

BOOK REVIEWS

Folie et Spiritisme: **Histoire** du Discourse Psychopathologique sur la Pratique du Spiritisme, Ses Abords et Ses Avatars (1850–1950) [Madness and Spiritism: History of the Psychopathological Discourse of the Practice of Spiritism, Its Approaches and Its Avatars] by Pascal Le Maléfan. L'Hartmann, 1999. 338 pp. €27.45; \$35.48 (paper). ISBN 2-7384-8241-4.

Naissance d'une Science Humaine: La Psychologie: Les Psychologues et le "Merveilleux Psychique" [The Birth of a Human Science: Psychology: The Psychologists and the "Psychic Marvellous"] by Régine Plas. Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2000. 175 pp. €18.29; \$23.65 (paper). ISBN 2-86847-517-5.

Carl Gustav Jung e os **Fenômenos** Psíquicos: As **Vivências** e os Fatos **Biográficos** de Jung Ligados ao Espiritismo, à Metapsíquica e à Parapsicologia e Seus Contatos com Sigmund Freud, com William James e com Joseph Banks Rhine [Carl Gustav Jung and Psychic Phenomena: The Experiences and Biographical Events of Jung Related to Spiritualism, Metapsychics, and Parapsychology and His Contacts with Sigmund Freud, with William James and with Joseph Banks Rhine] by Carlos Antonio Fragozo Guimarães. Madras, 2004. 184 pp. R\$24.90; \$9.90 (paper). ISBN 85-7374-797-8.

Traditionally, the spiritual and the occult have been seen as an obstacle in the development of science. However, for several decades now there has been a movement in the history of science that argues that a different perspective needs to be considered. Although not all historians agree, some argue that such topics as Neo-Platonic thought, magic, astrology, and alchemy fostered in different ways the so-called scientific revolution in the seventeenth century (Vickers, 1984). A later example of this argument is the claim that the romantic philosophy of nature that occurred during the first half of the nineteenth century stimulated ideas about the structure and function of the nervous system that influenced medical and biological thinking (Clarke & Jacyna, 1987). The issue here is not that these ideas were "valid" or that some phenomena "really" took place, but that these topics affected the intellectual climate in ways that encouraged or facilitated scientific developments.

Historians of psychology and psychiatry have also started to do more than label what has been called the "marvellous," the "supernormal," the "psychic," or the "parapsychological" as pseudoscience that needed to be conquered in order to move towards a really scientific study, and understanding of, the human psyche. In his monumental book *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, Henri F. Ellenberger (1970) saw both

mesmerism and spiritism as movements that provided both phenomena and concepts that in turn contributed to the development of the notion of an unconscious mind. This perspective has been followed-up and enlarged by both Adam Crabtree (1993) and Sonu Shamdasani (1993).

Later work focused on the usefulness of psychical research to psychology. This has included seeing psychical research as the means by which French psychological knowledge about the subconscious came to the United States (Taylor, 1996). More recent authors have discussed actual research and theoretical contributions of some psychical researchers to the concept of dissociation (Alvarado, 2002) and the influence aspects of this work had on the influential French psychopathologist Pierre Janet (Crabtree, 2003).

These works, among other examples, have started to change the old view that psychic phenomena and their investigation were but mere pseudoscience, useless as agents of change in the development of psychology. The books reviewed here continue to expand this approach to the histories of psychology and psychiatry.

In *Folie et Spiritisme*, Pascal Le Maléfán argues that the figure of the medium in French spiritism affected French psychiatric nosology. Mediumistic trances, visions, and automatic writing provided an analogy "by which spiritist phenomena . . . served to refine mechanisms, classifications, etiologies and interpretation systems in psychopathology" (p. 47; this, and other translations, are mine). Mediumship was "an example to illustrate and understand pathology" (p. 16). Analogy, says the author, was the means by which the unknown was assimilated into the known. Furthermore, both spiritism and mediumship were seen to emerge in a variety of societal contexts that included various levels of discourse, such as competing religious and materialistic ideologies. In Le Maléfán's words: "Mediumistic deliriums emerged in the context of social subversion at the end of the 19th century responding to a general ill feeling and to the search for another identity by different parts of society . . ." (p. 21).

The French medical profession considered mediumship to be both hysterical and delusional and discussed it without mentioning any trace of the veridical phenomena studied by psychical researchers. Although there was a nineteenth-century literature on the topic, as can be seen in such authors as Philippe Burlet, Jean-Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet and others, Le Maléfán argues that it was during the early twentieth century that spiritism had an impact on the creation of psychiatric diagnoses. These discussions include comments on such figures as Gilbert Ballet, Joseph Lévy-Valensi, Jules Séglas, and Marcel Viollet.

The application of such diagnoses as spiritist "deliriums" varied from clinician to clinician and was related to the old ideas of degeneration, later diagnoses of disorders of the imagination, and hallucinations. Le Maléfán discusses in detail the work of Lévy-Valensi (pp. 108–110) and Ballet (pp. 189–197). Ballet created a diagnosis called "chronic hallucinatory psychosis" (CHP) and used the phenomena of mediums to illustrate its features. In one of his papers, Ballet (1913) defined the essential element of CHP as the "disaggregation" of personality but also listed as elements ideas of persecution and ambition, as

well as hallucinations. Although CHP did not apply only to mediums, Ballet argued in his paper that an interaction of the medium's habitual dissociation, or disaggregation, and other individual predisposing factors could develop into CHP.

Le Malkfan argues that there were different versions and views of the mediumship-pathology relationship. Some believed that mediumship caused insanity, probably due to continuous "doubling" (or dissociation) that created mental weakness and the fragmentation of thoughts. Others postulated that mediumship reflected only a predisposition to mental imbalance, whereas still others saw only similarities between various pathological symptoms and mediumship. Some authors stated that there were several different spiritist "deliriums" (p. 175). Among these were the problems that started with the practice of mediumship in a person who was not, in fact, a true medium. In "mediumnoid deliriums" mediumistic practices played a role, but only a secondary one. Other authors concentrated on the "deliriums" of mediums, that is, on the pathological problems of mediumship.

In a later section of his book, Le Malkfan contrasts the ideas proposed by physicians who pathologized mediumship to those of Thkodore Flournoy, Joseph Maxwell, and Charles Richet who, although accepting dissociation in mediumship, did not assume a priori mediums were necessarily hysterical nor that their condition was, in fact, pathological. Furthermore, these men believed that some mediums could produce veridical mental and physical phenomena. Here we find two opposing conceptual traditions in the interpretation of mediumship.

Le Malkfan's review presents good arguments supporting the idea that a "marginal" phenomenon such as mediumship was able to influence medical thinking even when the spiritual or "supernormal" aspects of mediumship were ignored or simply explained as an illusion. Le Malkfan's arguments parallel those of Ellenberger who developed similar points regarding the impact of mesmerism.

My only complaint about this book is its structure. I would like to have seen separate chapters more systematically outlining the growth of Kardecian spiritism and psychiatry in France before the pathologizing of mediumship is discussed. A description of F. W. H. Myers' ideas (pp. 78-79) comes after he has already been mentioned in relation to Janet (pp. 73, 74, 77, 78). But these are minor complaints about an innovative work that deserves to be better known by historians of psychiatry, abnormal psychology, and psychical research.

Like Le Malkfan, Régine Plas focuses on France in her *Naissance d'une Science Humaine*. She challenges the traditional account that psychology became scientific by breaking away from philosophy and getting closer to such disciplines as physiology. The study of that which she calls the "psychic marvellous" was important in this sense. "At the same time that the first laboratories and the first chairs of psychology [were established]," Plas writes, "societies were created for the study of 'psychic phenomena' . . ." (p. 11). She argues that many French psychologists were interested in the "marvellous" and that this was an "international movement that, while not including all the researchers of the

time, was not negligible . . ." (p. 12). In Plas' view, we should not see psychical research as an "infantile malady" or as an "amusing bizarreness" of psychology (p. 13). Instead, she sees interest in psychic phenomena as an important factor in the development of French psychology.

Plas covers a variety of hypnotic phenomena and the attempts of some people to naturalize them. Among the topics and individuals she reviews are Charcot and his work with hypnosis, metalloscopy (producing somatic effects on contact with different metals), and the phenomena of transfer (such as passing paralysis from one side of the body to another through the touch of a magnet). In her view, Charcot was, to some extent, within the magnetic tradition. Plas cites Charcot as explaining transfer as a function of the internal "nervous fluid" of hysterics (p. 47). Although Charcot did not defend animal magnetism, he argued for unusual electrical effects by which to explain metalloscopy and a variety of phenomena that Plas referred to as having a "magical" image somewhat connected to the claims of the old mesmerists. The transfer work was continued by such colleagues of Charcot as Alfred Binet and Charles Féré. This part of the "psychic marvellous" was one of the manifestations at the center of the controversies between the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools of hypnosis. Together with other hypnotic phenomena, transfer provided a forum and an opportunity for the elaboration of explanations of hypnosis based on the concepts of expectant attention and suggestion, as can be seen in some of the writings of Hyppolyte Bernheim.

Plas fights the myth that animal magnetism, conceptualized as a physical agent, died with the work of James Braid, Ambroise-Auguste Likbeault, and Charcot. She explores the late nineteenth century mesmeric tradition in the work of Jules Bernard Luys and Gkrard Encausse, known as "Papus" in the occult literature. These individuals believed in transfer phenomena by means of magnetic effluences stored in iron crowns that were taken from one patient to another. As commented on in other parts of the book, Luys and Encausse were not alone in maintaining belief in magnetism. Other members of the French neomesmeric movement were Alexandre Barkty, Émile Boirac, and Albert de Rochas. But Plas does not see this interest in magnetism as only a continuation of mesmerism. She also sees such ideas as part of the prevalent trend in the nineteenth century to "materialize the mental in the name of a physiology . . . [to] elucidate the mystery of thought itself, reduced to a circulation of nervous energy" (p. 19). Hysteria and a variety of hypnotic phenomena were subjected to the same approach.

Other fascinating discussions include work on what the French called "mental suggestion," a term that referred to thought-transference and to the induction of trance at a distance. The work of Pierre Janet and Charles Richet are cases in point. Plas points out that both men used Léonie Leboulanger as a subject. Following on Jacqueline Carroy's (1991) work on the construction of ideas in hypnosis through the interaction of the researcher/therapist and its subject/patient, Plas explores the double identity of the "psychic marvellous" with Léonie. Although Richet tested Lkonie's "lucidity" (clairvoyance), she became

one of the main hysterical patients in Janet's celebrated *L'automatisme psychologique* (1889), a role of key importance to the development of the concept of dissociation during the late nineteenth century. Lkonie, Plas says, took on two personalities, "gifted by an exceptional somnambulistic sensibility for Richet, she is for Janet nothing but a hysteric whose symptoms show a retraction of the field of consciousness . . ." (p. 108). It is also interesting to note that Janet's first famous work was his distance mental suggestion experiments with Lkonie, a line of research that he stopped when he moved into psychopathology. Plas points out that Janet "forgot" to mention his initial mental suggestion work in his later accounts of work with Léonie (Janet, 1889).

Referring to the influence of mental suggestion on the development of the concept of the unconscious, Plas argues that "attempts to understand how thought can be transmitted . . . without apparent exterior signs is what affirmed the existence of a substantive and psychic unconscious" (p. 122). She recognizes that there were other contributions to this process. But I would argue that as attractive and innovative this hypothesis is, we need to place it in a more detailed context. That is, mental suggestion, together with hypnotic state-specific memory, ambulatory automatism, and secondary personalities supported the existence of unconscious levels of thought. The challenge for the historian interested in the "psychic marvellous"—a challenge not fully met in this study—is to determine first how mental suggestion compared with other phenomena in their influence on the concept of an unconscious mind, and second how mental suggestion actually affected or encouraged the creation of the concepts of unconscious levels of mind. To accomplish this we need a closer examination of the writings of particular individuals to trace the logical, but largely hypothetical, influence of the concepts in question.

Plas makes it clear that mental suggestion was not widely accepted in psychology as Richet and others wished it had been. She is also aware, as Bertrand Méheust (1999) has argued about mesmeric phenomena, that the manifestations were absorbed or explained away by appeals to fraud, suggestion, and other conventional explanations. But regardless of these attempts to normalize (or tame) the "psychic marvellous," Plas believes that work on the phenomena contributed to support the concept of subjectivity in psychology, something that had an impact on such ideas as the existence and functioning of the unconscious mind.

Whereas Le Maléfan and Plas discuss a variety of individuals, in *Carl Gustav Jung e os Fenômenos Psíquicos* Carlos Antonio Fragoso Guimarães focuses solely on Carl Gustav Jung. The purpose of the book is to present events in the life of Jung "related, directly or indirectly, to his interests and thoughts about . . . *psi phenomena* . . ." (p. 9).

The author presents interesting general information about Jung's life and work, including a review of Jung's psychiatric training and interactions with Sigmund Freud. Regarding parapsychology, Guimarães touches on phenomena that took place in Jung's family, his interests in and studies of Spiritualism, his

experiences with physical and mental mediums, his contacts with Joseph Banks Rhine, and other topics such as synchronicity. Guimariies pays a great deal of attention to Jung's experiences with psychic phenomena, including Jung's apparent (and very fragmentary) recollection of a previous life (p. 33), as well as déjà vu (pp. 33–34), psychokinesis (pp. 59–60), and near-death experiences (pp. 174–175). The author also effectively uses some of the correspondence Jung had with Rhine to illustrate Jung's opinions and attitudes.

Following on the idea that psychology was influenced by psychic phenomena, Guimariies believes that Jung's main motivation to follow a career in psychology and psychiatry came from Jung's spiritual and parapsychological experiences. However, it is said that: "He [Jung] had to be careful about his interests regarding 'Occultism' and adopt, officially, a positivistic attitude. This was role playing, but it was a necessary role if he wanted to follow the career of a scientific researcher" (p. 61). Although Jung is cited in other parts of the book in which the need to be conservative is discussed, Guimariies does not analyze Jung's work with this perspective in mind. Consequently, it is unclear how prevalent was Jung's conservative attitude in specific instances.

Regardless of Jung's cautious attitudes, his interests in psychic phenomena continued to the end of his life. Guimariies states that Jung's contacts with Rhine "helped him . . . to take a stronger and more positive stand about parapsychology . . ." (p. 142) as time went on. The author also states that Rhine's work influenced Jung's concept of synchronicity. Furthermore, he believes that Rhine's work convinced Jung that the "psyche overcomes the classical physical limitation of space and time . . ." (p. 159). Although it is clear that Rhine influenced Jung, Guimariies' argument is weakened by his lack of important details. His discussion of synchronicity (pp. 169–172) says little about Jung's actual ideas. What is worse, Guimariies misses an opportunity to show how Rhine actually influenced Jung on the topic of synchronicity because he does not analyze how Jung cited Rhine and what arguments were actually used. In other words, a textual analysis of Jung's discussion is necessary in order to bolster Guimariies' points.

A similar lack of detail is apparent in the brief mentions of Jung's 1902 doctoral thesis for his medical degree (pp. 58, 62–63). Jung's work, entitled *Zur Psychologie und Pathologie Sogennanter Occulter Phanomene*, was a psychological analysis of his cousin Helene Preiswerk's mediumistic abilities. Unfortunately, there is no description of what Jung actually did or of his conclusions. This is a pity considering the historical importance of this study as an example of Jung's early research work, as an illustration of his interest in mediumship, and as an example of an early psychological analysis of mediumship in a medical context.

I also regret that Guimariies does not use most of the secondary literature available today about Jung. His bibliography includes only two book-length biographical studies, a very limited offering considering the vast literature about Jung in general (for an overview of this literature see Charet, 2000). More pertinent to the work in question, the author could have improved his discussion

if he had made use of such published works discussing Jung and psychic phenomena as F. X. Charet's *Spiritualism and the Foundation of C. G. Jung's Psychology* (1993) and Ellenberger's paper about Jung's study of his medium cousin (Ellenberger, 1991/1993).

The three books discussed here represent recent attempts to redefine the importance of psychic phenomena and psychical research to the development of psychology and psychiatry. Le Malkfan's is perhaps the most novel because he focuses on a variety of French psychiatrists previously neglected in the discussion of mediumship. Plas also covers some neglected ground, but parts of her work, as well as most of Guimarães' book, have been discussed before from different perspectives.

As far as the main thesis of the three books—the influence of psychic phenomena and their investigation on psychiatry and psychology—there is no question that the authors have all presented a good case in its support (especially Le Maléfian and Plas). But we need to be careful not to overstate the case. That is, we need to keep in mind that history is multi-causal and that the ideas discussed in this review have to be assessed in context. Other relevant contextual factors include the attitudes psychologists and psychiatrists adopted as strategies to further the professionalization of their disciplines, the variety of competing explanations for "marvellous" phenomena, and the social and cultural aspects that are generally assumed to render some ideas more interesting or relevant in some time periods than in others. Within these constraints, I believe that all three authors taken in aggregate make a good case for the thesis in question. One hopes that future studies will further develop the arguments to the benefit of the historiographies of both psychology and psychiatry.

CARLOS S. ALVARADO

Assistant Professor of Research in Psychiatric Medicine

Division of Personality Studies

University of Virginia Health System

P. O. Box 800152

Charlottesville, VA 22908

csa3m@virginia.edu

References

- Alvarado, C. S. (2002). Dissociation in **Britain** during the late nineteenth century: The Society for Psychical Research, 1882-1900. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*, 3, 9-33.
- Ballet, G. (1913). La psychose hallucinatoire chronique et la désagrégation de la personnalité. *L'encéphale*, 8, 501-519.
- Carroy, J. (1991). *Hypnose, Suggestion et Psychologie: L'invention de Sujets*. Presses Universitaires de France.
- Charet, F. X. (1993). *Spiritualism and the Foundations of C.G. Jung's Psychology*. State University of New York Press.
- Charet, F. X. (2000). Understanding Jung: Recent biographies and scholarship. *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, 45, 195-216.
- Clarke, E., & Jacyna, L. S. (1987). *Nineteenth-Century Origins of Neuroscientific Concepts*. University of California Press.

- Crabtree, A. (1993). *From Mesmer to Freud: Magnetic Sleep and the Roots of Psychological Healing*. Yale University Press.
- Crabtree, A. (2003). "Automatism" and the emergence of dynamic psychiatry. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 39, 51–70.
- Ellenberger, H. F. (1970). *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*. Basic Books.
- Ellenberger, H. F. (1993). C.G. Jung and the story of Helene Preiswerk: A critical study with new documents. In Micale, M. S. (Ed.), *Beyond the Unconscious: Essays on Henri F. Ellenberger in the History of Psychiatry* (pp. 291–305). Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1991)
- Janet, P. (1889). *L'autorisme Psychologique: Essai de Psychologie Experimentale sur les Formes Inferieures de l'activite' Humaine*. Paris: Félix Alcan.
- Méheust, B. (1999). *Somnambulisme et Mediumnité' (1784-1930): Vol. I: Le Défi du Magne'tisme Animal*. Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo pour de Progrès de la Connaissance.
- Sharndasani, S. (1993). Automatic writing and the discovery of the unconscious. *Spring*, 54, 100–131.
- Taylor, E. (1996). *William James on Consciousness Beyond the Margin*. Princeton University Press.
- Vickers, B. (Ed.) (1984). *Occult and Scientific Mentalities in the Renaissance*. Cambridge University Press.

The Inner Source: Exploring Hypnosis by Donald S. Connery. Helios Press, 2003 (Revised Edition). 269 pp. \$16.95 (paper). ISBN 1-58115-311-2.

In *The Inner Source: Exploring Hypnosis*, author and independent journalist Donald S. Connery chronicles the long career of Dr. Herbert Spiegel, a pioneer of modern medical hypnosis. Originally published in 1982, this revised edition includes a new introduction by the author, explaining its continued relevance to today's concerns. Overall, the book provides a good introduction to clinical hypnosis for the general reader and outlines the personal history of one of its leading practitioners. However, it the book's focus on the personality traits that connect to hypnotizability that sets it apart from other introductory texts on the subject. This makes it a particularly interesting introduction for parapsychologists as well as for those studying the psychology of paranormal belief.

Dr. Spiegel earned his medical degree in 1939 and was sent into World War II combat shortly afterward. On the battlefield, he discovered the value of hypnosis as a treatment tool. After being hired as a professor of combat psychiatry at the School of Military Psychiatry at Mason General Hospital, he went on to become a clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia University, where he taught a popular course on medical hypnosis. Over his long career, Spiegel treated thousands of patients for a variety of ills, helping them break addictions, overcome irrational fears, and diminish pain.

Despite the characterization of hypnosis as a magic-wand therapy, Connery echoes Spiegel's own concern with demystifying the phenomena, stressing that all hypnosis is self hypnosis and stripping the hypnotist's role of the power that our popular cultural assumptions have given it. Yet at the same time, Spiegel claims that sometimes lifelong ailments have been cured within a single session at his private practice. The credit, however, is given to the patient. According to Spiegel, successful treatment is not based on the skill of the hypnotist, but rather the innate trance talent of the patient.