

## The Occult Conspiracy

By Michael Howard Destiny Books 1989

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According to their beliefs, geometry had been taught by a pre-Flood patriarch called Lamech who had three sons. One invented geometry, another was the first mason and the third was a blacksmith who was the first human to work with precious metals. In common with Noah, Lamech was warned by Jehovah of the impending flood caused by the wickedness of humanity and the interference of the Fallen Angels in world affairs. Lamech and his sons decided to preserve their knowledge in two stone pillars so that future generations would discover it.

One of these pillars was discovered by Hermes Trismegistus or Thrice Greatest, known to the Greeks as the god Hermes and to the Ancient Egyptians as the ibis-headed scribe of the gods Thoth (pronounced Tehuti). The so-called Emerald Tablet of Hermes is said to contain the essence of the lost wisdom from before the days of the biblical Flood. According to occult sources, this tablet was discovered in a cave by the mystic Apollonius of Tyana who was regarded by the early Church as a rival to Jesus.

The first published version of the Emerald Tablet dates from an Arabic source of the eighth century CE and it was not translated into Latin in Europe until the thirteenth century. However the myth of the Hermetic wisdom had a profound effect on the Gnostics who were heretical Christians in direct conflict with the early Christian Church for attempting to fuse paganism with the new faith. They also claimed to possess the secret teachings of Jesus which he only divulged to his inner circle of disciples. These teachings had been censored from the authorized version of the New Testament approved by the Church councils who met to decide the structure and dogma of early Christianity. The Gnostic philosophy emerged in a different form in medieval Europe in the rise of the heretical Christian movement of the Cathars and the chivalric Order of the Knights Templar. The Hermetic tradition provided the spiritual inspiration for many secret societies in the Middle Ages and its influence can be discerned in both speculative Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

In the Masonic tradition it is said that masons were first organized into a corporate body during the building of the Tower of Babel. The concept of this tower was to reach up to heaven and contact God according to Genesis 11:4-6. The fall of the Tower of Babel destroyed the common language spoken by humanity and ended the second Golden

Age which followed the Flood. The architect of the tower was King Nimrod of Babylon who was a mason. He provided his cousin, the king of Ninevah, with sixty masons to assist in the construction of his cities. The masons were told on their departure to remain steadfastly true to each other, avoid dissensions at any cost, live in harmony and serve their lord as their master on Earth. According to popular belief the Hebrews received their knowledge of masonry from the Babylonians and introduced it to Egypt when they were taken into slavery. In Egypt this knowledge was influenced by the Mysteries and the occult traditions of the pyramid builders who were versed in the techniques of sacred geometry.

The key to the pagan origins of Freemasonry lies in the symbolic story related to candidates for initiation into the three degrees of Masonry, known as Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craftsman and Master Mason. In Masonic lore the basis of this legend is the semi-mythical story of the construction of King Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. This building was regarded as the repository of ancient occult wisdom and symbolism by both the Freemasons and the Knights Templar.

King David initiated the building of the temple at Jerusalem and after his death his son Solomon completed the task. To build the edifice Solomon imported masons, artists and craftsmen from neighbouring countries. Specifically he sent a message to the king of Tyre asking if he could hire the services of the king's master builder, Hiram Abiff, who was skilled in geometry. Hiram was a widow's son who had trained as a craftsman working in brass. Because of his artistic talents Solomon appointed Hiram as the chief architect and master mason of the temple to be built in Jerusalem.

Hiram completed the temple in a period of seven years (this number is especially significant in occult tradition and Masonry) but this achievement was overshadowed by his mysterious and violent death. At noon one day, as the other masons were resting in their midday break, Hiram visited the temple to check on the progress of the work which was nearly finished. As he entered the porch of the temple, passing through the entrance flanked by the two pillars at the gateway, Hiram was approached by one of his fellow masons who demanded from him the secret of the Master Mason's word. Hiram refused to provide this secret

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It is only in the secret, occult teachings of the mystical system known as the Cabbala, which is the esoteric doctrine of the Judaic religion, that the ancient concept of an androgynous deity survived in the feminine image of the Shekinah or Bride of God. In Jewish synagogues the Shekinah is welcomed at sunset on a Friday evening in prayers to celebrate the beginning of the Sabbath. In these prayers the Shekinah is welcomed as the Bride of God and the Cabbalists teach that only through her can creation be manifested. This idea is reinforced by the folk belief that the Shekinah materializes unseen over the marriage bed on the wedding night which suggests a relic of ancient fertility rites performed in honour of a goddess.

Ancient memories of Goddess worship also survive in the Jewish myth of the she-demon Lilith who inspired sexual desires in men by sending them erotic dreams. In Cabbalistic teachings Lilith was the first wife of Adam before Eve and taught him the arts of magical enchantment. From their illicit union was spawned the elemental realm of elves, fairies and gnomes according to occult lore. Lilith was not originally a demonic figure but can be traced back to a Sumerian goddess with the title of the Lady of Beasts who was depicted in the form of an owl. Lilith symbolizes the dark aspect of the Great Goddess of the pagan old religion in her femme fatale or enchantress form. This aspect of the feminine has always been rejected by patriarchal cultures whose sexual puritanism transformed it into a demonic symbol because they were incapable of handling the potent erotic energies associated with it.

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Abiff is raised from the dead by a special Masonic handshake known as the lion's grip.

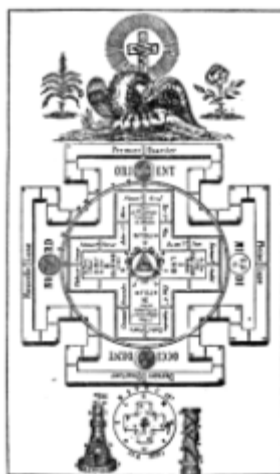
In both Masonic and Egyptian Mysteries the resurrected 'god' is buried on a hill in a tomb marked by a tree. Osiris additionally was called the Lord of the Acacia Tree which was the same tree planted on the grave of Hiram Abiff by

his three assassins. In Canaan the worship of the goddess Astarte involved trees and pillars erected in sacred groves and on hills as symbols of her divinity. In royal Arch Masonry the candidate for initiation is informed that the sacred name of God is really Jehalon. This name has been deciphered as a coded reference to the two major gods of the Middle Eastern fertility cultus - Osiris and Baal combined with the Hebrew tribal god Jehovah. In Masonry God is also referred to as the Great Architect of the Universe, which signifies the importance of sacred geometry in the design of sacred buildings based on the Hermetic axiom of 'As above ... so below'. This axiom teaches the ancient philosophy that the material plane of existence is a reflection of the spiritual realm.

The political aspirations of Freemasonry, revealed in their influence on the revolutionary movements and proto-socialism of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, can be traced back to the myth of the Golden Age in pre-dynastic Egypt during the reign of Osiris and Isis and, before the Flood, to the Babylonian and Hebrew myths of creation. In the legend of Osiris the god king is a civilizing influence in a land inhabited by primitive savages who had no concept of morality or law. The priesthood of Osiris were heirs to a political utopia expressed through spiritual symbols. It is this vision which was shared by the secret- societies of medieval Europe who were associated with the rise of Freemasonry and the political doctrine which was at its centre.

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During initiation, the neophyte was placed in a trance and experienced contact with the gods through a symbolic journey to the Underworld. Initiates symbolically died and were reborn as perfected souls. The purpose behind these rituals was to prove to the candidate that the body in which they incarnated on the physical plane was an illusory object, that spirit was the only true reality and that reincarnation on the Earth was a learning process for spiritual development. These pagan beliefs were to form the central mystery drama of the initiation rituals practised in the lodges of speculative Freemasonry.



The Mystical Diagram: Solomon's Temple  
(Used in Symbolism by Knights Templar)  
Note Cross with Rose at Top and Bottom

Early Christianity was permeated by the influence of the Mystery cults. While the Church prohibited pagan doctrines such as reincarnation, which was condemned by the Council of Nicea in 325 CE, rededicated pagan temples to Christian worship, and transformed pagan gods into saints, it soon discovered that it was impossible to eradicate paganism totally. Goddess worship was prevalent in the ancient world and the Catholic Church's devotion to the Virgin Mary is one example of the feminine principle's influence on early Christian belief. The Virgin was given the title Queen of Heaven and is depicted wearing a blue robe decorated with stars and standing on a crescent Moon. This image is almost identical to pagan representations of the goddess of love Ishtar who was worshipped by the Babylonians. The statues of the Madonna holding the infant Jesus in her arms, which were erected in Catholic churches, are almost exact copies of the effigies of Isis suckling her baby son Horus, found in Egyptian temples.

During the period following the emergence of the Mystery cults and the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire a new mystical movement arose in the Middle East which attempted to synthesize the best

elements of the decaying paganism with the new Christian beliefs. This movement was known as Gnosticism, from the Greek gnosis meaning 'knowledge', and the Gnostics believed, in common with the original disciples of Jesus, that direct contact could be made with God without the intercession of an established priesthood. They claimed to have preserved the real teachings of Jesus which had been suppressed by the ecclesiastical councils set up by the Church to produce a unified dogma for the new religion.

The Gnostics derived their spiritual inspiration from a variety of sources, including the Greek and Roman Mysteries, Ancient Egyptian mythology, the Hermetic tradition, the dualistic doctrines of Zoroastrianism, the Middle Eastern fertility cults, the Chaldean stellar religion and Esoteric Christianity. Gnosticism derived its central beliefs from the writings of the Persian spiritual teacher Zoroaster who had lived circa 600 BCE.

He was a priest of the Indo-Iranian religion which involved the worship of the elemental forces of water and fire. At the age of thirty Zoroaster had a vision during which one of the Iranian gods, Ahura Mazda or Ormazd, appeared to him and said he was the Supreme Being. From this moment Zoroaster broke away from the established religion and taught his own philosophy based on the universe as a cosmic battleground between the opposing forces of light and darkness which were in eternal conflict. According to Zoroastrianism the enlightened person had to choose between one or other of these principles.

Initiation into the Zoroastrian religion took place at the age of fifteen when both sexes were admitted to its rites. The candidate for initiation was given a special cord which he or she wore as a girdle. It was passed three times around the waist and knotted in the front and at the back. Every day the initiate untied the cord and then replaced it while reciting prayers using it in the fashion of a Catholic rosary. There are similarities between this cord and the one worn by the Brahmin priests in India, especially as it was worn over a white cotton shirt or tunic which was a symbol of spiritual perfection.

In its later stages Zoroastrianism became associated with the Mystery cult of the bull god Mithras which originated in Persia as an offshoot of the Zoroastrian religion but swiftly spread westwards where it made many converts among the soldiers of Imperial Rome who were attracted by its masculine image. Mithras was a solar god of light who, in common with Jesus, was born in a cave surrounded by animals and shepherds at the Winter Solstice in December. A famous statue of Mithras, which can be seen in the British Museum, depicts him sitting astride a bull and plunging a dagger into its throat. Blood pours from the wound and drips onto the earth to fertilize the land. Mithras wears a short tunic and cloak and on his head is the Phrygian cap which was also associated with Adonis and Attis. This distinctive headgear was adopted by both the medieval masons and the revolutionary guard during the French Revolution.

In Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism Mithras became the mediator between the cosmic opposites of Ormuzd and Ahriman, the gods who represented the powers of light and darkness. By understanding the role of Mithras, the Gnostics taught that his human devotees could learn how to reconcile the good and evil aspects of their own nature by realizing that evil was only the shadow image of good and both had to exist in an imperfect world. Mithras was also associated with another Gnostic deity known as Aion who represented endless time. The Zoroastrians viewed

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Gurdjieff confided in Bennett that these ancient Mystery schools dated back 30,000 to 40,000 years and that he had learnt about them while studying cave drawings in the Caucasian mountains and Turkestan. The Russian mystic had received initiation from Sufi masters so when, in the same passage of the book, Bennett reveals that there is a tradition in Sufism that it originated in Central Asia 40,000 years ago we do not need to guess the source for this startling information.

In common with early Christianity, the introduction of Islam was resisted by those Arabs who still followed the worship of pagan gods. Following the death of Mohammed several heretical sects arose promoting alternative forms of Islam and secret societies were founded based on these philosophies. They included the Ismailis, the Batimis, the Karmathites, the Fatimites and the Druses. Several of these heretical sects were inspired by Gnostic and Manichean ideas and some claimed to be preserving the Arabian occult tradition.

The most powerful and well documented Islamic secret society which operated in the Middle East was the sect known popularly as the Assassins. Their origins are shrouded in mystery but they seem to have been loosely connected with Gnosticism. In the eleventh century CE a mystic called Abdullah appeared in Persia with the mission to establish a pantheistic religion to replace Islam. He founded a secret society to propagate his beliefs which were derived from a mixture of Hinduism and the teachings of the Persian heretic Mani. Initiates into this society were offered nine degrees of illumination which were similar to the Eleusian Mysteries practised in ancient Greece.

The initiates were taught the mystical significance of the number seven which in the occult tradition was the number of planes of existence from the material to the spiritual. They were also taught that God had sent seven great teachers into the world to lead humanity to spiritual perfection. These teachers were Adam, the first man; Noah, survivor of the Flood; Abraham, the Chaldean founder of the religion of Yahweh; Moses, the Egyptian initiate and founder of the Cabbala; Jesus; Mohammed and Ishmael. Members of the society were also taught the Greek philosophies of Plato and Aristotle and were indoctrinated with the esoteric teachings of the Sufis.

Abdullah's secret society spread throughout the Middle East gathering in small groups to conspire against Islam until it was suppressed in 1123. One of its initiates was Hasam-i-Sabbah who organized an offshoot branch, called the Order of the Devoted, in 1093. The new Order renounced the mystical pantheism of the original society in favour of the positive virtues of the Koran. It was this Order of the Devoted which developed into the sect known as the Assassins.

It is alleged that the Assassins derived their title from the Arabic hashishmat or 'eater of hashish' which was the hemp plant they used for ritual purposes. Other authorities claim that it is derived from the Arabic hass meaning 'to destroy' or asana which means 'to lay snares'. Hasam took the traditional title of Sheikh al Jebal or Mountain Chief, hence his popular title of the Old Man of the Mountains. He and his followers established a castle at Alamut or the Eagle's Nest in Persia. Perched 600 feet above a valley gorge and surrounded by hostile mountains it was virtually impregnable. From this lofty fortress the Assassins waged an international war of terrorism against anyone who opposed them.

Hasam died in 1124 but the Assassins lived on as hired mercenaries willing to kill at a price. Several well-known European crusaders used the Assassins, including the English king Richard Coeur de Lion and Frederick II of Sicily who was excommunicated by the Pope for using them to murder the Duke of Bavaria.

The Assassin stronghold was finally overrun by the Mongols in 1256 and the Order was scattered. However, as late as 1754 the British consul at Aleppo claimed that the Order of Assassins still survived in Persia, Syria and India. It is alleged that they had taught their murderous skills to the Hindu cult of the Thuggee who worshipped the goddess of destruction Kali and practised human sacrifice during the days of the British Raj. In 1866 the Assassins were mentioned in a court case in Bombay featuring a Persian prince who claimed to be a direct descendant of the original Grand Master of the Order.

Some authorities have attempted to provide concrete links between the Assassins and the Sufis, who have been identified as Goddess worshippers because of their use of the double axe symbol (associated with ancient Goddess worship) and the shamanic nature of their rituals involving dancing and chanting. Pottery painted with the pentagram or five pointed star and the vesica piscis - an abstract symbol of the female vulva - have been unearthed from the ruins of the Assassins' mountain stronghold. They also wore white tunics and a red sash, symbolizing innocence and blood, which is similar to the costume adopted by the Zoroastrians, the Sufis, the Cathars and the Templars.

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The accounts of the worship of Baphomet were largely derived from confessions extracted under torture during which several members of the Order died. Many members however confessed without recourse to torture and confirmed stories which the agents of King Phillip infiltrated into the Order had obtained. On the 22 October Jacques de Molay confessed before an assembly of academics at the University of Paris that the charges made against the Order were true. He wrote to his fellow members in an open letter instructing them freely to confess the evil practices they had indulged in while members of the Order. As a result of this letter one of the leading members of the Order who

confessed was the Grand Treasurer, Hugh de Pairvad. He said that he had been responsible for initiating many knights into the Order and had seen the Templars' god which granted them their worldly wealth, made the land fertile and caused the death of their enemies.

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The fact that Rosenkreutz travelled extensively in the Middle East, studying with Arabian occult adepts, suggests strongly that the Rosicrucians were familiar with the teachings of Sufism. Idries Shah has compared them with a Sufi secret society founded in Baghdad in the twelfth century called the Path of the Rose. It was founded by a Sufi master, Abdellradir Gilani, whose personal symbol was a red rose. This Sufi group, in common with the Rosicrucians, practised alchemy as a metaphor for spiritual transformation from matter to spirit.

When Rosenkreutz returned to Germany he continued his occult studies, locking himself away for five years conducting magical rituals and alchemical operations. At the end of this period of isolation he decided to inform the world of his new found knowledge.



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This murder was regarded by eighteenth-century Masons as a turning point in the Templars' history and instrumental in its eventual downfall.

The survival of the Templar tradition was, according to Masonic historians, masterminded by the last Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, while he was in prison. On the night before his execution de Molay sent a trusted confidant to the secret crypt in Paris where the bodies of the Order's past Grand Masters were always entombed. This messenger took from the tomb various symbolic objects which were sacred to the Order, including the crown of the king of Jerusalem, a seven-branched candlestick from Solomon's temple and statues from the church which marked the site of the alleged burial place of Jesus.

De Molay told his trusted aide that the two pillars which stood at the entrance of the Templar tomb were hollow and contained large sums of money. He was told to use this wealth and the symbolic objects to recreate the Order so that its secrets would not be lost. The two pillars of the crypt's entrance were probably copies of the obelisks at the gateway of Solomon's temple. In addition to gold coin, the hollow pillars also possibly contained manuscripts detailing the occult teachings of the Templar Order.

As well as von Hund there was another claimant to the Templar revival in Germany. This was Johann Augustus Starck who had encountered Masonic Templarism while teaching languages in St Petersburg. He also made a separate contact with a surviving Templar tradition in southern France which practised in the Cathar style. Starck believed that the original Templars had inherited their occult lore from Persia, Syria and Egypt and this had been passed to them by an Essenic secret society operating in the Middle East during the Crusades. His version of neoTemplarism received the patronage of European aristocrats and membership of the new Masonic Templar lodges included dukes, counts and princes. In Sweden Gustav III became the patron of neoTemplarism because he believed it had been founded by Charles Martel and he was a supporter of the Scottish pretenders and the Jacobites.

In 1771 there was a grand convention of all the Masonic lodges which claimed mythical descent from the Templar Order. Starck's group was amalgamated with the lodges founded by Baron von Hund who, because he could offer no documentary evidence of the origins of his version of Templarism, was forced to retire and took only an honorary position in the new organization.



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Within two years Washington was fighting the French and with the encouragement of John Adams who was a Freemason and a member of the secret Order of the Dragon, had begun a military career which led him to become commander-in-chief of the rebel forces in the American Revolution.

George Washington was himself a high-ranking Mason. He had taken his first degree initiation at a lodge in Fredericksburg, Virginia in 1734. Among the fifty-six American rebels who signed the Declaration of Independence only six were not members of the Masonic Order. The majority of the military commanders of the American revolutionary army which fought the British during the War of Independence were practising Freemasons.

The secret influence of the esoteric societies in the American Revolution, both Masonic and Rosicrucian, is illustrated by the occult symbolism of the American flag and the Great Seal which is the national symbol of the country. The design for the Stars and Stripes was a joint effort by a committee whose members included Benjamin Franklin and Washington, but it seems they were helped by the strange intervention of a mysterious person whose real name and identity is unknown.

Preparations for designing the flag took place in the house of a rebel leader in Cambridge, Massachusetts in December

1775. At a dinner party attended by the flag committee a stranger staying with the family of the house was introduced. He was referred to merely as the Professor and was described by those who met him as an elderly man who was very well read and extremely knowledgeable about the historical events of the previous century as if he had witnessed them. He was a vegetarian, was accompanied by a large oak chest containing rare books and ancient manuscripts and seemed to know Franklin. The stranger put forward several proposals about the design of the flag which were eagerly accepted by the committee without argument.

When the dinner party broke up and the other committee members left for home, the Professor remained in conversation with Franklin and Washington for several hours. He predicted to the two statesmen that America would soon take its rightful place as a new nation recognized by all the governments of the world and was destined to be a future leader of civilization. The designing of the Great Seal of America, which is the country's symbolic coat-of-arms, was also an act surrounded by occult significance and mystery.

The President was a close friend of a neo-Rosicrucian called Pascal Beverly Randolph. Born in 1825 Randolph had travelled in the East where he had been taught the secrets of Tantric sex magic. He was of mixed blood and fought during the Civil War when he led a Negro infantry company. After the war Lincoln appointed him as an educator of emancipated slaves in Louisiana.

Randolph had begun his occult career in 1858 when he founded a Rosicrucian occult society called the Hermetic Brotherhood of the Light which taught sex magic. The early Rosicrucians had been interested in the transformation of sexual energy into spiritual power and had used alchemical symbolism to conceal the process from outsiders. Randolph claimed to have been initiated into 'the white magic of love' by a 'dusky maiden of Arabic blood' in Jerusalem. This may refer to an actual sexual encounter in the East or might be a coded reference to the Goddess worshipped in King Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.

Attempts have been made to dismiss Randolph as a charlatan who used occult practices for his own personal sexual gratification but he was aware of the history of the Rosicrucian Order. He regarded Christian Rosenkreutz as the one who revived rather than founded the Order, and alleged that he too had been initiated into Tantrism while studying in the Middle East. The aim of these practices was the creation of the Elixir of Life which prolonged youth. Randolph claimed that this elixir was the mixed secretions of men and women produced at the height of sexual excitement. His belief that the sex act was a sacred ritual, which could be used to achieve spiritual enlightenment, led to his arrest in Boston for advocating free love. The prosecuting counsel described Randolph as 'the most dangerous man in the world' but he was acquitted.

Randolph was not the only Rosicrucian to publicly announce his existence in the nineteenth century.

The formation of neo-Rosicrucian groups in England, which ultimately resulted in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, inspired a group of Freemasons in Pennsylvania to form a Masonic Rosicrucian Order in 1879. This group, today known as the Societas Rosicruciana Civitatibus Foederatis, is only open to Master Masons and, in 1980, it had a total of 773 members. There is no evidence that Randolph was connected with these Masonic Rosicrucians but links can be traced between his organization and the Ordo Templi Orientis, or OTO, which claimed to be following the Templar tradition. When R. Swinburne Clymer became the head of Randolph's group he rejected the Tantric sex magic of its founder for more orthodox Rosicrucianism. Randolph however had already passed on his knowledge of Tantrism to a group of French occultists who in turn passed them to the German founder of the OTO.

The Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC) was formally established in the United States by H. Spencer Lewis (1883-1939). Lewis claimed that AMORC was directly descended from an early American Rosicrucian group which had formed a lodge in Philadelphia in 1624, but he also said he had received instruction in the occult mysteries from a Rosicrucian Order in Toulouse, France in 1909. According to Lewis the authority to found AMORC was given to him by a member of the English branch of the Order who was descended from Oliver Cromwell and had received her authority from the Grand Master of the Order who lived in India.

The circumstances of Lincoln's assassination had some mysterious elements which have prompted some conspiracy theorists to represent it as an example of the workings of the secret societies in American history. The President's killer, John Wilkes Booth, was trapped in a burning barn after the murder and shot dead by a soldier named Boston



Corbett. Apparently Corbett was a religious fanatic who had castrated himself for spiritual purposes. He was later committed to a mental hospital but escaped and was never seen again. It has been suggested that he was a secret member of the infamous Skoptsi sect which flourished in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russia. This weird cult traced its origins back to the pagan Mysteries of the goddess Cybele whose priests wore women's clothing and castrated themselves as a sacrificial offering at her altars. This sect may have been introduced into nineteenth century America by Russian immigrants. Rumours persist that Booth escaped from the fire in the barn and lived until 1903 under an assumed name, financially supported by Lincoln's replacement in the White House.



Washington as a *Freemason*. (Library of Congress, Washington DC)

Another intervention by the Masonic-Rosicrucian-Illuminati tradition in American history took place in the 1930s and coincided with the Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt whose New Deal introduced socialism into the American political system and led to allegations by his extreme right-wing enemies that he was a crypto-Communist, Roosevelt was allegedly a member of a secret society called the Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles and Mystics and held the grade of a Knight of Pythias. This Order claimed to be an offshoot of the Illuminati and included among its past members Mirabeau, Frederick the Great, Goethe, Spinoza, Kant, Sir Francis Bacon and Garibaldi. This list of notables suggests there was some confusion between it and the Order of the Rosy Cross.

Two nineteenth-century Freemasons, Waiter Flemming and William Florence, were the co-founders of the American branch of the Order. Florence had been initiated into a French Lodge of the Order in 1870 while staying in Marseilles. He was later inducted into another lodge in Algeria and returned to found the first American lodge in New York in 1871. Membership of the Order was open only to Freemasons who had reached the thirty-second degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite or were members of Masonic Templar lodges.



The Order's mythical origins date back to the seventh century CE, or earlier, and it was allegedly founded by a descendant of Mohammed. He in turn had derived the idea for the Order from a politico-religious secret society in medieval Europe whose members included Arabs, Christians and Jews. The symbol of the Order is a crescent moon, made from the claws of a Bengal tiger, engraved with a pyramid, an urn and a pentagram. The crescent is suspended from a scimitar and in the Order is a representation of the Universal Mother worshipped in ancient times as Isis. The horns of the crescent point downwards because it represents the setting moon of the old faith at the rising of the Sun of the new religion of the brotherhood of humanity.

In 1945 Roosevelt arranged for the obverse design of the Great Seal to be printed on the back of the dollar bill. He had been given the idea by Henry Wallace, the Secretary of Agriculture who was a practising occultist. Wallace had suggested to the President that a new dollar coin should be minted showing the Great Seal design of the Egyptian pyramid and the eye of God. Roosevelt agreed with the idea but suggested that it would be more practical to include the design on the existing currency rather than create a new coin.

Wallace's idea originated with the Russian mystic and artist Nicholas Roerich who acted as a guru to the Secretary for Agriculture. Roerich had worked with Stravinsky on his ballet *The Rite of Spring* and had designed scenery for Diaghilev's famous Russian ballets. He had spent

many years travelling through Nepal and Tibet studying with the lamas in the Buddhist monasteries of those countries and searching for the lost city of Shambala - the legendary home of a fraternity of occult adepts or masters who had secretly influenced world affairs throughout history. These adepts were known in occult circles variously as the Secret Chiefs, the Hidden Masters or the Great White Brotherhood, and were believed to be the eminence grise behind the formation of all-important esoteric groups including the Freemasons, the Sufis, the Knights Templars, the Rosicrucians, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and the Theosophical Society.

Roerich was a supporter of world peace and was associated with the League of Nations founded after the First World War to prepare for the establishment of a world government. In 1935, the same year as the Illuminist symbol appeared on the dollar bill, Roerich was active in the drawing up of a pact signed by twenty-two countries pledging themselves

not to destroy cultural treasures. The symbol used to illustrate this pact was composed of three spheres symbolizing the trinity of love, power, and wisdom. These spheres were enclosed within a larger circle representing the world.

The Secretary of Agriculture was well versed in occult knowledge. In a letter to his Russian guru he stated, 'The search - whether it be for the lost word of Masonry, or the Holy Chalice, or the potentialities of the age to come - is the one supremely worthwhile objective. All else is karmic duty. But surely everyone is a potential Galahad! So may we strive for the Chalice and the flame above it'. The chalice he refers to is the Holy Grail, regarded by the Rosicrucians as a feminine symbol for perfection, and 'the age to come' is the dawning of the Aquarian Age.

His relationship with the Russian mystic was to have serious political consequences for Wallace. Critics of the Secretary for Agriculture managed to obtain copies of the correspondence he had with Roerich. They used it to expose his occult beliefs and to discredit his bid for the Presidency. They also alleged, without any evidence apart from the fact that he was Russian, that Roerich was a Communist sympathizer. Roerich was an internationalist and, whilst he may have supported the original democratic aims of the 1917 Revolution, he was an ardent critic of the excesses of Communism as practised under Stalin in the 1930's. In fact, as a student of the esoteric tradition and an agent of the Great White Brotherhood, Roerich was an internationalist and would have found the ultra-materialism of Communism less than attractive as a political ideology.

Wallace's reasons for wanting to introduce the reverse side of the Great Seal onto the American currency were based on his belief that America was reaching a turning point in her history and that great spiritual changes were imminent. He believed that the 1930s represented a time when a great spiritual awakening was going to take place which would precede the creation of the one-world state. According to Wallace's own account written in the 1950s, when he presented the idea to President Roosevelt he was excited by the idea. Roosevelt was eager to have on the American currency the Masonic symbol of the all-seeing eye, which he said was a sigil of the Grand Architect of the Universe. Before passing on the idea to the Treasury, Roosevelt asked his Cabinet colleague James Parley if the Catholics would object to the introduction of a Masonic symbol on the dollar bill. When he was told there would be no objections, Roosevelt instructed the Treasury to start printing the new dollars.

Although Wallace failed in his attempt to become US President he continued his occult researches and studies. In later years, the ex-Secretary of Agriculture became involved in psychic research. He was responsible for supporting the pioneering work of Dr Andrija Puharich, a scientist who was responsible for fostering the psychic talents of a young Israeli called Uri Geller and promoting him to the outside world through the media.

The strange incident of the one dollar bill may represent one of the last attempts by the Masonic-Rosicrucian-Illuminati tradition openly to influence American politics. They are however rumoured to have worked secretly behind several political organizations in the United States since the days of Roosevelt. The American Dream was finally to come to a tragic end on a November day in Dallas in 1963. This event was followed by a period of national suffering which was characterized by the Vietnam war, the civil rights struggle, Watergate and the recent Iran-Contra scandal. It is very difficult to see the United States today taking its predicted role as the civilizing leader of the New Age although the new era of detente with the Soviet Union offers hope for the future. In all difficult times history produces men and women of destiny and there is still time for the real American dream to be realized.

P. 106-114

In January 1871, through the political conspiring of Otto von Bismarck, King Wilhelm of Prussia was crowned as Kaiser or Emperor of the Second German Reich. This not only marked the birth of modern Germany but also inspired the rise of a pan-German nationalist movement which drew its spiritual strength from occultism and its ideology from the esoteric philosophies of the secret societies. Within this new political movement lay not only the imperialism which formed the political background to the 1914-18 war but also the extreme racialist doctrines which, in the 1920s, spawned National Socialism.

As early as the 1850s political movements had arisen whose aim was the union of all the German speaking peoples of Europe. These movements could be identified by extreme nationalism and their antisemitic, anti-capitalist and anti-

liberal views. By the 1870s this political movement had established a mystical framework for its racial views which seems to have been heavily influenced by the doctrines of the new Theosophical Society founded by a Russian medium, Helene Blavatsky, in 1875. Blavatsky's aim was to synthesize Eastern forms of religion and occultism, such as Hinduism and Tantric yoga, with the Western European occult tradition exemplified by Hermeticism, Freemasonry, Rosicrucianism and the Cabbala. Madame Blavatsky claimed to have been initiated into the occult mysteries while studying in India and Tibet. During her visits to these remote locations she had contacted the Great White Brotherhood, including the Comte de Saint Germain and the Master Koot Hoomi, who is believed by some occultists to be the reincarnation of Thothmes III.

Blavatsky was influenced by the romantic novels written by the English statesman and occultist Lord Edward Bulwer Lytton (1803-73). These occult novels had themes involving secret societies, mysterious initiations and the existence of a clandestine tradition behind the orthodox religion. Bulwer Lytton was a prolific writer whose novels were read not only in England but also in America and most European countries. It was widely rumoured that he was a practising member of the Rosicrucian Order and is claimed as one of their Grand Masters. He had been elected as a Liberal member for Parliament in 1831 and played an important role in the passing of the reform Bill. Lord Lytton's real interest, however, was in occultism which dominated his private life. He had an extensive library of books on the subject, including many rare treatises on medieval magic. He also allegedly operated a small occult group which practised magical rituals such as the conjuration of elemental spirits and demons.



*Seal of the Order Temples Orientis*

Bulwer Lytton's grandson claimed that his grandfather was a Rosicrucian and Grand Patron of the Order. Evidence exists which does prove that he was proposed as Honorary Grand Patron of the Societas Rosicruciana Anglia, a neo-Rosicrucian Order founded by Robert Wentworth Little in 1867. Wentworth was a clerk at Freemason's Hall in London who said he had access to secret documents in the archives showing a link between the masonic guilds and the Rosicrucians. These documents had been discovered by William White, the Grand Secretary of English Freemasonry until 1857. He had been initiated into a Rosicrucian Order by the Venetian ambassador in London. In collaboration with the occultist Kenneth McKenzie, who had been initiated into a German Rosicrucian Order and had been granted a charter to found an English lodge, Wentworth Little founded the SRIA. In 1888 this new Rosicrucian society gave birth to the famous magical fraternity known as the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. This Order was founded by two SRIA members, Dr William Wynn Westcott and Samuel McGregor Mathers who said they had received their authorization from a German occult adept called Anna Sprengel who lived in Bavaria, the home of the Illuminati.

MacGregor Mathers was a supporter of the Jacobite cause and was rumoured to be a member of another secret society known as the Jacobite Legitimists. This group claimed that the true heir to the Scottish throne was Princess Maria Theresa, wife of Prince Ludwig of Bavaria. They demanded home rule for Scotland and supported Irish nationalism. In February 1893 the House of Commons was in uproar when the banning of the society's official newspaper *The Jacobire* was debated. A Belfast MP said that unless the journal was banned, loyalists in Ulster would rise against the British government. The Jacobite cause also had supporters in the Theosophical Society including Bishop C.W. Leadbeater who was to be disgraced in a homosexual scandal involving young boys.

Bulwer Lytton may have been a member of the SRIA but there is no evidence that he attended any of its meetings. His honorary membership was granted because of his knowledge of Rosicrucian beliefs expressed in his best-selling novel *Zanoni*. In 1870 Bulwer Lytton was approached by the occultist Hargraves Jennings who had written a lengthy treatise on the sexual meaning of Rosicrucian and pagan symbols. Jennings sought the help of the politician to secure employment as a librarian as he was finding it hard to make a living writing on obscure occult subjects. Lytton replied

that he could not help him find suitable employment but congratulated him on tracing the Order's connection with earlier (pagan) religions .

One of Bulwer Lytton's closest friends was Benjamin Disraeli, who shared his interest in secret societies and the occult. In common with his aristocratic friend, Disraeli wrote several novels involving secret societies and political conspiracies. In 1856, in the House of Commons, Disraeli spoke out against the threat posed by the secret societies in Europe. He warned of the danger of supporting the revolutionary movements in Italy because of the influence the secret societies had in them. He said, "The government of this country has not only to deal with governments, kings and ministers but also with secret societies, elements which must be taken into account which at the last moment can bring all our plans to nought, which have agents everywhere, who incite assassinations and can if necessary lead a massacre."

Blavatsky had read Bulwer Lytton's novels and was very impressed by their occult content, especially *Zanoni* and *The Last Days of Pompei*. The latter was published in 1834 and dealt with the time between early Christianity and the *Mysteries of Isis* in Italy in the first century CE. Blavatsky's esotericism was virulently anti-Christian but this tendency was modified by her successor as leader of the Theosophical Society, Annie Besant.

Besant was a socialist, trade union organizer and strike leader until she joined the Theosophical Society in 1889. Previously she had been a member of the National Secular Society, the Fabian Society, the Social Democratic Federation and the Free Thought and Radical Movement.

From 1874 to 1889, when she became a Theosophist, Annie Besant had campaigned on a wide range of reforms including women's suffrage and sexual equality, anti-vivisection, penal reform, the organization of trade unions, the rights of ethnic peoples and the right to freedom of speech. Her political work was modified after she joined the Theosophist Society, but in 1893, she attended the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago and was invited to visit India. As a result she became involved in Indian nationalism and founded the Home Rule League in 1916. As a result of her political work for the League she was interned for three months in 1917 by the British authorities.

Besant was responsible, in 1902, for founding the Co-Freemasonry movement whose lodges admitted men and women on equal terms. The Grand Lodge of England refused to accept Co-Masonry, which claims as its Grand Master the Comte de Saint-Germain on the spiritual plane, and the new Order affiliated itself to the Grand Orient of France. There is no suggestion that Co-Masonry shares with the French Freemasons their interest in radical politics. The lodges of Co-Masonry teach the inner wisdom of the Craft which has been lost to the orthodox Masonic Order in this country. Many Co-Masons are also members of the Liberal Catholic Church which promotes esoteric Christianity through the Theosophical Society. In 1912 Annie Besant also founded a neo-Rosicrucian offshoot of Co-Masonry which was called the Order of the Temple of the Rose Cross which was active until the end of the First World War.

Bulwer Lytton's novels not only had an impact on the Theosophists but they also effected the mystical aspects of German nationalism. His occult novel *The Coming Race*, published in 1871, presented the fictional idea of a subterranean matriarchal, socialist utopia ruled by superior beings who had mastered the so-called Viril, or Life Force. This was a mysterious energy which could be manipulated by the adepts who ruled this underground world to perform healing and telepathy. It also had destructive uses as a death ray which was similar to the modern laser. One of the German mystico-political groups called itself the Viril Society and took its philosophy from Bulwer Lytton's novel. The Viril Society was originally founded as the Luminous Lodge and combined the political ideals of the Order of Illuminati with Hindu mysticism, Theosophy and the Cabbala. It was one of the first German nationalist groups to use the symbol of the swastika as an emblem linking Eastern and Western occultism.

The racial ideas of Madame Blavatsky, concerning root races and the emergence of a spiritually-developed type of human being in the Aquarian Age, were avidly accepted by the nineteenth-century German nationalists who mixed Theosophical occultism with anti-Semitism and the doctrine of the racial supremacy of the Aryan or Indo-European peoples. One of the leading occult societies of this type was the *Armanenschaft* founded by an Austrian esotericist, Guido von List, who had spent a lifetime researching Teutonic mythology. List was a practitioner of the old pagan religion and was dedicated to re-establishing the ancient cult of Aryan Sun worship and reviving the priesthood of Wotan or Odin, the one-eyed shaman god of the runes.

List based his society on the Masonic degree system of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason. Initiates into the Order were not only expected to learn the mystical meanings of the runic system but were also taught the secret history of the priesthood of Wotan. List claimed that when the Church suppressed paganism its priesthood went underground and its traditions survived in the beliefs of the Templars, the alchemists, the Freemasons and the Order of the Rose Cross. He believed that the Templars and the Rosicrucians had inherited the spiritual and aristocratic aspects of the pagan priesthood while the Freemasons, who were political rivals, had inherited the democratic aspects of the occult tradition.

Guido von List had tenuous connections with two occult fraternities which shared his extreme right-wing views and adhered to his idea of a pan-German Empire based on spiritual principles derived from the pagan religion. The first of these groups was the Ordo Templi Orientis, or the Order of the Temple in the East, founded between 1895 and 1900 by two high-ranking German Freemasons, Karl Kellner and Theodor Reuss. The OTO had been born from the Masonic Rites of Memphis and Mizraim founded by an Englishman called John Yarker who was an associate of the SRIA. Yarker had authorized the foundation of a German lodge of this Masonic Rite by contact with Kellner, Reuss and Dr Franz Hartmann. The latter was a prominent occultist who had started the German Theosophical Society in 1896 and had links with various neo-Rosicrucian Orders.

The OTO's official history taught that its unique Tantric doctrine had been given to its founders by three Eastern adepts and that the Order, possessed the key which opens up all Hermetic and Masonic secrets, namely the teachings of sexual magic and all the secrets of Freemasonry and all systems of religion'. When Kellner died in 1905 Reuss became the head of the OTO and within a short time branches of the Order were founded outside Germany, including France, England and Scandinavia. Reuss was a complex character who as a young man had worked as a spy for the Prussian Secret Service. He had lived in London spying on socialist Germans in exile, including the family of Karl Marx. Reuss joined the Socialist League, whose members included Engels and the Utopian socialist William Morris, but he was exposed as an undercover agent and forced to resign from the organization. There are some interesting connections between the OTO and the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn whose membership list included the poet W.B. Yeats and his close friend Maud Gonne, both active in Irish nationalism. Reuss had founded several Masonic-Rosicrucian lodges in Germany, with the authorization of William Westcott who was one of the founders of the Golden Dawn. Another member of the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley, was to become the head of the OTO in England. Reuss had written to Crowley in 1912 accusing him of revealing the inner secrets of the OTO in his Book of Lies which contained coded descriptions of various magico-sexual rites veiled in Rosicrucian symbolism. These rituals included one involving mutual oral sex as a form of occult meditation. Crowley told Reuss that the rituals had originated in documents belonging to Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the Illuminati.



Reuss accepted this story because he believed that the OTO had links with the Illuminati. In fact, either Crowley or one of his disciples had written the rituals some years before. Crowley had broken away from the Golden Dawn in 1900 following a leadership fight with MacGregor Mathers, and because some of the other members had objected to his preoccupation with the use of sexual energy in magical workings. Crowley was delighted when Reuss appointed him as head of the English branch of the OTO and he took the magical name Baphomet from the idol worshipped by the Knights Templars. Crowley may also have shared some of Reuss' political views as well as his interest in magical sex rites. When he was at Cambridge University the young Crowley had belonged to a Jacobite legitimate society and had dabbled in extreme right-wing politics. Crowley may have been responsible for the various theories which began to circulate concerning the OTO's origins. It was claimed that the Order had been founded in St. Petersburg many years earlier than 1895 by a mysterious count, that it was a direct descendent of the Order of Illuminati, or it was founded by a medieval Sufi saint who had taught the Templars the secret of sex magic.

The second occult fraternity was the Ordo Novi Templior the Order of New Templars, founded by Lanz von Liebenfels in 1907. Von Liebenfels was a romantic who had convinced himself he was descended from medieval German aristocracy, even though he was the son of a railway worker. He used his Order to further extreme right-wing, racist views based on the Templar tradition. Von Liebenfels was a fantasist who claimed that Lord Kitchener, who died in mysterious circumstances when his ship sank off Archangel during the Allied campaign to defeat the Bolsheviks after the First World War, was a secret supporter of the Order of New Templars. The ONT had established contact with several other radical right-wing groups with occult associations. It supported pro-Serbian nationalism, which was to play a crucial part in the events that led to the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, and assisted the Magyar nationalists in Hungary. During the 1920s, when Hitler was rising to power, the ONT acted as the international co-ordinator for European and American rightist groups. In the 1930s, it acted as a front for the illegal National Socialist Party in

Austria. This did not prevent the prohibition of the ONT by the Nazis in 1941 following the abortive peace mission by Rudolf Hess which led to the persecution of the occultists in the Third Reich.

An offshoot from the ONT and the Armanenschaft was the German Order founded just before the First World War. This anti-Semitic, racist, nationalist occult group used the swastika as its emblem and practised rituals based on Masonry. Its philosophy was centred on the purity and supremacy of the Aryan race, the revival of the pagan traditions of ancient Germany and the creation of a pan-German state. The German Order was the prototype of the Thule Society which later influenced the embryonic National Socialist movement. With the rise of the Nazis the mystical tradition of racial purity, neo-paganism and theosophical occultism was to be dramatically projected into the public arena and become the roots of a political creed of the most powerful nation in Europe.

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Hitler's early career was dominated by another occultist called Kari Haushofer. He had been the German military attaché in Tokyo before the war and had been in contact with several Eastern secret societies. During the war Haushofer was a general in the Imperial Army and after the armistice he became a professor of geopolitics at Munich University where Rudolf Hess, later Deputy Fuehrer in the Third Reich, was his assistant. Haushofer's son, who was an astrologer and a student of the prophecies of the medieval French mystic Michel Notre Dame, or Nostradamus, was later to become involved in Hess' disastrous peace mission to Britain in 1941.

Haushofer travelled extensively in the Far East in pursuit of occult knowledge. He believed that the Aryan race had originated in Central Asia and he was later to try and persuade Hitler to extend the Third Reich's political influence to Persia, India and Tibet. While visiting Tibet in 1908, Haushofer met George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff, the extraordinary Russian occultist who is not only believed to have been influential in the foundation of the German Order but is also said to have had contact with the Soviet dictator Josef Stalin when the latter was a student and stayed as a lodger in the Gurdjieff household.

Gurdjieff had been born on the Russian-Turkish border and at an early age was introduced into a secret society known as the Community of Truth Seekers. This was a group of powerful occultists who believed that there had been a single world religion in ancient times which had fragmented into the various religious beliefs and occult doctrines which exist today. The teachings of this once universal religion now only survive in legends, folklore, music and the secret teachings of esoteric fraternities. It was the task of the Truth Seekers to travel the remoter parts of Europe, the Middle East and Asia contacting the secret societies who still reserved the Ancient Wisdom and re-establish the ancient world religion.

During his own travels in Asia, Gurdjieff masqueraded as a carpet salesman and fashion designer who sold ladies' corsets. He was also acting as a spy for the Russian Secret Service against the British in India and Afghanistan. He stayed for ten years in Tibet as the tutor of the Dalai Lama and hatched a plan to convert Czar Nicholas II to Buddhism. While in the East, Gurdjieff was initiated into the Sarmoung Brotherhood which had been founded in Babylon in 2,500 BCE. Shortly before the outbreak of the Great War, Gurdjieff returned to Russia to teach his own occult system based on his Eastern studies. With the rise of the Bolsheviks he was forced to leave and established a spiritual commune in France which attracted writers and intellectuals from all over Western Europe.

It was through his contact with Gurdjieff that Haushofer was first introduced to the legend of the subterranean city of Agartha. According to occult doctrine Agartha was a mysterious underground kingdom situated in a remote part of the Far East. The city was constructed over 60,000 years ago by occult adepts who fled the cataclysm which destroyed Atlantis. Agartha supposedly had huge libraries of rare volumes containing ancient esoteric wisdom. It is said to have been the source of the material in The Secret Doctrine written by the founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena Blavatsky.

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'We shall form an Order, the Brotherhood of the Templars around the Holy Grail of the pure blood.' It was to be Heinrich Himmler who was to become the creator of Hitler's dream of a new Templar Order with the formation of the Schutzstaffel or SS who had originally acted as the Fuehrer's personal bodyguard in the 1920s. Himmler transformed the SS into an elite unit of crack troops, ruthlessly dedicated to the Nazi ideology. They were destined to become feared throughout occupied Europe and were responsible for controlling the network of special concentration camps set up in 1942 to deal with the "Jewish problem". Himmler was a disciple of the occult doctrines which were at the root of the racial policies of the Third Reich. He believed that the SS would be the vehicle through which the racial purity of Germany would be re-established by scientific breeding programmes designed to create the master race of supermen.

Himmler drew on many historical precedents when he reformed the SS into a secret society within the German military machine. These precedents included the Jesuits, the Freemasons, the Knights Templars, the Teutonic Knights, the Order of the Garter and the Fellowship of the Round Table. The headquarters of the SS was established in the castle of Wewelsburg which had been modelled on the castle in the Arthurian myth of the Holy Grail. In the castle the SS officer corps were initiated in neo-pagan rites and were given a special ring carved with a skull, runes and the swastika.

A special investigation group staffed by top SS officers was also formed under Himmler's direction. This group was given the task of studying history from a Nazi viewpoint with special emphasis on the secret societies in medieval Europe, including the Templars and the Cathars, and occult symbolism.

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The Illuminist conspiracy had been exposed after all in 1785 when a priest who was a member of the Order died in an accident. He was killed by lightning while on a secret mission for the Order and his body was taken to a nearby convent. A nun preparing the body for burial found a cache of documents sewn into the lining of his cassock. These documents outlined plans for the destruction of the Catholic Church from inside. The authorities promptly outlawed the Order and its leader Adam Weishaupt was banished from Bavaria. Although he died in obscurity some years later, in the immediate period following his banishment he laid the foundation for the completion of his grand plan which many believe is still in operation today.

Certainly one of the main objectives of the Carbonari was to infiltrate the Church at all levels and eventually have one of its own members elected as Pope. Some modern critics of the Roman Church, especially those with right-wing political views who support ultra-traditionalist doctrines such as the Latin mass, have seen in the liberalization of the Church in recent years proof that its hierarchy has been penetrated at the highest level by agents of the secret societies who are working for its eventual downfall.

In his book *The Broken Cross*, Piers Compton, an ex-editor of the Catholic newspaper *The Universe*, has traced the alleged infiltration of the Roman Church by the Illuminati. He cites as evidence the use of the Illuminist symbol of the eye in the triangle by leading Catholics. It has been used by the Jesuits, it has appeared as the seal of the Philadelphia Eucharistic Congress in 1976 and featured on a special issue of Vatican stamps in 1978. Compton further claims that Pope John XXIII, who died in June 1963, used the symbol on his personal cross.

According to Compton, Pope John (formerly Bishop Angelo Roncalli) was an initiate of a secret society. Roncalli was consecrated as a bishop in 1935 and entered the Vatican Diplomatic Service as the Apostolic Visitor of the Holy See in Sofia, Turkey. It was while he was in Turkey that Roncalli allegedly became a member of a secret society which used the symbol of the rose and the cross.



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The exposure of the P2 lodge in Italy was a rare example of the workings of a renegade secret society becoming public knowledge through the misdeeds of its leadership. Usually, because of their very nature, the secret societies work behind the scenes and their activities seldom become known to the outside world. Any interpretation of their activities must therefore be confined to an analysis of the outward signs of their influence within the overall pattern of international politics. These signs are occasionally revealed in major historical events or socio-political movements whose impact on mass consciousness is so great that the hidden hands behind them are briefly revealed to general view, albeit in a shadowy and indistinct form.

One classic example is the world government movement which in the decade following the First World War seems to have become the focus for the efforts of the leaders of the respectable secret societies who played no role in the events leading up to the 1914-18 conflict. Their goal seems to have been the elimination of the risk of any future outbreaks of war on a global scale. One of the political figures who played an influential role in the world government movement was President Woodrow Wilson of the USA, who was allegedly a secret member of a Rosicrucian Order. Wilson was a statesman who had an unusually idealistic view of world politics which sometimes led his more realistic critics to denounce him as a naive romantic. His foreign policy reversed past trends by respecting the rights of small nations and promoting non-intervention in the domestic disputes of other countries.

This foreign policy was responsible for Wilson's reluctance to allow the United States to be drawn into the war between Germany and Britain in 1914. He adopted a neutral stance and in fact engaged with Kaiser Wilhelm in protracted negotiations to bring a peace settlement. However, when details of a proposed military alliance between Mexico, Japan, and Germany, which would have involved Mexican troops invading Texas, was revealed, Wilson was reluctantly forced to act.

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The idea of the Round Table had been conceived by the nineteenth-century diamond and gold magnate Cecil Rhodes, who gave his name to Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Rhodes was a fanatical exponent of the world government concept and the idea behind The Round Table was to promote British imperialism worldwide. Conspiracy theorists have identified Rhodes' group as a classic example of a semi-public secret society with internationalist ambitions. It had been founded because Rhodes fervently believed that British values should be extended throughout the world, creating an imperial global power which would render war impossible. He was allegedly a disciple of Professor John Ruskin, the radical Oxford don who taught philosophy and art in the 1870s and who has been claimed as a follower of Adam Weishaupt and his Illuminist doctrines. In his will Rhodes left instructions to Lord Rothschild requesting time to expand the work of the Round Table which he had modelled on the organizational structure of the Jesuits and the Freemasons.

From its inception the Round Table had been influential in shaping British government policy, especially relating to foreign affairs. It is believed to have played an important role in the events leading up to the First World War. With the successful outcome of the 1918 peace conference it seems that the Round Table was anxious to extend its political

influence on an international scale. An American branch of the group had already been founded and when Colonel House approached it with his President's grand plan for a world government the Round Table was more than eager to become involved in his idealistic venture.

The new organization which arose from the Paris meeting was on a smaller scale than the League of Nations, reflecting its more modest ambitions, but it shared the same aspirations. In Britain the organization was called the Institute for International Affairs (IIA) while in New York it operated as the Council for Foreign Relations (CFR). The finances for the group came from wealthy international bankers and it quickly recruited prominent American and British political figures who supported its aims. Initially the CFR was regarded by its critics as an élitist, right-wing power group and it was even accused of helping to finance Hitler's rise to power although no evidence has ever been found to support this claim. Following the Second World War however, the CFR has been labelled a promoter of international socialism through the United Nations. Conspiracy theorists claim it was the CFR who supported Henry Wallace's plan to have the Illuminist symbol of the eye in the triangle on the one dollar note. The CFR's apparent contradictory political ideals are said to be typical of modern Illuminati front groups which allegedly use both right and left ideologies to further their cause which transcends conventional politics.



In the eyes of their opponents, the CFR is currently dedicated to destroying the sovereignty of the United States, reversing the democratic process which instigated the 1776 American Revolution, promoting internationalism and the foundation of a world super state embracing both capitalism and Communism in a new political order. The evidence for this seems to be largely based on the neutral stance adopted by the CFR in American politics. It has recruited its membership from both the Democratic and Republican parties, and leading members of the CFR have included Adlai Stevenson, Robert and Edward Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, John Foster Dulles, Robert McNamara, Henry Kissinger and Nelson Rockefeller. Several men who later became Presidents of the United States were CFR members earlier in their political careers such as Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter.

After the Second World War the CFR turned its attention to supporting the United Nations Organization founded in 1945. The idea for this international organization developed in US State Development policy documents drawn up at the beginning of the war. A study group called the Committee on Post War Problems (CPWP) was set up with the brief to formulate plans for a new international and social organization to replace the old League of Nations. This policy unit was allegedly staffed by CFR agents who were working within the State Department manipulating US government foreign affairs.

The first use of the words 'United Nations' was by Franklin Roosevelt, who is said to have had secret society connections, in the Declaration of United Nations in January 1942. This was a declaration issued by twenty-six nations who had pledged to fight the Axis powers of Germany, Italy and Japan. However, it was not until the end of the war that plans to form the United Nations were seriously considered. A conference on International Organizations met in San Francisco from April to June 1945 and deliberated on proposals worked out by China, the USSR, the UK, and the USA during a series of high-level meetings from August to October 1944.

The United Nations officially came into existence in October 1945 with the purpose of securing international peace in

the post-war period. As with its predecessor, the League of Nations, the UN found this a difficult task even with the use of an international peace keeping force drawn from the armies of its member states. Since the 1960s the UN has become more concerned with economic and social issues, including education, science, environmental protection, health, the refugee problem, disaster relief, drug abuse, racism and human rights. Although in these areas the UN has had some success it seems unlikely that it will provide the basis for a future world government at this stage in its history. Conspiracy theorists regard the UN with suspicion because of the alleged involvement of the CFR in its creation. Further suspicion has been cast on the UN by the activities of a shadowy group called the United World Federalists (UWF) which was founded in 1947 by two CFR members. The UWF promotes the setting up of a world governmental structure under the auspices of the United Nations involving countries from both the East and West power blocs. Right wingers who oppose the Soviet influence in the present UN see in this plan an Illuminist conspiracy to create a one world state based on Marxism.

The activities of the CFR have been linked with two other political 'think tanks' which have emerged in the post-war period and whose secret origins and unorthodox political views have labelled them as covers for the secret societies. These organizations are the Bilderberg Group and the Tri-lateral Commission and they have been suspected of being covert power groups engaged in the secret manipulation of international affairs. Because these groups go to extraordinary lengths to avoid publicity, hold their regular meetings in private and guard their important members by taking extreme security measures, the speculation concerning their real motives has become more and more sensationalized over the years.

The Bilderberg Group was founded in May 1954 and its first meeting took place in the Bilderberg Hotel in Osterbeck in Holland, hence the name it adopted. The chairman at the first meeting was Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands who remained in this position until 1976 when he was forced to resign over the financial scandal involving the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. He was replaced by ex-British Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas-Home. There is no official membership list for the group but at its meetings held once or twice a year eighty to a hundred people drawn from the political, financial and media spheres are invited to attend, although few will reveal afterwards the discussions that take place behind closed doors.

What prompted the foundation of the Bilderberg Group? In his book *The Global Manipulators* Robert Eringer links them with the CIA and international Freemasonry. According to Eringer, the first Bilderberg conference was organized by a mysterious personage called Dr Joseph Retinger. He had been involved in secret activities for nearly half a century and was reputed to be the top agent for international Freemasonry. Retinger knew everybody who was anybody in European politics, although it was rumoured that he had been banned from 10 Downing Street when he accused the wife of the then Prime Minister, Lord Asquith, of being a practising lesbian.

During the First World War Retinger was in Mexico working for President Wilson when he uncovered a conspiracy by Texan oilmen to spark a war between the Mexicans and the United States. In the 1920s, despite his Masonic connections, he was involved in special missions for the Vatican and in 1924 he established a secret organization dedicated to European unity. Despite the rise of Nazism he continued his crusade for a united Europe and when war broke out he joined the Polish Free Forces in London. He parachuted into occupied Poland with the British SOE to assist the resistance movement during the Warsaw uprising.

In 1946, at a lecture given to the IIA (the British branch of the CFR) in London, Retinger expanded on his personal vision of a united Europe as a bulwark against post-war Soviet expansionist policies. His morbid fear of Communism led him to join the American Committee for a United Europe (ACUE) which was channelling funds to anti-Communist groups in Europe and included the future Pope Paul VI as its top agent in the Vatican. In his function as a member of ACUE, Retinger approached Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and suggested that he use his Royal influence to help assemble a group of influential Europeans who shared the two men's anti-Communist views and belief in a united Europe. This new group would act as a select 'think tank' co-ordinating policies designed to combat the alleged Communist menace to Western society. In 1952 Retinger made contact with the CIA and requested the Agency to provide financial and moral support for the venture. Two years later the first meeting of the group was held in Holland with delegates attending from Europe and the USA.

Conspiracy theorists who see the Bilderbergers as an Illuminist front cite the fact that its steering committee consists

of the odd number of 39 which is  $13 + 13 + 13$ . In occultism the number thirteen has many mystical meanings and sinister associations. They also point out that Prince Bernhard's wife, Queen Juliana, has been involved in occult practices including Spiritualism and healing. Her daughter, Crown Princess Beatrix, attended a Bilderberg conference in 1965. This meeting was also attended by Prince Phillip and Lord Mountbatten and was held at the Villa d'Este on Lake Como in Italy. Como was, of course, the ancient headquarters of the Order of the Comacine who were the forerunners of the medieval Freemasons.

The Bilderberg Group was originally founded as an anti-Communist organization with a predominantly right-wing membership. However, in 1976, fifteen representatives from the Soviet Union attended one of its conferences in the Arizona desert. This move was interpreted by observers as a shift in focus by the Group from a united Europe opposing the Eastern bloc to the idealistic concept of world government promoted by internationalists within the secret societies. This change of emphasis coincided with the new policy of detente followed by CFR member Jimmy Carter when he became President.

Another mysterious power group associated with the CFR and the Bilderbergers is the Trilateral Commission which dabbles in international politics and supports the world government movement. The Trilateralists were the brainchild of certain American politicians who in the early 1970s became concerned that the traditional links between the United States were becoming weakened. Their plan was to create a new community of nations centred on North America but including Western Europe and Japan, which they identified as a future super power. The groundplan for this community was to begin with a policy group composed of industrialists and politicians from each geopolitical sphere. While on paper the Trilateralists are confined to co-operation between the United States, Japan and Europe the high number of CFR members who belong to it suggest that its inner doctrine is based on world government.

The director of the Trilateral Commission in the 1970s was Zbigniew Brzezinski who was a special advisor on national security in the Carter administration and a member of the CFR. He was quoted as saying, "The world is not likely to unite behind a common ideology or a super government. The only practical hope is that it will now respond to a common concern for its own survival. The active promotion of such trilateral co-operation must now become the central priority of US policy."

Both the Bilderbergers and the Trilateralists act as shadow governments promoting internationalist policies of European unity and world government. They act as a form of political Freemasonry offering world leaders and national insiders the chance to meet in secret to exchange information and discuss undisclosed social changes which can be put into practice in their respective countries. Individual members of these groups deliberately play down the real significance of these meetings but, despite this, world leaders take out valuable time from their work schedules to attend them. It is, of course, mere speculation to recognize in the workings of these covert power groups any resemblance to the Invisible College of the sixteenth-century Rosicrucians writ large on the modern stage of international politics.

Originally, Utopian, liberterian concepts were promoted by the medieval Freemasons and Rosicrucians. The occult adepts who were operating at the highest levels in those secret societies were genuinely concerned with the progress of humanity on both the material and spiritual level. They supported the political concept of an equalized society where everyone had the right to worship God in whatever form he or she believed in, and to follow the politics of their choice, providing they were based on democracy and freedom of thought and action. At a time when millions were enslaved to the medieval feudal system, the secret societies taught that all men and women were free individuals.

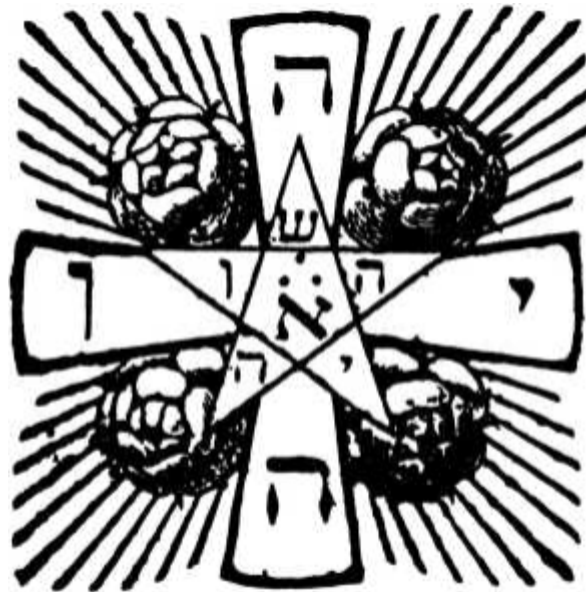
The secret societies advocated the reform of social conditions which imprisoned the soul, universal education for the masses and civil liberty. They believed the advantages of the new scientific research and the gifts of artistic creation were not the hidden treasure of a few but should be available to everyone. The secret societies believed that if knowledge were made more widespread a natural social progress would lead to the evolution of the individual from the common herd which was their long-term objective. The foundation of special organizations, such as the Royal Society, social movements and religious groups, was only a staging post for the grand plan of uniting religion, science and the arts into a universal philosophy for the enlightenment of the human race.

A very important aspect of the work of the secret societies has always been the ultimate unification of the world religions. This aim was based on the restoration of the pre-Christian Mystery Tradition, which had been persecuted by the early Church and forced to go underground in medieval Europe, and the recognition that all religions had originated in a universal spirituality referred to as the Perennial Philosophy, the Primordial Tradition or the Ancient Wisdom. The mystical beliefs of the secret societies were, and indeed are, based on the Hermetic maxim 'As above-so below' which teaches that the natural world is a material reflection of the spiritual. It forms the esoteric basis for the Ancient Egyptian Mysteries, Gnosticism, Esoteric Christianity, the Cabbala, the Hermetic tradition, alchemy and societies such as the Templars, Freemasons and Rosicrucians. The occult doctrines of geomancy, alchemy, astrology and sexual magic taught by these secret societies were used as symbolic metaphors illustrating the progression of the individual from material darkness to the spiritual light of understanding.

We have traced how the political philosophy of the secret societies developed in the twentieth century but how did these esoteric teachings express themselves in the mass consciousness? Secret societies such as the Rosicrucians have very seldom exposed their inner activities to the public gaze, preferring to work within established occult organizations which, because of their elitist structure, have concealed their real work from the gaze and criticism of the profane. In rare instances these esoteric teachings have been presented by an initiate to the public in a way which has made them accessible to the average person. A classic example of this was the foundation of the Theosophical Society in 1875 by Madame Helena Blavatsky. The formation of this group seems to have been a deliberate act by the Great White Brotherhood to establish the occult tradition in materialistic European society and to unite the spiritual beliefs of East and West.

Another initiate of the secret societies who was instrumental in the spread of their esoteric teachings in the early part of the twentieth century was Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). He had been a member of the German Theosophical Society and had connections with various Masonic and Rosicrucian groups. He spent some years as the secretary of the German Theosophical Society and had extensive contacts with Annie Besant, the left-wing activist who had replaced Madame Blavatsky as the leader of the TS. In 1909 Steiner separated from the Theosophical Society, declaring that he was opposed to the policy which had become popular in Theosophical circles in regard to the emergence of a new Messiah. Steiner's work was preeminently Christ-centered, and he strongly held that Christ incarnated only once as described in the New Testament. Because of the new direction the Theosophical Society was taking, Steiner resigned to form a new occult group called the Anthroposophical Society.

Steiner began to tour Europe lecturing on his theories about the spiritual value of art and alternative education which seem to have been deeply rooted in Rosicrucian tradition even though he had given them a modern gloss. In common with the medieval Masons, Steiner believed that the new spiritual impulse he felt flowing through the world had to be expressed through the medium of radical architecture. This led him to design an ultra-modern building at Basle in Switzerland to house the headquarters of his new occult fraternity. His unconventional ideas on educating children based on self-expression and artistic skills were crystallized in the founding of special Steiner schools which still flourish today. At the end of the First World War Steiner was briefly involved in politics when, being sympathetic to the world government concept, he advocated a solution to the problems of central Europe based on ideas of liberty, fraternity, equality and freedom which seem to have been based on Masonic and Rosicrucian teachings. He also promoted a vision of human development and evolution which drew its inspiration from neo-Manichean doctrines based on the eternal struggle between the powers of darkness and the forces of light. These teachings however were largely eclipsed by his ideas in the fields of organic farming, alternative medicine, the spirituality of art and the education of young children, where he brought together the latest scientific research with ancient occult techniques to provide a unique solution to many social problems.



*Symbol of the Cabalistic Order of the Rosy Cross*

It is significant that many of Steiner's ideas have been accepted and adopted by followers of the modern New Age movement which arose in the early 1970s but had its spiritual roots in the counter-culture of the 1960s. Today it has become fashionable to regard the Sixties as a wasted period of permissive self-indulgence which spawned our present social problems of drug abuse, political extremism and sexual immorality. Such a view is a simplistic one which ignores the fact that the period represents one of the most important influxes of spiritual energy ever experienced by Westernized society.

On one level it was a time of change and social upheaval when young people threw aside the moral shackles imposed by convention and elected to follow a radically different lifestyle to that of their parents. This new way of living embraced self-sufficiency, vegetarian diets, psychedelic drugs, astrology, radical politics, pacifism, free love, rock music, bizarre clothes and a spiritual devotion to exotic forms of religion based on Eastern mysticism and Western paganism.

It is difficult because of the fragmented nature of the counter-culture to identify clearly the esoteric sources which were at work behind the scenes or to pinpoint any actual involvement by the inheritors of the Rosicrucian and Masonic traditions. However the Sixties movement brought into public consciousness many of the symbols and beliefs of the occult tradition which became generally accepted as a natural part of daily life. The concepts, philosophies and ideals which arose from this important historical period were deeply influenced by more traditional esoteric beliefs and they were later to be taken on board by the New Age movement of the 1970s and 1980s.

Central to the beliefs of the new spirituality is the imminent dawning of the Aquarian Age. According to occult tradition every 2,000 years the world enters a new Zodiacal Age. The Piscean Age began with the birth of Jesus and was dominated by Christianity as the most influential world religion. The beginning of a new Zodiacal Age provides us with a unique chance to accept the eternal truths of the Ancient Wisdom in a new form. This changeover period between the Piscean and the Aquarian Ages is an important one because it is the first time in recorded history that our species has had the ability to commit global genocide and to destroy the planet by either a nuclear holocaust or an ecological disaster.

This changeover period is, as we can see from the daily events recorded in the mass media, a time of confusion, apprehension and extremism on a planetary scale. Dark forces are manifesting in the world, symbolized by international terrorism, famine, ultra-materialism, dictatorship and religious fanaticism. Such manifestations are to be expected because, according to occult belief, the new waves of spiritual energy which flow through the planet at these changeover periods meet with resistance from the old energies which are the psychic leftovers from the dying age.

The Aquarian impulse which motivated the Sixties generation encompassed an idealistic, if romantic, vision of a

Utopian society based on love and peace. War would be eliminated by common consent and all countries would unite in a non-political planetary brotherhood of nations. In this idealistic society every individual would have the right to worship whatever God (or gods) they chose and there would be complete freedom and equality between the sexes. It was a dream which would have been instantly recognized by sixteenth-century Rosicrucians such as Sir Francis Bacon and the Grand Masters of the Masonic lodges who influenced the American and French Revolutions.

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Many renegade elements have attempted to use the secret societies as a cover for their own power games and some of these have worn the masks of initiates. The legitimate efforts by the secret societies and occult fraternities to advance social progress and eradicate ignorance have often been grossly misrepresented by prejudiced observers who had their own reasons for wanting these efforts to end in failure. In our study of the hidden events which have shaped history we have not ignored these negative aspects. They provide an invaluable, if depressing, insight into these human minds who work for the downfall of civilization. However, the reader can be assured that even in the crisis torn 1980s initiates of the Great White Brotherhood are still working behind the scenes, even if their existence is not recognized or is even denied by those who have no knowledge of their activities and little awareness of the spiritual reality beyond the physical world.