

NEW SCIENCE PERSPECTIVES ON GHOSTS AND OTHER PARANORMAL PHENOMENA

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Note concerning the original context for this talk transcript: An earlier version was delivered at the October 2014 Aradale Creativity Retreat (held at Aradale Asylum, Ararat, Victoria). The Retreat weekend was organised by Cohesian Press and the audience for the talk included speculative fiction writers (horror, fantasy and SF) as well professional mediums and members of the Australian Paranormal Society. Consequently the tone is highly speculative and exploratory – the goal being to inspire creative writers and

artists – rather than overly ‘academic’.

NB: Photo of courtyard at the abandoned Aradale Asylum is courtesy of Cohesian Press.

Introduction

Before beginning this presentation I should say that I have never seen myself as a religious person - in fact I feel profoundly alienated from most of the world's major religions. On the other hand I have never felt comfortable with the world-view advocated by mechanistic (let's call it Baconian-Newtonian-Cartesian-Darwinian) science. You should also know that I am not a physicist, though the aspects of the New Science under discussion here - as well as their consequences for modern perspectives on the paranormal – have been harvested from the works of contemporary physicists from around the world.

NEW VISTAS FOR FANTASTIC LITERATURE: I'm a writer, poet, teacher and, I guess, Transpersonal Psychologist and my interest in our topic arises out of other interests: an interest in fantastic literatures of all kinds, a love of myths and legends and a fascination with the place of transpersonal experiences in the lives of individuals¹. A

¹ Transpersonal Psychology, developed in the mid-to-late 20th century and accepted dimensions to the psyche and collective psyche outlawed and disparaged as 'occultist' by classical science and the major schools of psychology including psychoanalysis. Transpersonal psychologists argue for a realm of the psyche - the 'psychoid' realm (Jung) and the 'Transpersonal Unconscious' (Grof) - that processes phenomenon ordinarily dismissed by psychologies influenced by mechanistic science. Some Transpersonal Psychologists working with traditional peoples speak of a continuum of ghost and spirit related phenomena with explanations ranging from split off projections, memories related to childhood and disowned aspects of the self, to inter-dimensional presences, helper spirits and unresolved

major goal of this presentation will be to provide new imaginative vistas for writers of fantastic literature.

LET'S FACILITATE A 'PARANORMAL IS NORMAL' COLLAPSE OF THE WAVE FUNCTION: It is useful to state now that I do not intend to prove or disprove any particular event we discuss today by resort to mechanistic science alone. Increasingly Classical science is understood, by leading physicists, to be incapable of fully describing reality to us – some of the reasons will be discussed as we progress - consequently to prove or disprove particular events by resort only to that paradigm seems like something of a dead end. My intention here is simply to suggest new ways of explaining certain puzzling events by resort to New Science developments. Since in this paradigm consciousness/es may play a key role in structuring 'reality' we will attempt, as much as possible, to free our thinking of our habitual, but largely outdated, mechanistic constraints.

LIFE ACCORDING TO MECHANISTIC SCIENCE: I was raised in a world in which the classical scientific paradigm prevailed. Francis Bacon's 'scientific method' supplemented by Newton, Descartes, Darwin and to a certain extent Einstein were at the heart of the reality paradigm that conditioned my experience of the world. However, as I will show, insights from quantum mechanics, contemporary cosmological thinking and transpersonal forms of psychology (especially Jungian and Grofian perspectives) suggest new ways of understanding paranormal phenomena.

Let us quickly summarise some key pillars of Classical science.

MIND AS PASSIVE EPIPHENOMENA TO BIOLOGY: In this paradigm - which in scientific circles (if not in popular culture) had its heyday in the lead-up to the first world war and was in full throttle decline by the end of the Second World War - the physical universe is out there as a more or less fixed external phenomenon and animal and human consciousness (mind) is an evolved addition (an epiphenomenon) to the material/biochemical fundamentals of matter - a kind of accident of complex material cosmological processes.

THE 'OBJECTIVE/IMPARTIAL OBSERVER' MYTH: Also at the heart of this paradigm was an assumed capacity to 'observe' the material phenomena of the universe in an objective, impartial way. It was assumed that a number of impartial observers could – by way of the scientific method - witness exactly the same external reality all

non-material spirits of locale, etc. In general the starting position seems to be: What does the phenomenon mean to the client? What is the phenomena's role in the life-world of the person/people experiencing it? I want emphasise here that this acknowledgement without judgment is eminently consistent with a Quantum conception of the role of consciousness in world creating (wave collapse).

else being equal. At the same time mind was quarantined from having anything but a passive (observational) impact on the material universe. In some Materialist formulations 'mind' was reduced to its accompanying biochemical components – in a sense it didn't exist at all.

MATERIALIST ROUT OF GOD/S, SOUL, SPIRIT, 'OTHER WORLDS', ETC: The senses five were also at the heart of this method, and gradually, as the scientific revolution gained pace, human beings felt they no longer needed concepts like 'god', 'the other world' or 'soul' to gather impressive knowledge about how the cosmos functions. Indeed, it was believed that an emphasis on any non-material aspects to experience was unhealthy and might even impede the gathering of genuine knowledge. Scientists increasingly dismissed the obsessions of religious systems and many pre-18th century philosophies as 'mere superstition' and later as 'opiates' (Marx) administered by social elites, or left overs of childhood 'fixations' and 'repressions' (Freud). At the height of the scientific revolution man was declared the measure of all things and god was declared 'dead' (Nietzsche).

CLASSICAL SCIENCE STILL DEFINES THE NORMAL V PARANORMAL DIVIDE: Twentieth century understandings of the division between 'normal' phenomena and 'paranormal' phenomena were usually framed, at least on the scientific side, by the presumed supremacy of the Classical scientific perspective. There is a vast amount of literature defining, debunking/validating, etc. various types of paranormal phenomena, usually, however there is a conscious or subconscious bias toward the meta-narratives associated with 19th century (Classical) scientific perspectives - *even among those sympathetic to the unusual phenomena being investigated.*

THE NEW SCIENCES AND THE NORMAL V PARANORMAL DIVIDE: Contemporary science currently acknowledges (and seems to be consistently discovering!) a range of reality violations/anomalies inexplicable from the perspective of the Classical model. However, it is argued that such anomalies occur mostly at quantum, subatomic levels of matter. For much of the late 20th century it was argued that at macro levels of matter organization, the 'anomalous' phenomena disappear or become negligible. This position is becoming increasingly unsustainable as quantum level anomalies are discovered much closer to the 'macro' level world we ordinarily identify with.

PARANORMAL PHENOMENA: DIFFERENT KINDS OF GHOSTLY VISITATIONS

Let us pause for a moment to briefly describe some of the different types of ghostly and non-ordinary phenomena identified by paranormal investigators.

Ghosts/visitations associated with a locale and or temporal occasions – these often appear to be unaware of the humans that are observing them. The classic version of this ghost might appear to be on a kind of 'loop' apparently repeating the same actions at regular intervals over prolonged periods of time.

Intelligent ghosts - ghosts that apparently wish to communicate with the living via: haunting a given place; channeling; necromantic summoning; possession events; Ouija board communications, etc.. Some of these ghosts have a kind of obsessive purpose and folk history has it that they may be earthbound - unable to move on (to where?) until something is resolved. The ghost of Hamlet's father in Shakespeare's famous play belongs to this type. Some are summoned from their place of rest in the underworld and thus a layering of worlds occurs during the communication – i.e. between the world of the living and the world of the dead. The underworld scenes in Homer's *The Odyssey* feature ghosts summoned from the underworld.

Doppelgangers or doubles - 'at a distance' (i.e. from the embodied entity) spirit doubles, sometimes of living people, sometimes of the recently or about to be deceased.

Poltergeists - noisy, disruptive visitations that may or not be attempting to communicate with the living. Sometimes viewed as independent entities sometimes as entities brought into existence by traumatic repression/abuse suffered by living or dead people in the vicinity.

Energy presences that appear to be animated/intelligent in some way. Inexplicable light orbs, 'ectoplasmic' masses, sudden atmospheric changes, etc belong to this category.

Non-human Visitations/Entities - i.e. demons, Gods, and other mythological entities. These figures have historically manifested in numerous ways - they can be summoned, they can appear as phantom presences, they can appear in dreams or they can occupy/possess a human being for a time as they do in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. As non-material visitations they are often confused with ghostly apparitions. Likewise, when they communicate through omens, runes, dreams, totemic animals, oracles etc. they are easily confused with communications from the dead (a source of great anxiety to Medieval Christians who believed that demons and devils had the ability to assume the forms of deceased souls familiar to the living).

Other Paranormal Phenomena

Precognition of future events

Divining of hidden/lost knowledge, objects, the future, etc

Telepathic communications
Channeled communications
Extreme coincidences
Curses that come true
Spells (projected desire), miracles i.e. 'unlikely futures that are conjured into existence'
Momentary or full-scale possessions
Dream communications/knowledge at a distance in time or place
Awareness of distant happenings

20TH C DEVELOPMENTS: Q.M. THEORY AT THE HEART OF THE NEW SCIENCE

THE ADVENT OF THE QUANTUM REVOLUTION: During the so-called quantum revolution of the post WW1 period, the pillars of the Classical scientific paradigm began to break down. At the heart of this paradigm shift was the discovery that the tiniest constituent parts of matter tend to behave differently dependent on whether they are being observed (measured) or not. To simplify a vast debate it seemed possible that observation - suggesting 'mind/consciousness' – is embedded in the material universe as a faculty that helps bring a particular universe/reality into being. The technical term is 'the collapse of the wave function'. Fantastically, it seemed as though modern physics was arguing that until something is observed by a 'mind/consciousness' it exists in only a potential state among an infinite number of potential states (universes/realities?).

NO 'IMPARTIAL OBSERVERS' AS CONSCIOUSNESS REIMPOSES ITSELF ON MATTER: In the New Science an impartial observer separated from the phenomena of the universe is impossible – indeed, in some versions of quantum mechanics, consciousness is neither passive nor irrelevant to the day to day (and historic) functioning of the universe. The Quantum perspective is that all possibilities for matter coexist together in 'superposition' (a kind of 'wave' field) until an observer observes a particular possibility at which point the wave-function collapses into a particular 'particle like' reality. This makes the 'unobserved' universe something like the program for a computer game *before* it is accessed by players (which would be the moment a particular game scenario/reality is launched/loaded).

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD IS UNDERMINED: If, as is the case with some versions of QM, consciousness is required in order to collapse the wave function into a 'particle' formation reality, then Classical scientific evidence gathering techniques may well be impossible since consciousness is never passively observing a reality out there - it is always to some extent *creating*, or perhaps the better term is '*selecting*', it through observation. The very notion of an impartial 'method' and of impartial 'evidence gathering' is undermined.

NEW-OLD QUESTIONS POSED BY THE NEW SCIENCE: 19th century Science was forced to cede ground to New Science versions of time, space, mind and matter. As the real world (whatever that is!) consequences of Quantum-related discoveries were worked through in the second half of the 20th century many strange phenomena were documented - along with a plethora of theories to explain what was going on: the many Worlds Theory, String Theory, retroactivity, non-locality, entanglement, immersion in a programmed universe, anti-matter universes, bubble and brane universes (in a multiverse), etc. The behaviour of matter at the subatomic levels seemed to demand perspectives that embraced phenomena *previously* deemed 'paranormal' - a fact that remains seriously embarrassing to many scientists, a proportion of whom have opted for outright denial and business as usual.

MORE QUESTIONS (AND DIMENSIONS AND UNIVERSES) THAN ANSWERS:

In truth, it remains profoundly difficult to formulate a single New Science perspective on the paranormal that can embrace and explain both: a) historic experiences of paranormal phenomena, and b) the new 'anomalies' uncovered by QM. Nevertheless, a plethora of questions demand answers:

- * Do thoughts and emotions affect the kind of world created?
- * Is the quality of the mind or minds doing the 'observing' - read: world/reality creating - relevant to the kind of universe selected?
- * Was our material Universe set in motion by preexistent minds or a mind?
- * Can a universe exist at all without mind/s to observe it?
- * Are human beings and even animals born with observing faculties lent them by minds standing outside space and time?
- * What really happens to this 'world observing and creating' mind at the point of physical death?
- * Is everything that exists 'mind'?

NEW SCIENCE EXPLANATIONS FOR TRADITIONAL PARANORMAL PHENOMENA:

1. HOW DO WE ACCESS AND HARNESS Q LEVEL WEIRDNESS?

FACULTIES CAPABLE OF AMPLIFYING QUANTUM WEIRDNESS: Quantum physics affirms that the behaviour of matter at the sub-atomic level violates a range of rules laid down by old paradigm Science. If quantum weirdness can be amplified, even occasionally, into the macro universe we routinely inhabit, then other previously inexplicable paranormal phenomena start to look possible - at least from the perspective of the New Science. Interestingly, more and more researchers are arguing that our biological make-up is geared to mediate, amplify and process quantum level energies to

the macro biological level.

PARANORMAL EVENTS DEFINED AS THE ACTIVATION OF Q WEIRDNESS TO MACRO LEVELS: The literature on paranormal happenings is dominated by impossible (i.e. according to Classical physics) knowledge of elsewhere events, future events or past events of importance to those experiencing the event (or others the experiencer is deeply 'entangled' with in the relational-emotional sense). It is also dominated by eruptions of beings/entities from elsewhere in time and space - i.e. from other worlds or other times - into a particular 'present'.

EXTRAORDINARY SITUATIONS MAY ACTIVATE ACCESS TO Q LEVEL PHENOMENA: Let's be specific about the way a stressed mind (or minds acting together) might force the wave function to 'collapse' into desired (but theoretically impossible) realities, likewise how such a person might be able to access future, past or distant information theoretically hidden to him or her. The literature seems to posit that paranormal phenomena arise when conscious observers (of the universe) are experiencing, or are about to experience, extraordinary situations or emotions - e.g. trauma, life threatening illness, abrupt life stage/developmental change, loss of a loved one, extreme emotional arousal, fear, strong feelings of love/attraction, focused desire/need, novelty situations and non-ordinary states of consciousness brought on by drugs, meditation, sensory deprivation, life changes, etc.

PARANORMAL (Implicate Order) ENHANCEMENTS TO ORDINARY CONSCIOUSNESS: Is it possible that periods of uncertainty and change may amplify - via only partially understood psychobiological mechanisms - quantum level violations of classical scientific laws to the macro level of larger scale objects/organisms? Under such circumstances stressed, aroused or threatened (or about to be stressed, etc.) individuals may gain temporary access to what Bohm calls the 'Implicate Order' - a realm in which quantum entanglement, non-locality, retro-causality and other space-time anomalies may manifest as slight macro level survival enhancements/advantages. Telepathy, precognition, miraculous healing abilities, etc. might then be interpreted as slight survival oriented 'enhancements' to ordinary consciousness. Awareness of other dimensions of being may manifest at such times since the observing organism is forced to expand consciousness beyond the socially 'conditioned' norms that are habitually used to negotiate ordinary life situations. In short, some paranormal manifestations may represent transpersonal creative responses to threatening or extraordinary life circumstances. All available organismic resources – including quantum level 'amplifications' - become mobilised.

'MAGIC' WAS ALWAYS ABOUT THE MANA and/or DESIRE OF UNIQUE MINDS: The 'observer affect', by re-visioning the role of consciousness (including here

the moral/ethical, developmental, motivational, emotional, archetypal, unconscious and cognitive dimensions to consciousness) may thus unwittingly legitimise certain kinds of paranormal phenomena. Successful magic (spells or curses), for example, might be reinterpreted as successful attempts by uniquely tuned minds to select desired (perhaps even unlikely) futures out of an infinite number of super-positional possibilities - magicians would be seen as skilled at precipitating particular kinds of 'wave collapse' – particular desirable realities (a job description element also demanded of economists!).

2. The Implicate Order: Are There Programmers Outside Our Known Reality?

DOES CONSCIOUSNESS/MIND PRECEDE AND TRANSCEND THE KNOWN UNIVERSE?: Some modern theorists on consciousness argue that a cosmos capable of creating conscious beings who are in turn depended upon - by matter fields - to 'collapse' an infinite number of possible universes into solid moment by moment realities had to be conscious itself in some way PRIOR to the Big Bang or Crunch etc. Consciousness in humans may thus originate outside 'time and space' as defined within this universe.²

'UNIVERSAL CONSTANTS' MAY ALSO POINT TO PRE-PROGRAMMING: Cosmologists interested in the remarkable range of 'just right' 'cosmological constants' in our Universe that support the development of life *and* consciousness also imply the possibility of other dimensions where the 'programmer consciousness/es' who devised the program for our universe reside. Even minor alterations to any one of the 'constants' (program integers?) would have snuffed out any possibility of life in our universe. Of course any discussion of 'other dimensions' to the physical universe is anathema to classical scientists since such 'other-worlds/universes' etc. were at the very essence of religious thinking for millennia.

CAN SEVERAL SUPERPOSITIONAL STATES BLEED TOGETHER INTO A DOMINANT REALITY?: Does mind (which may originate outside the Multiverse) have a capacity to access the quantum realms - perhaps even the pre-programmed realms of the Multiverse - when severely stressed/adrenalized, or when faced with extreme novelty (the breakdown of habitual perceptions/thinking)? So paranormal researchers suggest that we can gain partial access to a future event or elsewhere or past

² Here discussions between Jung and the quantum physicist, Pauli, as well as later Jungian theorising about the dual functions of the Psychoid realm need to be considered. The Psychoid realm is a timeless zone encompassing the individual psyche/imagination, external matter and other consciousnesses. In this realm communications outside ordinary materialist rules are possible. It is thus a place in which imagination may interact with entities usually dismissed by classical science. Archetypes (and perhaps Gods and spirits too) take on an ephemeral anthropomorphic form there. Importantly, some Jungian scholars split the phenomena encountered in this zone or field between projections of our unconscious mind i.e. internal phenomena, and - taking a lead from elements in Jung's writings based on medieval alchemy - encounters with phenomena outside space and time as usually conceived by consciousness - perhaps even entities with independent existence/consciousness.

traumatic event through: a) strong emotional attachment or desire/entanglement with others (love, fear, etc.); b) the collapse of 'mechanistic habits of thought/being'. I'm suggesting that phenomena usually confined to the quantum level can, under certain circumstances, erupt into ordinary consciousness, and perhaps into the physical world, by way of biological amplification mechanisms activated under extreme or novel situations

A kind of superpositional 'layering' or 'bleeding into' may occur - past to present, future to present, elsewhere present to situated present, or, more controversially, from 'programmer consciousness/es', the deceased, other consciousnesses in other multiversal dimension' etc. to ordinary consciousness. Ghosts, phantoms, precognition, telepathic communications, dream communications, channeling, 'cross-times' etc. might become understandable from such a New Science perspective.

3. Can the Observer(s) Create a Universe Amenable to Ghosts after Collapsing the Wave Function In A Particular Way?

If mind is not simply passive and dependent, as in the Materialist position, then ghosts, spirits, etc. begin to look implicated, along with consciousness etc., in residual aspects of the past impinging on the present. Only where matter is deemed fundamental, solid and free of any dependence on mind can we speak categorically of the illegitimacy of ghosts. The moment mind, including emotion, memory, consciousness, the unconscious, etc. becomes implicated in the construction of 'matter fields' (as in Quantum Mechanics) these same non-material aspects to mind can arguably be said to act on the present as determinants to the shape of any constructed matter/mind field.

HOW TO 'WAVE COLLAPSE' A UNIVERSE IN WHICH GHOSTS ARE REAL:

Indeed whatever beliefs, thoughts etc. are projected into matter by a mind during the collapse of the wave function can be said to influence the form taken by the resultant constructed reality. Whether mind or matter constructs: a) the forms of the Universe we experience at any moment in time; or b) the rules that govern the forms experienced at particular moments in time, is, fantastically, an open question in the New Science of Quantum Mechanics. What this may mean in terms of 'ghosts' and other paranormal phenomena is that an individual/observer/consciousness that projects a universe in which 'ghosts' exist may precipitate a collapse of the wave function in which: a) the phenomena *actually* exists, and in which, b) maybe even the laws of the Universe *alter in the relevant universe/locale* to allow such a phenomenon to exist. Indeed, is it possible that the more people (minds) in a locale project and observe a particular phenomenon the more likely it becomes that they can influence the wave function such that it collapses into, say, a ghost-infested, or paranormal 'normal' universe?

4. CAN QUANTUM ENTANGLEMENT EXPLAIN SOME PARANORMAL PHENOMENA?

There is, however, more to quantum weirdness than the problem of consciousness as it interacts with matter.

EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED IN THE NEW SCIENCE: In the New Science inter-relating subatomic fields operating outside conventional Newtonian laws concerning time, space and matter are theorised as foundational to the physical Universe. The discrete, concrete, alienated individualist objects (existing in a predictable billiard table universe) so beloved of Materialists, become blurry 'wave-particles' (understood as 'potentials' on average) dependent for their existence - as a particular 'collapsed' potential at a given moment in time - on 'observation'. These wave-particle fields also seem to interact in inexplicably 'spooky' (dare we suggest 'paranormal') ways due to 'entanglement' phenomena, theorized extra dimensions, various coincidental uni(multi)versal constants and other barely understood new laws/phenomena. Entanglement, for example, leads to a phenomena whereby subatomic particles known to have been in close proximity (i.e. that have become entangled) display a capacity to influence and communicate with each other instantaneously (i.e. beyond the speed of light) over great distances – thus rendering obsolete various laws dear to Classical physics.

ARE WE 'ENTANGLED' IN SOME SENSE AT THE QUANTUM LEVEL WITH EVERYTHING THAT EVER EXISTED, WILL EVER EXIST AND COULD EVER EXIST? Another casualty of these developments has been regular linear time. In a sense, Relativity and Quantum influenced notions of time do not require it to move forward like an 'arrow' - indeed due to Relativity theory time has become local and matter dependent, likewise, due to Quantum Mechanics all potential events - past, present and future – may exist together in a vast energy field. Something in our biological make-up, however, tricks us into believing in orderly sequences of events, but in truth the future could be influencing the present and the past, similarly *unlived* pasts might be influencing the present and future and so on. It is even possible that universes with different physical laws are somehow influencing our present moment. Everything in the past and future, and in unlived pasts and futures, might also potentially be 'entangled' in some way with us in fundamental but unknown ways.

DOES ENTANGLEMENT EXPLAIN SYMPATHETIC MAGIC? From anecdotal evidence accumulated over many centuries related to paranormal phenomena (including hauntings and magical practices like casting spells/curses/enchantments that require objects owned by the dead or living subjects to increase efficacy) we could argue that

long-term psychophysical connections (entanglement?) between kin (especially, it seems, twins), friends, lovers etc. might allow for 'faster than light', 'non-local' communication between said parties. In the Classical paradigm this would of course be dismissed as 'paranormal' communication (e.g. telepathy etc.) and thus deemed impossible.

ARE WE ENTANGLED WITH THE DECEASED? In terms of communication between the dead and the living - i.e. the various phenomena associated with ghosts, phantoms, hauntings, etc. - we might be able to stretch the New Science notion of 'entanglement' in ways that allow us to understand what might be going on. Specifically, if the currently theorized (and mysterious) extra dimensions to the Multiverse proposed by String Theorists, Anti-Matter Theorists, Many Worlds Theorists and Dark Matter theorists remain true to 'entanglement' principles/laws, then although a consciousness may lose a particular material form after death, e.g. a body (becoming instead say a 'wave', 'sub-atomic energy body' or simply quantum material previously stored in micro-tubules etc.) any surviving part of that being *anywhere else in the superpositional possibilities of this universe, or indeed in the Multiverse generally*, might well be able to communicate with loved ones by various means beyond the wall of death.

WHAT ABOUT GHOSTS IN LOCALE? Even 'ghosts linked to a locale' might perhaps be explained by such principles since the deceased person would obviously have been entangled with a range of places/locales frequented during his or her life. The emptying into the cosmos of quantum level biological material/information during the dying process could also be said to establish a high valence sub-atomic connection between the organism and the place of death. Even after a person's death then, the New Science principle of entanglement theoretically allows for 'spooky action/influence at a distance' by a consciousness voyaging elsewhere in the Multiverse but tied also to *former locales* significant to it. When significant individuals and significant locales are combined we might theorise a likelihood of increased entanglement-precipitated communication between the departed and individuals at that significant locale.

CAN ENTANGLEMENT BLEED OTHER VERSIONS OF SELVES INTO A WORLD DUE TO STRESS ETC.? Since in the Quantum world (Bohm's 'Implicate Order') macro level principles of time and space are apparently suspended, aspects of a being manifesting in the past (or even in the future) in the ordinary world (i.e. Bohm's 'explicate order'), can theoretically be 'entangled' with every other moment of that being's existence (including people and places connected to that being in a soon to be lived future). But wait, it gets weirder! If the many Worlds Theory is correct then selves that branched out to form/inhabit parallel Universes during a person's life *would nevertheless be 'entangled' with every other possible past and future self and the people and places those selves came to know*. Any of this, with sufficient emotional valence or

‘novelty’ added to the mix, could give rise to ‘paranormal’ experiences – i.e. amplification of quantum level phenomena to the macro level resulting various anomalies - forms of ‘bleeding’ between dimensions.

5. GHOSTS IN A COMPLEX QUANTUM COMPUTER

RETURNING TO THE 'WE COMPUTE' SCENARIO: Some modern cosmologists solve some of the problems uncovered by the New Physics by arguing that a fundamental feature of both life and matter, and by extrapolation, the functioning of the Universe (or Multiverse) is the role of ‘information’. Living organisms right down to the sub-atomic level are said to ‘compute’. Likewise, the constituent parts of ‘inanimate’ matter communicate with other constituent parts of matter - i.e. matter computes. If information is fundamental, then the Universe, from start to end is a manifestation of information exchange laws that were set down prior to its coming into being. In short: the Universe computes, the Universe is a vast and complex ‘quantum computer’. In a sense conscious organisms, like humans, can be theorized as 'game players' inside this apparently massive, pre-programmed, quantum computer. Computer games, of course, are simple information programs where time is both eternal/potential, from the perspective of the game existing in a computer, and 'time/event' contingent, from the perspective of an immersed participant (who usually inhabits an avatar to various levels of ‘immersion’). One version of this approach speaks of the holo-grammatical universe and argues that quantum level matter communications appear non-local because everything around us is a projection emanating from the outer *membrane* (‘brane’ from brane theorising) of our universe.

DO WE INHABIT MATTER AVATARS COMPOSED OF ANIMATE NON-LOCAL INFORMATION? We might ask: are ancient notions of the soul consistent with the possibility that the sense of being a conscious agency in humans arises from information exchange protocols subject to various types of 'quantum weirdness'? Is the soul something akin to discrete bundles of 'animate information' capable of transmigrating, at minimum, during conception and physical death (i.e. do we download, so to speak, into and out of rule bound worlds/realities something like what happens in *The Matrix* and *Avatar*)? From such a perspective aspects of this immersed ‘information soul’ would stand outside Classical notions of time and space, despite being subject, most of the time, to the ‘programmed’ laws set-up by the ‘Universal programmer or programmers’. For whatever reason or reasons (speculation invited!) we may well be minds inhabiting matter avatars.

PARANORMAL EVENTS AND MATTER AVATARS: How might we explain ghosts and other paranormal phenomena in the light of such (admittedly vociferous) speculations? We might understand them as 'animate information' glitches/anomalies,

perhaps as leechings/bleedings of parallel reality scenarios into a given game reality. Alternatively the glitches may be evidence of evolving reality programs that have been altered (upgraded?) for some reason but have never-the-less left traces of themselves. Fun, if disturbing, possibilities to think about I hope you agree!

THE PARANORMAL AS ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE THE QUANTUM GAME WORLD: Alternatively, if the 'information soul' immersed in a given program and life scenario remains connected to, or is a partial manifestation of, the programmer consciousness/ess that set-up and operate the universal program, then perhaps that 'mind' (never being totally 'immersed') can to some extent alter the program or life scenario out of amusement or need (perhaps giving rise to 'ghosts', 'miracles', 'faster than light communications' and other paranormal phenomena). Perhaps this theorized 'mind' can also partially step outside the program/life scenario to glimpse the laws by which it functions (thus revealing the future, possible futures etc.). This would be a place outside 'immersed' ordinary perceptions of space and time. Perhaps, as in some reported religious experiences of transcendence, the consciousness is catapulted outside the entire program leading to a confrontation with the programmer/s.

TRAUMATISED OUT OF OUR AVATARS - ACCIDENTAL ACCESS TO THE HOLOMOVEMENT. The question then becomes: what kinds of events in life allow consciousness (the 'observer' in QM theory) to transcend a programmed reality? Interestingly, there has been some research on the conditions that give rise to what we are here referring to as Anomalies and Glitches in our experience of ordinary space-time. Most of them, as already discussed, seem to involve intense or novel experiences, e.g. intense desire, grief, near death experiences etc.. Such experiences may sometimes throw us out of the program thus activating phenomena identified with quantum weirdness (and Classically defined as 'paranormal')

CHOOSING ASSISTANCE FROM THE HOLOMOVEMENT: Certain paranormal experiments seem to confirm this relationship - precognition of random images is apparently at its strongest prior to being shown images depicting possible objects of sexual desire, likewise prior to images that represent possible survival threats. Likewise, participants exposed to novel and interesting stimulus (to them) seem to do better than those exposed to boring, uninteresting stimuli during paranormal tests. Similarly, Jung talked about the activation of the 'transcendent function' as a stage of therapy (and thus of developmental growth) in which synchronicities and other paranormal events were routinely encountered. Is it possible that the part of the 'information soul' that is outside our Classical everyday world can jump ship for a time and either engineer a changed program or observe (outside of the program) the potentialities in the program before choosing the most desirable options on offer - kind of like a gamer cheating when the going gets tough?

MAGIC/RELIGION = CHEAT NOTES WHEN IMMERSSED IN A COSMIC GAME/LIFE SCENARIO WE AREN'T ENJOYING: We might also consult the entire human history of magic, witchcraft, shamanism etc. where imaginative/symbolic activities, e.g. art/dance/music etc. are routinely linked to strong emotions. Together, ritual and focused will/desire were believed to be able to 'alter' conventional reality for a moment allowing a new present (and future) to be selected - ones more in keeping with a participant's desires? In summary: Shamans and magicians, and interestingly creative artists of all descriptions, attempt to step outside their given life scenario or program to engineer a better scenario or program – i.e. they attempt to cheat for their own purposes.

6. THE ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE EXPLANATION FOR GHOSTS ETC. BEINGS 'BLEED' INTO OUR WORLD FROM OTHER WORLDS AND OTHER DIMENSIONS

WHO IS IT ENTERS THROUGH THE GATES OF TIME? One solution to the misfit between QM and Relativity is the Many Worlds Theory. It has been suggested by some brave souls that certain types of locale-related ghosts can be explained - using New Science insights - as beings from alternative universes who have bled (in the past), or are bleeding (in the present) into our universe due to quantum level amplifications of need/fear etc. - sometimes for reasons related to their own situation (deliberate or accidental), sometimes due to the needs of a person/people in this world.

WHAT WORLDS ARE THESE? Alternatively, observers in altered or heightened states may temporarily find themselves outside (or partially outside) ordinary space-time coordinates for some reason, rendering them temporarily sensitive to alternative realities usually non-accessible (and to the past, present or future in those realities).

GHOSTLINESS AS A LAYERING OF REALITIES: The existence of two realities side by side may explain the fact that ghostly phenomena typically manifest as weaker realities layered over a more fundamental (i.e. current) space-time. A kind of observer initiated 'rupture' may occur and the quantum realms, in all their counter-intuitive weirdness, may momentarily breach-flood or render depleted the faculty in the self that ordinarily 'collapses' wave function chaos into a single, solid particle based space-time reality.

BIOLOGICAL ORGANS CONTAINING ANIMATE Q INFORMATION: Some thinkers believe microtubules in the brain contain our animate q information - disturb them and the implicate order floods consciousness. The process of dying might loosen this information in microtubules causing it to leak into other realms during the dying process. Near death experiences might be understood in this way as near total leakage

followed by abrupt 'recall'. Perhaps also, highly traumatic events in a given locale may leave q field level traces of the event - causing projections of the event into the past and future (to be sensed by the sensitive).

Encouraging Access to the Implicate Order = Stall the Habitual Collapse of the Wave Function

URBANISM AND HABIT: The great enemy of a rich and expansive experience of reality is conditioned habit. Habitual thinking leads to disenchanted, uncreative living. The world is bleached of aliveness and sacrality and dreary sameness greets us each morning. Excessive rational and logical thinking collapses the wave function of our lives each day, each moment into boring sameness. Our q field accessing abilities very likely developed prior to urban living - perhaps to handle threats in the natural world. Urban living with its extreme 'noise' and sensorial overload might well deaden our innate 'paranormal' faculties. Urban life is, after all, profoundly habitual. We know there is more to life - more is possible - but our habits of thinking keep playing the same old record until we are shocked into the Implicate Order due to some extreme experience. We can thus talk about both involuntary and voluntary/conscious forms of access to the Implicate Order.

Unwilled

- * Death of a loved one
- * Extreme traumas and illness
- * Social breakdown - wars and other moments when social paradigms/reality is in chaos
- * Certain kinds of psychoactive drugs
- * New love and the termination of love relationships

Willed

- * Seeking peak experiences that destroy habitual living and thinking
- * Seeking people who experience the world in a more expansive way
- * Honouring our own creative journey - creativity is inherently 'habit busting', 'liberating' and 'expansive'. Dance, music, story-telling, poetry, etc. have long been credited with the capacity to change the way we experience the world.
- * Escaping oppressive and habitual Cartesian-Newtonian and hyper-capitalist 'reality' paradigms via immersion in fantastic literatures
- * Various spiritual practices that promote internality - vision quests, meditation, yoga, etc. - and remove a person from the social sources of habitual collapse.
- * Engaging in psychotherapies that promote expansive consciousness or remove sources of traumatic conditioned thinking/experiencing – e.g. Transpersonal, Jungian, Reichian,

Integral, Primal psychologies

- * Travel that opens your mind and doesn't simply replicate elsewhere the world you already know

- * Visiting places where more expansive experiences have been common for long periods of time in the past.

I'm suggesting that willed access to the implicate order is more healthy than having unwilled access thrust upon us - though unwilled experiences may still occur due to life events.

CONCLUSION

I'd like to conclude by arguing that regardless of the Classical or New Scientific status of some of the phenomena we've discussed, current widespread belief in the paranormal heralds, at minimum, an unconscious desire for liberation from overly inflexible (perhaps even life-negating) views of life (and death etc.) based upon outdated Newtonian-Cartesian paradigms.

FANTASTIC LITERATURE: A SOULFUL ANSWER TO THE MECHANISTIC STRAIGHT-JACKET? With these thoughts in mind we could theorise that the public remain fascinated by, interested in ghosts, demons and other paranormal phenomena precisely because we understand implicitly that the universe described to us by remnant Classical physics, biology etc, is something of a convenient lie. A full picture of the universe that might ultimately be important to us in our quest for survival and full living is missing and by exercising our minds on high quality fantastic literature we are not merely escaping the real world (whatever that is!) for a while but escaping a flawed reality paradigm that ultimately limits our capacity to be fully human, fully conscious, fully aware of our real, expansive role in a cosmos that perhaps demands 'high quality' minds/consciousnesses etc. to allow it to reach its full potential. The imaginal or psychoid realm may be activated by encounters with fantastic literature and through the imaginal processes triggered in our psyches we perhaps begin to sense a way to choose, perhaps with assistance from entities outside time and space, better futures for ourselves, our loved ones and perhaps the world generally than are available to us via the limited reality paradigms of old paradigm science.