

EIR Books

New books on Scottish rite: Are you a Man, or a Mason?

by Katherine Kanter

Freemasonry and Its Image of Man. A Philosophical Investigation

by Giuliano Di Bernardo
Freestone Press, Tunbridge Wells, U.K., 1989
167 pages with index, hardbound

The Temple and the Lodge

by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh
Arcade Publishers, Inc., New York, 1989
344 pages, hardbound, \$22.95

The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710

by David Stevenson
Cambridge University Press, New York and
Cambridge, 1989
246 pages with index, hardbound, \$44.50, £25

Three new books have come out on Freemasonry. "Not again!" you cry. Well, if Freemasons did not wish to recruit people, they would not write books. If publishers did not wish to push Freemasonry, they would not publish them.

You may, like many people, feel that Freemasonry is nothing but witchcraft practiced by men "above suspicion." You may feel that some kind of gigantic hoax is involved. Fine, but that feeling alone will not stem the tide. Over the last 20 years, international politics and finance have become so brutal, so utterly irrational, that it is hard to explain the *continued acceptance of such policies by the ruling elites*, save for the fact that these elites are held by tightly knit secret networks which come together (in more ways than one!) and thrash out (in more ways than one!) the basic drift of strategy. And drift it does.

So the matter of getting rid of the intellectual influence of Freemasonry has become of quite some urgency for the survival of the human race. Any Freemason who gets furious reading these lines, is either of such a low degree that he doesn't know what he's so angry about, or, he considers the survival of the Freemasonry more important than the survival of the human race, thus proving my point.

All three of the books reviewed here are quite typical of the Masonic current, in that they aim to persuade, that *so long as the public will follow*, myth can adequately replace historical truth, and that a belief structure can stand in for rigorous scientific thought. Mr. Baigent actually argues that point baldly in one of his chapters, while our other two authors do so a little more covertly. This kind of thinking simply assumes, as a fact of human existence, that *there is no reality*, that reality is purely *subjective*. Hence, the Masonic fascination with signs and symbols. You prick the Voodoo doll which is a symbol for the intended victim. The victim dies. Therefore the symbol has a real effect on the real world. Or

does it? Was it really the symbol which operated upon the victim? Or was it not the death-dealing force of hatred, which is proven to unleash the most powerful psychosomatic effects, when the entire village turns upon you, and waits for you to die?

Two of the three books reviewed, deal with an unfortunate nation which for the last 200 years, has been dealt with as though it were nothing but a myth, namely Scotland, which since the Act of Union of 1707 has been effectively silenced, to an extent that many *educated* Europeans do not know that the name refers to a separate country. They think it a geographical area somewhere in Northern England. Such a myth is the perfect birthplace for a myth known as the Scottish Rite.

In *The Temple and the Lodge*, Mr. Baigent wishes to persuade us, on the flimsiest of evidence, that the banned Order of the Temple found refuge in Scotland and that there is a direct line from the Temple, to Scottish Rite Freemasonry, Mr. Baigent seems happy to deal with a period of Scottish history so poorly chronicled in terms of original, contemporary sources, the period of Robert the Bruce and William Wallace (the late 13th and early 14th centuries), that he can get away with using the words "might well have been" a thousand or so times.

For the decisive influence of the Templars on Scottish history. Mr. Baigent can make only a very poor case. Had their influence been as he claims, Scotland would have *really* vanished from the map, because the essence of Templar policy was always to sell out whatever plot of land they got their hands on, to the highest bidder. The Temple, founded in the Middle East in 1120, was an arm of the great Alexandrian and Syrian *fondi* (dynastic financial interests), as is Venetian finance today. The Templars were bankers, in fact usurers, charging interest rates even higher than the Jews (who were the only ones officially allowed to collect interest on loans). Like many London and Wall Street usurers today, black magic was far more than a hobby to them, as Roberto Calvi might have testified, had he lived.

Now, were one to look closely enough at the men who caused the disaster of 1707, the men who sold Scotland out, it may well be that Masonic networks were involved, and especially, Edinburgh, which is an outpost of the "Venetian party." But that has to be proven, and not by Mr. Baigent's slapdash methods. Our author would have us believe, *inter alia*, that the exiled Order of the Temple, and not the Scottish armies themselves, was responsible for the victory at Bannockburn against the English in 1314, though Baigent himself admits "the precise details of what happened at Bannockburn are vague. No eyewitness account has survived and such second- or third-hand testimony as exists is distorted and confused." But we suddenly read: "All the evidence suggests that the decisive intervention came from some reserve of mounted men." What evidence? We read (p. 36): "The English collapse appears to have been caused . . . sim-

ply by fear. It is hardly credible that peasants and camp-followers could have inspired such fear. On the other hand, *it would certainly have been inspired by a contingent of Templars* [emphasis added]." As the recent events in Eastern Europe have shown, an enraged people, fighting for their very survival as a nation, is the most fear-inspiring sight on Earth.

In his first bestseller, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, Mr. Baigent made a much more outrageous claim: that Archduke Otto von Hapsburg, the Pretender to the Austro-Hungarian throne, is actually a blood descendant of Christ, who did not—says Mr. Baigent—die on the Cross, but fled and married—guess who—Mary Magdalen! *Voilà!* Revolting as this old Gnostic tale is, Mr. Baigent retold it cleverly, patching together his "research" like a real little devil. If only he had not felt the urge to use up the leftover bits of "research" in *The Temple and the Lodge!* Suddenly, without any apparent reason, we are projected from the British Isles in the 14th century, to America, and the Freemasons who, says Baigent, peopled that continent before anyone else was smart enough to get there.

Shall we believe Mr. Baigent's assertion that the success of the American Revolutionary War, can be written down to the unwillingness of British Masons to fight their Masonic brothers on the other side? This is crassly to deny that there were any real policy issues involved. H. Graham Lowry, in *How the Nation was Won* (Executive Intelligence Review, 1987), has shown to what extent the colonists, from the very day they set foot in America, knew that the intolerable political strictures that had brought them there, would soon lead to a showdown with the British Crown. The architect of the Revolution itself, Benjamin Franklin, whom Baigent describes as an arch-Mason, was a polymath known in his time as "The American Prometheus," owing to his original scientific work. Franklin and his network entered hundreds of organizations, took them over, and ran them. There was a need for secret societies to arrive at a precise strategic aim. That aim was the Republic. The Freemasonry was an existing secret structure, which Franklin penetrated and for his lifetime, ran. The world was his keyboard, and he played upon it. All Mr. Baigent succeeds in doing is playing upon our nerves.

Can Satan be the Supreme Being?

This brings us to a deadlier volume. Mr. Di Bernardo, of Bologna, is apparently a Masonic "heavyweight." According to the book jacket, he is a 33rd degree Mason, and a life member of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite. He holds the Chair of Philosophy of Science at the University of Trento, and has been vice chancellor of that university. Judging by his photograph, he looks quite the Syrian Magus. I can only advise his students to run for cover, into something safe, like physics. Anyway, Mr. Di Bernardo is very fond of acronyms, the worst being T.G.A.O.T.U.: The Great Author

of the Universe, a being the less Enlightened among us still insist upon calling God. After reading Mr. Di Bernardo's opuscle, I would suggest another acronym for the Scottish Rite: T.E.R.F.T.U.O.P.L.I.S.A.E.: The English Rite for the Undermining of Political Leadership in Scotland, and Elsewhere.

Being from Italy, where Masonry is under considerable pressure from the healthier elements in the Church, such as they are, Mr. Di Bernardo's object seems to be to prove, by scholastics, that Freemasonry is not by any means a religion, and that therefore, the Church should spare the competition. Sparing the reader Mr. Di Bernardo's involved argument, I jump to his conclusion: "It is typical of every religion to hypothesize the existence of a divinity; but Freemasonry only requires as a minimal condition, acceptance of the regulative valence of the Supreme Being . . . a position such as non-exclusive regulativism offers the great advantage of accepting true tolerance which cannot be guaranteed by positions such as deism." I have not quite figured out what words such as "regulative" or "valence" mean, but the general drift is clear enough.

First things first. Who is this Supreme Being? I want to know. What are his attributes? In 1986, in a written decision handed down by the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in Virginia, Judge Butzner described a prisoner's belief in Satan as a constitutionally protected right to believe in a Supreme Being. Indeed, all witches and warlocks worship a Supreme Being. His name is Satan. Now, according to a statement entitled "Freemasonry and Religion" (June 1, 1985), by the United Grand Lodge of England, which Di Bernardo describes as "the highest Masonic authority . . . Mother Lodge of the World," Freemasonry "*has no theological doctrine and . . . will not allow a Masonic theological doctrine to develop*" [emphasis added].

"Theology" is a Greek word, made up of *Theos* + *Logos*, that is God + Word: "words about God," you discuss God in order to understand truly what is His nature. So if God is actually, as the Masons say, Author of the Universe, but they are not allowed, as Freemasons, to investigate His nature, that can only mean, that "tolerance" also implies that an Evil God can be tolerated. If a man walks in and says, "I am willing to submit to the Five Notions of Masonry, and—oh, yes—my Supreme Being is Satan," there is absolutely nothing to stop him. Di Bernardo further says, that the English Mother Lodge's declaration "assumes the importance of a constitutive act . . . and a basic document valid for all jurisdictions," so we have to take him at his word.

In the same 1985 document, the English Lodge states: "Freemasonry does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge, or by any other means. The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned with modes of recognition and not with salvation." Salvation perhaps not, but what about perdition? If Freemasonry exists to further an ethical ideal,

as our author never ceases to claim, what is ethics, if there be no salvation? How do you judge what is ethical behavior? Does ethics mean, to respect the rules of Masonic code? Witches' covens have a precise code of Honor, which they call Ethics, the Wages of what they please to call Sin, being in every case, Death. When the Lodge refers to the term "salvation," it is only to deform it.

Both the Christian (excluding some extreme varieties of Calvinism) and Hebrew religions have a highly developed notion of salvation, which is based on the idea of good works: God being Good, God being The Good, he is best pleased by positive acts to raise up the lot of our fellow men. There is no limit, no boundary, no end, to the Good which man is able to think of, and carry out; therefore man is free. His will is not predetermined, neither as an individual, nor as a species. The idea of the unending power of the soul to rise ever beyond its earlier states by concrete acts in this real world, is salvation, a movement of the soul *which is not predetermined*. How then, can Mr. Di Bernardo say that "Masonic thinking *as such* is alien both to the idea of a personal and provident God, and to the idea of man's salvation, unless he destroy his own argument, that there is *no contradiction* between Christian or Hebrew teachings, and his own?" [emphasis added].

But can there be anything like Masonic thinking *as such*? Can there be a Masonic part of the mind, and a Christian or Hebrew part of the mind? Once you have accepted the idea of salvation, can you forget it during one of the bizarre rituals? How can the mind be divided against itself? Well of course, it can: It is called clinical schizophrenia, and in severe cases, paranoid dissociation such as is found in mother-dominated impulse killers.

This dualism can take the form of "religious" belief which approximates that psychosis, and in many cases actually provokes it, as in the Gnostic, nominally "Christian" sects like Catharism. For the Gnostic, the world is a battleground between God and the Devil, neither able to do the other in; therefore, one must sacrifice a little to one, and a little to the other. To the dualist, the human being is a battleground between the body and the soul; the body being impure, the soul being pure, one must mortify and degrade the body—exactly the opposite of the Judeo-Christian idea of the body as the temple of the soul. Thus, the "purely symbolic" physical punishment of which the English Lodge document referred to above speaks, inflicted by "Brothers" upon transgressing Freemasons is, in fact, an integral part of their dualistic belief structure, and note, that a rod or whip which has a "purely symbolic" function hurts just as much as a common ordinary garden rod or whip. To make sense of these two divorced worlds, there must be a key, the secret thing, the thing you can only *know* as a Gnostic (from the Greek word "to know," *gnosein*) by being initiated—in other words, by becoming a Free mason, and therefore, by definition, Un-Free.

Di Bernardo is quite good at snaring himself in his

own traps. He has set himself another one in his introduction. "Is Freemasonry's existence still justifiable?" he asks, and answers himself: "Anyone asking the latter question is not aware of the true nature of Freemasonry, which is initiatic, and therefore not confined to any one historical period. One could assert that as American Masons fought for and actually achieved the independence of their country, there is no longer any reason for Freemasonry to exist in America. But for Freemasonry, understood as initiatic society, there may or may not be any political or social engagement, and this in any event takes second place to the true aims that it pursues." Back to square one. The question has not been answered. Is Freemasonry's existence justifiable? If it has no political or social engagement, but other "true aims," then what are they? Since Mr. Di Bernardo is a 33rd degree Mason, we are sure as hell entitled to ask.

What he has just described to us, by his own internal admission, is an ancient cult, of the Syrian or Egyptian mystery variety, the only aim of which is to *perpetuate itself* by an intricate web of weird personal "friendships." There is a way in, but there is no way out, except death. By so doing, *the elite which is admitted into the rites, is also self-perpetuating*. This is the essence of an oligarchical secret society, and only the present press laws prevent me from expressing my thoughts more freely, or more colorfully, if you will.

As to the question of secrecy. It seems that the five notions of Freemasonry are Freedom, Tolerance, Brotherhood, Transcendence, Initiatic Secret. The last throws down any fine edifice the Freemasonry may spin out about the ones before. If Freemasonry has eschewed Christianity because it wishes to be as universal as possible, then it wishes to spread its own special notion of good as widely as possible among mankind. If not, why not? If the secret is good, then it must be known. Why can every man not know it? The truth is, that the secret is not good. It is bad. It is bad, first of all, by the fact that one class of people can, by the secret, lock out the rest of humanity; this is an anti-republican concept and it is by definition bad. The only qualification we can give to that, is that in time of war, or in time of revolution, it is for a very short period necessary to keep the utmost secret *from an operational standpoint*. But Mr. Di Bernardo specifically excluded that limit of urgency as I mentioned above. Secondly, if the secret were good, it were something you could avow, or at least, something you could tell your wife in the marriage bed, since the Bible not only tells us, but ordains, that man and wife, are one. But you cannot, you must not, and the wages of what they call sin, are death. Otherwise, the secret would be known, and the secret is not known.

Therefore, by their own telling, the Masonic vow of silence is contrary to the teaching of the Christian and Hebrew religions, which say that man is of one mind, and that he must be open in the face of God, which means, open in the

face of his fellow men, because to the Hebrews and the Christians, man is made in the image of God.

Ritual burial and rebirth

Some examples of oaths sworn in the Edinburgh Lodge around 1711 are given by Mr. Stevenson, in his depressing book: "you are to conjure him to secrecie, by threatening that if he shall break his oath the sun in the firmament will be a witness against him, and all the company then present . . . and likewise, the masons will be sure to murder him." And further: "to keep the keyes therof, under no less pain then having my tongue cut out under my chin and of being buried within the flood mark where no man shall know. Then he makes the sign again with drawing his hand under his chin amongst his throat, which denotes that it be cut out in caise he break his word."

Stevenson himself writes: "A central theme in many initiation ceremonies was ritual death and rebirth . . . Putting these points together, it is likely that the 17th-century masonic ritual involved the candidate in some sort of ritual death, and subsequent raising from the dead or being born again into the world of masonry through being lifted from the grave into the five points of fellowship embrace. Ritual burial, the death's head displayed to emphasize mortality, being raised from the dead, and perhaps having the candidate himself ritually exhume and raise Hiram's body in a necromantic search for the secret keys to masonry."

I think we may feel free to replace the past tense by the present throughout, since the Masons themselves insist upon the absolute continuity over centuries, even millennia, of their rites: the stench of the grave as password into an "innocent social gathering." What Mr. Stevenson has just described is one variation of an ancient Middle Eastern death cult. Who gets killed, whose corpse gets dug up, what narcotics are used to provoke the "death" of the initiate? So is it with witches' covens. Ugly stuff, and you wouldn't want to be anywhere near it when it happens.

Mr. Stevenson, who is director of the Center for Scottish Studies at the University of Aberdeen, had his book published by Cambridge University Press, which is odd for a man who says he is worried about "Anglo-centrism" in Masonic histories. Perhaps it can all be ritually explained. One thing is sure: Mr. Stevenson is a pluralist. You will not catch him, saying what *he* himself personally thinks about these strange things, whether they be good or bad, whereas, I think that history is a science; it is part of the search for truth. Truth starts with oneself, and saying what side one is on.

Mr. Stevenson blithely writes: "The ordeals of entry in mystery cults in the ancient world had exploited pain, fear, humiliation and exhaustion, as aids to changing attitudes, just as modern brainwashing techniques do . . . the element of humiliation and rough horseplay [is this one of Mr. Stevenson's euphemisms for homosexual

rape?—KLL] commonly found in these types of ceremony . . . may be undignified, but formed important elements in the ritual with serious functions, and their psychological appeal is indicated by their survival today in initiatory practices in many trades, schools, universities and other groups, in the face of the hostility of modern concepts of dignified behavior.”

What does he mean by “hostility of modern concepts of dignified behavior”? Is there something wrong with dignity? In fact, the “modern concept” of the sanctity of human life and consequently, the inviolability of the body (which includes the inviolability of the body *when dead*, the sacredness of tombs), is several thousand years old. Judaism and Socratic thought, which are the basis for Christianity, arose as a polemic against precisely those mystery (initiativ) religions which Freemasonry stands for today.

Kowtowing, as Mr. Stevenson does, to every modern trend in history writing is definitely not dignified behavior. We read for example: “In recent decades, historians have increasingly realized that Renaissance interest in subjects like astrology, magic, and alchemy . . . should not be dismissed with embarrassment as unfortunate aberrations on the fringes of the Renaissance. Such concerns are now seen as central to the understanding of the whole Renaissance . . . attitude to the world.” What historians? When did they “increasingly” realize? This “increasingly” begins with the fathers of modern fascism: Wagner and Nietzsche, arch-occultists whose friends all over Europe were busily rewriting history as history of the occult. Twentieth-century historiography has been run by such people, particularly since World War II, thanks to the influence of British intelligence on that dumb giant, the United States.

One last point: Mr. Stevenson states that he has written *Scotland's Century* in order to prove that the origins of modern Freemasonry are not English, but Scottish, and he lists as “Scottish masonic ‘firsts’ ”:

“Earliest use of the word ‘lodge’ in the modern masonic sense

“Earliest official minute books

“Earliest attempts at organizing lodges at a national level

“Earliest examples of ‘non-operatives’ joining lodges

“Earliest evidence connecting lodge masonry with specific ethical ideas expounded by use of symbols

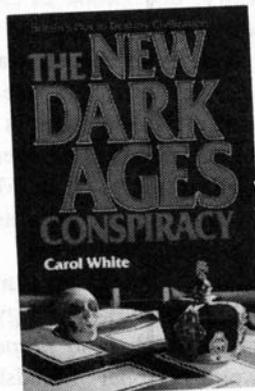
“Earliest evidence indicating that some regarded masonry as sinister or conspiratorial,” etc.

Awful stuff. To boast of how the political leadership of one’s country was rolled in flour by the English and neatly fried! That is why I put forward modestly, as a new electoral slogan for Scotland—though it might go down just as well in Italy, or perhaps, France—“Are you a Man, or a Mason?” Having given the likes of Messrs. Baigent and Stevenson a more than fair hearing for the last couple of centuries, will the real Scotland please stand up?

If a black death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full. The state of affairs might be unpleasant, but what of it?

—Bertrand Russell

This evil is from the father of the peace movement—find out what the rest of them think.



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by Carol White

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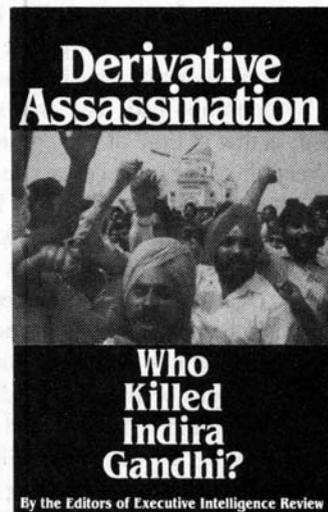
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