

THE SUPERNATURAL

William Shakespeare

Hamlet (1599-1602?)

Hamlet and the ghost

Act I, Scene V

ENTER GHOST AND HAMLET

HAMLET Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.

GHOST Mark me.

HAMLET I will.

GHOST My hour is almost come
When I to sulfurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

HAMLET Alas, poor ghost!

GHOST Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

HAMLET Speak. I am bound to hear.

GHOST So art thou to revenge when thou shalt hear.

HAMLET What?

GHOST I am thy father's spirit,
10Doomed for a certain term to walk the night
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison house,
15I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,

THE GHOST AND HAMLET ENTER.

HAMLET Where are you taking me? Speak. I'm not going any farther.

GHOST Listen to me.

HAMLET I will.

GHOST The hour has almost come when I have to return to the horrible flames of purgatory.

HAMLET Ah, poor ghost!

GHOST Don't pity me. Just listen carefully to what I have to tell you.

HAMLET Speak. I'm ready to hear you.

GHOST You must be ready for revenge, too, when you hear me out.

HAMLET What?

GHOST I'm the ghost of your father, doomed for a certain period of time to walk the earth at night, while during the day I'm trapped in the fires of purgatory until I've done penance for my past sins. If I weren't forbidden to tell you the secrets of [purgatory](#), I could tell you stories that would slice through your soul, freeze your blood

Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combinèd locks to part
And each particular hair to stand on end,
20Like quills upon the fearful porpentine.
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

HAMLETO God!

GHOST 25Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET Murder?

GHOST Murder most foul, as in the best it is.
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

HAMLET Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as swift
30As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST I find thee apt,
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear.
35'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forgèd process of my death
Rankly abused. But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
40Now wears his crown.

make your eyes jump out of their sockets, and your hair stand on end like porcupine quills. But mortals like you aren't allowed to hear this description of the afterlife. Listen, listen! If you ever loved your poor dear father—

HAMLETO Oh God!

GHOST Take revenge for his horrible murder, that crime against nature.

HAMLET Murder?

GHOST His most horrible murder. Murder's always horrible, but this one was especially horrible, weird, and unnatural.

HAMLET Hurry and tell me about it, so I can take revenge right away, faster than a person falls in love.

GHOST I'm glad you're eager. You'd have to be as lazy as a weed on the shores of [Lethe](#) not to get riled up here. Now listen, Hamlet. Everyone was told that a poisonous snake bit me when I was sleeping in the orchard. But in fact, that's a lie that's fooled everyone in Denmark. You should know, my noble son, the real snake that stung your father is now wearing his crown.

Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Renaissance English culture, into its characteristic ways of burying the dead, imagining the afterlife, negotiating with memories of the departed

The imagination is not the exclusive possession of experts; rather, the experts—great writers and artists—are singularly gifted at tapping into what is circulating all around them in virtually everyone, high and low. Some are gifted as well at drawing upon what has ceased to circulate, what was once alive but now lies buried beneath the cultural soil. Shakespeare, it seemed to me, had a particular interest in digging up and redeploying damaged or discarded institutional goods, cultural memories that he returned to his contemporaries and bequeathed to the future.

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PURGATORY

we need to understand the way in which Purgatory, the middle space of the realm of the dead, was conceived in English texts of the later Middle Ages and then attacked by English Protestants of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries

THE ABOLITION of CHANTRIES

Two chantry acts—1545 (Henry VIII's last Parliament) and 1547 (Edward VI's first Parliament)—resolved that struggle by abolishing the whole elaborate Catholic intercessory system, with its chantries, lights, obits, anniversaries, confraternities, stipendiary priests, and the like, with which English men and women had done suffrages for the sake of the dead in Purgatory and in anticipation of their own future condition as dead people

In the funeral service in the first Edwardian prayer book (1549), the dead person was still directly addressed: the priest is instructed to cast earth upon the corpse and to say, “I commend thy soul to God the father almighty, and thy body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” In the 1552 revision, which was later confirmed by Queen Elizabeth and used throughout Shakespeare’s lifetime, the words have changed decisively. The dead person can no longer be addressed. Instead, the priest says to the bystanders around the grave, “We therefore commit his body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”

INDULGENCE

Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant;
And my ending is despair
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so, that it assaults
Mercy itself, and frees all faults
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.

(The Tempest, 1601,
Epilogue, lines 13–20)

Ora mi mancano
Spiriti da comandare, Arte per incantare;
E la mia fine è disperazione
A meno che non sia salvato dalla preghiera
Che va tanto a fondo da vincere
La pietà e liberare dal peccato
Come voi per ogni colpa implorate il
perdono
Così la vostra indulgenza
metta me in libertà
Traduzione di Agostino Lombardo



DÆMONOLOGIE,
IN FORME
OF A DIA-
LOGVE,

Diuided into three books:

WRITTEN BY THE HIGH
and mightie Prince, IAMES by the
*grace of God King of England,
Scotland, France and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith, &c.*



LONDON,
Printed by *Arnold Hatfield* for
Robert Wald-graue.

1603

King James I
*Daemonologie, In
Forme of a Dialogue,
Divided into three
Books: By the High
and Mighty Prince,
James &c. (1597)*

as a philosophical dissertation on contemporary necromancy and the historical relationships between the various methods of divination used from ancient black magic. This included a study on demonology and the methods demons used to bother troubled men. It also touches on topics such as werewolves and vampires. It was a political yet theological statement to educate a misinformed populace on the history, practices and implications of sorcery and the reasons for persecuting a person in a Christian society accused of being a witch under the rule of canonical law. This book is believed to be one of the main sources used by William Shakespeare in the production of *Macbeth*. Shakespeare attributed many quotes and rituals found within the book directly to the Weird Sisters, yet also attributed the Scottish themes and settings referenced from the trials in which King James was involved.

True Relation
OF THE
APPARITION
OF ONE
Mrs. VEAL,
The next Day after Her DEATH:
TO ONE
Mrs. BARGRAVE
At *Canterbury.*
The 8th of *September*, 1705.



L O N D O N :
Printed for B. Bragg, at the *Black Raven* in *Pater-*
Noster-Row, 1706.

*True Relation of the
Apparition of one Mrs. Veal,
the next Day after her
Death: to one Mrs.
Bargrave at Canterbury.
The 8th of September,
1705. London: Printed for B.
Bragg, at the Black Raven
in Pater-Noster-Row, 1706.*



THE
Political History
OF THE
D E V I L,
AS WELL
ANCIENT as MODERN:
IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Containing a State of the *Devil's* Circumstances, and the various Turns of his Affairs, from his Expulsion out of Heaven, to the *Creation* of Man; with Remarks on the several Mistakes concerning the Reason and Manner of his Fall. Also his Proceedings with *Mankind* ever since *Adam*, to the first planting of the Christian Religion in the World.

PART II.

Containing his more private Conduct, down to the present Times: His Government, his Appearances, his Manner of Working, and the Tools he works with.

*Bad as he is, the Devil may be abus'd,
Be falsly charg'd, and causelessly accus'd,
When Men, unwilling to be blam'd alone,
Shift off those Crimes on Him which are their Own.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. WARNER, at the *Black Boy* in
Pater-noster Row, 1726.

The Political History of the Devil, as well Ancient as Modern: in Two Parts. Part I. Containing a State of the Devil's Circumstances, and the various Turns of his Affairs, from his Expulsion out of Heaven, to the Creation of Man; with Remarks on the several Mistakes concerning the Reason and Manner of his Fall. Also his Proceedings with Mankind ever since Adam, to the first Planting of the Christian Religion in the World. Part II. Containing his more private Conduct, down to the Present Times: his Government, his Appearances, his Manner of Working, and the Tools he works with. London: Printed for T. Warner, at the Black Boy in Pater-noster Row, 1726.



A
SYSTEM
OF
MAGICK;
OR, A
HISTORY
OF THE
BLACK ART.

BEING AN
Historical Account of Mankind's most early
Dealing with the Devil; and how the Ac-
quaintance on both Sides first began.

*Our Magick, Now, commands the Troops of Hell,
The Devil himself submits to Charm and Spell,
The Conjuror in his Circles and his Rounds
Just whistles up his Spirits, as Men do Hounds,
Th' obsequious Devil, obeys the Sorcerer's Skill,
The Mill turns round the Horse, that first turns round the Mill.*

LONDON, Printed: And Sold by **J. ROBERTS**
in *Warwick-Lane.* MDCCLXXVII.

*A System of
Magick; or, a
History of the
Black Art. Being
an Historical
Account of
Mankind's most
early Dealing with
the Devil; and
how the
Acquaintance on
both Sides first
began. London,
1727 [i.e., 1726].*



Contempore J. J. Gault Sculpt.

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
History *and* Reality
O F
A P P A R I T I O N S .

B E I N G
*An Account of what they are, and what
they are not ; whence they come,
and whence they come not.*

A S A L S O
*How we may distinguish between the Ap-
paritions of Good and Evil Spirits, and
how we ought to Behave to them.*

W I T H
*A great Variety of Surprizing and Diverting
Examples, never Publish'd before.*

*By Death transported to th' Eternal Shore,
Souls so remov'd revisit us no more :
Engross'd with Joys of a Superior Kind,
They leave the trifling Thoughts of Life behind.*

LONDON, Printed : And Sold by **J. ROBERTS**
in *Warwick-Lane.* M D C C X X V I I .

An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions. Being an Account of what they are, and what they are not; whence they come, and whence they come not. As also how we may Distinguish between the Apparitions of Good and Evil Spirits, and how we ought to Behave to them. With a great Variety of Surprizing and Diverting Examples, never Publish'd before. London, 1727.



D.D.

Daniel
Defoe



Clark & Pears

THE
L I F E
AND
STRANGE SURPRIZING
ADVENTURES
OF
ROBINSON CRUSOE,
Of YORK, MARINER:

Who lived Eight and Twenty Years,
all alone in an un-inhabited Island on the
Coast of AMERICA, near the Mouth of
the Great River of OROONOQUE;

Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, where-
in all the Men perished but himself.

WITH
An Account how he was at last as strangely deli-
ver'd by PYRATES.

Written by Himself.

L O N D O N:
Printed for W. TAYLOR at the Ship in Pater-Noster-
Row. MDCCXIX.



Contempore J. J. Gault Sculp.

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
History *and* Reality
O F
A P P A R I T I O N S .

B E I N G
*An Account of what they are, and what
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all four books were published within
sixteen months

The Political History of the Devil (May 1726)

A New Family Instructor (September 1727),

A System of Magick Defoe: Satire, Fantasy and Writings on the Supernatural, Volume 8 2 (December 1726)

An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions (March 1727)

A problematic genre: didactic/satiric

In all of them history, satire, drama and critical interpretation are mixed in varying proportions, with history and satire preponderant in *A System of Magick* and *The Political History of the Devil*, dramatic narrative and issues of belief more prominent in *A New Family Instructor* and *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions*.

Our generic labels for these books are somewhat problematic, however

One of Defoe's objectives is to suggest that the 'natural' and the 'supernatural', the 'visible world' and the 'invisible world', are not separate and opposed but connected and permeable, both as categories of thought and parts of a larger reality

RHETORIC of MODERATION

Considered as a group, these works suggest that believing too little is as bad as believing too much; Defoe saw the two extremes as equivalent, and deplored both.

New Philosophy..... Roman Catholicism

Defoe's rhetoric depends on positioning himself midway between fanaticism and atheism.

The problem for him is not that the new natural philosophy is too immersed in brute fact, but the reverse. Instead of acknowledging any empirical or experimental basis for these new ideas, he treats them as utterly speculative, and ridicules them for being as fanciful as the inherited superstitions they seek to supplant.

New Philosophy..... Roman Catholicism RIVAL NARRATIVES?

product of unbridled fantasy
rather than sober cogitation or
actual observation

(fantastical notions of life on
Mars or Mercury)

product of unbridled fantasy
rather than sober cogitation or
actual observation

Its ultimate object is a vindication of the reality not of apparitions themselves, but of the soul and a world of spirit, which the existence of (similarly immaterial) apparitions serves to bolster

Over against the groundless 'whimsies' of religious as well as scientific enthusiasts, Defoe sets a carefully cultivated tone of restraint and deliberateness.

the Popish threat

In criticising Catholicism, then, *An Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions* is not alone among Defoe's later works. The 'Absurdities of POPERY' are given greatest prominence in *A New Family Instructor*

SUPERSTITION

A better explanation may be that Defoe needs representatives of superstition – needs believers in apparitions that he can characterise as fanciful or fraudulent – in order to locate his own judicious position midway between atheism and fanaticism. He has to make his own standpoint as broad as possible: ideally, one that is shared by all the reformed churches or all English Protestants.

Lengthy Roman Catholic section

For Defoe's purposes, then, Roman Catholic tales of apparitions are (pardon the expression) a godsend, and the more fantastic the better. They bear out his substantive contention that many supposed apparitions have been fraudulently staged to support priestly power, and that their acceptance as true has owed less to clever contrivance than to popular credulousness. More importantly, they bolster his pretensions to be the spokesman for a no-nonsense Protestant religiosity, in which genuine faith is compatible with sardonic disdain for Popish hocus-pocus, its perpetrators and its believers.

In the closing chapters of the book, the incredible apparition accounts that crowd Catholic saints' lives are associated with the shams and delusions of paganism: whether they date from remote or recent times, and originate in Europe or farther afield, Defoe assigns responsibility for them to clerical chicanery, almost as sweepingly as freethinkers of the day were doing.

We hear about the politics of the Jesuits, and the rivalry between Franciscans and Dominicans, but not about sectarian clashes in England; about the devils of Loudon, but not about trials at Salem. There is no question that Defoe strongly disapproves of the Roman Catholic clergy, who have 'impos'd upon the World' (p. 285) with their 'cheats', 'bites', 'shams' and other 'vile Practices'. But if they had not existed, he would have had to invent them, because his enterprise requires that there be fanatics to one side of him, and also that they be as different as possible from himself and his fellow Dissenters, who were often stigmatised with this very label.

COMMUNICATION with SPIRITS

The supernatural is important to Defoe largely because of the support it lends to fundamental religious doctrines. For him, key principles of faith – that God exists, that the soul exists and is immortal, and that the two are linked through constant providential concern with human welfare – depend ultimately on revelation, as contained in Scripture. But they receive valuable confirmation in the present from the fact (as Defoe and other believers saw it) of ongoing communication between mankind and the Invisible World

DREAMS, IMPULSES

‘Spirits in the Invisible World’ have ‘a Power of conversing among us’ by means of ‘Dreams, Impulses and Strong Aversions’.

SEEING THINGS

Yet of the many reports of such occurrences that he recounts and analyses in this book, most turn out to be from people who were (as we say) seeing things: that is, not really seeing them at all, but imagining them.

Defoe does not regard this problem – that one or another supposed sighting of an apparition was the product of an overwrought imagination – as grounds for simply dismissing the episode as pathological, fraudulent, or meaningless

About both kinds of communication (apparitions and promptings) Defoe is careful to avoid peremptoriness. By proclaiming himself equidistant from enthusiasm and unbelief, he can be ironic, with seeming impartiality, toward fanatics and atheists alike. By poking fun at superstitious folly he establishes his own probity, an important element in shielding his cherished belief in spirit communication from the charge of foolish superstition.

GHOSTS and APPARITIONS

To modern readers ghosts and apparitions may seem synonymous, but to Defoe the distinction between them was very important, and in the History and Reality of Apparitions he devotes almost as much attention to attacking the belief in ghosts as to defending the possibility of apparitions.

APPARITIONS

VS

GHOSTS

Different kinds of angelic or quasi-angelic spiritual entities can assume visible form temporarily, Defoe believes, for the purpose of delivering messages to human beings; thus they become apparitions on special, providentially appointed missions.

Ghosts (as most people then and now use the term) are exclusively the souls of the deceased, either on return visits from heaven or hell, or lingering on earth while still in transit, as it were, to their long-term destinations

GHOSTS?

The dismiss'd, departed, unembodied Spirits, which we call Souls of Men, whether happy or miserable, can by no means appear among us; all Apparition of that Kind is fictitious and imaginary'

Those who 'fall into all the absurdities of Souls remaining in a wandering, unappointed, unsettled state after Life', Defoe asserts, 'must in many things contradict the Scripture, and the receiv'd Opinions of all the reform'd Churches, and almost of all good Men even in all Ages' (p. 108)

Within the rhetorical economy I have been sketching, ghost-belief is treated as a variant of fanaticism; Defoe denigrates it not only because he sincerely deems it mistaken and pernicious, but because by doing so he can further demonstrate that his own views regarding the supernatural are, in contrast, sound and wholesome.

The function of ghost-belief is therefore similar to that of Roman Catholicism: it is yet another specimen of the enthusiasm and delusion of others – unlike his own moderate, sensible position, embodying ‘the receiv’d Opinions of all the reform’d Churches’

SUPERSTITION?

From a modern perspective, these beliefs are liable to seem more or less equivalent and interchangeable: everything associated with the ‘invisible world’ smacks of superstition, so why draw the line at one or another of what appear to be equally untenable beliefs? Or rather, why suppose that Defoe, who evidently subscribed to some of them, did not accept all of them?

FREETHINKERS

Although they often pretended, in the spirit of ongoing reform, to be purifying Christianity from the accretions derived from paganism and Popery, the freethinkers were perceived rightly as attacking its fundamentals. Hence the importance to Defoe of regarding apparitions not as a superfluity or excrescence on faith, whose removal would leave everything else intact and strengthened, but as one in a series of links that support a belief in the existence and immortality of the soul

DEFOE as a PROGRESSIVE WHIG?

‘the picture of [Defoe as] a progressive, secular-minded Whig is not entirely plausible ... Defoe’s supernaturalism was not some quirk or a cobwebby vestigial corner of his imagination, but part of a conservative and religious cast of mind’ (p. 122).

MIRACLES? A paradoxical approach

That miracles do not occur now does not mean, according to Defoe's reasoning, that they had never occurred – contrary to the thinking of those who held that miracles could never have taken place, since nature's laws are constant

Joseph Addison, the Spectator, 14 July 1711

When I hear the Relations that are made from all parts of the World, not only from Norway and Lapland, from the East and West Indies, but from every particular Nation in Europe, I cannot forbear thinking that there is such an Intercourse and Commerce with Evil Spirits, as that which we express by the name of Witchcraft. But when I consider that the ignorant and credulous Parts of the World abound most in these Relations, and that the Persons among us who are supposed to engage in such an Infernal Commerce are People of a weak Understanding and crazed Imagination, and at the same time reflect upon the many Impostures and Delusions of this Nature that have been detected in all Ages, I endeavour to suspend my Belief till I hear more certain Accounts than any which have yet come to my Knowledge. In short, when I consider the Question, Whether there are such Persons in the World as those we call Witches? my Mind is divided between the two opposite Opinions, or rather (to speak my Thoughts freely) I believe in general that there is and has been such a thing as Witch-craft; but at the same time can give no Credit to any Particular Instance of it.

MIDDLE COURSE

To avoid falling into the extremes of superstition and enthusiasm on the one hand, or of freethinking rationalism and atheistic materialism on the other, many steered what they thought was a middle course, giving assent to some beliefs and withholding it from others. So it was possible to believe in communion with spirits yet not in witches or ghosts, and this was Defoe's position.

DEFOE'S STYLE: REALISM?

But what distinguishes this book from other collections of such stories is not only its so-called circumstantial realism – its way of making supernatural subject matter believable through ordinary characters, vernacular speech, homely detail, and other down-to-earth devices – but also Defoe's frequent interruptions to comment on the stories he tells, and the elaborate critiques he appends to most of them. Indeed, his willingness to disrupt the flow of narrative and dialogue indicates that realism for its own sake is not his chief objective.

SIFTING

His dedication to interpreting tales of the supernatural, rather than merely exploiting their potential as stories, wards off the aspersions of sensationalism that his subject matter might seem to invite. Defoe was genuinely interested in the legalistic sifting of questionable testimony, in all the ways people delude themselves and one another, and in his self-appointed role as defender of the faith; had he been less so, the book might have had more excitement, but also less depth. Without its critical commentary, he would have regarded it as a mere collection of old wives' tales:

SENSATIONALISM?

Are Defoe's prefatory protestations mere gestures to allay the misgivings of staid readers, wary of entering imaginatively into the lives of thieves, whores and other adventurers? His efforts to portray sensational stories as having loftier goals are undoubtedly sanctimonious and self-serving, but are they necessarily meretricious and absurd? Or should his prefaces be regarded instead as symptoms, fascinating in their very tensions and exaggerations, of a genuine if seldom successful struggle to reconcile fiction with truth, imagination with reality?

CREDULITY?

doubts and misgivings that serious readers have always felt toward accounts of the extraordinary that are not clearly labelled as fiction

TRUE HISTORY?

how are we to distinguish between a 'true history', a novel or romance, and a downright li

DOMESTICATING the MARVELLOUS

On the other hand, it could be objected that the History and Reality of Apparitions tends to domesticate the marvellous: that the techniques of circumstantial realism, as well as the rationalising codas to various stories, serve to naturalise the supernatural, and dispel the air of mystery relished by writers and readers of seventeenth-century accounts of witchcraft, apparitions, and other such phenomena. Having ventured into the ethereal, the unheimlich and the diabolic, Defoe usually returns sooner or later to the prosaic, the homely, and the all-too-human.

DEMYSTIFICATION

One of the ironies of the History and Reality of Apparitions, however, is that Defoe himself depends on the employment of similarly shrewd, sceptical techniques to weigh and find wanting most of the stories he introduces. To demonstrate that they are mere fables, hollow or nugatory in themselves, Defoe has to use the same tools as his freethinking opponents; he traces these latter-day legends to the same set of deliberate machinations, vulgar errors, physiological or psychological disorders, and wilful or involuntary self-deceptions identified by his atheistical antagonists as the source of Biblical falsehood and error.

IRONY

Particularly fatal, on this view, to a sustained aura of the mystical and otherworldly is Defoe's irony at the expense of superstitious inflation and mystification, everything 'Platonick' and over-refined, the illusions of 'Visionists' and spiritual mountebanks. His satiric humour could thus be seen as a force dangerously akin to, if not necessarily allied with, the scepticism of those he counted as enemies, whose mockery was directed beyond their ostensible target, the extravagances of superstition, to religious belief of any kind

PROBITY, WILDNESS and EXCESS

Undue focus on Defoe's critical detachment, or more generally on his rhetoric of moderation, is liable to obscure the ways in which his thinking, and the book as a whole, are in fact venturesome, colourful, and even extreme. He cultivates an air of authorial probity and restraint amidst what is, after all, a chronicle of wildness and excess.

TENSIONS

there is sometimes considerable tension in the History and Reality of Apparitions between the sober commentary of the authorial voice and the flamboyant eccentricity of the stories it deals with.

PROTO-GOTHIC

Proto-Gothic variety of realism is present in various passages of the History and Reality of Apparitions

Apparition Narratives (1670-1720)

Explosion of apparition narratives in the late Stuart Era (end of the 17th century)

Sustained debate on miracles in Britain during the 17th and 18th centuries

Thomas Hobbes

Joseph Glanvil

Robert Boyle

John Locke

David Hume

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651)

"Miracles are marvellous workes," writes Hobbes, "but that which is marvellous to one, may not be so to another" (L, 2.26.332);

"Faith and Sanctity, are indeed not very frequent; but yet they are not Miracles" (L, 2.29.366).

Catholic church and the Kingdom of the Fairies

"The Fairies marry not, but there be amongst them Incubi, that have copulation with flesh and blood. The Priests also marry not." (L, 4.47.714).

GHOSTS and SPIRITS

Hobbes uses irony to subvert the distinction between two words (ghost and spirit) that occur in religious writing and in supernatural fiction.

Hobbes wittily elaborates the notion that what we commonly call being filled with the spirit, after the fashion of certain Protestant sectaries, is, properly understood, nothing more than being haunted by ghosts

David Hume, *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (1748)

Section X, Of Miracles

Against “all kinds of superstitious delusion”

PROBABILITY

When anyone tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact, which he relates, should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other; and according to the superiority, which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous, than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion

FALSE WITNESSES

For first, there is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good-sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood;

BARBAROUS NATIONS

It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations;

Usual propensity of mankind towards the marvellous

ABSOLUTE IMPOSSIBILITY

And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the absolute impossibility or miraculous nature of the events, which they relate? And this surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation

John Ferriar,

An essay towards a theory of apparitions
(1813)

apparitions could be explained by optical illusions

TRANSITION from

METAPHYSICS (transcendent study of ultimate realities)

to

EPISTEMOLOGY (rationality of belief)

that accompanied the rise of the NOVEL

John Alderson, (1757-1829). M.D.

An essay on apparitions: in which their appearance is accounted for by causes wholly independent of preternatural agency (1823)

First published in *Edinburgh medical and surgical journal*, 1810. Reprinted with 4th ed. of his *Essay on the Rhus toxicodendron*, 1811" --p. viii.

ESSAY
ON
APPARITIONS,

IN WHICH

THEIR APPEARANCE IS ACCOUNTED FOR

BY CAUSES WHOLLY INDEPENDENT OF

Preternatural Agency.

BY

JOHN ALDERSON, M.D.

SENIOR PHYSICIAN TO THE HULL GENERAL INFIRMARY; CONSULTING PHYSICIAN TO THE LYING-IN CHARITY; PRESIDENT OF THE HULL LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY; HONORARY MEMBER OF THE YORKSHIRE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY; CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY, EDINBURGH, &c. &c. &c.

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UNIVERSAL BELIEF in GHOSTS

Now it is a general observation, amounting to an established fact, that in all countries whose history we have long been acquainted with, as well as in those to which the active and enterprising spirit of modern discovery has penetrated, there has constantly been found a belief in apparitions. This general notion or faith of the reappearance of those who have departed this life, could not, in all cases, have arisen from the transmission of the poetic inventions of former times; because countries have been discovered, where we cannot suppose, or at least cannot trace, any previous race of men, of superior intelligence, capable, like Homer or Ossian, of transmitting the records of antiquity

ADDISON

"I think," says Addison, "a person who is terrified with the imagination of ghosts and spectres, much more reasonable than one, who, contrary to the reports of all historians, sacred and profane, ancient and modern, and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of ghosts fabulous and groundless. Could not I give myself up to this general testimony of mankind, I should to the relations of particular persons, who are now living, and whom I cannot distrust in other matters of fact."

LUTHER

Is it not mortifying to know that such a man as Luther was a firm believer in apparitions as supernatural agents; and that he should suppose madmen and idiots to be possessed by evil spirits; nay, that he should actually have quarrelled with the physicians, who attributed these affections to natural causes?

STATEMENTS of the FACTS

THESE APPEARANCES ARE PERFECTLY NATURAL

arising from secondary physical causes, and depending on circumstances to which all nations, all mankind, are equally liable

CASE of Mr.X who saw ghosts

The whole of this complaint was effectually removed by bleeding, by leeches, and by active purgatives. After the first employment of these means, he saw no more phantoms in the day time; and after the second, once only, between sleeping and waking, saw the milkman in his bedroom. He has remained perfectly rational and well ever since, and can go out in the dark as fearlessly as ever, being fully convinced that the ghosts which he was so confident he saw, were merely the creatures of disease.

A MERE DELUSION: PHYSICAL CAUSES

the cause lies, not in the perturbed spirits of the departed, but in the disordered functions of the living.

“a temporary disordered state of the animal functions, wholly independent of the persons or bodies those figures represent”

PHYSIOLOGICAL and PSYCHOLOGICAL causes

It has been said by Mr. Locke, that the ideas we form of goblins and sprites have really no more to do with darkness than with light

Great mental anxiety, inordinate ambition, and guilt may produce similar effects.

KEYWORDS

GHOST

Spirit

The soul or spirit, as the principle of life; also ghost of life.

The soul of a deceased person, spoken of as appearing in a visible form, or otherwise manifesting its presence, to the living

A shadowy outline or semblance, an unsubstantial image (of something); hence, a slight trace or vestige

Give up the ghost

GHOST

1592 Shakes. *Venus and Adonis*. 933 ‘Hateful divorce of love’—thus chides she Death—‘Grim-grinning ghost, earth's worm.’

1651 Hobbes *Leviathan*. iii. xxxiv. 208 A Ghost, or other Idol or Phantasme of the Imagination.

1727 De Foe *Hist. Appar.* v. (1840) 50 An apparition is vulgarly called by us a ghost.

GHOST

g.11.g Television. A displaced repeated image on a television screen caused by a duplicate signal travelling by a longer path.

i.11.i A spurious signal on a radar screen that does not correspond to a target at the indicated location.

PHANTOM

1300 Illusion, unreality; vanity; vain imagination; delusion, deception, falsity

1382 Something that appears to the sight or other sense, but has no material substance; an apparition, a spectre; a spirit, a ghost.

SPECTRE

An apparition, phantom, or ghost, esp. one of a terrifying nature or aspect.

1605 Z. Jones (title), A Treatise of Specters or strange Sights, Visions and Apparitions appearing sensibly unto men.

→ An image or phantom produced by reflection

NECROMANCY /'nɛkrə(ʊ)mɑnsi/,

1456 The art of predicting the future by supposed communication with the dead; (more generally) divination, sorcery, witchcraft, enchantment.

MANES, LARVAE, LEMURS

With *plural* agreement. The deified souls of dead ancestors (as beneficent spirits, as opposed to *larvae* and *lemures*: see [LARVA n.](#), [LEMUR n.](#)); (also, sometimes with *singular* agreement) the spirit or shade of a dead person, considered as an object of homage or reverence or as demanding to be propitiated. Also *figurative*.

LARVA: ghost, hobgoblin

LEMURES: spirits of the departed

1834 E. BULWER-LYTTON *Last Days of Pompeii* III. IV. vi*. 13 Lest he beheld one of those grim *lemures*, who..haunted the threshold of the homes they formerly possessed.

GOBLIN

C1325 A small, ugly, gnome-like creature of folklore, fairy tales, and fantasy fiction; in early use considered as malevolent or demonic, in later use often as merely mischievous. Sometimes more generally: any imaginary being invoked to frighten children.

HOBGOBLIN

1530 A mischievous, tricky imp or sprite; another name for Puck or Robin Goodfellow; hence, a terrifying apparition, a bogey.

BOGY/BOGEY /'bəʊgi/
BOGEYMAN
BUGABOO

1840 As quasi-proper name: The evil one, the devil.

BUGBEAR/SCARECROW

C1570 An imaginary evil spirit or creature said to devour naughty children; a bogeyman. Now somewhat *rare*.

An object or source of (esp. needless) fear or dread; an imaginary terror. Now *esp.:* a cause of annoyance, anxiety, or irritation; a pet hate.

REVENANT

1827 1.1 One who returns from the dead; a ghost.

ZOMBIE

1819 R. Southey Hist. Brazil III. xxxi. 24 Zombi, the title whereby he [chief of Brazilian natives] was called, is the name for the Deity, in the Angolan tongue.

VAMPIRE /'vampɪə/ (Slavonic)

A preternatural being of a malignant nature (in the original and usual form of the belief, a reanimated corpse), supposed to seek nourishment, or do harm, by sucking the blood of sleeping persons; a man or woman abnormally endowed with similar habits.

1745 J. SWINTON *Trav. Three English Gent. in Harleian Misc. IV.* 358 These Vampyres are supposed to be the Bodies of deceased Persons, animated by evil Spirits, which come out of the Graves, in the Night-time, suck the Blood of many of the Living, and thereby destroy them.

GHOUL

[a. Arab. ghūl, from a verbal root meaning ‘to seize’.]

An evil spirit supposed (in Muslim countries) to rob graves and prey on human corpses.

1786 tr. Beckford's *Vathek* (1868) 71 All the stories of malignant Dives and dismal Goules thronged into her memory.

SUPERSTITIO

early 13c., "false religious belief; irrational faith in supernatural powers," from Latin *superstitionem* (nominative *superstitio*) "prophecy, soothsaying; dread of the supernatural, excessive fear of the gods, religious belief based on fear or ignorance and considered incompatible with truth or reason," literally "a standing over," noun of action from past participle stem of *superstare* "stand on or over; survive," from *super* "above" (see [super-](#)) + *stare* "to stand," from PIE root [*sta-](#) "to stand, make or be firm."

There are many theories to explain the Latin sense development, but none has yet been generally accepted; de Vaan suggests the sense is "cause to remain in existence." Originally in English especially of religion; sense of "unreasonable notion" is from 1794.

SUPERSTITION

Latin Super- stare

The etymological meaning of L. superstition is perhaps 'standing over a thing in amazement or awe'

1776 Adam Smith W.N. v. i. (1904)
II. 435 Science is the great
antidote to the poison of
enthusiasm and superstition.

In particularized sense: An irrational religious belief or practice; a tenet, scruple, habit, etc. founded on fear or ignorance.

1402 Pol. Poems (Rolls) II. 56
Foure general synnes, sett up bi
sir Adam, Jakke, among 3our
maistris, cedicious, supersticious,
the glotouns, and the proude.

ENTHUSIASM ἐν'θουζιαζ(α)μ

Possession by a god, supernatural inspiration, prophetic or poetic frenzy; an occasion or manifestation of these. Obs.

late L. enthūsiasm-us, Gr. ἐνθουσιασμός, f. ἐνθουσιάζειν, f. ἐνθουσία (Zonaras Lex.) the fact of being ἔνθεος possessed by a god. Cf. Fr. enthousiasme.

Enthusiasm

Fancied inspiration; 'a vain confidence of divine favour or communication' (J.). In 18th c. often in vaguer sense: ill-regulated or misdirected religious emotion, extravagance of religious speculation. arch

1660 H. More *Myst. Godl.*
To Rdr., If ever
Christianity be
exterminated, it will be
by Enthusiasme.

HAUNT /hɔːnt/

From the uncertainty of the derivation, it is not clear whether the earliest sense in French and English was to practise habitually (an action, etc.) or to frequent habitually (a place). The order here is therefore provisional.

1576 A. FLEMING tr. Socrates in *Panoplie Epist.* 228 One that is haunted with a fever or quivering ague.

To practise habitually, familiarly, or frequently. *Obsolete.*

1576 a. Of diseases (*obsolete*), memories, cares, feelings, thoughts: To visit frequently or habitually; to come up or present themselves as recurrent influences or impressions, *esp.* as causes of distraction or trouble; to pursue, molest.

SPIRITUALISM (Spiritism)

The belief that the spirits of the dead can hold communication with the living, or make their presence known to them in some way, esp. through a 'medium'; the system of doctrines or practices founded on this belief. Cf. spiritism.

1853 J. Dix *Transatlantic Tracings* xiv. 244 Every two or three years the Americans have a paroxysm of humbug—· · at the present time it is Spiritualism.

SÉANCE (a sitting)

A meeting for the investigation or exhibition of spiritualistic phenomena.

1845 Warburton Cresc. & Cross I. xv. 153 The hour was so late that no other boys were to be found; and so the seance broke up.

Ouija board /'wi:dʒə/

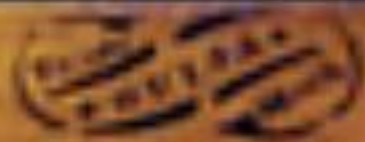
[f. F. oui yes + G. ja yes.]

A proprietary name for a board having the letters of the alphabet and other signs used for obtaining messages and answers in spiritualistic séances and in the practice of telepathy. Also (with lower-case initial) applied generally to spiritualistic spelling devices. Also ouija-board.

1891 Official Gaz. (U.S. Patent Office) 3 Feb. 510/2 Toys known as Talking Boards.—Kennard Novelty Company, Baltimore, Md. · · · Used since July 1, 1890. The word ‘Ouija’

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-strange-and-mysterious-history-of-the-ouija-board-5860627/>

YES



NO



A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

GOOD BYE





YES

OUIJA

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
THE MYSTIFYING ORACLE
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

NO

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0



Ouija Board: Satan's Toy Or
Healthy Family Fun? Norman
Rockwell's May 1, 1920

Cover Illustration For The
Saturday Evening Post.



Board ~ Spirit Board ~ Mystical ~ SPIRIT BOARD by Nemesis Now

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- Ouija Board ~ Spirit Board ~ Mystical ~ SPIRIT BOARD by Nemesis Now

[Compare with similar items](#)

New (1) from \$24.99

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+!

Th

Tu

Ch

In

Q:



Sh



Have

Be sure to have clear minds and approach the Ouija with respect and caution. Many warn that [evil spirits are waiting for unsuspecting people to join in](#) so that they can possess them. Usually the best time to use the Ouija board is at night – either midnight or 3am – the witching hour.

Don't be flippant and don't provoke the spirits, even if you decide to use it at Halloween or the Day of the Dead.

More fully *Ouija board*. A board with letters, numbers, or other signs around its edge, at which a planchette (movable pointer, upturned glass, etc.) points supposedly in answer to questions from users, esp. attenders at a seance.

ESOTERIC

Of philosophical doctrines, treatises, modes of speech, etc.: Designed for, or appropriate to, an inner circle of advanced or privileged disciples; communicated to, or intelligible by, the initiated exclusively. Hence of disciples: Belonging to the inner circle, admitted to the esoteric teaching

ἑσωτερικός, < ἑσωτέρω, comparative of ἔσω within.

1660 T. STANLEY *Hist. Philos.* III. I. 43 The Auditors of Pythagoras..were of two sorts, *Exoterick* and *Esoterick*: the *Exotericks* were those who were under probation, which if they well performed, they were admitted to be *Esotericks*.

ECTOPLASM 'ektəʊplæz(ə)m

ἐκτός adverb., outside

A viscous (glutinous, gluey) substance which is supposed to emanate from the body of a spiritualistic medium, and to develop into a human form or face.

1922 Daily Mail 2 Dec. 13 Frederick Munnings-Gaulton--prominent as a medium -- appears to have been an adept at producing 'ectoplasm'.

HOCUS POCUS

Appears early in 17th c., as the appellation of a juggler (and, apparently, as the assumed name of a particular conjuror) derived from the sham Latin formula employed by him: see below, and cf. Grimm, Hokuspokus.

Tillotson Serm. xxvi. (1742) ll. 237 In all probability those common juggling words of hocus pocus are nothing else but a corruption of **hoc est corpus**, by way of ridiculous imitation of the priests of the Church of Rome in their trick of Transubstantiation.

1632 Used as a formula of conjuring or magical incantation

MUMBO JUMBO

A grotesque idol said to have been worshipped by certain tribes or associations in Africa

1738 F. Moore Trav. Afr. 40 A dreadful Bugbear to the Women, call'd Mumbo-Jumbo, which is what keeps the Women in awe. Ibid. 116 At Night, I was visited by a Mumbo Jumbo, an Idol, which is among the Mundingoes a kind of cunning Mystery. · · This is a Thing invented by the Men to keep their Wives in awe

MUMMERY

1549 Allen Jude's Par. Rev. x. 1–4 Pompous byshops and monkyshe mumry.

Ridiculous ceremonial or ‘play-acting’; an instance of this. Often applied to religious ritual regarded as silly or hypocritical.

2. depreciatively. Ridiculous ceremony (formerly used esp. of religious ritual regarded as pretentious or hypocritical); an instance of this. Also: extravagant costume or other paraphernalia associated with or worthy of such ceremony

PARANORMAL

Designating supposed psychical events and phenomena such as clairvoyance or telekinesis whose operation is outside the scope of the known laws of nature or of normal scientific understanding; of or relating to such phenomena

1905 L. I. FINCH tr. J. Maxwell *Metapsychical Phenomena* vii. 1. 376
Parakinesis is a paranormal movement with contact; telekinesis is a paranormal movement without contact.

Spirits, Angels, Spectres, Daemons

To conclude, I find in Scripture that there be Angels, and Spirits, good and evill; but not that they are Incorporeall, as are the Apparitions men see in the Dark, or in a Dream, or Vision; which the Latines call Spectra, and took for Daemons. And I find that there are Spirits Corporeal, (though subtile and Invisible;) but not that any mans body was possessed, or inhabited by them

Leviathan CHAPTER 45
OF DAEMONOLOGY, AND OTHER RELIQUES OF THE
RELIGION OF THE GENTILES

PROTESTANT THEOLOGY and NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

Investigation of the properties of Air (=pneuma or spirit)

Royal Society; Robert Boyle

The “occult” properties of Air (rigid air in the northernmost latitudes SCOTLAND/LAPLAND is “especially apt to support and preserve apparitional forms”

OLD WIVES FABLES

Lastly, for the errors brought in from false, or uncertain History, what is all the Legend of fictitious Miracles, in the lives of the Saints; and all the Histories of Apparitions, and Ghosts, alledged by the Doctors of the Romane Church, to make good their Doctrines of Hell, and purgatory, the power of Exorcisme, and other Doctrines which have no warrant, neither in Reason, nor Scripture; as also all those Traditions which they call the unwritten Word of God; but old Wives Fables?

Leviatahn CHAPTER 46

OF DARKNESSE FROM VAIN PHILOSOPHY, AND FABULOUS TRADITIONS

ROYAL SOCIETY (1660)

The President, Council and Fellows of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge, commonly known as the Royal Society, is a learned society. Founded on 28 November 1660, it was granted a royal charter by King Charles II as "The Royal Society"

Journal “Philosophical Transactions”

Philosophical Transactions, which still flourishes today as the oldest scientific journal in continuous publication.

Sir William Crookes (1832-1919)

Chemist and science journalist: organic chemistry, chemical physics and meteorology.

investigation of mediums in the 1870's and 1880's.

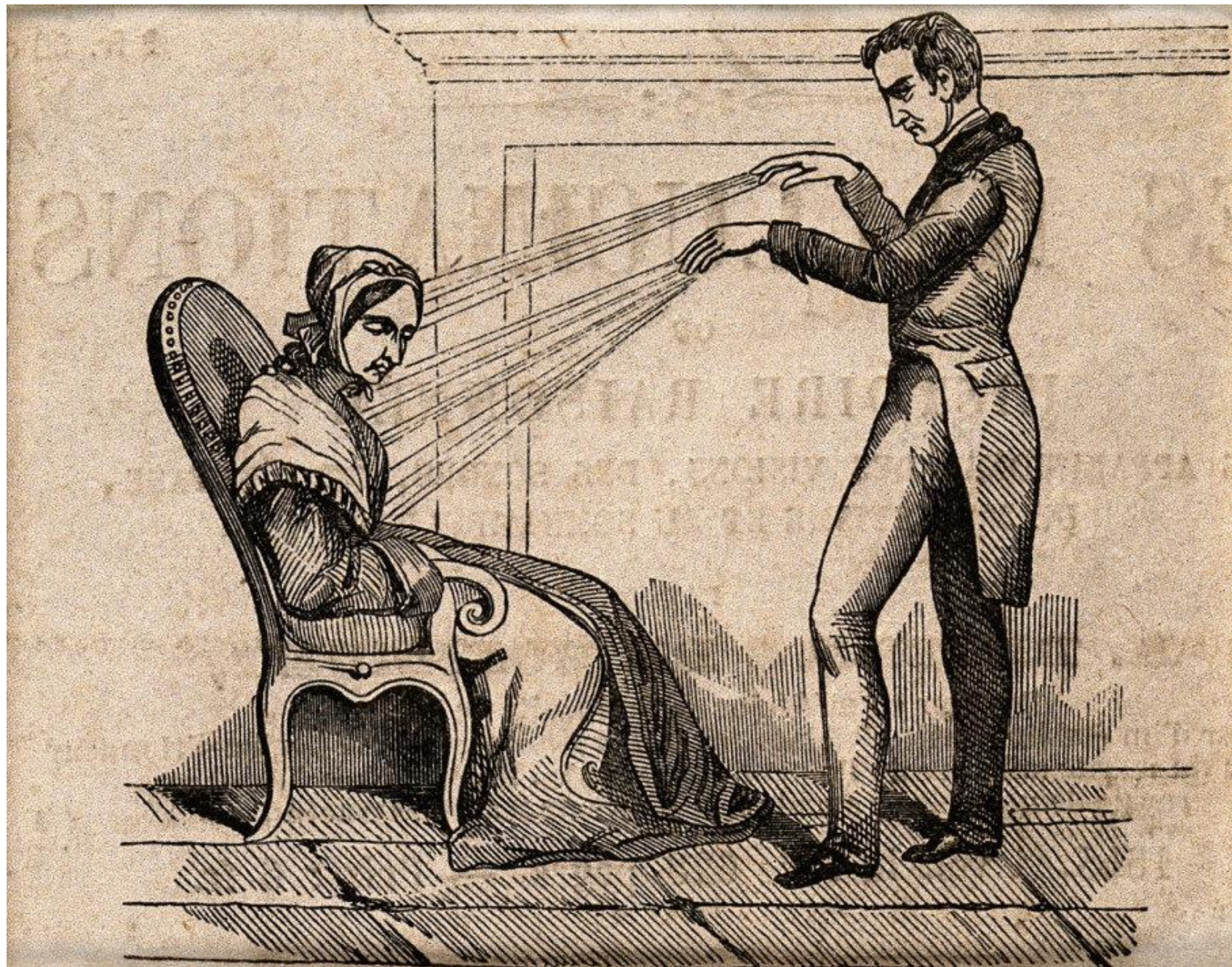
Franz Friedrich Anton Mesmer

(1734-1815)



ANIMAL MAGNETISM

→ HYPNOSIS



A FULL DISCOVERY
OF THE
STRANGE PRACTICES
OF
Dr. ELLIOTSON

On the bodies of his

FEMALE PATIENTS!

AT HIS HOUSE, IN CONDUIT STREET, HANOVER SQ.

WITH ALL THE SECRET

EXPERIMENTS HE MAKES UPON THEM,

AND THE

**Curious Postures they are put into
while sitting or standing, when
awake or asleep!**



A female Patient being blindfolded, to undergo an operation.

THE WHOLE AS SEEN

BY AN EYE-WITNESS,

AND NOW FULLY DIVULGED!

&c. &c. &c.

A FULL DISCOVERY
OF THE
STRANGE PRACTICES
OF
Dr. ELLIOTSON

On the bodies of his

FEMALE PATIENTS!

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WITH ALL THE SECRET

EXPERIMENTS HE MAKES UPON THEM,

AND THE

**Curious Postures they are put into
while sitting or standing, when
awake or asleep!**





In 1766 he published a doctoral dissertation with the Latin title *De planetarum influxu in corpus humanum* (On the Influence of the Planets on the Human Body), which discussed the influence of the moon and the planets on the human body and on disease. This was not medical astrology. Building largely on Isaac Newton's theory of the tides, Mesmer expounded on certain tides in the human body that might be accounted for by the movements of the sun and moon

AIR and The PRINTED PAGE

Analogy between

The imprint of writing on the page

And

The apparition (or projection) of a ghost onto the air

John Beaumont

*Historical, Physiological, and Theological Treatise of
Spirits (1750)*



William Hogarth *Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism* 1762

CREDULITY, SUPERSTITION, and FANATICISM.

A M E D L E Y.

Believe not every Spirit but try the Spirits whether they are of God, because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.
 1. John. Ch. 4. V. 1.
 Designed and Engraved by W. Hogarth. Published as the Act directs March, 25th 1762.



To St Money trap

Speak as a Fool

St. Peter

NEW and CORRECT
GLOBE HELD
BY ROMANS
LONDON 1840

Bull Roar
Scale of Vocation
Nat. Tone



broody

Of the Church of England

Only Love to
us be givn
Lord we ask
no other Heav'n
Hymn by
C. Whitfield

White
fields
Journal

THE POORS BOX

RAVING

Mad	ness
Convul	sion Fits
EX	TACY
LU	ST
Love	Heat
Luke	Warm
Low	Spirits
Sor	row
AGO	NY
Settled	Grief
Des	pair
Mad	ness
sui	cide

Vendy's Sermon
on Witches

POLTERGEISTS and PRINTS

Poltergeists (“racketing spirits”) who remained INVISIBLE to their original percipients.

COCK LANE GHOST (London)

Never seen, but visualized in print as a vaporous maiden (ballads, poems)

THE DRUMMER OF TEDWORTH (a pugnacious spirit)

the RHETORICAL value of APPARITIONS

Peddling sensory evidence of a supernatural realm that could double as proof of God's own existence

Montague Rhodes James
(1862–1936)

*The Collected Ghost Stories of
M. R. James (1931)*

PHANTASMAGORIA

Елѐна Петро́вна Блава́тская

1831-1891

Yelena Petrovna Blavatskaya



Madame Blavatsky

The Theosophical Society (1875) NY

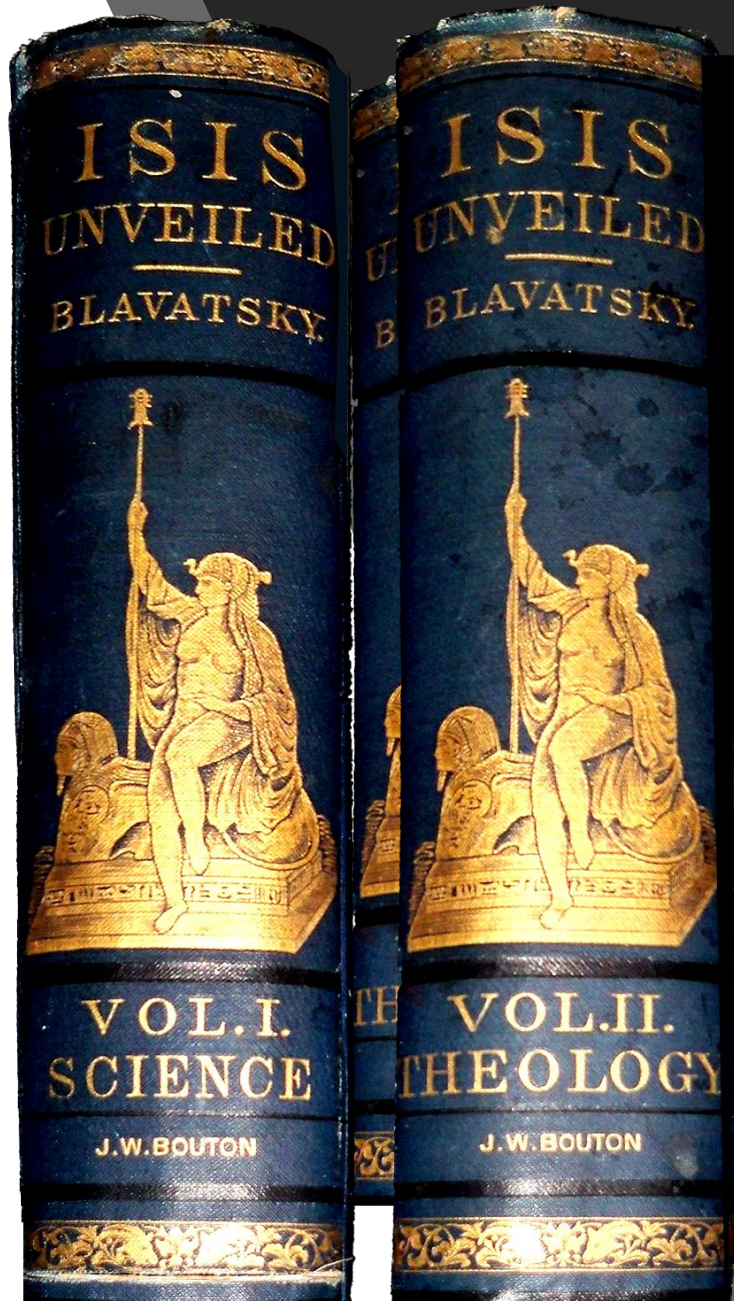
Blavatsky described Theosophy as the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy", proclaiming that it was reviving an "Ancient Wisdom" which underlay all the world's religions.



CONTROVERSY

Blavatsky was a controversial figure during her lifetime. She was championed by supporters as an enlightened guru and derided as a fraudulent charlatan and plagiarist by critics.

Her theosophical doctrines influenced the spread of Hindu and Buddhist ideas in the West as well as the development of Western esoteric currents like Ariosophy, Anthroposophy, and the New Age Movement.

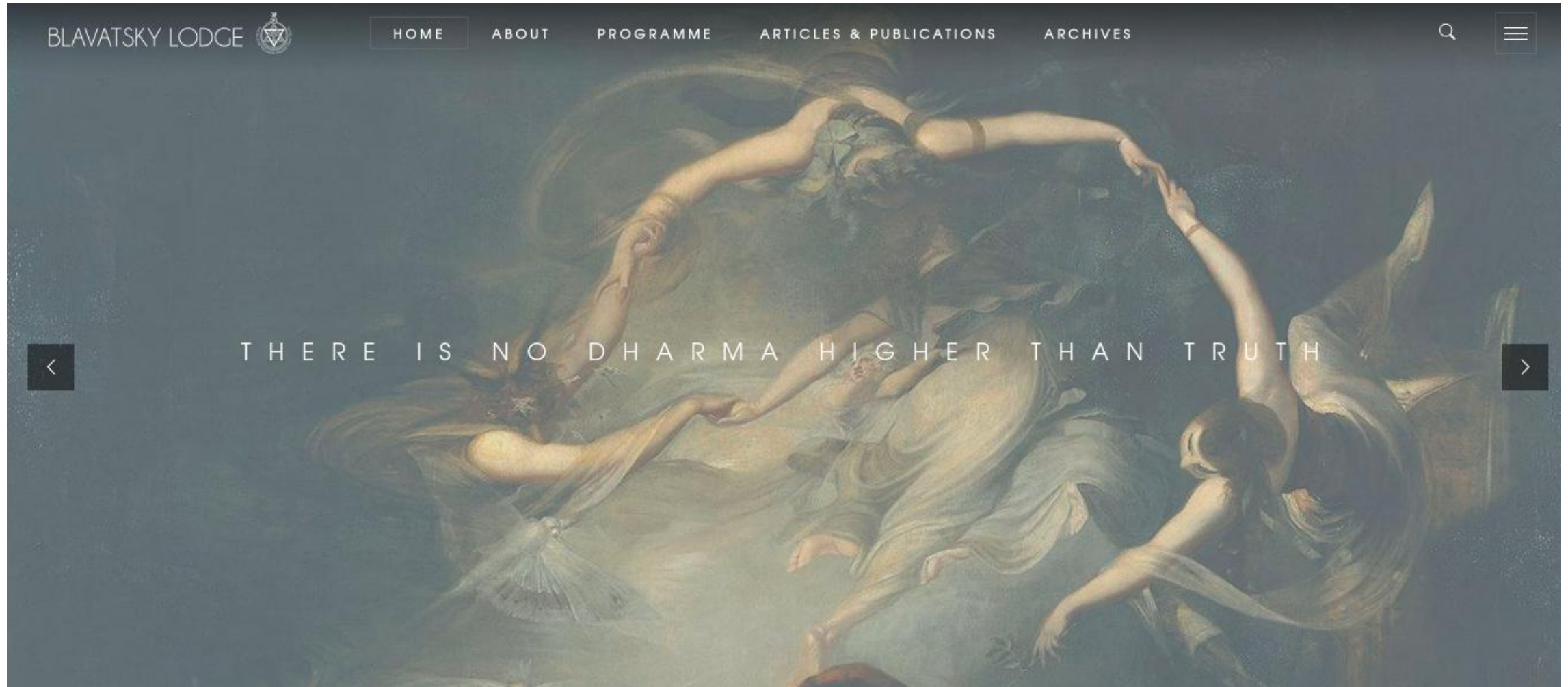


Isis Unveiled (1877)



French theosophy logo digitalized : The Star of David, Ouroboros, positive swastika, ankh and aum.
It reads : "There is no religion higher than truth"

The Blavatsky Lodge (1887) London



the SPR (Society for Psychical Research)

In London, Blavatsky made contact with the [Society for Psychical Research](#) (SPR) through [Frederic W. H. Myers](#). She complied with their request to undertake a study of her and the paranormal abilities that she claimed to possess, although was not impressed by the organisation and mockingly referred to it as the "Spookical Research Society".

the HODGSON REPORT (1885)

For our own part, we regard [Blavatsky] neither as the mouthpiece of hidden seers, nor as a mere vulgar adventuress; we think that she has achieved a title to permanent remembrance as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting imposters in history.

—The statement of the Society for Psychical Research on the basis of the Hodgson Report

Blavatsky talked incessantly in a guttural voice, sometimes wittily and sometimes crudely. She was indifferent to sex yet frank and open about it; fonder of animals than of people; welcoming, unpretentious, scandalous, capricious and rather noisy. She was also humorous, vulgar, impulsive and warm-hearted, and didn't give a hoot for anyone or anything.

—Biographer Peter Washington, 1993

Vernon Lee

(Violet Page, 1856-1935)





Portrait of a woman
1887

Cosmopolitan ESSAYIST and NOVELIST

Varied output (over 40 volumes): art, music criticism,
travel writing, essays on aesthetics

Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy

Ardent pacifist

HAUNTINGS (1890)