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"Dreaming While Awake": The Evolution of the Concept of Hallucination in the Nineteenth Century

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The dialectic of the Enlightenment radically redefined the interpretation and meaning of ghost-seeing by relocating the place of the ghost from the external, objective, and theologically structured world of experience to the internal, subjective, and psychologically haunted world of expression. This development led to the normalisation of hallucinations in psychological terms and the establishment of the idea that ghosts were created in the mind of the ghost-seer and were neither symptoms of psychiatric degeneration nor purely objective external apparitions that others could necessarily experience. From about the middle of the eighteenth century the figure of the ghost was therefore considered nothing more than a fallacious perception which impinged upon the conscious mind and tricked the experiencing subject into authentically seeing something that was not really there (Sarbin and Juhasz 348).

Yet with the eviction of the ghost from the objective world, the spectral world was now held to originate chiefly within the mind of the ghost-seer; this reorientation and displacement inaugurated a general transformation of the critical literature on the supernatural in the early-nineteenth century which began to focus on the phenomenological perspective of the subject in order to reveal the fallacies of mental life and the dangers and irrationality of ghost-belief. The pedagogical underpinnings of this new hallucination discourse were in tune with enlightenment scepticism and a general contempt for the credulity and superstition present in all orders of society. Yet with the new habitation of ghosts, spectres, and spirits firmly within the mind of the percipient, the realm of psychological space itself became a deeply haunted, uncanny, and unhomely site (Castle; Srdjan). It is within this context that rationalist and sceptical arguments against the reality of the spectral world came to demonstrate the mutability of normal consciousness and the potential for the fluidity of psychical forms to constitute the content of so-called supernatural phenomena. The belief that percipients, those who reported experiencing visual hallucinations, were in fact "dreaming while

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awake" thus became an established tenet within the new psychological theories of hallucinations.

As Theodore Sarbin wrote, when we ask the question "What is a hallucination?" we must remember that a hallucination is primarily an imagining that is publicly reported, and as such, any definition implicitly relies upon the culturally conditioned ideology of diagnosticians (Sarbin 363). In the nineteenth century a gradual redefinition takes place of what it means to see something that is not really there, as a critical transition takes place which removes most of the developed socio-cultural signifiers of ghosts which had been widespread since the early modern period. In the new sceptical and rationalist environment hallucinations were considered nothing more than fallacious perceptions - "wanderings of the mind"[2] - capable of sustained psychological inquiry and public dissemination. This paper will show that the rationalist theory of "spectral illusions" which discounted the objective reality of ghost-seeing, was challenged during the rise of the spiritualist faith, which drew a huge amount of attention from the scientific and artistic community to the psychogenesis of hallucinations and the rich research possibilities to be found in studying the fallacies of perception. Coming in the wake of the establishment of spiritualism, it will be seen that the Society for Psychical Research proposed that a certain number of hallucinations were "veridical" in that they corresponded to a real and verifiable event in the world - such as the death of a loved one - and could be apprehended telepathically. Thus, hallucinations represent a key concept in nineteenth-century debates surrounding notions of psychological truth, spiritual revelation, and the vagaries of the human imagination.

I

In 1799, a Prussian bookseller of sceptical disposition named Christoph Friedrich Nicolai read a paper to the Royal Society of Berlin entitled "A Memoir on the Appearance of Spectres or Phantoms occasioned by Disease," which attained cult status as a paradigmatic case throughout the psychological literature of the nineteenth century following its translation into English in 1803. In it Nicolai described how one morning in February 1791, during a period of considerable stress and melancholy in his personal

[2] "Hallucination," the anglicised form of the Latin *allucinatio*, meaning a wandering of the mind, made its first appearance in English in the 1572 translation of Lavater's *De Spectris, Lemuribus et Magnis Atque Insolitis Fragoribus*. Here hallucinations were defined as "ghostes and spirites walking by nyght, and strange noyses, crackes, and sundry forwarnynges, whiche commonly happen before the death of menne, great slaughters and alterations of Kyngdomes" (Sarbin and Juhasz 345).

life, he saw the apparition of a deceased person in the presence of his wife, who, however, reported seeing nothing. This apparition haunted him for the duration of the day, and in subsequent weeks the number of these figures began to increase. However Nicolai resolved to use his powers of observation coolly to study the phenomena and attempt to trace its cause.

> I observed these phenomena with great accuracy, and very often reflected on my previous thoughts, with a view to discover some law in the association of ideas, by which exactly these or other figures might present themselves to the imagination. ("A Memoir" 167)

When the apparitions began to speak to him, Nicolai resolved to allow himself to be bled by his physician and leeches were applied to the anus. Almost immediately Nicolai began to note the acute link between his physiological condition and the spectacle of phantoms which haunted his sensual world: his awareness of the apparitions swarming around him in the surgical room gradually disappeared and by the afternoon of his bleeding the ghostly figures seemed to move more and more slowly, then became paler, and had finally dissolved into the air by the evening. Ruminating upon this very graphic illustration of the connection between bodily dis-equilibrium and the appearance of spectres in the visual sphere, Nicolai described it as a lesson for philosophers and sceptics to be both more credulous of accounts ghost-seeing and at the same time less credulous of such phenomena which show

> how far the human imagination can go in the external representation of pictures; it may also admonish those well-disposed persons not to ascribe to their visions any degree of reality, and still less to consider the effects of a disordered system, as proofs that they are haunted by spirits. ("A Memoir" 173)

To admit to the reality of apparitions would be considered rank superstition among the educated classes, yet to deny totally the veracity of testimony and accuracy of the senses would be "the utmost tyranny of prejudice" (Ferriar 137). The notion of dreaming while awake, of misunderstanding the reality of the physiological and psychological signs presented to the mind, was a way of negotiating through the sense of uncanny dislocation triggered by the vision of an apparition. The belief that ghosts are the "stuff of dreams" and that the spectral world is a naturalistic consequence of the dream-world recurs in the writings on hallucinations by medical philosophers, scientists, alienists, psychical researchers, psychologists, and indeed poets throughout the nineteenth century. The notion of dreaming while awake provided an apparatus whereby extraordinary human testimony could be accepted by inquirers as valid and

"veridical," yet, notwithstanding, be also considered objectively false. Known throughout the nineteenth century as a prototypical "waking dreamer"[3] it was within the context of the new hallucination discourse that Samuel Taylor Coleridge famously remarked that he did not believe in ghosts because he had "seen too many of them" (Ford 92).

The two most influential studies upon the nature and origin of visual hallucinations in the early nineteenth century centred their examination on the phenomenon of apparitions and phantasms of the dead. In these works John Ferriar and Samuel Hibbert, both British medical physicians, outlined the theory of spectral illusions - that apparitions were to be traced to disorders and diseases of the human body, rather than insanity, revelation, or supernatural haunting. In *An Essay Towards a Theory of Apparitions* (1813), John Ferriar, basing his theory on the optical paradigm, wrote that apparitions could be explained by a "renewal of external impressions" through which a retinal memory could be reanimated via the visual sense (Ferriar 21). Samuel Hibbert in *Sketches of the Philosophy of Apparitions* (1825) outlined the similar thesis that "apparitions are nothing more than ideas, or the recollected images of the mind, which have been rendered more vivid than actual impressions" (Hibbert v). It is clear that these pioneering physiological theories of visual hallucinations formed the basis for psychological theories based on the similarities between the phantasmagoric nature of the dream world and the ghost-seeing experience, for by withdrawing the origins of ghosts from the supernatural world these theories laid responsibility for such marvels on the occult workings of the human mind: the only distinction became whether these perceptions had a central or peripheral origin in the brain.[4]

The positivistic and campaigning anti-occultist nature of the spectral illusions discourse is directly linked to the case of Nicolai, yet it also represents a broader intellectual shift that led to the psychologisation of supernatural perceptions in the sane. Of primary importance in this transformation was the phantasmagoric legacy of

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[3] Patricia Adair entitles her study of Coleridge *The Waking Dream* (1967), yet this labelling was also current within Victorian psychology and criticism (Carpenter 268).

[4] Yet preliminary remarks upon the assured religious beliefs of the author were common among the anti-apparition philosophers who were keen to annul any charges of atheism or materialism brought against them. Ferriar's disclaimer read: "observe, however, that the following treatise is applicable, in its principles, to profane history, and to the delusions of individuals only. If any thing contained in the ensuing pages could be construed into the most indirect reference to theological discussions, the manuscript would have been committed, without mercy, to the flames" (Ferriar ix). On the debate over the origin of hallucinations, central or peripheral, see Gurney 1885, 168-171, and Parish 110-151.

enlightened researches into the human faculties, which necessitated that the supernatural experience would be interpreted and re-imagined through the metaphor of dreams and dreaming. Yet as this development led to deeper investigations into the workings of the mind, waking and sleeping, new difficulties and categories emerged demanding an increased nosological awareness and new systems of symptomatolgy to create coherence in the structuring of perceptual experience.

Thus, in 1832 the French alienist J.E.D. Esquirol strengthened the medical model of ghost-seeing with his celebrated definition of hallucinations:

> In *Hallucinations* everything happens in the brain (mind). The visionaries, the ecstatics, are people who suffer from hallucinations, dreamers while they are awake. The activity of the brain is so energetic that the visionary, the person hallucinating, ascribes a body and an actuality to images that the memory recalls without the intervention of senses. (qtd. in Flint 263)

Therefore hallucinations, as fallacious perceptions with no actual external percept to excite the mind, became part of the continuum of altered states of consciousness ranging from a harmless poetic reverie to somnambulistic visions where the subject projected the ideas and images of the memory and gave form to his imagination in real life, thus dreaming while fully awake. In his much cited study, *Des Hallucinations, ou Histoire Raisonnée des Apparitions, des Visions, des Songes, de l'Extase, du Magnétisme et du Somnambulisme* (1845, translated 1859), A. Brierre de Boismont, who had worked within Esquirol's circle, departed from his teacher's pathological theory of hallucinations and instead emphasised the normality of hallucinations and their co-existence with sanity, regarding them as consistent with the due exercise of reason - an interpretation which allowed for the retrospective diagnosis of sanity upon many major historical figures who reported hallucinations (377).[5]

This notion of waking-dreams represented the blind side of a rationalist psychology which had aimed at bringing the workings of the mind and the soul to the light of reason and understanding, for more and more commentators were writing about the essential hallucinatory nature of thinking experience in itself. In his book *De l'Intelligence* (1870), Hippolyte Taine urged that we be constantly aware of the "invincible" illusions, tricks, and falsehoods of human consciousness. Like an eye with poor visual capabilities, Taine argued that consciousness must be magnified and en-

[5] The writings of William W. Ireland in particular pioneered the application of psychological concepts such as hallucination to historical figures. In *The Blot Upon the Brain: Studies in History and Psychology* (1885), and its sequel, *Through the Ivory Gate: Studies in Psychology and History* (1889), Ireland studied the hallucinations of figures such as Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, King Ludwig II of Bavaria, Emmanuel Swedenborg, and William Blake.

lightened in order to make proper sense of the external world (Taine x). He particularly focused on the vagaries of sensation in his study and argued that in a hallucination situation the "*special reductive*" in the mind, that which contradicts and corrects the erroneous sensation, fails in its duty, allowing the brain to sense what is not actually there:

> That is why solitude, silence, obscurity, the want of attention, all circumstances, in short which suppress or diminish the corrective sensation, facilitate or provoke the hallucination; and reciprocally, company, light, conversation, aroused attention, all circumstances giving rise to, or augmenting, the corrective sensation, destroy or weaken the hallucination. (Taine 54)

Thus Taine particularly singled out Nicolai's strength of mind, praising his method of rectification and the acknowledgment that he was in fact physiologically ill and that the phantoms surrounding him were merely dreamlike illusions not to be addressed or given supernatural significance. Yet in his study Taine came to the conclusion that the human mind is dominated by images, representations, and ideas that have no external present reality, but are processed as if they do. Therefore Taine felt justified in characterising the hallucination as *the* basic fact of mental life, and the state of mind of a healthy percipient as a series of hallucinations which halt at a certain point, the inability of this halting mechanism characterising more morbid states of mind: Taine followed Boismont in refusing to label hallucinations as general pathological symptoms. Thus "external perception is an internal dream which proves to be in harmony with external things: an instead of calling a hallucination a false external perception, we must call external perception a *true* hallucination" (Taine 224).

II

In a classic Enlightenment essay from 1766, Immanuel Kant, newly awakened from his dogmatic slumbers by David Hume, had noted that the illusions of metaphysics resemble the dreamlike cogitations of spiritualist mystics to an almost uncanny degree. His *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik* (*Dreams of a Spirit-seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics*) was published anonymously and was ostensibly presented as a sceptical examination of the mystical theories of Emmanuel Swedenborg whom he considers "the arch-spirit-seer of all spirit-seers" solely to please Kant's friends who urged the essay, and to provide some justification for going to the trouble of purchasing Swedenborg's main work *Arcana Celestia* (1749-56), which he considered to be "stuffed full of nonsense" (341, 347). However, this tactic of sarcasm

and nonchalance merely served to accentuate further the disturbance Kant felt at the revelations of "Schwedenberg" (purposefully spelt wrongly by Kant) and indeed the nature and meaning of hallucinations.

Kant believed that the differences between the metaphysical dreamer (a dreamer of reason), such as himself, and a *Geisterseher* (a dreamer of sense) such as Swedenborg, were based upon the will-to-deception of the ghost-seer who transposes the figments of his imagination, the *focus imaginarius*, outside of himself and into the external world. Such a conjuration or "deception" Kant believed was an effect of madness, or an inability of the will to exert its concentrative power. The introduction of the phenomenon of the "will" in the psychical process of seeing hallucinations was extremely problematised by the spread of mesmerism and induced somnambulism in western Europe in the early part of the nineteenth century where practitioners claiming pseudo-scientific powers could apparently induce a wakeful sleep in the patient (Crabtree; Ellenberger). With the phenomenon of magnetic sleep naturalised as hypnotism by James Braid in the 1840s, experimental psychologists demonstrated that visual, aural, and tactile hallucinations could be induced through suggestion and pointed to the potential of magnetic sleep to reveal the latent content of the subliminal mind and its dreams, a development which led directly to Freudian psychoanalysis via Jean-Martin Charcot's treatment of hysterics in the 1870s and 1880s.

Different arguments about the nature of the will emerged in the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer who believed that paranormal phenomena such as ghost-seeing proved the nature of his philosophical system. In his "Über das Geistersehn" ("Essay on Spirit Seeing") (1851), Schopenhauer argued that the palpable reality and affects of the dream upon the mind of the sleeper would prove that an intuitive perception of the world is possible without the actual presence of real bodies. The dream is considered the second faculty of intuitive perception, after empirical perception, and Schopenhauer assigns to the process of sleeping and dreaming acute responsibilities for the welfare and maintenance of the body, for visions are in a waking state what prophetic dreams are in a sleeping state, phenomena most frequently pertaining to the welfare of the individual. Ghost-seers merely objectively perceive the world through a "dream organ" with which they actively "dream the real" (*Wahrträumen*): thus apparitions of the living, the dead, and the dying may be objectively seen in the same way as they are in a fantastical dream, for much like people in a trance who are preternaturally aware of everything around them, the ghost-seers' internal intuitive perception has superseded

the pull of the external senses and thus clairvoyance is an enhancement of the dreaming of the real. Schopenhauer believed that cases of ghost-seeing and second-sight were indicative of the world-as-will, that is, that the conceptual "Will" which he claimed to underlie reality was capable of transmitting warnings, premonitions, and supernatural awareness among human minds (Schopenhauer 268).

With spiritualism becoming a matter of great controversy in the English scientific community the 1850s, the hallucination discourse became inextricably linked with what was generically described as the "epidemic hysteria" and "latent insanity" of séance room perceptions. However, the calibre and respectability of scientific observers such as Alfred Russell Wallace and William Crookes who were reporting paranormal experiences and enthusiastically converting to spiritualism, forced late-Victorian mental physiologists to focus upon the hidden workings of the normal mind which seemed to betray the intelligence and common-sense of otherwise normal people (Palfreman). For the celebrated mental physiologist William Carpenter, it was all a question of will as he demonstrated how supernatural sensations could be automatically produced by mental states characteristic of "expectant attention," or acute lack of volition, which allowed beliefs to be experienced as true sensations - phenomenological facts with no actual basis in reality. Following the naturalisation of many facets of the spiritualist repertoire such as mesmerism, table-turning, and thought-reading, the seeing and hearing of deceased figures became characterised as a willing hallucination, yet one in which "unconscious cerebration," or the subliminal mind, was active in perverting reality, thus deeply disturbing an empirical epistemology based upon evidence and personal testimony. Carpenter believed that spiritualists could truly *see* the content of their own unconscious and attributed this to a resignation of the faculty of "Common Sense" (Carpenter 115). Continuing the theory of spectral illusions, Carpenter radically devalued the evidence of the senses, propounding the point that sensations can be produced by mental states: indeed the "Sensorium" emerges as a contested perceptual engine at the mercy of all types of sensation with little distinction between perceptions that are "real" or "fictive." People who attend spiritualistic séances are "possessed" with ideas, and in their state of "expectant attention" "it is comfortable to all scientific probability that they should *see* luminous manifestations, should *smell* flowers, should *feel* the contact of spirit-hands or the voices of departed friends." (Carpenter 165)

Much like Coleridge before him, Carpenter used the symptom of "suspension of volitional control" to draw attention to the continuity between the variety of phenomena

and states of mind which share this major feature. Thus, in Carpenter's system, dreaming, delirium, hypnotism, reverie, abstraction, ghost-seeing, and indeed, insanity, were all essentially symptomatic of a lack of will-power within the mind of the percipient (Carpenter 557, 584). A battleground thus emerges in the hallucination discourse between multiple psychological realities vying to prove the evidential basis of their sense impressions. It is within this field that we may locate theories of evolutionary psychological mechanisms such as Sigmund Freud's analysis of the emergence of the reality principle as a response to the failure of the hallucination to satisfy the desiring individual. On a similar note, Francis Galton believed that the natural hallucinatory world of the individual was socially repressed and liable to be unearthed only in epistemic shift in late-Victorian society whereby a high cultural value would be placed on reported hallucination cases; this was a scenario which did in fact emerge towards the end of the century in a variety of cultural fields from psychical research to pre-surrealist aesthetics. Indeed in the pioneering anthropology of Edward Tylor in the 1870s the very basis of the animistic belief in the soul, and thus the origins of religion, was traced back to the hallucinatory perception of reality contained in the dream-world where the personality of the dreamer appeared to exist in an otherworld where life and death, and where reality and fantasy, were no longer contradictions. Commentators were thus appreciating notions of reality as more a continuum of varying levels of conscious and unconscious perception than as a monolithic concept.

III

In this context, the nineteenth century developed a democratic and widespread market for tales of ghost-seeing and hallucination which shirked off compartmentalisation into a single discourse, entertainment network, or episteme. Ghost stories, whether told around a fire at Christmas time, conceived in the imagination of scores of the most accomplished Victorian and Edwardian writers, or collected and collated in psychological and psychical journals, exerted a huge influence upon mid- to late-nineteenth-century fields of debate centred upon the reality of the sensual world and the extent to which scientific epistemology could accurately interpret the phenomenological reality reported by percipients throughout Britain. As the boundaries between notions of normality and abnormality became more fluid and transient, even within the unitary personality, it was clear that the metaphorics of the dream world could function as an

ambiguous labelling procedure whereby hallucinations were possible, normal, and a rich source of aesthetic inspiration and wonder.

"A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, first published in 1843, can serve as a fictional representation of the many debates and issues regarding the vagaries of human perception in the hallucination discourse, as mentioned above. Taine had gone so far as to ascribe to external objective perception the metaphor of hallucination, a situation in which the world itself becomes a phantasmagorical dream, further breaking down notions of outside and inside, and the boundaries between the occult machinery of consciousness and the film of traceable reality. In his supernatural fiction, Dickens interrogates the dissonance experienced by the ghost-seer at the uncertainty of knowing whether the senses are to be trusted in their interpretation of reality. Scrooge's supernatural experiences begin innocently enough, with what would have been termed by contemporaries an "illusion." Letting himself in home at night Scrooge "saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change - not a knocker, but Marley's face" (Dickens 14). This illusion, a mistaken perception of real objects in the visual field, vanishes rapidly yet forms a psychological gateway to the more serious hallucinations that will afflict Scrooge later on in the story.[6]

Throughout his ghost-seeing experiences Scrooge seems to demonstrate an awareness of the spectral illusions theory of hallucinations. Repeating the mantra of "humbug" he remains steadily incredulous in the face of the sensory data before him:

> "You don't believe in me", observed the ghost. "I don't", said Scrooge. "What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your own senses?" "I don't know", said Scrooge. "Why do you doubt your senses?" "Because", said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!" (Dickens 18)

Stating this in spite of the obvious sensual reality of the spectre, Scrooge resembles the heroes of the spectral illusion discourse, percipients who, like Nicolai, fought against their senses and refused to ascribe reality to objects they were sure had a physiological origin. The remainder of the tale can be read as a spectre-show in which the appearance of so many apparitions bombards and literally frightens Scrooge into a belief in the

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[6] As Edmund Gurney wrote: "Illusions, or false perceptions of colour, often precede the appearance of more distinct phantasms. So, in cases of more transient abnormality - such as the well-known *illusions hypnagogiques* - other signs precede the hallucination. The observer, whose eyes are heavy with sleep, begins by seeing luminous points and streaks, which shift and change in remarkable ways; and it is from these as nuclei that the subsequent pictures develop" (Gurney 1885, 181-182).

reality of the spiritual world and a consequent entrance into a "community of sensation"[7] whose members, like Scrooge's nephew, exhibit Christian charity and compassion in their daily lives. In this development the space of the bedroom, where falling asleep, dreaming, and waking take place, is crucial in signifying the potential for the detailed waking-dreams. It is here that Scrooge wonders about the reality of his hallucinations and frets over the uncertainty as to whether they belong in the dream-world or the world of reality:

> every time he resolved within himself, after mature enquiry, that it was all a dream, his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first position, and presented the same problem to be worked all through, "Was it a dream or not?" (Dickens 24-25)

Scrooge is visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future while in his bed (indeed the Ghost of Christmas future becomes a bedpost as he departs), and the inability to distinguish his experiences from waking dreams is complicated by the fact that he is described as being "much in need of repose" and "being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness" (Dickens 23, 39). The ghost-seeing described in "A Christmas Carol" can be considered as part of the contemporary hallucination discourse which noted the extreme mutability of consciousness and the inability to tell real objects from the externalised representations of the mind that dreams while awake.

The Society for Psychical Research (SPR), founded by Cambridge intellectuals and spiritualists in 1882, proved a central component in late-century debates concerning the veridicality of hallucinations, dealing with cases that seemed to have the forcefulness and realism of Dickens's fictional tale. In their efforts to locate ghost-seeing within the mainstream of scientific naturalism, the SPR propounded a telepathic theory of apparitions in which the hallucination of the living person could appear to a percipient as an apparition. Building upon their belief in the veridical nature of telepathic apparitions, the SPR began to use the term "phantasm" to refer to a hallucination of the sense of sight caused by an unusual condition in a distant agent:

> In virtue of having their real cause *outside* the percipient, and so in a way conveying true information, we may describe death-wraiths and the like as *veridical* hallucinations; but as projections of the percipient's own mind, by which his senses are deluded, we hold them to be altogether on a par with morbid hallucinations. (Barrett et al. 168)

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[77] This, and similar, phrases frequently occurred in Victorian writings on mesmerism and hypnotism to express the metaphor of intimate contact between people at a distance from each other (Barrett et al., 1883, 224).

Thus, by describing them as mental phenomena with no physical reality, by dealing with a person who was dying, that is, still technically alive, and by linking the topic to what they believed was scientifically proven - telepathy - the SPR sought to modernise the ghost story as an empirical narrative within the precepts of scientific naturalism. The classic representation of this exploration remains *Phantasms of the Living* (1886). However, in defining a phantasm as a hallucination of the sense of sight caused by an unusual condition or crisis, usually death, in a distant agent - usually a loved one - the SPR were having their cake and eating it, for they were using the physiological consensus on hallucinations to posit a new perceptible region in the unconscious mind which activated the mechanism of hallucination. Reacting to criticism of their methods of collecting data, the SPR resolved to back up their telepathic theory with a sociological survey that proved unique in late-Victorian psychology and was only approached in ambition by a similar Mass Observation study in 1947 (West).

Organising a "Census of Hallucinations", the SPR asked the question:

> Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing, or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause? (Sidgwick et al. 33)

After receiving 17,000 answers by 1894, the publication of this report led to the claim that about 10% of the population have experienced an hallucination, usually visual or auditory, while in a conscious and wakeful state (Sidgwick et al. 39). However the most sustained criticism of the Census centred on the difficulties of separating the realms of dream and reality in the mind of the average respondent. The fact that a significant number of hallucinations (especially the cases considered by the SPR indicative of veridical hallucinations) occurred while the percipient was in bed or in a bedroom led some critics to suggest that the boundary between believing one is awake and actually being in a sleepy or dreamy state were not as clear to define as some psychical researchers would like. Just as dreams sometimes took their place as real memories in the mind of the wakeful person, so hallucinations during sleep could become indistinguishable from real events in the perceptual world. The German psychologist Edmund Parish pointed to a fundamental dissociation of consciousness in sane people who during hallucination-experiences misinterpret a significant amount of the time when they were not fully awake. He wrote:

> The frequent recital of an interesting occurrence tends to imprint a distinct picture of it on the mind, and the vividness of the mental image serves further to confirm the percipient's conviction of having been fully awake at the time - a delusion common with persons in a drowsy, half-asleep condition. It is not, then, much to be wondered at if gradually all subsidiary detail fades away, until finally there remains in the memory only two points of cardinal importance - the hallucination itself, and the conviction of having been fully awake. (Parish 106)

This theory of dream ghost-seeing was also noted, from another angle, by the psychical researcher Frederic Myers who, in order to explain the apparent lack of volition and the meaningless actions of many reported apparitions wrote: "The projection of the phantom, if I may so term it, seems a matter wholly automatic on the agent's part, as automatic and meaningless as a dream" (Myers 196).

Recent cultural studies have highlighted the links between the development of the new psychology of the late-nineteenth century and the emergence of artistic modernism (Micale). What cannot be overlooked is the blending of the cultural fields of fictional supernatural writing with the psychological investigation of hallucinations. A prime example of this would be the interplay between the brothers Henry and William James, one a modernist, the other a psychologist and psychical researcher - and the almost endless scholarship on Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw" has comprehensively dealt with the literary influence of the SPR hallucination discourse upon this text (Roellinger). From an avant-garde perspective, citing the "gothic psychiatry" of Frederic Myers, the French surrealist André Breton wrote about how the engagement between psychical research and automatism, and the relationship between hallucination and creativity, inspired the trajectory of the surrealist movement, dominated as it was by Rimbaud's injunction that one must "make oneself a seer" through a "disordering of the senses" (Breton et al. 17). Indeed, the whole progress of surrealism can be examined as a sustained effort to simulate a variety of abnormal conditions in order to reveal the dreamlike nature of external reality, and in Odilon Redon's phrase, put "the logic of the visible at the service of the invisible" (qtd. in Flint 262).

The metaphor of wakeful dreaming formed a conceptual scaffold with which the major ghost-seeing theory of the early- to mid-nineteenth-century presented its findings to the reading public. From 1800-1840, the theory of spectral illusions, inspired by the case of Nicolai, attempted to redefine the phenomenology of everyday life by suggesting a dramatic psychological connectedness and slippage between the spheres of

dream and reality. The notion that ghost-seeing was nothing more than a dream appeared as a disguisedly simple doctrine, yet it nevertheless functioned as a rich semantic mediation describing the deceptions and impostures of mental life. As such, the standardisation of this conceptual metaphor played a central role in the strength of the psychological paradigm within the hallucination discourses, as seen in the criticisms of the accounts of spiritualistic séances and the findings of the SPR's "Census of Hallucinations" by the scientific establishment. Using the cultural fascination with the production of dreams and sense of psychological uncertainty surrounding the dream-world to deny the objective reality of supernatural apparitions, the concept that people can dream while they are awake also problematised the medical belief that the hallucination is a pathological symptom. What this survey shows is that the notion of dreaming while awake may link supernatural beliefs with psychological discourse in a way that is mediated by the emerging psychologies of the unconscious, and as such this idea constitutes one of the most interesting mythopoetic impulses behind the emergence of modernity.

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