

THE INFLUENCE OF SOME PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL FACTORS ON PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

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In ESP and PK experiments, physical and chemical influences may also play a far from negligible role as disturbing factors. Thus, for example, in changing weather with the approach of bad-weather and storm fronts, impulses of ultra-long electromagnetic waves—5-50 km. in wave-length—frequently make their appearance. They may be heard in radio reception as crackling, sizzling, or sputtering noises. Under their influence a human being's powers of attention and concentration and the speed of his reactions are lessened.

Frequently, too, strong moods of depression and sexual excitement set in (statistically borne out by the frequency of traffic accidents and of sex crimes in this type of weather). In places where the ground has a heightened degree of electrical conductivity, and where many dowsers have reacted with movements of their divining rods, these waves and the disturbances they cause appear with unusual intensity. Hence not only the state of the weather but also the geophysical nature of the terrain used for the experiment is important in determining what kind of disturbances may operate in ESP and PK experiments.

Ultra-short waves, now much in use in television and radio broadcasting, may with slight intensification exercise a calming, soothing, desensitizing, and even slightly hypnotic effect—as Weissenberg's experiments in Vienna have shown.

Similar effects can be achieved by an increase in the carbonic oxide, methane, or ethane content in the air or of

other short-lived hydrocarbons (benzine, benzene, etc.), as is often the case in the vicinity of gas works, oil refineries, and other motor-fuel plants. This can greatly affect an individual's clarity of consciousness and his powers of concentration—which in many ESP experiments is a disadvantage, but which in other cases may prove to be an advantage.

Instead of trying to influence rolling dice by means of PK experiments, attempts should be made to tip one of the balances of a very sensitive scale by means of PK forces. A. Hofmann, of Mehlem, successfully carried out just such an experiment thirty years ago on an analytical scale enclosed in a glass structure. The insertion of a wedge-like metal plate prevented the effect (cf. the radiometer effect of microwaves!).

In ghost visitations, the geophysical nature of the subsoil, especially its powers as a conductor of electricity, must be taken into account. Frequently, when fissures, cracks, or displacements occur underground, strong noises resound above the earth's surface—such as thundering, groaning, rustling, or moaning. Moreover, the radioactivity of the air in that spot increases. The air above the earth where deposits of oil and coal are contained often bears traces of self-igniting and combustible gases, which may also have a slightly narcotic effect.

Of particular importance is the study of the human aura—its physical and chemical bases and components. How does the aura of a mediumistic-inclined person differ from that of the usual run of persons? What is the relationship between levitations and materializations and the aura? Grünwald's experiments with ultra-red barriers should be pursued, so that we may observe the material in its nascent state.

One should not undertake to explain the parapsychological significance of a phenomenon until he has exhausted all possibilities of explaining it on the basis of known physical and chemical forces and processes. Modern atomic physics has shown us many new possibilities which men formerly dared not think of. These must be borne in mind in future experiments.