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The experience of colors, shapes and light in closed eye vision.

From Neuro-Science to Metaphysics -
Synesthesia – Phosphene – Mystical/Spiritual (the pineal gland)



By Anouk-Michelle Grégoire

I heard about synesthesia for the first time, in the context of recent classes through the Globe Institute. Lisa Rafel and Randy Masters classes, I believe. Though, I've experienced some forms of this phenomenon, I hadn't explored whether it had a word to describe it, a definition or diverse manifestations, until now.

Truly, I feel like I have opened a sweet kind of Pandora's box!

Looking into the Greek etymology of synesthesia, I've discovered that Syn is "together" and Esthesia or aesthesis is "sensations" - versus the familiar anesthesia which represents "no sensation".

Syn-esthesia, a "crossing of the senses" is a peculiar neurological trait or condition, which allows the stimulation of one sense to cause an involuntary reaction in one or more of the other senses.

Among the different types, there are **Graphemes** who associate **colors** to letters, numbers and punctuation, even days of the week and months of the year; **Chromesthetes** who **see** colors, shapes and light through sound and music; **Phonemes** who **taste** images. For example, the word "college" tastes like "sausage", "prison" like "bacon", etc. Every "synesthete" has characteristics which are specific to the individual. There would be up to 80 different types of synesthesia. Nearly every **combination of sensory experiences** or cognitive concepts is possible.

For a synesthete, the letter M can be blue; the number 5, red; and C#, green, ...

Some describe synesthesia as a disorder, though synesthetes happen to be endowed, among other gifts, with heightening connections, creativity and

superior memories. There is nothing wrong with a synesthete! The phenomenon is rather an ability to link seemingly unrelated things, which is the definition of a metaphor – seeing the similar in the dissimilar.

It has been thought that 1-4 % of the population would have this gift. But research is showing a growing number in time... According to François Richer, a neuro-psychology teacher from *Université du Québec*, in Montreal. Synesthesia would be 8 times more popular in artists, who excel at making metaphors, such as novelists, painters, composers, musicians... Also, synesthesia is more common in individuals with autism. This is well reflected in their contribution to exceptional talents.

Interestingly, it has been discovered that synesthesia runs in families. Though the development form of synesthesia is generally present from early childhood, there exist a few documented cases of acquired synesthesia, where individuals experience it for the first time later in life, following a head injury or a severe emotional trauma.

Still, non-synesthetes understand metaphors like “sharp cheese” or a “sweet person”. Even bad ventriloquists convince us that the dummy is talking! Sight, sound and movement map to one another closely. Watching a movie, we’re even tricked in believing sound is coming out of mouths, rather than technical sound speakers!

From about 1876-to 1895 there was a very present debate amongst scientists on the nature of synesthesia, and whether it was a form of pathology or an alternative manifestation of intelligence. It would seem that the first documented case was Georg Tobias Ludwig Sachs in 1812 (self-documented).

There exists a scientific process called phosphene. This would be described as “closed eye hallucinations”. It manifests as activity between neurons in the brain and your vision. The retina produces electrical charges. Many of us experience this in the comfort of our bed just before we sleep. We close our eyes, and the brain activity or stimulation we have experienced during the day, or during the past few hours or minutes continues to be experienced, creating visual flashes of light and/or darkness, multicolored flickering pixel-like spots, spiraling, random objects, pulsating shapes and colors.

In a calm mind or meditative state of being, the visual experience will tend to be of large spots, unified colors.

I remember as a child, nestled in bed with my eyes closed, I would often see a big peach colored spot appear. It was warm. It was gentle. It was comforting, joyful and safe! I remember feeling my soul smile and being profoundly grateful.

Also, in situations where I have received reiki treatments, for example, I have found myself experiencing shifting visual shapes and colors (with my eyes closed) as the practitioner moved their hands at a distance from my physical body over certain parts or organs. I have personally felt that this has augmented the healing experience by much! It has felt like an amplification of the intention! Studies show that when an individual is blind since birth, he or she does not experience phosphene. I would love to research further the effect of sound in relation to what they may “visually” perceive through their senses.

Research demonstrates that the pineal gland plays a big role in the visualization of these shape, color and light experiences. The ancient Egyptian *Eye of Horus*, also known as *Eye of Ra* is the identical representation of the third eye or pineal gland.

Ancient Egypt was much more advanced spiritually and esoterically than much of society today. The *Eye of Ra* is a symbol that was held in high regard and greatly valued. It was drawn on the forehead of sailors heading out to sea to assure their safety and protection.

René Descartes described the pineal gland as the “seat of the soul”.

In modern science, it was discovered that the pineal gland is made from crystal (in Greek – “Kristallos”, frozen light) – Intuitively, many spiritual and healing practices use crystals for meditation and healing. It’s interesting that we have crystal in our head! Cubic, hexagonal and cylindrical morphologies of calcite have been identified using scanning electron microscopy.

For those of us who are fond of Lapis Lazuli, it contains calcite!

The pineal gland is also made up of secretory cells called pinealocytes, which secrete melatonin and serotonin. All brain chemicals like dimethyl tryptamine influence your dreams, and are secreted and organized in your pineal gland. DMT would also be secreted by your pineal gland when you are born, and when you die. This manifests through light flashes before your eyes – your third eye. Psychedelics like ayahuasca and fungi offer this DMT - TRIP, as does experiencing an orgasm which also fires up neurons, creates a flux of ion and releases peptides.

Decalcifying our pineal gland is recommended for enhancing our health and mystical experience! I have added notes on how to do this at the end of my paper, which I invite you to explore!

Also, the pineal gland is another beautiful example of the Fibonacci ratio and sacred geometry, by where it is located in relation to the physical body! Mathematically, it’s perfect!

I could have gone on for three days about this wonderful subject...

Though as a conclusion for this presentation, I have prepared a sound experience for you to listen to, through which I'd like to invite you to pay attention to any type of sense stimulation you might have as you are listening, whether it be emotional, physical or visual. Preferably, I recommend you listen with your eyes closed and with head phones, if you have them.

The title of this piece, prepared for this presentation on March 16th 2022. is "Sky". You will hear sounds which I captured of the waves of the Baie des Chaleurs shores, in Gaspésie, Québec, where my younger sister lives; my voice superimposed; the vibration and percussion of a G note crystal bowl; a rain stick my aunt brought back from Peru as a gift; some finger cymbals/belly dancing bells which I improvised as tingshas; my breath; and the guitar playing of my friend Ray Montford.

I hope you will enjoy!

I am providing you with my email address to share your experience with me, if so inspired!

Luminous blessings,

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Some references or further interests:

Different types of synesthesia:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synesthesia#Signs_and_symptoms

Georg Tobias Ludwig : A colorful albino :

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20183209/>

Maureen Seaberg : <https://www.watkinsmagazine.com/synesthesia-spiritual-scientific-exploration> “So it could be that synesthetes are more in what you might call an altered state or a dream state or a quantum state.”

<https://www.gaia.com/article/pineal-third-eye-chakra>

Ahyawaska : *Banisteriopsis caapi*

<https://labblog.uofmhealth.org/lab-report/mystical-psychedelic-compound-found-normal-brains>

Uttar-Pradesh article – Dep. Of Neurosurgery <https://d-nb.info/1173516476/34>

How to decalcify the pineal gland: <https://scottjeffrey.com/decalcify-your-pineal-gland/?fbclid=IwAR0PUEbK4WKpY8vdcSmao1TYH8VOdWJTqXUjNScEPnCTD BDwIxsWf9-BIX4>

<https://alwaysinsearchoflight.tumblr.com/post/54959582201/sufficient-similarity-exists-between-the-masonic>

Sufu spiral dance pineal gland fibonacci <https://www.drterrywillard.com/pineal-gland-part-2-connection-to-spirit-and-activation/>

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Sensorium app : made to enhance your experience :

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.synesthesiameditation&hl=en_US

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Descartes and the Pineal Gland

First published Mon Apr 25, 2005; substantive revision Wed Sep 18, 2013

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pineal-gland/>

<https://mindbliss.com/pineal-gland-function-and-activation/>

“Recently, modern neuroscience has proven that pineal gland is not only the melatonin-secreting neuroendocrine organ which controls the circadian rhythm, but it also has mystical and energetic associations with spirituality.”

— The Platonic and Aristotle concepts highlighted the three types of souls concluding the importance of the heart as the center of control—“Phren.”³ According to them, the soul is outside the body and linked with the materialistic body with some part. It was Hippocrates, who changed their concept and said that soul resides somewhere inside the body. Hippocrates justified that it is the brain, rather than the heart, as the focal point of feeling and reason. The “soul” is the energy-generating part that coordinates the molecular, hormonal, physiologic, and chemical orchestra of the human body.

To paraphrase Robert Frost,

But yield who will to their separation,
my object in living is to unite
body, mind, and spirit,

as my three eyes make one in sight.

