

2003

THE MOTHER SHIP

The role of the 'mother ship' in less orthodox, primarily American interpretations of Islam is not insignificant. This massive spaceship is supposedly approaching planet earth at great speed, and its hold, according to the tale, can accommodate 1500 smaller 'scout' ships. Equipped with hyper-tech weapons, these ships are apparently ready to attack our planet, starting with devastating attacks on New York and London. Western civilization, based on white supremacy, will then be destroyed, and humanity, inspired by Allah, will be able to build a new intercultural society.

The Nation Of Islam, the biggest black Muslim movement in the United States, did not abandon this grotesque theology until 1999, but the theme still figures in pop culture, with rappers like Killah Priest and films like *Independence Day*, for instance.

The mother ship also seems to be entangled in the current war in Iraq. According to the Russian newspaper Pravda, a small alien spaceship crashed in the desert of Northern Iraq in December 1998, during Operation Desert Fox. It is unclear whether this spacecraft was shot down by patrolling American F-16's or by the anti-aircraft defences of the Iraqis. There are rumours among the Kurdish population in the northern city of Sulaimaniyah that the spaceship was manned and that the aliens were taken to holiday residences of Saddam Hussein. The area around the Zab river, where the spacecraft is supposed to have crashed, has been hermetically sealed from the outside world ever since. Other commentators claim that Saddam deliberately propagated the rumours about aliens in order to spread panic, and thus keep people far away from possible secret military bases.

A different source, as vague as Pravda's, also recently commented on Iraq's UFO in an American radio talk show. Someone claiming to be a high-ranking military official asserted that Bush's haste to invade Iraq was not so much a case of his fears about biological weapons, but had much more to do with Saddam's possession of extra-terrestrial technology. It is true that with this knowledge Saddam would have had a massive head start in the arms race of the superpowers.

On September 11, 2001, many a black Muslim believed that the mother ship had mounted the heralded attack on New York. Some Kurds believe that the Iraqi regime is being supported by aliens in its struggle against the imperialist United States. UFO experts all around the globe believe that George Bush and Saddam Hussein are keeping what they know about alien life and technology secret from the public. Some people will believe anything.

In the meantime the bloody battle for Basra and Baghdad is raging. You don't need a mother ship to destroy a civilization – we can do that ourselves. Now who exactly are the aliens?