



An Overview of FOTOCAT Project

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In year 2001, I decided to change subject after 10 years devoted to the review of military UFO cases in Spain, a job that included the start and follow-up of the declassification of the official UFO files of the Spanish Air Force. I planned to create an elementary index of the extensive photographic archives I had accumulated in the form of pictures, slides, videos, and case reports, after 35 dense years of UFO research.

Having done that, in 2002, now thanks to the estimable logistics support of the Spanish not-for-profit Anomaly Foundation <http://www.anomalia.org>, I commenced to extend the resulting census of my photographic assets into a worldwide catalogue of UFO (and IFO) events where a photo, film or video has been achieved.

Basically, I define FOTOCAT as a catalogue of references. It does not pretend to be a gallery of photographs (computer memory and copyright issues prevent us from doing so). It is a database where some basic information on this type of UFO report remains stored for the benefit of students of UFO phenomena.

Beyond the organization, consolidation and cataloguing of my personal photographic archives, the main objectives of FOTOCAT Project are the following:

- Integrate into a common databank all photographic UFO reports published in the mainstream UFO journals and books.
- Achieve a realistic view of the dynamics of the UFO phenomenon through its images, compile a catalogue of events, and provide it freely to the community of researchers and the public at large.
- Collect actual photographic materials from any donating sources and give shape to the photographic archives of the Anomaly Foundation.
- Assist in the statistical study or the re-inquiry of cases on record, support the collection and cataloguing of cases at local levels, and promote the analysis of images of alleged UFO observations.
- Stimulate the recovery and preservation of archives in danger of abandon, dispersion or loss.

A life dedicated to the UFO investigation has produced a large library of journals and books. Their systematic review, in addition to the input from colleagues from all parts of the globe, as well as the raw data that every day internet provides, is adding innumerable entries

to the catalogue on a daily basis. Catalogue today logs over 6,100 cases. It can be considered already the largest international catalogue of its class in the world. And it is expanding at a very quick pace. The catalogue will suspend new entries for events occurred after December 31, 2005 so that much more emphasis is given in collecting reports from past decades.

I pretend that this catalogue becomes a tool for users, and to this end local researchers are contacted to review the records available for their countries. Also, in order to fulfil this aim, when the complete catalogue is finished it will be posted in the internet in a full disclosure move for the unrestricted access to all ufologists and researchers who are interested to consult it, work upon it and improve it.

In the meantime, regional or year reports will be produced as formal by-products of this project. Also, a web site that it is quarterly updated has been created where catalogue progress and related information is facilitated. See <http://fotocat.blogspot.com/>

Although the catalogue is in English language, it is entitled FOTOCAT following the Spanish wording, in lieu of PHOTOCAT, in order to set up a difference with a previous, major photographic catalogue precisely named PHOTOCAT, developed by my colleague and friend Maurizio Verga to collect all Italian UFO reports with photographs.

Catalogue structure (see sample attached: [fcsample.xls](#))

FOTOCAT is actually an Excel spreadsheet with a number of columns filled with data. The information included in the catalogue has two parts. First, a number of columns are only for my own use, as they serve the purpose to note when the Spanish cases in the list belong to types of reports for which I have developed a specialization, e.g. landing or close encounter reports, or cases with military involvement. This section also includes columns to note the available format of images in my possession (still picture, slide, disk, CD/DVD, or video).

The next columns contain basic data on the event.

1. The date (expressed as day, month, year).
2. Following 3 columns note when any of the prior data are approximate.
3. Time. This has been recently added and this information exists only for two regional catalogues under special preparation, Argentina and Australia. In the future this value will appear in all recorded cases.
4. Description. It serves to provide the explanation of the phenomenon, if there is one known to the compiler. If not, the word OVNI (UFO in Spanish) appears, as a minor homage to the compiler's native tongue. Explanations are described in a way that consistent categories are formed. Work still pending to develop this.
5. An additional column noted with OK those cases explained, for retrieval purposes.
6. Location and country.
7. A column for nation code, following the United Nations 3-digit codes.
8. For specific countries, an additional (alpha or numeric) code for province, region, state or department is included. In the future this geographical division will engulf all the cases stored in FOTOCAT.
9. The original format of the image is entered in the following column: photograph, film o

video.

10. The name of the person who took the images.
11. Media indicates where the photographer worked (for professionals). It notes where originals can be also found.
12. The special features column captures singular information on the photographic recording. For example: object unseen by the photographer, record made through an automated camera, image obtained by a gun camera (military aircraft), infrared, ultraviolet or high sensitivity film used, stereo or 3D photograph, failure or blank photos, lost or confiscated graphical documents, spectrum recorded, etc. It provides useful clues for further research.
13. A recent column has been included to note those cases that were known by the USAF Blue Book program and included in the BB files.
14. References and sources. One of the most important data columns in the catalogue. Every valid bibliographic source where the researcher can find information on the event, as known to the compiler.
15. A final assistance column gives the date in the way it was originally reported. It is especially useful for approximate dates.
16. A control column indicates me when all the sources in my archives have already been fully included into the Reference section of the catalogue.

Some of the columns are still under construction. The data content has evolved since 2001 and some changing decisions have been made that involved past entries, therefore there is still missing information in some columns. I hope to remedy this situation with the participation of local researchers in the review and improvement of the national catalogues, before these can be analytically exploited.

The printing area of the FOTOCAT Excel file divides the content of into groups of 4 pages (see enclosure for a sample of the first 45 cases of year 2003).

A *FOTOCAT Report #1* is both online and published on paper journals. "The Year 1954 in Photos", August 2004, <http://www.anomalía.org/fotocat1954.pdf> (version 1)

- Translation into Italian: in print © Giuseppe Stilo, CISU (version 2)

- Translation into Spanish: "El año 1954 en fotos", @*nomalía* (II), 5, May 2005 (version 3, it includes reproduction of photographs).

- Translation into French: in print © Jean-Luc Rivera (version 4, it includes reproduction of photographs)

A relevant, international cooperation is being received, I must report. However, much is to be done, specially I need that individual specialists and organizations check my national records and enlarge them with the contribution of missing reports. Because of my ample review of the international literature, it happens frequently that FOTOCAT includes a number of national cases even unknown to local researchers. Such an in-depth review could multiply by 2 the number of cases known, I guess. The estimate of 12,000 to 15,000 can be a good guessing about the total number of UFO photographs taken in the work in the last two centuries.

On demand, I will provide colleagues and organizations interested with a tally of their regional or national FOTOCAT entries, for review purposes.

I am addressing all UFO students to also consider donating literature photographic documentation to this project, in the form of various materials related to photographic cases that you can spare, like copies or duplicates of newspaper clippings, magazine articles or case reports, as well as slides, pictures, videos, etc. That cooperation will be largely appreciated and it will be duly acknowledged.

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