

Mikhail Petrovo-Solovovo

Mikhail Petrovo-Solovovo (1868-1954) was a Russian diplomat and psychical researcher with a particular interest in physical mediumship.



Life and Career

Mikhail Mikhailovich Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo was born into a Russian aristocratic family and held various positions in the imperial court. He lost his home and wealth in the Russian Revolution and took up residence in Europe, earning income as a journalist in Brussels and elsewhere. He moved to London in 1936 and later acquired British citizenship. After inheriting the family title, he became Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo, and was generally known as Count Solovovo.^[1]

Psychical Research

Solovovo joined the Society for Psychical Research in 1890 and was appointed its honorary secretary for Russia. He contributed Russian cases to the society's research of apparitional experiences and carried out extensive research of physical mediumship. In 1918, he was awarded SPR honorary membership.

Physical Mediums

His book *The Scientific Investigation of Physical Phenomena with Mediums* was published in St Petersburg in 1900 in Russian and was reviewed by Walter Leaf the following year.^[2]

Solovovo was disposed to accept the reality of physical phenomena, but he expressed doubts about the honesty of individual mediums and insisted on the need for stringent precautions.^[3] He was initially positive about the Russian medium Stephan Sambor, whom he investigated in sittings between 1896 and 1902, but later came to believe that Sambor might be using an accomplice in order to cheat.^[4] In 1905 he translated Frank Podmore's *Modern Spiritualism* into Russian, adding a supplement that alleged fraud by Jan Guzik, a Polish medium.^[5] In 1910 he attended a short series of sittings in Naples with the physical medium Eusapia Palladino, later reporting that he was impressed with some of the phenomena she displayed, while remaining concerned about her resistance to effective controls.^[6] He also expressed suspicions of trickery by DD Home.^{[7] [8]}

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Endnotes

Footnotes

1. ^ Salter (1954), 366-67.
2. ^ Leaf (1901), 416-22.
3. ^ Solovovo (1928b), 361-68.
4. ^ Solovovo (1937), 88-89.
5. ^ Solovovo (1928a), 368-70.
6. ^ For instance, Solovovo (1911), 64-65.
7. ^ Solovovo (1912), 288; Solovovo (1927), 88-89.

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