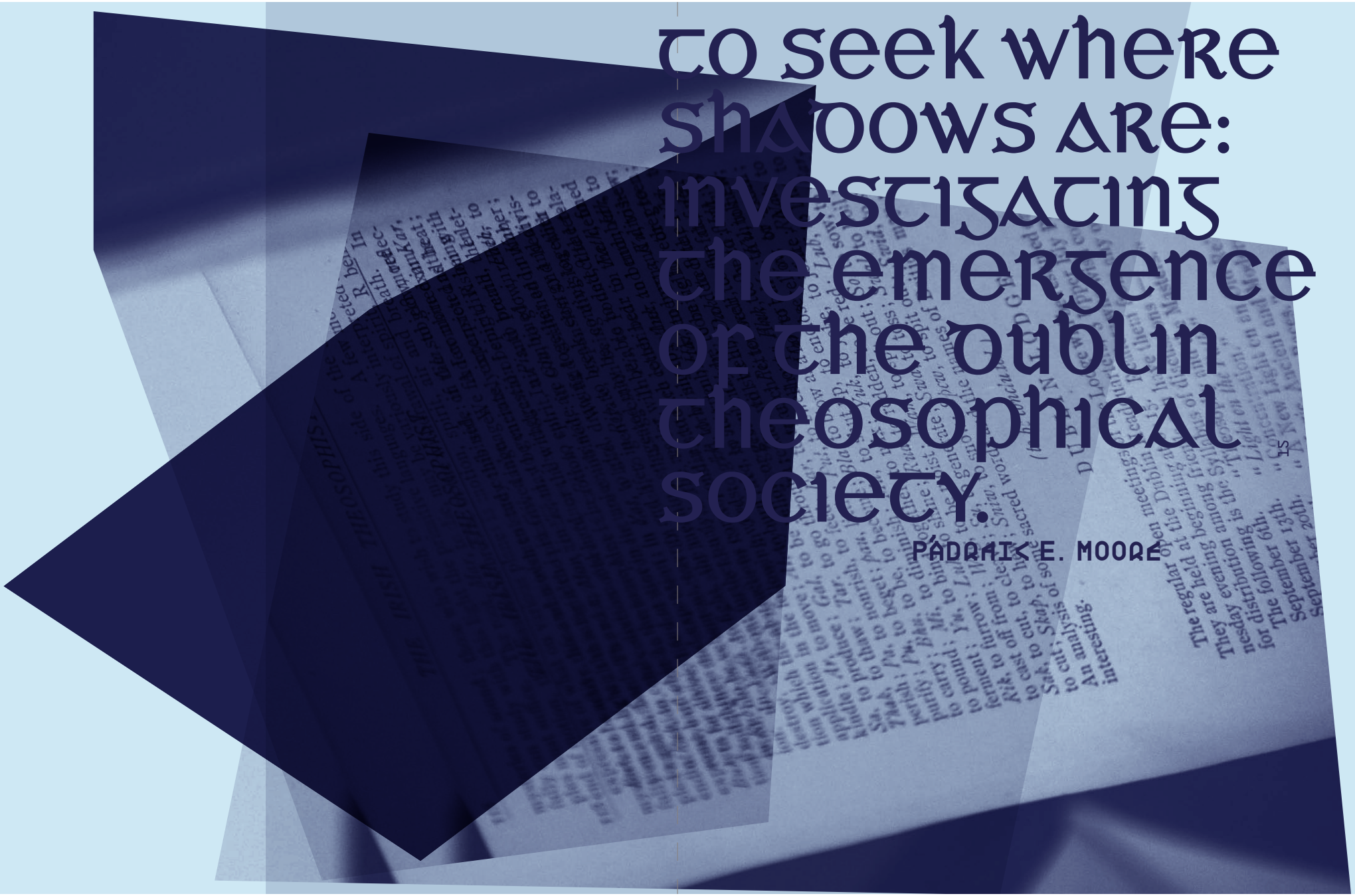


To seek where shadows are: investigating the emergence of the Dublin Theosophical Society.

Pádraic E. Moore

"Do you know," said Helen Laird to me one evening as we were doing nothing in particular, "Do you know we never hunted up that Theosophical Society Boss Gibson told us about."
"That's true," said I, "Why don't we hunt it up tonight?"
"It's raining," said Helen, "and likely to keep on raining."
"It's likely to keep on raining for ninety nights out of a hundred. Let's go tonight!"[1]

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Theosophical Society held great potential as a catalyst for cultural and political change in the context of Ireland. In Dublin, a community of non-conformists was attracted to the Theosophical movement, which drew upon all the world religions for its tenets and proclaimed a single worldwide revelation and the fundamental unity of all humankind. The movement was a source of visionary ideas and proposed the essential oneness of religions through the omnipresence of a divine spirit. Through their involvement in the movement, the coterie of Dublin Theosophists were introduced to a diverse range of Eastern and Western thinkers and many of them sought to achieve deeper forms of consciousness.

The chief deterministic doctrines of Theosophy, karma and reincarnation, were flexible enough to allow for diversity in membership.[2] Undoubtedly, this was one of the reasons why it appealed to several young Dubliners in the 1880s who were not attracted to the most dominant established religions. Affiliation with the Society and its ideas constituted a rejection of the intellectual isolation and ecclesiastical conservatism then so widespread in Ireland. The majority of those who became involved with the Theosophical Society in Ireland were from the upper echelons of society. Yet it seems that they were consciously looking for a cause that would provide a means of opposing the conservative culture from which they emerged. In the context of late nineteenth-century Ireland, Theosophy provided these individuals with a lens through which they could interpret their own Celtic legends in a manner that emphasised their poetic and allegorical currency. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, several revivalist movements emerged that drew on traditions of Celtic and Gaelic culture. This is exemplified in the Gaelic League, which sought to find, preserve and elevate what was left of ancient Irish language and culture. Likewise, Theosophy embraced the mythologies and ancient literatures as sacred, or at least

semi-sacred, writings. It recorded the history of religious symbols and endeavoured to disclose to its members the 'secrets' of their power.[3] Theosophy also promised to reconcile the differences between religion and science, and offered to restore the primacy of each individual's spiritual life to the practice of religion. The Theosophical Society's synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy thus provided several young Irish artists with a unique orientation from which to organise and reinterpret fragments of Celtic legends that had at that time been recently retrieved, rewritten and disseminated.[4]

The success of the Theosophical Society also stemmed from the fact that it was in tune with the sensibilities of a Bohemian set who – like many during the late Victorian period – displayed a tendency toward mysticism and the occult. While much has been written of William Butler Yeats and George Russell's involvement with the Theosophical Society, there has been relatively little research into the other members of the Dublin group, who also included Althea Gyles (1867–1949), Claude Falls Wright (1867–1921), Charles Weekes (1867–1945), William Kirkpatrick Magee (1868–1967), Violet North (1869–1932), and Ella Young (1867–1956). Membership and involvement in the Society encouraged independence of thought within these individuals at the same time as creating a sense of commonality. It also provided a focused direction for their rebellion against a conservative religion and scientific materialism. In addition to being an organisation of religious and philosophical pursuits, the Theosophical Society validated the occasionally radical political interests held by some of the aforementioned. Members came to regard themselves as a nucleus from which a widespread spiritual revolution might erupt. This is certainly something that became evident in Ireland during the Easter Rising of 1916, as we shall see.[5]

All those involved in the first wave of Theosophical activity in Dublin were born in the 1860s and were in their early twenties when the movement first became prominent in intellectual spheres. The safe and spiritually nurturing environment that these youths found in the Theosophical Society influenced their lives and their work significantly. The doctrines of Theosophy seized their imaginations – and that of many other young Dubliners at that time – in part because it offered a means of exploring their intuitive and even psychic potential, and instilled within all of them an exhilarating desire to revive and sustain a variety of esoteric traditions. The Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society was established in 1886 and was a small but dynamic operation, which frequently presented lectures and publications, and held a residence and headquarters at Ely Place in Dublin City. However, after the death of the founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena P. Blavatsky (also known as H.P.B.), in 1891, disputes amongst the members arose, eventually leading to the first of several schisms.[6] As is often the case with visionary movements, quarrelling and controversy compromised the society somewhat. Indeed, the schisms within the movement were one of the factors that led to the loss of the archival material regarding the history of the society in Ireland.[7] However, from the small amount of material that is extant, it is quite evident that the Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society introduced its members to a set of principles and attitudes that were to have a permanent influence on their artistic methodologies, political views and indeed spiritual outlook. This was something that would continue to shape many of their lives; even long after their first frisson with the Theosophical movement had passed.

The Theosophical Society formed in 1875 with the following intentions:

> 1. **To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;**
> 2. **To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science; and**
> 3. **To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in humans.**

The Theosophical Society was officially founded in New York in 1875 by Helena P. Blavatsky (1831–91), Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907) and William Quan Judge (1851–96).[8] An obsession with occultism was already widespread on both sides of the Atlantic at the time, manifest in the craze for Spiritualism, séances and clairvoyance. Although there are sharp distinctions between Theosophy and Spiritualism, the former did emerge in the context of Spiritualism's popularity, but was also significantly shaped by Eastern philosophies as well as Western Hermeticism.

Although its impact remains ubiquitous and palpable, it is difficult now to grasp the extent of the Theosophical Movement's popularity in the late nineteenth century. At the heart of its cumbersome and complex mass of doctrines concerning reincarnation, past lives, astral planes, higher consciousness and spiritual evolution was a message that appealed to legions of people. Many of these were seeking some form of spiritual guidance in a world that was being altered to an unprecedented extent by the processes of secularisation and industrialisation. Another aspect of the Society many found attractive was its novelty and the fact that it seemed to offer the means through which cultural and political change might occur. As well as having a spiritual element, it was also inextricably intertwined with the labour, national, and women's movements. In this way it can be seen as integral to the advance of modernity; the impact of the movement can therefore still be felt today. Although the Theosophical Society is not normally considered part of the New Age movement, its eclecticism and many of its other distinguishing elements contributed to and can be seen as precursors of New Ageism. Occult historian Gary Lachman argues that the Theosophical Movement introduced a variety of practices and ideas into our culture that have now become mainstream.

The most obvious examples of these include the widespread interest in Buddhism, reincarnation, meditation, karma, tarot, various forms of alternative medicine and esotericism in general.[9]

The principal teachings of the Theosophical Society are contained in two monumental works by Helena P. Blavatsky: *Isis Unveiled* (1877) and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888). Numerous popularisations of Blavatsky's revelations were also contained in a series of books – of a more concise nature – written by a group of her immediate associates, among them Annie Besant (1847–1933), who, somewhat controversially, would eventually succeed Blavatsky as the global leader of the Society. These writers attempted to explain and simplify Madame Blavatsky's ideas in various ways. Still, the profusion of material produced by and about the movement ultimately only served to popularise it. The success of the Theosophical Society and people's willingness to adopt its doctrine can also be attributed to the writings of Alfred Percy Sinnett (1840–1921), an Anglo-Indian editor whose works *The Occult World* (1881) and *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883) paved the way for the positive reception of Blavatsky's texts in Britain and Ireland.

Another reason why Theosophy flourished internationally was the fact that its founders took such a comprehensive approach to its classification, viewing it as neither a religion, a science, nor a philosophy. In fact, H.P.B. herself gave the *The Secret Doctrine* the subtitle *a 'synthesis' of science, religion and philosophy*. However, ultimately, Theosophy cannot be considered a religion per se for a number of reasons: it lacks churches, does not consider ritual important and its founders emphasised the idea that the Society supported all religions or at least that there is unity amongst them. Moreover, Theosophy can be treated as a philosophy, since it purports to explain the nature of the universe and the origin and the destiny of man through reason. It is an esoteric cosmogony; it presents detailed descriptions of the origin of the world in a language that is at once poetic yet precise.

The founders of the Theosophical Society developed a hybrid cocktail of ideas borrowed from many sources. From *The Upanishads* – a group of Vedic texts that form the philosophical basis of several schools of Hinduism and Indian philosophy – they took the doctrine of a fundamental unknowable and characterless unity. From Sankhya, one of the six orthodox schools of classical Indian philosophy, they took the idea that spiritual advancement consists of a gradual detachment from the processes of the phenomenal world. The concept of karma is central to Buddhist and Hindu thought and equally became a key tenet of Theosophical thought. From Yoga, Theosophy took the concept that freedom of thought and spirit could be achieved through various bodily processes and exercises. Theosophical texts also borrowed from many other writings on spirituality, philosophy and occult science that are rooted in Western traditions. Among these were works by the ancient Greeks Pythagoras and Plato; Plotinus, the Roman Neo-Platonist; the Renaissance occultists Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus; and the later Christian mystics Jakob Böhme and Emanuel Swedenborg. According to Alfred Percy Sinnett, mentioned above, even Jesus Christ himself preached ideals similar to those contained in H.P.B's *Secret Doctrine*.[10] The Theosophical Society also integrated the esoteric tenets of a number of earlier societies into their teachings, including the Kabbalists, Rosicrucian orders, and several groups of Freemasons. Theosophy's view was that popular religions corrupted the original revelations of mankind through their emphasis on empty ritual and excessive dogma. The movement advocated a more subjective approach and placed much more importance on psychic, intuitive and mystical activity as an equally valid form of knowledge. To the Theosophist, the primary duty of man is to increase the power of one's spiritual faculty through these varied teachings and methods.

Few modern religious currents have been as influential as the Theosophical Society and, until recently, few have been so under-researched. The intentions of this essay are to share some insights into the emergence of the Theosophical Society in Dublin and to investigate some of the individuals who contributed to the growth of the movement significantly. In so doing, I will show that the Society had an important influence upon Dublin's cultural and political milieu. This is by no means an exhaustive investigation, but instead will provide glimpses into some of those shadowy recesses of Dublin's intellectual history, which are all too often overlooked and indeed excluded from what has become the 'official' narrative.

Probably there has never been in any country a period of literary activity, which has not been preceded or accompanied by some stimulation of religious interest. Anyone in search of this in Ireland at this time may find it if he looks for it in the ferment caused in the minds of a group of young men by the early activities of the Theosophical Society movement in Dublin.[11]

The Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society shared in the enthusiasm that accompanied the arrival of Theosophy throughout the rest of Europe. Its diverse philosophy must have seemed incredibly exotic at the time and attractive to anyone seeking a philosophical doctrine that was in no way dogmatic. The Dublin Lodge was a vital locus for several prominent intellectuals in late nineteenth-century Ireland who sought holistic solutions to the political impasse caused by centuries of English colonisation and the oppression of the Catholic population. The genesis of the Dublin Lodge was in a small coterie of people who initially referred to themselves as the Hermetic Society.[12] The critic Ernest Boyd (1887–1946) tells us that in 1884, a young student with an interest in mysticism named Charles Johnston travelled to London to meet several Theosophists. Upon returning to Dublin, Johnston founded the Dublin Hermetic Society with William Butler Yeats.[13]

Although the global enthusiasm for Theosophy can be viewed as being connected to the more general trend of Orientalism, very much in vogue at the time, the Dublin group are known to have closely read and discussed A.P. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism* and Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*. However, this 'Hermeticist' student group in Dublin was not initially Theosophical per se, but was rather interested in a broad spectrum of 'mystical' as well as literary and cultural matters. In fact, the preamble to the constitution of the Hermetic Society stated that one of their main aims would be to collect a library of work on Hermetic philosophy, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christian mysticism, occult philosophy, as well as books of scientific research of particular interest that might aid them in their studies of the obscurer sides of consciousness, dreams, hallucinations and illusions. Roy Foster writes that in 1885, Yeats' aunt, Isabella Pollexfen Varley, sent her nephew a copy of A.P. Sinnet's *Esoteric Buddhism*,[14] the same year that the Dublin Hermetic Society had its first meeting, on the 16th of June 1885, with Yeats serving as chairman. In his

autobiography, Yeats gives a revealing description of the group, who "discussed great problems ardently and simply and unconventionally as men, perhaps discussed great problems as in the medieval universities."[15]

Charles Johnston, then a student of Oriental Studies at Trinity, was also in direct contact with H.P.B. at this time (he later married her niece) and was preparing himself for imminent employment in the Indian Civil Service. Although W.B. Yeats obviously went on to wider renown, it is Johnston who is credited as the individual responsible for founding the first Theosophical Lodge in Ireland and for summarising the principle tenets of Theosophy in the July 1885 issue of the *Dublin University Review*. This publication was important for the foundation of the Society, because it offered members of the group a way to disseminate their ideas and attract likeminded people. Along with writing about the Theosophical Society, it was also Johnston who obtained the charter that officiated the founding of the first Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society in April 1886.[16]

One factor contributing to these individuals' decision to join the T.S. may have been a desire to express dissent from the sectarian factions that divided Irish society during the 1880s and the 1890s. This is clear in the claim made in an 1893 issue of the *Irish Theosophist* (a magazine which will be discussed in greater detail presently) that "the Theosophical Society is non-sectarian and has in its ranks members of every denomination. Its one binding rule is Universal Brotherhood. It is the friend of every religion and endeavours to show the truth underlying each." Nevertheless, it must be noted that the Dublin Theosophical Society initially attracted a following that was predominantly Protestant and from an Anglo-Irish background. As Selina Guinness writes: "Theosophy may thus have offered Protestants a new liberty of conscience, and a new way of breaking free from an intellectual climate constrained by sectarian bigotry."[17]

I ASKED if I should pray.

But the Brahmin said,

Pray for nothing,
Say every night in bed,

I have been a king,

I have been a slave,
Nor is there anything.

Fool, rascal, knave,
That I have not been,
And yet upon my breast

A myriad heads have lain.
That he might set at rest

A boy's turbulent days

Mohini Chatterjee

Spoke these,
Or words like these.

'Mohini Chaterjee' by W.B. Yeats, 1928/1929

The Dublin Theosophists received guidance from and collaborated with several international Theosophists who lived in the city temporarily or visited it in the 1880s. In this way, the movement introduced to Dublin a number of individuals who went on to contribute significantly to its intellectual and cultural diversity. One of the most renowned of these was Mohini Chaterjee (1858-1936), who had become closely acquainted with Madame Blavatsky while she lived in India between 1879 and 1885. A Brahmin (member of the highest scholarly and priestly caste in Hindu society) and a graduate of the University of Calcutta, Chaterjee emigrated to Europe in 1884 and for several years acted as an ambassador for Theosophy throughout Europe. It has been suggested that Chaterjee came to Dublin to quell controversy caused by a scandal in which he was romantically linked with several English girls while residing in Paris.[18] Whether this is true or not, his visit was also a propagandistic mission for the purpose of

disseminating the tenets of the Theosophical Society and recruiting new students. An article in the *Dublin University Review* from May 1886 states:

> **Mr. Mohini Chaterjee contributes to our present number an account of that very striking movement in religious philosophy known as Theosophy. A Theosophical Lodge has recently been founded in Dublin, and has attracted many of those adventurous spirits to whom any new system of thought seems to beckon with promise.[19]**

Mohini Chaterjee's visit was a significant event in the development of the Theosophical Society in Dublin. It underscores the fact that, in the eyes of the International Organisation, Ireland was perfectly suited to adopt the movement. The Society seems to have made efforts to embrace Ireland, probably not least because aspects of the history and mythology of Ireland could be seen as compatible with Theosophical ideology.[20] Furthermore, Theosophy offered its predominantly Anglo-Irish followers a means of engaging in national patriotism without affiliating with Catholicism or conservatism, which was at that time inextricably intertwined with ideas of Irish identity. In his biography of W.B. Yeats, Roy Foster writes that, while in Dublin, Chaterjee preached "the necessity to realise one's individual soul by contemplation of the illusory nature of the material world."[21] No doubt there was much in his lecture and charismatic presence to appeal to youthful idealism, which was certainly in no shortage in Dublin at the time. He was also capable of elaborating upon and explaining many of the concepts which had become prominent via A.P. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*. Chaterjee clearly made an impact on writers such as Yeats, who years later wrote the poem 'Mohini Chaterjee' cited above. Another writer who attended this lecture was George W. Russell – who was a nineteen-year-old art student at the time. This experience was undoubtedly significant for Russell and it provided a further incentive to continue his study of Indian philosophy and literature, which had begun the previous year.[22] The art critic and novelist George Moore (1852–1933) emphasised the importance of Chaterjee's influence on Russell's thinking and had a formative effect on his creative output. Moore writes that Russell (also known as A.E.[23]) "had gone to him [Mohini] instinctively as to destiny and a few months later the Upanishads and the Vedas were born again in verse and prose."[24] The year after Chaterjee visited Dublin, A.E. published some of his earliest literature, an essay called 'The Speech of the Gods' in *The Theosophist* magazine. This marks the beginning of Russell's lifelong association with the Theosophical Society. Russell is a fascinating, complex figure whose life and work were comprised of what ostensibly seem to be contradictory facets.[25] On the one hand he was the visionary writer and painter who focused his mental energies on 'astral clairvoyance', on the other he was a practical organiser and expert on agricultural co-operation. His connection to the Theosophy Society would become central to his work as a writer, thinker and proponent of the agricultural co-operative movement.

> **It is an afternoon in springtime, all sunshine, green leaves, and bird-music. I find myself in Saint Stephen's Green Park with nothing to occupy me, and say to myself; "It is only a step to the Theosophical quarters in Ely Place". Turning the handle of the door, I walk in. There seems to be no one about, I have the whole house to myself - a joyous emptiness, space and quiet. Strolling idly, I reach the back office. Great silence in the back office, but two people are there, Violet North, and the strong-visaged, red-haired poet, Paul Gregan. They are seated on chairs at either side of the fireplace. Their chairs are tilted back, and their feet are sat squarely on the mantelpiece. Each one is solemnly smoking a long churchwarden clay pipe. I am about to speak but a gesture from Violet stops me. It means silence. I sit down meekly and dumbly. Perhaps they are conducting an occult experiment...**[26]

As soon as the Dublin Lodge charter was received, the members of the Theosophical Society set about strengthening the foundations of the organisation in the city. One of the most significant steps taken was to establish a residence where devotees lived together in a manner that would today be considered akin to that of an ashram or commune. The building was located at No. 3 Upper Ely Place, near St. Stephen's Green. Apart from the biographies of the famous individuals associated with the movement - chiefly W.B. Yeats and A.E. - there is scant specific information about this community. In particular, there is little definite information regarding the people who made up the membership of the society or who resided at the household. However, from what little evidence there is, it is clear that No. 3 Ely Place was a vital locus for the society and a destination for anyone in the city who sought to learn more about Theosophical thought. In his *Autobiography*, W.B. Yeats describes the household as follows:

> **The one house where nobody thought or talked politics was a house on Ely Place, where a number lived together, and, for want of a better name, were called Theosophists. Besides the resident members, other members dropped in and out during the day, and the reading-room was a place of much discussion about philosophy and about the arts. The house had been taken in the name of the engineer to the Board of Works, a black-bearded young man, with a passion for Manichaean philosophy, and all accepted him as host.**[27]

This host, who presided over and managed the household, was the committed Theosophist Frederick J. Dick (1856–1927), together with his wife, Annie (birth date unknown, died in 1904). Originally from Scotland, Dick came to Ireland after securing a position with the Board of Works. According to the Dictionary of Irish Architects, Dick was also Head of the Harbours and Lighthouse Board for Ireland from 1887 to 1905.[28] After the period Dick spent living in Ireland as an active member of the Theosophical Society, he relocated to California. There he became a senior figure in the Theosophical Colony at Point Loma, where he remained until his death. Another resident of the household was artist and poet Althea Gyles, a portrait of whom is presented in Yeats' *The Trembling of the Veil* from 1922:

> **On a lower floor [of the Dublin Theosophical Society house in Ely Place], lived a strange red-haired girl, all whose thoughts were set upon painting and poetry, conceived as abstract images like Love and Penury in the Symposium; and to these images she sacrificed herself with Asiatic fanaticism. The engineer [the Manichean philosopher who rented the house] had discovered her starving somewhere in an unfurnished or half-furnished room, and that she had lived for many weeks upon bread and shell-cocoa, so that her food never cost her more than a penny a day. Born into a country family, who were so haughty that their neighbours called them the Royal Family, she had quarrelled with a mad father, who had never, his tenants declared, 'unscrewed the top of his flask with any man', because she wished to study art, had run away from home, had lived for a time by selling her watch, and then by occasional stories in an Irish paper.[29]**

Althea Gyles was from Waterford and was a close friend of Constance Markiewicz (1868–1927). After studying art in Dublin around 1890 and writing an unpublished novel, *The Woman Without a Soul*, she moved to London and became a member of the Order of the Golden Dawn, as W. B. Yeats had also previously done.[30] Although this was a move away from the type of occultism associated with Theosophy, it is likely that her Theosophical roots prepared her in some way for what she later became. In the late 1890s she produced exquisite designs for the covers of Yeats' *The Secret Rose* (1897), *Poems* (1899) and *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899). These designs are rich with symbolism and constitute the perfect visual counterpart to Yeats' writings. In 1904, several of Gyles' erotic drawings also appeared in an edition of *The Harlot's House* by Oscar Wilde. Her involvement with the Golden Dawn ultimately led to a romantic relationship with Aleister Crowley (1875-1947). Gyles is a peripheral figure whose excellently conceived artistic output remains relatively overlooked, perhaps because it exists primarily within the realms of illustration and book design.

Obtaining the headquarters on Ely Place was a significant step in the advancement of the Theosophical Society in Dublin. The household provided members with a sanctuary where they could live freely and study and learn together. It was also a place where lectures were regularly held with the intention of introducing the public to the tenets of Theosophy. Moreover, the house provided a space for the movement to begin producing and distributing pamphlets and periodicals. The first official publication of the Dublin Society, *The Irish Theosophist*, was printed in 1892. The magazine was edited by Daniel N. Dunlop (1868–1935)[31] and was published on a monthly basis between 1892 and 1897.[32] This magazine is now one of the few sources of direct information regarding the development of the Society in Dublin. It not only contains numerous articles regarding the philosophies of the society and news concerning its progress, but also details of the monthly meetings held by the society and some information regarding the individuals involved. For example, *The Irish Theosophist* describes how "On October 19th, 1892, A.E. presented a public lecture on the Higher Mind and also that on Tuesday the 29th an interesting paper was read by a Miss Lawrence on 'Psychic Phenomena' at the North Dublin centre of the T.S. and that there was much interest."[33] In addition to disseminating information and attracting people who may have been interested in the movement, the founding and production of the magazine was also important because it directly precipitated the arrival of James Morgan Pryse (1859–1942) to Dublin. As with Mohini Chaterjee, Pryse's arrival demonstrates how the activities of the Theosophical Society attracted several interesting individuals to Dublin and in so doing, contributed directly to the diversity of the cities cultural and intellectual milieu.

"As everyone knows, it is a thousand times easier to reconstruct the facts of what happened at a certain time than its intellectual atmosphere..."

Stefan Zweig, The World of Yesterday.
The World of Yesterday, Pushkin Press 2009,
(first published in German as Die Welt von Gestern, 1942)

The following photographs were taken by Dorje de Burgh in various locations around Dublin and it's environs in 2013 and 2014. Some of these images document concrete traces of the Dublin Theosophical Society while others attempt indirectly evoke or transpose the lingering ghosts of the long-gone community.

I) Theosophical murals at Ely Place.
(Painted by Æ. and friends c.1895.)
II) Untitled (The grave of A.E. Mt. Jerome, Dublin)
III) Untitled (Overlooking Dolmen Vale)
IV) Untitled (Dolmen Vale)
V) Untitled (The house of Princess)
VI) Untitled (Smoke Cloud)
VII) Untitled (Red Couple)


Æ
I MOVED AMONG MEN AND PLACES,
AND IN LIVING I LEARNED THE
TRUTH AT LAST. I KNOW I
AM A SPIRIT, AND THAT I WENT
FORTH IN OLD TIME FROM THE
SELF-ANCESTRAL TO LABOURS YET
UNACCOMPLISHED

One of several artworks produced collaboratively by A.E. and Pryse for *The Irish Theosophist*. The image also features a visual reference to the abstract rock art present on many megalithic monuments throughout Ireland.

Born in Ohio, James Morgan Pryse initially studied law, but abandoned it for journalism, which allowed him to travel extensively. He settled in Los Angeles, California in 1886 and joined the Los Angeles branch of the Theosophical Society the next year, following the example of his brother John (1863-1952), who was already a member.[34] In 1888, Pryse relocated to New York City, where he combined his devotion to Theosophy with his interest in publishing and set about establishing a company which would handle the publishing needs of the various branches of the Theosophical Society in the United States. This proved an extremely successful venture and as a result, Pryse was contacted by H.P.B. in August 1890 and invited to London to establish and operate a new publishing company. The H.P.B. Press (or Blavatsky Press) was established in London in November 1890.

Pryse came to Dublin from London in early 1895 with the intention of assisting with *The Irish Theosophist*, which by then had already been active for three years. Apparently, he brought with him the printing press that had previously been used in London for printing Theosophical literature.[35] Importantly, Pryse travelled to Dublin in the company of Violet North, who married George Russell in 1898.[36] At the time of Pryse's arrival Russell was becoming increasingly ardent in his involvement with the Theosophical Society and was coming to the fore as an unofficial representative of the movement in Dublin. He and Pryse quickly became close friends and collaborators and worked together on a series of prints, which appeared in *The Irish Theosophist*. These prints are powerfully direct in their simplicity and depict ethereal androgynous beings in close proximity to or ascending from the bodies of mortals. These artworks are singular in the history of Irish art and constitute rare examples of material traces of the Theosophical movement in Dublin. Several of these prints bear A.E.'s monogram and the symbol used by Pryse in place of a monogram: the occult symbol of a cross inside a circle, also known as a sun wheel. The creative collaboration between Pryse and Russell was intense and fruitful, but came to an end when Pryse departed Dublin after just a year. Yet, although his time in Dublin was brief, Pryse's contribution was significant: deepening his companion's knowledge of Yogic practice and sharing his knowledge of magic rituals and initiation rites.[37]

It was during this period in the 1890s – while Russell was residing at the household at 3 Ely Place – that the impressive murals were painted on the walls of the first floor rooms of the house.

These murals are rare examples of Irish Theosophical art and are also significant because they share parallels with visual art being produced contemporaneously in France and Belgium.[38] Considering this, it is rather sad that these murals remain largely undocumented and indeed unknown, not least since they are losing their lustre and gradually fading. The current owner of the house states that these murals were obscured for some time, only being revealed in the late 1940s when layers of wallpaper were removed.[39]

Although Theosophical tenets remained important to A.E. throughout his career as a poet and painter, the murals at Ely Place are amongst the most 'Theosophical' of his works. Much of the symbolism contained in them has its direct source in *The Secret Doctrine*. These murals would have been seen by all those who visited the household for Theosophical meetings and events, and may even have had some sort of meditational or didactic function. In *Flowering Dusk*, the autobiography of another Dublin Theosophist, Ella Young, these murals are described, which Young encountered whilst attending her first Theosophical meeting. The following excerpt provides a personal response to the murals (which were then complete, their colours still brilliant) and is a valuable portrayal of the atmosphere at meetings held at the household:

> **We entered a room to the right of the hall. It opened with folding doors to another room, and both rooms were filled with people who sat on chairs. Somebody was addressing this audience. Helen and I found a seat and sat attentive. The speaker was talking of dream-consciousness, voyages in the astral, cycles of reincarnation, of many gorgeous things that shone and revolved like worlds in that dimly lighted cosmos. From the chandelier in the first room there hung a strange pattern of triangles that seemed to form a globe, and from that again hung a serpent. While he discoursed I stared at walls and ceilings. The walls had pictures painted on them – perhaps pictures are not the word, symbolic emblems or drawings, which made one think of Blake's drawings. In one place a small human figure stood between two great Beings, one blue and the other scarlet, which seemed eager to engage the attention of the man. In another place great serpents, crowned and plumed, reared their heads. The light was dim, and the pictures moved in it like tapestries blown by the wind, now in light, now in shadow.[40]**

Although these murals have been attributed to A.E., it is possible that other individuals affiliated with the Dublin group may have contributed to painting them. That the murals may have been a communal effort is given further credence by the fact that one of them features Yeats' signature. Moreover, since it is known that the work of the artist William Blake (1757–1827) influenced Althea Gyles, it seems entirely possible that she might have contributed to these fascinating paintings too, as she was residing at the household when they were painted and several figures in the murals possess a distinctively Blakean quality.[41]

This period in the 1890s represents the climax of the Theosophical movement's activities in Dublin. The many meetings, the establishment of the monthly publication, and the painting of the murals emphasise the fact that – at least at one point – the Society succeeded in operating collectively to propagate what it saw as vital cause. The household dissolved soon after Frederick Dick left Ireland and relocated to the United States, where he continued his Theosophical vocation and lectured at the T.S. Headquarters at Point Loma. The Dublin group continued to meet in various Dublin locations, but there was never again a residence where devotees resided communally. The only traces of this house's curious history are the aforementioned murals, which will sadly soon fade from sight.

The majority of the Irish Theosophical Society archives, including all the membership records, vanished at some point in the second half of the twentieth century.[42] The main reason for this is the fact that the Irish branch of the movement was fractured by a number of ideological disputes and underwent a crisis as a result of this. The last recorded instance of anyone directly accessing the papers of the Theosophical Society was in the mid-1950s: Monk Gibbon (1896-1987) accessed the Theosophical Society's attendance book (which dated from the 1880s onwards) while carrying out research for his thesis.

Gibbon states that this attendance book - which was signed whenever a meeting was held, or whenever an individual member visited the Theosophical Society headquarters - had survived in the charge of the Theosophist, painter and writer H.F. Norman[43] (1868-1947), who allowed him to consult it on one occasion.[44] This clearly enabled him to glean a great deal of important information. For example, the attendance book confirmed that Maud Gonne (1866-1953), who was then a central figure in the Hermetic Order of The Golden Dawn, attended the Theosophical Headquarters in Dublin.

According to Gibbon, there were a few other important signatories in this publication: in November 1888, two of the most prominent disciples of Theosophy of that time, W.Q. Judge (one of the founders of the society) and Dr. Archibald Keightley (1859-1930),[45] visited the Dublin Lodge. But these two luminaries of Theosophy were not the only ones to visit around this time. Early in October 1889, an announcement appeared in Dublin newspapers that Colonel Olcott - another founding member of the Theosophical Society - was about to pay a visit to Ireland and would address meetings in the capital and elsewhere.

Although other Theosophists of renown had previously made visits, this one seems to have held great significance for the Dublin Lodge. In what was clearly an attempt to reach the general public, the Society booked the Ancient Concert Rooms on Pearse Street (then Brunswick Street) for Olcott's opening lecture.[46] The announcement passed unnoticed in most newspapers, but on Saturday, 12th of October 1889 *The Freeman's Journal* came out with a leader on the subject. It begins:

An advertisement, which has appeared in the daily papers during the week, has acquainted the people of Dublin with the fact that a certain Colonel Olcott, 'President of the Theosophical Society', is to deliver a lecture on Monday evening next in the Ancient Concert Rooms. For the first time we learn that the Theosophical Society has a local habitation and a name in the metropolis. A pamphlet issued by the Dublin Lodge is the first intimation we have had of the existence amongst us of this interesting coterie of superior people who cherish the cult of what they are pleased to call Theosophy. The pamphlet informs us that the Lodge meetings are held on Wednesday evenings. It would be interesting to know what proportion of time consumed in these feminine gatherings is devoted to the study of Oriental legends concerning Buddha and what to an interchange of opinions about the latest Paris fashion in bonnets. This programme is in part elaborately nonsensical and for the rest a dishonest paraphrase of one of the fundamental laws of Christianity. Not one so-called Theosophist could translate a sentence from any Eastern classic. [...] As for the investigation of the psychic powers latent in man, and unexplained laws of nature – that part of the business is errant folly when it is not knavery.[47]

This rather sexist excerpt reveals how many people at the time viewed the activities of the T.S. with cynicism and illustrates the conservatism the movement faced in a city like Dublin. Nevertheless, the Dublin Theosophists were quick to defend the president of their Society. Within a few days, letters appeared from a number of people, including Frederick Dick, who struck back savagely and agreed, with irony, that anyone who attempted to discover a principle of unity behind the various warring sects and religions must indeed be mad. When the Colonel presented his lecture at the Ancient Concert Rooms to an audience of between three and four hundred people, *The Freemans Journal* disparagingly informed its readers that he looked:

Neither the soldier nor the dreamer. There is more of the prosperous merchant or the chairman of a paying twenty percent. His audience was composed of well-dressed men and women. The fair sex was well represented. Ladies of every age, but the young were in the majority [...] not the spectacled, wizened, and pigeon-chested order, which is the popular portrait of a woman of science.[48]

After this first presentation, Colonel Olcott is reported to have visited Limerick and Belfast where he also delivered lectures. When he returned to Dublin he gave two more talks to smaller audiences.

While Olcott's lecture tour of Ireland was certainly welcomed by the Theosophical community, it is not surprising that many others responded to his visit with derision. It was inevitable that the content of some of his lectures – and indeed some of the key aspects of Theosophical thought – would cause controversy amongst the more devoutly Christian attendees.[49] For although Christianity is built upon many rituals and practices that are rooted in paganism, it approaches the occult as something highly dangerous, or at least irrelevant to the path of moral and spiritual attainment. Moreover there are aspects of Theosophical philosophy that could be considered by some to be anti-Christian in character.

Theosophy thus catered to the rapidly increasing number of people who found the dogma of the established churches restrictive and was therefore viewed by some as a potential threat to Christianity. Like many religions, it insisted that materialistic dogmas were inadequate and propagated the idea that study and conscientiousness might reveal a spiritual universe governed by a spiritual law. It not only attracted those with occult leanings but also those who were anxious to bring their religious or spiritual leanings into some kind of alignment with science.

Looking back, it appears that Olcott's visit to Ireland marked the beginning of a period of decline in terms of official Theosophical activity in Dublin. The decade between 1899 and 1909 seems to have been quiet for the movement, though it is nonetheless likely that occasional meetings took place and study groups met privately. Other societies and ideological groups were emerging at this time, such as *Na Fianna Eireann* (the Warriors of Ireland), which were specifically political and nationalistic in nature.[50] A Dublin section of the Society for Psychical Research was founded by the Reverend Dr James William Barlow among others in 1909.

This decline in organised (and recorded) activity may have been precipitated by the resignation of George Russell from the movement in 1898. However, Russell's resignation was no reflection on his lifelong devotion to Theosophical ideals. Upon his resignation A.E. resurrected the more informal Hermetic Society of his student years; evidence suggests that he continued to encourage those who attended the

weekly meetings to read and observe the work of Blavatsky. Ella Young describes this in her autobiography:

> **There has been a split in the Theosophical Society. Aeon, followed by all the young writers and poets has renounced Mrs Tingley. The house in Ely Place has shut its doors against us. We call ourselves 'The Hermetic Society' and meet in a room, found after much searching, in a house empty but for ourselves. One climbs two sets of stairs to reach it. First one has to find the stairs; newcomers search for a long while before discovering the blind alley and the dusty entrance to the half-deserted house whence those stairs lead up to the deserted room. Tallow candles light it. It is full of shadows and dust. The members are supposed to clean it up now and again, but they don't think to do it very often. A fire burns in the grate when anyone remembers to bring sods of turf. Opening dimly from that first room is a second, dignified with the title of library - it has much emptiness and a few books and pamphlets. In contrast the walls of the chief room are covered with papers more or less securely pinned there. Close inspection discovers them to be sonnets and lyrics in the handwriting of the authors. There are questions and replies in verse - mock-serious criticisms and compliments. A.E. lectures on occultism every Thursday evening, and when the lectures are over he discusses poetry and criticises the work of his younger poets. He thinks it will be possible to collect enough material for a small book of verse; with a foreword from him it would find a publisher.**

It was in fact via A.E.'s Hermetic Society that many of the newest wave of young Dublin writers, such as James Joyce (1882–1941) and James Stephens (1882–1950), found their way to occult and Theosophical literature. It was Russell who first published Joyce's *Dubliners* in the publication he edited, *The Irish Homestead*, and the two had a complex relationship.[51] There are references to Russell in Joyce's *Ulysses*,[52] although they are less benevolent than one might expect. In his 1922 book *Ireland's Literary Renaissance*, Ernest Boyd explains how A.E. brought to prominence poets of the younger generation "who had gathered about him as part of Dublin's Theosophical Movement".[53] Ella Young was one of the poets A.E. chose for inclusion in his book *New Songs*, published in 1904 and it was through such literature that English poet Clifford Bax (1886–1962) was drawn to the Theosophical Society. Bax went on to found the Theosophical magazine *Orpheus*, to which Russell contributed.[54]

Like George Russell, Young was born in Northern Ireland – in Co. Antrim. When she was three, the family moved to Limerick and then eventually to Dublin. Like other figures associated with the Irish Literary Revival, Young (who described herself as Pagan in the 1911 census[55]) was interested in reviving ancient Irish folklore by putting it into print, staging it, and also learning the Irish language. To pursue these interests, Young made many trips to the West of Ireland, where she collected stories and lore, beginning thus a life's work that would eventually take her to the American West Coast.[56]

After H.P.B.'s death in 1891, Annie Besant assumed the role of worldwide leader and figurehead of the movement.[57] Besant was invited to speak in Dublin in 1909 and the lectures she presented reignited considerable interest in Theosophy. This is evinced in the fact that a new Dublin Lodge was formed in the wake of her visit. It is thought that it was Besant's visit to Dublin that attracted Francis Sheehy-Skeffington (1878–1916) and Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington (1877–1946), to become active supporters of the society in Dublin. Both of the Sheehy-Skeffingtons were advocates of women's rights, committed pacifists and both participated in the Dublin Lock-out of 1913. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington's Theosophical leanings will be discussed further presently.

The two other people primarily responsible for this resurgence of the movement in Dublin were James Henry Cousins (1873–1956) and Margaret E. Cousins (1878–1954). Like all the individuals associated with the Dublin Theosophical community mentioned in this investigation, the full extent of the Cousins' achievements can only be touched upon here. It was they who had invited Besant to speak in Dublin and, typically for those in Theosophical circles of that time, both James and Margaret were also suffragists, vegetarians, and anti-vivisectionists. James used several pseudonyms, including Mac Oisín and the Hindu name Jayaram, and was significantly influenced by A.E.'s ability to reconcile his inherently mystical character with a practical approach to social and political reform. James had a lifelong interest in the paranormal and acted as a reporter in several experiments carried out by William Fletcher Barrett (1844–1925), who was Professor of Physics at Dublin University and also one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research. Once again, this connection between the Theosophical and Psychical Research communities is interesting and underscores the socio-intellectual overlaps. Margaret Cousins was a founder of the Irish Women's Franchise League, a lifelong advocate of equality for women and author of a 1907 book, *Votes for Women*.

Another figure who was deeply involved in attempts to advance the Theosophical cause in Edwardian Dublin and beyond was Pierce Leslie Pielou (1870–1962), who was appointed President of the Society in Ireland in 1912. Pielou, who was also a Celticist, amateur archaeologist, astrologist, and supporter of animal welfare, was married to Margaret Cousins' sister and collaborated with her on psychical research. Like James Cousins, Pielou was also interested in

exploring and proposing connections between Ireland and Asian cultures. Both shared the belief that there were numerous significant parallels between Irish and Oriental civilisations. Pielou's ideas, which combine archaeology, mythology, linguistics, and a substantial amount of fantasy, were often expressed in Theosophical publications and he is believed to have been involved with the establishment of an Irish Astrological Society in the 1920s.[58]

Although Pielou made attempts to form an additional section of the Theosophical Society in Ireland, his efforts failed, largely due to the outbreak of World War I and the extreme escalation of political turbulence in Ireland, which resulted in something of a scattering of the organisation. In 1915, Annie Besant invited the Cousins to India and offered James a position as literary editor of *The New India*. Under Besant's direction this newspaper became an important organ for disseminating propaganda for Indian independence at that time. However, James Cousins' position as editor of the newspaper was temporary: after a year working for the newspaper, Cousins published an article in *The New India* expressing admiration and support for those who had participated in the Easter Rising of 1916 in Dublin. As a direct result of this, Annie Besant was forced to dismiss him having been previously imprisoned herself by the British authorities for sedition.[59] The Cousins would nevertheless remain in India almost permanently for the rest of their lives and James eventually converted to Hinduism.

Although the Theosophical Society attracted a global following, the character it assumed in Ireland was unique.[60] As a result of the specific conditions in Ireland at the time, the Theosophical movement became particularly politicised and was a unique force for cultural change. The ideas and attitudes promulgated by the Theosophical Movement in Ireland acted as an important catalyst for certain individuals, inspiring them to develop independent ideas and aspirations that had a specifically national resonance. For example, Ella Young founded a group called the Fine, probably a variation on the Celtic word Fianna, when she left A.E.'s Hermetic Society, which she had begun to regard as insufficient for Irish needs. Maud Gonne, a close friend of Young's, explains that her goal in the Fine was to free Ireland by drawing together "the wills of the living and the dead in association with the Earth and the elements which, to her seemed living entities."[61] The Fine made frequent journeys to megalithic sites and mountains, such as Slieve Gullion Mór, north of Dublin, which they believed was a location inhabited by special spirits. While this illustrates the fact that the invisible world was something very real for Young, it is vital to note that she was by no means frivolous, fey or incapable of partaking in urgent worldly matters. As we shall see, both she and Francis Sheehy-Skeffington were involved in the events of Easter Week in 1916.

While pacifism is a key tenet of Theosophical thought, several individuals affiliated with the Dublin Lodge were ardent supporters of the Irish independence movement and participated in the Easter Rebellion of 1916. As just mentioned, the compulsion to participate in what was perceived as a vital – and 'karmically correct' – cause inspired individuals such as Ella Young to play a role in the Easter Rising. Young is known to have been well-acquainted with Pádraic Pearse and spoke several times at his school, Saint Enda's.[62] She was also a member of the Cumann na mBán and smuggled and concealed armaments for the Republicans during the Easter Rising.[63] As already mentioned, the Theosophical convictions of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington were manifest in his belief in civil disobedience and efforts to encourage pacifism during the 1916 Rising. More tragically, Sheehy-Skeffington's pacifism led to his unlawful murder: during the Rising he tried to organise a civilian defence force to prevent looting. He was arrested by members of the British army on the grounds that he was an enemy sympathiser and was shot and buried at Portobello Army Barracks.[64]

While both the 1916 rising and subsequent Civil War might now be seen as inevitable steps in Ireland's evolution, they both resulted in widespread physical carnage and psychological damage. Unsurprisingly, the atmosphere in Ireland after 1916 was one of disappointment and disillusionment, and not one in which the Theosophical cause could properly flourish. The murder of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington (a dedicated pacifist shot without trial) illustrates the extent of the brutality encountered even by those who were not violent but simply idealistic. In the wake of Easter 1916, in which many individuals from diverse backgrounds had come together to fight for Irish independence, alignments disintegrated and new factions formed. Theosophy ceased to be a sufficient force to connect these many diverse factions from which Irish society was comprised.

However, there was certainly still some level of organised occult activity in Dublin in the wake of the Rising and during the War of Independence (1919–21). In fact, due to an injection of financial aid from the English Section, it became possible to acquire premises for a new headquarters in Dublin at 16 South Frederick Street.[65] A new charter was applied for and granted on the 25th of August 1919. Referring to the application for an Irish Section charter, Annie Besant writes:

> **The birth of an Irish Section is of great significance to the Theosophical Movement, especially in the West. Ireland is to the West that which India is to the East in particular and to the world in general - the great home of spirituality. When the rest of Europe was plunged in darkness consequent upon the destruction of the Greco-Roman civilisation, Ireland remained the home of learning and sent her missionaries throughout the continent.**[66]

Nevertheless, although there may have been some signs of growth, the socio-political turmoil of this epoch, in which the partitioning of Ireland took place, obviously was not conducive to the growth of the movement. Although relatively brief, the Irish Civil War (which broke out in 1922 and lasted eleven months) was extremely bloody and brutal. It involved guerrilla warfare, street battles and executions sanctioned by the Free State government. The atmosphere of violence and political fanaticism prompted many to leave Ireland at this time, a large number of whom were originally from Anglo-Irish

backgrounds. In several cases, this constituted the termination of a relationship with Ireland that had endured for many previous generations. This is exemplified in the case of Horace Plunkett (1854–1932) who was then leader of The Agricultural Co-operative Movement, Senator of the Irish Free State and prominent supporter of the Irish Home Rule movement. In 1923 Plunkett's house, Kilteragh, on the outskirts of Dublin, was – like many other great Irish houses – burned down by forces opposed to the Anglo-Irish Treaty.[67] The destruction of Kilteragh led directly to Plunkett's decision to quit Ireland. But this was not merely a personal loss for him: it constituted the ruination of a repository of numerous historical artworks and artefacts. This exemplifies how the birth of the 'new' Ireland involved many acts of destruction, which – though perhaps inevitable – were by no means essential.

It is of course understandable that the years of prolonged persecution and the burning of 'non-ascendancy' property (carried out by soldiers sent to Ireland by the government in London after 1918) would have repercussions. However, the implications of some of these devastating violent acts were particularly far-reaching, affecting everyone regardless of their political stance.[68] Furthermore, Horace Plunkett's case emphasises that many innovations implemented by an idealistic few were lost as a result of the reactionary status quo that emerged in Ireland after independence was gained. For while the Irish Free State was a country where independence from the crown had been achieved, it was paradoxically not a country where its citizens were entirely free. Ireland changed from a place that was tolerant (or at least indifferent) to the type of person who pursued Theosophy, to a country where such individuals would have been looked upon with disdain and suspicion. As the new state crystallised in the wake of the Civil War, many therefore grew disillusioned with what was emerging. The possibilities that had seemed within reach once again became distant, as the political and social atmosphere of the nation quickly stagnated and the new republic, minus the six counties of Ulster, began to take shape. Although the colonial presence had now departed, it was exchanged for the equally – if not more – repressive influences of the Roman Catholic Church.

Although efforts were made to accord fair treatment to Protestants, the fact is that free thinkers (or those affiliated with movements such as the Theosophists) and those who chose to pursue an alternative path from that deemed 'correct' by the Catholic church were regularly subjected to vitriol. In a general report by the T.S. from 1925, the Irish General Secretary T. Kennedy states that;

> **The general well-being of the country has been worse than ever, and is reflected in the fact that a large number of our members are too harassed to study and work for our cause and an increasing number failed to pay their subscriptions.**[69]

The late 1920s saw Ireland increasingly bound by puritanical laws rooted in an obsession with Catholic piety and a widespread desire to model the new state on an idealised form of Gaelic culture. The Romantic notions of reviving some sort of primitive Gaelic culture that had once been held by many of the Anglo-Irish thinkers of the Celtic Revival grew more aggressive under the Free State. These circumstances contributed directly to the departure of Ella Young in 1925, who toured as a lecturer for six years and eventually settled in California to teach at the University of California at Berkeley, and then subsequently also the departure of A.E. Their decision to leave Ireland underscores the fact that many important cultural figures left Ireland not only because of the climate of conflict, but also as a direct result of government imposed censorship upon all art forms.

A.E. remained in Ireland until the early 1930s and continued to lead his Hermetic group, but ultimately found the atmosphere claustrophobic and culturally barren and left disenchanted in 1935. Before leaving, A.E. was offered a position as Senator of the Free State, but he rejected it, writing that Ireland had become a "nation run by louts".[70] Although he held idiosyncratic and inconsistent attitudes to certain forms of Modernism as evinced by his uncharacteristically brutal criticism of the paintings of Irish artist Mainie Jellett (1897–1944),[71] Russell did attempt to cultivate progressive culture in Ireland for as long as he resided there. In all cases, this effort was galvanised by his efforts to propagate Theosophical ideas. In 1929, he issued a book of ethereal poems entitled *Dark Weeping*, which reflects his cosmic views and contains references to Vedic seers.[72] The fact that Paul Nash (1889–1946) was commissioned to provide the beautiful images that adorn this book is significant. It underscores once again the fact that the Theosophical milieu in Dublin was a conduit through which the work of cultural producers and thinkers from abroad was introduced. For Nash is one of the most remarkable figures of twentieth-century

British art. Though best known as a painter of the Great War, it is the Surrealist landscapes he painted later in life that are his most impressive works.

Although Russell was disillusioned with what Ireland became, he remained spiritually devoted to the country. In some ways this mirrors his relationship with Theosophy, the tenets of which he never rejected, despite renouncing what the movement became after the various schisms occurred. Russell's 1933 novel *The Avatars* (subtitled *A Futurist Fantasy*) exemplifies how he was still attempting to integrate his subjective interpretation of Theosophical ideas with visionary ideals regarding what Ireland's future would be. In it, a spiritual transfiguration of Ireland occurs as the result of communication between humans and the 'avatars' from another world. These avatars are mythical heroes who empower and arouse joy in those who they encounter. They are eventually eliminated by the authorities, but their cult – and their power – grows via the legends and artistic records in which they are perpetuated.

Upon his departure Russell passed on the responsibility of leading the Hermetic Circle to a close friend and fellow esotericist, P.G. Bowen (1882–1940). Bowen was an author and teacher of what has been termed 'practical occultism'. However, by the 1930s the activities of this society also began to wane and entered a period of permanent decline. Though meetings certainly continued to occur, there would never be the same level of structured commitment as before. Literary figures like James Stephens (1880–1950) and Seamus O'Sullivan (1879–1958; real name James Sullivan Starkey) continued to espouse certain ideas that suggest a certain Theosophical bent, but they did not maintain the movement per se. This decline of the movement in the mid to late 1930s in Ireland was undoubtedly hastened by the imposition of government censorship – and suppression – upon all forms of culture. Moreover, since Theosophy was not merely a cultural movement, but one that had religious and indeed political facets, it seems probable that it would have been viewed as pernicious during the period in Ireland's history referred to as the 'Emergency' – from 1939 to 1945.

The outbreak of World War II dealt a serious blow to the cohesion of Theosophical work globally. In Ireland this period also corresponds with the consecration of John Charles McQuaid (1895–1973) as Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. This can be seen as the beginning of a particularly dark period of modern Irish history, the horror of which the country is only now beginning to comprehend. From 1940 to 1972, McQuaid ruled over Catholic Ireland, wholeheartedly supporting a censorship system that banned the work of countless Irish and international artists and thinkers. This moral monopoly of the Catholic church resulted in the proliferation of an intellectually moribund and sterilised culture, yet even in the depressed and isolated Dublin of the 1940s, there were still those who, in the search for alternative ways of thinking and living pursued Theosophical activity and attended meetings. For this reason it is perhaps no surprise that connections can be found between Dublin Theosophists and the artists of the White Stag Group, who came together with the aim of promoting the advancement of subjectivity in psychological analysis and art.[73]

The White Stag Group was founded in London in 1935 by artists Basil Rákóczi (1908–1979) and Kenneth Hall (1913–1946). They came to Ireland in the summer of 1939 to avoid the impending war and had a significant impact upon cultural life there. When Rákóczi and Hall first arrived in Dublin, the art world was conservative in the extreme. They injected a welcome freshness into the scene and by means of their experimentation with art and psychology they asserted their independence and provided an example to other, mainly native artists, in their never-ending quarrels with the artistic establishment.[74]

Basil Rákóczi supposedly attended meetings of the Dublin Theosophical Lodge, at this point led by H.F. Norman, who is also recorded as having presented lectures at public events organised by the White Stag Group.[75] These associations are perhaps unsurprising, for Ráckóczi was also one of the founders of The Society for Creative Psychology, the aim of which was to create a methodology in psychology attuned to what they termed 'the natural rhythm of life', something which bears a significant similarity to Theosophical aspirations. In a city as isolated as Dublin was in the years of the Second World War, it was inevitable that dialogue would ignite between those who sought enlightenment and transcendence; from the humdrum and reactionary milieu they inhabited as much as anything else.

The fact that the T.S. never regained the power and popularity that it had during its first flourish in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was certainly not unique to Dublin. By the 1940s,

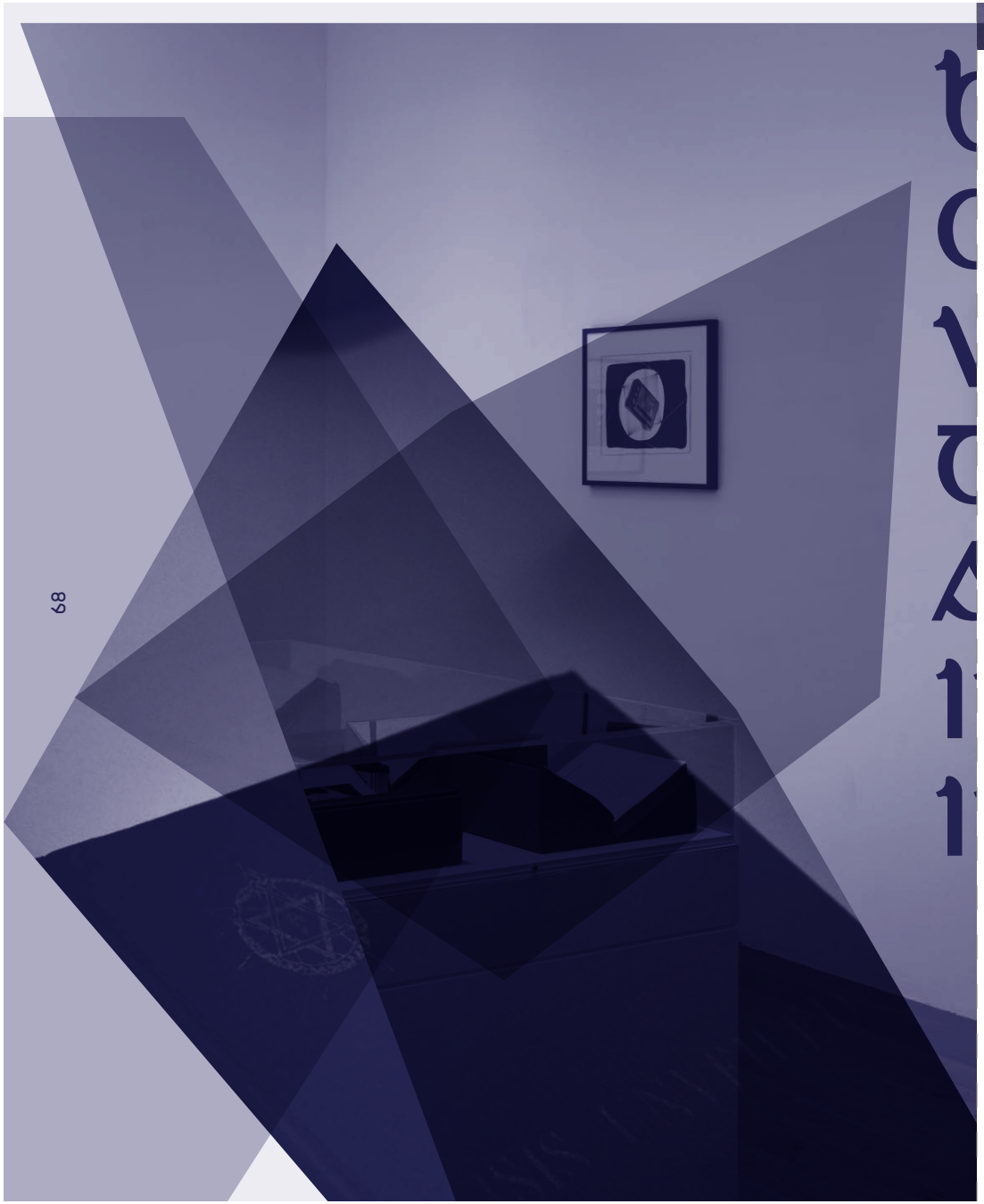
many of the ideas propagated by the T.S. had become pervasive and were no longer as esoteric as they had been in the previous century. The decline in the T.S. was not the result of the ideas it propagated becoming redundant, but of these foundational ideas in fact becoming integral to so much mainstream thought.

Moreover, the Theosophical Society – while certainly radical – was founded during an era in which finding and making personal and group identities was carried out by establishing groups, groups such as the Masonic lodges, gentlemen's clubs, women's clubs and literary societies. These societies provided opportunities to connect and fraternise with likeminded types, in some instances politically and professionally too. Theosophy, insofar as it is organised on the model of a lodge or fellowship, reflects those days. With some obvious exceptions, the twentieth century was for the most part distinguished by a sociological shift in which the compulsion to be a member of an organisation or association became less prevalent. While the T.S satisfied and further intensified the late Victorian and early Edwardian obsession with mysticism and the spiritual, it also introduced – and made mainstream – many ideas and cultural motifs which flourished within it. The emergence of several New Age movements and various aspects of 1960s counter-culture exemplify how many of the ideas first propagated by the T.S. were adopted by legions of people who simply did not feel the same need to become an official member of any one organisation, but instead subscribed to and engaged with ideas and philosophies in a more personal and less codified way. At present there are two active Lodges of The Theosophical Society in Ireland: the Dublin (Phoenix) and Belfast Lodges. Members continue to assemble – in a format akin to a study group – to discuss Theosophical doctrine. This evinces that while the popularity of Theosophical activity may have waned somewhat since the nineteenth century, it remains a vital source of philosophical and spiritual knowledge for many people in the contemporary world.

In *George Russell and the New Ireland*, Nicolas Allen highlights how the cultural topography of Ireland between 1890 and 1930 was, like the political topography, fragmentary and constantly shifting.[76] The influences of the Theosophical Society contributed another element to this period of flux. Yet, for the most part, the significance of Theosophy in the context of fin-de-siècle Ireland has been overlooked, omitted or at best been considered only via the prism of literary figures. There are several reasons for this, one being that there are almost no physical traces of the group; no material proof of their activities. Moreover, the movement is inherently rather quiet in its activities and not inclined toward self-promotion and noticeable public presence. However, the main factor contributing to the non-inclusion of the occult aspect of Ireland's recent past is that these elements are too outré to fit so neatly into the 'official' history.

It is essential that, from today's perspective, we view it not simply as a forgotten experiment or an historical curiosity. Instead, the contribution made by the Theosophical Movement must be recognised as an important idealistic force that was particularly significant in the context of Ireland, where there were so few organisations of this kind; in comparison to England for example where the Society flourished and where the Fabian Society also held much interest for those drawn to a Socialist perspective. The ideas propagated by the Theosophical movement contributed significantly to the pool of limitless possibilities once available to those who sought to construct a utopian Ireland. There were no other societies of this kind in Ireland and members of the Dublin Theosophical Society were without a doubt among the first in Ireland to explore Eastern philosophy. They were also united in their views on the necessity for a change in the role of women in society. The group's activities also represent a unique connection between cultural discourse, modernity, and the global networks of the British Empire and fin-de-siècle mysticism.[77] For a brief but decisive period the movement contributed directly to the formation of a cosmopolitan milieu that was open enough to allow a very diverse group of individuals to connect.

One of the most radical and culturally creative movements of their time, the Theosophists called for a new social order based on principles of cooperation and creativity. In addition to acknowledging the influences of the movement on recent Irish history, we might also do well to actually engage with some of the ideas the movement was founded upon. From the perspective of the twenty-first century, there is much that can be gained from studying and applying the ideas of fundamental altruism, a respect for all life, a holistic approach to problems, an acceptance of change and growth, an insistence on the intrinsic order and intelligibility of the cosmos, a recognition of the unique value of the individual and of the spiritual foundation of the material world.[78]



ENDNOTES

1.
ELLA YOUNG, *FLOWERING DUSK: THINGS REMEMBERED ACCURATELY AND INACCURATELY* (NEW YORK: 1945), P.28.

2.
ALTHOUGH IN IRELAND, IT MUST BE SAID, THE RANKS WERE ALMOST ENTIRELY PROTESTANT.

3.
THIS IS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE EMBLEM OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, WHICH COMBINES SYMBOLS DRAWN FROM VARIOUS RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD TO EXPRESS THE ORDER OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE SPIRITUAL UNITY OF ALL LIFE.

4.
THE IRISH AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN STANDISH JAMES O'GRADY (1846–1928) DEVOTED HIS CAREER TO THE STUDY OF IRISH ANTIQUITIES AND PUBLISHED SEVERAL BOOKS THAT POPULARISED AND REVIVED AN INTEREST IN IRISH HISTORY AND MYTHOLOGY. IN 1878, HE PUBLISHED *HISTORY OF IRELAND: THE HEROIC PERIOD* FOLLOWED IN 1880 BY *HISTORY OF IRELAND: CUCULAIN AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES*.

5.
JAMES H. O'BRIEN, *THEOSOPHY AND THE POETRY OF GEORGE RUSSELL (A.E.), W.B. YEATS & JAMES STEPHENS*, UNPUBLISHED THESIS SUBMITTED FOR DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY (UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON: 1956), P.74.

6.
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY HAS UNDERGONE SEVERAL CHANGES SINCE ITS INCEPTION AND SPLIT INTO SEVERAL CO-EXISTING FACTIONS. AFTER BLAVATSKY'S DEATH IN 1891, THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT EXPERIENCED A DECADE OF DISSENT. IN 1895 WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE WHO HEADED THE AMERICAN BRANCHES DIED AND WAS SUCCEEDED BY KATHERINE A. TINGLEY, WHO MOVED THE AMERICAN SECTION'S HEADQUARTERS TO POINT LOMA (SAN DIEGO), CALIFORNIA. FURTHER SCHISMS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA PRODUCED THE TEMPLE OF THE PEOPLE (FROM THE SYRACUSE, NEW YORK BRANCH) AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK.

7.
THE SPLIT OF THE GROUP IN DUBLIN RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF MUCH OF THE ORIGINAL MATERIAL, INCLUDING THE ATTENDANCE BOOK THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN SIGNED AT ALL THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS. THIS OCCURRENCE HAS OBVIOUSLY MADE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RESEARCH THE DUBLIN LODGE AND ESTABLISH WHO EXACTLY WAS A MEMBER OF THE GROUP AND WHAT ITS ACTIVITIES WERE.

8.
SINCE THE SUBJECT OF THIS INVESTIGATION IS THEOSOPHY IN THE CONTEXT OF IRELAND, IT SEEMS RELEVANT TO NOTE THAT WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE WAS BORN IN DUBLIN AND REMAINED THERE UNTIL THE AGE OF 13, AT WHICH POINT HE AND HIS FAMILY EMIGRATED TO AMERICA.

9.
GARY LACHMAN, *MADAM BLAVATSKY: THE MOTHER OF MODERN SPIRITUALITY* (LONDON: 2012), P. 10.

10.
THIS IS ALSO AN IDEA CENTRAL TO ANTHROPOSOPHY, A BREAKAWAY MOVEMENT FOUNDED BY RUDOLF STEINER AFTER HE LEFT THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

11.
WILLIAM K. MAGEE (PSEUD. JOHN EGLINGTON), *A MEMOIR OF AE* (LONDON: 1937), P. 11.

12.
FROM THE MEDIEVAL LATIN *HERMETICUS*, DERIVED FROM NAME OF THE GREEK GOD, HERMES.

13.
ERNEST A. BOYD, *IRELAND'S LITERARY RENAISSANCE* (NEW YORK: 1923), P. 213.

14.
ROY FOSTER, `THE APPRENTICE MAGE: 1865-1914', IN *W.B. YEATS: A LIFE*, VOL. I (LONDON: 1998), P. 46.

15.
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS, *REVERIES OVER CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH* (LONDON: 1916), P. 121.

16.
SEE SELINA GUINNESS, `"PROTESTANT MAGIC" REAPPRAISED: EVANGELICALISM, DISSENT, AND THEOSOPHY', IN *IRISH UNIVERSITY REVIEW: A JOURNAL OF IRISH STUDIES* (VOL. 33, NO. 1), PP. 14-27.

17.
IBID., P. 14.

18.
GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS, *MADAME BLAVATSKY: PRIESTESS OF THE OCCULT* (NEW YORK: 1946), P. 213.

19.
MONK GIBBON, *THE EARLY YEARS OF GEORGE RUSSELL*, UNPUBLISHED ACADEMIC THESIS FOR TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN: 1947/1948), P. 26.

20.
THIS IDEA HAS ITS ROOTS IN THEOSOPHICAL COSMOLOGY, WHICH PROPOSES THAT THERE WAS ONCE A CONTINENT COVERING MUCH OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN CALLED ATLANTIS. UPON ITS DISSOLUTION AND SUBMERGENCE, ITS NATIVE ATLANTEANS ENDED UPON THE ISLANDS OF IRELAND AND BRITAIN.

21.
ROY FOSTER, `THE APPRENTICE MAGE: 1865-1914', IN *W.B. YEATS: A LIFE*, VOL. I. (LONDON: 1998), PP. 47-48.

22.
HENRY SUMMERFIELD, *THAT MYRIAD MINDED MAN* (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: 1975), P. 16.

23.
RUSSELL ORIGINALLY BEGAN WRITING UNDER THE PSEUDONYM AEON, WHICH IS GREEK FOR `ETERNITY', IN 1888. HOWEVER, HE LATER TOOK AE AFTER A PRINTER WHO WAS UNABLE TO DECIPHER A HANDWRITTEN NOTE BY RUSSELL PRINTED AEON AS AE.

24.
GEORGE MOORE, *HAIL AND FAREWELL* (LONDON: 1947), PP. 22-30.

25.
THE NOW OUT-OF-PRINT BIOGRAPHY BY HENRY SUMMERFIELD IS WELL WORTH READING FOR A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF RUSSELL'S LIFE, AS IS NICHOLAS ALLEN'S MORE RECENT *GEORGE RUSSELL AND THE NEW IRELAND*, WHICH FOCUSES LESS ON RUSSELL'S CONTRIBUTION TO CULTURE AND MORE ON HIS POLITICAL IDEALISM AND HIS WORK AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

26.
ELLA YOUNG, *FLOWERING DUSK: THINGS REMEMBERED ACCURATELY AND INACCURATELY* (NEW YORK: 1945), P. 27.

27.
W.B YEATS, *AUTOBIOGRAPHIES: THE COLLECTED WORKS OF W.B. YEATS*, VOL. III (LONDON: 1999), P. 193.

28.
DICTIONARY OF IRISH ARCHITECTS: HTTP://WWW.DIA.IE/ARCHITECTS/VIEW/1492/DICK-FREDERICKJOHN (ACCESSED MAY 2013).

29.
THE COLLECTED WORKS OF W.B. YEATS, VOL. IX: *EARLY ART: UNCOLLECTED ARTICLES* (LONDON: 1999), P. 194.

30.
IN THE MOST BASIC TERMS, THE ORDER OF THE GOLDEN DAWN (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE FAR-RIGHT GREEK POLITICAL PARTY) IS AN ESOTERIC ORDER FOUNDED IN ENGLAND IN THE 1880S. ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY FREEMASONRY, THE ORDER IS CHARACTARISED BY THE USE OF MAGICK AND RITUAL. UNLIKE MANY MASONIC ORGANISATIONS, THE ORDER OF THE GOLDEN DAWN HAS PERMITTED WOMEN SINCE ITS INCEPTION.

31.
DANIEL N. DUNLOP WAS A SCOTTISH THEOSOPHIST WHO MOVED TO DUBLIN IN 1886. AFTER HE LEFT DUBLIN, HE BECAME WELL KNOWN FOR HIS PIONEERING ACTIVITIES IN THE PRODUCTION AND TECHNOLOGICAL USE OF ELECTRICITY. HE WOULD LATER BECOME A LEADING PROPONENT OF RUDOLF STEINER'S ANTHROPOSOPHY MOVEMENT.

32.
THIS MAGAZINE GREW AND BECAME MORE AMBITIOUS OVER THE YEARS. THE LATER EDITIONS WERE PRINTED IN EUSTACE STREET, DUBLIN 2.

33.
FREDERICK J. DICK, `OUR WORK', IN *THE IRISH THEOSOPHIST*, VOL. 1, NO. 1 (DUBLIN: OCTOBER 1892), P. 8.

34.
J .M. PRYSE OBITUARY, IN *THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST*, VOL. 33, NO. 12 (TORONTO: FEBRUARY 1953), P. 186.

35.
JAMES MORGAN PRYSE, `GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL: POET OF THE INNER LIFE', IN *THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST*, VOL. 16 (AUGUST 1935), PP. 164-166.

36.
RICHARD M. KAIN AND JAMES HOWARD O'BRIEN, *GEORGE RUSSELL: (A.E.)* (BUCKNELL PA: 1976), P. 28.

37.
D.H. LAWRENCE, *APOCALYPSE AND THE WRITINGS ON REVELATION* (LONDON: 1995), P. 5.

38.
THE MURALS AT ELY PLACE SHARE CERTAIN SIMILARITIES WITH PAINTINGS BY GUSTAVE MOREAU (1826-1898) AND JEAN DELVILLE (1867-1953).

39.
THE DUBLIN G.P., HOMEOPATH AND OSTEOPATH, DR GOODWIN MCDONNELL, CURRENTLY PRACTICES AT THIS ADDRESS AS HIS FATHER DID BEFORE HIM.

40.
ELLA YOUNG, *FLOWERING DUSK: THINGS REMEMBERED ACCURATELY AND INACCURATELY* (NEW YORK: 1945) PP. 29-30.

41.
RICHARD KACZYNSKI, *PERDURABO: THE LIFE OF ALEISTER CROWLEY* (BERKELEY: 2010), P. 67.

42.
I WAS INFORMED OF THIS UNFORTUNATE FACT BY THE CURRENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE IRISH BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY

43.
HARRY NORMAN WORKED AS EDITOR OF *THE IRISH HOMESTEAD* AND WAS ALSO ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE IRISH NATIONAL THEATRE SOCIETY. HE IS ONE OF THE LATER GENERATION OF DUBLIN THEOSOPHISTS AND WAS ALSO CONNECTED TO BASIL RAKOCZI OF THE WHITE STAG GROUP.

44.
MONK GIBBON, *THE EARLY*

YEARS OF GEORGE RUSSELL, UNPUBLISHED ACADEMIC THESIS (TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN: 1947/1948), P. 30.

45.
KEIGHTLEY WAS AN ACTIVE THEOSOPHIST WHO ASSISTED IN THE EDITING OF HELENA P. BLAVATSKY'S MAGNUM OPUS *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*.

46.
THE ANCIENT CONCERT ROOMS LATER BECAME THE THE PALACE CINEMA AND BALLROOM AND MOST RECENTLY THE ACADEMY CINEMA. THE BUILDING CEASED BEING A PLACE OF ENTERTAINMENT IN 1981 AND IS NOW UTILISED AS AN OFFICE BUILDING.

47.
THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL, 12TH OF OCTOBER 1889.

48.
THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL, 14TH OF OCTOBER 1889.

49.
THE TOPIC OF ONE OF OLCOTT'S LECTURES CONCERNED THE PRESENCE OF FAIRIES IN THE IRISH COUNTRYSIDE; A TOPIC THAT WOULD INEVITABLY ATTRACT RIDICULE FROM THOSE ALREADY CRITICAL OF THE MOVEMENT.

50.
IN 1909, COUNTESS MARKIEVICZ AND BULMER HOBSON ESTABLISHED NA FIANNA ÉIREANN. MANY OF THOSE AFFILIATED WITH THIS BRIGADE (WHICH IN ITS INFANCY RESEMBLED THE BOY SCOUTS) EVENTUALLY JOINED THE IRISH REPUBLICAN BROTHERHOOD AND PARTICIPATED IN THE 1916 RISING.

51.
JOYCE'S FIRST SHORT STORY, 'THE SISTERS', WAS PUBLISHED IN THE *THE IRISH HOMESTEAD* IN 1904 UNDER THE PSEUDONYM STEPHEN DAEDALUS – THE FIRST APPEARANCE IN PRINT OF A PIECE OF FICTION BY JOYCE. TWO MORE STORIES – 'EVELINE' AND 'AFTER THE RACE' – ALSO APPEARED IN THE *HOMESTEAD* BEFORE H.F. NORMAN, THE EDITOR, TOLD JOYCE HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY MORE BECAUSE OF COMPLAINTS FROM READERS.

52.
RUSSELL FEATURES IN THE SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS EPISODE OF *ULYSSES* WHEN BLOOM SEES RUSSELL COMING FROM THE VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT ON DAME STREET ON HIS WAY TO THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, WHERE HE JOINS A DISCUSSION ON SHAKESPEARE.

53.
ERNEST A. BOYD, *IRELAND'S LITERARY RENAISSANCE* (NEW YORK: 1923), P. 254.

54.
BAX FIRST MET A.E. WHILST VISITING DUBLIN IN 1906. THE TWO DISCUSSED ESTABLISHING A MAGAZINE THAT WOULD BRING CULTURE AND THEOSOPHICAL IDEAS TOGETHER. IN 1909, BAX BEGAN PUBLISHING THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL, *ORPHEUS*.

55.
NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF IRELAND, 1911 CENSUS ONLINE: WWW.CENSUS.NATIONALARCHIVES.IE/PAGES/1911/DUBLIN/DUNDRUM/KINGSTON/944978/ (ACCESSED MAY 2014).

56.
ROSE MURPHY, *ELLA YOUNG: IRISH MYSTIC AND REBEL* (DUBLIN: 2008), P. 17.

57.
THIS WAS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY RUSSELL RESIGNED FROM THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. HE, LIKE MANY OTHERS AT THAT TIME, BELIEVED THAT HER INCREASINGLY CENTRAL ROLE WITHIN THE MOVEMENT WAS SYMPTOMATIC OF THE NEGATIVE DIRECTION THAT THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY WAS TAKING.

58.
JOSEPH LENNON, *IRISH ORIENTALISM: A LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY* (SYRACUSE: 2008), P. 211.

59.
IBID., P. 332.

60.
DR SARAH TURNER, 'ORPHIC MODERNITY: THEOSOPHY, THE VISUAL ARTS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND BELGIUM IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY', PAPER GIVEN AT A CONFERENCE ON THEOSOPHY AND THE ARTS IN AMSTERDAM, SEPTEMBER 25TH 2013.

61.
ROSE MURPHY, *ELLA YOUNG: IRISH MYSTIC AND REBEL* (DUBLIN: 2008), P. 17.

62.
ELLA YOUNG, FLOWERING DUSK, P. 11.

63.
IBID., P. 154. IN 1922, PRO-BRITISH SOLDIERS RAIDED YOUNG'S FLAT. SHE HAD SIDED WITH THE ANTI-TREATY REBELS WHO CONTINUED TO FIGHT FOR A UNITED COUNTRY. THIS WAS AN UNSUCCESSFUL RAID, BUT IT IS OF INTEREST TO NOTE THAT THE ELLA YOUNG WHO HEARD FAIRY MUSIC IN THE HILLS AND DABBLED IN THE OCCULT IS THE SAME WOMAN WHO GUARDED WEAPONS UNDER THE FLOORBOARDS.

64.
CLAIR WILLS, *DUBLIN 1916: THE SIEGE OF THE GPO* (LONDON: 2010), P. 147.

65.
SEE THE GENERAL REPORT OF THE FIFTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY AND CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 1927 (ADYAR: 1927), P. 285.

66.
PHILIP SYDNEY HARRIS, THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA ONLINE: HTTP://THEOSOPHY.PH/ENCYCLO/INDEX.PHP?TITLE=EIRE_(ACCESSED APRIL 2014).

67.
KILTERAGH ALSO CONTAINED EXTENSIVE WALL FRESCOES AND PAINTINGS BY GEORGE RUSSELL AS WELL AS SEVERAL WORKS BY JACK B. YEATS.

68.
THIS IS PERHAPS BEST EXEMPLIFIED IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE IRISH PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

69.
THE GENERAL REPORT OF THE FIFTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY AND CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY 1927 (ADYAR: 1927), P. 131.

70.
LETTER FROM RUSSELL TO HORACE PLUNKETT, CITED IN HENRY SUMMERFIELD, *THAT MYRIAD MINDED MAN* (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: 1975), P. 286.

71.
RUSSELL (AE) DESCRIBED JELLETT AS "A LATE VICTIM TO CUBISM IN SOME SUB-SECTION OF THIS ARTISTIC MALARIA".

72.
THE ARIEL POEMS WERE A SERIES OF 38 PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1927 AND 1931 BY FABER AND GWYER (LATER FABER AND FABER), WHICH CONTAINED ILLUSTRATED POEMS. EACH NUMBERED PAMPHLET HAD AN ILLUSTRATED COVER. THE FRONTISPIECE WAS USUALLY MULTI-COLOURED.

73.
S.B. KENNEDY, *IRISH ART AND MODERNISM: 1888–1950* (BELFAST: 1991), P. 108

74.
IBID., P. 114.

75.
IBID., P. 372.

76.
NICHOLAS ALLEN, *GEORGE RUSSELL AND THE NEW IRELAND, 1905-30*, (DUBLIN: 2003) P. 26.

77.
DR SARAH TURNER, 'ORPHIC MODERNITY: THEOSOPHY, THE VISUAL ARTS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND BELGIUM IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY', PAPER GIVEN AT A CONFERENCE ON THEOSOPHY AND THE ARTS IN AMSTERDAM, SEPTEMBER 25TH 2013.

78.
THESE IDEAS ARE EXPRESSED BY EMILY SELLON IN AN ESSAY ENTITLED 'SOME REFLECTIONS ON A THEOSOPHICAL WORLD-VIEW', IN *THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHIST*, JULY 1983.

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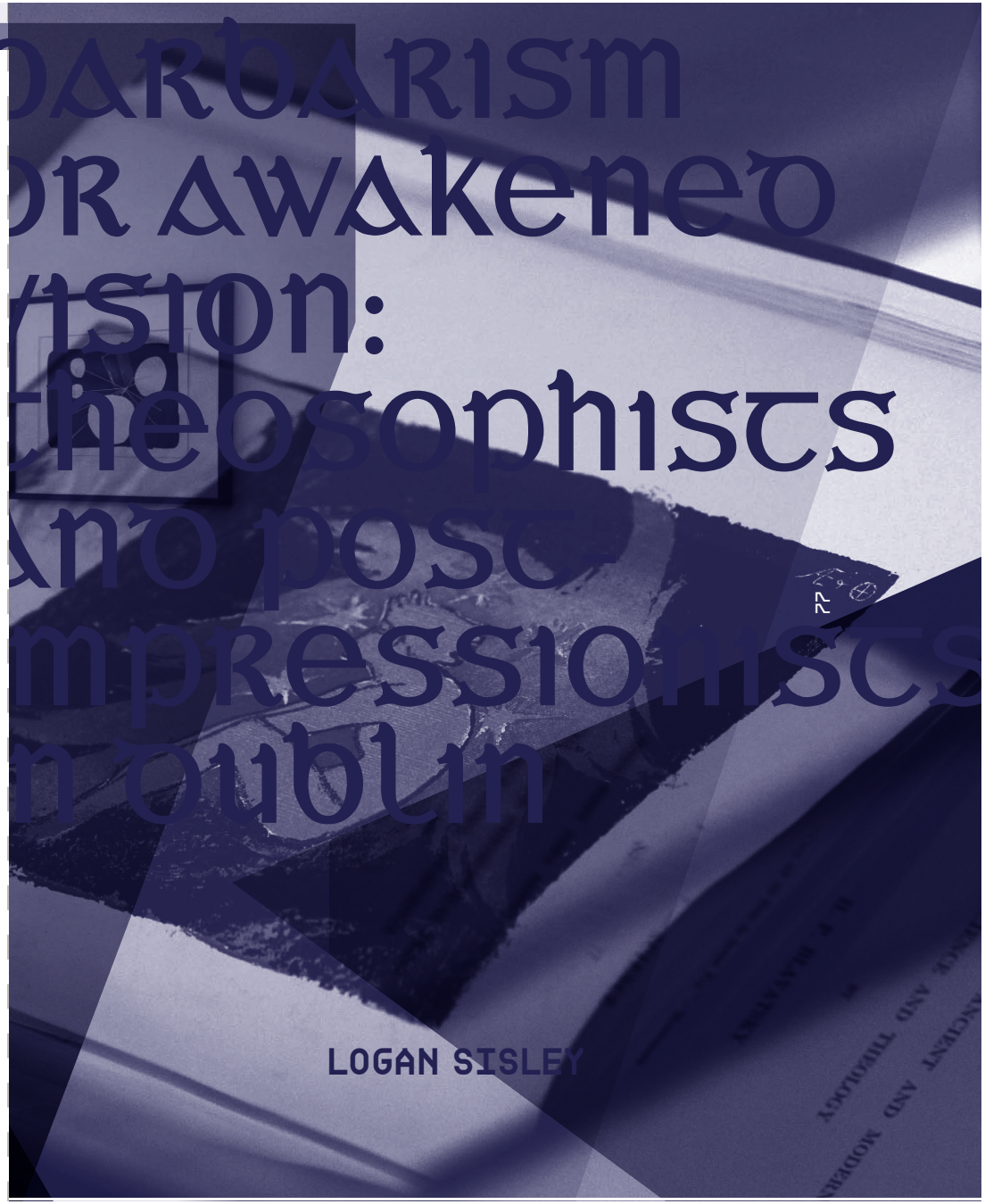

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