

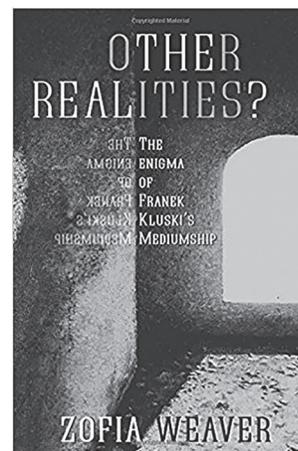
Extraordinary Physical Phenomena in Poland

A Review of
Other Realities? The Enigma of Franek Kluski's Mediumship, by Zofia Weaver.

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by Erlendur Haraldsson¹

The Polish medium Franek Kluski was, in terms of versatility and strength of his phenomena, one of the greatest mediums of all time, comparable to D. D. Home and Indridi Indridason. Franek Kluski was a pseudonym and his real name was Teofil Modrzejewski (1873-1943). He lived a varied and successful life, was a banker (on the board of one of the largest banks in Poland), writer, poet, and journalist. Extensive records exist in Polish of Kluski's mediumship, particularly by Norbert Okolowicz (1926). In English, however, apart from the writings of Gustave Geley, little has been available. *Other Realities* by Zofia Weaver radically changes that. She gives a fascinating account of his psychic life as well as his successful worldly activities and his background in Poland. Zofia Weaver is a native Polish speaker and is highly knowledgeable of the psychic literature in Polish and in English as a former editor of the *Journal and Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*.



Already in his childhood Kluski had frequent paranormal experiences of various kinds. He was subject to presentiments, had visions of events at a distance, and perceived “phantoms,” which to him appeared to be living. “He found these phantoms perfectly natural and neither feared them nor found them strange. He talked to them familiarly and found them welcoming and friendly” (p. 11). From his early life he seems to have had easy and frequent experiences of phantoms or apparitions of the departed. In Geley's *L'Ectoplasmie et la Clairvoyance* (1924) Kluski's childhood experiences are described. Apparently throughout his life Kluski would see around him phantoms/apparitions of deceased friends and relatives, as well as animals. This would take place during the day, in the open, and at night in bed. Kluski's mediumship started when he was 45. His séances were generally of a rather private nature, like a home circle, but he was ready to submit himself to serious scientific examination. Best known are the studies by Gustave Geley and Charles Richet at the Institut Métapsychique International in Paris where strict controls were imposed. There the famous paraffin wax moulds of hands were produced.

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In *Other Realities* Weaver gives a vivid description of Kluski's phenomena as they are described in Polish sources, particularly by Okolowicz, who gave very detailed and minute descriptions that remind this reviewer of the protocols that the Experimental Society in Reykjavik kept of Indridi Indridason's séances (Haraldsson, & Gissurason, 2015). As in the case of Indridi, lights of various colors and sizes would appear at the sittings. They moved around, appeared, and disappeared. It was common that chairs and other furniture moved without anyone present touching them. Knockings, as if with fingers or hands, were common, also outside of the séance context. Whispers and even singing were often heard, again remindful of Indridi, although of a much weaker nature with Kluski. Sitters often experienced breezes and touches, and apports brought from other rooms into the apartment were also reported.

There were some interesting differences between these two remarkable physical mediums. Levitations were common with Indridi but rare with Kluski, but sometimes happened to Kluski's sitters at séances. Kluski had no spirit controls whereas Indridi did. Direct voices were common with Indridi but rare with Kluski. Odors of various kinds were often smelled, unpleasant (e. g., of rotting flesh or dirty clothes) as well as pleasant fragrances similar to those coming from flowers or incense. On one occasion a sitter asked for rose oil and a few minutes later he and those close to him were sprinkled with rose oil that they could smell for a long time. Rose oil was not kept anywhere in the apartment.

Animal apparitions were frequent with Kluski, who was often seen and photographed with a bird, like a large hawk, on his head and shoulders. Okolowicz also described observations of human forms, materialized from light nebulae-like in Indridi's mediumship. Something like a pillar of light would form and in it a human form would appear. Generally these apparitions/phantoms were of a natural size, but sometimes they were partial or undersized. Okolowicz reports that 84 persons confirmed recognizing 88 phantoms of deceased persons known to them. Automatic writing was common with Kluski and with handwritings that differed from his own. Kluski also possessed more "ordinary" psychokinetic powers. He was able to influence compass needles and galvanometers, and turn electric lights on and off.

The subject index in the book is short and rather meager, a more extensive index would have increased the value of this important work. It contains some small photographs but it would have been interesting to see some more as much photographic work was done with Kluski. Zofia Weaver's *Other Realities* is a great contribution to the existing English literature on physical mediumship. Kluski was without any doubt one of the greatest mediums of all time and *Other Realities* is a fascinating book to read and highly informative.

References

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