

**AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND
MASONIC RESEARCH COUNCIL**

PROCEEDINGS



2024

**Biennial meeting and conference
17-19 October 2024**

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ANZMRC 2024 Biennial Conference

NSW Masonic Club, 169 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

Conference Programme

Thursday 17 October 2024	Day 1 - NSW Masonic Club, Level 4
1:00pm	Conference Registration
2:00pm	Opening of the 16th Biennial Conference UGL NSW and ACT Grand Master, MW Bro Khris Albano
2:30pm	Session 1 – Kellerman Lecture Felix Pintado and Dave Angeles, VIC History of Freemasonry in the Philippines
3:30pm	Afternoon tea/break
4:00pm	Session 2 – Kellerman Lecture Gary Bacon, QLD Brother Sir Augustus Charles Gregory An Icon Australian Explorer, Exemplary Citizen and Notable Freemason
5:00pm	Finish Day 1
6:30pm	Casual get together/ dinner (self-pay), self-organise
Friday 18 October 2024	Day 2 - NSW Masonic Club, Level 4
9:00am	Session 3 – Kellerman Lecture David Shearer, WA Freemasonry and Philosophy - Freemasonry's Debt to John Locke
10:00am	Morning tea/break
10:30am	Biennial General Meeting of ANZMRC
12.30pm	Lunch break – self-cater/pay
1:30pm	Session 4 - Kellerman Lecture Tony Mansfield, NZ History of NZ Scottish Lodges
2:30pm	Afternoon tea/break
3:00pm	Session 5 – Kellerman Lecture Bob Kluck, QLD Chevalier Ramsay - A Spiritual and Intellectual Adventurer
4:00-4:30pm	Finish Day 2
7:00pm	Session 6 - Special Lecture, Lodge Meeting Philip Quadrio, NSW A Lost Degree: Kerning's Lessons for the Sabbath Celebration Discovery Lodge of Research regular lodge meeting and dinner Sydney Masonic Centre, 66 Goulburn Street (700m walk)
Saturday 19 October 2024	Day 3 - NSW Masonic Club, Level 4

9:00am	<p>Session 7 – Kellerman Lecture David Taylor, QLD, <i>From the Quarries</i> “Where to from here? Freemasonry in the 6th Millennium A.L.”</p>
10:00am	<p>Morning tea/break</p>
10:30am	<p>Session 8 - Kellerman Lecture Phillip Quadrio, NSW The Influence of J.B. Kerning on Masonry, Fringe Masonry and Beyond</p>
11:30am	<p>Session 9 – Kellerman Lecture Mitchell Charman, NSW The Tableaux: Alternative Perspectives of the Tracing Boards.</p>
12:30pm	<p>Lunch break – self-cater/pay</p>
1:30pm	<p>Session 10 – Kellerman Lecture Don Ray, ACT The Blue Cord</p>
2:30pm	<p>Session 11 – Kellerman Lecture Ronald Paul Ng, Singapore Confucius Philosophy and Masonic Ideals</p>
3:30pm	<p>Afternoon tea/break - Conference photos</p>
4:00pm	<p>Open General Discussion/Socialising</p>
7:00pm for 7:30pm	<p>Conference gala dinner - Cellos Dining room, NSW Masonic Club Two Course Dinner, alternate serv (bar facilities available, self pay) Includes ‘hand-over’ to next Conference Host.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gala dinner speaker, Mike Kearsley, NZ "Four Years on The Square" 2. Entertainer, Magician, Bro. Aidan Bannister 3. Entertainment, Souvenir String Quartet

FREEMASONRY IN THE PHILIPPINES

FELIX J. PINTADO AND DAVE L. ANGELES

Synopsis

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 - Before the arrival of the Spanish
 - Spanish discovery and colonisation (1521–1898)
- 2 Freemasonry introduced**
 - British Masons in the Philippines (1762–1764)
 - Spanish Prohibition (early 1800s)
- 3 Spanish Masons and Lodges in the Philippines**
 - Implications of the Spanish Revolution (1868)
 - Cavite Mutiny (1872)
 - Organisation of Spanish Lodges
- 4 Filipino Masons and Lodges in Spain**
 - Propaganda Movement and *La Solidaridad* (1870s)
 - The Ilustrados
- 5 Filipino Masons and Lodges in the Philippines (1890s)**
- 6 The Three Wars**
 - Philippine Revolutionary War (1896–1897)
 - i. Reign of Terror (1895–1897)
 - ii. Freemason against Freemason
 - iii. The Pact of Biak-na-Bato
 - Spanish-American War in the Philippines (1898)
 - Filipino-American War (1899–1902)
 - The Philippine Flag and Freemasonry
- 7 Masonic resurgence (1890s–1930s)**
 - Philippine Freemasonry moves away from Spain
 - Towards American Freemasonry
- 8 Philippine Independence**
 - Japanese Occupation (1942–1945)
 - More recent events
- 9 Philippine and Victorian (Australia) Initiatives (2014–2024)**
 - Plaridel Lodge No. 1893
 - Memorandum of Agreement
- 10 Reflection and Conclusion**

References

Synopsis

Freemasonry has existed in the Philippines since the mid-1800s. Although the earliest lodges were composed solely of foreigners, Filipinos soon had a foretaste of the libertarian ideals of the Fraternity. This European Freemasonry aroused a craving for freedom from oppression through several wars that prompted the first Philippine President to claim that the revolution was “Masonically inspired, Masonically led, and Masonically executed”.

The paper is a brief study of the beginnings of Freemasonry in the Philippines, its impact and influence on the struggle for freedom and independence, and its gradual permeation into the very fabric of Filipino society. The study draws on literature that is not readily available on the subject matter, sourced directly from the Philippines, and relies on individual research undertaken during recent visits to the country and visits to Masonic lodges of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines.

Through a potted early history of the Philippines and Freemasonry, the study offers some insights and reflections on the achievements, heroes and successes of Freemasonry and its role in attaining the independence of the Republic in what is a predominantly Catholic country with ancient Islamic heritage.

1. Background

The history of the Philippines may be considered in four distinct periods as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1. Before 1521 | Pre-Spanish colonisation era |
| 2. 1521 – 1898 | Spanish colonisation |
| | - 1521 – 1750s Early Spanish period |
| | - 1750s – 1810s Middle Spanish period |
| | - 1820s – 1890s Late Spanish period |
| | - 1896 – 1898 Anti-colonial revolution |
| 3. 1898 – 1945 | American colonisation |
| | - 1942 – 1945 Japanese occupation |
| 4. 1946 – present | Post colonisation era |
| | - 1946 – 1965 Early post-war Republic |
| | - 1966 – 1986 Marcos period |
| | - 1986 – present Current period |

For the purposes of this paper, we will focus primarily from the middle period of Spanish colonisation until the early post-war Republic. It is near impossible to convey the various phases of Masonic progress without mention of the historical events that surrounded them and were intertwined in them. This paper is an attempt to present the authors’ research and perspectives on the intrinsically entangled story of Freemasonry in Philippine history.

In this sense, Filipino Freemasonry cannot be understood outside the context of Philippine history. To appreciate the role of Freemasonry in the history of the Philippines, it is essential to understand a little of the country and its origins.

Before the arrival of the Spanish

When the Philippines was discovered by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, it was a discovery to people of the West, but not to Filipinos who regard it merely as a rediscovery. The first ancient people of the Philippines came from Central Asia having walked across the connected land. Over thousands of years, immigration first by Indonesians and then by three waves of Malays the first two between 200 BC and 1300 AD.

The third of these immigrant waves was the Mohammedan Malays (Moros), between 1300 and 1500 AD, who were more advanced in culture than their predecessors, having been influenced by the ancient civilizations of Malaysia, India, China and Arabia. From the intermingling of the first settlers over thousands of years, evolved the Filipino people.¹

Mohammedanism (Islam) is still an active religion in Mindanao and Sulu. With this religion came a new form of government (sultanate), a new alphabet (Arabic script), Moorish arts and sciences and the use of gunpowder.

The unit of government among ancient Filipinos was the barangay – a settlement of 30 to 100 families – ruled by a datu (chief). Ancient Philippines was divided into hundreds of barangays, independent of one another, although some would unite for mutual welfare or for improved protection. This unit of organisation continues in local government structures of today.

In the centuries prior to the coming of the Spaniards, the Germans, British, Dutch and Portuguese were already bartering goods, but not establishing permanent settlements in the Philippines. Filipinos were also intermarrying with Indians, Chinese, Japanese and Arabs, and from their contact with western countries, the Filipino race was further mingled with Spanish, American, English, French, Italian and other Western nations. In this way, the Filipino people are a product of the racial blending of East and West with the Malay predominant – brown complexion, straight black hair, dark brown eyes and well-built physique.

Spanish discovery and colonisation (1521–1898)

In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese serving Spanish royalty, sailed from Spain with a Spanish expedition in search of the Spice Islands. He landed in Mactan on the island of Cebu in the Philippines in 1521 and claimed the lands for Spain, naming them *Islas de San Lazaro*.

Magellan never completed the journey himself, as he died in an encounter with natives. In what is known as the Battle of Mactan, in April 1521, Magellan and his one hundred soldiers were outnumbered by Chief Lapu-Lapu's 3,000 warriors. Three Spanish expeditions followed Magellan's – Saavedra (1527-29), Villalobos (1541-46) and the most successful of all, Legazpi (1564).

In February 1565, Spanish explorer Miguel Lopez de Legazpi set about to accomplish an almost bloodless conquest of the Philippines. He concluded treaties of friendship with the *datos*, the most famous of which was a blood compact and alliance with Datu Sikatuna on the island of Bohol. In May that year, the datu of the island of Cebu surrendered to Legazpi who established the first permanent Spanish settlement and became the first Spanish governor-general.

¹ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, p. xii.

Datus who decided to oppose Spain's colonisation were met with force, often with the aid of native alliances. The Spaniards played on old enmities of native tribes that opposed each other. A similar methodology, of pitting one native group against another, was used by the Spaniards in quelling revolts throughout its rule of the colony.

In 1570, Legazpi continued his exploration throughout the Philippine islands forming alliances with the datos he encountered to gain greater influence. Reaching Manila in the island of Luzon, Legazpi formed a peace pact with the native councils and local ruler Suleiman. Both groups agreed to organize a city council, consisting of two mayors, twelve councillors and a secretary. Legazpi established a settlement there in June 1571 and ordered the construction of the walled city of *Intramuros*. He proclaimed the town as the island's capital, and the seat of the Spanish government in the East Indies.²

Apart from the discovery of spices, Spain's primary aims and intentions in the Philippines may be described as God, Gold, and Glory, which is:

- the conversion of the natives, or "indios" to Roman Catholicism,
- the accumulation of wealth, and
- the supremacy of Spain over Portugal as a superpower.

The Manila-Acapulco galleon trade was the main source of income for the colony during its early years. The galleon trade brought silver from the Americas (New Spain) and silk from China by way of Manila. Income was earned by buying silk from China for resale to New Spain and buying silver from the Americas for resale to China.

The trade was very prosperous, but it neglected the development of the colony's local industries which in turn affected the native Filipinos who relied on agriculture as their livelihood. In addition, the building and operation of galleons meant that the natives were engaged in forced labour (*polo y servicio*). However, the cultural and commercial exchange between Asia and the Americas led to the introduction of new crops and animals to the Philippines notably tobacco which provided a new source of income that directly benefited the locals.

Spanish missionary work with Filipino natives focused on the advancement of education, culture, and architecture. Their efforts were the key factor in the virtual elimination of the ancient written literature of the Filipinos. The destruction of ancient writings and ancient cultural records has meant that only orally transmitted literature has survived.

As the country comprised thousands of scattered barangays, it became necessary to gather the population in places where colonial and religious officials could conveniently administer them. During the period of colonization, the Spanish operated under two divisions of government:

- the central government in which the King of Spain entrusted the colony to the governor-general, the highest position in the Spanish government.
- the *Royal Audiencia* - the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

Other structures included:

- The *Residencia* and the *Visitador* - special courts that investigated the conduct of the governor-general and other high-ranking Spanish officials.
- Provinces were divided into either an:
 - o *Alcaldia* - which recognized Spain's possession over the land, or a
 - o *Corregimiento* - where the people had not yet succumbed to Spain's rule.

² Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn., pp. 75-79.

- The *Ayuntamiento* or the city government was the center of society, religion, culture, and business. The pueblo (city) was governed by the *gobrnadorcillo*, the highest position for Filipino politicians and a *Cabeza de Barangay* governed the barrios (villages).³

Spanish rule also meant the union of the church (headed by the highest office of Archbishop) and the state (headed by the governor-general). While the governor-general had power over the church, the “friars” (a collective term for priests, brothers, and nuns of religious orders) had an overwhelming influence in the affairs of state.

In fact, the church exercised more power than the government and, because of this, the Spanish government in the Philippines was a “Frailocracia,” - a government controlled by the friars.⁴

There quickly developed social or racial strata by which Spanish authorities could ensure the purity of Spanish heritage was maintained in all dealings. The racial divisions became a means of self-identity as Peninsulares banded against creoles and insulares. These strata were:

- Peninsulares – Spaniards born in the Iberian Peninsula.
- Insulares – Spaniards born of Spanish parents in the Philippines, called “Filipinos Insulares” or just “Filipinos.”
- Criollos (creoles) – Spaniards born in the Spanish colonies (eg the Americas). Among the ranks of Spanish colonisers in the Philippines were those born in Mexico and Peru.
- Mestizos – offspring of Spaniards interbreeding with Indios, Chinese, and Creoles.
- Indios – natives of the Philippines divided into the ‘pacified’ and the ‘savages.’⁵

2. **Freemasonry introduced**

The spread of Freemasonry to the Spanish colonies occurred during the 18th century, heralded by several Masonic jurisdictions establishing lodges at considerable risk, as the wrath of the Inquisition discouraged membership of the Craft.⁶

In 1738, the Roman Catholic objections to Freemasonry were first expressed in the Papal Bull *In Eminenti* issued by Pope Clement XII. Accusations against Freemasonry included:

- becoming popular
- binding members to secrecy
- members being compelled to swear an oath.

Even though Freemasonry is obviously not a religion, but a unique and practical philosophy of life, perhaps even a philosophical companion to religion, the Catholic Church either chose to misunderstand it as anti-Christian or was genuinely fearful of the philosophy and confused its secular rituals with religious liturgy.

In Eminenti and subsequent Papal Bulls, however, did little to prevent Catholics from remaining or joining Freemasonry including many priests and Church dignitaries. Despite the automatic penalty of excommunication and being deprived of all spiritual privileges, many

³ Ibid.

⁴ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 81-89.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Rich, P & De Los Reyes, G, 1995, “Reappraising Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Latin America”, *Heredom*, vol 4, pp. 245-246.

Catholics ignored these Papal Bulls, which led to a series of Papal edicts over the next three centuries that confirmed or renewed the Church's position against Freemasonry.

The outlawing of Freemasonry by King Ferdinand VI of Spain in 1751, brought with it a continued wave of oppression across the Spanish empire.

British Masons in the Philippines (1762-1764)

It is not exactly certain when or why Freemasonry was introduced to the Philippines. The strict prohibitions of the 18th and 19th centuries have effectively wiped any early records that may have existed. There are, however, two pieces of evidence of early Freemasonry in the country.

There is a record of individual Masons having been in the Philippines in 1756. As Pope Clement XII's *In Eminenti* was enforced by the Spanish colonial government, a record of the Inquisition shows an entry of a trial of two Irishmen - James O'Kennedy, a merchant and Dr Edward Wigat, a physician – for 'heresy' in Manila on the charge of being Freemasons. Both Masons were released because they were British citizens.⁷

The other piece of evidence is a record of the earliest lodge, founded by English Masons in Manila between 1762-1764.⁸

The confrontational relationship between Britain and France can be traced to the Seven Years' War - the last major conflict before the French Revolution to involve all the great powers of Europe - between England and France in 1756 in which Spain allied with France. This conflict extended across the empire. In 1762, after a brief struggle with Spain, the British fleet anchored in Manila Bay to mark the beginning of the British invasion of the Philippines. General William Draper (British East India Company) led the expeditionary forces to capture the Spanish colony of Manila.

Almost as if in retaliation for the trial of the two British Masons six years earlier, there are vague reports that the occupying force used the Catholic Cathedral in the walled city of Intramuros in Manila as the venue to hold military lodge meetings. This military lodge was organised by members of Gibraltar Lodge No.128.⁹

This is the earliest evidence of lodge meetings having been held on Philippine soil. It is also an indication of how widely Freemasonry had spread across the globe, 45 years after the establishment of the United Grand Lodge of England.

The outrage at this occurrence is best evidenced in a letter in the Archives of the Indies in Seville, Spain, wherein the Archbishop of Manila sought to have the cathedral demolished because of the desecration caused by British Masonic meetings. Fortunately, the authority to do so was not granted. The hidden door to the meeting room and the meeting room itself still exist within the cathedral to this day.

The British occupation of the Philippines was short-lived as the Seven Years' War ended in Europe in 1763 with the signing of the peace treaty in Paris. The British invaders returned

⁷ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, p. 5.

⁸ Rich, P & De Los Reyes, G, 1995, "Reappraising Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Latin America", *Heredom*, vol 4, pp. 245-246.

⁹ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 6-8.

Spanish sovereignty over Manila and its environs in March 1764 and sailed back to India in April that year.

While the British occupation left distinct features of Indian ancestry, as Sepoy members of the British forces chose to remain and married Filipino women, the brief skirmish also brought about ideological change among Filipinos. Knowing that Spain was vulnerable and its rule in the Philippines would not last forever foreshadowed that Filipinos could and would eventually self-rule.

Another early record of the presence of Masons in Manila is a monument erected in Plaza Cervantes in honour of an American, Bro. George W. Hubbell, the first US Consul to Manila (1822-32) who passed away in 1834. A memorial was to be put over his grave, however since he was not Catholic (but rather a Protestant and a Mason) the Spanish colonial government would not allow it in its cemetery. The monument is now located on the grounds of the US Embassy in Manila.¹⁰

Spanish Prohibition (early 1800s)

To a large extent, the impact of Freemasonry and its contribution to the development of Philippine independence echoed the progressively political, secular, anti-clerical and reformist movements in Latin America during the 18th and 19th centuries.

During the early nineteenth century, Spain was ruled by King Ferdinand VII, a devout Catholic who detested Freemasonry because of its association with liberal thinking and political unrest. The revolts in Mexico and parts of Latin America were led predominantly by Freemasons like Miguel Hidalgo (Mexico, 1810) and Simon Bolivar, who is often referred to as the liberator of South America.

The first official prohibition of Freemasonry in the Philippines was in a Royal Letter Patent dated 19 January 1812 issued by the Council of the Regency of Spain and the Indies, on behalf of the absent Ferdinand VII of Spain who was then a prisoner of the French. In 1814, Ferdinand VII abolished the constitution and re-established the Inquisition.¹¹

In August 1824, in another Royal Letter Patent, Freemasonry was again prohibited as “one of the main causes of revolution in Spain and in (Latin) America”.¹²

There can be little doubt that Freemasonry in Spanish territories was perceived as a political threat, its very existence caused Spain to fear the loss of its colonies. In addition, the Roman Catholic Church perception of Freemasonry as godless, anti-Christ and heretical, meant that Freemasons in the Philippines were bound to wage a long, arduous struggle for religious freedom and against bigotry.¹³

Spanish Masons and Lodges in the Philippines

Foreigners in the colonies neighbouring the Philippines (such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Java, Macau and other ports) had a great advantage - they were consolidated by Freemasonry.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time* (1920), p. 6.

¹³ Rich, P & De Los Reyes, G, 1995, “Reappraising Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Latin America”, *Heredom*, vol 4, p. 249.

Fraternisation between them brought about a spirit of solidarity that was not present in the Philippines.

This advantage proved particularly useful to the Spanish Navy and helped to motivate the establishment of the first formal lodge in Manila in 1856 with the aim of creating a solidarity for peace and harmony. This led a Spanish naval officer, Capt. Jose Malcampo to establish “La Primera Luz Filipina” (Lodge of the First Philippine Light) in Kawit, Cavite.¹⁴

In 1859, joined by officer Mendez Nuñez, Malcampo formed another lodge in the province of Zamboanga. As most of the Lodges in Spain at that time were under the Gran Oriente Lusitano of Portugal, this jurisdiction was chosen for these first two lodges composed of officers from the Navy, Army, and government employees - all Spaniards.

In 1862, Malcampo and Nuñez returned to Spain and in 1868 participated in the revolution that deposed the Monarchy and Queen Isabella II. Malcampo later served the Spanish government in different positions until he was again assigned to the Philippines as Governor General from 1874 to 1877.

In the 13 years between 1859 and 1872 existing and new jurisdictions formed lodges in the Philippines. In 1868 alone, three lodges were formed:

Lodge Union Germanica (1868) organised by the German Consul General and other foreigners in Manila under a Scottish Rite lodge in Hong Kong.

Lodge Nagtahan (1868) organised by the British Consul in Manila also under a Scottish Rite lodge in Hong Kong.

Lodge Pandacan (1868) organised by exiled republican Spaniards.¹⁵

Both the German and British lodges admitted prominent “Filipinos”, presumably insulares, creoles or mestizos.¹⁶

Implications of the Spanish Revolution (1868)

One of the leaders of the Spanish revolution of 1868 was a Freemason, General Juan Prim, who became Regent in 1869. Under Prim’s administration there served another Freemason (and liberal), Segismundo Moret as Minister of Overseas Colonies. Moret set about reforming Spain’s colonies and appointed another Freemason who was also a liberal, Governor General Carlos Maria dela Torre who was assigned to the Philippines in 1869.

The reforms implemented by Governor dela Torre included free public discussion of social and political issues; partial secularization of education and government control over some educational institutions previously dominated by the friars. He lifted censorship of the press, and provided exemptions from forced labour and payment of tributes. Dela Torre also fraternised with mestizos and native Filipinos.

These reforms and innovations were well received by Filipinos, particularly the growing ranks of intellectuals and Filipino secular priests. However, they also served to anger the Spanish friars who saw their influence threatened and who feared the promotion of nationalist sentiment and the focus given this fervour by Filipino secular priests headed by Fr Jose Burgos.

¹⁴ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time* (1920), p. 9.

¹⁵ Henderson, K & Love, G (eds), 1994, *Masonic inspirations*, 8th vol, pp. 101-107.

¹⁶ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, p. 12.

Conditions quickly changed when the Spanish Parliament restored the Spanish monarchical system, the Regent, General Juan Prim was assassinated in 1870, and Governor General Carlos dela Torre was recalled to Spain in 1871, allegedly through the agitation of the friars.

In 1871, King Amadeo of Spain appointed Lt. Gen. Rafael de Izquierdo as Governor General of the Philippines. Both the King of Spain and the governor general were Freemasons.

Cavite Mutiny (1872)

The year 1872 was marked by the mutiny (revolt) of native military and other personnel working at the Cavite arsenal and navy yard who protested the withdrawal by the new Governor General Rafael de Izquierdo of certain privileges granted earlier by the liberal dela Torre.

Although the mutiny leaders were wiped out, the event was exploited by the friars and Izquierdo to quell growing nationalist feelings and to implicate many prominent Filipinos and liberal minded intellectuals many of whom were Freemasons.

While many were imprisoned or exiled to distant colonies, the friars convinced Izquierdo of the complicity of Fr. Burgos, together with Fathers Mariano Gomez and Jacinto Zamora in the so-called mutiny. The three priests were publicly executed by garrote on 17 February 1872.

A total of 41 people was executed because of the Cavite mutiny.¹⁷ The martyrdom of the three Filipino priests inspired rebellion and the quasi-Masonic rebel force yet to be formed in years to come, the Katipunan, used the cryptonym “Gom-bur-za” as a password in its ritual.

Many others, liberals, intellectuals and Freemasons were imprisoned or deported. As persecution continued, some were able to escape to Spain to avoid arrest. Those fortunate enough to reach Spain were later joined by Filipinos who were studying in Spanish and other European universities. Together, they started a movement for reforms which also led to the organization of Masonic lodges in the Philippines.

Organisation of Spanish Lodges

Shortly after the Cavite Mutiny, the Gran Oriente de España appointed Grand Delegate Rufino Pascual Torrejon to organise Masonic lodges in the Philippines. In 1874, together with a Spanish (Peninsulare) doctor, Mariano Marti, three Spanish lodges were established - Logia Luz de Oriente No 6 in Manila; Logia La Española in Cebu and Logia La Libertad in Iloilo.¹⁸

If there were any Filipinos that remained in these lodges, the reorganisation of the Gran Oriente de España in 1874 would have eliminated them. The Masonic lodges in the Philippines at this time were comprised completely of European membership.

By 1874, the three lodges formed in 1868 (German, British and Spanish) had all dissolved. When Malcampo (founder of the Portuguese lodge, Primera Luz Filipina) assumed the role of Governor General in June that year he reported, to the Minister of Colonies, the growth of

¹⁷ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 145-147.

¹⁸ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 13-17.

Freemasonry in the Philippines and expressed his fears that its existence would become hostile to Spain should its native members (Filipinos) become the majority and lead the secret society into activism.

Malcampo promised the Minister that he would impede and restrain the influence of Filipinos by ordering their elimination from the lodges and reorganising Freemasonry under the Gran Oriente de España. Torrejon complied and constituted a District Grand Lodge in 1875 with himself as Grand President. The following year, its General Regulations containing an organizational plan was approved by the Gran Oriente de España.

The next decade saw a consolidation of the Spanish lodges into a Provincial or Regional Lodge. In 1879, Torrejon's District Grand Lodge formed four more lodges - one in Iloilo, one in Cebu and two in Cavite. A Blue Lodge, a Sovereign Chapter of Rose Croix, a Chamber of Knights Kadosh and a Grand Triangle of the Royal Arch were constituted in each of these cities.

In 1884, the then Prime Minister of Spain, Illustrious Bro. Práxedes Mateo-Sagasta (Sovereign Grand Commander (Scottish Rite) and Grand Master of the Gran Oriente de España) appointed three 33rd degree Freemasons (known as the *Triangulo de los 33°* or Triangle of the 33rd Degree) to government positions in the colony. They were:

Emilio Terrero y Perinat, a general who served as commanding officer in New Castille and chief of the King's military. He was appointed governor general of the Philippines in 1885. A conservative at first, he became a reform-minded liberal and anti-cleric after seeing first-hand the abuses and avarice of the friars and their blatant disregard for the laws of the land.

Jose Centeno y Garcia, the acting Civil Governor of the province of Manila, long-time resident of the Philippines, mining engineer and author of several geological works on the Philippine archipelago. He was appointed chief of the mining bureau from 1876 to 1886. From 1884, he served as Grand Delegate of the Oriente Nacional de España and it was due to his efforts that the officers and members of Logia Luz de Oriente No.6 (formed in 1874) transferred and re-chartered their Lodge from the Gran Oriente de España to his Grand Orient.

Benigno Quiroga y Lopez Ballesteros, trained as a forester and served in the Spanish parliament as a liberal. He first served as Director General for Civil Administration in June 1887. He used the daily newspaper *La Opinion* as the mouthpiece of the Triangulo de los 33°. Most of the subscribers to this newspaper were progressive Filipinos.

The combined leadership forces of these three Spanish Freemasons helped to reduce, as far as they reasonably could, the power and prestige of the abusive friars in the Philippines. In a bold move, Terrero declared that all Filipino natives were by law Spaniards. He further decreed the establishment of schools in a province for the education of children by laypeople. This was in direct defiance of the Papal Bull – that education is the function solely of the Church.¹⁹

Consequently, with the continued agitation of the proponents of the *Frailocracia*, the Triangle of the 33rd Degree was eventually dismissed, and its reform efforts short-lived.

In 1886, the Gran Oriente de España was plagued by a series of upheavals after the resignation of its Grand Master over the discovery of mishandling of funds by the Grand Secretary. This

¹⁹ Gonzales, JY, 2015, "Father of Philippine Masonry- Ka Selo Del Pilar", *The Cable Tow*, Vol. 92, No. 3, Sept-Oct, pp. 42-48.

led in 1888 to a merger of the Oriente Nacional with the Gran Oriente de España. Charges of fraud marred the ensuing elections and Miguel Morayta, together with about 90 lodges, left the newly formed union of the two Orients to form the *Gran Oriente Español*.²⁰

Morayta was a professor at the Universidad Central Madrid and became the Secretary General of the Ministry of State during Spain's First Republic. He was initiated into Freemasonry in Logia Mantuana de Madrid and served as Grand Master of the Gran Oriente Español from 1889 to 1901 and again from 1906 until his death in 1917.

Filipino Masons and Lodges in Spain

For most of the 19th century, Masonic lodges were centres for liberal thought leadership and, as such, Freemasonry played a significant part in the liberation of the Spanish American republics primarily because of its “anti-clerical orientation and...the opportunity its secrecy allowed for clandestine activity”.²¹

The last two decades of the 19th century were characterised by political unrest never experienced by Filipinos. It was also a time when improved economic conditions in the Philippines enabled some Filipinos to travel to Europe.

Growing political and social consciousness and dissatisfaction with the status quo found expression in the works of students turned reformists such as Graciano Lopez Jaena, Jose Rizal, Marcelo del Pilar, Eduardo de Lete, Pedro Govantes and others, who were among those who fled the Philippines in search of freedom, to pursue higher studies or simply to avoid arrest.

The Propaganda Movement and La Solidaridad (1870s)

In 1872, these Filipino expatriates formed a literary and cultural (not political) organization known as the Propaganda Movement, which aimed to heighten Spanish awareness of the needs of its Philippine colony.

As part of this movement, the Asociación Hispano-Filipina (Hispanic-Filipino Association) was inaugurated in Madrid in 1888 with Miguel Morayta as president (*pictured below*).



²⁰ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, pp. 19-23.

²¹ Schumacher, JN, 1966, “Philippine Masonry to 1890”, *Asian Studies*, vol 4, p. 328.

The association, comprised of Filipino and Spanish Masons, worked with Marcelo del Pilar, Jose Rizal, Mariano Ponce, Antonio Luna and other Filipino propagandists all of whom served as key figures in Philippine Freemasonry and the campaign for colonial reforms.²²

After several attempts to give voice to the plight of Filipinos under Spanish rule in the Philippines, Lopez Jaena with the support of other Filipino reformist thought leaders in Spain funded and eventually published *La Solidaridad* newspaper in Barcelona in 1889. With contributions from Filipino nationals in the Philippines and Spain, the fortnightly paper was dedicated to:

exposing conditions in the Philippines;
defending Filipinos against the malicious and slanderous attacks of the friars; and
publishing studies about the Philippines and Filipinos.

As such, it addressed Spanish and European audiences so they might know and appreciate the conditions and the need for reforms in the Philippine colony.²³

Morayta also actively worked to promote Filipino interests and helped the campaign for the reinstatement of Filipino representation in the Spanish parliament (Cortes). Running out of funds, plagued with internal problems and weary of the apathy shown by the central government in Madrid, *La Solidaridad* printed its last issue on 15 November 1895. Less than a year later, the Philippine revolution started. Lopez Jaena died in January 1896 and Del Pilar followed him six months later – both succumbed to tuberculosis.²⁴

Disgusted with the role of the friars in Philippine affairs, the Filipino propagandists in Spain became closely affiliated with European Masonic lodges. It was also perhaps the fact that Freemasonry in the Philippines had not at this time accepted Filipinos as members that might help explain the readiness of Filipino students in Europe to join Masonic lodges that had no race prescriptions.²⁵

The *Ilustrados*

The Filipinos who became Freemasons in Spain became among the *Ilustrados* or educated or enlightened Filipinos. These educated Filipino Freemasons were able to promote the democratic notion of nationhood among Filipinos in the Philippines. In this way, Freemasonry in the Philippines was associated with revolutionary thought.

It should be noted that there were two types of *Ilustrados* borne out of this circumstance. The first were more urban-based and cosmopolitan and exemplified by Jose Rizal, Marcelo del Pilar, Graciano Lopez Jaena, Antonio and Juan Luna, Jose Maria Panganiban, Mariano Ponce, Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, Felipe Buencamino and Isabelo de los Reyes. This group had lived and been exposed to the conditions of Europe in general and Spain in particular.

The second were the rural *Ilustrados* exemplified by Emilio Aguinaldo, Santiago Alvarez, Apolinario Mabini, Ladislao Diwa, Artemio Ricarte, Gregorio Aglipay, Aurelio Tolentino and Emilio Jacinto. This group would have been exposed to the ideas of liberalism, enlightenment and rationality through local schools, academic institutions and through their participation in

²² Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time* (1920), pp. 40-41.

²³ Schumacher, JN 1997, *The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness: The Making of the Revolution: The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895*, pp. 128-138.

²⁴ Roxas-Mendoza, P, 2012, "Europe in the time of Rizal and the Free Masons", *Philippines Graphic*, vol. 23, no. 30, 24 December, p. 29.

²⁵ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 152-153.

local movements. They would not have experienced travel or life outside the Philippines. At the outbreak of the revolution, most of those in the second group would take up local leadership of rural communities.



Marcelo H. del Pilar, Jose Rizal, and other Ilustrados in Madrid, Spain in 1890

Some of the Freemasons who were among the *Ilustrados* included the following:



Jose Rizal



Marcelo H. del Pilar



Graciano Lopez Jaena



Antonio Luna



Mariano Ponce



Juan Luna



Jose Ma. Panganiban



Trinidad Pardo de Tavera



Felipe Buencamino



Isabelo de los Reyes



Emilio Aguinaldo



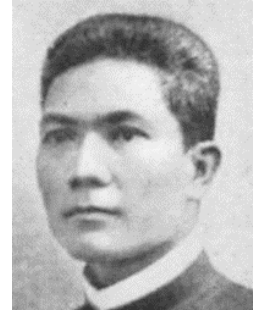
Santiago Alvarez



Apolinario Mabini



Artemio Ricarte



Gregorio Aglipay



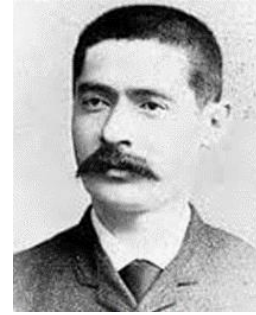
Aurelio Tolentino



Emilio Jacinto



Pedro Serrano Laktaw



Eduardo de Lete



Pedro de Govantes

In 1889, Logia La Solidaridad was founded in Barcelona by two Filipinos, three Cubans, a Puerto Rican and two peninsular Spaniards. Although the lodge dissolved after only a few months, it helped to establish Filipino contacts with Freemasons and Miguel Morayta.²⁶

Morayta's friendship with the Filipino expatriates led to the organization of a predominantly Filipino Lodge in Barcelona, Logia Revolución (1889) and the revival of Logia Solidaridad in Madrid (1890). Chartered by the Gran Oriente Español, Logia Revolución was the first predominantly Filipino lodge with Lopez Jaena as Master, Mariano Ponce as Secretary and members Marcelo del Pilar, Jose Maria Panganiban, and two Cubans.

Logia Revolución dissolved when Marcelo del Pilar moved the propaganda campaign to Madrid, and Logia Solidaridad became the lodge of Filipino Masons in Spain and a forum of nationalistic ideas. Dr Jose Rizal was made a Master Mason in the lodge. As Master of the Lodge, Del Pilar used the Lodge to actively communicate with other lodges, and used their collaboration in various petitions to obtain reforms and rights for the Philippines.²⁷

The lodges themselves became the focus of propaganda activities in Spain and were responsible for maintaining unity in the ranks. Some authors argue that Marcelo Del Pilar rose rapidly through the ranks in Freemasonry to make effective use of this advantage for the political purposes of the reformist movement and to destroy the power of the friars in the Philippines.²⁸

In contrast, Dr Jose Rizal was unwilling to make use of Masonic influence for political purposes having declared that he did not want, "to owe the tranquillity of the Philippines to anyone except the forces of the country itself."²⁹

²⁶ Schumacher, JN 1997, *The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness: The Making of the Revolution: The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895*, pp. 134-135.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 173-178.

²⁸ Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn., pp. 143-146.

²⁹ Schumacher, JN 1997, *The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness: The Making of the Revolution: The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895*, pp. 173-178.

The leading Filipinos then thought it was opportune to secretly set up lodges in the Philippines.

Filipino Masons and Lodges in the Philippines (1890s)

In 1890, Morayta authorised a plan for the organisation of Philippine Freemasonry and the establishment of Masonic lodges in Manila and the provinces. Marcelo del Pilar and Dr Jose Rizal led the initiative with the aim of establishing a strong, united force to teach Filipinos to make use of their freedom of thought and speech and set about to establish Filipino lodges in the Philippines under the jurisdiction of the Gran Oriente Español.³⁰

In mid-1891, Logia Solidaridad No.53 petitioned the Spanish Parliament (Cortes) for the restoration of the parliamentary representation of the Philippines which was cancelled in 1837. This right had been withdrawn in all overseas provinces of Spain but was restored in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The petition was also sent to lodges to elicit the support of their members and followed up with another circular in 1892.

Bro. Marcelo del Pilar is considered the most able journalist that the Philippines has ever produced in his generation. Using the cryptonym, “Plaridel” (after which is named the Temple of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in Malate, Manila), he wrote fearlessly and frankly about the plight of Filipinos under Spanish rule with little thought to what the consequences might have been for himself. He was also a politician and diplomat.³¹

Marcelo del Pilar helped to implant Freemasonry in the Philippines and made it work effectively for the country. His seminal writings were a significant inspiration for Lodges particularly during the formative period of Freemasonry in the Philippines. Today, Marcelo del Pilar is referred to as the “Father of Philippine Freemasonry”.³²

Marcelo del Pilar secured an authorisation from Miguel Morayta, Grand Master of the Gran Oriente Español, and Antonio Luna and Pedro Serrano Laktaw were appointed to undertake the practicalities of the task. Luna prepared regulations and a complete plan of organisation but was unable to return to the Philippines.

Morayta also authorised Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal to represent the Gran Oriente Español before the Grand Orient of France and lodges in Germany, with which he became affiliated.

In 1891 Lodge Nilad was formed in Manila and, in 1892, it was recognised by the Gran Oriente Español as Lodge Nilad No. 144. By virtue of being the first Filipino lodge, from where other lodges came from, it was considered as a “Mother Lodge” and granted authority to supervise other lodges. It was also known as Logia Central y Delegada (Central Lodge and Deputy).

By 1893 there were 35 such lodges in the country, nine of which were in Manila. Initially, these lodges were limited to the elite class and were among the first to throw their support behind Filipino propagandists.

Catholic historian and Jesuit priest, John Schumacher, argues that the fundamental purpose and rationale for the activity and organisation of the early Filipino lodges in the Philippines was three-fold:

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Schumacher, JN 1997, *The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness: The Making of the Revolution: The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895*, p. 121.

³² Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 16-17.

Educative - provide models for cooperative action and a collective life of association to bring about a receptiveness among Filipinos of the anti-friar, nationalist and progressive ideas of the propaganda movement as promoted in the works of Del Pilar, Rizal and others.

Research – study the problems of political, economic and military organisation of the Philippines to develop solutions for the future independence of the country.

Fundraising – for the reformist campaign, as initiation and other fees were collected by the mother lodge, Nilad, and used to fund propaganda activities of Logia Solidaridad in Madrid.³³

It was through the lodges that the inflammatory works of Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, were distributed discretely among Filipinos. For this reason, it took some time before this practice was discovered and, by then, the works had already opened the eyes of Filipino intellectuals.

Filipino Masons themselves however were careful in their pronouncements, so as not to antagonise unduly the Spanish authorities. It could be argued that Filipino Masons were not seeking independence from Spain as such, but the right to provincial self-rule, that is, as a province of Spain rather than a colony of the empire.³⁴

As such, Freemasonry in the Philippines seems to have confined itself to less disruptive activity, keeping itself free of any political or revolutionary endeavour. Although the lodges in Spain were a means of propaganda for Filipino Masons in Spain, Filipino Masons in the Philippines were not meant to be the vehicle for political action.

Thus, while Freemasons may have sought and acquired membership of groups with active revolutionary agendas, such as the Katipunan, they were not dependent on Freemasonry for their existence.

The Three Wars

Freemasonry spread throughout the country as the reform movement gained momentum and support. Recruitment was done through “the triangle system”, a form of networking where a Mason invited two prospects to form a triangle, who in turn, formed other triangles. When enough members were acquired in this manner, a lodge was established. (*see also the section on The Katipunan in this paper*)

The propaganda corps of the reform movement was composed mostly of Freemasons, and it was this fact that caused the greatest concern for the Spanish Minister of the Colonies.

In July 1892, Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal returned to the Philippines and organised *La Liga Filipina*, a peaceful, civic association of Filipinos aimed at uniting the country into one homogeneous body; providing mutual protection; defence against violence and injustice; encouragement of instruction, agriculture and commerce; and the study and application of reforms. Its motto was *Unus Instar Omnium* (One Like All).³⁵

³³ Schumacher, JN 1997, *The Creation of a Filipino Consciousness: The Making of the Revolution: The Propaganda Movement 1880-1895*, pp. 179-180.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn, pp. 146-148.

Barely three days after forming *La Liga Filipina*, Jose Rizal was arrested on 6 July 1892, having alarmed the authorities with his popularity as author of the anti-friar novel *Noli Me Tangere*, and imprisoned at Fort Santiago before being deported to Dapitan in Mindanao until July 1896.

As more lodges formed to accommodate the increasing number of new member Masons, the speed with which the Fraternity was growing and spreading again frightened the Spanish authorities into coercive action. High-profile Freemasons in government positions were harassed and ousted from their offices, and some Freemasons were exiled for possessing incriminating Masonic documents.

In 1893, Logia Nilad lost its authority over other lodges when its leadership was challenged over alleged infringement of the rights and autonomy of lodges. Morayta acted quickly to approve the establishment of a new body, the Gran Consejo Regional de Filipinas (Grand Regional Council) to administer Philippine lodges.

After 1892, Freemasonry seemed to have disappeared in the provinces, although it could be assumed that the Fraternity went underground as a means of survival. When the revolution broke out in August 1896, Freemasonry was already deeply entrenched in the Philippines despite constant government persecution. Though not directly responsible for the revolution – even if Andres Bonifacio was a Mason – Freemasonry served as a pattern for the methods and organisation of the radical group, the Katipunan.

Philippine Revolutionary War (1896-1897)

The failure of Spain to grant significant reforms forced Filipinos down a more radical revolutionary road. Amid the varying degrees of dissent, there were two polarities among the reformists and liberal thinkers:

those who considered Spain as the ‘mother country’ and who promoted reform to transition the Philippines into a self-governing province within the Spanish empire (as espoused by the reformists of the propaganda movement and Emilio Aguinaldo in the first instance), and

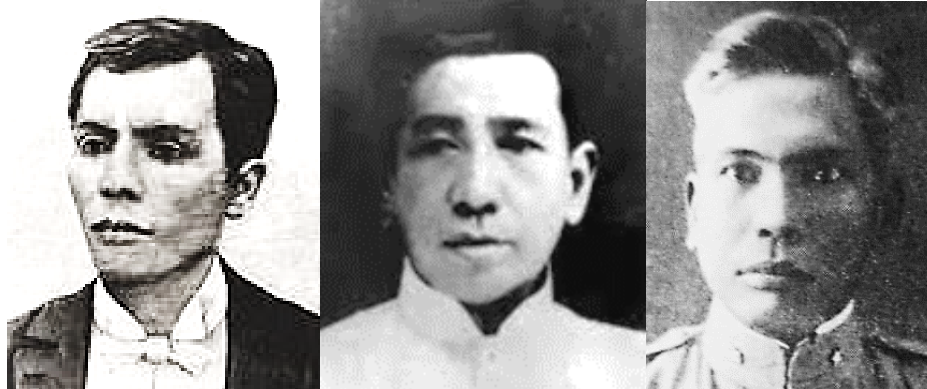
the adherents of revolution who considered Spain as an oppressive master bent on perpetuating itself and for whom the real ‘mother country’ was the Philippines that was crying out to be free from Spanish slavery (as espoused by Andres Bonifacio and his associates in the Katipunan).

As early as 1888, there were groups of revolutionaries that called themselves “katipunan” who adhered to the latter form of dissent and whose one aim was to overthrow Spanish rule. On the evening of 7 July 1892, the day after the arrest of Jose Rizal, the Katipunan was founded.

Six Freemasons: Ladislao Diwa, Andres Bonifacio, Teodoro Plata, Valentin Diaz, Jose Dizon and Deodato Arellano gathered to form the *Kataastaasang Kagalangalang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (KKK ANB or just KKK) or “Supreme and Most Honorable Society of the Children of the Nation”. Unlike Rizal’s *La Liga Filipina*, the Katipunan advocated for complete and total separation from Spain by revolution rather than through reform.³⁶

The six Freemasons who formed the Katipunan in 1892:

³⁶ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 160-172.



Andres Bonifacio

Ladislao Diwa

Teodoro Plata



Valentin Diaz

Jose Dizon

Deodato Arellano

With Bro. Andres Bonifacio as their leader, these patriot Masons quickly organised the first two *triangulos* (triangles); patterned after the patriotic Black Capes of Italy. The triangle system (*tungko*) design ensured that only two members would be known to any member at any time. The *triangulo* became a cell (*Hasik*) whose role was to recruit members from their local areas. Later, the Katipunan adopted the system of Spanish Grand Orient Masonry and became quasi-Masonic in its reception and initiation of members.

Bro. General Emilio Aguinaldo joined the Katipunan in 1895, having been inducted by Bro. Andres Bonifacio. After being elected Municipal Captain of Kawit, Cavite, Aguinaldo joined Freemasonry in the same year and was personally initiated by Bonifacio in Logia Pilar No. 203 in Imus, Cavite.

By 1896, Katipunan numbers swelled to approximately 100,000 members, with chapters in six of the eight provinces that first revolted. The eight provinces were: Manila, Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, Pampanga, Tarlac, Bulacan, and Nueva Ecija.

As early as 1893, Spanish authorities were cognisant of the existence of the Katipunan and considered it an “association of notable criminals” led by Freemasons and rich Filipinos. Though they had no real proof that it existed, they believed that Freemasons were supporters of the Katipunan or were Katipuneros themselves. Some of the intelligence reports (*Vigilancia*) listed Katipunan chapters as Masonic lodges.³⁷

As a result, Freemasons were even more readily associated with revolutionary thought and action, treated with deep suspicion, severely punished with many persecuted and killed.

³⁷ Ibid.

Despite some early Katipunan victories, as Spanish forces were thinly spread throughout the country, the Katipunan and Freemasons fell victim to the reign of terror unleashed by Spain.³⁸

Reign of Terror (1895-1897)

In July 1896, a Royal Decree was issued from Madrid condemning Freemasonry as a secret organization and ordering stricter measures against any member of a Masonic Order in the Philippines.

Among the measures, Heads of Spanish Orients were issued warrants of arrest, with the claim that it was Spanish Freemasonry that had implanted Freemasonry in the Philippines and therefore, shared in the responsibility for the insurrection:

*Secret societies among them and very specially Freemasonry have used their influence widely and regrettably in a most disruptive manner, in our colonial problems. These societies, by the mere fact of being secret, are illicit and illegal, harmful in every state and a source of insidious evil in a territory like the Philippines.*³⁹

The betrayal of the Katipunan in August 1896 by the wife of a Katipunero, aggravated the increasing fear of the Spanish colonial government, egged on by Church authorities, and turned into reports of an impending plot against the government and a death threat to all Spaniards in the colony. This led to a paranoid hysteria where all Filipinos especially members of Masonic lodges and person with liberal leanings were naturally suspect.

During August, Bonifacio gathered the Katipunan to Balintawak to decide on the next course of action. Having been discovered, the Katipuneros cried out “Revolt!” as their decision, tore up their cedula or identification papers (which sealed their fate as without it arrest was guarantee) and burned them crying, “Long Live Philippine Independence!”. The “Cry of Balintawak”, as this came to be known, has ever since been associated with the Katipunan movement and the Philippine Revolution.⁴⁰

By the end of August 1896, the Spanish Governor General issued a decree declaring the eight rebelling provinces in a state of war and laced them under martial law. Spanish authorities reacted swiftly and harshly. On 12 September 1896, in Cavite, 13 Filipinos were rounded up, jailed, and tortured and sentenced to die by firing squad to intimidate the populace into submission. They became known as the “13 Martyrs of Cavite”. Ten of the 13 executed men were Freemasons, and the list below provides some indication of the age and occupation of Masons (Filipino and Spanish) during this time:

Mariano Inocencio, 64, a rich proprietor
 Jose Lallana, 54, a tailor, former Corporal in the Spanish Army and a Spanish Mason
 Eugenio Cabezas, 41, a watchmaker and member of the Katipunan
 Maximo Gregorio, 40, a clerk of the Cavite Arsenal
 Hugo Perez, 40, a physician and member of the Katipunan
 Severino Lapidario, 38, Chief Warden of the Provincial Jail and Katipunan member
 Alfonso de Ocampo, 36, a Spanish mestizo and member of the Katipunan
 Luis Aguado, 33, employee of the Cavite Arsenal

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, pp. 125-128.

⁴⁰ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 170-173.

Victoriano Luciano, 32, a pharmacist and poet; and
 Feliciano Cabuco, 31, an employee of the Navy Hospital in Cavite.

The three non-Masons were:

Francisco Osorio, 36, a Chinese mestizo and contractor;
 Antonio de San Agustin, 35, a surgeon and businessman; and
 Agapito Concio, 33, a teacher, musician and painter.⁴¹

While Bro. Andres Bonifacio believed that the Katipunan should carry on the fight, Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo as military leader insisted that a new revolutionary government should be established to supervise the struggle.

In October 1896, Aguinaldo issued at Kawit, Cavite his manifesto proposing that the new government be based on the principles of “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” the motto of European Freemasonry.⁴²

The most infamous injustice was perpetrated upon Bro Dr Jose Rizal who was executed in Bagumbayan on 30 December 1896. Twelve days after his execution, another 13 Filipinos implicated in the Katipunan were executed by firing squad. All thirteen men were Freemasons:

Domingo Franco, a tobacco merchant
 Numeriano Adriano, a lawyer
 Moises Salvador, member of the Liga Filipina
 Francisco Roxas, a businessman
 Jose Dizon, a Katipunan member
 Benedicto Nijaga, a second lieutenant in the Spanish army
 Cristobal Medina, a corporal in the Spanish army
 Antonio Salazar, a businessman
 Ramon Padilla, an employee of the Manila customs house
 Faustino Villaruel, a merchant from Pandacan
 Braulio Rivera, a Katipunan member
 Luis Enciso Villareal, member of the Liga Filipina
 Faustino Manalac⁴³

In January 1897, 12 more Filipino rebels in Bicol were executed by the Spanish and 19 other patriots were shot to death in Kalibo, Kapis.

Freemason against Freemason

Even before the outbreak of the revolution, the Katipunan in Cavite was already divided into two factions representing two provincial councils – *Magalo*, headed by Emilio Aguinaldo and *Magdiwang*, headed by Mariano Alvarez. To resolve the conflict between the factions, the Tejeros convention was held in March 1897, with Aguinaldo and Bonifacio (a *Magdiwang*) in attendance. The convention elected Aguinaldo as President of the newly proclaimed Republic of the Philippines.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Philippine News Agency n.d., <http://www.pna.gov.ph>

⁴² De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 180-181.

⁴³ Dumindin, A, n.d., *Philippine-American war, 1899-1902*, <http://www.filipinoamericanwar.com/>

⁴⁴ Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn, pp177-179.

The arguments at the Tejeros Convention and the way the result of the election was achieved left Bonifacio and his faction disaffected. This led to Bonifacio forming an alternative military government through The Naik Military Agreement. On learning of Bonifacio's intentions, Aguinaldo ordered the arrest of Bonifacio and his brother Procopio, and their subsequent trial by the Council of War. Their trial lasted from 29 April to 4 May 1897, after which they were found guilty of treason and sedition, despite the lack of evidence to prove the alleged guilt.

Bro. Gen. Aguinaldo, who was now President, changed the death sentence to banishment, only to be convinced by his advisors to revert to the death sentence. On 10 May 1897, on the orders of one Mason (President Emilio Aguinaldo), another Mason (Bro. Andres Bonifacio) and his brother were executed in Maragondon, Cavite.

The discord between the two Freemasons, Aguinaldo and Bonifacio, left an enduring legacy of bitterness between the factions that some argue continues to this day. One aspect of the academic debate is whether Aguinaldo should indeed be considered the first President of the fledgling nation or to apply that accolade more appropriately to the "Supremo Presidente", as Bonifacio came to be known within the Katipunan from 1895.

These unfortunate events entrenched Aguinaldo as the leader of the Philippine Revolution and head of the first Philippine Republic. The fighting with the Spanish colonial government remained protracted and the revolution continued to spread.

The Pact of Biak-na-Bato

After several attempts at a truce, in December 1897, an agreement between the Spanish colonial government and the revolutionaries known as the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, created a truce between the parties. Among other terms, the resulting Truce provided:

That Aguinaldo and the revolutionary leaders would self-exile abroad.

That P800,000 was to be paid to the revolutionaries in three instalments:

P400,000 to Aguinaldo on his departure from Biak-na-Bato

P200,000 when the number of arms surrendered exceeded 700

P200,000 when the Te Deum was sung and general amnesty proclaimed by the Governor General.

That an additional P900,000 would be paid to the families of non-combatant Filipinos who suffered during the armed conflict.⁴⁵

Under terms of this agreement, Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo and other revolutionary leaders went into exile to Hong Kong. However, despite the exile, Filipino leaders were not disposed to abide by the Truce and instead, used their new found resources to purchase arms and ammunition. The Spanish also continued to arrest and imprison many Filipinos suspected of rebellion. Such acts exposed the Truce as a mask and led to the resurgence of revolutionary activity.

Spanish–American War in the Philippines (1898)

The relationship between the US and Spain continued to worsen over the insurgency in Cuba. The drift towards conflict led to a declaration of war in April 1898 and, as war broke out, Commodore George Dewey sailed from Hong Kong to Manila Bay leading the Asiatic Squadron of the U.S. Navy. On 1 May 1898, Dewey defeated the Spanish forces in the Battle

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp184-186.

of Manila Bay. Later that month, the US Navy transported Aguinaldo back to the Philippines.⁴⁶

With a renewed fighting spirit, and siding with the invading American forces, Aguinaldo called for the renewal of the struggle against Spain. Filipino insurgents soon won successive victories in various provinces. On 28 May, as Spanish prisoners were being marched to Cavite, Aguinaldo unfurled a new national flag which was sewn by Filipino women in Hong Kong.

The new national flag was again unfurled on 12 June 1898 at Aguinaldo's residence in Kawit, Cavite where he had the independence of the Philippines formally proclaimed. Aguinaldo's advisors, particularly Bro. Apolinario Mabini, advised against such a premature and imprudent act, as hostilities with Spain were in progress. However, some have argued that, although the declaration paid tribute to the US, it also served another purpose of delivering a message to the US of the Filipino resolve to attain freedom and independence.⁴⁷

By the time the US entered the Philippine scene, Filipino revolutionaries had largely won their revolution. Under Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo's leadership, the Katipuneros had nearly succeeded in overthrowing colonial rule in the Philippines. Aguinaldo's forces had laid siege to Manila at least three months before Dewey's confrontation with the Spanish military. The Spaniards' surrender to Aguinaldo's troops was only a matter of time.⁴⁸

Instead, to save face by not surrendering to the native *Indios*, Spain surrendered to the US in August 1898 following an unnecessary battle in Manila Bay, having already ordered the surrender in June. The US however was keen to show its might as a new superpower defeating the old superpower and so ignored Aguinaldo and denied him a role in achieving that surrender, thus sending a clear message of US superiority. Shortly thereafter Aguinaldo moved the seat of his revolutionary government from Manila to Malolos.

The Spanish government later ceded the Philippine archipelago to the United States in the 1898 Treaty of Paris. On 12 December 1898, it was clear that the US had no intention of recognising Philippine independence when President William McKinley (who was made a Mason in 1865 at Hiram Lodge No.21, Winchester, Virginia), even while the US Senate had yet to ratify the Treaty of Paris, issued the "Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation" declaring sovereignty over the Philippines.

The Filipino-American War (1899-1902)

The Philippine Revolutionary Government did not recognize the Treaty of Paris. When the US sought to execute the terms of the treaty, Aguinaldo's proposal for peace talks was refused and the Malolos Congress declared a state of war against the US in June 1898. The US government called it an insurrection and a three-year conflict, now referred to as the Philippine-American War, ensued.⁴⁹

Bro. Gen. Aguinaldo, with the help of his chief adviser, Bro. Apolinario Mabini formed a government, created departments, appointed diplomatic agents and formulated a national budget. Decrees were issued for the election or appointment of delegates to a national congress, local schools were reopened and military and vocational colleges established.

⁴⁶ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 184-187.

⁴⁷ Delmendo, S 2004, *The Star-Entangled Banner: One Hundred Years of America in the Philippines*, pp. 9-11.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 118-124.

⁴⁹ Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn, pp. 211-216.

Many active Freemasons held important positions in the revolutionary government of General Emilio Aguinaldo, among them were:

Apolinario Mabini, private counsellor to Aguinaldo, later head of the cabinet;
 Baldomero Aguinaldo and Ambrosio Flores, Secretaries of War;
 Gracio Gonzaga, Secretary of Finance;
 General Antonio Luna, Director of War;
 Timoteo Paez, Bonifacio Arevalo and Venancio Reyes, War Commissaries;
 Mariano Llanera, Vicente Lukban, Juan Castaneda, Pantaleon Garcia, Mariano Trias, Jose Alejandrino, Manuel Tinio, Servillano Aquino, Venancio Concepcion and Mamerto Natividad - Military Generals;
 Francisco Joven, Colonel of Infantry;
 Jose Sofio Banuelos, Lieutenant Colonel of Staff; and
 Estanislao Legaspi, Lieutenant Colonel of Infantry.⁵⁰

The Malolos Congress moved to draft a constitution and considered three drafts. The first which comprised 130 articles prepared by Apolinario Mabini was rejected as too Masonic. The second (Paterno) draft was too much like the post-revolution Spanish Constitution of 1868 and was also rejected. The third draft by Calderon was inspired by the constitutions of France, Belgium, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Brazil and Nicaragua and was accepted.⁵¹

On 21 January 1899 Aguinaldo's Malolos Congress promulgated a constitution which established a republican form of government. Freemasons led by Antonio Luna fought and won the separation of Church and State. On 23 January 1899, the Philippine Republic was inaugurated with Aguinaldo as president.

In 1900, Bro. President McKinley's First Philippine Commission (Schurman) established in the previous year, declared that Filipinos were not ready for independence. The Second Commission (Taft) was appointed in March 1900 with legislative and executive powers. A civil government was inaugurated on 4 July 1901 with Judge William H. Taft, a Freemason, as first Civil Governor, who for the passage of the Philippine Bill of 1902 establishing complete civilian government.

Bro. President McKinley was assassinated in 1901 and was succeeded by his Vice-president, Theodore Roosevelt (who joined Freemasonry that year at Matinecock Lodge No. 806, Oyster Bay, New York). Under Roosevelt, the war was pursued with more aggressive force and his army would be charged with numerous atrocities.

Against a powerful US war machine the Filipinos, short of arms, could not win the war. In March 1901, Gen. Funston arrested Aguinaldo and imprisoned him in Malacañang Palace where he was treated well by a fellow Freemason, Bro. Gen. Arthur MacArthur who was the Military Governor General at the time. Although President Roosevelt declared the end of the Philippine-American war on 4 July 1902, the war of attrition lasted for another decade.

It would be fair to say that the Philippine nation, like the United States, arose out of a revolution against a colonial master. However, due to the pre-emption of the Philippine revolution, unlike the United States, the Philippines did not decisively win its revolution.

⁵⁰ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time* (1920), p. 130.

⁵¹ De Viana, AV, 2011, *The Philippines: A Story of a Nation*, pp. 190-202.

The Philippine Flag and Freemasonry

There can be little doubt that the First President of the Republic of the Philippines, Bro. President Emilio Aguinaldo was a zealous Masonic partisan. In one of his speeches delivered at the 39th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines on 26 April 1955, Aguinaldo said:

*The successful Revolution of 1896 was Masonically inspired, Masonically led, and Masonically executed. And I venture to say that the first Philippine Republic of which I was its humble president, was an achievement we owe, largely, to Masonry and the Freemasons.*⁵²

In addition, during the Revolution, Aguinaldo frequently displayed a marked bias in favour of Freemasons and Masonry. He made membership in the Fraternity an important qualification for appointments to government positions. His nepotism was so pronounced, a critic of masonry denounced it as one of the “evils” of the Revolution.

It is no surprise therefore, that Aguinaldo extolled Freemasonry in the Philippine flag, despite the lack of any written affirmation of a Masonic connection to the flag. Among the more credible assertions relied upon to establish a connection between Freemasonry and the design of the Philippine flag are the following:⁵³

In 1899, Grand Master of the Gran Regional Council, MWBro Ambrocio Flores (at the time a general in Aguinaldo’s army), wrote letters to US Grand Lodges appealing for their influence to help the fledgling Philippine Republic. In these letters he compared the Philippine flag to the Masonic banner in this way:

*...this national flag resembles closely our masonic banner starting from its triangular quarter to the prominent central position of its resplendent sun surrounded in its triangular position by three five-pointed stars. Even in its three coloured background, it is the spitting image of our Venerable Institution’s banner so that when you see it in any part of the world, waving with honor amidst the flags of other nations and acknowledged by these nations, let us hope that with this flag, and through it, our common parent, Freemasonry will likewise be so honored.*⁵⁴

and

*...the task already started and that so greatly honors.....American Masonry, will be carried on until the Philippine flag, that ensign carrying all the Masonic symbols and colors, is officially hoisted in our country and recognized and saluted by all other nations.*⁵⁵

In 1928, historian Teodoro M. Kalaw said:

*And the triangle appearing on the Philippine flag, the loftiest symbolism of the struggles of the Filipino people, was put there, according to President Aguinaldo, as a homage to Freemasonry.*⁵⁶

⁵² Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, p. 27.

⁵³ Philippine News Agency n.d., <http://www.pna.gov.ph>

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, pp. 131-133.

⁵⁶ Fajardo, RS, 2004, *The Filipino Flag – Its Masonic Roots*, freemasonry.bcy.ca/symbolism/philippine_flag.html

Today, Filipino Freemasons consider the Philippine flag not only an emblem of liberty and a symbol of the valour and sacrifices of the Filipino people, it is also a memorial to the Fraternity so involved in the fight for freedom.⁵⁷

Masonic resurgence (1890s–1930s)

Freemasonry enjoyed a limited resurgence in the late 1890s through to the 1930s with the establishment of several lodges.

Among these was the first American Lodge that operated in Manila - a movable military lodge organized by Freemasons of the First Regiment of Volunteers from North Dakota in 1898. In the following year, another military lodge, the Manila Military Lodge No 63, under the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Missouri was founded by African American servicemen. In 1903 yet another American lodge was established in Cavite under the Grand Lodge of California.⁵⁸

At the end of 1898, attempts were made to resume Philippine Freemasonry by Ambrosio Flores, Grand Master of the Grand Regional Council (Gran Consejo Regional de Filipinas) together with Gracio Gonzaga, by gathering Masons who survived the persecution and the revolution. Some meetings were held but plans were interrupted by the outbreak of the Philippine-American war.

In October 1899, Flores again convened several assemblies for the purpose of restoring the Grand Regional Council or organizing a National Orient. An appeal was drafted addressed to Freemasons in the United States, beseeching their influence to help bring about an end to the Philippine-American War and to recognize Philippine independence.

While the war was still raging, the first active Filipino Freemasons during this period joined the reorganised Logia Modesta which was issued with a new charter by the Gran Oriente Español.⁵⁹

In 1900, an association of American Freemasons known as the Sojourner's Club, formed the Manila Lodge No. 342 under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of California.

In 1901, the Grand Orient of France organized Logia Rizal, so named after the martyred Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal who affiliated with a lodge of this French Orient in Paris in 1892. There soon followed other lodges so that by 1903, eight lodges and several Triangles were operating. In the same year, the Americans established Manila Lodge No 342 under the Grand Lodge of California and, in 1904, proposed a Grand National Lodge under US jurisdiction. The proposal was rejected by the majority of Filipino Masons, perhaps because of the war with the US.⁶⁰

In 1907, the Regional Grand Lodge of the Philippines (Gran Logia Regional de Filipinas) was organised with seven lodges as prescribed by the statutes and regulations and under the auspices of the Gran Oriente Español. In the same year, a member of the American Manila Lodge No. 342 (California) organised Lodge Perla del Oriente in Manila and Cebu Lodge No. 1106 in Cebu City, both chartered under the Grand Lodge of Scotland with the aim of

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 43-44.

⁵⁹ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, pp. 134-156.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

implanting the principles of Anglo-Saxon Freemasonry into the country for Filipino Masons who were denied admission to American lodges.⁶¹

Philippine Freemasonry moves away from Spain

In 1911, members of Logia Luz de Oriente No 228 of the Gran Oriente de España requested affiliation with the Grand Oriente Lusitano Unido, which was the result of the union of the old Oriente Lusitano with other Grand Jurisdictions in Portugal in 1869. The affiliation was granted in 1912 and this Orient chartered several lodges.

In the same year, a convention of representatives of three American lodges (Manila, Corregidor and Cavite) established the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands (GLPI) on the basis that, “the Philippines being a territory Masonically free, it was within the legal bounds of three subordinate lodges to organize a sovereign Grand Lodge.”

It should be noted that the present-day Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines (GLP), which is recognised by the United Grand Lodge of Victoria, acknowledges the unifying event of 1912 under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of California as its foundation.⁶²

None of the Filipino Lodges under the Gran Oriente Español were invited to send representatives to the convention that formed the GLPI because it was felt that the presence of such representatives would be looked upon by the US Grand Lodges generally, and by the Grand Lodge of California in particular, as irregular and would give them sufficient reason to deny recognition to the new Grand Lodge.

The primary concern of the convention was to proceed in accordance with the Masonic principles and procedures that guided the formation of the various US Grand Lodges. The reason given for the organization of the Grand Lodge was that “such a step would assure the permanency and promote the progress and efficiency of the legitimate and Ancient Craft Masonry in the Philippines.” In 1915, the GLPI constituted its first lodge, Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4.⁶³

The Grand Master of the Grand Regional Lodge of the Philippines, Teodoro M. Kalaw, convened a grand general assembly of Masons in 1915 “to discuss “internal and external problems, so serious and so fundamental in fact, that from their solution will depend the life, the honor and the future development of national Philippine Masonry.”

The general assembly elected Bro. Manuel Luis Quezon (Sinukuan Lodge No 272), as President and Presiding Officer and, among other matters, passed the following resolutions which were subsequently forwarded to the Gran Oriente Español and Masonic bodies around the world – that the Regional Grand Lodge:

question the legality of the organization and constitution of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands (GLPI) because the Gran Oriente Español had jurisdictional primacy over the country and the American Grand Lodge assertion that the country was Masonically free did not “coincide with the truth of actual facts.”

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Fajardo, RS, 1999, *The Brethren: In the days of the Empire- Philippine Masonry from the US Colonial Era to the Commonwealth Years*, pp. 15-36.

⁶³ Grand Lodge of the Philippines, n.d., “A Century of Dedicated Masonic Service”, www.grandlodge.ph

is reorganised into an independent Masonic body called the Grand National Lodge of Ancient and Accepted Masons of the Philippines; to be known as the Grand National Lodge of the Philippines.⁶⁴

From August 1915 to December 1916, a voluminous exchange of communications between the respective Grand Masters of the Grand Regional Lodge (MWBro. Kalaw) in the Philippines and the Gran Oriente Español (MWBro. Morayta) in Spain did not result in a grant of freedom and authority to form an independent Grand Lodge.

In one such communication, Kalaw warned Morayta of the growing tendency of Filipinos to favour fusion with the Americans and that prominent Filipino Freemasons were advocating for such a merger unless a favourable decision was received before the American Grand Lodge Assembly in February 1917. Grand Master Morayta died on 18 January 1917. His last letter to Kalaw was dated 21 December 1916 revealed:⁶⁵

Morayta's deep sentiments and mistrust of the Americans;
reaffirmed the regularity and legality of the Grand Regional Lodge of the Philippines; and
that the re-organizational plan was being considered by the Grand Council of the Order.⁶⁶

Towards American Freemasonry

The death of Morayta in 1917 cut the last ties that connected Filipino Masons with the Grand Oriente Español, and fusion with the Americans was pursued. After several joint meetings, a six-point draft agreement was prepared that guaranteed equal rights and privileges regardless of race and the freedom to adopt any recognised rite and language that a Lodge might choose for its work. Subject to ratification by each Grand Lodge, the draft agreement proposed to:

convene a joint assembly to adopt, with possible amendments, the American Grand Lodge's Constitution;
recharter the Lodges of the Gran Oriente Español; and
elect the Grand Officers.⁶⁷

In February 1917, the Grand Regional Lodge and its Lodges approved the provisions of the draft agreement. Ten days later, and one day before the joint assembly was to be held, GLPI representatives disapproved the terms of the agreement, rejected fusion by a constituted assembly and sought affiliation with individual lodges instead. Tasked by the committees to assist in resolving the situation, Quezon was able to overcome all opposition and persuaded the Filipino Lodges to integrate with the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands by affiliation.

Just before the scheduled assembly, the Grand Council of the Gran Oriente Español authorised the establishment of an independent Philippine Grand Lodge, leaving the final decision to an Assembly to be held in June 1917. The late arrival of the notice rendered the matter incapable of any influence on the chain of events.

⁶⁴ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, pp. 163-165.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 110-112.

⁶⁷ Fajardo, RS, 1999, *The Brethren: In the days of the Empire- Philippine Masonry from the US Colonial Era to the Commonwealth Years*, pp. 67-68.

On 14 February 1917, 27 Grand Regional Lodges of the Gran Oriente Español signed the document of affiliation to the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands. William H. Taylor was re-elected as Grand Master and Manuel L. Quezon (Resident Commissioner to the US) was elected as Deputy Grand Master.⁶⁸

At Quezon's suggestion, the practice was adopted wherein a Filipino and an American would alternate as Grand Master, since the larger number of Filipino Lodges could easily dominate in succeeding elections. In 1918, Quezon became the first Filipino Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands. The practice of alternate succession of Grand Masters continued until the election of the last American Grand Master in 1974.

In 1919, the Gran Oriente Español mandated to reorganize its symbolic lodges and revive its Scottish Rite bodies which led to the formation of the Gran Logia Regional del Archipelago Filipino. In 1924, a disagreement between the Grand Master of the Grand Regional Lodge and the Grand Delegate gave rise to the notion of forming the Philippine Family of Universal Freemasonry. This led to the establishment of two separate organisations:

Gran Logia Nacional de Filipinas under the "Supremo Consejo del Grado 33° para Filipinas" was founded by Timoteo Paez, incorporated on 4 July 1924, and proclaimed on 30 December with Timoteo Paez as Soverano Gran Commendador. It claimed jurisdiction over 27 Blue Lodges, one Lodge of Perfection, one Chapter Rosa Cruz, one Council of Kadosh and the corresponding Grand Consistory.

Gran Logia del Archipelago Filipino under the Supremo Consejo 33° del Archipiélago Filipino was chartered as sovereign and independent by the Gran Oriente Español in December 1925.⁶⁹

Following a resolution considered during the GLPI Annual Communication in 1937, approval was given and made effective in 1940 to change the title of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippine Islands, to the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. In the present day, this is The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines (GLP) recognised by the United Grand Lodge of Victoria.⁷⁰

Between 1930 and 1937, the GLPI warranted six lodges in China and in 1937 the District Grand Lodge of China under the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands was inaugurated in Shanghai.⁷¹

Philippine Independence

Despite the move towards American Freemasonry among Filipino Freemasons, there was an undercurrent movement to bring into effect the independence of the Philippines.

In 1913, under US President Woodrow Wilson's administration, Francis Burton Harrison (a Freemason) was appointed governor-general. Harrison worked for the Jones Law of 1916 – The Philippine Autonomy Act - which stated as its purpose the withdrawal of US sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as soon as a stable government

⁶⁸ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time (1920)*, p. 195.

⁶⁹ Fajardo, RS, 1999, *The Brethren: In the days of the Empire - Philippine Masonry from the US Colonial Era to the Commonwealth Years*, pp. 93-109.

⁷⁰ Fajardo, RS, January-April 1990, *The Cable Tow*, Grand Lodge of the Philippines, Manila.

⁷¹ Fajardo, RS, 1999, *The Brethren: In the days of the Empire- Philippine Masonry from the US Colonial Era to the Commonwealth Years*, pp. 175-200.

can be established. Harrison “Filipinised” the government and at the end of his term in 1921 it was 96% controlled by Filipinos.

During this time, missions were formed to work for the independence of the Philippines, with most of them chaired and attended by prominent Freemasons - Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña, Pedro Guevarra, Camilo Osias, Rafael Palma, Rafael Alunan, Emilio Tria Tirona, Teodoro Yangco, Filemon Perez, Ceferino de Leon, Tomas Earnshaw, Quintin Paredes, Jose Abad Santos, Conrado Benitez, Jorge Vargas, Maximo Kalaw, Arsenio Luz and others. They worked with and influenced Freemasons in the US government, the media and Masonic Lodges in the US.

As early as January 1916, Senator James P. Clarke (Western Star Lodge No. 2, Arkansas) introduced an amendment to the Philippine Bill, which would grant independence to the Philippines within a few years. His amendment was approved by the US Senate, but was defeated in the House of Representatives by a slim margin.

The first Philippine Independence measure passed by the American Congress was the Hare-Hawes-Cutting bill vetoed by Pres. Herbert Hoover. Another mission led by Senate President Quezon secured the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Law approved in March 1934 by Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt (a Freemason of New York City).

It called for a Constitutional Convention to frame the Constitution of the Philippines. Held in 1935, the Convention proved a fertile ground for Masonic free thought with 41 Freemasons as delegates - among them were Manuel Roxas, Jose Laurel, Camilo Osias, Conrado Benitez, Rafael Palma, Pedro Guevarra, and Vicente Francisco.

Incorporating Masonic principles in their deliberations, they ensured that the Constitution specified that “No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights.” Later, Claro M. Recto and Jose P. Laurel (both Freemasons) sponsored a bill for all students to study the banned Rizal books, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*.⁷²

Importantly, the Convention resolved that upon the final withdrawal of US sovereignty, the US Commonwealth of the Philippines would be known as the Republic of the Philippines. Manuel Quezon became President and Sergio Osmeña Vice President.

Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)

Japanese military forces attacked and bombed the Philippines on 8 December 1941 (the same day as Pearl Harbor). All lodges in the Philippines were forced to cease activities during the Second World War and the Japanese invasion and occupation of the Philippines.

The US Armed Forces in the Far East were under Lt. Gen. Douglas MacArthur (on whom GLPI Grand Master Hawthorne had exercised a rare privilege by making him a “Mason at Sight” and inducting him as a member of Manila Lodge No 1). Having given Europe priority, the limited US forces meant that a Japanese victory was inevitable in the short term.

During their Philippine occupation, Japanese authorities looked upon Freemasonry with aversion and revenge. They claimed that the Masonic and Shrine movements originated in Paris and were Jewish revolutionary organisations designed to overthrow established government indirectly, and that they had to be persecuted, tormented, humiliated, and reviled without respite.

⁷² Agoncillo, TA, 1990, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th edn, pp. 311-361.

Bro. Dr. Jose P. Laurel (Batangas Lodge) with fellow Freemasons Jorge Vargas, Rafael Alunan, Antonio de las Alas, Quintin Paredes, Camilo Osias, Benigno Aquino Sr. and others were ordered to serve the Japanese. In October 1943, Philippine Independence was proclaimed anew under the sponsorship of the Japanese Imperial forces. Bro. Jorge B. Vargas (Sinukuan Lodge) read the proclamation terminating the Japanese Military Administration and another Freemason (Aguinaldo) hoisted the flag marking the first time since the start of the Japanese occupation that the flag was displayed in public. The puppet government set up by the Japanese placed Bro. Dr. Laurel as President.

While these Freemasons accepted their duties to ease the consequences for the general populace and lessen the damage, other Masons refused to submit to the invaders and joined the guerrilla resistance movement. The eighth president of the Philippines, Pres. Carlos P. Garcia, was one such dissenter who served as a military guerrilla leader. Many high-ranking Freemasons were lost through the atrocities of the Japanese either during the occupation or because of the Battle of Manila in February-March 1945:

Supreme Court Justice Jose Abad Santos (PGM 1938) was executed in Malabang, Lanao for refusing to cooperate.

Grand Master John R., McFie was killed by Japanese artillery fire while interned at the University of Santo Tomas concentration camp during February 1945).

Deputy Grand Master Jose P. Guido was beheaded in the presence of his family on 7 February 1945.

Jose de los Reyes (PGM 1940) was also killed.

Joseph H. Alley, (PGM 1937) died 1 February 1946 after his release from concentration camp.⁷³

Early in 1942, President Quezon with his family and other Freemasons left for the US to influence that government to support the war in the Pacific and give independence to the Philippines. Bro. Gen. Douglas MacArthur fought hard to convince the Americans to come to the aid of their colony. In June 1944, the US Congress passed Joint Resolution No. 93 authorizing the US President to proclaim the independence of the Philippines on 4 July 1946. Quezon passed away in August that year never to see his efforts fulfilled.

MacArthur returned to the Philippines and restored the Philippine Commonwealth in October 1944 with Bro. Osmeña as President. Bro. Manuel Roxas followed as President of the Commonwealth in April 1946, and independence declared in July. Bro. President Harry Truman's Proclamation was read by High Commissioner Bro. Paul McNutt, after which a third Freemason, President Manuel A. Roxas (PM of Makawiwili Lodge No. 55), raised the Philippine flag.⁷⁴

In 1945, RWorBro Michael Goldenberg, Senior Grand Warden re-established the Grand Lodge of the Philippines when he became acting Grand Master after the liberation of the Philippines.

Following the end of World War II, Philippine Freemasonry spread to Japan, Okinawa, Korea and Saipan as the Americans continued the "island hopping" strategy of Bro. Major General Douglas and applied it to Freemasonry. In 1947, an English and two Scottish lodges that survived in American-occupied Japan sought, through the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, to

⁷³ Causing, J, 1969, *Freemasonry in the Philippines: a comprehensive history of Freemasonry during a period of 209 struggling, glorious years 1756-1965*, pp. 183-191.

⁷⁴ Philippine News Agency n.d., <http://www.pna.gov.ph>

organise lodges there. In 1950, membership of Masonic lodges was made available to Japanese nationals and, six years later, there were 16 lodges established.⁷⁵

In 1948, one of the six lodges established by the then GLPI (now GLP) during the 1930s, Amity Lodge No 106 of China convened a meeting of lodges in China, which was attended by lodges of other foreign Grand Jurisdictions as observers only (Massachusetts, England, Scotland, and Ireland). The delegates from China resolved to form a Grand Lodge of China; adopted a Constitution and Regulations based on the statutes of the Grand Lodges of California and the Philippines, and elected a Grand Master.

The District Grand Lodge of Japan, under the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, was constituted in 1954. Three years later, Moriahyama Lodge No 134 convened a meeting of Japanese lodges wherein 15 lodges, after unanimously endorsing the resolution, gave effect to the formation of a Grand Lodge of Japan and elected its officers in March 1957.

The president of the first Philippine Republic, Emilio Aguinaldo outlived most of his successors and witnessed how the Philippines struggled in the hands of Spain, the US, and Japan. After his crucial roles in wars against Spanish and American invaders, Aguinaldo championed the rights of his fellow veterans by establishing the Veteranos de la Revolucion (Veterans of the Revolution) and helping them buy land on instalment from the government. Aguinaldo died of coronary thrombosis at the age of 95 in 1964.

More recent events

Herein is an outline of some of the more recent events that have shaped Freemasonry in the Philippines and remarks regarding its role in the development of the country:

In 1998, Mabuhay Lodge No 59 was established in Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga in the Philippines, under the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington. Prince Hall Masons are the oldest and largest group of Masons of African origin in the world. Today there are 40 Grand Lodges of Prince Hall Freemasonry in the United States, Canada, the Bahamas, and Liberia, presiding over more than 5,000 lodges.

In 2006, two districts in Samar, Leyte issued a manifesto declaring independence from the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in an unsuccessful bid to form a United Grand Lodge of the Philippines. This was followed by seven regularly constituted GLP lodges that, through their respective resolutions achieved with much angst and in-fighting, formed the Independent Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands (IGLPI).⁷⁶

In an assembly held in August 2006, officers were elected and the lodges approved a draft Constitution. The IGLPI was formally constituted in September and in November that year, the Constitution was ratified during the First IGLPI Annual Grand Assembly held at the Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Lodge No 5, Kawit, Cavite.

In February 2012, the Hon. Joseph F. Violago, representative of Nueva Ecija-2nd District on the 15th Public Installation of Officers of Eulogio R. Dizon Lodge No 321 (GLP), quoted former President Carlos P. Garcia who paid tribute to Freemasonry in this way:

I cannot help but take cognisance of the great and noble work which your grand

⁷⁵ Fajardo, RS, 1999, *The Brethren: In the days of the Empire- Philippine Masonry from the US Colonial Era to the Commonwealth Years*, pp. 221-260.

⁷⁶ Philippine Center for Masonic Studies, n.d., *History of Masonry in the Philippines*, www.philippinemasonry.org/history-of-masonry-in-the-philippines/html

*fraternity had done and is still doing for freedom of thought and conscience, for democracy and equality. In our country and in the United States, members of your brotherhood led in the fight for the sacrosanct cause of liberty, equality and fraternity.*⁷⁷

At the 100th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in April 2016, on the Grand Installation of Grand Master MWBro. Voltaire T. Gazmin (former Secretary of National Defence of the Philippines), the Most Worshipful Grand Master said of Filipino Freemasonry today:

*.... Philippine Freemasonry today is very much vibrant, active, and progressive. We have successfully nurtured the freedom secured to us by the heroism of our celebrated brethren. We have passed with flying colors our centennial year of Masonic existence in this great Filipino nation. We have expanded the number of our active lodges which now total to about 380 lodges in the jurisdiction and still growing. And when it comes to passion, loyalty and dedication to our Craft, there is no doubt that the Filipino brethren would rank among the top in the entire world of Masonry.*⁷⁸

Philippine and Victorian (Australia) Initiatives (2014-2024)

22 May 2016 marked the 70th anniversary of formal diplomatic relations between Australia and the Philippines which commenced on that date in 1946. This auspicious occasion provided a unique background and perhaps an impetus for the revitalisation of the Masonic bond between the two countries, particularly in Victoria, Australia.

Geographically, Australia is one of the Philippines' most important neighbours sharing a democracy of the western pattern, the two countries are in the same ideological camp. The historical link goes back further than 1946 - Filipino pearl divers worked in Australia's fledgling pearl industry in the 1800s and some 4,000 Australian military service personnel fought alongside their Filipino brothers during the Second World War.

Australia and the Philippines share similar perspectives and openly cooperate on many regional, economic, trade, defence and security issues. A common democratic history laid the foundations of friendship, development assistance and ever-deepening brother-to-brother links across the seas. Immigration has played an important part, as Filipinos are consistently one of the fastest growing migrant groups in Australia.

As of June 2022, there were 320,300 Filipino-born people living in Australia. The Philippine Diaspora, particularly since the 1980s, has contributed to the fact that Filipinos now comprise the fifth largest migrant community in Australia, making up 4.2 per cent of Australia's overseas-born population and 1.2 per cent of Australia's total population. In 2024, the Filipino community in Victoria is the second largest in Australia. There are 95,188 people in Victoria who have Filipino ancestry, of which 68,463 were born in the Philippines.

It is in this context that, in 2014, a small group of Freemasons from lodges of the United Grand Lodge of Victoria (UGLV or Freemasons Victoria) made initial contact with Masons of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines (GLP). There then followed an informal visit by the Honorary Consul of the Philippines in Melbourne (a Freemason) to the GLP in Manila

⁷⁷ "My Homage and Clarion Call to the Masons" - speech delivered by the Hon. Joseph F. Violago, representative of Nueva Ecija-2nd District on the 15th Public Installation of Officers of Eulogio R. Dizon Lodge No 321 under the jurisdiction of the GLP, Pag-asa Gym, Talugtug, Nueva Ecija at 1:30 p.m., 25 February 2012.

⁷⁸ 2016, *The Cable Tow*, May-June 2016, Vol. 93, No1, Manila, Philippines.

in January 2015. During the visit it was resolved to encourage and work towards sending a Victorian delegation to the GLP Annual Communication (ANCOM) held in April 2016.

In October 2015, GLP Grand Secretary RWBro Danilo Angeles formally extended to the UGLV Grand Secretary and the UGLV Grand Master “our warm fraternal invitation to be our guest on the occasion of our 100th Annual Grand Communication”. What followed was a coordinated mobilisation of UGLV brethren who seized the momentous occasion to enable a visit by UGLV Grand Master MWBro. Don G. Reynolds to the Annual Communication and Grand Installation, marking the 100th anniversary year of the GLP and the 70th anniversary year of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The attendance of a UGLV delegation at the 100th ANCOM in April 2016 was reciprocated by a less formal visit to UGLV by GLP Grand Master MWBro. Voltaire T. Gazmin in August 2016, at the gracious invitation of the UGLV. During that visit, the GLP Grand Master had occasion to observe some lodge ritual at Middle Park Lodge No.206 and engage in discussions on corporate Grand Lodge matters. The outcomes of that meeting included:

- the mutual realisation that each of the two jurisdictions may benefit from the respective experience and governance of the other;
- the appointment of a UGLV Representative to the GLP; and
- the formation of technical working groups to forge the initial framework of inter-jurisdictional Masonic cooperation and comity between the GLP and UGLV.⁷⁹

To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding was prepared that set forth the terms and understanding between the GLP and the UGLV to forge and foster a mutually-beneficial sisterhood agreement by and between both grand jurisdictions. In 2017, the respective Grand Masters signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

In early 2019, the GLP established a Technical Working Group (TWG) delegated with appropriate authority to exercise all coordination necessary to prepare for the TWG’s sessions and to follow-up the implementation of initiatives arising from such sessions.

In the same year, two major initiatives marked the relationship between the GLP and UGLV. These were the Consecration of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 and the elevation of the MOU to a Memorandum of Agreement.

Plaridel Lodge No 1893

The idea of establishing a lodge affiliated with the United Grand Lodge of Victoria to work GLP Ritual was circulating among Victorian brethren for several years. The idea became reality in 2017 through the Memorandum of Understanding between the GLP and UGLV, which ushered closer collaboration and strategic activity.

For the first time in the history of the GLP and any Australian Masonic jurisdiction, the United Grand Lodge of Victoria (Freemasons Victoria) consecrated Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 on 21 September 2019.

With Robbie Burns Phoenix Lodge No. 88 as the sponsoring lodge, 66 petitioners were granted a ten-year Warrant acknowledging the Resolutions of the new lodge to work Craft Ritual of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines by dispensation.

The name of the lodge - “Plaridel” - honours the pen name of Bro. Marcelo H. Del Pilar (*pictured*) who had to use the code name to protect his authorship of numerous works calling for reform during the last decade of Spanish colonisation.

⁷⁹ 2016, *The Cable Tow*, July-August 2016, Vol. 93, No.1,



The number of Plaridel Lodge - 1893 - commemorates the year in which Bro. Marcelo H. Del Pilar organised the first National Organisation of Masons in the Philippines.

For his untiring efforts in promoting the principles and tenets of Freemasonry to promote a universal brotherhood and the autonomy or sovereignty of the individual during the revolutionary origins of the Filipino nation, Bro Marcelo H. Del Pilar is considered the “Father of Philippine Freemasonry”.

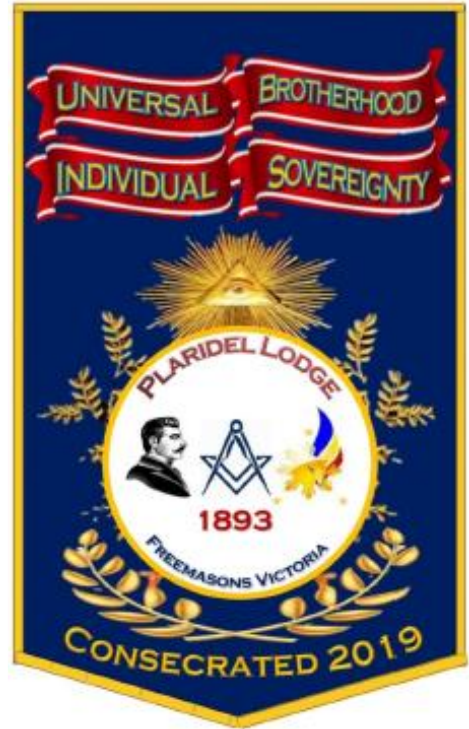
At the time of its Consecration, Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 had a total of 70 foundation members. The UGLV allowed Lodge members to wear their own lodge wear and regalia, which is distinct from that of the GLP and UGLV (refer images on next page). In honour of the coming together of two expressions of the Craft, the Australian and Philippine flags are presented, and the national anthems are sung at the commencement of every stated lodge meeting.

Plaridel Lodge functions as a ‘Dining Lodge’ that features mostly Filipino cuisine at the Festive Board after each meeting. It encourages members’ wives, partners, spouses, family members and friends, specifically non-masons, to become involved in the charitable and social work of the Lodge. Stated lodge meetings occur five times a year on the first Saturday of even months.

To facilitate proper observance of the ritual and ceremonial undertaken by Plaridel Lodge No. 1894, the GLP agreed to assign and send Grand Lecturers to Melbourne, Victoria each year to exemplify GLP work to the Lodge members and their UGLV counterparts so that the work of Plaridel Lodge could be properly supervised.



Apron and dress code of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893.



Banner of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893.

Having participated in the 2019 Consecration of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 as Grand Master of the GLP, MW Agapito S. Suan Jr., now Past Grand Master, provided a message for the Installation of its Worshipful Master in 2022 in which he captured these sentiments:

.....Plaridel Lodge No. 1893, under the Constitution of Freemasons Victoria, holds a very special place in the hearts of all Filipino Masons under the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. For one, your lodge is named after the nom de plume of the "Father of Philippine Masonry," Bro. Marcelo H. Del Pilar. Even your lodge number - 1893 - is auspicious as well, for it is the year when Del Pilar organized the first national organization of Masons in the Philippines. Secondly, many of your members have Filipino blood coursing through their veins. Thirdly, you are the only lodge that is allowed by your own sovereign Masonic jurisdiction to work the official Craft rituals of another jurisdiction - those, of course, of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. This is a remarkable first for the Masons in Victoria, in the whole of Australia, and even in the entire history of our own Grand Lodge, thus adding to the rich Masonic history shared between Australia and the Philippines.⁸⁰

As of August 2024, five years since its establishment in 2019, Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 has initiated eight new members with another three petitioning, and welcomed six joining members, with another seven who are awaiting approval.

Memorandum of Agreement

The closer ties between the GLP and the UGLV led to the renewal of the 2017 MOU and elevation to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was signed in April 2020. The MOA includes a commitment to undertake certain work toward refining the relationship including reciprocal arrangements and visits, mutual recognition, formalised education and research opportunities and information sharing on effective governance and organisational practices.

⁸⁰ MW Agapito S. Suan Jr., PGM GLP, 2022, Message for the Installation at Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 (UGLV), Melbourne, Australia

Despite best intentions, the continuing worldwide pandemic of recent times challenged the effective implementation of the MOA and most of the objectives remain unactioned, including an inability to review the agreement by November 2021.

As Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 approached the midpoint of its ten-year Warrant, in June 2024, the UGLV Masonic Council undertook a review of the nuances of lodges in Victoria that were working ritual and ceremonial from other constitutions. The review carefully considered the intent of the MOA with the GLP in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Warrant of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893, which include, *“that every individual warranted UGLV Lodge shall, as a condition of the issue and continuance of a warrant, conform to the ritual and ceremonial practices which are, from time to time, approved by the UGLV Grand Master or varied by his dispensation.”*⁸¹

The UGLV subsequently endorsed the following recommendations:

- That the previous Dispensations for Lodges to conduct ritual and ceremonial from other Constitutions be withdrawn effective forthwith;
- That Plaridel Lodge conforms to the Constitutions of UGLV and approved ritual, for opening and closing of the lodge, degree ceremonies, and the annual installation;
- Members of Plaridel Lodge may wear their specific regalia for their regular meetings;
- That Plaridel Lodge may perform the overseas rituals as a demonstration in their own Lodge once per Masonic year and/or by dispensation of the Grand Master on any other occasion and as part of Official Visits upon invitation;
- Members must wear approved Victorian regalia when visiting other lodges unless it is an official visit.

To this end, on behalf of the Lodge, the Worshipful Master of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 at the time, WBro Christian John Manalo, gave an assurance that the members of Plaridel Lodge would adhere to this decision with utmost compliance accordingly as necessary.

This decision, which extends to any Victorian lodges working ritual from foreign constitutions, highlights the importance for UGLV of protecting the integrity of its Ritual and Ceremonial, while ensuring that the richness of other Masonic traditions such as those of the GLP continues to be demonstrated within the Victorian jurisdiction as specified by the above recommendations.

It would be fair to observe, particularly in recent times, that the two Masonic jurisdictions of the Philippines and Victoria acknowledge the value in further developing close fraternal relations. To this end, the commitment and reciprocal efforts that continue to uphold the vision captured in the 2020 Memorandum of Agreement will hopefully lead to a review of its objectives in a spirit of ongoing revitalisation of their historical and Masonic bonds.

Reflection and Conclusion

Even from a brief overview of Philippine history, it appears that no other fraternal organisation has been persecuted, maligned, suspected, or blamed more for historical circumstances or political events than Freemasonry. In this sense, Filipino Freemasonry cannot be understood outside the context of Philippine history.

⁸¹ Warrant of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 granted by the United Grand Lodge of Victoria in September 2019, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Because the Spaniards, Americans, the Catholic Church and even the elite within Filipino society censored history to hide their own atrocities and misgivings, it is an ongoing challenge to uncover the truth regarding the role of Freemasons and Freemasonry in the Philippines. Even the two novels by Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal were banned for decades. Fortunately, because Filipino Freemasons were able to hide and preserve records, their archives have proven to be a great source of historical facts.

Throughout Philippine history the diverse legacy of Freemasonry – action and inaction, discord and unity, principled discourse and unabashed rivalry, philosophy and irrationality – play out all at once. This conundrum paved the way for many Filipino reformists toward European Freemasonry to seek the assistance and influence of Spanish liberals who happened to be Freemasons themselves.

The historical anomaly is that the various elements of Spanish rule and society deliberately introduced, openly promoted, vehemently objected to, and brutally persecuted the people and practice of Freemasonry in the Philippines. The Filipino and Freemasonry generally felt the brunt of a political climate in Spain that oscillated, albeit slowly, from conservative to centre to liberal. Some authors have pointed out the paradox that Spain began to weaken its own position in the Philippines through its at times positive support of Freemasonry. This is particularly evident in the numerous appointments of Freemasons to civic positions within the colonial government.⁸² Regardless, the racist treatment of those who were Philippine-born, including their exclusion from Masonic lodges, marked every phase of Spanish colonisation in the Philippines.

It was largely Freemasonry's political rather than religious challenge to the status quo that shook the foundations of the *Frailocracia* which served the interests of the friars at the expense of the native Filipino and the colonial government itself. As was the case in colonial Latin America, the Filipino lodges in Spain (more so than those in the Philippines) were regarded as 'heralds of the new era of democracy and self-government'.⁸³ As such, although their opposition to political and religious tyranny initially guided the Filipino brethren toward the Spanish Masonic tradition, it was the Masonic ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity that drove their involvement in the building of the Philippine nation.

US colonisation largely disrupted the harmony of the Masonic Order in the Philippines and created a dichotomy between Spanish and American Masonic observances. The distinction was probably most evident in the early days, as Filipinos of the Spanish Masonic tradition, compared to their American counterparts, tended to come from the more elite class of Filipino society (like the *Ilustrados*), highly educated and religiously oriented compared to the rest of the Filipino population.

More so in earlier times, Masonry was thought primarily to be only for the elite and well-educated, and provided an elevation of self-esteem, a sense of accomplishment and recognition, for those who strove to be a part of it. As it gradually aligned with traditional Filipino values of the extended family (where the recently acquainted would call each other *Kuya* (brother) or *Ate* (sister)), hospitality (where no one is left to go hungry), and collective community effort (*bayanihan*), Masonry became more accessible to the middle class. The dispersed and diverse geography of the country also encouraged Masonic principles of harmony and peace – if only to ensure viability, sustainability and development of the various

⁸² Rich, P & De Los Reyes, G, 1995, "Reappraising Scottish Rite Freemasonry in Latin America", *Heredom*, vol 4, p. 24.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

sub-cultures that make up the Filipino people. Much of this is still the case today, although Freemasonry in the Philippines provides a strong sense of belonging and acceptance regardless of ethnicity, financial or social status, together with a strong sense of attachment to history and its heroes.

While the association of Filipinos with American lodges fostered and advanced the movement towards independence, the dichotomy created by adherents of either the Spanish or American Masonic schools of thought, also divided the Filipino brothers. To this day, many jurisdictions remain irregular according to the GLP and the UGLV. Thus, while many famous men in Philippine history were Masons (such as Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal and Bro. Marcelo Del Pilar), if these gentlemen were alive today, we could not Masonically associate with them.

In all this, it was the fusion of Spanish/Latin Freemasonry with that of American Freemasonry in the Philippines that proved to be one of the most significant events in Masonic history. This great blending brought the beauty and glory of the Craft to a people who had formerly often been denied admission because of racial prejudice. It was great because the Chinese, Japanese and Malays knew that they were considered as brothers, equals of the Europeans and Americans, without the distinction of race, creed or colour.

In preparing this paper, the researchers were moved to pay homage to fallen Freemasons, who gave up their lives for Country and Craft. It is not possible to compile a list of all the Freemasons who were killed during the various persecutions and wars. Instead, the names of those who lost their lives in some of the more well-known executions in Philippine history are provided in context throughout the paper. This serves to highlight that the repeated trials and persecutions undergone by Freemasons, including during the Second World War, served to strengthen a resolve to withstand and appropriately re-establish the Craft in the fullness of time.

Perhaps, the most apt closing to this study, is a quotation from Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, MW Teodoro M. Kalaw, who in January 1920 observed:

*In these days of peace and goodwill, under a government that neither condemns nor persecutes, but rather encourages and helps those who work for the benefit and progress of humanity, Freemasonry which is a universal institution to which many honest men belong, irrespective of religion, race or nationality, will be able to teach the Filipinos that the ideal life is that in which nobody interferes with the beliefs of others; in which everybody may profess the ideas that each considers best, if within the law; in which everyone is free to adore his God in his own way; in which all may practice as they deem advisable the commandment of "Love thy neighbor as thyself; charity towards the needy, tolerance and humility towards the poor, justice and truth towards all; in which there is no hatred, but love, no division of classes, but fraternal cooperation, no monopolies for the few, but opportunities for everybody; and in which all will understand that morality is not expressed in words, or even in thoughts, but in daily deeds, in every industrial, commercial, agricultural activity, in every phase, in short, in human existence.*⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Kalaw, TM, 1956, *Philippine Masonry: Its Origins, Development and Vicissitudes up to Present Time* (1920), p. 205.

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Warrant of Plaridel Lodge No. 1893 granted by the United Grand Lodge of Victoria in September 2019, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

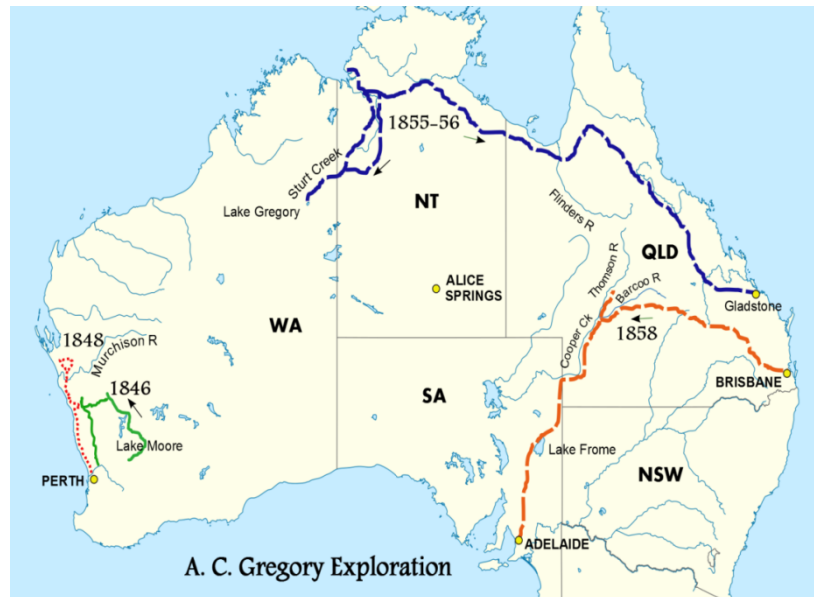
**BROTHER SIR AUGUSTUS CHARLES GREGORY KCMG, MLA,
FRGS, DISTGM:
AN ICONIC AUSTRALIAN EXPLORER, EXEMPLARY CITIZEN AND
NOTABLE FREEMASON**

GARY BACON



The life of this extraordinary man (Birth: 1 August 1819: Farnsfield, Nottinghamshire, England. Death: 25 June 1905: Brisbane, Queensland, Australia) is covered in three tranches, viz.:

- Explorer on the Australian Plateau
- State Administrator and Community Leader
- Patriarch of Queensland Freemasonry

Explorer:

Gregory's soldier father had been wounded and in lieu of a pension accepted a land grant in the new Swan River settlement in West Australia. The family arrived in 1829 and the mother home schooled the children. Aided by a neighbour, WA Surveyor-General John Roe, Gregory became a cadet in his department in 1841 and was soon promoted an assistant surveyor. His resourcefulness, bushcraft, facility for invention and technical expertise won him the confidence of his superiors and he was soon given command of his first expedition.

Irwin River Exploration 1846

The Irwin River Exploration of 1846 was led by Augustus Charles Gregory, an accomplished explorer and surveyor. He was often accompanied by his brothers, Francis and Henry, who were also surveyors. This exploration was part of a series of expeditions in Western Australia searching for grazing lands and minerals, and it was Gregory's first command of an exploration expedition. The expedition was significant as it made the first discovery of coal in Western Australia on the Irwin River gorge, which is now known as Coalseam Conservation Park in Mingenew. Through some of the world's most arid country, the Irwin River expedition covered 1534 km in 47 days at an average of 33km per day. Good grazing land and a promising coal seam were reported.

The Settlers' Expedition 1848

A group of colonists, impressed by Gregory's earlier enterprise, invited him to lead an expedition to map the Gascoyne River and search for more pastoral land. This expedition into the Murchison area north of Perth covered 2500km in 10 weeks, averaging 36km a day. Although repelled by dense scrub the party charted the Gascoyne River and found traces of lead which led to the opening of the Champion Bay district centred on Geraldton.

North Australia Expedition 1855-56

The WA Governor Charles Fitzgerald reported to the Colonial Office, with Henry Pelham-Clinton, the 5th Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyne as the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies from 1852 to 1854, in glowing terms of Gregory's skill and ability to abide by instructions. The imperial government had already decided after strong advocacy from the Royal Geographical Society to sponsor a scientific exploration across the north of Australia with an allocation of £5000 and Gregory was chosen to lead it. Fifty horses, 18 men, including

his brother Henry, scientific equipment and two years of supplies were crammed into two square riggers. The party sailed from Moreton Bay and landed near the mouth of the Victoria River. After initial setbacks with boat access Gregory led several forays up the Victoria River and traced Sturt's Creek for 483 km until it disappeared in desert and a bone dry 'Gregory's salt sea' later named Lake Gregory. Turning east the party explored the Elsey, Roper and Macarthur Rivers, crossed and named the Leichhardt and then travelled to Brisbane by way of the Flinders, Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Rivers. In a trip 3219 km by sea and 8047 km by land Gregory dissolved the myth of the inland sea and penetrated the Tanami Desert. Expedition botanist Ferdinand von Mueller catalogued 2000 plants. Although Gregory attributed his success to 'the protection of that Providence without which we are powerless', the smooth passage and thorough scientific investigations of the expedition owed much to his honed exploration skills and leadership. Paradoxically it was too successful to be recognized as one of the most significant journeys led by one of the few unquestionably great Australian explorers. Modest, unromantic and resolute in following instructions, he did not dramatize his report, boasted no triumphs and sought no honours despite his admirable Aboriginal policy and meticulous organization.

Search for Leichardt 1858

Gregory led an expedition sponsored by the New South Wales government in search of Ludwig Leichardt who had disappeared in 1848 during his journey across Australia. Gregory's party set out in March 1858 from Juandah station, crossed the Warrego and Barcoo Rivers but after finding traces of the lost explorer was forced by drought to abandon the search and travel south to Adelaide a journey of 2600km. The fate of Leichardt remains a mystery. This was Gregory's last major expedition.

Achievements

Augustus Charles Gregory was a practical bushman, an animal lover, innovative and mechanically skilful.

He designed an apparatus to operate the first revolving light installed on Rottneest Island.

He invented a pack saddle using light weight red cedar that replaced the old English horse furniture that then became standard use in the bush. The saddle allowed the animal to sweat and made it possible for packs to be bucked free if the horse stumbled.

Gregory also dehydrated and compacted food to lighten the load on his pack horses.

His most innovative design was the "Gregory Patent Compass." The compass could be used on horseback, so it gave him the ability to move faster through the bush.

His seasonal knowledge and bushcraft were unparalleled and he was the first to note the sequence of weather patterns in Australia from west to east.

Recipient of the 1857 Founders Gold Medal from the Royal Geographical Society for 'extensive and important explorations in Western and Northern Australia'

More than 14000 km travelled on expeditions, equivalent to three times circumambulating the Australian landmass. He never lost an expedition member.

Add myriad surveys within a newly gazetted Colony including establishing the southern border of Queensland.

Not surprisingly a retrospect of his explorations was headed *The Bradman of Australian Explorers* in the *Australian Geographic* magazine Jan-Mar 2006 edition, along with the

caption, ‘Scientist, navigator, inventor, horseman and leader of men. All these titles have been assigned to Augustus Charles Gregory, but his many skills shouldn’t overshadow his brilliance as an explorer and surveyor’.

Senior Citizen:

Gregory was not a man to ‘put the legs up’ after 14000 kms of exploration on horse and *shanks pony*. He actively sourced new active career pathways which most explorers, who survived, kept well distant.

Administrator/Legislator

1859 – 1863: First Queensland Commissioner of Lands

1859 – 1879: First Surveyor-General Queensland

1875 – 1879: Government Geologist, Queensland – Geological Surveyor Department of Works

Gregory was 40 when he embarked on a new challenge. He sent in a short resume and applied confidently to the new Governor of the newly separated Colony, Sir George Bowen, for the job of Queensland Surveyor-General. He was successful and the Governor appointed him Surveyor-General in December 1859 and, a month later, Chief Commissioner of Lands.

Gregory had the most onerous duties in the new government for land was the colony’s greatest resource. Revenue from the lease or sale of Crown lands exceeded the revenue from customs and excise duties, wool and beef were the mainstay of the export trade, and the promise of vast unoccupied pastures described by earlier explorers in glowing terms encouraged capital investment and a steadily increasing stream of permanent settlers. He was responsible for classifying, surveying and controlling an area of 670,000 square miles (Qld 1,853,000 km², British Isles 315,160 km², NZ 267,710 km², Victoria 227,444 km²) inhabited by only 12,000 people.

How best to utilise the land was a question that, from the start, resolved into “a burning political issue” between the pastoralists who laid claim to large tracts of land and “the selectors” who wanted access to small predominantly agricultural holdings.

The history of lands administration during this period was thus marked by controversy. It was said that none of the succession of Lands Ministers survived with their reputation intact. The civil servants appointed to implement what were described as “confusing and chaotic laws” did not fare much better. Officers of the Lands Department were regularly accused of incompetence, jobbery and even corruption.

In the years after the initial land legislation of 1860 there were over fifty principal and amending Acts, with a further thirty-seven Bills either lost or defeated in Parliament. There appeared to be no simple answer to the “land question”. Gregory was in the thick of this squabble from day one and anyone who has led a Government Agency will acknowledge that serving rotating Ministers with wide agendas is quite a mental and physical feat. Gregory persevered for over 16 years and must, at times, wished he was back in the outback on expedition.

1880 – 1905: President, Shire of Toowong, 1881-1884, 1888-1890, 1895, 1895-1901 and Mayor 1904

1882 – 1905: Member of the Legislative Council, Parliament of Queensland

The first Parliament, consisting of 26 elected Members of the Legislative Assembly, and 11 nominees appointed to the Legislative Council, met in 1860. The members of the Legislative Council were appointed by the Governor, whereas the members of the Legislative Assembly

were elected by eligible voters. Original appointments to the Legislative Council were for five years with subsequent appointments made for life.

Gregory was appointed to the Legislative Council on 10 November 1882 and continued to be a member until his death. Always a critic of the government he spoke more often than most members and his advice was freely sought and given, particularly on land and technical matters. He was never a member of a cabinet, preferring to be an independent member free to vote for measures of which he approved.

It is appropriate that the electoral district of Gregory for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland created in 1878 encompasses some 460 000 km² of rural and remote western Queensland.

Professional & Community Involvement:

1862 – First Council of Qld Acclimatization Society

Members of the Queensland Acclimatisation Society in the nineteenth century played a key role in the importation and experimentation with many plants. Founded in 1862 at the instigation of Sir George Bowen who became the first Patron of the Society, its inaugural meeting was attended by the busiest and most powerful men in the colony. The society's objects were 'calculated to afford powerful aid in the development of the material resources of the Colony and to assist in establishing its prosperity upon a sound and permanent basis'. They aimed to contribute to Queensland's agricultural industries by introducing commercially viable plants. They also believed that by exchanging plants with other parts of the world, they would draw attention to the Queensland's natural advantages and so encourage investment. The *Brisbane Courier* in April 1863 remarked that acclimatisation could bring commercial benefits.

1867 – 1899: Trustee, Queensland Museum

In 1859, a group of curious individuals formed the Queensland Philosophical Society. Three years later, in 1862, they conceived the 'nucleus of a Museum of Natural Science', where by the Moreton Bay Council granted temporary use of a 'large room in the windmill' on Brisbane's Wickham Terrace, and the Queensland Museum was born.

1876 – 1883: Member, Aborigines Commission, Queensland

In May 1876, the Government appointed a Royal Commission of five men with Bishop Matthew Blagden Hale as chairman 'with a view to improving the conditions of the Aborigines in Queensland'. The Commissioners were to 'report from time to time to the Government' on conditions at Mackay and elsewhere and to submit recommendations. The Royal Commission conducted its affairs as a semi-independent agency, and is listed as reporting to the Colonial Secretary in the Blue Book of the Colony of Queensland volumes from 1878 to 1883 inclusive, and then is not listed again.

1876 – Foundation President, Institute of Surveyors

Prior to 1876, surveyors in Queensland were not represented by a professional body. The *Brisbane Courier* reported that a meeting of licensed surveyors was held at Lennon's Hotel, George Street on 1 January 1876. Here they decided that they should form an association to look after 'the status and interests of the profession in Queensland.' This meeting was followed by another on 4 July 1876. It was decided by 20 surveyors to form the Queensland Institute of Surveyors. The officers elected at that first meeting were: President: AC Gregory. By 1877 the Institute of Surveyors had 60 members.

1883 – 1884: President, Philosophical Society of Queensland

1887 – 1888: President, Royal Society of Queensland

The Royal Society of Queensland was inaugurated in January 1884. It was born out of the Philosophical Society of Queensland, founded in 1859, the year Queensland was proclaimed a separate colony. As the senior scientific organisation in the State, the Royal Society with its predecessor has played an important part in scientific endeavour for more than 150 years. Traditionally, its activities have lain within general science, science-related policy and science-related education, but the Letters Patent issued under the Religious, Educational and Charitable Institutions Act 1861 under which it is incorporated do not limit the scope of its mission to science.

1885 – Foundation President, Qld Branch, Geographical Society of Australia (now RGSQ)
The Geographical Society of Australasia started at a meeting in Sydney, on 22 June 1883, by a gathering of citizens who were concerned that the Geographical Section of the Royal Society of New South Wales had become defunct. The meeting decided to form a new federal organisation that would have branches in all the Australian colonies and New Zealand. The idea was then shared with prominent citizens in Brisbane who were asked to support the scheme. Consequently, the Geographical Society of Australasia (Queensland Branch) was established in July 1885 with Gregory as the foundation President. Within a year, Queen Victoria granted the Society the privilege of using the ‘Royal’ prefix. Since 1885 the Society has pursued its main objective of promoting an interest in and the study of Geography through publications, field-based research projects, public lectures and excursions.

1893 – 1895: President, Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (now ANZAAS).

Speaking at the jubilee congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science in 1939, the historian Ernest Scott observed that “the Australia that we know was born in the Scientific Age.” Cook’s first voyage of 1768-1771 was primarily in response to the Royal Society’s request for observations of the transit of Venus across the disk of the sun (in 1769) from a suitable location in the Southern Pacific, and only secondarily a voyage of exploration of the southern Pacific itself. As the editor of the present book emphasizes in his introduction, “No one surrounded by the ubiquity of Cook and Banks and the eponymy of Botany Bay can escape the significance of science in our colonial heritage.” And the welding together of separate state associations to form ANZAAS in 1888--the centenary of which was the occasion for this book--was quite self-consciously recognized by many of the protagonists as a trial run for federation of the separate states themselves (an event finally accomplished in 1901).

Appendix 1 carries sections of an article published in *The Queenslander* noting the election of Gregory to the Presidency of AAAS.

Scientific Awards

1857 - Founders’ Gold Medal, Royal Geographical Society, London (Gregory was in excellent company as David Livingstone received the award in 1855 and Sir Richard Burton in 1859).

1897 - Clarke Medal, Royal Society of New South Wales. The Medal was awarded “for meritorious contributions to Geology, Mineralogy and Natural History of Australasia”.

Royal Awards:

1874 – CMG; Companion (of the Order Of) St Michael and St George

1903 – KCMG; Knight Commander (of the Order Of) St Michael and St George

District Grand Master:

Provincial/District Grand Master Queensland, English Constitution 1862 – 1905

Augustus Charles Gregory was initiated in Sydney Samaritan Lodge No 878 EC in 1855 en-route to Moreton Bay to lead the Victoria River expedition. Joined North Australian Lodge No 796 on 27 March 1861 and joined Prince of Wales Lodge No 908 on 5 September 1861 as a Foundation Member. Whilst he continued to be a member until his death in 1905 he never sat as WM of the Lodge. In extraordinary circumstances Bro Gregory was appointed by the leaders of the United Grand Lodge of England in London to be the first Provincial (later District) Grand Master, Grand Lodge Queensland, English Constitution, while a Master Mason. His unique advancement in the Craft is recorded in the Official Records as: ‘On a Tuesday evening, two days before the Christmas of 1862, about eighty Masons met in the original Masonic Hall in Albert Street. They had been invited to attend the inauguration of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Queensland, and the installation of Bro Augustus Charles Gregory as Provincial Grand Master. John Petrie took the chair as WM of the senior Lodge, the North Australian Lodge (then No 1098 EC).

The record runs thus:-

The Lodge having been duly regularly opened in the 1^o, the WM called upon Wor Bro W. M. Boyce to take the chair as Installing Master. Bro Boyce in suitable terms congratulated the Brethren on the occasion which had called them together that evening, and expressed a hope that the Provincial Grand Lodge they were about establishing under Bro Gregory’s rule would act beneficially, and that Freemasonry might spread its benign influence over the whole of this Province. Bro Boyce then read the Charter from the Right Hon, the Earl of Zetland, Grand Master of England, appointing Bro A. C. Gregory as Provincial Grand Master Queensland. Wor Bro Boyce

explained that as Bro Gregory had not been installed into the chair as Master of a Lodge, it would be necessary that he should be regularly Installed.

The Board of Installed Masters was formed from Wor Bros W. M. Boyce (WM Queensland Lodge), J. Petrie (WM North Australian Lodge), W. Borlase Stevens (PM Lodge No 710), J. M. Llewellyn PM, and the Candidate. The Installation was duly completed with proclamations and salutes, and at 9 pm the first Provincial Grand Lodge Queensland was actually constituted.'

Notable Highlights

22 January 1864. Provincial Grand Master (PGM) laid the foundation stone by request of the Lord Mayor for the new Town Hall in Brisbane with Masonic honours. This was the first public function of Freemasonry in the Colony and included a procession in Masonic dress.

20 September 1864. PGM laid the foundation stone for the inaugural School of Arts in Brisbane.

10 June 1866. PGM laid the foundation stone for the new Masonic Hall assisted by the heads of the Scottish and Irish Constitutions in Brisbane. Unquestionably the PGM would have been instrumental in obtaining the grant of land on Albert Street from Governor Sir George Bowen.

December 1866 – January 1867 the Provincial Grand Lodge was renamed District Grand Lodge from United Grand Lodge England.

24 March 1869. District Grand Master (DGM) dedicated the new Masonic Hall at Gympie and in May 1875 he visited Pioneer Lodge in Gympie. Travel was by coach as the North Coast rail line to Bundaberg was not opened until 1891.

May 1876. DGM dedicated new Masonic Hall in Ipswich.

16 April 1879. DGM held a Special Communication in Rockhampton the first country siting of the District Grand Lodge.

23 July 1879. DGM dedicated the new Masonic Hall at Roma.

March Quarterly Communication 1882. The DGM considered it undesirable for Masons to appear in regalia at funerals.

21 August 1885. DGM laid the foundation stone for the second Queensland Freemasons headquarters in Alice Street. The growth in membership and Lodges necessitated an enlarged meeting and banqueting Hall with 18 smaller rooms for administration, senior officers, etc. The New headquarters was dedicated on 1 December in the same year.

April 1886. Gregory Lodge was the first Lodge formed in Cairns.

27 June 1887. DGM dedicated the new Toowoomba Masonic Hall.

28 December 1887. DGM dedicated the new Masonic Temple in Warwick.

18 September 1888. DGM accompanied by several Officers of District Grand Lodge attended the ceremony of Installation of His Excellency Lord Carrington as Most Worshipful Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales.

Towards the end of 1888 a movement began among Queensland Masons with a view to establishing a Sovereign Grand Lodge of Queensland. In March QC 1889 the matter was

discussed in fulsome debate. No resolution was passed. The matter was again on the agenda at June QC and a circular issued that marshalled the arguments against the formation of a Queensland Grand Lodge. The DGM was against the formation and remarked, 'what may be highly inconvenient and improper at the present time might in ten to fifteen years hence be quite a proper proceeding'.

20 August 1891. DGM called the first of several annual Special Communications held during Exhibition week. These became a fixture of the year's agenda and were well received and attended by country members.

18 December 1891. The Brethren marked their esteem for the District Grand Master by presenting him with a life size portrait of himself in his Masonic regalia, and also a cheque with which to purchase some personal mementos. The project had been quietly in hand for three years, and in July 1888, in response to a circular, English Constitution Lodge representatives met and resolved, "That a half-figure life size portrait in oils should be painted by an artist of eminence in Melbourne, to be placed in the Masonic Hall, Alice Street, Brisbane, thus ever to serve to keep his memory before the Brethren; and further, that a personal gift, consisting of a piece of plate, should be presented." Signor Ugo Catani, of Melbourne, was commissioned to execute the painting.

RW Bro Barron L. Barnett Deputy District Grand Master in making the presentation said:

"That inner sight which men call memory, enables us to glance backwards over the era of Freemasonry in this Colony, and to see that the present great system sprang from one great Lodge alone, and at a distance of time, which is almost obscurity to some of us, and distant indeed to all who were connected with the Lodge. You, sir, have been connected with it all that time, and you have seen the District grow into one of very active Masonic Brotherhood, and I rejoice to think that it is one where there is to be found that genuine Freemasonry which seeks to do no evil and strives to do good Your government has been so successful because you have always known how and when to apply your authority rightly. Our Constitution proves for the establishment of Boards of Benevolence, General Purposes, etc., and under your careful and wise guidance we now have all the means of governing ourselves and everything in proper order."

The portrait hangs today in the Masonic Memorial Centre, Ann Street, Brisbane.

September 1893. DGM reported having attended the Installation of the Governor of NSW Sir Robert Duff as GM UGLNSW.

21 October 1895. DGM laid the foundation stone of the new Masonic Hall in Roma and District Grand Lodge met therein.

June 1896. DGM reported having attended the Installation of Lord Brassey as GM of the Grand Lodge of Victoria. The ceremony was attended by 3000 Masons.

9 November 1900. DGM dedicated the new Masonic Hall in Killarney.

February 1901 was a busy travelling month for the DGM, marked by three separate building ceremonies. 14 February the foundation stone laid for the new Masonic Hall in Gympie. 27 February the new Masonic Hall was dedicated at Rockhampton. 28 February the new Masonic Hall at Barcaldine was duly dedicated.

December Quarterly Communication 1903. A tone of rejoicing as HM the King had been pleased to confer knighthood on the District Grand Master.

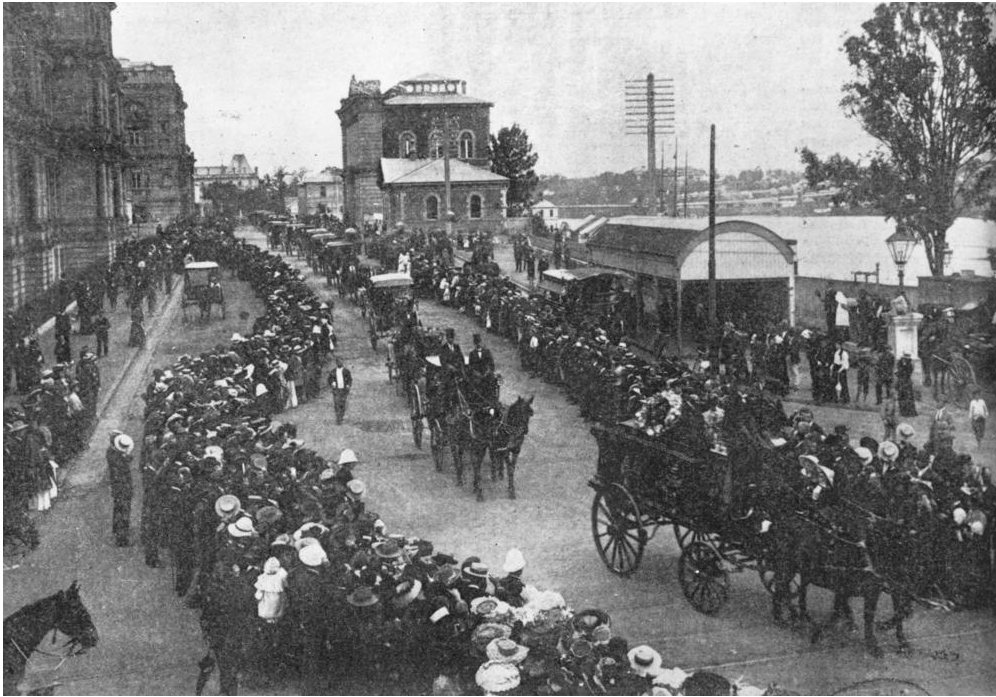
25 February 1904. Two senior Brethren were suspended by the DGM from all Masonic functions under the English Constitution for their involvement in circulating Lodges with a view to establishing a Sovereign Grand Lodge. On 25 April 1904 the Grand Lodge of Queensland was formed consisting of 39 Lodges (25 Irish Constitution and 14 Scottish Constitution Lodges but no English Constitution Lodges) and the 'Queensland Question' was not resolved until the amalgamation of 281 Lodges under the United Grand Lodge of Queensland on 27 April 1921.

March QC 1905 was the last at which the revered DGM presided. At the June QC meeting he was absent. He died at his home 'Rainworth' at the ripe old age of 86 years, and with him there passed away a unique figure in the world's Freemasonry.

A summary of his Masonic life provides recognition of his uniqueness.

Sir Augustus Gregory first saw Masonic life in 1855 in the Sydney Samaritan Lodge, No 578, which Lodge returned its Warrant in 1874 to the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). He joined the North Australian Lodge No.796, on March 27th 1861, resigning December 27th 1872. He became a member of the Prince of Wales Lodge No. 908, on September 5th 1861, and continued a member therein till his death. On February 28th 1865, he was made a Royal Arch Mason in the North Australia Chapter and served as leader from 1895. He was installed in the chair of the District, then called Provincial Grand Master (PGM) for Queensland of English Freemasons on 23 December 1862, and remained in that exalted position till his death — a period of over 42 years. The only comparable leader occupying so high a rank for so long a time and working so hard and continuously is the current Grand Master UGLE, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent. When he took the chair as PGM in 1862, there were but four English Constitution Lodges in the then Colony of Queensland; when he died, in 1905, there were 64. Almost the last act of his life was to sign the Warrant for the new Sir Augustus Lodge at Bundaberg, this being the second Lodge established in Queensland that carried his name. The record of District Grand Lodge (DGL) for 42 years is his Masonic record. His death evoked telegrams and letters from every part of Australia. A special meeting of DGL was held on 29 June 1905 with the Deputy DGM A.J. Stephenson in the chair. Sixty officers were present and representatives from thirty country Lodges. DGM of Scottish Constitution with his officers also attended to mark the regard in which the deceased was held by the Scottish brethren.

The funeral was attended by the Lieutenant Governor, the Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Supreme Court Judges, Ministers of the Crown, Members of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly, and a large number of Aldermen and Councillors, officials of the Public Library, the National Agricultural Association, the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Society and the Queensland Clubs, a great concourse of Masons and a very large number of the general public.



Funeral Procession of Sir Augustus Gregory, Brisbane, 1905.

Obituaries appeared in all the major media outlets of Australia.

The local *Brisbane Daily Mail*, 29 June, 1905, 53 carried an extensive and well researched coverage of a most extraordinary and active life, without peer in Queensland and perhaps Australasia:

“The late Sir A. C. Gregory, K.C.M.G., was a man of so many parts that in limited space it would be difficult to justly deal with his brilliant career. The excellent work that he accomplished in the political world, and his achievements as an explorer, are perhaps more widely known than the scientific side of his life and his private character.

The late Sir Augustus C. Gregory was a pronounced philosopher, and his scientific knowledge embraced a very wide range of subjects. As a geologist he was one of the most accomplished men that ever set foot in Australia. He was also a mineralogist, and in that branch of science was continually experimenting. The experiments he sometimes conducted in his little office in Mary-street, other times at his residence in Rosalie, where he had an extensive workshop. Many people used to consult him upon the subject of minerals. Samples unearthed by prospectors in all parts of Queensland were brought to him for opinion concerning their worth and kind. The intimate knowledge which he possessed was always at the disposal of all. He was the author of the first published geological map of West Australia.

Sir Augustus not only achieved brilliant success in the field of exploration, but through his profound scientific accomplishments was able to associate himself with work outside that sphere of usefulness altogether. And that is the ground upon which his career will be handed down to posterity.

He produced a few simple scientific instruments. These consisted of a box sextant, a prismatic compass, a small pocket aneroid, and a little thermometer. This was portable as the whole could be placed in one’s pocket. He could make numerous stellar and solar observations to determine latitude and longitude.

As a leader of men, he had been able to conduct hazardous expeditions, and return to civilisation with their good results, without the loss of a single life. This was largely due to his foresight. He took the precaution of reducing his impedimenta to a minimum. He caused all the tinned meat to be mixed with flour, and made meat biscuits.

At the workshop contained in his private residence at Rosalie he had an interesting machinery plant. Here there were to be seen lathes, steam engines, boilers, circular saws, and numerous other appliances dear to the mechanical mind. He was also an inventor of no mean order. He invented a compass, a

sextant stand, and a variety of mathematical instruments. He reconstructed an ordinary “Admiral Fitzroy” barometer upon an entirely new plan, and demonstrated the fact that a column of mercury can be enclosed hermetically within a wooden cistern.

Some years ago, Sir Augustus Gregory was elected to the presidency of the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science. This is the highest position of honour which a local man can possibly occupy in the Australian scientific world, and the act was warmly approved. The portraits of Sir Augustus Gregory and his brother Frank occupy prominent places in the council room of the Royal Geographical Society in London. He was elected to the highest position in Freemasonry possible to be held in Queensland, and held the same continuously until the time of his death.”

The *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 June 1904, can be given the final word:

“Masons and non-Masons were alike touched with sorrow, and animated with the desire, to do honour to the dead. That was attested by the 1,500 or more people who passed through the *chappelle ardente* and the long procession, extending from Victoria Bridge, North Quay. No great geographical discoveries are linked with Gregory’s name, no Darling or Murray. Though his name is not associated with any striking discovery, it is with a succession of long and successful expeditions, with no hint of failure amongst them; and his name will now take its place in the roll of Australian history as one of its most illustrious explorers. **He lived when there were giants, and he was not the least amongst them.**”

In summary it can be said that Brother Augustus Charles Gregory was a very significant person on every metric of assessment in Queensland’s early history. The name of Gregory figures prominently on the map of Queensland, the district of Gregory, the Gregory Highway, the Gregory River, and numerous streets in major towns. They are a reminder of his manifest contribution to Queensland’s development in many fields. A staunch Christian (Anglican) who won repute for his private charity and noble ideals of citizenship and sustained public service over diverse jurisdictions he undoubtedly meets every characteristic of an icon.

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Appendix I

THE HON. A.C. GREGORY, C.M.G., M.L.C.
PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
SCIENCE.

The Hon. A.C. Gregory, C.M.G., M.L.C., &c., was unanimously elected on the 26th September, 1893, at Adelaide to the position of president of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, in succession to Professor R. Tate, and, perhaps no one of those who have hitherto had a similar honour conferred upon them has more truly merited the high distinction. His scientific career has been protracted and fruitful in events that the truth of this conclusion cannot be gainsaid.

It was but a few years after his arrival in Western Australia — as early as 1829 — that he gave evidence of the possession of those scientific attainments and moral qualities which combine in the production of a successful explorer, and which led to his being chosen leader in two exploratory expeditions there.

The expedition, however, on which his fame principally rests, and which won for him the title of the Explorer of North Australia, started from the Victoria River in the Northern Territory. This important highway he ascended to its source, and then, crossing the watershed at a height of 1060 ft. above sea level, followed a stream — which Mr. Gregory named Sturt Creek — flowing south. From the Victoria the expedition advanced to the Gulf of Carpentaria, crossing the various rivers south to the Burdekin watershed crossing the dividing high lands, which he named the Newcastle Ranges.

That the choice of leader was amply justified may be concluded from the fact that he so creditably performed his arduous undertaking as to win a royal award, the founder's gold medal of the Royal Geographic Society being in 1857 bestowed upon him, Sir Roderick I. Murchison remarking when delivering the medal to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for transmission to the recipient of the honour that it was an award which would be approved of by the geographers of all countries. In 1858 Mr. Gregory undertook a further exploratory journey, assuming the command of the Barcoo expedition, which, as is well known, was equipped for the purpose of tracing the course of Leichhardt's ill-fated party; and during this, amongst other achievements, Mr. Gregory confirmed the supposed identity of the Barcoo River and Cooper's Creek.

After returning from this latest expedition he served as Surveyor-General of the colony from 1859 to 1875, and in this capacity accomplished much important work.

As might have been anticipated, Mr. Gregory has taken a leading part in the inauguration and proceedings of the different Queensland scientific societies, contributing important memoirs, especially dealing with local requirements, to their literary archives.

In fact so general are Mr. Gregory's scientific attainments that few engage in important investigations without consulting him, and of the many who apply to him none come empty away.

If asked to indicate anything which may have specially contributed to Mr. Gregory's eminence, one would probably point to his ready wit, his abundance of resource, his facility of invention.

There must be superadded certain high mental and moral attributes which conspire to effect the felicitous issue of an exploratory journey, and which are none other than those which are essential to the attainment of success in all human enterprise. That the president of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science is ennobled by their possession has been long since remarked upon, and is known to all who are honoured with his acquaintance.

In this connection it were inexcusable to pass over a certain incident connected with Mr. Gregory's election. Some time ago there was reason to believe that the honour of which he is recipient would be conferred upon Sir S.W. Griffith. It is eloquent of the magnanimity which happily not rarely adorns the occupants of the highest social positions that the Chief Justice, upon learning that there was a pronounced desire amongst the majority of our local scientific men that Mr. Gregory should be the successor to Professor Ralph Tate, at once took steps to withdraw from the position of nominee. He also expressed regret that he was not himself in a position to nominate our explorer.

Of Mr. Gregory's services to Queensland as a member of the Legislature, and of his generally high conception and industrious discharge of the duties of citizenship, it is quite unnecessary to speak. Queensland and Brisbane especially, is delighted to see him in the chair of the distinguished gathering of thinkers and investigators. His personal friends — and their name is legion — wish him a full measure of health and happiness in the year of his Presidency.

The Queenslander (Brisbane, Qld.) Sat 19 Jan 1895. Page 112

FREEMASONRY AND PHILOSOPHY – FREEMASONRY’S DEBT TO JOHN LOCKE

DAVID SHEARER

“The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom. For in all the states of created beings, capable of laws, where there is no law there is no freedom.¹”

— John Locke

INTRODUCTION



John Locke (1632—1704) was an English philosopher, academic, and physician. His most influential philosophical works include *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1667), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), and *Two Treatises on Government* (1689/90). He was a physician, member of the Royal Society and a Freemason; he moved in the same circles as Isaac Newton and was a considerable influence on early speculative Freemasonry².

John Locke is considered the most influential philosopher of modern times. He initiated the dominant philosophical tradition in Western Philosophy that is known as British empiricism, but Locke’s importance reaches far beyond the limits of the discipline of philosophy. His influence on understanding and thought, on the way we think about ourselves and our relations to the world we live in, to God, nature and society, has been immense. His message was to set us free from the burden of tradition and authority, in knowledge and understanding,

¹ Locke, John *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. VI, sec. 57

² <https://ledroitmain.international/the-origins/?lang=en>

government and religion. “God commands what reason does” are the words that best reveal the tenor and unity of Locke’s thought.

It has been said that Freemasonry is a child of the Enlightenment, but it is perhaps that it grew within and alongside the Enlightenment. Speculative Freemasonry was around as early as the late 16th Century in Scotland. Elias Ashmole was initiated in 1646 in Warrington in England³, but it was towards the end of the 17th Century that Speculative Freemasonry began to flourish in England, Ireland and Scotland.

This paper will look at the influence of John Locke on early Freemasonry in terms of its toleration of religious beliefs, its epistemology and its governance.

Was John Locke a Freemason?

It is believed that John Locke became a member of the society in 1668, a year after he became private secretary to Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley (qv), a powerful Whig politician. Some believe that he acknowledged his membership in Freemasonry in a letter (since lost) to the Earl of Pembroke (who was a Mason) on 6 May 1696, however Harrison disputes his membership⁴. Whether or not he was ever initiated, Locke was in regular contact with many known members of the Craft and with many others whose works and interactions suggest membership (e.g., Isaac Newton and Anthony Ashley Cooper)⁵.

WBro Ronald Paul Ng believes that Locke was a Mason. He says:

“Was Locke a mason? The answer is probably yes. There is an entry on the “Leyland Manuscript” in Albert Mackey’s “Encyclopedia of Freemasonry” in which he quoted a passage by the famous Dr. Oliver in the Freemasons’ Quart. Review, 1840, p 10, where Dr. Oliver said, “... this great philosopher [Locke] was actually residing at Oates, the country-seat of Sir Francis Masham, at the time when the paper [Leland Manuscript] is dated; and shortly afterwards he went up to town, where he was initiated into Masonry.”

However, according to Albert Mackey⁶,

“After having been cited (that is the Leland MS) with approbation by such writers as Preston, Hutchinson, Oliver, and Krause, it has suffered a reverse under the crucial examination of later critics. It has by nearly all of these been decided to be a forgery - a decision from which very few at this day would dissent.”

Today the Leland MS is regarded a forgery, albeit a pious forgery⁷.

Locke in a letter to Lord Pembroke⁸, says (referring to the wife of Sir Francis Masham with whom he was residing), “... for the reading of my Lady Masham; who is become so fond of Masonry as to say, that she now, more than ever, wishes herself a man, that she might be capable of admission into the fraternity.”

3 <https://internet.lodge.org.uk/index.php/pastmeetings/193-beresiner>

4 Harrison, David *The Masonic Enlightenment: Symbolism, Transition and Change in English Freemasonry during the Eighteenth Century*. PhD Thesis University of Liverpool, December 2007

5 <https://www.commonwealthbooks.org/pages/the-enlightenment-and-freemasonry>

6 http://www.themasonictrowel.com/new_files_to_file/the_leland_manuscript.htm

7 <https://skirret.com/papers/leyland-locke.html>

8 http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/spirit_of_masonry.htm

Whether Locke was or was not a Freemason, it would appear that he had an influence on the young John Theophilus Desaguliers. In Alain Bauer's "Isaac Newton's Freemasonry"⁹, it says that:

"Noticed very early on for his abilities and gifts, he (Desaguliers) went to Christ Church College, Oxford. Although the course of studies still followed the classical pattern, special attention was already being paid to the philosophy of Locke, who was also a former student of Christ Church. In the realm of scientific knowledge, Locke was especially opposed to the innatism of the Neoplatonists at Cambridge – for whom all truth came from a divine predisposition – and, in the domains of politics and religion, to defining and justifying the concept of tolerance."

In a 2016 paper¹⁰, Soares says, "Months after his nomination (Royal Society), in his (Desaguliers's) first trip to France in February 1715, Desaguliers met Pierre Coste (1668 - 1747), who was considered as the main advocate of John Locke's work in the Continent ...". Desaguliers later was appointed a demonstrator at the Royal Society by Isaac Newton and as his secretary. Desaguliers was of course the 3rd Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge of England in 1719/20.

John Locke – A brief history

Locke was born on 29 August 1632, in Wrington in the North Mendip Hills of Somerset about 12 miles south west from Bristol.

Locke's parents were Puritans. Locke's father was an attorney who served as clerk to the local Justices of the Peace; he was also a captain of cavalry for the Parliamentary forces during the early part of the English Civil War.

In 1647, Locke was sent to Westminster School in London under the sponsorship of Alexander Popham¹¹, a member of Parliament and Locke's father's former commander. After completing studies at Westminster, he was admitted to Christ Church, a constituent college of the University of Oxford 1652. Although he was a capable student, Locke was irritated by the undergraduate curriculum of the time. He found the works of modern philosophers, such as Descartes, more interesting than the classical material taught at the university. Through his friend Richard Lower, a physician, whom he knew from Westminster School, Locke was introduced to medicine and the experimental philosophy being pursued at other universities and in the Royal Society, of which he eventually became a member¹².

Locke was awarded a bachelor's degree in 1656 and a master's degree in June 1658. He was made a bachelor of medicine in February 1675, having studied the subject extensively during his time at Oxford and, in addition to Lower, worked with such noted scientists and thinkers as Robert Boyle, Thomas Willis and Robert Hooke. In 1666, he met Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, who had come to Oxford seeking treatment for a liver infection. Ashley was impressed with Locke and persuaded him to become part of his retinue.

Locke moved into Ashley's home at Exeter House in London, to serve as his personal physician. Ashley, as a founder of the Whig movement, exerted great influence on Locke's political ideas;

9 Bauer, Alain *Isaac Newton's Freemasonry*, Inner Traditions, Rochester Vermont, 2007 ISBN 978-1-59477-172-9

10 Soares, Luiz Carlos, "John Theophilus Desaguliers: A Newtonian between patronage and market relations", *CIRCUMSCRIBERE* 18 (2016): pp. 12-31.

11 Interestingly Popham was in possession of a house in Great Queen Street upon which the Grand Lodge was built. (<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/72144/72144-h/72144-h.htm>)

12 <https://makingscience.royalsociety.org/people/na8232/john-locke>

he became involved in politics when Ashley became Lord Chancellor in 1672. Although Locke was associated with the influential Whigs, his ideas about natural rights and government are today considered quite revolutionary for that period in English history.

Locke fled to the Netherlands in 1683, after being suspected of being involved in a plot to assassinate Charles II and his brother James, Duke of York, although there is little evidence to suggest that he was directly involved. During his five years in the Netherlands, Locke met with others from among the same freethinking members of dissenting Protestant groups such as Spinoza's small group of followers (Baruch Spinoza had died in 1677). Locke was apparently receptive to Spinoza's ideas, most particularly to the rationalist's well thought out argument for political and religious tolerance and the necessity of the separation of church and state. While in the Netherlands, Locke had time to return to his writing, spending a great deal of time working on the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and composing the *Letter on Toleration*.

Locke accompanied Mary II back to England in 1689 after the Glorious Revolution. The bulk of Locke's publishing took place upon his return from exile.

Locke's close friend Damaris, Lady Masham invited him to join her and her husband Sir Francis Masham at Otes, the Mashams' country house in Essex. Although his time there was marked by indifferent health from asthma attacks, he nevertheless became an intellectual hero of the Whigs. During this period, he discussed matters with such figures as the poet John Dryden and Sir Isaac Newton.

Locke died on 28 October 1704, and is buried in the churchyard of All Saints' Church in High Laver near Harlow in Essex in Essex, where he had lived in the household of Sir Francis Masham since 1691. Locke never married nor had children. There is a memorial in Christ Church, Oxford to his honour.

The following is an extract from the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, Vol XI Part 1 (1909)¹³.

The most interesting monument, that of the celebrated philosopher John Locke, is still in its original position on the exterior of the south wall with a Latin inscription, said to have been written by himself, commencing "Siste Viator". This has been translated as follows:
 Stop Traveller. Near this place lieth John Locke. If you ask what kind of a man he was, he answers that he lived content with his own small fortune, bred a scholar, he made his learning subservient only to the cause of truth. This thou wilt learn from his writings, and will shew thee everything else concerning him with greater truth, than the suspected praises of an epitaph. His virtues indeed if he had any were too little for him to propose as matter of praise to himself, or as an example to thee. Let his vices be buried together. As to an example of manners, if you seek that, you have it in the gospel; of vices I wish you may have one nowhere; of mortality, certainly (and may it profit thee) thou hast one here, and everywhere.

This stone, which will itself perish in a short time, records that he was born Aug. 29 in the year of our Lord 1632, and that he died Oct. 28 in the year of our Lord 1704.

John Locke lived for the last ten years of his life at Otes with the family of Sir Francis Masham, to whom he seems to have been much attached.

Locke's Religious Beliefs

Locke was brought up in a Puritan family within the Church of England. However it appears that like Milton and Newton, he was a Unitarian¹⁴. The Revd Henry Acton also asserts that

¹³ <https://www.esah1852.org.uk/library/files/T2110000.pdf>

Milton, Locke and Newton were Unitarians¹⁵. In 1683, when Locke's patron Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, lay dying in Amsterdam, driven into exile by his outspoken opposition to Charles II, he spoke to the minister Robert Ferguson, and professed himself an Arian¹⁶¹⁷.

Herbert McLachlan, principal of the Manchester Unitarian College, who gave the conclusion of his book *The Religious Opinions of Milton, Locke and Newton* (1941) the title "Milton, Locke, Newton and Other Unitarians." McLachlan writes, "The evidence, direct and indirect, is conclusive. John Locke was a Unitarian; cautious, conservative and scriptural; in all three respects resembling most Unitarians before the nineteenth century". Formally, Locke belonged to the dominant Anglican Church, but within the Anglican Church, he was an advocate of the broad church, or latitudinarianism. The broad church held that all that was required to belong to the Church was that you believed what Jesus taught about God and human salvation¹⁸.

A Letter Concerning Toleration

A Letter Concerning Toleration was originally published in 1689. This work appeared amidst a fear that Catholicism might be taking over England, and it responds to the problem of religion and government by proposing religious tolerance as the answer.

Locke gives three reasons¹⁹ for barring governments from using force to encourage people to adopt religious beliefs. First, he argues that the care of men's souls has not been committed to the magistrate by either God or the consent of men. This argument resonates with the argument used in the *Two Treatises* to establish the natural freedom and equality of mankind. There is no command in the Bible telling magistrates to bring people to the true faith, and people could not consent to such a goal for government because it is not possible for people, at will, to believe what the magistrate tells them to believe. Their beliefs are a function of what they think is true. Locke's second argument is that since the power of the government is only force, while true religion consists of genuine inward persuasion of the mind, force is incapable of bringing people to the true religion. Locke's third argument is that even if the magistrate could change people's minds, a situation where everyone accepted the magistrate's religion would not bring more people to the true religion.

Locke's views on religious freedom differ from those expressed by Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*, in that they support toleration for various Christian denominations. Hobbes did allow for individuals to maintain their own religious beliefs as long as they outwardly expressed those of the state. Locke's rejection of Catholic Imperialism was basis for his rejection of government's interest in spiritual salvation.

"That church can have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate," Locke argued, "which is so constituted that all who enter it *ipso facto* pass into the allegiance and service of another prince". If this were to be tolerated, "the magistrate would make room for a foreign jurisdiction in his own territory and...allow for his own people to be enlisted as soldiers against his own government".

Locke goes on to say:

14 *Memorable Unitarians*, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, London 1906.

15 Revd Henry Acton, *Religious Opinions and Example of Milton, Locke and Newton*, London 1833.

16 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arianism>

17 That is a follower of Arius

18 Jan Garrett, *John Locke on Reason and Faith*, <https://people.wku.edu/jan.garrett/rsn&fth.htm>

19 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/#Tole>

“The toleration of those that differ from others in matters of religion is so agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the genuine reason of mankind, that it seems monstrous for men to be so blind as not to perceive the necessity and advantage of it in so clear a light.”

later saying,

“All the life and power of true religion consist in the inward and full persuasion of the mind; and faith is not faith without believing.”

Here Locke is expressing both a desire for the separation of Church and State, and a desire for religious toleration. He goes on to consider the situation of the Jews:

“If we allow the Jews to have private houses and dwellings amongst us, why should we not allow them to have synagogues? Is their doctrine more false, their worship more abominable, or is the civil peace more endangered by their meeting in public than in their private houses? But if these things may be granted to Jews and Pagans, surely the condition of any Christians ought not to be worse than theirs in a Christian commonwealth.”

As for Mohammedans and other religions, Locke has this to say:

“And what if in another country, to a Mahometan (*sic*) or a Pagan prince, the Christian religion seem false and offensive to God; may not the Christians for the same reason, and after the same manner, be extirpated there?”

Anderson in his *Constitutions*²⁰ says:

“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.”

Locke is less tolerant with atheists:

“Lastly, those (*atheists*) are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of a God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all; besides also, those that by their atheism undermine and destroy all religion, can have no pretence of religion whereupon to challenge the privilege of a toleration. As for other practical opinions, though not absolutely free from all error, if they do not tend to establish domination over others, or civil impunity to the Church in which they are taught, there can be no reason why they should not be tolerated.”

Compare this with Anderson’s *Constitutions*²¹:

“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.”

Locke’s contemporary, Jonas Proast²², responded²³ to Locke’s *Letter* by saying that Locke’s three arguments really amount to just two, that true faith cannot be forced and that we have no more reason to think that we are right than anyone else has.

Revd James Anderson and John Theophilus Desaguliers were responsible for what are known as Anderson’s *Constitutions*. Desaguliers was Isaac Newton’s assistant and a member of the Royal Society; he was appointed as Newton’s assistant after Locke’s death, but moved in the

20 Anderson, James *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons*, London, 1723

21 *ibid*

22 Jonas Proast (c.1640–1710) was an English High Church Anglican clergyman and academic. He was an opponent of latitudinarianism.

23 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/#Toler>

same philosophical and scientific circles, so is likely to have known of Locke's work, and might even have met him at some point (see also Soares *qv*).

Two Treatises on Government

Today, Locke is often referred to as one of the founding figures of modern liberalism. His most famous political work, *Two Treatises on Government*, is the most prominent work on natural law theory in the Western world. In his *Two Treatises of Government*²⁴, Locke defends the claim that men are by nature free and equal against claims that God had made all people naturally subject to a monarch. He argued that people have rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and property. Locke's revolutionary thesis was that governments exist by the consent of the people in order to protect the rights of the people and promote the public good; governments that fail to do so can be resisted and replaced with new governments. Locke also defends the principle of majority rule and the separation of legislative and executive powers.

The *First Treatise*

The *First Treatise* is a counter to Sir Robert Filmer's assertion regarding the divine right of kings. Firstly Locke argues against the scriptural support that Filmer had offered for his thesis, and secondly he argues that the acceptance of Filmer's thesis can lead only to slavery (and absurdity).

Filmer's text presented an argument for a divinely ordained absolute monarchy through Adam's divinely ordained authority. He suggested that this absolute authority came from his ownership over all the world. To this, Locke responds that the world was originally held in common (a theme that will return in the *Second Treatise*). But, even if it were not, he argues, God's grant to Adam covered only the land and brute animals, not human beings. Nor could Adam, or his heir, use this grant to enslave his fellows, for the law of nature forbids reducing one's fellows to a state of desperation, if one possesses a sufficient surplus to maintain oneself securely. And even if this charity were not commanded by reason, Locke continues, such a strategy for gaining dominion would prove only that the foundation of government lies in consent.

Locke argues in the *First Treatise* that the doctrine of the divine right of kings will eventually be the downfall of all governments. If Filmer is correct, there should be only one rightful king in all the world — the heir of Adam. But since it is impossible to discover the true heir of Adam, no government, under Filmer's principles, can require that its members obey its rulers.

The founders of the Premier Grand Lodge recognised the need for one who would be the head and ruler of this Grand Lodge, its Grand Master. From this time, although the powers of the Grand Master are said to be nigh on absolute, nevertheless Grand Masters are elected and answerable to the membership through the regular Communications of Grand Lodge. In other words the Grand Master is a *primus inter pares* who rules with the consent of the members of Grand Lodge.

The *Second Treatise*

In the *Second Treatise*, Locke begins with a description of the state of nature, wherein individuals are under no obligation to obey one another, but are each themselves judge of what

24 Locke, John *Two Treatises of Government* (editor Peter Laslett), Cambridge University Press 1988

the law of nature requires of them. It also covers, among other things, property, representative government, and the right of revolution.

State of Nature

Locke defines the state of nature in terms of people in a state of freedom of acting and disposing of their own possessions as they think fit within the bounds of the law of nature. People in this state do not have to ask permission to act or depend on the will of others to arrange matters on their behalf. The natural state is also one of equality in which all power and jurisdiction is reciprocal and no one has more power than another. This last sentence should remind us of the Second Degree Working Tools Charge:

The l...l demonstrates that we are all sprung from the same stock, are partakers of the same nature and sharers in the same hope; and although distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination and to reward virtue and ability, yet ought no eminence of station make us forget that we are brethren, for he who is placed on the lowest rung of fortune's ladder is equally entitled to our regard as he who has attained its summit, for the time will come — and the wisest of us knows not how soon — when all distinctions, save those of goodness and virtue, shall cease, and death, the leveller of all human greatness, shall reduce us to the same state.

This is in direct contrast to Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathon* in which the monarch has an absolute power, ordained by God, over the lives and religious beliefs of his subjects. James I wrote a treatise for his son on how to justly rule as a monarch in which he wrote that the king is “the absolute master of the lives and possessions of his subjects; his acts are not open to inquiry or dispute, and no misdeeds can ever justify resistance.” Thus the first four English Stuart monarchs, James I, Charles I, Charles II and James II had created a century of absolutism, civil war and chaos. As Locke had written, James II was guilty of breaking the “original contract” between sovereign and people, and had therefore suffered the just wrath of Parliament and people²⁵.

Hobbes believed that when men entered civil society they relinquished their natural rights entirely and instead relied upon the positively enacted human law of their new sovereign. Locke, on the other hand, believed that only one right was relinquished, the right to enact the law of nature which was now replaced with a system of law.

Essential for Locke is that whatever government the people may choose to establish, all people are bound by the laws it promulgates; whether you are a peasant, a noble, or a king, the law binds all equally. If people in power exempt themselves from obeying laws, they will begin to act only for their own private advantage as opposed to acting for the common good, which is the only legitimate goal of political authority. Universality is always to be upheld, and particularity always to be shunned. For Locke, “Where-ever Law ends, Tyranny begins”. Locke is a strict constitutionalist in this regard, expecting well-established rules to govern the governors as well as the governed.

Locke and the Law of Nature

Locke emphasises the importance of living by the law of nature.

“In transgressing the law of nature, the offender declares himself to live by another rule than that of reason and common equity, which is that measure God has set to the actions of men”

The natural law²⁶ concept existed long before Locke as a way of expressing the idea that there were certain moral truths that applied to all people, regardless of the particular place where they lived or the agreements they had made. The most important early contrast was between laws that were by nature, and thus generally applicable, and those that were conventional and operated only in those places where the particular convention had been established.

Natural law²⁷ is also distinct from divine law in that divine law refers to those laws that God had directly revealed through prophets and other inspired writers. Natural law can be discovered by reason alone and applies to all people, while divine law can be discovered only through God's special revelation and applies only to those to whom it is revealed and whom God specifically indicates are to be bound.

Locke's political philosophy puts the concept of consent playing a central role. His analysis begins with individuals in a state of nature where they are not subject to a common legitimate authority with the power to legislate or adjudicate disputes. From this natural state of freedom and independence, Locke stresses individual consent as the mechanism by which political societies are created and individuals join those societies. While there are of course some general obligations and rights that all people have from the law of nature, special obligations come about only when we voluntarily undertake them. Locke clearly states that one can only become a full member of society by an act of express consent. We can only become a Freemason by a free and unencumbered choice.

Mr {surname}, do you seriously declare on your honour that, unbiased by the improper solicitations of others against your own inclination and uninfluenced by mercenary or other unworthy motives, you freely and voluntarily offer yourself a Can for the mysteries and privileges of Antient Freemasonry?

Locke's solution to the act of express consent is his doctrine of tacit consent. Simply by walking along the highways of a country a person gives tacit consent to the government and agrees to obey it while living in its territory. This, Locke thinks, explains why resident aliens have an obligation to obey the laws of the state where they reside, though only while they live there. This should remind us of the second of the Antient Charges and Regulation to which a Worshipful Master Elect must consent before his Installation:

You are to be a peaceful subject, and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which you reside.

By joining a Lodge, the Freemason voluntarily accepts the By Laws of that Lodge and the Constitutions and Regulations of its Grand Lodge.

An Essay Concerning Human Understanding

Locke's main thesis is that there are "No Innate Principles." Locke taught that new born infants were a *tabula rasa* or blank slate. New born infants bring no ideas into the world with them. Children's minds develop through their upbringing, their education and the culture of their families, companions and the world in which they live. A major question for the philosophy of knowledge is whether knowledge exists independently of the individual (objectivism) or can only be understood by the individual in the context of their life experience, education, cultural norms, religious beliefs and upbringing (constructivism)²⁸.

In the *Reasons for Preparation*, the new Entered Apprentice is informed:

26 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/#NatuLawNatuRigh>

27 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke-political/#NatuLawNatuRigh>

28 Shearer, David "The Epistemology of Freemasonry" Sanctum Testamentum College SRIA Study Group 2016.

You were h... w... or b... f... This was symbolic of your being in a state of utter darkness respecting the s...ts of Freemasonry, and to teach you to keep others in a similar state of darkness until brought to l... in the same regular manner as you yourself have been. Also, that the mind must be made to conceive before the eye can be permitted to discover.

This emphasises that although the new Entered Apprentice was prepared in his heart by a favourable opinion preconceived of the institution, a general desire for knowledge, and a sincere wish, founded upon worthy motives, to be ranked among its members, he knows nothing of the secrets of Freemasonry, there is no innate knowledge of the craft, his learning and development will depend on his upbringing, cultural beliefs, his education and life experience. His Masonic experience will depend on his *daily progress in Masonic knowledge*.

Masonic Understanding and Knowledge

Any thoughtful Freemason soon learns that the understanding to be gained from the Charges delivered during his Initiation, Passing and Raising will grow and develop over time. During his Masonic development, the mature Freemason will come to realise how much more he still has to learn. The knowledge contained in these early Charges is just the seedbed for the maturation of the Freemason's mind. The understanding of the deeper meanings of a Charge will grow as the Charge is heard over and over again, and especially when the individual Freemason gets to deliver that Charge in open Lodge. As the Freemason learns more lessons in other Masonic Orders, so his knowledge will grow as the loose ends begin to come together.

Entered Apprentices will often ask, "why don't you read the Charges directly from the ritual?". And of course the answer is that understanding comes from learning to recite the Charge from memory. The Charge is as much for the benefit of the one delivering it as for the candidate, more so perhaps. So if we accept that Masonic knowledge develops and grows with Masonic experience, how much does a Freemason really know? Since the understanding of each Freemason will grow and develop at different rates depending on the ceremonies they witness and participate in, can we say for certain whether there is one generally accepted body of Masonic knowledge? But we know from our own experience and discussions with other Freemasons, that this notion is untrue: there is a core knowledge about Freemasonry to which most Freemasons would assent.

What is the purpose of Masonic Ritual? Most Masonic jurisdictions will have a Rituals and Ceremonial Committee which oversees the ritual to be used by Lodges. In a paper presented by the Supreme Council 33° of the AASR Australia to the Conference of European and Associated Supreme Councils held in May 2003 in Capetown²⁹ they say:

Coming now to the *internal* aspect, it must be recognised that, ultimately, *the primary purpose of the Rite* – and indeed of the Craft and of every Order of Freemasonry (*author's emphasis*) – *is the education of its members to become better men and citizens*. It is this aim which must dominate all organisational thinking and decisions, and which must then direct all actions in shaping the meetings and ceremonials of Rose Croix Chapters and Grand Elect Knight Kadosh Councils.

The implication being that our rituals are organic and must be capable of responding to the needs of the Craft, its members and the times.

John Hamill³⁰ recently wrote:

²⁹ Paper submitted by The Supreme Council 33° AASR for Australia presented at the Conference of European and Associated Supreme Councils, Capetown, May 2003.

³⁰ Ibid.

First, Freemasonry has always been free from dogma. Grand Lodge having agreed the basic form of our ceremonies, after the union in 1813, then stood back from it, except for major principles such as the former physical penalties in the obligations, and has never entered into discussion as to what the meaning of the ritual is. This has been done in the firm belief that it is part of the individual's personal journey to form their own understanding of the ritual. In addition, were the Grand Lodge to define the landmarks, that would be the first step on the road to establishing dogma.

Secondly, in addition to finding his own meaning of the ritual, discovering the landmarks surely forms part of the individual's journey, providing an opportunity to make his own study and increase his own understanding of the Craft.

This last paragraph of John Hamill is significant. It is the responsibility of the individual Freemason to create his own understanding of the Craft. It implies that each Freemason may well understand the Craft that is unique to them. There is no 'one size fits all'.

Conclusion – Freemasonry's Debt to John Locke

The final decades of the 17th Century were among the most tumultuous in English history. Following the English Civil Wars and Cromwell's Protectorate, Charles II and his brother James II had failed to learn the lesson that Monarchs reign only with the consent of Parliament. Sir Christopher Wren was rebuilding the City of London following the Great Fire of London. Sir Isaac Newton had written his *Principia Mathematica* in which he invented the calculus and developed his laws of motion. The Royal Society was founded and included such luminaries as Robert Boyle, Christopher Wren, Robert Hooke, Isaac Newton, Sir Robert Moray (a Scottish Freemason), *John Theophilus Desaguliers* and John Locke himself. The Whig Party which had begun as a political faction that supported constitutional and parliamentary government was in the ascendancy; its leaders included Lord Ashley who invited John Locke into his circle of associates. John Locke was in the centre of all this.

The final decades of the 17th Century saw the development of Speculative Freemasonry in England culminating in the formation of the Premier Grand Lodge of England in 1717. The basic principles of the Premier Grand Lodge of England were inspired by the ideals of tolerance and the universal understanding of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century – projects in which John Locke had considerable influence. It is fair to say that John Locke is probably the most influential western philosopher of modern times. His influence in the history of thought, on the way we think about ourselves and our relations to the world we live in, to God, nature and society, has been immense.

Locke helps us to understand the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in which James II was deposed by the English Parliament and replaced by his daughter Mary II and her husband William of Orange. John Locke had written that James II was guilty of breaking the "original contract" between sovereign and people, and had therefore suffered the just wrath of Parliament and people³¹.

Locke's influence on Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence was considerable: *The entire Declaration has been said to have "Succeeded admirably in condensing Locke's fundamental argument into a few hundred words."*³²

But this paper is about Locke's influence on Freemasonry, not Western Philosophy or Western politics. Apart from his influence on *John Theophilus Desaguliers*, Locke has influenced

31 <https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/commons-information-office/g04.pdf>

32 <https://www.johnlocke.org/john-locke-and-the-declaration-of-independence/>

Freemasonry in three areas: Tolerance of each other, Governance through consent, and Knowledge and Understanding.

Tolerance in accepting that each man has the right to his own religious opinions. Governance in proposing that a man accepts the authority of others through choice. Knowledge and Understanding in proposing that each man's developing understanding of Freemasonry is his own, and although it may be influenced and guided by others, in the end it is his own understanding and not something imposed by others.

God commands what reason does.

SCOTTISH FREEMASONRY IN NEW ZEALAND

TONY MANSFIELD

Since the formation of the first Freemason Lodge under the Grand Lodge of Scotland, Lodge Otago Kilwinning No. 417 in 1861, there have been 57 Scottish Lodges in New Zealand. In 2023, there are only ten. The purpose of my research, which has resulted in this paper, is to understand what has happened to all those Lodges and where they are today.

For the sake of clarity, where I refer to a lodge, District or Province, unless otherwise indicated, they are Scottish. Lodges holding of other constitutions will be referred to as NZC for Grand Lodge of New Zealand, IC for Grand Lodge of Ireland and EC for United Grand Lodge of England. For the sake of brevity, Grand Lodge of New Zealand will be referred to as GLNZ and Grand Lodge of Scotland as GLoS.

Wherever possible, I have consulted the original minutes of lodges. Where those were not available, inaccessible or lost, I have relied upon various lodge histories. Other principal sources included 'New Zealand Craftsman' magazine (which, in the early days, often published official correspondence and notices in full), the Norman B Spencer prize-winning 'The Formation of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand' by Dr M Kearsley, 'History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand 1890-1970' by FG Northern and 'Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand' by RH Montgomery.

I also had the opportunity to talk with several senior members of the craft, especially regarding events since 2000. They included Bro J More, Bro RJ Russell, Bro AJ Ford and Bro MA Gilkinson, District Grand Masters past and present, and MW Bro M Winger, Past GM, NZC.

It is important from the start to appreciate Scottish Freemasonry is different in many ways to other constitutions. Firstly, everyone is 'Brother', even the MW Grand Master Mason. Honorifics such as Right Worshipful are associated with the role or position, not the individual. Secondly, Scottish lodges are Private Lodges and, as such, retain control at the lodge level over their assets, processes, ritual and regalia, which is why the individual lodges sometimes do things differently. Even the signs can be different which can be very confusing to a brother from a different constitution.

Introduction

We can identify five periods of masonic activity in New Zealand, which I propose to examine in turn.

From 1842 (when the first Lodge, Ara No. 348 IC was established) to 1889 before the formation of GLNZ.

From 1889 to 1892 with the creation of the Masonic Union movement which led to the formation of GLNZ.

From 1892 to 1913, while lodges continued to transfer to the GLNZ and until GLNZ and GLoS reached agreement on recognition.

From 1913 until 1970 which might be referred to as the 'Golden Age' of Freemasonry in New Zealand (and in many other countries).

From 1970 to the present day when Freemasonry has struggled to maintain itself as a viable organisation.

Background

In 1840, the population of the New Zealand was c.82,000 of which 80,000 were Maori. After the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6th February 1840, there was an influx of immigrants and by 1890, the population had grown to 667, 031.

The availability of cheap land and the gold rushes in Otago and Westland were major factors attracting immigrants who brought their own cultures with them, including Freemasonry. The population was scattered over an area greater than the United Kingdom and travel was difficult. This isolation led to the development of a strong sense of self-reliance amongst the settlers which, led to New Zealand society being strongly egalitarian. Keith Sinclair, New Zealand's most prominent historian, stated:

‘it must be more nearly classless, however, than any other society in the world. Some people are richer than others, but wealth carries no great prestige and no prerogative of leadership’.¹

1842 to 1890

The first reference to Scottish Freemasonry in New Zealand comes from 1840 when GLoS granted Philip Cumine Lloyd a commission to ‘institute Lodges in that quarter of the globe’. No mention is found of Lloyd visiting New Zealand and there is no record of any requests for charters.²

The first Masonic lodge was Lodge Ara No. 348 IC formed in 1842 in Auckland. Later in 1842, the New Zealand Pacific Lodge No. 758 EC was constituted in Wellington.

The first lodge formed under the GLoS was Lodge Otago Kilwinning No. 417 in Dunedin whose warrant is dated 4 November 1861. The next was St Andrew Lodge No. 418 in Auckland whose warrant is dated 2 December 1861.

By 1890, a total of 54 Scottish lodges had been formed. The greatest concentration was in Otago, with 14 lodges.

The Provincial Grand Lodge for New Zealand was formed in March 1865 and Bro. Vincent Pyke became Provincial Grand Master in April 1865.³

In 1877, the Province of New Zealand was split into two; New Zealand North and New Zealand South with the first Provincial Grand Master for New Zealand North, Sir Frederick Whittaker, being installed in November 1877.⁴ In 1882, the Canterbury Province was erected.

At the beginning of 1890, 49 Lodges remained, and these were divided into three Districts (the terminology changing from ‘Province’ to ‘District’ in 1888):

District Grand Lodge of New Zealand North	17 Lodges
District Grand Lodge of Canterbury	9 Lodges
District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South	23 Lodges

In the same period, five Lodges had ceased working. These were:

Lodge St Clair No. 450 which closed in 1869 after only five years. Little is known about the Lodge or why it ceased.

¹ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 276

² RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand* (Dunedin; Research Lodge of Otago No 161, Dunedin, 1998), p. 2

³ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 4

⁴ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 5

Lodge Southern Kilwinning No. 447 and Lodge St John No. 464 both closed in 1870 when the Imperial troops and Colonial Defence Force in their areas were removed.

Thistle Lodge of Westport No. 483 and St Andrew Lodge No. 528, both on the West Coast, were initially successful during the gold rush period but rapidly declined thereafter.⁵

During the same period, English and Irish lodges were also being consecrated and in 1890 there were a total of 149 Masonic lodges in New Zealand.

Towards a Grand Lodge of New Zealand

In 1876, the civil government in New Zealand had individual Provincial Councils in each area, which effectively operated independently, formed to meet the demands for local autonomy. These were not overly successful and, in 1876, were abolished in favour of a central government.

The first recorded proposal for the formation of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand came in 1876. By then, there were nine District and Provincial Grand Lodges; five under UGLE, one for the Grand Lodge of Ireland and, as mentioned previously, three for GLoS and the suggestion for a United Grand Lodge may have been derived from the changes in the civil government.

The move was led by two Scottish freemasons, Bro V Pyke, Past PGM, and Bro ET Gillon, PM, Waterloo Lodge No 463, the former being a member of Parliament and the latter a journalist. They called a meeting in Wellington on 7 July 1876 to consider the formation and invited Scottish Lodges to send representatives to a subsequent meeting on 4 September 1876. There were a variety of opinions and it was decided not to take the suggestion further at that time.⁶

The lodges had mixed reactions.

The Minutes of Sir Walter Scott Lodge No. 533 noted on 9 August 1876 the RWM had received a letter from Bro Pyke proposing a United Grand Lodge. The Minutes record that the Lodge was not in favour of the proposal.⁷

The Minutes of Lodge St Andrew No. 418 at their meeting on 15 September 1876, passed a resolution in favour of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand.⁸

Over the following decade, interest in the concept grew, particularly as there was growing dissatisfaction with the performance of the various District and Provincial Grand Lodges.⁹

By the late 1880's the concept of a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand was being quite widely discussed amongst the Masonic community.

It is uncertain how those discussing the concept rationalised the discussion in the context of their Masonic obligations. The Obligation of the First Degree as set out in 'The Scottish

⁵ G Barclay, *The Extinct Lodges of New Zealand*. (Wellington, Blundell Bros. Ltd., 1935), pp. 41-48

⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand 1890-1970*, (Wellington, Grand Lodge of New Zealand, 1971), pp. 8-9

⁷ A Burns, *History of Lodge Sir Walter Scott* (Auckland, Observer Printing, 1951), p. 13

⁸ TJ Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8* (Auckland, The St Andrew's Lodge No. 8, 1950), p. 8

⁹ *NZ Freemason*, (Wellington, 1881), Vol III, No 6, p. 12

Workings of Craft Masonry' published 1886, we find the Obligation did then (and still does today) include a phrase:

'I will faithfully guard and maintain the Landmarks of the Order and uphold the laws and constitution of the Grand Lodge of Scotland'¹⁰

And, as part of the ceremony of installing a Master in a Scottish Lodge, the incoming Master declared (and still declare today):

'I swear continued allegiance to the Grand Lodge of Scotland'.

1889 to 1892

The arguments advanced for the formation of GLNZ are well documented in several publications including those by Dr M Kearsley and F G Northern.

Essentially:

The current structure was seen as inefficient and a central structure would work better for the lodges.

The development of Freemasonry in New Zealand would be better enabled.

Unhealthy competition between lodges for candidates would cease.

The quality of candidates could be improved and the situation of a candidate being blackballed in one lodge only to join an adjacent lodge would be avoided.

Benevolent funds would be better managed and locally applied.

A major contributory factor was that Provincial and District Grand Lodges had not been responsive to the needs of the lodges, with numerous complaints. And GLoS was itself under fire for both a lack of accountability and a lack of responsiveness to correspondence.

In this period, the new Grand Lodges in Australia were being formed, and it seems there was a strong element of 'me too', especially as a new Grand Lodge would mean opportunities for brethren to secure a significantly higher rank than they may have otherwise been granted.

In addition, the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland were ruled by the upper classes. New Zealand society had become egalitarian and there was an element of resentment towards those rulers of the craft. This was especially true of the Scottish freemasons, many of whom had left Scotland to get away from the 'Lairds' who ruled over them.

The leading proponent for GLNZ was Bro ET Gillon, PM, Waterloo Lodge No. 463. Bro Gillon was a journalist, whose obituaries stated he was a 'trenchant journalist' with a vigorous style which 'called down upon himself considerable opposition'.¹¹ He was known to 'employ the "sledgehammer" style of composition'.¹²

And one of the most vigorous supporters was WBro TG De Renzy, the owner and Editor of the 'New Zealand Craftsman' magazine in Dunedin. WBro De Renzy was a Past Master of Lodge Otago No 844 EC. WBro De Renzy seemed to let his enthusiasm overtake good practice and he was later in trouble for publishing a letter to GLNZ before he had sent it to them.

A significant number of politicians were also supportive, the majority of which were from the Liberal Party whose policies reinforced an established pattern of state involvement in the economy and regulation of society. The Party believed in self-reliance and were very nationalistic.

¹⁰ *The Scottish Workings of Craft Masonry*, (London: A Lewis, 1884), p. 39

¹¹ *Colonist*, Nelson, 20 April 1896, p. 2

¹² *Star*, Christchurch, 20 April 1896, p. 3

The first step was a meeting of Past Masters of all constitutions in Wellington ‘to consider the advisability of taking steps to form a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand’, called by Bro. ET Gillon. Present were 19 brethren, of whom seven were from Scottish lodges and all were largely from the lodges meeting in or close to Wellington. hardly representative of the over 140 lodges in New Zealand. The meeting, chaired by Bro. ET Gillon, opened with an address which included the statement:

‘..will be proud of its brilliant triple ancestry, and ever feel its responsibility not to do anything unworthy of its honourable position’¹³

Described as a ‘large and representative meeting’, somewhat stretching the concept of literary license, a series of resolutions were passed, summarised as:

It is desirable a United Grand Lodge of New Zealand should be formed.

To promote that, a Masonic Union be formed..

That copies of the resolutions be forwarded to every lodge, seeking their support.

That, if a majority of lodges agree, to hold a Masonic Convention of representatives of lodges, to constitute the New Zealand United Grand Lodge, adopt a constitution, and elect a Grand Master.

The proposers and seconders of the proposals were all from the five lodges based in Wellington.

The Masonic Union was formed with a Central Executive in Wellington, the Chairman being Bro E T Gillon, with branches to be established at Christchurch, Dunedin, Auckland, Oamaru and Invercargill.¹⁴

The first branch of the Masonic Union was established in Christchurch. The meeting resolved in favour of forming a United Grand Lodge by 50 to 14. Over half of the 140 present abstained.

Next was Dunedin where on 29 March 1889, it was resolved by 134 to 24 to form a branch of the Masonic Union.

In Auckland on 10 April 1889, similar resolutions were passed by 75 to 17. A substantial number of those present abstained.

The records of the discussions in different Scottish lodges make interesting reading, reflecting, as they do, the variety of opinions held by lodges.

Bro ET Gillon’s lodge, Lodge Waterloo No 463, met on 13 March 1889 and, unsurprisingly, adopted the full resolutions.

In nearby Te Aroha, Te Aroha Lodge No 697 convened a special meeting on 28 March 1889 to discuss the proposal and voted to support the establishment of a United Grand Lodge ‘with the assent of the majority of Lodges now working’.

St Andrew’s Lodge No. 418 in Auckland passed unanimously a motion supporting the proposed Grand Lodge at their meeting on 26 April 1889.

The minutes of Hawera Lodge No 652 disclose there were several discussions over several months. In June 1889, the minutes record ‘further discussions as this change of allegiance was very controversial’.

¹³ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 10

¹⁴ Research Lodge of Wellington No. 194, *Historical Records Series No. 1: The Declaration of Union and The Basis of Union* (Wellington, Lodge, 1959), p. 5

St Andrew Kilwinning Lodge No 481 in Wanganui at the meeting in April 1889 passed unanimously a proposal that the time was advisable that a United Grand Lodge of NZ be formed.

Lodge St John No 461 at their meeting in March 1889, resolved unanimously “That in the opinion of this Lodge it is desirable that a United GLNZ be formed, the three Grand Lodges to be as equally represented on it as possible.”

Lodge St Andrew No 432, in Dunedin, passed a resolution unanimously ‘That it does not at present see its way to move in the direction of a United Grand Lodge, but will adhere to the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and regrets the matter has been gone about in so un-Masonic and precipitate way.’

It was reported that, by 15 May 1889, 36 Lodges had passed resolutions in favour of the proposal, of which 14 were Scottish. This must have been bitterly disappointing to the members of the Masonic Union as it was a long way from a majority of the 149 Lodges in New Zealand.

It is interesting there was debate about the status of Lodges which did not join any new Grand Lodge. There was considerable reference to ‘Masonic Jurisprudence’ by CJ Paton who was quoted as saying:

‘The Grand Lodge thus formed at once assumes the all the prerogatives of a Grand Lodge, and acquires exclusive Masonic jurisdiction over the territory No Lodge can continue to exist, or be subsequently established in the territory, except under its authority; and all other Grand Lodges are precluded from exercising any Masonic authority within the said territory.’¹⁵

It seems the Masonic Union believed that, as soon as GLNZ was established, all dissenting Lodges would have to join and the English, Irish and Scottish Grand Lodges would no longer have any authority.

The next step was a circular from the Masonic Union on 29 July 1889 calling for a convention of delegates to take steps towards forming a Grand Lodge and drafting a Constitution. The Central Executive even went so far as to draft a resolution for Lodges to consider:

That in the opinion of this Lodge it is desirable in the interests of freemasonry that a United Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand should be constituted with the assent of a majority of the Lodges now working in the Colony under the Grand Lodges of England, Ireland and Scotland respectively; That this Lodge hereby gives its hearty support to the furtherance of the object and pledges itself that when a convention shall be summoned by the New Zealand Masonic Union for the purpose of constituting such United Grand lodge it will appoint a delegate with full authority to tender allegiance of this Lodge to the United Grand Lodge of New Zealand and to vote for the election of the first Grand Master.¹⁶

The convention held on 11 and 12 September 1889 was attended by representatives of 72 Lodges of which 26 were Scottish. The Union must have been disappointed as less than half of the Lodges in New Zealand were represented. Those representatives signed a ‘Declaration of Union’ to form and constitute a Grand Lodge under the style of “THE GRAND LODGE OF NEW ZEALAND” after the ninth day of November, 1889.

The Masonic Union had set themselves a very short timeframe, just over three months, in which to obtain the assent of the majority of lodges.

¹⁵ *Manawatu Times*, Vol 1, Issue 7, 25 May 1889, p. 2

¹⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 10

At the convention, another decision was made – to invite the Governor General, the Earl of Onslow and a Past Grand Warden of UGLE to be the first Grand Master. It seems the Union felt that having the Governor-General as the Grand Master would not only add lustre to the new Grand Lodge but would also assist in persuading lodges to join and in obtaining recognition from UGLE.

The Earl of Onslow, in his reply, advised he was unable to provide UGLE with evidence of practical unanimity as had been achieved in Australia. He further stated that, if he were to accept the position, he could not hope that all the Lodges would join the new Grand Lodge and expressed the hope that in twelve months, or possibly, more, the views of the promoters were shared by a considerably larger majority of the Masonic Community, at which time he would be prepared to be of service.¹⁷



The Earl of Onslow

This was not what the Masonic Union wanted to hear and, interestingly, felt that a delay of twelve months or more might mean extinction of their hopes. They consulted RW Bro Sir H Atkinson, DGM, Wellington District EC, who indicated support but stated he felt the time was not yet ripe and counselled a postponement.¹⁸

A suggestion was made that a conference of Provincial and District Grand Masters might achieve the desired result and the Masonic Union agreed to defer the formation of GLNZ for three months to allow the conference to take place in Dunedin on 24 January 1890. The conference passed the following resolution:

That this conference of Provincial and District Grand Masters commend the action of the Masonic Union in postponing their proceedings and consider that in the best interests of

¹⁷ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, pp. 24-25

¹⁸ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 25

Freemasonry and with the view of preserving harmony in the craft it is not desirable to form a Grand lodge of New Zealand at present so that time may be allowed for a better understanding between the various Lodges of the several constitutions and a greater unanimity arrived at upon such a vital question to Freemasonry in New Zealand.

The views of those Provincial and District Grand Masters were almost equally for and against forming a new Grand Lodge and, in retrospect, appears to represent a reasoned approach, which may have been successful. This was, however, not the result the Masonic Union wanted or could accept.

Instead of attending the conference in his capacity as Depute DGM, Bro ET Gillon spoke at a public meeting called by WBro TG De Renzy. Bro ET Gillon made a lengthy and impassioned speech as reported in 'New Zealand Craftsman' and it would be fair to say the language was unsurprisingly passionate:

“greatest unanimity prevailed at the conference”

“total absence of the slightest feeling of local jealousy”

“they could not abandon all they had done”

“present agitation which, he regretted, developed a certain amount of personal animosity”

“The movers had been taunted with disloyalty. Never was that taunt less deserved”

“Every step so far had been taken in strict accordance with masonic law and precedent”

“if martyrs were required they would not shrink”¹⁹

Fiery indeed and unsurprising some of the audience responded in like manner. A Bro AH Burton commented:

“When the time came the true supporters of freemasonry would be enabled to rescue the malcontents in a kindly spirit and thus heap coals of fire on their heads” (applause)²⁰

The Executive Committee of the Masonic Union decided on 3 February 1890 they would proceed with the formation of GLNZ in March 1890. There was continued correspondence with the Earl of Onslow asking if 100 Lodges would be sufficient for him to accept the office of Grand Master to which he replied, after consulting with London, that 120 Lodges would be required and recognition by UGLE assured.²¹

On 17 March 1890, Bro ET Gillon sent the Earl of Onslow a telegram as follows:

“His Excellency The Earl of Orslow, Auckland.

Received your Excellency’s decision with deep sorrow. It destroys last hope of establishing Grand Lodge without friction, violent disruption and bitter struggle. Had your Excellency accepted voice of two-thirds of Craft there would have been no rupture or scandal. We feel we have now done all within our power to secure unanimity. Your Excellency’s conditions are unfortunately impossible. It would be useless going to Lodges with hope of getting 120 to commence with. If started with 100 the larger number would however have been speedily obtained. By Masonic Law no Grand Lodge can claim or obtain recognition from another until fully constituted, its Grand Master installed and sovereign territorial jurisdiction assumed. Accepting your Excellency’s reply as final our only course is to immediately carry out the alternative resolution unanimously passed by Convention to provide for contingency of your Excellency’s refusal. This is to constitute Grand Lodge forthwith under Bro. Henry Thomson, Dist. G.M., Canterbury, as first Grand Master. We again express our deep regret that your Excellency is unable to afford us that assistance which would, we are convinced, have removed all difficulties and led to the early attainment of complete unanimity in the Craft. E. T. Gillon.”

¹⁹ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 2, 1 Feb 1890. Supplement re Grand Lodge Question, pp. 3-6

²⁰ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 2, 1 Feb 1890. Supplement re Grand Lodge Question, pp. 3-6

²¹ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 26

This telegram is significant as the content makes clear that the Masonic Union believed that, once the new Grand Lodge was formed and recognised, all the dissenting lodges would be required to join as that new Grand Lodge would be sovereign over all lodges in New Zealand.

This belief explains why the Union were so concerned about circulars sent out by the Scottish District Grand Masters to their lodges advising that GLoS rules allowed a lodge to retain its warrant provided a minimum of three members wished to do so, even if the majority of the lodge members chose to change allegiance.

At the Quarterly Communication Meeting of the District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South, a letter from GLoS was read:

‘Grand Lodge will NOT recognise any new Grand Lodge as long as there are members willing to work the Scottish holding Lodges at present existing. It will also uphold the District Grand Master’s actions to preserve the interests of Scottish Freemasonry.’²²

Bro Sir Frederick Whittaker, DGM, New Zealand North, issued circulars on 19 May 1890 and on 24 July 1890 to the Lodges in the District of New Zealand outlining and summarizing the information he had been given from GLoS. The contents of the second circular were summarised in ‘New Zealand Craftsman’ of 16 August 1890:

In the case of a number of the members of any Lodge, whose charter has been taken from the Lodge-room against their wish and sanction, and for the purpose of preventing such members from assembling under the authority of the Grand lodge of Scotland, the Right Worshipful District Grand Master has the approval and sanction of the Grand Lodge to issue a dispensation pending the return of the original charter or until the receipt of a duplicate of the charter from the Grand Lodge of Scotland.

The members of a Lodge assembling under a dispensation (as referred to in the last paragraph) are in order in electing a Right Worshipful Master and Officers, who will hold office till the date of the next annual election, in the case where the Master and officers secede and accept a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of New Zealand.

Lodges accepting a dispensation from the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, and refusing to return to the District Grand Lodges their charters issued from the Grand Lodge of Scotland, will not be recognised as legally constituted Lodges, nor will the Grand Lodge of Scotland recognise any Grand Lodge retaining the original charters of such Lodges.²³

Sir Frederic Whittaker died and the new District Grand Master was Bro The Hon William McCullough. In J Hume’s ‘Historical Review 1877 to 1927 District Grand Lodge, NZ North’, he comments:

He favoured the idea of instituting a GLNZ; only, however, if recognition could be obtained in a constitutional manner from the three other Grand Lodges in Britain, which was undoubtedly the first intention. When, however, it came to throwing down the gauntlet to the Mother Constitutions, and forcing the issue in an unconstitutional manner, even if the new Lodges were deemed clandestine, he parted company, expressing his opinion emphatically that such procedure was wrong in practice and principle, this opinion being endorsed by Bro Wm Anderson Sub DGM who considered that members under the Mother constitutions were violating their obligations by throwing over their allegiance in favour of another self-constituted body until it was constitutionally formed according to Masonic procedure.²⁴

²² *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 5, 1 May 1890, p. 155

²³ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 8, 16 August 1890, pp. 271-2

²⁴ J Hume, *Historical Review 1877 to 1927 DGL NINZ Jubilee Year* (Auckland: District, 1927), p. 11



Bro. William McCullough

Bro J Gore, DGM, New Zealand South, was an implacable opponent of the formation of GLNZ, believing it at least 20 years premature. He ensured GLoS was kept informed, sought their advice, and circulated such advice to the Lodges. Bro J Gore ensured the Lodges in his District understood only a minimum of three members were required if a Lodge wished to continue working under GLoS.

Certainly, some Lodges were reconsidering. St Andrew Kilwinning No. 481, in January 1890, having ascertained no lodge had the power to surrender its charter whilst three members chose to retain same, resolved to withdraw from the Masonic Union, holding itself free to consider any future proposal.²⁵

The Minutes of Lodge Montrose show that, although they had signed the Declaration of Union, after some discussion, the lodge decided to remain under GLoS.

In summary:

District of New Zealand North:	14 out of 18 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ
Canterbury:	4 out of 9 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ
District of New Zealand South:	6 out of 23 Scottish Lodges joined GLNZ

That a larger proportion of lodges in the District of New Zealand North joined GLNZ may be attributed to the failings of the District in attending to the needs of the lodges in the District. There were many complaints about a lack of assistance, very limited visits by District Office-bearers and little recognition of long-serving and loyal brethren. Much may be attributed to Sir Frederick Whittaker, DGM, now being 80 and unwell. Belatedly, the District tried to address these issues but it was a case of 'too little, too late'.

The Executive Committee decided to continue with the formation of GLNZ and the formal constitution took place in Christchurch on 29 April 1890 when RWBro H Thomson, DGM, Canterbury EC was elected Grand Master. Bro ET Gillon was Acting Grand Master and installed RW Bro H Thomson. His address on the occasion displayed the style which may have been expected:

"no thoughtful Brother could fail to note the evils inseparable from the concurrent jurisdiction of three Constitutions each administered from the other side of the world and acting without consultation with each other."²⁶

In the intervening months, the Masonic Union was very active encouraging the Lodges to vote favourably on joining the new Grand Lodge as soon as it was constituted.

²⁵ IB Fleming, *Resume of The St Andrew Kilwinning Lodge No. 70*, (Wanganui: Lodge St Andrew Kilwinning, Centennial Programme, 1968), p. 12

²⁶ FG Northern, *History of Grand Lodge of Antient, Free and Accepted Masons of New Zealand*, p. 35



Bro. Henry Thompson, First GM, GLNZ.

Bro J Gore, DGM, New Zealand South, worked closely with RW Bro T S Graham, DGM Otago Southland EC, and, on the day after GLNZ was constituted, they wrote a joint letter notifying the Masters of the Lodges under their direction that GLNZ was an unrecognized Masonic body, that any members of it must be refused entry into any Lodge, and members to be cautioned not to hold any Masonic Communication with members of it until GLNZ was recognised by GLoS. The letter subsequently appeared in 'New Zealand Craftsman'.²⁷

The responses from the Editor and others were of astounded shock and indignation as if they could not believe they could be denied entry into an English or Scottish Lodge and the vitriol flowed in copious amounts. And that was nothing compared to the righteous indignation expressed by those District officers who found themselves summarily dismissed.

It seems as those freemasons who supported GLNZ had not even thought about the consequences of their actions and failed to realise they were part of an unrecognized and therefore irregular Grand Lodge and that would continue until such time as they were recognised.

There is no doubt emotions were running high and the content of the Masonic press during 1890 and 1891 was full of the fulminations of the promoters and members of GLNZ.

An appreciation of the depth of the feelings and the consequent behaviour of the brethren, can be seen by examining the history of the Scottish Lodges in Auckland, St Andrew Lodge No. 418 and Ponsonby No 708, both of which were bitterly divided.

A report in 'New Zealand Craftsman' informs readers St Andrew Lodge No 418 met on 26 May 1890 with 75 present, of whom 35 were members, including Bro Page, RWM, and, after raising two Fellowcrafts, a resolution was proposed the Lodge should forthwith work under the Grand Lodge of New Zealand. The resolution was reported as being passed unanimously.²⁸

At the meeting on 28 July Lodge 1890, the Lodge had received a letter from the Hall Committee informing them they could not use the hall on the usual 4th Monday of the month but had to select a night when the hall was not in use by another lodge.

²⁷ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 193

²⁸ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 5

“It appears that a number of the members who were in arrears with their subscriptions and disqualified from speaking or voting in the Lodge had been got together and in conjunction with such financial members who may have joined the movement had decided to attempt to carry on the Lodge under the S.C. and claim the very considerable property of the Lodge including its share in Freemasons Hall.”²⁹

They decided to petition GLoS to reverse the action of the DGM in allowing some brethren of the Lodge to continue to work as St Andrew Lodge No 418 SC, accusing those brethren of being un-financial or otherwise unqualified as members. That petition was then printed in full in *New Zealand Craftsman*, including the names of the supposedly unqualified brethren.³⁰

It would appear there was no law of libel at that time.

It would hardly seem as the situation could get worse with the Lodge split and arguing over the rights to the Lodge assets, but it did. On 25 August 1890, the meeting discussed the fact they had been forced to use the lower hall as the Hall Committee had allowed the spurious Lodge St Andrew to use the Lodge Room. It was decided that, although an entry could be forced it was decided to take milder measures. It seems legal advice had been taken and The Chairman of the Hall Committee Dr Dawson had indicated a willingness to accommodate the Lodge, just not on the same night. The Lodge resolved to change the meeting date under protest.³¹

The author stated:

“I learn from old members of the Lodge who were present at this meeting that the Police were in attendance to prevent a possible breach of the Peace. The Lodge was shut out of its regular Lodge Room, and its regalia and Lodge furniture and jewels were in the cupboards from which they were also locked out. But amongst the members present was Bro D Hyauiason, an expert Locksmith. While the Police watched in front of the Hall, this Brother picked the locks that barred his entrance to the Lodge Room and cupboards and secured the regalia and fittings necessary for the holding of the meeting. In view of this, the spirit of forbearance shown at the meeting is remarkable. After the meeting they faithfully returned the regalia and fittings to their accustomed places. But the Lodge or what must now be called the NZC portion of it retained the old Charter and the Minute Books and other records.”³²

The perspective of St Andrew Lodge No 418 is, unsurprisingly, different. After the meeting on 28 July, a special meeting was held on 3 July 1890, over which Bro McCullough, Deputy DGM presided. Bro McCullough stated 14 members of the Lodge were opposed to the brethren having accepted a dispensation to work under GLNZ. Those 14 members then submitted a petition to the RW DGM, Sir Frederick Whittaker for a dispensation to continue to meet and work as St Andrew lodge No. 418 SC. It is further stated those members who had changed allegiance had taken with them the warrant, minute book, attendance book, cash book, ledger, seal of the Lodge, set of by-laws, two sets of regalia, jewels plus the cash in the bank and other goods and property belonging to St Andrew Lodge No. 418.

Bro McCullough appealed to Bro Page, the former RWM of St Andrew Lodge No. 418, for the return of the Warrant but the request was denied. A dispensation was issued and the lodge met with Bro Rev Gould as RWM.

It seems the Charter was retained by Bro Hyauiason for many years, concealed in his office. Some thirty years later he met Bro Cox, a PM of St Andrew Lodge No. 418 and handed him the Charter.

²⁹ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 6, 16 June 1890, p. 10

³⁰ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 8, 16 August 1890, pp. 273-4

³¹ TJ Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8*, p. 10

³² J Fleming, *A Short History of the St Andrew's Lodge No. 8*, p. 11

Turning to Lodge Ponsonby No 708, it seems the Lodge was divided effectively in half between those who supported GLNZ and those that wished to remain under GLoS. The viewpoint of the loyalist was that having taken an obligation to support their Constitution, they were bound thereby, and if anyone wished to join GLNZ they could do so by resigning from his Mother Lodge; but that the property of the Lodge belonged to those who had remained loyal. On the other hand, it was contended that the Lodge property belonged to the contributing members, who, by a majority, retained it when they transferred their allegiance.³³

The Notice paper for June 1890 meeting contained the following: 'To consider Bro Fowld's motion re Grand Lodge of New Zealand'. It is assumed the motion was to transfer allegiance to GLNZ. The motion was not discussed in June or July as the RWM was absent and the motion no longer appeared on the notice paper.

In the afternoon of 5 August, the RWM was busy garnering support for the motion and interviewed the WJW, Bro M J Bennett stating he would be taking the vote on the motion. The RWM was advised by Bro Bennett he could not do so as the motion did not appear on the notice paper. The WJW and the IPM both advised the RWM he could not proceed with the vote for the same reason. That evening, having completed the raising of four Fellowcrafts, the RWM announced the vote would be taken. The three dissenters objected but to no avail and the vote was taken with a majority of one vote in favour. An objection was made in respect of one member voting in favour not being qualified as his dues were in arrears but the RWM disallowed the objection without the ledger being checked.³⁴

Undoubtedly the refectory was uncomfortable with the Lodge divided in half. After refectory, those who wished to join GLNZ uplifted all the books and the Charter of the Lodge so as to prevent the loyalists from continuing to work. They had also arranged with a carter to come to the Lodger the following morning and remove the furniture to a hall in Jervois Road which they had arranged in advance.

It so happened one of the loyalists, Bro Cleal, was a carter and heard from the carter booked for the following day about the planned removal of the furniture. Apparently, the carter who was booked was surprised the carter who was a member of the Lodge was not doing the work. Bro Cleal roused other loyalist members of the Lodge included the WJW who held the key to the Lodge building. They removed all the furniture and stored it at their homes. Early the next morning they met with the owner of the hall and secured its continued use by Lodge Ponsonby No 708 by payment of a deposit. It is said that when the other group arrived to collect the furniture and found it was no longer there, a few uncomplimentary remarks were exchanged.³⁵

The Treasurer, who was aligned with those wishing to change allegiance to GLNZ, was ready to enter the bank when it opened and promptly withdrew all the Lodge funds and then repudiated payment of outstanding accounts, stating they were the liability of Lodge Ponsonby No 708.³⁶

That, as a result, there was bitter animosity between Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC and The Ponsonby Lodge No 54 NZC is hardly unexpected. One does wonder if the poor carter, who arrived at 7.00am to find no work to be done, got paid.

³³ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, (Auckland: Lodge, 1934), p. 12-13

³⁴ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, pp. 13-14

³⁵ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, pp. 14-15

³⁶ J Hume, *A Brief History of Lodge Ponsonby 708 SC*, p. 15

A striking blow to the hopes of GLNZ must have come in July 1890 when UGLE considered an application received 1 May 1890 from ‘a body styling itself “The Grand Lodge of New Zealand” for recognition as the sole Masonic jurisdiction in that colony’. The discussion which followed referred to the Grand Lodges of South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales and how the Grand Lodge had recognised there was divergence of opinion amongst the Lodges and so withheld recognition until there was unanimity on the subject. The discussion also referenced that only about half the Lodges had agreed to join GLNZ, that some Lodges had petitioned UGLE to remain under them and GLoS had already declined recognition. Recognition was, unsurprisingly, declined.³⁷

The same meeting considered the application from a body styling itself “The Grand Lodge of Tasmania”. It was noted all Lodges had decided to join the new Grand Lodge and recognition was granted.³⁸

The first roll of Lodges of GLNZ, as appended to the Report of the Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge held at Oamaru on 15 January 1892, listed 74 Lodges. One Lodge was omitted and six were new so 69 existing Lodges had joined at that time.³⁹

It must have been very disappointing to the founders of GLNZ that, nearly two years after the formation of their Grand Lodge, only 69 out of the 149 Lodges then working in New Zealand had joined, less than half. Of those 69, 24 were Scottish, again less than half of the 49 Scottish Lodges then working.

1892 to 1913

The next decade saw considerable changes in the Masonic landscape of New Zealand.

One of the effects of the change in allegiance of some Lodges was that they could not visit Lodges where they had previously been welcome and they could not receive visitors who they had also previously welcomed. This was significant for the smaller country Lodges who had barely enough members to open and depended on visitors to fill the offices and deliver the charges.

At the same time, other lodges ignored the rulings from above. In Gisborne the three lodges, Lodge Montrose No 722, Lodge Turanganui No 1480 EC and Lodge Abercorn No 472 IC shared a lodge room and had many members in common. When Lodge Abercorn transferred allegiance to GLNZ, the lodges continued to meet and visit without change and visits of Lodge Abercorn, now No 76 NZC, were noted in the minutes of Lodge Montrose No. 722.

There was considerable pressure for the recognition of GLNZ, with some lodges making it very clear to their DGMs that recognition was very desirable so they could once again visit their friends in Lodges which had changed allegiance.

After representations were made to the Prince of Wales, then Grand Master of UGLE, recognition was granted by UGLE on 17 June 1898. Recognition from Grand Lodge of Ireland followed on 10 October and from Grand Lodge of Scotland on 2 March 1899.

GLNZ was continuing to charter new lodges and by the end of 1905 had issued 144 warrants. Some of those were to lodges who decided to join GLNZ after the initial rush but most were to

³⁷ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 9, 16 September 1890, pp. 356-7

³⁸ *New Zealand Craftsman*, Vol 1 Iss 9, 16 September 1890, p. 357

³⁹ Research Lodge of Wellington No. 194, *Historical Records Series No. 2: The Roll of Lodges*, (Wellington: Lodge, 1959) p. 13

new lodges and, by that time, lodges holding of GLNZ were in the definite majority although 53 lodges were still working under their original Grand Lodges.

The Grand Lodge of Scotland had, before and after it recognised GLNZ, retained to itself the right to open new Lodges. Accordingly, on 4 August 1892, charters were issued for two new Lodges. These were Lodge St John's No 785 at Eltham, Taranaki and Lodge Hinemoa No 786 at Midhurst, Taranaki.

Then, in 1900, came an event that proved to be explosive in respect of the relationship between GLoS and GLNZ. In 1900, Bro W McCullough, RW DGM, issued a dispensation for a new Scottish Lodge to be formed in Opunake in Taranaki. Lodge Mahara No 925 was subsequently issued a Charter by GLoS on 1 May 1902, after GLNZ had been recognised by GLoS.

At the same time, it had been intimated the RW DGM, District Grand Lodge of New Zealand South, was contemplating issuing dispensations for a new Lodge to be opened in Caversham, Dunedin. A detailed discussion of the events that followed can be found in 'Lodge Mahara No 925 SC' by R M Hunt.⁴⁰

It seems the RW DGM had been in correspondence with GLoS and the Grand Secretary had written on 1 March 1900 to confirm the terms of recognition of GLNZ, as follows: 'With reference to your enquiry as to the terms of recognition of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, I beg to say that our Grand Lodge, in agreeing to recognition, reserved the rights of our District Grand Lodges in your colony, and the rights also of daughter Lodges under the Scottish Constitution.

In the rights of the District Grand lodge under Rule 150 of Grand lodge Constitution and Laws, Provincial or District Grand Masters abroad may erect new lodges by dispensation. In recognizing the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, that right was not relinquished.'

That letter was circulated to every Scottish Lodge in New Zealand with instructions it was to be read in open Lodge and be inserted in the minute book.

GLNZ was outraged and injured innocence. The Grand Secretary, MW Bro Malcolm Niccol, wrote to GLoS on 25 September 1900. In that letter, he quotes the letter of recognition received from GLoS the previous year:

'It is a great pleasure to me to intimate to you that Grand Lodge has resolved to recognise the Grand Lodge of New Zealand, and to open fraternal relations with it, under the declaration and reservation that the Grand Lodge of Scotland retains its jurisdiction unimpaired over its Lodges in New Zealand who may choose to continue their allegiance to it; and also the rights and jurisdiction of the three Scottish District Grand Lodges in New Zealand over such Lodges and Scottish interests be preserved.'

⁴⁰ RM Hunt, *Lodge Mahara No 925 SC*, (New Plymouth: Research Lodge Taranaki Province No 323, 1984)



Bro. Malcolm Niccol

MW Bro Malcolm Niccol continues:

‘This practically places your Grand Lodge on the same footing as regards our terms of recognition as the Grand Lodges of England and Ireland...’

‘... but your jurisdiction in New Zealand is strictly limited by your own Act, to lodges *in existence in the colony on 2nd March, 1899*, the date of your letter announcing recognition.

The terms of recognition became the basis of a major dispute between the two Grand Lodges. It is clear GLNZ did not understand or appreciate that the Grand Lodge of Scotland is independent of the Grand lodges of England and Ireland, and the terms of recognition offered by GLoS were separate from and independent of any agreement that may have been made with the Grand Lodges of England and Ireland; and did, in their view, permit them to continue to warrant Lodges. GLoS were concurrently doing exactly that in Western Australia, where the Grand Lodge of Western Australia had been constituted on 11 October 1899.

Matters can only be said to have gone downhill from there. Briefly;

GLNZ sent a circular to all their Lodges on 5 December 1900 in which they declared the Scotch Lodge at Opunake is not to be recognised and the members are clandestine and irregular Masons. The circular also prohibited any GLNZ Lodge from receiving as a visitor Bro W McCullough RW DGM, Bro W Carron, RW DGSec and any member of Hinemoa Lodge No.786 SC.

GLNZ wrote to GLoS on 23 May 1901, seeking to resolve the issues

GLoS responded on 1 August 1901 informing GLNZ that unless they withdrew the 3rd, 4th and 5th paragraphs of their circular, there would be no progress.

GLNZ replied to GLoS on 19 October 1901, still protesting the actions of Bro W McCullough, RW DGM and the opening of Lodge Mahara but accepting the requirement to remove the offending passages of the circular and to recognise Lodge Mahara No 925 SC as a regular Lodge as pre-conditions to re-open discussions on the terms of recognition.

It is very evident tempers were getting frayed. The situation was undoubtedly aggravated when it was reported to GLNZ on 27 June 1902 that the RW DGM Canterbury SC was proposing to open a new Lodge to be called Ophir Lodge.

GLNZ quite reasonably requested the proposed Ophir Lodge not be opened until the terms of recognition had been finalized, and GLoS apparently assented to this request. GLNZ continued to press for the terms of recognition to be identical to those extended by the Grand Lodge of

England, continuing to fail to recognise the two Grand Lodges were separate and distinct with their own, sometimes quite different, ways of working.

Eventually, on 8 September 1904, GLNZ received a reply from GLoS enclosing a proposed set of Articles of Recognition. Those proposed Articles specifically included Lodge Mahara and the proposed Lodge Ophir. The articles also specifically provided that the Charters of dormant Lodges could be revived at any time. Those proposed Articles were further discussed and, although the references to Lodge Mahara and Lodge Ophir were removed, the reference to dormant Lodges remained. The final agreement was approved, after much correspondence, in 1913.

Bro R H Montgomery in ‘Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand’ makes a number of interesting observations on the events and the revised Articles of Recognition:

‘Where a new Grand Lodge was erected and did not obtain exclusive jurisdiction, Scotland recognised its legitimacy and was in fraternal harmony but considered that both jurisdictions could own new lodges.’⁴¹

‘...this statement is to cover the embarrassment of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand in finding, as many have done before and since, that England and Scotland are not the same people with a different accent. The Grand Lodge of New Zealand, because of the desire to have Lord Onslow as Grand Master, had concentrated on obtaining English recognition. Did it occur to them that Scottish recognition was different?’⁴²

‘The matter of dormancy has to be looked at rather differently than from today. Edinburgh has no time limit for a Lodge to be in formal dormancy – one in Scotland has recently been revived after a sleep of over a hundred years.’⁴³

“‘Concern” is a very mild word for the attitude of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand then towards dormant Scottish Charters. “Paranoia” would have been closer.’⁴⁴

While this was all taking place, GLNZ issued a ‘second time of asking’ in 1904, promising Lodges could retain their own ritual. The result was less than satisfactory from the GLNZ perspective. Very few Lodges made the change and the only Scottish Lodge affected was Lodge Otago Kilwinning No 417 which, in 1905, split to form Lodge Otago Kilwinning Lodge No 143 NZC.

As with St Andrew Lodge No 418 and Lodge Ponsonby No 708, the split was not harmonious. The Lodge history records there was much bitterness existing at the time as shown in the Attendance Book, where the pages for the meeting on 10 August have been heavily criss-crossed and the following note appears in two places:

‘The minutes and resolutions passed at this meeting have been called and recalled by Grand Lodge. W Begg, RWM, 1/2/1906’⁴⁵

In summary, the situation of the Scottish Lodges in New Zealand was then:

Of the 49 Lodges working, 22 joined GLNZ immediately and another 14 joined GLNZ between 1892 and 1905

One Lodge, Thistle No 647, joined GLNZ but subsequently merged with an EC Lodge and was not granted a warrant by GLNZ

Three lodges had split

A further three Lodges had been consecrated

⁴¹ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, (Dunedin: The Research Lodge of Otago No 161, 1998), p. 16.

⁴² RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 16

⁴³ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 18

⁴⁴ RH Montgomery, *Scottish Freemasonry in Southern New Zealand*, p. 18

⁴⁵ GL Austin, *The Centennial History of Lodge Otago Kilwinning No 417 SC*, (Dunedin: Lodge, 1962), p. 78

One Lodge, Cromwell Kilwinning No 535, was in recess but was reconstituted in 1894 and immediately joined GLNZ as No 98 NZC

Two Lodges closed

That left 12 Lodges still working and holding of GLoS. One, Lodge Taeri No 620, transferred to GLNZ as Lodge Roslyn No 250 in 1920.

It would have been hoped that by this time, the differences of the past having been set aside and new terms of recognition in place, there would have been a new era for Freemasonry with all four Constitutions working in harmony for the betterment of the craft. Sadly, that was not to be entirely the case.

1913 to 1970

The period from 1913 to 1970 really was the golden age of Freemasonry in New Zealand as it was in many other countries. Driven by many factors, of which one of the most important was a desire of returning servicemen to retain the camaraderie they had previously enjoyed, Freemasonry grew significantly. GLNZ membership peaked in the 1960's with over 40,000 members.

Lodges were large, many having over 100 members, and their social events were widely attended.

It is in this period we truly see the spirit of Freemasonry at work in New Zealand, with significant community projects involving the lodges of all four constitutions. In almost every part of New Zealand, lodges would work together to construct and operate Masonic Retirement Villages, not just for members but also open to the community.

One of the largest of these was the Roskill Masonic Village in Auckland. Not only did they fund the construction, lodges continued to support the village with maintenance and gardening. Lodge members would volunteer to help with many of the tasks associated with running the village, even down to making marmalade for the residents every year. The Masters of the lodges in the area were rostered to deliver the readings for the service in the Chapel every Sunday.

Regrettably, the increasing management requirements became too much for a voluntary organisation to maintain and the village was sold to a professional village service provider. The proceeds were used to establish what is now the Freemasons Foundation, a major charitable organisation in which all four constitutions continue to be involved.

In this period, GLNZ continued to grow, issuing warrants for new lodges until more than 400 lodges were working in New Zealand.

There was no change in the number of Scottish lodges in this period, apart from the transfer of allegiance of Lodge Taeri No 620 in 1920. No new Scottish lodges were warranted as the terms of the agreement for recognition between the two Grand Lodges did not permit that to happen. The existing Scottish lodges, as did all lodges, thrived and prospered in this period.

The relationship between the lodges holding of different Grand Lodges was, in this period, positive. Inter-constitution visiting was, where possible, common and the relationships between Lodges positive and healthy. Small actions such as the return of the original warrant to St Andrew Lodge No 418 and the return of the original Right Worshipful Master's collar jewel to Lodge Ponsonby No 708 went a long way towards setting aside the ill will and bitterness of the past and developing mutual respect between Lodges of all constitutions.

The good will was exemplified in a number of ways:

- For many years in Auckland, the presenting officers at the installations of GLNZ Lodges were drawn from Scottish and English Lodges.
- English, Irish and Scottish Lodges would invariably invite representatives of the other Grand Lodges, including GLNZ, to attend their installations and deliver specific charges. GLNZ Lodges often reciprocated.
- Representatives of other constitutions would often be invited to present the working tools at an installation

1970 to 2024

From 1970 to the present day, a significant decline in Freemasonry has been observed worldwide. For example, from 2007 to 2023, GLNZ membership dropped from 14,000 to just under 5,000, or around 65%. In the same period, the membership of Scottish lodges in New Zealand dropped 40% and the other constitutions report similar decreases.

There have been many books and papers written on the reasons for this significant decline. D West, in ‘Managing the Future of Freemasonry’, examines the decline in terms of the changes in society which have occurred and makes a strong case for freemasonry being one of the last repositories of social capital and therefore necessary for the wellbeing of our society.⁴⁶

The four constitutions continued to work together with the Freemasons Foundation and in other charitable activities including the KidzFirst Charity (supporting the children’s hospital in South Auckland) and the Teddies for Loving Care Appeal, both of which are supported by Scottish lodges.

Sadly there have been a few incidents which have disturbed the relationship between GLNZ and the remaining Scottish lodges.

Over the decades there were continuing efforts from GLNZ to convince the remaining Scottish lodges they should join GLNZ even though they had been clearly told on several occasions there was no interest in doing so. That was particularly evident as GLNZ approached its Centenary in 1990 when there was a further, unsuccessful, push for the remaining English, Irish and Scottish Lodges to transfer their allegiance.

About that time, the District Grand Lodge of North Island New Zealand was approached by GLNZ in respect of Lodge Hinemoa No. 786, consecrated in 1892 in Midhurst, a small country town in Taranaki. The Lodge had moved 5km from Midhurst to a neighboring town, Stratford, in 1911. GLNZ, some 80 years later, decided that, because the Lodge had moved, it was a ‘new’ Lodge in terms of the recognition agreement and therefore illegal in some manner. This even though the move had taken place before the agreement was made in 1913.

In 1984, RW Bro Clarrie Brown, Provincial Grand Master, Taranaki District, GLNZ in his Foreword to R M Hunt’s “Lodge Mahara No 925 SC” stated:

‘This unwillingness of the Home Grand Lodges to let the G.L. of N.Z. get on with the running of Freemasonry in this part of the world is still evident in the unilateral actions of the Grand Lodge of England in reducing the number of Districts and shifting the domicile of a Lodge in direct contravention of the articles of recognition.’⁴⁷

⁴⁶ D West, *Managing the Future of Freemasonry, A Book of Optimism*, (Keny: Hamilton House Publishing, 2015)

⁴⁷ RM Hunt, *Lodge Mahara No 925 SC*, (New Plymouth: Research Lodge Taranaki Province No 323, 1984)

Those comments were made in 1984 implying there is still resentment that Scottish, English and Irish lodges are still working as such, even though the articles of recognition in each case clearly reserved the right to do so.

Then in 1993 came another event which gave rise to a major upset in the relationship with GLNZ. That event was the move of the Cargill Kilwinning Lodge No 632 from Port Chalmers to Christchurch.

The DGM for the District of New Zealand South, Bro Max Finney, approached the GLNZ Provincial Grand Master for Canterbury about the proposed move and was advised that, in the view of the Provincial Grand Master, the proposed move would add to the masonic landscape of Christchurch. However, the GLNZ were not at all happy. They protested the move amounted to the creation of a 'new' Lodge. GLNZ instructed their Lodges in the area that visitors from Cargill Kilwinning Lodge were not to be received and their members were not to visit Cargill Kilwinning. In fact they declared Lodge Cargill Kilwinning No 632 'irregular'.⁴⁸

In 2002, GLNZ offered to withdraw their sanctions if the DGMs of both the Scottish Districts gave an undertaking that no such move would happen again. The offer was forwarded to GLoS with the comment that such agreement effectively changed the terms of recognition and would restrict the working of Scottish Lodges.⁴⁹

The response from GLoS in October 2002 reiterated the right of Scottish Lodges to work solely by the Laws of GLoS, that GLoS may be entitled to consider the 1913 Agreement had lapsed as GLNZ had resiled from it, and if the Agreement had lapsed, the GLoS again had the right to open new Lodges in New Zealand.

The DGM's of both the Scottish Districts, in 2003, wrote to all members of the Scottish Craft outlining the situation and concluded their letter with the comment:

'We would again remind brethren of the unfailing hospitality and respect with which we are received by brethren, Lodges and districts of the New Zealand Constitution. We must ensure these courtesies are acknowledged and reciprocated. But we must also admit to grave forebodings about the relationship between our respective grand lodges.'⁵⁰

The actions of GLNZ nearly destroyed Lodge Cargill Kilwinning but fortunately good sense prevailed in the end and the Lodge now has a permanent meeting place and is going from strength to strength.

In this period, the number of Scottish lodges has further reduced with Lodge St Andrew No. 432 closing due to falling membership. That leaves four lodges in the North Island and six in the South Island.

And the Future?

There is no doubt some of those lodges will struggle over the next few years. The two lodges in Auckland and one in Christchurch are attracting candidates and appear to be secure for the future. There are three lodges in smaller country towns and there is no doubt they find it difficult to attract candidates and these lodges will require the assistance of the District if they are to survive. One lodge in Dunedin has managed to attract a number of members from the

⁴⁸ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, (Auckland & Dunedin: SC Districts of New Zealand North & South, 2003), p. 2

⁴⁹ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, p. 4

⁵⁰ RH Montgomery & RM Russell, *Relationships with Grand Lodge of New Zealand*, p. 4

North Island and is relocating to Wellington where a great deal of interest is being shown. The three remaining lodges in Dunedin will be challenged as the city is not growing and a substantial proportion of the community are university students.

All the Scottish lodges are very aware that, if a lodge closes, it cannot be replaced by another Scottish lodge; as the recognition agreement between GLoS and GLNZ does not permit the GLoS to open a new lodge.

The knowledge of this makes members of the Scottish Craft very aware that they cannot permit a lodge to think about dying, and every lodge must strive to maintain itself. If nothing else, the renowned determination and stubbornness of the Scots will see them survive.

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Appendix I: Schedule of Scottish Lodges

No.	Name	Warranted	Original Meeting Place	Current
417	Otago Kilwinning	4 Nov 1861	Dunedin	
417	Otago Kilwinning			1905 split, GLNZ No. 143 (closed)
418	St Andrew's	2 Dec 1861	Auckland	
418	St Andrew's			1890 split, GLNZ No.8 (closed)
432	St Andrew	2 May 1865	Dunedin	Closed 1995
447	Southern Kilwinning	6 Nov 1865	New Plymouth	Dormant 1869
450	St Clair	7 Aug 1865	Dunedin	Dormant 1869
460	Clutha	5 Nov 1866	Balclutha, Otago	1890 GLNZ No. 14 (closed 2009)
461	St John	5 Nov 1866	Milton, Otago	
463	Waterloo	30 Nov 1866	Wellington	1890 GLNZ No. 14 (closed 2005)
464	St John	30 Nov 1866	Otahuhu	Extinct 1870
467	Westland Kilwinning	4 Feb 1867	Hokitika, Westland	1894 GLNZ No. 88 (closed 1990)
470	Dunstan	5 Aug 1867	Clyde, Otago	1895 GLNZ No. 103
477	Celtic	4 Nov 1867	Dunedin	
481	St Andrew's Kilwinning	3 Feb 1868	Wanganui	1894 GLNZ No. 79
483	Thistle Lodge of Westport	4 May 1868	Westport	Extinct 1878
487	Charleston Kilwinning	2 Nov 1868	Charleston	Dormant 1897
528	St Andrew	4 Nov 1872	Greymouth	Dormant 1881
533	Sir Walter Scott	3 Feb 1873	Thames	1890 GLNZ No. 15 (closed 2023)
534	Caledonian	3 Feb 1873	Timaru	1890 GLNZ No. 16
535	Cromwell Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Cromwell, Otago	1894 GLNZ No. 98
536	Patea Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Patea, Taranaki	1890 GLNZ No. 18
537	Oamaru Kilwinning	3 Feb 1873	Oamaru	1894 GLNZ No. 82
576	St Augustine	3 Feb 1873	Waimate, Canterbury	1895 GLNZ No. 99
585	Canterbury Kilwinning	8 May 1876	Lyttleton, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 23
586	Manukau	8 May 1876	Onehunga, Auckland	1890 GLNZ No. 24
604	Robert Burns	7 May 1877	Christchurch	1905 GLNZ No. 139 (closed 2004)
610	St John's	5 Nov 1877	Invercargill	1894 GLNZ No. 94
619	Southern Star	6 May 1878	Geraldine, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 27 (closed 2004)
620	Taieri	6 May 1878	Outram, Otago	1920 GLNZ No. 250
627	Thistle	5 Aug 1878	Ashburton, Canterbury	1898 GLNZ No. 113
632	Cargill Kilwinning	6 Feb 1879	Dunedin	Now in Christchurch

637	Arrow Kilwinning	1 May 1879	Arrowtown, Otago	1893 GLNZ No. 86
639	St Andrew	1 May 1879	Wellington	1890 GLNZ No. 32
659	St Thomas Kilwinning	5 Nov 1981	Kaitangata, Westland	1892 GLNZ No. 83 (closed 1999)
647	Thistle	6 Nov 1879	Masterton	Merged 1890 with 1430 EC
652	Hawera	5 Feb 1880	Hawera	1890 GLNZ No. 34 (closed 2000)
656	St Clair Kilwinning	4 Feb 1881	Teddington, Canterbury	Dormant 1890
662	St John Kilwinning	4 Aug 1881	Dunedin	Now in Wellington
663	Wairau	3 Nov 1881	Blenheim	1890 GLNZ No. 42
675	The Crown	3 May 1882	Sydenham, Christchurch	1904 GLNZ No. 138
690	Manawatu Kilwinning	2 Aug 1883	Palmerston North	1890 GLNZ No. 47
692	Robert Burns	2 Feb 1884	Reefton, Westland	1890 GLNZ No. 50
693	Methven	2 Feb 1884	Methven, Canterbury	1890 GLNZ No. 51
695	Harvey	1 May 1884	Gore	1890 GLNZ No. 49 (closed 2008)
696	Peninsula Kilwinning	1 May 1884	Portobello, Otago	
697	Te Aroha	1 May 1884	Te Aroha, Waikato	1890 GLNZ No. 52
708	Ponsonby	5 Feb 1985	Auckland	
708	Ponsonby			1890 split, GLNZ No.54
709	Wairoa	5 Feb 1985	Wairoa South	1890 GLNZ No. 55
717	Star in the Far South	6 Aug 1885	Papakura, Auckland	1890 GLNZ No. 56
722	Montrose	30 Nov 1985	Gisborne	
725	Whitianga	4 Feb 1886	Mercury Bay	Dormant 1899
727	Foxton Kilwinning	4 Feb 1886	Foxton	Dormant 1891
743	Taringatura	3 Feb 1887	Lumsden, Southland	1895 GLNZ No.100
767	St Andrew	1 Aug 1889	Kumara, Westland	1890 GLNZ No. 65 (closed)
UD	Ngapara		Ngapara, Otago	1890 GLNZ No. 68
785	St John's	4 Aug 1892	Eltham	1894 GLNZ No 94 (closed 2004)
786	Hinemoa	4 Aug 1892	Midhurst	Now at Stratford
925	Mahara	1 May 1902	Opunake	Extinct 1903

ANDREW RAMSAY
AKA
ANDREW (MICHAEL) RAMSAY
OR
CHEVALIER RAMSAY
OR
CHEVALIER DE RAMSAY

A spiritual and intellectual adventurer

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“For one who reached such notoriety, Ramsay’s Masonic career was unusually obscure. Though he belonged to the craft for 13 years, he appeared on the Masonic stage for only a part of one day, if he appeared then, to which may be added two notes he wrote to a Cardinal-Minister of France. No other freemason ever gained so much prominence in so short a time with so little effort and maintained his position so long”

Coil’s Masonic Encyclopedia. New York 1961. Cited in Batham, C.N. ‘Chevalier Ramsay, A New Appreciation. AQC 1968, p.280.



A caricature of De Ramsay drawn in Rome 1724 by Pier Leone Ghezzi
The Morgan Library and Galleries (New York)

Abstract

Many lectures and studies of Chevalier Ramsay are found amongst Masonic writings, the majority of essays focus on an Oration at a Lodge in Paris, 26 December 1736. This Oration had a strong influence and resulted in an unintended consequence followed by the subsequent blossoming of appending orders. It also ended Ramsay's recorded association with Freemasonry

This paper examines Ramsay's life with focus on those who would be called influencers should an 18th century version of modern day social media exist.

From the literature available to present day researchers, the evidence points to Andrew Michael Ramsay's association with writers, academics, religious notables, thinkers and romanticists. The evidence, however, also is replete with inconsistencies and contradictions.

In a number of articles on Ramsay, the transition from Calvinist to Roman Catholic is treated rather swiftly and with little depth. This paper explores that interval, as it is a clue to the development of his philosophies by the acquaintance and influencers with whom he comes into contact.

In this paper I shall use the names James Francis Edward for ‘the Old Pretender’ and Charles Edward for ‘the Young Pretender’. The sobriquets are the language of the victor, and an insult; many Jacobite Scots may agree with me.

Pierre Bayle: Prudent persons will always maintain an appearance of religion. *Historical and critical dictionary. Pub 1697*

INTRODUCTION

Should this man be unknown to you, let me introduce a character who could pass as an academic, a man of letters, successful author, friend of nobility, multilingual, sycophant, acolyte, plagiarist, political cabalist, revolutionary, Jacobite, Freemason, pedagogue and chancer.

Should you were to interview him for a job, looking at his resume, would he be a credible applicant or risky employee?

The scene into which Ramsay played was one of religious turmoil, political instability, changing ideas of government and monarchical roles, financial speculation, new scientific discoveries, coffee houses, greater education opportunities and a more literate society, the majority of his life was spent in France with intervals in Rome and England.

To be accepted into Paris society and the court of France, nobility was a pre-requisite. Noble patrons found themselves supporting a claim to James Edward for a “Certificate of Nobility.” Thus granted, our hero now became “Chevalier Ramsay” a title he much treasured right up to his death.

Just as every Grimaldi is not a Prince of Monaco, every Ramsay is not a relative of the Earl of Dalhousie¹

Oh, and by the way, I have failed to mention that he was Scottish born.

Born to Andrew and Susanna Ramsay, a baker of the town of Ayr, around 9 June 1686. The actual location is in doubt, as he may have been born in Ireland. Andrew Ramsay (Snr) was in trouble with the authorities in 1664 and left, with his wife, until 1668. No christening record can be found in Ayr for that period.^{2 3}

Andrew (Snr) was a staunch Presbyterian and would presumably have ensured the infant was christened promptly. On the other hand, Susanna apparently was Episcopalian and may have exerted some influence as to the choice of church. This “mixed marriage” may have been the source of young Andrew’s later doubts and troubles.⁴

¹ Mollier, Pierre. When Andre’ Michel Ramsay became a true knight. *The Union Chain* 2009/2 (No.48) pp. 30-37

² In 1664 a number of Covenanters were summonsd to court in Ayr for their political activities. At the accession of James II in 1665, Covenanting was declared treasonous and Covenanters were persecuted. It was at this point that the Ramsay family left for Ireland before subsequently returning to Ayr.

³ Anecdotes de la vie de Messire Andre’ Michel de Ramsay. Bibliotheque Mejanas, cited in ‘Chevalier Ramsay, A new appreciation’. Batham, C.N. *AQC* 1968.

⁴ The phrase “son of a baker” flags an unconscious bias in writings about the chevalier. His father was potentially a “freeman” and a guild member, this places him far higher in the social order of 18th century Scotland than such a phrase elicits in the 21st century. Free man or freedom of the Borough meant that Andrew (Snr) was entitled to purchase and sell property, enter into contracts, trade on his own account, sue for compensation and other legal freedoms. Andrew’s home life may have been more comfortable than we imagine. Other researches describe him as sensitive.

Fortunately, by the time Andrew was of school age, the Ayr parish (burgh) school was of sound reputation according to the strictures established under the Kirk.

This schooling was followed by attending a grammar school.

The principal function of the early 18th century grammar schools was the instruction of Latin grammar, Mathematics, Greek, Rhetoric and Logic leading toward matriculation and entry to a university.

Earning an Ayrshire bursary, it can be assumed that a career at law or the clergy would be his destiny. Having matriculated, at a university he would be a fee paying student, entitled to borrow from the library, wear a student gown (the length of that was an indication of student status) and be awarded a degree on graduation, a privilege not enjoyed by non-matriculated students.

Access to university in Scotland during that period was more open than English, German or French universities, less expensive and more open to reflecting society. Bursaries were available for training the clergy, students could live off campus, home or in lodgings.⁵ The curriculum was also more philosophical. Could this be the germination of the seed of his religious uncertainties? Resulting in the abandonment of a future career in the ministry.

Ramsay lived through a turbulent period across the latter 17th and first half of the 18th century. This turbulence was a carry-over of unresolved monarchial, civil and religious issues in both Britain and France. Religious unrest was both intellectual and physical. Monarchs attempted to centralize government, triggering voluminous hostile publications on liberty, religious tolerance, parliamentary role, political economy and corruption in civil and government life. Not only was Britain and France in turmoil, Ramsay was plagued by religious doubt in these formative years

By 1708 Ramsay, the young student sought a solution in Deism, probably from the advice of his mother to eschew Calvinism, at universities in Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The latter university was a centre of religious adventurism in Scotland.

Drifting into the Garden Circle, a group of mystics espousing the ideas of catholic contemplatives, he became acquainted with a number of like minds with whom he corresponded for many years. His contemporaries were George Garden, a controversial Episcopalian minister; his brother James Garden, author of *Contemplative Theology*; George Cheyne, physician and natural philosopher; Robert Keith, Episcopal bishop and historian; Alex Forbes (Lord Pitsligo), Philosopher and Jacobite officer; James Olgilvy, Later 3rd Earl of Airlie and Lord Dexford⁶.

This group of notables introduced Ramsay to a wider world of contacts in London and the writings of Mme Bourignon, Boerhaave, Mme Guyon and Archbishop Fenelon.⁷

⁵ Ditchburn, David. *Aberdeen before 1800*. Tuckwell Press. Chap 15. 'Educating the Elite. Aberdeen and its Universities.' 2002. p. 343

⁶ Henderson, George David, *Mystics of the Northeast*. Aberdeen, The Third Spalding Club 1934

⁷ George Garden (1649-1733) was a minister of the Church of Scotland and had been educated at Kings College Aberdeen and awarded an MA in 1666, followed by further studies and lecturing. He came from a minister's family and eventually ordained in 1677 by Bishop Scougal. Whilst a minister with the Kirk of St. Nicholas in New Aberdeen, by 1692 he was "laid aside" for "not praying for their majesties" William and Mary. Now with little religious duties, time was found to explore and translate the writings of Mme Bourignon, a continental mystic with a different view of Roman Catholicism. Translating her writings to English and adding prefaces laced with his thoughts. The Commission of the General assembly by 1700 required his presence at an enquiry in connection with his authorship of "*An apology for M Antonia Bourignon*". Refusing to disavow the authorship, he was

How Ramsay earned a living during this period is unknown, perhaps he already had learnt how to manipulate a way through life by having the appropriate introductions, alternatively, was he earning a living as a lowly schoolmaster? Through this period Ramsay explored various sects and branches of mysticism, namely: Quietism, Socianism, Arminianism, pyrrhonism.

At the end of 1708, moving to London, fortune smiled with the offer from the young Earl of Wymess to tutor his two children, the eldest was eight. This is the first record of his activity as a pedagogue. A task so easy at Isleworth that in 1709 he wrote to Bishop Keith “all my ambition now is to live forgotten by all”.

Being forgotten was the last thing that occurred, under the influence of Garden; by 1710, it was suggested to meet with Pierre Poirot a European mystic, much admired by the Garden Circle, at Rhynsburg. During the period at Rhynsburg, he attended lectures by Boerhaavan at Leyden university, these were also sources of knowledge and maintained his religious disquiet. The time at Rhynsburg was also only a few months duration.

A short explanation on the group of Mystics.

Mme Bourignon

Ostensibly a ‘Quietist’ the Mme. was a mystic and problem for the roman church. She believed she was chosen by god to restore true Christianity beyond the Dutch republic. The main tenant of her mystic philosophy was that faith was not dependant on priests, dogma or structure but could be found in the individual.

Pierre Poirot translated the French edition of Bourignon and corresponded with the Garden Circle in Aberdeen, influencing Ramsay to go to Rhynsburg

Mme Guyon: embraced the principles of Mme Bourignon and mysticism, following a disastrous start to life, but, maintaining to keep her inheritance, sought to actively convert girls to faith and contemplation.

Her early career enticed a young priest, Fenelon, to minister to a ‘school’ she established for converted girls to catholicize from Protestantism.

Her writings put her on a collision course with the Bishop of Geneva, Fenelon later defended her, when she was in trouble with the church authorities, and undertook an extended letter campaign with Cardinal Le Camus.

For his efforts, Fenelon was ‘banished’ to the city of Cambrai. As Fenelon was from a noble family, the title of Archbishop was granted by church authorities. Far from remaining quiet, the archbishop wrote not only religious topics but thinly veiled political works and an epic poem (*Tele'maque. 1699*) expounding a “princely” instruction manual for government using Greek myths as a structure for his thinking.

At this point in Ramsay’s life, (1710) some spurious sources describe a period of military activity,⁸ at the completion of this questionable activity some claim there were letters of recommendation to Archbishop Fenelon by officers engaged in the Spanish War of Succession.⁹ Other sources put it that it was Poroit who was the predominating influence.

subsequently cited to the assembly of 1701. Refusing to appear, he was deposed and “prohibited from exercising his ministry” Undeterred, he continued his ministry to his followers who adhered to episcopacy.

⁸ Lodge Chevalier Ramsay No.4. Brussels. Belgium.

⁹ Lodge Chevalier Ramsay No.4. Brussels. Belgium.

Sound evidence does exist that Ramsay spent some 3 years with Fenelon's household functioning as secretary to the Archbishops correspondence. Also converting to catholicism after many discussions¹⁰.

There is uncertainty when he departed from the Fenelon household at Cambrai, as there are overlaps in the records that he also served as Mme Guyon's translator and secretary.

The events between 1710 and 1717 are difficult to place in a simple geometric sequence, these are:

- Leaving Rhynsburg
- Military activity?
- Joining the Fenelon household
- Secretary to Mme Guyon,
- Death of Fenelon on 7 January 1715
- Leaves for Paris , (end of 1716)
- Death of Guyon 1717

Living in Paris, Ramsay, the author and tutor, over a number of years presents a corpus of writings eagerly sought by readers and thinkers of the early 18th century. A tredecim (13 years) of work commencing in 1719 appears as follows:

- Essay de Politique (1719)*
- Essay philosophique sur le government civil (1721)*
- L'Historie de la Vie de Fenelon (1723)*
- Les Voyages de Cyrus (1727)*
- A plan for education of a young prince (1732)*

And published posthumously:

- The philosophical principles of natural and revealed religion (1748/9) (2 volumes)*
- Historie du viscomte de Turenne (1771) (2 Volumes)*

Following his departure from Blois and Mme. Guyon, sometime in 1716, Ramsay went to Paris and remained there mostly for the rest of his life except for short periods in Rome and England.

As a tutor to the son of the Comte de Sassanage, first gentleman in the chamber of the Duc d'Orleans, who co-incidentally was the Grand Master of the Royal and Military Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem, the opportunity to become a Knight in this order required evidence of nobility.¹¹

In Paris, his tutoring was relaxed and he found time to compile *Le Historie un vie de Fenelon*, a book in which Ramsay depicted a strong bond with the Archbishop but little of Fenelon's life. Ramsay, however, took the option of describing the plight of Mme Guyon's Quietist affair, his conversion to Roman Catholicism and promoted James Stuarts' Jacobite cause. So much to the point the family sought a different biographer. However that work failed to materialize. The *Vie de Fenelon* remained the standard text on the Archbishop for the next 150 years.

In spite of the success of his writings, Ramsay sought acceptance into Paris society and, for acceptance into French society some questions of origin and rank were pre-requisite. His reception to the Order of St. Lazarus required evidence of "eight quarters" of nobility. Hence a "Certificate of Nobility" was the key.

¹⁰ Lodge Chevalier Ramsay No.4. Brussels. Belgium.

¹¹ Mollier, Pierre. *When Andre' Michel Ramsay became a true knight*. The Union Chain 2009/2 (No.48) pp. 30-37

On 20 May 1723 the Regent of France, Phillip d'Orleans, enrolled him a Knight of Justice in the Order of Saint Lazarus. A 'Knight of Justice' was the rank awarded to noble entrants, whereas persons of merit were awarded 'Knight of Grace'. Ramsay was now entitled to the rank of 'Chevalier'.

The elevation to a Knight was a reward to loyal servants of France, it also brought to married Knights, a pension from the Abby of Signy.

The ceremony must have made a distinct impression on this sensitive candidate and germinated the crusader epic aspect of his oration. Ramsay entered a close circle to the French royal court. His Jacobite loyalties to James would have been known and his connections secured favors.

A small problem: the 'Certificate of Nobility' was signed by James Francis Edward on 24 May 1723. Three days after the event!

Perhaps this was to replace the "eight quarters"¹²

In September 1722 Ramsay's tutoring at the Comte de Sassenage household being terminated, through the good offices of the Duke of Mar, George Granville and Lord Lansdowne, Ramsay was appointed tutor in Rome to Charles Edward Stuart, eldest child of James Francis Edward.

By 1724 Ramsay was back in Paris following dismissal from the court and a termination payment of 100 guineas. Ramsay's reason was that he was dissatisfied with the court, others say it was from an altercation with Forbes (Lord Pitsligo) and a third opinion was that he was spying for the Earl of Mar, a member of the Triumvirate (Earl of Mar, George Granville, Lord Lansdowne) that had already lost favour at the Stuart court. In a letter, James commented: *He was an "odd body" who had exposed himself strangely to the court, but the prince would "be charitable enough to think him a 'madd' man"*¹³.

Back in Paris, looking at a literary career, Ramsay became a member of *Club De L'Entresol*, a circle of thinkers committed to the establishment of a French absolutism. Notable members of the club were Montesquieu, Abbe de Saint-Pierre and Lord Bolingbroke. It was during these years that his most successful work, *Travels of Cyrus*, was published and quickly republished due to demand in Europe. The English translation was undertaken by Garden Circle colleague, Nathaniel Hooke.

Though, as an author he was subjected to criticism and accused of plagiarism.

A stinging commentary from Voltaire (who despised Ramsay) wrote:

Ramsay, who after had been a Presbyterian in his native Scotland, an Anglican in London, then a Quaker and who finally persuaded Fenelon that he was a Catholic, and even pretended a penchant for celestial love-Ramsay, I say, compiled the "Travels of Cyrus" because his master made his Telemachus^(x) travel. So far, he only imitated. On conducting Cyrus into Egypt, he employs the same expressions as Bossuet, whom he copies word for word without citing, this is plagiarism complete. One of my friends reproached him with this one day: Ramsey replied that he was not aware of it and that it was not surprising he would think like Fenelon and write like Bossuet.⁽¹¹⁾

You will find it instructive to compare the following passages from a critic's pamphlet:

"A Criticism upon Mr. Ramsay's "Travels of Cyrus"
WHEREIN

¹² Mollier, Pierre. *When Andre' Michel Ramsay became a true knight*. The Union Chain 2009/2 (No.48) pp. 30-37

¹³ Mansfield, Andrew. *Ideas of Monarchical Reform*. Manchester University Press. 2015

The character of CYRUS is cleared up and the many Absurdities, Inconsistencies, Trifling Sentiments, Affected Expressions, Obscurities, Injudicious Reflections, False Quotations and Notorious Plagiarisms of Mr. RAMSAY, are Exposed and Rectified

Stephen Whatley

J Pemberton (London) 1729

Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux

Discourse upon Useful History

p. 516 (1681)

It seldom rains in Egypt: but this River (the Nile) which waters the whole country by its regular overflowing bring it the Rains and melted Snows of other Countries. To multiply so useful a River, an infinite Number of Canals of incredible Length and Breadth are cut across the country. The Nile carries Fruitfulness everywhere with its wholesome waters, makes a communication between the cities, joins the Great Sea with the Red Sea and maintains both Foreign and Domestic commerce.....

Andrew M Ramsay

Travels of Cyrus

French 1727, translated 1729

Vol 1, p. 157

It seldom rains in Egypt: but the Nile which water it by regular overflowing, supplies it with the rains and melted snows of other countries. An infinite number of channels were cut cross it, in order to multiply so useful a river. The Nile carries Fruitfulness everywhere with its waters makes a communication with its cities, joins the Great Sea with the Red Sea and by that means maintains both Foreign and Domestic commerce.....

In this period plagiarism was not considered the academic crime it is today but the process did provide ammunition for a contrary opinion of the writer.

A different Andrew Ramsay (1574-1659) penned an epic poem in Latin (1633) that reads very similar to Milton's *Paradise Lost*.¹⁴ Milton, of course achieved the greater acclaim and A.M. Ramsay was probably able to compare the two works in Latin, in his university years. The main conclusion being: plagiarism is OK.

Further accusations were made concerning 14 pages verbatim copied from Bousset's *Discours sur l'Histori Universelle*(1678)¹⁵ the pages later expunged from subsequent editions.

None the less *Travels of Cyrus* enjoyed several editions from various publishers and is still in print via 'book to order' print houses and antiquarian bookshops.

Moving forward to 1728, Lord Lyon, King of Arms in Edinburgh, had been cajoled by Ramsay and supported by the Earl of Mar to have awarded "Diploma of Nobility" to further the claims of high birth.

England was by now under the rule of the Protestant Hanoverian court of George II and our hero was offered a position of tutoring the King's children. His reputation as a tutor must have been well regarded for such an offer. Surprisingly, the offer was refused, as he felt it unwise to be a Catholic tutor in a Protestant household.

He did however, travel to England for a number of reasons, his *Travels of Cyrus* was a popular read and some translation work with Hooke was undertaken. He was elected to the Royal Society in 1730 to mingle amongst the notables.

¹⁴ Mansfield, Andrew. *Ideas of Monarchical Reform*. Manchester University Press. 2015

¹⁵ Henderson, George David, *Chevalier Ramsay* Thomas Nelson, London 1952

Additional honors were bestowed in March that year by admission to the Gentleman's Society of Spalding, an antiquarian society devoted to literary discussion whose members included Newton (whom he much admired) and Alexander Pope amongst others.¹⁶

On 9 or 16 March the Horn Lodge welcomed the initiate, Andrew Michael Ramsay, into freemasonry. The *London Evening Post* reported:

On Monday night last at the Horn Lodge in the Palace yard, Westminster, (whereof the Duke of Richmond is Master) there was a numerous appearance of persons of distinction, at which time the Marquis of Beaumont, eldest son and heir apparent to his Grace the Duke of Roxburghe, Earl Kell of Wakefield, a peer of Great Britain; Sir Francis Henry Drake Bart, the marquis of Quesne; Thomas Hull of Nanteos Esq.; The Chevalier Ramsay; and Dr Misaubin, were admitted members of the Ancient Society of Free Accepted Masons.

In April, a Doctorate of Civil Law was bestowed on him by William King, (Jacobite) at Oxford University. He rewarded St Mary's Hall (Oxford) by presenting the rights to *Travels of Cyrus* in perpetuity to the college.¹⁷ Ramsay was the first Catholic to receive this award since the Reformation.

Surely, this is the apogee of the man's career, a Scottish Frenchman receiving English accomplishments.

Returning to France and the pension from the Abby of Signy, this required a marriage, the suitable spouse was found in the daughter (Marie) of Sir David Nairne (under-secretary to James Francis Edward). To enhance the family status, Sir David recommended that James Francis Edward make Ramsay a Knight and Baronet, thus in March 1735 a warrant indicating remainder to male heirs, was issued. The marriage apparently took place in June of that year.

During 13 years of Masonic membership no records of his activity have been identified until December 1736 upon presentation of an 'oration' and possibly at later occasions when candidates were initiated. The oration was of two parts, one for the education of the candidate in his behavior and duties as a Freemason, the second, a fanciful history of the ancient connections. For a writer of voluminous literary works, a presentation of 15-18 minutes must have been a mere afterthought.

For further acclamation, the oration was submitted to Cardinal Fluery for a "Imprimatur", seeking the cardinals support for freemasonry, and editing prior to submission to the censors.

The initial reply has not survived. Ramsay wrote a second letter in reply to Cardinal Fluery only to be marginally annotated "It is not the King's wish".

Following the rebuttal, whilst not abandoning freemasonry, only casual references of a Masonic nature have been identified as discussions, with Masonic authors.

All the while (1724 to 1741) Ramsay had associated with the household of Duc de Sully as a tutor.

¹⁶ A Gentleman's Society, Founded 3 Nov 1711 at Younger's coffee house in Spalding. *Mr. Spectator and the coffee house public sphere*; Cowan, Brian; *18th Century Studies* (J) Vol 37.3 (2004) pp. 345-347. 'Coffee houses were commercial enterprises that preyed upon the pretentious, extorting money from lazy posers in exchange for a den where they could imagine themselves great thinkers, philosophers and politicians.' Adam J Smith, *Coffee shops - the hangouts of choice for hipsters of the 18th century*. The Conversation 30/06/2015. 300 years later 'Youngers Ale' may be enjoyed in Spalding.

¹⁷ Batham, C.M. *Chevalier Ramsay, A New Appreciation*, AQC 1968 p. 285

Failing health but still dictating his “Anecdotes”¹⁸ to Marie, he entered the Grand Lodge Above on 6 May 1743. His death certificate was signed by two prominent masons; Alexander Montgomery, Earl Eglentown, Peer of Scotland and Charles Radclyffe, Earl Derwentwater, Peer of England. Other signatories were Michael Ramsay (a cousin?), Alex Hume and George Leslie.

The oration however did not gather dust; a portion has a great resemblance to an existing charge and new branches of degrees emanated through the 18th and 19th centuries.

Conclusion:

It would appear that it was inevitable that Ramsay would entertain the thought of being a freemason but:

“of course men did not join Masonic lodges to read educational publications. Yet it is well to consider what motives did actually impel men to join the fraternity. Somehow, no doubt, they had formed a favorable opinion of the order, some were attracted by the esoteric nature and the study of symbols from architecture and mathematical science. For a time it was fashionable to become a freemason.

Papal persecution of the order perhaps increased its popularity, neither Clement XII’s “*In eminent apostulas specula*” (1738) nor Benedict XIV’s “*Provides Romanorum Pontificum*” (1751) were complied with, particularly in France.

*Masculine conviviality attracted many during this century, as was a desire to learn the “secrets” of the order.*¹⁹

This period was the revealing of many scientific ‘secrets’ so why would Masonry be seen as anything different and its antiquity would have been alluring to those searching for answers.

He received an education that his enquiring mind equipped him with the ability to mix within circles of influence, cajole princes to empower him with nobility and to manipulate his way through a sea of great minds, fools and sychophants.

As a writer, his prodigious output is evidenced by the authorship of several published works, some tomes of several volumes, biographs, poems and a 15 minute oration with unintended consequences, Andrew Michael Ramsay leaves a window into the turbulent changes of the era. As a mason, Ramsay used his skills to philosophically enhance the furtherance of the interests of the craft.

Is it too much to insist that it was by merit that he gained this highly favorable position from which to view the universe of his day (Henderson, George David, *Chevalier Ramsay*)

If only he had access to LinkedIn.

Ce Qu’il nous A L’aise

¹⁸ *Anecdotes de la vie de Messire Andre’ Michel de Ramsay*. Bibliotheque Mejaes, cited in *Chevalier Ramsay, A New Appreciation*. Batham, C.N. AQC 1968.

¹⁹ Cumming, Ian: “*Freemasonry and Education in Eighteenth Century France*” *History of Education Journal* Vol 5 No.4. pp. 118-119

Additional reading:

Cherel, Albert. *Un aventurier religieux au XVIIIe siècle: Andrew Michel Ramsay. 1926.* (Copies in French language only)

Internet:

Wikipedia: for various terminology and comparisons of word meanings

The Merriam–Webster dictionary of synonyms and antonyms

Chat GP - useless and misleading.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?
FREEMASONRY IN THE 6TH MILLENNIUM A.L.

DAVID TAYLOR



“What is the reason for [publishing videos about Freemasonry]? No disrespect intended, I’m a humble person but I don’t get it. What purpose does this serve? Is nothing sacred anymore? Will there be masonic quiz sections in newspapers next? Maybe I’m old and I don’t understand what this world is becoming”.

YouTube Channel comment posted May 2024

“Can a lodge really be considered tyled if a Brother brings a mobile phone into a meeting?”

YouTube Channel comment posted February 2022

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the current perceptions and future trajectories of Freemasonry through a comprehensive survey distributed among the global community of “From the Quarries.” Engaging over 2000 respondents across 68 countries, this research leverages both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to paint a detailed portrait of the Masonic institution’s role in contemporary society and its potential evolution.

The survey responses reveal key themes such as the relevance of Freemasonry, membership challenges, the adaptation of rituals, and the organization’s role in community and global issues. While the majority of respondents find Freemasonry highly relevant, significant challenges such as membership decline, and public perception persist. Respondents emphasize the importance of preserving traditional practices while also advocating for enhanced educational programs, increased transparency, and greater global collaboration.

This paper provides actionable recommendations based on the survey findings, aiming to balance the preservation of core values with the need for modernization. These recommendations include enhancing educational initiatives, increasing public engagement,

fostering global unity, and adopting more inclusive membership policies. The study concludes that addressing these challenges and contradictions is crucial for Freemasonry to remain relevant and impactful in the 21st century.

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Introduction

Freemasonry has experienced notable changes in membership throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. At its peak in the late 1950s, the Craft in the United States boasted nearly 4 million members. This period of growth was characterized by a post-war boom in civic and fraternal organizations, which aligned with the values and social structures of the time.

However, from the 1960s onwards, Freemasonry began to see a steady decline in membership. Several factors contributed to this trend, including changing societal values, increased individualism, and a shift away from traditional social organizations. By 2000, membership in the U.S. had fallen to approximately 1.8 million, and this downward trend continued into the 21st century. As of 2023, membership numbers have further decreased to around 869,429,

marking the lowest total in nearly a century. This decline is attributed to various factors, including the aging demographic of current members and the organization's struggle to attract younger generations in a rapidly changing social landscape.¹

In the United Kingdom, the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) has also seen a significant decline in membership. The UGLE has taken steps to modernize its image and increase transparency, including publishing annual reports to provide insights into its activities and financial health. Despite these efforts, the membership decline mirrors the trends observed in the United States, with societal changes and competition from other social and professional networks playing significant roles.²

The decline is not uniform across all regions. For example, Freemasonry in some European countries and parts of Asia has remained relatively stable, thanks to strong cultural traditions and active community engagement. The diversity of these trends highlights the importance of local contexts in shaping the success and challenges faced by Masonic lodges globally.^{3 4}

Efforts to reverse the decline have included emphasizing Freemasonry's historical and philosophical significance, enhancing community involvement, and leveraging modern technology to engage potential members. Despite these initiatives, the overall trend suggests that Freemasonry must continue to adapt to the evolving social and cultural landscape to sustain its relevance and appeal.⁵

While Freemasonry continues to face significant membership challenges, its resilience and ongoing efforts to modernize suggest a potential for renewal and adaptation in the future. The organization's ability to balance tradition with contemporary relevance will be crucial in navigating these changes.

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the contemporary perceptions and anticipated future trajectories of Freemasonry among its members and broader audience. Conducted through a survey of the global community of the "From the Quarries" Masonic YouTube channel, this research aims to understand the multifaceted attitudes towards the institution's relevance and evolution in modern society. By engaging with over 2000 respondents from 68 countries, the study employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to paint a detailed portrait of Freemasonry's current status and potential paths forward.

This research is particularly significant given the historical context and current challenges facing Freemasonry. The institution has seen fluctuating membership numbers and varying degrees of public perception over the past century. By analysing responses to a set of ten structured questions, the study seeks to uncover patterns in the respondents' views on how Freemasonry should adapt and evolve to maintain its relevance and appeal.

Moreover, the study aims to explore the balance between maintaining traditional Masonic values and embracing necessary innovations. This balance is crucial for the Craft's sustainability and growth, particularly in light of societal changes and technological advancements.

¹ <https://msana.com/services/u-s-membership-statistics/>

² <https://www.ugle.org.uk/about-us/annual-reports>

³ <https://freemasonscommunity.life/researching-freemasonry-in-the-21st-century-opportunities-and-challenges/>

⁴ <https://www.thesquaremagazine.com/mag/article/20230221st-century-freemasonry-a-sign-of-the-times/>

⁵ <https://freemasoninformation.com/masonictraveler/so-what-the-dynamic-of-masonic-membership/>

The inclusion of a 13% response rate from non-Masons adds an external perspective, enriching the study's findings and providing a more comprehensive view of public attitudes towards Freemasonry. This dual perspective is essential for understanding the broader societal implications and potential outreach opportunities for the Craft.

In essence, this study aims to provide a robust framework for discussing the future of Freemasonry, ensuring that it remains a vital and dynamic institution well into the 6th Millennium Anno Lucis.

Survey Statistics and Participant Demographics

Platform

The study was conducted using the "From the Quarries" YouTube channel. The survey, comprising ten questions, was distributed through the channel's community page, leveraging its engaged and diverse audience to gather quantitative and qualitative data. This platform provided an effective medium for reaching a broad spectrum of individuals interested in Freemasonry, ensuring a representative dataset for the study.

Dataset

From the approximately 7500 channel subscribers at the time the survey was conducted (March to April 2024) 2007 responses were received. Participants were also invited to add additional comments or observations for each question. A total of 138 comments were received.

Sex

The respondents were predominantly male, accounting for 94.1% of responses, with females making up 5.8% and unspecified 0.1%.

Age

The majority of respondents are aged 35-44 (28.1%), followed by those aged 45-54 (24.0%), 25-34 (19.4%), 55-64 (14.8%), and 65+ (10.7%). Younger respondents, aged 18-24, constitute 2.9%, while there are no respondents in the 13-17 age group.

Location

Geographically, the largest portion of the respondents are based in the USA (48.5%), followed by the UK (9.5%), Canada (3.3%), Australia (2.9%), and the Philippines (1.2%), with the remaining 34.7% spread across 63 other countries.

Viewing Device

57.1% of respondents view their YouTube content on mobile phones, 20.2% on televisions, 16.6% on computers, and 7.3% on tablets.

Methodology

Distribution

Questions were posted bi-weekly on the From the Quarries YouTube 'Community Page'. Copies of these questions were also posted to approximately 500 additional Website, Email and Facebook subscribers, but all responses were collated through YouTube. Participants were provided with 4 responses to each question, with a fifth 'other' response inviting feedback in the form of comments.

Tyling respondents

As it is not possible to successfully 'tyle' online participants in a study such as this, a second series of general Masonic quiz questions was used to help estimate the percentage of cowans who became involved.

Before and during the study over 80 of these questions were posted, each dealt with basic Masonic topics. They were composed in a manner that any practicing Freemason would not find them too challenging (although some did!), while cowans would be making selections based on pure guesswork.

Cumulative analysis of these questions indicates that approximately 13% of respondents are not Freemasons.

Comment Moderation

The world of online comments is a wild and untamed frontier. Under the shield of anonymity, people take advantage of the freedom to post the most extraordinary comments and claims either because they are consequence free, or simply to stir up a reaction. Such trolling is a daily part of content moderation on From the Quarries.

In general, the comments posted on From the Quarries can be divided into five (not necessarily mutually exclusive) categories:

The serious and considered who have a logical point to make.

The Ill informed who have been diverted by pop-culture stories of the Illuminati and Freemasonry's 'Secret Agenda for World Domination'™.

The religiously motivated who see anything not aligning to their belief structure as inherently evil ('Repent now!').

The strange and occult who quote reams of illogical nonsense (usually in ALL CAPS) to make some point about their possession of secret knowledge.

The trolls, who are just looking to pick a fight. Their comments are usually littered with profanities.

For the purposes of this paper, I have redacted the obscene and/or irrelevant comments. Fortunately, this was quite a small number.

Analysis

Overall Summary of Findings

Participants in the study responded to 10 survey questions:

What is your perception of Freemasonry's relevance in today's society?

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing Freemasonry today?

In what ways do you think Freemasonry can adapt its rituals and ceremonies to be more engaging for the modern member while still preserving its core principles?

How important do you think the maintenance of the secrecy and purity of the rituals of Freemasonry is from a 21st-century perspective?

What do you think that Freemasonry's role in contributing to community and global issues in the 21st century should be?

How do you think Freemasonry can improve its public image and communication with the general public?

What role do you think technology and digital platforms should play in the future of Freemasonry?

How do you think Freemasonry should play a role in promoting intercultural dialogue?

Which of the following is your preference for the future of Freemasonry?

What changes or evolutions do you think will be necessary for Freemasonry to flourish over the rest of the century?

The survey responses provide a wide-ranging overview of the current perceptions and future trajectories of Freemasonry, reflecting a diverse range of opinions from members across the globe. The findings highlight several key themes and contradictions that provide pointers for understanding the organization's role and evolution in the 21st century.

Key Themes

A number of key themes emerged from the responses:

Relevance of Freemasonry

The majority of respondents find Freemasonry highly relevant in today's society. This is supported by both the quantitative data and qualitative comments, which emphasize the importance of the organization's historical and philosophical significance.

There is a noted generational gap, with older members finding greater relevance and younger members facing challenges in understanding and engaging with the craft.

Membership Challenges

Membership decline is identified as the most significant challenge facing Freemasonry.

Respondents express concerns about the sustainability of the organization due to an aging membership and difficulties in attracting younger members.

Public perception, influenced by misinformation and conspiracy theories, is another major concern, affecting the ability to attract new members.

Adaptation of Rituals and Practices

Enhancing education within Freemasonry is the most favoured adaptation, with a strong emphasis on learning, memorization, and bonding through Masonic activities.

Incorporating technology and updating language are also seen as important, though there is a desire to preserve traditional methods and rituals.

Shortening ceremonies is suggested by some as a practical adaptation to fit modern schedules.

Role in Community and Global Issues

Leading charitable and educational initiatives is viewed as the primary role for Freemasonry in the 21st century. This aligns with the organization's values and offers opportunities for members to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Promoting peace and intercultural dialogue is also considered important, though there is significant support for maintaining a neutral and apolitical stance to avoid conflicts.

Public Image and Communication

Holding regular public events and open houses is seen as an effective way to improve Freemasonry's public image. This approach aims to demystify the organization and engage with the broader community.

An active social media presence and forming partnerships with social enterprises are also highlighted as critical strategies for modernizing communication and enhancing visibility.

Technology and Digital Platforms

Technology is viewed as primarily useful for educational purposes and enhancing global Masonic collaboration. There is also support for modernizing communication through digital platforms.

However, there is a strong sentiment to preserve traditional methods, with some respondents advocating for a minimal role for technology to ensure the integrity of Freemasonry's core values and rituals.

Future Preferences and Necessary Changes

The most favoured preference for the future is the maintenance of traditional practices without significant changes, reflecting a desire to preserve the core identity of Freemasonry. Enhancing global collaboration, increasing transparency, and adopting more inclusive membership policies are also identified as important changes to ensure the organization's growth and relevance.

Contradictions

The study returned some contradictory findings:

Preservation vs. Modernization

There is a clear tension between the desire to preserve traditional practices and the need to adapt to contemporary societal changes. While many respondents emphasize the importance of maintaining rituals and core values, others advocate for modernization through technology and updated practices.

Public Engagement vs. Secrecy

The balance between improving public image and maintaining secrecy is another point of contention. Some respondents believe increased transparency and public engagement are essential for combating misconceptions, while others feel that the secrecy of rituals is integral to Freemasonry's identity.

Inclusivity vs. Exclusivity

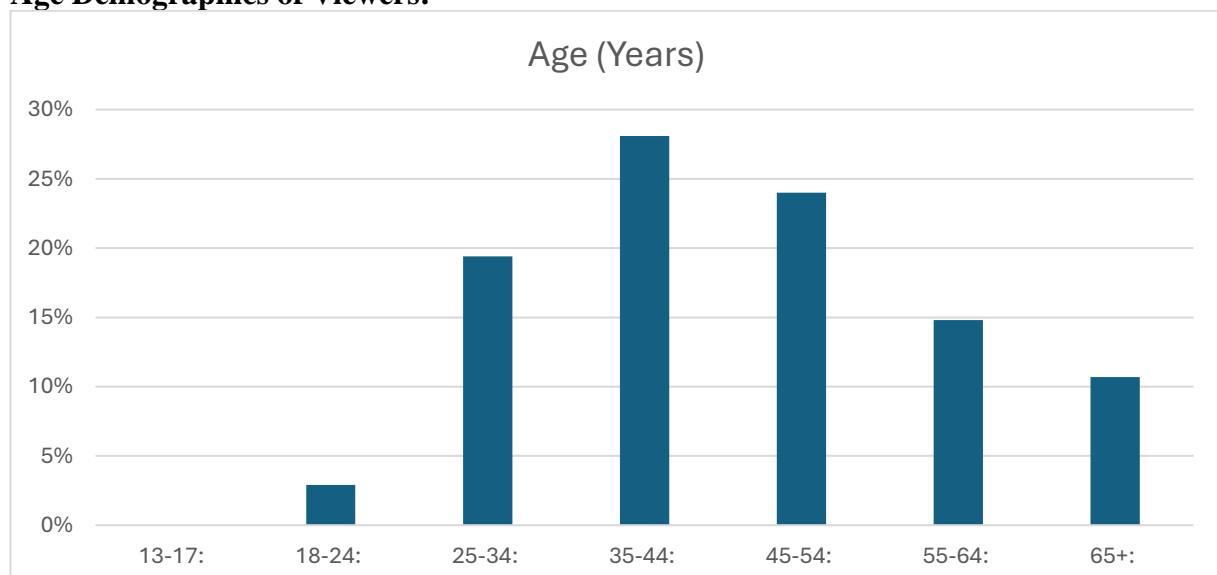
The need for more inclusive membership policies is recognized, yet there is also a strong sentiment to keep Freemasonry as a selective and sought-after organization. This reflects the challenge of balancing inclusivity with the tradition of exclusivity.

Overall, the findings reveal the complexity of Freemasonry's evolution in the modern era. While there is a strong desire to preserve the core values and traditions, there is also recognition of the need for strategic adaptations to remain relevant and impactful in a rapidly changing world. Addressing these contradictions and finding a balance between tradition and modernization is a challenge for the future.

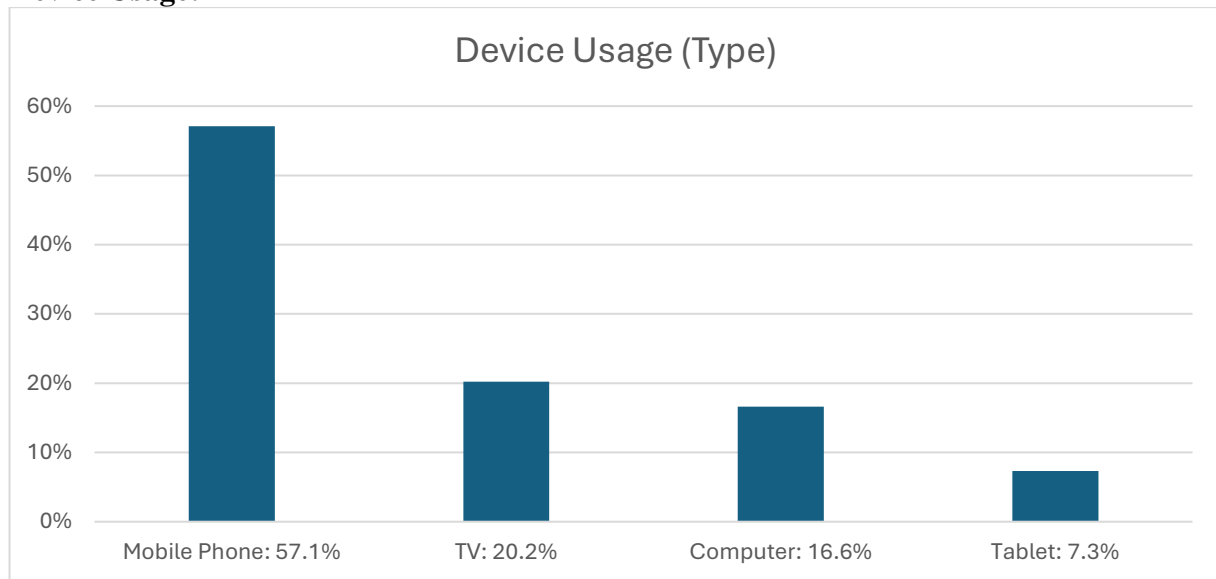
Age, Demographics and Device Usage

Although not formally part of the research project, the data on the age of participants correlated against device usage throws up some interesting data:

Age Demographics of Viewers:



Device Usage:



Correlation Analysis

By correlating these two datasets, conclusions may be drawn regarding the use of technology by survey respondents:

Younger Viewers (18-34):

Likely to use mobile phones for viewing content, reflecting broader trends in digital consumption among younger audiences who prioritize convenience and portability. The 25-34 age group constitutes 19.4% of the audience, and they are typically tech-savvy and prefer mobile devices.

Middle-aged Viewers (35-54):

This group represents the largest segment of viewers (52.1% combined for ages 35-54). They may prefer a mix of mobile phones and computers, balancing convenience with the larger screens of computers for better viewing experiences. Given the significant percentage, it's plausible that a substantial portion of mobile and TV viewership comes from this age bracket.

Older Viewers (55+):

The 55-64 and 65+ groups together make up 25.5% of the audience. Older viewers might lean more towards larger screens, such as TVs and tablets, which offer better visibility and ease of use compared to smaller mobile screens. The higher percentage of TV usage (20.2%) might correlate strongly with this demographic, who are accustomed to traditional viewing formats.

Potential Conclusions

Looking at this correlation, the following assumptions may be drawn:

Mobile Dominance:

Mobile phones are the dominant device across all age groups but especially prevalent among younger viewers (18-34). This aligns with general trends in media consumption where younger people prefer mobile devices for their versatility and ease of access.

TV Usage:

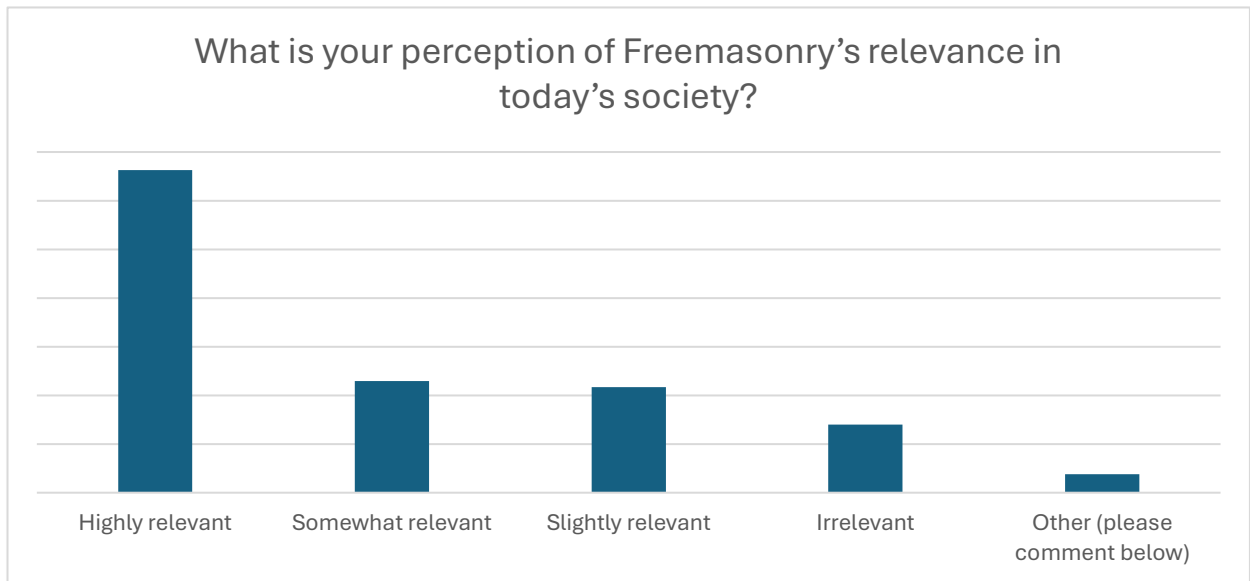
The significant TV viewership (20.2%) suggests that many middle-aged and older viewers (35+) prefer watching content on larger screens, possibly indicating a preference for viewing comfort and a more immersive experience.

Computer and Tablet Usage:

Computers are likely used by middle-aged viewers (35-54) who balance work and leisure on the same device, while tablets might be preferred by older viewers for their portability and larger screens compared to mobile phones.

By correlating these datasets, it becomes clear that age influences device preference significantly, with younger viewers favouring mobile phones and older viewers opting for larger screens like TVs and tablets. This insight can help tailor content delivery strategies to suit the viewing habits of different age groups, enhancing engagement and accessibility.

QUESTION 1



“In my district in Ontario Canada. All of our lodges are seeing members returning and also a good number of new members. Young men have a need for the craft but they don’t have the slightest understanding of what it is and what it has to offer.”

The data indicates that the majority of respondents find Freemasonry to be highly relevant in today's society. A significant number of respondents also find it somewhat relevant, while fewer respondents perceive it as slightly relevant or irrelevant.

Qualitative comments provide deeper insights into these quantitative findings. Many members express positive perceptions, noting the resurgence of interest and membership in certain regions. For instance, one respondent from Ontario, Canada, highlights that lodges are seeing members return and new members join, reflecting a need among young men for the craft, despite their limited understanding of it. Another non-Mason shares their lifelong curiosity about the craft, which began with conspiracy theories and evolved into an appreciation for its history and notable members.

“As a non-Mason, I’ve always been drawn to the craft from a young boy passing by the local lodge not knowing what goes on in the very ominous building. And learning more about the craft starting at the conspiracy theories then the history and the notable masons of the past.”

Generational insights reveal a significant gap, with older members finding greater relevance and younger members facing challenges in understanding and engaging with the craft. An EA Mason from Perth underscores the importance of intergenerational learning, describing how beneficial it is for a younger man to learn from senior members. Conversely, some comments

suggest that Freemasonry's relevance is more apparent to older gentlemen, while younger men struggle to find meaning in it, evidenced by declining membership acquisition and retention rates.

'As an EA Mason, I believe it is highly relevant in this new age. I'm a day lodge member in Perth and deliberately joined knowing this particular lodge would be full of senior members of our craft. It's amazing for a younger man like myself to sit and converse and learn from these men ...'

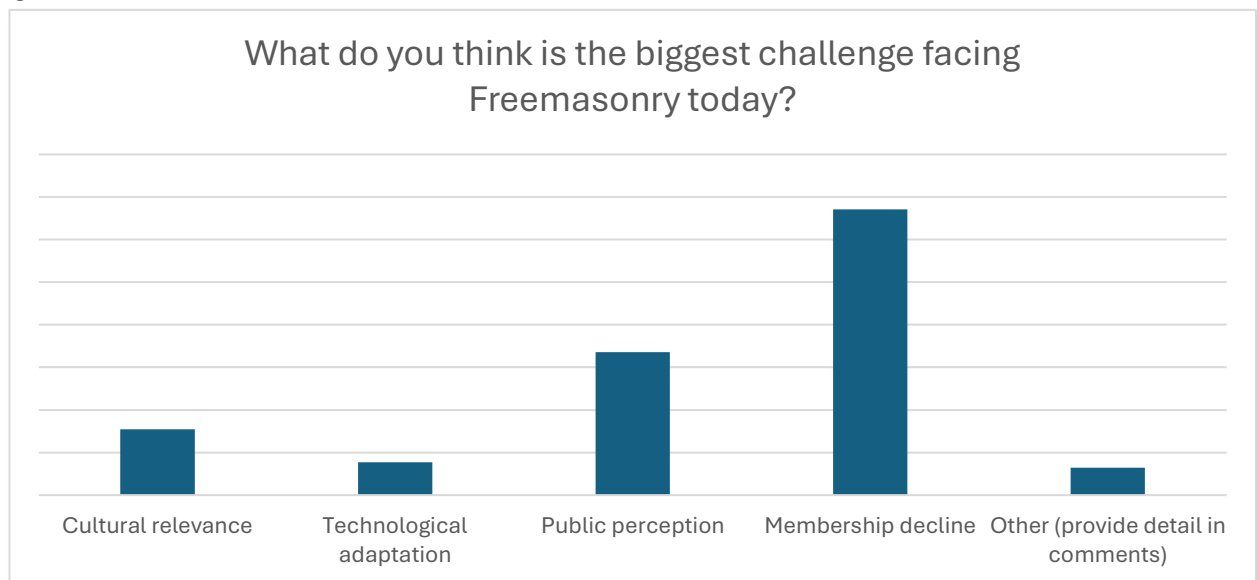
Geographically, the relevance of Freemasonry varies, with regions like Ontario experiencing a resurgence in membership, indicating that local factors significantly influence perceptions of relevance. Furthermore, comments from non-Masons highlight the curiosity and sense of mystery surrounding Freemasonry. This perception can be a double-edged sword, as it attracts interest but may also hinder broader engagement if the organization is viewed as too exclusive or secretive.

Overall, while Freemasonry is perceived as highly relevant by many, there are notable challenges related to generational engagement and geographical differences. To sustain and enhance its relevance, the organization must address these challenges and leverage its strengths in community values and historical significance.

Challenges and Criticisms:

- *"Think a lot of brothers are optimistic about the craft's relevance. If your lodge was shut down for whatever reason, your community would keep moving forward. It isn't critical."*
- *"Relevant to the older gentlemen as their long participation provides implicit meaning to life but increasingly irrelevant to younger gentlemen who are struggling to make sense of the world. Some may argue against this using their personal and anecdotal experiences, but the decline in acquisitions and retention rates speak for themselves..."*

QUESTION 2



The data indicates that the most significant challenge facing Freemasonry today is membership decline. Public perception is also a major concern, followed by cultural relevance. Technological adaptation is considered a lesser challenge.

“Membership will decline to the point where there will be insufficient resources to sustain the bureaucracy of modern Freemasonry as well as maintain the noble temples inherited from the past.”

Qualitative comments provide deeper insights into these quantitative findings. The issue of membership decline is emphasized by several respondents. One comment notes that “membership will decline to the point where there will be insufficient resources to sustain the bureaucracy of modern Freemasonry as well as maintain the noble temples inherited from the past.” Another highlights that the aging membership lacks the resources and time to develop a compelling vision for the future, exacerbating the decline.

“The biggest challenge facing Freemasonry: change in the outside world is accelerating much faster than within and at the interfaces: its aging members have neither the mental, physical, nor financial resources (nor time) to develop and deliver a compelling vision for the future to avoid collapse.”

Public perception is another major challenge. Respondents mention that lodges are closing worldwide due to negative public perception and conspiracy theories, which hinder the attraction of younger, tech-savvy individuals. One comment states, “public perception that I witness is still that of fear and possible misinformation. Often from sources not directly from practice but assumption.” This misinformation contributes to falling membership and a skewed understanding of Freemasonry.

“Lodges are closing all around the world mostly due to how public perception and conspiracy nonsense has created an inability to attract the younger, faster-paced, tech-inclined crowd.”

Cultural relevance is crucial for the organization, especially among younger members who find it increasingly difficult to connect with the traditional practices. A respondent notes, “keeping tradition. I didn’t join it because it was modern; I joined because it’s keeping the old world alive.” However, another comment points out that while older members find meaning in their long participation, younger members struggle to make sense of the organization in today’s world.

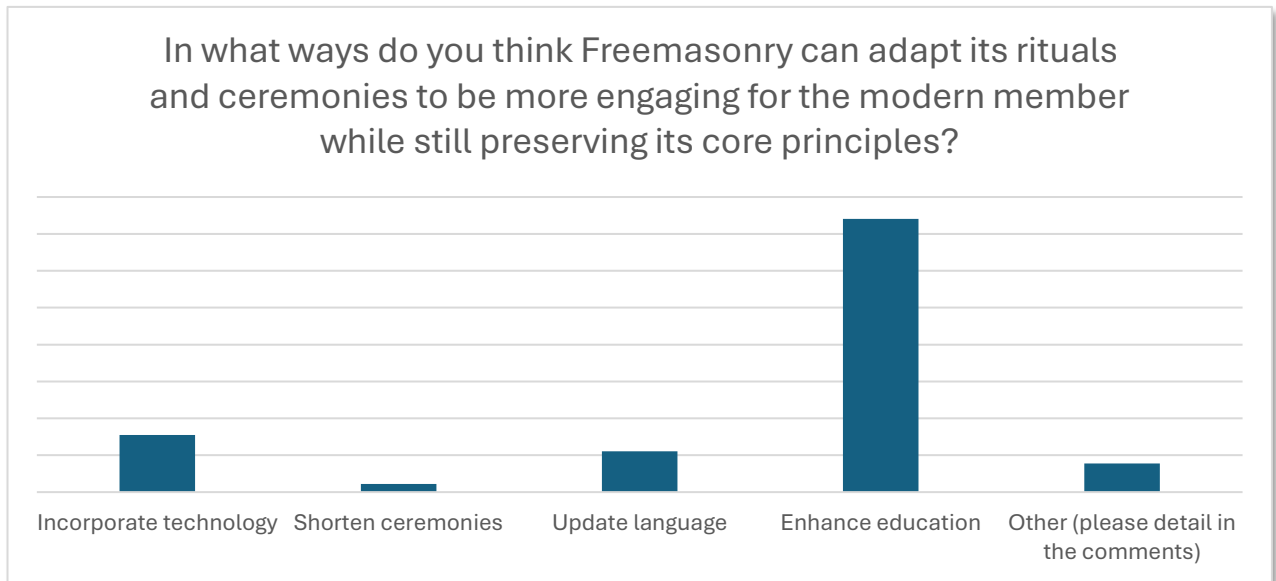
Technological adaptation is recognized as necessary but should not compromise the integrity of rituals and traditions. While virtual lodges and digital engagement are viewed positively, they have limitations. One comment suggests, “technology, yes, so long as it does not change ritual. Public perception, be active in the community and be proud of your Freemasonry.” Another adds that virtual lodges are a step in the right direction but cannot be properly tiled, highlighting the balance needed between tradition and modernization.

Technological Adaptation:

- ***“Technology, yes, so long as it does not change ritual. Public perception, be active in the community and be proud of your Freemasonry.”***
- ***“Virtual lodges are a step in the right direction but cannot reasonably be properly tiled, which may be a good thing. I’ve always advocated that ‘Every Cowan and eavesdropper is merely showing INTEREST, a step towards becoming a Brother.’”***

Overall, the primary challenges facing Freemasonry include membership decline, negative public perception, maintaining cultural relevance, and technological adaptation. Addressing these issues requires a careful balance of preserving traditions while engaging with modern technologies and improving public understanding.

QUESTION 3



The data indicates that the most favored adaptation for making Freemasonry's rituals and ceremonies more engaging for modern members is enhancing education. Incorporating technology and updating language are also considered important. Shortening ceremonies is less popular.

“The learning, memorization, and bonding is great. Ciphers and squirrely stuff are great. Speed is ok. I mean, nothing is slow aside from ‘repeating/recounting’ / business / charity stuff.”

Enhancing education is seen as a key adaptation, emphasizing the importance of learning, memorization, and bonding through Masonic activities. This could involve incorporating presentations on various aspects of Freemasonry, such as interpretations of symbols, and encouraging brethren to share their unique perspectives during meetings. These educational enhancements are viewed as essential for deepening members' understanding and engagement with the craft.

“Every meeting should have a short presentation on some aspect of Freemasonry (e.g., interpretations of symbols). The brethren would be encouraged to provide any unique perspectives on the presentation topic.”

Incorporating technology is also viewed positively, particularly for holding virtual meetings and reaching a global audience. This adaptation is seen as a way to modernize communication and make it easier for members to participate, regardless of their location. However, there are concerns about maintaining the integrity of traditional rituals and ensuring that the essence of Freemasonry is not compromised by technological advancements.

“Use modern technology to hold some meetings throughout the year (not all, just some). It is possible to reach tens of thousands across the world for many inspirational mentors and coaches.”

“Virtual lodges are a step in the right direction but cannot reasonably be properly tiled, which may be a good thing.”

Updating the language used in rituals to modern equivalents is another suggested adaptation. This change is seen as a way to make rituals more accessible and less daunting for new members, facilitating easier memorization and understanding. Regular updates to the language could help bridge the gap between tradition and contemporary relevance, making the rituals more relatable to modern members.

While less popular, shortening ceremonies is suggested by some respondents as a practical adaptation. The idea is that shorter ceremonies could better fit into the busy schedules of modern members, making it more feasible for them to participate regularly. This change aims to make the most efficient use of time during meetings, ensuring that the core principles and values of Freemasonry are still conveyed effectively.

Overall, the primary adaptations favored by respondents include enhancing education, incorporating technology, updating language, and, to a lesser extent, shortening ceremonies. These changes are aimed at making Freemasonry's rituals and ceremonies more engaging and relevant to modern members while preserving the core principles of the craft.

Update Language:

“Each lodge required to collectively visit a different lodge once per year. Every 25 years the language of the Workings should be updated to a modern equivalent to make memorization easier and less daunting for new brethren.”

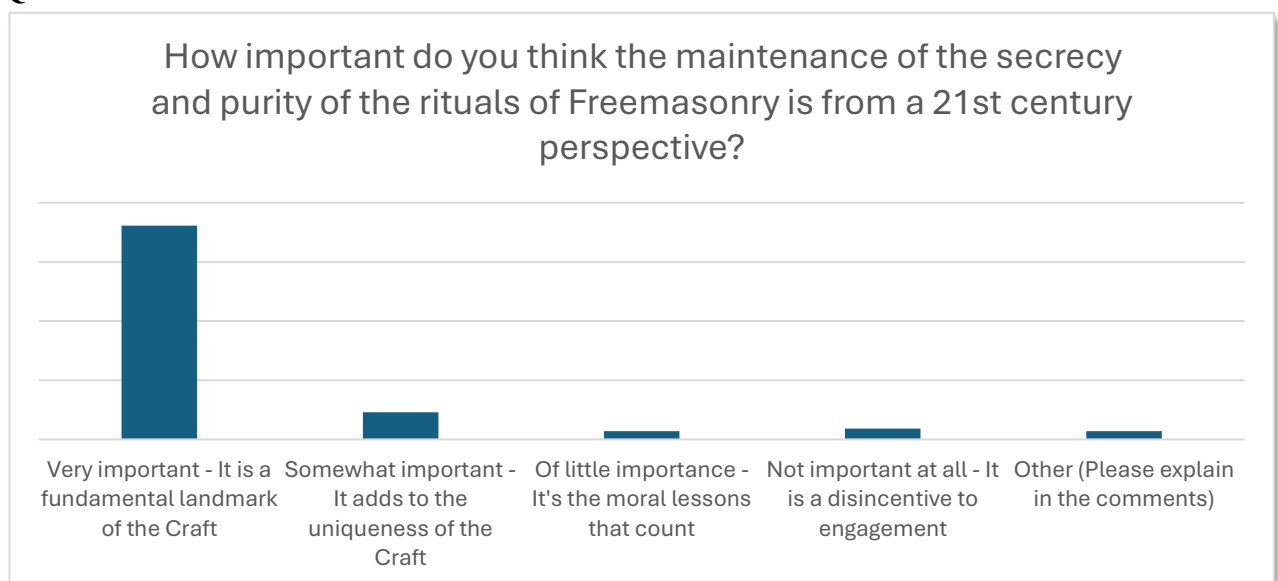
“The language must make sense, so updating it every 50 years or so is perhaps good. I think involving the new adepts immediately in the rituals and thus getting to know people.”

Shorten Ceremonies:

“Our Masonic ceremonies are of vital value but they are too lengthy. We don't have time to muck around in Freemasonry. Time is a more valuable quality than ever with increasing demands to make the best use of available time at our meetings.”

“Shorten ceremonies (because it will lead to further developments).”

QUESTION 4



“The truth is anyone with a spare \$20 can own Duncan’s Monitor. Or find the ritual for free online. Secrecy is a quaint notion. Even the ‘purity’ of the ritual is a phantom given the differences that exist from grand lodge to grand lodge.”

The data indicates that the majority of respondents believe that maintaining the secrecy and purity of the rituals of Freemasonry is very important, considering it a fundamental landmark of the Craft. A smaller group views it as somewhat important, adding to the uniqueness of Freemasonry. Very few respondents consider it of little importance or not important at all.

“The ‘secrets’ are knowledge open to those who seek and not for the ignorant. Existence would be pointless if all sought truth. Only those who do are on the true path of growth.”

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents see the secrecy and purity of the rituals as essential for preserving the tradition and significance of Freemasonry. These elements are viewed as distinguishing features that provide a unique and meaningful experience for members. While secrecy and purity are highly valued, some respondents feel that the focus should also be on the moral lessons and teachings of Freemasonry. They acknowledge that the uniqueness provided by these aspects is important, but not the sole defining feature.

“It’s important for the individual to have inner dialogue and sincerity. The ‘secrecy’ is self-imposed and builds character of a chivalrous nature.”

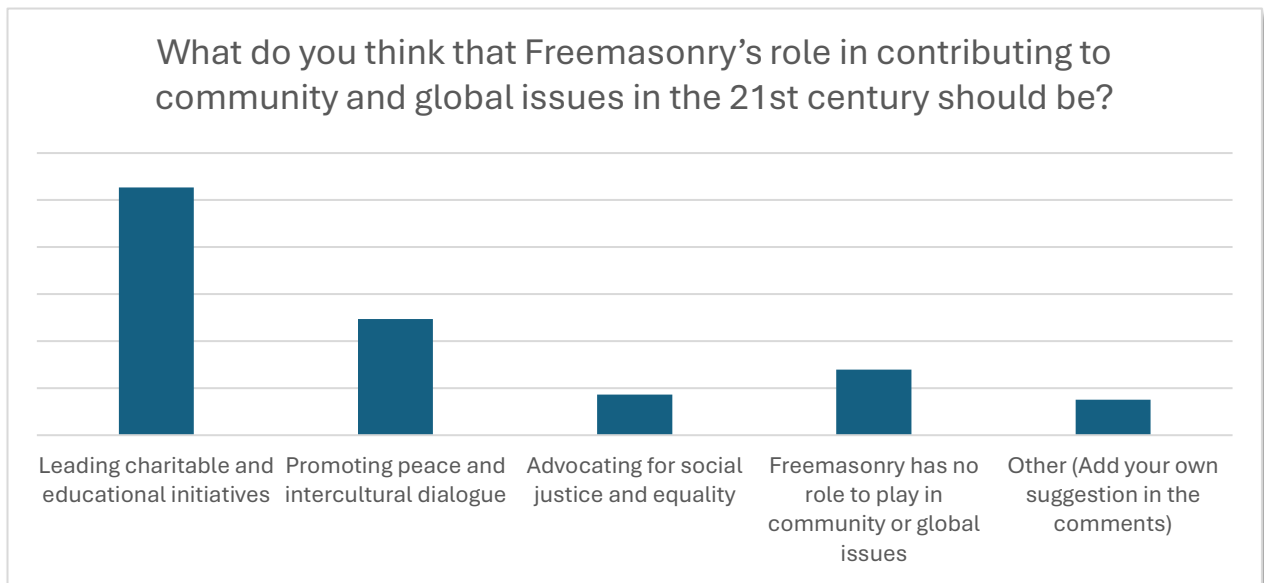
“The most important aspect of masonry according to Pike was its symbolism. Anyone who has developed a full spectrum comprehension of masonry’s symbols has gained more than any rote memorization could impart to him.”

A minority of respondents argue that the secrecy of rituals is less important in the modern context. They believe that emphasizing the moral and philosophical teachings of Freemasonry is more critical for its relevance and appeal. Some respondents offer nuanced views, suggesting that while secrecy and purity are important, there is room for adaptation and modernization to keep Freemasonry relevant in the 21st century.

Overall, the majority view the maintenance of secrecy and purity in rituals as fundamental to the Craft, essential for preserving its traditions and unique identity. A significant number see it as adding to the uniqueness of Freemasonry, though not necessarily the most critical aspect. A minority believe the moral lessons and teachings are more important than maintaining secrecy and purity. Some respondents suggest a balance between maintaining traditions and allowing for modernization to ensure continued relevance.

“It’s important for the individual to have inner dialogue and sincerity. The ‘secrecy’ is self-imposed and builds character of a chivalrous nature. I believe therefore it is beneficial to both the Brotherhood and the Brother himself.”

QUESTION 5



The data indicates that the majority of respondents believe Freemasonry's role in the 21st century should primarily focus on leading charitable and educational initiatives. Promoting peace and intercultural dialogue is also considered important. A smaller number of respondents believe that advocating for social justice and equality should be a focus, while a significant minority of respondents feel that Freemasonry has no role to play in community or global issues.

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents see the organization's involvement in charitable and educational initiatives as essential for maintaining its relevance and positive impact on society. These initiatives are viewed as aligning well with the core values of Freemasonry, offering opportunities for members to contribute meaningfully to their communities. Some respondents emphasize the importance of promoting peace and intercultural dialogue, suggesting that Freemasonry has a unique position to foster understanding and cooperation across different cultures and societies.

“Keeping the ancient teachings and knowledge living in the present, passing on to the incoming generations to ensure the knowledge for the future is still available and being taught.”

“Honestly, I believe it's a combination of the first two choices. Educational, charitable, peace and humanitarian. They all go hand in hand in my opinion.”

There is also a perspective among a smaller group that Freemasonry should advocate for social justice and equality, reflecting a more active engagement with contemporary social issues. However, a notable minority believes that Freemasonry should not engage in community or global issues, arguing that the organization's primary focus should remain on its internal goals and the personal development of its members.

“Promote enlightenment and peace.”

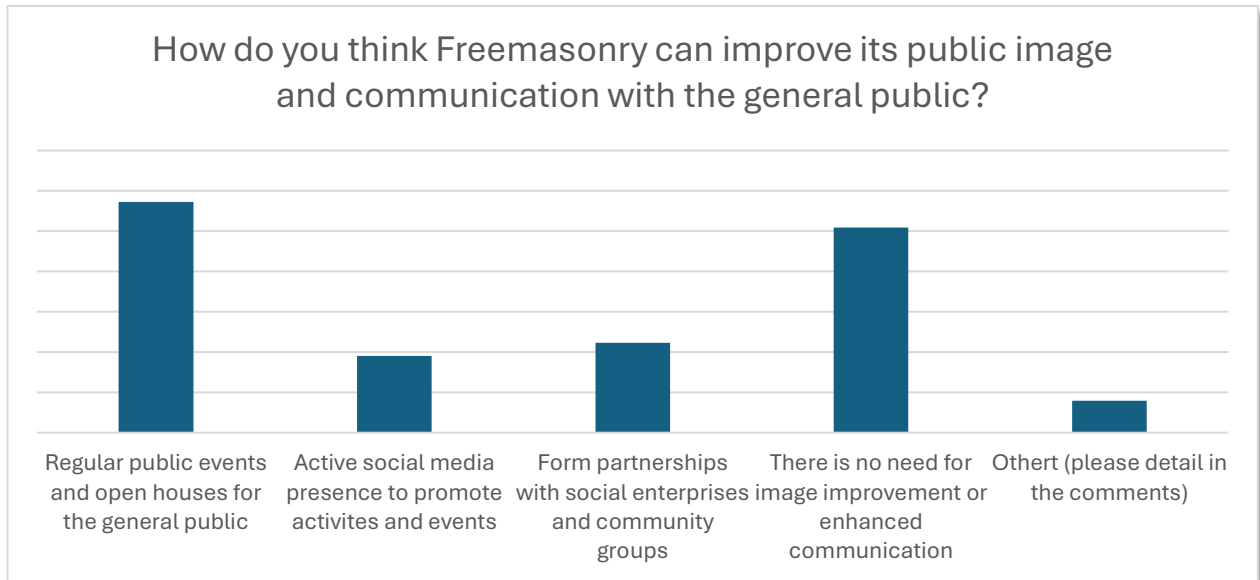
“Promoting peace and intercultural dialogue should fall within the scope of a charitable organization anyway.”

Overall, the primary roles identified for Freemasonry in the 21st century include leading charitable and educational initiatives, promoting peace and intercultural dialogue, and, to a lesser extent, advocating for social justice and equality. These roles align with the organization's traditional values while also addressing contemporary societal needs.

Freemasonry Has No Role to Play in Community or Global Issues:

- ***“Freemasonry has no role to play in community or social issues. Sadly, Freemasonry has lost its footing.”***
- ***“I put no role to play.... but I don’t believe it should be ‘no role’ but contribute to help however we can.”***

QUESTION 6



The data indicates that the most favored approach to improving Freemasonry’s public image and communication with the general public is to hold regular public events and open houses. There is also significant support for the idea that no improvement or enhanced communication is necessary. Forming partnerships with social enterprises and community groups and maintaining an active social media presence are also considered important strategies.

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents see regular public events and open houses as an effective way to demystify Freemasonry and engage with the broader community. These events provide opportunities for non-members to learn about the organization, its values, and its activities, thereby fostering a more positive and informed public perception. Additionally, forming partnerships with social enterprises and community groups is viewed as a means of enhancing Freemasonry’s visibility and demonstrating its commitment to community service.

“Spread light. Be a lighthouse to all people in these dark times.”

“Bring into light all that is secret that isn’t necessary to the continuation of the organization. The secrecy will ALWAYS draw skepticism.”

An active social media presence is also highlighted as a critical strategy for modernizing communication and reaching a wider audience. Social media platforms can be used to promote activities, share educational content, and engage with both members and the general public. However, some respondents believe that Freemasonry’s image does not require improvement, suggesting that the organization should focus on its internal goals and maintain its traditional approach to communication.

“Form partnerships with social enterprises and community groups to enhance our visibility and impact.”

“Collaborating with community groups can help show our commitment to service and improve our public image.”

“Active social media presence to promote activities and events.”

“We need to use social media more effectively to share our activities and engage with the public.”

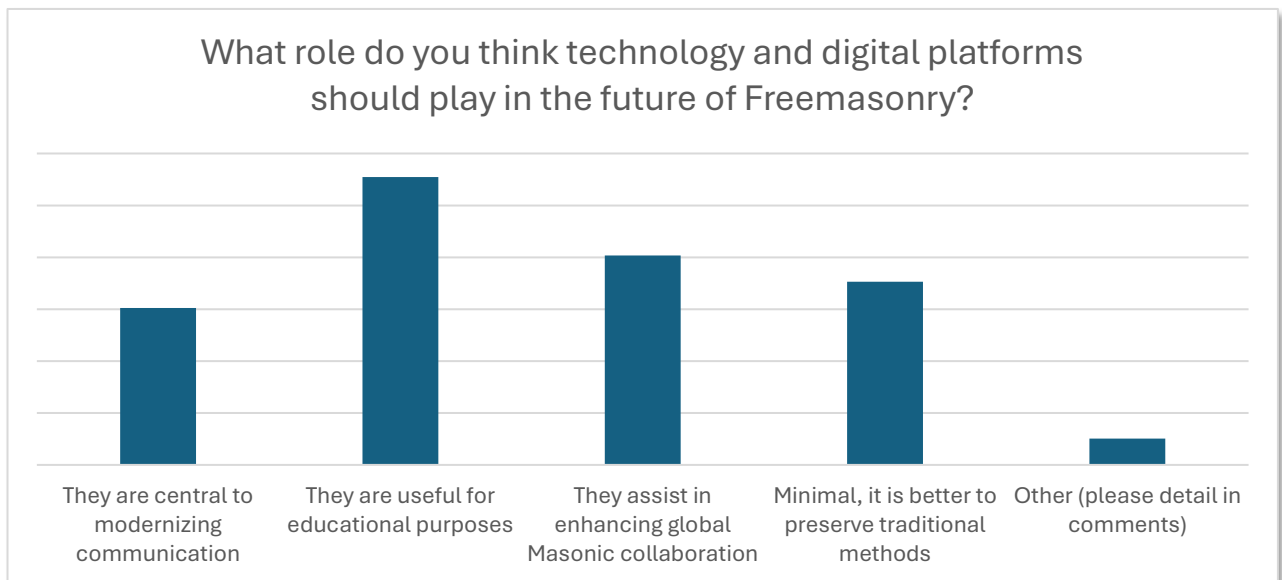
Overall, the primary strategies identified for improving Freemasonry’s public image and communication include holding regular public events and open houses, forming partnerships with social enterprises and community groups, and maintaining an active social media presence. These strategies aim to enhance the organization’s visibility, promote its values, and foster a more positive public perception while balancing the need to preserve its traditions.

No Need for Image Improvement or Enhanced Communication:

“There is no need for image improvement or enhanced communication.”

“The true secrets of Freemasonry can only be discovered by being a Freemason. They aren’t something that can be explained; they have to be experienced.”

QUESTION 7



The data indicates that respondents view technology and digital platforms as primarily useful for educational purposes. Enhancing global Masonic collaboration is also considered an important role for technology. Modernizing communication is seen as central by 30% of respondents, while 35% believe that technology should play a minimal role, emphasizing the preservation of traditional methods.

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents see the educational potential of technology as a significant benefit for Freemasonry. Digital platforms can facilitate the sharing of Masonic knowledge, provide access to educational resources, and support the continuous learning and development of members. This educational focus is seen as a way to enhance the overall understanding and engagement of members with the craft.

“Well-sorted-out educational programs are well overdue. Make something countrywide. Make it necessary to advance in grand lines to do mandatory education.”

“Incorporation of all methods should be and can be utilized and still stay steadfast within the boundaries of what is considered part and parcel of the craft.”

Enhancing global Masonic collaboration is another important role identified for technology. Respondents highlight that digital platforms can connect members from different regions, fostering a sense of global brotherhood and allowing for the exchange of ideas and best practices. This global collaboration is viewed as a way to strengthen the Masonic community and promote unity among members worldwide.

Modernizing communication is also seen as a crucial function of technology. Digital platforms can be used to streamline communication within lodges, making it easier to organize events, share information, and keep members informed. However, there is also a notable concern about preserving traditional methods, with some respondents advocating for a minimal role for technology to ensure that the core values and rituals of Freemasonry are maintained without dilution.

“No getting away from the very fast forward movement to digital, whether communication or currency it’s here and now. If one doesn’t move forward then stagnation will encompass and all will be left behind and lose out.”

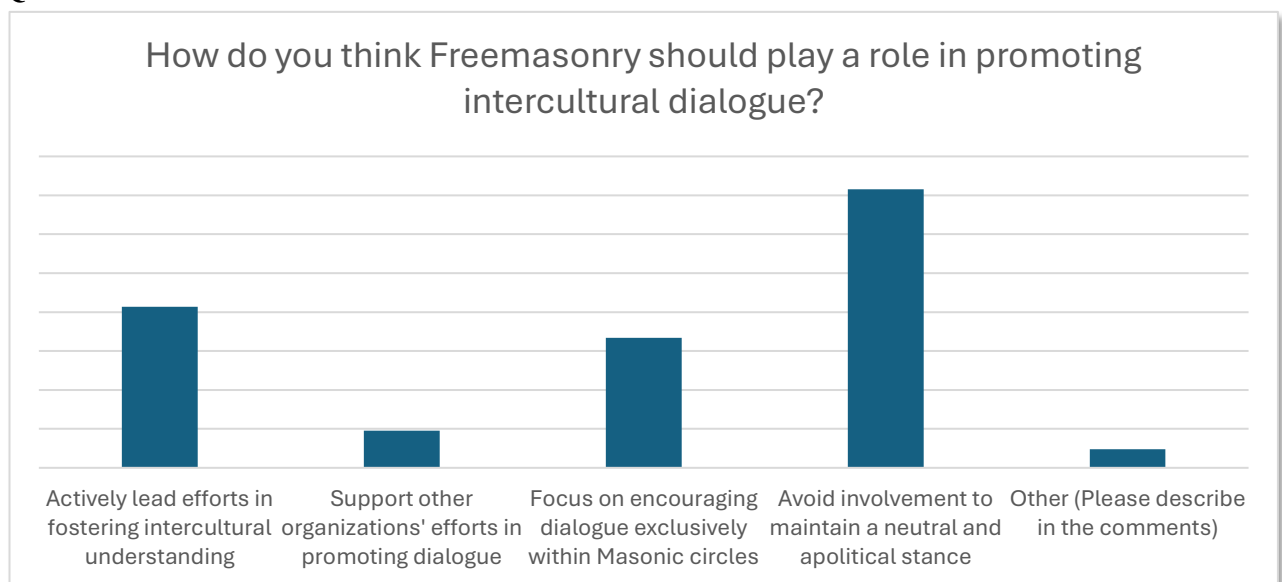
“All of the above options but communication and education above all.”

Overall, the primary roles identified for technology and digital platforms in the future of Freemasonry include educational purposes, enhancing global collaboration, and modernizing communication. These roles aim to leverage the benefits of technology while balancing the need to preserve the traditional aspects of the craft.

“If liberty is your pursuit the digital world is to be avoided.”

“The old ways should be the cornerstone for the new future build.”

QUESTION 8



The data indicates that the most favored approach for Freemasonry in promoting intercultural dialogue is to avoid involvement to maintain a neutral and apolitical stance. Actively leading efforts in fostering intercultural understanding is also considered important, with 41% of respondents indicating this as a key role. Focusing on encouraging dialogue exclusively within

Masonic circles is supported by 33% of respondents, while supporting other organizations' efforts in promoting dialogue is only favored by 9.5% of respondents.

“We don’t involve ourselves in politics nor talk about it in lodge was what I was taught. We are brothers all regardless of our political affiliations.”

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents see the importance of maintaining a neutral stance to avoid political and cultural conflicts. This approach is believed to align with Freemasonry’s principles of inclusivity and brotherhood, ensuring that the organization remains a safe space for all members regardless of their background. However, there is also significant support for Freemasonry taking an active role in fostering intercultural dialogue. Respondents highlight the potential for Freemasonry to lead by example, promoting understanding and cooperation across different cultures and societies.

“Masons avoid the discussion of religion and politics inside and within the lodge. But Masons can actively pursue dialogue outside the lodge.”

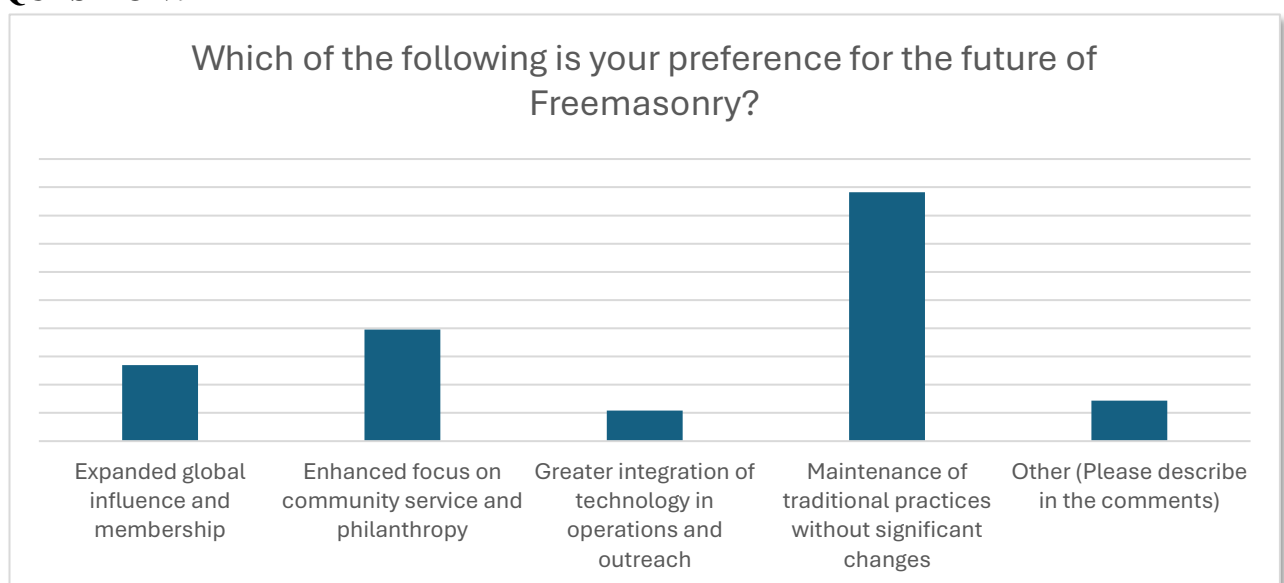
Some respondents prefer focusing dialogue efforts exclusively within Masonic circles, suggesting that internal discussions can strengthen bonds among members and enhance the organization’s internal cohesion. Supporting other organizations’ efforts in promoting dialogue is seen by some as a practical approach, allowing Freemasonry to contribute to broader initiatives without taking a direct leadership role.

Overall, the primary strategies identified for Freemasonry in promoting intercultural dialogue include maintaining a neutral stance, actively leading efforts in fostering understanding, encouraging internal dialogue, and supporting external initiatives. These strategies reflect a balance between preserving traditional values and engaging with contemporary societal needs.

“Understanding is the cornerstone of every learning done correctly.”

“Bring The Craft out of the lodge and show that equality & being on the level is for everyone.”

QUESTION 9



The data indicates that the most favored preference for the future of Freemasonry is the maintenance of traditional practices without significant changes, with 88% of respondents

supporting this view. Enhanced focus on community service and philanthropy is also considered important. Expanded global influence and membership is favored by 27% respondents, while greater integration of technology in operations and outreach is preferred by 11%.

“Keep making Good Men Better. Do that and all else follows.”

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents value the preservation of traditional practices as essential to maintaining the core identity and values of Freemasonry. These respondents believe that the historical rituals, symbols, and customs are what define the organization and distinguish it from other groups. There is a strong sentiment that any significant changes could dilute the essence of Freemasonry and compromise its integrity.

However, there is also considerable support for enhancing community service and philanthropy. Respondents highlight the importance of Freemasonry’s role in contributing to society and helping those in need. This focus on charitable activities is seen as a way to demonstrate the organization’s values in action and to build a positive public image.

“To get away from it being a social club and to effectively build the spiritual structure that it was intended for.”

“The current method needs revival. It needs a rekindling.”

Expanding global influence and membership is another preference, with respondents seeing the potential for Freemasonry to reach a wider audience and foster international brotherhood. This expansion is viewed as a way to strengthen the organization and ensure its longevity.

“Focus on Community Building so more Men will want to become!”

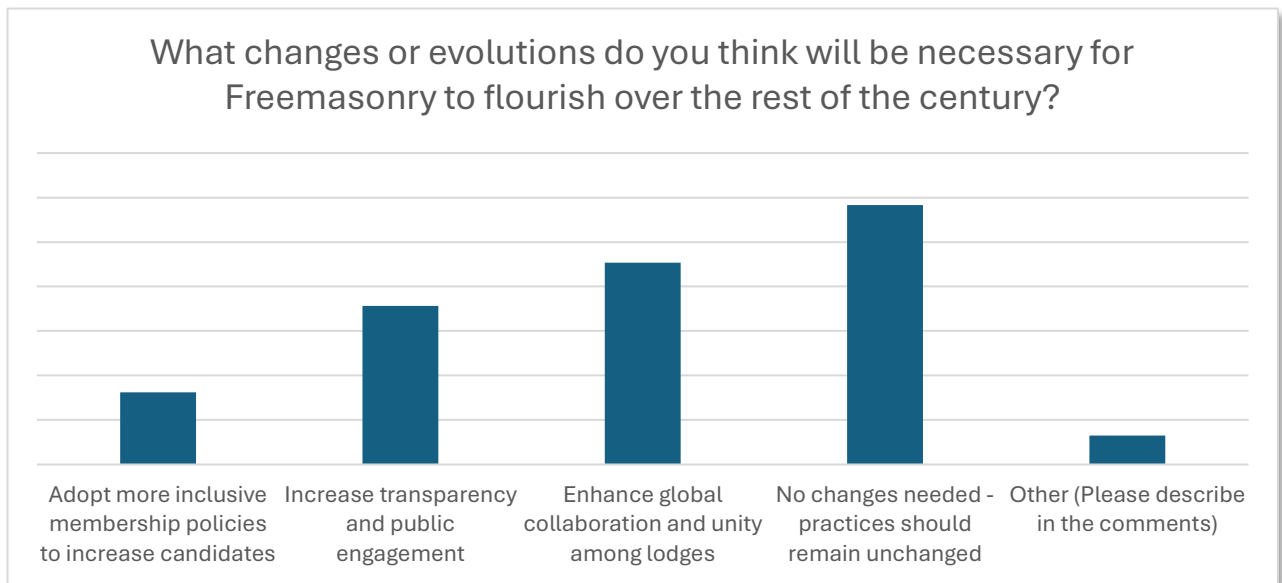
“Enhanced focus on community service and philanthropy.”

The integration of technology in operations and outreach, while less favored, is still seen as important by some respondents. These respondents believe that modernizing communication and administrative processes can help Freemasonry stay relevant and accessible to younger generations.

“A fraternity for the 21st century man needs to comprehend the limited time of a father working 60+ hours a week. When we meet we must focus on value-added activities.”

Overall, the primary preferences for the future of Freemasonry include maintaining traditional practices, enhancing community service and philanthropy, expanding global influence and membership, and integrating technology. These preferences reflect a balance between preserving the core values of the organization and adapting to contemporary societal needs.

QUESTION 10



The data indicates that the most favored change for Freemasonry to flourish over the rest of the century is to make no changes, with practices remaining unchanged, supported by 58% of respondents. Enhancing global collaboration and unity among lodges is also considered important, with 45% of respondents indicating this preference. Increasing transparency and public engagement is favored by 35% of respondents, while adopting more inclusive membership policies to increase candidates is preferred by just 16%.

“Freemasonry is not a club open to the public for a reason. It must be sought out by the individual. The teacher will appear when the student is ready.”

Qualitative comments reveal that many respondents value the preservation of current practices and believe that Freemasonry should maintain its traditional approach. These respondents feel that the core values, rituals, and structures are integral to the identity of Freemasonry and should not be altered. There is a strong sentiment that stability and continuity are crucial for the organization’s future.

However, there is also considerable support for enhancing global collaboration and unity among lodges. Respondents see the potential for a more interconnected global Masonic community, where lodges can share resources, ideas, and best practices. This collaboration is viewed as a way to strengthen the organization and promote a sense of international brotherhood.

Increasing transparency and public engagement is another suggested change, with respondents highlighting the need for Freemasonry to be more open and accessible to the public. This increased transparency is seen as a way to combat misconceptions and improve the public image of the organization, making it more appealing to potential new members.

“If you voted no changes needed...you must be ok with it dying...which it is.”

“It is in a sense dying. That is because it has become stagnant because there are so many lodges that have refused to do anything different than they were taught to.”

Adopting more inclusive membership policies is also mentioned, though with less emphasis. Respondents suggest that by being more inclusive, Freemasonry can attract a broader range of candidates, thus ensuring its growth and relevance in a diverse and changing society.

Overall, the primary changes identified for Freemasonry to flourish include maintaining current practices, enhancing global collaboration, increasing transparency and public engagement, and adopting more inclusive membership policies. These changes reflect a balance between preserving the core values of the organization and adapting to contemporary societal needs.

“There is almost no visibility of the lodge in my area. The only reason I knew the lodge was there is because I serviced it on my route one day.”

“I personally would like to be able to visit the lodges near me, say open days perhaps with written requests to do so. A little insight and a peek at history.”

“Please allow visits. Please have teaching days to non-brothers sincerely interested in learning.”

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Key Recommendations

Enhance Educational Programs:

Develop comprehensive educational initiatives within Freemasonry to deepen members’ understanding of rituals, symbols, and philosophies.

Regularly include presentations and discussions on Masonic topics during meetings to encourage continuous learning and engagement.

Increase Transparency and Public Engagement:

Organize regular public events and open houses to demystify Freemasonry and engage with the broader community.

Leverage social media platforms to promote activities, share educational content, and enhance public perception.

Preserve Traditional Practices While Adapting to Modern Needs:

Maintain the core rituals and traditions of Freemasonry to preserve its unique identity and historical significance.

Consider updating language and shortening ceremonies to make them more accessible and practical for modern members.

Foster Global Collaboration and Unity Among Lodges:

Enhance global collaboration by facilitating communication and resource-sharing between lodges worldwide.

Promote international brotherhood and unity through joint events, conferences, and collaborative projects.

Adopt More Inclusive Membership Policies:

Develop strategies to attract a broader range of candidates, including younger individuals and diverse demographics.

Create opportunities for non-members to learn about Freemasonry through open days and educational initiatives.

Other Items to Note

Balance Between Secrecy and Public Engagement:

Ensure that while increasing transparency, the essential elements of secrecy that define Freemasonry’s identity are preserved.

Clarify the distinction between necessary secrecy and openness about the organization's values and community contributions.

Utilize Technology for Enhanced Communication and Education:

Implement digital platforms for virtual meetings, online education, and global communication. Ensure that technology is used to complement, not replace, traditional methods and practices.

Emphasize Community Service and Philanthropy:

Strengthen Freemasonry's role in community service and charitable activities to demonstrate its values in action.

Form partnerships with social enterprises and community groups to enhance visibility and impact.

Promote Intercultural Dialogue:

Actively lead or support efforts in fostering intercultural understanding and cooperation both within and outside the Masonic community.

Encourage internal dialogue on cultural diversity to strengthen bonds among members.

Maintain Stability and Continuity:

While adopting necessary changes, ensure that the stability and continuity of Freemasonry's core principles and structures are maintained.

Balance the need for modernization with the preservation of traditions that define the organization.

These recommendations aim to enhance the relevance, engagement, and public perception of Freemasonry while preserving its core values and traditions.

DATA TABLE

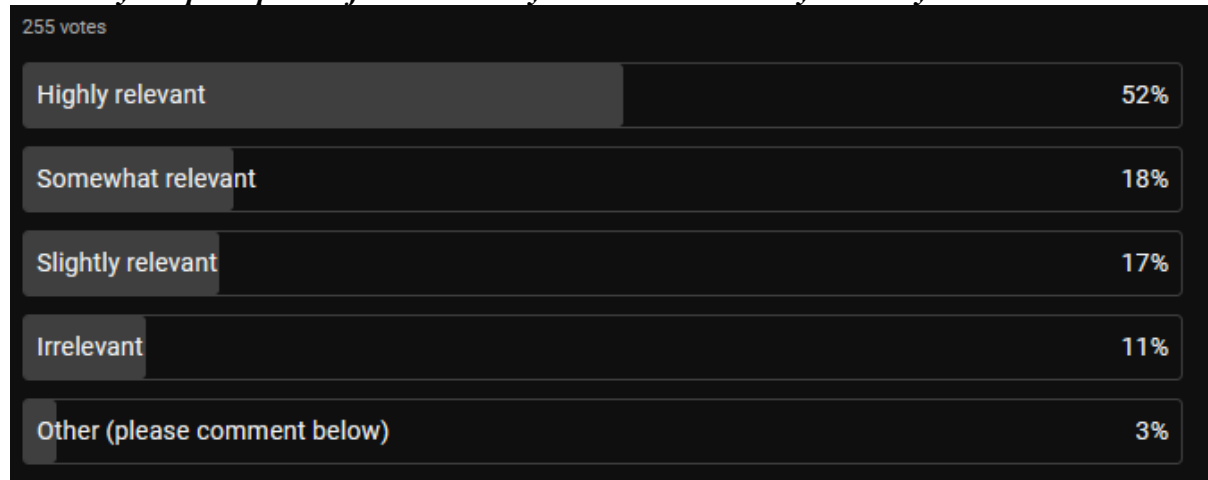
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INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

QUESTION 1

What is your perception of Freemasonry's relevance in today's society?



In my district in Ontario, Canada. All of our lodges are seeing members returning and also a good number of new members. Young men have a need for the craft, but they don't have the slightest understanding of what it is and what it has to offer. Keep learning, keep sharing, and the craft will show its true relevance in today time. Bro. Aaron Dunphy St. John's #82 Paris, Ontario.

As a non-Mason, I've always been drawn to the craft from a young boy passing by the local lodge not knowing what goes on in the very ominous building. And learning more about the craft starting at the conspiracy theories then the history and the notable masons of the past. I believe Lodges around the world will see membership numbers grow thanks to content creators such as yourself. I am looking forward to petitioning my local lodge and continuing my spiritual journey and growing as a man. Keep up the hard work and thank you for all you do. If the participants take the craft seriously and respect the craft and the oath. The craft's relevancy will return.

Couldn't have said it better

As a EA mason I believe it is highly relevant in this new age, I'm a day lodge member in perth and deliberately joined knowing this particular lodge would be full of senior members of our craft, it's amazing for a younger man like My self to sit and conversate and learn from these men and it's beautiful to see the love and respect these men have for each other in an age where men of my generation don't care for such things and would rather hide away with there face buried in there phones. All men of my generation need this guidance from our older brethren I believe and masonray is the perfect place to receive said guidance and we get to learn some cool ritual and wear some cool regalia as part of the deal.

Things are still picking up after COVID restrictions. People got disconnected and there is a threshold when you forget so much of the practice it feels cumbersome to attend. Much work was made locally to help brothers feel welcome. There is a steady influx and is looking stable. In my corner of the world at least. (Sweden) BTW Terra Masonica's two part movie Around the world in 80 lodges is now available for free on Youtube.

Highly relevant but I am a female not a Mason, but still enjoy the sharing and teachings from learned wise people. On this particular channel FTQ I have only ever found kindness promoted, sharing learning growing helping and protectiveness through community giving and sharing which, if these qualities could be found in the so called mainstream in the abundance I have found here, the world and all beings would be in a far better position indeed. I love the mix of

esoteric and exoteric, the papers, books quotes, everything. Immersive. So yes relevant today, more than ever.

It has the potential to be relevant (as does, say, the UN), but as on the individual level, we get out of it what we put into it.

Think a lot of brothers are optimistic about the crafts relevance. If your lodge was shut down for whatever reason,, your community would keep moving forward. It isn't critical. In earlier years I think lodge played a bigger part in community organizing but these days it's much less so.

It is for those of us who are aware and respondent to the issues we hold at heart. I wish it was more important.

Relevant to the older gentlemen, as their long participation provides implicit meaning to life, but increasing irrelevant to younger gentlemen who are struggling to make sense of the world. Some may argue against this using their personal and anecdotal experiences but the decline in acquisitions and retention rates speak for themselves - these reflect declining perceptions of value and relevance to life and the afterlife. Too much emphasis on ceremonial, which is easy to evaluate, rather than development of the man, family and community (and raising money is nowhere near as difficult as community building). Today's society needs Freemasonry more than ever but not in its current form.

The craft is stil very much alive and these times are what we were duly and truly prepared for What is A.L. stand for in 6th millennium AL?

Anno Lucis.

Masonry today is in a far different environment than after the Second World War when was in its prime. Young people today want things to happen in seconds. The principals of free masonry are time less. To the right man free masonry could have a lot of relevance. Also, the amount of charitable work has a lot of relevance.

QUESTION 2

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing Freemasonry today?



I'd be happy for the membership to stay at the level it is now but not too drop any further. I'm only new and am an EA but for me I remember the moment I decided to try and join the craft and it wasn't so much a hard process but a long process and one in which they didn't give a whole lot of hint that I was going to get in or not so when the day came that the secretary informed me of My initiation I was over the moon and surprised at the same time so for me it is a special fraternity that not everyone will get a chance to be in and I'm one of the lucky ones that gets that chance. It's and honour and a privilege to be a mason and I kinda like it being it's

own little club. I could be completely wrong too as I mentioned I am rather new to the craft, I'd dare say some of the older men amongst us would have a different.

Firstly, go back to who we are Non religious within the Lodge but men of faith, non political, accepting of all races, cultures, ethnicities, to ensure we stay on the level. Bring culture into the equation takes us from the level path. The mood and views of society change like the wind and just as quick. Freemasonry has lasted this long because it is true to its foundation. Sadly some Lodges in the world modify the Ritual due to possible sensitivities, they to me are no-longer true Lodges.

Technology, yes so long as it does not change ritual. Public perception, be active in the community and be proud of your Freemasonry, do not over sell or say the usual preamble if it is not on offer in your lodge. Decline of membership, faith is on the decline, but men seeking guidance is growing. We chase younger members, if your under 74 you are a potential younger member than me. On the level means all acceptable ages, that is over 18 years. Lodge education on freemasonry is a must. True understanding of each Ritual is a must. Ability to recite does not mean understanding. Practice the working tools in your own life. See, simple. Membership will decline to the point where there will be insufficient resources to sustain the bureaucracy of modern Freemasonry as well as maintain the noble temples inherited from the past. Things change slowly then all at once. At the point of system criticality, Freemasonry will likely fragment into nothingness or morph into something unrecognizable. The biggest challenge facing Freemasonry: change in the outside world is accelerating much faster than within, and at the interfaces: its aging members have neither the mental, physical or financial resources (nor time) to develop and deliver a compelling vision for the future to avoid collapse. And yet there is always hope: we can't see what awaits around the winding stairs: the greatest monuments of history have fallen to barbarous forces and the ravages of time, yet Freemasonry still survived. It endured because the mysteries of Masonry were forever firmly lodged somewhere sacred in the heart of men: living stones in the architects eternal temple.

Excellent summation. As a younger Mason I also concur that all of the property and bureaucracy will soon sink the grand lodges. The elderly members are not open to any talk of restructuring, so I don't bother. Many of the most dedicated Masons live for the bureaucracy and the pomp, so the only thing that will bring dramatic change is the hard reality of lack of funding. There are too many appendant bodies and lodges for too few members. Younger members don't have the time to commit because we're working longer hours for less money than the boomer generation, and our working wives are very jealous of our time. When we show up it's often a meeting for the sake of a meeting. There are a few nerds who have every ritual and lecture memorized but couldn't expound on a single esoteric subject. There are others like myself who have read the entirety of Morals and Dogma who will never be countenanced. Survival, to me, looks like a return to the mysteries and a shedding of excessive property and meaningless meetings. The ritual used to be learned over a pint of Ale in the rented attic of a tavern. It was fun. A true man's club.

Lodges are closing all around the world, mostly due to how public perception and conspiracy nonsense has created an inability to attract the younger, faster paced, tech-inclined crowd. Virtual lodges are a step in the right direction, but cannot reasonably be properly tiled, which may be a good thing. I've always advocated that "Every Cowan and eavesdropper is merely showing INTEREST, a step towards becoming a Brother." Dispelling myths, conspiracies, and misconceptions should be more of a duty of Masons online and IRL, however always remembering to Conceal.

Public perception that I witness is still that of fear, and possible misinformation. Often from sources not directly from practise, but assumption. The biggest challenge is not one single point but several in rank. Public perception, through technological access made easier. This can manifest in misinformation developing incorrect perception and result in falling membership..

This on turn leads to a fall away from the adherence yo correct behaviour and moral code which in turn leads to the manufacture of misinformation and fear of the now unknown
Lack of focus on enlightenment (NSW/Aus)

Keep tradition, I didn't join it because it was modern, I joined because it's keeping the old world alive

Hear hear! I was attracted to join because I wanted to get back to traditional values. I like that fact that we are smartly dressed, shoes shined! I love the genuine care and respect for fellow brothers. In the few years I've been in both Craft and RA masonry, I can see a positive change in my outlook on life.

I strongly agree with you brother!!

It should be a school of mysteries.

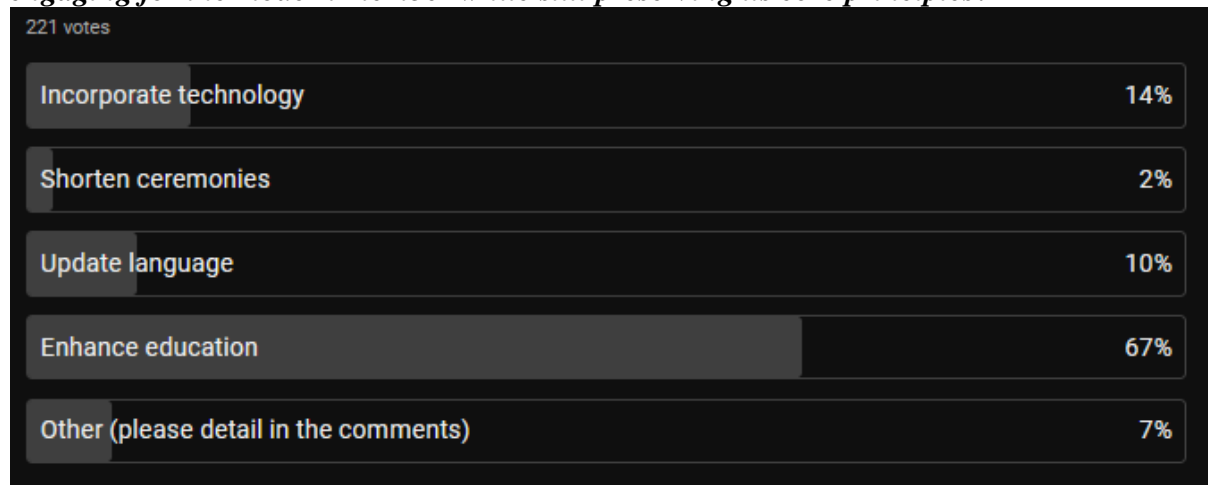
If you're going to call it masonry, you need to be building something. At some point, it needs to be decided whether Masonry is about building something (ie freedom, in the world, for future generations of humans) or about delisional guys play acting on the basis of partially disclosed practices they do not actually understand.

It is about building your own internal temple, that you put into practice by using the working tools as a guide. This can then be viewed by others as they observe you deal with life's situations. If asked how you can manage the hurdles in life say Freemasonry working tools. Cultural relevance would fix the membership problem.

Personal commitment to upholding the values and standards of Freemasonry.

QUESTION 3

In what ways do you think Freemasonry can adapt its rituals and ceremonies to be more engaging for the modern member while still preserving its core principles?



The learning, memorization and bonding is great. Ciphers and squirrely stuff is great. Speed is ok, I mean nothing is slow aside from "repeating/recounting" / business / charity stuff (busy people have loads of money they don't need to do simple cheap charity stuff, so utilize modern fundraising techniques and parties). Love titles and everything is good. We also fail to know how to talk about masonry to OUTSIDERS. That is key. We lack the language skills. We don't know all the things from some past masons and what they KNEW. What's missing is the dead art of symbolism. The teaching of symbols. The story-telling and narratives. People are afraid of controversy so they avoid story-telling nowadays. Lack of free-form talk in some places can lead to less discussion of history, philosophy, and symbols. Some people don't even know much about masonic symbols aside from the 3-4 of them.

I'm 43 and a Mason of 2-years. I find the ritual extremely engaging. The more I see it the better it gets. And the more of it I take on and present the deeper my understanding. Ritual is

knowledge that is passed in the bardic tradition. It needs to be performed in order for it to fully make sense.

Agreed

Not being a Mason, but I do enjoy the sharing here. The reason I chose “other” is because I’m my opinion from outside the lodge fraternity, but knowing g some brothers, I would need to choose more than one answer. If the rituals are as ancient as told they should not be changed as they have been habitually worked through and repeated over and over again thus increasing their power, enlightenment and educating properties. All rituals performed repeatedly for centuries or millenia are. Modern ways of educating people, like me, such as through this excellent channel helps. I note one brother in comments states Masonic families assist in their support of the individual, and this surely helps all of the members eventually, especially if there is a huge familial support system. Use modern technology to hold some meetings throughout the year (not all just some), it is possible to reach tens of thousands across the world for many inspirational mentors and coaches. Look at Tony Robbins or Master Stephen Co, just two. Working in different ways, sticking to the original rituals, blending the education into the modern world ways for very busy people across the globe at one time! Hope this helps and does not offend.

4. 1 - Every meeting should have short presentation on some aspect of Freemasonry (e.g. interpretations of symbols). The brethren would be encouraged to provide any unique perspectives on the presentation topic: to generate wisdom from the collective knowledge of the lodge. A table would be allocated in the South for brethren to continue discussions after the meeting if they wished to discuss more. Every brother would be expected to provide a regular presentation (unless physically incapable). 2. Every brother should be expected to visit another lodge each year and give a short report in their lodge on return. 3. Officers should serve/swap once as an officer in a meeting of another lodge in their year. 4. Each lodge required to collectively visit a different lodge once per year. 5. Every 25 years, the language of the Workings should be updated to a modern equivalent to make memorization easier and less daunting for new brethren. 6. Secure digital versions (video, audio only) of the Workings should be available for learning and revision - ritual continues to decline in most lodges as the mental abilities of experienced brethren fades and new brethren are unable to fill the gap with competence. Writing is not the preferred mode of learning for younger generations who may also have less free time than previous generations with changing expectations on parenting. 7. The master should stand at the door of the lodge before and after the meeting and thank each brother for their attendance. 8. The master should take on a new member as a mentor to understand how they and the lodge could be more engaging. 9. A new ritual: each midday, brethren should pause for one minute to contemplate their brothers and, if appropriate, call those that may need their support. Hopefully some of these ideas are of value ...

Tricky, going through the language is in which we use is difficult when you’re not used to speaking that way in everyday life, and education on what your learning could be very impactful as well. I’ll be raised March 30th. I hope to be involved with rituals either being in the line or conducting.

From an American perspective. And I say this anonymously. Do you want new brothers and to keep some good ones? Ya know, the involved ones in their 30s-40s? With families? Less is more Less is more indeed. Less titles, less meetings, and less speeches and ego-ing. Make what we have golden. Make more table lodges for those who want to get together frequently. Make the charity worthwhile. Wanna turn off a bunch of people who have busy schedules? Have them sell a bunch of peanut butter bars for less than they make in an hour. This will require planning; our leadership shouldn’t care Don’t make people sit there 2 times a month for some visiting deputy who is gonna just talk about himself. Institute tutoring. Institute standards. Make it cool. Don’t make it burdensome. Make our education count. Ditch the tallmudders; they are of the chaff.

Hmmm that's a tough one because for me it's the one thing we should be preserving about the craft is its rituals, they are as old as the craft itself and shouldn't be messed with in my opinion. If I wanted an abridged version of freemasonry I'd just look on youtube and listen to audio books about it, one of the first points made to me about freemasonry is that it's not for everyone, be that because you have a criminal record or your just into that kind of stuff. I'm not sure what the answer is really but I don't think reducing it to a lions club with a bit of funny acting thrown in is the answer either. I give My opinion with a bit of trepidation as I am only an EA and it doesn't hold much weight. I'd love to hear what the old boys of our craft think?? Am I in the wrong?

The first three options absolutely not !!!

Remove the mid century innovation of catechism memorization and initiation slow-down as well as the now unnecessary ciphers and move on. Plenty of appendant bodies read straight from clear text in their work and no one has died from the "horror." It's all on the Internet already. What matters is the practice of building discipline and integrity within individuals as they keep and preserve the knowledge within the fraternity not on actually keeping it "secret," so stop pretending like it's a secret. For goodness sake at this point I would bet money that in every Grand Lodge office there is at least one woman or non member man who knows all the "secrets," as it's pretty much inevitable.

I have brain damage, so it's kind of hard for me to memorize their things, so I just study at myself listening to lectures

Funny thing is my family helped form the masons. My family built the first structural wooden framed house in America and it was on a mason plantation.

Online lol

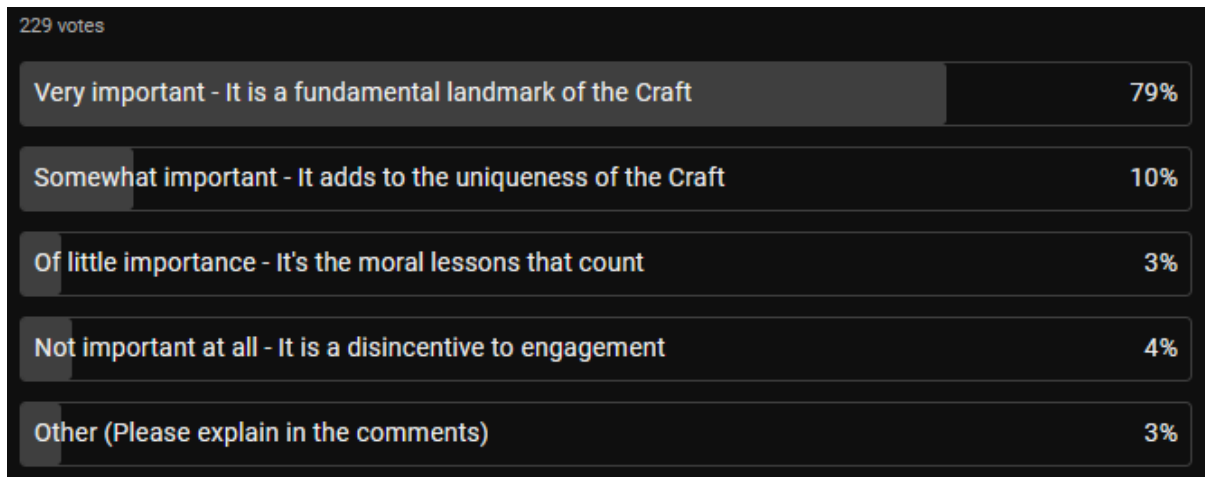
They should repent

I am not sure the rituals are what should be adapted. For me they are the appeal, their timelessness and old fashioned style and symbolism. Adding too much tech would ruin that for me. The rest is nice, but they are what matters most. I care not if they take one or two or three hours with the meal as the evening is pretty much used up either way. I realise that the language must make sense so updating it every 50 years or so is perhaps good. I think involving the new adepts immediately in the rituals and thus getting to know people. We have a mentor system which is beneficial as well. Encouraging brothers to be a mentor and to bring in new blood should be an active part in the leadership. Caring for brothers, checking on them. I agree with what was said by Compasspointadministrator: It must be easy and no more demanding than what is reasonable for a man in midst of life with all the priorities that follows. In this tech can facilitate with synchronising what goes on in different lodges and offer various alternatives, extra lunches or discussions. Now, we have some study circles that start already with newcomers to teach what goes on in the rituals and what it means for improving oneself and ones life. That is my number one suggestion. Also offer library nights to encourage further study in the degrees. I would say that family gatherings are important as well. A promasonic family helps immensely.

shorten ceremonies (because it will lead to further developments).

QUESTION 4

How important do you think the maintenance of the secrecy and purity of the rituals of Freemasonry is from a 21st century perspective?



Rituals should be kept a secret until the candidate is ready to receive the light.

The truth is, anyone with a spare 20\$ can own Duncan's Monitor. Or find the ritual for free online. Secrecy is a quaint notion. Even the "purity" of the ritual is a phantom given the differences that exist from grand lodge to grand lodge. The most important aspect of masonry, according to Pike, was its symbolism. Anyone who has developed a full spectrum comprehension of masonry's symbols has gained more than any rote memorization could impart to him.

It's very important. The "secrets" are knowledge open to those who seek and not for the ignorant. Existence would be pointless if all sought truth. Only those who do are on the true path of growth. Even being told the "secrets" doesn't mean they'd be understood. It takes years of contemplation to understand there are no real secrets, only knowledge accessible to those who commit to all that Freemasonry is and stands for

It varies on a spectrum. I find that if one wants to live the experience, some of the secrecy and purity is important, yet with that secrecy will always come those who speak ill of it. When it comes to the moral teachings of Masonry, keeping moral lessons a secret only stokes the flames of hatred against Masonry. If the lessons were made public knowledge and taught openly, it would draw less skepticism and probably more members

Secrecy is important. What I have an issue with in the question is the "purity" of the ritual statement. What is the meaning of "purity of ritual" because rituals have evolved. Preston's ≠ Webb's ≠ Cross ≠ Hemming's. Those four men's lectures account for the majority used in the Anglosphere, but don't account for the Modern's lineages that had separated prior to the adoption of Preston's Lectures by the Grand Lodge of England. Studying & traveling will give evidence of it. There is the Modern Rite as practiced in Netherlands, Belgium, France, Swedish Rite, Zinnendorf, Rectified Scottish Rite, Adonhiramite, Trinosophe Rational Rite. Then hybrids such as the Eclectic, Schröder, Grand Lodge of the Sun, Reuß OTO, Steiner Misraïm Dienst, Memphis Rite, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite (Fondeville, Willaume, Foulhouze-Dufau-Atwood, Covadonga, Folger, Pike). There is much diversity in rituals, especially once you travel outside the Anglosphere.

My 2 cents. It is essential for the pedagogy. If you know in advance, you will not face the unknown and thus not face yourself and is bereft of your single one opportunity to experience that degree from the perspective of the recipient. For the same reason the rituals should be kept very strict. There is no second chance to make that impression. Pure, as in strictly and well performed rituals I assume, has a secondary effect of keeping the officiants interchangeable if needed and a cause of strong bonding and cohesion among the officers. There will always be flavours in voices, emphasis on certain or other words, pace etc, but that is quite enough as far as differences go.

It's important for the individual to have inner dialogue and sincerity. The "Secrecy" is self imposed and builds character of a chivalrous nature. I believe therefore it is beneficial to both the Brotherhood and the Brother himself. Cheers from USA~

Ritual is a cornerstone of every just and perfect Lodge.

The words themselves carry meaning. Truth is beheld differently to different people. If cell phones existed when EA was being written, surely the obligation would have something about digital communication. They are a product of their time but communicate something timeless. We should focus on educating brothers on the meaning of the rituals. There are some key things that must not be left out. Regularity helps the profane minded brother avoid jacking up any esoteric implications. Unless we have a better way, it's best to protect the meaning. Only when we master the meaning should we consider updating. But we really need to think functionally here and what it is these words represent

Without the secrecy of our rituals and modes of recognition, there is no real allure. Nothing to set Masonry apart without our ritual. It's part of the obligations we take. Pretty much all of our "secrets" can be found easily these days. The point is we as Masons promise we will not reveal them and our Brothers can trust that we will not break that promise, nor reveal their secrets (with certain exceptions of course).

Keeping rituals secret and pure, is part of most ancient traditions or faiths following. I'm not speaking of religion, but of ways of living to purity or as near as one can get being in a human body having to eat sleep and care for family. The purity is usually achieved through repetitiveness in working, wording and will with intention focus and desire. This building on previous energy raised. Those who are ready will find their way to it no matter who or where they are.

It is my humble submission that there is some things that are ineffable and because we emulate nature at our best... we strive to become Maker. We do our best exhibit on earth those traits that are also in heaven...somethings by their very nature are concealed only to be revealed to those that are duly prepared...such is life...friend or foe it is not for one to determine when one is ready to embark on the path for only the creator knows that moment when caterpillar has become the butterfly..."to the east"

The "secrecy" is more of a personal formula for growth. In other words, the idea is for Masons to develop the ability to keep confidences with their individual selves and then with others. "As a Mason I promised to keep the secrets, but I did not promise to care about who found out about them". 🤔

Very relevant, but we need to ensure its relevance is properly maintained

My concerns about ensuring good standards are as follows:

1. Good communication is an essential tool of Freemasonry but as we struggle to memorise the wordings, we degenerate into mumbling our lines. Hence, for Freemasonry to be very relevant we must always speak up, raise our voice, articulate clearly and powerfully - a must for all Masons. Think of Masonic ceremonies as a "play" where the officers involved are there to present a powerfully moving piece of treasured Masonic teaching to the audience.
2. Freemasonry is the only organisation I attend which doesn't use microphones for making our ceremonies clearly understood (for hard of hearing members) in lodge rooms which can be large. For Freemasonry to remain relevant, I see a need collectively to engage every mason in the lodge room in active participation and in following our ceremonies which are mainly based on wordings; hence use microphones wherever possible to connect with everyone, not just the candidate.
3. Our Masonic ceremonies are of vital value, but they are too lengthy. We don't have time to muck around in Freemasonry, time is a more valuable quality than ever, with increasing demands to make the best use of available time at our meetings. Last month, I attended a third-degree ceremony which took three hours to deliver. In my view, this is untenable for the future.

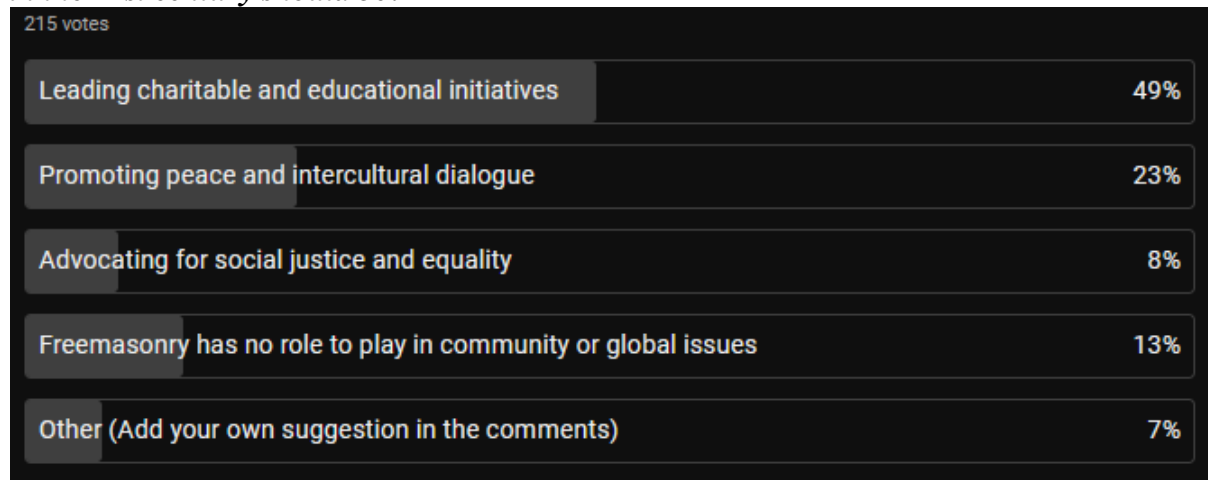
Hence for Freemasonry to be very relevant, ritual needs to be streamlined to take less than 90 minutes, if necessary omitting parts of lesser importance - like the correct way to enter and leave (which can be done later).

4. Another interesting point in regard to the relevance of Freemasonry is the way we use music. Currently we use old-fashioned hymns which are of little value to candidates in the 21st century. There is a wealth of music available these days which is well proven (in time) and which is thousands of times more relevant to men of today. Our Masonic ceremonies need the very best form of musical empowerment, not old tunes of “this will perhaps do category”. We need to give ceremonies a lift. I reject the old-fashioned notions that music should be only nice background, played softly so as to have little disturbance to the delivery of the spoken word. We live in an age where music directly impacts our appreciation of life. Hence for Freemasonry to remain very relevant we need to inject better music.

5. Finally, I note that there seems to be a tradition of using electronic organs as a means of providing musical accompaniment. My recent experience is that these machines are not properly maintained with consequential significant problems in delivery of sound and good sensory effect. I consider there are perhaps two solutions (1) recorded music using a Bluetooth speaker (great idea) or (2) alternative forms of instrument, even guitar playing. Streaming services may be another option, easy to access and apply. This is a simple solution to ensuring Freemasonry retains a high level of relevance to our fellow members, especially the younger generation joining the Craft.

QUESTION 5

What do you think that Freemasonry’s role in contributing to community and global issues in the 21st century should be?



Honestly I believe it’s a combination of the first two choices. Educational, charitable, peace and humanitarian. They all go hand in hand in my opinion.

Keeping the ancient teachings and knowledge living in the present passing on to the incoming generations, to ensure the knowledge for the future is still available and being taught. Modern community and global issues appear to be erasing a lot of the old ways in favour of new which is not always necessarily beneficial. To know the future is to be steadfast in the present with the knowledge of past as guidance.

I put no role to play ... but i don’t believe it should be “no role” but contribute to help however we can. Masonry should be about the craft for the most part, and I, for one, am fed up of it all being about charity now because we are not a charity. We are a fraternity that supports charity and we are losing our identity and becoming a social club/charity. The craft is being lost due to our over contributions to such practices and many of my “old school” Brethren agree. I didn’t

become a Mason to join a social club nor charity. I could've done that anywhere else. I do not want to lose what our true fundamentals are which is knowledge

This was a difficult one. I did finally opt for charity and education as I feel this is something individual Masons can have a direct impact on and also that the promotion of peace & intercultural dialogue, and advocating for social justice & equality could (should) fall within the scope of a charitable organisation anyway. I also think it's important that all Masons, under the guidance of their respective Grand Lodges of course, continue with the positive promotion of the craft. Since my initiation I've been shocked to find so many misleading videos, articles, and social media posts about Freemasonry. Much of what I stumble across seems to come out of the USA, but not all by any stretch of the imagination. I didn't realise just how much misinformation is floating around the internet with regards Freemasonry, nor how much of that misinformation began several hundreds of years ago and is still being touted as "truth".

I think an important purpose of the charity within masonry is what it does to the partaker of it. It helps build an identity of a good person that is a responsible member of society, which is what freemasonry produces and the "better than before" men are freemasonry's main contribution to the world. The charity does a lot of good, no doubt, but I think this and other good deeds come from the virtue ethics of the masonic systems. The practical results are in a way a byproduct, but a fantastic one and it would be a moral failure not to make it count as effectively as possible.

Charity that's the greatest. Charity. Sacrifice. Agape "love".

Take a few good men and make them better

Mason's need to build again.

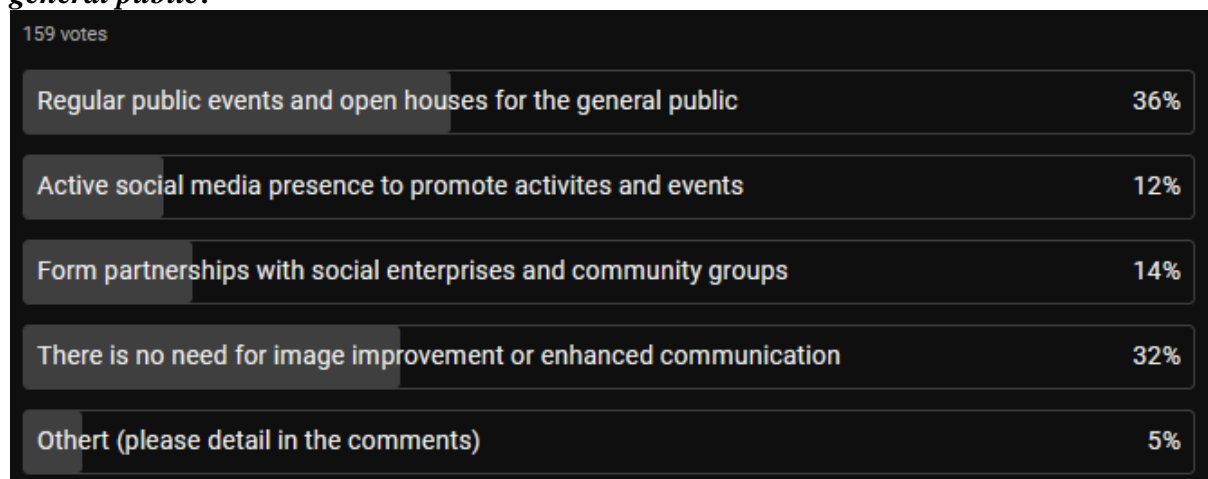
Promote enlightenment and peace.

Hidden mysteries.

Freemasonry has no role to play in community or social issues. Sadly, Freemasonry has lost its footing.

QUESTION 6

How do you think Freemasonry can improve its public image and communication with the general public?



Spread light. Be a lighthouse to all people in these dark times.

I truly wish I had listened to masonic musings no 67 to play upon the square at the time of representing the young man a couple of years ago. This really brings it home to me that the root of your teachings is founded in honesty and morality and brotherhood. So yes modern lodges need to clean out I'm afraid at least over here they do! Wish I had a big brush.

Chose other because - Seriously need to stop those brothers whom I have personally witnessed as have others probably across the world make a show of the fact they are supposed "brothers"

and clique together in workplaces to gain for themselves only. With absolutely no care what happens to other ordinary non Mason colleagues, very blatantly. One injustice I personally had to deal with soon became apparent a group of unscrupulous brothers banded together and used an innocent young male colleague as their scapegoat to avoid serious reprimand/possible job loss. I am a union rep but my higher colleagues at the time were my seniors, but high up brothers as well. It stunned me what had transpired and through the acts a very high number of workers swore they could never help a Mason. Ever. So weed out the rot. Permanently no matter how high a position they hold. This would be of great assistance. I do know several others whom I know or think are brothers and they are sound. So stop the rot from killing the whole. Just a suggestion Thank you for sharing the teachings you do here. I really appreciate them all.

All of the first 3 answer options provided.

Bring into light all that is secret that isn't necessary to the continuation of the organization. The secrecy will ALWAYS draw skepticism, and especially considering the information is alleged to "make good men better," the secrecy does such valuable information no justice at all.

That's going to do nothing and if you tell the truth unreasonable people will just assume you're lying

@bandit5272 the Truth is meant to divide the reasonable from the unreasonable, and that's kind of the point. Just as Christ mentions "separating wheat from tares," the principle applies here as well. For example, if I play the part of a "goodie two-shoes" to PERFECTION, there will still be those who hate on me. If I be myself to PERFECTION, without any deviation away from conscience, some folk will STILL hate on me. So, rather than live a lie (to live in sin/duality), it is better to be honest/True (Unity) and be oneself so as to find out who is truly one's friend/ally.

@bandit5272 also, how would anyone know it would do nothing?

[@joshuacromley7439](#) because since WAY before our time they knew not to cast their pearls before swine. If people want engagement they will seek it.

@TLDCHWTTOS casting pearls before swine pertains to those who have no ability to comprehend or lack appreciation for wisdom. Some are caught up in believing lies, some hear all sorts of rumors about certain groups and get spooked. Judging the individuals before speaking with them is just as "sinful" as "casting pearls before swine." Again, separating wheat from tares. Some want engagement, seek it, and find some representatives of Masonry to be disconcerting/distasteful. I'm just saying that a storm is brewing, one where the largest religion in the world is growing evermore distasteful towards Masonry. If you want a repeat of WW2, where Masons were imprisoned and executed as political enemies by agents of darkness, fine, but dead Masons can help NOBODY. Even AA, a group started by a Mason and a man influenced by a group associated with Masonry (the Oxford Group), understands the principle of at least making the attempt to enlighten their fellow man. After all, logically speaking, ALL is One. What our fellow man goes through, whether ignorance or suffering, we too shall experience.

[@joshuacromley7439](#) ok, after all of that emotion, how did you objectively disprove my statement?

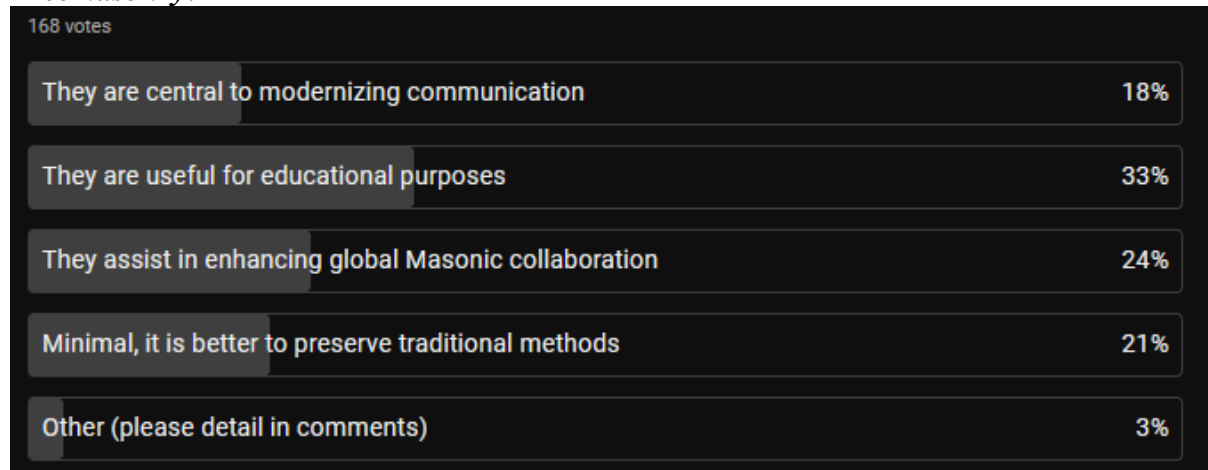
The true secrets of Freemasonry can only be discovered by being a Freemason, and not for the reasons you might think. They aren't something that can be explained, they have to be experienced. And because each Brother experiences life in a way that is unique to them, so the secrets of Freemasonry are equally unique to each Brother. This is a difficult concept for many people to grasp. Even more so now we're in an age where information is available on demand. We expect to be able to Google it or watch a TikTok that explains it in 90 seconds or less. In my experience, Freemasonry doesn't work like that. It takes time. Some would say a lifetime. I also strongly believe that Freemasonry isn't for everyone. It's not a one-size fits all organisation. But then, what is?

@TLDCHWTTOS what emotion? Are you asserting that presenting facts is “appeal to emotion?” Such notions are as logically sound as claiming “1=0.” I didn’t set out to “disprove” your statement, simply to generate a thought process where, hopefully, one could see the flawed logic behind assuming that because skeptics haven’t found their way to the organization that it means they qualify as “swine.”

Should be to increase image improvement and enhanced communication within the Masonic movement.

QUESTION 7

What role do you think technology and digital platforms should play in the future of Freemasonry?



If liberty is your pursuit, the digital world is to be avoided.

All of the above options, but communication and education above all

No getting away from the very fast forward movement to digital whether communication or currency it’s here and now. If one doesn’t move forward then stagnation will encompass and all will be left behind and lose out. This does not mean however the old ways be abandoned. On the contrary. They should be the corner stone for the new future build! 🙄

Hi Freemasons and Shriners and the Scottish Right Freemasons in the USA and in the world



From Freemasons and Shriners of ISIS Masonic Temple blue 🟦 lodge 60 Salina Kansas USA we Support All good Standing Freemasons and Shriners and go out to help your Country and City’s and Towns for the Right way Stay in the light 🕯️ 🕯️ God is good All Time peace and love and and Support your Family and kids and Stop the Races Thanking we or All one Respect All how Needs be Respected Stay Freedom to All

Well sorted out educational programs are well overdue. Enough with regional GL BS. Make something countrywide. Make it necessary to advance in grand lines to do mandatory education.

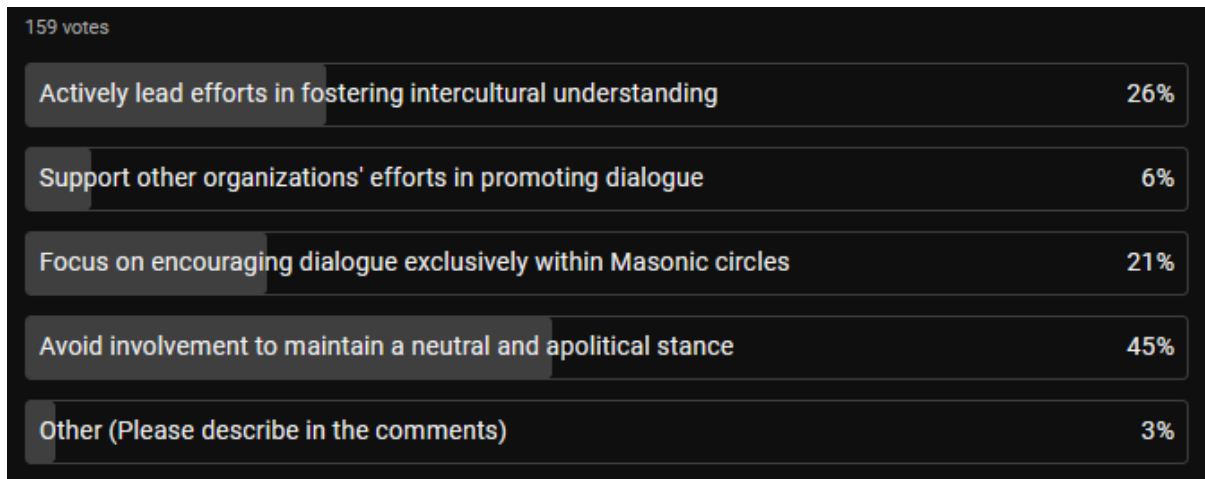
Incorporation of all methods should be and can be utilized and still stay steadfast within the boundaries of what is considered part and parcel the craft...it will forever be a beacon for all who seek and should never be allowed to dwindle, no matter what time it finds itself in...such is its ability to endure. Peace

All except 1.

They assist in enhancing global Masonic collaboration.

QUESTION 8

How do you think Freemasonry should play a role in promoting intercultural dialogue?



Masons avoid the discussion of religion and politics inside and within the lodge. But Masons can actively pursue dialogue outside the lodge. Bring The Craft out of the lodge and show that equality equality & being on the level is for everyone.

Truth, Justice, and Freedom for All.

We don't involve ourselves in politics nor talk about it in lodge was what I was taught? We are brothers all regardless of our political affiliations. Again as I have mentioned in previous questions I am on my an EA so I'm careful with My opinions..

There is no such thing as 'only an EA'. You are a Brother and entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other Mason 😊 Thanks for your comment and keep it up!

Choice 1 because intercultural dialogue does not necessarily mean religious dialogue. Culture is enjoyed by many across the world including those who have no affiliation to a religion.

Intercultural dialogue would fit well into Rabbie Burns lines "A man's a man fur a'that" and "Brothers heed". Understanding is the corner stone of every learning, done correctly,

This is the mire we need to avoid period! It's enough that we look not on the outward qualities of a man but the interior. The nature of man is in the thoughts of his heart and how he is guided by the Grand Architect of the Universe. We already set a beautiful example for others to follow. Politics and religion are forbidden for the reason that this divides men. No matter what it will become politicized by the outside world. It's not ever going to to be an uplifting conversation. There are parties we all know who, that make division their bread and butter. We need to avoid the bog they wallow in.

Stop oppressing and usuring, and rather concentrate doing good deeds.

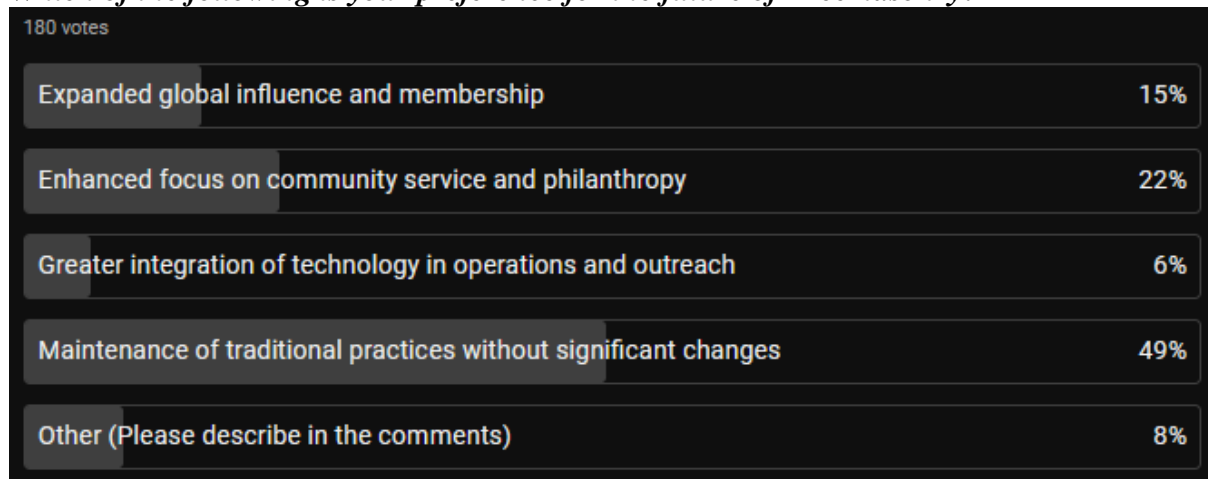
A ordem e as potências maçônicas devem evitar envolvimento com políticas partidárias. Mas o maçom individualmente pode participar ativamente da vida em comunidade, o que pode incluir atividades ou manifestações políticas Assim, o indivíduo maçom trazendo para a discussão pública cultural e política os aprendizados que teve na ordem me parece algo muito auspicioso Sempre falando em seu próprio nome, podendo ou não revelar a condição de maçom. Mas se o fizer, deixar claro que suas opiniões pessoais não refletem uma doutrina compartilhada por todos os maçons (*In order for the Masonic powers to avoid involvement with party politics.*

More or more individually can participate actively in life in the community, or that can include activities or political manifestations Assim, the individual more than trying to discuss the public culture and politics of the learners that you have in the order seems to me something very auspicious Always falando in its own name , podendo ou not reveal a condition of maçom. But please make it clear that your personal opinions do not reflect a doctrine shared by all of you.)

Support other organisations' efforts in promoting dialogue.

QUESTION 9

Which of the following is your preference for the future of Freemasonry?



A fraternity for the 21st century man needs to comprehend the limited time of a father working 60+ hours a week. When we meet, we must focus on value-added activities. A business meeting held for the sole reason of maintaining a charter will not inspire an increase in membership. Large buildings and the multiplication of appendant bodies have stretched men and money so thin that community impact is minimal. Masonry needs a return to the basics of fraternal values and spiritual instruction. It can offer a true sense of belonging to the disaffected 21st century male if it can remake itself.

To get away from it being a social club, and to effectively build the spiritual structure that it was intended for.

Maintaining and further developing of core esoteric teaching embodied in Brotherhood thought the time.

Keep making Good Men Better. Do that and all else follows

Focus on Community Building so more Men will want to become!

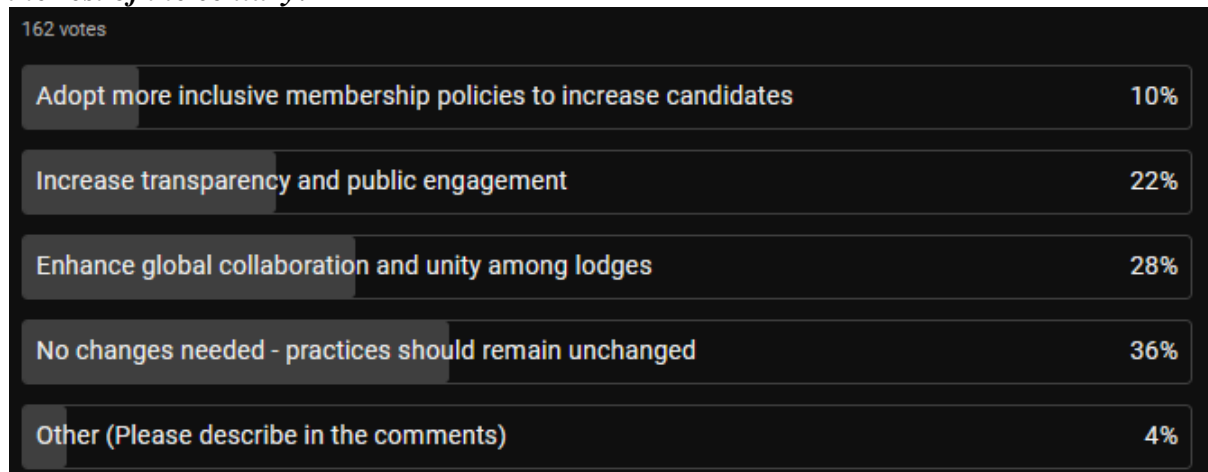
The current method needs revival. It needs a rekindling.

Delving into the hidden mysteries.

Attract a younger demographic in the way the Universities Scheme has succeeded in the UK.
enhanced focus on community service and philanthropy.

QUESTION 10

What changes or evolutions do you think will be necessary for Freemasonry to flourish over the rest of the century?



Spent a lot of time thinking about how to answer this - causes, effects, internal work and external, society and stability - just continue what you're doing. What people need most is stability, so be that, which I think you are.

Voted not sure because... I'm not a lodge member so cannot comment on number 1, 2, or 3 with concrete evidence. I know every chapter of life now no matter who or where one is or lives needs to be able to evolve and grow - or perish slowly. I personally would like to be able to visit the lodges near me, say open days, perhaps with written requests to do so. A little insight and a peek at history. However I am also acutely aware of the nature of the lodges and of why brothers will require to be protective. I am well into the depths of learning esoteric and exoteric teachings, am in awe of many of the preceding teachers male, female and other, and marvel every single day at the knowledge rediscovered again, hidden in plain sight. Please allow visits. Please have teaching days to non brothers sincerely interested in learning. Please advertise these opportunities in ways that people such as I can find the info and immerse in the learning. And thank you to FTQ for sharing so much so well, and to all the other brothers who have inputted. I am sincerely grateful to you all for assisting my spiritual path forward in this life here and now. Thank you.

Option 3 is irrelevant because we do not live on a globe, the PLANET is a somewhat flat, level expanse.

Have you ever tested this hypothesis?

There is almost no visibility of the lodge in my area. The only reason I knew the lodge was there is because I serviced it on my route one day.

Reduce Grand Lodge to almost nothing. Return power to the jurisdictions.

THE grand lodge? Every grand lodge? Jurisdictions on what level? Jurisdictions exist under their own grand lodges as well as grand lodges existing inside of larger jurisdictions. Perhaps this is a local issue for you?

If you voted no changes needed...you must be ok with it dying...which it is.

Well deserved for those that refuse to evolve as a system, while touting the evolution of individuals.. they must not be listening

It is, in a sense, dying. That is because it has become stagnant because there are so many lodges that have refused to do anything different than they were taught to. This has led so many new members out of the door instead of becoming active and loyal brothers to their fraternity. However, the changes listed in this poll here will not save freemasonry. Freemasonry is not a club open to the public for a reason. It must be sought out by the individual. The teacher will appear when the student is ready. If it becomes an open door to the public it will surely die.

Perhaps not in name but intention and spirit.

Close up, repent, and return to the one true faith.

33%

Become more secretive again and focus more on the knowledge and less on charity. We've lost our mystique and therefore, no interest would be expected. Who wants to be part of a glamorous charity? Our priory should always be based around truth. Bringing people on that want to join a social club are the wrong men. We are thinking men, not drinking men. This is basically how I originally answered, but, since I'm not a member, decided I didn't know enough to say that. But... How? Secrecy for the sake of secrecy is pointless, if not also truth. And knowledge of truth implies a responsibility to the rest of society, which is antithetical to secrecy.

@fusion9619 no my friend. The secrecy is for those to seek, not to withhold. The knowledge needs to be sought. What you learn from masonry cannot be told, it has to be experienced and telling people the secrets doesn't mean it'll be understood. The secrecy is just for those that seek, not those that just want a "quick fix"

Faith, hope, charity? Did you mean something else when you used the word charity?

@TLDCHWTTOS no, why would i? I've got nothing against us doing charity, I'm just saying our priorities are wrong. We should participate in charity but it should be the last of our concerns not primary and that's how it feels these days. It's like virtue signaling and frightened about any the outside world thinks of us.

[@vitruvianbody7132](#) charity is the top rung of the ladder. Is there no significance in that symbolism?

@TLDCHWTTOS of course there is but the top rung of the ladder is actually knowledge to encourage more enthusiastic participation in boosting understanding of the Craft values between all lodge members, and to boost sharing of these values across the global spectrum of lodges.

THE INFLUENCE OF J.B. KERNING ON MASONRY, FRINGE MASONRY AND BEYOND.

PHILIP A. QUADRIO

The central figure for the narrative I am about to tell is one Jean Baptiste Krebs, also known as J.B. Kerning, henceforth I will refer to him by the latter, which was his pen name. While known to German Masons, Kerning was virtually unheard of in Anglophone Masonry until relatively recently. His influence, nonetheless, was considerable, not only was he a central figure in Stuttgart Masonic circles but he also took on Masonic administrative duties in South Germany generally. It is not, however, his administrative capacities that this paper will examine, rather its object is to explore his mystical Masonry and outline the nature of the practices that he taught. To do this I begin with a brief biographical sketch, I will then introduce some of the key people who inherit and transmit his teachings. This line of transmission certainly extends further into the 20th century than we will take it here, and there are other interesting lines of transmission that we will not explore. For our purposes it will be sufficient to take our narrative to some of the key players in the esoteric and fringe Masonic world of late 19th century Vienna, particularly Friedrich Eckstein, Carl Kellner, Franz Hartmann and some of their associates, like Gustav Meyrink, Karel Weinfurter and the Bardon family. With that rather spectacular esoteric lineage in place, we will then turn to explore the nature of Kerning's mystical teachings. We will find that he offers a very embodied approach to spirituality, one which connects to sound and vocalisation, particularly the vocalisation of words, terms or names, that are thought to take us closer to the divine within.

The exact origins of Kerning's practices are not known, their similarity to Sufi techniques has recently been argued by Gladwin, yet, as Kerning never left Germany, Gladwin sets the notion aside, leaving it as an intellectually provocative suggestion for further research. Here we will speculatively extend Gladwin's thought, we will show that perhaps 'Mohammed' did not need to go to the 'Mountain' after all; that a confluence of more or less circumstantial evidence should turn our interest in Kerning's sources toward Sabbatianism, and the work of a fringe Masonic group, the Asiatic Brethren, which we can certainly place within Kerning's intellectual context and certainly connect to figures and institutions he was associated with. As such with the nature of Kerning's system sketched out, and a possible source for its work indicated, we will end by returning to Eckstein, Kellner and Hartmann and the influence of Kerning on Sigmund Freud's Vienna Circle, the work of Karl Jung, and early psychological and psycho-analytic theory.

To give a brief sketch of Kerning's life: he was born to a relatively poor, catholic family in Überrauchen in Baden in the year 1774. He was originally moving towards a clerical career, and commenced theological studies at Freiburg, but his life took a musical turn around 1794, one which would lead him to become an opera singer in the Fürstenberg court. By 1821 he had become the director of the court Opera, a position he maintained for the next 30 years¹. In terms of his Masonic history, he first joined Masonry in Berlin, at the Lodge 'Zum Widder'² in 1820, his influence on Masonry in Stuttgart becomes most pronounced in the 1830s and in 1835 he founded the lodge 'Wilhelm zur aufgehenden Sonne im Orient'. He served as its Worshipful Master virtually uninterrupted until 1851 when he passed to the Grand Lodge above. His work was discretely continued through his students. Perhaps the most influential line of communication for his ideas moves firstly from Carl Wenzeslaus zu Leiningen-

¹ Gladwin, I. *Letters on the Royal Art: The Spiritual Alchemy of JB Kerning's Esoteric Masonry*. Pansophic Press, (2022). p. 23.

² Loc cit.

Billigheim (1823–1900), the Lord Steward of the Grand Duchy of Baden, who had a direct association and friendship with Kerning, and from him subsequently to his son, Carl Polycarp zu Leiningen-Billigheim (1860-1899)³, who was born after Kerning had died but was quite active in terms of preserving Kerning’s ideas.

Carl Polycarp is an important figure. While serving a diplomatic role in Vienna, as an attaché of the Bavarian court, he became involved in Viennese Theosophical circles. This brought him into contact with one of the most important figures for this story, Friedrich Eckstein. Baier has reported that in 1887, Carl Polycarp gave a talk on Kerning’s system to the Theosophical Society and his knowledge of Kerning was well appreciated within that circle. While the most likely source of Carl Polycarp’s understanding of Kerning would be his father, we can speculate that other Masons in his father’s social group could have also been important mentors. Eckstein himself refers to Carl Polycarp being present at a summer gathering at Bellevue Castle in 1888⁴. In 1891 Eckstein, with Carl Polycarp, travelled to Prague where they helped to establish its first Theosophical Lodge, *Loge zum Blauen Stern*,⁵ a Lodge that involved figures like Gustav Meyrink, Karel Weinfurter and Viktor Bardou. It is clear from Weinfurter’s own writings in *Man’s Highest Purpose*⁶ that Kerning’s teachings were an important feature of the work of that Lodge⁷. While Meyrink and Weinfurter are significant for the further transmission of Kerning’s ideas within esoteric circles, I won’t pursue that line too far, further light will be shed in Sam Robinson’s forthcoming book on Rosicrucianism in Germany in the wake of Kerning⁸.

Eckstein’s introduction to Theosophy came through another figure of interest, Franz Hartmann. Prominent in the Theosophical Society, Hartmann joined the American branch in 1882 and in 1883 he travelled to Adyar in India where he became more deeply involved in the Society. He remained there until 1885 when he and Helena Blavatsky travelled back to Europe together⁹. Both through professional or business activity and through a mutual interest in the esoteric, Hartmann developed an association with a somewhat infamous figure in fringe Masonry, Carl Kellner¹⁰. Together, Hartmann and Kellner, with the assistance of Theodore Reuss, went on to form the foundations of the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO) in its pre-Crowley embodiment¹¹. It is important to note here that the pre-Crowley OTO was quite different to the system developed by Crowley; it essentially acted as a vehicle for reflecting on Masonry and communicating its own ideas about meditation and what, for Hartmann and Kellner, amounts to a form of Western Yoga, or a system of self-transformation through practices centred on the body and significantly influenced by Kerning. These practices had a more ascetic feel to them than would be typical of the popular conception of the post-Crowley OTO. Crowley and Theodore Reuss took the OTO in a different direction after Kellner’s death, but the fate of the OTO in their hands is not a concern for this paper, nor does the direction in which they took the organisation reflect much about what was occurring in its first embodiment. In any case, as we are told by Baier, “Being a friend of Eckstein and Hartmann, Kellner was, of course, connected

³ Baier, K. *Occult Vienna: From the Beginnings until the First World War*. In, Hoedl, H.G., Mattes, A. and Pokorny, L. (eds.), *Religion in Austria*, Vol. 5, Praesens, Vienna (2020). p. 30.

⁴ Loc cit.

⁵ Loc cit.

⁶ Weinfurter, K. *Man’s Highest Purpose (the Lost Word Regained)*, Capelton, A. and Unger, C. (trans), Rider and Co., London (1930).

⁷ Ibid. See, for example, p. 54.

⁸ Robinson, S. Personal communications.

⁹ Goodrich-Clark, N. *Hartmann, Franz*. In *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, Hanegraaff, W. (ed), Brill, Leiden (2006). p. 458.

¹⁰ Ibid p. 459.

¹¹ Pasi, M. *Order Templi Orientis*. In Hanegraaff, W. p. 898

to Theosophy and Eckstein's circle. According to Franz Hartmann, he joined the Theosophical Society in 1887"¹². This is, of course, around the time that Carl Polycarp was associated with the Eckstein and the Vienna Theosophical society.

Before returning to these figures, it is worth developing an account of the nature of Kerning's teachings and their sources. Here the discussion will be both in terms of esotericism broadly conceived, and more particularly in regard to Masonic teachings of an esoteric nature. One of our key sources for the former is Karel Weinfurter (1867-1942)¹³, an associate of Gustav Meyrink and mentor of Franz Bardon. As we have seen Franz's father, Viktor Bardon, was directly involved in the *Blauen Stern* Lodge with Weinfurter and Meyrink and through his father Franz came under Weinfurter's mentorship. For the more directly Masonic version of Kerning's teachings the main sources will be Gladwin's 'Letters on the Royal Art'¹⁴, which translates Kerning's correspondence with Idealist philosopher Joseph Franz Molitor (1779-1860) and Kerning's own *Sabbithengrad* Degree¹⁵ – a ceremony appended to the Craft Degrees as practiced in Kerning's Lodge.

The fact that Kerning had both Masonic and non-Masonic versions of his mystical system¹⁶ shows us that while this system can certainly be articulated into symbolic teachings of Masonry, its ideas are broader and not enclosed within the exclusivity of a Lodge. Weinfurter presents Kerning's system as a form of Christian mysticism and as lying in a long mystical tradition. After anchoring the origins of Christian mysticism in traditions flowing out of commonly cited sources, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Babylon, India and Kabbalah, Weinfurter tells us that within the Christian mystical tradition, "the file-leader remains J.B. Kerning"¹⁷. We need to temper this a little, as clearly Kerning is himself influenced by significant figures in the German mystical tradition, Jakob Bohme comes to mind in that regard, yet Weinfurter's enthusiasm shows us how significant Kerning's work was for those in the *Blauen Stern* Circle in Prague. For the Prague circle, Kerning presents not so much a speculative, theoretical system, but a practical mysticism and Weinfurter even refers to him as "Master Kerning"¹⁸. Consider the following where Weinfurter quotes from Kerning's *The Key to the Spirit World*, "By a *persevering practice* my mental horizon became extended, and I found within myself a new life, of which I did not know before. To that life I gradually devoted myself in full, and have reached that point where I seek all counsel in eternity"¹⁹. The centrality, indeed, priority, of practice is also emphasised by Gladwin when he tells us that for Kerning there is but one mantra "*practice, practice, practice*"²⁰. This does not mean that Kerning avers theory or, as we might say, 'speculation', but it does indicate the priority of practice. This thought is further emphasised in one of the first lines delivered after opening of a Lodge in the *Sabbithengrad*, "I do not like to do this ritual beforehand, because I'm afraid it will not be useful. You will hear it, talk about it, argue for and against it, but not practice, and then it would be as much as

¹² Baier, K. *Yoga within Viennese Occultism: Carl Kellner and Co.* In, Baier, K., Maas, P.A. and Preisendanz, K. (eds) *Yoga in Transformation: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Vienna University Press, Vienna (2018). p. 396

¹³ Op cit. Weinfurter, K.

¹⁴ Op cit. Gladwin, I.

¹⁵ Stettner, K. *The Sabbithengrad*. Eike, C. (trans), Manuscript of Translation supplied by Sam Robinson, personal communications, (2024).

¹⁶ Robinson, S. Personal communications (2024). Further details forthcoming in Robinson's book on Rosicrucianism in the wake of Kerning.

¹⁷ Op cit. Weinfurter, p40

¹⁸ Ibid. p170.

¹⁹ Op cit. Kerning in Weinfurter p54 (emphasis mine)

²⁰ Op cit. Gladwin p. 19.

nothing”²¹. Exactly what is being practised we will need to explore further, it is, however bound up with what has been described as “alphabet mysticism [or]...*buchstabenmagie*”²². One might assume here that we will be led into Kabbalah, but that assumption should be kept in abeyance for now, the story is more complex.

It is important that Kerning himself describes his practice as prayer²³, but insists that in prayer only a few words are to be used, that long wordy prayer is not useful. Weinfurter clarifies the role of prayer in Kerning suggesting that the term prayer should be taken as the “mystical concentration of thought”²⁴. Further, we know from Weinfurter that one of the phrases Kerning taught was ‘Our Father’, here Kerning suggests that “You shall pray nothing else but that, repeating it so often in silence, until not only your mouth, but also your heart, why your whole nature from the skin into the inmost point of your body knows it by heart. If then you feel the effect of it, when your hair is standing up and your bones are burning, then think you have received the baptism”²⁵. What we see here is that an internal process, which Gladwin has described as internal or spiritual alchemy, is thought to issue in physical manifestations signalling an internal change. This gives us a sense of the core practice in Kerning’s mysticism, a practice, as we have indicated, he taught outside of the Masonic setting. There are further intimations in these ideas of the practices that will later develop in the work of Alois Mailänder, a Rosicrucian whom we know studied Kerning’s works²⁶ and recommended them to his students (which included Weinfurter). In particular it seems to resonate with Mailänder’s practice of ‘soul work’ which involved the repetition of short phrases²⁷, somewhat in the fashion of *mantra*. Indeed, this is how Weinfurter and others saw Kerning’s work, as recommending practices they assimilated with Yoga, such as *mantra*²⁸. Mailänder, however, had his own system, which again was not restricted within Masonic circles, but was associated with Kerning’s teachings and he will also go on to become influential on Eckstein, Meyrink, Hartmann, Kellner and others. These figures therefore inherit what amounts to a dual Kerning influence, both in direct line from Kerning and through the teachings of Mailänder who encouraged his students to read and study Kerning.

Turning now to Kerning’s more Masonic teachings, we will find ourselves quickly led into exotic terrain. Within Kerning’s Stuttgart Lodge, *Wilhelm zur aufgehenden Sonne im Orient*, there was a specific interpretation of Masonry, based on his mystical views. While we have seen above that, in his non-Masonic teachings, there was a strong emphasis on Christian themes, such as, ‘Our Father’, prayer and an experience of ‘baptism’, the Masonic teachings have, at times, shown traces that are more exotic. Gladwin rightly notes the difficulty in reconstructing the influences Kerning brought to bear on Masonry, he mentions a similarity to the Kabbalistic ideas of Abraham Abulafia, but due to differences in the practices, such as the absence of ‘*Mudra*’ type exercises in Abulafia, he sets that aside²⁹. Gladwin also notes possible influences from *Hurufism*, through Sufi *Bektashi* Orders³⁰ which were known to have existed in Southern Europe and the Balkans, but he sets this aside due to the fact that Kerning never left Germany.

²¹ Op cit. Kerning in Stettner (2024)

²² Op cit. Gladwin p. 15

²³ Op cit. Weinfurter p. 54

²⁴ Loc cit.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 55

²⁶ Robinson, S. *Alois Mailänder: A Rosicrucian Remembered*. Pansophic Press. 2021

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Op cit. Weinfurter pp. 85-87.

²⁹ Op cit. Gladwin p. 16

³⁰ Loc cit

We might speculate, however, that Kerning may have picked up ideas that had been transmitted from Asia Minor. One path for this might flow from Sabbatian and Frankist sources. The Sabbatians were heterodox and at times antinomian Jews, the founder of the movement, Sabbatai Zevi (1626-1676), claimed to be the Messiah and had a keen interest in Kabbalah. Thus, in Zevi we find mystical or esoteric ideas meeting with Jewish messianism³¹. Zevi was born in Anatolia but spent time in Thessalonica, Jerusalem, Cairo and Montenegro. There was also some apparent contact with the Jewish community in Italy (Livorno) where his ideas had spread and from where his marriage to Sarah was arranged. A climactic moment in Zevi's life comes when, under pressure from the Sultan, who was concerned that members of community around Sabbatai saw him as a prophet, forced Zevi to convert to Islam. He took the name Mehmet Efendi, perhaps a reference to Vani Mehmet Efendi, a Kurdish religious official who was present when he agreed to convert³². Significantly for this narrative Zevi, as Scholem reports, had contact with "Muslim mystics among the Dervish orders"³³. David Marc Baer tells us that Sabbatians in Thessalonica recounted a story that "Shabbatai Tzevi met with antinomian Sufis, including Halveti Sheikh Niyazi Mısri"³⁴. Baer goes on to explain that Mısri had in fact established a Sufi Lodge in Thessalonica. While it cannot be confirmed that a meeting between Mısri and Zevi this took place, Baer notes that there is an undoubted connection, in the eyes of the Sabbatian community of Thessalonica, between their religion and Sufism.

Jacob Frank (1726-1791) was in some senses Sabbatai's spiritual heir. He spent much of his life in South Poland, Turkey, the Balkans, Austria and Germany. His final years were spent at Offenbach near Frankfurt, where a sizable community gathered around him at Isenburger Schloss, where in effect he had established his 'court'. Frank was influenced by Baruchiah Russo³⁵, a leader within the Dönme community, a community of Sabbatians many of whom had converted to Islam with Sabbatai Zevi; they followed Islamic traditions publicly but maintained Jewish traditions privately and held them together with forms of Jewish mysticism, particularly Sabbatian Kabbalah. The specific Dönme sect that Russo belonged to was known as Karakashi (*Karakaş*), essentially a radical and highly antinomian community of Sabbatians. The Dönme, according to the Encyclopedia Judaica, "were on friendly terms with Sufic circles, and with the dervish orders among the Turks, particularly the Baktashi"³⁶. Baer tells us "Their religion was a spiritual synthesis based on two religions, which incorporated elements of Kabbalah Judaism and Sufi Islam ... into a new construction that neither Jews nor Muslims recognized"³⁷. More specifically, for Baer these Sufi influences were "Bektaşî for the Karakaş"³⁸. Further Baer, citing Yıldız Sertel, a descendent of a Karakaş Dönme family, indicates that their community also maintained Sufi Lodges as important places of worship³⁹. Notably Baruchiah Russo, on his conversion to Islam, took the name Osman Baba, with Baba being a Sufi title; the resonance of his adopted Islamic name with that of the Alevi Sufi mystic of the same name shows the importance of Sufi tradition for this sect. One last fascinating connection before moving on, Frank's father-in-law, who was also a member of the Karakashi

³¹ Scholem, G. *Kabbalah*. Meridian Books, New York (1974), pp. 79-80, and 245-6.

³² Baer, D.M. *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks*. Stanford University Press, Stanford (2009). p. 2.

³³ Op cit. Scholem (1974). p. 268

³⁴ Op cit. Baer, p. 9.

³⁵ Op cit. Scholem (1974). p 274

³⁶ Encyclopedia Judaica, *DOENMEH (Dönme)*, The Gale Group (2007): <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/doenmeh> (accessed June 2024).

³⁷ Op cit. Baer p17

³⁸ Loc cit.

³⁹ Ibid. p 10

sect, went by the name, Dervish Efendi, again indicating that the link to Islam was more specifically a Sufi one.

While the foregoing is interesting, we are yet to see how it might connect to Kerning or his Lodge. Sabbatian and Frankist influences were certainly a feature of the fringe Masonic world, particularly *The Knights and Brethren of Saint John the Evangelist of Asia in Europe*, also known as The Asiatic Brethren, who had been active in Germany a few decades prior to the period in which Kerning was active. By the time Kerning had entered Masonry, the Asiatic Brethren were something of a remnant. But as Faivre suggests “its discreet but enduring presence is documented well into the 20th century in a variety of similar Systems which took their inspiration from it”⁴⁰, in particular he cites the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. One of the most interesting individuals for our story here is Thomas von Schönfeld⁴¹. Schönfeld was not only a Sabbatian, but his mother, Schöndl Dobruschka, was a powerful member of the community and was Jakob Frank’s cousin. Frank had resided on her estate in the mid 1780s. Von Schönfeld and his friend, Ephraim Joseph Hirschfeld, were the two members who were most responsible for the introduction of Kabbalistic, Sabbatian and antinomian elements into the Order⁴². It was they who largely shaped the rituals and traditions of the Order, drawing Kabbalah and other mystical aspects of Sabbatian or Frankist teachings into it. Hirschfeld, who had a more orthodox upbringing, was likely led toward Sabbatian ideas by von Schönfeld, but he was certainly quite connected to the Frankist movement. Indeed in 1792, a year after Frank’s death, he moved to Offenbach, where Frank had been resident until his death, and where the ‘court’ had now been taken over by Frank’s daughter, Eve. While the Asiatic Brethren as an Order was in decline by this point, Hirschfeld’s esoteric activities continued, he maintained contact with the Frankist community in Offenbach, and maintained Freemasonic contacts; in 1796 he wrote the *Biblisches Organon* which Faivre has described as “one of the most interesting theosophical works of the late 18th century”⁴³. Most importantly, Hirschfeld was in communication with the Idealist philosopher and Kabbalist, Joseph Franz Molitor, Kerning’s friend and correspondent.

We can now turn back to Kerning. We know that he had been exposed to Sabbatianism, because we know that he had some familiarity with the work of the Asiatic Brethren. Within his Lodge the version of Masonic ritual that was practised was the Fessler Rite, the 6th Degree of which contained a critical examination of the teachings of the Asiatic Brethren. Furthermore, Kerning’s friend, Molitor, is well known for having written on the foundations of the Asiatic Brethren. That there was some connection between the Asiatic Brethren and Fessler System of Masonry is evident from the title of the key source for information on the Asiatic Brethren, a text from 1803 whose title translates as *The Brethren St. Johannis the Evangelist from Asia in Europe or the only true and genuine Freemasonry next to an appendix, Fessler’s Critical History of Freemasonry and its voidness, by a High Advanced One*. The title seems to indicate that relations between the two systems were not entirely amicable, but nonetheless the Fessler system and the Asiatic Brethren are interlocutors of sorts. Whether or not Kerning read that work we cannot say, but Kerning was very well read in regard to Masonry and very well read in regard to theology and philosophy.

From Gershom Scholem we also learn that Molitor was in communication with Hirschfeld, this most likely came sometime after 1813 when Molitor’s focus turned to Jewish mysticism and

⁴⁰ Faivre, A. Asiatic Brethren. In Hanegraaff p 108

⁴¹ Ibid. p 107

⁴² Loc cit.

⁴³ Ibid. p 108

before Hirschfeld's death in 1820⁴⁴. Molitor's Kabbalistic studies commenced under "a very learned Jew named Metz in Offenbach, whom he met in 1813"⁴⁵. Exactly who Metz was and whether he was also moving in Frankist circles in Offenbach we do not know, but his association with Offenbach, home of the Frankist 'court', is curious, particularly given Molitor's close contact with Hirschfeld. The connection between Molitor and Hirschfeld is not a fleeting one, they worked together on a number of projects, most significantly they cooperated in trying to establish a Jewish Lodge in the area, the details of which I will set aside, but in a discussion of this activity, Katz tells us that Hirschfeld attempted to introduce the rites of the Asiatic Brethren into this Lodge in 1816⁴⁶. It seems from what Katz tells us that the rituals of the Brethren were still being worked by Hirschfeld during this period of activity with Molitor.

We can conclude, therefore, that Kerning certainly knew of the existence of the Asiatic Brethren and knew something of their ritual, how much he knew is a question, but again we simply indicate that he was well read on Masonic, theological and philosophical materials. Through the Fessler system he would have been, at least indirectly, exposed to some elements of Sabbatian and Frankist thought. More cautiously there is the possibility that he was more directly exposed to Sabbatian and Frankist ideas via Molitor, who prior to his correspondence with Kerning had been in communication with Hirschfeld. Although it must also be said that Kerning's exchange with Molitor comes quite late. On the other hand, Molitor shows that Christian Germans with mystical and Kabbalistic interests did turn to Frankist sources and that within the Frankist community, Jewish, Islamic and Christian thought coalesced. Sabbatians and Frankists did communicate with the Christian community and indeed around Isenburger Schloss, this had been the case since the 1730s when Nikolaus Zinzendorf took refuge under the Count of Ysenburg-Büdingen. Sabbatian ideas were thus in the air both through Jews who identified as Sabbatian and through the work of the Asiatic brethren, and they readily communicated with Christians about matters of religion and theosophy. The similarities between Kerning's teachings and practices to the work of Abulafia and to Sufism thus could well have been influenced from these directions, which do not require him to have left Germany. These ideas had been elements of Sabbatian, and particular Frankist traditions and the work of the Asiatic Brethren, particularly the esoteric elements therein were Sabbatian and Frankist. The influence of the Asiatic Brethren had spread across Austria, Switzerland and Germany, with quite an influence through the South of Germany, home to Kerning. Their work was well known to German Masons, even if it was viewed with suspicion for failing to be exclusively Christian⁴⁷. Finally, we can note that one of the more important Sufi practices to enter the Sabbatean tradition is the practice of *dhikr*, the repetition of the divine name to induce trance⁴⁸, this mantra-like practice certainly resonates with Kerning's injunction to the repetition of 'Our Father'⁴⁹, and also with transformation through vocal technique. Furthermore, this is the sort of practice that men like Weinfurter, Kellner and Hartmann associated with 'Yoga'⁵⁰.

Returning now to Kerning's more direct Masonic teachings, particularly as laid down in his correspondence with Molitor. Gladwin's discussion sheds more light, as he points out the fascinating influence of Swiss-Italian education theorist, Pestalozzi⁵¹. The latter's work seems

⁴⁴ Op cit. Scholem (1974). p. 257

⁴⁵ Loc cit.

⁴⁶ Katz, J. *Jews and Freemasons in Europe 1723-1939*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (1970). pp.66-67.

⁴⁷ Op cit. Katz. pp. 44-5

⁴⁸ Goldish, M. *The Sabbatean Prophets*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (2004). p. 62

⁴⁹ Op cit. Kerning in Weinfurter. p. 55

⁵⁰ Op cit. Baier (2018).

⁵¹ See also Baier, (2020), p. 55.

to reflect the Rousseauian quest for a practice of education that draws out the natural ‘goodness’ or virtue of the student, and the Rousseauian emphasis on “reasons of the heart”. Pestalozzi had emphasised practice prior to theory, and the importance of experience in learning, which is very much in line with Kerning’s method⁵². Further, as Gladwin points out, Pestalozzi’s ideas were to lead to a condition whereby “one’s ‘true’, or innermost, nature becomes connected to a greater reality, where the heart, above all is meant to lead”. While the notion of the heart leading is reminiscent of Rousseau’s Savoyard Vicar⁵³, for us what is interesting is that “Kerning’s method unfolds out of the experience of symbols, gestures, and sounds that affect one’s true, inner, and divine natures”⁵⁴. We can clearly see how such ideas could have structured the way Kerning developed the teaching of his practices, if not the specific content of what he taught. Kerning uses Masonry and Masonic symbolism to develop a process and practice of internal alchemy, the transformation or renovation of the interior condition of the one who follows this process. This process also takes us to the heart, as Kerning says, “For the founders of the Christian Religion the Mithras Temple was too large, so the teacher directed his followers to their own heart, where the riches of heaven, God and eternity are to be found”⁵⁵.

Sound is of particular importance for Kerning, his teachings are seen as a form of *buchstabenmagie* or ‘letter mysticism’ similar, as we have seen to Kabbalah and Sufi Hurufism. Remember that Kerning is a singer and vocal trainer. In particular he points to the sounds delivered through the letters of the alphabet. This is not the more complex system of Kabbalistic correspondence seen as fundamental to the Western Esoteric tradition, but more directly the vibratory force of vocal sound and its transformative effect within the body of the mystical practitioner – thus it is more practical and experiential. Here one might point not only to Kerning’s experience as a vocal trainer, but to the work of Jakob Bohme and his discussion of letters in *Mysterium Magnum*. Weinfurter had already seen that the letter practice reflected this Behmenist discussion⁵⁶, but it is worth quoting direct from Bohme “The spirits of the letters in the Alphabet are the form of the one spirit in the Language of Nature, the five vowels bear forth the holy tongue of the five holy languages out of the name Jehovah, from whence the Holy Spirit speaketh”⁵⁷. Now consider this from Gladwin’s discussion of Kerning: “we can look to the purification of the soul through the transforming power of the spirit found in the vowels and later the consonants... we are left with the discovery of the Lost Word [that for which all Masons seek], the actualisation or manifestation of spiritual matter, the perfected elements of one’s being”⁵⁸. But what Gladwin says here can also be seen in light of the work of Bohme, continuing the earlier quote from Bohme: “for the five vowels are the holy name of God, according to his holiness. For the name Jehovah hath nothing in it, save for the five vowels”⁵⁹. This is an odd claim given that, on the face of it, Jehovah seems to hold three vowels, so we need to clarify this.

It has long been held⁶⁰ that the Lost Word of Masonry is the true pronunciation of the *HaShem*, a stand in for the name of God which, in Hebrew literally means ‘the Word’. But I want to

⁵² Op cit. Gladwin p. 17

⁵³ Rousseau, J.J., The Creed of the Savoyard Priest, from *Emile*. Stephen Hicks (2024) pp. 1-3.

⁵⁴ Op cit. Gladwin p. 18

⁵⁵ Op cit. Kerning in Gladwin p. 34.

⁵⁶ Op cit. Weinfurter p. 145.

⁵⁷ Boehme, J. *Mysterium Magnum: An Exposition of the First Book of Moses called Genesis (Vol. 1)*. John Sparrow (trans). Hermetica, San Rafael, (2007) p. 300

⁵⁸ Op cit. Gladwin p. 18.

⁵⁹ Op cit. Boehme p. 300

⁶⁰ Pike, A. *Pike’s Esoterika: The Symbolism of the Craft Degrees of Freemasonry*. Arturo de Hoyos (ed), Scottish Rite Research Society, Washington (2022).

consider a quote from Weinfurter citing Bohme, and in particular I want to draw our attention to what must be a clever Kerning inspired misquote. The misquote involves the ordering of the five vowels, whereas in Bohme's discussion of the connection of the five vowels to the divine name he places them in the usual "A, E, I, O, U"⁶¹ arrangement, Weinfurter renders them in lower case (perhaps indicating phonetic use) and gives them in the following misquoted order "i, e, o, u, a"⁶². An order which when pronounced phonetically gives a peculiar though recognisable form of the name Jehovah. To see how this plays out directly in Kerning we can turn to his 'Eighth Letter' in the exchange with Molitor: "The Old Master Word by which the slain man was brought back to life is Jehovah, yet actually, i e o u a. The two H's were inserted to indicate the activity of inhaling and exhaling. This Old Master Life Word has played an important role in higher institutions in all times"⁶³. The Masonic significance of that passage would be clear for any Master Mason, for the Master Mason does not receive the lost word, but merely a substitute, which in other Orders of Masonry is eventually revealed as the name of God. But of further importance is the notion of 'hearing' the word. Connecting this back to Jewish thought, while the spelling of the name of God is known, its proper pronunciation is the preserve of the High Priest. Thus, the lost secret of Masonry, the "Mason word" is not – as it seems in some of the High Degrees of Masonry – the spelling, or letters of the name, but for Kerning the vibratory force of the pronounced name. Here it is interesting that Kerning noticed the peculiar way the words of the three Degrees of Craft Masonry are exchanged: in the First Degree the word is exchanged by 'lettering' (one letter at a time, essentially spelling); in the Second Degree by syllable, and; in the Third Degree through the full pronunciation of the Master Mason's Word (which is not the real word but merely a substitute, the Master Mason being left to seek out the true word). The whole course moves us in a developmental path from letters, to syllables to words – but it rarely strikes the Mason that sound is important, and this despite the fact that the Mason is told to seek the lost word in the 'Centre' (of the Temple) which in Hermetic correspondence theory correlates with sound, but also the heart, where "heaven, God and eternity are to be found"⁶⁴.

It is through the Three Degrees of Craft Masonry that Kerning then articulates a practice that leads to the discovery of the 'Lost Word', but this discovery happens through a process of integrating that 'Word' into the body, so as to renovate not just the interior of the person but in fact their whole being. The signs, words and grips of Masonry provide the keys for how this process is performed. Again, this is not about complex schemas of correspondence such as is typical of the Western Esoteric or Western Hermetic tradition, rather it is a contemplative practice for the individual to pursue, resonant with *Mantra* and *Mudra*. Gladwin's text shows us much about how this relates to the Blue or Craft Degrees. Kerning tells us "We see God's word and we hear it, but it is only when we sense and understand it through experience that a union with God and man is established. God is in man and man is in God. Sign, Grip and Word. Seeing, feeling and hearing... [f]or example, the Freemason forms the sign of an angular measure with his hand. He places the sign on the throat, the root organs of speech, and he spells the Entered Apprentice word until the throat is spiritually awakened, thereby making him able to speak freely and spiritually, inwardly and outwardly"⁶⁵. This indicates that it is not merely the hearing of the Word pronounced, but rather that the practitioner is seeking to awaken God's word within, or as he puts it awakening "the inner Word of wisdom"⁶⁶. While the above discussion gestures to practices related to the Entered Apprentice Degree, Kerning

⁶¹ Op cit. Boehme, p. 300

⁶² Op cit. Weinfurter p. 145.

⁶³ Op cit. Kerning in Gladwin p. 70

⁶⁴ Ibid. p. 34.

⁶⁵ Ibid p. 36.

⁶⁶ Loc cit.

goes on to say that the other Degrees provide other techniques that will eventually lead to the awakening of the Mason's "entire nature"⁶⁷, which – as we will see below – is the awakening of 'Basic Force'⁶⁸. Further, while Weinfurter understands this practice in light of the notion of *Mantra*, given that, ultimately, the Mason Word is the divine name, and that the words of the three degrees are steppingstones to that name, we could perhaps better anchor this practice in the Sufi notion of *dhikr*, important to the Sabbatians, the repetition of words or phrases that focus one's being on God. This then would lead us to see Kerning's work as having its structure provided by Pestalozzi, but its content stemming from a more Sufi, Hurufic (Bektashi) approach, but filtered through Sabbatian and Frankist thought and the Sabbatian Kabbalistic tradition of the Asiatic Brethren.

While 'Letters on the Royal Art' develops many of the practices that Kerning taught for the Blue or Craft Degrees, there is, in fact, a Degree or Ceremony that Kerning produced and communicated through his Lodge for those who had progressed to Master Mason. This is something of a Capstone Degree to the Craft Degrees and thus it supplements the material that we obtain through Kerning's correspondence with Molitor. The Degree is known as *The Sabbithengrad* – a Degree taken only by those who had progressed to Master Masons. The version I am working from here was translated by Christine Eike, based on a version from 1922 published by Konrad Stettner, with notes from a Brother A. Wenig. The copy was kindly provided to me by Sam Robinson⁶⁹. Wenig notes that the work of the *Sabbithes* (the name of those who have received the Degree) is anchored in Aristotelian philosophy, but other notes from Wenig also point to Pythagorean notions, this need not bother us too much as here I will not go into the fine detail of the ritual, but just sketch a broad view. The title of the Grade, and the name of its holders '*Sabbithes*' of course indicates the Sabbath and planet Saturn, the latter of which was held as particularly important in Jewish messianic traditions. Notably Sabbatai Zevi's name indicates the Sabbath and Saturn, which is fitting for one who claimed to be the Messiah. At this stage, a direct connection between the name of the Grade and its holders to Sabbatianism is speculative, but it is curious that within a Lodge practising Fessler and led by a man who is connected to Molitor, a close friend of Hirschfeld, there is a practical Masonic teaching that is resonant with the practice of *dhikr* and a form of 'letter mysticism' resonant with Hurufi teachings. This is a line of thinking for further research.

Taking a closer look at the *Sabbithengrad*, the first point to note, and it is resonant with what Gladwin tells us about the centrality of practice in Kerning's work, is that the ritual tells us "I do not like to do this ritual beforehand, because I'm afraid it will not be useful. You will hear it, talk about it, argue for and against it, but not practice, and then it would be as much as nothing"⁷⁰. Clearly, for Kerning, the Degree is not meant to feed our speculative thirst, not meant as something for us to theorise on or draw into complex conceptual schemes, it is primarily to encourage practice. Thus, as per Gladwin, Kerning's mantra "*practice, practice, practice*"⁷¹, the secrets of the *Sabbithengrad* are to be experienced and felt, it is not the Masonic (or Kabbalistic) puzzle-box offered in other quarters. The *Sabbithengrad* thus brings the teachings that Kerning communicated in relation to the three Degrees of Craft Masonry to a conclusion.

The *Sabbithengrad* moves to a discussion of the importance of sound. In the opening of the Degree, we see a reference to 'Tones' and 'Beats', and we are told that the 'Tones' "are always

⁶⁷ Loc cit. p. 36.

⁶⁸ Op cit. Kerning in Stettner.

⁶⁹ Sam Robinson (personal communication 2023)

⁷⁰ Op cit. Kerning in Stettner.

⁷¹ Op cit. Gladwin p. 19

sounding”⁷² and are “streams of life”⁷³, and the ritual makes clear that these ‘Tones’ are in fact the vowel sounds; they are eternal, having “neither beginning nor end”. This we can relate to Bohme’s notion that “the five vowels are the holy name of God... [for] the name Jehovah hath nothing in it save for the five vowels”⁷⁴. Yet now, when brought into relation with Kerning’s notion that the tones are manifest as streams of life, we get a sense that we, as living manifest beings, participate in the tones, a Logos coursing through the universe. The ‘Beats’, which are the consonants B, D and G, must, however, be renewed when we want to hear them⁷⁵. Yet we are told that largely these ‘beats’ are directed towards the same object, so if the tones are ‘streams of life’ that are expressions of the divine name, then the consonants seem to be a quite human manner of active participation in shaping the streams of life. In the first long discourse of the Degree, delivered by the Master, we are told very clearly that in Masonry we are given words, yet as entered apprentices we only spell those words, this indicates that we cannot yet speak the word, we can only make simple sounds. In the Fellowcraft Degree we progress to syllables, for while we still cannot speak whole words we are now, as Fellowcraft Masons, able to combine simple sounds. It is only as Master Masons that we come to be able to speak in whole words. This capitulates, through explicit formulation, what is taught by Kerning in the ‘Letters’ between himself and Molitor.

Kerning criticises the Masonic tendency to want to interpret the words of its Degrees conceptually rather than to ‘feel’ the simple power that resides within them, and it is this tendency, to think rather than feel and experience, which is the cause of Masons not achieving their goal – the retrieval the Lost Word. In the course of the initial lecture, we find the Master suggesting that God is alive in the process of the world, in life, or as per a note from Wenig, the deity is dissolved into the laws of nature. This leads the Master to suggest that one of the ways to find the word is through life itself – leading us into the interiority of that life we are most familiar with, our own. As the ceremony moves into its second phase, some of the working tools of Masonry are introduced, they are first connected to geometry, but the ritual contains the insistence that while this might seem like ordinary geometry it cannot be taken in that sense, rather something else is going on. This is then explained by the suggestion that the art of geometry is there to facilitate our hearing of the tones and beats – thus the visual leads us back to the auditory but this itself is supposed to lead to a sense in which all senses are contained, which is described as the ‘Basic Force’. Obtaining that basic force is the object of the Sabbithes. What is this basic force? Wenig includes a short and enigmatic note containing a single word “Actuality” or in German *Wirklichkeit*, a word that has a peculiar philosophical connotation, particularly within the Idealist philosophical circles in which Kerning moved. There it implies the actualisation of an internal telos or goal, the final unfolding of an entity according to a blueprint held within it, or, more theologically, we can see it as the manifestation of the Logos within, the logical unfolding of the human being towards a goal embedded within us, redemption. We obtain the basic force through the actualisation of the Logos, or ‘Word’ within, or in more simple terms, the actualisation of the divine within.

To illustrate the importance of this for the practice of ‘letter mysticism’ we can consider the following discussion, by Shahzad Bashir, of the work of the founder of the *Hurufi* tradition Fazlallah Astarabadi. A consideration that will throw light on both Kerning and Hurufism. Fazlallah taught that God had communicated, to Adam, the 32 letter/sound pairings of the Persian language, these were communicated as names (combining sign and sound) and these

⁷² Op cit. Kerning in Stettner.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Op cit. Bohme p. 300

⁷⁵ Op cit. Kerning in Stettner

names were gates to the “greatest cosmic secrets”⁷⁶. This is the language of God, in its Edenic form, taught to Adam, and constitutes a metalanguage that is central both to the creation and comprehension of these cosmic secrets⁷⁷. While the shape of these letters is important, the pronunciation is also essential as it was the letter/sound pairing that is the focus. Further Astrabadi “argued that all letters originated from three basic shapes: straight (*mustaqim*), rounded (*mustadir*), and bent (mu’wajj). These shapes were exemplified by the letters *alif*, *lam*, and *ha*, which was no accident since these three letters form the word *Allah*. The alphabet as a whole could thus be seen as pointing to God. The shapes of the letters corresponded directly to the parts of the human body as well, recalling the connection between speech and material reality going back to the command ‘be’ uttered by God in the beginning of creation.”⁷⁸. While the Hurufi held that the divine verb was in fact the entire alphabet (28 letters in Arabic, 32 in Persian), the more specific idea is that the name of *Allah* is comprised of the three basic shapes fundamental to all letters, so the keys to creation, and its comprehension, are the letter/sounds which are themselves derived from the name of God. Further it is clear from the above that the keys to creation are also related here directly to the body, that material, or created, reality that we are most familiar with. This brings the letters into relation with the body (creation), and the name *Allah* into relation with the straight, the angular (bent) and the round, from which those letters are formed.

Now consider this passage from Kerning’s *Sabbithengrad* which relates to naming the measuring instruments of geometry that are central to Masonry, the gauge-rule, the square and the compasses. Here the Master asks one of his principle officers this question “What was their [the measuring instruments] original name?” The answer he receives “They were given no names, they called themselves and were called I, O, A,”⁷⁹. So: 1) the gauge-rule is connected to the I, a straight line - “With the inch gauge. It measures straight lines”; 2) the square is connected to the A, which gives a right angle (bent) – “By the square I search the sizes of the bent lines”, and; 3) the O is the compass, which gives the circle – “How does the *Sabbithe* use the compasses? ... He compares the circular lines with other circular lines”⁸⁰. Thus these three central tools or altarpieces of European Masonry, laid across the Bible indicate the straight the bent and the square and are intimately connected to divine revelation (Bible). The I, O, A, formula, as the ritual progresses, then becomes constitutive of the signs and tokens (grips) for the Degree, such that signs and grips articulate IOA, indicating its centrality to their symbolism - IOA is the central mystery. While this letter combination is different to a similar one discussed in *Letters on the Royal Art* (the latter uses the Gnostic IAO), this specific letter combination, is in fact a truncation of the word for God generated by the five vowels that we encountered through Bohme⁸¹, Weinfurter⁸² and Kerning’s ‘*Letters*’⁸³. It is simply a truncation of i, e, o, u, a or Jehovah.

Thus we are led to the exhortation “Great Architect of the world [creator]. Your beats [sounds] ... called us! We stand before you in the signs [shapes] of your sublime tools. I. O. A.”. To get a sense of the cosmic nature of what is happening here consider the following question and answer: the Master asks “Lines and angles are objects for the eye [shapes/letters], tones and beats for the ear [sounds]! How is it possible for the ear to hear where the forms touch only the

⁷⁶ Bashir, S. *Fazlallah Astarabadi and The Hurufis*. Oneworld Press, Oxford (2005). p. 50

⁷⁷ Loc cit.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 75.

⁷⁹ Op cit. Kerning in Stettner.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Op cit. Bohme p. 300.

⁸² Op cit. Weinfurter p. 145

⁸³ Op cit. Kerning in Gladwin p. 63

eye? Solve this contradiction!” The answer takes us to a cosmic scale: “Inside creation, nature, life and man there is only one meaning. The others, as local emanations, are all contained in these... In this way the unity arises and the *Sabbithe* finds his principle proven”. The *Sabbithe* is seeking out a unity that lies behind the duality of sign, or shape (letter) and phonetics (sound). This creative unity lying behind duality and expressed through IOA, is stated to be “Actuality” which we have seen is the *Logos* behind creation. Thus exploring the letter/sound pairings are thought to lead the *Sabbithe* back to something more primal, as in the *Hurufi* tradition they are gates to seem to constitute a fundamental connection to, or gates to, the divine and are principles of, and means to comprehending, creation. Here we find a resonance with *Hurufi* and *Bektashi* mysteries right at the heart of Kerning’s mysticism and letter magic.

We can now circle back to where we began, to those who came in the ‘wake of Kerning’, to borrow from Robinson’s forthcoming book title, in particular Eckstein, Kellner and Hartmann. Baier has convincingly argued that, in the context of late 19th Century Vienna, and particularly from within an intellectual culture informed by the teachings of the Theosophical Society, it was easy for these inheritors of Kerning’s work to assimilate it with Eastern techniques⁸⁴. In particular he suggests, “Kellner’s appreciation of Hatha Yoga is just as inconceivable without Kerning and Mailänder as Meyrink’s concept of a spirituality of bodily metamorphosis”⁸⁵. Much of the appreciation of Kerning’s work in this later generation of esotericists stems from seeing his work as a practice of Christian Yoga and reinterpreting it in light of Yoga⁸⁶. Weinfurter, while clearly having a respect for the practice of Yoga, discussions of which are scattered across the text *Man’s Highest Purpose*⁸⁷, suggests that it is not a path that is suited to the Western temperament⁸⁸. He tells us, “the forcible and quick ways... for instance, asceticism and the Yoga practices... is impossible to a European, and is rather dangerous, as it cannot be in accordance with the circumstances under which we are living”⁸⁹. Yet, he still views Kerning in light of his understanding of Yoga, for the above quote, from a chapter titled ‘The Origins of the Mantra Practices’⁹⁰, then leads into a discussion of Kerning’s “mantra” work (repetition of short phrases)⁹¹. Here it is clear that Weinfurter understands this as an embodied mode of spirituality for he tells us that these sentences must be “practiced in all parts of the body”⁹². He then proceeds to quote from a parable told by Kerning that takes us directly to the embodied nature of Kerning’s work: “All that you have performed outwardly has also to take place inwardly. The first climbing touched but the skin, and now we are going to penetrate the flesh and the bones, through the loins, liver, lungs, and heart, into the very marrow in order to come nearer to the desired perfection”⁹³.

While reading *Man’s Highest Purpose* shows that Weinfurter appreciates the Christian nature of Kerning’s work, this was not what appealed to Kellner and Hartmann, rather it was the connection they saw in it to Yoga⁹⁴. Here Baier quotes from Kellner “Finally, I have to mention, that among the Christian mystics, Jakob Boehme in his discourse between the master and his disciple and J. Krebs ... represent the best that has ever been written in German about

⁸⁴ Op cit. Baier (2020) p. 58.

⁸⁵ Loc cit.

⁸⁶ Op cit. Baier (2018) p. 401.

⁸⁷ Op cit. Weinfurter.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 178.

⁸⁹ Loc cit.

⁹⁰ Ibid. pp. 93-187

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 179

⁹² Loc cit.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 184

⁹⁴ Op cit. Baier (2018). p. 401

yoga practices, albeit in a form that might not be to everyone's taste"⁹⁵. Of course, the mention of 'Jakob Boehme' indicates that Yoga is being used in a peculiar, quite loose, or perhaps 'universal' sense, but most importantly, in regard to Kerning, it shows how his very embodied approach to spiritual practice was appreciated by Kellner. This bodily spirituality is put forcefully and perhaps polemically by Weinfurter: "Master Kerning constantly shows the fact that God is present in a man in his whole body. Consequently, as soon as we begin to seek God within ourselves ... God commences to manifest Himself in all our body. Ninety-nine per cent of occultists suppose the mystical evolution to begin in a man's soul. This presumption is one of the greatest errors in modern Occultism"⁹⁶. This gives us a clear sense of why Kellner describes Kerning's work in light of Yoga, for 'mystical evolution' as Weinfurter describes it, begins in the body. Indeed, Baier has argued that it was the work, first of Kerning, and later of Mailänder, that helped to mediate a positive reception of Yoga into central European occultism and particularly in Vienna⁹⁷. This was facilitated by Hartmann's essays on Yoga, published in his own journal, *Neue Lotusblüten*, but also in more widely circulated journals such as the *Wiener Rundschau*⁹⁸.

It is in Vienna that Eckstein, along with Herbert Silberer, a Mason, Rosicrucian and likely practitioner of Kerning's work, that connects esotericism with early psychoanalytic theory. In his famous *Civilisation and its Discontents*, Freud himself mentions a 'friend' who "through the practices of Yoga, by withdrawing from the world, by fixing the attention on bodily functions and by peculiar methods of breathing, can in fact evoke new sensations and coenaesthesias in oneself, which he regards as regressions to primordial states of mind which have long ago been overlaid. He sees in them a physiological basis, as it were, of much of the wisdom of mysticism"⁹⁹. Merkur, who views these lines from Freud as failing to get the attention they deserve from scholarship, also informs us that, according to Anna Freud, the 'friend' referred to here is Friedrich Eckstein. Thus the 'yoga' referred to by Freud is more a reception of yoga that has been brought into dialogue with what was learned from Kerning and practiced as such. Eckstein seems to have had more than a passing influence on Freud, and while Baier claims that he influenced Freud's account of regression¹⁰⁰, Merkur tells us he also influenced Freud's understanding of Nirvana. The other, lesser known figure in Freud's circle, and a man who had been engaged to Carl Kellner's daughter for a time, was the above mentioned Herbert Silberer. While his relationship with Freud and the other members of Freud's circle was fraught, and perhaps his marginalisation from that group contributed to his suicide, Merkur claims that Freud's paper 'On Narcissism' was substantially written as a response to Silberer's work on mysticism and symbolism¹⁰¹. Silberer also applied a mystical, indeed Yogic, lens to discussions of libido, and drew in notions such as the union of opposites, so important to the alchemical tradition, further he recontextualised Freud's notion of sublimation situating it as the essence of the mystical self-transformative practice¹⁰². His association with the Kellner family did not, however, prevent him from taking a critical view of Kellner's friend and colleague, Hartmann, and of Theosophy more generally, he was a critical thinker after all. Yet Silberer does not take the same view of Kerning's work, while he felt Kerning was a little too uncritical, he also held "To-day, too, there is a royal art. Freemasonry bears this name. Not only the name, but its ethical ideal connects it with the spirit of the old

⁹⁵ Loc cit.

⁹⁶ Op cit. Weinfurter p. 170

⁹⁷ Op cit. Baier (2018). p. 402

⁹⁸ Ibid. p. 395.

⁹⁹ Merkur, D. *Explorations of the Psychoanalytic Mystics*. Rodopi, Amsterdam (2010). p. 12

¹⁰⁰ Op cit. Baier (2018). p. 403.

¹⁰¹ Op cit. Merkur p. 8

¹⁰² Op cit. Baier (2018). p. 433

alchemy. This statement will probably be contradicted and meet the same denial as did once the ideas of Kerning [sic]”¹⁰³.

But it was not only Freud who was influenced by these inheritors of Kerning’s work, Jung also partly rehabilitates the contributions of Silberer by seeing him as one of the first to investigate the connection between esoteric symbolism and the unconscious. Silberer’s discussion of mysticism as a form of introversion is likely to have influenced Jung’s technical use of that term. Further, at the Third International Congress for Psychology, held in Munich in 1896, which Kellner and Hartmann attended¹⁰⁴, a booklet Kellner had prepared on Yoga was circulated. It is interesting to note that we find early American psychological pioneer, William James, citing Kellner’s booklet in *Varieties of Religious Experience*. James did not attend the Congress, but the text made its way to him regardless. While more work needs to be done to track these influences, we know that Silberer published several psychoanalytic papers and texts, and even if Freud rejected him or treated him badly, Jung acknowledged the importance of his contributions and attempted to rehabilitate his reputation. Eckstein also delivered several papers to Freud’s Vienna group, although their influence is difficult to trace. Kellner and Hartmann, at least in 1896, were rubbing shoulders with the elite of the burgeoning movement in the science of psychology. All these figures, Eckstein, Kellner, Hartman and Silberer, received the Kerning tradition, and with the *Zeitgeist*, allowed that tradition and their understanding of Yoga to weave together in dialogue shaping their understanding of the mysteries. A dialogue that discretely plays itself within psychological and psychoanalytical circles in the late 19th and early 20th century Vienna.

To conclude, it is my hope that this discussion has provided some useful context for thinking about the work of J.B. Kerning and its influence on German Masonry, Fringe Masonry, and esotericism. We have traced the inheritors of Kerning’s system to some of the most influential and prominent figures in central European esotericism and fringe Masonry. We have also indicated the way that those influenced by Kerning interacted with psychologists and psychoanalytic theorists, including Freud and Jung. While further work needs to be done in exploring the sources of Kerning’s work, I have demonstrated that there is a plausible line of transmission for Sufi and indeed Bektashi practices into Central Europe and Germany through Sabbatian networks. I have shown that these networks certainly did feed directly into 18th Century Fringe Masonry, particularly the Asiatic Brethren. It is clear that Kerning was exposed to elements of the work of the Asiatic Brethren, but it is unclear how much or how deep that exposure was. It has, however, been demonstrated that Kerning’s friend and correspondent, Joseph Franz Molitor, had quite a deep understanding of the work of the Asiatic Brethren, and had, for a number of years, cooperated with one of the key Kabbalists of that Order, Hirschfeld. The fact that Molitor’s association with Hirschfeld and his study of Kabbalah has its centre of gravity in Offenbach, home of the Frankist ‘court’, supports the idea that at least Molitor would have had considerable exposure to Sabbatianism. Regardless, what we have found in Kerning is a form of mysticism that centres on sound, vibratory force and embodiment. This system was articulated by Kerning through his Lodge and was brought to a climax in the Sabbithengrad ceremony. The two key areas for further research lie around the possible influence of Sabbatianism on Kerning and the further cultural and intellectual influence of those who inherit his work, in particular the influence of Kerning inspired mystics on psycho-analysis and psychology.

¹⁰³ Op cit. Silberer in Baier (2018). p. 434.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 410.

THE TABLEAUX:
ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES OF THE TRACING BOARDS
MITCH CHARMAN

“To study the symbolism of Masonry is the only way to investigate its philosophy.”

— RWBro Albert Mackey



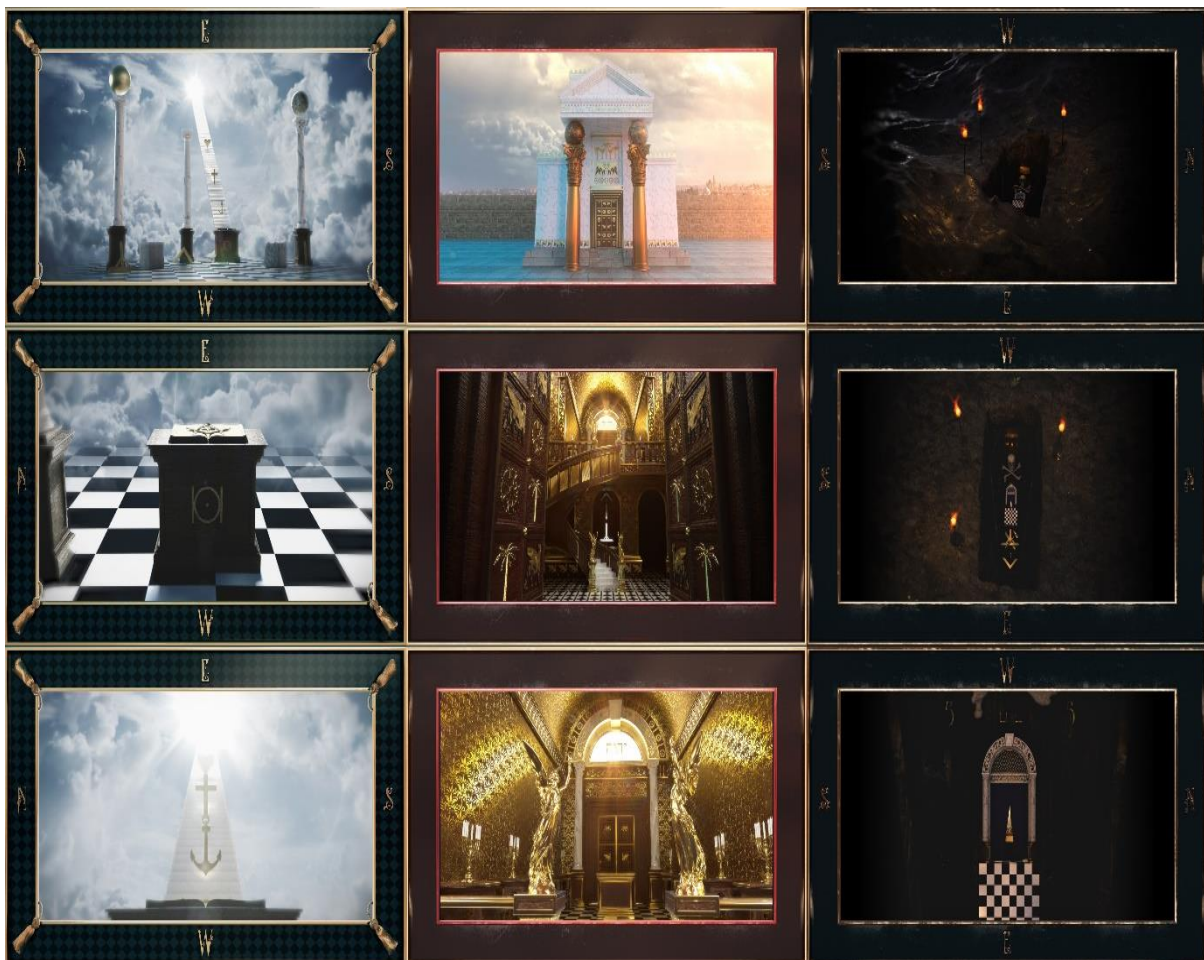
INTRODUCTION

Overview

The tracing boards, also known as lodge boards or trestle boards, are one of the most striking aspects of Masonry. They're densely symbolic, crystallising the essence of each degree's ritual in time and space. Although they're static and unmoving images, they're far from stagnant.

They sit, patiently waiting for an eye to engage so they can spark to life, pulling your attention around the scene, dynamically illuminating new insights, forging new relationships between symbols, and synthesising ideas beyond language which words can only approximate. The longer you look, the more they reveal. They're wonderful teaching aids and companions for concentration, contemplation, and meditation.

Ever since I first saw John Harris's three craft degree tracing boards, I wanted to create my own, a visual artist for film, television, and exhibition by trade. In late 2023 I decided to create my own. I started with the three familiar craft degree tracing boards based largely on John Harris' designs from c. 1820-45 and Josiah Bowring's designs from 1819. I also created some animated videos, with the camera moving through the scenes to explore their many parts. The ultimate goal would be to create longer versions of these to accompany a voice over of the official tracing board lectures, for presentations in rural lodges who have limited access to brethren with lectures memorized.



Among many features, my first degree tracing board includes a photographically accurate 3D model of the moon, based on high resolution photographs and topographical maps from NASA.¹ I'm also proud to say, I've made what could be considered the closest to an accurate

¹ Wright E. (USRA) and Petro N. (NASA/GSFC). "CGI Moon Kit." NASA Science Visualization Studio. September 6, 2019. <https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/4720>

On presenting these boards and animations in open lodge, I was subsequently approached to design three more craft degree tracing boards, this time based on those used in the Ancient and Accepted Rite. For clarity, I will refer to the familiar modern tracing boards as Emulation boards, and those of the Ancient and Accepted Rite as the AASR boards.

representation of King Solomon's Temple at a 1:1 scale, or one that is congruent with Masonry, at least. To rebuild the Temple, I returned to the descriptions in the Bible, specifically 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles of the New International Version (NIV), as well as the current second degree tracing board lecture as recognised by the UGL of NSW and ACT.

Additionally, I referenced surviving Phoenician architecture, with an emphasis on the Ain Dara Temple in modern day Syria, built during the period of the first Temple in what was, at the time, part of the Tyrian empire, and which shares many glaring similarities to the First Temple.

Modelling, texturing, arranging, animating, and compositing every object of all six craft tracing boards was a considerable contemplative and meditative exercise. I learnt a lot. Pulling apart each element to isolate for this book revealed even more. It's my privilege to share some of this with you.

In the interest of brevity, I've kept this paper relatively short. It truncates ideas found in my more comprehensive book, a companion piece to this paper, titled *The Tableaux: Reflections and Insights into the Tracing Boards and their Symbols*. It includes deeper analyses of the tracing boards, more perspectives on each symbol, a thorough history, and insight into the design process, with diagrams illustrating the Biblical references for the King Solomon's Temple. I've also sourced historical tracing boards from c. 1740 to 1850 and have upscaled them to full page, high resolution images using archival detail-preservation software. You can learn more about *The Tableaux: Reflections and Insights into the Tracing Boards and their Symbols* at ionicpublications.com.

In both the book and this paper, some sections are deliberately vague to preserve the secrets of the Craft with which we've been entrusted. I won't discuss the widely recognised and agreed upon interpretations of the tracing boards and their symbols, but rather posit unique perspectives for your consideration. These are my own views and not those of any Grand Lodge, order, chapter, or lodge of brethren.

Ultimately, I'd love if any part of this text encouraged you to try your hand at making your own tracing boards or esoteric art. The benefits of this practice are gained, not through the quality of the end product, but the observations made during their creation. There may be new relationships you notice between symbols or compositional choices you might question at first, but which the boards themselves will answer in time. I can guarantee additional layers of meaning will be illuminated through the practice of recreating them. As Homer wrote in *The Iliad*: "To labour is the lot of man."

Comparative Analysis

Conceptual Framework

While most mentions of tracing boards are generally Masonic, the concept of tracing boards exists much earlier, and in a broader context. In fact, the Masonic artwork known as tracing boards are, by a purely physical definition, are not tracing boards at all. Traditionally, tracing boards are blank.

In preparation for bas-relief engravings and paintings, ancient Egyptian artists first laid down string to draw a grid of red lines, allowing them to maintain proper proportions for their hieroglyphs and figures. Their work is often cited as some of the first most accurately proportioned depictions of the human form.² These red lines can still be seen to this very day

² Robins G. *Proportion and Style in Ancient Egypt*. (p76). Texas: University of Texas Press, 1994.

on some abandoned carvings, which will forever remained unfinished.³ Artists still use this technique to scale up images or for initial sketches onto larger surfaces. This is an especially useful for mural artists who are so close to their massive designs, there's no way they can keep the big picture in mind while focusing on the details.

More recently, drawing boards and computer software supersede most of the need for an artist to draw the grid themselves. However, in some way, shape, or form, the grid is still the basis for many forms of art and design. The legacy of the tracing board continues. I frequently use a gridded linoleum cutting mat and a ruler/straight-edge for physical ink and graphite illustrations. And within the computer, 2D and 3D design software contain guides and world grids to aid alignment and perspective.

From these first instances in ancient Egypt to the most modern computer software, all achieve the same ends: surfaces for laying down designs with consistent proportions, arranged in a grid to aid drawing and cutting level horizons, upright verticals, and square corners.

Though the Masonic boards don't meet the physical definition of a tracing board, they certainly are symbolically: that is, guides and outlines, within which we may effectively design and craft ourselves with square conduct, level steps, and upright intentions within due bounds. Within the lodge, the mosaic pavement is technically the real tracing board. It's where the ritual work takes place to sketch out the architect's designs that will be applied to life. In some lodges, the tracing board or floorcloth placed (or drawn) on the mosaic pavement.

One Blueprint

As architectural blueprints or schematic form the plans of a building with many floors, so the tracing boards can be seen as schematics for a philosophical structure with many layers. Continuity implied through all three boards suggests they are connected, or three floors of the same blueprint.

On the mosaic pavement of the first degree emulation board sits a schematic of King Solomon's Temple: a tracing board within a tracing board. The first board containing the design of the second within it. In the second emulation board, the mosaic pavement has risen from the ground floor to the second storey landing. It also shows us the porch of the middle chamber ajar, but at a distance. This alludes to a central feature in the third board, where the mosaic pavement has progressed to the Most Holy Place.

The boards could also be seen as maps. Or more particularly, three overlays of one map. All AASR boards, as well as the first, third emulation boards (and early renditions of the second) even have cardinal directions on their borders.

Three Journeys

All boards point toward the Divine Light and show us methods of approaching it. They also highlight the layers of creation descend from it. The first emulation board directs us there via a ladder. More specifically Jacob's Ladder. Interpreted literally, a ladder is a straight trip upwards using both all limbs: a direct route. The end is always in sight. The whole body and mind are engaged on the task of climbing.

The second emulation board contains a long, winding set of stairs. Stairs only require the feet, but traversing them does require some additional effort. One also cannot see the top while they

³ "Principles of Egyptian Art." *Royal Society of Chemistry*. Accessed March 4, 2024. <https://edu.rsc.org/resources/principles-of-egyptian-art/1622.article>

climb, only a few steps ahead. The third is arguably the easiest journey of all, a 'letting go.' It requires no limbs or effort, however every step on the journey is terminally opaque.

Similarly, the first two AASR boards contain stairs, three in the first, five in the second. Some historical versions of the third contained seven stairs. The third AASR board is very similar to the corresponding emulation board in its stark and obvious references to death, however it contains noticeably fewer elements.

Sacrifice

All three tracing boards outline a sacrifice. In fact, each ritual is, in a symbolic form, a sacrifice. Think about what work is done at the altar during each ritual and what we are willingly obligated to give up.

The first degree tracing board, framed by the Cardinal Virtues, shows the three Theological Virtues rising from the altar. And what is the practice of virtue, if not the overcoming of our animal nature? A willing sacrifice of sin. We purify ourselves when we give up our impurities. To attain freedom, we must give it away.

Fortitude is a sacrifice of fear, a biologically natural, primal response that requires constant, difficult decisions to willingly overcome. Justice, of both wrathful revenge as well as meekness, striking a balance of the two with less emotionally charged results, but always a better outcome long term. Prudence is an overcoming of sloth and Temperance, an unshackling from the gluttony and lust for those things keeping us bound to materiality and our lower nature.

As illustrated by the first degree tracing board, the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love (or Charity) are thus attainable on the conduit between the material and the Divine, once we can square our lower nature. The second degree tracing board shows the sacrifice of labour, the fruits of which are received in the symbolic form of wages in the Middle Chamber in direct proportion to the work. The third degree tracing board shows the ultimate sacrifice. Not death, but rather our lives: our time, vitality, and life force. As stated in Romans 12:1: "Offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship."

It is possibly an unrelated coincidence, given I can't find it written anywhere, but in ancient Rome, the dish used to collect the blood of sacrifices was a shallow, circular pan known as a 'patera.' The more common Greek equivalent for pouring libations, on which the patera was modelled, was called a 'phiale.' They often had a dimple in the middle for the thumb to be placed underneath, thus from the top they appear as a circle with a point at the centre, strongly alluding to the circumpunct.

A potent and enduring symbol in many orders and mystic traditions, the circumpunct symbolises many things, not least of which are the Sun (Sol), and the soul, the axis mundi, the Christ Centre. The seat of the Higher Self. And what are our lives, really, if not a living sacrifice for something higher? As sure as the Sun will set, and rise again, so too do we give up our vital life force to the Most High that granted it, so that for a time we may live in His Light and glory.



First Degree Tracing Board

The Frame

For many, the first impressions of the tracing boards tend to begin with the frame. It was certainly mine. It's hard to look past the fact North is not at the top, but rather East. The formal significance of this is widely discussed and understood. Something struck me while I was modelling the earth for the next tracing board, however, which I haven't come across anywhere else, but which is pertinent in any discussion of the Cardinal Directions.

North and South arrive. They have destinations. Travel far enough North eventually it becomes South and vice versa. On the other hand, East and West never arrive. They are eternal orientations without destination. You can travel Eastward for eternity. You can travel Westward for eternity. They are a direction to travel, not a destination to reach.

This reminds me of an audio recording of a lecture by Alan Watts. He describes life like a dance and a piece of music. The recording I heard of this is long detached from the original source, making it impossible to formally cite or find again, but it goes as follows: "In music, though, one doesn't make the end of the composition the point of the composition... Same with dancing, you don't aim at one particular spot in the room... The whole point of dancing is the dance... Existence is musical in nature." — Alan Watts

Music and dancing are always arriving but never arrive; they are purely of, and for, themselves. For those with an understanding of the significance of traveling East (and why you'd turn around and travel West again), I hope this may add a new dimension to your understanding. And for those who don't, this concept will keep returning through your journey, I encourage

you to investigate further and hope this points you in the right direction to shed light on the subject.

The Sun and Moon

The three pillars are often the centrally discussed feature in the first degree emulation board, or the two pillars in the AASR boards. Their symbolic meaning is robustly understood so I'll skip over my analysis of them here. But I analyse them at length in the book, *The Tableaux*.

Above the pillars appear the Sun and Moon, enduring symbols in most, if not all, spiritual traditions. Their central associations are with duality, illustrating that life and consciousness can only exist between two extremes, and of the harmony of balance (though never stasis).

Only between the light and dark can exist colour, beauty, and the myriad experiences of living: the only place to find the transcendent journey of drawing closer to the Creator. Though perhaps not the direct intention of this verse, for me this duality resonates with the Bible passage, Matthew 18:20: "For where two or more gather in my name, there am I with them."

In Taoist philosophy, specifically the Tao Te Ching, Lao Zhu says "The Tao gives birth to the One. The One gives birth to the Two. The Two gives birth to the Three. And the Three gives birth to the Ten Thousand Things. The Ten Thousand Things are bolstered by [or carry] Yin and wield [or embrace] Yang. Together they harmonize as Breath [or, they achieve harmony by combining these forces]."⁴

Between the Sun and the Moon is a considerably brighter light, denoting that the Divine Light is far more brilliant and illuminating than anything material.

On a canvas, it's hard to paint something brighter than the Sun. Previous tracing boards have approximated this by making the sun's rays orange and the Light between white.

In my version of the first degree emulation board, I've opted to make the sun a sphere of gold, still bright, but strongly reinforcing its material quality. The use of lens flares and effects has allowed me to render the Divine blindingly brighter, indicating its quality as transcendent beyond visible and material light.

Vitruvian Virtues

On the topic of the classical orders of architecture, it would be worth discussing the work of Vitruvius, the Roman architect. He wrote the *Ten Books on Architecture*, known as *De Architectura* or *On Architecture*. Today, his name is more commonly associated with Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man," modelled after Vitruvius's theories on the ratios of a 'perfectly proportioned man' (although additional research has revealed da Vinci also applied a lot of his own empirical measurements⁵). As an aside, relevant in a Masonic context it's worth noting how da Vinci illustrates the Vitruvian Man, the human form, squaring the circle.

In Vitruvius's work, he posits many theories that defined the rules of the classical orders of architecture which are still regularly used today. Many have to do with proportions, taking inspiration from Nature and, specifically, the human body. For example, the ratio of the capital

⁴ Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching* chapter 42, trans. by McDonald J. H. and Yutang L.

⁵ Baugh L. S. "Vitruvian Man: figure study by Leonardo da Vinci." Encyclopaedia Britannica. Updated February 26, 2024.

to the pillar being the same ratio as that of the human head to the body. Some Roman pillars were even fashioned in the likeness of human figures.⁶

One glaring relationship to Masonry is his three central virtues, which Vitruvius strongly encouraged: *firmitas*, *venustas*, and *utilitas*.⁷ In other words, strength, beauty, and utility, or the Masonic concepts of Strength, Beauty, and Wisdom. Some consider Wisdom closer to Knowledge than to utility but, as the old saying goes, knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad. Wisdom is inextricably bound with utility.

Many Masonic and artistic lessons can be learnt from the classical orders of architecture and the Greek and Roman philosophy surrounding them. For example, the six concepts within beauty, or *venustas*, are: *ordinatio*, *dispositio*, *symmetria*, *eurythmia*, *decor*, and *distributio*. In English, respectively: proper proportions, proper arrangement, symmetry, harmony, proper appearance, and proper distribution of resources. Five of those are actionable rules which, when followed, ultimately create the sixth, *eurythmia*, the pleasant feeling of beauty and harmony. It's an experience that, though discussed exhaustively, is difficult to articulate, something like the striking experience of awe when absorbing the sight of something beautiful and with considerable grandeur. Various ancient and contemporary definitions have been synthesised by author Pavlos Lefas: "A beautiful aspect and a balanced appearance of the members in their composite assemblage."⁸

Today's utilitarian society downplays the importance of beauty, especially in architecture. But it is the highest and quite possibly the most important feature of living. As an artist, author, and filmmaker, it is forever my pursuit to provide these keys of beauty so that audiences and readers may unlock this door to Divinity within themselves.

The Four Cardinal Virtues

The word virtue comes from the Latin *virtus*. It's last common usage in the ancient world closely associated it with the four cardinal and canonical virtues, but it also had earlier associations with manliness, bravery, and moral excellence, commonly associated with the military.

There was a strength to the word which has been watered down over centuries until the concept has become somewhat commonplace today. In schools, kids and adults alike brush them off as obvious and accepted, even though I doubt most people could name them all, much less define them.

The word comes from the root *vir*, meaning man, or, more specifically, "not as the state of being a man, but as the proper characteristic of a man."

It is also the root of 'virile.' There's connotations of nobility and chivalry in acting virtuously by its original usage. And rightly so, being virtuous is rarely always easy. Only those who truly practice them, especially under stress to act otherwise, know their difficulties.

In researching this, I discovered the Old English word for virtue was *cræft*, which, as far back as the writing of the legendary epic Beowulf (700-1000 AD), meant "strength," as well as its

⁶ Vitruvius Pollio. *On Architecture*. "Book III, Chapter I: On Symmetry: In Temples and In the Human Body," trans. Morgan M. H. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. Oxford University Press. 1914.

⁷ Vitruvius Pollio. *On Architecture*. "Book I, Chapter II: The Fundamental Principles of Architecture," trans. Morgan M. H. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. Oxford University Press. 1914.

⁸ Lefas, P. "On the Fundamental Terms of Vitruvius's Architectural Theory." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, Vol. 44 (p179). Oxford University Press. 2000

current definition of “skill, art, and profession.” It’s no surprise that Masonry is referred to as the Craft. Craft and virtue were once synonymous.

The three Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope, and Love/Charity are central and apparent in all modern designs of the first degree tracing board. But although I’d heard it in the lecture, I’d not taken too much notice of the much more subtle inclusion of the four Cardinal Virtues: Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude (or Courage), and Prudence (or Wisdom).

In the tracing board lecture of the first emulation degree, it is mentioned the tassels in the four corners are symbolic of the Cardinal Virtues. That seemed very ambiguous to me, and somewhat arbitrary and out of the way. I initially considered tassels and ropes a frivolous choice for the symbols representing something as important as these Virtues.

However, as I finished modelling the hair simulation for the splayed tails of the tassels and placed them in the corners of the first emulation board, it struck me that the object itself was not the importance, but their location.

In most lodge rooms, the Cardinal Virtues are placed in the corners of the room, as well as adorning the corners of the mosaic pavement in the centre. The similarity between their presence in lodge and on the tracing board was their location: always corners, all of which are perfect right angles.

Every Mason knows to pay attention when a 90-degree angle is mentioned. What we have is a room, a tiled floor, and a frame, all made square by the Cardinal Virtues. And only within a stable structure can the Theological Virtues be cultivated.

To square one’s conduct is to construct the Virtues within the self (and this has additional implications in the rendering of the perfect ashlar from the rough with the practical use of tools).

The circumpunct, with its two parallel lines as shown on the altar, are interesting in this respect. The circumpunct itself is a motif frequently recurring in many esoteric orders and occult works, but never elsewhere that I’ve found with lines on either side.

Not only are they parallel with each other, but also perfectly perpendicular to the Bible or other Holy Book sitting on top, these being the sources in which we learn the Virtues.

If the circle is related to boundaries set around our passions and the lines define their outer limits, then the Bible (or equivalent) becomes that which adds right angles to the lines on either side of the circumpunct. Thus, the Bible squares the circle.

The Three Theological Virtues

Faith, Hope, and Charity (or Love) are clearly central features of the first emulation board, depicted in various forms throughout its evolution. I feel their truest form are in their appearance as ethereal women, the three daughters of Saint Sophia for their allusions to angels. For contemporary viewers, however, their conventional symbols of the cruciform (or cup), anchor, and heart are perhaps clearer.

It is a common conception that the rungs of Jacob’s ladder are formed of the Theological Virtues and are what allow us to travel upwards toward the Creator. I agree, but I’d also like to posit an additional perspective that I’ve not heard or seen discussed much.

By placing the Theological Virtues on Jacob’s Ladder where angels are known to traverse, the tracing board relates these virtues with angels by association. Virtues are also a class of angel

according to the Christian hierarchy of angels. From this perspective, we could interpret this as breathing life into angels and doing their work by acting virtuously.

Rather than winged people, angels are perhaps better understood as divine forces, titles, and dignities that can become present in the material world when channelled through living beings: us. Adopting angelic qualities, the Theological Virtues, allow angels to walk among us.

In Genesis 28:12 it states, “He [Jacob] had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to the heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” Note the angels are both ascending and descending. In this interpretation, the Theological Virtues are not simply present on Jacob’s Ladder in the ascent, but also the descent. The common conception is that one must hold these Virtues in order to ascend to Divinity.

The Theological Virtues are also a lot easier to practice and come much more naturally once the Cardinal Virtues are in balance. One could go as far as to say, they descend from above and bless us with their presence. Hope is easier with courage/fortitude, and almost impossible without it. Faith is far easier with a regular practice of temperance, as well as the prudent study and application of wisdom. Divine Love is blessed upon us naturally when in harmony, or balanced, with justice.

I have rendered the Theological Virtues as golden jewels for this reason: though we also need to cultivate and reach for them, they are also gifts we receive from On High once we have strong foundations of the four Cardinal Virtues.

Jacob’s Dream at Bethel

The Biblical events surrounding Jacob’s Ladder, that is, Genesis 28:10-22, is of considerable significance to Masonry. Initially, Genesis 28:11, “taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.”

When taken with the events after the dream in verse 18, “...Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. He called that place Bethel.”

It’s not hard to see its relation to the Craft. Here we have a sacrifice made on a pillar to consecrate, and establish, the house of God. The word Bethel literally means the house of God.

The other relevant point in these verses is Genesis 28:16-17, “When Jacob awoke from his sleep he thought, ‘Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it.’... This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

One interpretation is that Jacob refers to his physical location. The other, that he speaks of the world itself or, more specifically, the world for those who recognise it for what it is. Many go about the material world unaware.

For those who open themselves up to Jacob’s Ladder, they can feel the angels ascending to and descending from heaven in this divine dwelling place of God.

This reminds me of a quote by the filmmaker and mystic, Alejandro Jodorowsky who once said: “A temple is not the ‘exclusive’ place of the sacred. We go to the temple to learn the sense

of the sacred. If the lesson has been understood, the entire earth becomes a temple, every man becomes a priest, and every food is a Communion host.”⁹



Second Degree Tracing Board

Building the Temple

Rebuilding King Solomon’s Temple was a daunting feat. I wasn’t sure if I was up to the task, partly because I didn’t feel I could do it justice. But also, because of many the Masonic lectures and discussions mentioning the honour and importance of contributing to such a remarkable structure.

To ensure I could do this justice, I abandoned the visual reference of previous tracing boards and online renditions of the temple. I returned to the original literature: 1 Kings 6-7, 2 Chronicles 3-4 (in this case, the King James Bible), plus the second Tracing Board lecture, as given during a second degree ceremony of the emulation ritual as it is currently held in the UGL of NSW and ACT.

What I discovered in comparing these three descriptions of the Temple was considerable granular detail, but also much ambiguity and many contradictions: within themselves, between Biblical descriptions, but mostly between the Biblical and Masonic descriptions. The discrepancies are what I’d like to focus on here for, in highlighting them, they reveal a lot about the Temple and the Craft.

⁹ Jodorowsky A. *The Finger and the Moon: Zen Teachings and Koans*, trans. Ulquiola A. T. (p. 5). Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2016.

Importantly, I don't believe any description of King Solomon's Temple was meant to be taken literally. They weren't written down as blueprints for operative builders, but spiritual blueprints for builders of the Self. Perhaps the discrepancies are deliberate attempts to point this out. However, as I had to build a physically congruent Temple, I had to arrive at some conclusions.

I weighted most heavily the Masonic description, being that these are Masonic tracing boards. I tied to the best of my ability to avoid taking purely artistic license, except in instances requiring visual legibility or where there was a lack of adequate description. I looked to architecture of the surrounding areas of the same period. King Solomon's Temple took heavy inspiration from Phoenician temples, not least because King Hiram, the lead architect, supplier of material, and designer of many of the elements including the pillars, was King of Tyre, a Phoenician city which is now found in modern day Lebanon.¹⁰

In the Afrin District of neighbouring Syria, also once part of the Phoenicia, is the home of an archaeological site of a temple, the Ain Dara Temple, now an archaeological site, which bears a striking (and controversial) resemblance to the description of King Solomon's Temple.¹¹ Though space does not permit me to elaborate here, I investigate this in more depth in *The Tableaux*.

The Cubit

Unlike previous artists, in creating my version of the second degree tracing board, I had the luxury of using 3D software, in this case Maxon Cinema 4D, which allowed me to work to accurate scales. I can easily define and alter the measurement and position of every object to the thousandth of a millimetre. With this, I could build King Solomon's Temple to the exact measurements specified in the Bible. However, all measurements are given in cubits, specified in 2 Chronicles 3:3 as, "the cubit of the old standard."

A cubit is referred to as the length of 6 palms, or from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Indeed, the word cubit seems to have derived from the Latin word, *cubitum* which means elbow. Naturally, as this is based on a variable human measurement, this fluctuates depending on the individual, age, gender, culture, and time. Luckily, and unsurprisingly, ancient cultures standardised their measurement system, as the imperial system has done with the length of a foot, although evidence shows some variation was still present.

We're also fortunate to have abundant research done on the topic, with many measurements being taken across culture and time periods to arrive at some accepted standard cubit lengths from those periods. The Babylonian cubit around 49.5 cm (19.8 in) and the Egyptian cubit is cited as 6-7 hands ranged from 42 to 48 cm (17-19 in), with a common cubit averaged at 44.425 cm (17.5 in). Archaeological evidence places the Israelite cubits in the same range as the Egyptian. More specifically are the Biblical measurements of the royal, or architectural, cubit of approximately 52.5 cm and the short, or anthropological, cubit of 45 cm.

Based on the 2 Chronicles definition, I chose the Israelite Standard cubit of 44.425, rounding up 0.475 cm to a flat 45 cm, which is also the Anthropological cubit, or Egyptian average cubit. As most measurements provided in the description of King Solomon's Temple are an even number of cubits, this allowed me to work in multiples of 90 cm which resulted in nicer round numbers when working at larger scales. It's possible the actual King Solomon's Temple was

¹⁰ "Phoenicia," *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed March 4, 2024.
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Phoenicia>

¹¹ Monson J. "The New Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel," *michaelsheiser.com*. Archived Jul 14, 2011.

built in the Royal or Archaeological cubit of 52.5 cm, so my version may be a little smaller with a ratio of either 1:1 or 1:0.95.

Laying the Foundations

The dimensions of King Solomon's Temple are given in 1 Kings 6:2 as "... sixty cubits long, twenty wide and thirty high." 9m W x 13.5m H x 27m D. However, later descriptions reveal this must be the interior dimensions. Verse 16 says, "He [King Solomon] partitioned off twenty cubits at the rear of the temple with cedar boards from floor to ceiling to form within the temple an inner sanctuary, the Most Holy Place. The main hall in front of this room was forty cubits long."

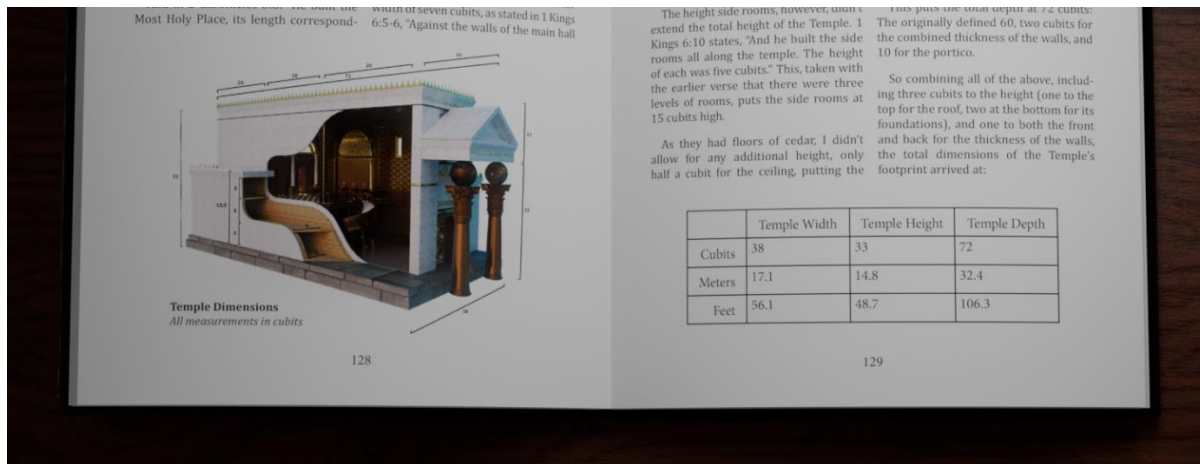
And in 2 Chronicles 3:8: "He built the Most Holy Place, its length corresponding to the width of the temple—twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide." Additional descriptions of the two cherubim's 10 cubit wingspan, touching the walls and each other in the centre, further reinforce the interior dimensions of 20 cubits. Thus, if the width inside is 20 cubits and the walls must be more than zero cubits thick, the exterior of the temple must be larger than stated.

There was also additional width allocated for the side rooms with interior width of seven cubits, as stated in 1 Kings 6:5-6, "Against the walls of the main hall and inner sanctuary he built a structure around the building, in which there were side rooms. The lowest floor was five cubits wide, the middle floor six cubits, and the third seven. He made offset ledges around the outside of the temple so that nothing would be inserted into the temple walls. Side rooms on both sides with the widest width of seven cubits adds an additional 14 cubits, or 6.3 m (20.66 ft). Allowing for one cubit thick interior walls, seven cubit side rooms, and one cubit thick exterior walls adds nine cubits on either side, 18 cubits overall, or 8.1m, leading to a total exterior width of 38 cubits, 17m.

But the side rooms' height doesn't extend the total height of the Temple. 1 Kings 6:10 states, "And he built the side rooms all along the temple. The height of each was five cubits." This, taken with the earlier verse that there were three levels of rooms, puts the side rooms at 15 cubits high. I allowed one cubit for the ceiling, made the total exterior height of the side rooms 16 cubits, or just over half the height of the Temple's main structure.

There is also mention of a portico at the front, adding to the temple's depth. 1 Kings 6:3 states, "The portico at the front of the main hall of the temple extended the width of the temple, that is twenty cubits, and projected ten cubits from the front of the temple." And in 2 Chronicles 3: 4 it says, "The portico at the front of the temple was twenty cubits long across the width of the building and twenty cubits high." This gave me the dimensions of the portico: 20 W x 20 H x 10 D, or 9m x 9m x 4.5m, putting the total depth at 72 cubits: the explicitly mentioned 60 cubits, plus two for the combined thickness of the walls, and 10 for the portico.

Combining all the above, including three cubits to the height (one for the roof, two beneath for its foundations), and a combined one for the thickness of both the front and back walls, the total dimensions of the temple's footprint becomes: 17.1m wide, 32.4m deep, and 14.8m high.



Ad Orientum

One thing that always bothered me about the Harris tracing board was the orientation of the Holy of Holies, in relation to the orientation of the entrance. I can see why he chose his layout. The stairs must wind, and he's arranged it all in such a way that viewer can see everything at once: the exterior, the pillars, the curvature in the stairs, and the middle chamber. To achieve all of that from one realistic perspective is a feat worth recognition. But it's come at a cost. Temples, lodges, and indeed the tabernacle the temple was based on are, or should, be facing ad orientum: the doors facing West, so the journey in and though is an Eastward one.¹² Or, in the case of some temples of the Mysteries such as the Temple of Mithras, the Roman-era remains of which were discovered in Walbrook in the City of London in 1954, the doors face East so the journey in is Westward and return out is due East.¹³ If John Harris placed his entrance due West, the journey up the stairs puts the Most Holy Place in the North, which strikes me as unlikely both for temples of the period, as well as for its Masonic connotations.

There's one Biblical passage that I physically haven't been able to square, which is 1 Kings 8: "The entrance to the lowest floor was on the south side of the temple; a stairway led up to the middle level and from there to the third." This is also the only reference to stairs. What is odd about it is the placing of the entrance on the South side. If this is the case, Harris is placing the Most Holy Place due West, the opposite direction.

Placing the entrance on the South side is problematic for a number of reasons. First, the description of the two pillars is differentiated by referring to them on the North and South sides which, if the entrance was on the South, would put the pillars one in front of the other, instead of side-by-side.

Additionally, given the width of the main hall is the same as the Holy of Holies, 20 cubits, it can only be approached lengthwise. Since the main hall is 40 cubits, if the entrance was indeed on the South side, this would put the pillars and entrance far down one end of one long side of the temple. While there is nothing that says the side rooms ran the entire length of the temple, one side would have to end short of the wall to allow for the entrance. This all leads to a structure that breaks all the virtues of Vitruvian architecture and ultimately creates a visually unbalanced structure lacking in beauty.

¹² Lewis C. T. Ph.D. and Short, C. LL.D. *A Latin Dictionary*. Founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin dictionary. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1879.

¹³ "Temple of Mithras," *London Mithraeum*, accessed 4 March, 2024. <https://www.londonmithraeum.com/temple-of-mithras/>

If the temple is indeed modelled on the tabernacle, the only conceivable orientation is with the pillars and entrance on the West side to proceed due East, through the ground floor and up the stairs into the middle chamber, conjointly 40 cubits, and then reach the Most Holy Place at the back third, a perfect cube of 20 cubits in all directions. This is one of the only explicit elements from the Bible, pertaining to the building of the temple, with which I have taken artistic license, and I feel it was the right decision. But it did present me with one more glaring hurdle to overcome.

The Staircase

Although the Bible doesn't mention it, the winding staircase is one Masonic feature I absolutely could not omit. But given the orientation of the temple, there's only two ways winding stairs could arrive at the second storey: the first, if each step were too tall to climb, or the second, if the staircase curved more than 90 degrees as is done in Harris's tracing boards. In fact, by modern, international step height regulations, 33 stairs perfectly complete a 360 degree rotation.¹⁴ This also puts the second storey at a similar height for buildings of the period, as well as modern standards. The second floor landing also splits the temple directly in half, which all supported my decision.

A full 360 degree rotation for the staircase also reinforces one of my favourite symbolic interpretations of the winding staircase. Though it far exceeds the symbolic (but physically impossible) fifteen steps, it embodies a deep truth regarding the journey of life, labour, and knowledge: being unable to see more than a few steps in front as you advance.

Decor

In the interest of space, I'll mostly skip over the discussion of the décor. A few relevant passages: 1 Kings 6:18 says, "The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with gourds and open flowers. Everything was cedar; no stone was to be seen." The Harris tracing board disregards this, and indeed most reference to decor, entirely. I agree with him in some cases, disagree in others, and have struck a middle balance for my designs.

The interior of the temple is often depicted with absolutely every surface plated in gold. This is elaborated at length in 1 Kings 6:29-35 and 2 Chronicles 3:4-7. The impression is: lots of cherubim, palm trees, flowers, and an overwhelming amount of gold. I tried this out for my version but, while it strikes an awe-inspiring mental image, in practice it's wildly excessive and monotonous. It's much better in the imagination and for its symbolic connotations, the gold losing its majesty and rarity in its sheer gross abundance.

For my versions, I wanted to stay true to the impression created by the Biblical descriptions of the interior of the temple, without going overboard on the gold. I opted for cedar and deep juniper wooden surfaces with the flowers, palm trees, and cherubim plated in gold. Ultimately, though a little artistic license was taken, I feel my result is far closer to the literary impression of the Bible than a literal rendering would have created. To me, it holds adheres closer to the Masonic (and Vitruvian) virtues of wisdom, strength, and beauty.

Setting Up the Pillars

I spent a lot of care and attention on the pillars. 1 Kings 7:15-20, states, "He [Hiram, King of Tyre] cast two bronze pillars, each eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference. He

¹⁴ "3.9.1.2 Stairway Construction," *National Construction Code*, accessed 4 March 2024.

<https://ncc.abcb.gov.au/editions/2019-a1/ncc-2019-volume-two-amendment-1/part-39-safe-movement-and-access/part-391-stairway>

also made two capitals of cast bronze to set on the tops of the pillars; each capital was five cubits high. A network of interwoven chains adorned the capitals on top of the pillars, seven for each capital. He made pomegranates in two rows encircling each network... The capitals on top of the pillars in the portico were in the shape of lilies, four cubits high. On the capitals of both pillars, above the bowl-shaped part next to the network, were the two hundred pomegranates in rows all around.”

But in 2 Chronicles 3:15, “For the front of the temple he made two pillars, which together were thirty-five cubits long, each with capitals five cubits high. He made interwoven chains and put them on top of the pillars. He also made a hundred pomegranates and attached them to the chains.” Then in 2 Chronicles 4:12-13, “The two pillars; the two bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars; the two sets of network decorating the two bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars; the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of network (two rows of pomegranates for each network, decorating the bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars).”

In the Masonic description, there is also the two spheres denoting earth and the heavens on top of the pillars, not mentioned anywhere in the Bible nor given any measurements. Additional to the network, the lecture also refers to nets thrown over both pillars to complete them.

So many renditions of these famous pillars have been made, interpreted by artists for centuries. But none have fully satisfied me. They’ve either looked like standard Corinthian capitals, which would have been much easier to describe, else they are a vast array of bulbous and extravagant structures. The only similarity between everything I’ve seen, is they all ignore or exaggerate one or more parts of the very detailed but elusively ambiguous descriptions. And, once I embarked on building them myself, I fell prey to the same complexities.

My first versions looked like pineapples, but my second fell back on other Phoenician pillars of the era and became simply Corinthian capitals. Throwing them both out and reading the instructions much more carefully, I arrived at my third and final design. To their historical accuracy, I cannot elaborate further. But of all the many varied versions I’ve seen, these sit best with me.

In the Biblical passages above, the only measurement I had for certain was the circumference, 12 cubits, from which I could work out the radius: $r = c / (2 \times \pi)$, giving me 85.94 cm. This appears as roughly 3-4 cubits wide from the front.

We also have described the pillars at heights of either 18 or 17.5 cubits high with capitals of 4 or 5 cubits or, in some artists’ renditions, a combined 9 cubits. 17.5 to 18 cubits isn’t a huge discrepancy, this could easily be owing to the ambiguity of a measurement system as inconsistent and varied as a forearm. I settled on 18 cubits for the pillars, or 8.1m, and five for the capital, or 2.25m. Given the reference to four cubits was in specific reference to the lilywork, the network would be kept for the bottom one-fifth of the capital. This was an ultimately satisfying conclusion, as it relatively resembles the laws of harmonious Vitruvian proportions, with the bottom one cubit of the capital for the network, and the top four for lilywork.

What remained ambiguous was whether the 18 cubits is inclusive or exclusive of the height of the capital, not to mention the addition of the height of the spheres added on top (a purely Masonic addition that felt important to keep). If the pillars are 18 cubits excluding the capitals, assuming there are no additional measurements omitted, the additional five cubits on top places them at a combined height of 23 cubits, plus the spheres.

From a literary and philosophical point of view, this doesn't make a difference either way. The symbolic associations are drawn from their decorations, grandeur, and duality. But, as I had to physically build them to proceed, I needed an answer. So, the first question I asked is: are these pillars freestanding, or are they supporting the structure?

Establishment

In the emulation board and some artists' illustrations of the temple, the pillars are freestanding. In others, they're supporting the roof. In the much more prevalent depictions, usually based on the second temple, they're shown embedded in the walls. But in no depiction that I've seen has anyone fashioned the portico for the front, or at least not one as described in the Bible. Some renditions have allocated a small alcove of the additional 10 cubits, but none place the portico forward from the temple at the prescribed height of 20 cubits, 10 shorter than the temple's main structure. Unless I've missed another passage saying this should be ignored, all existing artists' renditions of the temple seem to have missed this bit.

In chapter 7:21 it states, "He erected the pillars at the portico of the temple." As previously mentioned, the portico protruded 10 cubits forward from the temple. One would imagine 4.5 meters of protruding stone would need supporting. A portico by design, both now and at the time, is, by definition, separated from the main structure by its protrusion from the walls, their load supported by pillars.

Much more important symbolically is the consideration of King Solomon's Temple, and indeed the human body and the lodge, as the house of God. Much attention and significance are given to the stability that is established because of the two pillars. 1 Chronicles 17:12 speaks of God saying to King David of Solomon building the temple: "He shall build me a house and I will establish his kingdom [or throne] forever." And of course, the striking Masonic equivalent stated during the second degree.

The importance is placed precisely in the stability provided by the two balanced sides. One pillar provides strength to hold up a roof, but two pillars provide the stability that establishes the temple in which can dwell the presence of the Divine. If the pillars were freestanding, they're not doing much in way of achieving either.

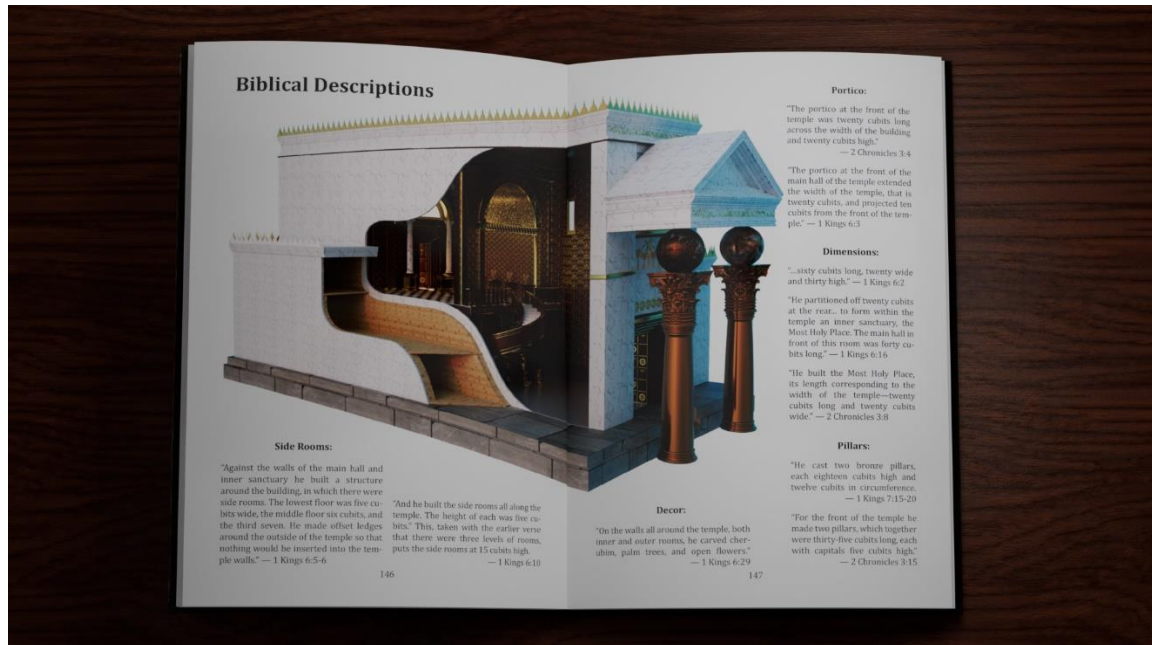
One could advocate a position that the spheres atop the Masonic rendition of the pillars illustrate that the world itself is the temple, and that the pillars support the macrocosm, thus there is no need for a material roof to represent this. I agree with that metaphorical stance in depictions of the columns separate from a temple, notably inside lodges. But as the pillars of my rendition of the temple must physically stand at the front of a physical building with a stone portico physically extending almost five meters out from the main structure, I would need the pillars of my temple to hold up the portico, physically as well as symbolically, to establish the entrance to this house of God.

This ultimately provided a solid answer to the ambiguity of the pillars' height: they could not have a height of 23 cubits or they would be taller than the portico they're supporting. They must be the Biblically described 18, inclusive of their capitals.

This places them 2 cubits or 90cm shorter than the portico, which isn't enough for meaningful or noticeable spheres of earth and the heavens on top of the pillars. But if the spheres were four cubits high then the pillars' total height becomes 22 cubits each. Stepped down in front of the two cubit foundation beneath the Temple, they stand at the perfect height to support the portico. For bonus points, the combined height of the five cubit capital and the four cubit spheres is nine cubits, making it congruent with the passage from 1 Kings which mentions they capitals

are both four and five cubits in the same sentence. This makes them one cubit shy of the 23 cubit alternative also described.

One Masonic feature I had to omit was the nets thrown over the pillars, which would only work if they were freestanding. However, all other passages describe “network,” that is, a lattice resembling a net but formed of the bronze cast. The grid depicted over the spheres would suffice as this network, preserving its symbolic function.





Third Degree Tracing Board

Atmosphere

I had many goals in mind from the outset when I embarked on the task of recreating the tracing boards. I sought understanding, through the act of meditating on each symbolic object as I built them, as well as deeper insight into relationships between symbols as I arranged them in three-dimensional space. I also wanted to pay homage to the artists and architects before me, especially the first, the Creator Himself.

But there was also another intention, something I felt I could contribute for the first time, specifically for the third degree emulation board. I wanted to create, not just an image, but a scene. An evolving series of moments with an unfolding story that not just conveys information, but also arouses strong emotions.

While I was excited to recreate the first two tracing boards, it is the third to which I felt I could contribute the most, specifically giving it a strong injection of atmosphere closer to the feeling of the third degree raising ceremony. Some previous third degree tracing boards are very moving. They do succeed in conveying emotion as well as all the symbols to fulfill its role as a teaching aid. The third, board, however, has always felt somewhat lacking, at least to me.

Given the depth and richness of its symbols and the deeply cathartic, unsettling story to which it alludes, the Harris tracing boards (and earlier designs) felt too bright and two-dimensional.

The events of the third degree allegory refer to a depiction of an open coffin, but the only existing tracing board that depicts it as such is the later design by John Harris from much later in his life. The more common varieties of the board, including those by John Harris are a stark departure from the realism of the previous designs in favour of flat, almost cartoon-ish illustrations, appearing as though the objects are sitting on top of the lid of a closed coffin. I speculate Harris must have felt the same, or he wouldn't have gone back to drastically redesign just the third board later in his life.

With the benefit of physically accurate lighting tools which I could adjust and real-time, I spent a significant amount of time lighting the three-dimensional scene, I dare say as long or longer than I spent on any other part of it. I trialled a variety of lights but couldn't help but arrive at three flaming torches. Three lights allowed me to obscure the objects inside the coffin for an uncanny and deeply unsettling atmosphere, while still providing enough light to see every object.

Given I could also work with the temporal dimension in my animated versions of the tracing boards, and I could shift and manipulate light and perspective over time, I started the animation at a distance, creating an uneven, eerie, and desolate landscape in all surrounding directions, and moved the camera through the scene so the viewer themselves could stumble upon and discover the coffin and its contents within the grave. The way the coffin is uncovered in the animation is inspired by the allegory it reflects, of which I won't say any more.

Starting the animation at a distance from the grave required my lighting sources to be physically visible, otherwise to have one patch of landscape lit from invisible sources felt too unrealistic. Flickering, open flame torches felt historically accurate as well as appropriately atmospheric, as though it were a makeshift grave someone (or some three) had abandoned halfway through digging by firelight. The three torches also allude to three lights which are either figuratively or literally present in the Lodge, depending on which version of the ritual is being performed. The RER depicts this very effectively during its work in all degrees. The AASR board required the objects remain on the coffin's lid instead of within it, and its colour palette limited my scope of being able to light the scene, but I managed to arrive at similarly stark, chiaroscuro lighting with one key light off to the right hand side and a much dimmer fill light from the left side, with a very faint softbox overhead to fill in the shadows for the milky detail in the darks.

Impressions

One of the features that stood out to me the most in my creation of the third degree emulation board was the three fives, arranged in a triangle. There's the official and accepted meaning, but one alternative I came across was a version of the board with Roman numeral Vs instead of 5s. I liked the allusion to the candidate's feet during three particularly important steps during the raising ceremony. Yet another version used five-pointed stars instead, which could also allude to 'seeing stars' during three notably high-impact moments that occur at a similar time as the aforementioned steps during the ritual.

It should have been obvious, but only once I designed the board did I see it as a map of the human body, with the skull at head height and square resembling feet. This means the porch is over the heart or solar plexus at the centre. In the AASR board, the golden triad featuring a G or, in my version, the Hebrew letter Yod, is at head height, the branch of acacia over the body, and the square and compasses at the foot.

The triangle is often the symbol for the Trinity and for God, as per previous the previous discussions of the Theological Virtues, pyramids, and the All-Seeing eye. Its presence in the third degree tracing board is perhaps the most critical element. When else can one truly and completely reunite with the Creator than in death?

In this interpretation, the coffin becomes the material box housing the Most Holy Place, within which hides God. This tracing board, and indeed all of them, act as spatial maps of how to reach Him.

Returning to Eden

If each tracing board is based on the lodge and the lodge is symbolic, both of the body and of King Solomon's Temple, which is based on the tabernacle, based on the Garden of Eden, then one could conclude that both the Temple and the Garden of Eden is inside us. 1 Corinthians 6:19 states, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?"

A great Kabbalistic theory I've heard, though I'm unsure of its origin, is that the Tree of Life is the circulatory system, connected to the heart, while the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is the nervous system, connected to the brain.

Removed from the body, both have a striking resemblance to trees with their complex networks of connected, fractal branches. From this perspective, the Fall from Grace can be seen as the maturation of the mind as we age, the loss of the innocence and nakedness of childhood, and the development of the adversary: the cold, Luciferian intellect which has some of the power from the Divine but lacks the warmth of its emotional connection.

Enlightenment, or the return to Eden, can thus be attained by the reintegration of the head and the heart to restore Unity inside us. As the Buddhist monks say, the attainment to enlightenment is achieved by returning to a childlike state.

The difference of adulthood, after the Fall and eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, is we can't easily forget the knowledge. Already knowing evil, the only way to return to Grace is to choose to act well. And here we return full circle to the earlier chapters of the Virtues, and the willing sacrifice of the lower self toward acting virtuously.

The Third Temple

There's something fundamentally different about the third degree boards in both the AASR, as well as the emulation tracing boards. They mark a significant departure from the previous two. While those were brighter, more densely symbolic, and focused within a large room of sorts, the third is unavoidably related to death, confined within the claustrophobic space of a grave.

I couldn't help but want to find some sort of continuity to carry me through from the previous two. The clue was in the porch in the centre of the coffin, a feature of King Solomon's Temple, and the allegory the tracing board represents, involving King Solomon and a handful of Hiram's. Any mention of the temple is forever inextricably linked with the events that subsequently followed: it was ransacked and demolished, rebuilt, and subsequently destroyed again.¹⁵ There are any varied points of view on the topic, but a belief persists that the

¹⁵ "Temple of Jerusalem," *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed 4 March 2024.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Temple-of-Jerusalem>

apocalypse will begin around the time of the building of the third Temple. Or, more specifically, that a third Temple is a requirement for the apocalypse.¹⁶

The main Biblical passages supporting this (loosely, I might add) are Matthew 24:1-2, reading: “Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, ‘You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.’” And continuing in verses 15-16, “So when you see the abomination of the desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).”

Also in Revelations 11:1-2, which says, “Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told ‘Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.’” And subsequently, if anyone harms God’s two appointed messengers, it continues into Revelations 11:6-7: “they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague ... the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them ... The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.”

The perspective of the third temple marking the end times is disputed on many fronts. Foremost is the fact there has already technically been a third temple, the first built by Solomon during the 10th Century BCE, the second by returning exiles in around 515 BCE, and the third (often cited as the second), was built under Herod in 19-9 BCE.¹⁷

If we should collectively disregard this third temple on technicalities, we still run into problems. The accepted location of the temple is the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, where the Dome of the Rock currently stands. Therefore, unless there comes a time it is removed, there could never be an official third temple resembling King Solomon’s. Since 2015, some controversial Jewish groups have been allegedly making progress to reinstate a physical third temple, one claiming to have already built an altar and are currently planting appropriate trees for its construction and some of the required sacrifices.¹⁸

I believe a stronger, less literal argument comes from the fact that Jesus and the church are as referred to as the third temple, superseding the need of a physical one, and deeming any attempt to rebuild a material Temple both pointless, as well a rejection of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 says, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” If Christ is the third temple, then a belief in him, or an embodiment of him, would be the beginning of that apocalypse.

This could appear a little terrifying on the surface until one digs into the etymology of the words. Apocalypse is Greek for ‘uncovering, disclosure, revelation.’¹⁹ And what is it to have a ‘revelation,’ but a sudden burst of ideas, a revealing of information? Key spiritual insights often lead to some kind of end. Not the end of the world, but an end to a way of being, a shift,

¹⁶ Kettley S. “End of the world: Jerusalem Third Temple ‘fulfills Biblical prophecy’ of end times – claim,” *Daily Express*, August 10, 2021. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/weird/1043186/End-of-the-world-prophecy-Jerusalem-third-temple-Bible-apocalypse>

¹⁷ Murray D. “The Temple in Jerusalem.” *World History Encyclopedia*. 6 January 2016. <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/852/the-temple-in-jerusalem/>

¹⁸ *The Temple Institute*. Accessed March 4, 2024. <https://templeinstitute.org/statement-of-principles-2/>

¹⁹ “Apocalypse,” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Accessed March 4, 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/apocalypse>

and a changed state of mind. Revelations 21:22 reads, “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.”

In this figurative interpretation, the building of the third temple does indeed usher in the apocalypse and the events of Revelations. But the building of the temple is that an embodiment of Christ, the events of Revelation represent the destruction of the old self and the liberation of a purified, Higher Self, and the apocalypse is the uncovering of spiritual truths, unable to be attained in the old way of living and being.

The sacrificial death and rebirth of Christ within the individual allows for the revelation of knowledge and relationship with Divinity. John chapter 2 verse 19-21, Jesus says, ““Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days’ ... But the temple he had spoken of was his body.” This brings us back to the emblem in the middle of the third degree emulation tracing board and the veil of the Most Holy Place.

The tracing board and the allegorical death it represents could be an allusion to the Most Holy Place we discover on the other side of our living sacrifice and rebirth with, and as, Christ, and the fundamental physiological and spiritual shift that occurs afterwards. In Epistle to the Hebrews 10:19-21 it reads, “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings.”

I believe this tracing board acts as a map marking the place where one can find the Most High within oneself to have a relationship and to do His work on Earth here, now, during this lifetime, not only on the other side of physical death. It shows the Light, stripped away from mortality: the eternal spark within us all.

Closing Remarks

It was an absolute honour and delight to go on the journey and craft these six illuminating artworks of our craft, rich in symbolism and allegory. I have learnt far more than what has been discussed here, and more still than is published in *The Tableaux*.

I hope you’ve taken something away with you from my tracing boards and this discussion on them. I believe what makes the ancient and royal craft of Freemasonry so rich are the many perspectives that contribute to it. Accepting it as already complete misses its beating heart, alive in its constantly evolving art and discussion. I’ve visited many lodges who don’t dig beneath the ritual and symbols they observe and practice, and who actively suppress new observations in strict adherence to the dogma on the page. This, in any art (and this is an art, in its truest and highest definition), is death to the living, breathing Creator that has His being in the discussions, creations, and belief.

The creation of any art as a homage to the Creator is one of the purest forms of worship. I encourage all readers to embark on some act of creation, letting the Light speak through you to bestow your work upon others, becoming as the Creator yourself. Everyone hosts angels within and around them, and the thoughts, emotions, sights, sounds, and ideas you generate will entertain more than just the people around you.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these perspectives and illustrations to you. If you’d like to see more, you find the companion book to this paper, *The Tableaux: Reflections and Insights on the Tracing Boards and their Symbols*, at ionicpublications.com.

I look forward to seeing what you create.

THE BLUE CORD DON RAY

Introduction

In the UGL NSW&ACT the ritual does not mention the representation of a blue cord that is seen on some lodge floors.



Grand Lodge Room 3, Sydney Masonic Centre [SMC], refurbished March 2009.



Cooma Lodge, built 1923.

Some other lodge floors



Lodge De Eendragt No. 233, Grand Orient of the Netherlands.
Lux in Tenerife



Freemasons Hall, Edinburgh



Morwell Masonic Lodge, Victoria



Grand Temple in Freemason's Hall, London; 11 July 2006



Lexington Lodge No. 1 Floor



International Traditional Regular Freemasonry Grand Lodge, Medellin, Antioquia, Colombia

Possible Problems

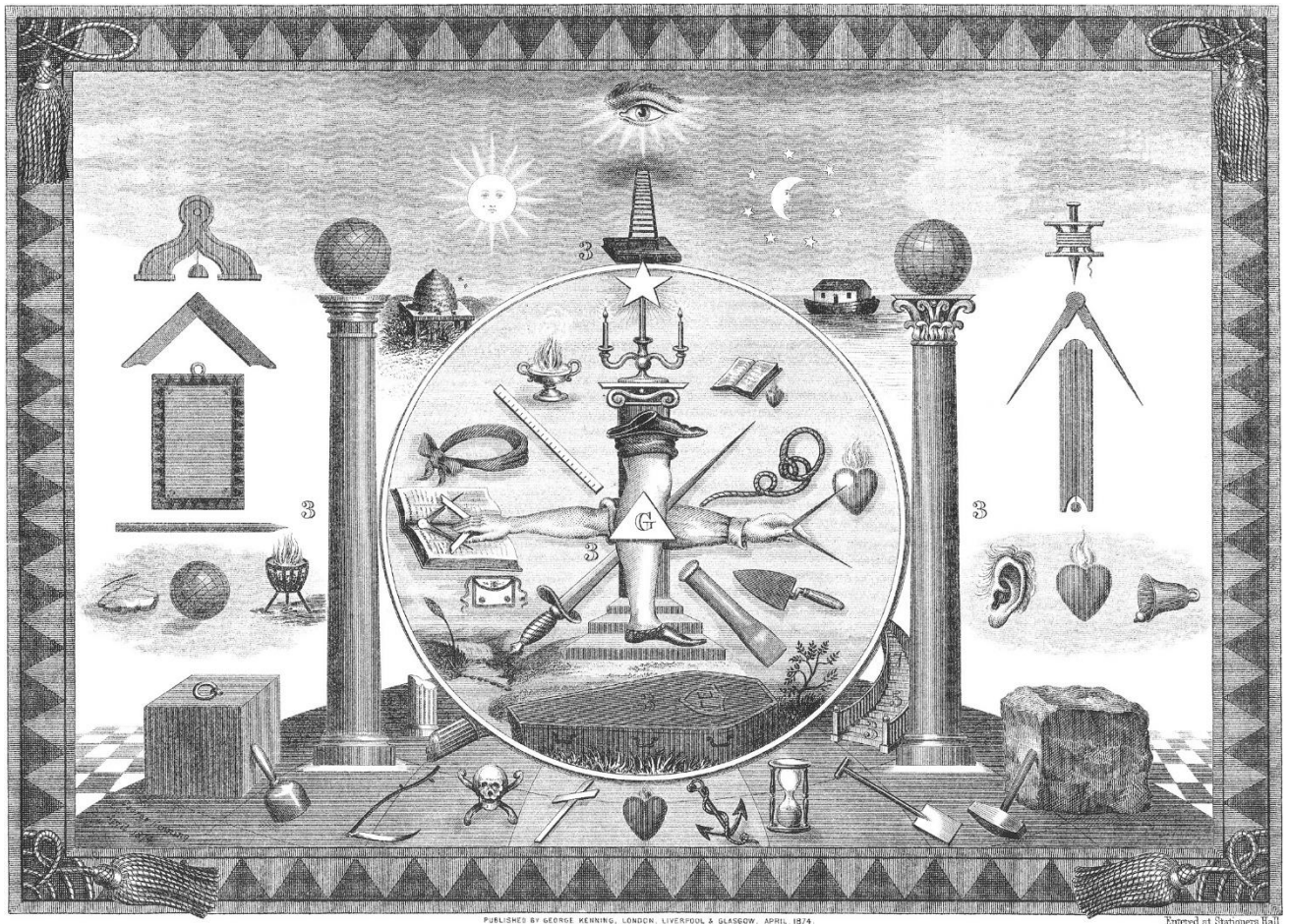
Masonic Secrecy

Evolving/Changing Ritual

Many of our lodges have a virtual attic of discarded ideas and practices that have been worn away by fear, lack of interest, or general laziness. In the same way that some Grand Lodges have done away with the penalties of the degrees, or allowed elements of Craft ritual to be removed²⁰.

Difference by Jurisdiction and Interpretation

In July 2012 I sent an email to the secretary of Scotland Grand Lodge enquiring if there was any guide as to the items in the 'Masonic Emblems'.



MASONIC EMBLEMS

*Respectfully Dedicated (by permission) To F. Whyles Melville Esq. of Pennsylvania, The Most Worshipful Grand Master Mason of Scotland,
By His Humble Servant William Garcey*

I received the following in reply:

Although there may be a consensus among some Scottish Freemasons as to what any particular word or symbol might mean there can be, and usually is, other alternative explanations. The letter 'G' will suffice to illustrate this point. A Freemason who is also a Christian by faith will usually interpret the letter 'G' mean G_D but a Freemason who is a

²⁰ A Temple of Living Stones - Examining the Concept of a Chain of Union by WBro. Andrew Hammer, PM, Alba Lodge No 222, Grand Lodge of Virginia, USA.

Muslim might well reject that idea because he cannot accept that G_D can be reduced to a mere letter of an alphabet created by humans. He will, quite often, argue that the letter ‘G’ stands for geometric and/or geometry. For similar reasons a Freemason who is Jewish might argue that ‘G’ stands for goodness – the innate goodness within every human being. There are others. For example: the GAOTU and GGOTU (not G_D) are particularly appropriate for [Scottish] Masonic usage.

From this brief example one can see that **it is considered impossible for Scottish Freemasons to provide a single, absolute, meaning for a symbol used within Scottish Freemasonry.**

NOTE: G_D means God. God is nearly always rendered as G_D by those of the Jewish faith. Similarly, Muslims would never use the term God (or even G_D) as the correct term is ALLAH (Blessed be His Name).

If this piece is used, in part or in full, I would appreciate the source (myself!) be acknowledged.

Robert L D Cooper.

Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library

July 2014²¹

Harry Carr stated:

We have the mysterious ‘Indented Tarsel’, mentioned by Prichard (in his exposure of 1730) as part of the ‘Furniture’ of the lodge. He describes it as ‘the Border round about it’, i.e., round the lodge and, if Prichard is to be trusted on this point, it was an ‘Indented’ Border!

From 1751 onwards we have (in *Le Maçon Démasqué* and later versions) illustrations showing indented borders and when, at a much later date, the chequered carpets were introduced, covering the whole of the working area, the ornamental border became a regular but more-or-less variable feature of the design, generally made up of triangular indentations. (See Q. 87, p. 197.)

Our Grand Lodge (UGLE) building, with some twenty Temples, have a chequered design in majority—if not all of them,—now entirely *without* ornamental or indented borders. The Indented Border has become a standard part of our Tracing Boards, but it is not deemed an essential part of the carpet.²²

Workings – The many versions of Masonic Ritual, 22 November 2017

NOTE: This only includes English and Scottish rituals.

There are many different versions of Masonic Ritual.

Scottish Craft Workings: 25

Standard Scottish / The Standard Ritual of Scottish Freemasonry

The Scottish Craft Ritual (by George Kenning)

DM Goudielock

The Complete Manual of Freemasonry (by William Harvey)

Scottish Masonic Ritual (by George Martin, Dundee)

Craft Freemasonry (by John Crombie and Alex McConnochie, Aberdeen)

The MacBride Ritual

The Modern Ritual

English Craft Workings: 33

The Perfect Ceremonies of Craft Masonry (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)

²¹ Symbolism a note for Brother Ray, Canberra, Australia from Robert L D Cooper Curator of the Grand Lodge of Scotland Museum and Library by email July 2014

²² *The Freemason At Work* by Harry Carr; p. 148

Nigerian Ritual (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)
 Revised Edition / Emulation Ritual (Emulation Lodge of Improvement)
 The Revised Ritual of Craft Freemasonry (by Franklin Thomas)
 Universal Ritual / The Universal Book of Craft Masonry
 West End / Authorised West End Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 Ritus Oxoniensis / Ritual of Craft Freemasonry in the Province of Oxfordshire
 The Sussex Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 Stability Ritual/The Standard Ceremonies of Craft Masonry (Stability Lodge of Instruction) *aka* Muggeridge Working
 MM Taylor's Handbook of Craft Freemasonry (North London)
 The Complete Workings of Craft Freemasonry
 Oxford Working / The Oxford Ritual of Craft Freemasonry
 The Logic Working of Craft Ceremonies (Logic Ritual Association)
 A Book of Masonic Ritual (by WBro. Arthur Calvert) (East London)
 The Castle Ritual (Northumbrian Past Masters)
 Craft Guide Merchant Navy Working
 The Veritas Working of Craft Freemasonry
 The Ceremonies of Craft Freemasonry (Welsh Masonic Lodges in London)
 Bristol Masonic Ritual
 Claret
 Unanimity
 York (Gilkes)
 Humber
 Plymouth Common-Sense
 Exeter Ritual
 Bury
 Britannia (Sheffield)
 Domatic
 Metropolitan
 East London
 West London
 South London
 English Ritual
 The Correct Ceremonies of Eastern Craft Masonry (privately printed), and practiced by
 "The Aldwych Club Lodge No.3794 and The Lodge of Sincerity No.174 (Thanks to
 David Mason, W.M., The Lodge of Sincerity No. 174).

English Royal Arch Workings: 14

The Metropolitan Working of Royal Arch Masonry
 The Perfect Ceremonies of the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch
 The Ritual of the Holy Royal Arch (Domatic Chapter of Instruction)
 The Complete Workings of the Royal Arch Ritual (Hale Chapter of Improvement)
 The Aldersgate Royal Arch Ritual (Aldersgate Chapter of Improvement) *aka* Nigerian
 Royal Arch Ritual
 The Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch Ritual (Standard Chapter of Instruction)
 The Midlands Working of the Royal Arch Ritual (Warwicks, Worcesters, Staffs &
 Shrops)
 The Warwickshire Working of the Royal Arch Ritual
 The Ritual of the Holy Royal Arch (Province of Sussex)
 Worcester Working of the Royal Arch Ritual
 The Oxford Ritual of Royal Arch Masonry

The Staffordshire Royal Arch Ritual
Grenadiers
Taylors²³

That there are divergencies in ritual, every masonic traveller soon becomes aware. Before he gets into the lodge in a foreign jurisdiction the look upon the faces of the examining committee, the awkward attempt to fit two divergent systems of work one to the other while neither party can go into explanations, shows at once that, while each is confident of himself, something is wrong. This comes out particularly in a matter as fundamental as the modes of recognition. Some jurisdictions letter and divide or syllable the word and divide or syllable the pass. In other jurisdictions the pass is given at once but the word is divided or syllabled. And if our masonic traveller were to go upon the continent of Europe and to find a lodge which his home authorities recognized, he might, as is well known, come upon an unfamiliar substitute word.²⁴

It is not uncommon for some brethren to think and speak of freemasonry as if it were a specific unified entity, but that was not the case then and is not so now, other than in the highest principles that are encouraged by its practice. It is a development from numerous forms, and variations continue in many jurisdictions. From the varieties of ritual and procedures that were in existence, the eventual agreed form adopted in England was still beset with quirks and idiosyncrasies that local custom had no intention of releasing; but even those practices at times suffered from the hands of “improvers” which sometimes resulted in items becoming isolated from the original context creating illogical problems for brethren who were to follow. In order to analyse modern items and to find basic reasons for their adoption it is necessary to look into the background, to return to whatever evidence may be found in manuscript material or the later published masonic exposures.²⁵

Every day it becomes more evident that our American Craft is still being subjected to the gradual extirpation of the Initiatic and Esoteric Dimension of its symbols and rituals. And what is more lamentable and alarming, is, that such actions have been taken and/or sanctioned by the very Hierarchies or Grand Bodies of our American Craft – They are either too ignorant, too indifferent, or, simply, too recalcitrant to understand and accept that thanks to these symbols (terminology included) and rituals, revealed to us through the ages.²⁶

Spelling or mistranslation mistakes.

We know by tradition, and by engravings that have been preserved, that during the ceremonies of initiation in the early part of the last century the symbols of the Order were marked out in chalk on the floor, and that this picture was encircled by a waving cord. This cord was ornamented with tassels, and formerly a border to the tracing on the floor was called the indented tassel, the cord and the tufts attached to it being the tassel, which, being by its wavy direction partly in and partly outside of the picture, was said to be indented. This *indented tassel* was subsequently corrupted by illiterate Masons into *indented tarsal*, the appellation met with in some of the early catechisms.

I think that I can readily trace the gradual steps of corruption and change from the original name *indented tassel*, which the early French Masons had literally translated by *houpe dentelée*,

23 Workings – The many versions of Masonic Ritual <https://freemasonrymatters.co.uk/index.php/workings-the-many-versions-of-masonic-ritual/>

24 *The Causes Of Divergence In Ritual*. by RWBro. Roscoe Pound, Deputy Grand Master 1915

25 Victorian Masonic Education Course Developed by WBro. Kent Henderson. *Understanding Freemasonry* by R.A. Wells - chapter 4.

to *indented tarsel*, and sometimes, according to Oliver, to *indented trasel*; then to *tassellated border*, and, finally, to *tessellated border*, the name which it now bears.

The form and the meaning of the symbol are now apparent. The *tessellated border*, as it is called, is a cord, decorated with tassels, which surrounds the tracing-board of an Entered Apprentice, the said tracing-board being a representation of the Lodge, and it symbolizes the bond of love—the mystic tie—which binds the Craft wheresoever dispersed into one band of brotherhood.²⁷

Henry Wilson Coil²⁸ says it was a misspelling that really brought the chain of union into Masonic lodges: “The Tessellated Border or Indented Tessel, sometimes miscalled Tarsal and even worse as Tassel, was a border surrounding the Mosaic Pavement, evidently having tooth-like indentations like a black and white fringe. So far, all is well; but at this point the gremlins went to work. The French mistook tessel for tassel and tessellated for tassellated and, accordingly, got a picture of a cord with tassels at both ends and, further, they imagined the cord draped around the edge of a tracing board. The Germans followed the French lead treating the object as a cord tied in lovers’ knots with two tassels at the ends”.²⁹

Houpe (Houpe) dentelée. This was apparently Perau’s attempted translation of the words ‘Indented Tarsel’ which Prichard had used in a somewhat similar context in his *Masonry Dissected*, of 1730. Prichard explained that the ‘Indented Tarsel’ was the ‘Border round about it’ (i.e., the lodge), & he probably meant an indented border. Dring, (*A.Q.C.*, 29, pp. 258-261) was at pains to show, unsuccessfully I believe, that Prichard meant a ‘perpend ashlar’. Whether Prichard should have said ‘perpend ashlar’ or not, is immaterial here, because he gave a clue to his meaning in the word ‘Border’.

Perau seemed to find difficulty in dealing with technical details in English, but it is not certain whether his mis-translations were deliberate or accidental. Thus, Prichard’s ‘Mosaic Pavement’ became Perau’s ‘Mosaic Palace’.”

‘Blazing Star’ ‘star-spangled canopy’

‘Indented Tarsel’ ‘*Houpe dentelée*’

and Perau gave no explanation of the latter term. Note, the word *dentelée*, with one *l*, means toothed, or indented. *Houpe* means ‘tuft’ or tassel.

From 1744 onwards the term ‘*Houpe dentelée*’ appears regularly in numerous texts.³⁰

It was Travenol who published the earliest printed designs of the Floor-Drawings in his first exposure, *Le Catéchisme*, in 1744. He was also the first to depict the *Houpe Dentellée* as a Tasselled Cord, serving as a kind of ornamental frame to the upper part of the Apprentice-Fellow’s Drawing. When, in 1745, the author-compiler of *L’Ordre . . . Trahi* described Travenol’s designs as *Inexact* and supplied two new designs to replace them, his amendments to the Apprentice-Fellow’s Drawing were comparatively slight and he retained the Tasselled Cord without amendment, thereby giving it his tacit approval, though there was still no explanation of the meaning, symbolism, or purpose of the Cord or its Tassels.

²⁷ *Encyclopaedia Of Freemasonry*, Tessell by Mackey.

²⁸ Henry Wilson Coil – *Masonic Encyclopedia*, Macoy Publishing & Masonic Supply Co., Inc., Richmond, Virginia, 1995, p.253

²⁹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

³⁰ *The Early French Exposures* By Harry Carr. Footnote 2 on p. 72

Here, in *La Desolation*, Travenol brought the *Houpe Dentellée* back again and described it as *Une espece de Cordon de Veuve qui entoure le haul du Dessein*, “A kind of Widow’s Cord which surrounds the upper part of the Design . . .” The term, “Widow’s Cord”, seemed to add only more confusion to the difficulty of explaining its meaning; but on closer inspection it proves to be a piece of Masonic whimsy which does credit to Travenol’s subtlety.

The whole idea takes its rise from an expression which was firmly established in European ritual in 1745, in which the Masons were described as “Sons of the Widow”. By an easy extension of symbolism the Craft itself became the Widow and the Floor-Drawing became her coat of arms. The solution lies in French Blazonry, i.e., that branch of Heraldry which prescribes how an achievement of arms is correctly drawn. I quote from *Larousse du XX^e siecle* the relevant words under the heading ‘Veuve’, sub-heading ‘Blas[on]’, in simple, non-technical translation:—

‘Widows bear the arms of their husband . . . surrounded by an intertwined cord . . .’³¹

The corruption of ashler into tarsel or tassley is still simpler. In both forms we get the accented syllable in ashlar, viz., the first; the ‘t’ sound is a case of prothesis and has been assimilated from the final ‘t’ sound in the preceding word perpend, perpent, indented or dented.

In old French we find a germane word *aisselle* derived from the same source as the English word ashler, and in Ducange, we find the Latin equivalent *aisella*.

So far as ‘indented tarsel’ or danty tassley’ may be considered as the equivalent of lacy tassel I can find absolutely no confirmation. I am aware that tarsel or tassley may easily be a synonym of tassel, but I cannot trace a single instance in English literature in which indented or dented is used in the sense of dentellé or lacy.³²

A Short Glossary

ashler tarsel or tassley
 Houpe (Houpe) dentelée. - ‘Indented Tarsel’
 ‘Indented Tarsel’ – ‘Houpe dentelée’
 indented tarsel ‘ or danty tassley

‘perpend ashlar’ Serrated puff - frayed ends of the rope that surrounds the temple. But by extension, the term serrated puff also applies to the entire rope, so that we also speak of knotted rope or cord.³³

Tessellated. From the Latin *tessella*, a little square stone. Checkered, formed in little squares of Mosaic work.

Knot symbolism

31 *The Early French Exposures* by Harry Carr p. 320

32 *The Evolution And Development Of The Tracing Or Lodge Board* by Bro. E.H. Dring, P.M. AQC 29 [1916].

33 La houpe dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houpe-dentelée-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>



The lace tuft - cord, decoration or symbol
 La houppie « dentelée »: cordelière, décor ou symbole ?³⁴

Knotted ropes and cords have been used for centuries for counting, measurement, as memory aids for prayer recitation, and for simple binding and tying. It could easily be said that knot tying may have been one of the major developments in the advancement of mankind, perhaps even overshadowing the invention of the wheel in terms of its impact. Anthropologists theorize that during the period in which man was learning to domesticate animals the rope became the very symbol of his mastery of brute nature. Consequently, the rope, or cord, came to acquire very early symbolic and mystical meaning.³⁵

Gordian knot, knot that gave its name to a proverbial term for a problem solvable only by bold action. In 333 BC, Alexander the Great, on his march through Anatolia, reached Gordium, the capital of Phrygia. There he was shown the chariot of the ancient founder of the city, Gordius, with its yoke lashed to the pole by means of an intricate knot with its end hidden. According to tradition, this knot was to be untied only by the future conqueror of Asia. In the popular account, probably invented as appropriate to an impetuous warrior, Alexander sliced through the knot with his sword, but, in earlier versions, he found the ends either by cutting into the knot or by drawing out the pole. The phrase “cutting the Gordian knot” has thus come to denote a bold solution to a complicated problem.³⁶

³⁴ <https://www.hiram.be/la-houpee-dentelée-cordelière-décor-ou-symbole-2/>

³⁵ The Knotted Rope In Masonic Esoteric Tradition by Bro. William Steve Burkle KT, 32°, KCRBE Alpha Lodge No. 116, Grand Lodge of New Jersey.

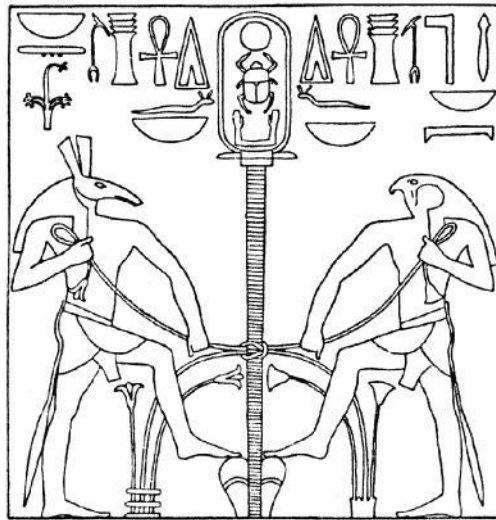
³⁶ Gordian knot.docx <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gordian-knot>

The Pharaoh employed a land surveyor, so called harpedonaptai or harpedonapts (rope stretchers or rope-knotters). After the annual flooding of the Nile river the property boundaries had to be reestablished. The harpedonaptai used measuring cords with 11 equally spaced knots (or marked with paint) dividing it into 12 parts. With these ropes they could form a right triangle with the sides of 3:4:5.³⁷

Knotting had a range of functions in the sphere of Egyptian religion/magic/mythology/medicine, four terms which in European thinking are quite disparate, but should be considered as a closely knitted complex in the context of ancient Egypt.

In funerary texts there are some clear references to circular knotting. Especially spells in the *Book of the Dead*.

Circular knotting with two strands occurs as *Tz tAwy*, an expression that is found rarely as an alternative to the common *smA tAwy*. The knot used for the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt is, again, the reef knot, tied with two separate strands around the respiratory tract (*Fig. 12*).³⁸



smA tAwy from the throne of Senusret I in Lisht.

I am the Knot of the god in the Aser tree, the twice beautiful one, who is more splendid to-day than yesterday (*Repeat four times*). I am Rai, who stablisheth those who praise him. **5. I** am the Knot of the god within the Aser tree, and my appearance is the appearance [of Ra] on this day.³⁹

Unas is the lord of offerings, the untier of the knot, and he himself maketh abundant the offerings of meat and drink.

I am Ra who establish those who praise him. I am the knot within the tamarisk tree, more beautiful in brightness than the disk of yesterday.⁴⁰

O my Creator, I am he who hath no power to walk, the great knot within yesterday.⁴¹

37 The Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops) <https://www.cheops-pyramide.ch/khufu-pyramid/pyramid-alignment.html>

38 *Entangled, Connected Or Protected?* By Willeke Wendrich
https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B0eawh9UmLRfQVduZ0J6SW9MTDA/edit?resourcekey=0-6vdA1_VNfLeRRE1BxhiDLw

39 *The Book Of The Dead: The Papyrus Of Ani, Scribe And Treasurer Of The Temples Of Egypt, About B.C. 1450* In Two Volumes Volume II.

40 *The Book Of The Dead The Papyrus Of Ani* by E. A. Wallis Budge [1895] p. 356

In Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics a knotted rope denotes a person's name or a separate and individual being. It is the symbol of a stream of life reflected upon itself and, as such, constituting a person. African witch-doctors use ropes as instruments for their magic and they are believed to become serpents, staves, fountains of milk and so on.

Central American civilizations regarded the rope as a divine symbol and, in Mayan and Mexican art, ropes hanging from the sky symbolize divine semen falling from Heaven to fecundate the Earth. This symbolism is echoed in the name of the month which ushers in the rainy season. In the Ancient Mexican calendar it was called Toxcatl, meaning 'rope' or 'lasso'.

The Chorti (one of the indigenous Maya peoples) bury their dead with a rope to be used to fight off the wild animals to be encountered on the way to the Underworld.

Northern wizards used to tie the winds which they controlled into a rope. A woodcut in Olaus Magnus' *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555) shows two sailors bargaining with a wizard standing upon a lonely rock in the sea, over his price for 'the rope with three knots which he holds in his hand and which contains the winds which he has tied up. By unpicking the first knot they would release a gentle west-southwesterly; by unpicking the second, a stiff northerly; but if they were to unpick the third then a most dreadful storm would follow'.

In the Koran, too, ropes are symbols of ascent, reminiscent of the rope the shaman or the oriental juggler throws into the air and uses to climb skywards.⁴²

The Inka empire (1400-1532 CE) used *kipus* – knotted string devices – to communicate complex mathematical and narrative information. More than 1,000 *kipus* are known but have not been deciphered.⁴³



Khipu in the Museo Machu Picchu, Casa Concha, Cusco. Image: *Wikipedia*

41 *The Book Of The Dead The Papyrus Of Ani* by E. A. Wallis Budge [1895] p. 357

42 The meaning of the dream symbol: Rope <http://dreamicus.com/rope.html>

43 The khipu code: the knotty mystery of the Inkas' 3D records <https://aeon.co/ideas/the-khipu-code-the-knotty-mystery-of-the-inkas-3d-records>

Numerical khipus

Each row on a numerical khipu has a value of up to 9, 90, 900, and so forth.

Narrative khipus

Khipus that diverge from the decimal and numerical organization of knots are referred to as “narrative” khipu.⁴⁴

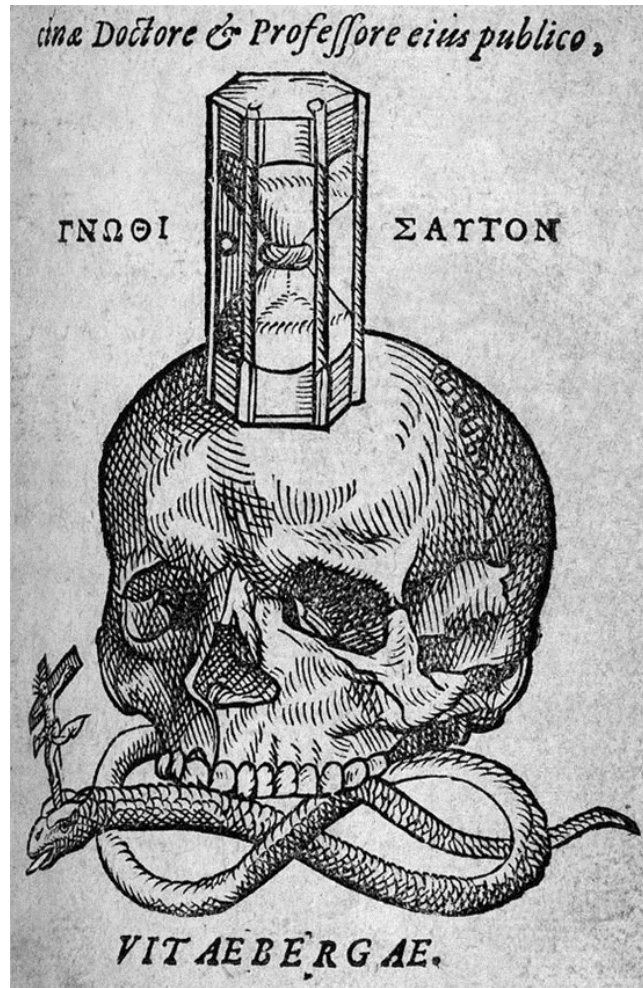
The **Order of the Ladies of the Cord** (French: L’Ordre des Dames chevalières de la Cordelière” or “Ordre de la Cordelière”), was a ladies order founded by the French queen Anne of Brittany in 1498. This rope with knots had been added by her step-grandfather Francis I, Duke of Brittany to his arms in honor of St. Francis its patron saint and her father Francis II, Duke of Brittany had continued the emblem.⁴⁵



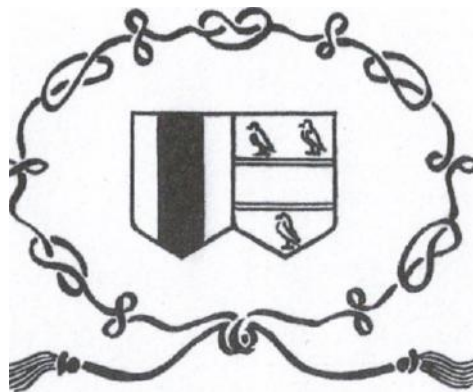
Château de Blois, gable of the chapel’s entrance showing crowned initials of Louis XII and Anne with their arms surrounded by the Orders of Saint Michael and the Cord.

⁴⁴ *The Inka khipu* by Dr. Kylie E. Quave

⁴⁵ Order Of The Ladies Of The Cord https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_the_Ladies_of_the_Cord



16th century woodcut illustration depicting a skull, a snake and an hourglass.
The snake has a crucifix in its head.⁴⁶



Arms Of A Widow

A rough sketch to show the origin of the Cordon de Veuve.
With acknowledgements to *Larousse du XX^e Siecle*

Wind knots were normally tied in groups of three, and were used to bind winds which could later be called upon when needed. Release of the first knot was believed to activate a moderate breeze, release of the second, a strong breeze, and release of the third knot caused a heavy

⁴⁶ This illustration was first published in *De methodo medendi liber unus* by Andreas Planer, printed at Basle in 1583.

wind. Other variously cited and beneficial uses of Knot Magic include the curing of fever, alleviation of diseases of the groin, prevention of scarlet fever, and keeping a person out of harm's way.

Because of their association with binding, knots were often viewed to restrict, impede, or constrain certain events such as childbirth, marriage, and death. It is recorded that in 1705, two persons were condemned to death in Scotland for stealing charmed knots which were subsequently used to interfere with the marriage of Spalding of Ashintilly. In 1718 the parliament of Bordeaux sentenced a person to death by burning for having spread desolation through an entire family by the use of knotted cords. Knot magic was also used for other malevolent purposes; such as causing impotence in men, or to surreptitiously prevent a desired pregnancy.⁴⁷

The Knotted Cord

At the time of the construction of cathedrals, the construction workers, skilled builders, moved from one day to the next with a cane that served as a measuring stick. Five marks were engraved on the wood to their own measure. Not knowing how to read or write, they traced their work with great precision thanks to this measuring system. In the construction of large buildings, the master builder established a rule, and each worker thus possessed the universal measure and the thirteen-knot rope.⁴⁸

The beginnings of the artistic styling of the Entered Apprentice tracing board did not feature the four tassels, but a wavy cord, which was contained four knots and finished with two tasselled edges hanging down.

This arrangement of is known as the scalloped tassel, Bro. John Browne in his text of the *Master Key* explains the possible reason that this design was used:

“the kind care of providence which so cheerfully surrounds and keeps us within its protection whilst we justly and uprightly govern our lives and actions by the four cardinal virtues in divinity”.⁴⁹

The immediate source of the tassels was probably a misinterpretation of the English text. But the cord with tassels (re: Prichard's exposure 1730 'Indented Tassel') has a curious French derivation, based on the Biblical statement that H.A. was a widow's son. In Masonic ritual, all Brothers to H.A., and are therefore called 'sons of the widow'. In French heraldry, the Arms of the widow are surrounded or framed by a wavy (indented) tasselled cord, a *cordon de veuve*, i.e., a widow's cord, and from 1747 onwards the cord with tassels is described as the *Cordon de veuve*.

Other students, more symbolically inclined, carry the simile further back - to first tracing board history - to the portion of the lecture which tells why all mason's lodges lie due E. and W., as did the Tabernacle in the wilderness, so designed by God's own decree. The cover of the Tabernacle was a vast cloth of skins held down by means of weights in loops, hung at intervals round its sides. Under this interpretation our four tassels become representative, symbolically, of the host of thongs that held the roof of the temple firm against the desert winds. Ritualist have given them names - those of four cardinal virtues - Prudence, Fortitude, justice and

47 Victorian Masonic Education Course Developed by WBro. Kent Henderson. *Understanding Freemasonry* by R.A. Wells - Chapter 4.

48 *The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs* by Nicolas Gasseau

49 Arts & Humanities/Religious Studies Tracing Boards - Irish Freemasonry
<https://studylib.net/doc/8767798/tracing-boards---irish-freemasonry>

Temperance, - which hold the human temple staunch against the winds of temptation. (NSW FM 8/48 p. 289)⁵⁰

The “cord tied in lovers’ knots” is not a Masonic invention; it was a well-known heraldic element, present in the armories of bishops, abbots, ecclesiasts living in celibacy and widows.⁵¹

The rope knots or Houppes (tuft) lace fabric. In the operative masons or the art, include the use of the surveyor’s chain or rope tied when it comes to drawing up plans for a sacred building. In the surveying operation, the measurement is taken by means of a knotted rope provides measurements simultaneously reports proportion.⁵²

We know that many Freemason symbols come from the world of construction; however, nowhere is a connection between this knotted rope and an actual tool found before the 20th century, and for good reason, its origin is heraldic. It was only in 1933 that it was assimilated to a measuring instrument. In his article *The unknown tool*, the symbolist Freemason Wladimir Nagrodski goes against the opinion of his peers by comparing the jagged tassel to a certain Egyptian rope:

The “harpedonaptes” (string stretchers) used the rope not only to orient the building according to the cardinal points of the horizon, but also to draw its right angles according to the very old method and based on the fact that the triangle with sides 3, 4 and 5 is necessarily a right triangle (later Pythagorean theorem).⁵³

References to the rope with thirteen knots multiplied during the second half of the 20th century. It is thus found in 1966 in *The Mysteries of Chartres Cathedral* of Louis Charpentier, a remarkable example of pseudoscience totally devoid of historical rigor, in which the author tells us in all seriousness that the builders of cathedrals did not need mathematics, because they used “the rope with twelve knots (twelve nodes, i.e. thirteen segments/*sic*) of the Druids”. Poor druids, you have to believe that the Egyptians were not enough.⁵⁴

The knotted cord around the tracing board and the Chain of Union are generally considered similar symbols; that is, “unity in multiplicity.” This isn’t explained in the ritual (Lodge France AASR), but is discussed in the oral tradition. Esoterically, we may consider the unity of the divine spark in all beings, connecting us to the source of Light, the G::A::O::T::U::, in the Chain of Union; “all is one, one is all.”

Oswald Wirth states:

“A serrated lambrequin borders and features a rope ending in tassels that meet near the J:: and B:: columns. This ornament has been mistakenly called a “serrated tassel.” The rope is tied in interlacing knots, known as “knots of love,” and thus represents the Chain of Union linking all Masons. There may be twelve knots to correspond to the signs of the Zodiac.”⁵⁵

The tessellated border consists of 60 threads in Ancient Masonic jurisdictions as some lodges were not allowed to have more than 60 members in those old days.

50 “Tessera Sapientiae” by WBro G. Love I.P.M. of the Victorian Lodge of Research 218, 23 May 1986.

51 Chain of Union by Radu Comănescu <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

52 History of the Chain of Union <http://thedebehir.com/3005AA.html>

53 The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs by Nicolas Gasseau p. 66

54 The corde à treize nœuds and the quine des bâtisseurs by Nicolas Gasseau p. 68

55 “La Franc Maçonnerie rendue intelligible à ses adeptes,” (1894). Translated by Aiden Rosa.

In America, the tessellated border is not seen as a cord. Instead, the tessellated border is a decorated part of the Mosaic pavement, and it is made of small square stones.⁵⁶

The fact that after 1725 Freemasonry adopted Hiram as its Archetypal Master, and Hiram was the son of a widow, might have contributed to the success of the cord with tassels.⁵⁷

The tassel design is not a pun. Tessellated means ‘Of or resembling mosaic, having finely chequered surface’. (O.E.D.) The word is from the Greek tessares = four. It has nothing to do with tassels, which seem to have arisen from a misunderstanding of the ‘Indented Tassel’ in Prichard’s exposure of 1730. That work became the basis of the catechisms in all the early French exposures, which translated the ‘Indented Tassel’ as Houppes dentelées. Houppes means tuft or tassel; dentelée, with one l, means ‘indented’; dentellée, with two lls, means ‘lacy’ or ‘laced’. The exposure *Le Catéchisme des Francs-Maçons*, 1744, in its combined Tracing Board for the 1st and 2nd Degrees, was the first text to illustrate the Houppes dentelées as a long cord with two tasselled ends forming a kind of ornamental headpiece across the top of the design. This was the first appearance of tassels in a Masonic context. They may have been in use on English Tracing Boards of that period, but there is no evidence to support this.⁵⁸

Rope is used by builders to trace out angles and straight lines, while the spaces between the knots represent units of measurement. It is important to distinguish the knotted rope from the indented tassel, a frieze of black and white triangles which runs around the lodge’s tracing board. The knots in the rope are not pulled tight, and form a sideways number 8, like the mathematical symbol for infinity. This sideways 8 is a geometric figure, called the lemniscate [from the Greek lemniscatas, (λημνίσκος) adorned with ribbons] and formed by two joined slightly elliptical rings. One of its symbolical properties, termed “squarability”, raises a number of questions. Squarability means that the area of one of the rings of the lemniscate is equal to the area of a square whose sides are the length of the diameter of the circle inscribed within a ring.⁵⁹

This construction represents the squaring of the circle. The properties of the lemniscate were studied by Bemouilli (1654-1705) after the work of Cassini (1625-1712), the first director of the Paris Observatory who discovered two of Saturn’s satellites. The lemniscate matches the apparent orbit of the planets around the sun, as observed from the Earth. The real orbit is elliptical, and the apparent orbit of a planet whose orbit is elliptical traces a lemniscate.⁶⁰

Bro Don Falconer wrote in *The Square and Compasses* [p 209 of the 2006 CD edition]: The wavy cord and the tassels. Some early tracing boards of the first degree were enclosed within a continuous wavy cord that was knotted at the four corners and terminated with its two tasselled ends hanging down. In French lodges this arrangement of the cord is called la houppes dentelées, which means “the scalloped tassel” and is described as “a cord forming true-lovers’ knots”. The old French ritual explains that the cord should remind all freemasons that the bonds uniting them should draw them closer together, irrespective of the distances that may separate them. In German lodges the knotted wavy cord is called die Schnur von starken Faden, which signifies “a cord of strong threads”. The old German ritual also explains that the cord symbolises the fraternal bond by which all freemasons are united.

56 The Masonic Mosaic Pavement <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

57 *Chain of Union* by Radu Comănescu <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

58 *The Freemason At Work* by Harry Carr, p. 149

59 Daniel Beresniak; *Symbols of Freemasonry*, Editions Assouline, Paris 1997, p. 30.

60 *Symbols Of Freemasonry* – Beresniak.

Also relevant to this discussion are the comments of John Browne in his *Master Key*, which sets out the elements of the Prestonian lectures. He says that the wavy cord and tassels allude to “the kind care of Providence which so cheerfully surrounds and keeps us within its protection whilst we justly and uprightly govern our lives and actions by the four cardinal virtues in divinity”. Alternative English translations of *dentelée* are “serrated” and “indented”, whence the “indented border” has been derived.

Later, on page 318 he wrote: As the early speculative craft lodges were usually held in rented rooms, it was customary to sketch appropriate emblems on the floor in chalk or charcoal, so that they could easily be erased at the end of the meeting. A temple and other symbols were usually drawn, often encircled by a wavy cord having open looped knots and tassels at the ends. This was the *indented tassel* or *indented tarsel* referred to in the old catechisms, but it is not, as is sometimes suggested, the *indented* or *tessellated border* that is referred to in modern rituals. The knotted and tasselled cord symbolises the universal bond of friendship that should unite every freemason with his brethren.

A Martinist version.

The traditional Cord of Union is then placed in the hands of those forming the circle and each member wraps it once around his left thumb, leaving the right hand free. The cord should be soft and may be of silk or nylon, about 5/16^{ths} of an inch thick and green, blue or dark red.⁶¹

The properties of the lemniscate were studied by Bemouilli (1654-1705) after the work of Cassini (1625-1712), the first director of the Paris Observatory who discovered two of Saturn’s satellites. The lemniscate matches the apparent orbit of the planets around the sun, as observed from the Earth. The real orbit is elliptical, and the apparent orbit of a planet whose orbit is elliptical traces a lemniscate.⁶²

In French lodges there is a further representation of the indented border, in the form of a cord of union. This is a knotted rope passing right round the lodge at approximately shoulder or waist height and also depicted on some French tracing boards, giving us a more concrete example of the concept of that which binds us together. The cord frequently ends in tassels, reminiscent of the four tassels on the corners of the indented or tessellated border.

So we have two principal ways of allegorically representing those sentiments which bind both the elements of Freemasonry and the Masonic brethren together: the Indented or Tessellated Border and the Cord of Union, the latter cord being both physical and figurative. But there is a third form of this allegory in Freemasonry, which is known as the Knotwork Pillar.⁶³

“The Union Cord with Love Knots, which runs around the Lodge upon the Architrave, is indicative of the mystic tie which unites us as brethren in the bonds of a happy Fraternity, telling of full generous love to fellow-men.”⁶⁴

The cable tow, or cord or rope is also interesting. When preparing this paper I came across an explanation of it running —

‘The knots are loose or open figure—eight knots, in French called ‘Lacs d ‘Amour’ (love knots). In north and Western Europe this type of knot is an ancient symbol of love, friendship or brotherhood. With this connotation were the knots first used in heraldry and, later, also in Continental Freemasonry, and the cord itself became a uniting element.

61 Houpe Dentelée aka The Cord of Union by NW Morse ‘A Daily Advancement’ . . . Linford Lodge Of Research, December 2020

62 *Symbols Of Freemasonry* by Daniel Beresniak

63 *Ornaments Furniture and Jewels* by Julian Rees page 38

64 2° of the AASR in Louisiana

‘In a speculative sense, it is said they are always depicted loose to illustrate that when we meet as brothers, there should be space within our relationship and, as we move further away from each other, the cord becomes straight and the knots will close and the further we move away, the tighter the knots (of brotherhood) become, this creating an ‘absence makes the heart grow fonder ‘concept.’⁶⁵

The Chain of Union

The Chain of Union is ancient, going back to the Compagnonnage, the 12th century French stonemason corporation — where it is known as “alliance’s chain.” Francisco Ariza thinks this ritual acted as support for a sacred invocation, it being a collective practice of “enchantment.” Enchantment is a sacred invocation, and is just a means to activate a memory of what is already inside the agent, awakening his inner faculties.⁶⁶

The first Masonic description of the chain of union seems to appear in 1696 in these lines of the *Edinburgh Regiuster House MS*:

“But to (be) a master mason or journeyman of the trade, there is more to do, and this is the following. First of all the apprentices must be led out of the company, and only masters must remain... So the masons whisper the word to each other, starting with the youngest... after which the new mason must take the posture in which he must receive the word... Then the master gives him the word and shakes his hand in the manner of masons, and that’s all there is to do to make him a perfect mason.”

The Chain of Union has a different meaning nowadays because by its formal resemblance to the lakes of love adorning the serrated puff, the Chain of Union, which is also evoked in 1723 in a Masonic song printed at the end of Anderson’s *Constitutions*, is identical to the serrated puff and its lakes of love representing the solidarity and love that unites each of the Brothers of the Chain.

This powerful Chain of Fraternity that united the Companion Builders of the Middle Ages explains how the monuments erected in Europe are of great resemblance. Many of the builders of that time had acquired their knowledge at the same school, that of the University of Cordoba. Thanks to their Fraternal Union Chain, Masons scattered throughout Europe were always in contact with each other. They transmitted their art and these known improvements.

A complex and rich symbolism is attached to this Chain of Union which also includes: “Serrated border”, “Knotted rope or serrated puff”.⁶⁷

The chain is an ancient symbol of Masonry, but the chain of union is a rather modern development, first operated in French lodges and due, as pointed out by contemporary Anglo-Saxon authors, to a misspelling.

But the chain of union extended its presence and, since the XIX century, became a ritual performed as part of the Masonic ritual. It is performed in practically all non-Andersonian Rites.⁶⁸

The Chain of Union found its way into the “contemporary” AASR Symbolic Degrees in 1923⁶⁹, where it appears in two places:

at the closing of the Lodge in the First Degree;

65 Linford’s letter to Eddie.

66 *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo P.M. - QSA Members Forum Lemmi Lodge No. 400 Grande Oriente d’Italia. <https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

67 Histoire Et Symbolique <https://www.gadlu.info/histoire-et-symbolique-de-la-chaine-dunion/>

68 Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

69 Ritual of the Grand Lodge of France (1923)

at a certain point during the initiation ceremony.

During the 1800s, the references to the Chain are obscure. It appears in several rituals for the 14^o (it was part of the traditional history, but some rituals also include the chain as part of the closing ceremony)⁷⁰.

It seems to have found its way into the English 18^o sometime in the early 1900s (the earliest English Rose-Croix ritual I have that mentions the interlinking of hands is 1938⁷¹; the others imply that the Princes simply stand in a circle). Of course, it may have been customary in some chapters before then, and then the 1938 ritual consolidated it as part of the rubric. The earliest Scottish Constitution ritual I have is from the 1960s, but it may have also been the case that the English were “window-shopping” from the Scots.

In the 1700s, the Scottish Rite was a little less regulated by ritual, and so significant variations exist from Lodge to Lodge. One of the earliest rituals in the “direct” AASR lineage is the Ritual of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Avignon, 1774⁷². This includes a Chain of Union at two points:

immediately after the Lodge is closed;
at the end of the banquet; on both occasions, the Brethren sang an ode, “le bonheur des maçons” (*the happiness of masons*) (to the tune of “Est-il de plus douces odeurs,” (*Is there sweeter smells*) which I haven’t been able to track down).

The Rectified Scottish Rite, which was forming at around the same time, also included a chain of union during the closing, and a prayer rather than an ode (the ethos of the RER values monastic silence rather than musical accompaniment).⁷³

The knot rope is originally a very ancient measuring tool of which traces can be found in Egypt.

At that time, professional rope tensioners used a thirteen-knot rope also called surveyor’s rope to draw right angles to establish a temple or to delimit the rectangular fields that the floods of the Nile had covered.

It is therefore quite natural that this tool took its place alongside the square and the compass in symbolic Masonry.

Upon entering the temple, the surveyor’s rope was embellished with knots in eight (instead of single knots) called Lakes of Love.

Some authors have seen it as a heraldic reference. Thus Jules Boucher in *La Symbolique maçonnique* p.173 recalls that “The cord of black and white silk whose widows surround their shield is made of lakes of love; Similarly, the coats of arms of cardinals, bishops and abbots include, under a hat, a cord formed of lakes of love and terminated by puffs.

Others evoke the desire of the first mason to represent through the lakes of love, the rite of the “chain of union”.

⁷⁰ *Ordo ab Chao* (1833, transcribed from earlier rituals) Kloss MS (1804–1815 date disputed)

⁷¹ Rose-Croix (1891, English ritual) Rose-Croix (1938, English ritual)

⁷² Ritual of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Avignon (1774) as transcribed in “The Genesis of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite,” Philippe Michel, 2017.

⁷³ Rectified Scottish Rite from the General Convent of the Order held at Wilhelmsbad in 5782 (1782) courtesy Aidan Rosa by email 30 June 2023

Companion builders of the Middle Ages who practiced it under the name of “Alliance Chain”. These chains made it possible to exchange techniques and knowledge within the same trade (mason, stonemason, carpenter, etc.).

This explains why the monuments erected in Europe have a certain unity.

The knot rope also evokes the unfolding of existence, the two ends representing the two key moments: birth and death.

This rope is not linear, the knots arranged at regular intervals complicate the drawing and remind us that our life is marked by many obstacles.

The serrated puff is located in height slightly below the starry vault.

It runs on almost all the walls of the temple: from the north to the east and the south. It also adorns the West, but it remains interspersed, open. This can be seen as a sign of a deep openness to the secular world.

The two ends of the cord, where the puffs are formed, are behind the Jakin and Boaz columns. So when we pass between the columns of the temple we make the connection between the two ends of this rope. We are then an integral part of it and all that it symbolizes.

It seems, therefore, that this rope acts as a link between the material and the spiritual.

There are twelve love lakes (although some authors mention different numbers). This number is of great symbolic force:

Note also that these knots are represented loose. We can again see it as a sign of a deep open-mindedness, openness to others.

On the other hand, they tighten when we pull on them, which reminds us of the symbol of fraternity and solidarity between Masons, in adversity the bonds that unite us are strengthened.

It is a real circulation of energy that is then created.⁷⁴

At a certain moment in ceremony of Initiation, the Mason Brethren form the long Chain of Union, in which they include the Candidate, and the Worshipful Master addresses to the Candidate:

“My dear Brother, around you there is the Chain of Union, which is merely a link in the Universal Freemasonry Chain and shows you that the Freemasons shall not leave you as long as the Truth, Justice, Fidelity and fraternal Love remain sacred to you...”. This is in fact the moment when the Candidate must be aware that he becomes an element in the Masonic Universal Chain, an indestructible and perennial unitary whole.

The moment when the new Initiated is included in the Chain of Union, he is no longer a Profane isolated from a crowd.⁷⁵

The Chain is broken normally without any pressure or shaking, except when an Initiate is included for the first time. It is then broken with a triple pressure of the hands and a triple shaking of the arms.⁷⁶

When a new brother has just been initiated, the Chain of Union takes on an even greater significance than usual and must be performed slightly differently. After the WM has called on

74 La houppie dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppie-dentellee-et-la-chaîne-d-union-101549332.html>

75 The Masonic Chain by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva

76 Lodge France 1° Chain Of Union Ritual

the brethren to join him around the altar, the SD and the new E.A. come forward, but remain several feet back from the circle.

The brothers should gather around and stand in a circle with their gloves on and not yet joining hands. An opening should be left near the northeast part of the circle where the SD and the new E.A. should be.

SW: WM, the Chain will not close.

WM: Bro. SW, what is amiss?

SW: WM, our new Brother cannot join the Chain of Union without our assistance. As it is every Brother's care and duty to aid our E.A., may we help him now to enter this solemn symbol of the unity of our Craft?

WM: You may, but before you do, I wish to ask him one last question. (SD walks new EA to the Chain and holds him in place without joining the Chain. WM turns to EA). You have met many men in your life and perhaps you have enemies. If you should find any in this Lodge, or amongst other Freemasons, would you be willing to extend the hand of friendship and forget the past?

EA: I would.

WM: We note your promise and will remind you of it if necessary. But remember that it is not always before you that your worst enemies are to be found. Turn and look behind you!

The EA is turned around by the SD, and sees himself in a mirror being held up by another brother.⁷⁷

It is with OPEN ARMS that the Brethren greet each other and, in a moment will greet you Brother Initiate.

You will observe that the arms of each Brother extends across the breast of his neighbour, this is symbolic of the protection Brother gives to Brother against the attacks of the Insidious should there be need.

Note also that each Brother clasps the hand - not of his immediate neighbour but of a Brother further down the Chain - symbolising the far reaching nature of Masonic Charity and help.

This Chain, when properly formed is symbolic of our Order. It is a double chain, has double strength, and a double meaning.

It shows the manner in which you are received into Freemasonry, into this Lodge, and into the hearts of every Brother in this Masonic Circle.

Being a double Chain with double strength, if a Brother is called away by the Great Architect of the Universe so that a link is broken (*Brother on right of the W.M. leaves the chain*) - the Chain remains strong and unbroken - but a weakness remains until a new link is forged - YOU Brother Initiate are that link. (*Initiate enters the chain where the gap exists*) (*The Brother who previously left the chain joins in another position.*)

May you remain strong and firm until YOU in turn receive your Summons to the Grand Lodge Above ... A Summons Brethren which will come to us all - and a Summons which we must all obey.

Bro Initiate - with your left hand you grasp the hand of the I.P.M., across the breast of the W.M.

⁷⁷ Templum Fidelis Lodge 746. Canada's First Observant Masonic Lodge - Templum Fidelis Chain of Union

The I.P.M. represents the past, the W.M. represents the present, and you Brother Initiate represent the future. Thus, the past looks through the present to the future for the continuance of our order and it's work.

From time to time all chains are tested. They are tested beyond the strain which they may be required to endure, so is our Masonic Chain tested.

This is shown by a gentle swaying of the Brethren, showing the strength of our Brotherhood.

EA's SONG - FULL VERSION except last verse then (Break to form Chain)
 Then join hand in hand - by each brother fair stand
 Let's be merry and put a bright face on;
 What mortal can boast so noble a toast,
 as **"A Free and an Accepted Mason"**⁷⁸

Upon entering the chain of union, the new brother intuitively discovers a message of universal fraternity.

When all the brothers shake hands, around the symbols of the drawing box; ideally forming a circle symbol of unity, something special happens.

When the hands are shaken, the beings melt. The contact of the tip of the fingers (energy seeds) of the left hand, on the palm of the hand (energy receiver) right, and vice versa, allows to transmit energy and generate a kind of fluid that spills into the chain achieving harmonization among the participants.

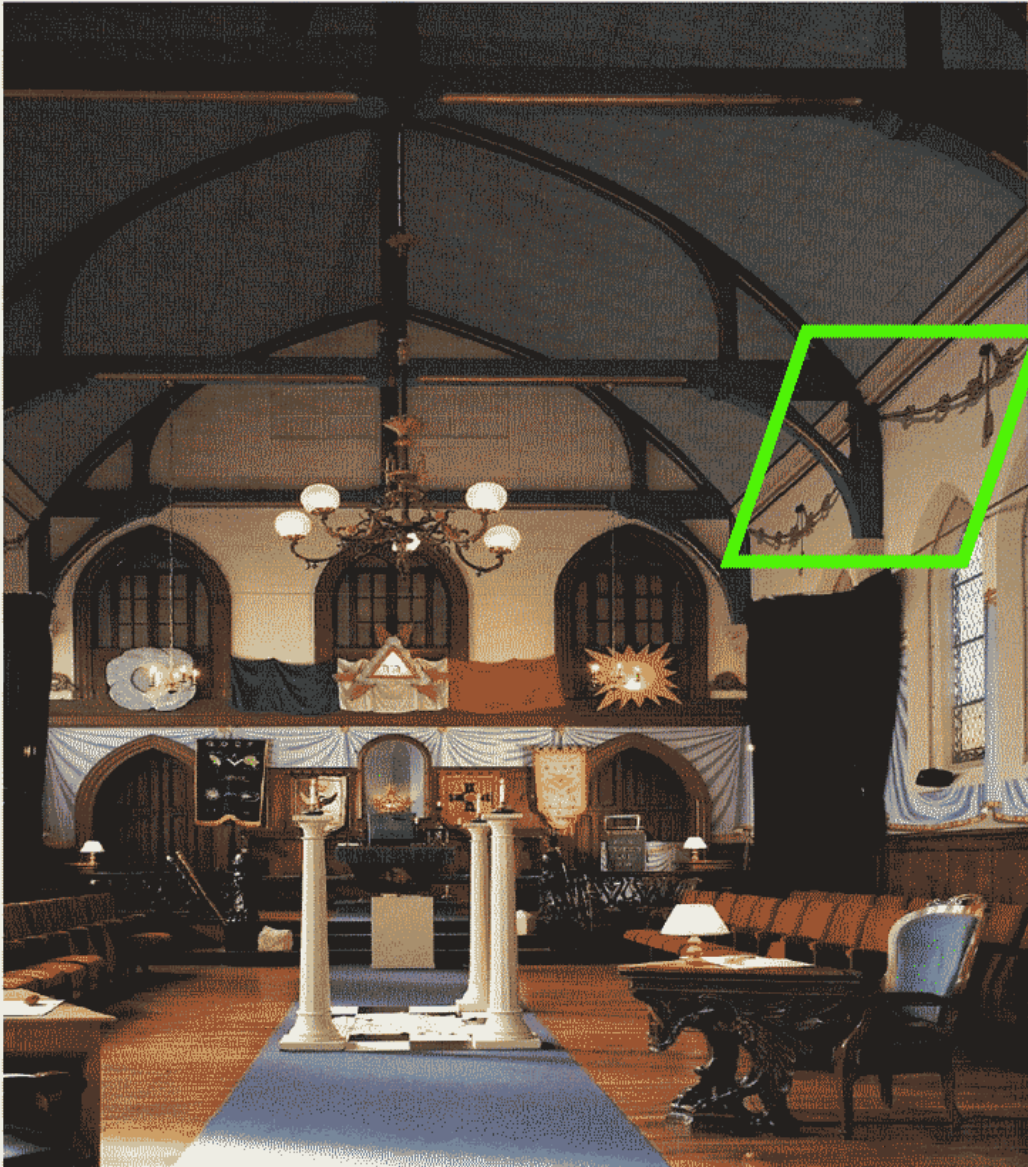
The union chain is also symbolizing the initiatory chain of Masonic tradition (and by analogy of all traditions) whose origin is immemorial as is also the message that she has been conveying over time.⁷⁹

The Chain of Union is actually a rope, which, circumvests the inner walls of the Masonic Temple in its upper part. Its "elevated location" gives it a celestial connotation, confirmed by the twelve knots that appear at intervals all along said rope, and, which, symbolize the twelve signs of the zodiac. These knots also correspond to the twelve columns that, except in the East side, surround the Inner Sanctum of our Temples in its entirety. Five of these columns are situated in the North, the other five in the South, and the remaining two, "Jachin" and "Boaz", in the West.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *The Masonic Chain* by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region, Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva.

⁷⁹ *The Cadena De Union* (Chain Of Union) by José María Villa, Publicaciones Masicas Friday, 13 January, 2017

⁸⁰ *The Chain of Union - Another Omitted Essential Part Of Our Ritual* by: Carlos Antonio Martinez, Jr.



Demophiles Lodge in Tours, France

Religious garments.

This rite of investiture, or the placing upon the aspirant some garment, as an indication of his appropriate preparation for the ceremonies in which he was about to engage, prevailed in all the ancient initiations. A few of them only it will be requisite to consider.

Thus in the Levitical economy of the Israelites the priests always wore the abnet, or linen apron, or girdle, as a part of the investiture of the priesthood. This, with the other garments, was to be worn, as the text expresses it, “for glory and for beauty,” or, as it has been explained by a learned commentator, “as emblematical of that holiness and purity which ever characterize the divine nature, and the worship which is worthy of him.”

In the Persian Mysteries of Mithras, the candidate, having first received light, was invested with a girdle, a crown or mitre, a purple tunic, and, lastly, a white apron.

In the initiations practised in Hindostan, in the ceremony of investiture was substituted the sash, or sacred zennaar, consisting of a cord, composed of nine threads twisted into a knot at

the end, and hanging from the left shoulder to the right hip. This was, perhaps, the type of the masonic scarf, which is, or ought to be, always worn in the same position.⁸¹

Biblical References

Num 15:38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them *fringes in the borders of their garments* throughout their generations, and that they put upon the *fringe of the borders a ribband of blue*:

Num 15:39 And it shall be unto you for *a fringe*, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring.

The Bible does not command wearing of a unique prayer shawl or tallit. Instead, it presumes that people wore a garment of some type to cover themselves and instructs the Children of Israel to attach fringes (*תצטית tzitzit*) to the corners of these (Numbers 15:38), repeating the commandment in terms that they should “make thee twisted cords upon the four corners of thy covering, wherewith thou coverest thyself” (Deuteronomy 22:12). These passages do not specify tying particular types or numbers of knots in the fringes. The exact customs regarding the tying of the tzitzit and the format of the tallit are of post-biblical, rabbinic origin and, though the Talmud discusses these matters. However the Bible is specific as to the purpose of these tzitzit, stating that “it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye go not about after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go astray; that ye may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy unto your God”.⁸²

Jewish



A white *tallit* according to some Sephardic traditions.

⁸¹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

⁸² Christianity And Fringed Garments https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_fringed_garments
Christianity and fringed garments



A *tallit* with black stripes according to the orthodox Ashkenazic tradition.

A **tallit** is a fringed garment worn as a prayer shawl by religious Jews. The tallit has special twined and knotted fringes known as *tzitzit* attached to its four corners.

The literal commandment in the Bible was not to wear a tallit but to attach tzitzit to the corners of one's four-cornered garments every day to serve as a reminder of G-d commandments.⁸³

Tallit katan



An Orthodox Jewish man wearing a wool tallit katan under his vest/waistcoat

⁸³ Tallit <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallit#searchInput>

While all four cornered garments are required to have *tzitzit*, the custom of specially wearing a *tallit katan* is based on a verse in Numbers 15:38-39 which tells Moses to exhort the Children of Israel to “make them throughout their generations fringes in the corners of their garments.”^[29] Wearing a *tallit kattan* is not mandated in Biblical law, but in Rabbinic law the practice is strongly encouraged for men, and often considered obligatory or a binding custom.^{[26][30][31]}



Tzitzis

Tzitzit (Hebrew: תצִיִּצִית [tsi'tsit]; plural תצִיִּצִיִּת Ashkenazi: *tzitzis*; and Samaritan: *şeşet*) are specially knotted ritual fringes, or tassels, worn in antiquity by Israelites and today by observant Jews and Samaritans. *Tzitzit* are usually attached to the four corners of the *tallit gadol* (prayer shawl), usually referred to simply as a *tallit* or *tallis*; and *tallit katan* (everyday undergarment).

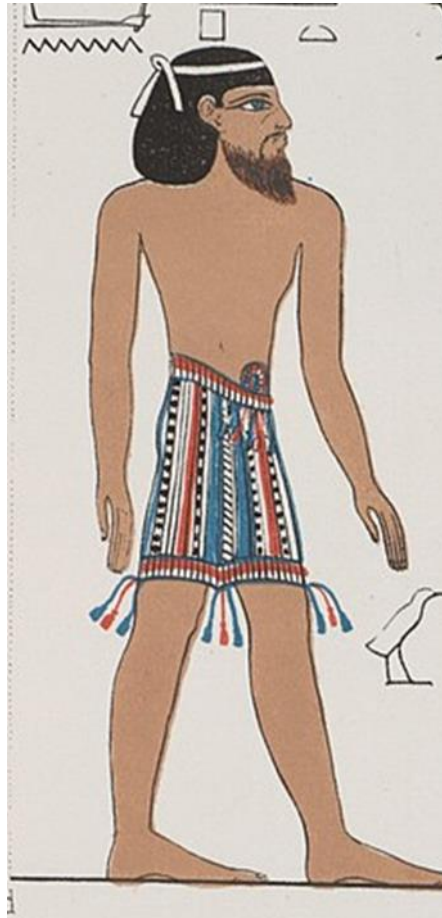
The further analyses of the antique iconography suggest that apart from this pragmatic purpose the tassels could also decorate the cloth and as such be a marker of the social status: the more elaborate and elegant the fringes, the higher the position of the owner. In addition to this and given the unique nature of each of the tassels it could also be used as a personal “signet” for sealing documents.^[4] This data has led the scholars to assume that the practice itself is of very ancient origins and evolved into Jewish ritual clothing where it was invested with religious meaning.^[5]

The *tallit* and *tallit katan* are four-cornered garments worn by practicing Jews which incorporate *tzitzit*. The *tallit katan* garment itself is commonly referred to as *tzitzit*. The blue thread mentioned in the Torah, *tekhelet*, is omitted by most Rabbinic Jews due to controversy over the dye-making process.

Threads and knots



The all-white *tzitzit* is Ashkenazi. The blue and white *tzitzit* is knotted in the Sephardi style.⁸⁴



Asiatic (Levantine) man with fringed garment similar to tzitzit (from tomb of Seti I, 13th century BCE)

Christian

The habits of Catholic religious orders are full of deep and rich symbolism, with each detail manifesting their particular charism. The same is true for the habits worn by the Franciscans. Our habit consists of a simple brown hooded robe, similar to the one worn by Saint Francis himself, and a corded rope cincture, or corded rope belt, worn around the waist.

The rope worn as a belt around the waist symbolises being girded with Christ and is tied in the three characteristic Franciscan knots that signify the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience taken upon becoming a member of the community. Each knot has five coils to remind us of the five wounds of Christ.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Note the difference between the 7-8-11-13 scheme and uninterrupted windings (between the knots) on the Ashkenazi, vs. the 10-5-6-5 scheme and ridged winding on the Sephardi tzitzit
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzitzit>

⁸⁵ Franciscans Knots <https://franciscanmissionaries.com/meaning-corded-belts/>



While much of traditional Christianity has not considered Torah commands such as tzitzit applicable to Christians, there are Torah-submissive Christians who wear tzitzit.

However, because of practicality and convenience, traditionally Jewish tzitziot and tallits are often used.

Liturgical use

In Christian liturgy, the stole and other vestments worn by priests and bishops traditionally have fringes on the edge, in remembrance of the Old Testament prescriptions.

In the Eastern Orthodox Church, when the priest or bishop puts on his stole he reads a prayer taken from the Psalms of Degrees: “Blessed is God Who poureth out His grace upon His priests, like unto the precious ointment on the head, which runneth down upon the beard, even the beard of Aaron, which runneth down upon the fringe of his raiment.” (Cf. Psalm 133)⁸⁶

Tassels

Some examples showing diversity

⁸⁶ Christianity And Fringed Garments https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_fringed_garments
Christianity and fringed garments



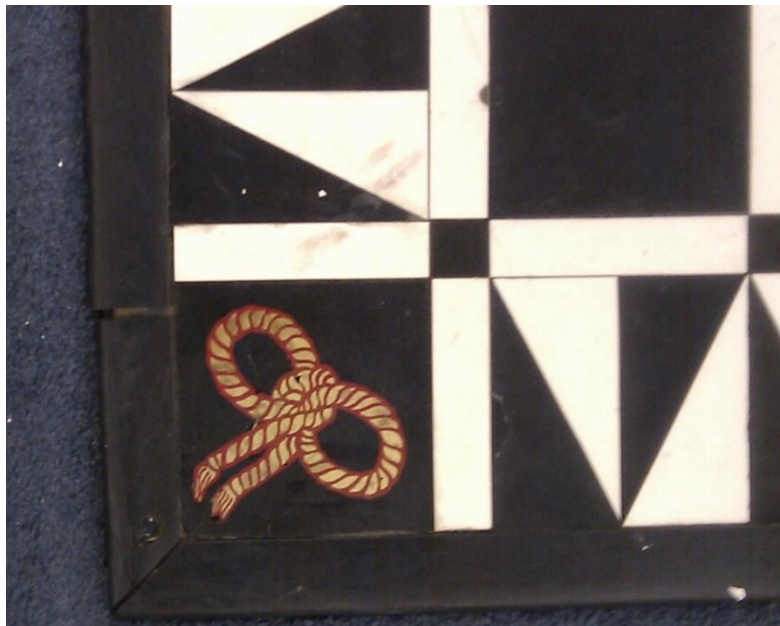
Tassel in Lodge room corner, Dunedin, New Zealand



Tassel on floor, Dunedin, New Zealand.



Tassel on floor Queanbeyan, New South Wales, Australia



Like many other old and interesting customs, these tassels seem to have disappeared, and we are left with a symbolic representation of the four ends of the rope in the corners of our lodge carpet.

There is, however, in these old tracing-boards another border, which surrounds the entire picture with lines, as in the following figure:



This indented border, which was made to represent a cord of black and white threads, was, I think, in time mistaken for *tessellæ*, or little stones; an error probably originating in

confounding it with the tessellated pavement, which was another one of the ornaments of the Lodge.⁸⁷

Further Possible Esoteric interpretations

Circle – Chains

In order to better understand the importance of the “cosmic plane”, mentioned by J.E. Cirlot, in the economy of chain symbolism, we must add some explanations about the Golden Chain, as presented by Algis Uždavinys: “In the Athenian school of Syrianus and Proclus, the Homeric image of the Golden Chain (*seire chruseie*, Iliad VIII.18), stretching from Heaven to Earth, was used to describe both the unbroken vertical connection with the first principles (noetic sources of the demiurgic descent, as well as paradigms of the revealed wisdom), and the horizontal, or historical, succession of the qualified masters and interpreters – a succession which was not always based exclusively on direct physical relations. In fact, the Golden Chain is the same as the Hermaic Chain [*Hermaike seira*, meaning irradiations from the divine Intellect, a chain of great initiates and philosophers and of the great truths revealed through them.] This chain was both the chain of theophany, manifestation, or descent (demiourgike seira), and the ladder of ascent. This imagery of the Golden Chain was inseparable from the metaphysics of light and solar symbolism. Socrates also regarded the Homeric Golden Rope as referring to the Sun”.⁸⁸

It is only by accepting the chain of a discipline that someone may become an adept and may obtain the spiritual liberation.

Initially, Homer recorded in his *Iliad* the image of a golden chain that suspends the Earth from Heaven. That was a very sacred image, because it was both an axis mundi, uniting the upper and lower realms of Creation; and a divine commitment, bonding the Earth to the Heaven, thus allowing the communication between these two, keeping the Earth in direct relation with the celestial worlds. As we have already seen, Socrates, in a very plastic manner, pointed to the Sun as a golden chain, because its light and energy, emanated from the sky, envelop the Earth. But later on, Neo-Platonic philosophers saw the golden chain not only as an *axis mundi* (line or stem through the earth’s center connecting its surface to the underworld and the heavens and around which the universe revolves) or an umbilical cord, but as a succession of mails arranged as a chain, each mail being another emanation descending from the Supreme Principle to the lowest reality. On the other hand, in Pythagorean environments the idea of a golden chain of initiates emerged: a line of highly evolved beings reincarnated through space and time.

These hermeneutical extensions of the old *catena aurea* (Latin for “golden chain”) were reinterpreted by great Christian medieval thinkers, such as Thomas D’Aquino, who have elaborated the actual symbolism of the chain of union: a powerful link uniting brothers beyond any boundaries of space or time, certifying the correct and complete communication of a tradition and assuring the unity through multiplicity. Thomas D’Aquino has edited a book named *Catena Aurea*, a very interesting kind of Christian Talmud, the philosophy of which covers the complete actual symbolism of the chain of union.⁸⁹

Thanks to The Union Chain that decorates the lodge the Masonic order acquires its full meaning, as it constitutes a sign of identity. Symbolically we could consider the chain as separating and protecting the “world of light” from the “world of darkness, the sacredness from the profane.

⁸⁷ *The Chain of Union* by Carlos Antonio Martinez

⁸⁸ Algis Uždavinys – *The Golden Chain: An Anthology of Pythagorean and Platonic Philosophy*, World Wisdom Inc., Bloomington, Indiana, 2004, p. xxi (from Introduction).

⁸⁹ Chain of Union - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

It represents the alliance that must exist among all its members to work within the framework of unity, despite differences of opinion. Everyone gives what he brought and withdraws what he needs, in communion with others.⁹⁰

“The Laced Fringe” sends us directly to “The Laced Frame” in zigzag, formed by equilateral triangles alternating black and white on the floor of the temple. “If the triangles in the exterior rows should be white to show how all unknown that surrounds us is able to enlighten us the black triangles express the effort of the initiated to understand the unknown. The orientation towards outside of the white triangles, pointing outwards suggests offensive of the human intellect against (to penetrate) the mystery.”

The fringe has nodes, the frame has triangles. The Chain is made of all of us! This chain symbolizes the universality of Masonry.

Of all the rituals, “The Chain of Union” is perhaps the most important from the perspective of the occult and symbolic, its secret being that, as Guaita Stanislav says, “it creates a fixed point on which to lean, it concentrates the mental energy and from this point chosen as the center it makes the astral light to shine upon the world enhanced strengthened by a will clearly defined and formulated for the Masons it becomes a shield and means to capture beneficial influences”.⁹¹

From a metaphysical point of view, the Masonic Chain of Union comes to signify exactly the same as “the chain of the worlds”: conforming to the Universal Manifestation, and coexists joined by the “Thread of Atma” (Sutratma), or, in simpler terms, through their “Breath” or “Vivifier Spirit”.

Hence the use of the expression “Bonds of Brotherly Love and Affection” when referring ourselves to the knots along the rope of the Chain of Union.⁹²

Another aspect of the Chain itself to the interaction between the ‘thick’ and the ‘subtle’. From physics we know that each geometric solid figure causes waves which vary according to the form of the figure. These waves are known as form-waves, or shape-waves, which can be measured according to their vibratory frequency.

The Egyptians knew of this phenomenon, and used it to protect the Kings’ chambers by emitting waves which are vibrating in the electrical phase, harmful for living entities for example the “curse of Tutankhamen”. To the contrary, churches and pyramids emit waves, which vibrate in the magnetic phase, so they are favourable for men. In ancient times, Freemasons were aware of this and therefore they protected their constructions through the cornerstone, which has a trapezoidal shape.⁹³

The symbolic Board teaches that God is the warp and woof of existence, enclosing and impinging upon us at all points of our being.

A rope or cable runs round the indented border breaking into diffused tassels at the four corners.

90 The Cadena De Union by José María Villa, Publicaciones Masicas Friday, January 13, 2017

91 *The chain of union* (the union chain) by Bro. Mircea C. S. Grand National Lodge of Romania
<https://sirijus.rs/26-6-the-chain-of-union-the-union-chain/>.

92 *Another Omitted Essential Part Of Our Ritual “The Chain Of Union”* by Carlos Antonio Martinez, Jr

93 *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo, P.M.

QSA Members Forum Lemmi Lodge No. 400. Grande Oriente d’Italia
<https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

Signifies the current of divine Energy circulating hidden through the Universe and becoming differentiated into four subsidiary modes”:

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.” (Genesis, 2-10).⁹⁴

The level of the energy field that is created by the crossing arms of the Masons is more powerful as each link is active.⁹⁵

The Chain testifies in a tangible way to the invisible tie that joins all the members of a lodge, and truly, in a more general way, to all Freemasons withersoever dispersed.⁹⁶

The chain of union is, in fact, the light. The light links everything in our cosmos and links our cosmos to God. In that manner, what started with the cable tow of bondage ends into the glory of light.⁹⁷

According to several rabbinic sages, blue is the color of God’s Glory.⁹⁸

Tassells

The four tassels that surround the tracing board refer to the four major points which are Pedal, Pectoral, Guttural and Manual. These points signify the four cardinal values of Justice, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance.⁹⁹

The tassel in the corner on the Master’s right hand side should represent justice and that on his left hand side should represent temperance. The reason for this is that, when ruling in his lodge and managing his work force, the Master should rule with justice that nevertheless must be tempered with mercy, so as to ensure that not only will the client obtain the service he is paying for, but also that his workmen will receive their just dues. The tassel in the corner on the Superintendent of Work’s right hand side should represent prudence and that on his left hand side should represent justice. Like his Master, whom he represents, the Superintendent of Work must be prudent in the use of his work force and the materials, so that the Master is properly served; but he must also ensure the men are treated with justice so that they receive the dues to which they are entitled.

The two Wardens are the officers who exercise direct control over the workmen, under the immediate supervision of the Superintendent of Work. The tassel in the corner on the right hand side of the Senior Warden should represent fortitude and that on his left hand side should represent prudence. The reason for this is that, as the officer who exercises direct control over the workmen while they are at labour, he is responsible for overcoming the many difficulties that inevitably will beset the work, which will require the utmost fortitude on his part. At the same time he must exercise his control over the men’s employment and the use of materials with the utmost prudence, to protect the men’s welfare whilst at the same time ensuring that the workmanship cannot be faulted. The Junior Warden, whose duty it is to assist the Senior Warden, is the officer primarily responsible for the men’s welfare especially when they are at rest and refreshment. The tassel in the corner on right hand side of the Junior Warden should

94 *The Tassels* by Bharat from Sapere Aude 329

95 *The chain of union* (the union chain) by Bro. Mircea C. S. Grand National Lodge of Romania

<https://sirijus.rs/26-6-the-chain-of-union-the-union-chain/>.

96 *The Masonic Mosaic Pavement*. <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

97 *Chain of Union* - Radu Comănescu & Vladimir <https://www.isel-europe.org/chain-of-union-romania>

98 Tzitzit <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tzitzit>

99 *The Masonic Mosaic Pavement* <https://bricksmasons.com/blogs/masonic-education/the-masonic-mosaic-pavement>

represent temperance, in allusion to the manner in which refreshment should always be conducted. The tassel on the Junior Warden's left hand side should represent fortitude, because he is supposed to personify Hiram Abif whose fortitude should always be emulated by every freemason.¹⁰⁰

Arm positions

Arms by sides

The Order of the Eastern Star have a ceremony called The Golden Chain. A circle is formed each holding the left hand of the member on their right with the right hand and the right hand of the member on their left with their left. When the candidate has been admitted the statement is "The golden chain is thus lengthened". At the closing of this ceremony all move their hands forward and the words "each link shall fall away in death, may the parting be temporary and the meeting eternal", are said and the hands are slowly released and [lace in the Sign of Salutation].¹⁰¹

Arms Crossed

Called by many "Short Chain"



La Chaîne d'Union - Grande Loge Nationale Roumaine 1880.

Each Brother crosses his right arm on the left to form a symbolic Saint Andrew's cross, joining hands to those of his neighbour from both sides, his right-hand grips the another's left: the former 'covers' and the latter 'supports'. In the Far-East tradition the right side matches to the *yang*, or the masculine element, it being 'the way of Heaven', while the left one is that of *yin*, feminine, representing the Earth: 'Heaven covers and Earth holds'.

Each Brother unites his own heels so to form a square and opens his toes, in order to let them contact the ones of his neighbours. The chin rests on the chest, eyes closed and everybody concentrates on "the Worshipful Master's intent", even if it remains unspoken. The Brethren are silent and meditative. After some time the Worshipful Master shakes his arms three times and so do all the Brethren and thereafter release their hands and "break" the Chain.¹⁰²

Composed of arms crossed the chain acquires a certain solidity and brings the brothers closer to each other. The physical link becomes more important, it is established not only by the hands but also by the shoulders and arms, the right arm is positioned above the left arm. The right hand is naturally placed near the heart. It is oriented palm down and evokes giving. The left hand palm towards the sky forms with the fingers a cup, ready to receive. In the chain

¹⁰⁰ *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

¹⁰¹ Australian Order of the Eastern Star ritual.

¹⁰² *The Chain of Union* by Bro. Giovanni Lombardo, P.M. Lemmi Lodge No. 400. Grande Oriente d'Italia.
<https://www.freemasonryresearchforumqsa.com/chain-of-union.php>

of union each Mason, in the same movement, gives and receives, he takes what his brother on the right offers him and transmits it in turn to his brother on the left. It is a real circulation of energy that is then created.¹⁰³

Arms Extended; called by many the “Long or Open Chain”

Brethren form the chain by spreading their arms “**Right over Left**” and grasp hands.

The arms of the Brethren reach beyond their immediate neighbour symbolising the far reaching nature of Masonic help. Each Brother’s arms cross the breasts of the brother on either side of him, symbolically protecting his brother from attacks whenever the needed. This Chain is symbolic of our Order. It is a double chain, therefore it is doubly strong and has a double meaning.

A short verse summarises very aptly the whole meaning of this Masonic chain:

“On the strength of one link in the cable
Dependeth the might of the chain -
Who knowest when thou may be tested
So live that thou bearest the strain”¹⁰⁴

NOTE: This method is used at the closing of an 18° meeting of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for Australia.

Waist and Shoulder

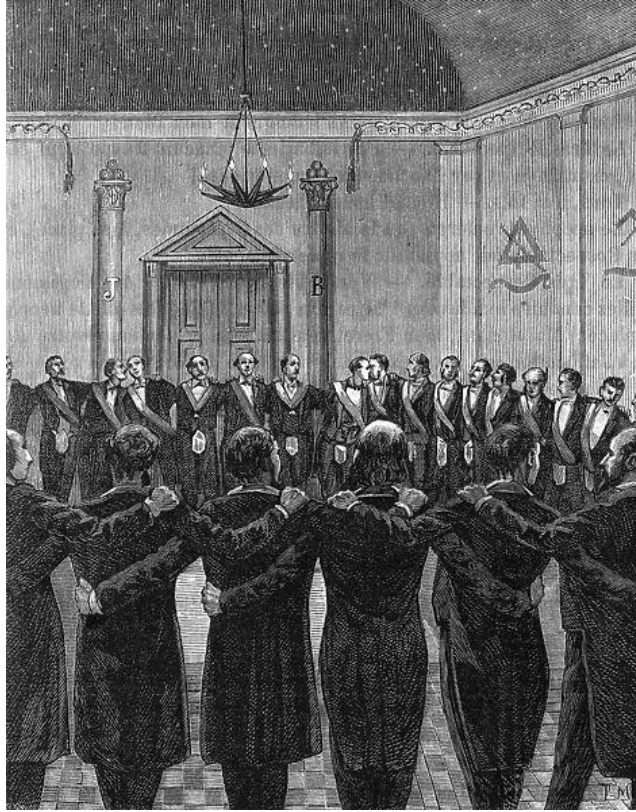
Members of a lodge link together to form a chain of union. One arm is placed on a neighbour’s waist whilst the hand is left free to tap the other neighbour three times on the shoulder. At the same time a triple brotherly kiss and the word of the week is given to a neighbour which is then passed on to the next neighbour along starting from the chairman the tap kiss and word is passed both ways around the group reaching the master of ceremonies at the same time whereupon the word is shouted aloud to the group. - 1890s.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ *La houppie dentellée et la chaîne d’union* (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppie-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>

¹⁰⁴ *The Masonic Chain* <http://46.32.240.45/broomwood6060.co.uk/>

¹⁰⁵ *The Chain Of Union* <https://www.mediastorehouse.com/p/164/chain-union-7193355.jpg>



A Chain of Union c 1890s: Note the cord and tassels at architrave.

Grips

The left hand is held open with the palm up (toward heaven) and the right hand is held open with the palm down (toward the earth) thus symbolising that “the right gives and the left receives”. It is also important that every Brother has their feet formed in a square and their eyes turned towards the centre of the Lodge.¹⁰⁶

In the case of forming the short Chain of Union, the masons cross their arms to distinguish themselves from the profane world, from its “horas” where participants circle round with their arms side by side. The superiority of the right hand over the left hand, of the active hand over the passive one, of the Hammer-holding hand over the Chisel-holding hand is demonstrated. The short Chain of Union is usually formed at the closing of Masonic works in the Temple, and in both cases, before releasing their hands, the Brethren raise and drop their arms in unison three times.¹⁰⁷

The left hand is held open with the palm up (toward heaven (receiving)) and the right hand is held open with the palm down (toward the earth (giving)).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Zetland 1°

¹⁰⁷ The Masonic Chain by Gabriel Vasile Oltean Expert Inspector of NGLR for Western Region
Past Worshipful Master, Zamolxis Lodge, no. 182, Deva

¹⁰⁸ Lodge France 1° 1012 ritual rubric for Chain of Union.



Image from *The Union Chain* by Oswald Wirth¹⁰⁹

Number of Knots

12

According to many authors, including Oswald Wirth, the number of knots finds a correspondence in the twelve signs of the Zodiac (The Book of the Apprentice p 178). It can also refer to the twelve symbolic hours of our work (from noon to midnight), to the twelve months of the year, to the twelve edges of a cubic stone.¹¹⁰

Possible Origin

Striking the centre

In medieval times the Master Mason, or architect, commenced his work by “striking the centre” having then determined the required orientation of the building and set it out on the ground, the four corners, the accuracy of the rectangle was checked by comparing the measurements of the two ends and the measurements of the two sides. With the four corner marks established, distinctively marked perpendicular stakes were set up near them, drawing attention to their location and protecting them from inadvertent damage. Suspended coloured cords or streamers distinguished the marker stakes. As the walls rose a piece of wood was extended from the corner inwards, and a plumb line dropped down to make sure that the walls were perpendicular and the angle was true on its upper parts as at the base.

These corner plumb lines persisted on the wall into the middle of the 19th century in Speculative Masonry not merely woven tassels on the carpet, but as actual tassels hanging in the four corners of the lodge room.

M.W. Bro. Raymond S.J. Daniels writings are similar to Ward’s with a similar conclusion:

“The tassels suspended from the four corners of the lodge represent the corner plumb-lines used by our Operative brethren to try and adjust all verticals.”¹¹¹¹¹²¹¹³

The Four Tassels

¹⁰⁹ Article published in the magazine “Le Symbolisme”(October 1912).

¹¹⁰ La houppie dentellée et la chaîne d’union (The serrated puff and the chain of union)

<https://www.ecossaisdesaintjean.org/article-la-houppie-dentellee-et-la-chaine-d-union-101549332.html>

¹¹¹ *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

¹¹² *Origin Of The Four Tassels* article researched by Martin P.S. Haywood. *The Queensland Freemason*, February 2008

¹¹³ *The Four Tassels In The Canadian Ritual* by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern Grand Historian Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

We are told the four tassels represent the four cardinal virtues, but was probably attributed in the late 18th century. There seems no particular reason why they should represent the four cardinal virtues any more than the four elements or any other particular four.

In modern speculative lodges those *four tassels*, respectively representing temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice in that sequence, should commence in the southeast corner, which is on the Worshipful Master's left hand side, then proceed clockwise around the lodge room.

In modern times the four cardinal virtues:

- temperance suggests moderation or even abstinence
- fortitude implies courage in endurance
- prudence conveys an impression of cautious self-interest
- justice implies the awarding of what is due

Mackey further describes the four tassels as being part of the English and French Tracing Boards of the first degree – not the lodge room – and that the four tassels refer to “the four principal points, the Guttural, Pectoral, Manual, and Pedal, and through them to the four cardinal virtues”.

The classical Greek philosophers emphasized that the four cardinal virtues are those on which all other virtues rest. One cannot be ethical or moral until one practices all four cardinal virtues. All four cardinal virtues are of equal importance; just as the four tassels in the lodge room are to be the same.¹¹⁴¹¹⁵¹¹⁶

Finally



Seven masons from the Nazi concentration camp Hut Emslandlager VII
Sculpture by Jean de Salle.

114 *The Operative Origins of the Four Tassels* by Falconer (<http://www.freemasons-freemasonry.com/don13.html>)

115 *Origin Of The Four Tassels*, article researched by Martin. P.S. Haywood in *The Queensland Freemason*, February 2008 issue.

116 *The Four Tassels In The Canadian Ritual* by V.W. Bro. Marshall Kern, Grand Historian, Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

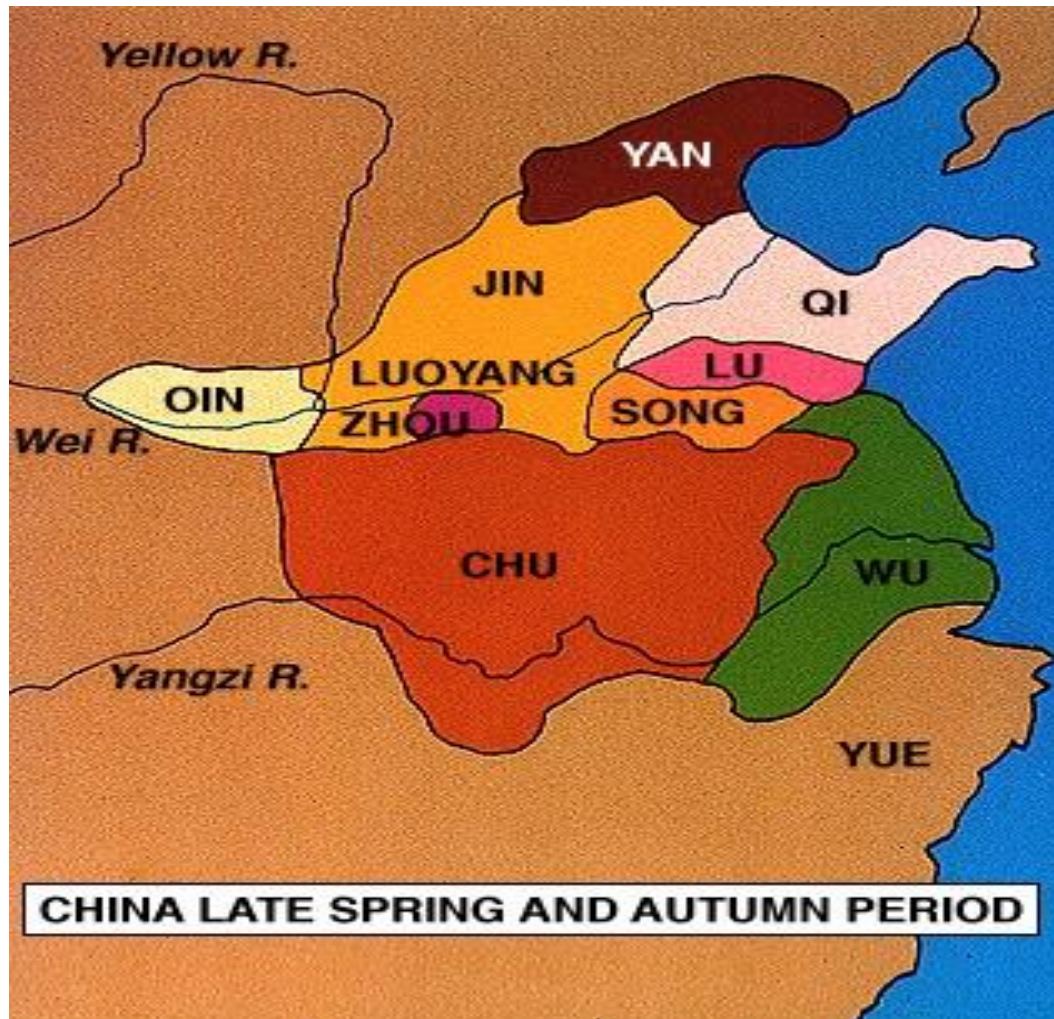


MAÇON SPÉCULATIF S'EFFORÇANT DE RECONSTITUER UN
LAC D'AMOUR INTEROBÉDIENTIEL SUIVANT UN ANCIEN TEXTE .

A speculative Mason striving to reconstruct a Lake of Love according to an ancient text.

CONFUCIUS PHILOSOPHY AND MASONIC IDEALS – UNIVERSAL VALUES? RONALD PAUL NG

Confucius (551 – 479 BCE) lived during the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history. It was a time when China was not a united country, but was divided into various kingdoms. It was a time of wars, chaos and unrest. Confucius was born in the Kingdom of Lu 魯, in the city of Qufu 曲阜.



In this chaotic and turbulent period, the rulers of the various kingdoms needed wise men to help them rule and survive, and Confucius spent the large parts of his life teaching and acting as administrators in various kingdoms.

There is a great emphasis on *harmony* (和) in Chinese philosophy, even before Confucius time.

In the Shi Jing (詩經), that section known as Xiao Ya (小雅), this is what it says of harmony:

Enjoying fine dishes and wines with all your brothers,

There are harmony and joy like playful children.

Enjoying the union with wife and children,

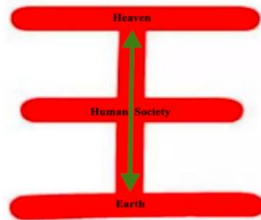
It is like the mingling of drums and strings.

With brothers in concord there are profound harmony and joy. (Li, 2008)

Thus from the importance of keeping harmony in society, flows many of the concepts in Confucianism.

Take this character for King:

Uniting human society with heaven
and earth



The traditional interpretation is that the three horizontal strokes represent Heaven, Man and Earth. The vertical stroke is the king, the one who connects them together. (Wang 2019). His duties are not just to rule the kingdom, but to preserve the harmony of the kingdom by ensuring heaven, earth and human society all act in harmony with each other.

During the Shang Dynasty, which preceded Confucius, the practice of ancestors worship in Chinese culture was already well established. “The ancestor worship cult is still an important part of the belief system of the Chinese people. It is based on the belief of reciprocity between the living and the dead. The living needs to sustain their ancestors as the ancestors were able to influence the gods to bring them good fortune.” (British Museum – Ancient China).

Any form of worship requires rituals or Li (禮). The word Li (禮) also means manners or proper behavior. Confucian philosophy emphasises the ethical transformation of the concept of Li from that of being the proper way to behave in ritual ceremonies to that of proper conduct in general. It also requires that the performance of rituals must not only be done in the right way, but must be done with the proper attitude and understanding. There is no place for a simple performance of the rituals by just parroting the words and gestures. Thus the original concept of the importance of rituals was expanded in Confucian philosophy into correct behavior. In a similar manner ancestor worships of old was expanded into filial piety, Xiao 孝.

A very important concept in Confucian ideas is that of Junzi (君子). The first character, 君, means ruler, and the second, 子, means son. So originally, Junzi means son(s) of a ruler or noble lord (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2008). In Confucian philosophy, only a man who is a Junzi, who is in harmony with the Dao (道) is fit to rule and lead. This obviously leads to the question of what or who is a Junzi, and following that, the expansion of that concept to describe anyone who fits those criteria. With that, the term is no longer a title to be inherited, but is used to describe individuals who have the qualities of a Junzi.

The word Junzi has variously been translated into English as “Gentleman”, “Superior Man”, “Exemplary Person”, ‘Noble Man”, and “Perfected Person”. All of them carry connotations beyond what Confucius has meant that term to be. For that reason, I shall not use any of the English translations, but continue to use the word Junzi.

What or who is a Junzi? A Junzi is someone who practices Li, “*In the practice of li, Harmony is the key.*” (Analects 1:12). Here again, one sees the importance of Harmony. He also said, “If one is straight forward without Li, one causes affront” (Analects 8:2). For Confucius, the ideal society should be guided by Li, because a good society cannot rely on laws and punishments alone. “Guide them with policies and align them with punishments, and the people will evade them and have no shame. Guide them with virtue and align them with Li, and the people will have a sense of shame and fulfil their roles.” (Analects 2:3). Think of the way how many people game the system without due thoughts for the immorality lying behind their actions. Think of leaders of society who do not understand the concept of “Noblesse Oblige”. If Li is properly taught, it is not only regulative, in that it tells us what we should not do, it is constitutive, in that it makes us do what is proper without even thinking about it. It sets boundaries beyond which we cannot cross, and therefore do not err.



Compasses 圓規
Carpenter's Square 矩
規矩 to behave properly, within the bounds of rectitude

A Junzi must not only understand and act according to Li, he must also have Ren 仁, “If a man is not Ren, what can he do with Li?” (Analects 3:3). What is Ren? It has been defined as “benevolence”, “goodness”, and “humaneness” (Matt Stefon, 2019) Further, in Analects 15.9, he says, a Junzi “does not seek to live on at the expense of Ren, and there are times when he will sacrifice his life to complete Ren”. Closely related to this is that famous Silver Rule: “What you yourself do not desire – do not impose on (or do to) others.” (Analects 12:2), and compare this with the Golden Rule from Matthew 7:12, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Ren also requires this of the Junzi, “He perfects what is beautiful in people, he does not perfect what is ugly. The small man does just the opposite.” (Analects 12:16) This means that a Junzi brings out what is good in another person, and does not bring out the bad qualities in other people.

It is central to Confucian philosophy that **Li without Ren, is incomplete.** (Analects 3.3). What does that imply? Ren is the outward expression of a genuine feeling and affection from the heart. It is not a matter of just being “nice”. The specific expression of Li need not be rigidly followed as long as it conforms with Ren, and is not an artificial or contrived expression.

What are other additional qualities that a Junzi should have, beside Ren and Li? Yi (righteousness 義), Zhi (Wisdom 智) Shin (Trustworthy 信), Xiao (Filial Piety 孝) and Zhong (Loyalty 忠)

Yi (義) has been variously translated as rightness or what is morally correct. “The Junzi comprehends according to [what is] right, the small man comprehends according to profit.” (Analects 4:16). Just as important, “The Junzi’s stance towards the world is this; there is

nothing he insists on, nothing he refuses, he simply aligns himself beside right.” (Analects 4:10) In other words, he is not dogmatic. Is Yi an abstract universal moral principle? Is it akin to Kant’s categorical imperative or to Bentham’s utilitarianism? Though Yi implies one has to do things according to the right way, it has to be the right thing as well, but as said, Yi is not dogmatic, which means what’s done must be appropriate to the situation. Appropriateness is measured by many factors, and cannot be determined from our own perspective alone. It must take into account the perspectives of other people, and this requires wisdom (智). In order to acquire wisdom (智), learning (学) and reflection are necessary. To Confucius, learning does not mean mental acquisition of facts. In Confucian times, an educated person should be familiar with the six arts (六藝), which are: 礼 rites, 樂 music, 射 archery, 御 charioteering, 書 writing, and 數 mathematics, and be proficient in the playing of the zither 琴, (music), chess 棋 (logic), calligraphy 書, and painting 畫. The reason for the emphasis of the study of those subjects is they would impart culture (文化). But on top of all that, genuine learning is also a process of ethical self-cultivation. “If you study but don’t reflect you’ll be lost. If you reflect but don’t study you’ll get into trouble.” (Analects 2:15) . That gives a very general and broad idea of what the acquisition of wisdom involves.

The cultivation of Xiao or filial piety from young, is the root and start of the other qualities. The whole hierarchical system of Confucian society, with heaven above requires that each party in that hierarchy behave accordingly. The King must behave like a king, the subject like a subject; the father like a father, and the son, like a son. When a king does not behave like a king, his mandate to rule, that mandate from heaven (天命) to rule, will be lost. The idea of the mandate from heaven should not be read as mandate from a personal god. Confucius once said, “敬鬼神而遠之” or in English, “Be respectful towards ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance .” More interestingly, that was said in the context of answering a question regarding what is knowledge. “To concentrate on what is right for the people; to be attentively respectful towards ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance – this may be called knowledge.” (Analects 6:22)

Why is it necessary for a Junzi to develop those qualities? The answer is that that is the only means by which he can follow the Dao (道) or the Way, and to make it grow. The *Junzi* is the ethical exemplar with the virtues making it possible to follow the *Dao*. (Wong, David, “Chinese Ethics”, 2018). What is the Dao? Here is one explanation: “Confucians used the term Dao to speak of the way human beings ought to behave in society. In other words, Dao, for them, is an ethical or moral way.” (Bloom, I. 2009). One can detect a sense of circular argument here. At the philosophical level, it could be defined as “the organic order that governs the universe,” organic in the sense that it is not wilful. It is not a conscious, active creator, not a personal entity, but rather an organic process that just moves along. It is mysterious in its depth and unfathomable in its essence.” (Schwartz, B., 1985). It is that ineffable way of life, pattern of the world, source of all that is (and is not). (Bockover, M.I. 2016). The way to achieve Harmony, in society, between heaven and earth, is by following the Dao. There is in addition the teaching of the “Doctrine of the Mean” or *Zhōngyōng zhī dào* (中庸之道).

Summarizing the main concepts of Confucian philosophy here, they are: Junzi (君子). Ren (benevolence 仁), Yi (righteousness 義), Xiao (Filial Piety 孝), Li (rituals, rites and manner 礼), Zhi (Wisdom 智) Xin (Trustworthy 信), Zhong (Loyalty 忠) Xue (learning), Dao (Way 道), and He (Harmony 和). Perhaps you can already see the many parallels between the ideals of Freemasonry and Confucian philosophy.

A mason is expected to behave with benevolence and do the right thing. He is expected, being a Lewis, to have filial piety and look after his parents. The rituals that he performs in lodge is to teach him lessons which he is to take to heart, and together with the understanding of which, guides his behavior. He is courteous, and trustworthy. He is loyal to his sovereign. He is urged to study the masonic arts. Harmony is emphasized in all his undertakings. A mason is therefore seen as having all the qualities of a Junzi who is following the Dao or way, which in the masonic context means to behave in a masonic manner. The seven liberal arts to a certain extent reflect the six arts that were being promoted in Confucius's time. The Doctrine of the Mean reminds us the Centre, and the exhortation "not to be an enthusiast, persecutor, or slanderer of religion" reminds us of the saying "... to be attentive and respectful of the spirits (god), but to keep them at a distance ..."

I hope you will all agree with me that many of the ideals required of a Junzi are the same ideals required of a mason, however, there is one big difference and that is the requirement to believe in a Supreme Being. This big difference reflects one of the major differences between the Confucian civilization in China and that in the West and perhaps even account for the major difference between the world views of China and the West.

The development of speculative masonry was very much a product of the Age of Enlightenment, a pivotal point in European history that brought about great advances in science and technology. As Joseph Needham has observed, science and technology in China was more advanced than in Europe prior to the European Age of Enlightenment. Indeed, as an example, he noted that the first iron suspension bridge, the Luding Bridge, was built in China in 1706, some 36 years before the first of such bridge was built in England. We all know that China invented the printing press, gun powder and the compass. He then asked this question, which has since been phrased as the Needham Question, which in his own words, he wrote, "Why did modern science, the mathematization of hypotheses about Nature, with all its implications for advanced technology, take its meteoric rise only in the West at the time of Galileo [but] had not developed in Chinese civilisation or Indian civilisation? ... between the first century B.C. and the fifteenth century A.D., Chinese civilization was much more efficient than occidental in applying human natural knowledge to practical human needs." (Needham, J. 1969), or phrased another way, "...the essential problem [is] why modern science had not developed in Chinese civilization but only in Europe." (Olerich, R.L. 2017)

Liu and Liu (Liu, Y. and Liu, C. 2007) offered the following reasons:

- Lack of property rights
- Science and technology were subjugated to the needs of the feudal families
- New Discoveries were sequestered by the government for its use.

While Justin Lin (Lin, J. 1995) offered the following:

China did not make the shift from an experience-based technological invention process to an experiment-based innovation process.

- The sociopolitical institution inhibited intellectual creativity, but more importantly, it diverted this creativity away from scientific endeavours
- Civil service was deemed the most rewarding and honourable work in pre-modern China.

Perhaps I am allowed to offer my opinion. I think we will all agree that Western civilization is built on the bedrock of Greeco-Judeo-Christianity with a firm belief in a God who is rational. That belief is so strong that even as late as the 20th century, Einstein who discovered the Laws of Relativity, could say, "I, at any rate, am convinced that [God] does not throw dice" [*Jedenfalls bin ich überzeugt, daß der nicht würfelt.*] (Einstein 1926)

By that he implies the belief in a world that has rules that govern its running, and randomness has no place in it. Mirroring that ethos, our ceremony says this, “you are expected to make the liberal Arts and Sciences your future study, that you may the better be enabled to discharge your duties as a Mason **and estimate the wonderful works of the Almighty.**” In the Confucian world, the main aim of learning is to improve oneself on the path to becoming a Junzi. This sentiment is reflected in that Masonic admonition as well in the first part of that statement – “that you may the better be enabled to discharge your duties as a Mason.” However, in the Confucian world, the second part is lacking, whereas in the West, the belief in a Supreme Being, who is rational, leads to a belief that by discovering the rational laws that underly the running of the universe, we can better understand that Supreme Being, and “estimate the wonderful works of the Almighty.” In addition, that God also said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:26) In Psalms we were told, “What is man that You are mindful of him ...? For You have made him a little lower than the angels and You have crowned him with glory and honour.” (Psalm 8:4-5) From the Hellenistic tradition, we have the saying of Protagoras, “Man is the measure of all things.” (Kattsoff, L.O. 1953). Underpinned by those two traditions, the Humanism of the Greeks, and the Biblical world view, the study of science, the discovery of those rules, is then used to dominate nature. Whereas the Confucian philosophy in China leads to a dominant idea that “the cosmos is in spontaneous harmony and the regularity of phenomena is not due to any external authority. On the contrary, this harmony in nature, society, and the heavens originates from the equilibrium among these processes. Stable and interdependent, they resonate with each other in a kind of nonconcerted harmony. If any law were involved, it would be a law that no one, neither God nor man, had ever conceived of. Such a law would also have to be expressed in a language undecipherable by man and not be a law established by a creator conceived in our own image.” (Prigogine, Ilya. 2017)

As if to underscore the difference between the two world views, even in the translation of the Bible. The implied meanings of the words used in Europe and in China are different. Let us look at St. John 1:1. It was written in Greek, the original language used in writing St. John:

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ **λόγος**, καὶ ὁ **λόγος** ἦν πρὸς τὸν **θεόν**, καὶ **θεὸς** ἦν ὁ **λόγος**.

In English:

In the beginning was the **Word**, the **Word** was with **God** and the **Word** was **God**.

In German:

Im Anfang war das **Wort**, und das **Wort** war bei **Gott**, und **Gott** war das **Wort**.

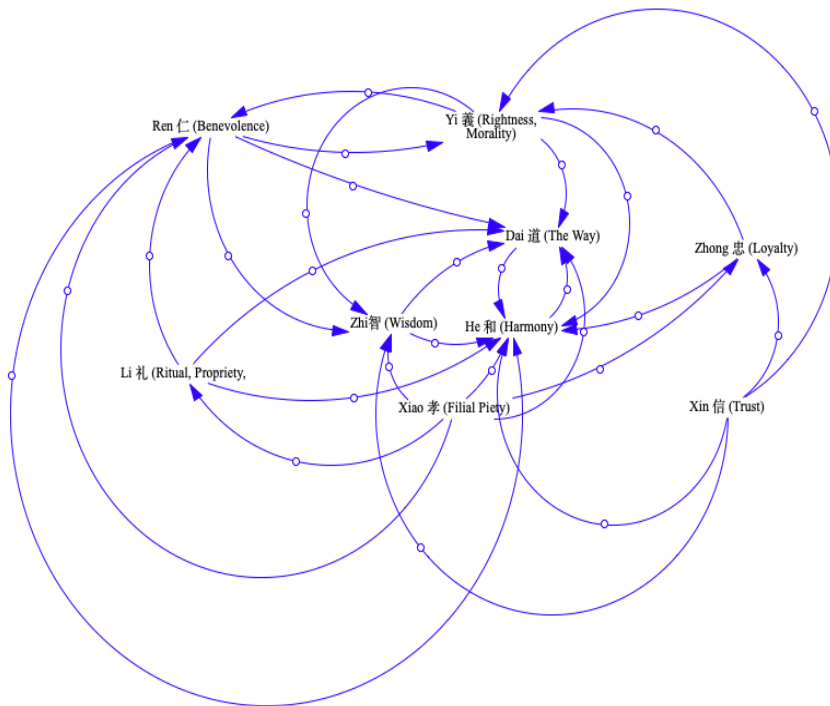
In French:

Au commencement était la **Parole**, et la **Parole** était avec **Dieu**, et la **Parole** était **Dieu**

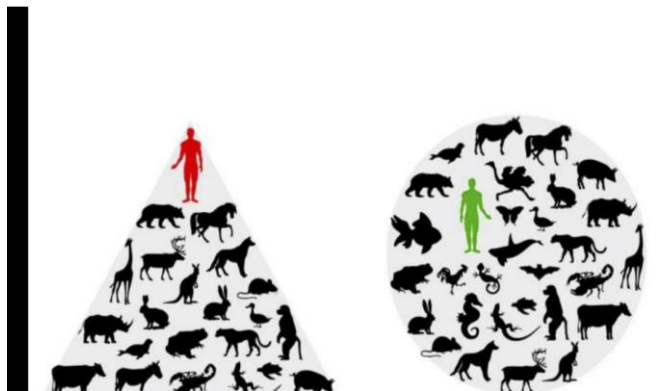
In Chinese:

太初有**道** · **道**與**神**同在 · **道**就是**神** (In the beginning was the Dao, and the Dao was with God and the Dao was God.)

The figure below shows how the various qualities a Junzi has to cultivate forms a web, an interconnected web. There is no Lawgiver in the form of a Supreme Being. The Dao and the other virtues are an interconnected web.



One system of thoughts places man as an observer of nature and hence the ability to dissect out the rules that govern the workings of nature, and use that knowledge to exploit nature for his own pleasure. The other requires man to be a part of nature, and hence the requirement to live in harmony with nature. Could that be the reason for the failure to be interested in dissecting out the rules of nature?



Perhaps the future requires *Homo sapiens* to somehow unify the two world views, that man, with our intellect and knowledge of science, is just a steward charged with looking after this planet, all the time, conscious of the need to be harmonious with not only other human beings, but with the whole of the universe in general, and this planet in particular.

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Ronald P. Ng

PM, The Lodge of St. George No. 1152 E.C.

PM, Lodge Mt. Faber No. 1825 S.C.

PM, Lodge St. Michael No. 2933 E.C.

SW (Founding and Petitioner), Lodge Scientia No. 9993 E.C.

PPZ, St. George Royal Arch Chapter No. 1152 E.C.

Hon DGJW, District Grand Lodge of the Middle East, Grand Lodge of Scotland

PADDC, District Grand Lodge of South East Asia, United Grand Lodge of England

PDyDGM, District Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of Singapore,

Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England, Wales and its Districts
and Lodges Overseas.

PGJO, Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England, Wales and its Districts
and Lodges Overseas.

PMW and 31°, Mt. Calvary in the East Chapter No. 47, under the Supreme
Council 33° of the Ancient and Accepted Rite for England and Wales
and its Districts and Chapters Overseas.

PG Chamberlain of the Great Priory of United Religious, Military and Masonic
Orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and
Malta.

PDG Organist (Internationale), GLNF.

Past Kellerman Lectures and Lecturers

Lecture	Lecturer	
1992		
The Challenge of the Changes in Membership in New South Wales	Harry Kellerman*	NSW & ACT
Preparation of a Candidate	Ken Wells*	Q'ld
The mason mark	Kennion Brindal*	SA & NT
Researching the Future	Max Webberley*	Tas
Nine out of Ten Freemasons would attack Moscow in Winter	Peter Thornton*	Vic
The Impact on Freemasonry of Social History in the 18th and 19th Centuries	Bryn Hitchin	WA
1994		
Freemasonry Among Australian Prisoners of War	Brian Burton*	NSW & ACT
Our Purpose	Brian Palmer*	Q'ld
Our Segregated Brethren, Prince Hall Freemasons	Tony Pope	SA & NT
Where do I Come From?	Ian Sykes	Tas
Back to the Future---A prescription for Masonic Renewal	Kent Henderson	Vic
1996		
The 46th (South Devonshire) Regiment and Freemasonry in Australia 1814 to 1817	Robert Linford*	NSW & ACT
Cosmographic Origins of Some Speculative Masonic Symbolisms	Arthur Page*	Q'ld
Possible Jewish Antecedents of Freemasonry	Graham Murray	SA & NT
Grand Lodge Recognition and some Contemporary Issues	Murray Yaxley*	Tas
Freemasonry is closer to Pythagoras than Moderns accept	Keith Hollingsworth*	Vic
The Five Noble Orders of Architecture	Peter Verrall	WA
1998		
Samuel Clayton, Australian Masonic Pioneer	Arthur Astin*	NSW & ACT
The World of the Ancients and Moderns: London 1700s	Guy Palliser*	NZ
The Bronze Castings of Solomon	Harvey Lovewell	Q'ld
The Origin and Development of Freemasonry---an upset thesis	George Woolmer*	SA & NT
Freemasonry, Two Chief Justices and Two Constitutions	Arnold Shott	Tas
A History of Early Freemasonry and the Irish Constitution in Van Diemen's Land	Ron Cook*	Vic
The Geometry and Construction of the Great Pyramid	Arthur Hartley*	WA
2000		
The Degrees of the Practical Masons	Neil Morse	NSW & ACT
Some Aspects of the Nature of Ritual	Guy Palliser*	NZ
The Rise, Decline and Revival of Jersey Freemasonry	James Hughes*	Q'ld
Let's Swap Secrets, Lift Landmarks and Exchange Egos	Max Webberley	Tas
The Masonic Approach to Self -development	Phillip Hellier	Vic
The Legend of the Knights Templar	Arthur Hartley*	WA
2002		

Masonic Education	Andy Walker*	NSW & ACT
Second Degree, Second Class: a second class second degree word	Bill Gibson*	NZ
The Hung Society and Freemasonry, the Chinese Way	Graham Stead*	Q'ld
Recognising Freemasonry---a brief history for the curious or interested	Alan Wright	SA & NT
The Place of Masonic Musicians in the History of Western Music	Nicholas Reaburn	Tas
Thales---The Forgotten Philosopher	Graeme Love*	Vic
A Peculiar System of Morality	Arthur Hartley*	WA
2004		
Mysticism, Masculinity and Masonry	David Slater	NSW & ACT
A Separate Reality---Anthropology, Ritual and today's Mason	Roel van Leeuwen	NZ
J and B, other Aspects	Alex P Tello Garat	Q'ld
The Father of Freemasonry in Van Diemen's Land	Max Linton and Max Webberly*	Tas
The Ladder of Jacob	Frederick Shade	Vic
Architects in Masonry	Peter Verrall*	WA
2006		
Catherine the Great and Freemasonry in Russia	Robert Nairn	NSW & ACT
A Conceptual Overview of Maoridom and Freemasonry in New Zealand Society	Kerry Nicholls	NZ
The Triangle	Ken Wells*	Q'ld
The Christian Objection to Freemasonry	Gregory Parkinson	Tas
Science, Freemasonry and the Third Millennium	Robert Barnes	Vic
Doors in Freemasonry	Peter Verrall*	WA
2008		
Green Masonry: Nature and Freemasonry	Geoff Ludowyk	NSW & ACT
Oamaru: Aspects of Early New Zealand stonemasonry and Freemasonry	Gordon Frazer	NZ
The Australian Connection in the Development of Freemasonry in New Zealand	Colin Heyward*	NZ
The Calendar and Masonry	Harvey Lovewell	Q'ld
Freemasonry: an Initiate Order	Ian Green	Tas
The Masonic Mozart: Wayward Prodigy or Product of his Times	David Beagley	Vic
The Ark of the Covenant	David Ganon	WA
2010		
New Masonic History: The future of Australian Freemasonry and Ned Kelly's Sash	Bob James	NSW & ACT
Certificates, Patents, Warrants and Charters of the Grand Lodge of New Zealand	Keith Knox*	NZ
An Illumination of Masonic Colours	Kevin Allen	NZ
Religious Fundamentalism/Extremism and Freemasonry	Harvey Lovewell	Q'ld
Green Masonic Connections	Ian Green	Tas
Pharaoh's Masons	John Boardman*	Vic
Freemasonry, the Scottish Heresy	Bob Grimshaw	WA
<i>Jack The Ripper a Freemason?</i>	<i>Yasha Beresiner</i>	<i>Special</i>
<i>The History of Freemasonry in Thailand</i>	<i>James Soutar</i>	<i>Special</i>
2012		
Statistical Foundations of the Masonic Mind	Phillip Purcell	NSW & ACT
The Origins of Speculative Freemasonry and Modern Academic Discipline	Robert H Montgomery	NZ
On Becoming a Grand Lodge: The Grand Lodge of New Zealand	Ian Nathan*	NZ

Crafting the Masonic Vision	Tony Tabrett	Q'ld
French Memphis Rite Goldfield Lodge --- Ballarat, 1853	Brendan Kyne	Vic
Freemasonry Positively Defined	Alan Gale	WA
2014		
Origin of the Craft Ritual in New South Wales	Ian Shanley	NSW & ACT
An Investigation into the First Three Degrees of New Zealand Craft Masonry	George Allan	NZ
A Short History of Esoteric Societies in New Zealand	Phil Ivamy	NZ
The District Grand Lodge of Carpentaria: The Formative Years	Lyndon Brandt	Q'ld
Before Freemasonry	Rex Hesline	Tas
Re-thinking the Origins of Modern Freemasonry	Murray Treseder*	Vic
Looking Through a Glass Onion: Freemasonry in the digital age	Daniel L Ganon	WA
2016		
Two Enduring Treasures: Why they are not Ornaments	Peter Bindon*	NSW & ACT
The Answer is a Lemon	Max Currie	NZ
The Oak Island Legend: The Masonic Angle	Dennis King*	NZ
King Athelstan and the Craft	Terry Edwards	Q'ld
Southern Lights	Albert Kusnezow	Tas
King Solomon's Temple and the Legend of the Third Degree	Nigel Parker	Tas
Lodge Liberty Cherie	Robert Brennand	Vic
<i>The Symbolism of Free Gardenry, and the lost Degrees of the Knights of Gethsemane</i>	<i>Ben Quick</i>	<i>Special</i>
Freemasonry, Qabalah and Tarot	Lewis Allan	Vic
Is Freemasonry a Progressive Science?	David Shearer	WA
2018		
Astronomy in Freemasonry	David Pederick	Vic
That Which Was Lost: The Naked truth	Phillip Carter	NSW & ACT
Conflicts: Science – Freemasonry – Religion	John Presser	Tas
The Conflict between Authoritarianism and Individualism	Peter Thomas	Tas
"Out of the Ashes: The impact of early twentieth century wars on New Zealand	Glenn Summerhayes	NZ
Freemasonry as a measure by the life of Colonel George Barclay"		
300 years of Freemasonry – a reflection on European Freemasonry during Mozart's time	Ernst Krauss	WA
Freemasonry in War and Peace	Richard Williams	NZ
4th Degree AASR: Kabbalah of the Secret Master Unveiled	Michel Jaccard	Swiss
2022		
Father and Sons: Masonic Pillars	Grant Watson	NZ
The Commemorative Crusader Orders in Freemasonry	Martin McGregor	NZ
Matariki And the Seven Sisters	Gary Muir	NZ
An Historical Reflection on Freemasonry in Ireland and The Role of Freemasons	Jack Dowds	NZ
in the 1798 Rebellion	Wayne McPhee &	
Some Mid-Nineteenth Century Sydney Freemasons	Benjamin Wharton	NSW & ACT
The Royal Society: 2 Pillars	Andrew Sheperd	Queensland