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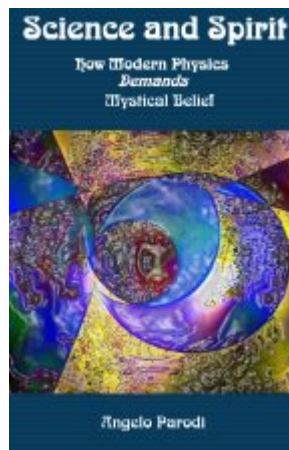
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Science And Spirit



By Angelo Parodi

Introduction

Regardless of how we approach the issue, it's impossible to dismiss the fact that science leaves many of life's most intriguing questions unanswered. Most people, educated in the doctrines and certainties of science, look upon spirituality, the paranormal, and the supernatural, with a kind of wistful wariness. The yearning to embrace something beyond the mundane materialism of our daily pursuits cannot be dispelled, but we fear that such an embrace would be tantamount to intellectual suicide. The result is a yawning void in our lives—a God-shaped hole—leaving unresolved the questions of what we may hope for, how we should live, and the ways in which we can control the

circumstances of our existence. The primary purpose of this book is to help close that void by showing that we need not choose between archaic doctrine and modern certainty. Essentially, our approach will be to present an apodictic argument to demonstrate that if proven starting principles are assumed, spirituality and the inevitability of paranormal events must necessarily follow.

Recent years have witnessed growing acceptance among 'mainstream' scientists that the world we live in is essentially holistic in nature. The concepts of Eastern spirituality and Western quantitative reasoning have converged steadily, and even the most stolid thinkers have been forced to acknowledge subtle interconnections between what were once viewed as discrete components of a mechanical universe. Nonetheless, science, medicine, cosmology, and other mainstream fields have been slow in embracing a spiritual philosophy, even when it is consistent with the very predictions of their own disciplines. As a result, the general public is left in something of an intellectual quandary. Popular media, which increasingly reflects the implications of hard science, confronts us with heady concepts like String Theory, black holes, and time-space continuity. Our instincts, developed since the dawn of consciousness, whisper that there is something more to reality than meets the eye; and yet, our culture often seems intent on making us feel preposterous for even entertaining such possibilities.

The goal of this book, therefore, is to help the reader overcome these formidable barriers, allowing us to listen to our subtle inner voice without reservation or apology.

PSI, crystal and faith healing, extraterrestrial visitations, Pleiadian channeling, new-age mysticism—the list goes on and on. Never in the history of intellectual exploration has there been a greater chasm between academic attitudes and popular belief than that which separates the discoveries of modern science from the quest for spiritual meaning. Physicists continue to develop highly complex theories of matter, energy, light, time and space, while at the same time denying the relevance of their discoveries to what they derisively refer to as 'lunatic fringe' conjectures. One cannot help recalling the historically pompous Lord Kelvin, who, in the late nineteenth century, smugly proclaimed that all of the discoveries of science had already been made. Similar hubris frequently characterizes the so-called mainstream scientific community, which, if it has learned from the mistakes of the past, appears to have done so only to repeat these errors with renewed frequency and greater precision.

This is not to point an accusatory finger at the halls of academia or the ivory towers of science. A disciplined mindset remains essential for discriminating between novel truths and specious conjectures. Nevertheless, the indoctrination of a formal education in the 'hard sciences' all too often succeeds in steering the inquisitive mind toward stodgy orthodoxy. Few and fortunate are those who manage to assimilate the discipline without succumbing to mindless conformity.

My own experiences confirm how powerful the lure of conventionality can be. I came of age in the turbulent sixties, dropping out of high school to pursue

dreams of rock and roll stardom, and immersing myself in the counterculture. I returned to college at the age of thirty, determined to study theoretical physics with an eye toward understanding the paranormal phenomena in whose existence I strongly believed. Despite these convictions, however, by the time I had attained my degree I had largely succumbed to the mainstream of scientific thought. Only after twenty years of working in industry did my old curiosity and open-mindedness revitalize sufficiently to result in the writing of this book.

At first glance, the diverse range of paranormal/spiritual phenomena discussed in the following pages might appear to share little in common beyond their frequent coverage in supermarket tabloids. The connections, as we shall see, are far more intimate, and completely intrinsic.

For the purposes of the present discussion, the term 'paranormal' shall refer to those classes of phenomena that appear to follow certain common patterns of manifestation, but which are currently inexplicable in terms of known scientific principles. As dazzling as our current scientific achievements are, we must remind ourselves that less than a century ago we illuminated our homes with candles or gas lamps, traveled in horse-drawn carriages, and, as our redoubtable Lord Kelvin once observed, were largely convinced that flight was an absurdity. Scientists, remember, are individuals who have a great stock in the prospect that even those things yet to be discovered will essentially adhere to the paradigm of what is already known. This resistance to change should not be underestimated. Change is accepted only in the face of irrefutable evidence, and that evidence must be presented in the jargon of the prevailing zeitgeist. This explains why mainstream scientists are reluctant to even consider anecdotal evidence originating in what they consider the 'lunatic fringe', and presented in something other than mathematical terms.

As anyone with an open mind, scientist and layman alike, must agree, it is highly likely that the universe around us is a far more complex place than we currently understand. (If this were not so, what a bleak prospect our future would hold!) On the other hand, if the patterns of the past are any indication, our current understandings will not be proven wrong in the light of future discoveries, but rather, will be shown to be special cases, applicable within a limited set of constraints. For example, Quantum Theory and Einstein's Relativity did not invalidate Newton's classical mechanics; they merely demonstrated that the earlier approaches apply only within the realm of large, slow-moving objects. Similarly, while it is unlikely that Special Relativity's injunction against faster-than-light travel will be proven 'wrong', we may well see that it applies only within certain special circumstances (e.g., in the realm of a 4-dimensional space-time continuum, which is merely a subset of the whole of reality.)

Concrete evidence surrounds us. It is verifiable fact that many stock brokerage firms employ astrologers. Large oil companies utilize the services of dowisers. Law enforcement organizations have used psychics to solve crimes. The governments of both the United States and the former Soviet Union have invested considerable resources to investigate the use of paranormal channels

for the purposes of espionage. (In 1967, the Soviets had more than twenty research centers for the study of paranormal phenomena, with an annual budget equivalent to \$21 million. In today's economy that would probably translate to about a quarter of a billion.) If even one of these situations can be shown to be factual in nature (and, as we shall see, they can), then we are compelled to accept the existence of an entire branch of science within which they operate.

Why would any sane person actually believe that our world is anything except what it appears to our five senses? The reason is that science itself not only supports belief in these concepts, but in most cases, actually demands it! As we shall learn in the coming pages, we need not search for answers further than what science already knows with 100% certainty.

In this book, I will present the most relevant findings of modern science, first, as the factual basis for those concepts that support the reality of paranormal events, and, second, as those concepts relate in detail to these phenomena. Some of the underlying, proven concepts may be somewhat difficult to follow and understand. Be patient—the farther we go, the more the different pieces will fit together, and the reward will be well worth the effort. If some of these concepts seem, initially, like magic, we must continuously remind ourselves that yesterday's magic is, more often than not, tomorrow's science. As Arthur C. Clark observed, "any sufficiently advanced technology will appear to be magic to those with lesser technologies." In the final analysis, it will be up to you to consider the content presented here, subject it to your own personal scrutiny, and decide what makes sense to you and what does not.