



ALSO RECEIVED

WE LEAF THROUGH A SMALL SELECTION OF THE DOZENS OF BOOKS THAT HAVE ARRIVED AT FORTEAN TOWERS ONLY TO GET LOST DOWN THE BACK OF BOB RICKARD'S SOFA...

Sublime Light on the Turin Shroud The true origin of a controversial medieval relic

Ludo Noens

Aspekt, 2019

PB, £16.95, 248pp, refs, index. ISBN 9789463385138

In April 1988, the Vatican allowed a small sample of the famous Shroud kept in Turin Cathedral to be cut and subjected to Carbon dating in three top European universities. The results came back six months later: the cloth was dated to between 1260 and 1390. Far from settling the matter, new disputes have raged. Some argue about the quality of the cut samples. Some say that the precise method of faking the negative-like image still cannot be resolved as it is not the result of burning or painting. Author Noens's hypothesis is that in the later Middle Ages, pious meditators managed to radiate some sort of mystical light that impressed the image. His documentation of each stage of this notion is quietly intriguing.

UFO Contacts in Italy, vols 1 & 2

Roberto Pinotti

Flying Disk Press, 2019

PB, £14 each, 269pp per volume.
ISBN 9789647115010 & 9781522064688

Flying Disk continues its valuable documentation of continental ufology with these large format imprints crammed with historic images of interest to historians and the specialist. Sad to say, the earnestness of the author is let down by Flying Disk's amateurish editing and presentation which makes life difficult for the reader.

Shine On The Remarkable Story of How I Fell Under a Speeding Train, Journeyed to the Afterlife, and the Astonishing Proof I Brought Back with Me

David Ditchfield and JS Jones

O-Books, 2020

PB, £12.00, 260pp. ISBN 9781789043655

In all the works on NDEs and OOBs, so-called 'crisis' exteriorisations are among the

most mysterious. Here is David Ditchfield's own story of "how I fell under a speeding train, journeyed to the Afterlife, and the astonishing proof I brought back with me." Despite its novelistic style, there is a lot of good and sensible data and discussion to back it up. A small appendix at the back holds the testimony of six people (including co-author Jones) who were with Ditchfield from his accident to his recovery, seeing how it changed him, and who vouch for his statements. A cracking read with an approving foreword by Dr Raymond Moody.

Sirius: The Star of Maltese Temples

Lenie Reedijk

Malet Books, 2018

PB, £20.99, 198pp. ISBN 9789490216047

This bold and provocative investigation of prehistoric Malta challenges the textbook consensus of how the archipelago's first settlers arrived around 5200 BC and that the first ritual sites began around a millennium later. Researched by a professional linguist who once lived on Malta, evidence hitherto swept under museum rugs and even deliberately destroyed (at the Hypogeum) is reassembled to strongly suggest that the island was inhabited by the Palaeolithic era, and that some of the "temples" are older than convention holds, possibly by up to several millennia. Temple axis and entrance alignments with the rising Sirius are key to this idea. Equally engaging is the history of the archaeologists who vied to control Malta's prehistory dating and frame it as an isolated culture.

Genius Weapons Artificial Intelligence, Autonomous Weaponry, and the Future of Warfare

Louis A Del Monte

Prometheus Books, 2018

PB, £11.99, 170pp. ISBN 9781633884526

Del Monte – a physicist, futurist and inventor – explores the bizarre fringes of micro-electronics, biochemistry and

Artificial Intelligence technology and what potential they would have in any future war. The prospect of military conflict by autonomous armies of biological or mechanical units controlled by onboard intelligent routines, he argues, is increasingly likely. In 2016, attendees to the World Economic Forum were asked if they would prefer a war settled by AI robots or by their sons and daughters; the majority went for AI. Cue the horrific prospects beloved of today's video war games as Skynet Day creeps nearer.

Gods and Robots Myths, Machines, and Ancient Dreams of Technology

Adrienne Mayor

Princeton University Press, 2020

PB, £11.99, 296pp. ISBN 9780691202266

In contrast to the above book, this is a completely different take on artificial life, being a survey of how the ancients imagined 'living' things made by man, not the gods. Mayor's examples are drawn from the oldest myths of the Greeks, Chinese, Indian, Roman and many other cultures. It is interesting to note how easily magic was put forward as the reason for or motivating power behind the moving statues, creatures and so on. Although mayor touches on the importance of the legendary first shaman-smiths to archaic societies, there could have been more discussion of the shaman-witch counterpart in the magical act of 'animation'. Mayor also shows how that the discussion (and dramatisation) of the ethical issues of creating artificial life are nothing new. Well-written and well-illustrated, here is a good example of accessible academic writing.

Legend Tripping A Contemporary Legend Casebook

Lynne McNeill and Elizabeth Tucker, eds

Utah State University Press, 2018

PB, £21, 275pp. ISBN 9781607328070

'Legend tripping' is – or was until the advent of COVID19 – an increasingly popular form of

focused tourism in which parties visit sites of notoriety, myth and legend, guided by authors or lecturers. In this first of a series, 10 experienced folklorists, historians and anthropologists discuss sites, legends and reactions. Our old friend Prof. Bill Ellis is among them.

Sacred Corridors Secrets Behind the Real Project Blue Book, Wright-Patterson AFB, Roswell, Battelle, Memory Metal, Dr J Allen Hynek & UFO Cover-Ups

Irena McCommon Scott

Flying Disk Press, 2018

PB, £14.00, 284pp. ISBN 9781791660680

Dr Scott – who worked for the US Defense Intelligence Agency and various aerospace institutions – recounts her years in the "sacred and hidden passageways where UFO studies took place", in particular Wright-Patterson AFB and the Blue Book archives. Being an 'insider' account, it is a tedious plod through thickets of names, places, incidents, records and disputes, and blizzards of unmemorable project acronyms, and so of value, probably, only to UFO historians. The pictorial documentation is more interesting, but mostly dull grey and out of focus. When, oh when, will Flying Disk get around to proper typesetting, navigable layouts and even an index? You know, things that might make a book more accessible to a wider readership.

The Sea of Consciousness George Adamski's lost debut, 'The Invisible Ocean'

Gerard Aartsen, George Adamski

BGA Publications, 2019

PB, £14.99, pp120. ISBN 9789090316956

A 'lost' essay by Adamski, one of the primary instigators of the contactee movement, inspired this small book. 'Invisible Ocean' was his first work, written in 1932, and shows his very early interest in Theosophical ideas of consciousness, and two later essays expand his ideas about how these relates to 'flying saucers' and their Earth-saving message. Scattered throughout are period photos and newspaper clippings that give this further historical value.