

# MASONIC COFFEE

STAR OF THE TWO WORLDS      LODGE #5379 G.O.D.F.  
ORIENT OF FORT LAUDERDALE (FLORIDA)      Volume 2, 2023



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In Memoriam Brother A.HIM  
(1943-2022) founding member  
of the Lodge.



**Star of the Two Worlds      Orient of Fort Lauderdale**  
**G.:O.:D.:F.:**

**Participants**

P.Lec.:

C.Ric.:

D.Ers.:

G.Sic.:

**Guests**

S.Bal.:

M.Tra.:

A.Mar.:

R.Bou.:

**Editor**

J-S.Veg.:

**Proofreader**

J.Mad.:

Star of the Two Worlds Inc  
web: [www.starofthe2worlds.org](http://www.starofthe2worlds.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cercle357>  
[lodge.sot2w@gmail.com](mailto:lodge.sot2w@gmail.com)  
[sec.sot2w@gmail.com](mailto:sec.sot2w@gmail.com)  
Zelle: [treas.sot2w@gmail.com](mailto:treas.sot2w@gmail.com)  
Paypal: [treas.sot2w@gmail.com](mailto:treas.sot2w@gmail.com)

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Edited by:

J-S.VEG.:., RL.: Star of the Two Worlds

J.MAD.:., RL.: Star of the Two Worlds

Layout designer:

M.PAT.:.

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The principle that governs the masonic world of ideas is no different from the great law of living matter of the Great Architecture of the Universe: – to be nourished (by the different knowledge pooled together), not to perish (under the blows of obscurantism and fanaticism), and to perpetuate (by bequeathing the knowledge traditionally acquired and externalizing it by example).

The other great law that cannot be ignored is the one of adaptation, the “functional adjustment of the living being to the environment” in order to remain alive.

In our previous volume<sup>1</sup>, generated from our response to the problem of traditionally continuing the masonic practice in spite of the contingencies of the world (the pandemic), we posed that whatever the circumstances, masons had to continue their labors.

The world of today is not the world of 1717, nor of 1877, nor of January 2020. Apart from pandemics, human and ecological disasters that thwart its action, the question arises: is freemasonry in phase with the young profanes and their expectations, and are its methods of improvement adapted to the contemporary world?

The policy of burying one's head in the sand and sticking to a dogmatic and regulatory tradition – the last straw for a “continental” freemasonry that loudly proclaims its non-dogmatic nature – can only be doomed to failure. The falling off of interest in the contemporary American masonic institution, however far from the “continental” practice, is revealing.

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<sup>1</sup> Masonic Coffee, vol. 1, Oct. 2022.

The freemasonry of the Grand Orient of France is a progressive institution<sup>2</sup>, progressing step by step – following a path traditionally initiated through the black and white pavements of the society in which it is present – through the contemporary obstacles that should not oppose its progress. The freemasons, with upright thinking, to overcome the hazards of our environment, must adapt to the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century before continuing their journey toward the Light and spreading those gifts acquired during their labors. They make their own, the harangue of Jean Jaures: *Tradition is not the cult of ashes; it is the transmission of fire*<sup>3</sup>.

With my Triple Fraternal Embrace,  
Worshipful Master P.LEC.:

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2 Article One: The purpose of Freemasonry, an essentially philanthropic, philosophical and progressive institution, is to seek the truth, study morality and practice solidarity; it strives for moral and material improvement and the intellectual and social development of Humanity. Constitution and general regulations 2022-2023 English edition, G.:O.:D.:F.:, page 7.

3 Jean Jaurès, janvier 1910, à Paris, Chambre des députés, *in* Pages choisies, éd. Rieder, published in 1922, p. 115. Quote curiously attributed to the composer Gustav Mahler (confer [https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Gustav\\_Mahler](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Gustav_Mahler)).

In the world of secret societies and enigmatic rituals, few organizations have captured the imagination of scholars and enthusiasts alike as profoundly as freemasonry. The esoteric nature of freemasonry has led to countless speculations and intriguing theories about its origins, purpose, and influence on society. This book takes you on a captivating journey through the intricate tapestry of freemasonry, exploring its connections to buddhism, its historical roots, the men of enlightenment who shaped its course, and its global reach. In these pages, we delve into the mysteries, myths, and facts surrounding freemasonry's enigmatic history.

To truly understand freemasonry, one must delve into its ancient origins. We explore the mystical beginnings of this secretive brotherhood, tracing its roots back through the annals of history to the medieval stonemasons and builders of Europe.

Throughout history, remarkable individuals have played pivotal roles in shaping the course of freemasonry. Luminaries such as Jean François Champollion, the decipherer of hieroglyphics, contributed to the masonic tradition with their intellect and curiosity.

Our exploration of freemasonry extends to Turkey, where we uncover the rich history of Turkish masonry. From its inception to its modern-day significance, we shed light on this lesser-known aspect of masonic history.

The Scottish Rite stands as one of the most prominent branches of freemasonry. We unveil the historical origins of this intricate and esteemed rite, tracing its development and significance within the masonic world.

Modern technology has played a profound role in the preservation and dissemination of masonic knowledge. We delve into the workings of the National digital commission of the Grand Orient de France (G.:O.:D.:F.:) and its efforts to digitize masonic heritage.

Within the intricate tapestry of freemasonry, the French Rite stands as a testament to the evolving nature of this ancient and secretive fraternity. Operating under the auspices of the Grand Orient of France,

the French Rite is rooted to the oldest rituals and is part of the different rituals practiced within the G.:O.:D.:F.:. What sets it apart is its role as the reference point for administrative ceremonies within the Grand Orient of France, making it the cornerstone of masonic activities. A vast reservoir of authorized masonic literature further enriches the understanding of this rite. Over time, the French Rite has proven its resilience by embracing new ideas and evolving with the changing tides of philosophical thought. It remains a dynamic and vital part of the masonic tradition, successfully marrying the age-old heritage with contemporary ideals.

Our final exploration takes us to the Caribbean colony of Saint Domingue and the newly formed nation of Haiti. Freemasonry played a pivotal role in the socio-political landscape of this tumultuous region during a time of revolution and change.

As we conclude our journey through the mysteries of freemasonry, it is fitting to consider the enduring themes of friendship and love that have transcended time and culture. From the perspectives of great philosophers like Plato and Aristotle to the teachings of buddhism and the humanist ideals that have shaped our modern world, the concept of friendship and love has been a constant thread in the fabric of human existence. These diverse perspectives remind us that despite the secrecy and enigma of organizations like freemasonry, the universal values of friendship and love continue to bind us together, transcending boundaries and fostering understanding among all people.

This book invites you to explore not only the mysteries of freemasonry but also the enduring values that connect us all as human beings. In the spirit of friendship and love, may we continue our quest for enlightenment and understanding in a world that is often shrouded in secrecy and complexity.

Freemasonry is an exploration of oneself assisted by those whom we call brothers and sisters. The influence of freemasonry can be divided in two parts; a lodge where their members are just waiting to somehow benefit in their banal existence, or those committed to embrace their responsibility and improve themselves. The first one

generates profanes wearing aprons and the second one has the ability to provide the world with masons who have no need to wear anything, for they will be known by their presence.

The way freemasons refer to those initiated into the mysteries of masonry is either as brother or sister in continental freemasonry. This is a sign of respect and acknowledgement as equals. The last part of this statement is the fundamental aspect of friendship; we are true friends with only those with whom we have a mutual recognition as equals. So, we are unable to be true friends with someone who is in a different position in the hierarchical pyramid. Therefore, a king does not have friends, just allies and followers on one hand, and foes on the other.

In this brief introduction we are going to explain the greek perspective of friendship and love based on the teachings of Aristotle and Plato, followed by a buddhist approach to the topics of friendship and love, and finally the humanist view. Greeks, buddhists and humanists alike philosophized about friendship and love, and concluded that there are different types.

We tend to use the word friend without discrimination, whether it is someone we have known for our entire life or a person we just met, but this does not mean that time is the best measure of friendships. Traditionally, friendship was seen as an intellectual and spiritual bond according to Plato. He believed that true friendship is based on shared values and a mutual pursuit of truth and knowledge. Plato regarded friendships of virtue as the highest form of friendship, emphasizing the importance of moral character and the cultivation of wisdom in sustaining such relationships. On the other hand, Plato defined love, or Eros, as a transcendent spiritual force that aimed to attain the ultimate Good and Beauty. He believed that love was a longing for the divine and a desire to attain higher truths. Plato presented the idea that love is a ladder, starting from the appreciation of physical beauty and ascending to the contemplation of spiritual beauty.

Aristotle distinguished between different types of love. He recognized two main forms: Eros, the romantic or passionate love,

and philia or friendship. He defined eros as a desire for union and completeness between two individuals, often associated with physical attraction. While he defined philia as a virtuous and reciprocal friendship based on shared values, trust, and mutual benefit.

Aristotle viewed friendship as essential for human flourishing and happiness. He differentiated between three different types of friends: those who are friends for pleasure, those who are friends for utility, and those who are friends for the sake of virtue. The first category is common in young people, when we are teens and we start exploring the world, we meet with others to go on this adventure. This friendship is based on the shared interests and enjoyment we obtain from this relationship. It is not a long lasting one, as when the pleasure ends, the friendship goes away.

The second category is friendship for the sake of utility. This is the type of friendship where both parties receive a mutual benefit. It is dissolved when one or both parties stop perceiving said benefit. The third type of friendship described by Aristotle are friendships of virtue, which are based on mutual admiration and moral goodness. According to Aristotle, friendships of virtue are considered the most valuable and enduring.

Buddha emphasized the practice of loving-kindness, compassion and empathy toward all beings, including friends. Buddhism approaches friendship from a compassionate and altruistic standpoint. It is seen as an opportunity to cultivate kindness, support others on the path to enlightenment, and contribute to their well-being. The concept of non-attachment is also emphasized, encouraging individuals not to cling to friendships or expect them to be permanent.

In buddhism, different types of friendships are recognized based on the qualities and intentions of the individuals involved. The four types of friendship emphasized in buddhism are: spiritual, loving-kindness, equanimity and virtuous friendship.

Kalyana-Mittata, or spiritual friendship is highly valued in buddhism. It based on shared values, virtues and a common pursuit of spiritual development and enlightenment. These friendships are seen

as supportive and conducive to the cultivation of wholesome qualities, such as mindfulness, compassion and wisdom.

Metta, the friendship involving loving-kindness emphasizes the practice of loving-kindness towards all beings, especially friends. It involves cultivating an attitude of benevolence, goodwill, and compassion towards one another. It involves treating others with kindness, empathy and a sincere desire for their well-being.

Equanimity or Upakka friendship is based on the quality of equanimity and impartiality. It involves developing a balanced and unbiased approach towards others, without favoritism or attachment. Upakka friendship emphasizes treating all beings with equanimity and maintaining a sense of calm and even-mindedness in relationships.

Sila-Mittata or the virtuous friendship refers to friendships based on shared moral and ethical principles. These friendships focus on practicing and upholding virtuous conduct, integrity and ethical values. Virtuous friendship involves mutual support and encouragement in leading a righteous and principled life.

For humanism, friendship is valued as human connection and support. It is viewed as a voluntary and reciprocal relationship between individuals who share mutual trust, respect and common interests or values. Emphasizing the importance of authenticity, empathy and emotional support within these relationships.

Friendships provide opportunities for individuals to share experiences, exchange ideas and receive support during both joyful and challenging times. Friendships are opportunities for personal growth, self-discovery and the cultivation of a sense of belonging. They prioritize honesty and compassion. Humanists recognize friendships as essential aspects of human nature and value their role in fostering personal development, well-being and meaningful connections with others. Friendship is viewed as a source of fulfillment and aid one in aligning with the humanistic values of empathy, respect and the pursuit of human flourishing.

While love in buddhism is often expressed through the concept of Metta, which is loving-kindness or universal love. Buddha taught that love should be unconditional, boundless and extend to all beings. Metta involves cultivating a genuine care, compassion and goodwill towards others, promoting their welfare and happiness without attachment or expectations. In humanism, different types of friendships can be observed, reflecting the diverse nature of human connections. While individual experiences may vary, there are a few common types of friendships that align with humanistic principles.

Companionate friendship is characterized by a deep sense of companionship, mutual trust and emotional support. These friendships often involve shared interests, activities and a strong sense of loyalty. This type of friendship is founded on empathy, understanding and a genuine concern for each other's well-being.

Intellectual friendship is based on a shared passion for knowledge, ideas and intellectual pursuits. These friendships involve engaging in stimulating discussions, exchanging thoughts and challenging each other intellectually. This friendship fosters growth, encourages critical thinking and provides an enriching environment for learning and personal development.

Supportive friendship focuses on providing emotional support, encouragement and understanding. These friendships thrive on empathy, active listening and helping during difficult times. Supportive friendships create a safe space where individuals can share vulnerabilities, seek guidance and receive comfort.

Recreational friendship centers around shared recreational activities, hobbies or interests. They are characterized by the enjoyment of spending time together engaged in shared leisure pursuits. It provides opportunities for fun, relaxation and creating memorable experiences together.

Cross-Cultural friendship bridges diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives. This type of friendship involves an appreciation and curiosity for different cultures, traditions, and experiences. Cross-

cultural friendship fosters intercultural understanding, empathy and can contribute to promoting inclusivity and the breaking down of barriers.

It's important to note that these types of friendships are not mutually exclusive and friendships can encompass multiple aspects. Humanism celebrates the richness and diversity of human relationships, emphasizing the values of respect, empathy, authenticity and mutual growth within the context of friendship.

Humanism sees love as a fundamental human emotion and connection that enriches individuals' lives. Love is seen as a natural expression of human compassion, empathy and care for others. Humanism emphasizes the importance of love in fostering meaningful relationships, promoting emotional well-being and nurturing personal growth.

While each perspective differs in its philosophical underpinnings, they all recognize the significance of love and friendship in human life. They emphasize different aspects such as the transcendental, virtue-based, compassionate or humanistic nature of love and friendship. While each philosopher had unique perspectives, they all recognized the importance of friendship and love in human life.

## Summary

	Friendship	Love
<b>Plato</b>	Emphasized friendships of virtue, based on shared values and a pursuit of truth and knowledge. These friendships were characterized by moral character and the cultivation of wisdom.	Saw love (Eros) as a transcendent force, seeking the ultimate Good and Beauty. Love was a longing for the divine and a pathway to higher truths.
<b>Aristotle</b>	Categorized friendships into friendships of utility, pleasure, and virtue. Friendships of virtue characterized by mutual admiration and moral goodness, were considered the most valuable and enduring.	Recognized two forms of love: philia (friendship love) and eros (romantic or passionate love). Philia was a virtuous friendship based on shared values, trust and mutual benefit. Eros involved desire for union and completeness between individuals, often associated with physical attraction.
<b>Buddhist</b>	Values spiritual friendship (Kalyana-Mittata) based on shared values and the pursuit of spiritual development. Friendships provide support on the path to enlightenment and cultivation of virtues.	Emphasizes love through the concept of Metta, loving-kindness or universal love. Love is seen as unconditional, boundless and extending to all beings. It involves cultivating care, compassion, and goodwill towards others.
<b>Humanist</b>	Values friendship as a vital aspect of human connection and support. Friendships are voluntary, reciprocal relationships, based on trust, respect and shared interests or values. They provide emotional support, personal growth and a sense of belonging.	Views love as a fundamental human emotion and connection that enriches lives. It emphasizes love grounded in mutual respect, understanding and the recognition of each person's dignity and worth. Love is seen as inclusive, fostering harmony and personal growth.

## Buddhism and freemasonry<sup>4</sup>



Contrary to what is often believed, spirituality is by no means limited to the religious sphere. As proof, the various forms of verticality which, although they do not refer to any god, nor to any transcendence, nevertheless elevate the

spirit and aim at improving Man<sup>5</sup>. In general, these are paths that propose to help each person give meaning to his or her existence, or traditions that promote an authentic construction of the self, and this, as we will come to understand, can occur outside the confines of any religious institution.

Among these spiritualities, which could be qualified as immanent, is non-dogmatic and liberal freemasonry. Indeed, if by spirituality we mean everything that nourishes the life of the spirit, as opposed to what is material, then there is no doubt that freemasonry has everything to do with a spiritual path. Doesn't it propose to its members to learn – in contact with others – to know themselves better, to work to improve themselves, to give meaning – a direction and a significance – to their existence? Only, it is a spiritual path free of any religious tint. There is indeed something sacred in the rites, rituals, myths and symbols, but free of dogmas and churches.

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<sup>4</sup> Masonic Coffee May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Modified article originally published in the review *Freemasonry and Buddhism* in *Critica Masonica*, vol. 4/2, n° 8, May 2016, Paris, pp. 117-126.

Freemasonry is a spirituality that is, strictly speaking, secular. On the other hand, the freemason is completely free, on a personal basis, to adhere to a religion. Let us recall, by way of illustration, what the Worshipful Master of a lodge of the Grand Orient de France declares to the newcomer, during the reception ceremony:

*The Grand Orient of France does not admit any limits to the freedom of the mind, to the freedom of conscience. Let us specify that each one of us has the right to believe in an intelligence which governs the world, or not to believe in it; that each one of us can believe in a creator god (that some freemasons call the Grand Architect of the Universe), or not to believe in it; that each one can practice a religion, or not to practice any religion (...). Among us, your personality will be perfectly free to blossom. Your opinions and beliefs will be perfectly respected. You will, of course, have the imperious obligation to respect those of others.*

Ritual of initiation to the 1<sup>st</sup> symbolic degree, 2011

It goes without saying that, just as religions do not have a monopoly on the sacred and spiritual, freemasonry is by no means the only secular spiritual path. Other secular traditions with a spiritual aim exist. However, when asked about this, most sisters and brothers inevitably cite buddhism without the slightest hesitation.

Previously unknown to most Europeans, buddhism, since the arrival in France of a number of Asian spiritual guides (at the beginning of the 1970s), has become more familiar to the average person. Who does not have today in his family, or among his close relations, a person who declares himself buddhist? Who has not tried this or that buddhist meditation, such as Zen or Mindfulness, for example? Who has not read a book like a biography of the Buddha, or a book about his life and teachings, seen reports on countries where buddhism is practiced, watched

the Sunday morning program on French TV devoted to the different buddhist traditions, or visited a monastery near his or her home? Since its establishment in France, buddhism has interested, even seduced, many freemasons. Having myself embraced the Tibetan form of buddhism at the age of thirteen, I quickly realized that the founders of the first and most important practice centers of Tibetan buddhism were, for the most part, freemasons.



In 1993, a first colloquium on buddhism and freemasonry was held in Savoy, at the initiative of the Karma Ling Buddhist Institute. Thereafter, regular meetings were organized. During this same period, a fraternity was founded to bring together buddhist freemasons: “The acacia” and “The lotus”, which became, in 2007, “Les Compagnons du Dharma”, whose aim is none other than “to bring together buddhist freemasons in order to study, deepen and combine the convergences between these two spiritualities; to work for the emergence of a Buddhist Orient in the West” (Declaration to the prefecture of the Rhône).

Notwithstanding Jean Mourgues, who it seems, did not understand why many of his contemporaries, rather than turning to the masonic institution, were initiating themselves into the traditions of the Far East. Indeed, not only are many French people attracted by traditions from elsewhere, but the French masons are particularly so.

## **Cabinet of masonic-buddhist reflection**

It is true that there are many common points between these two spiritual quests. The idea of perfectibility, in particular. Indeed, a



buddhist practitioner, like a freemason, starts from the principle that it is possible to improve oneself. The difference, however, is that on one hand, the work on oneself is done alone (despite the presence of a spiritual guide) and on the other, the work is done in a group.

For their part, buddhists are convinced that every human being carries within them the seeds of Wisdom. According to their point of view, each one would hold, buried in them, the qualities of deep Wisdom, qualities which are crying out to bloom. Unfortunately, this treasure of virtues would remain, very often buried; so many are the veils that cover them. These veils are called: hatred, greed, ignorance, anger, jealousy, etc. So much so, that rather than adding anything to bring about perfection, the task is rather to remove these veils.

The freemason is accustomed to preparing, cutting, and polishing their rough ashlar, that is to say, working on one's self. Wishing to progress morally and spiritually, the initiate knows that they can only count on themselves. Also, and above all, the initiate knows that this work does not consist so much in acquiring this or that quality, since it has always been there from all antiquity, waiting to be uncovered.

Liberal freemasonry possesses a universal vocation. It offers a form of non-transcendent spirituality that can suit both believers as well as non-believers, all while satisfying humanistic values. Moreover, it considers that its methods and tools facilitate the inner, moral, intellectual and spiritual work, whatever the culture of the initiate.

Buddhism, too, is for all people. Therefore, there is no need to be Indian or Tibetan to be a buddhist. Born in India in the VI<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the practice of buddhism spread throughout Asia before reaching Europe and the United States in the XX<sup>th</sup> century due to the emigration of people from Asia, and the great interest shown by many Westerners.

The absence of dogma and revealed truth is attractive to many Westerners. Strictly speaking, there is no unified body of beliefs specific to buddhism, any more than there is within liberal freemasonry. The multiplicity of schools and obediences bear witness to this, as does the free-flow of practitioners between the various schools.

What about reincarnation, one might retort? First of all, it should be known that buddhists never speak of reincarnation, but rather of rebirths. Are we dealing with a dogma? It is true that the rebirths that every living person could experience do not correspond to a factual truth, nor to a demonstrated truth, nor to a proven truth. However, no buddhist school demands that one must subscribe to this understanding,

each individual being free to adhere, or not to adhere, to such a conception of life and death. So, rebirth is more a belief (free choice) than a dogma (compulsory belief). Since I have



renounced all forms of religious belief, I cannot subscribe to the idea of rebirth. In spite of this, Tibetan religious people, who approve of this idea, do not hesitate to ask me to teach the history and the practice of buddhism.

The ethics of freemasonry and buddhism are quite similar with benevolence as a cardinal virtue on the buddhist side, and fraternity and solidarity on the freemasonry side. To which are added, in buddhist countries, three main poisons or disruptive emotions (greed, anger, opacity of the mind) and, in masonic lands, ignorance, hypocrisy and fanaticism which are opposed by work, loyalty, and tolerance.

A similar vision of generosity also exists, at least between freemasonry and the later buddhism of the Great Vehicle (Mahayana), which has always refused to see in the vocation of monasticism the perfect buddhist life. For if there is a place where, in my eyes, one is devoted to giving and where each one does not cease to offer whatever they have, it is inside a masonic temple. Some of the more pessimistic among us will perhaps say that they have nothing to offer! And yet, is this true? Because if we have even a smile to offer, let's not hesitate to give it to our sisters and brothers; if we have a little time, let's not hesitate to give it to them; if we have good advice to give, let's not hesitate to share it with them; if we have good ideas, let's not delay sharing them with them, etc.



Moreover, is this not what the chain of fraternal union reminds us of, in its own way? Shortly before midnight. With their feet firmly planted in the ground forming a square, brothers and sisters form the chain of union. The arms are crossed at the height of the solar plexus. The right arm over the left arm, the right hand of each brother or sister over the left hand of his or her neighbor. The hands are bare. The left hand is in supination (palm towards the sky) and the right hand, over it, in pronation (palm towards the ground) as during the battery. On one side, therefore, the left hand receives, while the right hand immediately gives back. Barely received, that which is given is immediately given again! With intertwined forearms, one does not know any longer to whom each forearm and each hand belongs. In fact, everything takes place as if there were no longer a you or me. Each one is then only a passer or a conductor. A simple transmitting link, in short, each one becomes a *Lacs d'Amour*, similar to those that adorn the jagged tassel, or knotted rope<sup>6</sup>.

In the buddhism of the Great Vehicle (Mahayana), we find the same kind of totally free gift. Indeed, the adept is supposed to give freely while keeping in mind that nobody actually gives, nothing is given, and nobody receives. Said differently: for the gift to be perfect, there must be neither me, nor you, nor any object<sup>7</sup>. An identical concern for equality. It is important to know that the Buddha had disciples of all castes and all conditions. Similarly, the freemasonry of the Ancient Régime admitted into its midst, on an equal footing, individuals from the nobility, the clergy, as well as the third estate.

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6 On the subject of freemasonry and spirituality, one cannot but recommend reading *La Chaîne d'Union*, Spiritualités en débat, n° 95, January 2021, Paris.

7 See *Bouddhisme et franc-maçonnerie*, published by Albin Michel, coll. Question de, n° 101, Paris, 1995.

Moreover, buddhism, especially in its Tantric version<sup>8</sup>, like freemasonry, is an initiatory current. However, initiation is seen, on both sides, as a seed placed in the heart of the neophyte. No one being able to do the inner work for them, it is up to them to make the necessary efforts to improve themselves. In this sense, initiation is never acquired, the ceremony during which it is conferred being just the starting point of a long journey.

Moreover, symbols are used in freemasonry, as well as in buddhism, especially in buddhism's tantric aspect. Each quality of a Buddha is, for example, represented in the form of a deity, which is only an allegory of this deity.

I will stop here with the comparisons between liberal freemasonry and buddhism. Unquestionably, there are very many common points. A good statement is that these two spiritual paths add up.

However, if there are similarities, it would be wrong to want to erase their differences. First of all, because the means used in their respective works are dissimilar. On the buddhist hand, we find the practice of meditation as solitary work on oneself and on the freemasonic hand the work is accomplished through exchanges with others, framed by a ritual, and revolving mainly around work on symbolism. Even if the freemason's approach is first conceived as individual, it mainly takes shape through contact with others. Without work in a lodge, there would be no freemasonry. The masonic initiatory path presupposes that others will be involved, more so than in buddhism. I agree that a buddhist monk is constantly confronted with their fellow monks who seek, just like them, to improve themselves. Seen in this way, a monastery can resemble a lodge, since, in both cases, we find people of good will who are determined to perfect themselves. And this is good news, because in

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8 Jean Mourgues, *Masonic thought. Une sagesse pour l'Occident*, Presses Universitaires de France, coll. Politique d'aujourd'hui, Paris 1988.

a monastery – as in a masonic workshop – there are many opportunities to get rid of one’s belief in an ego other than simply an empirical one. Still, the fact remains that the buddhist path is more solitary than the masonic one.

Another difference is the great distance that separates masonic initiations and rituals from buddhist initiations and rituals.

Mainly, the fact remains that buddhism is, without a shadow of a doubt, a religion as opposed to a secular spiritual current. Certainly, we are dealing with a religion of a rather peculiar type, because it is devoid of God(s) and free of any dogma. Nevertheless, buddhism is a religion. To be convinced of this, one needs only to think of its temples, its altars, its sacred objects, its monks and its nuns... I agree that buddhism is a rather particular spirituality, to the point that some have not hesitated to decree that buddhism is more a philosophy than a religion. But this is a mistake, as I tried to show in my book *Le bouddhisme : philosophie ou religion?* For my part, I began my apprenticeship in buddhism when I was a teenager and I was created a freemason at the age of 31, in a Norman lodge of the Grand Orient de France. Buddhism and freemasonry have become, for me, inseparable, so much of their complementarity contributes to what makes me an upright man.





## The origins of freemasonry<sup>9</sup>



There are a few versions of the origins of freemasonry, ranging from the most fantastic to the very reasonable. It is commonly believed that the regular masonic jurisdiction was formed in 1717 when the United Grand Lodge of England was founded. For example, regular freemasons celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of freemasonry in 2017 in London.

In truth, the history of freemasonry did not begin in 1717 but much earlier. That is why there are two types of freemasonry: speculative and operative. However, there is no reasonable answer that can be given explaining when exactly freemasonry began. So let us try to approximate the truth by considering historical facts.

To begin with, it is worth giving a little time to the analysis of *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite* of freemasonry, the well-known masonic work of our brother Albert Pike. There is a chapter in the third volume of this most interesting book entitled *The Knight Kadosh* wherein Albert Pike interweaves the history of the Order of Solomon's Temple with freemasonry and the "Fellowship of the Rosy Cross" (Rosicrucians). It is an exciting chapter, in fact, because he also explicitly states that the Templars survived as a secret organization, after the "disollution". Moreover, Pike even gives the identities of the supposed Grand Masters of the Order from the period – the Duke of Orleans, the Duke of Maine, the Prince of Condé and the Duke de Cossé-Brissac.

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<sup>9</sup> Masonic Coffee April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

As for the Templars surviving as some secret organization, I am not convinced that this is the case. However, the fact that the history of the Order of the Templars follows the history of freemasonry is beyond any doubt. We will certainly come back to this point later. For now, let us talk a bit about what other interesting information we can find in the archives.



*Albert Gallatin Mackey*

Here, I would like to name another remarkable book, a must-read. It is a work by Albert Gallatin Mackey called *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. By the way, Albert Mackey was Albert Pike's masonic mentor. However, neither Mackey nor Pike ever gave a clear answer as to how freemasonry came into existence and developed. There is a great deal of myth, speculation and mere fantasy about this subject.

Some authors want to trace freemasonry all the way back to the Biblical Patriarchs. Some are piously convinced that the Order of freemasons has existed since the time of King Solomon. Moreover, some believe that ancient Egypt impacted the order's existence. So let us turn to the facts.

So, every enlightened freemason knows that freemasonry originally was operative and then it later became speculative. Operative freemasonry included lodges of stoneworkers. For example, those that built gothic cathedrals. Speculative freemasonry is you and me.

Historically, operative freemasonry began to decline in the XVI<sup>th</sup> century. Then masonic guilds began to admit "outside people", usually aristocrats. Accordingly, the guilds evolved into masonic lodges, where people sharing the same interests gathered to observe the ritual. This process began in Scotland. For example, it is known for sure that The Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel), No. 1, appeared in 1599.

William of Orange joined the masonic lodge in the last years of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, and because of that, the craft of masons was considered royal art. As we can plainly see, the transformation of operative freemasonry into a speculative one began long before 1717 and had the full support of the enlightened aristocratic class of the time.



Even if the history of speculative freemasonry is less than clear, the history of operative freemasonry is firmly rooted in Antiquity. Thus, the earliest evidence of free mason's armies in Medieval Europe dates back to 643. This is mentioned in the *Edict of Rotari*, written by Lombard King Rothari. The heyday of operative freemasonry came during the construction of Gothic cathedrals throughout Europe and is thus already directly linked to the Knights Templar.

Until its defeat in 1309 and its dissolution in 1312, the Order of Templar Knights was the wealthiest organization in Europe, if not in the world. The Templars donated large sums of money to fund the construction of Gothic



*The Temple Church*

cathedrals. Artels of free stonemasons were engaged in it. For example, the Notre-Dame de Paris was built using money from Clairvaux Abbey, founded by a nephew of André de Montbard, the fifth Grand Master of the Knights Templar.

Did the free stonemasons retain their connection to the Templars after the Order's dissolution? Most likely. The Templars renamed

themselves the Order of Christ or the Order of Tomar in Portugal. The Fellowship of the Rosy Cross originated from it as well. Many Templars settled in Scotland, where they could not be reached by the inquisitors of the Pope and the executioners of the French king. It is, therefore, not a coincidence that it was Scotland where speculative freemasonry emerged in the late XVI<sup>th</sup> and early XVII<sup>th</sup> centuries.



One may also remember the great Christopher Wren, who rebuilt Temple Bar, the Church, and indeed the whole of London, after the Great Fire of 1666. I need not remind you that he was a mason, Worshipful Master of

the Lodge of the Primitive, now called the Lodge of the Ancient.

If we briefly describe the origin of freemasonry, it originated together with the first artels of freemasons not later than the XII<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Operative freemasonry blossomed from the XII<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the XIV<sup>th</sup> century, when the Templars marked their heyday. Free stonemasons of that time built fine gothic cathedrals, many of which still stand today.

After the Templars were destroyed, the free stonemasons did not disappear. They continued building gothic cathedrals using the money of other monastic orders of that time, although the pace of construction decreased considerably due to less financing. It is also probable that freemasons in Scotland and England kept in touch with the surviving Templars and their descendants. Moreover, the Templars, renaming themselves the Order of Christ, established The Fellowship of the Rosy Cross, the most enlightened secret organization of the time.

At the turn of the XVI<sup>th</sup> and XVII<sup>th</sup> centuries, operative freemasonry became extinct but served as a basis for speculative freemasonry to emerge, represented by prominent enlightened aristocrats of the time. Freemasonry, as we know it today, appeared in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century. It split off into regular (the centre is located in London) and liberal (the centre is located in Paris) in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century because of disagreements in the interpretation of belief in a Supreme Being.



# Man of Enlightenment Jean François Champollion and the Second degree<sup>10</sup>

by Gregory Sicard, MM.:



Exhibit at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France,  
site François Mitterrand, to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> years  
of the decryption of the Egyptian hieroglyphs  
by Jean François Champollion.

(Photo by G.SIC.: ©)

<sup>10</sup> Masonic Coffee July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

I choose to do this piece of architecture on Jean François Champollion following the celebration of 200 years of his decoding of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and hieratic. An exhibit to commemorate this event is currently held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, site Francois-Mitterrand, in Paris.

Following our instruction as fellow craft regarding humanities benefactors, I decided to investigate a man of enlightenments. Men of enlightenments, in search for truth and mankind advancements, many have brought us light and new discoveries. There are many unanswered questions, many lost civilizations seemed more advanced and developed intellectually than we thought. Could knowledge be lost through the ages, through cataclysm, abandon of a language for another by successive generations? Egypt is certainly the case. Some bring us back to old civilization interpreting and rediscovering their written antic language. In 1822 Jean-François Champollion publishes his letter to Mr. Dacier in which he exposes his discovery of the system to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs and hieratics or demotics, a simplified form of hieroglyphs. The signs in hieratic are cursive and link to each other, what we call a ligation. Hieratic is to hieroglyph what our handwriting is to printing characters. It was the current hand handwriting of ancient Egypt, the one of all documents (literature, administrative, knowledge, letters, rituals) that the scribes learned well before hieroglyphs reserved for the monuments. The hieratic is traced in ink, with a reed, one end grind to serve as a paintbrush. Hieratic respects all the rules of hieroglyph grammar. Champollion system will allow us to know the name of all the pharaohs builders of monuments in Egypt, to decipher the books of the death discovered in the tombs, to read the oldest poems and understand the walls of hieroglyphs that remained silent for over a thousand year.

Champollion sought knowledge the same way we freemasons are in quest for knowledge and truth. His older brother by 12 years,

Jacques-Joseph Champollion-Figeac (5 October 1778 – 9 May 1867) was his mentor, a father figure, his Master and pupil at the same time. The similarity with the masonic teaching in lodge is very striking. Pupils have a similar relation with their mentors and instructors. Also, pupils and Masters all learn from each other. I can identify with my own experience learning from other and also transmitting knowledge to others about a subject through my own research and pieces of architecture.

## Who is Jean-François Champollion?



*Jean François Champollion*



*The Rosetta Stone actual and printed copy*

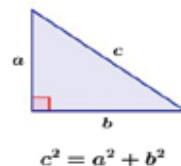
Jean-François Champollion, also known as Champollion le jeune (the young), (23 December 1790 – 4 March 1832). He was a French philologist and orientalist, known primarily as the decipherer of Egyptian hieroglyphs and a founding figure in the field of Egyptology. His brother, the scholar Jacques Joseph Champollion-Figeac, raised him partially. Champollion was a child prodigy in philology, giving his first public paper on the decipherment of Demotic in his mid-teens. As a young man he was renowned in scientific circles, and spoke Coptic, Ancient Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Wikipedia.

In 1822, the publication of the letter to Mr. Dacier give birth to a new subject of study, Egyptology. Jean Francois Champollion explains the culmination of his research, giving life and language again to antic Egypt. Hieroglyphs stopped as the Egyptian writing in the fourth century AD when the Christian faith became the official religion of the country, rendering mute all the walls of the temples and monuments of ancient Egypt. Champollion believed that the Egypt of the pharaohs was a highly developer and a far-reaching civilization, and the archeological remains were proof of that. He understood that the Bible and the Greek and Romans historians gave a false image of Egypt, which was in opposition to the academicians and thinkers of his time who put Ancient Greece as the cradle of civilization. As a matter of fact, the Egyptian civilization precedes the Greeks by four thousand years and was more advanced and sophisticated in many ways. On a side note, the masonic world insists on counting the four thousand years of Egyptian civilization and assumes that we are in 6022 AD. This is a mystery to be explained in further investigations as a mason.

The Greeks visited Egypt (Kemet)<sup>12</sup> as students to learn from the Africans. Plato studied in Egypt for thirteen years. Pythagoras studied philosophy, geometry and medicine in Egypt for twenty two years. Ibn Fâtik (X<sup>th</sup>-XI<sup>th</sup> century AD) explains that Pythagoras learned in Egypt the three types of Egyptian handwritings<sup>13</sup>. In mathematics, the Pythagorean theorem is a fundamental relation in Euclidean geometry among the three sides of a right triangle. It states that the area of the square whose side is the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides:  $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$



12 A number of names were used for Egypt. One of them was “Kemet”, which means the “black land.” Scholars generally believe that this name derived from the fertile soil that was left over when the Nile flood receded in August.

13 *L’Aventure Champollion Dans le Secret des Hiéroglyphes*, Bibliothèque nationale de France 2022.

This is fundamental for the execution of any construction even today and was certainly not discovered by Pythagoras. It was used in constructions older than four thousand years BC in Egypt! Further, Thales, the first Greek philosopher studied in Egypt for seven years. Hippocrates, who is called father of medicine, recognized the Egyptian multi-genius Imhotep as the father of medicine. Plato said that Egyptian education makes students more alert and humane. As a matter of fact, the Egyptian kind of teaching encodes in the form of maxims the standards of life, ethics and social, to which every individual had to conform. Designated in Egyptian under the term of sebayt, these texts generally take the form of a speech in which a character addresses another, often his son, to dictate rules of conduct to help him lead a consistent life in conformity with social norms and maat<sup>14</sup>. Plato told his students to go to Egypt if they wanted to study the minds of the great philosophers. Herodotus, the Greek historian, described ancient Egypt as the cradle of civilization.

Champollion discoveries bring us new ideas and discoveries of a lost civilization. Research brings knowledge and enlightens mankind. Champollion put Egyptian history where it belongs, by giving modern humanity access to learn about the ways of that ancient civilization.

## **The Rosetta Stone, A Masterpiece, A Guide**

The Rosetta Stone is a stele composed of granodiorite inscribed with three versions of a decree issued in Memphis Egypt in 196 BC during the Ptolemaic dynasty on behalf of King Ptolemy V Epiphanies.

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<sup>14</sup> Maat, also spelled Mayet, in ancient Egyptian religion, the personification of truth, justice, and the cosmic order. The daughter of the sun god Re, she was associated with Thoth, god of wisdom.

The top and middle texts are in ancient Egyptian using hieroglyphs and hieratics or demotics scripts respectively, while the bottom is in Ancient Greek. The decree has only minor differences between the three versions, making the Rosetta Stone key to deciphering the Egyptian scripts<sup>15</sup>.

The stone was carved during the Hellenistic period and is believed to have originally been displayed within a temple, possibly at nearby Sais. It was probably moved in late antiquity or during the Mamluk period, and was eventually used as building material in the construction of Fort Julien near the town of Rashid (Rosetta) in the Nile Delta. It was discovered there in July 1799 by French officer Pierre-François Bouchard during the Napoleonic campaign in Egypt. It was the first Ancient Egyptian bilingual text recovered in modern times, and it aroused widespread public interest with its potential to decipher this previously untranslated hieroglyphic script. Lithographic copies and plaster casts soon began circulating among European museums and scholars. When the British defeated the French, they took the stone to London under the Capitulation of Alexandria in 1801. It has been on public display at the British Museum almost continuously since 1802 and is the most visited object there<sup>16</sup>.

Jean François Champollion in 1811 at 21 years old was already working on decrypting ancient Egyptian language copying old papyrus. He benefited from his older brother's network of scholars on Egyptology at the time. Jean-Baptiste Prosper Jollois, an engineer and ancient member of Napoleon Egypt Expedition, sent to Jacques Joseph Champollion all documents in possession of his commission to allow Jean Francois to study them. Edme Jomard wanted the two brothers to analyze the "Ouvrage de l'Egypte" a well-documented compilation

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<sup>15</sup> Wikipedia.

<sup>16</sup> Wikipedia.

of the Napoleon Expedition. Jean Claude Martin, an ecclesiastical, negotiated with the Abe Tersan to obtain a copy of the Rosetta Stone for the Champollion brothers.

Jean François Champollion discovered that all assumptions that the Egyptian scripts were used only for sacred ritual concepts and unlikely to be decipherable since they were tied to esoteric and philosophical functions were wrong. He discovered that the scripts beyond rituals, recorded Egyptian history, and were the written form of a language, with its own grammar, and using phonetical, pictographical and letters at the same time. This was totally a breakthrough in interpreting the Egyptian language. He went far beyond and overshadowed British polymath Thomas Young who had made the first advances in decipherment in 1818. That same year, Champollion writes an Egyptian-Coptic dictionary. Champollion inclusion of phonographic dimension and the Coptic language, a latter form of ancient Egyptian, which he spoke, allowed him to decipher the entire system and achieve the honor of being the one who rediscovered the Egyptian language. In 1824, he published a *Précis* in which he detailed a decipherment of the hieroglyphic script demonstrating the values of its phonetic and ideographic signs.

The Rosetta Stone was the masterpiece among many other documents that Champollion used to decipher and translate the ancient Egyptian language.

## **Travel or Journeys**

Jean François Champollion traveled many times between 1824 and 1826 to different cities in Italy and especially Torino, to put his discoveries to the test and study more in the Egyptian Museum there, one of the most famous in the world. In association with the Italian

Ippolito Rosellini he organized an expedition to Egypt and travelled there from August 1828 to September 1829. In Egypt Champollion chronicles a chronological history of the pharaohs, writes a dictionary of hieroglyphs, reads many hieroglyphic texts that had never before been studied, and brings home a large body of new drawings of hieroglyphic inscriptions as well as hundreds of art crafts for the Louvre Museum. He also initiated the purchase of an Obelisk for France, which is now at Place de la Concord in Paris. He was ecstatic about the Egyptian civilization: *Karnack, there appeared to me all the Pharaonic magnificence, all that men have imagined and executed on a grander scale. All that I had seen at Thebes, all that I had admired with enthusiasm on the left bank, seemed to me miserable in comparison with the gigantic conceptions with which I was surrounded. No people, ancient or modern, has conceived the art of architecture on a scale so sublime, so large, so grandiose as did the ancient Egyptians; they conceived as men 100 feet tall, and the imagination*



*Temple of Karnak Egypt*

*which in Europe, soars well above our porticoes, stops and falls, powerless at the foot of the 140 columns of the hypostyle hall of Karnack. We are in Europe only Lilliputians*<sup>17</sup>.

Home again he was given a professorship in Egyptology, but only lectured a few times before his health, maybe ruined by the hardships of the Egyptian journey, forced him to give up teaching. He died in Paris in 1832 at 41 years old. His grammar of Ancient Egyptian was published posthumously by his brother. Champollion's decipherment

<sup>17</sup> *L'Aventure Champollion. Dans le Secret des Hiéroglyphes*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2022.

is now universally accepted and has been the basis for all further developments in the field. Consequently, he is regarded as the “Founder and father of Egyptology”.

I have myself traveled in Egypt from Alexandria to Abu Simbel on the Nile. I saw what Champollion saw before me and can only confirm the magnificence of the Egyptian civilization.



▲ *Temple of Karnak Egypt* ▼



*Rendering of Karnak in its heyday*

## CONCLUSIONS

When I arrived in Paris last April and I found out there was an Exhibit on Champollion to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his discovery, at the BNF, I knew with all my senses that I had to go see that exhibit and that I had to write about it.

Champollion brings us the chronological history of the pharaohs of Egypt. He died at the early age of 41 in 1832, 24 years before his older brother Jacques Joseph Champollion became a mason in 1856, at the Loge Bonaparte at the Orient of Paris<sup>18</sup>. Given the close relationship of the 2 brothers one can certainly assume that Jacques Joseph would have certainly introduced his brother into the masonic world. His work has enlightened so many people, and myself.

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<sup>18</sup> Archive du G.:O.:D.:F.: , Paris, fichier Bossu : <https://fichier-bossu.fr/>

## The History of Turkish Masonry 1909 onwards<sup>19</sup>



The Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, though established and working in the higher degrees of Freemasonry in the Ottoman Empire, it was not until 1861 that it could provide a regular work. In 1909, this masonic organization was directly revived by Turkish masons to bear the name ŞûraiÂliyi Osmani.

Shortly after that, seven national lodges founded by Turkish masons came together to form the first Turkish masonic obedience under the name of Maşrık-ı Âzam-ı Osmani. The national freemasonry did not show a rapid development in the first fifteen years after it was organized. First the Balkan War, then the First World War, then the War

<sup>19</sup> Masonic Coffee April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

of Independence each aggravated the rate of development observed in the years immediately after the proclamation of the Constitutional Monarchy. However, in the meantime, Maşrık-ı azam-I Osmanî joined the International freemasonry union, which is in Europe.

## Republic Period

Immediately after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, names of the masonic organizations changed. The Mashreq i-Azami Osmani to Great Mashreq of Turkey, Şûrayı Âliyi Osmanî to “Supreme Council of Turkey”. Shortly after that, masonic lodges who carried out their activities under foreign obediences began to close in Turkey.

Shortly after the declaration of the Republic, both the Great Mashreq of Turkey and the Turkey Supreme Council were organized as official associations in accordance with societal law. In 1932, the Supreme Council of Turkey, founded under the official name of Turk Yukselme Cemiyeti changed to Turkey freemasonry high society.

Turkey Great Maşriki was also a member of the International union of freemasonry which held the eighth general meeting in 1932 in Istanbul. This meeting drew wide attention of the press. But the echoes of these meetings led to the resumption of activity against freemasonry in Turkey, after a while.



Besides the attacks on freemasonry which occurred for various reasons, and on multiple grounds, it is certain that political influences were also involved. Three popular ministers and journalists wanted to enter freemasonry but were not accepted. One of them was Mahmut Esat Bozkurt (1892-21 December

1943) who was a Turkish jurist, politician, government member, minister and academic.



When we consider that it was Mahmut Esat Bozkurt who led the anti-masonic movement, the fact that he wanted to be a mason in previous years – he was proposed as a candidate for the Nejat Lodge and filed his request himself, but his application was not considered sufficient (one of the reasons for this anti-masonic movement can be understood more clearly).

Mahmut bey, as minister of Interior, launched within the party a campaign against Masonry. They started drafting a bill to close the lodges. They also tried to get Atatürk's support on this issue. The high degree brothers of the masonic organizations at that time, because the anti-masonic situation had reached a very critical and dangerous level, decided to close the lodges and associations in 1935.

In 1935, the Turkish masons, who are led by the minister of Defense Şükrü Kaya and Mustafa Kemal's private doctor and closest friend Mim Kemal Öke, because of the anti-masonic movements that took place against them in the parliament met with Atatürk, and as a result of that meeting, rather than closing the association completely, they decided to take a break from their studies and go to sleep.

Before this incident, Atatürk had no negative attitude or belief towards Masonry. Nothing had been said or written about what ATATÜRK said. However, as soon as the masonic lodges and associations were closed, there was a rumor that this incident was carried out at Atatürk's request.

Those, who attacked Masonry did so for many different reasons. While opposing Ataturk's revolutions and Kemalism, they were also

against Masonry and masonic lodges and they spread the words of Ataturk in 1935 in order to close the lodges.

In masonic terms, these years were called the “Turkish Mason’s sleeping time”. In reality, while official masonic activities were curtailed, and the masons took a break from their works, they still continued to gather among themselves.

For thirteen years Turkish masons displayed no organizational activities, but they kept holding lodge meetings in their homes still in 1939.



Although this was not the awakening of Turkish Masonry, it served as a preparation for awakening again. In 1948, Türkiye Yüksek Şûrası (Turkish High Council) members started their first official meetings. This organization that manages the units working in the higher degrees of Masonry, ensured that the establishment of new lodges, that were supposed to work under a Grand Lodge, were gathered under the High Council’s own management.

The lodges operating in the standard three degrees of masonry (Blue Lodges), which are working under the administration of the authority

of high degrees known as “high council” or “Supreme Council”, ran contrary to the rules and methods of organization adopted by Masons in the rest of the world.

Intense efforts were made to bring the lodges together, which had been established in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir to form a National Grand Lodge, once again. In the interim, under the administration of the high council, three separate Grand Lodges were established separately in the three major cities. It was quite difficult to gather them together, but in the end, it was accomplished. Due to the length of the name, it is often referred as simply: The Grand Lodge of Turkey.

In parallel with the official 1957 establishment, another Grand Lodge named the Turkey Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons was created. The association was named as the Türkiye Yükseltme Cemiyeti – (The Turkish Promotion and Progress Society).

Henceforth, Masonry continued working in the higher degrees and the Türkiye Yüksek Şürası changed its name to the Turkey Supreme Council. Legally, the newly re-established association was called the Turkey Masonic Association.

In the 1960s, we see that the Turkish Masonry had not developed as much as was expected. Until then Turkish Masonry was always worn down with problems from some outside influences. However, this time, it was a new event and it came from inside. Süleyman Demirel, who is nominated for the presidency of the Justice Party in 1964 and became 9<sup>th</sup> president of Turkey, was accused of being a mason to prevent him from being elected.

It was true that Demirel entered freemasonry in 1956, but then lost interest and did not attend the lodge meetings. Upon his request, Deputy Grand Commander Secretary Enver Necdet Egeran in Ankara personally signed and stamped a titled letter stating that Demirel was never registered with the association.

The issuance of such a document was described by and accepted by most masons as “Turkish Masonry cannot be in politics, and cannot be played like an instrument by anyone”. Therefore, intense discussions arose in the grand plenary session. Egeran accepted his mistake and resigned from his position declaring that he would not be a nominee for the next term’s Grand Commander position, and thus he was not sent to the disciplinary committee. Then the very next year, Enver Necdet Egeran, although he promised not to, declared himself as a candidate at the very last minute and was elected as a Grand Commander. It confused the Grand Lodge even more than it already was. On the other hand, the Turkey Supreme Council got involved in the Grand Lodge’s internal division introducing a harsh attitude and causing a breakup of the Grand Lodge’s management.



Turkish Masonry abandoned masonic studies for a period of one and a half years, disheartened by this issue. Eventually, some masons left their lodges and established six independent lodges on their own. One of the lodges in Izmir separated itself from the Grand Lodge, along with all of its members, and all together seven lodges met in 1966 and established the Turkey Grand Lodge of Masonry.

At this point, there were two forms of Masonry

in Turkey. The Supreme Council of Turkey cancelled all relations with the Turkey Free and Accepted Masons Grand Lodge and embraced the newly established United Mason Lodge. The Turkey Grand Lodge of Masonry began to work together with the Supreme Council's building in Istanbul. Because of this the Turkey Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons forbids their members from participating in high-degree studies in Masonry. Additionally, some high degree masons resigned from the Supreme Council of Turkey and formed another organization under the name of the Turkey High Council.

This second administrative organ, in accordance with the laws of the Turkish Republic, chose the name: Turkey Intellectual and Cultural Association. Masonry in Turkey from then onwards has two blue lodges and two high degree lodges.

## Period after division



The United Mason Lodge of Turkey continued working with the liberal approach adopted from the French Masonry. They tended to participate in the community and began some initiatives starts for the purpose of continuing the liberal approach.

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons continued to participate Anglo-Saxon freemasonry. These efforts were also led by Enver Necdet Egeran.

While in 1965, the Turkey Free and Accepted Masons-Grand Lodge was within the cohesion that we mentioned above, a ceremony, referred to as a consecration was carried out, which was deemed necessary for the Turkish Free and Accepted Masonry to be recognized as a

“regular Grand Lodge” by the Anglo-Saxon freemasonic organizations. This consecration was carried out in a hurry during one of the general assembly meetings, but was later found to be inadequate for the United Grand Lodge of England to accept them as masons. Some changes needed to be made in the statutes and rituals of the new Grand Lodge, but this alone was not enough. Another requirement for recognition by the Grand Lodge of England was for the obedience to have a lodge that had received its patent from a recognized obedience. Therefore, it is the lodge named Resne, which had joined the Masrik-i Azam-i Osmani in 1909 when it had been affiliated with the Egyptian obedience, that is cited as the origin of Turkish Freemasonry. Then in 1970, because of this lodge named Resne, the Grand Lodge of England recognized the Turkey Free and Accepted Masons-Grand Lodge as a regular Grand Lodge.

This division of Masonry in Turkey only belongs to some of the internal events that erupted in 1965. The result was two separate masonic lodges, and two separate high-degree authorities located on opposing sides, one of Liberal Masonry and the other of Anglo-Saxon Freemasonry.

According to the amendment law concerning associations, all associations who have Republic of Turkey or only Turkey in their name, changed in 1973. There upon the word Turkey was removed from the beginning of the names of all the masonic organizations in Turkey.

In the late 1980s, some Masons, as also happened in many western countries, supported initiatives to enable women Masons in Turkey. In this context, an association was first established in 1989 under the name of Contemporary Brotherhood Solidarity Association. In 1991, to enter Masonry a temporary lodge was established for members of this association.

The women who entered Masonry established four separate lodges. In the same year, these lodges came together and formed a

Grand Lodge named the Women's Grand Masonic Lodge. Female masons later changed the name of both this organization and the association to the Grand Lodge of Women Masons.



In May 2016, they also established their own Supreme Council, the Women's Supreme Council. In 1991, in order to become a member of the international masonic organization known as CLIPSAS, Turkish Liberal Masonry applied to the Turkey Council of Ministers. For this, a “universal declaration” was published, explaining the masonic attitude. With the permission of the Council of Ministry, they became a member of CLIPSAS.

The Grand Masonic Lodge began to use the name Grand Lodge of Liberal Masons since 1993. Today, there are three GRAND Masonic Lodges in Turkey. Since the higher degrees of Masonry are carried out under an organization separate from the Grand Lodge, there are currently six independent masonic associations in Turkey which are recognized by G.:O.:D.:F.:

In Turkey, there are many attacks saying that “Masonry is an international organization with roots outside” and that this organization is based against on the customs of the Turkish people and the laws of Republic of Turkey. For years there every kind of effort has been attempted to find a legal approach to ensure the closure of masonic lodges in Turkey.

Now days, it is accepted that as with other masonic organizations in various countries, Masonry is universal in terms of common purpose and the ideal of unification, but they are completely independent national institutions within their own administrative organizations. Ready to raise the ideals of humanity.

Today, there are nearly 15,500 free and accepted masons, 7,800 liberal masons, 1700 women masons, and an unknown number of young masons established in Turkey.

The Masonic Grand Lodge of Women was recognized as a regular masonic organization by the other obediences, which are known today as the Grand Lodge of Masonry, and also by many Liberal Masons in Europe. Later, they joined the international masonic organization known as CLIPSAS. This rapidly increased the number of its members and developed its organization in the cities Mersin, Bodrum, Antalya and Bursa. They acquired their own temples in Istanbul and Ankara. They also established lodges in Izmir, Adana, Bursa, Mersin, Bodrum, and Antalya. To date, the (2020) Women's masonic lodge has a total of twenty one lodges in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and Adana.

# The Historical Origins of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for symbolic degrees<sup>20</sup>



## Symbolic and high degrees

Every freemason, since the day of the initiation and, in many cases, even before becoming a freemason, cannot help but puzzle over the origins of our Ancient Order. The following pages try to clarify where the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite comes from and when it was born.

Another question is related to the steps a freemason has to take advancing towards knowledge and the degrees signing these steps. A

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<sup>20</sup> Masonic Coffee June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

well known american diagram gives a summary of the path by means of the following symbolic (even if from some points of view a bit deviant), representation.



American freemasonry normally uses the word “degree” and not the word “grades”, but some French sources make a distinction between “grade” and “degré”; the “grade” is conferred to a member, and it defines “degré” as the level where that grade is set in the masonic hierarchy of the rite. In this paper we follow the American custom and we always use the word “degree”.

At the base of the building are the “cowans”, an old word to designate the profanes, who climb the first steps of the temple or pause to think about making the crucial decision and becoming a “candidate”, and, if the petition is accepted, an Entered Apprentice or E.:A.:; there are the Entered Apprentices, E.:A.: first degree, recognizable because of their white apron with the spoiler up, the Fellow Crafts, F.:C.:, second degree, and the Master masons, M.:M.:, third degree.

The first three steps bear the names of these degrees. Some authors believe that the Master mason degree, if achieved and not only in



potentiality, opens the gates of the masonic knowledge; others, for instance René Guénon, have the opinion that the first two degrees of the Royal Arch, part of the York Rite, are an important supplement, since they still refer to operative masons on how to make an arch, not used in the Solomon temple, but widely part of Architectural Styles of the ancient Romans, and base of the Middle Ages Romanic churches and the

gothic cathedrals: there is an endless historical debate in Anglo-Saxon freemasonry about that.

In any case, everywhere in the world, there are rites designed to guide the initiatic path; in the diagram above we can see the Scottish and the York rites, both leading to the top of the building. The following pages make reference to the first three, or symbolic degrees with some reference to the high degrees, up to 33, of the Scottish rite, on a French point of view.

Blue lodges is the name of the first three degrees or symbolic ones, which cannot be considered as lower or inferior ones, since they constitute a closed and complete cycle of knowledge; this is the reason why the diagram could be deviating, if the higher position of the high degrees is interpreted as mandatory steps to a superior knowledge and not as optional steps of the path to knowledge.

Obviously in our adogmatic world, our brothers and sisters are free to have a different opinion about this point. Concluding, the term Scottish rite is used to design the so called high degrees, from the 4<sup>th</sup> up to the 33<sup>rd</sup>, that usually are a fully separated experience and have no hierarchical prevalence on the blue lodges, but in some masonic organization where the Grand Master and the Sovereign Grand Commander, by their Constitution, are the same person; in other organizations it is against the “*Étiquette Maçonnique*” to enter a blue lodge meeting with tags or any paraphernalia of the Scottish or York rite.

The so-called London International Compact of 1814, art. 1 gives the following indication: “It is declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Freemasonry consist in three Degrees and no more. Those of the Entered Apprentice; the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason including the supreme chapter of the Holy Royal Arch”.

## Scotland and freemasonry

Scotland occupies a relevant place in freemasonic history and our Scottish brothers make many claims about their priority. It has been argued that regulated freemasonry in Scotland is older than in any other part of the British isles. The connection between the craft of stonemasonry and modern freemasonry can be readily established in Scotland. This direct connection can be traced from the oldest masonic written records in the world, which are the property of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in Edinburgh.

The oldest records held by the Grand Lodge of Scotland are minutes of Lodge Aitcheson's Haven, which commence on 9 January 1599. The Meeting minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh (Mary's Chapel) No. 1 also date from 1599. Lodge Mother Kilwinning is number "0" on the Roll of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, and it is reputed to be the oldest lodge not only in Scotland, but in the world. It is styled Mother



*William St. Clair*

Lodge of Scotland, attributing its origins to the XII<sup>th</sup> century, and is often called Mother Kilwinning.

One of the most curious episodes in the history of freemasonry occurred at the time of the founding of the Grand Lodge of Scotland in 1736, when William St. Clair of Rosslyn (or Rossline, or Roslin), tendered his "resignation of the office of hereditary Grand Master" in order that in the future no confusions would arise as between his family and any Grand Master. The "resignation" begins by saying "that the masons in Scotland did,

by several deeds, constitute and appoint William and Sir William St. Clair of Rosslin, my ancestors and their heirs, to be their patrons, protectors, judges, or masters”.

William Sinclair of Rosslyn was a Scottish freemason, being initiated in lodge Canongate Kilwinning on 18 May, passed on 2 June 1736 and Raised on 3 November 1736. He is known as the first Grand Master (although his actual title is Grand Master mason), of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. He became the first Grand Master mason by acclamation on St. Andrew’s Day of the same year (1736).

With the end of the big building projects of the church, when the State became the most relevant customer, the governments imposed a person of their trust as controller of the Guilds of Builders. In Scotland, for instance, there were two Crown appointed officials, the Warden General and the Principal Master of Work to the Crown, the latter being in existence from 1539 at the latest. Towards the end of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, William Schaw held both these posts, since, on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 1583, King James VI appointed him principal *Maister o’ Wark* (Master of Works) to the Crown of Scotland for life, with responsibility for all royal castles and palaces, in place of Sir Robert Drummond. By the way William Schaw was an important figure in the development of freemasonry in Scotland.

There is an historical reason why Scotland is so relevant to a fond of masonic history, not just the fact of the celtic origins that ideally bind Scotland, Welsh, Ireland, France and north west Italy, as some never forgotten people traditions show, but there is something by far more recent and well documented, especially between Scotland and France.

## Scotland and France



Scotland and France had a strong historical tie, which seems an omen of the diffusion of the Scottish rite in France. The St. Clair family, so interweaved with freemasonry in Scotland, has French origins, Saint Clair, and recent DNA studies had given evidence of ties to the Merovingian dynasty. Furthermore Mary Stuart, better known as Mary Queen of Scots, was Queen Consort of France.

After the 1688 Glorious Revolution, the destiny of the Stuart dynasty brought her descendant to be exiled in Paris, where they gave an important contribution to the French freemasonry. Freemasonry flourished at the court of James Francis Edward Stuart, nicknamed the old Pretender, and many brothers were from nobility. In any case, to be a nobleman granted no privilege inside the lodge.



*Andrew Michael Ramsay*

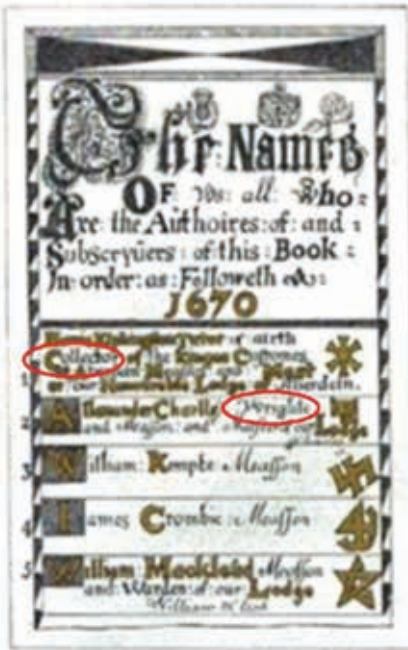
An eminent Jacobite freemason was Andrew Michael Ramsay commonly known as the Chevalier Ramsay. Anton von Gesnau, from a

noble German family, met Ramsay in 1741 and in his diary reported some useful information about Ramsay's view on the French freemasonry.

Here is a very interesting quotation from von Gesnau’s diary: “At these suppers the members, whatever their rank in society might be, are seated solely according to the date of their initiation to remind them that, in accordance with their creation, all men are equal to one another”. The XVIII century French masons did not care of nobility, social rank, wealth or degree, since they used to sit according to their masonic age and nothing more.

Astonishing in pre-revolutionary France! It is amazing that James Anderson, who wrote the 1723 Constitutions, still a fundament of speculative freemasonry, was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, and that his father was a mason; the American brother and historian Shawn Eyer published the following images of a chest in inlaid wood dated 1670 and correlating to the Aberdeen Mark Book, written by James Anderson’s father, who probably made also the box.

The Aberdeen Mark Book is relevant because it shows that operative and speculative masons were accepted as members of that



lodge. This is a page of the Aberdeen Mark Book, where we see that the last three Brothers were defined just as masons; the first, from the castle of Airth was a *collector* of the King’s Customs; also the second brother, past Master of the lodge, had a different qualification, since he is called *wrighte*, a word that means carpenter and architect too.

Let us now proceed with the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for symbolic degrees, as we wrote before, with some short references

to the high degrees. This paper is centered on the history of French freemasonry, a missing piece in a country where most of the studies are related to Anglo-Saxon freemasonry.

## **Grande Loge Générale Écossaise (The general Grand Lodge of Scotland)**

In 1804, a new masonic organization was born in Paris, the “Grande Loge Générale Écossaise (The general Grand Lodge of Scotland)”, which pretends to be the guardian of the “Ancient Accepted Rite”. Many of the members of this new Grand Lodge were French from America, who returned to Paris because of the Santo Domingo revolution, which ended the French colonial power on that island.

In their luggage, they brought back a masonic tradition with some unusual customs, not diffused in France, for the symbolic and the high degrees as well. Considering the symbolic degrees, they did not refer to the Premier Lodge of England constituted in 1717, but to the other great current of the early British speculative freemasonry, the so-called masonry “of the Ancients”, used in the first XIX century in France for the symbolic and the high degrees as well.

This masonic organization – which appeared in London in 1751 – had remained unknown in France throughout the XVIII century,

when the lodges practiced the rites, they had received from the Premier Grand Lodge of England in the mid- 1720s. On the other hand, the masonry of the “Ancients” was very well established in the future United States; since the French “Leeward” islands were a few tens of kilometers from the American coast, the French masons of



the colony had had frequent contacts with this masonic current; in Santo Domingo there was also a provincial Grand Lodge of the “Ancients”.

Regarding the high degrees, the French freemasons in the Americas continued to practice a system of 25 – then 33 – degrees, which they had received from France in 1761. In Paris, on the other hand, this system was abandoned in the years 1770-1790, to give way to the codification of the high degrees in four orders, adopted by the Grand Orient of France, but this decision was not universally accepted and the followers of the Ancient Accepted Rite rallied to their cause the masons who, since 1802, under the name of “Scottish”, had contested the standardization of high degrees adopted by the Grand Orient.

The Grande Loge Générale Écossaise (General Grand Lodge of Scotland), reunited, under the banner of the “Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite”, ritual peculiarities of quite different origins and nature. The 1804

quarrel revitalized two classic XVIII century freemasonry debates, which affected two completely separate masonic universes: in Great Britain the splitting between “the



“the Moderns” and “the Ancients”, essentially related to the symbolic degrees; in France the conflict between the “Grand Orient” and the “Écossais (Scots)”, which relates above all, but not only, to the question of the high degrees; therefore, even if the R.:A.:A.:A.: was established in Paris in 1804 only, its sources go down to XVIII century freemasonry.

## Differences between Ancients and Moderns

The analysis of the reference text of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite “Guide des Maçons Écossais (The Scottish Masons Guide)” immediately reveals a strong kinship with “Les Trois coups distincts (The Three distinct Knocks)”, the disclosure of the ritual of the Grand Lodge called of the “Ancients” (or Antients, following the spelling used by the Moderns).

Let us recall that, in 1751, a second Grand Lodge appeared in London alongside the Premier Grand Lodge of England founded in 1717. The “Ancients” and the Premier Grand Lodge of England practiced different rituals, particularly about the following points:

- the words of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degrees were “B and J” and not “J and B”,
- the Senior Warden was placed in the west, opposite the W.∴M.∴, and the Junior Warden in the middle of the column of the south, in front of the column of the Entered Apprentices,
- although having the same initials in both masonic organizations, M.∴B.∴, the word of the third degree was significantly different In a controversial spirit, the new Grand Lodge of the “Ancients” qualified the Premier Grand Lodge of England as the “Moderns” (even if the Grand Lodge of the Moderns, the Premier Grand Lodge, was founded about 34 years before the Ancients’ one).

What originally was a sobriquet, at the end became of common use and the expression the Grand Lodge of the “Moderns” today designates the freemasonry appeared in 1717. For a long time the historians have accepted the official discourse of the “Ancients” that they became secessionists because they were keen to retrieve the older masonic tradition, misrepresented by the Premier Grand Lodge of England.



In fact, that is not completely true: the Ancients were in large part from the Irish immigration to London and, as such, they received a very hostile welcome by the English Lodges.

The Irish Laurence Dermott wrote the Constitutions of the new Grand Lodge, The Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honourable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons (according to the Old Constitutions granted by His Royal Highness Prince Edwin, at York, Anno Domini nine hundred and twenty six, and in the year of masonry four thousand nine hundred and twenty six), published in 1756. He was born in Dublin and became a Mason in 1741; when he moved to London, he joined a lodge of the Premier Grand Lodge of England, but soon he left the Moderns and entered in one of the unaffiliated Irish lodges, constituted to have a lodge were the Irish migrants would be among themselves; five of those lodges gave birth to the new Grand Lodge. Actually, the rituals differences were not caused by the Premier Lodge of England innovations, but from the fact that in Ireland, and apparently in Scotland too, the original ritual heritage from the old operative masonry had been reorganized somewhat differently.

For instance, in the XVII century, the mason word for the degree was both J and B (to the question: “J”, they answered “B”); between 1720-1730 A.D., when the rituals were reshaped and the “secrets” of the old operative degree of Entered Apprentice were separated into two degrees, the English assigned J to the first degree and B to the second, while the Irish and Scots made an opposite choice.

The Ancients’ Ritual is neither more nor less symbolic than the Moderns’ one, just their symbols hierarchy was slightly different and there were some variations in the rite. The dignitaries of the new Scottish General Lodge added, to the ritual structure borrowed from the masonry of the Ancients, peculiarities of the “Scottish Rite”. The origins of this peculiar current of the French freemasonry which, in the



second half of the XVIII century, spread from Marseilles and from Avignon to Southern France and later to Paris, remain quite mysterious. It is not impossible that a Scotsman was the origin of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Marseille in 1751; the peculiarity of the Scottish Mother Lodge of Marseille, Avignon and later of Paris essentially affected the high degrees.

However, for reasons that are not very clear, the blue degrees practiced by the mother lodges presented some peculiarities, such as the place of the large candlesticks around the Tracing Board and their symbolic relationship with the Worshipful Master and the two Wardens: by semantic shift, we came to speak of symbolic degrees of the “Scottish Rite” meaning the blue lodges ones.

Finally, the “Guide des Maçons Écossais (Scottish Masons Guide)” adopts the customs or the concerns of the French masonry of the very beginning of the century about several points, for instance the presence of a Master of ceremony among the Officers or certain elements of masonic education.

The initiation journeys and trials were associated with the four elements, reflecting the interest of the time for hermeticism and the initiations of the Antiquity. The Masons dislike for structural squabbles, led quickly the leaders of the Grand Orient and of the General Scottish Grand Lodge to begin negotiations with the purpose of giving finally an end to their division; in 1804 “L’acte d’Union et Concordat “ is announced and the bond “français” and “écossais” was born.

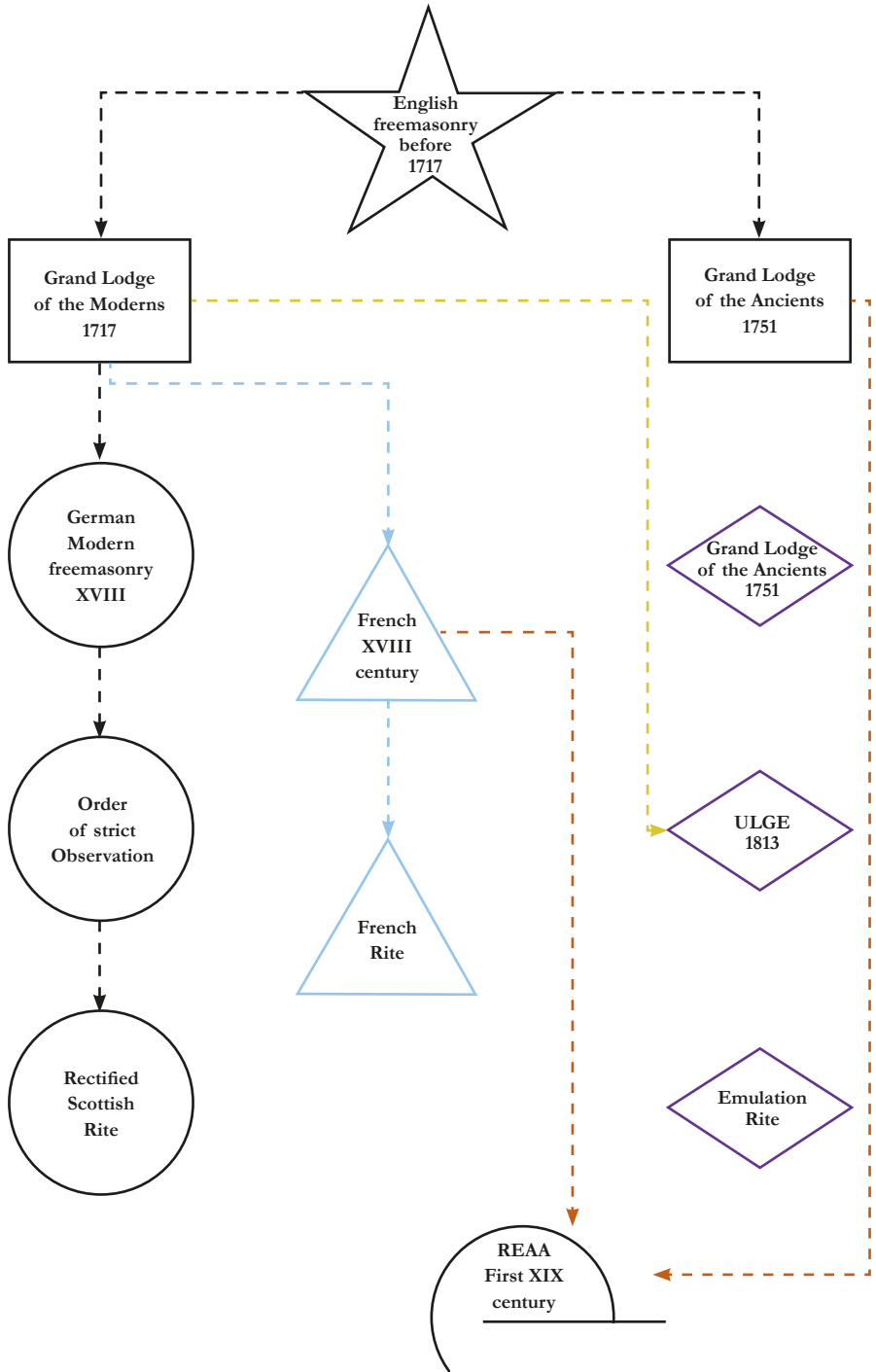
In few days, an agreement was reached and the Scottish General Grand Lodge merged into the Grand Orient, which declared for its part: “to unite inside itself all of the Rites “. Unfortunately, the application of the agreement encountered difficulties with regard to the high degrees

and it was broken in 1805; between 1805 and 1816, a tacit agreement was finally found; the Grand Orient of France managed the chapters from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> degree, while the Supreme Council administered the chapters beyond the 19<sup>th</sup> degree. Finally, in 1816, the majority of the members of the Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and last grade of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite decided to join the Grand Orient of France.

From that time on, the thirty-three degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite have always been practiced within the Grand Orient of France, which therefore benefits of an undeniable Scottish legitimacy. Furthermore, since 1804, there have continuously been Grand Orient Blue Lodges working with the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite; some of them are among the most prestigious ones, for instance: The Commanders of Mont-Thabor – the Lodge where we find all the founders of French ethnology – Les Sept Écossais – the lodge of Gérard de Nerval's father where he was received as a Louveteau (Lowton), as the son of a freemason is called when he joins his father's lodge – or even La Clémente Amitié, Les Zélés Philanthrop and many others.

Gérard de Nerval father was a doctor of the Napoleonic Army and later opened a practice in Paris. Gérard de Nerval (22 May 1808 – 26 January 1855) was the nom de plume of the French writer, poet, and translator Gérard Labrunie. He was author of novellas and poems and translated into French works of german romantic authors.

He was a mason and his interpretation of the Mith of Hiram Abiff introduced some different points of view on the story, since, in Gérard de Nerval version, the Queen of Sheba and Hiram fall in love.



# The National digital commission of the G::O::D::F::<sup>21</sup>

## History 2016 - 2017

Created at the 2016 Convent, installed in 2017, the National digital commission is intended to “address the issues & prospects of the transition from the industrial society to the information society”.

## Vision and mission

Desire	Improvements
If this definition seems quite limiting today, it nevertheless contains an ardent desire on the part of the freemasons to consider the transformation of society and to reflect on its improvement.	This is spontaneously the first concern expressed. Nowadays the Internet and digital technology are an essential component at the crossroads of freedom, culture, and social relations.

Through their work, the members of the commission will therefore attempt on the one hand to better interpret the major digital issues, and on the other hand to represent in our obedience the most open issues: societal of course, but also philosophical, symbolic and initiatory.

## Process

Each region (17) elects a representative in the National digital commission. The Council of the Order delegates a councilor at the annual assembly, a report is submitted and voted on, followed by a second vote on the renewal of the commission, as it is not a permanent body.


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<sup>21</sup> Masonic Coffee March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

## Since 2017, work has focused on

A guide to good digital practices for all the brothers and sisters of the G.:O.:D.:F.: A report entitled “Digital fractures, myths, threats and opportunities”, the multidisciplinary drafting of which should lead to publication work on specific themes: robotization, artificial intelligence, digital identity, digital deserts, digital secrecy, uberization, the responsibilities and possible commitment of the freemasonry on social networks, etc.

At the same time, the commission is constantly questioning the notions of digital sovereignty and loyalty of services: this more operational aspect remains at the heart of the transformations to come.

Tools	Online space	Note to Self
<p>Finally, the regions can equip themselves with tools adapted to their work. But above all, the times of confinement have intensified the digital practices, to the point of questioning in depth the meaning of the rituals with regards to the legitimate links that the lodges wish to maintain with all their members.</p>	<p>The commission has set up an online space for its own exchanges: it serves as a permanent laboratory. It is evaluated by the members of the commission.</p> 	<p>It should be noted that the commission has no role in defining the Obedience's own digital strategy objectives. At most, it can communicate its opinion or engage in a dialogue with the concerned bodies. This separation of “powers” leaves the commission free to carry out the work that it intends to disseminate.</p>

## The French Rite: a traditional and modern rite<sup>22</sup>

The Grand Orient of France (G.:O.:D.:F.:) is a federation of differing masonic rites:

1. French Rite
2. Rectified Scottish Rite
3. Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR)
4. Rite of Ancient York Masonry
5. Emulation (English style)
6. Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis-Misraïm
7. Operating Rite of Solomon

The “reference rite” for all administrative ceremonies is the French Rite. In G.:O.:D.:F.: meetings the French Rite is the standard for administrative work—the Rite of Reference: installation on the lodge, of the officers, etc. A voluminous and authorized corpus of Masonic literature (available to all) includes extensive coverage of the different rites practiced in G.:O.:D.:F.: lodges. Most lodges work the A.:A.:S.:R.: or the French Rite: our brothers and sisters are encouraged to expand their knowledge the A.:A.:S.:R.:, as well as the French Rite: these are the rites they are likely to encounter during lodge visits authorized by their degrees.

*Each Freemason has a particular attachment to the ritual,  
and it is in no way a form of fetishism<sup>23</sup>.*

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<sup>22</sup> Masonic Coffee September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Based on an article of our beloved late brother L.MAR.: (1951-2018) in *Le Franc Maçon en Habit de Lumière, esprit & matière*, Château de Tours, association 5997, 2002. Editor's translation and introduction, notes, illustrations.

<sup>23</sup> L. Marcos, *op.cit.* p. 135.

GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE

Puissance Symbolique Régulière Souveraine

CAHIER DES RITUELS  
DES TROIS GRADES  
AU RITE FRANÇAIS

RITE FRANÇAIS DE RÉFÉRENCE DU G. O. D. F.



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On the five continents, it is the “raison d’être” of the masonic institution, and it structures our identity by engraving the imagery and the gesture at the roots of what makes us human beings, where sensitivity and intellect meet and make sense.

The rites of freemasonry are a very interesting subject, rich in information, but trying to define them is surprisingly difficult.

They were born to be both a script and an act of commemoration and developed in an ideally reconstructed philosophical space-time framework.

## **What is freemasonry?**

A fraternity, an initiatory school, and a humanistic obligation. It extends its action beyond the practice of ceremonies and beyond its temples at the same time and perhaps because it is maintained in its structure by the identifying effect of the practice of a ritual. The form of this practice is in constant evolution but for the most part it was established between the end of the XVII<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. It is the result of the meeting between an operative background and the theme of the temple of King Solomon, which was developed historically thereafter.

## **Tools for speculation**

At its most ancient level, every masonic rite proceeds from a preserved or revived fund of operative customs linked to an ancestral continental stone mason culture. British historians may have a different view, but this is not central to this piece of architecture.



It persists in the emblematic or symbolic presence of the tools for working with stone: tracing board, trowel, plumbline, square, level, compass, crowbar, chisel, gavel, etc. – and an essential garment: the apron. It is also composed of a vocabulary borrowed from this same operative culture: tracing, site, board, brother, lodge, workshop, apprentice, craftsman, etc. (note in passing the roofing terms such as Tyler, cover, it’s raining!)

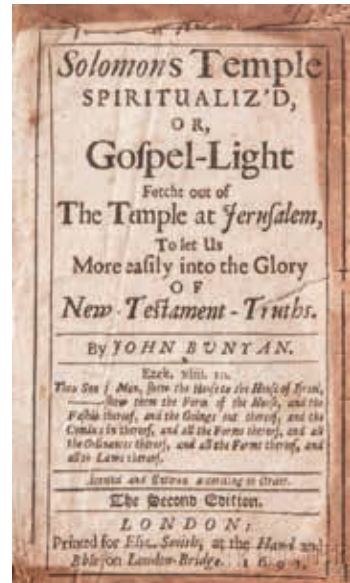
And that’s not all: the presence of various formulas, in particular the mason word, and all the catchphrases in the questions and answers about age or time are in the same vein as the modes of recognizing the craft. In the same way, although fewer in number, some elements of the old craft legend also formed the basis for later development. Judging by all these contributions and the great importance of sworn practice in the reception rites, by the very physical gestures in the signs, steps and grips, and by the clapping of the hands which recall the rhythms and sounds of olden days, one is forced to admit that this operative imprint is the foundation of masonic ritual.

Many aspects of stone masonry that have come down to us are therefore the reuse of the same material. This basis is what still makes modern freemasonry the successor and reorganizer of ancient practices with a new purpose, and to which were added the fruits of various speculations and developments in the mid-XVII<sup>th</sup> and early XVIII<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Contrary to what one might think, the first speculative masons did not consider themselves the heirs of the “cathedral builders”. That would come much later, in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, when the Middle Ages

and the craftsmen were better regarded. In the meantime, at the time we are interested in, the “Gothic” era was rejected and to claim descent from the “operative” masons would have been incongruous. It is the Protestant interpretations, centered in particular on the Scriptures, which enriched the fund of legend and provided the backbone of freemasonry. The advantage for the newly “accepted” non-operative who found there a protected place to develop a satisfying purpose, is that they found an origin myth and a framework adapted to their new brotherhood. Little by little, an edifying picture, commemorative comments and a philosophical corpus take shape and emerges dramatically between 1717 and 1723.

By the mid-XVII<sup>th</sup> century, the patron character of Hiram, the Master architect, began to take shape. He would become the basis of the central drama of a new degree between 1730 and 1740 and a particularly rich myth for the new institution. Samuel Lee’s glosses on the architecture of Solomon’s Temple, published in 1659 with plates in *Orbis Miraculum*, seem to have played a large role in this development. They show the two pillars and the pomegranates, the mosaic paving, the porch and the dormers<sup>24</sup>.



John Bunyan, in 1688, in *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*<sup>25</sup>, seems to have been the first to assert that the pillar to the North was called Jachin, and the one to the South Boaz. The reference to Solomon's Temple had been discreet until then, but everything legitimized it: it

<sup>24</sup> Editor Note: *Orbis Miraculum, or the Temple of Solomon*, London, 1659, 1665, printed at the expense of the university of Oxford.

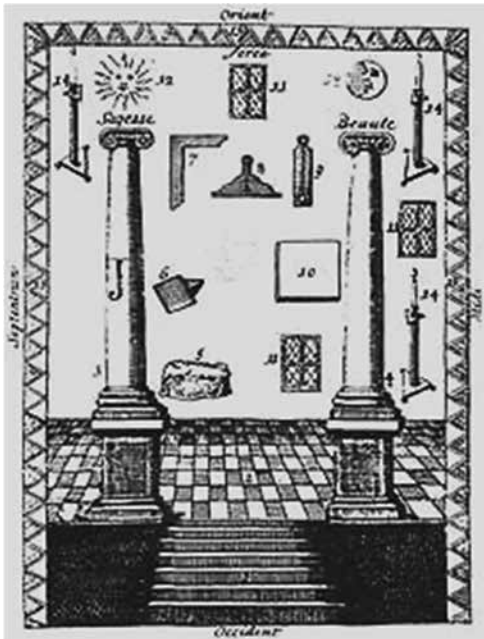
<sup>25</sup> Editor's note: chap XII-2 quoting Kings 21.

came from the Bible, it offered a universal religious model in accordance with the expectations of the brethren, and it induced the idea that the construction of this temple was the birthplace of the institution, mother lodge (reference lodge) par excellence.

The question of a Scottish catechism of 1663<sup>26</sup>: where was the just lodge? received the answer: In the porch of Solomon's Temple.

The influence of theological speculations was decisive: John Milton, a puritan philosopher of the time, spoke of a Creator using a plumbline and a level to make the human soul his rational temple, and the square and compasses to design bodies in the same way as buildings.

Finally, the Dumfries MS, an important masonic ritual manuscript of 1710 for understanding the way things were, adopts in catechism form, sometimes word for word, a number of Samuel Lee's commentaries.



The early XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, depictions of the construction of the temple with its porch housing the first lodge appeared in the form of “Tableau de loge” (Lodge mat). In a directed perspective these show the J and B pillars, steps leading to a door, a mosaic pavement, and the temple under the luminaries. Three grilled windows, two stones, a tracing board, tools and various objects are set

<sup>26</sup> In the Scottish Edinburgh Register House manuscript [MS] question 10.

out in a logical order. The whole is surrounded by an indented border with tassels in the corners. It is obvious that the authors of masonic catechisms and the iconographic artists they inspired drew on these sources and the art of memory to develop a kind of emblem.

## **The regular meetings: central point of the system**

The first operations consisted of an admission ceremony to transmit the step and word, repeated questions and answers, ceremonial movements and instructional actions centered on this original theme. They also claimed as their origin the meeting between operative signs and the commemoration of this supposedly founding act, which was soon relegated to the background. The custom of holding lodges transmitted, and the proto ritual of freemasonry was perfected, from this archetypal imagery and in these rather simple codes and gestures.

This concerns us in two ways. Firstly, because the motifs that developed directly inspired the decoration of masonic aprons (and of a significant number of other supports) a few years later. Their motifs take up the Solomonic theme, reducing it however to pillars, luminaries (sun and moon, whose position will change, stars and sometimes clouds), two ashlar and a few basic tools surrounding a central checkerboard pavement putting in perspective the facade of the temple or simply a door. It was sometimes enriched with images of landscapes, with a memorial cenotaph and some symbols, etc. The first motif was also the repository or inventory of iconography. Combinations, such as the superimposition of the square and the compass or various knots, developed in an increasingly free and artistic style.

Secondly, by wearing these fine, varied and elaborate compositions, from the middle of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century until the middle

of the XIX<sup>th</sup>, the brethren proclaimed their membership in the Order. They were a kind of scale model of the universe, or more precisely a reduction of the idealized lodge.

At the same time, permanent furniture to appear in the rooms entirely devoted to masonic activity. Here again, the representation already mentioned served as a model. The Lodge mat (Tableau de loge) was literally projected into reality the real pillars, real ashlars, etc.

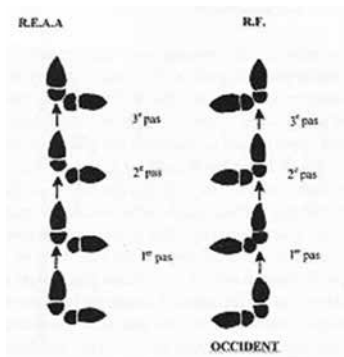
## A standard

The approach to this imagery and this proto ritual is also of interest since the French Rite is the heir and the repository of these early labors.

The establishment of masonry in France saw the introduction of an original type of lodge mat with its “indented tassel” and the presence of rough and perfect ashlars.

Through adaptations, approximations and an inevitable evolution, a continental influence on masonry was quickly asserted. The term “rite” was not used, but rather “style” or “régime” without any qualifying distinction since it is the ceremonial form common to all.

Later, another family of rituals was established and, at the end of

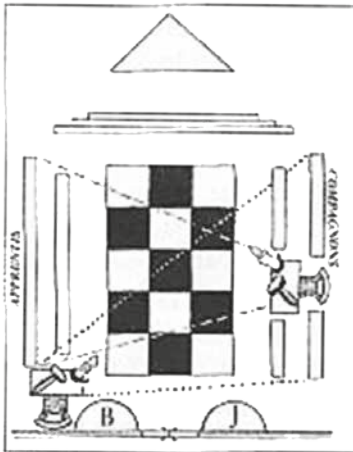


the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, it became necessary to specify the rite of the “Moderns” as opposed to the usurped qualification of the “Ancients“. In the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, the ritual of the “Moderns” took the name of “French” to distinguish it from other rites worked in France: Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Egyptian Rite, etc.

The French Rite is then of obvious interest as a “standard”; so are its main characteristics.

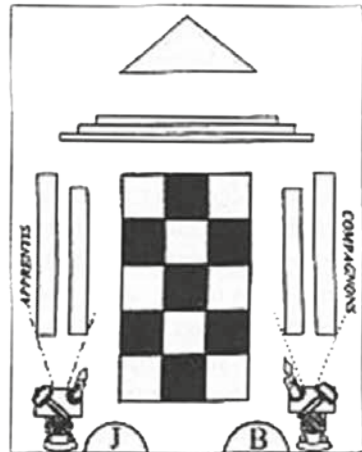
As in the ritual system of the Moderns, the Apprentice starts with his right foot (reminiscent of a precautionary method of moving on a scaffold?) Column J is on the left in the North and Column B on the right in the South; the Junior Warden and the Senior Warden (as soon as there is evidence of one) are placed respectively in the North and South.

**RITE ÉCOSSAIS ANCIEN ET ACCEPTÉ**



**Fig. 30 – Position des colonnes au R.E.A.A. et zones d’influence des surveillants.**

**RITE FRANÇAIS**



**Fig. 31 – Position des colonnes au R.F. et zones d’influence des surveillants.**

Another major feature is that the clapping of the hands is given by two sharp claps and one heavy clap (reminiscent of the sound of the gavel and chisel at work?)

Finally, the admission ceremony has a logical sequence: separation, physical tests, obligation, communication, recognition, and social advice. The structure of this ceremony, like so many other forms of initiation and yet so specific, has remained unchanged through time:

- In fact, the foundations and wording, the signs, the behavioral philosophy, and the respect for Hiramite dramatization (which appeared in the 1730s) of the French Rite are a faithful perpetuation of the corpus of the primitive ritual ;
- After the mid-XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, for reasons we need not go into here, the “Ancients” reversed the order of the Pillars and Guards, made the Apprentices walk on the left foot, changed or moved the words, and transformed the clapping of the hands into “three distinct strokes” ;
- Their name “Ancient” would have led to the mistaken belief that their innovations, which gradually became the most common version in the world, were the oldest tradition.

## **The lodge is structured**

The third contribution that gave the ritual of speculative masonry as it is presented here all its density, comes from the innovations and developments that gave masonry its definitive structure over the next few decades and which ended with the introduction of variations in the functioning of the French Rite during the XIX<sup>th</sup> and XX<sup>th</sup> centuries.

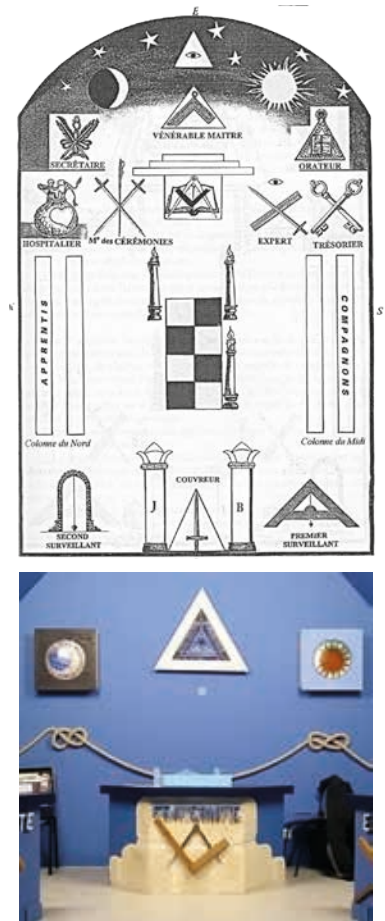
The most significant developments took place between 1750 and 1760 and concerned the naming and placement of officers as well as the symbols of their functions; for example, after 1727, the Master of the lodge had to carry a square, the Senior Warden a level and the Junior Warden a plumbline. Various jewels and objects appeared and three candles – the sun, moon, and Master of the lodge – were placed round the lodges mat. The seats are arranged. Wisdom, strength, and beauty are asserted and applied to the East and the two pillars.

The widespread use of the sword, the introduction of adoption customs for women and children, and the codification of table practice

copying military customs must also be attributed to the internal evolution of the “Moderns’ Rite” in its French form. They were often “borrowed” and retained by other continental rites and are generally still in use.

However, these evolutions also include the appearance of myths, additional degrees and additions of various origins (notably, chivalric and hermetic) that are also found in the admission ceremony.

Finally, the East was adorned with its radiant Delta and the throne of King Solomon was placed under a canopy. The ensemble was soon no longer in front of the temple as it was to be strictly understood but had become the temple itself.



## Faithfull to the régulateur du maçon

When French freemasonry was federated into the Grand Orient of France in 1773, it was under the auspices of the French Rite that the masonic customs and practices of the obedience were established.

The adoption of the principle of the plurality of rites, which facilitated the Rectified Scottish Rite in 1778, the AASR in 1804 and the Egyptian Rites in 1862; the separation between the first three degrees and the “higher degrees”, election of Masters of the lodge, and the

principle of “One Lodge One Vote” in the assemblies of lodges date from this period.

In 1786, the rite was codified and an official version for the Craft



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

degrees was adopted. It contained a rational presentation of all the labors practiced in France and their seniority. It fixed and specified the administrative structure, the officers, the way of receiving the non-masons and the protocol of the table ritual (very important at the time). This version was published in 1801 under the name of *Régulateur du Maçon*. The invocation of the Great Architect of the Universe was omitted in openings

and closings but is placed discreetly in the initiations and instructions.

A grouping of the higher degrees, known as “Scottish” degrees, in a system of four groupings (“Orders”) was instituted but declined rapidly in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century.



Portrait de Lucien Murat en tenue de Grand Maître.

During the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, the French Rite remained largely faithful to the 1801 *Régulateur du Maçon*. However, it was weighed down and transformed by regulatory measures, moralistic commentary, and ideological currents. It suffers from opposing tendencies. It was first marked by the progressive deism typical of the beginning of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, which led it in 1849, to integrate two “dogmatic affirmations”

concerning the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, at the same time as it adopted the trilogy “Liberté-Égalité-Fraternité.”

In 1858, the lodge was redesigned in a version promoted by Murat, who wanted to keep it within philanthropic and moral limits and to control and censor its activities (the prohibition of mentioning religion or politics in the lodge dates from this period; it is not, as is believed, a canon of tradition). Subsequently, it was quickly influenced by the trends of society and the increasingly republican commitment of most of freemasonry (but it was generally composed of brethren more flexible than those who practiced the AASR).

This trend led to the deletion of Article I, in 1877, of the two theistic affirmations of 1849. In the name of the absolute freedom of conscience, the lodges remained free to invoke or not the Great Architect of the Universe.

A few years later, this term no longer being an official reference in the obedience or in the ritual, the French Rite is bracketed by an almost doctrinal atheism, forgetting that a certain number of lodges have kept the invocation or that a certain number of ardent republican freemasons working in the French Rite are spiritualists. In any case, in 1887, the “Amiable”<sup>27</sup> ritual, which will impose many of its formulations for a long time, is marked by the positivist philosophy<sup>28</sup> of its writers.

An attempt was made to transform the rite into a rationalist catechism and certain traditional formulations were modified, as well as

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27 Editor’s note: Louis Amiable (1837-1897) 1886, with variation by Antoine Blatin (1841-1911 in 1907).

28 Editor’s note: Positivism. Positivism is an empiricist philosophical theory that holds that all genuine knowledge is either true by definition or positive – meaning a posteriori fact derived by reason and logic from sensory experience. Other ways of knowing, such as theology, metaphysics, intuition, or introspection are rejected or considered meaningless. The foundations for the positivist idea were established by the Scottish philosopher David Hume in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century and developed into a system by French thinker Auguste Comte in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century.

the initiation ceremonies and the instructions. But the lodges refused, and the most radical attempts to abolish or distort the initiation and symbols or to give freedom to the lodges in matters of ritual were rejected. The second and third degrees were hardly touched, and ritual was introduced for funerals, consecration of temples and installation of officers. Others were to follow for recognition ceremonies.

Contrary to a preconceived idea, the XX<sup>th</sup> century did not bring an accentuation of the phenomenon but rather a slow but steady return to the content of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century and the *Régulateur du Maçon* of 1801.

Most lodges had retained or readopted this outline before the Great War. Thereafter, the French Rite, although reshaped by its struggles and commitments, by the ordeals of the Occupation and by the difficulties of the post-war period, slowly reinstated the most traditional elements of its ritual, and returned to a more symbolic, even spiritual, philosophy, under the influence of men such as Antoine Blatin (who was the author of the current text of article I), Edmond Gloton or Arthur Groussier in the inter-war period, then Marius Lepage, André Doré or René Guilly. Reintroduced were references to Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, almost forgotten, numerous formulas of instruction from the middle of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century and certain traditional aspects of initiation.

This has led to the rediscovery of the antiquity and ritual legitimacy of the French Rite. The Tableau de loge (Lodge mat) is more and more frequently used in lodges working on the ritual and the Regulation du Maçon is the reference for a growing number of lodges of all obediences. Even the old system of “degrees of wisdom” organized in four Orders has been revived.

## The French Rite

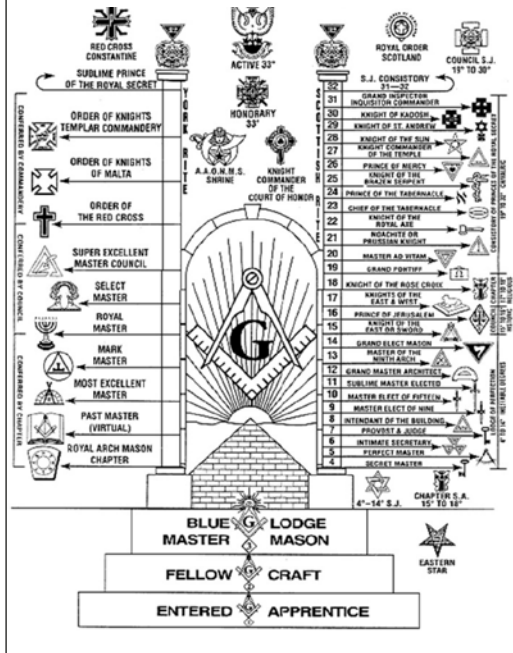
### Blue lodge:

1. Apprentice
2. Companion
3. Master

### Four orders:

- First order (4<sup>th</sup> degree):  
Secret Elect
- Second order (5<sup>th</sup> degree):  
Scottish Grand Elect
- Third order (6<sup>th</sup> degree):  
Knight of the Orient
- Fourth order (7<sup>th</sup> degree):  
Sovereign Rose-Cross  
Prince, Perfect freemason,  
Grand Commander  
of the Temple.

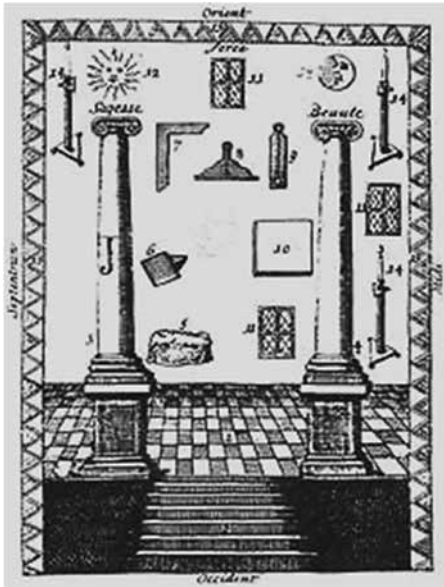
## The emblematic structure of regular freemasonry



The ability of the French Rite to adapt and evolve without losing its deep identity has been proven once again. The use of a mirror during initiation or the habit of having twelve officers instead of ten (adding a Master of Banquets and a Master of Music) are to its credit.

### Signs of French Rite revival include:

1. Its vitality in countries that have remained faithful to its practice, such as Belgium, in Africa, and Brazil
2. The regular return of Spain, Portugal, and former Eastern European countries
3. Emergence in Latin America.



The French Rite represents a noble part of our masonic heritage and rightly claims to unite tradition and modernity. Isn't that what every rite should do?

Rising above quarrels of "regularity" that no longer make sense, the obediences which practice the rite are dynamic and growing steadily but let us not forget that a rite is only as good as the men and women who serve it.

"The future of the French Rite is in the hands of those who, tomorrow, place their conviction in the dual capacity of freemasonry to live in tradition and to grow in modernity"<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> L. Marcos, *op. cit.* p. 143.

Editor's note: In 1813, in England, under the pressure of political power, the Grand Lodges of the "Moderns" and "Ancients" merged. The rite retained is largely that of the "Ancients"; it will be called Emulation (from the name of the lodge of conciliation responsible for developing it). This rite will spread throughout the British Colonial Empire. The rite of the "Moderns", of the First Grand Lodge, thus fell into disuse in its land of origin... Today, the only major Masonic obedience at the international level that still practices it is the Grand Orient of France... under the name of French Rite, whatever its versions!

Today 47 G.:O.:D.:F.: lodges out of 1,300 practice solely a traditional version of the French Rite, while the remaining lodges practice the "Rite Français Groussier" (1938, 1946, 1955 for the final version). Few others adopted another version (whatever the names, sometimes fanciful: the French Rite 1783, 1801, "Traditional" or even "Ancient", "Philosophique" or "Moderne Rétabli"). From the Grand Orient de France, this Modern French Rite swarmed to the Grand Loge Traditionelle Symbolique Opéra, The Loge Nationale de France, la Grande Loge Féminine de France... and even to the (so called "regular") Grande Loge Nationale de France!

# Freemasonry from Saint Domingue to Haiti<sup>30</sup>

by Gregory Sicard, MM.:



© P. Lec.:



30 Masonic Coffee January 15<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup>, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

*To the Master masons who led me to research and write on this subject that I wanted to discover. I also took the opportunity to deepen and shed light on the history of men and historical facts that were close to my heart.*

*To my friends from South America, France and the West Indies, our stories are linked by a past.*

*To all, to testify when Haiti radiated and enjoyed a certain prestige.*

#### **Advice to the reader**

“A people, or a civilization, which forgets, does not reflect on and refuses to understand its past condemns itself to relive it. Anyone who does not know history is doomed to relive it.” **George Santayana**

This quote is very important, I would add: people who do not know history are condemned to relive it... **and to decline.**

None of those we consider national heroes are untouchable. We must examine the beings who have made our history, see the good sides and also the dark aspects of their character, the acts that we must reproach them for, in order to understand the historical facts, analyze them and draw the salutary lessons for the future. We try in this document to approach the history of freemasonry from the colonial period in Saint Domingue and in Haiti thereafter. Through this story we also discover the history of Saint Domingue and Haiti from another angle and those of the freemasons who shaped it by their actions.

Our goal is that of all masons, to enlighten us and also to bring light to our brothers and to the laymen who will read us.

“The future of peoples often depends on how their past is presented to them. If someone makes a FALSE JUDGMENT on the facts of their annals, on the principles that guided their predecessors, their politicians, they undergo, DESPITE THEMSELVES, the influence of this error, and they are exposed to deviate from the road that they must follow to arrive at their prosperity, at their civilization. It is through these considerations that history is so useful, so instructive, for it is filled with precious teaching... But history should not be a simple account of events... Its object should be to indicate what is commendable or condemnable in these actions. It is through this that history encourages men to do good, that it diverts them from evil...”

Alexis Beaubrun Ardouin – 1796-1865

## Chapters

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3. Freemasonry after Independence ..... p. 134

## 1. Colonial period freemasonry in Saint Domingue

On December 5, 1492 Christopher Columbus discovers an island that he calls Hispaniola. It is the first Spanish colony in the new world. On September 20, 1697, several treaties are signed in Ryswick, Holland, between France and the Great Alliance of England, Spain, Austria and the Dutch Republic to end the Nine Years' War (1688-1696). By one of these treaties Spain gives to France 1/3 of the Island of Hispaniola that France calls Saint Domingue.

In a few years, thanks to the intensive cultivation of sugar cane, coffee, cotton and indigo, with a workforce of black slaves brought from Africa, Saint Domingue becomes the jewel in the crown of France. It is at the center of the triangular trade with France and West Africa. In 1789 it has about 30,000 white people, 50,000 freed mulattoes and 480,000 slaves. In the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, Saint Domingue is the richest colony in the world with revenues of 94 million pounds in 1775 and nearly 120 million pounds in 1778, about 70% of the revenues that France derives from all its American possessions and more than the revenues of all the English, Spanish and Dutch colonies of the West Indies combined, including Jamaica, Barbados, the eastern part of Hispaniola, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Curacao and Aruba, whose combined revenues amount to barely 118 million pounds. Saint Domingue alone supplies more than a third of French foreign trade, providing, among other things, three quarters of the world's sugar production. One Frenchman in eight lives directly or

indirectly from this colony. 1,500 ships call at its ports every year, 750 large vessels manned by 80,000 sailors ensure the link between Saint Domingue and the ports of mainland France every year, which live off this trade. The main products exported are sugar, coffee, indigo, rum, syrups, leather and wood. An inventory of the plantations established around 1788 reveals 792 sugar plantations, 2810 coffee plantations, 50 cocoa plantations, 3097 indigo factories, 705 cotton plantations, 150 guildives or rum factories, 350 lime kilns, 20 brick factories or tile factories, 20 potteries, and their number increased from year to year. In addition, there were 40,000 horses, 50,000 mules and 250,000 oxen. In 1788, Saint Domingue produced colonial goods worth 239 million pounds for the European and North American markets. Between 1763 and 1789, the exports of this French colony, which exceeded those of the United States, were the engine of the French “commercial revolution” of the second half of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century and the main source of wealth for the landowners. (6)<sup>31</sup>

The city of Cap français in the north of the island was called the Paris of Saint Domingue with its cathedral, its theaters, and its sumptuous buildings. In the New World, in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, the city of Cap français was one of the largest cities, more important than Boston in New England, counting 170,000 inhabitants in its area in 1789. (2)

In the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century freemasonry develops itself from England to the European continent and simultaneously to America: the british and French colonies. The prosperity of Saint Domingue explains the development of freemasonry in the milieu of the great white owners of plantations, in the administration and the colonial army, and in the milieu of the merchants and traders of the cities. It is the century of enlightenment and the elites want to belong to these elitist circles where the ideas and the philosophy of enlightenment are developed.

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31 Numbers in parentheses refer to the bibliography, end of article, p. 169.



*La cathédrale du Cap français, 1748*



*Map of Cap français*



*Cap Haitian cathedral today*

There were nearly 40 lodges in Saint Domingue in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, many of them of the Scottish Rite because they came from the Grand Lodge of England, the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, Scottish lodges such as the English Scottish Lodge of Edward Stuart, the Provincial Mother Lodge of Kingston, and the ancient Constitution of York.

The first “delegations” of lodges in France by the Grand Lodge of London take place in 1732. At that time, the French lodges are led by freemasons belonging to the English nobility, who remain in contact with the royal house of the United Kingdom. The Grand Orient de France is born in 1773 from a profound transformation of the first Grand Lodge of France founded on June 24, 1738. The Grand Orient of France now dates its foundation to 1733, when it began to have a

recognizable Grand Lodge of France. In 1773 with the establishment of the G.:O.:D.:F.: starts an era of universal regularization. G.:O.:D.:F.:inspectors are sent throughout France and to the colonies to regularize the lodges under the G.:O.:D.:F.: banner. There are 23 lodges in Saint Domingue that have received constitutions from the Grand Lodge and the G.:O.:D.:F.: or have been in contact with them: (3)

1. Saint-Jean de Jérusalem écossaise at the Orient of Cap français
2. La Vérité at the Orient of Cap français
3. Les Frères Réunis at the Orient of Cap français
4. Les Sept Frères Réunis at the Orient of Cap français
5. Les Frères Zélés at the Orient of Cavaillon
6. Les Frères Discrets at the Orient of les Cayes du fond de l'Île à Vache
7. Les Frères Réunis at the Orient of Les Cayes Saint-Louis du fond de l'Île à Vache
8. Les Frères Choisis at the Orient of Fond des Nègres
9. Grande Loge Provinciale de Saint Domingue at the Orient of Fond des Nègres
10. L'Étroite Union at the Orient of de Gros Morne
11. L'Écossaise des Philadelphes at the Orient of Jacmel
12. Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Choix des Hommes at the Orient of Jacmel then Santo Domingo
13. La Parfaite Harmonie at the Orient of Jacmel
14. La Réunion des Cœurs at the Orient of Jérémie then San Yago de Cuba
15. L'Amitié Indissoluble at the Orient of Léogane
16. Les Amis Réunis at the Orient of Mol Saint Nicolas
17. Saint-Jean de L'Unanimité then L'Unanimité du Saint Esprit at the Orient of Petit Goave

18. L'Union du Saint Esprit then L'Unanimité du Saint Esprit at the Orient of Petit Goave
19. La Raison Perfectionnée at the Orient of Petit Trou Quartier de Nîpes
20. La Parfaite Union at the Orient of Port-au-Prince
21. La Réunion Désirée at the Orient of Port-au-Prince
22. La Réunion des Cœurs Franco-Américains at the Orient of Port-au-Prince
23. La Concorde at the Orient of Saint Marc (3)



*In yellow the cities where the lodges are located.*

The information we share about these lodges comes from the original documents of the G.:O.:D.:F.: library in Paris and its archives preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

There are many lodges not affiliated to the G.:O.:D.:F.::

- Céleste Amitié at the Orient of Dondon
- Saint-Jean de Jérusalem at the Orient of de Fort Dauphin
- Nouvelle Alliance at the Orient of de Fort Dauphin
- Les Philadelphes at the Orient of de Léogane (9)

Jacques Delivon Joacin de la Tour de la Case, known as Martinès de Pasqually, born in 1715, arrive in 1772 in Saint Domingue and founds in 1773 a Sovereign masonic court for the colony in Port-au-Prince and two lodges, one in Port-au-Prince and the other in Léogane. He is the founder in 1754 in Montpellier of the Chap. des Juges Écossais, in 1760 the Temple des Élus Coëns in Foix and another in 1766 in Paris with notably: Bacon de la Chevalerie, Jean-Baptiste Willermoz. In 1767, he establishes his sovereign court, which was to govern the entire order of the Élus Coëns. He has explored a particular sector of the spiritual regions. He is known for having an extraordinary psychic dynamism and as a thaumaturgist. He died in Saint Domingue on September 20, 1774 (archives of the G.:O.:D.:F.: Bibliothèque nationale de France).

Other societies must be explained because they play an essential role linked to the lodges of Saint Domingue: The Circle of Philadelphians, The Circle of Massiac and The Society of the Friends of the Blacks.

**The Circle of Philadelphians** is mentioned several times in the history of lodges in Saint Domingue. Many masons in Saint Domingue create and are part of the Circle of Philadelphians. The Cercle des Philadelphes is a scientific academy founded on August 15, 1784, in Cap français. It ceases its activities in 1791 before being officially dissolved in 1793. It has up to one hundred and sixty-two members and regularly published a prospectus. Its followers defend the principles of Mesmer and care through magnetism. Many freemasons from Saint Domingue are members.

**The Circle of Massiac** is created on August 20, 1780 in Paris by the White settlers of Saint Domingue to fight the Society of the Friends of the Blacks. They meet at the Hôtel de Massiac, in Paris.

**The Society of the Friends of the Blacks** is founded by Brissot, and of which philanthropists, notably Abbé Grégoire, Condorcet, Mirabeau, de Pontécoulant, de Vaines, Sieyès, La Fayette,

Barnave, etc., are members, in order to take care of the fate of the Negroes, and also of the means to abolish the slave trade and slavery in the colonies.

**Étienne Morin** must be mentioned. He has played an important role in the creation of lodges in the West Indies. Born around 1717 and deceased in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1771, he was a merchant working between the West Indies and Bordeaux. On August 27, 1761 in Paris, Morin receives a patent signed by the officers of the Grand Lodge of France appointing him “Grand Inspector for all parts of the World”. He practices at that time the rite called Rite of the Royal Secret in 25 degrees, the highest of which is called “Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret”. In London, he meets Washington Shirley, Earl of Ferrers, who endorses his patent and extends it to the inspection of British lodges in the West Indies. Thanks to this patent, he then progressively constitutes lodges of all ranks throughout the West Indies and ensures his pre-eminence over the lodges of high ranks. It is from these lodges, their rituals and Morin’s patent that Henry Andrew Francken will transmit the Royal Secret Rite, ancestor of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, to Albany in the English colonies of North America.

### **1 Saint-Jean de Jérusalem écossaise at the Orient of Cap français**

Considered as the mother lodge of the colony, it is constituted on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1749 by the Perfect Lodge of Scotland of St. John of Jérusalem in Bordeaux. Its request for constitution to the G.:O.:D.:F.: is granted on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1776. It has up to 83 members. It has itself constituted three other lodges in Saint Domingue: The New Alliance in Fort Dauphin, The Brothers United in Cayes and The Chosen Brothers in Fond des Nègres. One of its prominent member is the historian Moreau de Saint Mery, Orator. Several of his brothers

are part of the Circle of Philadelphians in Saint Domingue of masonic emanation. It is a lodge of notables forming a rather closed circle in the traditions of those who created it. It is put to sleep in 1784 and disappears in 1789. (3)

## **2. La Vérité at the Orient of Cap français**

It has up to 204 members It is constituted on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1767. Reconstituted by the Grand Lodge on December 10, 1771 and the G.:O.:D.:F.: on March 2, 1775. According to a memorandum of F. Valette in 1771, when F. Martin, inspector of the G.:L.:F.:, arrives in Cap français in 1766, there were three lodges in this Orient: The Vérité instituted under the auspices of Edouard Stuart had been endowed with a constitution by a certain F. de Langeron. Its founders had been sufficiently liberal to give themselves a venerable whose misalliance was going to bring them the hostility of all the lodges of the colony. After the fire of the Cape français it holds its assemblies in Baltimore in the United States. In 1799 it is reconstituted in Cap français, bringing together the survivors of the Saint-Jean de Jérusalem Scottish Lodge as well as those of several lodges that had disappeared in the turmoil of the events in Saint Domingue. It has then 86 members. One also sees among its members the new holders of the civil and military powers. In 1801, it asks to be constituted as a departmental lodge. It symbolizes the dynamism of the northern region of the island and the Cap français. The vitality of its trade brought to this port a large current of men and ideas. La Vérité would become a place of privileged meetings between resident and visiting members. In 1806, it moves to Baltimore where it resumed its work.

Among its prominent members we see François Guizard, health officer of the Sion Lodge of the Brothers of True Equality at the Orient of Cap français, founder of La Parfaite Union at the Orient of

Philadelphia. Jacques Philippe Buriat, embroiderer and draftsman, also founder of La Parfaite Union at the Orient of Philadelphia. Philippe Rose Roume, Civil Commissioner in Saint Domingue, of the York Lodge at the Orient of London.

The revolution in Saint Domingue caused members of this lodge to spread to other lodges in the United States. (3)

### **3. Les Frères Réunis at the Orient of Cap français**

The application for incorporation of April 24, 1802 is granted by the G.:O.:D.:F.:. Originally it is called The United Brethren No. 87 of the old York Constitution regularly constituted by the TRGO of Pennsylvania at the Orient of Philadelphia. It has 27 members. It disappears with the second Cape Fire in 1802 and the torments of the War of Independence. (3)

### **4. Les Sept Frères Réunis at the Orient of Cap français**

It is registered by the lodge La Vérité of the Cap français on December 5, 1785. We find requests of reconstitution to the G.:O.:D.:F.: on November 27, 1798 and June 28, 1799. In 1801 there is new request to the G.:O.:D.:F.: with sending of a table (état-) where none of the founding members appear. It counts 28 members. Caught up in the turmoil of the events in Saint Domingue, this lodge disappears. (3)

### **5. Les Frères Zélés at the Orient of Cavaillon**

It is provisionally constituted by the Chosen Brothers at the Orient du Fond des Nègres on January 6, 1775. Request for Constitution to the G.:O.:D.:F.: made on November 11 1777, granted on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1778 to take rand on the date of the request by recalling the work begun in 1775. It counts up to 55 members. It is less and less

attended after the “cornerstone” of this lodge, the VB Buttete, retires to the Petit Goave. It will die out for lack of activity. (3)

## **6. Les Frères Discrets at the Orient of les Cayes du fond de l’Ile à Vache**

Provisionally constituted by the Provincial Lodge of Fond of the Negroes on February 6 1785, patents are granted to them by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on December 7, 1786 it will never reach them. We find 4 tables 1784 8 members, 1785 30 members, 1786 31 members, 1787 43 members. This lodge is characterized by the aggressive and polemical personality of its speaker Tanguy de La Boissière, member of the Philadelphes, condemned for defamation by the Superior Council of the Cap. He will carry his atrabilious moods on the other lodges. (3)

## **7. Les Frères Réunis at the Orient of les Cayes Saint-Louis du fond de l’Ile à Vache**

Original constitutions are obtained from Milord Penn. It is one of the oldest lodges of Saint Domingue. Request for constitutions is presented to the G.:O.:D.:F.: by the Provincial Grand Lodge on March 6, 1774, recalling the work begun before 1747. It is granted on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1778. After the disaster of Saint Domingue an attempt to reconstitute the lodge at the Orient of Paris takes place. The decision of the symbolic Chamber, at the beginning favorable, is cancelled afterward, on the pretext that the request is formulated by officers of the lodge in Paris, whereas it should be formulated by brothers living in the city of Cayes, which was totally impossible after the War of Independence in Saint Domingue. There are 4 tables 1774 33 members, 1779 54 members, 1781 58 members, 1787 27 members. A table at the Orient of Paris in 1805 counts 29 members. Moreau de Saint Mery is one of the illustrious members of this lodge and speaks of it in favorable terms: *A convenient*

*place and very pleasantly decorated by the brush of some members, officers of the navy, sees from time to time men who preach, and practice the love of their fellow man, and I found it very sweet to receive there an adoption which will be always dear to me. (3)*

### **8. Les Frères Choisis at the Orient of Fond des Nègres**

It is the first lodge constituted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: in Saint Domingue on July 20, 1774. It enjoyed such great prestige that the other lodges agree to constitute the Provincial Lodge in a town as little frequented and commercial as Fond des Nègres. In 1784, age and illness forced the two masons Gastumeau and Buttet to put the lodge to sleep as well as the Provincial Lodge. The tables of this lodge did not survive. (3)

### **9. Grande Loge Provinciale de Saint Domingue at the Orient of Fond des Nègres**

Constitutions are granted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1778, to take rank on March 22 1776. It is authorized to transfer her Orient to Petit-Goave on June 17, 1789. It takes refuge in New York in 1797. In 1802 Mathieu Dupotet asks to reconstitute it at the Orient of Port-Republican, without any response from the G.:O.:D.:F.: It is formed at the initiative of the brothers Buttet, venerable of the Frères Choisis, and Gastumeau, former venerable of the same lodge. Elected respectively president and secretary, these two brothers ensured for nearly ten years the role of mediator and representative of the G.:O.:D.:F.: in the Colony. Their arbitration in the disputes that opposed the lodges between them, was full of wisdom and moderation and succeeded in the vast majority of cases to bring peace in what were generally only conflicts of persons. (3)

### **10. L'Étroite Union at the Orient of de Gros Morne**

In 1764, the parish priest of Gros Morne, the Reverend Father Florentin Costeau and a sufficient number of masons from regular lodges

establish a lodge in Gros Morne requesting constitutions from the English Scottish lodge of Edward Stuart at the Orient of Cap français. Soon they are told that they were illegitimate, holding their constitutions from a lodge that, under false title, attributed itself a pre-eminence that it did not have. To get out of this unfortunate irregularity they send a delegation to the lodge La Concorde at the Orient of St. Mark to legalize their position. The latter, after having referred to the other regular lodges of the colony, graciously granted them constitutions on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1767. In 1777 La Concorde having obtained its constitutions from the G.:O.:D.:F.: encourages its daughter to do the same. Constituted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on April 5, 1781, to take rank at the date of the request on November 14, 1777 by recalling the work begun on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1767. It has 44 members. It is reconstituted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on April 5, 1781. (3)

### **11. L'Écossaise des Philadelphes at the Orient of Jacmel**

Only one document has survived for this lodge at the G.:O.:D.:F.:, it is a table of new officers dignitaries of this lodge regularly constituted at the Orient of Jacmel Republic of Haiti, by the Sup. Cons. For France of the 33<sup>rd</sup> and last degree of the R.:E.:A.:A.:, dated 1840. It is one of the few lodges that survived and continued its activity after independence. (3)

### **12. Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Choix des Hommes at the Orient of Jacmel then Santo Domingo**

Request for constitutions made on January 25, 1783, are granted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on May 19, 1785. On November 13, 1804 it writes to the G.:O.:D.:F.: to ask to keep her seniority rank. We find two tables from Santo Domingo 1804 77 members and 1807 51 members. These are the survivors of the second revolt or War of Independence: inhabitants who, on their return from emigration, had tried to cultivate

their plantations and who, forced to flee again when Haiti becomes independent, try to survive while waiting either for a new return or departure to France. Among the survivors, there are also a large number of military personnel, remnants of the Cap Legion and the Eastern Division, militias, sailors, a few merchants, lawyers and health officers, all of whom were refugees and almost all of whom were metropolitan. It is not a normal lodge, but rather a haven, a refuge and a place of mutual aid for brothers. The lodge sponsors the Parfaite Harmonie at the Orient of Jacmel, which has also taken refuge in Santo Domingo. (3)

### **13. La Parfaite Harmonie at the Orient of Jacmel**

Provisional constitutions under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania are granted on March 30, 1802. The Perfect Harmony asks three times for constitutions to the G.:O.:D.:F.: supported by the other lodge of the Orient of Jacmel Saint-Jean du Choix des Hommes. It will never obtain them. It knows the exile in Santo Domingo twice: the first in 1802, followed by a brief return to Jacmel, the second in 1804 after the defeat of the French expeditionary forces by the independentists. A table dated 1805 reveals 71 members. An interesting passage from a request for constitution addressed to the G.:O.:D.:F.: on August 5, 1802: "...established in the oldest city of the Caribbean (Santo Domingo), wishing to propagate the masonic light... where alone it exists in the midst of the spanish fanaticism not even reaching the feet of French philosophy. (3)

When Haiti become independent, Spain attacks the survivors of the expeditionary force that had taken refuge in the eastern part of the island, taking advantage of the defeat of the French to regain possession of its former colony. After the failure of Puerto Rico in 1807 their leader, General Ferrand, shot himself in the head. His successor, General Barquier, caught between the Spanish and the English fleet, surrenders

to General Carmichael on July 7, 1809. The French evacuated Santo Domingo on English ships. The eastern part of Hispaniola become Spanish again. (3)

#### **14. La Réunion des Cœurs at the Orient of Jérémie then San Yago de Cuba**

Constituted and installed provisionally on April 18, 1886 by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Saint Domingue, the constitutions of the G.:O.:D.:F.: are received on October 30, 1788. Transported to Cuba in 1790, it is officially reconstituted there. There are four tables at the Orient of Jérémie: 1787 23 members, 1788 32 members, 1789 29 members and 1790 16 members. In 1806, there is a table at the Orient of Cuba with 25 members.

Thanks to the letters of 1806 and 1807 of the deputies Bideau and Fondeviolle we can follow the misfortunes and peregrinations of the lodge through the revolutionary squall. “In 1790 begin the misfortunes that devastated the most brilliant of the colonies and these unfortunate people were forced to suspend their masonic work to go to camps and defend their possessions from the burning and looting of the rebels. The disasters were always increasing and after having seen their wives and children slaughtered, these unfortunate people were forced to flee and seek an asylum among the people who wanted to give them a beneficial hospitality.” (3)

#### **15. L’Amitié Indissoluble at the Orient of Léogane**

Request for constitution on March 3, 1776 are required by the G.:L.:F.: Reconstituted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1778, to take rank on November 26 1765 date of the constitutions granted by the G.:L.: We find four tables: 1776 28 members, 1777 30 members, 1778 19 members, 1780 19 members. (3)

In the correspondence one can see that in Saint Domingue, once their fortune was made, many large landowners returned to live in France: “Léogane was once cited as the place in the colony where there was the greatest luxury and on which the others were modeled, but since the landowners of the plain are almost all in France, one lives quite isolated and one seems only occupied with sending large incomes to these landowners...”. After Cap français, Léogane became the capital of Saint Domingue briefly, then was supplanted by Port-au-Prince, which became the new capital in 1770. Despite the earthquake of 1770 that cost the lives of 50 people and destroyed the city and a large number of houses, Léogane continued to increase its production and population. (3)

#### **16. Les Amis Réunis at the Orient of Mol Saint Nicolas**

Provisional Constitutions obtained from the “Mother Provincial Lodge of Kingston”, Jamaica, the region of Mol Saint Nicola being under English occupation at that time. Request for constitutions to the G.:O.:D.:F.: on February 8, 1799 are granted on November 3, 1799. It has 44 members who are the survivors of the revolutionary riots, returned from emigration to try to restore their plantations and properties. It will not resist the second revolutionary wave, the War of Independence, since we do not find any trace of Les Amis Réunis after 1799. (3)

#### **17. Saint-Jean de L’Unanimité then L’Unanimité du Saint Esprit at the Orient of Petit Goave**

Request for constitutions on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1774, are granted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1778 to take effect on the date of the request. The constitutions will never reach their addressee because of the war. Request for a duplicate is sent in 1783. Dissensions cause the departure of the venerable and part of the officers who then establish

the lodge L'Union du Saint Esprit in 1784. On February 2, 1785, the Grand Lodge Provincial, which had been transferred from the Fond de Nègres to Petit Goave, suspends the Unanimity and removes it from the regular lodges. In 1787 the two lodges resume their common work under the name of L'Unanimité et L'Union du Saint Esprit. We find five tables: 1776 13 members, 1777 19 members, 1778 24 members, 1785 17 members. (3)

### **18. L'Union du Saint Esprit then L'Unanimité du Saint Esprit at the Orient of Petit Goave**

The venerable and the officers having withdrawn from the lodge Saint Jean de L'Unanimité make a request of reconstitution for the lodge L'Union du Saint Esprit, presented by the Provincial Grand Lodge on November 24, 1784, with recall of the works begun in 1746. They are granted on August 7, 1788. In the meantime it had already merged with L'Unanimité. The merger was accepted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: in 1789. There are two tables for L'Union du Saint Esprit: 1784 10 members and 1785 14 members. A table for L'Unanimité and L'Union du Saint Esprit shows for 1788 40 members. (3)

### **19. La Raison Perfectionnée at the Orient of Petit Trou Quartier de Nipes**

Request for constitutions addressed to the G.:O.:D.:F.: on June 27, 1770. Constitutions granted on January 22, 1784. Two tables: 1780 18 members, 1785 24 members and 7 affiliates. Distinguished personalities are found in this lodge: the two Lefèvre des Haies brothers, inhabitant and naturalist, correspondents one of the cabinet of the King, the other of the academy of the Arcane of Rouen. Their brother Étienne was a member of the Cercle des Philadelphes de Saint Domingue as well as Robert Coels, a wealthy inhabitant and former Cent Swiss, who

became a specialist in colonial agriculture and author of a memoir on the disadvantages of slavery. (3)

## **20. La Parfaite Union at the Orient of Port-au-Prince**

In 1762 the lodge La Concorde, at the Orient of Saint Marc, grants constitutions for a lodge in Port-au-Prince, La Parfaite Union, a title that was not deserved because it has always sown trouble and displayed the greatest pretensions. The lodge obtains constitutions from the G.:L.: in 1769. There are two tables 1773 and 1774 with 37 members. An Englishman named Fox is its first Master, but leaves three months later. There follows a scandalous cabal to promote in his place one of the supervisors, with illegal or ignorant anticipation on the time marked to proceed to the elections, such is the cause of the decree of exclusion. (3)

In 1773 with the establishment of the G.:O.:D.:F.: it is the time of regularizations. Either because of their spirit of independence, making them refuse any subjection to the laws received, or because of their refusal to compromise themselves by entering the class of the new lodges, La Parfaite Union has always refused to conform to the general order. In spite of the numerous and fraternal solicitations of the G.:O.:D.:F.: and other lodges, it has always gone it alone, refusing other constitutions and declaring that those it already had were sufficient. (3)

On July 5, 1774 the venerable of the Perfect Union Daiherre writes to the G.:O.:D.:F.:: “Formerly constituted, we believe that we do not need new constitutions, but if such is the order, that it is necessary or that you believe you have to grant us letters of confirmation we will receive them with the greatest pleasure. He also asks the G.:O.:D.:F.: to suspend the contributions because of the earthquake of April 3, 1770. (3)

Visited by the brothers Radoux, Buttet and d'Espinefort, they were disgusted by the licentiousness, to say the least that went on in their banquets... They sang licentious and coarse songs: "La Favorite", "A fountain that runs along the paunch".

The Parfaite Union has refused to participate in the formation of the Provincial Lodge in Fond des Nègres, in 1776 declaring that if there was to be a Provincial Lodge it should be at its Orient in the capital. Indeed, Port-au-Prince founded in 1749 on the Habitation Prince, become the capital of the Colony in 1770. Following this incident The Provincial Lodge establish on June 3, 1783 another lodge at the Orient of Port-au-Prince La Réunion Désirée. (3)

It is a revolutionary lodge where the subjects that fascinated the colony were discussed: ministerial arbitrariness, exclusive trade and everything that could lead to economic autonomy. On March 7, 1769, the Prince of Rohan, Governor General of Saint Domingue, has the officers of the Superior Council of Port-au-Prince kidnapped during a meeting and taken to France where they are imprisoned at the Bastille. They were accused of having encouraged the spirit of insubordination and revolt among the inhabitants that had been provoked by the re-establishment of the militia in the colony. Some of its members are members of the Club de Massiac and the Cercle des Philadelphes. (3)

## **21. La Réunion Désirée at the Orient of Port-au-Prince**

Request for constitutions are presented by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Saint Domingue on April 16, 1783 to oppose La Parfaite Union of the same Orient. They are granted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on April 22, 1784 to take rank at the date of the request. It is provisionally installed on July 3, 1783 by the venerable Robert to whom Jean Thézan proposed to visit La Parfaite Union. He was refused entry for having installed La Réunion Désirée. It was put to sleep in 1791. Brother

Allemand, a former venerable, writes from New York in 1791 that the ornaments, jewels and effects left at his home on his precipitated departure of Port-au-Prince in September 1791 had disappeared in the fire, destruction and looting. (3)

It resumes its work in 1797. In 1805 it is seated in New Orleans while waiting for the end of the troubles in Saint Domingue. There are four tables: 1783 26 members, 1785 38 members, 1799 28 members, 1800 56 members, 1806 16 members. (3)

At its foundation, the venerable Jacques Sébastien Nau 1783-1785 is one of my ancestors. His son Auguste Nau, a career military man after having participated in the War of Independence, will be a founding member of the Grand Orient of Haiti on January 25, 1824. Jean Thézan, born in Bordeaux on November 13, 1736, captain of a ship, first settled in Martinique where he was a member of La Tendre Fraternité in Saint Pierre in 1774, which became La Parfaite Union and La Tendre Fraternité in 1777. He then settles as a merchant in Port-au-Prince and attends La Réunion Désirée. In 1816, his son Jean Thézan will be a founding member, then Worshipful Master and First Supervisor of L'Étoile d'Haiti No. 5 at the Orient of Port-au-Prince. My father Georges Sicard becomes a member of this lodge on March 3, 1946 and its Worshipful Master from 1955 to 1956.

We will see more precisely the role of the descendants of the former masons in the creation of new lodges after independence and the foundation of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Haiti in chapter 3. (3)

It is an inclusive and progressive lodge that in its early days is mainly composed of merchants, lawyers and plantation prosecutors, but after the revolution it admits into its ranks colored soldiers, officers of the expeditionary forces and former members of other lodges who had disappeared.

## **22. La Réunion des Cœurs Franco-Américains at the Orient of Port-au-Prince**

It is installed on December 21, 1789. It is derived from the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania of the former constitution of York. It should be noted that the Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania is autonomous since its departure from the lodge of England on September 26, 1776. Request for correspondence with the G.:O.:D.:F.: on September 7, 1791, are reiterated in 1799 and 1801. We find two tables: 1790 50 members and 1799 58 members. The worshipful Mathieu Dupotet creates in 1802 the Provincial Lodge of Saint Domingue still under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. (3)

## **23. La Concorde at the Orient of Saint Marc**

The lodge is reconstituted by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on September 18, 1776 to take rank in 1763, recalling the work begun in 1749. Louis Drouin is a founding member and former Worshipful Master. It is a lodge whose members are of a high social level and certainly quite influential in terms of ideas. Important figures of the colony such as Lamarque the American, Caignet de L'Ester, Drouin and many others, ensured its reputation at the beginning in 1749. (3)

## **Supreme Councils, The Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite**

Alexandre François Conte de Grasse-Tilly, an officer in the French Army, travels to Charleston, South Carolina, after the defeat of the French fleet by the English in Saint-Domingue in 1793. His father-in-law, Jean-Baptiste de La Hogue, founds a masonic lodge, La Candeur, at the Orient of Charleston, whose members are mainly refugees from Saint Domingue or from the Revolution in France. (source: Wikipedia)

On December 12, 1796, in Charleston, the Count de Grasse-Tilly, along with his father-in-law de La Hogue and six other French refugees from Saint Domingue, are issued a patent by Hyman Long making each man a Grand Assistant Inspector General. This appointment was a title recognizing that the bearer was in possession of the secrets of the “Rite of the Royal Secret”. In 1801 the eight French emigrants organize a Consistory of the 25<sup>th</sup> Degree, or “Princes of the Royal Secret”. This is the Mother Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. All other Supreme Councils in the world derive their authority from it. (source: Wikipedia)

In 1802 he returns to Cap français in Saint Domingue and found, with Jean-Baptiste Marie de la Hogue and other Freemasons, the Supreme Council of the Windward and Leeward Islands for Lodges of Perfection. The activities of the Supreme Council will end with the War of Independence.<sup>9</sup> In March 1805, he establishes a Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite for Italy, based in Milan. In October 1809, he establishes a Supreme Council for Spain, based in Madrid. He is elected Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of France, a position he holds until 1821.

## **CONCLUSION**

To put the disappearance of the colonial lodges in Saint Domingue in perspective, out of the 30,000 whites in the colony in 1789, many of them perish in the troubles of the revolution and the war, nearly 10,000 emigrate to the United States and Louisiana and 5,000 to Cuba. The emigrants from Cuba will later be deported to Louisiana by the spanish government.

Many factors will lead to the extinction of all these lodges and the independence of the colony. The majority of the colonial lodges were in opposition to the enlightenment ideals that led to the French

Revolution of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity which are also the ideals of freemasonry. For more than a century, the freedmen, mulattos and blacks, who were very attached to France, demanded without success the application of the royal edict of 1685, promulgated under Louis XIV, which granted them civil and political equality with the whites. In addition, it should be noted that France, through its governors in Saint Domingue, allowed the whites of the colony, both wealthy plantation owners and commoners “small” whites, to oppose the decrees of 1791 and 1792 that recognized the equality of civil and political rights with whites. With the French Revolution and in order to escape the revolutionary regime, the plantation owners of Saint Domingue tried to deliver the colony to the English and Spanish. The civil commissioner Sonthonax, after having used the freedmen to keep the colony for France, abolished slavery in Saint Domingue, echoing the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, to win over the rebellious blacks to the cause of France, enlisting them in the French colonial army and succeeding in defeating the English and Spanish occupying forces, to the great displeasure of the freedmen. This is how Toussaint Louverture emerged, whom the colonists will recover to emancipate themselves from France. Napoleon tried to control the colony by sending a military expedition commanded by his brother-in-law General Leclerc, but failed in his attempt to re-establish slavery eleven years after the general slave insurrection of 1791 and nine years after the proclamation of the abolition of slavery in 1793! Independence was inevitable, and there followed numerous mutinies in the French Army, and a merciless war between two parties. On the one hand, those in favor of the re-establishment of slavery, and on the other hand, those opposed to it, to prevent the purges in the French Army of Saint Domingue to achieve it and the genocide of the black and mulatto population. The revolutionary period is presented in more details in the next chapter.

## 2. The War of Independence

We present here a summary of the events to understand what happened in Saint Domingue and the repercussions on the lodges and the freemasons.

Like the lodges in France that played a great role during the century of enlightenment that led to the French Revolution of 1789, the masonic lodges in Saint Domingue were at the center of the movements and changes that lead to dependence. On August 26, 1789, the first revolutionary regime in France, the National Assembly proclaimed the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. This declaration will revolutionize the history of human beings.

Saint Domingue will see three factions tear each other apart to obtain their rights. The colonists counter revolutionary and royalist fight for the maintenance of the status quo, the abolition of the exclusive trade to be able to trade freely with other countries and more autonomy for Saint Domingue. They will oppose the equality of rights in the colony with the freedmen and the mulattoes. The freed blacks and mulattoes, many of whom are plantation owners, fight for their civil and political rights, equality with whites, which had been granted to them by the royal edict of 1685 but whose application had never been authorized by whites and governors. France and the successive Governors General even allow the plantation owners and other whites to oppose the decrees of 1791 and 1792 that recognized the rights of freedmen. The slaves hear about the revolutionary movement and demanded the abolition of slavery with all those in Saint Domingue and in France who support this cause. On September 26, 1789, a Colonial Assembly is created.

Revolutionary movements take place in Saint Domingue. On May 28, 1790, the movement of the white landowners creates the General Assembly of the Region of Saint Domingue, sitting in Saint Marc,

which decrees its independence from the metropole. It is open warfare between the colonists and the revolutionary colonial administration. On March 28, 1790, the French National Assembly authorizes all individuals, regardless of their skin color, to participate in assemblies in all French possessions. Thus, 85 deputies from Saint Domingue leave for France to represent the colony on August 8, 1790.

Vincent Ogé is a “quarteron”, son of Jacques Ogé, a rich white settler and owner of a coffee-plantation. He studies in France and become a merchant in Cap français. During a business trip to France



*Vincent Ogé*

he witnesses the storming of the Bastille. He returns to Saint Domingue determined to obtain the right to vote for free men of color. An amendment adopted by the General Assembly of France on March 8, 1790 affirms the equality of free men as property owners. The Governor of Blanchelande refuses. While free men of color are educated and some are wealthy landowners, colonial

laws exclude them from voting, holding office, and limit their rights. In October 1790, he arrives in Saint Domingue and with Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, another free man of color, militiaman, and veteran of the American Revolution, assembles a force of about 250 to 300 free men of color. This group of men succeeds in defeating and frightening several detachments of colonial militia sent from Cap français, but are flushed out by a larger force of professional soldiers and forced to cross the border into the spanish colony. On November 20, 1790, Ogé and 23 of his associates, including Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, are captured in Hinche, in the spanish part of Hispaniola. They surrender after receiving guarantees of safety, but the Spanish authorities send them back to the Governor of Blanchelande. Vincent Ogé is brutally executed by being

broken on the wheel in the public square of the Cap on February 6, 1791. Dozens of his men are severely punished. Their torments only serve to heat the already boiling cauldron of discontent among the colony's free men of color and slaves. Ogé has become an important symbol of the injustices of a slave-owning colonial society that want to restrict the benefits of the French Revolution to whites only. Governor Philibert François Rouxel de Blanchelande, a freemason, member of La Modeste Lodge, of the Colonel General Infantry Regiment in Selestat, and then Worshipful Master in 1788, will be condemned to death and executed in Paris on April 15, 1793, for having favored arbitrary detentions and convictions and the counter-revolutionary party in the colonies.

On August 7, 1791, after the insurrections in the Cul-de-Sac plain at Les Vases and Montrui, the freedmen meet in Mirebalais to create the Council of Representatives of the Freedmen, presided over by Pierre Pinchinat, in order to fight the colonists. During the night of August 22-23, 1791, an uprising of slaves takes place in the north, with Boukman at their head. In one week 600 coffee plantations and 200 sugar mills are burned and hundreds of white people are massacred. On November 14, 1791, the slave armies are routed. Boukman is captured and beheaded. On November 28, 1791, the first Civil Commission, composed of three commissioners, Roume, Mirbeck and Saint-Leger, arrives in Cap français to ratify the controversial decree of September 24, 1791, annulling the political equality of freedmen. Six months later, the situation changed: on April 4, 1792, a decree of the king dated March 28 proclaims that whites and coloreds are equal in rights. The colonists of the Croix des Bouquets are routed. (7)

To restore order, the second Revolutionary regime, the Convention sends a second Civil Commission to Saint Domingue. On September 18, 1792, the second Civil Commission disembarks at the Cap, composed of Sonthonax, Polverel and Ailhaud. On June 28,

1793, the decree of the Civil Commissioners granting freedom to those who fought for the Republic does not stand up to the Spanish offer of abolishing slavery and sharing the land. Spain wants to take advantage of the disorder to take back the colony of Saint Domingue.



*Leger-Félicité Sonthonax*

On August 29, 1793, the Republican Commissioner Leger-Félicité Sonthonax alone takes the decision to officially abolish slavery in Saint Domingue in order to bring the freedmen and rebellious slaves back into the fold of France and regain control of the colony from the royalist colonists. In reaction, the latter deliver Saint Domingue to the English. It is war in the colony. Three deputies from Saint Domingue are sent to Paris. Among them Jean-Baptiste Belley, a former slave, becomes the first black deputy in history. Their reports and testimonies will lead to the ratification of Sonthonax's proclamation. Thus, the first abolition of slavery by France takes place on February 4, 1794. For the first time in history, the National Convention proclaims the abolition of slavery in all the colonies, without any delay or compensation for the colonists, almost four years after the adoption by the Assembly of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. (7)

### **To the Convention on February 4, 1794** (16 pluviôse year II)

Drafted by Lacroix and voted by acclamation, the final text of the abolition of slavery is decreed on 16 pluviôse year II. Danton is at his best: "Until now, we had decreed freedom only as egoists, for ourselves alone; but today (...) we proclaim universal freedom". The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen is completed accordingly. In conclusion, it takes the necessity a policy of "fait accompli", added to

the sensational effect produce by Belley, to force the application of a right recognized since August 26, 1789.



Blue: *La Nouvelle France from 1534 to 1763*



Green: *Louisiana from 1763 to Dec. 20, 1803*

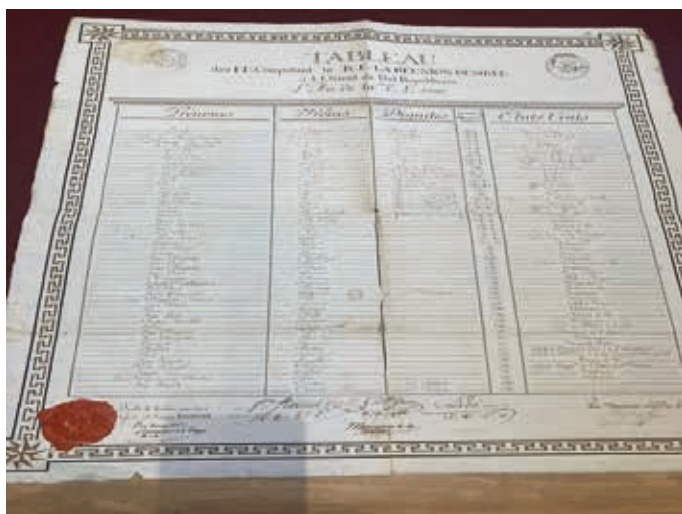
The abolition of slavery is effective in Saint Domingue, Guadeloupe and Guyana. It does not take place in Martinique and Tobago, which had been handed over to the English, nor in Reunion Island, because of the colonists' refusal, nor in Louisiana. In 1762, France, defeated in the Seven Years War, ceded Louisiana to Spain and Canada to England. It is only on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1800 by the Treaty of San Ildefonso, negotiated by Napoleon, who has just come to power, that Spain gives back Louisiana to France. With the abolition of slavery, we witness the emancipation of blacks and mestizos. The latter rise in rank in the army and the colonial militia and are admitted in circles, which until then were closed, to them. This is how we see in some lodges colored brothers. The table of the brothers of the Réunion Désirée at the Orient of Port-Républicain (Port-au-Prince, the name had changed after the French Revolution of 1789) for 1799 lists the names of men of color and blacks, who would constitute the elite of the Louvertureian state and the first administrators of the future Haitian state:

- Paul Louverture, younger brother of Toussaint Louverture, Brigade Chief in the French Army for the commune of Croix des Bouquets, then Commander of the district of Port-au-Prince;
- Joseph Balthazar Inginac, merchant, who will be Chief of Staff and a great diplomat under the presidency of Alexandre Pétion and Jean Pierre Boyer;
- Charles Belair, nephew of Toussaint Louverture, Chief of Brigade at Arcahaie;
- André-Dominique Sabourin, a white Creole inhabitant of Arcahaie. He will become the Grand Judge of the Republic of Haiti, the second most important person in the state;
- Jean Baptiste Charlestegui, merchant, Master mason and warden of the temple, future survivor of the massacre of the whites of 1804, and refounder of the Scottish Rite in the independent Haitian masonry. (3)

Toussaint Louverture rises in the French Army in Saint Domingue and reaches the rank of General. He helps to drive out the English and Spanish armies. With boundless ambition Toussaint wants to become the General-in-Chief of the whole colony. He goes to war with the mulatto generals of the south of Saint Domingue led by André Rigaud and Alexandre Pétion, from June 17, 1799 to August 1, 1800, with the help of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, whom he names Major General. After the defeat, André Rigaud, Alexandre Pétion and their comrades in arms flee to France to escape massacre.



*André Rigaud*



*Table of la Réunion Désirée at the Orient de Port-Républicain*

The Treaty of Bale (July 22, 1795) signed between France and Spain cedes the eastern part of Hispaniola to France. However, this territory was partly controlled by the English and the Spanish. Toussaint obtain the surrender of the English and subsequently that of the Spanish Governor Don Joachim Garcia on December 20, 1800. Toussaint controls the entire island of Hispaniola and after creating the

Central Assembly in Port-au-Prince, he had it vote the Constitution of Saint Domingue, which appointed him Governor General for life on May 9, 1801.



*Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc*

In order to regain control of Saint Domingue and then take possession of Louisiana, which Spain had returned to him, Bonaparte sends an expedition commanded by his brother-in-law, General Charles Leclerc. This expedition has 27 brigadier generals, 45,000 soldiers, 40 ships, 26 frigates and 17 corvettes. Those whom Toussaint had defeated during the Civil War in the South of Saint Domingue are part of it. The expedition arrives in Saint Domingue on January 29, 1802. Toussaint is defeated and arrested on June 7, 1802. Toussaint is deported to France to the Fort de Joux in the Jura where he dies on April 7, 1803. Leclerc controls the colony of Saint Domingue. (7)

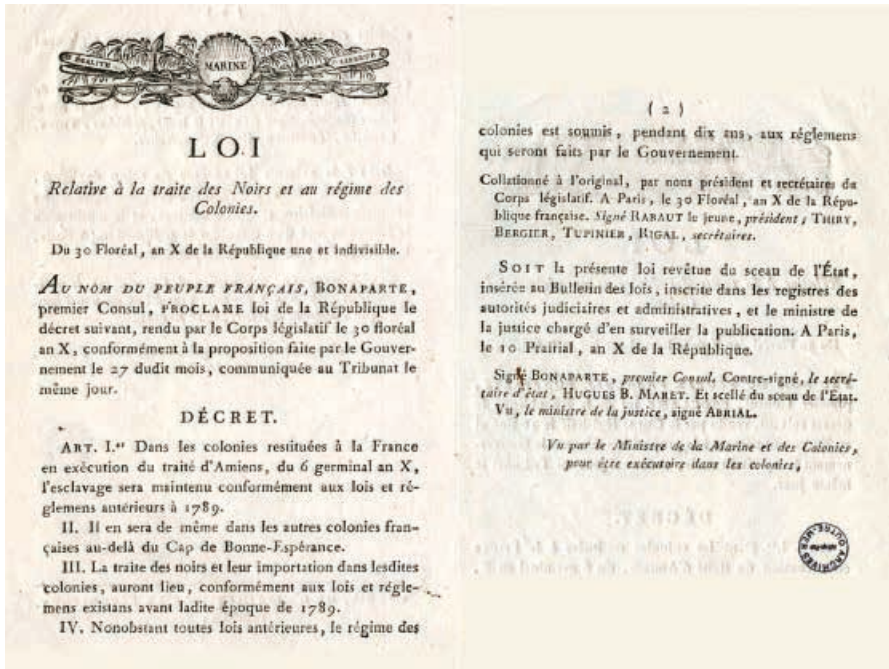
It is then that two events will occur that will trigger the War of Independence in Saint Domingue. On March 25, 1802 Bonaparte signs the peace of Amiens with England, putting an end to the wars of the French Revolution. He decides to maintain slavery in the colonies returned to France and to re-establish it in the other territories that France controlled and where it had been abolished: Guadeloupe, Guyana and Saint Domingue. Bonaparte, First Consul, dictator, by decree of a legislative body at the service of his power, on May 20, 1802, passes the law re-establishing slavery, which obtained a majority of 211 votes against only 63. (7)

General Richepance<sup>32</sup> a freemason, was given the same mission as Leclerc for Guadeloupe. He disembarks at Pointe-à-Pitre on May 6,

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32 Antoine de Richepance, General, 1<sup>st</sup> Master of Ceremony at the lodge St. Louis de la Palestine at the Orient of Paris April 9 178

1802. The brigade commander Magloire Pélage<sup>33</sup>, a mulatto freemason, who was the chief commander in Guadeloupe, submits.



*Decree proclaiming the reinstatement of slavery the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1802*

Squadron leader Delgrès welcomed the expedition in front of Basse Terre with cannons after having besieged and bombarded Fort Saint Charles where Delgrès has locked himself up with 400 men. He is forced to evacuate and to withdraw to the dwelling of Anglemont, where he blows himself up, with 300 companions and the French troops who had started to invest the house where he had withdrawn, instead of surrendering. On July 7, 1802 Richepance announces that the men of color are excluded from the army and would be shipped to France.

<sup>33</sup> Magloire Pelage, Brigade Chief, loge Le point Parfait at the Orient of Paris, June 8 1801.

On July 17, 1802 he announces the re-establishment of slavery in Guadeloupe. One week later Richepance dies suddenly of yellow fever. Thus, 90,000 people who had been emancipated in 1794 become slaves again, including the children they had been able to have for 8 years and who had been born free. The government of Guadeloupe decides to deport 1,500 blacks and mulattoes to the Spanish mainland and to sell them as slaves to crush any rebellion. One of the frigates carrying them had been damaged and had to stop in Jamaica. The English refused to receive it with its cargo and had it escorted to the Mol Saint Nicolas in Saint Domingue. In the first days of October 1802, some prisoners deceiving the vigilance of their guards, had managed to escape by throwing themselves into the sea. They had been welcomed and hidden by a native chief. Within a few days, all of Saint Domingue was aware of the re-establishment of slavery in Guadeloupe in a bloodbath. (7)

Opposition in Saint Domingue among the black and colored French generals is not long in coming. To execute the decree, the French Army in Saint Domingue must be purged of all those who are opposed to it, as in Guadeloupe. On October 13, 1802, Generals Pétion and Clervaux definitively abandon the French camp. In retaliation, on October 15, 1802, Leclerc orders the drowning of 1,200 colored soldiers taken prisoner and orders the arrest of all colored soldiers. The next day General Henry Christophe deserts to join the revolutionaries after having massacred hundreds of Polish soldiers who were part of the expeditionary corps. Leclerc writes to Bonaparte to inform him of his decision to wage a war of extermination: “We must destroy all the blacks in the mountains – men and women – and spare only the children under 12. We must destroy half of those on the plains and not leave a single colored man in the colony that has worn an epaulette. My soul is withered, and no joyful thought can ever make one forget these hideous scenes.” (7)

A series of desertions and battles follow, it is a total mutiny in the French Army in Saint Domingue. On November 1<sup>st</sup> 1802, Leclerc, struck by yellow fever the week before, dies. In 1802 and 1803 yellow fever ravages the French troops. On November 2, 1802 the 12<sup>th</sup> colonial half-brigade, although loyal to France, is exterminated by the French General Quentin.

In 1803, President Jefferson begins negotiations with Napoleon for the purchase of the port of New Orleans and the region of the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico known as West Florida, for the sum of 10 million dollars. Face with the announced defeat in Saint Domingue and the impossibility of using this territory as a spearhead to control Louisiana, Napoleon proposes to sell the entire French colony of Louisiana for 15 million dollars. The American negotiators quickly accept. The cession treaty is signed in Paris on April 30, 1803.

In Saint Domingue, Leclerc is replaced by Donatien Marie-Josèphe de Vimeur, vicomte de Rochambeau, a macabre character of infamous cruelty that only exacerbated the divisions within the French Army. In the roadsteads of Les Cayes, Anse à Veau and Cap, the warships were filled with native soldiers who were drowned or suffocated by sculpture. Their corpses were brought to the shores by the waves every day. Rochambeau organizes a macabre ball in Port-au-Prince during which the wives of the colored officers are invited to discover coffins containing skulls. The next day a bloody crackdown was carried out on all suspected colored men. From Cuba he brought in man-eating dogs trained to hunt down fleeing blacks.

Many French officers desert and take up the cause of the independence fighters. Among them are freemasons imbued with the ideals of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity, which were not in keeping with the orders they had received to exterminate their brothers in arms and to participate in the re-establishment of slavery

in a blood bath. Had they not fought in Europe for the freedom of all men? One of my ancestors, Doctor Antoine Laporte, surgeon in Napoleon's army, deserts in 1803 to join Alexandre Pétion.

On May 11, 1803, the Peace of Amiens between France and England is broken. On the one hand, England reproaches France for its intervention in Swiss and Italian affairs and on the other hand, France does not accept England's refusal to return Malta to the Knights of the Order of Malta. From July 2, 1803, the English fleet establishes a blockade of the ports of Cap français and Port-au-Prince. The French troops would receive neither reinforcements nor supplies from the metropolis. The tide turns against the expeditionary forces. Many blacks and mulattoes who had remained loyal to France because they did not believe in the triumph of the indigenous army desert and joined the ranks of the independentists.

In May 1803, Dessalines ordered the "cut off the heads and burn everything" which triggers the burning of the Cul de Sac plain where the plantations had escaped the revolt of 1791, which had destroyed everything in the northern plain. The work of two centuries of colonization goes up in fumes.

In 1803, the 114<sup>th</sup> demi-brigade composed of Polish soldiers, most of whom were freemasons, is saved from an assault by brigands thanks to the intervention of masonic brothers from the native army. The Poles desert the French Army.

Rochambeau ends up exasperating the colonial administration and the big merchants by his tyranny and his exactions. In an attempt to put an end to the macabre and unrealistic plan to re-establish slavery and to purge the French Army of blacks and mulattoes, a "coup d'État" against Rochambeau takes place on September 9, 1803. It is led by two freemasons, the colonial prefect Louis Maurice de Magnyot, Pierre Thouvenot, Chief of Staff of the Army of Saint Domingue since

February 26, 1803, and also Bertrand Clauzel, Commander-in-Chief since the death of Leclerc, the most respected of French officers. Many high officials in Cap français are in the conspiracy. Rochambeau was to be arrested and deported. Unfortunately the “coup d'État” fails, Rochambeau is warned. He denounces his enemies to the French Army as traitors who wanted to starve them to evacuate Saint Domingue. The garrison of the Cape, thus manipulated by Rochambeau, demands the death of the traitors. Magnytot, frightened, withdrew, Thouvenot and Clauzel are arrested the same day and sent back to France as prisoners on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The war against the re-establishment of slavery will continue. After the failure of this “coup d'État”, more officers desert to join the camp of the independentists.



*Pierre Thouvenot*



*Bertrand Clauzel*

The French tricolor flag, which combined the blue and red of the city of Paris with the white of the monarchy, symbolized in the eyes of the people of Saint Domingue the union of blacks, mulattoes and whites. On May 18, 1803, in order to symbolize the desire for independence and to have a new rallying sign, Dessalines tears the white from the French tricolor and brings the red closer to the blue. The bicolor blue and red becomes the flag of the independentists.

On August 4, 1803, the indigenous general Féroù captures Jérémie, and for the first time the bicolor of the independents is flown

with the motto: “Liberty or death. On September 17, 1803, Cangé takes Jacmel. October 9, 1803 Dessalines triumphantly enters Port-au-Prince. On October 17, 1803 Geffrard occupies Les Cayes. On November 16, 1803, Dessalines launches the assault on the Cap at the head of 20,000 men. On November 18, 1803, the battle of Vertières is fought and the next day Rochambeau signed the capitulation.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804 Haiti proclaims its independence in Gonaïves. The colony of Saint Domingue becomes Haiti.

### **Among the actors mentioned there are several freemasons**



#### **Donatien Marie-Josèphe de Vimeur, vicomte de Rochambeau (1755-1813)**

He was a freemason like his father Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, comte de Rochambeau. Member of the military lodge La Concorde of the regiment of Auvergne-Infantries in 1777 (Le Bihan, 1900, 281). Member of the lodge Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contract Social at the Orient of Paris in 1778 and in 1786 of the Olympic Society, of which all the members had to be regular freemasons (Logou 2006, 1044). (1)



#### **Toussaint Louverture (1743-1803)**

Born a slave on the Breda plantation, belonging to the Count of Noe, he is freed by the manager Bayon de Liberta, probably a freemason, at the symbolic and unusual age of 33. He is said to be the grandson of an Arada (now Benin) warlord named Gaou-Guinou. In 1791 he organizes the uprising

of the slave workshops in the northern plain, with a safe-conduct from the royalist governor to promote the counter-revolution in the island, Philibert-François Rouxel de Blanchelande (former Worshipful Master of the Military Lodge La Modeste of the Colonel-General Infantry regiment, of which he was lieutenant colonel and brigadier). In the spring of 1793 he registers at the service of Spain, which wanted to control Saint Domingue. He tries to supplant his black rivals in the Spanish camp, Jean-François and Biassou, and takes the title of “lieutenant general of the armies of the king of Spain” at the head of a troop of 4,000 men. After the proclamation of the general freedom of slaves by Sonthonax, he is convinced by the French Governor Étienne Maynaud Bizéfranc de Laveaux to join the French camp. Laveaux belonged to the English lodge Saint-Jean de Jérusalem of which he was the Worshipful Master from 1779 to 1798, then first Supervisor until 1788 of the military lodge of his regiment l’Amitié à l’Épreuve. It was then that the nickname of Louverture was given by the civil commissioner Polverel (initiated by the lodge L’Amitié de Bordeaux 1771), noting that Toussaint massacred on his way all those who tried to resist him. (1)

Toussaint gets rid of his tutors Laveaux and Sonthonax, the latter very popular after the proclamation of freedom for slaves, and expels the agent Hedouville sent by France to counterbalance his growing influence. He defeats the mulattoes of the South led by his rival General Rigaud at the end of the terrible civil war. He reduces the black rebels to his authority, including his own nephew Moïse, whom he has shot. The opportunism of this military career should be noted, since all the promotions made on the spot on the occasion of dramatic events, sometimes provoked, always end up being endorsed afterwards by France. (1)

The Constitution of 1801 proclaimed by Toussaint is directly inspired by the autonomists of the Assembly of Saint-Marc led by Bacon de la Chevalerie, whose masonic ties to Bordeaux and Paris were known.

In Saint Domingue, Bacon de la Chevalerie is considered the “promoter of the white autonomist revolution” (13). First, he makes himself elected president of the provincial assembly of the north of the island. On January 17, 1790, he is appointed captain-general of the national troops and soon after he will be promoted to the rank of general. At the end of the year, he decides to push for the embarkation of colonists to France, in order to plead their cause, in the operation known as the *Léopardins*, a group also called the “faction of the 85” by Ignace Frédéric de Mirbeck, the commissioner sent to the island by the metropole. Mirbeck, former secretary of the King, belonged to the lodge *Les Philosophes, Orient de Paris*. Toussaint’s main defender with Bonaparte was Colonel Vincent, Great Speaker and a high dignitary of masonry, who personally delivered the 1801 constitution to the 1<sup>st</sup> Consul.

First black general of the French Republic and governor of the former colony of Saint Domingue, after the promulgation of the Constitution of Saint Domingue, which appoints him Governor General for life on May 9, 1801, Toussaint, becomes Grand Protector of the Order. When asked if Toussaint was a Mason, the Haitian Historical Society points out that Toussaint’s signature with three dots plus one, and the fact that his brother and cousin were members of *La Réunion Désirée* at the *Orient de Port-au-Prince*, could not have been without his consent. Even if there is no formal proof of his masonic membership, it cannot be denied that he knew this milieu well and that he placed his men there and did not oppose them. One wonders who was manipulating whom? Toussaint was surrounded by freemasons who influenced him and favored his ascension. (1)

### **Alexandre Pétion (1770-1818)**

Of Bordeaux origin through his father Pascal Sabès, founder and first president of Haiti, Pétion was a great protector of the freemasons.

We cannot confirm his membership in a lodge because we cannot find his name in the preserved tableaux. This can be explained by the troubles of the time and the loss of many documents. Under his presidency the lodges were protected and could meet. In the museum of the National Pantheon in Port-au-Prince, one can find his masonic “flaming” sword on which are engraved the symbols of



Apprentice, Companion, Master and Rose Cross. The constitutions of the independent Haitian masonry will automatically erect the Head of State as Grand Protector of the Order. (1)

Pétion learns the trade of goldsmith and then joins the free hunters of the West militia, where he belongs during the Ogé uprising. Having taken part in the meetings of the freedmen of the West, he distinguishes himself in the first battle at Pernier, as an artillery captain. At the arrival of the civil commissioners who enforced the decree of April 4, 1791 in favor of the freedmen, he joins the Legion of Equality and distinguishes himself during the attack on Léogane by the English, in recognition he is promoted to the rank of chief of artillery battalion, then after the siege of Port-au-Prince in 1797, adjutant-general. He is in Rigaud’s camp in the war of the South against Toussaint. After a heroic resistance during the siege of Jacmel in 1800, he has to flee to France after the defeat of the mulattoes to escape the massacres. He returns to Saint Domingue in 1802 as a member of the staff of the Leclerc expedition against Toussaint. He is the first to desert the French camp when the news of the re-establishment of slavery in Guadeloupe reach Saint Domingue and the rumors that this colony would suffer the same fate. (1)

### **Pierre Thouvenot (1757-1817)**

This general of the expedition of Saint Domingue is said to be a freemason. Born in Toul on March 9, 1757, he is one of the main generals of the expedition to Saint Domingue. He is the king's engineer-geographer in 1774, then go to the school of La Fère as an aspirant artillery midshipman in the colonies in 1779. He is appointed in Guadeloupe in 1780 and become a lieutenant and then captain of artillery in 1788, and a knight of Saint-Louis in 1791. He deserts with Dumouriez on April 5, 1793, after having served in Belgium and Holland, and remains an emigrant until 1800 in the Duchy of Brunswick. At the end of 1801 he is appointed brigade commander to serve on the staff of the expedition of Saint Domingue, where he is found commander of the Mol Saint-Nicolas in 1802, commander-in-chief of the army's artillery, provisionally appointed brigadier general on October 15, confirmed on November 4, promoted to Chief of Staff of the Army of Saint Domingue on February 26, 1803 and arrested on September 9 for plotting against Rochambeau and sent back to France on September 13, where his rank is confirmed one year later. He is recalled to serve in Germany in 1805, commanding officer at Stettin in 1806, then the army of Spain, commanding officer for Bayonne, Guipúzcoa and San Sebastián in 1808. Napoleon elevates him to the dignity of Baron of the Empire on August 15, 1810, and of Officer of the Legion of Honor on June 30, 1811. He still serves in the Pyrenees Army in 1813 and rules at Bayonne where he is blocked by Wellington in 1814. He resists until his retreat on September 9, 1815 and dies in Orly on July 21, 1817. (1)

### **Bertrand Clauzel (1772-1842)**

He was born in Cantal to a family of boilermakers. His uncle Jean Baptiste Clauzel is a deputy at the Convention. He chooses a military career. On October 14, 1791 he is a second lieutenant. He

resigns when Louis XVI is deposed. He returns to the army on April 14, 1793 with the rank of captain in a battalion of the Pyrenees legion. He climbs the ranks in the army and participates in the Italian campaign as chief of staff. He plays an important role, put in charge by General Grouchy, in the negotiations with King Charles Emanuel, in order to obtain his abdication, the handing over of all the strongholds and the command of all the Piedmontese troops. He is appointed by captain-general Leclerc as division general and takes part in the expedition to Saint Domingue. This promotion is confirmed on December 18, 1802 by Rochambeau, commander-in-chief since Leclerc's death on November 2, 1802. He is in charge of the city of Cap français. He is, with General Thouvenot, the instigator of the "coup d'État" against Rochambeau, being in disagreement with the latter. He is sent back to France at the same time as General Thouvenot. He is pardoned and receives the cross of commander of the Legion of Honor, but is removed from the army for two years. Napoleon decides to take him back and assigns him to the Army of the North on November 18, 1805, then to the Army of Holland. He moves to the army of Italy and then Dalmatia and receives the title of Baron of the Empire commanding the 11<sup>th</sup> corps of the Grand Army. He takes part in the campaigns of Spain and Portugal. He distinguishes himself, named Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor on July 17, 1809, by numerous battles and in May 1811 by a memorable retreat compared to that of Russia. He is one of the last to lay down his arms in 1814 after Wellington informs the French Army of the Emperor's abdication. During the first restoration, the 100 days, he is among the first to declare himself in favor of Napoleon on his return from Elba. (1)

He is condemned by the order of July 24, 1815, which orders the arrest of generals who have betrayed the King before March 23. He manages to embark for the United States thanks to the help of the two

Haitian heads of state at the time, President Alexandre Pétion in the West and King Henry Christophe in the North, who declare that they would offer a reward to the ship's captain who would save Clauzel. It is important to note here the recognition of Pétion and Christophe who probably had not forgotten the "coup d'État" against Rochambeau and came to the rescue of a former brother in arms. Clauzel is sentenced to death in absentia on September 11, 1816. This sentence is contrary to the military amnesty signed by the plenipotentiaries of Louis XVIII. He returns to France in 1820 and asks for a review of the judgment against him. An ordinance of July 20 declares him included in the amnesty and restores him to all his rights, titles, ranks and honors.

He is elected deputy in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district of the Ardennes, in Rethel, on March 26, 1829 then re-elected in 1830. He is then general-in-chief of the Algerian troops from 1830 to 1831. On July 30, 1831, the king raises him to the dignity of Marshal of France. He is again re-elected in Rethel on June 21, 1834. Sent back to Algeria in 1832, he takes Guelma in 1834 where he set up a permanent camp. He is appointed governor general on July 8, 1835. He wages war against ABD el-Kader, taking and burning Mascara, the capital of the emir. In November 1836, he launches an expedition against Constantine, which is a failure and definitively ends his military career. He is replaced on 12 February 1837 by General Damrémont. He continues to sit in the Chamber of Deputies, re-elected in 1837 and 1839. He refuses to join the conspiracy of Luis-Napoléon Bonaparte, which will lead to the fiasco of Boulogne-sur-Mer. The deputy dies of a stroke in Cintegabelle on April 21, 1842, in the midst of financial worries.

## CONCLUSION

Pierre Thouvenot was one of the career military men, Freemasons, who tried to put an end to Rochambeau's excesses and to

stop the re-establishment of slavery by exterminating the natives within the French Army. He tried to plot against Rochambeau, with the help of the chief of staff Bertrand Clauzel, not adhering to the tactics that announced the defeat of the expedition. In addition to yellow fever, an important and determining element in the defeat of the expeditionary corps during the War of Independence would have been the desertion within the French ranks of the military masons and others. Indeed, what a dilemma for them and what an impossibility to reconcile the masonic ideals of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity and the orders received for the extermination of their brothers in arms and civilian populations for the sole reason that they were of mixed race, black or had black blood in their veins, in order to re-establish slavery. These are cases of conscience to make one lose one's head. The orders received being irreconcilable with any moral and just conscience. It was not until the end of the Second World War and the Nuremberg trials that passive obedience to orders received was questioned, whereas as early as 1802, in Saint Domingue during the Haitian War of Independence, it was already being questioned by French military masons or those imbued with the ideals of the French Revolution: liberty, equality and fraternity.

I must quote here from Jacques Verhaegen's paper, "Le refus d'obéissance aux ordres manifestement criminels": The principle will be recognized at Nuremberg, according to the wording that we know: "The fact of having acted on the order of his government or that of a hierarchical superior does not release the responsibility of (the agent) if he had morally the faculty of choosing." Certainly burning, for the executor as well as for the military institution itself, the *facultas resistendi* is thus based on the realization that its opposite – the principle of passive obedience – has emerged, as Speer recalled, as one of the greatest purveyors of war crimes... The duty of disobedience is now in the official statement of the Nuremberg principles and is found in many military

manuals today.” Many countries have accepted this principle and it is part of military training manuals. “In October 1966, General De Gaulle’s France adopts a Regulation of General Discipline in the Armed Forces, which expressly established the right and duty of subordinates to refuse obedience to certain orders. After the Nuremberg trials, “the criminality of the order is the alleged exception of the vital interests of the nation.

We can then understand the significance of Napoleon’s defeat in Saint Domingue and why it has been subsequently suppressed and does not appear in any school textbook in France! Let’s not forget that this defeat occurs the year before Napoleon’s coronation as Emperor of the French. This defeat taints his reputation, his aura and his prestige. It was necessary to stifle the affair. Moreover, there was a real mutiny in the French Army with many desertions for moral reasons. This had to be kept quiet in order to maintain the system of passive and strict obedience to the orders received so that the Great Army could continue and extend its influence over the whole of Europe. The masonic brothers who have deserted or attempted a coup within the French Army are all forgiven and reintegrated into Napoleon’s Grand Army. The two main instigators of the “coup d’État” against Rochambeau are amnestied to cover up their disobedience. This is a far cry from the Nuremberg principles at the time.

In Saint Domingo, the French were fighting other Frenchmen; Haiti did not yet exist. Both groups wore French uniforms and weapons and attacked each other, all singing the same song: La Marseillaise. Let’s not forget that La Marseillaise was the Haitian national anthem until the centenary of its independence in 1904, when President Nord Alexis launched a contest to have a national anthem for Haiti. Justin L’Hérison won this contest by composing La Dessalinienne to replace La Marseillaise.

France unfortunately chose to ignore its past in Saint Domingue, its defeat in the war to re-establish slavery, which she lost.

She was therefore condemned to make the same mistakes when the colonizations were re-launched under Napoleon III, in Africa and in Indochina. Colonial history could have been quite different if France had brought to these peoples the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, as the French Revolution had finally done in Saint Domingue, after many prevarications, hesitations, and multiple turpitudes and setbacks. Let us not forget that Napoleon Bonaparte had done it for Europe and the whites, even after his defeat by the forces of European coalitions, the history of Europe was changed and no European nation could return to the system of royal absolutism as before, the civil code having become the norm for equality before the law. These newly colonized peoples would have embraced this emancipation and the history of mankind would have been very different! Unfortunately it was quite different. Once again the colonized were reduced to servitude, exploited and without rights, the resources of their territory exploited without anything in return. As in Saint Domingue, we have seen the reproduction of two-tiered colonial societies where some had all the privileges and all the rights and the others nothing. These systems cannot last indefinitely, except if there is genocide of the dominated, because the human being seeing the inequality asks himself questions and once emancipated with the access to books and instructions he revolts. Moreover, miscegenation calls into question the foundations of segregation, prejudice and inequality. This colonial system undermines itself and ends up exploding. France has experienced two bloody wars of independence in Indochina and Algeria, which could have been avoided if it had learned the salutary lessons of the experience of Saint Domingue, had not deprived its citizens of the knowledge of this lived history and thus it could have approached future colonizations differently. It is very difficult to acknowledge one's mistakes and to do one's *mea culpa*, but that is what makes a man great.

### 3. Freemasonry after Independence

**Jean Jacques Dessalines, January 1<sup>st</sup> 1804 - October 17, 1806**  
**(Emperor Jacques 1<sup>er</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup> 1804 - October 17, 1806)**

Dessalines announces his opposition to the freemasons even before Independence. On the day of his triumphal entry into Port-au-Prince, October 9, 1803, with the indigenous army, being informed that there was a lodge where free masons were meeting, he gives the order to his battalion commander Bedouet to destroy their temple at the head of a company of grenadiers. This order was carried out with zeal. Dessalines was suspicious of masonry because it was a secret society, with its mysteries. He feared plots and conspiracies coming from the masonic milieu that he did not understand. According to the historian Thomas Madiou: “Dessalines had horror of freemasonry. He did not want to understand what was sublime in this institution whose goal is to make men better by establishing among them the closest fraternity. He confused the masons with the voodoo priests (sorcerers of our countryside) whom he had shot when they were arrested. (5)

After Independence, under the reign of Dessalines, from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1804 to October 17 1807, freemasonry is outlawed. On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1804 Dessalines is Governor General of Haiti, and in September 1804 he is proclaimed Emperor of Haiti. According to Thomas Madiou: “By ordering to close, in the empire, the lodges of freemasons, Dessalines raised against him the indignation of a great number of men of some instruction. However, the masons met secretly and went about their work. Among those of Port-au-Prince, one could distinguish men who almost all played later, in Haiti, superior roles: the citizens Auguste Nau, B. Inginac, Sabourin, Noël Piron, Dieudonné, Almanjor, Antoine Gerin, Monnier, Perdriel, Fresnel, Jean-Pierre Boyer, Jean Thézan, Jean-François Lespinasse In order not to be denounced to

Dessalines, they were careful to invite to their banquets some influential lay people... As for General Pétion, he was not unaware of their meetings and tolerated them contrary to the instructions that he had received.” (5)

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804, the Independence of Haiti is declared on the Place d’Armes in Gonaïves in the presence of generals, troops of various corps and the population of the city and surrounding regions. Dessalines makes a vehement speech in Creole and then gives the floor to his secretary Boisrond Tonnerre to read the three acts he had written. The first act announces revenge against the French for all the crimes and exactions committed during the War of Independence. The second act solemnly proclaims Independence and the will to live free or die. The third act proclaims Dessalines governor general for life, with the right to choose his successor. All generals swear allegiance to him, he holds all powers, he is dictator. (4)

**The second act of the Proclamation of Independence,  
written by Boisrond Tonnerre**

*Freedom or death.*

*Native Army.*

*Today, the first of January, one thousand eight hundred and four;*

*The General-in-Chief of the indigenous Army, accompanied by the generals, chiefs of the army, convened to take measures that must tend to the happiness of the country;*

*After having made known to the assembled generals his true intentions, to assure forever to the natives of Haiti a stable government, object of his most lively solicitude: which he did by a speech tending to make known to the foreign powers, the resolution to make the country independent, and to enjoy a liberty consecrated by the blood of the people of this island; and, after having collected the opinions, asked that each of the assembled generals pronounce the oath to renounce France forever, to die rather*

*than to live under her domination, and to fight until the last breath for independence. The generals, penetrated by these sacred principles, after having given their unanimous support to the well manifested project of independence, all swore to posterity, to the whole universe, to renounce France forever, and to die rather than to live under her domination.*

*Done in Gonaives, this 1st day of January 1804 and the 1st day of the independence of Haiti.*

*Signed*

*Jean-Jacques DESSALINES,*

*General in Chief;*

*Henry CHRISTOPHE, Alexandre PETION, Augustin CLERVEAUX, Nicolas GEFFRARD, André VERNET, Louis Etienne GABART,*

*Major Generals;*

*Paul ROMAIN, Etienne GERIN, François CAPOISS, Jean-Philippe DAUT, Jean-Louis FRANÇOIS, Laurent FEROU, Pierre CANGE, Louis Laurent BAZELAIS, Magloire AMBROISE, Jean-Jacques (Moreau) HERNE, Toussaint DAUT alias BRAVE, YAYOU,*

*Brigadier Generals;*

*Guy Joseph BONNET, François PAPALIER, MORELLY, Jean CHEVALIER, Ignace Desponteaux MARION,*

*Adjutant Generals;*

*Etienne MAGNY, Pierre Maximilien ROUX*

*Brigade Leaders;*

*CHACHERON, Jean-Marie Bernard LORET, Louis BOIS QUENEZ, Saint-Julien MACAJOUX, Alexis DUPUY, CARBONNE, Joseph Dominique Vigné DIAQUOI elder, Joseph Manuel RAPHAEL, Pierre Nicolas MALET, Pierre DERENONCOURT,*

*Army Officers;*

*Boisrond TONNERRE,*

*Secretary. (4)*

Among the signatories we must remark three freemasons member of colonial lodges: Guy Joseph Bonnet Étienne Magny, Jean Chevalier. Gerin initiated by the lodge Saint Jean D'Écosse at the Orient of Marseille. Other signatories will become masons not like Alexis Dupuy and Chareron. (9) Of the 37 signatories: 25 mulattoes, 11 blacks and one white.

### **Massacre of the French and role of the freemasons**

We must mention here the sad and abominable story of revenge: the massacre of the French. In my family my father always told me that this was one of the worst abominations in our national history. After Independence, Dessalines decides to carry out what had been mentioned in the first act of the declaration of Independence. Let's hear it from Historian Beaubrun Ardouin: "On February 22, 1804 Dessalines issued a decree ordering the generals commanding the divisions to arrest all persons (whites) who were convinced or suspected of having taken part in the massacres and assassinations ordered by Leclerc and Rochambeau, in order to deliver them to the sword of justice. It was recommended to these generals to take all the necessary information in the search for proofs in order not to expose themselves to the destruction of innocent people, ... and any chief who would have sacrificed to his ambition, his hatred or any other passion individuals whose guilt would not have been proven, would undergo death himself and his possessions would be confiscated". The courts being non-existent at the time, the military chiefs became judge of the accused. According to Beaubrun Ardouin: "... Dessalines had to go through the country to have it executed; the generals commanders of the divisions did not do anything about it, until he appeared in within their jurisdiction. However, he had ordered that priests, doctors, surgeons, pharmacists, and other Frenchmen who professed arts or trades be excluded from the massacre, as they could be

useful to the population. He included in these exceptions some who were incorporated into the troops, generally all the Poles who had been taken prisoner, and the Germans established in the commune of Bombarde. ...in spite of the recommendation made to the superior officers, it was impossible for them to prevent the particular vengeance from being carried out, when the order to kill indicated not only those who would be convinced but those who would be suspected of having taken part in the massacres, in the murders ordered by Leclerc and Rochambeau. The hour of vengeance had sounded. ... in the cities and towns through which Dessalines passed, he personally had all the French people put to death, without exception”.

None of the generals had executed the decree of February 22, because they were all opposed to it, and it took the presence of Dessalines and his iron will to have it executed. Ardouin added: “Nevertheless, if superior and subordinate officers, if private individuals even showed zeal in these acts of cruelty, one can cite, to their credit, others who made it their duty, their happiness, to save as many French people as they could by facilitating their escape from the country, by hiding them during these fury. Among these men who valiantly fought the War of Independence, history distinguishes Geffrard, Jean-Louis François, Férou, Bazile, Thomas Durocher, Gérin, Pétion, Bonnet, Borgella, Frémont, Giraud.” We have verified that all of them were freemasons, with the exception of François and Férou, who showed fraternity and risked their lives to save others. “In Cap Christophe himself had taken in twenty proscribed people to save them, but was forced to hand them over, as Dessalines was in that city”. Many men and women in the population showed compassion and humanity. There was no unanimity in vengeance. “Dessalines personally spared some Frenchmen whom he placed in public office; he saved others only because they showed courage, so contrasting was his character. In Port-au-Prince, abbé Dufour was going

to be sacrificed, even though he was excluded, because the assassins wanted him to give them money: he was refusing to do so with a rare courage. Dessalines arrived and dispersed his assassins with his cane, asking them if the children should not be baptized". (4)

Moreover, by mid-April, the massacre of the men having been carried out on all points, Dessalines ordered that of the women and children. According to the historian Thomas Madiou Dessalines was reluctant to go along these new revenges, which he had not even thought about, and that he was led to them by the infamous people who provoked them. But he adds: "Nevertheless, as he (Dessalines) did not put up an invincible resistance to these atrocious suggestions, history cannot justify him".<sup>5</sup> If General Clervaux in Cap Haitian perpetrated acts of savage atrocity, as well as Colonel Germain Frère in Port-au-Prince, General Moreau in Les Cayes, and the naval officers Begon, Aoua, and Tate, others hastened to save as many women and children as they could from death. Captain Alain in Port de Paix, General Pétion in Port-au-Prince, General Geffrard in Les Cayes, General Férou in Jérémie, Thomas Durocher, Théodat, Bergerac Tricnet, and Port Captain Gaspard, saved many lives that later acquired Haitian nationality. Once again, the freemasons played a great role of brotherhood in saving many lives, among the names mentioned they were all freemasons except Férou and Gaspard that we could not confirm as such. (4)

We agree with Ardouin's conclusions when he declares: "Revenge is conceivable during battles... But after victory, when right triumphs, moderation and generous feelings must prevail over hatred, however just it may be. The vanquished also has a right in the eyes of humanity, in the eyes of God: it is to be treated, not as an enemy, but as a defenseless man. What does it matter to the people of Haiti, the victors of the French Army, that during the occupation of the colony, the French Army carried out unheard of atrocities? It was not necessary to imitate its

excesses: humanity, always in agreement with good policy, commanded another conduct”.<sup>4</sup> And what to say about all those French men who had deserted the French Army or sided with the independentists and who now had to face the massacre of their relatives or to be victim of it on simple denunciation or suppositions. Ardouin concluded: “Bloody reprisals, like the crimes that provoke them, are in the realm of barbarism”.<sup>4</sup> Let us just imagine if all the victorious armies in history subjected the civilian population to atrocities after their victory. After any great victory, it is time for reconciliation in order to move forward.

I cannot help but to draw a parallel between Dessalines and Nelson Mandela. Dessalines was caught up in his atrocities, his arbitrary acts and his dictatorship over a population that aspired to freedom and peace after independence. He was assassinated at Pont-Rouge after barely two years and ten months of rule on October 17, 1806. His memory has been forgotten for three quarters of a century after his death, as the memory of the atrocities committed was present in all minds. This explains why today there is no portrait or drawing of Dessalines showing his true face. According to his descendants, he was a “griffin”<sup>34</sup> with light brown skin and stigmata, while for others he was black. We will not enter into this debate and that is why we refrain from publishing images of him that are purely a product of the imagination. It was under the presidency of Lysius Salomon (1879-1888) that his memory was rehabilitated as one of the founding fathers of the country.

Mandela, for having been magnanimous and for having forgiven his enemies and torturers after coming to power in South Africa, is recognized worldwide as a great man, a man of peace. History and human beings expect the victors to show self-sacrifice, forgiveness and to be men of peace and reconciliation towards those they have defeated.

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<sup>34</sup> Griffin, griffe or griffon in French a light skin black with black, red or light brown hair.

If Dessalines had shown these qualities, he could have been recognized worldwide as the Spartacus of the black race, but it was not so.

### **Visit of an eminent freemason in Haiti Francisco de Miranda**

Sebastián Francisco de Miranda y Rodríguez de Espinoza (28 March 1750-14 July 1816) was a revolutionary born in Caracas who traveled to Europe and the United States and wanted to achieve the Independence of the Spanish colonies in South America. Miranda was a freemason. He had founded the lodge The Great American Reunion at the Orient of London. It was in New York that Miranda began to organize his expedition to liberate Venezuela. With the American colonel Smith, he carried out a fundraising to buy weapons and recruit mercenaries. Miranda and 200 volunteers left for Venezuela on February 2, 1806 on a leased 20-gun ship he named Léandre, in honor of his eldest son. Miranda called at Jacmel in southern Haiti in March 1806, where he acquired two other ships and their crews. It was there that Miranda made and hoisted for the first time the Venezuelan flag that he had designed. Inspired by the Haitian flag after Independence, blue and red, he added yellow. This flag will be the flag of Venezuela, then of Great Colombia and is today the flag of Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador with variations: the size of the yellow is larger for Colombia and Ecuador, stars for Venezuela and different coat of arms for each country. (source: Wikipedia)

According to Thomas Madiou, Dessalines did not meet with Miranda but charged Magloire Ambroise to do so, to receive him with all honors, to give him his recommendations for success, to provide him with arms, ammunition and to allow him to recruit Haitian volunteers for his expedition.<sup>5</sup> Beaubrun Ardouin affirms that Dessalines would have met Miranda personally. Miranda explained to him that he intended to gather the country's notables in a popular assembly and that he would

proclaim independence by an act that would unite the inhabitants in the same spirit. Dessalines, incredulous, replied that to achieve Independence it was necessary to wage revolution, war and “cut off heads and burn houses.<sup>4</sup> Miranda failed in this first expedition. He returned in 1810 after the uprising in Caracas in the name of King Ferdinand VII of Spain against Napoleon. On July 5, 1811 a first Independence of short duration was proclaimed. On July 26, 1812 Miranda was forced to surrender and was taken prisoner of war. He died in a dungeon in Cadiz on July 14, 1816. (source: Wikipedia)



*Flag of Miranda – May 26, 1806 in Jacmel*



*Flag of Haiti on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1804  
before Dessalines changes it on May 20, 1805*



*Francisco Miranda*



**GEN. HENRI CHRISTOPHE**  
[From rare old prints.]



*Nicolas Geffrard*



*Étienne Gerin*



*Jean-Pierre Boyer*

### **The fall of Dessalines, a plot with many facets**

We must focus on the fall and death of Dessalines in a war ambush, the conspiracy and the revolt movement that surrounds this history fact, involves many freemasons. It is important to shed light and to study the different aspects and acts of the ones and others that led to this conspiracy. It is necessary to communicate the facts in search of the masonic truth.

Dessalines had surrounded himself with secretaries, Boisrond Tonnerre and Juste Chanlatte, advisor and aide-de-camp Étienne Victor Mentor, with ebullient, passionate, exalted characters, who matched his personality, interpreted his wishes and translated his secret desires into the acts they produced for him. This is how he put the massacre of the French into execution against the opinions of his generals. He governed as a dictator without consulting his generals, who had to sign acts on which they had never deliberated. Dessalines, uneducated but a great general, a leader of troops who knew how to galvanize and motivate soldiers, a military genius on the battlefields, was certainly not in his place as a manager of public affairs and devoid of a vision for the future of the country he had just led to independence.

Numerous unpopular decrees were enacted, constraining trade and the population. Any merchant who exported goods was obliged to

load as much coffee as cotton and sugar onto the ships. This was absurd and restrictive, since the buyers did not want to be forced to carry products that they did not trade in. Dessalines proceeded to destroy the guildives and the wood of campêches, which the farmers exported to make money and to free themselves from the obligatory and painful work on the plantations, impoverishing many small entrepreneurs. All guilds established before the decree of December 22, 1804 were authorized, the others without an authorization of the Emperor or the Minister of Finance would be destroyed, with a month's reprieve granted to put themselves in order. This was a way to limit the competition with the big alcohol producers of the Empire. The south suffered most from this decree, which caused great discontent. The verification of property titles produced numerous abuses on the part of the State as well of the citizens. This measure, good in its intention, just in its principle, but applied by ignorant and corrupt officials, was the cause, thereafter, of deplorable violence towards legitimate owners, who were dispossessed of the property they had enjoyed under all previous governments. Many were those whose titles had disappeared in the fires and tumults of the War of Independence. Zealous and sometimes corrupt auditors confiscated these properties for the state in order to have them leased by others. Soldiers received no pay, no rations, no clothing, and were subject to active service. Farmers who were almost forced to work on the plantations were forced to do so by the whip and the stick. The Louverture system of compulsory labor on the plantations had been restored. The former slaves were restricted in their movements and forced to work on the old plantations. This was revolting for them, after slavery came forced labor and no freedom to move around, to work on their own account and to grow food crops if they wanted to. Public education was abandoned, military enlistment had to suffice for everything. The Emperor had even dared to establish Catholic priests

with the parish cantors. The public treasury freely provided state funds to the Emperor's courtesans, notably Euphémie Daguilh, his mistress in Les Cayes, while the army lacked everything. The discontent became general, the revolution was in all minds and hearts. (4)

As early as 1805 Christophe was already meditating the overthrow of the emperor, he felt more capable than him for the management of the country and indeed he had more capacity than him. These two generals were rivals since they served under Toussaint Louverture. At the siege of Jacmel in 1800, Toussaint had to intervene between Colonel Christophe and General Dessalines because of the arrogance of the former towards his superior. Moreover, he had been humiliated by him during the massacre of the French, he had been obliged to deliver to Dessalines' sword the twenty or so Frenchmen that he wanted to save at all costs and that he hid in his own house. Bruno Blanchet the elder served as his secret emissary to Pétion, Geffrard and the other generals, in order to rally them to his cause, but the latter had no real reason to rebel at the time and received Blanchet with coldness.

Boisrond Tonnerre, Mentor, Borno Déléard and David Troy conspired on their side. Mentor had declared to David Troy: "Is an ignorant man like Dessalines fit to lead us? Men like us should be in charge of the government. Their goal was to get Dessalines to make himself unpopular by his actions, to get rid of the very influential and popular generals who had fought the War of Independence and replace them with young men who would be devoted to them, because they would recommend them to the emperor. "He (Mentor) was not afraid to try to incite Dessalines against Christophe, Geffrard and Pétion. Christophe soon discovered that he coveted the first dignity of the state no less than he did. Mentor denounced Pétion and Geffrard as conspirators planning the return of André Rigaud. "A report had reached Dessalines against one of those acts of despotism to which Christophe was so prone, and

he resolved to immediately summon him to Marchand, saying that he would have him killed immediately. Captain Alexis Dupuy was ordered to write a letter to Christophe on this subject. While sealing this letter, Dupuy added a small note: “Answer that you are ill”. Christophe did as Dupuy had suggested, “Dessalines, whose character offered contrasts, thought no more about it; but Christophe meditated more than ever: Dupuy’s advice had warned him that his life was at stake.

In 1805 Dessalines, wanting to make a living symbol of the union of black and mulatto, wished to marry his natural daughter Célimène, born before his marriage to Marie-Claire Bonheur, to Alexandre Pétion. Pétion explained that he was reluctant to marry and declined the emperor’s offer without giving as a reason that he was in love and living in concubinage with Marie-Madeleine Lachenais, a mulatto women known for her beauty, who had just given him a daughter Cécile. Moreover, Célimène was expecting a child for Captain Bernard Chancy and Pétion had been informed of this by the latter who was his aide-de-camp, a mulatto and nephew of Toussaint Louverture. Moreover, Chancy and Célimène had been in love since the time when Toussaint was governor. Dessalines, already bruised by Pétion’s refusal and later upset against the mulattoes, felt humiliated to learn on his return to Marchand what everyone knew about his daughter and Chancy. No one had dared to speak to him about it, probably fearing the wrath of the emperor. He ordered Germain Frère, commander of the district of Port-au-Prince, to arrest Chancy and send him to Marchand, to wash away this affront in blood. Chancy was imprisoned in Port-au-Prince, but he knew, as did Pétion, what was waiting for him in Marchand. Pétion sent him pistols and Chancy committed suicide. His remains were given final honors by Pétion.

Thus the three most influential generals of the empire were in Dessalines’ sights. Moreover, had he not taken care to place other rivals

beside them to spy on them and report to him, which they did with zeal to compromise them: Pétion with Germain Frère as commander of the Port-au-Prince district, Geffrard had General Moreau in Les Cayes, and Christophe had to deal with François Capois as brigadier general in Fort Liberté.

One event turned the tide, on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1806, Dessalines convened a secret council in the presence of Christophe to assassinate Geffrard and Pétion, who were suspected of plotting against him and facilitating the return of André Rigaud, which their enemies wrongly accused them of. Christophe dissuaded the emperor and convinced him that the time was not right, that by making them disappear in this way he risked a general uprising in the west and the south, as these generals were popular and the population and troops were devoted to them. However, he notified the concerned. In reaction, according to the historian Gaétan Mentor: “In 1806, on January 6, the freemasons of Les Cayes clandestinely create a wild lodge in this city. They give it the name of “L’Heureuse Reunion”. (9) According to Ardouin: “The population of this department (the south) was thus prepared for a meditated revolt, when Geffrard fell ill and died in Cayes on May 31. It was generally suspected that he was poisoned by secret orders from Dessalines, so quick are the popular prejudices to attribute the evil to the hated leaders.(4) Geffrard was 44 years old and was loved and respected in the south. He was also regretted because he was “the hope of a resistance for which all were preparing”. (4) Nicolas Geffrard did not see his son Fabre Nicolas Geffrard born on September 24, 1806 in Anse-à-Veaux who was to become president of Haiti from January 15, 1859 to March 13, 1867.

Dessalines’ trip to the south between June and September 1806 was to arouse the entire population of the south against him, all classes included. The verification, re-verification and counter-verification of

property titles, conducted with excessive zeal by Inginac, caused honest people to lose their property. Moreover, Dessalines had charged him with the task of annihilate donations, wills and sales made by whites in favor of the natives. Many alcohol producing plants that had been decreed illegal were demolished. Farmers ruined by the destruction of campêche wood destined for export were forced to return to work on the plantations. By setting export prices for coffee higher than the market price, exporters could no longer export coffee. By making the debtors pay, by forcing the state's farmers to give freely their crops to the state-owned stores, it was to provide for the scandalous expenses of the emperor's mistress, Euphémie Daguilh. She devoured a thousand gourdes a day, which was reduced to eight hundred gourdes a month. There were at least twenty concubines throughout the country, each costing twenty thousand gourdes a year. Dessalines dismissed all men close to Geffrard's in the army. While the population of Les Cayes was mourning Geffrard, Dessalines indulged in balls and wild celebrations with his staff and Euphemia Daguilh. The latter, a composer and choreographer, composed tunes that were in fashion and the "carabineer", decreed an imperial dance by Dessalines, which survived long after his death. He did so much that when he left Les Cayes, he went to Petit-Goave where he declared to Colonel Lamarre: "Lamarre, my son, keep the 24<sup>th</sup> demi-brigade ready; because before long I will need you and this corps to go down to the South. After what I have just done there, if the citizens do not rise up against me, it is because they are not men. (4)

On October 8, 1806 an insurrection breaks out in Les Cayes. General Moreau is arrested, colonels Wagnac, Francisque, and officers Papalier and Bourdet join the insurrection. Colonel Lamarre joined the revolt, rallied by Borgella. Colonel Francisque comes to L'Anse-à-Veau to ask Gerin, as the only division general present in the south, to take the lead of the rebellion. Gerin hesitates and replies: "But really,

Colonel Francisque, I cannot imagine that you all would embark on such an undertaking without calculating the consequences, and above all, without remembering the misfortunes of our civil war against Toussaint Louverture! (4) “At these words Madame Abel, who shared the common opinion that Geffrard, her brother, had been poisoned by order of the Emperor; ...rises from the table in a male and proud attitude, and apostrophizing him with these words of a heroine: “ General Gerin, if you no longer feel courageous enough to fight with your brothers, give me your uniform, your epaulettes, and your sword, I will march in your place!” 4 “O woman”. Gerin succumbs to this reproach marked with so much energy, brave and reckless as he is... he cries out: “It is done! I put myself at your head and I will see if you all know how to win or die with me in the terrible resolution that we all take today!” (4) Generals Yayou and Magloire Ambroise join Gerin. General Christophe takes up arms in the north. Petion writes to Dessalines to warn him of the revolt in the south. Dessalines orders him to march against the south and put down the revolt vigorously. Pétion is finally convinced by Yayou, whom he meets at Tapion, that his life is in danger and joins the conspiracy. The troops from the south and the west march on Port-au-Prince where they arrive on October 16.

Dessalines leaves Marchand with the idea of putting down the revolt in blood. “I want my horse to walk in blood up to his chest”.<sup>4</sup> He sends ahead of him the elite companies of the third demi-brigade. They defect and join the insurgents when they arrived in Port-au-Prince. A deputation of farmers comes to ask the generals gathered in Port-au-Prince for the death of Dessalines and Colonel Germain-Frère. Germain-Frère managed the former plantation of Caradeux, which had become one of the emperor’s farms, and knew how to be even crueller than this sad colonial landowner towards the farmers. On October 17, 1806 Dessalines leaves Arcahaie at 5 in the morning. He goes through

the plain and crosses many farmers coming from Port-au-Prince, or who are working along the road, not one of them tells him what is going on there. At 8 o'clock he is ambushed by the insurgents. Generals Gerin, Yayou and Vaval are in the ambush. Gerin gives the order: "Halt! Form the circle!" Dessalines becomes furious, realizing what is happening, animated by the courage that distinguished him in war. He seizes his cane and strikes the soldiers, to whom the officers shout: "Fire! Fire!" No one fires, one can judge the fear that officers and soldiers felt in the presence of a leader like Dessalines. "I am betrayed!" cried Dessalines, drawing his pistol, he kills a soldier, turned his horse around to go back, a young soldier named Garat let loose a shotgun that shots down the emperor's horse. Dessalines cries out, "Help me, Charlotin!" to help him get out from under the horse. Colonel Charlotin rushes from his horse to get him up. It is at this moment that the soldiers regain their composure and fire a discharge that kills Dessalines and Charlotin. Dessalines was accompanied by his staff who did not defend him. Dessalines fell in front of hundreds of witnesses. How can we believe that it was otherwise at a time when ill-intentioned revisionists would like to invent another history? At that time, several senior officers were said to have drawn the fatal example of unforgivable fury on the corpse of the leader they had so feared. Yayou and Hilaire Martin stabbed him several times, Vaval tried to unload his two pistols on him, the squadron leader Delaunay split Charlotin's head with a saber. Dessalines' fingers were cut off to take his expensive rings and his weapons, pistols, saber and dagger were taken away. General Yayou ordered the corpse to be transported to the parade ground in front of the government palace, and as he placed it on a stretcher made with rifles, he exclaimed: "Who would say that this little wretch, only a quarter of an hour ago, made the whole of Haiti tremble!" All along the way, the corpse was thrown to the crowd that came from all sides, and people were beating him with their sabers and

throwing stones at him. Adjutant General Étienne Mentor, his aide-de-camp, his favorite, cried out: “The tyrant is shot! Long lives freedom!”<sup>4</sup> The body remained on the parade ground until the afternoon, a woman named Défilée was moaning over the remains, when the soldiers sent by Pétion came to remove it for burial in the city’s inner cemetery. Défilée accompanied them. Thomas Madiou’s version tells us that it was Défilée who carried and buried the emperor’s remains, which Beaubrun Ardouin explains to be impossible for a woman he knew and so frail.<sup>(4)</sup> Charlotin was given a funeral that honored his glorious devotion. <sup>(4)</sup>

According to Ardouin, “the excesses committed against Dessalines should not surprise anyone. His overthrow of power, which he had attained through the wishes of his comrades-in-arms, acting in the general interest, was then an urgent political necessity, since it threatened the existence of the most important, the most influential among them. His cruel instincts overrode his duties towards society. He had held in various places a language which attested that these violences on his part were so many provocations to revolt, to find an occasion to decimate the populations, to spill the blood of his fellow citizens. His overthrow from power was possible only by a violent revolution, he could not be judged regularly. When a chief likes better to use fear, terror, than conviction and benevolence, to govern his fellow-citizens, if he comes to fall by an attack on his person, the spirits which he had compressed, the souls which he had humiliated, are then unleashed to take inhuman revenge for all the fear which they had had under his government; they are attacking his remains, his memory; he is now only a tyrant in the eyes of all, and they even deny the good he could have done for his country, in spite of his faults, his mistakes, because the passions of the moment are blind in their fury”. Who can prevent the excesses at the risk of exposing himself because the multitude which applauds the victor, “ has its instincts its abominable needs in such crises”. <sup>(4)</sup> Ardouin concludes:

“However, let us sincerely pity the unfortunate fate that Jean-Jacques Dessalines incurred: let us groan over the fatal necessity of the nation to arm against him, to immolate him to the security of all, to the reform of the abuses of his administration, to the creation of a government more equitable than his, to guarantee to the citizens of all classes their rights in civil society. His violent death was one of those deplorable events, which the most civilized peoples cannot always avoid themselves: they happen by a combination of circumstances that arise from the nature of things, often even more by the fault of governments. But however well based was the resolution taken in this respect by our famous predecessors, let us do justice to the memory of Dessalines, for having energetically guided his fellow citizens, his brothers in the conduct of their national independence. This is his title to glory, to the esteem of posterity”. (4)

With the revolt that put an end to Dessalines’ reign, Haitians of all classes said no to dictatorship, absolutism and despotism with a right to life and death over all citizens. They wanted to put an end to forced labor and the Louvertureian system of compulsory labor on the plantations and restrictions on movement. To all those who believe that the Haitian people should be led by dictatorship, the entire nation said NO. Such a system does not work and will never last because revolt comes sooner or later. Let’s not forget that the Haitian people knowingly made the choice to live free or die to liberate themselves from slavery! By ignoring our history and ignoring the historical facts, we have been condemned to relive several dictatorships, all of which were eventually overthrown in one way or another. Humans naturally aspire to freedom and the fundamental right of equality. Then comes the fraternity to help others less favored. Henry Christophe who will establish a dictatorship and a monarchy, once weakened and paralyzed by an apoplexy attack will be overthrown by a violent revolt led by his own generals which will cost the life of his heir son. Later Jean-Pierre Boyer, as a peacemaker bringing

peace, liberty and equality to the defunct Kingdom of the north, will manage to convince the conspiring generals against Christophe and will be accepted by the population of the north. Moreover, the population of the north had been emigrating to the west since the time of Pétion to enjoy more freedom and to escape the Dessalinist and Louvertureian system of compulsory labor continued by Christophe on the plantations in the north. Christophe cracked down on this phenomenon to stop the “hemorrhaging” of the population of the north.

### **Alexandre Pétion 9 March 1807 – 29 March 1818**

#### **Birth of Haitian freemasonry**

Among the revolutionaries who bring down the Empire are many freemasons: Guy Joseph Bonnet, Lamarre, Dieudonné, Janvier, Jacques Ignace Fresnel, Perdriel, Linard, Borgella, Daublas, David Troy, Viau, etc. A constituent assembly meets in Port-au-Prince to draft a new constitution. The Republic is proclaimed and democratic principles will be the basis of the new constitution. Among the constituents there are three freemasons: Théodat Trichet, Bruno Blanchet, Guy Joseph Bonnet. The majority of the deputies are freemasons: Jean-Pierre Boyer, Plésance, N. Saget, Linstant Pradine, Auguste Dupuy, Voltaire, Louis Auguste Daumec, J. Depa Médina, Jacques Ignace Fresnel, Almanjor fils, Blanchet jeune, David Troy, Lamoytte-Aignon, Manigat, etc. (9)

Pétion was a great protector of the Haitian masonry. With his authorization, the Haitian freemasons request from the Grand Lodge of England constitutions for the lodges in Haiti. The relations with France were not yet normalized at that time. Jacques Ignace Fresnel, Judge at the Court of Cassation, founds and requested the constitutions for the lodges L’Amitié des Frères Réunis No. 603 at the Orient of Port-au-

Prince and L'Heureuse Réunion No. 604 at the Orient of Les Cayes. It is interesting to note that L'Heureuse Réunion bears the same name of the wild lodge where the conspirators against Dessalines met. They are granted either by the Grand Lodge of 1717 or the one of 1751. In 1813, the merger of the Ancients (1717) and the Moderns (1751) takes place in England to give birth to the United Grand Lodge of



*Jacques Ignace Fresnel*

England. L'Amitié des Frères Réunis No. 603 becomes L'Amitié des Frères Réunis No. 610 then No. 1 in 1824 and L'Heureuse Réunion No. 604 becomes L'Heureuse Réunion No. 611 then No. 2 in 1824.<sup>9</sup> Fresnel founds with Jean Thézan, Auguste Nau, Thomas Madiou and other brothers in 1916 L'Étoile d'Haiti No. 5 at the Orient of Port-au-Prince.

### **Momentum of masonic solidarity toward Simon Bolivar and his companions**

Pétion offered the Haitian nation its finest hours of international solidarity when Simon Bolivar and his fellow fighters for the independence of territories in the south American continent sought the help of the Haitians. Thus, Pétion, with his noble sentiments, was a precursor, a pioneer, the true founder of Pan-Americanism at a time



*Simon Bolivar*

when mutual aid between nations of the American continent did not yet exist. Pétion received Simon Bolivar on January 3, 1815, who had been initiated in 1803 in the Lautaro Masonic Lodge in Cadiz, Spain. It was in this lodge that he first met some of his revolutionary

peers, such as José de San Martín. He received the rank of companion by the *Mère Loge Écossaise de Saint Alexandre d'Écosse* at the Orient of Paris on January 11, 1806 and in May the rank of Master mason. While in London, he attended the London lodge *The Great American Reunion* founded by Francisco de Miranda. Bolívar was fluent in French. Pétion, in a spirit of masonic solidarity, helped Bolívar and his companions and took actions that would decide the fate of a large part of Latin America.

Bolívar disembarked in Les Cayes at the end of December 1815, coming from Jamaica, where he had spent some time, and preceded Commodore Aury and his squadron who arrived from Cartagena on January 6, 1806. These revolutionaries had evacuated the city of Cartagena after having undergone a siege of several months by the Spanish army, which had inflicted the greatest hardships on them. This squadron, composed of ten ships, brought to Les Cayes the main leaders of Venezuela and many families who lacked everything. Among the Venezuelan leaders were Generals Marino, Bermuda, Piar, Palacios and Mac-Gregor, Colonel Ducoudray-Holstein, Intendant Zéa, the two Pineres brothers, Commodores Louis Aury and Louis Brion, Father Mariomon, and the Soubllette family, including Carlos Soubllette, who was to become president of Venezuela. These people of distinguished rank were the object of the greatest respect from the inhabitants of the capital. General Marion, commander of the district of Cayes, and the civil and military authorities gave a cordial welcome to which the entire population of the city added marks of an unprecedented generosity. Pétion ordered General Marion to cease all exports of grain and other foodstuffs from Les Cayes in order to provide food aid to the foreign independence fighters. (4)

Pétion was offered a great opportunity to serve the cause of freedom and independence in the new world. He made Bolívar understand that the independence of the Spanish colonies should

necessarily benefit all the men who make up the population and not as the English colonies in North America had done. Faithful to the motto liberty, equality, fraternity, he conditioned his help in arms, ammunition, etc., to the solemn promise that Bolivar proclaimed “the general liberty of all the slaves of the province of Venezuela and in all the others that he would succeed in uniting under the flag of independence”. Bolivar understood that this was the key to his success. He also realized that the success of the Haitian War of Independence was due to the union of leaders who had earned their stripes as generals in the midst of the action, and who had accepted Dessalines’ authority as a necessary evil for victory against the French. He applied the same strategy on his return to Venezuela. He discovered in Haiti a people proud of its freedom, all classes of citizens jealous of defending and maintaining their rights, calm and reassured of their unquestionable triumph, in the shadow of the laws, under the leadership of their president. He was faithful to his word by proclaiming the general freedom of slaves successively in Margarita, Carupano, Ocumare and by freeing 1,500 of his own slaves in his estate of San Mateo near Caracas. During the War of Independence the generals incorporated slaves into the armies in exchange for freedom. On the other hand, in Peru, Bolivar forbade forced labor, and guaranteed the liberation of the slaves who had participated in the liberation of the country and that the sons of all the slaves would be born free.



*New Grenada and Venezuela 1819-1831*

Unfortunately, the independence did not coincide with the abolition of slavery, a formidable opposition arose against the freedom of the slaves in the Congress of Cucuta, the constituent assembly to unify the republics of New Granada (now Colombia) and Venezuela.

A gradual freedom was proclaimed and it was not until 1854 that the last slaves were freed by General Jose-Gregorio Monagas, president of Venezuela. (4)

Pétion was self-sacrificing and declined Bolivar's offer of any honor, monument in his name and to be cited as the author of their freedom. As a fine diplomat, Pétion did not want his help for the independence of South American countries to incur the wrath of Spain, which was present in the eastern part of the island and also in Cuba to the west. Pétion paid 2000 piastres from the public treasury to Aury for the repairs of a ship of his squadron. Bolivar received 4,000 rifles, 15,000 pounds of gunpowder, as much lead, flints, a printing press and provisions for all those who were part of the expedition. The president even offered him the possibility of leaving with Haitians who volunteered for Bolivar's cause. Bolivar invited Borgella, who had received many Venezuelans on his property in Custine and in his house in Les Cayes, to accompany him to the mainland. Borgella replied: "My country may need my services; I cannot accept your offer". There was nothing more that could be done for the cause of freedom and independence of the Spanish colonies in South America. After three months in Haiti, Bolivar and his squadron left on April 10, 1815. (4)

Bolivar fought 100 battles, 79 of which were decisive, and during his campaigns he travelled 70,000 kilometers on horseback, ten times more than Hannibal, three times more than Napoleon and twice more than Alexander the Great. (12) He gloriously gained the independence of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. He is a major figure of universal history, a political and military icon in many countries of Latin America and the world, which have given his name to a great number of squares, streets or parks. His name is also the name of a state in Venezuela, of the currency of the same country, of a department in Colombia and above all of a country, Bolivia. Bolivar's great idea was to

obtain the independence of all the Latin American nations and to unite them under a great regional confederation. That is why he created the Great Colombia. He died on December 17, 1830, at the age of 47. After his death, the dissolution of Gran Colombia, undermined by internal political conflicts, was officially pronounced and the republics of New Granada (now Colombia), Venezuela and Ecuador were proclaimed, under the respective presidencies of Francisco de Paula Santander (back from exile), José Antonio Páez and Juan José Flores.

### **Henry Christophe 17 February 1807 - 8 October 1820**

#### **Henry 1<sup>st</sup> 26 March 1811 - 8 October 1820**

On December 26, 1806, the constitution was passed, the Republic was chosen as the form of government, and the president was elected for 4 years. General Henry Christophe rejected the 1807 constitution that limited the powers of the head of state to the senators and the title of president that he had been granted on December 28, 1806. The constituents wanted to ensure that Christophe could not govern as an absolute dictator like Dessalines. Christophe set the army of the north in motion against Port-au-Prince. Despite a first success at Sibert, he failed in his siege of Port-au-Prince and withdrew to Cap Haitian. A Council of State of nine members (seven generals and two civilians), chosen by General Christophe, met in the Cap and voted, on February 17, 1807, the “Constitutional Act of the New Haiti,” a new state comprising the north, the north-west, and the Artibonite. On April 4, 1811, Christophe proclaimed royalty and took the title of Henry the 1<sup>st</sup>. (8) No masonic activity was found during Christophe’s reign in the north of Haiti. After the reunification of the north with the rest of the Republic of Haiti under the presidency of Boyer, lodges were formed in this part of the country, among them L’Haitienne No. 6.

### **Jean-Pierre Boyer 30 March 1818 - 13 March 1843**

Boyer was a great organizer of the Republic of Haiti, a man of peace and was the only president to achieve the unity of the island. The day after Pétion's death, the Senate elected General Jean-Pierre Boyer president of Haiti. After the suicide of Henry Christophe Boyer arrived in Cap-Haitien, on October 26, 1820, and established the Republic after thirteen years of division. Boyer arrived as a peacemaker in the defunct Northern Kingdom. In agreement with the senate, Boyer negotiated beforehand with the generals who had overthrown Henry 1<sup>st</sup>, assured them that they would not be prosecuted and the recognition of their rank in the Army of Haiti. Boyer reassured Christophe's widow and her daughters of his protection.

The eastern part of the island had become Spanish again after the capitulation of the French on July 9, 1809. The former governor and landowner José Nuñez de Caceres declared the independence of the colony as the Spanish State of Haiti on December 1<sup>st</sup> 1821. There were three parties in this territory at the time, one wanted independence, the second wanted to be attached to the Republic of Gran Colombia and the third wanted to be attached to the Republic of Haiti, which enjoyed great prestige. The latter party won. Invited by the Dominicans and without firing a shot, Jean-Pierre Boyer triumphantly entered Santo Domingo on February 9, 1822, reunifying the entire island and was received with great pomp by Nuñez de Caceres. Boyer remembered the Te Deum at the Cathedral of Santo Domingo and the day of reunification as one of the most beautiful of his life.

### **The Grand Orient of Haiti**

The difficulties of communication with the United Grand Lodge of England, resulting from the suspension of transatlantic correspondence, its inaction in the face of requests for new patents, the

uncertainty of knowing whether or not it was receiving the many “pieces of architecture” that were sent to it, push Haitian freemasonry to declare its independence on January 25, 1824. (9) Among the founders of the Grand Orient of Haiti we must mention Jacques Ignace Fresnel, Grand Judge of the Republic, who becomes the first Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Haiti, Jean Thézan and Auguste Nau. The President of the Republic becomes automatically the Grand Protector of the Order. Under President Salomon on July 25, 1880 the foundation stone of the Temple of the Grand Orient of Haiti is laid. The Grand Orient of Haiti has known sixty Grand Masters and several schisms. Numerous lodges were created under the presidency of Boyer, obtaining their constitution from the Grand Orient of Haiti. (9) Jean Baptiste Charlesteguy, a former member of the colonial lodge La Réunion Désirée at the Orient of Port-au-Prince, founds the Scottish lodge Le Mont Liban No. 1 at the Orient of Port-au-Prince. This lodge will join the Obedience the Grand Orient of Haiti under the name Le Mont Liban No. 22.

Under the presidency of Boyer, the independence of Haiti is officially recognized by France and relations between the two countries resume. Thus, in 1836, the Grand Orient of France confreres on the Grand Orient of Haiti the constitutional patents, instructions, rights and powers of the 33 degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite to create lodges, chapters, court councils, consistories and a Supreme Council of Grand General Inspectors.

*Freemasonry as practiced by the Grand Orient of Haiti in 1824 proclaims the existence of a creative principle, under the name of the Great Architect of the Universe.*

*Haitian freemasonry imposes no limits on the search for truth and it is to guarantee this freedom to all that it demands tolerance from all.*

*It is open to people of all nationalities, races and creeds.*

*It forbids all political and religious discussions in its workshops; it welcomes all profane people, whatever their political or religious opinions, provided they are free and of good morals.*

*Its aim is to fight against ignorance in all its forms. Its motto is Liberty Equality Fraternity.*

### **The Grand Orient of Haiti brings freemasonry to the eastern part of the island**

The Grand Orient of Haiti brings freemasonry to a territory where no lodge existed. Indeed, as we mentioned in chapter 1, La Parfaite Harmonie at the Orient of Jacmel, goes into exile in Santo Domingo in 1804 after the defeat of the expeditionary corps. The brothers of this lodge are surprised to find, and confirmed in a letter to the G.:O.:D.:F.: in a request for constitution, that it was the only lodge in the oldest city of the American continent. They explain this by Spanish religious fanaticism in this colony. (3) The Grand Orient of Haiti issues a patent in 1827 to the lodge La Constante Union No. 8 at the Orient of Santo Domingo. Silvestre Prézeau is Worshipful Master and Tomas Bodilla is second supervisor. The latter would become the first president of the Dominican Republic when it would gain independence from the Republic of Haiti on February 27, 1844. He will be also Grand Master of the National Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic in 1858. Among the illustrious members of this lodge are: Jean Baptiste Riché, at the time Brigadier General and future President of the Republic of Haiti from 1<sup>st</sup> March 1846 to 27 February 1847, Céliigni Ardouin, who established a system of political doubling in Haiti from 1844 to 1847 and who was the brother of the historian Beaubrun Ardouin, Maximilien Borgella, Major General and Commander of the Department of Saint Domingue. In this same lodge, in 1843, we find Juan Pablo Duarte, future father of the Dominican nation and future president of the Republic, Joseph

Chevalier, grandfather of the Dominican dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, Buena Ventura Baez, future president of the Republic from September 24, 1849 to February 15, 1853, and many other names of the Dominican society. (9)

We must mention the other lodges patented by the Grand Orient of Haiti in the eastern part: La Fidélité des Frères Réunis No 9, The Philanthropy No. 10 at the Orient of Bani dissolved in 1836, La Parfaite Harmonie No. 18 at the Orient of Azua constituted in 1835, L'Indissoluble Fraternité extinguished in 1844, The Hemisphere No. 15 at the Orient of Puerto Plata and Le Vrai Héroïsme de la Vertu No. 21 at the Orient of Santiago de los Caballeros. (9)

On July 16, 1836 a secret society is founded in Santo Domingo La Trinitaria, by a freemason Juan Pablo Duarte. Its purpose is to conspire and overthrow Jean-Pierre Boyer, president for life of the island. On December 25, 1842, on the other side of the island in Jeremie, another secret society is founded by a freemason Honoré Féry with the same objectives. Boyer will be overthrown and will go into exile in France on March 13, 1843, after twenty five years of reign.

### **Two fratricidal civil wars between masons Brothers**

From April 22, 1968 to December 19, 1969 Haiti goes through a period of civil war. On one side we find the president Sylvain Salnave (June 14, 1867 to December 19, 1869), brother of the lodge l'Humanité No. 6 at the Orient of Cape Haitian, and on the other side freemasons as well: the generals Nissage Saget and Michel Domingue, both future presidents of Haiti and respectively president of the State of Artibonite and the State of the South Haiti is divided into three states at that time. Among Salnave's opponents in this war are other freemasons: Nord Alexis and Boisrond Canal, both future presidents of the republic, and also Pierre Momplaisir Pierre, Brunet Brice Ainé, one of my ancestors, and his son

Broussais Brice, Paulémon Lorquet, all members of the Liberal party. After the rebels have blown up the National Palace, the defeated Salnave escaped to the Dominican Republic, via the l'Hôpital Mountain, hoping to obtain the help of Brother Buenaventura Baez, who was at war with the Dominican president José Maria Cabral, who was also a freemason. Nissage Saget declares Salnave an outlaw and put a price on his head for 5,000 piasters. President Cabral attacks Salnave, arrests him and hands him over to the Haitian authorities. The 5,000 piasters will be paid to him and Cabral will distribute them to those who had captured Salnave. After an expeditious trial, Salnave is executed on the smoking ruins of the National Palace by a firing squad commanded by Boisrond Canal. (9)

In 1883 the Liberal Party takes up arms against the National Party, it was a fratricidal civil war between Brothers. All the leaders of the Liberal Party are freemasons: Jean-Pierre Boyer Bazalais, grandson of the president Jean-Pierre Boyer, Edmond Paul, Boisrond Canal, Pierre Monplaisir Pierre, N. Lataillade, Mayard, Rovigo Barjon, Armand Thoby, Arthur Vorbe, Georges Marc, etc. In the National party it is necessary to mention: Lysius Salomon, president at the time, Ovide Cameau, Callisthènes Fouchard, François Manigat, Osman Piquant. After a first defeat in Miragôane, Boisrond Canal will lead the Liberal Party to victory and Salomon will be overthrown and will go into exile in France on 23 October 1879. (9)

### **The mottos of the Republic of Haiti come from freemasonry**

- From 1803 to 1806 our motto was: “Liberty or Death”.
- President Pétion will return with the French motto: “Liberty Equality”.
- Henry Christophe will adopt: “Liberty Independence”.
- Boyer will adopt for the whole island: “Liberty Equality”.
- The revolutionary movement that overthrows Boyer and President Rivière Hérard will adopt: “Regeneration” and “Liberty Equality”.

- Guerrier, Pierrot, Riché and Soulouque will take: “Liberty Equality”
- Faustin Soulouque proclaiming himself King of Haiti under the name Faustin the 1<sup>st</sup> will use: “Liberty Independence”
- Geffrard will return to the motto: “Liberty Equality”.
- When Sylvain Salnave will come to power in 1867, he will formalize the motto “Liberty Equality Fraternity”, which will remain the motto of the Republic of Haiti to this day.

### **Mixed and Feminine Lodges in Haiti**

The first instigators of women’s lodges in Haiti were Brother Roger Victor-Hérard and Marcel Taylor Grand Commander. 9 We must mention: The feminine lodge Les Filles d’Isis No. 1 and Les Filles d’Ignace Fresnel. Under François Duvalier, the lodge Les Filles d’Isis No. 1 was created in 1961 as well as the obedience La Grande Loge d’Ayiti 1961, not to be confused with the Grand Orient d’Haiti founded in 1824. The women’s lodge Les Filles d’Isis No. 1 which operated within the lodge Le Mont Liban No. 22 was mothballed for years, and was reopened on July 31, 2012. In 1974 a Committee of Ladies Patronesses of the lodge Le Mont Liban No. 22 appeared composed of the wives of the Worshipfuls and officers of this lodge, under the administration of Worshipful Master Fritz G. Pierre Louis. This committee will be at the origin of the revival of the Daughters of Isis Lodge No. 1.

### **The Grand Lodge of Ayiti of 1961**

Following a convent in Chile in 1961, where a large delegation of the Grand Orient d’Haiti of 1824 participated, three lodges decide to leave the Grand Orient d’Haiti of 1824 and to form a new obedience The Grand Lodge of Ayiti 1961. This new obedience is created by: Cosmos No. 3, the lodge where President François Duvalier belong, Jean Jacques Dessalines Le Grand No. 5 and Ignace Fresnel No. 7. During

this convent many resolutions were taken, one of them forbidding the Grand Master of any obedience to cumulate the positions of Mighty Sovereign, Grand Commander and Serene Grand Master. The Grand Master of the Grand Orient d'Haiti in 1824, Illustrious Brother Luc Coicou, refused to implement this resolution. The first Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ayiti 1961 was Illustrious Brother Dupuy S. Theano. Simultaneously, the Grand Council of 33<sup>rd</sup> was born, the first in Haiti.

The Grand Lodge of Ayiti 1961 currently has about fifteen lodges, six of which are abroad. Two are in the United States: Les Phyladelphes No. 9 at the Orient of Brooklyn (NY) and Les Victoires No. 2 at the Orient of Miami. Four are in Paris: Alexandre Pétion, Trait d'Union France Haiti, La Taverne and Iosiris, the latter being mixed. Two new lodges will light their fires outside Haiti in 2023: Le Phénix at the Orient of Paris and Pélican No. 30 at the Orient of Boston. Nine lodges are active in Haiti: Jean Jacques Dessalines Le Grand No. 5, Les Filles d'Isis No. 1, Les Enfants d'Herou No. 4, Le Souvenir No. 6, Ignace Fresnel No. 7, the Mixed Lodge Jameson Absolu No. 73, La Maison de la Sagesse No. 2, Charlemagne Péralte No. 19 at the Orient of Thomonde, Centre, Haiti, Les Ouvriers de l'Orient No. 12 at the Orient of Cavaillon, South, Haiti. Four workshops are dormant: The Cosmos No. 3, The Ideal No. 4, The Orion No. 21 and Mount Horeb No. 12.

In 1971, a treaty of alliance was signed between the Grand College of 33<sup>rd</sup> of the Grand Lodge of Ayiti of 1961 and the Supreme Council of 1836 of the Grand Orient of Haiti. Subsequently, another treaty of friendship was signed between the Supreme Council of 1836 and the Grand Orient of Haiti of 1824, according to which only the Master masons of the Grand Orient of 1824 could be exalted to the rank of 4<sup>th</sup> degree and above. The Master Brothers of the Grand Lodge of Ayiti of 1961 wishing to be exalted to a Lodge of Perfection should

join one of the lodges of the Grand Orient of 1824. For this reason the Inspectors General of the Grand College of the 33<sup>rd</sup> of the 1961 Grand Lodge of Ayiti decided in 2002 to create a Supreme Council: “Supreme Council of the 33<sup>rd</sup> of the 1961 Grand Lodge of Ayiti”.

The Grand Lodge of Ayiti 1961 has its own Supreme Council for the higher grades and three lodges of perfection: Henry A. Louissaint No. 1, 4<sup>th</sup> degree M.’S.’, Maitre Saint Germain No. 1 Chapter of 18<sup>th</sup> and Aréopage Saint Michel No. 1. It is a dynamic obedience in expansion. It signed in 2022 an alliance with the G.:O.:D.:F.: The Serene Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ayiti 1961 is Jean Robert Pasquette.

### **Confederation of Haitian lodges**

The Confederation of Haitian Lodges is created on January 26, 1847. Its mission is:

- meeting of a general convent to examine the masonic situation and the measures to be taken,
- adopt a Constituent Assembly for a new charter,
- install a new Grand Master. (9)

### **The Supreme Council of Haiti**

On January 10, 1969 the Supreme Council of Haiti obtains its charter from the Supreme Council of France becoming independent. On September 7, 1987, President Jean-Claude Duvalier, Grand Protector of the Order, officially establishes three Haitian masonic bodies:

1. The Grand Conclave of Haiti with jurisdiction over the Past Master, Royal Arch and Templar Kadosh chapters (46 lodges);
2. The Supreme Council of Haiti of 1836 with jurisdiction over the lodges of perfection (38 lodges);
3. The Grand Orient of Haiti with jurisdiction over the first three degrees: Apprentice, Companion and Master. (83 lodges).

## **Out of 48 heads of state in 218 years of Independence**

### **33 were freemasons**

Jean-Pierre Boyer, Jean-Baptiste Riché, Faustin Soulouque, Fabre Nicolas Geffrard, Sylvain Salnave, Nissage Saget, Michel Domingue, Boisrond Canal, Lysius Salomon, François Légitime, Florvil Hyppolite, Tiresias Simon Sam, Nord Alexis, Antoine Simon, Cincinatus Lecompte, Tancrède Auguste, Michel Oreste, Davilmar Théodore, Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, Sudre Dartiguenave, Louis Borno, Sténio Vincent, Elie Lescot, Dumarsais Estimé, Paul Eugene Magloire, Daniel Fignolé, François Duvalier, Jean-Claude Duvalier, Henry Namphy, Leslie Manigat, Prosper Avril, Joseph Nérette, Emile Jonassaint. (9)

### **The G.:O.:D.:F.: in Haiti**

Quisqueya l'Amitié Retrouvée is the masonic name of the secular association Les Amis de Quisqueya, declared to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cults of the Republic of Haiti. It is affiliated with a federation of lodges called Obedience, the Grand Orient de France, which is itself a French Association under the 1901 law.

The Respectable Lodge Quisqueya l'Amitié Retrouvée is a free, regular and sovereign lodge. It works in the French Rite, the most used rite in the Grand Orient de France, obedience that holds the patents for many other rites. Started in 2001, after a few years of dormancy it regains strength and vigor by reigniting its fires on May 5, 2016 with Lionel Étienne as Worshipful Master. It is now a full-fledged lodge. Lionel Étienne was Consul General of Haiti in Guadeloupe and simultaneously in Martinique and French Guiana, the latter two legations opened thanks to his initiative. He later served as Haiti's ambassador to Paris. He is the instigator of an alliance between the G.:O.:D.:F.: and the Obedience La Grande Loge d'Ayiti 1961 concretized in 2022.

The Quisqueya Lodge l'Amitié Retrouvée is part of the region 01 of the Grand Orient de France. This region is called Region Antilles-Guyana-Caribbean. The twenty three lodges of this region meet three times a year for a Regional Congress during which many societal issues are discussed. A delegate of this lodge is also present at the Convent, the General Assembly of the 1397 lodges of the obedience. This convent is the legislative body of the obedience where the democratic principle of 1 lodge = 1 vote is scrupulously applied.

## CONCLUSIONS

Freemasonry and freemasons have played a major role in the history of Haiti as we have seen. There are nearly 186 lodges nowadays in Haiti. Unfortunately, under the Duvalier's dictatorship from 1957 to 1986, many members of the country's intellectual elite refrained from participating in the lodges, fearing denunciation by brothers working for the regime who had infiltrated the lodges. Freemasonry, silenced by the dictatorship, could not react. Since the fall of the dictatorship the lodges try to gain more members and to rally again the intellectual elites who made the strength of the lodges in the past.

Today, as Haiti lives in dark times, plagued by the corruption of many who are or have been in power, and the gangs that terrorize the population and defeat the forces of order, voices are being raised to revive the consciousness of the population. May the renewal of Haiti be done through the lodges that are trying to become the moral conscience of the population and a place where all classes and all walks of life can freely express and enlighten themselves.

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*War of Independence*  
 May 18, 1803  
 Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804



*Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 1804*



*Dessalines May 20, 1805  
 to October 17, 1806*



*October 17, 1806  
 Present*

### The ephemeral flags



*Kingdom of the North*  
 Mar 28, 1811  
 Oct. 8, 1820



*Kingdom of Haiti*  
 Aug. 29, 1849  
 Jan. 15, 1859



*Duvalier*  
 May 25, 1964  
 Feb. 17, 1986

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# MASONIC COFFEE

STAR OF THE TWO WORLDS      LODGE #5379 G. L. O. D. E. F. E.  
ORIENT OF FORT LAUDERDALE (FLORIDA)    Volume 1, 2022



## Volume 1 – 2022

Anderson’s Constitutions state that freemasonry was founded in order to unite the High Moral Values which otherwise would still be unknown to us, and to be the Center of Union “and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remained at a perpetual Distance”.

The Respectable Lodge Star of the Two Worlds, Orient of Fort Lauderdale (Florida), #5379 of the Grand Orient de France, one of the six lodges in North America, with its Brothers and Sisters from multiple origins and locations proudly claims the universality of freemasonry without exclusion (roots, gender, belief, language).

With XXI<sup>st</sup> century technology, and despite the pandemic, thanks to its specificity and unicity, our lodge, according to the laws of the Great Architecture of the Universe, adapted itself with flexibility and reason to remain alive, to give us the opportunity to continue to work and to transmit to those in search, the Light we have received.

With this publication of some of the Pieces of Architecture shared during our non-ritualic meeting “the Masonic Coffee” since March 2020, we wish to expand outside the Temple the principles of the liberal, non-dogmatic and continental freemasonry, in the name and under the auspices of the Grand Orient de France.

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Our first publication Masonic Coffee vol. 1 is available for free, additional printed copies on-demand as well.

Contact us at [lodge.sot2w@gmail.com](mailto:lodge.sot2w@gmail.com)

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## To keep our traditions alive!

In our previous volume , generated by our response to the problem of traditionally continuing the Masonic practice according to the contingencies of the world (the pandemic), we posed that whatever the circumstances, the Masons had to continue the Labors.

The Freemasonry of the Grand Orient of France is a progressive institution , progressing step by step, following a path traditionally initiated through the black and white pavements of the society in which it is present, through the contemporary obstacles that should not oppose its progress. The Freemasons, thinking upright to overcome the hazards of our environment must adapt to the world of the 21st century before continuing their journey towards the Light and spreading those acquired during their Labors. They make their own the harangue of Jean Jaurès: "Tradition is not the cult of ashes; it is the transmission of fire".

The Respectable Lodge Star of the Two Worlds, Orient of Fort Lauderdale (Florida), #5379 of the Grand Orient de France, one of the 6 lodges in North America, with its brothers and sisters from multiple origins and locations and without exclusion (roots, gender, belief, language) adapts itself with flexibility to keep alive the unique initiatic Order of non-dogmatic Freemasonry.

