

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Nineteenth Century Psychical Research in Mainstream Journals: *The Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*

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Abstract—While there were several psychical research journals operating during the nineteenth century, many interesting discussions about psychic phenomena also took place in a variety of intellectual reviews and scholarly and scientific journals of various disciplines. One such example was the French journal *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*, founded in 1876 by Théodule Ribot. Reflecting the various interests of psychologists during the nineteenth century, many topics were discussed in the *Revue*, among them hypnotic phenomena as well as mental suggestion and mediumship. The journal provided an important forum for French discussions in psychology and in the social sciences in general that helped the development of those disciplines. The same may be said about psychic phenomena, which were discussed in the pages of the *Revue* by authors such as Émile Boirac, Victor Egger, Théodore Flournoy, Jules Héricourt, Pierre Janet, Léon Marillier, Julian Ochorowicz, Charles Richet, and Albert Ruault. We present summaries of some of these writings which we hope will bring some of this material to the attention of non-French readers.

Keywords: *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*—French psychical research—mental suggestion—telepathy—mediumship—Théodule Ribot—Charles Richet—Pierre Janet

Much of the spread of psychical research and the dissemination of its results during the nineteenth century was due to such specialized journals as the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, the *Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*, the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, *Psychischen Studien*, and the *Rivista di Studi Psicologici* (Alvarado, Biondi, & Kramer 2006, Alvarado & Evrard 2012). In fact—and as has been

the case in other disciplines (Cantor & Shuttleworth 2004)—such spread during the nineteenth century was assisted by the proliferation of numerous magazines, intellectual reviews, and scholarly and scientific journals which carried articles, book reviews, and news about the investigation of psychic phenomena.¹

In this paper we present an overview of discussions of this topic in the well-known French journal *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*. Our purpose is to bring to the attention of English-language readers important bibliographical material relevant to the history of psychical research that is frequently neglected, most likely because of the language barrier.² It is our hope that this brief overview, which covers the nineteenth century period when the journal was most influential and contained many papers related to psychic phenomena, will help improve the situation. In addition, the paper is an outline of past developments in psychical research, mainly in France. We emphasize this journal not only because the material published in its pages about psychic phenomena is important and widely cited, but because the *Revue* was a significant influence on France's development in psychology and the social sciences in general.

The Conceptual Background

Magazines, Journals, and Psychic Phenomena

Psychical research received much publicity during the nineteenth century through articles in magazines and reviews. Some of these consisted of positive accounts, among them an influential group of articles authored by French astronomer and psychical researcher Camille Flammarion (1842–1925) in the *Annales Politiques et Littéraires*, discussing apparitions, telepathy, and mediumship (Flammarion 1899). Such papers remind us that there were positive articles in intellectual reviews written by psychical researchers themselves. Some of the best-known in English were those written by prominent members of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in publications such as *Nineteenth Century* (Gurney & Myers 1884), *Forum* (James 1892), and elsewhere (Podmore 1895). But many other papers, such as those appearing in the *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (Jastrow 1899), the *North American Review* (Minot 1895), and the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Paulhan 1892) were negative discussions of the topic.

More relevant to the theme of the current paper were publications about psychical research in scholarly and scientific journals, a type of publication that carried many discussions about psychic phenomena, usually negative, during the nineteenth century. This included skeptical comments in journals such as the *Psychological Review* (Alvarado 2009e), as well as *Science*

(Cattell 1898), the *American Journal of Psychology* (Hall 1887), and *Nature* (Wells 1894).

There were always exceptions to these negative views in important academic journals, as seen in William James's (1842–1910) open-minded and positive discussions of psychical research in two of the above-mentioned publications (e.g., James 1896a, 1896b). Other exceptions were the articles of Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and others in the *Archivio di Psichiatria, Scienze Penali ed Antropologia Criminale* (Lombroso 1891, 1896), a journal he edited and the pages of which he opened to psychic phenomena.³ However, overall, most discussions in prominent academic journals tended to be negative. The *Revue* had its share of critical and skeptical material, but also contained many positive discussions and presentations of cases.

Psychic Phenomena in France

By the time the *Revue* was founded in 1876, much work had taken place in France in relation to psychic phenomena. As in other countries, there were many developments connected to movements such as mesmerism and spiritism. This was evident in French works discussing both movements from various perspectives, such as Bersot's *Mesmer et le Magnétisme Animal* (1864), and Blanc's *Le Merveilleux dans le Jansénisme, le Magnétisme, le Méthodisme et le Baptisme Américains, l'Epidémie de Morzine, le Spiritisme* (1865). The developments were narrated by physician, chemist, and popularizer of science Louis Figuier (1819–1894; see photo) in his *Histoire du Merveilleux dans les Temps Modernes* (1860), not to mention in many modern scholarly works.⁴ Mesmerism in France, as documented in Dingwall's (1968) detailed discussion, was full of claims of psychic phenomena in mesmerized individuals. As stated by student of mesmerism J. P. F. Deleuze (1753–1835) in his *Histoire Critique du Magnétisme Animal*:



Louis Figuier

Somnambules are more or less clairvoyant . . . they present various phenomena: but the faculty of seeing with the eyes closed, the intimate rapport with their magnetizer, the development of intellectual faculties, the sight of their interior, the prevision of their coming woes, almost always accompany their condition. Moreover, and this is extremely remarkable, most somnambules see and describe the fluid in the same way. (Deleuze 1813:165–166; this, and other translations, are ours)

This fluid, conceptualized as animal magnetism, was at the center of the late French mesmeric movement which continued into the twentieth century (e.g., Chazarain & Declé 1886, De Rochas 1887; see also Alvarado 2009b). There were also other phenomena, such as the claims of cures and of vision at a distance, making the mesmeric literature a veritable catalog of unexplained phenomena.

Many figures of later hypnosis literature were also interested in psychic phenomena (e.g., Carroy 1991, Gauld 1992). One example was physician Ambroise Auguste Liébeault (1823–1904), who influenced the Nancy school of hypnosis (Liébeault 1889:part 2, Chapters 2–6, note C; see also Alvarado 2009a). Another important figure, who we will discuss in more detail below, was physiologist Charles Richet (1850–1935), who conducted work in areas such as mental suggestion and clairvoyance (e.g., Richet 1884, 1888b, 1889).

A similar catalog of unexplained phenomena, including a variety of physical manifestations and claims of communication with the dead, were part of spiritism, as seen in works such as Allan Kardec's (1860, 1863) famous books of spirits and of mediums.⁵ In the latter work, Kardec considered many phenomena related to mediums, or individuals believed to be capable of being in contact with the deceased. This included verbal, visionary, and written mediumistic communications, but also the movement of objects, raps, apports, materializations, and direct writing. Spiritism became a popular topic of discussion during the nineteenth century (e.g., Bonnamy 1868, Delanne 1897). Probably the most popular manifestation associated with spiritism in France was the phenomenon of table turning, described by Figuier in the *Dictionnaire Universel des Connaissances Humaines* as: "Strange phenomena that occupy much of the public, as well as the savants" (Figuier 1859:289).⁶

A topic that attracted the attention of many was mental suggestion, which was discussed by Polish psychologist and philosopher Julian Ochorowicz (1850–1917) in his widely cited book *De la Suggestion Mentale* (1887). According to one author, mental suggestion was "the transmission of thought or sensations of an individual to another without perceptible exterior signs to our senses" (De Rochas 1887:372). The concept included the effects of drugs and medicine at a distance, a topic popularized by Bourru and Burot in their book *La Suggestion Mentale et l'Action à Distance des Substances Toxiques et Médicamenteuses* (1887b). Furthermore, mental suggestion was believed to involve the transmission of ideas, images, and thoughts, and the induction of trance and behaviors at a distance. Much work along similar lines was conducted outside France, by, among others, members of the SPR, who used the terms thought-transference and telepathy.⁷

Mental suggestion, like other psychic phenomena, was controversial. As stated by one commentator:

Unfortunately, these facts are not conclusive. The vast majority of them leave room for multiple interpretations. Can they, however, all be explained by random or strange coincidences? The dominant view of contemporary psychologists and physiologists is certainly contrary to the existence of mental suggestion. (Yung 1890, p. 94)

Both mesmerism and animal magnetism, not to mention occultism in general, were the subjects of many magazines and journals. Three of them published in France were the *Journal du Magnétisme* (started in 1845), the *Revue Spirite* (started in 1858), and *L'Initiation* (started in 1888). The *Revue Spirite*, edited in its beginnings by Kardec, presented much information in its pages about psychic phenomena, particularly summaries of cases discussed in the press and opinions about phenomena and other topics authored by supposed discarnate spirits communicating through mediums.

In 1874 the *Revue de Psychologie Expérimentale* began publication. The journal covered such varied topics as spiritualism, somnambulism, and hypnosis. It was edited by physician and botanist Timothée Puel (1812–1890), a pioneer of hypnotism who had published work on catalepsy (Puel 1856). The journal was short-lived, stopping publication in 1876 (Lachapelle 2011:29–30).

In later years the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* (which started in 1891) became the main publication of French psychical researchers (Alvarado & Evrard 2012). Because psychic phenomena were considered controversial (e.g., Richet 1892a), there were few mainstream journals that opened their pages to the topic in a positive way.⁸

The Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger

The *Revue*⁹ was such a publication (see photo). It was founded in 1876 by philosopher and psychologist Théodule Ribot (1839–1916), an important figure in late nineteenth century French psychology who insisted the field should be empirical, based on systematic observation and connected to physiological concepts (Ribot 1879).¹⁰ It is not well-known that Ribot also had a life-long scientific interest in psychic phenomena (Gumpper 2013). Indeed, he was a corresponding member of the Society for Psychical Research from November 1886 to his death. Ribot was



a close friend of Richet, and stood at his side during some attempts to institutionalize psychical research, and even participated in some in some experiments (Richet 1888b:70). He helped to bring discussion of this research to an academic level in France.¹¹

Although the journal had the word *philosophy* in its title, its contents covered many disciplines. Thirard's (1976) analysis of 508 original articles published in the journal for the 1876–1890 period showed discussions of psychology (37%), history of philosophy (26%), philosophy, history of science, and logic (9%), sociology and human sciences (7%), metaphysics (7%), morality and philosophy of education (6%), esthetics (5%), and physiology (3%). While she argued that psychology was the most frequent topic when we consider esthetics, metaphysics, and other aspects of philosophy combined with other topics (morality, philosophy of science), philosophy needs to be considered at least on a par with psychology. Nonetheless, there is no question that psychology was a prominent topic in the journal.

Before the founding of *L'Année Psychologique* in 1894 (Nicolas, Segui, & Ferrand 2000), the *Revue* was probably the main French forum for the publication papers of psychological topics. Other existing journals were either short-lived and of limited circulation (e.g., *Bulletin de la Société de Psychologie Physiologique*) or were too specialized (e.g., *Annales Médico-Psychologiques* and *Revue de l'Hypnotisme Expérimental & Thérapeutique*). In fact, it has been argued that the *Revue* “was the instrument of diffusion of French ‘experimental’ psychology; therefore it represents the main historiographical source to understand the characteristics of the rising psychological research in that country” (Foschi 2003b:46).

The first volume of the *Revue* included articles by such noted figures as Paul Janet (1823–1899), George H. Lewes (1817–1878), John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), Hippolyte Taine (1828–1893), Eduard Von Hartmann (1842–1906), and Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920). There were also many reviews of books published in a variety of languages.

French historian of psychology Serge Nicolas has argued that while the new generation of French psychologists followed an empirical approach that dominated the *Revue*, the dialogue between scientific and philosophical psychologists was kept open in the journal. Nicolas further argued that the journal was a contributing factor in the development of nineteenth century empirical psychology (Nicolas 2002:118). An important aspect was that the *Revue* was a forum for work on abnormal psychology and hypnotic phenomena that contributed to the development of the concepts of the subconscious mind and of dissociation.¹² While Ribot argued for methodological improvements to deal specifically with mental phenomena,

others conducted the necessary research (for an overview, see Brower 2010: 39–44).

An important figure in this task was Pierre Janet (1859–1947) (see photo), who became well-known for his studies of hypnosis and dissociation in general.¹³ Three of Janet's papers about phenomena such as automatic writing and state-specific memory in a small number of hypnotized mental patients published in the *Revue* were particularly important and influential (Janet 1886a, 1887, 1888b). In the first work, which dealt with unconscious acts and the doubling of personality during hypnosis, Janet (1886a) wrote about a hysterical woman named Lucie, referred to as "L." in the article. Put into a somnambulistic (hypnotic) state during the middle of a conversation, L. stopped talking, but resumed the conversation when she awakened.

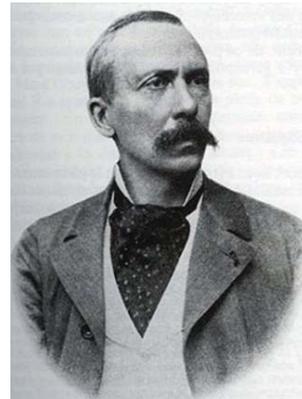


Pierre Janet

The same phenomenon has taken place elsewhere in somnambulism. Once she goes back to sleep, L. continues sometimes the act began during the previous somnambulism. We could have as well two conversations very strangely interrupted and resumed, one during the waking states, the other during somnambulisms. (Janet 1886a:579)

Different personalities communicated through L.'s automatic writing, one which adopted the name Adrienne at Janet's suggestion. On other tests Janet found that L. could keep track of numbers in her somnambulistic state. These and other observations led Janet to believe that: "Evidently there exists in the head of L. important psychological operations outside of her normal consciousness" (Janet 1886a:586).

Also important was the work of Richet (see photo), who explored memory states and personality changes during hypnosis and published his findings and ideas in the *Revue* (Richet 1880, 1883).¹⁴ Richet stated that the hypnotized showed "a dissociation of their psychic elements" in which the "self is retained, while amnesia of personality is complete" (Richet 1883:233).



Charles Richet

In addition to Janet and Richet, many other writers discussed the phenomena of

hypnosis in the pages of the *Revue* (Beaunis 1885, Bergson 1886, Bernheim 1885, Bourru & Burot 1885, Delboeuf 1886, Sauvairé 1887). Hypnosis was seen by many in France as a tool to explore non-conscious levels of the mind, as well as the mind in general (e.g., Héricourt 1889). As stated in the *Revue*: “Hypnotism constitutes . . . a genuine method of experimental psychology; it will be for the philosopher what vivisection is for the physiologist” (Beaunis 1885:1).

All of this work took place not only with hypnosis, but with the study of other phenomena. Outside the *Revue* there were many French explorations of various hysterical disturbances (Richer 1885) and spontaneous dissociative episodes of different sorts such as the famous case of Félicité X. (b. 1843) (Azam 1887), among others (e.g., Bourru & Burot 1888, Dufay 1876, Guinon in collaboration with Bloq, Souques, & Charcot 1893:Chapter 29). As others have noted, phenomena such as amnesia, somnambulism, and double and multiple personality cases, implying the idea of secondary states, were important in shaping parts of French psychology (Carroy & Plas 1993, Foschi 2003a).¹⁵ It was part of a general belief that the pathological and the unusual could illuminate the formation of normal personality (e.g., Ribot 1888).

As argued by Plas (2000), all this interest in non-conscious levels of the mind was not limited to amnesia, natural and induced (hypnotic) somnambulism, and secondary personalities. It also included what some referred to as psychic phenomena or what many in France referred to as the marvelous (e.g., Durand (de Gros) 1894, Figuier 1860). All of this was discussed in the *Revue*.

Commenting about the *Revue*, Wilhelm Wundt stated that topics such as hypnosis, telepathy, and animal magnetism were discussed “not as if they were mere curiosities” (Wundt 1905:43). In fact, and as discussed below, the *Revue* was unusually open to the topic, which may have reflected Ribot’s interests in unusual phenomena. He went on record at the Fourth International Congress of Psychology that “supernormal” phenomena were the “advanced, adventurous parts of experimental psychology, but not the less attractive” (Ribot 1901:46).

Psychic Phenomena in the *Revue*

Mental Suggestion

The most frequently discussed phenomenon in the *Revue* was mental suggestion. Richet (1884) authored an influential paper on this topic in the *Revue* in which he introduced statistical evaluation to the subject. His studies included guessing tasks of cards, photographs of statues, objects, and scenes,

and tests in which motor responses were elicited using the dowsing rod and table turning. Richet concluded:

The method that I have adopted is that of probabilities; it poses the problem thus: *Given an arbitrary designation whose probability is known; does the probability of this designation change by the fact of mental suggestion?* To this question our experiments allow us to reply affirmatively: For playing cards, the answer by chance should be 458, and it was 510 with suggestion on 1833 tests. For photographs and pictures, the probable number was 42, and the acquired number was 67 on 218 tests. For experiments with the dowsing rod, the probable number was 18, and the real number was 44 on 98 tests. For experiments called spiritistic, the probable number was 3, but the real number was 17 on 124 tests. The results acquired by the calculation of serial probability are more conclusive still. (Richet 1884:668–669)

Regarding the latter, Richet stated: “It is completely implausible that chance, on about 300 experiments, can give me so many times these remarkable series” (Richet 1884:669). Overall, he concluded that his results were not explained by chance. Paraphrasing Pascal, Richet wrote:

If it was necessary to opt for the reality or not reality of mental suggestion, I would let luck decide; but I would give two chances to the hypothesis that suggestion exists, and one chance only to the opposite hypothesis. (Richet 1884:670, Richet’s italics).

Assuming the reality of mental suggestion, Richet queried, would this mean that the phenomena would bring a “new era” to science? Not in his opinion. He believed the phenomenon “changes nothing in our actual knowledge about living or inert matter” (Richet 1884:671).

As discussed elsewhere (Alvarado 2008), the article included other interesting topics such as the reanalysis of previously published telepathy studies and the relationship of mental suggestion to the unconscious mind. According to Richet, mental suggestion acted on the “unconscious faculties of intelligence” (Richet 1884:639). There was no awareness that a message had been received, but the information could find expression through means such as unconscious movements associated with dowsing and table tilting. But the tests and statistical analyses of mental suggestions were the aspects most widely cited in this paper, and the reason why this article is still remembered and cited today.¹⁶

But what may have been more influential to open parts of the academic French scene to mental suggestion were the famous attempts to induce trance and behavioral effects at a distance reported by Pierre Janet (1886b, 1886c), a phenomenon one author referred to as telepathic hypnotism



Léonie Leboulanger

(Myers 1886d) and what the French called sleep or somnambulism induced at a distance. In two papers Janet reported tests conducted with Le Havre physician Joseph Gibert (1829–1899) in which he attempted to induce trance at a distance on Mme B., an alias for the famous subject/patient Léonie Leboulanger (b. 1837, see photo).¹⁷

This work was presented in meetings held at the Société de Psychologie Physiologique, which was founded in 1885, an event mentioned in the *Revue* (Société de Psychologie Physiologique de Paris 1885).

The Société, which was presided over by neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot (1825–1893), and had the above-mentioned Ribot and philosopher Paul Janet as Vice-President and Richet as General Secretary, was devoted to various problems of psychology, among them those of psychical research (see Plas 2000:54–55).

Janet's first paper had a simple title merely referring to "some phenomena of somnambulism," while the second one referred to sleep induced at a distance and mental suggestion. We will use the published English translation of the two papers (Janet 1886/1968a, 1886/1968b) and present several quotes from them.

In the first paper Janet (1886/1968a) reported observations made in 1885. He started by admitting that the phenomena were unusual and "far from being admitted [to] by all those who concern themselves with these questions" (1886/1968a:124). Then he proceeded to describe his subject, Mme. B. (Léonie Leboulanger), whom he characterized as essentially a healthy countrywoman during her usual state, but who presented moments of somnambulism starting in childhood during which "she was able to speak of and describe the unique hallucinations that she experienced" (1886/1968a:124). Janet described one of the tests conducted as follows:

Without warning Mrs. B. of his intention, Dr. Gibert went into an adjoining room and placed himself six or seven meters from his subject. From this other room, he tried mentally to give her the order to sleep. I remained with the subject and noticed that after a few minutes her eyes closed and sleep began. But what seemed particularly strange to me was that in her lethargy she was not at all under my influence. I could not provoke in her either contracture or attraction, although I was in her presence when she went to sleep. On the other hand, she completely obeyed Dr. Gibert who was not present, and finally it was Dr. Gibert who had to awaken her. This proved that it was he who had to put her to sleep. (Janet 1886/1968a:127)

In another test Janet stated that he had visited Gibert in his office and asked him to suggest sleep to B., who was in another house 500 meters away. B. had never been affected in this way at this time of the day, something Janet mentioned to show he was aware of the influence of expectation. Janet went to see B. and said there had been no apparent effect. But he wrote that she said:

I know that Dr. Gibert wanted to put me to sleep . . . but when I felt it coming I found some cold water and put my hands in it . . . I did not want him to put me to sleep this way . . . I could have been talking to someone and that would disturb me and make me appear stupid. . . . (Janet 1886/1968a:127)

On another occasion Janet repeated the same test, going to Gibert's place once again, and this time B. was asleep. "The sleep was not a natural one because she was completely insensible, and one could not awaken her" (Janet 1886/1968a:128).

Gibert also suggested some complicated acts to be performed:

These acts were evidently too complicated to be executed, but at the exact moment when Dr. Gibert ordered her to do them from Gravelle, I saw with my own eyes the effect that these commands produced at a distance of 2 kms and a real beginning of their execution. It really seemed that Mrs. B. could somehow sense these orders, that she had resisted them, and that she was only able to disobey when Dr. Gibert was in some way distracted. (Janet 1886/1968a:129)

In another test, silent suggestions were given from close by. Gibert mentally suggested to B. by bringing his forehead close to B.'s. He silently willed her to lock the doors of the house at 12 o'clock the next day. According to Janet:

The next day, when I arrived at a quarter to twelve, I found the house gates closed and the door locked. I found out that it was Mrs. B. who had closed them. When I asked her why she had done this strange thing, she answered in the following way: "I felt very tired and I didn't want you to enter the house, and put me to sleep." (Janet 1886/1968a:130)

Janet seemed to be open-minded about the phenomena he observed. But he stated he had no explanations for his results.

The report of the tests continued in the second paper (Janet, 1886/1968b). Once again, Janet attempted a distant test from his office separated from B. by four or five hundred meters. Janet was dubious of the result of the test. He wrote:

To my great astonishment, the people in the house warned me that Mrs. B. had been extremely indisposed for about an hour. She had been overtaken by fatigue and forced to interrupt her housework. In order to pull herself together, she had had to drink a glass of water and wash her hands and face. Mrs. B. herself told me of her indisposition, which she was unable to explain. (Janet 1886/1968a:259)

In another distant test when Janet went to B.'s place he found her "stretched out on a sofa in a very deep sleep" (Janet 1886/1968a:260). Several tests seem to have been failures and some partial successes. Janet further wrote:

On the 14th of April I put her to sleep without touching her, but at the time I was in the same room with her. On the 18th, which was a Sunday, I was alone and . . . I tried to put her to sleep from my place. I was completely successful. She was asleep 10 minutes after I began to think of putting her to sleep. On Monday, the 19th, my uncle, Dr. Paul Janet,¹⁸ had just arrived at Le Havre. I wanted first of all to show him the somnambule before trying any experiments. He preferred, with no one being warned, to ask Dr. Gibert to immediately put her to sleep from his place. Caught unaware, Dr. Gibert tried to do this at 4 o'clock. We found Mrs. B. completely asleep at 4:15. On the 20th, a Tuesday, Dr. Gibert put her to sleep from a distance, this time at 8 o'clock in the evening in front of Dr. Paul Janet and made her come to his place using mental suggestion. (Janet 1886/1968a:262)

Another test took place involving Janet's brother, Dr. Jules Janet (1861–1945).¹⁹ This time Gibert willed B. to sleep and to come to his place.

A few minutes after nine, Mrs. B. abruptly left her house. She was not wearing any hat, and her walk was rather precipitated. I went up to her and saw that her eyes were completely closed and that she showed all the signs which I knew to be typical of her somnambulistic state. She avoided all obstacles with a dexterity that reassured me but it took her quite a long time to recognize me. At the beginning she avoided me and stated that she did not want to be accompanied. After about 200 meters, she knew who I was, and seemed pleased with my presence. However, several times, I was rather frightened by the hesitation of her walk. She would stop and balance back and forth as if she was going to fall. I was afraid she might quickly enter into a period of lethargy or catalepsy which would have made the trip very difficult. This did not occur. She pulled herself together and arrived without any further difficulty. She had barely arrived when she fell into an armchair in a very profound state of lethargy. This lethargy was only interrupted for a moment by a period of somnambulism in which she murmured: "I came . . . I saw Dr. Janet . . . I thought it would be better if I didn't take the rue d'Étretat, there were too many people . . . (She had taken another street on her own volition.) A man threw himself in front of me. . . He said that I was blind,

how stupid of him . . .,” and she remained asleep for a long time. Later she again fell into a somnambulistic state and said that she had felt a great deal of fatigue and hesitation during the trip. She believed that this was due to the fact that Dr. Gibert had not thought continually enough of making her come. She had fallen asleep, as I was told afterwards, several minutes before 9 o'clock, that is to say the hour Dr. Gibert had thought of, but she began her walk only 5 or 6 minutes later. (Janet 1886/1968a:265–266)

Several tests took place in the presence of other observers, such as physician Arthur T. Myers (1851–1894), classical scholar and psychological researcher Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901), student of religion Léon Marillier (1862–1901), and the above-mentioned Julian Ochorowicz. These have been described elsewhere in more detail (Myers 1886d, Ochorowicz 1887:121ff).

Summarizing his work with Gibert, Janet stated that out of 22 experiments, 16 were successful and six were failures. In the second paper, as in the first, Janet did not offer any theoretical explanations for the reported effects. He merely finished the article by saying: “One must continue to gather facts which are more precise and more numerous on this delicate subject which is as interesting to psychology as it is to physiology” (Janet 1886/1968a:267).²⁰

Janet's papers were very influential in late nineteenth century psychological research, cited by many inside and outside of France (e.g., Gurney, Myers, & Podmore 1886 Vol. 2:679–682, Ochorowicz 1887:118, Paulhan 1892:71–72, Senillosa 1891:256–260). This work, particularly that reported in the first paper, opened the door to the publication of similar cases in the *Revue* by other authors, accounts that were also presented in the meetings of the Société de Psychologie Physiologique. Both Richet and physician Jules Héricourt (1850–1938) reported on old observations they made in the 1870s (Héricourt 1886, Richet 1886a). Richet (1886a) commented: “If, therefore, the phenomenon exists—and I think it is difficult to deny it absolutely—it is extremely rare, and occurs only in special circumstances which so far elude scientific determination” (p. 200).

Héricourt (1886) described his case as consisting of observations of a 24-year-old woman of Spanish origin who was a widow and mother of a five-year-old, of dark complexion, and with no discernible hysterical problem. As he wrote about his attempts to induce trance using mental suggestion, the first test was successful after a period of ten minutes in which he looked at her and held her thumbs.²¹ “Subsequently, the same result was obtained, either only by looking at or touching the head or the hand for barely a few seconds, and then finally, by even less. . . .” (Héricourt 1886:201; for more information about this case, see Héricourt 1931).

Others reported various observations as well to the Société (Beaunis 1886, Dufay 1888, Gley 1886, Richet 1888a). However, these reports were not as systematic as those authored by Janet.

Furthermore, many commented about these phenomena. In an essay review about publications on “mental suggestion and mental action at a distance” Marillier concluded:

Apparent mental suggestion is a dialogue between the subject’s unconscious and the unconscious of the experimenter and the greatest service that these new studies can make is to attract the attention of psychologists on a class of phenomena where we can find the solution of a good number of problems which confuse very much the science of the mind. (Marillier 1887:422)

Ochorowicz (1886) listed several variables that needed to be controlled in order to obtain acceptable evidence for mental suggestion. Among them were chance, involuntary verbal and other forms of suggestion, and hyperesthesia of the senses. But he affirmed the existence of the phenomena and listed disease, pain, objective sensations, feelings, ideas, and well as things that could be transmitted from one person to another.

On the skeptical side, physician Albert Ruault (1850–1928) assumed that sensory unconscious communication explained the phenomena (Ruault 1886). He believed that, “In general, the experiences of mental suggestion are much more successful when the hypnotist is in the presence of the subject than when he is away at some distance” (Ruault 1886:396). But he did not satisfactorily address the issue of distance in tests such as those of Janet and Gibert. In his view, “The thought of the hypnotizer doing the mental suggestion is manifested thanks to his interior word [thoughts], which is always accompanied by movements . . .” (p. 687). Given this, Ruault argued, “The movements are perceived unconsciously by the subject, whose sensory hyper acuity is then extreme. . . .” (p. 687). He suggested that this hyperacuity could include the hypnotist’s pulse rate, which accelerates when an effort of mental will is done. “Is it not therefore reasonable to assume that vasomotor phenomena, or other of our unknown signs may be unconsciously perceived by the subject, and produce in him these vague sensations which he attributes in effect to a personal influence of the hypnotist?” (p. 693).²²

Effects of Drugs and Medicines

Another line of research was the work of physicians Henri Bourru (1840–1914) and Prosper Burot (1849–1888), who were well-known for their claim that patients were able to show the effect of medicines and drugs when

they were presented to the patients without mention of their physiological properties (Bourru & Burot 1887a, 1887b). Both these authors and Richet discussed the topic in the *Revue* (Bourru & Burot 1886, Richet 1886b). Bourru and Burot (1886) asked if it was possible to induce “by a simple external application, the physiological action” (p. 313) of drugs and medicine on research subjects.

In one case, a hysterical patient had a piece of opium wrapped in paper put on his head, after which he closed his eyes, relaxed his muscles, and fell asleep. “On repeating the experience by changing the place of application: on the front, the neck, the left or right side of the head, the hand, and [up] to the soles of the feet, the effect is always the same” (Bourru & Burot 1886:313).

It was also observed that when “A vial of atropine is put in contact with the sole of the foot; after three seconds, the subject remains motionless, the eyes open; soon the eyelids will close, the eyes convulse, and after a few moments the pupils dilate. There is photophobia while awake” (Bourru & Burot 1886:314).

In another test they used two packets prepared by a colleague without knowing their content. They wrote: “The first produced sleep, with yawning and nausea while awake: It contained opium. The second produced an intolerable burn: It was a mercury salt. We consider this experience is of very great importance” (Bourru & Burot 1886:315).

The authors were aware of critiques such as that the subjects could perceive smells of the substances or that they could learn from the experimenters what effects to produce, objections they rejected. In a comment following the paper, Richet (1886b) was worried about smells perceived by the subjects and commented on expectation and the possibility of mental suggestion, as opposed to the direct action of drugs (such as the idea of vibrations emanating from the drugs and medicine, favored by Bourru and Burot (1887b:254). He ended by suggesting that future researchers should conduct tests while the experimenter did not know the nature of the substance used and that the results should be evaluated directly from the symptoms presented. In addition, he suggested the use of a limited number of substances, listing four possible candidates. He pointed out that in that case the probability of making an accurate diagnosis was one out of four, so after a few tests it could be evaluated “if one has a better diagnosis than could [be] given by chance” (Richet 1886b:323).

Other Hypnotic Phenomena

In addition to Ruault, others discussed the hyperacuity of the senses in the hypnotized (Bergson 1886, Sauvaire 1887). But one of the most

interesting hypnotic phenomena was that of transfer, which took place mainly within the Salpêtrière school of hypnosis and generated many controversies (Nicolas 2004).²³ As seen in a *Revue* paper by Alfred Binet (1857–1911) and Charles Féré (1852–1907), this consisted of the “transfer” of sensory and motor phenomena (e.g., hallucinations, paralysis) from one side of the body to another through the application of magnets (Binet & Féré 1885). Their subjects were generally hysterical patients who were hypnotized.



Blanche Wittman

The authors presented several examples of this transfer, such as the following with the famous hysteric/hypnosis subject Blanche Wittman (b. 1859, see photo):²⁴

Wit ... is in a state of somnambulism, sitting on a chair. We suggested to her to scratch the arm of the chair with the left index [finger]; the magnet was applied at some distance from the right hand, and then we woke the patient. The movement still existed on the left, but if slightly, so that the patient did not see it. At the end of 30 seconds, the two indexes were beginning to fiddle slightly; the movement was growing to the right, while it decreased to the left. The transfer was complete at the end of a minute. (Binet & Féré 1885:8)

In another test, the same patient was hypnotized and was suggested to write numbers with her right hand. “We woke her; a magnet was hidden in the vicinity of her left hand. She wrote up to the number twelve with the right hand, and then she hesitated, changed the hand with the pen, and began to write with the left hand” (p. 10). The numbers were correctly written in reverse from left to right and the left hand made similar movements to those of the right hand. This was considered to be evidence that the magnet induced a transfer. “It should be pointed out that while she writes with her left hand, it is impossible to write with the right hand, she became left-handed with her right hand” (p. 10).

Binet and Féré believed that the magnet produced the transfer, being “the great modifier of the nervous system” (p. 16). In their view, they had accounted for suggestion and expectations in different ways.

In later work reported in the *Revue*, physician J. J. F. Babinski (1857–1932) extended transfer phenomena beyond the patient’s body

(Babinski 1886). Instead of transfers from one side of the body to another, the phenomena was reported to take place from one person to another. This work was continued by others in work published elsewhere (Luys & Encausse 1890).

Of course, transfer demonstrations brought criticism from those such as Hippolyte Bernheim (1840–1919), who believed that suggestion, rather than the physical action of the magnet, explained the experiments of Binet and Féré (Bernheim 1885). “Among no hypnotized . . . have I seen any transfer produced by the single application of the magnet, before the idea of the phenomenon had entered their brain” (p. 312).²⁵

As was to be expected, members of the Salpêtrière School did not pay much attention to these objections. An example was physician Paul Richer’s (1849–1933) review of a book by Binet and Féré (1887) published in the *Revue* (Richer 1887).

Mediumship

Swiss psychologist Théodore Flournoy (1854–1920, see photo) authored an important paper on mediumship in which he presented two cases of mediumistic communications that were interpreted to be the “product of the subconscious imagination of the medium, working with recollections and latent worries” (Flournoy 1899:144). This was the beginning of Flournoy’s (1900b, 1911) well-known psychological analyses of mental mediumship.²⁶



Théodore Flournoy

Flournoy argued that his cases represented subliminally-produced romances by means of the mediums’ memories and of a “curious faculty of dramatization and personification” (p. 157).²⁷ Furthermore, Flournoy concluded that in some normal persons, the practice of mediumship may disturb their mental balance and “engender an automatic activity [whose] results simulate in the most complete way communications coming from the beyond, although in reality they are but the result of the subliminal workings of ordinary faculties of the subject” (pp. 157–158).²⁸

In an early paper Pierre Janet stated: “All suggestions must be accompanied by some degree of unconsciousness or instead . . . by some doubling of consciousness. All the phenomena of spiritism that are frequent are but the development of analogous facts” (Janet 1886a:592). Janet

developed these ideas further in other publications and returned to the topic in a later paper in the *Revue* in which he presented remarks about mediumship and spiritist publications.²⁹

In this paper Janet (1892) argued that spiritists had neglected the psychological study of mediums. On the other hand, he credited them for bringing a useful technique to the attention of students of the mind.³⁰ “We persist in believing,” wrote Janet (1892:413), “that spiritists were the first to bring attention to subconscious movements and to the manifestations . . . of mental disaggregation.”³¹ He had written in the *Revue* years before that automatic writing was a “method of psychological analysis,” the means to “penetrate further into the thought of somnambules” (Janet 1887:452).

In his view, both mediums and hysterics displayed a “serious problem in the mental operation of perceptions” indicative of “psychological disaggregation” (Janet 1892:419). Some of them, Janet pointed out, showed lack of sensibility in their right side while doing automatic writing. Nonetheless, Janet did not think that mediums were always hysterics. He observed a case of somnambulism and automatic writing that did not show hysteria, but presented fixed ideas, doubts, and insanity. In such cases he considered “mental disaggregation as a disease larger than hysteria that may manifest through hysterical symptoms but that may also manifest in other forms” (p. 424).

Mediumship was also discussed in a review of a book by Flournoy authored by magnetizer and psychical researcher Colonel Albert de Rochas (1837–1914; De Rochas 1900; see also Flournoy 1900a). There were also reviews of books that featured the mediumship of Eusapia Palladino (1854–1918, Boirac 1897) and Henry Slade (1835–1905, Review of *La Physique Transcendentale* 1880).

Near-Death Experiences and Panoramic Memory

Two papers by French philosopher Victor Egger (1848–1909) on “the self of the dying” focused on panoramic memory³² (Egger 1896a, 1896b). Egger postulated that being close to death produced in the experiencer a “live self,” consisting of “significant and rapid images” (1896a:37). A sudden threat of death, he believed, could trigger “concepts and propositions” (p. 30) related to the person’s mortality.

His discussion was followed by other articles and notes in which other cases and theoretical discussions were presented. Two readers of the *Revue* presented further cases of panoramic memory (Keller 1896, Moulin 1896). Other ideas were discussed by French physicians Paul August Sollier (1861–1933) and Charles Féré. Sollier (1896) speculated instead that the panoramic images were caused by an effort to escape death and a loss of

bodily sensibility. Egger (1896b) was critical of Sollier's physiological ideas and argued that the idea of imminent death was actually the "necessary condition for the phenomena" to take place (p. 343). Féré (1898) also argued for a physiological explanation of memories. In his view they were caused by "a momentary hyper-excitability of the nervous elements . . ." (p. 302).

Critical Views

As mentioned before, some papers were critical of the phenomena or attempted to present conventional explanations for them such as sensory cues (Bergson 1886, Ruault 1886) and suggestion (Bernheim 1885).

The reviewer of a book by British physician William B. Carpenter (1813–1885) considered the phenomena of mesmerism and spiritualism to be absurd, and expressed his belief that scientific education would decrease belief in the "marvelous" (Levoix 1877:443). On the other hand, historian of physiological psychology Jules Soury (1842–1915) reviewed Wundt's critical ideas about spiritism and Hermann Ulrici's (1806–1884) views, as well as the latter's reply, publications presenting negative and positive views about spiritualistic phenomena, respectively (Soury 1879).

Frédéric Paulhan (1856–1931), a librarian at Nîmes, did not review serious psychical research work, but was critical of superstitions and the claims of spiritism. In his view, some spiritistic manifestations could be explained by recourse to the "beautiful experiences of M. Pierre Janet [showing] that the doubling of the mind of the medium is the only real cause" (Paulhan 1890:495).

A stronger critic, P. Rosenbach (1892), referred to psychical research as an example of "modern mysticism." In his view, the Society for Psychical Research tried to "demonstrate the possibility of a supernatural and spiritual rapport between men . . ." (p. 156). Such an approach contrasted to what Rosenbach considered to be the far more scientific approach of psychophysics and "scientific experimental psychology." He believed that when psychic phenomena were examined scientifically they lost their mysterious, "mystical" character.

Richet (1892b) replied to Rosenbach, pointing out that he was wrong in thinking that psychical researchers embraced the concept of the supernatural. Furthermore, Richet stated that Rosenbach misrepresented the goal of psychical research and that he had a narrow view of science.

Other Topics

French philosopher Émile Boirac (1851–1917), once chancellor of the Académie de Grenoble and of the Université de Dijon, discussed what

he referred to as “cryptoid” phenomena, or phenomena at the margins of science. In his view, science should be able to find truth and grow conceptually, and eventually “recognize the reality of certain phenomena that it has considered before to be imaginary and chimeric . . .” (Boirac 1899:51).

The above-mentioned English classical scholar and psychical researcher Frederic W. H. Myers authored two notes on veridical hallucinations (Myers 1886a, 1886b), a topic studied by researchers connected to the London-based SPR (Gurney, Myers, & Podmore 1886). The phenomenon was defined as hallucinations that “without having a material reality, correspond nevertheless to real fact, that has determined, by a process as yet unknown, the moment and the nature of such hallucination” (Myers 1886a:214). Myers wrote:

A large number of observations . . . were collected, in which the hallucination of A coincided exactly with the disease or the death of B. In most cases collected by us:

1. There has never been any other hallucination;
 2. Neither death nor the disease of B were likely;
 3. The death and disease of B could not be known to A.
- (Myers 1886a:214–215)

Furthermore, aspects of the work of the Society were reviewed in a discussion of Gurney, Myers, and Podmore’s *Phantasms of the Living* (1886) (Marillier 1887) and in a note about the Society’s further work on hallucinations (Society for Psychical Research 1889). There were also short summaries of the content of the *Proceedings* of the Society (Review of Proceedings 1883, 1884a, 1884b).

A few other topics deserve mention. Among these are a discussion of Marian apparitions reported in Dordogne in 1889 (Marillier 1891) and, following the old French tradition of animal magnetism, ideas of “odic” and “neuric” forces, and what de Rochas called the exteriorization of sensibility and motricity (Boirac 1896, 1897, Janet 1888a, Lechelas 1887, Société de Psychologie Physiologique 1890).³³

Concluding Remarks

We have summarized the nineteenth century content of the *Revue* relevant to the study of psychic phenomena. While the journal still carried relevant publications in later years (e.g., Boirac 1911, Janet 1923), there were many more discussions of psychic phenomena during the nineteenth century. This is consistent with the view (seen from many studies) that the nineteenth century was a particularly important period for the topic in terms of research

and methodological developments as well as the formation of the first institutions and journals (e.g., Alvarado, Biondi & Kramer 2006, Gauld 1968, Lachapelle 2011).

The *Revue* included much material in support of specific phenomena such as mental suggestion. But like other publications it also had its share of critical outlooks and outright rejection of specific claims and ideas. In this way the *Revue* was not much different from more specialized publications such as the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*.

The *Revue* was also different from most academic journals—from France or from other countries—in that it regularly opened its pages to psychic phenomena. Perhaps this reflected both the interest of the times in the subconscious mind and unusual mental phenomena in France. This, as argued by others (e.g., Carroy 1991, Plas 2000) included psychic phenomena, but the majority of the efforts focused on dissociation in general, and more specifically on the variety of sensory-motor manifestations of hysteria and hypnosis.³⁴

This interest in mental phenomena may explain the lack of papers about physical phenomena in the *Revue*. There were, however, brief mentions of the topic in comments about published works (e.g., Boirac 1897, Janet 1892).

The critical views of Paulhan and Rosenbach may suggest a change in the openness of the *Revue* to psychical research. Whereas since Richet's 1884 article, many issues of the *Revue* contained studies on controversial phenomena of hypnotism and psychical research, in 1890 we find only Paulhan's article about the new mysticism and Binet's review of *L'Automatisme Psychologique* of Janet (Binet 1890), a book without his most "disturbing" experiments in Le Havre, yet positively received by many at the time. In 1892, Janet published his critical article on "contemporary spiritism," showing a skeptical view that was not evident in his previous reports of experimental studies on mental suggestion.

It seems that, with some exceptions, the wave of interest and openness about this topic inside the *Revue* extends primarily from Richet's 1884 article to Marillier's 1889 review of the First International Congress of Physiological Psychology. We have few clues to understand this change, which is exemplified by Janet. It may be speculated that the 1889 Congress marked the beginning of the failure of the integrative and eclectic strategy of the founders of the Société de Psychologie Physiologique. At this event, presided over by Ribot, questions of psychology, hypnotism, and psychical research were intertwined, as they were in the *Revue*. But the discussion of hypnosis and related topics at the 1889 congress received some criticisms, particularly in Germany (Sidgwick 1892:284).³⁵ Ribot, who derived part of his legitimacy from his promotion of the German positivist model of

psychology (Ribot 1879), may have found himself stuck. The *Revue*, like Janet, seems to have eventually made the choice to side with the psychological orthodoxy.

The Société de Psychologie Physiologique severely declined after the 1889 Congress. Both Wolf (1993) and Plas (2000) indicate that it was Richet's emphasis on the "marvelous" that alienated Charcot and caused his lack of support of this society. Indeed, it was this society which brought initial openness to psychical research in France. Its meetings and *Bulletin* provided a forum for discussions of mental suggestion which were also published in the *Revue* (e.g., Gley 1886, Héricourt 1886). It was not until 1900 that a similar dynamic developed at the Institut Général Psychologique (Brower 2010:Chapter 3). Meanwhile, the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* was founded in 1891 as a new forum of discussion (Alvarado & Evrard 2012). But while the *Annales* was an important specialized journal representing organized French psychical research, it was not a mainstream resource.

One of the topics that could have been discussed further here is the reception of the work mentioned. While a detailed study of this is beyond the scope of the present paper, it is an important topic that deserves further consideration in order to understand the impact of the material published in the *Revue*. While this paper has not studied this in detail, it is apparent that the importance of the *Revue* gave much visibility to the articles in question. We have already presented references to citations of Janet's (1886b, 1886c) research about the induction of trance at a distance. Similarly, the paper published by Richet (1884) about mental suggestion became a new representative of the scientific interest in psychic phenomena at the time, as seen in studies about developments in France (e.g., Plas 2000). But there were also citations of this work in many other publications beyond the French context (e.g., Gurney 1884).

A case could also be made about the impact and frequent citation of other papers mentioned. This includes articles about hypnotic transfer phenomena (Binet & Féré 1885), mediumistic communications (Flournoy 1899), and spiritism and the psychological study of mediums (Janet 1892).

Depending on the reader's interest, the material reviewed here will serve different purposes. Those interested in the reality of psychic phenomena will use these materials to assess the evidential value of the old work. In contrast, those interested in the historical aspects of psychical research will see these papers and book reviews as examples of important primary sources for the study of nineteenth century psychical research. From either perspective—and perhaps from the perspective of those interested in both views—there is no question that the *Revue* is an important source of information for the study of nineteenth century psychical research, particularly in France.

Notes

- ¹ There were also many books published during the nineteenth century in which authors presented observations of phenomena as well as theoretical concepts (e.g., Aksakof 1895, Gyel 1899, Gurney, Myers & Podmore 1886, Ochorowicz 1887). Some overviews of psychical research included those by Coste (1895) and Podmore (1897). We will not consider here discussions of psychical research in newspapers (e.g., Alvarado 2007).
- ² A possible example of this is that references to Richet's (1884) important paper about ESP and its statistical evaluation published in the *Revue*, and discussed below, generally rely on secondary English-language sources (e.g., Irwin & Watt 2007:49, Radin 2006:64).
- ³ Between 1896 and 1898 this journal had a section entitled "Hypnotic and Mediumistic Research," which was devoted mainly to psychic phenomena. In later years the section was called "Mediumship."
- ⁴ Crabtree (1993) presents an overview of some of these developments. On French work see Brower (2010), Carroy (1991), Dingwall (1967/1968), Edelman (1995), Lachapelle (2011), Méheust (1999a, 1999b), Monroe (2008), Plas (2000), and Sharp (2006). See also various general books about psychic phenomena and spiritism published in France during the late nineteenth century (e.g., Coste 1895, Delanne 1897, Erny 1895, Gibier 1887).
- ⁵ Spirits of the dead were also claimed to be seen in the visions of magnetic somnambules (Alvarado 2009c; for an overview see Crabtree 1993:196–212). Allan Kardec was the pseudonym of educator Hippolyte Léon Dénizard Rivail (1804–1869). For information about him see the detailed study by Wantuil and Thiesen (1984) and the more recent writings of Edelman (1995), Monroe (2008), and Sharp (2006).
- ⁶ Wantuil (n.d.) has presented a detailed study of table turning that is not well-known outside Brazil (see also Figuier 1860:Vol. 4, and Monroe 2008:Chapter 1). Some examples of French writings on the topic by scientists include Arago (1854:456–458), Babinet (1854), and Chevreul (1854). Perhaps the best-known work on table turning is by De Gasparin (1854).
- ⁷ Plas (2000:87–109) presents an overview of French work on mental suggestion (see also Caratelli 1996:Chapter 7). Additional examples of discussions on the topic published in France include Alliot (1886), Féré (1887:Chapter 18), Liébeault (1889:note c), and Paulhan (1892). The nineteenth century work of the SPR on the topic is summarized by Podmore (1894; see also Luckhurst 2002).
- ⁸ For some exceptions, see Bourru and Burot (1887a), Lombroso (1891), and Luys (1886).

- ⁹ Nineteenth century issues of the *Revue* are freely available online in Gallica (<http://gallica.bnf.fr/>), Google Books (<http://books.google.com/>), and in the Hathi Trust Digital Library (<http://www.hathitrust.org/>). On the journal see Meletti Bertolini (1991), Mucchielli (1998), Nicolas (2002: 113–118), and Thirard (1976).
- ¹⁰ On Ribot see Brooks III (1998:Chapter 2), Guillin (2004), Nicolas (2002:104–118), and Nicolas and Murray (1999).
- ¹¹ Ernesto Bozzano (1862–1943) credited Ribot with getting him interested in psychical research, having sent him an issue of the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* (Bozzano 1924). Historian of Italian psychical research Massimo Biondi believes that Bozzano’s memory may be faulty about this (Personal communication to CSA, 2/29/2012). This is consistent with other early problematic autobiographical recollections of Bozzano (Iannuzzo 1983).
- ¹² On this general interest in France see Alvarado (2010), Carroy (1991), Crabtree (1993), Foschi (2003a 2003b), Gauld (1992), Hacking (1995), and Nicolas (2002).
- ¹³ Janet has been discussed by many authors (e.g., Carroy & Plas 2000, Crabtree 1993:Chapter 15, Ellenberger 1970:Chapter 6, Foschi 2003b). On Janet and psychic phenomena see Kopell (1968) and Le Maléfian (1999:66–84). Carbonel (2008) discusses Janet in the context of the psychical research movement.
- ¹⁴ Gauld (1992:298–302) has summarized Richet’s hypnosis work. Wolf (1993) discusses his life and his scientific and scholarly work. For his psychical research see Alvarado (2008), Brower (2010:Chapter 4), Le Maléfian (1999:85–88, 273–278), and Tabori (1972:98–132).
- ¹⁵ Many 19th century authors reviewed the topic in publications appearing in France, among them Héricourt (1889), Laurent (1892), and Liégeois (1889:Chapter 9). Probably the best-known French work on secondary states was Janet’s widely cited *L’Automatisme Psychologique* (1889).
- ¹⁶ For discussions of this paper in the *Revue* see Lechelas, Tannery, and Richet (1885). Richet’s paper was discussed in many publications appearing in France (e.g., Gilles de la Tourette 1889:166–167, Ochorowicz 1887:65–69), and in other countries (e.g., Franklin 1885, Gurney 1884). Recent citations of the paper include Irwin and Watt (2007:49) and Radin (2006:64).
- ¹⁷ For earlier examples of this phenomenon in the mesmeric literature, see Burdin and Dubois (1841:415–416) and Esdaile (1852:227). Janet’s papers have been translated into English (Janet 1886/1968a, 1886/1968b). Gibert’s work as a physician is discussed by Carbonel (2006). On Le Boulanger see Richet’s studies (1888a, 1888b:32–42, 1889:67–83) and

Gauld's overview (1996). Plas (2000:107–109) has discussed the dual role Leboullanger played in France as a subject of psychological and psychic experimentation.

- ¹⁸ Paul Janet was a well-known and influential philosopher. He presented Pierre's first mental suggestion paper at the Société de Psychologie Physiologique (Ochorowicz 1887:118).
- ¹⁹ Pierre's brother was a physician who was also interested in dissociation and hysteria (e.g., Janet 1888). He was a urologist and published works on the subject (e.g., Janet 1890).
- ²⁰ Years later, Janet (1930) wrote in his autobiography that the tests had never seemed conclusive to him. He referred to the multiple citations of his work as an "abuse of my former observations" (p. 126). Janet was amazed that these authors did not ask his opinion of the matter.

I should have answered that already at that time, and even more so now, I doubted the interpretation of the facts and was disposed to criticize them myself, regarding them as a simple departure from more profound studies." (Janet 1930:p. 126).

Janet may have later seen this work as a "simple departure from more profound studies," but if put in the context of the times it may be argued, as Plas (2000) has done, that mental suggestion had clear conceptual connections to the study of the subconscious mind emphasized by Janet in his early work (Janet 1886a, 1887, 1888b, 1889); see also Myers (1886d) and Richet (1884) for connections between mental suggestion and the subconscious. Mental suggestion was a manifestation of the subconscious mind in the eyes of many at the time. Consequently, we should be skeptical of Janet's *later* attempt to play down the conceptual significance of mental suggestion work.

- ²¹ This practice probably comes from the old mesmeric belief in the importance of thumbs in the projection of animal magnetism. Deleuze (1825) wrote: "It is through the end of the fingers, and especially by the thumbs, that the fluid escapes with the most activity" (p. 31).
- ²² Referring to Janet and Gibert's tests, Myers (1887) said he found it "hard to believe that a peasant woman is sent to sleep by 'the sound of a going' in the arteries of an elderly physician, at a distance of half a mile" (p. 156). Presumably the reference to an elderly physician applied to Gibert, who was actually in his late 50s.
- ²³ On transfer phenomena see Gauld (1992:333–334), Harrington (1988), and Nicolas (2004:18–21). See also Myers' (1886c:449) suggestions of things to consider in conducting tests on the subject.
- ²⁴ For recent discussions of Wittmann see Alvarado (2009d) and Hustvedt (2011:Chapter 3).

- ²⁵ Bernheim's critiques were part of the paradigmatic conflicts between the Nancy and the Salpêtrière schools of hypnosis (Nicolas 2004). These conflicts centered over specific hypnotic phenomena, among them the phases of hypnosis and transfer. More dramatic for the attention they got in the press were the supposed cases of hypnotically induced crimes (Bogousslavsky, Walusinski, & Veyrunes 2009). Referring to transfer, Bernheim (1888:128) accused his opponents of suffering from "experimental illusions."
- ²⁶ On Flournoy and mediumship see Shamdasani (1994). The cases presented in the *Revue* paper appear in English elsewhere (Flournoy 1911:72–86).
- ²⁷ On such ideas before and after Flournoy see Alvarado (2011a).
- ²⁸ For discussions of the issue of pathology and mediumship, also relevant to Janet's ideas presented below, see Alvarado, Machado, Zangari, and Zingrone (2007), Alvarado and Zingrone (2012), Le Maléfán (1999), and Moreira-Almeida, Almeida, and Lotufo Neto (2005).
- ²⁹ On Janet and mediumship see Le Maléfán (1999:66–84). Janet discussed the topic in *L'Automatisme Psychologique* (1889:Chapter 3), where he argued that mediumship was similar to hysteria and hypnotic somnambulism in that all of them showed the "disaggregation of personal perception and . . . the formation of several personalities that are both successive and simultaneously developed" (p. 413). He believed that mediums were predisposed to have nervous problems and that their condition depended on a morbid state similar to one shown by those who develop hysteria and insanity. But mediumship was "a symptom and not a cause" (p. 406). Janet (1894:59) further wrote that automatic writing was a procedure that accessed the subconscious mind and that a medium was a person who had lost awareness of his or her internal mental activity (Janet 1898:395).
- ³⁰ Janet was influenced here both by Hippolyte Taine (1828–1893) and by Myers (Janet 1886a:587, 588).
- ³¹ Janet frequently credited non-scientific movements with influencing psychology. In his discussion of the use of crystal gazing to access the subconscious he stated his belief that "ancient superstition" may help psychology "today to guide our investigations" (Janet 1898:408). Such a view of the importance of past practices was expressed in his later discussions of hypnosis (Janet 1919).
- ³² For a more detailed discussion of the writings of Egger and others see Alvarado (2011b) and Le Maléfán (1995).
- ³³ On the late nineteenth century neo-mesmeric movement see Alvarado (2009b).

³⁴ For overviews see Carroy (1991), Foschi (2003a), Hacking (1995), Hustvedt (2011), and Nicolas (2002).

³⁵ On psychic phenomena in the 1889 congress see Alvarado (2006). The reactions to the first congress were but the beginning stages of rejection of psychic phenomena in the congresses. This continued and reached a critical point in the 1900 congress when many openly questioned the inclusion of spiritism and psychic phenomena (Janet 1901).

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