

PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

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Here now is a summary of the questions which, from the philosophical standpoint, particularly interest me in paranormal phenomena, and of the attitude I take toward them.

The primary task of parapsychological research is of course the collection and verification of facts on the basis of well-controlled observations and experiments. A good ontological point of departure for the philosophical aspects of the problem is Hans Driesch's book on parapsychology, especially his idea that the supposedly "normal" phenomena we all take for granted may essentially be just as mysterious as the paranormal and may offer excellent indications as to the latter's real meaning. Thus, paranormal phenomena may turn out to be exceptional cases of the normal, whereas the normal may be simplified cases of the paranormal.

The parapsychical phenomena—materialization, telekinesis, levitation—seem to me exceedingly significant. It seems to me extremely important to demonstrate their incontrovertible reality, in connection with a whole series of physical and theoretical developments in modern physics: Pascual Jordan's cosmogonic hypothesis—the imprint of space (*Metrik*) by the distribution of matter and energy; and the interpretation of fields of probability.

Admitting the very possibility of parapsychological phenomena depends on a prior metaphysical decision: namely, whether and to what extent the laws of matter are considered logical necessities.

Is the representation of the world as a space-time union a possible explanation for clairvoyance and precognition?

The acceptance of temporal clairvoyance and precognition need not mean suppression of free will. But even if such phenomena are accepted, the only thing that can be foreseen is (a) what has in fact been predetermined by the present state of things, even though normally speaking we cannot foresee it or fathom it; (b) what has been preordained by a Higher Power.

The problem of the unconscious and preconscious—memory, depth psychology, instinct, unconscious thinking, hypnosis, and autosuggestion—assumes (a) a superior subject comprehending our empirical ego, and (b) an essential communication with our body and beyond it with the world around us.