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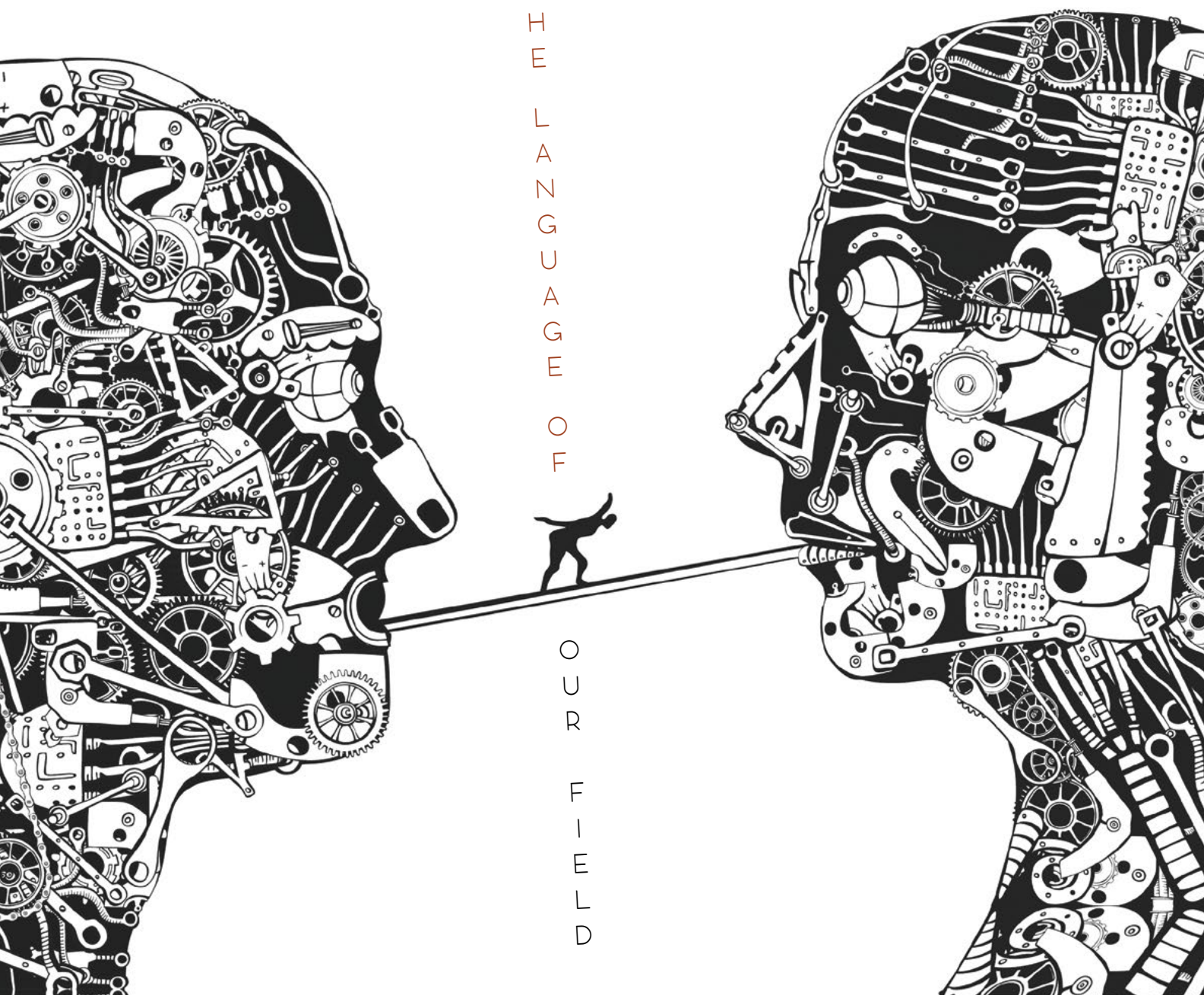
Issue 2

# Mindfield

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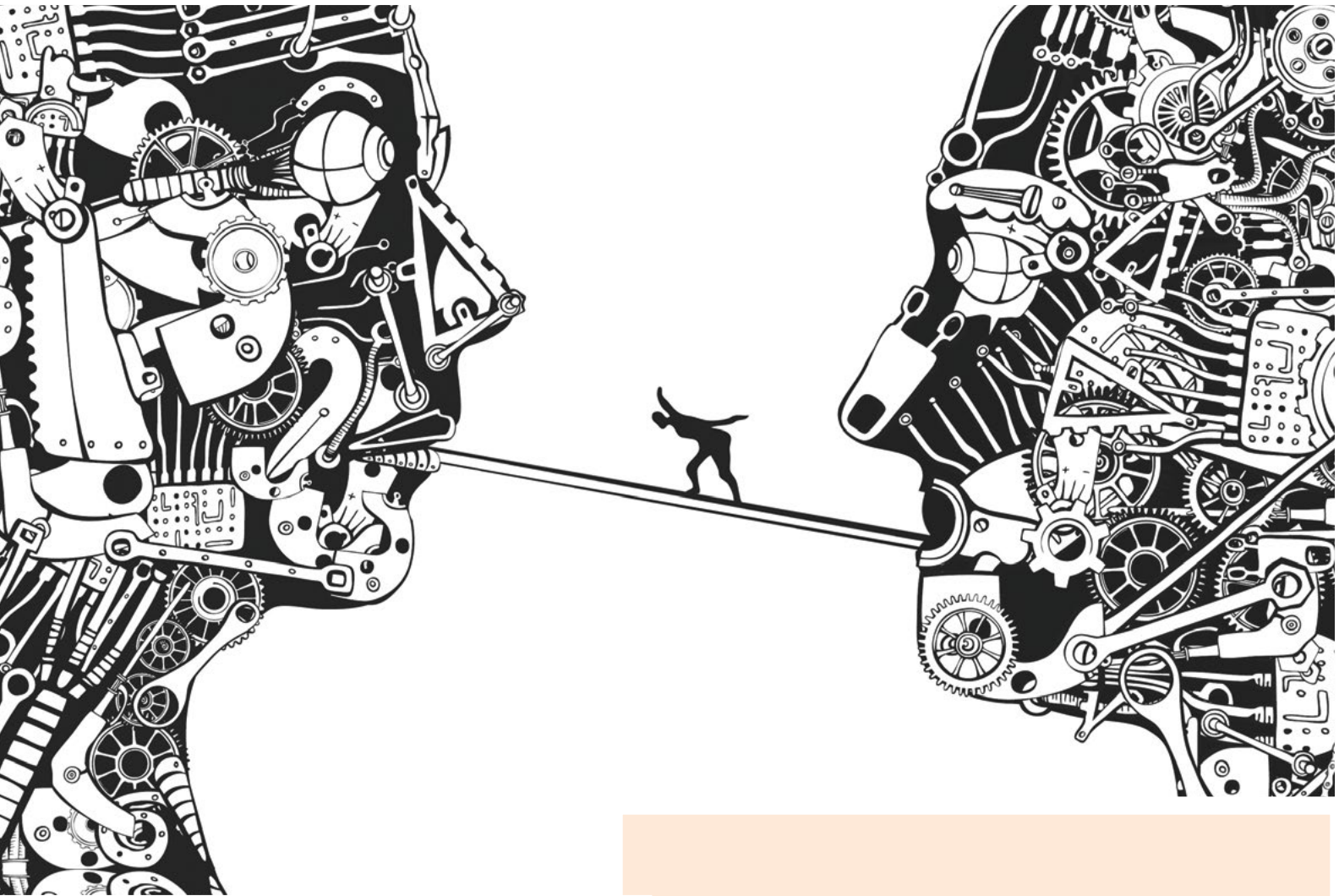


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# Mindfield

Volume 10  
Issue 2



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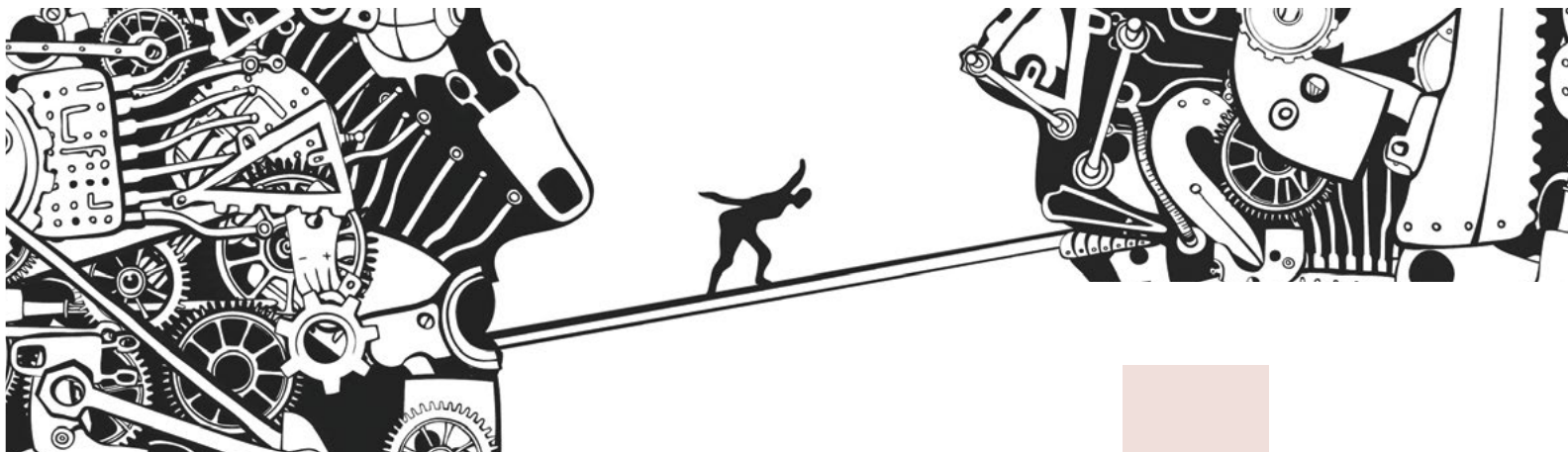
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# From the Mindfield Team

The Bulletin of the  
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| BY RENAUD EVRARD,  
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In 1989, Carlos Alvarado published an important article entitled “The Language Barrier in Parapsychology,” in which he outlined implications for ignoring material published in non-English languages. This unsolved problem raises a major reflexive question about the social organization of parapsychology. However, in this issue, we take a larger and broader view of language in our field, and consider barriers regarding our history, how we communicate with each other, and how

we communicate with the larger academic sphere.

As a field, we have inherited vocabulary that can sometimes be restrictive and alienating. Language pre-exists our births. We are immersed in a ‘bath of language’ (Lacan, 2001, p. 223) as we enter this world, meaning that our speech and language is beyond our conscious control. In order to advance our field, we must take ownership of our vocabulary and dig deeper into the roots and contexts of terms that have been met with varying degrees of success. Several contributions to this issue focus on re-examining the treasure of signifiers we share.

It is sometimes difficult for us to share a common lan-

*As architects of a young scientific discipline, parapsychologists have the opportunity to regularly reexamine their glossary of terms, but it is a complicated matter.*

guage, and this reflects the pluralism of our approaches and the fact that we simultaneously explore various ways of understanding. As architects of a young scientific discipline, parapsychologists have the opportunity to regularly reexamine their glossary of terms, but

it is a complicated matter. New terms may look like improvements of older ones, furthering our field by dispensing us of obsolete connotations, but is this really the case? Do we remain coherent, or do these changes within our vocabulary alienate us from our history and erect barriers between us and the public?

Sharing our vocabulary with outsiders also brings unique challenges. We generally have to adapt our language to the targeted audience, and sometimes we facilitate this by employing cultural synonyms instead of our scientific terms. For instance, “psi” is used as an equivalent of “magic” in

*We also examine phenomena that may be capable of undermining all modern theories of language, such as xenoglossy and xenoglossognosia [...]*

Dean Radin’s last book (2018). Does adopting the vernacular give the impression that we are only making cosmetic changes without any real improvement in our understanding of what psi phenomena really are?

There is also the temptation to use language as a means for “branding” or “mainstreaming” an approach, and thus gaining individual academic recognition. Such linguistic innovations may stand out from others, but what is the consequence of such manipulations? The way we describe our objects of study is part of their construction. Words shape the meaning of things. All in all, language is out of our control. No individual can decide the meaning of a single word.

Nevertheless, language is also an attractive topic of study in parapsychology. The language of psychics and experiencers are being studied more and more. We also examine phenomena that may be capable of undermining all modern theories of language, such as xenoglossy and xenoglossognosia (Steven-

son, 1974). These phenomena, as extraordinary as they seem, seem to indicate that we are sharing more than verbal interactions. They give us hope that language barriers may be overcome.

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# NEWS WATCH

## Experimental Psi Evidence in American Psychologist

*American Psychologist*, the official peer-reviewed scholarly journal of the American Psychological Association, has published a review of experimental evidence for parapsychological phenomena in their May-June 2018 issue authored by *Journal of Parapsychology* editor, and PA Past President, Etzel Cardeña. This article clarifies the domain of psi, summarizes recent theories from physics and psychology that present psi phenomena as plausible, and then provides an overview of recent/updated meta-analyses, ending with recommendations for further progress in the field. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/amp0000236>

## A New Facebook Discussion Group

A discussion group has been created on Facebook by the name: the 'Angelos Tanagras Memoirs Group' at: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/245762575985060/?source\\_id=108539022989620](https://www.facebook.com/groups/245762575985060/?source_id=108539022989620). Its purpose is to allow the discussion and exchanges on the history of the Hellenic Society for Psychological Research and the life of its president Angelos Tanagras. Related material is available in English articles regularly posted at: <https://www.facebook.com/Tanagras.Memoirs/>, which are principally based on his autobiography book in Greek that Fotini Pallikari published in 2016. The book is available free of charge at [http://users.uoa.gr/~fpallik/wholebook\\_2018.pdf](http://users.uoa.gr/~fpallik/wholebook_2018.pdf).

## New German-Lan- guage Book by Roger Nelson

Roger Nelson has written a book with Georg Kindel entitled *Der Welt-Geist: Wie wir alle miteinander verbunden sind Gebundene* (*The World Spirit: How We Are All Connected*), published March, 17 2018, by edition a, Vienna, Austria. It has been doing well in the German speaking countries, and is available on [Amazon.de](https://www.amazon.de/Welt-Geist-alle-miteinander-verbunden-sind/dp/3990012509) for EUR 21.90 (Kindle edition, 16.90). The book has not yet been translated to English, but the authors are working to make that happen. <https://www.amazon.de/Welt-Geist-alle-miteinander-verbunden-sind/dp/3990012509>

## Forthcoming Book Exploring DMT En- tity Encounters

There is a forthcoming book on the nature of apparent discarnate entities encountered on DMT, edited by David Luke and Rory Spowers, featuring discussion from Rupert Sheldrake, Rick Strassman, Dennis McKenna, Graham Hancock, Jeremy Narby, Erik Davis, Ede Frecska, Luis Eduardo Luna, Bernard Carr, Robin Carhart-Harris, Graham St. John, David Luke, Anton Bilton, Andrew Gallimore, Peter Meyer, Jill Purce, William Rowlandson, Anton Bilton, Vimal Darpan, Santha Faiia, and Cosmo Feilding Mellen. *DMT Dialogues: Encounters with the Spirit Molecule*: <https://www.amazon.com/DMT-Dialogues-Encounters-Spirit-Molecule/dp/1620557479/>

## Upcoming SPR Conference

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Society for Psychical Research International Conference will be taking place September 21-23 in Newcastle, United Kingdom. Invited speakers are consciousness researchers Dr. David Luke, Dr. Bernardo Kastrup and Dr. Rupert Sheldrake. Learn more at: <https://www.spr.ac.uk/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=108>

## Books Received

Bechtel, S., & Stains, L.R. (2017). *Through a Glass Darkly: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Quest to Solve the Greatest Mystery of All*. New York: St. Martin's Press. Journalists Stefan Bechtel and Laurence Roy Stains attempt to approach the complex historical record of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's plunge into Spiritualism without prejudice, concluding that what Doyle and his colleagues uncovered is as difficult to dismiss now as it was then.

Kean, L. (2017). *Surviving Death: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for an Afterlife*. New York: Three Rivers Press. Originally published in hardcover by Crown Archetype, a division of Penguin Random House, this 2017 PA Book Award Winner has been re-issued in paperback. Leslie Kean takes the most evidential case studies suggesting survival and subjects them to journalistic scrutiny, exploring the super-psi hypothesis as well as the survival hypothesis (and other explanations for the data) with objectivity and clarity. Kean includes reports on scientific studies throughout, culminating in thirty-three pages of meticulous end notes.

Luke, D. (2017). *Otherworlds: Psychedelics and Exceptional Human Experience*. London: Muswell Hill Press. Past PA President and Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Greenwich, David Luke writes about "weird people in weird places taking weird substances doing weird things and, importantly, having weird experiences" (xvii). Mixing lay-friendly writing with a dose of serious scholarship, Luke has re-edited a collection of material previously published in various journals into a cohesive collection that is part ethnographic travelogue, part speculative thesis, and part sturdy literature review.

Massullo, B. (2017). *The Ghost Studies: New Perspectives on the Origins of Paranormal Experiences*. Wayne, NJ: New Page Books. Clinical therapist and University of Edinburgh graduate Brandon Massullo contributes to the oeuvre of lay-friendly yet scholarly books on the popular topic of haunting experiences. Michael Jawer's work on environmental sensitivity is at the forefront along with Massullo's Spontaneous Apparitional Trace Theory - a new spin on the "imprint theory" of hauntings, which focuses on the telepathic distress messages at the root of crisis apparition cases.

# Defining Terms in Parapsychology and Related Disciplines

| BY MICHAEL TREMMEL,  
University of Giessen

A detailed delineation between the terms defining parapsychology and related disciplines has rarely been attempted.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, these terms have often been used synonymously. However, they are not wholly synonymous and each of them has its own history, as the following text elucidates.

## Psychic

Either Crookes (1871) or Cox (1871) presumably coined the term *psychic* relating to phe-

<sup>1</sup> See Tremmel (2014a, 2014b) for more elaborate precursors of this article.

nomena that are deemed to be a direct manifestation of mind. This sense has become the most common meaning of the term *psychic*, whereas the lexically similar and etymologically related German term *psychisch*, for example, has not acquired such a new meaning and simply means *relating to the mind or psyche*. The term *psychic* demarcates most closely parapsychology's research matter as its meaning includes extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, and phenomena related to the survival of death, such as out-of-body experience.

## Parapsychological

Dessoir coined the term *parapsychology* (or more precisely the German equivalent *Para-psychologie*) in 1889 (see also

Hövelmann, 1987). He used the prefix *para-* to convey that parapsychology is a discipline that is concerned with “those phenomena which do not figure in the normal functioning of the psyche,” a discipline “halfway between the normal and abnormal, pathological situations” (Dessoir, 1985–1986, p. 227). When *parapsychological* is used synonymously with *psychic*, *paranormal*, or *psi*, it is used as a metonymy (i.e., a term that substitutes another actually meant and semantically associated with it) because it actually denotes pertaining to parapsychology. However, the phenomena investigated in parapsychology may turn out not to be genuinely psychic, and psychic phenomena, provided they exist, can also happen outside the scientific context, of course.



*Researchers define paranormal beliefs based on what lay people believe to be paranormal (or what researchers believe lay people to believe to be paranormal), not parapsychologists.*

## Paranormal

The term *paranormal*, arguably derived from parapsychology, was already used in 1900 by Bernheim and possibly also coined by him (Joire, 1901, p. 645). Maxwell (1905, p. 376), however, gave a specific meaning to the term and by doing so arguably introduced it for the long term to the parapsychological literature. He compared psychokinesis to movements produced by muscular activity and extrasensory perception to ordinary phenomena related to sensitivity. His usage remains faithful to the meaning of the prefix *para-*, just like Dessoir's usage of *parapsychology*. Since then, Broad (1949), Ducasse (1951), and Braude (2002) have attempted to define *paranormal* in more detail.

These three definition attempts have the notion *unexplained but in principle explicable by science* in common and thus define *paranormal* negatively, in terms of what it is not. In addition, Broad's (1949) and Braude's (2002) definitions explicitly include a scientific conflict, such that *an explanation of what is unexplained necessitates major revisions in current scientific theory of science*. Definitions like these have shaped the way *paranormal* is understood in the parapsychological community today. By contrast, the way Maxwell originally used the term does not imply that something needs to be unexplained to be called *paranormal*.

*Paranormal in paranormal beliefs* is used in a broader sense. Researchers define *paranormal beliefs* based on what lay people believe to be *paranormal* (or what researchers believe lay people to believe to be *paranormal*), not parapsychologists. There are various *paranormal beliefs* and no real consensus on which beliefs are to be included in a definition. Nevertheless, definitions of *paranormal beliefs* typically do not only include belief in psychic processes but also belief in cryptozoological creatures, belief in extraterrestrial aliens, superstitions, and traditional religious beliefs, to name a few (Irwin, 2009).

## Psi

According to Thouless (1942), his colleague Wiesner coined the term *psi phenomenon*. The experimental research at the time suggested clairvoyance, precognition, and telepathy might be based on a single underlying process, and J. B. Rhine proposed to adopt *extrasensory perception* as a generic term for this process. Thouless, however, rejected the term because it implies some kind of perception, a theory that in his view could mislead research. He proposed to use the more neutral term *psi phenomenon* instead (Thouless, 1942). Only a few years later, Thouless and Wiesner (1946–1949) developed a theory and called extrasensory perception *psi-gamma* and psychokinesis *psi-kappa*. Thus, the once neutral term *psi* ironically became theory-laden itself. Despite their redefinition attempt, the terms *extrasensory perception* and *psychokinesis* have outlasted. Today, *psi* is used as generic term for these two phenomena, or alternatively in a broader sense, synonymously with *psychic*. *Psi* can be used as either an adjective or noun.

## Anomalous

The term *anomalous* was already used in the 17th century and means *deviating from what is standard, common, normal, usual*,

*Anomalistic psychology [...] is concerned with paranormal and related beliefs and experiences that can be termed paranormal, bizarre, strange, or unusual, that is, solely subjectively anomalous experiences, dealt with from an exclusively reductionistic perspective.*

or expected. Its use in parapsychology and related disciplines has been varied. May, Utts, and Spottiswoode (1995) proposed replacing *extrasensory perception* with *anomalous cognition*, *psychokinesis* with *anomalous perturbation*, and *psi phenomena* with *anomalous mental phenomena*. Braude (1998) convincingly argued that this proposal uses the term *anomalous* in an overly restrictive manner. In fact, these new terms are too inclusive to

be used synonymously with the established terms.

Anomalistic psychology, as conceived by Zusne (1982) and French and Stone (2014), is concerned with paranormal and related beliefs and experiences that can be termed *paranormal*, *bizarre*, *strange*, or *unusual*, that is, solely subjectively anomalous experiences, dealt with from an exclusively reductionistic perspective. However, normally, the definition of a discipline is based on the discipline's topics, not on the exclusion of certain hypotheses related to such topics. Consequently, a more inclusive anomalistic psychology has already been called for (see, e.g., Martins, Zangari, Machado, & Chagas, 2017). See Tremmel (2014a, 2014b) for a more detailed discussion of the different conceptions of anomalistic psychology.

Wescott's (1973/1975) definition of *anomalistics* remains more faithful to the meaning of *anomalous*, as does the definition of *anomalous experiences* by Cardeña, Lynn, and Krippner (2014, pp. 4–5), whose volume does not only cover psi experiences but also other anomalous experiences, such as lucid dreaming and synesthesia.

## Exceptional Experiences

White (1990) coined the compound *exceptional human experiences*, which she used to promote phe-

nomenological research into subjectively anomalous experiences. The related compound *exceptional experiences* has become a popular label for mainly subjectively paranormal experiences in the context of clinical practice. It has been proposed as a generic term that is ideologically neutral and comprises experiences that are usually referred to by the terms discussed above (see Belz, 2012, for a definition). The term is not synonymous with *psychic experiences*, *paranormal experiences*, and so forth as it is used to refer to only the subjective aspect of such experiences. Considering the meaning of the term *exceptional*, the compound *exceptional experiences* connotes rarity and specialness.

## Conclusion

Most of the terms defining parapsychology and related disciplines have been defined and redefined with the redefinitions having the tendency to define the terms negatively and more vaguely than the original definitions, often ignoring how the terms were initially coined and what they were used for. However, in order for research to advance, positive definitions are needed. Awareness of these terms' history may help appreciate preceding theoretical approaches. After all, it might make sense that psychic phenomena, provided they exist, are a manifestation of the mind and function

*Considering the meaning of the term exceptional, the compound exceptional experiences connotes rarity and specialness.*

analogous to conventional sensory and motor functions somehow.

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# Basic Terms in First Sight

**F**irst Sight is a model of the mind, and a theory of the kinds of hypothetical processes that parapsychologists study – call them *Psi*. I am the author of *First Sight* (drawing upon the contributions of many others), and I divide it into these two parts because I hope to sketch a framework that is sensible and scientifically useful, even if not directly testable (the model part). Additionally, I contribute some testable ideas about how psi works – ideas that are consistent with the rest of what psychologists are learning about how the mind produces experience and behavior out of a ground of unconscious processes (the theory part).

The terms I propose for parapsychology come from the model, hopefully in a coherent way. I think the following constructs are useful in accounting for some

aspects of how the mind works in producing experience and behavior out of unconscious processes:

**Meaning, Intention, Prehension, Weight, Direction** and **Somatosensory**. **Meaning** means what

we ordinarily take it to mean, and **Intention** refers to the goals that someone is aiming to realize. Intentions can be unconscious, and these are especially important in the functioning of psi. **Prehension**

means “to grasp,” and is used here both in the receptive sense (to know about) and the active or expressive sense (to seize, grab hold of), and it can be both conscious and unconscious. **Weight** means that the mind unconsciously senses that something prehended is important or unimportant to some degree, in light of one’s intentions in the context of the situation at the moment.

**Direction** can be either positive or negative, and means that something that is prehended is either



| by JAMES CARPENTER,  
Rhine Research Center

included or excluded (i.e. avoided) in experience and behavior. If something that is prehended is heavily weighted, its contribution (either positive or negative) will be strong and potentially obvious. If lightly weighted, its contribution will be negligible. **Somatosensory** refers to that sphere made up



of all the things that impinge in some way upon the physical organism with its sensory systems. **Extra-somatosensory** refers to the universe beyond that ken.

What makes these ideas apply to parapsychology as well as to, say, the formation of perceptions out of unconscious sensory stimulations, is the assumption that the unconscious mind is in touch with (prehends) reality beyond the somatosensory sphere.

The basic operational constructs of parapsychology have always referred to hypothetical relations much more than to things. *Extra-sensory Perception* means that an organism is producing something like a perception that refers to something beyond what is available to the senses, such as correctly guessing the content of a picture sealed inside an envelope. *Psychokinesis* means that an organism is somehow producing an action in physical processes that are beyond the sphere of ordinary physical influence, such as making a pendulum move without touching it. The terms posit meaningful relations between organism and event – albeit relations that everyday experience does not often provide.

First Sight theory rewords these things in a way that clearly refers them back to the model and theory in which I intend them to function.

## Extrasensory Perception becomes Receptive Extrasomatic Prehension – REP

**Psychokinesis** becomes **Expressive Extrasomatic Prehension – EEP**, which is what someone might utter upon seeing an instance of it. **Precognition** is rendered as **Receptive Antecedent Extrasomatic Prehension – RAEP**. And so on. We can describe other kinds of relation between organism and the wide extrasomatic world that we might wish to posit similarly, by further specifying the object of the relation. For example, **Postcognition**, or clairvoyance of things in the past is termed **Receptive Posterior Extrasomatic Prehension – RPEP**. Sensing the secret thoughts of another person (**Telepathy**), is **Receptive Extrasomatic Prehension – REP**, again, of another's experience. Having a willed effect upon the feelings or behavior of another person is **Expressive Extrasomatic Prehension – EEP** – of another's experience or behavior. Psychic healing is **EEP** on some disease process. We can also extend these terms to ordinary acts of perception and action. For example, seeing my monitor as I type is **RIP, Receptive Intrasonic Prehension**, and typing a word I intend to type is **EIP, Expressive Intrasonic Prehension**.

Are studies done on EEP and REP and RAEP any better than those done on ESP or Anomalous Cognition, or  $\psi$ ? Who knows which of our nominated terms may matter a whit as our science unfolds? My offerings may be helpful if it proves to be true, as I believe, that our work will benefit from seeking some theoretical grounding and coherence, and *First Sight* has some potential for providing that.

These terms have the virtue of pointing us directly toward some of the key questions our theory and research must try to answer. What determines the positive or negative receptive prehension of some piece of extrasomatic reality (what makes for psi hitting vs. psi missing)? What considerations enter into the relative weight assigned to some extrasomatic meaning (how strong an expression of psi will there be)? How can we estimate, if not directly measure, the unconscious intentions that we propose are used to assign weight and direction? When will a person's experience contain an REP, as opposed to evoking an EEP (experience an allusion to some distant meaning, vs. evoking an expression in some outer event, such as a banging sound in a wall)?

Parapsychologists have moved in two different directions when trying to improve their basic terms, make them more useful, and make our enterprise more

palatable for mainstream scientists. One is to try to rid them of any implicit presumptions. We often bring the word *anomalous* in here, since it means the proposed relation is simply unexpected and unexplained, and does not imply that it refers to minds, or human intentions, or even to anything real at all. This helps us to stay on friendly terms with scientists who do not find the constructs of mind or intention helpful and certainly do not believe that these “things” can interact with the world in any directly causal way. It may also help us talk in some clinically useful way with persons who make odd and troublesome attributions about their experience, such as those covered by the psychiatric construct of Schizotypy.

*The other direction we often take is trying to come up with definitions that seem more in accord with Physics, which sits at the top of the dominance hierarchy of the social structure of science.*

But does it really help with the scientists? It is very close to entirely empty to say only that some apparent relation is unexplained. As scientists we are trying hard to explain things, so such terms would hopefully become quickly obsolete. Then we will have the same problem of trying to come up with something more substantive. And does it help those friendly relations? Using basic terms that merely point to our ignorance is not exciting to anyone, scientist or not.

The other direction we often take is trying to come up with definitions that seem more in accord with Physics, which sits at the top of the dominance hierarchy of the social structure of science. If our relations can be dressed in terms of entropy or the equations of quantum mechanics, then we should have a warm place at the table. We have some fine physicists who are working at this, and I enthusiastically support them. I am especially impressed by the long line of research carried out by the IONS team, culminating in the double-slit experiment. However, as we pursue this direction we want to make sure that our assertions really make sense in light of the body of constructs physicists find to be workably true. If not really, we will seem foolish.

In one of Aesop’s fables, the homely jackdaw grows tired of his lowly station in life and finds

some cast-off peacock feathers. He weaves them into his own grey coat and then boldly struts about the glamorous company of the peacocks. They are not stupid birds, and quickly spot the deception. They peck him horribly and send him on his way. Then battered, he returns to the jackdaws, but they now resent his arrogance and reject him as well. Like many of Aesop’s fables, this one says that you must be really, really clever if you wish to improve your lot in life. The powerful guard their power, and gaining more of it is difficult business.

I think that we do have unconscious, extrasomatic relations with the wide world, they are real and beg for our understanding. I prefer constructs that presume that they are real, and that relate them to some overarching conceptual framework that ties in nicely with at least one big chunk of mainstream science – cognitive science, that is. It assumes that our prehensions extend beyond our sensory ken, and that they are personal, meaningful, and intentional, and almost entirely unconscious. Rather than trying to directly prove any of this, we are saying, essentially: “Trust me. This will turn out to be useful. The proof will be in the pudding.” Then we get on with the work in the kitchen. Almost everyone likes good pudding.

# In defense of a critical (but sympathetic) view of the anomalous

The controversy around a more precise definition for parapsychological experiences has a long history in parapsychology and is apparently far from over. The lack of a positive definition largely results from our ignorance regarding the exact nature of these experiences. We do not attempt here to provide a new theoretical solution to this complex and long-standing problem. Instead, we argue in favor of a more pragmatic approach, irrespective of the ontological nature of anomalous processes. What can we learn from terminological uses that have helped establish and advance our field, at least in terms of wider academic acceptance? In this brief essay, we present some of the achievements we have made in Brazil by resorting to a definition of such experiences as “anomalous”. We also argue in favor of a more inclusive approach to the study of anomalous experiences and show how this has helped to consolidate the work of the Inter Psi (Laboratory of Anomalistic Psychology and Psychosocial Processes of the University of São Paulo), the most important Brazilian research center in this area, which has inspired the creation of other similar research groups all over the country.



## Parapsychological or anomalous?

For a series of historical reasons, and similarly to what happened in other countries, the term “Parapsychology” acquired, in Brazil, a pejorative connotation, distancing itself from the rigorous scientific approach defended by members of the Parapsychological Association. It became a usual label for religious and New Age practices and beliefs of all sorts, with its use in academia being potentially suicidal. This invariably led us to look for more interesting terminological alternatives to emphasize the scientific nature of the experimental and survey research we

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had been carrying out since the 90s (Radin, Machado & Zangari, 2002; Zangari & Machado, 1996; Zangari & Machado, 2012).

We knew that the concept of anomalous experience was discussed in a groundbreaking handbook published by the American Psychological Association, written by some of the most prominent parapsychologists in the

*In Brazil [...] we have surveys indicating that up to 80% or more of the respondents report at least one type of such experiences [...] Numbers like these cannot be considered indicative of something uncommon.*

field (Cardeña, Lynn & Krippner, 2014). Some research centers in acclaimed universities of Europe were starting to use words such as “anomalous” or “anomalistic psychology” as part of their names, such as the *Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit* at Goldsmiths, University of London (founded by Christopher French), the *Center for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes* at the University of Northampton (directed by Chris Roe) and the *Center for Research on Consciousness and Anomalous Psychology* at Lund University (headed by Etzel Cardeña). We also knew that

other investigators from outside parapsychology were employing this terminology, although without reference to the parapsychological literature, to describe psychotic experiences (such as hallucinations), which certainly fulfill the criteria for the definition of “anomalous”. We then realized that the use of this terminology could strategically lead us to a gradual, and maybe smooth, integration into the mainstream science by claiming as our research subject something that psychologists already investigated from a more “normal” perspective. This could be done in a way that the many caveats of available explanations would be pointed out, indicating less reductionist avenues of interpretation and investigation. All these characteristics suggested to us that the term “anomalous experience” was the best option to overcome the many problems we had previously faced regarding terms such as “parapsychological” and “paranormal”.

It is important to stress, however, that our acceptance and use of the term anomalous did not occur without a fair dose of criticism. Not all aspects of the definition seem conceptually valid. To define these experiences as uncommon is certainly to ignore the cross-cultural evidence regarding their prevalence. In Brazil, for example, we have surveys indicating that up to 80% or more of the respondents report at least one type of

such experiences (e.g., Machado, 2010; Reichow, 2017). Numbers like these cannot be considered indicative of something uncommon. In any case, it holds true that these experiences are “believed to markedly deviate [...] from the usually accepted explanation of reality according to Western mainstream science” (Cardeña, Lynn, & Krippner, 2014, p. 4). Therefore, we understand “anomalous” much in the same way as Thomas Khun (1962/1996), that is, as *scientific anomalies*. In terms of cross-cultural validity, the term anomalous might be flawed; many cultures would consider such experiences as common and ordinary. But in terms of the mainstream science, the possibility of some of them involving real processes of communication or action at a distance, for example, would be something considered anomalous.

### *A culturally sensitive understanding of the anomalous*

It is no coincidence that the Inter Psi Lab is in the Department of Social and Work Psychology at the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo. We believe that an individual differences approach is not able to fully account for the complexity of anomalous experiences. Such experiences constitute a vital component of our culture. Brazil is one of the most religious coun-



*Many names were proposed over the last century to account for the experiences we investigate, including “supernormal”, “parapsychological”, “psi”, “transpersonal”, “exceptional” and “anomalous”.*

tries in Latin-America, known for the diversity and complexity of its religious expressions. Religious syncretism also comprises an essential element of Brazilian religious landscape. It is common for many individuals to have Catholicism as their main affiliation while simultaneously visiting and practicing other faiths, temples and belief systems (Zangari, Machado, Maraldi & Martins, 2016). Besides the religious implications, people who claim to experience paranormal phenomena or have psychic abilities are not only socially accepted but also highly valued. In this sense, “popular culture values psychic experiences as special gifts, not as evidence of pathology” (Zangari & Machado, 1996, p. 83). This strong cultural

component in the stimulation and moulding of Brazilian accounts of anomalous phenomena impelled us to develop an eminently psychosocial perspective, which takes into account both the individual and the sociocultural aspects of these experiences, seen in terms of a dialectical relationship (Maraldi, Machado & Zangari, 2010; Maraldi & Krippner, 2013).

This approach is also reflected in the way we define anomalous experiences. Many names were proposed over the last century to account for the experiences we investigate, including “supernormal”, “parapsychological”, “psi”, “transpersonal”, “exceptional” and “anomalous”. The changes through which the definition of these experiences passed over time reflected the values and cultural milieu of their proponents, as well as the hypotheses developed to account for them. These many names nevertheless share an important characteristic: all are technical, secular definitions of experiences previously understood as belonging almost exclusively to the realms of magic, mesmerism, religious beliefs, and mystical experiences. Due to the privatization of religion in Western societies, we began to look at those reports of inapprehensible phenomena through the lens of the individual; hence the emphasis on “experiences” rather than on a definite corpus of collective beliefs and dogmas. It is tempting

to explain such terminological transformations as natural or necessary developments of the accumulated knowledge regarding such experiences. The fact is that we can only do so by assuming the superiority of Western culture to the detriment of other cultural contexts.

We need to realize that as we study these issues, we also help to create part of what we observe. The relativity of terms such as “psi” or “anomalous”, however, does not deny their scientific use or importance. It is precisely in the debate about the scientific validity of such phenomena that we find the relevance of current terminology since it both reveals our ignorance about the nature of these experiences and the current lack of a broader cultural worldview to integrate them. Keeping current terminology unaltered becomes, thus, a form of cultural criticism, a way of examining the vicissitudes and circumstances of its formation and maintenance, aiming, if possible, for a future re-elaboration. The purported anomalous processes underlying these experiences could someday become part of the mainstream scientific paradigm. In this sense, we are dealing with a negative definition, what could lead us to an indefinite or ever-changing status. On the other hand, this is more in tune with what we know by now regarding anomalous experiences.

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### Toward an inclu- sive Anomalistic Psychology

When we look to the past to see what the first psychical researchers were investigating, we find that their interest was not restricted to certain forms of anomalous cognition, but encompassed a series of different human experiences, from telepathy and psychokinesis to multiple personalities, hypnosis, and creativity. Many of these researchers were also interested in the study of religious beliefs and experiences and could clearly recognize the many interrelations between Psychical Research and the nascent Psychology of Religion (Maraldi & Alvarado, 2017; Sech, Araujo & Moreira-Almeida, 2013). For a series of reasons, parapsychologists distanced themselves, over the years, from the study of religious

and spiritual practices and beliefs, focusing more and more on experimental approaches to psi-related phenomena – but see Kelly and Locke (2009) for an integrative perspective.

Here we argue in favor of an inclusive Parapsychology/Anomalistic Psychology, which takes into consideration a broader range of anomalous experiences, beyond psi-related experiences. If we are to take seriously the definition of the “anomalous” as espoused by Cardeña, Lynn, and Krippner (2014), we should be able to include other categories of experiences as part of the research interests of parapsychologists, from mystical experiences to reports of alien abductions. The fact is that, from a cultural point of view, these experiences are not isolated; people who hold beliefs in the afterlife may also believe in flying saucers or even report out-of-body experiences during which they contact both discarnate (spiritual) and extraterrestrial beings (Zangari, Machado, Maraldi, Martins, 2016). When we isolate such experiences experimentally this does not change the fact that they remain integrated in peoples' minds and cultural practices.

Moreover, we believe an inclusive and interdisciplinary approach could strengthen our relationship with more mainstream areas, including areas such as the psychology of religion

and spirituality, the psychology of memory and perception, the psychology of conspiracy beliefs, and the psychology of magic. Many of the research groups in Brazil that the Inter Psi has inspired the creation are now a combination of Anomalistic Psychology with other related scientific disciplines, more often the psychology of religion. This has intensified the dialogue with other researchers, from social sciences to medicine, who have an interest in topics for which both parapsychologists and other researchers could bring their contributions (for example, mediumship).

GeASER – Research Group in Anomalistic Psychology, Health, Spirituality, and Religiosity. Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul. Coordinator: Dr Letícia Oliveira Alminhana.

GRUPPA – Research Group in Anomalistic Psychology. University of Extremo Sul Catarinense (UNESC). Coordinator: Dr Jeverson Rogério Costa Reichow.

GEPPA – Research Group in Anomalistic Psychology. CEUMA University, São Luiz do Maranhão. Coordinator: Rafisa Moscoso Lobato Mendonça Martins.

GIEPAR – Interdisciplinary Research Group in Anomalistic Psychology and Psychology of Religion. Regional Psychological

*Many of the research groups in Brazil that the Inter Psi has inspired the creation are now a combination of Anomalistic Psychology with other related scientific disciplines, more often the psychology of religion.*

Association of Paraná (Curitiba).  
Coordinator: Dr Fábio Eduardo da Silva.

We need to realize that to investigate parapsychological experiences in their complexity, we must recognize the deep relationships underlying different scientific disciplines concerned in one way or another with anomalous experiences and related topics. This does not mean we should abandon ontological and experimental investigations concerning psi phenomena. Parapsychologists would only expand their subject of inquiry, keeping the same rigor

and quality as before. Although it is possible to study the psychological, social and physiological processes involved in anomalous experiences and beliefs irrespective of the ontological existence of anomalous processes, we defend a dialogue between both perspectives (phenomenological and ontological). An inclusive Anomalistic Psychology should certainly consider the study of the psi hypothesis as scientifically viable and important.

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# Facing the TABOO

## The Hesitant Border

In 1900, French psychologist Théodule Ribot publicly launched the Institut Psychique International (International Psychic Institute) at the Fourth International Congress of Psychology (Brower, 2010). This new institute was devoted to psychical research and was described as “one of the most elaborate attempts to legitimize mediumistic phenomena within the field of psychology” (Lachapelle, 2011, p. 75). At first, it gathered an impressive group of French and foreign personalities: 1200 attendees at the first public lecture, and 400 members in 1902.

However, Pierre Janet, one of the leaders of this institute and of French psychology in general, did not find his place here because



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psychologists were a minority (Plas, 2012, p. 99). He did not want to emphasize the popular expectations about empirical and speculative studies of paranormal topics, far beyond his pathological psychology orientation (Evrard, Pratte, Cardeña, 2018). Janet succeeded in changing the name from Institut Psychique International to Institut Général Psychologique (General Psychological Institute).

The change was not only a matter of words. At the end of 1901, Janet subtly diverted part of this institute’s resources to create, first within it, a Société de Psychologie, which became independent in 1904, and later became the Société Française de Psychologie (French Society of Psychology). The division between the psychical and psychological became sharper by Janet’s process of critically separating both.

Is this just an old story, or a recurrent pattern? Are we today immune to such internal boundary-work that also pass through language distortions?

## A Cursed Naming

Currently, some of us are still using the word “psychical” (in research and studies, for example), other use “paranormal”, “psi”, or “parapsychology”. Believe it or not, all these terms were first



*[...] some of us are still using the word “psychical” (in research and studies, for example), other use “paranormal”, “psi”, or “parapsychology”. Believe it or not, all these terms were first coined with a neutral meaning*

coined with a neutral meaning, i.e. they fit with an agnostic and scientific approach:

\* **Psychical:** In a letter to William Crookes dated 8 June, 1871, English lawyer and legal writer Edward William Cox suggested Crookes replace his “unknown/new force” by the expression “psychical force” because the phenomena produced by mediums seem closer to a nervous force which depended upon human organization (Cox, 1874). Cox also suggested to call psychics the people who manifest such an extraordinary power; psychism the scientific branch of psychology which studies these phenomena; and Psychological (!) Society the institute devoted to

this study (which he co-founded in 1875 but which was quickly dissolved after his death in 1879; cf. Richards, 2001).

\* **Paranormal:** The first published occurrences of the paranormal appear to be in Joseph Maxwell’s *Les phénomènes psychiques* (Psychical Phenomena, 1903). He defines “paranormal phenomena” as those that lie “outside” or “to the side” of the habitual rules of experience. In another place, he defines them as those that imply existence of some mode of perception that is “estranged” or foreign to the “normal personality”. The same author also uses Myers’ “supernormal” (as supranormal) as a synonym and isolates the single most stable character of paranormal phenomena as their irregularity or unpredictable nature. “In essence, it referred to a correspondence or connection between a mental state and a physical event, but it carried no necessary supernatural or religious connotations” (Kripal, 2017, p. 251).

\* **Psi:** The term is derived from the Greek ψ psi, 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet and the initial letter of the Greek ψυχή psyche, “mind, soul.” It was coined by biologist Berthold P. Wiesner, and first used by psychologist Robert Thouless in a 1942 article published in the *British Journal of Psychology*. Psi is the unknown factor in both extrasensory perception and psychokinesis

experiences that is not explained by known physical or biological mechanisms.

\* **Parapsychology:** The term was coined in 1887 by Max Dessoir, while he was still a student, and published in 1889 during a fake debate in the journal *Sphinx* (Hövelmann, 1987). He called parapsychology the science that studies parapsychic phenomena (and later also parapsychic phenomena), and defined negatively parapsychic phenomena as all phenomena that are not part of the usual mental functioning. His goal was to remove the psychopathological prejudice against these phenomena (Le Maléfian, 1992). Dissatisfied with his own term “parapsychology,” Dessoir later offered as a substitute “experimental pathopsychology.”

I could make the list longer, but my goal is simply to highlight some common features of these terms. All of them were coined as explorative, agnostic terms, implying a vague and cautious reference to the mental domain. Their coiners attempted to legitimate an unprejudicable scientific approach of phenomena which go beyond usual laws and classical knowledge. Thus, they are all positively (with the vague mental reference) and negatively (with the dynamical confrontation to the unknown) defined. This fits perfectly with the recurrent

*[...] paranormal phenomena are more likely to occur under liminal and transitional conditions and around liminal and marginal persons than among more ordinary conditions and people.*

epistemological impulse of parapsychology.

It seems, however, that in actuality, these terms were cursed. Their original meanings have become scientific taboo.

## Trickster Qualities of Parapsychology

The relationship between the Trickster figure and paranormal phenomena has been discussed since a long time (for instance: Radin, Kerenyi, Jung, 1956). The book *The Trickster and the Paranormal* (2001), by the professional parapsychologist George P. Hansen, gives the first overview of the possible applications of this theory in the fields of parapsychology and anomalistics, i.e. on their institutions, history, research, theories, paradoxes, and especially

on their people. The “paranormal” seems to have affinities with some social characteristics: liminality, anti-structure, marginality, *communitas*, transgressiveness, reflexivity, reversibility, etc; and some aversions with some others: centrality, structure, hierarchy, economical power, etc. In sum, the Trickster theory describes a recurrent socio-anthropological pattern which gives some intelligibility to what we ordinary observe in this field. This pattern applied, whether the field was named psychical research, metapsychics, parapsychology, psychotronics, psilology and so on. Possibly this applies with any name, although this may not hold true if the new name implies not only a rebranding, but a deep structural change.

Despite the epistemological impulses of parapsychologists, what is observed is something else: marginality and not centrality is a pervasive characteristic of the field of parapsychology (Hansen, 2001). Marginality is a subcategory of liminality, and frequent consequence of it. Liminality theory addresses transitional states, transient events, and ephemeral occurrences characterized by ambiguity, a tendency toward disruption, unpredictability, instability, a break from ordinary rules and expectations, and novelty. Strong liminality has a numinous quality and is associated with charisma and charismata (Turner, 1969).

Briefly, paranormal phenomena

are more likely to occur under liminal and transitional conditions and around liminal and marginal persons than among more ordinary conditions and people. For instance, some argue the best experimental subjects in psychical research were those who enter uncontrollable states of consciousness in which they cannot always inhibited their desires to produce the phenomena fraudulently. These liminal conditions are unpalatable and threatening for people invested in established hierarchies, thus, demoting their status view of parapsychology.

Another example is how academics who become involved with the field face repercussions (Hess, 1992). Hansen (2001) reviewed the plight of major societies and laboratories involved in psychical research, and concludes that:

“organizations that seek direct contact with paranormal phenomena (e.g., ghost research groups, parapsychology laboratories, spiritualist churches, government psychic spying programs) rarely maintain a long-term existence within a larger institution. Neither government, nor academe, nor industry, nor large philanthropic foundations, nor mainstream religions support long-lived, publicly known groups that directly engage psi in order to study it, utilize it for practical ends, or rationally assess its efficacy.”

As with the opening example of the Institut Général Psychologique, organizations that attempt to directly interact with the phenomena are prone to disruption, deception, and low (or loss of) status; groups within larger institutions are either eventually ejected or cease directly engaging the phenomena. There are counterexamples of parapsychological institutions with long-term existence, such as the Institut for Border Areas of Psychology and Mental Health of Freiburg-in-Breisgau, Germany, founded in 1950. But their engagement with the phenomena fluctuates, and tends to be diluted into mainstream research (Bauer, Hövelmann, & Lucadou, 2013). Their funding and links with academic setting tend also to be unsustainable. This may appear as a legitimate strategy, but from what moment is it a choice and not an external constraint?

Hansen (2001) seems to provide a pessimistic conclusion that contradicts what parapsychologists expect for their field:

Academics might study beliefs, history, or psychology of paranormal believers. But concerted attempts to directly elicit psi in order to observe it, and the conditions of its occurrence, are generally met with wide derision and hostility within academe. Research is occasionally tolerated, even welcomed, but tem-

porarily. The long-term trend is clear; parapsychology has failed to obtain academic recognition as a legitimate field of study.

Readers may differ in the way they receive Hansen's conclusion. Skeptics may see this marginal status as a rational consequence of this pseudo-scientific quest for unicorns, and any attempt to explain it as simply useless. Parapsychologists, and mostly those who had credentials in other classical fields of study, may be reluctant to accept that this field could work differently from their mainstream neighbors. Surely, better evidence and a perfect academic attitude will overcome all the resistance, won't it? They see the Trickster pattern as a vague conspiracy theory putting end-to-end events extracted from their contexts, or merely as a highly localized social effect, even if that does not depend on a culture or an era. Let's take the opposite hypothesis: to accept that these social facts say something fundamental about the nature of the phenomena, and that any comprehensive theory of the paranormal need to explain them.

## Our Taboo is our Totem

Can we remove the Trickster's curse (Evrard, 2010) on parapsychology? The successive naming and rebranding of the field do not

*Engaging with psi phenomena is a transgression, yet such disruptions have their usefulness. The way psi claims lead to scientific and technological improvements is the best proof of their necessity.*

seem to work long-term. Every attempt to remove the marginality, the liminality, and the other Trickster properties results in losing the parapsychologists' target: to understand psi as a real anomalous phenomenon. Perhaps the best strategy is to face the taboo and make it a totem: it is feared, but its place is also in the village. Engaging with psi phenomena is a transgression, yet such disruptions have their usefulness. The way psi claims lead to scientific and technological improvements is the best proof of their necessity. If parapsychology lost all its subversive power, perhaps parapsychologists will be cut off from their history, from the environments where the phenomena occur, and from

the people who go through these experiences.

Robert Amadou repeated that parapsychology has a scientific manifest content, but an anti-scientific latent content. Amadou was a part-time rigorous parapsychologist, and part-time controversial occultist (Evrard, 2016). How many of us are able to recognize their Tricksterian shadow? As a field, we may represent this conjunction of binary oppositions, the overlap between science and antiscience, reflecting the primordial articulation we are studying (subject / object, spirit / matter, interior / exterior, etc.). This means giving up an unambiguous language that would wash away parapsychology from any parascientific suspicion. We now have enough hindsight to endure this taboo, rather than operating a new internal divide to distinguish good consciousness researchers from bad parapsychologists.

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# RESEARCH WATCH

## Special Issue of Psychology of Consciousness on Precognition

A series of articles about experimental evidence for precognition appeared in the March 2018 edition of *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice* (<http://psycnet.apa.org/PsycARTICLES/journal/cns/5/1>). One article, written by Julia Mossbridge and Dean Radin from the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Petaluma, California, provides an overview of the current empirical evidence being generated in precognition studies. Mossbridge and Radin report extremely small, but highly significant, effect sizes across meta-analyses for precognitive dreaming studies, forced-choice conscious precognition tasks, implicit precognition tasks, and presentiment studies.

Two other articles develop the critical side of the precognition debate. Samuel Schwarzkopf from University College in London, England, argues that the implausibility of the precognition hypothesis makes any

statistically significant observation of it unconvincing. James Houran, Rense Lange, and Dan Hooper have a more complex rebuttal. They also use modern theories of physics to support their argument against the possibility of authentic retro-causation. However, they also examine the statistical grounds: standard statistical tests are consistent only if the  $H^0$  is false. That is, if we increase sample size, we are guaranteed to reject  $H^0$ , even for small artifactual effects. This “crap factor” – a potential distortion by many factors of noisy experiments – is a general argument that can be applied to all kinds of data whether it’s describing parapsychological phenomena or not. Meta-analyses don’t protect from the crap factor, either, so the authors privileged psychological explanations of precognition.

In a final article, Jonathan Schooler, Stephen Baumgart, and Michael Franklin from the University of California Santa Barbara, provide a more non-judgmental way to assess the evidence of extreme claims. These articles show that science is not broken, but we must

accept that scientists differ in their appraisals of the likelihood that anomalous cognition is possible. If we use methodology to neutralize explicit prejudice, research can go on without too much discord among scientists.

## Advancing Ghost Studies in the Analytics Age

Recently joining the ranks of Professional Membership in the PA, James Houran, Research Director at Integrated Knowledge Systems in Dallas, Texas, has formed a new international team with the goal to advance the study of ghostly episodes using new psychometric tools, advanced modeling approaches, various groups of witnesses and control conditions, and competitive hypothesis testing. In an article recently published in the *Australian Journal of Parapsychology*, Houran discussed factors that arguably hold back studies of haunts, apparitions and poltergeist-like outbreaks. He considers the impact of infatuation with gadgets (or “gadget envy”), sensationalized public image

and the absence of consistent, sound, cumulative theory-building. Houran proposed that we re-imagine ghost studies in several important ways: using improved quasi-experimental studies for ecological validity, cross-validating observations and hypotheses under laboratory conditions where possible, and transcending the traditional, linear use of statistics in favor of abstract thinking – such as catastrophe theory and improvements in witness psychology and brain chemistry. Finally, Houran stressed that multidisciplinary approaches are needed more than ever given the multivariate nature of the phenomena. The author actively welcomes collaboration.

Houran, J. (2017). “Sheet happens!” Advancing ghost studies in the analytics age. *Australian Journal of Parapsychology*, 17, 187-206.

## Exploring the Narratives of NDEers

Researchers at the University of Liège (Liège, Belgium) and the University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne (Reims, France) aimed to extract common themes reported by NDEers by analyzing concepts stored in the narratives of their experiences. A qualitative thematic analysis was carried out on 34 cardiac arrest survivors’ NDE narratives. The results of this analysis shed the light on the structure of the narratives by identifying 10 “time-bounded” themes that refer to isolated events

encountered during the NDE and one “transversal” theme that characterized the whole narrative and generally appears as a retrospective comment of self-reflection on the experience. The division of narratives into themes provided detailed information about the vocabulary used by NDEers to describe their experiences. Results corroborated the content of existing tools such as the Greyson NDEscale, but also highlighted new aspects of NDEs that could be further investigated in future studies. The division of narratives into themes gave a fuller overview about the way different features are combined and shed light on how these experiences, usually reported as being ineffable, are described by NDEers. The researchers demonstrate that thematic analysis, combined with other types of qualitative analysis methods such as discourse analysis, should help to explore this issue further.

Cassol, H., Pétré, B., Degrange, S., Martial, C., Charland-Verville, V., Lallier, F., et al. (2018). Qualitative thematic analysis of the phenomenology of near-death experiences. *PLoS ONE*, 13(2): e0193001.

## Physiologic Correlates of Culture-Bound Dissociation

A team of researchers spanning three universities in Brazil and its Hospital of the Armed Forces investigated the physiologic correlates of nonpathological dissociative experiences by comparing 20 female Spiritist mediums with several years of socially

sanctioned practice to 20 female nonmedium control subjects from the same religious context. They measured plasma levels of hormones and neuroactive substances, as well as vital signs and heart rate variability (HRV) parameters, before and immediately after spirit communication. Although no between-group differences were noted in basal physiological parameters, in response to the possession experiences, the groups differed in heart rate and in plasma concentrations of noradrenaline, thyroid-stimulating hormone, prolactin, and creatine phosphokinase. The changes in parameters indicated an arousal response in mediums and a relaxation response in control participants, and the same pattern of changes was observed in HRV parameters from each group during the possession experiences. However, the changes in physiologic parameters for mediums were mild and of short duration: one hour after the possession experiences, no difference in cardiac autonomic regulation was noted. The findings reinforce the importance of refining the differential diagnosis of nonpathological forms of possession and mental disorder, given that evidence increasingly shows that culturally well-integrated mediums can frequently be not only mentally but also physically healthy.

Bastos, M. A. V.Jr., Oliveira Bastos, P. R. H. de, Osório, I. H. S., Pinheiro, S. A. M., Landoli, D. Jr., & Lucchetti, G. (2018). Physiologic correlates of culture-bound dissociation: A comparative study of Brazilian spiritist mediums and controls. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 5(2), 286-313.

# Articles about the History of Parapsychology and Related Matters (part 1)

In recent years there has been an increase of interest in the history of parapsychology. For this reason, I present here references to relevant articles that have been published in recent years. Different from previous bibliographies in *Mindfield*, I am including abstracts of the articles to give more precise information to readers about the content of the papers. Because articles in parapsychology journals are sometimes ignored, I am including relevant articles published in those publications as well.

**Alvarado, C.S. (2013). Studying Ernesto Bozzano: Suggestions for Future Historical Studies. *Journal of the Society for Psychological Research*, 77, 147-163.**

Ernesto Bozzano (1862-1943) was an important figure in the history

of Italian studies of psychic phenomena. He was known in his lifetime for his bibliographical studies of psychic phenomena, as well as for his defenses of survival of death, and his polemics with those that opposed spiritualistic interpretations of the psychic. Bozzano has received much attention in Italy. Nonetheless I believe more work could be done to understand him better, which is the topic of this paper. Several suggestions are presented for possible future studies. These are investigations of Bozzano's (1) personal and intellectual development; (2) discussions of specific areas and phenomena; (3) concepts and theories; (4) use of rhetoric; (5) analytical method; and (6) reception. Work along these lines will not only contribute to our knowledge of Bozzano, but will also increase our understanding of the history of psychical research and



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spiritualism in Italy and in Europe in general.

**Alvarado, C.S. (2014). Classic Text No. 98 'Visions of the Dying', by James H Hyslop (1907). *History of Psychiatry*, 25, 237-252.**

Deathbed visions have been of interest to psychical researchers and others since the nine-

*A leading positivist psychiatrist and a prolific academic, Morselli was actively involved in the making of Italian experimental psychology.*

teenth-century. The purpose of this article is to present a reprint of an article about “Visions of the Dying” published in 1907 in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* authored by philosopher and psychical researcher James H. Hyslop (1854-1920). The article was Hyslop’s attempt to define the topic as one belonging to the agenda of psychical research and to request additional cases for further study. The reprint of the article is annotated and the article is presented in the context of previous writings on the subject, of Hyslop’s psychical research work, and of his writings about deathbed visions after 1907.

**Brancaccio, M.T. (2014). Enrico Morselli’s *Psychology and “Spiritism”*: Psychiatry, Psychology and Psychical Research in Italy in the Decades Around 1900. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 48, 75-84.**

This paper traces Enrico Morselli’s intellectual trajectory from the 1870s to the early 1900s. His interest in phenomena of physical mediumship is considered against the backdrop of the theoretical developments in Italian psychiatry and psychology. A leading positivist psychiatrist and a prolific academic, Morselli was actively involved in the making of Italian experimental psychology. Initially skeptical of psychical research and opposed to its association with the ‘new psychology’, Morselli subsequently conducted a study of the physical phenomena produced by the medium Eusapia Palladino. He concluded that her phenomena were genuine and represented them as the effects of an unknown bio-psychic force present in all human beings. By contextualizing Morselli’s study of physical mediumship within contemporary theoretical and disciplinary discourse, this study elaborates shifts in the interpretations of ‘supernormal’ phenomena put forward by leading Italian psychiatrists and physiologists. It demonstrates that Morselli’s interest in psychical research stems from his efforts to comprehend the determinants of complex psychological phenomena at a time when the dynamic theory of matter in physics, and the emergence of neo-vitalist theories influenced the theoretical debates in psychiatry, psychology and physiology.

**Caratelli, G. (2013). Una grande Figura della Parapsicologia Italiana: Tito Alippi [A Great Figure of Italian Parapsychology: Tito Alippi]. *Luce e Ombra*, 113, 353-362.**

This is an overview of Tito Alippi’s work in parapsychology in Italy. Alippi, who graduated with a degree in physics in 1895, lived between 1870 and 1959. He worked in geophysics and meteorology. Among other topics, Alippi wrote about auras, electromagnetism and psychic phenomena, Eusapia Palladino, and physics and psychical research.

**Evrard, R., & Pratte, E.A. (2017). From Catalepsy to Psychical research: The Itinerary of Timothée Puel (1812-1890). *History of Psychology*, 20, 50-71.**

The physician and botanist Timothée Puel (1812-1890) lived through a pivotal period of psychology (1848-1878), between the academic prohibition of the study of animal magnetism to its disjointed recovery in hypnotism and psychical research. One of his cases of “catalepsy complicated with somnambulism” triggered a lively debate on “extraordinary neuroses” within the young Société médico-psychologique [Medico-psychological Society]. In 1874, Puel founded the *Revue de psychologie expérimentale*



[Journal of Experimental Psychology], the first of its kind in French, which he intended as the vehicle of international interest in psychological research, the scholarly and institutionalized study of “psychism” that prepared the way for the recognition of academic psychology. Puel circulated between these different currents by taking advantage of the polysemy of concepts like “sleep,” “experimental psychology,” and “psychism.”

**Gonçalves, V.P., & Ortega, F. (2013). Uma Nosologia para os Fenômenos Sobrenaturais e a Construção do Cérebro ‘Possuído’ no Século XIX [A Nosology for Supernatural Phenomena and the Construction of the ‘Possessed’ Brain in the 19th Century]. *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manuais*, 20, 2013, 373-389.**

At the end of the twentieth century, supernatural phenomena such as so called trances and possession by spirits received a scientific classification, which includes the numerous diagnoses of the dominant psychiatry. At the end of the nineteenth century we can observe a process of scientific categorization of phenomena considered to have originated in superstition or popular imagination. In this work we show how trances and spiritual possession were studied by Franz Anton Mesmer and his followers when developing the concept of magnetism; by James

Braid during the creation of his theory of hypnosis; and by Jean Martin Charcot, which marked the entry of hysteria into nosological classification. Despite the differences between these schools, we identify the use of the brain and cerebral metaphors as the foundation of theories of the mind.

**Graus, A. (2014). ¿Dobles o Espíritus? Las Teorías del Desdoblamiento Frente al Espiritismo en la España de Principios del Siglo XX [Doubles or Spirits? Theories of Doubling Face Spiritism in Spain at the Beginnings of the XX Century]. *Asclepio: Revista de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia*, 66, 35-45.**

This paper discusses the relation between dissociation theories and spiritism in Spain. It shows two cases that took place at the beginnings of the 20th Century. The first describes the mental dissociation that the physician Víctor Melcior attributed to the medium Teresa Esquius. The second shows the polemic, between the astronomer Josep Comas and the spiritist Jacint Fornaguera, in regard to the bodily dissociation in the medium Carmen Domínguez. It is argued that these kind of debates favoured the scientific study of mediumship.

**Mülberger, A., & Balltandre, M. (2012). Metapsychics in Spain Acknowledging or Questioning**

**the Marvellous? *History of the Human Sciences*, 25, 108-130.**

The present article deals with a kind of parapsychology called metapsychics (*metapsíquica*) as conceived and practiced in Spain between 1923 and 1925. First we focus on the reception of a treatise by Richet that evoked both support (Ferrán) and criticism (Mira). Then we examine some experiments on clairvoyance performed at the Marquis of Santa Cara’s home, dealing chiefly with the rise and fall of a case of prodigious vision. The analysis gives special attention to the question of how metapsychics was understood and to which discussions it gave rise. The authors argue that the project of metapsychics must be understood within a frame of two tendencies, namely, the increasing popularization and the

*At the end of the nineteenth century we can observe a process of scientific categorization of phenomena considered to have originated in superstition or popular imagination.*

demarcation of science that were under way in modern society.

**Noakes, R. (2014). Haunted Thoughts of the Careful Experimentalist: Psychical Research and the Troubles of Experimental Physics. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, 48, 46–56.**

This paper analyses the relationship between the ‘elusive’ science of psychical research and experimental physics in the period approximately,

*Most studies of the relationship between psychical research and the established sciences have examined the ways in which psychical researchers used theories in the established sciences to give greater plausibility to their interpretations of such puzzling phenomena as telepathy, telekinesis and ectoplasm.*

1870–1930. Most studies of the relationship between psychical research and the established sciences have examined the ways in which psychical researchers used theories in the established sciences to give greater plausibility to their interpretations of such puzzling phenomena as telepathy, telekinesis and ectoplasm. A smaller literature has examined the use of laboratory instruments to produce scientific evidence for these phenomena. This paper argues that the cultures of experiment in the established science of physics could matter to psychical research in a different way: it suggests that experience of capricious effects, recalcitrant instruments and other problems of the physical laboratory made British physicists especially sympathetic towards the difficulties of the spiritualistic séance and other sites of psychical enquiry. In the wake of widely-reported claims that the mediums they had investigated had been exposed as frauds, these scientific practitioners were eventually persuaded by the merits of an older argument that human psychic subjects could not be treated like laboratory hardware. However, well into the twentieth century, they maintained that experimental physics had important lessons for psychical researchers.

**Plas, R. (2012). Psychology and Psychical research in France Around the End of the 19th**

**Century. *History of the Human Sciences*, 25, 91–107.**

During the last third of the 19th century, the ‘new’ French psychology developed within ‘the hypnotic context’ opened up by Charcot. In spite of their claims to the scientific nature of their hypnotic experiments, Charcot and his followers were unable to avoid the miracles that had accompanied mesmerism. The hysterics hypnotized in the Salpêtrière Hospital were expected to have supernormal faculties and these experiments opened the door to psychical research. In 1885 the first French psychology society was founded. The research carried out by this society may seem surprising: its members – Charles Richet in particular – were interested in strange phenomena, like magnetic lucidity, ‘mental suggestion’, thought-reading, etc. Very quickly, psychologists applied themselves to finding rational explanations for these supposedly miraculous gifts. Finally, after a few years, studies of psychical phenomena were excluded from the field of psychology. Charles Richet, disappointed by the psychologists, devoted himself to the development of a new ‘science’ which he called ‘Métapsychique’. Several hypotheses have been put forward to account for this early research undertaken by the French psychologists, pertaining as much to parapsychology as to scientific psychology.

## Relevant

# Articles Relevant to Parapsychology in Journals of Various Fields (XXV)

This is the twenty-fifth *Mindfield* column on publications of relevance to parapsychology in mainstream scientific journals. The grand total of articles, including the 88 articles below, published in this bibliography stands at 1791. The appearance of almost 30 new titles each month indicates that themes related to parapsychology are being recognized more and more (and possibly even accepted) in mainstream journals.

This edition of the bibliography includes titles from two special issues of journals on paranormal subjects: *IMÁGÓ Budapest*, "Psychoanalysis and the Occult" and *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research and Practice*, "Anomalous, Exceptional, and Nonordinary Experiences: Expanding the Boundaries of Psychological Science."

This column includes a fairly large number of articles on research related to paranormal belief, spiritist and mediumistic subjects, and near-death experiences. Most articles appeared in

journals for medicine, psychiatry, and psychology, but we also found relevant titles in fields as far apart as engineering, law, history, and education.

Once again we kindly invite PA members to forward relevant recent articles to [mauricevanluijtelaa4@outlook.com](mailto:mauricevanluijtelaa4@outlook.com) or [evrardrenaud@gmail.com](mailto:evrardrenaud@gmail.com). These articles should be published in peer-reviewed, English-language mainstream journals that are not devoted to themes in parapsychology or to subjects related to parapsychology. Books, book chapters, preprints, and articles that have not yet appeared in electronic journals will not be included.

Abotiv, L., Gorodetskaya, I., Akbirova, R., & Sibgatullina, L. (2018). Superstitiousness and paranormal beliefs of engineering students comparing to students majoring in sciences, arts and humanities. *Revista Espacios*, 39(10), 28. <http://www.revistaespacios.com/a18v39n10/a18v39n10p28.pdf>

Anefalos, A., E Silva, W. A. B., & Pinto, R. M. et al (2018). Spiritist hospital chaplaincy in brazil: 5 years of documented experience. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 57(3), 1038-1051.



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Carmona-Torres, J., Kohls, N., Hood, R., Silver, C., & Walach, H. (2018). The association between different spiritual practices and the occurrence of exceptional human experiences in a non-clinical sample. *Journal for the Study of Spirituality*, 8(1), 49-64. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/20440243.2018.1431035?journalCode=yjss20>

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