Herman A.O. de Tollenaere

The POLITICS of DIVINE WISDOM

Theosophy and labour, national, and women’s movements in Indonesia and South Asia 1875-1947
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Theosophy and labour, national, and women's movements in Indonesia and South Asia,
1875-1947

een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de Sociale Wetenschappen

PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen
volgens besluit van het College van Decanen
in het openbaar te verdedigen op dinsdag 21 mei 1996
des namiddags te 3.30 uur precies

door

Herman Arij Oscar de Tollenaere

e geboren op 24 september 1949 te Leiden
To my sister, Els de Tollenaere

My mother told me how, for the first time, as a child, she boarded the tram from The Hague to Wassenaar. As it passed the rich people's mansions there, she cried out to her father: 'Oh! I have never seen such beautiful houses before!' 'Yes', my grandfather replied; but added that they were built with the sweat of the Indonesian workers.

In the 1920's, Indonesian students published their *Indonesia Merdeka* magazine in the Merelstraat in Leiden. When my father came to The Netherlands a decade later, he went to live in that street, in a boarding-house with Indonesian and Japanese students. I lived there during my childhood.

As I grew up, I followed political controversies in the 1960's US from papers. Martin Marty writes that occultists were mainly on the conservative side of these questions. On composition of 'New Age' groups, Eileen Barker says: 'one of the most prominent features of the movement is the disproportionate numbers of materially advantaged, middle [and upper?] class followers, whom they attract.'

January 1996. The Dutch businessman Gerrit van der Valk says he is telepathically gifted. He advocates the theosophical 'Akasha chronicle' method in historical research. The 1990's. Beliefs like contacting spirits of the dead, reincarnation, astrology, and paranormal healing are widespread. Authors note them from Dutch universities to British royalty's Camillagate affair, to the US Pentagon intelligence's Star Gate affair.

This is not an overnight development. Some of its previous history is in this book. Scientists and others may think, prematurely, once they as individuals know aspects of occultism are nonsensical, there is no longer a social problem.

One can reproach critics, from Friedrich Engels up to Theodor W. Adorno, that they did not take phenomena like mysticism, occultism, spiritualism, and others, seriously enough.

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3 More, 3-10-1991; 19-12-1991 VAN VUGT, 20 attributes occult tendencies among Dutch university students to government pressures to study faster. The *Daily Mirror*, 19-12-1992. British Princess Diana engaged a clairvoyant to contact her late father as her marriage to Prince Charles went on the rocks.
4 D. Waller, 'The Vision Thing. Ten years and $20 million later, the Pentagon discovers that psychics are unreliable spies', *Time*, Dec. 11, 1995. The 'ultra-secret Defense Intelligence Agency' spent millions on 'Star Gate' (official code name) involving fortune-tellers in snooping on the whereabouts of Soviet submarines, North Korean tunnels, Colonel Gaddafi, etc; to no avail. The CIA also had its secret paranormal programs.
5 SENFT, 7. 'One cannot fight nonsense, just by saying it is nonsense.' Australian investigator of astrology Geoffrey Dean, interviewed *NRC* 10-1-1991.
Theosophists, though, saw progress in the evolution of consciousness with the nearing of the sixth root race, progress up from the mental plane, to the buddhic, intuitional plane\(^1\), with clairvoyance for all. Like with some other systems of thought, one attraction of theosophy is that once you accept a few axioms, the whole universe seems to fall coherently into place around you.

Is a third (or 4th, or ...) perspective possible, when one investigates especially links to political history in Indonesia and India?

I hope it will start discussions. I hope this book will clear up some misunderstandings; though inevitably it will produce new ones, there being hardly any 'definite' books on any subject. I hope readers will let me know their criticisms, so if I ever publish anything again on this, it will be an improvement.

I am very grateful to the people who helped me (any not mentioned should see it as deficiency in my memory or space, not in gratitude): my parents Felicien de Tollenaere and Anna de Tollenaere-Blonk. I shall never forget how Carla Risseeuw helped me on my way, as I began. Professors G. Huizer and G. Lock presenting me contributed much to the cohesion of my thesis. I also owe gratitude to Rudi Jansma, Dr. Harischandra Kaviratna and Miss Rajesvari Kaviratna, whose ancestors played a prominent part in the 1880 reception of the TS leaders in Sri Lanka, and in subsequent Buddhist education there; F. Tichelman and E. Schwindt, working at the International Institut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, the people working at Leiden university library and Institut Kern, Nirmala Nair, Tine Runker, M. Avc, Wan Dengkeng, H. Maier, Hans van Mier, Mrs Madelon Nieuwenhuis, A. Ollongren, Ton Tom Wong, H. van der Laan, Yvonne Hoops, Jurrie Reinking, J. Persijn, Catherine Wessinger (Loyola University, New Orleans, USA), Catherine Candy (Loyola University, Chicago), Jay Dixon, Robert S. Ellwood, J. Santucci, Charles Coppell, Susan Blackburn, Ien Brown, D. van Artel, I. Schöffer, W. Oeterspeer, Susanne Kasemuntuliah, Nanette Wyshmer, A. Caluwaerts, Friis Evaleen, and Faye van Ierlan of the Theosofische Vereeniging in Amsterdam, E. Rietkerk and others at the Nederlands Historisch Data Archief for photo scanning help. H. Poeze, D. Henley, Rita de Coursey, Rosemary Robson, and others at the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land en Volkenkunde in Leiden.

They helped me in the more desperate moments of writing this thesis (abbreviated in Dutch: 'diss.') when I reflected how close the abbreviation is to Dis, the Roman god of hell. Is having to rewrite from scratch after accidentally erasing your computer file the 1990's equivalent of ancient Sisyphus' punishment? Has blaming the computer for your mistake anything to do with the doctrine of Karma?

Do I have the right to write this book?

Tell them...... As pure water poured into the scavenger’s bucket is befouled and unfit for use, so is divine truth when poured into the consciousness of a Sensualist\(^2\) according to a ‘Master’ of TS founder H.P. Blavatsky.

\(^1\)BESANT and LEADBEATER(1913), 5. MARCAULT(1930), 672.

\(^2\)Letter to HPB from her Master; CLEATHER(1922A), IV.
HOW THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

This book was written in English; not on account of compliance with a Dutch Education Minister's wish English should become the language of universities in The Netherlands; not on account of theosophist C.W. Leadbeater's clairvoyant prediction it would be the 'universal commercial and literary language' of the year 2763 A.D.; just laziness. Most sources and literature on theosophy are in English, so it saved translating; not to mention inaccuracies, inevitably creeping in with translation.

Unless stated otherwise, all translations of quotes, originally not in English, are mine. I quoted Japanese authors' names as in the originals; though the order of personal and family names may be incorrect. Indonesian geographical names are in the new spelling. Names of persons are in the old spelling, except if they, like Sukarno, also played an important role after the introduction of the new spelling.

Wherever possible, I tried to avoid using 'learned' expressions for their own sake, or without explanation.

Numbers after authors' names, or years of publication, are page numbers. Dates are in the day-month-year format; 1-3-1900 is 1 March 1900, for instance.

I made illustrations with the WordPerfect Presentations, Harvard Graphics and PCPG computer programs.

MASTER KEY TO SYMBOLS

CAPITALS

author's names; titles in References, p. 412ff.

Fat emphasis

Interrupted underlining my emphasis in quotations

Italics title of book or magazine

Small quotes; footnotes, etc.

Solid underlining emphasis by authors quoted

[Square brackets] my interpolations

1 LEADBEBEATER(1971), 122. W.Q. Judge in The Path May 1886: 'The Sanskrit language will one day again be the language used by man upon this earth, first in science and metaphysics, and later in common life.' DONKER: the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in the 1990's wanted Sanskrit as only school subject.

2 Big T or t? Writings on theosophy do not agree. When Krishnamurti, after leaving The Theosophical Society, wrote 'theosophy' his ex-colleagues did not like that. IT May 1932, 220f. That is, like others (TH Jan. 1987, 28) use 't' is not preference, one way or the other. It saved typing; also, many theosophists prefer the idea of an impersonal god (theos, theos in Greek) to a personal God with personal name. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1978, says 'often capital T' for TS doctrine, as distinct from more general 'theosophic' 'mystical apprehension of God'; which is not our subject. See p. 8. The New York- and Adyar-based organizations both called themselves The Theosophical Society; others the TS. ELLWOOD and WESSINGER(1993), 79 speak of the TS (Pasadena now; Point Lorna earlier) as The TS; of TS (Adyar) as the TS; this should be inverted (RANSOM(1950), 38).
E. From London to Nibbana, 1888-1891

4. Reincarnation as Reprint: George Arundale, 1934-1945
   A. Home Ruler, Boy Scout and Bishop, 1878-1933
   B. Men and Germans, 1933-1945
   C. Poison, Mars, Tarot, and Growth, 1891-1907

5. Reincarnation from Brazil: C. Jinarajadasa, 1945-1947
   A. From Colombo to Hiroshima, 1875-1945
   B. From Aryan Empire to Independence, 1946-1947

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8. Around the world in 235 days

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D. Labour, Communism, and India

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2. Workers, peasants, and landlords of Latvia in 1905
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<td>Alice Bailey</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Annie Besant</td>
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<td>AdB</td>
<td>Adyar Bulletin</td>
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<td>AMORC</td>
<td>Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis</td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td>Acta Politica</td>
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<td>ARP</td>
<td>Antirevolutionaire Partij (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>BAC</td>
<td>Buddhist Annual of Ceylon</td>
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<td>BAH</td>
<td>Boekenkrant Ankh-Hermes</td>
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<td>BCW</td>
<td>H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings</td>
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<td>BNA</td>
<td>Bulletin Nederlandse Arbeidersbeweging</td>
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<td>BPCA</td>
<td>Besant Privy Council Appeal</td>
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<td>BTS</td>
<td>Buddhist Theosophical Society (Ceylon)</td>
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<td>BU</td>
<td>Budi Utomo (Indonesia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BV</td>
<td>Broad Views</td>
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<td>C of E.</td>
<td>Church of England</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>Christelijke Encyclopedie</td>
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<td>Cambridge Encyclopedia of India</td>
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<td>CHC</td>
<td>Central Hindu College</td>
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<td>CIS</td>
<td>Contributions to Indian Sociology</td>
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<td>CJ</td>
<td>Coruppmumillage Sinarjapada</td>
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<td>CNI</td>
<td>Communist Party of India</td>
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<td>CPM</td>
<td>Communist Party of the Netherlands</td>
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<td>CWWL</td>
<td>Charles Webster Leadbeater</td>
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<td>DGA</td>
<td>De Groene Amsterdammer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DK</td>
<td>Dwyal Kul (a Mahatma of the Great White Brotherhood)</td>
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<td>DN</td>
<td>Daily News (Colombo daily)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DNT</td>
<td>De Nieuwe Tijd (Dutch socialist monthly)</td>
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<td>DSV</td>
<td>De Vrije Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>ENI</td>
<td>Encyclopaedia voor Nederlandsch-Indië</td>
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<td>ENK</td>
<td>Encyclopedi Nasionall Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>EO</td>
<td>Evangelische Omroep (Dutch Protestant broadcasting corporation)</td>
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<td>ES</td>
<td>Esoteric Society; Esoteric/Eastern School</td>
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<td>FPC</td>
<td>Freethought Publishing Company (London)</td>
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<td>FTS</td>
<td>Fellow of the Theosophical Society</td>
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<td>GEPEB</td>
<td>Grande Enciclopedia Portoguesa e Brasileira</td>
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<td>GS</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
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<td>GSA</td>
<td>George Sidney Arundale</td>
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<td>HB</td>
<td>Hindu Baroe (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>History of European Ideas</td>
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<td>HOTS</td>
<td>Herald of the Star</td>
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<td>HPDT</td>
<td>Haagse Postuut Tijd</td>
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<td>Helena Petrovna Blavatsky</td>
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<td>Hindu Poetra</td>
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<td>HSO</td>
<td>Henry Steel Olcott</td>
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<td>Indian Economic and Social History Review</td>
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<td>IISG</td>
<td>Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (Amsterdam)</td>
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<td>Independent Labour Party (Great Britain)</td>
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<td>IM</td>
<td>Indonesia Merteja</td>
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<td>IP</td>
<td>Indische Partij (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>IS</td>
<td>Indische Statenbladen (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>BDP</td>
<td>Indische Sociaal-Democratische Partij (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>BSDV</td>
<td>Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>ISKCON</td>
<td>International Society for Krishna Consciousness</td>
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<td>Indian Theosophist</td>
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<td>IV</td>
<td>Het Indische Volk</td>
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<td>IW</td>
<td>Indische Weerbaar (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>JAAR</td>
<td>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</td>
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<td>JB</td>
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<td>JCH</td>
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<td>Journal of Modern History</td>
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<td>Jogy Supreme</td>
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<td>KH</td>
<td>Kast Huna (a Mahatma)</td>
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<td>KITLV</td>
<td>Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde (in Leiden)</td>
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<td>KM</td>
<td>Kaoen Moudo (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>KOF</td>
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<td>Katherine Tingey</td>
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<td>KV</td>
<td>Koloniaal Verslag 1 Nederlandsch Oost-Indie. Annual reports by the Dutch government to parliament on Indonesia. Printed at Algemeene Landsdrukkerij, The Hague</td>
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<tr>
<td>LB</td>
<td>Le Louys Bleu</td>
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<td>LCC</td>
<td>Liberal Catholic Church</td>
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<td>LD</td>
<td>Leidse Dagblad</td>
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<td>De Locomotief (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>LSSP</td>
<td>Lanka Samo Samaja Party</td>
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<td>LocH</td>
<td>Lucifer (The Hague magazine)</td>
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<td>LocL</td>
<td>Lucifer (London magazine)</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Moraya (a Mahatma)</td>
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<td>MAS</td>
<td>Modern Asian studies</td>
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<td>MB</td>
<td>Maha Bodhi (Journal)</td>
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<td>MBB</td>
<td>Maleische Bladen in de Buitenbezittingen</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>MBS</td>
<td>Maha Bodhi Society</td>
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<td>MCB</td>
<td>Maleisch-Chinesche Bladen</td>
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<td>MED</td>
<td>Meta Engels Werke</td>
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<td>MJB</td>
<td>Maleische Java Bladen</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>Modern Review (Calcutta)</td>
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<td>MRRTD</td>
<td>Maandelijkse Revue van Brochures en van Tijdschrift- en Dagbladartikelen, of IG</td>
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<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>Nationale Socialisme (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>NCE</td>
<td>New Catholic Encyclopedia</td>
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<td>NI</td>
<td>New India</td>
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<td>NIE</td>
<td>Nieuw Indie</td>
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<td>NOD</td>
<td>New Oxford Illustrated Dictionary</td>
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<td>NRC</td>
<td>Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant (Handelsblad)</td>
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<td>NSB</td>
<td>Natioanale Socialistische Beweging (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>New South Wales (Australian state)</td>
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<td>NY</td>
<td>New York</td>
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<td>OCSI</td>
<td>Overzicht der gesche den Cen traal Sarikat-Islam in het jaar 1921</td>
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<td>ODLO</td>
<td>Orde der Diener van Indie (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>Opgaan (Dutch liberal monthly)</td>
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<td>OR</td>
<td>Occult Review</td>
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<td>OSE</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTO</td>
<td>Order Tempel Orenan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVW</td>
<td>Organ der Vereeniging &quot;Hindo-Western&quot; (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEB</td>
<td>Politieke-Economische Bond (in Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPI</td>
<td>Personeels-Personeels (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKI</td>
<td>Partai Komoen Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMA</td>
<td>Personal memories of C.S. Amadale</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNI</td>
<td>Partai Nasional Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPPB</td>
<td>Perserikatan Pegawai Pegadaian Boemipoetera (Indonesian pawnshop employees' union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>Partai Raja Indonesia</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Perwarra Theosophie boronn tomoni Hindu Nederland (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW</td>
<td>Pontjara-Warna (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAN</td>
<td>Regierings-Amanah Voor Nederlandisch-Indie; two volumes came out once a year at Landsdruckeri, Batavia (Indonesia). All quotes from second volumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
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<tr>
<td>RW</td>
<td>Recht voor Allin (The Netherlands)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Asia Journal of South Asia studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAAO</td>
<td>Sarakai Asino Manmakhan (West Sumatra)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAN</td>
<td>Sociological Analysis: A journal in the sociology of religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>The Secrecy Doctrine</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDAP</td>
<td>Sociaal-Democratische Arbeiders Partij (name of Dutch Labour Party till 1946)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDF</td>
<td>Social Democratic Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Sin Dharma (Indian women's magazine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Sinar Hindia (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Soeara Merdeka (Indonesia)</td>
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<td>SM</td>
<td>Soeara Ra'kat (Indonesia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Soesilo Menjoe (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPR</td>
<td>Society for Physical Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>Soesilo Raja (Indonesia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRI</td>
<td>Societas Rescerencia in Anglia</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNY</td>
<td>State University of New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>De Theosophische Beweging (Amsterdam: monthly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TH</td>
<td>Theosophical History</td>
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<tr>
<td>THA</td>
<td>Theosophia (Amsterdam)</td>
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<td>THIC</td>
<td>Theosophical History Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Theosophy: The history of a nineteenth-century imposture</td>
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<tr>
<td>TNIA</td>
<td>Theosophy in Australia; or in Australasia</td>
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<tr>
<td>TNI</td>
<td>Theosophy in Nederlandsch-Indie</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRA</td>
<td>T' Koon Anders (Dutch magazine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TM</td>
<td>The Theosophical Movement (Bombay: UTT magazine; or: UTT book of that title, published 1925 and 1931)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TM</td>
<td>Transcendental Meditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMB</td>
<td>Theosophisch Meditaties for Nederlands-Indie</td>
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<td>TPP</td>
<td>Theosophical Publishing House</td>
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<td>TPS</td>
<td>Theosophical Publishing Society</td>
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<td>TR</td>
<td>Theosophical Review</td>
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<td>TS</td>
<td>Theosophical Society</td>
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<td>TF</td>
<td>The Theosophists</td>
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<td>TTC</td>
<td>The Theosophy Company</td>
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<td>TUM</td>
<td>Theosophische Uitgevers Maatschappij</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUP</td>
<td>Theosophical University Press</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Theosophische Vereeniging (TS in Dutch; old spelling)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TW</td>
<td>Theosophical World</td>
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<tr>
<td>ULL</td>
<td>United Lodge of Theosophists</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNP</td>
<td>United National Party (Sri Lanka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V4</td>
<td>Vrij Arbeid (The Netherlands)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WED</td>
<td>Wederswoon (Java magazine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WR</td>
<td>From/On the Watch-Tower (editorial)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WW</td>
<td>Warns-Warte</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWH</td>
<td>A Woman World-Honoured</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY

I. in Indonesia; S. Sanskrit

adat 
Adhi Dharmo
Adipati
alam
arya
assistant resident
Batavia
Budi Utomo
Buitenzorg
brahmana
bupati
controleur
dang
Datek
desa
dewan
ganget
hadji
hadji
harnat
insulinde
jimat
Jonkheer
kabupaten
kampung
kaum muda
kraton
kromo
ksatriya
makassar
Mas
Mas Adjeng
maya
Ngabehi
pakhu
panchama
Pangeran
priyayi
Raden
Raden Adjeng
Raden Ajoe
Raden Mas
Raden Mas Toemenggoeng
rajm
sambah
sair
Solo
sudra
Susuhunan
Sutan
toe
vasya
varna
Volkssraad
wayang
yoga
zemindar

nobleman; (traditional) official; literally, a king's younger brother; 1.
Javanese title of nobility, higher than Mas
Lady; title for Javanese unmarried women, higher than Mas Adjeng
Lady; title for Javanese married women (first wives if marriage is polygynous) of relatively high nobility
Javanese title of nobility, higher than Raden; in the Central Java principalities a more exclusive title than elsewhere
Javanese title of nobility, higher than Raden Mas
resident
Dutch official, ranking below governor-general and governor; 1.
pupil of Muslim boarding school; social category as for instance in GEERTZ (1960); 1.
greeting, for instance a prince, with hands folded before one's face; 1.
ray; 1.
old name of Surakarta
lowest varna; S.
title of ruler of Surakarta; roughly, king or emperor; 1.
shorter form of Susuhunan
Mr; lord; 1.
third highest varna; merchant; S.
one of four main castes in Hinduism; S.
advocacy council of the Dutch East Indies from 1918, elected by limited electorate
(especially Javanese) theatre, in various forms; best known with puppets; 1.
long period in Hindu chronology; S
Indian landlord

traditional (mainly unwritten) law and customs; 1.
Exalted Duty; 1.
high Javanese title of nobility
world; 1.
Javanese title of nobility
Japanese title of nobility, higher than Mas
Dutch official, ranking below resident; 1.
pre-1942 name of Jakarta
name of Javanese organization founded in 1908
pre-1941 name of Bogor
highest (originally; priestly) of four varnas. S.
Javanese title of nobility, higher than Raden; in the Central Java principalities a more exclusive title than elsewhere
Dutch official, ranking below resident; 1.
pre-1942 name of Jakarta
pre-1942 name of Bogor
dutch official, ranking below assistant resident; 1.
wayang theatre puppeteer or stage-manager; 1.
West Sumatran title of nobility
village; 1.
prime minister of Indian principality
Javanese and Balinese forms of music, mainly on metal instruments; 1.
Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca
Muslim who has been to Mecca
homage; 1.
Indonesian archipelago; also name of early twentieth century opposition party
smallest; 1.
lowest Dutch title of nobility, baronet
region, administered by bupati; bupati's residence; 1.
neighbourhood; 1.
young people; 1.
royal palace; 1.
non-noble Javanese person; Javanese language, as spoken to higher ranking person
second highest varna; noble; warrior. S.
old name of Ujung Pandang
lowest Javanese title of nobility
Lady, equivalent of Mas for unmarried women; 1.
in Hindu theology and theosophy: blindness, illusion; S
Javanese title of nobility
pivot; 1.
late 19th century term for person not belonging to one of the four varnas; S.
[usually non-ruling] prince; 1.
PART 0. INTRODUCTORY

1. POLITICAL HISTORY OF THEOSOPHY; THIS BOOK’S BORDERS

This book is of history. History of political views; views originating from various social backgrounds, meeting one another, sometimes clashing sharply. It is part of the history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, times of big change in technologies and economies. Twice there was a world war. Colonial empires were conquered and broke up. Political and religious ideologies changed.

The Theosophical Society (TS; see list of abbreviations, p. XVIII), was founded in 1875. Its history has more links, and different links, to politics than one might suppose from much literature. This organization is also interesting as a relatively well-organized ‘nucleus’ of a looser, broader occult current, influential in those times.

It claimed to bring its members and the world at large the fountainhead of truth behind all religions and sciences. From the first sixteen members in a New York drawing room, it spread to scores of countries, recruiting or strongly influencing hundreds of thousands, mostly upper or middle class men and women. Why were palmists, astrologers, the father of Indonesia’s first president, mayors from Seattle in the United States to Karachi in today’s Pakistan, United Kingdom ministers, a New Zealand Premier, future Prime Ministers of Australia and India, in one organization?

Many grouped around them did not join, but for a shorter or longer time thought: ‘Well, there must be some truth in it’. Millions either bought’ their books, or borrowed them from general, or theosophical, libraries. When radio became popular in the 1920’s, theosophists had their own station in Australia, and influenced a Dutch broadcasting authority.

\[\text{Needless to say, ‘influencing’ not in the sense of any conspiracy theory. SITARAMAYYA, 119 credits Annie Besant with ‘millions of followers in the East and the West’ (he was not one of them) Anarchist opponent RABBI[1898A], 1: theosophy membership ‘millions.’ An exaggeration then, and later, though membership did grow in the post 1898 decades. During AB’s presidency (1907-1933) 111,682 new members joined the TS (Adyar); see p. 89 of this book.}

\[\text{1BESANT(1913C), 157: a PTS became mayor of Seattle. For Karachi see p. 270. For New Zealand and Australia, p. 126-7; Nehru of India, p. 271; Sukarno’s father, p. 354.}

\[\text{2Two examples of many who, while rejecting some aspects of theosophy, accepted many other aspects: Portuguese author Fernando Pessoa; see p. 99; Dutch Frederik van Eeden, p. 59.}

\[\text{3It, Huchener ‘The greatness of the TS’, TW March 1937, claimed TPH had sold more than 2 million books. Also, many books by leading TS (Adyar) members, and by non-Adyar theosophists, came out at other publishers’. In The Netherlands in 1902, 500 £’s worth of Adyar theosophical books were sold. In 1905, it had risen to 2000 £ ‘mostly to non-members’; 27 Oct 1907, 95. Sizable, given lower price level, and lower Dutch guilder-sterling rate then. MUTHANNA, 63; 448: Besant’s Bhagavad Gita translation ‘sold in millions of copies’. Millions? BROOKS(1914A). 175 estimates 100,000 till then. CAMPBELL, 35: 500,000 Isis Unveiled copies sold 1877-1980. LEADBEATER(1922), 16 claimed ‘more than a hundred thousands copies’ of At the Feet of the Master, by J. Krishnamurti, printed up to 1914.} \]
The TS also aroused opposition. Indonesia eventually had the most numerous non-ruling communist party in the world. Why did the paper, out of which it arose, have the leader of Indonesia's theosophists as its most criticized opponent? Why did leading communists Semaen and Darsno write their first ever articles against theosophists?

I asked two questions: 1. Was the Theosophical Society apolitical? 2. Was the Theosophical Society politically leftist? I looked for answers in the TS' relationships to three types of political movements: labour, national, and women's movements; especially in colonially ruled countries in South Asia and Indonesia. Both how theosophists saw those movements, and how people active in those movements saw theosophists, is important for this. How did the TS influence politics of its time, how was it influenced by them?

This book needs a start and a finish. My start is in 1875, in the foundation year of the Theosophical Society. My finish is in 1947, the year of India's independence; one (not the only one) country where theosophists sometimes had sizable political impact. I tried hard to cut out everything before 1875 or after 1947. Sometimes I only half-succeeded, if issues were too closely linked. But I do not pretend to have elaborate ideas on the Theosophical Society as it is now, in the 1990's.

A QUESTION NUMBER ONE: WAS THE TS APOLITICAL?

British historian Hobsbawn, writing on the 'age of empire', mentions Annie Besant: 'the apparently non-political ideology of theosophy' 2. What, then, was appearance, what reality?

Imelman and Van Hoek said on the ideas of longtime prominent TS member Rudolf Steiner that Hobsbawn's 'appearance' was also reality: 'The description by socialist Van Ravesoye of theosophy (and spiritualism) as an anti- or un-social views is related to this. 3 [Might the views not more often be anti- or un-social views?] Impliedly, many political history writings, also those including Mrs Besant, support this viewpoint by excluding or almost excluding theosophy. 4 Annie Besant, though, said about herself.

1India', in this work, means what many authors then called 'British India', including today's independent India, Bangla Desh, Pakistan; sometimes also Burma, depending on time and context.
2HOBSBAWM (1987), 288.
3IMELMAN and VAN HOEK, 123. VAN RAVESTEYN (1917), 650. A. Koopmans, in DEN DULK Elf.; 7. Steiner's 'anthroposophy ... Because it is a Weltanschauung and view on life ... therefore it may become active in all aspects of the world and life'. 4. J. van der Meulen, ibid., 14.
4Denies anthroposophy is apolitical or non-social 'as this movement, on the contrary, manifests itself in numerous fields in society'. The criticism of being 'non-social' is, indeed, incorrect for anthroposophy, as for its parent, theosophy. Critics had better investigate instead where within society occult movements stand.
5Otherwise good OREN does not go into Besant's theosophical ideas at all. The recent biography TAYLOR (1992) has 156 pages on the 15 years before Annie Besant joined the theosophists, 1874-1889; that is, 10.4 pages per year. On her 44 years in the TS, Taylor spends 86 pages; i.e. 95 pages per year (she also has 18 pages on the TS pre 1889). Some theosophist authors on AB write few on her time before 1889; there is a sort of either/or situation in literature on her.
and vein from and to the same heart. They would insist on setting aside some to circle round the liver, some round the brain, some round the lungs, as they divide morality, religion, commerce, professional life, into separate and dissociated organs, instead of organs of the whole body politic.1

We will not just see that social categories usually seen as ‘politicians’, like ministers and MPs, were well represented in Theosophical Society memberships of diverse countries and times. We intend to look, for instance, at views on relationships of men to women as well as of the British government to India.

The international TS then did not give rise to an international political party.2 There is direct and indirect influence on politics only. In the long run, afterwards, may you tell which was which? Complex links exist between ideas on, say, art, and ideas on society and politics. Wherever relevant, I refer to these links.3

Are movements like the Theosophical Society ‘running away from politics’; or running from one form of politics to another? Should critics not look at differences in politics rather than at supposed apoliticism?

B. QUESTION NUMBER TWO: WAS THE TS LEFTIST?

A fairly widespread view of movements like theosophy sees them as politically progressive. Its supporters do not always argue convincingly, though.

James Webb’s The Flight from Reason is a general history of occultism of c. 1820–1910. It includes, but does not focus only on, the Theosophical Society and political aspects. Webb speaks of the TS as part of ‘progressive’ thought.4 Also, of kinship of occultism with ‘Nationalisms, Socialisms’, and ‘Women’s Rights’: so, in the context of nineteenth century Europe, where association of nationalisms with the political right was weaker than later, with the political left. He extended this to later twentieth century Asia, and (probably) Britain, by answering the question of occultists’ politics: ‘Let us imagine a “hands-off Viet-Nam” demonstration, with perhaps a delegation from North Viet-Nam among the protesters.’ Elsewhere though, Webb implicitly contradicted this, speaking of conservative monarchist occultists in France, influencing British TS member Anna Kingsford; and of theosophy as one influence on German nazis.5 We will see how this was with ‘nationalisms, socialisms and women’s rights’ in a colonial context.

US sociologist Tiryakian considered secret societies linked to occultism as mostly progressive, though conceding some, like the US Ku Klux Klan and Germany’s post-World War One Thule Society, were reactionary.6 Tiryakian wrote that esoteric thought has ‘a model opposed to the static, stable or harmonious view of things inherent in the natural attitude’. He added, though, ‘to document this point would require much more space than here available’.7

His colleague Daniel Bell focused on one category of the political left: in 1970, he linked in passing ‘nihilism and anarchism’ to ‘gnostic esotericism’.8 Linking these two in this way suggests conventional wisdom of the ‘surely, everyone knows that’ type. If everyone knows already, then no one needs research, confirming or partially or completely denying it. However, I think we do need more research on this, so I started some of it.

I myself for most of my life have known hardly more about Annie Besant’s politics than her socialism in the 1880’s and Indian National Congress presidency in 1917-8. If one knows only two points of a long sequence, one presumes the connecting line is straight: in this case, going through a politically leftist area all the time. I presumed that all too readily then.

One can compare conservatism or progressiveness in two ways. First, in individuals’ views before and after they joined, or before and after they left, the Theosophical Society. This is the most difficult way, needing biographical material on many persons. I did this mostly on Annie Besant, who plays a role in all parts, Second, what I did mainly, in relationships to the three movements of our Parts IV to VI.

Why did I choose these three subjects? Because labour, anti-colonial national, and women’s movements are big movements about which much material should exist. As for concepts, most people see all three as emancipatory and progressive. So, how relations with them are may say something on the TS’s rate of progressivity. I looked at the ideas of theosophists about these subjects. Also, at the ideas of outsiders to the theosophical movement, concerned with those political subjects too, they met theosophists on ‘their’ fields, and came to see them as allies, or as opponents.

Though leaders did try to get members in line, the Theosophical Society developed its

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1BESANT(1916B), 362. BESANT(1917A), 19, rejected the idea of strong separation between the political and the non-political, as ‘man is one: he cannot divide himself into water-tight compartments’.

2Unlike the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi’s TM movement’s 1990’s Natural Law Party: DONKER. At the 1925 Jubilee Convention, the TS declared as one of its aims the establishment of a World Government on the spiritual basis of restoration of ancient religions’ Mysteries; RANSOM(1950), 23. Freemasonry, more so than the TS in some phases of its history, is officially opposed to political links; yet COHEN, 134, wrote: ‘But all this does not mean that the movement has no political aspects or political consequences’.

3Well-known theosophy-influenced artists: Scriabin, the composer; Mondriaan, the painter.


5WEBB(1971), 218, 228, 189, 202f. Ibid., 40, on Himmler. MOSSE(1961); MOSSE(1966); MOSSE(1978), also claim influence of theosophical ideas on nazi ideology. WEBB(1971), v saw 19th century occultists as the precursors to ‘the romantic revolutionaries of today.’ xiv: ‘the occult and the revolutionary, run in the same paths’.


8Quoted TIRYAKIAN(1974), 269.

9Here, ‘progressive’ stands for asse11l to; ‘conservative’ for opposition to equivalence among people; suppressing democracy, respectively hierarchy; opposition, respectively ascent to a stronger military. All these issues will come up in later chapters.
inconsistencies and contradictions, like most movements lasting beyond a certain minimum of time, and involving more than a certain minimum number of people. One cannot say that the ideas of theosophists on politics were monolithic. Does this imply, though, that the spectrum of these ideas reflected in a completely proportional way all views on politics of the world from 1875 to 1947; from revolutionary anarchism or Marxism to all types of fascism (including the Spanish type, closely connected to the conservative wing of the Roman Catholic church)? Were all ideas equally represented, including of a state based on orthodox Protestant Christianity, or on orthodox Islam? Or was there rather a focus in the spectrum of theosophical ideas on politics; a focus that on many, though not on all, subjects was somewhat right of centre?

Why might it be right of centre? In our Part III we will look at which social categories were over-represented, and which were under-represented, among TS supporters. It is not an infallible rule that organizations, attracting, as it turns out, mostly members from higher income or status groups are always conservative; or that organizations, recruiting mostly lower income or status categories, are always progressive; let alone that all their members, one by one, have conservative, respectively progressive views. Still, this type of connection between position in society and views has more probability. People who have much to lose tend to have different ideas from those who have little to lose; as various social scientists see it. 3

1 "BESANT (1921G), 4: "We have among us [the TS] every variety of conservative, liberal, moderate, extreme views on every religious, political and social opinion". Roughly true; but it leaves open the questions if 'every' is 100%, and if all varieties were equally influential.

3 Throughout this book, both over- and under-representation are meant as compared to populations as a whole, unless it is specified in the context.

Social science deals with links of ideas to social categories. VAN DOORN/LAMMERS, 155-6; BERGER (1967), 117f. BERGER/LUCKMANN, 138: 'Different social groups will have different affinities with the competing theories and will subsequently, become "carriers" of the latter.' Roberto Michels, 'Conservatism' in Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 3, N.Y., MacMillan, 1930: 'Undoubtedly, the classes which most readily experience conservative feelings and work out complementary ideologies are the wealthy classes, those who have something to conserve.'

4 It is not right, when one in spiritual science or Theosophy, or generally in occultism, defines much, talks in concepts a lot." R. Steiner, Die geistige Führing des Menschen und der Menschheit. Berlin 1911, 16.
Theosophical Society. There, they translated theosophy as Divine Wisdom. C. Ideas outside the direct framework of that Society, but acknowledged or otherwise traceably influenced by B.

The links of some of A to the theosophy of the TS, founded in 1875, are tenuous. They would burden this book with looking backwards for many centuries, probably with ‘diminishing returns’. So we will only use senses B and C.

Already before 1891, when Helena Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society, died, there were some secessions from it. There were more after 1891. The first of two larger ones happened in 1895: most United States members, taking along some of other countries, split from the Theosophical Society, headquartered in Adyar (South India) to form the Theosophical Society, eventually known as TS (Point Lorna).

A second secession happened in 1913. The majority of the German section, led by General Secretary for life Rudolf Steiner broke away, or was expelled, with part of the membership of other sections, to form the Anthroposophical Society. As with the TS (Point Lorna), this change in name did not mean big changes in many of the major doctrines.

We will meet more, smaller, splinter groups later. Not all of them are unimportant for a study of the politics of Divine Wisdom.

In this book, simply ‘Theosophical Society’ (TS; members are FTS, Fellow of the Theosophical Society) means TS (Adyar); preceded over, until 1947, the end of our period, by Colonel H. Olcott, A. Besant, G. Arundale, and C. Jinarajadasa, respectively.

TS (Adyar) gets most of the attention because they had most members because

1BLAVATSKY(1987), 1. The word ‘theosophy’ came from Webster’s dictionary, when the TS was founded in 1875, and various possible names were suggested. 87 July 1986, 177.

2Amine Faivre, ‘Theosophy’, in ELIADE(1987), vol. 14, 466: ‘the Theosophical Society, which bears only a distant relationship to traditional theosophy.’ GUENON(1921)’s not that friendly neologism theosophism for the TS, as different from theosophie, did not catch on much; though HUTIN used it.

3See p. 7 for some of the organizations. J. Gordon Melton, in his Introduction to T. MILLER(1961), 2 estimated ‘over one hundred separate groups that can be traced directly to the Theosophical Society (though few bear that name)’.

4The version found in much literature: GOODRICK-CLARKE(1986), 104; ROE, 215: ‘split off’; TAYLOR(1992), 296: ‘departed’. But STEINER(1925), 293 himself maintains he was locked out, trying to stay in on his own terms. The GREAT SOVIET ENCYCLOPEDIA, vol. 25, 389: ‘After the [Krishnamurti] schism took place, R. Steiner formed an offshoot movement … Not it was 16 years before that schism. HUTIN, 1376, wrongly calls Steiner “a former pupil of Madame Blavatsky”. PAWELS and BERGER, 175, construct a scheme of ‘black magic’ ‘satanic’ Blavatsky theosophy versus Steiner’s ‘white magic’ anthroposophy. This conspiracy theory doesn’t explain why Steiner was an official in the ‘satanic’ TS for so long and did not leave voluntarily.

5RAVENSCROFT has a similar theory, and scores of pages on Steiner; yet not a single sentence on Steiner’s TS membership.

6If one believes in an ‘inner God’ in man, the difference between ‘divine’ and ‘human’ wisdom is not big. Ironically, ‘Anthroposophist’ was a pseudonym for a Bombay Christian opponent of the TS in 1879. BCW, II, 25.

8 Introductory

They had most political impact, certainly in India and Indonesia.

D. OTHER LIMITS AND LINKS. THIS BOOK’S DIVISIONS

India and Indonesia are big countries, central in world colonization and decolonization history; India also in religio-spiritual theosophic ideas. One can see its attraction to a person like Annie Besant, politically ambitious already before joining the TS.

About Indonesia I have written in comparative detail. Theosophical history, and more so history of theosophists’ relationships to politics, of this important country is closer to being virgin territory than of India. Iskandar Ngrahma’s M.A. thesis of 1989, which I did not know about until 1995, is an exception.

Ceylon, easy to reach from Adyar headquarters, was an example of a relatively small country where a limited number of ‘The’ TS, or other, theosophists might make a difference.

Other countries like The Netherlands, Britain, or Australia in themselves are not my subject. They only are sometimes in this book as part of the background. Some links of their political history to the TS may also be interesting. But really including them would mean too many disparate chapters. South Asia and Indonesia have more factors in their histories in common, limiting disparity. There, one can study anti-colonial national movements; not in, say, Germany’s history.

This study is divided into six parts. PART I is about how theosophists see the universe, planet Earth, and prehistory and history of humankind; compared to other, religious and scientific, views. I made it as compact as possible. Though not my real subject, one needs it for context.

PART II looks, more or less chronologically, at the history of the Theosophical Society (and related organizations) from 1875 to 1947. PART III looks at which social backgrounds the TS recruited members.

PARTS IV to VI are about relations to three political movements. They are: the labour movement; national movements in colonially ruled countries; and the women’s movement.

One could say: PART I, ideas; PART II, history; PART IV to VI, history of some political ideas, and their interaction with the social and political locale of the time.

Limiting myself to the three subjects of Parts IV to VI, in this book I did not use all opportunities that the many sides of the politics of theosophy present, to look at most major problems and currents in political life at the time. Theosophists had relationships, some parallel, some antagonistic, to most of these, from anarchism to fascism, communism to czarism, social democracy to liberalism.

The subject is also many-sided, in the sense of on the borderlines of many disciplines:

1Today officially and internationally known as Sri Lanka; spelt sometimes Shri. ‘Lanka’ then was the usual name in Sinhalese, its most widely spoken language. This book often uses ‘Ceylon’ like most contemporaneous English-language sources. Independence, 4-2-1948, agreed on by 1947.

2ROE, XV: ‘many moral issues emerge … The list includes race, gender, species, progressive education, peace … music … art.’
history, political science, sociology, philosophy, religious science... Discussing theosophist prehistory and history concepts needs some geology and biology.

Many-sidedness has its drawbacks too. Sometimes, I felt reminded of these lines by Dutch Annie M.G. Schmidt:

Achter elke muur zijn andere muren en nooit een eendroom of een bierbouw.

Behind every wall, there’s other walls never a unicorn or a bugbear.

During my research, I found loss of mythical creatures (at least, belief in them), but mainly, labyrinths of ‘other walls’.

2. WHAT SOURCES AND LITERATURE SAY AND DO NOT SAY

The Theosophical Society has advantages as an object of historical research in the 1875–1947 period: it was neither too big nor too small, international, existing all of that time, a well-recorded organization. Overall, there is not too little material. Too much?

The quantity of printed paper produced by theosophists probably outnumbers the publications of any organization.¹

TS ‘magazine density’ per member must be one of the highest of the time international magazines, plus at least one for most national sections and many local ‘lodges’. Pamphlets and books in many languages came out. Hundreds of them were by Annie Besant alone. She owned New India, for some time the best-sold daily paper of Madras presidency in South India.

Some of the publications were explicitly political (like the weekly Commonwealth). Others, like the best known TS monthly The Theosophist, contained both explicitly political articles, and articles implicitly interesting as background. If you try to put their ideas on politics into perspective.

Some of my findings on various political questions are from bulky books on them, some, though, are short remarks, often from short articles, sometimes aside from a context that is seemingly not much related to the subjects.

Did I overrate these remarks? Here, one should think of the possibility that within a social context (of a certain society, of a certain class, or a certain organization) some ideas are thought of as so self-evident that they need little or no defence or explanation.¹

So an enquiry into the history of important ideas may yield little material evidence, if

1. Unlike a tendency such as world trade unionism, with its hundreds of millions of people involved, Roman Catholicism or Islam are also too big, and have too long, too complicated, previous histories. Neither would a really small, short-lived movement, concentrated in one country, do.


3. M. COLE, 195, estimated: ‘four or five hundred books and pamphlets and an infinite quantity of articles’. MIEERS, 162: most of the work was done by her ghostwriters like Ernest Wood; certainly in her later years. Madame Blavatsky wrote ‘close to one thousand individual articles’ in the 1874–1891 period, B. de Zirkoff, preface to BCY, XIV, p. VII.

4. Not ‘The Commonwealth’, as misspelled in TMNT 1918, 539; and in GLINÉON (1921), 287.

5. RISSEEUW (1988), 177, based on Bourdieu, speaks of ‘doxa’.

Sources

Theosophists have always written about their own past (though those interested in history sometimes complain other theosophists are not); more so than non-adherents. In 1985, a Theosophical History Centre, organizing conferences and publishing pamphlets, was established in London, then attached to the TS English section. Since then since 1985, there is Theosophical History magazine, more or less connected to the Centre. ‘although the two are technically separate’.

Many theosophists’ writings have the advantages, and/or the disadvantages, of history, written from ‘within’ organizations in general. Some are apologies⁴ for authors’ stances within (in this case) the theosophic movement, or for leaders authors may follow; they may also be attacks within or without that movement.

¹ TILLETT (1989), 44

² PRICE (1988B): PRICE (1988A). Van Vlechteren of the Dutch TS in a 1992 lecture: Anarajadasa’s First Principles of Theosophy is no longer reprinted as it mentions races... not human races... [VOORHAM (1988): ‘no link at all to physical race’]. In our times one is prohibited using the word race, then one is supposed to discriminate against people. ‘As for not human (physical) races’. BESANT (1919B), 71. Defined ‘race’ as: ‘An ethnic type, distinguished by marked physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual characteristics, consisting of a race-stock, and, later, of branches. These branches are ‘Sub-Races’; races have a ‘common (divine) Ancestor’, as with Blavatsky.

³ TH Jan. 1985, 16. See also Information about Theosophie in Deutschland 16 (1990), 9ff.

⁴ Just one example: CLEATHER (1922B). The Christian Paulus Orosius, fifth century A.D., wrote Historia contres paganos–his history of the pagans; to him, historic truth was subservient to religion.

° A sharp example. CLEATHER (1922A). Changing sides in more than one case necessitated re-writing history. E.g., Bahmanji Pestonji Wadia had been a long time assistant to Mrs Besant.
Tillet sums up five problems in theosophical 'self-portraits':

There is a spectrum of historical dishonesty across which attempts to present Theosophical history can be ranged. In selecting examples I have kept to the area I know best - but I would not suggest that only the Adyar-based Society offers specimens of all these.

1. omit inconvenient material ... 2. edit out inconvenient material ... [in] new editions. 3. incomplete statements likely to mislead ... 4. misleading statements ... 5. false statements (or shall we call them lies) ?

Tillet proved TS leader Leadbeater misstated his own birth-date, and overstated the social status of his family.

So far the problems, if theosophists deal with their own history. These are linked to a problem that we will meet on p. 35, the problem of theosophists with history in general.

The history of all movements for human regeneration is in large measure a failure. Theosophical history is in a sense depressing (as is Buddhist history or Christian history).

As he wrote this, Price was thinking of internal conflicts.

Those conflicts are 'depressing' in another sense: few of them were about the theosophist view of history. A view of non-Darwinist evolution of socially and 'racially' higher and 'lower' humans; tied to the central Karma and reincarnation axiom.

after his 1922 break with her, he upgraded Besant's 1890's leadership rival, W.Q. Judge, in his writings.

1CLEATHER(1922A), 76f: AB and G.R.S. Mead inserted their own ideas into their (3rd) edition of Blavatsky's SO: 'Annie Besant's corruption of the Secret Doctrine'. Ibid., 71f. 'Tampering with H.P. Blavatsky's writings'. CLEATHER and CRUMP(1972): [AB's TS' Voice of the Silence editions] 'contain errors and even, in some cases, deliberate alterations and omissions'. CLEATHER(1922A), herself, 2 quoted HPB 'I am the mother and creator of the Society; it has my magnetic fluid .... Therefore I alone and to a degree .... can serve as a lightning conductor of Karma for it'. The dots I underlined stand for 'Olcott' in HPB's original. Mrs Cleather after 1925 did not recognize Olcott as president. Quoting that letter in CLEATHER(1922B), 26, 'Olcott' is there, no dots. Anthroposophists editing Steiner's early work put 'Anthroposophy' in most spots where Steiner wrote 'Theosophy'. Dissident anthroposophist and owner of Cagliostro publishers Spain called this editing: 'attacks of falsifications': THISSLER, 17. In 1951, six years after Indonesia's declaration of independence, the Theosophical Publishing House brought our Leadbeater's The Occult History of Java, reprinting 1929-30 articles from the Anthroposophist, but omitting the last article 'in which he praised the Dutch East Indies government; see p. 356. TICHELAAR(1977), 122: 'One can hardly see this magical removal as white [ = 'good'] magic'.


3TILLETT(1982), 11f: GOODRICK-CLARKE(1985), 90f. proved the same two things on Austrian theosophist von Hausen's memoire on 'race' von Lenz von Liebenfels. Leadbeater was leader of the ES (TS inner circle) 1933-34. He had played an important part earlier on; in the 1880's he was Secretary in Adyar. See p. 55. Misspelling 'Leadbeater': CUMBEY, 49: MOSSE(1961), 87.

4PRICE(1987), 50.

In the Secret Doctrine, BLAVATSKY(1977), vol. II, 421; 'Mankind is obviously divided into god-informed men and lower human creatures. The intellectual difference between the Aryan and other civilized nations and such savages as the South Sea Islanders, is inexplicable on any other grounds. No amount of culture, nor generations of training amid civilizations, could raise such human specimens as the Budhism, the Veduthas of Ceylon, and some African tribes, to the same intellectual level as the Aryans, the Semites, and the Turanians so called. The 'sacred spark' is missing in them and it is they who are the only inferior [italics HPB] races on the globe, now happily owing to the adjustment of nature which ever works in that direction - fast dying out'. Yet theosophist VOORHAMS(1988) protested 'that in the 18 big volumes of Blavatsky's collected works no one can show a single passage, a single sentence, a single word from which a racial thought might appear' JINARAJADASA(1948), 28, attacked the doctrine of 'superior' or 'inferior' races; without saying who supported it.

'To whom H.P. Blavatsky dedicated her The Voice of the Silence

2BLAVATSKY(1987), 247.

3EDGER(1903), 180f: translated into Dutch and sold by the Indies TS; TMN 1922, 464.

4GANDHI(1940), 194, on theosophists he met in South Africa: 'The chief thing about theosophy is to cultivate and promote the idea of brotherhood. We had considerable discussions over this, and I criticized the members when their conduct did not appear to me to square with their ideals'. WEBB(1974B), 249 on TS 'quarrels': 'There never was much conflict on principle.'

5Jean Overton Fuller, Tit Oct. 1985, 73. VAN LEEUWEN(1921H), 109: Count Wine had little sympathy for his cousin Blavatsky 'and just because of that could only be a bad biographer'.

6JINARAJADASA(1948), 5; 13 emphasized the link: 'a small body of Theosophists ... as statements, artists ... etc.' as 'only possibility to renew the world'. Writings on theosophists tend to play down (see TINGAY on Pogen's Lundery biography) or omit (WEHLER; WESSELING, 141 on Hubbe-Schedlen, who described himself as having 'no other interest or day or night' than theosophy; 77, June 1899, 555; SHARMA(1947) on Sir S. Subramania Iyer) their philanthropy. KUMAR did not mention as theosophical inspiration to AB her Masters, HPB or CWL.
'fantasy world', separately from her 'sympathetic' politics. However: even the weirdly fantasy ultimately has its origins in reality. It may influence that reality strongly, in ways much more earthly than occult magic.

Mrs Besant gets by far the most attention; this is understandable in view of her prominence in Indian and British politics. Many books in which Annie Besant enters the Indian history scene in a small or larger supporting part also juxtapose, instead of connect, Besant's theosophy (if dealt with) and her politics. They do not point out the not only spiritual, but also political, watered theosophy marked in her ideas.

With due regard to U-turns and contradictions in Besant's personal history, a link runs through theosophist political history, from quite before till quite after her time; both in and out of her society. Basically, Mrs Besant was a person, more able at putting into practice theosophical political ideas, which leaders before, besides, and after her held as well, in some form or other.

Many have failed to see the link. Marxist writers were on far more familiar ground criticizing ideas, closer to their own (social democracy; secular anti-colonialism) than with ideas to them were 'too far away', 'too weird' to deserve, maybe, more than a sneer in passing. One can compare this to many Marxist reactions to forms of religion; and, surely before 1933, to some of their reactions to fascism.

Anarchists, often seen by theosophists as main opponents, relatively frequently wrote polemics against theosophy; from Rabbie in 1898 to Senft in 1991.

Women's historians are interested as many women have been prominent in the TS, certainly compared to other religious organizations. I found, by the way, less in my sources on relationships to women's movements in Asia than in Europe; which explains the relatively small size of my Part VI. Some women's historians work within what one might call a feminist-Marxist framework. A keen eye for possible gender and/or class prejudice, though, does not automatically make for a keen eye for questionable 'race' doctrines.

A keen eye for biographical scholarly detail, as in Tillett, is also no guarantee for much more than passing references to racial theories; or to politics in general.

TABLE 1. VIEWS ON RELEVANCE AND PROGRESSIVENESS OF THEOSOPHY

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This book aims to be the first study of the Theosophical Society on the three selected subjects in political history; also the first one from an unusual viewpoint (see the lower right cell of Table 2), which it hopes to prove at least as plausible as the three other ones in that table. It tends to (over-) emphasize what others under-emphasized. Throughout the book, I have tried to present controversial issues in a many-sided way; showing different sides, both within and outside the theosophical movement, in controversies.

Sources

Concerning sociology and other social sciences, Zaretsky speaks about 'neglect' of esoteric groups, though he himself considers the occult a legitimate and important area of investigation in its own right and as an avenue leading to greater understanding of the society of which it is a part.

Another category, writing about theosophy (including, sometimes, its views on politics) from the outside are Christian apologists for Catholicism or Protestantism.

Much of their work, though, falls outside the scope of this book, being 'purely' theological (like attacking TS views on God as 'pagan') or legal (like accusing H.P. Blavatsky of fraud, or C.W. Leadbeater of perversion).
did not aim primarily to support or to attack either theosophists or opponents of theirs. Rather, from my work, people with more or less conservative views may find they are closer to theosophists than they thought; or progressives may find distances are greater than they thought. On the other hand, leftist foes or rightist friends of viewpoints, akin to those of the TS, may find that their estimate of distances between themselves and theosophists on the political field was more or less correct.

PART I: ON THEOSOPHY

I. THEOSOPHY ON ITSELF AND THE UNIVERSE; RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Theosophy, as its various schools see it, is Super-religion⁴ and Super-science:

Theosophy itself is Religion; not a religion, but religion per se carried to the nth degree ... It is Philosophy, also; not a philosophy, but philosophy per se, carried to the nth degree ... It is Science; not a science, but science per se, carried to its nth degree, so that no human intellect can compass its bounds.⁵

In the future, it will end differences between religion and science, which twentieth-century people see in their Maya [Illusion]:

"... we should not go far wrong in saying that the religion of this community is to do what it is told. There is no sort of divorcement between science and religion, because both alike are bent entirely to the one object, and exist only for the sake of the State."

Theosophy aims high:

"The philosophy of Theosophy, i.e., Brahma-Vidya has answers for all questions, explanations for all phenomena, and has no unsolved problems."

Reading how high theosophy aims, one may ask, as Annie Besant did:⁶ how are the aims related to practice, for instance (Super)-political practice⁷

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⁴WILSON(1970), 143, speaks of the "supra-religious" system of Theosophy. Krishna Dasa in NI, 25-8-1924, 9; "religion of religions". BESENT(1921), 117, claims the Maharaja [of Gwalior] wishes to build temples of the different religions in India. Already a Hindu Temple, a Mosque, and a Fine Sikh Temple have been built in the beautiful park, and our T.S. Temple of the Ancient Wisdom stands on a hillock above everything else—a suitable position for a T.S. Lodge. 78 March 1932, 138. Dutch GS J Kruithoeve mentions Mrs Besant has said, that the Great Ones, who live deep in the Himalayas, possess a chart on which every Religion is represented in its colour. The Theosophical light is white. (All colours: BLAVATSKY(1987), 56.) The Theosophical Society was chosen as the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religions of the world. 77 May 1937, 102.

⁵DE PURUCKER (1947), 26. Ibid., 14, on HPB "her great work, The Secret Doctrine, she called "the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy." These words, to many who do not understand their full import, may perhaps at first blush seem somewhat ambitious words."


⁷Brahma-Vidya (Sanskrit); literally, knowledge of Brahma. TM March 1934, 73; quoted OELC May-June 1934. "We can say safely that Theosophy today is the only doctrine in the world which never fails to provide the answer." LEOLINE L. WRIGHT, 21. "Theosophy solves all problems in... art... politics... nationalism... internationalism..." G. Arundale, "Theosophy is the next step", quoted OELC Oct.-Nov. 1937. "The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one;" Letter from the Brotherhood's (see p. 44 of this book) Grand Master, quoted CLEATHER(1922), 36.

⁸No practice is responsible unless it is based on true metaphysics. No metaphysics is true, that is, viable, if it does not lead to a responsible practice. An introduction to the science of peace, 53.

⁹DAS(1947), 446-7: "In short, what the Human Race needs today, is a World Religion, which will... be... the very oldest, indeed eternal, all-inclusive, universal religion, which will expressly
How theosophists related to religion and science is interesting for our later look at political consequences. Jawaharlal Nehru, some thirty years after the end of his TS membership, wrote politics must be based either on magic or science. ‘Personally, I have no faith in or use for the ways of magic and religion.’ In the times we write about and after, on the one hand many political movements claimed to base themselves on religious truth; this is too simple. Spiritualism: see p. 45.

Westminster parliament, after Constance Markievicz. On Java, GEERTZ (1960), 317: •. ‘This to Washington in the early war years.’ Conservative Lady Astor was the second woman elected to be religion. They differ from what Wilson calls introversionists who withdraw from politics. Of manipulationist Christian Science, he writes, ibid., •’I was Christian Scientists, and so were Lord and Lady Astor and Lord Lothian, British Ambassador to Washington in the early war years.’

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This part is about theosophy after it had become a more or less coherent doctrine, say after 1888 (publication of The Secret Doctrine). Earlier on, it was less easy to distinguish from ideas in spiritual ritual circles. H. Newton, first TS treasurer in 1875, said the Society ‘started as “pure” Spiritualists; it added interpretations of (for instance) South Asian religious years later.’

Theosophy, about A.D. 300, the author of a historically doubtful biography of Pythagoras, made an early reference to the opposites ‘esoteric’ versus ‘exoteric’, using it for differences within Pythagoras’ school. VON FRITZ, 211: ‘lamblichos is highly valued in the TS. Lambichus now is known under another name [of his present incarnation] as one of the Masters, who helped to found the present Theosophical Society.’

In all religions, philosophies (and sciences), throughout human prehistory and history, theosophists say, one should differentiate between an outer, ‘exoteric’ doctrine, for the taught, one’s super-religion, is theosophy. So in principle one may combine membership of the TS, as far as it is concerned, with that of any religious community.

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For Theosophy is the true and authentic Mother of all Religions and Philosophies and Sciences; the great central systematic Source whence all the later originally derived in past times, and therefore is their Interpreter; it interprets the hidden meaning and secret symbolism of all these ancient systems’. DE PURUCKER (1940), 517. Theosophy ‘is the great central Light, whence all other lights originate’.

‘Theosophists say, one should differentiate between an outer, “exoteric” doctrine, for the thoughtless multitude’, and, more importantly, an ‘esoteric’, Inner, occult [“hidden”] Doctrine for the initiated, for the Few. These inner doctrines are basically the same. They all derive from the Ancient Wisdom, from the source of all religions.’

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1Greek philosopher lamblichos, about A.D. 300, the author of a historically doubtful biography of Pythagoras, made an early reference to the opposites ‘esoteric’ versus ‘exoteric’, using it for differences within Pythagoras’ school. VON FRITZ, 211: ‘lamblichos is highly valued in the TS. Lambichus now is known under another name [of his present incarnation] as one of the Masters, who helped to found the present Theosophical Society’. T. H. Huxley, De Welvarenaar en democratie. TAWI 1920, 115.

2DE PURUCKER (1940). 38. BLAVATSKY (1987). 246: ‘uneducated masses’. DAS (1947), 417: ‘All believe their respective religions have two aspects, one, for the masses, another, for the few advanced souls’.‘1

3DE PURUCKER (1940). 6: theosophy ‘is the great central Light, whence all other lights originate’.

4BLAVATSKY (1987), 45

5May one also combine membership in the TS (Adyar) with membership in another theosophic organization? The General Secretary of the British section, Bertram Keightley, asked Olcott this in 1904. Did Olcott’s ruling of a few years earlier ‘that any member of the T.S. [Adyar] joining the Judge-Tingley organization [the T.S., Point Loma] is ipso facto cancelled his membership in the T.S. still hold good? Olcott, in an Executive Notice, published 77. Feb. 1905, suppl. x, replied it still did: “nothing could be clearer than that a person who links himself with such a hostile body [the Point Loma TS] has lost his right to remain with us as a fellow member; he has to choose between two opposite polities.” As the decades passed, this ruling gradually was no longer applied. On the relationship of the Point Loma TS to other theosophists, TINLEY (1915). 26 stated: “This organization does not have any relationships in any way to whatever other societies and bodies, which call themselves Theosophical”.’

6In 1932, it refused. TAWI 1932, 86.
1. Karma, reincarnation, human origins

Theosophists reject chaos or chance. For centuries, Christians had taught that chance does not exist, but that every event, even the falling of a single arrow, happens according to the will of a personal god. Nineteenth century science weakened this idea. If the uncomfortable spectre of chance should be explained away, then it had to be done on a different basis.

H.P. Blavatsky introduced two interdependent principles of order in the universe: Karma and reincarnation. She thought them central among tenets that all religions should have in common. For over 2,500 years, in some form, these two had been part of Hinduism, and, differently, of Buddhism.

They certainly were not central from the start in theosophy. In Isis Unveiled, her first book from 1877, Madame Blavatsky considered reincarnation a rare exception. Only after going to India two years later, she considered it the general rule.

What if ancient Egyptian religion, Islam, or Christianity do not have karma and reincarnation? Theosophists solved the problem by claiming the Initiates within these religions kept the teachings secret, and did not commit them to accessible writing, as the "ignorant many" might misunderstand them.

In Hinduism, karma and reincarnation teaching was tied to caste. In theosophy, it was tied to class/taste by the tenets of "old souls", who are ahead on the path of spiritual evolution, having lived more lives than young souls. It was also tied to doctrines of an "Aryan race", of racial superiority, rising in the late nineteenth century.

So upper and middle class Europeans, Americans, Australians, and Indians, adding pseudo-biologic and pseudo-historic racial theories deepened higher-order ideas on society of conservative Brahmanism.

As both the origin, and the future, of all religions is the one Wisdom Religion, called since H.P. Blavatsky's revelations theosophy, so the origin and future of all humans is the

1Sir S. Subramania Ayar in a memorial speech to HPB in Adyar: ‘According to the well-established doctrine of Karma, there was no such thing as an accident’; ‘White Lotus Day in Adyar’, IT, June 1906, 701. See JINARAJADASA(1939), 3. Psycho-analyst Jung also wrote, in The Psychology of the Unconscious, ‘there is no such thing as chance’; quoted Lady Emily Lutyens, Psycho-analysis and the Ancient Wisdom, IT, Oct. 1920, 55. Both occultism and Sigmund Freud influenced Jung. Lady Emily thought that some of Jung’s ideas were ‘closely akin’ to theosophy, but others ‘grossly materialistic’.

In the 1990’s, geologist and palaeontologist Stephen Jay GOULD rejected teleology and predictability, often seen in the U.S. as linked to evolution. He sees survival not as a teleological reward for ‘fittest’, but as a question of the luck of the draw in a ‘grand scale lottery’. Studies of, for instance, the fossils from the Burgess Shale in Canada show that survivors seem to have nothing in common. ‘Suppose you are a very successful fish; and then your pond dries up. You become extinct. . . Also Homo sapiens is here by the luck of the draw.’

2See our Part III.

Divine Principle. Theosophists use this more all-embracing (or 'more vague') expression more frequently than 'God.' Most reject the Christian (or Muslim, or Jewish) doctrine of a personal God. Madame Blavatsky also emphasized her image of God differed from the Christian view of long-term development of life on earth; and its similarities to, and differences from, other two views, see the table on p. 32.

Religions, and theosophy are forms of idealist thought: idealist in the sense of opposition to materialist philosophy. In this philosophical sense, the only one of two 'materialist' senses which Mrs Besant saw as a 'serious opponent' of theosophy, we will use 'materialist' and 'idealism' throughout this book. H.P. Blavatsky opposed materialist and

1. Theosophy considers humanity as an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto. Blavatsky(1897), 217.

2. For this objection to TS doctrines: Manslon, 34, TT, July 1907, 302, quoting French Protestant minister Chazel; Leadbeater (1922), 410; Mosse (1961), 86, 77, Feb. 1908, separt. xxv, 'talk as to sissy and vague theories [of the TS].' Mrs Besant, before she joined the TS, warned her readers against 'vaguely worded' theosophy; Missional Reformer, 18 June 1882, quoted Taylor (1992), 236.

3. BCW, XIV, 42: 'Sir God is the God of Immutable Law, not charity, the God of Just Retribution, not mercy, which is merely an incentive to evil-doing and a repetition of it.'

4. The 'Lord' (Sanskrit), the Creator, in Hinduism more or less synonymous with Brahma, or Siva, or any god who is considered the highest.

Aristotle attributed the theory of a Central Fire to followers of Pythagoras; Coxon, 804.

5. See p. 28. Besant (1889), 11: 'Man, according to Theosophy, is a compound being, a spark of the universal spirit being imprisoned in his body, as a flame in the lamp.'

6. As did the Islam of a Javanese Muhammadjah critic of the theosophy-influenced Budi Seria movement: 'these people thought that God and man were one, in contrast to Islam which teaches that God is God and man is man'; Geertz (1960), 317.

7. Besant (1889), 3-4. Ibid: 'That (non-philosophical, of 'pleasure' and 'enjoyment') materialism will never rule the world.'

8. T. Carlyle, an influence on AB, HPB (see Arundale (1920), T.H. Martyn (Martyn (1914), 261) and Arundale (TT Apr. 1936, 84; 'one of the greatest of modern writers', TMNI 1918, 244); expressed idealist philosophy in his Sarror Resauris 1-11: 'manner exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea, and 'body' it forth.' TMNI, 1917, 313-9, had a partial Dutch translation of Sarror Resauris. Dutch neo-Hegelian philosopher Holland, quoted as motto, TMNI, 1917, 313-9.

9. Theosophists consider humanity as an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto. Blavatsky (1897), 217.

Atheist thinking even more than she did the Christian form of religion. 1

2. Christianity

TS relations with Christianity were mutually ambiguous from the start. Conservative Christians especially see any creed different from their own, as 'pagan,' as diabolic. Especially an occult one; the TS is the best known organized occultism. A too impulsive missionary in the Central Provinces of India; today's Madhya Pradesh actually called us [theosophists]: 'soul-worshippers.'

Som, though Christians attacked the TS since its inception, it attracted other Christians to its

1918, 14, briefly described his idealism as: 'What is truth? Idea.' Jeeves, 77 Sept. 1930 (tie). II. 1. 'The Theosophist is ... dedicated ... to the destruction of materialism.' Anna Kingsford, TH July 1897, 85: 'destroy the cancer of infidelity.' Besant (1912A), 91, 'I may add that most of us regard the Theosophical Society as the result of a spiritual impulse, first sent out into the world by the White Brotherhood, in order to save the world from sinking into Materialism, and to prepare the minds of men for the restoration of the esoteric teachings of religion.' Hubbe Schönleben, ITT, was not that idealist when dealing with his practical colonialism: 'the economic question ... to-day is the basic element of all politics'; quoted Weshler, 42; CE, 420; and Michel, 17 accuse materialism of 'materialism'; they see materialism (or humanism; Cumbe, 23) as the great anti-Christian conspiracy, including all that is not Dutch Protestant Gereformeerde Kerker, respectively Roman Catholic. 'Materialist' also is a favourite term of abuse among occultists disagreeing with one another; for instance, Prokoeph, 17. Cathy Porter, 36, wrote of the idealist-materialist dilemma as people saw it in 19th century, critic Russia, 'angry shouting matches between 'materialists' and 'idealists': those who believed that the injustices of the present could only be removed by radical social changes, and those who looked back to the religious philosophies of the past, and held that it was only people's thoughts and feelings, never their social institutions, which were amenable to change.' 111. P. Blavatsky belonged to the 'idealists' of this perspective.
Liberal Christian. Olcott noted during his visit to Australia in 1891: ‘C1crgymen of orthodox realm of the snake. verbal and esoteric or Theosophical Christianity. continually ridiculed that [Christian] faith.’

So many cultures see them as symbols of immortality, or of reincarnation. In July 1936, 342, Apr. 1987, 74.

Christian iconographic tradition, a devil symbol. Its printed on magazines and books, has a snake; in Egyptian ‘pagan’ Ankh (life) hieroglyph did not attract especially Christians. Neither did the name Lucifer for a leading TS magazine.

Lucifer ... They have boycotted it in London, and will not allow it to be sold at the news-stands ... She [HPB] laughed as she said: There are people who believe that I am the devil with horns and hoofs.

Quakers, Positivists, Agnostics.

1RANSOM(1938), 115, among the first 16 members was Rev. J.H. Wiggin, editor of The Liberal Christian. Olcott noted during his visit to Australia in 1891: ‘Clergymen of orthodox repute and much influence joined the Society’. Quoted MURPHET, 246.

2BCW, II, 52, claimed (unnamed) American bishops had joined the TS.

3For instance, after the founding of the Liberal Catholic Church; and Anglican David Gostling from England, the Bombay lodge president; 77, Apr. 1903, suppl. xxv. Sec. p. 38.

4In 1882, Dr. G. Wyld, the British TS president, resigned because ‘the heads of the Society in Bombay [HPB and HSO] had systematically, and without discriminating between popular or verbal and esoteric or Theosophical Christianity, continually ridiculed that [Christian] faith. ’TT Apr. 1987, 74.

5Snakes shed their skins, interpreted as ‘old bodies’, and it is not easy to find a dying snake. So, many cultures see them as symbols of immortality, or of reincarnation. TT July 1936, 342, interprets the TS snake as ‘Indian’. But the seal is from 1875, when reincarnation was not a TS doctrine! A Dutch Protestant 1980’s anti-Catholic book was called The realm of the snake.

6Described by HPB as ‘the handled cross or the Egyptian TAU’. BCW, III, 315.

7Literally ‘light-bearer’. In Christian mythology, name of a fallen angel who became the devil.

8A visit to Madame Blavatsky.’ Commercial Gazette, Cincinnati, 13-10-1889; as reprinted WACHTMESTER(1976), 137.

3. Other religions

Within a few years of its founding, the TS started to attract many members from various non-Christian religious backgrounds. This was not surprising, as both theosophist doctrines and symbols were a mix from many religious and philosophical systems and beliefs and other

TS symbol, with Ankh sign in the middle. From TT Jan. 1911, 481

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influence in calling a local branch 'lodge', and in secrecy, pledges of loyalty: belief in 'the astral light', and spirits from spiritualism (though interpreted differently), from Russian, British, etc. folk religion; a heavenly hierarchy of 'Angels or Devas' from the *pseudo-Dionysius* writings of about A.D. 500. *Arhat* from Buddhism-used in the sense of theosophist high degree initiate. One can find the story of the vanished country (continent?) of Atlantis in Plato, and in nineteenth century Ignatius Donnelly. The idea of an age-old struggle between good White Powers and bad black powers (see p. 31) is familiar from Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism. Much is borrowed from various Hindu schools of thought.

Supporters saw this heterogeneity as Eclecticism with a positive connotation, taking the core, the best, from all (other) doctrines. Some 'others', chiefly South Asian religions, became a bit more equal than others, when TS headquarters moved to India in 1879 (Bombay, later Adyar near Madras). Especially Hinduism became so, especially after Annie Besant became president in 1907.

Theosophists were proud of the brotherliness at their gatherings, believers in many religions sitting peacefully side by side. Outside the TS, such was not always the case.

CLEATHER (1923), 4.

1 BLAVATSKY (1887), 271f.

2 The 'Coughtingley fairy photographs': in 1920/21 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Edward Gardner, TS English section general secretary after 1924, [JINARAJADASA (1925), 256] published photos in the Strand magazine. These were said to be of 'real' fairies. The makers, Elsie Wright and Frances Griffiths, young girls in 1920, confessed in 1981 and 1983 the photos were a hoax, with cut-out fairies of 'Windsor and Newton Bristol board, secured to the ground with flat pins'. Alex Owen, 'Borderland forms' Arthur Conan Doyle, Athion's Daughters, and the Polonites of the Cottingley Fairies, 1924-1945', *History Workshop*, 38, Autumn 1994, 48-85; JIPPES, Frances Griffiths called Doyle's and Gardner's associate in the case, Geoffrey Hodson, a phantom. Leonard, Hodson spoke as TS leader in Indonesia, and published articles on autonomy of the wise as synthesis between totalitarian and democratic politics. See p. 365.

3 BESANT (1921), 42. *Pseudo-Dionysius* writings (wrongly ascribed to the first century A.D. Christian saint Dionysius) also influenced the writings of Thomas Aquinas and other Christian (especially Roman Catholic) theologians on 'angiology', assigning angels their places in a hierarchical system. Deva means god in Sanskrit and its use in this cosmological context dates from Buddhism-used in the sense of *Devas, Angels and Archangels*. VAN GINKEL (1915), 207. *TMDI*, 1917, 214. "Deva's, also called Angels". "ICHELAR (1977), 121: 'angels, in India called "Deva's"'; L E Girard, in *TMDI* 1920, 295, has also 'fairies' as synonym for devas. 77, Mr. 1906, 431, 'Notes on the science of the soul', by W. A. Meyers, thought St. Dionysius really was the author of the *Pseudo-Dionysius* writings. So did VAN LEEUWEN (1920), 256, who spelled the name as 'Dionysus the Areopagite'.

4 Current theosophical teachings... They are all only extracts from the [Hindu] Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, etc... The Hindu Religion is the oldest and most comprehensive, and it contains the moral and spiritual teachings of all religions of the world. R.P. DAS, 26. But Swami VIVEKANANDA, vol. IV, 263, called the TS 'this graft of American Spiritualism': ibid., 264: 'Hindus... do not stand in need of dead ghosts of Russians and Americans'.

Critics thought it a 'mishmash'. 1 Madras daily the *Hindu* in 1911 proved that outsiders sometimes could find common ground:

Representatives of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam wrote to the paper condemning Theosophy, and noting that while in theory members of any religion could join the TS and continue to practise their faiths, in fact they were obliged to adopt a collection of doctrines and ideas which was inconsistent with any of them. 2

'Our' period saw the rise of other attempts at 'super-religion'. One of the best known, originating from Iranian shia Islam, was Baha'i, seeing itself as youngest (and best, because taking the best from earlier ones) world faith. It had some common ground with the TS. Though Baha'i's leader Abdul Baha (Abbas Effend), son and successor of prophet Baha'u'llah, sympathetically addressed the theosophists' meeting in 1913, he wrote of TS belief in reincarnation as 'puerile imagination'. 3

Even if we limit ourselves to India, theosophy was not the first attempt at synthesis between different religions. In Indian Islamic history, sixteenth century Mogul emperor Akbar, trying to found a syncretist Sun' religion took some steps towards Hinduism. So did Ahmadyyah Islam, Sikhism, and since the nineteenth century, Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj, started from a Hindu background, but by their monotheism took steps towards Islam (and Christianity). 5

B. SCIENCE

W.Q. Judge wrote his teacher H.P. Blavatsky's 'object was to make religion scientific, and science religious'. We have seen something of theosophists' relationship to religion. How about science?

The scientific revolutions, first of Copernicus, later of Darwin and the enormous prolonging backwards of the time scale in geology undermined not only the Christian God's...
authority (whether or not He exists). They also worked towards 'dehonizing human arrogance' which certainly exists. To some, the function of modern occultism is to fulfil a strong desire to reconcile the findings of modern science with a religious view that could restore man to a position of centrality and dignity in the universe.

Now, we go to the individual sciences. First, astronomy. Theosophists see the universe as orderly and hierarchically. There is a link here to their views on political and other human life on earth. They see heavenly bodies as inhabited by super-humans and as parallel to humans, like all astrology. The sun and the stars are... living entities, alive and intelligent, making and unmaking what Theosophists call Karman. 2

1. Goud.

2. GOODRICK-CLARKE(1985), 29. HB P saw the aim of his book the 5D as to give to man his rightful place in the plan of the Universe. Theosophist MURPHET, 128, saw it thus: "... Darwinism and other iconoclastic theories of advancing science were lowering man's traditional image of himself. The book [Esoteric Buddhism by A.P. Sinnett of the TS] tended to reverse the process, offering a deeper, more acceptable concept of the old idea that man was made in the image of God'.

On this 'magic-analogical thought, micro-macrocosm conception' see PISCHLER, 283.

3. Cosmos' for universe is from Greek kosmos, order; from the idea in ancient Greek religion that gods had made order out of chaos. Modern astronomers tend to emphasize chaos in outer space.

4. Every great man, every honest man, is by nature a son of order, not of disorder... he is the preacher of order. Does not all human work in this world consist of bringing order? Carlyle, quoted by G.S. Arundale, speech in Madras January 1918; as in WED, Aug. 1923, 43.

5. DE PURUCKER(1940), 199. 'There are beings on other planets of our solar system -one would not call them humans-, and yet they are actually more evolutionarily advanced than we humans are who think divergent thoughts than we do. There are also beings or entities inhabiting the Sun... starlight, astrophysicists say, over 4000 C, even Triton skis would not do. But De Purucker's fundamentalism is not true. Sunlight is purely spiritual, not hotter than the object it shines on, and consequently the Sun and its globes have inhabitants who think god-like thoughts, because having a god-like or solar consciousness.' De Purucker was Theosophical Secretary (Pt. Lorna) Leader, 1929-1942. On this point, Leadbeater of The Theosophical Society. 1990. D. Bergamini et al., The universe, 351; The solar system. Washington, D.C. National Geographic Society, 1990. O. Bergamini et al. The Universe, s.l., Time-Life 1964, 69. According to Annie Besant, the seven sacred planets are 'ruled by the "seven Spirits before the throne of God," Besant/C.W. Leadbeater: Occult Chemistry; quoted TILLET(1982), 67f. An ultimate physical atom is the smallest indivisible unit of matter. Non-occult chemistry divides the hydrogen atom into basically two components: 1. one proton, 2. one electron, in circular, not 'egg-like' orbit around it. BESANT(1912A), 55; clarivoyance as 'super-sense telescope or microscope'.

6. BESANT(1893), her autobiography, begins with her horoscope by 'Alan Leo'. BCW, III, 45:

7. ‘Astrology... a sublime science’. JINARAJADASA(1938), 66: 'true astrology will be the predominant religion of mankind'.

8. Karman is the Point Lorna TS form of Karma. DE PURUCKER(1940), 152. Today still, primary schools which Stein's anthroposophical TS offshoot set up, teach so on outer space. Nineteenth century German philosopher Fechner (theosophist, who, though he taught his Mahatma K), also thought space was alive. We already mentioned heavenly bodies: god-like comrades on p. 25, note 5. Some astrologers now take Neptune into account, but not all planets that were discovered post-1700, after the invention of better telescopes, it played no part in traditional astrology. Though TS vice president A.P. Sinnett, in Broad View, Jan. 1906; quoted TO, Feb. 1906, 390, wrote, basing himself on clarivoyance: 'the Chaldean [Mesopotamian] astrologers of the period (21,000

years ago)... must certainly know of the existence of Neptune'. DE PURUCKER (1940), 183 and 192, explained why it was not one of the 'Seven Sacred Planets': 'It is no proper planet of our solar system. It would be correct, doubtless, to look upon Neptune as a captured comet of a certain age' Astronomy notes size is different: the diameter of Neptune is 49,100 kilometres, whereas, of course, it is usually in a few km. The mass of Neptune is more than 50,000,000 times that of comets in their maximum computed from map, The solar system. Washington, D.C. National Geographic Society, 1990. O. Bergamini et al. The Universe, s.l., Time-Life 1964, 59. According to Annie Besant, the seven sacred planets are 'ruled by the "seven Spirits before the throne of God"', mentioned in the "Revelation of S. John"'. BESANT(1912A), 85.

9. JANSSEN(1954), 21-2: ancient Egyptians did not have the zodiac concept.

10. A. Besant/C.W. Leadbeater: Occult chemistry; quoted TILLET(1982), 67f. An 'ultimate physical atom' is the smallest indivisible unit of matter. Non-occult chemistry divides the hydrogen atom into basically two components: 1. one proton, 2. one electron, in circular, not 'egg-like' orbit around it. BESANT(1912A), 55; clarivoyance as 'super-sense telescope or microscope'.

11. BESANT(1917A), 51. One of biologist Louis Agassiz' motives for opposing Darwin was his belief in human racial inequality. He thought humans of different 'races' had different ancestors, an idea he shared with AB and Leadbeater. In 1862, Harvard University expelled John Vise for supporting Darwin's theories; ROTHMAN, 295. At Osler's and HPB's New York 1870's home, nicknamed 'the
To many Christians (and other believers) the idea was anathema that man was not created by God; but had evolved from an animal, from a beast, especially an ape-like beast, abhorrent to humans to whom apes look like a mocking comment on themselves, too close to the model for comfort.

When biologists tried to lecture on Darwinism in the southern US, religious shock troops, shouting 'Go to hell with your gorilla!', attacked them. Until the Reagan presidency, up to now, US pressure groups, overwhelmingly made up of non-biologists, claim 'creationism', not evolutionism, is true. They demand at least equal status with evolution biology for it in education.

H.P. Blavatsky, in the Secret Doctrine, and her followers, solved the riddle of creation/evolution of humans; apes and other animals, by claiming apes and other animals descended from humans—not vice versa:

Man is, in fact, the most primitive of all stocks on earth ... the other Vertebrata, as well as the great groups of the Invertebrata, likewise were derived from the human stocks, but in the previous globe-round.

...every vital cell ... contains within itself the potentiality not only of the dimmest latent within it, but it also contains numerous lower ... life-impulses, which ... would produce an inferior creature, whether it be an elephant, ... a dog, or some biological 'sport' which past history shows has not yet appeared on earth. The reasons ... why such cells ... in man today do not evolve forth into new phyla beneath man are ... First, evolution, as a process of unfolding new bodies and starting new stocks has permanently ceased for the remainder of this Round.\footnote{Lamarkay, was a stuffed dead ape they called Professor Fliske; it wore a white 'dicky' and necktie around the throat, manuscript in paw, and spectacles on nose.\textsuperscript{8}}

\footnote{DE PURUCKER(1947), 121. HPB in her manuscript, the later Secret Doctrine's vol. III, on differences with Darwinists: 'To the advocate of the "animalistic" theory, our cosmo-genetical and anthropogenetical teachings are "fairytale" at best ... For those who would shift any moral responsibility, it seems certainly more convenient to accept descent from a common simian ancestor, and see a brother in a dumb, tailless [all baboon species have tails] baboon, than to acknowledge the fatherhood of Pitris, the "Sons of God", ... BCW, XIV, 2. WEBB(1971). 52 attributes to HB, without references, the opposite of her real ideas: 'Man had evolved from apes—perhaps'; Just as Homo sapiens had evolved from a lower form of animal life'. Do not fall into the mistake of the western way of thinking, and say that man descends from the animal; that is not true': BESANT(1905), 151. 'Man, as a spiritual Being, comes forth from God and returns to God.' BESANT and LEADBETTER(1913), 1. LANZ VON LIEBENFELS(1890), 26 on Darwinism: 'the general monkey nonsense.'}

\footnote{BLAVATSKY(1881), vol. II, 684: animals are 'post-Human'. 'Animals are the refuse of human evolution'. Rudolf Steinr, quoted R. MEYER, 95: '... that animals and monkeys are degenerate men, is the basic thought of the old esoteric anthropologies': LANZ VON LIEBENFELS(1890), 27. 'Men did not develop out of the animal world, rather the other way around ... by unnatural cross-breeding', Guido von List, quoted DE KRUYT(1982A), 6.}

\footnote{Large categories in biologic classification. E.g., the phylum Vertebrates includes humans, fish, etc.; the phylum Anthropods: insects, crabs, etc.\textsuperscript{4}}

\footnote{DE PURUCKER(1940), 319.}

So today evolution (except 'spiritual evolution') stands still.

Of late, sexual liberationists criticize 'speciesism'\footnote{Noske, Humans and other animals. London, Pluto, 1989. In speciesism the human species is the one and only yardstick for all other animal species. There is similarity to the geocentric world view; for instance, astrologers. Speciesists believe a priori in the 'superiority' of humans (especially, if male in many views), and the 'inferiority' of other species. Thus, one can exaggerate the uniqueness of humans (all species, all individuals have a certain uniqueness) as too-users;} as an analogy to 'racism' or 'sexism'. Christian religion has been blamed for much speciesism in history,\footnote{Michel, 14: 'On no star or planet lives a ... being that noble and that divine as us, living limbs of the Holy Cross, who surpass all plants and animals and life.' Usual exceptions in Christian history: the saints' lives traditions of Anthony of Egypt and Francis of Assisi. French Renaissance thinkers like Montaigne and Céspedes (not Descartes) tended to upgrade the position of animals.\textsuperscript{4}} resulting in cruelty to domestic animals and wholesale extermination of non-domestic ones. But mainstream Christianity has no speciesism monopoly.

As many theosophists are well-known for vegetarianism, and/or anti-vivisectionism;\footnote{W. Collins was president of British anti-vivisectionists; 58 MPs were vice-presidents.\textsuperscript{5}} and many have warm feelings for their domestic animals;\footnote{J. Mabel Collins was president of British anti-vivisectionists; 58 MPs were vice-presidents.\textsuperscript{5}} one might think there are no traces of speciesism in theosophical theory. Are there not?

Fitting in with what we have seen on evolution theory, theosophists often refer to animals as 'younger brothers'.\footnote{Michel, 14: 'On no star or planet lives a ... being that noble and that divine as us, living limbs of the Holy Cross, who surpass all plants and animals and life.', usual exceptions in Christian history: the saints' lives traditions of Anthony of Egypt and Francis of Assisi. French Renaissance thinkers like Montaigne and Céspedes (not Descartes) tended to upgrade the position of animals.\textsuperscript{4}} TS (Pt. Loma) Leader Goutfried de Purucker wrote:

The human soul can no more migrate over and incarnate in a beast-body than can the psychical apparatus of a beast incarnate upwards in human flesh ... because the impassable gulf ... which separates ... the Human Kingdom and the Beast Kingdom, prevents any such passage ... from the one up into the other, which is so much its superior in all respects ... there is the impossibility that the imperfectly developed beast-mind and beast-soul can find a proper lodgment in what

Religion and science

... every vital cell ... contains within itself the potentiality not only of the dimmest latent within it, but it also contains numerous lower ... life-impulses, which ... would produce an inferior creature, whether it be an elephant, ... a dog, or some biological 'sport' which past history shows has not yet appeared on earth. The reasons ... why such cells ... in man today do not evolve forth into new phyla beneath man are ... First, evolution, as a process of unfolding new bodies and starting new stocks has permanently ceased for the remainder of this Round.\footnote{Lamarkay, was a stuffed dead ape they called Professor Fliske; it wore a white 'dicky' and necktie around the throat, manuscript in paw, and spectacles on nose.\textsuperscript{8}}

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TABLE 2. THREE VIEWS ON CREATION and/or EVOLUTION
(all dates very approximate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE of INFORMATION</th>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORIGIN of LIFE</td>
<td>God 5,000 B.C.</td>
<td>Divine Principle, Logos, svarga, 320,000,000 B.C.</td>
<td>Non-living matter 2,500,000,000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATICS/DYNAMICS of LIFE</td>
<td>Species stay static from Creation till Judgment Day</td>
<td>Creation, evolution, from, and eventually back to Divine Principle</td>
<td>Evolution: relatively simple species into more complex ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIGIN of ANIMALS</td>
<td>Created by God, a few days earlier than man, 5,000 B.C.</td>
<td>Descent from cast-off, lower human cells</td>
<td>Unicellular organisms evolved into 'animals' 250,000,000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. Dublin-born Anglican Bishop Usher, 1580-1656, who added up years from genealogies in the Bible. Blavatsky: 'the old exploded notions of the Jewish Bible with its 6000 [years] of the world'. Quoted 77, July 1931, 627. BESANT (1921), 38-9: 'When I was a young girl, most people that I was with thought that the world had not existed beyond six thousand years.' Dutch East Indies TS leader Labberton thought the 'Jewish' computation did make some sense, though 'naive'; not as the beginning of world history, but as the beginning of its Kali Yuga (see p. 38) era. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1910), 2.

2. BLAVATSKY (1977), vol II, 710.

3. DE PURucker (1940), 170: 'The Esoteric Tradition recognises no so-called 'dead matter' anywhere in Infinitude. . .

4. The Christian creation concept was rejected: BLAVATSKY (1987), 83.

5. DE PURUCKER (1940), 319; SCHWARZ (1905), 551. This is the important difference of TEPPER's (see p. 450 of this book) family tree from usual biologists' ones. LANZ VON LIEBENFELS (196), 31f. did not see it; or pretended not to. TILLETT (1982), 5, sums up theosophists' ideas on evolution: 'from minerals to Man and beyond to Superman. That misses the point of the supposed human divine derivation of minerals: who, if their Karma is right, may become human later. It misses the difference from Darwin; or 'Social Darwinism'.

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FUTURE of ANIMALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depends on Last Judgment</td>
<td>After many reincarnations, will, in later Rounds, become human; still much later, Divine</td>
<td>? Depends on human world economy, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AGE of EXTINCT GIANT REPTILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contemporaries of man, 5,000 B.C.</td>
<td>Contemporaries of '3rd Root Race man' 15,000,000 B.C.</td>
<td>250,000,000 to 65,000,000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ORIGIN of HUMANKIND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Created on 5th Day of Creation</td>
<td>Part of, which will return to, Divine Principle</td>
<td>Descent from 'ape-like' primate mammal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLACE OF ORIGIN of HUMANKIND

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paradise, Garden of Eden</td>
<td>Imperishable Sacred Land, near North Pole</td>
<td>Africa, most probably Ethiopia-Kenya area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANTQUITY of HUMANKIND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,000 B.C.</td>
<td>320,000,000 B.C. 'First Root Race'</td>
<td>400,000-200,000 B.C. Homo sapiens; 3,000,000 B.C. older 'man-like' species</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANTQUITY of 'ARYANS'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since the downfall of the tower of Babel?</td>
<td>'At least 1,000,000 years. 'Aryan (Fifth) Root Race'</td>
<td>No 'Aryan race'; Indo-European or Indo-Germanic languages 2500 B.C., maybe common origin from unknown language, 4,000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ARYANS in INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIANS of 1875 or later</th>
<th>THEOSOPHISTS</th>
<th>BIOLOGISTS, GEOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India far from geographic focus of Bible</td>
<td>For 850,000 years</td>
<td>Since 1750 B.C.?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. SCHWARZ (1905), 551.


4. SCHWARZ (1905), table K. But JINARAJADASA (1933): 20,000.

...some people. D. Lit!. at Amsterdam university in 1931, writing on history. He wrote in essays that a Marxist or Roman Catholic history cannot be the "true" history. The true and honest historian should have "Satyan naasti para dharmah" inscribed on his banner. Often, to theosophists clairvoyance and myth were truer history than historians' history was. On the concluding page of the first volume of her Secret Doctrine, Madame Blavatsky contrasted "legend" being "living tradition" favourably to history. Annie Besant wrote: "A myth is far truer than a history, for a history only gives a story of the shadows, whereas a myth gives a story of the substance that casts the shadows."
As expressed by Rudolf Steiner:

From ordinary history Man can learn but few about mankind's experience in earlier times. What Archaeology, Palaeontology, Geology, too, may teach us, always keeps within narrow boundaries. Exoteric history must limit itself to what has been preserved in time. No one can say what has been preserved is the real as well, if he sticks to the exoteric explanations.

Everything that arises in time, though, originates from the Eternal. But the Eternal is not accessible to sensory perception ... man ... however, can develop forces, slamming within him, in a way he may get knowledge about this Eternal. If man thus extends his perception, he is no longer dependent on exoteric proofs in order to know about the past ... From perishable history he proceeds into imperishable history ... This history, however, is written with completely different letters than the usual one. In Gnostics, in Theosophy it is called 'the Akasha Chronicle'.

Only the Few, who may disclose from it just bit by tantalizing bit, know this Chronicle. It is hard for pedestrian exoteric history (or political science, or any discipline) to rise to the Divine Wisdom level of Akashic super-History.

Unlike 'materialist' historians, who may divide time by bits of pottery, or by what stone or what metal tools are made of, spiritual theosophists linked their view of history to racial theories. This aspect will come later. Now, I just mention its division into eternity into seven very long periods: 'Chains' or 'Manvantaras'. These Chains are divided into seven 'Roots' each, with seven 'Root Races' each (separated by global catastrophes), with seven 'sub-races' each. Charlotte Despard touched upon this aspect, and also upon a second aspect, its...

disappeared, and at last the idea appears into the material world. Then they call this mutilated dead body a fact. That is the real nature of facts, to which people look up so much! On the contrary, a myth is the rendition of the Idea, as it exists in the heavenly world, and so it is always true.

1STERNER(1909), 3f. BESANT(1921), 3f: 'a person sitting at Advar can see back, and back, and back, for hundreds of thousands of years; may, he may go into almost inconceivable numbers of years, and by direct observation may say what happened in the far-off past; that is called reading the Ajashic record'. Sometimes, in reading it, you find that history has been very inaccurate. Aakasha: a Sanskrit word, theosophists borrowed from Hindu theology; interpreted by DE PURUCKER(1981), 6 as 'radiant, luminous' (primordial substance). Theosophists use 'aether' (a word used in early physics; later dropped) more or less as a synonym. Leadbeater(1922), 498: 'you must not take it for granted when you meet with any of our Theosophical terms, in Hindu or Buddhist books, that they mean exactly the same thing. Very often they do not.

2STERNER(1909), 7: 'On the sources from which these communications come, I am still bound to maintain secrecy now. One who knows these sources somewhat will understand why ... How much of the knowledge hidden in the womb of Theosophy will be allowed to be communicated bit by bit, is totally dependent on the attitude of our contemporaries.

3See Van Leeuwen, p. 122. 'Intellectual thinking brings nothing but headaches': from 'Karsismis, Schoolkrant Vrije School Merelend, Dec. 1989, 14, the magazine of a primary school in Leiden based on Steiner's teachings. Larnuril Babel in TOONDER, 19: 'Thinking can bring us nothing but misery.

4BESANT and LEADBEATER(1913), 30: A. Warrington, 'A Sketch of Theosophy and Occultism', 77, Aug. 1950, 634, 661. He, and LEADBEATER(1913), 302, have 'world periods' between Rounds and Root Race periods. Smaller periods of seven years are also very significant, teleology.

In the beautiful series of lectures, given by Mrs. Besant ... 'The Changing World', a picture is drawn of the incoming tide, of the little waves which are sub-races, and the great waves, which are root-races. That is a fine symbol of historical periods. One after another they come and go, and so to those who watch them it may seem that they barely, if at all, move upon the shore of human progress.

Unlike those who were then her fellow theosophists, Charlotte Despard here did not mention the questions, linked to the problem of ideology, of chance, of the possibility of various alternatives, of 'human free will'. Despard then belonged to both women's suffrage movement and TS. Both were growing; her teleology was optimistic.

Were all theosophists optimistic? An interesting question: their Society's century of birth, the nineteenth, with the hindsight of knowledge of the trenches of Verdun; Auschwitz; and Hiroshima, has been accused of optimism. Also, the 'exoteric' adopted faith of TS founders Blavatsky and Olcott, Buddhism, as an influence on nineteenth-century European thinking, was often accused of pessimism.

Many Buddhists rejected the accusation. But pessimism attracted many Europeans (such as Schopenhauer, Richard Wagner, Nietzsche) in what they saw as Buddhism.

It has been said nineteenth century 'Buddhism' influence on Europe and the US was a one-sided mix of northern or Mahayana Buddhism (in itself, Theravada purists from countries like Ceylon said, Hindu-influenced), and non-Buddhist Hindu writings, with metaphysical,

J. Wilkinson. St. Augustine, inc. divided world history into seven ages. The story of global catastrophes, destroying much or all life, is found in Scheuchzer (18th century), a believer in the biblical deluge; anti-evolution 19th century biologists Cuvier and Agassiz (whom BLAVATSKY(1908), 179 quoted in support of anthropocentrism), and Fabre d'Olivet, Cellier, 79.

1Affirmed by DE PURUCKER(1947), 169. VAN GINKEL(1915), 67. 'Occult science, which teaches that nature always works towards a given goal'.

Opening sentence of DESPARD (1910). She quoted from a lecture by AB in St. James Hall in London, 16 May 1909, see JANNI 1918, 221-2.

Dutch East Indies TS General Secretary Van Hinloopen Labberton said, in a speech to Badu Ulama: 'Also, every individual has his task in this world. Each is like a certain kind of labor in it. He himself may fancy he is doing everything himself; but in truth he is nothing more than a wayang puppet. There are dalangs [wayang puppet masters] who are behind this, and these dalangs are the ones deciding about the drama which will be played'. Still, humans have a margin of freedom. Some, who do gladly perform their task, use this margin well. Others, who in their discontent rebel against karma, abuse freedom; and will face the consequences of being useless wayang puppets; VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1909). 8. Theosophist astrologer VAN GINKEL(1915), 48 wrote: 'the humans are just cells, material vehicles of the various effects of national Dewa-consciousness'.

Who wrote: 'The fundamental difference of all religions I can ... only see as whether they are optimistic or pessimistic' . Quoted DE KRUIF(1988), 11. Madame Blavatsky considered him one of the great minds that lived during our period of history', 77 Oct. 1883, 12.

8MB, Dec. 1933, 497. Different views on Mahayana vs. Theravada influence exist,
elitist, and pessimist undertones.

The idea that today's humanity was in a 'dark age', a Kali Yuga within history, appealed to Western pessimists, like the Italian geology professor De Lorenzo, an honorary member of the Maha Bodhi Society founded by theosophists, and a senator in the Mussolini era. 'The Aryan race is now in its Kali Yuga, and will continue to be in it for 427,000 years longer.' Hindus thought Vishnu's tenth avatar would end the Kali Yuga. So did Steiner, but he was not as pessimistic about time-spans as Blavatsky. Madame Blavatsky saw her century as 'this, our most savage and cruel century.' In the writings of her followers, one can find both optimism and pessimism. Optimism in many publications of Besant's TS (Adyar); an organization which grew steadily till 1928. Pessimism for instance with smaller groups, or with individuals like Mrs Leighton Cleather.

Nineteenth century Briton T. Carlyle influenced theosophist ideas on history. We find his influence in the idea that a Mahachohan, a Manu, and a Bodhisattva lead every new 'root race' era in the TS calendar of world history. His opinion (from: On Heroes and Hero Worship) that history is chiefly made by 'great men' also inspired patriotic school history primers in many countries; and twentieth century fascist ideology.

Personally, I do not subscribe to Carlyle's view. Nevertheless, I subdivided next part, PART II, in terms of leading TS personalities; because of the autocratic position those leaders had.
PART II: REIGN AFTER REIGN

This is a more or less chronological account, up to 1947, of the theosophical movement. Chapters are named after TS leaders. Yet, they do not pretend to be personal psychological portraits. I will discuss some political issues that we will come across more extensively in later parts.

1. REINCARNATION OF A BUDDHA: H.P. BLAVATSKY, 1831-1891

I have no doubt whatever that I am a Buddha. That little image of bronze in his shrine is me as I was a thousand or ten thousand years ago.

If you will be led by me you will approach the light of truth and power, and become more potent than any Jehovah the Jews ever conceived.

A. THE NOBLE WIDOW(?), 1831-1875

Her devotees saw her as the White Lotus, the Great Theosophist, one of the superhuman Great White Brotherhood living among mere earthlings, at least equal in rank to Jesus Christ. They sang hymns in her praise.

Her parents knew her as Helena Petrovna von Hahn. 'Of noble birth', later theosophists stress. Like many Russian empire nobles, her father was of German ancestry: Hahn-von Rottenstein-Hahn, related to rulers of a Mecklenburg principality.

1 Leadbeater on Besant, quoted CLEAR A THER(1922A), 40: 'In her reign...'

2 Many say, one mark of a Buddha is non-reincarnation. HPB (BCW, XIV, 404f). Buddha reincarnated as the Hindu Sankaracharya- whom many Buddhists see as an enemy of their faith. In 'Some inquires suggested by Mr. Sinnett's Eastern Buddhism', 77, Sept 1883, 295-310, as reprinted BCW, vol. V, L. A., Philosophical Research Society, 1950, 182, she denied Sankaracharya had persecuted Buddhists. Steiner claimed the historic Buddha, after Nirvana, in the 17th century, as the request of non-historic (17th century fiction? ) Christ at the time went to Mars, to end a war between rocks? Oslo speech 1912, quoted VREEDE and MEYER, 48. PROKOFIEFF, 103. In theosophy, life moves inside the solar system, sometimes towards the sun, sometimes from the sun out. In the SD, Sanat Kumara moved from Venus to Earth and Buddha came with him according to Steiner. PROKOFIEFF, 79. Jupiter is not yet inhabited, but its moons are.' BESANT and LEADBEATER(1917), 7. CRUMP (OLEC Sept 1939): 'my step-son Mortal Collins got written messages from the Kirrwanakaya [Buddhist enlightened one] HPB'; 48 years after 1891. In HPB's first book, The Unveiled (1877), she spelt 'Buddha' and 'Krishna'. The years of occult training in India and Tibet, where she claimed the riddle of the world. Dyan-Ne Dya, as with WEBB(1971), 50: 'do not seem to have included spelling'. Dutch translation of DE PURUCKER(1951), 26: 'Buddha'; no fault of De Purucker's probably.

Blavatsky, quoted RAWSON, 212. 'Some one of the company suggested that it might be a relief if Buddha should retire into Nirvana and give us another rest of a few thousand years.' Ibid., 213.

HPB, quoted RAWSON, 214

3 Theosophists commemorate 8 May, the day of her death, White Lotus Day. In Hinduism, the lotus is linked to the god Vishnu.

4 BCW, vol. XIV, p. VII, prefecture by B. de Zirkoff, DE PURUCKER(1940), 339, 371, 373, 374, 383, etc. LANZ VON LIEBENFELS(18), 23 'grosse Theosophin'.

41

H.P. Blavatsky, 1831-1891

1 CRUMP(1923), 69: '... H.P.B. could scarcely have been of a lower occult status than what is known as an 'accepted Chela', which is no more than herself she claimed to be. The Masters Themselves called her 'Our Brother H.P.B.', which certainly implies a higher status. BESANT(1909A), 83: '... to those who sent her, she was: 'Our Brother whom you know at H.P.B., but we -- otherwise.' 'A Master' on HPB in 1872, quoted 77 Aug. 1931, 538: 'Chaste and pure soul; pearl shut inside an outwardly coarse nature... Anyone might well be dazzled by the divine light concealed under such a bank.' For the purpose of the theosophical work that she was an instrument used by one of the Masters, known to us as H.P.B.' A. Keightley, quoted: PRICE(1986A), 23. Many leaders of religious organizations claim relatively low status for themselves; but their followers (or Masters) accord them higher status. For this 'division of labour', HUTTEN, 574, quote 'Peace Mission' Father Divine: 'If my followers believe I am God, and by this conviction are led to renew their lives and experience bliss and happiness, why should I hinder them?' The leader of the Holy Grail Message Movement, O. Bernhardt used to have close contacts to the TS (Adyar) earlier; MIERS, 3. Ibid., 174: claims businessman Bernhardt had been repeatedly jailed for fraud. After he founded his cult, his followers called him 'King'. When he prohibited this, he was called 'the Lord'; HUTTEN, 550, Weissenberg, founder of the Evangelical Church according to St. John, called himself John the Baptist reincarnate; but his followers Jesus Christ; HUTTEN, 522f.; 535, ibid., calls this church 'poor man's theosophy'. Muslims may see a certain parallel in the history of Christian religion. Koran, sura 5, ayat 116: 'And when Allah said: O Isra'il, son of Mariam, hast thou said unto mankind: Take me and my mother as Gods, beside Allah?' he said: 'Glory be unto Thee! it is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth.' DE PURUCKER(1940), 1058: '... and it may as well be frankly stated that H.P. Blavatsky was a Messenger opening such a Messianic Cycle, and that a previous Messianic Cycle ended... some 2160 years ago, more or less, with the life and work of the Avatar whom the West knows under the name of Jesus the Christ.' See also LEADBEATER(1917), 172. Many theosophists think Jesus lived about 100 years B.C. Later twentieth century Unification Church 'Moonies' follow the traditional Christian birth year. They say Jesus was born 1920 years after Abraham: because 'history repeats itself', the Lord of the Second Advent (=their leader, the Reverend Moon) was born A.D. 1930. Waaron en hoe heerleent de geschiedenis zich? [Why and how does History repeat itself?] S.I., Unification Church, n.d.

3 Hall, Blavatsky! Thy holy doctrine our heart awakens', hymn which opens all South American TS meetings; written by Vicomtesse de Saro, of Rio de Janeiro; 77 June 1931, 258.

4 Latin alphabet transcription of Russian Yelena or Jelena.

CLEAR A THER and CRUMP(1928), 5; BESANT(1909A), 85: 'the noble House of the Hahns'; TM(1951), 27, Leaflet: International Headquarters Hall, TS, s.d. (1980's?): 'of noble family'; CRUMP(1923), 46: '... she who came of a noble Russian family, and could when she saw fit behave like an Empress. As Mrs Cleather has often told me.' TM/I, 1919, 271: 'a Russian princess with at least of high Russian nobility.'
He was an army colonel. Helena later claimed (incorrectly) that her mother, granddaughter of Princess Dolgorukova and thus distantly related to the imperial Romanov family, died when she was a baby.

She was born on her family's large estate, close to the city of Yekaterinoslav, founded by Czarina Catherine the Great; today's Ukrainian name is Dnipropetrovs'k.

1831, the year of her birth, was thirty years before official (not yet, on all counts, practical) abolition of serfdom. In the Ukraine, and south Russia proper, serfage had the particular intense form called 6apliHHa, barstcheena. Their masters could legally, depending on their dispositions, whip or sell peasants.

Serfs beaten to death were said to haunt cellars of a Blavatsky family estate. It is said Helena caused the death of a serf boy, threatening to set a malignant water spirit on him. If the story is true, superstitious awe may have gone hand in hand with awe of social 'betters', even if they still were children.

This was a society where Russian Orthodoxy was the state church and the only legal church; but where many pre-Christian beliefs in spirits still survived. A stratified society with a strong 'them versus us' sense. A society where the position of women was inferior, even compared to Western Europe then. Where women could not legally get higher education of the same level as men before 1917. Where they could not get any education, or own any property, without permission of father or husband. Little Helena learned to ride well on horse-back, though.

That Helena Petrovna belonged to both the privileged class and the underprivileged sex, in an autocratically ruled country, would influence the doctrines she was to develop in rivalry to official religion. Not in the simple, mechanical way of making her a militant feminist or at all times an unambiguous monarchist, however.

When Helena was 17 years old, she married 39 year old General Nikifor Blavatski, the vice-governor of Erivan in Armenia. That made her name in Russian for the rest of her life: Blavatskaja. As Madame Blavatsky, or as HPB, she became known, however. She separated after a few months; there was no such thing as a legal divorce in Russia.

She hated her married name, because it reminded her of her husband as an individual, and was proud of it, because of her status as a general's wife; or widow? Right after becoming a citizen of the US republic in 1878, she did not use a title of nobility. However, she did use a 'countess' coronet on her 1884 calling card.

Controversy, mystery, and speculations surround her life from 1849 to 1874. She

[TILLETT(1982), 27. TUP Agency, Catalogue 1989, 4. MEADE, 123, says her father was a captain; though HPB (ibid.) and TINGLEY(1915), 4, claimed he was a general]

[TILDE, 28.]

[So not in 'Kheres': CAIET, ROE, calls her a 'White Russian'. That is used for: a) the nationality from 'White Russia; Belarus', east of Poland, north of the Ukraine; b) a supporter of the armies fighting the October revolution after 1917. A) is out of place; B) is out of time for HPB]

[MEADE, 23f. 77 Feb 1936, 442]

[In the USSR of 1990, 11% were said to believe in contact with spirits of the dead (in the US in that year, 42% claimed to have had that kind of contact personally: SENFT, 34). Informationsbulletin, USSR embassy in The Hague, 14-7-1990: 'Atheisten geloven in voortekens']
Madame Blavatsky later claimed about her pre-1874 days that she had made intensive contacts, in Tibet and elsewhere, with the Great White Brotherhood, also known as the Adepts, the Masters, or (after 1879) the Mahatmas or the Transhimalayan Lodge. She said they were a group of originally human beings, usually staying in Tibet. By enlightenment they had transformed themselves to transcending their physical bodies, and acquiring miraculous powers. They included Masters like KH,1 and M. (Morya).

It is said Helena Petrovna got much of the inspiration for her statements on the Brotherhood from the novels of British Tory politician Bulwer-Lytton.2 He was the father of Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, and grandfather to prominent theosophist Lady Emily Lytton Bulwer.

Tibet was inaccessible then, its government banned foreign visitors, the Himalayas were unclimbed by Europeans as yet. It had a reputation as the country of the legendary snow leopard (known now to exist, though in jeopardy of extinction), and of the legendary Yeti (spoken of as 'subhuman'; disputes on its existence still raging). To verify or falsify, Helena Petrovna's story on superhumans was not easy.

Some questioned their qualities. A Dutch anarchist paper asked in 1898: "I'm not even sure their spelling was correct, except for the Koot Hoomi Lal Singh (or Sing? His (or HPB's)?) spelling was not certain from the start. Before KH, 'Gulab Singh' was used as signature under messages which were said to come from the Brotherhood - a name well-known as founder of the Kashmir ruling dynasty from the 1840's on, an important military ally of the British during the 1857 Mutiny."

It is also recorded that her early experiences in Tibet were not without controversy. Some doubted her claims of meeting with the Masters, including her letters to William Q. Judge, which were allegedly written by them, and delivered to A.P. Sinnett, H.S. Olcott, H.P. Blavatsky, and others.

Theosophists wrote many books and articles on who wrote Mahatma Letters. They consider the Great White Brotherhood to be the TS First Section, its real authors. In 1851, Madame Blavatsky is said to have got their message to found the TS twenty-four years later. Ascribing letters to Them in vain, or denying Their writings seen as authentic, is desecration in theosophist eyes. What theosophists say on individual Mahatma messages depends on where they stand in conflicts within the movement, like the one with William Q. Judge.

During nearly 50 years in theosophical thought and organizations, I came across about ten Mahatma Moryas, who not only flatly contradicted each other, but some of them called the others' stories under the sun.4

B.DO AS THE SPIRIT SAY DO, 1875-1879

It is certain Helena Petrovna spent time in the Middle East, especially Egypt, to study snake-charming and magic; and that she was involved in spiritualism.5

The United States Fox family started spiritualism in 1848. Circus director P.T. Barnum put the Fox daughters on show. By the time they were old ladies, they confessed it had all been a hoax.6 But by then, too many believed in their early sayings, to believe their later sayings. P.T. Barnum: 'There's a sucker born every minute'.

After most 1848-1849 revolutionary movements had been repressed, during the 1850's spiritualism rose in Europe.7 Karl Marx saw them as the times when 'China and the tables started dancing, as the rest of the world seemed to stand still.8

1. RABE(1898A), 1. The London Standard in 1883, the TS is 'a society founded on the alleged facts of certain Indian jugglers'; MEADE, 278. CUMBEY, 48: [the Masters] 'these demonic messengers'.

2. JONES(1989), 170. 'Sinnett became a major link between Blavatsky and the Mahatmas'. In fact, it was the other way around: Sinnett got his Mahatma messages by way of Madame Blavatsky.

3. CLEATHER(1922A), viii.


5. Here used in the specific sense of belief in communication with the dead. Not in the more general sense of a philosophy which claims primacy of the spiritual over the material; more or less a synonym of idealist philosophy, opposite of materialist philosophy.

6. WEBB(1971), 5. Margaret Fox said they had used a ball on a bit of string to make 'spirit rapping' sounds: CONSTANDESE, 13.

7. RANSOM(1938), 70.

8. Das Kapital, volume I in: Marx Engels Werke (MEW), vol. 23 (Berlin: Dietz, 1962), 85 'China' refers to the T'ai Ping rebellion, from 1850 to 1864.
In France, Hippolyte L.D. Rivail, who called himself Allan Kardec, became influential with his *La Revue Spirite*. Though his doctrines included reincarnation, Madame Blavatsky did not like to acknowledge him as an influence, as his Roman Catholicism repelled her.3

Spiritualism attracted, to use an anachronistic, 'trendy' people; it had become harder to turn to politics, for the moment firmly, in some cases brutally, taken in hand by traditional princely, aristocratic, or military elites. One needed some 'rebelliousness' to become a spiritualist; a rebelliousness that usually did not cross the border between the other side of death, and this side of social revolution.3

Spiritualism fought materialist philosophy. It believed matter was just a by-product of the spirit. Hence, a 'medium' (sort of nineteenth century equivalent of a pagan antiquity oracle priest, or priestess), living contact between the 'spirit world', the 'other side', and seances (spiritualist gatherings) could bring about 'materializations', letting cups, shawls, letters, or other items appear seemingly out of nowhere, out of the realm of the spirit.

Spiritualism soon found itself in conflict with many Christians, as well as with materialists; though quite a few Christian clergymen applauded it as proving the immortality of the soul. Theosophists would later have disputes on this with Théarava Buddhists holding the *anatta*—literally, 'non-existence of the soul'—doctrine.

Spiritualism was an international, but not internationally organized, movement. It was not even nationally organized in most countries where it had support, in spite of

1A rival group, led by Professor Z. Pickett, published *La Revue Spiritiste*, RANSOM (1938), 14. WILSON (1975), 117, misspelling Rivail
3Close friends and relatives of British Queen Victoria, though probably not the herself, engaged in spiritualist seances, and believed in reincarnation, LONGFORD (1916), 423. According to occult research by Annie Besant, Victoria was a reincarnation of Alfred the Great, king of Wessex 871-901, who fought against the Danes. Reenamtion, translated TAMI, 1919, 432. Austrian Empress Elisabeth ('Sissi') and Russian Queen Elisabeth ('Carmen Silva') had spiritualist seances together. COPPENS. Philosopher Buchner thought spiritualists had support especially among the 'cultured classes', quoted D.L.N. Vink, 'De Tongtongio van het Materialisme', TAMI, 1916, 209-22, 210 HBP, BCW, 111, 53 write of 'spiritualists and mediums of the St. Petersburg grand monde ... We seriously doubt whether these were will more than are now believers in Spiritualism among the middle and lower classes of Russia. These we too sincerely devout, and believe fervently in the devil to have any faith in spirits. ' Count Witte agreed with his cousin HBP at least on the social background of spiritualists in the czar's empire: 'Every night, I remember, Tblisi society gathered at our home around Yelena Petrowna ... There came for example Coeni V.-D. and the two counts O.-D. and other jeunesses dorées representatives ...' quoted TAMI, 1921, 44. Later, in Britain in 1957, the situation was different from HBP's, and many social theorists, view, but consistent with a view which questions the widespread perception of the role of religion as particularly lower class: STARK, 705, who did not mention Spiritualism, found that of the upper class, 90% believed in the devil, vs. 32% of the working class. See p. 135.
4Materializations by HBP; Adyar TS headquarters museum preserves some. HBP did not want to be called 'medium', as that would imply she wasn't in control.

1 Alfred A. Haigh was one of the few to deliberately use 'media' as plural for 'medium' (person). See his preface to HEÜZÉ, 5. French Paul Heuze was a sympathizer of René Guénon; ibid., 10.

2H P. Blavatsky, 1831-1891
3 'Materializations by HBP; Adyar TS headquarters museum preserves some. HBP did not want to be called 'medium', as that would imply she wasn't in control.

Some attempts. More or less loose groups, sometimes in more or less loose contact with other groups, formed around certain media (newspapers) and mediums (people).

When H.P. Blavatsky and others from a spiritualist background formed the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875, it appealed to believers in her 'materializations' and other supernatural 'phenomena'; in recently influential Eastern wisdom (for the TS, not much farther east than Egypt at first); to non-materialist critics of orthodox (Russian or otherwise) Christianity—'Churchianity', many in the TS called it, and especially to those who wanted to combine all these into a solid organization.

The Theosophical Society seems to be attracting within its pale in India some of those who have been forced to give up ancient superstitions but who aren't strong enough to rise upon reason alone.

Annie Besant said this in 1882, the first time she wrote on the TS,1 it might have been about countries on both sides of the north Atlantic ocean as well as on India. Why might these not be strong enough?

Since at least the days of Copernicus, cracks had begun to show in the various Christian churches' monopoly as supreme authorities on scientific questions, in traditionally Christian countries.3

In the very 19th century, when these countries subjected one heathen land after another, because we have got the Maxim gun. And they have not. (Hitler Bello), cracks showed in the Christian monopoly as religion of the overwhelming majority, as theology in the narrow sense; as main source of inspiration for ideologies that either propped up, or attacked, the social status quo.

The theosophical movement was one of the first to jump into these cracks. It was one focus attracting those who wanted a break with many doctrines of the established or state churches of that time (like Anglicanism or Russian Orthodoxy); yet wanted no complete break with all Christianity, or—some step farther away from orthodoxy—to break with all religion; not with all concepts of the Supernatural.4 Those wanted still 'to keep alive in
man his belief that he has a soul, and the Universe a God. 

Breaks with religious mainstreams do not necessarily go hand in hand with social rebellion. Catherine Wessinger names the TS as example of

Groups whose members may accept and conform to the social order, but reject the religious terms of the mainstream society.

From three different sides: theosophists, non-TS opponents of the labour movement, and staunchly non-TS Marxists, eventually came parallel views on changes in social position during the nineteenth century of one on the one hand, ideas like atheism, and scientific theories supposedly associated with them; on the other hand, theosophy.

Marxists like Van Raveseyn, Cornelie Huygens and Pannekoek had a theory that after about 1848 the bourgeoisie, ceasing to be revolutionary, had less importance for materialism, and switched to various idealist philosophies. This Van Raveseyn saw as the cause of the rise of spiritualism and theosophy.

Ex-Darwinist Prof. Virchow wrote on Darwinism, when he had become an opponent of it: 'I hope it did not escape your attention that Socialism has at last arrived! In a debate at a German medical congress, he said against Haeckel, that if he kept propagating Darwinism, revolutions like the Paris Commune in 1871 would result. People increasingly associated 'materialism' with Marxist or anarchist labour movements.

During a wave of workers' rebellion, in 1918, Dutch East Indies theosophist leader A. van Leeuwen made a speech in Ceylon against socialism. He said:

It is not by chance that the very 19th century which brought us agnosticism, atheism, and materialism, also became the century of social democracy. The brotherhood of men was seen in the fact that we are all children of the Earth, all formed from the same matter. But there is a higher brotherhood, we too are children of one and the same Father...

Helena Petrovna, though popular for her phenomena, did not become president of the Theosophical Society. Part of the reason may have been an organizational, not just admitting women, but led by a woman, might have looked less credible to respectable New York in the 1875 ideological climate on the 'proper' role of women. She became Corresponding Secretary, a relatively minor office, though one for life, like the presidency.

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1 Rules of the TS, as quoted by HPB: BCW, II, 51
3 VAN RAVESYEN(1917) PANNEKOEK(1917). Whatever the merits of this view on the social origins of theosophy, the TS would also attract European nobles, with no recent revolutionary past. Also non-Europeans like Brahmins: mostly privileged, but not identical to bankers or factory owners.
5 ZAHM, 1919, 90.
6 VAN MANEN(1916), 433. She called herself 'Secr\'etaire G\'en\'eral' in the 1880's. TT Aug. 1931, 624. In 1882, she was treasurer as well; JINARAJADASA (1925), 24. Contrary to what

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I am the mother and creator of the Society; it has my magnetic fluid. Therefore I alone and to a degree Olcott can serve as a lightning conductor of Karma for it. 

TS President (President-Founder; for life, until 1907) became Col. (US Army, retired) H.S. Olcott. To a journalist, he explained the Society's religious aims, and its political aims as well:

In the State, we wish to spread high notions of honour, patriotism, responsibility and that international exchange of courtesy...

The TS supported pro-Mazzini activity of New York Italian republican immigrants in 1878, which led to a conflict with the consul for the kingdom of Italy.

Lawyer William Quan Judge was a prominent member in those early New York days. The only woman, apart from Madame Blavatsky, of the first sixteen was Mrs Emma Harding Britten. Colonel Olcott in 1875 referred to her: 'who both as a lady and a Spiritualist is highly respected in two hemispheres'.

Mrs Harding Britten published a book, Art Magic, containing many ideas later to become well-known in theosophy. This apparently was not the hiring of Madame Blavatsky, who, sooner than planned, published her own first book. It was Isis Unveiled. Mrs Britten left the TS, quarrelling with its leadership both before and after leaving. Olcott wrote 'the sarcasms and pifflings' of Mrs Britten against the Society were much resented. She was the first major case; not the last.

For some time, the New York TS was almost dead. 1878 saw signs of revival: after...
some preliminary groundwork, a British Theosophical Society started. Contacts in Greece and Turkey had been established. The TS, though, remained small, until its leaders Olcott and Blavatsky arrived in India in 1879. They had left General Abner Doubleday, veteran of the Seminole, 1854-55 Apache Indian, and Civil war, as caretaker for the executive in New York.

C. WILL INDIA DESERVE IT? 1879-1884

The foreword to the address that Olcott gave 'At the Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay, on March 23rd, 1879 ... before a large and enthusiastic audience' said:

... the Society should command the sympathy and secure the enrolment of the educated and advanced-free-thinking-minds in all countries, and especially in India where the founders of the Society have come to settle. More Hindoosized than most of the Hindoos born on the soil-compounded with the ancient learning and philosophy of India-devoted to India-for India they have left their homes and sacrificed all worldly considerations. Let us hope India may appreciate this self-sacrifice, and deserve it.

Also from Bombay, in October 1879, came the first issue of their international magazine The Theosophist. It declared:

Unconcerned about politics, hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors-as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour. 1

In the nineteenth century West, the interest in south and east Asian philosophies gradually rose. An interest, not matched by widespread knowledge, relatively little of the ancient sources in languages such as Sanskrit (for Hinduism), Pali (Theravada Buddhism), let alone Tibetan, had been translated into European languages then.

Most Asian countries that were not yet colonies, became so by the last quarter of the nineteenth century: if they were colonized, pressure on the inhabitants (political, economic, in the field of ideas) increased.

1 Not in 1878, as in SCHWARTZBERG, 69. French Catholic priest and occultist Constant ('Eliphas Levi'), and Anna Kingsford in her 1882 book The Perfect Way, and later Rudolf Steiner, saw 1879 as an occult watershed year, a case where history, at least of the TS, and occultism may happen to agree. See GUENON(1921), 295, IMELMAN/VAN HOEK.

2 VAN MATER(1887), 93; BCW, vol. 1, 459.

3 Reprinted in: VAN MANEN(1916), 429.

4 The NCE forgets Bombay, saying it was published in Madras from 1879. CUMBEY, 48 has the TS move from New York in 1875; M. LUTYENS(1975), 10, in 1882 (both wrong). Askellaus Konversations Leksikon, Oslo, Det Malmingske Boktrykkeri, 1974, vol. 18, 783, wrongly has the headquarters in Benares before they went to Bombay; A. KOK, 361. headquarters in Benares in 1882, in Bombay later.

5HPB, IT #1 (1879), 7: 'What are the Theosophists'; BCW, II, 105; quote in CLEATHER(1922A), 61 is not 100% literal.

6 MUTHANNA, 70.; on Annie Besant and subjects like Karma and Yoga. 'She was the first Western philosopher who talked about these subjects in the far off lands', overrates her undeniable originality a bit.

In the field of ideas, in India and Ceylon, missionaries and sometimes other Christians had material and immaterial privileges under colonial government. In India and Ceylon (as in Ireland), taxes that benefited only the Anglican Church were levied on people of all faiths. Missions tended to look at the enormously complex and diverse philosophical and religious situation of the South Asian subcontinent as 'abominable native heathenism'.

We should not forget that, contrary to the image of the 'ever unchanging Orient', there were already divergences and dynamics before the start of colonial rule; as we discuss three of the possible South Asian reactions to missionary (more generally, colonial) pressure.

1. Conversion to Christianity. Only a small minority in India did this, as did a somewhat bigger, but still less than 10% minority in Ceylon, smaller, thus easier to influence, than India. Ceylon had been subject to missionary influences since the 16th century incursions of Roman Catholic Portuguese.

2. Withdrawing into isolation with one's own religion, seen as dogmas not to be changed, fondly remembering the idealized 'good old days', hoping someday the Gods might bring them back. There certainly was isolationism among nineteenth century Hindus: in many Hindu circles it was illegal to travel outside India. A Brahmana who had broken that law would be made an outcast, and would have to undergo purification rites to be re-admitted.

3. Trying to find a non-colonial answer to the changes in one's society: Trying to modernize, without necessarily to 'Westernize' or Christianize, certainly not to colonize. In the political field, this led to nationalist movements (both secular and more or less influenced by one religion or another, including in some cases, paradoxically, Christianity).

In the religious field, this meant developing arguments against the missionaries, both from re-interpreting national traditions, and from non-(orthodox) Christian Western sources. Already in pre-colonial times, critical currents in both Hinduism and Buddhism had attacked for instance tenets of caste, and denial to widows of the right to remarry.

From 1875, just before 1879, on, the Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayananda Sarasvati, spread fairly rapidly, mainly in northern India. The swami attacked image worship, polytheism, and caste practices in Hinduism. He recognized only the Vedas as holy scripture, not the numerous other writings many Hindus considered sacred (like the Puranas). News of his activities reached Olcott in New York.

In Ceylon, a Buddhist ideological counter-attack had already begun somewhat earlier. Christian missionaries had challenged Buddhist monks to a debate. In 1864 in Baddegama, the first of a series of discussions took place. The most famous of these

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debates, held mainly near the island's west coast, was in Panadura in 1873. It attracted over 10,000 people; according to most present, the Christians lost. An account of this debate, which Englishman P. F. published, got some quite attention, including the TS.

So two religions, with hundreds of millions of adherents, not Christian, like the TS founders, showed present-day vitality besides age-old reputation. But they were up against a colonial government unsympathetic to them.

Would not these religions be thankful to a super-religion in the making, such as theosophy, if it helped them; for instance, with newspaper publicity, or with a non-Christian education network? Organizing Spiritualists might prove as difficult as transporting a mass of frogs in a wheelbarrow. Pope Pius IX, Czar Alexander II, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, or the Episcopal (Anglican) bishop of New York City, would surely not accept the TS as superchurch to their organizations. Maybe someone, somewhere else, would.

HPB and HSO contacted both Swami Dayananda and Ceylon Buddhist priests about possible cooperation, and got positive replies; as this was the first time the recipients of the letters discovered European or American sympathizers with what missionaries from these continents denounced as paganism.

Colonel Olcott and Colonel Hahn's daughter thought of moving to Ceylon, but correspondence with Bombay convinced them India had better prospects. They embarked to Bombay, arguably setting a precedent for many poor hippies and rich yuppies in search of instant spiritual glory.

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recited the Buddha's Five Precepts (Pansil), and were thus formally admitted to Buddhism.

Dutch sailors, stranded on Ceylon, had become Buddhists centuries before them. The TS leaders, though, were the first to come especially to the island from another continent to embrace the faith. As they belonged to the 'respectable classes', Buddhists saw them as valuable allies in negotiations on their position under British rule.

After the Arya Samaj broke with Olcott and Blavatsky in 1882, they moved TS headquarters south, closer to Madras lawyer and orthodox Brahman T. Subba Row. He helped H.P. Blavatsky in the first stages of writing her new book, The Secret Doctrine. They could buy an estate at a low price in Adyar, near Madras city. They had a shrine built, where Mahaana letters appeared miraculously. Hindus gave quite some support. So did some Parsis, a numerically weak but in some cases financially strong community, descended from Zoroastrian immigrants from Persia.

Some influential British living in India also joined the TS (see p. 104), like A.P. Sinnett, editor of Allahabad newspaper the Pioneer.

Attractiveness in Asia in turn attracted new members in Europe and North America. Then, many Asian writings were translated. While many Orientalists were hostile to theosophy, their work showed the long history pre-dating Christianity and literary qualities, in religions which many had so far dismissed as 'crude barbarian paganism'. Increasing sympathy for those faiths was not bad news for an organization claiming to represent the link between them and the long hidden, authentic, original, tradition of the West, as opposed to merely 'exoteric' Christianity.

Some Orientalists eventually became FTS. The TS Adyar library collected and published manuscripts in South Asian (and other) languages; though some charged the TS with editing these to fit theosophist interpretation of Eastern religions.

The move to Adyar would make south India the region arguably most receptive to theosophy in the world for many decades to come. This is not without its irony and complications, when one looks at TS racial doctrines on south Indians. Theories of separate northern origins for southern Brahmins might solve those complications.

The move south also meant Ceylon became easier to reach from headquarters. Olcott was not so sure about others. Olcott especially was very interested in the island. His popularity even survived a clash with an earlier ally, Buddhist High Priest Mogittuwatte, who accused him of using Buddhism for ulterior theosophic purposes. Another important High Priest, Suraagala, took Olcott's side.

When Blavatsky and Olcott visited Ceylon in 1884, they had a companion: C.W. Leadbeater, ex-Church of England priest, who had turned theosophist and Buddhist via spiritualism. He joined the TS on 20 November 1883. From 1886 to 1889, Leadbeater was in charge of the network of Buddhist schools the TS set up to break the Christian monopoly. Olcott wrote to HPB:

Leadbeater is making a good impression on the people ... and he will not dream of trying to break off the Buddhists from the TS and set up a little kingdom of his own. Olcott was not so sure about others.

In presenting South Asia with an alternative to Christian education, theosophists were fairly successful, in Ceylon more so than in India. In 1904 Ceylon, Ananda College of the Buddhist Theosophical Society differed from government and Christian education in that

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1 W. T. Stead in 1884 or H. P. Blavatsky, quoted TMN 1920, 432: 'Still more conspicuous has been the success which this remarkable woman has had with her striving to get into the somewhat hard heads of the West European races, and especially into those of the English, the conviction (a conviction, which until then existed only within the heads of the Orientalists led by Professor Max Müller), that the East as far as Religion and Philosophy were concerned in no way was inferior to the West'. A missionary paper in Indonesia in 1918 called 'Mohammadansm' (Islam, the majority religion there) 'a plague for the Dutch East Indies' and attacked Chinese religion; quoted TMN, 1919, 3.

2 Richardus, 11: J. W. Boissevain.

3 Yadav, 2, his Introduction of the Autobiography of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, 'found that the English translation of the [1879-1880] Theosophist was awfully mechanical and at places quite confusing.'

4 Tillett, 82, 51. Richardus, 18: CWL thought ... of becoming a Buddhist' in 1906; he then already was for 22 years, and even after becoming an LCC bishop never gave that up.
'Our College, alone, has for Principal and teachers men of native birth-Sinhalese Buddhists.' Still, for other schools and at other times, theosophists attracted from Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (the last two relatively strong within the TS) men and women teachers, who may have thought of opportunities to be close to the Masters, and to help co-religionists or fellow Aryans. Teachers were among the lowest category of TS members on non-Asian social ladders. Princes, duchesses, and daughters of Viceroy's of India were at the top end. The TS used school buildings as venues for lodge meetings and lecturers, both local and from abroad.

D. FAQIR2 OR FAKER? FROM COLOMBO TO COULOMB, 1884-1888

Though both TS leaders and many members came to it by way of spiritualism, theosophist organizational and doctrinal discipline did not really appeal to all interested in 'phenomena'. Some joined the TS enthusiastically, some moved to its periphery, some became hostile to it. The labyrinth of loose, autonomous spiritualist circles did not prove easy to entangle by the snake in the TS sea. Though both TS leaders and many members came to it by way of spiritualism, theosophist organizational and doctrinal discipline did not really appeal to all interested in 'phenomena'. Some joined the TS enthusiastically, some moved to its periphery, some became hostile to it. The labyrinth of loose, autonomous spiritualist circles did not prove easy to entangle by the snake in the TS sea.

'Spiritualist' as used in theosophist writings eventually got a pejorative undertone.1 Historian Annie Romein-Verschoor wrote of theosophist attacks on spiritualism as confirming the rule that 'faiths' fight one another more the closer to one another they are.2 In The Key to Theosophy, published in 1889, H.P. Blavatsky devoted a chapter to the difference between Theosophy and Spiritualism: 'I must state here that it is Theosophy which is the true and unalloyed Spiritualism, while the modern scheme of that name is, as now practiced by the masses, simply transcendental materialism.'3

In 1882, in England, the division was not so clear yet. Both FTS and non-FTS, future Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Balfour and many university men among them, formed the Society for Psychical Research, to investigate mediums and phenomena. Many SPR members hoped to be able to separate 'real' from 'fake' psychism by establishing certain controls. Professor Myers, FTS, and a prominent SPR member, suggested Blavatsky's phenomena as a good field for research. The TS leaders initially agreed. Richard Hodgson, who did the main work for the investigation committee, in Adyar and elsewhere in India, as he began was quite sympathetic to the TS.

Hodgson's report was very unfavourable to HPB. He considered her a fraud and 'I cannot profess myself after my personal experiences of Madame Blavatsky, to feel much sympathy to the TS.'

2Not 'Coloumb', as in N.M.C. Tideman, 'H. P. B.', IT 1920, 429-34, passim.

1TS General Report on 1904, 46
2FAQIR: a saint in Sufi tradition within Islam; IT March 1934, 567.
3MYERS (1916), 472, said the difference was: 'Spiritualism drags down the spirits of the dead. Theosophy lifts up the souls of the living.' Sometimes theosophists saw spiritualism as a bit more positively, as doing the preparatory work for the real, theosophical, work: 'The sappers and miners of the Theosophical Society-Spiritualism and Materialism'; CLAUDE WRIGHT (1890), 343.
4And A.P. Sinnen, looking back at the rise of spiritualism, saw it as giving 'reality to ideals and principles essential to the maintenance of religious faith'; IT, June 1921, 301.
5BOLLAERT (1911), 77 translated it, unusually, into Dutch as 'ziekel onderzoek.'
doubt that her real object has been the furtherance of Russian interests. He did not prove this secret agent theory then. It would reincarnate thirty-four years later, when Annie Besant accused ex-German TS leader Rudolf Steiner (see p. 80).

Theosophist Leslie Price tries to shield Madame Blavatsky by pointing to her occult, as opposed to political, outlook. Price admits this distinction was not total: It is idle to deny that H.P.B. had some political interests, for she claimed after all to have fought for the Italian Nationalists, and to have been shot for her efforts. Although I understand she may be mentioned in the files of the India office that deal with subversives - she was kept under observation after her arrival with Olcott. ... H.P. Blavatsky's Secret Doctrine and other writings show one can call neither her nor her organization apolitical. Her views obviously had influences from her Russian ruling class background. Whether she had links to the 'Third Section', the secret police, is still unsolved. Both she and Olcott had public contacts with Russian government representatives; unsuitable for non-public agents. Olcott repeatedly received Russian princes, including future Czar Nicholas II. Blavatsky wrote on British Indian politics in the Russkiy Vestnik of the czarist Kaskov, and on Russian politics in Sinnett's Allahabad Pioneer.

Madame Blavatsky, who had moved from Adyar to Europe earlier in 1885, reacted furiously to 'the two miserable Coulomb people, who had eaten her bread for years.' She wanted to sue the TS' opponents. However, the majority of the leadership, including lawyers Olcott and Subba Row, did not want a court case, to Helena Petrovna's anger. Some FTS, like Myers, reacted by resigning.

Subba Row quarrelled with HPB after 1885. They agreed that, besides the visible body 'principle', there were more invisible 'principles' in man, than only the soul. But they disagreed on the number of principles. Madame Blavatsky discarded Subba Row's idea of four as mystic number, in favour of seven. Nevertheless, he had pretty much influence on the TS. It still calls its highest award of honour the T. Subba Row Medal. Row died in 1890.

The 'Mahatma-Coulomb-SPR' crisis shook the TS, but did not break it. Bad publicity is publicity too. Besides, missionaries joined the attack. In the eyes of many Hindus and other Indians this made HPB a martyr. Certainly so in the eyes of Price: Madame Blavatsky may have been officially unveiled by the 1885 report, just as Jesus of Nazareth, another 'impostor' was decisively dealt with by physical crucifixion.

1Ibid., 1. According to material in Washington archives, Olcott did gather information on the British Indian Army for the US government, MURPHET, 110.
3BCW, vol. I, 262f. In 1877 she defended czarism in the US press against charges that it was anti-Semitic and in 1880 in Allahabad daily the Pioneer against charges of the Economist that it was anti-Armenian; ibid., II, 263f. A Pioneer article by her on Russia's foreign relations: BCW, III. 75f. P. JOHNSON (s.d.), 99: 'The issue of HPB's political involvement has never received the serious consideration it deserves. HPB could have been a Russian 'spy' ... in the very limited sense of being a free-lance explorer who may have gained some financial support by writing reports of her findings to the government of her native country ... Her connections with the aristocracy and the military would easily have provided opportunities for such employment.' Ibid., 101: 'Theosophists have tended to regard HPB's mission ... as transcending any possible political goals. This seems naive and ill-informed in light of the clear intent of both HPB and her Masters ... to revive the national identity and pride of India and Ceylon. But to have objectives related to political change and connections with Russian intelligence does not make one a spy.' MURPHET, 119: British intelligence in India thought Madame Blavatsky; a 'Russian of the ruling class, and therefore suspect'. Madame Novikoff, who did work for the czar's intelligence, thought HPB 'a great Russian patriot' in her London days; TAYLOR (1992), 239; Maria Carlson, 'To Spy or not to Spy.' 'The Letter' of Mine Blavatsky to the Third Section', 79 July 1995, 253-31, in 1988, a Soviet magazine published a letter of 26 Dec. 1872 from HPB, asking for employment as secret agent of the czar. Maria Carlson was not sure if this was genuine or communist anti-theosophy.
4BCW, II. 294f, 263f, 351f.
Theosophy got more publicity in 1888, when H.P. Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine*, all 1571 pages of it, came out. She saw it as an improved version of *Isis Unveiled*. Its contents are central to later theosophist theorists: ‘Everyone should read that book.’ Not even all theosophists did. In 1922 in Indonesia, of 1600 FTS less than 250 owned copies.

... turn away from *The Secret Doctrine* because its style is nineteenth century and repugnant to them. ... Even among older members ... *The Secret Doctrine* is pronounced unreadable.

Tillett thinks it ‘irrelevant’ whether or not Leadbeater derived his best-selling books from *The Secret Doctrine*: ‘her works remain obscure and largely unread outside a select circle.’

In weighing irrelevancy, however, one should remember that obscurity may not only repel, it may attract as well, especially in religion. Dange pointed out the part played by ununderstood, or half-understood language in religions: Latin with Roman Catholics, Pahlavi with Parsis, and so on. One might also think of Sanskrit in nineteenth century Hinduism, or, still more clearly, in nineteenth and twentieth century theosophy in North America.

To some extent, the part of the *SD* in the *TS* parallels that of the Bible in medieval Europe. Then, the authority of the clergy was supposed to rest on it, they quoted from it in their writings, or in sermons to the illiterate.

The first printing of the *Secret Doctrine* was soon sold out; a year later, a second printing proved necessary. One may wonder how many copies of these and later editions served merely as ornaments on bookshelves. One *SD* reviewer, Annie Besant, became so impressed that she joined the *TS* in 1889. How important this was we will see.

In Mrs Besant’s London house, HPB died in 1891, leaving her ring to AB. Students in Mrs Besant’s London house, HPB died in 1891, leaving her ring to AB. Students

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1Pali equivalent of Sanskrit *Nirvana*


3In two volumes: ‘Cosmogénesis’ and ‘Anthropogénesis’. In 1897, Mrs Besant brought out a third volume: ‘Osculism’ from unpublished manuscripts. Theosophists disagree on whether or not this volume contains materials that HPB wanted in the volume three she did plan. Boris de Zirkoff in his preface to BCW, XIV, p. XXVI-XXVII, thinks parts of it were not intended for the reading public, but were ‘given under a solemn pledge of secrecy which was blantly violated by their publication’.

4DE PURUCKER(1947), 13.

5‘TMN’ 1922, 621. J. MILLER, 190. PRICE(1968A), 25: ‘Theosophists have a favourite and perhaps not entirely fair way of responding to superficial observations about their movement. ‘Have you read *The Secret Doctrine*?’ they enquire …’

6TILLETT(1982), 4.

7DANGE, vol. 3: 151: ‘history shows that God has never ordained that his devotees must understand the language of his divine utterance … the practice has been that all the transactions between God and his devotees have been carried on in something like a code language.’ See also BCW, II, 43.

8GLEC March-Apr. 1925: ‘Youngsters to shoot Sanskrit’. U.S. primary school children of the TS (Point Lorna) which had very few Indian members, were taught Sanskrit. Daily Satya Varthamani reported that Annie Besant defended Sanskrit in religion, though most Hindus did not understand it, from ‘the science of sounds’; quoted TIEMERSMA(1907), 21.

9Van DOORN/LAMMERS, 195: ‘Systematized ideology ... is the product and often the property of a small minority.’

10So she certainly was not ‘one of the founders of the Society’, as VARENNE, 225 writes, and Sheila Rowbotham, *Women, Resistance and Revolution. A History of Women and Revolution in the Modern World*, N. Y., Pantheon, 1972, 205. Neither did she join in 1893, as Subhas Chandra BOSE, 23, wrote; or in 1888, as one might conclude from JONES(1989), 174.

11UGLOW, 63: ‘she was estimated to have 100,000 followers at the time of her death’; Webster’s Biographical Dictionary, Springfield, Merriam, 1972, 158 has the same estimate; see also E. LUTYENS, 190. If you count as ‘followers’ only FTS, a more than tenfold over-estimate, Addt. Nov. 1909, 359; in 1895 worldwide not much more than 5,000 active members. The CE(1929), vol. v, 419, err the other way round: ‘In 1891 she had to die in London, left alone by
of a religious movement always ask: will it survive its charismatic originator? It did, as the next chapters will show.

2. REINCARNATION OF KING ASHOKA: H.S. OLcott, 1891-1907

A. IMPHIEE, PAPERS, BULLETS, INSURANCE AND GHOSTS, 1832-1875

Some seventy years before Leadbeater examined his earlier lives, on 2 August 1832, Henry Steel Olcott was born into a Protestant business family in Orange, New Jersey, USA. In 1857, he wrote a book Sorrow and Imphee on Asian and African sugar-canes. In the United States up to then, one could only grow sugar in the southern slave states, and northern sugar processors were interested in possibilities of lessening their dependence on the South. State legislatures asked Olcott to lecture to them about the canes. Mainly on agriculture, he wrote for the New York Tribune.

Horace Greeley owned this paper. He was most famous for the publicity he had given the Fox family when they started spiritualism. For his slogan ‘Go West, young man’ as ‘Manifest Destiny’ of the US he saw supplanting the Amerindians. The paper opposed slavery in the South.

In 1861, the United States civil war broke out. Marx called it slave-owners’ rebellion; as ‘Manifest Destiny’ of the US he saw supplanting the Amerindians. The paper opposed slavery in the South.

In 1882, Henry Steel Olcott was appointed to the Washington War Department, later in the Navy Department (both not yet known as ‘Department of Defense’, or housed in the Pentagon).

Later he became a lawyer. He wrote the official report, as Director, of the US National Insurance Convention (New York 1871).

For a long time, he had been interested in spiritualism. In 1874, he went to the New York state Eddy farm, which had a reputation for being haunted. There he met for the first time Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, one year older, as interested in spirits, but a good deal more experienced than he was. And ‘of noble birth’: the American Revolution had abolished royalty and nobility in the States a century ago. Even today, though, they still fascinate many Americans in countries, other than their own.

B. PRESIDENT-FOUNDER AND OCCULT PUPIL, 1875-1891

From 1875 onwards, Olcott was TS president for life; not H.P. Blavatsky. We have already written on respectable New York opinion about non-male charlatans. Also, HPB did not like addressing big meetings, though she strongly impressed many who met her in small gatherings.

So public speaking was left to Olcott; it would take him to nearly all continents. HSO also felt more at home in down to earth administrative and organizational work. There was an inner, as opposed to a merely outer, hierarchy, however.

Steiner mentions her ‘rough language’ to and ‘sympathy over’, Colonel Olcott, omitting to add that he was her occult pupil, and, as such, his very strong and troublesome personality had to be severely disciplined if he was to be of any use for real work.

In 1882, Blavatsky and Olcott stated:

Before we came to India, the word Politics had never been pronounced in connection with our names; for the idea was too absurd to be even entertained, much less expressed. One should see this statement, as Van Hinloopen Labberton wrote later, as ‘of course, nothing but a concession to existing problems and the distrust of the [British India] Government’: there were accusations of spying, in the repressive colonial political context. The statement limited ‘Politics’ to a narrow area, including spying. It excluded or other officer theosophist might have exposed that. Or is it just a reference to Col. Olcott seeing more Washington ink than battlefield blood? Then he was not the only one.

1RANSOM(1938), 39. Was his Report by then really still ‘the standard work on Insurance in the United States’?

2This was not ‘the farmhouse of Christian Science Founder Mary Baker Eddy’, as in Info India. Neither, as in Info India, a house is a house.

3CRUMP(1923), 71. TMNI, 3: ‘Colonel Olcott is only a lieutenant in this organisation’.

4CLEATHER(1922A), 61.

5VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1946E), 151. That was also the view of AB’s ‘The Wider Outlook’, 72 Nov. 1916, reprinted TMNI, 1917, 4.
for instance, journalism with Horace Greeley; war as a 'continuation of politics by other means', whether in the US, or at Mentana, where M.P. Blavatsky claimed she received a gunshot wound; H.P.'s claims for herself in the international politics field; HSO's War Department work; a claimed near-appointment by United States President Johnson to a leading position at the US Treasury, which went wrong because Olcott was said to have sided against Johnson in a political crisis; post-1865 employment as insurance industry lobbyist to New York State legislature; 1878 pro-Mazzinian activity by the TS in New York; it excluded talks with future Russian czars; it excluded views on the situation of India and Ceylon.

Indian Brahmanas held a ceremony to admit the TS founders into their caste. Most Hindus saw this more as friendly gesture than as legally binding. Olcott, in spite of his aversion to the 'aura' of 'low-caste people' continued to support reforms of at least the caste system's excesses. Later, this would sometimes lead to disagreements with Annie Besant. He also supported political criticism of excesses of colonialism, as expressed in the Indian National Congress then. He certainly was not as politically active as Mrs Besant would be later, though.

HPB and HSO did not always agree. Certainly not after Blavatsky left for Europe, never to return, after the 1884-1885 Coulomb shrine scandal. Later, she, and Olcott's theosophist opponents, would charge he did not defend her enough then.

Olcott was much more interested in Buddhism, in Ceylon and elsewhere. He had written a Buddhist catechism, with Sumangala and Mogumivvate advising him. It went through many printings, both in its original form and as abridged by Leadbeater, for instance for the expanding network of TS-managed Ceylon Buddhist schools. Olcott now helped to design an international Buddhist flag. His efforts to set up TS branches in Buddhist countries, other than Ceylon, were nowhere as successful. He managed to found some lodges in Burma, recently annexed to British India.

However, Olcott's 1889 journey to Japan, much publicized in the theosophist press, and given three chapters of over sixty pages in Old Diary Leaves, led to just one lodge, which fizzled out a few years later. Unlike Buddhism in Ceylon, Japan's non-Christian religions did not need support against a Christian colonial government (though some Buddhists might feel apprehensive about the government's newly-emphasized Shintoism).

C. Poison, Mars, Tarot, and Growth, 1891-1907

In spite of disputes with Olcott and some other FTS, during H.P. Blavatsky's last years her position had been central. After 1891, one could expect pushing to fill the empty spot at the top. Annie Besant and William Judge, HPB-appointed European and American ES leaders, respectively, both said the First Lodge, the superhuman Masters, continued to appear and to write letters. But were Judge's and Besant's Mahatmas the same ones? One version accused Judge (another version, Annie Besant's) of forgery; getting himself a stock of special ink, blank adept paper, and a seal he had found among Madame Blavatsky's belongings after her death, training himself in Transhimalayan hand-writing (showing influence of having learned writing originally in Cyrillic script, and English spelling in America) to mail letters to himself and others.

Which way would the pendulum swing? What was Olcott's position in the power struggle between the two? Or would they join against the president for life?

At first, the latter seemed to come about. Under Besant and Judge pressure, Olcott resigned, 21 January 1892, but was told by Mahatma K.H. on 10 February to resume office as President-Founder. Then, (the same?) Mahatma K.H. wrote to Judge that Olcott plotted to poison Annie Besant. Judge obligingly informed AB. AB thought, as obligingly informed Olcott, the two joining forces against Judge. Judge then accused

1. An 1867 battle between Garibaldi and the Papal state, plus French military.
2. M.P. Blavatsky left for Europe, never to return, after the 1884-1885 Coulomb shrine scandal. Later, she, and Olcott's theosophist opponents, would charge he did not defend her enough then.
3. HSO's War Department work; a claimed near-appointment by United States President Johnson to a leading position at the US Treasury, which went wrong because Olcott was said to have sided against Johnson in a political crisis; post-1865 employment as insurance industry lobbyist to New York State legislature; 1878 pro-Mazzinian activity by the TS in New York.
4. HPB and HSO did not always agree. Certainly not after Blavatsky left for Europe, never to return, after the 1884-1885 Coulomb shrine scandal. Later, she, and Olcott's theosophist opponents, would charge he did not defend her enough then.
6. Encyclopaedia Universalis says she left India in 1887; 2 years' lane.
7. Cleather (1922), 26: the shameful way in which she was thrown overboard, like a second Jonah, by Colonel Olcott and the TS council at Adyar in their cowardly panic during the crisis of 1884-85, H.P.B. says . . .
8. Obeyesekera (1992a): 'The role of the monks was to effectively and uncompromisingly throw out overt or hidden elements of Theosophy.'
Besant of black magic.¹

In 1895, a split occurred. In the Inner Group (six men, six women, formed by Madame Blavatsky in 1890 as 'non-scientist' equivalent of Christ's Twelve Apostles),² secret at the time, but of which Alice Leighton Cleather felt free to divulge the membership thirty-two years later, an eight against four majority sided against Judge.

Countess Wachtmeister, Emily Kislingbury, Annie Besant, Isabel Cooper-Oakley, her sister Laura Cooper, George R.S. Mead (these two would marry later), and Messrs. Old and Studly supported Olcott. One woman, Alice Leighton Cleather, and the three men Archibald Knightley, Herbert Coryn, and Claude Wright of the Dublin lodge, supported Judge.

The majority of the US membership,¹ and quite a number in other countries, left the TS (Adyar). From then on, there would be at least two bodies calling themselves Theosophical Society.³ Judge established one of his own, headquartered in New York City. This had the advantage of being both where he lived and where the TS' 1875 city of origin.

In Ireland,⁴ most, like Dick (Irish Astronomer Royal) sided with Judge. Like Besant, Judge was of irish ancestry; he was born in Dublin, not London, unlike her. In 1904, most Irish theosophists split back to Besant, only to split away from her again soon afterwards. If one knows about the long-standing mutual influence of Irish and Indian national movements, then the schismatic, always numerically weak, character of theosophy in Ireland is not totally irrelevant for Asian politics.

After the split, Judge got both an astral and a card-reading backstab from his opponents. London magazine Modern Astrology⁵ edited by 'Alan Leo' Ips. of William Frederick Allen. PTS (Adyar), pointed out: 'Judge who had Mars there in his horoscope; the planet was named after the Roman god of war and caused a secession.'

In his Old Diary Leaves, Olcott remembered:

Mr. [S.V.] Judge ... and I, amused ourselves at this time with the Tarot cards, and certainly got some strange prognostications. In one memorandum of the 26th June which at my request, Mr. Edge put into writing and signed, and which is pasted in my Diary. I find a prophecy which seems to have pointed directly to the action of Mr. Judge. What other interpretation can be given to these words: 'There is serious trouble and danger from somewhere, and a woman has a hand in it; there are folly and deception to be feared which will give rise to ennui and trouble; this seems serious, there is moral death for some one; perhaps a foolish affair on the part of a leading member; at all events, some act of suicidal folly.'¹

The woman to whom the cards alluded was Katherine Tingley. She had been, some said, an actress,² and, certainly, leader of the Christian 'Do Good Mission'. Weeks after Judge died in 1896, one year after the start of his own TS, she inherited his Esoteric Society Office Head office; according to her interpretation of Judge's will. As with H.P. Blavatsky before, with Olcott and Besant later, there was unclarity and conflict over that interpretation.

Olcott called Tingley: 'an American spiritualistic medium,' who had played no part while H.P. lived, though claiming contact with her spirit now.

Mrs Tingley, however, called herself 'Second successor to H.P. Blavatsky, Leader and Official Head'; or (on bills for a Bombay public meeting) 'Leader of the entire Theosophical Movement throughout the World.'⁴

1VACHTMEISTER (1989), 58
2CLEATHER (1923), 22ff.
3Spelling ALMA SUBARIO DIOYOADSURYO, 84: 'G.F.S. Macad'.
4Including one Mr Ramb, OD L, 27 March 1904, 324.
5For Dutch speakers, confusion was less. The TS (Adyar) called themselves: Theosophische Vereeniging, Judge's TS: Theosophisch Genootschap. One can translate 'Society' both as Vereeniging (or Vereeniging, new spelling) and Genootschap. Under Tingley, Judge's TS was called 'Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society'. To make things easy for historians, Adyar theosophists sometimes called themselves 'Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood'. For example: Annual Report on 1903, 67.
6CAMPBELL, 167ff.
7Oct. 1907, quoted 77 Oct. 1907, 180. It offered Mr Leo's horoscopes: fifty French frames or more for 'rigorously scientific' times, under fifty for 'science combined with imitation'. GUÉNON (1921), 232.

H.S. Olcott, 1891-1907 67
KT in 1896 tried to expand her TS by a Theosophist Crusade around that world. Apart from herself, Mrs Leighton Cleather and other speakers, this included travelling musicians. In Germany and The Netherlands, she had some success.

Not so in India. Tingley and Hargrove, president of her Society, left the others behind to go to Darjeeling, close to the Himalayas, to meet the Masters. Early in the Darjeeling morning, President Hargrove found out his Official Head had slipped away. When she came back, she told she had had a private exclusive talk with Master M. 1

The Times of India, 30-10-1896 reported on Tingley's Crusaders' meeting of the previous evening in Bombay Town Hall:

... although seating accommodation had been provided for some five hundred, of the general public only about seventy persons, principally Parsis, attended the meeting. Mr. Claude Falls Wright ... hoped a branch would be started in India, when things were less disturbed than now.

Katherine Tingley held a meeting in Ceylon, in the Floral Hall of Colombo, on 12 December 1896. As in India though, this did not lead to much support for her. Olcott commented: 'Something went wrong before the tour was finished, for Mr. Wright and his wife left Mrs. Tingley on the way home. 2

More riots appeared in her TS; Hargrove started what he called The Theosophical Society; Dr. J. Salisbury started the TS (New York). 3 In 1899, Mrs Leighton Cleather, not amused by the flop in mystically all-important India, and later accusing Tingley of "Vampirism", resigned. During the following years, Mrs Cleather wrote on Celtic and Germanic myths in Wagner's operas. It would be some twenty years before she would influence Asian, mostly Ceylon, politics.

Mrs Tingley centred her organization's activities on its new headquarters in Point Loma, California, built on cleared sagebrush country. 4 Annie Besant, Olcott's successor, held roughly the same opinion as he about Judge, his TS, and KT.

Most of his colleagues have separated themselves from the leader he chose when his insight was clouded by physical disease 5

A. EMPTY CHURCHES AND MATCHES, 1847-1891

Annie Besant 6 was the politically most interesting PTS. She had a very good voice for the duphs-see p. 443, inspired Purple Mother; 7 Purple was Tingley's favourite colour when speaking.

Olcott was a fairly good public speaker and organizer, though not on the level of Annie Besant. When he died in 1907, from the consequences of falling down a staircase, like Mrs Besant later, his Theosophical Society had grown from 16 in an 1875 New York drawing room, to: 'almost 10,000' in 1902. 8, 9, 14, 863 in 1907. 10 In 1904, Olcott wrote:

Thus, little by little, our Society is acquiring, by the advancement of its members, more and more influence in the conduct of public affairs. 11

Olcott though was as unable as his successor would be later to prevent internal conflicts. At the end of his, and the beginning of Besant's, presidency, the Leadbeater controversy, one of the Leadbeater controversies, led to resignations and expulsions.

Not only growth, also a high membership turnover rate, 12 characterized TS membership statistics. In Olcott's day, the number of charters issued to lodges had risen from 1 in 1878 to 958 in 1907. Only 567 of these 958 lodges still existed in 1907 though, so 391 had withdrawn, been expelled, or fizzled out. 13

It is not fair to compare this turnover rate to age-old established institutions like the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland (part of its English counterpart, in our period consisted of religiously fashion-conscious people, and might be compared). A comparison with turnover rates of political parties - then a pretty recent phenomenon as well - would be interesting.

3. REINCARNATION OF HERAKLES: ANNIE BESANT, 1907-1933

To him the science of politics was an aspect of the Divine Wisdom whose principles are firmly based on the bedrock of humanity's spiritual oneness, and not on expediency, which, alas, so largely dominates world politics today. 14

1. 2ODEL, 7 May 1905, 434-6. ODEL, TT, 7 June 1906, 517. Mrs Tingley travelled again in Asia in 1920, 4 May 1921, 94.

2. CAMPBELL, 134f.

3. CAMPBELL, 135f, 7 June 1951, 502.

4. CLEATHER(1922A), 48; 'Vampirism, pure and simple, on the psychic plane (I found that Mrs. Tingley well understood this form of Sorcery').

5. VAN MATER, 88.

6. BESANT(1909B), 533. BESANT(1910C), 285 claimed Judge had rejoined the Adyar TS posthumously, 'winning clearer vision on the other side'. In the July 1931 Canadian Theosophist, James Pryce (TS printing press manager in HPB's time) called Tingley a 'malevolent charlatan'.

7. "Ammie'', FREDERIC(1984), VIII, 122: not 'Besantos'; KORZEC, 50, 'Besent' as on a Madras road sign; 'Besant'; SEMIOZEN in SM, 25-8-1917; 'Besant'; AHMAD SUBARDJO DIJOYADISURYO, 84; 'Besant'; TSUCHIYA(1967), 142 and 150. EO TV program De geheime organisatie van New Age (The Secret Agents of New Age) of 1 Jan. 1992 translated 'Besant Theosophical Lodge' as Bouwmeesters theosofisch gebouw. Naming the TS the first New Agers, the
speaking in public. We should remember the extensive spread of the microphones, jettisoning chances in this aspect of public life, came only during her last years. She had the reputation of having silenced, on her own, a big workers' demonstration in London in 1881; thus she prevented a fight between them and police. She tells of training, while a vicar's wife, by preaching at pews in an empty church.

On 1 October 1847, she was born in London, as the daughter of a doctor active in trade, of mixed English-Irish ancestry; and an Irish mother. Her father died when she was five. Annie grew up without family money of her own, in a politically liberal, religiously pious Protestant environment. Such a background was not a recommendation for some well-off Tories who became theosophists before her, like Isabelle de Steiger;

As an Irish woman, she [AB] was, of course, 'again' all governments and 'again' everything that did not meet with her approbation.

Later, she would be known as Dr. Besant. That was because of an honorary degree in law, conferred in 1921 by Benares Hindu University. When she was about 18, English universities were inaccessible to women; and she lacked formal grammar school education. She would learn much in the classes of Bradlaugh's Secular Society later.

Young Annie Wood was very interested in religion. In 1867, she married Anglican vicar Besant; a priest's wife was the closest she could get to becoming a priest.

The more she investigated Christianity, the more inconsistencies she found. Frank Besant as a person did not prove to be as appealing as his lifetime as a parson. Behind Victorian 'don't wash dirty linen in public' sentences in her autobiography, are hints she program associated them with the medieval Eastern Roman empire, rather than with their 20th century president. The concept of a New Age originates from European astrology. It believes the contemplation of Aquarius is about to influence humanity; this is supposed to bring great benefits.

1NETHERCOT(1963), 370: she had India's first PA system installed in 1925
2BESANT(1893), 115
3MUTHANNA, 36: 'While alone and in her teens, she often lectured to the empty benches at the Sixby church'. She did it only once, while 25, in Sibsey, WESSINGER(1989), 46

4BAIG, 15 calls Mrs Besant and her follower Margaret Cousins 'English women', as do CEI, 347, SCHWARTZBERG, 219 and L. FISHER (1984). 108 on AB, 'Irish'. Certainly for Mrs Cousins would be correct: she wrote, COUNSINS(1911), 10, her views differed from most British in India, 'being Irish'. For AB, BESANT(1893), 13: 'three-quarters of my blood and all of my heart are Irish'. Sir S. Subramania Aiyar, in his letter to president Wilson: that noble Irish woman who has done so much for India.' VARENNE, 226, KRISHNASWAMI(1963) and WEBB(1971), 31, who 'paranormally' prolongs her life will at least 1920, call Margaret Noble (Sister Nivedita), Irish follower of Swami Vivekananda, 'English'. Compare NETHERCOT(1960), 327 calling Sinhalese Buddhist Jinarajadasa 'Indian', JONES(1989), 176, calling him 'the first Indian president'; and Dutch Indies D. L. N. Vink, FTs: 'the Hindu Jinarajadasa'. TAIN, 1816, 557.
5which, like the Ordoxy of HPY's youth, included belief in being bandies and fanatics BESANT(1893), 27.
6The Steiger's mother was an Irish Protestant too! BURFIELD, 42. After leaving the TS, de Steiger would become one of comparatively few Britons? in Steiner's Anthroposophical Society in the 1920's.
7Quoted BURFIELD, 48.
8BESANT(1893), 70.

was abused and ill-treated.

Legal divorce was not possible. Separation was; losing the children she loved, first one, then the other, to her husband. With her ex-husband's employer, there was divorce. Financially not immediately: she got into poor circumstances even worse than after her father's death and had to make a living cooking and sweeping floors at a vicarage in Folkestone. Soon afterwards, she became a well-known journalist and public speaker for atheism. Working closely with radical liberal M.P. Charles Bradlaugh, she was interested in both domestic and foreign politics. Annie Besant wrote on women's rights, and for strong opposition to the excesses of British rule in Ireland, Sudan, and India.

After opposing socialism, in 1885 she joined the social democrat Fabian Society. Anarchists abhorred Besant. They aimed to bring about socialism gradually, without an all-out attack on the ruling class. Gradualism has been the tactic of Roman military leader Fabius Cunctator, Fabius the Waverer, used with some success against the Carthaginian invasion of Italy in the 3rd century B.C.

Bradlaugh, non-socialist, though born poor and in favour of trade union rights, did not like this step. But she could still write for his paper. So far, her views had moved to the left. She took steps further left; to the Marxist Social Democratic Federation (where the quality of her Marxism was questioned though); and by her leading part in the 1888 East End London strike of female match factory workers. Isabelle de Steiger, whom she would join in the 'TS' next year, did not like it.

1I remember especially the speech to incite the match girls to their first strike. What a cruel and second-rate policy that was. 2Socialism in Britain was much smaller than in, say, Germany. Too small? And were there not other ways, apart from her ex-husband's C of E, to satisfy her interest in religion?

Time for one of Annie Besant's many changes. George Bernard Shaw, her fellow Fabian in the 1880's, in 1917 quoted British sceptics: 'She will die a Roman Catholic.'

This change was towards the Theosophical Society. Besant had attacked theosophy earlier: reading books by A.P. Sinnett had not convinced her; Madame Blavatsky had reacted more mildly to that criticism than to others. After the journalist W.T. Stead had...
introduced her in 1889, Annie Besant literally went down on her knees to HPB. She compared her change to a child's which "has outgrown its baby-clothes." 

Within a year, she was one of the twelve apostles of the Inner Group. Within one more year, on 1 April 1891, H.P. Blavatsky, five weeks before she died, in the name of the Master, appointed Mrs Besant "Chief Secretary of the Inner Group of the Esoteric Section and Recorder of the Teachings." This made her the equal in Europe to Judge in America, who had joined at the start. Only during the first 14 years of Theosophical Society history, and the last 14 years, after 1933, of this book's history, Annie Besant was not a leading TS member.

The theosophists were in Victorian terms a society of, mostly, her 'betters'. How would one of petty bourgeois background react to this new environment; though her qualities obviously were greater in many fields than those of many in that environment; she put off some older members; but her later arch-enemy Alice Cleather waxed lyrical. Spectacular conversions always bring publicity, and a brilliant speaker, tirelessly fast-writing journalist, and determined organizer like her was clearly an asset.

Bradlaugh's secularists broke with her. Madame Blavatsky compelled her to change some of her earlier progressive opinions rightwards.

Annie Besant's adoption of Theosophy necessitated a retreat from several of her positions on women's rights, and from many of her socialist activities.

The break with socialists was not fast and instant; yet, complete within two years. Her political activities, however, did not cease." A biographer like Catherine Wessinger stresses continuity in her ideas, and Nethercot discontinuity. Not just spiritual, also political dichotomy showed, though from opponent to supporter of the

and Annie Besant, who had been in love with him, TAYLOR(1992), 1972. Engels on Stead: "a really crazy fellow, but brilliant business-man", MEW, vol. 38, 191. 1

"BESANT(1893), 344. Olcott: 'she burst out of the iron cage of Materialistic Adversity', ODL, 77 Feb 1902, 264. The NCE lets AB join in 1890, NOIX(1978), 142 in 1887.

"BESANT(1889), 3.

"CLEATHER(1922A), 85.

"Disputed by CLEATHER(1922A), 850f

"77 March 1890, 346. NETHERCOT(1960), 299. AB was a 'rough outsider' to the 'aristocratic social group where her conversion had taken her', DINNAGE(1986), 79 quotes Olcott on fears 'her fads ... into our respectable body ... might keep influential women away.' This contradicts the last part of Dinnae's ibid., 77: theory: 'She was perhaps simply bored with trade unionism ... with her socialist colleagues and with her growing respectability.'

"CLEATHER(1922A), 64.

"POLLOCK GREENBURG, 18.

"BAYLEN/GOSSMAN, 88.

"WESSINGER(1989), however. WESSINGER(1990), 32: 'complete reversal' on feminism.

"Dora Kain, 'Annie Besant' in ELIAD(1987), vol. 2, 17: 'Throughout her life she remained devoted to social and educational reform.' Was that always from the same perspective on society, though?

British and Russian monarchies, the House of Lords, and the British army; from support to opponent of birth control and universal suffrage. Rather than explaining that by a few men's influence, one might argue she had moved from environmental influence of one class to another. Laura Oren wrote: 'Her attraction to ritualism and an authoritarian structure remain to be explained adequately by future biographers.'

Some of the explanation may be her general post-1889 rightward trend, as her new surroundings influenced her. In this, the future PTS was not the only PTS. In a still wider sense, also outside of the theosophists, the French proverb that a Jacobin who becomes a minister is not a Jacobin minister, points to this mostly subtle pressure to conform in an environment that is new to an individual; also if that individual is, according to that environment's formal rules, in a superior position.

B. ESOTERIC AUTOCRAT, 1891-1907

The Esoteric Society [the TS as the outside public knows it] is purely democratic [?]. On the other side we have an Esoteric Body which is practically autocratic in its constitution. The greatest power will always be in the hands of the E.S., and not in the head of the Society. I know that I exercise a quite unwarrantable power. But you cannot help it, existence.

After her American counterpart Judge had broken away, Annie Besant was only ES leader. Her relationship with exoteric president Olcott was reasonably good, in spite of some differences. On 16 November 1893, she landed in India for the first time.

Especially early on in India, Annie Besant was unscrupulous of caste. This brought her into conflict with Indian social reformers, for whom, with her sharp oratorical attacks, she made life difficult in Madras presidency. It brought her into alliance with conservative Brahmanas. However, she was not Indian-born, so she could not enter temples. Even in her early days in India, some interpreted her teas as religious ceremonies: an Indian PTS cursed under her tepid to worship her feet. She did not appreciate it much; the movement of his back threatened to shower her with hot tea."

\[1\] 
\[2\] 
\[3\] 
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\[11\] 
\[12\] 
\[13\]
Many theosophists outside India also worshipped Annie Besant. Editor A. van Leeuwen of the Dutch East Indies TS monthly recalled the first time when he heard her speak in Amsterdam:

Before the came, the whole overcrowded church was in a state of tension, as if something sacred and awesome was about to happen, and when she appeared in her white attire, striking like a priestess through the human masses, then we all arose amidst the deepest silence and the whole wide space was filled with currents of reverence and love, which in their intensity became nearly material, and forced the greatest blasphemer to practise awe and silent reverence. We do not understand the greatness of this woman, we only see as high as our spiritual eye can reach, but higher still her spiritual greatness towers above that.1

W.B. Fricke, former Dutch GS, said

The TS is a hierarchical society. The General Secretary is directly linked to Mrs Besant, and through her to the Masters of Wisdom.2

Annie Besant founded Central Hindu College in Benares in 1898.1 Some of its Indian pupils were less reverent sometimes. Once, ‘naturally sceptical’ boys hung bunches of keys, connected by strings, from windows. At night, they pulled the strings. ‘All over the compound’ people heard the keys jangling. Drawing scared faces, the boys told college authorities of the ghosts’ sounds. Mrs Besant treated them to a lecture on what to do and not do in the presence of evil spirits.1 Later, after a conflict about promotion of the Order of the Star in the East (see p. 76) by Hindu College’s authorities, she would help to expand it into Hindu University. She presided over its Board of Control. To this day, it is of the Star in the East (see p. 76) by Hindu College’s authorities, she would help to expand it into Hindu University. She presided over its Board of Control. To this day, it is

The Annie Besant of 1899 interpreted the Bhagavad Gita, deriving a doctrine of ‘just war’ from it. In the Boer War, and in later wars, she saw the British army as fighting on the side of higher spiritual evolution.4

On 25 January 1906, a war, bloodless this time, broke out in the TS over C.W. Leadbeater. CWL was, with Besant, one of the Society’s most popular public speakers, writer of best-selling books and pamphlets, frequent contributor to magazines. And now, on that January day, Mrs Helen Dennis, Corresponding Secretary of the United States ES, accused him of advising boys to masturbate. Many joined the attack.

Olcott forced Leadbeater to resign. Olcott expelled Jinarajadasa for supporting Leadbeater too enthusiastically, then reinstated him on 3 January 1907. Olcott wrote a letter from his deathbed to Leadbeater ‘at the Masters’ request’, opening possibilities for rehabilitation. The Masters, and a reappearing H.P. Blavatsky, wanted Besant to succeed as PTS.2

She was the only candidate. There was no opposition candidate;3 but still, there was opposition. G.R.S. Mead in March 1906 had written: ‘Whoever succeeds in this high office [of president] in the Theosophical Society must be a man of the most tolerant views ... ’4 He, and others, were afraid that Annie Besant would prove to be a woman of views too tolerant on Leadbeater. As president, she might reinstate him; and bring ‘psychic tyranny’.5

C.STARS AND SPLITS, 1907-1913

Opposition to Mrs Besant was most marked in the United States and England.6 Still she won, thanks to solid support from new US general secretary Van Hook, India (though not GS U. Pendramath Basu), Steiner’s Germany,7 the Netherlands, and other sections.

She did reinstate Leadbeater, as she told an Esoteric Section meeting on 6 September 1908, in Adyar, because Madame Blavatsky had urged her so when they met at the Masters’ abide.8 Like many theosophist opponents of Leadbeater, Tillett sees Annie Besant as completely under CWL’s influence. Cleather blames this on ‘sheer femininity’.

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1ANMI, 1918, 488.
2TB 1917, 133.
3COLE, 227, wrongly says the CHC was a model for (earlier) schools and colleges in Ceylon.
4SRI PRAKASA, 69-70
5Subhas Chandra BOSE, 24; and small Jawaharlal Nehru, J. NEHRU(1958), 12.
6At a TS congress, ‘Two English ladies said they could not live long enough to undo the bad Karma of voting against A.B.’. ITS, July 1912, 503.
7Steiner was President, his future wife Marie von Sievers Secretary, of Berlin’s Annie Besant Lodge of the TS, which they had started in 1905. Annual Report on 1905, 56; 118.
8The Link magazine [of the ES], as quoted THOMPSON(1913), 25.
... just simple woman, relying upon male guidance and authority. 1 That simple? Roe disputes it.2

Besant had the all-powerful positions of President and ES Outer Head. Leadbeater during some of her presidency, officially just had the position of Corresponding ES Secretary for Australia; and the experience of falling from grace (including, briefly, Annie Besant’s) once. His unofficial position of rising star depended on Annie’s official one, on her goodwill. Dependence was at least mutual. It does not make a very good impression if, as President, you admit accusations against the best-selling author and well-known propagandist of your organization.

Was Besant not more dependent on the ideology, created by H.P. Blavatsky, developed by Olcott, Leadbeater and herself, in a certain social setting, than on Leadbeater personally?

The Adyar Bulletin of May 1909, 231, wrote:

There is a friendly competition going on in our ranks as to who is going to hold the record for frequent lecturing. Mrs. Besant and Dr. Steiner stood first in our estimation, but we find them totally eclipsed by Mr. F.T. Brooks, who has been an active worker in India for many years. Between November 1st, 1908 and April 30th, 1909 he held 361 meetings (in 118 days)...

F.T. Brooks had gone over to the TS while living in Belgium in 1896; along with other local Ordre Marceilliste members.3 A few years later, Brooks got a place in world history as tutor to young Jawaharlal Nehru. A few years after 1909, two out of the three above-mentioned lecturers were no longer in Annie Besant’s TS. Brooks’ parting was not too friendly; see his writings Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Bogeydom, and My resignation.

Steiner’s parting was not too friendly either. In both cases, a major factor had been the founding of the Order of the Star in the East. After non-public preparation under names like ‘Lieutenants of the Lord’, it went public on January the 11th 1911, and got its best known name in July 1911. In theory it was separate (the OSE had non-Theosophical Society members), in practice it was not easy to distinguish from the TS. It taught the coming of a World Teacher, both Christ and Maitreya,2 who would bring a new World Religion, fit for the coming Sixth Aryan sub-race, and eventually the Sixth Root-Race. This World Teacher was said to inhabit the body of young Jiddu Krishnamurti, son of a Telugu Brahmin ES official.3

George Arundale, Headmaster of Central Hindu College, put his coming in also a political perspective:

path: in 1912 he got his Second Initiation 2 in Taormina on Sicily. That place was dear to Annie Besant, as there Pythagoras had taught ancient Greeks ‘their duty as citizens to the great Aryan empire will stand revealed. In preparation for that Flower of the Future, for centuries hence, will come in the very near future ... the Bodhisattva Maitreya, clothed in Indian form, to carry the great unifying message through the world, the Heart of the East and the Heart of the West.1

Jiddu Krishnamurti at Eerde castle in Ommen in July 1926; photo Theosophical Society
This messianism repelled and attracted many. It first attracted, but soon repelled Krishnamurti’s father. In 1913, he fought a custody court case against the TS leaders over the Lord Maitreya’s vehicle-designate and his brother. In the Madras High Court, he won: should Annie Besant have then come to India without returning the two boys to their father, she would have been jailed. But in the appeal before the London Privy Council in May 1914, Krishnamurti’s father lost.

A German speaker, Count Hermann Keyserling from Czar Nicholas II’s Baltic lands, for a short time believed in Krishnamurti as ‘the Messiah of the future ... I was both to give it up again; for it gives joy to live under such a supposition’. Rudolf Steiner’s ideas about 1900 had moved in a way somewhat similar to Annie Besant’s a decade earlier: from some sympathy for the social democrats, less deep than AB’s, to occultism and elite theories. He had been appointed Esoteric Society Arch Warden for Austria and Germany in 1904. Later, he had put himself, in effect, on the same level as the president of the Theosophical Society; that was a problem for long-term peaceful coexistence in an authoritarian organization. Some saw him as a reincarnation of St. Thomas Aquinas and Aristotle. Now, he objected to the reincarnation of Herakles’ Order of the Star in the East. Hübbe-Schleiden and Dr. Hugo Vollrath, German OSE leaders, clashed with Steiner. Steiner expelled Vollrath; Annie Besant reinstated him. Steiner called for Besant’s resignation; instead, she expelled Steiner, who formed his own Anthroposophical Society in 1913. Its impact was not equal in all countries: in Indonesia, only ‘five Steinerians’ were said to have resigned from the TS.

1912 was a year of movement. In England, a strike movement, denounced by Mrs Besant, and a fast growing women’s suffrage movement, led by Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst (an old acquaintance of Besant), and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia. Ireland was stirring. In India, ‘extremist’ nationalists became more and more active in universities and elsewhere. Even caesartocracy could not stop social movements in the Russian empire.

Would Annie Besant go to the right again, like in the 1890s, and as her attack on the English strikers suggested? Or would she go the other way around? Along what lines would the new Commonweal weekly write?

As far as caste in India is concerned, Heimsath suggests a pretty linear development from conservatism to reformism. This may lose sight a little of AB’s flexibility.

D. Watch-Tower4 in the storm, 1913-1918

The Leftward turn was not unequivocal. 1913 saw Annie Besant in conflict with Bhagavan Das, ex-general secretary of the Indian TS, about her authoritarianism, about her, and Headmaster George Arundale’s, involving of Central Hindu College in the OSE, and about what Das saw as Besant’s paranoia concerning “political seditionists and extremists” at CHC.

According to Theosophist, she then had a meeting in the supernatural city of Shamballa. There, the Lord of the World, three occult degrees higher still than the Masters, gave her political instructions to work for Indian autonomy.

1. WEBR(1934A), 236. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913B), 451
3. HEIMSATH, 328ff.
4. From the Watch-Tower [abridged: WT] was the name of AB’s editorials, in the 1890’s for Lucifer, then for TB, then for The Theosophist.
5. TILKEMAN(1933), 11. Arundale gave pupils marks on their school reports for unusual subjects: ‘discrimination, desirelessness, affection, ... devotion, recognition of ideals (like the OSE’s), purity’.
6. CLEA THER(1922A), 43f.
7. Dr. Besant’s Occult Life’, TT Apr. 1933, 145.
8. Contrast to TAM(1951), 293. Krishnamurti was not claimed to be that ‘Lord of the World’. Sometimes also known as Sanat Kumara (SD, son of Brahma in Hinduism) Sanat ‘eternal’ in Sanskrit, son = ‘Scion’, as in CUMBEY, 238. Sanat Kumara was said to have come from Venus millions of years ago, with the Lords of the Flame; RANSOM(1938), 47. TS ‘Lords circle’ children sang a song to him: TT March 1907, 472. BESANT(1921B), 74: ‘I am not able to go far enough and tell you anything about the leaving of Venus, but I have to hope that I have spoken to you at least [paranormally] their arrival here. Venus is more advanced than we.’ ‘Wheat, beans and ans were brought from Venus by the Lords of the Flame’; but Atlantean scientists ‘produced waps from bees, and white ans from ans.’ BESANT and LEADBEATER(1913A), 137. Non-initiate biologists think waps are older than bees, and termites (who are not white ans) much older than, and not much related to, ans.
Soon, two papers spread Besant's, and her TS's, re-emphasized (not totally new) interest in Indian politics. The Commonweal weekly first came out on 2 January 1914. On August the 1st 1914, three days before World War I, started her daily New India.

Tillett claimed that for every theosophist who, like George Arundale, threw himself into political work at the Hierarchy's command, there were a dozen who claimed that Mrs Besant was misguided and misleading the TS into a sphere of activity from which it ought to be specifically protected.

Even allowing for hyperbole in style, several points contradict this. In India, Besant's Home Rule political activities made the TS more attractive. Even higher strata of Indian society, whom one might see, from a radically pro-independence viewpoint, as collaborators, saw Britain's military and economic dependence in the First World War as an opportunity to re-balance power between 'central' and 'satellite' élites. If Besant's views were as unpopular as Tillett claims, then why did worldwide, not just Indian, membership rise, in spite of the difficult wartime circumstances?

The world war deepened Mrs Besant's conflict with Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophists. They took sides opposite her in the conflict between British and German rulers, which cost millions of non-ruling lives. To Annie Besant, her own war against Steiner's 'forces of darkness' and the world war fused. She wrote that Steiner had tried to take over from her in order to have a German spy network, including Christian missionaries, harming the interests of the British empire. Of Steiner pre-1914, she wrote:

"...an opportunity to re-balance power between 'central' and 'satellite' élites. If Besant's views were as unpopular as Tillett claims, then why did worldwide, not just Indian, membership rise, in spite of the difficult wartime circumstances?"

The Commonweal weekly first came out on 2 January 1914.

Mrs Besant's left turn was not only about India's social or Home Rule problems, but also about whose solidarity in Britain she looked for in her views. A few years earlier, that had primarily been the King, the House of Lords and 'all who appreciate the responsibility of ruling an Empire. These are comparatively a small minority, and the more radical earlier years.' In The Commonweal, 77, Nov. 1916, Annie Besant thought that Steiner had got the money for his propaganda against England, but we did not know that it was a part of a world-wide organization, intended to destroy the Island Empire. There was an outburst of hatred, following on a subtle invasion of other countries which had been going on for years.

E. Schüür had contributed to both the French TS and French nationalist ideology before 1914. He, and Mabel Collins, editor of Lucifer before Madame Blavatsky fired her in Feb. 1889, had taken Steiner's side in the TS civil war. They had to adjust to find themselves on AB's side of the world civil war.

From 1916 till 1919, the TS had no functioning German section. That was because Annie Besant had also come into conflict with Germans who had stayed loyal to her against Steiner, like Vollrath and Hübène-Schleiden, ex-planter in West Africa and colonial lobby leader. Hübène-Schleiden in 1882 had defined his aim as 'a German India in Africa', a big colony 'which would be the cornerstone of the German colonial empire'. Now it had turned out that Britain was unwilling to let Germany have an 'India' of its own without a fight.

Mrs Besant and Leadbeater saw the War as a conflict between Divine and Dark Powers, with the British empire leading the 'right' side. However, Besant thought fighting for that empire should go hand in hand with fighting its excesses in India.

Annie Besant worked hard, in spite of advanced age, beginning as early as four or five in the morning. In 1915, she started mass meetings on a large scale, as a way to put pressure on the authorities, for one of the first times in India.

Daniel O'Connell had 'invented' mass meetings in the country of her ancestors, Ireland, in the 1820's, in support of claims that mainly benefited the politically handicapped Roman Catholic sub-elite. Cobden and Bright had developed them in their native England, in the 1850's; Marx and others in the 1860's. International socialism, her political homeland from 1883 till 1889, developed them further.

Mrs Besant's left turn was not only about India's social or Home Rule problem, but also about whose solidarity in Britain she looked for in her views. A few years earlier, that had primarily been the King, the House of Lords and 'all who appreciate the responsibility of ruling an Empire. These are comparatively a small minority, and the
majority care more for football-matches and horse-races. Now, in the *Theosophist* editorial, she advised looking for support among British workers in view of ‘upper and middle classes’ vested interest in a subjected India. This went deeper than just one of Besant’s, and her supporters’, flirtations with her socialist past, which happened at times when it seemed opportune like the 1930’s world crisis.

Sir C.P. Ramaswami Ayar, the future dewan of Travancore principality, who had been the lawyer opposing Annie Besant for Krishnamurti’s father in the 1913 custody court case, later said on his ex-opponent:

She made politics a live and practical thing, as much discussed in the villages in as the drawing rooms and cloistered places.

In practice, she no longer applied her idea of a few years ago: ‘the great mass of the population, they are ignorant ... they care nothing for changes of the Government’. She did not speak any Indian language except some Sanskrit, though; she could speechify to them only in English, which made for a barrier. Still, Mrs Besant and those around her formulated the demands. Still, it prepared the masses to formulate their own later.

One may say the widening of political interest in the 1910’s, furthered by Annie Besant, contributed to her later decline, now not only Home Rule became a matter of discussion, but also issues like her Brahman supporters’ privileges, especially in Tamil Nadu. The political non-Brahmin movement, growing in South India about 1917, attacked Besant in a pamphlet for refusing to introduce inter-dining between people of different castes in her organizations because she regarded the Sudras as mere ‘younger brothers’.

1916 saw Mrs Besant’s agitation take organizational form in the Home Rule League. It grew fast. Non-FTS became the majority of its members. Among them were Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru, and the future first governor general of Pakistan, Jinnah.

Irish movements had for a long time been an influence on India. In 1916, the Easter uprising in Ireland by Connolly’s Irish Citizen Army, and part of the Irish Volunteers, re-focused world attention on Ireland. The rebellion appealed to Jawaharlal Nehru.

Trotsky applauded it, but regretted it took place ‘under an archaic flag’. Lenin applauded it, and disagreed on the ‘archaic flag’.

George Russell, “AE”; former supporter of first Katherine Tingley, later Annie Besant, wrote about uprising leaders Connolly and Pearse with a mixture of admiration:

Their dream had left me numb and cold.
But yet my spirit rose in pride ...
Here’s to you, Pearse, your dream not mine,
But yet the thought for this you fell
Has turned life’s waters into wine.

‘Easter Week’ got sympathy from Irish theosophist James Cousins in *New India*. Annie Besant had to sack him, and Madras governor Lord Penllatal slapped securities on her daily. Censors opened her private mail; and cut articles out of copies of *Theosophist*.

Police spies infiltrated the TS headquarters. It became illegal, first for civil servants, later also for government pensioners, to join Mrs Besant’s Home Rule League. In June 1917, the governor interned her with two fellow League and TS officials, Arundale and B.P. Wadia. He banned the writings of all three of them. Hastily, their articles, already printed and bound for the July *Theosophist*, were cut out; only 1.5 centimetres at the margin was left.

One hour before internment came into effect, Penllatal had a final personal talk with Annie Besant. He offered her a way out: leaving India for Britain. She refused. He refused to answer her question why exactly she was interned. Secretary of State for India Joseph Austen Chamberlain later also refused such an answer to British MPs. Annie Besant’s last words of the interview with Lord Penllatal were: ‘I believe your hands deal the death blow to the British Empire in India’.

Opinion on her internment varied. Her ally Ramaswami Ayar wrote:

1Nade, 4 July 1916; quoted RAFTERY, 4.
2quoted DUDLEY EDWARDS, 336.
3TAYLOR(1992), 302. MORTIMER(1983), 71; ‘she supported the Easter Rebellion’ is too strong.
4No Lord Portland, as in MORTIMER(1983), 73.
5BASHER, 88. WT, 7 Apr. 1917, 7, for instances copies sent to Jews.
6Annie Besant, *TANI*, 1918, 290.
7GROVER(1967), 289.
8So for 1916 as in VARENNE, 225.
9TANI 1918, 286. WT, 7 July 1917, 358-9. 1.5 cm in Leiden university library copy.
11Known as Austen Chamberlain; 1863-1937. He joined the Conservatives after earlier Liberal Unionism.
12TAYLOR(1992), 305.
She was conscious of running the risk of being regarded with suspicion by the Indians, so she courted internment.

Rabindranath Tagore thought: 'This internment will do more towards obtaining Home Rule, than all her political work.' The editorial of The Theosophist expected final victory and stated its view on the relationship between theosophy and politics:

For the first time, in the modern world, politics have been lifted (by Annie Besant) from the domain of mere earthly political arrangements, and an attempt made to realise something of the occult basis underlying them... Philosophy and Politics are ever inseparable... If politics in most countries are uninspiring, it is the lack of statesmen that is at fault; the cure is not so much an end to politics and keep them away from philosophers, but to bring philosophy and spirituality into them. Theosophy has so far served the world in several fundamental ways, it has shown the basis of religion, the basis of education, and the basis of true social reform; the era has surely begun when Theosophy will show the world the eternal basis of statecraft also. Pythagoras at Crotona proclaimed that message; Plato carried on the tradition. Marcus Aurelius (philosophically interested Roman emperor of the second century AD) showed how it could be lived. During Annie Besant's confinement, in the London government the more flexible Edwin Montagu succeeded the conservative and Conservative Chamberlain. Montagu was reminded of the myth of:

... Shiva who cut his wife into fifty-two pieces, only to discover that he had fifty-two wives.

This is really what happens to the Government of India when it intern Mrs. Besant.

The daily De Indische thought of a story from another religion, as it

compared Annie Besant's internment to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Indonesian Marxist Semaoen compared her to his fellow Social Democratic Society executive member Henk Sneevliet, then also facing government persecution for sympathy with the movement of colonially ruled peoples. Though not religious like the other comparisons, Semaoen's was also very complimentary, as Semaoen himself then had a sharp political conflict with Indonesia's TS leaders.

All this showed Annie Besant's prestige, also outside India and outside her Theosophical Society. It also disproved Gregory Tillet's claim that opposition to Besant's politics was general. As far away as Iceland, the TS started a campaign to free her. In the USA, this brought theosophists into conflict with the Department of Justice. In Australia, convention decisions of 'theosophists supported her' politically.

Internment raised her already great popularity with Indians to its highest point ever. She had to be freed on 16 September 1917. On 26 December, the Indian National Congress elected her president. Practically unanimously: she got 45 votes. Ironically, her rival who would soon push her into the background, Gandhi, got only one vote.

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1. Quoted TMNI, 1917, 338. "The Java Battle, from Jakarta," quoted LOC, 27-9-1917, 16 fr., 'De internering van mevr. Besant', thought it strange of the government to intern her: 'Wherever we read about her political work in India, we keep finding in it that spirit of loyalty to England and the British government, which she tries to drive home in her speeches to British Indians too.' The editorial of Indonesia's TS monthly, VAN LEEUWEN (1917b), 341-2, asked support for Besant: 'But, brothers, maintain vigilance, do not weaken in your struggle against the satanic being which sets it traps with seemingly beautiful promises, keep the ranks closed. In the times of danger unity is everything, divisions bring us defeat. Just one thought filled of the greatness and sincerity of her whom we elected to lead us at the head of the army which wants to fight for divine ideals of evolution and fraternization, and then the snake of darkness will gnaw its way to your heart before you suspect it.' BE STRONG, BE COURAGEOUS. BE TRUE', let this motto of our president be ours in the hours of trial and struggle.'

2. RAMASWAMI AYAR, 616. GUÉNON (1921), 292: 'mock internment' (mutually agreed upon by AB and authorities, to trick Indians) is unsubstantiated. The version of Indian communist M.N. ROY (1917), 316, though unfriendly, is not such a conspiracy theory. 'Mrs Besant rendered a valuable service to the imperial cause so dear to her, although the bureaucratic government did not seem to appreciate her merits and made a pseudo-martyr of her.' The 'M' in Roy's name stands for Manabendra; not Manabendra, as in VAN BERGEN, 156, 161; etc. From among Marxists in Indonesia, A. Baars wrote, in Nationalisme in Brits-Ind., (Shu), LV, 10-9-1917, 224: 'British authorities now have gone as far as to intern Mrs BÉSANT, certainly not a revolutionary fighter. Her only sin was to believe in the sincerity of the English objections, which are that the Indians are supposed to be unable to rule their country. She fought that opinion strongly, but in a childish way [with a 'mock Parliament' in Madras]... But the English rulers do not even tolerate her sincerely meant propaganda.'

3. De Indische, 27-9-1917, 1e blad, 'De internering van mevr. Besant'. Famous Bengal poet Tagore was not a member of the Theosophical Society, though he occasionally worked with them.

4. Edwin S. Montagu An Indian Diary, quoted 77 Jan. 1921, 278.
Annie Besant was the first woman Congress president, the first one active as such during the whole year of office, not just at the once a year session. We saw she was the first president to introduce resolutions on social issues in Congress.

But 1917-18 was the highest that Besant's, and her TS', political influence in India would ever get. 1917 was the year of the October revolution in Russia, which she abhorred, and which would inspire many of her rivals in Indian politics, and of B.P. Wadia's rivals in trade unionism. 1918 brought the end of the War, and with it, a dip in the fortunes of theosophists' supporters in politics.

Indian national movement and British empire were on a collision course; India's side needed a new leadership. In the view of one historian, during 1918, Annie Besant 'blew hot and cold on the question of opposing the government, thereby alienating the Home Rulers, who had hitherto looked to her for leadership'. In the years after 1918, her blowing would become colder.

E.AFTER THE WORLD WAR, THE WORLD TEACHER, 1918-1933

Congress rapidly became a mass movement. Annie Besant and her 'Mylapore clique' supporters (sometimes in alliance with unorthodox Muslim Jinnah and orthodox Hindu Pandit Mohan Malaviya) isolated themselves from its majority, when they basically accepted the British government's Montagu-Chelmsford proposals in September 1918; and opposed Gandhi's satyagraha strategy of passive resistance to the repressive Rowlatt Act. That act became law on 18 March 1919.

In Delhi, protesters were shot. Mrs Besant isolated herself further. She reacted:

as a Government's first duty is to stop violence-as in Glasgow the other day-before a riot becomes unmanageable, brickbats must inevitably be answered by bullets in every civilised country.

Many more bullets: on April 13th, led by General Dyer, the British army massacred a thousand unarmed protesters in Amritsar. Besant's ambiguous reaction to this: 'the battle-cry at Amritsar, as the mob murders and burns, is "Gandhi ki jai"' made her critics even angrier. When, in the 1920's, as a National Liberal Federation leader, she attempted to speak in public, hostile audiences often made this impossible.

In trade unions, Besant lost influence in 1922 when B.P. Wadia left both her TS and trade unionism.

Annie Besant tended after encountering problems in the field of religion, to turn to politics, and after failures in politics to increase emphasis on religion. Failures there were; like when she spent much time trying to make her constitutional views on India into law. The Coming of the World Teacher, which had not been so absolutely central to her while Krishnamurti, the Vehicle, was in England during the war, became very central again.

1928 was a high water mark of TS influence: in terms of overall membership, 45,098. Not in Indonesian or Indian politics, that had been ten years earlier. In British politics though, the May 1929 general election was a climax; six FTS became MPs.

1NI, 31-3-1919; reprinted BESANT(1919A), 52. 'Glasgow' referred (Q violence against the Scots labour movement; an instance of the link in imperialism between domestic class and overseas colonial oppression.

2AI, 25. There is a dispute over the exact number. Sarojini Naidu on Dyer's forces: 'My sisters [Amritsar women] were stripped naked, they were flogged, they were outraged'. SENGUPTA, 161.

3Victory to Gandhi'; BESANT(1919A), 63.

4TAYLOR(1992), 317.

5The National Liberal Federation had been founded after a suggestion by Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, in talks with Indians in Jan. 1918; MAJUMDAR(1969), 271. DANGE, vol. I, 52, written in the twenties, considered 'Beantinism' [sic] as a synonym for 'treacherous'. In the early 1920's, in Madras she still had goodwill left from earlier years: "treacherous'. In early 1920, certainly in Madras she still had goodwill left from earlier years:

6ENI, vol. VI, 763, figure of 'more than 50,000' for 1930 is incorrect. Figures in NUGRAHA(1989), 63 differ slightly.

7TILLETT(1982), 242. The ERI, vol. VI, 763, figure of 'more than 50,000' for 1930 is incorrect. Figures in NUGRAHA(1989), 63 differ slightly.

8TINGAY, 231: the six were Peter Frankman, George Lansbury, David Graham Pole, John Stour, Ben Tillett, and Henry Charles Charleston; misspelt ibid. once 'Charleston'. So roughly 1% of British MPs were theosophists, vs. far less than 1% of the electorate. Ibid., 231: 'the 1920's... has not been paralleled before or since in its [TS] history'. Tingay adds major Leslie Haden Guest,

Gandhi, as portrayed on a Sri Lanka stamp

1Not Sarojini Naidu (who was really second), as in MURUGESAN and SUBRAMANYAN, 244. Margaret COLE, 230, says AB's presidency was 'an honour which had never been accorded before to any woman, and probably will never be accorded again'. Two more women, Naidu among them, had already been presidents when Cole wrote this. Annie Besant was not the first president to introduce resolutions on social issues in Congress.

2JNARAJADASA in TMNf, she might think fit, the TS inaugurated 'The President's Fund', as its members 'know that to her Congress from 1917 to 1923', UGLOW, 57; nor 'At the beginning of 1917' elected 'chairman'; among them, had already been presidents when Cole wrote this. Annie Besant was not the first

3See p. 3, note 6. Though AI, 7 implies the contrary

4OWEN(1971), 66.
active in the British TS and MP from 1923-7; then, for Labour as were the others, though he later stood as an Independent and as a Conservative. In 1950, he was created First Baron Haden-Guest of Sailing.

Some Roman Catholics saw this growth as a danger. Dutch poet Ernest Michel attacked Krishnamurti and the TS:

thou, reincarnators of Christ; thou, polluters of Christ; thou, infertile adulterers, thou, poor little puppies, thou, lesbian curs; thou, poofy pooches; thou, homosexual ... thou who hast castrated Christ, polluted and soiled him into the filthy catamite ... these violators of children's innocence ... these dirty animals, should not they in this 'liberal' country be beaten to death with sewer pipes?!

Keen observers could see Krishnamurti felt ever more uncomfortable about his Messiah-like part. 3 August 1929 Krishnamurti disbanded the Order of the Star, by then the name of the former OSE. Weeks later, a world economic crisis broke out.

'It seems that theosophy has impinged most on society at times of anxiety and reorientation' These were times like that. Writers in The Theosophist expected so. Rightly?

The thirties saw many people interested in new, untried political ideas. They were not that different from the 1912-1918 period in this. Could Annie Besant, could the TS, like then, increase its political influence by a new turn? A turn to the left? As A.S. Wickremasinghe, Ceylon general secretary, suggested?

The membership of many organizations, active in very different fields, dependent on members' contributions, shrank in the early 30's. Some organizations went through an upturn though (like the Swedish Social Democrat and the Dutch Communist parties). Why not so the TS?

Annie Besant responded in 1929 by increased involvement in Congress politics. In 1930, there seemed to be signs of reconciliation with the Point Loma TS, now that her old opponent Katherine Tingley was dead. Her successor de Purucker invited an Adyar delegation to the 1931 celebration of H.P. Blavatsky's birth centenary. Besant accepted for herself, and for Leadbeater. De Purucker accepted AB; but not Leadbeater. And the whole plan was off.

Annie Besant, after a tiring 1930 European tour, after falling down a staircase, and after a long illness in Adyar, died there, 20 September 1933. Leadbeater succeeded her as ES Outer Head, but died in 1934.

So there had to be a new President, and a new ES leader.

The sixth volume of the Cambridge History of India, on the 1858-1918 period, which had appeared one year before her death, gave her only three brief mentions in its 660 pages. That hardly did justice to her historical importance. But it was symbolic of the decline in her political influence after 1918.

During the twenty-six years of Besant's presidency, 111,682 new members joined. She had obviously been a good propagandist. In 1933 though, of the total 143,439 who had joined in both Olcott's and her days, only 30,836 remained. Undoubtedly, this was due to deaths as well. Theosophists, however, did not recruit most of their members from income groups who died relatively young. Many must have left pretty soon.

4. REINCARNATION AS REPRINT: GEORGE ARUNDALE, 1934-1945

She is the one person in our Society who commands love and reverence of both the members and the outsiders.

In Motwani's 1933 view on Annie Besant, her successor, no matter how popular with
George Sidney Arundale was born on the 1st of December 1878, the son of an English congregational preacher. As his mother died in childbirth, his aunt, long-standing theosophist Francesca Arundale, adopted him. So he was the first PTS to get a theosophist upbringing from early childhood; maybe that was not a good preparation for daring innovations.

In 1909, he became Principal of Central Hindu College. The Acting Chief Secretary to the government of Madras wrote to the Home Secretary of Arundale in 1916, as secretary of the Home Rule League: 'his name is mooted as possible political successor to Mrs. Besant'. In 1917, he was interned with his President.

He married Srimati Rukmini Devi in 1920. She was the 16 year old daughter of TS Brahmin parents. The marriage caused some stir: Arundale was a theosophist Initiate. And Annie Besant at the Krishnamurti court case had stated that Initiates do not have sex. So, new explanations had to be found (also when Jinarajadasa married later).

Rukmini Devi Arundale became well known as leader of the Kalakshetra dance group, and of the Young Theosophists. In 1933 she was a candidate for the TS presidency; in 1977 for the presidency of the Republic of India. This was a son of seventy miles. During the Second World War, nazis used Star Camp premises as a concentration camp.

In 1925, Dr. Arundale was consecrated bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church, closely tied to the TS (Leadbeater was Presiding Bishop). He often went to The Netherlands: an important LCC centre was in Huizen, and in Ommen the OSE held its Star Camp mass meetings. Dutch theosophists had some influence in newly emerging radio broadcasting.

Arundale also founded a commercially successful theosophical radio station in Australia, called 2GB (= reincarnation of Giordano Bruno = Annie Besant).
The Theosophical Society was to stand for India and see that she won Home Rule and become a govenor of her own countries. Quoted M. LUTYENS (1975), 310.

82. Neither was his 1912 pamphlet Alcyone and Mizar, about his political career as Leader and Reich Chancellor tended to give him the benefit of doubt: in 1934-1945

George Arundale, 1934-1945

India, before, during, and after the war Arundale had stuck to Annie Besant’s ‘tested and tried’ line. As Gandhi frankly admitted, from the Boer War till about 1918, that line, apart from smaller political and personal differences with Besant, had been basically his line, and that of other Indian politicians too: India as an equal partner within the British Empire, Indian military support for Britain in wartime.

Annie Besant’s stand was becoming an anachronism to sharp-eyed observers in World War I; when reprinted by Arundale in World War II, it was even more so.

George Sidney Arundale died in Adyar, 12 August 1945; just at a time when the TS re-established contacts with cut-off sections on the European continent. Total worldwide membership was a little above 30,000. TS historical self-portraits like RANSOM(1938), (1950); contrary to the earlier JINARAJADASA(1925), gave no figures on members. Would they contrast with Arundale’s claim ‘Our membership is steadily on the increase’? At least one 1945 writer to the editor of Theosophist, H.C. Samuels, thought that the defeat of fascism that year also necessitated a critical look at the TS’ own history and ideology, from HPB on.

5. REINCARNATION FROM BRAZIL: C. JINARAJADASA, 1945-1947

Curupumulage Jinarajadasa was the first Asia-born PTS from 1946 till 1952, succeeding Arundale as only candidate in the election. The last six years of his presidency are no concern of this book, as they are after the political independence of his country of birth, Ceylon, and his country of long-time residence, India.

A FROM COLOMBO TO HIROSHIMA, 1875-1945

Jinarajadasa was born in 1875, the second son of parents he later described as poor and simple-minded. Leadbeater first met C.J in 1888, when he was 13 years old, and one of only 55 pupils in his Colombo Buddhist Boys’ school, later to develop into Ananda College. He joined Leadbeater when he went back to England in 1889. An eminent Singhalese who was well acquainted with Leadbeater’s true character, even at that time, in Ceylon, told me he was in the house when the boy’s (CJ’s) father came with a revolver, intending to shoot Leadbeater unless he gave up his son. My informant, being a (295. Though the 1954 KATHOLIEKE ENCYCLOPEDIE, vol. 23, 69f. called 7LEADBEATER(1933B), 197.

7 See tables, p. 391f.

7Jews-Race or Nationality?” by H.C. Samuels, 77, Dec. 1945, 120, denying there was a Jewish ‘race’, contrary to official TS views.

3Spelling ‘Jinarajadasa’ only found in NCE.

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PART III. WHOM DID THEOSOPHY ATTRACT?

Another great merit about Theosophy is the insight it has shown from the beginning into the value of our caste system as a preservative of the nation's spirituality, and as preventing Hindus from disappearing as a nation from the face of the earth.1

This quote by the prime minister (dewan) of Mysore princedom, apart from seeing nations as based on religions, sees a form of social stratification as conditional to both nation and religion. We too will discuss caste, class and related issues, as they figured in the history of theosophists, before we get to matters like nations in later parts.

The next chapters are on social stratification and social conflicts. First, about from which social categories people joined the Theosophical Society. Then, on criteria for recruitment to it. The TS rose at a time when caste or class as principles in societies were increasingly challenged. So, this part is also a preparation for Part IV, which will look at where they stood in these controversies, and at how they related to political currents that focused on these problems.

1 SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF THEOSOPHISTS

A. THE AMERICAS AND EUROPE

From what social backgrounds did the TS attract people to its branches in many countries? In the Americas and Europe, one can say they were from the higher social strata. That the Theosophical Society in England was an overwhelmingly upper and middle-class preserve needs no further demonstration than to note that its London meetings in the 1880s closed at the end of the Season.2

Once again, after the war, a TS president could travel to continents far away from Adyar. Jinarajadasa was formally installed as PTS on 17 February 1946. Then, Vice President N. Sri Ram, Mrs Arundale's brother, put the ring that HPB had left to Annie Besant, on his finger.3

Jinarajadasa marked the modifying of TS views to fit better into an era in which ideas of democracy were more, and ideas of racial superiority were less accepted than before. A former leader of the Buddhist Theosophical Society and editor of its paper, Baron D.B. Jayatilleke, became minister of soon to become independent Ceylon. Jinarajadasa marked India's independence by presenting Jawaharlal Nehru, ex-PTS, first prime minister, with a copy of an edition of Ashoka's edicts. But the vision of an Aryan world empire, much greater than Ashoka's, had died quietly.

1. CRUMP(l923), 56.
2. TILLETT(l982), 11-15; versus LEADBEATER(l911)
3. See OELC June 1939.
4. RANSOM(1950), 163.
officials of British anti-vivisectionists, jointly entertained the delegates. 1

The Antwerp branch paper was in French. 2 Then, less than 4% of the city's population was French speaking,3 virtually coinciding with the highest income groups.

The Theosophist 1903-04 reported, suppl. XVIII, on the Panchama education fund: 'E. Empain, Brussels Branch: 55 Rps, 11 anna.' Edouard-Louis-Joseph Empain, 1852-1929, was one of his country's richest bankers. He owned businesses in many fields, for instance in Paris Metro construction and Chinese railways. When many Belgian bankers were cautious about financing King Leopold II's Congo colony adventure, he was not. For his contribution to colonial activities, the monarch awarded him the title of Baron. The next king, Albert I, appointed him a colonel in 1914, and in 1918 a general and royal aide-de-camp. After the First World War, he acquired German chemical industry interests and founded Progil.4

Support for Adyar theosophy in the Americas varied; from Surinam's lone Paramaribo lodge, with the military Fort Zeelandia as its address and attached to the Dutch TS, to Cuba which had the world's highest per capita FTS % in 1942,5 and the Society's native US with its numerous lodges.

In Brazil, a great many of the relatively well-off were spiritualists in the mould of Frenchman Kardec.6 The relationship of Brazilian Kardecists to the TS was good. Remarkably, then, TS membership numbers there were low. 6

In South America's second largest country, Argentina, TS membership was not large either. Though when Olcott lectured in 1900 at the Government Palace, he noted:

"... Very distinguished audience of 400 Senators, Deputies, Judges of High Court, Ministers of Cabinet, Professors, etc., and many ladies. Spoke over an hour in French fluently. Much praise and applause."

1. Nobility

British TS executive member H.O. Wolfe Murray, among others, linked the hierarchy of the nobility of the visible world to the invisible spiritual hierarchy.7 The nobility was over-represented among members.8 Russian and Italian princes, Russian Princess Ada Troubetzkoy living in Italy,4 British Countess Muriel De La Warr, Viscountess Verena Maud Churchill,9 and the Earl of Crawford, German Countess Schack, 10 in Spain, there was the 'Duc de Plessac'.

Countess Constance Wachtmeister was the widow of the Swedish foreign minister. She and her son were prominent TS members. She was one of Annie Besant's main supporters in the conflict with Judge. The Countess, however, got a conflict of her own with her later. General Secretary in the early 1920's of the combined Denmark and Iceland section was Countess Bille Brahe Selby. The Dutch East Indies theosophical monthly described Countess M.E. de Prozor, wife of a ear's ambassador:

Madame Prozor is one of the most reforming Russian theosophists, who endeavours to spread the theosophical teachings and ideas, mainly within the "house voice" of intellectuals. Before the war, she had a very active part in spreading the theosophical thoughts, first in Geneva, and later in Nice (then), where she had a villa in the most splendid quarter, which she opened for the representatives of Art and Science. 10

James Webb did not base his remark: 'But there was nothing aristocratic about

1Quoted MURPILET, 288.

2'The Occult Origin of Nobility', TT Dec. 1910, 349-358. Ibid. 354 a table with 'ADEPT-KING' at the top, and 'Probationary disciples-Knights' at the bottom. See TT Nov. 1910, 165

3See for this term p. 6, n. 2.

4'TT, Jan. 1890, bxv. The aunt of Prince Wolkonsky had already joined in 1884, in Nice, at Lady Caitness' palace. ODL, TT Oct. 1905, 5.

5NETHERCOT(1963), 197. She was a daughter of the third Earl of Lonsdale, Leadbeater called her Roxana in his clairvoyant writings; TILLET(1982), 116. Her husband Victor Albert was Conservative Whip in the House of Lords, Lord Chamberlain at the coronation of Edward VII, and director of numerous companies. M. LUTYENS(1975), 115. Who was Who Vol. III, London, Adam, 1947, 252-3.

6NETHERCOT(1960), 291.

7NETHERCOT(1962), 117.

8ODL, TT Jan. 1904, 198. Duc (French)=duque (Spanish). The founder of two Spanish TS magazines was Marquis Francisco Monfort y de Togores; TT, Aug. 1905, 693. Don Jose Xifre [i.e. Xifré], Spanish GS, was an 'aristocrat', RICHARDUS, 15; of the royal court; BESANT(1920b), 107.

9TT 1920, cover.

10TMI(1921), 81. On her husband, see p. 147.
Theosophy\(^{1}\) on quantitative data. "It attracted the same sort of recruit which such movements have always attracted", he said, quoting about the medieval lower strata intelligentsia.

May one transplant categories from 19th century Russia centuries back in time and many worlds west, then centuries forward again? Webb names examples: Wedgwood as 'frustrated clergyman'; he was not a poor village preacher, though, but a scion of rich ceramics factory owners.\(^{2}\) And 'lawyer Baillie-Weaver' became a judge.

2. Business

Theosophy often sees as its predecessor hermetic philosophy, called after writings ascribed to Greek god Hermes.\(^{3}\) He was not just the god of deep philosophical mysteries, but also of business.

In Bryan Wilson's view, 'manipulationist' movements, as he considers the TS, pattern their organization after institutions of industrial society: educational institutions, 'business corporations and mail-order companies', rather than after older religious bodies' types.\(^{4}\) "Doing business plus occultism certainly is more interesting than only doing business."\(^{5}\)

Businessmen were well represented in the Theosophical Society. Thomas Alva Edison was an early, though not long-ume, member. Later TS from the US business world were Mary Dodge, of the car factory family.\(^{6}\) Alice Dupont 'of gunpowder fame', Colonel Lauder, and Henry Hotchener, manager of thirties Hollywood film star John Barrymore.\(^{7}\)

The equivalem of Roman god Mercurius (Mercury).

Dupont logo

3. Military, clergy, and judiciary

Officers and their wives and children were strongly represented in Theosophical Society membership. "It is interesting to notice how many officers of the army we count among our members."\(^{8}\) Quite some were colonels and their families. Like: Portugal's general secretary Colonel Oscar Garçao,\(^{9}\) Col. Boggiani, GS in Italy,\(^{10}\) president-founder Olcott,

Through claiming to bring order into chaos may become influential in such an environment WILSON(1970), 148, on Christian Science: 'several prominent theatre and film actors and actresses have also been among their number'.

\(^{1}\) OELC Oct-Nov, 1955.
\(^{2}\) TIRYAKIAN(1974), 165. 1895 Dublin lodge President; NETHERCOT(1953), 41.
\(^{3}\) In 1904, he was president of the Battersea lodge in London. Annual Report on 1904, 97
\(^{4}\) In 1909,397: major. HSO's Report to the Convention, 27-29
\(^{5}\) WEBB(1971), 65. But ibid., 64: What sort of person joined the Theosophists? ... Those ... to whom every tick of their drawing-room clock spelt boredom. .
\(^{6}\) He was James Wedgwood; not Josiah, as with CAMPBELL, 125f
\(^{7}\) See p. 25. The equivalent of Roman god Mercury (Mercury).
\(^{8}\) WILSON(1975), 15; 42.
\(^{9}\) The Vienna correspondent of daily De Av Nicholas in 1921; as reprinted TMN, 1921, 428-33. 433.
\(^{10}\) BROOKS(1914A), 6a.
\(^{11}\) TINGAY, 222.
\(^{12}\) Dupont de Nemours; SANTUCCI, 9.
\(^{13}\) May 1925, 144. Movie stars Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford joined the TS-linked Order of the Round Table; J. Krushke, 'Redactionele Aanteekeningen', TMN/1927, 2. TS-like movements had much support in southern California. Had this anything to do with fast up-and-down movements, not just financially, but also emotionally, of the movie business? A so far successful actor whose new movie flops, may not become poor, but may still become depressed
corresponding secretary-founder Blavatsky, G.R.S. Mead, "son of an artillery colonel", 1
Col. A.E. Powell, 2 Col. C. Weather and his wife Alice, "the wife of Colonel Murray", in
Australia Col. Prentice and Lieut.-Col. Brant. 4

With him, we come to officers a bit higher or lower than colonels. President of the
Vidya Lodge, Nice, France was "Le General Bazaine-Hayter". 5 There were General
Blasius von Nubila in Austria, 6 Rosa Frances Swiney, married to a major-general;
Major-General MacKay in the USA, 7 and Major-General J.H. MacRae in the USA.
Liet.-Col. A.G.B. Turner duly paid his 1915 membership dues. 8 Major Graham Pole
was Scots GS; Major Armstrong was in the Dublin lodge during the early 1890's. 9 Also,
there were Captain Sydney Ransom, Captain Max Wardall (USA), 10 Captain Sellon of the
TS in New York, 11 Captain Adalberth de Bourbon, 12 Captain Lloyd Jones of Australia, 3
'capitaine Frichette', president of the only Bulgarian lodge at the time. 13 US warrant

1 MEADE, 404. US Co!.. Arthur Conger, successor to de Purucker, had joined in Judge's time.
He served in the Spanish, Philippine, and First World Wars, then became military attaché to
Germany and Switzerland, OELC, March 1923.
2 IT Jan. 1931, 27spfl. He wrote The Rationale of Reincarnation
3 RANSOM(1938), 140. 'General Murray'; RCW, II, 505.
4 ROE, 219
5 IT Feb. 1914, 791.
6 GOODRICK-CLARKE(1985), 44. Von Schemua was also a member of the Lesi-Gesellschaft, a
fan club of occultists and anti-Semitic Guido von List, of which the Vienna TS was a corporate
member, GOODRICK-CLARKE(1986), 107.
7 ROE, 173
8 ROE, 218. He visited Adyar in the 30's; died 1936, IT Jan. 1937, 291
9 NETHERCOT(1963), 384.
10 IT, suppl. Feb. 1915.
11 THN!, 7
12 IT Aug. 1930, 654.
13 Ibid., 652. He succeeded Hamlet as TS treasurer. Married to TS Publicity Officer, ex-N Y
lecturer in the history of art Barbara Sellon, who died 1936, IT Nov. 1936, 160.

14 He had somewhat dubious claims of being grandson of King Louis XVI and Queen Marie
Antoinette of France. He founded the first Dutch lodge 'Post Nubila Lux', in The Hague in 1881.
RICHARDS, 5. His death in 1887 caused much trouble for that lodge. His successor as its
president was Mrs Hermance De Neufville van Karnebeek, whose son Herman Adriaan also became
foreign affairs minister from 1918 to 1927
15 Of the Royal Field Artillery, DAS(1947), V, II; VII.
16 TS Annual report on 1903, 111.
B. INDIA

The three last named bring us to India. One can gather something about the social background of those interested in theosophy when it started in that country, from the Pioneer of 6-12-1879. It wrote on a Bombay TS meeting:

several hundred of the most influential natives of the city-bankers, merchants, mill-owners, pandits, pleaders, etc.

Indian society has four main caste divisions. These four have numerous subdivisions, differing from region to region. Contrary to many foreign - and its own conservative Hindu - theorists, India in practice has always had some social mobility. We know of many cases where this happened as 'Sanskritization', used for upward mobility of sub-castes in their entirety. Cases of mobility for individuals or families occurred as well: the name Gandhi means 'grocer'; Mahatma Gandhi's ancestors' occupation for generations. But his grandfather managed to become prime minister of a small principality (which in theory was a hereditary job again).

Class differs from caste, as it refers to the relationships of groups of people, of social categories, to contemporary means of social production. Every individual everywhere has a direct or indirect relationship to those means of production.

Caste in south Asia has co-existed for centuries with class. One might call caste the ghost of an earlier society's class divisions, haunting its offspring, sometimes long after the economic and social forces that generated it disappeared or changed; propped up, sanctified, by orthodox Brahmanic interpretation of Hindu religion, sometimes also sanctioned by other religions in the subcontinent.

An example of the co-existence of caste and class in India is the social category of Brahman cooks. Orthodox Brahmanas may only eat food cooked by fellow Brahmanas (including themselves, or their families). If a Brahman happens to belong to a rich class, then he can afford to hire another Brahman as a cook. Thus, he frees himself and his family from kitchen labour. In class terms, one can categorize Brahman cooks as workers, not always the best paid of the working class. In a way, they are comparable to

1 PEKETE, 88: 1906 Hungarian High Court judge and TS chairman. Marie Loke was the granddaughter of a Dutch High Court judge: DE WILDE, 9.
2 GS for Greece: 77 Nov. 1936, 192.
3 Of the Calcutta High Court RICHARDUS, 24.
4 Quoted 77 Dec. 1937.
5 JALALI, 172.
6 RAMABAI SARASVATI, 6: "Without doubt, "caste" originated in the economical division of labour".
7 Based more on custom than on religious law texts, which sometimes expressly allow the contrary; RAMABAI SARASVATI, 5.

The Brahman Maharajahs of Benares gave to the theosophists their family motto, which the TS translated as 'There is no religion higher than truth', and land to build Central Hindu College on. Bhagavan Das, son of a Brahman 'rich landlord' and prominent TS member, was from the same region.

Later, membership centred in south India, especially Tamil Nadu. According to Kenneth W. Jones, Theosophical Society members in the Telugu-speaking districts north of Madras were 'aristocrats, officials, and members of the educated middle class'. Washbrook calls Annie Besant's supporters in Tamil Nadu the 'Mylapore clique', after the suburb between Adyar and Madras city centre. Her associates in south India were almost all Brahmanas. In 1912, Brahmanas were only 3.2% of Madras presidency's male population. Yet, they had 55% of the region's appointments for the highest offices in

Annie Besant during the hard times in the Folkestone vicarage, just after her separation.1

The main caste divisions are the four varnas; literally: 'colours'. According to many, this refers to the days after about 1500 B.C., when light-complexioned invaders from beyond the Himalayas attacked, and partly subjugated, darker skinned people retreating southwards. Or was 1500 B.C. too recent? '... the primordial Brähmanas ... had been initiated in Central Asia'; according to Blavatsky, at least 850,000 B.C.

Below these four divisions are the numerous casteless. Orthodox tradition sees them as illegal offspring of parents, differing in caste. Historians see many of them as descendants of those who were not immediately conquered by the invaders, so not included in the four varnas when they arose. Buddhists see many as Buddhists who came under Hindu rule, and as losers in a conflict were put at the bottom of the social ladder.

The idea of casteless persons had influence in Europe. Lanz von Liebenfels thought his lower class opponents were hereditarily inferior; he called them Tschandalen4 from Sanskrit: Chandala.

Social background of theosophists

1 See p. 71 Adyar TS headquarters employed a Brahman cook; TS General Report on 1905, 5.
2 JINARAJA DASA(1923), 49 they 'gradually became browned by the Indian sun' K. Moowat, 'India's message to the World', TT Oct 1937: It was also through the medium of this Vama-sthala-dharma that India assimilated the non-Aryans into her body politic and averted racial discord and disaster. Not all agree on this. Early 20th century Indian politician and religious leader 5th Aurobindo; and later SETHALA(1980) argued there had been no 'Aryan invasion', and that Aryans and Dravidians were basically the same. Romila Thapar, in her Sardar Patel Memorial lectures, quoted KRISHNA, 285, stated: The historian ... cannot but doubt the theory that a large

3 BLAVATSKY(1908), 596
5 A. MISRA.
6 JONES(1989), 178.
7 WASHBROOK, 229ff.
8 IRSCHIK, 44.
which Indians could rise under the British raj.1

Sri Prakasa described TS membership as largely 'orthodox Hindus in the professions of law and Government service'. Olcott wrote in 1906: 'the preponderating number of our Indian members are Government employees'. If he was right, then membership as a whole differed from those branch secretaries of whom the profession is known. For among those, lawyers, not government employees, were the biggest category. Lawyers, though depending on government-established courts of law, are not government employees. The medical profession was less represented than the legal one, as Brahmans usually rejected it as connected to body fluids.2 If a secretary gave only an educational institution as his address, we have presumed he was a teacher or assistant headmaster, not a headmaster. Even so, the proportion of headmasters versus teachers and assistant headmasters within the TS seemed to be higher than on schools in general.

Annie Besant did not mind over-representation of lawyers in her Indian organization:

'Whenever I have needed people ready to sacrifice, I have found them in the vakil [lawyer] class'.3

Not only Brahmans were theosophists. British in India also joined.4 In 1912 in Madras presidency, 'Europeans and Eurasians' were 0.1% of the male population and held 8% of selected government jobs.5 Contrary to Dutch in Indonesia, they were definitely a minority in the Indian TS, though certainly more than 0.1% of members.6

Early on, General Morgan, and future Major-General Gordon, later Lady Emily Lutyens,7 daughter of Viceroy Lord Lytton, became members. Lieutenant-Col. Lane.

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1IRSCHIK, 13-4. There were geographic concentrations of Brahmans within the presidency and around Madras and Tanjore cities. SCHWARTZBERG, 109. An estimate for all Hindus in British India in 1941 was 3.7% Brahmans; COUSINS(1941), 107.
2ODL, 77, May 1906, 565. SRI PRAKASA, 145.
3BESANT(1917A), 62.
4BESANT(1917B), 215 wrote of 'classes' within the Brahman caste: 'lawyers, exceedingly numerous, ministers of States; medical men, a good many'. The last remark may be an exaggeration.
5BESANT(1917A), 62.
6The good company of a number of English and other European aristocrats and men of science and high Indian officials-Generals, Colonels, Deputy Collectors, Magistrates, English Editors (many of them, with their wives), who have also joined our Society.' HPB in the Ceylon Observer, 31-5-1880: BCW, II, 394.
7IRSCHIK, 14.
80.1% would have meant five people for the whole of India. I estimate the percentage of India's TS membership of non-Indian ancestry was in the order of 5 to 10.
9ODL, June 1931, 279. On his wife Alice, when he was still a Lt. Col. and police Superintendent: BCW, II, 260.
10She was also related by her sister's marriage to Conservative prime minister Arthur Balfour; M. LUTYENS(1975), 223.
Indian princes and their ministers also gave support. In an important principality within British India, Jamnui and Kashmir, the Maharajah, a Hindu prince, though the majority of his subjects were Muslim, joined the TS. He also was the main financial backer of Central Hindu College which Annie Besant had set up. Landlords joined. Among them Byomkesh Chakravarti, in 1910 secretary of the Bengal Landholders Association, who lobbied against abolition of the zamindar system, which gave certain privileges to Indian landlords. Also, the president of Belary lodge in south India, Rai Bahadur A. Sabhapathy Mudaliar, owning sugar mills as well.

From start of the Indian TS in 1879, it had Bombay merchants like Moolji Thackerseye as members; there still were in 1917. Businessmen came from various castes and faiths. Some were Parsi, like Pestonji Khan, Brothers were Hindu. Tookaram Tatya, Thackersey as members; there still were in 1917. Businessmen came from various castes and faiths. Some were Parsi, like Pestonji Khan, others were Hindu. Toolkaram Tatya, though a rich businessman, was sudra by caste; he asked Olcott to confirm him as a Buddhist first, but returned to Hinduism while remaining a theosophist later.

In 1893, a separate TS lodge for vaisyas was founded. Gautama Lodge was its name (Gautama Buddha had not been the best friend of caste divisions). Annie Besant said in her Lectures on Political Science to business school students in 1918:

"It may be well to begin this introductory Lecture by saying why, in a College of Commerce, you should be asked to study such a subject as Political Science. It is hoped that from this college, men go out, who will be Captains of Commerce, capable of organizing and directing great commercial undertakings. These must be carried on within States, within Nations, that have relationships with each other, and for their successful direction, knowledge of National and International conditions and laws, not only artificial but natural laws, must be acquired and assimilated. Moreover, it may be that, hereafter, a man trained here, may become a Minister of Commerce in a Provincial, or in the Supreme Government, and a very poor Minister would be made were he ignorant of Political Science."

C. INDONESIA

In June 1906, the TS in the Dutch East Indies was said to have 200 members. In 1913, there were 533. Of whom Europeans: 331, Natives: 177, Chinese: 25.10 In 1925, out of 1375 ITS FTS 448 were women, 25.82%. As to age groups then: 20-29% was under 21; 55.89% from 21-40 years old: 36.87% 41-60; 5.2% over 60. (Dutch pensioners often went back to The Netherlands; rather few Indonesians reached that age.)

In 1930, of 2099 members, 1006 were European. This was nearly 0.5% of all Dutch in Indonesia, the highest proportion anywhere in the world! See p. 110. 876 were Indonesian, at least in name nearly all Islamic. So, more Muslim members than in the rest of the world together. 208 were Foreign Oriental, as most Asians of non-Indonesian ancestry were categorized. Probably about 190 of those were Chinese; also more Chinese members than in the rest of the world put together.

Foreign Oriental, European, and other categories, I use here as in Dutch East Indies law and Theosophical Society membership statistics then; not tied to actual country of birth.

1. Chinese and Indians

People of (partially at least) Chinese ancestry made up by far most Foreign Orientals. The majority were peranakan, whose ancestors had been immigrating since the Middle Ages. Often, they had intermarried with locals. A minority were totoq, these had come from China recently.

Probably, Chinese first joined the Theosophical Society in Surakarta. A report on the

1Annie Besant, 'Headquarters' Notes', ADB Aug. 1910, 227.
2They were also popular with Katherine MAYO, 275f., whose views on India differed much from theosophists. As Annie Besant came to India in 1895, Mysore state closed all offices to allow employers to hear. NETHERCOTT(1965), 16f. DAS(1922), 33, then closer to Gandhi then AB was, was much less positive about the princes.
3Like the Mysore Dewan (prime minister); RAO(1913). The Prime Minister of Travancore State in 1904 honoured Besant as a goddess, as the living incarnation of the goddess Saravalie; if the reporting of LUNS, 19 is correct; the spelling 'Saravatie' for Sarasvali is not.
4In 1935, only 9 were left there; rather few Indonesians reached that age.
5In 1930, of 2099 members, 1006 were European. This was nearly 0.5% of all Dutch in Indonesia, the highest proportion anywhere in the world! See p. 110. 876 were Indonesian, at least in name nearly all Islamic. So, more Muslim members than in the rest of the world together. 208 were Foreign Oriental, as most Asians of non-Indonesian ancestry were categorized. Probably about 190 of those were Chinese; also more Chinese members than in the rest of the world put together.
6Foreign Oriental, European, and other categories, I use here as in Dutch East Indies law and Theosophical Society membership statistics then; not tied to actual country of birth.

Social background of theosophists

BESANT(1919A), 1 Also reprinted TMNI, 1921, 338.
8HEMERSMA(1907), 214. Mrs C. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913), 469. For a more chronological approach than in this chapter, p. 281f.
9NUGRAHA(1989), 277.
10IT Apr. 1931, 24. ENI, VI, 763. 1303 members in 1919; P. Fournier, 'Occulte Werkzaamheid', TMNI, 1919, 511. TIJOSN Tjioe, May 1916, quoted: 'Persoverzieht', KOT, 1916, 391. 'Wonggori, in the Mangkunegaran, was a numerous branch soon after its founding. '40 Chinese and 120 Native members'; IT Apr. 1917, suppl., ii. In 1935, only 9 were left there; TMNI March 1935, 63.
local lodge speaks of 59 members in 1905, of whom twelve were Chinese. Of Chinese TS members, most may have been peranakan; as the TS was very weak in China, most tolok Chinese lived outside Java, and peranakan tended to adapt to other groups in Indonesia.

Which factors in Indonesia's history helped or hindered its reception of theosophy? As we will see with Indians, Dutch, and Javanese, both social stratification and religious factors were among them. So it was with Chinese.

Secretary Van Hinloopen Labberton thought that, in contrast with Christians, the TS attracted 'the better' Chinese. The Theosophist wrote: 'Among the native members there are some Chinamen, chiefly priests.' Religious views among Chinese were changing then. Earlier on, Confucianism had been more of a philosophical strand. Since the 1900's, the Confucian league Khong Kauw Hwee sought to change it to an organized religion, with Confucius as a prophet of God. The Confucian movement had been associated with members of the officer class. These were people, to whom the government had given titles like major, or lieutenant, of the Chinese; and privileges. Newly emerging groups among Chinese challenged them. Khong Kauw Hwee had personal links to the TS, which also served as its organizational model. 3

In the 1930's, there came also a Buddhist revival among Chinese. It had links to the TS as well. It spread beyond the Chinese community; see p. 365.

With Arabs, the second largest 'Foreign Oriental' group, their orthodox Islam made TS membership improbable; but the TS' Arjuna schools had at least one Arab pupil. 6

The third largest 'Oriental' group were people from British India. The census in 1930 counted 30,000 Indians, 21,600, mostly of Hindu or Sikh faith, lived in Sumatra. Most were low paid agriculture workers in the Deli region around Medan; so, unlikely candidates for TS membership. 5500 lived in Java and Madura, of whom 600 in Jakarta. Especially in Central and East Java, most were Muslim, so, like India's Muslims, unlikely to join. Of immigrants in Jakarta from the Gujarat region, 70% were also Muslim. From Sind (where the Theosophical Society had support, until it became part of TS membership improbable; but the TS' Arjuna schools had at least one Arab pupil. 6

The TS' main center was Surakarta.

2. Dutch

People considered three 'European' categories: 1. Not very numerous groups of foreigners like English and Germans, also Americans and Japanese. 2. Belanda tolok, recent immigrants intending to go back to The Netherlands. They were most represented in high level jobs of government and big business. Tolok were roughly one fifth of all Dutch in Indonesia in 1930 (more among adult men). Most TS members on whom I have found biographical data fall under this category. If these data are representative, then the Dutch peranakan to tolok ratio may have been the opposite of Chinese FTS. 3. The biggest group: Belanda peranakan, Indies Dutch, or Indo-Europeans. Generally, they were economically less well off than the tolok. They had lived in Indonesia for generations, and most had Indonesian as well as Dutch ancestors. Like Chinese peranakan, many were better at local languages than, in their case, the Dutch language.

K.A. James, prominent theosophist and later Resident of Western Borneo, opposed this much. 7

Absolutely and proportionally more Dutch joined the Theosophical Society in Indonesia than did British in India. One point here: the Dutch share of the total population

...
Social background of theosophists

Why was TS-mindedness among Dutch in Indonesia higher than with Dutch in The Netherlands (see p. 110)? One factor may be that in The Netherlands all social groups, both privileged and underprivileged, were mainly Dutch. In the Dutch East Indies, Dutch tended to be comparatively privileged.

Among them, traditionally Christian institutions were weaker than in The Netherlands. The Vrededreef, a Protestant missionary paper of Garut in Java, called the TS ‘representatives of the ANTI-CHRIST’. It did not impress many Dutch there.

Abraham Kuyper, ex-prime minister, was the leader of the Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, the main Protestant political group of The Netherlands. In De Standaard, his daily, in 1917 he announced the birth of a small sister party in the East Indies colony. Kuyper thought so far, the ‘not very numerous Christians, wandering aimlessly’ had been a poor second to ‘the Theosophists’ on the political stage there.

Kuyper had a personal stake. His son Frederik had gone to the Indies. In the Bandung expatriate environment, ‘Theosophy poisoned’ young Kuyper in 1912. His father attacked theosophy at a party public meeting, and in many letters to his friend, A.W.F. Idenburg. Idenburg was the only Anti-Revolutionaire governor-general, from 1909-16. Their correspondence showed worries about the TS in general, and in particular about Frederik Kuyper, and Surabaya Chinese Affairs official Henri Borel, FTS. Borel was an ally against Idenburg of M. van Geuns, editor of right wing liberal daily Soerabajtsch Handelsblad. Kuyper wrote: ‘It is so horrible how, also in this country, the civilized elite abjure Christianity and wallow in Theosophy’. The Indies worried him still more. Idenburg wrote to Kuyper: ‘This theosophy progresses terribly here. I really consider it as still more dangerous (in our times) than Islam’. ‘So, this will be the future religion of our poor Indies.’

1 LOCIER-SCHOLTEN(1994) Brisons were 0.03% of India’s population, Dutch 0.34% of Dutch East Indies population in 1930.

2 LOCIER-SCHOLTEN(1994) points out another difference between Dutch in Indonesia and in The Netherlands: in 1860, 50% of professionally active Europeans in Indonesia were civil servants. In 1930, this was 28%; in The Netherlands it was 6%. Figures in STEVENS (1994), 248; 1860, 80%; 1930, 30%. One should add relatively highly paid civil servants, as here Indonesians had many of the lower ranking government jobs. CADY (1964), 328; in 1938, 42% of government administration were Indonesians (far less than Indians in India; see p. 104). FASSEUR (1995), 44; then, of high level officials less than 7% were Indonesian. THILKEMA (1932), 58, estimated that 50 among theosophists in Indonesia were teachers; 18 as theosophical schools, others at government schools.

3 VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916A), 148.

4 Quoted IC. 1918 (40), 898; DE BRUIN-PUCHINGER, 587. In 1918-1940, Christian parties always got a majority in Dutch parliament. Then, of seats for ‘Europeans’ in the Volksraad (the closest Indonesia had to a parliament), very much a minority was Christian parties’. The Politieke Economische Bond and later the Vaderlandsche Club were big parties among Dutch voters in Indonesia. Their allies in The Netherlands, like them linked to big business and not to a Christian church, the Economische Bond and Verbond voor Nationaal Herstel, respectively, got only 1-2% of the vote at their maximum.
In 1915, Idenburg went to Protestant divine service in Bogor, where he resided, to a congregation 'very far from being the Bogor elite'. That year, he felt uncomfortable about the 'theosophical tendency, fashionable nowadays'; as he did on masonry.

Freemasonry and spiritualism, both strong before the TS came, provided a springboard for it. I could investigate whether memberships overlapped only for Javanese.

In 1911. In 1925, it had six branches: Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, Bandung, Bogor and Yogyakarta. More than half of European TS Fellows had also joined the Liberal Catholic Church in 1930.2

Government official A.J. Hamerster later became international TS Treasurer in Adyar.3 Like K.A. James, he also was a prominent LCC member. Other members were: P.W. van den Broek, assistant resident4 of Probolinggo in Java; the ex-director of the Native Prison in Surabaya, later in Mojokerto, W. Elderenbosch.6

Cornelia Rensina van Mook-Bouwman, according to her membership number, probably joined the TS in 1907 or shortly afterwards. In 1922, she was secretary of the Surabaya lodge. She published a poem on reincarnation and karma, 'Do not mourn!', in TMNI 1922, 51. Mrs Van Mook was also a member of co-masonry. Her husband was A. van Mook, of men-only masonry, and elderman of Surabaya. Her son was the future


3 Theirin the Netherlands on 'C.W. Leadbeater as Hero, Sages and Saints.' TMNI, Feb. 1931, 91.

4 D. van Hinloopen-Labberton, 'Soeman Bonang's leerlingen', TMNI, 1917, 507. VAN DEN DOEL(1995), 251. Assistant resident was a rank in colonial administration, roughly equivalent to Javanesse beasip, or government-general, governor, and resident, and above 'comroutier'. Van den Broek co-founded TMNI in 1901; VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913B), 2. He wrote Leertoek der Exoterische Theosofi, out by 1918.

5 His 'Toestanden in de inlandse gevangenis te Mojokerto', TMNI, 1920, 590-2, favoured prison reform on US lines, on which Governor Hurst of Arizona had written in TS papers; A. Besant, WT, 77, July 1921, 313. Indonesian prison doctor Joeda and public prosecutor Raden Soemjaijuegos directed in Mojokerto, both also theosophists, were angry with Elderenbosch as they thought he had not been a good director, and had depicted conditions as worse than they were. See articles by M.B. van der Jagt, D. van Hinloopen Labberton, R.P. Soemjaijuegosprodo, and A. van Leeuwen in TMNI, 1921, 47-55.
Annie Besant, he did not really separate his theosophy from his politics; as we will see, with Leadbeater, who stayed with him on a later tour of Indonesia. As a good follower of World Fair, and wrote the catalogue of the Indies exhibits. For some time, he became headmaster of the 'Theosofisch Lyceum', a TS secondary school in Naarden. He became of Education and Religion.1 In the 1920's, he went back to The Netherlands and became government school; and was one of the four highest ranking officials of the Department of Education and Religion.1 In the 1920's, he went back to The Netherlands and became headmaster of the 'Theosofisch Lyceum', a TS secondary school in Naarden. He became a D. Litt. at Amsterdam University in 1931, after writing a thesis on constitutional history.

In 1915 in Malang, the Krebet sugar factory was also the address of the TS lodge members, including its president, Mrs M. van Gelder-van Motman, related by marriage to Labberton, and G. Muller, its secretary, were linked to the factory management. Quite a few others' addresses on membership lists had the abbreviation 'sf', sugar factory. Several officials of the Koninklijke Pakkervaart Maatschappij, a private company with a virtual shipping monopoly between Indonesian islands, were FTS in 1916.2 Jonkheer N.J. Westpalm van Hoorn van Burgh was secretary and treasurer of the Rubber Planters League in Bandung, deputy manager of the Dutch Indies Commercial Bank, and sat in the executive of the Indies agribusiness syndicate.3 TS membership also included tea estate managers, like C.R. Krijgsman and H.E. Noothout of West Java.4

J. van der Leeuw was director and major shareholder of the big Van Nelle coffee and tea company, based on plantations in Indonesia. Annie Besant awarded him the T. Subba Rao Medal. He also was an LCC priest. He spent time in Australia with Leadbeater, in the Indies, in The Netherlands where he became TS General Secretary; and in South Africa, where he died, flying his plane.5

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2. NUGRAHA (1989), 252: 256; 263.

3. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1913a), 8. SCHOUTEN, 186; he married the daughter of the manager of the governor-general's palaces. RANI 1915, 498; 501. Jonkheer is the lowest Dutch title of nobility.

4. MANGOENPOERWOTO (1916-17).

5. ROE, 243. TINI 1927, 45. KOESEOMODINGRAT (1921), 358. HARMSEN, 227. M. LUTYENS (1975), 203. J. de Meurck Monier. 'Bij het heengaan van Dr. J.J. van der Leeuw', TINI Nov. 1934, 131. DE RAAT; the company was also involved in tobacco, groceries, and provisioning of ships.

3. Javanese

Indonesia's most densely populated island was Java. There, especially in its centre and east, the eclectic or syncretic position of theosophy had potential appeal1 among the nobles with links to the princely courts, the priyayi.2 The theosophical monthly used satrija (from Sanskrit kshattriya) as a synonym.3 Indian influences on society had been strong in the early Middle Ages.

In Indonesia's late Middle Ages, gradually, from the northwest, Islamic coastal states, based on trade, arose.4 The agriculture-based Hindu kingdom in the interior of West Java in the 16th century was conquered by the sultan of north coast Banten. Rulers of the great East and Central Java realm, at odds with Muslims of Surabaya and Demak near their north coasts, decided on a forward defence. They became sultans of Mataram, political as well as spiritual leaders of the Islamic faithful. In Java, the Brahman caste practically ceased to exist. The priyayi now topped the social ladder. Princes, though Muslim now, also kept alive pre-Islam, even pre-Hindu, traditions. Many Javanese continued to see the Mahabharata as deeply significant. That the Mataram monarchs later had to recognize Dutch suzerainty did not change this.

The realm was divided among different branches of the family; eventually, there were four ruling princes. Of those, the sultan and the Paku Alam reigned in Yogyakarta. The two others, the most prestigious one, the susuhunan [roughly, king or emperor], and the Mangku Negoro, lived in Surakarta.

Indonesian FTS mainly came from Javanese princely families and 'others from the priyayi class.' Several, like Raden Mas Aryo Woesjannarangrat in Surakarta, and some in West Java, were bupati, traditionally, a hereditary job within the higher aristocracy.4

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1. SIERRIKOESEMFOO (1920b), 10: 'The Javanese usually wants to have nothing to do with theosophy and yet he thinks theosophically, in a general sense.' TMNI 1916, 534: 'Every civilized Javanese recognizes Theosophy's value.'

2. This social category was also the most accessible to Dutch influences, like theosophy as it came to Indonesia; GEERTZ (1960), 235-6. Javanese religious ideas also influenced Dutch inhabitants.

3. Warga Oepasaka, 'Wewahan karingan baro otemaning karibon oemraping damangadi Brahma', FT 1920-I (14), 102: 'Satrija (priyajj). WED. Oct.-Nov. 1921, 176-7; 'In daily life, one becomes a satrija by birth. One who is born the child of a sofia, cannot possibly be a satrija.' Satrija is not completely a synonym of priyayi though, it may have the wider meaning of (not necessarily noble) 'fighter'.


6. Dutch: 'regent'; the highest position Indonesians might have in Dutch colonial administration. NUGRAHA (1989), 261; NAGAZUMI (1972), 192. In 1930, there were 76 bupati on Java and Madura islands; L. DE JONG, vol. 118, 183.
Raden Mas Toemenggoeng Pandji (a high title of court nobility) Djajeng Irawan presided over Djokjakarta lodge. He was the *patih* [prime minister] of the Paku Alam principality.¹ Prince Pakoe Alam VII (official name before his 40th birthday: Seerjedilogo) himself was also a member; and wrote the libretto for a wayang play at a TS congress.

Pakoe Alam VII was one of three Javanese who certainly joined both the TS and freemasonry.² Though three is not a big overlap, these were all prominent, both in politics and in the TS. The other two were Radjiman and Sarwoko Mangekoesoemo.

Raden Mas T. Sarwoko Mangekoesoemo was the *bupati patih*, the prime minister, of Prince Mangkoe Negoro VII. He joined the Indies TS executive in 1934. The TS congress of 1936 was at his residence.³ Radan Radjiman Wediodipoero was the court physician of Susuhunan Pakoe Boewono X Witjaksana of Surakarta.⁴ This prince would later grant him the higher nobility name Wediodiningrat. Like Wocirjaningrat, Radjiman was an important leader of the Javanese league *Budi Utomo*.

The oldest son of the *susuhunan* and special military aide to the governor-general, Prince Ngabehi IV (also spelt Hangabehi), joined in 1913. From 1939-44, he would rule as Pakoe Boewono XI.⁵

Notable was the elder brother of Pakoe Boewono X. The ruler gave him a title no one had held since the seventeenth century, of higher rank than other *pangeran*. This Prince Aryo Koesoemodiningrat was a major at the Royal Netherlands Indies Army's general staff.⁶ Influenced by Mr D. van Hinloopen Labberton, B. K. P. H. Koesoemodiningrat, besides the ngelmu [doctrines], learnt in his youth from then well known gurus, had embraced the theosophical doctrine.¹ Leadbeater, George and Ruknuln Arundale stayed at his palace. In 1924, he addressed the TS world congress in Adyar. As an 'ardent theosophist', 'completely absorbed by theosophy', he often wore the TS seal cast into diamonds and other precious jewels. He died in 1932.²

Another aristocrat officer, Raden Mas Pandji Brotowojo, rose to lieutenant-colonel. In the 1900's, he co-founded Surakarta TS lodge; he was often its president.³ Shiraishi describes this lodge in 1916 as

Prince Koesoemodiningrat, from: Djawá 12 (1932), 318

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¹Old style spelling for Yogyakarta.

²J. P. F. 1917-18 (11), 32. TS Annual Report on 1905, 137. Misspelt 'Trawan' in the 1903 and 1904 Annual Reports; Irawan in Javanese tradition is the name of one of Arjuna's sons.


⁴RANSOM(1938), 535. *TINI* Nov. 1934, 126.


⁶Born 1866, he ruled 1893-1939: DE GRAAF, 483. This realm was abolished politically after 1945 independence, unlike the Yogyakarta sultanate. In *TINI*, 1916, 455-65, 'Avondfeest in de Kruan', Annie H. v. V. described her presentation at the Surakarta palace, to which she had been invited along with the Resident, in October 1914. Witjaksana in Javanese here means 'the wise'. It may mean (human or divine) 'wisdom' or 'government policy'. TSUCHIYA(1987), 53: Susuhunan Pakoe Boewono X Witjaksana of Surakarta.

⁷LARSON(1987), 137. DE GRAAF, 483. Misspelt 'Trawan' in the 1903 and 1904 Annual Reports; Irawan in Javanese tradition is the name of one of Arjuna's sons.

⁸SASTFASOEWIGNJÁ, 318. Ibid., 319: in 1923, he established a dancing school with *jong-Java*, of which his son-in-law Djipjakdipoero was national chairman; LARSON(1987), 137. He helped to establish, and sponsored, the Arjuna school in Surakarta; VAN LEEUWEN(1921D), 244-5. He wrote on traditional Java textiles: *EN!, vol. II, 248. Frewarto Théophile advertised his writings Rasa Djawa [The Javanese Idea; in Malay] and Kemadjoean lahir barin bain [Outer and inner progress; Javanese].


¹⁰*TINI* Jan. 1937, 32. 'In memoriam Br. R. M. Pandji Brotowojo.'
a prestigious meeting place of Dutch, Indo-European, Chinese, Kasunanan [susuhunan's realm] and Mangkunegara princes, aristocrats, and high-ranking officials.1
Princes of the Paku Alam dynasty, Soerio Soeriokoesoemo, FTS, thought:

The division of tasks is not alien to the Javanese society. The daarna [special duty] of the Brahmans, the Ksatriya, the Vaisya, and the Soedra, they have learned to understand. They look after rank and station remarkably.2
Soeriokoesoemo's magazine Wederopbouw wrote:

What, then, is the aim of the caste system? To point out to the people the fourfold path of discipline?3
Soeriokoesoemo, however, thought this purposeful stability was under threat as industrial workers rose:

And with Dr. Radjiman, we protest strongly against an endeavour: to make the Javanese tiller into a factory-slave as soon as possible. Very improperly irresponsible is he who dares to utter such a thought. For a factory-slave with a jimat we already dare to predict a now that the Garut affair becomes a danger to society, like an anarchist, who walks around everywhere with a bomb and threatens society. Not the jimat makes a person into an anarchist, but the factory-slave in the Orient is the hotbed and the focus of anarchy itself. It only takes a small push to make the Javanese factory-slave a full-fledged 'degenerate Sama'.

Jimat in the quote means amulet. Though Indonesia's theosophists and leftists agreed that jimat did not cause this Garut conflict, they disagreed on effects of amulets as on causes of class conflicts.4

1SHIRAISH(I990A), 120.
2SOERIOKOESOEMO(I923A). 15. His Wederopbouw referred not only to workers, but also to Indonesian non-noble businessmen, as soerdoo (see p. 327. Sanskrit: 'austral'). In a debate versus Soeriokoesoemo, J.B. Wens, supporter of secular Indonesian nationalist Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, said: 'It will be the task of this and the next generation of Javanese to finish off once and for all the civilization on Java -mostly based on the Hindus- they have the sympathies of the higher classes.'
3Radjiman, 'Het kastenstelsel in het licht der democratie', WED, 1920, 234f; ibid., 235.
4Region of Java where an anti-government protest had been stifled at the cost of lives. See p. 233.

The religious make-up of middle level categories differed from, for instance, India; that made recruitment to the TS in principle less likely than there.

According to Ricklefs, theosophy arose in Indonesia at a crucial time for its aristocrats.5 Writing of some twenty years later, Reeve put the TS in the context of:

The religious make-up of middle level categories differed from, for instance, India; that made recruitment to the TS in principle less likely than there.

As social factors might attract part of the priyayi category to theosophy, so might religious factors. The TS was less successful with Javanese than with Hindus in India; but far more successful than with Muslims in India. Many priyayi's religious views were in between these two.

Clifford Geertz, in an influential, though not universally accepted,6 study, divided Javanese society into three categories. He saw these three roughly as both social groups and as groups with different views on religion. I have summarized that view in this table. As Geertz himself wrote, not all individuals fit neatly; like nobles or poor peasants who are strict Muslims.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL CATEGORY</th>
<th>VIEWS on RELIGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priyai</td>
<td>nobles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santri</td>
<td>traders, upper middle income peasants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abangon</td>
<td>poor peasants and workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher aristocratic elite of Java was, by 1900, at a low point in prestige, authority and self-assurance. ... Many of the younger generation left administrative service and sought careers in law or medicine. Others produced intellectual movements which had a clearly anti-Islamic content, and which were linked to Theosophy. Such movements attributed Java's unhappy state to the spread of Islam ... As for 'Others': there was some overlap, like nobles or poor peasants who were killed had refused to sell to the government] has killed the people, not the jimat.' Old spelling: djimat.

1For instance NOER, 19, objected, seeing social and religious categories of people as quite different. See for the various views: J.P.M. van de Pasch, 'De criticius wikt, Clifford beschikt. Recensies van 'The Religion of Java': een kritische beschouwing', Jambatan 9 (1991), 1, 3-30.
2CLIFFLEFS(1993), 129. 'The higher aristocratic elite of Java was, by 1900, at a low point in prestige, authority and self-assurance. ... Many of the younger generation left administrative service and sought careers in law or medicine. Others produced intellectual movements which had a clearly anti-Islamic content, and which were linked to Theosophy. Such movements attributed Java's unhappy state to the spread of Islam ... As for 'Others': there was some overlap, like Radjiman. On 'careers in law', see p. 121, n. 1.
the aggressive promotion by other Indonesians (largely santri, respectively abangan) of
reformist Islam and Marxism suggested the possibility of the creation of a future state hostile
to the [priyayi] tradition and to the people who came from it.¹
Van Hinloopen Labberton in 1913 had a 'trickle down' theory on theosophy in
Javanese society:

so far we are very exclusive in accepting people as TS members. Exclusively priyayi want to
be inscribed in our books; a very good policy, as the survey is easier that way, and still in
the end the common man benefits; if true religiosity and strong sense of duty and altruism
adorn the powerful. If the higher level people practice the Theosophical lifestyle, the lesser
ones will follow automatically.¹
Recently, a Javanese of just below the nobility level had joined; at least according to
Labberton then. He was Soemotjito, a retired village headman from the Purworejo
region, who had disagreements with Muslim clerics.

As for professions, the role of lawyers in early twentieth century Indonesian theosophy,

³Van Hinloopen Labberton (1913d), 34.
³Van Hinloopen Labberton (1913d), 49-50. NUGRAHA (1989), 263, though, has
'Mas Soemotjito'; the lowest title of nobility. Also, ibid., 34: Soemotjito was a 'priyayi'.
¹REEVE (1985), 8.
²Van Hinloopen Labberton (1913d), 54.
¹Theosophists believed only Aryans, the fifth root-race, had five senses; the third one ('Lemurians') only three, lacking taste and smell. BLAVATSKY (1906), 113.

¹Contrary to what one may think from Ricklefs; see p. 119, n. 3. Only since 1906 were there Indonesian law students in universities; KONING (1968), 4; and later also in Jakarta law school. L. DE JONG, vol. IIa, 143: in 1940, a total of 160 Indonesians had finished their law studies; including those not working as lawyers. Kemajoran Hindia 17/22-3-1924, quoted IPO I, 1924, 260: 'only 12 Indonesian jurists. FASSEUR (1995), 145: 40 Indonesian lawyers in 1939. Daniel S. Lev, 'Origins of the Indonesian Advocacy', Indonesia Apr. 1976, 135-70; 136: in the late 1950's, there were 189 lawyers per million people in India; in Indonesia, 17 lawyers only.
²LARSON (1987), 90: to many priyayi, doctor was a low prestige profession (as with Brahmins).
³Vragen, Mgr. C. W. Leadbeater te Makasar', TMNI 1926, 595.
goodwill, that is, with the help of theosophy!

This article led to an angry letter to the editor, speaking of ‘the most intolerant bigotry, or racial or social nonsense.’ It thought that the editor should reprimand ‘Een Indische Stem’ (An Indies Voice), especially on his ‘bovine eyes and open mouth’ clause. ‘I, too, do not want to risk that I will have to call to arms my fellow party members against the theosophists, against whom I have nothing, can have nothing.’

‘Een Indische Stem’ may have been C.A.H. von Wotzogen Kiihr, former assistant resident. His critic may have been Tjipjo Mangoe Emoe Emoe of the Nationale Indische Partij. I have no conclusive evidence for this. I base it on a similar polemic they had earlier on; see p. 303; and the Indische Gids referring to Kiihr writing in 1921 in Theosofisch Maandblad; it then had no articles under his name, so possibly under an alias. Editor Anton van Leeuwen did not mention which reader, or from what political party, the letter’s author was; or to whom he reacted. Van Leeuwen replied:

We believe that this [letter to the editor] is a wrong view. The person who writes under the pseudonym “An Indies Voice” is someone who (being in Holland now) already more than once, both in the [Theosophical] monthly and elsewhere, has put his pen at the service of the Indies’ evolution, and certainly does not try to do that by bringing discord.3

Van Leeuwen pointed out, on, also Indonesian, (pre-)history:

Thanks to the occult data, which were given to us by the Leaders of the TS and by its workers, our historical knowledge is based on a very much greater body of facts and remains infinitely more extensive periods in time than those which official science has at its disposal ...

So, one should not be surprised that, if they are relict, also in our lesstude [Indonesia] some traces of these Lemurian races are left, who peopled our earth 10 or 11 million years ago ... Though not explained [by British theosophist author Scott Elliot], still one can gather that also in our Indies there are still such scattered Lemurian leftovers, and probably one can find these with the still so little developed tribes in Central Borneo, Celebes and on New Guinea. It is difficult to decide now if it is correct that such tribes still live also in the mountains of Java.4

This racial and social doctrine on Indonesia, while theosophists saw India as sacred Aryan land, may be one aspect of why the Dutch East Indies TS section was mainly European, contrary to the Indian one.

Yet, sometimes the section tried to influence peasants. By permission of the Dutch Resident of Rembang, in September 1915 Van Hinoopen Labberton, another prominent theosophist, Raden Djojosoediro, and two others, attempted to persuade the Samin Resident of Rembang, in September 1915 Van Hinloopen Labberton, another prominent European, contrary to the Indian one.

Yet, sometimes the section tried to influence peasants. By permission of the Dutch Resident of Rembang, in September 1915 Van Hinoopen Labberton, another prominent theosophist, Raden Djojosoediro, and two others, attempted to persuade the Samin movement.

About 1890, in northern Central Java, Soerontiko Samin, a peasant like most of his followers, had founded this non-violent anti-government movement. They spoke ngoko [Javanese as between equals] to priyayi, shocking them. They refused to pay taxes, or to work at unpaid labour like auxiliary police service. The local bupati imposed harsh penalties. This did not work, though. Worried officials thought one might try convincing as an alternative to force.

Saminism was definitely not Muslim in the orthodox sense. ‘Nor does it seem to have been Hindu-Buddhist in inspiration.’4 According to Dutch official A.J.N. Engelenberg, they were as opposed to theosophy as orthodox Islam was. The theosophical delegates thought that Samin’s movement had on the one hand ‘some undesirable aspects, which presumably aroused through stupidity; yet, really many good things too.’

When the sides met, ‘Mr van Hinloopen Labberton had tried to convince them [Saminists] of the fairness of the auxiliary police service which the authorities demanded. He wanted to try to undermine their doctrine, by making them a present of a different faith, as a substitute.’ They remained unconvinced.

An international attempt to instill the simplest of theosophical tenets into ‘simple’ people, the Karma and Reincarnation Legion, had an Indies branch for some time. ‘But there, it wilted away and petered out quietly through lack of effort and lack of interest from the class for whom it was intended.’ Later, in 1926, a re-founded Legion had 200 members; ‘Few’ of them were Indonesian.

Still, later, in Java and the islands immediately to the east, as the only instance in the worldwide TS, hundreds of peasants became involved. In 1932, the Indies executive wanted to have an auxiliary organization (Dutch: nevenorganisatie). First plans were to call it Kawan Theosofie, Friends of Theosophy. Eventually, Pemiritan Thalaha, the Association of the Light, was founded for ‘the workers and the peasants.’ I found no further mention of workers. The 1930’s were the years of mass membership drives, mainly among peasants, of Subjects’ Leagues of the Central Java principality. Their slogan was ‘The prince and people at one.’

1RICKLEFS(1993), 167; it still exists. KORVER, 132. ILETO, 225-6.
4A. van Leeuwen, ‘Het Parijsche Paasch-Congres’, TMN 1923, 350-1; L. Mangelaar Meertens, ‘Karma en Reïncarnatie legen’, TMN 1926, 419-20. ‘The Legion had various publications of its own; TILLETT (1982), 226. Reïncarnatie was its English language Reïncarnatie was its Dutch paper. TJNI 1932, 72.
5Pemiritan(1938), 307, on this ‘simple presentation of Theosophy among the illiterate’, misspells Pemiritan Thalaha; and ibid., 559; Pemiritan. TJNI 1932, 162; 1933, 174.
6DAJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 64. They all had tens of thousands of members. The biggest one, Pekompeloan Kawaero Ngajogjakarta, Yogjakarta Subjects’ League, had 225,000 at its maximum.
Pemitran Tjahja held its first meeting in Cikondo village near Leles in West Java. 300 were present; twelve joined. The entrance-fee was f. 0.25; the (monthly?) fee was f. 0.05. So members paid less than full-fledged FTS. They had also fewer rights; neither voting, nor electing officials. Clause 6 of Pemitran Tjahja’s rules said the main subject of meetings should be At the Feet of the Master; officially by Krishnamurti, some say by Leadbeater. ‘This booklet should be read out and explained slowly and word for word.’ In August 1933, branches existed in Ciamis, Banjar, and Delanggu.¹ The Pemitran had 14 branches in 1934. TS General Secretary Van Leeuwen wrote then 900 people in all went to its fortnightly meetings.

Once, we had a very obnoxious conflict with some orthodox and fanatical Muhammadans, who worked against our endeavours and tried to keep the people from going to the meetings. At the same time, whenever there was a theosophical meeting, they made lots of noise. After we had complained about this to the local authorities, and after one of the high Javanese officials had joined the TS as a Fellow, we overcame the problems, and our success increased.² These peasants probably were abangan. In 1935, Pemitran members from largely Hindu islands joined full TS members in best wishes for the Mother [T.] Society, which has become a torch on our way to the great Aim, to us, inhabitants of Bali and Lombok, who until recently have lived in ignorance’s darkness.³

Van Leeuwen claimed about 1000 Pemitran Tjahja members in 1935.⁴ Theosophie in Nederlandsch-Indië after that scarcely mentioned it ever again.

D OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES

Though ¹¹ wrote: ‘It may be that we are making the link in Java to propagate Theosophy in China’, the TS never won many adherents in China.⁵ Finally, in 1922, nine Chinese and three English people founded the Shanghai lodge. Its president, Wu Ting Fang, was three times Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, the last time in 1921, in the Canton military government. He died also in 1922 though.⁶

In 1920, the French Theosophical Society section founded a lodge in Vietnam. The king of Siam joined the Theosophical Society in 1880,² but no section was officially by Krishnamurti, some say by Leadbeater. ‘This booklet should be read out and explained slowly and word for word.’ In August 1933, branches existed in Ciamis, Banjar, and Delanggu.¹ The Pemitran had 14 branches in 1934. TS General Secretary Van Leeuwen wrote then 900 people in all went to its fortnightly meetings.

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Social background of theosophists

Hutin¹ ascribes to it important and direct influence, for instance on karma doctrine, upon the syncretist religious Vietnamese movement Cao Dai (‘Great House’). This movement would win millions of adherents, and considerably influence twentieth century Vietnamese politics, since its 1920’s start in the country’s southernmost area.

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In Ceylon, among the first to join were Buddhist priests.³ Many rich Sinhalese lay families also joined.⁴ Buultjens as one of few prominent FTS came from a Burgher (traditionally mainly Protestant) background.³ As for other groups, there were few contacts with Tamils and Muslims.⁴

Peter de Abrew, FTS, furnished the land for building the Musaeus school. He remained involved with it later. He was

a big capitalist; he gave money for building temples. He was a prominent member of the Ceylon National Congress; not of the Council though, he was not much interested in politics.² He was a long time broker for Volkart Bros., the Winterthur (Switzerland)-owned coconut coir firm whose all-important branches were in Ceylon, including Galle fort.

From Colombo, Albert Schwarz² managed Volkart Bros. In 1893, he heard Besant lecture in Colombo. In 1895, he was recruited to the TS by fellow German speaker Mrs Musaeus; and helped Annie Besant buy her Benares home. When Oicott came to Ceylon, he stayed in Schwarz’ bungalow. Schwarz was international TS treasurer from 1907 till his death in 1933, arriving in Adyar Feb. 1908, named vice president of the local Adyar lodge.⁹ In the Golden Book of the TS, his was one of the four photographs in the gallery.

¹HUTIN, 1377.


³MALALGODA.

⁴Theosophical authors were not always clear on the island’s social categories: Caroline Corner-Ohlinsus (⁷ Estonian, XXIX, 1901-1902, 260), writing about a Sinhalese environment, speaks of ‘the Vettubaj caste’; a Tamil term. Oicott, ODL, II, 320, also wrote of Sinhalese ‘Willallas’; and ‘Vellallas’ in 77, April 1890, 352.

⁵Van DEDEM, 103, spelling Buultjens, spoke to him while visiting a Buddhist school in Colombo.

⁶The Muhammadan fire bath’, 77 July 1906, 742ff, on Ceylon. Written by F. Peters, clearly not over-familiar with Islam.

⁷Interview by the author with Dr. Harichandra Kaviratna.

⁸AdB, March 1908, 95f. DE ABREW(1933). ‘Star name’ (name valid for more than one incarnation), in Leadbeater’s occult prehistorical research: Sappho; BROOKS(1914A), xv; misspelt Schwarz.

⁹AdB Oct. 1908, 292.

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of honour.¹

E. OCEANIA AND CONCLUSIONS

Theosophist A.F. Knudsen was the manager of his family’s big cattle ranching and rice growing estate on Hawaii.²

In Australia arose one of the most numerous TS sections, with political connections. One of the first members in the 1880’s, Professor John Smith, sat in the New South Wales Legislative Council.³ At the first meeting that Olcott spoke at in the continent in 1891, an MP presided.⁴

Colonel Olcott was invited to lecture in the capitals of Australia, where he founded Branches, the membership of which were the best, both as to social position, influence and education.⁵

A. Deakin was president of the Victoria Association of Spiritualists in 1877. Later, he was a TS official.⁶ When Olcott visited Australia in 1897, he had lunch at the house of this best known of Australia’s Fellows.⁷ Deakin kept up a lifelong interest in, and sometimes membership of, the Theosophical Society. He visited, and wrote on Ceylon, and on India, The temple and the tomb. In the 1900’s he was three times prime minister, and came to an Annie Besant lecture.⁸ At first, he was a Liberal, later he contributed to union between liberal and conservative parties.

T.H. Martyn (Australia’s ES and OSE leader and General Secretary 1917-1921) was one of the richest Australians.⁹ Leading businessman Martyn, after contributing his ideas to his party, formed his own Theosophical Society, which

Alice Leighton Cleather joined. When in 1938 power in the Hobart (Tasmania) lodge changed hands from Martyn followers to Anundale followers, the new executive burned lodge library books by Mrs Cleather.¹⁰

The 1933 Australia census found as % of breadwinners in the top income bracket with theosophists 20, vs. 11 for Anglicans, and 8 for Roman Catholics.¹¹

New Zealand had a relatively numerous TS section. Among them were Lilian Edger, one of New Zealand’s first woman university graduates; and leading politicians. Conservative Premier Sir Harry Atkinson joined the first TS lodge in Wellington in 1888.¹² Olcott mentioned the Hon. William McCullough, FTS, a Member of the Legislative Council in 1893.¹³

We may conclude from this chapter that on all continents, groups above the average level in wealth and in social prestige were represented more among Theosophical Society members than among the general population.¹⁴ An individual from these groups may be politically indifferent; or leftist. So may, already more unlikely, small organizations consisting of such individuals. With thousands of such people, one has a potential for controversies with labour movements; and with national and women’s movements, if these have a radical, mass character.

In Indonesia, a Javanese Raden Mas certainly differed from a captain of Chinese; or from a Dutch plantation owner. A Brahman in India was different again; as was a US businessman. All had individual reasons for joining the TS. But rising mass movements threatened the various privileges of all. One might expect a philosophy both going along with the tide of emancipation by its tenet of Brotherhood, and rendering it harmless by the ‘older and younger brothers’ doctrine, to have some success among groups like these.

2. THEOSOPHY FOR WHOM?

From the 1875 beginning,¹⁵ there had been a dilemma for the Theosophical Society: how to expand?

A. It appealed, and wanted to appeal, to people from real, or would-be, elites in

¹JINARAJADASA(1925), 218.
²EMI, 1921, 445-6.
⁴MURPHET, 246.
⁵Lect., March-August 1891, 436.
⁶Secretary of the Isis branch. ROE, 94.
⁷TT, ODL, Jan. 1906, 243
⁸AdB, Aug. 1908, 227. ROE, 68: E. Barton, first prime minister of Australia, Deakin’s immediate predecessor, also went to hear her.
⁹ROE, 185.
¹⁰MARTYN(1919). On him, see ROE, TILLETT(1952), M. LUTYENS, CLEATHER(1922A).
B. Like most organizations, it wanted to become big. That might conflict with A, as philosopher Bolland remarked.

In the Dutch East Indies TS monthly, Humphry Hillary voiced the dilemma:

- Here, the (theosophical) society seems to be at the parting of the ways. It seems to have this in common with hundreds of other organizations, from empires down to the most negligible little groups. Should it remain an elite body of those who prepare to go forward on the hard and dangerous path, or should it become a powerful worldly organization with hundreds of thousands of supporters who hardly know what mysticism means. We shall see what the consequences of that approach are.

Hillary was apprehensive about a possible influx of intermediate social categories. In The Netherlands ("all that I tell here is no fantasy"), he had been at a theosophical public meeting in a big hall. There, he found many male office employees who happened to have read the announcement of the lecture and were at a loss about how to waste their time, and giggling girls. At another meeting, Hillary met a shop employer, a theosophist in his spare time. "And he talks about his shop business, his body bent, gesticulating with his arms. And it never stops. Not all of the night! Trouble with theosophists.

The lower classes do not have the philosophic religion of the higher classes, but worship God under the name of "Rama." The Hindu religion provides, as St. Paul expressed it, "the meat for strong men and the milk for babes." Therefore the more ignorant (younger souls) among them are not burdened with all sorts of questions which would disturb their minds. They look upon Him very much as the early Jews looked upon Jehovah.

Even the Syrian Sage, Jesus the Avatar... is said to have taught certain things to his disciples in private, whereas to the multitude the same truths, or at least parts of them, as the case may have been, were taught not openly.

Point A fitted in with theosophic views on history: which saw Initiates of secret Brotherhoods, as largely guiding it from behind the scenes. A much earlier example of a hard-to-join organization - if it existed at all as more than a hoax - had been the Rosicrucians. Such an approach is well known (1) from (semi-) secret societies, like

"Theosophy for whom?" 129

joined the TS as a thirteen year old, later looked back:

"I was smug, with a feeling of being one-of-the-elect, and altogether I must have been a thoroughly undesirable and unpleasant companion for any boy or girl of my age."

The histories of Hinduism and Christianity might seem to support approach A to theosophists.

For in Hindusthan, all religious and philosophical teaching from time immemorial has been divided into two parts: that for the multitude and that for the Dwija's, i.e., the "twice-born." The inner, secret, sacred, holy teaching, properly withheld from the thoughtless multitude, given only to worthy depositaries.

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sounded very mysterious and fascinating and I felt that here was the key to the secrets of the universe."

1. "Anarchist RABÉE(1896A) saw theTS' Universal Brotherhood object as the wish to 'control the whole lot'; like Roman Catholic or other churches.

2. BOLLAND(1910J), 145, quoted Mrs Besant: 'Theosophy is not only for the learned: it is for all' - To elicit Bolland, from a non-elite family background, the TS was not esoteric enough: 'That is not mysterious enough: That means the secret Doctrine is an open Doctrine.' He also quoted (misunderstood?): 'The doctrine of the eye (merely esoteric doctrine) is for the multitude.'

3. TILLET(1982), 29f.: on Leadbeater's 1883-1884 joining. See also BESANT(1907B), 65f.

4. Lady Caithness in France was very exclusive; GUÉNON(1921), 185.

5. J. NEHRU(1958), 16.

6. Interpreted here as Brahmans; but others (LIDDLE and JOSHI, 58): the three highest castes, also shíthraiya and vasyás.

7. DE PURUCKER(1940), 38f.


9. DE PURUCKER(1940), 54f.

10. In 1623 in Paris [VAN BOSBEKE, 17. LIGOU, 104]: in 1622 they put up wall-posters saying: 'If someone wants to see us just out of curiosity he shall never meet us; but if he really wants to inscribe himself on the lists of our brotherhood, then we, who judge the thinking, shall show them the veracity of our promises; so we do not give our address in this city. It would have been dangerous in Catholic France, for an organization founded by Lutherans, considering the pope 'an imposter, a viper and Anti-christ'. VAN BOSBEKE, 17], because the thoughts, joined to the real desire, will suffice to make us recognizable to him, and him to us.' Don't call us; we'll call you, by telepathic telephone. It obviously limits membership growth. German nobleman
Lucifer wrote that 'for the multitude ... Theosophy could not supply the place of a religion'.\(^2\) This suggested point A for recruitment. The TS, though, mostly did not base itself consistently on the exclusivity of point A. That would mean that Madame Blavatsky would have spoken on the Secret Doctrine only to small audiences, instead of, as she did, writing a publicly available book of that title.\(^4\)

Point B suggested a 'theosophy for the masses'.\(^5\) The Key to Theosophy chapter of that name\(^6\) says, in catechism-like form:

\[\text{ENQ. How? Do you expect that your doctrines could ever take hold of the uneducated masses, when they are so absurd and difficult that well-educated people can hardly understand them?} \]

\[\text{THEO. ... It does not require metaphysics or education to make a man understand the broad truths of Karma and Re-incarnation. Look at the millions of poor and uneducated Buddhists and Hindus, in whom Karma and Re-incarnation are solid realities, simply because their minds have never been cramped and distorted by being forced into an unnatural groove ... And the Buddhists, note well, live up to their beliefs without a murmur against Karma, or what they regard as a just punishment; whereas the Christian populace, \(\ldots\) accepts its lot contentedly. Hence Margaret and dissatisfaction, and the intensity of the struggle for existence in Western lands.} \]

\[\text{ENQ. But this cometh indeed, which you praise so much, would do away with all motive for exertion and bring progress to a standstill.} \]

\[\text{THEO. And we, Theosophists, say that your vaunted progress and civilization are no better than a host of wild ostriches, flickering over a marsh which exudes a poisonous and deadly miasma. This because we see selfishness, crime, immorality, and all the evils imaginable, pouncing upon unfortunate mankind from this Pandora's box which you call an age of progress ... As such a price, better the inertia and inscrutability of Buddhist countries ...} \]

\[\text{ENQ. Then is there the metaphysics and mysticism with which you occupy yourself so much, of no importance?} \]

\[\text{THEO. To the masses, who need only practical guidance and support, they are not of much consequence; but for the educated, the natural leaders of the masses, those whose modes of thought and action will sooner or later be adopted by those masses, they are of the greatest importance.} \]

\[\text{ENQ. Do you hope to impart this enthusiasm, one day, to the masses?} \]

\[\text{THEO. Why not? For history tells us that the masses adopted Buddhism with enthusiasm ... The chief point is, to uphold that most fertile source of all crime and immorality-the belief that it is possible for them to escape the consequences of their own actions. Once teach them the greatest of all laws, Karma and Re-incarnation, and besides feeling in themselves the true dignity of human nature, they will turn from evil and eschew it as they would a physical danger.} \]

\[\text{According to The Theosophist in 1898.} \]

\[\text{The Editor of The Buddhist [Ceylon Buddhist theosophical English language paper], at the close of a good editorial on 'Anarchism in Europe' says '... if they are taught to look upon their present condition, not as the result of an arbitrary divine interference, but as, to a very great extent, of their own making, being mainly due to their actions in the past; ... then indeed, it may be hoped that they will show more contentment in their lot in life, greater patience in misfortune, more forbearance towards others, and stronger efforts to restrain their passions'.}\]
So, one theosophist objection to Christianity was that it lacked effectiveness in stopping 'murmuring' among the workers of 'its' countries. Leadbeater saw the problem with Christianity as that the poor had corrupted Jesus' original esoteric views to fit their own materialist ends; and that they still had too much influence on it.

To a United States audience, Leadbeater said:

You have in the immediate future the possibility of serious struggle; you have all the elements of a possible social upheaval, and you have no religion with sufficient hold upon the people to check what may develop into a wild and dangerous movement.

Might theosophy do better than Christianity? Then, how about theosophic influence on the poor? How to do better than Christians like the Salvation Army, just beginning then, in this? How to set up Theosophy for the masses which point B, and HPB, suggested? Printing publicly available magazines, starting libraries, 'Harbour Missions', propaganda among workers, using radio after its invention.

Elites, in the long run, can only stay on as elites, if the multitude, the non-elite accepts their 'superiority', actively or passively. That is, if non-elites accept at least large parts of the same ideology, though not in the same way, as the elite.

Theosophists often labelled the masses as ignorant.7 (Anarchist Constantse, though, wrote of the TS: 'the stupidity of the 'better classes' has found its idol'.) This would not do for winning them over. For that, you must have at least something to offer them.

From 1894 on, Olcott helped found the Olcott Parish or Panchama Schools, for casteless children, financed by (mostly) theosophists. To Olcott's disappointment, Indian Fellows of the TS contributed but little financially (an exception was Allahabad teenager Jawaharlal Nehru). After 1933, only one school, then mostly for children of the lower-casteless children, financed by (mostly) theosophists. To Olcott's disappointment, Indian Fellows of the TS contributed but little financially (an exception was Allahabad teenager Jawaharlal Nehru). After 1933, only one school, then mostly for children of the lower-paid Adyar estate employees; was left of an aim of five of 'five'. Compared to past, while older and self-respect will take the place of scurrility and distrust.

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Theosophy for whom?

Ceylon, numerical success was low. That may have had something to do with their Buddhist character, which was emphasized early on, during Olcott's presidency; in Tamil Nadu, which by then had been mostly Hindu for centuries; or with the parents' poverty, or with easier communication for theosophists with 'respectable' parents, like Sinhalese planters; than with Panchamas (or harijans, as the TS, after Gandhi, came to call them later, in the 1930's). In spite of paternalistic ideas, of Annie Besant's objections to untouchable children going to touchable schools, in practice the Panchama schools also criticized the status quo.

Criticalisms of some obvious consequences of conservatism did appear in The Theosophist. It claimed in 1903 some categories of sudras should have more rights. Annie Besant gradually after 1904 began to criticize more aspects of caste as it worked in practice. However, Indian social reformers still attacked the TS in 1910, and in 1914. Brooks named 'Failure to tackle the Caste Evil in right earnest' as one cause for his resignation as FTS. In 1917, one of Besant's more leftist phases, TT wrote:

TT, June 1906, 692f. The fifth school was in the village of Krishnampet, part of Madras municipality. Earlier on in Krishnampet, there had been a missionary school, which had closed as the children did not go to school, but none of them had converted to Christianity, ibid., 692. Ibid., 693; contrary to the four other schools, not only Tamil, but also Telugu was the language of that school 'TS Annual Report 1903, 41, Courtright: the bulk of pupils of HPB Panchama School are children of 'coffees' of a large tannery and several brickyards, that is, from a clearly urban-industrial background. From the 1890's on, the Arya Samaj and other reformers from a Hindu background, had also founded schools for casteless; MAJUMDAR (1969), 1930)

Another superintendent of the Olcott Panchama Free Schools wrote in the Madras Mail, as quoted TT, Mar. 1905, 383-4: 'Mrs. Courtright begins by adopting the biological standpoint that the imitations and possibilities for mental training of the child are almost entirely a matter of the child's ancestry.' In accordance with this principle the schools do not aim at too high a mark of culture. The children are mostly destined to be servants and are therefore taught just as much as will qualify them for their lot of servitude under modern conditions. Contrary to this 'biological' standpoint, and though the children were sometimes very hungry, examination results were 20% better for the casteless children than for the average for caste children in Madras presidency. TS General Report on 1903, 67.

PANKHURST (1926), 152-3 quoted Annie Besant: 'It will need generations of purer food and living to make their [untouchables'] bodies fit to sit in the close neighborhood of a schoolroom with children who have received bodies from an ancestry trained in the habits of an exquisite personal cleanliness and fed upon poor foodstuffs.'

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Sris Chandra Bose 'Patanjali on Sudras', TT Dec. 1903, 160f.

'TT Dec. 1910, 458. On the other hand, breakdown ex-FTS and political right-winger GUÉNON (1921), 289 thought her too anti-caste.

'Brooks (1914), 26: '... nay, rank descention of the few public-spirited Indians who did so.' He then denied his TS opponents' charges that he had joined the Arya Samaj, which was more critical on caste, but TAYLOR, 362: 'He became a member of the Arya Samaj [sic]."
But at Adyar, we are trusted by the poor and the needy.¹

That year, the Theosophical Publishing House also published Annie’s presidential speech of the end of 1916 Lucknow TS convention. She urged her audience, if a casteless person saluted them on a street, to return the salute.²

In 1920, Bhagavan Das introduced a bill to validate inter-caste marriages in the Delhi Legislative Assembly; while still defending caste as he saw it had been originally, based on science of social organization.³

Theosophist propaganda among the ‘lower’ classes never was very successful anywhere. In this, it might just be an example of much religion. At least for the post 1940 USA and Britain. R. Stark argued:

Surveys ... have invariably found that contrary to the expectations of traditional social theory, the lower classes are less, rather than most, likely to be involved in religion. The proposed explanation of these findings is that the lower classes find radical politics a more attractive outlet than religion for their status dissatisfaction.⁴

It would be interesting to compare Stark’s findings to earlier times and other countries. Others found similar data.⁵ R. Stark himself states that since eighteenth century Wesleyan Methodism there have been no more big Western working class

¹WT, 7 Oct. 1917, 8.
²BESANT(1917A), 36.
³WT Nov. 1930, 132; DAS(1930); ii saw the values as an universal, not just Indian, law of social nature: ‘even in go-ahead U.S. America, a very large majority of the school-going children are congenially united, by the low quality of their intelligence to usefully produce students beyond the lower grades or classes in the schools’, so, ‘to get any higher than the middle level DAS(1947), 462. The very sound scientific reason for avoidance of indiscriminate intermarriage is, of course, obvious. If we are to preserve and promote individual and racial health, we must eat pure food, drink pure water, breathe pure air, in company with thinking sympathetic people of similar habits, and marry with persons of parity of temperament and compatibility of tastes, interests, likes and dislikes.
⁴STARK, 698. Ibid., 703: one of the surveys he named, in 1937 in Britain, found of self-styled upper class people 73% went to church at least occasionally; of the self-styled working class 39%. Ibid., 704: of Conservative Party voters, 63% were church-goers; for Labour, 36%. Of the upper class, 85% believed in life after death, of the working class 49%. 88% of the upper class, 70% of the working class, believed in Christ’s divinity. In influential theories, like A. van Leeuwen¹¹, 102. The TS tried to resolve it by having a Society within a society. Within the TS, the Esoteric Society, further subdivided into different hierarchical levels, was for the real elite. For joining the ES, 39% believed in life after death, of the working class 49% 88% of the upper class, vs. 70% of the working class, believed in Christ’s divinity. In influential theories, like A. van Leeuwen’s ‘A Study of History, and Ernst Troeltsch’, one finds the idea that ‘sects recruited from the lower class’, WILSON(1970), 25 rejected this form of the idea of a positive link between lower income groups and religion for industrial societies.
⁵SSTARK, 698. [Note: in a letter to Olcott, Judge proposed having a separate lodge ‘of mere common men of the lower orders’]. STARK, 702.

Stark’s findings are mainly on Christian kinds of belief and practice. Closer to the TS is belief in astrology, on which we have figures from 1963 France; quoted FISCHLER, 288. "Through differing in country, time and type of belief from Stark’s, the figures are remarkably similar in finding a relatively high rate of belief in astrology in ‘higher’, and a relatively high rate of unbelief in ‘lower’ socio-economic strata, FISCHLER, 288. Of the French as a whole, 30% believed in astrology. For ‘Professionals, managers, executives’ it was 44%; for small business owners 36%; for industrial workers, ‘ouvriers’, it was 29%; for farmers plus farm workers, it was 15%.

Although Stark’s findings are also true for 1875-1940, and for countries other than France, Britain, or the US; theosophic working class support was low if compared to support for some other ideologues, both religious and non-religious, of non-working class origin, among workers. Look for instance at the hundreds of thousands of Dutch workers who joined Protestant or Catholic organizations. Or to British (or even to Dutch) 19th century political liberalism and the links to trade unions which it had then.

‘Hewers of wood and drawers of water’, to use Christian terminology, were not very fast in taking their places on the TS spiritual ladder as sadras or untouchables, as younger brothers. The Theosophical Society had too many would-be generals and colonels, too few foot soldiers.⁶ The theosophical pyramid under construction turned out to be more top-heavy than Madame Blavatsky, or Annie Besant, envisaged.

Still, some miners there were FTs, an engineer from Kiruna had recruited them.

The Dutch Indies TS did not sound like it wanted to attract workers:

The religious movements, and that politics have replaced them.

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Exceptions to the rule surprised Olcott. He reported on a visit to:

... Northern Sweden, and within the Arctic Circle. Besides the native Esquimaux there were very few inhabitants save those working in the mines, and one would hardly expect that our Ancient Wisdom would appeal very strongly to the hearts and minds of a class so completely occupied in severe manual labour.⁷

Still, some miners there were FTs, an engineer from Kiruna had recruited them.

The Dutch Indies TS did not sound like it wanted to attract workers:

The religious movements, and that politics have replaced them.

Yet, even if Stark’s findings are also true for 1875-1940, and for countries other than France, Britain, or the US; theosophic working class support was low if compared to support for some other ideologues, both religious and non-religious, of non-working class origin, among workers. Look for instance at the hundreds of thousands of Dutch workers who joined Protestant or Catholic organizations. Or to British (or even to Dutch) 19th century political liberalism and the links to trade unions which it had then.

‘Hewers of wood and drawers of water’, to use Christian terminology, were not very fast in taking their places on the TS spiritual ladder as sadras or untouchables, as younger brothers. The Theosophical Society had too many would-be generals and colonels, too few foot soldiers.⁶ The theosophical pyramid under construction turned out to be more top-heavy than Madame Blavatsky, or Annie Besant, envisaged.

Exceptions to the rule surprised Olcott. He reported on a visit to:

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one should have been a member of the ordinary TS for at least three years (this did not apply to Annie Besant; or to Krishnamurti later). Around it was the esoteric Society, which also attracted somewhat less august (though rarely truly 'proletarian') people. To become an ordinary member of the outer TS, contrary to the inner ES, one was not required to hold beliefs, apart from supporting the idea of Brotherhood. Annie Besant said on this point in her acceptance speech as president in 1907:

It [the TS] admits into its ranks men and women from any religion, from any conviction, and, if only they recognize the Brotherhood as a general principle, it does not require of them a belief in any fact, however certain it is, in any teaching, however important it is. With a splendid faith in the victorious power of truth, it disregards all the divisions, which superficially divide Mankind ... and welcomes even those as Brothers, who deny those very truths upon which the Brotherhood is based, and who even reject the Revealers [the Masters], who make possible its realization to Mankind. Its field of work is as vast as thought is, as omnipresent love is like the sun, who gives warmth and light to all, even to those who are blind to its light.

Just after he broke with the TS, in 1930, Krishnamurti said in a speech against elitism: 'Are you the specially chosen few? Then I am sorry, for I will not speak to the chosen people ... What I am saying is for everyone, including the unfortunate Theosophists.'

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1Quoted TMNI, 1918, 288. According to J. Giles, 'Mixed musings on Theosophy'. TT, May 1917, 177, 'no sensible person would be attracted to a Society by the bare proclamation that it stood for the "Brotherhood of Man".'

2M. LUTYENS (1975), 279.
PART IV. THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The Theosophical Society was born at the time of the rise of the labour movement. We will look at how the TS related to it. Especially to its political components social democracy, communism, and anarchism. We should note, though, that actions for certain reforms, unionization, strikes, and revolutions, may be, but are not necessarily, linked to one or more of those three political currents. We focus on Indonesia in the 1915-1918 period. Then, and there, war was the main issue between the TS and labour. Earlier and later, and in India, economic labour disputes were more in the foreground.

1 SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND COMMUNISM

Some 35 years before the Theosophical Society included Universal Brotherhood in its Objects, in the 1840’s the Communist League had as its motto ‘All people are brothers.’ This soon changed to the better known ‘Workers of all countries, unite’. The Communist League was an international organization, in which migrant German workers in England were heavily represented. Its best known members were Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895).

When one may call the first transcontinental, though still mainly West European, organization based on workers’ militancy, the International Workingmen’s Association (First International), arose in the 1860’s, they had a sympathizing weekly, Sambalalash, in Bengal, and a small section in the U.S.

A. MARX AND ENGELS ON SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY

First, we will look at Marx’ and Engels’ ideas about spiritualism and theosophy. They wrote more on the former than on the latter. For only since the 1880’s, the decade when Marx died and Engels was in his sixties, the Theosophical Society became sizable, first in South Asia, later in the U.S. and Europe. Its predecessor, spiritualism, then had been going for decades.

1The pre-1918 labour movement did not differentiate between ‘social democrat’ and ‘communist’ as later. ‘Communist’ was more used earlier, ‘social democrat’ later in the nineteenth century. ‘Communist’ was sometimes a name for a current within anarchism. Supporters of anarchism Bakunin, when they were in the First International, also called themselves ‘social democrats’. Only after the militant current of the Russian Social Democrats changed its name to Communist Party in 1918, and militants in other countries followed suit, a distinct communist identity arose.

2This chapter is re-written from DE TOLLENAERE (1992). CAMPBELL, 13 observed: ‘Esoteric and mystical sources have been identified as part of the intellectual background for Hegelian and Marxist thought.’ He did not elaborate on this observation, however, and neither will we. The statement relates to indirect influence of pre-1800 ideas via Hegel. This concerns, however, an earlier age than our subject.

1. Spiritualism

Marx and Engels, in their voluminous works, often referred to Spiritualism. On examination, all these references are brief to very brief. Some of them do not mention Spiritualism by name, but are jokes (for instance, by Marx in Das Kapital; see p. 45) about dancing tables, ‘ghost-rappers, ghost-rapping shakers’.

Engels in a letter briefly put this movement into the perspective of U.S. society:

‘though the Americans ... have not copied medieval institutions from Europe, they did copy lots of medieval tradition, religion, English common (feudal) law, superstition, spiritualism. In short, all nonsense that was not directly harmful to business, and now is very useful to dull the masses.’

So he thought modern spiritualism was unmodern. He tried to explain its recent rise only when using the word ‘now’, as he wrote about usefulness to the rich in their battle against the poor.

Longest was a ten-page article by Engels, called Die Naturforschung in der Geisterwelt, ‘Natural Science in the World of Ghosts’. Probably written in 1878, it was not printed during his lifetime. It first came out in an 1898 Hamburg social democratic calendar. It resembled T. Huxley’s better known observations on credibility, or lack of it, of spiritualist mediums. The article ended with a Huxley quote. English zoologists from the sphere of Darwin and Huxley were prominent among the adversaries of spiritualism.

One of them, Ray Lankester (1847-1929), had American medium Slade, whom Olcott and Blavatsky had sent to Europe in 1876, sued in court for fraud. Later, Lankester was one of the speakers at Marx’ burial.

Engels thought that ‘modern spiritualism was the emptiest of all superstitions.’ As an example of fraud, he cited the Holmeses of Philadelphia. They had evoked the spirit of ‘Katey King’, an action that H.P. Blavatsky defended in the U.S. press.

Engels’ article aimed at a sociological explanation only in that he asked what kind of scientist spiritualism was most likely to attract. Paradoxically, it concluded that the


empiricist kind was more likely to than a priori theorists like German nature philosophers. Engels cited Alfred Wallace and Sir William Crookes\(^1\) as examples of the former.

2. Annie Besant before theosophy

For four years prior to her joining the Theosophical Society in 1889, Annie Besant was, like Engels, active in the English socialist labour movement. She had evolved from a radical liberal to a Social Democrat. She joined the Fabian Society, and later the Social Democratic Federation besides. The Fabian Society was too moderate for Engels; Hyndman's S.D.F. was officially Marxist,\(^2\) but was under fire for sectishness.

Although Annie Besant's biographer Nethercot did not quote from Engels' works, he did mention him several times. He wrote:

Certainly Mrs. Besant never darkened the doors of Engels' home, though she was the Fabian for whom he had the greatest respect, because of her influential pamphlets.\(^3\)

Engels did not forgive her her earlier anti-socialism.\(^4\) He saw her as one of 'all those 'dummy men and women'',\(^5\) who played a part only while British workers were not confident enough for leadership from their own midst yet.

Engels complained that Besant's Our Corner magazine, to which he sent a review copy of the new English translation of his The condition of the Working-class in England in 1844, ignored it.\(^6\) Like Annie's supporters later, when she played a major part in India, Engels spoke of 'Mother' Besant; but not in their complimentary sense.

3. Theosophy

The only time Engels mentioned H.P. Blavatsky was in an 1891 letter. From London, he wrote to Kaupsky:

Do you know Mother Besant has joined the theosophists of Grandmother Blavatsky (Blavatsky)? On her garden gate, 19, Avenue Road, now it in big gold letters: Theosophical

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\(^1\)Both would briefly become members of the Theosophical Society; RANSOM (1938), 19.

\(^2\)Sheila Rowbotham, Hidden from History: Rediscovering Women in History, N.Y.: Pantheon, 1974, 95: the 'so-called 'marxist'' SDF leaders. The Grote Nederlandse Larousse Encyclopedie, Scheidens & Gilty, 's-Gravenhage, s.d., vol. IV, 554, claimed Besant was the first woman to propagate 'utopian Marxism'. But for instance Marx' daughters had preceded her in this.

\(^3\)NETHERCOT(1960), 235.


\(^5\)Ibid., 710. Letter to Laura Lafargue (Paris), London, 11 October 1887; 708-710.


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These few lines in a private letter are all Engels (or Marx) ever wrote on the Theosophical Society. If he had thought it important, then he would have written more. Engels never wrote explicitly on the relationship of theosophists to politics. From what he wrote on religion in general, one may suppose it would not have been positive.\(^7\) One may conclude Marx and Engels rejected spiritualism and theosophy. This rejection, though, they did not think of as important enough to waste much ammunition, in the form of writing-ink, on.

B. THEOSOPHY ON CLASSLESS OR HIERARCHICAL SOCIALISM, 1875-1918

1. 1875-1905

In 1875, four years after the Paris Commune, in New York the just founded Theosophical Society faced the question of compatibility with socialism. C. Sootheran, the first TS librarian

made some inflammatory speeches at a political street meeting [of strikers], to which H.P.B. strongly objected: ... 'A Theosophist becoming a rioter, encouraging revolution and MURDER, a friend of Communism is no fit member of our Society. HE HAST TO GO.'\(^8\)

He went. H.P. Blavatsky in 1878 sent a letter to the Italian newspaper Fanfula, attacking 'Communism'.\(^9\) One year later, Madame Blavatsky wrote in the first issue of Theosophy: on her Society:

Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which in authors as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour ....

The first three words of the above quotation seem to bear out widespread ideas that theosophy and other 'Other World' movements are apolitical. Does not the rest, though, explicitly naming some political ideas, implicitly favour other political ideas?

In 1888 in Lucifer, the opponent of socialism T.B. Harbottle saw it as interference with Karma, as materialism, opposition to spiritual Hierarchy and 'an innate hatred of domination.' The 'socialist student of theosophy', who feared that he was 'still far from

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\(^7\)Ibid., 38, 88. Letter to Karl Kautsky (Stuttgart), 30 April 1891 (66-68). The last sentence paraphrases Heinrich Heine's poem Die Lorelei. H. Burrows was a SDF member as was Mrs Besant; he joined the TS shortly before her. He left after the 1907 controversy on Leadbeater Compare Engels' view to that of Sylvia Pankhurst, see p. 373. Pankhurst's father's views, like Besant's, had gone from liberal to socialist; unlike Engels, he had worked closely with Besant's labour free speech Law and Liberty League.

\(^8\)The essence of the state, as of religion, is humanity's fear of itself.' Engels, quoted BLOCH, 162.

\(^9\)P. JOHNSON(1990), 46. Sootheran then was in the N.Y. Liberal Club; later he was in the Knights of Labor and Socialist Labor Party; in 1896, a Democrat convention delegate.

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being a perfect Theosophist*. J. Brailsford Bright defended socialism against Harbottle's charges.1

Undeterred by her former associate G.W. Foote's remark, 'that the socialist, and every social reformer, is fighting against Karma [doctrine].2 Annie Besant joined the TS. Just afterwards in 1889, she still was a delegate from the Fédération Radicale de la mètre de Londres and of the match-workers to a Paris socialist congress. There were two rival socialist congresses in Paris then. Their participants; the moderates, called in French Possibilitistes; and the revolutionaries, would join forces in the Second International only later. Annie Besant joined, and defended, the Possibilités.3

She had also gone to France to meet H.P. Blavatsky. Her new contacts with HPB and W.T. Stead, who were both seen as close to the czar's government, aroused suspicion in British socialist paper the Labour Elector.4 Mrs Besant before becoming a theosophist had supported the illegal democratic opposition to czarism, known as Nihilism. H.P. Blavatsky had attacked it. In the Pioneer, she called it a black fungus ... Trade unions, infected with the notions of the International, sprang up like mushrooms, and demagogues ranted to social clubs upon the conflict between labour and capital ... the ranting spectre of the Nihilist delirium, the red-handed socialist.5

Madame Blavatsky was not only sceptical on socialism, as were other theosophists influencing Annie Besant's new surroundings, but also on smaller reforms like social

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1Lect, 11, 232.
2Quoted BESANT(1899), 24.
3Le congrès possiblest de 1889.Le congrès possiblest de 1889. Geneve, Moutot, 1876.
4MEADE, 432. NETHERCOT(1960), 280. Louis Dramard, co-writer with Benoit Malon in the possibilistes Revue Sociale, was FTS. GUÉNON(1921), 75. Dramard, born in 1848, lived in Algeria for some time. His writings on it were unsympathetic to French colonists and Jews, and sympathetic to Muslims. Dictionnaire de Biographie Francaise, vol. VI, Paris, Louvency et Anc., 1967, 730. RANSOM(1938), 245: in his TS lodge, entrance fees were low. 'In order to spread the truths of Theosophy among all classes' He died in March 1888; ibid., 249.
5TAYLOR(1993), 250.
6BCW, 1, 359: 'The history of a book'. See also ibid., 264. Ibid., III, 199: 'Armies of Socialists and red-handed Nihilists obscure the sun of the political horizon in Europe.' Ibid., III, 207: 'the savage production of this, our most savage and cruel century-the Nihilist-Socialists.' When the underground opposition killed Czar Alexander II in 1881, HPB was deeply shocked and became ill. BCW, vol. III, XXIV; ibid., 121ff; ibid., III, 153ff. In 'The State of Russia': she described those involved with the successful attempt on Alexander II's life as 'four men, from the scum of Russian society, and one woman belonging to the nobility'; and in quotes to corroborate her view: 'the most dishonourable set of ruffians that ever trod the earth': 'venomous reptiles'. The 'one woman', Sophia Perovskaja (Perovskaya), was executed. When later that year a US clairvoyante, Mrs Cornelia Gardner, claimed she had seen Perovskaja's spirit, HPB denied the vision was really one of 'that wretched, heartless creature': or of that of another Nihilist: 'the Jewess, Jessie Gehman, who had just been pardoned by the Emperor. (Alexander III, for pregnancy) and her death sentence commuted into deportation for life ... her worthless life was spared.' TP, BCW, III, 359ff.

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Social democracy and communism

insurance. She preferred private alms. In The Key to Theosophy, the chapter On Charity, she wrote about giving money to poor people:

Act individually and not collectively ... As done now a good portion ... gets into the hands of professional beggars, who are too lazy to work.1

A gentleman had given Blavatsky £1000 to spend for the benefit of poor women. Annie Besant wanted to spend it on a club for the London match girls she knew from their strike. Then, HPB wrote to Annie, warning her against a trade union link for this club. That would bring the TS into conflict with 'police and the whole of the conservative party'.2

Col. Olcott wrote on the 1894 end to her contacts with the match workers:

One of the girls was arrested. On the previous evening I went with Mrs. Besant to Bow St. to officially close the Women's Club. The experiment had proved a failure, probably because its moral tone was too high and there were no male fellows, potential lovers, to fill the time with courtship and kisses. We had a very pleasant evening, however, and the girls were amusingly enthusiastic over my singing of some Irish songs3 things they could easily understand, being on their own intellectual level.4

H.P. Blavatsky's last 1891 telegram before she died to Annie Besant ran: 'Their [Masters'] blessing, my love. Beware socialism.'5 Soon afterwards, Annie Besant cut all remaining ties with the SDF, which already had become less since 1889.

Later, she still had occasional contacts with the Fabian Society as a guest speaker. Her views now were:

Socialism Movement ... is making a tremendous blunder ... I shall dwell on it tomorrow night in addressing a Socialist Society. They are forgetting the very root of progress ... They think the future depends on economic conditions ... For society grows out of men, and not men out of society.6

In her later years, she became sceptical on the type of reforms she had fought for during the 1880's in the Fabians:

not in this way by small reforms wrung out by the exigencies of party strife ... a mere attack on privilege, by a tax here and a tax there ... that was not voluntary on the side of the privileged.

By the self-sacrifice of those who love, and not by the revolution and the uprising of those who have not. Revolution can destroy; it cannot build. The ignorant can rise up; they cannot

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1BLAVATSKY(1967), 244. HPB did not like beggars much: BCW, III, 234-3. 'Indiscriminate charity', said Sir William. Harcourt [British Home Secretary in the 1880's], benefits only the sturdy beggars and becomes a great evil.' A.S.1. [= A. Subramaniya Iyer?], 657.
2Letters published 77 Feb. 1932, 512.
3Probably many of the girls were of Irish background.
4ODL, 77 May 1903, 454.
5Reprinted 77 May 1932, 232.
6BESANT(1907B), 149.
2. Workers, peasants, and landlords of Latvia in 1905

showed German society needed colonial expansion policy as a safety valve. He thought that 'rising crime and Social Democracy' were symptoms of decay, which the German society did not identify with. The letter, however, strongly suggests she was a landed proprietress and reincarnation:

Christianity of a utopian type which he rejected, an exoteric type, ignorant about karma and reincarnation:

dreamers' fancies, begotten in minds which are quite ignorant of the law of human development, and suppose that there is such a thing as uniformity of character among masses of men. He [Sinnett] says: "All writers of the Tolstoi or Bellamy type start with the assumption, as if it were an undeniable axiom, that every child is born, comes into the world on equal terms with every other, free of all previous claims or responsibilities, a new divine creation in each case set up by Providence with a stock in trade of limbs, appetites and capacities, identically the same throughout the race, and constituting an equal credit on the accumulated reserves of the race, if the selfishness of individual magnates had not enabled them to absorb their proper share." He explains this stupid conception as the outgrowth of Christian theological teachings during the last dozen or so centuries. He then proceeds to elucidate the grand theory of human development, in which it is shown that both the human body and spirit are equally the outcome of evolutionary agencies.

Sinnett wrote this as in Tolstoy's homeland revolution had broken out.

2. Workers, peasants, and landlords of Latvia in 1905

Reacting to the 1905 revolution in the Russian empire, Olcott wrote a 'Theosophist' article: 'The awful karma of Russia'. Most of it were parts of a letter from a lady theosophist whom Olcott called 'one of the purest, sweetest and most cultured of our members'. He did not identify her. The letter, however, strongly suggests she was a landed proprietress in Kurland. Or rather, she had been a proprietress until recent expropriation: 'The little income that still remains to me does not get paid ...' And Olcott spoke of her family:

1. BESANT(1911C), 91. Compare BESANT(1912A), 74-5: 'happy life ... must be ... brought about by the love and sacrifice of the higher, and not by the uprising of the lower. Mobs can make revolutions; but they cannot build a State'.

2. QUOTED WEHLER, 144.

3. BV, Sept. 1905, quoted IT, Oct. 1905, 73.

4. OLCCOTT(1905), 56. 'Their property virtually gone ...'

Kurland today is independent Latvia's western part. Then, it was a subject territory of the czar's realm. Most workers in Latvia's cities were Latvian, Russian, or Jewish. Most peasants were Latvian. And most of the landed aristocracy, as in Estonia, and to a lesser extent also in Lithuania, was of German-Baltic German-ancestry.

Division along nationality lines coincided with division along social lines more closely than perhaps anywhere else in Europe. The 'Baltic barons' played an important role as officers in the imperial army, and as officials. By the empire's standards, St. Petersburg, the capital, was not far from their estates. Many of the empire's theosophists, like Marie von Stevers, the future Mrs Steiner, were from their ranks.

The lady writing from Kurland to Adyar described, from observations, newspaper reports, and grapevine rumours, how Latvian peasants in revolt, aiming at expropriating big properties, threatened these estates in the late summer of 1905. She and her family themselves had suffered financially, not bodily, from the peasants' movement. But the future worried them:

In the capital town, a few miles away, they have tragedies happening every now and then: strikes, street revolts, murders, and then there is shooting by volleys ... but the country is quiet and more beautiful than ever ... As the breath of roses and mignonettes comes to me through the open windows, I wonder whether the next summer will find us still on this plane.

1. OLCCOTT(1905), 59.

2. STRUVE, 274. Ibid: 'These German Bails who were not noblemen ... were, for the most part, businessmen, craftsmen and professionals'.

3. The imperial Romanov family had often intermarried with German princely dynasties.

4. WEBB(1974A), 236: Rudolf Steiner cancelled a lecture tour of the czar's empire when it turned out that most of his prospective audience had fled from the 1905 revolution. At least one Baltic noble, Count Hermann Keyserling, born in north Latvia, visited Adyar headquarters before the First World War. His Travel Diary of a Philosopher was favourably considered and partly published in instalments in three 1913 issues of The Theosophist, to which he also contributed 'Reflections on Indian Thought and Life', 77, 1913, 481f. In the 1920's, newly independent Latvia's government, though it was far from Bolshevist, took away from big German landowners all property over fifty hectares without compensation; this led to trouble with the German government. STRUVE, 293: after Latvia had expropriated Keyserling's estate, he had to go to Germany, where he founded the School of Wisdom, much influenced by theosophical and 'Oriental' ideas. The School also considered political and social questions; Keyserling admired Hordly's Hungary, where aristocracy still was strong (ibid., 295); sometimes he expressed himself for a 'new caste system'; ibid., 293; and against the Versailles treaty. He hoped for an anti-Bolshevist 'Internationale of the really Best, the most Enlightened, the most Well-meaning-in one word the Internationale of gentlemen'; quoted IT, June 1921, 306.

5. OLCCOTT(1905), 57. In theosophy, an individual's death does not mean its end; only the end of the lowest of its seven 'principles', of the physical body. Its invisible aspects then move away...
In this connection I wish to ask you [Olcott] a question: if our house should be besieged by some hundreds of howling ruffians -human beasts shrieking for murder- have I not the right to shoot my daughters, to break the fairest of my flowers, lest they should fall into the hands of those madmen (?) I suppose one is not to kill oneself, as it may be the karma one has to endure, but may one not help others? In Odessa they have done such unspeakable horrors on lovely young girls, poor things belonging to their own socialistic party, unhelpful creatures who went on board the rebel ships to take “proclamations to the brethren”. The sea brought back their bodies: and how!

Olcott’s correspondent denied that the Latvian revolutionaries had a case, also because the standard of living in the Baltic lands was higher than in the rest of the empire:

And here in our ... provinces the workmen are so well off, so well paid and well fed- every family having its cow and two sheep, not to count swine and poultry- whilst the farmers are all wealthy ... but the anarchistic propaganda has blinded all the best instincts and upset all sound thinking.

Olcott reacted to the letter:

I ask my readers if they ever saw as striking a case of true Theosophy practically applied. Was it not for the comfort and helping of such souls that our movement begun? Put yourselves, you mothers and wives, in the place of this lady ... with the fiery circle of savagery contracting about their peaceful country village day by day.

Though the letter contained no call for financial help (‘for they are gentle and self-respect keeps them tongue-tied’) Olcott responded with a call for a collection for those whom the revolution harmed. The Theosophist published receipt accounts.

In an ironic twist, only the relative relaxation of autocracy after 1905 made it possible for the Russian TS to come ‘aboveground’. Czar Nicholas II was interested in non-officially Orthodox occultism: about 1901, French occultist Papus was expelled from the TS to the Russian TS to come ‘aboveground’. Czar Nicholas II was interested in non-officially Orthodox occultism: about 1901, French occultist Papus was expelled from the TS for indiscipline, was his adviser; and Rasputin. The official head of Orthodoxy, though, from the earthly ‘plane’ to another plane (like Devachan, the realm of the gods), to wait for future reincarnation. The Kurland lady’s sentence expresses her idea that earthly life might not last much longer.

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... In connection with this letter I wish to ask you [Olcott] a question: if our house should be besieged by some hundreds of howling ruffians—human beasts shrieking for murder—have I not the right to shoot my daughters, to break the fairest of my flowers, lest they should fall into the hands of those madmen? I suppose one is not to kill oneself, as it may be the karma one has to endure, but may one not help others? In Odessa they have done such unspeakable horrors on lovely young girls, poor things belonging to their own socialistic party, unhelpful creatures who went on board the rebel ships to take “proclamations to the brethren”. The sea brought back their bodies: and how!

Olcott’s correspondent denied that the Latvian revolutionaries had a case, also because the standard of living in the Baltic lands was higher than in the rest of the empire:

And here in our ... provinces the workmen are so well off, so well paid and well fed—every family having its cow and two sheep, not to count swine and poultry—whilst the farmers are all wealthy ... but the anarchistic propaganda has blinded all the best instincts and upset all sound thinking.

Olcott reacted to the letter:

I ask my readers if they ever saw as striking a case of true Theosophy practically applied. Was it not for the comfort and helping of such souls that our movement begun? Put yourselves, you mothers and wives, in the place of this lady... with the fiery circle of savagery contracting about their peaceful country village day by day.

Though the letter contained no call for financial help (‘for they are gentle and self-respect keeps them tongue-tied’) Olcott responded with a call for a collection for those whom the revolution harmed. The Theosophist published receipt accounts.

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1Nicholas II’s brother-in-law, Grand Duke Alexander, was a ‘convinced spiritualist’ and after exile a friend of Alice Bailey’s.

2The “Russian Karma” Fund, Theosophist, Nov. 1905, suppl., xii; Olcott, Sir S. Subramaniam, and others contributed. A railway strike in the Russian empire caused problems in transferring the estate.

3Some members of the socialistic party, who are at the same time I. O. D. are writing themselves in such an order and will in that way help this party with theosophical ideas as a basis for economic change. There will also be formed Christian order will on the same plan (of the TS Order of Service) to influence theosophical ideas.

4Dutch social democrat A. J. Resink in his writings of about 1908 was the only case I found of someone wishing to reconcile theosophy with Marxism, and Marxism with revisionist socialism. Resink thought the TS would have to discard esoterism and democratize itself. Only thus it might attract socialists. For a few years a small group of Dutch socialist theosophists kept going. Later, Resink would link religion and politics.

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7The “Russian Karma” Fund, Theosophist, Nov. 1905, suppl., xii; Olcott, Sir S. Subramaniam, and others contributed. A railway strike in the Russian empire caused problems in transferring the estate.

8Olcott (1905), 58. Lower-ranking sailors of the warship Potemkin and other vessels of the imperial Black Sea fleet had taken control of their ships in 1905.

9Olcott (1905), 59.

10The “Russian Karma” Fund, Theosophist, Nov. 1905, suppl., xii; Olcott, Sir S. Subramaniam, and others contributed. A railway strike in the Russian empire caused problems in transferring the estate.

11According to Olcott (1905), 56: “But they [theosophists in the Russian empire] have never dared to openly form themselves into chartered Branches, so pitiless and powerful has been the influence of the Orthodox Church and the officials who are dominated by its authority.”
differently: in the Religious Socialistisch Verbond, a mainly Protestant socialist organization. He had convinced few fellow theosophists and few fellow socialists: 'the word 'occult' makes a Marxist run away.'

An example of that in The Netherlands was astronomer A. Pannekoek, fighting for the new proletarian philosophy, leaving no space anywhere any longer for mysticism. Also Pannekoek's co-editor of De Nieuwe Tijd magazine, W. van Ravesteyn, who knew Engels' works well. There was a similarity in his own writings to Engels': on theosophy he only wrote briefly and sarcastically. Once in Engels' case, twice with Van Ravesteyn. He described in 1917 'theosophist or Bollandist' views as variants of

This bourgeois wisdom ... this nauseous, disgusting mentality, which so characteristically belongs to a decaying and completely corrupt class without ideals, that one cannot find it in any earlier age of history, this specifically 19th century product, hateful and stupid like a modern Protestant or Catholic church building, a bourgeois drawing-room, or a bourgeois ladies' tea-party; to see this once again, dressed up in 'philosophical' clothes, and being proclaimed as the modern most modern thing; really, we are not tolerant enough for this.

When he accused his colleague Henriette Roland Holst of philosophical idealism six years later, he compared her views to theosophists.'

Also like Engels, Van Ravesteyn wrote somewhat more on spiritualism. 'If spiritualism ... would only have its adherents among people of property large and small ... there really would be no point in writing on it in a socialist magazine. [Should not socialists know about their opponents' various ideas?] However, also workers, 'though, as we hope, not many', were spiritualists. Still less were ITS; which may explain differences in sizes of Van Ravesteyn's writings.

To him, spiritualism was to the labour movement 'as dangerous as the most fanatical orthodox faith.' Its attraction was presenting itself as science, rather than as the religion it was. Spiritualism was 'anti- or unsocial views'; with a 'social cause' in 'grown capitalism' though. It was: 'Only since the mid-19th century the separation of the individual from the old social ties in the Western countries (also the US) has gone that far, that great numbers of people get conscious of, and get completely desperate from, the

feeling of becoming absolutely lonely resulting from it.'

De Nieuwe Tijd then was popular with Sneevliet and other socialists in Indonesia, who asked Van Ravesteyn for advice. Van Ravesteyn became one of few voices in Dutch parliament of independence for Indonesia. In 1922, communist MPs Van Ravesteyn and Wijnkoop made the first, defeated, proposal to use the name Indonesia instead of 'Netherlands Indies' in government publications.

In 1908, Pekka Ervast wrote of the Finnish TS' history. From 1901 on, they had regularly had lectures, at first in a building owned by socialists, later in Helsinki headquarters of their own. There still was, though, a 'fraction of the Socialist party, which recognises Theosophy as the ideal religion, and would reform Society on the base of love and mutual understanding between the classes'.

In 1909 in the United States, the New York Lodge's Mission League, part of the Order of Service, has undertaken the quite interesting experiment of propaganding among the socialists. The president, Mr. M.J. Whitty addressed them in a series of lectures which are said to be well received and fairly well attended. Some propaganda literature has been printed. However, "Only a minority of occultists wanted reconciliation with socialists."

The reverse was also often true. In Denmark, suffragist Johanne Marie Meyer (1838-1915) was editor of the Social Democrat women's paper until there was a conflict. In the 1900's, she joined the small Danish TS for the last years of her life. This made her relations to ... [the Danish Social Democrat] party leadership more complicated ... after she in her later years became more engaged in theosophy, which hardly had any working class support in Copenhagen.

Annie Besant spoke in an Australian trade union hall in 1908. To her surprise, her speech went down well. Legislation had improved the position of labour in early 20th century Australia. To the discontent of Annie Besant, who said 'the death-rate of the

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1RESINK(A), 17. In the long run, he was more optimistic then, ibid., 27. Because: 'Neither Marxists nor Christian Socialists know exactly what they want' [bold type Resink's]. Ibid., 28 2The propaganda [for theosophy) among social democrats will not take 30 years without bearing fruit!' He warned though, ibid., 6: 'So the Theosophical Society does have the right to look at class struggle in its way, but it does not have the right to wish itself above class struggle, for this in practice means sanctioning bourgeois defense of private capitalist interests and fighting the Proletariat ...

3PANNEKOEK, 303.

4VAN RAVESTEYN(1917), 632.

5VAN RAVESTEYN(1925). Roland Holst's religion was not the TS, rather, she had never broken with the liberal Protestant Remonstrant faith into which she was born: Carolien Boon/Ger Harmsen, 'Een poging tot bekering van Henriette Roland Holst'. BNAM, 32. Dec. 1993, 5.
children' went up due to trade union rights. In 1912, she attacked British Liberal Prime Minister Asquith for concessions to striking miners' 'callousness and irresponsibility':

Trade Unions can thus not only conspire for the starvation of the public, and for forcibly depriving the non-Unionist of the right to labour to gain bread for himself and his family, but can also look at will those who are struggling against its tyranny. To such a pass has Mr. Asquith reduced the public by his subserviency to organised labour.

John Earle, FTS, became Tasmania's first Labor PM, for one week in 1909; he regained office in 1914-16. Another Australian politician, M. Reid, joined the TS at about the same time, the 1910's, that he went from his earlier Labor to the conservative National party. He was an example, like Mrs Besant, Maharadja (see p. 331), and others, of convergence between a rightward shift in political views, and a TS-ward shift in philosophy. With some individuals, this convergence had mainly to do with a new TS social environment influencing their ideas; with others, with moving right anyway, and then choosing theosophy among existing philosophies that might match this shift.

In 1917, people like described in H.P. Blavatsky's quote (p. 142) toppled the czar's rule. The soviets, workers', peasants', and soldiers' councils with increasing Bolsheviki party influence, took over for their headquarters near Petrograd (St. Petersburg) the building of the Smolny school, the Institute for Girls of the Nobility; they turned out its pupils and management. Its director's daughter was leading theosophist and Russia's Order of the Star in the East representative, Barbara Poushkine, nee Princess Galitzine. She was related to Prince Galitzine, the czar's last prime minister, deposed in March 1917. Before the year ended, the soviets took over the government. Soon Madame Blavatsky's distant relations, the imperial family, were killed.

In the spring of 1917, when the Bolsheviki were not yet in the government, Russian

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TS General Secretary Anna Kamensky had travelled from Adyar back to Russia. According to Annie Besant's 1920 Convention speech, in which she based herself not on Russian theosophists, but on 'a person who was in Russia at the time':

the Society was closed down by the Bolsheviki in December, 1919; it was offered liberty if it would spread among the populace the teaching that not only was there no God, but that religion was the primary cause of ignorance and injustice. Our noble Anna Kamensky boldly refused, after being subjected to long interrogation and insult. Communication with the outer world is forbidden by the Tyranny, and we have heard nothing since October last. When I bade her farewell in London, when she took up the work of the T.S. under the Tsar's régime, I said to her in the words of the Christ: "Behold, I send thee forth as sheep in the midst of wolves," but the far worse wolves of Bolshevism were then unknown to her.

Anna Kamensky, Barbara Poushkine, and most other theosophists emigrated.

Why had the worst of the 1910's 'two world disasters: war and revolution' occurred? Rudolf Steiner in 1922 knew the answer: bad mathematics education at schools had caused Bolshevism in eastern Europe. Alice Bailey, who then had just broken with the TS, claimed she had received a letter from Mahatma Djwäl Kül. It was comparatively positive on the Bolsheviki. Bhagavan Das from India upheld the caste system as an example to Lenin.

Three years after October 1917, I. Krüssle wrote an article. In it, he argued that...
democratic 'rule by the masses' was an impossibility anywhere. He saw signs that Lenin's associates were moving away from earlier errors:

That which we see happening in Russia now is very remarkable in this respect, where Bolshevism at first showed itself as an exclusively democratic institution and treated the intellect with contempt, oppressed it, and many times murdered it, but where, according to the latest news, the state organization once again is going to be more and more hierarchal and government power now once more, automatically, moves away towards the hands of the intellectually most developed.1

Kruisheer then already was the major shareholder of the theosophist printing business in Indonesia.2 Two years later, he became General Secretary of the Dutch East Indies section, later of the Dutch section.

C. CONSCRIPTION IN INDONESIA? THEOSOPHISTS AGAINST SOCIALISTS

Before we go on, to a detailed account of the relationship of theosophists and socialists in Indonesia, 1915-1918, we must look at the views of both on war; as war was the main, though not only, issue in that relationship. Dutch Fournier wrote in 1917 in Indonesia about one who got to know theosophy:

Pain, suffering, wars, etc., etc., take on a completely different meaning to him, 'as he sees them as factors of spiritual evolution.3

We will see in what context Fournier's views fitted. First, briefly, general ideas on causes of and remedy for war. Then, individual wars.

1. Theosophists and war up to 1918

What causes war? According to Argentine's naval Comandante F.W. Fernandez, President of the TS' Vi-Dharma Branch:

the Western world which is always rushing through its experiences at headlong speed, always ascribes war to a material cause or to human initiative with the object of acquiring fresh territory or making permanent conquests as yet not fully perfected, those of the Orient who have inherited the traditions of the great teachings of the ancient wisdom as to the logical consequences of precedent actions [karma] as mingling with the great course of evolution, directed from above by those who have received the mission to regulate its progress [the Masters of the Great White Lodge] view it from a higher standpoint. Theirs is the duty to supervise not only the spiritual but the physical progress of the race. To such as have become familiar with this great fact these clashes of arms between nations, these displacements of populations, and these expansions of peoples all come under the action of the one immanent and eternal law of Karma.

Fernandez gave the 1905 Japanese-Russian and British-Tibetan wars as examples of how armed conflicts fit in with Karma and Superhuman direction.4

Leadbeater, also in 1905, expected world peace from theosophy's expansion.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that if Theosophy spread gradually among these various nations, if the majority, or even a large minority, of each nation understood and accepted the Theosophical ideas, anything like war between such nations would be wholly impossible.5

1.1. From Kurukshetra till 1904

Kurukshetra was the name of a paper for the military, which the TS distributed in battle zones of the First World War.6 Originally, it was the name of a field. There, according to the ancient Indian epic the Mahabharata, of which the Bhagavad Gita forms part, two sets of brothers, cousins to one another, fought the decisive bloody battle over who would succeed to the royal throne. Poison gas had already been used there, as in 1914-18, according to Annie Besant.4

How to interpret the Mahabharata religiously and politically has been the subject of many discussions throughout the ages. Symbolic interpretations exist, which interpret the poem only in terms of a struggle between good and evil spiritual forces within individuals; like F.T. Brooks' Holy War.

Annie Besant though, the initial superior and later opponent of Brooks, writing on the Mahabharata, did relate it to non-symbolic military events. According to her The Story of the Great War (also translated as a series in the 1916 Dutch East Indies TS monthly).

Sometimes a whole nation goes wrong. Then the Gods place in its way a great war, or a famine, or a plague,... And the Great War, the story of which we are about to study, was brought about by the Gods, because it was necessary for the evolution of the nation. We see many men and animals killed in a war, and say: 'How terrible! how shocking!' But men and animals are only killed when the bodies they are in are of no more use; when a man cannot do more in a particular body, the Gods strike it away, so that the man may have a better one. Instead of regarding a God as cruel when he strikes away a body, you should think of him as kind, setting the men free to grow.3

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna wavers about killing his cousins, but is told by Krishna...

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1La Verdad, July 1905, as quoted TT, Sept. 1905, 755. On Fernandez, TS Annual report on 1904, 30. He founded and edited the Argentine TS magazine La Verdad, 77, Oct. 1905, 72. TT, Dec. 1905, 229. 'Commandant Fernandez has placed us all under an obligation by suppressing the far, naked woman that he had on the cover of that magazine [La Verdad].'
2LEADBEATER(1905B), 91.
3TMNI, 1918, 304-5. J.J.W.B.P., 'De Nieuwe Era. Eene astrologische verhandeling.', TDrN, 1917, 521: the Mahabharata war was between the 4th and 5th Root-race, and ended with victory for the fifth. See also BLAVATSKY(1908), 155.
4WT, TT Oct. 1915, 2. She also published a Bhagavad Gita translation: BROOKS(1914A), 175, claims Bhagavan Das, who was not on the cover, did most real translating.
5BESANT(1927), 10-1.
to do so nevertheless. In Indonesia about the time of the First World War, both
theosophists like Van Ganswijk and Van Hinoopan Labberton (see p. 192), and
socialists, saw Arjuna as a hero. They differed, though, on what side of his inner conflict
made him a hero.

With the Dutch East Indies TS, it was allowing soldiery duty to prevail over personal
feelings. To S. Paroatmodjo, editor of daily Sinar Hindia, though, 'Arjuna may have had
feelings like a socialist, so he shrank from killing a fellow human' in his age of warriors.
'Maybe people then did not yet know about socialism, so people could be inclined easily
to go to war.'

Indonesians often retold the other famous epic poem from India, the Ramayana, as
well. It also includes a war, which King Rama fought to get his abducted wife Sita (Sinta
in Indonesia) back. The Indonesian TS congress of 20 April 1919 included a wayang
theatre show of the Ramayana 'comparing it to the present world war. Both wars had as
their aim: creating a new civilization.'

Now, we move from these ancient wars, to nineteenth and twentieth century ones.
During 1877-78 Blavatsky in the US press supported Russia against Turkey: 'I regard this
war as one of humanity and civilization against barbarism.' Britain's government then
opposed Russia; Annie Besant opposed that war itself. This was before she joined the
Theosophical Society. We have seen that, besides non-pacifist civilians, many officers
(we hear less of non-commissioned ranks and privates) were active in the
war as one of humanity and civilization against barbarism.' Britain's government then
had reprobated a French resolution expressing sympathy with a Peace Society-
back at her own earlier writings. BESANT(1919A), 54.

Annie Besant's support of her government in the Boer War led to pacifist criticisms
by Australian Mayers. Besant's reply to pacifists like her former self was:

What can be more inhuman than war .... Aye, but that is not all .... learning thus to sacrifice
himself for an ideal.  

1SH 4-3-1919, quoted IPO 10/1919, MJB, 17-8. Paroatmodjo commented on an article by
Honggodojojo on the Broto Judo, an Old Javanese retelling of the Mahabhahara.

2Neraja 17-4-1919, quoted IPO 16/1919, MJB, 2


4NEHERCOT(1960), 145; TAYLOR(1992), 126.

5See p. 99f. Bertrand Russell pointed out that the act of an individual who kills another is
called murder, but when a whole group of people murder millions of others, we call it a glorious
war. There are many hypocracies [spelling sic] of that kind.' President of the Theosophical
Society, Mrs Radha BURNIER(1986), 13. LA GRANDE ENCYCLOPEDIE LAROUSSE, 9067:
the TS has 'pacifist and generous ethics.' How does one define pacifism?

6MAYERS(1902), 596-600. BESANT(1908C). Some moderate English social democrats
within the Fabian Society had an attitude similar to their ex-colleague AB; see VAN ARKEL(1966)
stating XIII.

7BESANT(1900), 116.

1.2. From Russo-Japanese war till 1914

Already when Japan waged war on China, 1894-1895, it had sympathy in the TS; they
believed the Japanese general Nodzu was occultly protected. 1

When the Russo-Japanese war broke out in 1904, it interested people in India and
Indonesia. One of theosophist reactions was an anonymous article: 'National
Brotherhood. Where is it?' It deplored the war, and took a neutral position:
... negotiations will be resorted to and some settlement made, such as might have been arrived
as before the war, had patience instead of passion been in the ascendant. 2

Ultimately, the US government mediated a peace settlement. Had Olcott written or
supported the article? 3 If so, then it was similar to his government's position.

Annie Besant also was, differently, similar to her government. Great Britain was
Japan's main ally. 4 Mrs Besant praised a Japanese mother. That mother, after one son's
death in battle, wished she had another son to die in the war. 5 In The Inner Government of
the World, she pointed out the higher world divine background:

Manu ... inspired and stimulated the Japanese. flung them against Russia. 6

A Japanese visitor to TS headquarters wrote an article in praise of the Bushido
mentality of his country's military. It had spread throughout society:
the Government ... allowed even the Eta caste (former untouchables) to become the glorious
soldiers of our Emperor. 7

Later, Annie Besant would sound less positive though Japan was still Britain's ally.
She wrote, based on TS race doctrine (seeing both Britons and Indians as 'Aryan' 'Fifth
Race'):

If the primacy of Asia falls either to Japan or China -both Fourth-Race Nations- evolution will
suffer a serious set-back. Great Britain and India together are the natural leaders of Asia. 8

In the period between the 1904 and 1914 wars, her ideas had not reverted to her
former pacifism:

for the conquest of one country by another is not, as many people think, an evil thing. If

1ODL IV, 155

2TT Apr. 1904, 446.

3In TT, Aug. 1906, 828, Olcott mentioned how he, in order not to compromise TS political
neutrality, had reproached a French resolution expressing sympathy with a Peace Society.

4In 1919, AB criticized the British government for having been too pro-Japan, without looking
back at her own earlier writings. BESANT(1919A), 54.

5BESANT(1905), 366.

6Quoted TT Oct. 1917, 54. TT also wrote on 'Occult protection of Admiral Togo.'

7TT June 1905, 572f. See in praise of Admiral Togo's Bushido in the 1904-05 Russian war
also: C. Stuart-Prince, an army captain FTS, IT, July 1905, 629; 'The religion of Japan', IT, Jan.
1905, 228-35.

8WT, TT Apr. 1917, 4.
mingle peoples, it gives the knowledge of one to the other.¹

In 1910, she suggested that Republican Theodore Roosevelt, who had fought, and ordered to fight, wars to establish Pax Americana in Cuba, the Philippines, Panama, and elsewhere, should be re-elected as US President: 'and perhaps given the powers of a Dictator.' Then, 'we should see a nation committed to the cause of peace.'²

One year before the First World War started, Besant and Leadbeater predicted clairvoyantly:

Julius Caesar, who reincarnated some time in the twentieth century in connection with the coming of the Christ ... persuades all the countries to give up war ...³

So the end of war would come from above, by someone known in his former life for wars of conquest.

They thought world problems ... may be remedied by an offensive and defensive alliance between the severed halves [the U.S. and England] and a similar alliance with Germany, the remaining great section of the Teutonic sub-race [of Aryans], would weld the whole sufficiently into one to make a federated Empire.⁴

1.3. World War I: views and visions from Adyar

Even a World War is not too bad against anti-patriotism.⁵

The two opposing alliances of the First World War have both been called imperialist.⁶

Even far away from the trenches, the war permeated everyday things like geographic names in newspapers, or greeting someone on the street. The British press wrote 'Germans'. In the land of Kaiser Wilhelm II and General von Moltke, saying Guten Tag made one a suspect of anti-patriotism. It should have been Gott strafe England, or Sieg Heil.


²AdB. June 1910, 175.

³Besant and Leadbeater(1913), 43. See also van der Leeuw(1920), 135; Roelofs-Verschoor, 82; 93. The TS leaders predicted that the Balkan wars before 1914 would not escalate into a world war. Argentine TS magazine La Verdad, of March 1906, quoted TT, May 1906, 625-6, predicted, after reading on the Astral Plane, several wars, including a bloody one between Germany and France on Alsace-Lorraine; but it predicted these wars would be in 1906.

⁴Besant and Leadbeater(1913), 322. Earlier, British politician Joseph Chamberlain, and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, had wanted a British-German alliance. Ten years after the First, eleven years before the Second World War, AB revived the British-Us-German Alliance idea, 'because you are of the same race, and race is strong'. TT May 1928, 166.

⁵'Ben wereldoorlog zelfs is niet te erg tegen verstandsstrijding.' Dutch early twentieth century Christosopher theosophist M. Schoenmaekers, quoted NRC, 23-3-1990.

⁶Ali, 19.

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To get pacifists and revolutionaries within their ranks in line, German Social Democrat leaders spoke about the horrors of czarist autocracy; their French and English colleagues of Prussian horrors; in order to support their own rulers and their allies.

Adyar, and A. Vreede in Indonesia, saw Britain and its allies as fighting on the side of Light, against darkness.¹ Annie Besant put forward a theory based on size: the British empire was bigger than Germany and its few colonies. Therefore, it was a much better base for the Aryan empire of the future, and it should win.²

Lady Emily Lutyens recalled both her initial, and her later, reactions:

'I was full of patriotism ... and horror at the accounts of the German atrocities, but Krishnan[omuni] never believed them and was never carried away.²

A few years later, Mrs Besant dismissed Lady Emily herself as herald of the Star editor as 'too pacifist'; the HOTS should declare uncompromisingly on the side of the Brotherhood.
³

So far about war against Germany. How about war for-what? for Whom?

In Australia, Mrs Bright, FTS, said of her son: 'I gave him up to the Masters to go to the War without a tear.'⁴ And Senator M. Reid, FTS, supported not just the war, but went farther, supporting conscription.⁵

Unlike some other pro-allies, Adyar theosophists saw the war not stridently as a war for democracy, as the TS did not have stridently pro-democratic traditions. Annie Besant saw it within a hierarchical framework.

war is a continually returning fact in evolution, in a God-planned world, an opportunity to acquire in few days, weeks, months, properties that else would need lives to acquire.⁶

¹Tillett(1982), 162: 'Dark Lord Bismarck.' Commentament #19: 'Is the Kaiser Anti-Christ?'
²Pro-allies Dutch FTS and leading astrologer Van Ginkel wrote in a well sold booklet on occult truths behind war: 'So, behind the present struggle we see the big legions of Devas, divided into two camps, fight one another by way of the nations which have been allotted to them. Here, a great fight is fought between God and Lucifer ... It is the struggle between the Sun and Saturn, a crisis, necessary to the development process of humanity. For, according to occult information, the Devils who are on the Allies' side will absorb the other ones.' Van Ginkel(1915), 47. Vreede(1917A), 66: 'It is not because she [AB] is English, but because she knows [esotericism] and because she is a member of the White Lodge, that she has proclaimed, that justice is on the side of the Allies and that the Central states have become the tools of the powers, which work against civilization and development'.
³WT, 17 Nov. 1914, 98f.
⁴E. Lutyens, 69.
⁵ROE, 225.
⁶Sullivan, 356. Australians voted down conscription in 1917; see p. 213.
⁷Annie Besant, Broederschap en oorlog, from 1915; quoted Constandse(1929), 24f. Constandse called her views on war 'cruel and reactionary'. LIGOU, article on AB: 'she lets people know about the theosophical ideas ... opposes the military expenses' is not necessarily about the same periods in her life.
Annie Besant attacked American, including American theosophist, neutrality:

The United States, in her safe distance of the storm of battle while her sister Nations are writhing in the agony of struggle. One cannot wonder if this isolation be not somewhat selfish, somewhat harshly indifferent, a lonesome in a garden of peace. How will her quiescence work on her future status among the Nations? 

She did not agree much with socialist anti-war activities, or the 1915 The Hague peace congress, organized by American7 feminists like Jane Addams, and Dutch ones like Aleida Jacobs. Marie Loke, FTS from non-belligerent Holland, though, sympathized with the The Hague congress. In August 1915, she was one of the 75 signatories of the manifesto To the great Nations at War. An appeal to their common sense and their conscience.

In Theosophist, Helen Veale wrote against British Labourite Ramsay MacDonald and his fellow pacifists.8 Ben Tillett, MP and FTS, was active in the British Labour Party's pro-war wing.9 In the times towards the end of 1916, however, when India's Home Rule action had become a mass movement, Annie Besant had shifted to the left. That also made her sound less pro-war than one or two years earlier:

The youth of the nations has been cast into the pit of slaughter. Those who ought to have been the fathers of the coming generation lie as corpses in bloody graves. 

Still, she saw positive sides:

1. By Dutch FTS A. Verhage supported non-belligerence. Finnish GS (up to 1918) Aletta Jacobs, FrS from non-belligerent Holland, though, sympathized with the The Hague congress. In August 1915, she was one of the 75 signatories of the manifesto To the great Nations at War. An appeal to their common sense and their conscience.

In Theosophist, Helen Veale wrote against British Labourite Ramsay MacDonald and his fellow pacifists.6 Ben Tillett, MP and FTS, was active in the British Labour Party's pro-war wing.7 In the times towards the end of 1916, however, when India's Home Rule action had become a mass movement, Annie Besant had shifted to the left. That also made her sound less pro-war than one or two years earlier:

The youth of the nations has been cast into the pit of slaughter. Those who ought to have been the fathers of the coming generation lie as corpses in bloody graves.

Still, she saw positive sides:

1. A popular song in the USA in 1916 was: 'I did not raise my son to be a soldier; I brought him up to be my pride and joy. Who dares to put a musket on his shoulder? To kill some other mother's darling boy?' Quoted A. Blunkel: Romeijn, W. Oerlemans: Hoofdwerken der geschiedenis. Vol. II, Groningen, Wolters-Noordhoff, 1969, p. 49, note 2) 'employing the great mantram [formula] whereby the Buddha can be reached.

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The young men who tended to criminality, who were rough, who were what they call 'hoodlums,' who recognized no social ties and no social duties-those have very often turned into men of courage, of vigour, who have distinguished themselves in this terrible war. There were some men set free from jail who had been punished for offences against society, who have won distinction on the field of battle.

Also, bloody as the war was, it happened according to divine law:

It is inevitable, there is no blame on any. The Nations are in the grip of a terrible fate and they are working out the natural fruit of materialism, which had put God outside human life, and had tied him into a steel framework of religion.

Looking back after the war, Bhagavan Das wondered if theosophists should not have led pacifist movements in all their respective belligerent countries, and suffered the pains and penalties of conscientious objects. ... We have left others to do our duty.

1.4. World War I: the USA

In the USA, Katherine Tingley in her Point Loma TS headquarters was then at quite 'safe distance'. Like her government, she did not mind being away from 'this terrible war in Europe.'

In 1917, US president Wilson entered the war. Foster Bailey (Alice's husband) paid Wilson the compliment of calling him a chela of the 6th Ray.

Judge S. Subramanaya Iyer, ex-DS vice president and honorary Home Rule League president, sent a telegram to Wilson through American theosophists Mr and Mrs Hotchner. It asked to apply his declaration on self-determination to India. In return, Indians would increase their war effort and supply the Allies with millions of soldiers. French TS paper L'Affranchi in 1918 depicted Wilson, U.S. presidential seal

1. BESANT(1917A), 30.

2. BESANT(1917A), 29.

3. BESANT(1934). 4. Das saw World War I differently from AB: 'Why did they rush into the Great War ... and thereby so splendidly maintain law and order that they have slaughtered and mangled millions of human beings ... still ultimately for the benefit of a few capitalists?' BESANT(1922), 206; DAS(1947), 61.


5. Miero, 62. Theosophists thought seven rays shone out from the Logos (roughly: God); BESANT(1922B), 355. VAN LEEUWEN(V1917A), 435: 'speeches of Wilson, America's great president, who in these sounds a note of humanity and nationalism, which is close to unique in history and would be worthy of a Theosophist ... '

6. SITARAMAYYA(1969), 133, misspells 'Hotchner'.

7. Manoranjan Ila. Katherine Mayo and India. New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1971, 5. Edwin Montagu, though he was a reformer within the British government context, called this letter
and Kerensky as precursors of the Order of the Star in the East's Messiah.

1.5 World War I: Germany and Austria

German and Austrian theosophists' and anthroposophists' views on the war were a kind of mirror image of Annie Besant's. Steiner, Guido von List, Lanz von Liebenfels, they all, like Besant, saw the war as a holy war. They opposed her 180°, however, as to who were the holy and the unholy sides.

What were ideas about those killed in action? Leadbeater thought the allied killed in action would be reborn into the new sixth sub-race. Von List had the same theory; about those fallen for the German and Austrian kaisers. So, various clairvoyant Initiate leaders, rival representatives of the Inner Government of the World, took the sides of their respective exoteric governments in the war. Ervast, and Krishnamurti (who managed to convince Lady Emily Lutyens) were, as far as we found, exceptions. Ervast's case, the Russian government; in Krishnamurti's, the British one, were foreign governments.

Though Dutch astrologer Van Ginkel, FTS, backed the Allies, he quoted in his support Ludwig Frank, of the pro-war right wing of German social democrats. Ervast, in this war the foundation is laid for an immense progress. What Siidekum said, did not differ much of what a National Liberal professor, or even a conservative like Heydebrand, would have said on the war. Siidekum, ibid., said 'A people is forced to make war by its racial expansion force.'

2. Sneevliet versus Van Hinioproen Labberton

Even before the war, in November 1913, there had already been a debate on military expenditure in The Hague, at the Indische Vereeniging association of Indonesians in The Netherlands. The three leaders of the pro-independence Indische Partij Tjipto Mangoeoekoesoemo, Soewardi Soerianingrat and E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, exiled from Indonesia, came to the meeting. Raden Mas Noto Soeroto in his speech said The Netherlands should defend the Indies. Reacting, Douwes Dekker 'deeply hurt' Noto Soeroto, by saying the need was 'first and foremost' education; on this, the colony's government was 'too stingy in comparison with the expenditure on defense.' In the debate, Tjipto, later also of the Indonesian social democrats, supported Dekker. Noto Soeroto got support from his uncle Raden Mas Ari Sooyypopetro, theosophically-minded like himself. During the war, that debate continued on a much bigger scale; and this time, mainly in Indonesia itself.

Not only the debate got big and sharp, its debaters were also prominent. In 1921, colonial official P.J. Gerke looked back at Indonesia's political movements. He thought only 'three Dutch names' had been important to 'the Native movement': Douwes Dekker, 'the political theosophist Van Hinioproen Labberton', and Henk Sneevliet. The two last named, and their organizations, became sharp opponents rather soon after initial contact.

The Dutch East Indies TS General Secretary, Dirk van Hinioproen Labberton, then was a teacher of the Javanese and Malay languages to future officials. A. J. Resink wrote that Labberton's relationship to authority earlier on had not been as close:

Mr Labberton belongs to the renegades of nationalism. In his youth, he was a 'me too'.


2Noto Soeroto, 1888-1951, grandson of the fifth ruler of the Paku Alam principality, and son of Indies army major, Freemason, and ex-Budi Utomo chairman Pangeran Noto Djirodo, wrote poetry which TMV! reviewed. He was a Dutch army cavalry officer in World War I; Djaadjiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, 47. In the early 1920's, he contributed to Vrije Arbeid monthly, close to the Dutch Democratique Partij. This liberal party to the right of the Vrijheidsbotert, never won a seat in parliament. He later became secretary to Prince Mangkoeoegoro VII, an old friend from the days when both had studied at Leiden university. Cannegeiter(1937), 118, 122. LOC, 22-5-1917, 'Prins Noordrodo. 'Sooyypopetro, 1892-1927, was the brother of ruling prince Pakoe Alam VI; see p. 345.

3De Inlandsche organisaties', 1921, 345.

4See p. 300. Douwes Dekker was of both Dutch and Indonesian ancestry; related to famous author Multatuli. Gerke thought him the most important one. WANASITA, 13; in a telegram, Sukarno called 'DD' 'the father of Indonesia's political nationalism'; not 'one of the fathers', as in Van der Mark, 202.
socialist, but since then he has become a convert to and worshipper of capitalism. This went jointly with his evolution towards becoming a leader of the theosophical movement, which took off then.

Though there had been socialist sympathizers in Indonesia at least since the 1890s, they did not organize openly until 1914. Then, they founded the Indies Social Democrat Society, ISDV. Already in 1908, Labberton felt this might happen. Then, the syndicate of big European sugar entrepreneurs asked him to write against criticisms of their industry. In his book, Labberton feared that 'demagogic influences', inspired by, say, 'KARL MARX', might influence 'eagerly copying Native public employees', and, already too oppositional, 'Native newspapers.' Labberton thought struggle between capital and labour had no basis in the reality of the Indies; yet, it disquieted him.1

Early on, before theosophists and socialists in Indonesia tried to start mass movements, for, respectively against, conquest, relationships were not yet antagonistic. Sinar Djawa, the daily of the Sarekat Islam of Semarang, which would get close contacts to socialists, praised Labberton in 1914 for plans to teach Islam at his teachers' training school in Jakarta.2

This showed also on 23 and 24 May 1915, at a congress in Semarang on local election law. Contradictions already were apparent, but participants still felt there also was common ground. On the one hand, Van Hinloopen Labberton's proposals were more democratic than the status quo, doing away with government-designated local councillors. On the other hand, they fell short of universal suffrage. His educational and tax-paying criteria to qualify as a voter excluded a 98% majority of Indonesians.3 They limited 'Natives and other Muhammadans', so far more than 90% of people, to one third of local council seats. Labberton said: 'The natives still do not see the public interest; they still consider the group interest too much.'4

In 1917, the government would implement most of Labberton's proposals.5 Net his women's suffrage proposal though: at the congress, suffragist and socialist Mrs A.P. Dekker-Groot thanked him for that 'chivalry'.6

1Dutch: 'voor' socialists. DEKKER(1916): Labberton claimed to have studied Marx.

2RESINK(1917). Restink then was much more critical of the TS than a decade earlier. See p. 147.

3VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1908), 3-5.

4Sinar Djawa 110, 1914; quoted KOT(1914), 'Persoverzicht', 1253-4.

5Education in the Dutch East Indies was then less widespread than in, say, India. KIEWIET DE JONGE(1920A), 142: 98% of Indonesians were illiterate. SEMAOEN(1966), 61, estimate on 1921: 95%.


7TICHELMAN(1985), 212.

8Varia. Vijfde decentralisatiecongres', IG 1915 (37), 1135. Jakarta's public prosecutor opposed women becoming councillors: meetings would get longer 'as the women talk so much.' Raden Aje Siswa, first Indonesian woman to speak at a local government congress, opposed him. She said she did it shortly, to refute his long meetings argument. Ibid., 1135-4.
Sneevliet wanted to start a magazine linked to his ISDV. He wanted it to include also articles by non-socialist experts, "with this reservation, of course, that both other contributors and editors could object to their considerations." Just after the Semarang congress, he asked Van Hinthoopen Labberton to be one of these external contributors, to which eventually became Indonesian social democrat weekly Het Vrije Woord.

Labberton reacted in a letter to Sneevliet that the magazine "should not have a one-sided [social] Democrat viewpoint, but advocate vrijzinnige [Dutch; liberal, especially in the sense of non-clerical] politics in general." He added that he did not have much time to contribute anyway, and as turned out later, never contributed.

Fellow social democrats Koperberg and Koch sent letters to Sneevliet. In those, they objected to Labberton's politics and theosophic ideas on economy and philosophy. These, they wrote, would make him an unfit contributor to a socialist magazine. To Koch, Sneevliet's request was a sign that he had come to Indonesia only recently. Sneevliet's Marxist associate Baars was also unhappy with Sneevliet contacting the TS General Secretary.

So Sneevliet in 1915 saw Van Hinthoopen Labberton as someone with ideas, different from his own, whom he respected. From next year on, the relationship between social democrats and theosophists in the Dutch East Indies soon became worse. In the 1916 and 1917 volumes of Het Vrije Woord, Van Hinthoopen Labberton was probably the most often criticized individual. Sneevliet would write on this change towards whom he called then "the high priest of Indies theosophy":

Earlier on, we had seen this theosophist as an idealist, whose ideals we could not make ours, whose ideals we did not need, but whom we respected as a man who truly loved brotherhood. Unfortunately, we now must declare we have come to the conclusion that Mr v. H. L. now in our eyes does not differ from those propagandists of official religions, whose idealism is only an expedient to maintain a social order, clashing with neighbourly love and brotherhood, and making the personal pursuit of material success into the general rule. We admit readily that our opponent is a clever man, that he has influence ...... [in original] but add without any reserve, that we believe that this cleverness and influence are at the service of oppressors and oppressors' interest, and that the political movement of the oppressed should never forget this.

Labberton and other theosophists founded in 1916 in Jakarta a local electoral association called Melajoe. One exponent of it became Hadji Agoes Salim, since 1916 an active TS member. Salim, with A.F. Folkersma, translated Leadbeater's manual of theosophy into Malay as Kitab Theosophi in 1916. Salim's membership did not last long beyond early 1918. Soon after its founding, Melajoe in March 1916 discussed the right...

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2 TICHELMAN(1985), 284.
5 Koch thought Van Hinthoopen Labberton's principles differed 180° from socialism ones. Letter by D.M.G. Koch in Buitenzorg to H. Sneevliet in Semarang, 12-10-1915. Sneevliet archive, HSG, Amsterdam, 1559/11-14. As published partly in TICHELMAN(1985), 310. KOCH(1915) considered theosophy 'a spiritual asylum for the psychically unbalanced'. Sociologists of religion Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark later, likewise, wrote in Religion and Society in Tension. Chicago, Rand McNally, 1969, 254: 'The entire occult milieu .. of [Theosophy, the I AM .. of the varying Flying Saucer groups] is made up of persons afflicted with psychic deprivations.' Koch had debated against theosophist Kiewiet de Jonge on Marx' theory of value. He thought Kiewiet de Jonge, though able for a theosophist, knew nothing of Marx' or others' theories. Kiewiet de Jonge's membership did not last long beyond early 1918. Sneevliet wanted to start a magazine linked to his ISDV. He wanted it to include also articles by non-socialist experts, "with this reservation, of course, that both other contributors and editors could object to their considerations." Just after the Semarang congress, he asked Van Hinthoopen Labberton to be one of these external contributors, to which eventually became Indonesian social democrat weekly Het Vrije Woord.

2 KOCH(1915), 131, mentions a debate with Koch about 292-3.
3 29-11-1915; as published TICHELMAN(1985), 284.
4 KOCH(1956), 111-4, based his criticism of Marx on Austrian economist and Kiewiet de Jonge, though able for a theosophist, knew nothing of Marx' or others' theories.
5 TICHELMAN(1985), 310.
6 Letter A. Baars, Bandjar, to H. Sneevliet, Semarang, 4-10-1915; as published partly in TICHELMAN(1985), 233-4.
7 In 'De koloniale begroting in de Kamer', HVW 25-11-1915, Sneevliet criticized Labberton's proposal to add MPs from colonies to Dutch parliament, as in France: 'I am afraid that such a measure would only strengthen reaction. No make-shifts, but our own representation in Indonesia, not The Netherlands, with great powers.' Labberton later again wanted a 'constitutional change, which would make it possible to send Indies representatives to the Dutch parliament'. He proposed to add 20 deputies to the then 100 Dutch ones; interview, daily De Avondpost, quoted IG 1917 (39), 666-7, MRBD. LOC 20-9-1916, 2e blad, called the ISDV's demand for a real parliament in Indonesia 'social-neurasthenic', 'import democracy'.
8 Postscript to DEKKER(1916).
9 "Voorwoord Theosofie Vorweziging, Hindu dengan roepa-roepa perkoempoelan", PT 1916 (9), #1, 13-6. It existed at least till 1918, IV, 27-4, 8-6, 22-5-1918. Abdel Moes was its editor. Sneevliet in 1916 considered theosophy as an idealist, whose ideals we could not make ours, whose ideals we did not need, but whom we respected as a man who truly loved brotherhood. Unfortunately, we now must declare we have come to the conclusion that Mr v. H. L. now in our eyes does not differ from those propagandists of official religions, whose idealism is only an expedient to maintain a social order, clashing with neighbourly love and brotherhood, and making the personal pursuit of material success into the general rule. We admit readily that our opponent is a clever man, that he has influence ...... [in original] but add without any reserve, that we believe that this cleverness and influence are at the service of oppressors and oppressors' interest, and that the political movement of the oppressed should never forget this.
10 Labberton and other theosophists founded in 1916 in Jakarta a local electoral association called Melajoe. One exponent of it became Hadji Agoes Salim, since 1916 an active TS member. Salim, with A.F. Folkersma, translated Leadbeater's manual of theosophy into Malay as Kitab Theosophi in 1916. Salim's membership did not last long beyond early 1918. Sneevliet wanted to start a magazine linked to his ISDV. He wanted it to include also articles by non-socialist experts, "with this reservation, of course, that both other contributors and editors could object to their considerations." Just after the Semarang congress, he asked Van Hinthoopen Labberton to be one of these external contributors, to which eventually became Indonesian social democrat weekly Het Vrije Woord. Koch thought Van Hinthoopen Labberton's principles differed 180° from socialism ones. Letter by D.M.G. Koch in Buitenzorg to H. Sneevliet in Semarang, 12-10-1915. Sneevliet archive, HSG, Amsterdam, 1559/11-14. As published partly in TICHELMAN(1985), 310. KOCH(1915) considered theosophy 'a spiritual asylum for the psychically unbalanced'. Sociologists of religion Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark later, likewise, wrote in Religion and Society in Tension. Chicago, Rand McNally, 1969, 254: 'The entire occult milieu .. of [Theosophy, the I AM .. of the varying Flying Saucer groups] is made up of persons afflicted with psychic deprivations.' Koch had debated against theosophist Kiewiet de Jonge on Marx' theory of value. He thought Kiewiet de Jonge, though able for a theosophist, knew nothing of Marx' or others' theories. Kiewiet de Jonge's membership did not last long beyond early 1918. Sneevliet wanted to start a magazine linked to his ISDV. He wanted it to include also articles by non-socialist experts, "with this reservation, of course, that both other contributors and editors could object to their considerations." Just after the Semarang congress, he asked Van Hinthoopen Labberton to be one of these external contributors, to which eventually became Indonesian social democrat weekly Het Vrije Woord. Koch thought Van Hinthoopen Labberton's principles differed 180° from socialism ones. Letter by D.M.G. Koch in Buitenzorg to H. Sneevliet in Semarang, 12-10-1915. Sneevliet archive, HSG, Amsterdam, 1559/11-14. As published partly in TICHELMAN(1985), 310. KOCH(1915) considered theosophy 'a spiritual asylum for the psychically unbalanced'. Sociologists of religion Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark later, likewise, wrote in Religion and Society in Tension. Chicago, Rand McNally, 1969, 254: 'The entire occult milieu .. of [Theosophy, the I AM .. of the varying Flying Saucer groups] is made up of persons afflicted with psychic deprivations.' Koch had debated against theosophist Kiewiet de Jonge on Marx' theory of value. He thought Kiewiet de Jonge, though able for a theosophist, knew nothing of Marx' or others' theories. Kiewiet de Jonge's membership did not last long beyond early 1918. Sneevliet wanted to start a magazine linked to his ISDV. He wanted it to include also articles by non-socialist experts, "with this reservation, of course, that both other contributors and editors could object to their considerations." Just after the Semarang congress, he asked Van Hinthoopen Labberton to be one of these external contributors, to which eventually became Indonesian social democrat weekly Het Vrije Woord.
monolithic, consistency as a basis for politics? Sneevliet suggested so much later, after social democrat-TS contradictions had aggravated on the war question. He then described Theosophical Society membership as 'in most cases totally ignorant about hardship, not knowing it from experience, nor from observation.' Not only in social being, but also in social consciousness, theosophy differed from more numerous religions: 'This is a difference between Christianity and theosophy.' A minority among Christians still reproached the powerful with their crimes. But from the theosophists' ranks, only voices sound for support of militarism, which will bring humanity new disasters. 4

In the editorial of the Indies theosophical monthly, Van Hinloopen Labberton reacted to Sneevliet’s early 1916 separation of theosophy and politics. That separation was correct for Sneevliet’s view of what politics was:

There should be partisanship, there should be strife, one class should be incited against the other one, is what he [Sneevliet] means. And therefore he cannot expect anything from the work of our Electoral Association Meljoe. 5

However, a different view of what politics was existed:

The ancient politicians were the pupils of Pythagoras who had learned to serve the public interest in a truly Theosophical way, doing their duties for duties’ sake, and not on account of personal wages. The statesmen, as Plato depicts them in his POLITHEIA [TH spelling sic], had to be Theosophists. 6

De Locomotief thought of Labberton:

Bringing every social or political activity under direct or indirect influence of his philosophy is not one of Mr Van Hinloopen Labberton’s least qualities. With him, action and organization are subject to his theosophical convictions. 7

When Count van Limburg Stirum became governor-general, he received in audience on 13 May 1916 Labberton and then still referendaris [under secretary], a few months later government secretary. A.G. Vreede, as delegates of the TS executive. 8

The question of bad housing for most of the urban population in Indonesia caused another clash. Westerveld, a social democratic member of Semarang town-council, spoke on this in June 1916 in Jakarta, and proposed inhabitants’ action committees as a remedy.

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1SNEEVLIET (1916E), H. Sneevliet, ‘Een nieuwe onbeschaamtheid’, HVW, 20-12-1917, called members of theosophist Kiwiw de Jonge’s local electoral association in Bogor ‘well-connected substantial citizens, though they are not especially firm in character.’

2SNEEVLIET (1916E)

3VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916B), 196. Also other religious people might see Sneevliet’s view as materialist, not taking into account spiritual unity even as social and economic interests differed.

4VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916B), 196-7.

5LOC, 21-7-1916, ‘De Locomotiefthought of Lahherton:’

6SNEEVLIET (1916B), 110.
Van Hinkelop Labberton then from the floor sharply opposed this 'call for class struggle. That was bringing division, where co-operation might be possible, that was inciting one group of citizens against another one, etc.' Westerveld commented:

But Mr Van Hinkelop Labberton shuns struggle, he does not want hatred and discord, he wants neighbourly love. We [social democrats want this too, that is why we fight against a society which divides into two camps, those who own property and those who lack it, and which causes wars, as we have one now].

3. Conscription, the 'axis of all political activity'

Dutch Minister of Colonies Th. B. Pleyte, introducing his 1916 budget, wanted 'to replace the very expensive professional army [in Indonesia] by a bigger and cheaper one' of conscripts. The most important question, more so than housing, in the conflict between theosophists and socialists became whether conscription should be introduced for Indonesians. That was the 'axis around which all political activity in this country' revolved then. De Locomotief wrote: 'For the first time, in the Indies a political question has been posed, on which truly general interest has come alive, among both European and native groups.' Minister Pleyte himself also recognized the central role of the conscription debate in waking up the earlier 'slumbering political life in the Netherlands Indies'. Various fundamental questions became linked to it, 'like the relationship to Dutch authority, awarding political rights ... the Indies and the Javanese nationalism, the economical uplift, and others'.

A month after the World War broke out, on 13 September 1914, six hundred people had met in Semarang in the Stadion (city park). They were of Sarekat Islam, of the transport workers' union VSTP with many socialist members, and of moderate nationalist organization Budi Utomo. Radjinan of BU and the TS was chairman. Also present was 'a brother of the susuhunan'; possibly Prince Koesoemodiningrat, prominent theosophist and socialists became whether conscription should be introduced for Indonesians. That was the 'axis around which all political activity in this country' revolved then. De Locomotief wrote: 'For the first time, in the Indies a political question has been posed, on which truly general interest has come alive, among both European and native groups.' Minister Pleyte himself also recognized the central role of the conscription debate in waking up the earlier 'slumbering political life in the Netherlands Indies'. Various fundamental questions became linked to it, 'like the relationship to Dutch authority, awarding political rights ... the Indies and the Javanese nationalism, the economical uplift, and others'.

The meeting applauded Soedjono's speech. Soemarsono, a jurist and sceptic on conscription in the BU executive, accepted that the meeting would not decide to help the government, and closed it.

From 1915, Budi Utomo answered the conscription question with a yes, but ...
conditional on the government establishing a representative institution. Van Hinloopen Labberton, to the socialists' dismay, asked BU to drop that linkage, and support military service unconditionally. Snoeveld thought Budi Utomo's was

s, slyly-shyly view on militarism. But even this seems to go too far for Mr v. Labberton. Surrender to the armed forces is what he wants the Javanese intellectuals to do, unconditionally. And thus, this gentleman shows that he can make compatible with the "high ideals of theosophy", can make compatible with sense of brotherhood, with loving one's neighbour, action in favour of militarism, which here too, is on the increase; and which especially reaches its goal if it unleashes a general butchery of people. Thus, this colonial ethician advocates zealously non-that-ethical militarism, which should make possible political reforms. Thus, this "friend of the Javanese" appears as an apostle of Dutch colonial imperialism. We should point this out, as Mr v. H. L. has influence within the world of Javanese intellectuals because of his theosophical propaganda, and thus, his exhortation should not pass unnoticed.1

Later, in July 1916, the committee Indië Weerbaar [Arm the Indies. Literally, 'ableness Indies'] was founded, promoting compulsory military service for eligible male inhabitants of the country. In the Dutch East Indies TS monthly, Van Hinloopen Labberton, the father of Indië Weerbaar,2 explained it: the rule of non-violence was in the present age only valid for it, was only the dharma for, a small minority of saintly hermits. Even married priests of the Brahman caste had to defend their families. The dharma differed still more from non-violence for non-Brahmans:

I think that it is urgent to arm the Indies well to prevent threatening troubles and that the desirable defensive arms will be a strong contribution to Law and Order [Dutch: Rust en Vrede].

The Netherlands deserves to stay on, to be the Western teacher of Insulinde [Indonesia], provided that The Netherlands realizes its task as Guardian.3

Retsink, who a decade earlier had attempted unsuccessfully to link TS and SDAP, also

linkage, had been in the Budi Utomo platform, as point 9b, in 1917: LOC, 6-7-1917, 'Het program van Boedi Oetomo.' The 1919 congress of [more or less] BU’s youth organisation Jong Java rejected conscription, WED, 1919, 107. In early 1924, Dwidjosewojo and his BU executive proposed to the congress a program of 'Home Rule and introduction of a Native militia'; NIE, Feb. 1924, 38.

1SNEEVELD (1916A), 110; written, as some other articles, under the pen name -.

2Spelling not "Weerbaar" as in McVEY (1965), passim. EN, vol. III, 699. KORVER, 59-62. Also translated as Indies Defence; Indies Home Defence. The adjective 'Weerbaar' was behind the substantive, indicating a situation which the committee thought of as desirable, rather than actual.

3FATAH (1917). Captain Rhemrev and Labberton would later quarrel about who really was "the father of Indië Weerbaar." Labberton admitted that 'Mr Rhemrev first spoke to me on the matter'; but that was not enough for organizational fatherhood. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 612.

4VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916D), 516.

explained Indië Weerbaar. His explanation was critical, 'materialist' social, not Labberton's religious caste doctrine:

For some years, in the theosophists' ranks, the need has been felt for social work, that is, for social prestige! They have such hobbies in "charity", "education", etcetera. Mr LABBERTON for the first time, as a theosophist, has wanted to play a political role, and is very successful at this within the ranks of the bourgeois theosophists. The "Indië Weerbaar" movement has been an excellent way to increase the social prestige of theosophy [...] [in original] in walks of life, which aim at something very different from wisdom! But Mr LABBERTON and his supporters do not care at all about that. If only success comes, if only the socially powerful of these times cast an approving little glance at the nice tinkering of the theosophical Indies and gentlemen.1

Indië Weerbaar wanted "To make the Indies able to defend themselves, by cooperation of all people's categories, under the leadership of the Dutch government."2 Van Hinloopen Labberton advocated this not only from the IW and Theosophical Society platforms, but also in the Officers' League of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army.3

Labberton's electoral association Melatie soon discussed Indië Weerbaar. With Notoatmodjo, eventually a major conscription opponent, in the chair, debates were

1RESINK (1917).

2MOESIS (1917A), Mere, ibid., also wrote of "a living wall of armed forces, determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible:" LOC, 26-1-1917, quoted daily Nieuwe Courant: to establish a strong Indies army, consisting of natives; in order that the people, primarily its nobility and its noble ones, will have more affection towards the Dutch Empire, of which, then, they will really understand that they form part.' Professor H T. Colenbrander wrote in De Gods, 1917, 1, 580-1: "Without him [the Native] we will never make it [Dutch]." The original Indië Weerbaar resolution for 31 August 1916 explicitly named conscription for Indonesians. Insistence from the Sarekar Islands executive changed this to a more vague desire for stronger defence, leaving it to the Dutch government whether conscripting Indonesians was the way to this. In the public discussion between IW opponents and supporters, conscription, though, remained the main point: VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 610-4.

3LOC, 16-7-1916, 'Defensive-pragvat'; also published IG, 1916 (38), 1405-7: the Officers' League offered a 300 guilder prize in a contest for best 20-40 page pamphlet. The pamphlets should be 'preferably written as narratives' and would be translated into the main native languages. Their contents should be "an overview, comprehensible to the native population, of the great importance of strong armed forces to the Dutch East Indies; and also showing the necessity of founding a militia among people living in the Dutch East Indies." The three-man jury for the contest were: Labberton, Major W.H. Holle, ITS (HUGRAHA (1989), 254); and Armed Police Deputy Inspector J.C.A. Baarsma. The League's magazine, Organon der Nederlandse-Indische Officers-vereniging, had reported on an Indies Military Science Society meeting on 6 March 1916 about introducing conscription. Also Indonesians had been invited to speak. The article was 'more or less disappointed' in their speeches: 'We had hoped for and expected ... more assent from the native side.' Some speakers, like Jong-Java leader Sastrowidjo and linked to conscription; Sastro Admedjo was an outright opponent. Meeting chairman Captain Munting had protested against the criticism. SOERIANINGRAT (1916/17), 148-92; IG, 1916 (38), 968-9 and 1408, HRBDT.
From another side, people argued that one should consider especially that linkage to be a major mistake, as it would take away the [Indie Weerbaar] campaign’s value as an expression of spontaneity. People on that side pointed out that equal rights and all of the world’s Colonial Councils would be useless, if another sovereignty were to replace the Dutch one. From another government one might not expect that it would continue the civilizing task, which burdens The Netherlands has taken upon its shoulders over the last decades. The meeting that night did not reach a ‘definite decision’. Labberton’s pro-conscription stance was said to have cost his Melajoe ‘hundreds of members already immediately’.

For 31 August, Queen Wilhelmina’s birthday, Indie Weerbaar planned a public demonstration. From 1916 till 1918 that was its day of maximum activity. To prepare for it, the committee met in Jakarta on Sunday morning 23 July 1916. The meeting was not open to the public, though reporters of the friendly Locomotive and Bataviaasch Handelsblad attended. Of the twenty committee members present, one was Chinese, the local ‘major of Chinese’ (a government-appointed official); one, the local bupati’s pustik (secretary) was ‘native’: two were women. At least four of those present, as far as the local ‘major of Chinese’ ‘A major part of Ambonese [soldiers from the Moluccas; then in Jakarta] are against’ indie Weerbaar tried to get them all to back it, and did get support; much opposition too though.

For instance, the Chinese community was virtually unanimously against. Sneevelt sneeringly suggested to Van Hinloopen Labberton a solution for this: enlisting ‘theosophical Chinese’. A major part of Ambonese [soldiers from the Moluccas] in Indonesia government pawnshop employees, the PPPB, rejected indie Weerbaar:

as it thinks this is militarism propaganda. Besides, this union thinks that militarism strengthens capitalism. Against that, the indigenous people, many of whom are proletarians, should fight.

Daily Tjaja-Timoe commented on indie Weerbaar:

1NUGRAHA(1989), 244. TICHELMAN(1985), 444. LOC. 23-7-1916. ‘Indie Weerbaar’. LOC. 26-7-1916. ‘Indie Weerbaar’ RAN 1917, 719. Folkersma later went to The Netherlands, and founded the Omroen TS lodge there, close to the OSE centre; TMNI 1923, 615
2LOC. 26-7-1916. ‘De weerbaarheidsleuze.’ IG, 1916 (58). ‘Vergetend Comité Indie Weerbaar’, 1558-9; reprint from Bataviaasch Handelsblad: ‘Mr Vreede proposes to ban political debates at the big meeting and just to have the motion passed there.’
3SURYA NINGRAT(1918), 34.
4Sneevelt, HVW, 25-9-1916, 250. ‘De Chineesche bewolking en de Weerbaarheid’; pre-iw papers reported the apostle of conscription v [van] Hinloopen Labberton has not succeeded in a great meeting of Chinese, in convincing the Chinese, that indie Weerbaar represents a Chinese interest as well.’ Already LOC. 25-8-1916, 2e blad. ‘De Stang Boe en indie Weerbaar’ reported on a Stang Boe league meeting. Of 100 people present, only one supported indie Weerbaar. In HVW, 6-10-1916. ‘De Chineesse en de Deputatie’, Sneevelt wrote: ‘The solution is obvious. Let a handful of theosophical Chinese form some new association, form a league of [government-appointed] majors, captains and lieutenants, maybe some will volunteer, and then, one will be able to swindle with the will of the people of the Chinese as well.’ In his speech in The Hague to the Military Science Society, Labberton mentioned the ‘impure role’ of the Chinese and Malay language press. LOC. 24-8-1917, 1e blad. ‘De militie in Indie.’
5DOEWA TENGAT, 203; quoted KOT, 1917, ‘Persoverzicht’, 112.
6VAN DER WAL(1967), 460.
7LOC. 24-8-1916, ‘Indie Weerbaar.’
Now that the Indies are in danger by the war in Europe, they contact the indigenous and Chinese associations, which they ignore at other times. The paper predicted ‘failure’.1

4. Marco and the battle for Sarekat Islam

Winning the support of the country’s biggest organization, the Sarekat Islam (see p. 294), would be an asset to Indië Weerbaar; also, because Sarekat Islam had sympathies among the left in The Netherlands, thus improving chances for conscription all over the political spectrum.

Pantjoran-Warta, the daily of R. Goenawan, until November 1916 vice president of Sarekat Islam,2 opposed Indië Weerbaar strongly. One of its editors, Mas Marco Kartodikromo, though not FrS, had some sympathy for theosophy, in early 1916 until IW began.3 He then was away to The Netherlands. There, he had contacts with anti-militarist spectrum of the left in The Netherlands, thus improving chances for conscription all over the political spectrum. Marco there also published anti-IW cartoons, and his poem against conscription, named ‘Indie Weerbaar Committee’!

Marco thought a militia of Indonesians would be primarily for internal oppression. Introducing the series, he quoted the famous story of Saidjah by 19th century Multatuli. Peasant’s son Saidjah, searching for his lost fiancee Adinda, came to a village ‘which the Dutch army had just conquered, so it was on fire, of course.’ Saidjah found the bodies of Adinda’s relatives. Then, dead, naked and horribly mutilated Adinda herself. Saidjah desperately tried to stop the soldiers with his bare hands, but got killed too. Marco thought if the Indië Weerbaar plans went ahead, then the next Saidjah and the next

19-2-1917, quoted IPO 8/1917, MCB, 19.

2LOC, 8-11-1916, ‘De leiding der S.I.’; based on Oetawaan Hindia. Moes accused Goenawan in De Peuragerbeide of supporting the Jambi armed uprising; Tjaha Tjoe, 103, Sept. 1916, quoted KOT, 1916, ‘Persoverzicht’ by A.H.J.G. Walrhem and Ch.P.J. Blok, 1674. In 1915-6, the relationship between Tjapa Mangokoesoemo and Goenawan was bad; ‘De Javaanse Pers’, ‘Persoverzicht’, KOT, 1916, 105. Still, both opposed IW, LOC, 3-7-1916, ‘Uit de Maleische pers. De militantie’, quoted a Panjoran-Warta anti-conscription article by ‘Semoro’ [ps.]. ‘Do the Javanese people need conscription?’ Conscription was ‘a taxation, which the Javanese has to pay with his life.’ ‘Why do we need to shed our blood to fight an enemy, as we are not asked what we think of what we want and like?’

On his way to The Netherlands, a letter included a Krishnamurti quote; Marco, ‘Daien pelajaran, Falmouth (England), 21 Augustus 1916’, PW, 12-10-1916, 1. SHIRAISHI(1990A), 302, writes of Marco in 1924, a PKI member then, as ‘a theosophist’. Was he really at the same time, then, both a PKI and TS member?

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Adinda would die at the hands of her own countrymen.1

1PW, 14-2-1917, 1, ‘Keterangan gambar di atas.’ DEKKER(1916): ‘They [Indië Weerbaar] only speak of a foreign enemy, but they mean the enemy at home [the trade unions] as well.’ Djawa Tengah # 192, of Aug. 1916, quoted KOT, 1916, ‘Persoverzicht’, wrote: ‘So, the militia really is intended as a weapon against the enemy at home, so, against our own brothers.’ SH, 8-5-1918, quoted KOT, 1918, 1450: ‘The Indies’ only enemies are the money-bags.’


3Marco, ‘Sama rasa dan sama rata’, IV, PW, 17-2-1917, 1.

4PW 23-2-1917; quoted IPO 8/1917, MJB, 9.
Soerabaja, 9-10-1929, quoted (39), 959, MRBTD.

Wished he Ihe III ' committee members were dead. The cartoon with the series' first article depicted a mas Marco. Lines from the poem 'Comite Indie Weerbaar':

be humans, but beasts. Is that not an insult to the government? Opinions on Marco varied widely: write: 'Were Ihe natives 10 that this accursed native defends my beloved Indies! ['Indies)!' The judge asked Marco: 'Vou... 

TJokroaminoto, said 'that money for defence of the Indies could not come from the autonoms.' We recognize the need of guidance by The Netherlands.' The editors of PANILAN-Warta replied:

To conclude our article, we should not be surprised that Lord Raden Djojosoediro, Editor-in-chief of PEMIRAN, also still editor of Pewarta Theosofie, takes "Buddhism" as the basis for our prosperity... But Muslims should fight that "Buddhism", jointly with the Social Democratic society ¹

Fastah wrote that not only theosophy 'destroyed' Islam, it also did not square up with all this cost Marco a two years' jail sentence.¹

Throughout 1916-7, Muhammad Djoenarto, co-editor Abdullah Fatah (later chairman of the Petroleum Workers Union),² and others wrote sharp attacks on the Theosophical Society in PANILAN-WARTA. That angered supporters of pro-government Jakarta dailies PEMIRAN first, MERDEKA later. One of them wrote an anonymous letter to PW, signing it 'Orang Bogor' [inhabitant of Bogor]. He said that there were many crazy and 'koerang adjar' [uncivilized] people, but none as bad as the PANILAN-WARTA editors. He accused them of writing against INDIE WEERBAAR without attending its meetings. Editor R. M. Prauwira Ningrat replied:

To conclude our article, we should not be surprised that Lord Raden Djojosoediro, Editor-in-chief of PEMIRAN, also still editor of Pewarta Theosofie, takes "Buddhism" as the basis for our prosperity... But Muslims should fight that "Buddhism", jointly with the Social Democratic society ¹

Fastah wrote that not only theosophy 'destroyed' Islam, it also did not square up with either Buddhism or Hinduism. There never was any news of Labberton 'meditating up in the mountains to meet the Divine Teacher Vishnu.' Rather, Labberton 'every month lined his pockets with money which also comes from Kromo [non-privileged Javanese].' Labberton only got more power from theosophy, 'theosophy is just a tool to get gold.'

Due to the war in Europe, Mr Labberton has unmasked himself; as he asked the indigenous people especially to draw the sword to chase away the enemies, whom he thought would come, and would disregard his doctrine of magnanimity. Maybe he is scared that the people lining his pockets will be free. Surprise!

Fastah concluded:

From Mr Labberton's exhortation to draw the sword against the enemy, we may infer that theosophical doctrine is nothing but a way to keep the Indies under the Netherlands.

Fastah did not distrust all Dutch officials though, he saw D.A. Rinkes as an ally against Van Hinloopen Labberton. The popular goodwill that Rinkes created, 'is constantly destroyed by Mr Labberton and his Theosophy. This is not important though. If PANILAN-WARTA editors had really thought theosophy as unimportant in Indonesia as Engels thought it in England, they might have written just a paragraph on it, like him, not their many pages.

An unsigned leading article in OCTOES AM HINDIA, the paper of Sarekat Islam president Tjokroaminoto, said 'that money for defence of the Indies could not come from the natives, the people are too poor for that.' Finally, the author advises the "Indie Wenbaar" committee, if it wants to get the native organizations to cooperate with it, to try to be like the points which he had mentioned.³

Van Hinloopen Labberton's supporter in the executive, and since November Goenawam's successor, Aboel Moeis,¹ was 'unconditionally a partisan of making the Indies able to defend themselves.' He admitted, though:

¹Fastah (1917). VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916C). 247-8 accused Rinkes of 'dark machinations' against the theosophist teachers' training school Goenawam Sari.

²LOC, 31-7-1916, 'Uit de Maleische pers. Indie's weerbaarheid.' Tjokroaminoto linked assent to conditions: KORVER, 60. In ENI, # 192, Aug. 1916, quoted KOT, 1916, 'Persoverzicht', 576, 835; appeared an article by him, which assented to defence, but not to conscription. The Bataviaasche Courant wrote on Tjokroaminoto's 'The S.I. in fact does not want anything of this military defense, but it would be politically clever to say so clearly.' Quoted IG, 1918 (40), 470, MRBTD.

³New spelling 'Muis'; 1890-1957; 1928 Aug. 1916. quoted ENU, vol. 10, 393. He was from Sungei Puar in Sumatra: IG, 1918 (40), 434. MRBTD. But Padang-born; MOEIS (1917A). His title of nobility was gelar sultan panghalee, ENI, VI, 352. KOVER, 238-9: he moved to Java, becoming a journalist after earlier work as a civil servant.

⁴MOEIS (1917A). Moeis added, not as a condition: 'The Indies should become mature and autonomous... we recognize the need of guidance by the Netherlands.' The editors of De Locomotive, for which Moeis wrote, added a note to 'unconditionally,' to them, conscription 'seemed only to be admissible if at the same time native education in all its forms was brought to a higher level.'
Not long ago, the general view of my fellow party members was: We are sold out to the Blonds [Dutch] by Abdoel Moeis.1

He recalled one West Java meeting in an article for daily De Preangerbode:

I was almost on my own, people cursed me and called the names like traitor to my country ... They did not want to become serdadoe [soldiers], and that was it!

Moeis' critics worried that 'anak bini [children and wife] would not be taken care of.'2 Abdoel Moeis estimated that on 13 September 1916, of Sarekat Islam's 120 local branches, only 20 supported conscription.3 Months later in Amsterdam, he faced an estimate by Soewardi Soerianingrat that 99% of SI members opposed Indie Weerbaar.4 Moeis called this 'definitely a lie.' He did not contrast his own earlier estimate to Soerdjat's, but now said that 'out of 120 branches on Java, only three were against.'5

The majority of the Sarekat Islam executive finally, without enthusiasm and with linkage, decided to support IW.6 Tjokroaminoto was ill, though sometimes present.

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The majority of the Sarekat Islam executive finally, without enthusiasm and with linkage, decided to support IW.6 Tjokroaminoto was ill, though sometimes present.

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Local branches never got a chance to vote on the decision at an SI national congress. According to the Bandung daily Periembungan, Moeis, talking to Sarekat left-winger Semaen, admitted that in Indie Weerbaar he did not represent the branches, but only the national executive. By order of the government, that national executive had to keep somewhat separate from the locals. Thus, the numerically few at national level were easier to influence, for instance from the Theosophical Society; than at local level, where commited Muslims, leftists, or secular nationalists, might be stronger opposition.

In a letter to De Locomotief, Sarekat Islam member Prijathin thought that even if SI leaders would get concessions from the Dutch government in return for conscription, that would not be good for Indonesians or for Sarekat Islam. Only a small elite would benefit from those concessions. The people would be split into 'the soldier caste (k s a t e y a s) and the coolie caste (s o e d r a s).4

Indie Weerbaar founded local committees to organize meetings on 31 August in cities besides Jakarta. In Medan in Sumatra, W.H. van Tijen, head administrator of Deli limited and chairman of the Deli planters league, and H. Ketner, of the Dutch-American Plantation Company, vice chairman of the East Sumatra rubber planters league, and since 1915 Volksraad member, did that. In Surabaya, Hirsch, chairman of the sugar business syndicate, became IW chairman.6

Moeis' fellow delegate Dwijoneswojo said that 'under no circumstances the non-proportioned classes should be taxed to pay for the defence budget.' VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1916/17), 603.

Moeis(1917A).

LOC., 20-8-1917, 1e blad, 'Sarekat Islam en de SDAP.' In the Dutch parliament, social democrat Rader Troestra quoted a telegram from Soerdjat with the 95% estimate. LOCAL, 24-5-1917. 'De milieui in de Tweede Kamer. I. Rode; Mr. Troestra.' Nototvijodojo estimated at the ISDV general meeting of 28-5-1917 that 'at least 90% of SI members' disagreed with IW; TICHELMAN(1985).510.

LOC., 20-8-1917, 1e blad, 'Sarekat Islam en de SDAP.' SI also had many branches on other islands. NOER, 119 did not mention Moeis' earlier figures and accepted for 1916 the 3 of 120 figure from Nienja 29-9-1917, then, for many it was a matter of re-opening a divisive issue rather than of contents.

Surabaya SI leader Raden Achmad opposed it; VAN DER WAL(1967). Moeis had already joined the local IW committee in Bandung, HVW, 10-8-1916. 207. Finally, he did join the all-Indies IW committee as SI representative; VAN DER WAL(1967).501. At a public meeting, Tjokroaminoto defended the executive's pro-conscription decision. But he also pointed out that Indie Weerbaar's aims were 'first and foremost the protection of capitalism; so it would be only just if capital owners would bear the majority of conscription's costs.' He then 'sarcasstically' mentioned big sugar business; LOCAL, 20-2-1917, 2e blad, 'De S.I. meeting te Tjilatip.' Socialist Soerato Mentoko, 25-4-1917, 5-6, 'Lagii hal Weerbaarheid,' took notice. Moeis, though, in a interview with daily Het Volk, quoted LOCAL, 4-5-1917, 'Abdoel Moeis aan het woord,' said: 'For this conscription, one needs money. And it seems that one will have to get it for a major, if not, the major, part in the Indies, which boils down to direct or indirect taxation of the natives.'

around decision time. Social democrats saw the resolution as the consequence of government pressure, which the official Van Hinloopen Lawbergen, present at the non-public executive meeting of 29 August in Blitar, had applied.2

Local branches never got a chance to vote on the decision at an SI national congress. According to the Bandung daily Periembungan, Moeis, talking to Sarekat left-winger Semaen, admitted that in Indie Weerbaar he did not represent the branches, but only the national executive. By order of the government, that national executive had to keep somewhat separate from the locals. Thus, the numerically few at national level were easier to influence, for instance from the Theosophical Society; than at local level, where commited Muslims, leftists, or secular nationalists, might be tougher opposition.

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Moeis' fellow delegate Dwijoneswojo said that 'under no circumstances the non-proportioned classes should be taxed to pay for the defence budget.' VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1916/17), 603.

Moeis(1917A).
In Semarang, the mayor and the bupati joined. The committee wrote Mohamed Joesoef, local Sarekat Islam chairman, also supported them. But by the time they published that, Joesoef’s position had already changed, however. The SI branch met on 5 August. Joesoef said he had asserted to the request to join, as he thought that might make it ‘easier to ask for rights to have influence in government matters.’ So this view also was not as ‘spontaneous’ as Van Hinloopen Labberton might have liked. Members argued though, that the Dutch East Indies budget already spent 62.1 million guilders on the armed forces, and only 6.4 million on ‘native’ education. They voted that Joesoef should resign from Indië Weerbaar; and he did.2

The Indië Weerbaar delegation, led by Van Hinloopen Labberton, included representatives of organizations like Pangeran Aryo Koesoemodiningrat, the susuhanan of Surakarta’s elder brother, of the Princes’ League. According to various sources, they were not the only two FTS here; ‘some more Javanese members’ were among the other delegates.3 Danoesoegondo went on behalf of the bupati’s union, Dwidjosewojo for Budi Utomo; army lieutenant Rhemrev also went.4 The delegation was to bring the military requests to Queen Wilhelmina of The Netherlands and her government. In attacking Labberton, the socialist magazine questioned his theosophical philosophy:

Someone who speaks in favour of militarism, in a conquered country with a people heavily burdened by taxes, whose mode of production enables only minor accumulation of capital in this country, makes his own religion or morality a farce. Someone who does this and directs the Indies movement towards militarism, abuses it, and puts it into direct service of imperialism, of Dutch Colonial-Capitalism.

Sneevliet also called people like Koesoemodiningrat, whom he did not name. ‘Mendacious ... the Djojoja [Yogyakarta] pangeran ... who on behalf of all of the people of the Indies dare to ask for armament.’ In the daily De Locomotief, Surakarta court physician Radjiman, a theosophist like his client Koesoemodiningrat, pointed out Sneevliet’s mistake in Yogyakarta vs. Surakarta. He also protested against words like ‘mendacious’, and defended Indië Weerbaar. Radjiman wrote it was not, as Sneevliet said, ‘only for capital, but for the people’s right to exist.’5

5. Semarang and buffalo, tiger, and lion

In August 1916, the two fellow theosophists and designated members of the delegation to Queen Wilhelmina, Van Hinloopen Labberton and Prince Koesoemodiningrat, went to Semarang to reverse the local anti-IW mood. They wanted to do that before their own public meetings on 31 August, the queen’s birthday. At a joint anti-conscription meeting of the ISDV, Insulindae, and Sarekat Islam local branches, on the morning of 20 August, Labberton showed up. But a unanimous vote immediately asked him to leave, as this was an internal action-organizing meeting, not a meeting to debate with pro-conscriptionists. Labberton claimed the right to attend, as he said he was a Sarekat Islam member. His opponents, though, doubted that. Being Muslim faith was a condition for membership. SI and social democrat papers repeatedly wrote on that point during the next months.6

Labberton and Koesoemodiningrat now attempted to turn around views of anti-conscriptionist organizations one by one, after the failure at the joint meeting. First, they tried to get the Semarang SI branch executive meeting on the afternoon of the same day to reverse their members’ decision to oppose Indië Weerbaar. Of the two senior theosophists, Van Hinloopen Labberton was a high-ranking employee of Dutch government, which for nearly three centuries local people had come to know as dangerous to oppose. To

1LOC, 11-8-1916, ‘Indië Weerbaar.’

2LOC, 11-8-1916, 2e blad, ‘S.I. vergadering’. C. van de Kamer, a Semarang FTS supporter, reacted to the opponents’ education argument: ‘You want schools more schools. OK, but then two machine-guns for each school, and one cannon for each five.’ LOC, 14-8-1916, ‘De propaganda vergadering van de I.D.P. te Jogja.’

3TICHELMAN(1994), 187: Governor-General Van Limburg Stirum appointed him. LOC, 28-3-1917, ‘Poliëte en delegatie’; the delegates were ‘people, all tested for first class loyalty to the government.’

4According to the Bandung correspondent of LOC, 6-10-1916, 1e blad, ‘Bandanese en ander nieuws’, Koesoemodiningrat also undertook the journey to accompany some sons of his ruling brother, on their way as students to ‘negeri blanda [The Netherlands].’ The sultan’s children have a house of their own there, in Oegagoege [west of Leiden], where they live together.

5HVW, 19-8-1916, 125. See also p. 205.

6W.V. Rhemrev, one of IW’s two secretaries in the four member executive, a captain since just before the delegates’ departure, later a major, was army counter-insurgency specialist, in Aceh in the 1900’s and against communists in 1927; and in the 1930’s-40’s a leader of the Dutch East Indies National Socialists. LOC, 6-7-1916, ‘Indië Weerbaar.’ VAN J., EEUWEN(1917A), 438; L. DE JONG, vol. 11a, 304; 366; 528.
some Sarekat Islam leaders, he also was the most trusted Dutchman. He knew Indonesian languages and culture well. And he spoke in the first city where his Indies TS had obtained a permanent foothold. Prince Koeseominingrat was a leading member of a family which for even longer than three centuries had represented supreme worldly authority over most of Java. It had represented religious authority too, both pre-Muslim and Muslim; a family very much revered, even within the emancipatory "SI."

However, when these two asked the workers, low-ranking civil servants, and small traders of the Semarang Sarekat Islam, whether or not they denounced their opposition to conscription, the humble people replied politely but clearly 'noboten'.

The third meeting that day was a public debate in the evening, at the Semarang Military Club. First, Labberton spoke. Everyone noted he had put on a head-dress of the Surakarta type; 'clearly, to win the hearts of the Sarekat Islam people.' First, he protested against Mohamed Joesoef, 'who had left him in the lurch', resigning from Indie Weerbaar. Joesoef replied that, as elected chairman, he had to comply with 'quasi-universal' ideas in his branch. His earlier views, based on tactical considerations, had changed. Labberton said:

"We live in very unusual times. In normal circumstances, there were enough armed forces to maintain law and order, but now, the Indies' defence was inadequate. He wanted a 'defensive militarism.' The Dutch government no longer saw the Indies as a conquered country, but as a colony. A conquered country is completely exploited for the benefit of the mother country; a colony, though, is seen that way; nor are the Indies."

Labberton said 'making the Indies able to defend themselves would also contribute to more order and discipline [Dutch: orde en tucht]." Who opposed defence? Socialists, 'who do not know what a fatherland is'; and old-style Dutch dandies.

In the debate, Sneevliet replied first. He thanked Van Hinloopen Labberton for at least debating, while colonial officials banned anti-conscription meetings. Sneevliet's idea of association differed from Labberton's: 'In practice, Mr. L. neglects brotherhood. He does not differ from Christian propagandists for quick-firing cannons, Talma and Kuyper [leaders of the Dutch Anti-Revolutionaire Partij]. The reality of the First World War had shown that Van Hinloopen Labberton's line between 'offensive' and 'defensive militarism' was really fluid indeed. What was Indie Weerbaar? Support for imperialist politics. Count van Limburg Stirum, the new governor-general, was at its origin, not 'spontaneity'.

Teuwen of Insulinde was the next debater. Men like Labberton wanted to impose more duties on the people, but thought we were still too immature for more rights. We are considered mature enough to do duty for cannon fodder, however. Ethical gentlemen, give us that money [for the military] for schools, give us more education, give us better houses. No country has ever prospered through militarism.

Next came Semarang socialist local councillor Westerveld. 'We should have the means for learning, not for defence [Dutch: leermiddelen, maar geen verweer-middelen], teachers, not military men.'

Telg asked Labberton why, as a theosophist, he promoted Indie Weerbaar. How about theosophical doctrines 'of brotherhood and love?"

Then came Semaoen, a public transport worker and leading member of both ISDV and Sarekat Islam. Soon, he would write the anti-conscription book Indie Weerbaar. This book, in Malay, was the best sold Marxist one in Indonesia, at least until 1922. Later, he became the first chairman of Indonesia's communists. Semaoen said he opposed "Mr. His people had no say at all in their own country."

Labberton replied: 'Big sounding phrases', like Sneevliet's, were 'useless. We should be practical.' Then, Labberton tried to divide nationalist Insulinde people from internationalist social democrats, 'who do not understand nationalism at all.' He replied to Telg: 'In practice, we are not so far yet that these [theosophical] ideals may already be applied completely."

To Van Hinloopen Labberton, 'the Javanese people' was a kerbau, a domestic buffalo. The Dutch government was its faithful cowherd. An evil tiger was on the prowl,
and the kerbau should support its herd. The tiger was Japan. That remark by Labberton had repercussions which eventually sent Japanese journalist Yoroyoshi Minami to jail for one year. From the audience came a reaction: a lion is in the Dutch coat of arms; so, a carnivorous animal as well. True, Labberton and Djojosoediro’s daily wrote later; but the lion ‘is magnanimous and the tiger is not.’ If people joined the army, Labberton continued, then the buffalo would get horns; that would be good for both animal and herd. At this point, Semaoen interrupted the speech. He resented the kerbau metaphor; and had a long argument about it in Javanees with Labberton.

Semaoen, looking back at the incident weeks later, expected in the future the world will not be divided into domestic buffaloes and ‘bojah-anong’ [cowboys]. Then, all people will stand next to one another, free and with equal rights.

At this point, Sernaoen interrupted the speech. He resented the kerbau metaphor; and had a long argument about it in Javanees with Labberton.

Semaoen hoped for a future of ‘able-bodiedness’ in socio-economic, not military, sense; when ‘cannons and other tools of murder would be unknown in the Indies.’

After the end of the evening meeting, Van Hinloopen Labberton tried to reverse Insulinde chairman Topee’s views individually, again in vain; to the anger of anti-conscriptionists. At first, Labberton spoke to Topee in a ‘very sugary’ [manis manis] way. When this did not work, he ‘intimidated’ Topee. He said that the governor-general might ban Insulinde and the ISDY. Pontjara-Warta wrote that Labberton was busy slandering Indonesia’s political organizations to the governor-general; but hoped that Van Limburg Stirum would not buy it.

6. Countdown to the queen’s birthday

A few days later, opponents’ charges that Indië Weerbaar was not spontaneous, but government-linked, got unexpected support from a pro-conscription leader: Prince Koesoemodiningrat. He spoke for a militie to the annual general meeting of the Dorah Mangenengaran, the league of relatives of the Mangkoe Negoro dynasty:

‘Really though, there is a secret behind this. It is, that the committee is a blind [Dutch: dekmantel] to the government, who wants this [conscription] Pangeran Koesoemodiningrat can totally agree with the Indië Weerbaar committee, as its aim is nothing but to pay homage and loyalty to the government [Javanees: agungkanan sekuasa daeng kanggipun pemerintahan]. As it appears from the wayang stories, loyalty and devotion to one’s master is a human’s highest honour, and as a man has to the sooner or later anyhow, he should do it honourably.’

Naropswauru, the relatives’ league of the susuhunan, the major one of Surakarta’s two rulers, also met on Indië Weerbaar. ‘A pangeran’ addressed them, favouring it, and reminding them they were ksatriyas. Very probably, the pangeran was Arjo Koesoemodiningrat, the family’s senior male member. After he spoke, there was a ‘vemement debate.’ Many did not object to the government expanding the armed forces;

1LOC, 21-8-1916, 2e blad, ‘De vergadering van Indië Weerbaar’; HW, 25-8-1916, 218: ‘The Javanese, thus he [Labberton] said in his Semarang speech, should be compared with a domestic buffalo, which cannot dispense with its cowherd, the Westerner … and which with its labour power helps to sustain its master as well.’

2LOC, 28-9-1916, ‘Het artikel van Minami.’ Gelezen werde - ‘Berhooibroedt langjkapen teoem Minami’, PW, 2-10-1916. TICHELMAN (1985), 411. In Periikelangan, 18-9-1916, Minami wrote an article, ‘Who is more cruel?’ In it, he called Labberton a pangeran [provoker] who, ordered to do so by the government, had blamed abroad that Japan was acting harshly in Taiwan and Korea. Why did he write it? ‘The accused [Snoevliet] says: the speech, which Mr Van Hinloopen Labberton held in Semarang, for the Indië Weerbaar movement; and in which he said that Japan is the Indies’ only enemy … According to the accused, the people generally thought that these gentlemen [Labberton and H. Mouw] spoke in the name of the Dutch East Indies government.’ As a witness, Periikelangan chief editor Jacobus Rudolph Razoux Kuhn confirmed Minami’s article was a reaction to Labberton. So did Snievliet at his own trial; SCHWIDDER-TICHELMAN: 246. Warna-Warna, in which Tjipto Mangenengaran wrote, 228, Oct. 1916, quoted KOT, 1917, ‘Persoverzicht’, 251, thought, when Minami went to jail: ‘Besides, the public prosecutor has been unjust. He did not also send to jail [with Minami] that villainous theosophist and provocateur VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON.’ Sin Po, quoted IG, 1917 (39), 701-2, MRBTD: the Japanese consul-general came to see Van Limburg Stirum. He demanded Minami should be freed, ‘or else, also have Messrs Van Hinloopen Labberton and Mouw prosecuted in a court of law.’ Nevertheless, from 1923-6 Labberton taught languages in Japan; and the theosophist and provocateur VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916A), 54, had written: ‘For The Netherlands, dangers threaten from Berlin. For Indonesia, labours threaten from Tokyo. So it [military defence] is no question of siding for or against the allies or for or against the central powers.’


3Javanees mijmeringen en een dream, by ‘De rede S.I.-er’ [The red SI member; very probably Semaoen], HW, 10-9-1916, 237-8.

4SNEEVLIET (1916D), 222.
they did not want to serve themselves, however. After the speaker had reassured people on that point, he managed to have the meeting vote in favour. 1

Meanwhile, Abdoel Moeis also held pro-militia speeches; to socially less august and even more critical audiences. At Sukabumi in West Java, he spoke to a Sarekat Islam public meeting of 750. He said, like Labberton in Semarang, that the Indies were not a 'conquered country' [Dutch: *wingewest*] any longer, 'but a colony.' "The Netherlands is the best master, and the Indies are not yet mature enough for self-government.' The Dutch *Locomotief* reporter commented:

With the uneducated, simple people of the villages there still is so much misunderstanding and prejudice about *Indie Weerbaar*, that one finds it pleasing to hear one of their own race militarily strong and convincedly against those wrong ideas.

Moeis got many critical questions in Sukabumi. For instance, who would pay? Moeis said 'that the native should carry a very small part of the military burden as well.' 2

Four days earlier than other cities, on 27 August, Surakarta had its *Indie Weerbaar* demonstration. In his opening speech, chairman Th. Landouw attacked Sneevliet. Then, Prince Keesomdiningrat was to speak. He was present, but got someone else read his speech, summing up arguments not just for, but also against, *Indie Weerbaar*. Landouw thought this too academic for a propaganda speech, and ordered Josowidagdo to sit down.

As at other IW meetings, no debate was allowed. At the end of the meeting, Prince Maneske Negoro VII's military band played the *Wilhelms*, the Dutch national anthem. 3

On the evening of the same day, in the same city, the local Sarekat Islam, the SI's founding branch, met in the Habi Projo building. Keesomdiningrat went there to influence this branch, in his younger brother's capital, for conscription. The Surakarta TS lodge president Dr Radjiman, who earlier on had criticized especially this SI local, 4 also came. The reporter wrote that most of the 1500 at the meeting were "extremely cool towards the militia plans." One asked for yet another condition: were the Javanese to come. The reporter commented:

"The police have seized all these dirty little rags — and there were extremely many of them — and will investigate who put them there." 5

Semarang was the only city where authorities did not ban the anti-conscription meeting. Three thousand, mostly Indonesian workers, came to Semarang's theatre on 31 August. This was the largest number of people so far at a socialist-organized meeting in Indonesia. *Insulinde* member Razoux Klihr handed out cartoons. They showed a platoon of poor Javanese, with Van Hinloopen Labberton standing in front of them as their drill-sergeant.

Firm, Teuwen spoke against Labberton. "All members of the *Indie Weerbaar* committee are wealthy, they own sugar plants, get big bonuses, etc." Next, Mohamed Joesoef held an anti-militia speech in Javanese.

As did other papers, *Locomotief* had attacked the theosophists' General Secretary in


2 LOC, 28-8-1916, "De S.I. te Soekaboemi en Indie Weerbaar."

3 LOC, 28-8-1916, 2e blad, "De meeting van 'Indie Weerbaar' te Solo." The speaker probably was identical to "Mas Josowidakdo", a Surakarta TS member on 15 March 1915; NUGRAHA, 1916, 245.

4 See p. 294. FT 1916 (9), #3, 16.

5 Later, in The Hague, IW delegate Laoh linked consent to conscription of his Northeast Sulawesi organization to abolition of 'humiliating unpaid labour' in the region. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON, 1916/17, 608.
Het Vrije Woord. Here, again challenged IV's 'spontaneity'; also, Labberton's comparing Indonesians and government to a 'domestic buffalo; and a guy, who sits on top of it.' Sneevliet remembered Labberton's Javanese head-dress of a few days ago. To loud laughter, he called it and Labberton 'a kain kepala who is no kepala' (a head-dress of someone with no leadership mandate). Now, the delegation would go to The Netherlands. If there the delegates would not just talk about armament and loyalty, but also about people's rights, then that would not be due to the pro-conscription movement, but to our anti-conscription movement. He called for 'all the oppressed to work together against the Indie Weerbaar action.' Robbers of Insulinde challenged Van Hinloopen Labberton's difference between offensive and defensive militarism: 'In both cases, people will have to fight.' He attacked the slogan of the Dutch navy lobby society 'Onze Vloot [Our Fleet]': 'Indie verloren, rampspoed geboren [If The Netherlands loses the Indies, disaster is born].'

Last, Semaeno in Javanese held 'a speech to the echo, which loud applause

cannon-fodder, in order to protect Dutch interests in the Indies. ... Why didn't this "priest" say honestly that the money for this very heavy war tax, which will be a inevitable consequence of Indie Weerbaar, will have to come out of the pockets of the Natives, who already today pay 30% more taxes than he does [tax laws favoured Dutch]? What does he care that their taxes will have to be tripled, if only he successfully curries favour with the government. Poor kromo, Indie Weerbaar will even shear the hair in your neck away. Oh, you modern hellscum! Oh, you modern hecatombs!'

SNEEVLIET(1916D), 221: 'The priests of the theosophists, who postpone brotherhood until a following incarnation of present humanity. The man of high ideals, who plays at being the practical person, the pedestrian politician, to achieve enthusiasm for cannons and machine-guns. The reform-minded ethicist, who propagates a power of defence, which works against reforms, if it does not make them impossible. The Westerner by origin, who plays at being the Easterner, in order to be more effective.' Later: 'Our truth-loving theosophical militarist.' IVW, 6-10-1916, 7. 'De Weerbaarheidsmissie naar Holland.' H. Sneevliet, 'De terugkeer van D.O.', HVW, 25-2-1917, 84. The 'will-o'the-wisp of the "LIGHTHOUSE" LABBERTON.' A. Baars, 'Het Nationaal Comité van Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging.', HVW, 25-12-1916, 49: 'the theosophical-ethical herald of the sacred gospel of defense of the fatherland, of cannons and machine-guns.' A. Baars, 'Het "program" van den Heer v. Hinloopen Labberton.', HVW, 25-12-1916, 49. 'This theosophical-ethical militia propagandist.'

Kain kepala was Sneevliet's literal translation into Malay from Dutch hoofdfork; kepala was usual. Kepala may mean 'head' or 'chief'. Next day, 1 September, Teeuwen spoke at an Insulinde Semarang local election meeting. To loud laughs, starting his speech, he too put on a head-dress (a present from a Surakarta Javanese man at the anti-conscription meeting of the day before). 'Now, we start the Insulinde meeting in the Labberton way!' LOC, 2-9-1916, Ie blad. 'Insulinde'-vergadering.' More than a year later, in his defence speech at his trial, Sneevliet mentioned the head-dress of this so-called friend of the Javanese Labberton. 'We socialists have the moral duty to rip the mask of demagogic philanthropy off these propagandists, who manipulate the Indigenous people and their organizations, even though we can allow them the pleasure to keep wearing the Mangku Negoro type head-dress.' SCHWIDDER/TICHELMAN, 264; 287.

interrupted repeatedly.' Critics of the organizers could debate here, in contrast to Indie Weerbaar's meetings. Only one did, Akoevic. He asked in Javanese if a 'neutral' viewpoint on conscription was not best. As people prepared to vote on an anti-IW motion, the Dutch assistant resident, present in official capacity, rose to threaten to close the meeting. The organizers could avoid that. 6

7.Jambi, geese, fox, converts, and Radjimana

Theosophist A. van Leeuwen, writing to his official superior, tried to minimize the Semarang meeting. Sneevliet was only 'a fanatic, headman of a very tiny little clique of socialists.'

To the Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging, the war was senseless. To the Theosophical Society, it made sense in a perspective of higher worlds, karma, and reincarnation. In the editorial of TMNI, Van Leeuwen wrote:

This war of ours times ... Abhorred by some, as if hell were brought here on earth, as if humanitarian had backslid into primeval lack of civilization, on the contrary others see in it the promise of a beautiful future, of a civilization, which, built upon the ruins of the earlier one, will stand firmer and will rise higher. The latter look with the eyes of the worldling, the former see with the eyes of the spirit and thus understand completely the words of a Bholland [The wise man is at peace, even during war, for he is at peace with war.]

Who supported, and who opposed Indie Weerbaar; if one draws the circles wider in Indonesia than ISDV, or Ts?

De Lacombeix wrote: for, 'nearly all import Europeans [recent immigrants or toetoks]. . . . ' Baars later commented that among toetoks, 'tangan keras,' hardliners, like the Soerabainesch Handelsblad, and very ethical Van Hinloopen Labberton worked together excellently for a long time in IW. So, differences were not as big as they

1SNEEVLIET(1916D), 221: 'The priests of the theosophists, who postpone brotherhood until a following incarnation of present humanity. The man of high ideals, who plays at being the practical person, the pedestrian politician, to achieve enthusiasm for cannons and machine-guns. The reform-minded ethicist, who propagates a power of defence, which works against reforms, if it does not make them impossible. The Westerner by origin, who plays at being the Easterner, in order to be more effective.' Later: 'Our truth-loving theosophical militarist.' IVW, 6-10-1916, 7. 'De Weerbaarheidsmissie naar Holland.' H. Sneevliet, 'De terugkeer van D.O.', HVW, 25-2-1917, 84. The 'will-o'the-wisp of the "LIGHTHOUSE" LABBERTON.' A. Baars, 'Het Nationaal Comité van Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging.', HVW, 25-12-1916, 49: 'the theosophical-ethical herald of the sacred gospel of defense of the fatherland, of cannons and machine-guns.' A. Baars, 'Het "program" van den Heer v. Hinloopen Labberton.', HVW, 25-12-1916, 49. 'This theosophical-ethical militia propagandist.'

1LOC. 31-8-1916, extra-editie, 'Anti-'Indie Weerbaar''; LOC, 1-9-1916, Ie blad: 'De anti-meetings.'

2TICHELMAN(1985), 434.

31917, 203.

4VAN LEEUWEN(1917A), 438: daily Het Nieuws van den Dag at first opposed IW. Its editor Wijbrands wrote on possible alternatives to military spending: 'If, just for once, we would not brag so dishonestly, we, the Dutch, and if maybe sewers were to come here, Registration Service, disposal of foci in the cities, usury was fought, medical (especially obstetrical) help were provided, healthy drinking water, practical education, rapid justice.' Quoted Sneevliet, 'K. Wijbrands over de Weerbaarheid', HVW, 25-9-1916, 250, HVW, 10-10-1916: het Nieuws van de Dag opposed Labberton's anti-Japan campaign, as it supported the Allies, including Japan. Many Roman Catholics also were against conscription: IV, 24-11-1917. A Catholic priest had come to see Sneevliet in 1914 to discuss common socialist-Roman Catholic anti-war action; Sneevliet in HVW, 25-9-1916, 250.
seemed. De Locomotief's list of supporters continued: 'a fairly large part of the Indo-Europeans, and most Javanese intellectuals.' The daily might have added itself. To this, Soewardi Soerianingrat reacted: 'Whom does the Semarang paper mean by intellectual natives?' Many of them, Soewardi thought, were not the 'tame sheep' that De Locomotief considered them to be.

The daily thought opponents were the lower class Javanese, most of whom are incapable of judging correctly. From this, one might infer that the theosophists had become involved in class struggle, to which Labberton objected so much. One may consider them to be closely linked, the number of, especially Indonesian, supporters would have been low. incapable of judging correctly. From this, one might infer that the theosophists had become involved in class struggle, to which Labberton objected so much. One may consider them to be closely linked, the number of, especially Indonesian, supporters would have been low. From this, one might infer that the theosophists had become involved in class struggle, to which Labberton objected so much. One may consider them to be closely linked, the number of, especially Indonesian, supporters would have been low.

'Lower class' opposition sometimes expressed itself sharply. In August 1916, when IW propagandists came to Kerayoran kampung [neighbourhood], its inhabitants chased them out; they 'had to save themselves fleeing.' Bintang Soerabaja daily commented: 'So, not the Indies, able to defend themselves, but Kerayoran, able to defend itself.' The anti-IW press began to bring news items under headings like 'x Weerbaar', wherever people resisted authority. X in these stood for the armed uprising, or minor disturbance, area in these articles. For instance, 'Djambi Weerbaar' on the big uprising in the Jambi region, already known for petroleum underground. Labberton and Djojosoediro's daily Pembiran wrote in one of its last issues that no excessively heavy arms should defeat Jambi:

No, one should extinguish the uprising by magnanimity and by lofty lessons. Then, undoubtedly, the subjects' love will end all uprisings in the Dutch East Indies.

Contradictions sharpened in these years not only in Jambi and on conscription; in businesses too. Members of TS and ISDV also confronted one another as managers, respectively workers. In 1917, at least two of the four men of the management of the privately owned East Java Steam-Tram Company were active theosophists: Th. Vrede, brother of the Government Secretary, and L. Mangelaar Meemans, the late TS General Secretary. This company then faced the rise of Indonesia's first big trade union, that of the transport workers. Vrede also was a member of the Board of Semarang harbour. There, Smaev and other socialists then set up a dock-workers union, which went on strike several times. At the Kaliwungu sugar factory, close to Semarang, Van Ganswijk, FTS, was a manager; the Marxist Mohammed Kasan a labour leader.

H.W. Dekker was a transportation employee and the transport workers union's chairman. On 15 March 1915, and on 1 January 1916 still, he and his wife, A.P. Dekker-Groot, were members of both TS and ISDV. Then, contradictions were not that sharp yet, though combining these two memberships already made the Dekkers exceptional. Now, September 1916, however, H.W. Dekker warned against Van Hinloopen Labberton. Some might accept his indiër Weerbaar because of its leaders' religiosity: 'Beware of the goose, when the fox preaches.' He reminded Labberton that 'Jesus, whom you also recognize as one of your masters' had said:

Put the sword in its sheath, for whoever lives by the sword shall perish by the sword. But such language would not be in the liking of the powerful, and so it is better to suspend brotherhood towards the great mass of the dissatisfied.

Labberton, Dekker wrote, went further than government military policy:

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2 SOERIANINGRAT(1916/17), 148.
3 LOC, 1-9-1916. 2c blad, 'De weezaanscheidsdag te Semarang.' Ibid. 'The anti-demonstration was extremely abject ... dirty political show.' Sinar Hindia, from Semarang like De Locomotief, 21-11-1918, quoted IPQ 47/1918. MJB, 18. LOC was 'such an Indies Rasputin', and 'shanderson.' Pembiran Soerabaja, opposing IW unlike LOC, estimated that of both Indonesians and Chinese, 'less than 1% were supporters; 189 and 190; quoted KOT, 1916. Persoverzichtig, 1671. Sinar Sumatra, 27, 1917, quoted KOT, 1917. Persoverzichtig, 970. Thought '80% opposed IW. Soerdamin in SM, 31-12-1918, quoted IPQ 1/1919. MJB, 15 estimated that the Indonesian languages press were 'unanimously' and the people for 'more than 90%' against. Toetoe saidIW had same support from Indonesian intellectuals, who are close to the government ... but as distance from government increases, increasingly a hostile mood against that defence appears'; LOC, 24-5-1917, 'De militie in de Tweede Kamer. I. Rede Mr. Toetoe.

1 Bintang Soerabaja, 190, Aug, 1916; quoted KOT, 1916, Persoverzichtig, 1672.
You really are "plus royaliste que le roi" [more monarchist than the king], for in your speech [Semarang, 26 August] you advised: 'If the government now does not ask for support in this issue, then we really should intervene ourselves.'

Labberton did not wait for a call-up. He served as lieutenant in the 'Volunteer Motorcar Unit in Java and Madura'. TS colleague and Government Secretary, A. Vreede, was Command Council chairman of the military volunteers at Bogor. The colony's Deputy Adviser on local government, and secretary of Bogor TS lodge, Arnold Meijroos, was Commander. Dekker concluded:

To preach association and brotherhood with a revolver in one hand and a sabre in the other hand, seems to me the work of an imbecile or a demagogue. To preach association and brotherhood with a revolver in one hand and a sabre in the other hand, seems to me the work of an imbecile or a demagogue. Dekker concluded:

What Jesus had said on

command the sun to rise or to set, or to command the rivers to flow into the sea, and if you do not believe in the power of God, how can you believe in the power of God, how can you believe in him who made him who made heaven and earth? And who is this one who has said: 'I am the first and the last, and the living, and no one lives except through me.'

Theosophist C.C.W. van Ganswijk, of Kaliwungu sugar plantation, defended his General Secretary against Dekker, in a letter to Her Vrije Woord. What Jesus had said on violence was only an individually meant remark against 'Peter who was always rash'. On general, political, matters, Jesus had said:

'Render therefore unto the (Roman) emperor what is the emperor's.' And these taxes surely were for army and officials' expenses of the foreign, and in Indonesia, dominators and not for education [on which Dekker would rather spend the money], for example. Thus, also Mrs Besan forcefully insisted that England would participate in the great European bloodbath, as the defender of the weaker nations' rights against the Prussian terror, of freedom against oppression, of progress against stagnation. The Theosophist judges acts by the motives. If someone like President [Theodore] Roosevelt goes into the jungles of Africa, where he has no business, to kill wild animals, purely as a hobby, then the Theosophist considers that to be a crime. But if a planter, living on the edge of the rimboe [Indonesian for jungle], sees his child threatened by a tiger, and he shoots the animal just in time, then he performs a boon.

Nowadays, many tiger souls lived in human bodies. So, Indie Weerbaar was not at variance with brotherhood ideals, as Dekker wrote, but a consequence of them.

AIGEMEEN NEDERLANDSCH VERBOND local branches of the

LOE, 17-9-1914, 'Vrijwillerskorps en Indie Weerbaar'. The Bogor volunteers became linked to IW. They were founded shortly after the beginning of the war: the government then gave them the right to wear uniforms like those of the army. LOC, 17-9-1914, 'Vrijwillerskorps en Indie Weerbaar'.

DEKKER (1916).

VAN GANSWIJK (1916). He was president of the TS Purwokerto lodge in 1926; NUGRAHA (1939), 264; secretary of Dharma lodge, Yogyakarta, in 1934; TNI Dec. 1934, 152; and Indies TS executive member since 1938; TNI May 1938, 107. He organized Buddha Day celebrations at Borobudur; TNI Apr. 1935, 114.

An account of Nono Soeroto's speech in Haarlem in The Netherlands, 14 Nov. 1916, for the local branches of the AIGEMEEN NEDERLANDSCH VERBOND and DWA en West organizations: He differentiated the individual's 'wisdom, that is, losing the ego into the universe, from the nation's wisdom which has to be mainly practical. Holland will have to lend a helping hand to the Indies in developing the Indies, and in order to make that unhindered development possible, will have to help arming the Indies.' LOC, 4-1-1917, 'Indische stroomingen, in verband met "Indie Weerbaar" en "Volksontwikkeling".'

From a viewpoint of consistency therefore, there cannot be any objection to arming oneself also against such human eggers. How else could the many military members in the Theosophical Society defend their viewpoint. To them, the ideal is the hero Ardjoeno (Arjuna) from the Bhuja Judo, as his attitude was described in the Bhagavad Gita. ... Mr Labberton's [Indie Weerbaar] action is not surprising in the eyes of a single Theosophist.

Sneevliet, in an editorial postscript to Van Ganswijk, did not go much into religious-philosophical sides of theosophy, mostly into socio-political aspects, like Annie Besant's 'support of Imperialism':

Mrs A.P. Dekker-Groot took the opposite side in the conflict to H.W. Dekker. Until September 1916, when her husband wrote against Labberton, she was Her Vrije Woord's administrator. She had also been in the socialist festivities organizing committee, and in the Executive of the Women's Suffrage Society. In 1917, she was against the social democrats, which upset Sneevliet. As a letter to Sneevliet; tried to console his colleague, taking aim at her theosophic ideas: 'Why should you care about the anger of that fat nonjoh [Mrs] Dekker; let her just mind her Karma.' Addressing Semarang theosophists on 1 August, Dekker-Groot said: 'When contemplating the state of the world thoroughly, one can come to the quiet conclusion that "all is good, as it is", even if one has to cope with the greatest difficulties. It was our duty to help our oppressed brother .. but it was also necessary to inform him of the cause of his [own karma] troubles.' The second, spiritual, duty was more important than the first, 'If justice and order [Dutch, wet en orde] were not the basis underlying our world system, then all would have been chaos.'

She delivered a lecture at the Indies theosophical conference in April 1918, on Karma and reincarnation. In it, she said that many clever people, like Christian church-fathers (whom she got to know in her youth), and economists like Mathias and Marx (whose
ideals she came into contact with later), had already thought about differences between rich and poor. However, clever as these people were, they were unable to see root causes of these differences, as theosophy sees them in karma and reincarnation.

Some one writing under the pseudonym ‘A convert [Dutch: Een bekeerde; H.W. Dekker??]’, so possibly somebody whose ideas on theosophy and on socialism had gone the opposite way from Mrs Dekker, reported that TS conference for, formerly Dekker-Groot’s, Vrije Woord. He thought that, compared to other speakers there

Mrs DEKKER is more practical, she says, be just well behaved children, you who suffer [Dutch spelling in original ‘leidenden’, probably ‘lijdenden’ is meant] and are in want. From the wisdom of reincarnation it is proven, that you will return one more time into this small world, and then, things will be better: as for now, just start studying (theosophy) on an empty stomach, in a dirty slum dwelling without lighting. For our doctrine, which emphasizes fight and Justice, is merciless and hard.

This leftist criticism in Indonesia of ‘the social sedative character of the theosophical movement’, as historian Romein would say later, was somewhat similar to the reaction of Swedish-American trade unionist and singer Joe Hill (Hillstrom) to U.S. Christianity central as in 1917:

He thought that, compared to other speakers there

The reviewer thought if she would have written it later, King Louis XVI would have been proscribed. Actually, the French working class was less numerous and influential in 1789 than later in 19th century revolutions. Annie Besant in her atheistic, pre-TS days, had written a pro-revolution History of the great French revolution, Reviewed 77 May 1932, 214. The reviewer thought if she would have written it later, King Louis XVI would have been portrayed with more sympathy. On the supposed grandson of Louis XVI as FTS, see p. 100. She changed her mind later: the revolution ‘only caused the drowning of the forward movement in blood, and has thrown France backward, and not forward as some people suppose.’

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND COMMUNISM

Accepting socialist ideas, expecting all salvation from an economic uplift only, in many countries has led to a class struggle, which is at least as virulent as racial struggle. … And

Social democracy and communism

Whether all this leads in the end, as we said, the history of the French revolution teaches us, in which all moderate currents successively were defeated by extremist parties ... 1

He based himself on ex-socialist, then liberal, Frederik van Eeden, who wrote: ‘From experience, I have come to the conclusion that material liberation can only proceed from spiritual liberation.’ 2 Radjiman concluded: ‘Or can we, may we, submit to Marx’ materialist world view?’ No; it still ‘contradicted the Native people’s psyche too much.’ 3

8. Around the world in 235 days

Before the IW delegates went to The Netherlands, Labberton answered critics in an interview with Sin Po daily. “People who see me as a theosophist who loves war, as I work for ‘Indie Weerbaar’, are wrong. For that movement does not want to bring war to the Indies; it wants to keep them peaceful. That the poor would pay all the military expenditure increase, was also not true: big sugar companies’ taxes might rise too. Panjajaran-Warta was sceptical of that: the companies would raise consumers’ sugar prices; so, ‘si Kromo would still be left to face the music.’

Annie Besant in her convention speech at Lucknow in December 1916 mentioned the Dutch East Indies. They ‘fortunately had a very sympathetic government which sees the TS’ value.’ Labberton’s delegates would depart. Mrs Besant described the petition they had with them incorrectly as a Home Rule for the Indies petition. Thus, she assimilated to her own situation in India. Both Labberton’s opponents and a supporter like A. Vroede in Indonesia would emphasize contrasts.

On 3 January 1917, it was departure day. Before the delegates embarked, Rhemrev had laid down an enormous wreath with ribbons in the [Dutch] national colours at the feet of the statue of J.P. Coen. Coen was a 17th century East India Company representative, whose military expansion had cost many lives. The delegation went on board the Stadfort. The governor-general’s military aide, C.L.M. Bijl de Vroon, and Prince Koenemulmmgprat’s sister had come to see them off. Contrary to plans, the Indonesian delegates probably became first of their country to go around the world.

Both government subsidies and big agricultural companies paid the journey. Het Vrije Woord put IW’s official adjective ‘non-governmental’ between snigger quotes. 5

1. RADJIMAN(1917), 153
2. RADJIMAN(1917), 152
3. RADJIMAN(1917), 154-5.
5. TB 1917, 33.
6. LOC, 3-1-1917, 2e blad.
7. VAN LEEUWEN(1917A), 438; DVH, 4, on the itinerary.
8. SCHOUTEN, 103.
paper’s reporter at the theosophical conference wrote of ‘a jaunt, paid for by the proper­
tied class’. IV. 1 HVW computed that ‘apostle LABBERTON’ had a 1900 guilders a month salary,
high for that, while travelling as delegation leader. It commented:

On that pay, one can really be patriotic. Simplicity is one of the theosophical virtues. On 1900
guilders a month, a human, who loves simplicity, can break even, even in times of war and
wartime scarcity.2

The ship went to Padang harbour; Van Hinloopen Labberton and Moeis held speeches
in the city. Then, the party got a reception in Sabang, Indonesia’s most north-western
town. The ship continued to Colombo, then to the Suez cana1.3 The Sindo1o was ship­
wrecked near Gibraltar, Abdoel Moeis lost all his clothes and borrowed 300 guilders
from Labberton and 500 from Dwidjosewojo.4

The delegation had to continue by train through Spain and France. They stayed with
theosophical lodges.2 On 25 February, Labberton, after the Dutch consul in Geneva had
introduced him, addressed a meeting of forty Dutch living in Switzerland. His subject
was ‘The Netherlands’ colonial task in the Indies.’ Next day, Abdoel Moeis spoke, in an
anti-Chinese sense. Sin Po paper complained it were ‘lies’. The Dutch in Geneva did not
know any better. Sin Po protested though against Labberton, who did, not contradicting
Moeis.5

Already before the delegates departed, their opponents in Indonesia planned to found
a committee in The Netherlands to counter them.2 Hindia Poetra, the magazine by
Indonesians in The Netherlands, contained various views on the armed forces question. In
the September/October 1916 issue, editor Soewardi Soerianingrat opposed Indië
Weerbaar, and theosophist Raden Mas A. Sooryopoetro supported it. The third item on
SW supported Soewardi. R.M. Soeloko [pseudonym? of Soewardi?]’s parodist inversion
of a pro-colonialist poem by Dutch Speenhof against the Indische Partij, now turned it
against Indië Weerbaar:

Indies, did you hear it .... [all .... in original?]
Prepare for the future!
Indies, keep your eyes open.
to the militia danger.
Put the little gang of troublemakers
with their obnoxious noise
into a very fitting jail ....
Keep on being master in your own house!
Do not judge too mildly
Do not wait too long before you punish.
Do not fear to apply a pair of steel shackles
Do not fear a fitting judgment.
Let them themselves play at being soldiers
cosily together somewhere.
Indies, mind your interests,
Stay Toean Besar forever there!6

1GG, 1917 (39), 489-90, MRBTD: from the NRC. The audience reacted with ‘general assent’.
The TS Viveka lodge in Geneva was founded 23 April 1912; 77 May 1912, suppl., xii.
2GG, 1917 (39), 489-90, MRBTD: from the NRC. Sin Po 7-5-1917, quoted IPO 1917, 489.
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429-90, MRBTD: from the NRC. Sin Po 7-5-1917, quoted IPO 1917, 489.
5A. From the teugee djaukmakers.
624-24-4-1917, quoted IPO 1917, 156.
295-90, MRBTD: from the NRC. Sin Po 7-5-1917, quoted IPO 1917, 156.
30-9-1916, 2e blad, ‘Comité en deputatie’ called the delegation ‘conceivably the most expensive postman.’ LOC, 28-3-1917, ‘Politie en delegatie’: ‘a living and,
besides, rather expensive, explanatory and propagandist memorandum.’ SOERIANINGRAT(1916/17), 213: ‘The movement has been set up by the gentlemen capital
owners, who were willing to pay thousands of guilders to send their deputation to the mother
country’ ibid. it was ‘capitalist-imperialist.’ Views like those of ‘Abdoel Moeis and Dwidjo
Sewojo’ were ‘naive’.

H. Sneevliet, ‘De vaderlandsliefde der Indie Weerbaar delegatie’, HVW, 20-3-1918. Prince
Mangkoe Negoro VI, the retired predecessor and uncle of Mangkoe Negoro VII, then had a
pension of 11,400 guilders a year, his wife’s pension was f. 60 a year. LOC, 6-9-1917.
‘Onderhoud der Mangkoe Negoro afstammeling.’ In 1913, Colijn added up his pensions, as ex­
military and as ex-government minister, as f. 5800 a year; DE BRUIJN/PUCHINGER, 407.
Moeis’ monthly salary as transport workers’ union official in 1917-8 was f. 225, and later
army officer and as ex-government minister, as f. 5800 a year; DE BRUIJN/PUCHINGER, 407.

25-8-1917, 4e blad, ‘Abdoel Moeis
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624-24-4-1917, quoted IPO 1917, 156.
After they arrived in The Netherlands via Germany, the delegation members addressed many meetings of different organizations. In a meeting of the Navy lobby society 'Onze Vloot' in Amsterdam, K. van Lennep read a poem in the delegates' honour. Its title, almost like the poem's by Marco, was 'Indie Weerbaar.' Though lacking Marco's two exclamation marks, it, too, voiced strong feelings. Their contents differed much, however. Its concluding lines were: 'Unity of interests! For the Greater Netherlands, to which all of us are devoted.' Professor of history G.W. Kernkamp said there:

As in the seventeenth century one read The Netherlands' health from the pulse, which were the East India Company shares, so one in the future will read The Netherlands' health from the 'Indie Weerbaar' movement's degree of development.1

Abdoel Moeis held a speech, 'greeted by prolonged applause,' to the Hague branch of the Dutch right wing liberals.2 He met with more opposition at a leftists May Day meeting. Van Hiniopen Labberton had urgently asked Moeis not to say anything there. Henriette Roland Holst, though, from the chair, provoked Moeis. Soewardi criticized the social democrat parliamentary group's negative views on 'Indie Weerbaar,' SDAP leader Troelstra had called it a 'masquerade.'3 Mendels replied that he opposed

forcing the villager [Dutch/Indonesian: desaman] to fight for the Dutch interest. And for that, the 'Indie Weerbaar' delegation came to The Netherlands, and that is what the so-called parliamentary group opposed.

Mendels did not want to 'oblige people - who had been oppressed and exploited for

1LOC. 3-7-1917, 2e blad, ‘'Indie Weerbaar'’ wederom aan haar woord.'

2The Bond van Vrije Liberale. The party was also known in Dutch as 'oud liberale' [old liberals], LOC. 3-5-1917, 'Sarekat Islam en etische politiek.'

3LOC. 14-7-1917, 'Indiërs op een Mei demonstratie te 's-Gravenhage.' LOC. 28-8-1917, 'Een onderhoud met Abdoel Moeis.' DE Tijd, quoted IG. 1917 (39), 809-10. MRBTZ, J. Harinck, in 'Een Indiërs toegewezen grotendeelsstaatselijk veroordeeld', De Wapens Neder, July 1917 wrote that there two IW members had defended against Soewardi. Soewardi wrote in Dutch socialist daily Het Vark, quoted IG. 1917 (39), 1221, MRBTZ: 'Our Indies soil is fertile enough, and does not need human blood as manure.' SOERIANINGRAT, 1917 (177) IW was 'capitalist agitation,' and that is nothing but the truth.

4Speech in Dutch parliament, 23-3-1917, Quoted TICHELHMAN (1955), 433. He was Pieter Jettes Troelstra, not 'Jelle Troelstra' (P.J.'s son), as with HERING (1992), XV. Troelstra's later successor, Allarda, called IV 'a terrible comedy'; LOC. 3-5-1917, 'Indische begroeting in de Tweede Kamer.' SOERIANINGRAT, 1917 (173), IV was 'purely a comedy,' ibid., 213. Dwidjosewojo in Algemeen Handelsblad daily 'in a not very sympathetic way' had attacked Troelstra's views against IV.

300 years to put guns on their shoulders to defend capitalist interests.'4

In De Nieuwe Amsterdammer, Dwidjosewojo protested against Soewardi having written that in his heart, he supported Soewardi's goal of 'absolute independence of Indonesia.' That would be 'a dubious privilege.' Dwidjosewojo did want 'zelfstandigheid [autonomy]' which differs quite from 'independence.'5 On the concepts of 'zelfstandigheid,' Home Rule; or independence, theosophists would face many discussions in both India and Indonesia.

The delegates went to a meeting of Indonesians living in The Netherlands. Future Governor-General H. van Mook was also present. Moeis debated against colonial policy critic Abandan, who thought in the Indies aims other than the military deserved money.6 Aryo Koesoemodiningrat argued from

the Hindu doctrine, especially from the caste system. Anyhow, a society needs to join forces: the Brahmanas who take care of spiritual salvation; the Ksatriyas who keep the evolution going by fighting, the Waisyas who increase the country's economic development and the sudras who help to bring about material production. The lecturers [Koesoemodiningrat] linked this evolution to the coming of the god who became human, Vishnu. He has already come down to our world in many times, as it has proved to be necessary again and again to point out to degenerate humanity the right way. We must prepare this coming of the world teacher; for our world must be made worthy to receive Vishnu in our midst. So we should also prepare Vishnu's coming at an institute of higher education, which the Indies should get.

The prince said that the different cases should co-operate, so should The Netherlands and the Indies. He compared the Indies' need of defence to the need of a fence around a house.7

The delegates saw army target-practice at the Hook of Holland fort, submarines at Den Helder, and later combat simulation by 12,000 men in the Loon op Zand dunes. On 19 May, they went to a military show in Amsterdam soccer stadium, which the Army supporters society organized.8 Social democrat Malay language paper Soeara Merdika

1LOC. 20-8-1917, 1e blad, 'Sarekat Islam en de SDAP.'

2Dwidjosewojo, 'Indie Weerbaar.' De Nieuwe Amsterdammer, 2-6-1917.

3LOC. 2-7-1917, 2e blad, 'De Deputatie-Indie-Weerbaar als Gasten der Indische Vereeniging.' HPO 1916/17, 242-60. 249. J.H. Abandan, 1852-1925, had been a friend of Raden Adjeng Kartini. His criticism of traditional colonial policy went further than that of most 'ethnic.' Noto Soerio argued there that countries like Britain and Germany should disarm first, before The Netherlands did so.

4LOC. 2-7-1917, 2e blad, 'De Deputatie-Indie-Weerbaar als Gasten der Indische Vereeniging.' HPO 1916/17, 242-60: 247f. He said: 'We should have a pager (fence) around our house. Who, then, owns that pager? Of course, those who have built it.'

5KOESEOEMODININGRAT, 1921, 114: LOC. 1-5-1917, 'Comité Indie Weerbaar in Nederland.' LOC. 2-7-1917, 1e blad, 'Indie Weerbaar.' 'Indische penkrassen,' Weekblad voor Indie, 19-8-1917, reprinted POEZIE (1985), 115: they also went to a military parade in Gelderland province, inspected a cannon in an armoured cupola in Den Helder, and an ammunition factory. The Amsterdam show by the 'Ons Leger' society: LOC. 30-7-1917, 'Ons Leger.'
reported that Moeis (possibly as first Indonesian in history) had boarded a plane at Soesterberg Air Force base. Van Hinloopen Labberton and Prince Koesoemodiningrat sometimes wore their uniforms, respectively of lieutenant, and of major on the general staff. Labberton wore it at his well-publicized speech to the Extraordinary Meeting of the Dutch military science society, the Vereeniging tot Bevordering van de Onderzoek van het Krijgswet. on 23 May 1917 in The Hague. General Snijders, the Dutch Armed Forces Commander, having just won a conflict with Minister of War General Bosboom, who had to resign, was among the audience. First, Lieutenant-General De Waal welcomed Labberton from the chair. He explained that the society normally did not meet after 30 April. This, though, was of such extraordinary national interest', as it was on 'the militia', which will be introduced in the Dutch East Indies; at least, the intention to do so exists. Then, Van Hinloopen Labberton explained Indië Weerbaar. Yes, some opposed it; mostly 'the Chinese imperialists'; and 'the European socialists who made mischief ... Strayed to the Indies at an evil hour, they have done everything to incite the population and the Indo-Europeans against Dutch authority'. They had succeeded with Insulinde. There was the threat of the colony's separation; 'a separation that would be fatal for the development of the Indies, but most of all for the Indo-Europeans' own future. Dwidjosewojo, who also spoke there, told of Budi Utomo organized meetings in 1915 throughout Java on whether one should introduce conscription. There, 'Many words of abuse were hurled at my head.'

What should happen 'to defend the Tricolour [Dutch flag] side by side, against all attacks'? Labberton thought: the 'battle-cruisers needed to be launched as soon as possible.' Submarines should be built as well. A central naval base should be built on the Sunda Strait, and a network of smaller naval bases all over the archipelago. Military airplanes, too, should be built in the Indies. Labberton rejected the dilemma 'army or navy. We say, a strong army and a powerful navy are both indispensable.' Labberton's view about naval bases was close to that of his Dutch East Indies Officers' League and his colleague, Major W. Holle. Would conscript soldiers come from The Netherlands? The present constitution ruled this out. Labberton was not optimistic that 'Holland would change this Constitutional

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1. HEIT VADER/ALFRED, 'De militie in Indië', reprinted in 'I', 1917 (39), 904. BOSBOOM, 214.
2. KOESOEMODININGRAT (1921), 94.
3. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 577-8.
4. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 582. LOC, 24-8-1917. 1e blad, 'De militie in Indië.'
5. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 601. OVV, 1918, 1, 15-20. 'Indische militie'; 20. GOENAWAN MANGOENKOESOEMO (1918), 21: Dwidjosewojo held much the same speech to Delit students of the Oem Kolonaten league. RABEYMAN (1917), 149 on the meetings in Java: 'Then, complaints were made, as if the [80] Central Executive members were government tools.'
stipulation, which is so against its Colonial calling, for the sake of the Indies' defense. 1

Conscription in the Indies should be universal, 'so, on all islands.' 2 An army of
miliotns would be too much, however. It should be an honour to become a conscript:
'In principle, all have the duty of military service, but those who will have the privilege
to perform it, will be selected.' He thought of about '30 men per desa.' Prince Mangkoe
Negoro's forces were a good example.

'So, understanding the need for making the country able to defend itself, should
permeate all schooling and education, not in a German type militarist sense, though.'
Labberton preferred Switzerland, where the delegates on their way to the Netherlands
had stayed with theosophists. There, he had seen himself that views of the Swiss army as
'too good to be true, and so nothing but maya [in theosophy: illusion] were wrong.'
Some feared that Indonesians, if armed, would use those weapons against the Dutch. That
view was incorrect: 'For the basic characteristic of Indonesian character is devotion,
faithfulness, and attachment.'

'As far as money is concerned: the Indies should be able to bear all costs, except
those of a battle fleet.' Van Hinloopen Labberton estimated the money needed at at least
a quarter of a billion guilders. 3 To implement all this, 'Now should come a man with
military genius.' 4 He did not name ex-Governor-General J. van Heutsz. The insider
officers at the meeting, though, knew whom he meant. One way to look at Labberton's
speech was as a stalking horse for Van Heutsz' views in the confrontation between

1 According to Labberton's interview in De Avondpost, quoted IG, 1917 (39), 666, MRBT, he
wants '10-20,000 conscripts' from the Netherlands to go to the Indies. Minister Pleyte in 1914 had
stopped sending Dutch regular military men to the Indies, but resumed it later; BOSBOOM, 48, 81.
2 Not everywhere in Java though: 'There still are vast areas where the tribes still live in a state of
savagery. One cannot bring those areas under a militia law.' VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 594.
3 VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 394. LOC, 24-8-1917, 1e blad, 'De militie in
India.' OvW, 1918, 1, 15-20. 'Indische militie': 18. H. Sneevliet, 'Baars en V. Hinloopen
Labberton', Hhv, 30-10-1917. Van Hinloopen Labberton's financial estimate was roughly the same
as Deiker's quote of Van Heutsz and Kolijn; see p. 213. Labberton had already said on 20
September 1916 in Semarang that the Indies were rich enough to pay; LOC, 21-8-1916, 1e blad, 'De
vergadering van Indie Weerbaar.'

4 VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916/17), 594.
5 Labberton approved of the policies of colonial army commander and later, 1904-9, Governor-
General Van Heutsz, who was not popular with the Dutch labour movement and anti-colonial
Indonesians; VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1910), 169-70. Social democrat Troost in Dutch
parliament in the early 1900's compared the general to a swine, quoting a poem by Heinrich Heine:
'Noch immer schmückt man den Schweinen bei uns/ Mit Lorbeerblättern den Rüssel'; 5 Still, in our
country, they decorate swine's snouts with laurels; KOCH (1956), 34. The Koloniaal Tijdschrift in
1916-7 repeatedly called for putting Van Heutsz in charge in Indonesia; Terius [Gérard Malietz;
lieutenant-general of navy and army in the Indies. Prince Hendrik, theosophically minded, knew of the TS through his friend Baron P.D. van Pallandt van Eerde, who presented Krishnamurti with Eerde castle, and Arnhem Lodge president Baron H.P. van Tuyll van Serooskerken. Prince Koesoemodiningrat spoke for the delegates. The queen replied. She saw the delegation as a strong confirmation of the faith, which I have always put in the disposition of those Princes and those people. The feelings; which you voice (Dutch: vertolkt), provide a strong basis of morality to what is happening and will happen to strengthen the Indies' defence. Those feelings enable a great development of force. Afterwards, Wilhelmina spoke with all the delegates individually.

Saturday 31 March was the last day of the Dutch Students Congress in Utrecht. Recently graduated science student Dirk Struik reviewed it critically in socialist De Nieuwe Tijd. It was a sign of a rightward shift in ideas on Dutch universities, 'under the aegis of imperialism':

On Saturday morning, the show-stopper came, (deliberately?) not announced in the program, the inevitable Van Hinloopen Labberton and Prince Pangeran Ario Koesoemodiningrat [sic], 'Indie Weerbaar' without any fig-leaf for a cover. ... After the Indies had become able to defend themselves, and also Lord Raden Mas Ari Soerij [sic] Poero had informed us that the Indies and The Netherlands were sisters, the conservative economists from Groningen, Prof. C.A. Verrijn Stuart spoke ...

On p. 323 of his report on the journey, Koesoemodiningrat wrote of inspecting the trenches of the Holland Water Barrier, an old line of defence still in use then. Four pages on, he wrote of Madame Blavatsky. The delegates visited many businesses, like Wilton shipyard and the Leerdam glass-works; P.M. Cochius, FTS, chaired its board of directors. Leftist weekly De Nieuwe Amsterdammer sneered that Labberton did nothing useful in The Netherlands, 'apart from missing the [Indies] theosophical Easter conference in Bandung.'

The Dutch Theosophical Society held its biannual meeting in Utrecht, on 22 April. Labberton and Koesoemodiningrat were speakers; other Indie Weerbaar delegates also attended. As theosophists covered the Arts and Sciences building, members of the anti-militarist Religieus Socialistisch Verbond handed them leaflets, written by A.J. Resink and Baarman. These attacked 'Mr Van Hinloopen Labberton and the other theosophists who are in the Indie Weerbaar delegation.' The leaflets accused them of 'spiritual reason against the Indies people by collaborating with conscription in the Indies.' The religious socialists published their opposition elsewhere too.

...
country, but a colony, and the native for the time being a younger brother. We should be his guardian, until he comes of age. Along with other properties, in order to become mature he must also develop his Katriyani nature.

Theosophists believed in brotherhood, and 'Our Indies brothers deserve just as much protection as our Dutch brothers.' Labberton finished, moving a vote of censure against Resink and Baartman, and of confidence in himself and IW. This got very enthusiastic applause from the floor.¹

On 28 April, in Artis zoo in Amsterdam, the delegates attended a banquet in their honour, organized by General Van Heutsz. Most people present were big businessmen; also (former) government ministers.² On 2 May, Koesoemodiningrat addressed the The Hague TS lodge on 'Evolution'. Next weekend, again 'some hundreds of people', mainly theosophists, went to Utrecht. This time, it was the Dutch congress of the Order of the Star in the East. They had come for the Order's Ladies representative, Labberton, and for Arjo Koesoemodiningrat, also a member. The Hague daily Het Vaderland wrote: 'It is very significant, that thus the two members of "Indie Weerbaar" are also members of the Order of "The Star in the East".' Labberton spoke on 'Meditation' at the afternoon session, and again at the evening session.³

Minister of Colonies Pleyte gave the Indie Weerbaar delegates their farewell dinner in hotel De Witte Brug in The Hague on 2 June. Three days later, they departed for the return-journey via the US.⁴ Van Hinloopen Labberton was positive about the immediate results of the delegation, as the government had increased the military budget, had made concessions to Soewardi Soerianingrat's exile from Indonesia, and more higher education would come to the Indies.⁵ Soewardi reacted ironically to Labberton's gratitude for this.⁶ Warno-Warna regretted that the IW delegates, especially Messrs van Hinloopen Labberton and Abdoel Moeis, would now get the credit, while Douwes Dekker of the

¹LOC, 30-6-1917, 'De Deputatie: Indie Weerbaar' VAN DER WILLGEN(1917).
²LOC, 8-5-1917, 'De Indie Weerbaar deputatie.' LOC, 14-7-1917, 'Een nieuwe serie weerspraakssessievoorzien.' Labberton said that 'The Netherlands should not let go of the Indies; neither should the Indies let go of The Netherlands.' Noto Soeroto had been invited to hold a weerbaarheidsredevoeringen. Labberton said that 'The Netherlands should not let go of the Indies.' Noto Soeroto's article; so, maybe influence as an expansion of his earlier ideas. Warno-Warna regretted that the IW delegates, especially Messrs van Hinloopen Labberton and Abdoel Moeis, would now get the credit, while Douwes Dekker of the

³TB 1917, 63. LOC, 25-7-1917, 2e blad, 'Congres van "De Ster in het Oosten".' From Het Vaderland, of which H. Borel, FTS, just back from the Indies, was editor then.
⁴LOC, 30-6-1917, quoted IPO 29/9/1917, MCB, 1.
⁵G.C.E. van Daalen, Van Heutsz' successor as Aceh War commander, until a report on his amount of violence against civilians came out. Then, in 1908, Van Heutsz dismissed him, though it was said that Van Daalen had basically carried on his own policy. 1913-14 Lieutenant-General Van Daalen was Indies army commander; VAN HEERKEN. The two others were respectively of the Bond van Vrije Liberatoren, and the Anti-Revolutionaire Partij. Colijn, ex-officer under Van Heutsz in Ache, was a director of the Shell oil company, and later became prime minister. Lieutenant-Colonel Kerkkamp spoke to a Jakarta meeting of the NVVB, supporting IV, of "conscription for all Dutch subjects". Who would introduce it? He expected no good from the present Dutch government or parliament; 'What we need is a dictator, someone who should do more than what Lord Kitchener has managed in Australia.' This dictator should be 'ex-Governor-General Van Heutsz.' LOC, 28-4-1917, 'De Batavia.' On Australia see p. 213.
⁶Rhemrev's diehard colonialist views caused problems; TICHELMAN(1985), 652-3. On board the ship, Rhemrev said about 'natives' 'that they should be run through with bayonets.' Rumour had that Moeis then had hit Rhemrev in response. In an interview with /1('(, quoted NAGAZUMI(1972), 113. LOC, 14-8-1917, 2e blad, 'Terugkeer der deputatie "Indie Weerbaar".' Pleyte bestowed the order of knighthood at the farewell dinner in the name of the queen.
⁸Rhemrev's radical colonialist views caused problems; TICHELMAN(1985), 652-3. On board the ship, Rhemrev said about 'natives' 'that they should be run through with bayonets.' Rumour had that Moeis then had hit Rhemrev in response. LOC, 25-8-1917, 'Terugkomst verwacht deputatie "Indie Weerbaar".' Ibid., the Batavia correspondent of De Locomotief estimated that 'the Indie Weerbaar movement had already been completely discredited with the natives.' In an interview, Moeis said other delegates had prevented him and Rhemrev actually hitting one another. When the request of the passengers of the ship, Moeis gave a speech on Seoreakt Islam and Indie Weerbaar. Rhemrev tried to make it inaudible by making noise. Moeis felt 'extremely bitter' that someone with the same complexion as he [Rhemrev had Indonesian as well as Dutch ancestors; Moeis on the Rijndam: 'seven-eighths native blood'; 'Gestrand op de rotsen der verdeeldheid', the ship, Rhemrev said about 'natives' 'that they should be run through with bayonets.' Rumour had that Moeis then had hit Rhemrev in response. In an interview with /1('(, quoted NAGAZUMI(1972), 113. LOC, 14-8-1917, 2e blad, 'Terugkeer der deputatie "Indie Weerbaar".' Pleyte bestowed the order of knighthood at the farewell dinner in the name of the queen.
⁹LOC, 30-6-1917, quoted IPO 23/9/1917, MCB, 1.
Gibraltar on the outward voyage, the United States press now headline that the delegation 'has split asunder on the rocks of dissent.' The ISDV paper Soorad Malaka, and other papers, that Moeis and Prince Koesoemodiningrat, too, disagreed; and wondered whether it was personal or political. Labberton denied these reports.

From New York, the delegates went west by train. For two weeks, they stayed at the Theosophical Society Krotona centre, then in Hollywood. Koesoemodiningrat lectured there on Islam. They met Warrington, the later TS vice president.

The San Francisco political police asked Van Hinloopen Labberton, who knew Sanskrit and other Indian languages, to translate political pamphlets for them. Indians sent those pamphlets from California to the Dutch East Indies. Labberton sympathized with Mrs Besant's Home Rule action. He found that these leaflets, though, were in a much more militant anti-British empire vein, 'very dangerous', and advised the Dutch Indies government to ban them. It acted according to the advice.

The journey continued to Japan and China. On 25 August 1917, the ship with the Indie Weerbaar delegates reached back in the harbour of Jakarta. Koesoemodiningrat's brother, Pakoe Boewono X, had come to meet him.

The prince worked on at his Lompepoen Kangdjeng Pangener Arja Koesoemodiningrat ngideri bhoewana [Journey around the world by His Highness, Prince Koesoemodiningrat], the government publisher Volksleer brought out this account of the JW mission jointly with the TS printer in 1921. The over 600 pages of Javanese calligraphy-like script and photographs cost three guilders eighty cents. In 1922, readers of the Javanese People's Libraries bought it about 5700 times; rather frequently.

9. Towards the end of conscription, 1917-1918

While the delegation was away, Indie Weerbaar supporters decided to form an association of dues-paying members, different from the earlier committee. Delegates Moeis, Rhemrev, and Van Hinloopen Labberton were present at the association's founding meeting, shortly after their return. Labberton thought some founders of the association might have intrigued behind his back, against his leadership and against Indonesians' participation. Chairman Pop's emotional denial reassured him, though.

The new association was for every supporter of the trinity: 'Orange [royal dynasty], The Netherlands, the Indies.' Within it, 'One can be Protestant, Roman Catholic, modern'

Agnes Smedley (ibid., 172); E. Douwes Dekker, and, according to the police, with German spies. Ibid., 144 quoted its ideas as an 'incongruous mixture of [Irish] Sinn Fein, Marxian socialism, and Mazzini.' Ibid., 170, on 7 April 1917, one day after the US became a war ally of Britain, San Francisco police arrested Ghadar leaders. See also 'Een brief van Dr. Douwes Dekker aan den Volksraad', 1G, 1919 (41), 891-4.

LOC, 8-9-1917, 2e blad, 'Verkeerd begrepen.' The San Francisco correspondent of the Volksleer expected that the US government would ask Van Hinloopen to be an expert witness in the court case against the California Indians. See also LOC, 11-9-1917, 'Amerikaansche Brief.'

LOC, 28-8-1917, 'De soeman op reis.'

R. Kamil, 'Verslag van de Javaanse Volksbibliotheek over het jaar 1922,' 29, in IJO 1, 1924.

LOC, 1-1-1918, 'Oprichting Vereeniging Indie Weerbaar'. 'Mr Van Labberton affirms this has reassured him [Dutch: hierdoor bevestigd en zeker].' The association decided not to elect Rhemrev to its executive, contrary to the 1916 Committee, and to plans from before the incident on the sailing voyage back. Later, both Rhemrev and the Sulawesi member of the delegation, Lachi, still joined the executive. Rhemrev said the original Committee had been 'purely militant'; while in the later Association 'economic able-bodiedness' was also important. OWT, 1918, 3, 19-21, 'Indie Weerbaar week der afsluiering Soemadang.' SCHOUTEN, 177 calls 31 Aug. 1916 a 'members general meeting'; but there still were no JW dues-paying members then.
Opposition had also continued while the delegation travelled around the world. On 23 March 1917, the daily Perintibangan⁵ published a cartoon of a group of Indonesian draftees and their Dutch drill sergeant passing a chained watch-dog. Its caption was: 'This dog has to guard his master's property, without getting any rights in return. Will the Indigenous people be ordered to guard this colony in the same way?'

On 25 June in the JSDV paper Soeara Merdika, editor Notowidjojo attacked the slogan in delegate Moeis' daily 'Leve Groot-Nederland en zijn Volk [Long live the Greater Netherlands and their people]'. And 'Goblok' [pseudonym; 'Blockhead'] wrote as he had done before, 'that the real people of Indonesia [sedjatinja rajat Hindia] do not like to be made to be soldiers.'

A month later, 'Goblok' mentioned Annie Besant's recent internment in Soeara Merdika. He called her a 'heroine', 'really brave'. All people in Indonesia 'should see her bravery as an example'. In his concluding paragraph, 'Goblok' noted a contrast:

Another aspect: if we speak of Theosophy's leader in the Dutch East Indies, Mr Labberton, then he wants our country to be married off to The Netherlands, he chose the Government side in the Indie Weerbaar affair, he compared Indonesians [anak Hindia] to domestic buffaloes. So, a very big difference exists between this gentleman and Mrs Besant in British India. Is this theosophy really a sham? Only God knows.

Goblok also criticized the 26 June issue of the new daily Neratja; a 'government paper', he had already written earlier. That paper (with prominent theosophist editors) had headlined: 'People's representatives in The Netherlands.' However, that item was about the Indie Weerbaar committee. We know very well that this 'committee' are not representatives of the people, as all the Indies people did not elect them. ... Next time.

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[1]OvW, 1918, 1, 9-10: T. Ouolander, 'Eenzijdigheid? Neen!' it was that magazine's first issue.
[2]VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1917A). LOC, 4-9-1917, 1e blad, partly reprinted from the TS monthly. 'Darah Hindia' wrote in WW, # 215, 1918, against a pro-IW item in TMN by Labberton, translated from Dutch in Neratja: IW 'only works in the interests of the Government and the capitalists. '
[4]Notowidjojo, 'Quo vadis dominio', SM, 25-6-1917, 33-4. In his article 'Koaem moeda djadi pahlawanja koem ewang', SM, 10-7-1917, Notowidjojo's slogan was, 'Death to imperialism'. See also KOT, 1917, 'Persoservatives', 1495-6. Koaem Moeda thought the Indies soon would become the 'legal wife' of The Netherlands, instead of the 'combinant' like earlier on.
[6]Also SEMAOEN(1917), 68, praised Besant, though 'ex-socialist', for her love and work for India.
[8]SM, 25-6-1917, 36, 'U.'
building in Surabaya. Abdoel Moeis had opposed him there. Moeis, according to Mendels, was
under the agogs of the theosophical imperialism Van Hiniopen Labberton, thought 'Kromo does not want to become a soldier, as he still is a 'slave', not a free citizen'. Instead of spending money on a militia, one should 'fight the many diseases which already have cost thousands of lives.' Tjokromenggolo criticized theosophical influence in his organization. The executive majority at Bijjar, voting for Indie Weerbaar, had had no mandate from their branches.

The executive will probably reply that they surely have been up high in the sky, as Abdoel Moeis has flown in The Netherlands [at Soesterberg air-base], and that it needs mysticism as an inner basis (dasar batin) of the S.I. ... As within the S.I. executive theosophy, which is incompatible with Islam, gains ground; so, one may consider it as its enemy. ... R. Djojosudjono, Haji August [sic] Salim, and Abdoel Moeis are theosophists. They also head 'Neraja', a Government-subsidized paper, of which the tendency is to silence Kromo. Moreover, the S.I. executive members R.M. Soerjopranoto and S. Soerjokesoemo are theosophists; the latter even is a half-Christian. 4

The transport workers union met on 23 September, in Deca Park in Jakarta. Roughly 400 members, of whom 'about fifty Europeans', were present. Chairman H.W. Dekker discussed fast rising prices

In speeches, Mesters Van Heutsz and Colijia have pointed out the need to make the Indies able to defend themselves [in Dutch: Indie Weerbaar, spell like the committee]. And they say, that one needs 275 millions of guilders for this; yes, they say, the Indies are rich enough, and can pay that themselves!

Yet, he noted that the Indies government did not want to give a much smaller amount to the workers of the railways that it owned, to compensate for inflation 5

Australians voted down conscription in 1917, to the disappointment of the Dutch East Indies TS monthly. It saw that vote as a bad precedent for Indonesia. Editor Van Leeuwen continued on the social function of conscription:

Social democracy and communism

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How difficult it still is for many people in understand that a nation cannot grow, cannot become an economic state, without the painful coercion of duty and necessity. Fighting and militarism are still nearly always seen as the devils in our lives, which we should shirk away from and avoid as much as possible, as it is overlooked how inside every "devil" a "deva" hides, who is able to bring us up towards the Light. Pain is the great Initiator. Coercion and fate are the educators of a still infant race (Indonesians) towards a conscious idea of nationality and a high feeling of duty. 1

In Warna-Warna, 'Je Patriot' [pseudonym] attacked the TS. He called Labberton

1 I found no confirmation elsewhere of Moeis' TS membership, though his politics were close to it. The pamphlet (see p. 205) mentioning 'other theosophists' besides Labberton [and Koestoomediningrat] may be a pointer. So may FB mentioning 'some more Javanese members' (see p. 180), if the author either did not know Java from Sumatra; or if he thought Moeis, then living in Java, 'Javanese' in a wide sense.

2 HVW #295, 1917, quoted IFO #2/1917, MCB, 21ff. It is improbable that Soestum Soerjokesoemo, though in Adhi Dharma, was an S.I. member then; maybe in earlier times when he also had been in the IP. 'Half-Christian' may allude to his Order of the Star in the East membership.

3 De leden oversterving der VSTP', LOC, 26-9-1917, 1e blad.

4 VAN LEEUWEN (1917A), 438. In the same year, fellow theosophist Kiewset de Jonge came to a similar conclusion from economics and vitalist philosophy: 'The defense budget enables the nation to continue safely its exchange, and, if necessary, to carry through forcefully the regulations which this primary urge of life needs. So they are, one might say, overhead expenses; one cannot show their fruitfulness immediately, but without them the national production of material as well as spiritual values could not proceed undisturbed.' KIEWSET DE JONGE (1917B), 92.
'Beter' [Malay: concrete], 'the false prophet of theosophy-tai sapi' [ox dung] and 'a poison to society.' 'Je Patriot' also included in his article Labberton's 'accomplice R. Djoesoediro and his brother R. Sadarsan.'

Just after Russia's 'October', Sneevliet had to stand trial for an article supporting its February revolution, and saying Indonesia might learn from it. A clause in it against Indie Weerbaar was part of the indictment. In his defence speech, he analysed Indonesia's society, especially conflicts between peasants and big sugar business. He counterpoised his views to those of Van Hinloopen Labberton, 'the theosophical Sage', as the sugar business employers' league had published them:

All that has happened here during the later years of Dutch rule has as its aim to further the development of capitalism. That, though, indirectly is in the people's interest too, the reformers of the Labberton ilk, who have enlarged so much on the blessings of the sugar plantations for the people, shout unanimously.

That view, Sneevliet said, was one of 'demagogues with both factual and financial interests.'

Abdoel Moeis had described Russia as 'people slitting their throats mutually for no reason.' The ISDV though, supported the October revolution.

A break occurred between ISDV moderates and militants in the fall of 1917. Unlike an earlier break in The Netherlands, the moderates were a minority, especially so among Indonesian members. The ISDV majority gradually became communist.

The right-wing social democrats called themselves Batavia [Jakarta] section of the SDAP at first; since 8 June 1919 Indische Sociaal-Democratische Partij. Views on Indie Weerbaar had certainly not caused the break. When on 3 November 1917, the Batavia SDAP brought out the first issue of its paper, Het Indische Volk [the Indies

6-12-1917, quoted IFO 50/1917, MCB, 1.

Schwidder/Tichelman, 264. Van Hinloopen Labberton (1908), 31: the sugar business 'brings a gigantic financial boon to the Native people.' Van Hinloopen Labberton (1914), 4: 'Many agricultural companies, especially in Java, make great profits in which the natives have a share.'

Dutch: 'betogingsbeheerende en belangstellende demagogie.' Schwidder/Tichelman, 211. Van Hinloopen Labberton (1908), 1: 'Also after I concentrated my work on other fields, I kept feeling interested in this [sugar] industry.'

In a debate against Baars; quoted HVW, 20-12-1917, 76. Also Moeis in Neraja 26-12-1917, quoted IFO 52/1917, MCB: Baars talked of Indie Weerbaar turning people into cannon-fodder, while the Russian revolution was far worse. Ingleson (1975), 4's description of Moeis as 'PKI leader' is wrong.

16/10/1917, quoted IFO, 1173: 'Jaarvergadering Indische SDAP.' Contrary to NOER, 110 that was not the [Protestant] Anti-Revolutionary Party.

Just before the break, in September 1917, the then still Batavia ISDV section planned an anti-Indie Weerbaar meeting, jointly with Insulinde and Servant Islam. LOC, 7-9-1917, 1e blad. 'Anti-weerbaarheidsmeeting'; Tichelman (1985), 626. Ibid., 662: the public meeting did not go ahead, as Insulinde and SI also wanted a speaker from the Batavia ISDV section; and it could not find one.

In its second issue, IV assured its readers that it had 'the same views as the organizations Insulinde and the ISDV' against Indie Weerbaar. It continued, referring to Labberton though not by name:

We deeply regret that in these terrible times, even so-called apostles of peace try to make the country share in the crazy, all-annihilating arms race.

Behind IV's official propaganda were its capitalist, real aims: unhindered ownership of the sugar processing plants and tobacco fields, the coffee and tea enterprises.

Minister of Colonies Pleyte said that the PID, the political intelligence police, did not impede meetings. Het Indische Volk reacted sarcastically: obviously Pleyte thought anti-IV meetings 'were not worthy of the name of meeting.' If they had counted as meetings, and had gone ahead, then 'the propaganda of Messrs Van Hinloopen Labberton and their supporters would have been greatly harmed.'

'A convert' reported for Het Vrije Woord on the speakers at the April 1918 Indies TS conference. Government Secretary A. Vreede said:

The Westerner is the elder brother, he should provide leadership. The Theosophist does not practice party politics, that would lead to self-destruction. Just look at Russia. 'Protestants of all countries, unite' is brotherhood; but class struggle makes it into the very opposite of brotherhood.

1 Labberton was present when Countess van Limburg Stirum-van Sminia, the governor-general's wife, inaugurated the executive of the Dutch East Indies Boy Scouts. LOC, 6-9-1917, 'Indische padvinders.' A. Meijroos, FTS, led the Indies scouts. "Ardjoenascholen," TMW 1927, 84. The Bandung Scouts headquarters was in the local TS building; JAB, 'Bandoeng-Lage,' TMW 1923, 183. In NVW, 4-4-1919, 'Padvinderij,' 'Arden' [R. Stann] criticized counter-revolutionary politics in the scout movement. Countess van Limburg Stirum, to celebrate the failure of Troelstra's attempt at revolution in The Netherlands, 'invited the scouts to shout out three cheers of 'hozee' [hurrah] in honour of the Queen and the person who gave the scouts their flag, Prince Consort Hendrik.'

2/1917: 'Operegering Krabbel.' As a supplement, the issue had a cartoon pater against IV by Dutch social democrat caricaturist Albert Hahn.

2/'21, 4-1-1919, 'Padvinderij,' 46. "With a public meeting, did not go ahead, as Insulinde and SI also wanted a speaker from the Batavia ISDV section; and it could not find one.
'A convert' commented:

Younger brothers, who are exploited on a giant scale by the elder brothers. He should understand that really is the cause (Karma).

The Vrije Woord reporter continued with a question on south-east Sumatra. There, a peasant uprising against government-imposed unpaid labour had been bloody defeated. Non-rebel peasants had also been killed. What did Vreede think of the Ansar? It saw the bourgeois election machine as a 'Holy Alliance' between 'the capitalist, the (theosophist) swastika, and the (masonic) triangle', with as its 'demagogic cant'. 'A convert' concluded:

For now, [criticism of present society] is too dangerous, and Theosophists will not hinder Capital in the slightest way, as it celebrates its triumphs by exploitation and oppression. That is the message which the Theosophical congress gave out, to the salvation of humanity.

In June 1918 local elections in Jakarta, a coalition of Insulinde and social democrats opposed Fournier, FTS, and his fellow Nederland-Lidische Vrijzinnige Bond candidates. Het Indische Volk vowed that it would 'fight them strongly, both by speech and by pen'. It saw the bourgeois election machine as a 'Holy Alliance' between 'the [Christian] cross, the [theosophist] swastika, and the [masonic] triangle', with as its ' Aim: to bar the autochthonous people from the local council. But to achieve this 'he, as a rule, is too much on higher and by pen. It considered Van Hinloopen Labberton's conference speech 'a convert' concluded:

elaas noodige stap van hooge sociale beteekenis [An unfortunately necessary step of high social significance]. He called the borstal 'that creature of darkness', quoting 19th century liberal politician Thorbecke. At the official opening, 'All the authorities were at that evil place. Director of Justice Department, priests, lord mayor, theosophists .. and other mainstays and preservers of the so-called social (dis)order'.

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On 4 September 1918, Sinar Hindia published a criticism of the TS by 'Anarchist'. He wrote of Van Hinloopen Labberton, the 'world teacher' or 'Imam Mahdi' ('sic. Anarchist'). His TS wanted to build a big new headquarters in Jakarta, a central building with four big and four smaller buildings around it. That square got Blavatsky Park as its name. The Amsterdam monthly Theosophia wrote it was 'on the west side of the Koningseplein, the most fashionable and for our purpose most suitable neighbourhood of Java's capital.' Het Nieuws van den Dag had protested against calling a square after a 'fraud'. According to 'Anarchist' 'that great one of theosophy (Mme Blavatsky)' at her headquarters 'had been called a fraud by two professors'. What, then, should one think of Indonesians 'who have been fooled by this theosophy'? Theosophy did not really include all religions, as it claimed. Muslims would trust Labberton more if he would go on jayf to Mecca. 'Anarchist'

could imagine vividly, that after all the criticism by Het Nieuws van den Dag the theosophists sit together, meditating silently, in order to wait for the advice from the Mahatma from Tibet. Look out, Nieuws van den Dag, be prepared for the attack by the astral body of the Mahatma from Tibet! A teacher [Labberton] who still hopes to get rich, and strives to become chairman of the Volksraad, the Javanese call someone like that: panditaning aneling (literally: teacher of gama'n music without lyrics, of 'rada-la', of no content) and. according to reincarnation doctrine, after his death he will turn into a pretje (young frog).

Marxists in Indonesia did not like theosophists' links to institutions such as borstals. H W. Dekker described the opening of one in an article with the sarcastic title 'Een helles noodige stap van hooge soeheete beteekenis [An unfortunately necessary step of high social significance]'. He called the borstal 'that creature of darkness', quoting 19th century liberal politician Thorbecke. At the official opening, 'All the authorities were at that evil place. Director of Justice Department, priests, lord mayor, theosophists ... and other mainstays and preservers of the so-called social (dis)order'.

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1EEN BEKEERDE.
2IV, 18-6-1918.
3IV, 22-6-1918; 'Telegram. Kruis, Swastika en driehoek.'
4IV, 18-6-1918. 'Fallen little liberal jude': in 1917, liberals had lost their majority in Jakarta city council because of the Pouwle housing scandal. A pro-NIVB leaflet said that Batavia SDAP and Insulinde candidates wanted to raise the Revolutionary J.P. flag instead of the [Dutch] Tricolour Flag!!! IV, 20-7-1918. P. see p. 301.
This had to do with Annie Besant's ideas on crime, which the Indies TS translated into Dutch. Besant criticized the policy of punishing individual criminal acts as acts. To her, the question was not even individuals who are criminal persons; it was a criminal 'underclass'. For reasons which she derived from reincarnation doctrine, that class should, as a class, be subject from very early on in their lives, from before they commit any crimes, to a type of benign state servitude. I Kiewiet de Jonge, then of the Indies TS, favoured measures similar to Besant's; against long-term unemployment.

Reincarnation, applied to the treatment of criminals and of the undeveloped class which is ever on the verge of crime, suggests a policy wholly different from that of our present Society, which gives them complete liberty to do as they like, punishes them when they commit a legal offence, restores them to liberty after a varying term of gaol ... In the light of Reincarnation I suggest that the congenital criminal is a savage, come to us as a school, and that it is our business to treat him as the intellectual and moral baby which he is, and to restrain the wild beast in him from doing harm. These people, and the almost criminal class above them, are recognisable from birth, and they should be segregated in small special schools, given such elementary education as they can assimilate, be treated kindly and firmly, have many games, and be taught a rough form of manual labour. The teachers in these schools should be volunteers from the higher social classes ... From these schools they should be drafted into small colonies, bright, pleasant villages ... ruled by men of the same type as before; they should have everything to make life pleasant, except freedom to make it mischievous and miserable; these colonies would supply gangs of labourers for all the rougher kinds of work, mining, road-making, portage, scavenging, etc., leaving the decent people now employed in these free for higher tasks. Some, the true congenital criminal, the raw savage, would remain under this kindly restraint for life, but they would go out of life (and, later, on into the next) far less of savages than they were when they came into it. These chief difficulties would be innate rowdyism and idleness, for the criminal is a loafer, incapable of steady industry. The school would do something to improve him ... "He that will not work neither shall eat" is a sound maxim, for food is made by work, and he who, being able, refuses to make it has no claim to it." BESANT(1912A), 78-9; also nearly identically BESANT(1920D), 110f. AB. TAJN, 1918, 293: 'criminals are ignorant child-souls, dangerous because they live in strong bodies and look like humans, though they lack the higher human characteristics' BESANT(1912A), 60.

The criminal, the lowest and vilest, the poorest, smallest specimen of our race, is only a baby-soul, coming into a savage body, and thrown into a civilisation for which he is unfit if left to follow his own instincts, but which will provide for him a field of rapid evolution if his elders take him in coming into a savage body, and thrown into a civilisation for which he is unfit if left to follow his own instincts.

Kiewiet de Jonge, then of the Indies TS, favoured measures similar to Besant's; against long-term unemployment.

Five weeks later, Her Vrije Woord accused two Dutch officials, both Theosophical Society members, of facilitating the execution of a man who had murdered his pregnant wife. They were accused of "organising" the murder, which had been carried out by a local gang. The newspaper went on to say that the murder had taken place in the Banjarmasin sultanate in 1905.

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Especially the state itself, advised by both central institutions [state regulated: a banking league, and a trade and professional union, which he proposed ibid., 143], should act, and strongly so. The community should not treat these elements, unable to maintain themselves in microcosm by social degeneration, as outcasts, but as weaklings. That is its duty: rather than out of rational understanding, out of necessity, to keep the race as strong as possible and to exterminate all scabs of social infection. These social weaklings should be protected against themselves by the regulation that everyone who does not earn a minimum wage and does not have other income [from shares etc.] is stationed in the army or in a hospital. One should think here of a kind of Elma; [prison of N Y, state, TAJN 1913, 479] system, not considered as a punishment. ... An argument against this, which would speak of unassailable liberty of the individual, would be a bogus slogan in this context.

1. "Then, two Hamiltons were controller: M. and A.J. M. Hamerster throughout 1917 and 1918 was an 'official on leave'; so, presumably in The Netherlands. A.J. Hamerster, formerly of the Government Financial Affairs bureau, and later the TS treasurer in Adyar, in those years was controller of the Outer [outside Java] Islands administration, he had already had leave in The Netherlands in 1915. So, very probably, Her Vrije Woord meant him. N.A. de Haart was the regular controller of Matarapura in 1918. TAJN, 1918 and 1919. NUGRAHA(1989), 245.

2. SCHWIDDER/TICCHELMAN, 387. Senoessi was named in his defense speech as example, with Van Heutsz, of oppression. Christoffel fought 'with merciless severity' in Aceh, where 'kapitan rimoeeng' (tiger captain) was his nickname; EIN, I, 136; II, 439; Soerabaiasch, 4c.c. HV, 5-10-1918, 47; based partly on NUGRAHA(1989), 245.

3. CHOUTEN, 111; on 1917, unconcerned elsewhere. AB had many secretaries. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1916E), 168-9. CHRISTOFFEL(1916), written with Dutch Commonweal editor/acting Adyar librarian Van Maanen, who clashed with AB's anti-nationalism: RICHARDUS, 29; not with Indian Home Rule, as NETHERCOT(1963), 232 suggests.

4. C.C. v. D. 'Uit Dwistsche Streken', HVW, 9-11-1918, 47; based partly on Soeraanvisch, Handelsblad of 24-10-1918. In the same region, Christoffel had killed the pretender to the throne of the邦加拉ising sultanes in 1905: EIN, I, 136.
Cocoa is easy to digest and nutritious. In this way, you also support the Indies Industry.'

We ourselves, in general, do not condone objection to military service and inciting it to... The Kesatria should risk his life in his country's service, and in protection of his kith and kin. But, whose soul speaks against shedding blood, the Brahmans (sic) soul, wherever he was born (so not just in India), he should not be troubled by soldiering, in play or in earnest.'

Composer F. Belloni wrote an *Indie Weerbaar* march. On the queen's birthday, the *IW* association organized soccer matches for 'natives'; and a day later, for 'Europeans'.

A plane at their military air-show crashed, injuring the pilot.

The anti-*Indie Weerbaar* campaign also continued. Social democrats saw its *IW* acronym as 'Idioten Werk', the work of idiots. On 31 August 1918, *Het Indische Volk* announced a big anti-conscription meeting in Jakarta, organized jointly by Batavia SDAP, Insulinde, and Sarekat Islam.

The manifesto for the meeting called the draftee contract a

military coolie contract, more cunning in its tendency than the worst contract that ever was invented in Delhi. The people in Indie Weerbaar will drink champagne to your loyalty... They want to make you rich. That is why they rob you. Who among you is so stupid that he does not know that the tiger's velvet paw has murderous claws? Let that fat-head adorn himself with red, white and blue [of the Dutch flag], like an ox which goes to the slaughterhouse.'

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2. *RAN*, 1921, 277. He worked then at the Outer Islands Administration
4. *OVW*, 1918, 3, 3. Ibid., 18. Ibid., 4/5/6 and later, had an ad: 'One of the ways to make the Indies Weerbaar, is drinking Jaco-Cocoa. With that, you make your body able-bodied, for Jaco-Cocoa is easy to digest and nutritious. In this way, you also support the Indies Industry.'
5. *IV*, 10-8-1918 quoted Sinar Hindia: 'They want to make us able-bodied conscripts while our stomachs are empty... For three centuries, our brains have been forced into inertia by the policy of keeping us stupid. They have been able to call us names like "stupid like a domestic buffalo", lazy, rapacious, unreliable. Now, besides that, they want to force the Javanese to become soldiers, murderers. Over and above that: to increase the taxes to pay for the military budget. Who will become soldiers? The Javanese. Who will pay for it? The Javanese. They have given us... [in original] consumption instead of bread.' The article concluded with a poem: 'Peroellapar, matanja bergamelap, melocon, bilang smerlap [Because of a hungry stomach, the people go crazy/and if they open their mouths, they are called names like smerlap; Dutch for bun].'

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Jakarta then had about 100,000 inhabitants. Of those, four to five thousand, 'some hundreds of them Europeans',1 came to Senca Park on 1 September. This was the largest number so far at a political meeting in the colonial capital.2

From the chair, D. ter Laan of the Batavia SDAP opened the meeting, attacking the *Bataviasch Nieuwsblad* of theosophist Kiewiet de Jonge for its pro-conscription campaign. The authorities, he said, had allowed the meeting only on condition that Sneevliet and Semaen's ISDV, and the Private Soldiers Union, would be excluded from co-organizing it. At this, the audience booted. Though the ISDV did not participate officially, one of the three speakers at the meeting was Alimin Prawiradirdjo, then its Jakarta branch chairman,3 and later prominent communist. The others were Notoatmodjo and Batavia SDAP leader R. Schouten. Alimin said that 'he certainly wanted an Able-bodied Indies, but not a military Able-bodied Indies. He wanted to make the people able-bodied economically.'

A long gentleman, who refused an invitation to explain his views to the meeting from the rostrum, constantly heckled Alimin, shouting 'Long live Indie Weerbaar.' Alimin said: 'Just let fools shout out their opinion.' The heckler shouted again: 'Long live Indie Weerbaar.' Alimin said to loud laughter: 'The fools begin already.'

Next day, the anti-Weerbaar opposition showed at the big pro-*IW* military parade in Jakarta. With disgust, Governor-General Van Limburg Stirum's aide, naval Lieutenant C.L.M. Bijl de Vroe, noted in his diary, that at the head of the parade

a gang of soldiers whirled about, singing the Internationale. Bums like Baars, Sneevliet, Brandssteder, and Schotman work far too well among our military.

The soldiers distributed pamphlets for the right to have meetings.3 'Vengeur', pseudonym of J.F. van Nugteren, an oppositionist soldier, said in *HVW*, 5 Oct. 1918, 2, 'Indie Weerbaar': 'A call for conscription sounds through the [Indonesian] archipelago. The "elite" of society, the capitalists, fear a change of rule.'

On 7 September 1918, *Het Indische Volk* also attacked Kiewiet de Jonge; because, it said, in his *Bataviasch Nieuwsblad* he had given a biased pro-government account of an

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2. When on 15 March 1917, 100 people were at a Nederlandisch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond meeting, *LOC*, 16-3-1917, 'Het Batavia', commented: 'This is quite a lot for Batavia.' LOC, 31-3-1917, 'Het Batavia', described a protest meeting against the housing policy of the liberal local council (the Petodjo affair), as 'gigantic, more than 600'. Only the sensational trial of the murderer Brinkman, the correspondent thought, had ever brought together so many people.
3. *HVW*, 5-10-1918, 8, 'Batavia.'
4. Dutch translation of Alimin's Malay: 'Daar beginnen de gekken al': 'De Anti Indie-Weerbaar meeting', *IV*, 7-9-1918. Ibid., Schouten explained the origin of the world war: 'big capitalists longed for the property of rich mines, for more colonies in East Africa.'
incident, when navy sailors had refused to obey officers' orders. In the daily *Sinar Hindia*, more militantly socialist than *IV*, Soemadi used even stronger words; the *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad* was "a poison to the indigenous people."

The next *IV* issue, of 14 September, was an anti-conscription special. Kiewiet de Jonge had written in his daily that the anti-*Indië Weerbaar* action of the Batavia SOAP 'therefore was a rape of the political greatness of socialism.' Also the theosophist paper *Indische Stemmen* had, besides an article by Van Leeuwen, "a specimen of pro-conscription cant" according to social democrat Daan van der Zee. Van der Zee had attacked *Indische Stemmen* on the issue of class contradictions or national and racial contradictions.

A Surakarta wayang puppeteer dealt with conscription in his show. In Ujung Pandang on Sulawesi, three thousand people had met against *Indië Weerbaar* on 25 August. Sailor Arga from West Java told them that the militia plans 'should be kicked to the edge of the universe, as soon as possible.' Nine thousand turned up at a meeting in Kudus, a small Java town, of the local branch of the PKBT, the Workers and Peasants' League organized by *ISDV* militants, on 13 October 1918. Darsono and Marco spoke against *IV*, a motion against it was voted for. Sneevliet was unable to speak, as a car taking him there broke down. The October *Surekat Islam* congress in Surabaya theatre voted unanimously against conscription. Baars thought it hypocritical that even Abdool

1 *IV*, 7-9-1918; 'De dienstweigering der maroen'; Kiewiet de Jonge warned to 'save faces for the naval officers involved at any cost.'

2 SH 21-11-1918, quoted IPO 47/1918, MB, 15. Soemadi, a girls' school teacher, also wrote in *Sr-Dirpongore and Stridaratam*; IPO 15/1919, JB, 9.

3 Article 'Weerbaarheidsgevaar,'.

4 De doezelende Alarik (The obscuring Alarik; Alarik was a pseudonym in *IS*), IV, 31-8-1918: 'Nationalistische bladen', I. 31-8-1918: *IS* had said 'that the socialist movement does not recognize the indispensability of national striving in the world's development.' Van der Zee: 'Racial hatred is only a consequence of false feeling and false views. But class contradiction is real, based on the fact that one class owns the means, which the other class needs as badly to live.... And as for those who try to moderate and to obscure us, we join them there.'

5 Bromarrani 3-11-1918; quoted IPO 45/1918, JB, 5.

6 *Sr-Dirpongore* 11-11-1918, quoted IPO 46/1918, 'Extreemistische bladen', 2. Padjoeliran, quoted IPO 49/1918, 'Nationalistische bladen', 1. KM 23-12-1918, quoted IPO 52/1918, MB, 13: the navy discharged Arga dishonourably for this. He then started work at *De Nieuwe Hindoestaanse* translating Kropotkin, and as chairman of the sailors' union *Sinar Laoetan*.

7 SH 219, 31-10-1918; quoted IPO 44/1918, 23-5.

Moes now voted along with the others. Still, Baars was satisfied. Chinese, and also Arabs, living in Indonesia, held anti-conscription meetings.

In the end, the government did not introduce conscription. As the historian Fasseur has written, plans for it 'disappeared into a bureaucratic drawer.' Not just because of bureaucracy, however. Support for it weakened as the war ended; influential businessmen and politicians like Colijn preferred a military strategy based on the navy. And debates about the military among non-ruling civilians and privates had grown from scores in The Hague in 1913, to hundreds in Semarang in 1914, three to four thousand in Semarang in 1916, to many more thousands all over Indonesia in 1918. In these debates, opposition increased.

By now, this popular resistance grew at a time of, possibly, international revolution. Revolution took over from the ending war as the main issue between Indonesia's leftists and theosophists.

10 From *ISDV to PKl*, 1918-1927

On 15 November 1918, Darsono wrote in *Sooeara Ra'jai*: 'Look how in [Europe] the Princes are being chased away like boars. ... Put out everywhere the RED FLAG, the symbol of HUMANITY, EQUALITY, AND BROTHERHOOD.' Indonesians, he said, should make workers' and peasants' councils take over.

In Jakarta 'military guards had been doubled, patrols made their rounds. High level officials' wives learned to shoot at the Indies army rifle-range 'which is really useful to ladies because of the Bolshevik fun in Russia.'

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1 A. Baars, 'De hoteckens van het jongste S.I.-kongres', *HWW*, 13-10-1918, 10-4. On 29-10-1918, in *Koning Moeis*, formerly Moes', quoted IPO 44/1918, 12, S. G. [Sogenawan?] wrote, contrary to earlier policy: 'And then the militia, which is useless to Kromo. Kromo is able-bodied, if his stomach is full, and if he gets enough education.' According to a letter by official G. Hazen to Governor-General Van Limburg Stirum on 23 August 1918, Moes' views on conscription still led to 'fierce struggle' within SI, due to 'socialist-influenced opposition against the "Indië Weerbaar" movement'; published *KWANTES*(1975), 43. In a letter to *Sr-Dirpongore*, opponent of socialism S. Tondokoesoemo wrote that non-Javanese Baars should not discuss Javanese affairs. The paper's editor reacted: 'Then, how about the Government, and Labberton? *Sr-Dirpongore*, 11-11-1918, quoted IPO 46/1918, 'Extreemistische bladen', 2. Socialist SI, 5-12-1918 wrote that Tondokoesoemo himself was 'under the influence of "Sugar Kings"'; quoted IPO 49/1918, MB, 17.

2 200 Arabs were at an anti-conscription meeting in Semarang. B., 'De Inlandsche milie', *HWW*, 29-3-1919, 223-4.


5 Quoted IPO 46/1918, 'Extreemistische bladen', 3. Darsono was sentenced to a year in jail for an anti-IV article; SH 27-3-1919, quoted IPO 13/1919, MB, 19.

6 KIEWIET DE JONGE (1919), 98.

7 SCHOUTEN, 168.
A wave of strikes swept across the archipelago. Not only by workers; also the students of the theosophist teachers' training school Goenoeng Sari in Jakarta went on strike. They complained of unjust expulsion of a student and authoritarianism of director Corporaal and a lady teacher of pedagogy. Moesso, the later communist leader, was a Goenoeng Sari student; I am not sure if that was exactly then, and if he also struck. Hadji Agoes Salim, though hesitating about whom to blame, thought that

the director has acted more as a man of authority, who considered that authority had been subverted, than like a father guiding the students.1

The Budi Utomo paper Darmo Kondo asked if the director really 'knew the Indigenous people', and wrote: 'A wise man does not act hastily, or in anger.'2 Oetoesan Hindia commented on the dispute: 'The Javanese as such will not quickly act to defy their Chiefs, if the latter do not provoke that.'3 After mediation by Volksraad members Van Hinloopen Labberton and Abdool Moeis, the strike ended. It caused Salim to write at length on strikes in general, attacking the ideas in the Hindu caste system on social cohesion.4 Salim wrote the school had been founded with 'unity' as its slogan. The conflict, though, had made him think 'that one cannot get unity by a name, or just by wanting it, but especially by applying it in practice.'5

In the wake of the Russian and German revolutions, Troelstra, and Marxists to his left, proposed revolutionary policies, which were popular among the more militant of Dutch workers. The position of the ruling class and of the royal family seemed to be uncertain. From the theosophical sphere came alarm, also in artistic form:

Where may a king still find fidelity?6

Soon though, the government managed to regain control, with the help of right-wing paramilitary organizations.7 Also with the support of the Indies TS monthly:

3 17-1-1919, quoted Ipo 3/1919, MBA, 25. See also KM 20-1-1919.
4 Neraja 20 and 21-1-1919, 'Mogok'.
5 Neraja 4-2-1919, 'Praktijk associatie.'
6 H.G. Cannegiezer, 'Baden Mas Noto Soeroto', The Hague, Serves, 1926, 9, quoting 'the princely poet'. Ibid., 5. In 1918, Dutch theosophically inspired Karel Schmidt painted 'A Portrait of Wilhelmmina's fate.' Queen Wilhelmmina looked into a 'karmic mirror': Schmidt represented threats of revolution around her as 'spear, daggers, and evil spirits.' Lien Heyting, 'De beziende krachten van de schilder Karel Schmidt: Een allemachtig genie'; NRC, 26-8-1994.
7 The government also made concessions, like votes for women and a shorter working week. After Sjaevillii's exile from Indonesia, Dutch expatriates in Penang (now: Malaysia) sent a telegram to the queen, asking her to exile Troelstra from The Netherlands. Neraja 2-12-1918, quoted Ipo 49/1918, MBA, 1. Van Kol and other SDAP right wingers opposed Troelstra's revolutionary plans.

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... all the messages from the Motherland [The Netherlands] came to us about the revolutionary-bolshevik agitations, a sorry outgrowth to healthy evolutionary spirit. But the people of Holland indeed proved to be practical and matter-of-fact enough not to rush into the adventure of Bogus beautiful socialist and anarchist promises.1

Thank goodness, the government knew how to perform the action that was the only remedy against the surplus of such leaders as the S. D. A. P. has now.2

The editorial of the monthly summed up the theosophical ideal of society as: 'Duty above Rights'.3 A few months later, editor Van Leeuwen elaborated on the difference between revolutionary and hierarchical views of Brotherhood, and on relations of superhuman to political hierarchy:

1 VAN LEEUWEN(1918A), 583
2 VAN LEEUWEN(1919A), 4. In a speech in Cimahi that year, Van Leeuwen said: 'In social democracy a part of this Man has shown itself, the exoteric part, the human [as opposed to Divine] part, the wrong part, we will have to say. Man reaches out to the outside, directs eye and head and heart towards the environment and forgets that the source of all force is within.' TMM, 1919, 89. In an editorial, ibid., 98: 'The people outside the [social democratic movement], with all their seemingly beautiful words, are in Social Democracy instead of the way to a people's society, in which power is given to the majority and not the minority of the best.' Though Van Leeuwen was for constructing a 'Theosophical Social-Democracy' (ibid.) whose contents would differ from the SDAP: 'Theosophists have liberated the world from the chains of scientific materialism; now, once again theosophists will have to liberate the world from social democrat hatemongering'; ibid., 101.
3 VAN LEEUWEN(1919B), 350. Else, 'the evil is formed which leads to revolutions, to anarchy, to world wars'. Ibid., 351-2: 'Workers' demands, parties' demands, religious communities' demands, and so on, endlessly. But finally, one will have to realize that this will create an abuse, which cannot last, and in opposition to these excesses towards rights the FTS will have to state now a preponderance towards the side of duty.' BESANT(1919B), 33: 'Duty above Rights, obligations above claims.'
January 1919 editorial of the Dutch East Indies TS monthly:

a point against them which Van Leeuwen had not mentioned: the danger of confusion between anti-capitalism and opposition to other privileged people as well: 'protested strongly against action and agitation' of the Marxists. Soeriokoesoemo named

...[in original] there is no construction, but everything stays down.

A half truth [on brotherhood] is worse than no truth at all. ... Would not this be the reason why bi'other G.] Amsterdam [the later international TS president] advises revealing more of that which up to now was esoteric, to show the people and hold before them the truth of the existence of the "Elder Brothers" [superhumans in TS doctrine] to proclaim and to propagate as a fact the Hierarchy of beings in this Universe, as the ideas of Karma and Reincarnation, which are the property of the whole world now, were made known by us earlier on? And is it not significant, that also just in these days an important new book came out: "Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom", as if from these Elders themselves a voice comes, to witness of Their existence?

That is what our task is! To accustomed the world, including the Indies society, to the concept of "Hierarchy", of elder and younger ones, also among the earth's Nations and Peoples. A difficult task indeed in these times of revolution and democratization, but exactly because of that a still more valuable one. 

Semaono and his ISDV colleagues Baars and Sneevliet were the subject of the January 1919 editorial of the Dutch East Indies TS monthly:

In our Insulinde the plant, deriving from that bitter fruit, thrives and grows. People like Sneevliet, Baars, Semaono and so many others who are incapable of rising to spiritual heights, see nothing but the sham of the brotherhood in matter, while the Brotherhood in spirit still does not exist for them .... "Demon est Deus inversus [The demon is the inverted God]", H. P. B. says in her Secret Doctrine. And for as long as the brotherhood in matter is our aim, that which up to now was esoteric, to show the people and hold before them the truth of the existence of the "Elder Brothers" [superhumans in TS doctrine] to proclaim and to propagate as a fact the Hierarchy of beings in this Universe, as the ideas of Karma and Reincarnation, which are the property of the whole world now, were made known by us earlier on? And is it not significant, that also just in these days an important new book came out: "Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom", as if from these Elders themselves a voice comes, to witness of Their existence?

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In the same month, also Prince Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo in his Wederopbou inverted socialists' view of religion as opium:

Opium, for example, is a strong poison; surely, it often is an effective medicine. ... As opium is for the ill patient, so is socialism for suffering humanity. In both cases, there always is a chance of recovery; but the chance of persisting totally is bigger than that chance. Unfortunately, all authorized doctors at the moment are in complete agreement that, so far, there is no other remedy. We, though, rather stick to the natural way of healing-the (holy) water.

The Theosophical Society leaders disagreed with Sneevliet. So did the colonial government, and thus, using emergency law, they banned him from Indonesia in December 1918. 3 In a debate in the Volksraad (representative council), Sarekat Islam chairman Tjokroaminoto protested, as his executive had decided. 4 SI vice chairman Abdoel Moeso had already urged the government to ban Sneevliet in 1917, and now said nothing. 5 Prince Mangkoe Negero VII did speak, but on Javanese culture, not on the subject of the debate, the banning. 6

On 18 November, Neraja supported the exile proposal. 'Kita redactie O. H. [We, the editors] of Tjokroaminoto's Oetaan Hindia took Neraja to task for that view three days later. 'We protest strongly against the editor R. Djsojoediro. ... By this article, he has violated the principles of the S.I. national executive, of which he is a member. No longer should R. Djsojoediro be in the S.I. executive.' Though SI did not expel Djsojoediro, his next congress in 1919 would demote him (see p. 299). Darsono wrote in Saenra-Rajus:

This Djsojoediro, who applauded Sneevliet's exile, is nothing but a Government mouthpiece. It is alright that a paper exists which is based on the principles of the Government; but S.I.

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1SOERIOKOESOEMO(1919A), 15.
2SOERIOKOESOEMO(1920C), 2. VAN DER LEEUW(1920), 165 opposed Marxism in an at first sight anti-capitalist way: 'Marx in this respect is typical of 19th century mentality, as typical as capitalism he fought against, they are in this both symptoms of one and the same mentality.'
3L. DE JONG, vol. IIA, 284.
4Volksraad,'OH 21-11-1918.
5'Aroen' [J. Stam], 'Documenten over de uitzetting van Sneevliet', HVW, 14-12-1918, 91-2.
7'Aroen' [J. Stam], 'Documenten over de uitzetting van Sneevliet', HVW, 14-12-1918, 92
8Neraja 18-11-1918, 'Sneevliet dienlijk': OH 21-11-1918. 'Neraja moedafak!'
people should not head such a paper. A few days after the anti-Sneevliet article, editor-in-chief Djojosoediro went on sick leave. Fellow ST executive member, but already no longer fellow TS member(?), Hadji Agoes Salim replaced him, on 25 November. Then, Neratja wrote that the editorial had been against the views of Djojosoediro's fellow editors. The paper did not want to denounce it though, as long as Djojosoediro was not back from sick leave.

Raden Djojosoediro did come back on 28 November. On 11 December, Salim wrote another version that Djojosoediro had already been ill on 18 November.

The Sarekat Islam executive met on Sunday 22 December in Surabaya, first at Tjokroaminoto’s house, then at the Panji Harsoyo building. Ten executive members were present: Tjokroaminoto, Tjokrosomo, Djojosoediro, H.A. Sjadjiri, Soeprapranoto, Hasan bin Semit, Prawotosoedibjo, Soekardono, Sosrokardono, Semaoen. Others, like Moes and Mohamed Joesoef, were absent. Four left-wingers (very probably including Sosrokardono, Sosrokardono, Prawotosoedibjo, also an ISDV member) faced four right-wingers on the pro-exile editorial in Neratja. Semaon accused Djojosoediro’s faction of ‘lies on Sneevliet.’

Finally, chairman Tjokroaminoto helped a proposal, supporting Sneevliet, to a 5 against 4 victory; with one abstention. On the other hand, the meeting decided to accept Djojosoediro’s profession of non-responsibility for the pro-banishment article, though, as long as Djojosoediro was not back from sick leave. Moeis and Mohamed Joesoef, who embrace theosophy, and who listen to Mrs Annie Besant’s speech would surely be an inferior article, as long as Djojosoediro was not back from sick leave. The paper did not want to interpret it as: ‘The workers should not change the relationships of power.’...

The Dutch Indies TS had strongly opposed Annie Besant’s internment in British India. However, of this externment now they thought, concluding the ‘infernal pains’ of Society, the government, dived into its own bosom and caused the establishment of the pillars of society, the government knew how to perform the action that was the only remedy... Well may it continue in this way! And is it not splendid to see how at the same time as the externment of Sneevliet, on the very day that this man, this obfuscator of human idealism, had

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Neratja on West Sumatra. He saw the rise of communism, this 'modern poison'. It mixed
with pious Islam, 'like Hadji Misbach' [a Java santri PKI member].

Sinar Hindia then, reporting on the founding of a TS lodge, added that theosophists
kept silent on mass production of 'guns and poison gas' in capitalism. It compared
theosophists to Fraboe Dasamoeka, the Javanese equivalent of the evil King Rawana in
the Indian Ramayana.1 Just afterwards, on 7 February, the communist Abdoel Hamid
started a weeks long polemic against theosophy in that paper. He wrote an Open Letter to
Soerya of pro-TS daily Neratja. Soerya, he said, 'was like a capitalist, as he had joined
the TS.' He accused Soerya of getting a 'comfortable life' that way. The reply became
of revolution and theosophists' of evolution

SH

Neratja.

230

IV.1

the Indian Ramayana.2 Just afterwards, on 7 February, the communist Abdoel Hamid
kept silent on mass production of 'guns and poison gas' in capitalism. It compared
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Soerya remarked on 'the extremely obvious contrast' between communist views
of revolution and theosophists' of evolution.3 SH of 25 and 26 April published
Communism and Theosophy. Abdoel Hamid against Soerya.' Abdoel Hamid wrote:

Soerya, how can one have compassion with one's fellow humans, if one neither knows nor feels
the suffering? ... You lie till you are black in the face, Herr [German: Mr Soerya] ... Mr
Soerya is a theosophist, does he fear death? Does not theosophy say, that death is just a change
of clothes. Why, then, does Mr Soerya fear revolution?

The paper Halilintar from Pontianak in Kalimantan picked up the controversy. On 24
May, 'Communist L. Tj. Hoo' wrote he could not back Soerya; as 'theosophy does not
guaranty support for the people, because among theosophists there are also oppressors. '

In the Bandung communist weekly Matahari [the Stafl of 3 March, 'Sj. Hoed.'
criticized Volksteed member H. Soetadi. Formerly, he had been chairman of the
Auxiliary Teachers' Union; Matahari wrote that he had done good things then. However,
after joining the Volksraad, he had supported a proposal by Ten Berge to sack communist
teachers.

What does it mean that H. Soetadi studies 'Theosophy diligently'? What does it mean that H. Soetadi sits at the editors' table of Neratja, as its editor-in-chief?

'Sj. Hoed.' saw Neratja as 'enemy of the people.' Soetadi sat in the TS national
executive, at least in 1927.

PKI member Moesso spoke at a Red Sarekat Islam meeting in Nagrek (West Java) on

30 March 1924. He attacked the selling of jumats. Chandra of the Orde der Dieren van
Indie though, in Neratja of 4 April, defended belief in amulets, also for instance in
divining-rods.4 After Neratja had changed its name to Hindia Baroe, Sinar Hindia too
changed to Api [Fire]. Hindia Baroe thought it was 'Fire' from Hell.5

On 10 April 1925, the PKI tried to have a meeting in Surakarta. The police chased
them away. Many communists then went to the Habi Projo building, where Budi Utomo
was holding its congress. Josowidagdo, formerly of Indie Weerbaar (and still of the TS?)
told PKI leader Marco to send most of his supporters away. They wore shabby sarongs
[Javanese dress]. That was against the dress code of Habi Projo, a gentlemen's club.
Marco refused. Then, the police drove the sartorially and financially challenged out.
Marco stayed, and gave an address. It helped the left wing of Budi Utomo to win from the
Surakarta-based right.6

In 1926, General Secretary J. Kruisheer spoke at the TS congress in Blavatsky Park
in Jakarta. He warned against 'the pernicious agitation by the communists in this
country'.

Not long ago, there was an article in their paper 'A p i', which reproached the Theosophists
with cooling down the people 'like ice-sellers' if the communists had brought them to the
boiling point.

Kruisheer warned of a fate like that suffered by theosophy in Russia, and of communist
cells infiltrating, trying to disrupt the TS. The officials of lodges and centres should keep
out all individuals who wanted to propagate their PKI doctrine of intolerance.4

The government banned more and more papers and activities of communists and
trade unions. In 1926-27, there were armed communist uprisings, first in Java. Then, in
1927, Kruisheer wrote in the editorial of his monthly on West Sumatra:

Last, we want to commemorate our brother Rahman gelar Soetan Maharajja (PTS # 2095),
who was slain at the hands of the communists in Silungkang, where he was a teacher. ... Fallen
as a martyr to his conviction and his steadfast holding on to what he recognized as right, he has
carried a right to the sympathy of all of us ... The treasurer of the Indies TS collected money for Rahman’s next of kin.8 Former
Indie Weerbaar leader Major Rheemey crushed the uprising in West Sumatra. The
Sarekat A'idat Alam Minangkabau, with links to the TS, helped him, as it claimed9 A
government committee to investigate the rebellion included theosophist A.J. Hamerster, a

1Quoted IPO I, 1924, 192-3.
2SH 21-26 Jan. 1924, quoted IOP 1, 1924, 198.
4Quoted IPO 18/1924, 204-5.
5Quoted IPO 23/1924, 450-1.
6Quoted IPO 19, 1924, 500-1. RANI, 1922, 49; 1925, 48: the government appointed Soetadi as
member in 1921 and 1924. Apr 6/10-10-1924, quoted IPO 42/1924, 102-3: the Semarang
members' meeting of 5-10-1924 of Soetadi's union rejected his spending union money on Neratja,
of which Soetadi had only informed Coeneng Sari teacher Sastuwirjo. See on Soetadi also
NUGRAHA, 151; TMNI 1927, cover; TNI 1932, 93.

7SH 1-4-1924, quoted IPO 14/1924, 86. Ibid., 82.
8The Hell", NB 216-8.1924, quoted IPO 32/1924, 260-70. NB 166-10-1924, quoted IPO
41/1924, 69 headlined 'Driving away the plague of communism'.
10Harman(1926), 207.
12BOUMAN(1949), 78.
former official in that area some 17 years earlier. After the uprisings, the government banned the PKI completely and sent its members, and others, to prison camps in an epidemic-ridden area of New Guinea. Marco died from consumption in Boven-Digoel camp in 1932. As workers could no longer express dissatisfaction through political or union organization, the number of physical attacks, some resulting in deaths, on Dutch high level employees of plantations rose. This worried the government. A. Vreede, now director of its labour office, called a conference of his officials on those 'murders of assistant [managers]' in 1929.

11. Indies social democrats and Indië Weerbaar after 1918

The end of the First World War meant in Indonesia: the end of conscription as a hot issue, linking revolutionary and reformist socialists, and opposing reformists to theosophists. The Russian question also sharpened contradictions between both former ISDV wings. So, contradictions between the moderates, soon called Indische Sociaal-Democratische Partij, and the Theosophical Society could grow less sharp. Het Indische Volk regretted earlier attacks on the TS General Secretary. It now saw him as:

One of the best [Representative Council members] from the bourgeois camps, maybe even the very best one. Also among us. Labberton has sometimes been discussed sarcastically, as someone who was not practical, who was said to have lost the right view on social conditions, because he looked at them too much through theosophist glasses.

Some theosophists and former theosophists became active in the ISDP in this changed climate. In early 1919, A. Baars doubted if his moderate ex-colleagues should be happy with their new recruit Mrs Corporaal-van Achterbergh, wife and co-manager of the theosophist teachers' training school director. He quoted a 'sarcastic' item on her in the Nederlands-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond's liberal weekly:

The Vrijzinnig Weekblad says that it was especially joyful that Mrs Corporaal was an ex-NIVB member. ... In three weeks' time, Mrs Corporaal's instincts for the poor, oppressed people had awakened. We await expectantly for this principled and mature socialist leader's next incarnation.

The year before, Labberton's Dutch translation of Budi Ulomo [Krishnamurti] had come out. In 1929, 2

Mrs Corporaal became Batavia ISDP section treasurer at the end of 1919. H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge also joined, though only for a short time in 1919. Hadji Agoes Salim, with whose paper it had disagreed on Indië Weerbaar (see p. 319) now wrote in its weekly as an ISDP member.

Indië Weerbaar limped on. Itself, its links to the TS, and to Indonesians, all were weaker now than in its heyday. Hadji Agoes Salim considered the pros and cons of a militia. 'The argument against is that the overwhelming majority of the people do not support a militia.' Nor, in his conclusion, did Salim himself by now.

In 1919, near Garut in Java, government forces killed Hadji Hassan and his associates, who protested against the forcible selling of their rice. An alliance of Serekat Islam, ISDP, and others organized a protest meeting. In Indië Weerbaar's monthly, 'a sympathetic Sundanese [west Java] nobleman' wrote on it. He regretted both the killings and the protest meeting of 'passion and anger.' 'For God has a plan with the world. That plan is evolution. Kresna Moerti [Kristnamurti]. The first lines of the article had been a quote from At the feet of the Master, also ascribed to Krishnamurti.

1W executive members had plans in early 1920 to disband the association. 24 May saw one of the last flickerings of life at its annual general meeting, in the Bandung theosophical lodge. Because General Sniijders, ex-Dutch armed forces commander, spoke, the lodge building [see cover] was 'packed.' In 1922, the association disbanded itself at

1/2/3, 21.

1A. Baars, 'Onder het Rode Zeeekleed', NVW, 11-1-1919, 128.
2IV, 6-12-1919.
3B. Hering, personal communication from Kiewiet de Jonge's son.
4NOIR, 110. In 1920 Salim said to Halta (that he agreed with socialism; only its Marxist form was 'false and misleading.' HATTA(1981), 51. HATTA(1978), 85.
5GOENAWAN MANGOENKOESOEMO(1918), 22. Already in Oct. 1917, an ISDP association propagandist failed to get the Budi Ulomo general meeting to join the Association; though its 1908-11 first president, a_bpoei], joined, Neraja, 24-7-1919, thought the association had deviated from the earlier committee. The contacts of the Association with Geronas Melajoe were good though; for instance OM 5-5-1919, quoted IPO 25/1919, MBB, 10.
6Neraja 28-12-1918, quoted IPO 52/1918, MBB, 8.9. In Neraja 31-12-1918, quoted IPO 1/1919, MBB, 2. Salim again saw arguments in favour of a militia.
7The year before, Labberton's Dutch translation of At the feet of the Master had come out NVW, 1919, 3, 2-10, 'Overdenkingen/Perintebang'. Probably the same author, under the pseudonym Indië Weerbaar, wrote mostly the same article for KM 27-8-1919, quoted IPO 35/1919, MBB, 11-2; concluding 'The relationship between Government and People should be as between a father and his children.'

8NVW, 1920, 1/2/3, 2. Bandung TS buildings moved to Ool Park in 1930; 7 Apr 1931, 24, after the Second World War, Dutch and Indonesian government negotiators met there.
last. In 1932, Tilkema characterized the TS politically as:

Theosophists in Java are rather conservative. In the main, they are politically colourless; at the very most, liberal democrats or something. Even then, though, their views are as undemocratic as the others'. Sure, we do know a few members, who have joined the social democrat party; however, as many of our members think, this really is somewhat shocking.9

D. LABOUR, COMMUNISM, AND INDIA

International disgust among many poor people about the war and rising prices did not bypass Madras in 1918. In the spring, the textile workers went on strike. In September, food shops in many neighbourhoods were looted.10 In this climate, B.P. Wadia was active setting up unions in Madras, aided by Arundale; he then opposed strikes though.4 According to a British government report, while in Britain Wadia met communist labour activist Shapurji Saklatvala, a Parsi like himself. Saklatvala warned Wadia to 'on no account to involve Besant' in Indian trade unionism; also people organizationally linked to her should not 'have any connexion [sic] with the labour movement'.3

Other countries might follow Red Russia's example. In Hungary, 'the subsequents 1919 bolshevic régime made Theosophical work impossible'.5 Theosophists in Ceylon deplored Bolshevist anarchism that has become rampant in many lands'.7

In 1919, Annie Besant gave as the reason for her shift to a less anti-colonialist stand: 'India is now menaced by revolution, and Bolshevist propaganda is at work'.8 In 1919, Annie Besant gave as the reason for her shift to a less anti-colonialist stand:

Mrs Besant had objected to state ownership of industries in 1916.12 Still, in 1919 she joined the British Labour party, which became much bigger after 1918 than before 1914.12 English TS General Secretary Baillie-Weaver had feared that her 'completely opposite views on war might mean trouble between her and Labour.'3

In 1932, Tilkema characterized the TS politically as: Lutyens pointed out that Besant's still favouring Kingship by divine right would cause friction.1

Her political philosophy has been "hierarchical, and Gaud Socialism", while she abhorred Syndicalism and Direct Action.2

In England, non-revolutionaries seemed to become stronger. The International Conference on Labour and Religion took place in London, September 1919. George Arundale's report showed that many of those present belonged to the right wing of British Labour. From among them,

The Right Hon. George Barnes, Minister in the war Cabinet, opened the Conference with a strong warning against the perils of materialism, illustrated in the recent war and often offered to the common sense of the working men by callow academic exponents. ... He emphatically denied that the Labour problem was purely a question of wages and of the stomach.2 It was essentially a religious question—a question of man's proper place as man, and not merely as wage-earner. Six or eight months ago he was a little alarmed at the ferment in the Labour world, but he felt that we had now got over the worst.4

Other speakers were the Anglican Bishop Gore, Arthur Henderson,3 and George Lansbury:

AB's 1889 speech there could be no division between religion and politics, made such a great impression on Lansbury ... that he eventually embraced Theosophy and carried its social

1OVYW, 1923, 6, 8, 'Opheffing der vereeniging 'Indie Weesbaar'?
2TILKEMA(1932), 9, ibid; the ISDP 'could hardly be called liberal, certainly not revolutionary.' It never managed to get more than about 200 members.
3TAYLOR(1992), 313, 'Voedselrelletjes te Madras', Soerabaiasch Handelsblad 8-10-1918; from Times of Ceylon 10/12-9-1918.
4TS July/Aug, 1932, 319. PALME DUTT(1940), 369.
5TAYLOR(1992), 313, B.B. MISRA(1976), 171.
6FEKETE, 89.
7BIC, 1920, 10; goodbye article by A.D.J. to Woodward.
8BESANT(1919A), 26.
9NETHERCOT(1963), 240.
10NETHERCOT(1963), 329. GOREN, 90 [wrongly]: 'she did not join the Labour Party until the 1920's.'
11THA Jan. 1920, 319.
proceeds into his career as Socialist labor leader and Cabinet officer. As conference delegate for India, B.P. Wadia

declared that in the recently-born Labour Movement of India the spirit was intensely religious, dominated by the ideas of Karma, the immanence of God, and the solidarity of man. Within each caste there was the greatest brotherhood. The Brahman prince would let his daughter marry a Brahman cook, though between the castes no intermarriage was allowed. In 1921, Mrs Besant again took up the subject of workers’ ideas on class war:

A special hatred develops amongst them against those who are better off, a thing which is of course utterly un-Theosophical, and which it is the duty of every Theosophist to try to eliminate, wherever he may be living, whatever his particular views, whether sympathetic or antagonistic to Socialism.

And of revolution:

Always mischievous when it achieves that violent form.

Was violence really the problem with Annie Besant’s post-1889 views on class conflict and revolution? Then, one would also expect it to be a problem when a Government with the Great White Brotherhood on its side applied it, in a war against governments with black magicians on their side, as Mrs Besant described the First World War. We saw on p. 86 her views on government violence against unarmed brickbat-throwing Indian supporters of Gandhi. A basic tenet of Annie Besant in most of the second half of her life was that the masses should not rule (see p. 320f.) 1920’s TS Vice President Jinarajadasa commented on old and new ‘socialisms’:

Buddha ... was the greatest “socialist” that ever could be, but different from the socialists of the hands of the Elders, the wisest, the most experienced, and the morally best; ... that they are

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Buddha ... was the greatest “socialist” that ever could be, but different from the socialists of
I know now that the conditions do not make the people, but that it is the drunken and dirty people who cause the conditions.²

Sylvia Pankhurst, formerly of the CP of Great Britain executive, in a book published by Bombay communists pointed out how Mrs Besant had changed in the nature vs. nurture debate since her 1886 Why I am a Socialist; which said: ‘Take two healthy week-old babies ... the keeneest eye will not be able to separate the aristocrat from the plebeian ... Education, training, culture, these make class distinctions ...’ ¹ This change had to do with differences between historical materialism and idealism on whether essential ‘human nature’ exists.

Annie Besant attacked Dange of the CPI on financial support which the Soviet textile workers union gave to Bombay colleagues in their 1927 strike.³

In 1930, the Adyar estate and the Vasanta press, Annie Besant’s personal property, together employed hundreds; it was not a small business. When Adyar workers formed a union, Mrs Besant refused to recognize it. The PTS declared recognition would have to naturally the elder and the other the younger. As a compromise, workers could be against her own past ideas, as when she defended segregated schools for caste and casteless children in India, and class segregated schools in England:


³NETHERCOT(1963), 350.

²In the London Review; quoted S. PANKHURST(1926), 149. On the contrary, TJHPTO MANGOENKOESEOMO(1928), 9: ‘one cannot get improvement of the individual, if one leaves the circumstances under which the individual lives, alone.’ BESANT(1917A), 36: ‘an Englishman, who is often from the lowest ranks of society, drunken and brutal’. Ibid, 43: ‘the ruffian of the London slum.’

³PANKHURST(1926), 150f. In 1919, Besant wrote in Reincarnation (translated THINI, 1919, 421-2), taking the side of the ‘nature’ sect, along social, and ‘racial’ lines: ‘Once again, look at the evolution of man, from the stage on, which differs but little from the animal one, up to the stage of high civilization, and ask yourself [answer: reincarnation] what contributes to the difference between the limited contents of the consciousness of the child of the savage and the trained intelligence of a child of our own social categories. The properties, which show themselves in youth are very different ones in these two cases: when the child of the savage is transferred to a civilized environment, it progresses quickly during some years, and then, it comes to a standstill, because its intellectual facilities are not capable of any further expansion.’ See also TAYLOR(1992), 313: ‘the transformation of her attitude to socialism in general.’

¹MRNARRADASA(1931). Panchayat, village council of (traditionally, free) ‘wise men’, often idealized as a model not just for village, but also for national government. For instance the Nepal monarchy saw it as an alternative to allowing political panics; until the popular revolt of 1990.

²AYAR(1931). He was Annie Besant’s National Home Rule League provincial secretary.

³NEHRU(1972), vol VI, 113: Das expressed this idea in public and in a letter to Nehru; who wrote back that he objected to the equalization with fascism, though he did not agree with all in the Soviet Union.

⁴DAS(1934). vii STRUVE, 305: Count Keyserling (see p. 145) after the First World War also wrote of ‘not bolshevism or Marxist socialism, which did not deserve the name Socialist, but “true” socialism ... because if everyone claimed to be a socialist the Social Democrat Party could not survive.”

⁵Review in May 1937 77. In a debate in Madras on 15 Jan. 1936, Mehta said ‘revolutionary parties the whole world through had enjoyed worsening discontent and said people’s conditions.’ ‘Debat over wereldhervorming’, THINI March 1936, 5ff.

⁶TH March 1922, 622.
2. ‘ANARCHISM AND SIMILAR EVILS’

Anarchism (with Irish and Italian nationalism, and forms of Hinduism) was one of the influences on the Indian Congress 'extremists' whom Annie Besant opposed pre-1913.9 Gandhi also mentioned it at the 1916 controversy with her known as the 'Benares incident'. There, he described himself as a kind of anarchist, albeit different from extremists.10 The official Short Title of the British government's repressive Rowntree Act was 'The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919'. Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis influenced for instance E.F.E. Doutres Dekker and Marco in Indonesia. That many anarchists were atheists too might cause conflicts with theosophists.11 Theosophists' ideas also differed from anarchists, as from Marxists, on ruling and working classes, and on concepts of freedom.12 There was the question of how one sees

1. Back cover TT, Jan 1931
2. Wickremasinghe (1932), 399
3. Adyar Annual report on 1933, 576. 7 lodges. 102 members. - 23 compared to 1932
4. Lerkski, 15.
5. Wickremasinghe (1932), 402
7. Muthanna, 161. In the South African Naval Advertiser of 1-2-1895, Gandhi had attacked materialist philosophy as the cause of the awful growth of anarchism; Gandhiji (1958), vol. 1, 166. A TS dissident Anna Kingsford then in the 1890's influenced his views; ibid.,
8. See the polemic in De Vrije Socialist, p. 241. See p. 23. A French saying popular among anarchists is 'Dieu, ni maître; neither God nor master. No God was just possible in the TS; but no Master?
9. De Purucker (1906), 18. defined freedom 'briefly' as 'the inalienable right of man to own property, and to use all possibilities and facilities which Nature endows him, unless such action should damage others'; and, more mystically: 'Freedom in its essence can only be conceived as [religious] TRUTH'.
11. The Editor of The Buddhist, at the close of a good editorial on 'Anarchism in Europe,' says: '... The only possible remedy for Anarchism and similar evils, lies in a remodelling of the Western ethical philosophy so as to allow a place in it for the paramount truths of Karma and Rebirth'.
12. Anarchism (with Irish and Italian nationalism, and forms of Hinduism) was one of the influences on the Indian Congress 'extremists' whom Annie Besant opposed pre-1913. Gandhi also mentioned it at the 1916 controversy with her known as the 'Benares incident'. There, he described himself as a kind of anarchist, albeit different from extremists. The official Short Title of the British government's repressive Rowntree Act was 'The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919'. Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis influenced for instance E.F.E. Doutres Dekker and Marco in Indonesia. That many anarchists were atheists too might cause conflicts with theosophists. Theosophists' ideas also differed from anarchists, as from Marxists, on ruling and working classes, and on concepts of freedom. There was the question of how one sees

1. Back cover TT, Jan 1931
2. Wickremasinghe (1932), 399
3. Adyar Annual report on 1933, 576. 7 lodges. 102 members. - 23 compared to 1932
4. Lerkski, 15.
5. Wickremasinghe (1932), 402
7. Muthanna, 161. In the South African Naval Advertiser of 1-2-1895, Gandhi had attacked materialist philosophy as the cause of the awful growth of anarchism; Gandhiji (1958), vol. 1, 166. A TS dissident Anna Kingsford then in the 1890's influenced his views; ibid.,
8. See the polemic in De Vrije Socialist, p. 241. See p. 23. A French saying popular among anarchists is 'Dieu, ni maître; neither God nor master. No God was just possible in the TS; but no Master?
9. De Purucker (1906), 18. defined freedom 'briefly' as 'the inalienable right of man to own property, and to use all possibilities and facilities which Nature endows him, unless such action

the state as well. According to Marxists, the state should wither away eventually. The view of anarchists is still more negative; if possible, the state should be abolished today.

‘Anarchism’ in The Theosophist was a term of abuse. The Secret Doctrine described it as ‘blood-thirsty’. One of H.P. Blavatsky's objections to Western societies was 'the growth of the party of anomaly and disorder.

The Editor of The Buddhist, at the close of a good editorial on 'Anarchism in Europe,' says: '... The only possible remedy for Anarchism and similar evils, lies in a remodelling of the Western ethical philosophy so as to allow a place in it for the paramount truths of Karma and Rebirth'.

Australian TS GS Carroll in 1893 attacked: 'gambling and speculation, and thousands of Nihilists, Anarchists, and Disrupters of Society ... glibly propose reconstruction of society.'

Since the 1890's, in The Netherlands theosophists and anarchists reacted at one another. In 1892, Domela Nieuwenhuis, who then was evolving from the country's best known social democrat to its best known anarchist, had called his new-born daughter Annie. Annie, after Besant, because of her past work for socialism (she had left the SDF recently).

In Dec. 1895, Domela Nieuwenhuis and W.B. Fricke, the Dutch TS (Adyar) leader, debated. Domela said that 'theosophy and theology differed but little and that Blavatsky
was a fraud." Later, Van Steenis broke with anarchism as he joined that TS.

This one may see as a pattern we also saw in others' biographies, of convergence between rightward political and TS-ward philosophical trends. Just before he joined, Johan van Manen, later TS magazine for Indonesia editor, still later Mrs Besant's Commonweal editor, had anarchist sympathies. 3

In spite of theosophist attacks on anarchism, at least two Dutch (ex)-anarchists joined the TS (Point Loma): J. Sterringa, a bookseller; and W. Meng, an ex-preacher whose 'anarchist views melted away forever' when he joined. 4 Dutch architect and TS (Adyar) member Lauweriks at first illustrated Meng's magazine. 5

The paper Recht naar Allen, like Domela slowly evolving from social democrat to anarchist, on 10 Nov. 1896 reported a speech by Meng on 'Property, seen from a theosophical viewpoint.' RvA commented it was 'as useful as from a plumbers' viewpoint'; it 'could not make head or tail of the speech.' RvA, 'Akrates' [F: Drion] thought Meng 'dangerous'; instead of fighting for a better society, he 'stared at the volumes' of Schopenhauer and others 6

In widely read anarchist paper De Vrije Socialist M.A. Rabbie, who had visited theosophic meetings as an observer, critically described theosophy as 'theology's last refuge.' 7 Rabbie and editor Domela Nieuwenhuis attacked Sterringa about theosophic authoritarianism. Welcker describes Sterringa's Pt. Loma society questionably as less authoritarian than Adyar. 8 In matters of authority and democracy, Domela Nieuwenhuis compared theosophists with the Roman Catholic church. He concluded in favour of popes, whom at least a few score cardinals elected. 9 He also criticized Sterringa's disparagement of trade unions and his remark on 'materialist' anarchist workers;

And out of what miserable motives did they join unions? Fear of unemployment and hunger? As if it would be bad for humanity if they starved! 10

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1 Houkes (1995), 32.
2 Welcker, 482.
3 Richardus, 2, 66. M. Lutyens (1975) and Nethercot misspell Johann.
4 Houkes (1995), 32.
5 Bak (1991), 49-51. She describes, ibid., up to 1896 as Lauweriks' 'anarchist period' without mentioning the shift in Meng's magazine.
6 Houkes (1995), 32.
7 Rabbie (1898a).
8 Welcker, ibid. The oath of R. Crucible, and others who then were his fellow members, to Leader and Official Head Tingley ran: 'I ... recognising the person called Purple as being the agent of the Master I serve ... do hereby unreservedly pledge myself to unquestioning loyalty and obedience to her ... with my life if need be ... So Help me my Higher Self.' OEC, Nov.-Dec. 1934.
9 Domela Nieuwenhuis (1898). That was not friendly to theosophists, as Domela considered the church of Rome to be the ultimate opponent of anarchism: A. de Jong, 71.
10 Sterringa (1898).

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Domela Nieuwenhuis wondered how Sterringa could reconcile this with the tenets proclaimed in theosophy, of the brotherhood of humanity. Contrary to Van Steenis, Sterringa wanted to continue as both an FTS and an anarchist. He defended authority in theosophy by comparing occult knowledge to knowledge of potentially dangerous chemicals. From the DVS discussion, though, one can tell that his reputation among anarchists had received a blow.

Rotterdam anarchist Damme wrote a booklet against the TS in 1916. 1 Dutch atheist and anarchist Anton Constandse in 1929 (the TS' zenith) wrote a brochure against spiritualism and theosophy. He based his criticism on Annie Besant's The changing world.

In India, ... the submerged classes ... are far happier ... instead of blaming their neighbours, they blame themselves for the discomfort of their own position, and sometimes determine that their next birth shall be a happier one by making the very best they can of the disadvantages here. ... If you are trampled on, you must recognize that it is only yourself of the past trampling on yourself of the present. 2

He also quoted a then recent Dutch TS leaflet: 'Only seemingly these inequalities, which will remain with man for one earthly life, are imposed on him from the outside, in reality, they are based on differences in experience, or man himself has built them up in former lives, according to nature's laws.' 3

Constandse's comments were:

One may see that this nonsense is very reactionary ... I do not need to show that these fantasies just aim to reassure the rich capitalist and guarantee his riches as deserved property, while one teaches the poor person that only through repeating and patience he may improve himself. Still more materialist than Christianity, one promises to the exploited prole very tangible advantages ... [in original] in a future that keeps one waiting forever. And meanwhile, one expropriates him, very surely, owing to extraordinary virtuosity! 4

In June 1911, French anarchists (and, for different reasons, Roman Catholics) waged action against Annie Besant speaking at the Paris Sorbonne university. 5 Leadbeater reaffirmed the stand against anarchism in the 1920's. 6

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3. CONCLUSIONS OF PART IV

Was the Theosophical Society apolitical? Was our first question. From the material in this part, we answer it negatively. On Indie Weiteraar and other issues, the TS in Indonesia did not heed its opponent Henk Sneevliet's advice to keep out of politics. Nor did Annie Besant or George Arundale in India.

Now, our second question, on leftist or rightist politics. In 1875, right after founding

1 Thissen, 16.
3 Constandse (1929), 24.
4 Ransom (1938), 392.
5 Leadbeater (1922), 85.
in New York, Madame Blavatsky already considered TS membership incompatible with socialism. After that, there sometimes was open opposition, sometimes, as in Finland in the 1900's, attempts to make the socialists substitute class struggle by 'love and mutual understanding between the classes.'

In Indonesia, especially since 1916, there were conflicts with the political labour movement, first mainly on conscription, since 1918 mainly on revolution. In India, the political labour movement gained momentum later than in Indonesia; in contrast to national movements in both countries. The 1920's saw the TS conflicting with trade unions and communists of India. Both in India and Indonesia, the theosophists' headquarters, respectively school, had industrial disputes.

Most Marxists saw religion as a 'private matter'. Marxists tended to comment but rarely on theosophists unless both groups became involved in a particular political issue. Anarchists already in the 1890's tended more to seek out the TS and criticize their philosophy. Marty Bax ascribed to the TS 'Ties with socialism, anarchism.' One should modify this. The links as for movements were more often of antagonism than of sympathy.

As for biographies of individuals, like Annie Besant, Senator Reid in Australia, Van Hikloopen Labberton in Indonesia, their socialism or anarchism was mostly in different phases than their theosophy. The few, like Steerings and Resink, who really tried to link the two suffered strong opposition; their attempts did not last. This is not truly surprising for a Society of which, as Sax herself wrote. A major part belonged to the Dutch patriciaat [old established layers of the bourgeoisie; gentry] and the nobility, of whom some figured prominently in the Dutch business world. One might make more or less similar remarks on other countries.

PART V. IMPERIALISM, HOME RULE, NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

1. IMPERIALISM

There are many different theories of imperialism. One may distinguish at least two types in the history of ideas.

On the one hand, Hobson, Lenin, many Marxists, and many economic historians, say that imperialism started about 1870. The basis of earlier colonialism had been mostly trade; unequal trade, if your position was strong enough. Strategic military points, mostly along coasts, protected that trade.

Since the 1870-71 Franco-German war, and French reparation payments after it, big banks could consolidate into 'financial capitalism'. Deeper military, political and economic penetration of many countries worked to integrate them into the capitalist world market 'on periphery'. Now, china or spices were no longer that central in the world economy. Agricultural and mineral raw materials, not necessarily from coastal areas, were. So were direct investments.

The US, Japan, big and some small European countries, all had their own ideologists to justify this. Olcott referred to one of them, prominent FTS, that great scholar and renowned publicist, Dr. Hubbe-Schleiden, the acknowledged author of that Germany policy of colonial expansion which Prince Bismarck fashioned out of his writings.1

Another view of imperialism saw it as not so linked to a specific period, or to economics; rather as 'natural', 'timeless', projecting back into, say, the Roman empire, both practices and ideologies. Theosophist authors also argued on these lines.

It was his love of law and order that moved the Roman to annex the barbarian without, that he too might enjoy the benefits of Roman law.2

Kiewiet de Jonge during the First World War described his post-war expectations:

1ODL, 77 July 1903, 382. WEHLER saw Hubbe-Schleiden as central - though not the only one - of German colonialist theory. He did not say much on his practice as a senior official, or a planter in West Africa; or on the TS. Dutch colonial politician VAN DE DEM, 466, got along well with Hubbe-Schleiden.

2The Earl of Cromer [of Barings Bank]: Greater Britain and greater Rome; Lenin wrote against him. Or ancient Middle East realms; the 'British Israel Movement', including politicians Lord Rothschild and T.E. Lawrence, then the first to use the word 'holism', religiously sanctioned the British empire by claiming not Jews, but British and related peoples were the true descendents of Israel, the British kings descended from the ancient Israel kings, and in building the Great Pyramid Egyptians had used the English inch as a measure; JANSSSEN(1954), 24f. 'Een strijd om de Cheops-Pyramide', TMAH 1923, 355-64. Or 16th century Portugal: TS-influenced poet and international business correspondent Fernando Pessoa believed in a new Civilizing Portuguese empire in the near future; then, King Sebastian would return after three and a half centuries, and he himself would be Luís de Camões reincarnate. PERBONE-MOIZÉS, 87-8.

3J. WILKINSON(1930), 491. Caesar in the accounts of his wars was more cynically honest.
If then from this, or a next, war, a state or group of states will emerge all powerful, and will accept political leadership of the world without being challenged, then the nations will be able to rejoice about the amplification of their international law horizon, even though this hegemony may seemingly be a usurpation. For thus already to the Greeks seemed Alexander’s [the Great of Macedonia] empire, to the Gauls Julius Caesar’s rule, to the West European nations Charlemagne’s or Napoleon’s rule— and look at how beneficial the consequences of those reigns, often maligned in their times, were for the organization of mankind.

If such a world power should rise again, then we must trust either in history’s eternal principles, or in Divine Providence and not that the same as the former—that, as democracy’s victory (in Athens before Alexander) and internal strife, in Hellenic Alexander appeared, in Rome Augustus, in France Napoleon—that also thus at the head of that world-ruling state, or group of states, a world ruler shall appear to organize mankind with a firm hand, according to modern tendencies of development and to remove what would hinder the new social and political structures.

Annie Besant ‘represented the extreme anti-imperialistic spirit’ in the 1870’s and 80’s. She then spoke of England’s ‘bullying, boasting, cruel imperialism’; of its ‘land-stealing, piratical policy’. But later:

When I was a young girl, brought up as I was in a Whig [Liberal] family, I used to hear remarks about the Colonies very different from the remarks I hear to-day. They were spoken of grudgingly, with the hope that they would break away and make Kingdoms, Republics, as they pleased, of their own. They were not looked upon as parts of a mighty Empire... And in the Colonies themselves there was much of the same idea—independence, separation... But how different now!

In the April 1912 editorial of The Theosophist, Annie Besant quoted a ‘noble’ editorial of the Financial News, as that paper was ‘spiritualising the business world’, also on Britain’s links to its Empire:

The last twenty years have wrought a great change in us, and especially in the most deeply reflective section of the community made up of its business men... There, with almost festive quietude, has arisen the conviction that while we must base no jot of our endeavour to extend and fortify our material prosperity, our success is not the end in itself, but only the means to an attainment. Every factor in the outlook at this most critical period in the history of the world is full of suggestion that the uplifting of humanity depends upon the blending of the material and the mystic. Is it coincidence, or is it Design, that has joined under one Imperial flag the fearless (Indian) adepts of the mystic and occult, and the restless conquerors of the material resources of the earth?... If we turn from the transient pomp and circumstance [of the English royal visit to India] to the eternal verities behind them we may come to see that the onward path of imperialism lies through a more intimate blending of Western modes of action with Eastern habits of thought. By this time we are all aware that to evoke the more permanent stimuli, and so arouse real enthusiasm among modern imperialists, the notes of mysticism must be added to the chord; and the resulting harmony will awaken East and West alike.

Then, Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater wrote about imperialism as not limited to any age of imperialism, nor to planet Earth. On an island on the moon, millions of years ago, where comparatively ‘good savages’ lived:

help comes from outside which quickens their evolution. A stranger lands upon the island, a man of much higher type and lighter complexion—a clear bright blue—the muddy-brown islanders, who cluster around him with much curiosity and admiration. He comes to civilise the islanders, who are docile and teachable, in order to incorporate them in the Empire, from the capital city of which he has come... they... decide that he is a God, and proceed to worship him... Other savages, on planet Earth’s satellite, were not docile.

Some of the humanity of the Moon succeeded in going beyond the Arhat Initiation, and their superior were evidently from a humanity which had reached a far higher stage.

It was from These that an order reached the Ruler of the city—which was the capital of a large Empire—for the extermination of the savages of the mainland coasts. The expedition was led by Viraj, with Mars under him. The extermination of the savages—though done in obedience to an order that none dared to disobey—was regarded by the soldiers, and even by most of the officers, as only part of a political plan of conquest, intended to enlarge the borders of the Empire, these tribes stood in the way, and therefore had to be cleared out of it.

From the higher standpoint, a stage had been reached beyond which these savages were incapable of advancing on the Moon Chain, bodies suitable to their low stage of evolution being no longer available... It was the ‘Day of Judgment’ of the Moon Chain, the separation between those who were capable and those who were incapable of further progress on that Chain...
2. HOME RULE, INDEPENDENCE

During relatively short, but sometimes crucial, periods, the Theosophical Society stimulated some Home Rule movements. For the two most important countries which we will discuss, India and Indonesia, one may put these periods roughly at 1913-1918.

The TS could not go along with, and was bypassed by, subsequent demands for independence and social revolution. We have discussed theosophists' problems with social revolution. Problems with non-co-operation strategies, which theosophists had in Ireland, India, and Indonesia, Annie Besant explained from the TS' basic principles; see p. 262f. An obstacle to going along with movements as they rationalized was the theosophical leaders' view of 'the great World Empire of the fifth [Aryan] race', based on the British empire.2

For Backward Peoples': somewhat akin to the 'ultra-imperialism' concept of some German social democrats.

1VAN GINKEL(1915), 58. 20 years after the Secret Doctrine, Besant wrote her Pedigree of Man as a summary of the latter; TS treasurer Schwarz further summarized. Of the Aryan successors to the Atlanteans, the most recent branch had a global political future ahead: 'FIFTH SUB-RACE, The Teutonic. Also migrating westwards, occupied all Central Europe, and is now spreading over the world. It has occupied the greater part of North-America, it has seized Australia and New Zealand and is destined to build a world-empire and to sway the destinies of civilization' (pp. 150, 151).

2Schwarz(1905), 554, table K: 'The Fifth or Aryan Race'. References to AB's Pedigree of Man, VAN GINKEL(1915), 67: 'with the Teuton, one sees the long skull, the blond hair, the blue or light-coloured-eyes'.

2See p. 77f.; VAN GINKEL(1915), 61f. In her Theosophy and Imperialism, BESANT(1916C), 40, wrote on the British empire's future: 'The racial tie in the Empire would be the Aryan. As all the Nations in it descend from a common ancestor; and curiously enough, it would include the five sub-races already evolved the Indian, the Persian exiles in India, the Egyptian, the Celt, the Teuton.' Ibid., 482: 'India will bring to the common stock her sublime ideals of spirituality, of social independence, her higher standard of social honour, of the duty of the individual to the whole of which he is a part. Such a body politic as will be this Aryan empire the world has never yet seen. The combination of qualities in the constituent Nations will create a Federation unexampled in the history of the world. ... The various branches of the Aryan Race, developed in different environments, will unite in one splendid Imperial Brotherhood, the greatest the world has seen since the City of the Golden Gate [capital of the empire of the Atlantean race's 'highest phase'] was razed, and that Aryan empire shall rise higher and higher, until it overtops all that have gone before, the marvel of a world, the glory of Aryan humanity.' She saw the British empire as the basis for the Aryan empire, basing herself on theosophist Lieu.-Col. Peacocke's 'British Empire Destiny', in The Leader of Mombasa, quoted BESANT(1920A), 206f; 208-9: 'Our Lieut.-Colonel proceeds, after speaking of what I have called "The Inner Government of the World". You may now be asking: what has this all to do with the establishment of a British Empire? Well, if God (or Providence) be a reality and not a mere pious fancy, if He has a definite object in the creation of humanity, and if the growth of humanity is being guided towards the achievement of that object, it is surely of no small importance to decide what type of people shall be entrusted with a time with extensive power in the world and the right of governing other peoples of various types and faiths, and so effecting their future development. ... Having proved suitable, it was decided that the British should be entrusted with the projected World Empire.' Peacocke was cousin to the Marquess of Ely; ex-major in the Boer War; WMN/1913, 181; and ex-president of the South African TS; TS Annual Report on 1903, 118.

1French ITS G. Revel: De l'an 2500 avalll Jesus-Christ à nos jours; quoted GÜENON(1921), 293. Anna Kingsford, The Perfect Way, quoted GÜENON(1921), 294: 'the existing connection between England and India elevates itself from the political into the spiritual sphere.'

2Inarticulate wrongs', TT Sept. 1912, 856.

GÜENON(1921), 261.

At Trianon the post-War treaty with Hungary was concluded. 1927 London speech by Besant, TT Apr. 1926, 91; Hungary's dictators-Regent, Horthy, invited Besant in 1929 to an audience. FEKETE, 90.

The nation that shall lead tomorrow, that shall have a role comparable to that of Mano, father, shall probably be England; on the mother, on Budhisatwa side, we shall have India.1

In, say, India's case, one should not tear asunder the links of empire because Indians belong to the same, Aryan, root race. And in, say, Africa's case, one should not tear asunder because Africans do not belong to the Aryans; and should learn from their elder brothers. When The African Times and Orient Review asked Mrs Besant how she saw 'the interests of the coloured races', she replied, linking 'racial' to British internal social inequalities:

English liberty ... cannot be suddenly transplanted into communities where the very alphabet of self-government is still to be learned. English liberty is now in danger, in consequence of too sudden and too large introductions of masses of ignorant people into the sphere of government [many of the workers recently got the vote], and a similar policy in hitherto non-self-governing peoples would have similar results. The partial measure of self-government given lately to India will make possible, etc, etc, the inclusion of all her educated classes in the governing class; but India is capable of exceptionally rapid progress, because she already possesses an ancient and splendid civilization, and has merely to adapt herself to the new methods. ... 'Coloured men' is a wide term, and includes very different types, and no one system can be applied to all. Some coloured races are the equals of white races, while others are far more childish. The best heads and hearts in both races should guide, while the more childish follow.2

However, Guénon's view we have the conviction, we might even say, certainty, that theosophy is above all an instrument at British imperialism's service3.

Smacks too much of explaining world history by conspiracies.

Annie Besant preferred world empires; not just outside, but inside Europe:

Yet Europe owes Hungary much for her resistance to the Turks. The multitude of small States created at Trianon form a setback for the evolution of the United States of Europe.4

Now, we will look at Home Rule, anti-colonial, and national (sometimes: nationalist) movements in three Asian countries

1French FTG G. Revel: De l'an 2500 avalll Jesus-Christ à nos jours; quoted GÜENON(1921), 293.

2Anna Kingsford, The Perfect Way, quoted GÜENON(1921), 294: 'the existing connection between England and India elevates itself from the political into the spiritual sphere.'

3GÜENON(1921), 261.

4At Trianon the post-War treaty with Hungary was concluded. 1927 London speech by Besant, TT Apr. 1926, 91; Hungary's dictators-Regent, Horthy, invited Besant in 1929 to an audience. FEKETE, 90.
A. INDIA

1. Lord Curzon and other viceroys

Before we go into the relationship with eventually the major opponent of colonial rule, the Indian National Congress, we go into relations to that rule as British viceroys represented it.

In Annie Besant’s view, the Himalayan Mahatmas’ hierarchy included a ‘Spiritual Viceroy’ of India.¹

The first earthly Viceroy of British India we will deal with was one of the most controversial: Lord Curzon. Long before becoming viceroy, in 1887, he had had a visit in Adyar TS headquarters in 1900 when he praised Curzon repeatedly at a time secular education. Viceroy Curzon expressed his sympathy with Hindu College. He also mattered in the sphere of politics. He wrote to his fellow Conservative Lord Curzon:

Secrecy of State for India (1899-1903), Lord George Hamilton, thought that she still represented it.

Havelock told me that Mrs. Besant has been very useful in Madras in combating the Congress leaders, and denouncing Western methods of agitation as wholly unsuited to India, and endeavouring to establish a system of modern education associated with definite religious and moral training. ¹

According to Hamilton, Besant’s Central Hindu College was a good antidote to secular education. Viceroy Curzon expressed his sympathy with Hindu College. He also visited the Adyar TS headquarters in 1900. TT praised Curzon repeatedly; at a time...

TT displays that same brave declaration of opinion ... that have been so conspicuously shown since his coming to India. He writes to Mr. W. T. Stead ‘I entirely sympathize with your projected publication of a quarterly review dedicated to the examination of so-called spiritual or supernatural phenomena ¹.

In contrast to Annie Besant herself five years earlier (see p. 252), in 1899 the British Secretary of State for India (1899-1903), Lord George Hamilton, thought that she still mattered in the sphere of politics. He wrote to his fellow Conservative Lord Curzon

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repeatedly called for a Royal Viceroy with an unlimited term of office, instead of the actual five years.

2. Beginnings: ‘Congress and its mother body, our Society’. What is Svarga?

The first session of the Indian National Congress was in 1885. Organizations like the Madras Mahajana Sabha, consisting of local Brachmans, ‘several of whom were theosophists’, had prepared the way for it. According to Annie Besant, TS impact on the politics of India did not start with her. Blavatsky and Olcott had brought the charter of India’s freedom from the White Lodge, but were unable to stir Indians into united action. In 1885, appeared an article by H.P. Blavatsky ‘Our three objects’; Congress. This remarkable political body was made by our Anglo-Indian and Hindu members after the model and on the lines of the Theosophical Society. It has from the first been directed by our own colleagues, men among the most influential of the Indian empire. At the same time, there is no connection whatever, barring that through the personalities of individuals, between the Congress and its mother body, our Society.

British official A.O. Hume was important to the early days of Congress, as its secretary from 1885 until 1906. By then, though, he was more critical of the TS than during the relatively short time he had been a member.

In the Mahatma letters to Sinnett were frequent references to the 1880’s Ilbert Bill proposal, which angered many British residents in India. It would have allowed Indian judges to preside in trials of Europeans; the Mahatma lellers opposed the angry reactions, planes clairvoyantly - the dark cloud of the aura of the sensual and self-seeking character of the Englishman.

Many British residents in India disapproved of the idea of using Indian judges in trials of Europeans. This idea was not new; it had been proposed before, in 1858, by Sir Henry Parkes, the first Australian politician to serve in the British parliament. However, the idea was not accepted by the British government.

In 1885, the British government proposed an amendment to the Indian Penal Code that would allow Indian judges to preside in trials involving Europeans. This proposal was met with strong opposition by many British residents in India, who regarded it as an affront to their sense of honor and dignity.

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independence were awakened, no strong basis existed for political liberty.  

Unrest, and influence of “extremists” in Congress, spread in various regions. In the west, Tilak had contacts with both Bombay workers and Hindu clergy. In Bengal, British authorities condemned young Satyendra to death for an attempt on an official’s life. The London Times of 1 Feb. 1909 praised Annie Besant’s reaction, similar to that in 1905 on Bengal partition, in an article “Mrs. Besant and Indian Unrest.” At a meeting in Bangalore, with Major-General Pitcher, FTS, in the chair, and the dean of Mysore, V.P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E., present, she said on Satyendra’s death sentence:

after the crime of political murder had been committed the law was bound to take its course, and his mother’s tears and prayers to the authorities, even to the King-Emperor himself, were to no avail.

Mrs Besant told how in Poona she had asked to join her organization for ‘good citizenship.’ She got as a reply that if that would help to release Tilak, then jailed in Mandalay,

had three-fourths of the student population would join the movement. Her response was: “Thanks. On those terms we can do without your Poona help.”

So in 1913 Annie Besant did not really shift from apoliticism to politics, but rather to a different approach in politics.

Dr. Nar, later to co-founder of the non-Brahmin movement, in 1913 criticized Annie Besant as too pro-empire. Besant just then though changed her views to a more active pro-Home Rule stand.

Leadbeater was a staunch imperialist: “what else than love holds this Empire together?” he asked rhetorically. The Australian Martyn reported private conversations with him, in which, he said, Leadbeater attacked Besant’s politics. Martyn, however, by the time he reported this, had become CWL’s bitter opponent. Leadbeater himself wrote that on the political work of Annie Besant, he held the viewpoint of the occultist: you would manage immediately, on both sides, takes away the “colourbar” ... and armed with that wand, [managed victory of the Allies, which was therefore fore-ordained. It was this fore-knowledge by Dr. Besant of the victory of Britain and the Allies that made her go straight ahead and not swerve in the political campaign of Home Rule for India even though the British Empire was at war. She said British policy in India was an obstacle to an allied victory. New India wrote: the ideal of Self-Government for India along Colonial lines ... under the educational guidance of British statesmanship until Colonial Autonomy is attained ... obliteration of all racial privileges ...

When Annie Besant swept to the left, at the head of her Home Rule League, and put less emphasis on the link with Britain than either earlier on or later, she said: The duty of the Theosophist in India is to teach patriotism here as the Englishman teaches it -and rightly teaches it- in England. In India their patriotism must be love of their own land and only secondarily of the Empire at large. Her shift had increased theosophy’s popularity in Indian politics, in late 1916, early 1917, as Dutch East Indies Government Secretary and ardent follower of Annie Besant, A.G. Vreede, said. Vreede wrote on aims, though:

Often also with some English there is the wrong impression that India asks for complete independence ... (though it would really like to see a Viceroy from the royal family). The “delightfully vague” word Swaraj might mean both “dominion status” and “independence”. Many nationalists could live with that ambiguity at least for some time: they saw the former as possibly a transition, when the relationship of forces would permit so, to the latter. India’s communists wanted an unequivocal meaning of Swaraj.

So did Annie Besant and the TS; differently. They did not want that transition. In 1921, Mrs Besant would write that she left Congress owing to “my refusal to countenance

1 Annie Besant, The future of Indian politics; quoted SHUKLA(1969), 69.
2 AdB March 1909, 176.
3 The Great War, T Feb. 1916, 517. See also TILLET(1982), 149, 154.
4 Ibid., 188f.; see F.I.W.S.
5 NETHERCOT(1963), 217.
6 JINARAJADASA(1938), 52.
7 At the 1917 TS convention, she compared the situation with Old Testament Israelites, unable to win a war until one of them, who had stolen something, had been punished: “As long as the sin of Achaz is found within the Allies camp, the victory will be postponed.” TANS. 1918, 284-5.
8 NETHERCOT(1963), 224.
9 BESANT(1917A), 60.
10 Then, Vreede visited India for three months and attended Congress as a reporter for Koloniale Student magazine. VREDE(1917B), 2. “Theosophy, there it is, is the magic wand, which immediately, on both sides, takes away the “colourbar” ... and armed with that wand, I managed with the greatest of ease to collect my materials abundantly.”
11 A VRDEER(1917B), 46.
12 BCREHER(1959), 71. A concept first raised at the 1906 Congress session by Dadhabhai Naoroji, Tilak, quoted BAKSHI, 62: “I don’t care for any name.”
13 In ‘Point of View of the Masses’, Masses, vol. 1, 4, April 1925, reprinted: ADHIKARI(1974), 501. they wrote of Congress leaders: “whittling down the conception of Swaraj to dominion status ... under the inspiration, it seems, of Mrs Annie Besant, who has left preoccupation with the beatitudes of Hindu philosophy for the more urgent task of assuring British domination in India under some form or other. Apparently she has not been able to inspire among her fellow members of the committee that love for “the British connection” with which she herself is consumed.”
the votes of the local Congress organizations show that they no longer want Dominion Home Rule, but independence. I hold to the union between Great Britain and India as vital to both countries.

Dominion status to many Indians had been a matter of tactics; to Besant, it was a final goal, divinely sanctioned. In her biography, Jinarajadasa summed up her views:

It will be seen from the ideals which she proclaimed that not only was there never any dream of the independence of India, but there was a clear enunciation that India was to remain a member of the British Empire under the headship of its Sovereign [the king].

So it was a matter of principle, connected to the Aryan world empire to grow out of the present British empire. A matter of principle, based on her doctrines of the Inner Government of the World and Root-Races. It implied that British Aryans should not ride roughshod over Indian fellow Aryans. It also implied, though, that Indians should not separate from their fifth sub-race brethren. No writer, I think, ever emphasized how important these esoteric 'apolitical' ideas were for understanding her politics. After she had joined the Theosophical Society, Besant never again became a radical on whether complete independence, or rather something short of that, was the ultimate end; as apart from being for some time a radical on means.

If little more than the British crown ties dominions to Britain, and if the king-emperor is little more than a figurehead, then one may argue that dominion status and independence do not differ much. We will see, however, on p. 320 that Annie Besant did not want the king to be merely a figurehead.

One may have a speculative theory about the British empire, instead of dissolving as really happened, democratizing, which would have given a key-position to India. Gandhi's slogan in his South Africa years 'We are citizens of the Empire' pointed more or less in that direction. What separated Annie Besant from this 'democratized empire' view' were not just her ideas on Africans and other people, but her opposition to universal suffrage even for poor 'Aryan' Indians or Britons.1

1BESANT(1921A), 309.

2BESANT(1921A), 308.

At least for this Muntamara. S. Subramanya Iyer, Ns. 25-8-1924, 5 put the accent a bit differently: 'the oldest branch [India] of the Aryan Race capable of contributing to the well-being of mankind as much as, if not more than, the later and comparatively smaller branch laying a false claim to superiority...'

3JINARAJADASA(1986), 30-1; written in 1932.

4See p. 266. AIYAR(1924), 60: 'to enable [England and India], in spite of their differences ... to lead the Aryan civilisation of the future...'

5Lord Sinha, in his 7 March 1919 speech at the London Savoy Hotel, MONTAGU et al., 28, claimed 'the status of equal British citizens' for Indians.

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9Indian communist Shapurji Saklatvala argued that view would never be put into practice: 'Equal rights for India inside such an empire would be a grave danger to the British bourgeoisie, and not a gift, and unless British domination can be preserved by hook or by crook, by terror or by polished
Gandhi started his political life as Gokhale's pupil. Though he tried to be non-
sectarian, Hinduism influenced his political thinking. Jawaharlal Nehru, who thought that
"Religion, I feel, is the bane of India" sometimes criticized him for this. According to his
autobiography, Gandhi first got to know the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, writings
central to his Hinduism, from theosophists in England, respectively South Africa. In
1895 in South Africa, he wrote about reincarnation doctrine: basing himself on
The Perfect Way, by ex-TS London Lodge president Anna Kingsford, instead of directly
on Hindu sources.

When in London in 1889, he was interested in Mrs Besant: more so than in
H.P. Blavatsky. Annie Besant was one of four people whose portraits hung in his room.
When travelling through India, after he came back from Africa, he went out of his way
to visit her.

His view of Mrs Besant was higher than that of her TS. He refused to go to the 1911
London Universal Races Congress. That year, he wrote a letter, considering both
sectarianism in the [Theosophical] society is its secret side: its occultism. It
has never appealed to me. I long to belong to the masses. Any secrecy hinders the real spirit of
democracy.

Gandhi's politics on empire up to 1917 were not radically different from Annie
Besant's. He stood for supporting Britain militarily in the Boer War, the 1906 Zulu
uprising, and World War I. On the world war, his position was at first slightly to the
'right' of Besant. When she was interned, he wrote a letter to the viceroy, asking for
clemency for her. It included a sentence that he did not 'like much Mrs. Besant's
earlier mistakes than either Annie Besant or Leadbeater.

At the 1915 Congress session, when Gandhi called the British government 'Satanic',
Mrs Besant interrupted him, telling not to use these words.1 In the 1916 Benares incident,
Besant, supported by her Hindu University's princely financial backers, cut short
Gandhi's speech against the princes' riches. Gandhi did not report it in his autobiog-
ography.2

Lady Emily Lutyens in 1916 started a Home Rule for India League in England,
supporting Annie Besant's.3 Besant reacted to this:

I think the Auxiliary Home Rule League should be started at once with Snowden, Lansbury and
any others they select for officers. But I think you should keep out of this... I bowed to
Mrs Besant's wishes and resigned...

The reaction of Annie Besant to Emily Lutyens' resignation was:

To join the League and leave it rather does harm.

The Home Rule League attracted many Indian FTS, and many more non-FTS
Though the latter eventually became some five-sixths of its membership, geographical
distribution of its branches was roughly similar to that of the Theosophical Society. This
disproves ideas on supposed widespread opposition to Annie Besant's politics4 then, at
least in India. When the Home Rule League's Bombay branch started, 68 out of its 70
members were theosophists. After Mrs Besant was interned in 1917, however, this
changed drastically: Jinnah became its president and in his wake 'the whole legal
profession' joined.5 In Delhi, the local president was theosophist Miss Gmeiner,
headmistress of Indraprashta girls' school. Colonial authorities in 1917, when their
conflict with the League came to its high point, withdrew the grant-in-aid of
Indraprashtha. Also, rumours were spread, by the police, people said, on girls' morality at
the school.6 A backbone for Besant was the 'Mylapore clique', called after the Madras
suburb between the city centre and Adyar.

As Besant's internment diaries show,9 contrary to what both her opponents and
earlier mistakes than either Annie Besant or Leadbeater.

1Cousins and Cousins, 274.
2GANDHI(1940), 356, only mentions meeting Malaviya then in Benares. GANDHI(1958), XIII.
210f., 243f.
3E. LUTYENS, 79f. The London Times' reaction in 1916 was: 'Cranky people in this country do
many mad things, but surely the maddest is to encourage a Home Rule agitation in India'. Quoted
NANDA, 54. A. VREDE(1917b), 47: Jinnah was League co-founder with Lady Emily.
4E. LUTYENS, 80.
5OWEN(1968), 172-3.
6TILEY(1982), 139.
7James Masselos, 'Some aspects of Bombay city politics', in: R. Kumar (ed.), Essays on
AIP's opponent, was a member. B.B. MISRA(1976), 177.
8SANGAT SINGH, 240.
9ASHBROOK, 239f.
10Owen(1968), 176.
supports wrote, she was not always against passive resistance of a type, roughly similar to that of Gandhi.

The Theosophist in May 1917 reviewed Gandhi’s satyagraha ideas. The review was sympathetic; though wondering if ‘the right men will come forward’ for practice.1

B.P. Wadia, Home Rule League lieutenant of Annie Besant before her controversies with Gandhi and later with himself broke out, gave a religious colouring to resistance. In a 25 November 1917 speech in Trichinopoly, he said:

The ideals of Passive Resistance so much approved of by the general public during recent months are permeated through and through by the spirit of sacrifice. Our people were willing to suffer for the good of the Cause—suffer without actively retaliating, suffering leaving the result of the passions to the deus and the Lords of Karma.2

Annie Besant had brought Tilak back into Congress after their earlier antagonism. Jointly with him, she had started two Home Rule Leagues; one for Tilak’s West of India region, one led by her for the rest of India. Good relations did not last though.

Mrs Besant wanted to strengthen the presidency within India’s Congress: ‘the duty of a leader is to lead.’ When she made that presidential acceptance speech, many of her audience were already objecting.3 Her problem was that the National Congress was a more democratic organization than the TS, let alone the ES.4 Tilak objected to the supremacy which she claims for her opinions ‘in mailers political under the guise that she is the leader.’ 5

He summed up differences:

Theosophy may be, and sometimes is, tolerated in theological and Theosophical Society matters, but in democratic politics we must go by the decisions of the majority. ... Congress recognizes noMaharajah to rule over it except the Maharaja of majority.6

At that time, Annie Besant got also criticism for lack of democracy from within her TS. As US president Wilson spoke of ‘making the world safe for democracy’, his compatriots Alice and Foster Bailey, and Indian B.P. Wadia tried to do that for the Theosophical Society. It expelled them from office. The Bailey’s and Wadia went separate ways. Wadia joined the, to Alice Bailey, ‘fundamentalist’ United Lodge of Theosophists,1 which stayed small. Mrs Bailey, claiming contact with the Master DK from Tibet, became leader for life of her Arcane School. She had doubts whether and when India should become independent. She did not influence the debate there though.2

When Mrs Besant visited Ahmedabad in March 1918, she and Gandhi still shared the same carriage in a big procession.3 Soon though, the rise of non-co-operation campaigns led by Gandhi marked a downward trend for her. 4 Imperiled with losing the majority for her views in Madras Congress, Annie Besant ‘packed’ the provincial Congress committee with supporters ‘including European women and children’.5

In a speech against non-operation, Mrs Besant said:

Under the Gandhi Raj [rule] there is no free speech, no open meeting except for non-co-operators. Social and religious boycott, threats of personal violence, spitting, insults in the streets, are the methods of oppression. Mob support is obtained by wild promises, such as the immediate coming of Swaraj, when there will be no rents, no taxes ...6

Annie Besant also used caste as an argument in her 1919 opposition to Gandhi: he had not confined moral-political issues to the Brahmans where they belong, but involved ‘the crowd.’ 7 Sri Prakasa, who knew both, wrote: ‘Mrs. Besant’s appeal was more to the middle class educated folk, while the Mahatma[Gandhi’s] was to the vast masses of the country.’8

Bombay man Jamnadas Dwarkadas changed sides from Besant to Gandhi; so did Benjamin G. Horniman, editor of the Bombay Chronicle.9 Sometimes, someone changed sides the other way around. Dwarkadas, an ex-co-worker of Gandhi, spoke in Amsterdam for the TS on 29 November 1913.10 A talk between Annie Besant and Gandhi on 16

2WADIA(1917), 10, ibid., 27-8: ‘And now let me close. The transitional stage of Indian Nationalism is coming to an end. A New Age is upon us in this world-old country of ours ... we will bring our beloved Motherland, in the years to come, to the charm and prosperity of Ramachandra’s [Ram’s] Ayodhya.’ Philip MECHANICUS in 1917 in Da Locomotiva wrote that ‘passive resistance’ had been part of the program of ‘Mrs. Besant’s supporters ‘since a long time.’
3NETHERCOT(1963), 273.
4ES leadership was for life, in the TS the presidency was in principle for seven years; in Congress for one year. Her Home Rule League had elected Besant for three years: SITARAMAYYA(1969), 126.
5Quoted TAYLOR(1992), 315.
February 1919 in Bombay railway station failed to produce results.1

After Gandhi had announced his campaign, Mrs Besant in 1919 set up anti-non-co-operation, pro-police Committees of Public Order.2 Was it, then, surprising that in the 1920's, she got booted at meetings in India? Mrs Besant's Home Rule League in 1917 had campaigned for the release of the brothers Mohamed and Shaukat Ali.3 In 1921 though, when the Bombay government arrested the Ali brothers again, Besant 'sent an approving telegram from Simla' and met the Viceroy several times.4

For not only had Mrs Besant become less popular with former friends; she also became more popular with former opponents. Not so much with diehard colonialist journalists as with government. In a 1920 letter, Sir Edwin Lutyens wrote: Governor contradict alarming rumours, etc.'

extreme colonialists thought Montagu, in lifting Annie Besant's internment, 'gave in to some called AB 'a shameless political hucksterer'; and, still in 1919, accused her of a 'malicious and

BESWICK,9-10.

new policy of no to non-co-operation. She said it was more closely tied to the spiritual

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Quoted M,N, DAS, 28.

Minto's administration about 'these lower English who are destroying your work and undermining

JINARAJADASA(1986),41.

the Empire'.

MAC MILLAN, 218; 226. MECHANICUS:

1922 left to join the ULT, also shifted to the right in the 1920's. He reproached himself for not

both private, though government-subsidized.

Arnold, 24. WWF, 54: "the organization of bands of young men ready to maintain order, to

contradict alarming rumours, etc.'

BAKSHI, 51.


Daily The Englishman, representing the extreme sections of English living in India, in 1917 called AB 'a shameless political hucksterer'; and, still in 1919, accused her of a 'malicious and mischievous campaign against her own kith and kin.' MAC MILLAN, 218; 226. MECHANICUS extreme colonialist thought Montagu, in lifting Annie Besant's internment, 'gave in to some "sentimental Imperialists"'. Already in a March 26, 1910, letter, Mrs Besant complained to Lord

Mechanicus

Crombie, an ex-1910's Home Rule activist with AB, who in 1922 left to join the ULT, also shifted to the right in the 1920's. He reproached himself for not having paid enough attention to 'the English [that is, government] point of view' earlier on. BESWICK, 9-10.

BESWICK(l921F), 411.

NETHERCOT(1963), 299.

As quoted VAN LEEUWEN(1921A), 3f.

Home rule. Independence

not, without narrowing the platform of the Society. But now there has come an appeal which, above all other appeals, goes to the very heart of the Theosophical teaching, an appeal for co-operation between two races [Indian and European] divided

and from the mouth of the King-Emperor himself there is a cry to help in the building of India by co-operation between the Indian and the Englishman, between the officials and the people.

Do you suppose that the Theosophical Society can turn a deaf ear to the appeal founded on its

First Object, which declares that it knows no distinction of race, of creed, of colour?8 She left Congress when it decided in 1920 at the Calcutta special session to change its program 'so as to admit those who were against the British connection.'9 Her influence declined, her weekly Commonweal folded in that year.

At the end of 1920, Annie Besant held meetings in Bombay, opposing Gandhi's non-co-operation. The first meeting went off quietly, with few people, her supporters, attending. The second meeting attracted many, mainly her opponents. According to the account of De Locomotief from Indonesia,10 many ladies came.

The presence of the fair sex proved to be no obstacle to the opponents to air their indignation in several ways and shortly after Mrs Besant had mounted the rostrum it became clear that the aim of those not liking her, was to make the meeting difficult, and maybe impossible.

The lecturer soon found out what it was about and asked the ladies to leave the hall, when the noise became too loud ... after about twenty minutes, she pointed to the opponents that she might easily have called for police assistance in order to make sure of an orderly meeting, for only a few constables would have been enough to chase them away.

She said though that she had preferred to decline armed force support, because she had thought that Gandhi's supporters would let her go ahead. Because such was not the case, though, she was duty bound to close the meeting, which finished amidst shouts of "Shame, shame" and shouts of mockery by the opponents.

Annie Besant then, both in her The Theosophist editorial and at a press conference for the Bombay dailies, explained her opposition to non-co-operation: against the Congress' call not to use government-confined titles, against election boycott. And against education boycott too, which included Aligarh Muslim and Benares Hindu universities, both private, though government-subsidized.

Therefore I do not understand, Annie Besant said, why Gandhi also wants to destroy these educational institutions. ... Besides, when one looks at the matter from a national viewpoint, then nothing is worse than teaching disobedience to the children, whom one incites against their parents and their teachers, to leave their schools to which their parents have sent them. At the beginning of the movement Gandhi has declared that he would not extend his action to the schools, but now he declares openly that he does not care about education. So he has broken his promise, and I do not see, Annie Besant said, why he should have the right to complain if
First, 'Mr. Gandhi and "the All Brothers" went to Aligarh, where the students went on general strike. Annie Besant doubted that the university which she had founded would be spared:

"As I said at the beginning of these notes, I am writing them in Benares, and we are expecting the invasion of the Destroyers to seduce the students of the Hindu university to be false to their duty to their parents and their country. I have given two lectures to crowded audiences on "Co-operation" and "Non-Co-operation", showing the advantages of the one and the ruin consequent on the other. But the fun of tilting against the Government has captured the immature minds of the youngsters who, innocent of the ruin involved in Mr. Gandhi's subtle proposals, only see the side attractive to all high-spirited youths, of hating the Government. Behind striking students and Congress leaders on the one hand, and supporters of the British empire on the other hand, stood forces from invisible worlds:

This movement for Non-Co-operation is no movement of party politics, to which the Theosophical Society can remain indifferent. It has passed into a phase in which it menaces the very existence of India, her spiritual life, and her spiritual mission to humanity. This India is now the mark of all the "Powers of the Darkness of this world," driven back in the West by the downfall of autocracy in Germany, and now turning their defeated, but still tremendous, energy on India, by whose undoing and barring into chaos the onward march of the world may yet be checked for centuries to come. These hosts, ever the enemies of the Lords of Light-called Asuras by the Hindus, Abrahim and his agents by the Zoroastrians, Satan and his angels by Hebrews and Christians, Ebhis and his armies by the Muslims-they have caught hold of this movement of Non-Co-operation, because it is a channel of hatred, their favourite weapon, and are pushing its leaders onward, step by step, into wilder and wilder methods. What was 'the onward march of the world'?

I believe that the union of Britain and India is part of "The Great Plan," and is necessary for the helping forward of human evolution; I know that this union is part of the Plan. For our Race which the Lord Vaivasvata Manu [the Manu for the Aryan race], is carrying out, and as regards the insane policy now being forced on Indian politicians by intimidation and social boycott, and into which the ignorant masses are lured by promises of impossibilities, she did not mind standing alone on the side of right. Annie Besant's difference with Gandhi and the Congress majority was on radicalism of ends, rather than on radicalism of means. We have seen her earlier ideas on passive resistance. Violence was also less of a problem to her than to Gandhi. She was not always against violence by oppositions, as when James Cousins wrote of his support for Ireland's resistance. Violence was also less of a problem to her than to Gandhi. She was not always on general strike. Annie Besant doubted that the university which she had founded would be spared."

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1Van Leeuwen (1921a), 4. Tilkema (1932), 39, quoted Gandhi's autobiography on 'those citadels of slavery-their [the students'] schools and colleges'.
3Besant (1921f), 412.
4OEC, June 1929, and June 1939.

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The gospel of Tolstoy, so fascinating in its beginnings, but so fatal in its inevitable ending of anarchy, the dragging of all down to the sordid level to which society had cruelly reduced its producing class, was one of the causes of Bolshevism in Russia. That infection has been brought over here by Tolstoy's disciple, M. K. Gandhi, with all the fascination of its philosophical side and the deadly implications covered by that philosophy, while the masses have not yet become obedient to the Inner Ruler Immortal, the Hidden God in man. Men not yet Self-rulled from within, and thus determined to righteousness, must be ruled by Law from without. The destruction of reverence for Law, ingrained in the Hindu religion, the doctrine of "civil disobedience" was the step which marked the parting of the ways which lead respectively to Freedom and anarchy. ... Under such circumstances, I call on all students and lovers of Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom, to range themselves under the banner of ordered and progressive Freedom, and to oppose the threatened anarchy...

Mrs Besant predicted that in the long run, his own people would turn against Gandhi.

If India, the Mother fails, then will Bolshevism triumph for the time, and spread red ruin over the world. But I believe that she will not fail, that she will recognise her Dharma, and take her place in the World Order.

The Theosophical Society since 1914 had held its world conventions in cities, and at times, so as to enable Annie Besant and delegates to attend both theosophical and Indian National Congress annual sessions. Originally, the TS had planned its Dec. 1920 convention in Nagpur to link up with the Congress. Now, though, that contradictions between Besant and the Congress majority had sharpened, she wrote:

If I went to the Nagpur Congress, I should only be allowed to speak by grace of Mr. Gandhi, and I do not regard speech as free which is granted or withheld at the whim of a dictator.

Instead, the TS Convention was in Adyar, to fit in with the National Liberal Federation meeting in Madras. Mrs Besant spoke under 'our ancient Cathedral, the great Banyan tree in Blavatsky Gardens' to over 600 people.

She started her convention speech on 'The Great Plan' of Manu for ordered
IV, 554, on AB's 'fighting for India's independence'. A.S. Berger & contrary to many later descriptions, of the national independence movements, though.

That is to Gandhi's 'imperishable credit. Basing himself on the poor masses. To Indonesia's ex-FTS Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Both were obviously supporters of the national movements in these countries; not, similarly in their relationships to national questions in India and Ireland, respectively.

You ought to know more about it than the outer world. You and from divine plans. Evolution, from 'that very ancient adage: "As above, so below. " I and from divine plans. You and from divine plans. Evolution, from 'that very ancient adage: "As above, so below. " I and from divine plans.

India is now divided into two great camps and two only: one camp marked by love and the other by hate, one camp marked by love of liberty and the other by desire to tyrannise, one marked by cooperation and the other by antagonism. It is for you to choose which of these camps you will strengthen.

Theosophists knew 'that for forty-five years this teaching has been in the world and you ought to know more about it than the outer world.'

The outer world may be moved by temporary injuries, carried away by wrongs inflicted and sufferings endured, but you, students of the Wisdom, ought to realise that behind all these outside things the Inner Government of the world is ruling and ultimately must have its way, in one of two ways, by destruction or evolution: yours is the choice. If you find a movement marked by hatred, if you find a movement marked by tyranny over the opinions of others, by trying to force people along lines that some of them may adopt, if you find those means are means of compulsion, of tyranny, of social ostracism, of spreading hatred in India and dividing her more than she has ever been divided before, I tell you, no matter who may lead it, that is a movement of the Brothers of the Shadow and leads to destruction. Those are the marks that show what they are. The Lords of the Light sent our Society for this great crisis, to save the Indian Motherland.

At the National Liberal meeting, Mrs Besant gave Gandhi only 'negative credit' for working for India's independence. She finished on contemporary politics.

And from divine plans. Evolution, from 'that very ancient adage: "As above, so below. "'I and from divine plans. Evolution, from 'that very ancient adage: "As above, so below. " I and from divine plans.

The TS was 'involved in independence politics ... in India'. See p. 255 on AB and India. Annie Besant compared Ireland and India in early 1921:

Annie Besant thought she saw signs of weakness in her opponents in 1921:

Communist Party of India leader Manabendra Nath Roy, at the request of Lenin, in 1922 first published his book India in transition. In it, he postulated that differences between Mrs Besant and Mahatma Gandhi, though real, were not as big as they themselves, especially Annie, thought.

The advent of native orthodoxy in the person of Gandhi was preceded by a reaction, voluntarily

Parapsychology and Psychical Research, N.Y., Paragon, 1991, 33. AB 'leader of Indian independence'. WILSON(1970), 159: 'independent India (a cause into which Mrs Besant also threw her immense energies). MAC MILLAN, 25: 'Annie Besant, who scandalized the establishment by working for India's independence'. SAVILLE, VI: AB 'played an important part in the development of the national movement for Indian independence'. REEVE(1985), 7: the TS was 'involved in independence politics ... in India'. ELLWOOD and WESSINGER, 74 also: 'the independence movement ... without distinction of home rule to independence.'
She was seemingly an avowed spiritualist [?] dreading all contamination of things material, but in reality a masked defender of the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, in spite of her Irish birth. She had always [?] been the champion of the British Empire, which she chose to call the foundation of a real League of Nations. Her ideal of the League of Nations was evidently the incorporation of the whole world in the British Empire. The same instinct which thirty years ago, had induced the liberal imperialist Hume to promote the idea of founding the National Congress, led Mrs Besant to arise from her theosophical esoterics, in which she had immersed herself ever since she came to India, and pollute her holiness with such sordid materialism as politics. Her instinctual zeal for the welfare (not spiritual) of the imperialist bourgeoisie disgusted her at the sight of the ominous clouds gathering on the political horizon. Long residence in the country and intimate relations with the lower middle-class [?] intellectuals, enabled her to gauge the situation cleverly. She set out with the mission of stemming the rising tide of revolution.

Mrs Besant captured the imagination and admiration of the revolutionary-inclined young intellectuals by preaching with her wonted eloquence the familiar gospel of the spiritual superiority of India over Western culture, and condemning the British government as the worst manifestation of Western materialism from which, she exclaimed, the innocent children of sacred India must be saved. Thus a wrong channel was opened for the great revolutionary wave that was raising its majestic crest on the offing of the society. Essentially a socio-economic struggle, the impending movement must assume a political manifestation with considerable latitude to nationalist pre-occupations. The astuteness of Mrs Besant caught on the familiar, but harmless, political slogan of ‘Home Rule’ which swung the Extremists on her side, because it promised to head the movement abandoned by the Moderates. Consequently, those who might have sought the destruction of British domination with the aid of revolutionary mass-action committed themselves to the ambiguous programme of self-government within the British empire.1

To Roy, both Besant and Gandhi stood for interests of ruling classes. The nationality of these classes differed though:

Mrs Besant could not prevent the inevitable, she only prepared the ground for Gandhi, whose advent purified her into well-merited disgrace. Both preached the doctrine of orthodox nationalism, but the difference lay in the respective objects in view. The former desired to save the Indians from modern materialism in order to insist the continuance of British domination, while the latter’s hostility to Western civilization was founded by the apprehension that it would strike at the root of the religious, intellectual and patriarchal vested interests which, in the name of spiritual culture, held the Indian masses in moral as well as material bondage.2

When Gandhi had temporarily stopped civil disobedience, Annie Besant commended in 1923: ‘it is the queerest revolution that ever was since Gandhi replaced Tilak, has had the queerest leader, and has now the queerest collapse.’ Gandhi generously claimed about his ‘most formidable opponent’:

Her courage never shone so brilliant as when at the risk of losing her popularity she opposed Non-Cooperation.3

Besant’s associate Ayyar attacked Gandhism:

Non-Cooperation and Non-Violence in the political jargon of this period ... a blend of Western Anarchism and Materialism ... had nothing to do with the virile conception of life ... Indian culture always recognised that righteousness ... might ... depend ... as a last resort on physical force.

In a lecture of H. Kumar to the Quetta TS lodge, he saw Islam’s and Hinduism’s common ground in that they both rejected pacifism.4

At the end of Mrs Besant’s political work, the rift with Gandhi had not healed. She wrote in New India #5 in 1930 that Gandhi was the ‘most mischievous man in India.’

Nethercot saw Annie Besant as politically more far-sighted than Gandhi or Nehru. He thought that if India had followed the advice of her and her party in 1929 the country would probably have obtained Dominion Status seventeen or so years earlier than it did. It would have probably retained Pakistan, and there would have been no Kashmir problem.5

This contributes to anti-Gandhi myth, which is as unsatisfactory as pro-Gandhi myth. It forgets opposition by diehard British colonialists. It also forgets Gandhi had better contacts with Muslims since his South Africa days than Annie Besant had. In theory, both AB and Gandhi tried to combine personal Hinduism6 with broad-mindedness. Gandhi succeeded better. According to Sri Prakasa, Mrs Besant ‘never approached the Indian problem from the Muslim point of view.’7

British Empire with the desire to save India from the unseemly contamination of the sordid materialism of the Western world, if they dared.

1 Quoted SRIUKLA(1960), 243.
2 MAJUMDAR(1969), 1027.
3 NY, 25-8-1924, 7.
4 AYAR(1924), 62.
5 TT Jan. 1934, 441f.
6 NETHERCOT(1963), 468.
7 And with AB, political Hinduism: ‘Without Hinduism India has no future. Hinduism is the soil into which India’s roots are struck, and torn out of that she will inevitably wither, as a tree torn out from its place. Let Hinduism go, Hinduism that was India’s cradle, and in that passing would be India’s grave.’ AB, quoted: Ph.A. Ashley, Modern Trends in Hinduism. NY, Columbia University Press, 1974, 25.
8 MUTHANNA, 184: ‘Among the top leaders, only Mrs. Besant had good relationship with both the religious groups and no one else’ is uncorroborated. SRI PRAKASA, XX1, TT, May 1918, 193: ‘hardly half a dozen Muslims have joined the TS in India, far less than joined Congress, or the Communists.'
Muthanna attacks Gandhi for promoting Hindi as the national language for India. Yet in this, Gandhi did not differ much from Annie Besant, whom Muthanna contrasts favourably with him:

She felt that Hindi ... should become the official language of India. She recognized that this would create a hardship for Tamil- and Telugu-speaking people, but she felt that was a sacrifice they should make for the unity of India.1

Jinnah, Das, Menon

Jinnah's and Annie Besant’s views developed parallelly. Jinnah had led a Bombay anti-British Raj mass demonstration in 1918. Later, he was one of Mrs Besant’s few allies after her break with Gandhi, saying ‘Politics is a gentlemen’s game’, not ‘working up mob hysteria’.2 When jubilee meetings in 1924 celebrated half a century of public work by Annie Besant, Jinnah presided over the Bombay one.3

After the Second World War, Jinnah would become the first governor-general of Pakistan, then still a Commonwealth member. Karachi, that new country’s biggest city, had had as mayor Jamshed Nusserwanji, FTS, from 1922-1934; Hindus and other non-Muslims then were a larger segment of its population than later.

In 1920, Rai Bahadur Purnendu Narayan Sinha was both Indian TS General Secretary, and Bihar Legislative Council member.4 Bhagwan Das in 1920 was president of the Indian Social Conference in Saharanpur.5 In the early 20’s, he became closer for some time to Gandhi than to Annie Besant; in connection with Gandhi’s campaigns of 1922 he was in jail.6 In 1925 and 1931-37 he chaired Benares municipal board.

Some of his ideas remained, or became again later, close to AS: in connection with Gandhi’s campaigns of 1922 he was in jail.7 When jubilee meetings in 1924 celebrated half a century of public work by Annie Besant, Jinnah presided over the Bombay one.8

In the 1920’s, Krsna Menon was Propaganda Secretary of the Star Committee9 in the Order of the Star in the East. He also was the representative in England of Annie Besant’s Home Rule League; which she had founded after Gandhi had taken over her original one. Congress then had no official representation there;10 that may have led to estimations in England of Annie Besant’s influence, greater than Indian reality of the time warranted. Menon broke with Besant in 1930, changing from a theosophist to an agnostic in religion; from a supporter of dominion status to one of independence, and from non-Marxism to pro-Marxism in politics.11 In the 1930’s, he became a left winger in Congress.12 In the 1950’s, he became India’s Minister of Defence.

Ranganath Mudalal, FTS, had been provincial government minister in Madras.13 Another theosophist was B. Shiva Rao, MP.14

Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru

Motilal Nehru was a theosophist for a short time,15 and a friend of Annie Besant’s for a longer time. G.N. Chakravarti, another friend of his, via Mrs Besant recommended Brooks as tutor for his young son Jawaharlal Nehru.16 When Jawaharlal wanted to join the theosophists, ‘he himself had soon dropped out [in the days of HPB; he] laughingly gave his son permission, but without seeming to attach too much importance’.17

Muthanna states that M. Nehru broke with Annie Besant, and took Gandhi’s side out of spite, because Besant refused to nominate him as her successor as Congress president. The Publisher’s Note preceding the book rightly singles this out, as it would be an important new discovery, if proven. Muthanna though does not corroborate this with documents or eyewitness accounts, so it is not proven (yet?).

Jawaharlal Nehru helped his theosophist tutor Brooks learn Sanskrit. He joined the Theosophical Society when he was 13, with secret passwords.18 Annie Besant herself initiated him.19 Olcott complained many Brahmin FTS gave nothing for Panchama schools. There were exceptions; the Annual Report of the TS on 1903, 61, reported a gift for the Panchama Education Fund. ‘Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Allahabad 15 Rs.’ He was then 14 years old.

dominating background’. NETHERCOT(1963), 439: the council of the Commonwealth of India League in England in 1930 supported Congress; AB resigned from it
2ALL, 55.
377, May 1933, 251.
4NETHERCOT(1963), 223.
5J. NEHRU(1958), 15, on his father: ‘Curiosity probably led him to it more than religion’. The MUTHANNA, 72, describes of Motilal Nehru as one of the “staunch theosophists” exaggerates. He was also a member of Allahabad masons’ lodge Unity # 29. LIGOU, 608.
6BROOKS(1914A), 178.
7NETHERCOT(1963), 75f.
8MUTHANNA, VII, 235.
9BROOKS(1914A), 178f. J. NEHRU(1958) thought he himself had not learnt much Sanskrit.
10MUTHANNA, 73. ALL, 7, omits whether or not he was FTS, suggesting he was not.
11BRECHER(1959), 45.
Brooks broke with Annie Besant in 1914. Somewhat like Resink, he wrote: "Leading and following are not in the program of Theosophy as understood by me." Though Brooks shared some of Besant's non-democratic ideas on non-theosophists, he objected to her extending those to theosophists:

Why will they let rampant autocratic Bigotry be ... enthroned at the heart of their democratic society not of drink-beasted slum-dwellers and illiterate labourers ... but of picked, enlightened, liberal-minded men and women drawn from twenty-two modern countries, and more? Surely, if democracy can ever be expected to begin accomplishing something good for itself, it is in a Society like this, the very antithesis of the 'mob-rule' which Mrs. Besant rightly deprecates. But no, Mrs. Besant uses the 'mob-rule' argument to ban ... democracy from the prosperous nations of the world of to-day; and then, in her own select Society, she will as really have none of it. Does she really believe that all autocracy serves and holds power from the Great White Lodge, and that all democracy springs from the grim Brothers of the Shadow?"  

Nehru wrote let his TS membership quietly lapse when he went to England, because of lack of contact. Many theosophists lived in England, however; did he not outgrow the ideas? To what extent did he agree with Brooks' criticisms? He wrote of later times: 'But I am afraid that the theosophists have since gone down in my estimation'. After he ceased to be a religious devotee of Annie Besant, he still was later a political follower of hers. When that, too, stopped, he still valued her as a person: 'But, for Mrs. Besant, I always had the warmest admiration'.

He became a leading member, after coming back to India, of Annie Besant's Home Rule League. His first public speech ever, 20 June 1916 in Allahabad, was in support of Besant, whose papers then had trouble with government censorship. He called her 'that great and noble lady. Don't fail at this moment; follow her faithfully and let it not be said that you flinched when you ought to have supported her'.

That the government interned her in 1917 made Nehru withdraw his two week old application for British military service. He moved to cease Indian support for military recruitment, and got also Congress moderates like his father and Tej Bahadur Sapru to pass this resolution. Like many others, he parted company after the controversy that Annie Besant had come over as a friend of Indian freedom, and protector of her country's imperium. having as her faithful ally and admirer, even then, George Lansbury, and her indefatigable lieutenant, Graham Pol"imperium. having as her faithful ally and admirer, even then, George Lansbury, and her

In 1919, Saklatvala wrote, looking back at 1918-9: "Dr Besant has never believed in merely counting heads without examining what is inside the heads, as is the principle of universal suffrage."  

1 Note on a Proposal for a Parliamentary Bill for India, in J. NEHRU(1972), vol. II, 309.
2 Quoted JINARAJADASA(1986), 27. See also MORTIMER(1953), 69.
3 JINARAJADASA(1986), 37
5 Note on a Proposal for a Parliamentary Bill for India, in J. NEHRU(1972), vol. II, 305.
6 SITARAMAYYA(1969), 301.
8 Muzer, Feb. 1926, 'Future of Indian Nationalism': 'the lowest level of the Besantite constitution'; reprinted ADHIKARI(1976), 710.
9 The Simon Commission', reprinted ADHIKARI(1979), 291.
10 NETHERCOT(1963), 360. Subhas Chandra Bose, 121; CJ, WW7, 27; JINARAJADASA(1986), 38, and UGLOW, 57 wrongly claim that her '1925 Commonwealth of India bill won the backing of the
her. Gandhi, interviewed by New India on the bill, said 'I dislike the graded franchise'; and 'recognition of the King-Emperor as Sovereign' as 'indispensable condition'. '... nothing but the waste-paper basket is its destiny.' C.R. Das objected that it had no sanction if the government rejected it. Viceroy Lord Reading's autocratic 1921-6 rule was no time for compromise.

In 1927, Annie Besant was back in the All India Congress Committee. At the Madras Congress session of that year, the pro-independence motion got wide support. A bit too wide for Jawaharlal Nehru's taste:

The independence resolution was supported even by Mrs. Annie Besant. This all-round support was very gratifying, but I had an uncomfortable feeling that the resolutions were either not understood for what they were, or were distorted to mean something else. 'The best way to get rid of them (pro-independence resolutions) was to pass them and move on to something more important.'

According to Annie Besant in 1928, 'The Congress is becoming an intolerable tyranny by denial of free speech to the minority.' J. Nehru's reaction on 16 November 1928 was that the problem was the other way around.

If Dr. Besant wants the majority of the Congress to bow down to the minority, or to an individual, that surely would be some kind of tyranny and the tyranny of a minority or of an individual is worse than any other tyranny.

3 November 1929 came out the 'Delhi Manifesto': Gandhi, Annie Besant, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Motilal and Jawaharlal (who later said he was 'talked into signing' the manifesto though it was 'wrong and dangerous') Nehru offered co-operation; after vague talk by the colonial government, containing nothing new, on Dominion status.

Talks with the Viceroy did not bring anything though. So, the Lahore Congress of 1929 demanded independence: 'This Congress ... declares that the word "Swaraj" shall mean Complete Independence.' The times of ambiguity, which could include both radicalism and Annie Besant's reconstructed Empire, were over.

In 1931, Annie Besant came out once again against universal suffrage in India. This was about her last political statement. By that time, on this subject, she was to the right of many British and Indian Liberals and Conservatives. At the end of 1932 New India ceased publication; few subscribers were left.

Jinarajadasa saw Mrs Besant's relationship to others in India as follows: The editor of the Hindoos of Madras has suggested that she [AB] wanted to be given recognition as the only leader, and showed a smallness when the Indian national movement swept past her under the leadership of Gandhi and left her 'stranded.' Swept past her? Aye, and into the ditch, where it now is. Was ever Mother India so humiliated?

In spite of all differences, many Indian political leaders praised her when she died in 1933. Jawaharlal Nehru called her 'that lofty character.' Madras city named more than one big avenue after her.

Josephine Ransom, then theosophical GS for England, lectured India's democrats in her 1933 Convention lecture:

In India, she thought the change was not yet so rapid. They were still arguing about slogans and watch words like "Democracy", which in the West were left behind. Next year, Manjeri Venkata Iyer in TT attacked democracy's philosophical foundations from the heights of Ancient Wisdom:

The modern idea of democracy is, in reality, based upon the utterly false 'scientific notion' that the world is but a fortuitous concourse of atoms and molecules without any intelligent direction ... That a colony of idiots by putting their empty heads together can create wisdom seems to be the basic idea behind democracy. Democracy is really rooted in materialism, selfishness or separateness, which emphasizes individual rights instead of individual duties. The divine conception of a State or society is biological or organic, in which fight for individual freedom takes no place.

George Arundale, though he had a Home Rule League past, kept favouring a link with the British empire in the 30's. At the Benares convention, the official Indian, not the Congress flag, flew. His magazine Conscience paid much attention to Indian politics. Arundale kept fighting his predecessor's fights:

While the president of the Indian National Congress can now say without the slightest correction that violence must be met with violence, Dr. Besant was bitterly attacked for insisting that brick-
Contrary to India or Indonesia, Lanka did not have big movements of which the paramount aim was national independence. Since the 1930's, one party, Wickremasinghe's Lanka Sama Sajaya Party, advocated independence as one of its aims. Since the 1930's, one party, Wickremasinghe's Lanka Sama Sajaya Party, advocated independence as one of its aims. As it was an internationalist labour party, we have discussed it elsewhere. There already was a Sinhalese Buddhist revival before the TS leaders arrived in the country, expressing itself for instance in the Panadure debate. Blavatsky and Olcott already were popular before their arrival in Galle. This did not mean that many people accepted all of the TS doctrine. Olcott wrote few Buddhist monks believed in the Transhimalayan Masters, Madankare being about the only one. Among the Sinhalese laity, one of few believing in the Masters, going farther than the sympathys of most for the TS founders' sympathy for Buddhism, was the fourteen-year old son of a furniture exporter, from Colombo's richest Buddhist family. He attended a Christian school (the only education then possible). As the Anagarika Dharmapala, he would become well known in Sri Lankan history, both inside the TS as a prominent member, and outside as an opponent. He asked to go with the theosophical leaders to Adyar. His parents refused. Madame Blavatsky predicted 'That boy will die' if he did not go; he went.

1883, Easter Day: a crowd of Roman Catholics attacked Buddhists near Colombo, killing one. On behalf of the subsequently formed Buddhist Defence Committee, Olcott went to London in 1884 to negotiate with the British government. He managed to obtain the recognition of Wesak (Buddha's birthday) as a public holiday. Before, the government had only recognized days on the Christian calendar. This increased Olcott's popularity. Of his activities, Murphet wrote:

Apart from the raising of an Education Fund, political action was necessary if the wrongs of the Buddhists were to be righted. So Olcott became a lobbyist for the Sinhalese people-something they could not have done for themselves. He interviewed the Governor of Ceylon, Sir Arthur Gordon, who, fortunately, was interested in occultism and comparative religion. Henry was impressed, for instance, to find that he knew all about H.P.B.'s Simla miracles.

One should qualify Murphet's remark: 'something they could not have done for themselves' to 'which they were in a more difficult position to do for themselves'.

Enthusiast young Dharmapala founded the Maha Bodhi Society with Olcott in 1891. Already the first MB magazine, though, did not get that enthusiast a reception in The Theosophist.

After H.P. Blavatsky's death, on and off conflicts between Dharmapala and Olcott started. In 1893, Dharmapala considered himself more of a theosophist than a Buddhist. Soon though, he quarrelled again with Olcott, who did not support his court case against a high priest of Shiva on rights to Buddhist historic grounds in Bengal. Dharmapala was not financially dependent on Olcott. He was from a rich family, some of whom became members of the Council (later: Parliament); plus he had subsidy from Mrs Forster of Hawaii. He wanted to propagate Buddhism in India, and could do so mainly among 'proletarian' social strata, attacking privileges of the Indian TS' Brahman allies. In 1904 Dharmapala broke finally with the TS.

The rise of Annie Besant made it difficult to patch this up. Mrs Besant was far more interested in big Hindu India than in small Buddhist Ceylon; though she first lectured there in 1893, before ever having been in India.

The main source of income for the Galé TS' Mahinda college was T.D.S. Amarasingya. A dilemma for the TS was that a main source of Mr Amarasingya's income was selling arrack [a sort of gin], while Olcott and his TS stood for temperance. When in 1904 a mass temperance movement started, Amarasingya decided to check it from within rather than confront it. In September of that year, he let Olcott speak at his property. Olcott proposed that the principal of Mahinda College should direct the southern province temperance movement. At the 1905 TS convention, F.L. Woodward read a report of the Galé Buddhist TS to Olcott, written by D.J. Subasinha:

I regret to note that the Temperance Movement, which last year spread like wild fire, ... and which once afforded great hopes for a bright future, ... is now on the verge of extinction. The failure is solely due to the leaders' dislike to be benefited by your world-wide experience in such organizing work, and their refusal to carry out the campaign on the lines so generously proposed by H.P. Blavatsky, in 'The final result of the savage attack of the Roman Catholics on the Buddhists at Colombo', TT, Sept. 1883. 325, as 'the Roman Catholic ruffianly mob, of the so-called converts (mostly Malabarians)'. Malabar is in south-west India; roughly equivalent to today's Kerala. For India, many Christians live there.
by you.

In 1908, the first time Annie Besant came as PTS, she mentioned some opposition to her from Buddhist priests. In the same year, Jinarajadasa wrote:

... certain fundamental ideas of Theosophy are looked upon and denounced as heretical by the Buddhists of Ceylon, the impression distinctly in Buddhist lands is that it is Neo-Christianity! orthodox Buddhists dislike Theosophy for its theism and its doctrine of the Logos.

After 1915’s riots between Buddhists and Muslims in Ceylon, the government interned Dhannapala. They banned his paper Sinhala Buddhaya, but it came back later. The government also suspected Annie Besant.

In the 1920’s, Alice Leighton Cleather influenced Dhannapala and his Maha Bodhi magazine, as one can read in issues from then, and 1938, and 1940; though she, like other 19th century born Europeans, was close to non-Ceylon Mahayana Buddhists. For Dhannapala, this was a way to keep faithful to theosophical ideas, while denying the authority of Adyar. There also was some praise for Mrs Tingley in publications like MB and the Buddhist Annual of Ceylon.

In 1920, the first issue of Bac came out. About then, the Ceylon Theosophical Journal also started; in the 1930’s, it became Ceylon Theosophical News. Jinarajadasa, more categorically now than in 1908, wrote: ‘I am perfectly aware how my fellow-Buddhists in Ceylon look askance at all Theosophical ideas as heretical.’

Wickremasinghe’s successor as theosophist GS in the 30’s was T. Nalliamathan, Frankfort Place, Bambalapitiya, Colombo.

Dhannapala’s funeral in 1933 proved his popularity. MB estimated 100,000 mourners in Colombo. In April 1935, Jinarajadasa lectured in Wellawatte. Arundale remarked on Lanka:

1 General Report on 1905, 66. Rogers, 338-9, ascribes the decline of the movement to leaders’ inexperience in ‘organising ordinary people on an ongoing basis’.

2 Besant (1908c), Foreword, n. p. Obeyesekere (1992b): ‘With the development of an educated bourgeoisie the monk order as the sole repository of the religion no longer held. Thus, it became possible for laymen to know more about Buddhism and its history than monks did.’ This may have caused animosity with some monks, though the TS did not have an anti-monk policy.

3 Jinarajadasa (1923), 72-4, written in 1908.

4 Nelson (1967), 218: ‘Even in Ceylon Mrs Besant and her Theosophists were being blamed by the police as being partly responsible for the riots between the Buddhist nationalists and the Muslims. I am indebted to Mrs Kumari Jayawardena for a passage from a report of the Inspector General of Police (Confidential Minute paper No. 14502 of 1915, Ceylon Government Archives), concerning the dangerous influence Mrs Besant and her Theosophist followers were supposed to be exerting against Great Britain.’

5 De Purucker (1940), 101: ‘Hinayana ... means the defective, the inferior or imperfect’ vehicle.’ Also Van Hinloopen Labberton (1910), 101: ‘Hina-yana ... that exoteric morality form of Buddhism.’ Theravada Buddhists do not call themselves Hinayana.

6 Jinarajadasa (1923), VI.
Buddhist TS Schools in Ceylon

Numbers of schools

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Computed from SUMATHIPALA, 28, 204-5.

Buddhist TS Schools in Ceylon

Numbers: thousands; % of all pupils at government aided schools

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Computed from SUMATHIPALA, 28, 204-5.

C. Indonesia

I. Beginnings and Budi Utomo

In 1880, 1881 or 1883, Baron von Tengnagell from eastern Germany founded Indonesia's first TS lodge, in Pekalongan, on Java's north coast. That lodge fizzled out by 1885; Tengnagell died in Bogor in 1893; numerical success was not immediate. The first issue of the Dutch language monthly Theosofisch Maandblad voor Nederlandisch-Indië came out in July 1901. Twelve years later, half its subscribers were non-FTS. In 1903, five lodges existed in the Dutch East Indies. All their officials were Dutch, except for the president of Yogyakarta lodge, Raden Mas Toemaeggoeng Pandji Djieijing Irawan. In September 1905, the first issue of Pembara Théosophie boertr tanah Hindia Nederlands came out. This magazine was not only in the Javanese language, but also in Malay, so not aimed only at East and Central Java, but at the island's western part and other islands too. It already had 200 subscribers after its second issue. Since

1. BCW, Vol. 1, 511: he usually was translator of Olcott's speeches.
2. Carla Risseeuw, personal communication.
5. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913b), 3. Théosophie in Nederlandisch-Indië was for members only, while T/N was also for outsiders.
7. In 1903, he still was the only non-Dutch official in the, by then, six lodges in the Dutch East Indies.
9. All-archipelago trade language, which eventually developed into Bahasa Indonesia, official language of the Republic of Indonesia.
10. PT, March 1906, 476. TIEMERSMA(1907), 216. In 1918-19, PT also advertised two translations of theosophical books, by Annie Besant on Islam and 'At the feet of the Master' by Krishnamurti, into the Sundanese language of West Java. That volume had 194 pages; the same year's volume of TMW had 330 pages. From 1916-1920, PT's administrators, all Dutch, changed
the 1920’s there was a magazine in Javanese, *Koemandang Theosofie*, the Light of Theosophy; and another one in both Javanese and Malay, *Rasa*.

On 6 April 1912, the TS recognized the Dutch East Indies as an autonomous section. Annie Besant announced: ‘It is pleasant to chronicle the formation of a National Society in Java [ignoring Medan], which now feels strong enough to stand on its own feet, without the support of its mother, the T.S. in the Netherlands.’

The sections still had many links though. In 1913, Baroness Mollina van Asbeck, daughter of the Dutch diplomatic representative in Paris, came from Europe via Adyar, to lecture on morality and evolution. Not only to TS lodges: Bogor masculine Masonic lodge asked her to lecture twice, once in Dutch, once in French. Later, in the 1920’s-30’s, two Dutch TS General Secretaries, Kruijshee and Van der Leever, had an Indies background.

What did people among the Dutch majority of Indonesia’s theosophists think of colonial rule? General Secretary Van Heutsz Labberton wrote that after the start of colonialism, ‘the Teutonic race of the North soon followed suit; foremost of all’ the Dutch. Their East India Company had been present in Indonesia since the seventeenth century. Labberton considered that it had conducted ‘mutually profitable trade’ with the islands, in spite of Company selfishness. Its rule had been limited to Java, the small spice-producing Moluccas islands, and some fortified points along coasts. According to Secunen, only since the late nineteenth century colonialism had also become ‘imperialist’. Since then, it had expanded rapidly militarily into islands everywhere in the archipelago. Labberton gave a historical account of these wars in scores of islands and regions; everywhere, ‘robbery’ or ‘malevolent persons’ had left the military no alternative but ‘bringing them to their senses’ by conquest, resulting into ‘peace and prosperity caused by the Dutch rule’. On p. 202, we have discussed Labberton’s ideas on General Van Heutsz and imperialism.

Was Van Hinloopen Labberton a typical representative of ‘ethische politiek’ in colonialism? He himself did not like the word ‘ethisch’. Authors using it then, and now, do not mean the same by the word. Some call a group of Dutch officials, who criticized Dutch private business, ‘ethical’. Labberton was not ‘ethical’ in that sense. At the request of the syndicate of big sugar companies, he wrote a counter-attack to a well-known investigation by officials on the relationship of European business to the Javanese peasants. Their report said it contributed to their *mindere welvaart*; decrease in prosperity. Quite on the contrary, Labberton reacted; there was no *mindere welvaart*.

H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge thought:

> our Colonies should be ruled according to a system which in part looks like what people in the 18th century called ‘enlightened despotism’.

From Madame Blavatsky on, opinions of theosophists outside Indonesia about most Indonesians were lower than those on ‘Aryan’ Indians. TS leaders excepted the islands’ upper classes though; an Aryan empire had existed, ten thousands of years ago, which coloured Sumatra and Java ... for the most part they were welcomed in these regions by the
people, who looked on the fair-faced strangers as Gods, and were more inclined to worship them to fight them.1

In 1912, Van Hinloopen Labberton proposed that the Dutch prince consort Hendrik should come to Java. The daily Bataviaasch Handelsblad sympathised with Labberton's idea of strengthening Dutch-Java ties in this way. It was afraid, though, of 'pressure on the common men' of Java; the nobility would burden them with the costs of the prince consort's visit. To this, Labberton replied in TMNI.

Lastly, there really is an excessive tendency to attack the Principalities' princely families. Yes, there are still really many good sides to the Principalities' families, whose members rightly consider themselves aryas?3

In an article 'Java', The Theosophist mentioned contacts with the moderate nationalist Budi Utomo movement, founded in 1908. Its main support was among Java's aristocrats.4 On 16 January 1909, Labberton addressed a Budi Utomo meeting in Gambir, a Jakarta suburb. Three hundred people were present. He repeatedly said it must be Allah's will that Indonesia was now ruled by the Dutch.5 He spoke about the brotherhood of humanity, of occult racial theories, and of his wish that the Lord might increase the knowledge and morality of the people of the Indies. Labberton advocated fighting sins like gambling or drinking. Dutch journalists noted the speech:

While one may doubt the use of initiating the native, who already is greatly susceptible to superstition, still further into other forms of mysticism, certainly the conclusion of [Labberton's sermon] deserves universal support, as he points to vanity and wrongness of knowledge that is

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1BESANT and LEADDIATER(1913), 273. PTS former Volksraad member Th. Vreede, in a speech in Leiden university's Small Auditorium, 20 February 1922, said that the Hindu civilization in Indonesia probably is some millennia older than is usually supposed.' GODHART, 90. See the quote on Aryan occult prehistory on p. 122. In a less religious vein, the Dutch Resident of Surabaya, G. van Asch, also thought that the 'Native race' should be divided into descendants of the Hindu rulers and of the original Malay-Polynesian people. TICHELMAN(1985), 419. There certainly had been Hindu and Buddhist religious influence on Java's history.


377 Apr. 1909, 118. Its full name in the old spelling: 'Javaschebond "Boedi-Oetomo"'. Javanese League Budi Utomo, VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1909), 3. Budi Utomo aimed at a 'national brotherhood irrespective of race, sex or religion'; 1908 leaflet by Soewarno, reprinted SOEBANDONG, 115. RICKLEFS(1993), 165. Governor-General Van Heutsz, in these early days, had good expectations of Budi Utomo. DIAJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 47; even before BU's founding, Labberton knew some of its later leaders. The BU founders had also freemason contacts; STEVENS(1994), 59.


5VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1909), 8.9; 12.3.

not joined to higher religion and a correct way of life.1

As did some others, one Budi Utomo leader, Radjiman, joined the Theosophical Society.2 At BU's 7 July 1917 congress, he was the strongest speaker against upgrading Islamic and downgrading pre-Islamic elements, and managed to win over the majority.3

In 1915, Dr Satai Wirojasandjo had founded a BU youth league, jointly with students of the TS' Goeenong Sari teachers' training school. At first, its name was Tri Koro Dharmo; since 1918 Jong-Java.4

The relationship of TS to Budi Utomo was mostly good. Van Hinloopen Labberton regularly spoke at its congresses.5 Some sometimes criticized theosophy in the BU paper Darmo Kendo though;6 and at the 9 July 1916 Surabaya meeting, Vice-Chairman Soetopo thought Labberton criticized the Javanese's flaws too publicly.7

In Indonesia, some expected that a just prince, a ratu adil, would usher in an era of justice. According to a 1913 letter to Governor-General Idenburg by his adviser Rinties, there was some convergence between this traditional expectation, and theosophical World Teacher propaganda, which Annie Besant had recently started with the Order of the Star.
in the East. Labberton in the same year thought 'Today too, one can imagine the danger that the Japanese expectation of a Messiah will again be abused for political aims.' TheOSE should prevent this.2

Towards the First World War, the colonial government proclaimed an 'association policy', which it said was a fairer deal for 'natives'. The TS supported this policy.3

Theosophists did not base that support on the same philosophical foundations as Protestant Governor-General Idenburg though. When Christian missionaries said that association within the Dutch empire could only work on a common basis of religion,4 Van Hinloopen Labberton agreed. But he differed with them on the nature of that basis:

Dutch civilization in these lands will have to have a religious background in order to penetrate and to continue to exist. Only Theosophy, the Root of Faith in all faiths, will be able to provide

1D.A. Ritkes to A.W.F. Idenburg; VAN DER WAL(1967), 101. See also Mas Mangoenpoerwoto, 'Bintang timoer [Star in the East]', P7, 1918-19 (12), 70-1. Sociëkososemo inWED, 1920, 104: 'On the spiritual field, it is the Star of the East, which prepares the coming of the Raise Adil.'

2Nachtzicht van de Redactie', TMN 1913, 167f. Ibid., 169: 'Een leeraar, die komt voor de Gansche Wereld' interpreted New Guinea stories on a madamurgus, expected to return, as confirming the OSE.

3VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1916D), 518: 'Let everyone in his surroundings fight for this and support the Government in its noble striving towards regeneration of our system of rule on the basis of association'. See also TMN 1918, 49. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1917), 393, after visiting Queen Wilhelmina and other authorities as leader of the Indie Weerbaar delegation, wrote inTMN: 'My definite impression from what I have seen in The Netherlands is that the rules ideal which dates from before the abolition of slavery in 1863 in the Dutch colonial empire has been replaced with the influential and ruling Dutch by the idea of a policy of association, which will be consciously aimed at the education of the Dutch East Indies towards self-government and the development of the forces and talents of the natives as much as of the riches of the country.' According to Governor-General De Graaff in a letter to Miniser of Colonies Koninginberger on 5 January 1929, in 1918 Van Hinloopen Labberton had been the first to propose including Indonesians in Dutch delegations to international conferences; KWANTES(1984), 169. DIAJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 42, defines 'association' as 'Indonesia and The Netherlands should cooperate on a footing of parity and equality between the two nations.' This assumes too readily that various people using the word, mean the same by it. See for instance Van Hinloopen Labberton, and A. Vreede's 'elder and younger brother' view (p. 213), vs. Snoevels and Westerveld (p. 168, 182). Conservative Dutchman Risema van Eck interpreted 'association' as being different from 'assimilation': 'In association, besides an element of unification, there always is an element of segregation'; De Indische Gids, April 1920, as quoted WED, Feb. 1921, 22. See also his 'Indië staakt van onwederzicht' De Gids, 1917, 1, 201-21. Lord Carnarvon on India in 1917: 'The policy His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India is in complete accord, is that of the increasing association'. Quoted MORTIMER(1983), 75. Albert Sarraut, French Minister of Colonies in the 1920's, had a chapter La Politique d'Association in his book Le mas in valeur des colonies françaises. Reviewed by W. de Cock Buning in NIE, Sept. 1923, 7f. International 'association policy' was roughly the same as 'éthique politieke' in Dutch of that time.

4VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1916C), 243.

5Ibid., 248. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913B), 6. 'The Native society is too immature for unbelief. People with a strong moral basis from earlier incarnations may be very good citizens now, though they now are unbelievers or agnostics; we feel though that in this country, in this more superior society a widespread unbelief would become a grave obstacle to all true progress.' Without mentioning theosophy, Colonel Fabius at a Dutch right-wing liberals' meeting on conscription said: 'The native in an Indies army should feel as Dutch as possible ... The speaker [Fabius] in this context also questions, if bringing Christianity will not make the natives more to us. It is a fact that Christianity does not ban drinking alcoholic beverages.' LOC, 7-3-1917. It is blak: 'Bond van Vrije Liberale en Indië: Het debat over de motie Van Heutsz.'

6VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1909), 6. The Malay language original of the speech has 'orang papoa-papoa yang masih basa menerobok sombong memori'. Papuans who still eat human flesh; the Dutch translation included with the original has 'wilden', savages, instead of Papuans.

7VAN LEEUWEN(1903a), 54-5. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1910), 109: 'They less civilized peoples of the outer possessions [outside Java].' TH. VREEDE(1925), 8 suggested that the 3/4 more developed people be accorded a temporary authority over the 1/4 less developed ones, or, put differently, that Borneo, Celebes, New Guinea and other less developed areas would be temporarily dominated and colonized by Java.'
If The Netherlands lets the Indies develop, as they are entitled to. 1

Labbertoon's fellow theosophist, Government Secretary A.G. Vreede, wrote in Koloniale Studiën magazine on Indian politics. He wanted to warn especially 'Javanese readers' against losing sight of differences between Indians and Indonesians:

I do not mean to say anything humiliating, when I here pose the undeniable truth, that the people [Indians], entrusted to Dutch guardianship, are "younger" than those [Indians] who now are educated by England.

Vreede sympathized with Home Rule for India. However:

Without any doubt, through history and ethnological circumstances, the Indian nation has great advantages over the Indonesians, advantages that have given it a big lead. 2

The TS brought out a new political weekly, Indische Stemmen (Indies Voices). It saw Angie Besant's Commonwealth as its example. 3 Theosophist L.J. Polderman claimed that about 1916 he had written in the daily De Locomotief, favouring a National Congress in the Dutch East Indies, as in India. He proposed this at a 1917 Insulind meeting too. The socialist Sneevliet thought that idea of 'one Mr POLDERMAN' would harm

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1Quoted IG, 1917 (39), 666-7, MRBT.

2VREEDDE(1917b), 2. Also quoted OVW, 1918, 1, 'Indischhe euforie', 18-9. Writing of 'younger', K. ethnological circumstances, Vreede thought of Roor Races as Besant taught them. Ibid., 3: politics in India differed by their 'broader liberal'. Ibid., 4: a "general development in [India], also measured by western standards, which is immeasurably higher than which is now still the case with our Natives'.

3TAMN, 1918, 209; 281. It was a continuation of the fortnightly paper Indische Stemmen, an initiative of Van Hinloopen Labberton in September 1917, with himself, Hadji Agoes Salim, Adolfo Moeis, moderate social democrat (who had broken with the ISDV) W. Lubberink, and others as editors: TICHELMAN(1985), 57; For Lubberink, an ex-French officer, ibid., 380; VAN DER PAUW-102-3: in the early 1920's, he briefly became a member of the Communist Party of The Netherlands. In 1924, he was an employers' organization official, and became editor-in-chief of De Vaderlander (The Patriot), the Dutch fascist party weekly. According to BROEZE, 24, IS first came out in November 1917. In May 1918, the name changed to Indische Stemmen, edited by Moeis and the theosophist P. Fournier, who also wrote in TAMN, ibid. Members of Budi Utomo's youth organization Jong-Java wrote in IS: TAMN, 1918, 393. One contributor was B.J.O. Schrieke on landed property law; IS, 4-10-1919. The paper 'backed contributors and subscribers': TAMN, 1919, 311. But editor Klever de Jonge in the 11-10-1919 IS issue, 133, wrote that 'in less than ten weeks' time the number of subscribers to Indische Stemmen has more than tripled'. According to HERING(1922), VII, the number of copies per issue went from 280 to 900, read mainly by 'peas clerks, the teachers, the foremen and lower police officials'. Nevertheless, IS then merged with another weekly, De Taak (the Task). BROEZE, 86, names the theosophist editors of the pre-merger Taak: Klever de Jonge, Th. Vreede, and W.P.O. Corporaal. Radjiman also wrote in it; H. Sneevliet, 'Haar Taak', HVW, 10-8-1917. Among post-merger Task editors, A.J. Hamner was a prominent theosophist. Another editor was S. Kopenberg, who in 1915 had warned Sneevliet against working with theosophists.

4POLDERMAN(1922), 3-4.

revolutionary ideas within Insulind: 'Insulind, a part of the National Congress, the Congress of the Princes and Bupatis.' According to Polderman, the Congress idea had faded into the background with the coming of the Volksraad (People's Council). 2

Establishing this Volksraad was part of government association policy. In 1917, Budi Utomo put up candidates for it, as Van Hinloopen Labberton's request conjointly with his Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond. 3 This non-clerical electoral association eventually won most 'European' seats in the election. Labberton and three Indonesian FTS sat from 1918 on in the first Volksraad. The raad had 39 members in all. So more than 10% of membership were FTS; far more than any of the promillages in the graph, p. 110. The Theosophist saw this as a 'Nationalist movement on Aryan lines.' 4 Soewardi Soerianto, in the socialist daily Het Volk did not expect much from the council, as it was only partly elected. By limited franchise, with limited powers. He anticipated that the Volksraad will be moderately conservative. Let me introduce our "representatives" to you. 1. Dr. Radjiman, court physician of the Susuhunan of Solo, theosophist and scholar,
political and moral opponent of the ex-exile Tjipto. 

Bandung daily Koem Moeda, then Dnma Koesoema's, expected Labberton in the Council to fight conservatism; but 'that fight will keep within the limits of the principle that the Indies will remain under Dutch authority.' 

A committee of Javanese living in the Netherlands, led by Raden Mas Ario Soeryopoetro, celebrated ten years of Budi Utomo, partly in the The Hague TS building, De Ruyterstraat 67, on 20 May 1918. The theosophists also had a good relationship with the society of Indonesians in the Netherlands, the Indische Vereeniging. Soeryopoetro and his nephew Noto Soeroto then were prominent in it. Soerjopranoto had represented its paper for Indonesia. In it, Soeryopoetro explained theosophy as

This reincarnation doctrine has given birth to the caste system. Each caste has its own souls, which help to fit that caste's members for a definite task of the work in society and state. Do we not find this idea in a genie doctrine as well?

The TS founded a central fund for 'all theosophical-social or political work' in the Dutch East Indies in 1919. In the next year, before the term of the first Volksraad finished, a second Dutch, and fifth in all, theosophist 'MP' joined Labberton, also for the Indonesian Press, ex-Semarang local councillor Theo Vreede. 

Many publications frequently mentioned theosophists. In 1916, the editor-in-chief

1 Het Volk; quoted IG, 1918 (40), 343, MRBTD. In the valuable list of articles by Soewardi, TSUCHIYA (1987), 50-1 did not include Soewardi's Het Volk articles.

2 KM 15-1-1918, quoted I/G 2/1918, MJB.


4 POEZE (1986), 75: in 1911, Labberton was one of the IV's penningen (literally, 'leaders', donors). Ibid., 76: Noto Soeroto went to the 1911 London Races Congress, to which Besant in vain had urged Gandhi to go.


6 TMM 1919, 302: it started with 6000 guilders. In 1921, the Theosofisch Stichting had a capital of f. 100,000. EH, vol. VI, 764. When he spoke to Budi Utomo, VAN MINDELOPEN (1909), 4, had denied that the TS was political; it only wanted to cleanse people's hearts, because else people's political movements would also be unclear. He said that at a time when all organizations of a political nature were illegal in the Dutch East Indies; compare Orelli's views on apoliticism, linked to expectations that this might facilitate legalization of the TS itself in Russia; see p. 63.

7 KOCH (1956), 72: 130. He was not as active a Volksraad member as Labberton: SOERJIOKOESOEMO (1921B), 72. MEY (1965), 450 wrongly calls Vreede an ISDP member.

8 After an attack on Labberton by Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch Indië, which theosophists saw as inspired by Roman Catholic clergy, TMM, 1918, 48, took stock of the TS' friends and foes among dailies. Apart from the Nieuws van den Dag, it said also about Bataviasch Nieuwsblad, Pretangerbode, and Soerabaiasch Handelsblad. 'One should beware of these media.'

and press reviewer of pro-colonial monthly De Indische Gids, ex-Indies army captain E.A.A. van Heekeren, felt weary. Once again, he had been reading anti-government column after anti-government column in Indonesian papers. 'The Native press,' he wrote, 'broadcasts poison ... if only the government wanted to understand the press' great power. Why cannot the government use men like Van Hilinopo Labberton, who have very great influence on Native society, and to whose voice they listen? ... How they should perform that task, by founding a new organ,' or in another way, 'it is a matter for more talks. But anyway, the Indies government should do something. From all sides, from this country and from abroad, they incite Kromo. The social democrats have their revolutionary organ, the Insulide people broadcast their products of sedition.'

Next year, a new daily came out, in 1918, a remodelled old daily came out. Then prominent FTS, Raden Djiposodirjo and Hadji Agoes Salim, and H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge, respectively headed Neraja (The Balance), and Bataviasch Nieuwsblad. Both were accused of being government mouthpieces. 

In 1918 and 1919, of contributors to the TS' own Theosofisch Maandblad, all but Anrajadassa were Dutch. The Maandblad's 1919 List of Contributors consisted of Anrajadassa, ten Dutchmen, and five Dutch women. In 1920, leading Budi Utomo member, though not representative of all of BU, Raden Mas Soeroto Soerikoesoemo, joined them. Before we look further at this leader of Javanese nationalism' politics, we look at other political movements which had emerged meanwhile.

Who supports them financially or morally is an accomplice. The Javabode and the Bataviasch Handelsblad from Djakarta, the Mataram from Yogyakarta, the Lomouwief and the Indien from Semarang, and the Sumatra Post from Medan, were considered friendly. Things changed fast for the Bataviasch Nieuwsblad.

1 IG, 1916 (38), 178, MRBTD.

2 Salim was born in October 1884; according to KOCH (1960), 131, he sometimes called himself 'a Libra man.' In astrology, people born under the Libra sign are supposed to be moderate and balanced.

3 Kiewiet de Jonge, who also wrote in TMNI and Djhava magazines, from 1918-19 was Bataviasch Nieuwsblad editor-in-chief. KWANTES (1975), 614-5: 'Arojen' (J. Stam), in 'Verantwoordelijkheid,' HVW, 9-11-1918, 46: 'Mr KIEVIJT [sic] DE JONGE, who is very closely connected to Buitenzorg the government-general's palace in Bogor,' KOCH (1956), 112-3: he had got that job through intervention of the government Intelligence Service chief, Captain W. Muurling, to propagate the government-general's policies; as with Neraja, which received government money. After Kiewiet de Jonge had been dismissed from the Nieuwsblad because of falling circulation, in 1919, when he was living in Gambir, he became editor of Indische Spectra.

See also the graph on p. 292 for the authors of articles. The five women were Mrs van Hillinopo Labberton, F. Beguin-Bickers, A.P. Dekker-Groot, E.H. Sonnebom Grönholt, J. Westbl-Westers.
After 1912, more radically anti-colonial movements, which managed to get mass followings, upstaged Budi Utomo. They were: Sarekat Islam, based on Muslim lower level civil servants, small and middle business people, peasants, and workers; the Indische Partij; and later, in the 1920's, the communist PKI, and Sukarno's PNI. The shift in attention from Budi Utomo to Sarekat Islam was potentially negative for the Theosophical Society, even though the SI was no strictly Islamic monolith. Budi Utomo tended to look for inspiration towards Hinduism, especially for the early years. Of course, the Javanese men of culture, as they search for means for the construction of Java's decayed and ruined palace, are in need of materials which India's spiritual riches brought us.

The 'masses' in the SI looked more to Muslim countries; or to Russia after 1911. That in India after 1917, Gandhi's non-co-operation pushed Annie Besant's views into the background, might complicate TS relationships with those in Indonesia who looked to India as well.

In 1916, the Dutch Resident Engelenberg reported on political and politically relevant movements of Indonesia. He described the Theosophical Society as ardent supporters of the association policy, who tried to win over Javanese to their ideas. He strongly doubted their chances of success, however, as the 'real Islamic spirit' would not be satisfied with the position of a mere spark of a syncretic Central Fire. Still, one can argue that in

1 VLEKKE, 412 G.E. HALL (1968), 752: BU 'took its inspiration from ... Rabindranath Tagore, and to some extent from Mahatma Gandhi' generalizes, especially for the early years. SOERIOKOESOEMO (1919B), 22: 'The assimilation of the Javanese and the Hindu spirit in all respects succeeded so completely that Islam, invading later, could not undo what this Javanes-Hindu spirit had made, not even by violence and abuse of power. Though Islam seemingly vanquishes ... the ancient Javanese religion, in reality it has lost splendidly'. Noor Soeroto, 'Javansche cultuur en Indische sympathieen', WED, 1920, 38: 'the Javanese have never forgotten their ancient (Indian) gurus'. Within BU's youth league, Jong-Java, in 1924 theosophists, Christians and Hindus had instruction in their own religions; Muslims had not. NOER, 248.


3 VLEKKE, 412.

'Sneevliet said: British India should not be the example (for Indonesia); rather, the proletarians should direct their eyes towards Russia. The civilized Dutchman acts like a dog, when he comes to the Indies'. 'Sneevliet in Holland'; from De Tribune, reprinted HVW, 17-5-1919, 238.

4 A.J.N. Engelenberg, in VAN DER WAL (1967), 461. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1910), 109, described the Indonesian Muslim as mainly tolerant, 'even though a Pan-Islamic movement is trying to kindle the unholy sectarian fire within him'. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1916A), 51 thought that the Dutch colonial government would have to stop Indonesian Muslims from performing the haj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, as pan-Islamism, linked to the Turkish government and to the 'Djadjal la war, the Anti-Christ' (ibid., 52), might influence them there. But 'the Government so far has done nothing to ensure the interests of its Muhammadan subjects, in order to prevent wobby fanaticism and sectarian religious hatred being encouraged amongst them and increasing the
Indonesia the TS had more Muslim members than in the rest of the world put together, though some might doubt the orthodoxy of these Muslims.1

The theosophist Radjiman addressed Sdeo Moestia, the bupati's union, on Sarekat Islam in late 1913 in Semarang. His speech concluded 'negatively in all aspects' to SI. In his own Surakarta he had observed that priyayi did not want to join a league like that. 'People still want to hold on to the existing distinction of castes.' So, SI was 'doomed to break up.' Also Labberton did not sound enthusiastic.2

Not all, of the TS, or the Surakarta court, opposed Sarekat Islam so fraudly. When it offered Prince Ngabehi IV its patronage in 1913, 'he accepted it impulsively.' His father, Pakoe Bocowo X, soon ordered him to resign.3 Still, Prince Ngabehi may have been one of the theosophists through whom over the next years Labberton developed rather good contacts with at least some SI leaders. He spoke at the Sarekat's first congress of 1916. Some of the leaders were originally not sharply anti-colonialist: Tjokroaminoto stood at first for an autonomous 'Indies state' within a 'Greater Netherlands' framework.4

Many Sarekat Islam members criticised the social hierarchy in Java. In 1914, Kiewiet de Jonge worried about sympathies of Dutch officials like Rinke for 'democratic tendencies' in SI. 'As with the downgrading of native authority, the government also possibility of disturbances, of which the maddened perpetrators in the end will be the worst victims'. Such a pilgrimage ban was not 'an obstacle to religion but only a fatherly precaution' D. van Hinloopen Labberton, 'Soenan Bonang's leeringen', TMNI, 1917, 305, called Javanese Islam 'a form of Islam, which, being meditative and theosophical, we should consider extremely important in relationship to our theosophical propaganda'. In TMNI, 1918, 599, Van den Broek thought that in spite of SI activity, Javanese would become 'PUIE' Muslims now, to older, what he called 'Godhuns' influences. Probolinggo, close to the Tengger mountains, where Van den Broek was assistant resident, was one of the less Islamized regions in East Java, TMNI, 1920, 41, reprinted a report from daily De Locomotief from 1 December 1919, of an SI meeting where Hadji Mohamed Djochan, founder of the reformist Muslim Muhammedjah organization, pleaded for tolerance towards other religions like Christianity. The TMNI editor supported this view.

1 GEERTZ(1960), 316, 336; the mystical sect Ilmu Sedajati (True Science), founded by Prawirosoedarmo, a Madura court noble in 1915, acknowledged theosophy as one of its four sources of inspiration. It is also called itself 'true Islam', 'to the anger of the orthodox. In Dec. 1920, it already had 4210 supporters, 2475 men and 1735 women. So, though geographically less widespread than the TS, it already had more support. According to the Dutch political police 'nothing at all for so apparent of undesirable political influence or interest.' POEZIJ(1922), 489. 'Prawirosoedarmo', ibid., 219; and the at least 1915 and 1916 TS 'Prawirosoedarmo (Raden), Manip goeroe [education official] Malang'; NUGRAHA(1989), 247, 257: probably are the same person.

2 Dr. Radjiman's redeel over de S.I., IG 1914, 65-6. LARSON(1987), 56. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1913), 125 had criticised this branch of the 'Sarekat dagang Islamiah' for 'the unwisdom of the all too numerous members of this league, of whom the number has surpassed its leadership.'


undermines the respect for its own authority.1

At the end of 1916, Labberton had a disagreement with Sarekat Islam on the hormat question. Hormat meant prescribed, extremely respectful manifestations of loyalty by relatively lowly placed people towards, for instance, Javanese princes. Dutch colonial officials also claimed rights to hormat.

Van Hinloopen Labberton had already defended hormat at the 1915 local government congress.2 Later also in an interview in the Jawabode daily. He spoke of 'the infamous anti-hormat circular', in which officials had tried to limit the practice.

In the Sarekat Islam paper Oetoesan Hindia, 'a Javanese SI member' wrote that Labberton misunderstood the SI's character. 'It was not just a religious organization, as he thought, but a people's movement first. So, it dealt with the suffering, the poverty, the lack of justice, etc., which oppress nearly all of the native world.'

Mr L. Labberton, the author continues, has never been a Javanese who has become a victim of exaggerated hormat; there are quite some people like that among the oppressed. Through this (we would like to call it) lust for hormat, there are some native noblemen, who fancy they are 'radja [king]', and love to go beyond what is reasonable and fitting ... the officials should be there for the people; and not the other way around. How can one win trust, if Krono is forced to crawl and to sembliah before a bupati, while Krono's soul rebels against this?3

In the 16 November 1916 issue of Oetoesan Hindia, Van Hinloopen Labberton reacted for hormat; 45

a truly civilised nation has manners, and so is not slavishness, if one manifest respect towards others. ... In Europe, only the wealthy observe the forms somewhat, the majority of Europeans are conceited, bumptious and ill-bred. Is it really necessary that such etiquette is transferred to Java? ... Some humans are predestined to rule, others are predestined to form the people.

The Oetoesan Hindia editors added a note to the article, saying that they opposed hormat practice, and Labberton's defence of it.

A member of the Sarekat Islam national executive, Raden Djojosoediro, was Pernawas Theosoofie HN editor-in-chief.4 In early 1915, he also was the editor of Taman Perwara. He became chief editor of Pemirisan (Association), at the end of 1915, or early 1916, when it became a daily. A Dutch official in 1915 had described Pemirisan as a 'sometimes rather vocal publication which had some influences from the I.P. with theosophical

1 H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge, letter to his parents, 6-8-1914; ISG, Kiewiet de Jonge archive. # 24.

2 He said his views were 'far from those who wanted to incite the people against the bupati and to undermine hormat.' He thought 'that the bupati with their intellect might make the people progress.' IG 1915(37), 'Varia. Vijfde decentralisatiecongres', 1138.

3 VOC, 13-11-1916, 2e blad, 'Het karakter der S.I.'


5 PT 1916-1921, covers. Since 1921, Raden Notoeddri was editor along with Djojosoediro.

6 KOT 1915, 'Persoverschijt', 121-2.
tendencies.\(^1\) When Djojosoediro came, earlier editors like Soekirno, who had Indische Partij/Insulinde and ISDV sympathy,\(^2\) resigned out of opposition to theosophy. Many fellow SI members saw Djojosoediro as too much of an idealist; a Dutch official described him as 'a reliable person in all respects'.\(^3\) When Governor-General Idenburg's term ended in early 1916, Pemitran honoured him by sending his portrait to all subscribers.\(^4\) Every early 1916 Pemutra Thesoftsoe issue had a Pemitra ad on its cover. The Pewarta issues of late 1916 and early 1917 all had the message that the daily paper in early October 1916 ceased publication, as subscribers did not pay.\(^5\)

After Pemitran, in 1917, Djojosoediro started a new daily, Neraja.\(^6\) He did this together with fellow SI members, and then still fellow TS member, Hadji Agoes Salim. Like Abdul Moeis, who also became an editor, Salim was from the Minangkabau region; from Bukittingi. Sarekat left-winger Alimin debated against him on 17 June in front of 1200 Jakarta SI members. Salim supported the liberal local council majority in the Perdjo housing speculation affair. Alimin opposed them.\(^7\)

On 31 July in Panyajaran-Warta. Alimin was not positive about Neraja's contents.

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\(^1\) D.A. Rinkes, in VAN DER WAL(1967), 382. About 1913 the colonial government feared the Indische Partij most, as it might radicalize the more numerous SI. In 1915, Rinkes thought another paper by Djojosoediro, Tjalahaja Timoer, 'much improved' since 1913, quoted TICHELMAN(1985), 651.

\(^2\) TICHELMAN(1985), 626.

\(^3\) Dojawa Tengah, 8 Jan. 1916, quoted KOT, 1916, ‘Persoeverziech’, 500. The press reviews were by A.H. J.G. Balchewin and Ch.P.J. Blok. Soekirno, who earlier on had been chief editor, said in him [the Dojawa Tengah author] that he had no longer been able to contribute to that paper, because its real chief leader, the Officials' School teacher VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON, with DIAJASEDIRA as chief editor, '.....in original form' are both theosophists. For the same reason, also Moh. Safevie left the board of editors. On this conflict also Modjopail 18-7-1917, quoted IPO 29/1917, MfB, 19-20. LOC, 6-11-1916, 2e blad. ‘De S.I. vergadering;’ and 9-11-1916, 2e blad, ‘S.I. vergadering.’ Soekirno was a Jakarta branch SI chairman He spoke, as did Goensawan, his predecessor as chairman, TICHELMAN(1985), 49. PW, 5-4-1917. ‘Keterangan;’ when Marco was put in jail, Soekirno was in a support committee. Soerojo Merdiah, 25-6-1917. Alimin mentioned Soekirno as participant in a Jakarta SI discussion on votes for women. SI thought: 'Many women fight for freedom and are workers, just like men. Why should they not determine the direction, in which the country's situation should go?' McVEY(1965), 145. Soekirno caused the final break between PRI and right wing SI, by a speech against rich Muslims. After it, he had to run from the rostrum 'to escape a beating.'

\(^4\) KORVER, 242. VAN DER WAL(1967), 496. Djojosoediro in 1917 was an unsuccessful SI candidate for the Volksraad, NAGAZUMI(1972), 124.

\(^5\) IG, 1916 (38), 923, MRBD.

\(^6\) See also KOT, 1917, ‘Persoeverziech’, 98.

\(^7\) N.V. Uitgevers Makkassappie Evolucie’, PW, 26-5-1917, 4. Its publishers 'Evolucie' also published Indische Stemmen.

\(^8\) Openbare S.I. vergadering. Javaalse: reprinted IG, 1917 (39), 1442f. Ibid.: Alimin attacked Tjokroaminoto, who also spoke, on Indische Weerbaar.
In the spring of 1917, another (at first) theosophist SI executive member, Raden Mas Soerjopranoto, founded the Adhi Dharma organization. Its original aim was 'to bring help and relief to people of good reputation who have got into trouble.' Soerjokoesoemo and other Paku Alam princes also played leading roles in it.

The SI had two Volksraad members since 1918. One was its president Tjokroaminoto, the other one was vice president Abdoel Moeis. Moeis politically supported TS leader Van Hinloopen Labberton, while Tjokroaminoto was said not to like Labberton much.

Since the Indie Weerbaar issue, the SI was divided into a left wing; and the right wing of Soerjopranoto, had Abdoel Moeis Salim, and Moeis. People called Moeis' wing 'Sarekat Islam purba', the white Islamic federation. The leftists were 'Sarekat Islam merah', the red SI, like the colours in the red and white flag of the Sarekat (also, later, 

1Soerjopranoto, born in 1871, was related to the Paku Alam (and thus, to Soerjokoesoemo) and an elder brother of Soewardi Soerianingrat; VAN NIEL (1960), 110. He was at first active in Budi Utomo. SHIRAISHI (1990A), 122, calls him a personal friend of Van Hinloopen Labberton. He was classed under ex-TS members 'who maybe still were [members]', SOERJOKOESEOMO (1921B), 72-3.


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16Based on the research of Kabir, Islam has been critical of the S.1. will become an organization for workers only, then we will see that the same things will happen as in Russia .... It is a good thing that there are other voices. To right wing leaders as we saw on p. 227, at least until 1918, theosophy was at least as important as Sarekat Islam. It then was more a right wing in political and socio-economic sense than in religious sense. First, the left seemed to win. The fourth SI congress in October-November 1919 in Surabaya demoted Djojosoediro to a lesser office: executive adviser instead of member. A Dutch official observer saw this as one symptom of a decline of the right wing.2

17The leftists reminded Abdoel Moeis of his Indi Weerbaar past; and Abdoel Moeis Salim of his TS past and writings in Perwara Theosofie.3 Moeis said of the left that they wanted to destroy religion and to replace Islamic family life with free love.4

18As president Tjokroaminoto, who tended more to compromises between left and right, was not present at Sarekat Islam's sixth congress in October 1921, Moeis presided. Then Moeis Salim explicitly denied that he argued for 'the younger brother to elder brother relationship [as in TS theory], not for the idea of following blindly, but for brotherhood on a footing, equal for all.' Through him and through Moeis, resolutions were passed which led to expelling Semaoen and others of the left wing: they could after that only be politically active in the PKI.5

19In May 1922, a secret government report thought that the split had fatally hurt the SI. Who would fill this political vacuum? The report named two possibilities: the Nasional Indische Partij; and 'a theosophical hegemony'. It thought neither really probable, though it still considered theosophists prominent among Dutch informing young Indonesian intellectuals on 'cultural and social questions'.

20Not long afterwards, Moeis too left the SI. Its significance as an organization continued to decline through the twenties and thirties.6 PT editor Djojosoediro remained in the executive of Sarekat Islam's anti-communist rest, at least until 1923.8

1'Anarchist, socialist, mononotis (bourgeoisie), clericals, etc.' In JS, 27-9-1919, 110, he thought that 'a class struggle among themselves would be very fatal'. In KIEWIET DE JONGE (1975B), 112, he had rejected the 'classes categorizing of proletariat and bourgeoisie, of worker versus capitalist.'

2Neroto wrote: 'If the S.I. will become an organization for workers only, then we will see that the same things will happen as in Russia .... It is a good thing that there are other voices. To right wing leaders as we saw on p. 227, at least until 1918, theosophy was at least as important as Sarekat Islam. It then was more a right wing in political and socio-economic sense than in religious sense. First, the left seemed to win. The fourth SI congress in October-November 1919 in Surabaya demoted Djojosoediro to a lesser office: executive adviser instead of member. A Dutch official observer saw this as one symptom of a decline of the right wing.'

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So did Soerjopranoto and Hadji Agoes Salim. Both had broken with the Theosophical Society, however. Contrary to the TS, SI came to advocate non-co-operation with Dutch authority. After the latter banned the PKI, common opposition to open communism was no longer a link to the TS. At the 1928 SI congress, Soerjopranoto warned: ‘Islam has been able to withstand communism, but now has to fight Christianity and Theosophy, which try to destroy the religious foundations of native society.’ And Salim then wanted to introduce the Ahmadiyyah interpretation of the Qur'an into Sarekat Islam, as he considered it ‘the best one to satisfy the needs of intellectual youth and to keep it far away from the commentaries of Theosophy, which are to be considered a major danger to Islam.’ So, earlier TS’ contacts within the SI had turned into its most outspoken opponents.

In the early 1920’s, the TS seemingly, at least in Jakarta, had a fairly good relationship to the modernist Muhammadijah, more especially religious and less political than Sarekat Islam. That relationship was in a parallel decline in the late 1920’s. Though H. Fachrodin of Muhammadijah had doctrinal objections to Ahmadiyyah, he too thought ‘the danger which threatens Islam now from Christianity and Theosophy, is considerable.’

3. Indische Partij and Indo-Europeans

The Indische Partij, a political party that demanded independence, expanded rapidly after its founding in 1912. Under government pressure it was dissolved in 1913. The government banned from Indonesia its three leaders Tjipto Mangonkoesoemo, E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, and Soewardi Soerianingrat. Labberton, optimistic about winning people to his views as he would be later with the Sarnim movement, on 6 September 1913 wrote an open letter in Theosofisch Maandblad voor Nederland-Indië in both Javanese and Dutch to Tjipto, Soewardi and their wives (so not to Douwes Dekker). He admitted they were ‘courageous’ as persons; ‘but still, you erred.’ He urged them:

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1As quoted PETRUS BLUMBERGER (1987), 322.

2PETRUS BLUMBERGER (1987), 323. At the West Java congress of the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia, as the name had become, on 18 Aug. 1929, the Ahmadiyyah missionary from British India, Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig, said that theosophy had ‘various doctrines which were at variance with Islam.’ Faridjar Asia, 2/7-28-8-1929, quoted IPO 35/1929, 259.

3IB 1/6-10-1924, quoted IPO 39/1924, 635: Muhammadijah then had contacts with the Goemeng Sart school and the ODI, and a TS representative attended a meeting.

4Bintang Islam 25-6-1928, quoted IPO 27/1928, 1.

5Soewardi in 1928 changed his name to Ki Hadjar Dewantoro. TSUCHIYA (1987), XI.

6Also Governor-General Idenburg thought: ‘I have hope that the natives [Tjipto and Soewardi] will still change their mind: DD does not have much chance of this, unless God converts him completely.’ VAN DER MARK, 202. Though a political opponent of ‘DD’, Labberton asked the government for clemency for him, when he was exiled: WANASITA, 112.

7VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON (1913A), 602.
these errors ourselves, then we really should become somewhat heavy-hearted.\(^1\)

What we have written on Tjipto may also apply to his sympathizer Darna Koesoema. Darna figured on the TS membership lists of March 1915 and January 1916; they misspelt 'Darma Koesoema'.\(^2\) On him, too, I found no evidence of political parallelism to the TS leaders.

While an exile in the Netherlands, Tjipto pursued his medical studies further. In 1914, he wrote an article for the *Indische Gids* on wayang theatre. It had one sentence on the Indies TS section: it had correctly chosen wayang as an object of study, as that was important. As in Tjipto's other works which I read, he did not mention theosophical occult doctrines positively. He did mention that plays sometimes criticized Dutch authority. Wayang was a 'purely Javanese creation'.\(^3\)

Also in the *Indische Gids*, Tjipto got an angry reaction. Its author was C.A.H. von Wolzogen Kühr, former assistant resident after a career in Surakarta and other places in Java and Madura. As were some of his relatives, Kühr was a member of the Indies TS.\(^4\) More so than Tjipto's, his article showed it. Tjipto was 'that native doctor, whom we would rather not have bandaging us, should our coarsely material body be wounded'.\(^5\)

Kühr started with an anecdote from when he had studied to become a Dutch Indies official. Then, a fellow student at an April Fools' Day party had supposedly told of an ancient Hindu travelling by ship to Java. On board he had with him 'a complete set of gamelan instruments, wayang puppets ... and last but not least, ... [in original] a bunch of pisangs [bananas]' ... Why pisangs? 'Well,' the answer was 'to entice the still Polynesian, shy, ashamedous Javanese out of the trees, to tame them, and make them fit for unpaid labour, especially building the 'Hindoestaansche' like the "Borobudur".' Though told as a joke, Kühr thought this 'racist' view was 'as fond basically' correct. What did Tjipto say, wayang 'purely Javanese'?

A primitive people [Dutch: *naturvolk*] of Polynesian origin, still not influenced by the external civilizing element, maybe standing as a still lower stage of civilization than the Papuans, deep in the interior of New Guinea, do now- would people like that really have been the wayang's inventors? ... A *naturvolk*, like the Polynesian Javanese, will not invent wayang, with lakons [plots] which speak of a much higher level of culture.

Kühr meant the level of the aristocrats among Javanese. The immigrants from India, country of 'the treasure of wisdom', he thought, because of their caste rules ('*lijatoeryavyanm*') had only mixed 'in moderation' with lower classes.\(^1\)

The Polynesian Javanese was, and stayed, a sudra. Then we, the Dutch, came; still witnesses of Hinduism's death throes in its fight against Islam. We came as modern Hindus, sired by the Aryans who had spread over Europe; finally arriving by sea in Java, in order to bring this new civilization, in which, as one may hope, we will succeed better than the earlier Hindus. Here the Aryan circle, with its great diameter, closes itself!\(^2\)

Kühr did not only oppose Tjipto Mangoenekoesoemo's history. Concluding, he suspected Tjipto had hidden political propaganda for his *Indische Partij* in an 'innocent' article on art. Was it not 'an attempt to idealize the Javanese, and to downgrade the good things which come from the white brother'?\(^3\)

Tjipto had mentioned the three clowns in wayang: Semar, Gareng, and Petruk. Kühr thought that now, these three clowns were the IP's three leaders. 'The Great Dalang' [Governor-General Idenburg] 'has rightly locked them inside the wayang box ( Kotak).'.\(^4\) Thus, Von Wolzogen Kühr finished his defence of colonial rule.\(^5\)

Of the three exiles, Tjipto came back in 1914; the others four and five years later. Ex-IP members kept their ideas alive under the names of first *Insulinde*, later *Nationale Indische Partij*.\(^3\) At a public meeting in The Netherlands with his *Indië Weerbaar* delegation in 1917, Van Hinloopen Labberton said: 'I regret that the IP later became a revolutionary movement and did not want to be active in parliament.' Then Soewardi interrupted him: 'This is untrue, we were the first ones to ask for a parliament, and have always participated in local elections.'\(^4\)

In 1918, *TS*-minded daily *Oecoesan Meloge* described *Insulinde* as an 'opponent' of theosophy.\(^5\) Three years later, Semaoen saw it as 'a mixture of Eurasians, Dutchmen, and 'VON WOLZOGEN KUHR(1914), 792-3. VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1914), 2 on Java: 'they could exercise - and especially the Hindus - a favourable influence on the uncivilized aborigines.'

'VON WOLZOGEN KUHR(1914), 798-9.


'

'VON NIEL(1960), 63 (accepted by REEVE(1985), 3) has: 'The cultural counterpart to the IP party became the Theosophical Society which had a remarkable influence on many disoriented Indonesians, but there is no indication of formal concerted action between the two groups.' The second part of this statement qualifies the first half, and what he cited, 160, writes on the IP successor organization *Insulinde* see the conflict on *Indië Weerbaar*, p. 187, 201. In an interview I had with Prof. van Niel on 29-10-1995, he said that now he saw the TS as 'very different' from the IP, and did not want readers to conclude otherwise from the 1960 quote. REEVE(1985), 7 says E.F.E. Douwe Dekker was FTS; he gives no source; not confirmed elsewhere. Douwe Dekker was a friend of Kauwaly, Trooststra in 1915 introduced him to Trotsky in Switzerland. He saw Aryans as just a 'myth'; he thought Freud 'has finally liberated us from the human delusion of his [humans'] divinity'; WANASITA, 61, 64. Theosophists would disagree with both.
One may compare Insulinde to a beautiful woman, who receives Indies Dutch, Europeans, Chinese, Arabs, and Japanese into her chamber, 'if only they pay a 25 cents admission.' 'They call that nationalism.'

Landouw wanted a party for Dutch only, 'but those who had lived in the Indies for generations and in most cases had also Indonesian ancestors; and recent immigrants, committed to their new country.' Landouw, in Jakarta, did not really agree with this objection to Insulinde: 'no limitation to an Indisch-Europese party' but a party for 'all people of good will.'

At Landouw's Surakarta meeting, not only supporters of his plans, like C. van de Kamer from Semarang, showed up; also some opponents, like Sneevelt of the ISDV and G.L. Topec and F.W. van de Kastele of Insulinde. When Landouw's son called Van de Kastele a 'rotter' and a 'coward', the meeting almost degenerated into a boxing match, though it was in clubhouse 'De Gezelligheid.'

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One may compare Insulinde to a beautiful woman, who receives Indies Dutch, Europeans, Chinese, Arabs, and Japanese into her chamber, 'if only they pay a 25 cents admission.' 'They call that nationalism.'

Landouw wanted a party for Dutch only, 'but those who had lived in the Indies for generations and in most cases had also Indonesian ancestors; and recent immigrants, committed to their new country.' Landouw, in Jakarta, did not really agree with this objection to Insulinde: 'no limitation to an Indisch-Europese party' but a party for 'all people of good will.'

At Landouw's Surakarta meeting, not only supporters of his plans, like C. van de Kamer from Semarang, showed up; also some opponents, like Sneevelt of the ISDV and G.L. Topec and F.W. van de Kastele of Insulinde. When Landouw's son called Van de Kastele a 'rotter' and a 'coward', the meeting almost degenerated into a boxing match, though it was in clubhouse 'De Gezelligheid.'

The correspondent of De Locomotiej, a local TS in Surakarta, did not really agree with this objection to Insulinde: 'to form a moderate party as rival to Insulinde.'
and we will also sometimes do. 1 He was an irrigation superintendent in the Public Works Department. 2

Soerio Koekoekoem founded the Committee for Javanese Nationalism, as distinct from Indonesian nationalism, in 1917. 3 Other founding committee members were Abdel Rachman, 'Native expert' on housing of Jakarta local government, 4 and Doctor Satan Wirjosandijo. From early 1918, the Committee published its magazine 'Wederopbouw' (Reconstruction), 'perpendicular by the theosophist leaves'. 5

A written debate took place in 1917-8 between Soerio Koekoekoem and Tjipto Magoon Koekoekoem. Tjipto wanted all-Indonesia nationalism, or, as he then called it, 'Indies' nationalism. 6 His supporters thought Soerio Koekoekoem's Javanese nationalism "narrow-minded." 7 Both the theosophist Tilikema and others later wrote on these two views of nationalism. 8

1 Kwanten (1978), 127. He represented the high nobility league (Dutch: prinsenbond) of Paku Alam principalcy in the 1917 'National Committee', in which various Indonesian organizations prepared for the Volksraad elections. Nagazumi (1972), 206. The editorial address of ‘Wederopbouw’ was the Paku Alam's palace in Yogyakarta. In a European ruling family, Raden Mas Soerio Koekoekoem would have had the title of prince. In the Central Java principalities, titles like Raden Mas (for Pangrango) were more exclusive than elsewhere in Java. Contrary to Thomas Herring, 1992, VII and Reeve, 1985, 19. Not to be confused with the Bandung 'General fascist Federation,' Probably identical with 'Soemadipradja', a Bandung TS member; probably wrongly, have 1914 as the founding year for the Committee (Shiraishi also for its paper 'Arbiter Partij,' Semarang section. Tjipto and Soerio Koekoekoem knew one another from the times when the latter was more leftist, in the early Indoische Partij. In 1913, they had been chairman, respectively vice-chairman, of the 'Native Committee of The Netherlands' one hundred years of freedom [from Napoleon's France] jubilee. 9

Through Bouman's categories, well known in, for instance, the history of Flemish versus Belgian nationalism, are helpful. I did not use them further, as especially the adjective 'volkse' (German: volkisch, English roughly: racial) suggests a close link to national socialist vocabulary. Peter Blumberger (1987), 275, writes of 'racial-ethnic' movements: Kratoska Batston, 256, of 'ethnic' versus 'territorial' nationalism. Tielkema (1912), 54-5, basing himself on B. Schiele's The Effect of Western Influence on native civilisations in the Malay Archipelago, differentiated between 'social (or political) nationalism' [like Tjipto's] and 'cultural nationalism' [like Soerio Koekoekoem]. He thought, ibid., 56: 'Western education had dealt a heavy blow to cultural nationalism' and unwittingly caused 'social' nationalism. Soerio Koekoekoem placed much emphasis on his descent. 8

2 Feith/Castles, 483 Rev. 1922, 49.

3 Soerio Koekoekoem et al., 12. Shiraishi (1981), 95. and Larson (1987), 69, very probably wrongly, have 1914 as the founding year for the Committee (Shiraishi also for its paper 'Arbiter Partij,' Semarang section. Tjipto and Soerio Koekoekoem knew one another from the times when the latter was more leftist, in the early Indoische Partij. In 1913, they had been chairman, respectively vice-chairman, of the 'Native Committee of The Netherlands' one hundred years of freedom [from Napoleon's France] jubilee. 9

4 Of 14-2-1917, quoted IPO 7/1917, MIB, 18.

5 IV, 2-2-1918, 'Nieuw Maandblad'. In 1918, it listed as editors Soerio Koekoekoem, Sabooyan, and Abdel Rachman. Prepared for the early 1921 also Raden Soemadipradja; (mis-spelling 'soemadipradja'). Tsiuchia (1987), 39, probably identical with 'Soemadipradja', a Bandung TS member. Nagazumi (1989), 259, Van Miert (1995), 126. Not to be confused with 'Wederopbouw' in Herding (1992), VII and Reeve (1985). 19. Not to be confused with the Bandung 'General fascist Federation,' Probably identical with 'Soemadipradja', a Bandung TS member; probably wrongly, have 1914 as the founding year for the Committee (Shiraishi also for its paper 'Arbiter Partij,' Semarang section. Tjipto and Soerio Koekoekoem knew one another from the times when the latter was more leftist, in the early Indoische Partij. In 1913, they had been chairman, respectively vice-chairman, of the 'Native Committee of The Netherlands' one hundred years of freedom [from Napoleon's France] jubilee. 9

6 Before 1920, mainly geographers used 'Indonesia'; already in 1916, Soerio Koekoekoem used it politically, and later claimed he had already done so in 1913: Tsiuchia (1987), 32. In the 1920's, it became more widely used in politics. This was marked in 1922 when the Indische Partij was the Paku Alam's palace in Yogyakarta. In a European ruling family, Raden Mas Soerio Koekoekoem would have had the title of prince. In the Central Java principalities, titles like Raden Mas (for Pangrango) were more exclusive than elsewhere in Java. Contrary to for instance Soewardi, Soerio Koekoekoem placed much emphasis on his descent. 8

7 Bouman (1949), 10, as a theory both on international and Indonesian affairs, on the difference between the two nationalisms, in terms of where in society they find support: 'The urban, merchant and soldier type will be able to see state nationalism as his ideal come true; if the emphasis is on the state and not on the nation, one will be able to accept representatives of different races as citizens. In the volkse nationalism the emphasis, however, is on the national tie, the feeling of a deeper belonging by language and race, and for instance a 'naturalisation' of aliens, which is acceptable in state nationalism, will be impossible. In the volkse nationalism the titular and the landed aristocracy will see their ideal fulfilled.'

8 De Jong, vol. 11, 220. Tsiuchia (1987), 19. Djawi Hidayat, 3-9-1919, quoted IPO 30/1919, 1B, 2, thought Tjipto was descended from Petruk, a clownish peasant character in wayang plays, not from princely Arjuna. Soerio Koekoekoem (1920B), 5. Tjipto, ... who is proud that he can reckon himself among the broad masses of the people, recently openly professed democracy, and wanted the people to be on the throne. A people's government! That is an utopia ...'

9 Shiraishi (1990A), 56. Van der Wal (1967), 305. Soerio Koekoekoem (1920B), 4. Abdel Moes was also in the committee, but first Soerio Koekoekoem, then Moes, resigned as other members collided with the government; Tsiuchia (1987), 41. Soerio Koekoekoem wrote that he had been more militant in his youth, but had become older and wiser; Soerio Koekoekoem (1922A), 10. In an article in Boedi Osmo's paper, quoted LOC, 27-3-1917, 'Het inlandse Nationaal Comite', Soerio Koekoekoem wrote that earlier on, he had been 'conceited of everything Javanese'. Reij (1979), 288-8, basing himself on an anonymous 1920 Wed article on the medieval
Soerwardi Soerianingrat suggested, Tjipto disagreed with Soerioekoesoemo’s contributions to his paper. Now, in 1917-8, their views were ‘diametrically opposing’. In the debate, Soerioekoesoemo first defined nationalism in general, as a form of egoism; good egoism though, compatible with ‘making sacrifices, killing one’s selflessness’. Nationalism differed not only from selfish egoism, but also from ‘absolute altruism’. Then, he explained his Javanese nationalism:

Therefore, the founders of Boedi-Oetomo wisely decided to make this organization for Javanese only ... Those who think ‘and they are many’ that Boedi Oetomo takes a narrow viewpoint, did not take into account the natural groups of nations. ... (Javanese) may not even expect that our closest neighbours (others in Indonesia) will lend us a helping hand. The Indies now are not one country, not one people with the same culture. ... Holland really made the Indies or Native people, while contrariwise, the Javanese people exist by themselves.

Majapahit empire, claim there then was a ‘new line’ which brought ‘earliest Javanese nationalism’ towards Indonesian nationalism. Reid’s ‘earliest’ is doubtful. There was some margin for differing views in WED. But for instance, SOERIOEKOESEMO et al.(1920E), 76, later than the anonymous article, once again re-sited editor Soerioekoesoemo’s opposition to all-Indonesia nationalism. The Committee for Javanese Nationalism kept its name at least until Soerioekoesoemo died in 1924. From 1912 to 1917, Soerioekoesoemo had moved from ‘Indies’ to Javanese nationalism, i.e., in the opposite direction. In December 1923, Satman Wijayaandjogo once again attacked all-Indonesia nationalism and what he saw as their hijacking of Javanese medieval and later history, see p. 349 n. 1.

1) *Uit de Indische pers*, HPO 1916, 27-8: Soerioekoesoemo had written short contributions, ‘Venkjes’ [little sparks], to Tjipto’s *Modadjop*, which are probably meant as propaganda for ‘the ancient Javanese religion’. We should remark here that the M.P. editors are not responsible for the ‘Venkjes’. The utterances by the Buddhist(?) Soerioekoesoemo clearly caused critical reactions in the papers; while because of this, the well known journalist R. Djajasoebrata saw the opportunity of explaining the theosophical view on this in *Koaen Monda*.

1) SHIRASHI(1981), 108. REID(1979), 282, writes: ‘Javanese nationalism’ ‘differed radically only over Tjipto’s advocacy of Indies (not Javanese) nationalism’. But there were also the issues of democracy, racial doctrines, and Soerioekoesoemo’s theosophical ‘Hindu’ religious politics versus Tjipto’s secular politics.

2) SOERIOEKOESEMO et al.(1918), 3. Raden Mas Sooryosoeporo, in ‘De Jongeren in de Javansche beweging’, HPO, 1918, 37-9, which introduced Wf694,9324 to The Netherlands; ibid., 58, wrote of ‘equilibrium between egotistic chauvinism and altruistic humanism’. VAN LEEUWEN(1921C), 251, defined ‘Nationalism is the abstract principle which lies at the base of, realizes and mirrors itself into, the community of individuals of one and the same race, which one usually calls Nation and which manifests itself in phenomena of a certain national culture, as in art, tradition, customs and habits.’

3) SOERIOEKOESEMO et al.(1918), 3-4. Soerioekoesoemo in WED, 1918, 6. ‘Gewijd aan mijn Kameraden in “Insulindie”’; quoted if an ‘Indies’ nation were ever to arise, it would explode again soon. VAN LEEUWEN(1921G), 305: ‘For what it is “Javanism”, if it is not something which makes this nation differ inwardly from other nations?’ In Djdwd, May-Sept. 1925, 154, the theosophist W.P.D. Corporaal wrote that Theosophy ‘is in a sense identical to Javanism and to the basis of Oriental culture’; also quoted in ‘Een gevaar in zachtzinnig gewaad voor de Indonesische stallen van vreemde smellen vrij. He [Tjipto] can delightfully sneer at it.’

4) Ibid., 6. KIEWIT DE JONGE(1917B), 232: nations are ‘the organic units, the racial complexes’.

5) Ibid., 6. KIEWIT DE JONGE(1917B), 232: nations are ‘the organic units, the racial complexes’.

6) Het Indisch nationalisme en zijn rechtvaardiging’; in SOERIOEKOESEMO et al.(1918), 19.


8) SOERIOEKOESEMO et al.(1918), 20.

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TJIPITO, MANGANGKOESOEMO, defending his all-'Indies' nationalism, did not go explicitly into Soerioekoesoemo’s argument from Annie Besant’s authority:

For my part, I just point out that it is not really the racial kinship which is decisive, but rather the material interest... That may sound somewhat materialist, but thus is the average human.

Besides, that defence of national character may sound fine in theory, but in practice it will turn out to be a desperate struggle, from which one can hardly emerge victoriously.

The tendency in present day development is towards the levelling [Dutch: nivellering] of everything. The ‘citizen of the world’ takes over from citizens of special countries:

With every ship arriving, a number of foreigners is let loose on the Javanese people, which means that we have to take superhuman exertion to keep this people in all its particulars ‘free from foreign stains’... I will never believe such an endeavor will be successful.
Tjipto denied that outside influences meant 'degeneration' for Java. He thought Soerioekoesoemo had forgotten Javanese, who, forced by poverty, leave Java, to look for work on other islands.

In Tjipto's all-Indies nationalism, not race, but geography and individuals' preference were the criteria:

Thus, by 'Indies person' [Dutch: Indier] we mean all who consider the Indies to be their homeland. ... Thus, I deny it, when people say that a difference in spiritual life separates the Javanese from the Indo-European or Indo-Chinese.

Tjipto, on the other hand, is not petty enough to see differences between, for instance, the Javanese person, and the Batak [of Sumatra] or the Dyak [of Borneo].

Tjipto expected 'the dying-hour of racial nonsense'; he based himself on Jean Finot, who denied the existence of 'race'.

The language question was linked to the all-Indonesia or Javanese nationalism problem. Soerioekoesoemo thought 'Malay belongs in Sumatra and not in Java.' As

WED, Ibid., 35.

Nor in any case people, then that distinction should be: distinction in morals, distinction in ideology.

1920, 42, on Sumatra: 'up to today, one does not find major influence of Hindu culture there'.

September 1918, 42, in 'Vreemde talen voor de landsznaren van Java', WED, 1918, 21-3. SHRAISHI(1981), 90, sums up as Tjipto's idea of a nation: a community of politically independent individuals'. Against that view, WED. 1920, 49, quoted French Renan: 'What is a nation? Ernest Renan has as a yardstick: a nation is soul and body together; a common market is not a fatherland; a spiritual family, not a mass, united by the outward form of the territory. A nation is soul in the past, spiritual principle in the present.' For Java, the editors thought, that meant, ibid., 'the Oriental Thought and the Asian Spirit' .

Darma Koesoemo in Weekblad voor Indië, 26, Oct. 1917, quoted IC, 1918 (40), 230, MRBTD.

SOERIOKOESOEMO et al (1918), 31.

ibid., 60. As dis, ibid., 47, and in IV, 12-1, 1918, 'A.M. ': A. Muhrimen, who preferred Javanese nationalism, like Soerioekoesoemo, but unlike him, rejected 'race'. In the same debate, Tjipto's supporter, Miss Bertha Walbeech, thought: 'If, as it one still must distinguish between people, then that distinction should be: distinction in morals, distinction in intellect. Not in any case distinction in race.' ibid., 35.

1SOERIOKOESOEMO (1920[9]), 3. saw Borobudur as the earthly 'shadow image' of 'the divine Temple of the Javanese Nation ... And in this, we are fanatical'. 'De Groote Leer en de Wet zooals en de Wet zoals en de Wet zoals van 1919 (1920), 8.

2Dutch: Kees Kees Kees je hebt er water bij gedaan ik heb je met een etensmand naar de pomp gebracht. Nederlandsch-Jiddisch Onderwijsdienst, quoted IC, 1918 (40), 617, MRBTD.

3Kv on 1919 (1920), 8.

SOERIOKOESOEMO et al (1918), 69.

4SOERIOKOESOEMO(1920C), 3, saw Borobudur as the earthly 'shadow image' of the divine Temple of the Javanese Nation ... And in this, we are fanatical'. 'De Groote Leer en de Wet zoals en de Wet zoals van 1919 (1920), 8.

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7SOERIOKOESOEMO(1920C), 3, saw Borobudur as the earthly 'shadow image' of the divine Temple of the Javanese Nation ... And in this, we are fanatical'. 'De Groote Leer en de Wet zoals en de Wet zoals van 1919 (1920), 8.

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function as our ancestor and ascribe to him the greatest of heroic roles.\textsuperscript{1}

This pride in Java's pre-Islamic past opposed Sarekat Islam's strict Muslim wing.\textsuperscript{2} One observer thought this wing felt 'threatened from two sides; from one side, because in Central Java Javanese nationalism is coming on strong again, with a return to ancient Hinduism or a transition to theosophy.\textsuperscript{3} Prince Soeroto considered

Sarekat Islam is levelled down to a middle class party; the party of the 'bourgeoisie' which wants to surpass the foreign 'bourgeoisie'.

He described SJ leader Tjokroaminoto: 'I saw the scarlet face, glowing with passion, of the demagogue'.\textsuperscript{4} Soeroto also looked at 'the Hindus ... who in many respects are about 50 years ahead of us.\textsuperscript{5}

In January 1918, a critical review of Wederopbouw's first issue appeared in the socialist Het Vrije Woord. Darsono, a supporter of Sarekat Islam's Marxist wing, wrote it; later, he became a leading member of the communist PKI.

In this, his first ever article, Darsono had three objections. First, to Prince Soeroto's theosophical style of writing:

Words of wisdom, making my poor head dizzy, and making it difficult for me to understand them. As long as His Highness keeps moving on the higher planes of the inner life, until then his scribbling will remain unintelligible to us, the uninitiated. And there are many non-initiates

1Written contribution to Javanese cultural congress, KLOOSTER, 235. Ibid., history should be written in 'a fairy-tale like language'. Klooster, whose interest was historiography, did not mention Soeroto's theosophical style. Ibid., saw continuity between Soeroto and some post-1945 historians. They, Indonesian nationalists, differed from Soeroto's Javanese nationalism.

2KWANTES(1975), 59-60. Ibid., 67: 'In these more Arab-Muslim-Mr. Labberton's theosophy at all'. SOERIKOESEOMO(1919), 71-2: 'Islam must be right for Arabia and its surroundings, as Christianity is for Europe. They do not correspond to the psyche of the Javanese. ... Every effort to make the Javanese a true Muslim or Christian, will therefore fail'. Ibid., 77: 'Mecca, the holy land of the Arabs, should not rule us any longer, and should disappear from our thoughts in order to be replaced by Java, the holy land of the Javanese'. Soeroto in WED, 1919, 173: 'Give up the land of Mecca and concentrate your thoughts on Java. Only then you are a good nationalist...'. When, in a draft political program for Indonesia, POLDERMAN(1922), 7, proposed: 'Better religious education: viz. penetration into the meaning of the Koran and its prescriptions', editor Soeroto added: 'Not for all groups of the population'.

3KOT, 1918, 1325-6, 'Islam-beweging', by 'Tertius'. Christian missionaries were also sceptical on theosophists and others glorifying the pre-Muslim past. ALIMIN(1919), 21 wrote of 'noble parasites'.

4B.J.O. Schrieke commented on Darsono; ibid.: 'In these ultra-democratic walks of life, people are afraid that the Committee for the Development of Javanese Culture [of Soeroto, Radjiman and Mangkoe Negoro] works to restore the ancient social order.' GOUDA(1993), 16, did not mention Darsono when she wrote that Dutch and Indonesians spoke only of male, not of female, ways of characters in political comparisons.

5See for instance PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 118: he saw strong female character roles in wayang plays as an inspiration for women to be courageous in the present political struggle. GOUDA(1993), 16, did not mention Darsono when she wrote that Dutch and Indonesians spoke only of male, not of female, ways of characters in political comparisons.

6Djawa Dipa, which wanted to end the difference between High and Low Javanese speech. Noto Soeroto opposed it: SOEBANGSIH, 139.

\textsuperscript{1}Written contribution to Javanese cultural congress, KLOOSTER, 235. Ibid., history should be written in 'a fairy-tale like language'. Klooster, whose interest was historiography, did not mention Soeroto's theosophical style. Ibid., saw continuity between Soeroto and some post-1945 historians. They, Indonesian nationalists, differed from Soeroto's Javanese nationalism.

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Van Hinoop Labberton and the Wederopbouw editors organized, as ' antidemocratic ' .
Only ' Tjipto MangoenKoesoemo attended the congress as a democrat counterweight, considering himself ' extreme left, even among democrats. '
There, explaining his own views on Javanese culture, he had his second debate with Soeriokoesoemo.
Tjipto attacked the caste system and other ' Hindu ' elements in Java. ' This had now become a pillar of Dutch colonial rule and was suffocating whatever creativity the Javanese had. ' Tjipto pointed out that, contrary to Soeriokoesoemo's view of a hierarchical and harmonious past, for instance wayang plays had also elements of dissent and disobedience, which he valued .

If I do not believe in nobles, then I do so as they are dominators, even though they are dominators of the same blood as mine, though somewhat bluish. ... Dominance in any form, and by any person, goes against the grain with me .

In The Netherlands, Tjipto's friend Soewardi Soerianingrat reacted critically to his relative Soeriokoesoemo. Writing as a contribution to a book celebrating ten years of Badi Uloame, his tone was not sharp or personal. He began by differentiating between ' cultural and political nationalism. ' There ' are many conservative elements among the former nationalists, who first of all want to maintain and to restore the so-called national essential identity [Dutch: volkseigenheid], also at the cost of whatever, if need be ...... [does in original] of national independence. ' He thought that ' Soerio Koesoemo ' confused the cultural and the political meanings of the word nationalism .

Soewardi himself loved Javanese culture. However,

1 SHIRAISHI (1981), 97. Prince Mangkoe Negoro VII was founder and honorary president of the Java Institute, founded 1-8-1919; TSUCHIYA (1987), 121. It organized similar later congresses and brought out the magazine Djaww; see its issue 'Extra-nummer. Aangeboden aan P.A.A. Mangkoe Negoro VII. 4 september 1924', 1, 13. At the Dec. 1924 congress, Djaww, 1925, 13ff.: Radijnman spoke (mentioning AB's Lectures on political science and Count Keyserling), as did W.P.D. Corporaal, and F. Post: 'This is the right place to think of Mrs Besant in great admiration'; ibid., 183.

2 Congress contribution, quoted IG, 1918 (40), 1389.

3 Quoted SHIRAISHI (1981), 97. The TSUCHIYA (1987), 44 remark that Tjipto stood for 'the destruction of Javanese culture' is wrong. Compare Darsano, p. 313.

4 Congress contribution, quoted IG, 1918 (40), 1389.

5 Soewardi, of the Paku Alam dynasty like Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo, was not as distant to Javanese nationalism as Tjipto: REID (1979), 284-5. Though Soewardi valued the Javanese language more than Tjipto, TSUCHIYA (1987), 37 over-rates their distance; and under-rates the political distance between Soewardi and Soeriokoesoemo. Soewardi translated the Internationale into Malay; IV, 1-5-1920. Soeriokoesoemo probably did not like these lyrics in any language. TSUCHIYA (1987), 34: in 1916, Soewardi said Malay should be all-Indonesia language; compare p. 310ff.

6 SURYA NINGRAT (1918), 27.

7 SURYA NINGRAT (1918), 40. Ibid., 39: 'obfuscation'.

For this sake of Indonesian solidarity, one needs to separate all cultural propaganda from political action. This will also help cultural propaganda, as many, who avoid political action, then will be able to participate without problems; while others [like Soewardi], unable to agree earlier on with the political-cultural league's political tendencies, then will be able to join the cultural league, without violating their [political] principles. Javanese nationalism, used as a way of political struggle, can easily become a refuge for exclusivists and imperialists .

After 1913, Soewardi never joined Soeriokoesoemo in a political association; though, being a teacher, he would in the Tunan Siwa education league in 1922. In Wederopbouw, Soeriokoesoemo criticized Soewardi: 'Maybe the Indische Partij discipline harms him in this .'

In the same book as Soewardi, Goenawan MangoenKoesoemo, Tjipto's brother, mentioned a proposal by Committee for Javanese Nationalism member Satiman to have Sanskrit 'as instrument to study Western science.' Goenawan thought that 'absurd .'

Prince Soeriokoesoemo's view of the state was reminiscent of Annie Besant's 'Pythagoras-based' one (see p. 77). Though he quoted Plato:

The blossoms of thine host of sciences, thou, Lady [the personification of Java], thou wantest to make incline towards glorification of the state, its institution and its economy. Remember, that the famous Greek philosopher, Platon, like thou, founded his 'State' on Beauty, Truth, Wisdom. 'To cut a long story short, we see Platon rise up high in the shape of the Priest-King. Does not Java have priest-kings? Not even one? Well, Lady, look forward expectantly is the attitude in life, which fits us .

SoerioKoesoemo's nationalism, though, was 'not really a consequence of my love for a Javanese State as much as for Javanese Individuality .'

4.2. Wederopbouw's views: only Javanese or also theosophical?

The historian Tsuchiya recognizes SoerioKoesoemo had a fairly long term influence. The wrightism concept, which may mean 'politics', 'divine wisdom', or other things, is central to Tsuchiya's analysis. He considers there is a link between Soeriokoesoemo using it, and limitations on democracy in Indonesia since 1959. In the late 60's-early 70's, Colonel Widyapranata was editor of Armed Forces daily Angkasa
Many Javanese Nationalists, who follow theosophy, and thus are most readers of this paper [Wederopbouw], often do not know how they should tie together both seemingly contradictory ideas in a beautiful, harmonic whole. ... Javanese nationalism is the inevitable colour of Javanese culture, and so cannot possibly be at variance with theosophy, which in this context should mean 'divine'.

Against Tjipto's all-Indonesia nationalism, he said:

If we [Javanese] really have to dissolve ourselves, then let it be into the World sea and not into an Indies ocean ... floating on the divine waves of theosophy, there are yet the ship which spans the ocean ... it is Javanese nationalism that bears the mark of divinity.

If we compare our universe now to a Waringin [banyan tree], and the divine plan to the roots, which are under the ground, hidden to our eyes, then theosophy is the trunk, and Javanese nationalism one of the many branches. So contradiction is out of the question.

Though Wederopbouw was mainly on politics and the TS, its links to theosophy, and to its spiritual views were clear. In an editorial, Soeriokoesoemo promoted the coming of the World Teacher, the Order of the Star in the East, and H. P. Blavatsky. 'This struggle is a rule the theosophists are those, who can get access to the spiritual life of the Javanese'.

Another contributor, under the pen name of Daha, and also the sponsor, without whom Wederopbouw would have been impossible, was Mangkoe Negoro VII, Pangeran Adipati Ario Praboe Prang Wedono. Probably, he was the real founder of the Committee for Javanese Nationalism; but stayed in the background because of princely status.

Bersenjara. He quoted Soeriokoesoemo in support of his view of 'New Order', differing from other political systems. When Shiraishi discussed the Tjipto-Soetatmoe debate, he put Soeriokoesoemo into a perspective of history of ideas on politics in Java. He did not mention Soeriokoesoemo's theosophy, or ideas on politics in the TS, though.

Herbert Feith and Lance Castles saw Soetatmoe as important enough to include in their widely read textbook of Indonesian political thinking. Likewise not mentioning the TS, they left out some 'theosophical' parts of his text. They called it 'the anti-egalitarianism of the Javanese tradition'. Was at least part of it not tradition 'invented' by recent non-Javanese TS leaders?

Soeriokoesoemo explained the essential unity of international theosophist and Javanese nationalist ideas:

Many Javanese Nationalists, who follow theosophy, and thus are most readers of this paper [Wederopbouw], often do not know how they should tie together both seemingly contradictory ideas in a beautiful, harmonic whole. ... Javanese nationalism is the inevitable colour of Javanese culture, and so cannot possibly be at variance with theosophy, which in this context should mean 'divine'.

Against Tjipto's all-Indonesia nationalism, he said:

If we [Javanese] really have to dissolve ourselves, then let it be into the World sea and not into an Indies ocean. ... floating on the divine waves of theosophy, there are yet the ship which spans the ocean ... it is Javanese nationalism that bears the mark of divinity.

If we compare our universe now to a Waringin [banyan tree], and the divine plan to the roots, which are under the ground, hidden to our eyes, then theosophy is the trunk, and Javanese nationalism one of the many branches. So contradiction is out of the question.

Though Wederopbouw was mainly on politics and the TS, its links to theosophy, and to its spiritual views were clear. In an editorial, Soeriokoesoemo promoted the coming of the World Teacher, the Order of the Star in the East, and H. P. Blavatsky. 'This struggle is a rule the theosophists are those, who can get access to the spiritual life of the Javanese'.

Another contributor, under the pen name of Daha, and also the sponsor, without whom Wederopbouw would have been impossible, was Mangkoe Negoro VII, Pangeran Adipati Ario Praboe Prang Wedono. Probably, he was the real founder of the Committee for Javanese Nationalism; but stayed in the background because of princely status.

Bersenjara. He quoted Soeriokoesoemo in support of his view of 'New Order', differing from other political systems. When Shiraishi discussed the Tjipto-Soetatmoe debate, he put Soeriokoesoemo into a perspective of history of ideas on politics in Java. He did not mention Soeriokoesoemo's theosophy, or ideas on politics in the TS, though.

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Mangkoe Negoro VII ruled one of Central Java's four autonomous principalities; he was related to the rulers of the three other ones.

'Long before his [1913] arrival in The Netherlands', he 'had been attracted to theosophy and to theosophical literature.' According to Nugroha, he had officially joined the TS.1 Under the name of Raden Mas Ario Soerioesoparto, in 1914-15 he had been a lieutenant in the grenadiers of the Dutch army.2 Queen Wilhelmina had received him; ultimately, he became her 'Special Adjutant'.3 From 1915-6 he had been president of Budi Utomo, succeeding Radjiman. He then was active in the pro-conscription campaign. After succeeding to the throne in January 1916, in 1918 he was still, to the indignation of many social democrats, a member of the Volksraad (the parliament), though not yet chairman of the four-country federation of regional parliaments, on which he proposed for elsewhere in Indonesia.1 Mangkoe Negoro VII suggested the federation of the four princes' states, thus in a way recreating the old Mataram empire; this was not successful.2 He sat in the Volksraad from 1918-21 and 1923-4. He shared with Soerioesopoemo a great admiration for Rabindranath Tagore, whose poems he translated and whom he met personally.3 He donated the Surakarta TS lodge ground for its building. The prince also received Leadbeater at his palace in 1929. Leadbeater then in Surakarta was received at the susuhunan's court too.4

What did Wederopbouw think about monarchy and democracy? How did these ideas relate to those of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia? and of Mrs Besant? Annie Besant's republican phase lasted longer than Soerioesopoemo's involvement with the democrat and republican Indische Partij. In her pre-TS days, she had written in English Republicanism: 'The Republican spirit is the very core of English progressive thought'.5 Then, she approvingly quoted North England miners: 'We don't care to keep more cats than there's mice to catch.' By the feline metaphor, the miners expressed: 'the royal cats are...

1KIEWIET DE JONGE(1920A), 44: 'the Mangkoe Negoro's realm, doubtless the best ruled' was 'a proof of what Native autonomy -also if restricted by [Dutch] government- may accomplish.' See also LOC, 23-8-1916, 2e blad, 'Een model vorstendom.'
2DIJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 63.
3CANNEGIETER(1937), 122. He also admired Frederik van Eeden, whose Tagore translations were popular in Indonesia; KONING(1968), 38. Contrary to TSUCHIYA(1987), 42, Mangkoe Negoro VII introduced Noto Soeroto to Tagore's work; DJAJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 47; Noto Soeroto himself, in POEZE(1986), 96. Indonesia Merdeka, 30-8-1916, 2e blad, 'Dit model vorstendom.'
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wholly unprofitable animals. She wrote:

That Great Britain will become a Republic, none can doubt; the only question is—when? ... our cousins on the other [US] side of the Atlantic have set a good example.

If the British people were to follow this example, that would be the end of 'the weight of a German Yoke' by the Hannover-Saxony Coburg royals.

Annie Besant joined the TS after reading The Secret Doctrine. H.P. Blavatsky, basing herself on Plato, wrote in it on divine kings. Rulers should not be of the same level as ruled; just as 'We do not place a bullock or a ram over our bullocks and rams, but give them a leader, a shepherd...'.

Mrs Besant later wrote Sri Ramachandra, the ideal king; the Indies TS translated it in Dutch in 1920, and in Javanese later:

You rightly speak of him as a Divine King. He was inherently superior to the people whom He ruled, and the people whom He ruled reached a high civilisation because they obeyed Him and others far more developed than themselves. It is like a Shepherd with sheep. The King is above the people. He guides them, tells them what to do, what not to do; they obey, and they flourish.'

There also seemed to be an ideal king in her own times: Edward VII. Later, Jinarajadasa echoed her ideas:

none stands so high in achievement as Queen Victoria ... Disraeli, King Edward VII, who cemented into friendship two nations ... England and France.

In a 1911 letter, Sir Edwin Lutyens wrote:

Mrs. Besant ... her ultra Imperialist ideal ... got 3000 radicals together the other night and talked Divine Right and Empire till they were nearly all sick.

Thanks to her past reputation though, they at least came to hear Annie Besant, unlike others with her type of opinion. After the 1912 strike wave in England, Mrs Besant called for greater royal power. Subtitles of her weekly and daily ran: 'For King ...'.

The table on this page represents Annie Besant’s ideas on rule, both in world political history, and in her own Society’s then 32 years.

A. van Leeuwen, editor of the Dutch East Indies TS monthly, and future General Secretary, was a former student with neo-Hegelian idealist philosopher and opponent of democracy Bolland. Van Leeuwen had a view of monarchies’ sacredness, basing himself both on Annie Besant and on his former professor. After modern democracy, ‘shall once more begin the Golden Age of the Priest-Kings, then the Gods will return to earth, the Angels will associate with men, in order to work together and to build the eternal Temple

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TABLE 3. THEOSOPHY ON TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF RULE</th>
<th>1ST PHASE</th>
<th>2ND PHASE</th>
<th>3RD PHASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TYPE OF RULE IN HISTORY</td>
<td>Direct divine rule by Priest-Kings, originally from planet Venus; for millions of years</td>
<td>Separation kings/priests; ill-advised democratic experiments up to now</td>
<td>Future Priest-Kings; in those early days, as in the days that will close our human history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE OF RULE IN TS HISTORY</td>
<td>Direct divine rule by Masters 1875-1888</td>
<td>Separation esoteric/esoteric TS (Blavatsky-Besant/Olcott) 1888-1907</td>
<td>Besant both president and ES Head 1907f.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1BESANT(1877B), 3.
2BESANT(1877B), 8.
3BLAVATSKY(1908), 589.
4BESANT(1921I), 77-8.
5BESANT(1910B), 175f.
6JINARAJADASA(1939), 19. Edward VII also has this good reputation with other supporters of the British monarchy; for instance Sir George Bellew, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, in Britain’s Kings and Queens, Pitkin Pictorials, 1974, p. 22-3. Other authors, like MEYERS(1933), 129, might wonder if the ‘cementing’ was in London and Paris brothels. George Arundale wrote in ‘The spirit of kingship’, American Theosophist, June 1934, the divine-human hierarchy analogies applied to one country in particular: ‘devas and Masters wore crowns like those of English kings.’
7Quoted HUSSY, 172. See BESANT(1911A).
Van Leeuwen thought a philosophical synthesis of democracy and anti-democracy should come. One should, according to him, answer the question if a theosophist should be a democrat, 'in the way of Bolland and Nietzsche: "With democracy, against democracy!"' Van Leeuwen wrote:

"Republics are only the blind intellectuals in their mock wisdom, who because of the fog of semi-rational false thinking no longer see the Ideal and ordain that the Ideal is no longer there. They bring the poison of democracy, of superficial civilization into their more simple brothers' unsuspecting hearts. A republic cannot create culture.

He named the US republic as an example:

And our ancient Europe, which in contrast still has its culture, where still throbs a nation's heart, looking up in love and devotion towards its princes, it goes, driven by the blind social democracy into the abyss of superficial civilization and mediocrity."

Van der Leeuw, sometimes of the Dutch East Indies, wrote his thesis on 'Historical Idealist Politics', as opposed to Marx' historical materialism. He wanted 'aristo-democracy'.

Hillary of the Indies, who knew Van der Leeuw's book would come out, thought he had made too many concessions to democracy. He saw Van der Leeuw as a diligent theosophical worker and intelligent jurist. In this book, he will tell about an aristocracy, which has become rather popular recently in the walks of life of capitalists, who feel something of the new spirit of times and are sympathetic to it, but still do not want to lose their privileged position. It is a compromise, at the making of which people are very clever nowadays, between the republican and the monarchical idea. Someone, though, who speaks about 'electing' a king does not understand the highness and augustness of the royal heart, looking up in love and devotion towards its princes, it goes. driven by the blind social democracy into the abyss of superficial civilization and mediocrity."

Hillary thought history taught different lessons: the situation in China and ancient Egypt had been best under monarchy, Russia owed its growth towards great and European power to the czars' autocracy. Prussia owed this to Frederick the Great.1

In 1920, many monarchies had just fallen and the Turkish one was about to fall. Hillary wrote of the relationship between kingship and rule by superhuman beings:

"The theosophical writings teach us that a dewa [god; 'angel'] 'reigns' over a nation. So this means, that this nation is his way of expression, of sacrifice (by descending from high spirit into low matter), it is his body. So the rhythm of the dewa is the great Ideal, slumbering within the nation's individuals. Though this in the infancy of a nation is obeyed unconsciously-instinctively, and people then recognize kingship automatically, slowly the intuitive knowledge of the nation's consciousness and its ideal gets lost, along with which kingship also degenerates. Without, however, disappearing totally, for if that should happen, then the dewa's body (that is, the nation) would be left to decomposition. Kingship is the expression itself of life."

After Besant's thesis and antithesis (see p. 321), Hillary expected the synthesis:

"If it has reached the age of manhood, however, the nation shall feel its ideal once again and express it, consciously though, now, as one sees this with the personality. The expressing, the indication of the rhythm, will have to be done by the king. ... He is the light, the intelligence, the idea. One hardly needs to say that for a nation only one can do this. ... In him, the brotherhood is realized. It is hardly necessary to say that one other person or more could not possibly do this jointly with him. Should someone not want to be carried by the waves of the rhythm, then he would be a poison to the people. It would not be possible that he himself could indicate exactly the same ideal, the same rhythm as the nation's suna [Javanese: roughly king], for no two persons are equal. In case he should still be so highly developed that his ideal, his idea, might attract thousands of people, then he should look for another nation or make revolution, for the struggle of ideas in the higher worlds reflects itself as wars on the material plane. The people now do not seem to see this truth. They think of ruling nations by meetings and councils.

They deny kingship, though they subconsciously still hold to the royal ideal. ... Humanity has outlived the times, in which it instinctively recognized brotherhood and thus kingship and intelligence have not yet reached the stage in which they can make this vague intuition into conscious knowledge. Thus, one also denies in oneself the ideal, the king. For the outer world, the mon- is only a reflection of one's own consciousness. This gives rise to great restlessness. That is characteristic for this time of unbalanced people, so much different from face-off ages, when kingship was seen internally and externally and there was balance and calm, to which the papers and stone memorials left behind still bear witness. Nowadays people try to prove from history that progress lies in the development of so-called democracy."

Hillary thought history taught different lessons: the situation in China and ancient Egypt had been best under monarchy, Russia owed its growth towards great and European power to the czars' autocracy. Prussia owed this to Frederick the Great.
Today, it is fashionable to say that it is so good that at last the feudal conditions in central Europe have ceased to exist. Those saying this forget that under the Habsburgs, however mediocre, or less than mediocre, they may have been, the German Empire has reached a hitherto unknown prosperity and the wakening German people, which had always been bullied by its more solidarity neighbours (Sweden, France, Denmark, The Netherlands), under their guidance, has held at bay the furious joint attacks of all the world’s nations. That is what the empire has done! The Habsburg monarchy has managed, though beset by grave rebellions and enormous internal confusion, to still hold out under its emperors during four years of bitter war.1

Hillary thought of the ancient monarchy as the counterpart to modern revolutionism:

Now, when there is screaming everywhere of equality and anarchy, with the rest [Marxists] as well as with the blacks [Roman Catholic politicians], and also on Java one hears more and more mockery and sneering about authority, ideal and nobility, it is certainly the 75’s task to hold aloft the ideal of Majesty, to teach the Indies [so also outside Java] people once again their ancient reverence for His Highness the Susuhunan of Solo.2

The historian Legge wrote on theosophy, with a sideways glance at his subject, Indonesia: ‘there is something patronizing in the earnestness with which Western enthusiasts urged Eastern wisdom upon India’. With Soeriokoesoemo as an individual, it probably was more parallelism and inspiration than urge by, say, Hillary.

Soeriokoesoemo wrote on traditional homage to princes, the sembah:

We are glad that the so-called modernized Javanese cannot resist the desire to sembah respectfully before the [Surakarta] Sunan or the [Yogyakarta] Sultan. We hope that one day they will understand that the sembah is no dead form, but one of the ways by which one may reach THAT [the Absolute]. To us, it is something natural and it would even be sacrilege, were we not to do this, because we know that behind worshipping a prince much more is hidden than glorifying a human.3

Soeriokoesoemo drew political consequences from the principle: As it is above, so below:

the masses have no will and thus cannot rule. This is not only correct for the people of Java, who, as is said, have no “civilization” yet. It is also correct for the “highly civilized” nations of Europe and America.4

1HILLARY(1920), 400.
2HILLARY(1920), 401.
3LEGGE(1922), 24.
4"De betekenis van de sembah", WED March 1921, 48-50: ibid., 49. Noto Soeroto in SOEMBANGSIH, 140, had similar views. Soeriokoesoemo saw Yudivishira from the Mahabharata and wayang plays as an example of a priest-king. The ruling prince Mangkoe Negoro VII sponsored Soeriokoesoemo’s magazine.

5Soeriokoesoemo in WED, 1918, 95. SOERIOKOESOEMO(1916), 98: "We are Orientals, but kastayas above all else, and it is our duty to work towards an ideal state which does understand life’s contradictions."
Nevertheless, Budi Utomo elected Soerio Koesoemo to its executive; and from 1921 until 1924 he sat in the Volksraad (as government nominee). Van Leeuwen, Annie Besant in 1905 (the ‘blunders of the unguided democracy’ would yield to ‘the authority of wisdom’) and 1907, and Leadbeater, all saw democracy as an ‘intermediate stage’, ‘this unlovely stage of democratic mismanagement’, in between autocracies. So did Soerio Koesoemo. He used the metaphor of politics as a river, usually flowing within its bed, but which sometimes floods (banjir in Malay):

To the real sportsman, the banjir, tearing along and destroying everything in its violent current, has a certain attraction, which others may understand only dimly. The history of mankind is not experiencing such a big banjir for the first time. During Plato’s life, democracy has banjired once before, and then it was Plato himself, who could not restrain himself, and tossed himself into the stream to counter it. So democracy was not completely unnatural, as rivers do flood sometimes. Nevertheless, it was not a desirable phase. Soerio Koesoemo denied the link between national self-determination and democracy, made by US president Wilson and others. Soerio Koesoemo saw in the family not only the father, the ruler, and the children, elder and younger brothers, the subjects, but also the wife. That wife was for him the equal in rights. He asked: ‘Do the members of the Theosophical Society elect their Mahatmas?’

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The duties which the father imposes on his wife and on the children, they accept gladly; they do not complain. That which Father says is good, for Father is wise! That is the ideal of a family, therefore also of the State.

If the wife rules instead, plutocracy causes wrongs. Under democracy, the children rule and all goes wrong. ‘In such a family, one does not know of duties, all ask about their rights first.’

One who believes that the word of the uneducated peasant (Dutch-Indonesian deseman) is equivalent to the one of the wise man, acts unjustly and believes unwisely. Fellow theosophist and fellow editor of Wederopbouw Abdoel Rachman, unlike Soerio Koesoemo from West Java and not from a ruling family, criticized him mildly in the December 1920 Wederopbouw, reprinted in TMNI. Rachman thought there should be a ‘joining of autocracy and democracy’. ‘Not only democracy might bring “anarchy”, but there might also be a “bad autocrat” who does not deserve support.’

An unsigned Wederopbouw article also aimed at as a synthesis transcending run-of-the-mill autocracy and democracy:

A king with a council of wise men should be the ideal. The proponents of aristocracy, constructing their system, stress the human being, who is of divine origin, who should develop divinity in order to be able to reach THAT. . . . Who thinks that the Divine Germ-cell, present in all people, can be developed, that love for his neighbour vanquishes human selfishness, such a person, we think, would do better to support autocracy. The one who, while excluding the people, speaks and writes according to the spirit of that people; and not the one who lets everyone have their say on affairs, about which they are ignorant, is a democrat. . . . Only thus will democracy and autocracy be able to co-exist.

Lecturing to the Jakarta TS lodge, Assistant Resident A.J. Hamerster was happy to note ‘a beginning of reaction’ against the demand of power to ‘the great masses of the people’. That violated the cosmic principle of Hierarchy. As became apparent in the

...
1920's, as in the times of Napoleon I, autocracy may not only be rule by someone from a traditional princely family. It may also be rule by a dictator, not from an old ruling family, who may end contradictions between political parties by force. A Dutch theosophist (ex-assistant residet Von Wolzogen Rühe) wrote under pseudonym:

And the people are thus conditioned by democratic slogans that they rather see those men at the party control button, moving the party machinery, men, servants of their instincts instead of rulers of these. Those party leaders, who are capable of few things however, hide behind all kinds of beautiful slogans if problems are intricate. So, in the political field, one has endless bumbling, and nowhere is there a brisk tackling of the serious problems, which are so manifold in our times.

With good reason in the old continent (Europe) today many look for a strong man who can put the crippled affairs in order. Also in the Dutch East Indies one can feel this longing, and elsewhere as well. How will Nature answer this?4

1920 showed that common membership in the Theosophical Society was not always a basis for identical views on political history by Dutch and Javanese, even if the latter were not militants. A TMNI article by P. Fourmier2 had a passage on the karmic inevitability of colonial rule because of the bad situation when the Dutch came. An anonymous Wederopbouw editor objected to this. Fourmier explained his view in Wederopbouw. The Wederopbouw editors objected to the explanation: not to the karmic inevitability view itself, but it hurt that a Dutchman had stated it.1

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1HAMERSTER(1923), 135-6. EEN INDISCHE STEEM(1921), 507-8. Already KIEWiet DE JONGE(1917), 239-40, had written, as concluding paragraph of his De Politek ter Toekomst, linked to his prediction of a world empire after the word war (see p. 246): 'And the same argument runs analogously for establishing the national level reforms which I proposed [chamber of economic functional groups etc.]. The more this happens through voluntary amalgamation of political parties, the better, but if it turns out that they are incapable of bringing about such grand style politics, then once the desirability of the reforms is recognized—only from an overwhelming political or military victory, but proves to be an organ of Law as well.'

2FOURNIER(1920), 35: 'Had the Europeans not come here, then the downfall of the Indies people would have been inevitable.'


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5Ball, Lombok. Outer islands

In 1915, the TS had one member in Bali: the Javanese Mas Djono in Denpasar. Later, 'The upper class Javanese, who visited Bali recently, are full of enthusiasm.' Mangkoe Negoro VII went there.5 Soerioekoesoemo went for three years, 1918-1921. On 6 April 1919, he inaugurated a Budi Utama chapter at a meeting in Denpasar. The reporter regretted that the chairman had addressed Prince Soerioekoesoemo with just 'dame'; in Balinese, 'you' for kshatriya caste persons. In Bali however, there were brahmanas, making kshatriyas only the second caste. Soerioekoesoemo saw Bali as religiously purer than Java. He thought of it as a counterweight to strict Muslims; Dutch officials who wanted to favour Roman Catholic missionaries in Bali distrusted him though.3

In 1934, Van Leeuwen went on holiday to Bali. There was no lodge yet. He met members at large 'Sister De Jong, who keeps theosophy's torch burning in Denpasar' and 'Brother Oosterdoom in Ampenan [Lombok].' Van Leeuwen also spoke to three Dutch officials, successively Residents in Bali.4 Raden Mas Koesnodmodirdjo of the TS in Java wrote in his Verslag (Pendantreels Bali', TM, July 1937, 112, of his visit to the recently founded Adhijna Nirmala lodge, the only one in Bali. It had 16 members, and I Goesti ['Lord'; Balinese title] Ketut Djelantik was its president.3

Since 1921, BU had been active in Lombok Island as well. The TS set up a centre among Hindus there in the 1930's.6

Theosophy made little headway in other islands to the north to east of Java. In 1915, H. Zwers of the Ternate police was a member at large; as was J.W. Beck, Dutch ongewijshe official with more power than usually, in a region considered militarily unsafe of East Ceram. So were his colleague W.J.D. van Andel, and I.A. Ledeboer, manager of the local mining company, in Paleleh (Sulawesi). In Ujung Pandang in Sulawesi, Lieutenant A.J.L. de Groot was. The only member in 1916 in Mando was M.E. Wawo Roentoe.7

Since at least 1922, the TS had had a centre in Banjarmasin on Kalimantan, and since

3These islands were called in Dutch buitenposten, outer provinces; Labberton had first used the word about 1916, and it soon passed into wide usage. ENI, vol. V, 126; JS 1918, 121. VAN HINDERTEN LABBERTON(1910), 167, had still used the word buitenhondelingen, outer possessions.


6ENI Nov. 1934, 120-30.

7In the 1950's, the lodge was still active; Djelantik published his ideas on Hinduism and theosophy for it in mimeographed form; several mimeographs in KITLV library.

8NAGAZUMI(1972), 117. TM Nov. 1935, 198.

1926 in Gorontalo on Sulawesi. Respectively, H.K.M. Defares, and Po Tong Hien, a local official and FTS at least since 1915, were chairmen. In 1932, Gorontalo closed and Banjarmasin too did not last much longer. The Balikpapan (Kalimantan) centre, led in 1922 by C.H.A. de Steur, was already gone in 1928; though the politically 'moderate' weekly Persatuan of Samarinda close to it published translated articles from The Herald of the Star of the Order of the Star in the East.1

The TS had a member early on, in 1895, in Sumatra: P. de Heer, who lived in the Asahan area in the island’s north. He attempted propaganda; but ‘work here is very difficult, and there has been very little result… we have today [1910] four members of the Society’.2 Things went somewhat smoother further to the north, in economically important Medan; though on Sumatra, it was not a typically Sumatran city.3 Also, for some time, in politically interesting West Sumatra.

6. West Sumatra

There, Datoek Soetan Maharadja, 1860-1921, ‘father of Malay journalism’, founded the daily Oetoesan Melajoe (Malay Messenger). Before 1916, Maharadja was a democrat.

1. NUGRAHA(1989), 247; 265-7; 272. Persatuan 7-20 July 1924, quoted IPO 29/1924, 148
TNI 1912, 24; 61.


3. MAN(A), 39; most inhabitants were immigrants. In 1930, 5.6% ‘European’, 25.6% ‘Chinese’, 4.9% ‘other Asian’, mostly Hindu, of Indonesians, more than 50% were from Java: Javanese, Sundanese, Javakans. Most Javanese were plantation workers, for whom TS membership was improbable. They were koeleis (coolies), a status roughly between capitalist ‘free labour’ and slavery. There was also, in Medan and other places in the Deli region, a small category of Javanese middle-level civil servants. In 1915, Max Amtoudiworo, Medan local authority clerk, and veterinarian Notosoediro were FrS; NUGRAHA(l989), 242; 247. This category started to movements like Sarelwnt Islam, Budi Utomo Notosoediro did consider government to investigate the coolies’ situation; ‘De Delische Contract-Koeleis’, HPO 7/1917, 79-80; more on Maharadja’s article on reincarnation. Like many other

4. Leadbeater laid the first stone for the TS lodge building in Medan in Dec. 1926. On 31 Dec. 1931, membership was 44: ‘29 Europeans, 1 Sikh, 6 Javanese, 4 Chinese, and 4 Hindus’; so not one ‘real’ Sumatran; TIN 1923, 518.


7. BOUMAN(1949), 25.

8. GIEZE, 10: the only post-primary educational institution in Sumatra; 40% of students were from the Minangkabau region, the rest from elsewhere in Sumatra and other parts of Indonesia.

9. ABDULLAH(1973), 223. For instance, the whole front page of OM 28-8-1919, quoted IPO 36/1919, MBB, 14 was a Maharadja article on reincarnation. Like many other OM articles, Maharadja’s women’s paper Soenting Melajoe reprinted it. A.L., ‘Centrum Agam te Fort De Kock’, TIN 1923, 518.

10. ABDULLAH(1971), 29; referring to Insulinde as Natioaal Indische Parry.

11. OM, § 163. Sep. 1916; quoted KOT, 1916, ‘Persverzicht’, 1602-3. When the IV association started, Maharadja expected more from it than from the earlier committee, as he did not trust Abdel Moess; OM, 5-2-1917, quoted IPO?1917, MBB, 4.

away from the *adat* associations? 1
Abdullah writes of Maharadja’s *SAAM*:

The generally loyal [to Dutch rule] stance taken by the *adat* parties created the popular belief that, despite their frequent criticism of government policies, they were no more than government parties whose ideology represented Minangkabau-centered cultural nationalism. 3

*Oetoesan Melajoe* praised Sorektokoesoemo’s Javanese cultural nationalism:

The Minangkabau people are very happy that, like them, the Javanese are not keen at all to change race (nation) (that is, to make the new nation and to be called *Indies* [Indies people, Indonesia]). It is deplorable to change one’s race. 1

It also planned a Sumatran Cultural Congress, like Sorektokoesoemo’s Javanese one. 1

Like those of Sorektokoesoemo, *SAAM* ideas fell foul of Muslims, Marxists and all-Indonesia’s secular nationalists in Sumatra’s politics. In 1918, Sarekat Islam demanded that Maharadja should resign his Padang town-council seat, ‘because he has always resisted all progressive measures’. 10 Her Nieuws vall den Dag both were conservative. With one difference: the former was honestly so, and the former was not. Some *Sumatra* readers protested against this article by Mohamad Kanoe. 7 Amir of *Sumatra*, a theosophist like Maharadja, went

1 *OM*, # 225, as quoted ‘Persoverzichte’, KOT, 1916, 206. Ibid., # 203. In Bengkulu residence, a few months of *Sarekat Islam* had disturbed a forty years’ tradition of peace and quiet. Ibid.; when *SAAM* worked at founding chapters in West Sumatra, ‘the [OM] editors in issue number 225 urged the authorities to be vigilant.’ Ibid.; 374, *OM*, # 241 opposed founding a *St* branch. ‘Don’t we have ourselves enough people who may lead a league? Why should we resort to other races [the *St* also had support elsewhere]?’


3 *OM* 25-11-1918, quoted *IPO 49/1918*, MBB, 1.

4 Mohamad Kanoe, ‘De conservatieve kracht Sumatra’s Westkust in actie’, *JS* 1918, 176-80, 178.

5 *OM*, # 232, as quoted in ‘Persoverzichte’, KOT, 1916, 206; similarly in *Wedangboe* later:

‘1. One Indies nation does not exist, there are many Indies races, from Madagascar to New Guinea.

2. If people talk of ‘the Indies people’, they might as well talk of ‘the Asians’, and so, of ‘the earth’s inhabitants’ as well.’ Maharadja wrote in *OM*, # 144, 1918, quoted KOT, 1918, ‘Persoverzichte’, 91, against the existence of this ‘newly created race, “Indies people”, to which Papuans, Alfurs [from the Moluccas], etc., will also belong.’ *OM*, 8-4-1919, quoted KOT, 1919, ‘Persoverzichte’: ‘They [Minangkabau people] do not want to be put on the same level as Dyaks and Papuans; also, they do not want people to consider them to be of one race with Kubus and Mentawai people [from Sumatra and an island close to it].’ ‘Persoverzichte’, KOT, 1916, 676: *OM*, # 38 [new series] was unhappy about Malay as spoken throughout Indonesia: ‘that, though, is pasar [street market] Malay, of which every true Malay is ashamed.’

6 *BOUMAN (1949), 47. See also *Keraaj*, 26-3-1918.

7 *Quos Ego….*, *JS* 6/7/18 and 11, 1918, 115-8.


10 *OM* 1-9-1919, quoted *IPO 38/1919*, MBB, 1; and *OM* 18-9-19, quoted *IPO 30/1919*, MBB, 4.


12 *OM* 8-12-1917, quoted *IPO 50/1917*, MBB, 1. *OM* 20-12-1917, quoted *IPO 52/1917*, MBB, 3-4. *JS* 1918, 76 on 2 January 1918. In 1915, Darwis galar Daetoeh Madjo Lolo, supreme District official (oostboek Sekaping) was a member; *NUGRAHA* (1989), 243.

13 *OM* 30-10-1918, quoted *IPO 45/1918*, MBB, 1.

14 In the Dutch East Indies, first class ‘Native schools’ were mainly for the nobility’s children; financially less well off second class schools were for non-noble children.

15 As quoted *KOT*, 1919, 494; *IPO 49/1918*, MBB, 1. Ibid: ‘Insulinde…are opponents of the *oef*.’
Muslims, then had disputes in West Sumatra. The Theosophical Society saw tassawuf (Sufi form of Islam) as consistent with their views. Datoek Soetan Maharadja angrily rejected the view of kaum muda author Zainoeddin Labai who says ‘that tassawuf and theosophy are different things’; that was only ‘envy of advanced Europeans’.

Muslims, among other things, disliked Maharadja’s theory that the Qur’an as people know it, was not the Divine original. That had supposedly been burnt by 7th century Caliph Osman, who substituted a fallible, human one of his own. Thaja-Sumatra resolved: ‘D. S. M. has said all this to make the supporters of Tarekat [traditional mystic secret organization] and Theosophy believe that their roots are in the [‘original’] Qur’an, burnt by Caliph Osman.’

Abdoel Karim now was not as enthusiastically pro-militia as OM earlier on.

We cannot fight a foreign enemy. There is no enemy at home. Also, we can fight an enemy at home better with a strong, well-organized police force.

He continued on the relationships of theosophy, Minangkabau, and The Netherlands to one another:

Superiors or leaders must be able to philosophize. ... Blessed is the empire, the country, the kampung, the village, whose inhabitants have the pure science! One learns that pure science, tassawuf=theosophy from competent teachers. So, the author really strongly hopes that the rest of the people have pure knowledge. The core was the teaching of ‘one Divine life’, really compatible with the Hindu Upanishads and reincarnation doctrine.

Abdoel Karim predicted a great leader for all religions for 1921. In 1929, he was a contributor on ‘Evolution’ to the monthly of Datoek Rangkajo Maharadja’s civil servants’ council.

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Abdoel Karim predicted a great leader for all religions for 1921. In 1929, he was a contributor on ‘Evolution’ to the monthly of Datoek Rangkajo Maharadja’s civil servants’ council; its name was now Vereeniging van Inlandsche Besluite Aanhebaren. In 1930, he became the only Indonesian writing in The Theosophist. He distinguished in the Q’uran between an esoteric part and exoteric non-essentials. The core was the teaching of ‘one Divine life’, really compatible with the Hindu Upanishads and reincarnation doctrine. The rest was ‘only intended to apply to the Arabie people’.

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1 ABDULLAH (1971), passim. NOER, 216f.
2 Tassawuf boekan theosofie??’, OM 20-9-1919, quoted IBO 30/1919, MBB, 4-5
3 2/1-1919, quoted IBO 2/1919, MBB, 1. OM, # 241 as quoted in ‘Persoverzicht’, KOT, 1916, 374; instead of the hajj to Mecca, pilgrims should visit a local saint’s grave, so the money, which now benefits Arab traders, will stay in our own country.
4 OM 23/12-1918, quoted IBO 50/1918, MBB, 1.
5 OM, 17-12-1918, quoted KOT, 1919, 494.
7 ABDUL KARIM (1930).
some former popularity. The government official B.J.O. Schrieke wrote on Indonesians' attitudes: 'Mr Labberton strikes people as wanting to ram his leadership down their throats and they do not want that any more.' Labberton basically had not moved, as political positions both to his right and left were taken up.

Not even his theosophical colleagues always heeded him. On 2 July 1919, Radjiman of Budi Utomo sided with the government and the Volksraad majority against a motion which Van Hinloopen Labberton supported, to investigate a peasants' strike movement in the Central Java principalities. TS members had always been a minority in Budi Utomo. Yet, the critical articles in the BU paper Darmo Kondo of 1919 would have been improbable ten years earlier. They especially criticized theosophists in education.

At Labberton's insistence, theosophists had founded a teachers' training school, Goenoeng Sari, in Jakarta in 1913. The government put it on equal financial status with its own teacher training schools in 1918. Then, its first primary school teachers graduated in 1920, it had 72 students, including seven girls. Its textbook for the subject Political Science was Annie Besant's Lectures on political science. Many of the other textbooks were also by her: Text Book of Hindu Religion and Ethics; Sanatana Dharm (on Hinduism); The Story of the Great War. 1

The Dutch East Indies Theosophical Schools Association founded the first 'Ardjoena (Arjuna) school' in 1921. For some time, P. Post was its headmaster; at the second school, also in Jakarta, Djokosorowo was in the early twenties. In 1927, the Gambir school had a 'heroes' hall' [Dutch: heldenzaal]. There already hung portraits of H. P. B. Col. Olcott, C. W. L. A. B. and Krishna(murti(i)]. Others, including Moto Suroto, were to come soon.

In 1932, five Arjuna schools existed in Jakarta, two in Bandung, one each in Bogor, Purwokerto, Jatiluwih, and Ajibarang. In Ajibarang, portraits of TS leaders hung in the classrooms. The pupils celebrated White Lotus Day and Annie Besant's birthday. The school had a 'heroes' hall' [Dutch: heldenzaal]. There already hung portraits 'of H. P. B. Col. Olcott, C. W. L. A. B. and Krishna(murti(i)]. Others, including Moto Suroto, were to come soon.

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As a movement theosophy has made, in the past, quite an impact upon the Indigenes. But that is shrinking visibly. Also for Oriental consciousness, so prone to fancy, it becomes more and more a time for realism: for power formation through political and trade-union organization. That need could not be met by the ideology of theosophy. ... the gap gets wider all the time. 1

If one compares Van Hinloopen Labberton to Annie Besant, he had some, not all, of her organizational and rhetorical gifts. Unlike her, he did not then shift to the right; he no longer was to Annie Besant’s right, as Soeora Mudika had charged in 1917; see p. 210. Like her, he had become caught between two opposing tendencies.2

These were: radicalization of the national movement on one side; and conservative retreatment on the government side. The accession of a new governor-general, Fock, in 1921 marked that.3 Of his predecessor, Count Van Limburg Stirum, the TS magazine wrote of ‘honour, which all Great ones deserve ... Great men cannot leave us unaffected’.4 Early in 1921, Van Leeuwen expected that the Indies TS might become the ‘RUDDER’ of ‘the great future Ship of State’.

Is that especially our task? To build our society up, so that it becomes a strong and good tool, a trustworthy rudder, worthy of the Great Helmsman? Once we are that far, undoubtedly that Great Helmsman too will come.5

Van Leeuwen still sounded more optimistic than Kiewiet de Jonge: ‘More and more FTS move along the uncertain paths of politics, study clubs are formed, the theosophical book-shelf begins to fill up in its political section and at meetings, it becomes more and more a subject of speech and thought.’ Theosophist J.N. van der Ley in 1921 temporarily became mayor of Bandung city.6 A. Meijroos, 1916 Bogor TS lodge

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1 Letter to his parents of 28-11-1919, Kiewiet de Jonge private archive, HSG. #54. Translation partly as by HERING(1992), 1; partly as by myself. See also KIEWIET DE JONGE(1919), 100.

2 SITARAMAYA(1969), 130: ‘Mrs Besant was soon feeling out of tune both with Government and with the people. The former deprecated her forwardness, the latter her backwardness’. Jong-Java at the end of 1920 wished there was an Annie Besant in Java: VAN LEEUWEN(1921A), 7.

3 His period in office brought more repression and cuts in civil servants’ wages on their education. Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo thought that different salaries should be based on ‘the only real point—the difference in race ... surely a criterion which exists and cannot be denied’.7 Javanese civil servants compared their salaries to the higher ones of Dutch colleagues. However:

I think this very hunting after financial gain among my own countrymen is highly unsympathetic and definitely irreconcilable with their deepest essence. They have knowingly obscured this essence, because they want to go with the times, the times that have taken money as the yardstick. ... When I was still inexperienced, I always participated in protests, which had as their aim to get equal salaries for equal education levels. Since I got to know the situation on the island with its low standard of living, I thought to myself that the Western knowledge which we have learned at school would be truly a blessing to us, if only it could be tied to a low standard of living, as we have seen on Bali. ... We cannot and may not go along with the raising of salaries. In the conviction that I will meet with grave disappointments, maybe resistance as well, among my own countrymen, nevertheless I must advise to level down all salaries of the officials, mainly Dutch, majority in Bandung council, as opposed to the left caucus of Indonesian and Indo-European members, supported by Nationaal Indische Partij and ISDP. IV, 3-1-1920, ‘Bandungse gemeenteraad’. Bandung’s TS lodge president, F. Moet, was also a city councillor; RANI, 1917, 220.

5 VAN LEEUWEN(1921), 766. PP IX (1916), 33. 16

6 SOERIOKOESOEMO(1921B), 72. TH. VREDE(1925) defended the Volksraad’s record.

7 LOC, 29-8-1917, ‘Boedi Otono’. RANI, 1922, 49.

8 SOERIOKOESOEMO(1921B), 72. BUMAN(1949), 9; with the rise of anti-capitalism in Indonesia’s political movements after the First World War ‘there was a decrease in being influenced by Dutch—for instance theosophists—who sympathetically supported the growing self-confidence, and thus had doubtlessly won a “goodwill” for the Dutch cause, which in a later period other groups, which had less sympathy for Indonesian nationalism, would be able to use to their advantage. Also, the influence of the Javanese nobility, the exponent of Javanese culture and Javanese self-view, diminished.’

9 SOERIOKOESOEMO(1921B), 73. Ibid.: ‘Should we think of chance here, of contingency, that especially the best leaders came from the ranks of that [Theosophical] society? Or should we rather see in this an ordered interplay of mysterious, divine forces, which rule all phenomena of life, and should at the same time prove to be found in these, that this society has been allotted a certain calling and a certain task?’
Now, with disappointment on the Volksraad, ideas from before its establishment of the Indian National Congress' example resurfaced. Van Hinloopen Labberton joined the Committee for Autonomy of the Indies, which wanted a better position for Indonesia within a decentralized Dutch empire. It proposed a federation, with one-third representation for The Netherlands, one-third for the Indies, and one-sixth for Surinam and Curaçao. It had support from the 'Nieuw Indië' committee in The Netherlands, including theosophist Polderman and ex-minister of colonies Pleyte. Mrs Besant also supported it: 'Holland should give the Indies much more freedom, if it does not want to loose them'. The Committee for Autonomy soon collapsed under pressure by Governor-General Fock. Labberton joined a new 'National Committee' with Sarekat Islam support. Though disapproving with his old Marxist opponents on the link with The Netherlands, on one point, naming the country 'Indonesia', he agreed with them.

Some Dutch theosophists in Indonesia worried that he had moved too closely towards Indonesian militants, and had forgotten occult truths about the difference between brotherhood with 'brown brothers', and equality with them. The secretary of Sukabumi lodge, P.K.G. de Bont, wrote in TMNI:

Let us never forget that 'brotherly love' pays least of all homage to 'equality'. Raising our brothers to the level of our own development is not possible by far their majority, at least not yet. And because of that, there never can be any 'equality'. ... For we should all rise towards the Masters; well, as a consequence of the law 'as above, so below', let our brown brothers also work their way up towards the level of Their development, and I can applaud that we give them the means to do so, but there should be discrimination here, else we become trapped into extremes. We really should take into account the type of development of the native people of the

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1SOERIJKOESOEMO(1922A), 10-1
2POOLDERMAN(1922), 5. Polderman counted on support of organizations like BU and ST; he also hoped that the organizations of princes and of hupas would 'follow the good example of their Aryan Colleagues in British India', but had his doubts on organizations of Chinese and Indo-Europeans.

Koch(1956), 124; VAN MIERT(1995), 381; 'Pemersatuannya jang borosan perancaraan anur perdesaan', PT 1920-1 (14), 81-98. Nieuw Indië, founded 5 October 1921 in The Hague, brought out a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to Vrije Aarde, see p. 161. Later, most editors, like Jocke and De Cock Buning, were of the Liberal Democrat party; Van Kol was from a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to

Koch, 1956, 124; VAN MIERT, 1995, 381; 'Pemersatuannya jang borosan perancaraan anur perdesaan', PT 1920-1 (14), 81-98. Nieuw Indië, founded 5 October 1921 in The Hague, brought out a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to Vrije Aarde, see p. 161. Later, most editors, like Jocke and De Cock Buning, were of the Liberal Democrat party; Van Kol was from a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to

3KOECH(1956), 124; VAN MIERT(1995), 381; 'Pemersatuan jang borosan perancaraan anur perdesaan', PT 1920-1 (14), 81-98. Nieuw Indië, founded 5 October 1921 in The Hague, brought out a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to Vrije Aarde, see p. 161. Later, most editors, like Jocke and De Cock Buning, were of the Liberal Democrat party; Van Kol was from a monthly of the same name; at first as an appendix to
merely abandoned policies of exploitation still exist in practice. To want to change that is as much of wishful thinking as wishing to bring about a revolution in the Dutch national character.

After an H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge quote in support, the account of Vreede's speech continued:

For The Netherlands, as the lecturer thinks, the continuation of the ties with Indonesia is to be wished for, in three respects: first, economic (obvious enough). Second, political. At the Washington conference, [H.A.] Van Karnebeek [Dutch Foreign Affairs minister; see p. 100] did not represent 7,000,000, but 7,000,000 + 47 million souls. Third, cultural.

Noting Gandhi's non-co-operation in India, Vreede pointed at the need of:

fast reform, before it is too late. ... Greater dangers than threaten England threaten us [Dutch], because in Indonesia (unlike British India), more aggressive Islamism has outstripped passive Hinduism. The lecturer sees a lasting tie between The Netherlands and Indonesia, which together form an international state, as future ideal.

In his Wederopbouw, Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo had attacked a Japanese plan to buy the Indies from The Netherlands, like the United States had recently bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark, as "large scale slave trade!" He wrote

a co-operation with Holland for us is still a mandatory necessity. ... We still need the Dutch now. We will also recognize so frankly. With this recognition, we may ask frankly that they take into account a little our wishes. ... We must insist that Holland does not admit foreign capital. For the development of the Indies' giant resources, a giant loan should be contracted, but above all else: out with foreign capital.

What if Dutch authorities would not heed this? Who should rule instead of them then? Soeriokoesoemo:

only then, is there a case for us to look for a different solution. ... Preferably, we should link our destiny with our Hindu neighbour, that is, prefer English rule above any other one. Japanese rule especially, even if we should have to bleed to death under British justice.

So, a parallel to Oetoesan Melajoe's view of two years earlier. Soetamro argued, though, from India's Hinduism; unlike his colleagues in more Islamized West Sumatra (see p. 333), who argued from the presence of Muslims and the sect of the Theosophical Society in Britain.

Soeriokoesoemo expressed his confidence in Governor-General Count Van Limburg Stirum, not in the 'plebs' of some Dutch journalists, and concluded:

Let us be on our guards against over-estimating ourselves. Confidence in the force of the masses means confidence in a blind force.

One year later, Soetatmo compared two 'masters' from 'Hindostan': Rabindranath Tagore, 'the spiritual guru', and Gandhi, 'the material master', and their influence on what Soeriokoesoemo consistently called the 'Hindu people'. He thought that Gandhi's satyagraha would have been unnecessary and not so successful, if the British government had listened more to the more moderate Tagore.

Soeriokoesoemo admired Tagore's ideas on education. He wrote to Mangkoe Negoro VII of his small-scale education experiments on Bali in 1920. In 1922, Soeriokoesoemo was a founder of the influential, Tagore-inspired, Taman Siswa private schools' movement; it included Sukarno.

Soeriokoesoemo noted that Gandhi's non-co-operation policy influenced radicalizing Indonesians, for instance in the Nationale Indische Partij; also, though he did not say so, in Budi Utomo's left wing. He doubted if that was sensible, but still 'Has Gandhi's time come yet?' was in itself a legitimate question for Java.

In his 1921 speech to the Budi Utomo annual general meeting, Soeriokoesoemo answered that question; negatively: "And this [non-co-operation] is just what I do not want, I think Gandhi's time has not yet come and I also hope that that time will never come. Not because I am afraid of that, if circumstances would make it necessary for us; but still, all of us would rather reach our aim in a more peaceful way, and our Budi..."
Oetomo ('the beautiful striving' with an undertone of spiritual harmony] would then be jeopardized. Still, Soeriodokesoemo's attitude to Gandhi was not as negative on principles as was Annie Besant's. In the Volksraad, he rejected non-co-operation, but warned the government on the future:

Mr Chairman, our ladies may get into the very situation as the country of the Hindus. The right policy and the most extreme cautiousness therefore cannot be recommended often enough to the Government, before it is too late. At the moment, I can readily assume that amongst us there hardly is anyone who does not want co-operation with the alien Government of these colonies. This wish though, Mr Chairman, is joined to other wishes, which should rather be called difficult demands of the nationalists liberating themselves. So, do not cheer prematurely if we show our loyalty and seemingly acquiesce in the present situation. Guardianship goes with a moral obligation, which is included in the Educator's task.

Soeriodokesoemo did not get along well with Harloff, the Dutch Resident of Surakarta. A point on which Wederopbouw criticized the government was banning meetings in the 'very loyal' states that Javanese monarchs ruled:

The painful aspect lies mainly in the fact that the suspension of the right to hold meetings is only applied in the Princely States Solo and Djokja [Yogyakarta], while Semarang [Semarang] goes scot-free. Samarang, the country of revolutionaries and communists, can meet without punishment as much as it likes. Whatever can be the cause of this? ... After Tjoe Soerjo [Mangenkoesoemo] left, there was no longer any reason to maintain that ban in Solo and yet, it is maintained until today.

1 SOERIOKOESOEMO (1922C), 244.
2 SOERIOKOESOEMO (1922A), 15-6 again doubted if Gandhi's non-co-operation was 'sensible', but did not doubt the wisdom and purity of Gandhi's character.
3 SOERIOKOESOEMO (1922A), 16. An editor's note to L.J. Polderman's article 'Congresfilosofie', in WED, 1922, 67, said: 'If this force [of non-co-operation] is felt by all, for just one simultaneous moment, then the ladies will be in ruins—possibly also in our distress! But if the reaction wishes to sharpen the situation in this country, then let us be prepared to drink the poisoned cup together'.
4 SOERIOKOESOEMO (1922B), 83. In July 1920, Harloff had already caused an accident at the wedding of Prince Mangkoe Negoro VII to the Ratu Timur; contrary to unwritten law, he had rejected non-co-operation, but Ongeschreven wetten, 'Wederopbouw en de Keuze van Hindia Poetra, a speech to a students' congress in Wageningen on 29 August 1918, he spoke of 'great ones amongst Hindia Poetra' a point on which Wederopbouw took issue with Hindia Poetra magazine. Hindia Poetra advocated non-co-operation policy, based on Woodrow Wilson's doctrine of self-determination. Soeryopoetro reacted:

We deny the peoples' right to self-determination from the religious viewpoint that it is not for us, humans, to decide; we humans, and especially Javanese, have individual freedom as far as keeping ourselves pure and receptive for inspirations from Higher Levels is concerned; and in keeping on putting into practice these inspirations swiftly and strongly. No group of humans is excluded from putting into practice these inspirations; thus, non-co-operation is not in keeping with divine-human devotion.

Non-co-operation is only based on a temporary fit of anger.

8.Hatta and Perhimpungan Indonesia

Hindia Poetra was the magazine of, then, the Indoensische Vereeniging, of Indonesians, mainly students, in the Netherlands. That society grew more distant from the TS as Soeryopoetro's and Noto Soeroto's original influence on HP waned. Noto Soeroto collected money to give Governor-General Count van Limburg Stirum a farewell present. When Van Limburg Stirum returned to The Netherlands on 13 September 1921, Indonesian students, led by Noto Soeroto, were there to welcome him. This led to a sharp comment in the Marxist Soerara Raja: 'These students apparently have not heard about Gandhi yet'; referring to Gandhi-organized student strikes and other non-co-operation then. 'Under Lord van Limburg Stirum's rule, many people have been exiled, or have

1 See p. 309. He was also from the Paku Alam dynasty, and had been WED Netherlands correspondent along with Noto Soeroto; KONING (1968), 8. He greatly admired Soeriodokesoemo; in a speech to a students congress in Wageningen on 29 August 1918, he spoke of 'great ones amongst the Eastmen, like both Tagore and Soerono Soeriodokesoemo'; HPO, 1918, 41. In HPO, 1920, 38, he described himself as 'Buddhist' by religion. He had married Dutch Miss L. van Oyen, who also wrote in Wederopbouw; WED, 1920, 80f. He died November 1927; TUCHIYA (1987), 80.
2 Probably identical with 'Abdurrahman' of the Jakarta HPO.
3 Noto Soeroto [different spelling from the cover]. 'Wederopbouw en de Keuze van Bouwmaterialen', WED, Aug. 1923, 53-6; 54.
4 KONING (1968), 6.
5 WED, July 1921, 152.
Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond in March 1925, Noto Soeroto denied Dutch papers' gone to jail.' In Australia 'this gentleman' had also voiced 'strange' ideas on Indonesians. And yet ... students thanked him. Noto Soeroto was 'no Tagore.'

On 14 December 1924, the Indonessche Vereeniging expelled ex-president and honorary president Noto Soeroto, with 45 votes to five. Speaking to the congress of the Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond in March 1925, Noto Soeroto denied Dutch papers' reports that he represented a moderate majority: 'I really know, that the overwhelming majority of my educated compatriots do not share my views.' These 'showed that they had not understood the nature, and thus, the call of their racial personality [Dutch: raspersonlijkheid].' In the less well off in Indonesia, he feared a very ugly quality-the envy of the have-nots. The imported ideas of class struggle and destruction of present society are especially unfit to get my sympathy, as those ideas, permeating the uncritically thinking broad masses of the Indonesian nations, will lead to class hatred and class envy and to the scourge of an appetite for destruction causing amok [wanton murder].

Before Noto Soeroto's expulsion, theosophists tried to prevent losing ground in the Indonessche Vereeniging. They had to do that while the social background, and the opinions, of Indonesian students changed, unfavourably to them. Cheaper transport from Indonesia, and more scholarships, made 'it was no longer exclusively students from upper aristocratic circles who went to the Netherlands to study, and the views of the newcomers differed markedly from those of the prewar generation.'

Mohammad Hatta, then in the Vereeniging executive, later vice president of the Indonesian Republic, eventually became a major opponent of the TS in the IV. He came from a West Sumatra trading family. Supporting the karmic mada, he fought the Oriental Meligoe theosophists. At a meeting in Padang on 6 September 1918, he called their leader Datoek Soetan Maharadja 'pengchianat (traitor)'s When Hatta studied in Jakarta, 1919-21, he met theosophists Fournier and Van Leeuwen.

They once tried to get me to join the Theosophical Society ... I resolutely refused on the grounds that I was a committed Muslim. It Fournier said that being a Muslim was no barrier to becoming a Theosophist. Theosophy was not a religion -he said- but a teaching. But I still refused.

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1[SR, 1-10-1921, 6, 'Boekan Gandhi [No Gandhi].'
2[KONING(1968), 6; JM, 1924, 134-5. POEZE(1966), 179f; DIAJADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 53: 56: Noto Soeroto was expelled because of a Parallel to Van Heutsz article, comparing the general to Mahabharata hero Bima Sensenoo, then in the Netherlands, also played a role in the expulsion.
3[2]1923, 5, MRBDT, 446-7; 449. H.T.D., 'Noto Soeroto over: 'Nederland en Indonesie', KOT May 1923, 335 challenged Noto Soeroto's 'ras-personlijkheid' concept, as he was a minority.
4[DJAIIADININGRAT-NIEUWENHUIS, 52; also: POEZE(1966), 157.
5[2]1918, 198-9; thanks to Hans van Miert.
6[3]HATTA(1978), 166: HATTA(1981), 45, 86. In Indonesian, Hatta called Fournier kepala, 'the' or 'a' 'leader'; translated in English as 'Chairman' of the TS; actually, he was on its executive.

They were more successful with others at that time.

As far as I know, the people they had succeeded in ensnaring were Basuki from Jong Java and [Mohammad] Amir from the Jong Sumateran Bond. Perhaps also Muhammad Yamin.

Theosophists like Polderman, Mrs Van Hinloopen Labberton, and Van Leeuwen sometimes lectured to the Jakarta branch of the Jong Sumateran Bond, a league of students from Sumatra like Hatta.

From 1917-9, Ahmad Subarjo Djioyoadisuryo was a TS member and went to live at their Jakarta headquarters at Blavatsky Park. He left soon, though, as he could not stomach the mandatory group meditation. In the 1920's, Subarjo became a member of the Indonessche Vereeniging; in 1945, minister in the first government of the Indonesian Republic. The Sumatran Amir Sjarifuddin became prime minister, before anticonununist troops shot him in 1948. In the 1920's in Jakarta, he started a three years TS course in philosophy, but stopped before the first year was over. Datoek Maharadja Emas Abu Hanifah thought, from the same island and later a leader of the Muslim party Masjum, moved in these circles longer, successfully completing the course.

In 1923, Fournier and Van Leeuwen came to the Netherlands, where Hatta was studying by then in Rotterdam. They had a new proposal for him. This time, not joining the TS itself, but a new organization, the Orde der Dienaren van Indië (Order of Servants of the Indies). According to a member of it, Tabrani, later: 'In all, membership of the Orde was about 50 ladies and gentlemen.'

Hatta: The organization's objectives were to achieve unity and mutual assistance and a sense of brotherhood, and its members were to write the initials DI after their name. I was invited to one of their meetings. Apart from Amir and myself there were two other members of the Jong Sumateran Bond: Bider Johan and Nazif. There were also some members of Jong Java. But eventually the ideals of the Orde der Dienaren van Indië were to thrust upon us. Certain rituals were performed at the commencement and the closing of the meeting.

Though he had misgivings about the ODI, Hatta then was not free to refuse. They knew he had financial problems continuing his studies; he desperately wanted to
continue. Van Leeuwen got him a scholarship. And Hatta joined.¹

The end of Wederopbouw was not immediately the end of Javanese nationalism. Ex-editor Satiman Wirjosandjojo then was a Surabaya local councillor. On 17 December 1923 in the Indische Courant, he announced the foundation of the Javanese Intellectuals' League. The League opposed all-Indies nationalism,² Islam,³ and what Satiman saw as Budi Utomo's recent tendency to admit also 'low class' Javanese, leading to a 'democratic mess'. He thought the new League should organize 'the few who act, instead of the many who talk.' BU should reorganize itself, 'with the intellectuals as its soul, the non-intellectuals as its body'; an image which theosophists also used for their ES and outer TS.⁴

Satiman got much criticism. Fournier, writing in Neraatje of 21 January 1924, did not support him. People in other islands would object. Indonesia Merdeka [Free Indonesia] magazine, successor to Hidita Poetra, published a unanimous vote of censure by the Indoncisne Vereening against the League. The motion accused it of 'Javanese Chauvinism', which would help colonialist 'divide and rule' politics.⁵ A few months later, the magazine criticized the League's limitation 'not just to Javanese only, but worse still: to Javanese intellectuals only'.⁶

²Satiman thought Indies nationalists trespassed on Java's history: 'Do they [all-Indonesia nationalists] wish to diminish the glory of Majapahit [medieval empire with capital in Java and power in many Malay archipelago islands] or Mataram, by calling these empires Indies empires? Quoted NIE, Feb. 1924, 17. 'Een Javansche Intellectueelen Bund'.
³PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 198: Satiman saw the hadj as a 'waste of money'
⁴PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 34-5. NIE, Feb. 1924, 17. 'Een Javansche Intellectueelen Bund'. Satiman: BU 'gradually began to neglect its aristocratic nature', it 'gives Javanese [mainly common among poor peasants] and Wongso [wangsa; regional Javanese form for 'relatives'; here for non-nobles; SH 7-1924, quoted IPO 1, 1934, 115] free admission'. He regretted that now in BU 'clerk and Budi Ulomo could sit freely next to one another'; PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 34-5, Apr. 1924, 37-8; a few months later, there were talks between the executives of the Javanese Intellectuals League and Budi Ulomo, said to have brought about a good relationship between both. PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 34-5 denoted the talks' success. Budi-Oelomo 25-30 Jan. 1924, quoted IPO 1, 1924, 223-4; at talks on 30 Dec. 1923, Dwijidjoe-wojo thought that 'the masses would feel humiliated' by Satiman.
⁵ petroleum, 1, 1924, 190.
⁶Quoted IPO 1, 1924, 190.
⁷IM, 1924, 18. PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 198. Kemadjoem Hindia from Surabaya, 31-12-1923/1-1924, quoted IPO 2/1924, 46, smeared 'fascism, Javanese imperialism and Javanese autocracy'.
⁸PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 35: 'nearly all of the Native press' attacked Satiman, so did the PKI, which also criticized the BU executive for making concessions to Satiman. Social democrats (Het Indische Volk), 2-1-1924, saw the League as 'still more a withdrawal within the golden fog of a supreme Javanism, to remove oneself still further from one's own suffering masses.' Quoted NIE, Feb. 1924, 17.
⁹IM, 1924, 30.

Radji'am and other executive members in 1924-5 tried to make ex-Wederopbouw's ideas official Budi Ulomo policy. At the April 1925 congress, the majority, including all-Indonesia minded members from coastal areas, rejected these mainly Surakarta-based views though.¹

In 1924, Fournier wrote to Hatta. As Hatta remembered, it:

said that the policy of the Indoncisne Vereening was not in accordance with the views of the DI [Servants of the Indies]. If I did not leave the Indoncisne Vereening, I would have to resign from the DI. He also mentioned that the choice would not influence the scholarship I had been granted through the kindness of Ir Van Leeuwen. So I resigned from the DI group and I wrote Ir Fournier that I would repay the scholarship when I returned to Indonesia. As it turned out, however, owing to the vicissitudes of my life as a nationalist, I was not able to fulfil this promise until 1952.²

As with Krishnamurti, the TS had guessed correctly that Hatta would play an important role. With him, too, it would differ from what they wanted.

In the fall of 1924, Fournier addressed a Jong-Java meeting in Yogyakarta on 'Java's gift to the world'. Indonesia Merdeka was 'far from agreement' with him; Fournier 'temporized' in the Java or all-Indonesia question. They thought Fournier's 'uncuous preaching' a grave danger to our national struggle.'³ In May 1925, IM warned Indonesia's young people against both theosophists and Christians.⁴

The conflict between TS and Indonesian nationalists sharpened in late 1925-early 1926. Indonesia Merdeka wrote, so far, they had only 'warned'; warned that 'indulging in profound philosophizing on life is absolutely disastrous' to Indonesian nationalism. Now, though, there was a need to 'protct'. This happened after the Dutch East Indies Theosophical Society had forbidden its Indonesian Fellows to be members of non-cooperation organizations, 'if they still wanted to lay claim to the so-called "promotion towards world citizenship"'.⁵ The Indoncisne Vereening, the Pekindo, Indonesia, reacted. It declared that people who were members of both PI and the TS-

²HATT(A)1981), 91. Tabrani, Bintang Timeer 28/31-1-1929, quoted IPO 1929, 5-6, 182 confirmed the declaration of incompatibility (the source wrongly has Persatuan Indonesia for PI). Authorities interned Hatta 1934-42. HATT(A)1978, 157: he re-paid in 1950.
³IM, 1924, 108-11, 'Uit het Verre Vaderland'; ibid., 108; Dutch: 'en geit en koolte sparen'.
⁴Ibid., 109.
⁵Ibid. 39. 'Aan de Indoncse jeugdbeweging'; 39: 'From all sides, one has tried to cram various philosophies of life down your throat, counting on your youthful and therefore susceptible feelings. Theosophists, Calvinists, Catholics and others... we think that you allow them to intimidate you too much.'
⁶Van gevaa in Zachzinnig gewaard voor de Indoncse jeugdbeweging'; IM, 1926, 19-23; 19.
linked Orde der Dienaren van Indië ‘which supports a policy that is against our nationalist principles’ had to choose between these. Two out of the three individuals involved, chose for the Pt. Only Amir, married to a cousin of Fournier, preferred the Orde.\footnote{Bestuursmededeling, \textit{IM}, 1926, 32-3. VAN MIERT(1995), 69.}

\textit{Indonesia Merdeka} asked why the TS had banned dual membership.

So, a ban against working along to realize our national freedom ideal. What, now, may be the reason for this action? Is it because they consider that for complete dedication to Theosophical doctrine absolute negation of all worldly events is necessary? Or maybe it is their intention to make our young people into passionless monks, for the salvation of sinful humanity?

\textit{IM} believed that the real reason for the aforementioned political measures in their society which is otherwise of a very theological hue were ‘very different’ from anti-politics. They were different policies:

As Blandas (Dutch) it is of course in their interest that the colonies remain so, and they certainly are for doing their bit in defending the inhuman injustice in our country.\footnote{Een gevaar in zachtzinnig gewaad voor de Indonesische jeugdbeweging, \textit{IM}, 1925, 226-7; compare Rudolf Steiner on jazz: \textit{Rudolf Steiner Archiv}, 11-11-1925. NOO00000 (1951), 275-80.}

\textit{IM} mentioned that theosophists said:

It is not good to be a Theosophist and to fight against one's fellow humans at the same time. But in this case golden theory does not fit at all, for, unfortunately, here these fellow humans are antipodes of one another, that is, dominators and dominated. And does there now exist a more monstrous abuse against the realization of that brotherhood ideal?

Also, theosophist and Dutch East Indies government advisor P. Post\footnote{Post was Headmaster of the theosophists’ first Arjuna school in Jakarta, and editor of the Indies theosophical education league’s paper \textit{Assiciatie} (Association). The paper folded after Post went back to The Netherlands in mid 1928. TILKEMA(1932), 44; 53. Post also spoke at the Dec. 1924 Java Institute Congress; \textit{Djwad}, 1925, 179-80 and 183-4. \textit{TINI} Jan. 1935, 9; Post spoke at the 1935 Indies TS congress.} at a teachers' congress in November 1925 in Gambir, had criticized \textit{Indonesia Merdeka}. He said it contained ‘bloodthirsty essays’. These were the consequence of the editors’ too Western intellectualist education. That education had made them ‘unbalanced’, had disrupted their ‘world view and spiritual life’. So they became ‘susceptible to the development of undesirable theories like non-co-operation, communism, and hatred of Europeans, and a


dangerous over-estimation of their own strength.\footnote{Een gevaar in zachtzinnig gewaad voor de Indonesische jeugdbeweging, \textit{IM}, 1926, 19-23; 22.}

\textit{Indonesia Merdeka} reacted:

This rising star in the world of education now thinks he has found a remedy against all those terrible things, in the form of reforming present education into an “Eastern” system. That is, on a religious and philosophical (meaning, Theosophical!) basis, and this religious education should be “general spiritual education, which forms character and creates tolerance”. Here, once again, the political reality emerges from behind Theosophical appearance.\footnote{Een gevaar in zachtzinnig gewaad voor de Indonesische jeugdbeweging, \textit{IM}, 1926, 19-23; 23.}

Creating tolerance, indeed!\footnote{A Kruisheer, “De Uitkijk”, \textit{PIM} 1923, 226-7; compare Rudolf Steiner on jazz: \textit{Rudolf Steiner Archiv}, 11-11-1925. NOO00000 (1951), 275-80.}

\textit{IM} thought Post himself, reacting to their magazine, had not ‘given an example of tolerance’. It concluded on the TS: ‘Brothers, be aware of this danger in a gentle guise!’\footnote{A Kruisheer, “De Uitkijk”, \textit{PIM} 1923, 226-7; compare Rudolf Steiner on jazz: \textit{Rudolf Steiner Archiv}, 11-11-1925. NOO00000 (1951), 275-80.}

As in India, the questions of co-operation or non-co-operation with colonial authorities, home rule or full independence, marked the disagreement between militants and theosophists. Van Hinsloop-Labberton’s successor as General Secretary, J. Kruisheer, was less politically prominent. The links to Indies artistic life were still rather strong. However, Kruisheer did not like all art. He wrote that, to theosophists, music is not only sound, but also vibrations which only people with occult perceptivity might feel. These might be good vibes or bad vibes. Basing himself on A. Tranmer of the South African TS journal, he warned against jazz music and dancing to it.

Really, all of Western Society is being ‘niggerized’ [in strange Dutch: ‘verniggerd’], if I may borrow this word [from Tranmer]. Of course, someone in Africa knows the Kaffirs’ coarsely sensual way of dancing. Compared to this, our Oriental styles of dancing are subtle and relatively innocent.

At the TS congress in 1926, Kruisheer spoke of Besant’s opposition to Gandhi as a model for the Indies: “Theosophy and Non-co-operation are two diametrically opposed concepts.”\footnote{Een gevaar in zachtzinnig gewaad voor de Indonesische jeugdbeweging, \textit{IM}, 1926, 19-23; 24.}

\textit{Indonesia Merdeka} in 1926 again criticized Satiman, on his opposition to non-co-
operation. He saw it as self-conceived, as a manifestation of a discouraged people, as passivity. IM reacted: 'Not the Indian, but the Irish Freedom movement has been our example. ... The non-violence principle is not part of our movement.'

Satiman had said: 'Obtaining positions, both within society and within government offices, leads us to self-esteem.' Indonesia Merdeka saw that as 'job-hunting'. Also, the Dutch word zelfstandigheid might mean both independence, and autonomy within the Dutch empire; they saw that as unclear. Satiman had a major role at meetings in 1926, replacing left-wingers from Semarang within the Budi Utomo executive with co-operationists, and overturning an earlier non-co-operation decision.

9. Since Tabrani and Sukarno

In 1920, two students were in the Surabaya branch of Jong-Java: Sukarno and Tabrani. Mohamed Tabrani was born in 1904 in Pamelranaa, Madura. A member of the Young Theosophists, he became editor of the daily Hindia Baroe [New Indies].

On 26 May 1924, Hindia Baroe had succeeded Keraja as that had succeeded Penjoan. From now on, the TS' Indonesische Drukkerij printed it. Hadji Agoes Salim wrote one more thing had changed: government subsidies had stopped. Few opponents believed that. Indonesia Merdeka criticized it for its proposal not to boycott the kabupaten councils. After October 1925, Tabrani was chairman of the journalists' league Asia, which excluded communists from membership.

Tabrani became chairman of the 'first Indonesian youth Congress' in Gambir, 30 April-2 May 1926. Organizations represented at that congress included the Young Theosophists, Jong-Java, Christians, and Muslims. Ex-Perhimpunan member Amir wrote sympathetically on it in the Dutch Liberal Democrat magazine. The Perhimpunan magazine was not as positive. That congress was the work of undesirable elements, that is, the Dutch theosophists, who try to misguide our youth by way of

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1IM 1926, 36-9, 'De taal der jongelingschap'; PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 199.
2Sukarno agreed with the last sentence; speech in 1933, quoted VAN BERGEN, 21.
3PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 278.
5IM 1926, 105-8, 'Algemene Nogatie'. Kabupaten were ruled by a bupati; thus, many kabupaten had roughly half a million inhabitants.
7PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 390. STEVENS(1994), 152; the congress had a 'completely different tendency' from Scriprio's NIVO. However, only later youth congresses, not led by Tabrani, were radical; and Tabrani and Scriprio together founded the PRL. See p. 357.
8AMIR, 77. PETRUS BLUMBERGER(1987), 390.

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Home rule, Independence

the so-called Order of the Servants of the Indies. The manifesto, convening the congress, said:

To be a nationalist in Indonesia means to be a Servant of God and to live in the Spirit. We do not need to be above all people, we do not need to be above everything.

Indonesia Merdeka thought this only 'beautiful sounding phrases'.

For example, our people are affected by an epidemic [frequent in Indonesia then]; yet, they are supremely happy, for they ... (all ... in this paragraph emphasis by IM) believe. The majority of our people are illiterate; yet, they are supremely happy, for they ... believe ...

What intelligent human would, or rather could, believe this? Look, there the little political devil of the Dutch theosophists comes into play again! In our Malay language IM we have already warned against their satellite Tabrani. One should beware.

Muslims at the congress were suspicious that the youth league to be founded there 'might get a theosophical character'. IM in the 1970's, the Indonesian historian Drs Mardanas Salwan wrote also of TS influence as a problem. Tabrani, looking back in 1974, saw Salwan's view as 'tidak benar' [not true]. He underlined his own view, maybe more of later times than of 1926 as it had been, with four synonyms: the ODI was 'autonomous, separate, zelfstandig, free' from the TS.

Though Tabrani still was a Jong-Java member, his perspective was all-Indonesian, and co-operationists nationalist. On the one hand, the PKI uprisings of Java in 1926 and West Sumatra in 1927, were 'all kinds of restless and malevolent elements, who were incited to violent mass action by extremist leaders'. On the other hand, Governor-General Fock's 'iron fist' policy was partly to blame for the rise of communism. Between these, the position of moderate nationalists became more hazardous, day by day. In the eyes of their compatriots, supporters of extremism and non-co-operation, they were "cowards" and "traitors". When the Indonesian considered them "revolutionaries".

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The non-co-operating Partai Nasional-Indonesia had personal history connections with the Theosophical Society, as in the case of a later education minister of Indonesia, Sarmidi. Also Raden Soekumi Soerodiharjo, father of Sukarno, the future first president, was PTS. Theosophy played a part in his son's education. Sukarno during his secondary school days lived in a rented room at Tjoekroaminoto's in Surabaya. Thanks to Soekumi's membership, he could visit the TS library at Sawahan, where the city's lodge president D.L.I. Vink also lived (Princiesvaart). Did Sukarno meet Mrs Van Moock, the mother of his opponent after 1945, there? In the library, he developed a fractious reading habit, including political books. Probably Carlyle; Abu Hanifah taught him a 'very, very great' influence on Sukarno. One book, said to have influenced him much, he probably did not get from the theosophical library: the account of the trial of Van Hinloopen Labberton's opponent Sneevliet, by Sneevliet himself and Baars.

Sukarno was apparently no longer close to the TS in 1921. As two wings formed in Jong-Java, he chose the 'red' wing. At the June 1921 congress in Bandung, he protested against neglect of poor people and against capitalism. Right wingers of the Jakarta branch of Jong-Java, like Basuki and Supomo (later well known as a jurist), held before the leftists 'the motto of theosophist Fournier: keep your head; and keep your heart warm.' Fournier had said this on 31 October 1920 at the inaugural meeting of the Studiegroep Politieke Wetenschap. It was a short-lived joint venture in Jakarta by Jong-Java and the Jong Sumatraanse Bond to study political science; probably, Annie Besant's Lectures: The Jakarta Jong-Java then had its office in the TS headquarters.

1 Originally: Perserikatan

1 TSUCHIYA (1987), 68. 82; 86: Sarmidi Mangnossarkaro, born in 1904, 'a noble from Surakarta who grew up under the influence of Theosophy.' TABRANI (1974), 318: he was OPI member. He was active in Jong-Java and taught at a Taman Siswa school. He left, however, in 1928, to teach at the TS Arjuna school in Jakarta. There, he joined the Young Theosophists. TSUCHIYA (1987), 86: he joined the PNI also in 1928. If that is correct, he probably will not have been a member of both for long, in view of the earlier TS conflict with Indonesian nationalists, and the later one especially with the PNI. See p. 350, 360.

1 SUKARNO, 19: He was a primary school teacher by profession, with a relatively low title of nobility.

1 SUKARNO, 21: 'although Father practiced Theosophy, he was legally a Moslem.'

1 ROE, XIII; SUKARNO, 23: ibid., 71: 'My grandfather inculcated in me Javanism and mysticism. From Father came Theosophy and Islamism.'

2 Tj 1916 (9), 3, 16. FT, 1917. Covers NUGRAHA (1989), 261. Vink in TMN, 1918, 215: 'in the broad masses there is a fairly strong tendency towards the anti-idealist, in some of these social strata even towards the animal.'

1 SUKARNO, 39.

1 ABU HANIFAH, 41.

1 SCHWIDDER/TICHELMAN, xxxvi.


A few years later. Sumatran student Roestam Effendi told Sukarno he had joined the Orde der Dienen van Indië. Roestam recalled that he reacted: 'You've fallen into the trap, haven't you, [Roes] Tam?'

Sukarno prepared the founding of the PNI, in 1927, with Tjipto Mangnossarkaro, whom he called 'chief.' Like Jawaharlal Nehru in India, in spite of connections from young years, the new party did not choose an elite ideology like Soeridjoekoe's, Van Leeuwen or Vink's. It aimed at mass support and chose 'Marxism' as Sukarno eventually called it, Marhaen, like Kromo, is a name common among poor peasants. Many returned former Perhimpunan Indonesia members joined.

Sukarno admired Gandhi greatly, but criticized him on some points. His criticism of Gandhi differed from the theosophists' though. It was somewhat similar to Tjipto's objections to Soeridjoekoe's.

The spiritually inclined Indian pays too little attention to the materialistic side of the struggle. He never should lose themselves in the vague clouds of philosophisms and abstractions. ... Especially Mahatma Gandhi, brilliant though he may be, has sinned greatly against this. As a logical consequence, society has turned cruelly against him.

When PNI supporters founded a school in 1928, they voiced similar ideas.

In 1928, Tabrani was a student in The Hague (The Netherlands), a contributor to De Telegraaf daily, and to the monthly of the Dutch Liberal Democrat party. Then he wrote Sukarno a letter, 'urging him to come overseas and warning him to stay out of the public.
came in for criticism from the Indonesian press: A. Meijroos and Fournier. The other hand, Kiewiet de Jonge angered colonialist diehard journalists by shaking hands with Sukarno at his 1929 trial when he was a witness, as a sign of respect for an opponent.

Leadbeater, visiting Indonesia for the fifth time in his life in 1929, approved of Dutch rule there. He thought that its 'pedagogical task' still needed at least 'half a century of vigorous work'. At the end of that year, two prominent Fellows of his society came forward in criticism from the Indonesian press: A. Meijroos and Fournier.

When the Indonesian councillors of Jakarta wanted Thamrin as deputy-mayor, Meijroos objected. The Indonesian Thamrin did not qualify, as local government was 'moulded in the Western way'. Even the very co-operative paper De Samenwerking attacked Meijroos, comparing him unfavourably to the governor-generals Van Limburg Stirum and Fock. The councillors resigned collectively as a protest, and won.

The criticism of Fournier also came from a moderate side; from Budi Utomo in his case. Earlier in 1929, Boedi-Oetomo had approvingly quoted Annie Besant on the value of 'self-assurance'. Then, however, Fournier made a speech on 'Indonesian nationalism, seen from a theosophical point of view'. 'Scientific politics' should prevail over sentiment. He had no faith in an independent Indonesia. 'There was not any Indonesian nation, only an Indonesian people'. The daily Sedijjo Tasto commented that Fournier said this 'purely to be able to bring about a co-operation of all groups of the people with the Government. The Government will be grateful to the lecturer."

In a letter to the daily Bintang Timor in 1929, Mohamed Tabrani claimed he had resigned from the PRI, as 'it had decided to base itself on theosophy'. He founded the weekly Revue Politik in May 1930. Months later, he also founded the moderate Partai Rakjat Indonesian, Indonesian People's Party, of which he became chairman. Rakjat was the PRI forthwith. Another PRI leader was Raden Mas Soeripto, nephew of the suhunan of Surakarta. Governor-General De Graeff wrote he had helped Tabrani.

A second attempt by cooperating nationalists to attract some of the PNI's membership was launched by Tabrani just two days before the PNI leaders' trial opened in Bandung on 18 August 1930. Tabrani was mistrusted largely because he was a member of the Theosophical Society organisation, 'Servants of the Indies', which was considered anti-nationalist. He and the other leaders were accused of holding associationist ideas and opposing the PNI [Perhimpunan Indoansia] while students in the Netherlands.

Supporters of the PNI, whose symbol was the banteng, saw Tabrani's PRI as merely a kancell. Members of the PNI youth league made it 'nearly impossible' for Tabrani to 'make propaganda speeches anywhere'. Once, a student at a meeting gave Tabrani a leaflet. As the orator looked at it, he said it described him as a 'windy no-good'. Tabrani was so shocked that he stopped his speech immediately, and did not resume that
night. An estimate of PRI membership was only 200. The PRI stood politically for 'independence' in the form of 'dominion status', to be attained by parliamentary means. Economically, it stood for 'development in the direction of a modern monetary economy and with adjustment to the international exchange', also with stimulation of 'Indonesian economical initiative'.

A Budi Utomo attempt to work closely with the new party misfired; a Madurese promoter of business interests like Tabrani did not automatically have the same ideas as Javanese aristocrats. He had criticized Noto Soeroto's monthly Oedaya [Rise] for being promoted by the Dutch government. Noto Soeroto criticized supporters of independence in The Hague in 1927:

National sovereignty and independence have become very relative categories now, if only because of the universal phenomenon of the world economy. In an ideal union of both nations, the Dutchman will be able to rise to a purer and higher type of his people, and the Easterner to a similar type of his particular group.

Indies TS General Secretary J. Kruisheer commented: 'Lord Noto Soeroto states the only correct viewpoint, in our opinion.'

Noto Soeroto advocated the caste system, which led to 'happy acceptance of one's social condition, without envying the apparent privileges of other classes, social categories or groups.' In 1931, he published a book on his 'aristo-democratic' political system, invoking Plato, in the vein of Soerioekosomo and Van der Leeuw. It differed from Wederopbouw times in proposing 'local autonomy' for Java, no longer political autonomy. Even this, though, was suspect to supporters of Indonesian unity.

The 'democratic' part of the system would be kabupaten councils. They would be elected very indirectly, like the organs that Annie Besant had proposed for India. The councils would have only advisory powers, so as not to hamper the 'aristoi', the bupati. For 'in certain families, one is born with qualities which one needs for the art of government; they have become instincts.' After his break seven years earlier with Perhimpunan Indonesia, Noto Soerato now, less spectacularly, also became secluded from the hardline colonialist right: he stopped contributing to the paper De Rijkseenheid [Imperial Unity].

Noto Soeroto went back to Indonesia in February 1932. A committee of admirers, including fellow author and prominent Dutch TS member Miss Tony de Ridder, paid his fare. He found out he had become isolated there too. Though opposing parliamentary rule, he tried to get nominated to the Volksraad; in vain, however. Only the Theosophical Society gave him a platform for lecturing to sizable numbers of people. He declined for instance from his Wayang Songs. The concluding lines of one of these said victory might have to wait till next incarnations:

Lord, let me be a wayang [puppet] in your hands.
Then, after a hundred years, or a thousand years, Your hand will make me move again ...
And one day, my enemies will be silent, and the demon will lie down.
Lord, let me be a wayang in your hands.

The TS considered this ‘great Javanese poet’s ‘Aristo-democracy’: ‘Now, it is clear that he was a visionary!’ His reunion with Mangkoe Negoro VII was ‘like the two brothers Krishna and Baladeva.’ He also met Sukarno, but disagreed with his ideas.

The Indonesian delegation to the All Asia Women's Conference, in Lahore, 19-25 January 1931, consisted of three PNI supporters. Mrs Roekmini Santoso was a daughter of the bupati of Jepara, and sister of Raden Adjeng Kartini (1879-1904). Kartini’s writings are seen as the beginning of both women’s and national movements in Indonesia. The two others were Miss Soenarjati, a teacher like Santoso, and Soenarjati’s brother Soegondo.

After they arrived, they decided not to participate, as it was ‘not really an Asian women’s congress, but organized and led by European theosophic ladies.’ Theosophists
stood for co-operation with governments, unlike the PNI. So, the delegates limited their presence to an informal chat at a tea-party at the Lahore governor’s.

The ‘theosophic’ may have bothered more than the ‘European’, in particular to Mrs. Santoso. She was one of the few Indonesians in the largely Dutch Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkiesrecht. She sat in its executive, and represented it at the first Indonesian women’s congress in 1928.1

One may measure the relative importance of the Theosophical Society in the country from the 1931 Encyclopaedie voor Nederlandsch Indië. It contained a large article, much of it on TS activities in Indonesia.2

In 1930, of the 24 full-fledged lodges, only two were outside Java, one-twelfth; outside Java lived one-third, not one-twelfth of the total population. These two lodges were an all-Dutch one in Ujung Pandang in Sulawesi, and one in atypically Sumatran Medan. In Abdool Moes’ and Datoek Soetan Maharadja’s Minangkabau region, there was only a small ‘centre’ in Bukittingi, not a full lodge.3 The Ujung Pandang lodge and the Bukittingi centre soon stopped.4 Indonesia’s TS (and LCC) had become relatively Java-centred. When the executive founded Persoon Tjahja ‘to re-establish contact with the masses’, Polderman said

We have not lost contact with the masses; that has never existed. We did lose contact with the intellectual indigenous people.’

Also politically, there was isolation from both radical nationalists and a moderate like Sutan Sjahrir. Sjahrir wrote in 1935 that ‘eastern wisdom and religion’ were wrongly ‘esteemed highly.’5 Isolation on education politics too:

In the more conservative European theosophists’ walks of life, the idea gets stronger and stronger that Indonesians have been given enough, and maybe already too much, education.6

To the leaders of Taman Siswo and Muhammadijah the Theosophical Society simply does not exist. They go their own way.7

Of the two school-founding organizations that Tilkema named, the TS had had few contacts with Muhammadijah. Much had changed, though, since Prince Soetambo
Soerioekoesomo’s early leading role in *Taman Siswa*.

Van Leeuwen did not like Tilkema’s criticism of the TS and theosophical education. In his review, he contrasted them favourably to the schools which the government did not recognize. The ‘wild schools’ to him were mostly politically, religiously, or nationalismistically biased. Very often led by the small fire of antitheses: white versus brown, rich versus poor, capitalist versus worker, etc.

In 1933, the TS of Egypt asked its sister organization in Indonesia to protest against the persecution of Jews in Germany.

The executive decided, as the TS is not a political league, and, additionally, there is no reliable information available, to decline this request.

In August, Van Leeuwen wrote on the pros and cons of fascism. He concluded the chauvinist dangers were strongest. This led to a reaction by F.J. van der Veer, FTS, defending fascism. It was ‘no danger to world peace’, having brought Germany and Italy together. There were two internationalisms: one of pacifists and ‘talking shops’, and ‘true, proud internationalism’, as also in the Boy Scouts. Theosophy had ‘the correct feeling for a corporative state’, like the fascists. In a postscript, Van Leeuwen wrote that Van der Veer had convinced him somewhat; not really entirely.

The names of the theosophist monthlies were now *De Pionier*, with Meijsko as an editor, respectively *Purawatan Hidup* [Unity of Life]. The *TT* report on 1933 said membership had decreased by 300. That was as with other organizations in the years of economic downturn. Many Dutch dropped out, or went back to The Netherlands; many Indonesians could afford little. On 30 September 1934, 1184 members were left of 3628. *Sv AN LEEUWEN (1934), 143. TiNI Apr. 1935, 90.*

1934 it founded the *Algemeene Centrale Bank* (General Central Bank), a limited liability company, also representing the big Dutch insurance firm *De Nederlanden van 1845* for the Indies, and handling Liberal Catholic Church finances. 20,000 of its 100,000 guilders original capital were TS property. Five unnamed members owned the other 80,000. Van Leeuwen and Mrs J.A.E. van Blommestein-Land were its Board of Directors: suffragan bishop Monseigneur Fournier its manager.

In spite of membership losses, Van Leeuwen sounded optimistic in his Diamond Jubilee greetings to Arundale.

Theosophy is for the Dutch Indies a source of ever refreshing Inspiration. Notwithstanding the difficulties of a Colonial Society, where two races are always somewhat opposed to each other. Theosophy is acceptable to both ... The Indonesian people has assimilated several Religions and Philosophies [sic] and Theosophy is to her a Synthesis and a Solution of all problems, by its Message of the Divine Wisdom: The Dutch people has always striven for Freedom and Equality and to her Theosophy is to her [sic] the Apotheosis of that Ideal Message of Universal brotherhood, based on the Truth of the [sic] its One Life.

As membership had shrunk, so had interest in politics. From 1930-4, Fournier sat in the Volksraad as government-appointed member. He was also chairman of the by now small *Nederlandsch-Indische Voogdij Bond*. Fournier, though, disappeared from the council; so did the *NIVB* from the political parties’ list. When the Tasikmalaya lodge proposed that the TS should nominate three candidates for the Volksraad, the executive and the general meeting blocked this. Van Leeuwen had also lost his enthusiasm of two decades ago for strengthening the armed forces. In 1936, Dutch founded a committee *Let op uw Saar*, similar to the earlier *Indië Weerbaar*. As least one FTS wrote to Van

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1STANGE, § 48: ‘Taman Siswa philosophy ... resonated with the teachings of the Theosophical Society and Maria Montessori’ is more correct for early, Soerioekoesomo, says TSUCHIYA (1987), 52-3; suggests a link between Soewardi Soerianingrat’s views on education and Rudolf Steiner; that was ‘not clear’ though. REEV (1985), 12, with neither Tsuchiya’s caution nor Steiner’s quote or other proof, says Steiner influenced Soewardi. Steiner wrote mainly on education after he started his first ‘Waldorf school’, sponsored by Waldorf Astoria cigarettes; after the economic downturn. Many Dutch dropped out, or went back to The Netherlands; many Indonesians could afford little. On 30 September 1934, 1184 members were left of 3628. TiNI Apr. 1935, 90.

The membership of individual lodges was not as nationally plural as the total membership. In 1935, the Malang lodge had 46 members, all ‘European’. Of all the 35 lodges and ‘centres’, 15 had only ‘Indigenous’ and/or ‘Foreign Oriental’ members. These were mainly the ones with fewer members, in smaller towns.

Though its printing company had failed, the economic crisis had not wiped out TS finances. In 1934 it founded the *Algemeene Centrale Bank* (General Central Bank), a limited liability company, also representing the big Dutch insurance firm *De Nederlanden van 1845* for the Indies, and handling Liberal Catholic Church finances. 20,000 of its 100,000 guilders original capital were TS property. Five unnamed members owned the other 80,000. Van Leeuwen and Mrs J.A.E. van Blommestein-Land were its Board of Directors: suffragan bishop Monseigneur Fournier its manager.

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Leeuwen that he should have been more positive towards it.1

Already in Dec. 1928, Jong-Java had decided to merge with the all-Indonesia youth league Pamoedoe Indonesia, against the objections of founder Satiman.2 Budi Utomo merged with other groups in 1935. The name of the new merger party, Partai Indonesia Raya, Great Indonesia Party, marked a break with Javanese nationalism like Soerikoesoemo's. Socially, it was still conservative.3 Its chairman became one of BU's early leaders, Raden Soetomo. He had known Van Hinlooven Labberton well and had contributed to Wederobouw. In 1924, he had founded a well-known study group as a less controversial sequel to Satiman's Javanese Intellectuals' League. Bupati Woerjaningrat became vice-chairman. Was he then still an FS as earlier on?

Tabrani in 1933 became chairman of the journalists' league PERDI.4 In 1936, his PRI finished. Then, in his daily Pemandangan, he supported the petition of Volksraad member Soeardjo, which asked the Dutch government for more autonomy.5 In 1940, Tabrani had a conflict with the nationalist leader and Volksraad vice president Thamrin, and charged his job from Pemandangan to the government publicity service. After 1940 he no longer was PERDI/ chairman. He was suspected of supplying the government with information which led to Thamrin's 1941 arrest; Thamrin died five days afterwards.6

A.J. Hamerster, former Indies government official and TS treasurer in Adyar, went to Ceylon as a Buddhist monk in the 1930's. He wrote in Maha Bodhi with James Arthur as his pen name.

In 1932, the Netherlands Indies government sent Ong Soe Aan, chairman of the Giri Lojo TS lodge in Bandung, to Madras to study opium policy. Ong also went to Adyar. There, Jinarajadasa introduced him to another Maha Bodhi author, the Buddhist monk Narada Thera from Ceylon. Narada had a speaking tour in Indonesia's TS lodges in 1934, converting many to his religion. According to Iem Brown, that mission was of singular importance to the history of Buddhism in Indonesia.7 Two years later, Jinarajadasa came.

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1Brief van den Voorzitter N. I. T. V., TNI Jan 1937, 2.
2PLUVIER, 132. VAN MIERT(1935), 334.
3Sostomo's opening speech, first Parindra congress, 23 Dec. 1935: Parindra 'makes the best effort to woo them [the upper priyayi (interpretation by Anderson), so that their dedication to the land and the people could be accelerated according to their own dharma, that is, the dharma of a true ksatriya according to their aristocratic blood.' Quoted Benedict O'Gorman Anderson, A time of darkness and a time of light: Transposition in Early Indonesian Nationalist Thought', in REID/MARR, 218-46; 246.
4LARSON(1987), 168.
5PLUVIER, 165.
6TABRANI(1974), 307. PLUVIER, 123. Ibid., 124f: militant nationalists were originally divided on the petition, but most ended up supporting it.
7L. DE JONG, vol. 11a, 571-5.
8Van Leeuwen (1934), 145. BROWN, 9-11; 16. TNI Nov. 1934, 123; this was the 'Occult Hierarchy's plan' for Java.

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Also in 1934 and 1936, the leading US theosophist Geoffrey Hodson visited Java. The second time, he spoke not only to theosophical, but also to Rotary branches. Mangkoe Negoro VII invited him to a wayang performance, and later to a dance, at his palace. Hodson was not that positive on his stay; what struck him in particular were many animal sacrifices and much black magic among the people of Java. He remarked on contacts between humble Javanese and their august supernatural beings, like the goddess of the Southern Sea:

It appears unlikely that any ordinary Fourth ['Atlantean'] Root-Race man would connect these great Beings.2

In 1939, Hodson wrote in the TS press of Australia and Indonesia, on that year's contradiction between 'democratic' and 'totalitarian' governments. He thought:

It is clear that a compromise between the democratic ideal's complete freedom of thought and action, and the totalitarian state's complete subjection of the individual to the state will have to be found... What will the solution? As I have already made clear, it will be benevolent and wise autocracy. Autocracy rules in the inner worlds. Autocracy rules in the Inner Government of the world. A time will come, when what is esoteric now, will become exoteric. The Toltecs' Golden Age will be repeated once more on this planet.

The Dutch East Indies TS executive consisted of 'Sister van Blommestein-Lind', nine Dutch men, of whom Van Leeuwen was chairman and fourier vice-chairman, Chinese, and three Javanese, in 1937. Next year, after 25 years, the theosophical teachers' training school had to close down because of finances. Theosophic in Nederlandse-Indie mentioned plans that the 1942 theosophical world congress would be in Java.6

Then other visitors came. The few thousand Indonesians, whom the army conscripted then 25 years after Indie Weerbaar, could not stop them. Thirty-one years after joining the TS, Sultanhan Palace Boewono XI died in 1944. One oral tradition says of poison, for not accommodating enough to the Japanese army.7

After 1945, the TS was suspect to Indonesians, because of the connection with the...
Dutch. The prewar name Annie Besant Square in Semarang (like Olcott Park in Bandung, Blavatsky Park immediately west of Koningsplein, renamed Merdeka Square, in Jakarta) disappeared from the city map. The road signs with Mrs Besant's name are still there in Madras. In this too, Indonesia differed from India, even though Jawaharlal Nehru, looking back, still criticized Annie Besant's policies.

3. CONCLUSIONS OF PART V

As for our question on apoliticism, the many connections we have found with Indian politics clearly answer it in the negative. This is also true for Indonesia; though there, decline in membership and influence in the 1930's did mark a retreat from politics compared to earlier on. In Ceylon, national independence was not high on the political agenda until the 1930's, when TS influence had declined much. The party putting it on the agenda, the LSSP, was primarily an internationalist labour, not a nationalist, party.

Now, our second question, on the TS' position in the political spectrum as far as national movements are concerned. Both in India and Indonesia 1918 marked a zenith in influence. While very soon afterwards, in India Annie Besant clashed with Congress on non-co-operation, in Indonesia this became an acute conflict later, though perhaps leaving more marks, in the 1920's. The TS in India allied itself with the co-operationist Liberals. In Indonesia, relations were good with socially conservative, not sharply anti-colonial 'ethnic' nationalists of Java and West Sumatra.

In Indonesia, the conflict with the labour movement preceded the one with the national movement; while it was rather the other way round in India.

Now, individuals' opinions. When Sinnett, after joining the TS, wrote more positively on Indians in his daily The Pioneer, Master K11 in a letter complimented him: 'Such is the first political fruit of the society you have the honour to belong to.' More shifts of this type probably happened. They were mainly limited to views on elites among non-Europeans though, seen as 'Aryan', not to views on for instance Javanese hill area villagers. They also had less to do with theosophists' views on home rule or independence, than with views on 'race' theories. To go deeper into this would require a part of its own.

1. GEERTZ (1960), 342. Ibid., 340: in Pare, during the post-1945 war, Dutch and pro-Dutch Indonesian police chiefs, both in the TS, formed the Budi Setia meditation group, with an all-priyayi membership. In 1934, Sapardjo was secretary of the Pare TS lodge; TiN Doc. 1934, 153.

2. STEVENS (1994), 361: in 1961, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and Rotary were banned in Indonesia.

3. Personal communication from Prof. Bambang Hidayat in Lembang.

4. Quoted In June 1932, 350. In 1879, HPB refused to print in TT, as a 'religious' paper, a complaint about unfair treatment of Indians in the Civil Service, though she sympathized with its contents. BCW, II, 161. In July 1886, Sinnett wrote in the Transactions of the London TS Lodge that the people of India 'are on a somewhat lower level of cosmic evolution'. HPB opposed this: 'How many times have I told you that if, as a race, they [Indians] are lower than Europeans it is only physically and in the matter of civilization or rather what you yourselves have agreed to regard as civilization? ' TM (1951), 112.
PART VI. THE WHITE BROTHERHOOD: HOW ABOUT SISTERHOOD?

1. WOMEN IN RELIGIONS AND IN THE TS

At the TS’ time of foundation, women were subordinate in most religions. Their subordination in society and religious community was religiously sanctioned.

Even so, many saw religion as a suitable field of activity for women; usually, if their needed activities were on lower levels of it, like passing on religious values to sons, or scrubbing church floors.

When the Theosophical Society started in New York in 1875, two out of sixteen members were women. Of the first 24 Australian FTS joining 1879-1883, not one was a woman. However, this gradually changed, until in the 1920’s women were a slight majority of Australian members, though a minority of officials. Since 1888, ‘without distinction of sex’ had been in the TS Objects.

How did their fathers, husbands, etc., who, according to the ideology of society as it was, were supposed to ‘keep them in line’, see their theosophical activity? Sir Edwin Lutyens, the only honorary FTS, mixed positive and negative feelings. He wrote on his wife Lady Emily and Annie Besant:

She has courage - her astral concentration theory frightens me; but, to the point, she has absorbed this summer all my wife’s energies in her propaganda. All I can say that is better than suffragettes!

Other husbands might like a ‘suitable activity’ for wives as they might other religious activity. The wives, however, could do it at a more equal level - sometimes an equal level - with men than in the great majority of other religious activity. This made the TS attractive to religion-minded women at a time when some old barriers fell, and others started to show cracks.

At the same time, the TS did not require that they broke with social virtues.

1 LEADBINDER(1922), 369: ‘They look on religion as a nice sort of thing to amuse the ladies’. One can think of treasures on the Vatican, paid for by taxes the Papal State levied all the many pilgrims attracted by the many pilgrims to Rome. There is a certain parallel to cooking: women do the bulk of it, unpaid; once it gets paid, and certainly if highly paid, men do most of it.

2 ROE, 14.

3 ROE, 185: in 1918/19, 97 men, 153 women joined Australia’s TS. In 1928/29, 25 men, 63 women. ROE, 182: 1891-1925 32% of lodge presidents and secretaries. 18% of presidents only, were women. In the LT community, 63% were women in 1900, 58% in 1910; S.M. WRIGHT, 37. On the 1990-10 drop, she has a general theory of ‘need for “male labor”’, she does not test it for the Lorna TS case.

JINARAJADASA(1925), 249.

4 LUTYENS, 37f.

5 HUSSIEY, 172.

traditionally reserved for women (like ‘chastity, sacrifice’, ‘self-sacrifice’). These were asked for in many religions, especially from women; sometimes by other women higher up, but mostly by men higher up, who apparently had to sacrifice less.

6 Women’s high visibility in the TS made some of its opponents use sexism as an ‘argument’. They spoke of it as ‘hysterical women’, or, more subtly, disapproving that its leaders were not all male as they ought to be: ‘[the TS] leading men - I should say women.’

Did this mean that there was no difference between the types of activities of men, and of women, theosophists? In 1918, Mrs Corporaal-van Achterbergh of the Dutch East Indies suggested there was; in the sense that women’s activities were internal, while practical application in the wider social and political spheres was almost exclusively an all-male affair.

This part is rather small, as I found in my sources more information on women’s movements in Europe than on Asia. I limited the European part to what was necessary as background to Asia.


3 John Stuart Mill, ibid., ascribed much of the difference between men and women in tendencies towards self-sacrifice, to philosophies and religions.

4 BOLLANDX(1911), 123 approvingly quoted Olcott’s criticism of an 1879 HPB article. Bolland thought it ‘an extremely female hothouse speech’ (‘een buitengewoon vrouwelijk hutspeu’).

5 LUNS, 6. ‘Hysterical’: ROHM, 77, ibid., 21; he held her divorce against AB. The social democrat KOCH(1915) saw as one category of TS members: ‘women, or rather: ladies, who are either unmarried or unhappily married, and, for want of a husband, embrace theosophical doctrine.’

6 CORPORAAL-VAN ACHTERBERGH, 118: ‘And now, within the Theosophical Society, this is the peculiar phenomenon: while in all of the Theosophical Society one finds a striving to apply the knowledge one has acquired in practice, in work within society, in imitation of our president’s [AB’s] work, this really is true only for our male members, while the female ones are practically completely out of this’.

What were the views of the ‘mother and creator of the Society’, Helena Petrovna Blavatskaja, on women? Meade tends to see HPB as anti-feminist; Roe as pro-feminist. Her views were complex; for instance

H. P. B., always told me that her successor would be a woman, long before Annie Besant had become a member of the T. S. 3

On the other hand, in the Mahatma Letters: ‘Verily woman is a dreadful calamity in this fifth race.’ 4 And in the Secret Doctrine

the pure maleness is purely divine and spiritual, while the female in a sense is polluted by matter, it is, indeed, matter, and therefore an evil. 5

When Madame Blavatsky wrote on the TS’ Three Objects, she omitted the recent addition of ‘without distinction of sex’. 6

What were views on abortion, inside and outside the Theosophical Society? A doctor from Colorado, who had joined the still few US theosophists, asked Madame Blavatsky:

‘Is Foeticide a Crime?’ Not that I personally have any serious doubts about the unlawfulness of such an act; but the custom prevails to such an extent in the United States that there are comparatively only few persons who can see any wrong in it. Medicines for this purpose are openly advertised and sold; in ‘respectable families’ the ceremony is regularly performed every year, and the family physician who would presume to refuse to undertake the job, would be peremptorily dismissed, to be replaced by a more accommodating one. I have conversed with physicians, who have no more conscientious scruples to produce an abortion, than to administer a physic, on the other hand there are certain tracts from orthodox [Christian] channels published against this practice, but they are mostly so overdrawn. 7

Madame Blavatsky replied: ‘Theosophy in general answers: “At no age as under no circumstance whatever is murder justifiable!” Not because of “one or another orthodox ism”, but as abortion was a “crime against nature”, “interference with the operation of nature, hence with KARMA”, and “double suicide.”’

3. ANNIE BESANT FROM ‘FULL-FLEDGED FEMINIST’ TO DELICATE BALANCE

‘My first public lecture should be on behalf of my own sex’, Annie Besant wrote of 1874 beginning of her career. During her pre-1889 period, she had literary, but hardly organizational influence on the young movement of women.

the women’s suffrage movement did not dare accept her, a militant anti-Christian, among their ranks. 8

In pamphlets like Marriage in 1882, she attacked violent husbands. In her Our Corner magazine, she wrote on subjects like ‘Some Advanced Women in the Past’, and ‘Anti-Slavery Women’. 9 Reva Pollock Greenburg considers her, in the time before she

For, indeed, when even successful and the mother does not die just then, it still shortens her life on earth to prolong it with dreary percentage in Kamaloka. ... Of course the people of whatever class will sneer at our notions and call them absurd superstitions and “unscientific twaddle”. But we do not write for sceptics. 1

Madame Blavatsky not only opposed the feminist view on the right to abortion, but also breaking down the barriers between sexes. As is evident in her attack we mentioned earlier on the Russian ‘ nihilist’ democrats:

The names of John Stuart Mill, Darwin, and Büchner, were upon the lips of every beardless boy and every heedless girl at the universities and colleges. The former were preaching Nihilism, the latter Women’s Rights and Free Love ... The one let their hair grow like muzhiks [peasants]; the other clipped their hair short and affected blue spectacles. 2

Indian child marriage appalled HPB as an individual; she never campaigned for its abolition though. 3 She did not criticize orthodox Hindus’ ban on widows remarrying:

If a female has entered the marital relation, she should, in my opinion, remain a chaste widow, if her husband should die. 4

1. Ibid., 283. Kamaloka is the equivalent in theosophy of purgatory in Christian theology.
2. Anarchist Emma Goldman, for instance, who left the Russian empire for the US like HPB, though of poor parents, propagated pro-choice views on abortion in the late nineteenth century. CUMBEY, 41; 59, opposing both occultism and abortion, wrongly lumped them together in her conspiracy-led-by-Satan theory.
3. Russian universities then did not take girls, heedless or not.
5. MEADE, 207; 480. Unlike Van Hulooko Labberton in Indonesia; see p. 285.
7. BESANT (1893), 181.
8. DUNNAGE (1986), 31. Her speeches and free speech court cases attracted many young women though.
9. POLLOCK GREENBURG, 15.
joined the TS, 'the first full-fledged feminist.'  

In demanding reproductive rights and sexual satisfaction for women, Annie Besant was clearly a century ahead of her times.

W.P. Ball, a fellow freethinker opposed to her socialism, wrote of Annie Besant: 'like most women, at the mercy of her last male acquaintance for her views on economics ...' Her 1885 reaction to this was 'stupendous male self-conceit'. And her theosophic 1893 reaction to her 1885 reaction: 'A foolish paragraph'.

Nethercot in a way echoed Ball, when he looked for the clue ... to her mutable career ... she yearned to be a martyr. At the same time she was extremely susceptible to outside personal influences, particularly of a masculine nature.

Annie Besant's joining the TS marked a ceasing or lowering of her involvement in progressive movements, women's movements among them. Madame Blavatsky objected to contraception, as it interfered with souls seeking reincarnation. She changed Besant's earlier views on birth control to 'restriction of the sexual relation to the perpetuation of the race'. She made Mrs Besant withdraw her pre-TS book *The law of population*.

According to Reva Pollock Greenburg, Annie Besant:

ceased publication of *The Law of Population* [sic] and refused to sell the copyright, depriving the public of one of the few explicit and inexpensive manuals on birth control, and one of the few well-reasoned arguments in favour of feminine control on reproduction.

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1 POLLOCK GREENBURG, 13.
2 POLLOCK GREENBURG, 15.
3 BESANT(1893), 315f.

Ibid. Contrary to OREN, 90 she did not write, only quoted, the 'self-conceit' in 1893.

1 NETHERCOT(1963), 117; CLEATHER(1922A), 19-20 agrees; TAYLOR(1992), 161; 290 disputes this. Engels wrote to German socialist Kautsky on Annie Besant: 'Mother B. always is of the religion of the man who has subjected her.' *MEW*, vol. 38 (Berlin: Dietz, 1968), 191; letter to Karl Kautsky (Stuttgart), London, 25 October 1891, 190.1. Sylvia Pankhurst's biographer Patricia Romero has a similar doubt. Engels on her subject: AB's feminist biographer Rosamond Dinage has a sort of non-sexist variation on Ball's theme: DINAGE, 51: 'Later, set of beliefs from the latest strongest personality'. Besant herself suggested Edward Aveling had become a socialist, as he had fallen in love with Eleanor Marx; TAYLOR(1992), 165-6. Things may work the other way around if one moves from one social environment and/or philosophy to another (see p. 73), one may become attracted to different types of people than before.

1 ROE, 311.

3 BESANT(1910C), 99. Much earlier, in BESANT(1876), 7, though: 'pay women, for the same work, the same wage that men receive; let sex be no disqualification; let women be trained to labour, and educated for self-support'.

2 E. LUTYENS, 32-3.

3 BESANT(1910C), 99. Much earlier, in BESANT(1876), 7, though: 'pay women, for the same work, the same wage that men receive; let sex be no disqualification; let women be trained to labour, and educated for self-support'.

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1 POLLOCK GREENBURG, 27. This recalls a question we have already discussed for Annie Besant: a shift 'away from politics' upon becoming a theosophist? Or towards a different type in politics?

2 BESANT(1910C), 99. Much earlier, in BESANT(1876), 7. though: 'pay women, for the same work, the same wage that men receive; let sex be no disqualification; let women be trained to labour, and educated for self-support'.

3 TAYLOR(1992), 83-4. BESANT(1910C), 99. Much earlier, in BESANT(1876), 7, though: 'pay women, for the same work, the same wage that men receive; let sex be no disqualification; let women be trained to labour, and educated for self-support'.

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1 TAYLOR(1992), 165. Things may work the other way around if one moves from one social environment and/or philosophy to another (see p. 73), one may become attracted to different types of people than before.

2 NETHERCOT(1963), 344 suggests she supported the OSE in the 1920's; but the then was a more traditional, Adventist, Christian. Sylvia PANKHURST(1931), 90, on her mother Emmeline, suggests a follow-up to 1880's friction: 'Annie Besant, then active in the cause, whose short skirts and short hair Mrs. Pankhurst thought hideous.' Ibid., 91: 'It was said that Mrs. Blavatsky, had been seen to extend her arm to abnormal length, in order to light a cigarette at the gas jet in the ceiling. Mrs. Pankhurst and her sisters attended some of the seances, but nothing remarkable happened during their presence, Mrs. Pankhurst was completely skeptical and dismissed Blavatsky's occult phenomena as mere imposture.'
Annie Besant

Motherhood never materialized but I wrote a book called The Call of the Mother ... ¹
Margaret Cousins quoted what Annie Besant had said to her: ‘You can work better with women than I can, you know them better.’ ²

According to Jinanarajasa, Annie Besant during her last years before 1933 did not want to stay a woman.

She has her eyes fixed on the future, particularly on a swift respite in an Indian body. Her preference is for a Kshattriya body—of course, a male one—for she says that in her inmost nature she is a Warrior.³

Both outright opponents of the women’s movement and militant feminists were minorities in the TS. Annie Besant’s later views agreed with this.

A FIGHTING ‘VICE’

One can observe the shift in Annie Besant’s views on women in general also in her specific views on prostitutes.

Anti-prostitution crusades, in which she joined forces with the Salvation Army, were a favourite cause of Annie Besant’s colleague, William T. Stead;⁴ and of many others at the 19th century’s end. Opinions on the subject differed, though. Ellen Ross discusses

social purity leader Ellice Hopkins and feminist Josephine Butler (in Britain in the 1870’s-80’s). .. Both did “rescue work” among prostitutes, but Butler deplored Hopkins’s antivice crusades. Butler’s movement was explicitly feminist and was committed to defending the civil rights of the same prostitutes whom Hopkins was trying to drive off the streets.

In her atheist and later also socialist days, Annie Besant based herself on Josephine Butler, whose ‘heroism equalled by few women or by few men either’⁵ she admired. She thought

‘Ladies in the upper classes have no conception of the stress and agony that drives many a forlorn girl “on the streets”. If some of them would try what life is like when it consists of making shifts at three halfpence each (money not provided) and starving on the money earned, they would perhaps learn to speak more gently of “those horrid women”.’⁶

Annie Besant then did not consider prostitutes as really at a lower moral level than many of the married women.

“If a woman may not earn a living by selling her labour,” she wrote “she must earn it by

¹E. LUTYENS, 127.
²COUSINS(1934), 391.
³WT, 77 March 1933, 1.
⁴WILSON(1970), 63.
⁶BESANT(1876), 1.
⁷BESANT(1876), 7.

³When Madame Blavatsky reviewed Alexandre Dumas fils’ plea in favour of voting rights for women, she strongly objected to his view that the profession of prostitute should be legal.⁷ A quarter of a century later, Annie Besant addressed her theosophic followers as follows:

There are women amongst you pure and clean and good; there are women in the streets who lack every virtue you possess. Oh, your purity would be brighter if you shared the impure, and tried to raise your sisters to that which is the blessing of your own lives.⁸

Her approach had shifted from differences in level of finance to differences in level of virtue: from women with bad or good luck, to women in the perspective of meaningful karma. To Annie Besant now, anti-prostitution was central to the women’s movement:“that heroic struggle ... the terrible battle against prostitution. And the fight against prostitution was also partly won, but there is very much more to do in that, and that is one of the reasons why the women’s vote is wanted so badly.”⁹

Dutch East Indies General Secretary D. van Hlinloopen Labberton thought:

Work is one of the best ways of education. In Semarang, I saw in the women’s prison how the morality improved by weaving and batikting. Also in fighting prostitution, one finds that the Native woman needs only the bijet (weaving bath) or the janger (little wax [pen-like] jug) harder to forget all sensuality, and so return to a chaste way of life.¹⁰

The question for Rukmini Devi Arundale at the start of her successful career as a dancer and dance group leader was not so much prohibiting prostitution as distancing herself from it. She made Tamil Nadu’s Bharata Natya dancing respectable by doing it herself; before, it had been ‘practised exclusively by the courtesans’.¹¹

¹¹POLLOCK GREENBURG, 17. quoted and comments. WIERINGA(1995), 80. Indonesian Suwarni Pringgodigdo stated the question similarly in 1933.
¹³BESANT(1914C), 39.
¹⁴BESANT(1914B), 7.
¹⁵De nieuwe strafwetgeving voor Nederlandsch-Indi?, TMNI, 1918, 50, ‘Oproep’, TMNI 1918, 175, called on readers to fight all sex outside marriage: ‘fight prostitution, non-Malthusianism [birth control], homosexuality and all other forms of vice in deed, word, or thought.’¹⁶
¹⁶N. Sobhananam, ‘Rukmini Arundale’, RAY, vol. 1, 57. J. Michael Kennedy, CIS, Dec. 1992, 333, writes of ‘Brahmanised Bharathanatyam’. The question of distancing themselves also came with Indian Congress women street demonstrators, whom their enemies compared to ‘street women’ in the sense of prostitutes. Gandhi told prostitutes wanting to join the Congress to change their profession first; THAPAR, 87. COUSINS(1941), 70: ‘the Devadasi or dancing girl heard the call of Mahatmaji (Gandhi) and left her vocation braving the treatment she might be given by her
4. INDIA

One influence on theosophy, orthodox Hinduism, in its doctrines had barriers against the equality of women. In *Lucifer*, a Hindu defended death by fire for widows, and prohibiting widows from re-marrying. Bernard, the former French Joint GS, defended orthodox Hinduism on women's position within it, basing this on reincarnation theory.

G. N. Chakravarti, a leading Indian member of the TS and later an important adviser of Annie Besant, wrote an article against a Madras runaway wife. In it, he asserted male authority in marriage. A critical reaction to this by Captain Bonon appeared in a later issue.

In India, in 1893, the year Annie Besant first came there, 'for the first time native ladies would attend the coming convention' of the TS. Krishna Dasa commented on Besant's views of Indian women's issues:

she ... rushed to the defence and sometimes deprecated interference even with customs (like child marriage and enforced widowhood), which were really against the Hindu Shastras, lest the high spiritual and sacramental ideal on which the institution of marriage and the relation between husband and wife were based in the Hindu Shastras be lowered.

Catherine Westinger calls this 'a complete reversal of Besant's feminist stance, taken as a young atheist'.

In the *Adyar Bulletin* of Dec. 1908, 370-1, Mohibai E. Balsivila wrote 'Theosophy and Womanhood'. It was one of the very few articles by an Indian woman in theosophical magazines, though by then many Indians and many women were writing in them. In those times, outside the TS, quite some Indian women wrote in magazines.

Jawaharlal Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, remembered 1916, the year of 'respectable' fellow prisoners; but I saw the most orthodox of Brahmin women mingling socially, even eating with her, while she wept as she was being released because her Sanyagrihi sisters had rendered them greater by the adhesion...
The Liberal Catholic bishop and future TS president George Arundale defended ceremonial conservatism, adding ideas on 30's society:

... each woman is a temple of Motherhood ... how can any woman envy us who are within this [LCC] Sanctuary when she is an Altar, when she is a Priest, when she is a Sacrament, when she is an Offering all in one? Unfortunately in the world today women do not realize this splendid priesthood. Some of them seek after other priesthoods ... War ... unemployment ... these crimes exist in our midst in no small degree because woman has forgotten, or perchance does not yet know, her mission, her power, her purpose. ... Men will execute, but women will inspire, and until women do inspire the world must surely continue to suffer. 1

Rukmini Devi Arundale was practically the only exception to the rule that no Indian women wrote in TT. In a Leadbeater experiment, a novelty for Hinduism, she also figured as female purohi [officiating priest]. The experiment succeeded, Leadbeater wrote: the blue-throated Deva2 appeared.

Rukmini Devi Arundale said in her 1936 congress speech

In modern times, many people do not understand; they think that woman must be an exact likeness of man ... What many women want is freedom to be equal with man in his vices, the freedom of licence ... 3

Rukmini applied her husband's ideas to the sphere of Indian politics:

Unfortunately, many women who are active in work in the outer world tend to become somewhat hard, and even, I might say, unwomanly ... women must be womanly just as men should be mainly. The world suffers when woman strips herself of the womanliness and tends to become masculine. Often her masculinity is worse than the man's. A woman very strongly should be manly. The world suffers when woman strips herself of the womanliness and tends to become feminine in manner, speech, in appearance. 4

Since 1921, India had 80 women members of state and provincial legislatures, 'and their influence and position secured by its women'. 5 In modern times, many people do not understand; they think that woman must be an exact likeness of man ... What many women want is freedom to be equal with man in his vices, the freedom of licence ... 3

In the 1930's Indian Central Legislative Assembly, Bhagavan Das opposed the politicians', relative lack of resistance to women's suffrage favorably to her earlier experiences in England and Ireland, COUSINS(1941), 38. Until 1926, women could not be elected to legislatures. Ibid., 60 and 86; by 1940, India had 80 women members of state and provincial legislatures, 'and thus ranks third [after the USA and USSR] amongst the nations of the world as regards the political influence and position secured by its women'. 6

Rukmini Devi Arundale defended the possibility of divorce. 1

Margaret Cousins, who had been active in the Irish women's vote campaign, after moving to India paid much attention to women there. In her book The Awakening of Asian Womanhood, she contributed to the 'only women's magazine in India', SRI DHARMA (meaning in Hindu religious law 'proper conduct for wives'). SRI DHARMA's editor, Mrs Malati Patwardhan from Bombay, Honorary Magistrate of Madras, District Commissioner of the Girl Guides, frequently travelled along with Krishnamurti. 7 The magazine was linked to the Women's Indian Association, which had 2700 members by 1921. 4 While Annie Besant was still alive, Cousins duly mentioned her TS president's opposition to Gandhi's non-cooperation in it.

After Besant's death, George Arundale did not inspire comparable docility in her though, and participation in Gandhi campaigns led to jail terms for Mrs Cousins. 5 To the disappointment of Margaret and James Cousins, Arundale prevented men and women acting together in a play. 4

A. EDUCATION

All teachers must be clairvoyant; it is an absolute prerequisite for the office. 1

Some theosophical schools were: in The Netherlands the Pythagoras primary school in Ommen, and a secondary school in Naarden; the King Arthur school in Edinburgh, Scotland; in Australia till Martyn broke away and turned off the money tap. Most TS education effort, though, was in India, Ceylon and Indonesia. Before we move to women's education there, first some short general remarks on theosophy and education.

Madame Blavatsky had emphasized 'in all countries' 'non-sectarian education'. 2 Practice in Ceylon, where Christian sectarian education was the only option before she...
arrived, had already differed. Annie Besant changed the theory, however.1 In Kashmir, Besant felt that generally it was not advisable to educate children of different faiths at the same institution.2

In 1912, she formed the Theosophical Education Trust: only ES members might join.3 Most joined Krishnamurti when he split.4

Ex-school principal Arundale expressed his ideas:

I see no reason why the education of girls should not substantially be the same as for boys, but with special emphasis on the management and beauty of the home, on food values and simple medicines. And in principle I favour co-education throughout the educational system.5

The Theosophist, in March 1897,6 illustrated with tables, showed little had been done so far on women's education in British India. When Annie Besant came there she wanted to change that. But on what lines?

AB expressed her ideas, rather new to her, that women's education meant preparing girls for a future as 'Goddess of the home'.7 One might argue that was still more liberal than those who did not want any education. In 1893, Mrs Besant and Olcott met leading pandits of Benares for discussion. We found that they disapproved of education for Hindu girls in general, especially for the virgin widows.8 On the other hand, they expressed their unqualified approbation of my Sanskrit libraries and schools and societies for Hindu boys. It was amusing to see the contrast between the appearance and views of Annie Besant, the champion, for so many years, of the uplifting and education of women, and the hard, stony conservatism.9

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1. 77 Feb. 1906, 395. BESENT(19078), 176. BESENT(1911), 174. 'Over here there is much feeling in favour of secular education because you have never had it and know not its results. New Zealand has it, and her youth is a problem...racing, gambling, lack of all control and subordination.' Olcott (convention speech, 77, suppl. Nov. 1898, viii) saw the TS as a counterforce for 'the home of every Hindu boy who was exposed to' not only 'foreign missionaries' but also 'skeptic teachers'. Ibid. ex. AB called CHC 'absolutely Hindu'. See also 'Lord Curzon's sympathy with the Central Hindu College scheme', 77, suppl. Feb. 1899, xxii-xvii. 77, May 1906, 631, attributed increase in crime in Upper Burma to secular education there, contrary to religious education in Lower Burma. Gandhi, and 1930's and 40's Ceylon education minister C. Kannangara, favoured separation between school education and religion. SUMATHIPALA, 157.
2. WESSINGER(1989), 227; referring to AB's The Indian Nation, 36, But VAN HINLOOPEN LABBERTON(1919), 185 preferred non-denominational government schools to then still mainly Christian religious schools in Indonesia.
3. BROOKS(1914A).
4. 8Pundit Jawaharlal on women's education', MB, Feb. 1934, 91-2
7. Parsis then had done most on women education, compared to other religious communities. In 1901-2, 67.15% of Parsi girls were at school. MATHUR(1973), 54.
8. 77, March 1897, 331. 77, Jan. 1902, 252-3. Also 77, June 1905, 57.
9. "People did not educate their daughters to get them employment but to marry them on better terms. But as soon as a suitable bridegroom was available, the girl was at once placed in the seclusion of the purdah.' MATHUR(1973), 62.
By the other school it is argued that ... the majority of girls are precluded by early marriage from a university career ... that women with the traditional characteristics of decorous home-keeping are what the educated husbands themselves desire rather than the westernised product of the university, and that girls are, as a rule, physically incapable of the strain of a university course.1

Annie Besant would not have agreed with the last part of that sentence. As did the British India government,2 she agreed with neither view completely. Nevertheless, theosophists often sided more closely with the second, housewife, view; in Indonesia, as we will see, and in India. Looking at the TS3's social base there, this agrees with Mathur's remark on socially different views.

Son of a landlord Bhagavan Das was president, his sister Srimati Uma Nehru was secretary of Crosthwaite Girls' College, Allahabad.3 In a speech there, he explained his ideas, similar to Annie Besant's 1900's ones:

Her vocation is on the whole different from man's, and it is in every way finer and nobler ... woman's natural and noble vocation is that of wife and mother ... the woman is the head, the man the head ... .

I most earnestly pray with all the strength of my heart, that India may be saved from one particular phase of Western experience, i.e., the setting of man against woman, and woman against man.5

In the West, man and woman are said to have forgotten their older and true ideal, the same as the Indian, of better half and other half, and to be fighting for equality to-day. It is as if the right lobe and the left lobe of the same brain should fight with each other. It is madness. Our ideal has always been, not of equality, which involves odious comparison, whence conflict, but of identity of wife and husband, as two halves ... .

Nemesis has come, and they are trying to do all the things that men are doing and strive against them, in the battle of life, instead of nerveing, heartening, vitalising them for that battle. This is scarcely natural, from the Indian standpoint.

Man seems intended by nature to do all the rougher and harder outside work of "bread-winning" and all the competitive battling of life; and woman to do the comparatively less hard and more affectionate work of "house-keeping" and "home-making"; and reserve her vital power for the great toil and travail of maternity. Some very false and very mischievous catchwords have become current, in consequence of the thoughtless speech and behaviour of foolish and arrogant men, who have been insulting womanhood ... about the "household drudgery" of women and the "dignified work" of men.1

Das spoke of men, but omitted some feminists also opposing division of labour by sex.

His conclusion on the field of education was: It would be well, therefore, if girls were educated primarily for home-making, and all that it means.2

5. EDUCATION IN CEYLON. THE WELL AND THE PENDULUM

Annie Besant's views on Ceylon were similar to those on India: Sinhalese maiden's education should not prepare her for a profession; 'That evil fate has not yet descended upon the East. 'J More progressive ideas were voiced later by Wickramasinghe.6
TS involvement. That the relative influence of the Theosophical Society on education was bigger in Ceylon than in India, though, may have contributed to the literacy rate of Lankan women. It was higher than in other South Asian countries, though the 1881 starting position had not been much different.¹

An Australian, Miss Kate Pickett, became Principal of Colombo Sanghamita Girls' High School, in June 1890. On 23 June 1891, she was found drowned in a city well with a high rim, very difficult to fall into inadvertently. Christians said it had been suicide; Olcott and other theosophists during the judicial enquiry indignantly denied this:² an TS involvement. That the relative influence of the Theosophical Society on education were not automatically identical, as turned out when Mrs Musaeus Higgins sent death, joined her.) This American widow, German-born, daughter of a High Court judge,² would play a central part in the next decades of the isle's educational history.

Views of women from a German-American and from a Lanka background on girls' education were not automatically identical, as turned out when Mrs Musaeus Higgins sent in her resignation to Olcott on 21 December 1893. She had a conflict with Sanghamita's ladies' committee. Olcott wrote of its previous history:

I introduced her into office at a public meeting of the women's Society and made them pledge her that she should not be interfered with in her management of the institution. I did this because the women of Ceylon had never been associated together in any public work before and as their domestic relations and house customs differed diametrically with those of Western women, I knew that it would be impossible for Mrs. Higgins to get on with these associated Sinhalese ladies unless she were given freedom of action ².

1Olcott, L.T., March-August 1891, 510; over 6,000 attended Miss Pickett's crenamation. Theosophists are strongly anti-suicide: "suicide", then I say, most decidedly not. Such a result can never be a 'natural' one, but is ever due to a morbid brain disease, or to most decided and strong materialistic views. It is the worst of crimes and dire in its results." BLAVATSKY (1897), 227f. Report of Annie Besant lecture, L.T. June 1897, suppl., xlii: 'The lowest part of the astral world is filled by souls actuated by the lowest type of brutal and animal passions ... Suicides and executed criminals of the lowest type are flung into this state of wretchedness ... 'OELC July 1937, 'Suicide Bridge': Glendale, California bridge created 'thought forms' around a local bridge by invocation to prevent suicides. C. Janarajadasa, L.T. May 1937, on suicide: 'The more one knows ... the less one is inclined to general conclusions.'

2LTC, 6, p. 383, 1971, 71% of Sri Lankan women were literate, compared to 22% in India and 12% in Pakistan; CEBL, 150. In 1921, the figure for British India was 4.5%; computed from Encyclopaedia Britannica. London, 1932, 278. COWSINS (1914), 17, gives 2-3% for the time of writing for India as a whole; and ibid., 96. 0.5% for Bihar in 1930. For Ceylon, in 1911 the percentage was 11.7; in 1921 30.2; SUMATHIPALA, 48; 338. See also SCHWARTZBERG.

2Oltcct (1892). Olcott, L.T., March-August 1891, 510; over 6,000 attended Miss Pickett's crenamation. Theosophists are strongly anti-suicide: "suicide", then I say, most decidedly not. Such a result can never be a 'natural' one, but is ever due to a morbid brain disease, or to most decided and strong materialistic views. It is the worst of crimes and dire in its results." BLAVATSKY (1897), 227f. Report of Annie Besant lecture, L.T. June 1897, suppl., xlii: 'The lowest part of the astral world is filled by souls actuated by the lowest type of brutal and animal passions ... Suicides and executed criminals of the lowest type are flung into this state of wretchedness ... 'OELC July 1937, 'Suicide Bridge': Glendale, California bridge created 'thought forms' around a local bridge by invocation to prevent suicides. C. Janarajadasa, L.T. May 1937, on suicide: 'The more one knows ... the less one is inclined to general conclusions.'

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6. INDONESIA

How to react to women’s emancipation was a theme in three of the categories in which the TS had members: Dutch, Sunnaitrans, and to a lesser extent Javanese around Weerdhoofden magazine.

On 26 October 1911, the theosophist 'Mr. S. v. d. W.' lectured to the Batavia (Jakart) branch of the Dutch Women's Suffrage League. Very probably, she was the local teacher Miss Marie Simone van der Willigen, later to be involved with the Goenoeng Sari school. She said theosophy saw people as being at distinct hierarchical levels, comparable to age differences in a family. Sex differences differed from that, though. There is a difference between a man from our environment and our civilization, and a woman from the non-subject tribes in the interior of Borneo, so you could consider that man to be at a higher level than that woman; but the same difference exists between a man from those regions, and a civilized woman from our society.² Becoming a woman

To regain that freedom of action now, land for a new school had to come from Peter de Abrew. Later financial contributions came from Albert Schwartz. On 1-5-1895, Dr. W.A.E. English, then associated with Mrs Higgins’ school, became the TT sub-editor.¹ Her new school was successful. Sometimes maybe too successful, if one takes for a yardstick the tone that was set in Mrs Besant’s speeches:

We offer Mrs. Higgins our congratulations; although we cannot say that our ideal of education for Sinhalese girls is to make them B.A.’s, ‘G.H.’ (good housewife) would be more to our taste.²

Mrs Musaeus Higgins’ 1920 retirement plans³ and 1926 death were markers in the downswing of the pendulum of Adyar influence in Ceylon. Though her school’s official De Abrew still looked among theosophics for contacts.

three free Buddhist scholarships, attached to Musaeus college ... three ladies of any nationality, between the ages of 32 and 40, who are well educated Buddhists, with a Buddhist missionary spirit ... apply to Mr. Peter de Abrew F.T.S., M.B.E.³

1LTC, 7T Jan. 1904, 195
²TT, Suppl. Feb. 1903, xii. 'Mrs. Higgins' success'.
³BESANT (1921), 505. 'Mrs Higgins sorely needs an English Theosophical graduate, who can succeed in her place.'

¹TT March 1937, XIV.
²NUGRAHA (1989), 136. She was from a prominent Dutch family. RANI 1912, 322; 1914, 312; 816; she was 'first class' (the highest rank) teacher, in Banyas since 1901. As one of only two women teachers then, the government gave her an order of knighthood. On 5-5-1913, she went to The Netherlands on leave. At least during the World War, she did not return. She probably was the 'M. van der Willigen' who wrote VAN DER WILLIGEN (1917) on the Indo-Westerner delegates as the TS meeting. In 1933, Marie Simone van der Willigen published a Dutch translation of Mabel Collins’ The Idyll of the White Lotus as TUM.
³VAN DER WILLIGEN (1911), 1.
was not low-level, though it was different:

I just said, one needs an incarnation as a woman for developing female characteristics. In that, I think, there is also a warning for those fighters for women's rights, who think that they serve their cause best by considering themselves man's equal as far as possible, and show that by copying his characteristics, habits, and acts. Also for parents who think that they help their girls most by bringing them up similarly to boys, and by developing characteristics in them which people like to see in boys. ... We should be woman and stay woman. Those who fail in this and fight against their femininity, waste their time and the opportunity, given to them (by karma). They probably will have to spend still more lives as a woman, in order to obtain what they might have already obtained in this life, had they not striven for something which is not theirs. Now, certainly, life's circumstances are thus that woman can best develop and show her femininity as a wife and mother, and the man as provider of the family, and as the person, who in difficult circumstances supports and protects the others.

She argued from earlier incarnations for women getting the right to vote:

Who knows, how many present-day women in their pasts as men have worked at a government position, and they still have the characteristics which they acquired then.

She also argued from Plato, 'one of the greatest theosophists.' And from the administration of the Theosophical Society: first, Madame Blavatsky had done it together with Oolun. Now, Annie Besant reigned, jointly with Leadbeater. The suffrage association became the Vereeniging voor Vrouwenkwestie in the Indies in 1919. Mr and Mrs Van Hloon Labberton joined. It was not really attractive to Indonesian women, though.

In 1911, his more leftist phase, Datoek Soetan Maharadja started the 'first feminist magazine in Sumatra', Soearning Melajoe (Malay Ornament). Its slogan was 'May women's ability increase constantly.' Maharadja's daughter Zoebaidah Ratna Djoeewita was its first editor.

Seven years later, progressive West Sumatrans were as disillusioned about Soearning Melajoe then, as with what Maharadja's views had become on other issues. This showed in the November 1918 issue of Panasena-lasti, the magazine of Poetri Merdika [Free Women] organization. There, Bahdet Johan, describing himself as Social Democrat sympathizer, criticized the conservative papers Oesoevan Melajoe and Soearning Melajoe. They say 'that the women have enough rights in Minangkabau.' Everyone knows, though, that this freedom is as a bird's in a cage.

In the same month, Soearing Perempoean (Women's Voice) magazine said that Soearing Melajoe did not live up to its slogan. Soearing Perempoean thought itself really the only women's magazine for Sumatra, 'one cannot say as much for Soearning Melajoe.' A Maharadja supporter a year later called Soearing Perempoean a magazine of 'whores and pub-crawling girls.'

Javanese women within the Theosophical Society had little, if any, impact on debates. In March 1915, the TS had three Indonesian woman members, all unmarried ladies of the nobility in Bogor. They were Mas Adjeng Soerjati and Mas Adjeng Soelastri, both from Kanjung Anjer, Gang Sepatoe; and Raden Adjeng Tedjapoernama. In January 1916, the number had risen to five, all from Java: Raden Ajoie (Lady Elly) Purnama, the wife of the Malang public prosecutor, and Raden Ajoie Kamjana Ningrat from Cianus had joined. About those five I found no further information.

'Karom', pseudonym in Soertikoesoemo's Vedeyonahv magazine, in an article on the Tanan Suma education movement approvingly quoted 'a married woman':

The Javanese women’s movement follows the Javanese men’s movement directly. In their aim, they are the same - "changing the existing situation". While the man strives after the greatness of his country, the woman gives her force for the happiness of the family. Though...
limited, this is not inferior to the men's aim; as in domestic happiness man finds his perpetual source, by which he keeps his forces fresh for the struggle outside the home.1

Thousands of Javanese women were involved in politics then, for instance in the Sarekat Islam of Semarang, and later in the PKI. However, the segment in the political spectrum of these workers and street market saleswomen was far away from the TS, at least since the founding of Indië Weerbaar.

These women had been driven underground by the time various organizations met at the 'first Indonesian women's congress', in Yogyakarta 22-25 December 1928. At this and later congresses, marriage laws were the main point. In Yogyakarta, a female teacher of a TS Arjuna School clashed with Siti Moendysh, of the Muslim women's organization Pembela Islam, over the institution of polygamy. In Semarang, and later in the Netherlands, marriage laws were the main point. In Yogyakarta, a female teacher of a TS Arjuna School clashed with Siti Moendyah, of the Muslim women's organization Pembela Islam, over the institution of polygamy. Siti Moendyah replied that she did not defend polygamy, merely understood why it existed.2

An Islamic man, who did defend polygyny against secular nationalists, proved that Annie Besant had prestige beyond her Society. This "S." in Pembela Islam named her and Schönemaker among supporters of his view that 'one cannot fight polygamy, and monogamy cannot exist without prostitution."3

When the Japanese army invaded twelve years later, still not even the governor-general's wife, Lady Tjarda van Starkenborgh Stachouwer, had ever been allowed to vote.

A. EDUCATION

In government primary schools in the Dutch East Indies at the end of 1908, girls were much under-represented: 45% girls with 'European' children, 13.5% with 'native' children, and 15% with 'other' (mostly Chinese) children.1

General Secretary Van Hinloopen Labberton was interested in girls' education. Like the Theosophist editor in 1903 on Ceylon, he opposed schooling of 'bluestockings'. In a polemic, he characterized an inspector of education as:

an opponent of domestic education, cooking lessons, washing lessons, and practical needlework (children's clothes, sewing on buttons etc.) at the Kartini schools [private girls' schools, founded in memory of Raden Adjeng Kartini, where he sees scholarly little Native ladies as his ideal instead of well-educated, correctly Dutch-speaking, but otherwise solid and practical homemakers, whom we want to see to graduate there;5

The Arjuna schools of the Dutch East Indies Theosophical Education Association were mostly for boys. A reporter of TMNI wrote on girls at the Gambir Arjuna school:

Friday is girls' day. Of course, they cook themselves, both European and Native style, lay the table neatly, with tasteful floral adornments, note down various domestic things worth knowing, wash, wash floors, cut, sew, embroider, march [in the Girl Guides], stalk, command, and cat.1

When, after Soerjoekoesoemo's death, the Javanese nationalist current within Budi Thomo tried in vain to make his ideas official BU policy, their program included a clause on educating women. It was like Mrs Besant's views about their South Asian sisters: "Girls should be educated to become good housewives, not for positions in society."2

Though W.A.L. Ros-Vrijman, the Theosophical Society had a personal link with education of Dutch women, who were bound for Indonesia as housewives. Mrs Ros was founder in 1920, and still executive president in 1928, of the Koloniale School voor meisjes en vrouwen (The Colonial School for girls and women). It had three month courses. The Ministry of Colonies and The Hague local authority subsidized it.3

7. CONCLUSIONS OF PART VI

Once more, we can answer our question on apoliticism negatively. However, on Ceylon I found much more material on indirectly politically interesting education than on attitudes to the wider women's movement.

To our second question, of rather conservative or rather progressive politics, the answer differs somewhat from our parts on labour and national movements. Annie Besant's views moved rightwards, also on women's issues, after joining the TS. Polities, for instance in Sumatra, saw theosophists as a brake on the women's movement. Nevertheless, conflicts rarely got as sharp as with India's Congress and Communist Party, Indonesia's Marxists, or Indonesia's women delegates in Lahore in 1931 (boycotting the conference because of the colonial, rather than of a specifically women's, issue).

Those other conflicts happened at their sharpest after 1916, as labour and national movements were on the rise. At that time, one cannot describe the women's movement as equally on the rise.

Jill Roe ascribes a downturn in women's influence to World War I. That is relative

1 Arjoenschoolen', TMNI 1927, 44.
2 VÄN MIERT (1995), 253. HPO July-Aug. 1916, 142-3: in Tjipto's De Voorpost, Soeratme Soerjoekoesoemo had criticized a certain M. 's view that 'women's education brings immorality.'
3 IG, 1928 (50). 'De Koloniale School voor meisjes en vrouwen in Den Haag', 1108-9; Het Vaderland, 18-2-1921, reproduced HPO, Mar. 1921, 45-8, 'De Koloniale School voor meisjes en vrouwen'. Ibid., 46-7: 'What, then, does the Colonial School want? It wants to prepare the girls and women, who go to the Indies, for their task there. It wants, first of all, to bring them to the school into an Indies environment, into the Indies family amidst Indies servants, amidst language, people, and customs.' IG, 1920 (42), MSBTD, 367-8. HPO, Apr. 1922, 47: the queen was the school's patroness.
Articles in *The Theosophist*, Oct. 1912-Sept. 1917, by authors' sex and country

After the 1929 death of Katherine Tingley, and the 1933 death of Annie Besant, maybe not entirely by coincidence, neither Point Lorna nor Adyar had a woman leader during our period. Still, there were probably more articles by women (though not Asian women) in TS magazines than in many other magazines of the time; certainly magazines on religion.

There might have been even more, if women had equal access to TS management and writing activities, in proportion to their beliefs, as distinct from formal membership: French 1963 statistics on astrology say women then tended to believe in it nearly twice as...
much as men. There was no similar sex disparity in traditional Christian beliefs.

One conclusion: opposition to feminism existed within the theosophical movement, but mostly as a minority (as were militant suffragists), and at the fringes (except for the Liberal Catholic Church, which one could hardly call marginal). Roe’s remark: “the T.S. eschewed sexism both in theory and practice” is also not 100% correct, when one thinks of the Mahatmas.

Did non-feminist women become feminist after joining the TS? Or did feminist women joining become less so; which is arguable for for instance Annie Besant after 1889? From a feminist viewpoint, the theosophists’ record becomes more favourable, if one compares it not with the women’s movement, but with other religious organizations at the time. One might argue ideas of most theosophists on women were more progressive than those of other religious organizations then, and more progressive than their own ideas on many other issues. The prevailing attitude about women in the TS proves that to be relatively progressive about one nodal point of far-reaching issues, does not automatically make one so on others. Patriarchy in otherwise emancipatory movements is the other side of this coin, in other movements.

| FISCHLER, 288: 21% for men; 39% for women. |
| ROE, 167. Mary Farrell Bednarowski, ‘Widening the Banks of the Mainstream: Women Constructing Theologies’, WESSINGER(1993), 211-31; 223-4: ‘Theosophy has a history of women or brothers of dead rulers were at hand. COXON, 904: in Greek antiquity, the Pythagorean order, excluded from political power under absolute monarchy were so mostly because no convenient sons for political life, as the occult system is its zenith.’ CWL and AB forgot that the few women not leaders and a long-standing interest in the feminine principle or the eternal feminine. At the same time, Theosophy has in its history a kind of anti-feminism that emerges from an occult worldview. |
| BESANT and LEADBEATER(1913), 139: ‘The exclusion of women from political power in England only came, it should be remembered, with the growth of democracy ... This is the spirit of political life, as the occult system is its zenith.” CWL and AB forgot that the few women not excluded from political power under absolute monarchy were so mostly because no convenient sons or brothers of dead rulers were at hand. COXON, 904: in Greek antiquity, the Pythagorean order, which was also conservative and oligarchic on many other issues, was ‘open to women equally with men’. Anti-woman writer Strindberg also sympathized with Swedish Social Democracy late in life. |

SUMMARY

The politics of divine wisdom

Theosophy and labour, national and women’s movements in Indonesia and South Asia, 1875-1947

This book is not a full history of the Theosophical Society (TS), founded in 1875; it does not go beyond 1947. It is not even its complete political history; concentrating on India and Indonesia. My two central questions are: 1. What were the Theosophical Society’s relationships to three political movements: labour, national, and women’s movements? 2. How did outsiders, linked to these movements’ fields of activity, agree, or clash, with the theosophists’ approach to them? I based the book on many sources, both from theosophists, and from their allies and opponents in the political field.

One approach to 1875-1947 world political history is looking at it through a well-recorded organization, existing all of that time, international, neither too big nor too small. The Theosophical Society fits these criteria. It is also interesting as a relatively well-organized ‘nucleus’ of a looser, broader occult current, influential in those times.

Often, authors see theosophists’ occult views as politically irrelevant; this shows in the little attention political history pays to them. On the other hand, authors connect them to progressive political views. James Webb associated occultism with ‘Nationalism, Socialism.’ Daniel Bell linked ‘gnostic esotericism’ to ‘anarchism’ without explaining this. Authors both left and right in the political spectrum, opponents and supporters of theosophy, often took one of these two views. This book questions both. I limited the complex notion ‘nationalism’ to nationalism in a colonial rule situation.

Part I is a brief outline of theosophic doctrines: it looks at theosophy’s self-definition as religion of religions, science of sciences. It deals with its relationships to various religions. The doctrines of karma and reincarnation, of the non-existence of chance, and of the existence of higher worlds, are central to theosophy. When scientists attacked traditional religious views of Earth, as the centre of the universe, and humans as the most important products of divine creation, theosophists tried to restore them in a scheme of non-Darwinian idealist evolution.

Part II is a brief history of theosophy. Its origins were in spiritualism. From the US, it spread, mostly to western Europe, South Asia, and Australia. 1917 & 3 was the high point of its influence on Indian and Indonesian politics; the 1920’s of its influence in general. In spite of conflicts and splits, and a high membership turnover rate, the TS as an organization grew, from 1875 till 1928. The Theosophical Society attracted many thousands; it lost many again, though, especially after 1929. Aasdale, who was not as dynamic a leader as Annie Besant had been, managed consolidation, but not new expansion, in the late 1930’s.

Part III deals with social backgrounds of theosophists over the world. The great majority of supporters belonged to more or less privileged strata like the nobility, business, and officers. Theosophy, promising an international elite, inter alia worked as ideological...
Summary

Support for theosophy was strong across various regions in Indonesia during World War I. Members from West Sumatra, Bali, and Lombok contributed to the society, with a notable absence of support from Chinese families, who were often associated with political challenges.

In theory, theosophy was accessible to all, but attempts to reach workers and peasants were infrequent and unsuccessful. In Indonesia, there were significant efforts to challenge the dominant views of the Javanese nobility, which were represented by the Indonesian student movement, the 

In the Netherlands, the Theosophical Society (TS) demonstrated solidarity with the Indonesian movement, particularly with the support of Annie Besant and her associates. However, the relationship was strained due to political differences, with some members favoring political activism and others opposing it. Besant's views on religion and spirituality clashed with other social movement ideologies, leading to political and philosophical differences within the TS.

In India, the TS had a significant presence, particularly in the form of a TS section in exile, which maintained close ties with other political groups in the country. The TS's role in India's political movement was less described than its earlier influence in the Indian National Congress. The relationship between theosophists and trade unions, socialists, and anarchists was more complex. On the one hand, there were quite some links; on the other hand, a basic principle like universal suffrage was a problem with theosophists.

In Indonesia during the First World War, the TS was an auxiliary to the TS, which had close to a maximum number of members. By far the most Indonesian members were from the Javanese nobility; fewer were from 'officer' families, an elite which other Chinese challenged. The TS' influence in Indonesia was not as significant as in other countries, and its members emigrated, and formed the only TS section in exile. Relationships with other TS members were not as good.

In India, the TS was bad in 1918. Their paper accused the theosophists of basically supporting authorities who had bloodily defeated the uprising in the Jambi oil region. It also accused two prominent TS members, A.J. Hamerster and Captain Christoffel, of murdering a village headman in Borneo in a case of sexual harassment against the headman's sister. In 1921, contradictions from the TS seemed to wear off somewhat. After then, though, the non-co-operation question became central. As in India, this question opposed not only communists, but also others to theosophists. General Secretary Kruisheer accused the PKI of a plot to wreck his TS in 1926. He also wrote that at least one member was killed by communists during the 1927 uprising in West Sumatra.

In the early twentieth century, the TS had a good relationship with Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of British India. As showed during the controversy on the partition of Bengal in 1905. This changed, though, during Annie Besant's Home Rule action in 1916-7. As one cannot just assume, as has been done, that his later activities in the Indian and Irish politics had much mutual influence. However, in spite of some personal contacts, theosophical influence on Irish politics was minor. The Theosophical Society in Ireland had relatively fewer members than for instance in Britain or The Netherlands; and many less than in Ireland.

In the later part of the 19th century, the TS had a good relationship with Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of British India, as showed during the controversy on the partition of Bengal in 1905. This changed, though, during Annie Besant's Home Rule action in 1916-7. As more, also non-privileged, people became involved in Indian politics, the TS' influence declined again. After 1918, Annie Besant lost the overwhelming part of her influence in the Indian national movement to Gandhi; though she tried to keep, and, later, to regain it. This later part of theosophists' role in India's politics is less described than the earlier one. So I paid some more attention to it. Mrs Besant came to oppose Gandhi's non-co-operation
strategy, which she had not rejected earlier. She now claimed non-co-operation was against theosophical basic principles. So, co-operation with colonial authority, unlike her earlier Home Rule agitation, was a religious duty. Non-co-operation supporters could no longer view theosophists as an uncooperative community. The remain members of the Esoteric Section, the Theosophical Society's 'inner circle'. Theosophical Society did not keep the earlier allegiance of people like Jawaharlal Nehru or Krishna Menon.

As in India, in Indonesia, only members of theosophical influence. For some years then, theosophists like H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge, Raden Djojosoebroto, and Tahirani led pro-government papers like the Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad, Penitam, and Nirja. Also Hadji Agoes Salim was an active TS member, and contributor to the monthly Pembara Thotostafje for some time. Good contacts within political movements like the Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond, Budi Utomo, and with Indonesian living in The Netherlands, existed. To a lesser extent, they also existed with Sarekat Islam, though ideas on hierarchy differed. The government-imposed gap between S/I's national and local levels made influence at the national level by personal links like from the active Van Hulloon Labberton to Djojo, and possibly the later susuhulan Pakoe Boewono XI, easier than at the local level. Sukarno, later Indonesia's first president, read his first political books in the Surabaya TS library, because of his father's membership.

Annie Besant tended to emphasize Indian unity over regionalism, which in Tamil Nadu was associated with her non-Brahmin opponents. The situation with regionalism in Indonesia differed. Contacts were best with two groups, aimed at the aborigin of Java and West Sumatra. First, Javanese nationalists of prominent theosophists Prince Soetan Soerjokoesoemo's magazine Wederosopbang, one among tendencies within Budi Utomo. Prince Mangkoe Negen VII was Wederosopbang's sponsor. Wederosopbang aimed at a Javanese state, a member of the League of Nations, and at reconstruction of Javanese culture in an aristocratic sense. Basing himself on Annie Besant, and on the philosopher Bolland, much quoted in the Wederosopbang, Soerjokoesoemo fought democracy on principle. Annie Besant changed her views on for instance universal suffrage, after the joined the TS. Both within their organization, and in politics, theosophists thought in terms of democracy, and authority. The historians Tachiyana and Revee see influence from Soerjokoesoemo's ideas as a factor in movements on democracy in Indonesia since 1959. Tachiyana in this, though, does not mention Soerjokoesoemo's TS connection. David Revee sees theosophy as an influence on the ruling Golkar party. In that view, authoritarian stands in theosophical thought may have influenced Indonesia deeper than India; though post-1945, the TS' reputation in India was better than in Indonesia.

The TS also had a link to the Sarekat Adat Alam Minangkabau of Datoek Soetan Maharadja in Sumatra. Earlier on in his daily Hetosan Melajoe and women's paper Satting Melajoe, Maharadja used to criticize Dutch authority and aristocrats. After about 1916, this changed. Then, he, and supporters like Abdul Karim, kept writing theosophical articles. In these, they attacked kaum muda (Islam modernism), socialism, theosophy, and all-Indonesia nationalism. Much in Hetosan Melajoe was parallel to Wederosopbang, of which it approved.

Contacts to other organizations like Sarekat Islam weakened, if these aimed at broader layers of people, and became more militant. In Jakarta, already from 1915 members of Sarekat Islam's left wing around the daily Purangan-Watra (of Soetan, Marco, Goenawan, Aliun and Abdullah Feath), were sharply anti-theosophical. Feath, of the petroleum workers' union, called for common action by Muslims and socialists against theosophical ideas. At least till the end of 1918, the TS' relationship to Sarekat Islam's right wing (Djojosoebroto, Abdal Moesir, Hidji Agoes Salim) was close.

With Budi Utomo, relations were not as good in 1919 as in 1919 years earlier. This showed in the strike by students of the theosophical teachers' training school in Jakarta. In the 1920's, ex-TS members like Sari and Soetanprakoso became the most avowed anti-theosophists within Sarekat Islam. Contacts with the Indische Partij, called Insulindische and National Indische Partij later, were not good. With Perhimpunan Indonesia, the organization of Indonesians in The Netherlands, relations deteriorated. Attempts to influence the new generation of members, like Mohammad Hatta, soon failed. The thought the TS: 'a grave danger to our national struggle.' In spite of Sukarno's theosophical education, his Partai Nasional Indonesia did not come to think similarly. It was based on non-co-operation with colonial authority. As in India, the Theosophical Society declared that membership in non-co-operation political organizations was basically incompatible with TS membership. Perhimpunan Indonesia in its turn banned dual membership with the theosophists' social and political organization. Indonesian PNI delegates withdrew from an international women's congress after finding that theosophists had co-organized it.

Indonesia had no parliament. In the first Volksraad from 1918-21, the closest Indonesia had to one, eventually five out of 39 members were theosophists, as was the mayor of Jakarta, A. Meijroos. As in India though, the TS was already past its real zenith. Both colonialist hard-liners and revolutionaries had grown to dislike Van Hulloon Labberton. Labberton, isolated, went back to the Netherlands.

The Committee for Javanese Nationalism and Wederosopbang disappeared after the death of their founder, Soekirmo Soerjokoesoemo. Gradually, the ideas of that committee too declined. Budi Utomo disappeared in a merger. The Hetosan Melajoe paper of Datoek Soetan Maharadja ceased to exist.

VI deals with views on the women's movement. Both strong opponents and strong supporters were minorities among theosophists. Annie Besant represented an intermediate position. Before she joined the TS, people saw her as the most militant feminist of her time. Like on other points, during her rapid rise as TS leader she changed towards more conservative views. Also like on other points, shortly before World War I she began to defend somewhat more progressive views again, also on the position of women in India. Both on suffrage there, and in women's education also in Sri Lanka, positive influence is probable or evident. I could find some links of Dutch women TS members in Indonesia to the (moderate) women's movement. Not so, however, of the very few Javanese women TS members in the 1910's.

In 1914 in England and in 1920 in India, Annie Besant got some criticism for excessive moderation regarding the women's movement. The 1918-20 conflict with theosophists around Datoek Soetan Maharadja with conservatism, lasted longer.

Contrary to anti-colonial and labour movements, 1920-1945 was a time of decline for
the women's movement in many countries. So, the friction did not lead to a major worsening of relations like with the two other movements.

With these, relations worsened if their support got more of a mass character, and social groups that were little represented in the TS, increased participation in them.

In Indonesia, the conflict with the labour movement from 1916 on, predated the one with the national movement. In India, however, after 1918 the conflict with the national movement first became most conspicuous. Contrary to India, in Indonesia labour gained momentum before the national movement did (Saskia Islam was various movements in one). The contradiction to the national movement in India clearly influenced Indonesia India, of course, was the country of the TS international headquarters. However, as far as I found out, Indonesia did not influence relations with India's labour movement. Language may have been a factor here: more people in Indonesia knew English or Sanskrit than people in India knew Dutch or Malay.

The Supposition on the TS 'apolitical nature' proves to be wrong. Both Annie Besant, and opponents like Perhimpunan Indonesia, contradicted it. However, the TS in Indonesia had a more apolitical attitude in the 1930's than before. That was not typical for all countries: though also in India political influence had declined. TS president Arundale tried to reverse that tide. Also against the 'apoliticism' supposition: quite some important politicians in various countries belonged to the TS, were influenced by it, or thought it important enough to oppose it.

As for the assumption on the special relationship to the political left James Webb himself already pointed out. In Theosophy and the Labour Movement, he called the cleavage 'social', rather than political. This book qualifies the thesis even more. In 1875-1917, one may find people like Annie Besant, Australian ex-Labor, later rightist Senator Reid, Dutch ex-anarchist Van Steenis, Datoek Soctan Maharadja, and probably D. van Hin Joopen Labberton: they joined the TS and moved left to right on the political scale. On the other hand, people like J. Nehru, Wickremasinghe—both from Ceylon TS, were 'apolitical'.

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The political direction of theosophists varied; the 1913-1918 period marked both more progressiveness and more influence than before or after. On the whole, it was more one-sided in various countries: though also in India, political influence had declined. TS president Arundale tried to reverse that tide. Also against the 'apoliticism' supposition: quite some important politicians in various countries belonged to the TS, were influenced by it, or thought it important enough to oppose it.

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In de praktijk ontbraken arbeiders en boeren vrijwel in het ledenbestand, men probeerde nauwelijks dit te veranderen. Als uitzondering ondermaa de TV in Indonesië twee pogingen onder boeren. In 1915 probeerde men een eind te maken aan de Samin-beweging, van geweldloos verzet in noord Java, door hen tot de theosofie te bekeren. Dit mislukte. Na verhaald langdurig en succesvolle was de tweede poging, in de jaren dertig toen als geheel de TV achteruit ging. Toen fungeerden enkele jaren de Pemimiran Thalha, een nevenorganisatie met tegen de duizend aanhangers op Java, Baté en Lombok.

Deel IV gaat over de verhouding van de TV tot drie stromingen: arbeidersbewegingen, bewegingen voor zelfbestuur binnen, of onafhankelijkheid buiten, het kolonialisme, en vrouwenbewegingen. Deze stromingen konden, breed gedefinieerd, emancipaties veranderen, met de visie van de televisen, ook in Indonesia, op de eerste wereldoorlog en uiteindelijk onafhankelijkheid, in koloniale regerende landen. Een kort inleidend hoofdstuk bespreekt de ideeën in theosophische kringen over imperialisme. Voor vormen van sociale ongelijkheid en religie in de tijd van de TV werd er op aandacht gelegd, en de TV leden in ballingschap ter ondersteuning van de TV beweging. Bij crises in het Tsarenrijk in 1917, zoals de beurscras in Lelant in 1905, hadden mevrouw Blavatsky en oude TV leden zich betrokken, in 1927 in West Sumatra.

In het begin van de twintigste eeuw was de verhouding met de vertegenwoordiger van de TV bij de politie van de theosofen rond Wanderpaw. In dit licht kan men niet zonder meer aannemen, zoals beweerd is, dat zijn latere activiteit in de Taman Siswa onderwijsscholen op de ideeën van de TV of van Rudolf Steiner gebaseerd zou zijn.

Bij crises in het Tsarenrijk voor 1917, zoals de beurscras in Lelant in 1905, hadden mevrouw Blavatsky en oude TV leden zich betrokken, in 1927 in West Sumatra. In de praktijk waren TV leden Engelse of Nederlandse oorsprong, en meestal betrokken bij de TV beweging.

In haar boek over India bezwaarde Sylvia Pankhurst hoe Annie Besant’s ideeën over maatschappelijke ongelijkheid veranderden, sinds de tijd dat ze socialist en nog geen theosofe was geweest. Ook met Indiase communisten was de verhouding niet goed. Vanuit ballingschap bezwaarden M.N. Roy en Shapurji Saklatvala Annie Besant, evenals Dange in Bombay, en Singaravelu Chettiar in Madras. Muzaffar Ahmad in Bengalen, waar de TV relatief akkoord was, moesten haar daarentegen niet.

Deel V gaat over de verhouding tot bewegingen voor meer politieke rechten, en uiteindelijk onafhankelijkheid, in koloniale geregende landen. Een kort inleidend hoofdstuk bespreekt de ideeën in deosophische kring over imperialisme. Voor vervorming van bestuur binnen koloniaal verband bleek men vaak te voelen. Maar tegen onafhankelijkheid verzetten men zich met wereldwijde bewegingen. In Sri Lanka was de invloed na een veelbelovende beginsel vol vrees en angst. De TV leden in India en Indië waren betrokken in de strijd om onafhankelijkheid, en later ook tegen de politiek van de theosofen rond Wanderpaw. In dit licht kan men niet zonder meer aannemen, zoals beweerd is, dat zijn latere activiteit in de Taman Siswa onderwijsscholen op de ideeën van de TV of van Rudolf Steiner gebaseerd zou zijn.

jaren later werden Indoneeische leden van theosofische organisaties voor een dergelijke keus gesteld. De Nationaal Liberale strooming, die neervrouw Besant samen met de latere gouverneur-generaal van Pakistan, Jinnah, opzette, werd echter geen succes in India. Omdat over deze fase veel minder geschreven is dan over de Home Rule League in 1916-17, besteed ik er extra aandacht aan.

Sinds 1916 zo'n tien jaar lang in Indoneeische leden van theosofische redacteuren als H.J. Kiewiet de Jonge, Raden Djojosidiro, en Tabraini regeringsgezinde dagbladen, als Bataaviaasch Nieuwsblad, Pemirran, en Neraja. Ook hadi Agoes Salim was kort tijd actief TV lid en medewerker van maandblad groeperingen. Ten eerste de Javaanse nationalisten rond prins Soetatmo Soeriokoesoemo's extra aandacht aan.

Baraviaasch Nieuwsblad, Pemirran, en (met o.a. Soekirno, Marco, Goenawan, Alimin en Abdullah Fatah) uilgesproken anti-sinds 1915 leden van de linker vleugel van op bredere volksgroepen richlen, en een scherpe lijn gingen volgen. In Jakarta waren al 402 Oeroesan Melajoe Soetan Maharadja in Sumatra. Maharadja was vroeger in zijn dagblad tijdschrift Wederopbouw, anders. De contacten waren hel sterkst met op de adel van twee regio's gerichte aanhangers. waren Labberton gaan wantrouwen. Dil 1eidde tot iso1ement, en uiteindelijk tot vertrek van Labberton naar Nederland.


Annie Besant kreeg in 1914 in Engeland en in 1920 in India een kritiek dat zij niet ver genoeg met de vrouwenbeweging meeging. Langduriger was in 1918-20 de tegenstelling met vrouwenbladen in Indoneeische, die de theosofen rond Datoek Soetan Maharadja conservatisme vooral.

Met Budi Utomo was in 1919 de verhouding niet meer zo goed als tien jaar eerder, zoals bleek bij de staking van leerlingen van de theosofische kweekschool in Jakarta. In de jaren twintig werden ex- TV leden als Salim en Soerjopranoto van de tweede tv vleugel anti-theosofen binnen Sarekat Islam. Met de Indische Partij, later inheemse en Nationaal Indische Partij gehele, was geen goed contact. Met de Perhimpunan Indonesia, de Vereniging van Indonesiërs in Nederland, werd de verhouding uiteindelijk slechter. Pogingen tot invloed op de tv groepen liepen overigens waarschijnlijk of aantoonbaar. In de periode rond 1915 had de TV, voor over in de regering van Pakistan, Jinnah, opzette, geen succes in India. Omdat over de tegenstelling met die van Nederlandse vrouwen inIndoneeische, maar niet met die van Javaanse vrouwen.

Annie Besant kreeg in 1914 in Engeland en in 1920 in India een kritiek dat zij met zorg in de vrouwenbeweging meeging. Langduriger was in 1918-20 de tegenstelling met vrouwenbladen in Indoneeische, die de theosofen rond Datoek Soetan Maharadja conservatisme vooral.

In tegenstelling tot bij anti-koloniale en arbeidersbewegingen, was 1920-1945 voor de vrouwenbeweging, over de hele wereld, een periode van nergens. Zo luidde de sinds 1914 enigszins optredende vrijheid toen hier niet zo optredend in de verhoudingen als bij de twee andere bewegingen. Met die andere bewegingen verslechterde de verhouding, als hun aanhang massaler werd, en maatschappelijke lagen die in de TV weinig vertegenwoordigd waren, een grotere rol gingen spelen. In Indoneeische ging het scherpe conflict, sinds 1916, met de arbeidersbeweging vooraf aan dat met de nationale beweging. In India waren in de jaren ervan, vanaf 1918, de de beweging en van de voorgang. Dit hangt er mee samen dat in Indoneeische in tegenstelling tot India de arbeidersbeweging eerder kracht won dan de nationale beweging (Sarekat Islam was een aantal bewegingen in een).
Samenvatting

Ceylon TV tot Ceylon communiste partij-leider werd, en Krishnamurti, afstand nemen. James Webb zelf wees al op verbindingen tussen occultisme en conservatief Frans stelling tegen te nemen. Probeerde TV voorzitter Arundale dat tij te keren. De TV in Indonesië een meer apolitieke houding aan de dertiger jaren dan daarvoor. Dit arbeidersbeweging niet. Talenkennis zou hier een factor kunnen zijn: Engels en Sanskriet positiever over Indiers schrijven in Theosofische sfeer samen met een politieke ontwikkeling naar links. A.P. Sinnett ging personen als lawaharlal Nehru, Krsna Menon, M. Hatta, S.A. Wickremasinghe die van vermelding van Resink klopt, D. van Hinloopen Labberton. Dezen werden TV-lid, ongeveer relativeert die stellingname verder. monarchisme; in tegenstelling tot zijn opmerking over 'Nationalisms. Socialisms.' Dit hoek was niet typisch voor andere landen: hoewel ook in India de politieke invloed was gedaald, probeerde TV voorzitter Arundale dat tij te keren. Tegen de veronderstelling pleit ook dat veel belangrijke politici in diverse landen lid waren van de TV, of erdoor beïnvloed; of de vereniging belangrijk genoeg vonden om stelling tegen te nemen.

Wat betreft de veronderstelling over de verhouding tot het bijzonder politiek links: James Webb zelf wees al op verbindingen tussen occultisme en conservatief Frans monarchisme; in tegenstelling tot zijn opmerking over 'Nationalisms. Socialisms.' Dit boek refereertie die stellingname verder.

Evenzijds vind men in de onderzochte periode personen als Annie Besant, Rudolf Steiner, de Australische ex-Labor, daarna rechts senator M. Reid, de Nederlandse ex-anarchist Van Steenis, Danoe Soeman Maharadj, mevrouw A.P. Dekker-Groot, en als de vermelding van Resink klopt, D. van Hinloopen Labberton. Dezen werden TV-lid, ongeveer tegelijkertijd met van links naar rechts gaan in het politieke spectrum. Anderzijds ging bij personen als Jawaharal Nehru, Krishna Menon, M. Hatta, S.A. Wickremasinghe die van Ceylon TV tot Ceylon communistische partij-leider werd, en Krishnamurti, afstand nemen van de theosofische sfeer samen met een politieke ontwikkeling naar links. A.P. Sinnett ging positiever over Indiers schrijven in The Pioneer nadat hij TV lid werd (maar bijvoorbeeld zijn tegenstand tegen socialisme bleef). Waarschijnlijk waren er meer voorbeelden van ontwikkelingen deze richting op. Ze beperkten zich echter voornamelijk tot visies op niet-Europese elites, die men als 'Arisch' zag; visies op bijvoorbeeld Javaanse dorpsbewoners stonden hier buiten. Voor de Theosofische Vereniging was 1913-1918 zowel een periode van naar verhouding meer progressiviteit (meer name in India) als van meer invloed. Zowel in India als in Indonesia was 1917 een hoogtepunt. Daarna verloor men die gunstige uitgangspositie. De daling begon snel, ook al probeerde de leiding van de TV invloed te behouden in de periode 1920 en later. Dat breder lagen van de bevolking bij politieke bewegingen betrokken raakten, bij Indiërs en Indonesiërs zowel in hun land als in Engeland of Nederland, benoemdelijk het behoud van invloed.

XINGKASAN

Politik kebijaksananda dewata

Teosofi dan gerakan-gerakan buruh, nasionalis dan wanita di Indonesia dan Asia Selatan, 1875-1947

Translation: Marek Avé


Bagian I meringkas gagasan-gagasan terpenting para teosofi, mengenai karma, reincarnasi, tradanya kebudayaan, astrologi, dsb... Dalam bagian ini juga dilustrasikan hubungan dengan bersama-sama agama, ilmu-ilmu pengetahuan, dan sejarah. Pada waktu para ilmuwan meragukan pandangan-pandangan agama-tradisional mengenai manusia sebagai hasil terpentes ciptaan tuhan, para teosofi mencoba memubahkannya kembali. Hal ini dijelaskan melalui sebuah ajaran evolusi yang idealis, berbeda dengan ajaran Darwin.

Bagian II menguraikan tentang kedudukan di, dan gagasan-gagasan mengenai masyarakat para teosof. Anggota-anggota teosof berasal dari golongan masyarakat mana?

Pada umumnya dari golongan bangsawan, dunia pengusaha dan perwira-perwira. Teosofi, mungkin orang India paling banyak, tidak ada orang Arab, dan 190 orang tinggi di pemerintahan dan kehidupan usaha. Oalam kategori 'Orang Timur Asing' Brahman; sebagai golongan pekerjaan banyak pengacara. Oi Indonesia banyak orang Sumatera (barat), dan, baru sejak tahun tigapuluhan, Bali dan Lombok.


Bagian IV sampai dengan VI membahas sejarah politik hubungan PT terhadap tiga aliran: gerakan buruh, gerakan-gerakan autonomi dalam, atasan gerakan kemerdekaan diharapkan kolonialisme, dan gerakan-gerakan wanita. Aliran-aliran tersebut, kalau diberi definisi yang luas, dapat disebut gerakan-gerakan emanasi.


Bagian V membahas tentang hubungan PT terhadap gerakan-gerakan yang memenuhi banyak mempengaruhi gerakan politik Indonesia, meskipun ke arah yang berbeda.


Ringkasan

1. Ringkasan

2. Ringkasan

3. Ringkasan

4. Ringkasan

5. Ringkasan
Ringkasan

dengan Perhimpunan Indonesia, yakni perhimpunan orang Indonesia di Belanda, akhirnya membubur. Upaya untuk mempengaruhi angkatan anggota-anggota baru, seperti Mohammad Hatta, gagal. PI berpendapat bahwa PT: 'adalah bahaya besar bagi perjuangan nasional kami.' Walaupun Sukarno diusahakan dengan ajaran-ajaran teosofi, dan membaca buku-buku politik pantamannya di perpustakaan PT di Surabaya, partainya, Partai Nasional Indonesia, akhirnya sependerap dengan PI.

Bagian VI membahas hubungan dengan gerakan wanita. Baik kelompok yang terang-terang pro maupun yang terang-terang anti merupakan minoritas dalam aliran teosofi. Annie Besant mewakili posisi antar golongan. Sebelum menjadi anggota TV, ia dianggap sebagai seorang feminis yang terang-terang pada jantannya. Namun seperti dalam hal-hal yang lain, ia juga berubah menjadi konservatif setelah dia cepat muncul sebagai pemimpin TV. Seperti dalam hal-hal yang lain juga, sesaat setelah pecahnya perang dunia pertama pandangannya membalik agak progresif lagi, juga mengenai kaum wanita di India. Baik dalam hal hak untuk memiliki bagi kaum wanita disana maupun dalam hal pendidikan untuk anak perempuan, juga di Sri Lanka, ada kemungkinan bahwa dia memberi pengaruh yang merangsang dan hal ini dapat juga dihukum. Dalam periode sekitar tahun 1915 PT di Indonesia ada sedikit hubungan dengan gerakan wanita Belanda, sejauh mana yang saya dapat selidiki, tetapi tidak ada hubungan dengan gerakan wanita Jawa.


Tahun 1920-1945 merupakan jaman kemerdekaan bagi gerakan-gerakan wanita pada umumnya disebabkan dunia, lain halnya dengan gerakan-gerakan buruh dan anti-kolonial Perselisihan dengan gerakan wanita yang terjadi sejak 1914, tidak menimbulkan pembentukan hubungan seperti pada gerakan-gerakan lain.

Hubungan dengan dua gerakan lain menjadi buruk waktu pengikut mereka menjadi lebih masal, dan golongan-golongan masyarakat yang tidak ikut serta dalam TV, mengambil peran lebih pemimpin. Di Indonesia sengaja sengat termasuk, sejak 1916, lebih dulu dengan gerakan buruh dari pada gerakan nasionalis. Di India sebaliknya sejak 1918 sengsara dengan gerakan nasionalis muncul jauh lebih dahulu. Berhubungan dengan keadaan di Indonesia dimana gerakan-gerakan buruh lebih pesat maupun keluaran dari gerakan nasionalis (Sarekat Islam terdiri dari beberapa gerakan yang bersatu), sebaliknya dengan keadaan di India. Pertemuan dengan gerakan nasionalis di India jelas mempengaruhi keadaan di Indonesia. Pimpinan PT internasional berkedudukan di India. Sebaliknya Indonesia tidak mempengaruhi hubungan dengan gerakan buruh di India, sejauh mana yang saya dapat selidiki. Pengebuhan bahasa mungkin menjadi faktor dalam hal ini; bahasa Inggeris dan Sanskerta lebih dikenal di Indonesia, dibanding bahwa Belanda dan Melayu di India.


Hal lain yang menentang asumsi tersebut ialah bahwa banyak kaum politisi di manca negara menjadi anggota PT, atau dipengaruhi oleh PT, atau menganangkan perkumpulan tersebut cukup penting untuk mengambil sikap.

Mengenai asumsi tentang hubungan terhadap khususnya politik sebelum kiri: James Webb mendunia menunjukkan kaitan antara oktultisme dan monarkisme konservatif Perancis; sebaliknya dari adanya mengenai 'Nationalisms, Socialisms'. Bukti ini membahas pendapat ini secara lebih relatif.


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Theosophical Society arose in a historic period, when capitalism entered a new phase\(^1\) (second lowest row of table, p. 456). Then, labour had mostly replaced feudalism as its main opponent. Increasingly, within the tension between 'order and progress' (A. Comte), capitalists tended to favour order. Had theosophy and related occultism any chance of becoming sizable, maybe even dominant, in these new social and political circumstances? Had the international character of the TS anything to do with internationalization, in spite of old and new contradictions, of ruling, or just-below ruling, classes?

In the table, columns 2 and 4 deal with perceptions of relationships between the highest level of authority with people on lower levels. It should be taken with even more gunny sacks of salt than this book as a whole: 1. as perceptions; 2. because especially the upper rows generalize from (West Central) European 'types'; 3. because each pair of rows links one social formation to just one ideology, one set of ideas; 4. in history's practice theoretical stages (rows) always overlap. The table is not intended as a dogma (Roman, occult, historic, sociological, or otherwise). or a prison. Even if true, it does not imply any established occult church took over the organizational position of nineteenth century established churches.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\) See p. 244 of this book: SENFT, 9, Ibid., II: 'for the end of the 19th century the traditional possessing bourgeois type-puritanical, "inner directed" (David Riesman) and "analy fixed" (Sigmund Freud) had become obsolete as leader of a changing society, centered around the idea of achievement'. Ibid., 11-14, links this to the cutting of the earlier tie between bourgeoisie and enlightenment. HERKLESESS, 509, writing about economists' and historians' thinking in the late nineteenth century, saw 'neo-idealism' as taking the place of empiricist positivism of 'economic orthodoxy before finance capitalism'. According to WILSON (1975), 41, movements like the TS 'appear to arise in achievement-oriented societies, where physical, economic, and social well being are open to at least some measure of competitive action. In such an impersonal social context other means to gain wealth, power, and status may also exist—gangsterism, fraud, charlatanism, nepotism, and intrigue, as well as the use of esoteric knowledge'.

APPENDICES
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Changes in Annie Besant's thinking

1875 - 1888 - 1895 - 1905 - 1921 - 1933 -

- birth control - czarism - British monarchy - war

In each diagram, the Y axis, from the top down, shows progression in time. The X axis shows a political left to right dimension. The diagrams show changes in views on individual issues; within each issue, in relationship to their starting points in their earliest years.

TS on ISSUES, 1875-1947

1876 - 1889 - 1895 - 1905 - 1914 - 1921 - 1929 - 1933 - 1947 -

- women - India - fascism - democracy - caste

CURRICULUM VITAE


Hij was redacteur van het Leids Studentenblad en het Leids Universiteitsblad. Later publiceerde hij op het gebied van geschieidenis der theosofie, van toepassing van computers in de geschiedwetenschap, en van muziek en natuurlijke historie. In 1993 publiceerde uitgeverij Balans te Amsterdam Het Witte Zuidpoolboekje over Antarctica.