Pierre Janet and the Enchanted Boundary of Psychical Research

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Abstract

Among the founders of French psychology, Pierre Janet (1859 –1947) is recognized for both his scientific and institutional roles. The psychology born at the turn of the 20th century was initially partly receptive to, but then engaged in, a battle with the "psychical marvelous," and Janet was no exception. He was involved in the split between psychology and parapsychology (or "metapsychics" in France), developed at that time, playing several successive roles: the pioneer, the repentant, and the gatekeeper. At first, he was involved in so-called experimental parapsychology, but quickly chose not to engage directly in this kind of research any longer. Janet seemed to become embarrassed by his reputation as psychical researcher, so he increased his efforts to side with the more conventional thought of his time. Janet's attitude, in this, is an example of how French nascent psychology has explored "marvelous phenomena" before recanting. Yet this aspect of Janet's work has been rarely commented on by his followers. In this article, we describe the highlights of his epistemological journey.

Keywords: psychical research, Pierre Janet, Charles Richet, spiritism, hypnotism at distance

Introduction

Among the founders of French psychology, Pierre Janet (1859 –1947) is recognized for both his scientific and institutional roles. These roles involved engaging in the battle over the "psychical marvelous" (Plas, 2000; Sommer, 2013), to which the psychology born at the turn of the 20th century was initially partly receptive. Telepathy, clairvoyance, premonition, and the mental and physical phenomena of mediumship were among the first areas of study in psychological research (Brower, 2010; Lachapelle, 2011; Plas, 2000) before their restriction to a kind of subdiscipline within psychology that received various names: psychical research, parapsychology, and metapsychics.[1] Currently, this subdiscipline, sometimes considered a pseudoor proto-science, is best known under the name "parapsychology," despite its multidisciplinary approach and its contentious

[1] In this article, we treat these terms as synonymous because of their epistemological overlap, with the exception of the distinctions between metapsychics and parapsychology made by Amadou (1954) and Méheust (1999) discussed below.

relationship with academic psychology (Cardeña, 2015; Gauld, 1968; Méheust, 1999; Sommer, 2013). In France, "the intersection between 'official' nascent modern psychology and psychical research was, albeit relatively short-lived, nowhere as overt" (Sommer, 2013, p. 11). As a philosopher, and later a physician and professor of psychology at the Sorbonne and the Collège de France, Janet was involved both in the intersection and the split that soon took place between psychology and parapsychology. In this article, we describe the highlights of his epistemological journey through parapsychology, in which he went through three different phases: pioneer, repentant of his own and other's work, and gatekeeper against a tacit acceptance of the topic. Yet his involvement in psychical research has been rarely commented on by his followers (e.g., Bauer, 2010), with a few exceptions (e.g., Ellenberger, 1970/1994).

To begin, we need to explain the concept of "enchanted boundary," coined by the American theologian and psychical researcher Walter Franklin Prince (1863–1934). His last book, The Enchanted Boundary (Prince, 1930), documents several startling responses from scientists encountering allegations of paranormal phenomena. For instance, their judgment was sometimes biased and their emotions took over; they ignored contradictory arguments and reacted in a way that would be unthinkable in their own area of expertise, as remains the case to this day (Cardeña, 2015). Prince's book is not just a plea against unwarranted forms of skepticism but a plea to question the social and psychological forces summoned by alleged paranormal issues in science. Some authors have come to believe that the intellectual double standards maintained by some in the professional elite are indissociable from these phenomena (Hansen, 2001). Any scientific discussion of the paranormal seems to reawaken old and questionable divisions, especially those between magic, religion, and science.

In this article, we discuss the case of Janet, who claimed to have shown experimentally telepathic communications with a gifted participant, before abandoning this area and trying to erase it from his career. If he really believed that he had achieved the results he described, what could have persuaded him to stop this promising research? It may be that Janet crossed a metaphorical border between orthodoxy and heterodoxy with his experiments on remote hypnosis, triggering both extraordinary enthusiasm and mistrust. We argue that he managed to cross back using strange rationalizations and strategic omissions. In this, Janet is an example of how French nascent psychology went through the study of "marvelous phenomena" before recanting by claiming a higher scientific status than parapsychology/metapsychics (Marmin, 2001; Plas, 2000).

As a young scholar, Janet developed scientific research on paranormal phenomena in the context of its intersection with modern psychology (Sommer, 2013), and

several psychologists at that time were moderately supportive of this inclusion. A demarcation was soon constructed, first with an internal boundary between psychology and the special subdiscipline of psychology dealing with ostensible paranormal phenomena, and then a hardening of this boundary with its elimination as a subdiscipline (Evrard, 2016). This demarcation had not been established firmly in 1885, but Janet, in part because of his personal agenda, participated in establishing that boundary. For a time, he was the champion of this distinction before delegating it to one of his students, Henri Piéron (1881–1964), who continued and strengthened it (Evrard & Gumpper, 2016).

In this article, we expand the analysis of Janet's early relation to parapsychology to the entire span of his professional life, going further than previous historical analyses of his experiments on remote hypnosis and his involvement in the Institut Général Psychologique (IGP) [General psychological institute] (Brower, 2010; Lachapelle, 2011; Méheust, 1999; Plas, 2000; Sommer, 2013). We also provide a new critical appreciation of Janet's rewriting of his involvement in psychical research as a sort of momentary lapse distinct from the rest of his work, also adopted by some historians (especially Ellenberger, 1970/1994) and most Janetians (e.g., Bauer, 2010). This essay synthesizes data published by various historians with neglected sources, including papers published by Janet and Richet in specialized journals, and the testimonies of Janet's granddaughter Noëlle, one of his students, Hans Bender, and psychologist William McDougall. We hypothesize that Janet had an ambivalent and prolonged relation to paranormal research and conclude that later parts of his work may be seen as a kind of strategy to cover up his enthusiasm for the paranormal interpretation of the phenomena he observed with Léonie, as in his nonexistent "third school of hypnotism" (Alvarado, 2009). Furthermore, we analyze some of his epistemological choices, following a psychobiographical approach (McKinley Runyan, 2013).

Janet, Pioneer of Metapsychics (1885–1889)

The term "metapsychics" was coined by the physiologist and Nobel prize-winner Charles Richet (1850 –1935)[2] in 1905 to define the scientific study of unknown phenomena attributed to latent abilities of the human psyche (Lachapelle, 2011), and to demarcate this field from other disciplines such as psychology or physics. Later distinctions between metapsychics and parapsychology, if any, have differentiated an idiographic and qualitative approach (metapsychics) from a nomothetic and quantitative one (parapsychology; Amadou, 1954; Méheust,

[2] Richet was a pioneer in several fields, among them aviation and the universal language Esperanto, and was the 1913 laureate of the Nobel Prize in Medicine/Physiology for his work in immunology. His conception of metapsychics is in line with his pioneering activities in the field of psychology (Carroy, 1991; Hacking, 1988) and his scientific activities in general (Van Wijland, 2015).

1999). Representative works of metapsychics often involved extensive studies of gifted individuals to understand their practices while respecting their own ecology, whereas parapsychology is more associated with the systematic research program of Joseph Banks Rhine and Louisa Rhine at Duke University in the United States, which emphasized the statistical analysis of the average performance of unselected participants.

However, this apparent distinction overlooks the fact that Richet (1884) introduced his research program on divination using double-blind (or masked) protocols and statistical analyses, offering tools that would become standard in experimental human and social sciences (Hacking, 1988). Additionally, it overlooks the fact that Rhine and collaborators also investigated selected individuals and unique cases (e.g., Pratt, 1977). Richet (1922) explained that he abandoned his more experimental methodology because of its monotony and lack of success. But we must also recognize that Janet's experiments on remote mental suggestions with a gifted participant played a crucial role in the field's shift into the more idiographic metapsychics from Richet's nomothetic, quantitative program. The gifted participant was Léonie Leboulanger (1837–190?), a modest woman with a strong character who made herself available to doctors' experiments for decades (Gauld, 1996–1997).

The Experiments at Le Havre

Although his uncle Paul (1823–1899) was a famous spiritualist philosopher, Pierre Janet was only an ambitious high school philosophy teacher at Le Havre when he was invited by Joseph Gibert (1829–1899), nicknamed "Normandy's Charcot" (Carbonel, 2007, p. 12), to observe the strange phenomena developed by one of the individuals whom Gibert had on several occasions "magnetized." The term followed the original theory by F. A. Mesmer of animal magnetism, but descriptively meant something akin to inducing an altered state of consciousness through hand passes over the individual's body, which might produce fixed gaze, changes in experience and behavior, apparent communication from another aspect of the person's mind, and enhanced responsiveness to verbal suggestions (Ellenberger, 1994). Although he planned to focus on hallucinations for his doctoral thesis to advance his career, Janet temporarily wavered when meeting these interesting phenomena.

When Janet began this study, it had been only a few years since somnambulism had obtained some scientific legitimacy within the context of various versions of hypnotism (Méheust, 1999). The study of "animal magnetism" and its derivative, "artificial somnambulism," experienced a peak in France in the late 18th century after its proposal by F. A. Mesmer and its practice by many others. However, many contradictory debates, including critical reports commissioned by Louis XVI,

prevented it from obtaining a stable scientific recognition (Evrard & Pratte, 2017). In 1842, its official banishment by the French Academy of Medicine did not completely prevent the pursuit of studies on magnetism, but they were relegated to the margins of official science. It was only through the later concept of hypnosis that some researchers claimed scientific legitimacy, even if they broadly distanced themselves from their predecessors. As early as 1875, Richet and the influential Parisian neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot (1825–1893) removed part of the insalubrious reputation of hypnosis and urged their colleagues to reconsider hypnotism as an experimental and therapeutic tool (Estingoy & Ardiet, 2005). This tool was based on specific verbal and nonverbal suggestions to which some humans seemed to respond in an almost involuntary way, in an apparent altered state of behavior and consciousness reputed to be analogous to somnambulism or sleep. “Somnambulists” might also display various psychosomatic phenomena like analgesia, hyperesthesia, psychomotor automatisms, and hallucinations. Charcot thought that only people with some type of psychological/ neurological deficiency and prone to go into pathological states were responsive to hypnosis, whereas the rival Nancy theoretical school of Bernheim and Liébeault posited that hypnotic phenomena depended on suggestibility, which was present in everyone, not just in people with pathological conditions.

Deciding to study the reputed parapsychological phenomena of hypnosis, which had
often been mentioned in informal communications (Crabtree, 1988), Janet reported 37 successes out of 65 trials of “mental suggestion” between September 1885 and December 1886 (see Figure 1). In this experiment, a hit was scored when the participant obeyed the suggestion (generally, to fall into a hypnotic sleep) at “about the same time” as it was mentally made by the experimenter. A miss was scored when it appeared that the individual did not perceive and/or obey the suggestion. No statistical analyses were produced at Janet’s time, only a description of cumulative and very improbable events (e.g., a specific and paradoxical suggestion—like opening an umbrella despite the sunny weather—was obeyed at an unforeseen time and at a distance). The conditions varied in terms of experimenters, selected suggestions, distances, randomization, and control conditions. In general, Janet’s reports were not very detailed and were sometimes incomplete (for some trials, only positive or negative results were reported), but these gaps were rarely pointed out by his contemporaries.

These experiences often started with the magnetization/hypnosis of Léonie by Gibert, to induce a presumed hypnotic state, and then specific experimental suggestions were given by Janet and his brother Jules (1861–1940), a medical intern at the Salpêtrière who eventually pursued a career in urology. To their surprise, they found that the hypnotic suggestions were as effective when silently

formulated as when spoken orally (J. Janet, 1888). For example, Léonie was able to enter into a reputed hypnotic state at the moment chosen by the experimenters, without any obvious sensory or predictable clues. Gibert and Janet therefore decided to test "mental suggestion" by eliminating unintentional suggestion using a simple control: the spatial separation of the hypnotist and the hypnotized. With distance varying between a few meters to two kilometers, attempts to remotely hypnotize Léonie were conducted at unexpected moments. This phenomenon has been given many names: "remote hypnosis," "telepathic hypnosis," (Myers, 1886) and "telehypnosis" (Vassiliev, 1963). Because these experiments have been the subject of detailed descriptions based on the original articles (Janet, 1968a, 1968b; especially Leloup's, 1978, medical thesis; see also Dingwall, 1967, pp. 264–273; Myers, 1903, Vol. 1, pp. 524–529; Podmore, 1894, pp. 100–112), it is more important to focus on what happened next. Our aim is not to provide a scientific analysis to determine whether these experiments proved "remote hypnosis" or not, but to analyze their impact on the rise and the pursuit of the career that would allow Janet to become a member of the French academic elite.

Reception of Janet's Experiments

The transcript of Janet's first experiments was read by his uncle, Paul Janet,[3] at the November, 30, 1885, meeting of the newly formed Société de Psychologie Physiologique [Society of Physiological Psychology], presided over by Charcot. This society was one of the first forums for the institutionalization of psychology in France, following the model of the London Society for Psychical Research (SPR), founded in 1882 to study psychology, hypnotism, and psychical phenomena (Gauld, 1968). Richet and the Polish scientist Julian Ochorowicz (1850–1917) were the French society's main instigators, psychologist Théodule Ribot (1839–1916) and Paul Janet its Vice Presidents, and Charcot accepted the presidency on the condition, according to Ochorowicz (1916, p. 5; quoted by Domanski, 2003), that the word "physiological" be added to its name to distinguish its members from spiritists claiming to be "psychologists" because they believed they studied the soul.

The reception of Janet's transcript was very positive and was followed by numerous corroborative testimonies; the transcript and subsequent articles were published both in the society's bulletin and in the Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger [Philosophical Journal of France and Abroad], edited by Ribot. The report of the first series of seven trials of remote hypnosis was published along with similar cases and positive feedback from Richet (1886), Jules

[3] Paul Janet probably influenced his nephew through "his considerable avidity for every psychological— or parapsychological—thing" (Prévost, 1973, p. 11). All translations from French are ours.

Héricourt (1886), Henry Beaunis (1886), and several others (Dufay, 1889; Gley, 1886; Ochorowicz, 1886; Ruault, 1886). This publication in the Revue stimulated an important debate on the role of psychical research in the emerging field of psychology (Alvarado & Evrard, 2013). At the crossroads of several intellectual trends and schools, Janet's approach was acknowledged in an almost unanimously positive way. It fit into the growing appeal for a secularized study of marvelous phenomena (Monroe, 2008).

Richet (1886) even asserted that these experiments utilized a scientific methodology, even though they did not follow his card-guessing protocol (Richet, 1884). Janet tried to use the probabilistic approach with cards as targets but encountered difficulties inherent to the personalities of his participants. In her somnambulistic/hypnotic state, Léonie "was far from being docile and refused to take care of things she found insignificant" (Janet, 1885, p. 32). There was an epistemological shift from universalist to elitist approaches that contrasts with the scientific standards adopted later, for example, by Rhine, but this makes sense in the French psychological tradition, heavily influenced by Hippolyte Taine and his predominant interest in exceptional cases (Carroy, Ohayon, & Plas, 2006).

Encouraged by this positive reception, Janet continued to report his results in the bulletin of the Société de Psychologie Physiologique, the Revue Philosophique by Ribot, and the Revue Scientifique [Scientific Journal], then edited by Richet. In all, seven articles addressed various aspects of the work with Léonie (P. Janet, 1885, 1886a, 1886b, 1886c, 1886d, 1886e, 1887, 1888). Furthermore, prestigious witnesses decided to participate in these experiments, and a "self-proclaimed control commission" was created, including Janet's uncle Paul, his brother Jules, the brothers Arthur Myers (1851–1894) and Frederic Myers (1843–1901) from the London SPR, and Richet, Ochorowicz, and Léon Marillier (1862–1901; Le Maléfan & Sommer, 2015) from the Société de Psychologie Physiologique. This commission evaluated the trustworthiness of the experimenters and secretly added controls, such as members of the commission stationing themselves between Gibert and Léonie's houses to prevent any collusion during the attempts of mental suggestion. The commission also stressed the importance of randomly assigning the moments of suggestion, rather than following a deliberate choice by the hypnotists, to control for Léonie's anticipation.

Several members of this voluntary commission published reports (Marillier, 1887; Myers, 1886; Ochorowicz, 1887) that depicted the subtle personal differences in experience between the commission members (Dingwall, 1967, p. 267). These differences, without lowering the value of these experiments, underscored the fragility of human testimonies. Methodological criticisms were often relegated to

the background of these reports,[4] behind the sense of wonder vis-a`-vis the phenomenon, its heuristic value, and the innovative methodology used.

At only 26, then, Janet was seen as a pioneer in psychical research, "playing here a role that we will not see him take again thereafter" (Plas, 2000, p. 87). He abstained from reaching any definite conclusions and preferred to open the debate around the enigmatic facts he had gathered. His experimental and positivist approach inaugurated a standard for work on anomalous mental phenomena, in particular, and metapsychics, in general (Plas, 2000, p. 90):

- Accumulation of observations.
- Repetitions of experiments whose success is less and less likely, and therefore, more and more convincing.
- Not providing interpretation of the results.
- And declaring an atheoretical perspective.

But Janet's career in psychical research quickly took a radical and definitive turn. Voices were quickly raised against him, as if some perceived he had broken a taboo by crossing the enchanted boundary. The philosopher Charles Renouvier (1815–1903) wrote to the American philosopher and psychologist William James (1842–1910) on February 5, 1886, that "Richet and Beaunis and others' observations and experiments are not developed in good conditions for verification and control, like most testimonies that fill the books on animal magnetism" (quoted in Perry, 1935, Vol. 1, p. 700). Georges Gilles de la Tourette (1857–1904), skeptical about mental suggestion, made a similar critique (Gilles de la Tourette, 1887, pp. 167–168). However, Gilles de la Tourette's opinion was only based on his own failure to replicate Richet's experiments on mental suggestion analyzed through statistics (without providing any data) and not on recent facts of hypnosis at a distance, which he deemed "far more complex." Some supporters of the resurgence of hypnosis feared that, in its tenuous acceptance as part of psychological research, some researchers including Janet and Ochorowicz "throw themselves headlong

[4] Outside the laboratory, experimenters were confronted with extraneous factors and were forced to improvise. The protocols and measurements made were constantly modified. For example, the success of a trial was associated with the temporal coincidence between the order given mentally to fall asleep and the effect observed by a third party, but that sleep sometimes occurred with more than 1-hr delay or in an incomplete form that was difficult to distinguish from other alterations of consciousness. Researchers were then forced to justify why Léonie had resisted falling asleep or, conversely, why she had, on rare occasions, fallen asleep without any mental order being transmitted to her. Moreover, in order to verify that Léonie had fallen asleep or correctly followed the appropriate suggestion, it was necessary to involve other persons, particularly her domestic associates, whose testimony was difficult to verify. Furthermore, the presence, even concealed, of one of the experimenters near the house gave a clue to the somnambulist or her associates of what their intentions might be at that point.

into the marvelous and the miraculous" (letter from Delboeuf to James, Houghton Library, Harvard University: MS Am 1092 [159]; Delboeuf, 1886). One could no longer say the same thing about Janet a few years later.

Janet, the Repentant Psychologist (1890–1899)

Janet's very last experimental trial with Léonie was on Christmas Day of 1886. Neither Léonie nor Janet had planned an experiment but Janet tried a suggestion at 3:15 p.m. While she was walking with a friend on the jetty, Léonie had a headache at 3:20 p.m. and almost immediately ran to her home to sleep. The trials of this last and longest series (35 trials; see Figure 1) were not published in a confirmatory article but only as a short appendix to an article by Richet (1888a, pp. 450– 451).

Following these last, mostly successful, experiments, Janet left Léonie to other psychical researchers. Richet invited her to Paris at least 1 month each year from 1886 to 1889, and published five experimental studies with her between 1887 and 1889 (Richet, 1887–1888a, 1887–1888b, 1888b), including a 151-page paper published in the SPR Proceedings, and a last study with Léonie as the only participant (Richet, 1889). She also collaborated with Myers, who studied her in Cambridge in 1889 (Bickford-Smith, 1889– 1890). Janet's methodology was improved through random selection of the day and hour of the mental suggestion, and included double-blind experiments of card-guessing. Despite some hits, Richet (1922, p. 106) eventually qualified these experiments as very poor. During his own experiments with Léonie, he caught "Léonore," one of her secondary personalities, attempting to cheat by opening the sealed envelopes or substituting cards, which forced him to spend sleepless nights watching her! In the end, even if it is not what history remembers, Richet worked with Léonie at least as much as Janet. The cause of this oversight might be Richet's approach, which seemed to be less successful than Janet's and focused too much on paranormal aspects to develop enough bridges with orthodox psychology.

A Strategic Repentance

Following the international interest aroused by his two publications, Janet seemed to become embarrassed by his reputation as psychical researcher, so he increased his efforts to side with the more conventional thought of his time. Although his first publications communicated enthusiasm for the results obtained with Léonie, he disavowed them afterward and cultivated the figure of the open-minded but cautious scientist. Repentant, Janet was like a religious man who becomes aware, deep inside him, of his previous misdeeds and constructively confesses at public events, or like an artist who paints over one of his earlier paintings.

In his late autobiography, Janet (1930) described how he was "quickly wary of hasty generalizations made by members of the London society" (Trochu, 2008, p. 203) and their interpretation of telepathy. Janet also spoke of a lack of precautions and insufficient research, which might have justified his skepticism, according to the historian and psychiatrist Henri Ellenberger (1970/1994, p. 362). The philosopher Max Dessoir visited Janet in 1894 and called him his "old comrade in arms in the parapsychology's battlefield," and testified to his critical attitude, which he described as "containing an acid which would dissolve the platinum of facts" (Dessoir, 1946, in Sommer, 2012).

However, "there is little evidence of the skepticism he claimed [later] in his two long papers [on remote hypnosis]" (Quercy & Quercy, 1948, p. 279). The young Janet even wrote, in some places, that he had taken every precaution to prevent unintentional suggestions (Janet, 1886b). Neither he nor his contemporaries accurately analyzed the methodological weaknesses of his study, and he made only few vague retrospective remarks to downplay his previous enthusiasm. General epistemological criticisms of psychical research were more frequent at that time than detailed methodological criticisms (e.g., Wundt, in Sommer, 2013), which were mostly published later in specialized journals. Yet it seems that Janet's change in attitude has been taken as a sufficient reason to dismiss his previous conclusions. For instance, some historians of psychology did not analyze Janet's early works because, as they claimed, Janet "renounced his fascination for the marvelous" (Lecadet & Mehanna, 2006, p. 128; see also, Nicolas, 2005).

Surprisingly, Janet did not mention his parapsychological experiments with Léonie in his doctoral dissertation in philosophy, *L'Automatisme Psychologique* [The psychological automatism] (Janet, 1889), something Plas (2000, p. 135; personal communication, December 2, 2013) called an ironic "oversight." Ellenberger (1970/1994, p. 372) saw this as an effort to "stay on the solid ground of facts." Janet also did not discuss the clinical aspects of his work on dissociative personalities in *L'Automatisme Psychologique* (Janet, 1889). There were two probable reasons for this. The first is that it was a thesis in philosophy, not medicine. But perhaps a more important reason is that he became qualified as a physician, thus able to treat patients, only later with another thesis. He strategically chose to omit his clinical activities early on to avoid professional complications. Given that the abovementioned historians agree that he did this, should we not also consider that Janet removed the parapsychological aspects of his thesis to advance his career?

Only a few years after Janet's experiments in Le Havre, and although no critical analysis nor denial had been published, they continued to fascinate some of his contemporaries (e.g., Paulhan, 1892). Janet himself did not engage directly in this

kind of research anymore, although he maintained the role of critical commentator. In fact, he chose a difficult epistemological option in which he defended with ease the legitimacy of these studies while systematically concluding that the scientific evidence was not yet satisfactory (e.g., Janet, 1923; see section The Estrangement Between Janet and Richet). He also applied this criticism to his own contributions, although without specifying the precise technical reasons that led him to question the facts that had previously not troubled him. When asked about his conclusions by psychologist William McDougall, "Janet's answer was a shrug of the shoulders and the remark, 'What can one say? These are very difficult matters'" (quoted by Rhine, 1947, p. 158). Noëlle Janet, granddaughter of Pierre Janet, said he told his daughter (Noëlle's mother) late in his life that he remained puzzled about the phenomena produced by Léonie, unable to position himself permanently on their status (personal communication, January 11, 2013). Psychologist Hans Bender (1907–1991) mentioned the same ambiguous relationship to parapsychology in response to a question he asked Janet, when he was his student in the 1930s (personal communication by Eberhard Bauer, August 11, 2013; cf. Bauer, 2006).

Janet's strategy could be explained by his interest in furthering his career more than by a genuine lack of interest in these issues, as they continued to occupy him until the end of his life. He remained a corresponding member of the SPR from 1887 until his death 60 years later. One can wonder if Charcot would have opened to him the doors of a new laboratory had he remained an experimental parapsychologist providing ostensible evidence of anomalous events. Indeed, Charcot gave him this warning, at the beginning of his medical studies: *Nihil admirari* [Marvel at nothing]. Janet would adopt this motto in 1912 as an advice to "beware of strange things and check with far more severity a thing that takes the appearance of the wonderful" (Janet, 1912, quoted by Plas, 2000, p. 144). The influence of Charcot was probably decisive, as suspected by historian Régine Plas (2000, p. 144): "This warning, associated with the obstinate silence that Janet would keep his entire life on the sensational experiments of his youth, suggests that he had to disavow crediting his participants with extraordinary abilities." Pascal Le Maléfan (1999, p. 69) suggests a form of self-censorship in Janet, because he evoked throughout his dissertation the possibility of studying nonordinary psychic abilities, but did not return to that issue. Thus, Janet's dissertation was both innovative and reductionist, especially because "it was produced in response to his desire to investigate the supernormal abilities of mediumship" (Le Maléfan, 1999, p. 80).

Janet saw his vocation as a compromise and potential reconciliation between science and religion. While young, he had a strong attraction for the natural sciences and deep religious feelings (Janet, 1946a; Minkowski, 1939). When he was

17, he missed 1 year of school because of a crisis involving depression and religious concerns (Ellenberger, 1970/1994, p. 426). Throughout his life, he preferred reason, the "higher" functions of synthesis,[5] expanding the field of consciousness, at the expense of the "lower" activities of the psyche that he finally identified with pathology. Le Maléfan (1999, p. 71) wondered whether this division was his own solution to avoid collapsing into his depressive and mystical tendencies.

In the absence of personal documents, we cannot decide between the hypothesis of academic censorship or self-censorship. According to Bertrand Méheust (1999, 2006), the two phenomena overlap constantly; social and institutional pressures to make psychical researchers illegitimate are quickly integrated and endorsed in advance by the researchers themselves. Méheust (1999, p. 116) cited the criticism of Joseph Maxwell (1858–1938) about Janet's selection bias, as the latter was caught in

> the network of institutional psychiatry that drains toward it neuropaths, i.e. "subjects" that it helps to cultivate and refine; he is also struggling with career constraints that lead him to silence the strong interest for metapsychics from his youth, and most likely, he eventually internalized the skepticism he claimed.

Similarly, Janet proceeded to a selective appropriation of the material presented by his contemporaries, such as the psychical researcher Frederic Myers (Alvarado, 2007, p. 170).

Psychopathological Reductionism

After his first dissertation, Janet positioned himself as a critical researcher in the field of parapsychology. Thus, in 1889, at the First International Congress of Physiological Psychology, Janet criticized the data collection method used in the large SPR study *Phantasms of the Living* (Gurney, Myers, & Podmore, 1886/1891). This project was based on a survey of the population of the United Kingdom about their "paranormal" experiences. But according to Janet, mentally healthy people could not have such hallucinations (Le Maléfan, 1999, p. 69). However, the selection bias that Janet attempted to reintroduce could only lead to a biased perspective.[6] Janet's attitude regarding exceptions was systematically psychopathological: "Individuals who have . . . to an exceptional degree a phenomenon or a personality trait that will not be very apparent in a normal man,

[5] Janet (1894) distinguished between the higher level of consciousness with the psychological function of integration of psychic elements (synthesis) and the lower level of psychological automatism (disaggregation of dissociation, psychological weakness).

[6] Indeed, this psychopathological reductionism has been largely disproved since (Evrard, 2011). These experiences—whether they are called "hallucinatory," "paranormal," "anomalous," or "exceptional" — have a high prevalence in the general population and no necessary association with psychopathology (Bentall, 2014).

are necessarily sick" (Janet, 1889, p. 27). In doing so, he created a confusion between the abnormal and the anomalous, a point that would eventually precipitate divisions (cf. Cardeña, Lynn, & Krippner, 2014). Indeed, for researchers like Myers, something out of the ordinary is not necessarily a sign of pathology. For example, a prodigious mental calculator shows an outstanding example of a mundane mental arithmetic skill, but that does not make him/her psychologically disordered.

For a certain time, Janet oscillated between three different positions about hypnosis and mediumship: In the first one, they did not involve morbid processes by themselves, although they involved an abnormal state; in the second, they subsumed a weakness ("psychological misery") that may lead to psychological disintegration; and a third in which any exaggerated automatism was itself pathological. This last position is the one he defended in his medical thesis, in which he reduced all mediumship to hysteria (Janet, 1894), probably under the influence of Charcot. According to Le Maléfan (1999, p. 72), "it is understandable in the light of this analysis that Janet could not, despite a certain attraction, become the founder of a kind of parapsychological research in France at that time." However, many of his contemporaries were slow to notice this. According to historian Jacqueline Carroy (1991, p. 212), Janet always declined to turn psychology into parapsychology: "The suggestion and the 'rapport' need, for him, to be explained in psychological terms and nothing but psychological. We must suspend judgment about what we do not explain." This limitation, posed at the outset, is a kind of heuristic reductionism that was later taken over by "anomalistic psychology" (French & Stone, 2013).

Thus, Janet recognized nothing but the historical role of animal magnetism and spiritism in psychology (Janet, 1892, 1919). To Janet, these "half-scientific studies and half-religious beliefs . . ." (Janet, 1892, p. 413) are nothing but "things which are not serious" (Janet, 1892, p. 442). Magnetizers and spiritists "have no longer any reason to be. . . [and] seem absolutely incapable of any serious study" (Janet, 1892, pp. 439, 434). In his overview of the spiritist literature, Janet (1892, p. 426) saw only material for medical students wanting to make retrospective diagnoses of all kind of neuropaths and insane people. This condescending language allowed him to redraw the boundaries of the marvelous, relegating to an extrascientific territory disturbing phenomena whose status was then uncertain. He claimed to regret that spiritist journals ceased to be the "curious collections of psychopathological psychology" they once were, thanks to previous meticulous "physical and moral descriptions of mediums," and now devoted their pages to discussion of new experimental studies of the so-called "physical phenomena of mediumship" or the exposition of the movement's internal quarrels (Janet, 1892,

p. 426).[7] According to Janet, spiritists' change in empirical claims was forced by the explanations given by psychologists to all mental mediumship phenomena, "which created a great void in their thoughts" (Janet, 1892, pp. 441– 442). Reciprocally, these ostensible physical phenomena overflowed the field of psychology, because natural science disciplines were required to examine them (Brower, 2010).

Appreciated in this role as "retrospective physician," in the manner of his master Charcot, Janet would be admitted by the Société Medico-Psychologique [Medicopsychological Society]. This society, which itself was involved in psychical research's controversies between 1857 and 1860 (Le Maléfan, 2014), had at first refused his candidacy, for complex reasons that went beyond his involvement in psychical research (Carbonel, 2007). When his application was finally accepted, Janet was offered an entrance examination in which he had to analyze the latest book by Joseph-Pierre Durand de Gros (1826–1900), entitled Le Merveilleux Scientifique [The Scientific Marvelous] (Durand de Gros, 1894). This physician had been a supporter of hypnotism in France from the beginning, before being sentenced by Napoléon III for his republican convictions. His theory of polypsychism[8] had inspired several theories of human personality, including Janet's, but Janet attacked Durand de Gros's old-fashioned promagnetic positions. In the debate that followed, Durand de Gros marked his disapproval of the way Janet discarded all phenomena demonstrated by magnetizers in the prehistory of psychology (Durand de Gros, 1896; Janet, 1895). He also stated that Janet was

> really poorly placed to have this negative and disdainful attitude about this question [of the reality of magnetic and telepathic phenomena]. Indeed, he had himself provided one of the most explicit, accurate and decisive testimony in support of mesmeric theory. (Durand de Gros, 1896, p. 104)

A Plural Léonie

The character of Léonie is symptomatic of the appraisal of this legacy: The multiplicity of her personalities was true both at the clinical and the epistemological levels. Janet first described her as an "honest country woman" (Janet, 1886a, p. 190). It was only in 1888 that he pretended to learn that "his subject" was not sane and virginal, but a "hysterical" patient shaped by a succession of magnetizers who had even contributed to solve local mysteries thanks to her lucidity (for a more thorough historic account of Léonie, see Gauld,

[7] Sharp (2006, p. 172) thinks that Janet's assertion is exaggerated because this "physical" turn of spiritists remained largely restricted to the leaders of the movement.

[8] According to this theory, the human organism consists of anatomical segments, each of which had a psychic ego of its own, and all of them are under a general ego, the Ego-in-Chief, which is our usual consciousness. These sub-egos perform the complex psychic operations of our unconscious life (Ellenberger, 1994).

1996–1997). “The hypnotic phenomena Léonie showed me in 1884 were a remnant of the ‘somnambulistic exercises’ made under the direction of Perrier in 1860,” complained Janet (1919, p. 174). Méheust (2006) was surprised that Janet had learnt belatedly of Léonie’s past. In his first communication (Janet, 1885), Léonie was not described as a “hysteric,” and, before Gibert, she had refused all physicians who wanted to test the somnambulism she had expressed since childhood. In his second communication, dated May 25, 1886, Janet mentioned that Léonie had been seeing a local practitioner who used to magnetize her (Janet, 1886c, p. 213), but he was not worried about this fact despite the contradiction with his previous remark. In his article in the Revue Scientifique, written at the same time as this second communication, in which he developed a model of hypnotism’s phases based on the “evidence” obtained with Léonie, he also mentioned her hypnotic phenomena induced by other magnetizers (Janet, 1886e, p. 578). Here, again, he was not concerned about the repercussions of the previous magnetizations on the material he used.

In 1887, Janet quickly mentioned Léonie without adding anything to her description. And it is only in the first footnote of the article “Unconscious Acts and Memory During Somnambulism” (P. Janet, 1888, p. 241) that the magnetic past of Léonie is recalled and used to focus on the nature of her disorder. In the meantime, at the end of 1886, Myers had published an article about “telepathic hypnotism” in which he described the magnetic past of Léonie, including a quote by Féron (Myers, 1886, p. 126), claiming to rely on notes transmitted by Janet and on conversations with Gibert. We can therefore question the opportunism of Janet, who feigned ignorance about the career of his somnambulist to give more objectivity to his model of hypnosis, before using this past to support the assimilation of Léonie and her peers to the figure of the “hysterical” patient. From 1889 onward, Janet “describes the past of Léonie, but he only speaks of the phases of her hypnotism (even if they are schematic) and not of the ‘marvels’ she showed him” (Nicolas, 2005, p. 10). This impure somnambulist became, under his pen, a fully formed “hysterical” (Méheust, 2006). She did not cease, however, to be employed for her lucidity, especially in the Dreyfus Affair (Carroy, 2002; Carroy & Plas, 1995). As the historian Alan Gauld (1996–1997) emphasized, Léonie is of great importance for psychical research and models of mind, and her case stands at the crossroads of magnetism, hypnotism, parapsychology, multiple personalities, and hysteria.

More generally, about to become a recognized clinician, Janet published several clinical cases of patients with symptoms crossing the register of the paranormal, commenting with particular cynicism on their “false beliefs,” which his psychotherapy had cured. For example, Alcide Daillez, renamed “Achille,” acted as if he had been possessed by a demon before Janet removed, through a suggested

hallucinatory pardon by his wife under hypnosis, the guilt of adultery that was burdening him (Janet, 1898, pp. 375– 406). However, the historian Hervé Guillemain (2011) found that Achille was single, a fact that would add Janet to the list of practitioners lying about their case studies.

The case of the "mystical" Pauline Lair Lamote, alias Madeleine Lebouc (Janet, 1901b), is also well known (cf. Clément & Kakar, 1993; Maître, 1993), because Janet might have made matters worse by systematically unmooring her discursive constructs from their religious anchoring, which were part of a mystical tradition (Third Franciscan Order; cf. Maître, 1993). Although Janet tolerated ordinary Catholicism, he criticized mystical states, which he situated in the domain of pathology (Gumpper, 2013).

Less known is the case— discussed at the start of the IGP (see section "The Direction of the Institut Général Psychologique")— of Meb, 26 years old, who was hospitalized at the Salpêtrière because of her hallucinations with mystical and erotic themes, and her production of false "apports" of objects during somnambulistic crises. Janet diagnosed Meb as hysterical (Janet, 1901c). Carroy (1993, p. 206) even discerns a true "style tic" in the way Janet used, in almost every clinical vignette, "qualifiers like 'strange,' 'weird,' or 'odd.'" Plas (2000, p. 144) summarizes the reductionist stance of Janet and many of his colleagues very well:

> Now psychologists' main task is to account for the nature and genesis of mediumistic productions. Some, like Janet, will invariably equate them with mental illness and, following observations of discarnates' words interpreted as nonsense and childhood fantasy, assimilate them under somnambulists' automatisms, whether hysterical or not, and consider them to be the result of mental disintegration.

This reductionist shift helped Janet become (re)integrated into the medical and scientific elite of his time. He became the substitute for Ribot at the Collège de France in December 1895, and then "chargé de cours" (Lecturer; October 1898), and finally "maître de conferences" (Associate Professor, 1899) at the Sorbonne. In doing so, he became one of the most influential French psychologists of his generation.

The New Orthodoxy

In the process of situating himself and legitimizing the nascent psychology in search of institutional recognition, Janet used the opposition of two trends in psychology, one orthodox and the other heterodox (Evrard, 2016). But although

characterizing magnetizers and spiritists as irresponsible precursors, Janet endorsed an asymmetrical discourse that placed barriers to any dialogue (Méheust, 2006). Three decades later, the theoretical founder of surrealism, André Breton (1896–1966), called the Janetian psychological model "sterile" and attempted to break down the reductionist barriers between psychological automatism and the marvelous (Bacopoulos-Viau, 2012).

To explain how he himself was located on the side of orthodoxy, Janet was obliged to retrospectively invent a "psychological school of hypnotism" (Janet, 1919, p. 182), to which he linked his first works. This school was a kind of third school, overshadowed by the development and rivalry of the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools (Ellenberger, 1970/ 1994). Janet originated this third school in Richet's work on "induced somnambulism," which managed to overcome the prejudice of the simulation explanation of hypnotic phenomena (Janet, 1919, p. 149). But the simulation hypothesis came back strongly after the death of Charcot in 1893, under Joseph Babinski's label of "pithiatism." The international composition of this third "school of Charles Richet" is very questionable, as its members never unified during their lifetime (Carbonel, 2008), and they were supposed to include Myers, Gurney, Stanley Hall, Moebius, Ochorowicz, Forel, Beaunis, Binet,[9] and Féré, in addition to Janet and Richet. But the positionings of the members of this hypothetical school are too different to warrant a real ideological community (Alvarado, 2009). We guess, in this flagrant rewriting of history, that this was Janet's attempt to separate himself from the field of psychical research in which he had directly participated. The notion of a "third school" was not recognized by anyone else. Nevertheless, Janet would be strongly followed in his reconstruction of a psychology that had definitely abandoned the magnetic era.

Janet, the Gatekeeper (1900–1947)

After his phase of repentance, Janet became more famous for his work in psychopathology than in parapsychology. He represented the new model of the psychologist-philosopher-physician that would persist until the Second World War (Carroy et al., 2006). The doors of the most prestigious institutions were opened to him and, even if he did not create his own school, his influence extended from philosophy textbooks to advanced thinkers such as Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and William James. It was in this role that Janet would be able to legitimize his knowledge of some heterodox areas by combining it with his commitment to his zeitgeist. Decades later, his notions of dissociation would become foundational in

[9] [9] It would be interesting to compare the careers of Alfred Binet (1857–1919) and Janet. Navigating in the same circles, both had studied animal magnetism, alterations of personality, and parapsychology before competing for the most prestigious academic positions, including the one at the Collège de France, where Janet finally outstripped Binet (Alvarado, 2010; Nicolas & Ferrand, 2000).

new theories of hypnosis (Hilgard, 1977) and dissociation (Putnam, 1989).

The Direction of the IGP

The most significant episode of this third period is the creation of the IGP (for a review, see Brower, 2010, pp. 47–74). In 1899, Janet and Richet were approached by Serge Youriévitch, sculptor and attaché to the Russian embassy, and Oswald Murray, from the National Liberal Club of London, to consult on how to found a new institute devoted to psychical research. It was "one of the most elaborate attempts to legitimize mediumistic phenomena within the field of psychology" (Lachapelle, 2011, p. 75). Janet's involvement was highly expected in order to promote the seriousness of this society. His first address (Janet, 1901a) seemed to mark his return to psychical research, which had been expected by some (De Vesme, 1901). At first, Janet played the game and participated in the foundation of the Institut Psychique International [International Psychic Institute], quickly renamed IGP. It was publicly presented by Ribot in 1900 at the Fourth International Congress of Psychology, co-organized by Ribot and Janet. Even if the IGP gathered an impressive group of French and foreign personalities, Janet did not find his place there because psychologists were a minority (Plas, 2012, p. 99). At the end of 1901, he subtly diverted part of IGP's resources to create, first within it, a Société de Psychologie,[10] which became independent in 1904 and later became the Société Française de Psychologie [French Society of Psychology].

Janet claimed not to recognize his approach in IGP's, because the latter emphasized the popular expectations about empirical and speculative studies of paranormal topics, far beyond his pathological psychology orientation. The division between the psychical and the psychological became sharper by his process of critically separating both. Besides, Janet had just been appointed professor at the Collège de France in February 1902, recommended by Bergson and Ribot, and was now fully launched in academic psychology. Thus, he left the IGP and founded, with Georges Dumas (1866–1946), in 1904, the Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique [Journal of Normal and Pathologique Psychology], after having used the Bulletin of the IGP for several years to publish the works of his society.

According to the proponents of psychical research, this IGP episode was experienced as the ultimate betrayal and a huge waste of opportunities (De Vesme, 1901; Sage, 1904). Its impact would be very important because, as early as 1905, voices were raised to support the foundation of another institute dealing properly with psychical research (Geley, 1905). Richet (1905) gave the name "metapsychics" to this special science, concluding that it could not then be

[10] Presided by Janet, this first Society of Psychology included Alfred Binet (Vice-President), Théodule Ribot (Honorary President), and Georges Dumas (General Secretary). Richet was not among its members, showing some distance between him and Janet. This was the second society of psychology in the world after the one based in the United States.

integrated with the emerging psychology. From 1904 to 1907, the study of the Neapolitan medium Eusapia Palladino maintained the illusion of an official collaboration of metapsychics and psychology, before the publication by Jules Courtier (1908) of some hesitant conclusions that puzzled everyone. He recognized that some anomalous physical phenomena had been observed in controlled conditions— producing a subjective conviction— but that some cheating attempts decreased the credibility of the results, negating the clear answer that everyone expected. When, in 1917, the spiritist patron Jean Meyer declared his intention to fund a metapsychical institute, he did not heed Richet's advice to establish an academic chair for a specialized psychologist (Archives IMI, Box 3, Folder 8; Richet, 1917). The episode with the IGP had left traces, and thus the Institut Métapsychique International [International Metapsychical Institute] was born in 1919 as a private foundation, outside the academic world and beset by difficulties related to its spiritist patronage (Lachapelle, 2005).

Building on his experience at the IGP, Janet had the opportunity to play his new role vis-a`-vis psychical research. Shortly after his trip to the United States in 1904, where he gave lessons on psychotherapy at the Lowell Institute in Boston, he sent a 20-page letter to James Hyslop (1854–1920), professor of philosophy at Columbia University, who asked his advice on the creation of the American Institute for Scientific Research in New York, with psychical research and abnormal psychology sections. Janet authorized the publication of this programmatic letter in the Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research (Janet, 1907). He said there that psychology was the most appropriate discipline to study these interesting phenomena, but stated that, in his opinion, only the clinical issues, such as the empirical evaluation of therapeutic methods, were important. As for the ontological reality of the paranormal phenomena, he claimed a middle position between denial and blind and enthusiastic faith, and supported the legitimacy of these investigations. However, at the end, he advised Hyslop against the foundation of a true parapsychological research institute, telling him to rather focus on the pathological psychology of so-called occult phenomena claims. During the 1920s, Janet nevertheless agreed to take part in the Scientific Council of the American Psychical Institute at the request of Hereward Carrington (1988, p. 60), a former assistant of Hyslop.

Once Janet officially distanced himself from the IGP and psychical research, after having obtained the most prestigious academic positions, he was fully involved in his new role of gatekeeper. This led him to stand against one of his closest colleagues: Charles Richet.

The Estrangement Between Janet and Richet

Janet's very critical stance toward Richet was played out in two stages. First, in

1906, Janet claimed that Richet has been fooled on the sole basis of the photographs of an alleged "ectoplasm" observed in Algiers (Janet, in Dramas, 1906; Le Maléfan, 2004). Richet's scientific influence had begun to decline at that time and his capacity of discernment was being questioned (Le Maléfan, 1999, pp. 171–172).

Janet's next opportunity to analyze Richet's work came with the latter's publication of his *Traité de Métapsychique* [Treatise on Metapsychics] (Richet, 1922). Janet's role was to comment on its good and bad points in 25 pages. His criticism was developed in three steps. Initially, largely quoting Richet, Janet (1923, pp. 5–11) endorsed his eloquent call to develop metapsychics as an entirely legitimate science. Then Janet reviewed the research (pp. 11–14), interpretations (pp. 14–18), and methodologies (pp. 18–22) popularized by Richet, always abstaining from contradicting him. Then, finally, came Janet's methodological criticisms:

> It's not enough to monitor the subject during the session, above all we need to know him/her before the experiment, both physiologically and psychologically. The study of his or her constitution, various functions, previous life, personality, various troubles; the reasons that led him/her to behave in a certain way would often explain phenomena that seem mysterious and would make monitoring easier. I have committed myself to doing things this way and it was the desire to explain ostensible marvelous phenomena through the analysis of the subject that led me to the psychological study of the neurotic. But it is obvious that this method is very long and deviates us from the immediate verifications of metapsychics. (Janet, 1923, p. 22)

The type of study proposed by Janet was not without interest but was completely divorced from the study of the possible anomalous phenomena themselves, as only the clinical hypotheses are described as worth studying. Because a psychopathological explanation was very convincing in some cases, Janet tried again to apply it systematically in an approach that was both original and reductionistic. Other criticisms were harsher. Janet (1923, pp. 27–28) blamed Richet for his overuse of the appeal to authority as a method of science, in which the weaknesses of the arguments could be compensated by a confidence in the epistemic authority of the "honest men" of science, a position that would fall out of favor shortly thereafter (Brower, 2010; Lachapelle, 2011).

Similarly, Janet (1923, pp. 24–25) reproached Richet for systematically eliminating the possibility of fraud, leaving, at certain times, some freedom to the medium—for example, by respecting the promise not to touch the "ectoplasm" or to turn on the light without warning. The problem with his criticism is that Richet did not endorse a flawed study of mediums always accepting poor control conditions, such

as Janet suggested. Richet proceeded gradually, gaining first his participants' trust, respecting their ecosystem, and bringing them, little by little, to comply with all the necessary controls. And, on this point, Richet stayed always dissatisfied and continued to challenge his observations and develop his methods (Richet, 1899). The historian Brian Inglis (1977) even took Richet as an example of the "retroactive dissonance" that leads witness of paranormal phenomena to call into question their own observations over time (see also Richet, 1889).

Richet was clearly at fault when he juxtaposed in his Treatise observations made in control conditions that were too inconsistent. And Janet took note of this weakness: "Another unfortunate impression seemed to depend on the accumulation of examples of the same fact, repeated until satiety, without one sensing progress in the demonstration" (Janet, 1923, p. 28). When Richet went beyond his methodological description to enter into a tentative demonstration of the reality of metapsychical phenomena, he faced a collection of facts from which, as he acknowledged, no one is convincing enough when taken alone.
In his reading of Richet, Janet (1923, pp. 26–27) declared to be in the category of readers "who already knew most of these facts, who had already studied them with great interest, and who had occasionally gathered evidence for similar phenomena." He continued,

> Unfortunately the descriptions they have read didn't seem totally demonstrative, their own observations appeared incomplete and insufficient and, regardless of their inclination to admit some of these facts, they retained doubts about the true reality of metapsychical phenomena. (Janet, 1923, p. 27)

This position identified Janet as the gatekeeper, one who is psychologically prepared to believe but is not able to because of a lack of scientific evidence. Except that this special status collapsed immediately when Janet (1923, pp. 30–32) began to reject any work on ectoplasm on the pretext that in ectoplasmic photographs or moulds there are elements that seem artificial. On the sole basis of complex photographs, without cross-checking them with the reports describing the experimental conditions, his claim that ectoplasm was fraudulent is unmistakable: "We scream against the fraud: These observations should be suppressed and the medium killed" (Janet, 1923, p. 30). He did not seem free of prejudice against some metapsychical phenomena. Janet's curious sympathy hardly concealed his discomfort with such claims.

In his conclusion, Janet wanted to be less indulgent than Richet toward the participants and the observations. He reproached Richet for sometimes abandoning his critical thinking to take the attitude of a believer. This lengthy review was therefore an exemplary illustration of Janet's boundary work. What he

offered was effectively to embody the psychology of his time and put Richet at the margin by describing his "unalterable faith":

> There are more serious things that accentuate, if I may say so, the separation between the author and the reader: sometimes the attitude of Richet surprises us because it is different from the one we would have had in the same circumstances; he seems not to think like us or experience the same feelings. (Janet, 1923, p. 30)

From this, we can deduce that Janet and Richet, but also psychology and metapsychics, no longer understood each other (Estingoy, 2008, 2009): "Without saying it strongly, Janet condemned metapsychics, the study of facts that have only 'the appearance of the wonderful' was no longer of any use" (Marmin, 2001, p. 163).

However, his review also lends itself to another reading: Janet covertly testified there of his own experience, seeking to excuse the deviation taken at the beginning of his journey as an academic psychologist:

> One thing we generally ignore is that such research is extremely difficult and extremely painful. It consumes a great deal of time, requires courage against mockery, a constant vigilance, an attitude of suspicion and criticism vis-a`-vis those who do not always understand its necessity. To make such efforts, for a very long time, one may be supported by an intense faith and it is not surprising that, from time to time, that faith takes us too far. These excesses are easy to correct and do not remove their value to the courageous efforts that accompanied them. Such works will gradually lead to discover a whole world of new physiological and psychological phenomena. (Janet, 1923, p. 32)

According to this alternative reading, pursuing our idea of repentance, Janet recognized the faith that guided his initial research and that he was finally able to channel. But when reducing all the metapsychical issues to an opposition between believers and nonbelievers, his remarks also erected a barrier between psychologists and metapsychists. Other international examples show that this type of discourse has often been used under the rubric of professionalizing psychology to facilitate its admission into the scientific community (Irwin, 2009; Lamont, 2013; Wolffram, 2006).

Richet (1923) replied in the next issue of the *Revue Philosophique*, stating that many of Janet's observations were not justified. He pointed that Janet had selected the weakest aspects of paranormal perception cases, excising precise details, to suggest Richet's "boundless stupidity" (Richet, 1923, pp. 464–465). He also pointed out that Janet reproached him for expressing his doubts about some observations while accusing him of expressing certainty. Then, he explained that

he had given numerous, sometimes imperfect, examples in order not to base his evidence on a few cases, because doing so could be easily explained as statistically predictable coincidences. Finally, he denied having used any argument from authority because the great scholars he summoned were authentic experimenters, not stooges spouting superficial opinions (Richet, 1923, pp. 467–468).

According to Richet (1923, p. 467), Janet did not play fair, and because the latter did not criticize the good observations but only the most fragile ones, Richet could interpret this as a rhetorical "straw man" argument that revealed a more general position favorable to the reality of these phenomena. Janet was especially severe with "objective" metapsychics (the physical phenomena of mediumship), whereas Richet himself explained that he did not accept it with the same degree of certainty as paranormal perceptions (or "subjective" metapsychics), so he considered himself far from holding the religious faith Janet unfairly attributed to him. He then attempted to eliminate the gap inserted by Janet:

> The state of mind in which you are is not at all different from mine, whatever you may say. I never recognized that there was no possible mistake. On the contrary, both in my readings and in my experiments I only had one concern, a very bitter one: not to be fooled! I am constantly looking for any error! I persist in looking for a defect in the precautions taken. Instead of an intense faith, as you said disastrously, I'm still besieged by anguishing doubts. (Richet, 1923, p. 470)

Richet's *Treatise* was not the metapsychic textbook some expected, although its reputation was important. It was quickly overtaken by the *Introduction à la Métapsychique Humaine* [Introduction to Human Metapsychics] (Sudre, 1926), written by the science journalist René Sudre (1880–1968), which better integrated Janet's work (Evrard, 2009; Méheust, 2001). The fact remains that Janet's criticisms were the most sophisticated Richet had had to reply to, the distance between the two ultimately being not so great.

At the end of this episode, one cannot help thinking that Janet held a very useful place in the French academic system, as he was almost the only person with the stature to oppose the Nobel Prize Laureate Charles Richet in an area in which few had expertise. The Professor at the Collège de France therefore dutifully helped psychology and science as a whole by pushing back metapsychists' claims from the conservative border of the accepted.[11]

[11] We also note the presence of Janet in the editorial board of the journal *Psyché: Revue des Sciences de l'Homme et de Psychanalyse* [Psyché : Journal of human sciences and psychoanalysis], directed from 1946 to 1959 by Maryse Choisy (1903–1979), a journalist, writer, and psychoanalyst. Choisy and her journal offered an eclectic psychology in which metapsychics had a place (Ohayon, 1999). Janet published his last article there (Janet, 1946b).

The Legacy of Hypnosis at a Distance

It is difficult to imagine how much the hypnosis at a distance protocol used by Janet fascinated his contemporaries, as it is now almost totally forgotten. The German psychiatrist Albert von Schrenk-Notzing (1862–1929), in his preface to a German translation of Richet's essay about his experiments with Léonie and other individuals (Schrenck-Notzing, 1891), reviewed the failures of many hypnotists in similar attempts (Bernheim, Gilles de la Tourette, Forel, Kraft-Ebing, Moll, etc.), but also the success in remote sleep induction by Dusart (100 experiments with distances between 200 m and 10 km), Dufay (1889; distances up to 112 km), Claude Perronet (1886; using multiple agents forming a "psychic chain"), and Beaunis (one hit on 10 trials, with Miss Camille S.; cf. Turbiaux, 2007). The spiritist engineer Gabriel Delanne (1902, pp. 259–280) identified other studies of remotely induced sleep, as did Myers (1903, pp. 524–533). Richet (1922, p. 127), without providing his reasons in detail, asserted that the experiments of "remote fluidic action" were not convincing.

The Russian physiologist Leonid L. Vassiliev (1891–1996), an admirer of the early work of Janet, managed to replicate and refine it starting in the 1920s. He renamed the phenomenon "tele-hypnosis" and gave it a biological interpretation, anticipating the wave of "psychotronics" in the Eastern countries (Vassiliev, 1963). Closer to our time, research similar to that of Janet is still conducted under the terms remote influence and direct mental interaction on living systems (DMILS), defined as influence on living systems (e.g., the autonomic nervous system of another human), unmediated by sensory information or known energy communication. Although Janet measured behavioral responses (e.g., whether Léonie slept or not), modern experiments also include measures of physiological responses generally unconscious and involuntary. This line of research is currently an experimental paradigm in parapsychology supported by comprehensive meta-analyses (Schmidt, 2012, 2015; Schmidt, Schneider, Utts, & Walach, 2004). It is astonishing to think that the successes achieved by Janet and others at their time, in control conditions so inadequate that they led to the rejection of their entire work, perhaps addressed genuine phenomena that contemporary psychologists and parapsychologists are rediscovering.

How can we understand that both Janet and Richet abandoned their experiments on hypnosis from a distance after finding what they judged to be convincing evidences of its reality? Psychoanalyst and parapsychologist Jules Eisenbud asked this question again after the Second World War, and asked one of his patients to be his "Léonie." He remotely and mentally suggested him to perform some

unusual tasks. Eisenbud (1982) wrote,

> My results, as far as they went in a brief and informal fling, were beyond anything I had anticipated I succeeded in getting a well-trained hypnotic subject, a truck driver, to phone me at odd hours (well after midnight) even when such acts were at considerable variance with his normal behavior Instead of following up with more systematic studies, however, I made a few skimpy notes on what had taken place and, like Janet and Richet, promptly found other interests to occupy me, as if what I had been doing were no more significant than getting a few subjects in hypnosis to perform one or another of usual stock of motor or sensory feats characteristic of that state. (p. 148)

The psychoanalyst second-guessed himself and, as an echo, his predecessors: Was it resistance? Laziness? After having become convinced themselves, should Eisenbud and Janet have tried to convince their peers?

Conclusion

The historical record shows that Janet never ceased to be interested in psychical research and partly built his work on what he found there, from the "psychical momentum" of his thought, which extended approximately from 1885 to 1889. It is clear that Janet continued to interact with the field after stopping his experiments on remote suggestion, even if he opted for a more detached position. His last courses at the Collège de France on "the conduct of belief" and "the oscillations of the mind" were still close to his first studies with mediums and somnambulists.

In sum, we present an alternative view of Janet's epistemological journey that attempts to avoid a retrospective bias against parapsychology, judging it as a scientific failure because of its current controversial scientific status (Sommer, 2014). For instance, we mention that the rejection of Janet's findings was not made on methodological grounds, as we only found a few vague negative remarks by Richet (1922) and Janet himself (Quercy & Quercy, 1948). The idea that the success of his remote hypnosis experiments is easily explained by fraud or methodological biases may be an illusion codeveloped by Janet because he disregarded his findings without properly describing the methodological flaws that we have identified. Because the experimental test of remote hypnosis is similar to the current replicated experimental paradigms of mental influence at a distance (Schmidt, 2015), we might not have heard the final word about the phenomena he observed at Le Havre.

Janet perceived, knowingly or unknowingly, that he had crossed a line, the boundary that separated orthodoxy from heterodoxy (Evrard, 2016). The number of his enthusiastic friends increased as fast as the number of his disdainful

enemies. Was this a reaction inherent to that time? The many similar examples in other countries and at other times suggest that no one does parapsychological research with impunity (Cardeña, 2015; Wolffram, 2006). The work of Walter Franklin Prince (1930) on the "enchanted boundary"—and more recent work on liminality, the trickster, and the paranormal (Hansen, 2001)—support this pattern: to conduct supportive parapsychological experiments leads to marginalization. The American parapsychologist Joseph B. Rhine even used Janet's withdrawal as an illustration of the pressure experienced in the field:

> That a pioneer like Janet can be stopped while on a trail offering such promise for psychological science constitutes something of a historical exhibit, a demonstration of the social forces under which the explorer in parapsychology has had to work. (Rhine, 1947, p. 156)

But Janet is not a good model of a martyr.

The interest of Janet's case lies in its transitions: A researcher who first crossed the enchanted boundary was then able to reposition himself on the side of orthodoxy by promoting an exclusively psychopathological approach and "forgetting" his so-called "mistakes of youth." This repositioning based on reductionism and repentance led him to compromises that many considered a treason to his earlier views, but they illustrate the mobility of the enchanted boundary. It can be redrawn to conquer new territories. Janet achieved this redrawing with his work on psychological automatism, dissociation, and subconscious process, emptying animal magnetism and spiritism of part of their subversive substance. He did not explore the entire territory that occupied Richet, Myers, James, and others, but he introduced some innovative boundaries between orthodox and heterodox psychology while still carrying an avant-garde discourse that helped legitimize the scientific exploration of some aspects of anomalous psychology or "the marvelous." He is recognized as a pioneer in the fields of hypnosis, dissociation, and dynamic psychiatry, and his pathological psychology of so-called occult phenomena claims is still relevant for the clinical approach of anomalous psychology (Cardeña et al., 2014; Le Maléfan, 1999). As these fields can be now considered legitimate in academic psychology, it seems worthwhile to better understand Janet's contributions to this displacement of boundaries, without neglecting the compromises he made to accommodate his personal and professional situations.

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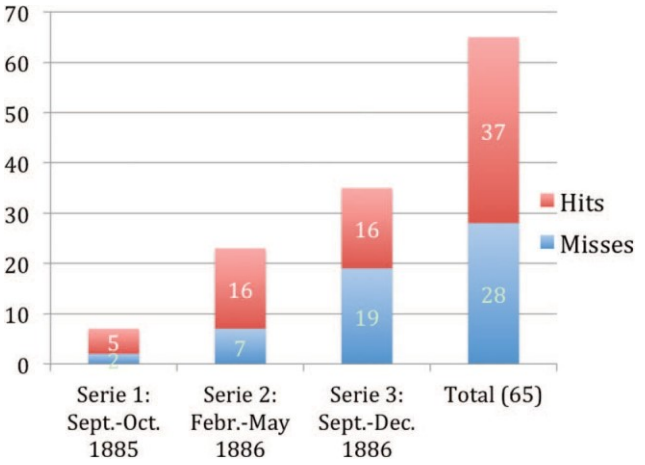

Figure 1. Results of Janet's three experimental studies of hypnosis at distance.