

TEACHING OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN INDIA AND THE ANDHRA EXPERIMENT

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TEACHING OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN ANCIENT INDIA

Yoga and tantra are two disciplines that were taught for centuries in India. These disciplines are regarded as *sastras* or sciences and are believed to produce states of consciousness where *siddhis*, i.e., various kinds of supernormal phenomena, manifest. Thus, it can be said that parapsychology has been a subject of teaching from the early beginnings of Indian thought. Not only was the possibility of paranormal communication and supernatural powers extensively discussed in almost all schools of Indian thought, but various kinds of practices believed to be related to the acquisition of these abilities were also traditionally taught in Brahmanic as well as Buddhistic schools. For example, the University of Nalanda, which flourished between the fourth and twelfth centuries A.D., was a great center of tantric studies. Kamalasila was a Professor of Tantras at Nalanda. Citing epigraphical evidence, Sankalia points out that "Tantra was, perhaps, a very popular subject with the students as well as professors in the Nalanda University."¹

In the heyday of Nalanda there were as many as 8,500 students and 1,500 teachers, all residing at the University. It is interesting to note that education at Nalanda was not confined to Buddhistic learning alone. It is stated, for example, that "Hiuen Tsang himself became a student of Nalanda for the study of yoga-sastra, in which the Nalanda Chancellor, Silabhadra, was the highest living authority."²

Tantrism, according to Buddhistic tradition, was introduced by Asanga (fourth century, A.D.). The most important and probably the earliest Vajrayana tantric text, *Guhyasamaja-tantra* is attributed to Asanga.³ From the time of Asanga down to the time of Dharmakirti (seventh century A.D.), tantric practices were transmitted to trusted disciples by the *gurus* in a very secret manner because some forms of tantra violated the rules of conduct prescribed by the Buddha. But by

the seventh century such men as Indrabhuti, Saraha and Padmasambhava made no secret of these practices.

According to *Guhyasamaja-tantra*, the sole aim of tantra is to obtain *siddhi* or "the attainment of superhuman powers of the mind, body or the sense organs".⁴ The Buddhistic tantras are divided into four subdivisions, viz., (a) *Kriya-tantra*, (b) *Karya-tantra*, (c) *Yogy-tantra* and (d) *Anuttara-tantra*.

It should be mentioned that tantrism is not an exclusively Buddhistic preoccupation. As Eliade points out: "It is a pan-Indian movement, for it is assimilated by all the great Indian religions and by all the 'sectarian' schools. There is a Buddhistic tantrism and a Hindu tantrism."⁵

Students are not freely admitted to tantric classes. We are told: "the prospective Tantric must be properly initiated into the Tantric practices through the right channel—viz., the guru. And no ordinary guru would do. He, in fact, must possess all the qualifications laid down in the Tantric works. His duty was to initiate the *sisya*, to give him different kinds of *abhiseka*, and then instruct him how to achieve the Siddhis. Likewise only that student could approach the guru for the knowledge of the Siddhis and Tantric practices who had the requisite qualities."⁶

The belief that many physical and psychical powers not commonly found in men can be secured by practicing yoga is a very old one, and certainly older than Patanjali. *Katha* and the later Upanishads like *Svetasvatara* and *Maitrayani* speak of yoga. In *Katha* Upanishad, yoga is described as restraint of the senses. "When the five instruments of knowledge stand still together with the mind, and when the intellect does not move, that is called the highest stage. This, the firm holding back of the senses, is what is called yoga."⁷

Svetasvatara mentions for the first time *dhyana* or meditative yoga, and speaks of postures, breath control and the different psychical states emerging out of yoga practice. As Radhakrishnan points out: "the *Upanishads*, the *Mahabharata*, including the *Bhagavadgita*, Jainism and Buddhism accept yogic practices . . . Patanjali's yoga is the crystallisation of ideas on asceticism and contemplation extant at his time in a more or less hazy and undefined way."⁸ Eliade also states: "Patanjali is not the creator of the yoga 'philosophy' just as he is not and could not be—the inventor of yogic techniques . . . And in fact yogic practices were known in the esoteric circles of Indian ascetics and mystics long before Patanjali."⁹

There is no agreement on the probable date of the composition of the *yoga sutras* by Patanjali. Some authorities, like Woods, assign Patanjali to the fourth century A.D.¹⁰ But Dasgupta assigns him to the

second century B.C. arguing that the fourth part of the *yoga-sutras* in which Buddhistic references are found is of a later interpolation and therefore does not support the opinion that *yoga-sutras* could not have been written before 300 A.D.¹¹ *Yoga-sutras* are in four parts. The first part deals with the nature and aim of *samadhi*. The second describes the method of reach the *samadhi* state. In the third part, an account of the supernormal powers that can be obtained by practicing yoga is given. The fourth part expounds the nature of *Kaivalya* (liberation) which is the ultimate aim of yoga.

Since the time of Patanjali, yoga has been practiced in various forms and taught extensively throughout India. *Yoga Today* lists more than two hundred yoga centers functioning in India at present.¹² The University of Saugar has a Department of Yogic Studies. Yogic exercises are taught in a number of educational institutions. Yoga seminars and conferences are frequently held, several of these under the sponsorship of one or another agency of the government, state or central.

The most recent one, "Yoga, Science and Man," was held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi from March 14 to 16, 1975. The seminar was sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Family Planning and co-sponsored by such prestigious bodies as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the National Council for Educational Research and Training, the Indian National Science Academy, the Indian Council of Medical Research, the University Grants Commission and the Shri Aurobindo Ashram. The conference was attended by several hundred yogis, yoga teachers, yoga enthusiasts and educators and scientists interested in yoga. Included among them were Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Pandit Gopi Krishna, physicist Dr. D. S. Kothari, cardiologist Dr. Datey and physiologist Dr. B. K. Anand. The seminar discussed several aspects of yoga. But the most dominant interest shown was in the possible medical application of yoga and its therapeutic utility. There was hardly any mention of the parapsychological relevance of yoga. I have referred to this seminar because it illustrates the general situation. While one could come across a lot of glib talk about the *siddhis* and their acquisition through yoga practice, it is not easy to find in India a serious *sadhaka* attempting to obtain *siddhis* by yoga practice or a serious scientist (except perhaps a couple of parapsychologists) attempting to verify the claim that yogic practice would enable one to acquire supernormal abilities.

It is mentioned quite often that the tradition discourages the practitioner from seeking *siddhis*, or even forbids it. This of course is true. Therefore, it is argued, we do not come across yogis interested in

them. I do not find this reasoning very convincing. In the first place, we find a lot of people, called by various names, claiming to possess supernormal powers. Secondly, the number of those who practice yoga seeking *kaivalya* is disappointingly small. Finally, yoga in its popular form is concerned with such lower functions as body culture, health and therapy.

The debasing of yoga as body culture and its degeneration from the lofty heights of *kaivalya* and *siddhis* to a kind of therapy, the efficacy of which is yet to be established, could be a consequence of either of the following. Yoga does not in fact enable the practitioner to obtain *siddhis*. The claims contained in such texts as the *Yoga-Sutras* are but false promises held out by the authors to coax men into practicing yoga in an age which craved magical gifts to control the forces of nature. Or the yoga path to *siddhis* is so arduous, difficult and uncertain that it fell into disuse. It is difficult at this time to say which of these alternatives is more probable. But what is important to note is that yoga as practiced today in many so-called yoga-centers in India is as remotely related to parapsychology as hypnosis or psychoactive drugs. This is surprising because *siddhis* are traditionally regarded as one of the significant outcomes of the practice of yoga or tantra. It may be concluded, therefore, that the teaching of yoga and related disciplines can hardly be regarded as having any direct relevance to parapsychological teaching in contemporary India.

PARAPSYCHOLOGY AS A UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE IN MODERN INDIA

Parapsychology as a subject of university study and research is a post-independence phenomenon. Some of the Indian universities are more than a hundred years old. They were established by the British and patterned to a large extent on the model of British universities. Therefore, one could hardly expect them to take interest in the study and investigation of paranormal phenomena. After independence, parapsychology soon found its way through the portals of some universities. In the early fifties, Banaras Hindu University offered courses in parapsychology. Under the leadership of that great pioneer of Indian psychology, Dr. Gopalaswamy, Mysore University started work in parapsychology, and offered a parapsychology course in its Department of Psychology. Professor Atreya of Banaras Hindu University, Dr. Kali Prasad of Lucknow University, Dr. Boaz of Madras University, Dr. Kuppaswamy of Mysore University and Professor Parthasarathy of S.V. University, among others, showed interest in parapsychology and encouraged its study. Theses were written and

degrees were granted for work in parapsychology. Powerful patronage from politically important men was forthcoming. Soon a parapsychology unit was started at the University of Rajasthan's Department of Philosophy. Lucknow University held a seminar on yoga and parapsychology. Ambitious research projects were announced. Parapsychology Institutes were proposed. But then Kali Prasad and Boaz died. Atreya and Kuppuswamy retired. Banaras and Mysore stopped teaching parapsychology. The Parapsychology Unit in Rajasthan was closed.

This situation is surprisingly similar to the one on the American scene when psychical research first gained admission into universities. As Dr. J.B. Rhine pointed out: "The ESP invasion of the already well-established departments of psychology was definitely not a success. There was no adequate continuity about any single one of these separate investigations."¹³

The reasons for this state of affairs are not difficult to find. Parapsychology, it would seem, was not simply ready for a permanent place in those universities. Its premature entrance was made possible by the personal involvement of a few influential professors who either felt the importance of parapsychology at a theoretical level and wished a place for it in the academic world or simply responded to extramural pressures. The unfortunate part of it is they failed to provide the necessary research and structural base that would ensure continuity. They were either too busy with other things or simply were not themselves sufficiently equipped to undertake serious investigations in this difficult area. Therefore, with their exit parapsychology was quietly shelved. Public pressure and patronage could give only the initial push. The momentum generated by such a push should be self-sustaining. This was not the case, because these universities did not have men trained in techniques that would test the ideas challenging them. Therefore, their commitment was half-hearted; so was their effort.

Fortunately, this is not the end of the story. About the same time as these things were happening elsewhere in India, a young graduate student at Andhra University got interested in parapsychology. His interest and the fortunate confluence of a variety of useful circumstances all converged to bring about a situation where parapsychology found a permanent foothold in an important university. This story is autobiographical. It is briefly told here with the hope that it would reveal the relevant antecedents necessary for the admission of parapsychology into a university. A comparison of the notes by those of us who are involved in similar enterprises of teaching parapsychology in universities, I think, would give us insights into the problems and

prospects of academic parapsychology and, more important, into the ways parapsychologists are made.

THE MAKING OF A PARAPSYCHOLOGIST

Professor Saileswar Sen was a chip off the old block among university teachers. He loved teaching; he loved his students even more. He encouraged students to visit him frequently as his home, gave them delicious spiced tea and engaged them in Socratic dialogue. He was an authority on Navya Nyaya, but his scholastic interests were broader than this narrow area of specialization in Indian philosophy. During one of those informal evenings at his house he talked about extrasensory perception and suggested Rhine's *New Frontiers of the Mind* and Myers' *Human Personality* for reading. One of the students read these books and at once saw the significance of ESP, if it existed, for our understanding of the nature of man. After further discussions and consultations he made up his mind to take up research in this area. Professor Sen agreed to supervise

By this time our student at Andhra University became a lecturer there in the Department of Philosophy, teaching psychology. There was at that time no separate department of psychology at Andhra. Professor Sen died before the research was completed. The burden of guidance now fell on his successor, Dr. K.S. Murty. Finally, in 1955, a dissertation entitled "Paranormal Cognition: An Essay in Survey of Evidence and Theories," was accepted by the Department of Philosophy for Master of Arts Honors Degree. This is a degree awarded for two years of acceptable research after the M.A. The work was entirely theoretical and made no claim to any significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge. However, it gave our young lecturer an adequate appreciation of the scope and relevance of the field, the necessary insights into the problems, and further motivation to undertake experimental investigations.

The early experiments did not cause much excitement. The results did not refute the null hypotheses. The interest was about to wane when a belated reply came from Dr. J.B. Rhine to a letter written about one year before. This letter added the needed fuel for continued burning of the desire to search for an empirical base to some of the most challenging ideas contained in classical Indian psychology. There was also the desire to go to Duke University and work with Dr. Rhine.

In 1957, an attempt was made to go to Duke University. Our lecturer was selected for a Smith-Mundt Fulbright grant, but failed to get a placement for graduate study in Duke's Psychology Department. The following year the same grant was offered and placement was obtained

at the University of Chicago. A British Council fellowship to study at Oxford with Gilbert Ryle was also offered. The subject proposed for study at Oxford was "An Analysis of Parapsychological Concepts." It was not easy to choose between Oxford and Chicago. The decision was finally made to go to America.

When our young Fulbright grantee arrived on the shores of the U.S. in July, 1958, he was warmly received by Dr. Fahler, who was then assisting Dr. Osis at the Parapsychology Foundation. He later met Dr. Osis and others at the Foundation. The next couple of months saw him attending the first annual convention of the Parapsychological Association at the City College of New York and then paying a pilgrimage to the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University. These events were all important for one who was at the cross roads of his research career, with many different paths open to him. The personal contacts with the luminaries in the field at the PA convention and outside created bonds of professional identity. It is these bonds that were decisive in firmly holding him to the field.

Three months at the Parapsychology Laboratory before returning to India in January, 1961, gave the needed training in psi experimentation and also the confidence of success as an experimenter. One year of part-time work at Andhra gave promise and further motivation to seek a full-time research career in parapsychology. This led to acceptance of the invitation from Dr. J.B. Rhine to spend three years at Duke University. These years were crucial in transforming a tender-minded theoretician into a tough experimental parapsychologist.

While at Duke, our parapsychologist received a letter from Dr. D.S. Kothari, a distinguished physicist who at that time was the Chairman of the University Grants Commission, an agency of the Government which provides funds to Indian Universities. In his letter, Dr. Kothari expressed his appreciation of the work done at Andhra (based on his reading of a review of the book *Psi Cognition*) and wished that a research center for parapsychology would be established in one of the Indian universities. This led to further correspondence, two short visits to India and starting of a program to train a few more Indian parapsychologists at Duke. Thus, the stage was set for our parapsychologist to launch his operations on Indian soil.

THE ANDHRA EXPERIMENT

Andhra University is fifty years old. As Indian universities go, it is one of the older and leading ones. Situated on the uplands of Waltair and surrounded by sea and hills, it houses nearly forty faculties on campus and supervises over one hundred colleges located in the

various parts of the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. Under the leadership of such outstanding man of education as Dr. C.R. Reddy and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, it has enjoyed a liberal tradition from its very inception. It has been open to new ideas, never hesitant to encourage new areas of research and study. Andhra is one of the earliest universities in India to start such specialized faculties as Nuclear Physics, Geophysics, Applied Physics, Oceanography and Meteorology, each offering full-fledged Masters and Ph.D. programs.

That Andhra University is hospitable to parapsychology does not surprise any one who is familiar with its workings. The call of parapsychology was heard by one of its leading Vice-Chancellors, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who was later to become the President of India. Over forty years ago, this philosopher-statesman wrote: "The investigations of the Psychical Research Society into what are called 'spiritualistic' phenomena have begun to shake the hardest faith in the truths hitherto accepted in the name of science, that intelligence and memory are functions dependent on the integrity of the cerebral mechanism, which will disappear when that mechanism decays. Some thinkers are now beginning to believe that the brain is by no means indispensable for conscious activities. Psychologists tell us that the human mind has other perceptive faculties than those served by the five senses, and philosophers are slowly accepting the view that we have mental powers other than those of ratiocination and memory conditioned by the brain."¹⁴

When I returned to India in July, 1965, with the hope of finding a permanent place for parapsychology at Andhra University, there was of course no Radhakrishnan as its Vice-Chancellor, but Dr. D.S. Kothari still continued to be the Chairman of the University Grants Commission. His interest in parapsychology did not slacken. His commitment to provide a place for parapsychology in an Indian university stood. The UGC gave us money to hold a seminar on parapsychology. This seminar was attended by a number of top psychologists in the country. The seminar also had the benefit of the participation of Dr. J.G. Pratt and Dr. Milan Ryzl. It was the forerunner for the formal entry of parapsychology into the university.

Dr. K.R. Srinivasa, Iyengar, who was the Vice-Chancellor when the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology was inaugurated on December 28, 1967, told the story of the establishment of the Department thus:

It was in January 1963 that, at the instance of the University Grants Commission, one of Professor Rhine's close collaborators, Dr. J.G. Pratt (who had conducted as early as 1933 the Pearce-Pratt Series of

experiments), visited India along with Dr. Ramakrishna Rao, and went round the Universities and met philosophers, psychologists and educationalists interested in parapsychological research, and came to the conclusion that India offered "a tremendous scope for fundamental scientific work in this field." In their Report to the UGC, Dr. Pratt and Dr. Rao recommended the establishment of a Centre of Parapsychology and added:

"There is so much interest in the country, there are so many parapsychical claims that are made, there are so many people eager to work, and there are so many Universities eager to sponsor, we think the Centre is bound to have a great future." Soon afterwards, in March, 1963, the Chairman of the UGC asked my predecessor, Dr. A.L. Narayan, whether the Andhra University would be prepared to establish a Centre of Parapsychology in terms of the Pratt-Rao Report. After some correspondence, the University Syndicate decided in January 1964 to organise "on a modest scale" a Centre of Parapsychology. But things were delayed, partly because Dr. Rao had gone back to the Duke University, and partly because the University and the UGC could not agree about the exact manner in which the proposed Centre or Institute was to be financed. While the University expected assistance on 100% basis, at least for a 5-year period, the UGC only offered to finance the Centre on a sharing basis. In the meantime, on Dr. Rao's return to the Andhra University, he was appointed by the Syndicate in July 1965 as Honorary Organising Officer of the proposed Centre. After further delays, the UGC sent Dr. J.N. Kaul in January 1966 to hold fresh discussions with the Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Rao, and in their report they recommended the establishment of a Composite Department of Psychology and Parapsychology. The UGC, however, having considered the Report, advised the University in March 1966 to include the proposal for the establishment of this Department along with other IV Plan proposals for the consideration of the Visiting Committee. This was the situation when I took charge as Vice-Chancellor.

When the UGC Visiting Committee came to Waltair in December 1966, they considered this as well as our other proposals, and agreed to include it among their recommendations. But the financial climate in the country was far from bright, and several months passed before the UGC accepted most of the Visiting Committee's recommendations, subject to the drastic proviso that we were to count upon only 70% of the originally assigned allocation for the IV Plan period. . . .

We have since been able, in spite of the necessity for pruning our earlier IV Plan Schemes, to retain practically intact the proposals with regard to the establishment of the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology. . . .

Although there have been exasperating delays and harrowing uncertainties, and although 5 years have passed since the proposal

was first mooted, still I am glad it is now at last taking a definite shape and the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology is being inaugurated today. It is always wise and profitable to function on a wider basis, and I feel that Parapsychological studies stand to gain by being linked with Psychology from the very beginning.

Parapsychology, as it finally emerged at Andhra in partnership with psychology is different from what was envisaged when a parapsychology institute was proposed. Admittedly, this was a retreat from the original grandiose vision. But this retreat was deliberate and carefully thought out. It was not forced on us; we chose this way. Why this choice? The memories of the shift from Duke to the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man were fresh. It appeared that a research center with no teaching base has difficulty surviving permanently on university grounds. Parapsychology as a discipline is not yet ready for complete independence on campus. For the present it needed to grow under the shelter of a more firmly rooted discipline. Also, the training needs of the profession call for an academic program that is noncontroversial and acceptable to the academic community as it exists today and yet one that could serve the peculiar demands of the field.

It was indeed gratifying to read later that Dr. Rhine held similar views, even though the solutions he suggested were somewhat different. Dr. Rhine wrote: "as for a permanent section or a department of parapsychology, I am hesitant to think that either the *subject* [italics mine] or the universities are yet prepared."¹⁵ His solution is "that the separation be regarded as a permanent one; that the independent status parapsychologists have already learned to live with be accepted in all good grace."¹⁶ The Andhra experiment, however, attempted to effect an integration of psychology and parapsychology. Such an integration appeared possible at Andhra. This seemed also to be the obvious step if the prefix "para" were to be dropped eventually.

So, the strategy was to build an academically acceptable and noncontroversial teaching program which would be a permanent base for training and research in parapsychology for the interested student, leaving others free to pursue conventional courses in psychology. Therefore, it was decided to keep the department open to psychologists from other institutions for inspection and involvement and to recruit to the faculty only those who compared favorably in their psychological training to their counterparts in the other psychology departments in the country. The inauguration of the department was so timed that a large number of psychologists from other universities would be present. The occasion was the annual convention of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology. Our faculty members are

encouraged to involve themselves freely with any kind of psychological activity that interests them. My colleagues and I have welcomed every opportunity for interaction with professional psychologists.

This approach appears to have paid good dividends. We no longer feel an isolated bunch or a persecuted lot. Judging by the usual criteria, we feel we have achieved full academic acceptance not only at Andhra, but throughout the country. We have all but succeeded in dropping the prefix "para." Dr. S.P. Adinarayan, a distinguished social psychologist and the Vice-Chancellor of Annamalai University, who reviewed the work of the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology, wrote in his report submitted to the University last year: "Every psychology department has possibly a line or specialization—should this find a place in the name of the department itself? The work done in parapsychology in the department is of paramount importance and should be continued. Since parapsychology is a branch of psychology, the name as it stands is somewhat redundant. Therefore it may be changed to the Department of Psychology."

THE ANDHRA PROGRAM

At the M.A. level we offer one course in parapsychology. The students get full academic credit for it. However, those who are not interested in parapsychology may take a substitute course. In addition, the interested may opt to write an acceptable dissertation for which he gets credit for one additional course. This teaching course has two objectives: (1) to give the student an understanding of the history, scope and methods of parapsychology and to present a review of the research findings and their interpretation, and (2) to train the students in the skills and techniques of psi research. Accordingly the course is divided into two units—one involving the classroom type of instruction and the other laboratory work, including a research project.

In the formulation of this program, we were guided by what Dr. William McDougall said in his Clark University address on "Psychical Research as a University Study." McDougall spoke of three main functions of the university: "First, the function of educating the young people within its gates; secondly, the function of research, of extending the bounds of knowledge; thirdly. . . the function of exerting a controlling influence in the formation of public opinion on all vital matters."¹⁷

Our course in parapsychology for M.A. psychology students is expected to serve mainly the educational function. This function has two aspects, as pointed out by McDougall, viz., the imparting of

knowledge and giving intellectual and moral discipline. McDougall regarded the latter as more important than the rest. It is in this area, he thought, parapsychology has most to contribute to the training of a psychologist. In its demands for patience and resoluteness in attacking problems, for "selective sagacity" to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant and for a high level of reasoning acumen to draw conclusions, exercising "infinite caution" and "unlimited precautions," parapsychological discipline is unrivalled. Hence the psychology student who takes a properly given course in parapsychology should be all the richer for it. If we are correct in our assumptions and if this is evidenced by the performance of our students, then sooner or later other universities in the country should follow our example.

In our M.A. program we admit eight to twelve students every year. There has been considerable demand for admission. The proportion of those turned down is nearly ten times those admitted. Every year we receive over fifty requests from interested and eligible overseas students, especially from the U.S.A., for information about our teaching program. Our inability to render any financial assistance almost always stands in the way of welcoming the deserving among them. The minimum eligibility for admission to our M.A. course is a bachelor's degree in arts or science. Nearly all the students when they join the department say that they are interested in parapsychology and would like to study it. But these are largely uninformed. Their notions about parapsychology are usually hazy.

The first year M.A. program is concerned with basic psychology. Students are not required to do any formal reading in parapsychology except when they become familiar with some of the standard psi testing procedures as part of their laboratory work for the experimental psychology course. However, the weekly seminars and review meetings provide sufficient opportunity for them to get a "feel" of the field and its controversial nature. By the time the students come to the second year and are ready to decide if they wish to study parapsychology, we find only a few opting for it. Again, some among them who are found wanting in good scholastic habits are dissuaded from choosing parapsychology and diverted to other specialties. Thus, we have built-in safeguards and an effective filtering system so that only those who are properly motivated and have the necessary intellectual competence and scholastic habits to profit by parapsychological training are admitted. Frankly, we are not interested in numbers. More often we find ourselves discouraging rather than persuading students to take up parapsychology.

In addition to the M.A. course in psychology the Department of

Psychology and Parapsychology offers two research degrees—M. Phil. and Ph.D. in parapsychology. The M.Phil. program is of two-year duration after the M.A. The Ph.D. is three years. One could enroll for the Ph.D. without first doing the M.Phil. The first year program for M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees is identical. The student makes advanced study of parapsychology and research methodology. These are given as reading courses without any formal lectures. At the end of the first year he is required to pass the pre-Ph.D. written and oral examinations in these subjects. The M.Phil. degree is awarded for an acceptable dissertation presented at the end of the second year. The Ph.D. dissertation is expected to be of much higher standard than the M.Phil. We normally send our Ph.D. dissertations to experts outside India for evaluation. We have had in the past such leaders in the field as Dr. Schmeidler, Dr. Pratt and Dr. Van de Castle as our Ph.D. examiners. We believe our M. Phil. and Ph.D. programs serve, in addition to the educational function, the research function as envisaged by Dr. McDougall.

We have recognized the interdisciplinary nature of parapsychology and have therefore also provided for non-psychologists to join our research courses. Theoretically, any Master's degree holder is eligible for admission to either of our research programs, provided he gives evidence of aptitude in and competence for research in parapsychology. But our research admissions so far have been confined largely to those who have had psychology earlier. Since the basic psychology qualification is essential for recruitment to our faculty positions, we would necessarily have difficulty in providing adequate faculty guidance for any research that calls for knowledge of medicine, physics or biology. This indeed is our serious limitation.

Psi is much broader than parapsychology. I like to limit the use of the concept "parapsychology" only to that part of psi which can be properly assimilated and researched by psychologists. Eventually parapsychics, psi biology and medical psi—therapeutic and diagnostic—are bound to assert themselves in gaining a respectable place in physics, biology and medicine. Dr. Rhine has said: "psi research is obviously of special concern to those who are interested in the full range of the unexplored nature of man When we come eventually to the stage when the *sciences of man* take a pre-eminent position, we shall find that one of the places around the conference table will have to be reserved for parapsychology."¹⁸ I wish to go still further and say that the implications of psi are much wider and encompass the totality of nature. If psi involves a new form of energy or process there is no reason to believe that it is confined only to man or

animals. It may be an important ingredient involved in the various manifestations of matter as well. Therefore, the results of psi research may be just as important to physicists as they are to psychologists.

Having come close to dropping the "para" and integrating parapsychology into the general framework of psychology at Andhra, I fear that, if this does happen, it may have a serious limiting and even distorting effect on our knowledge of psi unless it be augmented by something else. I seem to come back to the institute idea of Dr. Rhine. His quest is for a "bold philanthropic offer to establish an institute for parapsychology at a first-rate university. This should, of course, be done with the approval, and even the collaboration, of that university's department of psychology."¹⁹I venture to add that Andhra University is ready for such a move, if there is an offer. My reason for favoring the institute idea is that collaborative interdisciplinary research and training are essential for an all round understanding of psi. Such research is possible only at an institute which would have on its staff scientists from all the related disciplines. I would not name such an institute the "Institute for Parapsychology." I prefer the name to be the "Institute for Psi Research." Therefore, the next organizational advance at Andhra should be the establishment of the Institute for Psi Research.

Now, what about the impact of the Andhra experiment on other universities in India? Perhaps it is too early to answer this question. But this much can be said. I know of no psychologist who feels threatened because of our existence as parapsychologists. There is at least one more university department of psychology which proposes to start a parapsychology research center. There are a few psychologists, like Dr. Mathew of Kerala University, who were able to obtain small grants for their research in parapsychology. I believe many universities would now be willing to offer a parapsychology course, if they could find among their teaching staff someone capable of teaching it. Since the financial constraints make it difficult to hire an additional teacher, many universities prefer to have one of their teachers trained in parapsychology. I believe a 10-week summer course in parapsychology to which psychologists from other universities could be invited would serve a very useful function to spread parapsychology to other universities. The faculty for this course may be drawn from the various parapsychological centers around the world.

Finally, what about our resources? Since we are an integral part of the University our maintenance is its responsibility. We depend mostly on the University Grants Commission for any developmental activities. I suppose, no one has all that he needs or wishes. If we had more resources we could use them for the following:

(1) Library and laboratory facilities. There is need to strengthen these facilities. I find considerable gaps in our book collection. We apparently have a lot of difficulty in obtaining books for our library, as several titles are simply not available through our book trade. Also we need to get the parapsychological journals by airmail. We seem to suffer from a good deal of information gap. While our laboratory facilities are adequate for the present, a number of items are still on our shopping list.

(2) Fellowships to research students. These are needed to attract good students to parapsychology. In view of the considerable interest shown by students from other countries, we need to have at least one fellowship sufficient to cover the expenses of an overseas student. Fellowships for Indian scholars would be very useful.

(3) A one-time summer institute and workshop for training psychology teachers in parapsychology. An intensive ten-week course with leading parapsychologists of the world as faculty would enable parapsychology to spread to several universities in India. This requires international collaboration.

(4) Institute for Psi Research. The establishment of such an institute has the highest priority in mind. But I realize that this has the least probability of being realized. Perhaps a beginning can be made if we find resources for inviting specialists in other disciplines to spend a year or so at the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology.

In conclusion, I would like to say, if the Andhra experiment is a success to any appreciable extent it is so because of a number of factors. First and foremost is the rare international collaboration and help received with no strings attached. Second is the academic environment in India that is not hostile but hospitable to parapsychology. Third is the availability to Andhra University of a group of trained parapsychologists who have a healthy commitment to the field and possess academic qualifications and competence comparable to others in the university community.

The Andhra experiment is one of the finest examples of international effort and understanding. In time, we hope, Andhra will become an international center where scientists from all parts of the globe work unitedly for the advancement of knowledge concerning the hidden energies of the universe.

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DISCUSSION

CHILD: I'm very curious to know to what extent the parapsychology courses at Andhra or the other universities where they are taught, differ in their subject matter or their approach because of the rich background of tradition of the paranormal in India that you mentioned at the beginning.

RAO: Your question, Dr. Child, is best answered by referring to a statement Mr. Angoff made when he visited our department in March, 1970, at a time when we were holding our annual review meetings. He said then: "I will confess to a slight disappointment that more work pertaining to phenomena in the Indian environment is not going on. I will also confess to a little disappointment that the work is along conventional or traditional lines." I'm afraid this statement of 1970 is still valid and that we have not yet succeeded in our attempts to *Indianize* parapsychology. Parapsychology courses we teach at Andhra

are basically Western-oriented and drawn mostly from the work done in Europe and the United States. We have as text-books for the first course *Parapsychology* by Rhine and Pratt, my book *Experimental Parapsychology* and Myers' *Human Personality*. We do, however, talk about yoga, meditation, altered states of consciousness, and their possible bearing on psi, but we do not have, for example, *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali as a text for compulsory reading. We have another elective course, Indian Psychology, which goes rather thoroughly into the traditional Indian approaches to the study of man's nature, including the paranormal.

DEAN: Dr. Rao has just been mentioning the connection between the Yogic thought and our Western thought, but more has been made of this. At the Second International Congress of Psychotronics in Monte Carlo, in the abstracts of the proceedings, there was a paper by Charles Musès, the mathematician. He is playing with very interesting mathematics and of course, it is on the boundaries of brain-storming. It hasn't been proved or anything, but it's very interesting for those of us who are interested in creative ideas on how to solve some of the problems we have in parapsychology. He's come up with some formulae which suggest that perhaps what he's working with is the mathematics of consciousness. One of these equations indicates, and—though he may be interpreting it wrongly—he interprets it as meaning that in order that we can be conscious of our external world, it comes in phases and only on every twelfth phase of the cycle can we be conscious of our universe. He then has looked up the books of Patanjali, and in Book IV, Verse 13, he quotes a statement which seems to connect with this modern mathematics that he's doing. The statement says, "The external manifestation of an object occurs,"—and I'm now adding "to our senses, so that we can be aware of our universe"—"it occurs when its three gunas are in the same phase." Now, he interprets gunas in Patanjali's words to mean "space, time and consciousness." If this is true and if it leads to something that's constructive, it will be very interesting, that Patanjali by Yogic methods of meditation, was able to get at this very deep, profound insight back in 300 A.D.

RAO: I am not sure I would agree with the statement of Mr. Dean. First let me confess that I am a bit allergic to a lot of sanctimonious breast-beating that often is the case when we speak of our past achievements. Historically, it is not true to say that what is contained in the *Yoga Sutras* is "the profound insight" of Patanjali obtained through "yogic methods of meditation." All available evidence suggests that Patanjali simply compiled and systematized the beliefs that were

existing at his time. I question also the assumption that the three *gunas*, *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, may be interpreted as consciousness, time, and space. According to the *Sankhya-yoga* school consciousness is the characteristic attributable only to the *purusha* and not to the *prakriti*. As you know the three *gunas* are characteristics that belong to the *prakriti*, the primordial matter. I am reminded of a day in the 1950s when the Russians sent their first Sputnik into space and we had a meeting organized in the University to discuss the significance of that event. Our Professor of Telugu at that time, who was one of the speakers, read out a few verses from one of our well known epics in which a reference is made to an elephant being thrown into space by the mighty Bhima. It is said that the elephant is still orbiting the earth. The implication is that the Hindus achieved this feat many, many centuries before the Russians did. I am a proud Indian and very fond of my own culture. But I do not consider it necessary to engage in such excessive and imaginary generalizations to establish the greatness of our ancestors.

KRIPPNER: I was very interested in the discussion about the orientation of the parapsychology course at Dr. Rao's university, because I also was there recently, less than a year ago, and had a chance to discuss with the students the outlook that they had on parapsychology and how they might relate it to the Indian tradition. I certainly found no such thing in India as the so-called occult revival in the United States. In fact, it was just the opposite. The Indian students I spoke to were very much against traditional religion because of the really dreadful things that they thought were being done to their country by religious dogma. They accused religion of holding back progress, exacerbating the population problem, increasing the ecology problem, wasting natural resources, etc. They did not want to have anything to do with that particular aspect of occultism. However, they were interested in scientific parapsychology and very grateful for the opportunities that had been provided to study it at their university. I might also say that Dr. Rao's psychology building is a stunning edifice which would be the envy of many people in this country. It is very tastefully designed and well constructed. You go up to the psychology library and there are a number of very beautiful photographs and paintings—one being a painting of Eileen Garret; furthermore there is a Psychophysiology Laboratory which is very well equipped and which has been named in her honor. And then in the library itself, there is a large painting showing Dr. J.B. Rhine and D. Rao the day that Dr. Rao became president of the Parapsychological Association, and was congratulated by Dr. Rhine. So these are some of the very pleasant

memories I have of that beautiful building and the dynamic work that is being carried on there.

WHITE: I'd like to ask you, Dr. Rao, if you're entirely pleased with the name change of the department. It sort of eliminates free advertising, as it were.

RAO: I really wanted to have your suggestions on this question at this time because we now have the choice to change the name. I am at this point unable to make up my mind whether the distinctiveness of the department should be maintained by continuing to call it the Department of Psychology and Parapsychology or whether parapsychology should be dropped so as to indicate the natural and the desired integration of psychology and parapsychology, which seems to have come about in India. I would really like to have your comments on this.

JOHNSON: Dr. Rao, you just touched upon Yoga and Yoga's possible bearing on psi. I know I asked you about this seven years ago. What is your present position? Do you believe that yoga has a bearing on psi ability?

RAO: I am afraid, Dr. Johnson, my answer to you today is not very different from the one I gave you years ago. It is not because of any lack of effort on our part but we simply were unable to obtain the results we hoped. I spent nearly two years going about in search of people who claim exceptional psychical powers. My experience has been more a disillusionment than a significant reinforcement of my hope to find a performing yogi who can demonstrate psychic abilities on demand. While I have so far failed to find one who could do even a moderately significant something for me, I found at least four people using sleight-of-hand which my naked eye could easily catch. I have given up any hopeful search for a psychic yogi. I have not been able, however, to convince any of my American friends who come to India in search of just such people. I find some of them agreeing with me only after they had spent three fruitless months in India.

The other line of research, related to this question, is to do psychophysiological studies of developed yogis under laboratory conditions with a view to discovering any unique patterns that may conceivably be related to psi function. We also have plans for starting a centre for voluntary control of internal states, where students practicing such disciplines as Yoga may be given ESP and other tests throughout the period of their training. On the hopeful side, we have the results of studies made by Mr. Dukhan, one of our doctoral

students from the West Indies. He obtained interesting results. His subjects did significantly better in ESP tests taken immediately after they had meditated for at least half an hour in comparison to the ESP scores they obtained before meditating. These results are open to several interpretations, but I have no doubt that Mr. Dukhan's study does indicate an important relationship between psi and meditation which deserves further follow up.

VAUGHAN: I was wondering about your own investigations of such people as Sai Baba. Americans I know have gone there and been quite impressed, yet we've had no official reports from India and I wondered what you might say about it.

RAO: First let me make it clear that I did not study Sai Baba. I simply did not have the guts to take up this very important project. I did not think that studying Baba would serve any purpose unless he is prepared to work under my conditions. I would love to work with him if I could feel reasonably confident about the conditions under which I may be permitted to observe his "miracles." I have carefully read several things written about Baba but I have not been able to make up my mind whether going after him would be worthwhile from a scientific point of view.

I did investigate, though, a number of less-known miracle makers. This work has been mainly fruitless. Some are too clever to permit me to observe them under conditions that reasonably rule out alternatives to psi. Others were too naive to practice sleight-of-hand and other cheap tricks that I could easily discover. I am unable so far to find a miracle-maker whom I could confidently recommend to you as a genuine psychic.

NOVILLO: When I went back to my country in 1973, I lectured in parapsychology and asked that the subject be listed in the school of psychology. At first there was resistance. The name does not have good connotations, it doesn't seem to be a science; then I have suggested the term "dynamic of the unconsciousness" as this really is. After some discussion, it was accepted as a new aspect or point of view of the studies dealing with the dynamics of the unconscious in the school of psychology.

RAO: We really have no difficulty in using the word parapsychology. The question I raised is whether parapsychology should find a place in the name of the department. No one has really objected to calling our course, a course in parapsychology, even though some may prefer other names like paranormal psychology. I must make it very clear that

Dr. Adinarayana did not really object to the name as we have it now. His is only a suggestion. He seems to think that it is redundant to call a department the department of psychology and parapsychology since parapsychology is a branch of psychology.

FRANKLIN: The question of whether or not there's any training that can help in parapsychology performance is an interesting one. In the studies at Stanford Research Institute on remote viewing, they found that the average person could do just about as well as the psychics that they had in their group. And then if you asked the question, whether or not one can do any type of training which will increase one's parapsychological capabilities, I think that's a very interesting question. One of my closest friends graduated with honors from Oberlin and worked at Columbia University for his Ph.D., worked under Skinner at Harvard. Then he was head of a section at Bell Labs, worked at Cornell for awhile, and then studied Yoga in India for a year under a teacher. I was amazed about the things that he told me his Yoga teacher could do. I've also read the books of Sri Aurobindo on Yoga, I've read comments by The Mother, and I find repeatedly things that refer to things that I categorize as parapsychological in nature within those Yoga books. So my question, I guess, is do you feel that there are practices within the framework of Yoga that can increase one's parapsychological capabilities?

RAO: One could make an assumption. But I don't really have any data to suggest that practice of a particular kind of Yoga would enable one to develop certain psychic abilities. This is not to dispute the fact that belief in such possibilities has been held for many centuries in our country.

Regarding the observations of your friend, who may be a good psychologist, I would only like to say that the observations people report are very often personal impressions that are largely determined by one's own frame of reference and belief system. Let me illustrate this by my own experience with a friend who is a well-educated, sensible and level-headed man who has two university degrees. He told me once that a Swami had materialized certain things in his hand and his wife's while he was watching. He was apparently very much interested and persuaded me to visit him. He also arranged for an appointment with him at Madras. A senior psychologist, formerly a university professor, and I in the company of my friend observed the Swami "materialize" a few things. We had no difficulty in agreeing among ourselves that the Swami was playing not even a clever trick. I asked my friend, "Why on earth didn't it occur to you that he could have done this to you and your

wife?" He said wistfully, "Yes, come to think of it, why didn't it occur to me? I never thought that a Swami would cheat. Why should he cheat? I can understand a magician using a sleight-of-hand. Why should a Swami cheat?" So, you see, the frame of reference of the observer is extremely important. Most people who go to these Swamis and Babas have a frame of reference which accepts these men as holy—and a holy man cheating is a contradiction in terms.

WHITE: I have another question. Are you pessimistic about Yoga?

RAO: I did not say that. At this time I am neither pessimistic nor optimistic. At one time I must say I was optimistic. Now I am not so optimistic. But still I have not reached the point of skepticism.

WHITE: O.K. You said you had gotten, or your students had gotten some results with meditation. Now what I want to know is are you distinguishing between meditation and Yoga?

RAO: These people went through a course of Yoga in an *ashram* in Pondicherry. The ESP tests were given every day following a meditative session. But these people were also practicing physical yogic exercises under the guidance of a swami. While these subjects were not expert yogis, they were all practicing Yoga.

WHITE: But that is Yoga, really.

RAO: Yoga, yes, and then the tests had taken place in a situation where they meditated for at least half an hour before they took the ESP test. The meditation is not of one kind. They have practiced different sorts of, shall I say, eclectic meditation. Meditation is of course an important part of Patanjali Yoga.

WHITE: I see. Thank you.

ONETTO: Two small questions; and a proposition. At the beginning of the paper you said that traditional thinking in India considered Yoga and Tantra as science. Would you personally be more inclined to consider them as religious beliefs and aims—really Yoga and Tantra what they'd like to do and what they want to do, as their last aim is Samadhi, and this is not the aim of parapsychology, and not of any positive science? And the second question is, have you planned with your department to make a survey of spontaneous cases in the future or have you done something along this line? And the proposition is definitely that you maintain the name of your department. I think it's a very good name—"Psychology and Parapsychology." We are still not mature enough for any change in that.

RAO: Regarding some of your reactions to the name, maybe you could give them to me later as we go on with the conference and have occasions to meet. Now let me answer your first question. It is true that the ultimate aim or goal for most Indian thinkers is liberation from the earthly bondages to find identity with the ultimate and escape the cycle of birth and death. But at the same time you could quote a number of passages, and I did in my paper, which say that *tantra* is essentially a method of gaining psychic powers. So, it seems to me that *tantra* was regarded, at least by some, as a way of obtaining paranormal abilities even though the striving for them was discouraged. The religious motivation has always been one of attaining *moksha*, the ultimate liberation.

As to your second question, regarding spontaneous cases, we haven't started any scheme of surveying or actually soliciting, but we do have a small collection that is gradually accumulating. The other day, when I was talking to Dr. Palmer in Charlottesville, I was thinking it might not be a bad idea to do a survey of psychic experiences among Indians similar to the one he did in Charlottesville.