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CHAPTER FIVE

Historical Profiles in Poltergeist Research

Peter Mulacz

This chapter does not intend to provide an exhaustive history of the research into hauntings and poltergeist phenomena (Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis or RSPK) or a systematic survey of all phenomena ever reported in such cases. Rather, the aim is to portray a selection of the most prominent and influential figures in the field from the opening years of the twentieth century until today. I am inclined to call these short biographies "intellectual biographies," as the emphasis is not on the outward life of these personalities but on their reasoning, theory building, and the results of their research. I'll try to present them in roughly chronological order, area by area, as there is some interdependence between nationals of the same country.

France

France has a long tradition in parapsychology. Thus it comes as no surprise that one can find statements in reference to poltergeist cases by many French researchers, among them the outstanding Charles Richet, physiologist and Nobel Prize winner. Here two French researchers will be portrayed who in their respective works showed particular emphasis on spook phenomena (both poltergeist and haunting): Camille Flammarion and Emile Tizané.

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Camille Flammarion

The astronomer Camille Flammarion (1842–1925) is one of the intellectuals whose life and work contributed to create in France the archetypal image of the scholar possessing a vast wealth of knowledge who is at the same time a man of great wisdom—an image that manifests particularly in popular literature, cinema, and comic strips. A frequently reproduced portrait shows him in his old age with a white beard and abundant white hair.

Admitted as an astronomy student to the Observatory of Paris at the age of sixteen, Flammarion had to leave four years later, probably because he disagreed with the director, Urbain Le Verrier.[1] In that same year he published the book *La pluralité des mondes habités* (The plurality of inhabited worlds).[2] It marked the beginning of his career as an independent scientist, equally concerned with research as with educating the general public.[3] Though his report on the rotation of celestial bodies had obtained, in 1870, the approval of the Academy of Science, it was the publication in 1880 of the book *Astronomie populaire* (followed by the creation, in 1882, of the review *L'Astronomie* and by the foundation in 1887 of the Société astronomique de France, still active today) which spread his fame to audiences of every kind.

Flammarion's written work includes, besides his articles and notes, fifteen astronomy handbooks, ten scientific books, and seven philosophical works, six purely literary texts, and six books devoted to parapsychology (or psychic studies, as it was known in France at this time), published between 1900 and 1923. And like so many others of his time, Flammarion was interested in the paranormal through his personal belief to the spiritualist doctrine.

However, unlike such figures as Oliver Lodge or Arthur Conan Doyle, Flammarion was not led to spiritualism as the consequence of a personal emotional trauma. He tells in his *Memoires* how, at the age of seven, he was inspired by a funeral procession to declare to one of his companions that there must be "something" after death. This conviction became a certainty during his adolescence and it explains why he felt justified in delivering a speech at the funeral of the influential spiritist Allan Kardec in 1869. Without questioning Flammarion's intellectual honesty and sense of rigor, we can see that, whether consciously or

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unconsciously, for him the study of the paranormal was a way of providing a rational foundation for his faith.

Flammarion's active participation in the séances organized in Paris with Eusapia Palladino, notably taking photos of tables levitating, was only a minor part of his research in parapsychology. The major part comprised the study of case histories reporting spontaneous phenomena. Thus he published, from 1907, a series of books in which such cases were collected, analyzed, and evaluated. The last of these studies, *Les maisons hantées* (Haunted houses), appeared in 1923 and was republished as recently as 1970 in an abbreviated version, in the pocket collection *L'Aventure Mystérieuse*, which was a best-seller in France.

Les maisons hantées offers the reader a collection of witnessed accounts, most of them narrated in considerable detail. In his two introductory chapters the author explains, with examples, why, in his view, parapsychological phenomena, taken as a whole, can constitute an experimental proof of survival. Then he warns us that although hauntings have been known since the earliest times, stories concerning them should be treated with the greatest caution and often rejected. The cases which are the object of the book and which the author presents as being authentically paranormal were chosen, therefore, only after a very strict scrutiny. The two first cases (reporting events which occurred in Paris in 1849 and 1860) have subsequently been frequently quoted by other authors because they mention the projection of stones and other objects, such as partially consumed logs in the 1860 case.

Flammarion does not wait until the final pages to present his thesis: haunting phenomena are caused by invisible creatures that may be deceased human beings (thus following F. W. H. Myers). At the same time, however, he displays an open mind by recognizing that "more than one haunting phenomenon may be due to a remote action of the psychic force of a living person. In many cases it is even entirely likely."[4] So Flammarion cannot altogether escape the charge of contradicting himself. This hypothesis of the action of the psychism of a living person could be perfectly well applied to Gabrielle Renaudot's testimony, though Flammarion interprets it as demonstrating the intervention of a dead person.[5]

In conclusion, Flammarion attempts to make his readers clearly understand the distinction between his own conscious choice ("I am far

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from being opposed to the admittance of the manifestations of the dead, quite the contrary") and the problems presented by cases of haunting.[6] According to him, the authenticated testimonies are sufficient to support the claim that hauntings, and more generally all psi phenomena, constitute a legitimate object of scientific study.[7] In order to justify this conclusion, Flammarion does not hesitate to remind us that the materialistic philosopher (and famous politician) Jean Jaurès expressed an opinion very close to his own[8] and to cite Lavoisier's *Report to the Academy of Science concerning a Stone That It Is Claimed Fell from the Sky*, a notorious document that denied the existence of meteorites.

Emile Tizané

Although the name Emile Tizané is well known in parapsychological circles in France, and even beyond, it is little known to today's researchers. He was born in 1902, but the precise date of his death is unknown. Yves Lignon met him on a single occasion, about 1980, before belatedly learning of his death some years later. Because Tizané's books were published in the years following World War II, a search in the Bibliothèque Nationale would be necessary to find his original texts. Some were reissued after 1965 in abridged or small circulation editions, or extracts published in compilations. Consequently, it is only through these fragments that Tizané's written work is easily accessed, or through the comments and analyses of those, such as professor Rémy Chauvin, who had the opportunity to read the original works. A police officer from 1929 (he ended his career as a commandant), Emile Tizané studied poltergeists over several decades as an independent researcher. In France people often invoke Descartes, thoughtlessly, to assert that interest in psi phenomena is incompatible with rational thinking: that it is impossible to be both a police officer or a mathematician, and at the same time a researcher in parapsychology.

Tizané's career demonstrates the falsity of this idea, since it was precisely by using his professional skills and his position that he was able to develop and propose his personal typology of hauntings. Tizané was able to construct this typology because he started with a simple idea. He took advantage of his position as a police officer to collect reports compiled by the gendarmerie (a French police corps) at the close of investigations into such phenomena as knockings on walls and the seem-

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ingly inexplicable movements of objects. The oldest of these documents date from the 1930s, but even at the end his life, though then retired, Tizané was still adding to his case collections.

These reports are interesting in two respects: first, they are prepared according to strict rules that are standardized throughout France; and second, their authors are little inclined to adopt an priori paranormal hypothesis. French policemen receive training that encourages them, if they are confronted with something out of the ordinary, to look for a hoax or a villager seeking revenge on a fellow villager rather than the possibility of a paranormal phenomenon.

The typology constructed by Emile Tizané differs from the one usually employed. The reported facts are of a kind to which parapsychologists usually attach the label "poltergeist" (including, for example, the projection of hot stones), but Tizané prefers to use the term "hauntings." He further distinguishes what he calls "small hauntings" from what he labels "English (or large) hauntings." Cases in the latter category, he suggests, tend to be associated with a particular location and can be observed over a period of years, even centuries. Small hauntings, by contrast, tend to be associated with a psychologically unbalanced person. While admitting (perhaps because of his own philosophical or religious convictions) the existence of large hauntings, Tizané admitted that he had not collected documentation on the subject, and for the very good reason that when a story of this type (rumor? legend? myth?) is aired, there exist in France legal and sociological reasons that oppose the opening of a police inquiry.

Tizané, like many other researchers, noticed in regard to small hauntings that the protagonist is often a pubescent boy or girl in conflict with their family. However, his analysis of the police reports led him to emphasize a particular aspect of the problem. On many occasions, the teenager, who would have been simply qualified as agent of the poltergeist by parapsychologists, eventually admitted to the police that he was only the author of a hoax. Nevertheless, these confessions contradicted some of the information obtained during the inquiry, which showed that the details claimed by the culprit as his modus operandi were materially incompatible with the facts. This led Tizané to speculate on the hypothesis of an anthropomorphous poltergeist that would arrange for someone else to be blamed in its place. He also

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wondered if, on some occasions, an authentic hoax might be transformed into a real parapsychological phenomenon.

The two main books of Commander Tizané are *Sur la piste de l'homme inconnu* (On the track of the unknown man) and *L'hôte inconnu dans le crime sans cause* (The unknown guest in the purposeless crime). In a work published shortly before his death *(Les agressions de l'invisible* [Attacks by the invisible]), he reports on séances in which he took part in the years preceding World War II and analyzes certain religious phenomena (again from his personal philosophical viewpoint). He also published on the same subject "Les apparitions de la Vierge" (Apparitions of the Virgin). Finally in 1937–1938, Commander Tizané collaborated with Eugène Osty, director of the Institut Métapsychique International (IMI), and prepared a manuscript entitled "Phénomènes spontanés de hantises" (Spontaneous phenomena of hauntings), which was deposited in the research center library.

Italy

Ernesto Bozzano

Born in Genoa on January 9, 1862, Bozzano, since his youth, showed a great passion for knowledge, whether literary, philosophical, or scientific. Enrolled in a technical school, he never ended regular school programs and continued by himself to study a variety of matters and English and French languages. In practice, he was a self-taught man, with all great enthusiasms and the typical gaps. But, above all, he wished to confront the mystery of being, the reason of the life and of the death.

The study of spiritualist philosophers and their metaphysical postulates, nevertheless, had him fall into deep doubts and the result derived from such negative experiences was to become a strong positivist, very fond of Herbert Spencer's philosophical system. At thirty, free from any economical problem as he was born in a well-off family, he seemed destined to lead a quiet life as observer of the great scientific and philosophical changes during the last years of the nineteenth century. Other kinds of debates were arising in Europe and the United States concerning the manifold anomalous possibilities of the mind and in that context, a qualified organization, the Society for Psychical Research, was going to become a landmark for culture and science open-minded

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people toward those faculties. Bozzano was extremely skeptical toward telepathy, supposing that the thought could act at distance, independently from the nervous system, meant to allow mystic elements of ancient times emerge again in the context of the new certitudes coming from the science.

A first important moment for the attentive Bozzano was represented by two papers published in 1891 in two issues of the famous *Revue Philosophique*. The first one, written by Professor Rosenbach of St. Petersburg, a psychologist, was a total negation of the phenomenon of thought transmission and an attack to the intrusion of the new mysticism into official psychology. The attack was based on reasons that appeared weak and partial also to the young skeptical Bozzano. It was very different from Richey's paper, which refuted, with a deep critical insight, the different negative elements pointed out in the previous paper affirming the reality of the phenomenon. Bozzano was impressed by Richey's arguments and reputed, honestly, that the supposed transmission of the thought from a mind to another had the right to be studied by science. He supposed also the presence of a not-definite energy spreading from a brain to reach another one.

A wide reading of the great works about that argument, still appreciated today, and the first experiences of mediumistic séances brought him to a next important and decisive moment. During a séance in Genoa in 1893, the automatic writing of the medium, Attilia Montaldo, announced the presence of his beloved mother, deceased the year before. The entity repeated to him the last two lines of the epigraph present on her tomb, pushing him to continue along the path just taken, as his mission on the earth was to be a spiritist.

He never became a real experimental researcher in the field of paranormal and psychic phenomena, for he lacked a strong scientific background and a scrupulous attention toward the observed and investigated manifestations, and because he was intimately inclined to a great theoretical synthesis concerning the phenomena on the whole. Anyway, in 1899, with Giuseppe Venzano and the journalist Arnaldo Vassallo, he founded in Genoa an organization that, for some years, should have been the most important Italian organization dedicated to paranormal phenomena, with some excellent members, such as Professor Enrico Morselli and Professor Francesco Porro. Among the activities of that

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period, the séances with the controversial Italian medium Eusapia Paladino are still famous.[9]

In 1922, Bozzano left Genoa and retired, living a secluded life, in the silence of his brother's villa in Savona, together with thousands of specialized texts and journals that allowed him a systematic study of all surveys concerning paranormal and mediumism. There was only an exception with the return to experimental activity with the famous and doubtful séances of Millesimo, a little town near Savona, in 1927–1928. The séances were carried out in the villa of marquis Carlo Centurione Scotto, who was the medium, and had, among the most meaningful phenomena, apports and direct voices. The séances were debated by many people, particularly members of the Society for Psychical Research, for the lack of any kind of control.

In that period, Bozzano wrote most of his literary production, which amounts to at least 15,000 pages between books and journals, following principally a method, today considered old-fashioned, defined as comparative analysis and convergence of trials. Starting from wide surveys, the method was based on the comparison between the phenomena and the evaluation of meaningful affinities and differences, trying to reach the fundamental cause of the whole. Ernesto Bozzano died in Genoa on June 24, 1943.

His name is today linked to the Fondazione Biblioteca Bozzano-De Boni—Foundation Library Bozzano-De Boni (Gastone De Boni was his outstanding disciple and heir) in Bologna, Italy, a nonprofit organization that keeps all his library archives and all new acquisitions.

Bozzano is the author of the unique Italian text dedicated to haunting cases: *Dei fenomeni di infestazione* (About haunting phenomena), including one chapter about poltergeists and another about the psychometric hypothesis considered in relation to haunting phenomena. The book also shows many attempts of statistical classification of the phenomena.

As with other authors, Bozzano was acquainted with the difficulty of discriminating correctly, both theoretically and practically, the occurrences of hauntings from poltergeist occurrences, owing to the frequent presence, though with different intensity, of common elements in both classifications. More evident and important is, for Bozzano, the discrimination between (1) subjective and hallucinatory occurrences, per-

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sisting in the time, often coinciding with death events and marked by apparitions of ghosts, and (2) objective or physical (telekinetic) occurrences, of short period and in direct relation to the presence of a living, sensitive subject. Among the latter, a few are considered by Bozzano to be of merely animistic, subconscious origin, that is, the less complex events. The other ones, for their constant intelligent features, suppose an extrinsic cause, a concomitant cause of spiritistic origin. The cases belonging to "class 1" would be prevalently telepathic manifestations and prevalently mediumistic; but for Bozzano the common element present in the whole phenomena, haunting and poltergeist, is the spirit in his double condition of disembodied and embodied.

Even if admitting the spiritistic hypothesis and real presence of "disembodied entities" in the cases of reliable and supposed real hauntings, in most cases their interventions, for Bozzano, are the *telepathic transmission* of their thought, a projection of their intense mental images toward the percipients, thoughts centered on the places they lived and the dramatic events that took place there. For Bozzano, this explanation is strengthened by the verified fact that often the phenomena are "elective," that is, the ghost apparition is seen only by some of the witnesses and not by others or; sounds heard only by some people and not by others, and so on.

Ghost apparitions seen by percipients in haunted houses, relative to the prevalent and reliable available survey, should be then true (veracious) hallucinations (which Bozzano called "simulacres"), even if it is possible to suppose—in a very small number of cases in which ghost apparition is seen by witnesses according to perspective's laws—the presence of "something" not better defined, with a certain "material consistence," having a feature of substantiality and not being therefore an authentic hallucinatory occurrence.

German-Speaking Countries (Austria, Germany, Switzerland)

Puls

At the end of the 1880s, a retired German judge by the name of Puls published a book on spooks, poltergeists, and hauntings, *Der Spuk von Resau* (The Resau spook), a contemporary case that ended in a lawsuit,

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along with more than one hundred other ones he collected, starting from the earliest times but most of them from the then recent past. The majority of case reports were compiled from the earlier literature—Puls himself was not a field investigator. This was the state of affairs in the German-speaking countries at the turn of last century, perhaps the first large case collection, yet somehow uncritical, augmented by some theoretical reflections rather on their premature spiritualistic interpretation than on the poltergeists as such.

Reinhard Piper

A trained historian whose special subject was castles and who had previously published several works on this topic which are still today, some hundred years later, benchmarks, Piper took an interest in the lore and traditions connected to these old buildings. In 1927, he published a sound collection of mainly hauntings in his *Der Spuk: 250 Geschehnisse aller Arten und Zeiten aus der Welt des Übersinnlichen* (The spook: 250 events of all kinds and from all times from the world of the transcendental) in Cologne at Bachem Publishers. This work saw a second edition under the same title in 1922, in Munich at Piper Publishing House (i.e., his son Reinhard Piper), with cover decoration and the frontispiece drawings by the famous Austrian artist Alfred Kubin.

Bruno Grabinski

Bruno Grabinski is an author who, like Gebhard Frei and Andreas Resch, belongs to the school of Roman Catholic parapsychologists. All his publications in the field focus on matters such as miracles, stigmatization, obsession, visions, apparitions of spirits from the purgatory, and so on. In the given context, two publications are worthwhile mentioning, *Der lokale Spuk* (The local spook), published in 1925 in Munich (Herold), and his *Spuk- und Geistererscheinungen oder was sonst?* (Spook and spirit apparitions or what else?), which has seen over the years since its first edition early in the last century many editions with numerous changes and amendments. Though part of them bears the subtitle *Eine kritische Untersuchung* (A critical investigation), Grabinski is not critical at all (which refers to how he deals with the facts; his Catholic interpretation is a different issue) and, moreover, he is not very reliable in his quotations. Yet he has some merit in covering a cer-

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tain segment by collecting cases from rectories and monasteries—places that might not be easily accessible for investigators lacking that specific Catholic background. It may be noted that these Catholic rectory hauntings show a distinct pattern that is missing in cases outside this specific segment. Thus Grabinski has unintentionally supplied good evidence for how the mental framework of a given social group impacts the style of the phenomena.

Albert, Baron Schrenck-Notzing

Enter Schrenck-Notzing. Albert, Baron Schrenck-Notzing, born May 18, 1862, came from a family of old, albeit lower, German nobility that, like many others, became impoverished in the course of time. Young Albert studied medicine and at last settled as a doctor in Munich, specializing in neurology and sexual pathology. Like Franz Anton Mesmer more than a century earlier, he married a wealthy woman, Gabriele Siegle, heiress to the Siegle'sche Familienunternehmen, today's BASF. Whereas the earlier interests of Schrenck-Notzing laid in the fields of hypnosis on one hand and diseases of the sexual apparatus on the other, he gradually shifted toward parapsychology. It may be noted that another prominent physician of that era who also took a keen interest in sexual diseases and hypnosis alike, Geheimrat Moll, grew into an ardent enemy of parapsychology.

Schrenck-Notzing was the founder of a (Para-)Psychological Society in Munich. One already existed, founded by the spiritualist philosopher Carl du Prel, and Schrenck-Notzing's new one did, on the contrary, not embrace spiritualism. In the "classical" terminology, the antagonism between Super-ESP and Survival was called animism versus spiritism, and Schrenck-Notzing was, in his role as a scientist, definitely an animist. About his personal belief in an afterlife or otherwise little is known.

Schrenck-Notzing's interests in the field of parapsychology were widespread; however, in the course of the years they focused on physical phenomena of mediumism, in particular telekinesis and materialization, which are—according to the paradigm of that era—connected to one another. Telekinesis, which is the movement of objects at a distance (i.e., without the use of "normal" means) was seen as being effectuated by (invisible) limblike structures called pseudopodia, which

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emanated from the body of the medium and were reabsorbed afterward. The substance that forms these pseudopodia is called teleplasm (or ectoplasm). Hence telekinesis is an early stage of materialization.

In order to investigate these phenomena thoroughly, Schrenck-Notzing set up a well-equipped laboratory of his own in the basement of the palace he had built in Munich (which is still preserved to the present day although no longer inhabited by the Schrenck family). The equipment of that laboratory was continuously updated and represented the state of the art in experimental parapsychology of his time, culminating in the installation of Amereller's electrical control apparatus for mediums later copied by Harry Price.

Just before the outbreak of World War I, Schrenck-Notzing published his *Phenomena of Materialization,* which was met by fierce resistance from the scientific establishment. Subsequently Schrenck-Notzing published *The Struggle for the Phenomena of Materialization*. In 1923, he published a second edition of his *Phenomena of Materialization* that incorporated the material used in *Struggle*. Notwithstanding the fact that Schrenck-Notzing published several more books later, this *Phenomena of Materialization* (2d ed.), his magnum opus, remained the work he was most famous for. During the time span of less than a decade until his death in 1929 he published books entitled *The Physical Phenomena of the Great Mediums or Phenomena of Motion at a Distance*. His last book, *The Phenomena of the Medium Rudi Schneider,* was published posthumously in 1935.

During his decades of research into the physical phenomena of mediumism, Schrenck-Notzing held séances with a number of mediums, most of whom were active for a certain period of time, only to be replaced by others. As the active period of mediums was limited rather than indefinite, there was a constant demand for new mediums. This is where the RSPK phenomena come in. The biographies of "great" mediums invariably report that certain spontaneous phenomena used to occur around them during their childhood or early youth—Daniel D. Home (nineteenth century) and Franek Kluski (twentieth century) are prime examples for this. Subsequently, to arrive at the conclusion that there is a link between early RSPK phenomena and later "physical" phenomena was obvious, and likewise that early RSPK was a predictor of future mediumship. Thus, Schrenck-Notzing's primary interest in

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RSPK appears to have been based on the hope to find new mediums for his research.

In the wording of that day, the idea was, to transform the "wild" erratic poltergeist phenomena into "regular sittings mediumship," a basis on which the physical phenomena could systematically be studied. The development of mediumship was seen as going through several phases, the first of which are those erratic RSPK phenomena, out of which, if guided by an experienced parapsychological researcher or at a least circle leader, regular sittings mediumship could evolve, provided that the phenomena would not cease prematurely, whereby the regular sittings mediumship was not an aim in itself but a necessary precondition for future research in physical mediumism.

In the many poltergeist cases Schrenck-Notzing had taken a keen interest in for the above reasons; the ones he published himself were the following (all in German language only; I render the titles here in translation):

- The Spook in Hopfgarten (documentation of telekinetic phenomena by a court)
- The Spook in Ylõjärvi (Finland) (a case at court)
- Spooky Phenomena at Johanna P. according to Reports by Eyewitnesses
- The Spook of Neuried in Upper Bavaria
- The Spook on Augusten Street in Munich
- Spook Phenomena in Kotterbach and Nikolsburg
- More on the Spook in Nikolsburg
- The Spook Medium Vilma Molnar

Moreover, he published a theoretical paper, "Guidelines for the Assessment of Mediumistic Spook Events," containing chapters on age group and puberty, on sympathetic cooperation of several agents, on psychoanalysis, and on fraud. Without going into details, the mere wording of the titles he chose show his linking of poltergeist (spook) phenomena to (physical) mediumism when repeatedly using the term "spook medium" for what we nowadays call the focus person. As far as the ages of the focus persons are concerned, he reports on eleven persons from nine to seventeen years of age, nine girls and only two boys.

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He also points at group effects, at unconscious complexes and unsolved psychical problems, at the suddenness and violence of the phenomena, and at their uniformity. Thus, many of his viewpoints appear quite modern. In addition, Schrenck-Notzing discusses the role of the moon a possible trigger of phenomena. (At least in the Zugun case, this hypothesis had to be rejected.)

There is one more facet of Schrenck-Notzing that needs to be addressed. As mentioned above, he was an extremely wealthy man. As Gerda Walther, his former assistant and an eminent parapsychologist in her own right, puts it, by the fact that Schrenck-Notzing governed his wife's industrial enterprises extremely well through the turbulent years following World War I, he has, so to speak, righteously earned his inherited wealth. His double standing as a researcher and a personality of that social status (both noble and rich) made him the undisputed leader of parapsychologists within the German-speaking countries. In the international parapsychological community of that era, he was highly esteemed; in particular he was a good friend to French physiologist and Nobel Prize winner Charles Richet. (Needless to say, he attracted the antagonism of the skeptics, resulting in scientific disputes and lawsuits.)

Schrenck-Notzing supported the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* (Journal for Parapsychology, the follower of the former *Psychische Studien*, Psychic Studies) substantially—when his widow withdrew his subsidy a few years after his death, the journal faltered. Though he did not serve as the journal's editor, he was in the position to pull strings. So he dominated the field.

Not only did he support the *Zeitschrift,* he also supported young mediums and other researchers' projects alike (we will encounter this again when dealing with the Zugun case of Countess Wassilko).

In 1927, at the third International Congress for Psychical Research held at the Sorbonne University in Paris, Schrenck-Notzing delivered a lecture on the disputed medium Kraus (also known as Weber). This was his last international appearance; less than one and a half years later, he was dead (February 12, 1929). The researcher who had been supposed to be his heir in the field of experimental parapsychology, Karl Gruber, a zoologist at Munich University, had died prior to Schrenck-Notzing, in his forties. The man who actually continued the research along Schrenck-Notzing's lines was Karl Krall, an experienced

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researcher, however not a trained scientist—basically he was a businessman. Krall survived Schrenck by two years, and his death concluded the end of Schrenck-Notzing's laboratory and the Schrenck-Notzing era as well. When Hitler came to power in 1933, virtually everything in Germany changed, including the preconditions for parapsychological research. In 1934, the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* ceased to exist—after sixty-two years (under different names).

In 1941, the Schrenck-Notzing bequest was handed over to Hans Bender and his institute (whom we will encounter later in detail) by Gabriele, Freifrau von Schrenck-Notzing, Albert's widow, when Bender was professor at the then newly founded Reichsuniversität Strassburg (Strasbourg University of the Reich). Then fate turned and the Germans were defeated: Strasbourg became French again. Bender managed to get the Schrenck-Notzing bequest (that had been stored unopened throughout the years of the war) from the French authorities and brought it back to Germany, actually to his native Freiburg in Breisgau where, in 1950, he founded the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP; Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Psychohygiene). The Schrenck-Notzing library became, alongside with the Moser library, the cornerstone of the new institute, and the Schrenck bequest is still preserved at the institute's archives in the new premises near the university's main complex.

Fanny Moser

Swiss researcher Fanny Moser, a biologist by profession, aroused little interest in the Anglophone world—her name is not found in the *Biographical Dictionary of Parapsychology*. Yet she was quite an important researcher in the field. Born on May 27, 1872, in Germany, not too far from the Swiss border, she graduated in zoology after studies in Zurich and Munich, carried out zoological studies in various places, later married a Mr. Hoppe, a musician; they settled first in Berlin and then, after World War I, in one of the German-speaking areas of what is now the Czech republic, the area her husband came from. Just before, in 1913, she became witness to an ostensible macro-PK phenomenon—the levitation of a heavy table in the presence of a physical medium—that changed her life, or at least the focus of her research interests. She started attending séances with various mediums, including Rudi

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Schneider (at Baron Schrenck's laboratory) during one of which a violin she held clamped in her arms was suddenly removed without her being able to resist. After the death of her husband in 1927, she moved to Munich where eventually, in 1935, she finished her magnum opus, *Der Okkultismus: Täuschungen und Tatsachen* (Occultism: Fallacies and facts), two volumes of almost a thousand pages, published simultaneously in Munich and Zurich. This book is a very strange one, as the authoress was a strange personality herself, more than skeptical on one side, and almost gullible on the other, and a difficult character to deal with. Almost forty years later, long after her death on February 24, 1953, a reprint was published under the new title *Das grosse Buch vom Okkultismus* (The great book of occultism) with a preface by Hans Bender. Just before his death in 1961, the eminent German parapsychologist Rudolf Tischner corrected several hundred mistakes in Moser's work, mainly misspelled proper names, for a possible future edition; yet, at the end of the day, the original version was reprinted without any improvements; Eberhard Bauer published a small brochure as a supplement correcting all the mistakes. Issuing another edition of her old book has been a condition of her bequest—a marvelous library on animal magnetism as well as the revenues from real estate in Munich—to the benefit of Hans Bender's IGPP.

During World War II Fanny Moser moved to Switzerland to escape the Allied bombings. She commenced working on another publication, again planned to comprise two volumes, devoted to hauntings and poltergeists. Eventually, in 1950, she published the first volume; however, the second one never appeared in print (the executor of her will met a tragic fate prohibiting him from further fruitful work such as editing the fragments of the manuscript of that second volume). No lesser than famous Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung—with whom she had attended séances in the past—wrote the preface to her book titled *Spuk: Irrglaube oder Wahrglaube: Eine Frage der Menschheit* (Spook: Misbelief or truth: A question of mankind). Volume 1 contains mainly a collection of case studies—just a fraction of the more than three hundred cases she had collected herself or had been given by Professor August Ludwig and others—including her own historical research. Volume 2 was supposed to detail the different hypotheses and models, yet the way she arranges the cases she reports points to the

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fact that she entertaines opinions different from the mainstream of her time. She introduces a new class of poltergeist activity she labels "ephemeral spook" (i.e., short-lived spook, isolated occurrences of spontaneous psychokinesis, quite the opposite of RSPK). Under this category, she summarizes cases of undisputable macro-PK such as the breaking into pieces of a glass "by itself" at the moment of death of a relative or friend. The famous cases related by Jung of a knife breaking into pieces "by itself" or the explosionlike noise in Freud's bookstand during a tense argument between the two psychologists would probably fall into the same category (Jung called it a "catalytic exteriorization phenomenon"). Her *Spook* was reprinted (1977) with an afterword by Hans Bender.

Countess Wassilko

Zoë, Countess Wassilko von Serecki, was born on July 11, 1897, in Czernowitz. The noble Wassilko family, at this time Barons von Serecki, had resided for more than five hundred years in Bukovina, which was the easternmost area of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. After the collapse of the Hapsburg empire at the end of World War I, the Bukovina became Romanian, only to become divided between Romania and the Ukraine in 1941 and remaining so ever since. Thus, Countess Wassilko was born Austrian and remained so all her life. The Wassilko family held enormous estates in Bukovina, causing them to be nicknamed "the uncrowned kings" of that region. Only the eldest son, however, was heir to this territory, so Stephan Freiherr Wassilko von Serecki, her father, who was the second out of four sons, decided in 1900 to follow the pull of the capital city of the empire and move with his family to Vienna in order to pursue a career as a civil servant. In autumn of 1918, just before the monarchy ended, the members of the Wassilko family (i.e., the families of all four sons) were raised to counts by Emperor Charles I, the last Hapsburg emperor. (In 1919, the parliament of Austria, which by now has become a republic, passed a law of doing away with nobility. It then became illegal to use aristocratic titles as part of the name. Neighboring Germany did not [and still does not] have such regulation. Hence, as Countess Wassilko's booklet and papers on the Zugun case and others were published in Germany, she usually was referred to as countess.

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By the age of twenty-two, she became interested in psychical research and the occult, and read all the well-known works of this period, beginning with Schrenck-Notzing's books. In 1924, following a suggestion by Professor Wettstein, a botanist and then head of the Austrian Academy of Science, a university committee for the investigation of the claims of the paranormal was founded, headed by theoretical physicist, Professor Hans Thirring, focusing on physical mediumship. Prominent mediums of these days were the Schneider brothers from Braunau, Upper Austria, with whom séances were held in Vienna University (under Thirring) as well as in private circles. Soon, Countess Wassilko who participated in séances with Rudi, the younger of the two Schneider brothers, was to meet Thirring, and Baron Winterstein, too, an immediate disciple of Sigmund Freud, in one of these overlapping circles. In the context of the present volume it should be added that Alfred, Baron Winterstein, Ph.D. (1885–1953), was the first one to apply psychoanalytic viewpoints on cases of haunting, in an article, "Zur Psychoanalyse des Spuks" (On the psychology of hauntings) in the February 3, 1926, issue of the psychoanalytical journal *Imago,* the special issue bearing the character of a festschrift for Freud's seventieth birthday. Winterstein was one of only two Viennese psychoanalystists who did not emigrate during the occupation of Austria by Nazi Germany and stayed in Vienna throughout Word War II.

In autumn 1924, Thirring organized séances with a medium named Kraus, allegedly a school teacher by profession, who introduced himself as one of Schrenck-Notzing's mediums, in which Countess Wassilko took part. Soon she realized that Kraus's performance was relying on tricks, and not only was she able to expose him but she also demonstrated how his fraudulent effects had been accomplished. Thus, Countess Wassilko made her debut as a critical investigator and can by no means be called credulous.

Her family roots and three uncles and numerous other relatives lived their lives in Bukovina, though after 1919, they had lost most of their estates to the new Romanian government. The ties have never been severed despite Austria's territorial losses, so she received information of the spectacular Zugun poltergeist case and took a keen interest in its development. After the sudden death of Grunewald, the first researcher dispatched to the scene, she felt the vocation to play a more active role

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in this case that took place in the former family estates in Talpa and its vicinity.

In September 1925, she traveled to the Bukovina, where she met Eleonore Zugun, the peasant girl around which the ostensible phenomena occurred, for the first time. This was an encounter to change the lives of both of them. The countess was impressed by what she saw and decided to take the little girl back with her to Vienna for further investigations. It took until early next year for this plan to materialize. After her return to Vienna, Countess Wassilko wrote a booklet on the case, *Der Spuk von Talpa* (The Talpa poltergeist), which was published 1926 in Munich, rendering the early history of the case as exactly as it was possible after seven months had elapsed since the onset of the phenomena.

In February 1925, Eleonore Zugun (born on May 24, 1913) was reportedly collected by a male cousin of hers, who was eighteen years of age, to visit their 105-year-old grandmother living in the nearby village of Buhai, who was blind and had fallen ill. On their way through a forest she found a 2-lei coin wrapped in a handkerchief on the ground, which she took, although warned by her cousin that this was "devil's money." In Buhai, she spent this money on candies which she ate all by herself, refusing to give some to her young female cousin living there, though this girl had given her a nice coral chain as a welcome present. The grandmother, who felt disturbed by the ensuing quarrel, cursed Eleonore, who and had now swallowed the devil together with the sweets bought with the devil's money, so that she would never more be free from him. (Thus, a real devil complex was induced in Eleonore by this malediction, and from now on Eleonore attributed all the phenomena occurring around her to the devil, in Romanian language *dracu*.)

The very next day the poltergeist activities commenced in Buhai. Stones were thrown against the house from the outside, breaking windows; and small objects in Eleonore's vicinity were moved and thrown; they jumped and flew. Soon, Eleonore was sent back home to Talpa, where the phenomena continued after a short break of three days. She then was put "for observation" into the mental asylum of Czernowitz, and, later, back to the Gorowei monastery where she had already spent a few weeks.

On January 29, 1926, Eleonore Zugun arrived to Vienna, accompanied by Kubi Klein, the journalist who had discovered her, and the first

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phenomenon is reported to have happened on January 30: the maid allegedly saw a silver spoon falling down from the table "by itself." The next entry in the countess's record again refers to a silver spoon that allegedly disappeared and reappeared, falling from the ceiling, and another spoon Eleonore let drop, perhaps on purpose. So, from these early days the stage is set for the main problems, such as witnesses of unproven veracity, the psychology of observation, and the thin dividing line between genuine phenomena and resorting to trickery and fraud. From this very entry *absichtlich?* (i.e., on purpose?) in her log, it is clear that the countess was aware of these problem areas.

The Zugun phenomena, after her arrival in Vienna, fall easily into two distinct phases—phase 1 in Vienna, almost exclusively the Wassilko household though a few phenomena occurred during visits to acquaintances of the countess or even in the street, and phase 2 during a travel period visiting foreign parapsychologists (in London and in a number of places in Germany). The countess recorded each and every phenomenon the three volumes of her handwritten logbooks, altogether 141 pages. Two volumes belong to phase 1, taking place in Vienna; volume 3 covering phase 2 commences with the start of a travel period of several months, during which only some of the phenomena that occurred were entered in the log; on other occasions, someone else acted as a log keeper; for example, Harry Price during the stay at his National Laboratory, whereas for the time they spent in Germany the penciled records were discontinued in favor of typed ones.

It appears that the entries in the countess's logbooks (phase 1, vols. 1–2) are much more reliable, and more detailed, than the later (typed) ones by various log keepers; furthermore, almost all of the phenomena occurred in the Wassilko apartment and were witnessed by members of a limited group of persons, besides the five household members mainly scientists, altogether eighteen plus another twenty-five persons who witnessed isolated phenomena. Nonetheless, more than half of the reported phenomena (55 percent) were witnessed by just the countess alone. The one who, by coincidence, would witness the largest number of phenomena apart from the countess herself was Hans Hahn, professor of mathematics at Vienna University (the teacher of Karl Menger) and member of the famous Vienna Circle headed by philosopher Moriz Schlick. There had been several visiting scientists from foreign coun-

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tries, too, who became witnesses of the Zugun phenomena of phase 1, including Harry Price, who at that occasion invited Eleonore and her researcher—who in fact was also practically acting as her foster mother at that time—to pay a visit to his National Laboratory.

In contrast to phase 1, phase 2, particularly during travels in Germany, shows an extreme fluctuation of participants in the Zugun demonstrations, many of them laypeople sharing an interest in psychical research and study groups; often it remains unclear who is responsible for the entries in the log, even if it is clear who has done the actual writing.

Besides these and other methodological issues, the main difference between the two phases is the fact that during phase 1 the locomotion of small objects was in the foreground; however, most of these movements were viewed by the countess as sort of small-range "apports"—the sudden appearance (or reappearance) of an object within a closed space—whereas during phase 2 dermatological phenomena played a major role: scratches "by the *dracu*" on the face, the neck, and the arms of the girl, and the *dracu* "spitting on her." In several aspects, the Zugun case was a pioneering one: as early as 1926, ostensibly provoked paranormal phenomena could be captured on film: Eleonore beating a drawing of her *dracu* and subsequently the *dracu* inflicting scratches on the uncovered parts of her body.

Allegations of fraud were raised that led to a lawsuit which did not address the genuineness of the phenomena as such. It would lead too far to discuss the pro and con of this spectacular case, spectacular if only by the sheer number of paranormal occurrences: Countess Wassilko counted 3,454 single phenomena (2,092 of which during phase 1), and if applying a very critical stance and accepting only the best documented cases, we arrive at total of 884, out of which 702 belong to phase 1. These observations were possible because the focus person lived close together with the prime researcher, Countess Wassilko, sharing even their room for a period in excess of one year. The methodical approaches implemented in the course of the investigation of the Zugun case included the attempt to communicate with the unconscious of the girl by various means, not the least in order to provoke phenomena; the attempt to transform the character of the phenomena systematically from spontaneous ones to séance phenomena (actually the same conceptual framework as entertained by Schrenck-Notzing); the psychoanalysis of

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Eleonore Zugun (this case appears to be the first one where psychoanalysis was applied on an RSPK focus person); and the experimental confrontation of the focus person with other mediums or psychics.

As far as theoretical aspects are concerned, the countess always viewed the psychological mechanisms underlying Eleonore's phenomena as self-punishment (i.e., punishment by the assaults of the *dracu,* who is a mere personification in Eleonore's unconscious equals self-punishment), starting from the very onset of the phenomena in Buhai. For the monthly distribution of the frequency of phenomena, she arrived at the hypothesis that the highs and lows are an anticipation of the female cycle, with one peak and one low each month. Schrenck-Notzing, on the contrary, uttered the hypothesis that this frequency distribution is not due to internal, physical processes, but synchronized by external forces that show a similar rhythm, most likely by the phases of the moon. Now, some decades later, it could be shown that both hypotheses need to be refuted, the only correlation the frequency of phenomena shows is with the psychological situation in any given moment, for example, the attention received by observers, the topic of the conversation and, last not least, the intentional "provocation" of phenomena by various means—an important step in the direction of the possibility of controlling the phenomena to a certain extent and, in the long run, to modify the RSPK occurrences and to transform them into a "regular séance mediumship" (Schrenck-Notzing).

This ultimate goal, however, could not be achieved, as the phenomena decreased dramatically, both in respect of their frequency and their magnitude, with the onset of menstruation. Eleonore spent a few more months in Vienna as an apprentice to a hairdresser, learning a trade that could support her later, and then returned to her native Romania.

There is one more aspect of the Zugun case that needs to be mentioned: the study group around Countess Wassilko was the germ cell of the Austrian Society for Psychical Research founded in 1927 (now Austrian Society for Parapsychology and Border Areas of Science), the secretary-general of which the countess remained for the next thirty-eight years. The most prominent founding members, besides the countess herself, were Hans Thirring and Alfred, Baron Winterstein.

In the years prior to World War II the countess wrote a number of articles on various issues of parapsychology, including research in other

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cases of ostensible RSPK as the one of Frieda Weissl (from Graz, Styria) in which rapping noise was in the foreground. Frieda was lying motionless on her bed in a hotel room rented for the purpose of her visit to Vienna, observed by several members of the Austrian SPR, and the raps in her bed were so loud that people on the street called for the police in order to stop this disturbance of the peace.

In 1966, the countess resigned from the society, after gradually shifting from parapsychology toward astrology, which she always had taken a keen interest in. She died in Vienna on November 26, 1978.

Hans Bender

Hans Bender was by far the most influential personality in parapsychology within the German speaking countries during the second half of the twentieth century; however, since the 1930s his goal had been to establish parapsychology as a topic in academia. On top of this, his specific interest, at least during the later periods of his life, was in poltergeist research on which subject he delivered his presidential address during his term as the president of the Parapsychological Association. His commitment to research in poltergeist cases earned him the not too benevolent nickname "spook professor" in the German media.

Hans Bender was born on February 5, 1907, in Freiburg, Germany. He studied—after a short intermezzo in jurisprudence—psychology and Romanistics (and remained a Francophile throughout his life) in Freiburg, Heidelberg, and Berlin; in 1933 he graduated from the University of Bonn (Prof. E. Rothacker) with a thesis based on experimental research in ESP: "Psychische Automatismen: Zur Experimentalpsychologie des Unterbewußten und der außersinnlichen Wahrnehmung" (On Psychic Automatisms. Experimental Psychology of the Subconscious and of Extra Sensory Perception). Like his *Zum Problem der außersinnlichen Wahrnehmung: Ein Beitrag zur Untersuchung des räumlichen Hellsehens mit Laboratoriumsmethoden* (On the problem of extra sensory perception: A contribution to the investigation of spatial clairvoyance by laboratory methods), it was published in 1936. His favorite subject was Henriette Wiechert, who later became his wife and bore him two daughters and one son. Bender's medical degree became disputed, as it "disappeared" in the turmoil of the war; eventually, in order to escape allegations that he used his second doctorate unjustifiedly, he

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wrote another thesis (1979) and passed the medical exams anew in his advanced years. In 1941, by a professorial dissertation on experimental visions (unpublished), he had become assistant professor. Shortly afterward, he followed a call as professor of psychology and director of the Institute for Psychology and Clinical Psychology at Strasburg University (the Strasbourg University of the Reich, one of the two Universities of the Reich, which was founded after the fall of France to the troops of the German army). It was during this period in Strasbourg that the bequest of the late Schrenck-Notzing was solemnly handed over by his widow, yet remained packed in boxes until Bender's return to Freiburg after the war. Roughly at the same time, Bender tried to acquire Harry Price's famous library but the deal (the library in exchange for an order of the Third Reich) did not materialize. Since the mid-1930s, Bender had established contacts to the parapsychological laboratory at Duke University; subsequently he translated *The Energies of Men: a Study of the Fundamentals of Dynamic Psychology,* by William McDougall, into German, followed after the war by works by J. B. Rhine and J. G. Pratt and G. N. M. Tyrell.

After the war, he returned to his native Freiburg, where he maintained various professorships; in 1967, he was appointed full professor and became director of the newly founded Department of Border Areas of Psychology in the Institute for Psychology at Freiburg University. In 1950, he had founded the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP; Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Psychohygiene) as a personal enterprise at the Eichhalde in a lovely location in the outskirts of Freiburg; one of the opening speeches, "The Science of Parapsychology Today," was delivered by no lesser than J. B. Rhine. From 1957 onward, Bender published a journal, *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie* (Journal for Parapsychology and Border Areas of Psychology). In 1968, the IGPP at the Eichhalde hosted the eleventh convention of the Parapsychological Association.

Over the years, Bender carried out research and published numerous articles and several books, both scholarly and popular, on a wide range of subjects in the field, including ESP, PK, poltergeists, mediumship, spontaneous phenomena, and spiritual healing; his publication list contains more than two hundred items. Strangely enough, none of his

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books was translated into English, although there are translations into several foreign languages. However, a number of his papers are published in English (either originally or translated into English); a few of the titles reflect cornerstones of his thinking, such as a plea for an unprejudiced approach—transcultural uniformity of poltergeist patterns (and spontaneous paranormal phenomena in general)—a positive critic of superstition. The latter aspect goes together with his engagement in psychohygiene, which comprises the dissemination to the public at large or to concerned individuals of reliable information on (para) psychological processes in order to combat irrationalism, anxiety based on superstitious imaginations, and magical superevelations. For humanistic reasons, he viewed psychohygiene as a permanent accompanying task of parapsychology which is strikingly reflected in the labeling of his creation, the IGPP.

Having always been interdisciplinary oriented, Bender developed an interest in the possible relationship between parapsychology, systems theory, and theoretical physics, particularly quantum theory, and subsequently maintained contacts with physicists like the Nobel Prize winners Werner Heisenberg and Austrian-born Wolfgang Pauli, and also with Pascual Jordan and Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker. I can almost hear his voice in my ear when he stated, "If I were not that old I would still commence university studies of physics."

Bender was a charismatic personality who dominated the field of parapsychology not only in academia but also by his presence in the mass media, both the print media and the broadcast and TV stations. He was a spellbinder whose lectures were received eagerly all over Europe. Reaching the age limit, he resigned from the chair of psychology in 1975 (in which he was followed by his former assistant Johannes Mischo) but retained the directorship of the privately funded Institute at the Eichhalde until his death on May 7, 1991.

Now focusing on Bender's interest in poltergeist cases, in the course of the years, a great number of ostensible RSPK cases have been brought to his knowledge out of which he, with the assistance by the varying staff of the IGPP at the Eichhalde, would investigate quite a number of cases in various depth. Out of these, fifty-four cases were later subjected to a state-of-the-art statistical analysis by Monika Huesman and Friederike Schriever: "Steckbrief des Spuks. Darstellung und

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Diskussion einer Sammlung von 54 RSPK-Berichten des Freiburger Instituts für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene aus den Jahren 1947–1986" (Characteristics of spooks: Description and discussion of a collection of 54 Reports of RSPK from the Freiburg Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Psychohygiene).

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Hans Bender could avail himself of the so-called Psi-Bus of his assistant Louis Bélanger (now in Montreal, Canada). Bélanger's modified VW minibus was equipped not only like a camper with a sleeping possibility but also with all the institute's equipment necessary for a proper documentation of spontaneous cases, such as still and video cameras, VCRs, monitors, audio recorders, and so on, permitting not only documentation as such but also remote monitoring of the events.

Without any doubt, the most outstanding RSPK case Hans Bender could investigate was the one that took place in the small city of Rosenheim, Bavaria, in 1968. The initial report, "Der Rosenheimer Spuk: Ein Fall spontaner Psychokinese: Ein vorläufiger Bericht" (The Rosenheim poltergeist case: A case of spontaneous psychokinesis: A preliminary report), was published in 1968 in his journal, *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie* 11: 104–12; later it was reflected in publications in English as well. The case is widely known, has made its entry into the large collection of cases, and has been quoted over and over. Thus, I do not feel the need to re-narrate it here again. Nonetheless, I cannot suppress quoting my own impressions when I visited the scene (unfortunately only after the strange occurrences had ceased and everything was "back to normal" again). Mr. Adam, the attorney in whose office premises the phenomena had occurred, showed me a bookstand full with heavy-weight folders (lawyers usually produce masses of paperwork), some 1.60 meters high and approx 1 meter wide, being positioned—as usual—on the wall of the room. In the course of the RSPK events, this bookstand came off the wall and was found moved 80 centimeters into the room. The point, however, was the following. The room in question had its floor covered with a linoleum floor covering of about 4 millimeters height; yet that bookstand stood on the original wooden floor. When they laid out the linoleum floor covering, they found the bookstand too heavy to move and the number of folders on it too large to empty it, so they had de-

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cided to cut the floor covering around the bookstand and to spread it only on the floor around it, leaving the bookstand untouched in its original position on the wooden floor. This resulted in a little step of the thickness of that linoleum which needed to be overcome whenever the bookstand was to be moved. Thus, when the bookstand was apparently PK-moved 80 centimeters into the room, it had to be lifted a few millimeters free from the floor. I was not able to lift the bookstand from the floor when I tried to do so by grabbing it near its bottom in the style normally used to lift heavy objects (and I may add for those who don't know me that I am by no means a weak man); however, when pushing the bookstand back toward the wall (furniture hardly standing flush with the wall) and thus using the height of it as a lever it was no problem get the bottom free from the floor. In other words, when two separate forces would attack, one pushing back at the top, and the other one moving it laterally, the effect could easily be achieved.

The most important feature of the Rosenheim case has been the fact that it gathered much public evidence. Beyond the limited circle of parapsychologists, quite a number of specialists have been included in the investigation of the case, starting from Herr Brunner, the electrical engineer in charge of the respective department of the Rosenheim power supply unit, up to physicists Drs. Karger and Zicha from the Max Planck-Institute for Plasma Physics in Garching near Munich, let alone the numerous journalists and authors carrying out their research into the case who all became witnesses of the phenomena. Thus, Rosenheim became the best-documented RSPK case ever, maintaining this position until today.

Nonetheless, documenting the phenomena by various means was only one side. Bender's focus, however, was on the psychodynamics of the persons involved, in the first place of the focus person. His focus on the psychological dimension became clear also in his discussion of the bogus confession of Heiner Scholz, who in his youth was the focus person of a case starting in the household supply store where he was an apprentice and where many items of chinaware fell into pieces in his presence, and continuing when Heiner, after causing too much damage in that first store, was given another apprenticeship place as an electrician. There is a video capturing how hooks just mounted into the wall of an aisle preparing for electrical installation came out of that wall by

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themselves when Heiner passed through that aisle. Nonetheless, in his adult age Heiner Scholz admitted that he had faked all the phenomena; there have been similar cases with physical mediums, too.

Only two more poltergeist case documented by Bender and the Eichhalde staff need to be mentioned briefly: the case of Nicklheim, geographically not far from Rosenheim. The significance of this case was the fact that there has been good evidence of the apport phenomena in several instances (e.g., his overcoat moved from the wardrobe located in the anteroom to the garden outside). Though this is a difficult-to-understand phenomenon, thus attracting the skeptics who are prone to ridicule it, Hans Bender always maintained the realness of it in the Nicklheim case. The other case, Scherfede, was a "water spook." Water appeared in large quantities inside a house, delivered by apparently paranormal means what could be viewed as an apport of a liquid instead of solid matter. This case was very similar to one I investigated in Vienna involving serious damage to the furniture.

Hans Bender's opinions on the RSPK phenomena were different from those of the earlier Schrenck-Notzing or Countess Wassilko, at least in these aspects that, as I feel, were characteristic for his approach:

- He paid particular attention to the social aspects, particularly the family dynamics, of the focus person. Countess Wassilko, in her Zugun study, had already emphasized the importance of the interaction of Eleonore with other persons. Bender, in his exemplary Rosenheim case, pointed out the multiplicity of stressing situations the focus person, Annemarie Schaberl, was subjected to: with her parents at home, with her boyfriend, and, last but not least, at her place of work, attorney Adam's office, with the head of office there, Mr. Engelhard.
- As he focused on the social psychological aspects, he did not follow the idea that RSPK phenomena could be converted into a "regular physical mediumship" (to use Schrenck's wording), at least he did not talk about that as a possible approach.
- He did not contemplate "breeding" the phenomena (to use the countess's wording) in order to achieve better options for studying them.
- In contrast to the earlier researchers, he tried to solve the cases with the intention of putting an end to them, based on his hu-

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> manist persuasions and the fact the he, being a physician as well as a psychologist, felt the vocation to help the people involved who in most cases experienced poltergeist phenomena as a disturbing burden.

Louis Bélanger emphasizes this humanistic approach of Hans Bender (and likewise his achievements for the academic integration of parapsychology, the establishment of the IGPP, and the importance of psychohygiene) when saying in an interview:

> Hans was part of that generation of humanists one doesn't find anymore. Today, they produce "professional idiots," i.e., people needed to be produced in a certain field but possessing a reduced overall picture. Hans Bender, in contrast, had undergone education in medicine, in philosophy, in literature, and in psychological disciplines. He was radiant, he had that approach, he had that empathy, he had that openness . . . He has been criticized for some lack of strength, which was true—as one cannot have everything. I deplore the loss of such a personality, a humanist difficult to replace. With him, a tradition, an approach, a weltanschauung is gone . . . this is sad. Tribute must be paid to Hans Bender because due to him parapsychology is not only continuing in Germany, moreover, fresh wind came into it. Through all his life in his contact with people he struggled to spread information and to raise funds for his research. Remove the Freiburg Institute and you will inflict a fatal blow to the multidisciplinary parapsychological research worldwide. Finally, it is due to Hans Bender that the dimensions of psychohygiene and psychosocial hygiene are recognized in the context of parapsychology. Since 30 years, surveys have shown that more than half of the population in industrialized countries believe in paranormal phenomena. Hans Bender was convinced that it was necessary to deal with the belief of these persons, with their worries, and their anxieties as they identify their experiences with paranormal experiences. Surely this forms the most useful and positive aspect of parapsychological activity, because scientific proof in a strict sense escapes us. (personal communication)

Walter von Lucadou

Walter von Lucadou was born at Löffingen, Germany, in October 1945. He has been married since 1969 and has three children and one granddaughter. From 1966 to 1968 von Lucadou served in the armed forces and left the army with the rank of a second lieutenant. From 1968 to

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1973, he was a student at the University of Freiburg. Though his major subject was physics, von Lucadou also studied psychology and philosophy (including two semesters at the University of Berlin). In 1971, von Lucadou received his B.A. degree from the University of Freiburg. Two years later, he received the M.A. degree in physics, also from Freiburg. For his M.A. thesis, von Lucadou carried out an experimental study on Penning-ionization with a fast beam of metastable helium atoms. From 1973 to 1977, von Lucadou was appointed to the Department of Physics at the University of Freiburg, teaching undergraduate physics students. In 1978, he received his Sc.D. in physics, also from the University of Freiburg, his Sc.D. thesis focusing on experimental investigations of chemical reactions with the crossed beam technique.

From 1977 to 1978 von Lucadou was employed as research associate at the Kiepenheuer Institute for Solar Physics at Freiburg, where he tested a new optical instrument called the lambda meter to measure Doppler shifts in solar lines.

In 1986, von Lucadou obtained a Ph.D. summa cum laude in psychology at the University of Berlin with a thesis entitled "Experimental Investigations of a Possible Influence of Observers on Stochastic Quantum-Physical Systems." From 1979 to 1985, von Lucadou was appointed to the position of assistant (assistant professor) to the chair of Psychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie (psychology and border areas of psychology) at the Department of Psychology of the University of Freiburg. In this position von Lucadou established a laboratory for parapsychological research containing a computer system, different Schmidt-type machines, and an electromagnetically shielded room for ESP experiments. Since the budget of the chair was very limited, he could only realize his plans by raising funds from several industrial companies. From 1985 to 1987, von Lucadou was appointed as visiting research associate at the Parapsychology Laboratory at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, were he carried out a follow-up study on his previous PK experiments at Freiburg University. In 1988, von Lucadou established the Parapsychologische Beratungsstelle (Parapsychological Counseling Office) at Freiburg, which is supported as an official project by the Federal Government of Baden-Württemberg. This project, which von Lucadou still leads today, helps people who have problems with spontaneous paranormal and religious experiences and those who

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have problems or questions concerning psychical abilities and techniques. The office receives about three thousand contacts per year. Furthermore, the project includes the education of teachers, medical doctors, psychologists, and psychotherapists as well as laypeople in the results of parapsychological research. Already before the parapsychological counseling project was founded, von Lucadou was also interested in field research. In cooperation with other scientists and academic institutions he investigated a number of spontaneous cases of allegedly paranormal events. Based on the traditional emphasis on psychohygiene, von Lucadou carried out a substantial amount of work in this area. Another central focus of von Lucadou' s career has been the education of undergraduate and graduate students. He supervised several diploma theses and, during a period of over five years, he gave regular lectures and seminars on parapsychology at the University of Freiburg. During this time, von Lucadou was also responsible for regular postgraduate seminars on psychological cybernetics and was invited to lecture at several other universities and institutes in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria.

In 1987, von Lucadou was invited to lecture at the Human Information Processing Group (HIP) at Princeton University, and he continued to lecture publicly and organize seminars open to the general public. In all, von Lucadou has given more than a thousand lectures in various cities in Germany and Europe and has also participated in about seven hundred television and radio interviews and discussions concerning anomalies research. Since 1980, von Lucadou has been managing editor and, since 1983, coeditor of the journal *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie* (Journal for parapsychology and border areas of psychology), established by the late Hans Bender. He is also coeditor of *Cognitive Systems* and consulting editor of the *Revue Francaise de Psychotronique* (French revue of psychotronics), Toulouse, France, and of *Transpersonale Psychologie und Psychotherapie* (Transpersonal psychology and psychotherapy), Germany. Von Lucadou has also served as a referee for many scientific journals such as the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research,* the *Journal of Parapsychology,* and the *European Journal of Parapsychology,* and for publishers such as Gordon & Breach (London). Since its inaugural meeting in 1981, von Lucadou has been a council member of the Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft zur Förderung der

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Parapsychologie (WGFP) (Scientific society for the support of parapsychology) and retains full membership in the Parapsychological Association (PA), the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), London, the Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE), USA, the European Society for the Study of Cognitive Systems (ESSCS), Netherlands, the MUFON CES, Germany, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Systemforschung e. V. (DGSF) (German society for systems research), Germany. Von Lucadou has published more than 170 scientific and popular articles concerning physics, psychology, system theory, and parapsychology as well as a number of books.

Von Lucadou's opinions on RSPK (i.e., his model of pragmatic information, MPI), are characterized by the systemic viewpoint of RSPK phenomena in which the elusivity of the phenomena plays a central role.

Elusivity

Researchers in exceptional human experiences connect the problem of RSPK to both fear and hope, stemming from the possibility of an ultimate "proof" of "genuine" paranormal phenomena to the suspicion that such occurrences would forever escape a rational scientific approach. Of course, rare phenomena are hard to observe because one is not prepared for them. However, in cases of spooks this fact seems to be particularly amplified. Hans Bender writes: "To take photos or films of RSPK phenomena during their occurrence or to audio tape acoustic phenomena encounters the difficulty—given their hitherto unproven factuality—that these phenomena appear to escape any critical access. The impression suggests itself that the intelligent forces would tease the observer and produce a phenomenon just where it cannot be captured" (1952, 160). A typical case narrated again by Bender: "We were notified that troops of the fire brigade were deployed at K.'s house. One of them told us that *during a short unattended moment*—he had just turned away his head—a puddle has built up on the kitchen floor" (1980, 195). W. G. Roll (1976, 205) reports that in the Miami case nothing happened as long as the TV crew focused the cameras on the "active spots" (Roll means by this term such areas where the phenomena had accumulated). Such observations are corroborated by many observers and reporters, though this is not always stated explicitly. Out of 116 cases analyzed by Roll (1977), in only sixteen cases such "timidness of

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observers" was stated. In Gauld and Cornell's collection (1979) of five hundred cases, this trait is not even mentioned. On the other hand, until this day there is no single photographic document (such as film or video tape) that renders an alleged RSPK phenomenon beyond doubt. For those believing that RSPK could be traced back only to delusion or deceit this fact seems plausible in a double way: (1) a nonexisting phenomenon can certainly not be captured by photo or film and (2) reporters who believe in spooks hardly admit in their reports their failure to observe or capture any phenomena.

Admittedly, there are some video recordings providing evidence of manipulations in poltergeist cases (Bender 1977b, 376). In case of fraud a direct documentation is indeed possible. This is even more true for artifacts (such as a faulty water pipes) as these are not "timid of observers." On the other hand, in many RSPK cases inexplicable occurrences are narrated by trustworthy and untrustworthy observers under circumstances that make delusion, fraud, or artifacts extremely unlikely. For this discrepancy hypothetic explanations may be specified that would not mutually exclude each other:

1. The phenomenon of no direct observability is underrepresented in relevant records as it is not recognized as a trait or otherwise it is recognized as a nasty side effect which is attributed to a lack of attention or ability of the observer and which could be avoided by skilful action.
2. There are two groups of observers: those who are able to observe poltergeist phenomena directly, whom I call 'naïve' observers in this context, and critical observers, in whose presence the phenomena do not occur or do not permit their direct observation.

When poltergeist phenomena are classified in the framework of scientific hypotheses and models, the questions of observability of the phenomena or of the role of the observer appear to be of minor importance in view of the magnitude and the mysteriousness of the reported phenomena. This is exemplified by the fact that hitherto the question about the origin of operating "forces and energies" or the question of whether objects could get into closed spaces have always been in the foreground.

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What Is Typical for the Poltergeist?

The usual patterns that occur time and again in a very similar way shall not be described here in detail; suffice to point at the large number of case collections (Bender 1977a, 1979, 1980; Gauld and Cornell 1979; Huesmann and Schriever 1989; Moser 1966, 1977; Owen 1964; Roll 1977; Thurston 1955; Tizané 1951). Essentially, the features are (inexplicable) noise (*Poltern*, from which the word "poltergeist" is derived), movement of objects with particular motion sequences, disappearance and reappearance of objects from closed spaces or containers, and so on. Often, the phenomena appear to be somehow spatially and temporally connected to a person, usually a youth, the "agent" or "elicitor" of the poltergeist case, or the focus person. The most comprehensive investigation into the variety of reported phenomena is the above mentioned analysis of five hundred poltergeist cases by Gauld and Cornell. Using a certain statistical method (cluster analysis, see Gauld and Cornell 1979, 224ff.) two classes of phenomena can be distinguished that conform the usual classification of personal (poltergeist) and local (haunting). It is noteworthy that this analysis showed no significant difference between first-hand reports and second- or third-hand ones. Contrary to the usual assumption that such narrations or rumors would exaggerate the analysis shows that in second/third hand accounts, less 'massive' phenomena are reported compared to direct witnesses. This appears to point to a social repression mechanism emphasized already by Moser (1966, 1977), a "complot of hushing up" (Bauer, Kornwachs, and Lucadou 1981) connected to the tabuization of the poltergeist topic. In our opinion rather these (socio)psychological aspects and other interrelationships governed by structural laws, as we call it, could provide clues for a theoretical description of poltergeist phenomena than too close adherence to single phenomena such the questions about, for example, the characteristics of a rapping sound, or the energy consumption for the movement of an object. In the same sense, Moser (1966) states that poltergeist activities are spatially and temporally limited; it seems that spooks occur more in the dark than in the light; and poltergeists have a selective "infectious" potential toward environment and objects (Roll 1977 calls this the "focusing effect"). The phenomena occur mostly on certain places or classes of objects and remain "attached" to them for some time. Thus, Bender reports (1977b, 370) in

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the Nicklheim case always the same objects were flying through the rooms (small dolls, toiletry articles).

Likewise, the temporal sequence of poltergeist cases shows significant patterns. Generally, the occurrences start suddenly and develop dramatically. As long as the people concerned refer to external causes such as hoax by unknown, surges in the electrical system (Rosenheim), leakages in water lines (Scherfede), and so on, the phenomena increase in strength and show a distinct "demonstrative" manifestation.

The people struck by the phenomena become increasingly unsettled and apply to their environment for help, such as police, fire brigade, or technical centers. Thereby the attention of the neighborhood becomes directed to the events. Often, there are good, trustworthy, and independent witnesses who are completely clueless as to the occurrences. I call this the "surprise phase."

Then the first conjectures crop up that something extraordinary could be the case. At this stage, usually the mass media such as press and television join in. Depending on the sociocultural background speculations like ghosts, specters, the deceased, witchcraft, spooks, and parapsychology are expressed and generally only then do scientists get the option to deal with the case. Mostly, already during the stage of conjectures the phenomena are attributed to one person or several, and the general helplessness and anxiety may transform into an inquisitive curiosity. Von Lucadou calls this the "displacement phase."

The concerned are beleaguered by sensation-seeking journalists and self-proclaimed parapsychologists or exorcists, and to the curious interest of the neighborhood, increasing pressure is added expecting the production of the phenomena that are still affirmed by the initial witnesses. As this pressure increases—often generated by visiting researchers—the phenomena diminish: the "decline phase." Sensation-seeking visitors depart disappointedly from the scene. During this phase, the focus person often is caught manipulating or deceiving.

Afterward, the final phase of a poltergeist event commences, the "repression phase." The suspicion of fraud is expressed more or less openly, involved persons and witnesses are often ridiculed by the mass media, witnesses withdraw their previous statement (at court), and exposing articles are published (Bender and Mischo 1978). The social repression mechanism—the "complot of hushing up" (Moser 1977)—has

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begun. As for the psychological characteristics of the poltergeist, the emphasis is on the hoaxing nature, as Bender pointed out in his publications time and again. Their impact is aggressive, regressive, often atavistic. In this context, the pychodiagnostic investigations of the focus person are interesting. Mischo (1970) reports a number of common features: ongoing conflicts, psychical lability, high short-term arousability, and low frustration tolerance. Bender repeatedly pointed out that poltergeist events should be understood as unconscious cries for help by the focus persons. Taboas and Alvarado (1981) contradict strongly the widespread opinion that focus persons often suffer from pathological manifestations of hysterical, epileptical, or schizophrenic origin (cf. Roll 1977). In fact, there are a number of cases where the focus persons are in no way sick; on the contrary, they show extraordinary physical vitality which may lead to the presumption that the events in question occur in lieu of of psychosomatic reactions. Furthermore, a significant disposition of the focus person toward association can be detected.

In parapsychology, it became usual to label poltergeist phenomena as recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK). It is presumed that the agent or focus person produces the strange phenomena unconsciously by direct psychical influence on physical processes—psychokinesis. At first, the problem appears only to be shifted as the essence of psychokinesis is in no way yet resolved and at least as puzzling as poltergeist. Not much is gained if psychokinesis is conceived as a hitherto unknown physical interaction (as Roll 1974 does) or kind of energy because the elusivity of the poltergeist cannot be understood by this model.

Systematic Aspects of the Poltergeist

The starting point of the system-theoretical approach is the limitation on statements based on structural laws, what means that at first no reductionistic program is pursued; it is not assumed that physics is more fundamental than, for instance, psychology. The description of a system depends on the aspect and interest of the describer and hereby on the purpose of the description (Lucadou and Kornwachs 1983). In this sense, the system theory assumes that spatial information (i.e., structural information) and temporal information (i.e., behavioral information) are terms that complement each another like position and im-

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pulse in quantum mechanics (cf. Kornwachs 1987). This is one of the basic assumptions of the model of pragmatic information (MPI) that has been described in detail elsewhere (Lucadou 1995a, b). Here we shall focus on its presumption that quantum effects may occur even in macroscopic systems, given that their complexity is large enough. If the categories of structure and behavior indeed play such a fundamental role in the description of systems, this should certainly be reflected in the description of poltergeist phenomena as well. As a matter of fact, the cluster and factor analysis of forty-six items recorded by the witnesses of fifty-four poltergeist cases in the Huesman and Schriever investigation has provided evidence that there are two factors in poltergeist cases which may be called "structure factor" and "behavior factor" respectively (Huesman and Schriever 1989) and may well be interpreted as complementary categories for the description of the poltergeist. The complementarity or incommensurability between structure and behavior may be formally expressed as follows:

$$R * A = C * N = I$$

A solid, comprehensive, and precise functional description of a system implies high reliability (R) of the system, it disallows autonomy (A) of the system. In contrast, autonomous systems can be reliable only up to a certain degree. The incommensurability between autonomy and reliability is determined by the amount of pragmatic information (I). That means the minimum information impacts the system in case of a measurement performed on it. In nonclassical systems, there is no way that this minimal amount of effect could be avoided by any trick. In quantum physics *I* equals the Planck's quantum of action *h*. In the MPI, however, *I* depends on the complexity of the system. Every measurement on a system simultaneously means a preparation of the system and vice versa. Let's imagine a biologist who wants to describe a captured animal (e.g., a raven) as precisely as possible. Standing alone, this animal is an organizational closed system (Varela 1981) that demarcates itself from its environment. That is, it has its own surface and cannot be observed without interaction with the outside world. Hence the biologist needs to take action if he wants to describe the animal; for example, the biologist locks it up in a cage. In the MPI, this preparation of the system means an

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increase in pragmatic information. Now it depends heavily on which intentions the author of the system is pursuing in the description of the system. If his orientation is behavioristic, he will not be interested in limiting the autonomy of the raven resulting in only moderate reliability. If he, in contrast, is a zoological anatomist he will limit its autonomy and increase the reliability—he will kill it. To some extent, the pragmatic information represents a testing probe that on one hand may destroy the phenomenon or on the other may be absorbed in an immunizing reaction that in turn would constitute no more scientific investigation. In this case one had to address it as participation rather than observation. Whereas according to the fundamental equation of the MPI the organizational closed system will perform the way that the product of autonomy (A) and reliability (R) remains constant, the interaction with the observer will be reflected in novelty (N) and confirmation (C). The component of novelty denotes what is really new and surprising within the transmitted information. However, pure novelty could not be understood, it would show no effect. Hence the component of confirmation needs always to be present which in a way ensures the 'anchoring' of the new information within the observer. Pure confirmation, on the other hand, is not information either; it has long since been established and therefore has no more effect. In particular, the scientific requirement of replicability demands confirmation. The poltergeist, however, primarily provides novelty. The interplay of reliability and autonomy, or confirmation and novelty, respectively, changes with each interaction with the system, yet has to remain constant in their product as the poltergeist is limited in its possibilities of action (pragmatic information). This results not only in a quite natural explanation for the strange elusivity of the poltergeist but also for its underlying mechanisms. Moreover, it becomes clear why poltergeist is inherent in social systems.

A Sequence of Poltergeist Events Constructed in Accordance with the MPI

The profit of the system theoretical approach consists mainly in the fact that in the first place it is not necessary to probe each and every single phenomenon for its authenticity as the decisive interactions between the ones involved with the poltergeist and their observers do not necessarily need to be paranormal. For constructing an "ideally typical" poltergeist based on this model, we start with the focus person (agent

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of the poltergeist case). Normally, he will be in a difficult stage of his development (e.g., puberty) and will attempt to communicate his problems somehow to his environment. In order to make the pragmatic information of his message arrive and understood, he needs to allot the relation of novelty and confirmation in that way that he receives the necessary attention. If we further assume that his message falls on deaf ears with his family, it may be that the agent—consciously or unconsciously—embarks on the strategy of increasing the novelty of his message. As is generally known, novelty creates attention, thus a ribald prank, a hoax, but also psychokinesis, may well arouse the attention of the environment; the surprise phase of poltergeist shows this explicitly. Whether by hoax or by psychokinesis, the agent may be sure that he or rather the phenomenon will receive full attention of the audience during the surprise phase. But is his cry for help really understood? The naive observers search for all possible causes of the inexplicable yet fail to realize its real meaning.

Paradoxically, the chances that the environment would at last realize what the point is are sometimes higher with hoaxes than with authentic poltergeists. If the originator is found out, there is at least a chance that it will be reflected why the agent has acted that way. In cases of authentic poltergeists, this route is initially obstructed—the causes are searched for in completely different places: in technical failures, in malevolent neighbors, in ghosts or gremlins; the true message is not received. Therefore, the poltergeist can riot further. Already during this phase, the elusivity of the poltergeist becomes clear: of course, the people want to see "something." This they can; however, the poltergeist always is in places where it is not expected. Afterward, the second phase of the poltergeist event commences. Here it becomes clear that the phenomena are connected to the focus person. Here, the naive observers and the focus person create a new organizational closure (Varela 1981); they constitute the (conspiratory) unit of those who have witnessed the really inexplicable miracles of the focus person and are now exposed to the disbelieving, probing questions of the visiting critical observers—journalists and researchers alike. During this phase, normally the previously isolated focus person becomes the epicenter of the naive observers—that social group at which the cry for help had been directed to. Insofar, his goal would have been met, unless there

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were no critical observers. They produce a significant pressure of expectation and alter the observed system again by their observation. The aim of their description of the system is the doubtless and dependable documentation of the phenomena; that means to prepare their object of observation reliably, which—according to the fundamental equations—necessarily will lead to a decrease in novelty.

The visiting critical observers are still interested in the facts, albeit sometimes less interested in the affected persons; yet it is not excluded that even they may still experience something from the initial dynamic. However, it is much more likely that something will—perhaps not even with malevolent intention—be stage-managed for them; this staging may very well be a group effort. Often the surprisingly simple moral justification for such manipulations consists in the fact that the involved know how it really was and do not object to reenacting the phenomena. Thus fraud, too, crops up at the border between the organizationally closed system of those interested in the poltergeist and the society. After the decline effect, the poltergeist case ends with the repression phase, the phase of hushing up. Neither the society nor the bodies of the state have any interest in the anarchy of a poltergeist event. It is their goal to have reliable systems at their command (or to govern them). In poltergeist cases, too, the preparing effect of publicity becomes clear. From this viewpoint it is definitely no coincidence that, at least in Germany, jurists, forensic medical doctors, and police officers feel the vocation to do in the poltergeist (and parapsychology likewise) (cf. Bender and Mischo 1978).

United Kingdom

Among the leading contemporary British experts in the field of parapsychology are Alan Gauld and Tony Cornell; from the former generations, Father Thurston, S.J., would merit a place here, too; however, there is only one British researcher who is going to be portrayed here, as he is the best known (and most controversial) from the classical era: Harry Price.

Harry Price

Harry Price, the founder and director of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research established in 1925–1926, later known as the Uni-

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versity of London Council for Psychical Investigation, was born on January 17, 1861, in England.[11] In 1920, he became a member of the SPR, and from 1925 to 1931, he served as the foreign research officer for the ASPR. From childhood on, he was interested in magic and sleight of hand; subsequently he later became a member of the Society of American Magicians and of the Magic Circle, and eventually became the vice president of the Magicians Club, London. This made him well suited to discover attempts of deceit by mediums and to expose them. He collected a 20,000-volume library rich in works on this topic, which now is the Harry Price Library at the University of London, based on which he published the excellent bibliography *Short-Title Catalogue of Works on Psychic Research, Spiritualism, Magic, Etc.*, and which Hans Bender later intended to get for his institute at the Strasbourg Reichsuniversität during the 1940s but failed.

Price's interest in magic and conjuring caused him to develop an equally deep-rooted interest in psychical phenomena, mediumism as well as poltergeists and hauntings, and he became almost a fanatic in researching these topics.

Price was a businessman, not a trained scientist, yet his studies of applied sciences in evening classes at a college made him well qualified for the type of research he undertook. His business was in the paper manufacture, where he successfully invented machinery, too, that made him a wealthy man who could, like Schrenck-Notzing, not only support his own laboratory and research himself but also assist others.

The expressed aim of the National Laboratory he established was to subject mediumship, telepathy, clairvoyance, and phenomena to scientifically controlled examination using electrical and mechanical apparatus as well as his knowledge of magical tricks. In the field as well as in his laboratory, Price investigated the leading mediums of his time, exposing many of them as bogus and writing voluminous reports that led to scientific conflicts with other psychical researchers. Among the mediums he found genuine were the Schneider brothers, Stella Cranshow (whose mediumship he had discovered), Eleonore Zugun, and Eileen Garrett (who later founded the Parapsychology Foundation). His most famous investigation was the haunting case of Borley Rectory (Sussex) with a long history of apparitions and related

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phenomena. In 1929, Price was requested to investigate that case, which took him eighteen years to complete, visiting the premises many times, holding séances there and interviewing witnesses; at times, so he claims, he became witness to ostensible paranormal phenomena at Borley himself. The outcome was two books, *The Most Haunted House in England* and *The End of Borley Rectory*. The case was controversial and remains so.

He wrote several books and nearly two hundred articles (more than 100 were newspaper articles) and pamphlets, and published the *British Journal of Psychical Research* and various *Bulletins* and the *Proceedings of the National Laboratory* where he authored many of the contributions himself.

Price was very active in the field and traveled a lot in order to see foreign mediums. He visited the Austrian physical medium Maria Silbert, as well as Eleonore Zugun at Countess Wassilko's apartment whom he subsequently invited to his National Laboratory. Not only was he active in research; he was also very active in promoting the field in the public, sometimes by means that are more than questionable. The famous Brocken experiment is an example. Price undertook it to put the ancient witchcraft ritual to test that if at a certain moment during a certain night of the year a pure virgin would kiss a he-goat on the Brocken mountain in Germany this animal would transform into a man. Of course, it did not. Yet it received widespread press coverage (what has been Price's intention) ridiculing the field (e.g., was the moment of the kiss determined not exactly enough, was the virgin no virgin, or was perhaps the legend but pure superstition?). The media coverage Price received for his different research projects—he invited them to all his major investigations—was enormous. At the Harry Price Library, curator Alan Wesencraft kindly showed me the many volumes with newspaper clippings of reports on his activities in the field. Price loved publicity; however, I feel he was on an ego trip, severely overdoing it. The Brocken experiment backfired as it harmed his reputation in scientific circles.

Another spectacular investigation was the one of fire walking. In our time, fire walking has become widely known as a part of the New Age movement. This was not the case in the years before the war. Price invited the fakir Kuda Bux, who performed his fire-walking ritual during

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which a few parameters could be measured. Price later published a record in the *British Medical Journal* (1953).

There have been two incidents—besides Price's conduct of carrying out the questionable Brocken experiment—that have, rightly or wrongly, severely damaged his reputation in academia: his so-called exposure of Rudi Schneider and an incident at Borley Rectory.

It appears that during the early 1930s there was competition among different laboratories and different groups of psychical researchers. Price, whose intention was the same as Schrenck-Notzing's—to arrange laboratory conditions so stringently that fraud became impossible—published his account on his séances with Rudi Schneider, boasting about having obtained genuine abnormal phenomena.[12] Yet the outcome was another confirmation and did not render any new results. Such new results were obtained shortly later by the father and son team of the Ostys at the Institute Métapsychique International, Paris, where it was established that Rudi's "force" (or "substance/force," as the Ostys' have it, equaling the older "ectoplasm") was oscillating by the same frequency as his breathing (which was much accelerated during his trance). This was a breakthrough! Another competitor was a group of SPR members headed by Lord Charles Hope negotiating a series of new séances with Rudi. Then Harry Price published a strange photo of Rudi obtained during a new series of séances; however, he held it back at first and published it only several months, almost one year, after he had taken it. This photo shows Rudi with one arm doubled—either during a movement or (more likely, but this is a matter of dispute) due to a double exposure. Clearly someone was cheating, either Rudi on Price or vice versa. Admittedly the electrical control was not used during this séance—why? Was this Price's trap for Rudi to fall into? Apart from the photo itself, it is very strange that Price withheld it so long. Quite a number of publications have been written on that topic, many of them accusing Price for ill doing, some of them defending him—it would lead too far to go into the pro and con. Moreover, all this refers to physical mediumism, not to poltergeists and hauntings, yet it is deemed necessary to shed some light on Price's character that is assessed very controversially by different authors.

Whereas this affair of the Rudi picture damaged Price's credibility during his lifetime, other allegations came after his death on March 29, 1948. In essence, he was accused of having faked phenomena at Borley

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Rectory! The report containing these accusations shows a heavy bias against Price, yet again there is no space here to balance the pro and con carefully against each other.

John Randall (2000), one of Price' apologists, yet apparently a careful researcher, summarizes on this particular issue as follows: "the Borley case remains the most fully documented example of a haunting in the annals of psychical research, and Price's accumulation of a vast dossier of eye-witnesses reports is a major contribution to the study of spontaneous phenomena. His work on poltergeists (1945) is a useful source-book which has been quoted in several more recent publications (e.g. Carrington & Fodor 1953; Gauld & Cornell 1979)."

Randall's overall assessment of Price's achievements:

> The growth of so much interest [sc. in psychical research or parapsychology] within the academic world and among the general public was largely due to the efforts of one man, Harry Price. He undoubtedly put more time, effort and money into psychical research than any other Englishman since the days of the founding fathers of the SPR. His experimental and investigative work was extensive, his reports voluminous and detailed. Yet after his death he was vilified and portrayed by several writers as a liar and a cheat, with the result that much what he achieved has been rendered null and void.

So far, I fully concur with these statements; however, the author continues, "It is my contention that the case against Harry Price has been overstated, and that a serious reappraisal of his work is long overdue." Whether overstated or not, the future will show; anyway, Price's importance in the research in poltergeists and hauntings is high enough that he could not be bypassed in this biographical listing.

United States

Parapsychology (or psychical research) has a long history in the United States since the days of William James and since the foundation of the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) in 1885.

There are also many well-qualified contemporary researchers in the field who are particularly interested in poltergeist phenomena and hauntings, and a number of popularizers in addition. Within the scien-

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tists, Michaleen Maher and Andrew Nichols are well known figures, however, the undisputed senior in this field is Danish-born Bill Roll.

William G. Roll

When Roll was a schoolboy in Birkerød, Denmark, he began having out-of-body experiences at night. There was nothing exotic about his OBEs, as he later learned to call them; he just walked around the house and once in the yard outside. But the experience of being outside of his body was unmistakable, and he was as clearheaded out of the body as in. In an experiment he once tried to stick his hand through a wall but pulled it back when it was only partially in; it felt too strange. Another time, after a nap in the afternoon, it had gotten dark and he went to turn on the light by the door but saw his finger move through the switch and discovered that his body was still on the bed. His mother had died in 1942, sometime before the first of his OBEs, and he has lately wondered if they were a response to his distress. He was sixteen years old. Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany, and two years later, in 1944, he joined the resistance movement.

The OBEs made him read books about parapsychology and about the self. He was especially impressed by the Bhagavad Gita, the old Indian text that tells of a world soul which embraces everything that exists. This was vastly different from his OBEs and much more interesting. He thought that if there actually is a world soul and if it can be experienced, war and conflict would surely cease.

In 1945, Germany surrendered, and the year after that he went to the University of California in Berkeley to study OBEs and the world soul. He might as well have gone to the moon. Then he read a paper by Henry H. Price (1940), a philosophy professor at Oxford University who had a theory about ESP. Price accepted him as a student. In the meantime Bill had married, and Muriel and he went to Oxford for a year. Eileen Garrett, head of the Parapsychology Foundation in New York, visited the parapsychology laboratory and reading room he had set up in their house. She invited him to give a talk at a conference she had arranged at the University of Utrecht, Holland, to honor the appointment of W. H. C. Tenhaeff to a professorship in parapsychology that had just been established. This was the first parapsychology conference he attended and the first in a series of international conferences

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arranged by the Parapsychology Foundation. Mrs. Garrett provided a three-year grant so he could continue his research at Oxford, and the University and the Society for Psychical Research gave smaller grants. The year stretched to seven. Dr. Rhine visited (Bill has a photo of Dr. Rhine holding Lise, their firstborn, in his arms) and later invited Bill to join his group at Duke University.

Nothing was further from his mind than poltergeist and haunting. If he had been told that one of the colleges was haunted, he wouldn't have bothered to stop by. The *Journal of Parapsychology* was his guide, and his interest in psi was strictly experimental. His tests mostly used ESP cards that Dr. Rhine had sent from Duke (Roll 1975). As far as he was concerned, things that happened outside the laboratory were too uncertain to be taken seriously.

There was a current of research that had not reached Rhine's journal but was prominent in old volumes of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*—psychometric tests with mediums (Roll 1975). Psychometry, in the parapsychological sense of the word, is the practice where an object from a person, such as a piece of jewelry or clothing, is used to obtain ESP information about events in the person's life. If a psychometric object is more than placebo, material objects contain or channel information. This did not make sense in terms of traditional physics.

Price (1940) had a psychological theory for psychometry. Memories, he proposed, are not only a property of living beings but also of inanimate objects; psychometry is perception of the "place-memories" of an object. Others (Osty 1923; Roll 1975, 1978) had found that recent, frequent, or emotionally significant events are especially likely to be perceived. This makes sense if psychometry is a type of remembering. Psychometry died down as a topic for research but is practiced outside the lab by psychics who attempt to find missing persons or solve crimes (Duncan and Roll 1995).

Price suggested that reality is made up of mental units or "subminds," each with its own perspective and place memories. When the body occupies a submind, you have a sensory experience from that point of view. But you can also have a submind experience without the body as in ESP. Subminds, he thought, make up a world soul of which individual minds are dissociated segments. ESP occurs when the dissociation is momentarily suspended.

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Perception itself is perception of place memories. Because of the time it takes light and other sensory stimuli to reach the body, the sense organs do not tell you about the object as it exists at the present moment. What you experience is the past of the object (sensory processing adding additional delays). The stars seen from earth are light years in the past; the cup on the table is a fraction of a fraction of a second away.

Memory is involved in ESP in another way (Roll 1976). A test for ESP is also a memory test because the subject has to remember the symbols or numbers used as targets. When ESP impressions take the form of visual or auditory impressions, these too appear to be the subject's own memories, tailored to fit a distant event.

Sense perception itself is part recall; you can use a collage of shapes and colors as a cup because of your memories of cups. But in ESP, sensory signals are prevented from reaching the subject; ESP is limited to the object's place memories. It is the same with precognition. Like ordinary prediction, precognition comes from knowing the past; but precognition can see things that prediction may miss because the database of precognition includes place memories.

Bill Roll could not test his OBEs in the lab because he was unable to bring them on at will. But a student at Duke who had frequent OBEs, Keith Harary, was able to induce his on demand. Their tests with visual targets did not succeed. Keith experienced being in the room with the targets during his OBEs but the things he saw were not the targets. He had better success when he tried to interact with his pet kitten (Morris et al. 1972).

About the same time, Roll was finally able to test one of his own OBEs. One night he had a clear experience of leaving his body on the bed and walking to the sitting room. There he was met with a display of light and shadow from moonlight striking the furniture. To test if he was really there, he went down on hands and knees and measured the shadow of a small table with his right hand. He returned to the bedroom with this precious information, aroused his body, walked back to the sitting room, and found this in complete darkness. He had to conclude that his OBEs were only dreams, though interesting dreams.

The most rewarding research was ESP card-guessing tests with Sean Harribance, a psychic from Trinidad. Bob Morris (Morris et al. 1972) found that Sean scored best when his EEG showed the alpha brain

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wave. (Bob was later appointed professor of parapsychology at the University of Edinburgh.) Much later (Roll 2002) it was found that a certain segment of Sean's brain (the parietal-occipital region) was activated when he gave psychic readings. It seemed that this might have been Sean's "ESP cortex."

Sean succeeded with some experimenters but failed with others. The experimenter effect is characteristic of psi. Results in tests of ESP and PK are affected by the social setting in which the results are obtained. Outside the lab, ESP is usually about family and friends and usually about events with a strong emotional charge. Psi is a social affair. This constellation of people, animals, and objects has been called the "long body," an American Indian term for the tribal body. The bonds that hold the long body together are invisible but can be extremely strong; humans will lay down their lives so that their group will survive and prosper. To understand the cause of conflict and war, you have to understand the long body.

While at Duke, Roll directed the research of the Psychical Research Foundation, which had been formed to explore whether consciousness survives death. Surveys (Roll 1982, 1997) of apparitions of the dead, communications by mediums, and memories of previous lives said that place memories continue after death but there is little evidence that people persist as independent and autonomous beings. However, the long-body to which an individual belongs, will survive the person's death. Near-death experiences, may show glimpses of the long body and of the world soul.

When he first came to Duke, he hoped to learn the secret of the successful ESP experimenter. But he was unable to obtain even the modest level of statistical significance he got at Oxford. Then Dr. Rhine asked Gaither Pratt, the assistant director of the lab, and Roll to look into the "house of flying objects," as the papers dubbed it, in Seaford, Long Island. They spent ten days at the Herrmann home (Pratt and Roll 1958), interviewing the family and police about their experiences of moving objects and pieces of furniture. While Roll and Pratt were with the family upstairs, there was an explosive sound from the basement and they found that a bottle with laundry detergent had lost its cap, fallen over and was spilling its contents. This was but one of many poppings of bottles with screw caps. The family suspected a spiritual cause and put out

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bottles with holy water; but they too had screw caps and popped. The incidents only happened when Jimmy, the twelve-year-old son, was home and awake; they attributed them to recurrent spontaneous PK, or RSPK, and thought that Jimmy was the RSPK agent.

The following years Roll went to other homes where RSPK was reported (Roll and Persinger 2001). In each, he attempted to identify the incidents that could have been fraud and then analyzed the rest for clues about how RSPK works.

Four features stood out:

1. The incidents reflected the relationship between the agent and other members of the family or group, the agent's long body.
2. The objects that were affected represented these individuals.
3. Visitors, including investigators, who paid attention to the agent joined the agent's long body and were rewarded with moving objects.
4. The incidents were displays of physical energy. When Roll measured the distances of the occurrences from the agent, he found the numbers decreased with increased distance, the same shown by known forms of energy.

To widen the database Roll included RSPK reports by others (Roll 1996). There were 116 cases in total that could not easily be dismissed as fraud. A large proportion involved RSPK agents who showed symptoms of what is now called CPS or complex partial seizure. Since CPS is due to recurrent electromagnetic discharges in the brain, he thought RSPK might be an electromagnetic phenomenon. The discharges are far too weak to levitate objects, but a physicist, Hal Puthoff (known also for his experiments in remote viewing) suggested that the agent may affect the zero-point energy, a universal electromagnetic field that interacts with gravity and inertia. If the RSPK agent interacts with the ZPE, this could cancel the gravitational pull that usually keeps things in place (Roll 2002). There is another electromagnetic link; RSPK tends to occur on days of above-average geomagnetic perturbations—disturbances in the earth's magnetic field. If zero-point energy underlies RSPK, this suggests that the ZPE has a consciousness aspect and perhaps is the seat of the world soul. Procedures that may facilitate

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awareness of a world soul, such as meditation and yoga, are part of the exploration.

RSPK is rare, but Roll often gets calls from families who complain that their house is haunted and ask for help. These localized anomalous occurrences (LAOs) typically include sounds of footsteps, banging sounds, indistinct human voices, a sense of presence, night paralysis where someone or something seems to hold you down, and apparitions. The latter rarely represent deceased occupants but sometimes resemble living people in the area. If there are dogs in the home, they are likely to behave as if they sense something invisible to humans.

There are sometimes physical incidents. Locked doors may open and personal belongings are said to disappear from one location and to be found in another. There is often interference with electric power and installations. Flash photos with digital or 35 millimeter cameras may show cloudlike formations or other constellations invisible to the naked eye. The most disturbing aspect of some haunts is health problems in the occupants. Dogs and other pets who are in good health when brought to the home may suddenly die.

Anomalous electromagnetic or geomagnetic fields have been detected at haunts. Apparitions and other subjective experiences may result when these fields interact with the brain. The same fields may cause the electric disturbances and movement of objects with ferrite components. Roll suspects that more extensive movements of objects are RSPK due to stress.

Psychic discoveries are lining up with current physics. In the two-slit experiment, photons behave like waves or like particles according to whether or not the process is being observed, an example of John Wheeler's (1990) "observer participancy" and, it seems, of PK. Roy Frieden (1998) has extended Wheeler's idea to large-scale objects. According to Frieden, observation injects information into its object, and the information interacts with the object's energy and matter. Information is memory, and information in an object is equivalent to the object's place memory. Information is not passive, according to Frieden but "a physical entity" that can "flow" from one object to another (Frieden 1998, 106), a description that also fits ESP and PK.

Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne (1989) have extended the physical concept of complementarity to parapsychology, quite similar to the ear-

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lier Jung-Pauli discourse: the same event can be either physical or mental depending on your perspective, but not at the same time. Physicists and parapsychologists are talking about the same world and both say that this world is a human creation.

Conclusion

After a journey in time of more than one hundred years between the first and the last publication of the personalities portrayed here, the questions suggest themselves: what has changed over this time span, and what has remained constant? Certainly, one might answer, the theoretical models have changed, whereas the phenomena remain always the same; moreover, their uniformity is, as we have seen, one of the characteristics of poltergeists and hauntings. This obvious answer is premature, as it is not incorrect but somehow incomplete. What remains missing in this view is the potential further development toward physical mediumism, an indispensable aspect of how Schrenck-Notzing (together with Richet, *the* exponent of the classical era), Countess Wassilko, and others from that era viewed poltergeists.

Apparently, physical mediumism is out of fashion now. There is no physical mediumship these days, at least none that can be subjected to scientific scrutiny.[13] Skeptics have an answer ready as to the reasons for this development: the better control conditions of our time do not allow cheating by fraudulent mediums, and this is why physical mediumism came to an end. The tacit assumption behind this kind of statement is obviously that there is no such thing as genuine physical mediumistic phenomena. Clearly this argument is circular. Discussing control conditions here would lead too far; suffice to say that neither in Amereller's control apparatus (employed at Schrenck-Notzing's and later at Harry Price's laboratory) nor in Osty's experimental design any flaws have been detected.[14] Thus the skeptics' view needs to be rejected. Rather the very statement that physical mediumism is out of fashion as such is the answer. It must not be overlooked that there are psychological elements changing over time that may best be characterized by the word "fashion." During the nineteenth century it was fashionable for (especially young) ladies to faint now and then. Today young ladies who drive cars, and so on, do not even know what a vinaigrette is. Fainting

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is just out of fashion. A quarter of a century ago Uri Geller's metal bending was trendy—today it is still around, like Geller himself, but it is no longer in fashion. In the very same way, I think, physical mediumism simply faded away and passed out of fashion with the changes from the paradigm of the classical era to the Rhinean paradigm. "Telekinesis" in the older paradigm is quite different from "psychokinesis" in Rhine's theoretical framework, even from macro-PK. In the telling example of Grabinski—the author whom I portrayed as traditional Roman Catholic—we saw how phenomena (haunts in that particular context) are, within the limits of their general uniformity, shaped to the expectation of the respective clientele of parish priests and other members of the clergy. Likewise, phenomena are shaped to fit the researcher's expectations and preoccupations, including his theoretical framework. If no one undertakes to do research in physical mediumism, it comes as no surprise that physical mediumism has declined and can now almost no more be found.

To return to our question, what has changed over the period under review?

The changes are twofold, whereby both aspects go side by side:

- Changes in the theoretical models to explain spooky events, both poltergeists and hauntings
- Changes in the handling and the attitude toward the focus persons

For the parapsychologists active in poltergeist research during the first half of the twentieth century, the focus was on the agent, and his or her "specific abilities," "spook mediumship." During the second half of last century, attention shifted to the social situation the agent was embedded in and on his exposure to (emotional) stress by his environment. The earlier view called for keeping the phenomena alive as a study object, doing everything possible to provoke and increase them. The later view, based on the humanist argument, called for helping those involved get rid of the disturbances, actually to stop the phenomena. In other words, the humanist attitude of trying to terminate the disturbing occurrences caused the disappearance of their later states and has possibly added to the loss of the phenomena of physical mediumship. There is a parallel to this development in medicine:

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modern treatment during early stages caused quite a number of disease patterns to disappear; for example, untreated examples of late-stage breast cancer are now seen only in the specimens of anatomical museums, not in patients.

The Zugun case is a good example how the poltergeist responds to suggestions by observers and how single phenomena could be triggered. A counterpart to this was the Rosenheim case some forty years later where an analog response could be observed: someone made the remark, "It is merely wanting that pictures on the wall would start rotating" and shortly afterward this happened: one picture moved around the hook some three-quarters of a circle and came to a halt there in a very weird position due to the fact that the wire it was hung on had wound up itself around the hook (by the way, one of the rare cases that could be taped). To summarize the fact that the poltergeist responds to external stimuli has long been acknowledged.

Opinions have changed as to possible modifiers of the phenomena. Schrenck-Notzing suspected a possible influence of the phases of the moon, however, it turned out that this is not the case. Presently geomagnetic perturbations are in the foreground and it appears that they may play a role in several cases; nevertheless, there are cases (e.g., the Zugun case) where no influence of the geomagnetic fluctuations was evident. Thus, geomagnetism may play just a subsidiary role.

Where do we stand right now in our theoretical modeling? It may appear that the choice is between the MPI and the long body. To decide in favor of one or the other is, in my opinion, not a question of "right" and "wrong." Rather, the question is, Which model of the two better describes the phenomena in question? In other words, which one can account for more features arising out of the model that are also found in real poltergeist cases, and which one starts from fewer basic premises? It might well be that depending on which patterns of a given case are in the foreground, one might prefer one model or the other, whichever could account better for some specific characteristics—the two models could turn out to be complementary to one another, with their explanatory power on different aspects of the entire poltergeist issue.

There remains a final question: What about the spirits and man's search for them?

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As demonstrated in the short biographies above, the spiritualistic interpretation found more approval with researchers from Romanic countries (particularly Bozzano, who was a declared spiritualist, and to a certain extent Flammarion, who remained somehow ambiguous in reference to poltergeist and haunting cases) than with those from German-speaking and Anglophone countries. (1) Only Puls discusses a spiritualistic interpretation yet he dissociates himself strongly from ordinary spiritism and advocates kind of refined "reasonable" spiritism, the details of which remain unclear. He recognizes the role of the agent, whom he calls the "spook medium," somehow connects to spirits from the "beyond." (2) For the very marginal traditional Roman Catholic camp (Grabinski), the afterlife is an important part of their religious persuasion.[15] Grabinski does not draw conclusions from hauntings to the likelihood of an afterlife; rather, he finds in haunting cases irrefutable evidence for the independent existence of a human soul and its continuation after death.[16] Apart from those two, no researcher finds any reason to resort to the belief in spirits. Schrenck-Notzing still uses the term "spook medium" but without any spiritistic connotations. For him a medium mediates the phenomena, not the spirits. Countess Wassilko treats Eleonore's *dracu* like an independent person; however, this is just a style of easy-to-use references, a *façon de parler,* whereas the countess is well aware that the *dracu* has no existence on its own and is, as she emphasizes time and again, just a personification originating in Eleonore's devil complex (i.e., her unconsciousness). Since the onset of the twentieth century, poltergeist phenomena are generally ascribed to living persons, whether they are called spook mediums, agents, or focus persons, without any reference to spirits or any notion of a beyond. Though there were some changes as to the source of the phenomena, or perhaps more to the wording for this source—from mediumship to psi—they are credited to psychic abilities of the agents themselves, not to external, independent spirits. Thus, playing with words, one could say it is the spirit within man that generates the phenomena, and there is no need to fall back on any kind of external spirit. This view is generally acknowledged today. One might be inclined to call it the modern view, were there not the fact that this view is at least half a millennium old. It was Henricus Cornelius Agrippa ab Nettesheim[17], a famous Renaissance scholar, who versed:

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Nos habitat, non tartara, sed nec sidera coeli,
Spiritus in nobis, qui viget, illa facit.

In us—neither in the underworld, nor in the stars of the sky—
Dwells the Spirit that, if it is strong, causes such.[18]

Notes

1. The biographers of Le Verrier, who discovered by calculation the planet Neptune in 1846 and thus won immense glory, record that his irritable nature led to endless conflicts with his colleagues.

2. A title which, given the concerns of the time, was not considered excessively audacious.

3. Flammarion used his personal observatory in the suburbs of Paris.

4. L. Flammarion, 1923, *Les maisons hantées* (Paris:Lib. Ernest Flammarion, chap. 10.

5. The astronomer Gabrielle Renaudot (1878–1962), coworker of Camille Flammarion (whom he married after the death of his first wife), once went with him to a friend's house and was given the bed of the owner's dead wife. The room was furnished with objects belonging to the deceased, whose large portrait hung facing the bed. Mlle Renaudot's own words were: "I was impressed enough." On the first night (April 25, 1918) she suffered from sleeplessness and on the two following ones, she heard cracking sounds from a wall and in the bed, footsteps, and violent knocks struck in the portrait. For the night of April 27 we have a second witness because Renaudot, frightened, asked a servant to keep her company.

6. See note 4.

7. This point of view is identical to the one that certain scientists hold about UFOs.

8. In *La réalité du monde sensible* (1902).

9. Anglophone readers may be surprised by the spelling used here, which nonetheless is the correct one.

Eusapia Paladino (1854–1918) was semi-illiterate and had problems spelling her own name. Sometimes she signed pictures with "Paladino" (which is correct; e.g., Moser 1935 contains a picture of her that is clearly signed "Paladino"), and at other times with "Palladino." Owing to a picture in the possession of Eric J. Dingwall (once the critical research officer of the SPR) on which she erroneously signed her name with double l, this (wrong) spelling, "Palladino," made its entry into the world of Anglophone parapsychology. The very first sentence the late Emilio Servadio, famous Italian parapsychologist and psychoanalyst, uttered toward me when the topic of Eusapia Paladino

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came up in our conversation was, "Paladino–with only one *l*." Thus I feel it is time to correct this protracted mistake.

10. 1872–1874, *Spiritistisch-rationalistische Blätter;* 1874–1925, *Psychische Studien*, becoming more and more critical; 1926–1934, *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*.

11. Though it was Harry Price's personal enterprise, he labeled it National Laboratory. It appears to me that from its onset there was a certain subliminal antagonism to the SPR, which definitely increased over the years.

12. Actually Price had several devices of Schrenck-Notzing's laboratory (e.g., the electrical control apparatus) copied.

13. Assessments of the Scole group are highly controversial. There are good reasons to remain reserved.

14. Even Pascual Jordan, a theoretical physicist with a positive bias toward parapsychology, uttered that the phenomena published by Schrenck-Notzing were "without remainder" to be ascribed to fraud. It is significant that he neither states any reasons for this general remark nor gives any concrete example for his critique.

15. This camp was marginal in Grabinski's time and has slipped even further since. Yet, for the sake of completeness, I include it here.

16. It must be noted that Grabinski's publications all stem from the time prior of the Second Vatican Council after which the Catholic doctrine on the relationship of soul and body was somehow rephrased, to say the least.

17. Born in 1486 in Cologne; died in 1535 in Grenoble.

18. "Such" refers to paranormal phenomena.

References

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