

# Annabella Cardoso and EVP

## a paper by David Fontana

Although EVP and ITC is not my interest I find some of the work fascinating. Clearly the lead was taken by George Meek in the USA with some interesting work. However, the baton seems to have been passed on and much of the leading work is coming out of people associated with the Spiritists. Dr Cardoso is one of the most interesting and I attach this report about her written by David Fontana who is well known in the SPR and one of those who was hoping to research our then Physical Mediums in 2003 who was turned down by David Thompson (see a copy of the email in Michael Rolls Campaign for philosophical freedom archives in 2003)

### Part 1

ITC Research, with Particular Reference to the Work of Dr. Anabela Cardoso

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### Introduction

Research into ITC (or Instrumental Transcommunication - in which apparently paranormal voices, images and texts are captured on electronic media such as audio tape, radio, video tape, telephones, fax machines and computers) has been seriously neglected by scientists in Great Britain. The work of David Ellis (Ellis, 1978) during his tenure of the prestigious Perrot-Warrick Studentship at Trinity College Cambridge suggested strongly that ITC research prior to that date - and specially the work of Konstantin Raudive, whom Ellis particularly studied during his investigation of the subject - had failed to demonstrate conclusively any paranormal effects. Ellis considered that Raudive's results could be attributed primarily to stray radio transmissions and the tendency by researchers to place over-generous interpretations upon the distorted, fragmentary sounds heard during these transmissions. The meticulous nature of Ellis' investigation convinced British scientists engaged in psychical research that little could be expected from ITC and that research energies could be better directed elsewhere.

While accepting the quality of Ellis' work I was not entirely satisfied by this, and continued to take an interest - if only a peripheral one - in an area that, should it produce positive results, would clearly prove of great significance to parapsychology. It was this interest that led me one day to pick up in a second-hand bookshop a slim volume on the subject by the late Samuel Alsup (Alsup 1989), and leafing through the pages I saw enough to convince me that it was worth buying. I did not regret the purchase. In a modest and unassuming way Alsup described his own dedicated research

into one of the phenomena associated with ITC, namely EVP (or Electronic Voice Phenomena - the procedure investigated by Ellis in which a blank audio tape is set to record white noise from a radio or other source, and which on playback is claimed sometimes to contain paranormal voices unheard during the recording). Alsop's book was sufficiently interesting to prompt me to write to him in a quest for more details of his methods and results and for a tape recording of his results. In due course I received a reply, not from Alsop himself who had sadly passed away just previously, but from his daughter Gillian Alsop, who had collaborated with him during his life and who was now carrying on his work.

In the course of our subsequent correspondence Gillian Alsop sent me audio tapes of her father's results and of her own, and the quality of the voices and the relevance of the communications was sufficient to convince me that either they represented genuine paranormal phenomena, or were the result of fraud (for which there appeared to be no motive - far from making money from his work Alsop had even paid to have his book published, and Gillian Alsop subsequently refused a research grant generously offered to her by the College of Psychic Studies). Over the following few years, and particularly during my Presidency of the SPR, I was able to correspond informally with other ITC researchers and to receive samples of their work, in particular two leading figures within the field, namely Raymond Cass (whose results were particularly impressive) and Gilbert Bonner. Further information came my way from Dr. Hans Schaer, who was one of our co-investigators during our research into the work of the Scole Group (Keen, Ellison and Fontana 1999). Dr. Schaer had at that time been working with a group of ITC investigators in Luxembourg, in particular Maggy and Jules Harsch-Fischbach, and had become convinced that the results he had witnessed with the group were strongly suggestive of paranormality. I also learnt from him, to my surprise, something of the extent of the work currently being undertaken into ITC in a number of European countries and in the USA. It seemed that we in Britain had been failing singularly to keep abreast of current developments in a field that held out much potential promise. If ITC was found to yield genuinely paranormal phenomena, then this would have clear implications for laboratory work. And if the voices recorded during ITC experiments were those of the deceased, as was claimed, then new possibilities for research into survival of death might also emerge.

#### Dr. Cardoso's Work

Up to this point however, I had not been directly involved in testing the validity of ITC. My interest had been theoretical. I simply collected examples of alleged ITC communications from those carrying out the research, listened to their results with an open mind, and noted their apparent integrity and their dedication to what, from a scientific viewpoint in Great Britain at least, appeared to be remain an unfashionable area of psychical research. However, in 1999 I was approached by an

acquaintance who had recently visited an ITC researcher in Spain, and who was markedly impressed by the results which she had been able to witness. I was given the address of the researcher concerned and invited to contact her, as she had welcomed the possibility that I might take an interest in her work. To my surprise, the researcher turned out to be Dr. Anabela Cardoso, the Portuguese Consul-General in Vigo, north-west Spain, and her country's most senior woman diplomat. In my experience, diplomats are not as a species interested in psychical research, and the fact that Dr. Cardoso was not only interested but ready to give time and money to her own investigations and moreover to prove able to obtain apparently impressive results suggested at the very least that her work should be taken seriously. I further learned that the success of her results and those of others had prompted her to found and edit *The ITC Journal\** which publishes work in English, Portuguese and Spanish (and which has by now established itself as an important publication within the field). We corresponded and she gave me an account of this work and of the information that she was currently obtaining through her ITC contacts. One personally impressive example of this information was the fact that she was told by these contacts of the death of my mother, which had just taken place (I had previously told Dr. Cardoso of my mother's illness, but at that point the date of her death could not be predicted). Subsequently I heard some good audio recordings of her results during one of her visits to Britain, and accepted her invitation to visit her in Lyon - where she had just taken up the particularly important Consul-Generalship (the Lyon area includes over 100,000 Portuguese resident in France), and where she had again established her own ITC studio.

It hardly needs stating that Dr. Cardoso would not have attained her position of eminence within the Portuguese diplomatic corps were she not a person of professional and personal integrity. Gifted culturally and intellectually, with a career that has included positions of leading diplomatic responsibility in Europe, the USA, India and Japan (where she was Portuguese Chargé d' Affaires), she is by training and by nature cautious and sceptical in her attitude towards psychic phenomena. Prior to her experiences with ITC she had had no experience of such phenomena and no interest in seeking it, and throughout her work in the field she has retained the objectivity essential to any researcher into the paranormal. Her path from scepticism to acceptance has been determined solely by the strength of the evidence accruing from her own research.

During my first visit to observe her work I learned that she had begun experimenting with EVP on the hypothesis that if there was indeed anything in this form of paranormal communication (which as already indicated has attracted far more serious attention and attendant publicity in other European countries than it has in Britain), it might provide a way of comforting a friend of hers who had recently lost a young son in a sailing accident. The phenomena, which later included the apparent voice of the young man concerned, first occurred after some weeks of regular

experimental sessions, and over the subsequent months she received a range of successful communications (examples of which are given in due course below). On the apparent instructions of her communicators, she then progressed from EVP to another ITC procedure, namely DRV (or Direct Radio Voice, a procedure in which the radio is tuned to receive the static between stations, and in which voices are said to occur against the background of this static that directly address the experimenter, thus enabling conversations to take place). The communications she had received through DRV ostensibly originated with a group of deceased individuals calling themselves 'Estação Rio do Tempo' ('Timestream Station'), a group that had apparently also communicated with the Harsch-Fischbachs in Luxembourg). The voices concerned used Portuguese, Dr. Cardoso's native tongue, but her fluency in French, Spanish, English, Italian and German has meant that, as with other polyglot researchers, she has subsequently sometimes found herself addressed in other languages (with more than one language sometimes being used in the same sentence, as apparently happened with Raudive and Jürgenson and other early researchers).

## Part 2

### Timestream Station

During my first and subsequent visits, I heard a wide range of audio tapes of the communications received by Dr. Cardoso. Having some knowledge of Portuguese, I was able to follow many of them without too much difficulty. Some of the voices evidenced a characteristic distortion, but others were of remarkable clarity. One communicator in particular, who gave his name as Carlos de Almeida and who was said to be a leading member of the Portuguese group within Timestream Station, had a quality that approximated well to normal recorded speech. His voice, together with the voices of other communicators, had been subjected to audio analysis by a team from the Department of Acoustics at Vigo University who were not told they were paranormal and who reported them to contain characteristics atypical of the human voice. Further confirmation of the atypical characteristics of his voice and that of other communicators has since been obtained from Daniele Gullà and Paolo Presi, acoustics engineers at Il Laboratorio Interdisciplinare di Ricerca Biopsicocibernetica in Bologna, Italy. Among the examples I heard of Carlos de Almeida's communications (here translated from Portuguese to English) were the statements 'I go down to my Group, I go to the Soul' (an apparent reference to the Group Soul of which Myers, communicating through Geraldine Cummins, apparently spoke - Cummins 1932). There were also references to 'planes of existence' and to other aspects of the afterlife, and a later reference by other communicators to the fact that Carlos de Almeida had gone on to the next plane (attempts are currently being made to trace the historical Carlos de Almeida, who was

said by communicators to have been imprisoned in Portugal during his Earth life for revolutionary beliefs). Among other communications recorded by Dr. Cardoso were male and female voices - including those of deceased members of her family - and passages of music of a seemingly unearthly quality. Dr. Cardoso also played me a very faint, child-like voice said to emanate from one of her deceased dogs, Nisha.

A necessarily brief selection of some of the clear and informative communications - now filling some 200 audio tapes - received by Dr. Cardoso from Timestream Station through EVP and DRV respectively are given below. All of these examples were clear and unmistakable - what would in fact be called 'Class A' voices in a threefold classification of quality. The EVP results belong to the earlier stages of her research, as she was subsequently told by her communicators to cease trying for EVP, and to concentrate solely upon DRV. In each case the original Portuguese is followed by an English translation, and by details where necessary of the request, comment, remark or reference by Dr. Cardoso to which the communicators were responding.

EVP:

O Pai vive. 'Father lives.' (In reply to the request for a message from her deceased Father.)

Amou a gente, muita gente. 'He loved people, many people.' (In response to a reference to Carlos de Almeida, a frequent communicator at that time.)

Claro que não tem nada que ver, a ilusão que temos nós, eles não me podem ouvir, tem que ser através do mar 'Of course it has nothing to do [with it], we have the same illusion, they cannot hear me, it has to be through the sea.' (In response to a remark that Dr. Cardoso believed the communicators could 'hear' her better if she shouted while asking questions during a recording session. The reference to 'the sea' appears to relate to the fact that in Galicia the studio is in a house overlooking the sea.)

Sei (Portuguese word) parlare (Italian word). 'I know how to speak.' (In response to a request for a message by EVP during a DRV session when a visitor was present.)

DRV:

e sinto um collie bem inglês... e sinto um pouco de urze e sinto outra cor, sinto o meu poder de infinito. O inconsciente de Deus a todos cobre ...Rio do Tempo... pense sempre em nosso mundo, quem pensa no nosso mundo as

distâncias reduz. 'I feel a very English collie... I feel a little bit of heather and I feel another colour, I feel my power of infinity. The unconscious of God covers all. Timestream. Always think of our world, whoever thinks of our world reduces the distances.' (Segment of a lengthy communication. The communicators are referring to Dr. Cardoso's collie dog present in the garden, and to the heather growing in profusion upon the hills outside. Interestingly they often use the word 'feel' rather than 'see' when commenting upon anything in the studios or their environment, suggesting that they do not directly experience them visually. The reference to the 'unconscious of God' might justify a whole paper to itself.)

Rio do Tempo, Rio do Sol ... This is Rio de Todo ... This is Rio de Todos ... This is Rio do Tempo! ... '[This is] River of time ... River of the Sun .This is River of the Whole ... This is River of All ... This is River of Time!'. (The mixture of English and Portuguese used in this communication occurred during a visit of an English speaking guest to the studio).

... Bela, Bela, Bela! ... 'Beautiful, Beautiful, Beautiful.' (Dr. Cardoso's petname as a child.) ... Já respondeste, a resposta saíu justo p'ro nosso espaço! 'You have answered, your answer came right into our space.' (The communicators' response when Dr. Cardoso apologized for not being able to answer directly. However, her acknowledge of her name prompted this response by the communicators.)

É a tua avó! 'It's your grandmother' (In response to the question 'Who is speaking?').

É. 'Yes, it is I.' (In reply to the further question 'Is it you, grandma?')

Fala Joan Colbert. 'It is Joan Colbert speaking.' (In reply on another occasion to the question 'Who is speaking?')

Sim, aqui, mas não fala o Carlos de Almeida. 'Yes, here, but it is not Carlos de Almeida speaking' (In reply to the question 'Is it from Timestream Station?')

... Estou a falar com os humanos ... Este mundo é o da alma que aposta noutro lado.... 'I am speaking with the humans. This is the world of soul that places its values elsewhere.' (Presumably the final words mean that the communicators and humans have different values from each other.)

Somos mortos. 'We are the dead'. (Often repeated, seemingly as an alternative call-sign to 'Rio do Tempo'.)

É p'ra essa gente humilde, é convocar o amor, panacea do mundo, seria bonito, non? 'It is for humble people. It is to call upon love, panacea of the world, it would be beautiful would it not?' (apparently a reference to the purpose of ITC communications.

Rio do Tempo transmitiu p'ra Anabela Cardoso ... Anabela Cardoso de Portugal. 'Timestream transmitted for Anabela Cardoso ... Anabela Cardoso from Portugal.' (A comment at the end of a DRV session.)

### Part 3

#### Equipment and Procedures

I have myself been fortunate on many of my visits to Dr. Cardoso's studios both in Lyon and in Galicia (where she still maintains a studio) to hear many good examples of live DRV voices speaking to Dr. Cardoso in Portuguese. Exceptionally clearly on each occasion I have heard the words, given virtually as a call-sign, 'Rio do Tempo, Rio do Tempo'. Both studios have been open to my unaccompanied inspection at all times of the day or night during all my visits, as have the premises in which the studios are located, the gardens, and the surrounding environments. Never on any occasion have I found the slightest sign that any of the devices used in the studios have been tampered with in any way, or that there is any possibility that audio signals can be secretly transmitted to them from outside the studios. Dr. Cardoso typically uses a bank of seven radios, namely two state of the art Sony ICF SW7600G/GR, two smaller but powerful Sony ICF SW77, one Sony CFS-DW38 and two valve radios, which currently produce no sound but that are electrically active when switched on. Two microphones are set up in the studio, one to register the voice of the experimenter and the other to register that of the communicators. The microphones are then connected via a mixing table to a Pioneer tape deck CT-W806 DR.

Each of the radios is tuned to a different frequency between stations in the short-wave band, and on the instructions of the communicators each of them is often left continuously switched on, the Sony radios producing radio static at almost full volume for several days and nights. This continuous static is said by the communicators to assist them, even at times when they are not intending to speak to experimenters, in their own attempts to find ways of modulating the sound in order to produce consistently better reception (they have assured Dr. Cardoso 'we shall be able to speak directly' - i.e. with greater clarity). Sometimes, when the radios are on during these attempts, the volume of static coming

through each of them has been switched abruptly from very loud to near silence, apparently paranormally, and Dr. Cardoso has even been on the premises on a number of occasions when the four short-wave Sony radios have each been switched off individually during the night, apparently by the communicators, while the other radios remained on (N.B. This could not be explained by a fault in the electrical supply to the house, as the electric clocks also connected to the same supply were not affected). In addition, when the radios have been left on during the night in order to enable the communicators to continue their attempts to improve the quality of communications, their voices are sometimes heard at such volume, particularly in the studio in Galicia, that they have woken me repeatedly from sleep in an adjacent bedroom. At such times the voices have continued unabated when I have entered the studio, although the only words that can clearly be distinguished in the characteristically distorted sound are 'Rio do Tempo', often repeated continually.

The repetition of this call sign makes it clear that stray radio frequencies cannot be responsible for the sounds. This is further demonstrated when direct communications are taking place by the fact that the communicating voice is sometimes heard emanating simultaneously from all the Sony radios, while at other times it originates from one of them and then continues the communication by switching without interruption to another of them - an impossibility if stray radio frequencies are responsible. The use of different languages by the communicators - sometimes in the course of the same sentence - their direct response to questions, their use of Dr. Cardoso's name, their comments on what they 'feel' to be happening in the studio and its surroundings, their use of the call-sign 'Rio do Tempo', and their communication of details about the nature of their 'world' also rule out the possibility that they can be ascribed to stray radio signals.

In spite of these convincing facts and my inability to discover any other normal explanation for the voices in the studios in Lyon and in Galicia, I early decided to use a protocol that, though simple in itself, would place the possibility of normal explanation for the phenomena beyond any reasonable doubt. Without informing Dr. Cardoso of this protocol, I began to speak to the voices myself while observing her communicating with them in her studio in Lyon. I used English (a language which they had not at that point employed in their communications) and asked them to repeat certain words after me. The words I used were 'Hallo David', and 'How are you?'. To my great satisfaction, these words were repeated to me as requested, and were captured by us on audio tape. The implications of this successful protocol are considerable. Not only does the successful outcome



dispose of the notion that the voices are stray radio emissions or the result of faking on the part of Dr. Cardoso or others, it also largely disposes of Super PSI (the theory that all survival-related communications can be explained by telepathy, clairvoyance or psycho-kinesis from the living) as a possible explanation of the results. It could be argued - unsuccessfully in my view, since it would rely upon the postulation of psycho-kinetic abilities beyond any of those witnessed in the parapsychology laboratory - that Dr. Cardoso has extraordinary psychic abilities that enable her to produce EVP and DRV voices consciously or unconsciously herself. But it could hardly be said that she could produce the replies to my request for repetitions without even knowing that I was to make this request, and to produce replies moreover that were word-for-word in accordance with that request. Unless the supporter of Super PSI may wish to argue that I also have extraordinary psycho-kinetic powers, or that Dr. Cardoso knew telepathically or precognitively that I was about to make my request and then used psycho-kinetic powers of her own to satisfy it (an argument so far-fetched and unfalsifiable as to be of no value), SuperPSI can effectively be left out of the equation.

While on the subject of possible paranormal abilities in the experimenter, it is worthy of note that I asked Dr. Cardoso to enquire of her communicators whether or not mediumistic abilities in the experimenter are necessary for the conduct of successful ITC experiments. The suggestion that they might be has been put forward on a number of occasions, not least in connection with the results reported by George Meek in the presence of his collaborator William O'Neil, who was said to possess these abilities (see Meek 1987 for an account of these results). Dr. Cardoso informs me that the communicators have repeatedly emphasised that mediumship by the experimenter is not necessary, and have further made it clear that part of the value of ITC is that it removes the need for the information concerned to be channelled through a human mind. The communicator associated with Timestream known as 'The Technician' seems to have informed the Harsch-Fischbach couple in Luxembourg that whereas four-fifths of the content of mediumistic communications comes from the mind of the medium and only one fifth from the beyond, in the case of ITC the position is reversed. Four-fifths come from the beyond, and only one fifth from the human mind. The communicator continued by saying that the eventual aim was to improve matters until no contribution to the communication was made by the human mind. Not only does ITC therefore greatly reduce the possibility that the content of the communication becomes distorted by human thought processes, it avoids the claim that the communicators are simply the medium's own sub-personalities, which take on an apparently independent existence of their own.

As an interesting follow-up to the successful use of my protocol in Lyon, I used it again in the studio in Galicia, once more without informing Dr. Cardoso that I was about to do so. Again the results were successful.

Interestingly, since then I have sometimes found that the voices spontaneously greet me in English with the words 'Hallo David', if the radios are on when I enter the studio . Dr. Cardoso also has instances of spontaneous communications on entering the studio. One of these arose in connection with the fact that whenever the radios are on, computers and mobile 'phones are kept switched off in the house as the communicators insist that these devices can interfere with their attempts to make contact. Leaving them switched off can be highly inconvenient, particularly when the communicators request that they need the radios to remain continuously on for several days in order to assist them with their own developmental work. Recently Dr. Cardoso entered her studio in Lyon wondering mentally whether, although the radios were on, it would prove possible for her to use her mobile 'phone. The answer to her unspoken question (in Portuguese but here translated into English) came immediately through one of the radios - 'Today you can use your mobile 'phone'.

Unfortunately a spontaneous communication of this kind did not allow sufficient time for Dr. Cardoso to switch on her tape recorder, so the hard evidence was lost, but the voice came with great clarity, allowing no mistake in comprehension, with the sentence twice repeated. Of particular interest is the fact that the communication appeared to come in direct response to Dr. Cardoso's unspoken question. This suggests that the communicators may have the ability to establish telepathic contact at times with some researchers. Dr. Cardoso has had other experiences that suggest this may be the case, and fellow ITC researchers have sometimes reported similar experiences.

conclusion to come

## Conclusion

### Quality of the Voices

Dr. Cardoso's voices (if I may use the possessive for convenience) are almost always of sufficient volume, and the utterances are often lengthy. Frequently however there is a characteristic nasal distortion to the words. As noted by the Professors of Acoustics from Vigo University who analysed Dr. Cardoso's voices, consonants are often glossed over or even absent (an observation made by Presi, 2.000, in connection with the results of other communicators such as Dr. Renato Orso) which can make for difficult and frustrating listening. The verbal ability of different communicators also varies. Carlos de Almeida, whose name has been mentioned on several occasions earlier, spoke with a volume and a clarity directly comparable

with that of good normal speech. Other communicators appear less gifted, which suggests that it is not only the method of communication that plays a part in the clarity of the voices, but the experience or otherwise of the communicator. This has been explained by the communicators themselves as due to the fact that they are not speaking directly to the listener, voice to ear, but are forced to modulate in some way the radio waves and the electronic equipment receiving their voices, something that is by no means an exact process, and one which they are constantly working to improve.

Atmospheric conditions and possibly phases of the moon also appear to play a part in the success or otherwise of communications. Presi quotes a survey of the existing evidence carried out by Dr. Trajna in 1977 that suggested that the mind-set of the experimenter may play an important part (see also Trajna 2.000a and 2.000 b). As already made clear, the presence or otherwise of communications apparently has little or nothing to do with the possession of mediumistic abilities by the experimenter, and perhaps much to do with his or her belief systems and level of commitment. As Trajna put it, 'There have been many attempts to find a technical device able to improve the production of voices, but they were largely unsuccessful. New devices were proved valid only for those who designed them or for those believing in them ...'. The content of some of the communications received by Dr. Cardoso suggests that the activities of the communicators themselves may play an even more important part. Timestream have told her that whether or not experimenters receive contacts depends upon Timestream. I said earlier that Carlos de Almeida was particularly successful in communicating, whereas others at Timestream Station appear still to be attempting to match his proficiency.

### Conclusion

The work of Dr. Cardoso and of other ITC researchers is ongoing, and the hope is that communicators will eventually be able to refine voice production to a point that enables everything to be clearly heard. Should the work develop in this way - and in fact even on the strength of what is already available - suggestions by Konstantin Raudive, George Meek and many other pioneers that ITC represents a major breakthrough in the study of paranormal phenomena and survival of death would seem to be appropriate. More attempts are now required to obtain EVP voices in acoustically shielded environments (such shielding may not be appropriate in the case of DRV if the paranormal voices are produced, as the communicators claim, through modulation of radio waves), and to analyse the voices with the latest acoustic techniques in order to detect precisely how they differ from normal human speech.

It is claimed that at present in excess of 70,000 people worldwide are

experimenting with ITC, and if this is indeed the case it would seem that it represents one of the most extensive investigations into the paranormal ever conducted. My experiences of ITC in Dr. Cardoso's studios have demonstrated to me that this form of communication can not only support the reality of paranormal phenomena, but also strongly support the possibility of survival of physical death for all beings. This report was compiled in April 2003, and at this point in time the future for work of this kind thus looks very bright.

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\* For details of the ITC Journal see <http://eureka.ya.com/cadernostici>

## Summary

Ostensibly paranormal communications through audio tape recorders, radios, video recorders, fax machines, computers, telephones and other electronic media have been reliably reported by a number of investigators over the last half century (the term Instrumental Transcommunication - ITC for short - is now used for these communications). Doubt has been expressed as to the origin of these communications, and in the case of those coming through audio media it has been suggested that stray radio transmissions

may be responsible. The paper outlines a number of reasons why this explanation appears inadequate, and concentrates particularly upon the investigations into ITC currently being conducted by Dr. Anabela Cardoso. Her equipment, methods and successful results are all discussed, as are the author's personal experiences of her work. The paper reaches the conclusion that Dr. Cardoso's results and those of other successful investigators indicate that ITC appears not only to demonstrate the existence of paranormal phenomena, but to support the possibility of survival by all beings of physical death.

I hope that you all found this of interest. Interestingly a transcript of her paper Survival Research can be found here <http://www.itcbridge.com/guest/AnabelaCardoso/survivalresearchanabelacardoso.doc>

Jim