

UFO in the Himalayas

By: Valentín Alejandro Ladra von Pepin

About 9 pm. As I seldom eat at night when I travel, I decided to seat comfortably at the magnificent terrace of the Windamere Hotel in Darjeeling, over 2100 meters high, just to stare at the dim house lights at the other side of the valley and do nothing, which in this uncanny world is a pleasure in itself. The fresh air and the silence of the night, with the glow of the distant moon –not full yet- over the mountains makes one, I assure you, feel very human again.

I returned after several days from my trip up north, to Sikkim, not far away from the border line with Tibet and Nepal to the west; and later to Kalimpong to the east, near Bhutan. All those places are magnificent, full of mystical marvels and natural beauty everywhere.

At the Windamere I was enjoying the invitation and hospitality of the noble Tenduf-La family, of Tibetan origin. The hotel is a reminiscence of the fading glory of the British officers who at the times of the Raj took refuge from the awful heat of Calcutta –today called Kolkata-, a fascinating piece of history upwards toward the powerful snowy Himalayas. The Windamere is part of the World Heritage, and by all means very well deserved.

Well, this is just a small introduction to an unexpected experience with a visitor from another world... in the Himalayas!

But that is not all, because about one hour before 'I knew that something strange, odd, was going to happen in my last night before the next day flight from the Bagdogra airport to New Delhi'. It was very deep in my consciousness, an unanswerable feeling as it used to happen throughout all my life; in different places in the world, from Egypt and Mesopotamia to the Amazon jungles.

That sudden whisper, an inner voice, made my head turn up to the left and gaze at the stars. And there IT was: very high above the over 7000 meter high mountains a UFO. How did I figure it out that this bright flying object was not from this world? The answer is easy: no human device can maneuver backwards, go up and down and sideways at different uncanny speeds in the same motion... and, gosh! Stand still for several minutes. And start all over again. The light was potent, very bright, moving north by south west: a ghostly cosmic ballet dance.

In split seconds I thought of running to my room up the wooden stairs, open the door with my key, take the video camera, the same one I was filming with all over India, Nepal and the Himalayas, but I realized it would take a lot of time doing it. The UFO might be gone. So I called the attention of two of the ladies who were gossiping behind me, unaware of what was happening. One of them was a young manager of the Windamere and the other a

piano player and music teacher from Kolkata, who used to entertain visitors and guests at tea time and dinner.

In the uproar the attention was also attracted to some hotel workers and Hindu guests.

That space vehicle –what else to call it- was not from planet Earth. Its velocity was outrageous and did not change after several 90 degree turns, north by southwest and viceversa. Constant 90 and 45 sig sags. Hard to calculate the time, but I assume the strange space dance went on for more than 4 or five minutes, not 2 or 1. That's lots of time in most of UFO sightings. The object was huge, for it almost could be confused with some of the stars, very high almost in deep space. And then... it stopped, disguised as another bright star in a very clear night. And it stood still for more than an hour. I guess we all got bored watching it.

And then it was gone: unthinkable velocity.

Here are the testimonies of both ladies of the strange Himalayan UFO event, which I made them write down on a paper. First of the manager of the Windamere Hotel, Miss Vasundhara Subaiya: "in an unusual clear night in Darjeeling I saw this unusual sighting for several minutes, in the form of a bright star moving across the sky. It seemed to be a drunken star looking for its lost space. I frankly do not believe in flying saucers or the kind, but this strange incident has somehow changed my mind".

Let's see now what Miss C.Kannade, the talented elderly lady piano player, had to say: "I, C.Kannade, by name, saw late at night the strangest vision. The night was unusually clear, with a full moon, and suddenly what seemed to be just another star was moving with great speed, very bright and doing all kind of strange maneuvers. ¿A UFO, what everybody calls a flying saucer? Not a human device? And then it just stopped, fort a long time. What was it?"

The other witness, a hotel employee of Nepalese origin living in Darjeeling, Naresh Thami, just bubbled his name out of the surprise but said nothing. It was 16 of June of 1992.

The next day I send the report to El Mundo newspaper for the Cadena Capriles, the huge Venezuelan press emporium for whom I was the director of one of the magazines some years before, with photos of the Darjeeling area and a humble sketch of the sighting, and a few months after my return I also wrote it in my weekly column "Orbita Cero" – Cero Orbit -. But still in India some days after, in a local newspaper it was mentioned another similar sighting.