

Why, in a scientific age, are people still interested in, or afraid of, the super...



The supernatural is unpredictable and has been thought to be responsible for certain inexplicable situations. This creates a sense of fear as we know not what harm might result from the supernatural, yet we are still morbidly interested in it.

The realms of science fail to provide reasonable explanations for everything and many may seek to find 'alternative' answers when they are astounded by strange situations. The media can be partly accounted for the interest in the supernatural. From time to time, ghost stories are publicised and people have natural curiosities that demand to be satisfied. Not only that, we doubt if there are forces higher than us to do certain things that we cannot. The media often captures our apprehension and interest in the afterlife, to which there are no certain answers. Religion would also play a great part in supernatural beliefs.

No doubt certain religions censure belief in the supernatural; but often this produces a counteractive effect! There are also religions that believe in the supernatural. In this case, natural interest may be reinforced and encouraged. Putting one's faith in the supernatural when one receives no hope from scientific treatments serves to be a diversion from the realities of life. This explains why a few elderly people have been cheated in Singapore when they spend a lot of money on 'miracle stones' that are supposed to cure all ills. This would also explain why there are people who will be willing to drink 'holy water' made from ashes mixed with water when it is obviously harmful for the body.

The existence of exorcists and geomancists is explained by people's fear of death or 'bad luck' for some. Yet at the same time, despite this need for a miracle, the supernatural is deemed to be a frightening representation of what we do not know. The supernatural both baffles and amazes us. We cannot, for example, explain how certain people are gifted with extraordinary abilities. Psychics, as people who have had 'out-of-body' experiences are often revered but kept at a distance. Such is the reaction to the supernatural.

At times, the supernatural creates such a natural interest because there have been established traditions. Numerology, for example, has been used by the Egyptians and some have claimed that there is some truth in it. There are also those that swear by palm-reading and face-reading. And what about the great number of people who read horoscopes, whether faithfully or not? No one can really suppress their curiosity to know more about themselves and their future.

If one believes in divinity then the interest in the supernatural would be even greater. Often some gain enjoyable entertainment from mild interest in the supernatural. We may also be interested in finding new outlets for powers we know not of. Telepathic powers, for example, would be very useful. Seeing the way some people can influence their physical world and the laws of nature would make us wonder if we can do the same.

However, because there are so many stories about malevolent ghosts or spirits, there is a tendency to be fearful of the supernatural. After all, if these forces of the supernatural exist, they would be above us in strength. This

unpredictability may never convince the masters of Science, and that is why even though there is much fascination with the supernatural, there will always be apprehension and caution in dealing with it.