



Faculty of Security Studies, University of Belgrade
**International Journal of Contemporary
Security Studies (IJCSS)**



Article

Occultism in Warfare and Espionage: An Unholy Alliance

Punsara Amarasinghe^{1*}

Institute of Law, Politics and Development, Scuola Superiore Sant Anna, Pisa, Italy;
punsaraprint10@gmail.com

* Correspondence: punsaraprint10@gmail.com; tel.: +39 567898

Received: 30 January 2026; Revised: 20 February 2026; Accepted: 1 March 2026; Published: 30 March 2026.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the roots of occultism in warfare and espionage from an academic perspective that argues that occults have changed the dynamics of war. It finds that occultism, despite its intriguing manner, has some serious impacts on the outcome of war. While tracing the history of occultism associated with war and espionage, this paper takes a more nuanced approach to explore the possibilities of occultist involvement in warfare throughout human history. The article examines various epochs, showing how nations turned to the occult to achieve their military goals. However, it should be noted that this article does not make a persuasive effort to prove the existence of occultism, as it can lead to a pseudo-scientific path, and the onus of this paper lies in presenting a strong argument that occultism has been used as a propaganda tool and psychological weapon. This outcome, stemming from this work, aims to address the research gap in the scholarship that treats occultism's involvement in warfare and espionage as a fallacy. Using historical literature and declassified documents as methodological tools, this paper provides a comprehensive picture of occultism's role in warfare and espionage. In particular, it emphasizes the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Iran wars, and occultism's claims on those issues offer practical lessons for the reader.

KEYWORDS

Occultism, warfare, psychology, propaganda, historical analysis, declassified documents, espionage.

1. Introduction

This paper begins with a conjecture that any attempt to seek occultist roots in warfare or in its use can attract harsher criticism, leading to the denial of such connections as pseudo-scientific endeavors. However, occultism's tryst with warfare is as old as war itself, which proves the inseparable nature of the two, regardless of the ostensible impossibility. If one emulates Clausewitz's adage that defines war as the continuation of politics by other means, the definition of occultism can be nuanced, as occult methods can differ subjectively. The term occultism derives from Latin *occultus*, meaning "secret" or "hidden," and applies equally to an array of sects, from paganism to mysticism. Describing the nature of occultism, Justin Sausman states, "Occultism posits that there are hidden energies or forces animating the natural world that orthodox science cannot explain, and that the goal of magic is the transformation of the self through using these forces" (Sausman, 2019).



The central point of the discussion arising from this paper lies in the use of occultism in warfare. While occultism generally aims to use or rely on power beyond mundane forces, occultism in warfare can be defined as the invocation of a power beyond human control. In the words of Austin Lee, the use of occultism in warfare stands as purely an unconventional tactic beyond human control (Lee, 2025).

The use of occultism in warfare and espionage has existed throughout history, from ancient times to the modern era. In the Western tradition, the association between occult practices and military success is often traced to sixteenth-century Elizabethan England, where English witches allegedly claimed responsibility for the “Protestant wind” that destroyed the Spanish Armada (Parry, 2008). This narrative entered the English national consciousness and exerted a lasting psychological influence on subsequent generations. Residual cultural beliefs originating in sixteenth-century occult narratives resurfaced in wartime Britain during the 1940s, most notably in the Helen Duncan case, when the British Prime Minister openly criticized the Witchcraft Act as an anachronism, arguing that the promotion of occult or supernatural beliefs would distract the public from the realities of war (Rosenbaum, 1971).

2. Methods

The theoretical impetus for this article has emanated from the concept of “Psychological warfare,” which places heavy emphasis on the human psyche’s connection to the outcomes of war. Beyond these theoretical underpinnings, this article draws on a strong body of secondary sources, including declassified documents and other secondary literature.

The case materials used in this paper include a wide range of primary sources drawn from declassified documents in the archives, supported by many secondary sources, from scholarly texts to open sources. The sources were systematically categorized using thematic categorization. This involved exploring the use of occultism by various alleged actors in history, showing how powerfully it was used to change the dynamics of war and espionage. The scope of this paper does not exceed the boundaries of scientific analysis on the use of occultism in warfare and espionage, as it does not try to rationalize the pseudo-scientific claims recorded elsewhere. However, this paper also pays equal attention to them to construct its narrative of occultism’s relevance in warfare.

3. Results

This article analyzes the influence of occultism on warfare and espionage through historical trajectories, focusing on modern European history up to the Second World War, to assess whether occult beliefs influenced military decision-making. Although establishing a direct causal relationship remains difficult, this study examines how efforts to employ occult practices in support of wartime objectives nonetheless strengthened the perceived connection between occultism and warfare.

3.1. *Occult fascination in the West*

The scientific revolution that drove technological advancements in the West did not eliminate longstanding beliefs in occultism. Neither the witch purges in Europe nor the influence of the Christian church in the 15th century diminished the impact of occultism on statecraft. The Anglo-Spanish rivalry of the 16th century demonstrated the enduring presence of occultism in political affairs, as Catholic-dominated Spain feared Elizabethan England for its alleged mystical powers, particularly following the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English navy. Notably, Elizabethan scholar and mathematician John Dee was frequently involved in espionage activities linked to occult practices. Dee advised Queen Elizabeth on complex matters of statecraft and dedicated his leisure time to invoking angels as sources of information (Trattner, 1964).

The 18th-century Enlightenment in Europe shifted occultism from its earlier state-sponsored role, as rationalism and scientific thinking gained prominence. However, Enlightenment ideals did not eliminate the fascination with occultism among statesmen, especially during wartime. In the late 19th century, as the Russo-Anglo rivalry over Central Asia intensified during the “Great Game,” both countries developed a renewed interest in occultism (Hopkirk, 1994). This climate led to suspicion of several historical figures, including Madame Helena Blavatsky, whose loyalty was questioned by the British, who suspected her of being a Russian spy posing as a mystic (Amarasinghe, 2024). Blavatsky was known for her charismatic presence and claimed abilities in occultism and theosophy, though some scholars later dismissed her as a charlatan. Despite ongoing speculation about her abilities, the British colonial administration in South Asia closely monitored her activities, particularly her connections with Buddhist monks in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Sadhus in India, which heightened British concerns about her intentions.

The West’s fascination with the occult intensified during the First World War, as the conflict created new avenues for the alleged involvement of occult beliefs and practices on the battlefield. The enduring impact of the legend of the Angels of Mons remains evident in British war literature, which romanticized the belief that angelic figures protected British forces from annihilation by the numerically superior German army during the Battle of Mons in 1914. Following the publication of a short story by Welsh author Arthur Machen, which depicted supernatural forces averting the impending defeat of British troops at Mons, a wave of similar narratives emerged that attributed British success to occult or supernatural intervention (Clarke, 2002). While British society was captivated by romanticized accounts of the Battle of Mons, the Ottomans—a key member of the Central Powers—drew upon battlefield practices associated with longstanding occult traditions dating back to the fifteenth century. Ottoman tradition embraced the concept of the “men of the hearts” (*gönül erleri*), unseen armies composed of the souls of martyrs and saints believed to engage the enemy before physical combat commenced; this mystified belief system was revitalized when the Ottoman Empire entered the Great War (Saryannis, 2025).

In addition to references to occult practices on the battlefield, rumors regarding the use of occultists for intelligence gathering during the inter-war period evolved into post-war legends, generating numerous stories. The narrative surrounding the eccentric Aleister Crowley remains particularly enigmatic, prompting ongoing questions about his potential association with British intelligence. Crowley, born into an evangelical family in England, established a reputation in occultism, Eastern mysticism, and various forms of ancient knowledge. His multifaceted persona led to shifting public perceptions and contributed to diverse interpretations of his character. Crowley referred to himself as “The Great Beast 666,” engaged in sex magic and Tantric Yoga, studied Buddhism, and later became a controversial critic of the British monarchy (Owen, 1997). The development of Crowley’s alleged connections with British intelligence appears unusual, especially given his open disdain for social norms, which led to his marginalization within English society. However, scholars such as Richard B. Spence have argued that British intelligence exploited Crowley’s anti-British persona to infiltrate German secret societies, thereby enhancing British understanding of German operations (Spence, 2006). Spence further contends that Crowley’s public image as the Great Beast effectively masked his intelligence activities, diverting attention by portraying him as merely an eccentric figure with unconventional behavior. Western interest in occultism and its use in warfare and intelligence during modern Europe was closely linked to shared historical roots in paganism. These collective memories, combined with contemporary needs, helped sustain occult practices in everyday life.

3.2. Nazi occultism in the military during the Second World War

Today, there is a steeping alacrity among scholars and the general public in exploring the hidden roots of occult sciences in Nazi ideology and their alleged involvement in the German war front. Inspired by several works such as *Occult Roots of Nazism*, many have developed several claims on Nazi Germany’s interest in occultism, especially Ahnenerbe, the Nazi research institute founded in 1935, and its expeditions have buttressed different narratives in the post-war world (Winkler, 2016). To some degree, those narratives suggesting the Nazis’ fascination with the occult seemed to have

reached beyond any scientific claims to a hyperbolic end by generating pseudo-scientific theories. The real question that comes to the fore is whether the German Third Reich actually relied on occultism as a decisive factor in bolstering its war efforts.

Answers to this question are rooted in the secret lives of many Nazi leaders and their personal interest in occult sciences. SS leader Himmler, who patronized the activities of Ahnenerbe to seek Aryan origin through esotericism, was a key proponent of Nazi occultism. Leaders such as Rudolph Hess, Alfred Rosenberg were known for their association with the Thule society (Mosse, 1960). One of the strongest claims indicating Nazi Germany's fascination with Occultism can be found in Eric Kurlander's work *"Hitler's Monsters: A Supernatural History of the Third Reich"*, in which Kurlander contends that Nazi scientists zealously worked to manufacture a wonder weapon called *"Die Glocke"* to reverse the tides of the Second World War (Kurlander, 2007). Although the main stream scholars have ignored any story related to *Die Glocke* as a conspiracy narrative, it is plausible to assume that German zest for a such a weapon during the Second World War may have risen from Nazi's occult interest, mainly inspired by ancient Indian Sanskrit texts on *Vimmanas* that further suggests Nazi scholars strived to seek arcane knowledge to fasten their military victories.

From a vantage point, the myth-making associated with Occultism in Nazi Germany intended to boost the morale of the nation, claiming that German war machinery would not be vanquished. Especially, the wonder weapon (Wunderwaffe) narrative came to the fore in the dying days of the Third Reich as the Allies advanced, and Goebbels aptly used it to motivate ordinary Germans to support the war. In short, Occultism during Nazi Germany fulfilled two objectives; first, it appeared to be a tool of interest in the German leadership to trace its imaginary Aryan origins and imaginary secret knowledge. Secondly, it made a profound appeal to the German public as a booster to increase their confidence in the Nazi government.

3.3. How occults shaped up the Post-War order in warfare and espionage?

Even though the scientific community never accepted the involvement of occultism in deciding the outcomes of war or gathering intelligence, the post-war development in those fields continued silently as the proclivity on occultism embraced a new dimension called "Parapsychology", which began to make a stir in the Cold War theatre between the Soviets and the US. The Soviet Union regarded the occult as anathema due to its Marxist doctrine, which mandated a strictly materialist foundation; deviation from this principle was often viewed as nearly treasonous. However, recent studies by post-Soviet scholars have traced alleged secret links between Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and occult practices, reporting that he placed considerable faith in psychics for several political endeavors. Given the ideological contradictions that pervaded the Soviet sphere, the adoption of psychic programs or occult practices as Cold War instruments in the postwar period required a significant paradigm shift in Soviet dogma. Leonid Vasiliev, a renowned Soviet parapsychologist, worked to meet this requirement by persuading Moscow of the strategic importance of psychic research for the Soviet Union's success in the Cold War (Williams, 1982). Indeed, Vasiliev's efforts aligned with the strategic objectives of the USSR, as evidenced by his appointment to a special laboratory at Leningrad University devoted to psychical research, where he claimed in 1963 to have conducted successful long-distance telepathy experiments between Leningrad and Sevastopol.

Between 1965 and 1970, Soviet experiments based on parapsychology saw a gradual development that produced astonishing results depicting effects of using psychic powers for war and intelligence. The U.S. government first became aware of these experiments through Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder's 1970 book *Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain*, which claimed that Soviet intelligence agencies were conducting a nationwide search for the most talented psychics and that they had already established "twenty or more centers for the study of the paranormal with an annual budget estimated in 1967 at over 12 million rubles (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1977).

Meanwhile, the CIA kept a hawk eye on the development related to parapsychology and occultism within the Soviet Union, as the recently issued declassified reports contain serious information on Soviet endeavors to use these unusual factors in the Cold War. One of the CIA's unclassified

reports concludes. "The major impetus behind the Soviet drive to harness the possible capabilities of telepathic communications, telekinetic, and bionic is said to come from the Soviet military and the KGB. Today, it is reported that the USSR has twenty or more centers for the study of parapsychological phenomena, with an annual budget estimated in 1967 at over 12 million rubles" (Hamilton, 1977).

In particular, the mysterious activities of Nina Kulagina, a housewife and former member of a Red Army tank brigade, attracted the attention of the United States and subsequently contributed to the development of Washington's own programs to counter the perceived threat of Soviet "psychic spies." What particularly alarmed U.S. officials were the so-called remote-viewing experiments conducted by Soviet scientists using groups of psychics, which prompted American authorities to reinforce their own efforts to explore psychic capabilities for espionage and military applications (LoMeo, 2016). Some U.S. intelligence analysts believed that Soviet advances in parapsychology could undermine core aspects of U.S. national security, as such capabilities might enable Moscow to achieve several strategic objectives:

- Know the contents of top secret US documents, movements of the American ships, troops
- Disable, at a distance, US military equipment of all types, including spacecraft.
- Cause the instant death of any US official at a distance.

In this context, the USA opted for its own program based on parapsychology that sponsored many American think tanks to explore the possibilities of remote site seeing, and the best-known beneficiary of this funding was Stanford Research Institute, a respected university-affiliated think tank that began to develop the possibilities of remote viewing under the leadership of a young academic called Hal Puthoff (Little, 2004). Although the CIA funded the initial remote viewing project, their attitude towards its success was skeptical. However, this hesitation began to reverse when a remote viewer named Pat Price appeared to visit a sensitive NSA facility on the East Coast psychically. Price's verbal and graphic description of the facility was accurate to the core, which created a great deal of interest within the US defense community to boost the program using psychic spies, a special program called "Grilled Flame" (Little, 2004).

Declassified CIA reports released much later confirm that American psychic operatives were tasked with gathering intelligence on key facilities in Tehran during the 1979-1981 hostage crisis, on terrorists and Western hostages in the Middle East, the whereabouts of Manuel Noriega during the 1989 U.S. raid on Panama, the location of al-Qadhdhafi prior to the 1986 bombing of Libya, and the positions of Scud missiles during Operation Sand Storm (CIA, 1991). The advancement of U.S. psychic espionage was largely motivated by Washington's concerns regarding Russian progress in parapsychology, as early Soviet successes in remote viewing placed them ahead in this field. A prominent defense official in Washington remarked, "If the Russians have remote viewing and we do not! Then we are in trouble" (CIA, 1993). This sentiment exemplifies the Cold War mentality that drove the United States to explore unconventional technologies, including occult and parapsychological methods.

4. Discussion

Project Star Gate can undoubtedly be described as the apogee of America's desire for the development of parapsychology in the realm of defence. However, it should be noted that Cold War currents drove the American administration to pursue its own program. Initiated in the 1970s under the direct supervision of the CIA and DIA, the Star Gate process saw robust development by the 1980s, when the US administration recognized the imperative of remote viewing to counter the Soviets (Edmund, 2025). Despite the scientific knowledge championed by the US, there was a zest among the scientists involved in the Star Gate project to trace ancient wisdom and occults, investigating the unfathomable scope of the human mind, which was key to the psychic spies. For instance, a declassified CIA document released to the public shows how American scientists sought the methods of Indian yogis who practiced Kundalini meditation, and that such ancient knowledge was intended to be used to understand the mechanism of the brain. In a report submitted by Wayne McDonnell to the CIA in 1981, McDonnell states, "The states of bliss described by those whose Kundalini symp-

toms have completed the full loop along the hemispheres may be explained as a self-stimulation of the pleasure centers in the brain caused by the circulation of a current along the sensory cortex" (McDonnell, 1981).

The above-mentioned statement aptly demonstrates the gravity of ancient knowledge for scientific development in the USA during the Cold War. Although the Star Gate project ended in 1995, at least according to official records, its legacy has never faded from the intelligence and defence circles. On the face of it, Star Gate opened a path to blend ancient occults and mysticism, which lurked in the veil of the past, with modern scientific knowledge. It is no hyperbole to state that the notion of "Remote Viewing" as a concept had never been a wonder in the Indic tradition among the Yogis, who were well acquainted with many mystical abilities. Aphorism 3.26 of Patanjali's classic work *Yoga Sutras* (400 B.C.) describes the first of the ashta-siddhis (or psychic powers) that a serious practitioner of Yoga can acquire as 'obtaining knowledge of the small, the hidden or distant by directing the light of superphysical faculty'. Russell Targ has commented that the techniques used by the US viewers for 'looking into the distance and the future' are 'strikingly similar to the detailed instructions given in the *Yoga Sutra*' (Targ, 1977).

Notwithstanding the bizarre narratives glorifying the use of remote viewing and psychic spies, it should be equally remembered that such claims seemed to be psychological warfare tools and propaganda techniques at an unprecedented level.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War, effectively establishing the United States as the sole unipolar superpower (Vracevic, 2025). This geopolitical transformation, however, did not diminish modern states' interest in occult forces for warfare and espionage. The reliance on occult practices in determining war and peace remains as persistent today as it was in antiquity. This section examines the growing tendency among contemporary world leaders to employ occult practices in critical decision-making related to war. The core argument advanced in this section is that humanity's perennial predilection for occultism—as a force associated with warfare and intelligence gathering—remains unshaken despite advances in modern science. When Russia launched its unprecedented military campaign in Ukraine in 2022, its ideological rationale resonated with the narratives advanced by Russia's far-right ideologues in their support for Putin. According to Russian journalist Mikhail Zygar, Putin demonstrated an explicit interest in incorporating occultism into state decision-making, reflecting the Kremlin's long-standing affinity for mysticism in governance (Rubanov, 2025). Zygar reports that President Putin undertook several visits to Siberian shamans prior to launching the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russia's long-standing affinity with occultism has long permeated its political elite, and Putin's actions represent a continuation of this historical tradition. In addition to drawing upon occultism to bolster its own military objectives, the Kremlin employs narratives accusing Ukrainian forces of invoking dark, demonic powers. Rooted in the sixteenth-century theological doctrine of Filofei's "Third Rome," which sought to sanctify Moscow's role as the guardian of Orthodox Christianity (Amarasinghe, 2021). Ironically, Moscow simultaneously relies on the very same occult practices as a means of psychological and ideological reinforcement in warfare. Thus, the Russian case reveals the indispensable yet paradoxical role of occultism in modern warfare, functioning as a double-edged sword.

The most recent incident related to the alleged use of occultism erupted in the aftermath of the 12-day escalation between Iran and Israel in 2025, as Tehran started a propaganda campaign targeting Jerusalem that denoted Israel's or commonly Jewish competence over the art of occultism. From a vantage point, this allegation is akin to long-standing anti-Semitic views that dominated the Middle East, labelling Jews as sorcerers, which brings the mythical narratives such as Solomon's Ring and Kabbalah mystics to the stormy arena of the conflict in the Middle East (Amarasinghe, 2025).

Tehran's claim over alleged use of occultism by Israel in the 12-day war firstly sprang from one of the state-sponsored media in Tehran called "Javan. Its editor, Abdollah Ganji, stated After the recent war, a few sheets of paper were found on the streets of Tehran containing talismans with Jewish symbols." (Sinajee, 2025). The same official argued, quoting some unverified sources, that Netanyahu met several Jewish occultists after Gaza strikes began. Iranian paranoia about Jewish occultism as an existential threat to the Islamic Republic has not emerged recently. Even before the 12-day war broke out this year, a plethora of allegations from Iran targeted Israel for invoking Jinns and other

supernatural forces to cripple the Islamic regime. In March 2020, supreme leader Ali Khamenei alleged in a televised address that “enemies from among both jinn and human beings” were arrayed against Iran.

Notably, certain targeted sites in Iran, including its nuclear reactor, featured geometric patterns resembling the Star of David, a principal symbol of Israel and its Jewish identity. Additionally, several Iranian generals, such as the late Tariq Soleimani and IRGC Commander Amir-Ali Hajizadeh, were recognized for wearing protective rings inscribed with Quranic verses. Although the tradition of wearing rings dates back to the era of the Caliphates in the Arab world, the contemporary use of protective rings among Iranian generals reflects a persistent narrative that attributes the use of occult forces in warfare to Israel. Furthermore, longstanding beliefs in the Muslim world regarding Jinnis and their perceived powers to bring harm to humanity continue to reinforce such narratives related to warfare and intelligence. Islamic beliefs and regional folklore in the Middle East often attribute significant influence to Jinnis, sometimes suggesting their involvement in critical events, including military conflicts. For example, following the surrender of an Iraqi army regiment to advancing ISIS militants in 2014, rumors circulated that Jinnis had possessed the regiment, compelling them to relinquish their territory. Consequently, recent claims arising after the 12-day conflict between Iran and Israel are not isolated incidents but are instead connected to broader, enduring narratives within the region.

Notwithstanding the claims on Israel’s use of occultism in warfare and espionage, a set of people within Israel also seems to have relied on such claims, propelling the truth behind them. In Israel, Uri Geller, a psychic and an author, has advocated for the existence of occultism as a pivotal factor ensuring the very existence of the Jewish State from its hostile neighbors (Reich, 2025). Considering the peculiar history of Geller’s previous claims and his involvement in the National Security Agency’s *StarGate* project during the 1970s, his statement cannot be dismissed as mere fallacy. Geller participated in the *StarGate* project after American authorities recognized his alleged abilities as a potential asset in a covert program aimed at exploiting psychic powers for military and espionage purposes. According to Geller, the information obtained by American researchers contributed to the formulation of a plan to demilitarize an entire Russian city in the event of an escalation between the two superpowers. Certain details of this highly classified project entered the public domain when the NSA declassified a series of related documents in 2011.

The aforementioned claims during the Iran-Israel 12-day war cannot be solely taken as accurate examples depicting the use of occultism on the battlefield. On the contrary, such claims, as discussed earlier in this article, are used for multiple purposes, ranging from boosting morale to instilling fear.

5. Conclusion

The above-mentioned analysis, spanning various historical incidents to the modern era, attempts to construct a detailed picture of the intrinsic connections between occultism and warfare. Mankind’s desire for occult practices has remained unaltered throughout history, denoting its power over the human mind. The same manner deployed by war to deter the people for particular objectives rooted in political gain can be equally applicable towards occultism. The specific historical incidents discussed above in this article reveal the use of occultism in warfare at different levels. While occultism is discarded as a pseudo-science, its effects seemed to have encompassed the fields of defense and intelligence gathering.

It is not far from obvious that the use of occultism or at least the propagation of occultism in the theatre of war makes a pivotal psychological impact. Thus, it is by no means an exaggeration to describe the use of occultism in warfare as embodying one of the best forms of psychological warfare tactics. A working paper compiled by RAND in 1950, under the heading “The Exploitation of Superstitions for Purposes of Psychological Warfare,” questioned the possibility of non-rational actors in changing the causes of war. This report clearly illustrates how allies used Rudolf Hess’s great interest in occultism to turn it against him, convincing him to fly to England on an auspicious day, which ultimately led to his arrest by the British. In fact, the use of occultism as a psychological tactic

can debilitate a person, and there have been many instances from the days of yore that show how leaders ruthlessly relied on occultism to weaken their enemy's morale on the battlefield.

In particular, the example of the Battle of Mons, which perpetuated the story of angelic assistance to the British against German troops, boosted British public opinion during the Great War, and its aftermath effects pervaded war rhetoric until the end of the Second World War. A similar analysis can be drawn by examining the role of Shamanists in the Russian propaganda campaign, as their active role tends to present Russian triumph as inevitable. In contrast, Russian media often report the alleged occult rituals practiced by Ukrainian forces, depicting Russia's rivalry as an unholy, Satanic force.

The Iranian claims about Israeli occultism reveal two sides of the broader discourse on occultism in warfare and espionage. Even though it is rooted in the fervent anti-Semitic legacy in the Middle East, which maintains a sheer abhorrence towards Jews in general, its current deployment by the Iranian regime stands for a different story. It is simply a story that covers their inability to defend Iranian airspace when the Israeli fighter jets dominated the sky during the 12-day war. Bemused by the apocalyptic fall of its security apparatus during the brief war, Tehran seems to have looked at occultism as Israel's secret advantage that succored its massive strikes, especially a strong security network built up by Iran, which they presumed to be impenetrable.

Beneath all this speculation of categorizing occultism as a typical tool for psychological warfare, one uncanny factor remains unanswered, and it cannot be conjured from a research article. The results emerged from the Star Gate project and the Soviet-led activities that proved the notion of remote viewing to be more than a fanciful idea, demonstrating how non-rational factors, such as psychic spies, can contribute massively to defense. Especially, the Star Gate project involved different occultist practices from Yogic to Tantric meditations in order to reach its objectives, which is a stark illustration of the co-existence of occultism and military objectives. All in all, it can be plausible to suggest that occultism's relationship with warfare is a solid partnership as a psychological tool for achieving military objectives. However, it remains a mystery without empirical evidence.

Acknowledgments: I acknowledge Prof. Patrick Mendis, a US diplomat, for providing many details about the Star Gate Project.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

6. References

Amarasinghe, P. (2020). Tracing the civilizational influence in the construction of Chinese and Russian approaches to international law. *Torun International Studies*, 1(13), 56–78.

Amarasinghe, P. (2025). The art of military innovation: Lessons from the Israel Defense Force. *Naval War College Review*, 78(2), 46.

Chick, E. (2026). The balance of power in Ukraine and the effectiveness of deterrence against nuclear-armed Russia. *International Journal of Contemporary Security Studies*, 2(1).

Cvetković, V. (2026). Upravljanje rizicima od katastrofa: teorija, koncepti i metode [Disaster Risk Management: Theory, Concepts and Methods]. Scientific-Professional Society for Disaster Risk Management, Belgrade.

Hamilton, T. (1977). *Soviet and Eastern European parapsychology research* [CIA declassified document]. (Issued December 11, 2011).

Hopkirk, P. (1994). *Great game: The struggle for empire in Central Asia*. London, England: Penguin Random House.

Kurlander, E. (2007). *Hitler's monsters: A supernatural history of the Third Reich*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Little, D. (2004). Mission impossible: CIA and cult of covert action. *Diplomatic History*, 28(5), 178–198.

- LoMeo, G. (2016). Rationality, parapsychology and artificial intelligence in military and intelligence by the US government. *Journal of Parapsychology*, 80(2), 56–71.
- McDonnell, W. (1981). *Analysis and assessment of gateway process* [Classified report submitted to the U.S. Army Intelligence; approved for release in 2003].
- Mosse, G. L. (1961). The mystical origins of National Socialism. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 22(1), 81–96.
- Ostrander, S., & Schroeder, L. (1977). *Psychic discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Owen, A. (1997). The sorcerer and his apprentice: Aleister Crowley and the magical exploration of Edwardian subjectivity. *Journal of British Studies*, 36(1), 99–133.
- Parry, G. (2008). English magicians and the crown of Poland. *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, 42(1), 79–100.
- Reich, A. (2025, July 17). Uri Geller: Israel used secret group of military psychics to attack Iran. *The Jerusalem Post*. Retrieved December 29, 2025.
- Rosenbaum, H. (1971). The occult and political development. *Comparative Politics*, 2(4), 561–574.
- Sariyannis, M. (2025). *Ottomans and the supernatural: Nature and the limits of knowledge in the early modern Ottoman Empire*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Sausman, J. (2019). Occultism and the crisis of our time. *Sociological Bulletin*, 1(2), 22–240.
- Sinajee, M. (2025, July 11). Witchcraft and war: Claims of Israeli sorcery draw scorn. *Iran International*. Retrieved December 29, 2025.
- Spence, R. (2008). *Secret agent 666: Aleister Crowley, British intelligence and the occult*. London, England: Feral House.
- Targ, R. (1977). *Mind-reach: Scientists look at psychic ability*. Virginia, VA: Hampton.
- Trattner, W. (1964). God and expansion in Elizabethan England: John Dee. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 25(1), 17–34.
- Unaam, A. O. (2025). Intelligence gaps and inter-agency rivalry in the Sahelian theatre: Evidence from the Lake Chad Basin and Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Contemporary Security Studies*, 1(2), 165–174. https://doi.org/10.18485/fb_ijcss.2025.1.2.12
- Vračević, N. (2025). Strategic roles of private military companies: The evolution and privatization of warfare in the context of contemporary global conflicts. *International Journal of Contemporary Security Studies*, 1(1), 163–174. https://doi.org/10.18485/fb_ijcss.2025.1.1.12
- Williams, R. (1982). The nationalization of early Soviet culture. *Russian History*, 9(2), 67–81.
- Winkler, M. (2016). Nazi ideology and Tacitus' dangerous book. *New German Critique*(127), 91–118.