Fraternal Ties in Nationalist Eyes: the Fate of Freemasonry in the Age of European Nationalism

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Fraternal Ties in Nationalist Eyes:
The Fate of Freemasonry in the Age of European Nationalism

Thesis
by
DANIEL PATTEN BENNETT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
The University of North Georgia
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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To anyone I might have forgotten who read, critiqued, offered advice, or listened,

Thank you.
ABSTRACT

Europe’s twentieth century history is filled with stories of minorities, social groups, and institutions facing persecution at the hands of authoritarian, fascist, or nationalist governments. Freemasons, though not usually widely analyzed outside of Masonic research bodies, were one of many groups which faced this onslaught of persecution. Though there have been many reasons proffered for this persecution—support for democratic or republican ideals, Jewish references in Masonic rituals, freethinking attitudes within the Lodge itself—this thesis shows a different side of the story. This thesis demonstrates through a comparative analysis of a number of countries and a case study examining Nazi Germany itself, that in fact what aroused suspicions regarding Freemasons in the minds of European nationalist demagogues more than anything else was the alleged, and in many cases real, internationalist outlook and cosmopolitan attitude of many Lodges in Europe at the time. Most held an idealistic view of what the Masonic Fraternity as a whole could bring to a world recently wracked and torn by war and bloodshed: a fraternal union of all humanity without reference to race, color, creed, or national origin. This internationalist outlook made Freemasons threatening to right-wing nationalist European governments. An institution that put the needs of humanity as a whole before the needs of the state and national glory, was not a welcome institution in many of the affected countries during this period. Therefore, for many, Freemasons formed both a potential and a real “fifth column” which placed them in the crosshairs of many governments of twentieth century Europe. Masons themselves paid a heavy price, losing their Lodges, their possessions, and ultimately their lives. What these governments ultimately failed to extract from many of them though, was their integrity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>3WK</td>
<td>Grosse Nationalmutterloge Zu den drei Weltkugeln</td>
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<tr>
<td>A&amp;ASR</td>
<td>Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERR</td>
<td>Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Freimaurerorden (i.e. GLL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FzaS</td>
<td>Freimaurerbund zur aufgehended Sonne</td>
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<td>GLL</td>
<td>Grosse Landesloge der Freimaurer von Deutschland</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFRC</td>
<td>Law for the Repression of Freemasonry and Communists</td>
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<tr>
<td>LPR</td>
<td>Law of Political Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSDAP</td>
<td>Nationalsocialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei</td>
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<td>RSHA</td>
<td>Reichsicherheitshauptamt</td>
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<td>RYZF</td>
<td>Grossloge von Preussen, gennant (Royal York) Zur Freundschaft</td>
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<td>SA</td>
<td>Sturmabteilung</td>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>Sicherheitsdienst</td>
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<td>SGvD</td>
<td>Symbolische Grossloge von Deutschland</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On January 26, 2016, news broke of a foiled terrorist attack on a Masonic building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The planned attack on the Humphrey Scottish Rite Masonic Center by Samy Mohamed Hamzeh was thwarted by FBI informants and undercover agents posing as sympathetic accomplices and weapons dealers, respectively. Hamzeh had initially wanted to attack Israelis in the West Bank, but opted instead for an attack on the Masonic Center. After taking a tour of the building to scout out the area, his plan was to “commit a mass shooting intended to kill dozens of people” which he hoped would set off broader clashes worldwide. The plan was for the three-man team to first kill the receptionist and then after posting a watch, enter the Lodge room and “spray everyone in the room.” His goal was to massacre everyone and anyone possible within the Lodge rooms, but he had anticipated killing at least thirty people.

When questioned about his motives, his response was quite telling. Hamzeh stated that “They are all Masonic; they are playing with the world like a game, man, and we are like asses, we don't know what is going on, these are the ones who are fighting, these are the ones that need to be killed, not the Shi'iat, because these are the ones who are against us, these are the ones who are making living for us like hell.”

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Two points of note regarding this news item should stand out. One is that to Hamzeh, an attack on the Masonic Center which had been part of the Milwaukee community since the mid-1800s served as a comparable substitute for attacks on Israelis themselves. The second is Hamzah’s belief that Freemasons in Milwaukee—and by association Masons everywhere—exerted control of events half a world away, thus “playing the world like a game.” Hamzah truly believed that in striking out against Freemasons, he could thus gain retribution for attacks on Sunni Muslims while possibly triggering a larger battle against Masonic “forces” or the forces they “controlled.” Of course, Hamzah did not generate these notions in a vacuum, nor was (or is) he alone in his belief of a “worldwide Masonic conspiracy.” For centuries, fringe commentators have blamed Freemasons for a plethora of world problems, but what is startling is the development of a mainstream belief in Masonic conspiracies which began in the 1800s and is currently experiencing a revival. Some have even begun to revive the belief in the Illuminati and other “secret societies” like the Freemasons in an attempt to “explain the unexplainable” in current and past world events.

However, as with many historical rumors, these myths and conspiracy theories are not new. In fact, they represent a very long mythical tradition which stretches back at least as far as the French Revolution. Throughout history, many anti-Masonic authors for myriad reasons have posited that a vast Masonic conspiracy existed to control the world, and believers and adherents have sought to use these myths to achieve various ends. Through these conspiracy theories, Freemasons became “implicated” in various plots and schemes to overthrow “throne and crown,” but only in the last three centuries have Freemasons been linked with Jews and Communists, transforming anti-Masonic conspiracy theories into
“international” conspiracies. These changes emanated out of a corpus of European myth-making and scapegoating in the years between the French Revolution and World War One. These myths further coagulated into a more coherent and standardized mythology following the First World War of 1914-18, and reached far wider audiences as literacy and mass communication technologies gave these ideas far greater reach than ever before. These myths were also employed productively by the new far-right anti-communist political movements that greatly expanded across Europe following the Russian Revolutions of 1917 and the creation of Bolshevik Russia between 1918 and 1921. By the 1930s, those in power in authoritarian European states acted on such myths and openly attacked and attempted to wipe out Masonic institutions and communities in Spain, France, Italy, Germany, and other European countries.

Throughout history, since its origins, Freemasonry has frequently been an object of both elite and popular suspicion, suppression, anxiety and scandal. In a worldwide context, there are very few places in which the Masonic community did not, at some point, find itself under fire from anti-Masonic movements within either the populace, or from government, or sometimes a combination of both. Even the United States, an Enlightenment state founded by some of the most prominent Masons of the era, developed its own anti-Masonry movement which led in time to the establishment of the first official third party of United States politics: the Anti-Mason party which was created around the furor of the Morgan Affair of 1826.2

2 Tindall, George Brown, and David E. Shi, "The Jacksonian Impulse,” In America: A Narrative History, Brief 6th ed. Vol. 1 (New York, New York: Norton), 2004, 333. The Morgan Affair centered on the disappearance of William Morgan after he threatened to expose Masonic secrets in writing. His disappearance was blamed on Masons who had supposedly murdered him to keep their secrets from being broadcast to the world. The Anti-Mason party emerged initially as a single-issue party but then broadened their political
Examples of repression have never been isolated within a single historical period and context, but at the opening of the twentieth century and alongside the rise of virulent nationalism on the world stage, the Fraternity found itself in a tenuous position in many places. In Europe, with the establishment of authoritarian dictatorships across the continent in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, European Freemasonry was subjected to new threats and challenges, many of which no one—most of all the Fraternity itself—would or could have anticipated. Soon, Masonic lodges across Europe were dissolved and their possessions seized. Masons in these countries found themselves subject to persecution, discrimination, interrogation, imprisonment, and even death at the hands of authoritarian governments and supportive populations. The question of why these violent actions occurred has been asked many times and various answers have been offered. Some scholars such as Paul Bessel and L.D. Cooper suggest that it was the Fraternity’s democratic nature that threatened authoritarian nationalists, while others such as Ellic Howe posit the penchant of many at the time to believe in the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy,” and still others believe it occurred due to the organizations secretive nature and its perceived elitist character.

This research project began with an exploration of the topic of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany, initially focused on the emergence of the “Forget-Me-Not” lapel pins that have

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platform planks to include other issues. Several Anti-Masons were elected to positions in state legislatures and the party also gained some governorships. The party’s ranks included such men as Millard Fillmore, William Wirt, Thaddeus Stevens, and John Quincy Adams.

3 The term “Fraternity” as it will be used in this thesis, derives from the Latin frater or “brother” as in a fraternal order or organization, society, or club composed of mainly men organized around some religious, philosophical, or civic- secular purpose. In this context, when the term “Fraternity” is used, it is specifically meant in context as a substitute for “Freemasonry,” “the Masonic Institution” or “Organization” or “the Masonic Fraternity.”

over the decades become associated with Masonic recognition during the time of suppression by the Nazi regime. However, from a cursory reading of the scholarly work advanced in this area the evidentiary historical basis for this association remains very weak and had largely been mythologized as a result of the propaganda surrounding the return of the Masonic institution to Germany after the end of the Second World War. In a brief reading analyzing this connection, this researcher ran across a single-line discussion of the “Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany,” the only Lodge to actively resist Hitler and the Nazi regime during World War Two. A little more digging produced more evidence that revealed a fascinating history and a deep backstory. In short, in the midst of the national crackdown, this Lodge resisted National Socialism and found a way to preserve the proud history and traditions of the German Masonic Fraternity while the storm of Nazism passed. Founded at Hamburg in 1930 under the leadership of Dr. Leopold Müffelmann, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany proved a staunch defender of Freemasonry against the ideology of the Nazi state and their fellow travelers. Although it would only exist within the history of German Freemasonry for a period of less than three years before resolving to go dormant, the Lodge and its leadership in this brief time defiantly published its fair share of anti-Nazi rhetoric. In fact, the main publishing organ of the Grand Lodge, Die alten Pfichten (The old Charges) would carry several stern declarations against National Socialism, mostly penned by Müffelmann himself.

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The most fascinating aspect of this story is that the last German Grand Lodge to be organized and the only Lodge to actively resist Hitler and the Nazis would be one of the first to return to Europe after the tumult of National Socialism and World War Two. This Lodge successfully preserved almost three hundred years of German Freemasonic tradition and culture. The desire of this Grand Lodge to resist change, to refuse to succumb to the whims of the Third Reich, and to preserve the values and philosophy of German Masonic institutions—even to the point of having members arrested and interrogated and instituting a self-imposed exile to Palestine—illustrates how far Leo Müffelmann and the members of the Symbolic Grand Lodge were willing to go to preserve their noble institution. Tragically, the price for this defiance would be high; Müffelmann would pay with his life, as would many other members of the German and European Masonic Fraternity as relatively unknown and understudied victims of Nazi repression and genocidal violence.

Earlier research focused on explaining how these developments took place and worked themselves out within the context of Nazi Germany, and surveyed the rise of the Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy myths and the increasing persecution by Nazi officials and their sympathizers following World War One. This research detailed just how much, and the manners in which, the Symbolic Grand Lodge and its Grand Master Leo Müffelmann resisted Nazi persecution and examined the extent to which the maneuverings of the Symbolic Grand Lodge helped to preserve German Freemasonry. It ended by explaining the nature of the return of the exiled Lodges to Germany and their role in the re-establishment of Freemasonry in Germany.8

This study produced some answers and a remarkable story to tell, but also left some larger questions regarding the key—or possibly changing—motives behind the attacks on Freemasonry unanswered. Although the anti-Masonic movements which appeared in several countries can be examined singularly at the turn of the century, Germany presents an especially valuable case study for these interactions because of the unique nature of the Fraternity in that country. Freemasonry was maligned and linked to Judaism by Adolf Hitler and many within the Nazi government, as it was also in other countries at the time such as Nationalist Spain under Francisco Franco. Hitler himself in Mein Kampf stated that Freemasonry was allied with Jewish interests in an attempt for world domination. To thwart this “conspiracy”, in 1933 Masonic Lodges across Germany were closed down, their possessions seized, their assets liquidated, and their leaders imprisoned or sent to concentration camps. Hitler would not budge from his ultimate goal of eliminating Freemasonry from his areas of control and in the process, would destroy a proud history and culture that had existed in Germany since 1733.

However, what also makes Germany unique is that for some time after the Nazi takeover Masons remained able to negotiate their presence in the Reich. As the suppression began in 1933, many Grand Lodges, though not all—as there were several “Grand” bodies that existed simultaneously in Germany at this time—gave public support to Hitler, both as an act of self-preservation but also as a true indication of their beliefs in the emerging

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9 “To strengthen his [the Jew’s] political position he tries to tear down the racial and civil barriers which for a time continue to restrain him at every step. To this end he fights with all the tenacity innate in him for religious tolerance—and in Freemasonry, which has succumbed to him completely, he has an excellent instrument with which to fight for his aims and put them across. The governing circles and the higher strata of the political and economic bourgeoisie are brought into his nets by the strings of Freemasonry, and never need to suspect what is happening.” Hitler, Adolf, Mein Kampf (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company), 2001, 315-320.
Nazi German ultra-nationalist state. Furthermore, later in the war Hitler changed his protocol for the admission of former Freemasons into various parts of the Nazi state machinery. This lapse in time, along with the existence and survival of evidence detailing numerous and differing voices within the Masonic fraternity under German Nazism allow a glimpse of what might possibly account for all suppression of the organization in Europe—with some information coming in the diaries, and eyewitness reports of Masons themselves between 1933 and 1945. In Germany therefore, scholars have had the opportunity to view Masonic persecution and its intricacies over a longer period of time in comparison with other countries such as Italy, France, and Spain, where the elimination of the Fraternity was short, swift, and total. Several questions emanate from this evidence; was the Masonic institution truly beleaguered because of some terse connection with the “Jewish” portions of the Old Testament, and did Hitler and his associates truly believe in a Judeo-Masonic cabal intent upon crushing the German nation? Or was there some other, perhaps a deeper reason or reasons for the destruction of the Masonic institutions in Germany and the occupied territories? Furthermore, what do these interactions tell us about a paranoid and authoritarian state apparatus bent on control, and its fear of citizen-based and private fraternal organizations that function beyond its purview? What can we learn today from these interactions between a private, voluntary, benevolent civic community organization and the state, and what are the contemporary lessons this past offers? The long history of German persecution of Freemasonry allows us to answer some of these deeper questions, and by analyzing the case of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany, even shed some light on what exactly concerned Hitler and the Nazis so much about the Masonic institution, and their other self-identified “enemies” more generally.
Some scholarship on these topics already exists; however, the majority of the research on the subject has remained compartmentalized and confined within the Masonic community itself. Within this community, a very large, vibrant, and burgeoning group of Masonic scholars is currently engaged in researching a wide plethora of historical topics and questions. These “internal” investigations and analyses are truly exemplary and the research that this study draws on displays a very high standard of scholarly and methodological integrity, separating the myths of the “Romantic” school from the historical development of the institution. However, this research is valuable to many more groups than just Freemasons themselves. The time has come to close this gap between Masonic and external historiography, widen our analytical lens and reassess the motives of both the Nazi regime and the German Freemasons themselves to get a clearer picture of what was happening amid the complexities of the rise of Nazism and other nationalist organizations during this tumultuous time.

The recent interest in the Fraternity following the publication of widely-read works of fiction shows that the general public does still have an interest in the organization and its history, however real or imagined. Even today, many governments and citizenry are

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10 The “Romantic” school of Freemasonic history looks for the geneses of the Masonic institution in its forms and ceremonies and “believes that Masonic legends, symbolism, and circumstantial evidence” point to origins which are to be found in “Solomon’s Temple, the Tower of Babel, the medieval Knights Templar, the Hermeticists and/or Rosicrucians, the Essenes…the ancient Egyptians, and any number of the ancient mystery religions and/or schools.” Arturo De Hoyos, *The Scottish Rite Ritual: Monitor and Guide* (Washington, DC: The Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction, 2010), 77.

still leery of the Masonic affiliations of civil servants and other government officials, and often question their allegiances either publicly or through *ad hominem* attacks on social media and online. Furthermore, when most people today think of victims of Nazi persecution and brutality, most overlook the persecution suffered by the Freemasons as they do not represent or resemble a racial, ethnic or social “identity” group within themselves and as such have been largely written out of the scholarship of the victims of the Third Reich. Alarmingly, a quick internet search reveals that many of the same propaganda pieces, misinformation, and general use of blurred facts and “fake news” that was used to attack Freemasons in the Nazi era are still being proffered today around the world as “proof” of an imminent worldwide Judeo-Masonic conspiracy.12

Given these realities, the time has come for a scholarly reassessment of the motives, actions, and outcomes of the persecution suffered by the German and wider European Masonic fraternity during the mid-twentieth century. By examining the motives and actions of perpetrators, those who out of self-preservationist motives tried to allay the fears of the Nazis and cozy up to the regime, and those who courageously resisted the Nazi assaults, our knowledge of these events and their wider consequences increases. It is time to critically measure up and assess the high ideals maintained by the organization and those who strove to preserve them in the face of a burgeoning storm of death and destruction,

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and also acknowledge that others, for various reasons, turned away from these ideals. It is time to assess why, in 2016, Samy Hamzah could proffer a worldview in which a charitable organization could be linked to Israel and a conspiracy for world domination, and what this means for the Masonic Fraternity and other civic, non-state fraternal organizations as we move on through the increasingly nationalist twenty-first century.
CHAPTER 2
HISTORIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW AND HISTORICAL ARGUMENTS

The study of Masonic institutions within the wider field and sub-fields of European history and European nationalist and authoritarian movements has largely been confined to specialist Masonic in-house research bodies, and until now has not received much attention within the wider academic world. Unfortunately, the bulk of source materials for the examination of this relationship between authoritarian regimes and the Masonic organization in Europe during the twentieth century are mostly found in overseas archives.\textsuperscript{13} Regardless, a series of resources can be accessed in the United States and used to make preliminary assessments. For example, in the area of primary sources, especially when discussing the beginnings of the suppression in Germany, this study utilizes contemporary accounts of those within the international Masonic community and their impressions—some gained first-hand—of the situation within Europe. Additionally, there exists a large volume of primary source material from within the Transactions of the Supreme Council and its official publication \textit{The New Age} magazine.\textsuperscript{14} The New Age is

\textsuperscript{13} Archives include those such as the Library and Museum of Freemasonry at the United Grand Lodge of England in London. Specific archives housing documents related to the suppression of Freemasonry can be found in the French National Archives while others after their collection by the RSHA were captured by the Russians and moved to the Russian State Military Archives in Moscow. A number of these documents have been returned to their rightful states and owners, but many remain there.

\textsuperscript{14} The Supreme Council—full title The Supreme Council (Mother Council of the World) of the Inspectors General Knights Commander of the House of the Temple of Solomon of the Thirty-third Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America—was the first Scottish Rite governing body to be founded in 1801, in Charleston, South Carolina. It is from this Supreme Council that the remainder of the Supreme Councils throughout the world derive their authority. In the Southern Jurisdiction, the Supreme Council consists of thirty-three members presided over by the Grand Commander. There exist “Sovereign Grand Inspectors General” (S.G.I.G.) that presides over his individual “Orient” or State. The various Supreme Councils and Sovereign Grand Commanders throughout the world maintain contact with one another and offer advice, support, and counsel in the maintenance of Scottish Rite Freemasonry.
unique in that it has the largest circulation of any Masonic magazine and in a number of letters to the editor during the period of persecution various historical actors discussed and commented on historical events in the affected areas on the continent as they transpired.  

The majority of this account however, draws from a mass of exemplary secondary research produced since the end of World War Two. By taking a fresh look at these resources and teasing out the subtext that exists just below the surface of the narratives, this thesis offers a fresh perspective on a subject long ignored by academia.

The historiography of the institution of Freemasonry as a fraternal organization goes back almost as far as the beginnings of the society itself. What is certain is that within the Masonic fraternity, historicist tendencies have been present from these beginnings, as certain members within the group tried to create a mythical history that purported to stretch back eons into the past.

The very earliest written histories of Freemasonry made clear that there was a concerted effort to link this Enlightenment-founded institution with the succession of generations that had come before it, so that the Fraternity and its ceremonies were perceived and understood to have passed from patriarch to patriarch in one continuous line. This “Romantic” school of Masonic historiography is best evidenced in the writings of Dr.

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James Anderson, Albert Mackey, and others who wanted to link King Solomon, Moses, Noah, and in some cases Adam himself to the Fraternity, while other writers later linked the Freemasons with the medieval Knights Templar. One can see this penchant for the blending of myth, historical fact, historical legend, and sincere historicizing ambition in some of Masonic history’s earliest scholarly works.

The oldest manuscripts in existence that provide a historical narrative of the organization are the Regius and Cooke Manuscripts, which first appeared in 1390 and 1450, respectively. These manuscripts contain some of the first mentions of the geometry of Euclid, the term “masonry,” as well as language relating to a “Worshipful Master” and “the craft.” The Regius Poem ends with a statement that Euclid traveled through Egypt and other “diverse lands” teaching and explains that this is therefore how Freemasonry made its way to England and the English-speaking world.

Shortly after the founding of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, Dr. James Anderson was commissioned to create a constitution and “charges” or rules and regulations for the organization. This work, entitled *Constitutions of the Free-Masons in the year of masonry 5723*, was published in 1723 and subsequently revised in 1738. Within this book of “dos” and “don’ts,” and comprising almost half of the work, is the first “official”

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18 The year 5723 represents the Masonic dating system of *Anno Lucis* or “In the Year of Light” which is determined by adding four thousand years to the Gregorian calendar year.
narrative record of Masonic history. It also appears that Anderson was influenced by the various Masonic manuscripts such as the Cooke and Regius manuscripts circulating at the time.

Anderson instructs that new members after their admission to the Fraternity are to be read this lengthy history which traces Masonry or Geometry—terms which Anderson and others in Masonic history equate as one and the same—from Adam and his offspring all the way down through Noah and his sons, through the building of the Tower of Babel, after which Masonry, according to Anderson’s legendary account, spread to the far reaches of the Earth and among all peoples. From the Israelites working on the pyramids in Egypt—Moses being the Grand Master of Masons at that time—to the Tabernacle in the wilderness of the Exodus and eventually to the time of King Solomon himself, all of the great characters in the Old Testament or Abrahamic pantheon, Anderson transformed into Masons, all well-skilled in the “Royal Art” of Freemasonry. Anderson tracked the history of Freemasonry down through the building of King Solomon’s Temple, after which Freemasonry spreads to Babylon, Greece, Asia, and Africa where many great men of history are all found to be—or at least suspected or rumored to have been—Masons.

Anderson eventually brings his history through the building of the Second Temple, the Grecian eras and up to the time of the Roman Empire, during which he integrates the school of Vitruvian architecture into his story and explains the dispersion of Freemasonry throughout the Roman Empire and thus into the far reaches of Gaul (France) and the British Isles. Waves of war and destruction separated by periods of peace and progress mark Anderson’s history of Freemasonry up to the time of King Athelstan, who became a great patron of the Masons in England and after whom all of the reigning kings and queens of
England employ, protect, and patronize Masons throughout their kingdoms. Anderson’s history is largely mythical, but still remains one of the prime examples of early Masonic narrative history and historical consciousness. Furthermore, it illustrates what the early modern Freemasons thought not only of themselves, but also those that came before them, and how their fraternity connected to the European and Western civilizational narrative tradition.

This foundational narrative proved remarkably durable; many Masonic historians could be consulted regarding the origins and past of the institution, however many authors such as William Preston, Albert G. Mackey, Chevalier de Ramsay, and others—although very scholarly in the manner with which they went about researching the history of Freemasonry—still fell into the habit of repeating and reinforcing the various “Romantic” legends and myths associated with the organization’s origins and development.19

To gain a basic understanding of the history of Freemasonry free from all the mythical and mystical baggage which characterized earlier histories, researchers need to turn to J.G. Findel’s *History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day*.20 Published by the German Mason Gottfried Joseph Gabriel Findel as *Geschichte der Freimaurerei von der Zeit ihres Entstehens bis auf die Gegenwart* in 1861, the work was subsequently translated into English in 1865 and a second edition appeared in 1869. Findel previously authored a history of German Literature and was the editor of the German

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Masonic periodical *Die Bauhütte*, (The Lodge) which gained him many contacts throughout the Masonic world. He was thus able to write a history of the Masonic organization spanning many countries by utilizing primary documents provided to him through the world’s numerous Grand Lodges in addition to the secondary surveys mentioned earlier.

Findel breaks down his work into four parts, each within a particular time period defined by various developments within the organization. Findel provides an excellent general historiography of the organization and of the various historians and their theses regarding the origins of the institution. Findel does not reach back into the mists of time—or even to the British Isles—but rather situated the origins of the organization in the Roman architectural colleges, which evolved into the German *steinmetzen* (stonemason) groups of the medieval period. It is to these organizations that Findel believes the English Freemasons are indebted for their organization. He explains that he believes its symbols were expounded upon by the more learned members of these groups thereby making the organization more intellectual and allegorical and therefore mystical. Findel concludes part one with a thorough examination of the various old Masonic charters and constitutions in existence at that time, categorizing them chronologically and summing up their main points of import. After this thorough introduction, Findel turns to an examination of the various legends of the early history of the organization and also includes an assessment of the early building fraternities of Germany, England, and Scotland.

Findel’s second section covers the development of Freemasonry in the various European states with special emphasis on the countries of England, Ireland, Scotland, France and Germany in the years following the foundation of the Grand Lodge of England.
in 1717. The author addresses the various crises in the early years of the organization, including the schism between the “Moderns” and the “Ancients” and the appearance and proliferation of the “high degrees” in England and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{21} Findel also provides brief sketches of the organization of Freemasonry in other continental countries such as Denmark, Russia, Spain, Portugal, and America.

Findel’s assessment of this second period of development of the Masonic organization is less than positive, fraught as it was with disruptions and disagreements within the organization as to the purposes and direction of the fraternity. Furthermore, as Findel explains, these schismatic tendencies and grandiose innovations later spread throughout the continent, in his opinion further adding to the chaotic nature of this period of Masonic organization as it struggled to expand. Findel thus looks backward, to the early form of the fraternity, in which the simplistic and unpretentious was the rule and not the exception, and which he believed was a prerequisite for the reform, defense, and continued growth of the organization as a whole.

Before moving away from the general “origin” type histories of the organization as a whole, it is worth mentioning David Stevenson’s \textit{The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710} which appeared in 1988, if only for its efforts to shift the beginnings of the fraternity of Freemasons to the West of London and one century prior to its purported establishment in 1717.\textsuperscript{22} Stevenson, Emeritus Professor of Scottish History at the University of St. Andrews and author of many works on Scottish history and the

\textsuperscript{21} The “Modern,” “Ancient” split in English Freemasonry occurred over numerous topics including the inner culture and politics of the Masonic fraternity as it developed. The schism was resolved in 1813 with the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England.

Scottish Freemasons, argues that the development of “speculative” Freemasonry emerged in concert with the “operative” Lodges of the 1600s. Furthermore, he produces evidence that the esoterically-linked side of the organization existed long before the foundation of the Grand Lodge of England. Utilizing a vast number of primary resources, Stevenson is able to explain and detail the proliferation of stone mason lodges through the “Schaw Statutes” written by the King’s Master of Works William Schaw in 1598.

According to Stevenson, the mystical and esoteric portions of what would become known as the “speculative” Freemasonry of modern times developed in tandem with the increasing importance and prestige of the “operative” stonemason guilds. Most significant is that Stevenson provides links—sometimes admittedly thin even according to the author—between the Old “Kilwinning” Charges, and those traits which characterize the modern institution such as Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, and other mystically-tinged worldviews via thinkers such as Giordano Bruno and other Medieval and Renaissance philosophers. These undercurrents merged into a culture with mystical propensities that attracted a large swathe of the learned and accomplished in Scottish society prior to the Scottish Enlightenment.

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23 “Operative” masonry meant the use of stonemason’s tools for the construction of an edifice. “Speculative” masonry alludes to the metaphorical and allegorical use of these tools to improve the moral and spiritual nature of man.

24 Neoplatonism was a strain of Platonic philosophy which began with The Enneads of Plotinus and is engaged in an examination of the world and all its parts in relation to the Godhead and its various emanations including the demiurge or creator god. Neoplatonism greatly influenced early Christian, Islamic, and Jewish thought including those who examined the Jewish mystical practices of the Kabbalah. Hermeticism refers to supposed esoteric philosophical and religious writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus. Such writings proposed a Prisca theologia or first religion or true theology which was handed down by God to man and has been corrupted over time. Hermeticism and Neoplatonism enjoyed a revival during the Renaissance and influenced thinkers such as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino in their understanding of the Perennial philosophy which held that all religions formed some part of the ultimate truth of God.
With the establishment of Quatour Coronati Lodge No. 2076 (*QCCC*) in London in 1884 and its demand for evidence-based research, the caliber of and quality of the scholarship concerning Masonic history increased exponentially. This organization represented the exertions and labors of the “authentic” or “historic” school of Masonic research, which began to gain ground during this time. In the first publication of the Lodge’s transactions, *Ars Quatour Coronatorum (AQC)*, in 1887 the Lodge set out its primary devotions and eight “main objects” of purpose:

1. To provide a centre [sic] and bond of union for Masonic Students.
2. To attract intelligent masons to its meetings, in order to inbue [sic] them with a love for masonic research.
3. To submit the discoveries or conclusions of students to the judgment and criticism of their fellows by means of papers read in Lodge.
4. To submit these communications and the discussions arising thereon to the general body of the Craft by publishing, at proper intervals, the Transactions of the Lodge in its entirety.
5. To reprint scarce and valuable works on Freemasonry, and to publish Manuscripts, etc.
6. To make the English-speaking Craft acquainted with the progress of masonic study abroad, by translations (in whole or part) of foreign works.
7. To tabulate concisely, in the printed Transactions of the Lodge, the progress of the Craft throughout the world.
8. To acquire permanent premises and form a masonic library and museum.\(^{25}\)

From the establishment of the *QCCC* a group of Masonic scholars and researchers emerged whose primary goal was to preserve and narrate the history of the fraternity from its earliest documentable stages up to their present time. As a result, many compilations of authentic

Masonic history were produced at this time and remain until today as the first stop for Masonic history research and scholarship.

Thus, scholars looking for a basic historical encyclopedic work on the history of worldwide Freemasonry should turn to the massive four-volume *Library of Freemasonry* by Robert Freke Gould. Gould provides a wonderful overview of Freemasonry, region by region and country by country. Gould was an eminent Masonic scholar, prolific writer, and a member of this authentic school of Masonic research. He was not only a founding member of the Quatuor Coronati Lodge of Masonic Research but also served as the head of that body in 1887.

Following upon the heels of Findel, Gould presents the reader with a much more scholarly and critical view of the history of the organization and all of its appendant organizations including the Knights Templar, Scottish Rite, and Shrine. The value of Gould’s work lies in its sheer breadth of scope, volume of information, and accessibility. Gould also provides more information regarding the development of the fraternity post-Findel in a global context. As such, Gould works well as a source for basic times, dates, and developments within the international history of the organization in the early twentieth century.

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27 Appendant bodies of Freemasonry are usually defined as those Rites, bodies, or organizations which exist in addition to, but are not attached to, the first three degrees of the Craft or Blue Lodge. These may be organizations which one can petition after receiving the Third Degree or these may be honorary or research bodies. In any case, many of these organizations have their own, independent organizing body for structure and oversight purposes.
For more specific and detailed information on the beginnings of Freemasonry in certain countries or regions, the AQC also holds a wealth of factual information. This content includes Ladislas de Malczovich’s “A Sketch of the Earlier history of Masonry in Austria and Hungary,” a work which spanned five volumes of the transactions of AQC, running in part in every issue from volume four in 1891 to volume nine in 1896. The volume nine publication of 1896 also holds an excellent examination of the Masonic fraternity in Germany from its earliest documented origins up to the founding of some of the later Lodges before 1896.

In his article, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” Gotthelf Greiner examines the foundations of the majority of the Lodges in Germany and also their hierarchical structure and specific organizational customs of German Freemasonry. Carl Wiebe’s response to Greiner’s overview of the German institution of Freemasonry, “Notes on German Freemasonry” included within the same volume, specifically examines the controversies surrounding the first Grand Lodge to be planted on German soil and again harkens back to the role of English Freemasonry in the foundations of almost all Grand Lodge bodies on the European continent.

Moving past the early period to the Interwar period of the 1930s yields a wealth of primary source material, including documents and images which give researchers a taste of the critical public view of Freemasonry which encompasses much of the negative propaganda produced by the National Socialist German government and others within and

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28 Ladislas de Malczovich, “A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary,” *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 4-9 (1891-1896).
30 Carl Wiebe, "Notes on German Freemasonry,” *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 9 (1896).
outside the country. Hitler repeated much of this propaganda in his work *Mein Kampf*, which he used to rail against all those he believed to be responsible for the condition in which Germany found itself in at the time.\(^{31}\) Of his many scapegoats, Freemasonry and individual Masons themselves provided prominent targets. These materials include sources such as the Reichstag Fire Decree of February 28, 1933 and the Enabling Act of March 24, 1933, used by the Nazi government to suppress various organizations which it viewed as politically hostile.\(^{32}\) The most accessible source for much of this material is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website, which features digitized visual and documentary primary sources related to the persecution of Freemasonry before and during the Holocaust. The majority of this primary source material indicates a large-scale effort by the Nazis and their supporters to scandalize and discredit the Masonic organization due to its supposed “worldwide” links.\(^{33}\)

However, due to these international links — especially from the globe-spanning Scottish Rite — organizations within the United States possessed a working knowledge about the events and issues surrounding the suppression of the organization in Nazi-controlled Germany. Much of what was occurring from 1933 onward until communication became limited due to the onset of the war in 1939 was transmitted through letters and other contacts between Masonic institutions and Masons themselves. As early as 1931, status reports were presented at the bi-annual meetings of the Scottish Rite Supreme

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Council in Washington D.C. Some of these status reports were then reprinted within the pages of The Scottish Rite’s monthly journal *The New Age*. In addition to these reports, *The New Age* regularly ran letters to the editor from members worldwide while also reporting on world political events and publishing articles centering on the conditions of European Freemasonry at the time. Many of these early reports mention the confused condition of Freemasonry within Germany, though much of this discussion centers on the issue of official recognition. However, as time passed the leadership within the organization was able to glean more information from “between the lines” on the actual situation in Germany. Reports of the occurrences in Germany also circulated within American popular media. Thus interested researchers will find that in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* of 1934 two articles pronouncing the closure of Lodges in Germany are published and a popular magazine *The American Mercury* declares the “annihilation” of Freemasonry in Germany in 1941. Most of these accounts do not venture much further than interpreting the suppression of Freemasonry within various interwar European authoritarian states as acts directed against either the supposed “Jewish” aspects of Masonic rituals—taking a cue

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from German propaganda—or their support of and commitment to maintaining democratic principles then under assault.

In the immediate postwar period, several works produced by both the Masonic academic communities appeared that attempted to narrate the trials and persecutions of European Masons in the early and middle parts of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, much of this early postwar scholarship again simply focused on critical analysis of aspects of the development of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy proffered at the time as an explanation for prewar and wartime persecution.

One typical example of this approach is Ray V. Denslow’s work *Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere* published in 1954. Denslow was in a particularly fortunate position in regard to the state of German Freemasonry after the war as he led two delegations, one in 1945 and one in 1949 on behalf of the Masonic Service Association, specifically to report on the condition of the fraternity in those countries and their struggle to reorganize themselves after 1945.

As volume two of a modern worldwide history of the Fraternity, *Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere* does not cover the ancient origins of the organization but instead works to give readers a short history of Freemasonry in each country, issues encountered during this history, and its status at the time of publication in the eyes of the public and government. Again, as with most of the histories mentioned thus far, Denslow’s work does not offer much in the way of analysis of the issues at hand beyond a mere presentation of facts and occurrences within the fraternity.

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In 1959 W. Irvine West presented a paper before the Society of Blue Friars—an honorary Masonic research organization for distinguished Masonic authors—which detailed the role that the persecution of Freemasonry played in the trials of Nazi party officials at Nuremberg. “Freemasonry and the Nuremberg Trials: A Study of Nazi Persecution” focused on and reproduced specific sections of the records of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg including various trial transcripts, interviews, and other evidence. These records clearly demonstrate that looting or confiscation was discussed within high Nazi circles and illustrate that an anti-Masonic conspiracy was advanced at many levels of the Nazi party. Nazi party officials would push these measures as part of a program which was aimed at destroying perceived “enemies of the regime.”

The first scholarly study of the Jewish-Freemason “connection” is Jacob Katz’s *Jews and Freemasons in Europe* published in English for the first time in 1970 after being translated from Hebrew by Leonard Oschry. Originally published in 1968, Katz, a professor of sociology at the University of Jerusalem, utilized various Masonic archives in the Netherlands, Germany, France, and elsewhere to examine how Jews were received into the Fraternity in the wider context of their entry into European society following emancipation. Both of these trends—the emancipation of the Jews in Europe and the foundation of a new organization devoted to tolerance—emerged out of the Enlightenment. However, what Katz makes clear is that there were many contradictions between the

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philosophy espoused by Masonic groups on the continent and their actions toward Jews who desired to become members of the Fraternity.

For a time during the nineteenth century, Jews were permitted to petition and join Masonic Lodges, particularly in Britain, France, and the Netherlands. Katz blames reformist tendencies within the organization for pushing out members of different faiths as an attempt by the Masonic institution to demonstrate itself as friendly toward the Catholic Church. As such, many Jews formed their own fraternal groups both within and outside of the context of Freemasonry as doors into the institution began to close with the rise of Christian revisionism and exclusivity within the organization. These effects occurred again later in the century as a facet of the rise of European nativist nationalism and anti-Semitism.

The most important feature of Katz’s work however is its major focus on the historical study of Jewish populations and Lodges in Germany. Additionally, Katz provides an excellent examination of the “Judeo-Masonic conspiracy” narrative, including its origins and proliferation in various countries, culminating in its use by the Nazis as a tool to persecute and liquidate Masonic organizations as they were conflated together within the Third Reich’s larger “crusade” against Jews.

Published the same year in the Ars Quatour Coronatorum was Leo Maris’ study of English Masonic associations, “circles,” and “Lodges of Instruction” in Germany between the years of 1921-1929 and 1945-1971, with the intervening period covering the years in which Freemasonry was banned within Germany and including World War Two. English Freemasonry existed in the country prior to the British occupation of Germany immediately after the end of World War One and helped to establish the organization on the continent. Maris deals with this time period in another work, published in the Transactions of the
Manchester Association for Masonic Research in 1972. The majority of this work, entitled “English Freemasonry in Germany,” dealt with the founding and activities of the various English Masonic organizations meeting in Germany, utilizing the minutes kept and various communications sent by these groups during the British occupations after both world wars.39 Maris examined a majority of these organizations individually and provided a brief account of the history and details surrounding each. Maris also detailed the struggles that these groups faced in terms of their ever-changing membership and financial states in their attempts to carry on some sense of organizational “normalcy.” Most valuable is Maris’ depiction of the immediate post-World War Two period in which German Masonic organizations attempted to reorganize themselves under the auspices of the Allied Military Governments and in coordination with the various British, American, and Canadian Lodges working on foreign soil. Maris also examines much of the negotiations, maneuvering, and jurisdictional conflicts which arose from the formation of the United Grand Lodges of Germany.

During the 1980s several assessments and reassessments of Freemasonry during the Nazi era were published by preeminent Masonic historians in the journal of the Quatour Coronati Lodge of Research, the Ars Quatour Coronatorum. These works included, really for the first time, some analyses of the events and actions of various actors within Germany during the Third Reich.

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The first of these more analytical works, Ellic Howe’s “The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5,” appeared in the 1982 volume of the journal.\textsuperscript{40} Within the Masonic scholarly community, Howe is known for his work regarding The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and other occult and fringe groups that originated within various Masonic circles in England. Howe is also noted for his account of British subversive military actions against the Germans during World War Two.\textsuperscript{41}

Howe’s primary evidence derived from a collection of circulars reproduced and housed in the Grand Lodge of England’s library. These letters, from one of the oldest “Christian” Lodges in Germany, revealed to Howe that the “Jewish questions” and related rhetoric of anti-Semitism of the period had already begun to disintegrate the unity of German Freemasonry long before the Nazis rose to power. In “The Collapse of German Freemasonry,” Howe argued that in as much as the Nazis actively worked to destroy German Freemasonry, German Freemasons themselves assisted in their demise in various ways, so that when Freemasonry was officially outlawed in 1935, the organization itself had been moribund for quite some time. Howe attributes this process to structural factors, including the existence of a great number of Grand Lodge bodies within Germany at the time, and their failure to collectively realize the threat posed to them by the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” narrative, not just in terms of recruitment of new membership, but

\textsuperscript{40} Ellic Howe, “The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5,” \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 95 (1982).

also in the wider domestic political environment. In his view, the inability of the German Grand Lodge bodies to present a united front against the threat of Nazi stigmatization and persecution only assisted the Third Reich’s plans of “divide and conquer” toward one of their greatest political adversaries.

Citing Katz, Howe retraced the history of the “Judeo-Masonic conspiracy” narrative from its origins in France during the nineteenth century and follows its dissemination across the border into Germany in 1850 before outlining the reasons behind the confused situation of Germany’s numerous Grand Lodges during the interwar era. He picks up the threads of the conspiracy post-World War One and follows it through the various anti-Masonic publications and legislation it produced before assessing the feelings of the German National Socialist Party toward Freemasonry before its ascent to power in 1933. Howe examined the various persecutions suffered by the German Masonic Lodges and details the attempts of the old “Christian” Grand Lodges to reform themselves in a manner consistent with the tenor of National Socialist anti-Masonic rhetoric. He also examined the appeals leveled at the Nazi party by various Masonic Grand bodies within Germany in their attempts to preserve their Masonic associations and at the same time become members of the party. Howe provides an excellent account of the negotiations which occurred between the old “Christian” Grand Lodges and the Nazi state over their continued existence, the declining membership rolls of all Lodges in the face of increasing party membership, and their eventual destruction at the hands of the Third Reich. Howe’s work remains the first in English to sufficiently tease out some of the specific details of the demise of the organization in Germany and his study led to further works of reassessment in the 1980s.
In 1983 Alain Bernheim published “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland” (“Investigations on the History of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in Germany”) which specifically examined the history of one of the last Masonic bodies organized in Germany before the rise of Hitler. Bernheim, while a young boy in France, was arrested and placed in a concentration camp by the Germans and would go on to study music at the Paris Conservatory of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music. However, Bernheim later turned his attention toward the study of Masonic history and dedicated his time fully to that endeavor. For his work, Bernheim has been honored as one of the most renowned Masonic historians in Europe and regularly publishes work in a wide array of Masonic journals.

In “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland” Bernheim traced the history of the Supreme Council for the Scottish Rite in Germany after a cursory explanation of the fragmentation of the German Grand bodies which he argued took place due to the earlier, fragmented state of the country prior to imperial unification. Bernheim’s work features several important narratives including those related to early attempts at creating an “international” union of Freemasons and also the founding of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite in Germany—arguably one of the most internationally connected institutions of German...

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42 Alain Bernheim, “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland.”

43 Bernheim has been honored in both 1986 and 1993 with the Norman Spencer Award by the Masonic Research Lodge Quatour Coronati N° 2076. In 1997, He was awarded by the Philalethes Society, a US Masonic research body with the Certificate of Literature. In 2001 the Scottish Rite Research Society awarded Bernheim with the Albert Gallatin Mackey Scholar Award and was made a Fellow of the Research Society and in 2007 he was elected to membership in the Society of Blue Friars, yet another Masonic research body.
Freemasonry at the time. Bernheim also analyzed the schisms leading up to the founding of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany (SGLvD) in 1930 and its subsequent dissolution of the organization in June 1933 using letters, memoranda, and other communications produced by the Lodge members and leadership of the time. Bernheim brings to the fore documents relating to the incarceration of the head of the organization in a German concentration camp and his release in November 1933, which are valuable today for their ability to provide information relating to the negotiations between members of the organization and the Nazis. Finally, Bernheim’s work dealt with the reestablishment of the Scottish Rite in Germany after 1945, and detailed the status of the organization up to the eve of German reunification.

The following year saw the publication of J.A. Jowett’s examination of one of the more liberal Grand Lodges in Germany—and the immediate precursor to the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany—“The Masonic Union of the Rising Sun.”[^44] Jowett examined several of the issues revolving around this Grand Lodge’s foundation and subsequent decline, including issues related to intermasonic recognition and membership losses, the effects of the dissolving of Masonry by the Nazis, and the war period. Jowett brought his work full circle in discussing the attempted revival of the Union in the post-war years and its struggle to integrate itself into the newly formed postwar Grand Lodge of Germany. Published in the *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* in 1984, Jowett’s short publication gives readers a view into a Grand Lodge which harbored a deeply humanitarian and liberal *modus operandi* which proved attractive to the men who would become members of the organization. Jowett employed various circulars and the Union’s publications to give the

reader a sense of the high intellectual tenor of the organization, which manifested itself not only in its regular meetings, but also its goals within the larger German community—Masonic and public.

Published in the same volume of the *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* is Hans-Heinrich Solf’s study, “The Revival of Freemasonry in Post-war Germany,” which picks up where Ellic Howe’s work left off in 1982.45 Solf split his work into three parts; a history covering the time period before the outbreak of World War One, and the period between World War One, 1933 and the rise of the Nazis, and post-1933. Solf created this multi-part framework due to his assertion that to understand the situation Freemasonry found itself in with the rise of Hitler, one must start at the beginning. Using a small sampling of primary sources and previous studies both in the Quatour Coronati Lodge and outside scholarship, Solf attempted to bring the story of German Masonic disunity and patterns of disagreement from the early stages of its history through to the decades of the 1960s and 1970s.

Solf analyzed the history of the multitude of Grand Lodges of different allegiances in Germany and their various attempts to unite under one banner following German unification in 1871. Much of the disagreement during these attempts, Solf explains, resulted from the admission of non-Christians into the subordinate Lodges in Germany. Solf details the organization of several of these “unions” and ends his first section with their disbandment, so that when one enters the second part of his work German Freemasonry is in disarray. Solf also outlined the foundations, organization, and membership levels, including subordinate Lodges under jurisdiction of all the various

Grand Lodge systems in Germany, and those outside of Germany proper. Solf then moved on to an examination of the revival of unifying movements within Germany in the post-1945 world, noting the formation of small working groups under the purview of occupational governments. Through various starts and stops and the attempts of the elder members to understand the radically-changed environment of the post-war era, Solf covered the formation of the United Grand Lodges of Germany in 1949.

Solf’s work then discussed the various attempts of the United Grand Lodges of Germany to obtain recognition abroad in the renewal that followed the war and the lead up to the enlargement and solidification of the United Grand Lodges of Germany in 1958 with the signing of the “Magna Charta.” Following unification Solf provides an account of the regulation of rituals within the union, and a discussion of the reformation of the Scottish Rite and formation of York Rite bodies in Germany, along with various other research Lodges and “splinter” groups within the Masonic world.

Interestingly enough, Solf ended his work with a discussion of the differences in the formation and spread of Freemasonry on the continent that made it wholly different from what developed in the British Isles. He posited that the plethora of side degrees and organizations that flourished without any overarching control led to a situation in which only after a purge of these elements and a reassertion of central control could unity within German Freemasonry be organized. Ultimately though, it would take two world wars and the near destruction of Europe to accomplish this.

46 The “Magna Charta” more properly known as the “Magna Charta of German Freemasons” was the organizing document which brought all German Freemasonry under one umbrella Grand Lodge known as “The United Grand Lodge of Germany” in 1958.
In terms of modern scholarship on the subject beginning in the 1990s, there has been much written on the subject of German Freemasonry, the internal relationships between the various Grand Lodges, and their relationships with the Nazis and Nazi era in general. Some scholars have simply analyzed the minutiae of interactions, while others analyzed them within the context of wider historical currents and events.

Paul Bessel, Masonic historian and past President of the Masonic Library and Museum Association, conducted much of this more recent research, and made it available in Masonic research journals and other in-house publications. Some of the Bessel’s work remains unpublished (though presented in some form on a website curated since 1994 by Bessel himself) but is widely available to the public. Bessel possesses a wide-ranging interest in Masonic topics but has also conducted a fair amount of research into the relationships between Freemasonry and Judaism along with other publications focusing on Freemasonry and authoritarian regimes.

Bessel’s work on Freemasonry and Judaism closely follows in the footsteps of the work produced by Katz in the 1970s, but Bessel went further in drawing parallels between the fundamental teachings of Judaism and their similarity to Masonic values and virtues.47 In his publications regarding Freemasonry and authoritarian governments, Bessel, working from a large catalogue of secondary sources, argued that the persecutions exacted upon the Fraternity from these regimes was due to the organization’s exposition of democratic ideals, political freedom, and toleration of all peoples and all beliefs.48

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It was not until the eve of the millennium that an academic work appeared regarding the history of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite—an organization whose philosophy and virtues played such an integral role in the establishment of Masonic resistance to the Third Reich. Published in 1999, William Fox’s *Lodge of the Double-Headed Eagle* used an enormous mass of primary materials to tell the history of the Scottish rite in America through an institutional lens.⁴⁹ Thus Fox frames his history around the actions and responses of the leaders of this organization as it changed, grew, and responded to various challenges over the years between 1801 and 1995.

Fox traces the early history of Freemasonry beginning in Europe, covering the seminal Masonic thinkers and innovators of the time before transitioning to the North American continent and tracing its early Masonic history. He details the arrival of the precursor to the Scottish rite in the Americas, its establishment in 1801, and reform and proliferation through the personage of Albert Pike. Fox’s study then charts the years and changes in leadership from the death of Pike in 1891 through the early twentieth century, the Depression, World War Two, into the post-War 1950s and 1960s, all the way into the 1990s with the most recent Grand Commander of that time, C. Fred Kleinknecht. Central to Fox’s work are the connections he sees between events in the outside world and their effects and ramifications for the Scottish Rite as a whole.

Although Fox tends to focus much more on the Western Hemisphere in his account, his discussion of the times when the Scottish Rite in America reached out across the globe—especially during the Second World War and in its aftermath—is vital in

demonstrating how involved in and how aware the organization actually was of world events. Where the New Age publication reported on the public view of the events of the time period as they happened, Fox’s assessment of the leadership of John H. Cowles and his attempts to connect with and aid members of the organization persecuted by fascist regimes provides vast insight into the inner workings and concerns of the leadership of the Scottish Rite during this period.

In the 2000s, another burst of scholarship appeared, much of which, while rehashing the familiar facts presented in the previous three decades of research, began more closely and critically analyzing interactions between ordinary Germans, German Freemasons, and the Third Reich. Due to much of this scholarship—produced as various archives were opened and records released—Germans themselves would come to grips with their involvement in the Nazi regime and German Freemasons would prove no exception.

In 2004, Ralf Melzer would bring this previously hidden collusion to the fore in his article “In the Eye of the Hurricane: German Freemasonry in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich” published in the compilation of essays for Freemasonry in Context: History, Ritual, Controversy edited by Arturo de Hoyos and S. Brent Morris. The editors of this work pulled articles from the journal of The Scottish Rite Research Society Heredom and arranged them into three broad sections indicated in the title. Melzer’s work falls under the “History” portion of the work, between articles examining the role of women in Masonic affairs and Freemasonry’s role in the development of service-oriented clubs. Melzer, who

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completed his doctoral work in Germany on the history of Freemasonry in the Weimar years and the Third Reich, places the Fraternity into the events and context surrounding Germany’s loss of World War One and closely links events within German political history with those of the various German Grand Lodges.

As with most other writers, Melzer begins his work with an assessment of the numerous Grand Lodge bodies, finding that the inability of Masons to present a united front against the accusations and scapegoating that were directed against them beginning in the immediate post-World War One years led to much of the damage connected to later persecution. Melzer used Lodge documents and publications to demonstrate how Masonic Lodges were not immune to the emerging popular trends of a mythological German past which accompanied the rise of nationalism within Europe. The author provides other evidence that Lodges attempted to align themselves with the regime politically and socially in order to obtain protection from the Nazi government. This failed, and ultimately many Freemasons had thus implicated themselves through these attempts at conformity.

Later, Melzer contends, Masons in Germany attempted to disentangle themselves from this history by presenting themselves—much like many in Germany—as victims of the Nazi regime. Indeed they were; however, their involvement in the regime would not be so easily glossed over. As Alain Bernheim has shown in his article “‘The Blue Forget-Me-Not:’ Another Side of the Story,” German Masons in the post-War years attempted to present themselves not as accomplices of Nazi terror, but as wholly innocent of Nazi crimes.51 Although there were some Freemasons who did resist—Bernheim’s research

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indicates less than five percent of all Masons in Germany—the story of the Blue Forget-Me-Not and the story of popular Masonic resistance to the regime later become part of the legend of the rebirth of Freemasonry in Germany. Bernheim challenges this myth, indicating that the historical accuracy of the legend is difficult to prove and possibly completely untrue due to the emerging evidence that indicated the exact opposite.

Bernheim however did not let the story rest there and returned in 2008 to again critically analyze the relationship between Freemasons and the Nazi regime, focusing however on those Grand Lodges which did not fit the mold of the obsequious Masons who attempted to align themselves with fascism and authoritarianism. In “German Freemasonry and Its Attitudes Toward the Nazi Regime,” Berheim laments the persecution of those in the Scottish Rite of Germany and the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany—who resisted Nazi influence and suffered the consequences—and takes to task those Grand Lodges which followed the Nazi party’s dictates and attempted to nationalize themselves.52 The primary value of Bernheim’s articles is his extensive use of primary source documents, thus providing American historians with valuable and accessible secondary content.53

In 2011, Robert L.D. Cooper, curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library, produced a history of anti-Masonic thought or Masoniphobia. *The Red Triangle*—a title which references the badge given to political prisoners inside Nazi concentration camps—is part history and part personal memoir.54 In part the work responds to attacks

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leveled against Freemasons in Scotland in the wake of the Dunblane Primary shootings in 1996.\textsuperscript{55} Cooper’s work charts the history of anti-Masonic movements from their beginnings to the present, emphasizing those times in which anti-Masonic fervor reached a fever pitch. The most valuable portions of the work however, consist of Cooper’s careful elucidation of the creation of the \textit{Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion}—along with its reproduction in English in the appendix—from its earliest beginnings through to the Nazi era and its use by the Third Reich as justification for the persecution of both Jews and Freemasons. The work also contains a valuable bibliography and many images of anti-Masonic propaganda from several different countries.

Cooper first examines the history and prosecution of anti-Masonry in numerous European countries and thus tackles the political dimension of attacks on Freemasonry. In a following chapter he comments on the many religious-based arguments and objections to the Masonic organization. His concluding chapters on Masoniphobia in the modern era bring these themes forward in time, reflecting upon the media sensationalism and popular reaction to the murder of children and a teacher by Thomas Hamilton, a deranged man who was falsely dubbed a Freemason by several “experts” and the media in Great Britain.

Cooper uses Hamilton’s actions and other events to point to the fact that although many minorities have been protected in recent years from discrimination and slander, Masons have not. Furthermore, he contends, they continue to be made scapegoats for many events which the public struggles to understand. Cooper believes this misunderstanding

\textsuperscript{55} The Dunblane School Massacre was a mass shooting took place in 1996 at Dunblane Primary School near Stirlingshire, Scotland and is one of the largest mass shootings in Great Britain. The gunman, Thomas Hamilton, was able to kill sixteen children and one teacher before taking his own life. The outcry and debate over the massacre led to the passage of two firearms acts which reduced private gun rights and ownership in Great Britain.
springs from the apolitical and non-religious stance taken by Masons *qua* (in relation to) other Masons. As such, Masons appear easy targets, and are scapegoated for all sorts of purposes because they belong to no political faction nor any religious sect.

Christopher Thomas’ doctoral dissertation, produced at Texas A&M University in 2011, examines the history of Freemasonry during the Third Reich. Thomas provides a thorough historiography of the subject of Freemasons and Nazis, and also decries the lack of academic work completed on the subject. Using primary source documents from the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), the records of the SS, and Nazi party records, he argues that Freemasons caught up in the tumult of the Nazi period were able to distance themselves from their Masonic past because as members of a class of highly educated civil servants, businessmen, and other professionals, they proved able to negotiate their position in German society better than most other persecuted minorities. Furthermore, the men who made up the membership of the German Lodges were mostly identical in their political outlook, and influenced by the same inclinations as the majority of the German population at the time. Thomas contends that the Nazis struggled to define the problems associated with Freemasons in Germany because, he argues, they only despised the institution of Freemasonry and not individual Masons themselves. As such, many Freemasons were able not only to join the party but also occupy positions of leadership and even enter the SS.

In 2012 David Lewis presented a paper to the Lyceum Lodge of Research in South Africa which took a broader view of Masonic persecution by including those allied to the Nazi regime including Imperial Japan. Lewis argues in his paper “Freemasonry Under the

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56 Christopher Campbell Thomas, “Compass, Square, and Swastika. Freemasonry in the Third Reich” (PhD diss, Texas A&M University, 2011).
Nazis,” that not only did the Nazis and their allies attack Masonic organizations because of their beliefs in individual and social freedom, but because they in fact did represent an international fraternity without distinction between races or creeds.\(^5\) This philosophy of course conflicted with prevailing beliefs of the time, particularly the racist tenets of Nazism.

In 2014, Alain Bernheim reassessed the postwar return of German Grand Lodge unity within his article “United Grand Lodge and United Grand Lodges of Germany, 1946-1961.”\(^6\) In contrast to Solf, who argued that the proliferation of various Rites in Germany created issues for reunification, Bernheim argues that what took the German Grand Lodges so long to reunite was in fact the uncomfortable issue surrounding many Grand Lodges’ connections to Nazi atrocities through their interwar and wartime complicity with the regime.

What is clear from the abovementioned historiography is that while most researchers and writers—both academic and Masonic—have focused on Nazi persecution of Masonic organizations based on their supposed “Jewishness” or of their support of democratic ideals, while completely ignoring the connotations enmeshed in the language used in Nazi propaganda and official statements of persecution which point to much more subtle implications and more complicated narratives. Despite a lack of easy access to German language primary sources, this thesis aims to show that by breaking down and dissecting available secondary materials and utilizing the descriptions of various primary


sources which they include, an argument appears that what bothered the Nazis the most about Masonic organizations lay just below the surface of their pejorative depictions of the Masonic organization as a group of “artificial Jews.”

This thesis argues that at a time when “hypermationalist” sentiment ran rampant in Europe and elsewhere the explicitly “internationalist” and “globalist” perspective of many groups such as Freemasons garnered them negative attention and led to persecution during the twentieth century in a number of European countries including Germany. Masonic philosophy encouraged members to erase national borders and differences to create a “brotherhood of man,” uniting all into one common mass regardless of ethnicity, race, or nationality. This ideology of the common good of man stood in stark contrast to racist and xenophobic nationalism that swept to power in Spain, France, Italy, and Germany during the 1930s and 1940s. Many in these governments and their publics increasingly perceived these groups that harbored international connections as “fifth columnists” within a larger, nefarious international conspiracy that included Jews and Communists, and were thus inherently untrustworthy and more likely dangerous enemies. These perceived traits, rather than any rebellious deeds or actions, garnered them the most oppressive punishment. In a world suffused with paranoia and anxiety, perception overrode logic and reason, leading tragically to violence, persecution, and brutality.
CHAPTER 3
THE BEGINNINGS AND PROPAGATION OF EUROPEAN FREEMASONRY

Tracing the early history of the “speculative” branch of the Masonic institution requires a dose of imaginative speculation as researchers seek to disentangle fact from fable and to separate that which is legitimate from that which is legend. Many theories of the origins of Freemasonry attribute the rise of the sixteenth century Freemasons to the Egyptians, the Rosicrucians, the Templar Knights, or other fantastical antagonists, making the truth more plausible if only for its simplicity. Arturo De Hoyos contends that the term “Freemason,”

…in all its forms, ‘free mason,’ ‘free-mason,’ and ultimately ‘freemason,’ likely derives from one of two sources. The most substantive evidence supports the view that it referred to hewers and setters of *freestone*, ‘a fine-grained homogenous sandstone capable of being tooled in any direction.’

Thus, the term “free-mason” was a simple contraction of “free-stone-mason.” David Stevenson however argues that the term “freemason” was a loaded term that indicated a status, rank, or privilege conferred on a stonemason who had become “master” of his guild;

A man admitted to the privileged position of a master in a trade guild, or of a burgess in a town, was made ‘free’ of the guild or town, becoming a ‘freeman’ in

60 Ibid.
the sense of being free to enjoy certain rights, and from that to calling a fully qualified master mason a freeman mason or a freemason is only a small step.61 Most researchers agree that the modern Masonic Fraternity emerged with the founding of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. The resulting major questions revolve around exactly when the operative institution of stonemasons became institutionalized as a “gentleman’s organization.”

General research holds that as the operative Lodges—Lodges formed by guilds of stonemasons working on large edifices and public works—were coming to eminence in both Scotland and England in the 1600s certain men, possibly because of their privilege, wealth, or influence, were made part of the free-stone-mason Lodges as non-craftsman through a rite of “‘Accepcon,’” or “‘the Accepcion.’” It is possibly from this process that the term “Free and Accepted Masons” appeared.62 Some research points to this “Accepcon” as a rite of initiation which brought together both groups of “masons”—both operative and speculative.63 At this point only two existing fraternal degrees existed—that of Entered Apprentice and Fellow-craft—and later degrees, such as the Master Mason’s or Third Degree (3°), much less any other “high degrees,” did not exist.64 Regardless, the prestige

of Masonic association was such that for a payment of twenty shillings—forty shillings for “strangers”—non-craftsman could enter the organization as full members.65

The evidence that exists of these “gentleman masons” attending meetings of Masons in Scotland comes from the June 8, 1600 register of a convened meeting of the Lodge of Edinburgh by William Schaw in which the laird John Boswell of Auchinleck—an unlikely character to be an operative stonemason—“appended a mark to his signature that presumably is his mason mark.”66 Regarding his presence at the meeting, David Stevenson states that “as the existence of the lodges was largely a secret he would not have been admitted if he had not been an initiate.”67 This would have also applied to the other non-operative men present at the meeting such as the four notaries which were acting as clerks or secretaries for the lodge. As far as can be determined however, Scotland’s first “gentleman” mason without question was Sir Robert Moray, who was initiated into the Lodge of Edinburgh on May 20, 1641 along with Alexander Hamilton while they were serving in the army.68 Moray, a soldier, statesman, judge, spy, and philosopher would become one of the more philosophically inclined early Scottish Freemasons. These attributes of Moray along with the general “Three Estate” social stratification of Scottish society at the time made him quite unsuitable to prefer the company of stone-squarers, this again pointing to the fact that Freemasons Lodges were undergoing critical changes during this time. Moray adopted what he termed his “Mason Mark,” attributing to it a fair amount of symbolism and value “which [is] present in later freemasonry.”69 Evidence also exists

68 Ibid., 167.
69 Ibid., 169.
which seems to indicate that as early as 1652—and presumably earlier—that “[Presbyterian] ministers…had been Freemasons,” clearly indicating that those who were not working craftsmen were brought in to some form of association built upon the operative guilds.

In England, during the years 1620-21, certain groups of “Accepted Masons” met in a Lodge with the operative Masons of the London Company of Freemasons in Masons’ Hall. During those years “seven persons were received into the ‘Accepcon’ (i.e., the Acception) or Lodge…all of whom were already members of the Company.” 70 To Robert Gould these meetings were “sufficient to prove that the two bodies were distinct associations” even at this time. 71 Further proof of two distinct organizations exists in the case of Nicholas Stone, “who, though master of the [London] Company in 1633, and again in 1634, was not enrolled among the “Accepted Masons” of the Lodge, until 1639.” 72 Soon, other prominent Englishmen joined the organization. The great antiquarian, founder of the Royal Society, and Renaissance man in genere Elias Ashmole was initiated into speculative Freemasonry on October 16, 1646 at 4:30 pm at Warrington, in Lancashire “with Coll. Henry Mainwaring, of Karincham in Cheshire.” 73 Much of what we know, in fact, of the early speculative Masonic Lodges comes from the diary of Elias Ashmole. His diary states further “‘the names of those that were then of the Lodge’” who “were all presumably men of good social position, without a single operative mason belonging to their number.” 74 What is evident from these examples is that the admittance of these men

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71 Gould, A Concise History of Freemasonry, 240.
72 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 241.
in both Scotland and England illustrates that by the mid-seventeenth century the Masonic organization no longer maintained its essentially operative, craft-guild character and had begun to take on a more philosophical and esoteric dimension which attracted men who were so inclined to the organization.

After these developments, records indicate that by 1717 various groups of men began meeting in a number of places for the dispatch of various tasks such as business or initiations. Most of these early Lodges were apparently quite rudimentary and evidence suggests that the “Lodge” and its “furnishings” were simply drawn with chalk in the form of a diagram upon the floorboards of whichever location sufficed for the meeting place that particular evening. After initiations were completed, the diagram would then be washed off with a mop and bucket, and a table placed where the diagram had been. The Master of the Lodge and the Wardens and other members sat in their respective positions around the table. Later, this chalk or charcoal diagram would be replaced by more elaborate designs which were “sketched or painted upon canvas or other cloth; and eventually it was woven into carpets.”

Thus the basic outlines of the ritual and purpose of English Masonic Lodges had begun to take shape when on June 24, 1717—St. John the Baptist’s Day—at the urging of four London Lodges, the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster was formed. These Lodges, which met at the Goose and Gridiron Ale House, the Crown Ale House, the Apple Tree Tavern, and the Rummer and Grapes Tavern had met earlier that February and

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76 St. John the Baptist is one of the two patron saints of Freemasonry with the other being St. John the Evangelist. Masonic Lodges have observed these two Festivals since the earliest meetings of the organization.
established a Grand Lodge pro tempore. They now met to “[revive] the Quarterly Communications of the Officers of Lodges…to hold the annual Assembly and Feast [of St. John the Baptist], and then to choose a Grand Master among themselves.” Essentially fulfilling their oversight role as the “Premier Grand Lodge,” the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster, among other things, set about organizing a number of regulations for the government of the institution and the relationship of subordinate Lodges to the Grand Lodge. In 1724 the Grand Lodge under the direction of the Grand Master Charles Lennox, the Duke of Richmond, established a Committee of Charity which was used for the support of Brethren who had “met with reverses of fortune or become poor.” From this point, the Masonic institution “was now separated from Architecture, forming an Association having purely social aims, and therefore capable of spreading itself to all the quarters of the globe,” and spread it certainly did. Though it can be argued that some form of operative Freemasonry existed in most countries in Europe, this pattern of Grand Lodge formation began in England and then spread to the remainder of the British Isles. Masons in Ireland established their first Grand Lodge in Dublin in 1730 and Scotland organized their Grand Lodge at Edinburgh in 1736. By the 1730s, the Grand Lodge of England began to provide charters of organization to Lodges all across the globe and as the British Empire spread throughout the eighteenth century, Lodges would be “brought to Light” in the most distant

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78 Findel, History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2nd Germ. Ed., 137.
79 Ibid., 142.
80 Ibid., 138.
81 One could argue—as Stevenson has—that Scotland had a much longer organizational history than England or Ireland, just not Grand Lodge organization. Such an argument certainly has merit as subordinate Scottish Lodges still retain much of their independence in relation to the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Joseph G. Findel, History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2nd Germ. Ed. (London, 1869), Google Play Edition, 188 and 193.
reaches of the Empire, from the Americas, to India, and Australia, and New Zealand. Many of these Lodges later broke away from the Grand Lodge of England and organized themselves along nationalist lines, as the individual colonies gained their independence and obtained nationhood in their own right.

Once the Masonic organization had been established in England, it quickly spread through the remaining states and empires on the European continent through the travels of Masons themselves on business, military, or diplomatic missions. European Lodges were also organized and propagated by emissaries of various Grand Lodges sent for that specific purpose. From the British Isles, the Fraternity first found fertile ground in France and then expanded throughout the continent at various points between the middle of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

The establishment of Freemasonry in France is only a little more convoluted and steeped in mystery than that of the British Isles, however its development is of great importance when examining the blossoming of Masonic Degrees on the European Continent. One of the primary reasons for the difficult nature of tracing early French Masonic history is the lack of sources indicative of activity such as minute books or circulars from the Grand Lodge to its subordinate Lodges. For this reason, “the history of the first fifty years of French Freemasonry cannot be [anything other] than a series of possibilities, probabilities, surmises, and traditions.” Additionally, the history of Freemasonry in France is a story of establishment, development, and then innovation.
followed by a number of schisms and re-unifications over the key meanings and central purposes of the Fraternity.

From the accounts available to researchers, Freemasonry was introduced to France in any years between 1721 and 1732.\textsuperscript{83} One Masonic historian noted that no complete list of Lodges for France existed until the end of the eighteenth century, and as a result determining the precise establishment and trajectory of Freemasonry in France remains quite difficult.\textsuperscript{84} Findel cites a “historical notice” held by the Grand Lodge of France which alludes to the establishment of a Lodge in Paris in 1725 by a “Lord Derwentwater, squire of Maskelyne, a lord of Huguerty, and some other English noblemen” at Hurre’s Tavern based on the authority granted to them by a warrant dispensed from the Grand Lodge of England.\textsuperscript{85} This Lodge possibly spawned subordinate Lodges, including a Lodge d’Aumont (au Louis d’Argent) at Landelle’s Tavern on the Rue Bussy. L’Anglaise Lodge at Bordeaux was supposedly issued an English warrant in 1732 or 1746 and other Lodges were chartered including one at the castle of Charles Lennox, the Duke of Aubigny. English engraved lists mention King’s Head Lodge No. 90 in Paris as the only Lodge existing from 1730-1732, whereas a publication of the Grand Orient in 1788 claims five as extant in 1725-1730 including Louis d’Argent, d’Aumont Lodge (\textit{au Louis d’Argent?}), Bussy Lodge

\textsuperscript{83} Joseph G. Findel, \textit{History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Germ. Ed.} (London, 1869), Google Play Edition, 200. Robert Gould relates that one Lodge at Dunkirk when it affiliated with the Grand Orient (one of the organizing Grand bodies in France) in 1756, retroactively dated its year of constitution to 1721 and its origin of constitution to the Grand Lodge of England. Gould states that this was accepted though he doubts the sincerity of the claim. Robert Freke Gould, \textit{A Concise History of Freemasonry} (London: Gale and Polden, 1904), 137.


(also d’Argent which was on the Rue Bussy?) Parfait Union, and Bernouville. It would seem possible that at least three of these Lodges—Gould argues at least two, Louis d’Argent and Bussy, and possibly Derwentwater’s Lodge—were one and the same. In either event, these records illustrate that numerous Lodges in France were organized and convening at some point, with or without official permission or warrant to do so from another Grand body.

The situation of French Freemasonry in this period resulted from a lack of rigorous standards and regulations, which had not been implemented for subordinate Lodges by any Grand Lodge. This lack of standardization is evidenced by three sets of facts; that wide variations existed in the probationary period for advancement between the Apprentice and Master’s Degree, that there were an apparently large number of “incompetent members” occupying all sorts of various grades and degrees, and thirdly warrants of constitution could be sold and purchased. Records from several sources indicate that in 1736 a Lord Harnouester was elected as Grand Master of the Masons in France by four Paris Lodges. Surviving sources are on more stable ground—and there is some agreement on their reliability—when two years later in 1738 a newspaper advertisement announced “that the

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86 “King’s Head” was possibly the same Lodge as Louis d’Argent according Gould’s reasoning as Louis d’Argent lit. “Louis of Silver” he argues was a silver piece with an imprint of King Louis on its face. Robert Freke Gould, The History of Freemasonry (New York: J. Beacham, 1886), 137-138.


88 Gould argues again that this Harnouester is none other than Darwentwater—a corruption in pronunciation or transcription again which leaves us in the dark as to the true nature of who was organizing and meeting at this time and where. Robert Freke Gould, A Concise History of Freemasonry (London: Gale and Polden, 1904), 449. See Joseph G. Findel, History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2nd Germ. Ed. (London, 1869), Google Play Edition, 195. Robert Freke Gould, A Concise History of Freemasonry (London: Gale and Polden, 1904), 450. Robert Freke Gould, The History of Freemasonry (New York: J. Beacham, 1886), 139. All agree on the significance of this nobleman—whoever he was—being elected as Grand Master. Arguably though, this did not constitute the formation of a Grand Lodge per se.

By this point there was a strong sense in the French Masonic community at large that the excesses and “irregularities” of the previous periods had to be reined in, and thus from this point forward it is possible to consider that a Grand Lodge for France existed in some fashion. It would not be d’Antin, but his successor, Duke Louis of Bourbon, the Count of Clermont, elected by sixteen Lodges to be Grand Master on December 11, 1743, who would lead the clarion call for reform in the French Lodges. During Clermont’s time, the Grand Lodge of France became the *Grand Loge Anglaise de France* and published a French edition of laws and regulations for the government of the Fraternity totaling “twenty articles, nineteen of which were taken from the English Book of Constitutions of 1723 and 1738, [but] accommodated to the different circumstances of the French Lodges.”\footnote{Joseph G. Findel, *History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2nd Germ. Ed.* (London, 1869), Google Play Edition, 203. Robert Freke Gould, *The History of Freemasonry* (New York: J. Beacham, 1886), 208.}

The proliferation of the so-called *hautes grades* (high grade) was one of the main causes of the many schisms and changes in the governance structure within French Freemasonry. As a result, many Grand Lodges later formed and dissolved because of disagreements and factionalism within the French brotherhood. In short, the development of Degree Rituals and Grades beginning with the “Scotch Master” or Fourth Degree led to questions of legitimacy and power within French Freemasonry, as a group of “Fourth Degree Scotch Masons” or others could claim greater privilege and prestige over the simple...
“Third Degree Master Masons” which made up the *Grand Loge Anglaise de France*. Furthermore, these groups also often claimed rights to chartering not only new “High Degree” Lodges, but regular Craft Lodges (1°-3° Degrees) as well. Findel states

In this manner did these tares grow and flourish, and the high Degrees were the luckless result! The vivacious Frenchman gave but too willing an ear to such fantastic suggestions, and introduced them into the consecrated dominion of Freemasonry. The original three degrees, the nature of which they could not comprehend, no longer sufficed them…There were an abundance of ribands, signs, customs, and offices; this flattered their vanity, and [would] continue to do so as long as there [existed] persons weak enough and foolish enough to allow their money to be abstracted from their pockets.

The confusion that existed at the time within French Freemasonry—and within all the new Lodges, Consistories, Chapters, and Councils—forced the *Grand Loge Anglaise de France* to change its name and adopt a new set of regulations in 1755. Hoping to regain some central control and also quell the rampant creation of new degrees and orders associated with them, the Grand Lodge of France acknowledged the “Scottish” Degrees. Unfortunately, the plan backfired and even more systems cropped up containing ever more degrees and claiming to possess even more mysterious secrets. Divisions within these higher degree systems very quickly bled over into the Grand Lodge proceedings. The so-called *Empereurs d’Orient* (Emperors of the East) which drew its membership mainly from the nobility and political class continually fought with the *Chevaliers d’Orient* (Knights of

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91 Most of the development of “High Degree” Masonry is laid at the feet of The Chevalier de Ramsay and his obsession with linking Freemasonry with the Crusades and Knights Templar.


93 In an article written in the early 1970s, C.N. Bantham relates regarding this time period in French Masonic History that, “Almost overnight, France was deluged with all sorts of so-called Masonic High Grades, some of which involved elaborate paraphernalia, dazzling and attractive decorations, high-sounding titles such as 'Prince,' 'Emperor,' 'Knight,' and 'Priest’’ and that “It may have been difficult to believe, but more than 1,100 different Degrees have been traced, forming part of more than 100 different Rites. There were rites of 7 Degrees, then 10, 25, 33, 90, and finally one of 95 Degrees.” C.N. Batham, “Freemasonry in France,” *Transactions of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research* 62 (1972), 25.
the East) which was made up of mostly men from the middle classes. This led the Grand Lodge of France to issue a statement in 1766 “forbidding its Lodges [from] having anything to do with any high grades whatsoever.”94 The decree fell flat and a second Grand Lodge was momentarily formed—an incident which had occurred at least once before—and these two Grand Lodge bodies quarreled over legitimacy for a time. Eventually, the King issued a decree which forbade the Grand Lodge from meeting, and this would quell the derision coming from both sides for a short time. When the Count of Clermont died in 1771, two new rival Grand Lodges were established: the Grande Loge de France and the Grand Loge Nationale Française. Though both claimed to be the current manifestation of the original Grand Lodge of France, neither was clearly representative of its predecessor. Meanwhile, others almost immediately began working to revive a Grand Lodge body for France which would lead to the formation of the Grand Orient.95

Informal meetings were held shortly after the death of Clermont, and in late June a convocation of Masters of the Lodges of Paris convened with the intention of reviving the now defunct Grand Lodge. A new Grand Master was elected—one acceptable to both the regular French Lodges and the high degree Lodges, and in early August 1771 a Loge du Consiel which functioned as an advisory board was formed. Deputations were requested from Lodges and appendant bodies including the higher degrees in an attempt to fuse all Masonic bodies into one so that these bodies would be “ʻunited to the very respectable G.L. [Grand Lodge] to constitute with it one sole and inseparable body, uniting all Masonic knowledge and legislative power over all the degrees of Masonry under the title of

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Sovereign and very respectable Grand Lodge of France.” 96 Thus the higher degree bodies with all their confused amalgamation of degrees, but mainly the Sovereign Council of the Emperors of the East and West—Sublime Mother Scots Lodge, were brought under the control of the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, which was also empowered to “examine all grades, to bring them back to their original form, and to indicate their rank.” 97

The negotiations continued with various meetings of the Loge du Consiel throughout 1773, with continued squabbling between various parties including those representing Paris Lodges and those representing Provincial Lodges. Nonetheless, by the end of the year, the Grande Loge de France dissolved, and the Grande Lodge Nationale Française became the Grand Orient de France. The old Grand Lodge, though “officially” dissolved, continued to appoint officers proclaiming the Grand Orient an illegal organization and forbidding its members from visiting Lodges organized under the Grand Orient. As always, rivals arose and still new Masonic Rites were developed or imported from other countries and vied for French Masonic membership. The Grand Orient attempted to amalgamate as many of these Rites under the jurisdiction of the Grand Orient as possible, some more successfully than others. There would be over 900 Lodges in France by 1788, though it would be all for naught as the French Revolution and the subsequent Terror forced Lodges to close and Freemasons were led to the guillotine one by one. 98

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97 Ibid., 150.
98 C.N. Batham, “Freemasonry in France,” *Transactions of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research* 62 (1972), 26. It must be stated that most Freemasons in France were not executed for their Masonic affiliation *per se* but because Freemasonry in France at the time was largely confined to the upper classes and the Clergy of French society. Thus, the conspiratorial statement often made that “the Freemasons started the French Revolution” in itself is an odd and fallacious statement, as the French upper classes were the enemies of the Revolutionaries.
Despite these persecutions and violence, French Freemasonry reemerged during the reign of Napoleon under his protection. Two “grand” Masonic bodies existed in France at this time: one a solidified and cohesive Grand Orient, and the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, established in France in 1804.\footnote{C.N. Batham, “Freemasonry in France,” Transactions of the Manchester Association for Masonic Research 62 (1972), 31-32.} In 1877, the Grand Orient took actions which instituted a change in the philosophical purpose of the organization which still affect Freemasonry in France up to this day. Particularly, French Freemasonry would now take on a peculiarly politically revolutionary and humanistic flare and French Masons henceforth argued that “the basis of Freemasonry ‘is absolute liberty of Conscience and the solidarity of Humanity.’”\footnote{Ibid., 27.} This pronouncement generated important future ramifications for those who looked with disdain on French Freemasonry and its precepts. The Grand Orient lost recognition from a number of other Grand jurisdictions because of these changes. Therefore at this time, there existed no “regular” Masonic bodies in France, though there were three organizations—The Grand Orient, the Grande Loge de France, and the Supreme Council of France—who all simultaneously claimed to hold that title.

In 1913 one Lodge called the Centre des Amis broke away from the Grand Orient over its particularly anti-religious leanings and together with another Lodge, soon joined by a third, formed the Grand Loge Nationale Francaise. The new Grand Lodge was hastily granted recognition by the Grand Lodge of England as a regular body.

All three Grand Lodges experienced significant membership losses during World War One, though the Grand Orient remained the largest of the three Grand bodies. Though
it is hard to determine exact membership numbers for France based on English sources, Ray Denslow states that by 1927 the Grand Orient had twice as many members as the Grand Lodge of France and this is indicative of the general trend in French Freemasonry. However, Denslow does not provide any numerical data for this assertion, so his statements must be taken with a degree of caution. It can also be gleaned from Denslow’s work that the height of membership in both bodies was reached just prior to World War Two, with the Grand Lodge of France having a membership “between 20,000 and 30,000” with “twice that number in the Grand Orient.” Denslow also cites a report published by Charles E. Holmes which indicated that membership in the Grand Orient reached a peak of 40,000 at the outbreak of World War Two. That number would fall to 14,500 by 1948.

In Spain, Freemasonry emerged almost in tandem with the community in France. Once again, English expatriates provided the initial catalyst. Findel asserts that Lord Coleraine established the first Lodge in Gibraltar in 1727 and another in Madrid in 1728, others assert that it was Philip Wharton, the Duke of Wharton, who established the first Lodge in Madrid in 1728. The Wharton Lodge would be known as “the Lodge of the Lilies” and would be held in the French Hotel on the Via San Bernardo in Madrid and the Lodge would be presided over by Charles de Labelye. Roughly ten years later, the Grand

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101 Though large amounts of numerical membership data for France can be found in Daniel Ligou’s 2001 work, Histoire des Francs-Maçons en France, the book was not available for publication in the US. My numbers come from Ray Vaughn Denslow, Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere, (Trenton, Mo: n.p., 1954), 172.
103 Denslow, Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere, 175.
Master of England appointed Captain James Cummerford Provincial Grand Master for Andalusia. It wasn’t long thereafter that Pope Clement XII issued his *In Eminenti* Papal Bull which formally banned Catholics from becoming Freemasons. Philip V would yield to the Pope and would persecute Spanish Freemasons through the Inquisition and other measures. In 1767 the Gran Logia Espanola formed and separated itself from the Grand Lodge of England. The first Grand Master of the *Gran Logia Espanola* was the Count d’Aranda who served as Prime Minister under Charles III. This Grand Lodge would change its name to the *Grande Oriente Espanola*, adopting the French system of Masonry in 1780. Freemasonry would flourish in the country throughout the nineteenth century and a number of Prime Ministers featured among the Fraternity’s ranks. In 1808 with the abdication of Charles IV and his son Ferdinand VII in 1808, Joseph Bonaparte was appointed king of Spain by his brother Napoleon Bonaparte. Joseph had been acting as

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107 “In eminenti,” *Papal Encyclical*, July 07, 2017, accessed November 12, 2017, http://www.papalencyclicals.net/clem12/c12inemengl.htm. Pope Clement XII would issue the religious edict in response to the Jacobite-Hanoverian controversy in that some Lodges were Jacobite and mainly Catholic and others were Hanoverian and mainly Protestant. However, both “flavors” of Lodge admitted the opposite denomination and Hanoverian Lodges specifically admitted atheists. In order to remain outside of the political realm the Pope drafted the Bull in religious terms as being “depraved and perverted.”

108 Findel even relates the story of a Catholic monk “Torrubia” who infiltrated the Lodges, just to produce a list of Freemasons in the country and expose them to scandalous accusations before the Inquisition. As for Philip V, his persecution most likely emanated from his loyalties as a Catholic monarch in the Jacobite-Hanoverian rivalry in contemporary Europe. However, many monarchs of the time had grown suspicious of the Fraternity because of its secrecy. Some monarchs would regard the Lodge’s secrecy as a threat to their own security. Furthermore, the Papal Bull expressly called on the “secular arm” for assistance in aiding the Inquisition in its work and investigations. Joseph G. Findel, *History of Freemasonry from its Origin Down to the Present Day Tr. From the 2nd Germ. Ed.* (London, 1869), Google Play Edition, 347.


Grand Master of the Grand Orient since 1806 and would quickly move to end the Inquisition and the Spanish prohibition on Masonic meetings and Lodges in the country.\textsuperscript{112} The Grand Consistory for Spain was established sometime around 1809 subordinate to the Grand Orient of France and was then detached when de Grasse-Tilly organized a Supreme Council of the 33\textdegree{} for Spain and the Indies.\textsuperscript{113} This Supreme Council was then united with the National Grand Orient in 1870. This structure would remain in Spain until 1922 when the Grand Orient separated itself again from the Supreme Council for Spain. Thus, prior to World War Two, two Grand Lodges existed within the country: The Grand Orient of Spain and the Grand Lodge Espanola. The Grand Lodge Espanola became colloquially known as the Grand Lodge Cataluna, “because of its location in that part of Spain.”\textsuperscript{114} In contrast, the Grand Orient was headquartered in the capital of Madrid and held jurisdiction over seven Provincial Grand Lodges consisting of eighty-four Lodges which exercised control over twenty-seven Degrees and claimed approximately four thousand members to its ranks. In 1932 there was an attempt to unite the Grand Orient to the Grand Lodge, though because of opposition, this was never accomplished.\textsuperscript{115} As late as 1936, the Republican President of Spain, Diego Martinez Barrios, also served as Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Spain.\textsuperscript{116}

Freemasonry in Italy developed in much the same manner as in Germany, as Italy remained a fractured state until its unification in 1870. The first Italian Lodge was founded


\textsuperscript{113} A Consistory comes from the French Scottish Rite system and is able to confer the Degrees 4-32.

\textsuperscript{114} Denslow, Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere, 161.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 161-162

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 162.
in Florence in 1733 by Lord Charles Sackville, Earl of Middlesex. Other Lodges were chartered in such cities as Pisa, Milan, Padua, Venice, Turin, and one in Rome itself. However, in 1740 Clement XII issued his *In Eminenti* Papal Bull. The Bull was put into effect not only in the Papal States, but in Italy as a whole. Freemasonry was subjected to the Inquisition and Catholics who were accused or “outed” were threatened with excommunication or worse.\(^\text{117}\)

Even following the Papal Bull however, more Lodges appeared in various parts of the peninsula and many were suppressed by the Inquisition and forced to close. Some of these Lodges existed for a few decades, while others operated for only a couple of years before they were quashed. In the early 1800s Lodges again began to crop up in familiar places on the peninsula, with a Lodge formed again in Milan in 1801 and another Lodge reformed in Padua shortly thereafter. Most important to the history of Italian Freemasonry however, was the introduction of the Ancient and Accepted Rite from Paris in 1805 and from this Rite emerged the Rite of Misraim.\(^\text{118}\) Grand Orients on the French model also began to be established, with the Grand Orient of Naples founded in 1807 and was grafted to another in 1809. During this pre-national period, there existed the Grand Orient of Italy and the Grand Orient of Naples along with other Lodges in Italy which fell under the jurisdiction of the Grand Orient of France. By 1861 three Grand bodies had emerged and

\(^\text{118}\) The Rite of Misraim (later the Rite of Memphi-Misraim after the merger of the two Rites by Guispe Garibaldi into a ninety-seven Degree system) was a rather esoteric and heavily mystical Rite which had its beginnings in the High Egyptian Rite of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro (also known as Giuseppe Balsamo or Joseph Balsamo) in 1784. The Rite was organized after Cagliostro received some high degrees from Luigi d’Aquino and incorporated these degrees into the Rite which held ninety degrees. From the beginning it was viewed as a rather spurious Rite and once combined with the Rite of Memphi and transported to America, became increasingly spurious. It was eventually banned as Degrees and honors were most often bought and sold and not earned. Today, the Rite of Memphi-Misraim is controlled by the Grand College of Rites of the United States of America and is strictly controlled. The Degrees are never conferred on Masons, but are exemplified and published for scholarly research purposes only.
solidified in a divided Italy: The Grand Orient of Naples, The Grand Orient of Palermo, and the Grand Orient of Turin.\textsuperscript{119}

With the unification of the country came a unification of all Masonic bodies into the Grand Orient of Italy, led by Guiseppe Garibaldi. The Grand Orient would move from Florence to Rome in 1872 and the first Grand convocation was held that same year. Grand Constitutions were adopted, and a regular line of Grand Masters existed up until 1922 when the Fascists took over the country. Italy had its own Masonic uproars and ruptures, the most important of which was the schism of 1908 which resulted in the foundation of the National Grand Lodge in 1919.\textsuperscript{120}

Austrian Freemasonry “has been largely of the hide-and-seek variety over the centuries,” often forbidden and only sometimes tolerated, always at the whims of whatever duke, archduke, or petty prince happened to hold the throne.\textsuperscript{121} For example, Freemasonry was at first promoted and protected under Charles VII and later persecuted and prohibited by Maria Theresa, even though her husband, Francis I, was a Freemason. Her son, Joseph II was permitted to revive Freemasonry in Austria and its territories. The Fraternity would be dissolved again however, and not remerge until after World War One.

Freemasonry in the Austro-Hungarian Empire began properly in Prague, Bohemia with the founding of the “Three Stars” by Francis Anthony Count de Spork on June 26, 1726.\textsuperscript{122} The history of the Bohemian Lodges is important in discussing Austrian Freemasonry inasmuch as many of the founders and organizers of Austrian Lodges were

\textsuperscript{120} Denslow, \textit{Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere}, 242-245.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 181.
\textsuperscript{122} Ladislas de Maleczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 4 (1891), 21.
initiated in places such as Prague and Berlin. Freemasonry in Austria itself began in 1742 with the establishment of *Zu den Drei Kanonen* or “The Three Cannons” in Vienna. The Vienna Lodge was granted its regularity by the *Grosse Landesloge von Berlin* as were many other Lodges founded in the Austrian-Hungarian territories.\(^{123}\) The Lodges in Austria possessed a royal member and protector in Francis Stephen, the Duke of Tuscany and husband to Maria Theresa. Francis protected the order from a number of attacks and conspiracies and would not allow the *In Ementii* Bull of Clement XII or the *Providas* Bull of Pope Benedict XIV to be published in either Austria or Hungary.\(^{124}\) However, Francis could not protect the Fraternity from the intrigues and attacks of Maria Theresa herself. During her reign, there were a number of military raids upon meetings in progress and the most salacious rumors published regarding the proceedings. However, there was little if anything of a great magnitude done regarding these meetings and therefore even after intrusion, many Lodges continued to meet secretly. For the most part, this was due to statements made by the queen to the extent that “she knew about the existence of Austrian Lodges, nor did she oppose their meeting, provided that they would avoid sensation and not provoke the interference of the police.”\(^{125}\) Other Lodges would be founded in Vienna during the 1760s including a military Lodge.

Regardless, due to concerns within Austria of “fifth columnists” who were loyal to their “Royal Brother of Prussia” the Lodge was banned in 1764 in all Austrian territories.\(^{126}\) However, Austrian Freemasonry continued in Lodges founded by Austrians living and

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\(^{124}\) Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 4 (1891), 182.

\(^{125}\) Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," 192.

\(^{126}\) Ibid. 184.
working in Hungary. The first of these Lodges was founded in 1871 at Neudorfel and would be called *Humanitas*. Not until 1918 would Freemasonry be tolerated again within the country. By that time, there were over fourteen Lodges which operated under the *Symbolic Grand Lodge of Hungary*. The *Grand Lodge of Vienna* would only be formed in 1919 after the formation of the Austrian Republic, and was issued its charter by the Grand Lodge of Hungary in 1920.127

Thus, in Hungary, Freemasonry arrived following its establishment in Germany and Austria. But the Orders’ movement to the country began long before 1871. For many years Hungarian noblemen and others from distinguished families along with those who were of high rank in the Hungarian military or Royal Guard had been initiated in Austrian Lodges and this continued for some time with Masonry being spread mainly through the army by officers.128 Through the efforts of Count Casimir Draskovich and Count Stephen Niczky and others in the Hungarian Military, Freemasonry came to Hungary and expanded from there to many other territories within the Hungarian domains.129 Though there is some argument over exactly which Lodge constitutes the first, true “Hungarian” Lodge, many existed in the country and its territories shortly after 1750. One Lodge claims to have been founded in 1769 at Nagy-Szeben called “St. Andrew of the Three Sea-Leaves.” However, the best candidate for the “first Hungarian Lodge” was "The Virtuous Traveller” founded

128 Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 4 (1891), 186 and 188.
129 Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 8 (1895), 180. See also Malczovich, “A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary,” *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 5 (1892) 189.
in Eperjes in 1769. Yet another Lodge called “Taciturnitas” appeared in Pozsony in 1774.130

Zsuzsa Nagy, in his study of the development of Hungarian Freemasonry notes that membership numbers fluctuated wildly throughout the 1770s and 1780s, ranging anywhere from six hundred to one thousand members though the order had many royal patrons and protectors. Hungarian Lodges were also graced with membership from the elite echelons of society including numerous intellectuals.131 Most of these early Lodges met in the homes of members who were also gentry of the towns with Lodges moving frequently between meeting places.132 Other Lodges would form later including military Lodges such as Zur Kriegsfreundschaft or “Of Military Friendship” which was founded at some point between 1764 and 1769 in Glina with other Lodges being founded in Zagreb, two at Varasd, Essek, and Kreutz in the 1770s.133 Budapest would have its first Lodge chartered very late, the Lodge Magnanimitas being established in the early 1770s.

One of the lodges founded in Varasd, Croatia was called L’Union Parfaite and would attempt to become “rectified” by going over to the Rite of Strict Observance as many


131 Zsuzsa L. Nagy, “Freemasonry in Hungary Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” 421-422; Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," Ars Quatour Coronatorum 7 (1894), 186.


133 Ladislas de Malczovich, "A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary," Ars Quatour Coronatorum 7 (1894), 188-189.
Masonic Lodges in the region were also doing at the time. Though, when the transition process slowed and the Lodge was still left “unreformed” after a number of years, Counts Niczky and Draskovich determined to reform the Hungarian Lodges based on the particularities of their own country and condition. *L’Union Parfaite* would change its name to “Lodge of Liberty” and took the role of Mother Grand Lodge for a new, independent, and peculiar Hungarian Rite which was called *Latomia Libertatis sub Coronâ Hungariae in Provinciam redacte* or “Masonry of Freedom” while the Rite was also known as the “Draskovich Rite” or “Draskovich Observance” after its founder. This would be the only new Rite which developed in the lands of the Austrian-Hungarian territories. Some Lodges separated from this Rite for a number of reasons and obtained warrants from other countries, while others formed Masonic Circles and founded new Lodges after declaring themselves Mother Lodges. Rituals were revised to suit each Mother Lodge’s tastes and overall directing philosophy such as Rosicrucianism or Templarism.

Freemasonry in Hungary continued to develop over the next century, but become heavily persecuted in the aftermath of the French Revolution and was officially banned in the Hapsburg countries in 1795. Though new Lodges formed after this time, the tumult and repression which followed the 1848 revolution led many Hungarian Masons to take refuge in other countries. Twenty years after the Revolution had begun, Freemasonry would be again permitted to resume its work in Hungary. The first Lodge founded after

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134 The Rite of Strict Observance as propagated by Baron von Hund in the 1760s was patently Christian in nature, being built around the Templar mythos which was popular in Masonic circles at the time and functioned as a reform movement within Continental Freemasonry.
135 Ladislas de Malczovich, “A Sketch of the Earlier History of Masonry in Austria and Hungary,” *Ars Quatour Coronatorum* 7 (1894), 182-186.
136 Zsuzsa L. Nagy, “Freemasonry in Hungary Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” 422.
this period of probation would be Lodge “Mathias Corvinus,” established in 1869. Shortly after Hungarian Freemasonry’s rebirth, the two Masonic Camps—that of Scottish Freemasonry and Symbolic Freemasonry—merged to form in 1886, a singular Grand Lodge which became the Grand Symbolic Lodge of Hungary. Ferenc Pulszky would become the first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge and the institution flourished so that “When World War I ended there were 126 active lodges working in Hungary, with approximately 13,000 members” out of a population numbering twenty million. The flowering of the Fraternity proved short-lived as repression would again plague the Lodges, however this time in the form of the dictatorial Bolshevik regime of Béla Kun. Even after Kun’s fall from power, Lodges would eventually be banned in toto and remained as such until after World War Two.

Thus, by the middle of the twentieth century, most countries in Europe possessed some semblance of Masonic Grand Lodge formation which stretched back to the early 1700s. Some had suffered periods of open and vigorous persecution by both the crown and papal offices, while others proceeded with their development relatively unmolested. However, all had experienced and had to deal with public suspicions, accusations of conspiracy, or internal intrigue in their roughly two hundred year history. These persecutions continued and intensified in many European countries after the turn of the twentieth century, and a new element to these persecutions came to the fore and gained so much traction and momentum that the European Fraternity as a whole would be affected until this day.

CHAPTER 4

THE PROTOCOLS AND THE JUDEO-MASONIC CONSPIRACY

The basis of much Masonic persecution in the twentieth century centered on the publication of a plagiarized forgery which came to be known as *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. Produced during the Dreyfus Affair sometime between 1894 and 1899 with the assistance of the Okhrana, the imperial Russian secret police, the Protocols possess a long and cumbersome history, lift their content from many different sources and incorporate many anti-Semitic myths predominant at the time. The work’s ultimate beginnings however, lie in the deep-rooted anti-Semitism already present in Europe for centuries. Few of these conspiracies and myths were new by the twentieth century. “Accusations of ritual murder [the blood libel], the curse of Ahasverus the wandering Jew, and fantasies about the universal world conspiracy had never vanished from the European consciousness even during the Enlightenment. Now they were to be revitalized and given renewed force.” Both Jewish and Masonic conspiracy theories were deeply ingrained in the European collective consciousness long before the publication of the first *Protocols* manuscript. The arguments and “evidence” presented within it were not in any sense new revelations. The value in the publication of the *Protocols*, therefore, lay in its wide dissemination in various forms over the whole of Europe, and the influence they wielded in this new, xenophobic nationalist context.

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138 The Okhrana was formed shortly after an assassination attempt on Alexander II. The organization functioned as the Czar’s secret police within the Empire, though it did have satellite agencies in various other countries in order to keep a thumb on the pulse of Russian revolutionaries living abroad.

Like Jewish conspiracies, anti-Masonic conspiracies floated for centuries throughout European thought, often used by elite groups to explain various catastrophic events in European states. For example, most of the leadership of the Catholic Church believed that Freemasons engaged in conspiratorial and seditious acts. The inability of the Church to know and control what happened in secret Masonic meetings behind closed doors was, of course, one of the reasons that Pope Clement XII issued the *Eminenti Apostolatus Specula* Papal Bull in 1738 and encouraged Pope Benedict XIV to “double-down” and issue the *Providas Romanorum* Bull in 1751. Freemasons were also accused of fomenting political upheavals that threatened the established European status quo. The first occurrence of crisis laid at the feet of Masonic Lodges was the French Revolution of 1789. As early as 1797 various authors blamed Freemasons for fomenting the French Revolution and orchestrating the events from within the Lodges themselves. Authors such as John Robison and the Jesuit Abbé Augustin Barruel both published works that outlined Masonic conspiracies to overthrow the governments in Europe and subvert religious authority. Robinson, who claimed to have been initiated in *La Parfaite Intelligence* in the city of Liège in 1770, published *Proofs of a conspiracy against all the religions and governments of Europe: carried on in the secret meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and reading societies* which argued that European revolution on a mass scale was planned and led by Masons and European Masonic Lodges and that it was only a matter of time before the European continent erupted into turmoil.

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Barruel, in his four-volume work, took these accusations of conspiracy further, writing in *Memoires pour service a l'histoire du Jacobinisme* (Memoirs illustrating the history of Jacobinism) that a “supreme council” controlled all of the Masonic Lodges in Europe. This twenty-one member council answered to an “inner” group of three. According to Barruel, Jews had infiltrated European Lodges at the highest levels, and that this “outer” and “inner” council’s one goal was to fuel revolutions across Europe at the behest of an appointed European Grand Master. Barruel was convinced that the French Revolution had been devised and executed by “anti-Catholic secret societies, specifically Freemasons.” He specifically linked the French Revolution’s motto—“Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity”—to Freemasons, as this phrase was also the motto of the Grand Lodge and Grand Orient of France. The work made Barruel a good amount of money as it was translated into many languages and published in numerous countries. Though some Masons might have been involved in the French Revolution, many suffered torture and death as aristocrats and many Lodges were forced to close and had their meeting places ransacked.

Ultimately, neither Robison nor Barruel “makes clear their motives for writing their books but both contain huge amounts of unverified speculation, propaganda and factual error.” Nevertheless, these works, in spite of reality, became part of the incriminating evidence linking Freemasons to national revolution and world conquest. “In the immediate aftermath…Freemasonry was the only ‘organization’ bent on creating a New World Order.” Though Barruel mentioned in passing that Jews had infiltrated some of the higher

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143 Ibid., 56.
144 Ibid., 53.
echelons of Masonic society, he unequivocally laid the blame for the French Revolution’s violence and destruction at the feet of the Freemasons and no one else.

Anti-Masonic texts linked Freemasonry to the “Jewish cabal” as early as 1779, but in reference to the crucifixion of Christ, and not as leaders of conspiratorial coups designed to rule the world. For example, in 1779 during a Lenten homily at the Cathedral Church in Aix-la-Chappelle, priests Peter Schuff and Ludwig Greinemann delivered an anti-Semitic and anti-Masonic statement which, though laughably imaginary, likely received a favorable nod from their parishioners;

The Jews who crucified the Saviour were Freemasons, that Pilate and Herod were Wardens in a Lodge. Midas had been admitted a Mason in a Synagogue before he betrayed Christ, and when he gave back the thirty pieces of silver before setting out to hang himself, he did nothing more than pay the fee for initiation into the order.145

Though this sermon linked Jews and Freemasons together, it must be impressed again that it was not as part of a conspiracy aimed at either the overthrow of governments or fomenting world revolution. However, it did conflate the two groups into one conspiratorial bloc. The first traceable point at which this wild conflated assertion appeared comes from a letter written to Barruel in 1806 from J.B. Simonini, as Robert Cooper noted in his work *The Red Triangle*;

In the process of congratulating Barruel [Simonini] explained that Barruel knew only part of the Masonic plot to take over Europe. Simonini revealed that while in Piedmont [Italy] he had met some Jews who had become separated from [the] Jewish faith and culture at a very early age. These Piedmontese Jews welcomed him with open arms and entrusted him with secrets relating to Jewish European activities. He was shown large sums of gold and silver used to reward those who would join the cause…More importantly arrangements would be made to have him promoted to a general…his side of the bargain was to become a Freemason. This was necessary because Freemasonry (and the Illuminati) has been founded by Jews and they were in control of both organizations…Jews were disguising themselves

as Christians and had infiltrated the highest level of the Roman Catholic Church...[and were trying] to ensure that a Jew would soon be made Pope. Simonini’s letter to Barruel would be the first time in which Jews and Freemasons became explicitly linked in a “Judeo-Masonic” conspiracy to wrest control of the world from the Christian powers. However, when contemporaries looked at the aftermath of the French Revolution, and kept this conspiracy in mind, it looked eerily prescient to those who lived in this age. For example, Jews received civil and emancipatory rights as a consequence of the democratization which followed the French Revolution. Furthermore, in 1806 Napoleon had called for a meeting of Jewish leaders in Paris which he called the “Assembly of the Great Sanhedrin” which gave some “evidence” to the conspiratorial mind that there had been a continual “supreme ruling body” of the Jewish people since Biblical times.

This particular line of conspiratorial thought lay dormant for approximately fifty years before surfacing again after the “Year of Revolutions” or “Spring of Nations” in 1848, in which cumulatively, a dozen or so European states experienced significant political and social turmoil and upheaval. The reasons for these revolutions are both complex and numerous, however many contemporary critics, particularly conservatives, began looking for an “origin narrative” to explain in one fell swoop the causes of the chaos and confusion. “The reasons underlying events usually only become clear after a lapse of time. In the intervening period imagination, assumption and perception dominate.”

Into this void came various anti-Masonic conspiracy narratives, beginning with Eduard Eckert’s 1851 work *Freemasonry and its True Significance*. Following his

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147 There are some who argue that this was the origin of the *Protocols* conspiracy. See Robert L D. Cooper, *The Red Triangle: A History of Anti-Masonry*. (Hersham, Surrey: Lewis Masonic, 2011), 58-59.
distribution of a number of similar conspiratorial anti-Masonic pamphlets, Eckert produced *The Temple of Solomon* in 1855. Together, these works along with his minor pamphlets revived Barruel’s earlier conspiracy theories, laying not only the responsibility for—but also the organization and fomenting of—revolutions at the feet of the Masonic Lodges. Eckert “in particular…accused Freemasonry of causing moral degradation, religious turmoil and economic chaos as preliminaries to revolution…[and]…when chaos reigned, Freemasons [would launch a] revolution.” Most importantly, Eckert would be the first to explicitly link Freemasons and Jews together as “co-conspirators.” In 1862, the *Historisch-politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* (Historical-Political Notes for Catholic Germany) a conservative Catholic periodical, ran a satirical article entitled “Daumer on the Freemasons.” Supposedly written by a Freemason, the article’s significance derived from the fact that it was published in one of the most widely-read Catholic journals in German-speaking Europe. It also—like Eckert—both explicitly linked Jews and Freemasons together but also merged the conspiracy theories of Robinson and Barruel with the revolutionary events of 1848. The article alleged that Jews were “becoming increasingly influential in Prussia” and had “formed an association which [had]…the appearance of being Masonic, the aim of which was the subversion of all European states. Jews, and their Masonic ‘association,’ were directed by ‘unknown superiors’ nearly all of whom were said to be Jews.”

By the late 1860s, these conflated anti-Semitic and anti-Masonic narratives received further reinforcement through the publication of Hermann Goedsche’s 1868 novel

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150 Ibid.
151 Ibid., 62.
Biarritz. “Eckert’s Freemasonry in its True Significance and The Temple of Solomon, the article in the Historisch-politische Blätter, and Hermann Goedsche’s Biarritz all came together at a time when European society was undergoing intense scrutiny and political debate,” and so-called “foreign elements” in those societies were seen as increasingly suspect. In this increasingly nativist and anxiety-laden context, Masonic loyalty to the nation was seen as questionable because the organization was apparently led and controlled by an “international Jewish cabal” working for the overthrow of the legitimate governments of European nations. “The Protocols gave [these] beliefs new life.”

Therefore, most scholars argue that the origin of The Protocols begins in 1868 with the publication of the novel Biarritz, written by the German anti-Semite and Prussian spy Hermann Goedsche under the pen name of Sir John Radcliffe. However, recent research has also indicated that the Protocols also pulled heavily from a work published in 1864 by a French lawyer named Maurice Joly entitled Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu, ou la politique aux xixe siècle (Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, on the Politics of the Nineteenth Century). Robert Cooper even argues that Biarritz itself was a plagiarized version of Joly’s work which in and of itself was a plagiarism of another work entitled The Mysteries of the People written by Eugène Sue. In short, it is clear that though these earlier French anti-Masonic works never explicitly implicated either Jews or Masons in conspiratorial acts, they did suggest that the “masses

were being…manipulated…by superior persons” in order to create a New World Order, and thus begins this conspiratorial line of thought that is brought together within the Protocols.156

Of primary importance to the history of the Protocols however is one chapter of Biarritz which details a secret meeting of twelve Jewish elders who represent the Twelve Tribes of Israel. These twelve elders are known as the “cabalistic Sanhedrin”—a reference to one of the many myths which had by this time become linked to the study of the Jewish Cabalah—in the Jewish cemetery in Prague.157 During the meeting, the Elders conspire to enslave the non-Jewish population. The reader learns of the details of the meeting through the accounts of two eavesdropping Christians who shrouded themselves in the shadows cast by the cemetery gravestones. Thus the “protocols” or plans of the Jewish elders are revealed: the goal of the Jews is:

To concentrate in their hands all the capital of the nations of all lands; to secure possession of all the land, railroads, mines, houses; to be at the head of all organizations, to occupy the highest governmental posts, to paralyze commerce and industry everywhere, to seize the press, to direct legislation, public opinion and national movement—and all for the purpose of subjugating all nations on earth to their power.158

Shortly after its publication, this section was directly lifted from Biarritz and published in Russia and Austria under the title “the Rabbi’s Speech,” and later served as the foundation

156 Jacobs and Weitzman, Dismantling the Big Lie: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, 15.
157 Jewish Cabalah or Kabbalah is a Jewish mystical and contemplative school of thought which has various interpretations and applications depending upon those following its practices. The term Cabalah means “to receive” and refers to the oral traditions of much of this branch of Judaism. Historically Cabalah emerged during the 12th Century in France and Spain and its primary sacred text is the Zohar. Cabalah explains creation through “utterances” or “Sephirot” in which God spoke the material world into being, this being explained graphically by the “Tree of Life.” Though a Jewish school of thought, Cabalah was integrated within Christianity by a number of medieval thinkers, occultists, and esotericists.
158 Goldstein and Evans, A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism, 250.
of arguments presented in the *Protocols.* Goedsche also weaved into the story another long-standing anti-Semitic myth, by making Ahasverus one of the “Elders” who met in the cemetery that night. Therefore, “the wandering, wicked Jew” cursed to walk the Earth forever for cursing Christ while on his way to the crucifixion came to life in the present and became neatly enmeshed in Goedsche’s malicious work.

The *Protocols* also borrowed from another work written by the French anti-Semite Roger Gougenot de Mousseaux. Published in France in 1869, only one year after *Biarritz, Le Juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens* (The Jew, Judaism, and the Judaization of the Christian Peoples) was an anti-Semitic polemic in which Gougenot claimed that the “Jews of France [were] devotees of a secret mystery-religion presided over by the devil himself…” Furthermore, Mousseaux declared that the devil was the King of the Jews.” It would be Mousseaux’s version of the Jewish plot—most likely plagiarized from *Biarritz* itself—which would become part of the famous *Protocols.*

A fast-forward through time and a change in geographic location brings the other origins of the *Protocols* into focus. Fin-de-siècle Russia, much like most of Europe, was a multiethnic and multicultural imperial state which used antisemitism for political leverage, and pogroms against Russian Jewish communities occurred frequently. The Russian monarchy and its advisors fanned the flames of xenophobic and nativist anti-Semitic resentment to gain support for the Czar and stave off reformist factions by financing anti-Semitic publications and nationalist groups. With the death of Alexander III in 1894 his successor, Nicholas II, continued to support and promote these measures.

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159 Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism,* 117.
160 Ibid., 117.
In all probability, the *Protocols* “were forged in France in the midst of the Dreyfus Affair, with the assistance of the Russian secret police…between 1894 and 1899. The French right wanted a document in order to link Dreyfus to the supposed conspiracy of his race, and the Russian secret police needed it to justify czarist anti-Jewish policy.”¹⁶¹ To further solidify his power and turn the people away from revolutionary groups who had been pushing for reform, the Czar decided to use this course of action to direct the populations’ attention toward a “common enemy.” This common enemy would be, of course, Russian Jews. The Czar’s secret police—the Okhrana—and other agencies played an extensive role in generating various propaganda tracts and directing nativist political movements within the empire. For example, Okhrana agents revived the “blood libel” myth through the use of government-supported newspaper publications. A “patriotic society” known as the Black Hundreds was also secretly funded and assisted by the Okhrana in initiating pogroms against the Russian Jewish population. These actions were again part of a series of ploys and attempts to protect the power of the Czar from revolutionary and reform movements within the country. However, the game of smoke and mirrors failed to prevent these groups from gaining power and increased public support. After the disastrous Russian failure in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, popular unrest forced the Czar to create a *duma* (parliament) which, if granted the legislative powers promised to it, greatly reduced his power. The Czar made a final bid to protect his autocratic rule by attempting to disenfranchise Jewish citizens of the Russian Empire. These efforts were soundly rejected by the *duma* and in the end the Czar was forced to declare and guarantee

equal rights and basic freedoms to all peoples in the Russian Empire, including Russian Jews.

In response to this forced decree, the Czar financed a secret campaign to undermine these constitutional changes, and his secret police printed pamphlets urging popular protests against them. These pamphlets enraged local populations and encouraged riots and other violence against Russian Jews. By 1907, the various uprisings and reprisals subsided with the Czar still holding power; despite this success in weathering the storms of 1905, Nicholas II began a new campaign against the Jews of Russia, and directed the Okhrana to begin publishing and disseminating the forgery now known as the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. For anti-Semites everywhere, this forged, plagiarized work served as evidence that Russian Jews were not only scheming to take over the Russian Empire, but the world itself. “The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion [thus] became both the climax and the synthesis of” the various conspiracy theories, anti-Semitic myths, and defamation which existed in Europe at the time. In the waxing years of the 1900s, the work spread rapidly to other countries and attracted many supporters as it was disseminated across the continent.

Today, definitive authorship of the Protocols is difficult to trace due to the plethora of various versions and redactions which have been produced—sometimes anonymously—by various publishers, including some government publishers. Cooper asserts that the Protocols were written by journalist Matvei Golovinksi working under Pyotr Ivanovich Rachkovsky, Bureau Chief of the Okhrana in Paris. Cesare G. De Michelis argues that

163 Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 117.
this is the best—though still unproven—hypothesis proposed by H. Rollin in *L’Apocalypse de notre temps* (The Apocalypse of Our Time) published in 1939. De Michelis further claims that the original *Protocols* was first written in French sometime during 1897, and though scholars remain unable to verify the author of this edition, De Michelis calls it “the archetype.” The French “founding text” appears to have been translated into Russian sometime in 1901.\(^{165}\) Pieces of the *Protocols* appeared at various points in the early 1900s, and Cesare G. De Michelis has reverse-engineered the numerous versions of the text in order to trace its precise authorship and locality of origin.\(^{166}\) De Michelis traced at least five versions of the *Protocols* published between 1903 and 1906 “to which should be added two ‘shortened versions:’ one, published several times in 1905 and 1906, while the other appeared as a monograph in 1917…therefore it is difficult to say if we are dealing with different editions, the reprinting of the aforementioned texts, or mere ‘bibliographical ghosts.’”\(^{167}\) “Between 1903 and 1905, more than 3,000 anti-Semitic pamphlets, books, and articles were published in Russia alone.”\(^{168}\) The *Protocols* became of the most well-known of these tracts.

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\(^{165}\) Most likely this French edition did not exist, but was simply a ruse “functioning as the accreditation of a forgery” and suggested by the fact that the *Protocols* had “largely been plagiarized from a French text” which was Joly’s *Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu, ou la politique aux xixe siècle*. See Cesare G. De Michelis, *The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion*, English ed., trans. Richard Newhouse, Studies in Antisemitism (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 33 and 6; De Michelis, *The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion*, 6.


The first publication of the *Protocols* appeared in 1903 in serial form in the rightist St. Petersburg paper *Znamya* (the Banner), founded by Pavel Krushevan.\(^{169}\) Krushevan, a Moldavian anti-Semitic journalist and publisher of *Bessarbec*, was the instigator of a pogrom which occurred on April 19 and 20 in Kishinev and a member of *Russkoe sobraine* (The Russian Assembly) and the president of the *Sozuz russkogo naroda* (The Union of the Russian People) of Bessarabia, both “Black Hundreds” associated groups.\(^{170}\) He published the *Protocols* in the *Znamya* with the headline *The Jewish Programme for the Conquest of the World* “but the title of the document (attributed to the ‘translator’) appeared as *Protokoly zasedanij ‘vsemirnogo sojuza franmasonov i sionskix mudrecov’* (The protocols of the sessions of the ‘World Alliance of Freemasons and of the Sages of Zion,’” which signaled the first time in which Freemasons were specifically identified in the *Protocols* as part of the Jewish plot for world domination.\(^{171}\) De Michelis identified this version of the *Protocols* as the “primitive version and therefore the closest to the photograph or original…but not ‘the’ photograph, as [some] omitted passages demonstrate.”\(^{172}\) From this point, Masonic “links” were regularly included in published versions of the *Protocols*. One year later, Krushevan’s version of the *Protocols* were republished in Hippolytus Lutostański’s *Talmud i evrei* (Talmud and the Jews) which presented them in excerpted form.

A second anonymous version of the *Protocols* appeared in 1905 in the anti-Semitic pamphlet *Koren’ našix bedstvij* (Root of Our Disaster) under the title *Vyderžki iz drevnix


\(^{171}\) Ibid., 7.

\(^{172}\) Ibid., 9.
sovremennyx protokolov Sionskix medrecov Vsemirnogo obščestva Fran-Masonov (Excerpts from the ancient and modern Protocols of the Sages of Zion of the World Society of Freemasons). Though this version was anonymous, the pamphlet was published by the printers at “the Headquarters of the Guards and of the Military district of St. Petersburg;” this is unsurprising given the involvement of the Okhrana in the creation and dissemination of the Protocols.\textsuperscript{173}

The next version of the Protocols appeared in Russia as Protokoly sobranij sionskix mudrecov (The protocols of the meetings of the sages of Zion) in an addendum to Sergei Nilus’ work \textit{The Great in the Small}.\textsuperscript{174} Nilus’ version is the one that then served, beginning in 1918, as the text later distributed worldwide. It made it to Germany after a number of reprintings before appearing in 1920 in \textit{Luč sveta}, a magazine for Russian exiles living in Germany.\textsuperscript{175} “It came out in Berlin in 1922, in Paris in 1927, and from there it was reintroduced into post-Soviet Russia.”\textsuperscript{176} Other versions of the Protocols which enjoyed some success were produced by Georgij Vasil’evič Butmi de Kacman who assisted in founding the Union of the Russian People with Krushevan. Butmi’s version appears in 1905 or 1906 in pamphlet form as Protokoly izvlečennye iz tajnyx xranilišč Sionskoj Glavnoj Kanceljarii (Protocols dealing with the secret deposits of the Central Chancellery

\textsuperscript{173} De Michelis, \textit{The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion}, 9.

\textsuperscript{174} This origin of this version of the text is attributed to “the mysterious ‘representatives of Zion of the 33\textsuperscript{rd} degree’” again linking Freemasonry—and in particular the 33\textsuperscript{rd} Degree of Scottish Freemasonry—with the Jewish “New World Order” conspiracy. See Cesare G. De Michelis, \textit{The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion}, English ed., trans. Richard Newhouse, Studies in Antisemitism (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 12.

\textsuperscript{175} The 1911 version of Nilus’ work would be the copy which was spread to Germany specifically. See Cesare G. De Michelis, \textit{The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion}, English ed., trans. Richard Newhouse, Studies in Antisemitism (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 11.

\textsuperscript{176} De Michelis, \textit{The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion}, 12.
of Zion). Butmi’s version went through several editions and appeared not only in Russia, but also in Germany and France.

Two more versions of the Protocols specifically implicated Freemasons in the Jewish plot to take over the world, one published as a speech to the Russkoe sobraine (The Russian Assembly) in 1905 and another in 1917. The 1917 edition interestingly carried with it excerpts from Albert Pike’s *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*. This combination points to early attempts by those wishing to generate an idea of “universal Freemasonry” through attempts to defame the Scottish Rite. Furthermore, in the 1920 edition of Nilus’ work, there is a further attempt to slander Albert Pike using Taxil-esque methods claiming that Pike was “the ‘Black Pope’…‘a certain Jew, A. Pike,’ who had established the cult of Baphomet [sic] and of the Anti-Christ at Charlestown [sic].” Subsequently, in the third edition of Butmi’s Protocols the author makes particular reference to the Scottish Rite in America and Albert Pike specifically, claiming that Pike was “the occupant of the ‘Holiest throne of the

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178 Ibid., 14.
179 The Russian Assembly was a rightist-monarchist and orthodox conservative political organization in Russia which operated from 1900-1917.
181 See note 76 in De Michelis, *The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion*, 22. Marie Joseph Gabriel Antoine Jogand-Pagès, known by his pen name, Leo Taxil, was a French journalist who wrote scandalous exposés in the 1890s for the Catholic Church in order to lambast the organization. Taxil claimed that Freemasons engaged in devil-worship or worship of Baphomet and engaged in any number of hedonistic acts while in Lodge. Earlier he had written a number of salacious pamphlets about the Catholic Church and the Pope, but claimed to have denounced these when he converted. When confronted about his claims, he held a press conference in Paris on April 19, 1897 in which he announced that all his claims were a hoax to expose and ridicule the fanatically anti-Masonic Catholic Church. See Arturo de Hoyos and S. Brent. Morris, *Is it true what they say about freemasonry?* (Lanham, MD: M. Evans, 2010).
Supreme Patriarch of Universal Masonry.” These references serve to buttress the existence of a global Judeo-Masonic group where none in reality existed. These claims increased in significance and utility later in the twentieth century, when the Protocols were employed specifically by authoritarian regimes to subject European Masonic Lodges to persecution.

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CHAPTER 5

HISTORY OF REPRESSION AND ANTI-MASONRY MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE

Only after the Protocols appeared in Russia, possibly as early as 1905, did the Czar realize that the document was a plagiarized forgery and only later would he be told his own Okhrana created it. Upon learning this, Nicholas II ordered the distribution of the Protocols to be halted, stating that “One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods.”\(^{183}\) However, by this point the damage was already done and the Protocols in a myriad of forms spread throughout Europe to many different audiences, and were subsequently used by many different regimes for a variety of purposes. During and after the Russian Revolution and the subsequent Russian Civil War, many anti-Semitic “White” Russians seized upon the fact that Karl Marx and Leon Trotsky were both of Jewish descent and following that line of thought they concluded that all Jews must have been Communists.\(^{184}\) “As the White Russians fled…they brought the Protocols…with them. To many of them and to a growing number of people in other countries, the Protocols seemed to explain the losses and anxieties of the modern world.”\(^{185}\) However for each Russian anti-Semite who, in every place and event, saw evidence of an international Judeo-Masonic and Communist plot, an even larger number of British, Germans, Austrians and other Europeans saw the same “threat” and “routinely exaggerated the power of Jews.”\(^{186}\) As such, by 1922, translations


\(^{184}\) Ibid., 242. It is interesting to note that Marx himself had been baptized into the Christian faith and Trotsky himself claimed to be an atheist, though he never denied his Jewish heritage to anyone.

\(^{185}\) Ibid., 248.

\(^{186}\) Ibid., 239.
of the Protocols could be purchased in almost every European country and by 1924 also in Japan and elsewhere across the world. In August 1921, The Times of London ran an exposé on the Protocols and deemed them a fraud by demonstrating that they were plagiarized from other fictional works to create the propaganda tract.

Regardless of the revelations of The Times of London, the work’s illegitimacy and dubious provenance, many in Europe who were convinced by the existence of the “global Jewish conspiracy” proffered in the Protocols often pointed to the existence of fraternal Jewish organizations as evidence of the “truth” behind the plot. For example, in 1860, the “Alliance Israélite Universelle” was formed by a group of French Jews in order to aid those of their creed who lived in countries where they lacked civil rights. The Alliance also engaged in many other philanthropic endeavors including building schools in numerous parts of the world. Regardless, “these worthy purposes were, of course, ignored and the Alliance [was] seen [at the time] as the exposed tip of an iceberg of conspiracy.”

As Goldstein and Evans explain:

Why were they convinced that about three million Jews (most of whom were penniless immigrants)...had so much power? [The] belief was based in part on the old myth that Jews controlled the world’s wealth. It was also influenced by the vigor with which the Jews defended one another. Every time a group of Jews protested an injustice or helped a poverty stricken Jewish community at home or abroad, some non-Jews saw those efforts as evidence of an international conspiracy and concluded that Jews were loyal only to one another and not to the countries they lived in.

Goldstein and Evans, A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism, 250-251. It should be noted that Henry Ford himself truly believed in the Protocols myth and spent vast sums in having it reprinted here in the United States. He regularly published anti-Semitic articles in The Dearborn Independent a newspaper he owned. He was eventually sued for libel. These actions and a boycott sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League forced Ford to shut down the newspaper.

Goldstein and Evans, A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism, 250.

Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 119.

Goldstein and Evans, A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism, 239.
Objections such as these often continued even after anti-Semitic politicians and governments forcibly dissolved Jewish organizations or banned them altogether. In the absence of Jewish organizations to persecute and scapegoat, Freemasons’ lodges often became the next best piece of physical evidence of the Judeo-Masonic designs for the world as laid out in the Protocols. “Anti-Semites and racists pointed to the Masons as another existing secret conspiracy directed by the Jews [as] the Protocols had linked Jewish and Masonic conspiracies.”

The Catholic Church took an early lead in attacking these perceived Masonic-Jewish connections in 1897 when it convened the Anti-Masonic World Congress. The proceedings of the Congress received the blessing of Pope Leo XIII and were even “placed under the protection of the Virgin Mary.” In the proceedings of the 1897 Congress, participants specifically linked Jews to an anti-Catholic Masonic conspiracy. This movement later spread to Germany, and in France, the Union Antimaçonnique, formed in 1897, received a great deal of support from French anti-Semites. Herein lay the strength and malleability of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy myths. Mosse explains that

…such myths and legends…were used in order to mobilize those who wanted to protect both traditional Christianity and traditional society…[and] the national mystique could without question accept these myths…More importantly, however, such legends became a mechanism though which rightist movements sought to change society. The imaginary threat…could be used to rally people behind such interest groups as agricultural unions and conservative parties in their battle with liberals and Socialists.

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191 Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 119.
192 Ibid.
193 Ibid., 119-121.
As such, the Protocols became a powerful weapon, used by nationalist and fascist governments all across Europe as they took control of states in the chaotic aftermath of World War One.

In France, anti-Masonic and anti-Internationalist action emerged long before the advent of interwar fascist dictatorships. “Contemporaries had thought that racism had penetrated France suddenly and rapidly from the 1880s on, unleashed by financial scandals, the corruption of the Third Republic, the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany, and…the Dreyfus Affair.” In fact, however, it had always lurked just beneath the surface of public discourse, waiting for an opportunity to reappear. “It was particularly strong in the countryside, where…Catholic priests and laymen often denounced Jews, Freemasons, and republicans.” Thus, as a reaction to the issues of the time, the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy reemerged contingently during the time of crisis at the turn of the century—but also because of the long-simmering French Catholic “hate of ‘Jewish Freemasonry’—a conspiracy said to rule the Third Republic.”

In fact, the militant Catholic and anti-Semitic Action Française movement, born of the Dreyfus Affair, included as one of its chief goals to turn back the clock and resurrect the monarchy and the Ancien Regime. The result of this rebirth would be a France in which Jews were relegated to their former status as non-citizens and the “atheistic republic of Jews and Freemasons” would be subverted to French national glory once again. Those associated with Action Française, such as its leaders Édouard Drumont and Charles Maurras, youth groups such as the “Camelots du Roi,” and intellectual associations such

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194 Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 151.
195 Ibid.
196 Ibid., 141.
197 Ibid., 142-143.
as the Cercle Proudhon, essentially began to wage what they saw as a nationalistic “holy war” against “Jews, Masons, and Republicans” and would stop at nothing until political power was taken away from “Jewish Gold” and returned to “French blood.” These nationalistic principles also targeted the French bourgeoisie who they claimed “had become ‘Judaized’…the Third Republic, which “was a creation of Jews and Masons” and to this end even Protestants and Germans were added to the list of enemies against monarchy and God.198 Adding these final two groups, along with the ideas of Maurras that “race did not exist” demonstrates that at certain points the actions of these ultranationalist groups derived more from a reaction against internationalism and anything “not French” than an overtly racist endeavor—though, at times it did become an overtly racist movement.199

This anti-internationalist position was most evident in the writings and proclamations of Édouard Drumont, the most active French national socialist of the late nineteenth century. In particular, it would be Drumont who claimed in 1886 that the “mercantile, covetous, scheming, and cunning Semites were responsible for the existing state of national and social degeneration.”200 Drumont also explicitly associated all Jews with Freemasons and Protestants, all of which he felt would need to disappear from France before national reconciliation and progress could be achieved. The trade group associated with Drumont, “Les Jaunes,” proclaimed that the future of France was one in which “workers [rose] to the rank of proprietors [and became] patriotic workers who fought Jews,

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198 Mosse, _Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism_, 144.
199 Ibid., 143.
200 Ibid., 155.
reds, and Freemasons alike." This idea of an existential fight or struggle between groups grew so that by the end of the century tensions would reach fever-pitch;

Indeed, there was something hysterical and violent about all French anti-Semitic racism as it evolved from the end of the nineteenth century to the twentieth. Jules Guérin actually believed that Masonic lodges were a cover for Jewish conspiracies. To beat the Jews and Masons at their own game, he founded the anti-Jewish and anti-republican “Grand Orient.” There in the rue de Chabrol, he collected arms for a coup d’état, and in 1899 resisted a siege by the police for several days.

There would be more of this forced “nationalizing” of Freemasonry in the next century in Germany.

The exact tenor of these movements aside, France became the birthplace of fascism as a viable twentieth century political ideology, and national socialist thought buried itself deep in the French national consciousness. However, national socialism soon spread beyond France throughout the rest of Europe, and many groups in various countries began to organize themselves around similar principles. “These diverse National Socialist movements were not aware of each other’s existence. Each was a response to a particular situation as part of that general search for a more equalitarian community within the national mystique which took place throughout Europe.” France became one of the first places in which a bastion of traditionalism—a government and society dedicated to monarchy, nationalism, Catholicism, and traditional social mores—was erected in Europe through nationalist fervor. Given this history, it appeared to many that France—rather than Germany, Austria, or any other country—seemed most likely to succumb to an anti-Semitic

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202 Ibid., 158.
204 Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 164.
and racist national socialist movement. During the early twentieth century it subsided, though it would never completely fade. This pull toward the older, nationalistic, monarchist, and staunchly Catholic France returned strongly during the Vichy years.

The First World War gave many of these movements a revitalized momentum and many significantly increased in size, violence, and self-confidence. Postwar European politics changed drastically and much of the outreach that occurred between nations at the end of the “War to End All Wars” imploded, leaving a vacuum waiting to be filled by those who possessed the ability to quickly take advantage of the radical new ideologies which began to rise to the surface. George Mosse explains this tumultuous postwar period as follows:

The hurricane which had swept through Europe after the First World War destroyed many a dike that had protected Jews [and others] against terror, defamation, and racism. Governments proved too weak or too unwilling to restrain the nationalist fury which followed the abortive revolutions…Everywhere the end of the war ushered in an age of mass politics and mass movements which advocated a definition of democracy different from that of parliamentary government. Political participation was defined by acting out a political liturgy in mass movements or in the streets and by seeking security through national myths and symbols which left little or no room for those who were different. The war had transformed politics into a drama built upon shared emotions.205

France’s extreme right had been largely defined before the war by Action Française but after the war many of AF’s members left the movement, seeking more radical means to the same end. A number of new fascist organizations organized in France between 1925 and 1936. One of these, the “Francistes,” revived the writings of earlier national socialists, particularly Drumont, and used them in their own publications which condemned Jews, Freemasons, and blacks.206 In 1935, a group known as the “Interparliamentary Group of

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205 Mosse, Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism, 190.
206 Ibid., 193.
Action Against Free Masonry” was formed and backed by a number of fascist supporters. Many of these supporters were members of the National Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The Interparliamentary Group later stated that, “the hour has come when Free Masonry must be struck down. A struggle to the death has begun against it and the national forces must now fight without truce or respite.”

By the mid-1930s the largest French fascist group with over 250,000 members was Jacque Doriot’s *Parti Populaire Française* (PPF) which formed in 1936. They, however, did not espouse a virulent anti-Semitism until the Nazi Party gained momentum within Germany, which they found enviable. When Germany invaded France and took Paris, Doriot’s group began actively collaborating with the Nazis. Once France fell fully under joint control of the Nazis and the Vichy regime an August 1940 decree “ordered the abolition of all French ‘secret societies’ and the dismissal of Freemasons from state employment.” The Vichy government ordered the Grand Orient and Grand Lodge of France dissolved, their assets seized, and their property sold. The Vichy government then called for the death of anyone who dared to reenter the Lodges. The government also dismissed Freemasons from all state employment, and military positions. “Some 14,600 civil servants were affected, including at least 1,328 teachers.” Individual Freemasons were subjected to searches of their homes and businesses and faced loss of their businesses.

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for their association. “Bernard Fay, who had written Revolution and Freemasonry, an anti-Masonic book before the war, was put in charge of anti-Masonic activities by the Vichy government. He caused the arrest of thousands of Freemasons, [the] deportation of almost 1,000, the death of almost 1,000, and the seizure of much property.”

“In total, 60,000 suspected French Freemasons were registered, 6,000 detained, 989 deported and 549 were shot or died following deportations to Nazi concentration camps.”

The traditions of anti-Masonic propaganda that had their origin so far back in the history of France finally took their toll on the Fraternity with the inception of the Vichy regime. French fascists and national socialists, along with Catholics and anti-Semites, had long believed in the global conspiracy myths of the Protocols and believed that they had erased a piece of the global internationalist scheme. Though French Freemasons had actively pushed for the acquittal of Alfred Dreyfus and had been more politically engaged than their brethren in England, French Freemasons were innocent of the crimes leveled against them by their now-powerful enemies.

In Italy, the Protocols were published by Giovanni Preziosi in 1921. Preziosi was a true believer of the “Jewish conspiracy” myth. Though Italy generally protected the Jews when pressed by the Nazis, Mussolini’s Fascist regime propagated various racial laws which discriminated against Jews. By the time Mussolini ascended to power in 1922, a growing suspicion among Italian Fascists had become sacrosanct; that suspicion surrounded anything which hinted at any internationalist links. The “international Judeo-Masonic conspiracy” became one of the Italian right’s obsessions. In February 1923,

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Mussolini’s government ordered that Freemasons who were also Fascists must renounce one or the other of their memberships. Amazingly, the Grand Orient sided with the government, stating that “Freemasons were at liberty to give up Masonry and that such action would be in accord with the love of country which is taught in the Lodge.” These statements aside, Freemasons and Freemason’s Lodges now found themselves targets of violence and destruction. Those who gave up their association with the Fascists were not allowed to leave easily. General Luigi Cappello, a high-ranking member of the Fascists and distinguished member of the Italian military who also served the Grand Orient of Italy as Deputy Grand Master resigned his membership in Fascism rather than Freemasonry in 1924. For his loyalty to the Grand Orient he was accused of being involved in an assassination attempt on Mussolini less than a year later, though some claim he was framed for this crime. Regardless, Cappello was sentenced to thirty years in prison.

In 1924, Mussolini ordered that Fascists in Italy report the names of any Freemasons who were not sympathetic to the Fascist cause. Additionally, committees within the Fascist government were appointed to investigate Freemasonry and gather information on the institution. In 1925, Mussolini dissolved all Grand Lodges in Italy, declaring that “while Masonry in England, America, and Germany was a charitable and philanthropic institution, in Italy Freemasonry was a political organization that was subservient to the Grand Orient of France...[and] charged Italian Freemasons with being agents for France and England and opponents of Italy’s military actions.” This move

215 The title, “Deputy Grand Master” is generally reserved for those who sit at the right hand of the Grand Master. Though not always true, the Deputy Grand Master will usually become Grand Master as his next station of duty.
specifically occurred after a report prepared by a committee which stressed the “foreign nature” of the Fraternity.\footnote{Ruiz, "Fighting the International Conspiracy: The Francoist Persecution of Freemasonry, 1936–1945," 182.}

Though the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Italy, Comizio Torrigiani, protested these statements and actions, the Fraternity faced a bleak future. Many Freemasons were harassed and persecuted, and some prominent Freemasons were assassinated. Italian Fascists looted homes of members and exiled prominent Masons to the Lipari Islands, including Torrigiani himself, who was exiled there in 1932 where he soon died.\footnote{Bessel. “Bigotry and the Murder of Freemasonry.” http://bessel.org/naziartl.htm}

As World War Two dragged on and the Italian Fascist government began to crumble, Giovanni Preziosi began broadcasting radio messages from Germany into Italy in which he railed against the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy and called for a further purge of Freemasons in the country. Preziosi went to his death in 1945 proclaiming that Italy remained under the control of the “international Judeo-Masonic conspiracy.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Besides Vichy France, perhaps the place where Freemasonry faced most extensive persecution as an internationalist organization outside of Germany was Francoist Spain. Though Freemasonry had existed in Spain for over two hundred years, it suffered various forms of persecution throughout its history. The Inquisition had kept Masonic Lodges out of Spain, and had done so with remarkable success until the French invaded in 1808 and began to establish Lodges in the country. “After the restoration of the \textit{ancien régime} in
1814, Freemasonry was again…denounced as unpatriotic, foreign, and Jewish."^220 and this discrimination expanded into open harassment and violence as soon as General Primo de Rivera established his military dictatorship in 1923. Because most Spanish Freemasons opposed the rule of de Rivera, the Grand Orient was dissolved and approximately two hundred Masons including the Grand Master were imprisoned for plotting against the state.^221 While most of these prisoners were released by the government, the Grand Master and five others remained in custody.^222 In January 1930 the de Rivera dictatorship fell, offering an opportunity for the Grand Orient and Grand Lodge to continue to operate. The Second Republic formed in 1931 and that May, the Grand Lodge of Spain met in Madrid for three days. Out of this meeting came a declaration of principles which the Spanish Masons believed should be incorporated into the constitution of the new Republic. The Grand Lodge affirmed the “inviolability of human rights in all their manifestations…” including

...the right to life and security; freedom of thought and conscience; the separation of Church and State; universal suffrage; free and compulsory education for all; State-controlled obligatory work allocated according to the strength and aptitudes of each individual; care of the elderly; free justice for all citizens and trial by jury for all offences; civil marriage with divorce laws and the legitimisation [sic] of natural offspring; abolition of the death penalty and voluntary military service limited to home defence [sic] in the case of aggression until “the spirit of peace among all nations makes it unnecessary.”^223

Of course, these were very liberal statements and the Spanish Freemasons set to involving themselves in the political future of the country. In the Spanish elections of 1931 the left—

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^223 Sealan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
and Freemasons—formed the new government. Spanish Freemasons filled government offices after the elections: eight of the Spanish cabinet posts, the mayor and governor of Madrid, the President and Speaker of the parliament of Catalan, the mayor of Barcelona—all were Freemasons in either the Grand Orient or the Grand Lodge of Spain. Furthermore, many other ministers were also Freemasons and even the Grand Master of the Grand Orient, Diego Martinez Barrio, served in an official capacity as Minister of Communications for the Second Republic.\textsuperscript{224} The Grand Orient of Spain would unequivocally support the new government as following Masonic philosophy and ideals.

Unfortunately, the reality of so many Freemasons in the new government did not sit well with those on the recently-defeated Spanish right. In 1931 the \textit{l’Association Maçonnique Internationale} gave the right more political fodder to attack the leftist government when it declared in its bulletin that, “our Spanish Brethren, who had so long been under suspicion by the dictatorship, are today in the seats of honour [sic]. We congratulate them.”\textsuperscript{225} Thus it comes as no surprise that when another Mason, Manuel Azaña, became President and introduced a program of agrarian reform coupled with a push for regional autonomy in Spain that the right attacked his regime as a “Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik” conspiracy.\textsuperscript{226}

The straw that broke the back of the proverbial camel in Spain came when Diego Martinez Barrio became Prime Minister of Spain. Though the Grand Orient and Grand Lodge maintained that they did not involve themselves in the political machinations of the

\textsuperscript{224} Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
\textsuperscript{225} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid.
country, the sheer number of Masons in the government along with the AMI’s statement in 1931 made this a hard pill for many rightists to swallow. Mauricio Carlavilla (known as Mauricio Karl), a right-wing Spanish propagandist took these conspiracy anxieties to new heights when he published *El Enemigo: Marxismo, Anarquismo, Masonería* (The Enemy: Marxism, Anarchism, and Masonry) in 1934 and followed that publication up with *Asesinos de España: Marxismo, Anarquismo, Masonería* (Assasins of Spain: Marxism, Anarchism, Masonry). Another right-wing writer, Francisco Luis, backed up Carlavilla with his 1935 publication *La masonería contra España* (Masonry against Spain). That same year, as a response to this pressure and after yet another election that restored right-wing parties to power and in an effort to break supposed Republican-Masonic influence in the country the Spanish legislature adopted a law which banned any member of the Spanish armed forces from being a Freemason.

The elections of 1936 ended with the leftist Popular Front government barely holding onto power. When José Calvo Sotelo, the head of the Monarchist party, was assassinated in July of 1936 by Luis Cuenca, the right pushed back against what it saw as an “international conspiracy” to remove traditionalists from power in Spain. The Popular Front coalition eventually gave way to another far-left Republican government under José Giral, who was also a Mason. These events led ultimately to the rightist uprising under General Francisco Franco which sparked the Spanish Civil War.

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227 Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
228 Ibid.
229 The defense of Madrid would be left to yet another Mason, General José Miaja.
From the beginning of the uprising, Franco’s supporters focused on removing what they termed “internationalist elements” from Spain. “In his very first instruction sent to fellow conspirators on April 15, 1936, [General Emilio Mola] stressed that the rebellion would be directed against ‘foreign’ elements such as Freemasonry.” General Franco was obsessed with the “international Masonic conspiracy against Spain” for the majority of his career and often pointed to the time of the founding of the Supreme Council by the French as evidence that Lodges were anti-Spanish and controlled by foreign entities. Even before the uprising, as commander of the Canary Islands, Franco ruthlessly banned Freemasonry, dissolved Lodges, and confiscated their property. As his Nationalist forces invaded the mainland, they pitilessly executed scores of Masons and leftists alike. While the Spanish Civil War raged, the Right took the opportunity to “avenge the loss of the Spanish Empire” by carrying out summary violence against Spanish Masons. During and after the Spanish Civil War, the majority of the Right in Spain united behind a belief in the right-wing, ultranationalist ideological theory of Spanish “Hispanidad” which meant “a strong centralized government, Catholicism and patriotic political and cultural attitude and deemed communism, anarchism, socialism, liberalism and freemasonry as foreign manifestations of anti-Spanish attitudes.” Thus, it was “with some justification that…the Nationalists fought for traditional Catholic Spain. These were people, moreover, who believed that by virtue or better education they had a superior sense of the history, culture and destiny of Spain and that all these [leftist] political movements they feared and

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despised were imported, foreign ideologies and essentially anti-Spanish, bent on tearing the country apart.” In September 1936, the Nationalist forces declared Freemasonry illegal, and warned that engaging in Masonic activities constituted an act of rebellion. On the first day of the uprising, two hundred Masons were executed in La Linea. Even though there were only about twelve members of a Masonic lodge in Huesca, over one hundred residents of the town were executed by firing squad in 1936. In October of that year, six Masons were executed by hanging for simply being members of the Fraternity and these violent trends only continued to intensify.

Throughout Spain, Spanish Morocco, and the Spanish Canary Islands, Masons by the hundreds were killed or imprisoned for just being Masons. In Spanish Morocco all Masons who were found were shot...in Cordova all those thought to be Masons were killed; in Grenada all those whose names were on Masonic records for any reason were marched out of the city and killed after digging their own graves; in Malaga [eighty] Masons were garroeted to death.

As stated above, Rightist newspapers and media outlets played a large role in the violence perpetrated against Masons and Masonic Lodges. Pro-Nationalist newspapers regularly acquired lists of Freemasons and quickly published them so that members could be hunted down en masse. Many of these publications were quite open about their goals. In particular, El Defensor de Cordoba (The Defender of Cordoba) called for the nationalist forces of Spain to “fight to form a single national front against the Jews and Masonic Lodges...[t]he calls to extermination are constant.” “One Falangist newspaper called for a crusade against masonry while another in Zaragoza stated that quick punishments should

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233 Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
236 Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
be meted out, ‘such is the damage that this pernicious society has caused Spain.’”

The bloodletting continued through 1937, and massacres of Masons occurred many times. Nationalists routinely acquired kill-lists of names of Freemasons or their associates. On July 18, 1937 Franco broadcasted a message via Spanish radio from Salamanca, in which he railed against the “interference of ‘foreign powers and lodges,’” and the “‘treason of the lodges. [against Spain]’”

In that same year, Father Jean Tusquets would begin working for the Nationalist Press Service and along with the personal chaplain to Franco—Father Jose Maria Bulart—and working as representatives of the “Delegation of Special Services” generated an index of over 80,000 alleged Spanish Freemasons—though at this time there were only an estimated 5,000 Freemasons in all of Spain. The Civil War continued on and Freemasons continued to perish at the hands of Nationalist forces.

…the masonic temple in Santa Cruz, Tenerife, was confiscated and transformed into the headquarters of the Falange, and another was shelled by Nationalist artillery. In Salamanca thirty members of one lodge were shot, including a priest. Similar atrocities occurred across the country: fifteen masons were shot in Logrono, seventeen in Ceuta, thirty-three in Algeciras, and thirty in Valladolid, among them the Civil Governor. Few towns escaped the carnage as Freemasons in Lugo, Zamora, Cadiz and Granada were brutally rounded up and shot and in Seville, the entire membership of several lodges were butchered. The mere suspicion of affiliation was often enough to earn a place in a firing squad, and the blood-letting was so fierce that, reportedly, some masons were even hurled into working engines of steam trains.

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237 Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
240 Scalan, “Freemasonry and the Spanish Civil War: Part I, the Path to War.”
In short, Masons found in any Nationalist-controlled region in Spain were massacred and Franco’s stance on the Fraternity was clear. Though this was not the first time Freemasonry was explicitly linked with Communism and Judaism, Franco’s conviction—and the conviction of much of the Fascist government—was that much like Communism and Zionism, Freemasonry “was an international movement that would never rest until Francoist Spain had been crushed.”

To Franco, Freemasonry had to be obliterated and erased from Spanish history and culture. To this end, in 1938 he decreed that gravestones bearing the Square and Compasses or other Masonic symbols be removed or the symbols erased. Franco also legalized the confiscation of Masonic property in February 1939 with the Law of Political Responsibilities (LPR). The law also specified that “membership in a Lodge” was one of seventeen factors which indicated responsibility for starting the civil war. In January 1940, the now-victorious Francoist regime clarified the issue further by military order that “any Freemason who ‘actively took part in the red revolution’ should be shot.” This conflation of Masons and Communists raises serious questions as to which groups the “crusade” was primarily directed against, because not even members of the Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist Party or PCE) were subjected to such harsh measures. Franco specifically outlawed and criminalized

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241 This link would first be made in France. Cardinal Goma would make a radio address to Spain “in which he announced that the Nationalists were fighting against the ‘bastard soul of the sons of Moscow—the ‘Jews and Masons.’” Again, the old links of “atheism”—real or supposed—would link Masons, Jews, and Communists and atheism was something the nationalists in Catholic Spain feared the most. Ruiz, “Fighting the International Conspiracy: The Francoist Persecution of Freemasonry, 1936–1945,” 180.
244 Ibid.
Freemasonry one year later in March 1940, with the passage of the Law for the Repression of Freemasonry and Communists (LRFC).\textsuperscript{245}

The LRFC was significant for a number of reasons, and its implementation was even more telling in regard to which groups the law specifically aimed to target and punish. The first and most apparent observation regarding the LRFC was that even though Franco and his allies posited a “Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik” conspiracy much like rightists and fascists in France, Italy, Germany, and elsewhere, nothing in the law specifically mentioned Jews. Furthermore, it should be noted that though there were very few Jewish residents—probably less than one thousand—in Spain at the time, and though they practiced their religion under strenuous circumstances, subjected to vandalized or closed places of worship, “there was no systematic persecution of the Jews” in Spain.\textsuperscript{246} The law itself was never used to punish Jews as a specific group, though this did not prevent Francoist ministers and bureaucrats from linking Jews to Freemasons as the Special Tribunal—the highest judicial body in Francoist Spain—did in 1942. The Tribunal stated that, “‘it is interesting to note…the great numbers of Jewish Masons. Taking into account the few followers of Moses who, thankfully, live in Spain, one can state that virtually all Jewish residents…were masons.’”\textsuperscript{247} During the Holocaust, Francoist Spain even allowed Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany to cross into the country in order to escape Nazi persecution.\textsuperscript{248} Thus it seems that the international Jewish conspiracy was never a primary

\textsuperscript{245} Full text of the decree can be found at the Grand Lodge of Scotland’s website http://www.grandlodgescotland.com/masonic-subjects/holocaust-memorial-day/articles/96-freemasonry-banned-in-spain-by-general-franco.


\textsuperscript{247} Ibid., 180.

\textsuperscript{248} Ibid.
concern in Francoist Spain. Even communism, specifically referenced in Articles one, three, five, and seven was “characteristically ill-defined in the LRFC as ‘agitators, leaders, and active collaborators of Soviet, Trotskyite, anarchist or similar propaganda or activity’” and an early draft of the law did not even include Communism in the title, but only referred to Freemasonry.249

What is clear from an examination of the structure of the 1940 anti-Masonic law and its implementation is that “Spanish Freemasons (unlike their Jewish counterparts), were held especially responsible for the national ‘decline’ of Spain.”250 For example, the law not only made it a felony to be a member of a Masonic Lodge, but constituted Masonic membership in the higher Masonic bodies of the “18th to the 33rd inclusive” or to have “taken part in any Annual Communications or being part of any Committee or Board of the Grand Orient of Spain” as “aggravated circumstances.”251 The year the decree appeared, a five-member special military tribunal—specifically called the “anti-Masonic Tribunal” by the Falangists—convened in Madrid to prosecute Masonic cases;

…it is estimated that about 2,000 men were imprisoned for up to [thirty] years. A more detailed summary derived from Grand Lodge of Spain records lists 1,608 Brethren sentenced to [twelve] years and one day imprisonment, 285 to [sixteen] years and one day, 133 to [twenty] years and one day and 159 to [thirty] years, all with loss of civil rights. On the other hand, Franco’s Minister of Justice claimed that 950 Freemasons had been imprisoned, of which 500 had been released by 1945.252

250 Ibid., 182.
252 Ibid.
So great was the fear and persecution of Freemasons in Spain that in June 1942, the tribunal tried ninety-seven-year-old Martin Sescador Ventusin who had been initiated into Argentina Lodge in Almería in 1883. Ventusin was thirty-eight at the time of his initiation. He was convicted and given a sixteen-year prison sentence. In 1946 Mario Blasco Ibanez was sentenced to twelve years in prison for being a member of a Masonic Lodge at some time, this despite the fact that Ibanez was not only blind, but also deaf and paralyzed. This brutal persecution continued until the restoration of democratic rule in 1975, though it apparently failed to “make the regime feel more secure against the Masonic ‘threat.’” This failure occurred because the true reason for the passage of the LRFC was not, according to scholars, to punish Freemasons for causing the downfall of Spain and the Spanish Civil War, but to “defeat the still powerful influence of the international conspiracy within Spain.” Ruiz states that

Although complete figures are still not available, recent research points to this conclusion. A study of all 2,307 sentences issued in absentia by the Special Tribunal before its dissolution in 1964 shows that 2,269 (98.4 per cent) were convicted for Freemasonry, 26 (1.1 per cent) for Freemasonry and communism and only 12 (0.5 per cent) for communism. Analysis of 677 defendants from Madrid sentenced by the Special Tribunal in the period 1941 to February 1945 has revealed that 654 (96.6 per cent) were convicted of Freemasonry, 14 (2.1 per cent) were acquitted of Freemasonry, seven (one per cent) were convicted of Freemasonry and communism; just two (0.3 per cent) were convicted just for communism... [even] more Falangists (as ex-Masons) were convicted than actual Communists. From this conviction data, it is clear that the primary goal of the LRFC was the persecution of Freemasons almost exclusively “to meet an imagined need—the subjugation of the

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256 Ibid., 189.
nebulous international conspiracy within Spain.” 

Franco stated this plainly in 1943; “"Above States, above the lives of Governments, exists a super State: the super Masonic State, that dictates its laws to its members." Franco would also conclude that, “"Freemasonry has always been the main enemy of Spain. It has sought her ruin for the benefit of foreign powers."”

Franco held onto his belief in this conspiracy until his last days, as can be seen within the transcripts of some of his last speeches and those of his comrades.

These instances of anti-Masonic persecution in areas of Europe other than Germany clearly demonstrate that although the “Judeo-Masonic” or “Judeo-Masonic-Bolshevik” conspiracy was employed and propagated by European right-wing ultranationalists to incite national communities and their leaders to action, in practice these actions specifically targeted Freemasons. Whether it was the “nationalizing” of the “Grand Orient” by Jules Guérin, the Italian Fascist committee report which stressed the “foreign” nature of Masonic Lodges, or the many vicious and violent attacks and persecutions of “internationalist” and “foreign” Masons in Francoist Spain, all of these examples represented traditionalist attempts to repulse a popular movement they feared and despised - the growing liberal internationalist perspective espoused by many Europeans—including Masonic Grand Lodges—after World War One. These liberally-inspired ideas of putting nationalities aside and making “one Great Lodge of Brethren worldwide” generated intense fear and anxiety in those who strove to reestablish strong nationalist interests in their country and take control back from those “foreign” elements which were seen as ruining their attempts at

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258 Ibid., 194.
259 Quote cited in Ruiz footnote 112, 194.
restoring “pure” national glory. This worldview took on an even more alarming tone when taken up by European Freemasons themselves. National Socialist Germany, the example analyzed in the next chapter, provides one instance of this disturbing process.
The history of Freemasonry in Germany—following the general trend of the institution itself—is steeped in legend, mystery, and mythical created histories. This largely inscrutable past is exacerbated by the fact that many German Lodge records were lost or destroyed over the last three centuries or were never kept to begin with, due to the transitory nature of many early Lodges as they lacked permanent meeting places. The history is complicated further from the simultaneous existence of several controlling “Grand” Lodges in the regions that later became Germany.²⁶⁰ In addition, over time certain Grand Lodges amalgamated with others, while smaller Masonic circles changed allegiances or broke away entirely and formed their own Grand Lodges. In this regard, the history of German Freemasonry is as fragmented and chaotic as the history of German-speaking Europe itself.

Throughout the history of the Masonic Order, European Freemasons attempted to link their magnificent institution with the guilds of ancient builders who constructed the monolithic structures of Europe. In this case, one history of German Freemasonry began...
with the Steinmetzen (stonemasons) of the late medieval and early modern period.\textsuperscript{261} However, in terms of definitive links between the modern society of “speculative” Freemasonry and those of the “operative” guilds, the jury is still out.\textsuperscript{262} To determine when the purely modern institution of Freemasonry came to Germany however, one need not look deeper into the past than the early 1700s, shortly after the forming of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. It is around this time that Germans traveling abroad in England were initiated into English Lodges, after which they returned to their places of origin. By the 1730s, Freemasonry spread throughout German-speaking Europe—albeit without an overarching official, or “Grand” organizing body—and groups of Freemasons met in “improvised arrangements” to discuss “mutual masonic intelligence,” read “the Book of Constitutions,” and work on “catechizing.”\textsuperscript{263}

Scant documentary evidence from the early eighteenth century points to the formation of a masonic circle in Lower Saxony, as a “Monsieur Thuanus” was appointed the Provincial Grand Master of the region in 1730, but does not confirm that he made any particular effort to establish a working Lodge in this area.\textsuperscript{264} By 1733 however, formal Lodges were established throughout the area as more German men joined the fraternity. One group of eleven Masons in Hamburg were granted a deputation to form a permanent Lodge by James Lyon, 7th Earl of Strathmore who at that time was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England. However, little more is known about this Lodge, as specific


\textsuperscript{263} Gottfried, \textit{History of Freemasonry}, 238-39.

\textsuperscript{264} Carl Wiebe, "Notes on German Freemasonry," \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 9 (1896), 147.
Lodge records such as minutes do not survive and there is some debate as to whether the Lodge even ever officially formed.\textsuperscript{265} Surviving records in England point to the fact that a Lodge of Masons in Hamburg existed from this point, although its exact location, name, and date of constitution remain the subject of scholarly debate.\textsuperscript{266} Some additional evidence from Hamburg in 1737 also suggests that a “Holy Lodge of St. John”—otherwise an anonymous Lodge—formed, as minutes of that meeting survived, but again, little else is known of this Lodge. In any event, evidence indicates that some gathering of Masons existed in Hamburg since 1733. Officially, the Absolom Lodge is the oldest Lodge in the German-speaking area, as it received a Warrant of Confirmation in 1787 stating that it held succession from the Lodge chartered in 1733.\textsuperscript{267} However, as more Lodges formed—usually gaining their charters from the Grand Lodge of England—some of them took the initiative of declaring themselves “Mother and Grand Lodges” for their region and therefore declared themselves the “official” supervising body. This was especially true of Lodges founded in larger cities such as Berlin. These self-appointed “Grand Mother Lodges” then began to issue warrants of constitution to other Lodges, granting them permission to form and meet. As such, the peculiarity of several coterminous Grand Lodges and “independent” Lodges in Germany is explained by these developments.\textsuperscript{268}

The heritage and regularity of the Absolom Lodge becomes important as Freemasonry in Germany would receive its largest endorsement from the Crown Prince of Prussia after his initiation by a delegation from the Absolom Lodge in August 1738 at

\textsuperscript{265}\ See arguments in Carl Wiebe, "Notes on German Freemasonry," \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 9 (1896).
\textsuperscript{266}\ Ibid, 147.
\textsuperscript{267}\ Wiebe, "Notes on German Freemasonry," \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 9 (1896), 149.
\textsuperscript{268}\ Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum}, 9 (1896) 55-6.
Brunswick. The future king constituted a Lodge and held meetings in secret at the Rheinsberg Palace. Prince Frederick became King Frederick II (the Great) in 1740 and shortly thereafter established a new Lodge in Berlin under the name of *zu den drei Weltkugeln* (The Lodge of the Three Globes).\(^{269}\) The Lodge held its first meeting with Frederick the Great himself at the helm in September 1740. Very soon after its formation, the Lodge of the Three Globes began issuing warrants of Constitution to several groups wishing to form Lodges of their own and in June 1744, The Lodge of the Three Globes declared itself “The Grand Mother Lodge of the Three Globes.” Frederick assumed the title of Grand Master for this Grand body from this point until his death in 1786.\(^{270}\)

This trend of “Grand Lodge” establishment continued with the founding of the Royal York Lodge of Friendship, established in 1760 at the urging of some French Masons in Berlin and the Grand Lodge of Prussia, called the Royal York of Friendship in 1798.\(^{271}\) Finally in 1770 in Berlin J.W. von Zinnendorff formed the National Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Germany. This Grand Lodge evolved from twelve Lodges constituted under the Swedish Rite.\(^{272}\) This Grand Lodge later received official sanction by Frederick the Great in 1774.\(^{273}\) Together, these three Grand Lodges constituted the “Old Prussian” Grand Lodges.

\(^{270}\) Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” 56.
\(^{271}\) Ibid, 60.
\(^{272}\) “The Swedish System or Rite is commonly described as a mixture of English Freemasonry, the High Degrees of the French, of Templarism, and of certain ideas peculiar to the Hermetic or Rosicrucian Fraternities. It is also affirmed that the mystical teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg are discernable in the doctrines of the Rite.” Gotthelf Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” 57. Ralf Melzer relates that the Swedish System “followed an exclusive and explicit Christian form of Freemasonry, even more so than the other Old Prussian Grand Lodges” in “In the Eye of the Hurricane: German Freemasonry in the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich,” in Hoyos and Morris, eds., *Freemasonry in Context: History, Ritual, Controversy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 90.
\(^{273}\) Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” 59.
Another Grand Lodge bloc evolved parallel to the Old Prussian system beginning with the founding of the Grand Mother Lodge zur Sonne (the Sun) at Bayreuth by Frederick I, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach in 1741. Frederick I, in direct imitation of Frederick the Great, served as Grand Master of this Grand Lodge until 1763. Two more Grand Lodges were constituted and established in 1811; The Grand Lodge of Hamburg and the Grand National Lodge of Saxony. Additionally, the Mother Grand Lodge of the Eclectic Union formed in 1823 out of disagreements with the Grand Lodge of England and The Grand Lodge “Concord” of Darmstadt would form in 1846 out of disagreements that would come about due to quarrels within the Grand Lodge of the Eclectic Union. The last regular Grand Lodge to take shape formed from five “independent” Lodges. This Lodge, known as the Grand Lodge German Chain of Brotherhood was established in Leipzig in 1924. These five “regular” Lodges comprised the “Humanitarian” Grand Lodges within Germany.

These two camps—Old Prussian and Humanitarian—constituted the nucleus of German Freemasonry for many years. As such, these eight Grand Lodges formed an alliance in the Grand Lodge League of Germany in 1872. The goals of this league included fostering closer cooperation between the various German Grand Lodges and to “present a united Masonic front to the non-German Grand Lodges”.

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276 Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” 63.
In addition to the Lodges which formed the Grand Lodge League there were two final Grand Lodges that appeared in the first half of the twentieth century. These two Lodges were seen as “irregular” and as such did not join themselves to either the Old Prussian or the Humanitarian Grand Lodge camps. The first of these was the Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun formed in 1907, and the second was the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany formed last in 1930 and sanctioned by the German Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.277

Thus, the landscape of German Freemasonry in the early 1900s was heavily fragmented between the “Old Prussian,” “Humanitarian,” and independent Grand Lodges. This fragmentation was structural, political, and ethical. Of course, all of the Grand Lodges in Germany held concurrent jurisdiction with one another, meaning that in reality there was no sole sovereign governing body of all Masons in Germany. Therefore, little solidarity existed among the various Grand organizations themselves, as none held any power over another. Additionally, Lodges in the “Old Prussian” group tended to lean more toward the right of the political spectrum and were usually more nationalistic than the “Humanitarian” Grand Lodges which were more internationally focused and whose members could usually be found in political parties that occupied the middle or far left of the German political spectrum. “Old Prussian” Lodges also deliberately excluded Jews, whereas “Humanitarian” and the various independent Grand Lodges did admit Jews.278 Moreover,

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the “Old Prussian” Lodges specifically ignored a portion of the Ancient Charges.\textsuperscript{279} These omissions included one specific charge mentioned by Howe, “Let a man’s religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the order provided that he believe in the glorious architect of heaven and earth and practice the sacred duties of morality,” which derives from the 1815 revision of the Ancient Charges.\textsuperscript{280} For many years across Europe, Jews were both admitted to various Lodges and had formed their own Lodges based on this or similar versions of this Ancient Charge. This issue regarding the “Jewish Question” had plagued the development of Freemasonry in German since the early 1800s, and continued to be the point of contention between the “Old Prussian” and “Humanitarian” Grand Lodges.\textsuperscript{281} The reason for this religious discrimination that was given by the “Old Prussian” Lodges was that their Craft Degrees were followed by Higher Degrees which were overtly Christian.\textsuperscript{282} However, the initial benign religious restriction later became a justification for racial exclusion, as anti-Semitism grew in Europe during the early part of the twentieth century.

\textsuperscript{279} The “Ancient Charges” refer to a set of rules that Masons were “charged” or duty-bound to execute.

\textsuperscript{280} Versions of this charge include the 1723 charge which reads, “I. Concerning GOD and RELIGION. A Mason is oblig’d by his Tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charg’d in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet ’tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish’d; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain’d at a perpetual Distance [sic].” The 1738 charges contained various innovations introduced by Anderson, including passages that indicate that a clear Christian emphasis had entered the Lodges. See James Anderson, \textit{Constitutions of the Free-Masons: in the year of masonry 5723 and The new book of constitutions of the antient and honourable fraternity of free and accepted Masons in the vulgar year of masonry 5738} (London: Quatuor Coronati Lodge, 1976).

\textsuperscript{281} Gould, Robert Freke, \textit{A Library of Freemasonry, 75}.

\textsuperscript{282} Howe, “The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5,” \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 95, 21.
Regardless of the complex nature and fractured jurisdiction of the various Grand Lodges, German Freemasonry as a whole grew and flourished during the nineteenth century. In 1896 membership across all eight Grand Lodges plus five independent Lodges stood at an estimated 45,080 members. These numbers rose and fell during times of crisis, including World War One. However, by 1925 these numbers again increased to more than 82,000 Masons in Germany, members of one or more of the 632 Lodges in the country. Unfortunately, these numbers experienced a steady decline in the years between 1926 and the disbandment of Masonic Lodges almost ten years later as a result of the global economic downturn and a vociferous, sustained dissemination of anti-Masonic propaganda by German far-right groups, including the National Socialists.

Two interesting details help contextualize the beginnings of the suppression of Freemasonry in Germany: first, although the Nazis actively and aggressively perpetuated anti-Masonic sentiments, antagonism toward Freemasons in Germany began earlier than the rise of Nazism after 1922. Second, as noted earlier in this thesis, the construction of the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” myth occurred well before its employment by Nazi leadership. The Nazis simply and cynically employed inherited hatreds and suspicions that had existed for centuries. When Europe erupted in revolution in 1848, conspiracy theories soon followed. A series of anonymous pamphlets titled Aufklärung der grossen Freimaurer-Lüge (Clarification of the Great Freemason Lie) appeared shortly thereafter in German-speaking areas and explicitly implicated Jewish-Masonic collaboration in the 1848 German Revolution. As noted previously, the Protocols came to Germany through a

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283 Greiner, “German Freemasonry in the Present Era,” 75.
284 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 90.
number of reprintings before appearing in 1920 in *Luč sveta*, a magazine for Russian exiles living in Germany.\(^{285}\) It later appeared in German translation in Berlin in 1922.

The German version of the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” became more articulate as anti-Semitic furor escalated after Jewish emancipation in the mid-nineteenth century, and the association further manifested during World War One, as radical-right nationalist authors such as Ludwig Müller von Hausen and Theodor Fritsch seized on the news in 1915 that Italy had entered the war on the side of the Allies. These writers interpreted this decision as a blatantly anti-German move instigated by the Grand Lodge of Italy and the Grand Orient of France. Von Hausen and Fritsch also first proposed the existence of a *Weltfreimaurerei*, or “International” or “World Freemasonry” secretly controlled by a worldwide Jewish cabal.\(^{286}\) Three other anti-Masonic German language works later became extremely popular during the interwar period that continued to perpetuate the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” and represented the hyperbolic pinnacle of interwar anti-Masonic propaganda. The first, Dr. Freiedrich Wichtl’s *Weltfreimaurerei, Weltrevolution, Weltrepublic*” (World Freemasonry, World Revolution, World Republic) published in 1919, was followed by von Hausen’s edited version of the *Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion* in 1920—which incorporated vast amounts of anti-Masonic material not present in the original, primarily anti-Semitic manuscript—and General Erich Ludendorff’s *Vernichtung der Freimaurerei durch Enthüllung ihrer Geheimnisse* (The Extermination of Freemasonry by the Exposure of its Secrets) published in 1926.


Ludendorff, military commander of Germany during the war and later an early supporter of Hitler, argued that “the secret of Freemasonry everywhere is the Jew” and that “the striving for a ‘brotherhood of men’ for ‘humanity’ and ‘human bliss’ was…identical with a ‘Judaization’ of the peoples of the world and with establishing Jewish world domination.” All three publications enjoyed wide readership and best-seller status during the interwar period. Von Hausen’s Protocols was instituted as mandatory reading for schoolchildren in the Third Reich even after its unmasking as a plagiarized hoax a generation earlier.

Of course, many other writers not mentioned here also reworked and republished these conspiracy theories. Thus, the “perfidious Jew” stereotype merged with the “perfidious Freemason” stereotype through these nationalistic propagandist narratives during the early twentieth century, with a cumulative effect that shaped a strand of public opinion openly hostile to both Jews and Freemasons. As a result, for many ideological fellow-travelers the terms became synonymous. Thus, the “imaginary enemy” had already been created, documented, detailed, and internalized by many in Europe by the time the Nazis took control of Germany. When Hitler came to power in January 1933, the majority of the justification for oppressing Masons in Germany already existed for him to use, and when he railed against Freemasons in Mein Kampf he simply parroted what had become “common knowledge” for many in Germany at the time.

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Tragically, the idea of an international “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy,” though expressed in various versions of the Protocols and other anti-Masonic publications, unfortunately echoed similar statements made publicly by many Masons across nineteenth century Europe which provided apparent “evidence” to support many contemporary conspiratorial arguments. “‘[German] Freemasonry penetrated both the world of the courts and that of the educated and propertied burgher classes. The members all came to share a beneficent, cosmopolitan attitude, one that expected an improvement in humanity.’” For example, a lecture presented in Karlsruhe in 1869 by Johann Caspar Bluntschli “argued that the lodges were a ‘moral association,’ a ‘bond that loops through the different states and the different churches and, in contrast to political egotism and religious pettiness, connects them all as parts of a single mankind.’” Other Masons in the same decade suggested a “‘Masonic-cosmopolitan era’ was imminent, as ‘the necessary final link in the chain of the gradual developments of the human race’” and that the “‘civic sense and national feeling [would (soon) lead] to cosmopolitan sense, [and to] universal human love.’” Masons themselves, as well as non-Masons, defined and understood Freemasonry as an international and transnational institution, and to some extent this was true. As police supervision of Masonic Lodges waned in many countries after 1860, and regional and international commerce and travel increased due to the “shrinking of the world” made possible by new forms of mechanized, rapid long-distance travel and communication, “correspondence among the grand lodges, the exchange of representatives, and individual visits to lodges in foreign countries (for example, during

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292 Ibid., 245.
business trips) all made Freemasonry more international.” As a result of these trends, for anxious xenophobic nationalists, Freemasons became the enemies within—archetypical internationalist “fifth columnists”—as the ideas of internationalism, universalism, and the “brotherhood of all men” propagated by those in Masonic Lodges in rhetoric and reality collided head-on with new nativist and ultranationalist ideologies.

This clash of ideologies appeared clearly in the rhetoric which accompanied European Masonic discourse during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), and afterward in the buildup to World War One during the Belle Epoque. In short, “nationalism transformed pre-political beliefs and norms into political ones in such a way that these determined national identity as well as conceptions of the ‘enemy,’” so that during this war, both the Germans and the French—and German and French Freemasons—viewed each other as the perennial evil which threatened “humanity.” As such, both Germany and France severed ties with one another during the war and French and German Freemasons both issued manifestos condemning the other side for barbarity, while characterizing their national cause as an attempt to safeguard Western civilization. Other Masonic grand jurisdictions in Europe followed suit, all condemning “German barbarism” during the war. During the early months of the war, war balloons dropped leaflets over the front lines which “called on Freemasons to think about progress and to join the French as brothers after civilization [the French] had been victorious over barbarism.” However,

294 Ibid., 241.
295 Ibid., 250-254.
296 Ibid., 251.
297 Ibid., 250-251.
there were also stories of Masons on both sides showing compassion to one another on the battlefield, as Hoffman relates in the following anecdote;

One German Freemason told the following story: On the battlefield, a French lieutenant is able to identify himself as a Freemason through the secret Masonic distress signal. A German captain spares the French lieutenant’s life but is then struck in the heart by an enemy bullet. The Frenchman is shot in the head and collapses beside his savior. He seized the German by the hand and utters the following words before dying: ‘Thank you, my brother!’ Faced with death, the distinctions between friend and foe disappear; the two are simply brothers.\footnote{Hoffman, \textit{The Politics of Sociability: Freemasonry and German Civil Society, 1840-1918}, 252.}

Stories such as these also inspired Masonic poetry during the war. Nationalists in later periods would have been horrified to hear of such “international” compassion. In addition to stories of fraternal compassion, there existed on the front lines during and immediately after the war in 1871, some “field Lodges” in which returning French POWs and withdrawing German soldiers met. A Lodge was established around Vesoul in eastern France by approximately three hundred French and German officers and local members—all Freemasons—met in harmony and concord so that many “must have believed they were witnessing a \textit{tableau vivant} [living picture] of Freemasonry’s humanist ideals.”\footnote{Ibid., 253} The fact that German and French Masons met in Lodges together during the war, of course, appeared scandalous, even treasonous to those in the nationalist camp, and encouraged many nationalists to speculate as to which and how many “state secrets” and “traitorous activities” were exchanged during these meetings. However, for the most part, Freemasons in both countries remained hostile to one another even after the war ended. Therefore, the reality of an “international” or “universal” European Freemasonry never materialized as many had hoped (or feared).
Eventually a reunion between the Masonic jurisdictions in both countries occurred and “depending on their political beliefs, members of the public regarded this mutual recognition either as an important step in the rapprochement between the two countries or as yet more evidence of a Jewish-Masonic world conspiracy.” Though many Masons embedded their moral universalism and internationalism in the progress of their own nation-state (i.e. German or French culture would become the standard of the universal morality or culture) those on the outside of the Lodges heard only the talk of an “international brotherhood” or a “universal brotherhood” and this made the Lodges suspect. The internationalist tenor of many Masonic conventions after the war, again, did not help the case of Freemasons wanting to distance themselves from the rumors that implicated them in an international conspiracy.

Themes of internationalism and universalism prevailed in the European Masonic world after the Franco-Prussian war and into the twentieth century. For example, the 1900 *Handbuch der Freimaurerei* (the Handbook of Freemasonry) stated that “according to Freemasonry’s essence and purpose, the Mason must recognize every person as a human being, regardless of his race or heritage, regardless of his rank or status, and regardless of his religion. In order to connect its members as brothers of the human race and bind them together in human love, freedom, and concord, Freemasonry excludes from its lodges all religious and political conflict.” To further stress the point, in 1903 the International Bureau of Masonic Relations was established in Neuchâtel with the explicit motive of facilitating international links between Masonic Lodges in Europe. Finally, in 1907 a

301 Ibid., 242.
302 Ibid., 263.
303 Ibid., 261.
meeting of pacifist Freemasons occurred in Alsace near Colmar, close to the border of France and Germany. The meeting’s main purpose was, of course, “For World Peace and International Brotherhood.”

Further meetings would be held elsewhere in Basel and Baden-Baden, all following the same trajectory.

“Moral universalism or…internationalism ‘was the reverse of the medal of nineteenth- and earlier twentieth-century nationalism.’ The two existed in ‘permanent, uneasy tension with one another, the Siamese twin brothers of a single world-historical process.’”

As the First World War began, these tensions between nationalism and internationalism arose again as

Both German and French Freemasons initially regarded the First World War not as a repudiation but as a confirmation of their universalist identity. This changed, however, over the course of the war, as the traumatic rupture that the war represented undermined the belief in the idea of civilization, for the French and even more dramatically for the Germans. The connection between nationalist and humanist discourse typical of the nineteenth century list dramatically in credibility. Between the First and Second World Wars, a variety of political camps openly rejected this humanist identity and came to regard Freemasonry as the negative embodiment of it.

After the war, “concepts such as humanity and civilization and the ideas of liberalism and universalism were now said to be foreign to Germans, who, it was claimed, had always pursued a particularist volkish social and political ideal.”

After their traumatic and unexpected defeat in the First World War, the German people were motivated to single out groups that they considered responsible for their losses, and secretive groups such as Freemasons proved easily identifiable and convenient targets.

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305 Ibid., 273.
306 Ibid., 275.
307 Ibid., 282.
Only initially did the German public place the blame for the World War on foreign Lodges. This changed as World War One continued, and the myth of the “Judeo-Masonic world conspiracy,” which now included German Masonic Lodges, was propagated by those on the right, specifically by Catholic parties. The Prussian Parliament in 1918 debated the theory openly, when Prince Otto Salm-Horstmar stated that Freemasons were provoking world revolution and specifically implicated Trotsky and Lenin in the wider plot. Thus a new internationalist ideology, Bolshevism, was brought into this conspiratorial narrative.

To the entire Prussian Upper Chamber

Salm-Holstmar described the world war as the metaphysical battle between a Western “Jewish-democratic” worldview and a “German-aristocratic” one. ‘It is the nature of the Jewish race, which has spread across the entire world,’ he argued, ‘that it increasingly loses its sense of home and fatherland—of course with some exceptions—and that it thus develops more sense for cosmopolitanism and the International.’ In their ‘striving for world domination,’ ‘far-sighted Jews,’ Salm-Holstmar continued, had found a useful instrument in Freemasonry, ‘where they play a leading role.’ It is impossible, he conceded, to determine ‘the extent to which the aims of international Freemasonry coincide with the aims of the international Jewry.’ Salm-Holstmar was certain, however, that the ‘Jewish-Masonic International’ sought a universal ‘domination of large-scale capital’ and a democracy under an Anglo-American diktat.

Salm-Holstmar’s speech was widely disseminated in the German press and many people became aware of the supposed secret intrigues of international Freemasonry. “The völkish camp had ‘discovered’ Jews and Freemasons as political scapegoats for the world war.”

As a result of the change in the political winds

German Masonic lodges thus found themselves in a paradoxical situation. While Freemasons in France and Germany had abandoned their humanist identity over the course of the war, the German public now more than ever regarded Masonic lodges precisely as the symbol of this political humanism and thus attacked them sharply.

309 Ibid., 283.
310 Ibid.
as the secret bridgehead for the enemy within their own country. The lodges’ traditional cosmopolitan claim was now used against them.\textsuperscript{311}

While the Catholic parties inside Germany had always regarded Freemasons as the enemy, now a majority of German citizens began to see Freemasons as the central and only enemy. Writers increasingly blamed the loss of the war on Freemasons. One author in the \textit{Historisch-politische Blätter} speaking of the First World War wrote that “‘the lodge is the true and most profound reason for this horrifying bloodbath…it is the instigator of the most terrible worldwide fire that mankind has ever seen. The lodge provoked war among nations because it believed that the time had come for it to play its double game and to inaugurate a new era devoid of thrones and altars.”\textsuperscript{312} Thomas Mann writing in \textit{Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man} stated that he “had already identified the ‘World Lodge’ with its political humanism as the chief offender responsible for the outbreak of the First World War.” Mann would argue that “‘Germany’s enemy in the most intellectual, instinctive, venomous, and deadly sense, is the “pacifistic,” “virtuous,” “republican,” bourgeois rhetorician and fils de la revolution [sons of the revolution]; this born three-point man.’”\textsuperscript{313} After the war, even Kaiser Wilhelm II claimed in his memoires that the World War had been started by an “‘international Grand Orient Lodge’” in order to destroy the German monarchies.\textsuperscript{314} The change that had occurred was that, in the first half of the twentieth century, terms such as “bourgeois,” “cosmopolitan,” and “Jewish” came to be understood as synonymous terms for the same definition and diametrically opposed to the \textit{volk}.\textsuperscript{315} As such, during the post-

\textsuperscript{311} Hoffman, \textit{The Politics of Sociability: Freemasonry and German Civil Society, 1840-1918}, 282.
\textsuperscript{312} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{313} Ibid., 287-288.
\textsuperscript{314} Ibid., 283.
\textsuperscript{315} The 1851 \textit{Meyer’s Conversations-Lexicon} defined the term “cosmopolitanism” as denoting that “‘every people develop freely, without impairing others and without being impaired by others. Cosmopolitanism does not strive to eradicate that natural national differences, which allow mankind to appear in such enormous diversity, in favor of some abstract unity. Instead it allows all peoples of the world to freely
War eras, not only hard rightist political parties, but liberal parties increasingly came to see Freemasonry as an establishment which propagated a humanist and universalist philosophy of a bygone time and unsuited to the times, trials, and necessities of the twentieth century.

As a result of these outside pressures, many German Lodges of their own accord began attempts to change aspects of Masonic ritual and project an image that was more “nationalistic” and “volkish” than before. As early as 1920, many Humanitarian Craft Lodges began to bow out of liberal Freemasonry, leaving their Humanitarian Grand Lodges and joining with the Old Prussian camp. Even the Masonic journals and other publications of the time became more polarized and politicized, and many Lodges found Nazism to be in line with their Masonic ideals, especially those who were members of Old Prussian Grand Lodges. Before Nazism could destroy the temples of Freemasonry in Germany however, it would be the actions of the various Grand Lodges themselves that would begin to pull up the floorboards.

Ralf Melzer relates that as of “1922, membership in the Old Prussian lodges consisted of about 47,000 brethren, which was approximately 70 percent of the 67,000 German men who were then Freemasons and members of regular lodges in Germany.”

Even with this power in numbers however, Masonic Grand Lodges in Germany could not present a united front against anti-Masonic attacks. There would be less synchronicity in the message coming out of German Masonry after April 1922 when the Old Prussian Grand Lodges of Royal York, the Three Globes, and the Grand National Lodge withdrew from unfold the talents and powers they possess. It demands only that this does not occur at the expense of other peoples. Thus cosmopolitanism is by no means opposed to a sensible patriotism firmly defining the rights of the fatherland, but only to unjust, arrogant, and prejudiced national fanaticism.” Hoffman, The Politics of Sociability: Freemasonry and German Civil Society, 1840-1918, 245.

316 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 92.
the Grand Lodge League citing the “‘pacifist and cosmopolitan policies’” of the Humanitarian Grand Lodges. “They felt offended by the Humanitarians because of the Old Prussians’ disapproving attitude toward Jews.”

They went on to state that “there is a border which strongly differentiates humanitarian from Old Prussian national Freemasonry. We, the three Old Prussian Grand Lodges, refuse to take part in the general humanitarian fraternization movement between people and the world.”

The Old Prussian Lodges “felt that the German Union of Grand Lodges prevented them from giving new heart to the German nation, and that they were hindered by their efforts to support ‘the nation’s religiousness.’” In severing ties with the remainder of the German Grand Lodges, they emphasized their German nationalistic and patriotic sentiments, partly in hopes of gaining favor with their critics.

However, these shifts to the right did not change the attitudes of their critics, neither did they go unnoticed by those within the Masonic establishment. In the preface to the third volume of the 1932 Geschicchte der Freimaurerie in Deutschland (History of Freemasonry in Germany), author Ferdinand Runkel stated that, “‘The spirit of political dissension has invaded even Freemasonry’s quiet Temples. Since then the two movements, the older Christian one and the younger Humanitarian one, have become more and more estranged.’”

Individual Lodges still had convivial relations and still allowed visitation rights between Humanitarians and Old Prussians. Ultimately, however, policies appeared within the Old Prussian camp designed specifically to ostracize those in the Humanitarian

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317 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 92.
318 Christopher Campbell Thomas, “Compass, Square, and Swastika. Freemasonry in the Third Reich” (PhD diss, Texas A&M University, 2011), 49.
319 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 92.
camp. Eventually Lodges within the Old Prussian group became hostile to one another, as each Grand Lodge began to turn inward and become increasingly isolated from the others.\textsuperscript{321}

Difficulties continued to grow as external forces began exerting pressure upon the Grand Lodges—and Masons themselves—in Germany. The majority of this pressure came from nationalistic political groups including the National Socialist Party. For example, the National Union of German Officers, a veterans group, made it clear that membership in a Humanitarian Lodge was grossly unpatriotic and irreconcilable with membership in its organization. A year later, the Union explicitly requested membership information from the three Old Prussian Grand Lodges in what amounted to politically-motivated harassment. The Old Prussian Grand Masters were explicitly asked “what steps they were taking to ‘eliminate racial elements’ from their Lodges and what they were planning to do to “wage a decisive battle against Jewry” to which the Old Prussian Grand Masters replied that their “‘patriotic Christian attitude’” need not be questioned and in so many words told the Union to keep their nose out of the Grand Lodges’ business.\textsuperscript{322}

In what could be viewed as an attempt to mitigate the pressure that was obviously increasing, the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes and the Grand National Lodge began making various internal changes within their daughter Lodges. In response to their alleged “Judeo-Masonic” links, official Masonic ritual was “Aryanized” so that any Old Testament references in the Grand Lodge ritual were removed. In response to their alleged “international outlook” Foreign ties with international Masonic bodies were severed, and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[322] Ibid.
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the Old Prussian Grand Lodges increasingly distanced themselves from the Humanitarians. Humanitarian Lodges did not escape internal antagonism either. In 1931 the Eclectic Union Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge of the Sun “revised their Craft rituals [those of the first three Degrees of E.A., F.C., and M.M.] so that everything which had an Old Testament connotation was eradicated.”\textsuperscript{323} These were the first explicit changes to German Masonic ritual and culture, and these wounds were largely self-inflicted. Tragically, despite these changes, the vultures were already circling. Freemasons had been linked with the Jews and Bolshevists for too long by this time and the ties were indissoluble in the minds of many Germans. Freemasons became the enemy of each and every good Christian German who had an interest in preserving his nation’s sovereignty against “alien” influences.

As Hitler came to power in 1933, the vultures would land and begin to pick apart the Masonic skeleton. Jacob Katz sums up the situation rather succinctly by noting that “if the Masons expected to appease their adversaries by yielding, they were mistaken. Once the propagandists had begun to attack Jews and Freemasons in the same breath, the patriotism of the Freemasons was no longer taken for granted. While Freemasons dissociated themselves from Jews [and all other Jewish elements within their Lodges], other circles sought to dissociate themselves from Freemasons.”\textsuperscript{324} Freemasons remained largely unaware that they were part of a \textit{Weltanschauung} or “worldview” which placed them in the enemy camp simply for their cosmopolitan and international outlook. “In Hitler’s world, the law of the jungle was the only law. People were to suppress any

\textsuperscript{323} Howe, “The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5,” 28.
inclination to be merciful and be as rapacious as they could.”

According to Hitler, man was but a part of nature and in line with the law of nature, races were in eternal competition for land and other resources. This was true for all except Jews. “Jews followed the alien logic of ‘un-nature.’” Jews, Hitler believed

…insisted on dominating the entire planet and its peoples, and for this purpose inverted general ideas that draw the races away from natural struggle. The planet had nothing to offer except blood and soil, and yet Jews uncannily generated concepts that allowed the world to be seen less as an ecological trap and more as a human order. Ideas of political reciprocity, practices in which humans recognize other humans as such, came from Jews…Hitler’s basic critique was not the usual one that human beings were good but had been corrupted by an overly Jewish civilization. It was rather than humans were animals and that any exercise of ethical deliberation was in itself a sign of Jewish corruption. The very attempt to set a universal ideal and strain towards it was precisely what was hateful.

Having a worldview that was cosmopolitan was thus out of the question, and having ideas of a “universal brotherhood of man” without regard to “natural national differences” of race or national origin was also thus in itself an idea which demonstrated Jewish domination of Freemasonry. Herein lies the downfall of Freemasonry in a Nazified world. Here too is the essential core of National Socialist perceptions of Freemasonry which, although changed through the “nationalizing” of the Fraternity, singled out Freemasons for persecution in Nazi Germany. Within this Nazi worldview, these universal ideas—essentially Jewish ideas—had permeated the minds of Freemasons and thus made them the irredeemable enemies of the Reich. For Hitler and his followers, Kampf, national struggle, rather than international development in line with a universalist ideal in which all humans

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326 Ibid., 5.
327 Ibid.
were entitled to rights, comprised reality. Everything else was “cosmopolitan,” “bourgeois,” or “Jewish” according to Hitler’s definition.

As noted earlier, German Freemasonry had endured decades of attacks before the National Socialist Party existed. In linking Freemasons to Jews and Russian Bolshevism—and many times equating them so that the term “Jew” and “Freemason” were used interchangeably—right-wing propagandists had created a conflated, “three-in-one” enemy and were now able to focus national anger and enmity toward the Grand Lodges and all of their members.

After the Nazi party emerged in 1920, attacks increased exponentially in both frequency and ferocity. As such, very few Masons retained any doubts about what lay ahead for them and their fraternity after Adolf Hitler came to power. Even though they had voted for the Nazi government, and even Hitler himself, for many Masons at the time it was not a question of if something would change in German Masonry; the pertinent question was to what extent changes would be imposed by the new government. Freemasons in Germany would not have to wait long for their answer. Hitler made it very clear in Mein Kampf that his view of Freemasons was negative, and it was not only Hitler who held these views. Many of his closest associates and much of the wider Nazi Party leadership also believed wholeheartedly in the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” as he did.

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329 These Nazi leaders included extreme right-wing Russian emigres such as Alfred Rosenberg. Rosenberg was one of the most influential and dogmatic members in the Nazi party aside from Hitler himself. He wrote prolifically on racial theory, lebensraum, the Jewish Question, and other Nazi topics. Rosenberg and Hitler had a long history together beginning with the Beer Hall Putsch. After the failed Putsch, Rosenberg was placed in charge of the National Socialist Party by Hitler himself while he served out his prison sentence. He occupied the chair of the head of the Centre of National Socialist Ideological and Educational Research which developed the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg. Following the Operation Barbarossa he was appointed Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories. Rosenberg wrote two anti-Masonic books, Das Verbrechen der Freimaurerei (The Crime of Freemasonry) in 1921 and Freimaureische Weltpolitik im
Dr. Walter Darre, Minister of Agriculture would bluntly declare to a gathering that Freemasons were the enemy of the German peasants who plotted to sabotage the Nazis agricultural policies. A 1931 Nazi party instructional guide stated that, “the natural hostility of the peasant against the Jews, and his hostility against the Freemason as a servant of the Jew, must be worked up to a frenzy.”

Hitler quickly turned words into deeds and took aggressive action on the fraternity almost as soon as he was appointed Chancellor in January 1933. Justification for such actions only needed a national crisis to be pushed through. “Despite the open, savage incitement marking the years of Nazi rise to power, the Freemasons, like the Jews, had no inkling of the fate in store for them…a few months of actual Nazi rule [would suffice] to show that it was bent on the total liquidation of all Masonic Lodges.”

For the first couple of months, the Nazis did very little to intrude upon Masonic Lodges, however it was only the calm before the storm. Following the Reichstag fire on February 27, 1933, the Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of People and State—more commonly known as the “Reichstag Fire Decree”— passed, giving Nazi leadership wide latitude to imprison anyone seen as presenting opposition to the regime.

Events quickly proved that this decree would be used against Freemasons and others viewed as being on the left. In a foreboding incident of events to come, on March 6, 1933—


only one day after the last democratic general election in Germany under Hitler—the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes received an unexpected visit;

When the members of the Zu den drei Verbündeten [the Lodge of the Three Allies] arrived at their premises for a meeting that evening they learned that five S.A. Stormtroopers in uniform and a number of civilians had just left the building. They had been received by a serving brother who asked for evidence of their respective identities. ‘Loaded pistols were their authority’ according to a report signed by the Grand Masters of all three Old Prussian Grand Lodges which was sent to the Prussian Ministry of the Interior on 13 March. The intruders demanded the lodge’s files which were kept in a locked cupboard…Since the keys were not immediately available they smashed the lock and began to remove the papers to a lorry which was waiting outside.333 This intrusion shocked many within the Masonic establishment and it triggered a number of responses from various Masons and the Grand Masters of the Three Prussian Grand Lodges themselves. The Fire Decree would be trailed by the Enabling Act on March 23.334 This Act suspended parliamentary procedure in the Reichstag and gave Hitler supreme power until 1937. With these two legislative acts accomplished, Hitler and the Nazi regime now had almost limitless power at their disposal to repress those with whom they disagreed or those viewed as subversive. With the legal framework and justification for persecution now firmly established, all that was left for the Nazi regime to do was execute their plans.

After the passage of these two acts in early 1933, the various German Grand Lodges reacted in different ways. Some Grand Lodges began to protest the rising anti-Masonic message being heard throughout the land, while many conservative Grand Lodges sought to prolong their existence by trying to convince Nazi leadership that the institution and National Socialism could in fact coexist. Others sensed the direction of the political wind,

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and realizing their fate simply closed and disbanded. The more “internationally-minded” and liberal of the Grand Lodges were the first to close their doors, in some ways seeing the writing on the wall. The Grand Lodge of the Sun and the Eclectic Union both voluntarily dissolved in 1933. The Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun also dissolved almost immediately after Hitler seized power, along with the Allgemeine Freimaurerliga (Universal Masonic League). Following in their footsteps, the Symbolic Grand Lodge went dormant on March 28, 1933 and the German Supreme Council (A&ASR) would be “put to sleep” three days later.

In marked contrast, the three Old Prussian Grand Lodges very quickly attempted to cozy up to the regime. The Grand National Lodge was the most vigorous in these collaborative attempts. After sending congratulations to Hitler on his recent promotion, the Old Prussians tried to present themselves to the Nazi regime in as favorable and subservient a light as possible. A letter written by the three Grand Masters of the three Old Prussian Grand Lodges on March 6, 1933 asked for National Socialist patronage similar to those they had received from the Prussian kings in the past. They also continued to distance themselves from the Humanitarians, stating that, “‘a species of Freemasonry has arisen in Germany which is not only opposed to our conception of patriotism, but also to our Christian viewpoint and our opposition to all kinds of internationalism.’ [emphasis added]” The Prussian Grand Masters complained that they were being discriminated against when trying to gain admission into other organizations because they admitted being Freemasons. They also complained that their public and professional lives, including their

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335 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 98.
336 Ibid., 96.
careers, were now at risk because “they were being indifferently lumped together with Jews and Marxists.” Former Lodge members were also continually harassed and forced out of local civil service positions.

Eventually a representative from the National Grand Lodge of Germany secured a meeting with Herman Göring on April 7, 1933 to discuss the future of Freemasonry in Germany. The future looked bleak. Goring stated officially that “‘In National Socialist Germany there is no place for Freemasonry,'” and in so many words hinted to the Grand Lodges to shut down themselves or the Nazi regime would do it for them. Tellingly, he noted that Freemasons might be regarded as hostile to the Reich because of their connections with international Freemasonry. It is at this point that the Grand Lodges ceased to be Masonic institutions and instead reorganized themselves into Deutsch-Christlicher Orden (German Christian Orders).

That same day, on April 7, 1933, the National Grand Lodge passed legislation stating that, “the order will return to its original shape. From today on, the term ‘Grosse Landeslodge der Freimaurer von Deutschland’ which was taken on in the 18th Century will no longer be valid. The order will henceforth have the name that corresponds with its nature: ‘Deutsch-Christlicher Orden Gral der Tempelitter’ [German Order of the Grail of the Knights Templar].” The legislation went on to clarify—just in case some missed it—that, “with this decision, the order has ceased to be a Masonic corporation.” However,

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342 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 97.
if any German Grand Lodge possessed the ability to claim a return back to its “original Christian form” it would be the Landeslodge through its association with the Swedish Rite. The Three Globes Grand Lodge followed suit, renaming itself the Nationaler Christlicher Orden Friedrich der Grosse (National Christian Order of Frederick the Great) as would the Old Prussian Royal York of Friendship, which now became the Deutsch-Christlicher Orden Zur Freundschaft (German Christian Order of Friendship).

The rules of the Orders now became more overtly nationalistic, and they emphasized racial elements very similar to Nazi ideology. The German Christian Order of the Knights Templar now included in its rules for admission stipulations such as “as a consequence of the German and Christian character of the order, only Germans of Aryan origin who have been baptized as Christians can become members.” Further changes explicitly emphasized the new, nationally-oriented character of the Order. These included changes to terminology, as “Freemason” was replaced by the term “Disciple of the Order” and “Lodges” became “convents.” Myths and rituals were also “Christianized,” as Old Testament Hebrew symbolism was replaced with New Testament, Germanic, or Grail symbolism. The legend of Hiram the Builder was replaced with the German legend of Baldur, Solomon’s pillars Jachin and Boaz were renamed “Licht and Volk” (Light and Folk), and Solomon’s Temple itself became the Germanic cathedral, specifically the Cathedral of Our Lady of Strasbourg in one instance. The crux of these changes was to divorce the current Orders from any trace of their previous embodiment.

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343 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 97.
344 Ibid., 97-98.
The Christian Order of the Knights Templar went on to tighten its restrictions for members in September 1933, issuing an ordinance of which three points are very important. These points stipulated that “Brothers who are not of Aryan descent are to be honorably dismissed from the order immediately.” “Aryan descent” was defined as “persons whose parents and grandparents were Aryans.” Having a Jewish wife barred one from membership as well. These points restricting membership to Aryans only became known as the *Arierparagraph* or the Aryan Paragraph and were eventually adopted by the Grand Lodges of Hamburg, Saxony, and the Grand Lodge German Chain of Brotherhood.\(^{345}\)

Despite these changes, National Socialism remained committed to Freemasonry’s complete demise. Out of desperation, the Grand Masters of the now “Aryanized” Orders repeatedly petitioned the Nazi leadership for protection and favor, stating that “‘we are not Freemasons!’ but ‘‘20,000 patriotic men who feel the call to collaborate in the building of the National Socialist state.’”\(^{346}\) Regardless, Nazi Party officials continued to see the former Freemasons as untrustworthy. The Grand Masters eventually protested to Hitler himself, but these protests also went unheeded. Physical threats, attacks, and intrusions into the Orders’ business by S.A. Stormtrooper units and the Gestapo continued throughout 1933. One report by two Grand Masters detailed one such intrusion in which twenty Gestapo agents “spent six days reading every conceivable document, including mail which had not yet been opened” at the Köingsberg Skull and Phoenix Lodge.\(^{347}\)

The changes and rhetoric that emanated from the “Christian Orders” at the Grand Lodge level were clearly aimed at self-preservation of the institution. As this section shows,

\(^{345}\) Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 98.
\(^{347}\) Ibid., 32.
various Craft Lodges accepted these changes because they erroneously believed that such changes would decrease pressure on remaining members who had been victimized for their association with Freemasonry. Thus German Masonic culture that had developed largely of its own accord up until this point all but ceased to exist within Germany as National Socialist political pressure simply became too great. “German Freemasonry” as an institution effectively disappeared and it fell to the Nazi SS to destroy what remained of it.

By the end of the first year of Nazi rule, the three Christian Orders still existed, although attacks continued to increase and membership—owing to these increased attacks and further discrimination—dramatically decreased. Lodges that voluntarily dissolved were not declared hostile to the state and were therefore able to protect their property from confiscation by Nazi leadership. Instead, communal property and assets were liquidated and any funds garnered from liquidation were strictly controlled by the Gestapo.

The money was used to cover the costs of the closing of the lodges and the transfer of their property, including expenses incurred by taking possession of the lodges’ stocks. For Masonic real estate that was sold or disposed of, only a symbolic sum was paid, if at all, to the former Masons. Every sale depended upon the Gestapo’s consent, and the Gestapo often refused its authorization; this meant that property was then passed on to the state or directly to the Nazi Party.  

Events leading to the remaining Lodges’ eventual demise moved quickly over the next year. Plain-clothes S.A. members regularly forced their way into meetings, stating that they were there to “protect” the members of the Lodges from the “enraged populations.”  A decree enacted in January 1934 gave Nazi leadership the right to forcefully liquidate any lodge whose membership fell below seven members. That same month the Nazi Party and the People’s Court ruled that Masons who had not left their Lodges prior to January 30,

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348 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 97.
1933 could join the Party, but could be nothing more than a regular member with no chance of promotion. Those who joined after January 30 but had remained Masons had to resign from the Party immediately. Hermann Göring, exercising his authority as Interior Minister, dissolved the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes, the Grand Lodge of Prussia, and National Grand Lodge of Germany on January 16, 1934, stating that there was “‘no further need for their existence.'” Later that month, Göring called for all other Lodges to voluntarily dissolve and required that any Lodges taking this route had to have such actions submitted to Göring himself to be approved.

Over the summer of 1934, the Gestapo forcefully closed down the remaining individual Lodges and Grand Lodges, ransacked and confiscated the Lodges themselves along with their libraries and archives, and liquidated any and all remaining assets. These records would later be used to create archives of Freemasons as had been accomplished in other countries. In October 1934 a young Adolf Eichmann was given the job in the Nazi Sicherheitdienst (SD) of creating an archive of prominent German Freemasons in order to better understand the international character of the Fraternity.

Eventually, the three Old Prussian Grand Masters were forced to attend a meeting with the Gestapo in March 1935, and by May the Reich Ministry of the Interior ordered the three Christian Orders dissolved. Before dissolution, they were instructed to hold one last meeting in which each Grand Master was to simply announce the decision and nothing else. In June and July 1935, the remaining three Lodges—the Grand Lodge of the

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352 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 98.
Three Globes, Royal York of Friendship, and National Grand Lodge formally dissolved.\textsuperscript{353} In August 1935, the Reich Minister of the Interior, Dr. Wilhelm Frick stated that “It is inappropriate that a secret society with obscure aims should continue to exist in the Third Reich. It is high time that the Freemasons’ lodges should disappear from Germany…If this is not realized in masonic circles, I will soon help them in this direction.”\textsuperscript{354} Nazi leadership clearly still doubted the Christian Orders’ statements regarding their patriotism and change of heart. In September 1935, another thirteen Lodges were closed down by Frick “in Soldin, Stettin, Minden, Halle, Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, and in several other cities.”\textsuperscript{355} Nazi authorities would give no other justification for the closures other than “under the law of Jan. 8, the government [had] the right to disband lodges.”\textsuperscript{356} In October of that year the Interior Ministry issue an additional decree that the Lodges were in fact hostile to the state and were therefore “subject to having their assets confiscated.”\textsuperscript{357} Citing the Reichstag Fire Decree, on August 17, 1935 the Interior Ministry ordered all remaining Lodges closed down and their assets liquidated.\textsuperscript{358} However, these measures were still not enough for many Nazis.

Propaganda regarding the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” continued to be circulated, much of which was highly questionable. For example, in 1936 the Berlin newspaper \textit{Der Angriff} (The Attack) “reported that Free Masons in the United States had assembled an air fleet of 18 planes piloted by Masons and each bearing the name of a prominent Mason. Its

\textsuperscript{353} Howe, “The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5,” 34.
\textsuperscript{354} Ibid, 33.
\textsuperscript{355} "13 Masonic Lodges Dissolved by the Nazis; No Reason Is Given,” \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune}, September 19, 1934.
\textsuperscript{356} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{358} Ibid.
purpose was to join the fight against Franco’s forces in Fascist Spain, and then to assist China which was fighting against Japan because Japan was supporting the Fascist states that oppose Masonry.” Furthermore, Regular articles in Nazi publications such as *Der SA-Mann* characterized Freemasonry and Freemasons as enemies of the state that served no purpose in Nazi Germany and therefore had to be destroyed. To ramp up the propaganda and assist in the suppression of the Fraternity, in July of 1937 SS second-in-command Reinhard Heydrich created a division of the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), the elite investigative section of the SS, whose sole task was to handle the investigation and suppression of Freemasonry. Heydrich believed that Freemasons were “‘the most implacable enemies of the German State,’” and wanted to purge the German people of “‘a Jewish, liberal, and Masonic infectious residue that [remained] on the unconscious of many.’” Heydrich’s actions now meant Section II/111 of the SD and later in 1939 Section VIII B 1 of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Reich Security Main Office or RSHA) became solely responsible for investigating Freemasonry and eradicating its existence in any territory conquered by Nazi German military forces. As Germany readied itself for war in 1937 and 1938, the Nazi regime appeared to back off of its previous hostility toward former Freemasons. Though Dr. Bordes—Grand Master of the 3WK—would be detained in a concentration camp for nine months, Hitler later awarded partial amnesty to those who had not attained any degree higher that of Master Mason (3°) and had not been Masters—or any other officer—in their Lodge. Of course, this amnesty only applied to those Masons who gave up their membership prior to January 31, 1933 and had joined the Nazi Party.

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360 Ibid.
instead. Those receiving pardons would also have to renounce all past associations with the Fraternity. Interestingly, Masons originally forced out of the public or governmental spheres were allowed to return after the war began, and by then even the military had relaxed their restrictions on former Masons becoming officers. The Nazi Party continued to officially ban former Masons from membership into 1938, even when those bans were loosened and exceptions made. Allowances were even made regarding former Masons joining the SS.\textsuperscript{362} It is curious to note that this period of leniency within Germany coincide with more forceful suppression of Freemasonry in recently conquered territories.

Much in line with other regions at this time such as Spain, Masons of a higher Degree than that of Master Mason were singled out as especially heinous, again, possibly due to their wide connections with Scottish Rite Masonry and their international relationships. A 1938 work written by Dieter Schwarz and published by the Nazis entitled \textit{Freemasonry, Its World View, Organization and Policies} contained a preface written by Reinhard Heydrich. What he would say regarding the Masonic Fraternity is enlightening in revealing how the Nazis viewed Freemasons. Heydrich stated

\begin{quote}
Masonic lodges are…associations of men who, closely bound together in a union employing symbolical usages, represent a \textit{supra-national} spiritual movement, the \textit{idea of Humanity}...\textit{a general association of mankind, without distinction of races, peoples, religions, social and political convictions} [emphasis added.].\textsuperscript{363}
\end{quote}

Thus, wherever the Germans found Masonic Lodges across Europe, time and time again they were forcefully dissolved, and their assets confiscated or liquidated. Lodges were then ransacked of documents, including membership lists and library and archival materials,


\textsuperscript{363} Bessel, “Bigotry and the Murder of Freemasonry,” http://bessel.org/naziartl.htm
Lodge furniture was stolen, and any other artifacts of value were stolen. Items were then sent to the SD or RSHA. Throughout the years of 1940-1941, anti-Masonic exhibitions were set up across occupied areas of Europe as part of an anti-Masonic propaganda campaign;

German-occupied Paris hosted an anti-Masonic exhibition in October 1940, as did German-occupied Brussels in 1941. Displaying Masonic ritual and cultural artifacts stolen from lodges, such exhibitions aimed to ridicule and direct hatred toward Freemasons and to heighten fears of a Jewish-Masonic conspiracy. German wartime propaganda, particularly in the army, charged that they Jews and Freemasons had provoked World War II and were responsible for the policies of US President Franklin Roosevelt, who was identified as a Freemason.  

After the occupation of France, French Lodges were ransacked and items would be taken to the Petit Palais in Paris. When the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia, they did so with a list of names of 3,000-4,000 Freemasons. The men on these lists were arrested and a number were sent to concentration camps. Dr. J. Sedmik and Dr. V. Glavac, both Freemasons, were tortured for a period of two years and then killed by the Nazis. When the Nazis entered Belgium and the Netherlands in 1940, they found existing anti-Masonic sentiment useful in their suppression of the Craft in those countries. Exhibitions were organized in both countries to lambast and scandalize the Fraternity. Although not in Germany proper, it is interesting to note what the signs and posters advertised at the time: “Come and see the satanic, ugly mimics and their disgraceful ceremonies performed by this handful of miserable who pretend to save humanity and improve mankind.”

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In the Netherlands, Grand Master Hermanus van Tongeren refused to cooperate with the Nazis and was arrested in October 1940. He was held for six months in Amsterdam before being transferred to Sachsenhausen where he died on March 29, 1941. In 1939 Masonic membership in the Netherlands would exceed 6,000, by 1945 only 2,000 remained.\(^{367}\) In Belgium a movement called *L’Epuration* (the Purification) assisted in liquidating Freemasonry in the country. The anti-Masonic exhibit there was visited by approximately 38,000-68,000 people. The Nazis ordered all lodges dissolved on August 26, 1941 and “the Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite, Georges Petre, and other high Masonic officials, F.E. Lartigue and F.E. Sasse, were shot in their homes between December 1942 and February 1943. The whole of the Scottish Rite Library in Belgium was sent to Berlin. Approximately eighty Belgian Masons appear to have died in concentration camps.\(^{368}\) The Jersey Masonic Temple on the Channel Islands was looted by SS troops beginning in January 1941. Afterward, a group of specially trained Nazis from Berlin were sent to obtain materials for an anti-Masonic exhibit to be held in the German capital. They burned everything else. The Nazis later forced the Jersey government to transfer all remained Masonic property to the Nazis.\(^{369}\) Between 1934 and 1936 a majority of the Masonic Lodges in Austria closed and in 1938 the Nazis acquired the Grand Lodge of Vienna and arrested Grand Master Dr. Richard Schlesinger. He died shortly after his arrest from the harsh treatment he received at the hands of his captors.

Being a truly international organization—as Hitler believed it was—it is also interesting to note what was known in international Masonic circles about the events in

\(^{368}\) Ibid.
\(^{369}\) Ibid.
Germany and in Nazi-occupied Europe. It is clear from the Transactions of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction, together with its magazine, The New Age, that American Masons were aware of the persecution being suffered by Jews and Freemasons alike in Germany. William Fox notes that it was even clear to some long before the 1940 presidential elections.

In 1942 Adolf Hitler placed Alfred Rosenberg in charge of a new Nazi bureaucratic section to wage an “‘intellectual war’ against the Jews and Freemasons.” The Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (Deployment Staff of Reich Leader Rosenberg or ERR) was charged with confiscating and analyzing materials gathered from the various raids on Masonic Lodges across Nazi-occupied territory. These plundered resources were supposed to assist the Nazis in winning the war against “World Jewry.” Rosenberg’s actions leading the ERR would form a part of his conviction at the Nuremberg Trials, particularly his pre-trial examination testimony on September 25, 1945 at Nuremberg, which can be found in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression: Supplement B. As late as 1943, in a speech to Nazi commanders in Badschachen, SS chief Heinrich Himmler would rail against Freemasonry as one of the lead groups of conspirators against the Nazi state.

During the Second World War, Masons from across Europe were sent to concentration camps, and wore the inverted red triangle denoting that they were political

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370 “Especially from 1930 on, the magazine of the Scottish Rite’s Southern Jurisdiction, The New Age, regularly featured articles about political developments in Germany and the differences among German Freemasons.” Cited in footnote 4 in Melzer, Ralf, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 102. The author spent three weekends in the Masonic Library at the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Atlanta pouring over copies of The New Age magazine and the Transactions from the years beginning in 1931 and it is clearly evident that much information was being passed on to American Masons from Germany very early on.


prisoners. Although accurate numbers are very difficult to verify, it is estimated that 80,000 German Freemasons perished in concentration camps between 1933 and 1945. Upon the end of the war and the beginning of the Nuremburg Trials, the persecution of Freemasonry entered several legal discussions during the trial and conviction of several in the Nazi regime including Herman Göring, Alfred Rosenberg, and Julius Streicher. According to W. Irvine Weist, “The third count, that of committing war crimes, had ten divisions, the fifth of which [was] the plunder of public and private property [which] was treated as being in the same category as the murder and ill treatment of civilian populations, the utilization of slave labor, [and] the killing of hostages…It was under this count that most of the evidence of the persecution of Masonic lodges was admitted into evidence.”

Not all German Masons believed that the institution of Freemasonry and Nazism could coexist. In fact, some believed just as Hitler did, that Freemasonry was the arch enemy of National Socialism, fascism, racist ideology, nationalism, and war. Some even believed that Freemasonry as an institution had an obligation to fight against such ideas, and some indeed fought and actively resisted Nazi persecution. While most Lodges in Germany attempted to change their reputations in an attempt to palliate the rising nationalist sentiment in the country, one Grand Lodge propounded a philosophy of Freemasonry that was not only international and pacifist in scope, but also blatantly hostile to National Socialism altogether. This Grand Lodge, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of

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Germany, also defied the Nazi state as it deliberately and defiantly admitted and initiated Jews into the Fraternity, and their actions under political pressure helped to preserve German Freemasonry as the Nazis—and the largest of the German Grand Lodges—attempted to wipe it from the Earth. As the last vestiges of German Freemasonry and those of any other Nazi occupied territories were eradicated, scattered Masonic resistance increased, in small but significant ways nonetheless. It is this story, and a specific Grand Lodge’s battle in particular, which this study now turns to.

The history of the Symbolic Grand Lodge was, from the beginning, unorthodox. Its probity would always be questioned but its significance to the preservation of German Masonic history and culture can never be understated. To trace its beginnings requires a more detailed examination of the formation of the Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun in 1907. From its inception, the Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun was deemed an “irregular” independent Lodge, much like the later Symbolic Lodge of Germany. Other Lodges characterized the Union as “an association of free-thinkers following the doctrines of Professor Ernst Haeckel…who propagated pure materialism in a form quite unacceptable even to the most tolerant Freemasons. But Masonic usage was employed…”375 The Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun garnered a respectable number of members —2,000 by 1930 with 52 Craft Lodges under its jurisdiction—drawn largely from the educated classes of German society, even though no “regular” Masonic body ever recognized them.376 As the other Grand Lodges began to turn inward and become more

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376 This Grand Lodge also counted some prominent members of German society as members of their organization including Kurt Tucholsky and Car von Ossetzky who were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1935 as noted in Alain Bernheim, "German Freemasonry and Its Attitudes Toward the Nazi Regime,"
nationalistic, the Freemasons Union specifically adopted a deliberately pacifistic and internationalist stance in contrast. The Union established connections with the Grand Orient of France and the Grand Lodge of France, but wider recognition by a “regular” Masonic body still eluded the group. The Freemasons Union reached a crossroads in the late 1920s when the Union was rejected for recognition by the Alliance Maçonnique Internationale.\(^377\) Due to this final rebuff, a good number of members broke away and formed Lodges affiliated with the Grand Mother Lodge zur Sonne at Bayreuth. Despite these defections, a number of committed Union Masons remained active until 1930. The remainder of former members of the Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun went on to form the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in 1930. The largest influence on the Grand Lodge was its Grand Master, Leopold Müffelmann. Müffelmann became a staunch defender of Masonic philosophy and virtue during the rise of National Socialism in Germany, and his actions secured the moral and ethical integrity, forms and ceremonies of German Freemasonry until the time was safe for their return once the Second World War ended.

Leopold Müffelmann was born in in Rostock on May 1, 1881. He obtained his Doctorate of Philosophy in 1902 from the University Rostock writing on the issue of the concept of free will in modern German philosophy.\(^378\) His father, the journalist Ludwig Müffelmann, was the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg and was an active Freemason himself. Ludwig Müffelmann would introduce his son to the Fraternity in 1913

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\(^{377}\) For years the Union’s membership in the Alliance had been argued over and no decision had ever been made in the Union’s behalf. Discussed in Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 94.

at the Humanitarian Lodge aptly named *Humanitas* which fell under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg in Berlin.\(^{379}\) Interestingly, Hjalmar Schacht, who would later rise to power as president of the Reichsbank and the Nazi minister of trade and commerce would vouch for him.\(^{380}\)

The young Leopold Müffelmann would, like his father, become very active in Freemasonry, moving to various Craft Lodges under the Grand Lodge of Hamburg before joining with the Grand Lodge of the Sun “as he had always been isolated in the Hamburg Grand Lodge because of his international outlook.”\(^{381}\) In September of 1926 he was part of a conference organized by the International Masonic Association of which the theme was “the realization of peace.” While there, he exchanged a “brotherly kiss” in greeting the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France, Arthur Groussier, and while it did not cause issues within the conference, it caused a nationalistic firestorm back home in Germany, even in his own Lodge. As a result of this controversy Müffelmann left Germany to join the Labor Lodge in Vienna.\(^{382}\) Müffelmann received the 33° from the Supreme Council of Austria on November 29, 1929. On February 10, 1930, along with Edward Byng 33°, Müffelmann returned to Germany and founded the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for Germany in Berlin.

The Supreme Council of Germany was regularized and installed by the Supreme Council of the Netherlands on April 18, 1930. At its inception, the Dutch Grand Secretary


\(^{380}\) Cited in footnote 17 in Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 103. Müffleman would also serve with Schacht on the Bluntschli Committee for the League of Nations.

\(^{381}\) Ibid, 94-95.

\(^{382}\) Labor lodges, while based around Masonic usage, generally attempted to take a reforming, progressive function within their countries. They took on a policy of internationally focused openness and supported “the emancipation of the proletariat.” Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 92.
Nieuwenhuis, 33° noted at the end of his report that “Summing up the impressions of all we lived, heard, and saw [during the days we spent in Berlin], we are convinced that serious and honorable men have begun to fight with enthusiasm, good will, energy and self-confidence, against the nationalistic, dogmatic-Christian spirit in German Freemasonry. They are determined to fight to the end until they succeed, even if their success lies possible hidden in a distant future.”\textsuperscript{383} The report of the Grand Secretary proved prophetic. Müffelmann served as the organization’s Lieutenant Grand Commander for only a short time until his appointment as Grand Master of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany forced him to resign from his office in the Supreme Council. He then returned to the position of \textit{Kommissarisch Groß-Kommandeur} (Grand Commander pro tempore) in June 1933 after the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany became dormant.

In the same month, six hundred men from the Freemasons Union of the Rising Sun withdrew from the Union and were recognized and made regular by the Grand Lodge of France. On July 26, the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany was inaugurated with the blessing of the Supreme Council for Germany A&ASR. Of course, for the Supreme Council of Germany, the chance to constitute a new Grand Lodge was an opportunity for them to “use the Symbolic Grand Lodge as a recruiting ground with about a thousand Craft masons,” as all “existing German Grand Lodges did not allow their members to join the Ancient and Accepted Rite, even though it had been quite regularly constituted by the Dutch Supreme Council in 1930.”\textsuperscript{384} Even more, “As no other Grand Lodge was prepared to constitute this new Grand Lodge, the Supreme Council for Germany of the Ancient and

\textsuperscript{384} Solf, "The Revival of Freemasonry in Post-war Germany," 5.
Accepted Rite seized on the opportunity.”\textsuperscript{385} The Christian Müffelmann—he is listed at the University Rostock as an Evangelical Lutheran—created the Lodge as a refuge for mainly Jewish brethren as “a symbol of the failure of German Freemasonry” to incorporate men of different faiths into their ranks.\textsuperscript{386}

As many Lodges heeded the call of the Nazi party to purge their ranks of any Jewish members, these “principled” Christian brethren united with their Jewish brethren to form a united Grand Lodge front.\textsuperscript{387} Most men who joined this group had been members of regular Lodges or belonged to Lodges regularized by the Grand Lodge of France. Some Masons came from the various Humanitarian Lodges as they changed alliances in the late 1920s and abandoned their rituals and legends, while others were regular German Masons who were members under the Grand Lodge of Vienna. Despite their different origins and reasons for bringing the Symbolic Grand Lodge into existence, a generalization may be made about the Masons who belonged to this group. They all strongly “held on to the idea of a worldwide chain of brethren who were united against any hostility and who interpreted the League of Nations as a political expression of this concept.”\textsuperscript{388} The Masons who formed this Grand Lodge generally fell into the more centre-left, social-democratic side of the political spectrum previously that characterized the Union and as such the Lodge reflected the membership’s international and pacifist propensities.

\textsuperscript{385} Solf, “The Revival of Freemasonry in Post-war Germany,” 5.
\textsuperscript{387} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{388} Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 94.
In 1930, the Symbolic Grand Lodge organized eight Craft Lodges under its jurisdiction with a membership of eight hundred men. By 1932, the number of Craft Lodges in the Grand Lodge’s jurisdiction grew to twenty-nine, although its membership dropped below seven hundred. As Lodges within Germany began to cut ties with the new Grand Lodge it would go on to garner support and recognition from many other Masonic organizations outside of Germany although it would never garner the support of the Grand Lodge of England. In January 1932, the Symbolic Grand Lodge gained recognition from the Grand Orient of France which further strengthened its international connections. At this time, tensions between Germany and France were reaching a fever pitch and reconciliation was on the minds of many Masonic organizations in both countries. To aid in this reconciliation, the Symbolic Grand Lodge sponsored and supported exchange visits for young students in both countries. Topics for discussion within the subordinate Lodges of the Symbolic Grand Lodge reflected the European concerns of the time: “‘the term of Masonic tolerance and its limits,’ and ‘the formation of Europe.’” Subordinate Lodges discussed one of these two topics at their regular meetings. On the whole, and on all fronts, the Symbolic Grand Lodge represented a stark contrast in form, function, and outlook to the remainder of Lodges in Germany. Where most had already begun to “sell out” to National Socialist pressures, the Symbolic Grand Lodge began to fight. This is nowhere more obvious than in the monthly magazine produced by the Grand Lodge.

390 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 95.
Political statements had been made by different groups before, but none were as blatant as those carried in *Die alten Pflichten*.\(^{391}\)

*Die alten Pflichten* (The Old Charges) would be published from October 1930 to March 1933.\(^{392}\) The magazine carried discussions of “ideas and plans for a ‘‘social program for Freemasonry’’” in tandem with virulent denunciations of the other Lodges in Germany and National Socialism in general.\(^{393}\) In September 1931 issue members railed against Richard Bröse, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, about the various letters he had written to Hitler, Rosenberg, and others trying to convince them of his Grand Lodge’s loyalty to the Nazi regime. The letters were reprinted in form with comments from Leo Müffelmann, including statements such as “How is it possible that a responsible Grand Master of a supposedly Humanitarian Grand Lodge contrives to write a letter to Hitler that is devoid of any Masonic dignity and any Masonic self-respect?”\(^{394}\) Later, another member in the November 1931 issue commented that by writing the letter to Hitler, Bröse had swept away what was left of the Grand Lodge and The Old Charges and had laid them at the feet of the fascists.\(^{395}\) In the December 1931 issue, Müffelmann would devote more than four pages to the topic of the relationship between Freemasonry and National Socialism. His deduction would be clear.

Such letters as they are directed by the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg to Hitler, mean the end of Freemasonry as an intellectual movement. But the true Freemasonry today recognizes its task. The present aim of true Freemasonry is to fight against Bolshevism, Fascism, and National Socialism. In

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\(^{391}\) Bernheim, Alain, “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland,” 23.


\(^{393}\) Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 95.

\(^{394}\) Bernheim, “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland,” 23.

\(^{395}\) Ibid.
spite of all contradictions, Freemasonry stays here side by side with the Roman Catholic Church as a fighter for individual freedom, for humanity, and mankind. The fight has begun. The common defense of Western civilization is at stake.396

In the issue printed in February 1932, Müffelmann made his strongest statement regarding the Nazis, writing, “Discussions within the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany resulted in a completely unanimous position against National Socialism. National Socialism is the enemy of Freemasonry. Freemasonry fights and must fight against National Socialism.”397

The pressure around the budding Grand Lodge built as 1933 dawned and the Nazis began to force Lodges into dissolving. The Masons of the Scottish Rite for Germany and the Symbolic Grand Lodge could read the writing on the wall and began proceedings to allow both bodies to “go to sleep.” The Symbolic Grand Lodge’s subordinate Craft Lodges outside of Germany—those in Jerusalem and Saarbrücken—were not forced to go dormant. Thus, the internationally-inclined Grand Lodge still managed to operate outside of Germany proper.398 In the March 1933 Issue of Die alten Pflichten—the last issue to be printed in Germany—the leadership of the Symbolic Grand Lodge announced that on March 28, the decision had been made to allow the Grand Lodge to become dormant. Also included in this issue was a reprint of the resolution of support for Adolf Hitler from the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes adopted in March. The next item in the final publication was an article which declared that “‘The Grand [National] Lodge of Saxony sent a telegram expressing its faithful support to Dr. Goebbels. The three Grand Lodges [Three Globes, the Royal York of Friendship, and National Grand Lodge] even sent a congratulatory address to the Reich chancellor Hitler.’” The comment from the Symbolic Grand Lodge regarding

397 Ibid.
398 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 96.
these statements was typical of their general stance toward the Nazis: “Such addresses will land by us where they properly belong.” One can read between the lines and finish the statement for them with “in the trash.”\textsuperscript{399} The Symbolic Grand Lodge went to the end fighting to remind their fellow Brethren of their errors in an attempt to aid their reformation.

Shortly thereafter on April 2, 1933, the Supreme Council sent out a circular to all other members which stated

The Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany, in accordance with the present conditions has put itself to sleep according to Masonic law, and the undersigned and active members of the Supreme Council hold that in the interests of Masonry and the Fatherland, it is necessary to even put to sleep the Supreme Council… I therefore ask that you sign the enclosed letter and mail it to the Grand Secretary at the following address…

Signed Fritz Bensch, Signed Ernst Rauschenbusch, Signed Raoul Koner, Signed Leo Müffelmann.\textsuperscript{400}

Müffelmann himself had sent a second circular to the Grand Officers and other members of the Symbolic Grand Lodge in an attempt to arrange a covert meeting. Two months later in June, Müffelmann convened this secret meeting in Frankfurt am Main. “Present were Bunger, Haarstrich, Rauschenbusch, Meyer II, Frey (from the French consulate), two Frankfurt brothers, Koner, Bensch, and Silverberg.”\textsuperscript{401} At this meeting, the key members of the Symbolic Grand Lodge decided to exile the Grand Lodge and transfer its activities to Palestine. On November 15, 1933, the Symbolic Grand Lodge in Exile was revived in the British Mandate of Palestine by two local Lodges—\textit{Quelle Siloah} and \textit{Ari}—organized under the jurisdiction of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany. These Lodges later

\textsuperscript{399} Bernheim, "German Freemasonry and Its Attitudes Toward the Nazi Regime," http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/bernheim12.html.
\textsuperscript{400} Bernheim, “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland,” 25.
\textsuperscript{401} Ibid.
became a refuge for many Jewish Masons who escaped Germany before the worst had come to pass.402

In August of 1933 the Gestapo arrested Fritz Bensch, the Lieutenant Grand Commander of the Supreme Council for Germany and Raoul Koner another member of the Supreme Council. Müffelmann, who was serving as Grand Commander pro tempore, would also be arrested on September 5 following a business trip to London. The three men were interrogated separately for four weeks by the Gestapo and were then sent to the Sonnenburg concentration camp on October 6. They were regularly beaten and abused while at Sonnenburg and Müffelmann suffered from a leg injury. Koner was possibly then sent back to Berlin on October 12 and interrogated once again by the Gestapo.403 Koner was finally released from custody on November 16, while Bensch and Müffelmann remained in custody until November 26. Their release was probably due to the personal intervention of Henry Cowles, Grand Commander of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States.404 All three men were interrogated several more times after their release. After all of this, Müffelmann’s diary states that all three were forced to sign a statement saying that they had been treated well by the Gestapo before they were released.405

Müffelmann and the others were of course arrested and detained because of their connections with Freemasonry, as none of the men were Jews. Müffelmann later reflected

402 Melzer, “In the Eye of the Hurricane,” 96.
403 Bernheim, “Nachforschungen Über die Geschichte des Alten und Angenommenen Schottischen Ritus in Deutschland,” 25.
404 See footnote 41 in Fox, Lodge of the Double-Headed Eagle: Two Centuries of Scottish Rite Freemasonry in America’s Southern Jurisdiction, 455.
405 Müffelmann’s diary Drei Monate Schutzhaft or three months protective custody September To November 1933 for membership of Freemasonry contains an account of his time while in the custody of the Gestapo as well as his ruminations regarding his arrest. He would keep a diary until his death.
upon his arrest, stating that he believed at least their association with the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany and moreover the Supreme Council of Germany was what led to their arrest. Moreover, they were all charged with “the treason of Freemasonry.” This connection is also evidenced by the fact that Müffelmann revealed in his diary that the Gestapo had come for the Grand Commander of the Supreme Council at that time, but he was residing in Switzerland and therefore was not “reachable.” They arrested Fritz Bensch instead.406

Müffelmann made a second trip to the British Mandate of Palestine on April 5, 1934, attending the opening of a third Craft Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in Exile, and administered by Emanuel Propper. Leopold Müffelmann was also elected Grand Master ad vitam at that time.407 Through this relocation, the legacy of the Supreme Council of Germany was preserved as Leo Müffelmann elevated four Brethren including Propper to the 33o.408 Libanon Lodge was consecrated on April 24, 1934 and operated in Hungarian.409 The remainder of the subordinate Craft Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in Exile worked in the German language and the majority of the members of those Lodges were German-Jewish refugees.410

Müffelmann stayed in Palestine for only a short time, preferring instead to return to Germany to continue the fight against Nazism and for Freemasonry there. Müffelmann died in August 1934 at age fifty-three, most likely as a result of the treatment he received

while at the Sonnenburg concentration camp. He is buried in the Wilmersdorf forest cemetery near Stahnsdorf. In May 1935, a fourth Craft Lodge would be founded under the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in Exile. The Lodge would be organized in Tel Aviv and would be named *Müffelmann zur Treue* (Out of Loyalty to Müffelmann).  

Five further subordinate Lodges emerged out of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in Exile, and by 1949 the Grand Lodge received the honor of becoming a district Lodge under the National Grand Lodge of Palestine. Thus, the Lodges organized in exile by Müffelmann formed the cornerstone of Israeli Freemasonry in the future. Although an early victim of Nazi brutality against Freemasons, Müffelmann ultimately triumphed over the forces he courageously resisted.

This alliance of German Freemasonry in the Middle East continued in exile until June of 1949 when the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany in Exile would return to Germany, becoming the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Germany.  

Upon its return to Europe, the Symbolic Grand Lodge took the lead in helping to form a united Grand Lodge for the whole of Germany. With the return of this Grand Lodge, the Supreme Council also returned shortly thereafter in 1947. The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted

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413 The Supreme Council of Germany would be one of the only Masonic groups who could rightfully claim to not have collaborated with the Nazi Regime, and as such were very particular in who they admitted, stating that “only such Master-Masons who are not compromised through their collaboration with the NSDAP or its structures will be admitted to the high degrees of the Rite.” Furthermore, at a meeting of Grand Commanders at Lausanne in May of 1952, Grand Commander August Pauls would state that, “We are very careful with the admission of new members in the bodies of the Rite; no Brother who collaborated with the Nazis will be tolerated and may become a member of the Rite…I repeat, no member in our rows belonged to Hitler’s criminal organizations.” quoted in Bernheim, “United Grand Lodge and United Grand Lodges of Germany 1946-1961,” 82.
Masons of Germany now became one of the three Grand Lodges that formed the United Grand Lodges of Germany after the end of the Second World War.
CHAPTER 7

POST-WAR REEMERGENCE OF FREEMASONRY IN EUROPE

Freemasonry returned to a number of European countries after the war through various avenues. In those countries absorbed into the Soviet-dominated Eastern Bloc, Freemasonry remained outlawed, as it was in Francoist Spain. After the defeat and surrender of Hitler’s Third Reich on May 7, 1945, Freemasonry’s persecutors in Germany and its former occupied territories scattered.

In Germany proper, former German Masons began to meet in small groups to plan and discuss the return of Freemasonry to their shattered country. Germany itself was divided between the Allies into four occupation zones which made the reactivation of a truly unified “German Freemasonry” difficult. German Freemasonry returned, but only slowly and only after a series of starts and failures, challenges, scandals, and arguments. Freemasonry initially returned to Germany in the form of “Square and Compass Clubs” arranged by the Allied occupying forces for the purposes of holding Schools of Instruction or just general meetings.\textsuperscript{414} The first attempts at bringing back domestic German Freemasonry to the war-torn country took place in 1945 when groups of Masons who had formerly belonged to Humanitarian Grand Lodges began to hold meetings with the blessings of the American authorities in Bensheim. On November 10, 1945, the Federal Grand Lodge of Germany was hurriedly constituted. This Grand Lodge did not last long,

\textsuperscript{414} Leo Maris, “English Freemasonry in Germany (1921-1929, 1945-71),” \textit{Ars Quatour Coronatorum} 83 (1970), 277.
as the de facto consent of the American occupational government would be withdrawn after the death of the Grand Master a few months later.

A second attempt occurred within the British Zone of occupation at Herford in 1946, with the majority of Masons belonging to the Old Prussian camp. Unsurprisingly, this group soon fell back into its previous emphasis on the Christian character of the Fraternity. In between the first and second meetings the Grand Mother Lodge of the Three Globes had held meetings itself.\textsuperscript{415}

Early in the negotiations for the reformation of a Grand Lodge for Germany, it became clear that the past collusion with the Nazis would be forgotten as quickly as possible. In 1947, a group made up of representatives of both Humanitarian and Old Prussian Grand Lodges known as the “Frankfurter Konvent” met in Frankfurt am Main in June 1947 in order to determine a basis for which German Freemasonry might begin operating once again. This meeting was presided over by Dr. August Pauls who in his opening address to the group stated that the majority of German Freemasons had in fact remained loyal to Masonic ideals and had not collaborated with the Nazis in any way. Many in the group preferred to, in the words Past Grand Master Heinrich Höpker, “let the past be buried.” A second meeting of the Konvent would be held in July at which it was resolved that “In the future there shall be one single Craft Masonry without any division between Christian and Humanitarian doctrines. By acknowledging the humanitarian ideal, by sharing a pure and beautiful human love and by recognizing the brotherhood of all men, we profess the religion in which all men agree…We therefore unanimously pledge

ourselves to the brotherly love which is the cornerstone and cement of our old fraternity.”

On May 15, 1948, another meeting took place at Frankfurt am Main with the Grand Masters of several reconstituted Grand Lodges. The attendees concluded that unity could only be obtained by establishing a Humanitarian-based Grand Lodge for the whole of Germany, and that all Masonic bodies—even those determined to be irregular prior to 1933—should be allowed to join the group.

In October 6, 1948, a Grand Masters’ Conference was held in Bad Kissingen where nine provincial Grand Lodges determined to join together in the United Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Germany. This group later elected Dr. Theodor Vogel, Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Sun in Bayreuth, as its Grand Master and adopted a basic set of organizational principles. These included stipulations that “the essence and object of Freemasonry are fully comprised in the three Craft degrees and that the creed of a candidate should not constitute an obstacle for his admission.” This declaration was soundly rejected by the reconstituted National Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Germany (Landesloge) who refused to join the group, as it still held on to the Christian Swedish Rite.

It is important to note that delegations were sent by the Masonic Service Association to Europe in the aftermath of the war to report on the status of Freemasons on the continent in various countries. Two delegations were sent to Germany in 1945 and 1949. The delegations were organized and led by Ray V. Denslow, Past Grand Master of Masons in Missouri. The second delegation which was led by George Edward Bushnell,

Grand Lieutenant Commander of the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction and Martin Dietz, Past Grand Master of Masons in New Jersey. This delegation received the most information regarding Masonic persecution in the country, and the majority of this information came from Theodore Vogel. It would only be revealed later that the information gained by this delegation was a clever fabrication of Vogel’s. At the least, it appears that much of the misinformation regarding Nazi persecution of Freemasons and Masonic collaboration with the Nazis between 1933 and 1945, even if it did not originate with Vogel, was propagated by him at this time. Alain Bernheim writes;

The report [to the Masonic Service Association] signed by Denslow and Dietz proves that American delegates received biased and incomplete information. It did not mention once the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany or the Supreme Council for Germany, both founded in 1930, [and] the only German Masonic bodies which openly resisted Hitler. Nor did it mention the declarations of Prussian Grand Lodges which openly supported [Hitler] in 1933 and 1934. It depicted an imaginary German Freemasonry too weak to resist the Nazis and forcibly dissolved in 1933. That information, which reflected the agreement to forget the past, mostly originated from Theodor Vogel. Had the American delegates been fully informed of the attitude of most German Masons in the 1930s...their report would have been different.\textsuperscript{418} Vogel is also the most likely instigator of the popular “Forget-me-not” myth within Masonic circles. The story recounts how Freemasons beginning with the Grand Lodge of the Sun—Vogel’s Grand Lodge—knowing that their eradication was imminent, adopted a lapel pin in the style of a small, blue forget-me-not flower to replace the common square and compass lapel pins worn at the time. The story continues that under the most awful persecutions and tortures, and even within the concentration camps themselves, this blue forget-me-not pin served as a token of recognition between Freemasons gone underground.\textsuperscript{419} Many Lodges in the years after the war were named after the popular

\textsuperscript{419} Ibid.
Masonic story and honorary bodies were constructed for Masonic writers, scholars, and authors all organized around this myth.

In reality, it is quite unrealistic to believe that Freemasons would have worn a badge as a secret means of recognition during the time in which “wearing a mark or a badge which did not originate in the [Nazi] Party was a criminal offence.” It is much less likely that this pin was worn in the concentration camps after all the victims’ possessions had been confiscated. The reality is probably best explained by the German historian and Freemason, Ernst G. Geppert. Geppert claims that the myth emerged from serendipitous events which occurred both prior to, and after the Nazi takeover of Germany. Geppert’s explanation is this;

1. The Grand Lodge zur Sonne (Bayreuth) used to let a pin be made for its yearly meetings and it gave one to each delegate. Those made for the meeting held in Bremen about 1926 represented a forget-me-not, and were manufactured in...Selb.

2. In 1934, the Nazis invented the...Winterhilfswerk [lit. Winter’s Fund an annual charity drive developed by the Nazis in which badges or pins would be sold to raise money]...Different [badges or pins] were chosen each winter and they were worn only during the time of a collection to identify those who had already contributed.

3. By an extraordinary coincidence, the badge used by the Nazis for the [March 1938 Winterhilfswerk] happened to be the very forget-me-not pin chosen by the Freemasons in 1926...made by the same factory. No doubt...Freemasons who attended the Bremen meeting of 1926 were glad to wear it again...However it is out of the question that such a pin could have been worn after the March 1938 collection...

4. When Grand Master Vogel installed a new Lodge at Selb in 1948, he remembered the story of the pin. Since the factory and the mould [sic] still existed, he let large quantity be made anew and distributed...when he made official visits abroad.

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5. This explains why the blue forget-me-not turned out to be regarded as an official German Masonic emblem after the war.\textsuperscript{421}

Bernheim also relates that Geppert himself while accompanying Vogel abroad at some point heard him tell the mythical story to various Masonic delegations. This story demonstrates that very early on, many in the Masonic fraternity in Germany attempted to create a legend, “likely born as the result of an unconscious effort to inhibit the past as well as a conscious maneuver. It was believed not only because it was the logical thing to do, but also because it was reassuring to imagine Freemasons acting according to their ideals,” rather than succumbing to base racism, nationalism, or opportunism.\textsuperscript{422}

From 1945 until 1973, involvement and collaboration of some German Masonic groups with Nazism remained hidden in the mist of the past, especially to English-language historians and authors.\textsuperscript{423} The various Grand Lodges that emerged from the war characterized themselves as victims of the Third Reich, “too weak to resist”, and which now attempted to pick up the pieces and help the German people heal.\textsuperscript{424} The United Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Germany was formally established on January 22, 1949, with its seat in Frankfurt am Main. The newly established Grand Lodge organized itself without the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes, Grand National Lodge, or other various Berlin Lodges which had determined to become Grand Bodies in their own right. In yet another

\textsuperscript{422} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{423} Ellic Howe would be the first English writer to cite the various speeches and declarations made by the Prussian Grand Lodges and later “Christian Orders” praising the Nazis and Hitler. Howe would present his paper "The Collapse of Freemasonry in Nazi Germany 1933-5" to the Quatour Coronati Lodge in 1973, but the Grand Lodge of England prevented the paper from being printed in that year’s Ars Quatour Coronatorum. It would not be allowed to be published until 1982. See Alain Bernheim, “‘The Blue Forget-Me-Not’ Another Side of the Story,” http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/bernheim3.html.
attempt to “leave the past buried,” the first public declaration of the new Grand Lodge would present a memory of Masonic persecution that “had little in common with factual truth.”

“It asserted that not one single German Mason had taken part in the Nazi crimes, which may have been true. Nevertheless, in 1949, former members of the Nazi party such as Wilhelm Lorenz...Hermann Dörner...Udo Sonanini...Kurt Hendrickson...Herbert Kessler...and Karl Hoede...already were or [soon became] prominent Masons under the new German republic.”

In April 1952, The Grand Lodge of the Three Globes and Grand National Lodge joined together to form the Union of Christian Masonic Grand Lodges of Germany. After their establishment both Unions determined to gain recognition at home and abroad. In their attempts at negotiations with their British counterparts, the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, Paul Hoffmann, would declare that the UGLE would recognize only one combined United Grand Lodge of Germany or none at all. The United Grand Lodge of Germany and Grand National Lodge entered into negotiations in December of 1954 and January 1955. Soon, negotiations boiled down to who would hold ultimate sovereignty in Germany, and the United Grand Lodge of Germany’s insistence of initiating non-Christian men. Negotiations between the two groups continued through 1958 with each Union gaining recognition from sympathetic Grand Lodges outside of Germany.

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426 Ibid.
427 “It has always been of great importance for a new or reconstituted sovereign masonic authority to seek recognition by world Masonry and above all by the mother Grand Lodge of England. At the same time it is well know that London has been and always will be extremely cautious in extending a fraternal hand without a very careful examination of all the facts.” Solf, "The Revival of Freemasonry in Post-war Germany," Ars Quatour Coronatorum 97 (1984), 9.
On May 17, 1958 both Grand Lodges held assemblies to ratify the *Magna Charta*,\(^{428}\) the Union of Christian Masonic Lodges of Germany was dissolved, and the United Grand Lodges of Germany-Brotherhood of the German Freemasons was formed. The United Grand Lodge held its first meeting in 1958 in Berlin, and Dr. Theodor Vogel was once again elected as its Grand Master. A total of 346 Lodges now united across Germany and finally gained national cohesion. The organization finally received recognition from the United Grand Lodge of England in December 1960.

Freemasonry returned to many other European countries after World War Two in a similar manner. In Italy, most of the leadership of the Grand Orient and Grand Lodge were persecuted, attacked, or murdered during the war. Domizino Torrigiani, the last Grand Master of the Grand Orient as well as the Grand Orator, Secretary, and Treasurer at the time of reconstitution were dead. It fell to the Grand Senior Warden Guiseppe Guastalla to reform the Grand Orient as Grand Master. Shortly after the fall of fascism in July 1943, Guastalla issued a summons to all Masons in the liberated areas of Italy. Ten answered this summons and assisted in forming a committee charged with convening “a regular meeting of the Grand Orient when the proper moment arrived, all in accordance with the [Grand] Constitution.”\(^{429}\) The members of the committee also helped reconstitute individual lodges in the liberated areas and kept surviving past members informed as to the progress of the Fraternity. In 1944, several were still arrested by the Gestapo and murdered.

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\(^{428}\) Early on in the negotiations between the United Grand Lodge and the Grand National Lodge it had been decided that a universally agreed set of principles prescribed in a document should be ratified by both parties before a compact could be agreed upon. This was to become the “Magna Charta.”

the committee and the Masons of Italy had reconstituted more than 200 Lodges. Discussions began with the National Grand Lodge in 1945 and rapprochement of the two bodies achieved in November 18, 1945. At a General Assembly of the Grand Orient of Italy-Grand National Lodge, a Grand Master was elected as well as other Grand line officers.

Freemasonry returned to France in March of 1943 at which time Henri Giraud, the French civil and military Commander-in-Chief of North Africa abolished the Vichy laws which discriminated against and allowed the persecution of Freemasons in the country and throughout its colonial territories. One of the first acts of French Freemasons after the war was to compile and publish a list of Freemasons who were persecuted, imprisoned, or murdered during the war. At the beginning of World War Two, French Freemasonry claimed a membership of approximately 40,000. After the war, this number had declined to only 14,500. The Grand Lodge of France claimed a prewar membership of 15,000, which was reduced to 5,000 after the war. At a meeting of the Federal Council of the Grand Lodge of France in 1945, the previous Grand Master, Michel Dumesnil de Gramont was re-elected to serve as Grand Master again. At that time, the Council determined not to merge the Grand Lodge and Grand Orient, but reaffirmed the right of visitation between the two bodies. The Grand Lodge Nationale Française was reconstituted sometime in 1952. In other countries under wartime Axis occupation, Freemasonry returned almost as soon as the Nazis were driven out, including in Austria and Hungary, though in Hungary it was again proscribed by the Stalinist Soviet regime in 1950.

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430 Denslow, Freemasonry in the Eastern Hemisphere, 252.
431 Ibid.
432 Ibid., 174-179.
In Spain however, Freemasonry continued to be banned for the duration of the life of the dictator Francisco Franco. It is likely that he never personally believed any of the Jewish connotations of the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy,” but he continued the persecution of Freemasons inside Spain until his death. Even during one of his final speeches, Franco railed against the leftist Masonic conspiracy threatening to destroy Spain. After the death of Franco and the return of democracy to the country in 1975, the Grand Orient of Spain began negotiations with other European Grand jurisdictions in order to gain the backing necessary to approach the Spanish government concerning the reestablishment of Freemasonry. In 1977, the Grand Orient declared its exile over and began to form committees in order to hold discussions with various ministerial chairs in the Spanish government. The Grand Orient held a press conference in which they laid out the principles of the Grand Orient and issued a statement in which they stated that they wished to maintain a friendly relationship with the Catholic Church and the monarchy. This angered some of the liberal left members of the Grand Orient, who broke off and formed the Grand United Spanish Orient. In 1979 the Grand Symbolic Spanish Lodge was formed under the Grand Orient of Spain. The Grand National French Lodge also began establishing Lodges in Spain and would constitute the Grand Lodge of Spain in 1982.

Freemasonry would be officially reconstituted and the LRFC of 1940 repealed in a decision from the Supreme Tribunal of the Spanish Supreme Court in 1991. In March 2001, the Grand Lodge of Spain and the Grand Orient of Spain merged, taking the name of the Grand Lodge of Spain and would elect Tomas Sarobe as Grand Master.433

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

Freemasons comprised just one of the many groups that Hitler, the Nazis, and other twentieth century authoritarian regimes sought to wipe from the face of the Earth, and yet, the story of Freemasonry in the years prior to, during, and after the Second World War has not been comprehensively examined in many places outside of Masonic publications. However, Hitler was not alone in his persecution of the Fraternity. Freemasonry, it has been shown, faced slander, persecution, and prohibition in the past and during the twentieth century in several European states. Europe during the years before and during the Second World War prove to be a dangerous, often deadly place for a Freemason, regardless of the country he lived or worked in. This proved especially true for Freemasons who had internationalist ties or sympathies and were living in the countries controlled or occupied by strong authoritarian-nationalist governments.

The treatment of Freemasons as a political group became deeply entwined with that of the Jews and Communists early on in the post-World War One period. Although Freemasons as a group did not constitute as great a number of the victims of the Third Reich as other groups such as Jews and Slavs, Freemasons’ internationalist and cosmopolitan outlook still constituted a perceived threat to the National Socialist state and its leadership, and they would see to it that the Fraternity as a whole would be wiped out in any areas under their control. Other nationalist governments, such as Vichy France and Francoist Spain either preceded the Nazis in these actions or followed in their wake. In their crusades against Freemasonry Hitler and others destroyed part of their countries’
proud history and culture that stretched as far back as 1733—if not even further into the past.

Seeking a scapegoat to pin either German military defeat or perceived Spanish, Italian, and French national degradation on, nationalist right-wing political opportunists and propagandists reached back into the past and wove a complex web of mythical entanglements between the Freemasons, Jews, and Russian Bolsheviks—all the great enemies of the nationalists—until all these groups became one and the same in their own minds and the minds of their supporters. However, it could be argued that even had this political propaganda and the “Judeo-Masonic Conspiracy” not been perpetuated, Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco would still have found twentieth century Freemasonry alarming. For Hitler the concerns were multiple: Freemasonry’s use of passages and symbolism from the Old Testament; its obsession with King Solomon—a great Hebrew King—and his Temple; for Franco, the internationalist outlook of several of the Grand Lodges in Spain; and the admission of Jews as equal members in some jurisdictions would have made Freemasonry a target for persecution early on in the ultra-nationalistic, Christian countries in which it was banned. For Mussolini, the strong emphasis of Freemasons on the strict separation of Church and State would have continued to cause issues within Italy. The fact that Freemasonry also operated as a “secret” organization made its rituals and practices all the more distressing to those in power in authoritarian, “totalitarian” regimes that sought total control over their citizen’s public and private lives. Herein lay the great advantage of scapegoating Freemasons: persecution and elimination could be justified and brought to bear on virtually any situation in which Freemasons appeared involved, at a relatively low political cost, and often for political and personal gain.
An imaginary all-purpose “enemy,” capable of shapeshifting and bending to the will and whims of its creators—and various situations as needed—with an international outlook and world-wide connections, secret and subversive goals, and a penchant for revolting against developing nationalist movements slowly took shape. This negative propaganda became the gospel truth in the Nazi New Order and elsewhere, and although it is clear that the Nazis nor any other nationalist governments originally created this multifarious enemy, they opportunistically made use of it whenever they needed to incite their populations into a nationalistic fervor. Freemasonry—a charitable social institution that aimed to improve and civilize mankind—found itself enmeshed within the rising fin-de-siècle European nationalist populist antipathy toward Jews and Bolshevists alike, and most Freemasons failed to find a way out of the web of murderous deception created for them.

The interwar German case in particular however demonstrates that it was the international connotations within and between the Masonic Lodges that many nationalists hated most. It was at this point that the Old Prussian Lodges began to try and placate their tormentors by purging their Lodges of their history, traditions, and “devious, alien” elements. Today, this should be seen for what it was: a futile attempt to continue the social and institutional concepts of Freemasonry and to relax some of the pressure that the Old Prussian Masons felt politically and professionally in their lives, not as some grandiose attempt to simply put a shroud over the past until the danger was gone. Despite these motivations, during the National Socialist era many in Germany in particular saw their Masonic goals as parallel to the goals of the Third Reich and were hoping to “work towards the Führer” by “Aryanizing” the institution. However, this is not to condemn or judge those
who took these actions. Many other normal, run-of-the-mill Germans found themselves swept up into Nazi fervency and zeal in the years surrounding and following the rise of Hitler to power—and Freemasons were not immune to this. It is unfair to pass judgement on these groups for turning their backs on their Masonic ideals, traditions, and history, as self-preservation instincts inevitably take over in these situations. Many people today join the Masonic community simply out of curiosity, for social reasons, or reasons related to family history. This was no doubt just as true for those that joined in the years immediately following the First World War. As such, they did not feel the need to defend or protect Masonic ideals or ideology, as many never joined for these ideals as such to begin with. Thus it was easy, when the time came, for them to shed the old garments of their tradition and create for themselves new Nazified robes designed to impress upon authorities that they had certainly changed.

However, despite these efforts at window dressing, Hitler and the Third Reich leadership were more worried about what lurked internally, in the minds of the Masons themselves. Externally, they had indeed changed in concept, outlook, and goals, but Hitler still wondered what the aims and objectives of the secretive “Christian Orders” would be. To Hitler and his subordinates such as Rosenberg and Heydrich, they were still “secret” organizations, with a history of a cosmopolitan outlook and therefore were the subject of suspicion which was evident in the comments and evidence left behind by many Nazi leaders. Hence the reason that the “Christian Orders” were treated no differently than other “Freemason Orders.” In an authoritarian, racist totalitarian regime, Hitler and his followers had to know—and control—everything within their purview, including private social institutions and community groups. If they could not know and control a certain population
or organization, they would simply repress it and if it still posed an issue, eliminate it. Furthermore, the nation was Hitler’s means to an end and anything which did not glorify the nation or further his aims was suspect.

However, something must also be said for those who did not turn away from their ideals. These were mostly the Humanitarian Grand Lodges, and although not completely free from the guilt of some of their actions during the tough years of 1930-1933, they generally stood firm in their beliefs. The same is true regarding the many Freemasons who courageously joined resistance groups in France and elsewhere. Many Lodges would simply close however instead of fighting for those ideals—again considering the circumstances, this was just another attempt at self-preservation rather than preservation of the Fraternity.

The greatest story in Freemasonry to come out of this tumultuous time would be that of the courageous fight of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany, and its leader Leo Müffelmann. As the last Grand Lodge to be formed, and shunned by all other Grand Lodges in Germany, it took on the Third Reich politically and morally while operating almost completely alone in the German Masonic network. Here, in the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany, were those Masons who stood for Masonic ideals, history, and ideology in the tradition of the Old Charges of 1726. They were willing to put not only those ideals, but their own lives, up against the Nazi regime. This one small Grand Lodge preserved the ideals and integrity of German Freemasonry virtually uninterrupted for almost 300 years as a result of their self-imposed wartime Middle Eastern exile. German Freemasonry very well might not have survived had the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany not taken these actions. In light of the conditions in Germany in 1934, the circumstances and results of the
exile of the Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany are ironic. As Freemasons Lodges—now Christian Orders—in Germany were being dissolved, liquidated, and destroyed, German Freemasonry and Masonic culture and ideology continued and was preserved by the very same groups of German Jews who were pushed out and refused membership by mainstream German Freemasonry in the years before. Many would stay, preferring to work in the newly formed state of Israel, but some would return to Europe after 1945 to continue the legacy of German Freemasonry in Germany, right where it belonged.
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