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NEWS AND VIEWS

Seminar on Extra-Sensory Perception

A seminar on extra-sensory perception was convened by the New Horizons Research Foundation in November, 1977. It was opened by a lecture and demonstration of extra-sensory perception by the psychic sensitive Mr. M. B. Dykshoorn (born in Holland, now resident in New York), (author of the book *My Passport says Clairvoyant* (Hawthorn Books, New York, 1974), who subsequently led a number of discussion workshops. The Foundation wishes to thank those donors whose special donations made this interesting event possible.

Research Grant

A grant of £300 has been received from Trinity College, Cambridge, England for investigation of the history of Borley Rectory.

Termination of Philip Experiment

The Philip experiment which had continued for more than five years (since the Summer of 1972) was formally wound up in the Fall of 1977. This decision was arrived at because it was felt that no further progress could be made in gaining understanding of the psychokinetic force involved, and the scientific results to be gained from further meetings had therefore become disproportionately meagre in relation to the time and effort put in by the group members. The Research Committee were influenced in making this recommendation by the fact that, despite many requests to physicists and parapsychologists, no proposals had resulted for experimental approaches that would be both new and practicable. In addition, the group was becoming inundated with requests by visitors from all parts of North America and even further afield to sit in at the meetings. Originally the group had welcomed the participation of serious-minded visitors as it disseminated knowledge of the phenomenon, whose unique "flavour" (like that of many paranormal occurrences) is difficult to appreciate in abstract, or verbally to communicate. However, in the Fall of 1977, few of the weekly sessions were without a visitor, a circumstance which has been extremely frustrating of scientific purpose because it has rendered any continuity in experimentation quite out of the question. None the less, the Research Committee and the Philip group believe that group psychokinesis and in particular the projection of controlled fantasy or drama has been and will continue to be an important research method which, it is hoped, will be taken up by others, doubtless with improvements. We also welcome suggestions for new research by ourselves on "Philipian" lines.

Can Humans Detect Weak Magnetic Fields?

JOEL L. WHITTON, M.D.,¹ and STEPHEN A COOK, Ph.D.²

ABSTRACT: Two experiments on detection of weak magnetic fields are described.

1. Introduction

The controversy over whether magnetic fields can physiologically affect or can be detected by *Homo sapiens* historically began with Anton Mesmer over two hundred years ago. There is little doubt that lower animals are influenced by weak magnetic fields. Barnwell and Brown (1964) have shown that snails, flatworms, fruit flies and *Paramecia* have highly differentiated responses to magnetic fields. Snails and flatworms for example distinguish the orientation of an artificial magnetic field and will systematically orientate their body axes to the field. Persinger et al. (1974) have demonstrated consistent alterations in thyroid function of rats exposed prenatally to low frequency weak magnetic fields.

In humans the controversy has been clouded with claims of healing and other anomalous effects of magnetic fields (as for example described by Davis and Rawls, 1974). Charcot and his pupils were among the first to investigate the putative healing effects of magnets (Owen, 1971). The issue can be approached by three questions. Is the normal geomagnetic environment essential for man? Can man behaviourally detect the presence or absence of an artificial magnetic field? Are there central nervous system correlates of magnetic fields?

Beischer (1971) has in part answered the first question with a *No*. By exposing subjects for 10 days to a null field environment he found no significant changes in tests of motor performance, spatial orientation and time estimation from results in the normal geomagnetic environment. He concludes that "a magnetic directional sensing, so convincingly demonstrated in insects, was either lost by man during the evolutionary process or is active in a more subtle way not noticeable in the described experiments".

Regarding the second question, there are claims that a certain group of individuals known as *dowsers*, who claim to be able to detect the presence of subterranean water, are sensitive to local gradients in the earth's magnetic field. In field dowsing, a dowser walks over a terrain and his forked twig or L-shaped rod will rotate or in some manner signal the presence of water, oil, minerals or whatever the dowser is attempting to locate (Tromp, 1968; Lewis, 1974; Owen, 1975). Barrett (1884) reported that in a large survey, three individuals could tell by standing beside an electromagnet if the current was on or off. Rocard (1964) claims to have shown that dowsers can detect magnetic field gradients

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as small as a few tenths of a millioersted per metre. (The earth's magnetic field intensity at the poles is about 0.7 oersted). Foulkes (1971) duplicated Rocard's study with results no different from pure chance.

The third question is equally provocative. A very interesting but still not confirmed effect of magnetic fields is the alteration of the electroencephalogram (EEG) in the presence of a magnetic field. Mikhailovsky (1969) reported that a subject's EEG showed delta and theta rhythms in the presence of 0.01 to 5 Hz, 1000 gamma sine waves.* Maxey (1975) found that in two of eleven subjects their EEG had evidence of coupling to a magnetic field of 4.7 to 11.4 Hz, 30 gamma. These two experiments were done with very low intensity fields. High intensity fields also have an effect on the mammalian EEG. Gualitieri (1963) found alterations in the DC activity. Becker (1963) and Kholodov (1964) noted the occurrence of delta waves, and Kholodov (1962) and Beischer and Knepton (1966) found a decrease in the frequency pattern and an increase in spindles in the EEG. Becker (1969) has reviewed to 1969 the effects of magnetic fields on the central nervous system. The results of experiments with low field intensities are important, as in nature normally only weak fields occur (Conlay, 1969). Interestingly, the human EEG itself produces a very weak magnetic field which may be as high as 0.0025 gamma (Cohen, 1972).

The present study was undertaken to further clarify the second question and to determine if individuals can behaviourally detect weak artificial magnetic fields.

2. *Experiment One*

A flat coil of 100 turns of 28 gauge magnet wire was wound on a stiff cardboard circular support and suspended in a vertical plane with a wooden frame so that the centre of the coil was one metre from the floor. The coil radius was 0.46 metre, and 5% resistors were placed in series with the coil to give a total resistance of 1600 ohms. A wavetek function generator supplied a 10 Hz alternating current of 0.31 mA through the coil. This system produced a theoretical magnetic field intensity of 0.43 millioersted (mOe) at the center of the coil. The power dissipated was 0.16 mW and the magnetic energy was 4×10^{-10} joule.

Twenty-seven subjects, including two who believed themselves to possess the ability to dowse were studied during five experimental sessions spaced one month apart. Two experimenters were present; one to turn the current to the coil on or off, and the other to record the subjects' responses and whether or not the current was on. A trial consisted of first switching the current on or off to the coil and then a subject walking past within one metre of the coil and verbally stating simply whether or not the current was "on" or "off". The subjects were free to walk past the coil several times, stand in front of the coil or move their arms about or indulge in such motor behaviour as they believed would help obtain the correct response. Each subject was allowed a learning trial at the beginning of the series. At the end of each of the five experimental sessions, the subjects were told their performance score for that session. Not all subjects were present during all the five sessions and thus a variable number of total trials was obtained for each subject.

A chi-square test for non-randomness of responses was calculated for the response when the current to the coil was on, when it was off, and on the total

*One gamma = 10^{-5} gauss.

responses across all sessions for each subject. A chi-square test on a two by two contingency table to test if the current status was independent of each subject's total responses was done. In all cases P exceeded 0.05 (5%). A One Sample Runs Test was used to confirm randomness of the current states at the 5% significance level.

3. *Experiment Two*

The method for experiment 1 was used with the following modifications. The coil was suspended horizontally under the wooden floor of the testing room. The subjects were aware of its location. An automotive battery delivered a direct current to the coil such that the computed magnetic field intensity at the center of the coil was 600 mOe, approximately equal to the earth's magnetic field. A magnetic compass placed on the floor above the coil before the experiments deflected about 30° when the current was turned on. Eleven subjects, none professional dowzers, were studied during three experimental sessions. Each subject was equipped with a pair of dowsing rods (i.e. "angle-irons") consisting of coat-hanger wire bent in an "L" shape, with the two legs of the L about 4 inches and 10 inches long respectively. The subjects walked across the floor over the coil loosely holding the short legs of the angle-irons vertically, one iron in each fist. They reported their opinion of whether the current was on or off, based on the amount of rotation of the rods as they walked over the coil. It was confirmed that the off-on current status for each subject within an experimental session was random.

4. *Results*

In experiment 1 the results for all subjects in their ability to correctly identify whether the current was on or off were not different from chance. Two subjects gave more off-responses and two gave more on-responses than expected by chance, but in each case the results were independent of coil current status. When all subjects were grouped, there was an average per subject of 9.2 (S.D. 7.2) on-current trials with an average of 4.6 (S.D. 3.9) on-responses and 4.5 (S.D. 3.7) off-responses, and an average per subject of 7.7 (S.D. 5.9) off-current trials with 3.6 (S.D. 3.1) on and 4.0 (S.D. 3.8) off-responses.

Within specific experimental sessions there were tendencies for some subjects to have significantly correct responses, but this was not maintained over the five sessions. Interestingly, some subjects reported physiological sensations in the presence of the artificial magnetic field. Some of these sensations were reported as "tingling sensation in back of hands", "sensation in head like change in air pressure as in an elevator", "a prickling feeling", "tingling sensation in stomach", "like walking through a cloud or fog". These sensations were reported in learning trials when the subjects knew the current to the coil was on.

The results for the second experiment were similar to the first. For all subjects, the results of identifying whether the current was on or off were not different from chance. Two kinds of errors are possible, identifying "on" when the current is off, and vice versa. Both kinds of errors occurred equally within both experiments.

5. *Discussion*

This study did not confirm the results of Rocard (1964). However, Rocard tested known dowzers in experiments using dowsing rods. The two self-proclaimed dowzers in the first part of the present study did not achieve significant results, but they did not use dowsing rods. The results of the present study are

consistent with those of Foulkes (1971), who found that the one experienced dowser tested could not detect weak static fields. It should be noted, however, that the fields used in the first part of the present study (about 0.4 mOe) and those used by Foulkes (about 7 mOe) were about 1500, and 90 times weaker respectively than the earth's magnetic field at Toronto (about 600 mOe). The second part of the present study employed static fields equal to the earth's magnetic field, and negative results were still obtained.

The methods in the present study do not exactly duplicate Rocard's (1964) study, especially as known (or professional) dowsers were not used. However, as regards non-acclaimed individuals — by far the majority — the present evidence suggests that they cannot behaviourally detect very weak magnetic fields.

6. Acknowledgment

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Mr. Mackenzie King and the Problem of Survival

IRIS M. OWEN

ABSTRACT: This paper considers fraud in mediumship as alleged by Lamar Keene, and attempts to discriminate between possibly genuine paranormal phenomena and erroneous interpretations thereof. The origin of Mr. Mackenzie King's spiritualist beliefs is re-interpreted in the light of the Philip research.

Parapsychological research covers a very wide field, including such subjects as telepathy, faith healing, dowsing, the human aura, the meaning of dreams, clairvoyance, precognition, psychometry, altered states of consciousness and many more. One of the more popular areas of research in this field is that concerned with the so-called 'spirit world' — ghosts, apparitions, poltergeists and the spirits of the dead who are alleged to appear in the séance rooms of spiritualists and mediums. In fact, newspaper, radio, and television reporters often seize on this aspect of the subject, and will refer to parapsychologists as 'ghost-hunters'. It is of course a very important and fruitful area of research into things labelled 'psychic'.

The psychological need to believe in some form of survival of the human personality seems to be an integral part of human nature. From his very beginnings Man has not accepted the idea that when the body dies, the whole of the personality — the essential being — also dies. The manner of survival, the ultimate destination of the surviving 'spirit' may vary with the cultural beliefs of the times, but the fact of some form of survival seems to be never in doubt. Here perhaps one should say, that when trying to probe the mysteries of the problems concerning survival, one is not necessarily casting doubt upon the fact of survival itself. The psychological need to believe probably exists in almost every one of us. Whether proof itself exists or not, survival may very well be a fact. As parapsychologists we are concerned with the truth of the claims that many people make that certain events offer such proof; and *that proof* relates to survival in a very specific form. If it were generally believed that survival was a continuance of one's essential being — the spirit, if you wish to use that word — into another sphere, a place without continuing relationship with earth, that all connections with life on earth are severed, and no communications between living and dead are possible, then, as parapsychologists, we would not be especially concerned. It would be a matter of personal faith. In fact many people do, of course, believe this to be the case, and conduct their own lifestyle accordingly.

But the spiritualist belief is different. Spiritualists believe that our spirits do indeed survive death, but in a very special way. They believe that spirits can return to previous homes and loved ones, that they are still aware of what is happening in this world, and of events concerning friends and family; that they are concerned about this, and in many cases able to intervene, by means of

warnings, counselling, and prediction of future events. The spiritualists also claim that they themselves can communicate with the spirits of the dead, pass on their messages and warnings, and they offer this communication as proof of survival. As I have said, this is a special form of survival. According to this theory the spirit remains bound to the earth — although it may mysteriously travel the globe instantaneously at the bidding of a medium; the spirit is concerned and involved with earthly affairs, so that we live in a truly double world, peopled by the living and the dead, the seen and the unseen, combining to shape events and destinies. This is a matter of some concern, for it affects us all, collectively and individually, if the facts are as related. It is important to us, for instance, if those in charge of our affairs are acting solely on the wishes and advice of their earthly colleagues, or are tapping the resources of the spirit world for guidance. The idea, of course, is not new. The pagan gods and goddesses, the spirits of the trees and woods, the spirits of the primitive tribes in our earliest days of civilisation, were credited with the ability to appear, and interfere in the affairs of men. The prophets of the Old Testament, the Apostles of the New, saints and martyrs, kings, politicians, famous figures from the history books, many of them have been reported to have appeared again after death to help, warn or advise the living.

What we as parapsychologists are concerned with is this — are these alleged communications really proofs? Do they represent the truth about survival? Or are they a manifestation of the psychological need to believe in survival? Are we capable of believing in survival without proof, and do we therefore cling to any theory that seems to offer proof, however flimsy and insubstantial? Even if this so-called proof is totally irrational, do we prefer it to the absence of any proof at all? I suppose a definition of a parapsychologist is someone who is seeking for the truth in these areas that are on the fringe of psychology. Scientists seek for truth in many fields, physics, chemistry, astronomy, and so on, and these are all recognized as orthodox, conventional, scientific areas of research. Because psychology is the study of the make-up of the human mind — a word which we cannot even define adequately — it is not regarded in the same way as the orthodox sciences, it cannot be defined in the same kind of terms. Still less can we come to grips with all the interplay of human beliefs, feelings, psychological needs and irrationalities that lie within the area that we define as of interest to the parapsychologist.

To the parapsychologist it is important to discover the truth about these theories of survival. It is important because if you believe the spiritualist theory, you are subscribing to the idea that we are living in a truly 'double' world — peopled by the unseen spirits as well as the living inhabitants. Are these claims real hard facts, or are they part of our psychological make-up, part of our mind's defences against the acceptance of death? Does survival mean that we are doomed to a sort of shadowy existence in the after-life, still possessing links with this earthly life, and at the beck and call of psychics and mediums on earth whenever they choose to 'call' us back for consultation? As ghosts will we return to warn our families left behind of future disasters? Or, can we dismiss this kind of proof, and say that the question is still open; there may be some form of survival of the human personality, but we do not know at present in what shape or form our spirits enter into a continuing sphere of existence after earthly death? These questions are important, not only regarding our own personal attitude to life and death, but also because our daily lives may well be affected substantially by those people who do believe the spiritualist theories,

and who may be acting under counselling, advice or instruction from departed friends or relatives. Three books have recently been published which shed a great deal of light on the subject of survival. They are all the result of a careful search for the truth, without prejudgement or bias by their authors. I would like to talk about these three books, individually, and in some detail.

The first book I would like to refer to is entitled *A Very Double Life* and was written by Professor Stacey of the University of Toronto. It is a report of his examination of the private diaries of William Lyon Mackenzie King, one of Canada's most famous sons who was Prime Minister for more than twenty years, more years than anyone has held office in Canada, including the duration of the Second World War. Mackenzie King was a man whose private life was kept a close secret from all but a very few of his nearest friends, a man considered by the public as utterly efficient, a little ruthless perhaps, and an unemotional unapproachable person. But Mackenzie King was one of those unusual people who managed to keep a fully written diary of his private life from the time of his youth — since he was eighteen years old in fact. There have been some famous diarists in history — Pepys is probably the name that first springs to mind in this context, and Samuel Pepys revealed to us the daily life of his times in a way that no historical chronicler could possibly have done — the day-to-day gossip, the little cameos of events give us a wonderful picture of life in England during his times. But there can surely never have been published a diary such as the one left by Mackenzie King. The contrast between the image of the public man, and the picture of him that is revealed by his diaries is truly amazing. The title of Professor Stacey's book is taken from King's own comment in a diary entry that he is leading a 'very double life'.

We are fortunate that we have the diary available to us! Mackenzie King had intended to write his political memoirs at some time after his retirement, and had kept the diaries for this purpose. But, aware of the possible reactions to the revelations they contain, he had intended that they should be strictly edited, and that all the portions pertaining to his private life should be destroyed. However, his instructions were not sufficiently definitive on this point, and at the time of his death he had neither written his memoirs, nor decided which portions of the diaries should be retained. Application was made to the courts by prospective biographers, and the content of the diaries became more widely known. Judgement was made that the whole content of the diaries should be available for posterity.

The diaries reveal Mackenzie King to have been a very different man from the person he appeared to be to the public. The book by Professor Stacey makes fascinating reading indeed. But in the context of this discussion the aspect of his life that was so very interesting was the fact that, completely unknown to all but a very few of his closest friends, Mackenzie King was a man who regularly, almost on a daily basis, consulted the members of the spirit world for advice, counselling, and pre-knowledge of events yet to come. It seems that King's conversion to spiritualism came about as a result of a number of family bereavements that fell upon him during the years of the first World War, in particular the decease of Bell, a much loved sister, and of his mother, to whom he was very close. He was then (1917) in his mid-forties, and at this time he wrote that Bell, the dead sister, "is nearby, she watches and helps to plan and arrange". However, it seems that his first encounter with a medium was in 1925 while in the throes of a general election. He writes of this

period that he believed that his "dear mother and father, and Max and Bell are near and about me, and Sir Wilfred [Laurier] as well. Their spirits will guide and protect me".

He continued to consult mediums, and on a visit to London in 1926 records conversations with Sir Oliver Lodge on the subject of spiritualism. The first actual séance he attended seems to have been in 1932. The medium was a Mrs. Etta Wriedt, well known in spiritualist circles on both sides of the Atlantic. It should be noted here that Mrs. Wriedt seems to have been honest in her beliefs, and certainly over many years of holding seances for King never seems to have asked for more than very modest fees for her services. But she convinced King that he was in contact with his parents, grandparents, brother and sister and other dead relatives, as well as with many political figures. King writes in his diary, "there can be no doubt whatever that the persons I have been talking with were the loved ones and others I have known and who have passed away. It was the spirits of the departed. There is no other way on earth of accounting for what we have all experienced this week". King continued to visit spiritualists for many years. He goes to great pains in his diary to state that he never acted *solely* on the advice and information given him by these spirits beyond the grave — he listened, and then made up his own mind. He says he never allowed these sessions to cloud his judgement, and Professor Stacey states that he believes King was honest in his belief. However, it is indeed difficult to believe that anyone as immersed in the spirit world as King was could refrain from being influenced, particularly when the communicators were people who had so much influence on him when alive. His devotion to his mother was extraordinary, and it is probable that was the reason that he did not marry. It seems hardly likely that he could be objective about advice from his mother from the world beyond, especially as it would seem to have the weight of extra knowledge and authority. It is impossible to believe that he was not at some times influenced by messages from the spirits.

But King received communications in another way. A year after his first seance experience King discovered that he did not necessarily need a medium, or a seance circle, to get messages from his beloved departed spirits. He discovered table rapping. On the 13th November 1933 King held a small dinner party at which three close friends were the guests. We do not know who introduced the idea, but King writes in his diary, "We had an amazing evening. The first time I have seen table rapping, and having messages come thro' to me from father, mother, Max (his brother) and Bella. There can be no shadow of doubt as to their genuineness". From then on King refers constantly to his "little table" — he seems to have communicated constantly through it. His circle was small, a very few close friends, who lived nearby. He no longer needed to travel to mediums, or have them brought to him, to stay in touch with his dead family — he could communicate every night if he wished. Frequently his only companion with the little table was Joan Patteson, a close friend and next door neighbour. It was all very cosy. King continued to visit mediums whenever the opportunity presented itself, and when he travelled, but in the meantime he had his little table. He seized upon every opportunity to communicate with the dead. It is recorded in the book that when in Toronto, in 1942, on a visit to his publisher, he discovered by chance that one of the employees of the firm was a spiritualist. Nothing would satisfy King but that he have an immediate sitting before returning to Ottawa, and he records with great pleasure that not only did all his relations appear, but that he had conversation with Sir Wilfred

Laurier, Queen Victoria, Florence Nightingale, Ann Boleyn, Sir Frederick Banting, Norman Rogers (his former secretary), and many others. One has an irresistible mental picture of all these characters lined up, so to speak, in a waiting room to converse with the Prime Minister of Canada. A motley crowd indeed.

Perhaps I should relate one of the more interesting communications recorded — one that caused King some doubt, however fleeting, as to the origins of some of his messages — because he *did* doubt at times, but seemed able to successfully stifle these doubts. It was 1939 at the outbreak of the second World War. On the 2nd of September King and Joan Patterson were holding a session with the little table. King's father came through and announced that Hitler was dead; "He was shot by a Pole". Hitler's armies had invaded Poland the previous day. King's mother, Laurier, William Gladstone (a frequent visitor) and Max King followed. During the seance there was a telephone call to say that the British Cabinet were delivering an ultimatum to Germany, and that war was imminent. King felt that more time should have been allowed before the ultimatum expired. He returned to the little table, where his father's spirit still asserted that Hitler was dead and said that the British and French would agree to a conference when they heard of this. His mother declared that, "War will be averted". Hitler, of course, was not dead and war was not averted, and on the 4th September King wrote, "This all makes perfectly clear either that a lying spirit has come in somewhere, or that subconscious wishes dictate the words expressed". He continued, "I felt I perhaps should not have sought to use the table to discover the course of events".

From time to time King expresses an uneasy feeling that some, at least, of his messages originate in his own subconscious desires and wishes, but he does not seem able to sustain this belief. To a large extent he left his spiritualism in abeyance during the war years, and during two visits to London, for instance, he records no séances. However, he did continue to use his little table, and he records a séance in 1941, when he sought advice about a trip to England, and Laurier advised him to go by bomber plane, his mother declared that Churchill liked him, and Gladstone told him the war would be over by Christmas — all his own subconscious desires! In spite of reservations that King expressed from time to time about the messages, it is clear that in fact, at heart he believed them. In 1948, on a visit to London, and when he had resumed sittings with mediums in that capital city, he records a sitting with Geraldine Cummins, a well-known English medium. Roosevelt was then, of course, dead, but he communicated during this sitting, and asked King to deliver certain messages to Winston Churchill. During the course of the sitting Roosevelt had, allegedly, asked or begged King not to retire from his office of Prime Minister; Roosevelt said that King had the wisdom that Churchill lacked, and urged him to hold on to office, promising that when he (King) slept he (Roosevelt) would put messages in his mind. King was indiscreet enough to send word to Churchill that he had these messages for him, and when Churchill asked to see the documentary evidence he sent the record of the sitting to Churchill, together with the uncomplimentary remarks about Churchill, who was not pleased. In 1948 also during this visit, when King was ill and confined to his rooms at the Dorchester Hotel, a whole procession of professional mediums visited him, bringing with them the spirits of a host of his deceased friends. Roosevelt appeared and told King he should "knock off for at least a year". and that he should write his memoirs, not forgetting the *"important chapter, your firm faith in a future life,*

that you have evidence of it." King returned to Canada, and within two weeks resigned from being Prime Minister, but he never got around to writing his memoirs or the requested chapter.

I would like to turn now to the second book of my trio. This one is called *The Psychic Mafia* with a subtitle *The True and shocking confessions of a Famous Medium*. The medium is one Lamar Keene, and the book is his confession of fraud, as told to Allen Spraggett and the Rev. William Rauscher. Allen Spraggett is a wellknown personality in the field of parapsychology, an investigator, an author and journalist. He has had many years of experience of investigation of mediums. Canon William Rauscher, an Episcopalian rector in New Jersey, and past President of the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship, has also had many years of experience in investigating spiritual mediumship, and he and Allen Spraggett collaborated in writing a biography of Arthur Ford, the famous medium among whose papers they found evidence suggestive of fraud. Over the years there have been many allegations of fraud in the séance room, especially among the more highly paid professional mediums, and there have been many confrontations between investigator and practitioner, and some between mediums and those who come seeking the truth. There has recently been a controversy in England between the President of the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain, and some members of a spiritualist church he visited, who accused him of conducting a fraudulent séance. This type of allegation is not new, but such allegations are very difficult to prove. Evidence of the truth of the medium's *message* is often very convincing, especially to a bereaved and emotionally upset person who wants nothing more than the conviction that death is not the end.

This book *The Psychic Mafia*, like the previous one on Mackenzie King, makes fascinating reading. Lamar Keene relates how, when he was nineteen years old, he was introduced to spiritualism by a friend. He and the friend attended a spiritualist church, gradually becoming absorbed into more and more of its activities. They started off innocently, genuinely believing, but he relates that they became increasingly aware of the fraudulent aspects of the set-up. He describes the gradual change in his own feelings *about* the fraudulent aspects of mediumship — after all the sitters want voices, spirit forms, wonders, and isn't the customer always right? He relates how easy it was to pick up bits and pieces of information about the clients and weave them into the spirit messages. He relates also how he and his friends gradually came to realize how much fraud was involved, but by then they were also dazzled by the potential profits! He goes on to say how they broke with the church they had been involved with and decided to launch out on their own. They invited a famous medium to visit them to demonstrate her abilities, and they realized that she was using the most simple methods of cheating. They let her know they were aware of this, and offered to co-operate, and they were in! Once it was realized they were prepared to operate on a fraudulent basis the mediums' secrets were revealed to them, and Lamar Keene relates how the "psychic mafia," as he dubs it, works. He tells of files that are kept relating to everyone who ever seeks a sitting from a fraudulent medium, how these mediums exchange information both of messages given, and knowledge obtained from the sitters, how this information is recorded and circulated on file cards kept in locked and secret vaults in many spiritualist churches and camps. He reveals the conjuring tricks that these cheating mediums use to produce their effects; he tells of objects stolen, only to be returned at a later date as if mysteriously

produced by spirits. He tells of fake materializations, of concealed microphones to pick up illicit information about sitters, and much more.

One might quite justifiably wonder why, if mediumship was so profitable, did Lamar Keene decide to confess. It was a very profitable racket and he tells us of enormous sums of money paid to mediums for their information. He says that he gradually became unhappy about deceiving one particular person of whom he had become very fond, and who was as a second mother to him. This lady was a person of great integrity and honesty, and Keene says he became very uncomfortable with his deception. He tells us also, that he became a Mason, and began to take the masonic obligations to heart. Friction increased between him and his partner in mediumship, until finally a confrontation occurred, and Keene decided to make a clean break. He confessed his tax evasions to the Internal Revenue Services, and confessed to the police authorities, the FBI and the sheriff of his years of fraud. He then was prepared to tell his story to anyone interested and prepared to listen. The book *The Psychic Mafia* is that story.

But Lamar Keene's story is not the whole story of mediumship and spiritualism. It appears obvious that *many* of the professional mediums are fraudulent, and only in the business for the money. But Keene's story only confirms what many researchers have been very suspicious about for many years. There are many stories on record of exposures of fraudulent séances. It is interesting that in the past, parapsychologists and researchers have often been bogged down by the fact that they have been certain that fraud exists, and have yet been unable to prove it satisfactorily. A great deal of effort has gone into trying to prove that the physical phenomena of the séance room, the noises, floating trumpets, and the like, are produced by cheating methods, and perhaps not as much effort has gone into research into the origins of the messages themselves, the sources from which the mediums obtained the information given out by the spirits. It has been a very mixed picture indeed, and it is clear that while there are fraudulent mediums, there are also many many people who are *not* cheating, and who do really and honestly believe that they are communicating with the spirits of the dead.

We come now to our third book, entitled *Conjuring up Philip — an Adventure in Psychokinesis*. This really was an adventure — with an unexpected ending. This book tells the story of a parapsychological experiment, one of the most interesting ever performed by the participants. A number of members of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research became interested in a discussion on the nature of a ghost. The question arose because some of the members had been out investigating an alleged haunting, and during an all-night vigil some of the team had themselves seen what they thought was an apparition. During the subsequent discussion the group reasoned that as they themselves did not believe that such apparitions were indeed the spirits of departed people, then seeing a ghost must be an hallucination, and if several people see it at once, then it must be a collective hallucination. This of course, was only a theory, but the group felt it was an acceptable alternative theory to the departed spirits theory. They reasoned that if their theory were correct one ought to be able in some way to produce an hallucination, preferably a collective one, that they all would see together, and if they were really lucky perhaps one that could be seen by everyone present. It seemed an attractive idea for an experiment, and they decided to try it. The book tells the story of the experiment.

Briefly, this is what happened. The members of the group decided that in order to be sure that their ghost was not a departed spirit they would have to invent a completely fictitious character, but give him or her a personality and background story that could be acceptable in order to create a ghost story. The story of Philip, a Cavalier, living in the mid 1600's, at the time of Oliver Cromwell in England, was invented by one of the group members. Philip had been a follower of Charles I, who had been deposed, and Philip remained a follower and spy for Charles during the period that Cromwell was ruling the country. Philip was married to a beautiful but frigid wife, Dorothea, and the marriage was extremely unhappy. Philip found a beautiful gypsy girl while riding through his estates one day, and brought her back to live in secret in the Dower House as his mistress. However, Dorothea found her, and accused her of using witchcraft to ensnare Philip, and had her tried and burnt at the stake as a witch. Philip was too afraid of being denounced as a spy for Charles to intervene, but subsequently suffered agonies of remorse, and finally cast himself from the battlements of his home in despair, and became a ghost. This was the ghost the group decided to attempt to create.

It did not prove an easy task. The group met regularly for a whole evening each week, but at the end of a year, after trying various meditation methods, they still had not seen any apparition. However, during this time they had come across the work of some English people who had been interested in trying to reproduce the physical effects of the seance room — the previously mentioned noises, raps, levitations, etc. A special type of approach to this particular problem was recommended, likened to learning a psychological skill. Here were some people saying that perhaps some types of physical phenomena were genuine, and that they could be produced by any body, not necessarily mediums, and also that these effects were not caused by the spirits of dead people, but that they came from the subconscious minds of the living people in the circle. The Toronto group members decided to try this approach, having read with care the details of the English experiments and the reasoning as to why it worked. At that stage they were still hoping to create an hallucination. Basically, the recommended approach was a re-creation of the seance room atmosphere, but without the need for a special medium, or the belief that spirits of the dead were present. The English experimenters believed that the force necessary to produce the phenomena was generated in the minds of the sitters, and that anyone could acquire the ability to do this by learning it as a sort of psychological skill. The members of the Toronto group decided to try this method to produce their apparition, and changed their approach to the experiment completely.

To their great surprise, one evening, shortly after they had changed their methods, the table suddenly slid across the room although nobody had actually pushed it. Shortly afterwards the table started to emit raps, loud and clear, while everyone's hands were still on top and nobody was moving. The raps seemed to be coming from inside the table. The sitters asked if the raps were being caused by Philip, their imaginary ghost. They suggested that one rap should signify 'yes' and two raps 'no'. The table responded with one rap, and they continued to ask questions and elicit raps in reply. It should be emphasised that the raps came in reply to questions only, and were not random noises. The sitters continued over many evenings to question 'Philip' and elicited from him entire confirmation of the story they had invented for him. Over a period of

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time the table acquired a complete personality to the members of the group — he was Philip.

Philip did not appear, and to date, has still not done so. The members of the group feel that the experiment will not be really complete until they do produce the apparition. But the experiment had taken an unexpected turn and instead of providing answers about ghosts had shed considerable light on what happens in the séance room. Here were genuine physical phenomena, but the spirit allegedly responsible for them was a completely imaginary character. It should be stated that none of the group members are psychics or mediums, they are not spiritualists in their beliefs, and the sittings were conducted in full light — even the glare of television cameras — as opposed to the dim lights of the séance room. Many many visitors came to see and participate; the proceedings have been filmed, videotaped, televised, and tape recorded. There is no fraud involved in the production of the noises, or indeed of various other minor physical manifestations that have occurred from time to time. The experiment continues to the time of writing — the group members have tried many experiments — they have proved they can switch communicators to such improbable characters as Father Christmas, a raven-haired beauty from Venus, a talking dolphin named Silk, the Artful Dodger from Dickens. Anyone whom the group desires to produce as the communicator they can. They discovered that they were not all needed to produce the rappings. Any four of the original eight group members could produce results. Any number of visitors can be added, and these get answers to their own questions in the form of raps under their own hands. The full story of the experiment, together with some of the alleged conversation from Philip is told in the book, together with chapters relating the experiment to spiritualist theories, to the poltergeist phenomenon, to current parapsychological research and to haunting and apparitions.

Perhaps for the purpose of this paper the reader should be reminded that spiritualism had its very beginnings in the United States in 1848, when two sisters, Maggie and Cathie Fox were the victims of what, in the light of current knowledge, appears to have been a poltergeist outbreak. Noises were heard, in particular loud rappings, especially in the walls. The girls, after an initial period during which they were badly frightened, started to answer the raps back, and to their great surprise the raps responded in the same way Philip does. A conversation ensued when the raps alleged that they were created by the spirit of a murdered peddler, who had been done to death in that house by a previous occupant. Although the previous owner vigorously denied the story, and no trace of proof was found to confirm that such a peddler had ever existed, nevertheless the belief that the spirits of the dead can communicate by rappings was born. During the next forty years or so the idea grew until a new religion, that of spiritualism began.

Although one cannot, as yet, explain the source of the energy that creates the physical phenomena, certain ingredients, so to speak, seem necessary. There has to be a strong emotional element to produce results — it seems as if the noises are the result of the release of emotional tension. The members of the group need to be strongly *en rapport*. They need to have spent time with each other, and have emotional sympathy and empathy, with a common object of attention — in this case Philip. Experience has shown that the group members acquire a degree of mental telepathy with each other. So much for the necessary ingredients to produce physical phenomena. But what about the content of

the messages? The group have demonstrated to their own satisfaction, and to the satisfaction of those people who have been observing the experiment, that they are unable to produce anything in the way of response that they do not already know either collectively or individually. Philip in his responses never strays from the story the group have invented for him, unless the group as a whole decide to make a change, then he goes along with it. The group can demonstrate a degree of mutual telepathy, but they have no ability to foretell the future, or to answer correctly a question to which none of them know the answer. Interestingly, in such a situation strange scratching sounds come from the table — typical of the scratching noises reported in many poltergeist cases. The group may answer questions *inaccurately*, in fact they often do. But this is because their knowledge is incomplete, and they *believe* the answer to be correct. In other words, Philip is a reflection of their own collective knowledge, conscious and at times, subconscious.

This experiment sheds a great deal of light on what might very well be happening in those spiritualist circles where the medium is not deliberately fraudulent, or cheating. Many such séance circles are exact replicas of the Philip experiment, consisting of the same group of people meeting week after week, with a common shared interest and belief, often emotionally involved with the idea of the spirits of the dead being present, and in fact obtaining genuine physical phenomena, purporting to come from these same spirits. In reversal of what has been so often believed, the phenomena may well be genuine, but do the messages come from the dead spirits, or are they a product of the conscious and unconscious minds of the sitters? Are they getting just the messages they wish for and expect? It seems to me that the evidence is beginning to be weighed down very much in favour of this latter idea.

Let us return to Mackenzie King. He had dealings with both professional and amateur mediums alike, and although his biographer states that there is no evidence that King was exploited, or that they charged him excessively, nevertheless it is difficult to believe that many of the professionals could not have been well aware of his identity, and of his extreme belief that his family and dead friends were all around. Certainly at one time at least it was recorded that King was urged to retire from public life, write his memoirs, and especially was he enjoined to write of his belief in spiritualism and of his communications with the spirit world. He did indeed retire within two weeks of being told this, but he did not write as suggested. He never got around to writing his memoirs, and he seems to have decided that the world was not ready to accept the fact that the Prime Minister of a country such as Canada was indulging in Spiritualism. But imagine how profitable it would have been to the spiritualists if such a public statement had been made by King! But as well as participating in professional séances King himself indulged privately in the table rapping. Probably his experiences with the table reinforced his belief in the mediums and vice versa. He could not know as we do now that he himself could be responsible unconsciously for the rapping. He would know, for certain, that neither he nor Mrs. Patteson were actually knocking with hands or knees to produce the sounds. To his mind it *had* to be some outside force, and for him, the spirit theory was the obvious answer. Nevertheless, from time to time, he had his doubts and he expresses these in his diary. He wonders whether the messages were the surfacing of his own subconscious wishes and desires, but the genuineness of the rapping led him to believe that they had to be caused by some sort of spirit, even if it was at times a lying spirit.

As I have said the diaries make fascinating reading, and we are fortunate indeed that they have been preserved. Of course, Mackenzie King was not the only person in high office or with a responsible position who has consulted mediums and the spirit world, but his diaries constitute perhaps the most detailed account of such consultations. As I said at the beginning the question of one's personal belief in survival as such is not affected by the truth or otherwise of the spiritualist claim. But the mode of survival is important if it is claimed that we continue to meddle in the affairs of men after we have passed on. It is then important to be sure of the truth of what is being claimed. I think the content of the three books I have been discussing proves to anyone who is not totally biased that there can be other interpretations put upon the events and messages that are associated with the practice of mediumship than that our spirits are surviving beyond death, floating in a kind of never-never land, waiting to be called in by some medium to deliver banal messages, dubious counsel, and often sugary comfort. I would hope most of us are too intelligent to believe in this mode of survival.

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Xenoglossia: A Subject with Two Possible Instances

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ABSTRACT: Three types of xenoglossia may be distinguished: neophasia, linguistic restitution or pseudo-xenoglossia, and true xenoglossia. A preliminary case report of xenoglossia in a subject who spoke Norsk, the language of Vikings, and wrote Sassanid Pahlavi, the ancient language of Mesopotamia, while in a deep hypnotic trance, is discussed.

1. Introduction

In mediaeval times the utterance of foreign languages unknown to the speaker was one of the four principal signs of the presence of a demon. *Xenoglossia*, the speaking of foreign languages, and *xenography*, their writing, even today — despite over 100 years of empirical research — are regarded as uncanny. It is useful to consider the writing and speaking phenomena as related, and to distinguish three types: neophasia, the construction of a purely artificial language; linguistic restitution, the use of a previously forgotten language or the recall of subliminal auditory and visual memory records; and xenoglossia itself, as a true utterance of a language foreign to the speaker.

The neophasias include two related phenomena “speaking in tongues” or *glossolalia*, and *linguistic neoformation*. The speaking in tongues of certain fundamentalist religious groups has no apparent grammar or propositional vocabulary and sounds as pure gibberish; however, it is claimed that the speaker and sometimes others can translate what was said. William James (1897) reported one case and later (1902) remarked that automatic utterance is characteristic of religious leaders. Cutten (1909) considered glossolalia a phenomenon unique to Christianity. Linguistic neoformation sometimes satisfies the requirement of a language. In the late eighteenth century a man known as Psalmanaazaar constructed an artificial language he called Formosan (Stuchlik, 1967). Early in the present century, William James reports of a journalist and member of a spiritualist camp who spoke an artificial language while in trance (Fodor, 1966). A famous case was that of Mlle. Hélène Smith who devised (apparently unconsciously) the “Martian” language, and the “Uranian” and “Lunarian” languages, as she called them. Theodore Flournoy, Professor of Psychology at the University of Geneva, studied this case thoroughly and discovered the Martian language was modelled after French (Flournoy, 1899). There were two subsequent Martian languages, those of Mrs. S. Mead and of Dr. Mansfield Robinson (Fodor, 1966). Two more recent cases were a new language from a schizophrenic patient studied by Jessner and a man who constructed several languages (*polyglottous neophasia*) reported by Stuchlik (1957), both cited by Steyn (1972). Historically, much earlier examples of neophasias are known. The “primeval tongue,” the universal language Swedenborg believed to be the language of the Angels, was used by the early spiritists to communicate with the dead. The beginning of modern spiritualism in the

mid-nineteenth century, however, saw the primeval tongue fade out and be replaced by multiple more cryptic constructs.

Linguistic restitution is a form of cryptomnesia and is the most widely recognized of the xenoglossic phenomena. Regression to another language or the mother tongue is not uncommon (in polyglots) in acute aphasia. Psychotic polyglottous individuals may exhibit fewer thought disorders in some of their languages (Steyn, 1972). A related type of language restitution is the unconscious recall of long forgotten visual or auditory memories during dissociative states such as hypnosis and automatic writing. One of the first recorded cases of the remarkable unconscious ability of aural memory (cited in Meerloo, 1964) as of a maid-servant who in delirium spoke ancient Biblical Aramaic. It was discovered that some years previously she had listened to a minister who was preparing himself aloud for an examination in Aramaic. Many passages of the woman's delirious speech were identified in the pastor's collection of Rabbinical writings. A similar case (and perhaps the same case) was reported by Coleridge (1889). Myers (1961) discusses a case reported by Schiller whose brother while in trance wrote classical Greek sentences that he later recalled having seen years previously in the Iliad. Fragments of Hindustani were also spoken, a language which he had not heard since a baby of eight months in India. Freeborn (1902) reports an elderly lady delirious with pneumonia speaking Hindustani which she had not heard since the age of four. A physician, the late Dr. Eric Strauss, in charge of the psychiatric department at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London, once wrote in trance a script that was German and written upside down. It was found to be a close copy of an encyclopaedic article that the writer presumably had seen much earlier (Heywood, 1968). All commonly known languages have been seen in automatic handwriting (Kardec, 1874). Linguistic restitution may be responsible for reports of foreign languages in dreams. Such occurrences are usually consonant with the dreamer's language skills and the dream work (Altman, 1969). It may also explain reports under hallucinogenic drugs of hearing voices speaking foreign languages unknown to the subject (Barron et al, 1964). Linguistic restitution may also account for the unusual ability of some automatic writers to construct more grammatically correct language forms while in trance than normally.

True xenoglossia is controversial. Myers did not believe in the phenomenon (Fodor, 1966). It is a phenomenon difficult to prove because it requires establishing that the speaker or writer previously never had heard or seen the language. For example, Mathew Manning (1974) reports automatically writing Arabic script that was, to him, a completely unknown language. One phrase, however, translates as "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" of which the Arabic version appears on bank notes. Heath (1886) describes over 600 people, mostly children, in the period 1688 to 1701, who reportedly did not know French, but would preach long sermons in that language. The *New York Evening Post* reported (November 10, 1930, cited by Fodor, 1966) a four-year-old girl in Warsaw who, although her parents spoke only Polish, was found to speak correct Gaelic (a long-deceased great-grandfather who spoke Gaelic had emigrated from the island of Lewis in the Scottish Hebrides). It is not known what became of the girl or if she had memories pertaining to past lives. (See Stevenson, 1975, 1977, for such memories in children). Stevenson (1974) thoroughly researched the case of a woman who spoke grammatically correct Swedish and Norwegian while recounting, in trance, a past life. After several years of study

it was strongly suggested the woman had not in her current life learned the foreign languages spoken in trance. A second case suggesting true xenoglossia has also been reported by Stevenson (1976). Challmes (1974) has reported on a hypnotic subject that while being investigated for memories of past lives wrote Egyptian hieroglyphics considered by language authorities to be "very well done." The report did not mention if an attempt was made to establish whether the subject had previously seen hieroglyphic script. Another instance of speaking words in the old Egyptian hieroglyphic language occurred in a young native English-speaking girl known as Rosemary in 1927 (Wood and Hulme, 1937; Curtis, 1970). Several thousand phrases obtained while she was in trance were verified by Egyptologists to be authentic. Furthermore Rosemary was able to answer in context, and in the ancient language, questions put to her in that language.

2. *Hypnosis and Multiple Personalities*

The induction of multiple personalities in a deeply hypnotized subject is a well recognized phenomenon. Seven percent of volunteer subjects are able to create secondary personalities under hypnosis, and such subjects are psychologically healthier and freer creatively to adapt to hypnotic suggestions than hypnotic subjects who are less able to dissociate ego functions (Kampman, 1976). That in certain subjects these *sub-identities* are integrations of unconscious memories of putative past lives is a matter of some controversy. It can only be tested empirically. Should such personalities demonstrate knowledge and skill (for example, of foreign language) not known to the hypnotic subject, that would be evidence for the case (Ducasse, 1962). The requirement that no one else now alive also knows the knowledge (as proposed by Watson, 1974) begs the question of ancillary mechanisms such as telepathy and clairvoyance. If clairvoyance exists as a valid mechanism to see the future (and to know what the experimenter will find if he attempts to verify hypnotically produced facts, as suggested by Lodge, 1894), why not a parallel mechanism to see the past psychically? In such cases, the requirement of Lodge and Watson needs augmenting by the condition that no one else, alive or once living, knows or has known the knowledge — a clearly unreasonable situation. I believe it is merely sufficient for the hypnotic subject not to know, itself a formidable state to prove. However, it is difficult for some people to be rational about reincarnation theory on account of bias from either our Western Culture's materialism or its religious creeds (Lewis, 1977; Stevenson, 1977; Whitton, 1976). Immense resistance is mobilized against any theory that threatens to revise a culture's foundation.

The technique of regressive hypnosis and its precautions as employed in these experiments have been previously described (Whitton, 1976).

3. *Case Report*

The subject is a single man in his late thirties. He is educated in the field of psychology and holds a responsible position in the assessment and treatment of children with learning and behaviour disorders. His native language is English, but he has also studied, in varying degrees, French, Hebrew, Rashi, Yiddish, Greek, Latin and Italian. As far as can be determined, he had heard or seen at some time, Hindustani, Punjabi, Spanish, Polish, German, Russian, Hungarian, Czech, Dutch, Norwegian, Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Cree, Ojibway, Korean, Vietnamese, Gaelic, Swahili, Arabic, Afrikans, and several dialects of the West Indies and Polynesian Islands. Such exposure to various languages is

not uncommon with today's communication and travel. As far as can be so far ascertained from the subject and his family he has not heard or seen Icelandic, Norsk, or any of the older Iranian scripts.

Using techniques previously described (Whitton, 1976), documentation and analysis was undertaken of memories of putative previous lives of the subject. Of those personality identities studied in depth, two seem able to speak or write fragments of languages that the subject has not studied within this life. One is a personality called Thor who claims to be what is now called a Viking. Thor is not remarkable, being only one of many raiding warriors in a small Viking army about the year 1000 AD. Thor speaks Norsk, the direct ancestor of modern Icelandic. The subject while in deep trance said that in his mind he heard Thor speaking. The subject could not translate the language nor understand in any apparent manner what Thor was saying. When asked, the subject was able to write on paper a phonetic description of phrases and words he would hear Thor speak. The following list of phonetically written phrases were obtained when the subject, as Thor, was asked to describe his ship and life at sea. Raters who spoke Icelandic and Norwegian assessed independently the list for "Icelandic-looking" words and phrases that were represented phonetically. The phonetics in bold type are those for which there is agreement in the interpretation; the Icelandic word equivalent is in the second column and English translation in the third.

NAJLBROVNIK	BRU NYK	<i>Bridge Seamonster (NYKUR)</i>
	(LJUBAVNIK in Serbian means <i>Lover</i>)	
YIAK NBRONIJK	JAKI	<i>Iceberg</i>
LEJNESVKONJA	NES VIK	<i>Part of land between two bays, Bay</i>
	(KONJA in Slavonic languages in <i>Horse</i>)	
ROKO	ROK	<i>Storm</i>
VLOGNIA	LOGN	<i>Calm weather</i>
NEJI LOKUSNO	LOK LOKS	<i>Container, Ending, At last</i>
	(NIJE USUSNO in Serbian means <i>It is not tasteful</i>)	
IAN TI		
KIAK 80 SANTI	(80 SANTI in Serbian means 80 <i>Ice floes</i> , the 80 was written in numerals)	
IAN TIYOCCO		
YKONDOROKONO	KOMDU	<i>Come you</i>
VOLNYKIAGE	(VOLNY in Russian means WAVES)	
KLONYK CHIKRANTI		
IAN TI LBOVNYK		
BITTEREN HOSEN	(This came into his awareness as he was looking at his clothes and is probably out of context)	
YAK RUDI	ER UTI	<i>Is outside</i>
LOTTGAEN	(A name of a place)	
VRONJK		
YIAK LEDDEREN	(JAK LED in Serbian means <i>Strong ice</i>)	
YAKOVADJKA		
RAMA BJACTAEN		
HYARTA KNOLOTTEN HJARTA	<i>Heart</i>	
VIOLNYK		

This collection of phonetic phrases can in part be recognized as fragments of the language claimed, and it appears to be in context to the questions asked of the subject.

A subject who is naive to a certain language can experience considerable difficulty in phonetically writing that language. For example, another subject was slowly read the following Icelandic sentence: *Enn bar staka jaka af og til ad lani vid Hornbjargsvita*, which means, *At Hornbjargsvita single ice floes were occasionally still drifting ashore*. As the subject was read word by word the Icelandic sentence by one of the raters (whose native tongue is Icelandic), the subject wrote the following phonetics: NYR STARKA YAKA RFOTV ARLADI YIV HORVSRSWEDA. It can be appreciated that only three or four of the phonetic groups would be recognized in their translation.

Most of the recognized phrases from the case report do relate to the context of ships and possible events at sea. It is interesting to note that some of the phonetic phrases can be recognized as other languages (Serbian and Russian). Whether these represent instances of linguistic restitution or coincidence of language forms could not be determined. A related problem is the chance that a random phonetic group can be recognized as representing words in a specific language; this has not been assessed, although it has long been recognized that auditory perception can be unreliable (e.g., Coover, 1917). There is no evidence that the subject has seen or heard at any time Icelandic or Norsk or Serbian. However, on one language there may be hesitation to declare that linguistic restitution is not a factor in this subject.

A second foreign language was investigated in this subject to increase the likelihood of true xenoglossia. The subject while in deep trance was able to write a script that belongs to the Iranian Group of scripts. He described being a young man living in Mesopotamia (then part of Persia) in 625 AD. The script used at that time was Sassanid Pahlavi (226-642), and has not been used since 651 AD. It has no relation to the present day Iranian. All of the samples produced in deep trance were verified as being Sassanid Pahlavi script by Dr. Idrahim Pourhadi from the Near Eastern Section of the Library of congress (communication, November 23, 1977). The script was written in a child-like manner with some letters misplaced. The subject was asked in trance to write Pahlavi words as translations for certain English words. However, most of the produced script cannot yet be translated, and that which is does not appear to match what would be expected.

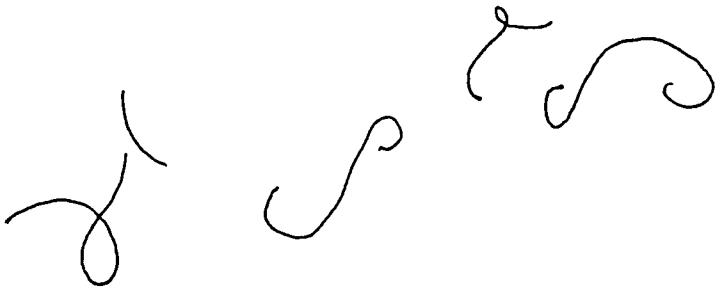
Of these two foreign languages it cannot yet be said that they meet the full criteria of true xenoglossia. However, there is no evidence they are instances of linguistic restitution or cryptomnesia, or neophasia.

SUBJECT'S PAHLAVI TRANSLATIONS OF SOME WORDS

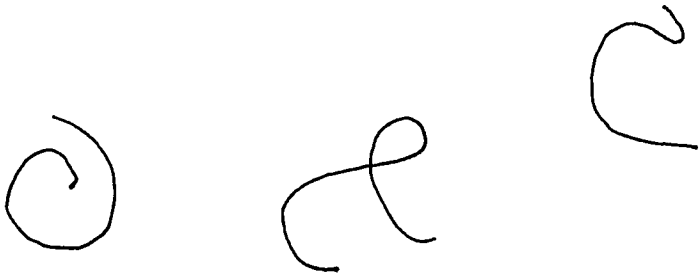
ORNAMENTS



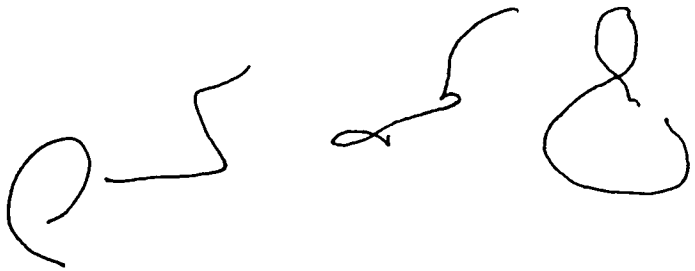
COUNTRY



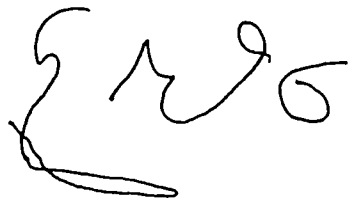
FOOT



TEMPLE



ROAD



CLOTHING

g o

HOUSE

Flora's

VILLAGE

Wendy

BROTHER

James

20 ("HIS" AGE IN YEARS)

82

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T.S.P.R. Medical Committee

30th February, 1977

The Problem of UFO Reports

IRIS M. OWEN

ABSTRACT: Some notes on the problems encountered when on the 'receiving end' of UFO reports. How does one make an assessment and decide on the method of investigation when a sighting is first reported?

In April 1976 the Toronto Society for Psychical Research decided to take a closer look at the UFO phenomenon, in an attempt to understand just what was the experience people had had when they said they had seen a UFO. It was decided to set up a standing committee of the TSPR to undertake this research. Many of the members expressed interest in this project, and a number of qualified people in various disciplines offered their help, and we are able to call on the services of astronomers, air traffic controllers, meteorologists, soil analysis experts, and many others. We announced the formation of the UFO Research Centre, Ontario, to the local media, radio stations, television stations, and all the local newspapers, and waited for the reports to come in.

As might be expected, in the initial stages we were swamped with reports, most of them old sightings, some of them dating back many years. The majority of these reports were impossible to check because of the time factor. However, things eventually settled down, and the actual number of phone calls lessened. This paper is a reflection on the problems one encounters and the difficulties that arise at the receiving end of these telephone calls reporting UFO sightings. When calls come in decisions have to be made on the type of investigation to be carried out, the people to be called on to investigate, and the priority to be given any call.

The first frustration is that when someone sees what they believe to be a UFO they frequently do not telephone immediately and report the sighting. They wait until the next day, or the next week, or until someone or something reminds them that the 'thing' they saw "must have been a UFO!" Perhaps they have been listening to a radio program, or have read something in the newspaper. Thus, following media programmes, one gets a 'wave' of calls reporting out-of-date sightings, and there is no way of checking whether a light somebody saw, at some time they can't quite remember last week, was really unidentified, or merely *unidentifiable*, because of lack of sufficient information. The person concerned will generally assert that "it must have been a UFO, I have never seen anything like it before", and if you cannot explain it, they go on believing they have seen a UFO. Also, following a media program many reported sightings are 'coloured' to fit what the person reporting believes he or she *should* have seen for it to be a UFO. Any suggestion that a light in the sky could have been a planet, satellite, helicopter, or plane will be indignantly denied.

Even when people do telephone at the time of reporting a sighting their own beliefs and wishful thinking can sometimes colour their reports in this way. Thus I may be looking out of the window at the actual object being reported

to me as a UFO (say a planet, or searchlight), and the person at the other end of the telephone will be insisting that it is a UFO, but I can recognize it for what it is. Conversely, of course, many of our callers are pleased when we can immediately identify something as a natural phenomenon. However it becomes increasingly difficult to identify all man-made or natural objects in the sky; there is a limit to one's ability to identify aircraft when not presently in view, there are too many of them; similarly there is no reliable chart of the satellites, and some of these are visible on very clear nights or at certain times, and not others. To a large extent we have had to accept the fact that very many reported lights in the sky will remain *unidentifiable* — this does not mean that had we had the necessary information we could not have identified them, but such information is very difficult to get, especially after the event. However we take note of lights behaving in a manner which seems completely at variance with any other object in the skies which we know of, and some of them are indeed puzzling. One has also to take into account, of course, the possibility of deliberate hoax; a group of engineering students apparently pulled off an elaborate hoax in London, Ontario, in the Spring of last year. Some seven hundred people telephoned the local radio station to report two strings of lights crossing the sky; the sighting was reported on the news and a television crew went to the local airport to interview the pilots of two small planes that were in the air at the time. Although the students also telephoned in, saying it was a hoax, and although the remains of the balloons they used were found, and one of the pilots actually saw the balloons rising from the campus, the fact that it was a hoax was not widely published, and many people are not aware of the truth concerning this incident. This, of course, is an ongoing problem, stories about sightings continue to be circulated and repeated whether they have been proved reliable or not; it is important in the initial stages of an investigation to make sure that your informants are not pushed into a position from which they cannot retreat should they be proved mistaken.

The majority of the sightings reported to us have been of lights in the sky, but we have had a number of reported sighting of actual objects which certainly cannot be explained away as satellites, planets, airplanes, etc. The sighting reported is of an actual object, seen clearly enough to recognize shape and texture, although there may be lights on it, or around it. Also we have had reports of markings on the ground, alleged to have been caused by a UFO landing, although we have not, in our Centre, had a definite link between a UFO and a landing site. But we have had reports of objects 'as big as a house', 'hundreds of feet across', and so on. These reports present a problem completely different from the reported lights. Often these reports come in well after the event, and usually there is no other witness, although some sightings are reported where more than one person is alleged to have seen the object.

In dealing with such reports it is useful to be able to draw on one's previous experience in parapsychological research, because there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that some of these objects did not in fact objectively exist; they could have been due to other explanations. Of course, we have been the victims of one or two attempted hoaxes; some people tell us these stories just for fun, but to most of the people reporting this kind of object the experience is real, though the object *may* not be. I have no doubt that some of these sightings are types of hallucination. This was one of the reasons that we ourselves became interested in the UFO phenomenon — we were becoming increasingly aware of the strong resemblance that some of the UFO sightings bear to psychic pheno-

mena; an aspect that has until recently been largely overlooked. One of the points that used to be continually made in favour of accepting some of the more bizarre close encounter cases for instance, was that these events were reported by people whose 'word would be accepted in a court of law' — that there could be no reason why they should be lying, that the event which occurred was a real experience to them, and so on. This is a situation with which we are familiar in psychic research — psychic phenomena can and do happen to anyone, they are real to those to whom they are happening, very often they are real in the physical sense that anyone who happens to be present can witness them. The people reporting these events are not lying, they are telling the truth as they know it. It is perhaps important to reiterate the nature of hallucinations. Given the right circumstances anybody can experience an hallucination, and probably most people have had such an experience at some time or other during their lives. Hallucinations due to drugs are known and accepted as fact by most people who have read about the subject; hallucinations during a febrile illness are well recognized; and generally referred to as delirium. But one can also experience hallucinations at times of emotional upset or stress, if one is elated, depressed, worried, overjoyed, etc. This is nothing to do with one's mental health, it is purely related to emotion. In a state of disturbed emotions one frequently sees what one expects to see, for instance seriously ill people and those in danger of death frequently 'see' those loved ones who have already died. These experiences are very real to the person concerned, and they are unable to distinguish between hallucination and reality. I believe that some reported UFO sightings are a form of modern 'ghost'. The hallucination takes the form that is expected by the person seeing it.

We are all familiar with the ghosts of various ages and cultures, religious visions, ancestral ghosts, and so on. There are other modern ghosts, however, that parallel even more the UFO ghost theory. There is a legend in the Eastern part of England of appearances of a Great Black Dog — 'Black Shuck'. This ghostly dog, with blazing eyes, has been continually seen over a period of many years in this particular part of England. The legend belongs particularly to this part of the country. Ivan Bunn of the Fortean Society recently collected accounts of some forty first-hand sightings of this creature and plotted them on a map. They all occurred in the area of the legend. If you are an East Anglian you will be familiar with this legend, and you will not be surprised if the ghost you see is that of Black Shuck. Incidentally it is an area singularly free from UFO sighting reports.

In July 1976 two milkmen delivering milk early in the morning in Nottinghamshire, England, reported seeing a lion, on the road, walking away from them. They called the police, and a huge search, using tracker dogs and helicopters was mounted. It is a populous area, lions are not native to Britain, and it was believed the lion must have escaped from a zoo or circus. But no zoo or circus reported a missing lion. And no lion was found. Neither were the remains of any meat or animal a hungry lion might have devoured ever found — the lion, if it existed, must have become a vegetarian! People called in and stated that their pets were restless on the night before the sighting, and during the following ten days 65 people called in to the local police reporting seeing the lion. One couple even called in from Norfolk, many miles away, to say that previously they had seen a lion on a pull-in on the road, but had not reported it for fear of being thought crazy. A farmer called and reported finding

strange pawprints on his land. The lion was never found, nor its body, nor any remnants of food. It could not escape from England, and apart from the Norfolk report it was not reported anywhere else. But the whole episode reminds one very forcibly of the kind of thing that happens when a programme concerning UFOs is broadcast, even down to the restless animals, and the prints on the ground. Some of the objects people reported as lions turned out to be ordinary indeed, mistaken in the height of excitement for a lion, others were completely non-existent. The English are fond of animal ghosts (perhaps because of their well-known love of animals), a ghostly puma has been roaming the Surrey hills for some eight years past, and I have no doubt the lion will become a local legend in Nottinghamshire. It is worth noting that the initial sighting was observed by *two* milkmen, as was the aberrant lion in Norfolk seen by two people. While some of these sightings were probably in the nature of harassment to the already overworked police, undoubtedly a large number of people, in a state of excitement and fear, really thought they saw a lion. A momentary trick of vision can be transmuted into belief that one is seeing the object one expects to see. A ghost experience is often the culminating event in a poltergeist situation. Traditionally, in a poltergeist situation the first disturbances consist of noises, sounds of footsteps, doors banging, and so on. Then objects begin to move of their own accord, often quite large objects of considerable weight. Lights may switch themselves on or off, electrical and mechanical equipment may malfunction. At this stage the people concerned may believe they are being 'haunted', and search for a possible scapegoat, or 'scapeghost'! When it is decided who it is that is causing these effects it is not uncommon for one or more of the people concerned to see an actual apparition of their 'ghost'. This is a very common pattern of haunting, and on with which we have become very familiar over twenty years of research. Generally speaking the phenomena centre around someone who is in the midst of an *emotional* disturbance. Now, transpose this to the UFO phenomena, and one can see the parallels. If the person undergoing emotional stress is in a situation where unexplained happenings are taking place around him, and he then is out in his car, and suddenly the lights go off, or the engine stops, and he is familiar with and believes in the possibility that UFO's are real craft from outer space, and contain strange beings — labelled humanoids — then this is what he may very well see! They will appear as completely real to him as any other type of ghost. And, incidentally, one has only to recollect the reality of a figure conjured up by a stage hypnotist for fun, to realise how very real these figures are to the person reporting the experience. And of course their reality is confirmed in the witnesses' view by the actual reality of the car malfunction, or perhaps by the broken branches of trees, or even, possibly, by landing rings. We have had such cases reported to us. They need much careful and confidential investigation, but we have no hesitation in saying that some of the alleged close encounter cases reported to us have been experienced in the context of a poltergeist happening. The ghost that one sees in such a situation is exactly that which the viewer expects to see — in the days of Ancient Greece and Rome people saw the ghosts of the gods, and goddesses, who visited the earth and conversed with mortals; later, in the Middle Ages, religious ghosts were seen, the Virgin Mary, Christ himself, and various saints, apostles, martyrs. Ghosts of historical figures abound in their expected places, and family ghosts are seen in their expected and usual clothing, no matter that the brooch on great grandma's dress is the

one reposing in the jewel box upstairs! Traditionally all the expected trappings are there.

There is a further complication in the field of UFO reports. A specific 'cult' has grown up around UFOs. The basic beliefs of the cult are essentially the same as the basic beliefs of many religions, but with a 'twist'. Essentially the story is that UFOs are craft from some other galaxy, operated by beings superior to ourselves. They are watching the progress of life here. (Some say they actually 'planted' mankind here). They are finding and training certain chosen people who will be rescued from an impending 'holocaust' towards the end of the current millenium. Some spiritualists are now saying that the souls of those passed over are taken up into the UFO computers, and some of them can continue to communicate and are sending us this information! Some of these ideas have been around for many years and were put forward in the literature of the 1930's. They have become a mishmash of science fiction, spiritualism, and psychic readings, with a flavouring of pyramid lore, stories of the Bermuda Triangle, and lost Atlantis. When investigating a reported UFO sighting of a 'close encounter' type it has become necessary to ascertain if the person reporting has been exposed to any of these ideas, and believes in them. We have found that a number of people reporting this type of strange object, or who report they have been taken aboard, very firmly believe these theories; they may believe that they are among the chosen, that they have been given a message for mankind, or even that their loved ones who have passed on are aboard the UFOs waiting for them. Their reported sighting may then be more in the nature of a religious vision or apparition, and the 'shining people' bear a striking resemblance to angels.

As I have said this is not a research report, but a note of the difficulties one encounters at the preliminary stage of an investigation. On receipt of a call reporting a sighting some preliminary judgement has to be made as to the method of investigation to be followed. Mere filling in of a form does not give one much information about the personal background of the persons concerned, and it has to be stressed, very strongly, that whether the report is of seeing a flying saucer, or a ghost, or encountering a lion in the High Street, or a black dog with blazing eyes in the countryside, or a puma, or a headless coachman with headless horses, the experience itself is real, and the people having the experience may well be *completely normal people*. Any one of us can have this experience, and in fact most of us do have such an experience from time to time, even though we do not always recognise it as such.

It also has to be said that although many of the close encounter type sightings reported to us fall into the categories just mentioned, we cannot at this stage say that they all do. I have listed the possibilities that must be taken into account when investigating a reported sighting, indicating the depth of research that has to be done before conclusions can be reached; I am not suggesting that all sightings fall within these boundaries. We continue to collect reports and to investigate them as fully as possible. It is a problem well worth investigating, an increasing number of scientists and professionals are taking the UFO problem seriously and devoting some of their time to at attempt to unravel what is, in any case, a fascinating mystery. Hopefully we shall eventually understand the whole phenomenon as a result of these efforts.

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