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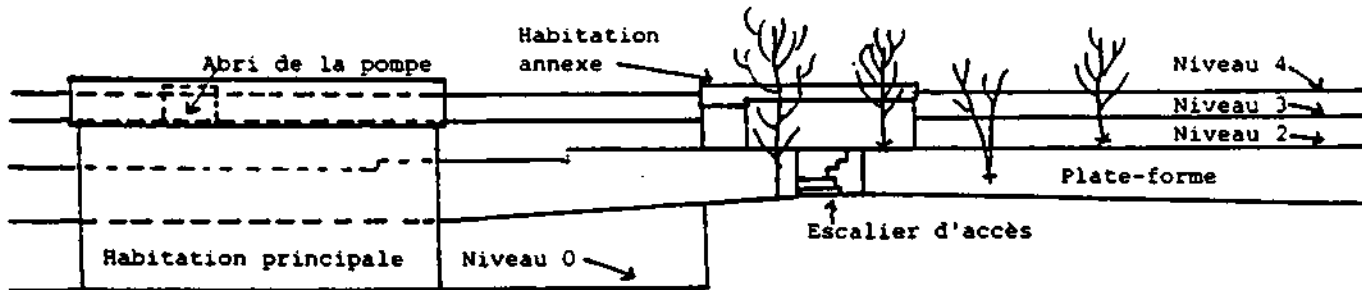
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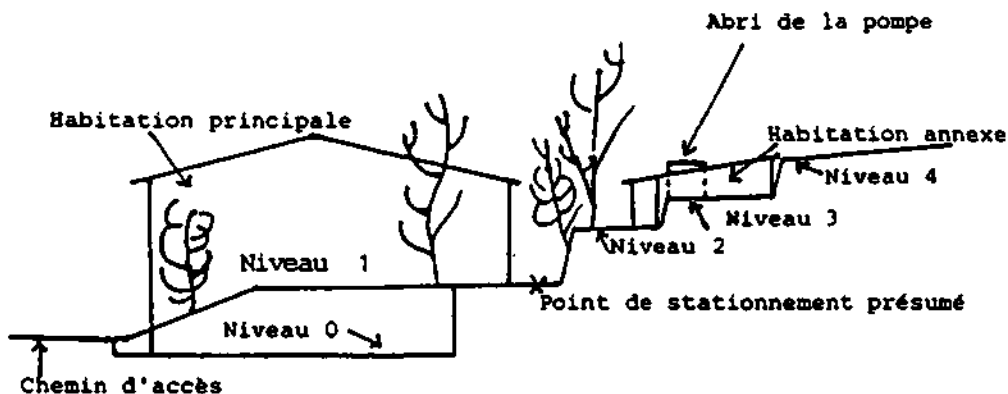


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French Government's "most enriching" UFO case

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FROM THE EDITOR

This issue is unusual in the sense that most of it is devoted to a single case, one involving physical traces. However, it is significant because it was a reported landing case that was thoroughly investigated by GEPAN, the French government agency charged with the scientific investigation of the UFO phenomenon. GEPAN issued its report only after three years of investigation and analyses. Although GEPAN stopped short of saying that that really was a UFO that landed in Mr. Colini's backyard, it does say the physical evidence strongly supports his story.

We have tried to be as faithful to the original report as possible, but we may have missed a point here and there due to ignorance of idiomatic expressions. Further, our scientific shortcomings led us to leave out some of the minute scientific detail which we might have misinterpreted. (Readers interested in those details can obtain copies of the report from MUFON.)

We believe this report is unusual for both its conclusions and what it reveals about how GEPAN goes about investigating UFO cases.

We are indebted to James E. O'Brien of West Palm Beach, Florida, for his time and effort in translating the report.

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Following is a major portion of a GEPAN report on what it calls its "most enriching" UFO investigation since GEPAN was established in 1977. It is a case in which French scientist Alain Esterle, former head of GEPAN, is quoted as saying (in *Flying Saucer Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1):

"For the first time we have found a combination of factors which conduce us to accept that something similar to what the eyewitness has described actually did take place there."

GEPAN is the Groupe d'Etude des Phenomenes Aerospaciaux Non-Identifies, or Group for the Study of Unidentified Aerospace Phenomena. GEPAN is a part of the Centre National d'Etudes Spaciales (CNES), France's equivalent of NASA.

This particular case involves the reported landing of an unidentified object on January 8, 1981, behind a rural house near Trans-en-Provence, a village near the town of Draguignan, not far from Nice in the south of France.

The report, titled Technical Note No. 16, was submitted to CNES by GEPAN on March 1, 1983, after three years of study and analysis. The report gives pseudonyms for the lone witness, his village and the nearby town.

The witness is known to be Renato Nicolai, 55 at the time of the incident. The report calls him Renato Colini. The village is identified only as A1 and the nearby town of Draguignan as A2. The one identification we do not have is that of a private French UFO group that investigated the case, called Group XYZ in the report.

The 66-page report was translated for MUFON by James E. O'Brien, of West Palm Beach, Florida. Readers who are familiar with the French language and are interested in the various charts, graphs and other results of the scientific analyses should write to MUFON headquarters, which will provide copies at 20 cents a page plus handling and postage.

GEPAN's most significant case

Let us remember briefly that the decision by GEPAN to undertake an investigation of this observation is because the case presented the possibility of applying techniques of rigorous and efficient analysis. This is a case that from the outset yielded information that could be analyzed; i.e., it was not a fantastic type of story and there were several physical traces of evidence to corroborate the witness's story, so that we felt there was enough there to look at scientifically.

Presentation of the case

On Friday, January 9, 1981, police in the town of A2 got a telephone call about the observation of an unidentified phenomenon and indicating the presence of traces in the soil. These events took place in the vicinity of the village of A1 the day before.

GEPAN first became aware of the case on the morning of Monday, January 12, and learned that the police had already taken samples of the soil the day after the event. Strong rains had fallen during the weekend and GEPAN, after consulting with the police, decided not to intervene immediately. We asked the police to let us know as early as possible the results of the samples that had been taken.

(continued on next page)

Some of the findings in the case

- **Traces were still perceptible 40 days after the event.**
- **The chlorophyll pigment in the leaf samples was weakened from 30 to 50 per cent.**
- **The young leaves "withstood the most serious losses, evolving toward the content and composition more characteristic of old leaves."**
- **Attempts to duplicate the changes were unsuccessful: Applying nuclear radiation "does not seem to be analogous with the energy source implied with the observed phenomenon."**
- **On the other hand, "it could be tied to the action of some type of electric energy field."**
- **Concerning the witness, the investigation clearly did not show "indications of invention or exaggeration on his part or a mental deformation which would cast doubt on his testimony."**
- **"It was possible to qualitatively show the occurrence of an important event which brought with it deformations of the terrain caused by mass, mechanics, a heating effect and perhaps certain transformations and deposits of trace minerals."**
- **"We cannot give a precise and unique interpretation to this remarkable combination of results...We can state that there is, nonetheless, another confirmation of a very significant event which happened on this spot."**
- **"This GEPAN investigation is the most enriching of all those made up to the present."**

GEPAN, Continued

A telex received on the afternoon of January 12 confirmed the events and led to more precise decisions on how to approach the area in question.

We also learned that several private groups had been notified of the case by the local press; and they also went to the site. One of them, Group XYZ; also had an investigator on the spot as of January 13, who began his own investigation.

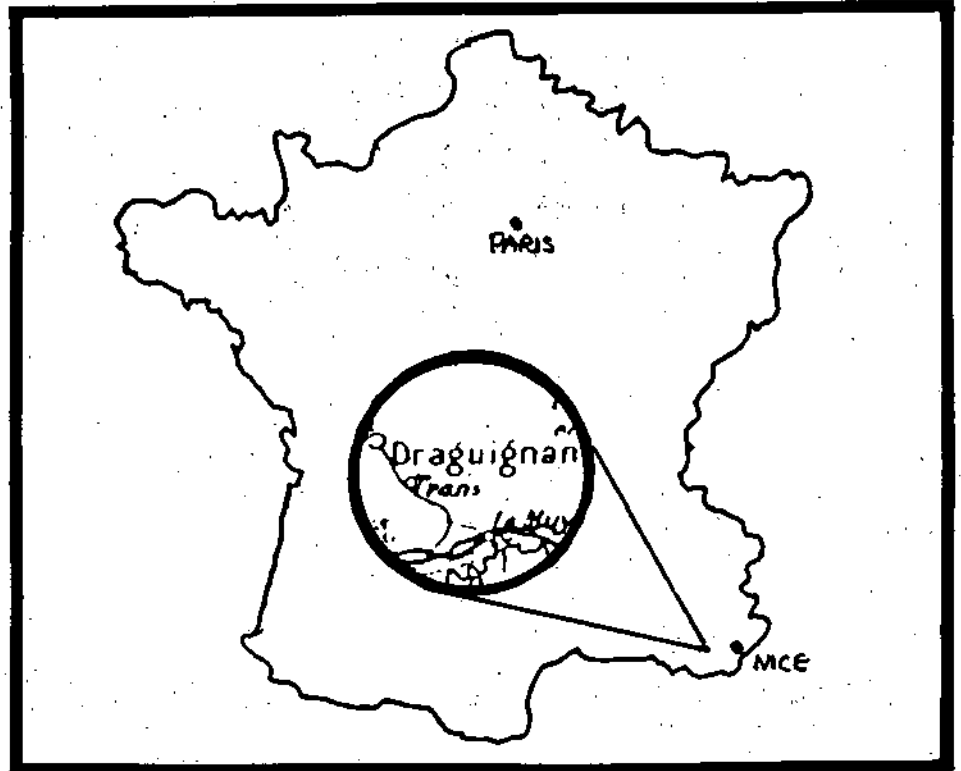
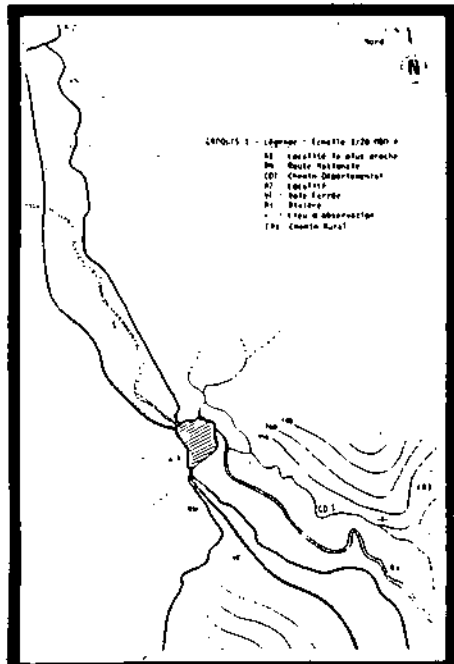
The police went to the site at 11:30 AM on January 9. They observed the site, questioned the witness, took photographs and took soil samples according to the book of police procedures. Several days later, the police sent soil samples to GEPAN and soil samples and several vegetation samples to the INRA laboratory.

A short time after that, additional samples were taken at the request of the laboratory.

THE INVESTIGATION

The village of A1 is three kilometers southwest of A2. Mr. and Mrs. Colini live on some property two kilometers to the east of this locale and route CD1, on the side of a hill which overlooks the Valley of Rise. The valley runs east and west, and from it a number of fruit and vegetable groves are visible.

The few houses in the area are



oriented with windows and doors toward the valley. A number of terraces built into the hill, called restantes, allow for cultivation of the soil. These restantes are generally constructed with rock from the region and their average height is two meters.

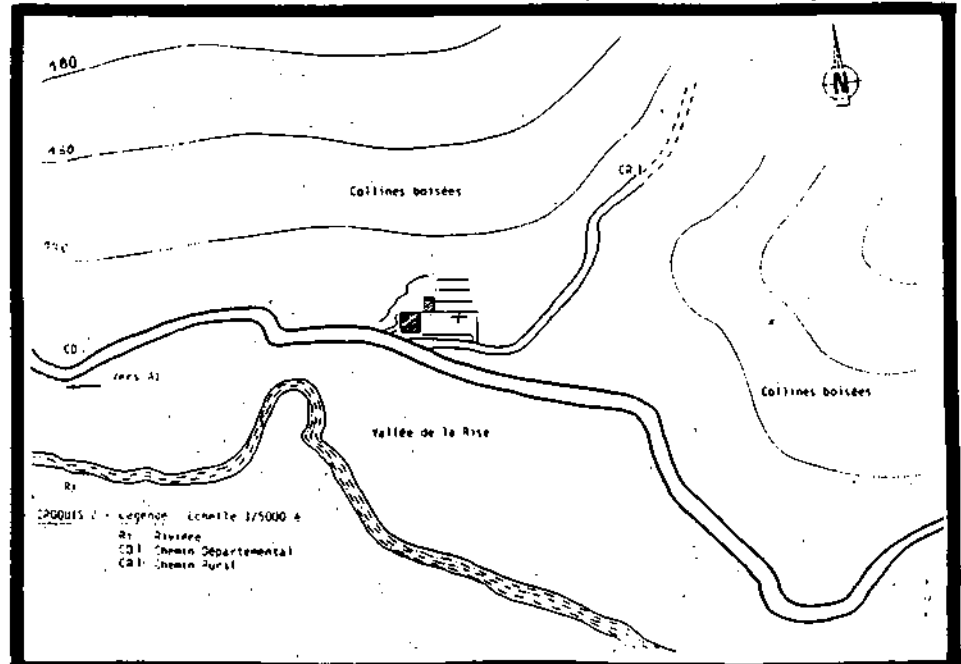
Environment of the site

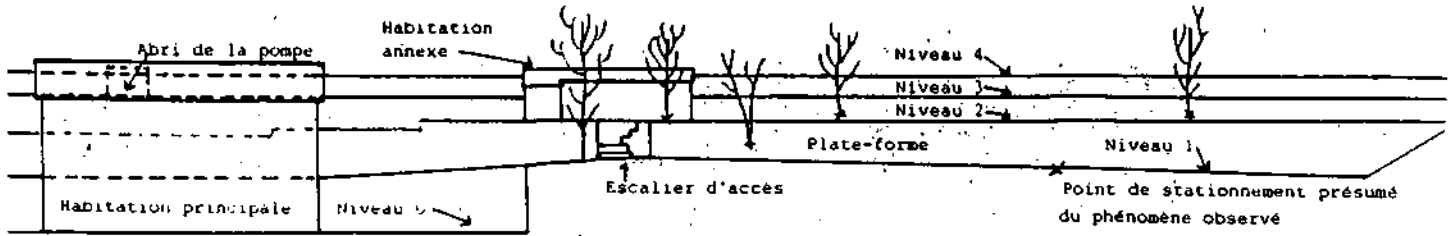
The Colini property sits away from the road on the north side of the valley. A long path goes around their property

and ends up 400 meters further on on a deserted farm. This property is worked in such a manner as to put the side of the hill to the best agricultural use. The house is constructed on several levels of these restantes and is built directly into the hill.

The paved entry level is 30 meters from the road. A stairway on the left side of the villa gives access to the living quarters and on the right side a rise of earth inhibits access to the big terrace.

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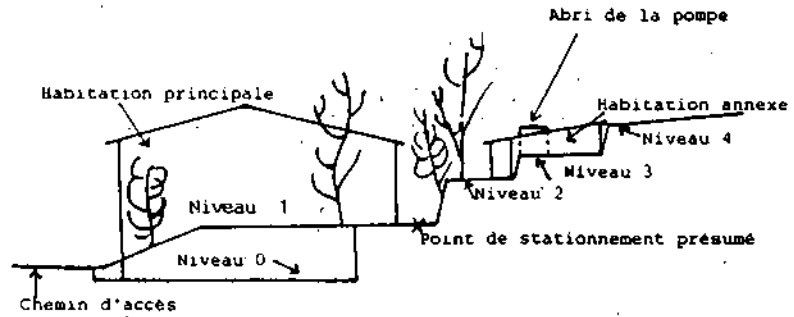


GEPAN, Continued

Vehicular access to this portion of property is made by the previously mentioned pathway.

The terrace or platform connects to the other restantes by a stairway situated behind the house. However, this platform is practically never used. On the northeast side of the hill are two restantes partially raised in successive one-meter jumps. There are two more constructions on these levels, a little shelter and an annex building for horses.

Above the big platform, two restantes are used for grazing. These are of average dimensions, 50 meters in length and 2.5 meters of width. Woods of pine trees, among which are some as high as a dozen meters, surround the property, except on the side toward the valley to the southwest. No particular



obstacle, i.e., electric lines, telephone lines, television cables, is visible on the Colini property.

Colini's Testimony

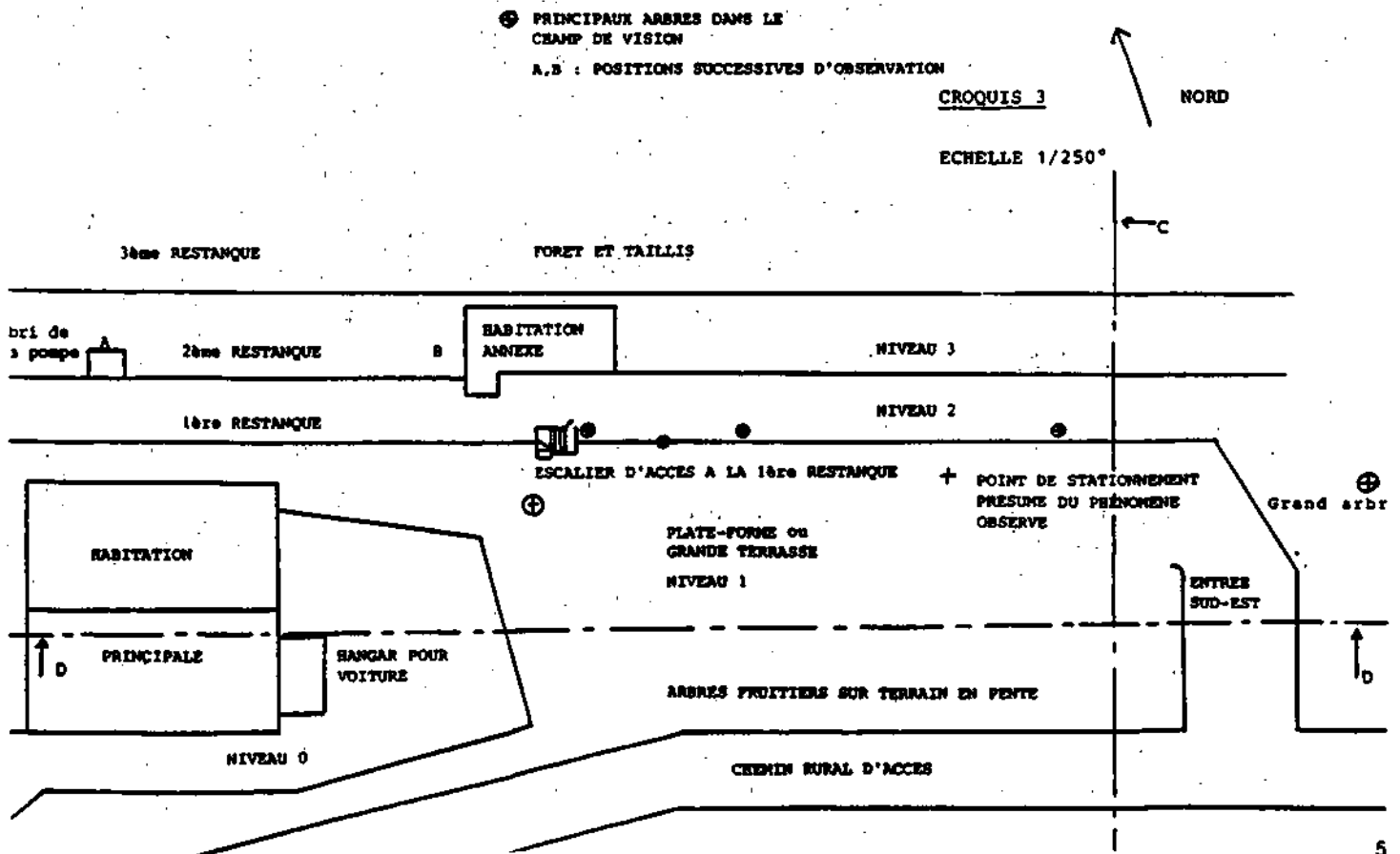
(Excerpt from the verbal testimony to the police)

I have lived at A1 for 14 years. I live alone with my wife, who is a cleaning woman at the social security office. I

haven't worked since November 1979. I had worked at the social security office. I have a disability pension because in 1973 I had a heart attack.

Yesterday, the 8th of January, 1981, like practically every day, I was puttering around. I was behind the house, which is built on a restante. I was building a little cement shed in which to put a water pump. Behind the house on

(continued on next page)





GEPAN, Continued

the same level is a little flat piece of land. You get to it by a path that comes from the bottom of the house. It was just about 1700 hours in the afternoon. It was starting to cool off.

My attention was drawn to a small noise, a kind of little whistling. I turned around and I saw in the air a ship which was just about at the height of a pine tree at the edge of my property. This ship was not turning but was descending toward the ground. I only heard a slight whistling. I saw no flames, neither underneath or around the ship.

While the ship was continuing to descend, I went closer to it, heading toward a little cabin above the house. When I got near the wall of the cabin, I was able to see very well above the roof. This cabin is also built on one of the restantes. I found myself on the topmost restante on my property, about 1.20 meters from the roof. From there I saw the ship standing on the ground.

At that moment, the ship began to emit another whistling, a constant, consistent whistling. Then it took off and once it was at the height of the trees, it took off rapidly in the direction of the forest of A1, which is to say toward the northeast. As the ship began to lift off, I saw beneath it four openings from which neither smoke nor flames were emitting. The ship kicked up a little dust when it left the ground.

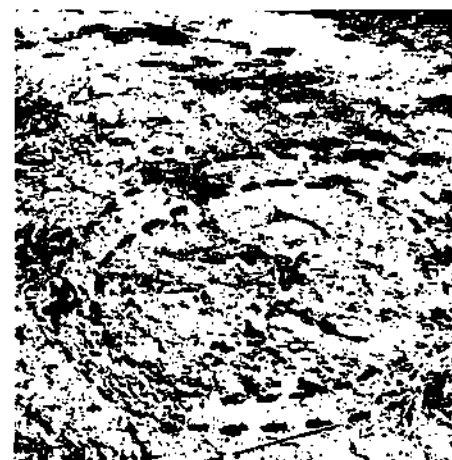
I was at that time about 30 meters from the landing site. I thereafter walked toward the spot and I noticed a circle about two meters in diameter. At certain spots on the curve of the circle



there were tracks (traces?).

When my wife came home that night, I told her what I had seen. She thought I was joking. The next day, when it was light, I showed her the tracks in the circle and she called our neighbor, Urbain, and he came with his wife. I told him about it and showed him the tracks and they told us to call the police.

The ship was in the form of two saucers upside down, one against the other. It must have been just about 1.5



meters high. It was the color of lead. The ship had a border or type of brace around its circumference. Underneath the brace I saw as it took off two kinds of round pieces which could have been landing gear or feet.

There also were two circles which looked kind of like trap doors. The two feet or landing gear extended about 20 centimeters beneath the body of the whole ship.

I have absolutely no problems with my sight or hearing.

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COLINI'S TESTIMONY TO AN INVESTIGATOR FOR GROUP XYZ

The report of the investigator:

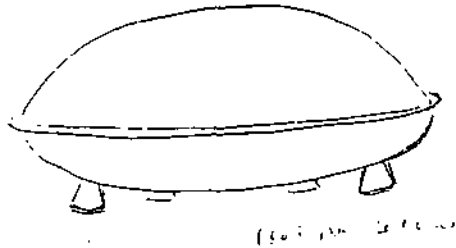
Colini was working on a little masonry job on the terrace just above his house. Night was falling and he wanted to finish before night. Suddenly, at the end of the platform he saw a ship fall from the sky just between the tops of two trees. The ship was dark-colored. As this fall of the ship was accompanied by no sound, Colini was surprised and taken aback and he watched it with rapt attention, fixing his eyes on the spot where the object landed. He was about 80 meters away.

The ship was immobilized against the background, which consisted of loose, dry stones and loose, soft earth. From the spot where Colini was standing, he noticed what looked like a big upside down bowl of a dark gray color. In surprise, he headed toward the object and stopped at the end of the restante about 45 meters from the traces which will have been observed as having come from the object.

Then he discovered that as he approached he was able to discern an oval-shaped vehicle having the general form of two half-spheres of unequal volume, cleanly separated by a flat border that stuck out and was about 15 centimeters beyond the main body of the craft and which formed a sort of ring around the metallic mass of the somewhat lead-aluminum alloy. The top part of the ship kind of spilled over the border of the restante and the ship stood about two to two and a half meters high.

The witness noticed no antenna, no door, no porthole, no opening. He noticed no kind of evidence of a motor or power source or any mechanical parts on the outside of the ship. The whole thing seemed to be smooth and compact. He estimates the horizontal diameter of the ship was bigger than its height.

He did not have the time to continue his observation because the craft lifted off, kicking up a light dust and accompanied by a soft whistling. Then it appeared to incline lightly, which allowed him to see its bottom,



and it took off at an increasing and surprising speed, passing precisely between the two trees between which it had landed, which was exactly the same point at which he had first seen it fall.

The witness noted that the course of the landing and the takeoff were not similar, that the trajectory of the takeoff was different than it had been when it landed.

At the moment the ship took off on its departure trajectory, the witness noticed four accessories underneath the ship. He compared them to the size of two masonry bricks to estimate their size, diameter and length. But he noticed that that description is imperfect and only approximate, especially since the observation had been brief due to the speed of the ship's takeoff and the near instantaneity of its disappearance.

He heard no particular sound of a motor in the silence of the countryside, and it was later documented that there was little if any peripheral noise in the area at that time.

He felt no heat, no vibration, no illness, neither during the observation or after. He was simply very impressed by the inexplicable spectacle.

He was somewhat disquieted and surprised. He went back to his house and told his wife about it. She was both skeptical and mistrusting, and she told him to watch out for further escapades and to stay home.

Next morning, they both went out to the spot where Colini had seen the phenomenon. That was when she saw the visible trace spots on the soil. She became as convinced as he and thought it best to get in touch with the local police.

Particulars gathered by GEPAN on February 17, 1981

The GEPAN questioning was principally aimed at the complementary collection of material evidence, notable

vegetation and so forth, and this led to a session with the witness. This was a somewhat shortened session.

The investigation took place in three phases: The meeting with the witness' wife, the reconstruction of the events, a topographic study accompanied with photographs of the surroundings and the site and subsequent session with the witness, description of the phenomena and the trajectory.

Witness indicates he first noticed the phenomenon in the sky above the trees at the end of a restante, then more precisely between two big pine trees which stand out above the woods.

Colini indicates this trajectory was directly in a straight line without any deviations or zig-zag, was rapid, and that there was absolutely no slowdown or stop before it hit the ground. He also pointed out the point of impact, where there are still visible traces on the soil.

The takeoff trajectory and its disappearance are considered by the witness as similar but not identical to the trajectory of landing. Details of this, however, will be clarified later.

The length of the observation, according to the reconstruction, the phase of approach of the phenomenon from the beginning of its touchdown was very brief, several seconds only.

Then the witness left his work spot, went to the cabin and the phenomenon was on the ground on the terrace. The witness observed it for several seconds and then abruptly the phenomenon took off, sped above the woods, gaining altitude, and through a phenomenon of simply distancing its diameter began to diminish.

As a result of several points furnished by Colini, we can guess that the entire length of the observation would be several dozen seconds; to be more precise, on the order of 30 to 40 seconds.

Concerning the observation, the witness was consistently at all times during this point in a good spot to carry out uninhibited observation. His position at all times gave him an unimpeded field of vision, with only three trees that could have possibly provided any obstacles to his vision.

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GEPAN, Continued

Distance of the observation: It was rather short from observer to phenomenon. If we consider the beginning of the approach phase, the distance the object covered from the first time he saw it and the landing was approximately 20 meters, from initial sighting to landing. It was 17½ meters from where he was working to the cabin, and he probably never got any closer to the phenomenon than 70 meters.

We must also note that entire observation was made in a frame of reference well known to the witness, which diminishes the likelihood of errors on the estimations of distances.

Form: In the descending phase, as the object got closer, Colini really can give very little observation about the form that he was looking at. It was only after touchdown that he got a better grasp of what was actually sitting there in front of him. This is also consistent with the idea that the whole landing took place very quickly.

Two phases particularly captured the attention of the witness: Its having been parked on the ground, and the takeoff.

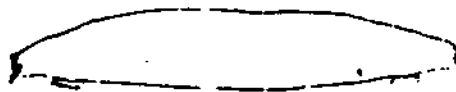
PHASE A

The witness does not describe what he saw by way of analogy to a recognizable form. He prefers to use the word *ship*. (Note: Colini has lived in France only 20 years, having come from Italy, and his command of the French language is not perfect, so this may account for some imprecisions in description.)

The witness has specific observation about two points: On the side of the ship he emphasizes the existence of a thick band that went around the entire silhouette and on the underside of the ship two types of landing gear or legs stuck out.

PHASE B

Sketch 5B is how Colini saw the ship from underneath after takeoff. Its form is circular and in the visible surface he indicates there were four small



SKETCHES 5A and 5B



circles set up on perpendicular and symmetrical axes.

Colini declares that they were clearly visible and compares them to two masonry pails.

In his testimony, Colini estimates that the dimensions of the ship as they stood against the background of the landing site and in its relatively simple sense there is a slight small wall that borders the restante where the ship landed and this wall at no point is higher than two and a half meters.

So he indicates also that the dimensions of the ship as it stood on the restante are as follows: The diameter of the exterior is estimated to be about two and half meters. The height is estimated to be between 1.70 and 1.80 meters. It stood just above the restante, which, as previously mentioned, stood about a meter and a half to two meters high.

The diameter of the little circles underneath were once again estimated to be about the same size as a masonry pail. We must note that the relationship between diameter and height is very different from that he pointed out on his drawings, and also in the drawings that he gave to the private investigator.

COLOR: Colini describes the color of the ship in gray tints, gray tones, a zinc-like gray, dark and flat on the thick side, and when he saw the ship from underneath four spots appeared clearly darker than the rest of the surface but still in the same basic tone.

NOISE: The witness recalled that it was a noise that first attracted his attention, and that was when he was working on the water pump shed. Colini had a little difficulty defining the nature of the sound that the ship made

as well as the loudness. He compares the noise to a rather strong wind blowing. He did not indicate whether there was continuous or interrupted sound and he did not indicate if there was any discontinuation of the sound when it landed.

The brutal shock at the point of impact he pointed out and the sound that resulted from the point of impact is compared to that, in his words, of a *rock falling on the ground*.

In the takeoff stage, the sound effects were at the same amplitude or level of loudness as at landing. Concerning the takeoff, this is where Colini is the most precise in his observations, which may be explained for two reasons: First of all, that was when he was closest to the ship, and secondly, the surprise had worn off and he was better able to see and react to what he was observing by then.

Therefore, according to him, the ship was on the ground, immobile for several seconds, and suddenly it took off vertically a couple of meters and climbed, angled off above the restante and continued to rise from this position at an angle and disappeared into the sky.

Further discussions

Colini has been sick for several years. He had myocardial infarction, which prevents him from working. At the time of our visit, Colini was somewhat ill and tired. After the initial reconstruction of the facts, he had to go in and lie down for a minute.

His wife told us a few minutes later that he could see us again and she corroborated his story as best she could from what she knew. But she also demanded some explanations from us as to what was going on and she wanted to know if we thought her husband was crazy.

He saw us in the family dining room and he took up his story, apparently in an attempt to find an explanation that would satisfy his own curiosity. He reviewed the various kinds of flying vehicles it could have been, airplanes and especially helicopters, but in the end had to come to the conclusion that

(continued on next page)

GEPAN, Continued

it really is not possible for an aircraft to land here. There are spots in the valley a lot more practical and a lot flatter for aircraft to land on.

Colini came back to the ship, particularly the technology that he marveled at. He kept saying over and over again: *"It hardly made any sound and it went up and down vertically. It fell like a rock and it didn't break. It's without a doubt a military ship."*

There's a military base, Camp Jouvan, not far away from where he lives.

Reaction

We have emphasized during the testimony that Colini did not stay passively in one place during the course of his observation. He did attempt to get closer, all the while staying very much on his guard, placing himself behind a wall so that he could protect himself.

His first idea was that it was some type of military weapon or ship that he didn't know anything about, some kind of new military ship, and we must say that that's the idea he fixed on and maintained until our visit.

Effectively, despite having spoken to several different people — police, journalists, private investigators — he maintained the idea that he had seen some type of military vehicle or property that he admitted he admired quite a bit and was particularly impressed with its flight performance and the precision with which it landed.

He excluded almost right away the presence of a helicopter because of the closeness of a wall to the restanté. *"The ship came down almost right against the wall."*

Once the event had ended, he took up his work again on the water pump shed and when his wife came home about an hour later, he tried to explain to her what he had gone through that afternoon. She absolutely did not believe him, and even advised him to go rest because of his health. The next morning, however, he persuaded her to come with him to the landing site, and there was still a faint outline of impressions.

Madame Colini accompanied her husband to the spot and confirmed the presence of several marks on the ground. She at that moment realized that something had in fact happened which she had not witnessed and began to believe her husband wasn't telling her a story.

At that very moment, she decided that they must tell their neighbors, who occupy a certain social rank which she believed would enable them to advise them as to what they should do. These neighbors at once notified the police.

Evolution of beliefs

During the course of our conversation, Colini told us that he had heard the word UFO on television several times and that was the only source he had for learning that word. The family TV is in the kitchen, where he always eats his meals, and he regularly spends several hours a day watching shows.

He also told us that he hardly ever reads, not even newspapers, so the word UFO didn't mean anything to him. We then explained to him what it meant.

He told us he had often heard of UFOs since the sighting and members of private groups as well as journalists had spoken to him about extraterrestrials to find out if that was what he had seen. He frankly answered without any hesitation, and with a little smile, that he hadn't seen anything of the sort.

He then went off into a discussion of life in the universe. He doesn't even know what much of this corresponds to. He confuses the word *galaxy* with the word *universe*. He talked about stars and thinks that if there are stars there must be other life forms and thinks that extraterrestrial life identifies itself in a fashion identical to the one we know.

As concerns his religious beliefs and the evolution of his beliefs after this sighting, he answers that he believes in God and that this isn't going to change one thing about his belief.

His wife, who is helping him out during this discussion, absolutely insists on intervening in this discussion to answer for her husband. She kept interrupting. She also speaks about her

religious beliefs. She believes that she has slowly begun to lessen her religious beliefs in the past several years. She has no precise idea about the meanings of the words *universe* and *space*, but she shares her husband's point of view on extraterrestrial life.

At the end of this session, she absolutely insists on pointing out that no one would have bothered her husband if there had not been a visible trace on the spot, and she doesn't understand why everybody is so interested in what her husband saw.

SYNTHESIS OF THE TESTIMONY

As we see it, the different versions of Colini's testimony actually contain very few differences or discrepancies as concerns the basis of the matter. There may be a few details that differ here and there but the basis is consistent.

All his various versions are not identical, quite far from that. But the differences consist primarily in a choice of terms. For example, in one description he uses a rather neutral vocabulary and in another version a more evocative or emotionally charged vocabulary. Naturally, we must keep in mind this difference in choice of words may be as much due to the investigators and stenographers as to the witness.

In Colini's case, his imperfect command of French vocabulary leads us to believe that these differences may, in fact, be more due to the stenographers and investigators than to him himself.

Therefore, in the version furnished by the investigator for XYZ, the presentation is more literary, more emotive. *He was absolutely stunned by this strange object...impressed by this chimeric type spectacle, etc.* and this version refers also voluntarily to a pre-existing imagery of the private investigator's own background; i.e., the private investigator's own preconceived ideas: *an oval-shaped vehicle...he sees no antenna...no windows, no openings...unearthly speeds* and all this.

(continued on next page)

GEPAN, Continued

Now in detail, we must note that version XYZ neglects to point out the soft whistling that originally attracted the witness' attention. However, on the other hand, XYZ's account makes quite a big deal of the dust the ship kicked up when the ship left the ground, and this is a detail that did not appear in the GEPAN testimony.

Finally, the drawing furnished to XYZ is substantially different from that Colini gave to GEPAN. XYZ's drawing seems a bit more classic, if one may speak thus, and is drawn with a much surer hand.

Finally, the different elements assembled do not necessarily lead to an unfavorable portrait of the witness. Rather, the witness' subjectivity does not seem to have played a big part in what he had to say. Quite the contrary, the difficulties Colini has expressing himself verbally can actually lend more credence to the possibility that it was the investigators who may have compromised any of the descriptions.

Analysis, therefore, becomes complex, to get precise and detailed conclusions on only one testimony or the testimony in general beyond the simple observation that there is a general coherence to every single version that he gave.

THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

At the end of his observation, Colini took us to the spot where the thing landed. At the moment he got there, right after the phenomenon left, he noticed very abnormal traces or markings on the soil, which he saw very clearly on the surface of the restante.

These traces eventually became the subject of examinations, photographs and soil samplings as well

as vegetal samplings, which were later sent for laboratory analysis.

The spots marked on the surface of the big terrace (level 1) in the general vicinity of the southeast entrance by the little path are visible on a little band of earth very close to the wall of the restante, about 22 meters from a tree at the left, where Colini first noticed the form at the very beginning of his observation.

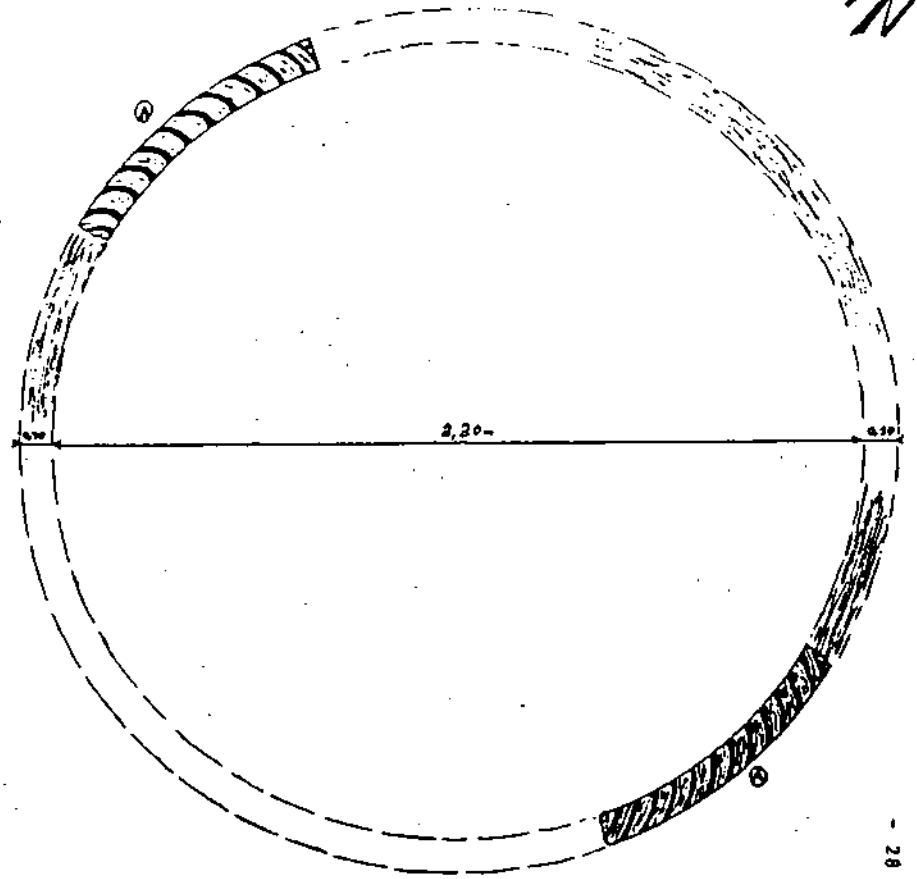
The description of all the elements came from diverse sources: the police, GEPAN, XYZ.

As of Friday, January 9, the local police brigade proceeded with an examination of the traces, and police say: "We observed the presence of two

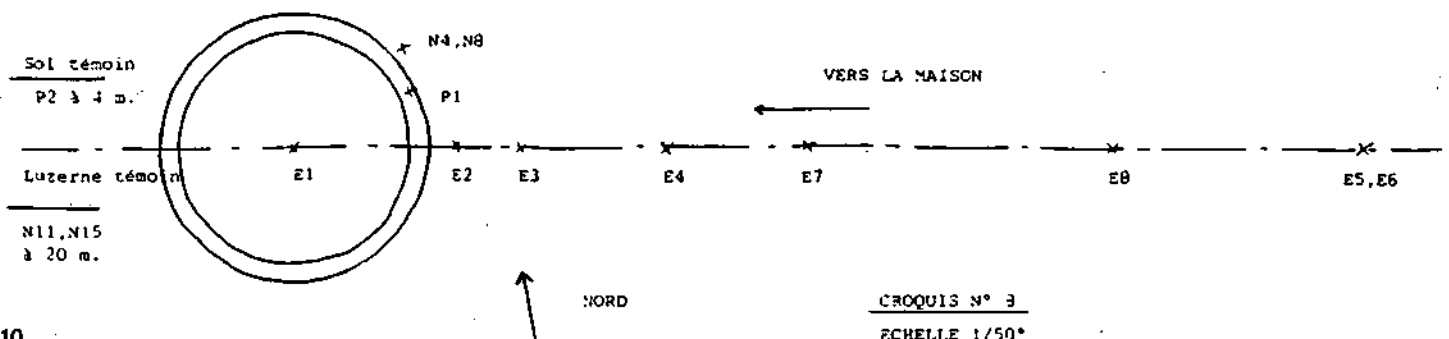
concentric circles, one 2.20 meters in diameter and the other 2.40 meters in diameter. The two circles form a sort of corona 10 centimeters thick on this corona, one within the other. There are two parts clearly visible, and they also show black striations (see sketch).

Several days later, XYZ's investigator came up with a somewhat different description. Instead of two portions diametrically opposed and clearly marked, he observed rather a horseshoe type of design with very regular striations as if someone had used a metal press or form to make them. And on this striated surface, all

(continued on next page)



Chemin de terre largeur moyenne 2,90 m.



GEPAN, Continued

trace of vegetation had disappeared.

On February 17, or 40 days after Colini's sighting, you could still see the traces, no doubt because there has been little rain since January 8, 1981 (there has been only one storm since then) and they are also visible due to the fact that this part of the property is not often frequented by anybody.

Visually, one could observe the presence of a zone with circled arcs. The earth was heavily compacted with a crust on the order of about a centimeter thick. The surface at certain spots on this crown or corona seemed to have worn down just a little bit.

All sorts of observations and examinations were carried out on the site:

- On January 9, the police took several samplings

- On January 23, at the request of the biochemical analysis laboratory, the police took new samplings of vegetation up to and including 20 meters from the site.

- On February 17, GEPAN proceeded on to a series of eight vegetation samplings on various wild plants. The distances between these samplings and the center of the corona were measured and reported on the table in Drawing 8. All of these samplings were put through laboratory analysis.

Meteorological data

At the moment of Colini's sighting on January 8, 1981, toward 5 PM, meteorological conditions were the following:

- temperature: 6.8
- humidity: 30%, no precipitation
- wind: southeast at 2 meters per second

- cloudiness: 2/8

- visibility good

Several significant precipitations took place twice over the weekend, on January 10 and 11. On the other hand, until February 17, the date of GEPAN's investigation, there was no new rain, which contributed, no doubt, to the good state of preservation of the traces, which allowed GEPAN to take significant samplings of the traces.

Air Traffic

After having asked civil and military authorities in the region about air traffic in the area, it must be noted after rigorous investigation that there was only one single helicopter flight, an Alouette 11 that flew over the region at a height of 200 meters from the ground at just about 4:30 PM on January 8.

Random information

The locality of A1 is situated south of a region which is one of the biggest maneuver grounds for the French army, Camp Jouvan. We checked with military authorities to find out if there had been any particular activity that day at Jouvan. The only notable activity at the hour of the observation was a cannon shot with a blank shell with a short trajectory shot toward a firing range about 25 kilometers to the north of A1.

ANALYSIS OF THE SOIL SAMPLES

Analyses began with an overall visual exam with binoculars and then more precisely with a microscope.

This first stage took place in the CNES laboratory.

Second stage samples were sent to different laboratories for physical and chemical analysis in order:

- to determine the structure and composition of the elements composing the samples.

- to analyze and interpret the eventual differences of composition, structure, etc...between the two samples to attempt to bring to light the effects of the actions (mechanical, thermal, radioactive, etc.) applicable.

A series of photos taken were amplified by an optic microscope, which eventually resulted in two or three different enlargements.

Photograph number 14. There are two important parts of this photograph. The earth was strongly compacted with a thick crust 6 to 7 millimeters, predominantly composed of calcium, very dry, so dry and compacted that only a very few traces of dessicated



PHOTO 14



PHOTO 15

vegetation appear.

At the surface, curved lines appear very clearly on the photo and show that this earth was subjected to a rubbing which had the same effect a sandpapering would.

Photograph 15, shown in enlargement. In this photograph you can see the presence of a flint, a piece of rock that was smashed down and ground into the soil. You can distinguish here and there on this flint a fracture line that may be due both to mechanical pressure as well as a heating of the ground.

However, on the right side of photo number 15, it appears darker and contains little vegetable traces, having no doubt actually seeded or germinated after we took the samples.

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MUFON

103 OLDTOWNE RD.
SEGUIN, TX 78155

GEPAN, Continued

Physical and chemical analysis at the SNEAP laboratory

This lab always does GEPAN's preliminary analyses. The lab did two types of analyses, one which showed blackish deposits and the other which made the striations to appear. In the course of the investigation, it was possible to note there were no organic compounds identifiable that would be characteristic of motor combustion.

Using an electronic ultrasound device (CAMECA), they were able to detect the presence of iron. However, the degree present did not allow for a strict identification of the elements; that is to say, whether it was free or oxidized iron.

This metallic compound is found on several portions of the calcified rock, in striations about the thickness of a micron. The following elements, Cr, Mn, Ni, etc., are not present.

Microscopic analysis and structure of the materials done by Paul Sebatier University in Toulouse

Three compounds were found: $\text{BaCa}(\text{CO})_{3/2}$, $(\text{Ca})_2, 8\text{H}_2\text{O}$

A bigger concentration of CaO_2 and $8\text{H}_2\text{O}$ in crystalline form were found on sample P1b, which was different from sample P2.

Analysis of the laboratory at the University of Metz

To have a double blind study, samples were sent to different labs. Metz got elements of the soil to allow for an identification of the compounds. This lab made an analysis of spectrometry with ionic bombardment.

On the corona they found negative ions and the presence of $\text{C}_2\text{H}_2\text{O}$...the ion 63 and 79, which are typical of the phosphate ion...and negative traces were also present that are analogous with certain types of polymers and petroleum residue.

Black particles are distinguished in the neighboring soil by the absence of aluminum. Sodium, magnesium and titanium are there in small quantities. Calcium was the major element. The

presence of other fragments in the negative ion column confirm the existence of carbon polymer.

In conclusion, the black macroscopic particles seem to be the residue of combustion.

Analysis of soil samples at the laboratory of the University of Pau

This laboratory specializes in the analysis of physico-chemical traces on mineral and organic materials. CNES has made use of its services since it made an analysis four years ago of lunar soil taken from samples furnished by NASA.

The laboratory uses a spectrometer that makes use of sparks and mass.

The soil samples analyzed were set apart from those furnished to the other laboratories. This analysis reveals an everyday quality of soil, nothing spectacular, made out of *argilo-calcaire*. The results show there is little significant difference in other soil witnessed in other laboratories and the one on which the deposit is visible. The only elements quantitatively discernable are zinc and phosphate. The laboratory interprets this as perhaps having come from a painting of basic black or primary black with a base of black carbon.

Synthesis of the analysis of the soil

The methods of analysis and microscopic observation brought out elements that indicate that the terrain or soil where Colini claims to have observed the phenomenon underwent certain specific modifications. For example:

A mechanical effect

In studying photographs 14 and 15, we note that clear and dark zones correspond to the curved lines of which the fairly precise outline can bring to mind the effect of a trampling down.

At the same time, a flint appears to be cut and to have undergone a surface polishing. The soil seems particularly compacted at this point. The earth sample taken from this spot manifests a hardness, a fairly important crusty

surface which is not at all the case of neighboring ground, which, on the contrary, is very soft and dusty and crumbly.

A thermal effect

The SNEAP laboratory believes that there was a heating that went along with this mechanical rubbing because the consistency is more solid under the black iron trace, or oxide iron, than next to it. Moreover, the particles of CO_3Ca are not active. They, therefore, were not heated greater than 600° , which could have brought on the disassociation of CO_3Ca , and then its recombination with active fluorescence.

Elsewhere, the University of Ranguell laboratory tried without success to reproduce the monocrystallization of the compounds in the soil by heating it for two hours at 1,000.

Therefore, the total of these analyses may be summed up according to the tables which appear hereafter and the following remarks:

- There was a strong mechanical pressure forced (probably the result of a heavy weight) on the surface

- the appearance of a superficial structural modification of the soil, with both striations and erosion

- a thermatic heating of the soil, perhaps consecutive to or immediately following the shock, the value of which did not exceed 600°

- an eventual residue of material in the form of detectable traces on the samples analyzed, such as a weak quantity of oxidized iron on grains of calcium and minute quantities of phosphate and zinc.

Biochemical analysis of the vegetable samples

This part of the investigation was done entirely by Dr. Bounias of the biochemical laboratory of the National Institute of Agronomy Research (center at d'Avignon-Montfavet). He himself dictated the synthesis of all the work that he did this day and it is his text which constitutes the following:

(continued on next page)

GEPAN, Continued

After an observation of an "unidentified object" in the circumstances heretofore described, certain vegetable samples were taken with a view toward biochemical analysis to determine the probable consequences of the "phenomenon."

Different sorts of physical-chemical trauma can show up at several different levels: Primary effects of radiation on peroxydases and the byproducts of oxydo-reduction...as well as chlorophyll pigments and carotene pigments being broken down...The effect of hydraulic shocks on the peroxydases and on the glucides and amino-acids; and an effect of temperature and light on the inter-relations between photosynthetic pigments and free amino-acids. The numerical results presented here constitute the first part of the research undertaken. They will be followed by a series of complementary factors in the course of analysis.

The taking of samples

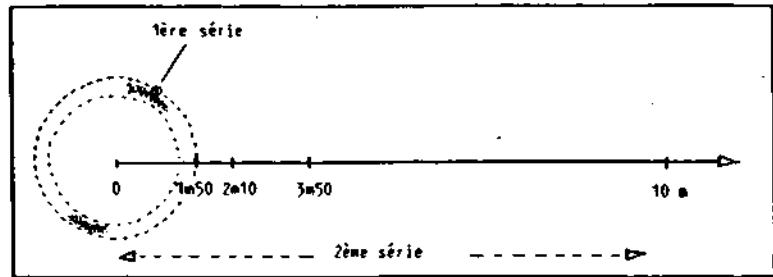
The principle consists of choosing one species, animal or vegetable, from which it might be likely to find a series of ecological "stations" situated on an axis which has its origin in the center of the "phenomenon" and from there distancing itself from the center. The furthest points away can witness to the effects just as well as intermediate and closer points because they will give evidence of a gradual gradation of the consequences.

In the case of the observation of January 8, 1981, samples consist of a type of primitive or wild luzerne plants, the *medicago minima*. Two series of samples were taken successively:

- by the police in A2 on January 9 in one of the spots 1.50 meters from the center and, on January 23, 20 meters from the spot

- by GEPAN on February 17, samples were taken consecutively from the center (using the center as a point of departure) and further out to the periphery to a point 10 meters from the center.

The two criteria of choosing the



analyzed fragments are as follows:

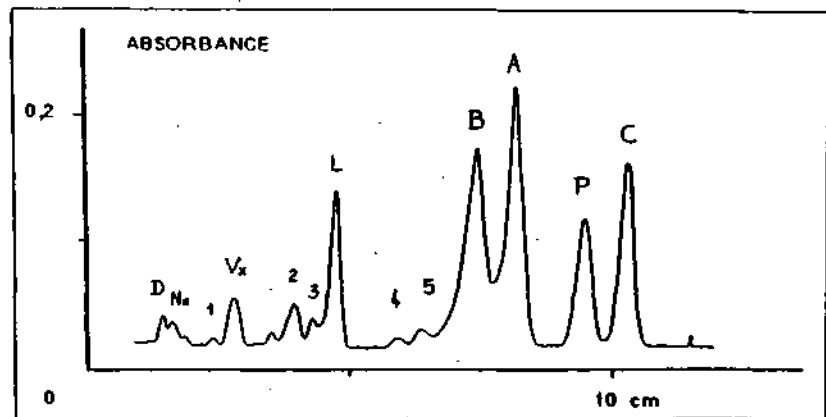
(a) a morphological identity, including color, of like samples coming from diverse points in the sample region.

(b) a reconstitution of the elements that were retained for analysis on the entire surface of the samples.

Samples E-5 and E-6 encompass the values of the average individual weights of samples E-1. Comparison between E-5 and E-6 will as well take into account the effects which would

eventually have happened to the leaves had they continued growing. In the case of E-3 or E-5, for example, we would see examples of their inherent anomalies or mutations in their slight development at this stage, tied in with the hazards of their particular eco-physiological environment.

Two lots of five leaves each from the second series were dried in an oven (six hours at 100° c) and the final dry weight represents 28.5 + or - 1.% of the cool weight.



RESULTS

Photosynthetic pigments

Figure 2, chromatogram of pigment extracted from the first series (Phase chloroform without revelation, photometer Vernon PHI-5, white light)

D = deposit (chlorophyllides + pheophorbides and tanins)

1 = Methyl chlorophyllides

2 = Protochlorophyllides

3 = Lutein-epoxide or zeaxanthine

4 = cryptoxanthine type or carotene-epoxide

5 = Oxy-chlorophylls

Nx = neoxanthine

L = Lutein

B = chlorophyll B

A = chlorophyll A

P = Pheophytines

C = Beta carotene

Vx = Violaxanthine

Table 1 expresses in nanomoles by mg of the tissues the results of analysis of samples of the first series. The coefficients of variation $C=0.22$ for 3 measures.

The differences of equipment for inherent pigmentations during the aging (the stripping out of chlorophyll and the augmentation of xanthophylls) was observed by BOUNIAS in 1972 and we find unequivocal evidence of them here in the samples taken from 20 meters.

Samples taken from the periphery ($d = 1.5m$) show a general weakening of the pigmentary colors. Whatever the age of these leaves, chlorophyll A was reduced by 33%, chlorophyll B by 28% and pheophytine by 31%. They were all

(continued on next page)

GEPAN, Continued

weakened and stripped to a fairly similar degree in all three cases. Each one has undergone the same kind of reduction...

Among the carotinoids, the most affected is the beta carotene, which was reduced by 50 to 57% in the vicinity of the phenomenon, as well as the violaxanthine (80% of this substance was stripped out of the young leaves).

Table 1 -- Analysis of the pigments in the first series: young leaves (N-15 = vicinity and N - 8 = exposed) and old leaves (N-11 vicinity and N-4 exposed)

During this series of analyses, diverse forms of isomers or oxides of chlorophylls A & B appear, as well as pheophytines.

Forms A and B correspond to algorithmic derivatives lightly oxidized by increasing polarity; therefore the least chromatographic mobility the existence of which has been known for quite some time... The byproduct B can reverse itself into its initial structure while the passage from form A to forms A1 and A2 is irreversible. Form A2 may well correspond to one of those described by STRAIN in 1955...

These molecular modifications can be explained as well as by modifications using an absorption spectrum. These molecular modifications are of two types: on one hand a tracing of the short length of waves and on the other hand an augmentation of the relationship between absorbances lambda 410 nm (Soret band) / lambda 677 nm, which can be interpreted according to STRAIN et al as an indication of the tendencies of oxidation.

Forms A and B present a normal chromatographic mobility and the positions of the maximum points of their spectrum conforms equally to that position of the spurs.

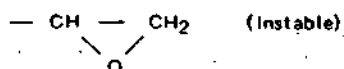
Form A shows a light tracing of red awl from 677 to 675 nm. The relationship lambda 410 nm / lambda 677 nm is raised there and its color is constantly stronger in sample 1 than for example in sample 4. The relations between the molecular structure and the physical properties of chlorophyll seems to once again indicate a

Tableau 1 - Analyse des pigments dans les échantillons de la première série : jeunes feuilles (N-15=Témoin et N-8-exposées) et feuilles âgées (N-11=Témoins et N-4-exposées).

Pigments	N - 15	N - 8	N - 11	N - 4
Chlorophylle A	0,87	0,58	0,81	0,54
Chlorophylle B	0,62	0,45	0,51	0,37
(A + B)	1,49	1,03	1,32	0,91
Phéophytine A	0,73	0,44	0,29	0,20
B Carotène	0,21	0,09	0,20	0,10
Lutéine	0,32	0,28	0,34	0,24
Violaxanthine	0,15	0,030	0,17	0,11
Néo-xanthine + chlorophyllides	0,28	0,30	0,26	0,25
Protochlorophyllide	-	-	9,9	6,0

tendency towards oxidation:

- from the radical CH_3 into $\text{CH}-\text{O}$ for example, from Chl A to Chl B
- perhaps the radical ethylene $\text{CH}-\text{CH}_2$ into epoxide



which would have little influence on mobility, masked by their carbons, -2a -2b of the molecule.

Pheophytine A is especially characterized in the vicinity of the "phenomenon" by a lessening of the rapport between lambda 410/lambda 675.

Let us note, finally, that the relations of structure to "light/spectors" are extremely difficult to manipulate. Therefore, the electrofile radicals of substitution exercise a bathochrome effect when it is a question of carbons 2-6 and a hypsochrome effect in position 3...

At the level of carotenoids, the chromatographic mobility has not been significantly affected, but the analysis of the traces or these graphs sometimes reveals a tendency toward certain modifications of molecular structure.

The comparative analysis of the diverse samples show that these structural modifications are more marked in the samples coming from the immediate vicinity of the "phenomenon."

In the November 19, 1983, issue of the newspaper France-Soir, published in Paris, journalist Jean-Yves Casgha reported on the Nicolai case after interviewing Dr. Bounias, who conducted some of the laboratory analyses of the leaf samples. He quoted Dr. Bounias as saying:

"We worked on very young leaves. They all had the anatomic and physiologic characteristics of their age. However, they had the biochemical characteristics of advanced senescence, of old age! And this does not resemble anything known to exist on our planet..."

"We have found differences sufficiently important that the statistical significance of the results is irrefutable...All we can say is that something certainly happened. We have observed the effects of a phenomenon. We don't know its precise nature or, above all, its cause."

(From the February 1984 issue of the U.F.O. Newsclipping Service, translation by George Andrews)



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DISCUSSION

The leaves coming from plants harvested in the most immediate vicinity of the "phenomenon" show certain particularities common to the two series of samples, which were still perceptible 40 days after the event. The chlorophyll pigment and carotenoid is weakened from 30 to 50 percent of active forms and enriched in inert or degraded forms.

The young leaves withstood the most serious losses on the level of beta carotene (-57%) and of violaxanthine (-80%). In all the samples of the second series, chlorophylls are partially decomposed into oxidized forms but the modifications are more pronounced in the immediate vicinity of the "phenomenon."

In most cases, quantitative correlations exist between the observed perturbations and the distance from the center of the "phenomenon": The parameters of regression vary as a function of the differences of the free enthalpy associated with the transformations.

In the case of glucides and amino-acids, certain quantitative modifications appear also from the graph of the different components. The most important modifications tend to make the content of the very young leaves evolve towards the contents and composition more characteristic of old leaves.

The observed perturbations at the level of photosynthetic pigments can be examined by comparison with those products in the *cotyledonaires* leaves of the following *d-Arabidopsis thaliana* (cruciferous) plants after exposing seeds to gamma irradiation (BOUNIAS, 1973)...The following numerical givens show that it is necessary to apply a very large dose of these beta rays 10^6 rads to obtain these changes...

Chlorophyll A : -30%
 Chlorophyll B : -46%
 violaxanthine:-40%
 Luteine : -30%
 Beta carotene : -20%

It appears as well that when we apply about 250K rads, a chemically

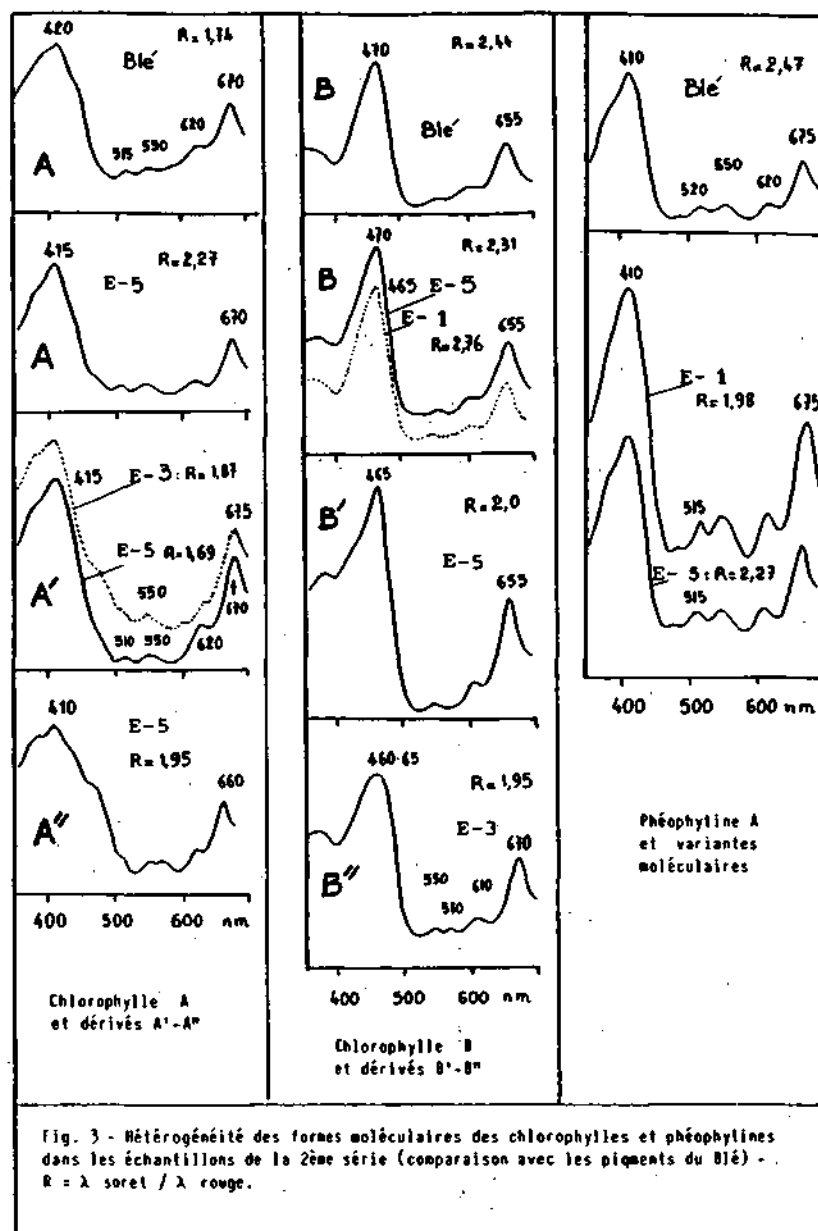


Fig. 3 - Hétérogénéité des formes moléculaires des chlorophylles et phéophytines dans les échantillons de la 2ème série (comparaison avec les pigments du Blé) - $R = \lambda \text{ solet} / \lambda \text{ rouge}$.

active mobile compound appears and the movements between this beta carotene and these pheophytines, the compound with a weaker polarity than the chlorophylls and the graph leaning toward long waves that grow as they go along would appear to correspond rather to a reduced derivative of chlorophyll A, such as described by Krasnovskii in 1948...is characterized as well by a red coloration and a band of Soret...A transient derivative giving a maximum absorption of 475 nm was also extracted by ZIEGER and WITT in 1961...during a chemical reduction of chloroyll A, which confirms the relation between the reduction and the bathochrome effect.

The action of nuclear irradiation

therefore does not seem to be analogous with the energy source implied with the observed phenomenon., on the other hand, a specific intensification of the transformation of chlorophylls into pheophytines and from chlorophyllides into pheophorbides could be tied to the action of a type of electric energy field.

Other experiments now under way have as an object to complete the actual results and to attempt to establish a comparison of the modifications of certain inter-relations between pigments and amino-acids with those observed under the action of diverse other types of physical trauma.

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CONCLUSIONS

The testimony given by Colini stated an observation which took place in broad daylight, says he, about 30 meters in distance and for a duration of about 12 seconds, during the course of which the phenomenon was for the most part immobile.

The investigation did not clearly show in successive conversations with the witness, nor in his behavior, indications of invention or exaggeration on his part or a mental deformation which would cast doubt on his testimony. Even though we cannot disprove his testimony and cannot prove he is deranged or is telling a lie, we do not consider his testimony in and of itself enough to constitute a proof.

Complementary approaches were undertaken with a bias towards physical analyses of visible perturbations in the immediate vicinity. Just on a pedestrian level, the particular conditions of the terrain hardly allowed for a precise analysis of the mass of the pressure and the heat. It was nonetheless possible to qualitatively show the occurrence of an event of important amplitude which brought with it deformations of the terrain caused by mass, mechanics, a heating effect and perhaps certain transformations and deposits of trace minerals.

These possible interpretations of shock, of scrapings, remain, however, too diverse and vague for one to consider that they furnish a definitive confirmation of the witness's account.

On the biochemical level, the analyses were made on the entirety of the factors of photosynthesis, lipids, sugars and amino-acids. Many differences appeared among the samples the further they were from the spot and those that were closer to the spot.

In most cases, the amount of mutilation or transformation in them is a function of distance from the center...Nonetheless, the actual results and the knowledge that we gained from the actual deformations that the plants underwent, still remain too scattered to form a whole picture, so that as of this

Les tableaux 2 et 3 précisent les résultats des analyses quantitatives effectuées à partir des différentes formes moléculaires séparées et identifiées d'après leur mobilités chromatographiques et leurs spectres respectifs.

Tableau 2

Pigments	E-1	E-2	E-3	E-4	E-5	E-6
Chlorophylle A	0,005	0,010	0,016	0,017	0,021	0,0082
Chlorophylle A'	0,353	1,08	1,14	1,17	1,25	1,28
Chlorophylle A''	trace	0,008	0,0088	0,0116	0,0281	0,0398
Chlorophylle B	0,030	0,031	0,030	0,037	0,049	0,031
Chlorophylle B'	0,13	0,23	0,22	0,15	0,18	0,14
Phéophytine A'	0,174	0,21	0,16	0,12	0,098	0,026
Phéophytine A	0,27	0,50	0,61	0,58	0,53	0,50
B carotène	0,090	0,106	0,12	0,158	0,195	0,251
Lutéine	0,089	0,087	0,123	0,140	0,175	0,287
Violaxanthine + Néoxanthine + chlorophyllides	0,327	0,538	0,468	0,746	0,592	0,655
Protochloroph. (4)	0,061	0,13	0,12	0,18	0,13	0,13
Protochloroph. (3)	0,071	0,23	0,21	0,20	0,16	0,16

Tableau 3

Paramètres statistiques	B carotène	Lutéine
N = nombre de couples	6	6
Coeff. de corrél. ρ	0,945	0,871
Probab. signif. P	0,0022	0,012
Pente b	0,0130	0,0148
Intersections /x	0,094	0,083
/y	- 7,22	- 5,62
Point médian (\bar{x} ; \bar{y})	0,15 / 4,51	0,15 / 4,51

moment, we cannot give a precise and unique interpretation to this remarkable combination of results.

At very least, we can state that there is nonetheless another confirmation of a very significant event which happened at this spot. It remains to discover if this corresponds to the witness's descriptions.

In fact, there is a constant balance between these two aspirations: to succeed in proving that the testimony is "true" or that it is false, or succeed in understanding precisely, physically, the events that took place. But we must not lose from sight that these two perspectives are not contradictory and can ally themselves with one another quite closely in the very heart of the scientific process. It is through gaining comprehension that we prove, and the

proofs brought forth by these physical analyses that will give the measure of the clarity and precision of all the interpretations that have been made up till now.

Our interpretations are vague at this time and will remain so as long as they have not been submitted to a program of studies that are systematic on the characterization of the large classes of physico-chemical interactions.

Therefore, an investigation such as the one we just presented raises more questions than it answers, but this time the questions seem to be very clear and indicate a path toward which we can proceed, and this GEPAN investigation is the most enriching of all those made up to the present.