

Photography as a Form of Technological Mediumship in the Nineteenth Century Spiritualism

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Abstract

The nineteenth century has been a process for spiritualists who used their physiological bodies to communicate with spirits. Spiritualists have combined photography with physiology and used technology as “mediums” to prove the visibility of spirits. Nevertheless, the nineteenth century has been also the exploitability of productions as much as their benefits. Spiritualists and spirit photographers have been denounced as impostors. However, spirit photography has endeavored to prove that a reality existed beyond the visible, and the visibility of spirits endorsed the spiritual narratives by invigorating the ties between mediumship and photography. This article will document the arguments of the spiritualists, defenders and debunkers of the nineteenth century and portray their contribution to mediumship.

Keywords: Spiritualism, The nineteenth century, photography, spirit photography, technology.

19. Yüzyıl Ruhçuluğunda Teknolojik Medyumluk Biçimi Olarak Fotoğrafçılık

Özet

On dokuzuncu yüzyıl ruhçuların ruhlarla iletişim biçimi olarak bedensel fizyolojilerini kullandıkları bir süreçtir. Ruhçular fotoğraf ile fizyolojiyi birleştirmişler, “medyumlar” olarak ruhların görülebilirliğini kanıtlamak üzere teknolojiyi kullanmışlardır. Nitekim on dokuzuncu yüzyıl üretim araçlarının faydası kadar sömürsünün de yaşandığı bir yüzyıl olmuş, ruhçular ve ruh fotoğrafçıları da sahtekarlar olarak atfedilmişlerdir. Buna rağmen ruh fotoğrafçılığı görünenin ötesinde de bir gerçek olduğunu kanıtlamak için çabalamış ve fotoğraf ve medyumluk arasındaki bağı kuvvetlendirerek ruhların görünürlüğünün mevcut ruhçu anlatıları desteklemesini sağlamıştır. Bu makalede on dokuzuncu yüzyılın ruhçuları, destekçileri ve karşıtlarının görüşleri belgelenecek ve medyumluk adına sundukları katkılar da betimlenecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ruhçuluk, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl, fotoğraf, ruh fotoğrafçılığı, teknoloji.

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Manuscript Received / Gönderim Tarihi

February 28, 2022 / 28.02.2022

Revised Manuscript Accepted / Kabul Tarihi

May 11, 2022 / 11.05.2022

To Cite This Article / Kaynak Göster

Bayülgen, B. - Hepdinçler, T. (2022). Photography as a Form of Technological Mediumship in the Nineteenth Century Spiritualism, *ViraVerita E-Journal: Interdisciplinary Encounters*, Vol. 15, 272-291.

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Introduction

This article has examined how technology and photography functioned in the nineteenth century spiritualism to generate the concept of mediumship. It has been mentioned that photography has inspired and been assimilated by mediums to prove the visibility of spirits while their faculties have been controversially prospered. For this reason, this article has focused on photography which became functional for an assessment of visible spirits. The methodology of this article has been the historical documentation of arguments/counter arguments for and against the renowned spirit photographers, Mumler and Hudson to portray how they utilised photography and intensified the roles of mediums in seances.

One of the most principal development in technology which spiritualists have grabbed was photography which has also varied from a research in spiritualism to maintain spirits. Spirit photography embarked on scientific opportunities to prove the visible existences of spirits. Therefore, spirit photography belonged to the field of technology which was attracted by spiritualists since they endeavored to demonstrate the visibility of spirits. Besides, spirit photography was consistent with the eclectic progression of spiritualism and technology. Photography generated a loyal dependence on the research in spiritualism. It improved the context with visibility, how spirits looked like, how did they exist, etc. Spirit photography also proposed a visibility to spiritualism. Whether the vision and the visible were flourished with testimonials, the vision was strict and casual than the narratives. Louis Kaplan noticed the deficiency of spirit photography in Jeffrey Sconce's book *"Haunted Media"*. Sconce's main argument was the adaptation of technological systematics to human body. On the other hand, spirit photography was the capability of a technological device which consummated what human faculties could not achieve. Spirit photography did not ignore the human faculties. The human faculties were mediumistic faculties which instructed photography to the spiritual field. The physical conditions of the photographers such as William Mumler and Frederick Hudson who turned into mediums went parallel with the role of a photographer who could not be separated from the dominant faculties of the mediums.

Photography, Spiritual Manifestations and The Physiological Structure of the Medium

The nineteenth century has differed from the eighteenth century in terms of dissolving from the communal to individualism. This dissolving has been the result of a metropolitan life which has totally measured the functionalities of individuals with money. The measurability of the functions of an individual and the money-based aspects of the metropolitan life shape the psyche of individuals whose besiegement by objects and institutions does not require a stance against but an authenticity which could not be replaced by another individual. Simmel states that “where quantitative increase of value and energy has reached its limits, one seizes on qualitative distinctions, so that, through taking advantage of the existing sensitivity to differences, the attention of the social world can, in some way, be won for oneself” (Simmel, 2002, 18). This acquisition has not been endowed to people by nature. It has gained appreciations by the society (Simmel, 2002, 19).

The rapid changes have constituted such new fields of knowledge in which photography adapted itself into as molding of new systematics and organizations of societies. The observer has been detached from the empirical and physiological techniques of *camera obscura* which has been defined by Cambridge Dictionary as “a box, room, or device with a small hole that lets light through and shows an image on an opposite surface”, and its usage as “(...) to help create artistic topographical drawings”. The observable has been required to be visible and measured in terms of happiness and wealth which were intended to be ensured by the political power (Crary, 1992, 10, 123). Furtherly, photography has been positioned to function as a tool of evidence. Tagg states that:

What is real is not just the material item but also the discursive system of which the image it bears is part. It is to the reality not of the past, but of present meanings and of changing discursive systems that we must therefore turn our attention. That a photograph can come to stand as evidence, for example, rests not on a natural or existential fact, but on a social, semiotic process, though this is not to suggest that evidential value is embedded in the print, in an abstract apparatus, or in a particular signifying strategy (Tagg, 2009, 4).

Photography’s role in the technological field is as “if one looks at the time–motion studies of Étienne-Jules Marey or Eadweard Muybridge, one recognizes that the goal was to use photography in order to see the invisible and to reveal truths that were beyond the powers of the naked eye” (Kaplan, 2008, 9). The new fields of knowledge in the nineteenth century were criminology, psychiatry, comparative anatomy, germ theory and sanitation which have

intertwined the faculties of photography to expertise. For instance, the rationalization of France in 1880's used photography as an identity card for prisoners. Britain has been using photography for crime since 1860's but the cost compared to the successful result was inconsistent (Tagg, 2009, 5-7). On the other hand, photography was not independent from the other major discoveries such as telegraphy, the postal and railway system. Telegraphy managed to aggregate a space where the distance of a communication has been resolute. While a message of a distance person could be tipped into another distant surface soaked in potassium iodide, Samuel Morse who was the inventor of telegraphy has visioned a similar system to be applied to images (Natale, 2018, 61). The postal service molded photography as transportational communications: (i) The photograph of a person displaced loss in The Civil War, (ii) the photograph of a distant people was celebrated as a form of visitation (Natale, 2018, 65). The railway system managed to "participate in a regular network of long-distance communication" which managed to capture the distant landscapes of the World (Natale, 2018, 64). These discoveries and new possibilities were in constellation. Geoffrey Batchen's statements portray how the signals of electricity could be transported into a paper and how the possibility of this transformation necessitated and inspired photography. Natale paraphrases from Batchen as:

In July 1838, the Englishman Edward Davy granted a patent for a telegraphic system, in which a current being received was passed through a moving paper tape soaked in potassium iodide, leaving a coloured mark: "electricity was there by turned into a legible image, a kind of image produced very much like a photograph" (automatically, as a chemical reaction to received energy) (Natale, 2018, 61).

Photography necessitated a rationality since the physiological structure of the observer affected the perception. The memory and intelligence were neither the faculties of the brain nor the internal organs. The perceptions as the secondary qualities placed the primary qualities. Johannes Muller has determined the inner stimulants with blood and external stimulants with pressure and electricity (Crary, 1992, 74, 81-84). The body has been evaluated as defective and inconsistent hereafter. The correlation of physiology with perception has been endangering for photography because the physiology of an observer was a component of the eye and sight. The perfectness of an object has been related to the brain (Crary, 1992, 79, 83-84).

The physiological structure has a significance in photography in terms of spiritual

manifestations. The evaluation of body which belonged to the medium has been considered hereafter as a form of a passive “tecnomorphic channel” whose interrelation with a distant space enabled a spirit to manifest. Manning associates the function of technology with spiritualism as:

Spiritualists often claimed that “The doctrine of growth or progress is nowhere so brilliant and potential as in Spiritualism”. (...) The development of new materialization phenomena at the seance from simple raps to direct voice and full materialization was also an index and icon of this “spiritual progress” (Manning, 2018, 70).

The body has been resolved into a physiological apparatus in the nineteenth century. Furtherly, the affection of physiological structure on perception had a reciprocation in spiritualism. The significance of the body in spiritualism dates to the invention of telegraphy which necessitated to consider the body as a form of technology. The natural body has become the mere machine of the spiritual body (Manning, 2018, 69). Telegraphy had already inspired photography in terms of its working mechanism but telegraphy furtherly inspired spiritualism: While telegraphy has enabled the aggregation of distinct people/space, the medium in a seance became a “cybernetic being” whose mediation functioned as a “phatic labor” between the human and the spirit which Jill Galvan termed as “human-mediated exchange” (Manning, 2018, 68-71; Sconce, 2000, 7). The spiritual dominance depended on the subjectification of technology which furtherly destabilized the human to manifest a spirit. A manifestation required a certain amount of impetus from the medium to render physical phaticities as “table-tipping, spirit-rapping, spirit-writing, picture-drawing, the movement of inert bodies, spirit-voices, and the materialization of heads, faces, bodies, arms, hands, clothing, jewelry, flowers, fruits, paintings, the transformation of water, the dissipation of matter” (Manning, 2018, 170; Wolfe, 1875, 93). The infrastructure of telegraphy was associated with a new term coined as “the spiritualist telegraph” whose idea was used by Galvan to define a seance as an “interplay between the phantasmal and the technological” (Galvan, 2012, 79; Manning, 2018, 68). The medium was the bodily and mental channel to give the spirit an opportunity to manifest itself. The most significant mediumistic mediations for a manifestation were automatic-writing, mesmerism, rappings or trance speaking. Furtherly, photography assimilated itself into mediumistic mediations.

Mediumship in Photography as a Faculty of Capturing Spirits

The effects of physiological structures have reciprocations in spirit photography which functions as a mediation between the phantasmal and the technological. The definition of spirit photography has been emerged from the common specialties of the produced images which signify an extra figure on the surface which is unfamiliar to the object. Spirit photography has been correlated to the general claims of spiritualism when that extra figure has been identified as a spirit. In a January 1891 periodical called as *"The Arena"*, Wallace insists that spirit photograph has been the evidence of objectivity of spiritual apparitions (Sidgwick, 1892, 268). A Boston jewelry engraver named Mumler was recognized as the first spirit photographer who identified the extra figure on his photographic experiment as his cousin who died twelve years before the photoshoot. He focused his lens on an empty chair without anybody present in the studio. Mumler took position by the chair after he uncovered the lens and stood until the exposure was made. The obtained result was the appearance of a girl on the chair (Doyle, 1926, 125). At the first stage, even Mumler himself could not interpret what he has seen on the photograph. Mumler was quite sure that nobody else was present than himself during his shot. As he showed his photograph to an operator, he was informed that the glass in which the negative has appeared could have not been totally cleaned, so that the re-development of the negative could have created such a ghost-like figure. Mumler writes that when a gentleman has visited him to obtain the photograph, Mumler was not aware of the fact that an article would be printed in a New York based paper *"Herald of Progress"* which depicted his photograph. The same article would be reprinted in a Boston paper called *"The Banner of Light"* (Kaplan, 2008, 72). The production of the first spirit photographs in 1861 and '62 has reached two significances which were (i) he was not a dedicated medium, and (ii) he was not a professional photographer but a willing experimenter. His recognition both as a photographer and -latterly- as a medium has been comprised when his results repeatedly showed the same characteristics. The photoshoots of his close friends have extended his reputation when his extra figures which surrounded the object were identified as the sitter's dead relatives. Mumler has become aware of his psychic faculties after his production of the first spirit photograph in 1861. Patterson explains that the significant point is "his [Mumler] fame travelled so quickly that he was compelled to become a professional medium in order to satisfy the demands of his time" (Patterson, 1965, 11). Mumler explains his position in spirit photography and spiritualism as:

Who can describe the joy that filled this father's heart when he discovered that his son was not dead? that in passing through the change he had become more closely allied! He felt that the gloom that surrounded him had been dissipated and looked forward with pleasure to the time when they should meet on 'the evergreen shore' (Kaplan, 2008, 292).

Furthermore, in 1862, a year after his first spirit photograph, Mumler was before the investigators and had the ability to prove the validations of his productions which were called as "spirit extras" (ibid.). "Fame" and "spirit extras" mean that he has been already mass producing his faculties both as a photographer and medium. The modernization process in the nineteenth century was the rapidity of new artificial methods which replaced the natural things and the discovery of the new availabilities by mass reproduction (Crary, 1992, 11). The spirit photographs of Mumler excited the spiritualist circles to crystallize the previous and the ongoing claims on accessing death as Kaplan paraphrases from Davis as "Davis's claim, then, was that the (spirit) photographic medium could provide access to that which was beyond the normal powers of perception" (Kaplan, 2008, 9). Nevertheless, Mumler's profession became a mass production in which its validity and exploitation began to be interrogated. The transformation of portrait photographs has been provided by the development of the postal service to displace loss and as a mode of communication. Mumler used the postal service to obtain many different costumers from distant spiritualist circles and Natale's imputation of photography with a banknote calls forth the circulation of a photograph as a mode of communication and economy which requires exchange. (Natale, 2018, 66-68). According to Phineas Taylor Barnum, Mumler's reputation caused him bookings for three months in advance after his fame was first published in the Boston journal; "*The Banner of Light*" and his price was five dollars for each photograph while the common photograph studios charged only twenty-five cents to produce an ordinary photograph. Moreover, in the circulation of communication and exchange, many spiritualists sent their customers to visit Mumler's studio where they were guaranteed to be appeared with spirits. The main motivation in the need of Mumler has resided in coping with death and the faculties of photography in the new fields of knowledge as Tagg mentioned that the photography began to be used for evidence. The Civil War has cost six hundred and twenty thousand deaths approximately whose widows and close relatives have filled Mumler's studio to be attested by the visibility and immortality of their deceased (Loxton, 2014, 65). Barnum who was a notableshowman of the nineteenth

century and the founder of The Barnum & Bailey Circus in 1871 has made his reputation in manipulating reality as a form of entertainment and he was strictly against Mumler's profession which has been declared as exploitation by Barnum. Mumler was arrested in 1869 in New York for fraudulence and he was sued. The accusation for Mumler consists of the unrecognized apparitions such as of Marshal Joseph Tooker's who has been sent as a prosecutor by the Mayor of New York under a false name whose photograph with Mumler was guaranteed to be a spirit relative (Tooker's father in-law), but failed to be recognized (Kaplan, 2008, 16; Sidgwick, 1892, 270). The indeterminacy of how Mumler has managed to create the spirits in his photographs was another charge.

The Counterarguments Against Mumler

The trial of Mumler has taken interests of such photographers who claimed to debunk spirit photography by consulting to the photographic techniques' themselves such as Abraham Bogardus who had been a photographer for twenty-three years and who testified against Mumler with twenty-four pictures which have been exhibited by himself. Bogardus testified that Mumler has been alienated from the National Photographic Association of the United States to which Bogardus was associated with. The reason why Mumler has been unwanted was that the same association devoted itself to fight against impostors like Mumler. Bogardus claimed to produce any photographs like Mumler with photographic processes which could not be easily detected (Kaplan, 2008, 191-194).

The accusation of fraud was in fact the technically readable aspect of the spiritualism in which a coded structure of spiritualism is residually recognizable, "undefined" for debunkers but still referring to the image which enables to speak about the photograph technically. Bogardus' production of manipulated photographs does not necessitate any kind of mediumistic faculties. Bogardus firstly explained that the process of trickery has started with two impressions: (i) To make the sitter thrust that s/he had come to be appeared by a spirit, (ii) to make the sitter believe in the capabilities of the camera. The trickery process was coating the plate and putting it into the coating bath at any wished length which produced a shadowy figure. Furtherly, Bogardus explained that the focus of the camera had a dominancy in producing such photographs while the less proper focus has created an indistinct result, a proper focus impelled the imagination of the sitter. Bogardus stated that the spirit figures have already been taken from somewhere else which necessitated two different photographs or

pictures (Kaplan, 2008, 191-197). Moreover, Barnum consulted Bogardus to produce a photograph of a spirit where he has seen that there had been nothing extraordinary about the plate except the process of placing the plate into the camera. Firstly, Bogardus had poured a liquid on the plate and then a nitrate of silver before placing the plate. The result was successful and Barnum appeared with The President Lincoln who was quite similar to the most famous photograph of Mumler who shot the widow of President Lincoln (Mary Todd Lincoln) in 1872 with her late husband without knowing that the sitter was Lincoln's wife. But the most important statement of Barnum was that he did not feel any kind of a spiritual presence during the shooting process with Bogardus (ibid.)

The Defenders of Mumler

These above statements do not have a substantial provision for spiritualists because the factualness of Mumler's mediumistic faculties have been supported by Judge Edmond who was the Justice of N.Y., Supreme Court between 1847-1851, and a long-time senator for N.Y. Edmond had two sittings with Mumler in which he obtained great results of photographs depicting his late friends. As Patterson paraphrases from Edmond: "I know a great many persons who have visited Mumler, some of whom met with astonishing success in procuring spirit pictures of departed friends" (Patterson, 1965, 12). Mumler had been found "not guilty" on charge. Patterson correlates the readiness of spirits with spirit photography in which "they [spirits] are willing to assist in photographic experiments" (Patterson, 1965, 57). Patterson tackles with the process of shooting in the form of a spiritual seance which he finds beneficial to gather a "circle" consisting of equal number of sexes and scientific intellectuals to obtain the best results (Patterson, 1965, 55). Mumler's mediumistic faculties have been bushed out of his progression on technical skills. Spiritualism was not Mumler's specific domain until the ghost-like discoveries in his shootings have beaten the big drum of spiritualists. Kaplan exemplifies both Mumler's sectoral interference and mediumistic faculties by giving three individuals' name who were Helen Stuart, Hannah Mumler (his wife) and Frances Ann Conant. Stuart was the technical ground for Mumler. She owned a photograph saloon in Boston where Kaplan assumes that Mumler was taught by her for technical skills. His assumption has been legitimated by Stuart because Mumler's first photographs were developed in the same exact place (Kaplan, 2008, 14). Spiritualists acquired a channel throughout the medium who

enabled the manifestation of spirits. Mumler acquired help from his wife H. Mumler and Conant who worked for a spiritualist newspaper titled as *"The Banner of Light"*. It has been stated that the general structures of manifestations were rappings, trance-speaking, mesmerism and automatic writing. Those manifestations were intrinsically the faculties of the medium in regard of his/her intellectuality on modesty and moral sentiments. H. Mumler and Conant's mediumship positioned Mumler as a spiritualist whose declarations have been received by a camera. This fact revives the question of how a photographer could gain spiritual faculty. Photography in Mumler's era was still a recent field which made the spiritualists suppose that the same field had the capacity to capture what the human eye could not see (Hartzman, 2018). Patterson's example of Edmond consists of Mumler's mediumistic faculties but seems to neglect the ways of manipulating reality in the nineteenth century agenda. London Stereoscopic and Photographic Company which was formed in 1854 had already begun to produce images which were inspired by the Victorian ghost fictions in 1860's for stereoscopic viewing. These stereoscopic images (Figure 1) depict ordinary people who were frightened steeply by transparent apparitions.



Fig. 1. London stereoscopic and photographic company (c.1856). The ghost in the stereoscope. Metropolitan Museum of Art <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/302466>

Eugène Thiébauld shot series of staged photographs in 1860's which were inspired by spirit photography while his photographs made fun of the same field at the same time. In 1863, six years before the Mumler trial, he shot his most famous photograph which featured the stage illusionist Henri Robin in fight with a staged ghost figure (Figure 2).



Fig. 2. Thiébault, E. (1863). Henry Robin and a spectre: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Henry_Robin_et_un_spectre.jpg

Sidgwick's Responses, Hudson and His Seances with Guppy

Spirit photography has also emerged in Great Britain with photographer Hudson who generated a spiritual affiliation with photography. In 1892, Eleanor Sidgwick wrote a reply to Alfred Russel Wallace who criticized The Society for Psychical Research (the society which Sidgwick was a member) for not focusing on spirit photography. Wallace firmly believed that the same field has been an exact objectification of the psychic force. Sidgwick's evaluation of spirit photography was quite negative. She firstly focused on the results as the "recognition of spirits". She started with the pro-arguments of spiritualists who defended that a spirit light could pass through opaque objects such as a skull of the sitter or reflecting mirrors (Sidgwick 1892, p. 273). Sidgwick explains the claims of the defenders of Hudson as:

Thus "spirits" told them that the success of our manifestations in these cases is to bring ourselves within the sphere of the sitter, and to amalgamate that sphere with our own. When rays of light pass through this mixed aura they are refracted and often cause things to be apparent on the plate which you cannot account for (Sidgwick, 1892, 271).

The accusers of Hudson such as Traill Taylor who was the editor of "*The British Journal of Photography*", Thomas Slater who was an optician and John Beattie who was a former

photographer have testified that their attendances on the shooting process should have been a result of a trickery. M.A. Oxon who wrote an article in May 1875, "*Human Nature*" focused deeply on the results of spirit photography rather than the shooting process. He examined four-hundred-sixty photographs and concluded that the effects of spirit photography have been a deceptive perception and memory. Within all these photographs, he detected that only ninety of the photographs have been recognized which formed only the one-fifth percentage of the whole. Oxon's argument was that the sitters have only seen what they wished to see, so that a recognition could be only a resemblance of a false memory. If the deceased had not been photographed previously, it meant that s/he had already been dead for a long time. The memory could erase the lineaments of the deceased. The most important detection of Oxon was that a single apparition was recognized by many other sitters who claimed that the very same apparition was the relative of them. Furthermore, Oxon focused on the contradictive iconography of spirit photographs in which the trickery usage of brooms and sheets could easily create an image of an apparition which assimilated a grandmother. The appearance of such draperies could have made the recognition much more difficult. Oxon also stated that the apparitions who wore draperies or pigtails would not match with the time of the deceased. The clothes have been already declined to be worn even in the age of the deceased (Sidgwick, 1892, 281-88). Oxon demonstrated that a widowed man who has lost his wife eighteen months ago wanted to be photographed with his little son on his shoulders in 1888. The experimenter stated that he briefly saw the image of his wife who appeared in the background and slowly faded during the development in the dark room. This incident did not endow him any kind of belief (ibid.). According to Oxon, the warrant of a single spirit photograph did not have any legitimacy. The experiments were formed by many exposures which did not result with a spirit extra. For instance, the experiments of Beattie with Josty lasted for eight seances but did not result with any extras out of nine exposures on the first day. The second day resulted unaccountable with the ninth exposure. The third day resulted with successive plates but the other seances did not give results such as only one successive result out of twelve exposures, one out of fifteen or three out of twenty-one (Sidgwick, 1892, 285). On the contrary, Patterson states that "the genuine character of a psychic photograph is not determined by the number of exposures which are clearly visible on the negative, but rather by the conditions under which the photograph is taken" (Patterson, 1965, 49). Hudson of Great Britain established such an environment to the

medium couple Guppys in his studio where Mr. Guppy felt a presence over his head before the shooting (Patterson, 1965, 13). The feeling of a spiritual presence has contradicted with the statements of Barnum whose unconscious did not suit with the general structures of spirit photography. The demonstration of spiritual seances predicated on a mediumistic faculty to compound the spirit and the receiver. Houghton who was a mediumistic painter, council member of the British National Association of Spiritualists and the founder of London Spiritualist Alliance wrote the first book on spirit photography named as "*Chronicles of the photographs of spiritual beings and phenomena invisible to the material eye*" in regard of her seances with Hudson. Her significance in the literature of spirit photography was that she examined trickeries with her entire mediumistic characteristics. She received a letter which intrigued her to spirit photography from George, Prince de Solms who displayed the role of Hudson in a mediumistic faculty. The same letter depicts the organization of a sitting in the form of a seance:

I observed that the production of the spirit photographs always more or less depended upon the health of the photographer. If Mr. Hudson was not quite well, and physically low, as I was concerned sometimes to find him, he obtained nothing, unless some other person of mediumistic temperament was present to give power (Houghton, 1882, 6).

The same letter confides the role of the medium to succeed in spirit photography. For instance, Hudson and George failed to obtain successful results due to Hudson's discomfort. Meanwhile, Fowler who was a renowned medium sensed a need of help from Hudson and George. They obtained such successful results from three sittings (Houghton, 1882, 7). According to Houghton, the succession of Hudson in Great Britain was claimed to be envisioned by spirits. The foreseeing of spiritual achievements dates back to Andrew Jackson Davis who predicted the pioneers of spiritualism, The Fox Sisters. His revelations revived how societies would insert their spiritual conceivableness into the progressions of technology. The occasion between Hudson and Guppy was an appointed shooting which took place in Hudson's studio (Patterson, 1965, 13). Patterson does not mention a spirit who rendered the conditions. Nevertheless, the spirit which Mr. Guppy sensed prompted Houghton to sit for Hudson. Houghton's first sitting with Hudson unveiled the guiding spirits who were on due for the manifestations of other spirits. The shooting process evoked a presence for the sitter. Mrs.

Guppy who accompanied Houghton received a notification from her spirits that Houghton's



Fig. 3. Hudson, F. (1880). Mama extending her hand towards me. Houghton, G., *Chronicles of the photographs of spiritual beings and phenomena*, Plate 1, p.2.

mother would manifest herself (Houghton, 1882, 2). Houghton confirmed that the manifestation on the plate was indeed her mother even though the lightning conditions enervated an expecting result (Figure 3).

The second attempt in the same sitting was restrained by the guiding spirit. Houghton's insistence revealed an appearance of her baby sister and a tortoise-shell dagger which fell on her lap. Hudson saw the object from the lens which he thought that it looked like a cross. The dagger was not brought to the studio previously and Hudson had no idea what it was until Houghton told him that it was a souvenir from the Guppy's (Houghton, 1882, 3). There are two terms for the visibility of the spiritual materials: (i) "Apport" which is an "object that appears in the presence of a medium or spiritual adept as it has been formed from thin air or has passed through solid matter" (Guiley, 2007, 24). In regard of the definition of apport, the dagger could be categorized under this term. (ii) "Materialization" which is "the process of forming seemingly solid spirit faces, body parts or complete spirit figures by a medium during

a séance” (Guiley, 2007, 310).

Katie King was the most materialized spirit along with his father John King to acquaint the material world. Among their acquaintances were the Davenport Brothers and Helena Blavatsky. J. King (the father) was supposed to be the reincarnation of Henry Owen Morgan who conquered Jamaica in the seventeenth century and knighted by King Charles II (Guiley, 2007, 264). Guiley refers to Doyle for J. King’s visibility and visual characteristics as being tall, swarthy and bearded which also vary throughout a masquerade, especially in Helena Petrovna Blavatsky’s seances (Guiley, 2007, 265). On the other hand, both spirits had behavioral characteristics which J. King carried an intellectuality while K. King bore a wit and low social status. An 1874 photograph of a Cook’s seance (Figure 4) depicts K. King’s physical “manifestation” as a white- veiled figure. Cook also added that she was discalced and physically encountered.



Fig. 4. Crookes, W. (1874). Katie King materialized. Research Gate: https://researchgate.net/figure-/Katie-King-photographed-by-William-Crookes-in-the-parlour-of-Florence-Cooks-Hackney-_fig2_-29810960

Another appointment of Houghton was her presence in Hudson’s cabinet where she received rappings from the very same spirit. Katie claimed that the sitting would be successful within a week (the next Thursday). According to Houghton’s diary, the spirit Katie thought the chemical proceedings and necessary supplementary and threatened to spoil the sitting if Hudson did not keep her instructions a secret (Houghton, 1882, 3, 9-10). The result was the photograph of Houghton with Katie which was similar to the manifestation of Katie in Cook’s seance (Figure 5).



Fig. 1. Hudson, F. (1880), *Mrs. Guppy, Tommy and Katie*. Houghton, G., *Chronicles of the photographs of Spiritual Beings and Phenomena*, 1882, Plate 3, p. 80.

Conclusion

This article has examined how spiritualism consulted to technology in the nineteenth century to utilize itself from the capabilities and inspiring mechanisms of technology. The mechanisms of telegraphy coined and inspired new terms for spiritualism as “cybernetic being” which functions as “phatic-labour”, “human-mediated exchange”, and “tecnomorphic channel” as a passive physical condition of the body to manifest spirits. This article has examined the role of photography which spiritualists grabbed to prove their claims on the existences of spirits. Spiritualism tried to scrutinize the role of mediums in relation with technology and photography to further states which were the visibility of spirits or the ultimate point to assess the existences of spirits. Spirit photography gained a large popularity among the spiritualists and public since such photographers and mediums as Mumler and Hudson assessed visualizing the deceased. Therefore, the counterarguments have been brought forward for exploitation and fraudulence. On the other hand, the arguments for spirit photography portrayed how the visual aspects of spirits coincide with the conventional claims on spiritual seances such as the visibility of Katie King or the similarities in each photograph of Mumler

and Hudson. Throughout the arguments and counterarguments, it has been determined that spirit photographers who were regarded as mediums tried to manifest, capture and channel spirits.

ORCID ID**Burak BAYÜLGEN** Orcid ID: 0000-0003-3200-2679**Tolga HEPDİNÇLER** Orcid ID: 0000-0001-9453-7148**Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The author declared that there were no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship or the publication of this article.

Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı

Yazar bu makalenin yazarlık veya yayımlanmasına ilişkin olarak hiçbir çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmiştir.

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¹ Bu makale Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi, İletişim Lisansüstü Programları, Sinema ve Medya Araştırmaları Doktora Programı bünyesinde 23.06.2021 tarihinde savunulan "Death as a Reflection of the Nineteenth Century Spiritualism into Spirit Photography" başlıklı doktora tezinden üretilmiştir.