A Taxonomy of the Mental Paranormal (TaMePa) [1]

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Vorwort für den "Aushang" dieses Artikels im Forum

Mit diesem Artikel habe ich mir ein Unbehagen von der Seele geschrieben mit dem Ergebnis einer gewissen Erleichterung. Das Unbehagen entstand durch die begrifflichen Verwirrungen, die die Beschäftigung mit der Parapsychologie bei mir hervorrief. Die Erleichterung besteht darin, ein erstes Ordnungssystem geschaffen zu haben, das mir die Orientierung in diesem ziemlich chaotischen Gebiet der Wissenschaft erleichtert. Ob auch andere mit dem, was dabei herausgekommen ist, erleichtert werden oder ob bei ihnen eigenes Unbehagen nur verstärkt wird, bleibt abzuwarten. Einsprüche werden gerne entgegengenommen, wenn sie zur Verbesserung des ersten Entwurfs beitragen. Auch eine völlige Ablehnung würde mich zufrieden stimmen, vorausgesetzt dass der Kritiker einen Ersatz mitliefert, mit dem das gleiche Ziel besser erreichbar wird.

Die kategoriale Ordnung des „mentalen Paranormalen", die hier versucht wird, impliziert nicht gleichzeitig, dass das kategorial so Geordnete im einzelnen als empirisch genügend evident betrachtet werden darf.

Zu den Unvollkommenheiten des Erstentwurfs gehört die nicht hinreichende Anknüpfung an andere Autoren, die mich bei den vielen Entscheidungen, die zu treffen waren, im einzelnen entweder gestützt oder eines Besseren belehrt hätten. Für einschlägige Literaturhinweise wäre ich dankbar.

Abstract

Parapsychologists, having plenty of peculiar phenomena to investigate, are in want of a nomological network to put the bewildering variety of claimed phenomena into some order. This paper suggests a taxonomy with kernels of coherence between mind A (relatum A), selected as an observer's prime focus, and relatum B to which relatum A is internally connected. Relatum B may be categorized in four different ways: B may be organic (living matter). B may be

[1] An earlier version of this paper has been commented on, with fecund effects, by Damien Broderick, Eckard Etzold, and Gerd Hövelmann).

another mind unit with or without organismic base, B without such base is coined *spir*. Coherence between A and B may be conceived by focusing individual minds or masses of minds ($_{MASS}$A). Coherence is also assumed among mental processes of an individual A (intra-systemic coherence, $_{SELF}$A). Each kernel of coherence is enlarged by adding influential facets, i. e., main categories of claimed positive or negative influence on psi-manifesting events. Psi-manifesting events, experimentally induced or spontaneous, may thus be placed into a comprehensive conceptual system. The taxonomy does not try to amend an existing parapsychological glossary, familiar terms are left unchanged. Yet it might be helpful as an underlying framework covering the bulk of claimed psi manifestations. Discussions about psi phenomena and problems of research might be facilitated, above all discussions with the academic mainstream whenever pertinent knowledge is limited and confusion is likely to occur.

Introduction

The aim of parapsychological research is to describe and, if possible, to also explain occurrences of paranormal mental phenomena. Mental phenomena , whether normal or paranormal, should not be abstracted from biopsychological correlates. Organismic and behavioural factors and manifestations should always be seen as factual or potential concomitants of mental processes. [2] Phenomena are called *paranormal* if pertinent observations, escaping explanations by present-day scientific knowledge, are convincing enough to be acknowledged as existent (as "possibly not illusive"). Parapsychology does not exclude from research claims of paranormal phenomena with as yet insufficient evidence as long as the phenomena cannot be convincingly dismissed. The term *psi* refers to an as yet unknown explanation which, once found, is expected to become an integral part of future science.

During more than a century of parapsychological research an abundant variety of paranormal phenomena has been claimed, observed and reported. The first 20 entries in Thalbourne's *Glossary of Terms Used in Parapsychology* (Thalbourne, 2003) referring to psi events are *apparition, apport, arrival case, astral projection, aura, automatism, autoscopy, bilocation, clairaudience, clairvoyance, coincidence, deathbed experience, direct voice, displacement, divination, dowsing, extrasensory perception, focusing effect, gamma telepathy*. Most entries refer to spontaneous psi phenomena, they form a bewildering , orderless aggregate of occult peculiarities.

[2] This applies at least to the observable person on whom parapsychological research puts its prime focus. Purported discarrnate entities endowed with mental processes lacking brain support - a possible experiential objective of an observed informant - cannot become prime objects of research.

Psi phenomena of *experimental* interest have been grossly classified in the past. Clairvoyance and precognition are classified as *extrasensory pe*rception (ESP). Telepathy has been added by extending ESP to GESP, *"general" extrasensory perception.* Clairvoyance, precognition, and telepathy have been grouped together as predominantly afferent modes of information transfer. Psychokinesis (PK) , on the other hand, being conceived as being generated by some pseudo-motor or *efferent* process, establishes a complementary category. [3]

GESP with its three manifestations and psychokinesis have become standard categories, they are often used as chapter headings in parapsychological textbooks. Is this standard satisfactory? I doubt it. *Agents* in telepathy experiments do *not receive* information, they *send out* information, sending out has an *efferent* direction and cannot be classified as ESP, nor as PK, because PK is held in reserve for the "production of physical effects" (Beloff, see footnote 2).

Another problem: Does *Direct Influence on Living Systems* deserve a separate category (DMILS), as the originators of this thread of research posit? (Schlitz & Braud, 1997). In their studies, again both directions, efferent influential action (by agents) and afferent reception (by recipients) are involved. DMILS is certainly special in that the receiving part of the interaction might react primarily (not solely), by physiological symptoms, unlike GESP, and that *living* matter is the target of paramental influence, unlike ordinary psychokinesis whose targets are physical. Anyway, DMILS is not unique and need not be detached from familiar contexts.

Furthermore, where should the phenomena obtained from Nelson's Global Consciousness Project (GCP) be placed? GCP is a newcomer among spontaneous psi effects (Nelson, 1997a). Should excessive fluctuations of atomic decay worldwide on days of emotional mass excitement – a GCP result – be classified as psychokinesis? Would a modifying attribute, *unintentional PK* , help much? More phenomena, some of them might still be discovered some day, need to be categorized. Above all, the vast realm of *spontaneous* psi phenomena mentioned above needs to be incorporated into one comprehensive and, if possible, agreed-upon conceptual order of potential psi occurrences. My impression is that a taxonomy of psi phenomena is overdue. In what follows, an attempt is made to fill the gap, its result is presented for further discussion and, hopefully, for further improvement.

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[3] Beloff (1979/8): „*Obviously, one needs the basic distinction … between ESP, conceived of in its most general sense as the paranormal acquisition of information or knowledge, and PK, conceived of in its most general sense as the paranormal production of certain physical effects."* (p. 71).

Towards a taxonomy

On closer inspection and reflection, the majority of paranormal or psi phenomena may be conceived as having as kernel one simple pattern of connected A and B relata. Relatum A is the mind of some thinking, feeling, craving, and behaving key entity (person or animal) on which the prime focus of an observing researcher is centered. The term *mind* is used here pars pro toto: The entire psychophysical system of relatum A (person, animal) is involved. Yet the prime focus is on mind A, on A's *mental* processes.

Psi-manifesting events, experienced by A and/or observed/inferred by a researcher whose focus is on entity A, particularly on A's mind, presuppose mind A's relatedness to some relatum B. B manifests itself in four ways. B may be

(1) matter (anorganic matter and processes of microscopic or macroscopic extension: atomic particles, radioactive decay, spoons, pendulums, earthquakes etc.);

(2) biomatter (organic/organismic systems like cells, blood, skin conductance, etc);

(3) mind of some organismic entity (another person's/an animal's mind, mind B);

(4) mind-like entities, matterless, without brain correlates (apparitions, out-of-body entities, spirits, inspirations, automatisms, appearances, CORT or cases of reincarnation type, etc.). This category may appear unusual and extremely broad. But claims of mind or mind stuff without bodily vehicles are something special, it makes sense to put them into an extra category.

A new term is required to refer to the latter category: I propose to refer to all sorts of purported brainless mind stuff, discarnate mental entities, super-psi constructions etc. by the neologism *spir*. This term is chosen for several reasons. *Spir* has a mnemonic advantage, it reminds of *spirit*. At the same time, *spir* shields unwelcome existing meanings of *spirit* as well as *spiritual, spiritist, spiritism spiritualism*. *Spir* does not entail any commitment with occult or religious beliefs, it is a descriptive construct denoting relata B without material base.

I also suggest to subsume all possible ways of relatedness between person A and his/her possible four relata under the term *coherence*. This term may be used without much theoretical commitment. It is largely descriptive and denotes an internal togetherness of A and B. Birds within a flock of birds are related by coherence even though not every bird is related to every other bird in the flock

by sensory stimuli. Units A and B are always selections from a larger field of internally related units. Coherence of A and B does not require *material* connections between A and B with spatial and temporal features. Material links, if existent, however, are conceptually not excluded.

Coherence is not restricted to psi occurence. The minds of persons in love, in families, groups, nations display considerable coherence . Examples of biological coherence are abundant, coherence among organisms is particularly strong in societies of termites, ants, wasps and bees, Sheldrake (1988) pointed at these phenomena and tried to explain them by introducing *morphic field* as an organizing unit with causative potentials. Mother and child may be seen in *coherence*, strong biological bonds are manifested even by anatomical features (e. g., the mother's breasts) - this idea is well expounded with somewhat different terminology by Angyal (1942). A concept like *morphic resonance* is not required to understand coherence. The term *coherence* is also apt to denote relations between persons and their values, ideals, material or immaterial properties.

Psi-processes may be conceived as being intertwined with and embedded in ordinary life processes. They might be paranormal contributions to common coherences existent among minds or between minds and mind-accessible relata. [4] Psi need not be based entirely on brain processes nor on spir-like grounds. Scientists should share a common descriptive framework from which they might take varying and possibly conflicting theoretical directions.

The term and concept of coherence has been brought into discussion earlier , e. g. by Carpenter (2002): "*The anomalous observations of parapsychology now lie about our cultural landscape like so many odd, disparate stones. Yet they suggest an implicit coherence that cries out for understanding*" (p. 244). Using mind as a point of departure for further conceptual constructions and the above four relata as directions that they may take, four kernels of coherence emerge which may be conveniently referred to by acronyms.

Kernels of coherence underlying psi-revealing events

(1) mind - matter coherences (MI-MA): relatum B is physical;

(2) mind - biosystem coherences (MI-BIO): relatum B is biophysical, psychosomatic;

[4] "*The normal may be the fuse that ignites the paranormal or simply the base on which the paranormal is mounted " (Rao, 1993, p.7).*

(3) mind - mind coherences (MI-MI): brain and body vehicles exist for mind A and B (MI-MI pronounced like *smily,* not *silly*).

(4) mind - spir coherences (MI-SPI): relatum B is some mind-like entity conceived as existent without bodily vehicle.

One might consider as an additional B relatum *events* or *grand events,* when both, physical matter and people's minds, are involved as with natural or terrorist disasters which may become objectives of , say, precognition. But mixed cases of coherence between mind A and *mind B-plus-matter* need not be distinguished from purer coherence cases. Similarly, since mind processes are associated with brain processes, all MI-MI cases could actually have also been classified as MI-MI-BIO cases. Yet classifications should serve a researcher's prime aims, niceties and logical completeness should be avoided.

Nonetheless, two supplementary categories of coherence are still deemed indispensable, a macro category: *Mass mind cases of coherence* (with subdivisions #5 and #6, see below) and a micro category, *within-system coherence* among sub-mind relata (#7, #8, and #9).

Mass mind coherence
Supplementary kernel of coherence (I)

Relational kernels (#1) - (#4), classified above, and those to be introduced as supplements below (#7 - #9), embrace psi coherence of *individual* minds A with various B relata. The following supplementary kernels of coherence (#5) and (#6) are useful for covering larger groups or masses of people whose mind processes may be seen as forming coherent units, say, by resonance, and to exert paranormal influence on animate or inanimate entities.

(5) mass mind - matter coherences ($_{MASS}$MI-MA)

This applies, e.g., to FieldREG effects (relatum B = matter) created by resonant activities of groups of minds during moments of emotional arousal (as claimed by Nelson, 1997a). Another case is given, e. g., when masses of people, hoping and perhaps praying for good weather on approaching days of outdoor festivities, raise, purportedly, the probability of the desired meteorological condition to occur (investigated by Nelson, 1997b).

(6) mass mind - mind coherences ($_{MASS}$MI-MI)

This applies, e. g., to the so-called Maharishi effect: masses of meditating people are purported to exert appeasing and pacifying effects on minds of surrounding

populations (a claim of adherents of Transcendental Meditation, TM, see Ertel, 1994, Hagelin et al., 1999). An additional *mass* tag to mind B ($_{MASS}$MI-$_{MASS}$MI) is possible, but an explicit distinction between *individual* B-minds and *masses* of B-minds may be foregone .

The taxonomic tool might be used to also mark off mass mind effects on *biological* entities, on bodily processes of individuals or larger groups. As long as respective studies are not undertaken, classifications such as $_{MASS}$MI-BIO or $_{MASS}$MI-$_{MASS}$BIO are dispensable.

Intra-system coherence
Supplementary kernel of coherence (II)

The following categories #7 - #9 apply to instances of paranormal effects occurring within individual systems. Carpenter's notion "intra-subject effects" (in ESP experiments) points roughly into this direction (Carpenter, 1977).

(7) mind A - biosystem A coherence (coherence within individual systems, $_{SELF}$MI-BIO):

Paranormal healing, e. g., might be achieved by mind work of a patient on himself/herself without actions of an external healer. Miracle healings of fatally ill Lourdes pilgrims, e. g., might fall under this category. Placebos work on brains of depressed people the same way as antidepressants do (Mayberg, 2003) which is an example showing that mind might possibly change its owner's brain.

(8) mind A - mind A coherence (within-system coherence, $_{SELF}$MI-MI):

Mind should not be understood as an indivisible whole, but as a realm of interrelated processes of cognitions, memories, emotions etc. . Mental processes of individual minds are coherent, and psi, playing a role for coherence among mental processes of *different* people, might also support coherence *within* individual mind systems. Supposing memory and other cognitive processes were triggered and modified by psi, as claimed by Stanford's Psi-Mediated Instrumental Response (PMIR, Stanford 1974a, b) and Carpenter's "first sight" model (Carpenter, 2002) , then this mode of psi manifestation would find its logical place under the $_{SELF}$MI-MI category. Minds cannot be separated from environments, Stanford and Carpenter do not isolate $_{SELF}$MI-MI processes from MI-MI and MI-MA processes. The point is that in their models within-system coherence is predominant.

(9) mind A- spir A coherences ($_{SELF}$MI-SPI) .

This case applies, among others, to out-of-body experiences (OBE) resulting from a particular kind of a splitted phenomenal self. An observing self is spir-like while the observed self is an entity with ordinary body features. One might dispute this description and prefer to see the spir and non-spir roles reversed or one might claim that both selves have spir quality. But since the corresponding relata are conceivable as existing *within* the person reporting his/her OBE afterwards and since at least one relatum has spir quality, an extra category of self coherence should be reserved for such spir-self phenomena.

In experimental or natural situations from which psi phenomena arise, more entities may be distinguished in context, aside from A and B. An influential observer or researcher is generally an active part of the study (which is introduced below as relatum R). Technical research equipment might play a psi-inhibiting role , the experiencing person might be faced with inconvenient safeguard conditions etc. Yet A and B and their variation, abstracted from context, are elements of an indispensable structural *kernel* of all psi-revealing events. The framework of an enlarged psi taxonomy may be built upon this kernel.

For a complete assessment of psi phenomena, however, various influential facets of psi occurrences should also be considered. The present taxonomy attempts to organize the main facets.

Influential Facets

After having established nine kernels of coherence abstracted from events with potentially paranormal components, concomitant influential features, henceforth called (influential) facets, demand consideration. Some facets enlarge the view on factors associated with the participating subjects (experiencers, agents etc.), some others entail factors associated with participating experimenters/researchers/observers, still others characterize the whole event into which psi occurrences are embedded.

I. Influential Facets focussing participating subjects

The following seven facets deal with MIND A and its carrier in the first place. When necessary or desirable, MIND A facets might also be applied on MIND B. But MIND B-features in MI-MI patterns are subordinate and may generally be neglected.

01. Subject's processual mind roles ($_S$ROLE).

One of the most salient subject facets is the subject's psi-relevant action or reaction (processual role) with respect to relatum B. A's behaviour may be more *agentive* (e. g., with psychokinetic actions or with sending out ESP-information) or more *receptive* (e. g., Mind A may paranormally be affected by some vision of an actual disaster). Mind A will either act upon or react to some relatum B under coherence conditions. For communicative MI-MI cases, when agent and recipient roles must be distinguished, the agent role is preferably attributed to Mind A and the recipient role to Mind B, although this decision appears arbitrary. Another processual role of Mind A which is easy to conceive, theoretically, but difficult to prove, might be conceived: An extremely rapid oscillation of Mind A between action at and reaction to some B relatum, resulting in some "resonance" or "vibrating interaction".

$_{S}$ROLE as facet is essentially independent of *intention* and *awareness* - more about these facets below. A young soldier, dying in military combat, may send out, as agent, a last message to his mother. He may not *intend* to send out such message nor does he need to be aware of sending it out. The mother's *receiving* her son's message may not be intended either. But she may be fully *aware of* the shocking experience of her son's death.

Emotionally less arousing information, on the other hand, may be received by paranormal means, for example, by sensing visual attention from people looking from behind (Sheldrake, 2003), sometimes even without awareness: a psi experimenter's own psi might intrude without anyone's awareness (Kennedy & Judith, 1976, see also below). Mind A's two polar processual roles, either agentive or receptive, seems to be a conditional facet of all psi-manifesting events.

The question might arise whether non-mental, i. e., physical and biological B relata, are also capable of exerting any impact, by paranormal means, on some *receiving* Mind A. Do dogs, e. g., have precognitive abilities. If they do, are they capable of alerting their owners in moments of danger? Should a dog's mind be taken as MIND A and the owner's mind as MIND B, if this happened? Such questions require theoretical groundwork and need not also be solved here.

02. Subject's intentions of producing/experiencing psi effects ($_{S}$INTENTIONS).

High scores in multiple choice and free response psi tests (psi hitting) are generally *intended* [5], scores far below expectation (psi missing) are *not intended*. Psi hitting as well as psi missing may occur in sufficiently long test series

[5] Intention in this context encompasses wish and desire.

conducted by single participants (Rhine, 1971). Hence, one might conclude that intentional and unintentional psi effects are both observable, even in long enough test records of individual test participants.

High hit scores and other psi-relevant observations are partially dependent on intentions. For example, participants producing high scores are generally capable of reducing their hit rates at will (Ertel, unpublished) [6]. But the intentional effects are limited, participants cannot generally *increase* hit scores at will. Moreover, hit rates may fluctuate within runs (*position effects*, Rhine 1969) and across runs (run score variance, Rogers, 1967) which escapes the participants' control). Nevertheless, $_S$INTENTION is an acknowledged factor and should always be considered as a potential co-determinant of experimental and spontaneous events.

03. Subject's awareness of psi effects ($_S$AWARENESS).

Participants intending or wishing to obtain psi effects are generally largely aware of subsequent successes and failures. Experimenters may promote their awareness of results by providing feedback which is generally deemed favourable for psi manifestations (Honorton, 1970). Nevertheless, participants may also be totally unaware of psi effects irrespective of whether they are or are not intended. In addition, persons (Minds A) experiencing spontaneous psi may be fully aware of the paranormal quality of an unexpected , hence unintended event which occurred to them. Thus, awareness and intendedness should be kept conceptually apart.

04. Subject's degree of coherence with B relata ($_S$COHERENCE).

Another facet of importance is Mind A's degree of coherence with relatum B which is generally based on past experience. B may be A's family member, a friend, an acquaintance or some stranger. Coherence strength is generally assumed to influence psi manifestation, higher degrees of A-B coherence, notably A's familiarity with B, are deemed psi-favourable and paucity of prior coherence psi-unfavourable (Irwin, 1980). MI-SPI cases seem to follow the same rule, reports of appearances of deceased family members are considerably more frequent than appearances of unknown people (Haraldsson, 1988). Enhanced coherence conditions might have psi-facilitating effects for MI-MA as well as MI-BIO cases. DMILS may be more effective with friends as targets of mental activity compared with strangers as targets (Schlitz & Braud, 1997). Coherence of A with B may be increased somewhat in experimental situations, e. g., by letting the participant handle the test material extensively so as to induce familiarity. The so-called *focusing effect* observed in experiments with

[6] Participants in a pingpong ball picking test were asked to avoid picking, say, number 3, while numbers 1, 2, 4, and 5 were admitted. The counts of failures, i. e., low counts of unwanted hits was the criterion of success.

Pavel Stepanek is a supporting observation, Keil, 1977).

05. Subject's mental state factors ($_{S}$STATES).

Much research has been devoted to the participants' states of consciousness, a facet which is assumed to have strong impact on paranormal phenomena (Honorton, 1977). Since emotional states of participants are largely accessible to control, much effort has been devoted to this facet. Mental states of meditating, relaxing, dreaming people, of those in hypnosis, having a dissociative or altered state of consciousness, are generally deemed to be more psi-conducive compared with states of ordinary distraction and diversion. Relaxed minds of participants obtained after 15 minutes ganzfeld exposure are effected by experimenters assuming that psi is thereby generally favoured.

However, spontaneous psi phenomena of MIND A sometimes arise while A is experiencing considerable affective arousal, the opposite of relaxation. Pre-school children seem to be particularly psi-productive, although their mental states, while taking the test, are aroused (Hricikova, 2003). In addition, motivational states of curiosity are deemed psi-conducive while states of boredom are supposed to be psi-inhibitory (Braud, 1987**).** Curiosity which is deemed psi-conducive is quite unlike ganzfeld-typical calmness. Such questions are not yet resolved, but $_{S}$STATES is unquestionably an important facet of psi-exhibiting events.

06. Subject's attitude factors ($_{S}$ATTITUDES).

An *approach-psi* attitude of "sheep" and an *avoid-psi* attitude of "goats" and their effects on psi manifestations are well-known (Schmeidler, 1945, Palmer, 1972). $_{S}$ATTITUDES of A and B participants are dependent on paranormal life experiences on which present attitudes are based. In addition, pertinent *knowledge* about paranormal phenomena, acquired by participants prior to test sessions, pertains to this facet. Attitudes towards the paranormal are associated with belief in the paranormal, but beliefs are predominantly cognitive processes and dependent on attitudes. Attitudes are dynamic processes giving main directions to cognitions.

07. Subject's personality dispositions ($_{S}$DISPOSITIONS).

Conceptually distinct from particular attitudes are general personality dispositions of temperament or cognitive style (traits). Extraversion, optimism, inner harmony, general openness seem to be psi-conducive (Palmer, 1977). Thalbourne's personality construct *transliminality* , a cognitive style, seems to facilitate psi effects (Thalbourne, 2000). Past research thus shows some

consistency of correlations between assessable personality $_{S}$DISPOSITIONS and psi effects.

However, among the seven influential facets that have been distinguished, $_{S}$DISPOSITIONS, as far as they have been assessed by research, seem to have only minor psi-enhancing or psi-inhibiting influence. This fact is surprising since large individual differences regarding psi manifestation have been observed: Reliable psi manifestations of up to 20% of unselected student participants have been found while roughly 80% are consistently psi-insensitive (Ertel, 2005). After all, the terms *psychics, mediums , psi-stars*, *high-hitters,* etc. would hardly be used without repeated confirmation of the observation that some individuals are psi-gifted and many not.

II. Influential Facets focusing researchers

It is generally agreed that in psi research, personal features of researchers have considerably more impact on results than in mainstream psychological research (White, 1977, Smith, 2003). Those seven influential facets above, characterizing subjects/participants, are deemed helpful to also characterize psi researchers/experimenters, even though the profile of relative importance for them might be different. Psi researchers do not regard themselves as targets of research. But since self-reports are widely obtained from participants, researchers might also apply such inventories on themselves. Readers would certainly welcome published self report data of experimenters - the R-facets below might lead to questionnaire items. Self report information from investigators might be crucial for understanding the presence or absence of expected psi effects, meta-analytic results might bear this out.

08. Researcher's processual mind roles ($_{R}$ROLE).

In experimental settings, researchers might become secret *senders* of information. Even in cases where transmission of information by sensory means is excluded, a researcher's knowledge of message content to be transmitted by participant A to B (or vice versa) might be a contributing paranormal factor. This factor might be excluded by double blind procedures. The question is, though, whether $_{R}$ROLE should be excluded at all. This depends on the study's goal.

Researchers might also *receive*, by paranormal means, a participant A's message, sent out to participant B, which might be a favourable condition for participant B's receiving that message. It is more difficult to exclude this factor, but, again, the question whether this factor need or need not be controlled should first be settled.

09. Researcher's intention of obtaining psi effects ($_R$INTENTION)

The meaning of *intention* in the present context should include *expectation* and *desire*. It may be presumed without risk that the desire component of a researcher's volitional and motivational set is pro-psi in most cases. On a more or less latent level, however, individual researchers might wish to obtain insignificant psi effects. It is conceivable that the difference of results obtained by Schlitz (with apparently positive intention/desire) and Wiseman (with possibly opposite desire) was the main reason for discrepant results in their joint study (Wiseman & Schlitz, 1999).

Occasionally researchers, while analyzing their data, are surprised by novel psi effects which have never been encountered before. No expectation and desire could have preceded the first observation of *psi missing* or *displacement* [7], psi missing is generally not considered/expected as an ordinary psi effect even today (Storm & Ertel, 2001). In other words, a researcher's intention (expectation, desire) need not anticipate psi effects in detail. $_R$INTENTION is entirely irrelevant for *spontaneous* psi cases where phenomena occur without a researcher's intention.

10. Researcher's awareness of psi effects ($_R$AWARENESS)

Intended effects are nearly always associated with a researcher's awareness, while unexpected effects may drop in without his/her awareness. A researcher's surprise by unexpected psi manifestation in the data implies his/her lack of awareness at the time when the effect occurred.

Lack of intention and awareness of psi effects are valuable features of psi studies since they raise the credibility of genuine positive results. Moreover, a researcher's awareness of results of psi experiments, even awareness with temporal delay, plays a crucial role for observational theories (OT) as endorsed by Walker (1975) and Houtkooper (2002).

11. Researcher's coherence with participant's relatum B ($_R$COHERENCE)

Inasmuch as the coherence (familiarity, feeling of belongingness) between participant A and his/her relatum B is strong and paralleled by a corresponding coherence between researcher R and relatum B, R's paranormal ability, if present, might have additional favorable effects on A's psi production. R's connectedness with or liking of participant A may be another psi-promoting or –inhibiting factor.

[7] Displacement: Above chance hit frequencies for targets for temporally/ spatially displaced calls.

12. Researcher's mental state factors ($_R$STATES)

The mental state variable (curiosity, boredom, aloofness, ambition, concentration etc.) might also apply to researchers. Such conditions are sometimes revealed and deemed important by parapsychologists in informal internet discussions, they are hardly ever referred to in published research reports.

13. Researcher's attitude factors ($_R$ATTITUDES)

This facet applies to the researcher's evaluations of psi matters, his beliefs and endorsements which might be as important as the participant's beliefs and endorsements. $_R$ATTITUDES should be kept distinct from $_R$INTENTION since R with positive attitudes regarding psi in general, might well wish ("intend"), in particular cases, to obtain negative results, e. g., to disprove a colleague's disliked theory.

14. Researcher's personality dispositions ($_R$DISPOSITIONS)

We do not yet know whether psi effects obtained by extravert parapsychologists are less sparse than those of introverts, whether emotionally stable researchers are more successful than unstable researchers etc. One need not also explore this possible source of effect variance – which would hardly be possible anyway –, but it is worth mentioning.

15. Researcher's efforts of control ($_R$CONTROL)

It is imperative to know whether claimed psi phenomena manifested themselves under control or without control and what kind of control was conducted. Otherwise an answer to the question whether reported psi occurrences were factual or fictional is difficult, if possible at all. Hence, among parapsychologists, a distinction between experimental (with control) and spontaneous paranormal manifestation (without control) is commonly made in the first place.

Less common is the additional distinction between experimental (sufficient control) and *quasi-experimental* research (field conditions with insufficient control) which has been abundantly conducted (sittings and séances). The amount of control need to be assessed. The present system of influential facets does not (yet) also categorize control strategies as they are applied in research.

Control of experimental conditions is nearly always associated with event induction and manipulation, hence induction and manipulation need not be separated from control as a separate $_R$Facet although in certain cases control

might be exerted without induction and manipulation (e. g., video recording of Poltergeist happenings). Hence, control as a facet of research conditions may be divided into the following subcategories:

(1) Manipulated and controlled conditions
1.1 experimental conditions
1.2 quasi-experimental conditions (sittings, seances etc.)
(2) Not manipulated and uncontrolled conditions (spontaneous paranormal cases)

Control has been subsumed here under the researcher's facets. One might prefer to logically regard control as a study facet, not as an R facet. But a separate study category is deemed dispensable.

III. Facets of psi-revealing events

16. Range of psi-revealing events ($_{E}$SCOPE) .

The range of events on which psi effects might have some bearing is large. Psi seems to affect atomic particles, organisms or mental macro-structures and processes. The attributes *micro* and *macro* as they are used for making distinctions among psychokinetic effects is a case in point. The range of psi-based mental events as claimed by Carpenter ("first sight" approach, Carpenter, 2002) would be vast, if veridical, since this author claims that the totality of ordinary psychological processes is based on or emerges from psi processes.

17. Temporal duration and frequency of psi-revealing events ($_{E}$DURATION).

Psi manifestations may be restricted to rare events or they may be elicited more frequently. Their duration may be unnoticeably short as during trials of multiple choice tests or they may last longer as in apparitions and poltergeist happenings. Carpenter claims a permanent presence of psi with "first sight" functions.

18. Temporal coordination of psi event components ($_{E}$COORDINATION).

By unknown paranormal means, Mind A might become coherent with future mind B processes or with some future physical event, e.g. a disaster which might be anticipated via precognition or presentiment. These phenomena arise due to an obstruction of or deviation from ordinary temporal coordination. Premonition has been documented experimentally (Bierman & Radin, 1997). Apparently, by including events ahead of time, psi manifestations might deviate from ordinary temporal coordination .

Connectedness with events ahead of time need not be restricted to transfer of information (premonition). It has been claimed that psi might also be capable of launching or modifying future events. Mind A's activity at t_1 might have impact on physical events at $t_{(1+k)}$. *Delayed* PK effects, temporal displacements, are conceivable and evidence already exists (Ertel, submitted).

Deviations from ordinary temporal succession might also take a reverse direction. Evidence has been reported for retro-psychokinesis, i. e., for effects on physical mikro-processes at t_1 by Mind A's activity at $t_{(1+k)}$ (Bierman & Radin, 1999). This is another *temporal* feature of psi effects which, if real, provides extraordinary evidence for the claim that psi cannot be explained by contemporary scientific models.

Discussion

The Taxonomy of the Mental Paranormal aims to organize the rather unordered aggregate of observational and conceptual oddities of parapsychological research. Conceived as an ordered whole, parapsychological issues should arouse less confusion and less controversy. An attempt to exclude, as much as possible, theoretical issues on a descriptive level, might, if successful, facilitate the debate.

More advantages are conceivable: A taxonomy of psi phenomena might be helpful at solving terminology problems which have been bothering parapsychologists since long (Rhine, 1971). Attempts at improving the parapsychological glossary by various committees turned out to be futile and were given up (Zingrone & Alvarado, 1987). Much inadequate coining of terms has occurred in the past, but the prime problem seems to be different. It is the damaging neglect of putting notions underlying the terms into an acceptable order. Terminological improvements are desirable, but less urgent. Familiar terms, even inappropriate ones, may be used further on with less dissatisfaction if the associated concepts are well placed within a generally accepted conceptual groundwork.

The present taxonomy may be put to a test by asking, e. g., *what is clairvoyance*? The answer: Clairvoyance is a MI-MA case, an individual A receives more or less distinctive knowledge about some non-mental unit B. A is clairvoyant if he/she gives an account of B from which A cannot have obtained any direct (perceptual) or indirect (communicative) information. One might also find that A's past and present coherence with B possibly supports A's clairvoyance of B, A's awareness of receiving from B some paranormal information might also be influential. A's balanced state of consciousness, his positive attitude towards paranormal issues and certain personality dispositions

might also enhance the probability of a clairvoyant transfer of information. Clairvoyance may also be referred to, following the convention, as an instance of ESP, but this label does not add any information.

Theoretical benefits of this approach are conceivable: Parapsychological theories, if placed into the new scheme, display actual limitations: Walker's *Observational Theory* would no longer appear to explain all of psi, because OT deals, in the first place, with effects of $_{R}$AWARENESS. Carpenter's "first sight" theory does not cover all of psi either, its objectives are predominantly $_{SELF}$MI-MI relations. Pallikari's theory of fleeting synchronicities whose effects are deemed to level out with time (Pallikari, 2000), applies, above all, to MI-MA processes, not to all of psi. Thalbourne's *transliminality* is confined to the $_{S}$DISPOSITION andsoforth. Selecting particular issues of interest as support for a preferred theory tends to make the theory all-shining while the remaining issues, from which the preferred ones were selected, disappear. This danger might be diminished by urging theorists to keep their focus related to the entire field, including the "ground" from which the preferred "figures" are taken.

A clear-cut and comprehensive system of parapsychological notions might be particularly useful for raising interest of mainstream scientists. Psi researchers, unable to provide theories for psi phenomena, have not even ordered their findings descriptively in systematic ways. This insufficiency need not persist without end.

The taxonomy might also be helpful for future statistical and meta-analytical work. Psi manifestations reported in empirical papers might be coded using the present scheme as a standard once the majority of the parapsychological community is happy with it, as is, or with some revision.

The taxonomy's main limitation is that it has not yet been discussed. The guiding idea might be frowned at in the first place, the particular direction of the present first attempt might be dismissed or a larger number of details might be criticized. But whatever the result of further discussion, it will, hopefully, bear out clarifications which in this difficult field of research are badly needed.

Problems remain to be solved: While MIND A is receiver of a clairvoyant information, no sender role is conceivable as long as relatum B is a physical or mindless biological unit. Yet it is not inconceivable that B, being "coherent" with A, is capable of somehow triggering A's clairvoyant para-perception or para-monition, analogous to a common "stimulus", or, say, via some 'resonance' factor. Or MIND A might not receive B information unprepared, A might search, more or less subconsciously, relatum B. In that case A's role might be both, subconsciously agentive (searching information) and consciously receptive (receiving information). These are open questions which arise by

combining the available facets of our scheme.

Limitations

The taxonomy, as suggested here, is limited. It does not incorporate hierarchical relations as they are common in taxonomies of plants, animals etc.. The above coherence categories #5 to #9 might have been treated as subcategories of #1 to #4 instead of appending them to the list of main categories. The mind-mind coherence, for example, might have been subdivided on a subordinate level with *single mind* vs. *mass mind* and *other mind vs. self mind* as varieties of relatum A. But a multiple-level order is less easy to handle in practice and has therefore been renounced.

The present taxonomy is not entirely a-theoretical. The concept *coherence* which is useful for pointing at empirical togetherness, may not be welcomed by everyone. However, coherence has less theory-load than, e. g., *entanglement* (Radin) or *field resonance* (Sheldrake) which might be preferred by others. A conceivable alternative for *coherence* is *association,* which, however, is also avoided because of its mechanistic implications. *Coherence* is preferable because this concept may characterize, on a descriptive level, say, ordinary social-emotional A-B relations (love etc.) which is hardly possible with *entanglement* or *association*. Theoretical constructions using *nonlocal entanglement* as an explanatory concept may nevertheless be ventured from a descriptive base with *coherence* as an appropriate start up .

The taxonomy is not entirely comprehensive. Not all contextual factors influencing psi- revealing events have been considered in this scheme. Some objectives of psi research escaped the meshes of the net, above all physical conditions, i. e., geophysical (Persinger & Kripner, 1989) and sidereal time conditions (Spottiswoode, 1997). Nor have factors been addressed whose prime focus is the mind's vehicle, the brain. The reason is that geo- and cosmophysical influences of the environment on system A and neuropsychological conditions of system A are both inaccessible to A's experiencing mind.

Surely, a facet of *subconscious* units and processes might be introduced as an additional level of coherence holding influential mental factors beyond A's reach. Subconscious processes cannot be observed by Mind A, yet they might be inferred by observers. In addition, a facet of *transconscious* conditions might be established in order to account for factors beyond the imagination of observers. One might hope for pertinent insights of future science which cannot be anticipated. The present taxonomy of the parapsychological field is experience-based and observer-based.

Prospects: The taxonomy is thus expandable and changeable, it may be

improved. It would have to be dropped, however, once an alternative, entirely different and more satisfying approach is suggested.

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