



adelma von vay



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## ADELMA VON VAY AND ATTEMPT OF THEODICY

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

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Adelma von Vay's seductive book *Spirit, Power and Matter* [*Geist, Kraft, Stof*] is not entirely devoid of philosophical curiosity: although it is originated as a spiritual dictation, there are numerous themes that are found in traditional theoretical tractates. One of these is the problem of the origin and nature of evil, which solution is always closely connected with the general plan of ontology, in which frameworks it appears. "Pythia of Styria" presented her own theosophic experience by scientific and philosophical vocabulary, trying to defend the reality of an irrational by means of reason. In this article enigmatic spiritualism contained in Adelma von Vay's book is shown as a contemplative attempt of justification of God with description of His creativity, which by the force of primeval light overcomes the resistance of "outer darkness". This esoteric book undoubtedly is characterized by taste of theodicy.

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Baroness Adelma von Vay addresses us with truly strange book\*: we are dealing with a text in which she presented an entire ontological vision which does not find its roots in the school tradition of philosophy. If we believe the notes from the biography of author and history of impact of this writing, *Spirit, Power and Matter* is not the scientific treatise, but spiritual *dictation* (letter or word that is dutifully transmitted without alteration). It is beyond-reason tradition and mediation. The role of mediator does not belong to any record evidence – writer himself becomes medial being. (It is not therefore clear who dictated to Adelma, i.e. *what* was the nature of spirits that dominated her. We consider that it is always useful to make difference between non-rational sobriety and state of stupefaction by the irrational, especially in this periphery realms of pneumatology. The creators of writing themselves give us in "Epilogue" possibility of designation for and against. This remark we should accept as a statement of *caution*, rather than pharisaic condemnation with allegedly height of neutral interpreter). Whatever decision we make in this regard, there remains beyond doubt the first, seemingly self-evident Adelma's message: man *is* medium. This thought should properly understand in general terms. *Every* man is place of refraction of spiritual rays, the battleground of numerous and diverse influences. Countless possible experiences of Order are not lost in lukewarm porridge of indefinitely idea of Spirit. If the Spirit remains undefined in its substance, deceivers will grab the empire and treasure will remain

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\* *Geist, Kraft, Stof*

empty. Man is one who bears spiritual Truth, which does not mean that man awoke and discerned Truth in advance. With this in view, the most important thing is to recognize and follow the distinction between Good and evil. Our medial nature is most often concealed and distorted, but the intervening power of man never dies down. That is the first attitude which reader without any doubt takes (or reads) from these records that are often inaccessible to the faculties of common imagination. (Perhaps the mentioned impression is strengthened by my poorly ingrained in physical and geometrical mysteries of being, wherewith this book is full of). One of the ways of our medial role undoubtedly may be recognized in *hermeneutic* transfer and exchange of collected and always just chosen meanings of some work. Such a procedure arises particularly in reading and evaluating hermetic texts. There is a danger of wrong derivation and wandering. Therefore, in this paper only philosophically interesting features of Spirit, Power and Matter will be highlighted. We will try to obviate, as far as it is possible, esoteric things in this book by the translation them to the conceptual structure known to us.

It seems that dictation of Adelma von Vay has features of nonclassical theodicy. Work is actually a bold description of God's creativity, the justification of highest Reason that reveals through spiritual meanings [*logoi*] of the world. With unconcealed metaphorically tone of biblical sayings, here elaboration gradually becomes the doctrine of creation which is spiritualized and its (primarily unconscious) saturation by the divine potential. The world begins from creative Reason and the world is harmonized with his first ideas. The fall of cosmic order in blindness and chaos is caused by *self-will* of creatures. The ontic falls in meontic; counter-law resists law. Furthermore, evil is "moving" in order of Good. After a very long movement occurs conciliation with the first Principle. Finally, circle of justification of God and thoughtful design that precedes all the intricate cosmogonic "rotations" are closed. God overbalances a rebel ("electrical") power of creatures. Adelma's book discusses the return of harmony and restoration of once disorganized totality. Inasmuch as everything created is in itself split (dual) there is a need of admirable Spirit, Power and Matter which will overcome that repartition and difficult fracture. Adelma's prompters teach that everything existing in its singularity, each individual of organic-mechanical<sup>1</sup> unity is a sort of rational mirror of nature and mindfulness of God as a *primum mobile*. *Primum mobile* himself remains immobile and unchangeable, but not absent as in the systems of deism. Symbolically, God is at the very beginning of the Adelma's book represented as a *point* which should be clearly distinguished from the blank, without dimension "beginning". The Creator is "point" as "realistic in abstract".<sup>2</sup> These terms require clarification. Baroness in everything existent finds a unique three-part structure of the spirit, power and matter which could be viewed from three different,

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<sup>1</sup> *Spirit, Power and Matter* removes habit of mechanical and organic separation. According to Adelma's apprehension, nature becomes and develops as a lawful union of regularity which is appropriate in mechanism, whereas at the same time something inspired and revived. In this way unknown spiritualist co-authors of this text remain in the vicinity of modern philosophical spirit flows.

<sup>2</sup> For this occasion we recall the words of Paul Florensky who presented an interesting interpretation of the point in his unpublished work *Symbolarium*: "In ontology the point signifies Principle, Unit, First Cause; it is ontological Center from which everything turns. It is An Active Principe, Spirit, Reason, God the Father, *Yod* of Kabbalistic philosophy which expresses itself with dotty letter *yod*. So it comes to the male principle which in itself is not detach a women's supplement, and like a lot of power, in androgynous manner he is born of himself. But that fullness of power, before which everything shined and born nothing, from the point of view of the latter, from the world of manifestations (phenomenon) itself is evaluated as Nothing, as En-sof, as a principle that can be reached only *via negationis*, as a subject of apophatic theology; the point is symbol Unnamed, Unknowable, etc. (Paul Florensky, *Sochineniya*, t. II, p. 582).

but inseparable sights. Namely, author differentiates both in God and in creatures: 1) pure reality – clear *to be* or existence; 2) concreteness – the realization of that real, i.e. the “how”; 3) abstraction – as the union of the first and second characters of being. We are accustomed to think about “abstract” as it is something that deviates from the present and given, as it somehow swallows and annihilates. We want to abolish or overcome the abstract principles. In Adelma’s book abstraction is, however, completion of the concrete, the fulfillment of the Eminent existence in its otherness. As far as word about being of God is concerned (or about being as such), baroness von Vay claims that it realizes itself in the form of spirit, power and primeval light (*Urlicht*). Abstract meaning of that trinity does not imply a negation of the specific content, just as the reality is not regiment and listless “is”. Abstraction is more a confirmation of God’s being: the spirit is manifested as love, the power as “vibration” and primeval light as “assimilation”.<sup>3</sup> Here we find again unusual game of signs. Do not forget that abstraction is related to self-expression in his “otherness”. In order to have better understanding of this, it is necessary to reflect on the legacy of modern philosophy.

The celebrated beginning of modern philosophy is: *I am*. In thinly determinate congruence with declaration of Yahweh in Old Testament, the guiding thought were based, particularly in the German idealism of unquestionable identity that is realized in what arises from itself: the plot of nature and history. Using Adelma’s vocabulary we may say that abstract *theory* was way of assimilation of reality beyond I, her *occupation*, where the very otherness of the other is actually deleted. The other “transforms” into the *same*, but *Ding an sich* remains in unapproachable shadow of cognition. Schopenhauer’s teaching gives the most graphic and at the same time the darkest pessimistic expression to that contemplative attitude.<sup>4</sup> Modern consciousness assimilates even the Creator of the world. The late Schelling, therefore, driven by anthropomorphic prejudice, in logic manner strived to conquer what is extra-logic in God: for him God is firstly “egoist” and then secondly in the higher potency - Love.<sup>5</sup> With such project he initiated a strange movement in God’s being, whereas *personally* existence of God he observed (according to some “analogy from above”) as a perfect shape of *our* personality. For this reason, he could not avoid the consequence of “evil in God”. In the visions of Adelma von Vay there is no such correspondence, but it seems that she still keeps her way of analogical mirroring. Why it will be necessarily to attribute the trigon spirit-power-matter to God himself, if he does not want to be “manacled” by the triad that is foundation of objects within this world? First of all, we have in mind the “material” aspect of God’s existence – primeval light. Meaning of that aspect is enigmatic. Do we use primeval light to appoint essence of all created before creation (the world in God’s idea, “interior”, perfect form of the world) or we conjure up the inexhaustible presence of God (Spirit) in spiritualized universe as his desirable other? Is the matter “part” of God’s being or “primeval light” as a symbol reminiscent of the primordial “let it be” which survives despite repeated denials and resistance? Do we think here

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<sup>3</sup> Adelma von Vay, *Spirit, Power and Matter* [in slovenian edition: *Duh, sila, snov*, trans. Jan Ciglencečki, Matic Kastelec, Don Ciglencečki, KUD Logos, Ljubljana, 2011], p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Unequalled pessimism such awareness experienced blooming at the moment when “the order and connection of ideas” (in which demiurge edited “the order and connection of ideas”) stood up against their own “luminosity”. Rise of humanity in Enlightenment ended by revolutionary atrocity; ideas became petrified ideology. Thus, through a rough simplification, can be represented the arch of evil in modern history of human’s spirit. In developing this thesis, we will move from the topic of our essay, but we will certainly be closer to the solution of a “political theodicy”.

<sup>5</sup> F.W.J. Schelling, *Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen*, in serbian edition: *Filozofija slobode*, Plato, Beograd, 1998, p. 21.

about light as the name of God? Is the primeval light character for One who himself includes all? If so, *wherfrom then is evil?* Who and why it allows and permits? What flavor of theodicy is found in the writings of Mrs. von Vay?

Firstly, it is necessary to affirm that God's world protects and maintains *logos* as his way. "Primeval law" of God is revealed in nature law. All cosmic (spiritual, powerful and material) is formed *outpouring* of primeval light (eternity) in the created, limited and time-existent. Primeval light is principle of *Logos*; the transcendence that *descends* into a world of immanence. This descent is beginning of the world. By the creation which is appropriate to the Logos "other" is assimilated, i.e. is made *similar*. Accordingly, in the writings of Adelma von Vay, theodicy is also *cosmodicy*, the justification of the world which is in its hidden ground similar to God. This foundation in its nature is good.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the author *wanting* to make things schematic (of which we believe that *should not* be schematic) sometimes writes attitudes that suggest *consubstantiality*, rather than similitude of world to the God's being. Her way of writing undoubtedly reveals a tendency towards pantheism. Of course, there was not a simple form of pantheistic doctrine by which empirical caught world is identical with God himself. It is obvious that in this case every theodicy will be either unnecessary or impossible. Contrary to the experience which is polluted by evil, opposite to dark appearance of the world, Adelma von Vay anticipates the light noumenal side - "hiding place" of primeval light. From this hiding place opportunities and *powers* arise and they are able to ostracize and destroy evil. The force by which God works in the creation is called "vibration". Thereby *the nonviolence of assimilation* is emphasized; the world is invited to choose the Logos who is inscribed in it, although he is not obtrusive as voracious elemental fire.

Eclectic writing of *Spirit, Power and Matter* confuses us in regard to role of *nothing*. Schelling was certainly right when he named the question of non-being as a true "cross of every philosophy". If "the nothing" in Adelma's teaching is the name for matter to which God inspires life, does it mean that the dead matter (i.e. death itself) co-exists with Him. It seems that in some places author is really fond of such view. From there is the talk of inanimate nothing, which "wakes" and takes ecumenical looking due to the inspiration of God. Seemingly, God takes a demiurge figure. On the other hand, this description can be understood as a picturesque view of thought which is said on the same occasion: "The matter without life principle is nothing, zero."<sup>7</sup> This means that the matter cannot be without One; the matter just by creating according to logos law comes into existence. God acts because of love (for love and primeval law are the same) and the result of that action is enlivened matter. If this interpretation is correct, the term "spiritualized matter" would be pleonasm. Matter does not exist out of spirit, matter lives in spirit because the Spirit is nothing but Life. The view-point on living matter strongly opposes the materialistic assumptions. On the difference laconically pointed Kant: "Hylozoism imputes life to everything; materialism, carefully considered, kills everything."<sup>8</sup> According to Adelma von Vay insight, the triad which is established by God is positive and absolute essence, the prototype of reality; everything that is out of divine existence is *relative*. In other words, by the painting of triple structure in even the tiniest part of the universe the connection or relation (*relatio*) between the Creator and creation is kept. Omnipresence of "primeval light" is a principle that recognizes the fact that all material

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Duh, sila, snov*, p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 53.

<sup>8</sup> I. Kant, *Dreams of a Spirit-seer, illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, Swan Sonnenschein & co./The Macmillan co., London/New York, 1900, p. 57.

is invited to vigilance and watchfulness, i.e. the world is not just the sum of self-sufficient and self-made existence. Obstinate “I (by myself) am” as exposed, turned upside down “primeval law” means the supremacy of death and *incurable* evil.

At the same time, however, we must distinguish self-sufficiency, (pseudo)autarky from relative autonomy. Intra-world being exists in harmony with over-being Artist. Consequently, the beginning of the world is reflection of harmony that belongs to God by nature, because “it was all harmony, triad-sound.”<sup>9</sup> Being made by free decision (God’s decision that will mind about his own primeval law), the creature also is free and able to sever the relationship and come back (temporarily or permanently) into the jaws of non-being. The creature can choose Good or evil, non-being or Being. Because of that volatility of choice, absence of predestination for one or another, in the realm of creatures rules “relative dualism”.<sup>10</sup> The world can “act toward” God *as though* the relationship between them (longer) does not exist/ is not valid, but the reality of the relationship will not be abolished forever by wrong choice or existential miss. Dualism is relative because it is temporary and resulting from chronological way of being. If we look “reality in abstract” *sub specie aeternitatis*, the cleft of creation ceases to be insurmountable given. Curative philosophical term of aspiration toward overcoming of duality (which, if we declare it for law, doomed to *Weltschmerz*) and monistic “happy science” of metaphysical optimism we find in the teaching of Semyon Frank. This famous thinker in the twentieth century developed system of *monodualism*, which internal logic does not annul God’s or creaturely freedom.<sup>11</sup> For our topic, it is important to note that evil (as radical no to every love, energy of Logos) never causes a fracture (*Bruch*) in the being of God. Only if the universe ruled by “dual” proclaims it for our only habitat, evil can be considered as eternally tyrant. Evil in its essence is a *sprightly effort against Life*, the effort that “non-existent establishes himself as being”<sup>12</sup> Therefore *all-unity*, i.e. the One and only principle that is present in all must (from created being point of view) look as dummy, but not “perfect” harmony.<sup>13</sup> Semyon Frank is not credulous or blind, and therefore rightly observes: “Harmonious, divinely all-unity of being is intersected by deep cracks, abysses of non-existent, abyss of evil. All-unity is *flawed unity*, what is empirically demonstrated.”<sup>14</sup> Adelma von Vay went from similar intuition describing “fracture” which is the act of God’s blinded “firstborn”, demons. What causes discomfort and confusion when reading Spirit, Power and Matter is the tendency to somehow *justified* crack in being. And again we are confronted with doubts: Does not the cosmodycy (defense of God with picture of

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<sup>9</sup> *Duh, sila, snov*, 57.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Semyon Frank, *Nepostizhimoe [The Unknowable]* in: *Sochineniya [Writings]*, “Mysl”, Moscow, 1990, p. 315.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>13</sup> To the gallery of philosophers of all-unity here we join Evgeniy Trubetskoy, who in his theodicy, as described in the book *The Meaning of Life* notes: “We have seen that our reality is moving from non-existent into being, acting as crossing, it participates in both – in the darkness of non-existent from which is born and in the eternal light to which it aspires. However, the ascent of the world from nothingness to perfection and fullness is not realized in a straight line. The world’s process is not a painless evolution. The struggle of opposite possibilities and aspirations which takes place in it turns into a way of disaster with many obstacles, deviations, and lows of adversary. (Evgeniy Trubetseckoy, *Smysl zhizni*, “Respublika”, Moscow, 1994. p. 109).

<sup>14</sup> Semyon Frank, *op. cit.*, 317.



world-in-God) defend the *evil* as an integral (and perhaps even necessary!) part the natural law? How, after all, “primeval law” then be rid of his negative contra-reflection? From this scheme follows that evil spirits are actually accomplices in creation; God appears only *ex machina* to correct errors which free agents of natural world consciously or unconsciously do. Negative answer is probably hidden in Adelma’s invocation of God’s *mercy*. Like sometime olden Leibnitz, baroness from Slovenske Konjice tries to equalize law of nature and law of mercy, grounded them in the Reason of Creator. Mercy is precisely innermost “abstract” (not tale, “bad supplement”). Mercy is power which toward itself pulls and *comprises* unnumbered multitude of creatures. In other words, omnipresent Logos indeed chooses to endure evil (though *is not subject of evil*); “primeval law” of love *tolerates* pressure of counter-law which *basically* has not power and so as “*parasite of being*”<sup>15</sup> repeatedly breaking on its own cliff. Counter-law is possible only in opposition, antagonism, resistance to perfect Meaning! Malice is powered by Good’s juice/rays, turning them against their giver. The evil spirit is not ungrounded being; it is just trying to establish itself by constantly speaking maliciously *no* to its desolated foundation (spirit of Good). In this denial rests the pain of evil/unholy creature – “dark memory”<sup>16</sup> In the language of the *Spirit, Power and Matter*, the way of evil is side-track of “depotential”, while the path of theodicy (of the creation itself) and shining of grace (spirit of the law) is equated with “increasing/involution”. The evil has already defined as the inability to achieve the Logos, weakness of stability in Good, as a will toward non-being and upside down drift of natural powers (e.g. Maximus the Confessor). The depotention is not “perfect” way of time lasting being. It just shows beclouded memory, freely denial of “primeval light”. All-involving activity of God’s mercy (pure “magnetism”) is the victory of *divine energies* in the world. Return of the world in the order of Truth. The universe is paradise *in its task*,<sup>17</sup> whereas in a *given* situation the universe “all lies in evil” and the temptation of collapse constantly threatens: bottomless hell. Why is this so? We should bear in mind two mutually exclusive meanings of “depotention”. The first is related to the loss of power (evil and deficient) and the other is consisted of voluntarily admission/choice of your own weakness. Good is *apparently* devoid of power. Therefore, in the cosmology of baroness von Vay “primeval law” is entailed in front of the dummy of law. We know that demonic spirit is different from angelic (and *divine*) precisely because it never *disavows* power, although essentially it is not deprived from the beginning. The spirit of evil do not want the most exceptionally denial, it stubbornly tells him defiantly not! The reason is thematic simple, but hardly attainable: the most denial is proper to God alone and pious (ennobled) nature filled with *true Eros* and desire. Adelma von Vay seeks to show that the negation of the negation of God (if it is allowed to say so) even involuntarily subjected to the law of endorsement, affirmation, i.e. to the “primeval law” of *love*. Hereof St. Isaac the Syrian testifies from his mystical, but orthodox horizon. Indeed there is only Love, it is comprehensive and omnipresent, the *foundation* and breath of all-unity; only irremediably evil creatures, ghosts of resistance and dissidence feel this love as “eternal torment”. It is the one of the possible solutions of theodicy (resolution problem of *origin* and *outcome* of the evil) that does not linger on reasoning and calculating.

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<sup>15</sup> Sergius Bulgakov, *Svet nevecherniy [The Unfading Light]*, “Respublika”, Moscow, 1994, p. 228.

<sup>16</sup> *Duh, sila, snov*, p. 143.

<sup>17</sup> Op.cit., p. 197.

In the writing *Spirit, Power and Matter*, as we said, the law (of nature) and mercy are essentially equal. Mercy is the penetration of the supernatural into natural order; this penetration serves to return wrong course of events, caused by “fracture” and will for chaos, in the flute of harmony. What is the ground of this ontologically “fracture”? Evil is an offshoot of the free will for negation, but it is not shown as the negation of primeval light “per se” (God’s secreted), but those potencies through which God dwells in every grain of the creation. Accordingly, within Adelma’s system we can differentiate primeval light in specificity of God’s being (i.e. the fullness of his realitas) from primeval light which embodies and realizes in the world becoming God’s “exponent” in material reality. In this way we avoid materialization and utmost compensation of God and cosmos. “Involution” by mercy is overcoming of fracture, the healing, in which the aforementioned *dark memory* is transformed in the light figure of the world. “Sufficient reason” for triumph of primeval law (harmony) over counter-law (disharmony), over the spirit of opposition that *purposeless* wants to be *rival* spirit, equally divine, baroness von Vay finds in *natural* structure of beings. In fact, All has its own logos by nature, everything is received rays of God’s light. This is a higher purpose of duality in cosmic duration. Not only “dual” is one who chooses evil; there is one that is open to the Light (because it is not “tight” in a selfish existence). The ontological basis of duality, in contrast to evil ranks, does not lie in the fact of choice. Before this choice (lower division) is “temporal” and “valuation” dual character of mundane being. It does not exist “in itself” (just as matter is impossible “as such”) but it owes its existence to the Logos (“primeval light,” “primeval law”) which is always residing in it. Duality is inscribed in the being of the world, because the world, from strictly ontological point of view, never exists *alone*. There is only “world in God” which self-knowledge necessarily runs gradual. Self-conscious or “increasing/involution” we can even call *theocosmodicy*. Seen from the perspective of the divine, the world is already a paradise, but in fallen being salvation – full assimilation, theodicy, *theosis* – reveals only as “future”, not yet realized harmony.

Let us look at how non-violent assimilation occurs. Adelma von Vay believes that *miracles do not exist*, and that everything can be explained by the law. In all appearances which are in the plane of *doxa* are shown as miracles, there is only *literal* permission given to the nature to be what it already *is* – realm of primeval law that is in the law senses and by the law realizes. The miracle is, paradoxically speaking, return of harmony that is already here. Positive meaning of that disturbing, principled negation of miracles, through which Adelma at least for the moment (*discursively*) comes closer to the spirit of counter-law, could be expressed by saying that the whole logoi order is in fact a great miracle. Platonic heritage helps us here: the *presence* of God in the world and *participation* of world in the reality of God is the *source* of all other miracles, through which in *no way disturb* the nature in its normal state, but only break pathology of self-indulgence and closing into the borders of mere “herebeing”. The law is not abolished, but *fulfilled*.<sup>18</sup> Similarity of one Adelma’s saying with key physical settings of Leibniz is

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<sup>18</sup> In his explanation of this phenomenon russian Christian philosopher Sergei Bulgakov claims that miracle is not a new creative act of God, but part of the existing causal sequence. With this in view he writes: “Causality is logos of the world which law is logical connection with all, in its continuity. In the causal sequence, or more precisely, in the infinite causal sequences which express the overall relationship, we have the presence of various types of cause, counting here that causality through freedom. However, all these different causes are equally of the world, they are grown in the life of cosmos and from it they are understandable. Similarly, the miracle is cosmic and legal like all natural phenomena. His character is by no means consists in without-causality and beyond-cosmic, but only in a specific causality, and ultimately, in relation to the space it has be accepted as a natural, rather than supernatural, and the more as against the nature. In other words, the miracle is not related to the creation, but the God’s deliberation about world. But God as someone who cares does not act

conspicuous: nature does not make leaps. In accepting such an understanding, the baroness gave his theodicy slightly different taste from the one we found in rich heritage of theology. She does not deal with miracles which exempt from evil (there is no referring to examples from the Gospels, e.g. resurrection). Divining in the secrets of nature and inquisitive trust in the powers of primeval light which is pledged in the *creation* is closer to her. For those clues “natural grace” there is also “sufficient reason” and Adelma finds it in the mode of existence of creation.<sup>19</sup> As we have already said, the duality is not necessarily collapse and opposition – it is invited to be ascent and accordance. Nonviolence of assimilation - through which one can achieve existential, perfect harmony - has a foothold in the “logical structure”, i.e. in the relation between the Creator and the world. God (who is reviving Principle) inspires nature and brings the spirit of life in it and so arises being within this world. The life principle (stated, for instance, through biological and cosmological knowledge) represents clue or expression of primeval principle. Matter, to remind, was *nothing* until it moved by the giver of life. In the same way, the created spirit becomes a *living spirit* owing to God’s inspiration. Following game of words the theodicy of Adelma von Vay gets another important accent: light of the living spirit (*Odem*) was named odic light (*Odlicht*). The whole world is invited to be a poem, an ode which by singing responds to an undeserved gift. Psalmist said kind of “existential imperative”: “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord” (Book of Psalms, 150). By ascending to God, the life principle becomes clear mental principle, *flown* with God’s primeval light.<sup>20</sup> Refusing such ascent, *demons have become the lowest melodious creatures under the sky*. But the music that exalts sphere eventually bears the victory.

The light of an ode is synergistic correcting wrong way, the return of “rotation” in a reality which is “derotate”. If these expressions are understood metaphorical and metaphysical, it shows that good will is turned to rank Good and is the one that moves in the circle of God’s actions, nearby sublime. It is, strictly speaking, the real *media* (instrument) through which to creation is returned the forgotten powers. So we finally come to the question of man. Adelma von Vay (and this is definitely the weakest part of her teaching) insists on *panspiritism*. The ancient belief that “everything is full of gods” here blends into “everything is full of ghosts”. They have been awarded such an important role in the presentation of cosmogony and theodicy, and even a man subjects himself to their laws. Reading *Spirit, Power and Matter*, we sometimes have an impression that we are a toy in the hands of ghosts. The man here is not subject of all-unity (self-conscious “I am”<sup>21</sup> is almost subordinate to parallel psychological phenomena), but he became a member of the infinite series of natural objects on which the law

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in the world by violence over it, fixing and changing the principles of its existence, but only directing through spiritual causality, his natural, so to speak, mechanical causality. In this union of spiritual causation – through freedom, and mechanical – through necessity, the character of world’s legality is consisted. The world is not a mechanism, but an organism that grows and lives. This connection between spirit and nature, spiritual-natural structure of the world, where the spirit can be subjugated and captured in the flash, but the flash can obey the spirit, and it represents permanent miracle of the world, miracle of miracles, as the basis of each marvelous thing.” (Sergius Bulgakov, *Relics and Miracles*, in serbian translation: *O evanđelskim čudima*, “Logos”, Belgrade, 1996, p. 14-15).

<sup>19</sup> Such confidence in the logos of nature is proper to even magical consciousness; from that fact some authors (such as Bulgakov and Florensky) developed the statement that Platonism as a world view grew out of imminent, pre-philosophical connection with the “soul of the world”. It is precisely that connection, that closeness, in their opinion, completely lacking in modern naturalism which is usually tantamount to expulsion (superhuman) Idea from the game of world.

<sup>20</sup> Does it mean that Adelma’s ideal of *Potenzierung* (increasing/involution) is the unity of all fused into one, which features of creation lose, as opposed to “without confusion and indivisible” unity that principled keeps the difference?



of triad is implanted and lasts. In contrast to philosophical and theological tradition, where the man is awarded by honorary role, in writing of Adelma von Vay human being is equal with all other cosmic elements. Dilemma remains: Is the man top of the creation or completion of (free) fall?

Man as a medial, what we mentioned in the beginning of our essay, Adelma sees in the sharing of knowledge unapproachable to “work of term”. Medium is not hermeneutical (which seems acceptable starting point), but *unconscious* carrier of messages that have beyond logical character, but, surprisingly, should serve to the *logic* of the world. It is not entirely clear whether the truth, in the opinion of von Vay, is transmitted exclusively by the dictates which she was exposed. A separate issue concerns the lack of developed reconciliation between the panspiritism and *panlogism*. It is certain that we should avoid extremes where Kant was succumbed, saying that “the appeal to the immaterial principles is subterfuge of bad [lazy] philosophy”.<sup>22</sup> But philosophical laziness can be equally proper to those notional composites which originate from non-rational level of being. Therefore, we must keep ourselves at all times from confused, obscured performances. Casting aside cramps of rationalism, we have to accept clarity and perspicuity of *higher order*.

For the final evaluation of Adelma’s version of theodicy is also important a distinction that sets her work in relation to the Christian tradition. The triad of spirit, power and matter *is not translatable* to the teaching of the Holy Trinity. The structure is similar, but character is essentially changed. Here and there we have three in unity. In both cases, the highest element of the triad is unavailable to reception, can be expressed only indirectly (through nonviolent power/powers). Traditional theology, however, sees in Logos enhypostasized Christ, and only then basic/law of world order (what this rich word means, among other things, in ancient philosophy). To such insight, in his way, was even Hegel faithful.<sup>23</sup> In chapter 36. Adelma suggests that the ghosts (presumably human) which are related to “the firstling” (say: *angel*) different from them in essence.<sup>24</sup> How it can be reconciled with the thesis of mapping/stamping of spirit, power and matter as unique triad that is repeated all over in creation? Is there word about the same essence which does not allow hierarchy and jumps? What Adelma’s “system” moves closer to traditional Christianity is belief in the spiritual animation of man and distrust of a strictly materialistic outlook of science. Significant deviation reflected, however, in the absence of senses for *hypostatic* God’s being. Originally trinity is, like God of philosophers, very *impersonal*. This confirms the rhetorical question that we find at the very end of the book: What the name, in fact, means in the Universe?<sup>25</sup>

It is also noticeable that the triad of spirit, power and matter, applied to the human being, in the writing of baroness von Vay has a clear Platonic shape. Man is made up of spirit, soul and body which must be harmonized. (It is again, as you can see, on the central notion of *triad-sound*). Distortion, disruption

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<sup>21</sup> A little earlier we understood attitude “I am” as the beginning of evil. Here we have in mind inalienable self-consciousness which serves to Good.

<sup>22</sup> Kant, op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>23</sup> *Logos* as excellence of personal existence includes “analogy from above” which has been strange to Schelling, as we have seen. God’s person is not seen in the light of “dark element”, some *difficulties* that exist in it, but human person is determined with respect to the person of God (as the source and model).

<sup>24</sup> *Duh, sila, snov*, p. 206.

<sup>25</sup> *Duh, sila, snov*, p. 143. (underlined by M. G.)

of this sequence is the feed of evil. Previous strict evaluation on Adelma's conception of man as a puppet in the hands of others could be mitigated by saying that we are as people free beings, and that freedom consists in respecting the laws of our own ontological structure. Our spirit must be superior to the soul, and the soul must rule over body. Perfectly "mimesis" the principles of the world can only be achieved in the ladder, where the spirit becomes alienated assimilated by the forces of Spirit, and wild instincts are turned into expressions of Light. From all this arises *simple* task of theodicy. Instead of proper debates about nature of evil, *man ought to do everything in his power to overcome and transfigure evil in its own nature.*

Translated into English by Zlatko Vujanović.