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BOOK REVIEW

by

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CRASH GO THE CHARIOTS by Clifford Wilson, M.A., B.D., PhD.
Lancer Books, New York, 1972.

This book, penned by a recognized archeologist, is an enigma. It purports to present an alternative to Erich von Daniken's best-selling "Chariots of the Gods?" which created a storm of controversy. Von Daniken claims that astronauts from far-off worlds visited Earth in ancient times leaving much evidence behind and he ridicules archeologists as being incompetent for ignoring this evidence.

Dr. Wilson went to considerable effort in an attempt to prove von Daniken's theory wrong. It must be admitted that in certain instances von Daniken's logic has been stretched and his evidence is sometimes weak. However, it is Wilson's book which is of concern here. Wilson accuses von Daniken of unscientific statements such as "without actually consulting Exodus, I seem to remember" (p.42) and converting theory to fact without supporting evidence. In many cases, Wilson is right, but this doesn't prove von Daniken wrong - it simply shows that von Daniken hasn't proved his case. It may still be correct.

After tearing von Daniken to shreds, we then see Wilson engaging in the same bad scholarship. Wilson refers to a tape in his possession in which an interviewer talks to several people who "speak in tongues" and some "undoubtedly were possessed by what would generally be called 'evil spirits' ". He presents no evidence to support his 'evil spirits' conclusion. He goes on to tell of a friend in Fiji who dabbled in a form of spiritism but gave it up because "evil spirits tried to drive the one possessed to a violent death". Then he states "I do not profess to understand this altogether but my friend was a highly qualified government official and I have no reason to doubt some of the experiences of which he told me". It is evident that Wilson is not an expert on evil spirits (by his own admission) and his friend's governmental expertise would not appear to qualify him in this field either. Wilson accepts his friend's verbal testimony as proof of evil spirits. How scientific is this?

Numerous instances follow in which Wilson invokes evil spirits to explain many strange occurrences. He seems to have a 'thing' about them. He says it is "abundantly clear that black