

Major Assignment Research Paper:
The Ideology Related to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion

Anthony J. Toledo

Library Information Science, University of Southern Mississippi

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Johnnie Pace

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The use of propaganda to achieve ideological goals is nothing new. The paradigms and goals vary and change, but the overarching framework of fundamentalism is everlasting and unwavering. From the broadest sense to the most specific definition of extremism, all beliefs that are subjected to this form of following share more common traits than unique qualities. While some theories are more far-fetched and outlandish than others, all hypotheses rooted in divisive measures are unified in their core principals. The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* are a primary example of such propaganda and its limitless capacity to thrive and survive the most rational and skeptical analysis. For over a century this document has exerted its authority over the minds of those who choose to believe its claims, that of enslavement and domination of the global population under the influence of a wealthy and elite council of Jewish elders. The concepts outlined in the *Protocols* are core beliefs of conspiratorial theories throughout time, long before the publishing of this material and long thereafter.

The religious context in which conspiracy has a resolute and strong sentiment is one that is reapplied to crisis' that reoccur throughout history. The apocalyptic narrative that is a driving force has been well established in Christianity and is, without a doubt, a contributing factor in rationalizing paranoia with scriptural evidence. These fundamentalist views adapted by those who buy into those concepts with extremism is something that allows theories, as those outlined in the *Protocols*, to be taken as a cardinal truth (Henne and Shere, 2022). The everlasting qualities of these theories are evident in other theories, such as the Order of the Illuminati, which U.S. religious zealots staunchly fought against in the 18th century and are historically recorded as thwarting the growth of international relations by manifesting their counter-conspiracy to the conspiracy itself (O'Donnell, 2020). Yet the role of economic prowess and adepts, such as George Soros (b. 1930), in the global economic market and the conspiratorial xenophobic

narratives that are attributed to their reputation (Whitfield, 2018) correlate with the accusations made in conspiracies as those stated in the *Protocols*¹. Whether it is the Illuminati or highly successful hedge fund managers, the alluding evidence of the hidden hand and its global control remain lacking that smoking gun for critical thinkers and skeptics to accept as undeniable evidence.

Contemporary popularity of the *Protocols* is deeply imbedded in the collective subconscious of present-day conspiracy theorists and so called “truthers” and “decoders,” a popular term on social media for independent researchers and influencers who present their theories and findings lacking peer review. A very popular notion in these communities is one that rejects peer reviewed analysis on the basis that the peers who review the material are contributors to their conspiracy theories. These contributors are threats to their counter-conspiracy findings and labeling them as the enemy is a popular tactic utilized by the *Protocols* and documents of that nature. The mainstream news media outlets hold a large amount of the blame when it comes to reasons why the truther community have gained so much popularity. Many reports in the mainstream are presented as relevant and transparent but turn out to be distractions rather than honest and relative reporting (Plax, 2013). But most of the truth is not representative of the complete truth, there are always outliers. Such a circumstance was made evident and emphasized in an article covering the *Protocols* and its relevance by Dunlap (2016):

Philip Graves, a correspondent of The Times of London, exposed it as having largely been plagiarized from an 1864 book attacking the regime of Emperor Napoleon III of

¹ Protocol 6

France. The original book took the form of an imagined dialogue between the philosophers Machiavelli and Montesquieu. (para. 12).

Some of the global events of contemporary time that give some credence to conspiracy minded truth-seekers apply some relevance to their theories and the susceptible mindset of those theories. In 2020, the SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic crippled global economic markets and those effects were felt from the smallest to the largest communities. The only country to have a positive economic growth that year was China (He, 2021), which also happens to be the country of origin for the outbreak of the virus. This is the type of information that one could use deductive reasoning to make accusations of a conspiracy, although those accusations would need further evidence and intelligence for complete justification. That same year, censorship became an issue when social media outlets banned its users from posting open-source information alluding to China being responsible for the outbreak, whether it was intentional or by negligence. Posting such material was deemed “Anti-Asian racism” and would be blocked from many social media outlets and those users would be temporarily banned. This is my firsthand testimony from events that happened regarding my personal and professional social media accounts. Data such as China’s economic growth, the global recession (except for China), and the censorship issues surrounding the pandemic of 2020 could easily be viewed and interpreted as the ingredients for a conspiracy. If nothing else, all these events could at least be categorized as suspicious.²

The rise of sources providing information and reporting on relative issues, those past and present, without validating their information with reliable sources presents a probable cause of the conspiracy mindset that allows forgeries, such as the *Protocols*, to be presented as a likely

² This is an example of contributing factors to conspiracies. The amalgamation of factors like these are often combined to create an umbrella of suspicious details that lack in depth research or analysis.

reason of the global conflicts that are recurring. Being that the *Protocols* “was one of the best sellers of interwar period,” (Zia-Ebrahimi, R., 2018, p. 329), its inspiration always reemerges during times of global strife and unease, which were the conditions of its inception and initial popularity. The specificity of the *Protocols* reserves no restraint with the antisemitic, aggressive tonality of its concepts. One of the most disturbing historical facts about this specific collection of rhetoric is how prominent figures, such as Henry Ford (1863-1947), and multiple American academic intuitions perpetuated the *Protocols* as authentic or possibly accurate (Henne and Shere, 2022).

There is a thin line for the ingredients for a conspiracy being effectively implemented to make it an actual conspiracy. According to Pipes (1992), those ingredients would be “a belief in imaginary cover-ups and clandestine government; secretiveness; and an inclination to run all institutions along military lines” (para. 8). These core ingredients exhibit a pattern among many theories and are common ground among independent researchers and their audience of believers. Being that “Conspiracy theorists often end up as conspirators” (Pipes, 1992, para. 1) highlights the dangers of anybody full-heartedly believing any theory, especially without conducting proper research or validating their sources. A lack of self-critical evaluation contributes to the reasoning a researcher lacks the due diligence of properly assessing their sources, which could lead to the following (Plax, 2013):

A society that fails to teach the meaning of irony to its citizens who will be able to engage in self-parody and become modest and moderate, is a society that will remain hypnotized by Idealism and silently sustain the extremism that so plagues our time. (p. 203)

The perils of the cyclical collective self-destructive nature of humanity never fails to resurrect when times of despair plague the global population. The correlation of antisemitism and

Islamophobia between the *Protocols* and similar works (Zia-Ebrahimi, R., 2018), and the lack of critical analysis of information by researchers contribute to the lack of confirmed conspiracies. For decades U.S. law enforcement intelligence reports were conveying a sense of concern and urgency with the rapidly rising popularity of the *Protocols* in the twentieth century (FBI, 2020). The sociological background and psychological circumstances present for such beliefs to rise again play a pivotal role in the ideological success of such polarizing theories. Division, suppression, domination, enslavement, and tyrannical governance are all components of a system of conspiracy rationalization that lead to exaggerated group thinking. This form of thought process takes on a more passionate expression, having critical analysis replaced by illogical and intense emotional responses. These passionate fires stirred up within individuals and groups are the bedrock of the collapse of international societal harmony. Until critical analysis and authentication of information becomes normalized, the truth may always remain whatever we perceive it to be.

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