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PARANTHROPOLOGY

JOURNAL OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE PARANORMAL



***Hearing the Dead:
Supernatural Presence in the
World of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic***

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Editor's Introduction

By Jack Hunter

Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of Bristol

Welcome to *Paranthropology* Vol. 7 No. 1. It seems like a long time since the last issue of the journal was published, but we have not been idle in the gap between issues. Indeed, since the last issue two new edited volumes have been published, both of which deal with themes that are very close to the heart of *Paranthropology*. The first publication, *Transpersonal Ecosophy Vol. 1*, is an epic (600 page) exploration of the intersections of the anthropology of consciousness, parapsychology, transpersonal psychology, ecosophy and quantum physics, edited by Mark A. Schroll. Along with *Strange Dimensions: A Paranthropology Anthology*, this book is one of the first publications of the new *Psychoid Books* imprint (www.psychoidbooks.co.uk).

The second publication I would like to mention here is my own edited collection *Damned Facts: Fortean Essays on Religion, Folklore and the Paranormal*, published by Aporetic Press. This book was initially intended as a means to determine what a Fortean religious studies would look like. To this end it features articles ranging from comparisons of the work of Charles Fort and William James, research on the links between UFO sightings and fairy folklore (à la Jaques Vallee), right through to examining John Keel's influence on the Occult revival and analyses of personal psychedelic and psi experiences. It is well worth getting hold of, and the introduction has been reproduced in this issue (see page 51).

In other news, it is with sadness that I report the passing of Edie Turner in June this year. Edie's work on the anthropology of ritual, experience and consciousness was a massive influence on my own work, and has been a light guiding the direction of this journal. I feel so privileged to have had the opportunity to meet up with Edie at the Esalen Institute back in 2013 for our symposium on 'Anthropology and the Paranormal.' Her energy was incredible then, even at the age of 93, and listening to her speak was like sitting at the feet of an oracle. Paul Stoller (another attendee at the Esalen symposium), echoes my own feelings about Edie's contributions to anthropology in his wonderful article reproduced in this issue (page 40).

Also in this issue, Neil Dagnall and colleagues from Manchester Metropolitan University present their follow-up of Castro *et al.*'s recent survey work on paranormal belief and experience. Then Matt Coward

explores the fascinating, and quite unexpected, intersection of traditional Japanese and Korean spirit possession practices with Shakespearian tragedy (very apt, as 2016 is the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death). Next, Juan J. Rios describes his own initiatory experiences, which he attempts to interpret through the lens of the trickster archetype. Finally, psychologist Emyr Williams presents the findings from his qualitative research on the paranormal beliefs of the contemporary Vampire subculture.

The Articles section then continues with Alistair Coombs' paper on supernatural presences in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic, focussing specifically on the enigmatic Balıklıgöl statue. Then, Benjamin J. Wood discusses the influence of the Uncanny in the future of British Quakerism. John R. DeLorez then guides us through the murky quagmire that surrounds the closely related phenomena of mental travel, remote viewing and clairvoyance.

In the Reviews section, Gerhard Mayer discusses Beatriz Caiuby Labate & Clancy Cavnar's *Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond*, Jean-Michel Abrassart reviews Eric Ouellet's *Illuminations: The UFO Experience as Parapsychological Event*. Finally, Colin Stanley, organiser of the first International Colin Wilson Conference at the University of Nottingham, provides us with an exclusive summary of the day's proceedings.

One last thing before you delve into this treasure trove of paranormal scholarship. You might have noticed that the format of the journal has changed slightly since the last issue. This is primarily so that hard-copies of the journal can be purchased for a much lower price than previous issues. In the past print copies have been in a larger format, and have cost around £16.00 to buy. With this new format, which is much smaller, print copies should be available for somewhere in the region of £4.00 I hope this makes it easier for interested parties to build themselves a collection of hard-copy issues. Details on how to purchase are available at www.paranthropology.co.uk. Please do consider buying a print copy, as this is an excellent way to help support the journal, and to ensure that we are able to continue publishing new research on the weird and anomalous.

I hope you enjoy the issue.

Paranormal Experience, Belief in the Paranormal and Anomalous Beliefs

By Neil Dagnall, Kenneth Drinkwater, Andrew Parker & Peter Clough

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Abstract

Relatively few studies have investigated the nature and incidence of paranormal experience. Extending the work of Castro et al. (2014), this study investigated the prevalence of subjective paranormal experiences (SPEs) and examined relationships between SPEs and anomalous beliefs (paranormal, urban legends and conspiracism). The sample comprised 1215 adults, aged 16-70 years drawn predominantly from a UK University. Data analysis revealed important findings. Forty-two percent of respondents reported an SPE and incidence of multiple experiences was common within experiencers. Despite minor gender differences, across experience types, SPE incidence was largely unaffected by gender. Finally, SPEs correlated positively with belief in the paranormal and anomalous beliefs.

Keywords: *Sociology of the Paranormal, Subjective Paranormal Experiences, Anomalous Experiences, Multiple Experiences, Anomalous beliefs, Parapsychology.*

Introduction

This paper reports the results of a 2015 survey (UK University based sample), which investigated prevalence of subjective paranormal experiences (SPEs). Noting inextricable links between perceived paranormal experiences and belief in the paranormal (see Drinkwater, Dagnall & Bate, 2013) the survey also examined relationships between SPEs, belief in the paranormal and potentially related anomalous beliefs (urban legends and conspiracism).

From a sociological perspective, it is important to note that self-report measures of paranormal experience index only percipients' willingness to attribute paranormal causation, rather than the manifestation of actual supernatural phenomena (Glicksohn, 1990). Typically, when individuals report paranormal experiences, accounts conflate two occurrences, the observation of an inexplicable incident and their interpretation of the event as paranormal (Irwin, Dagnall, & Drinkwater, 2013). This dichotomy builds on the work of Cardena, Lynn and Krippner (2000), who delineated unusual experiences as encounters, experienced by a substantial proportion of the population that deviate from accepted explanations of reality.

In this context, phenomenological interpretation, via reflection/introspection, plays a central role in the labelling of experience(s) (Smithies & Stoljar, 2012). Sociological factors, such as social acceptability, gender and age are pivotal to this process because the acceptability and frequency of paranormal experiences generally, are likely to influence elucidation and the individual's willingness to label and report personal paranormal experiences (Markovsky, 2008; Northcote, 2013; Truzzi, 1971; Woods & Woffitt, 2014).

Within the present study, the term SPE denotes specifically an individual's conviction that they have had a 'paranormal' experience (Neppe, 1983). SPE was preferred over other demarcations because it encapsulates the personal, interpretative nature of paranormal experiences. In this context, SPEs represent exceptional experiences, beyond the comprehension of conventional science, attributed to paranormal phenomena (Neppe, 1990). Pertinently, Irwin demarcated the paranormal as, "apparent anomalies of

behavior and experience that exist apart from currently known explanatory mechanisms that account for organism–environment and organism–organism information and influence flow" (Irwin, 1999: 1). Particularly, an experience is paranormal if its causation references a non-scientific, common-sense explanation: a clarification not empirically attested to the satisfaction of the scientific establishment (Irwin, 2009).

Surveys report that SPEs are relatively common, a fact that, defines them as an essential part of human experience (Castro et al., 2014; Schmied-Knittel & Schetsche, 2005). Because experiencers represent a significant minority of the population, it is fair to say, from a social perspective, that SPEs represent relatively common atypical occurrences. Experiences viewed as exceptional by science are for many people an integral part of the everyday world (Schmied-Knittel & Schetsche, 2005). This view concurs with the seminal work of Greeley (1975), which evinced that the majority of the population claim to experience a paranormal occurrence and a substantial minority of experiencers report more than an occasional experience. Hence, societally, SPEs are important because of their prevalence, persistence and affect upon the individual. Within the literature, authors often misleadingly refer to paranormal experiences as anomalous. The term is inappropriate because it trivialises personal experiences. SPEs are more than unusual, irregular and atypical; they reflect the relatively common perception than an individual has had a genuine paranormal experience. Despite their social importance, several factors have limited sociological interest in SPEs (see Castro, Burrows, & Woffitt, 2014). Principally, amongst these, lack of awareness about the social relevance of SPEs. Additionally, the paranormal is located typically within the psychological literature (cf. Irwin, 2009). Particularly work associated with individual differences and negative psychopathology. Furthermore, a significant and powerful sceptical movement tends to discredit work corroborating the existence of paranormal phenomena.

Noting these factors Castro et al. (2014) performed the first systematic sociological consideration of paranormal experiences in contemporary Britain. Castro et al. (2014)

analysed data collected by Ipsos MORI, who conducted face-to-face interviews with 4096 adults, aged 16 years and over. Weighting matched the sample to the profile of the British adult (16+) population. Within the sample, 37% claimed at least one paranormal experience. Interviews asked about five experience types and incidence varied: precognition (24.1%), ESP (12.8%), mystical experiences (12.4%), telepathy and ADC (10.4 %). Experiencers reported multiple experiences: 17.5% reported one type, 10% two, 5.1% three, 3% four and 1.3% five (all experiences Castro et al. (2014)). The finding that experiencers often report multiple SPEs concurred with several previous studies (Haraldsson & Houtkooper, 1991). A seminal example is the Charlottesville (Virginia) postal survey (Palmer, 1979). Response analysis identified two groups, respondents noting no/few psi experiences, and those indicating multiple experiences. Based on these findings, Castro et al. (2014) concluded that reporting of paranormal experiences is common within Great Britain; a sizeable minority of British adults claim to have had at least one paranormal experience and many experiencers report multiple experiences.

Additionally, Castro et al. (2014) described findings related to key sociological variables (gender, age and region). Women in comparison to men were significantly more likely to report a paranormal experience. This difference was consistent across experience types and concurred with previous work (Rice, 2003). Regarding age, similar patterns emerged across experience types. There was an increased likelihood of reporting experiences in the middle age groups (35-64 years), with the exception of telepathy, which showed a statistically significant increase between 45-74 years. There was a decreased reporting likelihood in older respondents (75 years and over) and a general dip in likelihood in younger age groups (16-34 years). Castro et al. (2014) found that certain age groups were significantly more likely to report particular experiences. For example, compared to the entire sample (12.8%), 16.1% of 35-44yr olds and 16.7% of 45-54yr olds reported ESP.

In terms of age groups least likely to report particular experiences, there were similar patterns across experiences. Lowest levels of reporting were observed generally within younger (16-24 and 25-34) and the oldest group (75yrs and over). Participants with the greatest likelihood of reporting paranormal experiences were those in the mid-aged groups. This supported Greeley's (1975) previous finding that people in their 50s reported most experiences. Region produced consistent effects. Generally, reporting of experiences was highest in the South West followed by the South East. The North West typically produced the lowest levels of reported experiences. Collectively consideration of regional findings revealed significant variations.

These results are difficult to contextualise because social phenomena are difficult to quantify. Principally because occurrence varies as a function of time and survey (cf. Gergen 1973). Hence, reported incidence of paranormal experience fluctuates across studies. In this context, Castro et al.'s (2014) findings were consistent with academic work citing high levels of SPE. For example, Hay and Morisy's (1978) survey of exceptional and transcendent experiences found

that 36 % of the UK population reported paranormal phenomena. Schmied-Knittel and Schetsche (2005) outlined similar results in a large-scale study conducted in Germany. This study is pertinent because of its recentness, scale and social orientation.

Schmied-Knittel and Schetsche (2005) surveyed a representative sample of 1510 people and then interviewed 220 respondents reporting exceptional experiences. Seventy three percent of respondents experienced at least one of the set phenomena (ESP-dreams, strange coincidence, crisis-ESP, Animal psi, apparition, déjà vu, haunting and Other/ Miscellaneous extraordinary experiences). Multiple experiences were common. The mean number of experiences was 2.8, and 25.7% of respondents personally experienced four or more experiences.

Whilst the high experience figures were partially attributable to the breadth of questions asked, consideration of items related to traditional paranormal experiences (ESP dream, apparition, crisis-ESP and haunting) revealed that 52% of the interviewees experienced at least one of these extraordinary phenomena. Overall, women reported more experiences than men did. As age increased, the percentage reporting exceptional experiences decreased; life experiences offered increasing ordinary possibilities for explaining phenomena (Schmied-Knittel & Schetsche, 2005). The Schmied-Knittel and Schetsche (2005) report is illustrative of the fact that studies, across a range of populations, have demonstrated the prevalence of SPEs (e.g. America, McCready & Greeley, 1976; Latin American, Montanelli & Parra, 2002-2005; and multicultural, Haraldsson & Houtkooper, 1991).

The present paper extended the work of Castro et al. (2014) by asking respondents to report on a broad range of paranormal phenomena. Castro et al. (2014) focused on core experiences related to traditional paranormal beliefs (ESP and life after death). Indeed, of the five featured categories, three related specifically to aspects of ESP (telepathy, precognition, ESP). Although these are fundamental paranormal experiences, they fail to represent the full range of paranormal experiences (psychokinesis, witchcraft, out-of-body experience, haunting, extra-terrestrials, astrology, etc.) delimited by Irwin's definitions (Irwin, 1999; 2009). The inclusion of additional experience types furthered sociological understanding of the nature, breadth and prevalence of experiences. Delineations used within the present study were precise and more fully represented the range of potential paranormal experiences.

Additionally, the current study examined relationships between SPEs, belief in the paranormal and anomalous beliefs (urban legends and conspiracism). To date few academic studies have considered the degree to which these variables are related. Consideration of anomalous beliefs alongside belief in the paranormal is important because these represent different non-conventional belief sets, which share important common features (Brotherton & French, 2014). Particularly, they defy conventional understanding of reality (French & Stone, 2014) and draw upon explanations not empirically attested to the satisfaction of the scientific establishment (Irwin, 2009). Indeed, recent work revealed

associations between paranormal belief and anomalistic beliefs (conspiracist ideation and urban legends) (Drinkwater, Dagnall, & Parker, 2012). In this context, the present paper determined whether SPEs were associated with openness to anomalous beliefs generally.

Paranormal experiences play a potentially important role in the development and maintenance of paranormal beliefs. Particularly, Glicksohn (1990) advanced the notion that belief in the paranormal arises, in part, from direct personal paranormal experiences. Indeed, Individuals frequently refer to personal experience as the reason for belief, and a positive correlation between number of subjective paranormal experiences and strength of paranormal belief has been reported (Glicksohn, 1990; Musch & Ehrenberg, 2002). Collectively, studies imply an experiential basis for belief in the paranormal. For example, Rattet and Bursik (2001) found respondents, who reported precognitive experience, possessed higher paranormal belief scores. Additionally, as Hergovich and Arendasy (2005) point out, research demonstrates that paranormal experiences are a justification for belief in psi (Irwin, 1991). Whilst a body of research supports the experiential basis of belief hypothesis, there have been less positive findings (Castro et al., 2014). These inconsistencies may arise from methodological issues such as, the conflating of belief with experience and the use of different measures of paranormal belief (Castro et al., 2014).

Alternatively, belief may produce or influence the perception of paranormal experiences. In this context, folklore research delineates two important explanations of supernatural belief, the cultural source (Hufford, 1982; McClenon, 1994) and experiential source hypotheses (Hufford, 1982). The cultural source hypothesis proposes that paranormal experiences are products of tradition, or imaginary subjective experiences caused/shaped by tradition. Thus, paranormal belief creates or shapes experience and cultural traditions influence interpretation of bizarre experiences.

Contrastingly, the experiential source hypothesis (Hufford, 1982) proposes that certain phenomena are universal, occur across different cultures and represent real experiences. Such experiences are instrumental in changing beliefs (McClenon, 1994). For example, The Old Hag tradition contains elements of experience that are independent of culture (Hufford, 1982). The Old Hag syndrome refers to a perception of waking from sleep feeling immobilized by a malevolent presence. The inclusion of belief measures alongside SPEs extended sociological understanding of how paranormal experience affect individuals' beliefs.

In summary, the study of subjective paranormal experience is important for several reasons. Particularly, because a substantial minority of the population experience SPEs, individuals often define SPEs as important historical autobiographical events, and SPEs possess the potential to affect profoundly experiencers. These characteristics have persisted throughout history and across cultures (Daniels, 1998). Considering the prevalence of SPEs, Ross and Joshi (1992) note that paranormal experiences are difficult to ignore. For these reasons, it is essential that researchers

investigate the nature, origin and social context of paranormal experiences. In this context, this paper makes a valuable contribution to the extant literature.

Methods

Respondents

The study sample comprised 1215 respondents. Ages ranged from 16 to 70 years, with a mean (M) of 25.13 and a standard deviation (SD) of 9.41; 75.7% (920) were female and 24.3% (295) were male. Female ages ranged from 16 – 67 years, M = 24.43, SD = 8.87; males ages ranged from 17 – 70 years, M = 27.33 years, SD = 10.64. Respondent recruitment occurred via emails to: staff, students, alumni, local colleges, and the wider population (businesses and leisure clubs). Participation was voluntary and respondents could terminate their participation at any time during the study.

Materials and Procedure

Respondents completed the following counter-balanced measures:

Subjective Paranormal Experience (SPEs)

An 18-item measure assessed incidence of subjective paranormal experiences (SPEs). Respondents (using yes or no) indicated whether they believed they had had a 'genuine' paranormal experience. If they responded yes, they indicated the type of experience and its frequency of occurrence. Listed experiences were ESP (extrasensory perception), PK (psychokinesis), witchcraft, OBE/NDE, haunting, contact/communication with dead, UFO visitation, UFO sighting, astrological prediction, or other (indicate). For each experience category, respondents indicated yes or no. Respondents reporting a particular paranormal experience were asked to specify frequency of occurrence (1 = single incident, 2 = occurred between 2 & 5 times and 3 = occurred more than 5 times). The final question asked respondents to rate the degree to which they believed in the paranormal because of paranormal experience(s) (1 = definitely not, 2 = probably not, 3 = unsure, 4 = probably, and 5 = definitely).

Respondents reporting no experiences moved to the next section of the self-report measure.

Belief in the Paranormal

Two established measures assessed belief in the paranormal, the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS) (Lange, Irwin, & Houran, 2000); Tobacyk & Milford, 1983) and the Australian Sheep-Goat Scale (ASGS) (Thalbourne & Delin, 1993). The RPBS has construct breadth, but is based on an imprecise definition of paranormality (Lawrence, 1995), whereas the ASGS assesses only a restrictive, core range of beliefs (ESP, PK & life after death). Using both measures in tandem ensured that results were robust and immune to criticisms arising from conceptual debates about the definition and nature of paranormal belief.

The RPBS is a self-report measure, containing 26 questions assessing seven facets of belief: traditional religious

belief, psi, witchcraft, spiritualism, superstition, extraordinary life forms, and precognition. RPBS items appear as statements (e.g. “I believe in God” and “black magic really exists”), which are scored on a seven point Likert scale ranging (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Preceding analysis item scores were recoded (0-6) in line with Irwin (2009). Hence, final scores ranged from 0 to 156, with higher scores reflecting greater belief in the paranormal. Within the present study, two-factor solution, comprising New Age Philosophy (NAP) and Traditional Paranormal Belief (TPB), was also calculated (Lange et al., 2000). NAP contains 11 items measuring belief in psi, reincarnation, altered states, and astrology, whereas TPB assesses belief in concepts, such as the devil and witchcraft (Irwin, 2004). This factorial solution arose from a purification of the scale to correct for differential item functioning (age and gender bias). The Rasch scaling procedure (Andrich, 1988) produces scores ranging from 6.85 to 47.72 on NAP and 11.16 to 43.24 on TPB. The RPBS is conceptually and psychometrically satisfactory; it possesses adequate validity and good test-retest reliability (Tobacyk, 2004).

The ASGS measures belief in, and alleged experience of, the paranormal by focusing on the subset of core beliefs studied by parapsychology: extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, and life after death (Wiseman & Watt, 2006). The ASGS contains 18 items and participants are asked to respond in one of three ways: “False” (scored as zero), “?” (Don’t know: scored as 1), and “True” (scored as 2). The ASGS has been Rasch scaled (Lange & Thalbourne, 2002) and possesses established reliability and validity (Thalbourne, 1995).

Anomalous Beliefs (Urban Legends and Conspiracist Beliefs)

Five items, derived from previous research (Dagnall, Drinkwater, Parker, & Munley, 2010; Fox Tree & Weldon, 2007), assessed belief in urban legends. Questions employed the same 7-point Likert scale as the RPBS. To prevent response bias, two items were reverse scored (e.g. “when I hear urban legends I feel that they are untrue”). Urban legend items previously have demonstrated good internal reliability (Dagnall et al., 2010).

Conspiracist Beliefs (Drinkwater et al., 2012)

Five items assessed general belief in the veracity of conspiracy theories. Items measured the degree to which respondents believe that conspiracy theories accurately depict real-life events and contain truthful information. Responses were measured on a 7- point Likert scale (1 indicated “strongly disagree” and 7 “strongly agree”). Two reversed items control for response bias. The measure has previously shown acceptable internal reality (Drinkwater et al., 2012).

Scores on both anomalous measures range from 5 to 35 and high scores were indicative of conspiracist ideation.

Procedure

Instructions at the beginning of the self-report booklet informed respondents that the study was concerned with anomalous experiences and beliefs, and that there was no time limit for completing the measures. Once participants agreed to participate, instructions asked them to provide demographic details (age and gender). On completion of the questionnaire, respondents were debriefed. All aspects of the study adhered to University ethical guidelines.

Results

Paranormal Experience (SPEs)

Incidence

Within the study sample, 42% (n = 506) of respondents reported a paranormal experience (SPE). The most frequently reported experience was ESP 23%, and the least frequently reported was UFO visitation 1% (see table 1).

The majority of respondents reporting ESP (73%), Haunting (69%) and Witchcraft (67%) related experiences, recalled more than one experience. Whilst incidence of PK (46% vs. 54%), Contact with the Dead (46% vs. 54%), and Astrology (44% vs. 56%), were more balanced with roughly equal proportions reporting single vs. multiple experiences. The majority of respondents reporting NDE/OBE (63%), UFO visitation (62%) and UFO sightings (75%) reported only a single incidence.

Of the respondents claiming to have had an SPE, 43% reported one of the experience types (n = 218), whilst 57% (n = 288) reported experiencing different types of SPEs. Within the multiple experience group, 94% (n = 270) identified between 2-5 experience types. Only 6% (n = 18) reported more than 5 experience types. This indicated experiencers typically believed they had encountered different types of paranormal phenomena.

Gender

A similar proportion of males and females believed they had a paranormal experience (41% vs. 42%); chi-square test revealed no significant association between the reporting of SPEs and gender, $\chi^2 = 0.150$, $df = 1$, $p = .698$. Correspondingly, males (M = 0.92, SD = 1.48) and females (M = 0.93, SD = 1.44) reported similar numbers of SPEs, $t(1213) = -0.112$, $p = .911$, $d = .01$. Further analysis within experiencers only, revealed also no gender difference (male M = 2.25, SD = 1.54 vs. female (M = 2.21, SD = 1.46), $t(504) = 0.277$, $p = .782$, $d = .03$).

Across experience types, gender differences manifested for PK, contact with the dead, UFO sightings and astrology. A higher proportion of males reported PK experiences (6% vs. 3%) and UFO sighting (9% vs. 4%), whilst females reported a higher proportion of contact with dead (14% vs. 10%). and astrological experiences (17% vs. 10%). Comparisons for ESP, Witchcraft, NDE/OBE, Haunting, Contact with Dead, UFO visitation and Other revealed no gender differences (see table 2).

Table 1. Number and per cent reporting different experience types and SPE incidence.

Experience Type	SPE Incidence					
	Reported Experience		Experience Frequency		Multiple Experiences	
	Yes	No	Single	Multiple	Between 2-5	More Than 5
	(n %)	(n %)	(n %)	(n %)	(n %)	(n %)
ESP	281 (23%)	934 (77%)	77 (27%)	204 (73%)	131 (47%)	73 (26%)
PK	46 (4%)	1169 (96%)	21 (46%)	25 (54%)	13 (28%)	12 (26%)
Witchcraft	46 (4%)	1169 (96%)	15 (33%)	31 (67%)	18 (39%)	13 (28%)
NDE/OBE	111 (9%)	1104 (91%)	70 (63%)	41 (37%)	30 (27%)	11 (10%)
Haunting	167 (14%)	1048 (86%)	52 (31%)	115 (69%)	83 (50%)	32 (19%)
Contact with the Dead	156 (13%)	1059 (87%)	71 (46%)	85 (54%)	61 (39%)	24 (15%)
UFO Visitation	16 (1%)	1199 (99%)	10 (62%)	6 (38%)	3 (19%)	3 (19%)
UFO Sighting	60 (5%)	1155 (95%)	45 (75%)	15 (25%)	10 (17%)	5 (8%)
Astrology	185 (15%)	1030 (85%)	82 (44%)	103 (56%)	67 (36%)	36 (20%)
Other	54 (4%)	1161 (96%)	25 (46%)	29 (54%)	16 (30%)	13 (24%)

Table 2. Number and per cent reporting paranormal experience(s) by

Experience Type	Gender		Overall	df	χ^2	p	
	Male	Female					
	n = 120	n = 386					
	(n %)	(n %)	(n %)				
ESP	72 (24%)	209 (23%)	281 (23%)	1	0.36	.549	NS
PK	18 (6%)	28 (3%)	46 (4%)	1	5.74	.017	Sig
Witchcraft	10 (3%)	36 (4%)	46 (4%)	1	0.17	.682	NS
NDE/OBE	29 (10%)	82 (9%)	111 (9%)	1	0.23	.634	NS
Haunting	39 (13%)	128 (14%)	167 (14%)	1	0.90	.764	NS
Contact with the Dead	28 (10%)	128 (14%)	156 (13%)	1	3.90	.048	Sig
UFO Visitation	6 (2%)	10 (1%)	16 (1%)	1	1.54	.214	NS
UFO Sighting	25 (9%)	35 (4%)	60 (5%)	1	10.38	.001	Sig
Astrology	29 (10%)	156 (17%)	185 (15%)	1	8.79	.003	Sig
Other	14 (5%)	40 (4%)	54 (4%)	1	0.83	.773	NS

Sig = Significant; NS = Not Significant

No major associations were evident between gender and experience frequency (single vs. multiple) (see tables 3 and 4). The only gender difference was a marginally significant tendency within males to report multiple UFO sightings. Overall, the proportion of single vs. multiple experiencers was similar for male (42.5% vs. 57.5%) and female respondents (43% vs. 57%), $\chi^2 = 0.22$, $df = 1$, $p = .966$.

SPEs and Belief in the Paranormal

Scale Reliability

The paranormal (ASGS, RPBS and RPBS subscales; NAP and TPB) and anomalous belief (conspiracy and urban legends) measures demonstrated good to excellent internal reliability (George & Malley, 2003). Belief in the paranormal measures correlated moderately with anomalous beliefs (conspiracism and urban legends) (see table 5)

Table 3. Number and per cent reporting paranormal multiple experience.

<i>Experience Type</i>	<u>Gender</u>									
	Male					Female				
	N	Single (n %)	Multiple (n %)	Bewteen 2-5 (n %)	More Than 5 (n %)	N	Single (n %)	Multiple (n %)	Bewteen 2-5 (n %)	More Than 5 (n %)
ESP	72	19 (26%)	53 (74%)	31 (43%)	22 (31%)	209	58 (28%)	151 (72%)	100 (48%)	51 (24%)
PK	18	6 (33%)	12 (67%)	8 (44%)	4 (22%)	28	15 (54%)	13 (46%)	5 (18%)	8 (29%)
Witchcraft	10	1 (10%)	9 (90%)	6 (60%)	3 (30%)	36	14 (39%)	22 (61%)	12 (33%)	10 (28%)
NDE/OBE	29	15 (52%)	14 (48%)	10 (34%)	4 (14%)	82	55 (67%)	27 (33%)	20 (24%)	7 (9%)
Haunting	39	14 (36%)	25 (64%)	19 (49%)	6 (15%)	128	38 (30%)	90 (70%)	64 (50%)	26 (20%)
Contact with the Dead	28	16 (57%)	12 (43%)	10 (36%)	2 (7%)	128	55 (43%)	73 (57%)	51 (41%)	22 (17%)
UFO Visitation	6	2 (33%)	4 (67%)	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	10	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
UFO Sighting	25	15 (60%)	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	3 (12%)	35	30 (86%)	5 (14%)	3 (9%)	2 (6%)
Astrology	29	12 (41%)	17 (59%)	12 (41%)	5 (17%)	156	70 (45%)	86 (55%)	55 (35%)	31 (20%)
Other	14	10 (71%)	4 (29%)	1 (7%)	3 (21%)	40	15 (38%)	25 (63%)	15 (38%)	10 (25%)

Table 4. Multiple experience(s) by Gender cross-tabulation values.

<i>Experience Type</i>	df	χ^2	p	
ESP	1	0.05	.823	NS
PK	1	1.81	.179	NS
Witchcraft	1	2.97	.085	NS
NDE/OBE	1	2.17	.141	NS
Haunting	1	0.54	.463	NS
Contact with the Dead	1	1.86	.172	NS
UFO Visitation	1	3.48	.062	NS
UFO Sighting	1	5.14	.023	Sig
Astrology	1	0.12	.728	NS
Other	1	4.80	.028	NS

Sig = Significant; NS = Not Significant

Correlations examined relationships between SPEs, belief in the paranormal and anomalous beliefs (conspiracism and urban legends) (see table 6).

SPE occurrence (reporting a paranormal experience) correlated positively with belief in the paranormal (ASGS and RPBS). Correlations were within the moderate range (Cohen, 1988). Anomalous beliefs also correlated positively with SPE occurrence; however, correlation sizes were weaker. A similar pattern emerged for SPE total (the overall number

of paranormal experience types reported). Finally, for believers level of paranormal belief and SPE influence (the perception that experience(s) informed belief in the paranormal) correlated moderately.

Discussion

Within the present study, 42% of respondents reported an SPE. This figure was commensurate with other equivalent

Table 5. Belief scale descriptives and inter-scale correlations.

Measure	α	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. ASGS	.89	19.68	6.51						
2. RPBS	.93	55.16	28.48	.70**					
3. NAP	.90	21.59	5.17	.69**	.87**				
4. TPB	.78	22.49	5.15	.58**	.84**	.72**			
5. Conspiracy	.81	18.69	5.52	.39**	.44**	.44**	.39**		
6. Urban legends	.86	20.94	6.30	.37**	.43**	.39**	.37**	.37**	

Table 6. Correlations between SPE measures and beliefs (paranormal and anomalous).

Measure	SPE Occurrence	SPE Total	SPE Influence
ASGS	.46**	.50**	.25**
RPBS	.33**	.39**	.37**
NAP	.31**	.34**	.36**
TPB	.28**	.31**	.24**
Conspiracy	.17**	.21**	
Urban legends	.17**	.21**	

surveys and illustrated respondents' willingness to report SPEs (Castro et al., 2014; Greeley, 1975; Schmied-Knittel & Schetsche, 2005). However, these data require consideration and careful interpretation. Comparisons between specific figures generated within this and other similar studies are of limited value because surveys sample diverse populations, define experiences differently, and perceptions of paranormal experience vary across time and between cultures. For these reasons, prevalence patterns are more revealing than SPE endorsement figures. In this context, conclusions drawn at the macro-level provide useful insights into the broad nature and social importance of paranormal experiences, whilst tacitly acknowledging the personal and profound nature of SPEs.

Analysis of experience types revealed that the most frequently reported SPEs were ESP (23%), astrology (15%), haunting (14%), and contact with dead (13%). The high incidence of ESP-related experiences, such as telepathy and precognitive dreams, accords with comparable paranormal experience surveys (Blackmore & Troscianko, 1985; Castro et al., 2014; Zusne & Jones, 1982). Considering the relatively high incidence of ESP-related experiences, a number of theories attempt to explain the origin of ESP-related phenomena. These are comprised mainly of psychological

accounts, which focus on cognitive and perceptual processes (cognitive and interpretative bias). Prominent examples are lack of critical thinking (French & Wilson, 2007), probability misjudgment (Blackmore & Troscianko, 1985) and faulty attributions (Wiseman and Watt 2010). Whilst these notions offer potential justifications for ESP-related experiences, they fail to explain why individuals inclined towards cognitive and perceptual bias express this predominantly as ESP specific SPEs.

The interpretative nature of SPEs, particularly the tendency to favour certain phenomena and justification, is explicable from a sociological perspective, where societal processes and institutions guide construction of meaning. For example, Gilovich (1991) evinces that complimentary, accepting media coverage has served historically to promote the credibility of ESP-related beliefs (see also Shermer, 2002). Singer and Benassi (1991) propose similarly, that uncritical media coverage in the 1960s facilitated belief in the occult by increasing its general cognitive "availability" as a culturally acceptable explanatory category. Thus, positive societal depictions of paranormal phenomena frame comprehension of puzzling events/experiences, legitimise the plausibility of paranormal elucidations, and skew people away from more

plausible alternatives (scientific and mundane explanations). Indeed, the famous skeptic James Randi, using a series of media orchestrated claims (e.g. UFO sightings, astrology, biorhythms), demonstrated that significant numbers of people will endorse paranormal testimony regardless of its veracity (Stanovich, 2010).

Hence, affirming societal representations provide meanings and labels for understanding unusual experiences. Gilovich (1991) argues that they channel transcendental temptation (people's deep-rooted tendency toward magical thinking and desire to believe in powers and abilities). Furthermore, once adopted paranormal explanations prove hard to refute because sceptics propose only alternative possibilities rather than definitive explanations (Gilovich, 1991; Presley, 1997). This is especially true, when experiences are located within paranormal domains, where other members of society express and share similar experiences.

Experimental work demonstrates also that social pressure effects endorsement of paranormal beliefs/ experiences. For example, Markovsky and Thye (2001) found participants were more likely to believe they had witnessed a paranormal phenomenon, when a confederate expressed the belief, that the phenomenon was true. Ridolfo et al. (2010) advise that the presence of normative influences (rather than informational) amplify this effect. Indeed, Ridolfo et al. (2010) observed that individuals were more likely to accept ESP when they believed ESP claims had popular support. The presentation of scientific evidence influenced also endorsement. Believing that science rejected ESP, resulted in participants being more likely to accept ESP as true. When participants believed that ESP had widespread support, they indicated generally high belief, irrespective of information on the views of science. Finally, when participants believed ESP had less popular support, they were more likely to believe in ESP, when informed that science rejected ESP. It is evident from these and other related studies that social/societal factors influence belief in the paranormal, and often shape perceptions of unusual occurrences (Markovsky & Thye, 2001).

Close inspection of frequently reported SPEs revealed that they reflected major social themes, concerns and anxieties (communication, community, religion, the future, death, etc.). For instance, contacting the dead (and to a degree haunting) reference major religious (life after death) and family/community (bereavement/loss) tenets. Thematically, higher prevalence SPEs linked with paranormal phenomena that were socially acceptable, reported often by others, reflective of major social concerns and difficult to refute. This contrasted with less frequently reported experiences (UFO-related, sightings and visitation; witchcraft; and PK), which generally lack social acceptance, are not reported frequently, prove less resistant to criticism and represent socially marginal themes.

These observations suggest that reporting of SPEs exists within a social feedback system, where the social relevance and standing of paranormal phenomena influences interpretation and reporting of subsequent experiences. Clearly, this may result in a reporting bias, where most frequently reported experiences facilitate the generation of

related SPEs. Conversely, individuals are less likely to report infrequently cited, socially unacceptable experiences because of doubt, disbelief and fear of potential ridicule. For these reasons, self-report survey data may not accurately reflect the incidence of SPE types, but index merely people's willingness to report particularly experiences.

Looking at experience incidence, 57% of experiencers reported multiple experiences (median = 2). Similarly, within SPE types, a significant percentage of experiencers reported multiple SPEs. In the case of ESP, hauntings and witchcraft the majority of experiencers indicated multiple instances. Approximately equal percentages of respondents referenced single vs. multiple experiences for PK, contact with dead, and astrology. With regard to UFO-related phenomena (sightings and visitation) and NDE/OBE experiencers generally noted single SPEs. Considering multiple experiences, only 6% of experiencers recorded more than five experiences. These findings are in line with previous studies, which have indicated experiencers' tendency to report multiple experiences (Castro et al., 2014; Haraldsson & Houtkooper, 1991). This concurred also with Palmer (1979), who noted that respondents typically represented two categories, those who reported either no/few psi experiences and those delineating multiple experiences.

Generally, these outcomes are consistent with work, evidencing relationships between attention, attribution (the search for and attachment of meaning) and the perception of paranormal experiences. Whilst the original work (see Houran & Lange, 2001 for a summary of relevant research) defines attention in the dynamic, cognitive sense, the notion of focus generalises well to the social level. Everyday life presents people with a continuous flow of potentially anomalous, unusual occurrences, which normally pass unnoticed because they lack consequence or relevance (personal or social). Periodically, an event will come to attention and require explanation. This then facilitates a search for and detection of additional events, which are consistent with earlier ones. Thus, the act of interpreting an event as paranormal can stimulate the perception of additional paranormal events (Houran & Lange, 1996a, 1996b). In the case of experiencers, the SPE provides a context for labelling ensuing events as paranormal.

Overall, a similar proportion of males and females believed they had a paranormal experience (41% vs. 42%). Across experience types, gender differences manifested for PK, contact with the dead, UFO sightings and astrology. A higher proportion of males reported PK experiences and UFO sighting, whilst females recorded a higher proportion of contact with dead and astrological experiences. The percentage of single vs. multiple experiencers was similar for male and female respondents (approximately 43% vs. 57%). The only gender difference was a marginally significant tendency within males to report multiple UFO sightings.

These outcomes did not concur with Castro et al. (2014), who reported that women compared to men were more likely to report paranormal experiences. This finding requires consideration. It may be that there is no causal association between gender and propensity to report paranormal experience, and SPE reporting varies as a function of other

factors (Castro et al., 2014). Particularly, the complex interaction between social and cultural factors (lifestyle, educational level, educational orientation, etc.). For instance, skepticism is associated with higher levels of education and the study of the natural sciences (Aarnio & Lindeman, 2005; Vyse, 1998). In this context, the present study drew extensively on participants connected with a university. Such a sample is likely to comprise individuals, who possess high levels of academic potential and a preference towards analytical thinking. Thus, environment rather than gender differences may determine reporting of SPEs. This is a tentative proposal and further research is required to understand more fully the interplay of social and cultural factors.

Within the present study, experience of an SPE and number of SPEs reported correlated positively with level of paranormal belief and endorsement of anomalous beliefs (conspiracies and urban legends). Additionally, perceived influence of SPE was associated positively with level of paranormal belief. These findings were consistent with Blackmore (1984), who noted that the most common reason for belief in the paranormal was individual experience of a phenomenon. Similarly, it supports the finding that strength of belief in the paranormal correlates with perceived number of subjective paranormal experiences (Glicksohn, 1990).

It is worth noting that these associations are correlational and that the relationship between belief and experience is complex. Particularly, it is unclear whether beliefs stimulate experiences, or vice versa. The Lange and Houran (1998) model of haunting or poltergeist phenomena illustrates the complex relationship between belief and experience. Lange and Houran (1998) found that fear of the paranormal induced belief, belief in the paranormal promoted paranormal experience and paranormal experiences produced a reduction in fear of the paranormal. In low fear conditions, this represented a negative feedback loop. In high fear conditions, however, Lange & Houran (1999b) observed a positive feedback loop, where highly fearful individuals were unable to explain fear-inducing ambiguities by labelling them paranormal; existing fears generated additional fears.

Whereas previous research suggests possible cause and effect relationships between belief and experience, findings within this paper are correlational. Hence, the authors suggest parallels with preceding work, rather than advocating explanations. The establishment of cause and effect requires systematic variable manipulation and the implementation of long-term research projects. Hence, whilst this article contributes to the cultural versus experiential source debate (Hufford, 1982; McClenon, 1994) it provides no definitive solutions. Whether culture creates/shapes experiences, or experiences represent rational perceptions of real phenomena remains unresolved.

Finally, it is useful to report positive correlations between paranormal and anomalous belief measures. Pertinently, conspiracism and endorsement of urban legends were associated similarly with paranormal belief measures. In addition, conspiracism correlated positively with endorsement of urban legends. Collectively, these findings indicated that openness to unorthodox beliefs extends beyond

the paranormal to encompass anomalous beliefs. Overlap may arise from a worldview based on a preference for subjective rather than objective evidence (Dagnall, Drinkwater, Parker, Denovan, & Parton, 2015). This view is consistent with Irwin, Dagnall, & Drinkwater (2012), who proposed that preoccupation with paranormal beliefs may be found within New Age believers, who create a worldview around which, their daily perceptions are structured. Correspondingly, new age thinking reflects the tendency to embrace alternative beliefs, philosophies and practices (Sjöberg & Wåhlberg, 2002), and embodies mistrust of science, realism, objectivity (Sebold, 1984).

The current work indicated that significant numbers of respondents claim paranormal experience (SPEs) and as such, that these experiences are an important feature of people's lives. Subsequent studies may wish to extend further/develop more sophisticated measures of paranormal experiences. One potential problem is that endorsement of self-report items indexed experience types. Thus, interpretation may have varied across individuals and been open to semantic confusion. Schmied-Knittel and Schetsche (2005) noted this problem previously when they reported that respondents incorrectly referred to ESP-dreams as *déjà vu*.

The present survey considered only the frequency of experiences. Although this was a useful and valid measure, incidence provides only limited information. Respondents were essentially agreeing to a standardized given item, which references only if they believe they have encountered a specific type of SPE. Whilst frequency of event is noted, there is no reference to important information on the phenomenological aspects of the experience. The use of semi-structured interviews would partially obviate problems associated with survey type measures and facilitate a deeper, richer understanding of personal paranormal experiences. However, interviews would be time consuming and resource intensive in comparison to self-report.

Other dimensions of experience, such as impact, intensity and significance, may play an important role with regard to the development and reinforcement of belief in the paranormal (and anomalous beliefs). Certainly, previous research has typically failed to consider how SPEs affect individuals (e.g. emotionally, cognitively and socially) and influence their behaviour. Extant work within this area provides mixed results (i.e. evidences negative and positive effects). For example, Montanelli and Parra (2002-2005) noted that 13.8% of their sample perceived ESP dreams to be very disturbing. In contrast, near-death experiences (NDEs) frequently induce positive changes in people (Ring, 1984). Furthermore, associations between paranormal experiences and an increased sense of well-being have been reported (Kennedy & Kanthamani, 1995). Despite these examples, comparatively few studies have examined the effects of psychic experiences on peoples' lives (McClenon, 1994). Siegel (1986) identified common reaction patterns in individuals experiencing the paranormal: fear, sense of responsibility toward another, feeling divine, specially gifted, and the desire to develop abilities. These provide a potential framework for future studies examining the impact of SPEs on individuals.

Additionally, succeeding work could explore the degree to which personal paranormal and anomalous experiences relate to belief in the paranormal and anomalous beliefs. This would test Rattet and Bursik's (2001) contention that belief in the paranormal, based on personal experiences, diverges from belief without confirmatory subjective experience. Clearly, impactful, personal experiences and belief should profoundly interact with each other.

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Strange Dimensions: A Paranthropology Anthology is a collection of essays celebrating the fourth anniversary of *Paranthropology*. It is from the paranormal's multifaceted nature that the title of this book takes its meaning. Throughout its pages we encounter, time and again, talk of a wide variety of dimensions, levels and layers, from social, cultural, psychological and physiological dimensions, to spiritual, mythic, narrative, symbolic and experiential dimensions, and onwards to other worlds, planes of existence and realms of consciousness. The paranormal is, by its very nature, multidimensional.

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Religious Flows and Ritual Performance: East Asian Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy

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Abstract

Since the arrival of Commodore Perry clutching his copy of Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales of Shakespeare* both Korean and Japanese societies have adopted Shakespearian tragedy as a way of transferring communal identity. This study explores how this has been done, and the striking relationship Shakespearian tragedy has with female shamanic communities in East Asia. In the context of South Korea this study will focus on the *Mansin*, and the performance of their *kut* rituals with a focus on the use of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. In the context of Japan this study will focus on the *Miko*, as well as the early ritual and theatrical techniques present in both *Nō* and *Kabuki* performances. Through the work of the acclaimed Japanese director Akira Kurosawa, this study explores the transliteration of *Macbeth* and *King Lear* in Japan.

Keywords: Performance, Ritual, Shakespeare, Shamanism

Ever since there has been the use of ritual, there has been theatre. All ritual involves an element of theatre; repetitive actions, vocalisations, choreographed movements. This study is not the first to look at the way in which performance and ritual interact, but there are two scholars in particular who create great undeniable links between ritual and theatre: Richard Schechner and the late Victor Turner. This study aims to shift the paradigm slightly and bring Shakespearian tragedy to the forefront.

For the purposes of this study the following will concentrate on two countries within East Asia: Japan and South Korea. Both of these countries have a long-standing legacy of mainly female shamanic practices the *Mansin* of Korea and the *Miko* of Japan. Both of which provide paying clients with two-way verbal communication between the deceased and their client through spirit possession; therefore, more rigorous comparison might be made. With regard to the content in relation to the countries the first notion will deal with South Korea and the way in which Koreans seek to grapple with the notion of Koreanisation through Shakespeare; secondly this study will look at Japanese cinematic interpretation of Shakespearian tragedy, by the acclaimed director Akira Kurosawa and the way in which his works have adopted the technique and poise of both *Nō* and *Kabuki* Japanese theatrical styles. Theatre and ritual, in this context, become a perfect pairing to discuss the way in which ritual interaction has taken place through theatre; Stein and Stein (2011), for example, note that:

In some ways ritual resembles a play. A play consists of actors, words, sets and props presented in a set way according to a script. And a play is a reflection of the culture of a society and that society's world view (Stein and Stein, 2011:77).

Crossing and Dwelling

Thomas Tweed's work *Crossing and Dwelling* (2006) remarks about the difficulty of defining religion stating that; 'despite warnings about the futility of efforts to define religion, many scholars still choose to 'get up and start running'' (Tweed, 2006:29). Tweed throughout his text aims to create a theory that speaks of religions according to their own merits; no theorist has ever 'encounter[ed] religion-in-general' (Tweed, 2006:55). He remarks, therefore, that it is important to speak of religion in the plural. For the purposes of this study, Tweed's definition of religions will be adopted:

Religions are confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries. (Tweed, 2006:54)

The definition is important to this study as it constitutes interdisciplinary space in which this research will take place: through the disciplines of religious studies, theatre and anthropology. This is where Tweed's theory becomes of the utmost importance; both the constraints of the organic (neural, emotional, cognitive) and the shifting cultural elements (tropic, ritual, narrative) come together and openly interact thereby creating religions (Tweed, 2006:67).

The following discussion will approach the idea of ritual within the confines of both anthropology and theatre. Fiona Bowie (2006:138) asserts that ritual functions on both microcosmic and macrocosmic levels for the benefit of both the individual participant and the community. Ritual also functions in providing a culture with a method for easily transmitting the values of their community inter-generationally. Religions could be seen as being made up of organic-cultural flows, as stated above, following both neural and ritualistic patterns "and the traces they leave move through time and space" (Tweed, 2006:62). One example of this organic-cultural flow through space-time can be seen in

the way generations pass on religious symbols within their society, thereby allowing culturally relative reverence to be placed allowing the otherwise profane to still be accessed as spiritually empowering.

Wherefore Shakespeare, wherefore tragedy?

William Shakespeare, the Bard of Avon, is a staple of the British literary canon and has been transported throughout the world. Dennis Kennedy (1993:1-2) asserts that since the eighteenth century Shakespeare has been in the hands of Anglo-centric academic critics; leading to the importance and cultural relevance of Shakespeare's canon within other cultures and languages has been somewhat masked. Shakespeare in this sense has been a given across the English speaking world for centuries whereas other cultures have had to 'find a desire for him' (Kennedy, 1993:3). One suggestion is that within the next fifty years Shakespeare, in his original context, will become completely alien to the general public, therefore Kennedy (1993:17) becomes concerned, and so, poses the question of what of Shakespeare's original work will remain once he is deprived of his tongue.

Throughout the course of the 20th Century, Shakespeare was becoming readily accessible within Asia. Toshikazu Oyama, a translator, remarked that, 'translating Shakespeare into Japanese is a wild shooting at a target in which there is neither bull's eye nor central circle' (Oyama cit. Nouryeh, 2004:254); thereby suggesting that any translation of Shakespeare into Japanese would be void of all context and subsequent meaning. However, scholars have noted that cultural difference between Elizabethan England and Shogunate Japan might not be as great as first imagined. Andrea Nouryeh (2004:254) comments, for example, that one of the strongest links is thematic: family ties, violence, bloodshed, treachery and revenge played a great part in the historical legacy of Japanese feudal society and within Shakespearean tragedy. Additionally, both Elizabethan drama and Japanese theatre attempt to explore the way in which the supernatural affects the realm of the living. This is obvious when speaking of Japanese theatre and can be seen within various Shakespearean tragedies such as the Ghost of King Hamlet, Banquo and Duncan in *Macbeth*; but also within other genres such as King Oberon and Queen Titania of the Fairies and Puck, Oberon's trickster within the comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As well as this Caliban, born of the witch Sycorax in addition to the main protagonist Prospero who controls the nymph Ariel in the tragicomedy *The Tempest*. However, both the effect of the 'supernatural' and Shakespeare's obvious awareness of the influence of ritual are exemplified within *Macbeth*. John Russell Brown (1999:48) for example draws attention to "the dancing, chanting, obligation and invocations of the witches as they worship the spirits whom they serve". The most famous ritual incantation within *Macbeth* is act IV scene I, wherein the witches and the goddess Hecate perform a ritual incantation where the goddess calls upon the spirits to come and dance around the

cauldron to allow Macbeth to see the three apparitions who appear later within the scene:

ALL

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Second Witch

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE

HECATE

O well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains;
And now about the cauldron sing,
Live elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

[Music and a song: 'Black Sprites, etc'] Exit HECATE

Second Witch

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!
(*Macbeth*, IV:I:35-4)

It is common within Shakespearean text that 'supernatural' characters speak in rhyme. The repetitive endings in the above quote underline this premise, for example: trouble-bubble; blood-good; pains-gains; sing-ring and locks-knocks. It is these repetitive endings that underline the ritualistic nature of the witches.

Furthermore, Brown (1999:44) asserts that within countries where religious ritual is still common in contemporary life, as in Elizabethan England, there is opportunity to assess the effect that ritual has within the play. Within Japan, for example, the art of making theatre is still considered to be a ceremonial and ritualistic act for both practitioner and audience. With reference to the *Suzuki Company of Toga*, Brown, (1999:49) states that silence 'often seems obligatory' and that the challenging journey that needs to be taken to reach the theatre in Toga, even with modern transport, is difficult – meaning that the event in itself almost seems to have a sense of pilgrimage around it.

It becomes apparent, that tragedy as a Shakespearean genre, is the most easily transferable Shakespearean genre to a non-Anglo audience; history and comedy losing their effect mainly through lack of deep-rooted historical understanding and the issue in translating cultural comedy with respect to tabooed actions and cultural norms respectively. As discussed later, the *Mansin* of Korea operate in what scholars have coined the 'field of misfortune' (Kim, 2003) and within Japan, as discussed above, cultural folklore and historical legacy has followed similar themes of tragedy. In many

indigenous societies human tragedy is the focus on which the local shaman works; the following section will consider the notion of shamanic practice before dwelling on the topic of Shakespeare and ritual further.

2 – HISTORY, RITUAL, AND THEATRE

Ritual, theatre and the ‘Shaman’

Before entering into a discussion about the ritual and theatrical aspects it is important to establish mutual understanding of the term ‘shaman’ as in most scholarship the *Mansin* of Korea are defined as ‘shamanic.’ There is general agreement regarding the origins of the term ‘shaman’ from the Tungus language of central Siberia – ‘Šaman’ (Stein and Stein, 2011; Bowie, 2006; Skiddy, 2010 and Crockford, 2011). Mircea Eliade was convinced that Siberia was untainted by the outside world and therefore the practices of the shaman remained relatively unchanged throughout history (Skiddy, 2010:214-5). Although, the term ‘shaman’ becomes complex given the range of definitions in use, the practices of these indigenous ritual intercessors differ depending on their context and the needs of the community that they are a part of; as Sussannah Crockford remarks ‘... from the outset, shamanism was a label applied inappropriately by Westerners for religious practices they did not fully understand’ (Crockford, 2011:185). The following section will explore the shamanic tradition of Korea, providing examples of the way in which it incorporates theatrical experience. Since the Korean Shamanic specialists the *Mansin* practices a series of beliefs and rituals imported from the northwest Ural-Altaic region (Hammer, 2001:35), it seems suitable to describe these religious practitioners as shamans.

The *Mansin* of Korea

The Korean *Mansin* (female shamanic practitioners) are ritual performers who provide verbal intercession between the paying client and the spirit world.² Within these *kut* rituals financial incentive plays a large role, as it is believed that the clients are paying the spirits themselves for their services.^{3&4}

Nonetheless these practices are not welcomed everywhere. Dong-Kyu Kim (2012a:17) asserts that the shamanistic traditions of Korea are still, today, seen to represent ‘negative aspects of Korean traditional culture’ (*loc. cit.*); furthermore, negative representations of this indigenous tradition have frequently been assessed as the result of cultural politics between *musok* and the ruling philosophy.⁵ Meaning that throughout historical interaction *musok*[’s] practitioners have been relegated from religious and political matters which, as Kim (2012a:18) asserts, means that non-shamanistic political supremacy throughout Korean history has led to the negative associations towards the *Mansin* in modern Korean culture (Kim, 2012a:18).⁶ Kim is quick to emphasise that political rejection of the *Mansin* is not the only

way that this can be understood. Chong-Ho Kim (2003:15) remarks that the *Mansin* practice in the ‘field of misfortune’ a ritual space which falls outside Korean societies conventional paradigm. Shamanism (used here as an umbrella term) is thought to coexist with other forms of religion; shamanism is seen to exhibit a particular ‘magical’ speciality (Eliade, 2005:8269); here, in the case of the *Mansin*, involves, in part, verbal intercession with the spirits.

These practitioners, according to Kim (2003:35), are able engage with the spirits in a way that other religious practitioner cannot - through speech; ‘spirit talk is essential to the Korean shamanic ritual’ (Kim, 2003:35); although this can, to some extent, become problematic for the practitioner as the only way that their ritual can lead to a positive conclusion is if the spirit’s speech affects an emotional change within their client. This is what makes the practice of the *Mansin* different from that of any other spiritual practitioner within Korea – the *kut* allows two-way verbal communication that cannot be accomplished by the various dominant religious practices in Korea, including: Buddhist, Christian, Confucian or traditions that incorporate superstitious beliefs and practices. Boudewijn Walraven (2009) suggests that the *kut* is a ritual in which the practitioner and client will not find meaning in its correct execution; the only way that the ritual will climax is through a ‘constant interaction between the performer of the ritual and those for whom the ritual is performed’ (Bruno cit. Walraven, 2009:58). Simultaneously Walraven, through his ethnographic fieldwork, remarks that there is a fine line and ability for sudden change between performance and climatic ritual, which can easily converge – during a folklore performance. In 1999 at a former prison, he noted that although the event had:

The outward characteristics of a ‘national’ folklore performance, at a certain moment part of the audience (who included descendants of the patriots who had died in Sōdaemun Prison in the colonial period) suddenly became highly emotionally involved when Kim Maemul, the chief shaman, re-enacted a scene of violent death, a standard element in death rituals of the Hwanghae tradition.⁷ (Walraven, 2009:59)

What needs to be assessed here is the way in which the performance suddenly switched from folklore performance to *kut* ritual. The audience, Walraven (2009:59) noted consisted of descendants of the executed – providing personal leverage in the situation which is in line with Graham Harvey’s (2005:139) notion that the shaman, as practitioner, requires the participation of others. It is well known that each ritual is interchangeable and that there is no great over-arching dogma governing the *kut* meaning that the *Mansin*[’s] rituals are therefore individualistic and microcosmic. To apply Tweed’s theory (2006:67) the organic outpourings of the client’s emotions function to influence the *Mansin*[’s] *kut*, thus meaning there is a constant reciprocating dynamic interaction of the organic and the cultural flows between both practitioner and client. Leading to the sudden

transference from a performance for the purposes of entertainment to a ritual practice for efficacy, which utilises many performance elements.

As well as the Korean *Mansin*['s] *kut*; other predominantly female 'shamanic' traditions can be seen within East Asia including the *Miko* ritual possession practitioners of Japan; whose ritual praxis aided the form of one of Japans greatest theatrical forms – Nō.

Japan and Nō: the stance place between Shinto and Buddhism

Benito Ortolani (1984:174) states that it was not until the beginnings of the 20th century that Japanese anthropologists had considered applying the term 'shamanism' to describe the indigenous practices of the female *Miko* practitioners. Who inhabit a strange place between the two major religious traditions within modern Japan: Shinto and Buddhism. One Japanese myth *Ama no iwato* (the heavenly cave) speaks of 'the trance-dance of the priestess Uzume before the heavenly cave of Amaterasu' (*loc. cit.*); which has led many scholars to describe the 'trance-dance' as the first written record of theatre praxis within Japan (*loc. cit.*). Within later works, Ortolani (1995) stresses the influence of Korean shamanic traditions on that of Japan's *Miko* noting that:

Others [scholars] stress the connection with shamanistic influences from Korea... Uzume's dance would be primarily a projection into timeless myth of the performance of a *Miko*, the Japanese version of a female shaman who performed ecstatic and erotic dances until relatively recent times (in fact, the *miko*-medium tradition, although rare, is not yet completely extinct (Ortolani, 1995:5-6)

The core of Japanese theatre is divided into three distinct techniques, the earliest and main focus of this study of these being Nō – a form of theatre 'synthesised principally out of the indigenous materials [*Miko* ritual] into a precise form towards the end of the fourteenth century' (Earnst, 1974:1). Nō theatre, at its height, was reserved for the highest members of society and with that in mind remained mainly the theatre of scholars. Holly Blumner (2007:15-6) notes that Nō as a theatrical form was given patronage under the *Shogunate* and that their art form was to be considered the ceremonial music of the *Samurai*.⁸

Nō is thought to have emerged during the fourteenth century when *Kan'ami Kiyotsugu* combined *kuse* (popular music) and *mai* (dance), which developed into a 'Buddhist-tinged theatrical narrative that became Nō' (Bulmner, 2007:15). Ortolani (1995:93) asserts that *Kan'ami* was born in 1333 to a family who genealogically descended from priests. Furthermore, the acting career follows a patriarchal lineage, passed down from generation to generation (Bulmner, 2007:14). Therefore Nō, the theatrical form, was further advanced by *Kan'ami* ['s] son: *Zeami Motokiyo*.⁹ Parallel to this,

it should be noted that theatrical historians usually credit *Kan'ami* over his son *Zeami* for the creation and implementation of Nō (Ortolani, 1995:95).

Zeami further developed Nō by scripting plays and writing treatises on acting. The influence of Zen Buddhism on *Zeami* becomes apparent within his discourse as he above all stresses the importance of restraint, advising that the actor should "move seven if the heart feels ten" (Bulmner, 2007:15). Within a Nō performance there are generally three classes of actor; the *Shite* (protagonist) who will often wear a mask; a overarching theme of Nō plays is that the true identity of the character, usually a Bodhisattva, God or Spirit, will not be revealed until the second act and is signified by a costume change (*loc. cit.*). Furthering this notion Ortolani (1984:176) remarks that the *Shite* role originated from the role of the 'main-god' played by the lead practitioner in earlier shamanic festivals, suggesting a syncretic approach to theatrical ritual praxis within Japan (and Korea, discussed further later).

The *Waki* (supporting character) whose role generally involves questioning the *Shite* to prompt the revelation of their identity and purpose; and the *ai-kyogen* (comedy role) who is usually an actor from the less structurally formal *Kyogen* genre and will throughout the performance encapsulate the story in a plain language (*loc. cit.*). Parallel to this Toida Michizo remarks that the:

...shamanic origins of several elements in the Nō ... [concurrent with the] Japanese feeling that medieval man lived with the 'other dimension,' where ghosts and supernatural beings dwelt. (Toida Michizo, 1957:4-7 cit. Ortolani, 1984:176)

Furthermore, the Nō school of acting is dependant on the earlier *Za* (companies) of *sarugaku* and *dengaku* schools of performance, many of whom were sponsored by either shrines or temples (Ortolani, 1995:86). Prior to the rise and patronage of the *Shogunate*, Nō performers were exempt from taxes but, at the same time, also required to live in villages reserved for societal outcasts. Scholarship on the topic, from the early 1980s by Toshio Akima (1982) has suggested that *Kan'ami* and *Zeami*['s] family lineage can be traced back to the socially ostracised group *senmin* who 'held more or less the same religious belief dedicated to the appeasement of the deceased's souls' (Akima, 1982:502); and that 'this families specialisation provides a plausible origin for Zeami's frequent use of ghosts as protagonists in his Nō plays' (Ortolani, 1995:86). Further notes provided by Akima (1982:503) remark that Nō held a relatively low social status at the time of its genesis; the suffix *-ami*, according to Akima, suggests an affiliation with the Buddhist sect *Ji-shu* who;^{10&11}

...had many devotees, almost exclusively among the lowest strata of society, especially the *senmin* class, and its priests usually had the names ending in 'ami' (Akima, 1982:503)

Ji-shu, was otherwise known as *Yuguo-shu* as the sects priests never took up fixed residence and instead moved from location to location calling Japanese citizens to engage in their *nenbutsu odori* (prayer dance) (*loc. cit.*).¹² Consequently, following the patronage of Nō by the *Shogunate*, the practitioners still travelled, much like their forbearers – *Kan'ami*, for example ‘died in the Suruga province (now Shizuoka prefecture), some 300 kilometres from the capital’ (Akima, 1982:504). Which suggests that the history of religious practice was still strong with the practitioners of Nō performance and as such it can be traced in their works and treaties on the topic.

Kabuki: a note on ritual and theatrical technique

Kabuki appeared towards the latter end of the 16th Century. As a theatrical genre, Kabuki, differed greatly from Nō; unlike Nō, Kabuki theatre had to support itself commercially, outside of the aristocratic theatre bracket. Therefore, Kabuki had to be in a position of open constant self-evaluation; thereby tailoring every performance to the audience's demands and interests. But, unlike Nō, Kabuki's unfixed theatrical style, with no entrenched dogma and artistic heritage meant that the genre could develop within a constant state of flux - this led to Kabuki not having a definitive theatrical form but rather incorporating various theatrical styles and techniques. Kabuki is not a representation of Japanese culture at its purest but ‘provides a comprehensive insight into average Japanese taste and reveals much of Japanese culture not expressed in the Nō ...’ (Earnst, 1974:2). Kabuki therefore explored the changing culture of Japan incorporating it into a theatrical narrative and cultural history. Whereas Nō performance dealt heavily with the Zen practice (Ortolani, 1995:172), Kabuki provides an interesting insight into folk beliefs of the working classes. From the performances of Kabuki, it should be noted that these 16th century viewers were just as concerned with the spirits of other worlds whether Shinto *kami* or Buddhist *Bodhisattva* as their 14th Century predecessors (*loc. cit.*).

Important to this study, is the way in which Kabuki used the formulaic layout of indigenous folk rituals within their productions, specifically ‘in plays adapted from the Nō,’ (Ortolani, 1995:173). This pieces would be staged for a predominantly Buddhist audience, as their viewers, mainly the Japanese working class, wished to see spirits acted out on stage, and resolutions found by:

...the bridging of the gap between the world of our experience and the ‘other dimension’ – where divine powers, friendly and revengeful ghosts, and strange animal spirits influence the human condition. (Ortolani, 1995:173)

These ritual practices both rely heavily on a syncretic application of religious practice. Within Japan, for example, scholars including that of Hendrik Kraemer (2004[1938]:39) have remarked that there is an overwhelming syncretic influence within religious practices being adhered to in conjunction with one another; he remarks that:

In Japan the pilgrims and tourists sacrifice their homage-coin (*saisen*) alike at Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines and Roman Catholic cathedrals (Kraemer, 2004[1938]:39)

As well as this, the Korean *Mansin* practice an adoption of Buddhist spirituality within their practices. More recent scholarship in the field, including that of Andre Droogers (2004[1995]), suggests a semi-actor-centric approach in which there is an interrelation between actors and social and symbolic structures; leading to interpretation of various events (Droogers, 2004[1995]218-9). Moreover, Droogers asserts that, syncretism:

Flourishes where playfulness gets a chance, that is, where social structural constraints are less imposing and where actors' subjectivity and subjectivity are offered space. (Droogers, 2004[1995]:234)

Meaning that through play, through ‘acting’ the participants are able to commune with various religious practices. The following section will seek to dwell on Thomas Tweed's theoretical basis before exploring contextual Shakespeare productions within both Korea and Japan.

3 - RITUAL AND PERFORMANCE

Religious flows cross space-time

Tweed (2006:54), within his definition of religions, describes religious practice as organic-cultural flows. The following segment will unpack the notion of the organic-cultural flows before assigning the way in which it is applicable to the following discussion. For Tweed, the religious flows, discussed previously, become ‘sacrosapes’ (Tweed, 2006:64),¹³ consequently suggesting that religions interact on both individual and communal levels in parallel. Furthermore, for Tweed, this does not reach far enough; religions have to become an ‘organic-cultural flow’ (*loc. cit.*). Tweed is not suggesting that religions are only the mechanics of the mind and the result of evolution. But as Dan Sperber, a cognitive anthropologist, proposed “the interpretations of cultural trajectories like religion cannot ignore ‘the micro-mechanisms of cognition and communication’ (Sperber cit. Tweed, 2006:65), which to some extent involve the repetitive actions, vocalisations and performances of theatre for both efficacy and entertainment.

Tweed's organic-cultural flows provide two important factors that both work in conjunction with the other. The understanding that (1) humanity has a capability to process, to an extent, emotional and cognitive markers that allow

humans to interact with their peers and environment; and that (2) religious divergence has been a positive factor alongside other culturally important activities (including theatre, music and art). Thereby leading to the understanding that ‘...religions can be imagined as a confluence of flows in which organic channels direct cultural currents’ (Tweed, 2006:66); which within the modern period further interacts. For example, the *Mansin* of Korea’s religious path has been forged through a series of both organic and cultural factors but their interpretation of other organic channels such as Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* alongside their emotional and cognitive development, as a community, has allowed for further interaction of organic and cultural elements.

Although ultimately, as Richard Schechner asserts, regardless of whether the change is permanent or temporary, performers are changed by the activity of performing (Schechner, 1994:4). The following section considers specific examples provided by various scholars through ethnographic fieldwork in both Korea and Japan; and how it is that the participants have interwoven their cultural framework and sacrosapes into Shakespearian tragedy.

Theatre as Ritual

Schechner (1994:120) remarks that although there is a definite and distinct interaction between both ritual process and theatre there are also marked differences, he notes that: ‘efficacy and entertainment are not so much opposed to each other; rather they form the poles of a continuum’ (*loc. cit.*). Although the polarity is based on the notions of performance for desired result or performance for entertainment, whether or not the performance can be understood as either ritual or ritualistic is dependent upon the situation. It is this flux, these organic and cultural outpourings that provide the ritualistic intention. Walraven’s (2009:59) discussion of the folklore performance which transformed spontaneously into a ritual act due to the relatives of the deceased being present at the performance. Without relatives, and others with a tangible link to the prison, the performance, arguably, would have been purely for entertainment purposes – yet it became an act entailing ritualistic intention as the performance held a ‘link to an absent other’ (those deceased) rather than just being ‘only for those [present]’ (Schechner, 1994:120). Simultaneously, it must also be noted that ‘no performance is pure efficacy or pure entertainment’ (*loc. cit.*), and that any performance, whether produced for either aesthetic or religio-ritualistic purposes, will cross boundaries and will flow between sacred and profane currents. A performance that might seem profane on the surface might have provided sacrosapes (Tweed, 2006:64) for individuals; and it is when these interact with both the individual and the greater community that and performances crosses boundaries.

Global Shakespeare

How was it that the work of the Bard of Avon found its way into East Asia? In the year 1853 Commodore Perry and his ship docked in Japan; on this journey the Commodore carried a copy of Charles and Mary Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare* (Ōuryeh, 2004:254). It was over a decade later that the first adaptations of Shakespeare began to be performed in Japan – unremarkably this began with Kabuki performances; since Kabuki was an ever changing medium that played to the general public rather than having the intense theatrical rigour associated with Nō theatre. Surprisingly, only thirty years later, in 1883, did Shakespeare become a part of Japanese curriculum (Ōuryeh, 2004:255).

Jong-hwan Kim (1995) notes that prior to 1906, Shakespeare was unknown within Korea, introduced as *Saygusbeea* (an obvious transliteration) to the Korean reader (Kim, 1995:37-8). Shakespeare was imported to Korea indirectly by Japan, due to their imperialist rule within Korea during from approximately 1910 till 1945 following the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905). These indirect translations in both Chinese and Japanese; were again comprised from the Lamb text which were articulated as narrative rather than play, ‘a genre more familiar to Koreans than faithful translations of Shakespeare’s originals would have been’ (Kim, 1995:38). Due to the influence of these indirect translations there has never been a history of legitimate productions of Shakespeare; rather the classical plot arcs are used as a base for embellishment.

During the period from 1948 until 1957, Kim (1995:41) notes, the Lamb tales were still popular, but more importantly several complete translations of Shakespeare were released including: ‘*The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, and *Romeo and Juliet*’ (*loc. cit.*). Whilst Kim notes that these translations encouraged more performances of Shakespeare in Korea; what is more important is the translators choice of play, all of the above list, bar *The Merchant of Venice* fall under the category of Shakespearian tragedy; asserting that thematic accessibility is key for both the translator, performer and viewer; the Korean populace understands the ‘field of misfortune’ (Kim, 2003).

Theatrical Ritual of Musok

The *kut* ritual of the *Mansin* have, for the most part, been reserved purely for sacred contexts (Seo, 2002:97). Though, there are instances in which the *kut* rituals have been used for public performance. These include such performances of *Madanggut* which shifted the perception of *Musok* and the *Mansin* from superstition to cultural history (Lee, 2007: 203). Though, it was hoped that their performances would still hold a distinctive ritual element, that is: “transforming detached individuals into a collective who affirmed a shared vision of a new political and cultural community...” (Ibid.). This turn towards secular *kut* as folk performances for viewing are along the same lines as the performance at the

Sŏdaemun Prison discussed previously. What is important to consider here is the intent of the secular ritual being performed; is it purely for the purposes of entertainment, or are there deeper meanings associated with the performance? *Kut* ritual practice is adopted into various performances of Shakespearean tragedy across Korea as a way of: (1) reasserting classical Korean spiritual heritage and (2) as a method of allowing the public to access Shakespearean performance through their own cultural paradigm. One striking element that is common throughout is the adoption of the principle of *han* throughout these performances. *Han*, in its most simplistic form can be described as a negative mental state in which negative energies trapped within a person's spirit causing negative emotions (Hyon-u, 2011:106). Jung-Soon Shim (2004) asserts that there is more to *han* than it purely being a 'negative mental state' he moves forward to describe *han* as:

The collective trauma and the memories of suffering imposed upon them [the Korean people] in the name of oppression over the course of the nation's five thousand-odd years of history. (Shim, 2004:216)

Concurrently, it should be noted here, that it is understood that women are more often represented as being drenched by *han* as within a Confucian context women are regarded as inferior to men; meaning that this collective trauma has been installed from generation to generation through female Koreans. Schechner (2003:263) notes that the performance is encoded in a special kind of communication that is specifically available to the audiences that are witnessing the performances; the performance, for Schechner, never truly belongs to the performer, it is an embodied communal action that seeks to resolve 'the collective traumas' within a specific context. He notes that, 'performance behaviour isn't free and easy, it never wholly 'belongs to' the performer' (Schechner, 2003:264). Moreover, the performer is embodying a constant balance between this world in which the performance takes place and the world of the practitioner's spirituality that the performance points to; thereby transforming themselves for the purposes of the event to take place; at the end they return, no longer within the realms of performance but carrying with them all they have learnt and gained from the process. The following section aims to discuss two performances of Shakespearean tragedy within South Korea; firstly, the 1995 interpretation of *Hamlet - Ophelia*, *Nu-eyu, Na-e Chimshilo* (*Ophelia: Sister, come to my bed*) - and secondly a distinctly female-led interpretation of *Macbeth* entitled *Lady Macbeth* first produced in 1998 by the acclaimed Korean director Han Tae-Sook.

A Shamanic Shakespeare; a Tungus tragedy

Again this study returns to the same question, why tragedy? Within Korea the first complete translation of a Shakespearean play was *Hamlet* (Hyon-u, 2011:104). Hamlet,

in terms of lines, is the longest play in the Shakespearean canon at 4,024 lines. Therefore, it could be argued that *Hamlet* must be significant, in some way, to the Korean people. Hamlet was also the first complete Shakespeare to be performed in 1949 at Chungang University (Hyon-u, 2011:105). The outbreak of the Korean War (1950-1953), following the imperialist occupation by Japan meant that South Korea was in a state of political upheaval. It is this upheaval coupled with the first line of Shakespeare translated into Korean. "To be or not to be" may have sounded like a 'proposition of survival' to Koreans' (*loc. cit.*); one of Shakespeare's most famous lines, within Korea during the year 1915, became a great message of social justice to the Korean people.

Salka jookulka hanan kushi munjeroda
To live or to die, that is the question
(Shin, 1998:28 cit. Hyon-u, 2011:105).¹⁴

Hamlet expresses his ultimate suffering during his soliloquy "to be or not to be" during which he states that:

Hamlet

...For who would bear the whips and
scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's
contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels
bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,...

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

(Hamlet, III:i: 70-77; 88-89)

Ophelia epitomizes the view of the Korean woman, a concept that will be discussed further in the proceeding discussion; that is why she has so easily been embellished to become the shaman. The obedient Ophelia differs from other Shakespearean heroines (Hyon-u, 2011:106) who might rebel against their fathers such as the famous protagonist Juliet Capulet or King Lear's youngest daughter Cordelia. Ophelia's respite comes only in her madness, her psychosis, her trance-possession in which she is 'freeing herself from conventions and prejudice' (*loc. cit.*). The heroine of Hamlet is drenched in *han*, these ill feelings that allow her to draw closer to the spirit world; it is through this that Ophelia becomes *Mansin*. In *Ophelia: Sister, Come to My Bed* (1995) we find Ophelia, acting as a shaman, becoming possessed by the ghost of King Hamlet. This alternate production contains only three main characters; Hamlet, Laertes and Ophelia who are assisted by a chorus of three monks who constantly

provide a heavy rhythmic percussion background and play other characters within the production (Hyan-u, 2011:108). Once again, Ophelia is portrayed to find relief through spirit possession.

Ophelia

Oh, oh, my lord, somebody's getting inside my body!

*(Suddenly **Ophelia** utters a spell and shakes her body as if a shaman [entered] by a spirit)*

Ophelia

Oh, I am dreadful!

Hamlet

Ophelia!

*(**Hamlet** is pushed away by something invisible at the moment when he touches **Ophelia**. The **Ghost of King Hamlet** stands just behind **Ophelia**. The Ghost is performed by a big puppet, which is operated by three monks... It resembles **Hamlet**, and is red as if burning. **Ophelia** is possessed by the ghost. Her body moves in time with the ghost's movements.)*

Hamlet

Ophelia? Or a phantom?

Ophelia

(In a harsh voice of a man) Hamlet my son! (spreads her arms)

(Jo, 1995:8 cit. Hyon-u, 2011:109)

What is very obvious here is that the ghost of the deceased King Hamlet possesses Ophelia, and seeks to communicate verbally (as discussed above) with the young Hamlet. Throughout this production the three Monks appear at a small altar bringing candles; this addition of Buddhist metaphor is important for the audiences understanding of the Ophelia-complex. Buddhist rhetoric asserts freedom from worldly emotions and desires; yet Ophelia is trapped (*loc. cit.*). Her love for Hamlet is not returned; he disdains women following Gertrude's remarriage so soon after the death of his father, her love for Laertes is impossible, due to its incestuous nature. Therefore, her only way to relieve her unrelenting *han* is through possession; through death; to a rebirth with the hope of finding her path once more.

The assertion of 'Koreanness' (Im, 2008:262) throughout any production is imperative to provide the performers with a sense of national identity; and this is not only seen within the diverse productions of *Hamlet* that have taken place within Korea. Another strong female character can be found in Shakespearian tragedy: Lady Macbeth. Acclaimed Korean director Han Tae-Sook's production of *Lady Macbeth*¹⁵ (1999¹⁶) runs in line with a general theme of Shakespearian reinterpretations within Korea; a performance

based around the female point of view (Shim, 2009:64). It seems as though it was two main elements that provided the basis for Sook's production. (1) The evolution of Lady Macbeth's sacroscape through the dissolving and integrating of male characters within the production. Jung-Soon Shim (2009:64) asserts that the characters of the Doctor (mainly present in Act V) and the traditional lead Macbeth were merged 'thus weakening the character density of the male roles' (*loc. cit.*). Through this process the character of Lady Macbeth becomes fully awakened and encapsulated within the story line of the main plot rather than her status in the Shakespearian original where she is relegated to sub plot, rather than the tendency for her internalised traumas being relegated to sub-plot. The beginnings of Lady Macbeth's personal trauma is first instigated during Act II; both herself and Macbeth have plotted to kill King Duncan and Macbeth has been set to task. Here the empowered Lady Macbeth becomes intoxicated on the impending death of Duncan, yet is fearful of what is to come.

Lady Macbeth

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;

What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.

Hark! Peace! (Macbeth, II:II:1-3)

Hark! The screech of an Owl sends Lady Macbeth, otherwise intoxicated – she is prepared to instigate the killing of Duncan. She drugs the guardsmen by her own hands; Lady Macbeth is implicated. She has blood on her hands.

Lady Macbeth

My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white.

(Macbeth, II:II:63-4)

Since within a translation of Shakespeare it is not possible to instigate the iambic pentameter other methods have to be adopted to show the characters emotional development during the course of the piece. Moreover, here within the canonical text, by counting out the syllables that Lady Macbeth is speaking it can be understood that a pause of four beats should take places before moving on to the next section of script. For example:

Lady Macbeth

U / U / U / U / U / [My hands are of your colour; but I shame]

U / U / U / . - - - [To wear a heart so white.]

U / U / U / U / U / ; [I hear a knocking at the south entry;]

U / U / U / U . - - [retire we to our chamber]

In the case of *Lady Macbeth* it is notable that within the video numerous motifs are painted across the walls of the stage in the shapes of ghouls and shadows provided to show the detrition of Lady Macbeth's mental wellbeing which appear and disappear back into the darkness just as quickly as her the canonical speech would pass. Once again we find a female character drenched in *han*; Shim (2009:65) asserts that *han* is linked with a notion of personal destiny and that these feelings can be described as 'knotted *han*... [that] has to be dissolved or purged' (*loc. cit.*). The use of three male witches within this piece of theatre has to be assessed. Han Tae-Sook notes that the male witches can be described as supernatural forces equivalent to lesser deities of the *Mansin's* shamanic pantheon. Walraven (2009:57) for example, notes that it would be reductive to speak of the pantheon of the *Mansin* generally as each individual shamanic practitioner revers different spirits via different methods.

Kurosawa: Nō and cinematic ritual

I like [Nō] because it is the real heart, the core of all Japanese Drama. Its degree of compression is extreme, and it is full of symbols. (Akira Kurosawa cit. Richie, 1973:117)

Akira Kurosawa, an acclaimed Japanese director created several cultural translations of Shakespearian tragedy during his career; which now sit in his 'cinematic canon.' Firstly, in 1957, *Komonosu-jo* known by its English title *Throne of Blood*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; and secondly *Ran*,¹⁷ in 1985, an alternate adaptation of *King Lear* in which the traditional three sisters are presented as the three sons of an aged emperor.

Katie Taylor-Jones in her text *Rising Sun, Divided Land* (2013) deals specifically with both Japanese and Korean cinema. More importantly, to this study, she underlines the definite interaction between nation and cinema asserting that: (1) cinema provides national audiences symbols of their identity; (2) that there is a constant interplay between nation and culture and that, (3) it is these ideals of nation and culture that traverse cinema as part of a wider dialogue (Taylor-Jones, 2013:2-4). Furthermore, Taylor-Jones remarks that it was through the *Jidai-geki*, or period film, that sought to break away from the formulaic structure of early theatre (Taylor-Jones, 2013:12); Kurosawa sought to adopt and reinterpret its ritual praxis. Women attained the right to vote in Japan in 1946 (Taylor-Jones, 2013:18), although this study will not focus on Kurosawa's *Waga Seishun ni Kuinashi* [*No Regrets for Our Youth*] (1946), it is important to highlight that the film, released in the same year as the vote edict; displays strong independent female protagonists who fight against negative odds. Thereby suggesting Kurosawa's tendency to portray strong female roles; a premise that will be further underlined in the following discussion regarding *Throne of Blood* (1957).

Komonosu-jo [*Throne of Blood*] (1957).

It is from the very inception of this piece of black and white cinema that we begin to understand the context; the sound of a harsh flute is played repetitively as the titles roll down the screen. This flute, Kishiko Masuo (1997:9) notes, is a traditional instrument of Nō theatre drenched in theatrical significance, for example, just prior to the appearance of the Witch, a shrill sound of the flute, discordant with a western ear, appears, synonymous with the appearance of a spirit (Ortolani, 1984:177; Hoile, 1987:31). Instruments, traditionally used by Nō theatre, are also played leading up to the murder of Tsuzuki (the Duncan character) in which Washuzi (the Macbeth character) is led by his wife Asaji towards the corner of the room; the door leading towards Tsuzuki's sleeping quarters. It is through the murder of Tsuzuki and the subsequent killing of the guard whom Asaji framed with the blooded spear that there is a realisation:

Macbeth [Washuzi] and Lady Macbeth [Asaji] have in fact stepped into another world where the inverted ethics of the Witches are its only principle... He [Washuzi] realizes that he can no longer return to the real world where he used to be, and the only way to 'exist' is to carry on their deeds. (Masuo, 1997:26)

Concurrently the self-destructive nature of both a traditional Macbeth character and Washuzi can be seen. It is inevitable, Henry Somers-Hall (2013:76) notes, that an external force will destroy Macbeth; but it is through the ambitions of both him and Lady Macbeth that this happens. Ultimately; it could be understood that the three central female characters control the actions of the protagonist. (1) The spirit (archetypal Witch) through her prophecy; (2) Asaji through persuasion and (3) the midwife, who stops Washuzi from looking upon Asaji following the stillbirth of his heir, '[t]hus sealing the association with women within the film with outside forces that control the destiny of Washizu' (Somers-Hall, 2013:80). This idea of existence through fate and unchanging reality can be traced throughout the entire film towards the climatic ending. Scores of arrows surround Washuzi, he is no longer able to escape his fate; each time he turns to move another score of arrows blocks his path – in one movement he must face his destiny and also his death.

Lady Asaji, portrayed by the late Isuzu Yamada, embodies traditional disciplined Japanese performance. Asaji's appearance throughout the film (fig. 1) is synonymous with the *Deigan* Nō mask, used to portray a vengeful spirit (fig. 2). The two images have consistency; from the dark markings atop of both temples on the faces as well as the styling of hair with a central parting and small amounts tracing down the face whilst the rest is tied back. Scholars, including Donald Richie (1998) and Masuo (1997) remark that it is not purely Lady Asaji's aesthetic but her entire performance that embodies the theatrical technique and philosophy of Nō theatre. Richie notes that within *Throne of Blood*:

...the Noh elements are mostly associated with Asaji – the Lady Macbeth role – for she is the most limited, the most confined, the most driven, the most evil. She moves heel to toe, as does the Noh actor. (Richie, 1998:117)

Parallel to this, Masuo (1997:24) asserts that Asaji adopts the prescribed movement techniques of Nō actors throughout her performance. As discussed previously, the characterisation of Lady Asaji moves in line with that of the Nō actor – to move seven if the heart feels ten (Bulmner, 2007:15). Though what proves interesting when returning to previous discussion of Nō theatrical style is that it is most common for the *Shite* character (the protagonist) to wear a mask throughout the performance whilst the *Waki* (the supporting character) adopts a role of questioning and prompting throughout the performance. On returning to the bed chamber, there is a juxtaposition between stillness and movement at play; which embodies the internal struggle that that is taking place between Asaji and Washuzi (Jin, 2004:5). In this instance Asaji succeeds, as her “silence proclaims her determination, ambition, and thirst for blood and power, as well as a pure evil force” (ibid.).

Consequently, what needs to be considered here is that it is the possibility that Lady Asaji, within *Throne of Blood*, could be considered as the main protagonist whilst Washuzi (the Macbeth character) acts as purely a supporting role questioning the thoughts and actions of his wife; spirituality of the female was important to the inception of this production. Moreover taking into account films produced later in the career of Kurosawa it becomes apparent that he looks to portray images of strong women (Taylor-Jones, 2013:18). Citing Zeami[s] treatises, *On the Art of the Nō Drama*, Stephen Prince (1991) states:

[N]o matter how slight a bodily action if the motion is more restrained than the emotion behind it, the emotion will become the substance and the movements of the body its function, thus moving the audience. (Zeami cit. Prince, 1991:146)

This notion can be seen particularly within the three major female roles in Kurosawa’s production; Lady Asaji, the Forest Spirit (Witch) and the midwife. The Forest Spirit herself (fig. 3), a shaman, embodies the workings of the female *Miko* practitioner foretelling events to come to both the Macbeth and Duncan character who is seen, much like Lady Asaji to have the limited qualities of performance; these ritualistic qualities seek to heighten the drama, moreover:

The concentration and intensity of silence, a legacy of the pauses between chants and songs in the Noh tradition, creates the compelling force... (Jin, 2004:4)

Furthermore, as Lei Jin (2004:2) asserts: ‘silence and sound produce a compelling power in Akira Kurosawa’s *Throne of*

Blood’ (loc. cit.) and that his use of both sound and traditional Nō musical accompaniment provide ‘symbolic vehicles by which to explore the major themes of the movie...’ (loc. cit.).

Ran (1985).

Towards the end of his career, more than a quarter of a century following the success of *Throne of Blood*, Kurosawa presented another Shakespearian tragedy to a Japanese audience. *King Lear* is portrayed through alternative characterisations to the original text; the three sisters of the Shakespearian play are transformed into the three sons of an aged warlord (Hidetora Ichimonji), the two older seeking to turn the Empire away from the father’s goals. Kurosawa explicitly sought to place the Shakespearian plot arc of *King Lear* into a Japanese context, in an interview he stated:

As much as I love Shakespeare, *Lear* has always been a play that I have found extremely dissatisfying... From a Japanese point of view, *Lear* doesn’t seem to have any reflection on his past... (Kurosawa cit. Hoile, 1987:30)

King Lear as a text is different to that of other Shakespearian tragedies as throughout the performance the audience is not presented with any backstory to *Lear* as we are with both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Moreover due to Japanese Buddhist rhetoric history and past actions – karmic consequences – are of utmost importance to the Japanese populace. *King Lear* is therefore placed in the context of the Japanese Muromachi period (c. 16th century CE); the main source for the character of Lear (Hidetora) within Kurosawa’s *Ran* being the historical figure Mori Motonari, territorial warlord who has three sons (loc. cit.). The main body of the film focuses around Hidetora succumbing to madness in which he is tormented and relives his past deeds. Parallel with the ‘love test’ of Shakespeare’s *Lear* Kurosawa uses the famous Japanese folk tale of Mori Motonari *Mitsuya no kyokun* (the tale of three arrows) to outline how his three sons should work together in unity; Saburo (the ‘Cordelia’ character), Hidetora’s youngest Son breaks the three arrows across his knee in anger. Richie describes the event as follows:

He [Hidetora] gives them an object lesson in cooperation. Taking three arrows, he can easily break each. But then he demonstrates that if one puts three arrows together, they cannot be broken... Saburo, the youngest son, is disturbed that his father has so rashly given up his empire and does not trust his elder brothers. So he takes the bundle of arrows and breaks them over his knee... [Hidetora] flies into a rage and banishes the loyal son (Richie, 1998:214)

Within *King Lear* Cordelia, the youngest daughter of Lear presents a similar message in the following lines:

Cordelia: I love your Majesty
According to my bond; no more no less
(King Lear, I:I;91-2)

What is interesting here is that Eric Dodson-Robinson (2013) notes that (1) Mori's failed lesson, by Hidetora, begins to explore the fracturing of the great clan that sets the tone for the remainder of the film (Dodson-Robinson, 2013:234) and that (2) Kurosawa is attempting to explore a larger political message in post-War Japan as 'Japanese schools still teach Mori's lesson of the arrows as a broader allegory for national unity...' (Dodson-Robinson, 2013:235). Dodson-Robinson's argument is that *Ran* has direct relevance in the socio-history of Japan; who in 1985 would still be negating both the atrocities caused and the traumas received following both WWII and the cold war; leading to what Dodson-Robinson (2013:233) understands as karmic retribution that cases past 'violence against others [to] entail self-fragmentation' (*loc. cit.*). Moreover the Buddhist rhetoric that presents itself within the opening of *Ran* and the tale of the three arrows can be seen throughout the entirety of the epic. It could, then, be asserted that the cultural relevance of post-War Japanese society and overarching Buddhist belief are impacting both the direction and viewing of the film, thereby leading the viewer towards a greater understanding of the socio-historical narrative of Japanese religion and culture meaning that *Ran* (1985) in essence becomes a 'sacroscape' for religio-cultural understandings; the medium of Shakespearian plot arc acting as a base for this.

Yong Li Lan (2008:188) states that Kurosawa not only sets aside the Shakespearian text but also reduces the dialogue throughout the film. Rather than an embodiment of a personal tragedy *Ran* explores tragedy as a spectacle, a tragedy of post-War Japanese society. Richie asserts that there are many similarities between both *Ran* and *King Lear*: 'Lear has his fool, and Hidetora has Kyoami; Cordelia dies, and so does Saburo [Hidetora's youngest son]' (Richie, 1998:216). The major plot arcs of the story are retained – as was the case with *Throne of Blood*. Stephen Prince, quotes Kurosawa who states that:

[S]ome of the essential scenes of this film [*Ran*] are based on my wonderings how God and Buddha, if they actually exist, perceive this human life, mankind stuck in the same absurd behaviour patterns (Kurosawa cit. Prince, 1991:284-5)

Here we find Kurosawa specifically referencing both 'God and Buddha' (*loc. cit.*), which provides a distinct frame of reference of the interrelation between Japanese Buddhism, Shinto and indigenous folk beliefs as per the discussion above regarding the origins and histories of Nō, as discussed earlier. Whereas Nō performance relies quite heavily on Zen Buddhist treaties, presented by *Zeami* other theatrical traditions including that of Kabuki incorporate folk beliefs into their performances. Moreover the culturally relative plot of Kurosawa's *Ran*, interwoven with the plot arc of

Shakespeare's *King Lear* allows the audience to fully interact with the performance.

4 – CURTAIN CALL

The intention of this study was to assess the interaction between religious flows and ritual performance in relation to Shakespearian tragedy in East Asia. Indigenous practices of the female Korean *Mansin* and Japanese *Miko* have been used to exemplify the inter-relation between religious flows and ritualistic Shakespearian performance. Thomas Tweed's theory of religions - *Crossing and Dwelling* (2006) - provided a theoretical basis for this assessment.

Important discussion regarding the interrelated themes between feudal Japan and Elizabethan England provided an understanding of transferable themes. The use of traditional Japanese theatrical technique, based heavily on folk ritual, can be seen to parallel with the Christian ritual presented within Shakespeare's works. Moreover Tweed's theory asserts that religions are formed through the interrelation of both organic and cultural flows. This is further underlined in the way that Korean interpretations of both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* use strong female roles to underline elements of the Korean national identity of *han*. The previous study provided two examples of this: *Ophelia: Sister, Come to My Bed* (1995) and Han Tae-Sook's *Lady Macbeth* (1999). *Ophelia: Sister* uses the strong female role of Ophelia as Shaman, which comes to the forefront when the dead King Hamlet possesses her. *Lady Macbeth*, as a piece of theatre, seeks to focus the performance around the eponymous protagonist: within the performance male actors multi-role in order to lessen the male character density. The pseudo-shamanic enactments by the male actors, to outline Lady Macbeth's mind-set provide the audience with an understanding of the 'feminine mind-set' of the Korean woman, moreover, the Korean shaman.

Both Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957) and *Ran* (1985) have sought to explore the idea of nationhood and early theatrical traditions, influence by the practices of the *Miko*, through cinema. Furthermore, *Throne of Blood* (1957) presents three powerful female roles that utilise traditional Nō theatrical technique in their performance; the main example discussed previously was that of Lady Asaji (the Lady Macbeth character). Rituals, even cinematic rituals, are therefore individual to their audience thereby suggesting that there is an interchanging interaction between organic and cultural outpourings; thereby fluctuating the continuum between efficacy and entertainment (Schechner, 1994).

Further study in this area would be invaluable; specifically in relation to the cinematic interpretation of Shakespeare within Asia more generally. For example the Thai film *Shakespeare Must Die* (2012), now banned for 'inflaming political passions in a country where it is taboo to criticise the monarchy' (Associated Press in Bangkok, 2012) or *Ye Yan [The Banquet]* (2006) a Chinese interpretation of *Hamlet*. More recently, due to more accessible translations of Shakespeare's works, directors have started to work on

Fig. 1.

The late Isuzu Yamada portraying Lady Asazi. The scene where this still is taken from is when Asazi is descending into madness following the stillbirth of her child.

Image © A. Kurosawa, 1957. Available from: <https://goo.gl/cFXxYN>



Fig. 2.

A traditional Deigan mask used to portray the Japanese *Onryo* spirit. 'The gold pigment [in the eyes] appears to sparkle like tears, representing the inner struggle of the character.' (www.the-noh.com)

Image © T. Morita. Available from: <http://goo.gl/dlcSX7>



Fig. 3.

The Witch in Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood*

Image © A. Kurosawa (1957). Available from: <http://goo.gl/DzP5ti>



Shakespeare's other genres, one example of this is the South Korean *Nalnari jongbujeon [Frivolous Wife]* (2008) based on the classic comedy *The Taming of the Shrew*.

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- Yē Yan [The Banquet]*. (2006. dir. Xiaogang Feng). Huayi Brothers, Media Asia Films. (131 min)



Shamanic Initiation by the Trickster

By Juan J. Rios

Abstract

This paper explores a possible initiation into a shamanic world through the myth of the Trickster. I am referring to a series of events in what may have been an alternative shamanic reality into which I was thrust due to a totally unexpected encounter with something I can only describe as energy, very powerful energy. First, I will tell the origin of the Trickster energy; next describe my experiences that were probably due to the energy, which may have been the Trickster manifesting in my life in various guises as witch, comedian, healer, animal, and devil. Hopefully in the telling, I will reveal something of value to myself and maybe the narrative will bring a new facet to light on an ancient figure.

Keywords: *Trickster, ritual, Wicca, OTO, Priestess.*

Nowhere does this disparity between the neat charts and glossaries in the textbook and the messy nature of real life come into clearer focus than when a researcher personally lives through an anomalous experience...the experience itself opens new horizons of intelligibility in a way that is unexpected, perhaps antithetical to the logical, rational mind (Bronson, 1992, p. 9)

This paper explores a possible initiation into a shamanic world through the myth of the Trickster. I am referring to a series of events in what may have been an alternative shamanic reality into which I was thrust due to a totally unexpected encounter with something I can only describe as energy, very powerful energy. In truth, I am still mystified by my encounter, and, because I have over 30 years of experience in a science profession, this paper is my rational attempt to explain the events and perhaps obtain closure. However, if the cause of my experience was the Trickster, I realize attempting to snare the Trickster in a laboratory web to study it under a microscope is a farce.

The tragedy of the Western mind is the conviction that closure, Truth, and certainty are possible and desirable goals. Viewed from a distance this appears to be not only a loss of wonder, presence, and comedy, but an altogether ludicrous folly...(Kremer, 2012, p.67)

Hearing the laughter of my Trickster friend ringing in my ears prevents me from analyzing the story I am about to tell, so I will only recount it as memory recalls. First, I will recount the origin of the energy; next describe my experiences that were probably due to the energy, which may have been the Trickster manifesting in my life in various guises as witch, comedian, healer, animal, and devil. Hopefully in the telling, I will reveal something of value to myself and maybe the narrative will shine a new light on an ancient mythological figure.

The Ritual

In shamanic societies especially, ritual is a stylized technology, one whose symbols and metaphors may well...provide a link between the ordinary world and

those realms purportedly traversed by the shaman. (Krippner, 2000, p. 94)

My story starts with a sacred ritual, more specifically a Wicca ritual. In 2001 I was ordained as a priest into a Wicca Order after six months of weekly classes. In my first class that had about 20 students, the instructor, a Wiccan Priestess, demonstrated how to cast a circle, which is a basic ritual in Wicca. Generally, the purpose of casting a circle is to create a protective energy barrier between the practitioner and the outside world. In Wicca lore, one is said to be "between the worlds" when inside the circle. Within the circle, protected by the energy barrier, the practitioner creates a sacred space in which further ritual work can be performed such as casting spells or summoning the assistance of gods or goddesses. It is "in this world of shamanic ritual and mythic stories where trickster roams" (Kremer, 2012, p. 66) where I first shook hands with the Trickster.

During the first class, right after the Wiccan Priestess had cast the circle, I felt a tremendous downpour of energy emanating from somewhere above the energy barrier of the Wicca circle. The energy cascaded through my body, overflowing me as if I were a cup. I became frightened thinking the energy would engulf me. Around me, I began to see the energy barrier of the Wicca circle as a golden glowing sphere of energy, which I now assume to have been caused by my heightened state of awareness due to the energy downpour. A strong feeling prevented me from simply walking through the energy barrier, and I begged the Priestess, to cut a hole in the energy field so I could escape. While I returned to complete all the classes, I was terrified for the next six months, fearing the experience would reoccur, and next time I would dissolve into the energy and not return (Tart, 1986; Garcia-Romeu & Tart, 2013, p. 134).

In succeeding classes, I discussed my experience of the energy downpour with class members, but other participants in the circle did not recount similar experiences or any other type of anomalous occurrences. Therefore, I assume I was the only one who had felt the downpour of energy out of the approximately 20 people in the first circle cast by the Wicca Priestess. As for me, for the next six months during my Wicca training, my body cells sang a Siren song attracting a frightening but sometimes wondrous alternate shamanic

reality. With time, the energy gradually faded till it finally left, possibly leaving residues still lingering inside me.

Because the energy descended in the sacred space of a Wicca circle that had been created by a ritual, it is my opinion that, if the Trickster did greet me in the Wicca circle, his purpose was benevolent. Lewis Hyde (1997) stated the Trickster operates in the realm of the sacred so a ritual setting is important for the Trickster otherwise it is not the real Trickster but just something out to con you (p. 13).

The Story Begins

Even in the "hard" sciences a sack of cold data is not an explanation. When you or I ask why something is, we aren't looking for only the facts that actually make up the what. We are looking for the inside story, the narrative, the tale of what the facts really mean. (Chalquist & Elliot, 2009, p. 2)

In this paper I attempt to paint a brief picture of the shamanic world that I may have been thrust into by what may have been the agency of the mythic figure of the Trickster. By telling stories of my time in what I believe to be an alternative shamanic reality, I hope to bring my experiences to life and also animate the Trickster as an entity active in the modern world of human affairs.

What follows is an abbreviated version of events that occurred during my six months of training. Burdening the narrative with lots of details would needlessly add to the length of this tale, and, in my opinion, the added details would not significantly add to the story of being thrust into an alternative reality. So, I leave out many details as well as stories such as the alarming sensation of being carried aloft by a giant moth, feeling a tremendous rush of energy from the earth, being slammed by a force emanating from another Wiccan, sun beams flossing my chakras and so on.

The Wiccan Priestess

While the Trickster in mythology is usually male probably because patriarchal tales stifle female voices, the conduit for the Trickster energy, which poured into me in the Wicca circle, was a female witch. Luckily, I was trained by a priestess who had at one time taught English literature in a local community college, and she injected mythology, archetypes, Bradley, Graves, and Campbell into the Wicca classes I attended. She had founded the Wicca Order and was also active in the branch lodge of the OTO founded by Aleister Crowley whose rituals contain sexual elements. In addition to her other part time jobs, she was also a dancer in clubs, the type where men thrust bills into G-strings. She told amusing, intelligent stories about her experiences in the clubs and related them to her magical training. But, I was never completely comfortable with her stories probably due to biblical tales about sexually empowered and therefore evil females about which, in my youth, my pastor endlessly warned us against. However, in all the time I knew her, the

instructor appeared to live by a strict moral code and at times even seemed a little prudish.

The Wiccan Priestess and I

One of the characteristics of a Trickster is sex. As Leeming and Page (1997) stated "he is sexually over-active, irresponsible, and amoral. But it is that very phallicism that signifies his essential creativity" (p. 24). Likewise, my story has a creative, sexual component that I imagined connected the Wiccan Priestess and me in a nonphysical although somehow sexual bond for the length of my six month training. However, looking back on my time with the Priestess, I do admit that there may have been an element of infatuation and/or fantasy projection on my part that may have enhanced my connection with her. But, throughout my training, I never felt that the Wiccan Priestess related to me in a similar manner.

After the experience in my first Wicca circle, I felt soaked with the energy that drenched me, and, even though I was terrified by it, I also felt a certain power. As boys will, I did some amateurish rituals on my own outside of the Wicca classes which may have intruded into the sexual psychic realm of some of the female members of the group, I innocently state. As I was in one of these intrusive witchy realms, suddenly the Wiccan Priestess' very stern face appeared, as plain as day as they say, ordering me to stop, which I immediately did. Class met once a week, and, in the next class, the Priestess, without referring to me or even looking at me, explained that my type of actions resulted in undesirable ethereal manifestations between people which she could see in our everyday world.

In another experience, I was sitting in a dark theater watching a movie. Suddenly I felt what I can only describe as tongues of energy coming towards me in a malevolent manner. Instinctively, I reached out with my thoughts, grabbed and yanked the energy tongues towards me, causing them to snap back like rubber bands; stopping the attack. In the next class, the Priestess lectured on psychic self-defense, and one self-defense technique she explained was to use your mind to grab the energy tongues and yank them, as I had done. But again, she did not refer to me by name nor even look in my direction.

There were other stories of the energy connecting us, but I will recount only one more. As I was going about my daily business, I felt an enormous pair of eyes watching me. Eventually the eyes manifested themselves into a giant wolf head watching me over a period of a few days. As before, in the next class, the Wiccan Priestess gave a lecture on totems and stated her totem was the wolf.

Despite what occurred between us on some ethereal plane, I never felt inclined to discuss our psychic connection with the Wiccan Priestess. Also, for some reason, I never dwelt on the unseen bond we developed during the six months of training. To me, our magical connection was perfectly natural and there was no need to give it a second thought. It was as if my rational, science trained mind had

decided to take a vacation during my six months of Wicca training.

The Trickster Manifests as Comedian, Healer and Animal

In another story, the Trickster manifested as both a comedian and healer. Before Wicca class, I was so tired I did not want to attend. As soon as I lay on the bed to rest, I heard a persistent drumming sound from a single drum, which I now know is the type one hears at a drumming circle. However, at the time, I had never attended a drumming circle. I lived in a large apartment complex where I had never before heard drumming, and I never again heard drumming after this experience. The only type of music my neighbors played was rock or country western. Annoyed at the noise, I put my ear to all four walls including the floor to determine the origin of the drumming, but I failed to locate a source.

For some reason, I pretended to play a game with whatever was causing the drumming. I thought if I pretended to go to class, I would fool the “powers” who were creating the drumming, but, of course, my intention was not to attend class. As I lay in bed pretending I was about to get ready for class, the drumming did not stop but only increased in tempo. This really began to aggravate me. The more agitated I felt, the more energized I became. Finally in an exasperated and now highly energized state, I flew out the door and ran several times around the apartment building trying to locate the source of the drumming. There was absolute silence. Energized by the experience, I got in my car and drove to class.

At the Wicca class, the Priestess gave instructions on to how to arrive at the origin of any ailment predominate in our lives. In my case, it was a neck issue resulting from an injury when I was 14. To assist us in our meditative journey, she played a tape. The exact same single drumming sound I had heard in my apartment started to play. As soon as I heard the drumming sound, I immediately recalled a past life in China. In my past life, I got the impression I was some sort of smartass scholar who was executed by the state for my lack of respect for government/religious institutions. The type of execution was beheading, and the blade of the sword hit my neck at the exact same spot where I had injured my neck at age 14, which caused my ailment as an adult over 30 years later. From that point forward my neck started to heal.

Still under the influence of the energy that poured into me in my first Wicca class, I had another experience of the Trickster as an animal. The apartment complex in which I lived was approximately somewhere in the middle of the city in a sparsely wooded area near major traffic thoroughfares that acted as boundaries for any type of large animal migration. One night, soon after my drumming experience, I heard the noise of snapping wood and went to the balcony to investigate. Glancing down, I saw a herd of deer below my second story apartment balcony with a magnificent stag in the lead staring up at me. I saw the herd once and never again even though I stayed a couple of years in the

apartment, and, as I stated, the complex was thinly wooded so a deer herd could not hide. Also, I never saw any other type of wildlife in the area except for birds. I don't know if the drumming incident and the deer incident are somehow related, but, as the stag looked at me, it reminded me of the stag hunt in the *Mists of Avalon* in the anti-patriarchal retelling of the Arthurian legends.

The Terror

At first, underlying all my experiences was a terror of the energy finding me again, and, the next time, it would engulf and sweep me away to a place where I would never return. Perhaps the fear was responsible for first experiencing the Trickster as demonic although Hyde (1997) stated “the Devil is an agent of evil, but trickster is amoral, not immoral” (p. 10). Whatever the case, in my heightened state of awareness, which I assume was caused by the downpour of energy in the Wicca circle, I could have sworn there was a black hole localized in a certain part of the floor in my apartment, and the hole was a doorway to another spooky, evil reality lying just beyond my everyday shared reality. Had I the courage, I could have climbed down the gateway in my apartment floor and entered another dark dimension. For hours, I would sit on the couch staring at what I thought was a black hole in the floor, my imagination burning. Over time, I became anxious and lost weight. Hoping to drive away the evil spirits, I bought a black candle from the Wicca store. The proprietor, who knew me, gave me a rather worried look because this was powerful stuff I was purchasing.

I Begin to Understand

Burning the candle did not work because next on the list of terrors was a gorilla who would pop out of thin air and attack me in my apartment by rushing at me and making all sorts of growling, frightening faces. This went on for several weeks until one night, as I entered my bedroom, the gorilla rushed at me. Instinctively, I grabbed its face and off came a mask in my hand. Inside the gorilla suit was myself staring back at me. I'm certain this experience speaks volumes about me on some psychological level, but right now I hear the Trickster laughing harder than ever. It was at this point I started to comprehend just a little, and this set the stage for my next experience toward the end of my six months of Wicca training.

While sitting in a nearly empty, dark movie theater, unexpectedly, all around me in all the empty seats, the outline appeared of a figure in profile. I imagined it to be a male figure with sharp, angular features, sharp nose and chin, wavy flat top head slanting forward, and devilish grin. Also, there was something faintly reminiscent of an animal in the figure which I could not quite place. Even though the multiple apparitions were not staring straight at me, I felt their entire attention was focused directly on me. By this time in my story, I was not as terrified as in the beginning; however, I was unnerved but also curiosity began to spark.

Later, at a nearby park, as I casually walked across an open patch of grass enjoying the bright sun shining on me, suddenly light beams came straight at me as if they were on the attack. Startled, I dropped to my knees and instinctively put up a shield *à la* Star Trek. On the invisible shield I had somehow mysteriously created, the beams impacted and stopped. Continuing my hike, I began to see light beams slowly gather in front of me and form a picture. After a minute, a gigantic profile of light beams appeared to float in the air directly in front of me. As I stood staring at the lines of light, the floating beams reminded me of the profile of the figure I had seen in the darkened movie theater. I had a feeling that despite the human appearance this was some sort of animal representation from Native American mythology. Also, I felt the figure did not intend to harm me but was only teasing me. Curiously, as I recall, my rational, logical mind saw nothing unusual about the gigantic profile in light floating in front of me.

Bart the Trickster

Fourteen years later, while casting about for ideas to write this paper, my memory wandered back to that time in the park, and I suddenly had a revelation. The luminous figure I had seen in the park looked very much like the sharp lines and angles of Bart Simpson in profile with a devilish Coyote like grin slit half way up his face almost to his ear. Searching the internet I found there were many references to Bart Simpson as the Trickster. For example, after seeing a child hold a figure of Bart Simpson's head emerging from a toy dinosaur, Caputi wrote:

This brief moment crystallized much of what was churning around in my mind concerning popular culture and its gods, goddesses, heroes, and monsters. Bart Simpson beneath his obviously brash and bratty surface, is an archetypal trickster, a transformer or shapeshifter. (2004, p.3)

And so it was in my case. During my six months of Wicca training, a transformer or shapeshifter had appeared in my life that took on various guises: witch, comedian, healer, animal, light beams. Despite the variety of experiences, I now have a sense there was one underlying entity or energy causing the events and the flow of disparate experiences were somehow connected. There appeared to be a unity and a purpose to what had happened to me during my six months of Wicca training.

Why Would the Trickster Visit Me?

Trickster brings the unexpected and introduces the element of doubt into what was once certain. Trickster pokes holes in rigid boundaries and complicates situations with multiple points of view. It is the archetype that pushes us to question norms and move beyond known limits. (Azaria, 2015, p. 30)

In my opinion, my subconscious called the Trickster at a particular time in my life so I could question the normal and

push beyond my limited views, restricted by my very logical mind. Therefore, I and the Trickster co-created emotionally charged situations that explosively propelled a forward momentum in the story of my personal evolution. In writing about transpersonal (holotropic) experiences, Grof (2003) stated "holotropic states tend to engage something like an 'inner radar,' that automatically brings into consciousness the contents from the unconscious that have the strongest emotional charge and are most psychodynamically relevant at the time" (p. 58).

If I did experience a visitation by the Trickster, it may be that the reason the Trickster visited me in the Wicca circle is because I needed intense experiences at a particular time in the unfolding of my life in order to reach a higher level of evolution in my personal story. One way to evolve, whether one wants to or not, is through trickery that rattles cognitive faculties tied to traditional conscious perceptions of the world.

The underlying cognitive structures, or ways of thinking and perceiving, are so intimately associated with particular states of consciousness, and these in turn with traditional realms of being, that it is difficult to tease them apart and understand one without the other. (Combs, 2010, Kindle Locations 1596-1597).

Did the Shamanic World Initiate Me?

The Wicca Order had Elders who had spent their lives practicing shamanic rituals. A few weeks after experiencing the downpour of energy in the Wicca circle, one of the Elders looked at me, smiled and said, "You're primed." The discussion did not get much further than that one statement nor did I feel inclined to press the matter because frankly I was still in a terrified state of mind.

At the end of my six months of training, I underwent a ceremony and was ordained a priest in the Order. However, I did not pursue any further training nor did I ever take up any duties as a priest because, less than one year after being initiated, I left the city and lost touch with the Wiccan community. It has been almost 14 years since the end of my Wicca training, and, although, during those years, I made attempts to contact other Wiccans and Wicca organizations, no associations lasted for more than a few weeks. Since being ordained a priest in the Order, I never again had experiences comparable in intensity to those that I had during my six months of Wicca training.

If the Shamanic world did initiate me during my Wicca training, maybe being primed, as the Wiccan Elder stated, is a sort of initiation on some level that may lead to further initiations at a later date. Perhaps the previous experiences in my life since childhood may have led me to that point in time where I met the Trickster as an energy that may have initiated me into the world of the shaman. "The shamanic self is not so much constructed as affirmed and confirmed during initiations; it is the rigorous confirmation of

something which has already been in the process of construction from early on” (Kremer, 2000, p. 116).

Conclusion

Although I was terrified most of the time during my Wicca training, I now consider my overall experience with the Trickster in a positive light. Having the logical, rational cognitive structure of an environmental scientist ingrained by over 30 years of experience, I could have read for years about alternate shamanic realities and not understood what they were or necessarily believed in the truth of them. Now I know an alternate reality is possible alongside the traditional world most of us have all agreed to inhabit. Hyde (1997) makes clear the Trickster shakes our ossified world view in order to open new perspectives when he states “the Trickster disturbs the established categories of truth and by doing so opens the road to a possible new world. There are moments in life when the practice of one’s life and the myth of the Trickster meet” (p. 13).

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The image on the cover of this book represents the idea that brain state alterations at sacred sites allow us to re-experience memories that are woven into the morphogenetic fields of that place, an idea that originates with Paul Devereux’s empirical enquiry into dreams at sacred sites in Wales and England. This book examines how this investigation provides us with a new way of understanding consciousness, and a new direction toward a reconciliation of the divorce between matter and spirit. We explore the work of David Lukoff, and Stanislov and Christina Grof, the connections between the varieties of transformative experience in dream studies, ecopsychology, transpersonal psychology, and the anthropology of consciousness, as well as the overlap between David Bohm’s interpretation of quantum theory and Rupert Sheldrake’s hypothesis of formative causation.

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Mark A. Schroll, PhD, is best known for his papers on ecopsychology, transpersonal psychology, and the anthropology of consciousness. He is the author of over 35 academic articles in various edited books, journals and magazines. He is the founder of the International Association for Transpersonal Ecosophy.

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A Quantitative Investigation into the Paranormal Beliefs of the Contemporary Vampire Subculture

By Emyr Williams

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Abstract

It has been argued that the growing resurgence of contemporary vampire literature has resulted in re-emergence of the vampire as a new sexy modern beast to which one is no longer in fear, but rather to a creature that is respected desired and even wanted (Hjelm, 2009). Alongside the literature on fictional vampires, there exists a subculture of 'real' vampires who exist within a community that could be viewed as a new category of person (Laycock, 2010). The current study utilises quantitative responses to an online questionnaire established to measure levels of religious and paranormal beliefs among those who claim adherence to the real vampire subculture. A total of 1,384 respondents affiliated with the vampire subculture completed the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (Tobacyk, 2004). The data confirm that paranormal beliefs are held by a proportion of the subculture; that differences emerge between different groups affiliated with the subculture; and that, in general, the vampire subculture is more accepting of paranormal beliefs than the general public.

Keywords: *Paranormal Beliefs, Quantitative Research, Vampires*

Introduction

There exists in most of society a subculture of individuals who define themselves as being 'real' vampires. This group, distinct from the vampires of fiction (Hjelm, 2009; Jackson, 2012; Goodall & Williams, 2012), are defined by many (Laycock, 2009, 2010; Keyworth, 2002) as those individuals who have the need to consume (feed) on blood, the energy generated by others, or a combination of the both.

This group has been subject to much curiosity from researchers and authors for a number of years. These pieces of work often focus on individual cases to understand the complexities of this subculture, with specific reference to beliefs, customs and lifestyles. For example, Ramsland (1998) focused on case studies to identify the underlying reasons why individuals would choose to contribute to a vampiric lifestyle. These accounts of the vampire subculture demonstrate a deeply complex infrastructure in which different communities have developed. Developing this work, Russo (2005) and the VEWRS (2012) survey have highlighted that the community exists with varying groups of individuals each taking a specific worldview. Included in this network are sanguinarian vampires (those that consume blood), psychic vampires (those who draw on psychic energies), and hybrid vampires (those that combine different spiritual energies with vampirism). Alongside, this community also plays host to donors (who give their blood willingly to vampires), enthusiasts (those who are neither donor nor vampire, but sympathetic to the lifestyle), and role-players (those who wish to be vampires, and play the lifestyle). Russo (2005) highlights how, often, these different groups are in conflict with each other. For example, it is noted that the vampires will view role-players with disdain as simply being individuals interested in playing games (Laycock, 2010). It is therefore reasonable to assert that differing groups within the subculture will bring differing beliefs, opinions and motivations.

Keyworth (2002) provided a sociological extrapolation of the socio-religious beliefs of the vampire subculture. Keyworth's work highlights a community that is bonded by a shared belief system based around the notion of the vampire, but divided into distinct groups such as: vampires, blood-donors, mystical members that are appealed by the vampire spirituality, blood fetishists, and role-players. For Keyworth, this segmented and polycentric network of participants was held together by a fascination with the nature of 'vampirism.'

Following on from this work, Laycock (2010) argued that the presence of such a community is subject to a paradigmatic shift within contemporary understandings of what it is to be human. The challenge raised by Laycock's (2010) analysis allows individual vampires to be seen as a new category of human. Yet despite the framing of vampires as a new category of humans, the social and psychological worlds in which they live reflect the standards of human life (Ramsland, 2002; Russo, 2005), especially with regard to group structures, social etiquette and the reciprocity of norms and sanctions. Perhaps one key element that binds all writings on vampires together seems to be the connection of vampirism as behaviour and vampirism as a religious or spiritual manifestation. Williams (2016) developed the argument of the religious underpinnings of the real vampire through an exploration of over 219 unsolicited qualitative comments to a quantitative survey disseminated to this group. The analysis of these results demonstrated that, with regard to religious belief, three distinct themes emerged. First, it was noted that the vampiric lifestyle itself was not seen as a religious one, but rather religion was held in distinction from being a vampire. Second, there was an affiliation with pagan religion and philosophies. Third, there was an openness and acceptance of a transcendent plane that was manifest through spiritual entities. Further, these were borne out in religious experiences reflective of the underlying concepts of

the religious beliefs. The analysis revealed that the vampire subculture was open to the guiding force of spiritual energies be these as transcendent 'other,' or in the form of traditional religious Gods. Williams' (2016) work, however, suffers from two weaknesses. The first is that only comments from sanguine, psychic or hybrid vampires were included for analysis, and therefore the results give a limited view of the subculture as a whole. Second, the comments were collected as unsolicited comments at the end of a questionnaire designed to assess religious beliefs. Therefore, Williams had no opportunity to engage the respondents in dialogue to develop further their thoughts.

One way to address these weaknesses would be to employ an established measure of religious belief. Given the nature of the religious experiences established by Williams (2016), it can be argued that this subculture is open to paranormal experiences. The Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS; Tobacyk, 1988, 2004) provides a 26-item scale that measures paranormal belief on seven orthogonal subscales: traditional religious belief, psi, witchcraft, superstition, spiritualism, extraordinary life forms, and precognition. Tobacyk's conceptualisations of paranormal belief were driven by the understanding that paranormal phenomena are those that violate the basic principles of Western science (Tobacyk, 2004). Tobacyk proposed seven distinct areas of paranormal belief to be assessed (Traditional religious belief, psi, witchcraft, superstition, spiritualism, extraordinary life forms and precognition), with these groupings being confirmed in other studies (Lange, Irwin, & Houran, 2000). It is against this background that the current paper is set. The paper aims to develop the academic analysis of Keyworth (2002), Laycock (2010) and Williams (2016) by providing a map of the paranormal beliefs (as operationalized by Tobacyk, 1988, 2004) among all identified groups within the 'real' vampire subculture.

Methods

Participants

An online questionnaire was distributed via established real vampire internet forums. A total of 2,598 responses were received of which 1,384 were fully completed. The sample was equally divided between males (50%) and females (50%) with 10 respondents failing to provide their gender. With regards to age, 11% were aged under 20, 47% were in their twenties, 24% were in the thirties, 11% were in their forties, 3% were in their fifties, 1% in their sixties and 3% aged 70 or over. With regard to affiliation with the vampire community, the majority (57%) of sample were vampires made up of sanguine vampires (20%), psychic vampires (18%) and hybrid vampires (19%). The remainder of the participants were donors (5%), role-players (8%), or vampire enthusiasts (30%).

Measures

Paranormal Belief was measured using the Tobacyk Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (Tobacyk & Milford, 1983; Tobacyk, 2004). This 26-item measure operationalizes paranormal

belief in seven areas: traditional religious beliefs, psi-phenomena, cases of witchcraft, belief in superstitions, belief in spiritualism, belief in extraordinary life forms, and belief in precognition. Each item is assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale: agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree, and disagree strongly. Higher scores in this scale indicate a more accepting view of paranormal phenomena.

Analytical strategy

In order to properly assess the differing levels of agreement between each group a cross-tabulation routine utilising a chi-square routine was employed. The tables presented below record the percentage of those who endorsed (that is agreed and agreed strongly) a statement within each categorical group. The tables also present a chi-square value which demonstrates the variance between groups, alongside the probability levels. Following the guidelines established by the American Psychological Society, the cut-off point for probability has been established at $p < .05$.

Results

Table one presents the cross-tabulation with chi-square routine for the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale as divided by the differing components of paranormal belief highlighted within the scale. With relation to traditional religious beliefs, statistically significant differences can be seen on all four items. With regards to the items 'the soul continues to exist though the body may die' and 'there is a heaven and hell' it was demonstrated that hybrid vampires were more likely to affirm these statements (31.2% and 12.7%), with role-players least likely to affirm these statements (13.3% and 5.7%). With regards to the statements 'there is a devil' and 'I believe in God,' those who claim to be psychic vampires were more likely to affirm these items (17.5% and 18.3% respectively), with role-players least likely to affirm these statements (5.7% and 6.7% respectively). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

When focus is turned to the items regarding psi there are statistically significant differences between the groups on all four items. With regard to the item 'mind reading is not possible' sanguine vampires recorded the highest endorsement (7.5%), while role-players recorded the lowest level of endorsement (1.9%). With the remaining three items there appears a clear pattern in which hybrid vampires recorded the highest levels of affirmation and role-players record the lowest levels of affirmation. Hybrid vampires were more likely to attest that: some individuals are able to levitate objects (25.4%) than role-players (6.7%); psychokinesis does exist (26.9%) than role-players (8.6%); and a person's thoughts can influence the movement of a physical object (25.4) than role-players (7.6%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

With regard to the items focusing on witchcraft, it is clear that statistically significant differences are present on all four items between the groups. Further, it is clear that hybrid vampires were more likely to affirm these items, with role-players being least likely to affirm these items. Hybrid vampires were more likely to attest that: black magic really exists (29.6%) than role-players (9.5%); witches do exist

Table One: Crosstabulations with Chi-square analysis for the Tobacyk Revised Paranormal Belief Scale

Item	Sanguine	Psychic	Hybrid	Donor	Role-player	Enthusiast	χ^2	p<
Traditional Religious Beliefs								
The soul continues to exist though the body may die	22.6	28.2	31.2	21.5	13.3	17.8	38.83	.001
There is a devil	14.3	17.5	16.5	8.9	5.7	11.7	29.19	.001
I believe in God	15.8	18.3	16.9	7.6	6.7	10.0	29.93	.001
There is a heaven and a hell	10.8	11.1	12.7	6.3	5.7	8.3	24.81	.01
Psi								
Some individuals are able to levitate (lift) objects	18.3	21.0	25.4	19.0	6.7	9.3	50.59	.001
Psychokinesis does exist	19.4	23.0	26.9	21.5	8.6	10.3	52.74	.001
A person's thoughts can influence the movement of a physical object	19.4	22.6	25.4	17.7	7.6	10.3	44.70	.001
Mind reading is not possible	7.5	3.6	5.4	3.8	1.9	4.9	45.31	.001
Witchcraft								
Black magic really exists	23.3	25.4	29.6	22.8	9.5	15.4	39.62	.001
Witches do exist	24.0	30.6	33.5	22.8	10.5	16.9	49.23	.001
Through the use of formulas and incantations, it is possible to cast spells on persons	20.8	24.2	29.2	17.7	5.7	12.5	50.89	.001
There are actual cases of witchcraft	24.0	28.6	30.8	24.1	10.5	15.4	45.85	.001
Superstition								
Black cats can bring bad luck	2.5	3.2	2.3	3.8	1.0	3.4	29.65	.001
If you break a mirror you will have bad luck	5.4	4.4	7.7	6.3	6.7	6.1	31.35	.001
The number "13" is unlucky	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.5	1.0	2.7	30.95	.001
Spiritualism								
Your mind and soul can leave your body and travel	23.3	30.6	30.8	26.6	11.4	16.4	41.97	.001
During altered states the spirit can leave the body	23.3	29.4	30.0	22.8	11.4	14.4	46.35	.001
Reincarnation does occur	17.9	22.6	26.5	22.8	10.5	11.2	46.89	.001
It is possible to communicate with the dead	20.1	25.8	27.3	21.5	8.6	13.0	41.73	.001
Extraordinary life forms								
The abominable snowman of Tibet exists	5.0	4.8	7.7	7.6	2.9	4.9	17.44	NS
The Loch Ness monster of Scotland exists	6.8	5.6	10.8	8.9	1.9	5.6	24.72	.01
There is life on other planets	21.5	25.8	28.8	25.3	15.2	17.4	21.24	.05
Precognition								
Astrology is a way to accurately predict the future	7.2	6.7	10.8	8.9	1.9	6.1	25.65	.01
The horoscope accurately tells a person's future	6.5	5.2	6.9	8.9	1.9	4.4	17.99	NS
Some psychics can accurately predict the future	17.9	23.4	25.8	15.2	7.6	11.0	43.15	.001
Some people have an unexplained ability to predict the future	20.4	26.6	28.8	20.3	8.6	12.2	53.40	.001

(33.5%) than role-players (10.5%); through the use of formulas and incantations, it is possible to cast spells on persons (29.2%) than role-players (5.7%) and; there are actual cases of witchcraft (30.8%) than role-players (10.5%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

With regard to superstition, it is demonstrated that statistically significant differences are present on all three items between the groups. For both of the items that 'black cats bring back luck' and 'the number 13 is unlucky' donors were more likely to endorse these items (3.8% and 2.5% respectively) than role-players (1.0% and 1.0% respectively). For the item 'if you break a mirror you will have bad luck' hybrid vampires were more likely to endorse this (7.7%), with psychic vampires being least likely to endorse the item (4.4%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

With regard to spiritualism, it is demonstrated that statistically significant differences are present on all four items between the groups. For this section a similar pattern emerges in which role-players are less likely to endorse the items. For example, while roughly similar proportions of psychic (30.6%) and hybrid (30.8%) vampires endorse that your mind and soul can leave your body and travel, this figure drops among role-players (11.4%). Similarly, while roughly similar proportions of both psychic (29.4%) and hybrid vampires endorse that during altered states the spirit can leave the body, this figure drops among role-players (11.4%). With regard to the final two items, hybrid vampires were more likely to endorse that reincarnation does occur (26.5%) than role-players (10.5%) and that it is possible to communicate with the dead (27.3%) than role-players (8.6%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

With regard to extraordinary life forms, no statistically significant differences were recorded on the item 'the abominable snowman of Tibet exists' with 5% of sanguine vampires, 4.8% of psychic vampires, 7.7% of hybrid vampires, 7.6 % of donors, 2.9% of role-players and 4.9% of enthusiasts agreeing with this statement. With regard to the remaining statements, the pattern emerges that hybrid vampires were more likely to endorse that the Loch Ness monster of Scotland exists (10.8%) than role-players (1.9%), and that there is like on other plants (28.8%) than role-players (15.2%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

Finally, with regard to precognition, no statistically significant differences were recorded on the item 'the horoscope accurately tells a person's future' with 6.5% of sanguine vampires, 5.2% of psychic vampires, 6.9% of hybrid vampires, 8.9% of donors, 1.9% of role-players and 4.4% of enthusiasts agreeing with this statement. The remaining statements demonstrated that hybrid vampires were more likely to endorse that: astrology is a way to accurately predict the future (10.8%) than role-players (1.9%); some psychics can accurately predict the future (25.8%) than role-players (7.6%) and; some people have an

unexplained ability to predict the future (28.8%) than role-players (8.6%). All other groups recorded roughly similar endorsement scores for each item.

Table two presents the percentage endorsements for the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale for the real vampire community and, for comparative purposes, for university students as collected by Williams and Roberts (2016) in order to test the extent to which the beliefs recorded by this subculture differ to those of a broadly general population with similar characteristics. The data demonstrate that, with regard to traditional religious belief sanguine vampires, psychic vampires, and hybrid vampires endorse all items to roughly similar levels as a university population, with donors, role-players and enthusiasts recording lower scores on all four items.

With reference of psi, the data demonstrate that those affiliated with the vampire community as either sanguine vampires, psychic vampires, hybrid vampires or donors are more accepting of levitation, psychokinesis and the potentiality of an individual's thoughts can move a physical objects (around 30%). For these three items the student population, role-players and enthusiast record roughly similar endorsement levels (between 10% and 17%). However, the student population was more likely to endorse that mind reading was not possible (18%) than any group affiliated with the vampire subculture (each group recording less than 10% endorsement).

With reference to belief in witchcraft, the student population were less likely to affirm the four items than sanguine, psychic and hybrid vampires. In particular, when asked to affirm if through the use of formulas and incantations, it is possible to cast spells on persons while only 9% of the student population affirmed this belief, the portion rose to nearly a third among hybrid vampires (29.2%) and to around a fifth for sanguine vampires (20.8%), psychic vampires (24.2%) and donors (17.7%). The remaining items demonstrated that sanguine vampires, psychic vampires and hybrid vampires were more accepting of black magic (around 25%), the existence of witches (around 30%), and that there are actual cases of witchcraft (between 24% and 31%) and the general population who recorded an around 18% endorsement for each of these items.

With regards to superstitious belief, around a tenth of the student population endorsed that black cats can bring bad luck (10%), that if you break a mirror you will have bad luck (10%), and that the number 13 is unlucky (7%). Among those affiliated with the vampire community, however, these items were less likely to be endorsed (all recording a percentage endorsement of 7% or less).

In terms of spiritualism, similar patterns emerged as were recorded for belief in psi. In general the student population (recording between 15% and 22% endorsement) were less accepting of these beliefs than sanguine vampires (with the exception of belief in reincarnation), psychic vampires, hybrid vampires, and donors (each recording between 20% and 30% endorsement), but more likely to

Table Two: Item endorsement comparison between vampire groups and Williams & Roberts (2016 data).

Item	Sanguine	Psychic	Hybrid	Donor	Role-player	Enthusiast	Student Pop
Traditional Religious Beliefs							
The soul continues to exist though the body may die	22.6	28.2	31.2	21.5	13.3	17.8	30
The is a devil	14.3	17.5	16.5	8.9	5.7	11.7	15
I believe in God	15.8	18.3	16.9	7.6	6.7	10.0	20
There is a heaven and a hell	10.8	11.1	12.7	6.3	5.7	8.3	14
Psi							
Some individuals are able to levitate (lift) objects	18.3	21.0	25.4	19.0	6.7	9.3	9
Psychokinesis does exist	19.4	23.0	26.9	21.5	8.6	10.3	10
A person's thoughts can influence the movement of a physical object	19.4	22.6	25.4	17.7	7.6	10.3	5
Mind reading is not possible*	7.5	3.6	5.4	3.8	1.9	4.9	18
Witchcraft							
Black magic really exists	23.3	25.4	29.6	22.8	9.5	15.4	17
Witches do exist	24.0	30.6	33.5	22.8	10.5	16.9	18
Through the use of formulas and incantations, it is possible to cast spells on persons	20.8	24.2	29.2	17.7	5.7	12.5	9
There are actual cases of witchcraft	24.0	28.6	30.8	24.1	10.5	15.4	18
Superstition							
Black cats can bring bad luck	2.5	3.2	2.3	3.8	1.0	3.4	10
If you break a mirror you will have bad luck	5.4	4.4	7.7	6.3	6.7	6.1	10
The number "13" is unlucky	1.8	1.6	1.9	2.5	1.0	2.74	7
Spiritualism							
Your mind and soul can leave your body and travel	23.3	30.6	30.8	26.6	11.4	16.4	15
During altered states the spirit can leave the body	23.3	29.4	30.0	22.8	11.4	14.4	16
Reincarnation does occur	17.9	22.6	26.5	22.8	10.5	11.2	19
It is possible to communicate with the dead	20.1	25.8	27.3	21.5	8.6	13.0	22
Extraordinary life forms							
The abominable snowman of Tibet exists	5.0	4.8	7.7	7.6	2.9	4.9	3
The Loch Ness monster of Scotland exists	6.8	5.6	10.8	8.9	1.9	5.6	7
There is life on other planets	21.5	25.8	28.8	25.3	15.2	17.4	34
Precognition							
Astrology is a way to accurately predict the future	7.2	6.7	10.8	8.9	1.9	6.1	7
The horoscope accurately tells a person's future	6.5	5.2	6.9	8.9	1.9	4.4	6
Some psychics can accurately predict the future	17.9	23.4	25.8	15.2	7.6	11.0	23
Some people have an unexplained ability to predict the future	20.4	26.6	28.8	20.3	8.6	12.2	27

affirm these beliefs than role-players and enthusiasts (recording between 9% and 16% endorsement).

With regard to extraordinary life forms, those who affiliated themselves as being sanguine, psychic or hybrid vampires and donors (between 5% and 8%) were more likely to believe that the abominable snowman of Tibet exists, compared to role-players, enthusiast and the student population (between 3% and 5%). With regard to the item concerning the Loch Ness monster, hybrid vampires were more likely to endorse this item (10%) than any of the other groups (between 2% and 9%). Finally, the student population was more likely to endorse that there is life on other planets (34%), than any vampire group (between 15% and 29%).

With regard to precognition, the pattern emerged that those who affiliated with the group as role-players and enthusiast were less likely to endorse that astrology is a way to accurately predict the future (2% and 6% respectively), that horoscopes accurately tells a person's future (2% and 4% respectively), that some psychics can accurately predict the future (8% and 11% respectively), and that some people have an unexplained ability to predict the future (9% and 12% respectively). Among the remaining vampire groups, and the student group, levels of endorsement on each item were roughly similar.

Discussion

This paper has been concerned with exploring the paranormal beliefs of members of the 'real' vampire subculture. Drawing on data collected from 1,384 participants, the current paper has been concerned with establishing the levels of paranormal belief (as operationalized by Tobacyk) among the different adherents in this subculture. Three main conclusions emerge from the data.

The first conclusion concerns the extent to which paranormal beliefs are accepted by the vampire subculture. As Tobacyk (1988, 2004) has argued, paranormal beliefs remain part of an individual's understanding of the world. Further, Williams (2016) argued, by drawing on qualitative data, that the vampire subculture was open to paranormal and spiritual experiences. The current data confirm that a small group within the vampire subculture are open to traditional religious beliefs, psi, witchcraft, spiritualism and some elements of precognition. However, this group is less accepting of extraordinary life forms (with the exception of the belief in life on other planets, which could be argued to be a difficult item to relate to paranormal belief given current scientific discoveries) and superstitious beliefs. This findings go some way to support the findings of Williams (2016) that while there is belief in transcendent planes (such as heaven and hell), there is a general understanding among this group that the transcendent can influence the everyday through such experiences as the levitation of objects, the transferability of the soul, and the ability to predict the future. For the vampire subculture, then, the paranormal is

seen as having an influence on the everyday lives of the participants.

The second conclusion concerns the assertions of Russo (2005) and Laycock (2010) that the vampire subculture can be seen as a fragmented one formed around an 'in-group' and 'out-group' in which role-players are seen as agitants to the community. The data presented here reveal that the group with the most divergent view with regard to paranormal beliefs are the role-players, and to a certain extent general enthusiasts. That is to say, role-players are seemingly less accepting of the paranormal worldview held by some members of the community who assign the title vampire or donor to themselves. This divergence of core beliefs would go some way to explain the perceived intolerances between these groups.

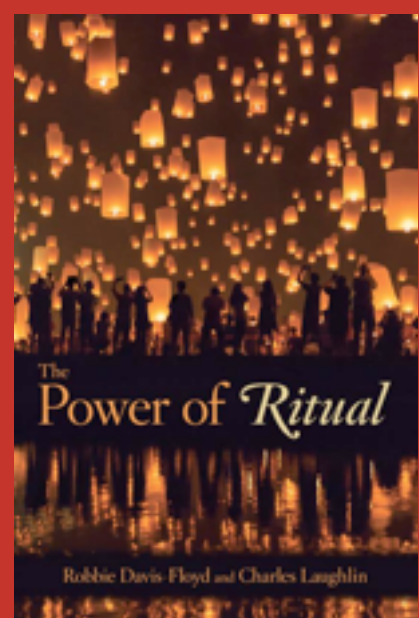
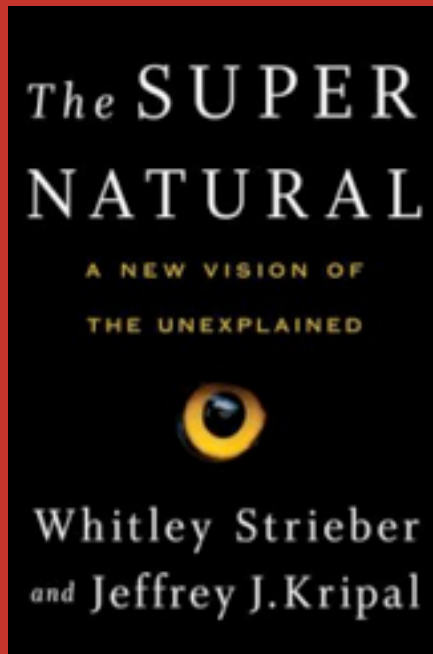
The third conclusion concerns the extent to which the vampire subculture can be seen as different to a group of participants from a similar demographic. The results here demonstrate that the vampire subculture (in particular those who assigned themselves as vampire and donor) were more accepting of most paranormal beliefs than a student population. Conversely, the student population was more accepting of superstitious paranormal beliefs than the vampire subculture. These findings support the notions argued by Keyworth (2002) and Laycock (2010) that the vampire subculture can be viewed as distinct from 'mainstream' culture, and that this group is developing their own set of worldviews in which coherence can be found (Williams, 2016). Future research is now needed to further explore these findings, and expand the range of religious and paranormal beliefs tested among these groups.

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Recent Publications of Interest



Edith Turner and the Anthropology of Collective Joy

By Paul Stoller

West Chester University

In these days of social, political, and ecological gloom, it's easy to become cynical. Everyday we are bombarded with news of racial prejudice, religious intolerance, economic inequality and xenophobia. Donald Trump, a man who is unabashedly racist, homophobic and misogynistic is about to become the Republican Party's nominee for President of the United States. In the UK, a majority of British voters have opted to leave the European Union. Many of them appear to be unaware of the economic and social consequences of their vote.

As scholars it's hard to know how to confront these dismal events in the world. How do we discuss ongoing problems that threaten to shred the global social fabric and bring widespread social, political and economic chaos.

Is there a measure of well being to be found in the world? Is there space for wonder?

In cynical moments when I need to ponder the wonders of human existence, I think about the work of Edith Turner, a monumental anthropologist who died on June 18th of this year, one day after her 95th birthday. In all of her work Edie, as her friends, students, and colleagues knew her, succeeded in describing what is special about the human condition.

In 1985 Edie Turner returned to Zambia in South Central Africa to continue the ethnographic research she had shared with her husband, the late Victor Turner, one of the great anthropologists of the 20th century. During a curing ceremony among the Ndembu people, the religious rituals of whom the Turners described in a series of classic books, Edie learned about the importance of understanding Ndembu rituals in Ndembu terms. In her book *Experiencing Ritual* Edie wrote about opening herself to the sensibilities of the Ndembu world. Witnessing that curing ceremony Edie wrote about being able to see... "a six-inch blob — a kind of plasma or gray spherical ghost — emerging from the patient's back". The spiritual extraction of what the Ndembu call *Ihamba*, a dead hunter's tooth, healed the Ndembu patient. For us, the passage takes us



Edie Turner (1921-2016)

to the edge of the possible and challenges our sense of reality. It compels us to think deeply about the human condition, about what is important in our lives and in our work.

Following the publication of *Experiencing Ritual* in 1992, when Edie was in her early seventies, she began to study healing rituals among a variety of peoples, publishing important works on the reality of spirits, on the nature of spirituality and on healers among the Iñupiat people in Northern Alaska.

For me her most important ideas are found in her final book *Communitas: The Anthropology of Collective Joy*, which she published in 2011 when she was in her early nineties. In the first paragraph of this book, Edie deftly tackled the unenviable task of defining something as elusive as *communitas*, a silent and sudden sense of social bonding. She wrote:

...The characteristics of *communitas* show it to be almost beyond strict definition, with almost endless variations. *Communitas* often appears unexpectedly. It has to do with a sense felt by a group of people when their life together takes on full meaning...*Communitas* can only be conveyed through stories....

Here Edie tapped into something extraordinarily significant: the power of narrative to connect writers to readers, the power of narrative, in the words of the psychologist Jerome Bruner, to construct realities — a narrative construction of a reality that is irreducible to formulae to or a set of abstract theoretical principles.

There is something about narrative that can convey to readers the mystery of the ineffable or the wonder of, as Edie would put it, collective joy. Even so, anthropologists, like most scholars, are trained to tell and not to show, to denote rather to evoke. Edie's work compels us to wonder what is missed through such academic socialization. As teachers and writers many of us are hesitant to take thematic or representational risks. In this domain Edie's life work is a beacon of inspirational light. Evoking the specter of *communitas*, Edie wrote:

... This book...tackles *communitas*, togetherness itself, taking the reader to the edge of the precipice of knowledge — and beyond, over the barrier of the scientists' analysis and into experience itself. Light dawns on what the real thing is, and we feel lucky it exists. Then we can make discoveries.

The stories of *communitas* that Edie recounted in her writing not only defined a place of togetherness but also the nebulous space between things. As such *communitas* shows us the way to an arena in which we can sometimes experience a rare feeling: collective joy.

When I discuss Edie's life work, I don't think about reviews, or critiques, or citations. Unlike most academic work, Edie Turner's contributions to anthropology and to humanistic scholarship provide us a framework for thinking about well-being-in-the-world. Her clear prose and conceptual daring have inspired many of us to stretch our imagination and extend our sensibilities to the outer limits of the possible. In so doing, Edie's work moves us to explore the unknown, the indefinable, the indeterminate, a path that is not always easy to follow. Despite the difficulties we encounter on this path, Edie Turner has shown us a way forward. In her life and work she marshaled the courage to explore the powerful indeterminacies that you find in the silence between two notes of music, or in the creative incomprehension you find between two cultures, or in the conceptual turbulence you find between spirit and reality. Indeed, Edie Turner's celebration of social life guides us to a place that has deepened our professional and personal well-being-in-the world.

In the end, Edie's notion of collective joy is a tonic for contemporary social life. It is a model for reaching our students and extending to the public our important insights about social life. Her joy of living the anthropological life is a model for being well in the world — a model that can bring us a measure of comfort as we confront the imponderables of our turbulent times.

The Edie Turner Humanistic Anthropology Award

honors the late Edie Turner, a driving force in the study of spirituality and culture, by acknowledging students at the University of Virginia whose teaching, activism, and writing recognize the richness of human experience.



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Hearing the Dead: Supernatural Presence in the World of the Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPN) in Reference to the Balikligöl Statue

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Abstract

This article discusses the possibility that the Balikligöl statue, referred to more commonly as the 'Urfa Statue,' or 'Urfa Man,' to-date the earliest human-size statue of a man yet discovered in the world, was designed to embody the presence of the dead or ancestors. It is suggested that notions of his deceased status are communicated to the perceiver through characteristics of his design. It is suggested that the feature of his absent mouth does not constitute a peculiar aesthetic but forms part of a stylistic design that symbolically insinuates the presence of the dead. Other characteristics of the statue's design together with a cross-cultural examination of comparative classes of statuary are considered to support my assertion.

Keywords: Supernatural, Neolithic consciousness, Göbekli Tepe, archaeology, ancient religion, magic, divination, auditory hallucination.

1. Urfa Man

The Balikligöl statue, named after the area in Şanlıurfa in which it was found, is an imposing, 1.80m high limestone figure of an apparently naked man who is shown embracing his genitals. The face consists of a fractured nose, hollow eye-sockets filled with obsidian crystal and, suggestively, a purposely absent mouth. The statue's base is conical, which implies it would have stood vertically when implanted in the ground. The statue was not found at the Göbekli Tepe site, which is located approximately 16 kilometres north of Şanlıurfa. The precise details of its finding are unclear but it was discovered by accident during the 1980s in the vicinity of Şanlıurfa's old town in the foundation pit of a car park, slightly north of Şanlıurfa's holy springs, which today are renowned as the birthplace of Abraham. Since the statue eluded classification, for many years it stood abandoned in the cellar of the city's museum.² Although modern settlement prevents further archaeological excavation of the area, together with the whole Balikligöl basin, it is estimated the area in which the statue was found was a sacred site and place of pilgrimage during the Stone Age.³

Discovered in the 1990s the PPN site of Göbekli Tepe is notoriously without context. Although hailed in popular media as 'the world's first temple,' there is no consensus about the site's purpose. Consisting of a series of stone circles, or enclosures, the earliest discovered dated to 9600 B.C., the site has been proposed as a religious sanctuary, cult centre, or holy place of the Stone Age and was purposefully buried c. 8000 B.C. The site, perhaps analogous to a glorified hunting lodge, was not permanently inhabited and likely served as a place of seasonal ritual and celebration that united different tribes. Cult feasting activities have been proposed.⁴ The small portion of the site excavated so far reveal the circles are not coterminous in age; there are significant gaps between the progressive construction of each. The older structures are larger and more elaborately

constructed. Though its ultimate function may evade us, together the evidence suggests the site served a multitude of functions over its near two-millennia of use.

Though Urfa Man was not found at Göbekli Tepe he is cognate in age with the site's use. Furthermore, preliminary observations made by Klaus Schmidt also indicate a connection with the symbolic thought-world of its builders.⁵ Urfa Man's V-shape neck design closely resembles that of the neck or 'collar' markings of Göbekli Tepe's much larger twin-pillars that occupy the centre of each enclosure. Though ambiguously anthropomorphic, the central T-shape pillars are definitely humanoid; they are depicted wearing belts, loin fox-pelts, and have clearly defined arms stretching down and meeting at their navels.

As cultic monuments stood in the open, the symbolic V-shape or chevron design identifies Urfa Man as a figure belonging to the sacred sphere of these people. Though Urfa Man is more realistically human than Göbekli Tepe's humanoid T-shapes, Schmidt discerned the statue as minister to them in the sense of an inferior or intermediary.⁶ Pillars 18 and 31, the central pair of Enclosure D and the largest and oldest T-shapes at the site, are depicted with similar V-shapes at the neck as are other pillars. Despite the precise meaning of the V-shape remaining unclear, its shared presence on this statuary indicates it designated ancestors, the dead, supernatural beings, or was used in affiliation with them.

Further relationship between Urfa Man and the pillars can be sought in their respective postures. Urfa Man is shown embracing his genitals, whereas the twin-pillars of Enclosure D are depicted embracing the navel. In both instances, however, ascribing these ceremonial bearings to familiar concepts of fertility or eroticism would seem questionable.

2. Mouth Symbolism

The stone artisans of this period were remarkably skilled and Urfa Man's absent mouth was intentional. What did it signify? Mouth symbolism conveys complex notions through

many cross-cultural media, but it can yet define post-mortem states consistently.

The Mesopotamian ‘mouth washing’ ceremony involved statue-gods who would have their mouths ritually washed in a solution consisting of herbs and odours before being installed in their shrines, and was a ritual process repeated periodically to rejuvenate the voice of the god. Similarly, the ancient Egyptian mortuary ritual known as the ‘opening of the mouth’ first specified in the Pyramid Texts,⁷ details a symbolic reanimation of the deceased pharaoh, enabling him to breath, eat, drink, but also speak in the afterlife, allowing the voice of the king to continue after death. In these instances, the mouth was the entry and exit point of life characterised as the word, or voice, both in this world and beyond. Elsewhere in Asian folklore, a class of ghosts are said to be characterised by an absent mouth, a feature which in their post-mortem environment implies they are unable to eat.

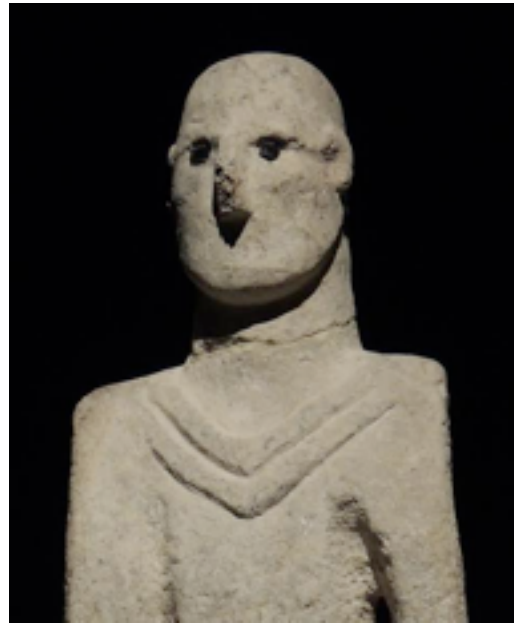
Within a different category, attention has been drawn to the mouths of wild animals depicted within Neolithic contexts, from where supernatural potency could be drawn upon by shamans. This relationship has been proposed to explain an otherwise complex and unlikely connection between the death and dismemberment-inflicting beaks and bared teeth of spirit-animals, with life-bestowing breasts.

Though these examples are context-neutral since they do not suppose any cultural connection, they illustrate how mouth symbolism has been adopted to distinguish figures of the dead and for inscribing them with supernatural qualities. Considering these examples in view of Urfa Man, might the absent mouth emphasise a continued presence of the dead in the world of the living with allusion to a, likewise, disembodied voice?

3. Eye Skulls and Statues

Besides the humanoid pillars human depictions, in statue or relief, are not in abundance at Göbekli Tepe or adjoining regions. However, it is noteworthy that at Göbekli Tepe four human-size stone heads, heads that once belonged to statues very similar to Urfa Man, were found beneath backfill and wedged into walls.⁸ Significantly, like Urfa Man, one of these human-size heads was depicted without a mouth, while another bears damage around the mouth.

Though it is inadequate to construct thought-worlds of the past solely from archaeological evidence, the cultural expression of the PPN cult of skulls attested elsewhere presents points of comparison with the cultural environment of prehistoric Urfa. The near-eastern skull cult in which sanctified human skulls became objects of power emerged from post-mortem skull removal of important, most likely sage-like, members of society as a part of burial ritual. As with the skulls of Jericho discovered in the 1950s, these amputated skulls were both filled in and modelled over with plaster and sometimes painted. A number of these predominately male skulls have also been noted for their ornate eye embellishing. Though it is uncertain what purpose



these treated skulls served before they were buried, given their aimful burial in circles or rows in purposely dug pits beneath the foundations of houses cut off from the living, they were not ancestor portraits or death masks intended to idealise their subjects in an exclusively mundane sense, but were objects or relics that talismanically related to them. The seashells or precious stones fixed upon the eyes of the skulls emphasize an importance of seeing, but would normal sight in itself need to be rectified? Given their cultic burial, it would be more tenable that the eye enhancements they feature correlated more with a supernatural sight or seeing in the afterlife.

Evidence for similar beliefs and practices come from a collection of statuettes excavated during the 1980s at Jericho's sister-site 'Ain Ghazal. 'Ain Ghazal became settled, it is believed, after part of the population of Jericho moved there. As with the Jericho skulls the 'Ain Ghazal statuettes are of the younger Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPNB) rather than older (PPNA). There is yet evidence for congruencies in the beliefs behind their construction and use. The curious 'Ain Ghazal statuettes number 32 in all and are divided into two sets or caches, following the collective pits in which they were found. The first comprises 13 full-body statues and 12 one-headed busts and is dated to 6750 B.C.⁹ The second cache that numbers two full statues, three two-headed busts and two fragmentary heads, is dated at 6570 B.C. Although these statuettes comprise bodies, emphasis was noticeably given to their heads, the eyes especially. As with the Jericho skulls, their finding in pits reflects little of the purpose behind their use, but the way in which they were ritually disposed indicates their status as sacred objects. Considering their supporting busts and bodies, however, the 'Ain Ghazal statuettes were designed to stand upright.

A markedly different eye aesthetic characterises the two caches. The older bear round, disproportionate eyeballs that are surrounded and enhanced with oval ridges of black bitumen. Their irises, or pupils, are also round. Contrastingly,

the younger group possess almond-shaped eyes with diamond-shaped irises or pupils that cast a strange feline, or non-human impression. In all instances, the statuettes are facially minimalistic besides the eyes so that despite stylistic differences between the two caches the eyes were the central focus.

Their unique, millennia-spanning percipience has been duly noted, somewhat impressionistically, by archaeologist Brian Fagan:

The compelling human images that were pieced together by the technicians' expert handiwork had stared at me with serene, almost ghostly confidence from a display case in the Smithsonian's Sackler Gallery. Androgynous and near life-size, the 9,000-year-old plaster figures gazed wide-eyed across the centuries, as if possessed with boundless wisdom. It felt as if their eyes were following me around the room – their impact upon me lingers still.¹⁰

Although etched with a compelling degree of sight, the 'Ain Ghazal statuettes were persuasively also commissioned to arouse nuances of perception and of awareness, and to convey these presences to the onlooker as a primary aim. While caution must be exercised between observation to the more subjective terrain of interpretation, the seeing-power these figures possess, which has been emphasised, tends to neglect dimensions of reciprocity they facilitated – indeed, to overlook motivating factors behind their creation. Arguably, the 'Ain Ghazal statuettes were not intended to replicate human seeing alone and seeing for their own sake, rather than evoke a supernatural sight that, as mnemonic devices, placed them at the boundary of the living and the dead.

4. Seeing or Hearing?

Later in period than the Jericho skulls and 'Ain Ghazal figures emerges a class of eerily observant statuary referred to as eye idols. Sourcing from the so-called 'Eye Temple' of Tell Brak where thousands were discovered, 'eye idol' is the most fitting description of these figurines. Unlike earlier examples, eye idols are barely humanoid in form. Thin, elongated bodies fashioned from limestone or alabaster support a pair of unrealistically widened eyes infilled in black or green paint.¹¹ Some of these figurines possess three eyes or two pairs of eyes one above the other. While some are shown to 'embrace' a minor and others bear markings symbolising gods, they are otherwise depicted with no anatomy and their physiognomy is featureless apart from the eyes. As with the Jericho skulls and 'Ain Ghazal statuettes, there is no overarching consensus behind their purpose, other than their relationship with sacred areas of religious sites.

Seeing, especially in shamanic contexts, is often privileged above the other senses as the primary means of perceiving supernatural worlds and the realm of the dead and for maintaining links with beings which inhabit them. Given that archaeological deposits only preserve visual

culture – excepting rare instances of lithophony, or stones that make musical sounds when struck, which generally does not extend to statues – then this preference is understandable. But, are we then to assume that despite auditory dimensions not being amenable to preservation in the archaeological record that sound, in one form or another, played no role in establishing encounters with and continuity between the worlds of the living and of the ancestors? Might not this missing element be reflected in otherwise silent, inanimate statuary?

The psychologist Julian Jaynes (1920-1997) produced a significant interpretive model that united ancient religion, archaeology and human neurology in his hypothesis of the bicameral mind. Though his hypothesis attracted criticism from the time of its inception, it is far from discredited. Jaynes perceived eye idols as belonging to a category of non-ornamental statuary, which would include the Jericho skulls and 'Ain Ghazal statuettes, that served as 'speaking statues' or figurines assisting as aids in the production of hallucinated voices. For Jaynes, these hallucinated voices chiefly concern verbal commands of archaic authority issuing from the dead, or ancestors, from memories and impressions stored within the right cerebral hemisphere of the brain. Jaynes summarises the psychological collaboration between eyes and voice in the following way, and explains how a statue might simulate it:

Eye-to-eye contact in primates is extremely important. Below humans, it is indicative of the hierarchical position of the animal, the submissive animal turning away grinning in many primate species. But in humans, perhaps because of the much longer juvenile period, eye-to-eye contact has evolved into a social interaction of great importance. An infant child, when its mother speaks to it, looks at the mother's eyes, not her lips. This response is automatic and universal. The development of such eye-to-eye contact into authority relationships and love relationships is an exceedingly important trajectory that has yet to be traced. It is sufficient here merely to suggest that you are more likely to feel a superior's authority when you and he are staring straight into each other's eyes. There is a kind of stress, an unresolvedness about the experience, and withal something of a diminution of consciousness, so that, were such a relationship mimicked in a statue, it would enhance the hallucination of divine speech.¹²

For Jaynes, the very phenomenon of this species of eye statuary, found in conjunction with early religious environments, props up his bicameral hypothesis in that it reflects a cognitive experience that had not previously been realised. Though a degree of scepticism might be directed at the cultural extent of his bicameral hypothesis, his analysis of an auditory dimension behind classes of ancient statuary lacks in other fields where seeing, rather than hearing, provides the only interpretative solution.

Jaynes' strength is his emphasis on the eyes of a statue mimicking living presences and an overlooked acknowledgment of an affiliation between eyes and voices specific statuary may have had, an aspect which the archaeological record does not, at surface, retain. Considering Urfa Man's features we could subject him to the same scheme as a compelling candidate.

5. Grim Oracles

A different though not unrelated category of beliefs and practices of the speaking dead sources from a constellation of folk traditions embedded in ancient Europe and elsewhere is the Cult of the Severed Head, typical examples including disconnected laughing heads, heads that entertain at enchanted feasts, and the head said to occupy some wishing wells. Talking head symbolism and the actual necromantic practice, whether conceived to summon the voices of the dead or to produce aural hallucinations pertaining to, was prevalent. A famous, or rather infamous, necromantic use of the severed head took place close to Urfa Man's home, though distanced by millennia, in Harran, a major centre of Hermetic and Sabaeon learning over the medieval period. The grimoire named *Ghayat al-Hakim* (*Picatrix* in Latin) relates devil-worshippers of 'old Harran' keeping a severed head acquired through a strange and sinister ritual that gave out prophecies.¹³ Whether or not some of these magical traditions and divination rites preserve relics, or hallucinations, of Neolithic heritage is a matter of conjecture.

6. Conclusion

Paved over and occupied by modern settlement, the area in which Urfa Man was found, which has also become a sacred site of Islamic pilgrimage, is effectively sealed from further archaeological excavation render it unlikely that similar 'Urfa Men' will be discovered. Though Urfa Man is singular, the features of his persona convey symbolic evidence of a communicator from a supernatural world of the dead to the world of the living in a realistically human shape. His purposefully absent mouth suggests that seeing and hearing were not mutually exclusive in summoning the presence of the dead to the perception of the living within the mind-set that produced him. Indeed, his participation in the physical may have been enhanced further by his choicely pale limestone material that gleams with a spectral appearance as if shimmering between worlds.

Notes

1. Schimdt, *Göbekli Tepe: A Stone Age Sanctuary in South-Eastern Anatolia* (Berlin: ex oriente, 2012), 191.
2. Bahattin Çelik, 'An Early Neolithic Settlement in the Center of Sanliurfa, Turkey,' *Neo-Lithics. A Newsletter of Southwest Asian Lithics* 2-3 (2000): 4-6.
3. Oliver Dietrich, et al., 'The Role of Cult and Feasting in the Emergence of Neolithic Communities. New Evidence from

Göbekli Tepe, South-Eastern Turkey,' *ANTIQUITY* 86.333 (2012): 674-695.

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5. Schimdt, 'Göbekli Tepe – the Stone Age Sanctuaries,' 248.

6. R.O. Faulkner, trans., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), Utterances 20-57, 3-11.

7. David Lewis-Williams and David Pearce, *Inside the Neolithic Mind: Consciousness, Cosmos and the Realm of the Gods* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 139-140.

8. Schimdt, 'Göbekli Tepe – the Stone Age Sanctuaries,' 249.

9. Lewis-Williams, *Inside the Neolithic Mind*, 72-73.

10. Brian Fagan, *From Black Land to Fifth Sun: The Science of Sacred Sites* (Reading, Mass: Helix Books, 1999), 81.

11. Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia* (London: The British Museum Press, 1992), 79-80.

12. Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 69.

13. Jan Hjärpe, *Analyse critique des traditions arabes sur les sabéens harraniens* (Uppsala: Skriv Service, 1972), 105-112.

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The Uncanny and the Future of British Quakerism

By Benjamin J. Wood

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'We cannot use electric lights'

The great Liberal theologian Rudolf Bultmann once expressed the key dilemma of modern Christianity like this: 'We cannot use electric lights and radios and, in the event of illness, avail ourselves of modern medical and clinical means and at the same time believe in the spirit and wonder world of the New Testament'². Such wonder world included for Bultmann the domain of ghosts, angels and ultimately *a man rising from the dead*. We can find meaning in various religious words and metaphors which have endured. We might even, suggests Bultmann, discover profound existential uplift (a series of meaningful personal symbols) in these stories. But *we cannot believe in them*, in the same way that we believe in radio waves, dishwashers and wifi. Yet, despite Bultmann's protestations about modernity, this, phrase of human development continues to pass many by. A cursory glance at the *Body Mind and Spirit* section of one's local bookshop confirms that there are lots of people who use antibiotics, iPads and microwave ovens, who at the same affirm a world which includes faith healing, channeling, spirit-guides and automatic writing. Such people (including many contemporary British Quakers) may function as rational-agnostic beings for much of their lives, but they still need a language and a practice to express, 'the mysterious,' the initiative and the uncanny. Regardless of the extent to which we take these individual phenomena seriously, they speak to a spiritual condition far more complex than Bultmann allows. This has been confirmed to me personally many times. Again and again I've had the same conversation. After Meeting, a Friend confides in me that they are learning Reiki, using Tarot cards or believe in angels. Yet, they do so in a cursive, embarrassed or hesitant tone. Why? The fact that these quiet confidences remain at the edge of Meeting life and not at the centre, suggests that there is insufficient soil in our Quaker community for such experiences to grow and deepen through our Worship and theology.

Confronting the Uncanny in Quaker Spirituality

What is blocking some Friends from bringing these extra-Quaker experiences into the full light and love of Meeting? I suspect that some of this has to do with a loss of confidence in our own Quaker language. No longer have we an adequate spiritual vocabulary for talking about Providence, spirits, grace or presence (whether divine, angelic or demonic). We have in other words, bought into a wider secular culture, which is suspicious of anything extra-sensory, weird or

unquantifiable. We have self-censored our Quakerism without necessarily realizing it-leaving those who are having intense spiritual experiences, to look for concepts from elsewhere. Yet, such a reduction of our Quaker speech comes with the danger of a kind



George Fox, founder of Quakerism

of generalized spiritual impoverishment. It may leave us unable to understand things holistically in our Quaker terms.

Such impoverishment was recently illustrated by a F/friend who told me that staff at a Quaker institution of her acquaintance (who felt they were subject to a haunting) had requested that a priest be sent for to perform an exorcism. This set me off thinking about the extent to which Liberal Quakerism acts like Bultmann's vision of the rational modern religion *per excellence* and about whether a significant minority of British Friends are actually in a different place. Individual Quakers may have profound, sometimes disturbing spiritual experiences, yet they feel they do not have the home-grown language to express it. To make up the gap they may delve into the language and practices of New Age, Theosophic or Spiritualist movements, or in the case of the Friends mentioned, request help from another Christian denomination. Why the lack of confidence among those Friends to talk in Quaker terms about the paranormal?

In part I think such silence can be rooted in many of the internal transformations which occurred in Western Quakerism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The American Quaker Rufus Jones (perhaps 'the father' of our modern pluralistic Quakerism) hoped to recast an insular, peculiar pietist sect (18th century Friends) into a group of liberal mystical Christians, who combined transcendental wisdom and religious rationalism with social action. As Jones noted in an article in 1922: 'We assume that [mysticism] is for saints or apostles, but not for common everyday people like ourselves. Well, that is where we are wrong.'³ Quakerism for Jones was that perfect balance between what he called 'transcendent reality' and the everyday. Yet in brokering this settlement, much was rejected from Jones' vision of Quakerism. Not merely were piestic and Evangelical currents largely abandoned, many early currents of Quakerism were also jettisoned. These included early Quaker references to faith healing through touch, a belief in divinely inspired

visions, as well as the existence of angelic and demonic presences.

The rejection of this charismatic Quakerism is understandable. It fit not at all with Jones' highly modernist synthesis of erudite mysticism and political activism, indeed it probably appeared positively bizarre and folkish to the high-minded Jones. Consequently, these features are explained psychologically or simply played down in Jones' own assessment of George Fox's life. This was a culmination of a process which had been underway, at least since the publication of Fox's *Journal*. British Friends have always been somewhat uneasy about Fox the charismatic faith-healer, prophet and vision-quester. Jones merely provided an appreciate framework to enshrine such reticence. What were the long term consequences of this framework? Ultimately, such an emphasis could be argued to have denied Friends a language to address issues of strange and the arcane. This gap is most apparent when individual Friends face death and bereavement. How should we face death when the focus of our Quaker language is focused on the Kingdom here and now? What does death mean for the future of the self? What do we do when we sense that those who have died are still with us? But there are other awkward questions prompted by our gap in vocabulary. How do we talk about radical evil? While contemporary Friends acknowledge the healing power of the Light, how do we articulate those experiences of 'something' which opposes the Light? In previous generations Friends could have talked about 'testing the spirits,' even the demonic. Yet, how do we express such experiences today?

Breaking Out of an Agnostic Box

Some of these thorny questions find expression in a series of umbrella groups within Britain Yearly Meeting including *The Quaker After-Life Studies Group*, *The Friends Fellowship of Healing*, and *Experiments with Light Groups*. The first grouping is significant for it demonstrates a key element of a Quaker faith living after Liberalism; an active disavowal of the silencing effect of a normative agnosticism. If Liberal Quakerism aspired to a respectable mysticism and a religious rationalism (one which banished the weird and the wonderful) Q.A.L. is actively intent on breaking down the taboos concerning death and the afterlife which such liberal religion engenders. As the Group's website notes:

The Quaker After-Life Studies Group (formed in July 2000) aims to open up discussion of death and immortality, which current Quakerism hardly tolerates, although many passages in Quaker Faith and Practice testify to its importance. Such discussion can draw on spiritual writings from early Christian times onwards, as well as evidence from Spiritualism and the psychic experiences of gifted individuals. We would like to see the growth of an atmosphere in the Society of Friends in which an open and sympathetic attitude allows those with experience or concerns in these areas to speak to Friends about them, and to minister in Meeting for

Worship if called to do so. See <https://quakerafterlifestudies.wordpress.com/>

If the first group breaks down secular surveillance of soul-language and death, the latter two groups generate points of resistance to the reduction of human experience to mere psychology or existential uplift. Both these groupings have sought to recover and sustain charismatic traditions of intense inward experience as well as physical faith-healing within a Yearly Meeting where such a perspective is hardly common currency. As the Fellowship defines inspiration of its membership: 'people nowadays feel the inspiration to offer 'hands-on' or contact healing, and, following the example of George Fox and other early Friends (members) are led to offer their time and service to others.' A similar emphasis upon charismatic gifts is noted by Damaris Parker-Rhodes in *Quaker Faith and Practice* itself:

Power of the inner kind increases with use. It is not unusual for telepathy to develop between those who are close to each other in love. Again, prayer groups increase prayer power, and as the bonds of friendship and trust develop, charismatic healing gifts arise. This type of spiritual study and prayer fellowship has been the most precious part of my life for many years. Such groups sustain and bind people together so that when one falls ill, feels depressed or suffers a bereavement, he or she may count upon the friendship of the others. It is this kind of relationship, where there is both giving and receiving at an inner level, which sometimes extends beyond the grave (QF&P, 2.80).

Here we see a new spiritual/subjectivist narrative running contrary to the secularizing trend of latter-day Liberal Quakerism. In Parker-Rhodes description there is a space not merely for faith-healing and prayer but the possibility of a form of relationship with those beyond death. Instead of seeking, rationalist, reductive or empirical explanations for their experience, such Friends seek personal and supra-natural justifications for the religious life. Might these groups offer us a path beyond the silences of 20th century Liberal Quakerism? Only time will tell of course, but a recovery of the Quaker sense of a 'charged' world (a world of presence and deep power) has the potential of allowing us to bypass our wordlessness when confronted with the deathly, the spiritual and the occult. We might again be able to recognize the spiritual dimensions of disease and illness as our ancestors did. We may also recover the ability to speak more openly about our mortality and what lies beyond it, without anxiety or embarrassment. We may even recover a capacity to talk with confidence about that which seemingly obstructs the Light in ourselves and others without needing help from other spiritual communities. Above all contemporary British Quakers have the opportunity to interrogate a civilization which attempts to bracket out the uncanny from our lives. Where might this more holistic, less censored road might lead, is in the end up to us. But one thing seems certain, it is likely to energize and unsettle us in equal measure.

On Mental Travel, Remote Viewing and Clairvoyance

By John R. DeLorez

In a recent discussion about *The Controlled Remote Viewing Handbook* I found that many were unaware that Remote Viewing, despite how it is presented currently, is not a new practice at all, but is actually one that has been in use in the West for quite some time. I was introduced to this practice early in my studies^[1] under the name of ‘Mental Travel,’ a specific skill set that lies within the field of Clairvoyance.

Remote Viewing

Physicists Harold E. Puthoff and Russell Targ at SRI International created the term Remote Viewing in 1972 to designate a technique that they were developing whereby a person allows their awareness to expand sufficiently to be able to focus on a remote location and/or event, viewing it as if they were physically there. The basic perception of how this is possible is that the consciousness of every individual has the ability to access information through means beyond the five physical senses. These additional “extra-sensory” senses (beyond the five physical senses) provide us with the ability to observe or sense information for which there is no apparent physical means of access, and are lumped together by modern Parapsychology under the label of Extra-Sensory Perception or E.S.P. Today, in addition to its original reference to “seeing at a distance”, the term Remote Viewing has been expanded to encompass a range of abilities that in the past were grouped under the label Clairvoyance within the Oriental Occultism Philosophy^[2] modalities of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Carlos S. Alvarado PhD, Visiting Scholar at the Rhine Research Center in a post on his blog titled *Remote Viewing and Stock Market Predictions*, discussed a paper authored by Christopher Carson Smith, Darrell Laham, and Garret Model titled ‘*Stock Market Prediction Using Associative Remote Viewing by Inexperienced Remote Viewers*,’ which states in part, “each participant in the study **remotely viewed** (emphasis mine) an image from a target set of two images, one of which he or she would be shown approximately 48 hours from that time. Of the two images in the target set, one corresponded to whether the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) would close up, while the other corresponded to whether it would close down at the end of the intervening trading day. For feedback, the viewers were shown only the picture actually associated with the actual market outcome. In aggregate, the participants described the correct images, successfully predicting the outcome of the DJIA in seven out of seven attempts (binomial probability test, $p < .01$). Investments in stock options were made based on these predictions, resulting in a significant financial gain.”

My purpose in mentioning the preceding is not to in any way detract from the value of the work being done today

in studies such as this, but to merely reiterate that the ability to “see” an event in the future that is now being called “Associative Remote Viewing”, and in some cases that I have seen, “Mental Time Travel”, has traditionally been studied under the classification of Clairvoyance (Clear Seeing).

I am not sure whether this re- classification of abilities is being done in an attempt to distance this area of Parapsychology from any association with fortune telling or other practices considered to be “non-scientific”, or that today’s researchers are truly not aware of what Clairvoyance is, nor are they conversant with just how much research into this area has already been done in the West over the last 125 years by their predecessors. Although it could be both, I am afraid that it is primarily the latter, because much of what I read about present research doesn’t seem to actually be covering any new ground or to provide for any new approaches, so what follows is a brief introduction to the traditional meaning of Clairvoyance in its many forms for any who might not be familiar with the subject of Remote Viewing under its previous name.

Types of Clairvoyance

Because of the way it is used in today’s popular culture, the word Clairvoyance more often than not elicits an immediate negative reaction. But when used properly, Clairvoyance either designates one specific psychic sense: “Clear Seeing”, as in the case of the Stock Market study referenced above; or it can be used in a broad sense to encompass the entire set of psychic senses exhibited by individuals either born with a working awareness of these extra senses, or who have worked on developing one or more of them through study and exercise, as was the case with the Remote Viewers that the Military Manual was developed for.

The half dozen individual “psychic abilities” most often found under the heading of Clairvoyance are listed below. They are interrelated parts of what could be viewed as a parallel nonphysical nervous system, and in most cases, all of these abilities are possessed to at least some level of capability by those considered Clairvoyant.

1. **Clairvoyance:** “Clear Seeing”, the ability to “see” people, places and events through means other than physical sight, a “vision” using a more traditional label, or Remote Viewing and/or Mental Travel to use the more modern one

Clairvoyance may provide an image of something in the present or from the past. The latter form has been used successfully in Archeology on dig sites to “see” what the area looked like in the far past. Decisions on where to dig on the sites that

were based on these images have borne fruit in finds that would have otherwise been missed without using this technique. It has also been used in the viewing of maps of areas like the Sahara (and labeled as Remote Viewing by the Archeologists involved) to select areas for exploratory digs. There too it has produced good results.

Clairvoyance may also provide an image of the future, as in the Stock Market study, but those who were traditionally experienced in this area always warned that at the moment that an image is viewed it is only the “probable” future, and as time passes the probable future is subject to change, and the further out in the future that the image viewed is, the more likely that there will be change.

Those who practice Clairvoyance also frequently experience Clairaudience with the images, in other words, pictures with sound.

2. **Clairaudience:** “Clear Hearing”, is the ability to hear sound that is “psychically” rather than physically sensed. Some examples of this could be a disembodied voice or voices, the sound of music when there is no physical source for it, or the full range of sounds that come with a Clairvoyant Vision of activities at either a distant place (Remote Viewing), or sounds associated with the past of a physical location.
3. **Clairsentience:** “Clear Feeling”, in the popular vernacular, an Empath. One who possesses Clairsentience is able to feel the emotions of others, and can frequently do so whether the person is in their presence or, if there is some form of linkage between the individual and the Clairsentient, at a distance

Emotions can also be felt by a Clairsentient that have been imbedded either in the past or present in material objects or physical areas. Sensitives and Mediums who can sense strong emotions from the past in their surroundings fall under this classification. Some also use the term Psychometry for this ability, but I do not believe this to be accurate since in Psychometry much more than just emotions can be detected. Clairvoyance, or images, frequently also come into play in Psychometry.

4. **Claircognizance:** “Clear Knowing”, the ability to just “know” that something is true without any physical means of acquiring that knowledge. A somewhat mundane example would be to suddenly “just know” that an alternate route should be taken to avoid an area, without knowing that an accident has occurred on the road ahead. Premonitions can be one form of Claircognizance, as well as a form of Clairvoyance.

Two forms of Clairvoyance follow that generally go unmentioned by name in the early reference works on the subject. They were forms of information that were accepted as being so much a common part of our ability to interpret nonphysical energies in physical symbolisms such as a scent, as to not really require singling out. A classic example would be that smell of flowers that most of us have occasionally experienced when there were no flowers present, and although more recent reference works do provide them with names, they are still rarely mentioned.

5. **Clairallience:** “Clear Smelling”, also sometimes labeled Clairence or Clairolfactance, it is the ability to sense and interpret non-physical information in the form of a scent or smell.

6. **Clairgustance:** “Clear Tasting”, similar to Clairallience in that non-physical information is sensed and interpreted in the form of a taste. Since the physical senses of taste and smell are so closely related, these two psychic senses are also frequently experienced together.

Conclusion

For those interested in looking further into the earlier work done within the area of Clairvoyance in all of its aspects, including the ability to ‘see at a distance’ and Mediumship, I would recommend that they review the substantial amount of information that was published in the 50 years preceding the 1930’s. Sources for this information include the Society for Psychical Research (S.P.R) and the Parapsychological Association, as well as works published during that period by the several Theosophical Publishing houses and the body of work done by William James through the S.P.R. For more recent research into this area I recommend reviewing the work done by The Windbridge Institute and the Rhine Research Center.

FOOTNOTES

[1] *Beginner’s Exercise That Was My Introduction to Mental Travel*

As was mentioned in the opening, I was introduced to the practice of Mental Travel early in my studies. As part of that introduction there was a beginner’s exercise provided for learning Mental Travel (Remote Viewing).

For those who are willing to put in the effort, a summary of that exercise is given below. It starts with learning to do Mental Travel or Remote Viewing within the boundaries of your home, and since this is an exercise that will generally require repeated practice initially, it is recommended that you choose a room for this exercise that you can make use of frequently, and where you won’t be disturbed.

- Because it is your home and you are there all the time, most of what is in the room has long since been relegated to just background information, so the first step is to walk around the room really looking at everything in it, taking note of as much detail as possible.
- Next, if there is not already a chair in the room near the middle, place one there and sit down, or if you are comfortable doing so, sit on the floor on a pillow.
- This exercise works best if you are already accomplished in reaching a light meditative state at will. With your eyes closed, relax and center yourself, then begin creating a three dimensional image in your mind of the room around you, using the same orientation in your mind as your physical position in the room. Make it as detailed as possible.
- Once you have this image fixed, see the room in your mind from the perspective of you standing up. Then continue the visualization of what the room looks like in your mind as you move to a location somewhere in the room behind you.
- Once there, examine in detail an object or book as if you were physically there. For example, in the case of a book see

yourself opening it and read what is written on the page that you opened it to.

- Then, again in your mind, return to the chair and view the room as it is in front of you.
- Open your eyes and compare what you physically see to what you saw in your mind.
- You will want to repeat this exercise as often as necessary for it to become fairly easy for you. Once you have reached that point you can begin to test yourself. In the case of the book visualization, when you have finished the exercise you would actually get up and go to the book and look up the page that you visualized to see if it matches what you saw in your mind.
- When you find that you can satisfactorily reproduce the surrounding room in your mind and travel to any part of it with reasonable accuracy, the next step in the exercise is a straightforward one. While sitting in your chair, in your mind simply go to the door and walk out of it. The door in this step is your gateway to whatever destination you have decided to go visit, and you can find yourself in your room one second, and in the next second, upon going through the door find yourself at your destination.

Bon Voyage

[2] Oriental Occultism, as I understand it, is a field of study in the West that came originally from the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society. I should point out here that I am not a member of the Theosophical Society, and gotten this understanding, as well as the information that follows from my study of the organization and its publications, not from a direct source.

In the early Theosophical Society there was both an Exoteric Section (formalized in 1875) and an Esoteric Section (formalized in October 1888). From the beginning, there seemed to be a significant resistance on the part of the bulk of the membership of the Exoteric Section towards the activities of the Esoteric Section, and by the 1930's, or perhaps even earlier, the Esoteric Section seems to disappear from public view. As a result there was a parallel reduction in published works relating to the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society after this time, and modern publications on subjects such as Clairvoyance (Remote Viewing) provide very little information on the methodology needed for acquiring these skills.

While many people are at least familiar with the Theosophical Society by name, I find that most in general seem to have very little awareness of how large a role this society has played in the numerous Western Spirituality Movements that have sprung up over the last 125 years or so. Names like H. P. Blavatsky, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, and W.Q. Judge are always mentioned in articles about the founding of the Theosophical Society, and are credited for heavily influencing the growth in interest in Eastern Philosophies in the West that followed the founding of the Society, but many other names that show up in discussions about the Spirituality Movements that came into being in the 20th Century are also people that either played a prominent leadership role in the Theosophical organization throughout their lives, or were active in the Society for a period of time prior to breaking off to form their own organizations.

This list includes names of such people as; Annie Besant, Katherine Tingley, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Alice Bailey, C.W. Leadbeater, A.P. Sinnett, T. Subba Row, G. de Purucker, Jinarajadasa, Manly P. Hall, The Ballards (who formed the "I Am" movement), Max Heindel (who formed the Rosicrucian Society in Oceanside California) and Rudolf Steiner (who was expelled from the Society by Annie Besant around 1912, along with the entire

German Section of the Society and all of its branches because of Steiner's development of Anthroposophy, which Besant viewed as no longer consistent with Theosophy).

A number of prominent organizations (in addition to those already mentioned) were initially formed by Theosophists, such as the London Society for Psychical Research (S.P.R.) founded in part by F.W.H. Meyers, W. Stanton Moses and C.C. Massey, prominent Theosophists of the late 19th Century, and in San Jose, California, The Rosicrucian Brotherhood (AMORC).

A sampling of names of prominent people who credited Theosophy with either providing them with their world view, or for having had a profound influence on their lives include Elizabeth Clare Prophet, Thomas Edison, L. Frank Baum (Wizard of Oz), Paul Gauguin, William Butler Yeats, Henry Ford, Mohandas Gandhi (who in his autobiography claimed that the members of his Indian National Congress "were all Theosophists"), Elvis Presley(!), Jane Goodall, and rumor has it, Albert Einstein, to name just a few.

An excellent timeline covering the growth of the Theosophical Society, including all of the in-fighting, splintering off into new groups, and internal politics that keep reshaping the society into something that I doubt Blavatsky would recognize, can be found in the book; *The Theosophical Movement, 1875 ~ 1950*, put out by The Cunningham Press, Los Angeles, CA in 1951. It is no longer in print but you can generally find a copy through one of the online Antiquarian Book Sellers.

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Intermediatism and the Study of Religion

By Jack Hunter

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Over the course of four groundbreaking books published between 1919-1932,² Charles Hoy Fort (1874-1932) meticulously presented thousands of accounts of anomalous events that he found documented in scientific journals, newspapers and books at the New York Public Library and the British Museum. In conducting his wide-ranging textual excavations, Fort uncovered impossible numbers of extraordinary reports of fish and frogs falling from the sky, poltergeists wreaking havoc on unexpecting families, spontaneous human combustion, unidentified flying objects, levitations of people and things, mysterious disappearances, apparitions, and so on.³

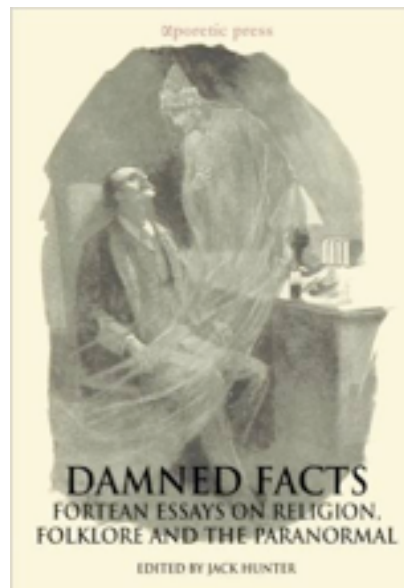
All of these strange events, according to Fort, had been brushed under the carpet by mainstream science,⁴ indeed his books were deliberately intended as an out-and-out affront to the scientific establishment, and in particular to the idea that science has essentially 'sorted it all out' already. Fort was not at all convinced by this, and his collections of 'Damned Facts,' as he called them, served as evidence in support of his suspicions and speculations. Fort obsessively catalogued these 'Damned Facts' on small pieces of card, which he stored in hundreds of shoe boxes in his New York apartment, ready to be unleashed in the wild processions of his books.⁵

Fort's books would go on to become classics of 'paranormal' literature, and inspired others to employ a similarly 'Fortean' approach in their own work, notably including writers such as John A. Keel (1930-2009), Colin Wilson (1931-2013), Robert Anton Wilson (1932-2007), and Jacques Vallée, amongst others (some of whose work will be discussed in later chapters of this book). Fort's books and approach were also the inspiration behind the founding of the famous magazine *Fortean Times*, which, since it was first published in 1973, has helped to keep Fort's eclectic legacy alive.

The original goal of *Damned Facts* was to explore what a Fortean approach to the study of religion might look like, with all of its associated anomalous events and enigmatic experiences. The book you hold in your hands, however, became something much more diverse. Indeed, as we shall see, the writers collected here each offer their own unique perspectives and insights, and take us to places that we might not immediately associate with 'religion.' With this eclecticism in mind, then, what I would like to do in this introduction is to give a basic overview of some of Fort's philosophical speculations on the nature of science, religion and reality more generally, and then to outline some of my own ideas concerning what a Fortean approach to religion might entail.

Intermediatism

Throughout all of his published works on the anomalous, Fort employed a philosophy that he called 'Intermediatism,' the basic tenet of which suggests 'that nothing is real, but that nothing is unreal,' and 'that all phenomena are approximations in one way between realness and unrealness,'⁶ a kind of ontological indeterminacy. He writes:



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...in general metaphysical terms, our expression is that, like a purgatory, all that is commonly called 'existence,' which we call Intermediateness, is quasi-existence, neither real nor unreal, but the expression of attempt to become real...⁷

Through the lens of this ontologically agnostic perspective, in which all phenomena take place somewhere along a spectrum between the real and the unreal, Fort was able to explore some exceedingly strange territory, unearthing phenomena that mainstream science had either refused to comment on or had rejected outright. In the process, Fort (often half-jokingly) postulated some intriguing hypotheses to account for his damned data, including, for example, the frightening idea that human beings are, in some undefined way, 'property,' and the equally bizarre notion of a 'Super-Sargasso Sea,' a mysterious place to which objects are teleported.⁸ Fort, however, often immediately contradicted and discredited his own theories, and is famous for announcing that: 'I believe nothing of my own that I have ever written. I cannot accept that the products of minds are subject-matter for beliefs.'⁹ His agnosticism extended even to his own theories and ideas.

By approaching *all* phenomena as equally real/unreal, from the common-place and everyday to the most exceptional and far-out, Fort was essentially proposing a Monistic metaphysics, according to which all events, in all their varied manifestations, are, in some sense, fundamentally connected to one another. All are part of the same process of 'becoming real,' of moving toward 'positiveness,' and all give equal insight into the 'underlying oneness.' Fort suggests that this oneness might best be thought of as a living system, perhaps as a cosmic 'organism,' maybe even possessing some form of purposive intelligence and agency. This idea was

later taken up by John Keel, who suggests the possibility that 'the earth is really a living organism, and that it in turn is part of an even larger organism.' For Fort, the strange phenomena he collected provided glimpses into the underlying nature of this system. He writes:

We shall pick up an existence by its frogs...if there is an underlying oneness of all things, it does not matter where we begin, whether with stars, or laws of supply and demand, or frogs, or Napoleon Bonaparte. One measures a circle, beginning anywhere.¹⁰

To the Intermediatist, then, all phenomena, from the most mundane to the most extraordinary, provide gateways through which we can approach the structures and processes of the 'underlying oneness.' Perhaps strange events are something akin to 'phantoms in a super-mind in a dreaming state.'¹¹ Maybe these 'phantoms' reveal the working structural mechanisms of the super-mind itself.

The implication is, then, that the extraordinary phenomena and experiences reported by humankind, throughout history and across continents, may well prove fertile ground for investigating not only the nature of religion, culture, and human consciousness, but also of 'reality' itself, and should not be brushed under the carpet because they don't yet make sense, nor because they contradict our currently dominant models of reality. Fort's philosophical approach emphasises wholeness, and cautions us away from ignoring any aspect of existence, no matter how bizarre or disconcerting. There is much to be learned from the anomalous, and Fortean Intermediatism provides us with a useful framework through which to approach it.

Dominants

Writing some forty-three years before the publication of Thomas Kuhn's (1922-1996) famous *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,¹² which emphasises the role of successive 'Paradigms' in the development of science,¹³ Fort was already keenly aware of the influence of what he called 'Dominants' on the interpretation of phenomena and events: 'All phenomena,' he writes, 'are "explained" in the terms of the Dominant of their era.'¹⁴

Much like the anthropologist James Frazer (1854-1941), whose book *The Golden Bough* proposed an evolutionary model of the development of modern rationalism (from magic, to religion, to science),¹⁵ Fort proposed a three-tiered model of successive 'Dominants.' While Frazer's stages culminate with 'science' as the pinnacle of human intellectual development, however, Fort's model projects forward to a future state: Frazer stops at science, but Fort pushes on. Fort's model moves from the old Dominant of religion, through the scientific Dominant (which we still seemingly inhabit early in the twenty-first century), through to the so-called 'New Dominant,' a state of intermediatism.¹⁶ He writes:

In our acceptance, Dominants, in their succession, displace preceding dominants not only because they are more nearly positive, but because the old Dominants, as recruiting mediums, play out. Our expression is that the New Dominant, of Wider Inclusions, is now manifesting throughout the world, and that the old Exclusionism is everywhere breaking down.¹⁷

Fort's use of the terms 'Exclusionism' and 'Inclusionism' here refer to each Dominant's attitude towards 'Damned Facts.' The old Dominants of religion and science are both *exclusionist* in Fort's view, rejecting the anomalous in favour of their long established models of an ordered reality. The New Dominant, by contrast, would be *inclusive* of damned facts, no longer rejecting them, but embracing them, taking them seriously as part of the nature and process of reality.

Unlike Frazer, again, who held 'science' up as the final point of human intellectual development, Fort was of the opinion that the 'New Dominant' too would one day become rigid, stagnant and fixed, at which point another Dominant would emerge to build on and succeed it, moving humankind further towards greater inclusivity and an appreciation of *all parts* of the 'whole.'

Natural and Supernatural

For a student of extraordinary phenomena it might come as something of a surprise to learn that Fort was not at all interested in the 'supernatural,' at least not as the term is classically defined. The supernatural, he writes:

...has no place in my vocabulary. In my view, it has no meaning, or distinguishment. If there never has been, finally, a natural explanation of anything, everything is supernatural.

Here Fort's approach echoes the efforts of Psychical Researchers in the late nineteenth century to escape from the religious connotations of the 'supernatural' in their investigations of strange and anomalous experiences (apparitions, extrasensory perception, telepathy, psychokinesis, and so on). Frederic Myers (1843-1901), a founding member of the Society for Psychical Research in 1882, for example, proposed the term 'supernormal' (later becoming 'paranormal'), as a means of indicating that extraordinary experiences and phenomena are not in any sense *un-natural*, abnormal, or beyond the scope of rational investigation, but are, in actuality, natural and suprisingly common. The Fortean rejection of the 'supernatural' also resonates with Émile Durkheim's recognition that the category of the 'supernatural' itself is a distinctly 'modern' one, and that:

In order to call certain phenomena supernatural, one must already have the sense that there is a natural order of things, in other words, that the phenomena of the universe are connected to one another according to certain necessary relationships called laws.

Fort rejects the label 'supernatural,' precisely because he remains unconvinced of the 'natural' laws proposed by mainstream science. Fort's notion of the 'natural order of things,' is significantly different to the dominant cosmology of materialist science.

Fort's philosophical perspective, then, which is founded upon a radical skepticism regarding the authority of cultural 'dominants' (both religion and science included), questions the solidity of science's underlying assumptions (that there are natural physical laws, that matter is inert, and so on) and, as such, he remains open to the possibility of extraordinary events - they are no less possible than anything else. Fort argues that his procession of 'Damned Facts' actually challenges the established 'natural' laws of science (as well as those of religion), and actively push us towards adopting an

intermediatist position, according to which all things are understood to partake of a 'quasi existence, neither real nor unreal,' and all events are connected by an 'underlying oneness.' In Bernardo Kastrup's words anomalous phenomena are 'calls to the absurd,' while for Peter Berger, they are 'signals of transcendence,' hinting that there is *something more going on, just below the surface.*

Witchcraft, Psi and Faculty-X

Religion is belief in a supreme being. Science is belief in a supreme generalization. Essentially they are the same. Both are the suppressors of witchcraft.

Fort's use of the term 'witchcraft' here refers to unusual human capacities and experiences, such as the ostensible ability to predict future events, the strange manifestations that seem to occur around 'poltergeist girls,' and the morbid wounds of Stigmatics. From a Fortean perspective, then, the term 'witchcraft' is much like Colin Wilson's 'Faculty X,' or the term 'psi,' as employed in the parapsychological literature, which refers to such phenomena as 'anomalous processes of information or energy transfer that are not currently explainable in terms of known physical or biological mechanisms.'¹⁸ Psi, Faculty-X, witchcraft and magic are natural, not supernatural.

Again, Fort's understanding of witchcraft is prescient of the writings of anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard, whose 1937 book (published 5 years after Fort's final publication), *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande* suggested that the Azande of Northern Sudan:

...have no conception of 'natural' as we understand it, and therefore neither of the 'supernatural' as we understand it. Witchcraft is to Azande an ordinary and not an extraordinary...event. It is a normal, and not an abnormal happening.¹⁹

So, just as witchcraft is a normal, taken for granted, component of Azande life and cosmology, so it is also to be expected in Fort's metaphysics and philosophy, where it is viewed as a natural human capacity.

In *Lo!* Fort explores the idea that the manifestation of 'witchcraft' is significantly influenced by the psychological, social and cultural factors that surround the agent or experient. In the context of religious revivals, for example, Fort writes:

...when a whole nation, or hosts of its people, goes primitive, or gives in to atavism, or reverts religiously, it may be that conditions arise that are susceptible to phenomena that are repelled by matured mentality.²⁰

Here Fort preempts the theories of the Italian anthropologist Ernesto de Martino (1908-1965), whose book *Magic: Primitive and Modern*²¹ suggests that paranormal experiences and phenomena are embedded in broader networks of psychological, social and cultural influence: 'culturally conditioned nature.' The idea is that psychical phenomena manifest more readily in socio-cultural conditions that are open to their existence, while conditions that are 'actively anti-magic' will repel or inhibit them.²² According to this view, culture, or a Fortean Dominant, serves as a sort of lens or filter for what is deemed possible, and this, in turn, filters

what is actually able manifest as 'real,' or, in Fort's terminology, to 'become positive.'

It is also clear that Fort recognised the centrality of human consciousness, and especially altered states of consciousness, in the mediation of psychic experiences, suggesting that mind can be trained (consciously through the practice of meditation, for example, or unconsciously through the influence of cultural Dominants), to manifest in fantastic ways. This notion is further elaborated in Fort's final book *Wild Talents*, published in 1932, where he examines the influence of conditions of religious belief on the manifestation of certain psychical phenomena. In discussing the apparitions witnessed at Lourdes, the apparent miraculous curing of a young boy's paralysis 'by the touch of a bit of bone of St. Anne,' and recent cases of Stigmata, for example, Fort suggests that:

The function of God is the focus. An intense mental state is impossible, unless there be something, or the illusion of something, to center upon. Given any other equally serviceable concentration-device, prayers are unnecessary. I conceive of the magic of prayers. I conceive of the magic of blasphemies. There is witchcraft in religion: there may be witchcraft in atheism.²³

Fort's idea of witchcraft is not bound by any particular ideology, but is instead a natural function of the 'underlying oneness' of our 'quasi-reality,' ready and waiting for a gap in our 'matured mentality,' or for just the right socio-cultural conditions, to allow it to filter through us and manifest.

'The realization of the imaginary'

Fort's notion of witchcraft also includes extraordinary mind-body processes within the human organism. He asks:

Can one's mind, as I shall call it, affect one's own body, as I shall call it? If so, that is personal witchcraft, or internal witchcraft. Can one's mind affect the bodies of other persons and other things outside? If so, that is what I call external witchcraft.²⁴

Fort's notion of 'internal witchcraft' sounds a lot like certain theories put forward in discussions of Stigmata, which appears to represent a highly culturally specific (usually, though not always, Catholic),²⁵ manifestation of the influence of consciousness and culture on the physical body. Researcher of Stigmata Ian Wilson suggests that in such cases 'the flesh really does change, in an extraordinarily dramatic way, in response to mental activity,'²⁶ which he takes as indicative of the notion that Stigmata is a psychophysiological phenomenon related to social and cultural expectation. He notes, for example, that the particularly dramatic symptoms of Stigmata (gorey, bleeding wounds, and so on), only appear in the historical record following an aesthetic cultural shift in depictions of the crucifixion. It was only *after* artists began depicting the crucifixion in vivid, life-like, detail that Stigmatics began to manifest their own graphic wounds.

We also see similarities here with the 'psychosomatic,' or 'psychogenic' disorders, which appear to manifest physical symptoms that are shaped by cultural expectation,²⁷ and with the field of psychoneuroimmunology, which emphasises the role of psychosocial influences on bodily healing processes.²⁸

The veil between the 'ordinary' and the 'extraordinary' feels especially thin here, as do the boundaries between the 'mental' and the 'physical,' the 'internal' and the 'external,' and the 'cultural' and the 'natural.' Fort captures this breakdown of dichotomies in his concept of transmediumization:

...meaning the passage of phenomena from one medium of existence to another...I mean the imposition of the imaginary upon the physical. I mean not the action of mind upon matter, but the action of mind-matter upon matter-mind.²⁹

Here Fort seems to be talking about some form of panpsychism, or the notion that mind and matter have co-evolved and are fundamental to one another,³⁰ in other words, that both matter and consciousness 'are two aspects of a single system.' What if, then, the very foundations of the dominant materialist perspective (upon which most 'Western' academic theorising is tacitly based), are misguided, or incomplete? What if all matter is, in some sense, conscious, or at least has the *potential* to become conscious? And what if we, as consciousness-matter ourselves, can interact with the matter-consciousness surrounding us in subtle, and less subtle, ways? *If this is the case*, does it mean that we will have to reconsider some of our dominant explanatory models and theories? Whether we like them or not, these are important questions.

Fort's intermediatist approach raises fundamental questions about the limitations of our understanding of the world around us,³¹ and totally destabilises the metaphysical assumptions and ontological certainty inherent in positivist-materialism, which dominates scholarly discourse and the cosmological models it constructs.³² This destabilisation of ontological certainty, I suggest, is a useful starting point for exploring the extraordinary, religious and paranormal dimensions of human experience.

The X-Files of the Humanities

As an academic discipline concerned, in the first instance, with 'belief,' Religious Studies frequently assumes an agnostic framework that allows exploration without the need to commit to a single interpretation. This is one of the ways in which Religious Studies has sought to distance itself from Theology. Often, however, this agnostic stance does not extend beyond the 'beliefs' of our informants. When discussing beliefs, things are easy enough to deal with: we do not have to share those beliefs, and we embrace a relativist position.³³ But what about experiences and events? What about when our informants tell us that something highly unusual happened to them, or what if (heaven forbid), something extraordinary happens to the researcher in the field?³⁴ The standard approach has been to 'bracket' the phenomenon/experience, to demarcate it as beyond the realms of acceptable scholarly contemplation, to move on, and look at something else instead.³⁵ In Fort's view this would be a deliberate exclusion of an essential part of the whole.

Miraculous events, strange powers and supernatural beings are fundamental components of many (if not most) of the world's religions, and yet, for some reason, their relevance and implications have been somewhat downplayed in the scholarly discourse. Folklorist David J. Hufford, following Max Weber's (1864-1920) similar observations, has identified a process of disenchantment within Western scholarly discourse, whereby the 'modern' rational and scientific

worldview emerged in opposition to traditional, magical and mythic modes of understanding the world. Indeed, this modern worldview actively constructs itself in opposition to what it deems 'unreal' and 'irrational.'³⁶ This is the underlying framework that supports much of the theorising in the humanities.

I am of the opinion that Religious Studies and other allied disciplines such as anthropology, folklore, and so on, have the potential to become the *X-Files* of the humanities. A safe place to catalogue, compare and analyse the anomalous and extraordinary experiences and capacities of human kind, and to critically engage with their implications. What I mean to say is that Religious Studies is already ideally suited to the exploration of a wide range of extraordinary phenomena while still maintaining its academic respectability as a discipline. Jeffrey Kripal's recent textbook *Comparing Religions* (2014), gives a good example of how one such approach to Religious Studies might look. Kripal explains that he is

sceptical of models of religion that focus on the normal, on the everyday, and on the ways these events are domesticated, rationalized, and institutionalized. All that, too, is 'religion' - of course. Maybe it is most of religion. But, if we only focus on these social processes, we will get a very flat view of religion, which is exactly what we have today in much of the field.³⁷

In essence, what we have here is a more inclusive Religious Studies, an Intermediatist Religious Studies, that does not exclude the extraordinary, but rather understands it as an essential part of the system under study. Kripal is not the only voice calling for a more inclusive Religious Studies, however. Other scholars have also been exploring the possibilities inherent in this kind of open-minded approach to the study of religion. See, for example, the work of anthropologist Edith Turner in regard to experiencing the reality of spirits, and on the efficacy of ritual,³⁸ Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston's recent edited book on the significance of 'subtle bodies' in religious practices,³⁹ Ruy Blanes and Diana Espírito Santo's volume examining spirits as agents rather than symbols,⁴⁰ and Fiona Bowie's efforts to investigate afterlife beliefs through the lens of 'cognitive empathetic engagement',⁴¹ amongst others. All of these researchers are pushing the study of religion further toward greater inclusivity.

Ontological Flooding

In a nutshell, then, what I am suggesting is that we extend Fortean agnosticism into the domains of ontology, and question the very foundations of what we understand as 'real.' In other words, we should not assume that we already know what is *really* real. Fort's intermediatist philosophy goes some way towards achieving this kind of ontological destabilisation. According to this perspective nothing can be said to be wholly real, just as nothing can be said to be wholly unreal. This opens up the ontological flood barriers, a process I have referred to elsewhere as 'ontological flooding'.⁴²

But what is the point?

The point has to do with admitting the limitations (or at least the possibility of limitations), inherent in the dominant explanatory models of the social sciences, and with embracing the *possibility* that there may be more going on in the things that we study than the established models can

adequately account for. This does not mean that we have to become believers in 'the supernatural' (Fort certainly did not), but just that we need to be aware of the fact that our models are more than likely incomplete. There may well, for example, be more going on than social functional processes, cognitive processes, power struggles, economic struggles, politics, doctrines or ideologies (of course, that is not to say that such factors are not involved, just that they are not necessarily *all* that is going on).

What if religious rituals and collective worship are at least attempting to tap into psi, Fort's 'witchcraft,' or Wilson's 'Faculty-X,' for their efficacy? What if prayer really is effective in some way? What is going on in cases of Stigmata or physical mediumship? Is it all fraud, or are such cases hints of 'internal witchcraft'? Is spirit possession purely a social-functional phenomenon, or a cognitive phenomenon, or something more? What if there is a God, or gods, or some God-like thing(s)? Some kind of intelligence(s) perhaps? Or spirits? Might matter possess consciousness? Do shamanic practitioners enter into other worlds during their rituals and trance states? The dominant approach, grounded in the established materialist metaphysics, says 'No,' but, like Fort, I remain unconvinced that we have worked it all out, and so, for this author at least (and, no doubt, for Fort as well), the possibility that there is 'something more' going on remains open (whatever that 'something more' might be).

Fortean Approaches

In keeping with the agnostic nature of Fort's philosophy, the chapters gathered in this collection each approach their subject matter in different ways. There is, then, no defining stance or conclusion that unites the essays that follow, nor was this ever the intention in putting this book together. Instead, the chapters are united by an open-minded willingness to consider the implications of Fort's procession of Damned Facts.

In 'No Limestone in the Sky,' Amba J. Sepie introduces us to the politics of Damned Facts, especially in the context of anthropology, an academic discipline in which encounters with 'spirits' in the field are not an uncommon occurrence. Timothy Grieve-Carlson's paper then looks at the similarities between Charles Fort's philosophy of Intermediatism and William James' philosophy of radical empiricism. Although it is unclear whether Fort read James, Grieve-Carlson suggests that much of Fort's philosophical perspective is pre-empted in James' writings on radical empiricism.

Next, Wellington Zangari and colleagues from the University of São Paulo give an overview of extraordinary and religious phenomena from Brazil, which include everything from encounters with apparent alien entities, to cases of physical mediumship and poltergeist manifestations. Their chapter summarises religious, folkloric, scientific and Fortean interpretations of such experiences. In 'A New Demonology: John Keel and the Mothman Prophecies,' folklorist and journalist David Clarke examines John Keel's ultraterrestrial hypothesis and its impact on the 'Occult Revival' of the 1960s and 1970s. Clarke's paper is then aptly followed by Robin Jarrell's chapter on 'UFO Abductions as Mystical Encounter,' in which she draws on Jacques Vallée's famous research linking contemporary UFO and abduction experiences to traditional faerie folklore motifs. Jarrell's paper pays particular attention to the extensive abduction experiences described by the horror author Whitley Strieber, and links them back to the writings of Vallée, the seventeenth

century Scottish priest Robert Kirk (1644-1692), and the early twentieth century ethnographer W.Y. Evans-Wentz (1878-1965).

David V. Barrett's contribution takes a slightly different Fortean approach to religion, leaving behind the UFOs, poltergeists and Stigmatics to focus on British-Israelism, the belief that the British people are descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Not only is this chapter fascinating for its exploration of the ways in which such beliefs are supported by the misunderstanding of myth as historical truth, it is also frightening to see how these beliefs can come to be used in the promotion of particular (often far-right) political ideologies and agendas.

Next, in 'The Transmediumizers,' Eden S. French and Christopher Laursen take Fort's concept of 'transmediumization' as their starting point, and look forward to the dawning of the New Dominant, when binary oppositions of 'man/woman, black/white, human/beast, life/death, human/God, organic/artificial' break down to reveal 'a larger, more complex, networked ecology of materiality and immateriality.'

Interestingly, the two final chapters in this collection both draw on the labyrinth as a model for exploring the nature of mind and reality. In 'The Mirror Maze,' James Harris takes us on a kaleidoscopic journey through art, revelation and neuroscience in an effort to make sense of a psychedelic vision he had under the influence of Psilocybin mushrooms. Harris argues that we must come to accept 'that it is puzzles all the way down.' In the final chapter, Roberta Harris Short gives a very personal account of an experience she had following a premonitory dream about her mother. When the dream apparently came true her understanding of the nature of reality shifted considerably, leading her, like James Harris, to ponder its labyrinthine qualities.

This is an eclectic book, which, I hope, captures something of the essence of Fort's Intermediatist approach, so why not let down your ontological flood barriers, and go with the flow...

Footnotes

1. *The Book of the Damned* (1919), *New Lands* (1925), *Lo!* (1931), and *Wild Talents* (1932).
2. In the introduction to *The Directory of Possibilities* (1981), Colin Wilson criticises Fort's scatter-gun approach to presenting his 'procession of Damned Facts.' Wilson writes 'He jumbles up all kinds of weird occurrences...as if all were on the same level, and he fails to make the slightest attempt to explain them.' To Fort, as we will see, however, all phenomena *are* on the same level, and this, in a sense, works towards his explanation for them.
3. Perhaps 'scientism' would be a better term.
4. Jim Steinmeyer, *Charles Fort: The Man Who Invented the Supernatural* (London: Heinemann, 2008).
5. Paul Sieveking and Bob Rickard 'Introduction by the Editors of *Fortean Times*.' In Adam Sisman Ed. *The World's Most Incredible Stories: The Best of Fortean Times* (London: Warner Books, 1996), 10-14.
6. Charles Fort, *The Book of the Damned: The Collected Works of Charles Fort* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 2008), 15.
7. Ibid.
8. A term that Fort coined in *Lo!*
9. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 555-556.
10. Here, Fort's perspective seems to resemble the Process Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947). Whitehead suggested that 'the actual world is a process, and that the process is the becoming of actual entities,' *Process and Reality* (New York: Macmillan, 1979), 22.

11. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 556.
12. John A. Keel, *The Eighth Tower: On Ultraterrestrials and the Superspectrum* (Charlottesville: Anomalist Books, 2013), 248.
13. Ibid., 544.
14. Ibid., 258.
15. Fort's yearning for greater holism brings to mind William James' (1842-1910) comments on the importance of incorporating the full range of altered states of consciousness into our models and conceptions of reality: 'No account of the Universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded,' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2004), 355.
16. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
17. Kuhn defines a paradigm, very simply, as 'universally recognized scientific achievements that, for a time, provide model problems and solutions for a community of practitioners' (1970, 11).
18. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 306. See also Colin Bennett, *Politics of the Imagination: The Life, Work and Ideas of Charles Fort* (Manchester: Headpress, 2002).
19. J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study of Magic and Religion* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1993).
20. Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Mutants and Mystics: Science Fiction, Superhero Comics and the Paranormal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 87.
21. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 249.
22. Ibid., 655.
23. '[Supernormal refers to] a faculty or phenomenon which goes beyond the level of ordinary experience, in the direction of evolution, or as pertaining to a transcendental world. The word supernatural is open to grave objections; it assumes that there is something outside nature, and it has become associated with arbitrary inference with law. Now there is no reason to suppose that the psychical phenomena with which we deal are less a part of nature, or less subject to fixed and definite law, than any other phenomena' Myers, 1902, in Kripal, *Mutants*, 67.
24. Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 28.
25. Which could, perhaps, be understood as a form of 'magical consciousness.' In which case, Fort's model of development through Dominants is a virtual reversal of Frazer's.
26. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 15.
27. Bernardo Kastrup, *Meaning in Absurdity: What Bizarre Phenomena Can Tell Us About the Nature of Reality* (Winchester: Iff Books, 2011)
28. Peter Berger, *A Rumour of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971).
29. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 999.
30. Because, in Fort's view, Religion (with a capital 'R'), acts as a suppressor or witchcraft, I feel that a Fortean approach to religion (with a little 'r'), would be primarily concerned with what Rudolf Otto calls 'the numinous,' defined as the 'non-rational' experiential component of religion, *The Idea of the Holy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958). Witchcraft and the numinous are equivalent. A Fortean approach to religion might also intersect nicely with 'ordinary theology' and 'vernacular religion' approaches in Religious Studies.
31. Wilson writes: 'If by "normal" we mean something that tells us the truth, then Faculty X is far more normal than our everyday awareness, and the reality seen by the mystics is the most normal of all' *Beyond the Occult* (London: Corgi, 1989), 123.
32. Daryl Bem, 'Feeling The Future: Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100 (2011): 407.
33. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 30.
34. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 666.
35. Ernesto de Martino, *Magic: Primitive and Modern* (London: Tom Stacey, 1972).
36. Ibid., 58.
37. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 1001.
38. Sociologist Eric Ouellet, taking inspiration from parapsychologist Walter von Lucadou's model of RSPK (poltergeist) cases, has proposed a social-psi explanation for the UFO phenomenon. According to Ouellet's model, waves of UFO slighting can be understood as collective psi events, expressive of underlying social, cultural and political tensions. Eric Ouellet, *Illuminations: The UFO Experience as Parapsychological Event* (Charlottesville: Anomalist Books, 2015).
39. Fort, *The Book of the Damned*, 1014.
40. Parapsychologist Stanley Krippner has written on Stigmatic phenomena occurring with the Brazilian medium Amyr Amiden, who was brought up in the Islamic faith.
41. Ian Wilson, *The Bleeding Mind: An Investigation into the Mysterious Phenomenon of Stigmata* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), 100.
42. Ibid., 80-81.
43. Edward Shorter, *From the Mind into the Body: The Cultural Origins of Psychosomatic Symptoms* (New York: The Free Press, 1994).
44. Michael Winkelman, *Shamanism: The Neural Ecology of Consciousness and Healing* (London: Bergin & Garvey), 209.
45. Ibid.
46. Max Velmans, 'The Co-Evolution of Matter and Consciousness,' *Synthesis Philosophica* 22.44 (2007): 273-282.
47. Kastrup, *Meaning in Absurdity*, 105.
48. Rupert Sheldrake, *The Science Delusion: Freeing the Spirit of Enquiry* (London: Coronet, 2012).
49. Other recent writers have come to similar conclusions. See Thomas Nagel, *Mind and Cosmos* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), for example.
50. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 17.
51. See David E. Young and Jean-Guy Goulet (eds.) *Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounters: The Anthropology of Extraordinary Experience* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 1994); Jack Hunter, 'The Anthropology of the Weird' in Greg Taylor (ed.) *Darklore VI* (Brisbane: Daily Grail, 2010).
52. Jeremy Northcote, 'Objectivity and the Supernormal: The Limitations of Bracketing Approaches in Providing Neutral Accounts of Supernormal Claims,' *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 19.1 (2004): 85-98.
53. David J. Hufford, 'Modernity's Defenses.' Paper presented at Symposium on *The Anthropology of the Paranormal*, Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California, Oct. 2013.
54. Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Comparing Religion: Coming to Terms* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), xiv.
55. Edith Turner 'The Reality of Spirits: A Tabooed or Permitted Field of Study,' *Anthropology of Consciousness* 4.1 (1993): 9-12.
56. Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, *Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West* (Oxford: Routledge, 2013).
57. Ruy Blanes and Diana Espirito Santo, *The Social Life of Spirits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
58. Fiona Bowie 'Building Bridges, Dissolving Boundaries: Towards a Methodology for the Ethnographic Study of the Afterlife, Mediumship and Spiritual Beings,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 81.3 (2013): 698-733.
59. See also Jack Hunter and David Luke (eds.) *Talking With the Spirits, Ethnographies from Between the Worlds* (Brisbane: Daily Grail, 2014), Jack Hunter (ed.) *Paranthropology: Anthropological Approaches to the Paranormal* (Bristol: Paranthropology, 2012), and Jack Hunter (ed.) *Strange Dimensions: A Paranthropology Anthology* (Llanrhadeir-ym-Mochnant: Psychoid Books, 2015).
60. Robert Anton Wilson, *The New Inquisition: Irrational Rationalism and the Citadel of Science* (Phoenix: Falcon Press, 1987).
61. In this context, the term 'ontology' is taken as referring to 'the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality.'
62. Jack Hunter, "'Between Realness and Unrealness": Anthropology, Parapsychology and the Ontology of Non-Ordinary Realities,' *Dickens: Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religion* 17.2 (2015): 4-20.

Review: “Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond” by Beatriz Caiuby Labate & Clancy Cavnar

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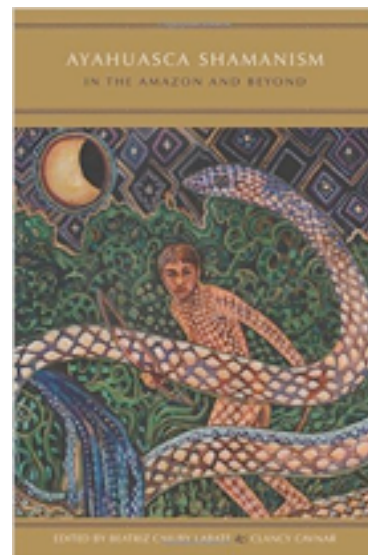
Ayahuasca shamanism is a term for a specific form of shamanism which is performed by indigenous and mestizo shamans of the Amazon region using the psychoactive concoction ayahuasca, and which has attracted increasing attention by western tourists over the last years. By now I have read several books on the issue of ayahuasca, and some of them I also reviewed (Mayer 2010; 2013); but this anthology, compiled by Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Clancy Cavnar, impressed me in a particular way. It is characterized by a sensible composition of individual contributions which result, in an overall view, in a dense, multifaceted, and compelling picture of the present situation of ayahuasca shamanism and its development trajectories. Moreover, it describes the complex situation which emerges with the encountering of indigenous culture, its urbanized forms, western researchers (primarily anthropologists), and western tourists. The subjects covered by the chapters of the book are all concerned with ayahuasca shamanism as a core issue but they point much further, however, by dealing with the relations between indigenous/native shamans and western visitors in general. Thereby, numerous problems resulting from mutual misunderstandings, projections, and idealization are addressed. Each of the chapters deconstructs images and ideas which, since the 1960s, have been developed in western people's minds around the ayahuasca complex, its alleged rootedness in an ancient tradition, as an embodiment of authentic, primeval nature wisdom.

In addition to a foreword by Oscar Calavia Saéz (“Authentic Ayahuasca”) as well as introductory “Notes on the Expansion and Reinvention of Ayahuasca Shamanism” by the two editors and social anthropologist Françoise Barbira Freedman – both are texts worth reading – the anthology contains 11 chapters which cover a broad range of topics surrounding the meeting between natives and westerners from different perspectives. The first two chapters deal directly with the “invented tradition” of ayahuasca use in ethnic groups. Medical anthropologist Glenn H. Shepard Jr. (“Will the Real Shaman Please Stand Up?”) shows how two groups which traditionally didn't know ayahuasca as a brew consisting of a specific combination of two psychotropic plants, i.e. the Amazonian vine *Banisteriopsis caapi* and a DMT-containing plant like *Psychotria viridis*, came in touch with this beverage in the end of the 1950s (the one group), and in mid-1980s respectively (the other group), and adopted it to their tradition in different ways. Because of its potency and efficacy, even traditionally used shaman plants have thereafter been replaced to some degree. Social scientist Mariana Ciavatta Pantoja's (“Kuntanawa”) article is concerned with the identity-forming function of ayahuasca for the Kuntanawa people, demonstrating how creatively they use their tradition, culture, and ethnicity. In the third chapter, the Finnish researcher in Latin American studies, Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen, portrays how ayahuasca shamanism

causes new alliances of various indigenous groups but also of indigenous, urban, and white shamans (“gringo shamans”); thereby, questions of power as well as indigenous identity are also reformulated. In chapter 4, the anthropologists Esther Jean Langdon and Isabel Santana de Rose address a similar issue, a “medicine alliance” which is formed by a network of Guarani, an indigenous ethnic group from the south of Brazil (and other South American countries), Santo Daime (an ayahuasca religion), and the Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan, a religious association which is strongly oriented on the native customs of North American natives. Here again, it becomes apparent how rituals, sacred artefacts, and substances have been exchanged, and new ritual formations and traditions have been created. Primordially, ayahuasca has only been used by Santo Daime, and unknown to the other two parts of the alliance. In view of such developments, the authors note:

Western perceptions of shamanism tend to seek the primordial shaman, emphasizing an essential connection with the past. This past, constructed as timeless, primordial, and mythical, represents shamanism as a stagnated cultural form. However, modern ethnographies show that shamanisms today must be understood in light of the interethnic context in which indigenous peoples are inserted. Shamanisms are situated historically and constitute dynamic systems of knowledge and practices that are negotiated and renegotiated in contexts where diverse cultural actors are in dialogue. (p. 98)

Such meetings and interactions of foreign cultures are not always characterized by mutual understanding; successful encounters can even rely on systematic misunderstanding. This is demonstrated in an impressive manner by anthropologist Anne-Marie Losonczy and social scientist Silvia Mesturini Cappel with her contribution “Ritualized Misunderstanding Between Uncertainty, Agreement, and Rupture” (chap. 5). The authors identified three main fields of essential misunderstanding which form settings of successful communication. The first one concerns the aim to



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cope with situations of uncertainty. The search for a way out of uncertainty is common to both, westerners and natives, but is it propelled by an *epistemic* doubt with the latter, and by an *ontological* doubt with the former. For natives, uncertainty is related to the identity and intentions of the encountered beings as well as the meaning of the encounters. The 'plant teacher' ayahuasca is sought to provide insight and clarification. Westerners, by contrast, are driven by the question whether there is a world 'on the other side,' whether spirits 'really' exist, etc. They try to reduce, or remove, their uncertainty with regard to their (new and/or alternative) worldview. The second field of misunderstanding is concerned with the understanding of, and dealing with, illness and diseases where a psychological-animistic concept (diseases are caused by emotional traumas or psychological blocks), is in opposition to a spiritualist concept (diseases are caused by sorcery or conflicts with the spiritual realm). The third field of ritualized misunderstanding concerns the legitimization of the shaman. For westerners, it depends primarily on his local (indigenous) origin or initiation as well as on his moral and spiritual motivation. However, in a native perspective legitimization depends primarily on shamanic power which is reflected in access to a western clientele, and the related economic and social advantages. Envy between local shamans and the resulting 'magic wars' do not fit with the above mentioned western understanding. For the authors, ayahuasca is a kind of mediating third party because it is providing a ritualized framework in which it is jointly consumed by natives (shamans) and westerners, in which it produces experiences and contents (images, visions, etc.), which are understood as communication of supernatural entities, and which become objects of shared communication. The authors remark:

Multi-sited ethnography has shown that, no matter how different the speech and practices surrounding ayahuasca may be, this beverage seems to function as a ritual device capable of opening a relational field that allows people who were previously spatially separated to meet and interact in a common ritual frame while remaining culturally and socially distinct. This meeting stimulates a process of communication and exchange that rests on ritually framed mutual misunderstandings that create, time and time again, the perception of a mutual agreement, expressed in shared ritual action. (p. 125-126)

With the chapter "Shaman's Networks in Western Amazonia. The Iquitos-Nauta Road," social anthropologist Françoise Barbira Freedman deals with several changes caused by ayahuasca tourism in the western Amazonian region as well as with the tradition of shamanic networks. A 75 kilometers long road plays an important role connecting the Peruvian cities Iquitos and Nauta, which crosses almost perfectly straight through the jungle, and without turnoffs: a lot of native shamans have taken up residence along this road, and built ayahuasca lodges to offer ceremonies for tourists. The road itself builds a demarcation line of 'civilization' and jungle, but also of local and transnational shamanism. Freedman called it a "transformative mixed-contact zone" (p. 138), because various forms of involvement in ayahuasca shamanism meet there whereby the categories are rather fluid: identities can change, local shamans can become "international" ones, "gringos" can become "gringo shamans" or mediators between westerners and natives etc.

The author also emphasizes the resulting situation of envy and competition between shamans with its negative effects (e.g. accusations of sorcery, misuse of power, offering 'bad' ayahuasca).

In her dissertation, cultural anthropologist Evgenia Fotiou investigated ayahuasca tourists. She interviewed 82 persons during 2003-2007 asking about their motives, needs, and wishes which brought them to travel to Peru. Her findings are included in the book chapter "On the Uneasiness of Tourism. Considerations on Shamanic Tourism in Western Amazonia" (chap. 7). She cites four main reasons: (1) self-exploration and spiritual growth, (2) curiosity, (3) physical and emotional healing, and (4) the desire for vacation in an exotic location (p. 163). But she could not find any patterns in age, class, education, or social status; however, with regard to gender she found more than twice as many men as women in her sample who attended ayahuasca ceremonies (p. 161). She suggested that this gender difference might be explained by a higher willingness to take risks among men as well as greater challenges and inconveniences women are exposed to when travelling through South American countries. Surprisingly, many of the participants of ayahuasca ceremonies did not have any experiences with other hallucinogenic drugs before. For many of them, the wish for authenticity, for a connection to an archaic past, as well as for direct access to spirituality and the sacred is a key desire. Meanwhile, the shamans know these needs and wishes very well: they choose their outfit and design their ceremonies according to the ideas and composition of the participants. The author calls this "performance of 'authenticity'" (p. 169). She abstains from one-sided criticism and offers a differentiated picture by identifying threats and misunderstandings, however, not seeing shamanic tourism as an anomaly.

With the chapter "The Internationalization of Peruvian Vegetalismo," social anthropologist Beatriz Caiuby Labate, who is one of the editors of the anthology, presents a well-informed overview of various processes of change which the Peruvian ayahuasca tradition (*vegetalismo*) is subjected to since the increase of international interest. Keywords include: psychologization of ayahuasca experiences, retraditionalization, which means emphasizing a connection with (allegedly) ancient, and sometimes foreign, traditions (see above: "performance of authenticity"), formalization, systematization and ritualization of ceremonies and other offerings – and all this to meet the imagination of international visitors; however, concepts of western science and medicine made, and still make, a contribution to the processes of transformation. In the meantime, ayahuasca has been recognized as national cultural heritage of Peru, and to some extent has an identity-building effect. Labate notes in her conclusion:

The internationalization of ayahuasca can be seen as a multidirectional process, 'from the forest to the city,' and likewise in reverse, 'from the city to the forest.' International networks have emerged in which subjects, substances, capital, images, and 'sacred techniques' circulate (p. 199).

Ethnomusicologist Bernd Brabec de Mori presents a very special perspective with his contribution "From the Native's Point of View: How Shipibo-Konibo Experience and Interpret Ayahuasca Drinking with 'Gringos'" (chap. 9). He married a Shipibo woman, and has become part of the Shipibo community, an ethnic group in the Amazon rain

forest in Peru. The Shipibo-Conibo people have been very important for the western idea of ayahuasca shamanism by using so-called *icaros*, medicine chants, which are sung during ayahuasca sessions, as well as by their particular aesthetic use of patterns on pottery, and other artisan craftwork as well as in face paintings. These formal patterns have become synonymous for indigenous groups using ayahuasca. As an insider and part of the social group he reports of the attitude of native people towards western visitors, gringos, which is not characterized by ‘performance of authenticity,’ and which may be somewhat disillusioning for several visitors. As an inhabitant of both worlds, he gains insight into mutual misunderstandings as well as conceptions distorted by projections and idealization. Most Shipibo, for instance, “do not distinguish between tourists, researchers, and ‘apprentice shamans.’ They all ask apparently similar questions, take photos all day long, and wish to explore the ayahuasca experience” (p. 209). All of them are thought to make a lot of money but behave, in the eyes of indigenous people, very naïve. Most of the ayahuasca tourists are considered drug addicts, and that is why they are searching for ayahuasca experiences. Anthropologists, shaman apprentices, and tourists who take photos and audio recordings, and who buy ritual items or other artifacts would make a lot of money with them in their own countries, thereby exploiting the Shipibo people. But this attitude towards the gringos is of great ambiguity because they are also attractive due to significant economic benefits for individual families who come into closer contact. Moreover, the new ayahuasca ceremonies were created within the ritual framework of ayahuasca tourism. They may, as the author writes, “well substitute for former rituals that are nowadays lost” (p. 224). He concludes:

Apparently, this new ritual serves for performing and (re-)creating the cosmos for both the visitors (including their audiences in their home countries) and the Shipibo. Shipibo people seem to be in need of a new performance of their positionality as an animist society that now is merging with the globalizing Northern (naturalistic) ontology (p. 225).

With Chapter 10 (“Ayahuasca’s Attractions and Distractions”), cultural anthropologist Daniela Pelusa addresses an important issue which unfortunately has made negative headlines in recent years: the relationship of ayahuasca and sexuality in connection with ayahuasca tourism. Here, too, intercultural misunderstandings come into effect. On the one hand, the indigenous concept of sexuality, and of adequate sexual behavior, is based on a worldview in which one can shift between different realities, and human identity as well as agency is seen as much more fluid than in a western secular conception. The demand for sexual abstinence as a part of the shamanic diet is based on this (at least in part). In a tourist setting, this aspect of dieting, and of abstinence, is omitted to a large extent. Shamans as well as shaman’s assistants are in a hierarchic position of power, and some of them take advantage of it for sexual harassment and abuse against the will of female participants. This, for itself, has little to do with an intercultural misunderstanding, and is – unfortunately – a relatively frequent occurrence in similar hierarchical situations. However, the author points also to a “mismatched gender code” (p. 245) which can play a crucial, and problematic, role in this context. She notes:

To circumvent vulnerability, indigenous women avoid smiling directly at men, laughing with them, paying too much attention to them, being in their presence without close kin nearby, and traveling alone. Not coincidentally, these precautions prescriptively describe most nonlocal female ayahuasca participants, particularly if they openly esteem the shaman, converse and laugh freely, are unhindered by local customs, and travel alone (pp. 244-245).

Native men obtain their idea of western women mainly by watching films in cinema, and perceive them as independent, permissive, and driven by sexual desires. Certainly, sexual abuse of female ayahuasca tourists, and other inappropriate behavior, is generally disapproved – by the tourists themselves as well as by the local people. But indigenous women have an advantage: “Yet, whereas Amazonian women tend to view shamans as humans who can potentially be abusive, uninformed Western women do not” (p. 250).

The last chapter entitled “Yage-Related Neo-Shamanism in Colombian Urban Contexts,” and authored by social anthropologist Alhena Caicedo Fernández focusses on the situation in Columbia where new forms of ayahuasca (*yage*) usage have evolved. Such ceremonies are not held in the jungle area or on the demarcation line between jungle and ‘civilization’ (as on the Iquitos-Nauta road – see above), but in urban contexts. These neo-shamanic approaches refer to indigenous yage shamanism, and maintain this connection, although they have found their own forms by integrating therapeutic as well as religious aspects. Similar to ayahuasca religions (Santo Daime, União de Vegetal, etc.), catholic elements are sometimes integrated, for instance, and the participants of the yage sessions are not visitors from far away Europe or North America but local people.

My overall judgment of the volume can easily be deduced from the detailed presentations of the individual chapters. The articles show a high degree of reflexivity as well as self-reflexivity which goes along with an important, for some people in some respects probably painful deconstruction – a deconstruction not only of ideas of ayahuasca, ayahuasca shamanism, and ayahuasca tourism, but also of concepts and projections of authenticity, tradition, nativeness, and ahistoricity as well as of successful transcultural understanding. The book extends far beyond a specific interest in the ayahuasca complex. It is inspiring, thought-provoking, and eye-opening. This anthology provided by the two editors is a laudable project. By the way: it is a remarkable and very pleasant fact that 12 of the 14 authors involved are females who contributed to this dense and nuanced scholarly work!

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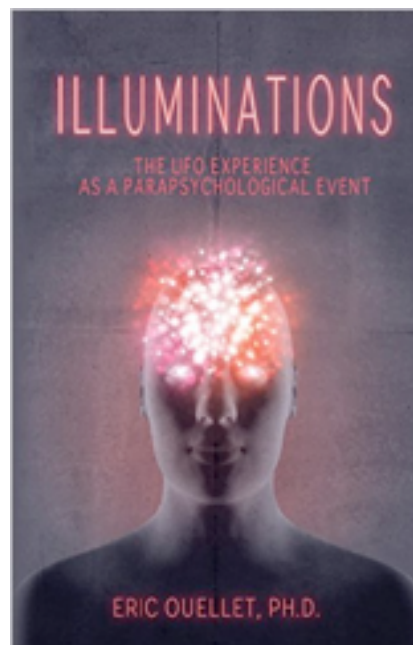
Review: Do we need the paranormal to explain the UFO phenomenon? A Review of *Illuminations: The UFO Experience as Parapsychological Event* by Eric Ouellet

By Jean-Michel Abrassart

Catholic University of Louvain

The core idea behind Eric Ouellet's (2015) book, *Illuminations: The UFO Experience as a Parapsychological Event*, is to apply parapsychological models to the UFO phenomenon. He is a Canadian sociologist and a Parapsychological Association professional member. Looking at UFOs through the parapsychological paradigm is not new, but the author is knowledgeable about current thinking in the field and thus brings up-to-date parapsychological concepts and hypotheses to ufology. In the literature on UFOs, there are - very broadly speaking - three main paradigms: the extraterrestrial hypothesis, the psychosocial hypothesis and the parapsychological hypothesis. *Illuminations* belongs clearly to the third category. In that it follows in the footsteps of Carl Gustav Jung (1978) and others. Our overall impression after reading this book is that Eric Ouellet has a good grasp of the extraterrestrial hypothesis and parapsychological literature, but he is not very knowledgeable about the skeptical approach.

In his chapter on the topic of the Belgian UFO wave, he draws only on the work done by the Société belge d'étude des phénomènes spatiaux (SOBEPS). His sources are mainly the two books published by that amateur research and investigation group (SOBEPS, 1991, 1994). The problem is that the work done by this ufological organisation has been heavily criticised over the years, starting with the seminal work done by Marc Hallet (1992, 1997) and Magain & Rémy (1993). It is true that those publications are unfortunately in French (one of the three main languages spoken in Belgium), and thus are not well-known in the English-speaking world, but Eric Ouellet is himself a native French-speaker. That's what make his failure to engage with the French skeptical literature on the topic frankly difficult to understand. He only mentions an explanation that was proposed by Bernard Thouanel (1990) in the very early days of the wave: the hypothesis that some sightings could be explained by Lockheed Martin F-117 Nighthawk. Typically, Ouellet doesn't source the primary literature on this point (Thouanel's paper in the magazine *Science & Vie*), but only the secondary one (a chapter in SOBEPS's first book in which they discuss it). Anyway, debates about the Belgian UFO wave have moved well beyond that point nowadays. In summary, in that chapter, he uncritically presents to the reader the narrative that has been popularized by the SOBEPS about the Belgian UFO wave. Even though for example Magain & Rémy's paper has been published in *Physicalia Magazine*, a Belgian peer-reviewed scientific journal in the field of physics. If you do a literature review in French about the Belgian UFO wave, not mentioning this article shows either a lack of in-depth research or a strong bias in the way you present information to your readers. Recently the French ufologist Patrice Seray (2015) has published an



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anthology, *OVNI en Belgique: Contributions sceptiques*, regrouping in one place articles from various researchers criticising the work done by SOBEPS on this wave. That being said, it is likely that Eric Ouellet had finished writing *Illuminations* by the time it came out.

The idea of applying Von Lucadou's predictions of the Model of Pragmatic Information (MPI) for poltergeists (Von Lucadou, W. & Zahradnik, F., 2004) to the UFO phenomenon was the most interesting aspect of this book. Von Lucadou & Zahradnik (2004) propose four phases when a poltergeist case occurs: the "surprise phase," the "displacement phase," the "decline phase," and the "suppression phase." Ouellet applies these to UFO waves, but unfortunately he does not contrast it with Klass' Law (1986):

"Once news coverage leads the public to believe that UFOs may be in the vicinity, there are numerous natural and man-made objects which, especially when seen at night, can take on unusual characteristics in the minds of hopeful viewers. Their UFO reports in turn add to the mass excitement, which encourages still more observers to watch for UFOs. This situation feeds upon itself until such time as the media lose interest in the subjects, and then the flap quickly runs out of steam."

Klass' Law is the way researchers working in the psychosocial model would approach that very issue (Abrassart, J.-M. & Gauvrit, N., 2014). The main difference between the two approaches is that von Lucadou's model posits a genuine paranormal phenomenon, where Klass' Law is reductionist and only invokes known sociological and psychological variables. It would have been very interesting to have an in-depth discussion about why, according to Ouellet, Klass' Law is not enough to describe what is going on during a UFO wave and why we need von Lucadou's predictions instead. But the Canadian sociologist unfortunately fails to do so.

This book is quite good as long as you agree with Ouellet's premise that it's impossible to explain the UFO phenomenon in a reductionist framework. If you don't, it quickly becomes very problematic. We agree with the author that the extraterrestrial hypothesis ultimately fails. The lack of reliable physical proofs is indeed a big issue for ufologists advocating the extraterrestrial hypothesis. The thing is, when you acknowledge the fact that the extraterrestrial hypothesis cannot really explain the UFO phenomenon, you have the choice between the psychosocial hypothesis and the parapsychological one. In this book, Ouellet doesn't even try to argue why we should choose the later over the former. On this topic, he just writes in the introduction:

"And while most UFO researchers concede that the vast majority of UFO sightings are simply mistaken perceptions, such as planes, helicopters, satellites, weather balloons, Chinese lanterns, hoaxes, collective hallucinations, and delusions, a hardcover group of skeptics contend that all UFO events are misperceptions. So since the early days of the modern UFO phenomenon (since the well-publicized sighting by Kenneth Arnold in June 1947) we have been stuck between two untenable alternatives: they are either aliens from another planet (or dimension), or they are all misperceptions."

It's a little bit short as a rejection of the psychosocial model, which is after all for the moment the mainstream scientific position on the topic. From a rhetorical point of view, it's a sophism called "argument from middle ground": because they are two positions in the debate, we should take a third one situated in the middle. It's an informal fallacy because it sounds compelling, but in reality in science the best choice is not always the compromise position. Sometimes one of the extreme positions is the correct one. We agree that some parapsychological results are intriguing and that it may suggest the existence of psi, but jumping from that to the idea that we should use the paranormal hypothesis to explain all UFO phenomena is a leap of faith. Even if psi does exist, it doesn't follow that UFOs are paranormal in nature. If you believe so, you should at least try to argue why. But in this book we just find something along the line of: psi is real, skeptics can't explain the UFO phenomenon and thus the paranormal hypothesis is the best one. It is a very weak argument. It actually feels like rejecting the psychosocial hypothesis for ideological reasons and not scientific ones, since the time devoted to explaining that choice is so brief.

One can also wonder why a model that is supposed to apply to poltergeists should also apply to UFO sightings and alien abductions. None of this is discussed beyond the: both are paranormal in nature, so it should somehow work. But in why should poltergeists be "paranormal" in the same way that the UFO phenomenon is? It is also essential to consider

in the ufological debate that, from an epistemological and methodological point of view, the paranormal UFO hypothesis is impossible to scientifically test. Simply put: what aspects of an observation would go against it? No details of UFO observations could be ruled out by it, because absolutely everything is possible in this approach. It is painfully obvious when Ouellet discusses the Hill abduction: there's nothing in the abduction phenomenon that cannot be explained by "it's paranormal." In the skeptical literature, there has been lots of work done on the fact that hypnosis fabricates false memories (Clancy, 2007), that Betty Hill certainly had a fantasy-prone personality (Sheaffer, 2007) and the fact that their story was influenced by the science-fiction of the time (Colavito, 2014, Kottmeyer, 1990). Why consider that these fail to explain the Hill abduction case? The parapsychological hypothesis can explain everything and anything, but is, in the end, not testable. On the other hand, it is possible to test the extraterrestrial hypothesis and the psychosocial hypothesis. The paranormal UFO hypothesis is highly problematic: it is similar to psychoanalysis in the way that on one side it can explain anything and on the other nothing can refute it. It also begs the question of what is an explanation? At the end of the day, is saying "it's paranormal" really explaining anything? When you show that the Grey in the Hill case was likely inspired by the TV show *The Outer Limits*, which has been discussed in the work done by Kottmeyer (1990) and Colavito (2014), doesn't that feel more like something has really been explained? Ouellet should have discussed such epistemological issues in-depth in this book, but he didn't.

Overall, *Illuminations* is an interesting read, but ultimately fails to convince. It fails to convince that the paranormal hypothesis is necessary to explain the UFO phenomenon, but worse than that it fails to convince that the paranormal hypothesis is, from an epistemological and methodological point of view, the best way to approach the topic. Do we need the paranormal hypothesis to explain the UFO phenomenon? So far, it still seems like a false good idea.

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Review: First International Colin Wilson Conference, University of Nottingham, July 1st 2016

By Colin Stanley

When the *Colin Wilson Collection* was opened at the University of Nottingham in the summer of 2011, it was agreed among those present that there should be a Conference to discuss his work. 2016 was mooted as an appropriate date because it coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of the publication of his first (and still most famous) book *The Outsider*, which, incidentally, has never been out of print since publication day in 1956 and has now been translated into over 30 languages.

Unfortunately, in the meantime, Colin Wilson (who was too ill to attend the opening) died on December 5th 2013. Since then I have been assisting his widow, Joy, to sort his papers and manuscripts in preparation for their transfer to the archive. Much of this has been achieved and the University now not only holds copies of all his printed work but also a significant amount of his manuscripts, letters, journals and assorted papers.

As it happens 2016 is turning out to be an exceptional year for Colin Wilson and studies of his work. In January, Paupers' Press published Nicolas Tredell's *Novels to Some Purpose: the fiction of Colin Wilson*. In May, Cambridge Scholars published Colin Wilson's *Collected Essays on Philosophers*. This was followed by Nigel Bray's *Bargaining With the Devil: the Work of Colin Wilson in a Cultural Context* in June and my booklet on the *Writing of Colin Wilson's Adrift in Soho*. In September my book *An Evolutionary Leap: Colin Wilson on Psychology* is to be released by Karnac Books and Gary Lachman's major biographical study *Beyond the Robot: the life and work of Colin Wilson*, by Tarcher/Penguin; the latter coinciding with a new edition of *The Outsider* with an Introduction by Lachman.

It was appropriate that all of the above-named presented papers at the First International Colin Wilson Conference on Friday July 1st. This was held at the King's Meadow campus of the University of Nottingham where the Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections (and therefore Colin Wilson's archive) is housed. Among the special guests were Joy Wilson, her daughter Sally, sons Damon and Rowan and granddaughter Rosa, all of whom were taken by the Manuscripts staff, behind the scenes on a tour of the archive store before the Conference got underway. Curiously, King's Meadow was previously the home of ITV's Central Studios and it was there, on a cold night in March 1995, that I, and my wife Gail, met Colin



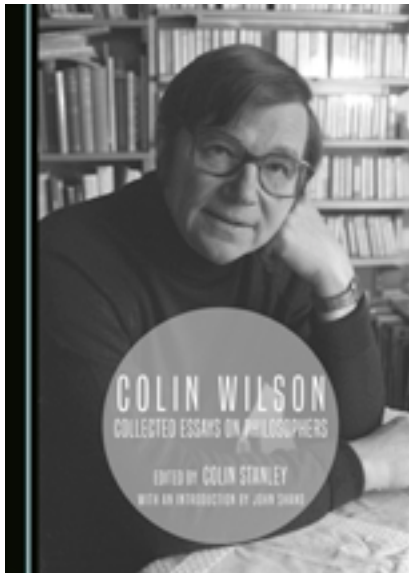
Wilson himself in the lobby. He had invited us to be in the audience at a live programme of psychic phenomena, hosted by David Frost, entitled 'Beyond Belief.' Colin was one of the experts employed to explain the mysteries which unfolded during the course of the programme. In a wonderful example of synchronicity the programme was broadcast from the very auditorium which now holds his archive.

The first paper was presented by Simon Brighton, a writer and musician who collaborated with Colin Wilson on a CD of music and spoken word entitled *A Giant* which celebrated the work of T. C. Lethbridge. He had also contributed an essay on *The Philosopher's Stone to Around the Outsider*, a symposium, published by O-Books in 2011, to celebrate Colin Wilson's 80th birthday. For some years Simon has been working on a project to digitalise Colin's journal which he had recorded onto hundreds of cassette tapes over the years. The delegates were treated to many audio extracts from these journals during the paper.

Professor Stephen R. L. Clark, emeritus professor of philosophy at the University of Liverpool, who had written an essay on *The Mind Parasites* for *Around the Outsider*, presented the next paper on a writer about whom Colin Wilson had much to say over the years: H. P. Lovecraft. His enlightening paper contained many quotes from Lovecraft and also touched upon Colin Wilson's ambivalent attitude to the author's work.

After a short coffee break, Nigel Bray took the floor to deliver a lecture based on a section of his newly published book (mentioned above). His paper, intriguingly entitled 'Colin Wilson and 'Dread of Being'', included an analysis of the author's important ideas on depression, boredom, and how we can overcome them.

The final paper in the morning session was delivered by Lindsay Siviter, who, as a trained historian, has worked in various museums around the UK including Scotland Yard's famous Black Museum. As an expert on Jack the Ripper she took the delegates on an entertaining chronological guide to Colin Wilson the 'Ripperologist' (a term he, apparently, coined).



Before lunch a specially prepared trailer for the forthcoming film of Colin Wilson's novel *Adrift in Soho*, directed by Pablo Behrens for Burning Films, was shown.

During the lunch break delegates were invited to view a display of interesting items from the archive which included early versions of Colin Wilson's

first novel *Ritual in the Dark*, the actual handwritten manuscript of *The Outsider*, various signed first editions and other treasures.

The afternoon session was kicked-off by Nicolas Tredell whose contribution to *Around the Outsider* was an essay on *Ritual in the Dark*. His fascination with this under-rated novel was reflected in his paper 'A Ritual for Outsiders: philosophy and narrative in *The Outsider* and *Ritual in the Dark*.'

David Moore who runs the blog 'Ritual in the Dark: essays and reflections on the work of Colin Wilson' (<https://ritualinthedark.wordpress.com/>) presented the next paper which he entitled 'The Light Barrier: Existentialism and the occult in Colin Wilson's

science fiction.' In this paper he argued, very convincingly, that *The Mind Parasites* and *The Philosopher's Stone* formed the link between Colin Wilson's new existentialism and his writings on the occult.

Gary Lachman gave the penultimate paper. His many books on the occult, mysticism and

psychology have made him well-known throughout the English-speaking world and he contributed the essay on *Poetry & Mysticism* to *Around the Outsider*. He chose to talk about Colin Wilson's 'Faculty X': the sense of the reality of other places and other times. His paper drew much discussion among those gathered.

Finally, George C. Poulos, an independent researcher from Australia, whose main interest is in transcendent states of consciousness and who provided the essay on *Beyond the Occult* for *Around the Outsider*, delivered the last paper. He chose, not surprisingly, to speak on Colin Wilson's transcendental theory of evolution in an attempt to provide a link between recent scientific research and Colin Wilson's ideas.

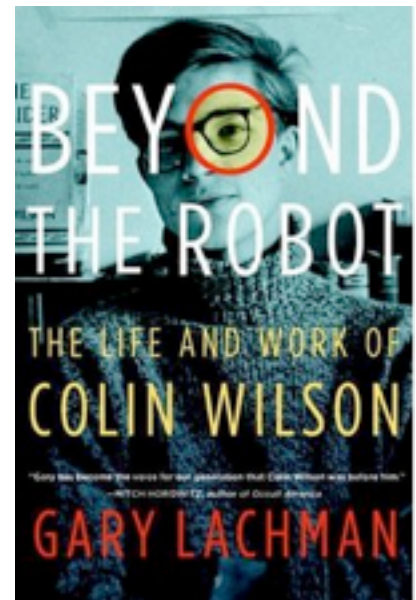
The proceedings concluded, many of the delegates retired to my house near Trent Bridge to continue the debate fuelled by some good wine. It was here that the guest of honour, Joy Wilson, was presented with a framed artist's caricature of her late husband. The following day there was a meal for the speakers and special guests at a local restaurant.

Photographs of the event are posted on the Colin Wilson RIP Facebook page. The video recording of some of the papers will follow at a later date as will the published proceedings.

Details of the holdings of the Colin Wilson Collection and Archive can be found at:

<http://mss-cat.nottingham.ac.uk/DServe/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CWA&pos=12>

<http://mss-cat.nottingham.ac.uk/DServe/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CWC&pos=13>



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