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## NINETEENTH-CENTURY SUGGESTION AND MAGNETISM: HYPNOSIS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY (1889)

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### ABSTRACT

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Many important conceptual issues related to hypnosis arose during the nineteenth century. Some examples were included in the discussions about hypnosis at the 1889 International Congress of Physiological Psychology. This was the first of a series of international congresses that assisted in the development and professionalization of early psychology. Discussions about hypnosis in the congress included its role in psychological research, as well as terminology, the importance of suggestion, hypnotic sensibility, methodological problems in the study of hypnosis, comparison with sleep, induction techniques, animal hypnosis, mental suggestion, and the existence of magnetic action. Hypnosis papers and discussions from the congress provide us with a reminder of prevalent thought about the subject in 1889, as well as the consensus and controversies of the times.

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*Key words:* history of hypnosis, history of suggestion, International Congress of Physiological Psychology, animal magnetism, French hypnosis, Charles Richet.

### INTRODUCTION

In August of 1889, a congress of psychology met in Paris. It brought together many of the main psychologists of the world (Congrès International de Psychologie Physiologique, 1890; Nicolas & Meunier, 2002). One of the topics discussed at the congress, and the purview of one of its committees, was hypnosis. Men such as Joseph F. F. Babinski (1857–1932), Hippolyte Bernheim (1840–1919), Joseph R. L. Delboeuf (1831–1896), August Forel (1848–1931), Pierre Janet (1859–1947), Jules Liégeois (1833–1908), Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901), Julian Ochorowicz (1850–1917), Charles Richet (1850–1935), and Albert von Schrenck-Notzing (1862–1929) presented papers or participated as discussants. In this paper I will summarize the main hypnosis discussions that took place at the congress.

### NINETEENTH-CENTURY HYPNOSIS AND MAGNETISM

Histories of hypnosis have documented the important developments on the subject that took place during the nineteenth century (e.g. Crabtree, 1993; Gauld, 1992; Nicolas, 2004; Winter, 2000). Such developments in the research and theory of hypnosis were part of the rise of a new empirical psychology which, to a great extent, was attempting to separate itself from philosophy (e.g. Nicolas, 2002; O'Donnell, 1985). Hypnosis provided a tool for

the collection of information and theoretical development using special individuals who submitted themselves to all kinds of experiments (Carroy, 1991). In fact, one author wrote: 'Hypnotism constitutes . . . a genuine method of experimental psychology; it will be for the philosopher what vivisection is for the physiologist' (Beaunis, 1885, p. 1; this, and other translations, are mine).

Some influential examples of these developments included the pioneering work of two men who brought their scientific reputation to the support of the subject, physiologist Charles Richet (1875, 1880, 1883) and the famous neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot (1825–1893; whose writings on hypnosis were collected in Charcot, 1890). In his initial paper, 'Du Somnambulisme Provoqué', Richet (1875) argued that in somnambulism 'reason is perverted, but their intelligence is visibly overexcited' (p. 358), a state in which the person was open to the 'predominant influence of a foreign will' (p. 360). Charcot's interest was related in part to his involvement in pathology and therapy, as seen in his comparison of cases of paralysis that are produced by mental means to the use of suggestion to put ideas 'in the mind like a parasite' (Charcot, 1887, p. 336). One of his best known publications on the subject was a paper presented at the Académie des Sciences entitled 'Sur les Divers États Nerveux Déterminés par l'Hypnotisation chez les Hystériques' (1882).

Many other works published during the late nineteenth century attest to the interest in the subject (Dessoir, 1888). Examples representing a variety of theories and methodologies include Azam's *Hypnotisme, double conscience et altération de la personnalité* (1887), Bernheim's *De la suggestion et de ses applications à la thérapeutique* (1888), Gilles de la Tourette's *L'hypnotisme et les états analogues au point de vue médico-legal* (1887), Liébeault's *Le sommeil provoqué et les états analogues* (1889), Moll's *Der Hypnotismus* (1889), Myers' 'Human Personality in the Light of Hypnotic Suggestion' (1886), Sidis' *The Psychology of Suggestion* (1898), Tamburini and Seppilli's 'Contribuzioni allo Studio Sperimentale dell'Ipnotismo' (1881–1882), and Tuckey's *Psycho-Therapeutics; or Treatment by Sleep and Suggestion* (1890). In 1886 the *Revue de l'hypnotisme expérimental et thérapeutique* began publication in Paris, edited by Edgar Bérillon (1859–1948). In Berlin, the *Zeitschrift für Hypnotismus* appeared in 1892 under the editorship of J. Grossmann.

The period also saw conflicts between the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools of hypnosis, led by Charcot and Bernheim, respectively. These opposing schools defined most of the French debates and developments regarding hypnosis (Nicolas, 2004). According to a commentator writing in 1887, the work conducted in France and elsewhere laid 'the foundation of a true experimental psychology' (Dessoir, 1887, p. 545).

These explorations included different emphases. Some of them used hypnosis in the study of the subconscious mind. This was the case in the investigations of Pierre Janet (1889) on secondary personalities, and Edmund Gurney's (1847–1888) studies of hypnotic memory and creativity (Gurney, 1887b, 1887c). Others focused on the physiological effects of suggestion (Tamburini & Seppilli, 1881–1882) and on its therapeutic uses (Schrenck-Notzing, 1895).

In addition, during the nineteenth century, hypnosis was associated with studies of phenomena more controversial than those previously mentioned. Among these were feats of mental suggestion in which it was believed that telepathy could be used to convey ideas during the hypnotic state or to induce trance (Ochorowicz, 1887; Richet, 1889). Closely related to these ideas of action at a distance were concepts of animal magnetism defended by some students of the subject (Baréty, 1887; De Rochas, 1887). Such ideas had by no

means disappeared during the late nineteenth century (Alvarado, 2009b), as will be seen in the discussion of the content of the congress.

With the exception of therapeutic concerns, all of these phenomena found their way, if only briefly, into the discussions of hypnosis held in the congress. For this reason, an overview of hypnosis in the congress presents us with a glimpse of the research, ideas, and questions raised about hypnosis in 1889.

### THE 1889 CONGRESS

In addition to the psychology congress, 1889 also heralded the publication of a number of influential works (Janet, 1889; Liébeault, 1889; Liégeois, 1889; Moll, 1889) and another meeting at Paris on hypnosis (Bérillon, 1889). Many of the papers presented in the 1889 congress of hypnotism were about the therapeutic use of hypnosis in psychological or medical conditions (e.g. Gascard, 1889).

The 1889 International Congress of Physiological Psychology was the first of many congresses representing different aspects of psychology (Nuttin, 1992). It was organized by members of the Société de Psychologie Physiologique, which was founded in 1885. The President of the 1889 congress was Charcot, but he was not present so Théodule Ribot (1839–1916) took his place. Richet was the General Secretary, and members of the congress committee included Henry Beaunis (1830–1921), Francis Galton (1822–1911), William James (1842–1910), Enrico Morselli (1852–1929), Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), and Pierre Janet. In addition to hypnotism, which was one of the most widely discussed topics at the congress, the programme of the meeting listed the following subjects: muscular sense, the role of movements in the formation of images, attention and affective states, a statistical study of hallucinations, the appetite of idiots and imbeciles, motor impulses independent of images and ideas in the insane, 'psychic poisons' (drugs affecting mental functions), and heredity (Programme du Congrès, 1890).<sup>1</sup>

To a great extent the congress was the result of the development of empirical psychology during the late nineteenth century, as well as attempts to professionalize the field. Similar causes moved psychology in France (Nicolas, 2002) where the congress met during the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition for which the Eiffel Tower was built. These developments were not only concerned with laboratory work, but also with the systematic recording and study of clinical cases, particularly important in the French tradition (Foschi, 2003).

### DISCUSSIONS OF HYPNOSIS IN THE CONGRESS

#### Richet on Hypnosis

In a paper about the topics of the congress Richet (1890b) referred to hypnosis as a subject that 'empassions all psychologists today' (p. 35). The congress, he said, represented all schools of hypnosis. He wrote about the conflicts between the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools: 'We will have achieved great progress if we could reach a reconciliation between the two rival schools . . . The moment is close when this rivalry will be regarded as no more than a historical fact rightly relegated among the misunderstandings and errors of the past' (p. 36; but see Babinski's [1890] critiques of Bernheim in the congress).

Richet stated in the same paper that the congress would not cover medical aspects, but would focus instead on the 'scientific character' (p. 36) of hypnosis. He wrote: 'Hypnotism is an admirable instrument of psychological vivisection. Thanks to the work of physicians

and physiologists who have studied hypnotism, we are acquainted with the unconscious, we know that this unconscious accomplishes silently marvelous intellectual operations' (pp. 37–38; such views are consistent with those presented in the congress by Dessoir, 1890).

In Richet's view some questions had been solved: 'No one dares to talk anymore of simulation.<sup>2</sup> The influence of suggestion is pretty much universally admitted' (p. 37). But he also reminded his audience that many questions remained unanswered.

### Terminology

One of the topics discussed was that of the terminology of hypnosis. Richet (1890b, p. 36) had already stated in the above mentioned address that it was due to the 'defectiveness of language' that errors continued in science. Brissaud and Richet (1890) presented definitions of many relevant terms, among them amnesia, automatism, catalepsy, ecstasy, hypnotism, unconsciousness, lethargy, animal magnetism, memory, simulation, sleep, and somnambulism. Hypnotism was defined as a 'somnambulism induced through *physical* actions'<sup>3</sup> and it was added that magnetism was 'an induced somnambulism, due to the intervention of an influence or of an *individual will*' (p. 24).

In Brissaud and Richet's view animal magnetism was a vague term used in a variety of ways to refer to the induction of somnambulism. They wrote: 'The word magnetism means . . . action at a distance; it may be applied to all the actions that bring on somnambulism; for example: the passes, called *magnetic*, producing magnetic sleep. The magnetic sleep is the state of induced somnambulism; the hypnotic state is the same state induced by a cause a little different, that is to say by physical actions, instead of an individual influence' (p. 25).

They wrote about suggestion: 'By its etymology, it is the act of suggesting . . . an act or an idea' (p. 27). Suggestion may come from a word, a gesture, or from any other indication. It is autosuggestion when it comes from the subject herself. Mental suggestion was defined as a suggestion in which 'the person who suggests does not provide the subject with any appreciable indication to the senses or to the normal faculties of knowledge' (p. 27).<sup>4</sup>

Brissaud and Richet's definitions were presented to and discussed by members of the congress in a special meeting (Section de l'Hypnotisme, 1890a). On the term 'amnesia', Delboeuf, the Chair of the session, suggested that the following be added to the definition: that 'the amnesia is *momentary or complete*' (p. 39). Forel suggested that it was important to determine in what way amnesia could be 'partial', and some amnesias could have physiological or dynamic causes.

Richet said that hypnotism was an 'induced somnambulism due to physical causes, magnetism is an induced somnambulism due to an individual difference' (p. 41). But, Richet also argued, 'magnetism and hypnotism indicate the same phenomena' (p. 41). To this Liégeois said: 'The two words hypnotism and magnetism have a historical meaning; both words imply a theory' (p. 41).

Bernheim focused on aspects of the meaning of the word 'suggestion'. In his view a person fell under the influence of a suggestion when they accepted an idea and implanted it in themselves through the abolition of resistance. He further stated: 'The word hypnotism is not synonymous with somnambulism or induced sleep' (p. 42). Bernheim said he could produce phenomena—analgesia, hallucinations, catalepsy—without trance: 'Hypnosis is nothing but suggestion; all the suggestions can be obtained without sleep' (p. 42).

In Bernheim's view defining hypnosis as 'induced sleep' excluded many instances of the phenomenon because such a term only referred to one manifestation. He defined hypnotism as a '*particular psychic state susceptible of being induced and that exalts suggestibility*' (p. 42). He believed the term 'induced somnambulism' was ill-defined and 'animal magnetism' was also problematic. Hypnotism, he argued, had separated from magnetism and become 'an independent scientific branch' (p. 43).

The majority of those attending this discussion session replied negatively when the Chair asked if the terms 'hypnotism' and 'magnetism' should be used in the same sense. When the Chair asked for agreement with the statement that hypnotism was part of magnetism in the same way that geometry was part of mathematics, six attendees agreed and fifteen did not.

At the end of the session on terminology, Brissaud and Richet's terms were accepted with the following exceptions. It was resolved that the term 'animal magnetism' should be reserved for the science dealing with '*nervous phenomena generally included by that term and explaining them in ways other than suggestion*' (p. 43). It was also recommended that hypnotism be defined as the science dealing with phenomena explained by suggestion and autosuggestion, as well as by 'analogous reactions' (p. 43).

### Errors in the study of hypnosis

Léon Marillier (1862–1901) presented a paper about observation errors in the study of hypnosis (Marillier, 1890a). The simulation of the phenomena was a problem, and one, he said, that could be 'voluntary or involuntary and half unconscious' (p. 17). Marillier cautioned experimenters about using the same subjects in many experiments,<sup>5</sup> and recommended the changing of experimental conditions on occasion.

Marillier also considered mental suggestion. In his study of this phenomenon he suggested that sources of error came from the observer. Experimenters were cautioned not to give any cues to the subject or 'any sign which the subject could interpret, consciously or unconsciously' (p. 17).

### Hypnotic sensibility

Polish psychologist and philosopher Julian Ochorowicz presented several papers on hypnosis. In one of them he discussed hypnotic sensibility, defined as the 'aptitude to be influenced by various hypnotization procedures' (Ochorowicz, 1890a, p. 18). Such a propensity could be shown by the facility to induce hypnosis, the depth of the state, the suggestibility of the subject, and the subtlety of the phenomena obtained. In his paper Ochorowicz asked if this sensibility depended on age, sex, race, or social position, or if it was pathological or related to nervousness or sleepwalking. Other questions included: Are there some exterior signs of this sensibility? Are persons showing natural somnambulism more susceptible to hypnosis? Can this sensibility be augmented by chemical means? He concluded: 'In summary in the current state of our knowledge, can we say of what *hypnotic sensibility* consists?' (p. 19).

Ochorowicz's topic was discussed by the attendees (*De la Sensibilité Hypnotique*, 1890). Richet argued that non-hysterical subjects could be hypnotized. Bernheim commented that neuropaths were the most difficult to hypnotize. He believed there was an inverse relation between nervousness and suggestibility and that everyone 'is hypnotizable, but some people cannot be put into the necessary psychic conditions to sleep' (p. 59). Ochorowicz agreed that neuropathy and hypnotism were different types of sensibilities, and Forel

argued that suggestibility depended to a great extent 'on the momentary disposition of the subject' (p. 60), a disposition that could change from day to day, or from moment to moment. Other discussants focused on the personal influence of the hypnotizer. This was the case of Bernheim, Delboeuf, Myers, and Richet.

Philosopher Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900), then President of the Society for Psychical Research, stated that he could not hypnotize people and that different hypnotizers may have different influences. To this Richet replied that he had noticed in himself a diminution of his ability to hypnotize, which was stronger when he was younger.

### Hypnotic and normal sleep

In another paper Ochorowicz (1890b) discussed the comparisons between normal and hypnotic sleep. He wondered if the same phenomena of hypnosis could be produced in someone who was sleeping by establishing rapport with the sleeper. In relation to sleep-walking he said he knew of a person who could be in the state for hours, but who was not hypnotizable. Furthermore, Ochorowicz asked if it was 'possible to transform to hypnosis the dream of a person *who is not hypnotizable* in the waking state' (p. 19).

He stated that, unlike normal sleep, hypnosis is an 'accidental, abnormal state . . . which is easily distinguished through the variety of its stages and its symptoms, by the morbidity of its inhibitions and dynamogenies, and finally by its suggestibility, which never acquires such a distinct and marked form during normal sleep' (p. 21).

Ochorowicz pointed out that there were many unanswered questions. These included the similarities and differences in physiological measures between both states, and the possible existence of spontaneous dreams in hypnosis.

### Is suggestion the only explanation?

Ochorowicz (1890c) delivered a third paper in which he asked if all of hypnotism could be accounted for by suggestion. He accepted the existence of suggestion but noted that some hypnotists used physical means of induction. There was much discussion of this paper, with some participants commenting that suggestion did not explain everything (Section de l'Hypnotisme, 1890c). Ochorowicz asked if some of his observations could be explained by suggestion—an example included obtaining unintended healing effects using suggestion. This was the case in his attempts to cure a nervous tic and accidentally controlling insomnia, or trying to get a hemiplegic to move a paralyzed arm and instead inducing a warming feeling in the feet, which had been cold, and improving circulation. Observations of this sort led Ochorowicz to ask if it was accurate to say that 'hypnotic therapy is but a suggestive therapy' (p. 75).

Richet argued that phenomena could be produced by suggestion that could produce 'deep modifications in our psychic state' (pp. 75–76). Forel said that 'the phenomena of suggestion are physical cerebral phenomena' which, in turn, produce 'indisputable physical effects . . . such as the arrest or production of menstruation' (p. 76). In his view, the fact that Ochorowicz found effects other than those intended did not disprove suggestion, but pointed towards autosuggestion by the subject. He further wrote: 'The verbal suggestion . . . is always completed by the autosuggestion of the hypnotized, that is to say by the way in which it is understood and felt by the subject. . . . Autosuggestion includes phenomena analogous or identical to those produced by suggestion, which the subject produces spontaneously' (p. 76).

According to Bernheim: 'There are two opinions represented in this congress: some attribute everything to suggestion, others give a great part to physical influence. But suggestion of a physical action on the brain is not always verbal, it can arise as a result of a touch, when, for example, a hand is placed on the forehead' (p. 79). However, in a paper entitled 'La Suggestion Dans l'Hypnotisme,' Babinski (1890) disagreed with Bernheim, arguing that 'the somatic properties of hypnotism and grand hypnotism may develop independently of all suggestion' (pp. 131–132). He further argued that many of the observations of Charcot and others were confirmed by independent observers. Furthermore, he asked what evidence some researchers thought they had to affirm that suggestion was the only cause of hypnotic phenomena. On Bernheim he said: 'The only reason invoked by M. Bernheim consists in saying and repeating, in several different ways, that he has never reproduced in his subjects, without the help of suggestion, the somatic effects observed by M. Charcot and his pupils' (p. 134). Babinski countered by saying that Bernheim was using a different type of hypnotic subject. The 'hypnotism of the Salpêtrière is the hypnotism of hysterics' (p. 135); consequently, he argued, it was possible to induce certain phenomena with patients there that could not be obtained with other subjects elsewhere. This difference of opinion between Babinski and Bernheim illustrated the conflict between the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools of hypnosis.

Babinski's presentation was followed by a discussion touching on issues of pathology and suggestion (Discussion of Babinski's paper, 1890). Forel argued that suggestion could produce the appearance of hysterogenic zones.<sup>6</sup> Janet argued that distracted people were the most hypnotizable. In his view 'hypnotism is the symptom of a disease, not a physical disease, but a moral disease' (p. 137). But Ochorowicz disagreed. In his view the issue was one of a special sensibility that was not pathological.

### Animal hypnosis

The issue of animal hypnosis also received attention (Danilewski, 1890). Danilewski argued that studies of human beings were not sufficient. Comparative studies with animals, as performed in other areas of science, were important and necessary to understand hypnosis. He argued that, 'from the theoretical point of view, the organization of physical and psychic man does not present in general but the highest degree of development of animal organization' (p. 80).

The paper included a long section about frogs in which Danilewski mentioned the inhibition of movements presented as a response to outside stimuli and the suppression of voluntary movements. Other animals discussed included birds, crayfish, crocodiles, fish, octopus, the electrical torpedo (a ray), and serpents. It was said that sea turtles were harder to hypnotize than other animals, but Danilewski wrote: 'It is not difficult to induce an access of dyspnea in a hypnotized turtle' (p. 86). In his view, the 'exterior hypnotizing influences that, in animals, act on the exterior senses, are replaced in man by psychic influences' (p. 90).

### OTHER TOPICS

German philosopher Max Dessoir (1867–1947) presented a paper about the double self, a topic that received much discussion during the later nineteenth century (Dessoir, 1890).<sup>7</sup> He saw hypnosis as producing evidence for double consciousness. In his view there were two hypnotic states: one in which the hypnotized person perceived surrounding events but

reacted only to the hypnotizer, and another in which only the hypnotizer was perceived. Like Richet (1890b), Dessoir believed that hypnosis could be a valuable instrument of psychological exploration. In his opinion what the field needed was systematic research on specific questions, as opposed to more therapeutic reports or sporadic observations. Research would be of help in the development of theories.

The proceedings also included a summary of a presentation by Albert von Schrenck-Notzing about photographs of hypnotized individuals (*Photographies d'Hypnotiques*, 1890). In another paper Lombroso (1890) discussed observations of hypnotic phenomena such as hallucinations.

In his address summarizing the topics of the congress, Richet (1890b) stated that there were many questions left unanswered, such as the influence of metals and magnets on the hypnotized,<sup>8</sup> and the issue of lucidity (clairvoyance), consisting of 'isolated observations, without being able to determine the conditions [of occurrence], and without even being able to produce a demonstration beyond reproach' (p. 37). There was a general discussion of many of these topics (Discussion of Babinski's paper, 1890, p. 138), in which Myers mentioned the thought-transference experiments conducted by the Society for Psychical Research using hypnotized subjects, and made a call for further work on the subject. Ochorowicz argued that there were several hypnotic states to consider in mental suggestion. He suggested that a state of monodeism, in which a dominant idea ruled the mind, was a favourable state for the phenomenon (*Statistique des Hallucinations*, 1890, p. 155). Bernheim indicated his scepticism by referring to 'obscure or doubtful phenomena (lucidity, vision at a distance, presentiments, etc.)' (Section de l'Hypnotisme, 1890a, p. 43).

Another issue discussed was that of the existence of a magnetic action in hypnotism. In a session on terminology (Section de Hypnotisme, 1890a), Professor Liégois stated: 'Those who believe in the fluid are the magnetizers, those that do not believe [in the fluid] are the hypnotizers' (p. 41). In the same section discussing terminology Forel stated that the word magnetism should be used by those who believed in 'fluidism', and the term hypnotism should be reserved for scientists. But Delboeuf argued that some scientists believed in fluidism and that 'non-fluidism is not completely demonstrated' (p. 41).

Myers (Section de l'Hypnotisme, 1890b, pp. 61–62) brought to the attention of the group the studies by Gurney (e.g. 1887a), designed to show that the hand of a magnetizer could produce an influence (such as contractions) separate from suggestion. Both Delboeuf and Gilbert Ballet (1853–1918) were sceptical of such an influence. Bernheim also expressed doubts about the existence of a 'personal influence' and stated he had never induced contractions if the subjects were not aware of his intentions. Ballet, the Chair of the session, argued that while Bernheim had not observed such facts, he had done so several times. In Ballet's view, 'suggestion cannot explain all the facts', and touch could produce contractions 'impossible to obtain through suggestion' (p. 63).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Pickren and Fowler (2003) have argued that the content of the early psychology congresses 'reflected the heterogeneity of psychology during the period' (p. 535). The same may be said about the discussions of hypnosis at the 1889 congress, which illustrate the variety of ideas and the controversies of the times. Perhaps the most important aspect of the discussions was that no consensus had been reached on either the role or the nature of

suggestion. For some attendees suggestion explained all of hypnosis, while others found suggestion to be an incomplete explanation.

The proceedings of the congress also showed how little knowledge or consensus had been reached at the time on specifics such as the relationship of hypnosis to psychopathology and the factors related to hypnotic sensibility, as seen in Ochorowicz's (1890a) paper.

Regardless of Richet's hope for the disappearance of rival schools, the fact is that they were present at the congress. The Salpêtrière position may have been weakened by attacks from the Nancy school, but the war was not over. Babinski's (1890) paper criticizing Bernheim was the main example of this conflict during the congress. But the tension between these two schools did not characterize the whole of the congress' discussions. In fact, one must remember that not everyone interested in hypnosis at the time could be classified either as a follower of the Salpêtrière or of Nancy. Delboeuf, Ochorowicz, and Richet were among those who had not committed to one position or the other.

The congress also illustrates the state of hypnosis culture at the end of the century and its concerns with what some refer to today as the paranormal, such as the occurrence of telepathy during the hypnotic state and other phenomena. There were many individuals—among them Beaunis, Gurney, Janet, Liébeault, Myers, Richet, and Ochorowicz—who explored both hypnosis and psychic phenomena (Alvarado, 2002; Crabtree, 1993). In fact, there were other discussions in the congress related to psychical research, such as those about veridical hallucinations (Marillier, 1890b). However, such an emphasis was barely present at the 1889 hypnosis congress (Bérillon, 1889), perhaps because attendees were more concerned with the therapeutic applications of hypnosis. After the 1905 psychology congress, however, psychical research topics were rarely discussed at the meetings. They also disappeared slowly from the agendas of hypnosis researchers and clinicians. Hypnosis itself was also discussed less often in congresses after the turn of the twentieth century.

Conceptually related to the concerns of psychical research are the discussions of magnetic influence in hypnosis, which by the time of the 1889 congress did not have much scientific credence in the eyes of most representatives of established science. Nonetheless, and in opposition to those who believed these ideas had long disappeared from serious circles, the concept of a magnetic action capable of inducing trance and a variety of healing, physiological, and mental effects, was still around in 1889 as can be seen in the discussions in the congress, and in the work of others publishing at the time (Alvarado, 2009a).

The 1889 congress is a window that presents a slice of the history of hypnosis, serving as a reminder of theoretical diversity at the time of the meeting. The efforts of the members of the congress were important to later developments in the empirical study of hypnosis, not to mention in the organization and professionalization of psychology. But such aspects can only be studied in detail by expanding the focus beyond the congress, and considering in more depth aspects such as the psychotherapeutic uses of hypnosis.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the Society for Psychical Research for a grant that allowed me to write this paper. I am also grateful to Nancy L. Zingrone for editorial suggestions that improved this paper.

1. For overviews of the congress see James (1889), Marillier (1889), and A. T. Myers (1889).

2. Interestingly, Richet discussed the topic in his first publication on hypnosis (Richet, 1875, pp. 363–370), as well as in later years (Richet, 1880, pp. 337–350).
3. Physical actions included the fixation of the person's gaze on an object (sometimes luminous or shiny), the use of light and sound, pressure on the eyes and on other parts of the body, friction, and the application of magnets (Binet & Féré, 1887, ch. 4). For earlier discussions see Braid (1843, ch. 2).
4. Richet (1884, 1888, 1889) was well-known at the time for the study of these phenomena. In fact, he was responsible for bringing leading members of the London based Society for Psychical Research to the congress (Sidgwick & Sidgwick, 1906, p. 515).
5. Repeated use of the same hypnotic subject was common (Carroy, 1991). An example of such 'professional' subjects was the career of Blanche Wittmann (Alvarado, 2009a).
6. These are zones which, when pressed, would induce hysterical symptoms, as discussed by Richet (1881, pp. 32–40).
7. Examples include the discussions of Janet (1889), Myers (1892), and Sidis (1898).
8. The issue of metals and magnets has its own interesting place in the history of hypnosis (Harrington, 1988). This also involved the phenomena of transfer studied by Binet and Féré (1885). Richet (1890a) presented a communiqué about this in the congress in which he asked for new studies on the subject.

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Financial support: Grant from the Society for Psychical Research (no grant number).