

# Paranormal Phenomena in the light of Psychology of Religion

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## Abstract

*People's enthusiasm for supernatural phenomena is another major social source of some Cults. It is the reality of paranormal phenomena that is at stake. Over many years there has been no effort to provide psychologists with a summary of the nature of the investigation, the methods, the evidence, and the state of the research. Once, at least, in a decade question of that difficult or threatening nature. The focus of contemporary investigations in Parapsychology is the attempt to define working conditions under which specific paranormal phenomena, such as extrasensory perception, tend to appear, to define verifiable regularities in their nature.*

**Keywords:** paranormal, phenomena, Psychology, religion

## Paranormal Concept

What does "paranormal events" mean? To the man in the street, such phenomena are simply "weird" or strange occurrences that go beyond our present understanding of normal sensory perception or the bringing into effect of desires and intentions without the kind of actions normally considered necessary. The phenomena involved may be grouped in two categories: (a) *Extraordinary ways of knowing*, and (b) *Extraordinary ways of doing things*<sup>1</sup>.

## Paranormal within Science

On the outer edge of science, some people and some parapsychologists believe that some supernatural events are indeed measurable, but (a) *We don't know where to observe or how to observe*, and (b) *Lack of sensitive equipment*. These people are still working on this. Perhaps these supernatural phenomena, including angels, are real and can be understood by science<sup>2</sup>.

In the period of ignorance of science, people could not strictly distinguish between natural phenomena and supernatural phenomena. When they try to grasp natural phenomena, they turn to the supernatural power of magic. Taoists who perform magical acts believe that there is a supernatural connection between real objects, and thus establish a sincere belief in supernatural powers<sup>3</sup>.

By "paranormal" phenomenon, we mean each incident that generally does not happen, nor any other known in the natural sciences capable of causing it<sup>4</sup>. Science does not stand for paranormal phenomena. Retired physicist Milton Rothman is particularly interested in applying scientific rules to prove that paranormal phenomena are not possible<sup>5</sup>. The scientific community, in general,

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<sup>1</sup> G. K. Zollschan, G. F. Walsh & J. F. Schumaker, *Exploring the paranormal: perspectives on belief and experience*. Bridport: Prism, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> R. Hauck, *Angel: What is the life of an angel*. Weizhi Publishing House, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> L. Difan, *The Construction and Integration of Guobao System before Tang Dynasty*. Taiwan Student Bookstore, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> J. C. Ducasse, *Paranormal Phenomena: Nature, and Man*. Swarthmore College, 1951.

<sup>5</sup> D. L. Bender, *Paranormal Phenomena opposing Viewpoints*. Greenhaven Press, 1991.

continues to reject evidence that "paranormal phenomena" formerly known as "*mental phenomena*", i.e., the incidents that do not comply with known standards, behaviors, or theories<sup>6</sup>. Marie D. Jones tells us in her book that the word paranormal means, beyond normal, and includes any phenomenon that cannot be readily explained by a well-known law of science<sup>7</sup>. It should be added in this connection that over and over again we have found in this field, as in others, that the phenomena were not what they seemed to be. For example, the reconsideration of it, for a long time, looked as if the phenomena bracketed together under the term '*telepathy*', indicating a sort of transmission from one mind to another. Inadequate as our concepts are, it appears today that it would be very much nearer the truth to say that porous boundary or even a state of absence of boundaries between two personality systems or individual event-systems and that neither the Psychology nor the Physics of today can describe the nature of the oneness and the interplay between persons that exist<sup>8</sup>.

### Psychics and the Paranormal

A very useful way to define a paranormal phenomenon is to say that psychic events reveal the intent of consciousness to create a pattern of which abnormalities are not natural<sup>9</sup>. Many people, having heard of extrasensory perception (ESP) and related phenomena on popular media/social media, tend to believe them. The main problem for Parapsychology is the absence of a recurrent paranormal phenomenon<sup>10</sup>, to describe them as *paranormal* in appearance is not to deny their importance. After all, some seemingly paranormal phenomena can be paranormal, and they should not be placed in some sort of ontological limb<sup>11</sup>. For those who may believe that mental phenomena are easily rejected by reasonable scientific analysis, it may lead to valid conclusions about all aggregated data<sup>12</sup>. The psychologist Andreas Hergovic performed a series of experiments in which two groups of subjects loyal to paranormal phenomena and skeptics were presented a series of misleading tricks "*pseudo-psychic demonstrations*"<sup>13</sup>. An atmosphere of totally unpretentious beliefs seems to facilitate and can be necessary for the emergence of paranormal natural phenomena<sup>14</sup>.

### Paranormal with Research

Some people are suspicious by nature, some people even live to see ghosts in broad daylight, and some people have never believed in evil, since they were young, and have not believed in supernatural phenomena in their lives. Does this phenomenon have a biological, physiological, or chemical basis? The British "*New Scientist*" magazine reported that people's idea of supernatural phenomena may depend on chemicals in the brain. People with high levels of dopamine are more inclined to discover the meaning of the accidents and piece together meanings and patterns out of nothing<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> D. L. Bender, *Paranormal Phenomena opposing Viewpoints*. Greenhaven Press, 1991.

<sup>7</sup> M. D. Jones, *PSience: How New Discoveries in Quantum Physics and New Science*. New Page Books, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> A. Q. Sartain, A. j. North, J. R. Strange & H. M. Chapman, *The American Psychologist* 13(2) 1958.

<sup>9</sup> R. F. Haines, *UFO Phenomena and the Behavioral Scientist*. Scarecrow Press, 1979.

<sup>10</sup> T. Hines, *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal*. Prometheus Books, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> S. E. Braude, *ESP and Psychokinesis: A Philosophical Examination*. Temple University Press, 1979.

<sup>12</sup> A. D. McKenzie, *Psychic Phenomena: A Clinical Investigation*. Lulu.com, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> M. Mangan, *Performing Dark Arts: A Cultural History of Conjuring Volume 2 of Theatre and consciousness*. *Intellect*, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> K. J. Batcheldor, Report on a Case of Table Levitation and Associated Phenomena. *JSBR*, 1966.

<sup>15</sup> L. Hua jie, *Chinese genius science: from the viewpoint of philosophy and sociology*. Shanghai Jiaotong University Press, 2004. The above research was disclosed by Peter Brugger at a meeting of the European Federation of Neuroscience Societies held

A new study shows that people who feel lonely are more likely to believe in the so-called *supernatural* (usually referring to supernatural forces or supernatural phenomena), such as believing that God, angels, or miracles do exist<sup>16</sup>.

When Freud was conducting psychological analysis for one of his patients, he encountered the communication in the dream, the omen, the channeling between the doctor and the patient, and various supernatural and mysterious phenomena that he called "*abnormal coincidence*". To this end, he wrote many articles and delivered many speeches explaining the relationship between Psychoanalysis and supernatural mysterious phenomena<sup>17</sup>.

Philosophers William James and later H. H. Price had studied paranormal phenomena such as Spiritualism and life after death. He thought he could demonstrate to his colleagues that such phenomena were still worth studying. Instead, many shunned him<sup>18</sup>. The conclusions reached by the members of the *Society for Mental Research* (SMR) on the reality of Paranormal, illustrating the depths of the desire for the paranormal to be real, have shown nothing convincing<sup>19</sup>. Depending to a large extent on the scholar or researcher of your choice, experience, and belief in supernatural phenomena can be explained as a result of a series or combination of illusions, pranks, residents, religious desires, or genuine<sup>20</sup>.

Researchers have had to depend upon witnesses to the phenomena to describe what they believe occurred as carefully as possible, and as soon as possible after the "ostensibly paranormal" phenomenon occurred. The phrase "*ostensibly paranormal*" is used to show that whether the experience was paranormal is a judgment to be made only after all the evidence has been analyzed and all "normal" explanations have had to be rejected. Many critics of psychical research may not fully realize how many reports of strange happenings have been proven by parapsychologists to be explicable by perfectly normal means, or have been rejected as inadequately supported by convincing evidence. Probably more than one report in 100 was deemed worthy of publication<sup>21</sup>.

There is surely no field of study in which the concepts, beliefs, and biases of our "common sense" world clash so violently with the data collected and analyzed by scholars as psychical research or, as it is frequently termed today, Parapsychology. No field seeks to follow scientific methods whose data and theories are so widely denied by orthodox scientists. In short, the scientific community at large still rejects the data that indicate that "paranormal phenomena"-earlier called "psychic phenomena"-i.e., occurrences that do not fit into currently known patterns, behavior, or theories, ever occur. Dr. George R. Price says that his opinion concerning parapsychologists is that many of them are dependent on clerical and statistical errors and unintentional use of sensory clues and that all extra-chance results are dependent on deliberate fraud or mildly abnormal mental conditions<sup>22</sup>.

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in Paris at the end of June 2002. Helen Philips wrote in *The New Scientist* that Prague, a neurologist in Zurich, Switzerland, pointed out that people who believe in peculiar phenomena are more likely to see skeptics.

<sup>16</sup> *China News Service Weekly* 1-8 (2008).

<sup>17</sup> S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, in Standard Edition. London: Hogarth Press, 1961.

<sup>18</sup> N. Piehl, *Paranormal phenomena*. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> H. Sidky, *Religion, Supernaturalism, the Paranormal and Pseudoscience*. Anthem Press, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> K. Partridge, *The Paranormal*. Volume 81, Issue 5. H.W. Wilson Company, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> R. H. Ashby, *The guidebook for the study of psychical research*. New York: Weiser, 1973.

<sup>22</sup> D. L. Bender, *Paranormal Phenomena opposing Viewpoints*. Greenhaven Press, 1991.

## Historical Efflorescence Attitude Towards the Paranormal Phenomena

The Greeks and Romans of antiquity, for example, believed in foresight<sup>23</sup>. Philosophers believe that all presumed paranormal phenomena are explained either as illusions, false judgments, or frauds<sup>24</sup>.

In ancient China, ordinary people believe in such supernatural phenomena. Many Chinese people with advanced education have an ambivalence about the supernatural phenomena they have experienced that they neither believe nor value but can't get rid of them. They take public reports seriously. The outgoing communication with the other world is a response to this ambivalence<sup>25</sup>.

## Between Paranormal and Spirit

For the spiritualists, the psychic phenomena constituted the evidence of the existence of a transcendent reality<sup>26</sup>.

To say that the spirit can exist independently of the body is a supernatural force in itself because the spirit itself does not have such ability. In the past one or two hundred years, there have been studies in the international academic circle that attempted to prove the existence of supernatural forces by scientific means, including the "parapsychological research" of telepathy.

## Paranormal Through Beliefs

Natural phenomena and paranormal are perceived differently amongst various cultures. For example, in modern society, people generally think that some common diseases are the result of the natural activities of bacteria and viruses, while in other societies, diseases are the result of supernatural forces, and thus form part of religious concepts<sup>27</sup>.

This refers to the notion of supernatural things, which is the belief in the reality of supernatural phenomena: "*All religions are nothing but the reflection of the illusions in people's minds about the external forces that dominate people's daily lives. In this reflection, human forces adopt super-human forces*"<sup>28</sup>.

The thinking phenomenon, a kind of consciousness phenomenon, therefore, is a religious phenomenon that contains some elements (e.g., church, rituals, beliefs and ideas, special emotional experience, ethics, etc.). In itself, the element "*sufficient to stipulate the essential characteristics of the concept of religion*" is "Belief and Ideas", that is, "*the idea of supernatural things is the reality of supernatural phenomena*"<sup>29</sup>.

In the past years, people like C.G. Jung, Henry Bergson, etc., in various disciplines, may have been inspired by Spiritism, or even tried to prove the phenomenon of Mysticism and give theoretical explanations. Therefore, the general tendency of Psychology is to believe in the possibility of supernatural phenomena; but its scientific attitude and strict requirements for experiments have never been able to show that<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> R. Guiley, *Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience*. Grange Books, 1993.

<sup>24</sup> *Philosophy, Canadian Philosophical Reviews*, Vol. 17. University of Michigan: Academic Print. & Pub. 1997.

<sup>25</sup> L. Guilian, *Modern China's Legal System and Jurisprudence*. Peking University Press, 2002.

<sup>26</sup> H. Sidky, *Religion, Supernaturalism, the Paranormal and Pseudoscience*. Anthem Press, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> L. Chengwu, *Kemu people: a cross-border ethnic group in the southwestern frontier of China*. Central University for Nationalities Press, 2006.

<sup>28</sup> I. A. Kryvelev, *History of Zong E* (Vol. 1). China Social Sciences Press, 1984.

<sup>29</sup> I. A. Kryvelev, *ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> Z. Kewen & D. Zhenyuan, *Out of the labyrinth of ignorance: modern superstition analysis*. Social Science Literature Press, 2000.

The answers to the question 'Do you think you have seen any genuine paranormal phenomena?' showed that one in five believers stated that he had seen such phenomena<sup>31</sup>. Paranormal phenomena are studied under several different names; the most commonly used terms are: Parapsychology, paranormal, and bioenergy, which "indicates that paranormal phenomena are intrinsic to biological systems"<sup>32</sup>.

There are many different abnormal phenomena. The term covers all paranormal as well as some rare "normal" phenomena. Indeed, that seems to connect them is the mystery of how they were accrued<sup>33</sup>. Before the onset of Parapsychology, paranormal phenomena in Western culture were either associated with the divine or demonic, or largely ignored. Concerns were raised, particularly within the scientific community, about the widespread belief in paranormal phenomena. Scientists (and others) have observed that people who are related to the existence of paranormal phenomena can have difficulty distinguishing fantasy from reality. Their beliefs may indicate an absence of critical thinking skills necessary not only for informed decision-making in the voting booth and other civic venues (for example, jury duty) but also for making wise choices needed for day-to-day living<sup>34</sup>. Robert Klose is a professor who has been teaching Biochemistry at the University of Oxford for several years. From his perspective, he argues that the interest and belief of students in the paranormal not only disrupts his classroom environment, but actively hinders the ability of students to understand scientific principles. Due to the fact that students have grown used to the easy answers provided by paranormal phenomena, they are unwilling or unable to do the hard work of grasping scientific concepts and engaging in scientific research. Robert Klose challenges teachers to confront this mentality, convincing students of the fundamental importance of science to society<sup>35</sup>.

## PARANORMAL PHENOMENA MIDST RELIGIONS

### Hinduism

Hindus do not reject ghost stories and paranormal phenomena as myths and fantasies of a deformed spirit<sup>36</sup>. Hinduism loves the secret experience, but it distrusts psychic phenomena. Yoga, the Hindu system of philosophical and ascetic meditation, designed to influence the association the mind with the world<sup>37</sup>. Most so-called supernatural or paranormal phenomena may be caused by mental disorders familiar with abnormal Psychology, although we are not engaged in total denial of the occult or the supernatural<sup>38</sup>. In Hinduism, the paranormal phenomenon associated with reincarnation, the notion that the mind not only outlives death, but later is given a new life in another body. Faith in reincarnation belongs to some Religions, especially Hinduism<sup>39</sup>. We go back as animals, as Hindus believe, or maybe as different generations of people later<sup>40</sup>. Science tries to explain the phenomenon of this natural world, whereas religion tries to explain the nature of supernatural phenomena<sup>41</sup>. According to functional analysis these phenomena subordinate in an ethnographic context that shows the relationships of ghost disease, ghost epidemics, plague and

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<sup>31</sup> K. Frazier, *Encounters with the Paranormal: Science, Knowledge, and Belief*. Prometheus Books, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> G. Karolyi, *An Excursion Into the Paranormal*. Paranormal Phenomena Research Foundation, 2009.

<sup>33</sup> V. Hope & M. Townsend, *The Paranormal Investigator's Handbook*. Collins & Brown, 1999.

<sup>34</sup> M. E. Williams, *Paranormal phenomena*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press/Thomson/Gale, 2003.

<sup>35</sup> N. Piehl, *Paranormal phenomena*. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2011.

<sup>36</sup> H. C. Mathur, *A Text-Book of Hindu Psyche: scientific Rationale of Hindu Faith*. JBD Book, 2002.

<sup>37</sup> G. Sommerville, *Ideology for Survival: An Answer to the Crisis of Our Time*. C. Smythe, 1984.

<sup>38</sup> N. K. Devaraja, *Hinduism and the Modern Age*. Islam and Modern Age Society, 1975.

<sup>39</sup> P. D. Netzley, *Paranormal Phenomena*. Lucent Books, 2000.

<sup>40</sup> D. L. Bender, *Paranormal Phenomena opposing Viewpoints*. Greenhaven Press, 1991.

<sup>41</sup> K. S. Singh, *Hinduism: Past & Present*. Janaki Prakashan, 2000.

flu, and the relationship of ghost beliefs to Hindu ideology and the sacred texts of Hinduism<sup>42</sup>. In Hindu and Buddhist traditions, however, paranormal activities are often considered evidence of their sacredness<sup>43</sup>. We cannot avoid referring to so-called supernatural phenomena like telepathy and Spiritualism which have been the object of mental research in recent years<sup>44</sup>. Some are referred to as telepathy, hypersensitive perception, miracles, supernatural phenomena, and mystical or religious experiences. The survival of life beyond physical existence is the core of the Hindu religion<sup>45</sup>. A scientific label for the study of physical paranormal phenomena is "*psychotronic*".

One of the reasons why people behave amazingly in paranormal phenomena is because they perceive themselves as faced with exceptional circumstances, which can range from encounters with demons and spirits of the dead to supernatural wounds and disasters. Many outstanding behaviors come from systems that include supernatural entities of one kind or another. A faith similar to the existence and activities of evil<sup>46</sup>, like magic, contains an alleged supernatural power<sup>47</sup>. The ancient Hindus are known for having no peculiar image of a God or even the idea of the temple. Natural objects like fire, thunderstorms, sun, etc. appeared before their eyes as supernatural phenomena which they venerated<sup>48</sup>. Mental phenomena mix up natural and chemical laws. The laws of nature do not prevent the application of psychical phenomena<sup>49</sup>.

## **Buddhism**

Buddhism insists on the supernatural phenomena of the unique extreme form of natural change, decay, and relativity. Supernatural phenomena cannot be distinguished from human beings; they are part of the human being, just as the natural world cannot be separated from the human being. The ultimate goal of ethics and religion requires a human endeavor<sup>50</sup>.

## **Judaism**

Jews believe less in all than those reporting no religion; compared to Christians (Protestants and Catholics), they report less belief in the religious phenomena and show mixed results on the others<sup>51</sup>.

God is a spirit. He can speak directly to man's mind. It is not always necessary to employ external agents or mediators; for these, it can affect the soulless directly. The message spoken in conventional words in the outward, and therefore conveyed to the mind, maybe pronounced just as effectively by the divine spirit to the soul itself. Such is God's plan to make known his goodness and righteousness. He may speak to man, as he spoke of old from Horeb, by causing lightning to blaze about the mountain's summit, and thundering long and loud to reverberate from crag to crag, and shake the trembling earth, and then utter in audible tones: "*Jehovah, Jehovah, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, for-*

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<sup>42</sup> R. S. Freed & S. A. Freed, *Ghosts: Life and Death in North India*. American Museum of Natural History, 1993.

<sup>43</sup> M. Momen, *The Phenomenon of Religion: A Thematic Approach*. Oneworld, 1999.

<sup>44</sup> G. K. Dutt, *Hindu Culture: Essays and Addresses*. Hind Kitab, 1951.

<sup>45</sup> A. Angoff & B. Shapin, *Parapsychology Today: A Geographic View; Proceedings of an International Conference*. Parapsychology Foundation, 1973.

<sup>46</sup> H. Evans & R. E. Bartholomew, *Outbreak!: The Encyclopedia of Extraordinary Social Behavior*. Anomalist Books, LLC, 2009.

<sup>47</sup> C. L. Parrott, *Religion: Man's Creation, Lucifer's Lie*. Xlibris Corporation, 2011.

<sup>48</sup> P. Bandyopadhyay, *Mother Goddess Kali*. United Writers, 1993.

<sup>49</sup> P. Schanz, *A Christian Apology*, Vol. 1. Pustet, 1891.

<sup>50</sup> D. Huaiqing & T. Yijie, *New Humanism Trend of Thought: Babbitt's Echoes in the Chinese*. Jiangxi University Press, 2009.

<sup>51</sup> C. F. Emmons & J. Sobal, Paranormal Beliefs: Functional Alternatives to Mainstream Religion? *JSTOR* 22(4). 1981. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/3509764>.

*giving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the children's children, unto the third and fourth generations"*<sup>52</sup>.

The Jews were called great astrologers in classical antiquity. Some Jewish teachers rigorously rejected Astrology as magic, but others proudly accepted it, and Abraham, especially was presented as the father of all astrologers as the only biblical starting point was Genesis 15:5, which informs us merely that God showed Abraham the stars of heaven; but this was enough for people who were willing to present him as a master for all astrological knowledge<sup>53</sup>.

The *dybbuk* in Jewish folklore, an evil spirit who owns the living, was seen as a demon or a lost soul. A ghoulish (often female) feeds off the flesh of the dead and may be associated with a home where the tragedy took place<sup>54</sup>.

Ghost: *Rafa, Ruach, ha-Met*. The idea that the spirits of the dead may still live among the living is an ancient Jewish belief. Most ghosts in the Jewish tradition are either the soul of the dead who has not yet made the transition into the World-to-Come or is the spirits that are somehow disturbed or summoned by the living. The only ghost story found in the Bible describes how the ghost of the prophet Samuel temporarily summons from the realm of the dead for a séance (II Sam. 28)<sup>55</sup>.

## Christianity

More important, however, is the nature of religious belief that links it to the paranormal. It is the belief that there is a reality beyond the one we see before us—as if our day-to-day reality is a veil that can be lifted to reveal the ultimate truth. If there is a spiritual world and a life after death, then our finite and mortal world is only a prelude to the great truth. As people search for this truth in their lives, many will find the Church, while others will pursue alternative avenues such as *New Age* practices and Mysticism, Cults, ghost hunting, and, sometimes, witchcraft and Satanism<sup>56</sup>.

In the Christian religion, believers accept by faith that God, in human form, was born of a virgin, completed numerous miracles in his lifetime, had thousands of followers, and was then crucified and rose from the dead. Paranormal is defined as that which is outside the accepted normal reality and is unexplained. The story of Christ certainly matches the mold. Christianity also postulates absolute evil and absolute good, defined as Satan and God, both of which are at work in this world. Thus, miracles and disasters, charity and murder, being born again and possessed by demons are all at work in the real world, and it is the believer's role to play an active part in one of those two sides. Thus, on the one hand, there are religious services and prayers that call for eliminating magic and on the other hand dark magical rites that call to spell of witches. The world is as a spiritual battleground of opposite forces, and we are just in the middle<sup>57</sup>.

## Paranormal Phenomena in Examples

*The near-death experience* is one of several types of paranormal phenomena. From ghost hunters on television to *psycho-chic* detectives at crime scenes, the supernatural — albeit unproven and

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<sup>52</sup> A. Tompkins (1854). *The Universalist Quarterly and General Review*, Vol. 11, HardPress Publishing (2019).

<sup>53</sup> E. J. Harold, *Miracles: God, Science, and Psychology in the Paranormal: God, Science, and Psychology in the Paranormal Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* (Vol. 3). ABC-CLIO, 2008.

<sup>54</sup> S. Young, *Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion: A-K* (Vol. 1). Macmillan Reference USA, 1999.

<sup>55</sup> G. W. Dennis, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Myth, Magic and Mysticism*. Llewellyn Worldwide, 2007.

<sup>56</sup> M. E. Fitch, *Paranormal Nation: Why America Needs Ghosts, UFOs, and Bigfoot: Why America Needs Ghosts, UFOs, and Bigfoot*. ABC-CLIO, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> M. E. Fitch, *ibid*.

unsupported by mainstream science — is part of American culture<sup>58</sup>. Skeptics have espoused the principle of challenging the evidence of the paranormal phenomenon. “Occam can be applied to a myriad of supposed paranormal events, including ghosts, psychics, UFOs, people who talk with the dead, reincarnation, the soul, spoon benders, near death, and out-of-body experiences”, says Richard Rockley, who runs the blog “Skeptico”. “Usually, the paranormal explanation of these phenomena cannot be refuted, which is often the reason why we should consider the paranormal explanation. But Occam says to go ahead with the natural explanation for now, until any new evidence prolongs it”, for example electronic voice phenomena. Most ghost hunters, including the ‘ghost hunters’ team, use portable voice recorders to attempt to capture a so-called ghost voice or EVP. Often, a cloakroom holds the recorder while standing in the middle of a room and addressing the assumed mind, or walking around. He will return later and review the high-volume recordings, listening to the whispers, sounds, or low noises<sup>59</sup>.

The examination clearly emphasizes the importance of NDE as an altered state of consciousness conducive to the appearance of paranormal phenomena. Few, if any, impaired conditions are likely to have the frequency and variety of paranormal events that occur with NDE. These include OOBES, apparitions, recognition, and being the subject of another person’s psychic experience during the NDE. NDE also leads to an increase in psi experiments and has made a significant contribution to the survival study. However, the obvious downside to NDEs is that they cannot be studied directly, but depend on retrospective self-assessment reports. It is at least possible that these reports are biased predictably but currently unknown. While an altered state such as hypnosis or drug-related changes may be induced and studied methodically under controlled conditions, NDEs, for obvious reasons, cannot. As a result, researchers are greatly reduced to compiling percentages and studying correlational relationships<sup>60</sup>.

### Summary

Paranormal things can be a source of a good or a source of evil. When the study of paranormal phenomena receives 51% of the votes of scientists, it will receive the funding needed for far more significant advances than any other has yet to be achieved.

The existence of paranormal phenomena merely points to the fact that the scope of mental influence and human potential is more extensive than is currently recognized by orthodox science. Furthermore, I am not yet convinced that the scope of these powers is unlimited or that their operation is erratic and unpredictable. On the contrary, I am impressed by the great difficulty of obtaining even the weakest manifestations of paranormal phenomena, either of self or other persons in controlled laboratory conditions<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> R. Espejo, *Paranormal phenomena*. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2013.

<sup>59</sup> R. H. Ashby, *The guidebook for the study of psychical research*. New York: Weiser, 1973.

<sup>60</sup> G. K. Zollschan, G. F. Walsh & J. F. Schumaker, *Exploring the paranormal: perspectives on belief and experience*. Bridport: Prism, 1989.

<sup>61</sup> G. K. Zollschan et al., *ibid*.



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