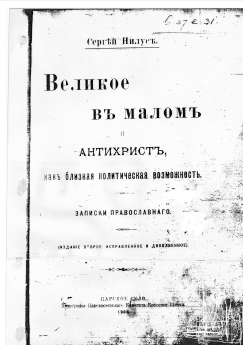


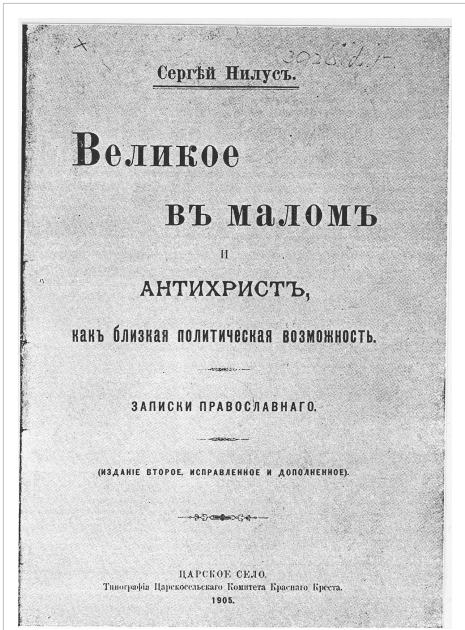
# The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

## *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*



Cover of first book edition, *The Great within the Minuscule and Antichrist*

<b>Author(s)</b>	Possibly Pyotr Rachkovsky; the author plagiarised from Hermann Goedsche and Maurice Joly
<b>Original title</b>	<i>Програма завоевания мира евреями</i> (Programa zavoevaniya mira evreyami, "The Jewish Programme to Conquer the World")
<b>Country</b>	Russian Empire
<b>Language</b>	Russian, with plagiarism from German and French texts
<b>Subject(s)</b>	Antisemitic conspiracy theory
<b>Genre(s)</b>	Propaganda
<b>Publisher</b>	<i>Znamya</i>
<b>Publication date</b>	August–September 1903
<b>Published in English</b>	1919
<b>Media type</b>	Fraudulent political treatise
<b>Pages</b>	417 (1905 edition)



A reproduction of the 1905 Russian edition by Serge Nilus, appearing in *Praemonitus Praemonitus* (1920).

Part of a series on
<b>Antisemitism</b>

Part of Jewish history
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>History</b></li> <li>• <b>Timeline</b></li> <li>• <b>Resources</b></li> </ul>
Category

*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* or *The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion* is an antisemitic hoax purporting to describe a Jewish plan for global domination. It was first published in Russia in 1903, translated into multiple languages, and disseminated internationally in the early part of the 20th century. Henry Ford funded printing of 500,000 copies that were distributed throughout the US in the 1920s.

Adolf Hitler and the Nazis publicized the text as if it were a valid document, although it had already been exposed as fraudulent. After the Nazi Party came to power in 1933, it ordered the text to be studied in German classrooms. The historian Norman Cohn suggested that Hitler used the *Protocols* as his primary justification for initiating the Holocaust—his "warrant for genocide".<sup>[1]</sup>

The *Protocols* purports to document the minutes of a late 19th-century meeting of Jewish leaders discussing their goal of global Jewish hegemony by subverting the morals of Gentiles, and by controlling the press and the world's economies. It is still widely available today and even now sometimes presented as a genuine document, whether on

the Internet or in print in numerous languages.

## Creation

### Sources for the *Protocols*

The *Protocols* is a fabricated document purporting to be factual. It was originally produced in Russia between 1897 and 1903, possibly by Pyotr Ivanovich Rachkovsky, head of the Paris office of the Russian Secret Police, and unknown others.<sup>[2][1]</sup>

Source material for the forgery consisted jointly of *Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu* or *Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, an 1864 political satire by Maurice Joly<sup>[3]</sup> and a chapter from *Biarritz*, an 1868 novel by the antisemitic German novelist Hermann Goedsche, which had been translated into Russian in 1872.<sup>[4]</sup>

A major source for the *Protocols* was *Der Judenstaat* by Theodor Herzl although, paradoxically, early Russian editions of the *Protocols* assert that they did not come from a Zionist organization.<sup>[5]</sup> The text, which nowhere advocates for Zionism, resembles a parody of Herzl's ideas.<sup>[6]</sup>

### Literary forgery

World literature includes a number of works employing the literary technique of the false document, presenting a work as an authentic text – the reader, however, will know of the fictional origin of the work.<sup>[7]</sup> Wikipedia:Citing sources *The Protocols* is one of the best-known and most-discussed examples of literary forgery, with analysis and proof of its fraudulent origin going as far back as 1921.<sup>[8]</sup>

The forgery is an early example of "conspiracy theory" literature.<sup>[9]</sup> Written mainly in the first person plural,<sup>[10]</sup> the text includes generalizations, truisms and platitudes on how to take over the world: take control of the media and the financial institutions, change the traditional social order, etc. It does not contain specifics.<sup>[11]</sup>

### Maurice Joly

Elements of the *Protocols* were plagiarized from Joly's fictional *Dialogue in Hell*, a thinly veiled attack on the political ambitions of Napoleon III, who, represented by the non-Jewish character Machiavelli,<sup>[12]</sup> plots to rule the world. Joly, a monarchist and legitimist, was imprisoned in France for 15 months as a direct result of his book's publication. Ironically, scholars have noted that *Dialogue in Hell* was itself a plagiarism, at least in part, of a novel by Eugene Sue, *Les Mystères du Peuple* (1849–56).<sup>[13]</sup> Identifiable phrases from Joly constitute 4% of the first half of the first edition, and 12% of the second half; later editions, including most translations, have longer quotes from Joly.<sup>[14]</sup>

*The Protocols* 1–19 closely follow the order of Maurice Joly's *Dialogues* 1–17. For example:

<i>Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu</i>	<i>The Protocols of the Elders of Zion</i>
<p>How are loans made? By the issue of bonds entailing on the Government the obligation to pay interest proportionate to the capital it has been paid. Thus, if a loan is at 5%, the State, after 20 years, has paid out a sum equal to the borrowed capital. When 40 years have expired it has paid double, after 60 years triple: yet it remains debtor for the entire capital sum.</p> <p>— Montesquieu, <i>Dialogues</i>, p. 209</p>	<p>A loan is an issue of Government paper which entails an obligation to pay interest amounting to a percentage of the total sum of the borrowed money. If a loan is at 5%, then in 20 years the Government would have unnecessarily paid out a sum equal to that of the loan in order to cover the percentage. In 40 years it will have paid twice; and in 60 thrice that amount, but the loan will still remain as an unpaid debt.</p> <p>— <i>Protocols</i>, p. 77</p>
<p>Like the god Vishnu, my press will have a hundred arms, and these arms will give their hands to all the different shades of opinion throughout the country.</p> <p>— Machiavelli, <i>Dialogues</i>, p. 141</p>	<p>These newspapers, like the Indian god Vishnu, will be possessed of hundreds of hands, each of which will be feeling the pulse of varying public opinion.</p> <p>— <i>Protocols</i>, p. 43</p>
<p>Now I understand the figure of the god Vishnu; you have a hundred arms like the Indian idol, and each of your fingers touches a spring.</p> <p>— Montesquieu, <i>Dialogues</i>, p. 207</p>	<p>Our Government will resemble the Hindu god Vishnu. Each of our hundred hands will hold one spring of the social machinery of State.</p> <p>— <i>Protocols</i>, p. 65</p>

Philip Graves brought this plagiarism to light in a series of articles in *The Times* in 1921, the first published evidence that the *Protocols* was not an authentic document.<sup>[15][16]</sup>

## Hermann Goedsche

"Goedsche was a postal clerk and a spy for the Prussian Secret Police. He had been forced to leave the postal work due to his part in forging evidence in the prosecution against the Democratic leader Benedict Waldeck in 1849."<sup>[17]</sup> Following his dismissal, Goedsche began a career as a conservative columnist, and wrote literary fiction under the pen name Sir John Retcliffe.<sup>[1]</sup> His 1868 novel *Biarritz (To Sedan)* contains a chapter called "The Jewish Cemetery in Prague and the Council of Representatives of the Twelve Tribes of Israel." In it, Goedsche (who was unaware that only two of the original twelve Biblical "tribes" remained) depicts a clandestine nocturnal meeting of members of a mysterious rabbinical cabal that is planning a diabolical "Jewish conspiracy." At midnight, the Devil appears to contribute his opinions and insight. The chapter closely resembles a scene in Alexandre Dumas, père's *The Queen's Necklace* (1848), in which Joseph Balsamo, Alessandro Cagliostro, and company plot the Affair of the Diamond Necklace. By 1871, this fictional story was being recounted in France as serious history.

In 1872 a Russian translation of "The Jewish Cemetery in Prague" appeared in St. Petersburg as a separate pamphlet of purported non-fiction. François Bournand, in his *Les Juifs et nos Contemporains* (1896), reproduced the soliloquy at the end of the chapter, in which the character Levit expresses as factual the wish that Jews be "kings of the world in 100 years" —crediting a "Chief Rabbi John Readcliff." Perpetuation of the myth of the authenticity of Goedsche's story, in particular the "Rabbi's speech", facilitated later accounts of the equally mythical authenticity of the *Protocols*.<sup>[1]</sup> Like the *Protocols*, many asserted that the fictional "rabbi's speech" had a ring of authenticity, regardless of its origin: "This speech was published in our time, eighteen years ago," read an 1898 report in *La Croix*, "and all the events occurring before our eyes were anticipated in it with truly frightening accuracy."<sup>[18]</sup>

Fictional events in Joly's pamphlet, which appeared four years before *Biarritz*, may well have been the inspiration for Goedsche's fictional midnight meeting, and details of the outcome of the supposed plot. Goedsche's chapter may have been an outright plagiarism of Joly, Dumas père, or both.<sup>[19][20]</sup>

## Structure and content

The *Protocols* purports to document the minutes of a late-19th-century meeting attended by world Jewish leaders, the "Elders of Zion", who are conspiring to take over the world.<sup>[21][22]</sup> The forgery places in the mouths of the Jewish leaders a variety of plans, most of which derive from older antisemitic canards.<sup>[21][22]</sup> For example, the *Protocols* includes plans to subvert the morals of the non-Jewish world, plans for Jewish bankers to control the world's economies, plans for Jewish control of the press, and – ultimately – plans for the destruction of civilization.<sup>[21][22]</sup> The document consists of twenty-four "protocols", which have been analyzed by Steven Jacobs and Mark Weitzman, and they documented several recurrent themes that appear repeatedly in the 24 protocols,<sup>[23]</sup> as shown in the following table:<sup>[24]</sup>

Protocol	Title <sup>[24]</sup>	Themes <sup>[24]</sup>
1	The Basic Doctrine: "Right Lies in Might"	Freedom and Liberty; Authority and power; Gold = money
2	Economic War and Disorganization Lead to International Government	International Political economic conspiracy; Press/Media as tools
3	Methods of Conquest	Jewish people, arrogant and corrupt; Chosenness/Election; Public Service
4	The Destruction of Religion by Materialism	Business as Cold and Heartless; Gentiles as slaves
5	Despotism and Modern Progress	Jewish Ethics; Jewish People's Relationship to Larger Society
6	The Acquisition of Land, The Encouragement of Speculation	Ownership of land
7	A Prophecy of Worldwide War	Internal unrest and discord (vs. Court system) leading to war vs Shalom/Peace
8	The transitional Government	Criminal element
9	The All-Embracing Propaganda	Law; education; Masonry/Freemasonry
10	Abolition of the Constitution; Rise of the Autocracy	Politics; Majority rule; Liberalism; Family
11	The Constitution of Autocracy and Universal Rule	Gentiles; Jewish political involvement; Masonry
12	The Kingdom of the Press and Control	Liberty; Press censorship; Publishing
13	Turning Public Thought from Essentials to Non-essentials	Gentiles; Business; Chosenness/Election; Press and censorship; Liberalism
14	The Destruction of Religion as a Prelude to the Rise of the Jewish God	Judaism; God; Gentiles; Liberty; Pornography
15	Utilization of Masonry: Heartless Suppression of Enemies	Gentiles; Masonry; Sages of Israel; Political power and authority; King of Israel
16	The Nullification of Education	Education
17	The Fate of Lawyers and the Clergy	Lawyers; Clergy; Christianity and non-Jewish Authorship
18	The Organization of Disorder	Evil; Speech;
19	Mutual Understanding Between Ruler and People	Gossip; Martyrdom
20	The Financial Program and Construction	Taxes and Taxation; Loans; Bonds; Usury; Moneylending
21	Domestic Loans and Government Credit	Stock Markets and Stock Exchanges
22	The Beneficence of Jewish Rule	Gold = Money; Chosenness/Election
23	The Inculcation of Obedience	Obedience to Authority; Slavery; Chosenness/Election
24	The Jewish Ruler	Kingship; Document as Fiction

## History

### Publication history

*The Protocols* appeared in print in the Russian Empire as early as 1903. The antisemitic tract was published as a serialized set of articles in *Znamya*, a Black Hundreds newspaper owned by Pavel Krushevan. It appeared again in 1905 as a final chapter (Chapter XII) of a second edition of *Velikoe v malom i antikhrist* (The Great in the Small & Antichrist), a book by Serge Nilus. In 1906, it appeared in pamphlet form edited by G. Butmi.<sup>[25]</sup>

These first three (and subsequently more) Russian language imprints were published and circulated in the Russian Empire during the 1903–6 period as a tool for scapegoating Jews, blamed by the monarchists for the defeat in the Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 Russian Revolution. Common to all three texts is the idea that Jews aim for world domination. Since *The Protocols* are presented as merely a document, the front matter and back matter are needed to explain its alleged origin. The diverse imprints, however, are mutually inconsistent. The general claim is that the document was stolen from a secret Jewish organization. Since the alleged original stolen manuscript does not exist, one is forced to restore a purported original edition. This has been done by the Italian scholar, Cesare G. De Michelis in 1998, in a work which was translated into English and published in 2004, where he treats his subject as Apocrypha.<sup>[25][26]</sup> As fiction in the genre of literature, the tract was further analyzed by Umberto Eco in his novel *Foucault's Pendulum* in 1988 (English translation in 1989), in 1994 in chapter 6, "Fictional Protocols", of his *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* and in his 2010 novel *The Cemetery of Prague*.

As the 1917 Russian Revolution unfolded, causing white Russians to flee to the West, this text was carried along and assumed a new purpose. Until then *The Protocols* had remained obscure;<sup>[26]</sup> it was now an instrument for blaming Jews for the Russian Revolution. It was now a tool, a political weapon used against the Bolsheviks who were depicted as overwhelmingly Jews, allegedly executing the "plan" embodied in *The Protocols*. The purpose was to discredit the October Revolution, prevent the West from recognizing the Soviet Union, and bring the downfall of Vladimir Lenin's regime.<sup>[25][26]</sup>

### First Russian language editions

#### Conspiracy references

According to Daniel Pipes,

The great importance of *The Protocols* lies in its permitting antisemites to reach beyond their traditional circles and find a large international audience, a process that continues to this day. The forgery poisoned public life wherever it appeared; it was "self-generating; a blueprint that migrated from one conspiracy to another."<sup>[27]</sup> The book's vagueness—almost no names, dates, or issues are specified—has been one key to this wide-ranging success. The purportedly Jewish authorship also helps to make the book more convincing. Its embrace of contradiction—that to advance, Jews use all tools available, including capitalism and communism, philo-Semitism and antisemitism, democracy and tyranny—made it possible for *The Protocols* to reach out to all: rich and poor, Right and Left, Christian and Muslim, American and Japanese.<sup>[11]</sup>

Pipes notes that the *Protocols* emphasizes recurring themes of conspiratorial antisemitism: "Jews always scheme", "Jews are everywhere", "Jews are behind every institution", "Jews obey a central authority, the shadowy 'Elders'", and "Jews are close to success."<sup>[28]</sup>

*The Protocols* is widely considered influential in the development of other conspiracy theories, and reappears repeatedly in contemporary conspiracy literature, such as Jim Marrs' *Rule by Secrecy*. Some recent editions proclaim that the "Jews" depicted in the Protocols are a cover identity for other conspirators such as the Illuminati,<sup>[29]</sup> Freemasons, the Priory of Sion, or even, in the opinion of David Icke, "extra-dimensional entities."

## Emergence in Russia

The chapter "In the Jewish Cemetery in Prague" from Goedsche's *Biarritz*, with its strong antisemitic theme containing the alleged rabbinical plot against the European civilization, was translated into Russian as a separate pamphlet in 1872.<sup>[4]</sup> In 1921, Princess Catherine Radziwill gave a private lecture in New York. She claimed that the Protocols were a forgery compiled in 1904–5 by Russian journalists Matvei Golovinski and Manasevich-Manuilov at the direction of Pyotr Rachkovsky, Chief of the Russian secret service in Paris.<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1944, German writer Konrad Heiden identified Golovinski as an author of the *Protocols*.<sup>[29]</sup> Radziwill's account was supported by Russian historian Mikhail Lepekhine, who published his findings in November 1999 in the French newsweekly *L'Express*.<sup>[30]</sup> Lepekhine considers the *Protocols* a part of a scheme to persuade Tsar Nicholas II that the modernization of Russia was really a Jewish plot to control the world.<sup>[31]</sup> Stephen Eric Bronner writes that groups opposed to progress, parliamentarianism, urbanization, and capitalism, and an active Jewish role in these modern institutions, were particularly drawn to the antisemitism of the document.<sup>[32]</sup> Ukrainian scholar Vadim Skuratovsky offers extensive literary, historical and linguistic analysis of the original text of the *Protocols* and traces the influences of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's prose (in particular, *The Grand Inquisitor* and *The Possessed*) on Golovinski's writings, including the *Protocols*.<sup>[31]</sup>

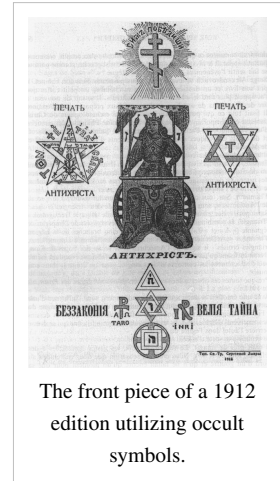
In his book *The Non-Existent Manuscript*, Italian scholar Cesare G. De Michelis studies early Russian publications of the *Protocols*. The *Protocols* were first mentioned in the Russian press in April 1902, by the Saint Petersburg newspaper *Novoye Vremya* (Новое Время – *The New Times*). The article was written by a famous conservative publicist Mikhail Menshikov<sup>(ru)</sup> as a part of his regular series "Letters to Neighbors" ("Письма к ближним") and was titled "Plots against Humanity". The author described his meeting with a lady (Yuliana Glinka, as it is known now) who, after telling him about her mystical revelations, implored him to get familiar with the documents later known as the *Protocols*; but after reading some excerpts, Menshikov became quite skeptical about their origin and did not publish them.<sup>[33]</sup>

### Krushevan and Nilus editions

The *Protocols* were published at the earliest, in serialized form, from August 28 to September 7 ( O.S.) 1903, in *Znamya*, a Saint Petersburg daily newspaper, under Pavel Krushevan. Krushevan had initiated the Kishinev pogrom four months earlier.<sup>[34]</sup>

In 1905, Sergei Nilus published the full text of the *Protocols* in *Chapter XII*, the final chapter (pp 305–417), of the second edition (or third, according to some sources) of his book, *Velikoe v malom i antikhrist*, which translates as "The Great within the Small: The Coming of the Anti-Christ and the Rule of Satan on Earth". He claimed it was the work of the First Zionist Congress, held in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland.<sup>[25]</sup> When it was pointed out that the First Zionist Congress had been open to the public and was attended by many non-Jews, Nilus changed his story, saying the Protocols were the work of the 1902–3 meetings of the Elders, but contradicting his own prior statement that he had received his copy in 1901:

In 1901, I succeeded through an acquaintance of mine (the late Court Marshal Alexei Nikolayevich Sukotin of Chernigov) in getting a manuscript that exposed with unusual perfection and clarity the course and development of the secret Jewish Freemasonic conspiracy, which would bring this wicked world to its inevitable end. The person who gave me this manuscript guaranteed it to be a faithful translation of the original documents that were stolen by a woman from one of the highest and most influential leaders of the Freemasons at a secret meeting somewhere in France—the beloved nest of Freemasonic conspiracy.<sup>[35]</sup>



The front piece of a 1912 edition utilizing occult symbols.

### Stolypin's fraud investigation, 1905

A subsequent secret investigation ordered by Pyotr Stolypin, the newly appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers, came to the conclusion that the *Protocols* first appeared in Paris in antisemitic circles around 1897–1898.<sup>[36]</sup> When Nicholas II learned of the results of this investigation, he requested, "The Protocols should be confiscated, a good cause cannot be defended by dirty means."<sup>[37]</sup> Despite the order, or because of the "good cause", numerous reprints proliferated.<sup>[34]</sup>

### The Protocols in the West

In the United States, *The Protocols* are to be understood in the context of the First Red Scare (1917–20). The text circulated in 1919 in American government circles, specifically diplomatic and military, in typescript form, a copy of which is archived by the Hoover Institute.<sup>[38]</sup> It also appeared in 1919 in the *Public Ledger* as a pair of serialized newspaper articles. But all references to "Jews" were replaced with references to *Bolsheviki* as an exposé by the journalist and subsequently highly respected Columbia University School of Journalism dean Carl W. Ackerman.<sup>[38]</sup>

In 1923, there appeared an anonymously edited pamphlet by the Britons Publishing Society, a successor to The Britons, an entity created and headed by Henry Hamilton Beamish. This imprint was allegedly a translation by Victor E. Marsden, who died in October 1920.<sup>[38]</sup>

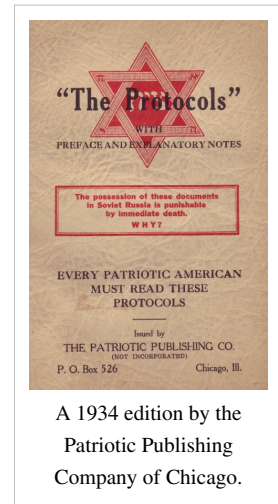
Most versions substantially involve "protocols", or minutes of a speech given in secret involving Jews who are organized as Elders, or Sages, of Zion,<sup>[39]</sup> and underlies 24 protocols that are supposedly followed by the Jewish people. *The Protocols* has been proven to be a literary forgery and hoax as well as a clear case of plagiarism.<sup>[16][40][41][42][43]</sup>

### English language imprints

On October 27 and 28, 1919, the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* published excerpts of an English language translation as the "Red Bible," deleting all references to the purported Jewish authorship and re-casting the document as a Bolshevik manifesto.<sup>[1]</sup> The author of the articles was the paper's correspondent at the time, Carl W. Ackerman, who later became the head of the journalism department at Columbia University. On May 8, 1920, an article<sup>[44]</sup> in *The Times* followed German translation and appealed for an inquiry into what it called an "uncanny note of prophecy". In the leader (editorial) titled "The Jewish Peril, a Disturbing Pamphlet: Call for Inquiry", Wickham Steed wrote about *The Protocols*:

What are these 'Protocols'? Are they authentic? If so, what malevolent assembly concocted these plans and gloated over their exposition? Are they forgery? If so, whence comes the uncanny note of prophecy, prophecy in part fulfilled, in part so far gone in the way of fulfillment?"<sup>[45]</sup>

Steed retracted his endorsement of The Protocols after they were exposed as a forgery.



A 1934 edition by the Patriotic Publishing Company of Chicago.

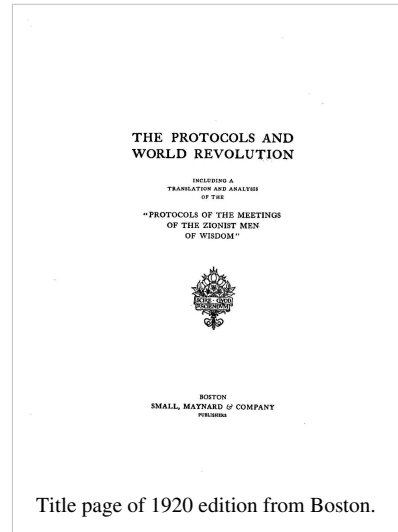


## United States

In the US, Henry Ford sponsored the printing of 500,000 copies, and, from 1920 to 1922, published a series of antisemitic articles titled "The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem", in *The Dearborn Independent*, a newspaper he owned. In 1921, Ford cited evidence of a Jewish threat: "The only statement I care to make about the *Protocols* is that they fit in with what is going on. They are 16 years old, and they have fitted the world situation up to this time."<sup>[46]</sup> In 1927, however, the courts<sup>Wikipedia:Avoid</sup> weasel words ordered Ford to retract his publication and apologize; he complied, claiming his assistants had duped him. He remained an admirer of Nazi Germany, however.<sup>[47]</sup>

In 1934, an anonymous editor expanded the compilation with "Text and Commentary" (pp 136–41). The production of this uncredited compilation was a 300-page book, an inauthentic expanded edition of the twelfth chapter of Nilus's 1905 book on the coming of the anti-Christ. It consists of substantial liftings of excerpts of articles from Ford's antisemitic periodical *The Dearborn Independent*. This 1934 text circulates most widely in the English-speaking world, as well as on the internet. The "Text and Commentary" concludes with a comment on Haim Weizman's October 6, 1920, remark at a banquet: "A beneficent protection which God has instituted in the life of the Jew is that He has dispersed him all over the world". Marsden, who was dead by then, is credited with the following assertion:

It proves that the Learned Elders exist. It proves that Dr. Weizmann knows all about them. It proves that the desire for a "National Home" in Palestine is only camouflage and an infinitesimal part of the Jew's real object. It proves that the Jews of the world have no intention of settling in Palestine or any separate country, and that their annual prayer that they may all meet "Next Year in Jerusalem" is merely a piece of their characteristic make-believe. It also demonstrates that the Jews are now a world menace, and that the Aryan races will have to domicile them permanently out of Europe.<sup>[48]</sup>



### ***The Times* exposes a forgery, 1921**

In 1920–21, the history of the concepts found in the *Protocols* was traced back to the works of Goedsche and Jacques Crétineau-Joly by Lucien Wolf (an English Jewish journalist), and published in London in August 1921. But a dramatic exposé occurred in the series of articles in *The Times* by its Constantinople reporter, Philip Graves, who discovered the plagiarism from the work of Maurice Joly.<sup>[16]</sup>

According to writer Peter Grose, Allen Dulles, who was in Constantinople developing relationships in post-Ottoman political structures, discovered 'the source' of the documentation ultimately provided to *The Times*. Grose writes that *The Times* extended a loan to the source, a Russian émigré who refused to be identified, with the understanding the loan would not be repaid.<sup>[49]</sup> Colin Holmes, a lecturer in economic history of Sheffield University, identified the émigré as Michael Raslovleff, a self-identified antisemite, who gave the information to Graves so as not to "give a weapon of any kind to the Jews, whose friend I have never been."<sup>[50]</sup>

In the first article of Graves' series, titled "A Literary Forgery", the editors of *The Times* wrote, "our Constantinople Correspondent presents for the first time conclusive proof that the document is in the main a clumsy plagiarism. He has forwarded us a copy of the French book from which the plagiarism is made."<sup>[16]</sup> In the same year, an entire book<sup>[51]</sup> documenting the hoax was published in the US by Herman Bernstein. Despite this widespread and extensive debunking, the *Protocols* continued to be regarded as important factual evidence by antisemites.

### **Middle East**

A translation made by an Arab Christian appeared in Cairo in 1927 or 1928, this time as a book. The first translation by an Arab Muslim was also published in Cairo, but only in 1951.<sup>[1]</sup>

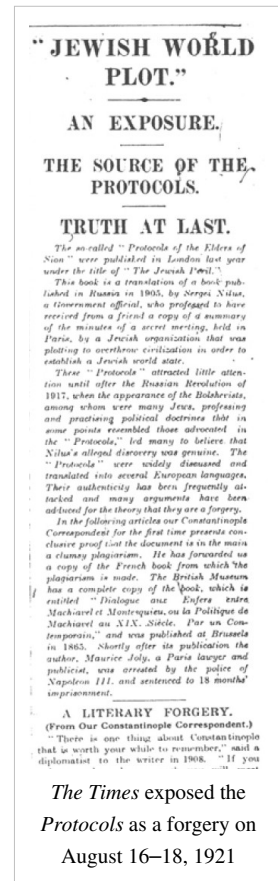
### **Switzerland**

#### **The Berne Trial, 1934–1935**

The selling of the *Protocols* (edited by German antisemite Theodor Fritsch) by the National Front during a political manifestation in the Casino of Berne on June 13, 1933,<sup>[52]</sup> led to the Berne Trial in the *Amtsgericht* (district court) of Berne, the capital of Switzerland, on October 29, 1934. The plaintiffs (the Swiss Jewish Association and the Jewish Community of Berne) were represented by Hans Matti and Georges Brunschvig, helped by Emil Raas. Working on behalf of the defense was German antisemitic propagandist Ulrich Fleischhauer. On May 19, 1935, two defendants (Theodore Fischer and Silvio Schnell) were convicted of violating a Bernese statute prohibiting the distribution of "immoral, obscene or brutalizing" texts<sup>[1]</sup> while three other defendants were acquitted. The court declared the *Protocols* to be forgeries, plagiarisms, and obscene literature. Judge Walter Meyer, a Christian who had not heard of the *Protocols* earlier, said in conclusion,

I hope the time will come when nobody will be able to understand how in 1935 nearly a dozen sane and responsible men were able for two weeks to mock the intellect of the Bern court discussing the authenticity of the so-called Protocols, the very Protocols that, harmful as they have been and will be, are nothing but laughable nonsense.<sup>[34]</sup>

Vladimir Burtsev, a Russian émigré, anti-Bolshevik and anti-Fascist who exposed numerous Okhrana agents provocateurs in the early 1900s, served as a witness at the Berne Trial. In 1938 in Paris he published a book, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion: A Proved Forgery*, based on his testimony.



On November 1, 1937, the defendants appealed the verdict to the *Obergericht* (Cantonal Supreme Court) of Berne. A panel of three judges acquitted them, holding that the *Protocols*, while false, did not violate the statute at issue because they were "political publications" and not "immoral (obscene) publications (Schundliteratur)" in the strict sense of the law.<sup>[1]</sup> The presiding judge's opinion stated, though, that the forgery of the *Protocols* was not questionable and expressed regret that the law did not provide adequate protection for Jews from this sort of literature. The court refused to impose the fees of defence of the acquitted defendants to the plaintiffs, and the acquitted Theodor Fischer had to pay 100 Fr. to the total state costs of the trial (Fr. 28'000) that were eventually paid by the Canton of Berne.<sup>[53]</sup> This decision gave grounds for later allegations that the appeal court "confirmed authenticity of the Protocols" which is contrary to the facts. A view favorable to the pro-Nazi defendants is reported in an appendix to Leslie Fry's *Waters Flowing Eastward*.<sup>[54]</sup> A more scholarly work on the trial is in a 139-page monograph by Urs Lüthi.

### The Basel Trial

A similar trial in Switzerland took place at Basel. The Swiss Frontists Alfred Zander and Eduard Rüeegsegger distributed the *Protocols* (edited by the German Gottfried zur Beek) in Switzerland. Jules Dreyfus-Brodsky and Marcus Cohen sued them for insult to Jewish honor. At the same time, chief rabbi Marcus Ehrenpreis of Stockholm (who also witnessed at the Berne Trial) sued Alfred Zander who contended that Ehrenpreis himself had said that the *Protocols* were authentic (referring to the foreword of the edition of the *Protocols* by the German antisemite Theodor Fritsch). On June 5, 1936 these proceedings ended with a settlement.<sup>[55]</sup>

### Germany

According to historian Norman Cohn,<sup>[56]</sup> the assassins of German Jewish politician Walter Rathenau (1867–1922) were convinced that Rathenau was a literal "Elder of Zion".

The *Protocols* also became a part of the Nazi propaganda effort to justify persecution of the Jews. It was made required reading for German students. In *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry 1933–1945*, Nora Levin states that "Hitler used the *Protocols* as a manual in his war to exterminate the Jews":

Despite conclusive proof that the *Protocols* were a gross forgery, they had sensational popularity and large sales in the 1920s and 1930s. They were translated into every language of Europe and sold widely in Arab lands, the US, and England. But it was in Germany after World War I that they had their greatest success. There they were used to explain all of the disasters that had befallen the country: the defeat in the war, the hunger, the destructive inflation.<sup>[57]</sup>

Hitler refers to the *Protocols* in *Mein Kampf*:

...To what extent the whole existence of this people is based on a continuous lie is shown incomparably by the *Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*, so infinitely hated by the Jews. They are based on a forgery, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* moans and screams once every week: the best proof that they are authentic. [...] the important thing is that with positively terrifying certainty they reveal the nature and activity of the Jewish people and expose their inner contexts as well as their ultimate final aims.<sup>[58]</sup>

Hitler endorsed it in his speeches from August 1921 on, and it was studied in German classrooms after the Nazis came to power. At the height of World War II, the Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels proclaimed: "The Zionist Protocols are as up-to-date today as they were the day they were first published."<sup>[59]</sup> In Norman Cohn's words, it served as the Nazis' "warrant for genocide".

### German language publications

Having fled the Ukraine in 1918–19, Piotr Shabelsky-Bork brought the Protocols to Ludwig Muller Von Hausen who then published them in German.<sup>[60]</sup> Under the pseudonym Gottfried Zur Beek he produced the first and "by far the most important"<sup>[61]</sup> German translation. It appeared in January 1920 as a part of a larger antisemitic tract<sup>[62]</sup> dated 1919. After *The Times* discussed the book respectfully in May 1920 it became a bestseller. "The Hohenzollern family helped defray the publication costs, and Kaiser Wilhelm II had portions of the book read out aloud to dinner guests".<sup>[59]</sup>

Alfred Rosenberg's 1923 edition<sup>[63]</sup> "gave a forgery a huge boost".<sup>[59]</sup>

### Modern era

*See also: Contemporary imprints of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and New World Order*

The *Protocols* continue to be widely available around the world, particularly on the internet, as well as in print in Japan, the Middle East, Asia, and South America.<sup>[64]</sup>

Governments or political leaders in most parts of the world have not referred to the *Protocols* since World War II. The exception to this is the Middle East, where a large number of Arab and Muslim regimes and leaders have endorsed them as authentic, including endorsements from Presidents Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat of Egypt, one of the President Arifs of Iraq, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and Colonel Muammar al-Gaddafi of Libya. The 1988 charter of Hamas, a Palestinian Islamist group, states that *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* embodies the plan of the Zionists.<sup>[1]</sup> Recent endorsements in the 21st century have been made by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Ekrima Sa'id Sabri, the education ministry of Saudi Arabia, member of the Greek Parliament Ilias Kasidiaris, and young earth creationist and tax protester Kent Hovind.<sup>[65][1]</sup>

In 2010, Italian philosopher and novelist Umberto Eco released his novel *The Cemetery of Prague* which contains a fictional account of the origin of *The Protocols* forgery.

### Notes

[1] .

[2] .

[3] Jacobs & Weitzman 2003, p. 15.

[4] .

[5] De Michelis, Newhouse & Bi-Yerushalayim 2004, p. 47.

[6] De Michelis, Newhouse & Bi-Yerushalayim 2004, p. 114 (<http://books.google.com/?id=9uG1jsrOenwC&pg=PA113&lpg=PA113&dq=first+zionist+congress+nilus#v=onepage&q=first+zionist+congress+nilus&f=false>).

[7] De Michelis, Newhouse & Bi-Yerushalayim 2004.

[8] .

[9] .

[10] The text contains 44 instances of the word "I" (9.6%), and 412 instances of the word "we" (90.4%).<ref>.

[11] Pipes 1997, p. 85.

[12] .

[14] De Michelis, Newhouse & Bi-Yerushalayim 2004, p. 8 (<http://books.google.com/?id=9uG1jsrOenwC&pg=PA113&lpg=PA113&dq=first+zionist+congress+nilus#v=onepage&q=first+zionist+congress+nilus&f=false>).

[16] Graves 1921.

[17] . Republished as .

[18] .

[20] This complex relationship was originally exposed by . The exposé has since been elaborated in many sources.

[21] Chanes 2004, p. 58.

[22] Shibuya 2007, p. 571.

[23] Jacobs analyses the Marsden English translation. Some other less common imprints have more or fewer than 24 protocols

[24] Jacobs & Weitzman 2003, pp. 21–25.

[25] de Michelis, Newhouse & Bi-Yerushalayim 2004.

[26] Cohn 1967.

[27] .

- [28] Pipes 1997, pp. 86–87.
- [29] .
- [30] .
- [31] .
- [32] Bronner 2003, p. ix ([http://books.google.com/books?id=kk1-ZxE6h0oC&pg=PR9&dq=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+modernity&hl=en&ei=Bd3tTKjkMcKt8Aa6\\_u3SDA&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+modernity&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=kk1-ZxE6h0oC&pg=PR9&dq=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+modernity&hl=en&ei=Bd3tTKjkMcKt8Aa6_u3SDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+modernity&f=false)), 56 ([http://books.google.com/books?id=kk1-ZxE6h0oC&pg=PA56&dq=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+attack+on+liberalism&hl=en&ei=WtvfTI3MOoK88gauzMGiDA&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=kk1-ZxE6h0oC&pg=PA56&dq=A+rumor+about+the+Jews+attack+on+liberalism&hl=en&ei=WtvfTI3MOoK88gauzMGiDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)).
- [33] in .
- [34] .
- [35] .
- [36] .
- [37] .
- [38] Singerman 1980, pp. 48–78.
- [39] .
- [40] .
- [41] .
- [42] David 2000.
- [43] Carroll 2006.
- [44] .
- [45] .
- [46] .
- [47] .
- [48] .
- [49] .
- [50] .
- [51] Bernstein 1921.
- [52] The main speaker was the former chief of the Swiss General Staff Emil Sonderegger.
- [53] Ben-Itto 2005.
- [55] Zander had to withdraw his contention and the stock of the incriminated *Protocols* were destroyed by order of the court. Zander had to pay the fees of this Basel Trial.<ref name="FOOTNOTELüthi199245">Lüthi 1992, p. 45.
- [56] Cohn 1967, p. 169.
- [57] Nora Levin, *The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry 1933–1945*. Quoting from IGC.org (<http://ddickerson.igc.org/hitler-protokollen.html>)
- [58] .
- [59] Pipes 1997, p. 95.
- [60] Kellogg 2005, pp. 63–65.
- [61] Pipes 1997, p. 94.
- [62] .
- [63] .
- [64] Jacobs & Weitzmann 2003, pp. xi–xiv, 1–4.
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