

adelma von vay



Mark Demarest

THREE QUESTIONS ABOUT ADELMA VON VAY

International symposium on life and work of Adelma von Vay - Ljubljana, 03. december 2012

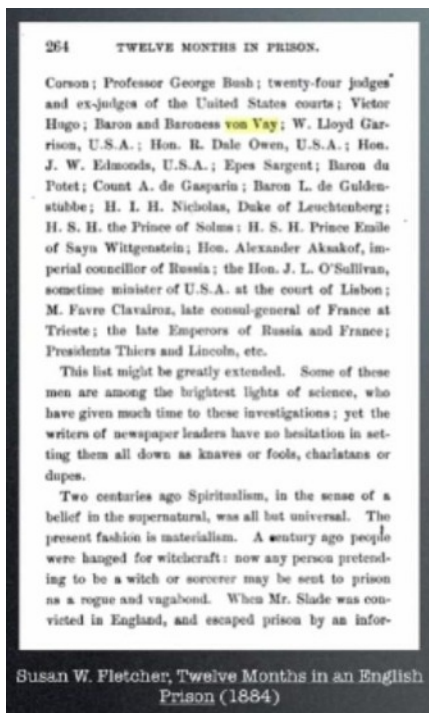
Hello everyone! I am Mark Demarest, the curator of the Emma Hardinge Britten archive. I would like to take few minutes today to talk to you of what I see as an interesting biblio-historical problems surrounding Adelma von Vay's "Spirit, Power and Matter", and particularly the English translation of that text. In my opinion, a close look at Von Vay's life and work accessions a set of questions to students of Spiritualism and Victorian occult that really require investigation and explanation. And I will explain why I believe that that is so and what some of those questions are.

We know that Von Vay's name was a name to conjure with. What most of the students of Spiritualism in English know about Von Vay they know by reading works of Emma Hardinge Britten. Emma conjures with Von Vay's name on a regular basis. Here, in an article she wrote, entitled "Mysticism and Madness", in the June 15th 1888 issue of her periodical *The Two Worlds*, she says ... Anyone who is

If the lovely Countess of Caithness, the beautiful Baroness von Vay; sparkling little Florence Corner, or her sister Kate Cook; bonny, good, and kind Mrs. Goldsbrough, of Bradford; good Joe Armitage; the sweet little ladies, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Bailey, and Mrs. Groom; jolly, happy, glorious Mr. Younger; Mr. Yates, of Nottingham; Mr. Eglinton; pleasant Mrs. Mellon, ever-kind and smiling Mrs. Wallis, or her genial husband—ALL MEDIUMS; together with some five or six hundred more in this country alone—should happen to read the above description, we are quite sure they will not feel the least bit offended; but they will either send him their portraits to convince their caricaturist of the pitiful nonsense he has been writing, or else believe—as our American cousins would say—that the man has been "poking fun at them." Whichever it may be, it is evident that he knows little or nothing of the subject he essays to write about, and in virtue of his ignorance and presumption would never have called forth this notice had we not felt it worth while to show to our adherents the positions of imbecility to which our antagonists are reduced when attempting to fight against "the outpouring of the spirit on all flesh."

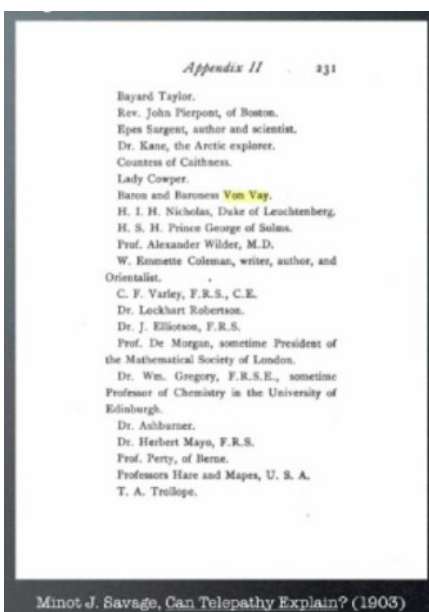
*If the lovely Countess of Caithness, the beautiful Baroness von Vay; sparkling little Florence Corner, or her sister Kate Cook; bonny, good, and kind Mrs. Goldsbrough, of Bradford; good Joe Armitage; the sweet little ladies, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Bailey, and Mrs. Groom; jolly, happy, glorious Mr. Younger; Mr. Yates, of Nottingham; Mr. Eglinton; pleasant Mrs. Mellon, ever-kind and smiling Mrs. Wallis, or her genial husband—all. mediums; together with some five or six hundred more in this country alone—should happen to read the above description, we are quite sure they will not feel the least bit offended; but they will either send him their portraits to convince their caricaturist of the pitiful non- sense he has been writing, or else believe — as our American Cousins would say—that the man has been "poking fun at them." Whichever it may be, it is evident that he knows little or nothing of the subject he essays to write about, and in virtue of his ignorance and presumption would never have called forth this notice had we not felt it worth while to show to our adherents the positions of imbecility to which our antagonists are reduced when attempting to fight against "the outpouring of the spirit on all flesh." (Emma Hardinge Britten, "Mysticism and Madness," in the 15 June 1888 issue of the *The Two Worlds*.)*

not a specialist in Spiritualism would probably not recognize most of these figures. I confess that having spent years of my life working on Anglo-American Spiritualism I have no idea who Joe Armitage is, but one of the things that strikes me about this passage is that Marie Countness of Caithness and Adelpma von Vay are sinedoctally Continental Spiritualism. And this is quite common for Emma Hardinge Britten. When she wishes to envoke names to stand for Continental Spiritualism she only really uses two names, and she either talks about Marie Countness of Caithness or she talks about Von Vay. And that is particularly important when you realize that Britten was financially tied to Caithness, Caithness funded *The Two Worlds*, and made capital available to Britten for other projects. So, Britten was very much beholden to Marie Countness of Caithness. And Adelpma von Vay occupies a similarly important position in Emma Hardinge Britten's panteon of Spiritualist Illuminaries.



Susan W. Fletcher, *Twelve Months in an English Prison* (1884)

But it isn't just in Emma Hardinge Britten works that we find Adelpma's name to be conjured with. We can find it in widely varying texts within the Spiritualist corpus. Here, for example, in 1884, is Susan Fletcher in her text "Twelve Months in an English Prison" conjuring with Von Vay's name, and Von Vay appears in very illustrious context, between Professor George Bush, the man who wrote the first important theoretical texts on Spiritualism, and Victor Hugo, the novelist, on the one hand, and on the other hand, Lloyd Garrison, Robert Dale Owen, judge Edmonds, Epes Sargent, the perrenist de Potet, and the list goes on. These are the Illuminaries. And she is conjuring with the Von Vay's name in a very problematic text which is essentially justifying why it is that she has to spend twelve months in English prison for practicing mediumistic fraud and theft.



Minot J. Savage, *Can Telepathy Explain?* (1903)


We can go to the other extreme, to a highly respectable text published another twenty years on, dr. Savage's "Can Telepathy Explain?" and we can find Von Vay again being conjured with a very similar list. There is Epes Sargent, Dr. Kane, the Arctic explorer, arguably commonlaw husband of one of the Fox sisters, and on the other hand we have the Alexander Wilder, W. Emmette Coleman, Cromwell Vairley, John Eliotson, William De Morgan, William Gregory, and these are the Illuminaries of the Movement. The central, canonical figures of Spiritualism. And Von Vay is right there, right in the midst of them.

If I take a broader view and I look at 15 hundred plus texts in the Standard Spiritualist and Occult Corpus, which are English texts only, I can find Von Vay referenced 43 times, in 43 distinct texts, from the early 1870's until 1917. Now, to calibrate that data point,

Zöllner, the author of arguably the most complex and troubling work of theoretical Spiritualism, that would be “The Transcendental Physics”, is referenced in 190 texts in that same corpus. Now, you might conclude that that means that Von Vay is relatively speaking insignificant, after all Zöllner is referenced in 190 texts and Von Vay is only referenced in 43, but these are two very different contexts, Zöllner had “Transcendental Physics” translated into English by C. C. Massey, one of the founders of the Theosophical Society. That text was broadly read by English speaking Spiritualists, it was broadly debated, it was very controversial, and it involved arguably the single most controversial medium of the second half of the 19th century, Henry Slade, the Slade writing medium, or in Zöllner’s case the Medium. So, here we have a lot of dense theoretical work on Zöllner’s part, being referenced in 190 texts and Von Vay who left us no theoretical work in English, who at the time of her death is referenced in 43 texts within that same corpus. So, my read of this data is that Von Vay was extraordinary important, given how little material written by Von Vay was actually available to Anglo-American Spiritualists during her own life-time. So, given her significance, which I think is uncontrovertable, we may not understand that, but we can’t deny that it is real, given her significance at least three interesting question occur to me.

Three Questions

- Given Von Vay’s significance...
- 1. Why was SPM not translated into English before her death?
- 2. Why was SPM translated into English in 1948, in Cincinnati, Ohio, by an unlikely trio of individuals?
- 3. What does the absence of an English translation of SPM prior to 1948 say about Von Vay’s material influence on Anglo-American occult thinking prior to that time?




The wrapper of the first American edition of SPM.

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The first is, why “Spirit, Power and Matter”, which I take to be her central theoretical text, not translated into English before her death? Second question, why it was translated into English in the war times 1948, in of all places Cincinnati, Ohio, and by, what I am thinking of being unlikely trio of individuals? And what does the absence of English translation of “Spirit, Power and Matter” prior to 1948 say about Von Vay material influence on Anglo-American occult thinking prior to that time? She is significant but we don’t know why. Her theoretical material is not widely available in English until 1948, yet she is exerting influence. What is the nature of that influence? Is it personal? Is she travelling a lot? Is she an active correspondent? How is she influencing the thinking of significant figures in the Spiritualist movement?

1. Why No English Translation Prior To 1948?

- Two answers:
 - Caroline Corner
 - Christian-Reincarnationist Spiritualism



Caroline Corner, circa 1895

incarnations of spirits, as a consequence of their spiritual fall in the existing organism and matter, and took their independent individual way of multiplication.

Equal to these material incarnations was the whole nature of these worlds of the sixth circle. The development of them is material from the beginning. Principally, the kind of development is always the same, even if the incarnations are materially more depotentiated and coarser.

In this way, the so deeply fallen spirits were placed between coarse material flesh-organisms. According to the law of descension they became similar to these, organically as well as materially. They retained their spiritual individual principle. They formed a transition, a link between animals and men and they were called animal-men. Such deeply fallen spirits could not have any other first incarnation, according to the law of spirit, power, and matter, which never makes jumps or exceptions, but creates a just and similar way.

In the course of rotations and of life periods, the first developed worlds of the sixth circle potentiated or purified themselves. However, all over in all planets where the deeply fallen spirits had arrived at the border of the contrast, the animal-human incarnation is the first one.

Naturally, these spirits have lost all consciousness of their past during the incarnation. They suffered the pain and struggle of death and a spiritual paralysis before their incarnations. The woman gives birth with pain. Her turn of life is short but manifold. The incarnations are permanent, until the spirit has again reached a level of intelligence, reason, and good will.

The separation of souls in these worlds is total. Since they are united spiritually by law, they meet and themselves again, according to law, after many incarnations and after the awakening of and desire for spiritual law.

Blinded by arrogance and stunned by sensuality, these spirits forgot the idea of God, and formed idols for themselves, according to their spiritual level.

The communication with higher spirits would have been

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Von Vay on reincarnation from the 1948 Shiller edition

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About the first question I think we can answer this one. Why was there no English translation prior to 1948? I will offer you two answers that I think explain that fact. The first is Von Vay's apparent choice of an agent. When you read about Von Vay in Anglo-American periodical literature during her life-time Caroline Corner is either in front of Von Vay, metaphorically speaking; she is the reporter or she is right next door. She is the person to whom other people point when they are talk about translations of Von Vay's work, in particular about her Diary. She is the person who more than anyone else appears to be the agent of Von Vay in England.

Now, Caroline Corner is, I believe, the sister in law of Florence Cook, the famous materialization medium. Caroline's brother Edward Algie Cook married Florence Cook, she becoming Florence Cook Corner. And I think that was Caroline Corner's entry into the Spiritualist community. We have first-hand accounts of Caroline participating in some of Florence Cook's materialization séances. She is clearly writing in the "Light" and the "Medium and the Daybreak" and other Spiritualist organs in the late nineteen eighties but she is moves to Ceylon, marries and stays in Ceylon till the death of her husband. When she returns to England in the early part of the twentieth century she writes on the occult topics in Theosophical periodicals and elsewhere, but she is much more a folklorist and a popular writer than a spiritualist.

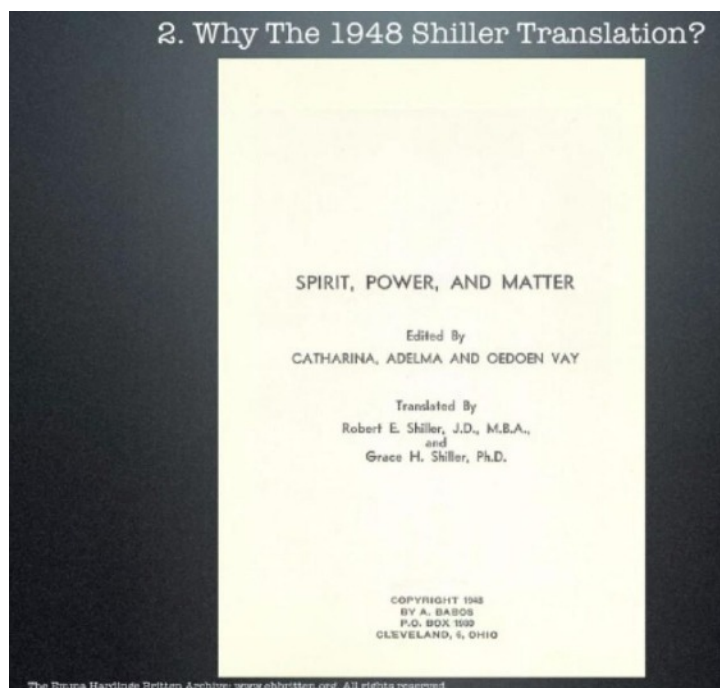
What that says to me is that Caroline Corner was neither a serious Spiritualist nor was she taken seriously as a Spiritualist by others Spiritualists. So, to the extent that Von Vay chose Caroline Corner to be her agent for English language publications she made a poor choice. Did she in fact make that choice, I don't know. Was Caroline Corner's representation that she was in the process of translating Von Vay's Diary an accurate one or not, I don't know? That doesn't help us to fully explain why there was no English translation of "Spirit, Power and Matter" prior to 1948.

But I think the content of "Spirit, Power and Matter" offers the rest of the explanation. And it is the very straightforward one. Von Vay was a Christian-reincarnationist Spiritualist. I can think of the top

of my head of really one other figure of similar stature who adopted that line, and it was interestingly enough Marie coutness of Caithness. But really Von Vay attempted to cross too many battle-lines in unifying Christian thought, Reicarnationism and Spiritualism into a coherent doctrine. The split between Christian and non-Christian Spiritualists occurred very early, by the end of the eighteen fifties, and non-Christian spiritualists were simply non interested in Christian doctrine, they were for the most part actively, aggressively anti-Christian. They partook of an earlier free-thought orientation, coming out of English and American thinkers and writers in the first half of the nineteen century. They were very much about debunking Christianity and/or attacking Christianity as precisely the kind of institutionalized dogma that Spiritualism wanted to avoid. And, of course, Reincarnationism was very much a French Spiritualist notion, but never gained significant acceptance in Anglo-American Spiritualism. And once the Theosophical Society became the force to be reckoned with, overtly by the end of eighteen eighties, Reicarnationism belonged as a world to the Theosophical Society, it was part of their super-structure, their ideolog, and Spiritualists were for the most part opposed to the Theosophical Society, in part because they were opposed to the notions about Reicarnation which undermined the linear, progressive movement towards the perfection of the Spirit which is at the heart of the Spiritualist thinking.

So, the short answer to the question: why there was no English translation prior to the 1948, is I think, Von Vay may have chosen an inappropriate agent in Caroline Corner, to the extent that she did choose Corner as an official agent, and the content of the "Spirit, Power and Matter" was unlikely to find any broad audience in the Anglo-American Spiritualist community. Non-Christian Spiritualists were unlikely to be interested in her Christian content, non-Christian and Christian Spiritualists were unlikely to be interested in her Reincarnationist content. Von Vay was pursuing a very sincretic, synthetic theory of Spiritualism that simply didn't have much of an audience during her own life-time.

So, my explanation for the lack of the publication of "Spirit, Power and Matter" in Von Vay's life-time doesn't go anywhere towards answering my second question; and it is the one that particularly disturbs me, and that is, why does the first English translation of "Spirit, Power and Matter" occurred in 1948.



Why do these three people, Robert E. Schiller, his wife Grace H. Schiller and Agnes Babos, the copyright holder and publisher of the work; why do these three individuals ban together in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the late nineteenth forties to produce an English edition of “Spirit, Power and Matter”.

Now, as some of you may know this kind of very small scale historical investigation is what I spent most of my time doing, and so this is in fact where my interest in Von Vay really came from. I did this as a background work for two of my colleagues who are also presenting at this conference, so that they would have an appropriate understanding on about, on the one hand, the relationship between Von Vay and Caroline Corner, and on the other hand, the origin of this particular text.

So, when I went to look at the 1948 Cleveland Edition of “Spirit, Power and Matter” things became very complicated very quickly. So, the work is translated by Robert Schiller and her wife Grace Schiller. At that time both of them are teachers. Grace will apparently continue to teach till the end of her life. Robert Schiller, on the other hand, would leave Academia and become an agent for the US Internal Revenue Service, where he spends most of his life before he becomes late in his life a paralegal. They are both clearly very well educated people. I believe, based on the inspection of the text, that did based their translation on the 1869 edition of “Spirit, Power and Matter” in German. They are clearly both capable of this translation because they were themselves both German. In fact they were German Jews who have left Germany in the late nineteen thirties in response to the rise of Hitler and nacism. They escaped relatively early and they clearly were part of a larger exodus of related individuals to Cincinnati in the late thirties because when Robert Schiller’s first wife and co-translator, Grace, dies in, as I recall, in nineteen seventies, Robert Schiller remarries and he remarries very quickly a woman named Julia whose maid name I was unable to determine. But Robert and Julia, who are together until the end of their lives, they commit suicide together, knew each other from childhood. Julia, like Robert and Grace, is very well educated, she is a concert musician and clearly has a deep intellectual pedigree, well beyond you might expect.

So, we have Robert and Grace Schiller doing translation, and the copyright is held, and so presumably the translation and publication are paid for, by woman named Agnes Babos who is a Hungarian imigrant who lives a good part of her life, until her death anyway, in Cleveland, Ohio, never becomes a US citizen. I was unable to obtain very much information about Agnes Babos, but she, as the Schillers, has an amazingly large amount of personal tragedy in her life, including the death of her son-in-law and her grand-child and the apparent insanity of her daughter. So, take that intrusting strange mix of people and add to it a man who is listed on the raper notes (?) for the first edition as Frank Szikossy, a Hungarian name. I think Frank is likely the Americanization of Ferenc, about whom I can learn absolutely nothing, there is no record whatsoever in public record sources in the US of Mr. Szikossy. Noone of that surname, no entry in the United States, no exit from the United States, nothing. As far as the public records are concerned this person has never stept foot inside the US, let alone spent any time in Cleveland, Ohio, which is not first port of call for the new imigrants in general case. I am inclined to speculate, and it is no more than that, that Frank, Ferenc Szikossy was not in the US at all, that the raper notes he wrote for the first edition he wrote from a foreign country, quite possibly from anyone of the countries that in Von Vay’s time made up her home stamping (?) grounds

And things are a bit more complicated than this. Normally, when two or three citizens get together to produce a small run self-published translation of what is after all a fairly obscure work of nineteen

century spiritual philosophy, normally you would expect that that book published in Cleveland, Ohio, would also be printed in Cleveland, Ohio, by a local job printer, but that is not the case with the first American edition "Spirit, Power and Matter". It is printed by the Progress Press of Brea, now Brea, in California. That in itself is startling and anomolous, but there is more. I can't find virtually no output from this Progress Press of Brea, California. From 1948 untill 1955, which appers to be entire operating history of this entity, I can only find four texts that are either printed or published. There is "Spirit, Power and Matter", there is the bibliography called "Desert Treasure", published in 1948, it is the publisher of record for a novel called "The Last Enemy", published in 1953 and written by a women named Rebecca True, I believe that is a suden (?) name, but I can't find anything either the novel or the author; and finally in 1955 they are the publisher of a book of poems called "Mince in the link" by Ethel Jacobson. Now, Jacobson unlike Rebecca True, E. I. Edwards and Frank Williams, is a writer of some note. She wrote frequently for Nature Magazine which was an important US publication. *Nature Magazine* kindly reviewed "Mince in the link" when it was published and it reviewed it favourably. I am inclined to speculate that there is some relationship between Ethel Jacobson, the writer, and the Progress Press of Brea, California, she might be an owner or an operator of that press, may have been, and therefore is quite likely a relationship between Ethel Jacobson with Agnes Babos, Grace Schiller and Robert Schiller. But the Progress Press is also problematic, it may in fact be an earlier incarnation of a similarly named organization, the Progress Press of Chicago, Illinois, which was active in Chicago in nineteen twenties which did publish some ? material and which was run by the man called Vernon T. Browns. That organization may in turn be the reincarnation of the Progress Press which was operating in Battle Creek, Michigan, in the earlier part of the twentieth century. Those of you who are familiar with the history of the American Spiritualism will have your bell run by Battle Creek, Michigan, because that is a hot spot for Spiritualists and Occult practices of one sort or another from the eighteen sixties onward. Several major movements, several famous figures operated out of Battle Creek, Michigan. If those three organizations are connected than there is in fact an occult slash lineage to the Progressive Press of Brea, California.

This is all I have been able to determine, and to be honest it took me far longer that I expected to produce this poverty striking result. It is fundamentally still a mistery why Robert Schiller, Grace Schiller, Agnes Babos and Frank Szikossy collaborated to produce an English translation of the "Spirit, Power and Matter" in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1948. The only plausible explanation that I can come up with is that some or all of them were involved in an international group of Spiritualists and/or Occultists who were operating out of Adelma von Vay's theorethical work, they were, for a lack of a better term, the Vayans. I don't have evidence for this hypothesis but this is my working hypothesis at present. Given these two facts, that there was not an English translation of Von Vay's theorethical work during her life-time and that the first time we see Von Vay's theorethical work translated into English is in 1948, in an unlikely place and by an unlikely group of people that occassions my third question which is: What sort of influence did Von Vay actually exert from the theorethical perspective?

3. What Sort of Influence Did Von Vay Exert?

- Her work was not available to Spiritualists and occultists who were unable to read German, prior to 1948
- The periodical coverage of Von Vay, in English, is notably silent on Von Vay's theoretical work, despite what Erica Georgiades rightly observes is Von Vay's **wide-ranging set of Spiritualist and occult practices**, and her **advanced mediumistic abilities** (e.g., fully-conscious automatic writing, multi-modal mediumship, astral travel)
- SPM reads, to me, very much like other mid-twentieth century theoretical occult texts, notably The Urantia Book (aka The Fifth Epochal Revelation) (1955) [another text with its origins in automatic writing, by an unknown individual known as the Sleeping Subject], and also has some (it seems to me) absolutely unique features: the elaborate numerological superstructure, for example
- Who read Von Vay between the late 1860s and 1948, in England and the US, and how did those readers co-opt and react against her theoretical work?

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We know, or I think that we know, that her work was not available to Spiritualists and Occultists who were unable to read German prior to 1948. And to be clear, that is in my estimation most Spiritualists and Occultists. Most Spiritualists and Occultists were not multi-lingual; those who were multi-lingual were not likely to read German at all.

When we look at the periodical coverage of Von Vay in English it is notably silent about her theoretical work. I think I explained why, because her theoretical work was contentious, it was both Christian and it was Reincarnationist, and this is despite, what Erica Georgiades has either already suggested to you or is going to suggest to you, namely that Von Vay had a very wide-ranging set of Spiritualist and Occultist practices and that she had very advanced mediumistic ability; she was not a typical medium. Not only did she delve deeply into the theoretical work but she also had very sophisticated skill set. She could engage in fully conscious automatic writing which is not the norm at the time when she is working, she was a multi-modal medium, she could both scry and write automatically at the same time, and she reports numerous examples of, numerous instances of her astral travel, which was a highly contentious topic during her life, by no means an orthodox Spiritualist belief.

When I read "Spirit, Power and Matter" it reads to me very much like other mid-twentieth century theoretical occult texts, and in particular I am thinking of one, the "Urantia Book", it is known also as the "Fifth Epochal Revelation", which was published in 1955. Now, those of you who don't know nothing about the "Urantia Book", if I pick your curiosity, ...?, this is nothing less than science fiction space opera meets another Testament of Jesus Christ. This is an extraordinarily complex work. And interestingly enough it is a text that is produced, in my view at least, exactly as "Spirit, Power and Matter" was produced. We know that "Spirit, Power and Matter" was produced with automatic writing. In the English version that process is described explicitly and they are in fact testimonials by people other than Von Vay herself to the matter of its production. The "Urantia Book" was similarly produced; it was by automatic writing, by an unknown individual who is referred to by Urantians as the Sleeping

Subject. The leaders of the Urantia movement for most of its life, Doctor and Mrs Sadler, really doctor and doctor Sadler, were very clear how it was produced, they were very clear that they were not the producers of it, and they referred to the individual who did produced the text as the Sleeping Subject. That person identity is a matter of some controversy.

There are a lot of similarities in my view between the cosmogony and metaphysical mechanisms of the “Urantia Book” and those of “Spirit, Power and Matter”. Now, that could be coincidental, but it is important to you to know that Urantians themselves have identified well north of one hundred other books that the “Urantia Book” borrows extensively from. And when I say borrow someone else could use the word plagerize. It strikes me as being possible to probable that the “Urantia Book” borrows from “Spirit, Power and Matter”.

And I think that could be a fruitful topic of investigation for someone who has more at stake in this particular activity than I do. Given those kinds of similarities there is also material in SPM which is in my estimation on the verge of being unique, and I am thinking particularly of the elaborate numerical super-structures that we find in the “Spirit, Power and Matter”. I fully confess they mean nothing to me. I am unable to make any sense out of them whatsoever. While I may be stupid I have the experience of a lot of texts in this general discipline in English between the late seventeen hundreds and the end of the second world war, and I have never seen a more elaborate numerical super-structure than one we encounter in the “Spirit, Power and Matter”. It is fascinating to me, I cannot find nor figure out where Von Vay could have gotten that kind of super-structure from. It appears to me to be a creation of hers, one that has very few precursors and very few imatators. So, I am very curious to know who read Von Vay in German or in other languages other than English between late eighteen sixties and 1948 in England or in the United States, and how those readers coopted and reacted against her theoretical work. That to me is a very important question, perhaps the most important of the three questions I’ve raised and here is why.

The Spiritualist Internationale

- There definitely was one (as Paul Johnson points out in his talk)
- The connections between (a) American Spiritualism, (b) Commonwealth Spiritualism and (c) the various Continental Spiritualisms are not completely, or commonly, understood, at present
- Von Vay is clearly an important node in the SI, but her connections and influence are incompletely understood
- I look forward to an increase in the work on Von Vay and to collaborating with anyone interested in the problem set I've outlined here.
- Several more extensive notes on this topic can be found at:
 - <http://ehbritten.blogspot.com>

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We have a problem in Spiritualist history generally and that is: we know that was the Spiritualist Internationale, an international Spiritualist movement. Paul Johnson either has or will point this out in his talk. Definitely was one, but we really don't understand the connections between American Spiritualism, Commonwealth Spiritualism, by which I don't mean only the Spiritualism in England, Scotland and Ireland, which are themselves different, or Wales Spiritualism for that matter, which is yet again different. We don't understand the relationship within the Anglo-American Spiritualism or its relationship to the various forms of Continental Spiritualism, because there are wide differences in belief theory and practice just between the French and Spanish versions of Continental Spiritualism; fractions of Nordic Spiritualism and Russian Spiritualism and yet more differences. We know that there was a network, and it was relatively attenuated network, there were relatively few important nodes that linked these national discourses together, and I at least am convinced that Von Vay was an important node in this Spiritualist Internationale, but her connections and influence I think are incompletely understood at best.

Was there a connection between Emma Hardinge Britten and Adelma von Vay? Without doubt, and it was a close connection; it was a connection as important to Emma as her connection with Marie countess of Caithness, but unlike her connection to Marie countess of Caithness, about which we know a great deal, we know nothing about the nature of the relationship between Emma Hardinge Britten and Adelma von Vay. We know nothing about a possibility of direct relationship between Von Vay and Helena Blavatsky, something that is equally important to us to understand. We know nothing about the relationship between Von Vay and Marie countess of Caithness, a woman with whom she would have had much in common, theoretically, geophysically, the works.

So, I was very encouraged to see this conference being formed. I look forward to an increase in the work on Von Vay and I am very interested in collaborating with anyone who is interested in the problem set I have outlined here. For those of you interested in more information there are more extensive notes on this topic with citations, they can be found on my blog at url: <http://ehbritten.blogspot.com>

Thank you very much for your attention.