

# **PSYPIIONEER**

An Electronic Newsletter from London

Volume 1 No 7 November 2004

## **New Psychic newspaper launched – see p. 65**

### **Other highlights of this issue**

Stainton Moses accused of matrimony	53
Light on Stella C	54
German University Hosts Spiritualist History Seminar	55
The Names of Emma Hardinge Britten	57
The SNU and the Christ Principle - W.E. Harrison	58
A Spiritualist Archdeacon	61
Parapsychology in Germany – Eberhard Bauer	61
Mediumship in Australia may be ancient	64

## **NEW DNB SAYS STAINTON MOSES WAS MARRIED**

The medium for “Spirit Teachings” left a wife Mary on his death in 1892, according to his entry in “The New Dictionary of National Biography” published in September 2004. Previously historians had known only that his mother, believed to be called Mary or more formally Mrs Moses, survived him. The publisher OUP has now been asked for evidence of the marriage. The New DNB contains a number of articles useful to students of the pioneers. Richard Noakes, for example, writes about the much-travelled Mrs Guppy. Alan Gauld assesses D.D. Home and E.J. Dingwall, both of them puzzling. But care must be taken in using the entries.

- 1) the long lead time before publication means important new sources are missed. Thus the entry on CPS vice-president Rosamond Lehmann does not use the biography by Selina Hastings.
- 2) even the entries of reliable authors may have errors introduced in the editorial process. This may be why, for example, Anne Taylor in the entry on Annie Besant twice says that Olcott died in 1909 instead of 1907, or Peter Rowlands in the entry on Lodge calls Myers his psychic mentor “Frederick”
- 3) some authors know their subject, but are perhaps too sympathetic. Thus Mary Lutyens on Krishnamurti calls him a heterosexual but does not mention the book “Lives in the Shadow” with its adultery and abortion..
- 4) other authors are not known in the relevant field. Thus the writer Richard Davenport-Hines contributes 142 articles, including one on H.P. Blavatsky. The first source in his bibliography is the writer Peter Washington’s “Madame Blavatsky’s Baboon” (1993), itself a compilation of secondary sources.

Washington did not reveal that Blavatsky had been acquitted by forgery expert Dr Vernon Harrison in his 1986 re-investigation of the Hodgson Report (see JSPR April 1986.) Davenport-Hines does not mention Harrison either, although he says Blavatsky perpetrated reckless frauds, was denounced as a fraud, was betrayed as an impostor, and was dishonest, rash, mischievous and self-infatuated. Omitting the paper and subsequent book by the main witness for the defence from the bibliography is surely not what the New DNB should be about. Indeed the full text of Vernon Harrison's book "H.P. Blavatsky and the SPR" (Theosophical University Press, 1997) is now fully available on line.

Look out for references to post-mortem activity by subjects. Thus of Stainton Moses it is said "After his death he continued to play some part in British public life through his contacts with the living" while Malcolm Gaskill writes of Helen Duncan "it seems that her feelings are mixed about a campaign to have her conviction quashed."

---

### **A COPY OF LIGHT CHANGED A YOUNG WOMAN'S LIFE**

Stella C. (Dorothy Stella Cranshaw) born in 1900 was a significant English physical medium because

- 1) there was no suggestion of malpractice in her work.
- 2) she was carefully studied by psychical researchers, using some of the latest technology of the day.
- 3) she had no connection with organised Spiritualism, was non-professional and had to be persuaded to take part in three series of sittings in 1923, 1927 and 1928.

She is relatively neglected because she was primarily studied by Harry Price, rather than by the SPR officially, was active only for a few years, and did not welcome publicity. There is a valuable reassessment of her by J.L. Randall "The Mediumship of Stella Cranshaw: a statistical investigation" JSPR 65 Jan. 2001 p.38-46. "Her phenomena" he suggests "were at least as remarkable as those of Palladino, about whom a vast amount has been written."

Randall notes that the presence of medium Eileen Garrett may have given strength to phenomena at some seances in the first series. The balance of the sexes could also have affected the power. The first Stella series was historically important for its instruments. Among other novel apparatus, Harry Price seems to have been the first person to attempt the systematic recording of séance temperature changes. He used a Negretti & Zambra self-registering thermometer installed on an oak beam away from the medium. As Crookes had realised, the room really did get cold during phenomena.

This was also the most important psychic investigation to involve the LSA (now the College of Psychic Studies). The first series was held at its then headquarters in Queen's Square. The second series was in its new building at 16 Queensberry Place, where Price rented rooms for a "National Laboratory of Psychical Research". It was LSA secretary Mercy Phillimore who had persuaded Stella to resume co-operation. But most important of all, Price had first met Stella by chance while commuting by train. She had asked to look at a copy of the weekly newspaper "LIGHT" which he had placed on the seat beside him, and in the ensuing conversation, told him of the phenomena that happened spontaneously around her.

## GERMAN UNIVERSITY HOSTS SPIRITUALIST HISTORY SEMINAR

In the summer term at Freiburg University Eberhard Bauer, together with Uwe Schellinger (IGPP archivist) and Professor Sylvia Paletschek from the History Department of Freiburg University offered a special seminar for students of history at Freiburg University on "Spiritism and Occultism in Germany in the 19th Century"

Bauer told PP:

"There is now a great interest in such topics among scholars of cultural and social history. Recently several Ph. D. theses were published (or are in preparation) dealing with different aspects of the history of German psychical research."

Bauer is based at the Institut fur Grenzgebiete der Psychologie & Psychohygiene e. V. (IGPP) Wilhelmstrasse 3 A 79098 Freiburg i. Br. Germany ([www.igpp.de](http://www.igpp.de))

**Seminar course: A 19<sup>th</sup> Century History of Occultism and Spiritualism (21.04.04-21.07.04)**

**Sylvia Paletschek – Eberhard Bauer – Uwe Schellinger**

Table tilting, contacts with the deceased, apparitions of the dead, mediumistic seances, hypnosis over a distance, etc., are popular phenomena broadly reported in various social contexts since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, well-known researchers were aiming at empirically investigating such "psychic" phenomena by means of then recognised methods of natural sciences, and at theoretically interpreting them. Several societies and organisations for the systematic investigation of "occult" instances were founded, such as the Society for Psychical Research (1882).

The seminar course provided an overview on the manifestations, questions, interpretations, and organisations of spiritualism and occultism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the view of social and cultural history and the history of science. Special attention was paid to responses to these phenomena from society, politics, church, and established science.

### **Literature:**

Freytag, Nils, *Aberglauben im 19. Jahrhundert. Preußen und seine Rheinprovinz zwischen Tradition und Moderne (1815-1918)*, Berlin 2003.

Linse, Ulrich, *Geisterseher und Wunderwirker*. Frankfurt am Main 1996.

Sawicki, Diethard, *Leben mit den Toten: Geisterglauben und die Entstehung des Spiritismus in Deutschland 1770 bis 1900*. Paderborn 2002.

## **Course program:**

Session 1 (21.4.): Opening and allocation of topics

Session 2 (28.4.): Occult phenomena and their investigation & guided tour at the IGPP

Session 3 (5.5.): Mesmerism as a precursory movement

Session 4 (12.5.): Messages from the beyond – Contacts with the deceased

Session 5 (19.5.): Justinus Kerner and the Seeress of Prevorst – The doctor and the somnambule

Session 6 (26.5.): “Table tilting” as a social and scientific phenomenon

Session 7 (9.6.): Spiritualism as a social organisation

Session 8 (16.6.): Religion and the occult: Apparitions of Mary in the 19th century

Session 9 (23.6.): Well-known cases of haunting in the 19th century (Weinsberg 1835) – Stans 1860 – Resau 1888

Session 10 (30.6.): Responses to occultism and spiritualism from church, politics, and science

Session 11 (7.7.): “Experimental spiritism” as a branch of science (G. T. Fechner and others)

Session 12 (14.7.): Centres of spiritualism and occultism: Berlin, Munich, Leipzig

Session 13 (21.7.): Screening of the TV documentary “Das Geisterhaus” (“The haunted house”) on the Joller haunting of Stans / Switzerland, 1860

### *Brief comments on the course by Andreas Sommer*

This was a seminar course offered to students of history, but which in principle was open to interested students of all faculties. Since the interest was immense, however, it was necessary to limit the number of participants by demanding prior registration (hence I am grateful to the lecturers for allowing me to attend as a guest). Lecturers were Prof. Sylvia Paletschek of the Freiburg University’s history department, psychologist Eberhard Bauer, council member of the Freiburg Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP), and historian Uwe Schellingen, who is in charge of the IGPP archives and who had established the collaboration between the University’s history department and the IGPP.

In the first session, students were asked to form groups and present their findings according to the schedule of the seminar course. As the host of the course, Prof. Paletschek is to be congratulated on her didactic style, as she was able to inspire students throughout the course with her open-mindedness and her interest in the topic, at the same time encouraging a critical attitude of mind. The motivation and biases of the students naturally proved to be mixed, but as a whole they did good and often thorough research, and I can say I had not expected to get this amount of new information from the results which were presented at the respective sessions (not all of which unfortunately I was able to attend).

As this seminar was organised by the university’s department of history in collaboration with the IGPP, the focus was clearly on the social and scientific perception of 19th century occultism in Germany (i.e. mesmerism and foremost spiritualism), rather than on possible scientific implications. Nevertheless it goes without saying that students often asked “so is there something to it, or is it all nonsense?” and this is where Eberhard Bauer was in demand. He impressively

managed to reframe specific questions and put them into a broader interdisciplinary context. By incorporating a profound and unique knowledge of the history of psychical research (at least unique for a German scholar), a thoughtful sociological and sociocultural perspective, as well as the experience of a researcher and a counsellor of individuals troubled by alleged “poltergeist” disturbances and other exceptional human experiences, Bauer’s expertise was certainly crucial in the balance and caution which characterised his contributions.

It is to be hoped that the academic interest in reports of both historical and contemporary anomalies will continue to broaden and perhaps even will be integrated into the official agenda of science some day. That a course like this one was possible can perhaps be regarded as a reason for such hope.

Andreas Sommer

---

The Psypioneer newsletter is at present available on the web site [www.woodlandway.org](http://www.woodlandway.org) and we are greatly indebted to our Australian friends. You can obtain it free and direct by sending an e mail entitled “Subscribe” to [leslie.price@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:leslie.price@blueyonder.co.uk) or “Unsubscribe” to discontinue.

---

## THE NAMES OF EMMA HARDINGE BRITTON

Care should be taken in referring to Emma Hardinge Britten. In an otherwise useful article in one of the most valuable Spiritualist church sites ([www.fst.org](http://www.fst.org)) we read “*She was the daughter of Captain Floyd Hardinge*”.

The essential reference tool now for all students of Emma’s life is Robert Mathiesen’s monograph “The Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten” (2001) obtainable from the publisher “Theosophical History” ([www.theohistory.org](http://www.theohistory.org)). This includes a chronology of her life.

She was born Emma Floyd, and her father was Ebenezer Floyd a schoolmaster according to her Church of England baptismal record. He may have been at sea previously of course.

About 1850 she formed a relationship with Dr Hardinge, and chose to be known as Emma Hardinge. In 1870 she married Dr William Britten, and became Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten.

This means that she published “Modern American Spiritualism” as Emma Hardinge and “Nineteenth Century Miracles” as Emma Hardinge Britten. Libraries have rules about how to refer to authors who change their name, but in consulting catalogues for her works it is always best to check under both Hardinge and Britten.

One feminist editor lately insisted on the style “Ms Britten” in her columns, but Emma seems to have been proud to be called “Mrs Britten.” She was widowed in 1894, and died in 1899.

## THE S.N.U. AND THE CHRIST PRINCIPLE

By W. E. Harrison

(PP editor's note. We are reprinting this article because it contains an account of the 1928 SNU report on a possible Eighth Principle. It first appeared in "London Spiritualist" 1978. Since then the SNU has tightened its membership criteria to exclude adherents of other religions, such as Christians. Bill Harrison, former LS editor and founder, was president of Balham Spiritualist Society, the most influential psychic centre in South London, with whom were connected Harry Edwards, Arnold Clare, Rosemary Brown, Ivy Scott and other notable workers. )

When inquirers first begin to attend Spiritualist Church services I have often found that they are somewhat puzzled about the place of Jesus in Spiritualism. This is not surprising as our two major church organisations, the Spiritualists' National Union and the Greater World Christian Spiritualist League, each have a different assessment of the place which should be accorded to Jesus in our religion.

The majority of people inquiring into Spiritualism come from a Christian background. They would doubtless describe themselves as nominal Christians, though probably not church- goers, except for the occasional wedding or christening. They are, however, fully aware that the central figure of the Christian world is Jesus Christ and when they come into a Spiritualist Church and find the service is conducted on more or less Nonconformist lines, except for a demonstration of clairvoyance, they wonder in what light Spiritualism views Jesus.

Let us assume that the newcomer goes first of all to a church affiliated to the SNU. On entering, he will be given a hymn book. There he will find the Seven Principles which contain no mention of Jesus. Looking through the hymn book he will find no reference to Jesus in the hymns. Listening to the prayers of the speaker /medium will not enlighten him in this respect but he will most probably hear the Lord's Prayer chanted or spoken, perhaps followed by a reading from the New Testament. Perhaps he will now feel on more familiar ground. In the course of the speaker's address, he may hear the name of Jesus mentioned but the interpretation will be quite different, to any orthodox views he may hold. At the end of the service he will probably have no more idea of the position of Jesus in this particular church than when he entered.

In fact, it seems doubtful whether even the church members or regular attenders have any clear idea of the position which the Spiritualists' National Union ascribes to Jesus. They will know what they personally believe and have every right to their own conception, but that belief may not necessarily be in line with the official declaration of the S.N.U. position.

7

What, then, is that position? To answer the question we have to look back 50 years. In the 1920's, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was lecturing in large halls throughout Britain proclaiming his conviction of the truth of Spiritualism and making many converts. In 1927 he was urging the S.N.U. to add an 8th Principle to the existing seven. This new Principle was, in effect, to accept the spiritual leadership of Jesus Christ. At the S.N.U. Annual Conference of that year a motion was proposed in these terms "That a new principle be added to the Seven Principles of Spiritualism, declaring that while admitting that every creed has its own message from on high, however distorted by human frailty, we in the western world acknowledge the original teaching and example of Jesus of Nazareth and look upon them as an ideal model for our own

conduct". The resolution was debated at length, the result being that a special committee was set up with instructions to report its findings at the next annual conference. At the 1928 meeting, the committee presented its unanimous report as follows:-

"Since the revelations of Spiritualism are universal we recommend that it is not in the interests of Spiritualism or of the churches affiliated to the S.N.U. that the well known Seven Principles of Spiritualism now embodied in the Memorandum of Association of the Union, should be added to or remodelled in such form as to reduce the universality of the basis of membership which at present is open to people of all races, colour and religion".

"We recognise that spiritual truth is one and universal, and that all religious systems have resulted from an incursion from the spirit world, manifested through chosen instruments. These inspired men have revealed in varying degrees, and in their respective periods and countries, new and higher aspects of God, the spiritual nature of man and glimpses of the whence and whither of man's origin and destiny".

"Recognising further the changing and controversial views regarding the person and work of Jesus current among the orthodox churches of Christendom, and recognising equally the wisdom of safe-guarding the movement of Spiritualism from the unjust reproach of being 'anti-Christian', we affirm that the development and unfolding of religious ideas from earliest times to the present age conforms to a law of evolution exactly as does the growth of man's perceptions, and his acquisition of scientific knowledge.

Zoroaster, Gotama 'The Buddha', Jesus 'The Christ' and Mohammed are the recognised founders of great religions known by their names, which still exist and give spiritual consolation to innumerable congregations. Nearest to the Western world and accepted as its special teacher is Jesus. His teaching, as represented by the sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule and the New Commandment, admittedly embodies an ideal ethical and spiritual standard for human conduct; and the story of his life and self-sacrificing death has been and remains an inspiration and comfort to millions of his followers".

"Spiritualism, however, bases its position upon the universe (universal? – PP ed) manifestations of the continuity of personal life after physical death and the uplifting influence of excarnate spirit people upon the incarnate. It therefore accepts all these great founders as inspired and as revealers of spiritual truths to mankind and builds its own philosophy and teaching not only upon the truths revealed to mankind through these ancient teachers, but also upon the New Revelations received by this generation through modern Seers, Prophets and Mediums".

"Since Spiritualism accepts all revelations of truth as progressive it is unwise to impose restrictions which fetter liberty of thought. The S.N.U. therefore welcomes into its ranks every Spiritualist who can conscientiously subscribe to the Seven Principles, leaving him free to exercise liberty of interpretation thereof, and to enjoy any further opinions which do not contravene the Statutory Principles".

The committee's report was accepted on a unanimous vote at the 1928 conference. The S.N.U. position in relation to the Christ Principle is clearly defined and has remained unchanged throughout these past 50 years. On the light of events which followed perhaps we may question whether in rejecting the 8th Principle the S.N.U. made the right decision in the best interests of the movement. It certainly left the way clear for the development of Christian Spiritualism via the Greater World League.

In the 1920's a home circle was receiving impressive teachings from an evolved spirit teacher known as Zodiac, who claimed to be a teacher in the temple at the time of Christ. The teachings touched upon all aspects of the spiritual life on the basis of acceptance of the spiritual leadership of Jesus Christ. In 1928, it was decided to bring the teachings before a wider public and a weekly paper, *The Greater World*, was founded and still exists today. Miss Winifred Moyes, the deep trance medium used by Zodiac, gave trance addresses in large public halls and great interest was aroused in this form of Spiritualism with its clear Christian connotation. So much so that in 1931, the Greater World Christian Spiritualist League was born and by 1933 had expanded so rapidly that it had 400 churches affiliated to it.

This, of course, was powerful opposition to the S.N.U. and not unnaturally there was strong rivalry between the two organised bodies. Happily, the tension which existed between them for years has in recent years been dispersed in favour of a tolerant working arrangement. There have been attempts to establish one united Spiritualist body but all have failed and it is unlikely that this will ever come about because neither are likely to depart from their respective Principles, which, in the case of the G.W. includes the spiritual leadership of Jesus. The rapid growth of the Greater World organisation made it clear that many more people were ready to join the Spiritualist movement once they were assured that it had a Christian attachment and the newcomer entering a G.W. church is left in no doubt on that point.

However, I think the S.N.U. made the right decision in 1928 in rejecting the inclusion of an 8th Principle. It could only have been accepted on a majority vote which could have caused a rift in the Union with the possibility of a breakaway splinter group being created. It would not have prevented the growth of the Greater World organisation as many are always ready to follow the teachings of a lovable spirit guide such as Zodiac proved to be. Just as today, there are many followers of White Eagle from which has come the White Eagle Lodge and Temple which is an independent organisation.

The S.N.U. declaration in 1928 does not prevent any of its members accepting the spiritual leadership of Jesus in their personal lives if they so desire. What we personally believe about Jesus depends upon our understanding of the meaning and purpose of his life, his teachings and his works, which is aided by the teachings of spirit guides who have claimed that their mission is guided, directed and inspired by that great soul.

Recently there was a gathering of Spiritualists from all parts of the world meeting in London as members of the International Spiritualist Federation. With their different religious backgrounds it would be unwise to insist that they should believe in the spiritual leadership of Jesus as a defined principle. Many may do so but as an international movement, Spiritualism can only be based on the broadest principles acceptable to all.

---

(In 2003 was celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies (originally the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical

Study). Previous attempts to form such bodies floundered, and it is an important historical question why the others failed, and this one succeeded. To help answer it, we are presenting a regular series of reports on the prehistory of the Fellowship.)

## A SPIRITUALIST ARCHDEACON

Among the clerical predecessors cited by Maurice Elliott (e.g. in "The Bible as Psychic History" 1959) was Archdeacon Thomas Colley (1839-1912) who appeared in the lives of such noted mediums as Francis Monck, William Eglinton and William Hope. Colley campaigned for many years, by lectures and pamphlets to persuade the Church of England to accept Spiritualism, as did Elliott later.

In the "Paranormal Review" issue 22 of April 2002, John L. Randall contributed "Thomas Colley: Priest, Musician and Psychical Researcher" (The Review is a forum published by the SPR- like other SPR publications, it is an essential resource on the pioneers.). Randall gave a seven page illustrated account of Colley's eventful life in three continents.

At his death, Colley left a haunted rectory (not perhaps the only Spiritualist clergyman to do so). His publications would merit re-examination, and in his support for women's suffrage and racial equality (in South Africa, no less) he was ahead of his time.

Roger Straughan wrote to "Paranormal Review" issue 23 of October 2002 to add that Colley appeared on a spirit photo at the Crewe circle, reproduced in Conan Doyle's "The Vital Message". (1919) Indeed, his name is common in old psychic books. It is interesting to see that Emma Hardinge Britten cites him in "Nineteenth Century Miracles" (p.396-7) in a typically distant place. She inserts a sketch "Spiritualism in Italy", written by the Rev. Thomas Colley, Temporary Chaplain at Naples on July 19 1877, which describes how through the kindness of Signor Damiani, he was sitting regularly with the trance medium Baroness Cerrapica, and encountering rescue work, reincarnationist messages and even living communicators.

## PERIODS OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN GERMANY: AN OVERVIEW

Eberhard W. Bauer (Institut fur Grenzgebiete der Psychologie & Psychohygiene, Wilhelmstrasse 3 A, 79098 Freiburg iBr., Germany)

In Germany the involvement with paranormal ("occult") phenomena mirrors a long and complex tradition which is of considerable interest from both a socio-historical as well as cultural- historical point of view. If we take into account the development of German parapsychology from the beginning of the 19th century, four major phases or periods can be distinguished: (1) mesmerism/magnetism between 1820 and 1850; (2) "experimental spiritualism" between 1870 and 1890; (3) "scientific occultism" between 1919 and the mid-1930s; and (4) postwar parapsychology connected with the life and work of Hans Bender (1907-1991).

### MESMERISM AND MAGNETISM BETWEEN 1820 AND 1850

The so-called higher phenomena of animal magnetism (e.g., travelling clairvoyance, divination, community of sensations), which could be observed as manifestations of the artificially induced magnetic sleep, constituted in Germany the basis for the first quasi-empirical investigations into what later was called the paranormal. The theoretical frame of reference had been developed by the German physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734-1815) and his followers. For Mesmer, telepathy was something like a propagation of thoughts affecting the inner sense of man.

A group of physicians, theologians, and philosophers ("pneumatologists"), heavily influenced by Schelling's naturphilosophie and the romantic movement, tried to rediscover the "night-side of nature" including the human soul; in their opinion, the "day-light" of Enlightenment couldn't deal adequately with this realm of life and nature.

An important source for relevant observations and views of this kind is the Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus (1817-1827). The most important figure of the early German "occultistic" research is the physician and poet Justinus Kerner (1786-1862), who published in 1829 his famous book Die Seherin von Prevorst (which can be read as a clinical study as well as a biography of a medium) and who was also interested in the empirical investigation of RSPK cases (Eine Erscheinung aus dem Nachtgebiete der Natur, 1836). Kerner's book Die somnambülen Tische (1853) marks the transition period between mesmerism and the rise of spiritualism. Arthur Schopenhauer's essay Versuch über das Geistersehn (1851) represents an important German contribution to the literature about the philosophical importance of paranormal phenomena in the first half of the 19th century.

#### **"EXPERIMENTAL SPIRITUALISM" BETWEEN 1870 AND 1890**

The spiritualistic movement had become quite popular in Germany in the middle of the 19th century, but experimental investigations of the phenomena in question were scarce. In the early 1870s, two factors contributed to a change in the situation: (a) In 1874 the journal Psychische Studien appeared under the editor-ship of Alexander Aksakow (1832-1903), and for nearly 50 years it was the most important German parapsychological journal; and (b) in 1877-1878 the noted astrophysicist Friedrich Zöllner (1834-1882) held in Leipzig experimental seances with the American medium Henry Slade (1840-1904).

Zöllner's famous, 'knot', and 'ring', experiments, the results of which he took for an empirical proof for the existence of a four-dimensional space (Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen, III, 1879), provoked bitter polemics. Among Zöllner's opponents was the founding father of German experimental psychology, Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), who was convinced that Slade's manifestations were produced by trickery and who feared moreover that the assumptions of spiritualism threatened the "higher order of the world" based on "general causality" (Der Spiritismus, 1879). His colleague Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801-1887), however, who had also taken part in the Zöllner-Slade séances, revealed a much more tolerant position vis-a-vis paranormal phenomena (Die Tagesansicht gegeniiber der Nachtansicht, 1879).

Another controversy of those years, called the "animism" versus "spiritism" debate, is connected with the names of Eduard von Hartmann (1843-1906) and Alexander Aksakow. Hartmann's book Der Spiritismus (1885) was the first attempt to give a complete psychological explanation of all occult phenomena, including subjective delusions as well as "objective" physical manifestations, without resorting, however, to hypotheses of ghosts, demons, or fraud. Aksakow's rejoinder, Animismus und

Spiritismus (1890), criticized the 'hallucinations hypothesis', for not being able to deal with "objective" physical manifestations.

The decade between 1880 and 1890 was dominated by the philosopher Carl du Prel (1839-1899) and his "Psychologische Gesellschaft," founded in 1886 in Munich, which dealt mainly with the possible religious or mystical significance of occult phenomena as an underpinning of an idealistic *weltanschauung*; empirical work, if any, concentrated on demonstrations of a "telepathic rapport", under hypnotic influence. Under the leadership of Albert Baron von Schrenck-Notzing (1862-1929), Max Dessoir (1867-1947), and Albert Moll (1862-1939), a new society, the "Gesellschaft für Experimental-Psychologie," was founded in Berlin in 1889, the very year when Dessoir published his seminal article "Die Parapsychologie" in the journal *Sphinx* (which appeared between 1886-1896). A reactivation of researchers can be observed in 1914, when Schrenck-Notzing's much-debated book *Materialisationsphänomene* was published.

#### "SCIENTIFIC OCCULTISM" BETWEEN 1919 AND THE MID-1930S

The most intensive period of German parapsychology took place between 1919 and the establishment of national-socialism in the mid-1930s. This period was characterized by the following elements:

Original experimental contributions to the problem of extrasensory perception were published, especially by the physician Rudolf Tischner (1879-1961), the author of an excellent *Geschichte der Parapsychologie* (1960).

Schrenck-Notzing was reaching a dominant position: He investigated the physical phenomena of mediumship (including telekinesis and materializations), he founded a special and well-equipped laboratory for the experimental study of physical mediums (e.g., Rudi and Willy Schneider), and he financed and controlled the most important parapsychological journal of those years, the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* (1926-1934).

There was a heated public and scientific controversy regarding the legitimacy of "scientific occultism," culminating in the mid-1920s, in which two antagonistic centers can be distinguished: Munich, dominated by Schrenck-Notzing and his circle, and Berlin, dominated by Dessoir, the influential academic representative of the "skeptical wing." Between 1926 and 1928, there appeared under the editorship of Richard Baerwald (1867-1929) the *Zeitschrift für Kritischen Okkultismus*, meant as an attempt to organize an exchange between "critics" and "proponents."

Some prominent university professors of philosophy (psychology), such as Hans Driesch (1867-1941) from Leipzig and Traugott Konstantin Oesterreich (1880-1949) from Tübingen, supported the idea of integrating parapsychology within an academic framework and favored the foundation of a German parapsychological society after the model of the British SPR.

(e) In 1935 Hans Bender (1907-1991) published in the prestigious *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*

an experimental study on clairvoyance conducted at the psychological department of Bonn University.

(f) Further development in scientific parapsychology was interrupted by the Nazi government; academic supporters of the field had to retire, and 'official' activities were forbidden.

#### GERMAN POSTWAR PARAPSYCHOLOGY

In 1950 Bender succeeded in establishing his Freiburg "Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene". With the help of the estate of the Swiss biologist/parapsychologist Fanny Moser (1872-1953), he was able to begin a new effort to organize parapsychological research on a scientific basis, which finally led to the establishment of a chair for "Grenzgebiete der Psychologie" (Border Areas of Psychology) at Freiburg University in 1954. In addition to the foundation of a new German journal of parapsychology in 1957 (Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie), that meant a partial integration of psi research into the academic framework and a first step toward its official recognition. In 1967 Bender became full professor of "Psychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie," and in 1968 he organized the 11th Annual PA Convention in Freiburg. After Bender's retirement in 1975, Johannes Mischo took over the university chair. Bender remained director of the independent "Eichhalde-Institut" until his death in 1991.

In 1981 the "Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Parapsychologie" (WGFP) was founded, and in 1989 it established a "Parapsychologische Beratungsstelle" (Parapsychological Counseling Center) in Freiburg i.Br. under the direction of Walter v. Lucadou. It also hosted in 1991 the 34th Annual PA Convention in Heidelberg. For a more detailed overview of German postwar parapsychology, see Bauer & v. Lucadou, ZP, 1987, 241-281.

We are indebted to the author and to the Parapsychological Association for permission to reprint the paper above from "Research in Parapsychology 1991".

---

### **MEDIUMSHIP IN AUSTRALIA MAY BE ANCIENT**

Rock paintings in Western Australia may show shamans journeying to the spirit world thousands of years ago. The paintings, known as The Bradshaws after a rancher who described them, are in the Kimberley region, and appear to stretch over many centuries. Suggested dates range from 4000 to 17000 years ago.

A geologist Per Michaelsen has claimed these could be the oldest known depiction of shamanism. Some colour reproductions appeared in New Scientist 19 May 2001 in a report " Spellbound" by Allan Coukell, a New Zealand science writer.

Other scholars dispute that any paintings among the hundreds preserved, show shamanism. There is also uncertainty where the Bradshaw people came from - one painting shows a ship. Michaelsen's research is described on [www.bradshaw.dk](http://www.bradshaw.dk) where there is also some discussion of whether shamanism is the right term. The rock paintings may be compared with others in many parts of the world on [www.bradshawfoundation.com](http://www.bradshawfoundation.com)

We would suggest historians of the paranormal keep an eye on this debate.  
(item revised from former web site [www.psypioneer.com](http://www.psypioneer.com))

## NEW SPIRITUALIST NEWSPAPER LAUNCHED.

A monthly Spiritualist newspaper aimed at a “broadsheet” readership has been launched from Manchester by Simon Forsyth. **The Psychic Times** imitates “The Independent” daily newspaper in its editorial page design. (see [www.ThePsychicTimes.com](http://www.ThePsychicTimes.com))

The newspaper enters a competitive market, with “Psychic News” (weekly), “Psychic World” (monthly) and “Two Worlds” (a monthly magazine) seeking Spiritualist church advertising and sales. The last similar weekly psychic paper was LIGHT (known as “The Times” of Spiritualism) which was obliged to change to monthly magazine format during the Second World War. Two Worlds (1887) was started and long edited from Manchester, but moved to London forty years ago. Simon Forsyth, once the founder editor of “Psychic World”, must also compete for reader attention with web news services. Whereas many enquirers once awaited Thursday as the day when Psychic News appeared on the newsstands, this is now the day that [www.survivalafterdeath.org](http://www.survivalafterdeath.org) sends its weekly free dispatch to its e group.

On 15 August, for example, the NAS, once a leading Spiritualist organisation affiliated to the Council of Spiritualists, which over a decade had generated many column inches of news, voted to close. In the old days, a reporter would have been present and relayed the news to next week’s paper; probably the front page. In fact, it was the ISS survival after death web site which carried the news on 19 August. Similarly, the ISS web site was first in the UK to report the passing of Edinburgh parapsychology professor Robert Morris which had been announced by the Parapsychology Foundation in New York.

A traditional newspaper can still succeed with good feature articles, punchy readers letters and some scoops of its own. But is “**The Psychic Times**” wise to identify with the Spiritualist movement, now a fairly small and at times introverted market, rather than the wider survivalist community? The paper does have one advantage. Like “Psychic News” before 1995 (when the threat of closure was averted by an SNU take over) the new publication “is completely independent from any Spiritualist organisation. We are therefore free to bring you completely unbiased features and reports of the Spiritualist scene.” it notes in its first editorial. Actually there are still the advertisers, and the keepers of church literature tables who can switch their patronage elsewhere if they do not like your coverage (or the terms of business like discounts and sale or return for that matter) And what papers are or are not permitted to be sold at big centres like Stansted Hall or SAGB is always relevant.

The editor of a psychic paper once told me that if she knew the parent body strongly disliked a story, she did not print it. Older readers will remember how Maurice Barbanell did indeed print stories that annoyed the institutions- perhaps that is why his papers sold. News has been defined as something that someone somewhere does not want to see printed. That’s an exaggeration, but critical calls do come up regularly. What happens, for example, if someone about whom the paper has printed many positive stories over the years (like Sai Baba or Gordon Higginson) becomes involved in distasteful scandals? Is there a duty, within the limits of libel, to alert your readers? LP.