

Proofs of a Conspiracy: Against All The Religions and Governments Of Europe, Carried On In The Secret Meetings of Freemasons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies.

John Robison

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"A candidate for reception into one of the highest orders after having heard many threatenings denounced against all who should betray the secrets of the order, was conducted to a place where he saw the dead bodies of several who were said to have suffered for their treachery. He then saw his own brother tied hand and foot, begging his mercy and intercession. He was informed that this person was about to suffer the punishment due for this offense, and that it was reserved for him (the candidate) to be the instrument of this just vengeance, and that this gave him the opportunity of manifesting that he was completely devoted to the order. It being observed that his countenance gave the signs of inward horror he was told, that in order to spare his feelings, a bandage should be put over his eyes. A dagger was put into his right hand, and being hoodwinked, his left hand was laid on the palpitating heart of the criminal, and he was ordered to strike. He instantly obeyed; and when the bandage was taken from his eyes, he saw it was a lamb he had stabbed."

"Proofs of a Conspiracy" was written by John Robison, a Scottish professor, to warn Britain and other kingdoms that the forces which toppled the French monarchy and started The Terror were still active. In his book, Robison traced the story of the 1776 founding of the Bavarian Illuminati by Adam Weishaupt, a professor at Ingolstadt and the suppression of the order by the royal and church authorities of Bavaria in 1785. The Illuminists went underground all over Europe and used existing Masonic lodges or set up their own as a cover for their activities. In Paris, the Duc d'Orleans headed the Illuminist front called the Grand Orient Lodge, his base to conspire against the ruling House of Bourbon. The English and Scottish lodges were generally apolitical amd many worked actively to keep out Illuminists as insincere applicants, but Robison maintained that some continental lodges remained hotbeds of revolutionary plotting, and therefore dangerous, at the time he wrote. Robison was a contemporary and collaborator with James Watt (with whom he worked on an early steam car), contributor to the 1797 Encylopedia Britannica, professor of philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, and inventor of the siren. Although Robison was very much an advocate of science and rationalism, he became an ardent monarchist later in life due to his disillusionment with the French Revolution. In "Proofs of a Conspiracy," Robison laid the groundwork for modern conspiracy theorists by implicating the Bavarian Illuminati as responsible for the excesses of the French Revolution. The Bavarian Illuminati had an inner core of true believers, who secretly held radical atheist, anti-monarchist and possibly proto-feminist views, at that time considered beyond the pale. They recruited by infiltrating the numerous (and otherwise benign) Freemasonic groups which were active at the time on the continent. Today, the Illuminati have today become a byword for a secret society which hoodwinks its junior members and puppet-masters society at large-a reputation which is in no little part due to Robison's book.

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