

In the history of the humanity there is a great deal of mysteries which are unresolved until the present, and scientists still tackle these issues in an attempt to prove every mystery from a scientific way and thus to dispel myths surrounding the problems. However, either because of lack of information on some problems, or because of wrongful research methods or paths, some problems are still unresolved. And the question of the existence of the Illuminati order and its secret operation is one of such issues still to be considered from a sensible view.

In historical literature a great deal of attention is paid to the question of Illuminati existence – whether such an order still operated secretly, whether it is involved in some kind of conspiracy, and whether some of the world's problems and critical situations have happened truly because of the Illuminati order's activities and conspiracies. There is an opinion that the idea of conspiracy is simply a paranoid way of thought which is appropriate of some society members and is however obtruded on people in the society. This is the very issue to be considered in this research in order to come one step closer to the truth.

Before starting consideration of the conspiracy of Illuminati, and the activities of this secret order it is necessary to contemplate the history of the order itself, its roots and further existence. The order is known to appear and develop in the 18th century in Bavaria, Germany, but still the tales of the order are considered both true and made-up. In this stated period of time in Bavaria there were a lot of religious institutions, and, according to Stauffer and Williamson (126) it was the land where sacerdotalism was at its height. This was the era of the Enlightenment in Europe. Adam Weishaupt, educated by Jesuits, founded the organization of the Illuminati in 1776, on May 1st. This man was the first of the lay professors of canon law in the University of Ingolstadt. This organization is often considered to be the risen from Freemasonic order which roots in England. There is also an opinion that Weishaupt himself hated Jesuits and as a result one of his goals which was transferred to one of the goals of the society was to eliminate Christianity and to replace it with some new form of religion called “religion of reason” (Methvin, 121) which was grounded upon Rousseau's ideas. The reason for such a negative attitude towards the Society of Jesus lied in the fact that Jesuits possessed a great amount of power in the society in those days influencing government and police, as well as ruled public education. The entire inner order of the Society of Jesus was greatly inappropriate, in Weishaupt's point of view since he believed their instruments were used for the bad not for the good. Among the rules were such as unconditional obedience, mutual surveillance, person-to-person confession, to name a few. (Methvin, 121) These regulations resemble the rules having been accepted within the Communist Party of the Soviet post-war era (and particularly, many scientists today draw such parallels among many other associations with other political organizations both secret and officially existent which will be considered hereinafter).

An interesting case is considered the development of Weishaupt as a personality and a leader which happened due to his self-education in his godfather's library plentiful of a great amount of books by radical French philosophers. The young man then perceived many of their ideas, his further education at the university and acceptance as a tutor and catechist and further career advancements made him the dean of the faculty of law at the age of twenty-seven. His ambitions and ego were flattered and he felt really able of creating some powerful to oppose the Jesuit order established in the society. (Stauffer and Williamson, 130)

The Illuminati order developed by Weishaupt is known as an organization which set itself against the existing order and eager of establishing the new order. The goal was attacking the existent monarchy and religion and obtaining the world power eventually. Publicly the order was supposed to be a charitable organization, and this particular positioning attracted a great deal of freethinkers

who supported liberalism, secularism, gender equality, republicanism and similar ideas. The central goal was formulated as a drive to make the entire world one prosperous and united family without governments and religious intrusion (a lot similar to a communist concept). (McIlhany, 33) The loyalty of the society members was doubted by Weishaupt who developed a network of spies who were seeing after each other at all times. Since the order of Illuminati became unofficial in 1777 (because of the king of Bavaria Karl Theodor's order having prohibited secret societies) it became even more important to control the secrecy of the Illuminati's activities.

The Illuminati order developed its own rituals which were introduced by one of the society members – Baron A. von Knigge, and which were supposed to assure the creation of the society of free members lacking any rulers and kings. In a decade in the 1780-s the ideas of the Illuminati spread actively, and lodges established in many of the southern Germany's cities and towns. However the society appeared a failure – not because of the government's victimizations. It appears that even before the government started hounding the Illuminati members, the society began disintegrating from within. Many of its members became engaged in “apolitical mysticism and occultism” (Scott and Rothaus, 470), and Knigge himself being a serious ideologist of Illuminati left the society unable to withstand Weishaupt's authoritarian attitudes. The history shows that the order of Illuminati seized its existence and operation in 1786.

And this is where the history ends and the myths begin developing and spreading, which are still to be well-grounded and proved and which are connected with the conspiracy of the Illuminati. But before beginning the consideration of the issue of the Illuminati conspiracy in particular it is necessary to define the conspiracy in general as a notion and a phenomenon. In general the term of conspiracy is entitled as Manichaeism by Barkun (2) as it anticipates the struggle between good and evil, and the belief that this struggle is eternal and will continue till the end of days. Thus, conspiracy is defined as an attempt to “delineate and explain evil”. (Barkun, 3) Thus, a conspiracy of a certain group predefines the group's activities as such directed towards achieving certain evil end. And thus all the society's activities are directed towards this goal. Among different conspiracy types there is one – systematic conspiracy which is the definition for the conspiracy of the Illuminati. This conspiracy type presupposes broad goals, such as obtaining control over a country or the world in general. Accordingly, the network of secret society members is supposed to “infiltrate and subvert” (Barkin, 6) all the institutions within the country (or the world) and to destroy them from the inside. Thus, the change of the world with destruction of governments and religion and conversion of it in a single brotherhood of free people is the conspiracy goal of the Illuminati.

When the conspiracy theory is considered from the angle of the modern world, it is really difficult to distinguish whether this theory is true-to-life and explaining different cataclysms and evil acts happening all over the world, or whether this is a paranoid thinking of some people too much preoccupied with searching for certain double-meaning and a catch in each action of governments or some global organizations. It is rather difficult to draw a distinct line between the reality and paranoia in this case when the issues of conspiracy are involved. One more opinion connected with conspiracy theory (which is a very rational one, as it should be admitted) lies in the belief that making references to conspiracy is a very convenient way of conducting a debate when there is the lack for arguments. (Fenster, xi) Thus, if an opponent has nothing to say in a debate one may accuse the respondent of participating in a certain conspiracy (which is truly opposite to the opponent's opinions one is unable to support or prove). This is a convenient way of ending a debate.

At present a great deal of conspiracy theories exist which begin with Mason orders, the Illuminati activities, the UFO projects (an attractive sci-fi plot depicted in the *X-Files* series), and many others. Any person with an inquisitive mind and inclination of paranoid thinking and suspecting somebody in certain evil deeds may rely upon a conspiracy theory of a choice and develop the entire culture. The same has happened with the issue of conspiracy of the Illuminati.

There is an opinion that the Illuminati ideas after having been suppressed in Bavaria were successfully transferred to France and then to the US (and still flourish in disguise). There are certain proofs of this opinion, and even entire researches have been conducted to give grounds to them. There is a belief coined by French Jesuit priest Abbe Barruel (18th century) who studied and developed theory of Illuminati conspiracy and John Robison, scientist and conspiracy theorist from England (late 18th century) that the Illuminati conspiracy was the ideology of the French Revolution of 1789-1799. But this opinion was totally dismissed by a known French politician of the 18th century Jean-Joseph Mounier who wrote books about the revolutionary Jacobin ideas and their lack of connection to the Illuminati ideology.

One more opinion lies in the belief that the Illuminati followers transferred their ideas to the young state of the America and also were the ideologists of the American Democracy. The considered evidence of this opinion is the fact that the Illuminati symbol of a pyramid with an eye above it (printed on the American dollar banknotes) has been obtained by the fathers of American Democracy from Illuminati ideologists. However, the Declaration of independence was proclaimed in 1776, in the same year (but a couple of months later) when the Illuminati society was created in Bavaria. The entire ideology could not be spread to another continent from Europe in a couple of months and could not inspire the American war for its independence, and thus these suppositions seem very far-fetched.

In general, conspiracy theories are supposed to unmask some powerful elite members all over the world participating in a kind of conspiracy against the governments in their strive to develop a new world order perhaps without any government at all. However, clear-headed scientists appeal to people's common sense and logic and ask for adequate analysis of all the conspiracy arguments in order to understand that these theories are rather controversial at times and seem very far-fetched. (Goldzwig, 498) At present, the American extremists try to find the traces of the Illuminati conspiracies in each of the 20th century organizations as well as tragedies, global or country level accidents. They believe that all of the powerful global organizations such as the UN, or the American Federal Reserve Bank, as well as all the powerful people, industrial companies' leaders and bankers are the members of the Illuminati order whose goal is to obtain total control over the world and to rule it inseparably. (Atkins, 137) Even in means of racial issue and tension – white power issue – there is an opinion that Martin Luther King, a famous fighter for the rights of the African-American people was the Illuminati puppet which is definitely not true, either. (Cashmore, 446)

Certainly, the case of the Illuminati conspiracy is a very interesting issue which makes educated people challenge their opinions and attitudes, and look for the truth and consider different ways of thinking. But it is evident that accusing some legal and openly operating world organizations such as the United Nations organization in the strive towards establishing the New World Order as Illuminati saw it (not as it was coined by great politicians of the 20th century such as Woodrow Wilson or Winston Churchill) is a very paranoid way of thinking. And such believers should adhere to critical thinking and more research to find out the truth rather than to accepting utopian

conspiracy theories and accepting them in good faith. One more powerful argument against conspiracy theories is their popularity in pop culture which makes them rather anecdotic.

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