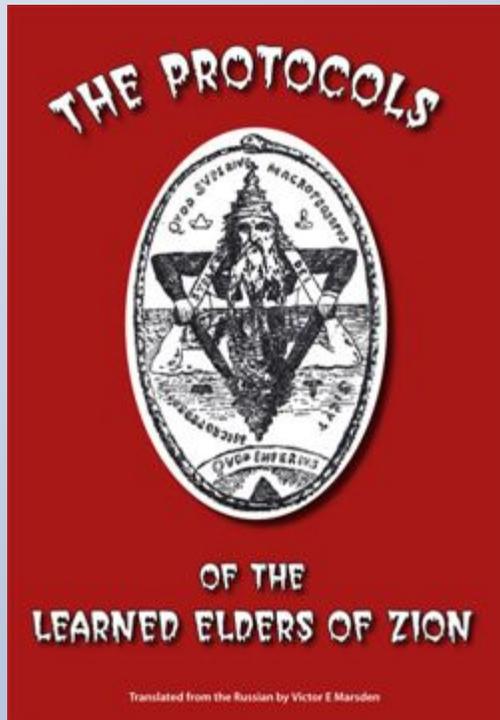


The Protocols of The Elders of Zion



By Nesta Webster

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CONTRARY to the assertions of certain writers, I have never affirmed my belief in the authenticity of the Protocols, but have always treated it as an entirely open question.

The only opinion to which I have committed myself is that, whether genuine or not, the Protocols do represent the programme of world revolution, and that in view of their prophetic nature and of their extraordinary resemblance to the protocols of certain secret societies in the past, they were either the work of some such society or of someone profoundly versed in the lore of secret societies who was able to reproduce their ideas and phraseology.

The so-called refutation of the Protocols which appeared in the Times of August 1922, tends to confirm this opinion. According to these articles the Protocols were largely copied from the book of Maurice Joly, *Dialogues aux Enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu*, published in 1864. Let it be said at once that the resemblance between the two works could not be accidental, not only are whole paragraphs almost identical, but the various points in the programme follow each other in precisely the same order.

But whether Nilus copied from Joly or from the same source whence Joly derived his ideas is another question.

It will be noticed that Joly in his preface never claimed to have originated the scheme described in his book; on the contrary he distinctly states that it “personifies in particular a political system which has not varied for a

single day in its application since the disastrous and alas! too far-off date of its enthronement.”

Could this refer only to the government of Napoleon III, established twelve years earlier? Or might it not be taken to signify a Machiavellian system of government of which Napoleon III was suspected by Joly at this moment of being the exponent?

We have already seen that this system is said by M. de Mazères, in his book *De Machiavel et de l'influence de sa doctrine sur les opinions, les moeurs et la politique de la France pendant la Révolution*, published in 1816, to have been inaugurated by the French Revolution, and to have been carried on by Napoleon I against whom he brings precisely the same accusations of Machiavellism that Joly brings against Napoleon III. “The author of *The Prince*,” he writes, “was always his guide,” and he goes on to describe the “parrot cries placed in the mouths of the people,” the “hired writers, salaried newspapers, mercenary poets and corrupt ministers employed to mislead our vanity methodically”—all this being carried on by “the scholars of Machiavelli under the orders of his cleverest disciple.” We have already traced the course of these methods from the Illuminati onwards.

Now precisely at the moment when Joly published his *Dialogues aux Enfers* the secret societies were particularly active, and since by this date a number of Jews had penetrated into their ranks a whole crop of literary efforts directed against Jews and secret societies marked the decade.

Eckert with his work on Freemasonry in 1852 had given the incentive; Créteineau Joly followed in 1859 with *L'Eglise Romaine en face de la Révolution*, reproducing the documents of the Haute Vente Romaine; in 1868 came the book of the German anti-Semite Goedsche, and in the following year on a higher plane the work of Gougenot Des Mousseaux, *Le Juif, le Judaïsme, et la Judaïsation des Peuples Chrétiens*. Meanwhile in 1860 the Alliance Israélite Universelle had arisen, having for its

ultimate object “the great work of humanity, the annihilation of error and fanaticism, the union of human society in a faithful and solid fraternity”—a formula singularly reminiscent of Grand Orient philosophy; in 1864 Karl Marx obtained control of the two-year-old “International Working Men’s Association,” by which a number of secret societies became absorbed, and in the same year Bakunin founded his Alliance Sociale Démocratique on the exact lines of Weishaupt’s Illuminism, and in 1869 wrote his *Polémique contre les Juifs* (or *Etude sur les Juifs allemands*) mainly directed against the Jews of the Internationale. The sixties of the last century therefore mark an important era in the history of the secret societies, and it was right in the middle of this period that Maurice Joly published his book.

Now it will be remembered that amongst the sets of parallels to the Protocols quoted by me in *World Revolution*, two were taken from the sources above quoted—the documents of the Haute Vente Romaine and the programme of Bakunin’s secret society, the Alliance Sociale Démocratique. Meanwhile Mr. Lucien Wolf had found another parallel to the Protocols in Goedsche’s book. “The Protocols,” Mr. Wolf had no hesitation in asserting, “are, in short, an amplified imitation of Goedsche’s handiwork” and he went on to show that “Nilus followed this pamphlet very closely.” The Protocols were then declared by Mr. Wolf and his friends to have been completely and finally refuted.

But alas for Mr. Wolfe’s discernment! The Times articles came and abolished the whole of his carefully constructed theory. They did not, however, demolish mine; on the contrary, they supplied another and a very curious link in the chain of evidence. For is it not remarkable that one of the sets of parallels quoted by me appeared in the same year as Joly’s book, and that within the space of nine years no less than four parallels to the Protocols should have been discovered? Let us recapitulate the events of this decade in the form of a table and the proximity of dates will then be more apparent:

1859. Crétineau Joly's book published containing documents of Haute Vente Romaine (parallels quoted by me).

1860. Alliance Israélite Universelle founded.

1864. 1st Internationale taken over by Karl Marx.

† Alliance Sociale Démocratique of Bakunin founded (parallels quoted by me).

† Maurice Joly's *Dialogue aux Enfers* published (parallels quoted by Times).

1866. 1st Congress of Internationale at Geneva.

1868. Goedsche's Biarritz (parallels quoted by Mr. Lucien Wolf).

1869. Gougenot Des Mousseaux's *Le Juif*, etc.

† Bakunin's *Polémique contre les Juifs*.



It will be seen, then, that at the moment when Maurice Joly wrote his *Dialogues*, the ideas they embodied were current in many different circles.

It is interesting, moreover, to notice that the authors of the last two works referred to above, the Catholic and Royalist Des Mousseaux and the Anarchist Bakunin, between whom it is impossible to imagine any connexion, both in the same year denounced the growing power of the Jews whom Bakunin described as "the most formidable sect" in Europe, and again asserted that a leakage of information had taken place in the secret societies.

Thus in 1870 Bakunin explains that his secret society has been broken up because its secrets have been given away, and that his colleague Netchaïeff has arrived at the conclusion that "in order to found a serious and indestructible society one must take for a basis the policy of Machiaveli." Meanwhile Gougenot Des Mousseaux had related in *Le Juif*, that in December 1865 he had received a letter from a German statesman saying:

Since the revolutionary recrudescence of 1848, I have had relations with a Jew who, from vanity, betrayed the secret of the secret societies with

which he had been associated, and who warned me eight or ten days beforehand of all the revolutions which were about to break out at any point of Europe. I owe to him the unshakeable conviction that all these movements of "oppressed peoples," etc., etc., are devised by half a dozen individuals, who give their orders to the secret societies of all Europe. The ground is absolutely mined beneath our feet, and the Jews provide a large contingent of these miners....

These words were written in the year after the *Dialogues aux Enfers* were published.

It is further important to notice that Joly's work is dated from Geneva, the meeting-place for all the revolutionaries of Europe, including Bakunin, who was there in the same year, and where the first Congress of the Internationale led by Karl Marx was held two years later.

Already the revolutionary camp was divided into warring factions, and the rivalry between Marx and Mazzini had been superseded by the struggle between Marx and Bakunin. And all these men were members of secret societies.

It is by no means improbable then that Joly, himself a revolutionary, should during his stay in Geneva have come into touch with the members of some secret organization, who may have betrayed to him their own secret or those of a rival organization they had reason to suspect of working under the cover of revolutionary doctrines for an ulterior end. Thus the protocols of a secret society modelled on the lines of the Illuminati or the Haute Vente Romaine may have passed into his hands and been utilized by him as an attack on Napoleon who, owing to his known connexion with the Carbonari, might have appeared to Joly as the chief exponent of the Machiavellian art of duping the people and using them as the lever to power which the secret societies had reduced to a system.

This would explain Maurice Joly's mysterious reference to the "political system which has not varied for a single day in its application since the disastrous and alas! too far-off date of its enthronement." Moreover, it would explain the resemblance between all the parallels to the Protocols from the writings of the Illuminati and Mirabeau's *Projet de Révolution* of 1789 onwards. For if the system had never varied, the code on which it was founded must have remained substantially the same. Further, if it had never varied up to the time when Joly wrote, why should it have varied since that date? The rules of lawn tennis drawn up in 1880 would probably bear a strong resemblance to those of 1920, and would also probably follow each other in the same sequence. The differences would occur where modern improvements had been added.

Might not the same process of evolution have taken place between the dates at which the works of Joly and Nilus were published?

I do not agree with the opinion of the Morning Post that "the author of the Protocols must have had the *Dialogues* of Joly before him."

It is possible, but not proven.

Indeed, I find it difficult to imagine that anyone embarking on such an elaborate imposture should not have possessed the wit to avoid quoting passages verbatim—without even troubling to arrange them in a different sequence—from a book which might at any moment be produced as evidence against him.

For contrary to the assertions of the Times the *Dialogues* of Joly is by no means a rare book, not only was it to be found at the British Museum but at the London Library and recently I was able to buy a copy for the modest sum of 15 francs.

There was therefore every possibility of Nilus being suddenly confronted with the source of his plagiarism.

Further, is it conceivable that a plagiarist so unskilful and so unimaginative would have been capable of improving on the original? For the Protocols are a vast improvement on the *Dialogues* of Joly.

The most striking passages they contain are not to be found in the earlier work, nor, which is more remarkable, are several of the amazing prophecies concerning the future which time has realized.

It is this latter fact which presents the most insuperable obstacle to the Times solution of the problem.



To sum up then, the Protocols are either a mere plagiarism of Maurice Joly's work, in which case the prophetic passages added by Nilus or another remain unexplained, or they are a revised edition of the plan communicated to Joly in 1864, brought up to date and supplemented so as to suit modern conditions by the continuers of the plot.

Whether in this case the authors of the Protocols were Jews, or whether the Jewish portions have been interpolated by the people into whose hands they fell, is another question.

Here we must admit the absence of any direct evidence. An International circle of world revolutionaries working on the lines of the Illuminati, of which the existence has already been indicated, offers a perfectly possible alternative to the "Learned Elders of Zion."

It would be easier, however to absolve the Jews from all suspicion of complicity if they and their friends had adopted a more straightforward course from the time the Protocols appeared.

When some years ago a work of the same kind was directed against the Jesuits, containing what purported to be a "Secret Plan" of revolution

closely resembling the Protocols, the Jesuits indulged in no invectives, made no appeal that the book should be burnt by the common hangman, resorted to no fantastic explanations, but quietly pronounced the charge to be a fabrication.

Thus the matter ended.

But from the moment the Protocols were published the Jews and their friends had recourse to every tortuous method of defence, brought pressure to bear on the publishers—succeeded, in fact, in temporarily stopping the sales—appealed to the Home Secretary to order their suppression, concocted one clinching refutation after another, all mutually exclusive of each other, so that by the time the solution now pronounced to be the correct one appeared, we had already been assured half a dozen times that the Protocols had been completely and finally refuted.

And when at last a really plausible explanation had been discovered, why was it not presented in a convincing manner? All that was necessary was to state that the origin of the Protocols had been found in the work of Maurice Joly, giving parallels in support of this assertion.

What need to envelop a good case in a web of obvious romance?

Why all this parade of confidential sources of information, the pretence that Joly's book was so rare as to be almost unfindable when a search in the libraries would have proved the contrary?

Why these allusions to Constantinople as the place "to find the key to dark secrets," to the mysterious Mr. X. who does not wish his real name to be known, and to the anonymous ex-officer of the Okhrana from whom by mere chance he bought the very copy of the Dialogues used for the fabrication of the Protocols by the Okhrana itself, although this fact was unknown to the officer in question?

Why, further, should Mr. X., if he were a Russian landowner, Orthodox by religion and a Constitutional Monarchist, be so anxious to discredit his fellow Monarchists by making the outrageous assertion that “the only occult Masonic organization such as the Protocols speak of”—that is to say, a Machiavellian system of an abominable kind—which he had been able to discover in Southern Russia “was a Monarchist one”?

It is evident then that the complete story of the Protocols has not yet been told, and that much yet remains to be discovered concerning this mysterious affair.

The End

About The Author



Nesta Helen Webster (Mrs. Arthur Webster), (24 August 1876 – 16 May 1960) was a controversial author who revived conspiracy theories about the Illuminati. She argued that the secret society's members were occultists, plotting communist world domination, using the idea of a Jewish cabal, the Masons and Jesuits[6] as a smokescreen. According to her, their international subversion included the French Revolution, 1848 Revolution, the First World War, and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

In 1920, Webster was one of the contributing authors who wrote *The Jewish Peril*, a series of articles in the *London Morning Post* centred on the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. These articles were subsequently compiled and published in the same year in book form under the title of *The Cause of World Unrest*. Webster claimed that the authenticity of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion was an "open question".

She was born Nesta Bevan in the stately home Trent Park. She was the youngest daughter of Robert Cooper Lee Bevan, a close friend of Cardinal Manning. Her mother was the daughter of Philip Nicholas Shuttleworth, Anglican bishop of Chichester. She was educated at Westfield College (now part of Queen Mary, University of London). On coming of age, she travelled around the world, visiting India, Burma, Singapore, and Japan. In India, in 1914, she married Captain Arthur Webster, Superintendent of the British Police in India.

Returning to England she began her historical studies and literary career with a critical re-assessment of the French Revolution, especially exploring the theory of the monarchy's subversion by a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. For more than three years she immersed herself in historical research, primarily in the archives of the British Museum and Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Her first serious book on this subject was *The Chevalier de Boufflers*.



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