

MASONIC COFFEE

STAR OF THE TWO WORLDS LODGE #5379 G.O.O.F.F.
ORIENT OF FORT LAUDERDALE (FLORIDA) Volume 3, 2024



MASONIC COFFEE

STAR OF THE TWO WORLDS
LODGE #5379 G.:O.:D.:F.:

ORIENT OF FORT LAUDERDALE (FLORIDA)

Volume 3, 2024

In Memoriam Brother Ph.BRO.
(1954-2024) first Worshipful Master
of the Resp.:. Lodge.:. Hembra,
Orient of Lisieux, France, G.:O.:D.:F.:

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

Participants

F.Ati.:
C.Bru.:
A.Jon.:
P.Lec.:
M.Mac.:
S.Mac.:
J.Mad.:
J.Mar.:
C.Ric.:

Guests

A.And.:
A.Mar.:
M.Tra.:

Editor

J-S.Veg.:

Proofreader

J.Mad.:
M.Mac.:

Star of the Two Worlds Inc
web: www.starofthe2worlds.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cercle357>
Phone: +1 954 300 4099
4551 NE 3rd Ave, Oakland Park, Florida 33334, USA
lodge.sot2w@gmail.com
sec.sot2w@gmail.com
Zelle: treas.sot2w@gmail.com
Paypal: treas.sot2w@gmail.com

© Masonic Coffee

First edition: December 2024, Fort Lauderdale – Florida

Cover design by © P.LEC.:., RL.: Star of Two Worlds

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

Layout designer: M.PAT.:.

Published by Lodge Star of the Two Worlds
4551 NE 3rd Ave, Oakland Park, Florida 33334, USA

This book is not for sale.

© All copyright reserved.

No segment of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or shared in any way without the authorization of the publisher Lodge Star of Two Worlds.

Contents

History of the Grand Orient de France on the 250 th anniversary of the naming of the G.:O.:D.:F.:	13
5 th anniversary of the installation of the R.:L.: Star of the Two Worlds	35
Alchemy – <i>The art of fools in search of the Grail?</i>	67
Who was Epicurus?	109
Amerindian World Rites and Symbols. <i>On the diversity of American Indian peoples</i>	123
Socrates and Plato.....	143
The Graphic Novel of Hugo Pratt, <i>a Magical Journey to Treasure Island</i> ...	155
Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Adelphity – <i>Fraternité, Sororité, Adelphté</i>	181
Labors in Continental freemasonry lodges. <i>Freemasonry is a method, a discipline, and assiduity to achieve its goals, a duty. Are we freemasons without working in a lodge?</i>	217

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to this journey through masonic ideas and symbols, a journey that takes us through the sands... or swamps! of the South Florida masonic desert to an oasis of knowledge and understanding. This book is a collection of pieces of architecture written by Brothers and Sisters who contribute to the labors of our lodge, united by initiation into freemasonry but enriched by the diversity of our backgrounds, languages, and levels of education.

Our lodge embodies the ideal of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, bringing together what is scattered. In our workshop, we practice no exclusion of gender, creed, origin, or social status. We speak a common language, that of symbols, but we are also enriched by our different rituals of origin as much as our cultures, traditions, and backgrounds.

Our aim is to consolidate our basic knowledge, on which we build this unique lodge, with which we build ourselves and our lives tomorrow. We emphasize the practice and explanation of the rituals we have freely chosen to use, so that our new members can pass these rituals on to the next generation and perpetuate the values, principles, ceremonies and organization that have enabled the G.:.O.:D.:F.: to be the reference obedience of non-dogmatic freemasonry worldwide since 1728.

Like a mason building on difficult ground, we seek to establish a solid foundation, well fitted and well cemented, enriched by the variety of its materials. We return to the original and unique texts: our Constitution, our rituals in the reference versions updated by the obedience. There is an enormous body of masonic literature which already contains interpretations which we recommend reading when they are appropriate to our practice (it would be confusing to read theoretical works on American football for a soccer player). We insist on the basics of progressive teaching, step by step, like a roofer who does not lay the tiles until the framework has been erected, or a mason who does not build a wall if the ground has no foundation. With the exception of a few geniuses – and we know some among our brothers and sisters! – it's

inconceivable to write an opera if you haven't learned the musical notes, composition and instrumental practice... it's the same with the labors we present in lodge to enrich ourselves and improve the knowledge of our peers: we review the essential basics of writing so that the form, used wisely, can effectively divulge what we're saying.

Our philosophical reflections are based on our shared and common knowledge, so that all can embark on and elevate new theories and principles to enlighten us. To this end, our Masonic Coffees insist on this basic knowledge of our history and philosophies, so that the force of our ambitions for the betterment of mankind and society retains all the power of our initial will and impetus.

From our vantage point near Cape Canaveral, we can regularly witness the very best of human genius as rockets soar through the air towards the stars. According to Newton's 3rd law of reciprocal action, it's the reaction force of the launch pad that lifts the rocket. It must therefore be sufficiently strong and stable to absorb vibrations and minimize their impact on the rocket's structure, preventing diversion from its intended trajectory.

The body of knowledge and principles that enable lift-off requires a solid foundation to support impressive and ambitious achievements.

We invite you to join us on this journey, to explore the ideas and symbols that form the core of our masonic practice, and to contribute to the dissemination of the universal principles and values of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.

With my Triple Fraternal Accolade,
Worshipful Master P.LEC.∴

Welcome to the third volume of Masonic Coffee, a collection dedicated to exploring the rich tapestry of freemasonry, philosophy, history and culture. This edition takes readers on a journey through time, unveiling the profound narratives that have shaped societies and individuals alike.

As we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Grand Orient de France (G.:O.:D.:F.:), we delve into its origins, tracing its roots back to 1728. Founded amidst the burgeoning French Masonic movement, the G.:O.:D.:F.: has played a pivotal role in the evolution of French society, republican ideals, and the promotion of freedom of conscience. The story begins with the duc d'Antin and other notable figures who brought British Masonic ideas to France, laying the groundwork for what would become a cornerstone of European freemasonry.

We then turn our gaze to the ancient art of alchemy, a discipline often shrouded in mystery and superstition. Alchemy's principles, studied fervently by renowned figures like Sir Isaac Newton, trace back to the wisdom of ancient Egypt. Through the lens of French abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, we traverse a timeline from the Pharaohs to the Enlightenment, revealing the alchemist's quest for transmutation as a metaphor for spiritual and intellectual transformation.

Philosophy finds its place in these pages as well, with an exploration of Epicurus, the ancient Greek philosopher whose teachings on atomism and the pursuit of happiness continue to resonate today. Alongside Epicurus, we meet Socrates and Plato, whose contributions to philosophy and their dramatic lives offer timeless lessons in morality, justice, and the relentless search for truth.

The volume also invites readers to discover the rich cultural heritage of the American Indians, whose diverse tribes and spiritual practices embody a profound respect for nature and community. Their worldview, which sees the earth and its inhabitants as interconnected and equal, offers a poignant contrast to contemporary environmental and societal challenges.

From the mystical to the philosophical, we shift to the visual artistry of Hugo Pratt. His graphic novels, blending storytelling with evocative imagery, transport readers to fantastical worlds, where each frame is a standalone work of art. Pratt's life, marked by adventure and creativity, serves as a testament to the power of imagination and the enduring appeal of the graphic novel.

In exploring the fraternal organizations of America, we uncover the rituals and ideals that bind communities together, from the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks to the Knights of Columbus. These organizations, often modeled after masonic principles, emphasize fellowship, charity, and the betterment of society.

Finally, we reflect on the practices of Continental freemasonry lodges, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has challenged traditional methods of meeting and working, prompting innovative approaches to maintain the masonic spirit of fraternity and continuous improvement.

As we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the R.:L.: Star of the Two Worlds under the G.:O.:D.:F.: in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, we are reminded of the enduring strength and adaptability of freemasonry. Despite challenges and setbacks, the commitment to masonic principles remains steadfast, illustrating the resilience and dedication of its members.

Masonic Coffee volume 3 is a tribute to the enduring legacy of freemasonry, the pursuit of knowledge, and the spirit of human connection. It invites readers to reflect, learn, and find inspiration in the timeless stories and principles that continue to shape our world.

History of the Grand Orient de France on the 250th anniversary of the naming of the G.:O.:D.:F.:¹



The Grand Orient de France is France's oldest masonic obedience, and the largest and most influential in continental Europe. Its history is deeply intertwined with the evolution of French society, republican ideals, and the promotion of freedom of conscience.

1. Origins, 1728

The Grand Orient de France (G.:O.:D.:F.:) has its roots in the French masonic movement of the 18th century. It was founded in 1728. At that time, freemasonry in France was still in its infancy, and the first masonic lodges were linked to Fellowcraft workshops.

¹ Masonic Coffee # 42, Nov. 4th, 2023.

Annales originis magni Galliarum

O.:

OU

HISTOIRE

DE LA FONDATION

DU

GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE,

Et des révolutions qui l'ont précédée, accompagnée et suivie, jusqu'en mil sept cent quatre-vingt-neuf, époque de la réunion à ce corps, de la Grande Loge de France, connue sous le nom de Grand Orient de Clermont, ou de l'Arcade de la Pelletrie,

AVEC

Un Appendice contenant les pièces justificatives, plusieurs actes curieux et inédits ayant rapport à l'Histoire de la Franche-Maçonnerie, des détails sur un grand nombre de Rites, et un Fragment sur les Réunions secrètes des femmes;

Ouvrage orné de tableaux et de figures en taille-douce.



O 10. 178

566 069
FHOR
O 10. 178

A PARIS,

Chez P. DUFANT, Libraire, quai Voltaire, N°. 19.

De l'Imprimerie de Nouveau, rue de Cléry, N°. 9.

1812.



The creation of the Grande Loge de France, as it was first called, came at a time when freemasonry was expanding rapidly in Europe, mainly in Great Britain. Masonic ideals, centered on fraternity, tolerance, and the search for truth, were in harmony with the principles of the Enlightenment, which advocated rationality and critical thinking.

Several notable French personalities played a key role in the creation of the Grande Loge de France. Among them were the duc d'Antin, the duc de Wharton, the duc de Montagu and the comte de Clermont, who were influenced by British masonic ideas and helped structure freemasonry in France by establishing rules and rituals.



Duke d'Antin



Duke de Montagu

The Grande Loge de France

Although the name Grande Loge de France only appeared for the first time on May 14, 1737, French freemasons had already decided in 1728 to recognize a “Grand Master of freemasons in France” in the person of Philippe, Duke of Wharton (1698-1731), who lived in Paris and Lyon from 1728 to 1729, and who had already been Grand Master of the Grande Loge of London in 1723.



Duke of Wharton



This 1st Grand Lodge of France should not be confused with the current French masonic obedience La Grande Loge de France (abbreviated G.:L.:D.:F.: or G.:L.:F.:), founded in 1894. Nor with the Grande Loge nationale de France (1913), the only one recognized as “regular” by the UGLE.



In its early years, the Grande Loge de France was mainly composed of aristocrats and nobility. The initial Saint Thomas au Louis d'Argent lodge, of Jacobite tendency, was very quickly doubled by a homonymous Hanoverian lodge, Saint Thomas II, constituted under this new obedience at London's request in 1732.

Evolution to the G.:O.:D.:F.:

Over the decades, the Grande Loge de France evolved and developed, becoming the Grand Orient de France (G.:O.:D.:F.:) in 1773. This name change was not merely symbolic but marked a shift towards a more philosophical and liberal orientation. G.:O.:D.:F.: members embraced republican principles and actively participated in the intellectual and social movements of the day, as well as in its internal workings.

Philosophical context

At the time, France was at the heart of the Enlightenment, an intellectual movement characterized by adherence to the values



of rationality, tolerance and freedom of thought. The ideas of Enlightenment philosophers such as Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot were widely discussed and appreciated in masonic lodges, which sought to put these values into practice within their

obedience. The G.:O.:D.:F.: became a place where members could openly discuss political, social, and philosophical issues, helping to shape its liberal and republican identity.

Reform of Internal Functioning

In addition to the name change, the G.:O.:D.:F.: undertook a major reform of its internal workings:

Election of the Worshipful Master

The election of Worshipful Masters of lodges put an end to their irrevocability by specifying that: “the Grand Orient de France will henceforth recognize as Worshipful Master of a lodge only the Master raised to this dignity by the free choice of the members of the lodge”.



Election of the Grand Master

Previously appointed, the Grand Master was now elected. This democratic approach has enabled members to choose their principal leader, reinforcing the principles of democratic governance within the obedience.

Democratic principle of “1 Delegate, 1 Vote”

The G.:O.:D.:F.: also introduced the principle of “1 Delegate, 1 Vote” into its internal workings. This meant that each lodge, whatever its size or number of members, had an equal voice in obedience decisions. This democratization of the decision-making process was in keeping with the spirit of the Enlightenment and the ideal of equality.



A Grand Orient is a federation of lodges.

The G.:O.:D.:F.:, at the same time, was involved in republican movements, contributing to the fall of the monarchy and the establishment of the First Republic in 1792. It's a misnomer to say, as has been widely written – particularly by its detractors – that the French



Revolution was organized within the lodges. While freemasons were also represented among monarchists and revolutionaries, it is undeniable that lodge debates fomented the ideas that led to this major French event and its international consequences.

2. Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité

“Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité” is the motto of the French Republic, chosen in 1848 under the Second Republic. It is inspired by the principles of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, but Fraternity is absent.

These three words, among many others, appeared during the French Revolution. The motto first appeared in Maximilien Robespierre's *Discours sur l'organisation des gardes nationales*, printed and circulated in mid-December 1790, but never uttered.



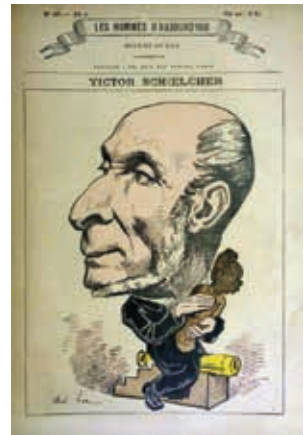
It first appeared in the texts in November 1848, then inscribed in stone on the pediments of all French institutions including schools. Then in the French Constitutions of 1946 and 1958. In Haiti, the motto appeared in the Constitution of the Grand Orient de Haiti (1824) and in the Haitian Constitution since 1867².



From 1830 onwards, the republican current within the Grand Orient de France had as its program: free education, the cooperative association of workers and the abolition of slavery, of which our Brother Victor Schœlcher was the most fervent promoter.

Although the translation of masonic principles should have led to full support for the abolition of slavery, freemasonry's position was neither unanimous nor official. Some abolitionists were freemasons, but others were not.

Nevertheless, V. Schoelcher succeeded in having the eminently republican principles of abolition of slavery and equal rights adopted, and on April 27, 1848, he drafted the Decree abolishing slavery in the French colonies: *considering that slavery is an attack on human dignity; that by destroying man's free will, it abolishes the natural principle of right and duty; that it is a flagrant violation of the republican dogma: "Liberty - Equality - Fraternity" [...]*



Decree: Art. 1st Slavery will be entirely abolished in all French colonies and possessions, two months after the promulgation of the present decree [...].

² Masonic Coffee, vol.2: Freemasonry From Saint Domingue to Haiti, 2023, pages 87-169.

On August 10, 1849, the G.:O.:D.:F.: adopted its first Constitution.



CONSTITUTION



General Principles of the Masonic Order

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.

Its principles are mutual tolerance, respect for others and for oneself, and total liberty of conscience (1).

It recognises that religious beliefs are a personal matter for members, and so it rejects any dogmatic assertions.

It attaches particular importance to Secularism.

Its motto is: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity (2).

ARTICLE II



Of the principles of this motto, the G.:O.:D.:F.: gave a strong support to the French Third Republic, which was established in 1870 until 1940 and particularly after 1879.

The Paris Commune of March 18 to May 28, 1871, was an insurrectionary movement that emerged in response to the harsh living conditions and social

inequalities in Paris at the time. The Communards took control of the city for around two months and attempted to implement social and political reforms, including the separation of church and state and the creation of a democratic republic.

During this period, many freemasons found themselves involved in the events.

They believed in the need for a more egalitarian society and sought to implement reforms that reflected their masonic convictions.

Freemasons executed during the Paris Commune

The Paris Commune was finally brutally suppressed by government troops in May 1871, and many freemasons were arrested, summarily tried, and executed. To honor the memory of the freemasons and all the Communards who lost their lives, an annual commemoration is held by the G.:O.:D.:F.: on May 1st at the Murs des Fédérés in the Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris.

This symbolic monument has become a gathering place to pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for their convictions. It underlines the importance of remembering the history and sacrifices of those who fought for a better future. This reminds the freemasons of their heritage and commitment to the principles that have shaped modern France and at the same time link them to our venerated masters who have gone before us and stood up, even unto death, to defend our ideals.



3. Establishing Absolute Freedom of Consciousness and “laïcité” – 1876

Scientific advances, Enlightenment ideals and philosophical debates have challenged traditional religious dogmas. The G.:O.:D.:F.:, influenced by this spirit of questioning, took the bold step of breaking with the masonic tradition of requiring belief in God, by abandoning the god principle and establishing absolute freedom of consciousness and removing from its constitution the phrase “Freemasonry has as its principle the existence of God and the immortality of the soul”, which led to its transformation into a secular masonic obedience.

This decision had a profound impact on freemasonry in France and marked the G.:O.:D.:F.: as a pioneering institution in the promotion of absolute freedom of conscience according to which everyone could adhere to different religious beliefs or be atheists, without restriction or discrimination.

This created a masonic space where tolerance and respect for individual opinions were fundamental values. Other masonic obedience in France continued to maintain belief in God as a condition of membership, creating a division in the French masonic world as well as with the severing of relations with the UGLE (which established its basic principles — of regularity – in 1929).

During the 19th century, the Grand Orient de France played a leading role in French public life, considerably influencing the political and social debates of the time. This period was marked by important political developments with the establishment of the Third Republic and the rise of democracy in France. The G.:O.:D.:F.: made an active contribution to these developments, promoting republican ideas, equality, and secularism.

Equality and human rights

The G.:O.:D.:F.: also played a key role in promoting human rights in France. Its members were often involved in social movements

aimed at improving workers' living conditions, combating inequality, and defending fundamental rights. The discussions and reflections conducted in masonic lodges³ contributed to the drafting of laws and social reforms, such as the first labor laws and trade union rights.

Examples of laws and reforms influenced by the G.:O.:D.:F.: :

- **Freedom of the Press Act (1881):** The G.:O.:D.:F.: supported freedom of speech and of the press, contributing to the passage of the law which guaranteed freedom of the press in France.
- **Law on the separation of Church and State (1905):** The G.:O.:D.:F.: played a major role in drafting and promoting this historic law, which formalized secularism in France by separating religious institutions from the State. Challenged from 2000 onwards, the freemasons' mobilization ended with President Macron's plan to amend the law being abandoned in March 2019.
- **Weekly rest law (1906):** masonic lodge reflections on workers' rights contributed to the adoption of this law, which granted workers a weekly day of rest.
- **Secular education reforms:** the G.:O.:D.:F.: campaigned for secular education and access to education for all. This influence was reflected in educational reforms aimed at establishing a free, secular education system in France. Freemasons still need to be vigilant and committed to promoting civic education.

³ Masonic Coffee, Vol.1: Questions to study in lodge: What do freemasons think about?, 2022, pages 95-107.

4. Anti-masonry

The history of the Grand Orient de France is marked by anti-masonry, a phenomenon that has had its moments of intensity in France, particularly during the 19th and 20th centuries which follows on from the famous old papal bull *In eminenti apostolatus specula* of 1738, never revoked. Anti-freemasonry has taken many forms and has manifested itself through movements and ideologies hostile to freemasonry in general, and to the G.:O.:D.:F.: in particular.



Anti-freemasonry has its roots in conservative and religious movements that perceived freemasonry as a threat to the established order and linked to fears of the secularization of French society. These movements often accused freemasons of conspiracy, occult influence, and subversion of traditional institutions particularly with the publications of the *Unveiled Mysteries of the freemasonry* by Leo Taxil (1890s) and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in 1903 (Russia). Although these documents have long been denounced as forgeries, it has been widely used to propagate anti-semitic and anti-masonic conspiracy theories.

The history of the Grand Orient de France has also been punctuated by controversies and reproaches that have helped fuel the anti-G.:O.:D.:F.: movement, notably because of its perceived anti-clerical and progressive positions (not to be confused with the *progressive* term – step by step – in article 1 of its Constitution).

The G.:O.:D.:F.: was accused of anti-clericalism because of its commitment to secularism and the separation of Church and State in the 19th and 20th centuries when the Catholic Church played an influential role in French society.

The G.:O.:D.:F.:, some of whose members were involved in socialist and workers' movements, was also associated with progressist positions such as workers' rights, social equality and justice, which drew criticism from conservative political and social groups. This proximity to left-wing movements has reinforced the G.:O.:D.:F.: 's image as a politically committed masonic obedience.

The G.:O.:D.:F.: has always sought to promote freedom of thought, which means that its members have been able to hold a variety of individual political and religious positions within the obedience. Reproaches and accusations reflect wider political and social tensions in France and are the result of generalizations and simplifications of the diversity of opinions within the G.:O.:D.:F.:.

The Vichy Regime and the Fight Against freemasons - 1940-1944

During the period of the Vichy Regime in France, led by Marshal Pétain after the 1940 armistice with Nazi Germany, and the occupation of most of France by German forces, French government collaborated with the Nazis and established an authoritarian regime marked by anti-semitic laws and widespread repression against those considered “undesirable”, gypsies, homosexuals, the disabled, including freemasons subjected to intense repression because of their commitment to the republican ideals of secularism and fraternity in direct opposition to Vichy's authoritarian and collaborationist ideology.

The main law that led to the dissolution of masonic lodges under the Vichy regime was the law of August 13, 1940. This law banned secret associations and was used to dissolve masonic lodges throughout occupied France and confiscate their assets.

Lists of names of freemasons were published, exposing these individuals to persecution and reprisals. This pattern is repeated today in Italy. Many Brothers and Sisters were excluded from jobs and functions because of their masonic affiliation.

Deportation and repression

Many freemasons were tortured, deported, and imprisoned for their masonic commitment as our Brothers Jean Zay, Gaston Poitevin and René Boulanger. Brother Jean Moulin, the famous French Resistance fighter and prefect was arrested by the Gestapo in 1943 and suffered severe torture before dying in captivity.

Brother Pierre Brossolette was a French journalist, writer, and Resistance fighter, was arrested by the Gestapo in 1944. Rather than surrender, he committed suicide to avoid capture.

These men were emblematic figures of the French Resistance and freemasonry, and their sacrifice left its mark on French history as in that of our memory as freemasons.



Jean Moulin



Pierre Brossolette

A famous anti-masonic exhibition was held in Paris in 1940. This defamatory exhibition claimed to reveal the supposed secrets of freemasonry and demonized freemasons. It was used as a propaganda tool by the Vichy regime to discredit freemasonry and its members. Just like the movie “Forces Occults”, released in 1943, which portrayed freemasonry as a secret, subversive organization and conveyed negative stereotypes about freemasons.

These examples illustrate how anti-masonicism was present in French society during this dark period in history, contributing to the persecution of freemasons and the demonization of freemasonry. In

the face of this brutal repression, the Grand Orient de France resisted in secret. G.:O.:D.:F.: members continued to meet clandestinely to keep the flame of freemasonry and its principles alive. They also lent their support to the French Resistance.



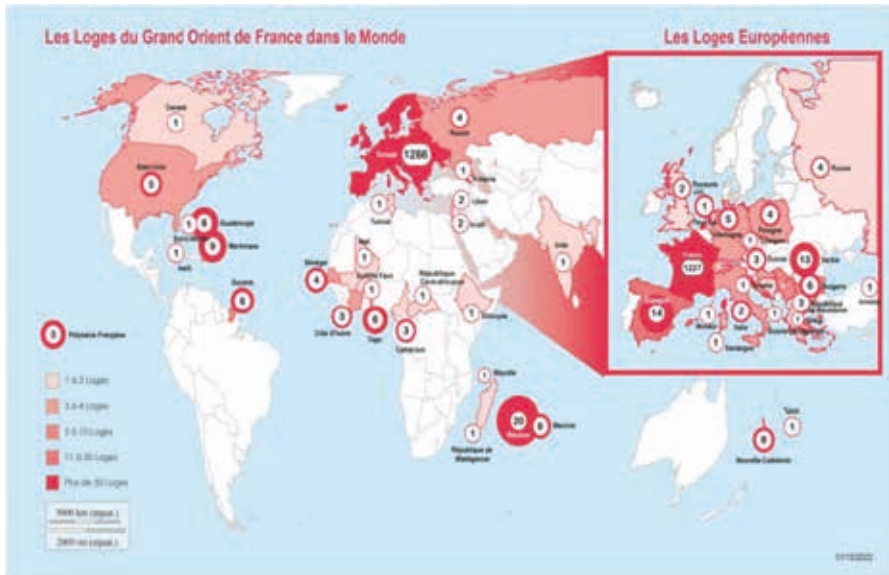
5. The current state of the Grand Orient de France

The current state of the Grand Orient de France bears witness to its persistence as an active masonic obedience: the leading masonic symbolic power and influential in French society in general.

On the strength of 52472 members (6147 sisters) in 1389 Loges (Aug.31st, 2023: 1,228 in mainland France, 57 in French overseas departments and territories, 56 in Europe and 48 worldwide including 6 in North America) the G.:O.:D.:F.: maintains its unwavering commitment to republican and secular principles.

It still promotes the values of liberty, equality and fraternity, as well as the separation of Church and State, and continues to defend

the religious neutrality of the French State. As a secular obedience, the G.:O.:D.:F.: is the guarantor of conscience within freemasonry. This is the first reason given by the American men and women, freemasons, or aspiring freemasons, who join the G.:O.:D.:F.: here.



Ateliers Régionaux d'Action du Conseil de l'Ordre - Page 28 sur 33

The G.:O.:D.:F.: is still a place of debate and evolution

The masonic lodges of the G.:O.:D.:F.: are spaces for discussion and reflection, where members can explore a wide range of subjects, from ethics to philosophy to politics. This openness to debate contributes to the G.:O.:D.:F.: 's continuing vitality and relevance in French society and where we operate.

To achieve this goal, all the members are invited to work every year to The Question to Study in Lodges that allow us to continue outside our walls a part of the work we do. Distributed in the form of public works, these reflections of We the Lodges are deposited on the desks of governing authorities (presidency, ministerial departments, assemblies, organizations) and national or European leaders and the

media to share, what can be the collective work in Lodge for “material and moral improvement of Humanity”.



The evolution of the obedience, too fast for some, not fast enough for others, was particularly exposed during the debate on gender diversity.

From a male obedience originally, the G.:O.:D.:F.: contributed to the development of mixed and female obedience, since the end of the 18th century, before evolving towards flexibility regarding the presence of women at its Labors.

Lodges became free to welcome Sisters from obedience with which the G.:O.:D.:F.: has treaties of recognition or friendship (Le Droit humain 1901, Grande Loge Féminine de France 1952...).

Since 2010, the Grand Orient has left its lodges free to initiate women or affiliate freemason women, in accordance with the same procedures as apply to all male members of the Grand Orient.



The G.:O.:D.:F.: remains committed to social justice and human rights. It supports philanthropic and charitable initiatives, notably with the Fondation du Grand Orient de France, and participates in projects aimed at improving society. The obedience continues to be actively involved in social and political issues affecting France and the world.



The G.:O.:D.:F.: also maintains relations with other masonic obediences around the world. It is also present in over 30 countries. It has signed friendship treaties with some one hundred French and foreign obediences, enabling it to maintain regular relations with freemasons the world over, while striving to advance its ideals in sometimes hostile environments. It takes part in international masonic exchanges and dialogues in Europe, Africa, and Latin America, in Asia too particularly through our Lodge of Mission Samarquande, Orient of the World, reinforcing its role in global freemasonry.

Our lodge Star of the Two Worlds is particularly emblematic of the universalism of non-dogmatic freemasonry (liberal and continental) and its principles, which we disseminate A.:N.:E.:S.:L.:A.:D.:G.:O.:D.:F.:, In the Name and under the Auspices of the Grand Orient de France.

The freemasons of the G.:O.:D.:F.: are a good example of the principle enunciated by James Anderson in his Constitutions of bringing together what is scattered⁴.

⁴ *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons: The charges of a freemason*, I, (1723), edimaf, 4th ed, p. 178.

Just look around you, here, in our Orient, what that means: our Brothers and Sisters were born in Algeria, Belgium, Benin, Bulgaria, Cameroun, Chile, Colombia, France, Haiti, Italy, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Russia, USA, they are located in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Mexico, Texas, even in England, France, Israel, Italy, Netherland; all genders combined; they are Buddhist, Christian (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox), Jewish, Muslim, Agnostic, or none of the above; they are Democrat, Independent, Republican or none of the above, etc.

The motto of the region to which our lodge belongs – Region 03 aka The World – also reminds us that the G.:O.:D.:F.: is a federation of lodges, of rites, from all continents, enabling different sensibilities to work in conditions most conducive to self-improvement and the betterment of humanity: *In unity and diversity, we bring together the scattered.*

The Rites

The historical rite of the Grand Orient is the French Rite. It is the reference rite for all lodges of the G.:O.:D.:F.:, while those practicing a specific version of it or another rite benefit from double patents. Most lodges (around 900) practice the French Rite, most in its “Groussier” version. Around 300 lodges practice other rites for which the Grand Orient holds patents, both “blue lodges” and “higher degrees”.



The rites practiced are:

- **the French Rite (RF)**, codified between 1783 and 1786 and revised in 1858, 1887, 1938, 1955, 1995 and 2001;
- **the Rectified Scottish Rite (RER)**, which appeared in 1770 and joined the Grand Orient by treaty with the Scottish directorates of Auvergne, Burgundy and Septimanie in May 1776;

- **the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (REAA or AASR)** which appeared in 1804 and was united with the Grand Orient by concordat of December 5, 1804;
- **the Rite of Ancient York Masonry**, joined the Grand Orient by integration of the Provincial Grand Lodge of the Leeward Islands (Saint-Domingue) of Ancient York Masons in 1804;
- **the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis-Misraïm**, joined the Grand Orient following the agreements of August 4, 1862 (Memphis) and March 6, 1865 (Misraïm).

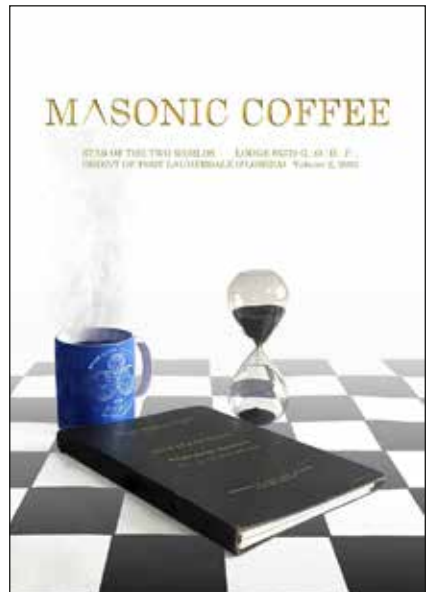
But also:

- **English Rite, Emulation style**, reintroduced in France in 1958 and in 2002 in the G.:O.:D.:F.:;
- **the Operative Rite of Salomon**, created by the G.:O.:D.:F.: in 1971-1974;
- **Modern French Rite**, 1783;
- **Modern Reestablished French Rite**, mostly following the *Regulateur du maçon*;
- **Philosophical French Rite**, created by the G.:O.:D.:F.:, 1970-1985 and approved in 2002.

All rituals are available to download from the Portal of the G.:O.:D.:F.: for the members.

In addition to the symbolic themes specific to all masonic obedience, the members of the Grand Orient de France work on issues that pave the way for a fairer, more fraternal society, thus contributing to the expression of citizenship and the emancipation of peoples. In today's masonic panorama, this dual approach is what makes the Grand Orient de France unique. With over 250 years of history behind it under the name of G.:O.:D.:F.: and 300 years since its creation, the Grand Orient de France aims to play a leading role in social transformation.

This is what the Brothers and Sisters of our respectable Lodge Star of the Two Worlds are committed to doing in the masonic desert of South Florida and the dissemination of our Masonic Coffees is one of our outreach actions. Since the pandemic, The Masonic Coffees bring monthly in videoconference, Brothers and Sisters together in a non-ritual way to discuss subjects that our non-dogmatic freemasonry is studying and that we want to spread around us, in our concern to explain and externalize the G.:O.:D.:F.: in our country.



**5th anniversary of the installation
of the R.:L.: Star of the Two Worlds
Orient of Fort Lauderdale (Florida)
Grand Orient de France
October 20th, 2018⁵**

The difficulty of succeeding only adds to the necessity of undertaking.
Beaumarchais: *The Barber of Seville*, ed. Paris 1824, p. 398

*Tis known by the name of perseverance in a good cause,
and of obstinacy in a bad one.*
Laurence Sterne: *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy,
Gentleman (1760-1767)*, Book I, Ch. 17

The best way to build nothing is to stick to general codes and regulations.
Pascal Lecocq, April 2017



⁵ Masonic Coffee # 41, Oct. 14th, 2023.

I would like to start this fraternal celebration with only the pleasure of meeting again those who 5 years ago participated in the crowning of several years' efforts, and to testify to them that their support and confidence had not been in vain.

Unfortunately, the uniqueness and strength of our lodge, under the Name and the Auspices of the G.:O.:D.:F.:, in the Florida masonic desert, and even more so in the USA, is its main weakness.

We were so happy to have finally succeeded, last January, in negotiating an agreement with a local African-American Masonic micro-obedience to finally be able to find a masonic place to work, by renting their Temple and no longer be one of the last of the 1,300 lodges of the G.:O.:D.:F.: to still be STF (Sans Temple Fixe/ Temple less), but the newly elected Grand Master of this micro-obedience challenged our agreement, not even understanding that we could meet with non-male freemasons.

So, we're once again, the STF of the G.:O.:D.:F.: since our installation last September, and the consolidation of our Lodge – notably for ritual practice in a space dedicated, for our EA and FC – is affected by this, requiring us to make many more painful efforts to the detriment of the Labors we could be holding in serenity.

But we're still standing.

And non-dogmatic, liberal or continental freemasonry, under the auspices of the G.:O.:D.:F.:, is still alive and well in our Orient.

As a preamble to the festive and joyous events we'll be dwelling on



in the second part of this presentation, it's important that our archives and our memory preserve the various stages that led to the creation of this lodge, for the founding members, for those who have joined us since, for those who would like to improve our regulations and relations with the authorities and sovereign obedience, and for those who

would like to undertake to continue spreading our masonic principles in other Orients, States and Countries, since this is our duty as freemasons of the G.:O.:D.:F.:

2003-2012

Our requests to visit local lodges: Dewey Hawkins Lodge No. 331 F&AM (Oakland Park, FL Florida), Pompano Masonic Lodge No. 263 (Pompano Beach, FL Florida) were refused firstly in the name of the G.:O.:D.:F.:’s “irregularity” in practicing freemasonry, and then for the G.:O.:D.:F.:’s “gender mix”.

During Brother P.LEC’s annual visit to his mother lodge, L’Étoile des Deux Pôles, G.:O.:D.:F.:, Orient de Trouville-sur-Mer, and his regret that he could only take part in his Lodge’s Labors by mail, his Past Worshipful Master R.LEF. told him, with his customary glibness and faconde: “Open your own Lodge, Mate”.

2012-2013

At the time, only one Brother from the G.:L.:D.:F.:, A.ALV. was known to us (he left at the end of 2013, like many French investors unaware of local conditions).

We were in touch with GOUSA (Grand Orient des États-Unis d’Amérique), which has received the patent and support of the G.:O.:D.:F.: and has one of its 5 or 6 lodges, in the Fort Lauderdale area (Lodge Spinoza, Feb. 2013).

We were even appointed secretary, but there were never any regular meetings, only whisky and cigar dinners... (The G.:O.:D.:F.: eventually took back its patent).

We contact the North American Lodges of the G.:O.:D.:F.: to present our project, visiting R.L.Atlantide, Lafayette89 and Art et Lumière, as well as the Regional Delegate of the Region 03, the Governing Council Member D.LAM (from the French department of Reunion), the Regional delegate de la région Ouest J-Y.LEP. and the Grand Orator P.FOU.

We set up a website, a Facebook page and twitter (August 2013) which provided most of our future contacts.

The Sister A.MON., a regular visitor to Florida, contacts us through this channel, and the Brother C.RAS. from Los Angeles, transferred to Miami, joins the project.

2014

A candidate sent from Paris G.:O.:D.:F.: (A.HIM. American from Miami of Martinique descent) is forwarded to us by the R.:L.: Lafayette89. In the regulatory impossibility of proceeding with his entry to the G.:O.:D.:F.:, we will have him initiated in the meantime at the Droit humain, American federation in Miami in May 2015, with whom we were entering into a relationship. One of the French S. A.VAG adhered to the idea of joining us to find a Lodge of the G.:O.:D.:F.:.

The EA F.DAU (from Cannes) was transferred to Fort Lauderdale and together, we prepare our Triangle file.

Unfortunately, our letters to the Governing Council Member D.LAM. (from 2013 to 2016) remained unanswered.

And the EA F.DAU will again be transferred to Mexico. Our attempt to form a Triangle aborted.

2015

Sister S.RAM., Brothers J-P.ACH. and C.RIC. Master mason of the R.:L.: Étoile des Deux Pôles, Orient of Trouville-sur-Mer, G.:O.:D.:F.:, volunteer to support our project and actively participate in our Labors.

Several French Brothers from the G.:L.:D.:F.: and G.:L.:N.:F.:, having heard of the creation of a G.:O.:D.:F.: Lodge, got together to organize themselves among Francophones, males, believers, and investors, criticizing the G.:O.:D.:F.: 's refusal to maintain relations with sympathizers of groups calling for discrimination, hatred or violence against a person or group of people on the pretext of their origin, ethnicity, or religion... These Brothers,

after failing to open a lodge with the Grand Lodge of Florida, then the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the regular Grande Loge du Québec and then under the auspices of a G.:L.:N.:F.: lodge in Cannes (France), found a home with the newly-created G.:L.:T.:F.:, which split off from the G.:L.:N.:F.: in June 2012, claiming a recognition agreement with the G.:O.:D.:F.: (an Obedience of the same name with a friendship treaty dating from 1993 – demonstrating the lack of follow-up of the G.:O.:D.:F.: we've been castigating for 20 years, of our relations with other Obediences –) and been installed one year before us in Nov. 2017, this lodge recently exploded for its sectarian drift and half its members have just formed a provisional G.:L.:D.:F.: lodge in Miami in French only, which denies too – unfortunately – receiving visiting Sisters.

Brother F.PEC, who has come to set up a business in Miami, joins us, as does the Brothers H.ROU. And P.PROV., who divides his time between France and Florida, completes our group of supporters.

We finally officially form the Triangle Étoile des deux Mondes on August 12, 2015 with the Signature of 4 local Master masons of the G.:O.:D.:F.: (A.MON., F.PEC., P.PROV., P.LEC.). Brother C.RAS. being away on business, Brother H.ROU. not yet reinstated, Sister Anca and Brother André not yet affiliated.

The Triangle was approved by the Governing Council in October 2015 and the Triangle rooted to the R.:L.: Lafayette89, Orient of Washington, DC. G.:O.:D.:F.:

From then on, regular monthly Triangle meetings were held in the President's studio. Sister D.KRA (G.:L.:F.:F.:), Br.J.RIV and a Sis.M-E.CIO. from Colombia, not French-speaking (G.:O.:C.:C.:), Brothers S.JUA (G.:O.:D.:F.:), N.LAV (G.:L.:D.:F.:), A.AUD (G.:O.:D.:F.:) and Sis.M-C.AUD (G.:L.:F.:F.:) reinforce our membership. We begin translating the AASR ritual into English.

2015-2016

G.:O.:D.:F.: Brothers J.DUF (Lafayette89), E.CHA and M.PEU (FEU), C.LEF (Locarno Fraternité), T.JOU (Amour et Connaissance) wished to be affiliated.

Meeting between our Brother A.AUD. and Brother M.AIT.



Governing Council member at the Marseilles Convent to support our efforts, in particular the affiliations required by the lodge Lafayette89 in order to have the required number of Master masons.

October, a profane from Miami, J-P.GUI is investigated, passed the blindfolded interview in Washington where he will be initiated in December 2016 as a Triangle was not allowed to do so.

2017 first attempt to install the lodge

January: our Brother A.AUD. met the GMA P.FOU. in Nice.

February: Brother P.PROV. met with our Brother Council member M.AIT. and the Grand Orator E.GAR. at the G.:O.:D.:F.: headquarters in Paris for a waiver (granted but not ratified) of the minimum number of Master masons (9 to 11 instead of 14).

Brother and Sister J-F. and J.MAR. confirmed their affiliations.

March: visit and presentation of the constitution files to the Respectable Lodge Art et Lumière, Orient de Los Angeles, G.:O.:D.:F.:, who have actively supported us from the start.

April: Constitution of the Lodge was put on the agenda of the April 2017 Regional Congress, but the files were not sent by the lodge Lafayette89 to the Secretary of the lodges and the creation failed.

April: The GWU (American micro-obedience) denied us the right to create an English G.:O.:D.:F.: lodge on US territory.

The Governing Council member M.ATT., the GSAE M.CIC and former Grand Master the late beloved Brother C.HAB intervened to denounce a clause that does not exist in the creation of the GWU by the G.:O.:D.:F.: in 1976 and its refoundation in 1996.

May: Sister M.TRA of the G.:L.:I.: and Brother aka Anonymous (A.MAR of the G.:O.:I.: and the G.:L.: New Hampshire) became regular visitors and contributors to our Labors.

In July, the elected Worshipful Master B.VAE. in Washington took charge of the project and worked to solve the administrative problems caused by our remote location and unfavorable environment.

2018

Affiliations to the G.:O.:D.:F.: and reintegration of Brothers and Sisters A.HIM, H.ROU., J.RIV., N.LAV, A.VAG, D.KRA and M-E. CIP. by the Respectable Lodge Lafayette89.

We have the required number of G.:O.:D.:F.: Master masons to finalize our application on May 18, 2018, and to send it to Paris.

Confident this time in the positive outcome of our file, we start touring local Masonic temples again to rent it for installation.

On June 29, the completed file was forwarded by the Secretary of the lodges to the President of the Region 03 Congress.

At the Regional Convention in Rouen, France, Aug. 20th delegates unanimously approved the transformation of the Fort Lauderdale Triangle into a full-fledged lodge. Meanwhile, as always, we worked... and had awesome fraternal agapes.

Finding premises for the Opening Ceremony

Most of the local masonic temples contacted either didn't reply or refused to let us use their facilities.

The Oakland Park temple, thanks to the intervention of our Brother G.KRA. who was a member of the G.:L.: of Florida, offers

us a \$350.00 rental for the evening. When we brought the check, they refused to allow the G.:O.:D.:F.: to practice Masonic meetings in their temple, even though they rented for events such as birthdays and Bar Mitzvahs (*left pic*).

The search for premises is therefore an urgent addition to our worries. We eventually located an empty store nearby who accepted to rent for one day (*right pic*).



The patent of the G.:O.:D.:F.: signed by the members of the Council and its president J-P.HUB. on September 28, 2018, was eventually delivered.

Our organizing committee was now working to set up the installation, despite the uncertainty of the date chosen by the Governing Council and the dispatch of the Commissioner Governing Council Member for the Installation.

The Program

We provided a booklet for our attendees, especially for those coming to Florida.

A 30-page pdf containing:

- lodge consecration agenda
- suggested activities for your free time in South Florida
- useful tips: flights, rentals, maps...
- historical presentation: 1562-1565 - When Florida was French
- a must-read
- 25 ways to find out if you're a true Floridian
- a Florida Survival Manual



ALLUMAGE DES FEUX
ETOILE DES DEUX MONDES
OR.:. DE FORT LAUDERDALE
GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE

OCTOBER 19-21, 2018

Coordination by: Marie-France Gagnepain, mfriani@owd.com, Mobile (954) 242-0117
V.M. Pascal Lemoyne, vm@etoiledes2mondes.org, Mobile (954) 906-8270

www.etoiledes2mondes.org

- and sent the invitation.

**Invitation à l'Allumage des Feux de la Respectable Loge
« ETOILE DES DEUX MONDES »
Orient de Fort Lauderdale (Florida) Etats-Unis d'Amérique.**

G . O . D . F .

Le Vénérable Maître, le Collège des Officiers et tous les Frères et Sœurs fondateurs de notre Loge provisoire vous invitent à nous honorer de votre présence pour participer à la Tenue d'Installation de notre Loge, suite à la constitution symbolique approuvée par le Grand Orient de France, Puissance Symbolique Régulière Souveraine.

The Worshipful Master, the Officers and all the founding Brothers and Sisters of the provisional Lodge invite you to honor us with your presence to participate in the consecration ceremony of our lodge in accordance with the Charter delivered by the Grand Orient de France.

|

Le samedi 20 octobre 2018 à 10 heures précises au temple "Lafayette"
Saturday, October 20th, 2018 at 10 am at the Temple "Lafayette"
55 E Prospect Rd, Oakland Park, FL. USA

L'ordre du jour prévoit la cérémonie solennelle d'Installation de la Loge selon le rite français par les Commissaires Installateurs :

The Agenda will include the consecration of the Lodge in conformity with the French Rite of the Grand Orient de France by the Commissaires Installateurs.

Le F.: Alain Asik, Conseiller de l'Ordre de la Région #3 « Le Monde »,
Le F.: Bruno Vaes, Vénérable Maître de la R.:L.: Lafayette 89,
Or.: de Washington, GODF,
La S.: Elisabeth Tunderman Burgess, Vénérable Maître de la R.: L.: Art et Lumière,
Or.: de Los Angeles, GODF.

Vous êtes cordialement conviés aux agapes fraternelles qui auront lieu à l'issue de la Tenue en salle humide "René Le Floch" à 13h30.

Le Triangle individuel s'élèvera à 33cm (US\$33.00) à régler sur place ou par avance en ligne.

Fraternal Agape will take place after the ceremony and you are cordially invited.

The triangle per person is set at \$33 to be paid online or on site.

Une tenue ordinaire au 1er Grade symbolique suivra ensuite vers 15h30

Regular 1st degree meeting will follow around 3:30pm.

Friday, Oct 19th, 2018, sets and props were ready for the D Day

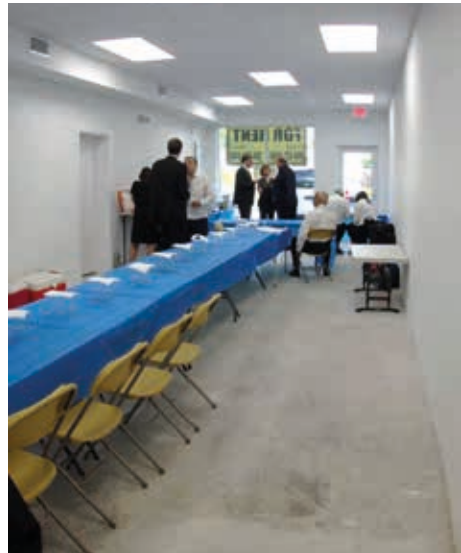


Day 1 - Friday Oct 19th evening, for those already arrived:

Lecture regarding the French history in Florida: French arrival in the 16th Century by Brother J-P.GUI. At the Caruso Italian market, 4165 N Dixie Hwy, Oakland Park, FL 33334.

Followed by a dinner and an award ceremony by the Lafayette Order with the presentation of diplomas by its representative J-P. GUI. Knight of this Order, to the Worshipful Masters of the R.:L.: Lafayette89 and the provisional Lodge Étoile des Deux Mondes.

Early on Saturday Oct 20th, 2018, Setting the Temple, by designated members,



Saturday October 20th, 2018

9:30 AM -10:00 AM Welcoming the attendees

9:30 - 10:30 AM Registration

Complementary coffee and croissants, donuts, muffins available.

Last details set up - the temporary temple was set



TEMPLE LAFAYETTE

10 :00 AM – 1 :00 PM

CONSECRATION OF THE LODGE
(in French)

French Rite of GODF

GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE
PUISSANCE SYMBOLIQUE RÉGULIÈRE SOUVERAINE

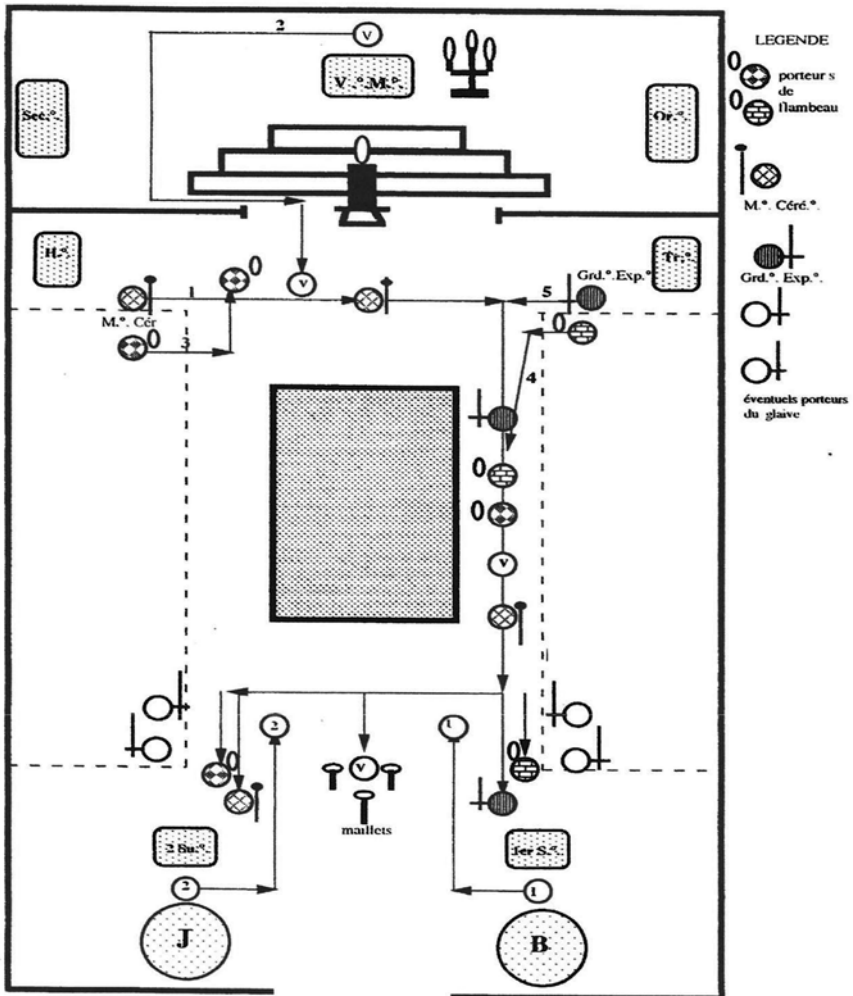
RITUEL D'INSTALLATION
DE LOGE

© 2011

Opening of the Labors, on the 1st degree of the French Rite of the G.:O.:D.:F.:., by the College of Officers of the Provisional Lodge and its President:

VM: P.LEC.
 SW: S.JUA.
 JW: C.RAS.
 OR: P.PRO.
 Sec: H.HIM.

Deacon: N.LAV.
 MdC: H.ROU.
 Treasurer: J.RIV.
 Almoner: A.VAG.
 Tyler: A-C.AUD for S.D.KRA.



It was then followed by the introduction into the Temple of the three Commissioners appointed by the Governing Council: The Very illustrious Brother President A.ASI., Governing Council Member, Regional Delegate of the Region 03, AKA The World, the Very Illustrious Brother Commissioner B.VAE, Worshipful Master of the Respectable Lodge Lafayette89, the Very Illustrious Sister Commissioner E.TUN, Worshipful Master of the Respectable Lodge Art et Lumières, to whom the three gavels were presented.

The Very illustrious Brother President opened the Labors of the Grand Orient de France.

The Director of ceremonies lighted the G.:O.:D.:F.: Star on the President's desk, then, after The Very illustrious Brother President has read the powers conferred by the Governing Council, he joined the Lodge Star to the G.:O.:D.:F.: Star and lighted it.



Under the delta formed by the sword of the Deacon and the Cane of the Director of ceremonies, The Very illustrious Brother President draw a battery and cheered the installation of the new Lodge.

The Officers of the College took the Oath in the East and then seated at their respective positions.

The Very illustrious Brother President then invited the members of the G.:O.:D.:F.: to form a chain around the mosaic pavement for the communication of the semester's words.

Back to the East, The Very illustrious Brother President A.ASI. reminded us of the difficulties and challenges that opening a lodge in the USA represented for all of us, and this occasion will undoubtedly remain memorable for all those present and for the G.:O.:D.:F.: as a whole.

The G.:O.:D.:F.:, with its 1,341 lodges and 53,000 members, acts to bring what seems to be a utopian vision of the world under the keyword of fraternity.

But to work under these conditions, in an unjust world, you must want to, and not be afraid that your "Work" will be perceived as utopian. I'll be there for you, my heart will always be with you, good luck, Star of The Two Worlds.

Then, The Very illustrious Brother President A.ASI. declared: *In the name of the Governing Council of the Grand Orient de France, I have the favor and the great honor of presenting you with this Patent, which testifies to your membership of our Obedience.*

The Labors of the Grand Orient de France Lodge were closed by The Very illustrious Brother President A.ASI.

The Worshipful Master P.LEC then declared that the first Labors of the Respectable Lodge Étoile des Deux Mondes were about to gain strength and vigor and delivered his induction speech.

Very Illustrious Brother Council Member A.ASI., Worshipful Masters E.TUN. and B.VAE. in the East, Brothers and Sisters in your degrees and qualities.

When in 1432 - no, that's not the date we started building our Triangle, even if, for some, it seemed like an eternity - no, when in 1432 the painter Jan Van Eyck



completed the altarpiece in St Bavo's Cathedral, Ghent, he followed his signature with these words: Als ich kan. As well as I could.

He could, to say the least, be considered a fine craftsman, for having given us the absolute masterpiece of oil painting, a medium he practically invented. A masterpiece that will never be equaled.

As for the Freemason of the G.:O.:D.:F.:, who is committed to work diligently, consistently, and regularly on the labors of the Freemasonry.

As MM he draws up plans as perfectly as possible to give FCs and EAs instructions and useful advice, in order to develop in them a love of Truth and Goodness.

As Master Mason, it is his duty to spread the truths outside the Temple he has learned and even more so to enable profane people to join the specific, liberal, non-dogmatic and secular Freemasonry.



This is the 7th challenge mentioned by our GM J-P.HUB. "that of recruitment and, beyond that, of renewal and transmission"⁶ .

Not to do so is to condemn oneself to the crime of non-assistance to a person in danger.

This eventually leads him to want to create a non-dogmatic Lodge in a masonic desert, and he does so... as best he can.

There's no need to congratulate or thank him, he's just done his job. As best he could.

Of course, building a Lodge in a masonic desert doesn't happen every day.

It means extra work for the authorities who govern us. We must therefore be grateful to the Secretary of the Lodges in Paris for having accomplished this unusual task and to our Brother Council Member M.AIT-AAR for having been able, since the end of 2016, to devote time and support us, while at the same time having to manage the 72 Lodges in our Region 03 known as "The World".

Fortunately, we have received a great deal of encouragement from Brothers, Sisters and Lodges who have supported our quest for this inaccessible star, which we are finally reaching thanks to them, to set up the base for our future explorations. Some of you are here today, founders from the start or fraternal visitors.

If anyone had asked for nothing and thought to assume his Worshipful Master Office to devote himself to the taking task of leading his Lodge, it was our Brother B.VAE. who inherited the baby that the Governing Council had placed in the arms of the Respectable Lodge Lafayette89 in August 2015. He didn't shy away from taking care of us in June 2017, despite our state, left to our own since the official creation of our Triangle ... and he achieved the tour de force of putting us on our feet in just one year.

This constitution of Lodge is therefore his, and the Brothers and Sisters of the Étoile des Deux Mondes will be keen to bear witness to him, through the strength and vigor of their future Labors, that he has not done this immense work in vain.

6 "The seventh issue, which will be the last to symbolically respect the seven points of mastery, is that of recruitment and, beyond that, renewal and transmission." Installation speech by Jean-Philippe HUBSCH, Grand Master, President of the Governing Council, p 3.

But most of all, if our Brother B.VAE. will allow me, all the credit goes to our Sisters A-C.AUD , A.VAG., D.KRA., M-E.CIP., our Brothers A.HIM., J.RIV., N.LAV. Brothers and Sisters from Sister Obediences, who have contributed to the constitution of this Lodge of the G.:O.:D.:F.:

They were under no obligation to do so, as they could always come as visitors to work in fraternity in a Lodge or Triangle of the G.:O.:D.:F.: after knocking and answering the tuilage.

They've gone beyond the divide that some Obediences, insist on triple-locking, to embrace the workings of another Obedience that, on paper, guarantees the fullness of Masonic ideals. They've extracted themselves from the cocoon of habit that leads to certainty, to fly under this new starry vault of Florida, towards their own ideal and swarm as only a constituted Lodge has the means to do. They have therefore joined the G.:O.:D.:F.: to enable our Lodge constitution to become a reality, and to enable them, along with us, to continue the masonic Work.

Symbolically, bringing together here and now, whatever the gender, origin, language, metaphysical conceptions, bank account, diet, intolerance to gluten or to a certain president..., is for me the only achievement to be praised.

It is, indeed, what the Grand Orient should be... Universal.

This universality – and the freemasons of the G.:O.:D.:F.: don't use words lightly, as our former Grand Master P. FOU. reminded us at the Conférence of the regional Congresses⁷ – means opening our columns to the citizens of our adopted country.

It's not a question of coming with arrogance, as many Americans caricaturally seem to think towards anything that comes from abroad. It's not a question of imposing our vision of society or of freemasonry, but of contributing to the 3rd challenge that

⁷ “We are not in a Regular Meeting, my Brothers, my Sisters, however we are here among Masters, which induces mastery and in particular mastery of words.(...) we are freemasons, we attach importance to symbols and the word” Philippe Foussier, Grand Master, Saturday, April 28, 2018, Minutes of the regional congress conference, April 2018, p. 31.

*our Grand Master defined in his installation speech: spreading our universalist and humanist values*⁸.

It's a tough job, and we have Americans under the mallet who want to join us, but many haven't persevered.

We know men and women here who would enrich our ranks. And not just heroes like Senator John McCain, who “could not ignore any abuse of power when he saw one, in any form, in any country” and “who personified the essential values of fairness, honesty and respect” as former Vice President Joe Biden put it in his eulogy. But also, as a passerby like Marine Veteran Michael Fellars confided: “John McCain is certainly the only politician I've ever known who cared about his country's constituents, and who contributed, as best he could, to making this country a better place to live”⁹.

Others are standing up for our common values, like big companies like PayPal, and I'll grumble less now when she takes her bank commission from me..., when, last September 22, I translate: “she stopped all commercial relations with Infowars when her remarks of hatred and intolerant discrimination towards certain communities or religious groups were revealed”¹⁰.

In a caricatured way too, which is always the fruit of ignorance, and the propaganda of US appearances is to blame here, “we're rich!” to the point that in my Mother Lodge the Brothers and Sisters downgraded their brother Treasurer's generous offer of a medal.

*Brothers and Sisters, you will be able to tell them that you passed a village of homeless tents in the heart of our town, that the minimum wage is 8.25 USD an hour or 7.14 euros, having generously increased by 0.78 \$ in 10 years and that in our County: 44%, yes 4 out of 10 people you'll meet here, can't meet basic living needs (43% in the State)*¹¹.

8 3rd issue (...) this policy seems to me indispensable for the first liberal and non-dogmatic Obedience in Europe and in the World, as well as for the diffusion of our universalist and humanist values. (...) Installation speech by Jean-Philippe HUBSCH, Grand Master, President of the Governing Council, p. 3.

9 Michael Fellars (By Associated Press, Aug 30, 2018, | 12:20 PM).

10 *Sun Sentinel*, Sept. 22, 2018, p. 4a.

11 Floridians need a governor who will fight for them, *Sun sentinel*, Sept. 8, 2018, p. 11a.

*Ask one of our Brothers here if, at his age, he wouldn't be better off fanning his toes in Sorrento, ask this other one who has to work two jobs, nights and weekends, ask our Sister who has just lost one of her two jobs, ask this other Sister who must be on her tenth employer since she started decorating our columns and who has to perform her steps at every Regular Meeting because she always has to work overtime, ask this other Brother how many times he works 35 hours a week? In our program, we've indicated a recent book, admittedly in English, which paints an unvarnished picture of today's real America, well worth a read: *Subprimes*, a novel by Karl Taro Greenfeld (2016).*

So, the time for rest has not yet arrived.

Am I happy and satisfied? The members of this Respectable Lodge are well aware of my attachment to this final question of the AASR.

I'm indeed pleased that in the last few minutes, more than three years of administrative headaches have come to an end, and as for being satisfied, I'll answer you, if I can, in ten years' time, if we can celebrate this anniversary with columns filled with many new freemasons.

It's time to conclude three years of constitution and get down to work.

Concretely, that sounds a bit "cemented", doesn't it? At least, that's what the G.:O.:D.:F.: wants to show with its new banner on its web pages: "Making concrete progress in society".

So, it's not by wearing a pretty apron or slapping a sticker on the back of your car that you'll be "concretely" masoning, it's by taking your tools and attacking the stone.

Brothers and Sisters of Respectable Lodge l'Étoile des Deux mondes, Orient of Fort Lauderdale (Florida), G.:O.:D.:F.:, let's roll up our sleeves, our next workshop opens at 3:30 this afternoon.

With Strength and Vigor. I have said.

Then, Brother treasurer J.RIV. listed the lodges who have generously contributed with medals, that means financially, but also with some gifts, to the installation and consecration of our lodge.





Moon and Sun painted by the visiting Sister S.LHE. from Trouville and Delta by Brother P.LEC.

The Brothers and Sisters who had made the journey from their Orient to Florida representing their lodges or Congress were thanked by the Worshipful Master and given a hearty round of applause.

Brother Orator P.PRO. gave explanations on the name of our distinctive title, in reference to our Worshipful Master's mother lodge *the Star of Two Poles*; on the name of our Temple, in reference to the Marquis de Lafayette and our parent Lodge Lafayette89; on the name of our banquet hall, in reference to Brother R.LEF. who initiated the process of creating our lodge in the masonic desert of South Florida since 2012.

The music accompanying us that noon was the musical piece of architecture by the late brother R.LEF. (realized in January 2014).

Entrance: Mozart, Violin Concerto #3 1st mvt

Inspection: Vivaldi, Estro Armonico Larghetto

Entrance of dignitaries: Handel: Zadok the priest

Moving through the Temple: Pezel, Sonata 22 maestoso

Lighting up the stars: Mozart: Violin Concerto #3 3rd mvt

Meditation: St George Violin Concerto #2 rondeau

Chain of Union: Mozart; Ave Verum Corpus

Widow's trunk: Borodin String quartet #2 nocturne

Exit : Murracciole : Liberté Egalité Fraternité.

Our Beloved brother R.LEF. who was also the Musician of his Lodge had offered to our Worshipful Master, at their last meeting in

January 2014, 4 CDs of music he made specially for the three degrees and ceremonies of our future modge... We still use them.

Many attendees asked for the floor like the Worshipful Master of Lafayette89 B.VAE:

I'm not going to keep you waiting any longer after the many fraternal words already spoken, except to emphasize my admiration of the perseverance and tenacity it took to get to today's celebration. While our Lodge, Lafayette89 at the Orient of Washington, supported these efforts, the bulk of the work was done here, and setbacks and disappointments were overcome by you.

I recently read the archives of the creation of our Atelier, which will celebrate its 30th anniversary next year. As I read the minutes of our Labors held in Brothers' garages and basements, as I saw the hopes of initiating the first profanes and the efforts to make ourselves known, as I examined the short list of materials and regalia available to assemble and decorate a Temple, I thought of you.

I know you will succeed because the essential work has been done.

All the brothers and Sisters of Lafayette89 send you their congratulations, and a triple fraternal hug.

Then Worshipful Master E.TUN. made sure to remind us of the everlasting joy that comes with the creation and consecration of a lodge. *This is truly a School of Perfection that allows each of us to improve while working on keeping the Indispensable Fraternal Harmony.*

Brother J-P.ACH took the time to explain the symbiotic link between L'Étoile des Deux Pôles, Orient de Trouville-sur-Mer, created 150 years ago, and L'Étoile des Deux Mondes, Orient of Fort Lauderdale. Fortuitous circumstance, challenge, premonitory act or inescapable chance, it took all this and more to understand what a guttural was originally, existential wish, "Why don't you open your own lodge in Florida, Mate?" to Brother P.LEC.



Brother J.RIV. of all the Brothers and Sisters of the Triangle offers to it's then president P.LEC. a medal: *A warm thank you for all your lessons, to those of us that have been a few years in freemasonry, it has reinforced our idea of what perseverance really means. And for those who are just starting in this journey you have shown the importance of this word in the masonic life.*

According to our ritual an emotional Chain of Union linked all of us, present or not, in fraternity.

Particularly those who were not able to attend that day, been ill or unable to travel: T.JOU., M.PEU., C.RIC., G.KRA., A.MAR., D.KRA, S.RAM., M.TRA.

During our Chain of Union, Brother J-P.ACH sang: *When Men Will Live For Love.*

Today, our chain of union will link us to our beloved brothers and sisters who have since left for the Eternal East.

P.PRO, S.RAM, G.KRA, A.HIM.

When men will live for love
There will be no more misery
And the beautiful days will begin
But we will be dead my brother

In the great circle of life
Where we had to go
Where we had to be
We got the worst part

When men will live for love
It'll be peace on Earth
The soldiers will be troubadours
But we will be dead my brother

When men will live for love
There will be no more misery
And the beautiful days will begin
But we will be dead my brother

But when men will live for love
May there be no more misery
Maybe one day they'll think about
Those of us who will be dead, my
brother

In the great circle of life
So that there can be better times
Some losses are always necessary
The wisdom here that's the price

Those of us who, on the bad days
In hatred and in war
Looked for peace, looked for love
May they know then, my brother

When men will live for love
There will be no more misery
And the beautiful days will begin
But we will be dead my brother

P.PRO.	S.RAM.	G.KRA.	A.HIM.
1954-2020	1965-2021	1939-2020	1943-2022

With the sound of beating gavels, the Commissioners of the Governing Council exited the lodge.

The lodge was closed in due and ancient form, and the brethren retired content and satisfied under the oath of silence.

But that celebration was still young. Stay tuned for the following.

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM:
complementary appetizers and toast
were offered to participants.

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM:
Banquet Hall "R.LEF". Agapes



	37	Guest/ upgrade Paper, Include 2 tablecloths Disposable heavy classic-ware plates, silverware, napkins Include plates, rolled in napkin (fork & knife) / takeout containers for left overs
Stuffed Chicken Piccata	37	Spinach & Ricotta Cheese Stuffed Chicken Piccata (topped with white wine and caper sauce Sides: Rice Pilaf Cookies & Brownies
Signature SUB	37	Signature Salad: Crisp Greens, Diced Tomatoes, SIDE ITEMS: * Walnuts* Cranberries * Mandarin Oranges* Gorgonzola Cheese * Dressing
Salmon Sweet n' Spicy F...	1	Grilled Salmon: Full Pan 8 lbs (20-24) Salmon NO blackening, Guest prefer milder but flavorful seasonings 1-Chaffing Dish Set: 1-wire rack, 1 water pan, 1-6 hr Sterno fuel
Grilled Veggie Medley F...	1	Grilled Vegetable Medley: zucchini, squash, portobello mushrooms & roasted peppers Full Pan (serves 28-35) 1-Chaffing Dish Set: 1-wire rack, 1 water pan, 1-6 hr Sterno fuel
Soda	30	Assorted Can Soda: Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite
Bottle Water	30	Bottled Water
Service Fee		set up service, delivery

Every attendee got a gift basket including a special mug.



Going back to the labors... 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

1st degree meeting of the Lodge,

French Rite of reference of the G.:O.:D.:F.:

– P.O.A. by Brother F.C.RIC.: The moral doctrine of freemasonry

– P.O.A. by Brother E.LEF and Sister G.LEF: The Statue of Liberty



LIBERTÉ – ÉGALITÉ – FRATERNITÉ
– LAICITÉ –

Resp.: L...
L'Etoile des Deux Mondes
Or.: de Fort Lauderdale (Florida)

G.:O.:D.:F.:

L'assiduité, et la réponse aux convocations, sont des devoirs maçonniques.

Ma T.: C. S.:, mon T.: C. F.:, tu es fraternellement invité à participer à nos Travaux (rituel en français)

Dear Brethren you are hereby cordially invited to attend our next Meeting (Ritual in French light translation possible!) held on :

SAMDEI 20 Octobre, Oct 20th, 2018

15h30 Ouverture, 3:30pm Opening

Lieu de réunion : Temple Lafayette, 55 E Prospect Road, Oakland Park, FL

- Δ Ouverture rit.: des Trav.: au 1er Grade symb.: au R.:F.: Opening on the 1st Degree French Rite
- Δ Ordre du jour réglementaire : Summons convening the meeting
- Δ Lecture de la correspondance. Reading of the Official Correspondence.
- Δ Vote sur la proposition de rituel choisi par la L.: ballot for the Rite chosen
- Δ Pl.: « La Doctrine morale de la Franc-Maçonnerie » par le F.:Ch.R...d. « The moral doctrine of Freemasonry »
- Δ Remise des passeports maç.: Delivery of masonic passports
- Δ Pl.: « La Statue de la Liberté » par le F.: E.L...h et la S.: G.L...h : « The statue of Liberty »
- Δ Vote sur les capitations 6019, ballot about dues 6019
- Δ Questions diverses et Circulation des Troncs : Charity collection and propositions.
- Δ Chaîne d'Union symb.: Chain of Union
- Δ Clôture rit.: des Trav.: au 1^{er} Grade symb.: au R.:F.: Closing on the First Degree French Rite.
- Δ Dîner à l'issue de la Ten.: au restaurant Cielinto Lindo Dinner after the meeting at Cielinto Lindo

Par mandement du V.:M.: le Sec.: A...é H...r

Envoyez-moi vos fatigués, vos pauvres,
Envoyez-moi vos cohortes qui aspirent à vivre libres,
Les rebutés de vos rivages surpeuplés
Envoyez-les moi, les désshériés, que la tempête m'apporte,
De ma lumière, j'éclairai la porte d'or !

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I'll lift my lamp beside the golden door!"
Emma Lazarus: The New Colossus (1883)

Tenue de ville sombre, décors et gants blancs. Excuses reçues par le F.: Sec.:.

Visitors meet the Br.: Deacon for instructions at 3 pm.

Dark attire, apron and gloves requested, (additional aprons and gloves available on site)

web: www.etoiledes2mondes.org
Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/cercle257?ref=hl>
Facebook W. M.: <https://www.facebook.com/pierre.lecouvreur.9440> (for Pascal L...é)
Twitter: @etoiled2monde
Skype group: Ed2M
Whatsapp group: Ed2M
Email: cercle@etoiledes2mondes.org
Secrétaire: sec@etoiledes2mondes.org
Adresse: Ath Ec2M, 4551 NE 3rd Ave, Oakland Park, FL 33334, USA. Tél: 1 954 771 5669 (répondeur)

As the minutes of the regular meeting recorded:

Brother C.RIC. presented his P.O.A. “The Moral Doctrine of freemasonry” which theme is centered around Article 1 of the constitutive document of the G.:O.:D.:F.: from the Convent of 1884.

It states that freemasonry is an institution essentially philanthropic, philosophical and progressive whose objective is seeking the truth, the study of morality, doing the work of charity and diligently working at making humanity a better place, morally, materially, intellectually and socially.

To the question, what are we doing in lodge? Freemasons’ response is usually, *We are building temples to virtue and digging tombs to vices.*

Coming to freemasonry demands that a person holds high moral values and a commitment to constantly be better for himself, his Brothers and Sisters and the society he is a citizen of.

“The Statue of Liberty”, the subject of a symbolic P.O.A. and joint effort by twin Brothers V.LEC. and E.LEF. and appropriately delivered by Brother E.LEF and his Sister G.LEF. in honor of their late father Brother R.LEF. This P.O.A. was delivered with conviction and passion to remind us of what it took to build it, fund it and the symbolism attached to it at the time.

The Statue of Liberty was a joint effort between the United States and France to commemorate the lasting friendship between the peoples of two nations.

The French sculptor Brother Frederic-August Bartholdi created the statue itself while Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, the man behind the famed Eiffel Tower designed the statue’s steel framework. The French historian Edouard de Laboulaye, a great believer in democratic values thought the centennial of the Declaration of Independence in 1876 should be the right opportunity for France to create a statue to give to the United States in celebration of

that nation's success to build a valuable democracy. The statue, a joint effort of the two peoples, the French people responsible for building and assembling the statue and the Americans, the pedestal on which it stands. What the history of that statue does not say enough. If not for the effort of mostly people of masonic values and beliefs this statue would not have stood as the symbol that it represents nowadays. It is even more disturbing in today's recurring Nationalism that we conveniently forget these words etched at the base of the Statue of Liberty "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore". These lines come from a sonnet called *The New Colossus*, which was written by Emma Lazarus in 1883.

In part, this P.O.A. is a tribute to the ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. It is also a tribute to the realization of seemingly innocuous aspirations and dreams expressed during what we call "les agapes", a conversation between Brother R.LEF. now in the Eternal Orient and our Indomitable Brother P.LEC that became the symbolic building stone of our temple.

8:00 PM this long, exceptional day came to an end with a dinner, together with partners, at a Mexican joint: Cielito Lindo, a restaurant next door.

Sunday October 21st, 2018, 11:30 AM, we reunited for a brunch at the Aruba Beach Cafe, on the beach, with partners, booked table, at Lauderdale-by-the-Sea.

Monday October 22th, 2018, Leisure times: visit to brother P.LEC.'s solo show Hotel Atlantic - Sept 13th/Jan 24th, 601 Ft. Lauderdale Beach Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 33304

More agapes... at the Rustic Inn, 4331 Anglers Ave, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

A specific ritual. Aprons and gavels of the Perfect Lobster Degree!

Tuesday, October 23rd, 2018: last American breakfast at the Moonlight Diner, Hollywood, FL, for our Governing Council Member Dear Brother A.ASI.

Wednesday, October 24th, 2018: continuing the agape. Cuban-style this time at La Carretta, calle Ocho, Little Havana quarter in Miami, FL

Saturday October 27th, 2018: we form a new “Triangle” in South Beach with the then visitor from Quebec, Brother E.MAU.

Sunday, November 4th, 2018, finally, last meeting at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show with a large exposition by brother P.LEC at the Convention Center.

Almost done!

Since our opening, in keeping with the founding principles of our triangle and our lodge to be the center of the union, with the use of the English language prevailing, we have officially requested the Governing Council to change, as the RG allows, our distinctive title from Étoile des deux Mondes to Star of The Two Worlds. This request, approved by the Regional Congress of Region 03, known as The World, was ratified by the G.:O.:D.:F.: and we were granted a new patent on November 26, 2021.

As today we have initiated, re-integrated or affiliated 32 new members to the G.:O.:D.:F.:

We have received 469 visits.

In 2020-2021, the delegate of our lodge became the president of the Regional Congress, of the Region 03, known as The World.

In 2023, the Journées des Loges d'Amérique du Nord, the JLLANs are reborn and bring to Congress many labors, wishes and proposals in an exemplary way to the work of the basins that make up the Congress.

Since the pandemic, the masonic coffees bring monthly in video-conference, Brothers and Sisters together in a non-ritual way to discuss subjects that our non-dogmatic freemasonry is studying and that we want to spread around us, in our concern to explain and externalize the G.:O.:D.:F.: in our country.

The volume 2, having received a grant from the Regional Congress and the Governing Council, is in press. Today's presentation will certainly be published in a future volume.

We hope to see you, if not before, in October 2028 to celebrate our 10th anniversary together.



Alchemy

*The art of fools in search of the Grail?*¹²



Alchemy: the word usually brings to our mind the image of medieval long bearded and a little crazy man in dark and obscure caverns, working with alembics and athanors (the furnace of the alchemist), in the vain struggle to transmute lead into gold; based on the ignorance of modern science we feel the flavor of mystery mixed to a share of superstition. Some doubts can rise when we find that Alchemy was widely studied in the Renaissance

and renowned scientists, Sir Isaac Newton for instance, were first alchemists. Furthermore, the word Alchemy does not have a medieval origin, but it derives from, the fabulous Egypt!

Many old books and manuscripts tell the history of Alchemy, illustrating its principles. We start with a famous, dense with content book, that will be a vehicle for an amazing ride from the Pharaohs' Egypt up to the eve of the French revolution and of the perhaps temporary triumph of the Enlightenment.

Its author, the French abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy will be one of our guides. He was born in Beauvais, Northern France, in 1674, and he moved to Paris, where he studied intensively theology and, in

12 Masonic Coffee # 31, Dec. 10th, 2022 and # 33, Feb 11th 2023.

1704, he was ordained as a Catholic Priest and obtained the License in Theology. In 1708, Prince Eugene of Savoy put him in charge with the purchase of rare books and manuscripts for his collection in Vienna. Lenglet was also a skilled member of the French intelligence and did a great service to France.

With an extraordinary erudition in all sciences, he even took part in Diderot and D'Alembert's Encyclopedia project. Lenglet wrote 131 books with his name and with many pennames. He passed away in 1752 in unclear circumstances. He is our main guide in this journey with Alchemy through the centuries; we also integrated his writings with more modern authors and points of view.

A possible etymology of Alchemy is Kemet, the Egyptian word of the Land, because of its black soil, made fertile by the Nile floods. Later emet assumed the meaning of “Egyptian Art”, since, in antiquity, Egyptians were considered the most powerful magicians in the world.

Another possible etymology is the Greek khymeia (πο&io), that means melted down, cast, solder (from the Greek “khuumatos”, indicating a melted down ingot); this Greek term could be the origin of the Arab word al-khimiyya, composed by the determinative article al and the word khimiyya, whose meaning is chemistry. In any case, the Arab culture had a very relevant part in the study of the Hermetic Philosophy or Alchemy.

What is Alchemy?

The title of Lenglet book is *HISTORY OF THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY*, not *ALCHEMY*, because Alchemy is seen as a form of Philosophy, the higher form of Philosophy, according to our Guide, the way to true Knowledge.

Alchemy is a Science, “The Science of the Fools; to follow its way it is necessary to discharge any mundane convention and prejudice and make Knowledge the only purpose of life, and even that is not enough”.

To achieve superior Knowledge, symbolized by the Alchemic Gold, the Philosopher, as coherently the Alchemist shall reach the Grace, a status where the pilgrim of the alchemic way is in harmony with the superior Spirit, that is true reality, beyond any struggle and greed for earthly power, wealth and worldly success. Furthermore, the alchemist shall have a Master to guide him in his path.

Therefore, the alchemists with their allegories, refer to the psychic and spiritual transformation of the human being, who, following a series of progressive processes of improvements, succeeded in transforming himself from vile lead into “philosophical gold”. In an interview, Paolo Lucarelli, the most relevant alchemist of our time, individuated Egypt as the source of hermetic philosophy and stated that in Alchemy “Spirit” and “Matter” are the same thing: Spirit is Spiritualized Matter and Matter is corporification of Spirit. The cycle Spirit and Matter is represented by the Oroboros, the snake who bites its own tail.

This image is from a 1470 Alchemic book, Theodoros Pelecanos's manuscript about an alchemical tract, attributed to Synesius. The Alchemic Science is the Knowledge of the rules and norms of Creation; inside Creation is the “Universal Spirit”, the Soul of the World, which is the base of any life manifestation and of the understanding of Creation.



Alchemy means to build a vase, the Holy Grail, able to attract that Universal Spirit and to *corporify* it into a crystal of peculiar beauty, which is called “Philosophers' Stone”, a real thing, not a symbolic one, like the sacramental bread of the Catholic Mass.

The corporified Spirit transmutes metal into gold, heals any illness, connects with the Universal Wisdom and, furthermore, it is able to

spiritualize the matter: “that is Alchemy”, so explained Paolo Lucarelli. But the “Philosophers' Stone” and the transmutation of lead into gold is not the main aim of the Alchemist; his true purpose is to achieve a peculiar Knowledge; it is a compulsion to become able to transform experience, the raw material, into Knowledge: to the Alchemist it means to enlighten the divine side of it, to purify himself in God, using Lucarelli's expression. Many others tried to explain what Alchemy is; Eugène Canseliet defined it as “*Experimental Metaphysics*”.

The materialism which dominates the culture after the Age of Enlightenment caused the loss of the metaphysical dimension; the Royal Society of Chemistry f.i. has a diminutive view on Alchemy: *The aims of the alchemists were threefold: to find the Stone of Knowledge (the Philosophers' Stone), to discover the medium of Eternal Youth and Health, and to discover the transmutation of metals.*

To the medieval alchemist's mind, the different elements were but the same original substance in varying degrees of purity. Gold was the purest of all and silver followed closely; charlatans, quacks and cheats took over and alchemy became, along with sorcery and witchcraft, infamous for fraud and extortion. In the 18th century scientists tried to pry loose the real achievements in chemistry, pharmacology and medicine from this confusing cornucopia of science and magic.

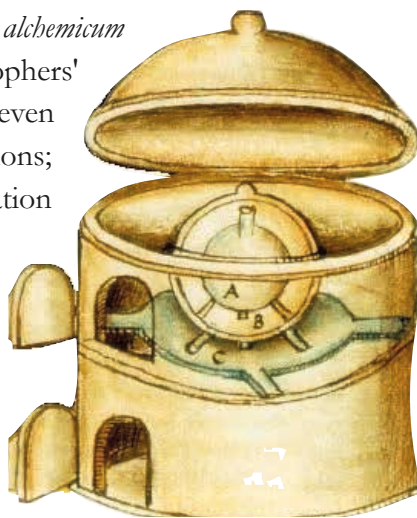
Alchemy is also often defined: “ARS REGIA (King of Arts)” and “MAGNUM OPUS (The Great Work)”.

Alchemy is the way towards unity of Spirit and Matter, but there can be no Alchemy without operative work. The *Mutus Liber (The Mute Book)*, an old esoteric book, is considered amongst the major books on alchemy; it is called mute because it has no words but images, and, according to the well-known French alchemist Eugène Canseliet, they need to be interpreted to have directions about how to proceed in the “MAGNUM OPUS”. The message of this book is: *ora, lege, lege, lege, relege, labora et invenies*, a Latin sentence that means **pray, read, read, read, read again, work and you will find**; the alchemist shall first invoke the help of God (the Grace), then he will study hard and work to achieve what he is searching for.

The Emerald Table (Tabula Smaragdina) so reminds us: *that which is below is like that which is above and that which is above is like that which is below, that the miracles of the One Thing may be accomplished.* The image below is the Emerald Table from the book *Amphiteatrum Sapientiae aeternae* (*Amphiteater of the eternal Wisdom*) by Heinrich Khunrath (1606).

The Alchemical Process

The operative part of the *opus alchemicum* (alchemic work) to obtain the philosophers' stone takes place through seven procedures, divided into four operations; Putrefaction, Calcination, Distillation and Sublimation, and three phases, Solution, Coagulation and Tincture; during these operations the “raw material” mixed with sulfur and mercury and heated in the furnace (the athanor), would gradually transform, passing through various stages, distinguished by the color



assumed by the material during the transmutation, and thus losing its gross aspects to take on more ethereal or spiritual ones.

The three fundamental stages for dissolving and recomposing matter, according to the Latin motto “solve et coagula” are: Nigredo or black work, in which matter dissolves, putrefying itself; Albedo or white work, during which the substance purifies, sublimating itself; Rubedo or work in red, which represents the stage in which it recomposes itself.

The Alchemists always keep their knowledge well veiled and never used words understandable to any profane: their principle is that the alchemic process shall be earned step by step, by means of a very hard work.

Some theories start from the four classic elements, earth, air, water, and fire; in other cases, this first step is skipped, and the process starts with two primordial essences, “sulfur” and “mercury”, which are seen as the components of any material.

We are not going to examine the alchemic processes in detail; Alchemy is a complex, long, and completely absorbing way, which involves any aspect of the life of the one who is willing to follow its path. Lenglet cites failures, squandered fortunes and very few achievements by alchemists supported by a Guide, unshakable will, abstraction from the mundane society, tireless study, prayer and, above all, Divine Grace. From a spiritual point of view, Grace could also mean to achieve synchrony with the Spirit that is the base of everything. It is the need to reach individual awareness of the relationship between man and the universe, the Great Workplaces man in active harmony with the great Architecture of the Universe.

Alchemic Universal Symbols

The alchemical universe is pervaded by symbols which, intertwining in mutual relationships, permeate the various operations and are the ingredients of the process. In the alchemical iconography Gold and Silver acquire the symbolic features of the Sun and the Moon, of light and darkness, of the male and female principle, which unite in the *coniunctio oppositorum* (union of the opposite) of the Great Work. Apart from the symbols of the primary elements, i.e., the seven metals corresponding to the seven planets of classical astrology, the alchemical iconography is full of symbols which refer to tools and techniques for the transformation of matter that the alchemist never identifies with “vulgar matter”. The cosmic elements had great importance for the parallelism that linked them to the natural elements, based on the analogical principle of hermeticism; traditionally, each of the seven celestial bodies of the solar system known to the ancients was associated with a certain metal.

The following image shows the list of the dominion of celestial bodies over metals:

Animals and fantastic figures often appear in the illustrations of medieval and Renaissance treatises. The three main stages through which matter was transformed, the nigredo, the albedo and the rubedo were respectively symbolized by the Raven, the Swan, and the Phoenix. The latter, due to its ability to be reborn from its own ashes, embodies the principle that “nothing is created, and nothing is destroyed”, the central theme of alchemical speculation.













The Crow



The Swan



The Phoenix

HERMETIC IDEOGRAMS		
	Water	<i>The Sun</i> (☉) rules Gold
	Earth	<i>The Moon</i> (☾) is connected with Silver
	Air	<i>Mercury</i> : (♿) <i>Mercury</i>
	Fire	<i>Venus</i> : (♀) <i>Copper</i>
	Mercury	<i>Mars</i> : (♂) <i>Iron</i>
	Sulfur	<i>Jupiter</i> : (♃) <i>Tin</i>
		<i>Saturn</i> (♄) <i>Lead</i>
	Salt	
	The Chrysolprase or "Philosophers Stone" (symbol of Reintegration)	
	The Old Man, Death's Head, or "Damned Earth" (perishable matter)	

Alchemy, Its Ancient Origins

We will see the most famous Alchemists of the past as milestones of our travel. Our main guide is the Abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, at least from the Alexandrine Egypt up to the eve of French Revolution.

Obviously, we listened to other voices, before and after the Revolution as well. We will meet shining figures of scholars and upright alchemists and some exceptional and rare men, who were able to achieve the symbolic Gold of Alchemy, but, on the other side, some self-styled Alchemists, moved by greed, and also con artists, who faked the transmutation for personal gain or to mask the fruits of their briberies, and their usually unavoidable ruin.

Where and when was Alchemy born? Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy follows a Noahite legend; Cam, son of Noah, was versed in art and sciences and his son Mezraim had his elder son Thaut, also called Hermes, practicing chemistry.

This science was related to Hermes, called also Trismegistus and Moses had been educated in all the Egyptian wisdom, metals transmutation included.

Lucarelli reported during an interview: “The great alchemical



HERMES TRISMEGISTUS (THRICE MASTER)

tradition was born, for regarding our cycle, probably in Egypt, in Heliopolis, where the main Temple stood, and it remains a “templar” tradition, i.e., closed in the temple, until the Alexandrian era. However, there were “exits” from that sacred place: I think of Greeks going to Egypt, learning the secrets, and returning to their homeland,

like Diodorus Siculus or Pythagoras or Timaeus, Plato's teacher. In the III century B.C., Greek became in use and what we call the Greco-Alexandrian Tradition was born; this Tradition diffused in the Byzantine cultural area and the Hermetic Tradition moved to Middle East and, with the Islam, arrived in any part of the Islamic world. Alchemy comes back to Western Europe from Byzantium, through Venice and Sicily, from Spain, with the mediation of the Arabs, and from Provence, now Southern France”.

Even if Lenglet cites a report by the Jesuit Martini about a very old practice of alchemy in China and some authors suggest Ko Hung name in III Century B.C., Lucarelli tells that in none of the Far Eastern countries there is an idea of alchemy before the Christian era, at least a documented. Lenglet included in his list, Comarius, Cleopatra's teacher, Cleopatra herself, and, on the authority of Adam of San Vittore, Saint John the Evangelist, who made gold and gems to help the poor. Democritus, who was initiated into the Egyptian art of alchemy.

In Alexandria, the center of culture in the Roman Empire, lived Mary or Maria the Jewess, I Century A.D., considered to be the first true alchemist of the Western World, and the philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician **Hypatia** (350-370, 415 A.D.) with her pupil **Sinesius**.

In 640 A.D., the Muslims seized Alexandria, the Greco-Egyptian culture faded and was overwhelmed by the rising Arabian one.

Abu Musa Jabir ibn Hayyan al-Azdi, named Geher by the Christian scholars, was author of many works in Arabic (often called the Jabirian Corpus); his alchemy, magic and chemistry parts survived and his books (f.i., The Book of Mercy and the book of Seventy) were translated into Latin. The Jabirian alchemy was different from the Greek one, being clearer and more practical, less focused on symbolism, and it included organic



substances. Geber is cited by many alchemists, among them, Avicenna, and Albertus Magnus.

The Crusades and the seizing of Constantinople in 1205, allowed the “*Latins*” to know more of the Arabic science and to arrive at the source of the Hermetic Philosophy. **Doctor Mirabilis Roger Bacon** (c. 1219/20-c. 1292), a Franciscan friar, well renowned because of his visions that seem inspired by the knowledge of future. He is reputed to have started the Alchemic studies in Western Europe.

Doctor Universalis Alherthus Magnus (c. 1200-1280), a German Dominican friar, probably educated at the University of Pavia (Northern Italy), studied Alchemy and was the mentor of the young Thomas Aquinas.



The first European book to mention alchemy was *Trba Philosophorum* (*The Assembly of Philosophers*), a treatise on Alchemy in Latin, that was published in 1150, followed by *Le Roman de la Rose* (*The Romance of the Rose*) in 1231, published in Old French. In 1256, King Alfonso of Castile had alchemical texts translated from Arabic and, in 1370, **Doctor Angelicus Thomas Aquinas** shared the idea of alchemical transmutation in his *Summa Theologica* (*Summary of Theology*).

On the left, *Triumph of St Thomas Aquinas*, between Plato and Aristotle Benozzo Gozzoli, 1471. Louvre, Paris. The most relevant Alchemist in the XIII century was **Ramon or Raymond Lull** (c. 1232-c. 1315/16). Lull was born in 1235 in Mallorca Island, recently reconquered

defeating the Moors, from a noble Catalan family; he became a courtier to the king James I of Aragon. At the king's court he fell in love with the beautiful Lady Ambrosia di Castello, whose lesser virtue was her physical aspect; she exhorted him to take the path toward God. In 1267 he went on a pilgrimage to Saint James of Compostela, then returned to Mallorca, distributed his goods to the poor, but a part that he gave his sons, and retired



on a mountain to prepare for his holy mission: to convert the Muslims. In 1294 Lull met Arnaldus de Villa Nova (1240-1311) a Catalan like Raymond, physician and alchemist, pupil of Albertus Magnus. Arnaldus was considered an adept, a man who achieved the alchemic Knowledge; he introduced Raymond into the Art.

After many travels, in 1308 Raymond Lull arrived in Paris, where he made acquaintance to Duns Scotus, Doctor Subtilis, and where, in 1312, he received letters by the king Robert Bruce of Scotland and King Edward II of England inviting him to London. Lull believed that Edward really meant to fight against the Unfaithful to free the Holy Land, had he the necessary amount of gold; to make that possible, Raymond worked hard in the London Tower and produced, according to old books, about 24,5 tons of pure gold: many reports of the time to confirm that the transformation into gold really happened. That gold was used to mint a coin, the Noble of the Rose, still called Raymond's Noble in the XVI century.

As soon as Lull become aware that the king did not intend to keep his promises, he left England and, at 79 years, embarked to Africa where he started to preach again the Gospel among the Muslims.

He was lynched by the mob in June 1315; he had just a breath of life when some Genoese merchants obtained to take him back to Mallorca, where, two days after, he passed away.

The Roman Catholic Church Is Against Alchemy



The life of an Alchemist was not always easy, for instance Lull's memory was attached by the inquisitor Nicolau Aymerich (the first proponent of the horrendous practice of a nail to block the tongue of the heretics led to the stake).

Many religious orders were prohibited from practicing alchemy; Pope John XXII issued a Bulla against alchemy, even if he had a laboratory installed in secret inside his own cellars. Among the Alchemist condemned by the Church, the French Franciscan friar Jean de Roquetaillade, also known as John of Rupescissa, (ca. 1310 - between 1366 and 1370), who died in the papal prison of Avignon.

Francesco Petrarca, the famous Italian poet, as well as Geoffrey Chaucer, believed that the practice of the Art leads to disorder of individual and family life. In 1376 Dominican inquisitors included the alchemists among magicians and therefore liable to condemnation.

Nicolas Flamel

Nicolas Flamel (1330 -1418), French scribe and manuscript-seller, gained the fame of Great Alchemist; even if modern scholars

believe that his achievement of the philosophers' stone and the elixir of life are just a legend.

Nicolas Flamel was born in Pontoise and lived in Paris, where he made the scribe for a living. In 1257 he bought an old book and, after 21 years of useless work, he decided to travel to Spain and consult some wise and learned Jew, because of the book origin. Finally, after years and years of hard work, on the 17 January 1382 he succeeded in transmuting mercury into silver and, on the 25 of April he achieved the mercury into gold transmutation.

Nicolas Flamel and his wife Pennerelle, old and childless, dedicated all their efforts to support the poor and the Church, as old acts and papers show; everybody was astonished since it was unexplainable how two old persons, born in poor families, after a really poor life, could be able to make more donations than Kings and Princes. King Charles VI of France sent Cramoisi, his *Mâîtres des Requêtes*, to know more about that; the officer of the king visited Flamel and found him living in poverty and using simple terracotta pottery. Rumors about a supposed Jewish source of Flamel and Pennerelle's gold are ungrounded, in our Abbot opinion, and he shows it.



Basilius Valentinus (1394-?)

Was a German Benedictine monk and alchemist, author of relevant hermetic books, of non-easy interpretation. The legend tells that his works were discovered inside a column hit by a lightning.

Bernardo Trevisan (1406-1490)



Son of a physician, started his alchemical studies as a young man, driven by a thirst for increasing his riches, but later he followed the true hermetic way all his life and dissipated his whole wealth in the search.

Fallen in hard times and in disgrace with his family, Trevisan found shelter in Rhodes, a small Mediterranean island, where, at 75, he is told to have finally achieved the “Great Work”, after a path

that lasted 60. Bernardo Trevisan passed away at 84 achieving a great, but posthumous, reputation.



The Abbot thus shows how costly the Alchemical research was, because of the necessary material and of the large number of scammers that promised to supply books, magic powders, and other elements of a science in change of an insane amount of money.

The view on Alchemy remained almost unchanged until **Paracelsus** (1493 or 1494-1541), who shifted the emphasis of Alchemy to naturalistic and medical

aspects, making of it a science aimed no longer at the manufacturing of gold, but at the preparation of medicines to cure the sick.

However, it was only with Paracelsus that the two constitutive principles of matter (Sulfur and Mercury or Quicksilver) became three (the *tria prima*) with the addition of Salt (“neutral” principle) to the first two.

After the fall of Constantinople, Marsilio Ficino translated into Latin from Greek the Corpus Hermeticum, a collection of 17 treatises attributed to the mythical Hermes Trismegisto, imported from the Byzantine empire into Florence by Cosimo dei Medici in 1460. The translation made Hermeticism a fashionable philosophy in the Renaissance world. Influenced by Hermeticism, a learned Renaissance magic arose, and, in this spirit, were born the Christian Kabbalah of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) and the occulta philosophia of Cornelio Agrippa (1486-1535).

Jean Pie, as Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy, calls Pico della Mirandola, wrote a treatise on gold and on its transmutation, but, the Abbot comments, he was not an adept.

Irenaeus Philalethes

The king of Alchemists arrived from the other side of the Ocean; Irenaeus Philalethes, (i.e., “Peaceful lover of truth”); even if his identity remains unknown, from recent research it seems probable that he was the alchemist George Starkey (1628-1665), author of *Pyrotechnics*, and American scientist of colonial origins.

Philalethes was a Colonial American alchemist, educated at Harvard, medical practitioner, and writer of numerous commentaries and chemical treatises that widely circulated in Western Europe and influenced prominent men of science, including Robert Boyle and Newton.

After relocating from New England to London in 1650, Starkey began writing under the pseudonym Eirenaeus Philalethes. He remained

in England and continued his career in medicine and alchemy until his death in the Great Plague of London in 1665.

He is considered the most important adept in the alchemical tradition of the modern West. Fulcanelli mentions them in his works.

The Abbot's history of the true and of the pretended alchemists ends in 1739; his historical work shows that he who worked for a superior purpose, forgetful of any personal interest, arrived at the Alchemic Gold and he who was moved by greed and worldly interest, at the end of his path, found his own ruin.

In XVIII century, the existing gap between "*Philosophers*" and "*Blowers*", as the true Alchemists contemptuously called them who made experiments without the directions given by the Hermetic Philosophy, widened: Alchemy and Chemistry parted their ways.

In many cases Blowers obtained relevant practical results, for instance Johann Friedrich Böttger (1682-1719); he was a young alchemist, only 18 years old, when the Elector of Saxony, August den Starken (the Strong), seized him and ordered him to produce gold; he never succeeded in that, but, in 1708, he found the way to produce, first in Europe, the hard-paste porcelain, a discovery worth more than gold.



The Enlightenment kept up with new views about science; **Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier** lead the so-called chemical revolution and had a large influence on chemistry. Lavoisier totally subverted the traditional concept of the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water as base of everything since he individuated 55 substances that could not

be decomposed and listed them as elements. His discoveries opened the way to new practical application of chemistry and caused the abandonment of the alchemical concepts; the rise of the science of Chemistry eclipsed the operative Alchemy.

In XIX century, Alchemy was seen as an occult knowledge and this included the use of a “*lingo*” and a reality representation based on symbolic correspondences between the World and any part of it; Alchemy was seen as a revealed truth descending from the Primeval Knowledge, the “*prisca sapientia (ancient knowledge)*”, to use a very diffused word in Isaac Newton time.



*Lavoisier and his wife Marie Anne,
who took an active part in his scientific work*

Paracelsus had started a new development based on empiricism, but Alchemy continued to exist during the Enlightenment; the emerging chemistry appropriated of many alchemic concepts, that were presented as fruits of a sort of proto-chemistry; soon the millennial discipline became considered an obstacle to the development of chemistry and to speak of transmutation, for instance mercury or lead into gold, of alembics and distillation, became widely commented with a light smile and the words: “Alchemy? Nothing more than Medieval superstitions”.

A singular and mysterious character was the **Count of Cagliostro** (his real name was Giuseppe Balsamo) (1743-1795), endowed with an extraordinary intelligence, one of the most fascinating personalities of the 18th century. He was defined fraudster, magician, esotericist, but also alchemist, seer, healer, and freemason.

Giacomo Casanova (Venice I 725-Duchcov 1798), adventurer, writer, poet, alchemist, esotericist, diplomat, scientist, philosopher and

even secret agent, citizen of the Republic of Venice. He got to know many famous personalities of his time, like Rousseau, Voltaire, Madame de Pompadour, Mozart, Franklin, Pope Benedict XIV, Catherine II of Russia, and Frederick II of Prussia. He was also a freemason; some say that it was not his licentiousness but his membership in freemasonry the cause of his being locked up by the Tribunal of the Serenissima in the famous Piombi prison.

Raimondo di Sangro, prince of Sansevero (Torremaggiore, 1710-Naples, 1771), a nobleman, esotericist, inventor, anatomist, soldier, alchemist, freemason, patron of the arts, writer, was an original exponent of the first European Enlightenment.

First Grand Master of the Neapolitan freemasonry, he was a prolific inventor, in the underground laboratories of his palace, where he made experiments in the most diverse fields of science and arts, with results that appeared “prodigious” to his contemporaries.

Among the French famous alchemists, we must remember the Comte de Saint Germain (c. 1691 or 1712-1784), a European adventurer, with an interest in science, alchemy and the arts. Voltaire called him the *man who never dies and knows everything*. The Count Saint Germain was said to turn base metals into gold, to remove the flaws from diamonds and discover the elixir of youth... Was he a successful alchemist who found the secret of eternal life? Was he a time traveler? Or was he a highly intelligent man whose reputation became a fantastic legend? His figure is still surrounded by mystery.

The theories of Antoine Court de Gébelin (1719/25-1784) and the works of the esoteric scholars, from Eliphas Lévi (Alphonse-Louis Constant, 1810-1875) to Papus (Gérard Encausse, 1865-1916), supported the equal dignity of science and tradition; occultism, in its imitation of the scientific methodology, gave an important role to Alchemy, which was studied in many branches of research, withdrawn from the public sphere, assimilated to magic and occultism.

It was the era of Madame Blawatsky's and Theosophy. In the XX century Alchemy was finally restored in its traditional and esoteric area.

Paolo Lucarelli in *La tradizione Alchemica del XX secolo (The XX century Alchemical Tradition)*, wrote “Falconelli ... as an operative alchemist in the ancient meaning of the word, rebuilt, on the basis of the Hermetic Symbolism, the main points of the Great Work, since he illustrated its theoretical principles and its experimental practice in a never seen before detail and precision”.

Fulcanelli

Fulcanelli is the pseudonym of a 20th century author of alchemy books, whose identity has never been ascertained. The pseudonym used is formed by the union of the words Vulcano and Helio, two elements that refer to the alchemical fire.

It has been assumed that he could be Eugène Canseliet, Jean Julien Champagne, a painter and alchemist too, or Schwaller de Lubicz, or Camille Flammarion, or Pierre Dujol or Jules Violle, a French doctor, but there are many other hypotheses.

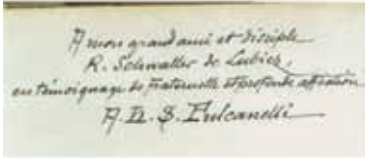
Among the hearsays around him, there is the supposition that he really found the philosophers' stone and the eternal life elisir, that he was the Count of Saint Germain, or another alchemist of the past; furthermore, he is told to be still alive. As a matter of fact, we know nothing of the author who signed himself “Falconelli”, on *The Mystery of the Cathedrals* (Paris, 1926) and *The Philosophical Dwellings* (Paris, 1930), but the few clues were reported by his pupil Canseliet; for instance, that he was a graduate of, the renowned Ecole Polytechnique of Paris and that he belonged to the higher French nobility.

By means of his writings, Fulcanelli wanted to show that the masterpieces of Gothic art must be interpreted essentially as the expression of an alchemical thought, and that its adepts supervised these works.

He decoded the symbology found upon and within the Gothic Cathedrals of Europe, which have openly displayed the secrets of alchemy for 700 years.



His relevance was well enhanced by Paolo Lucarelli: Fulcanelli ended the dark age when alchemy, magic and occultism were confused and restored the hermetic philosophy to its ancient and original glory.



Julien Champagne

Jean Julien Champagne (1877-1932) was an alchemist and the illustrator of the original edition of the *Mystery of the Cathedrals*; some authors believe that he was the mysterious Fulcanelli, since, in his famous Self portrait, see the image on the right, painted in the house of Schwaller de Lubicz in Grasse (around 1930), Champagne signs himself as “Fulcanelli”.

Julienne Champagne met Guenon and André Breton, Anatole France, Papus, De Guaita and the many others devoted to esoteric cults; he experimented with magic, lodges, and drugs, finishing all his money.

In 1910 Schwaller de Lubicz, a wealthy twenty-three-year-old Swiss who became a Theosophist and a friend of Champagne, arrived in Paris, and signed a contract with him: he would finance his experiments until he rediscovered the alchemical way to redo the stained-glass windows of Chartres Cathedral.

In 1922 Champagne is told to have succeeded in a step of the alchemical transmutation, even if he never achieved the “Great Work”; he went on with his research, in poverty and financially supported by some friends, debilitated by absinthe and opium, until his death at 45, caused by a gangrene in his leg.

Eugène Léon Canseliet (1899-1982) always declared himself a disciple of Fulcanelli and edited the prefaces of his books; Fulcanelli always spoke through Canseliet and some scholars claim that he actually was Fulcanelli.

Canseliet was an alchemist, well known to the general public, and author of many works; he affirms that he frequented Fulcanelli for a long time, from 1916 to 1952, and that Fulcanelli found the *philosophers' stone* and *immortality elisir*, but he refused to provide more accurate information. Canseliet was the guide of Paolo Lucarelli.

Paolo Lucarelli

The most relevant alchemist of the XX century, Paolo Lucarelli (Turin 1940-2005), had a strong scientific background, since he graduated in Physics at Turin University and became a researcher on metals, working for C.N.R., the National Research Council of Italy, and for a big private Company. In alchemy he was a friend of Zolla and a pupil of Eugène Canseliet, who, in turn, had the great Fulcanelli as a guide; furthermore he was a Master mason of the Grand Orient of Italy: beyond any doubt, Brother Lucarelli is the perfect guide to explore the strong binds between Alchemy and freemasonry with a modern scientific education, which grants that superstition, gullibility and swindle are banned.



Paolo Lucarelli was the author and translator of many books; publications and he released many interviews. Paolo Lucarelli was translator and editor of Canseliet's Opera Omnia, of many Schwaller de Lubic's texts, of Fulcanelli, Philaletes, of XVII century German Treatises of Alchemy, attributed to the Golden Rosecroix, a book about Isaac Newton, scientist, and Alchemist.

An interesting voice, even if he cannot be defined an alchemist, is **Carl Gustav Jung** (1875-1961), a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who founded analytical psychology. Jung's acquaintance with alchemy came between 1928 and 1930, when he was introduced to a manuscript

of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, discovering singular affinities between the ancient Chinese symbols and the dreams of his patients.

In 1944, Jung published *Psychology and Alchemy*; analyzing the alchemical symbols, he saw a direct relationship between them and the psychoanalytical process: the stages of the alchemists, the blackening, the whitening, the reddening, and the yellowing, could be taken as symbolic of individuation-his term for personal growth.

The alchemical tradition and analytic practice seem to have a common nature: they both aim to create a new and superior reality: alchemy is therefore a psychology in action, something akin to modern psychotherapy.

Conclusions

We are at the end now of the first part of our presentation; we tried to show a little about what Alchemy is and its main principles, meeting in this journey some of the most relevant alchemists.

The second part of our presentation will introduce Spiritual Alchemy and, in general, Alchemy's connection to freemasonry.

The question still stays: *is it possible to make gold by transmutation of less noble metals?*

Is it just a symbolic operation, is it a nonscientific superstition? How does it match with the fact that many alchemists were scientists too, for instance Sir Isaac Newton, and, moving to the modern science, Fulcanelli is told to be a Polithecnicien, the elitist school of French engineering, and Lucarelli a graduated in Chemistry and a researcher of the CNR. We were really close friends of a Brother who was in lodge with Lucarelli, and we often spoke with one of his pupils.

Do the new frontiers of Physical and Chemical Sciences go beyond Lavoisier as Relativity and Quantistic Physics went beyond the Galilean Physics?

ALCHEMY AND FREEMASONRY

We are now going to illustrate the Alchemy links to freemasonry and to give a hint to the new low energy atomic reactions, a recent, new frontier of science, even if there is a passage attributed to Fulcanelli that seems to allude to it.



Our long-time travel brought us from the Pharaohs's Egypt up to our century; we know the History of that ancient Art, the deeds of the renowned Alchemist and the misdeeds of the many con-artists who faked the transformation of vile metal into gold.

The first part had the purpose of entering the mind of a traditional Alchemist and seeing the world with his eyes; we chose the Abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy as our main guide for our time travel in this different dimension, then we covered the gap between the XVII century and our days by means of Paolo Lucarelli, a real alchemist in the traditional meaning of the word.

We are not alchemists and surely, we do not know everything on the subject... (the old: I KNOW THAT I DO NOT KNOW is always on).

About 150,000 books have been published about Alchemy: not easy to be familiar with all of them! We can try to set some “Landmarks” to clarify the difference between the classic Alchemists, the Protochemists and the followers of some modern unconventional chemistry.

A true traditional Alchemist will never give clear operative instructions, but just veiled clues that only who is worthy and steadfast in his work can understand; if somebody tells too much, he is not a traditional Alchemist or he is putting the reader inside a foggy labyrinth, and then it is on the reader himself to find the right way out.

The Alchemist is on a personal path, with the purpose of unveiling the eternal Truth and to reach Knowledge, with no material interest; the modern scientist builds a temporary truth by means of repeatable experiments with the purpose of operating on the matter: *we spoke, and we will speak of the former, not of the latter*. Traditional Alchemy has nothing to do with magic, witchcraft, theosophy, or other views diffused in the second part of the XIX century.



The path of Alchemy is guided by a superior **veiled Truth**, which can be achieved by means of subsequent steps of purification, made in parallel by the matter and the Alchemist himself; the path is stated, and man must find the way to follow it, walking towards Knowledge. (In the image, the veiled truth, marble from Prince of Sansevero Chapel, Naples Artist Antonio Corradini, year 1752).

Chemistry builds its knowledge by means of tries and failures, in an experimental way, putting the results together, reaching a practical, even if limited, image of reality, with the purpose of making something useful on the earthly point of view; when its model of reality is no more close enough to the intimate structure of the matter to reach the aimed purpose, the chemist just tries with an improved one; step by step, the modern science builds an envelope to describe reality.

Furthermore, the traditional Western Alchemy does not concern organic matter and its purpose is not medicines preparation. The use of organic elements and the noble, but material, purpose of healing is the first step toward Chemistry and Pharmacology. Let us also better clarify the figure of the Master in the Alchemic tradition.

Master's function and duty is not limited to convey knowledge; donating his love, time, energy, attention, he must be considered an intermediary by his disciples. Knowledge is a gift, whoever has received it, in any extent, has the responsibility to use it and to convey it, so that the seed may give, at the right time, its fruits.

The Alchemist's Guide may perhaps have some apparent similarity to the Guru of the Hinduistic Religion; the root "gu" is "darkness" and "ru" is "to disappear", and the Master of the Alchemist opens to him the way towards Knowledge, but the similarity ends here, because, after the first steps, the true Master of a traditional Alchemist is not another person, it is the inner Master in himself.

Traditional Alchemists called the proto chemists' "puffers" or "blowers" and they cared not to be confused with them.

Is Alchemy and freemasonry Somewhat Linked? If we go back to **Part I**, we remember that many of freemasonry's forefathers were alchemists too, but if we go back in time a little more, we can find an amazing symbolic image, which shows Masonic and Alchemic symbols together. Alchemists' members of the Royal Society; Robert Moray, Elias Ashmole and Christopher Wren.

This image is attributed to Basilius Valentinus (1394), a German Benedictine monk and alchemist, author of relevant hermetic books of not easy interpretation.



The name of this image is *REBIS* and it was published in 1624 as a fifth engraving of Basilius Valentinus's book *Azoth* (there are some differences in the image and in its position inside the book, depending on the edition).

Rebis, sometime spelled *re-bis*, is a term derived from Latin; *re* derives from the noun *res*, thing in English, and *bis* or *bina* suggests the concept of double; then *Rebis* means double thing. This term is used in Alchemy for the result of an Alchemic wedding and designs the Philosopher's Stone seen as *compositum de compositis* or the union of the opposites. *Compositum de compositis* is also the title of a treatise attributed to Albertus Magnus.

On the Philosophical point of view, to realize the *Rebis* meant to reach God, as He was seen by the neo-platonic tradition; Nicola Cusano wrote of *coniunctio* or *coincidentia oppositorum* (union or coincidence of the opposites), a concept that has its freemasonic formulations: the symbolic value of the black and white checkered floor and the motto: *to unite what is shattered*.

The shell of the Philosophic Egg separates the *Rebis*, symbol of the superior order from the undifferentiated chaos, in Latin *Ordo ab chaos* (*Order from chaos*), another motto familiar to freemasons.

The Egg is divided in two parts, the celestial and the terrestrial one. In the celestial section there are the seven planets, Sun and Moon, symbols of male and female, spirit, and soul. On the right there are the physical sex determining planets: Mars for male and Venus for female sex. On the left the planets that shape the inner qualities, Jupiter for character and Saturn for thinking.

In the center there is the *Rebis*, androgynous, who harmonizes male and female natures; the concept of androgynous is also part of the Masonic lore. To achieve true Knowledge, it is necessary to realize the unity of the male and female spiritual



nature; in the image the male spirit holds the Compasses, and the female spirit holds the Square; we, as freemasons, need both of them to walk our path toward the superior status of Adept. Looking at the upper section of the Sigil, inside a Star we can see the symbol of Mercury, which represents the unity of both the polarities, able to form the sun-moon energy. The Androgynous is connected to the Sun and to the Moon, and he is the son of both at the same time. The same symbolic meaning can be seen in the union of two G symbols, that meant resurrection or rebirth, reshaped in a Y, since there the lunar and solar lights meet to give birth to a single third light.

The Sigil shows that it is the essential and definitive conditions of the Initiate, the Adept, he who has known the Light of the Spirit and brings that Light to the world; cannot we see a symbolic formulation of our work for the progress and the improvement of mankind?



The Rebis stands with his feet on the lower part of the Orphic Egg, his legs remind the columns of the Temple, while the Dragon symbolizes the dark forces of nature, which the Adept shall never deny, on the contrary he will know and master them.

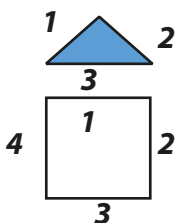
The Dragon's wings, tail and flaming mouth are set upwards; the tamed beast offers his services to the Adept; the vices are pushed down into a dark dungeon and once known and dominated, they become helpful virtues.

The Dragon stands on a winged sphere; the primeval matter is created innocent and perfect, and a sphere has no corners, spikes and any of its points is equidistant from the center.

The primeval matter is very close to the Spirit, but, since it is still under the influx of the Dragon, a differentiation phase starts, symbolized by the distinct point at its center.



The sphere is further divided in two polarities, the vertical line of transcendence and the horizontal one of immanency, which in the sigil form a cross that originates the square of the four elements; from the higher point of the sphere descends the creative force of the equilateral Triangle: this represents the creation act. Since Basilus Valentinus was a friar, we can presume that he meant the Holy Trinity; the classic Alchemists gave a great relevance to faith and prayer even if they often seem closer to gnosis, a heretic vision in Rome, but allowed by the Orthodox Church.



In any case, the lower part of the Sigil shows the way to the 3 upper one by means of the triangle and the square, enhanced by the number 3 and 4 superimposed to a side of the triangle and of the square.

In freemasonry we wear an apron, made by a square lower part and a triangular upper one. In Alchemy 3 represents the creative force, 4 the elements and $3 + 4 = 7$, the alchemic steps to the Philosopher's Stone.

But 3 is the number of the Theological Virtues, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY and 4 is the number of the Cardinal Virtues, PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE, and TEMPERANCE; the Seven Virtues oppose the Seven Capital Sins.

Humane knowledge is based on the sciences of trivium et quadrivium: the former gives mastery of Grammar, Logic and Rhetoric, the latter of Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy: 3, 4 and 7 again.

Concepts, Symbols and Numbers that are familiar to any freemason. The Alchemist, when he reaches the end of his path, can

symbolically give wings to the matter, or take back nature to its primeval perfection.

This Symbolic Sigil could be the subject of many and many pages, but we must remember that, beyond the traditional interpretation, every Symbol has an upper meaning that each of us must disclose by looking inside himself.

Alchemy and freemasonry

The analysis of Basilius Valentinus's Sigil shows many concepts that are part of Masonic lore; this is not unexpected, if we remember that the Grand Lodge born in 1717 was not a lighting creator of something new, but it constituted nothing more than a reorder of existing traditions by means of a bureaucratic restructuration.

Looking at the previous century and at the men (and women) who set the basis of the Craft, we cannot deny that many of them were scientists and renowned traditional Alchemists. Sir Isaac Newton (1652-1626), one of the mathematicians who set the basis of differential calculus, the physicist who studied gravity, in his time was by far more known because of his Alchemy studies than for any other of his works. We have no written evidence that he joined a Masonic lodge, but he was co-opted as a Royal Society member, a cradle of Masonic thinking.

Elias Ashmole (1617-1692) was an English antiquary, politician, officer of arms, astrologer, and student of alchemy. Although he was one of the founding Fellows of the Royal Society, a key institution in the development of experimental science, his first book, *Fasciculuus chemicus* (1650), written under the pseudonym James Hasolle (an anagram), consisted of translations from the Latin of two alchemical texts, the *Fasciculuus chemics* (Paris, 1631) of Arthur Dee (son of John Dee), and Jean dEspagnet's *Arcanum hermeticae philosophiae opus* (Paris, 1623); in 1646 in his diary he wrote: *I was made a Free Mason at Warrington in Lancashire, with Coll: Henry Mainwaring of Karincham/Kermincham] in Cheshire.*

**Quoting parts of the article “Alchemy and freemasonry” by
C.R. Scarborough, June 29, 1977**

“Freemasonry and Alchemy have sought the same results (the lesson of Divine Truth, and the doctrine of immortal life), and they have both sought it by the same method of symbolism, it is not, therefore, strange that in the Eighteenth century, and perhaps before, we find an incorporation of much of the science of Alchemy into that of freemasonry. Hermetic Rites and Hermetic Degrees were common, and their relics are still to be found existing in degrees which do not absolutely trace their origin to Alchemy, but which show some of its traces in their rituals. It is a question of still greater interest whether this attempt was successful so far, at least, as to impress upon the features of that early freemasonry a portion of the characteristic tints of the Hermetic philosophy, some of the marks of which may remain in our modern system.

The Sun and Moon of the Alchemists concur in perfecting and giving stability to the Philosophical Stone. They correspond to the two columns of the Temple Jachin and Boaz. The Sun is the hieroglyphic sign of Truth because it is the source of Light; the rough Stone is the symbol of Stability. The Medieval Alchemists indicated the Philosophical Stone as the first means of making the philosophical gold, of transforming all the vital powers figured by the six metals into one, that is, into Truth and Light.”

“Or Ancient Masons have concealed from us the most important point of this Divine Art, under hieroglyphic characters, which are but enigmas and parables, to all the Senseless, the Wicked and the Ambitious. A rough ashlar is the shapeless stone which is to be prepared in order to commence the philosophical work; and to be developed, in order to change its form from triangular to cubic, after the separation from it of its Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury by the aid of the Square, Level, Plumb, and Balance, and all the other Masonic implements which we use symbolically.”

“Long Livers: A curious History of such Persons of both Sexes who have lived several Ages and grown Young again: With the rate Secret

of Rejuvenescency of Arnolds de Villa Nova. And a great many approvd and invaluable Rules to prolong Life: Also, how to prepare the Universal Medicine. Most humbly dedicated to the Grand Master; Masters, Wardens, and Brethren of the last Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of the Free Masons of Great Britain and Ireland.” (From a 1720 book by Eugenius Philalethes, E.R.S.).

Freemasonry and alchemy: Methods to achieve the same knowledge

Freemasonry and alchemy as well are methods, *according to the definition of Denys Roman, in an article published by “La Lettera G / Lettre G”* a masonic bilingual magazine printed in Turin, Italy, with the support of a local lodge.

Since freemasonry is a living ark of symbols, in this ark, the seeker can find traces that have been lost or canceled elsewhere; there is a plurality of traditions that in their specificity constitute the mosaic tiles that make up the image of the so-called universal tradition.

In freemasonry converged a wide number of esoteric knowledges coming from many sources, i.e., the Bible, Philosophy, Alchemy, Kabala, Mystery Cults, Templar, Gnosis, Rosicrucian, Oriental Philosophies; this knowledge step by step became the frame of Speculative masonic Rituals in form of Rites, Symbols, and a System of initiatic degrees, all of them united by the masonic esoteric language.

The tradition, therefore, correctly understood, constitutes the relic of time. And precisely this infinite reflected game allows Rites and symbols to be interpreted according to a methodology, that of Alchemy, which certainly remains closer to the original sense of the initiatory path.

Alchemy and Freemasonry are different expressions of a single knowledge. A parallel between Alchemy and Freemasonry can be seen in the fact that both ways constitute *and offer an analogical path*, a path that asks man to erect a symbolic building; this work is an instrument

to realize something that, at its beginning, is poorly guessable (the apprentice freemason does not yet understand what freemasonry is, as well as the student of Alchemy does not understand what the art or the adept are).



Alchemic and masonic ritual correspondances

Masonic Rituals have some correspondence with the steps of the Alchemic path; it is possible to understand this following the Initiation of a cowan. Since the Alchemic tradition was based on the ancient physics, the Alchemists believed that everything was made by means of the four elements: earth, water, air and fire; later Aristotle added a fifth element, called the *quintessence*.

Quintessence is a Middle English word derived from the Medieval Latin *quinta essentia* (fifth essence, aether), a putative fifth element (aether), which was of exceptional superior quality to the other four basic elements or essences. The Initiation has four steps, which we

can see as somewhat linked to matter and, according to some masonic scholar, a fifth spiritual one.

Many authors wrote about the four elements, for instance Joshua Sylvester in *The Divine Weeks and Works* (1979) Dan Brown, who, in *Angel and Demons* (2000) depicts what he refers to as the Illuminati Diamond, an artistic creation forming the words earth, air, fire and water.

Theories and debates about the fundamental building blocks of all materials, or *prima materia*, or primal matter or primary material of all substances, are found in the works of the school of natural philosophers. In the sixth century BC, Thales developed a theory where water was the most basic of all elements, and his disciple Anaximander proclaimed the air as basic element; Heraclitus believed the simplest element must be fire and Xenophanes asserted that all things were made of earth. Empedocles (494-435 BC) combined the previous theories and postulated that all things were made up of various combinations of earth, air, fire and water.

In the 5th or 6th century B.C., Buddha taught the four elements, and we find the same concepts in Japan and in Hindu traditions from India, where a fifth element was added to explain the spiritual influences.

The Indians started with three elements, fire, water and earth, to which the Chinese added wood and metal; the Indians later expanded the theory to include air.

Note that, for the Greeks, the four classical elements are not a physical substance, but they meant the elements as a physical state of being Aristotle added a spiritual element, called *quintessence*.

In the Middle-Ages, the Arabian scholars were in touch with the Byzantine, the Indian and also the Chinese civilization and they developed new theories; they were deeply interested in Alchemy and believed that all metals were made up of a combination of sulfur and mercury, and later salt was included too; in Europe Paracelsus (Phillip von Hohenheim, 1493-1541), believed that the classic Greek elements, water, air, earth and fire were composed by the Arabic principles, mercury, sulfur and salt.

In the Middle Ages, the four elements theory was a guide for everything. There was a bond between the main elements and the main qualities: water and humid, air and dry, earth and cold, fire and warm; since the Medieval men believed in the correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm, everything could be viewed from that point of view. In the elemental trials of the Initiation Ritual, we can clearly see this old heritage.

Earth

When the candidate enters the Chamber of Reflection, he is symbolically placed deep into the earth, because *“our Mother Earth alone, of all elements, has never proved unfriendly to man”*: the earth represents man's beginning and end, since God made man from dust and breathed air through his nostrils to give him life.

From the earth man is awaiting the resurrection and the return to the endless cycle of life. Because of that the candidate is "buried in a small and dark chamber, representing the grave, where he meditates on the step he is going to make, writes his will and leaves the Chamber of Reflections born anew and prepared to receive instructions as a *tabula rasa* or blank slate.

Air

In the Hebrew tradition, God breathed air into man's nostrils to make him a living soul, a free moral agent, made in His likeness; in Hebrew the word *rach* means *soul* and *wind as well*. That is why the profane, after entering the Temple, makes his first Journey and must go over the Trial of the Air, symbolically an air flow that hits him.

Water

Water is the second Journey, still hard, but with less obstacles and the noise is softer now, since with the first trial the profane starts to get free from the domination of his passions. The first two elements mentioned in the Bible are EARTH and WATER.

Water played a vital part in the rituals of the world's major religions. The Christians baptize with water and the *mikvah* is a ritual bath practiced in Judaism; the Holy Scriptures of the Jews require a ceremonial purification with water and the Muslims are required to make the same before their prayer. The Egyptian sacred rituals were performed by the Pharaoh and by the priests after a purification with water and for the Alchemist too, water was a symbol of transmutation and purification.

Fire

The fire is, to the Hebrew and to the Alchemist, the most active of the elements; it was regarded as an agent of transmutation and as a symbol of renewal, representing light, spirit, the sun, radiance and purification. The Alchemist used fire to separate the precious metal from the base, that is a symbol of man's spirit elevating himself above matter, and the Jews Holy Book Zohar says that the flaming sword referred to in the Genesis symbolizes the trials with which God overwhelms man, so that he may be purified and restored to the way of goodness; traditionally the Tyler's sword was shaped to represent that sword.

Since immemorial time, fire is symbol of renewal and one of the best images of that is the Phoenix, the mythical bird that combusts into flames and is reborn from its own ashes. The German philosopher Nietzsche wrote: *You must be willing to burn in your own Dame: how could you become new unless you had first become ashes?*



A modern panel that collects Alchemic references of many traditions and languages

The ancients implemented a trial by fire perhaps similar to Albert Pike's variation of the Entered Apprentice degree, probably to remind the neophyte that he must set aside or destroy his old image of life and self, to receive the teachings of freemasonry and become a new and better creature.

Quintessence

The candidate's blindfold is then removed, and he can see the Temple and take his oath; after that, the Worshipful Master descends to the Temple floor and approaches him with the traditional formula: *"you are my Brother"*. This spiritual influence makes of the newborn candidate an Entered Apprentice.

In the Chamber of Reflection, the candidate faces many Alchemic Symbols and concepts. Probably the acrostic V.I.T.R.I.O.L. is the most known; the word "vitriol" from medieval latin *vitriolum*, now is used to designate the sulfur acid, but it is also a well-known Rosicrucian motto and appears for the first time, on what we know, in 1613, in the book *Azoth* written by Basilus Valentinus. It means: *"Visita Interiora Terrae, Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem"*, in English, *"Visit the interior parts of the Earth; by rectification you will find the hidden stone"*; sometime the

sentence ended with *"veram medicinam"* in English *"which is the real medicine"*.

The acrostic is illustrated in the sigil from *Viridarium Chymicum*, Frankfurt, 1624.

A complete analysis of the Symbols would need a book, then we will only examine the points of greatest relevance. The motto VITRIOL is written



along the circle, not as an acronym, but in extended mode. At the corners of the image there are the four elements, the salamander is fire, the bird is air, on the left we see earth and on the right water; the wings at the center of the upper part, represent the quintessence.

The Alchemist's feet are one on the earth and the other on the water and his hands hold the torch, representing fire and a goatskin containing air. Again, the four elements that constitute the world and the Alchemist, or the freemason, who has achieved the knowledge of them.

The triangle is man with his three components: on the left upper side the Sun represents the Soul (*anima* in Latin), on the upper right the Moon represents the Spirit and down at the center the Cube represents the Earth.

The star has seven points, distinguished by a number, which follow the sequence of the Alchemic Work; the first one (number one) is black and represents the nigredo, alchemic putrefaction, or, in masonic language, the ritual death of the candidate during his Initiation and it is directed towards the earth. The circles among the star points represents the steps of the path towards perfection: the first one, the crow and the skull, is death, and the man emerging from earth represents rebirth, the cycle of Solve et Coagula any freemason well knows.

We can use another Sigil, published in Asoth, 1613 edition., to make the connection Alchemy-freemasonry clearer. The Alchemists gave relevance at the number 7; seven were the metals: gold, silver, copper, tin, mercury, iron, and lead, linked to seven celestial bodies: Sun, Moon, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars and Earth and to seven processes: four operations, putrefaction, calcination, distillation and sublimation and three phases: solution, coagulation and union.

There are three fundamental Stages, **Nigredo** or Blackness, when the matter dissolves, **Albedo** or Whiteness, where the impurities are washed away, and **Ruhedo**





NIGREDO



ALBEDO



RUBEDO

or Redness, the final major stage of the alchemical Magnum Opus (Great Work).

In freemasonry there are three fundamental phases, or degrees. In the first one, the Entered Apprentice learns to listen, to put his interior chaos in order and dies to his previous cowan's status.

In the second one, the Fellow Craft works to control his emotions, and is purified from the prejudices and the bonds of the profane world, and, in symbolic correspondence with the Albedo, or whiteness, which diffuses light, he may speak in the lodge and diffuse his interior light, at least in the limits of the path he has walked.

In the third one, the Master mason, who has completed his path, enters the level of the Spirit, where Spirit and Matter are unified. Silver has been transformed into Gold.

We conclude this section with some verses by **Robert Fludd, also known as Rohertus de Fluctihus** (1574-1637), physician, alchemist, mathematician, cosmologist, astrologer and Kabalist, where he affirms the equivalency between the masonic work to build the Temple and the Alchemic Transmutation.

“Then the Temple shall have been consecrated, its dead stones will become alive, impure Metal will be transmuted into fine gold, and Man will recover his primitive estate.”

(Quotation from the *Tractatus theologo philosophicus, de vita, morte, et resurrectione fratribus Crceis Rosae dedicats*, in English *Theologicalphilosophical Tractate about life, death and resurrection dedicated to the brothers of the Red Cross*, published in 1617).

Did Alchemyst really trasmute metals?

This is a fascinating question that involves logic first and, afterwards, Physics and Chemistry as well. The method of Galilean Science requires some features to hold something as true and this way offered amazing results to mankind, but Plato put these words in Socrate's mouth (Plato, *Apology* 22d): *For I was conscious that I knew practically nothing.*

To proceed on the path of knowledge, we need to forget the true-false duality and add a third, important way: *I do not know!*

Too often the European Middle Ages are seen as a dark time dominated by superstition and ignorance, but in those centuries, mankind made relevant discoveries, in some cases they were able to make better than the Greek and the Romans.

Clearly, the Galilean Science is based on different principles. Knowledge, since this aspect is closer to our Mmasonic research, but there was a substrate of features of the elements and of links among them.

The following Diagram (which has been confirmed to be perfectly exact by J. Boucher, who received an identical one from his Master Fulcanelli), from Amblains “Spiritual Alchemy”, show a series of links: Cold and Wet generate Water, Wet

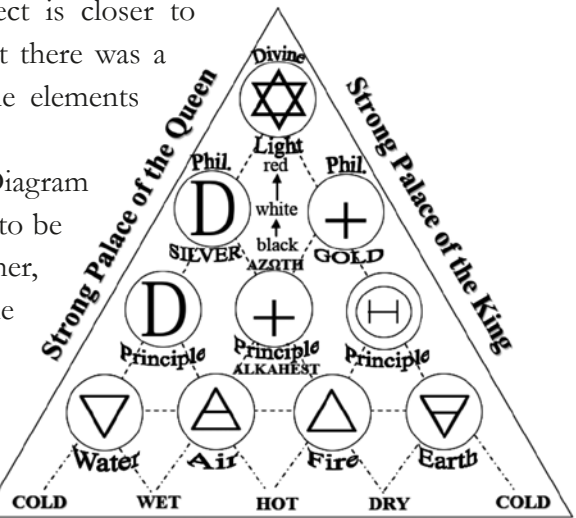


Fig. 1

and Hot generate Air, Hot and Dry generate Fire, and Dry and Cold this is not the subject of our dissertation but it is amazing to remind a successful application of these links.

A scientific study has shown that the Knights of the Temple, purifying the data of deaths in battle and burning at stake, had a longer life than the lay Knights.

A nutritionist physician reconstructed their diet and a further study, taking into account a Templar's life and activities, for instance armors and swords weight, size of their horses and many other factors, revealed that a Templar's diet, based on **Alchemic principles**, was very close to the scientific diet studied for our **American Navy Seals** in similar climatic conditions (the article was published on the American Magazine *Knight Templar*).

Had I told a scientist of the XIX century that time runs at different paces in different places or that to observe a phenomenon means to interfere with the phenomenon itself, I would have been branded as superstitious, ignorant, and anti-scientific, but relativity and quantum physics are on my side.

Again, “*transmutation or not transmutation*”, this is the problem; actually, on a spiritual level, to transmute earthly lead into silver and silver into earthly gold has no relevance, but in the world of matter, it dramatically changes; has the achievement of a superior spiritual level, therefore, not as a purpose, the power to change a vile metal into gold?

History is full of crooks and con artist, but, for instance, in the cases of Flamel and Raymond Lull, it is not possible to prove beyond any doubt that they never achieved the transmutation. The Abbot Nicolas Lenglet du Frenois wrote that they did realize the “Great Work”.

According to Canseliet, Fulcanelli achieved the transmutation in 1922, in old age, and joined the narrow fraternity of immortal Adepts who passed beyond the limits of the space-time.

A French book published in 1960, *Le Matin des magiciens (The morning of magicians)*, by Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, reports a meeting of Fulcanelli with Jacques Bergier, when the latter was assistant

of professor André Heldbronner, a French physician, chemist and inventor, who, among many other important research, studied the use of the Heavy Water to slow down neutrons and submitted a report about the realization of an H bomb to the French Academy of Sciences. According to Bergier, in 1937 Fulcanelli warned against the nuclear energy dangers since it was easy to unchain it. Fulcanelli added: *The Alchemists know that since unmemorable time, but they had moral and philosophical concerns; on the contrary, modern physics was born in XVIII Century to the amusement of rich people.*

Furthermore, Fulcanelli cited Relativity and Indetermination Principle and explained that the Alchemist's secret was to manipulate Matter and Energy; this way he achieves access to the reality normally veiled by space, time, matter and energy. The Philosopher's Stone and the Transmutation are nothing more than secondary consequences; a true Alchemist works essentially at his own transmutation, not at making gold. Furthermore, the Alchemists had no knowledge of the nucleus structure nor of electricity. Did really Fulcanelli meet Bergier at the Society of Gas in 1934 and explained the concepts above? Was that visitor the real Fulcanelli?

Since Relativity was published between 1916 and 1921, the *Indetermination Principle* in 1927 and Fulcanelli published *The Mystery of the Cathedrals* in 1926 and *The Philosophical Dwellings* in 1930, in 1937 it could be easy to impersonate the Master. On the other side, Fulcanelli's identity was known in Andre Heldbronne's social environment.

According to Bergier's book it was possible to perform the Transmutation, even without the enormous amount of electricity.

But it is not really proved if Fulcanelli visited the Society of Gas and if he expressed the concept recorded in Bergier's book.

Then, again, we are not sure that the Alchemists could transmute lead into gold, since we do not know how to make it but, if we check some scientific studies, we find something amazing: LERN.

LENR stands for Low Energy Nuclear Reactions, (or sometimes Lattice Enabled Nanoscale Reactions), and refers to the phenomenon

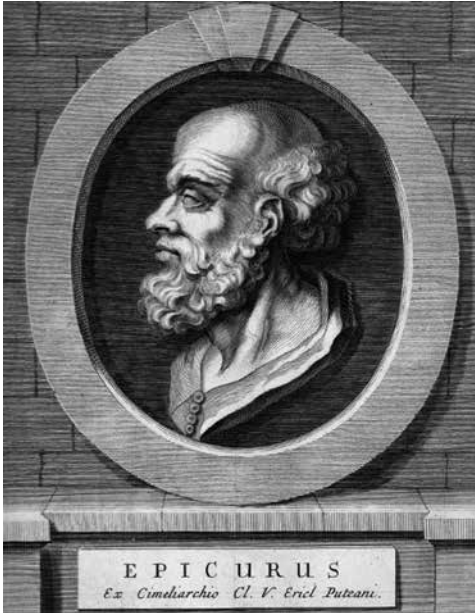
where anomalous amounts of heat are created when certain metals (e.g., nickel, palladium) absorb hydrogen or deuterium and an external stimulus such as heat or an electric current is applied. The reaction takes place at a relatively low temperature and sometimes results in the transmutation of elements as well as the production of heat. Either no strong radiation is produced, or it is absorbed locally. The waste products have been found not to be radioactive. This phenomenon is also referred to as Cold Fusion, LANR (lattice assisted nuclear reaction), as well as with other terms.

Low Energy Nuclear Reactions exist, the demonstration experiments are replicable, and there is a firm theoretical base for their existence. An unknown amount of engineering will be necessary to make commercial use of the phenomenon, but the promise of lower cost of ownership for LENR reactors driving steam turbine power plants, with a 24/7 operation, no need for spent fuel recycling, and with inexpensive fuel, LENR has every needed characteristic for making lower cost energy available to the world. Furthermore, not only do the reactions exist, but they offer pathways for remediation of radioactive contamination, recycling of spent reactor fuels, and long-lived space power plants.

**BUT PLEASE,
WAIT AT LEAST 15 YEARS.**



Who was Epicurus? ¹³



Epicurus was born on the island of Samos in 341 BCE, seven years after Plato's death. His father taught grammar and his mother was a magician who purified houses. At fourteen, the young Epicurus would have been particularly irritated by his schoolmaster, unable to provide valid answers to his questions, about the origin of the Chaos that Hesiod evokes in his *Théogony*¹⁴, and from which the organized universe would have come, the Cosmos.

From then on, Epicurus decided to study philosophy. He then followed for 4 years the teachings of a disciple of Plato. Then, at 18, Epicurus went to Athens to complete his two-year military service. In Athens, Epicurus followed the lessons of Xenocrates, the philosopher who, since the death of Plato, directed the prestigious Academy. Subsequently, he discovered atomism and abandoned Plato's thought. He then followed the teachings of a disciple of Democritus.

¹³ Masonic Coffee # 29, Oct. 8th, 2022.

¹⁴ Hésiode, *Théogonie*, trad. P. Mazon, ed. Les Belles Lettres, collection des Universités de France, Paris, 1982.



At barely thirty years old, Epicurus went to the island of Lesbos, where he began to teach. Finally, at the age of thirty-five, he left to permanently settle in Athens. He acquired a garden there. Five years later, Zeno will create a rival school in Athens: Stoicism.

Epicurus taught throughout his life in his famous Garden. He died at the age of seventy-one in a bathtub filled with lukewarm water. He swallowed wine and asked his friends present not to forget his teachings. Epicurus wrote three hundred works, which makes him, after the Stoic Chrysippus, the most prolific philosopher. Alas, the works of Epicurus are now lost. In fact, we only have three letters and forty maxims called “Capital Maxims” as well as eighty-one maxims called “Vatican Sentences” which are in a manuscript in the Vatican Library. The first of the three letters, which deals with physics, is written to a certain Herodotus. The second, intended for Pythocles, deals with cosmology, atmospheric phenomena, and the stars.

The last, addressed to Menoeceus, presents the morality of Epicurus, this morality which was so misunderstood both at the time of the philosopher and afterwards. Epicurus said that pleasure is the first and most natural of possessions.

He invited men not to fear the gods and to reject all forms of superstition. He emptied nature of its gods and maintained that our soul is mortal. He proclaimed the equality of human beings. He advised keeping away from political occupations and military activities and renouncing the pursuit of power and honors. That's why he was hated.

At “epicurean”, most dictionaries give as synonyms: pleasure-seeker, carnal, partygoer, reveler, sensual, libertine, luxurious. Already in Latin, *epicurianus* designated the “debauched”. The Latin poet Horace (65-8 BCE) speaks of the “pigs of Epicurus' herd”¹⁵. Subsequently, Plutarch will call the disciples of Epicurus “swine”¹⁶.

Already during his lifetime, people (especially the Stoics) said of Epicurus that he was married to a prostitute whose daughter was also a prostitute. He was accused of selling his own brother's body to anyone who wanted it, of dressing as a woman, of organizing drinking parties, of vomiting after each meal as he ate so much. All this will be taken up by the fathers of the Christian church, such as Clement of Alexandria. Which is entirely false.

It was not until the 17th century that we witnessed the rehabilitation of Epicurus, thanks to the meticulous work of Pierre Gassendi¹⁷ (1592-1655).



15 Horace, *Epîtres*, trad. F. Villeneuve, ed. Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 2003, I, IV, 16. Already Timon of Phliontus (325-235), a disciple of Pyrrhon of Elis, the father of Scepticism, had called Epicurus a “pig” by means of a play on words (from the Greek word *hustatos*, which means “the last”, but also “the most piggy”). Cf. Diogenes Laërce, *Lives, Doctrines and Sentences of the Illustrious Philosophers*, *op. cit.* in T. 2, X, p. 215.

16 *Contra Epic. beat.*, quoted by J. Salem in *Like a God Among Men. The ethics of Epicurus*. ed. J. Vrin, coll. Bibliothèque d'histoire de la philosophie, Paris, 2002, p. 46.

17 History will mainly remember Gassendi's quarrel with Descartes. Cf. R. Descartes, *Résumé des cinquièmes objections faites par Gassendit et Réponses de l'auteur aux cinquièmes objections faites par Monsieur Gassendi in Œuvres et Lettres*, textes présentés par A. Bridoux, ed. Gallimard, coll. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, N.R.F., Paris, 1953, pp. 470-518.

The Garden of Epicurus



Antal Strohmayr, 'The Philosophers' Garden, 1834

Unlike Plato's Academy which mainly trained politicians, unlike Aristotle's Lyceum which trained scholars and unlike the Stoic school which trained insensitive beings, the Garden of Epicurus will be open to everyone. Epicurus will address both young and mature men, as well as women, often the wives of Epicurus' disciples, but also prostitutes. Slaves also attended his classes. Epicurus was a *Philanthrôpos*, a “Friend of all Men”.

The “Savior of humanity”

Epicure started from the following observation: “The whole earth lives in pain”¹⁸. This is why he proposed a philosophy of happiness. Happiness is for him, health of the body and health of the spirit. For

¹⁸ It is the philosopher Zeno who, here, quotes Epicurus. See A-J. Festugière, in *Epicure et ses dieux*, ed. PUF, coll. Quadrige, Paris, 1985, Preface to the first edition, p. VII.

him, it is urgent to philosophize and this at any age, because it is philosophy (his) that makes you happy. Philosophizing does not wait. Unlike Plato¹⁹, Epicurus is



convinced that one should not wait until the age of fifty to philosophize.

Blessed and incorruptible are the gods

At the time of Epicurus, the gods are everywhere on earth, and everyone is afraid of them. However, Epicurus affirms that the gods are blessed and that they do not change. The gods exist, it is obvious, says Epicurus. You can't accuse him of atheism. But Epicurus dissociates the gods from natural phenomena. Happy, the gods are not bored and therefore never come to Earth.

At no time did these gods intervene in the formation of the universe or of men. The universe, composed of indestructible atoms, exists from all eternity. Without a beginning, it will never know an end. Everything is explained by the laws of physics. So, there is nothing to fear from the gods. Happy, the gods know no change. They are immortal.



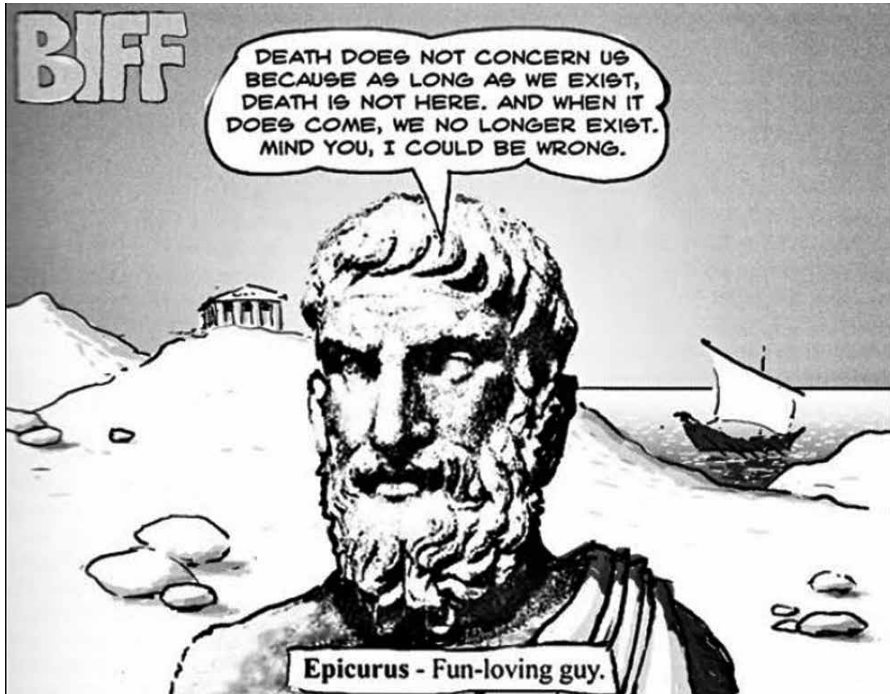
19 *The Republic*, trad. E. Chambry, T. VII, ed. Les Belles Lettres, collection des Universités de France, Paris, 1989, VII, 540a, p. 184.

An adventure without a future

After having shown that there is nothing to fear from the gods, Epicurus proclaims, still in the *Letter to Menoeceus*, that death is nothing for us. For there to be pain, there must be sensations. However, once dead, one no longer has any feeling. Either we live and feel, or we are dead and no longer feel. Death cannot therefore be experienced. Only a living observer can see our death.

Moreover, there would be fear of death if the soul lived and felt after death. But that is not the case. The soul is made up of atoms, atoms that disperse at death and then recombine with other atoms. Nothing is lost, everything is transformed (see Lavoisier's thermodynamics).

Another important idea: you should not wish to have a very long life. It is not a long life that counts, but a good life. Quality is more important than quantity. We must live fully in the present. Be ready for what you are going through.



For a hierarchy of desires

In the *Letter to Menoecus*, Epicurus says that we must make differences between desires to privilege only those which bring happiness. Contrary to what the Cyrenaic maintained, not all pleasures are always worth pursuing. Experience shows us that some pleasures can sometimes be bad.

Hence the interest of using our reason to distinguish the good from the bad desires. Here we have an economy or an arithmetic of pleasures. Epicurus is the opposite of Plato and his rejection of bodily pleasures. One can avoid, says Epicurus, physical pain by leading a healthy life. We can also avoid psychological suffering. It is enough to remove all fear and satisfy desires that are not dangerous.

You should know that Epicurus said that there are three kinds of desires:

1. Neither natural nor necessary,
2. The natural ones but not necessary,
3. The natural and necessary.

Desires that are neither natural nor necessary are dangerous because they are endless. They are never satisfied. Example: glory.

Natural but unnecessary desires can be satisfied if one remains reasonable. Example: enjoying a good dish. But mustn't become addicted. You must stay moderate. Love is one of these kinds of desires. Love is not necessary.

Natural and necessary desires correspond to vital needs: to drink, to eat, to sleep, to protect oneself from bad weather, etc.

Our current society is far from following the advice of Epicurus. However, thanks to one's reason, everyone can examine what is beneficial to him or, on the contrary, dangerous. *Phronesis*, or prudence, is the greatest possession.

Questions and answers

About freemasonry

Q – Epicurus' philosophy as just presented resonates with many echoes for us freemasons.

A – Indeed, even in the form, because for the Athenians, the Garden of Epicurus – of which the “profane” does not know what happens there – arouses curiosity and mistrust, just like the masonic lodge. Basically, we are looking for the same thing. The hygiene of life, the health of the body and the spirit, which define for Epicurus his concept of happiness, speak to us. Just like his fight against all forms of beliefs and superstitions. And fears. Doesn't a freemason die standing up?



About happiness

Q – For us, Americans, the search for happiness is inscribed in our constitution (1787) largely enlightened by the freemasons who wrote it. The quest for happiness is no longer only moral but political. The democratic state is responsible for providing individuals with the

conditions for happiness (it is up to them to achieve their happiness as they see fit). This search for happiness replaces the search for salvation or beatitude which were the prerogative of religious facts.

Nevertheless, is the search for happiness in the satisfaction of one's needs as our consumer society seems to plunge us – we will never be satisfied not to possess the new iphone 666... – and isn't this the other side of the Epicurean philosophy?

A – Epicurus' philosophy is anything but the unbridled search for material goods and pleasures, as the Stoics and the Church Fathers would have us believe. Happiness, according to Epicurus, is in the measure, and luckily, we are intelligent, endowed with reason, and we can therefore weigh the pros and cons.

Nevertheless, and this is where we can diverge from Epicurus – we rarely have all the parameters to judge: how do we know if a pleasure is going to be good to satisfy? Perhaps we will realize, too late, that we should never have tried to satisfy it.

Platonism and Stoicism quickly disappeared from Greece, on the other hand, Epicureanism was exported to Rome where many philosophers called themselves Epicureans. If Cicero was opposed to it, we owe to Lucretius and his poem *De Natura Rerum* a universal diffusion.

Of course, the search for happiness can be constitutional, but let's remember that the criteria of the Founding Fathers were anchored in a specific reality (obsolete today, but dogmatically unchangeable): no permanent army that could threaten individual freedom, primacy of agriculture over industry, federal tax not exceeding 1 dollar per year! Another country – Bhutan – has also written it into its constitution, even establishing with the help of a form of a hundred questions a Gross Happiness Product per inhabitant (GHP) – which of course does not concern the Nepalese whom they exploit and mistreat...

About The satisfaction of desires

Q – Among the natural but not necessary desires Epicurus cites love and seems to prefer friendship to the former.

A – After three marriages and three divorces, I can answer the question! (lol)

For Epicurus, love (especially sexual acts) is natural, but we can do without it because love is a source of problems (jealousy, possessiveness, fear, injury, addiction ...) that thwart the search for happiness.

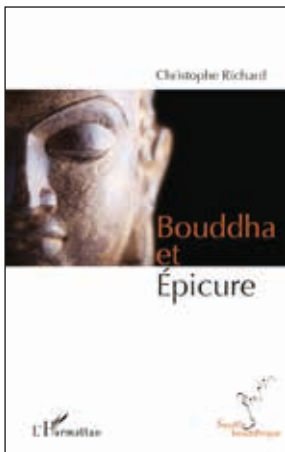
Friendship, like our brotherhood, is therefore more reasonable, calmer, and more balanced.

Q – Among the desires that are neither natural nor necessary, that are dangerous, can we include those that an English philosopher, Bertrand Russell, in 1950 highlighted in the public sphere: possession (acquisitiveness), rivalry, vanity, love of power which are insatiable by their very nature. He also wrote that all human activity is dictated by desire.

A – This indeed leads to an excessive propensity to ego. This belief is the source of our suffering. Among Buddhists, there is only an empirical ego, the one that differentiates me from the other, and not an ego that would last (since the soul does not exist in them) which is the source of the failings highlighted by Russell.

About Buddhism

Q – In your book *Buddha and Epicurus*, you talk about the fourfold pharmacopoeia of Epicurus which you put in parallel with the Four



Truths of the Nobles of the Buddha as regards the search for happiness:

- one should not fear the gods,
- one should not fear death,
- good is difficult to attain,
- one can suppress pain.

A – It is indeed a similar goal but there are many differences in the search. It is wrong to say as certain that the Buddha would have been aware of Epicurus' philosophy, but both Buddhism and Epicureanism are similar in the

satisfaction of pleasures that allows to free the mind from constant desires. In the same way, if both philosophies do not believe in the soul, there could not be in Epicurus any post mortem transmission from one life to another (reconstitution, reincarnations...) following the principles of Democritus: the atoms disperse in the universe and aggregate randomly (the idea then of “atome crochus” – which allows the atoms to form molecules and entities, is always present in the French language when one says of two persons having common interests that they have “atomes crochus”).

About the present

Q – Can we say that the expression *Carpe Diem* is an epicurean formulation? And, if we quote the complete verse of Horace (*Odes I-II*): *Carpe diem, quam minimum credita postero* (size the present, trust tomorrow as little as you may) if this follows from an Epicurean formulation?

A – If the projection in the future is for Epicurus a source of nuisance in the search of happiness it is nevertheless necessary to define what is the present. Let us look at the mosaic pavement to note that the present exists and that it does not exist. The present exists in the sense that there is only the present, only one time. We live the present, not the past if it is only when it was the present, not the future that we will live only when it will be present.

But the present is fleeting, the time of a finger snap, in that it does not really exist because its duration is restricted to the moment when it is. It is nevertheless necessary to be “present”, conscious of being, at this moment, to understand and appreciate it.

A “Buddhist” meditative attitude of being well present, conscious of this precise moment, at each moment, and of living it fully.

An attitude that is not recommended when one is suffering physically, because it is not pleasant to be present to pain, unless one is trying to learn to concentrate (since one has the experience of concentrating on one's pain).

Again, with Epicurus (although he has the stone disease, which is painful), one should not worry about physical pain or be afraid of it because either the pain is very strong and one loses consciousness, or one dies. One does not worry about what no longer exists.

About death

Q – Irvin Yalom is an American psychotherapist who has written many books including *The Garden of Epicurus*.

Suffering from an incurable disease, the protagonist is confronted with death and with the stress that this generates for him. To alleviate his anguish, he refers to Epicurus and to an existentialist philosophy of the present, but also to our relationship with others, notably the sharing of our experience and its transmission to others.

I see this as a particularly beneficial aspect of the masonic method. The subtitle of the book is: *and look the sun in the face*, a way of saying how to look death in the face, but also discover the radiance of one's life.

This seems to me to mean live in the present (Epicurus), be what you are (Nietzsche), be aware of it and assume it.

Is this then the way to die happy?

A – Just as one recognizes the mason at the foot of the wall, one recognizes, according to Montaigne, the philosopher in front of his death. I will tell you when the day comes, but not after... (lol). If our thought has served a purpose, we can die serenely. The problem of regrets is again a worry contrary to the Epicurean philosophy. If you have lived the present to the fullest you can leave without regret, no matter when and Epicurus (at a time when life was very short) adds living a long time does not bring much... Epicurean philosophy is reassuring. Here, we can object that if we are lucky enough to have a pleasant life, it would be a pity if it did not last as long as possible...

About materialism

Q – You speak of the materialist philosophy of Epicurus. Can you redefine philosophically how materialism is opposed to spiritualism,

especially when dogmatic freemasonry tries to oppose a freemasonry like the G.:O.:D.:F.: that asks questions and reflects, using these terms in their political and religious connotations?

A – The philosophical question par excellence is: what is man? Each philosopher proposes an answer. There are three of them:

1. The materialist says that man is only a material body, without soul, without immortality and that now of death, the brain as well as the other organs disappear;
2. The spiritualist maintains that man is a body, a spirit (brain) and an immortal soul;
3. The existentialist asserts that man is devoid of fixed characteristics. One cannot define a man. Or the definition of man, one might argue, is that he is a living being without definition.



Amerindian World Rites and Symbols

On the diversity of American Indian peoples²⁰

One only sings right in one's family tree.

Max Jacob (French writer and painter, 1876-1944)



A short introduction

The American Indians occupy the whole of North America from the subarctic region to the confines of the Mexican border today. They constitute a myriad of tribes, some of which have organized themselves into nations. They represent an extraordinary human diversity by their languages, their myths, their traditions, and their ways of life according to the geographical area where they are located.

To understand these peoples is to experience another way of living in the world, it is to consider *the earth, the water and the air which have the same rights to life, to the respect of their dignity and to the security of every human being, because in them resides the life*²¹.

²⁰ Masonic Coffee # 32, Jan. 14th, 2023.

²¹ *The Republic*, trad. E. Chambry, T. VII, ed. Les Belles Lettres, collection des Universités de France, Paris, 1989, VII, 540a, p. 184.



Here the spiritual dimension where a spirit resides in everything and that of the sacred takes root in a conception where the place of the human being is not considered more important than the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral.

All are passing guests on Earth. They are part of the great community of living beings for which humans have the greatest respect and have obligations, including that of preserving harmony and balance on Mother Earth, which “gives life”, of listening to their parents, ancestors, and the dead, and of maintaining dialogue with the spirits that surround them.

The object of my piece of architecture

This work is a short presentation of the P.O.A. that I had presented to the commission “Transcultural symbolic resonances” of Samarkand in February 2021, then enriched for the solstice of June 18, 2022. My

purpose at the time was to expose some significant features of certain peoples: **Lakotas** (northwest), **Blackfeet** (northwest), **Zuni** (southwest), **Navajo** (southwest) and **Cherokee** (southeast). Peoples of the rich plains (north and center) or arid (south) or peoples of the mountains.



By continuing this first work, on the one hand, I wish to complete it by integrating more context, in particular the history of the meeting between French and English settlers with the Amerindian tribes, in the north with the Algonkins, in the south with the Cherokees. On the other hand, to deepen the link between the symbols and the sacred narratives (mythology) most shared by the Amerindian peoples.

From where I speak: my origins, my sensitivity, my curiosity that I am allowed to share with you, this noon

The work undertaken invites me to gather what is scattered. Between a history that fundamentally connects me with a part of myself that exists and lives in the United States, a large part of intimacy on what I deeply feel, of sensitivity, of receptivity to the culture of the other, an openness to the world to feed my personal and masonic approach.



First, my personal history, since part of my family has been present for more than 150 years, forcibly chained in Georgia, 300 km south of Atlanta on the Munneryn plantation. Memory and transmission are at the heart of the “cousinades”, organized every two years and which gather several hundred family members. My father's father was married

to a Native American woman from the Cherokee Nation. Her name is Maybelle, and she was already the wisdom of the family.



Alexander Munnerlyn Rd

Waynesboro, GA 30830, Burke County, Georgia

to “sustainable development”, to *solidarity and social justice*. Finally, my quest for *spirituality*, as many questions, research, travels, dialogues, and creation that organizes my days and animates my life.

Other reasons animate this project: my affection for *nature*, which inspires me because it represents a permanent *spectacle*, because it excels in the *beauty* of all the elements that compose it and for the *diversity of life* that manifests itself there.

It is also my commitment to “sustainable develop-



*New Echota Parliament, Cherokee Nation,
up to 20,000 inhabitants at its peak*

This is an opportunity for me to recall the fate of the Cherokee Nation, the largest and most advanced of the “Five Civilized Nations”, which was forced to submit by leaving its ancestral lands in Georgia and to find itself, in the heart of the winter of 1838-1839, on an interminable path of exile called the “Trail of Tear” *Nunna daul Isunyi* in

Cherokee²². Deported further west, beyond the banks of the Mississippi, from where 20,000 of them left the capital city of New Echota, located at the foot of the Appalachians, of which only 2,000 would return. I visited this place where ritual ceremonies are still held, now a federal museum.

Safeguarding the Native American language, spirituality and tradition

Also, I would like to recall how much these *peoples and civilizations that are being reborn today* have undergone a form of collapse in the course of history. They have been fought, rejected, misunderstood, destroyed²³ without any consideration for what they represented in the great history of humanity. Their fault was to be there at the wrong place and at the wrong time facing the territorial expansion of the Westerners, justified by their “manifest destiny”. This ideological and conquering watchword for a providential mission²⁴ and a messianic belief²⁵ has made the United States a territory in perpetual conflict that has been resolved either by war (independence, secession, Mexican, Indian) or by land acquisition, notably Louisiana to France in 1804 (Florida to the Seminoles, the Great Arid Plains of the Southwest to the Mexicans, Alaska to the Russians).

22 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_of_Tears. William Humphrey, *The Trail of Tears*, ed Gallimard. Bernard Vincent, *The Trail of Tears. Le grand exil des Indiens Cherokees*, Paris, Flammarion, 2002.

23 Prohibition of dances, ceremonies and rituals, sterilization of women, abduction of children, forced acculturation, assimilation, forced displacement for days in appalling conditions...

24 *Providence*: that which relates to providence, that which is wanted and sent by it.

25 *Messianic*: sent by God to save men from their sins and restore divine justice on earth.



Yet, we have so much to learn from the Amerindian peoples for their *spirituality, their ethics, their philosophy of life*. We know how much the Amerindian peoples have developed for centuries a living civilization, in harmony with their environment, conscious that their life is intimately linked to the respect of nature and that they have returned it well.

And, we also have to learn about the way *the sacred* is at the foundation of their way of life, individual and collective, without being separated, nor reserved only for spiritual times punctuated by ceremonies.

The sacred is at the heart of everyday life in the way we care for children, prepare meals, take care of the house, address each other, create...

Let's come to some basics to illustrate our subject

One of the reasons that brings us together this noon is to explore how *rites and symbols resonate or dissonate* with those we know in freemasonry.

Another is to explore *the universal*, revealing what is common and unites the human community.

Some references in myths, rites, and symbols

There are many terms for life in all its forms. In Lakota, the word "ni" means life energy. The word "oni" means inside. The word "wichoni" means human life, with "wicha" meaning man. And for health "wichozeni" means the man inside, and "zani" means in balance. Thus, life and health refer to balance and inner peace... But also, to the integrity of the being at all levels of consciousness and the permanent search for this state. When a state of imbalance occurs, the skills of medicine men/women are called upon.



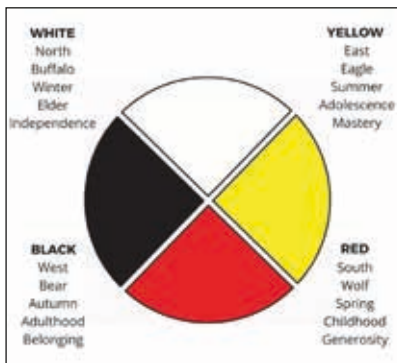
Wakan
Lakota Sioux
North America

For the Lakota, the individual, the tribe, the community, the nation, and the universe are like interlocking circles, where the balance sought must be lived in coherence at the different levels. Sacred circle of life *where the spiritual and the ordinary of the days are gone. For us symbols are a part of nature, a part of ourselves*²⁶. The symbol is omnipresent. The sacred circle contains all beings, allows man to realize himself, to remember his kinship with the world, to initiate and to transmit, to find and to realize with humility his place.



Wakan Tanka which means “all that is **mysterious, sacred, hidden** and almost unknowable”, *Tanka* means “**great**”. Wakan Tanka is a quaternity made up of the chief God, the spirit God, the creator God, and the executor God. He represents the all-encompassing

²⁶ Tahca Ushte, *Of Indian Memory*, Pocket Editions, May 1989. <https://www.babelio.com/livres/Lame-Deer-De-memoire-indienne/62274>



energy that is invisible and over the universe. Everything comes from this energy which contains everything and everything returns to it. *Cangleska Wakan*, represents the Universe and its balance, both powerful and fragile where this invisible energy is located that over the world around you and in you.

Of the universe, Wakan Tanka (Lakota Sioux), the Great Spirit considers that it is deposited in each of us and that it allows us to enter a link with the energies whatever they are — tree, bear, water, mountain, plant – through the energy of the symbol. The “wheel” is the ceremony by which the *seven rituals*²⁷ are organized and structured in the tradition of many Amerindian peoples without getting lost in the immensity of the energy of the universe. Numerous testimonies of chiefs of different communities have transmitted this tradition to us in an oral or written way. To this, there is a whole literature easily accessible.

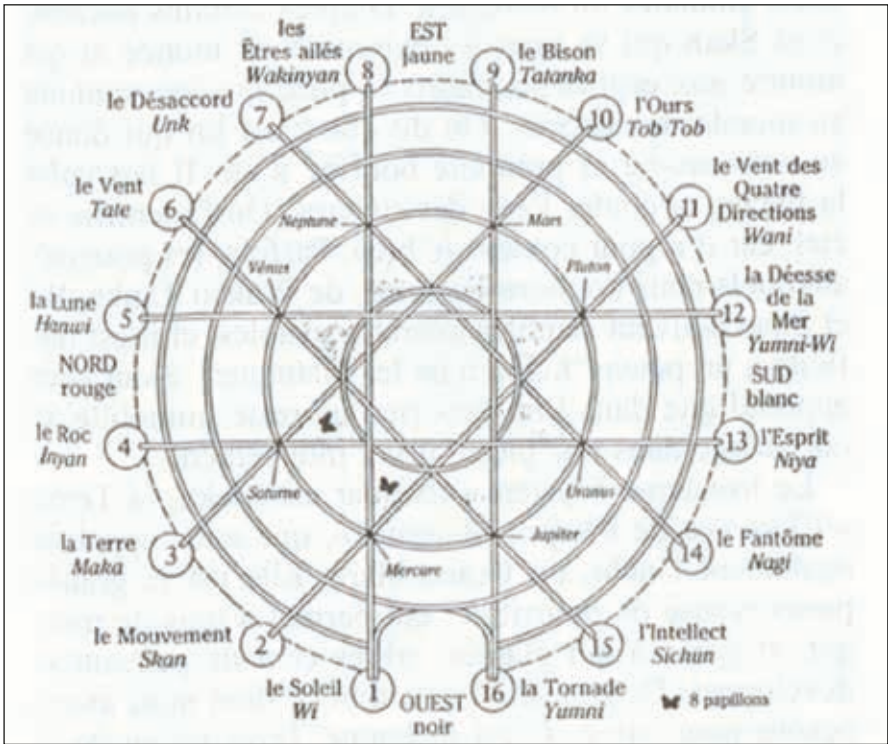
It is in *the circle*, which represents both the universe and man, but also unity, harmony, and cosmic infinity, that the wheel will be exercised and bring rites and symbols to life. A cross of directions evokes the four winds that structure the world. The wandering inside the wheel is under the aegis of the whirling wind.

*For life to unfold, both structure and movement are needed*²⁸.

Each direction corresponds to qualities of the universe and its analogies in man (emotional, endurance, courage), coupled with elements that are plants, animals (black eagle, bison, bear, falcon...), or allies and sentinels that represent our own strengths.

27 Oinikaghe (Inipi): sweat lodge, the oldest - Hanbleceyapi: vision quest or imploration - Nagi Kagapi: soul guard - Wiwanyak Wacipi: dance in front of the sun. Hunkapi: the match - Isnala Awicalowan: puberty ritual for young girls - Tapa Alowanoi: ball throwing (no longer practiced today).

28 Marie-José Piantino del Molino.



The number 4 is common in Native American worldview and philosophy. Four means fullness. Four is the number that relates to the earth as evoked in the cosmogony of the Zuni (pueblos) indicating that *while it does not create, it contains all that is created from it*. The number can be suitable for the Supreme God, in that it contains everything. In addition to the four elements and the four cardinal directions, the Pueblo Indians (southeast) evoke the four Gods of Rain.

It is interesting to note that the number 4 is also the number of the four rivers that flow out of Eden (according to Genesis), irrigating and delimiting the habitable universe. Revelation speaks



of the four ends of the earth from which the four winds blow and distinguishes four great periods that embrace the history of the world²⁹.

Space is divided into four parts.

Time is measured by four units: the day, the night, the moon and the year.

There are four animal species: those that crawl, those that fly, those that walk on four legs, those that walk on two legs.

There are four parts in plants: root, stem, flower and fruit.

The four celestial beings are the sky, the sun, the moon, and the stars and four are the winds that walk around the circle of the world.

Finally, the Zuni see four caves at the bottom of the earth, representing the four wombs of Mother Earth.



At the bottom is *the extreme darkness of the world* from which men come thanks to the action of the **divine twins**, the Ayahutas warriors, created by the sun in search of men.

29 Jean Chevalier and Alain Gherrbrant, page 920, Robert Lafont.

Thus, to reach the light, men have crossed four worlds: *the world of soot, the world of sulfur, the world of fog, the world of wings.*

Human life consists of four hills: childhood, youth, maturity, and old age.

Finally, there are four virtues in men: courage, endurance, generosity, and faithfulness. In women: skill, hospitality, loyalty, and faithfulness.

Putting the freemasonry and the Amerindian world into perspective

We have seen how Amerindian symbols are more alive than ever in connection with their perception of the world and the universe, all in harmony and respect with the surrounding living world. The initiatory process is part of the cycle of the rhythms of nature and of breathing with the universe as if to anchor man on an axis and his compass to help him find his way.



MM Degree Daylight Lodge #542 in Tulsa, Oklahoma

The example of this board of symbols (tableau de loge)



On this board of symbols, we can easily recognize elements of Native American symbolism combined with those of freemason symbolism. Against the background of the Amerindian worldview and beliefs, its composition is remarkable in the way it has reconciled, in such a harmonious way, the freemason symbolism.

In Canada, in the meeting between the colonists and the first peoples, notably the Algonkians, or the Métis³⁰ who are men of French and Catholic origin marrying native women from the 1600s, located in the heart of the flourishing fur trade. The Métis were overtaken by the capitalist companies trading in furs, an activity that was at the heart of the wars with the colonists who demanded more and more.

Also, in Georgia, the rapprochement between the missionaries and the Cherokees could be established within the tribal territory. But the Cherokees were not fooled by this, as they made their settlement conditional on the missionaries agreeing to build schools and where girls and boys learned in these institutions.

Here, as elsewhere, borrowing from the culture of Europeans was not confused with identification or what others would call assimilation. Let us note the extraordinary work of the Cherokee Se-quo-yah which allows the education of children in the Cherokee language.

30 The first Métis people emerged in eastern Canada in the early 1600s with the arrival of European explorers and their union with Aboriginal women. One of the first Métis baptisms to be discovered was that of André Lasnier, born in 1620 in Port Latour, Nova Scotia, but baptized in France in 1632. The Métis are recognized by Canada as an Aboriginal people but not as First Nations.

He will invent a pictographic and then syllabic system which, in 85 lines, will form the basis of the Cherokee script. The system allowed for literacy in three years, in one's own language, without school and with the syllabary to learn alone.

To resist and maintain their land, living in full sovereignty and self-determination, the Cherokee were ingenious in their cooperation with the settlers. But the wheel turned the day the U.S. government changed the rules by changing their status to “Domestic Dependent Nation”. Their fate was sealed, as was the fate of all other Native American peoples who were no longer recognized as belonging to their ancestral land.

It is thus a *syncretism* that we are witnessing, where the Amerindian community internalizes several symbols that are external to their traditions. They represent a form of appropriation and adaptation to the Amerindian society without betraying their own values.

This movement also expresses a form of resistance to the pressure against which it has been increasingly difficult to stand. It is the fruit of a fruitful dialogue, to show that the Amerindian society participates in societal evolutions and to call for the advent of a new world by invoking the time of the origins, a golden age and today to value their traditions.



**Board of symbols (Tableau de Loge)
representing Amerindian symbols
enriched with freemason symbols**



The **board of symbols (Tableau de Loge)** is a representation of symbols originally drawn on the floor. If the oldest use consists in drawing the lodge board and then erasing it, the practice quickly came to make “permanent boards”. The lodge mat the name given in the French masonic tradition, which also sometimes calls it the lodge board, is the symbol and “tool” most characteristic of the so-called “modern” rites, which originated from the first Grand Lodge of England, such as the French Rite. Its use is attested in the oldest minutes of the masonic lodges of England between 1738 and 1787.

Comments

- A. The first is the CIRCLE, which represents the unfolded universe and evokes the cycles of life. Beyond the space-time frame it is the space of transcendence and creative will. Inside, a CROSS whose parts are equal in relation to the CENTER. It represents the four elements and the four cardinal points. The number 4 is of importance for the Amerindians. Although the number 3 represents “the productive aspect of duality still unfertile”³¹, with the number 4, the quaternary is the number of the manifestation of the Word, in the 4 directions of space, the 4 elements, the 4 seasons, the 4 ages of life, the 4 temperaments.
- B. The square whose two points are directed upwards, and including, at the bottom, at the height of its right angle the letter G. The square is represented by two pipes which form at their ends a SQUARE and where the letter G is precisely located.
- C. The spread of the wings (supposedly those of the Eagle) recalls the symbolism of the mosaic pavement, that of the constant opposition and the perpetual confrontation of the two polarities: cosmic and terrestrial. Solar bird, the Eagle looks the sun in the face, what expresses the people of the plains by the “dance which looks the sun” with the feather of Eagle for decoration and the whistle in eagle bone for the evocation of the animal.

31 Luc Benoist, *Signs, Symbols and Myths*, collection Que sais-je, September 2019, p. 71.

- D. In the place of the letter G, the pipe bowl represents the soul of man, while the hollow stem of the pipe represents the body of man. The sacred pipe is a symbol of unity and harmony. Through the pipe, all natural forces are united in this tobacco and its smoke is a living prayer, whose flying particles enable the spirits to make the wishes expressed come true.
- E. The compass stylized covers the square. The compass is an important cosmological symbol. It is also important in other civilizations, Western and Chinese. The compass is used to measure and draw the circle. And we know the importance of the circle for the Amerindians. The square (tool) is used to draw the square (geometrical form). Two squares (tool) form the square (geometrical form). By indicating both the horizontal and the vertical the square also symbolizes space. When it is asymmetrical like an L it expresses activity and dynamism. The conjunction of the compass and square symbols corresponds well to the circle and square often found in Native American symbols, rituals, and mythology.
- F. The skull symbolized here by an animal: the buffalo, of course, the most sacred of all animals, symbolizing abundance. He is our brother, for there are many legends of bison turned into men, expressing man's deep trust in this animal.
- It is the foundation of existence since it provides the prairie people with everything they need to feed, clothe, cover themselves, their tools, and the shelter from which they made their teepees. If a white buffalo appears, it means that the prayers have been answered and that a period of abundance is coming. This is why the head of the animal is represented here in white. Beliefs and spirituality are embodied in the bison because "legend has it that the "white bison-woman" brought the sacred pipe of medicine to the men".
- G. The starry sky and the moon are represented here. The moon symbolizes living time and links together the Waters, the Rain, the fertility of women, that of animals, of vegetation, the destiny of man after death and the initiation ceremonies. Here, it has all its place.

H. Higher up an eye that seems to be that of a bird, with its yellow beak and spread wings. For the people of the plains, the revered bird is the eagle. It embodies the divine force. It is equated with the great spirit (Wakinyan Tanka - the great Thunderbird) because of its ability to soar high in the heavens, allowing it to dominate all of life with its eyes. For many Native Americans, “it is only by testing one's own fortitude that a person can acquire the strength of the Eagle”.

In their representation of the universe, for the Zuni, the eagle with the sun is placed at the fifth cardinal point, which is the Zenith. Thus, it follows the trajectory of the sun, from sunrise to zenith which coincides with the axis of the world.

For the people of the plains, four paths lead to the mountain where the Wakinyan lives. The eastern access is guarded by a butterfly, the western by a bear, the northern by a deer and the southern by a beaver.

Let's go back to the four colors in the circle: each one represents one of the Thunderbirds, which legend says are huge and old. The first is the Great Wakinyan of the West. It is black and clothed in clouds. The second, the Northern Wakinyan, is red. The third, the Thunderbird of the East is yellow. The fourth one, the one from the South, is white (some people describe it as a blue, and it appears as such in the picture). It has no eyes, nor ears and yet it sees and hears it is a mystery.



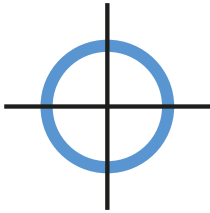
I. In the background, earth, nature, and sky are well represented in this lodge painting. The sky represents three quarters of the decor and opens on a wide and distant horizon. Water is very present, in various forms, both on the earth and in the sky. This one seems to be capricious, forming numerous flashes. The lightning symbolizes the

spark of life and the fertilizing power. The lightning is the celestial fire of immense power and formidable speed. The association of water and fire is also purifying: the truth requiring purity.

Let us observe that the lightning starts from the eye of the Eagle which also expresses sight, but also more widely its vision. In view of the composition of the different elements, the interpretation could be that the lightning, spark of life, from its meeting with water, comes to purify on the one hand, and to stimulate, on the other hand, the vital energy, which is in each of us, joining the symbolism of the pipe (see point D) and all the symbolism of our letter G.

In many religious or spiritual traditions, lightning and thunder are associated with the word of God (among the Hebrews, the Greeks, in African traditions..) and the association with rain, as celestial seed, is almost universal. Based on the duality water-fire, they are the two sides of the same symbol.

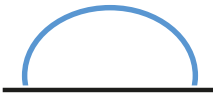
Some symbols around the circle



The CIRCLES symbols of spirituality

The link between circle and cross, whose ends go beyond the circle symbolizes the four stages of life.

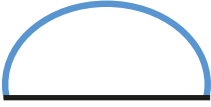
- Age of learning (0-12 years)
- Age of reception (12-24 years)
- The age of personality polishing (24-36 years)
- The age of wisdom (after 36 years)



This symbol represents the vault of heaven.

- The horizontal line symbolizes the Earth
- This line goes beyond the limits of the circle
- It is a symbol of stability and reliability

The semicircle whose ends are connected.



- A horizontal line represents the earthly life of a person, under the celestial vault, of his beginning to the end.
- It is the energy in the pursuit of his personal development which gives a specific meaning to each person's life.

The revival of Native American peoples and nations

Since the 1970s/1980s, the struggle of the indigenous peoples³² of North America (USA + Canada) has been growing, awakened by the repeated attacks on their environment, the violation of their sacred sites and the questioning of the agreements on the Indian reserves at the end of the 20th century. Fundamentally, Native Americans seek to *strengthen and revalidate their ancestral Innu tipenitemun (sovereignty), bearer of their knowledge and laws. They show us how their link to Assi (The Earth) is a source of life and how their relationship to the past remains a source of truth.*

The recognition of the fate of the Amerindians as well as the international movement under the aegis of the UN, since the middle of the 1980s, in favor of the rights of the indigenous peoples, then their considering by the States where they live, arouses the revival and the renewal of the Amerindian cultures. Also, it is enough to observe the great interest that the West has today for its thousand-year-old cultures and in many fields: the relationship with the living, the consideration, and the respect of ISSA (Mother Earth), the care, the spirituality, the agricultural techniques, the sense of the sacred in the daily life.

32 Indigenous Peoples Rights International. Urgent Call to Governments, United Nations and International Community to Immediately Address the Alarming Conditions of Indigenous Peoples in Relation to COVID-19 and the Deadliest Delta Variant (iprights.org)



May we hope that in the future our civilizations will act more concretely and resolutely to bring to life the cardinal values of equality, fraternity, solidarity, and justice to strive for harmony and balance, which are indispensable for preserving life, maintaining diversity, and supporting human creation.

To conclude, I offer you this beautiful poem³³

Here in the hands that were warriors comes sweetness: under the canvas beating the night a man takes his wife, a man takes a book, a woman takes her child, and in the distant poplars, far from these bare slopes, sounds a thousand-year-old lullaby.

Then a man closes his book, from under the canvas of the camp rises, listens, takes a few steps into the vast night, says a few words with closed lips, and takes an answer from the rustling poplars.

Mitakuye Oyasin (“We are all connected”),
reminds us of the Lakota people



33 Bernadette Engel-Roux, *ARARAT*, 57 pages, Cheyne ed., 1996

Socrates and Plato³⁴



Socrates was born in Athens 469/470 BCE to a sculptor father and a midwife mother. His father taught him his trade, and Socrates started out as a sculptor. But, by dint of hearing about philosophers, he finally gave up sculpture and opted for philosophy.

³⁴ Masonic Coffee # 34, March 11th, 2023.

Like all Athenians, Socrates was a soldier. As an infantryman, he fought in several campaigns (Potidaea, Delium). Socrates was married. His wife, named Xanthippe, from whom he had three sons, became legendary because of her bad temper.



Xenophon presents Socrates, in *The Banquet*, as a hardy soldier, a drinker with a good grip on wine and a man with his feet on the ground. Aristophanes, in *The Clouds*, shows him as a soaring intellectual. Plato makes him the hero of philosophy whose life was nothing but the search for Truth and Justice, whatever the cost. Socrates was sentenced to death in 399 BCE by democratic Athens for three reasons:

1. Impiety (Socrates preferred morality to the national religion whose gods were totally immoral);
2. Worship of foreign deities (*I have a personal god*, says Socrates, a *daimon*. Each one of us has in fact his own personal god: his conscience, his reason);
3. Corruption of youth (young people follow him).

The judgment took place in two stages, as was customary. In the first stage, the judges deliberated on the guilt or innocence of the accused. In the second stage, they decided on his sentence.

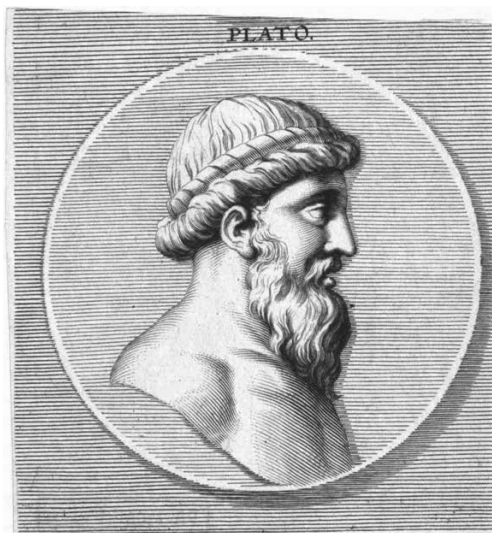
In the first instance, only a slight majority was in favor of guilt. Socrates could have gotten away with a derisory sentence, a simple fine. Then something quite astonishing happened: instead of making amends, Socrates hardened his position and, far from accepting any punishment,

asked to be fed for life at the expense of the state. His answer appeared to the judges as a contempt of court. Hence his death sentence. His escape was planned, but he refused to escape. Of course, his sentence was unjust, but Socrates chose to respect the laws of his city. For if everyone could decide when to obey or disobey the laws, there would be no justice. To disobey would be to threaten the very existence



of the laws. Socrates died for his ideas. He is a martyr. He thus became the very model of the ideal philosopher, a kind of founding myth, like for example in freemasonry the architect Hiram.

Plato was an Athenian from the upper class, an aristocrat belonging to the family of the ancient kings of Athens. Around 404 BCE, Plato experienced in Athens the terrible regime of the Thirty Tyrants. This led him to think about what a just city would be. In addition to this, of course, the condemnation of his teacher Socrates. Philosopher was his answer



to the political situation made of violence, ignorance and lies that he knew.

He also created the Academy to train statesmen. Plato's work consists of 35 dialogues. These are his exoteric dialogues. Among them, only 2 feature Socrates talking to women (Diotima and Aspasia). His own wife (Xanthippe) appears only once (in the *Apology of Socrates*).

Plato never appears in his dialogues. Only Socrates speaks with this or that person. We are always dealing with a dialogue. The philosophical dialogue, as a genre, will be found in Plutarch, Cicero, Thomas More, Hobbes, Berkeley, and Hume.



Socrates always refused to write. A writing, like a prostitute, passes from hand to hand. Moreover, the author is not there to defend his text and his ideas. It is Plato who writes (but... see *Letter VII*). Socrates' method was to question this or that specialist in this or that field. With his questions, Socrates

made him aware of his ignorance. In fact, the specialist thought he knew (what courage is, what justice is, what love is, etc.) when he knew nothing. Socrates, on the other hand, knows that he knows nothing.

One day a friend of Socrates named Cherephon (see *Apology of Socrates*, 20-23) asked the Delphic oracle if there was anyone wiser than Socrates, and the oracle answered that no one was wiser than Socrates. This is why Socrates spent his life questioning his contemporaries, to verify the words of Apollo (God of knowledge, but also twin brother of Artemis).

The technique Socrates used for questioning is maieutic: the art of giving birth, which Socrates describes in the following text: (150b) *Socrates All that is true of their art of midwifery is true also of mine, but mine differs from theirs in being practiced upon men, not women, and in tending their souls in labor, not their bodies. But the greatest thing about my art is this, [150c] that it*

can test in every way whether the mind of the young man is bringing forth a mere image, an imposture, or a real and genuine offspring.

For I have this in common with the midwives: I am sterile in point of wisdom, and the reproach which has often been brought against me, that I question others but make no reply myself about anything, because I have no wisdom in me, is a true reproach; and the reason of it is this: the god compels me to act as midwife, but has never allowed me to bring forth. I am, then, not at all a wise person myself, (150d) nor have I any wise invention, the offspring born of my own soul.

PLATO (Theaetetus)³⁵

In this text, Socrates explains his art and his way of proceeding to a young interlocutor named Theaetetus. Socrates' goal is to make Theaetetus understand what maieutic consists of.

- First observation: this talk on maieutic is part of the exercise of maieutic since Socrates is giving birth to Theaetetus, whom he wants to lead to understand, by himself, what science is.
- Second observation: maieutic is an art. It is a technè, a know-how, a practice with rules. It is not a theory. We learn it by practicing it. If others want to practice maieutic, they will have to acquire experience, like the midwives who had to have given birth to practice their art.
- Third observation: maieutic resembles the art of midwifery. Moreover, Socrates was himself the son of a famous midwife.



35 Plato. Plato in Twelve Volumes, vol. 12 translated by Harold N. Fowler. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1921.

But the art of Socrates refers to a particular kind of childbirth that could be called spiritual. It is about delivering the mind from the truths it carries within it without knowing it. Maieutic is superior to the art of midwifery because it is performed on the soul and not on the body. Socrates undresses souls, to verify if the ideas they contain are truths or mere opinions. The philosophical search for truth begins with a sorting exercise.

Another difference: Socrates' art delivers young men, not women. Socrates is interested in young people because their minds are still virgin. The younger a soul is, the more malleable it is.

On the other hand, like the midwives, Socrates is sterile (in Greece, midwives were older women who had had children, but no longer gave birth. Note that the goddess Artemis who patronizes midwives is sterile). He does not claim to know.

Plato's dialogues are aporetic, meaning he portrays his speakers as troubled by real (or pretended) doubt on important subjects. Socrates never gives a definitive answer to the question he asks at the beginning. His goal is not to deposit knowledge in people's souls. First, he relieves them of their preconceived ideas, then they can give birth to beautiful



ideas. Socrates does not bring the truth from outside but helps everyone to discover the truth by himself. So, Socrates does not give lessons, but questions and gives birth to minds. Socrates' teaching is a method of learning to think.

Education is not, as the Sophists say, a simple transmission of knowledge from the one who knows to the one who does not.

At the beginning of chapter VII of *The Republic*, Socrates explains to Glaucon how to free himself from

the chains of ignorance. He explains it to him by means of an allegory: an allegory is a story, or an image, that means something else (allogoreuein) than what it expressly says: it must be deciphered, interpreted. This story unfolds in three parts.

First time – A description of the cave



At the beginning, Socrates-Plato begins with the description of a subterranean place, deprived of light, where humans have been chained since their childhood. What can this dark place symbolize?

The ignorance of which most people are victims and who are, therefore, like prisoners locked up since their childhood in the cave of ignorance, in particular because of their body (captive souls of the body). They let themselves be misled by their senses and appearances. Plato sees in matter the handicap of the spirit. The body is the enemy that reason must absolutely triumph over.

The chains also symbolize ignorance and the cave the confinement of Men.

The prisoners cannot turn their heads. They cannot look elsewhere and differently than is their habit. (Refer to “dangers of habit”). Of themselves and of others, they only know the shadows cast by the fire. This means, therefore, that each one does not know himself more than he knows the others. (Refer to “Know thyself”).

Moreover, this immobility of the head is only the allegory of the immobility of those who remain on the surface of things and never put their spirit in movement. Let us note, in this regard, that the bonds that bind them are, for them, invisible, which means that they ignore their own chains, because they are ignorant of their ignorance.



The prisoners only see shadows projected on the wall in front of them. This distracts them. They appear hypnotized (see Netflix...). They look like children attending a puppet show and end up believing

that what they see is real. As a result, they do not try to escape. The prison is golden.

Moreover, he who speaks of puppets infers puppeteers also; that is to say, infers manipulators (Sophists, politicians, gurus, etc.). However, there is an opening and, therefore, another world. The world of the cave is the domain of illusion.

To understand this, we must remember that Plato opposed to our visible world that we perceive thanks to our five senses, an invisible or intelligible world, because it can be perceived only by the intellect.

The cave represents the visible world. This world is marked by time. In the visible world everything changes and disappears. Fortunately, there is another kind of reality that can only be reached with the mind. Without this world, no science would be possible since everything changes constantly. To each thing in the visible world corresponds an idea, to each temporal existence an eternal essence. Eidos designated primitively the outline of a thing, its form. The Idea is the thing as it is, independently of any personal consideration. The idea does not change according to people. It is timeless. It can only be known with the intellect. "Know thyself", Socrates' motto, means don't forget that you have a soul, don't let your body take over it. "Because of the body"

Plato writes, “we are unable to discern the true” (Phaedo, 66d). For, “Whenever the soul resorts to the body to examine something, using either sight or hearing or any other sense (...) then (...) it is plagued by wandering, confusion, dizziness, as if it were drunk” (79c).

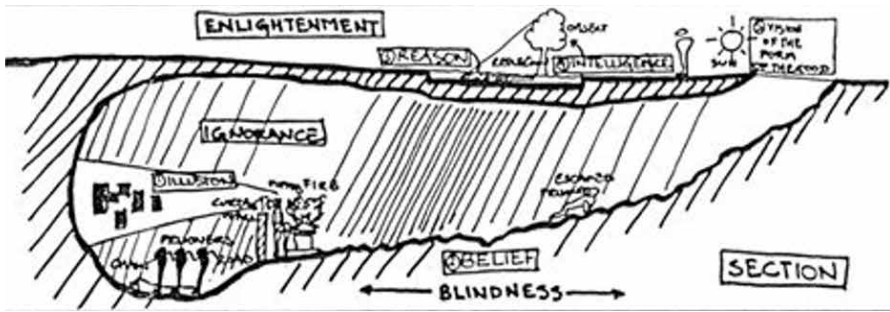
This is why the wise man approaches the world only with the eye of the spirit, with thought alone, without the contribution of the senses.

The shadows of the allegory are the sensible, inconsistent, and fluid appearances, whereas the real objects, transported to the other side of the wall, correspond to the Ideas. These Ideas are obtained by abstraction of what is inessential. The dog we see running and hear barking is not the real dog. The real dog is what is common to all dogs: the Idea of dog.



Second time – The exit from the cave

The exit from the cave represents the work of thought. The journey described by Plato is that of reflection. A prisoner is untied and needs help from a philosopher like Socrates to put him on the way. It is up to him to discover for himself the Truth. From a passive existence, he must become active.



But this is a cause of suffering. To get rid of his preconceived ideas and to discover the Truth requires efforts. The mind resists. Moreover, once the Truth is discovered, the mind has difficulty admitting it. As we have seen, it is a careful progression through different stages. Only gradually does the mind move from darkness to light.

The prisoner is first shown the shadows of the objects, then their reflections in the water. Then, the objects themselves that cast these shadows (these are the originals of the copies), the stars at night and, finally, the Sun of Truth.

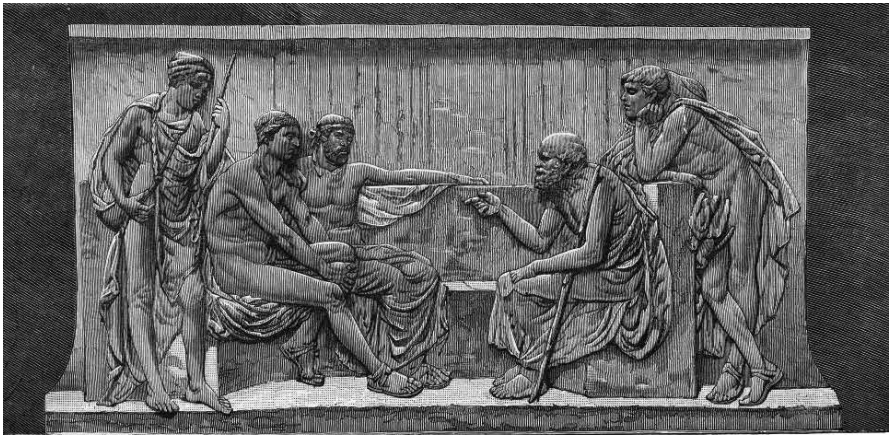
Third time – The return to the cave



The Man who knows the Truth must share it with others by guiding them. He must go back down into the cave. His life will be, from then on, education, i.e., he will have to help others to see the Truth. This will be painful, because he will have to get used to the darkness (stupidity and ignorance) again. The prisoners will refuse to believe him, or even kill him (Refer to the execution of Socrates).

He will also have to rule the City (Refer to *Philosopher-king*).

The allegory of the cave is an invitation to think for oneself to escape ignorance.



COMPOSITION IN SCULPTURE: "SOCRATES TEACHING THE PEOPLE IN THE AGORA." BY HENRY BATES.

The Graphic Novel of Hugo Pratt, a Magical Journey to Treasure Island³⁶



Today we enter a fantastic world, wandering among seas, deserts, and jungles in search of what we do have inside us. The axis of our fantastic world is Venice, Hugo's homeland. Only images and poetry can reach our mind directly, wrote Hugo Pratt; then we'll favor images over words as much as possible;



Hugo Pratt

36 Masonic Coffee # 39, Aug. 12th, 2023.

let Hugo's images take us in his magic world and be our guide through this travel.



But, first, we need to learn the story of Ugo, not yet Hugo. **Hugo Pratt** is the most relevant interpreter of a wonderful sort of art, the *graphic novel*, which unites the story telling of a classic written story to the intuitive and immediate communication made possible by images.

And, when Hugo Pratt is the author, his script has always a deep, eternal meaning; each image is a glance on a real place transformed by the vision of the artist: landscapes, clothes and everything else fit the time and the place when and where the narrative takes place, without becoming a material reproduction, since his magic lifts the story and takes the reader in a special dimension outside ordinary space and time. Furthermore, every image is extremely accurate and could be a standalone artwork.



These features accompany Hugo from his first graphic novel, published in Argentina in 1959, *Anna nella Giungla* (*Anna in the Jungle*), until his last work with Corto, *Mu, the lost Continent* in 1988 and, in 1996, the unfinished *Storia di uomini a sei zampe*, that he wrote for AGIP, an Italian petrochemical company, whose logo is a six-pawn dog.



In his first graphic novel, written in Argentina, he put a mariner from Venice, Zeno, who well represents the idea later developed with his better known character: **Corto Maltese**, Hugo's most famous character, but his whole production shares the same features



Jesuit Joe (1980)



Sgt. Kirk with Orrsted in Argentina (1953)



Sgt. Kirk – characters study

Hugo Pratt's Biography



Ugo Pratt is not an ordinary man, and his life is a chain of adventures, roles and impersonated characters, jobs, and interests. Ugo or, later in his life, Hugo, was not only the top comics' author everybody knows, but he was also a rugby player, a drafting teacher, a movie and theater actor, a screenwriter, an entrepreneur, a scholar a complete list of his artistic works would take pages and pages, but we must limit our biography to the essential steps of his life.

Ugo Pratt was born in Rimini, Italy, on the 15th of June 1927, of Rolando Pratt and Evelina Genero, but he spent much of his childhood in Venice, which will remain his city forever. His cosmopolitan family had roots in many cultures and Countries and that

influenced his artistic formation and vision of the world. Rolando Pratt was son of Joseph Pratt from Lyon (France), descendant of a family that had to leave England in 1745; Joseph wife was Ernesta Quadrelli de' Brabanti, from an important family of Urbino. (Italy).

His grandfather was Eugenio Genero (on the left), of Spanish-Jewish descent and his wife was from the Venetian-Turkish Azim-Greggyo family. His father Rolando was an Officer of the MVSN (Voluntary Militia for National Security), an Italian military Corp in charge of many jobs, among them road construction, and was deployed to Abyssinia; Ugo and Evelina joined him later. In 1941, when the English Army entered Addis Abeba, Rolando was taken prisoner; according to Marco Steiner, Rolando makes a last, meaningful act:

He asks the British military if he can go back in the house; he takes a book and gives it to Hugo. It's Stevenson's Treasure Island. A few words are sufficient: "You'll see, one day, you too will find your treasure island"; in 1942, he passed away in a concentration camp.

Back in Italy, in 1945, Ugo joins the Allies and becomes interpreter for the 8th British Army and afterwards as theater organizer for the 5th American one.

Soon Ugo started his activity in comics, he became an A series rugby player, and, in November 1952, he moved to Argentina where he had a very brilliant life: parties, rugby, tango; in Argentina he worked with Alberto Ongaro, Gisela Dester (who became his first wife) Solano Lopez and Hector Germàn Oerstheld, author of the well-known graphic novel *The Eternant*.

In 1959 he published his first graphic novel, *Anny Dan*, a four episodes serial. Among the characters shines a mariner, Luca Zane, a restless globetrotter, refined, angry revolutionary, looking for adventure: we will find the same traits in Corto Maltese. Hugo metaphorically "sailed the seven seas" since we find him in many Countries, Argentina again, England, Mexico ... but finally he returns to Venice and starts his collaboration with some Italian magazines. In 1967 a new graphic novel appears: *Una Ballata del Mare Salato* (*A Ballad of the Salt Sea*), the



first of the twelve volumes of the Corto Maltese Universe. In 1970 Hugo Pratt moves to Paris and Corto adventures are published by the magazine PIF gadget. In 1973 *A Ballad of the Salt Sea* is published by France-Soir, and in 1976 it receives the Prize for the best realistic cartoon at the III Angouleme Fair. In the same year, Hugo Pratt, following his grandfather and his father example, becomes Brother Pratt.

In 1983 Hugo Pratt moves to Grandvaux, close to Lausanne, Switzerland, and in his library, he collects about 30,000 books. In 1986 an exhibition is dedicated to Hugo Pratt at the Grand Palais of Paris, thanks to Jack Lang, the French Culture Minister, who, in 1988 gives him the French National Grand Prix for Graphic Arts.



In 1994 Hugo Pratt starts the publishing company Lizard and publishes the graphic novel: *Saint-Exupery - l'ultimo volo (the last flight)* and *Mu, The Lost Continent*, his last graphic novel with Corto, a magic travel through myth, dreams, and history. On the 20th of August 1995 Hugo Pratt passes away in his home in Grandvaux, Switzerland.

Cartoons, Comics and Graphic Novels

There are different approaches to a narration made by means of drawings; Comics and Cartoons are not the same thing, their common origin notwithstanding.

Comic is a book whose narration is based on a series of sequential panels, which are the means to write the story. If each of the panels could be seen as a cartoon, the book, namely the Comic, cannot be

defined a Cartoon. The term Cartoon refers to the illustration, or to the small series of them, usually published in a section of newspapers and magazines.

Here are some examples of cartoon

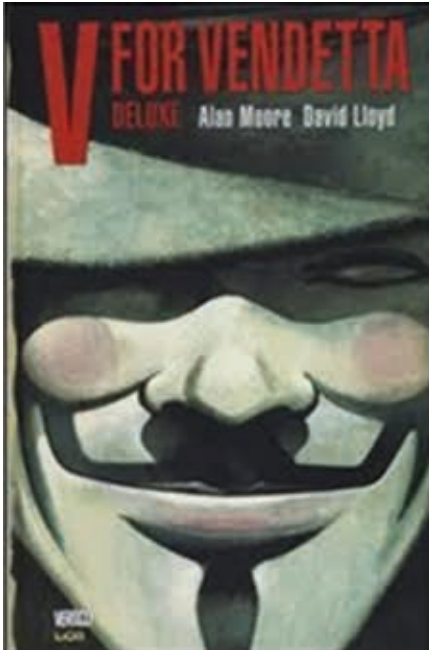


and of comics



GRAPHIC NOVEL

GRAPHIC NOVELS and COMIC BOOKS are close, since both use a sequence of images to tell a story, but a graphic novel has a complex plot, comparable to a classic novel, and tells a complete story. A graphic novel is expected to have more accurate images and script, even if somebody considers a collection of comics printed in a single



book as a graphic novel. A graphic novel, but not all of them, may be read in a symbolic way to find a message veiled in its pages; V for Vendetta and even more the movie inspired by this graphic novel is a good example of a veiled Masonic message, for example.

Hugo Pratt's works are a guideline for graphic novels, since his stories can be read as “stand alone”, even if the reader has no previous acquaintance with the characters.

Furthermore, each one of Hugo Pratt's graphic novels is the result of the most accurate research on the historical and geographical circumstances about the time and the places where the plot develops.

Every image is drafted with care and imbued with the spirit of the artist, each of them with the purpose of expressing the thoughts crossing the mind of the author, until reader's and author's minds are synchronized.

His use of color and graphics is a sort of nuanced poetry, to guide his reader into his world; making him travel through magic and esoteric elements, into an arcane and mysterious universe where nothing is what it seems; it is our real, normal world where the magic is real and normal.

The following images try to explain two different approaches:



*Batman the Killing Joe HC (2008 DC)
The Deluxe Edition cover*



Hugo Pratt watercolor – CONG Hugo Pratt art properties

But Who Is Hugo Pratt?

An easy answer would be: *an artist*, true but not enough. We may get closer to a satisfying definition listening to his own voice and reporting the opinions of the persons who met him.

Pratt used to say: *My current style is the culmination of a lifetime of research. I have worked for fifty years to be able to draw as I do now. I would like to succeed, someday, in telling it all with one simple drawn line.*

And furthermore, about his relationship with poetry and the link between poetry and images: *Poetry is what impresses me more in literature, since poetry is synthetic and proceeds image after image. When I read it, I see images and I perceive them at an intuitive level. I perceive instantly the deepness veiled behind a poem and comics too are a world of images, which compels to combine two codes and, consequently two worlds. Images, a non-mediated universe and a world mediated by the word.* (Tandem Dec.1989 - Conversation with Hugo Pratt).

His voice again:

For me, my travels have been the chance to go to a place that already exists in my imagination.

When a book is read, its author lives on in the reader: a kind of reincarnation if you will.

He's dreaming with his eyes open, and those who dream with their eyes open are dangerous, for they do not know when their dreams come to an end.

And some quotations



Umberto Eco, (5 January 1932- 19 February 2016), an Italian medievalist, philosopher, semiotician, novelist, cultural critic, and political and social commentator; he was Emeritus professor at the University of Bologna, Italy, and visiting professor at New York University and at Northwestern University in Illinois. Eco is the author of famous novels: *Il nome della Rosa* (*The name of the Rose*), *Il pendolo di Focault* (*Focault 'sPendulum*), *L 'isola del giorno prima* (*The Island of the Day Before*), *Baudolino*, *La misteriosa fiamma della regina Loana* (*The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loane*), *Il Cimitero di Praga* (*The Prague Cemetery*), *Numero zero*, and of about 47 nonfiction and literary essays.

He said about Hugo Pratt's work: *If I need to relax, I read an essay by Engels, if I want to be intellectually engaged, I read Corto Maltese and: (Pratt) wrote really well ... the Ballad of the Salt Sea can be read and looked at many times enjoying the way it has been conceived, images and words.*

Frank Miller (born January 27, 1957) is an American comic book writer, penciller and inker, novelist, screenwriter, film director, and producer known for his comic book stories and graphic novels; he is reputed one of the more relevant and influencing American graphic novel author: *I first discovered Corto Maltese reading the books at Forbidden*

Planet in New York as a young man. Then on my travels, I studied and discovered an edition at a newsstand in Rome. The artwork was so expressive and so bold that it leapt off the newsprint. It swept me away. It was full of magic and romantic adventure. Maltese is a rascal who could talk to the Gods. To me it showed off the power of the comic where language is not much of a barrier. I have been a Corto Maltese fan ever since. This is the hero's journey in its most classic form, and I couldn't be more honoured to help bring into this series the romanticism, heroism, and underlying mysticism of Pratt's creation. Frank Miller is director, script author and producer of a TV series based on Corto.



Numa Sadoul, born on May 7, 1947, in Brazzaville, Congo, where his father, Numa Sadoul, was Governor of Overseas France. He lived for 19 years in Africa before settling in the South of France in 1966. Writer, playwright, and journalist, he wrote his first poems when he was 7 years old. His poems, and short stories as well, have been published in newspapers when he was 16, then he released his first book, a collection of plays, in 1970.



Over thirty books were published since then, in all genres of writing.

Numa Sadoul is a *band dessinée* great specialist, he met Hugo Pratt and wrote an article in the magazine *Les Cahiers de la Bande Dessinée* (No 32, 1976).

Probably his life in Africa inspired the following sentences about Hugo Pratt and his character Corto Maltese: *In that work the reader breathes the bushes and the Savannah, the rich of magic deserts, coasts where people live without a mask, the reader understands the rhythm of and existence at the antipodes*

of our European meanness... We have stirred common, blazing memories, Hugo and I, brothers of Africa, nostalgic of an extraordinary youth.



Maurilio Manara (born 12 September in Lüssen (Luson), South Tyrol, in Italy known professionally as Milo Manara, was educated as an architect and became one of the top Italian known graphic novel author, writer and artist. He wrote the script of some of Pratt's work. Milo's opinion: *Hugo Pratt is the greatest cartoonist in the world. His evocative ability is so engaging that with his continuous approach to the graphic essentiality, he is able to add further suggestion to his drawings, instead of removing them.*



François Mitterrand, former French Republic President: *I think I have a soft spot for Corto Maltese, not that I am similar to Hugo Pratt's hero, but because I am sure I would never get bored in the shoes of this laconic solitary adventurer, a free spirit imbued in different cultures.*



Luigi Pruneti, G.:L.:D.:I.: Past Grand Master and SGC, professor, author of innumerable books and articles, in a book dedicated to Corto Maltese, wrote : *So here the "journey" of Pratt's graphic novel, crossing meridians and parallels, places of the non-time and historical characters freed from the myth, it is an adventurous and aware initiate's path "ad intra": between the two borderline waters, above and below, toward the Dream and the Awakening of the shining Mystery of Man.*

Hugo Pratt's Way of Drawing

There is something special in Hugo Pratt's graphic that makes his work recognizable at first sight; this is perhaps an issue for specialists, and, because of that, we even asked Clio Parecchini, an Italian concept artist and illustrator, living in England, her views on the way he creates his images.

Here is her analysis:

“When we meet a strongly characterized graphic novel character like Corto Maltese, we are intrigued with his traits and with those of the author who generated him, in this case Hugo Pratt.

We even look for a physical resemblance or an intrinsic characteristic that recalls the stroke with which the comic is drawn, since any artistic work reproduces the author himself in some way.

Corto Maltese and Hugo Pratt have no openly evident common physical characteristics, yet a certain gaze position with thin and somewhat hooded eyes are found in both; what is an essential note in their lives is the link to the sea and to travel. Pratt defines himself as Venetian, despite having lived in many different countries throughout his life, and Corto Maltese is a sailor born on an island, he has exotic traits which denote a nomadic origin and his adventures touch seas and lands of all continents. Hugo Pratt's stroke can vary from round to straight, with lines that follow each other uninterrupted; his pen almost never detaches from the paper, tracing sinuous shapes and shadings made with short oblique zigzag strokes. A unique path that flows on the sheet to generate faces, shapes, expressions, and that, in the best great tradition of cartoonists, manages to trace an entire character without having previously sketched the structural volumes of the body.

Perhaps the characteristic of maintaining a sort of softness even with angular lines is unique (or difficult to imitate) in Pratt's visual language.

Feline face, small nose, bright eyes (their color? they always seem light), almost always shaded by a captain's hat pulled down over his



forehead: that is the face of Corto Maltese, who has now become iconic everywhere in the world. With a face inspiring sympathy and charm and a gaze focused on the distance of the horizon, he looks to the future and has the

tranquility and certainty of being the architect of his own destiny.

On the other hand, it is amazing to note how his rival (or his dark side?), **Rasputin**, has diametrically opposite characteristics: a prominent nose clearly visible from every angle and straight bob hair, in contrast with Corto's soft curls.

The scenes where a character appears often have a minimal background; sometimes the backgrounds are flat and dark, since they have the function of focusing the reader attention on the protagonists.

Generally, the interiors are characterized by some finely drawn details (a lamp, a door jamb), to give a hint of the context, without overwhelming the action of the characters.

On the contrary, when, in long shots, ships, boats, trains or other transportation means appear, the drawing is richly accurate and rich of scenographic details.

Once again sea and travels denote a link between the graphic novel script and its author. Great is his use of watercolors: Pratt has often sketched scenes where the characters in the foreground stand out against the landscape; in this case too his stroke synthesizes the faces and the atmosphere, by means of areas of shadow and light in a linear, but very effective, way.

The tones used are often warm: skies full of clouds and fiery sunsets, and the sea, inevitable, reflects a sun veiled in mist and broken by sails of ships or gull wings in flight.

The architectures in the background and the nature, hinted at with synthetic games of dark silhouettes, manage to tell the reader about the climate and atmosphere of the country in which the story is set.

The travelers Hugo Pratt and Corto Maltese, not only tell us about the adventures of a graphic novel but take us on a journey with them to discover the world.”



His Life

Corto Maltese is the more elaborated among Hugo Pratt's characters. But who is Corto, what does his name mean? Corto was born in La Valletta, Malta, a Mediterranean island, on the 10th of July 1887; his name was inspired by an Andalusia argot, Corto meaning *fast of hand*.

His father is a sailor from Tintagel, Cornwall, nephew of an Isle of Man witch. Corto's mother is an Andalusian gypsy witch, called *Niña de Gibraltar*, a beautiful woman, model of Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (perhaps the most representative painter of the French romantic school) and, when she and Corto lived in Cordoba, lover of the rabbi Ezra Toledano (an assonance: do you remember the Toleano family from Toledo, among Hugo's ancestors?), who teaches Corto the Zohar and the Kabbalah.

In Cordoba, when a fortune teller notices that Corto has no fortune line on his left palm, he uses his father's silver razor to incise it by himself: a symbolic act that helps to understand his character.

In 1904, Corto becomes a sailor and, the following year, he is in Manchuria at the end of the Russian Japanese war; there he meets the first relevant man of his life, Jack London, and he makes acquaintance with Rasputin, a Russian deserter, whose life will be interwoven with his own. In Argentina Corto meets Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid and, in 1906 he is in Ancona, where he meets Iosif Stalin; later in the years, a phone call to Stalin will save Corto's life. In 1908 in Argentina, he meets Jack London again; soon he leaves the mainland and sails the Seven Seas and, one year later, he is in Trieste, where he makes acquaintance with James Joyce.

Corto becomes officer of a cargo, but his passenger John Reed is charged of homicide and acquitted, following Corto's intervention, who loses his officer position; between 1910 and 1913 we find Corto sailing the Antillean Sea and we know that somewhere he met the English writer Frederick Rolfe, better known as Baron Corvo. In 1921 a Baron Corvo's posthumous letter gives the go to the adventure of *The Tale of Venice*.

Between 1913 and 1914, Corto sails the Pacific Ocean and is involved in the hostilities between Germans and British, as we read in: *The Tale of the Salt Sea*; at this juncture Corto meets Pandora, a young girl he will meet again many years later.

In his fantastic saga, Corto crosses the road of some real-life historical figures, some of them well known and other ones familiar to the specialists; here is a list:

Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), Hermann Hesse, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Joseph Conrad, Sükhbaatar, John Reed, White Russian general Roman von Ungern-Sternberg, Enver Pasha of Turkey, and Sergei Semenov, modeled after Grigory Semyonov.

In 1916 he is in South America, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, he sails the Caribbean Sea and, in 1917, he arrives in Venice in search of a map of the “Eldorado” and he is interested by the “Seven Cities of Cibolla” Myth. Corto witnesses WWI, finds the king of Montenegro's

treasure and starts his Celtic saga; again, the war, this time the French border is the background of new adventures and he witnesses the death of Manfred von Richtofen, the *Red Baron*.

Few months later Corto is the captain of a ship of a Yemenite Warlord, he is in Somalia and Ethiopia, but, in Autumn, he is in Honk Kong, Siberia and China; in April 1921 Corto is in Venice searching for King Salomon's Clavicle, a legendary emerald.

Magical Venice and magical novel, where Corto is somewhat involved in a Masonic Meeting and his way even crosses Gabriele D'Annunzio's one. Autumn 1921: Rhodes Island, Samarkand, Silk Road to China, in search of Alexander's treasure.

1923 Argentina, 1924 Ethiopia and Switzerland and finally Corto's last adventure: the search of the mythic submerged continent, Atlantis, also called Mu.

No further graphic novel with Corto, but in one of the series *The Scorpions of the Desert*, Cush, an African warrior and Corto's friend, tells that Corto disappeared during the Spain war.

Who Is Who

Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres is connected to Hugo's mother in Pratt's story. He passed away in 1867 at 87; he lived in France and in Italy, but we are in a magic world and perhaps in this world the *Niña de Gibraltar*, a witch, is young and beautiful forever.

Butch Cassidy and **Sundance Kid** were two American outlaws who run away to Patagonia to avoid the American police.

Iosif Stalin's presence in Ancona as a doorman of the hotel Roma e Pace in 1907 is controversial; a recent Italian book proposes this old hypothesis again, supported by further evidence, but many other scholars still believe it is a legend.

John Reed (1887-1920), American journalist and communist militant.

Frederick William Rolfe (1860-1913), better known as Baron Corvo, was an English writer, photographer, and artist. He lived in England but eventually in Venice, where he died from a stroke.

Hermann Hesse (1877-1962), a German-Swiss poet, novelist, and painter; his books explore an individual's search for authenticity, self-knowledge, and spirituality. In 1946, he received the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938), poet, playwright, orator, journalist, aristocrat, and Royal Italian Army officer during World War I, and Freemason. Gabriele D'Annunzio, believing that Italy had not received the due advantages after the victory in WWI, seized Fiume, a small city close to the borders of Italy and attempted to annex it to Italy; he declared Fiume an independent State as Italian Regency of Carnaro, seen as the prologue of the Fascist system; an amazing thing was that the Bolshevik Russia was the first State to recognize D'Annunzio creature.

Joseph Conrad, (1857-1924), was an English novelist and short-story writer, admired for his prose and his renderings of dangerous life at sea and in exotic places; to him the sea meant above all the tragedy of loneliness.

Damdin Sühbaatar (1893-1923) was a Mongolian communist revolutionary, founding member of the Mongolian People's Party.

Roman von Ungern-Sternberg, (1886-1921), was an anti-communist general in the Russian Civil War and then fought in Mongolia against China. Made prisoner by the Mongolian Red Army, was executed after a short trial. His sobriquet was *The Mad Baron*.

Ismail Enver (1881-1922) was an Ottoman military officer, revolutionary against the Sultan absolute power, one the *Pashas triumvirate* who ruled Turkey during the WWI. He was one of the perpetrators of the Genocide of thousands of Armenian, Assyrians and Greeks.

Grigory Mikhaylovich Semyonov (1890-1946) was the leader of the White movement in Transbaikalia, and afterward lieutenant general and the *ataman* (*supreme army commander*) of Baikal Cossacks. Exiled in China, he mobilized Russian and Cossack communities living there against the

Soviets; Seymonov worked for Puyj, the last emperor of China and had bounds to the Russian Fascist Party. Japanese government made him *chairan* of the Bureau for Russian Emigrants in Manchuria. Captured and executed by Soviets in 1946.

Manfred Albercht Freiherr von Richtofen (1892-1918) was member of an aristocratic Prussian family and an ace of the German Airforce, who shot down 80 enemy planes with a Fokker triplane; on the 21st of April 1918 a single bullet, shot from the ground by a machine gun, killed him.

In Corto's life there are some interesting clues

From a revolution to a revolution

Corto appears on the scene in 1900, and he is a witness of the Boxer Revolt in China; Corto disappears in Spain during the Civil War (1936-1939), opposing the leftists Republicans, supported by Mexico and Soviet Union, to the Nationalists of Francisco Franco, supported by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Portugal. Corto's parable seems to connect people struggles to break away from the dominating class ideas; he has no respect for social position and the conventions of society.

Leftists and right-wing characters in his story

Corto meets many historical characters, left and right wing as well; the right-wing ones were defeated and executed: this was the fate of Roman von Ungern-Sternberg Grigory and Mikhaylovich Semyonov.

The left-wing ones were successful; everybody knows what the doorman Iosif Stalin became when he left Ancona (I) and went back to Russia. Damdin Siikhbaatar won his battle, and he is the Mongolian National hero.

A logic vision for a man, Hugo Pratt, who worked with Hector Germàn Oerstheld, one of the many *desparecidos* because of their opposition to the military Junta.

Jorge Videla, Orlando Agosti and Emilio Massera formed the military junta that ousted the Argentinean president, Isabel Eva Perón in 1976. The Junta began a campaign to crush any dissent from their autocratic rule: social workers, trade unionists, writers, journalists, artists, and anyone suspected to be a left-wing activist became the target of the regime; many of them, about 30,000, were arrested tortured and disappeared; in Spanish they are called *desparecidos*.

The Quest for his personal Grail

Remember Hugo's father spiritual last will: *You too will find your treasure*, giving him a copy of "Treasure Island"? Corto is always in search of his treasure: king Salomon's mines, the magic emerald called the Clavicle of king Salomon, king Cirus the Persian treasure, afterwards purloined by Alexander the Great, in South America the Island marked by four aces on a map, and finally the highest step, not a jewel, but a treasure not made by matter, Mu alias Atlantis.

This, we would say obviously, happens in the last graphic novel with Corto written by Pratt. The companion of the quest is Rasputin, the dark supplement of Corto.

Pratt and Fascism

Pratt's relationship with fascism is a peculiar one, since his grandfather and his father as well were involved with that political side rising, even though the family had Jewish blood and Eugenio and Rolando were Freemasons, two elements contrary to the later evolution of that regime.

The writers and artists met by Corto, Hesse, Conrad, Reed, Rolfe, London, were communists or, at least, leftists. The exception is Gabriele D'Annunzio: he was a Mason, and he was not a leftist in today meaning, anyway it is not historically correct to categorize him as a fascist. The *Charta Quarnerina* (in Latin) or *Carta del Carnaro*, a document enacted to rule the newborn Repubblica in Fiume (I), immediately recognized by the Soviet Union, had a syndacalistic nuance and art and freedom

were its basements. This Constitution was written by the socialist and trade unionist Alceste de Ambris, with a formal revision by Gabriele D'Annunzio himself: his appearance in *The Fable of Venice* cannot mean a nostalgia of fascism.

In any case, Corto, or the same Pratt, cannot be categorized as a classic right-wing man, rather as an individualist anarchist with no commitment to the set of values of Catholicism, nor to the social vision of Communism: Corto eschews dogmatism and shows solidarity towards mankind. Pratt's juvenile membership to fascism shall be seen not as a political one, but just as the consequence of being born in Italy in the twenties of XX Century, and his behavior when he went back from Africa is well justified: Italy was at war! In any case Hugo, as soon as he became aware of the situation, sided with the Allies and there are no nostalgic clues in his work.

Is Corto a freemason?

Hugo Pratt was a freemason, and we will deal about that later; but what about Corto? In the first part of the *Fable of Venice*, Corto falls from a skylight down into a masonic meeting and he utters a well-known masonic sentence, but, asked if he is a mason, he answers that he is not, but that he hopes to remain a Free Mariner. Another of Hugo's riddles, since the Mariner Degree exists in the Royal Ark, a masonic Rite, and can be conferred to Master Masons only: where is the truth, has Corto ever been made a Mason? Corto 's behavior may seem inspired by the old Masonic motto.



TRUTH: it, or Knowledge, is the purpose of his search.

RELIEF: he often helps who is in unfairly in distress.

BROTHERLY LOVE: Corto acts for himself, and he is individualist, usually, but like a Knight in search of the Holy Grail, he takes the part of the oppressed and helps them.

In any case Corto is adogmatic, he mocks the established authorities and Freemasonry itself does not escape his irony, since he looks at Truth behind the veils.

Corto's favourite book is *Utopia* by Thomas Moore, but he was never finished with that book.

A Masonic clue: in the *Tale of Venice*, Corto finds the jewel he was searching for inside his own pocket.

Corto and his ladies



Hugo Pratt wrote: *It is by means of my work that the women I loved will live forever, forever fixed, beautiful prisoners of my stories cartoons, until somebody will open the book and then they will wander the readers' fantasy.* Corto's women are beautiful, but not flashy, clever, and never submitted to any man. They may be temporary overwhelmed by their sentiments, but they are

strong, their reason prevails, and they show they are less sentimental than Corto himself, who pretends to be cynic, but cynic he is not. CONG publisher released an Italian book: *Donne d'Avventura* (*Adventurous ladies*); the issue is unending... then we'll give the floor to Pratt and his pencils and watercolors.



Brother Hugo Pratt

Hugo Pratt openly declared to be a Freemason. On the 19 of November 1976, he was made a Freemason in the R.: Lodge “Hermes” of Venice, affiliated with the Gran Loggia d'Italia degli ALAM (Grand Lodge of Italy of the Ancient Free Accepted Masons).



Before the Meeting, Pratt gave back the Flaming Sword of the Lodge, that his father took during a fascist raid in 1924 and preserved at home. On the 27th of April 1977, he is passed Fellow Craft and on the 9th of September he is elevated to the Master Mason Degree. In 1989 Pratt joined the Rito Scozzese Antico Accettato (Scottish Antient Accepted Rite) in the Perfection Lodge “La Serenissima” (The Republic of Venice was called La Serenissima) of the Supremo Consiglio d'Italia, and became Maestro Segreto (Secret Master) during a joint Meeting in Nice, France, with the Perfection Lodge “Olivier secret” of the Grand Collège des Rites of the G.:O.:D.:F.:

According to Luigi Pruneti, past G.:L.:D.:I.: Grand Master, Hugo used to say that the Masonic path had been very useful to him: it was a cross section of society, of tensions and unfilled desires of man. Proceeding on the path, he became able to understand and to go beyond horizons previously unseen.

Hugo Pratt's exhibition at the *Musée de la Franc-Maçonnerie (Freemasonry Museum)* in February 2012 was inaugurated by M. Guy Arcizet, Grand Master of the G.:O.:D.:F.:

The exhibition catalog describes Pratt as the ideal Masonic Artist and Masonic Man, the Artist Craftsman respected and celebrated by the French Encyclopedists, son of a rationalistic culture, who was able to combine manual and essentially technical skills with the artistic flair and metaphysical intuition proper to the true art.

French Masonry Museum Director M. Pierre Mollier in front of one of the expo windows. It is possible to recognize Baron Corvo, one of the main characters of the *Fable of Venice*.

In 1995, few months before passing away, Hugo Pratt wrote his Masonic Last Will adding some images to his Fort Wheeling graphic novel, where he illustrated a Masonic Initiation; the images are now in the *Musée Maconnique* of G.:O.:D.:F.:

Pratt In America

In the USA Hugo's work is well known and much valued but by a limited number of comics specialists, like Miller's words explained. Masonic clues are not unusual in comics; Walt Disney and Stan Lee of Spiderman, for instance; in any case, Hugo's graphic approach was not very popular on this side of the Atlantic and some low-quality editions of the past did not help. Since 2014, IDW Publishing, working with Patrizia Zanotti, printed a good quality series of Corto's adventures.



Pratt's official site by Cong has now in its catalog a good number of Pratt's graphic novels in English; a full list and a description can be found on the net at: <https://cortomaltese.com/en>

The CONG products are sold as **ebooks** too.

If you are travelling to Italy and you program a visit to Pratt's city, Venice, bring with you *The Secret Venice of Corto Maltese*: it is not the usual tourist's travel guide: it's the best way to lose and find yourself in the most fascinating hidden treasures of Corto Maltese's city.

But, even if you are not, the true travel is inside yourself, and Corto can give your mind the wings you need to enter his amazing, fantastic, magic world.



We dedicate our work to our dearest Brother PIERO BOLDRIN K.T., Master Mason and 31° Scottish Rite, member of the R.:L.: Costantino Nigra of G.:O.:I.: in Turin and honorary member of other Italian Lodges and of the R.:L.: Giordano Bruno n° 181 in Paris, Right Worshipful Master, and former member of the G.:O.:I.: Rite Panel.

He was a Mason for 50 years and was invested of the higher Italian Masonic Honor, the Golden Giordano Bruno, named after the Italian philosopher and freethinker burned at the stake in 1600, who is the symbol of Italian Freemasonry.

Above all, Piero was our dearest friend, and now (as he often said) he is taking part in the Eternal Orient Meetings, in the place known only by the Sons of the Widow.

Piero was also, thanks to his amazing memory and immense education, among an incredible number of other things, a specialist in comics and Pratt's works; we have also used some of his notes and what he told us during our nearly daily dinners.

Brotherhood, Sisterhood, Adelphty, *Fraternité, Sororité, Adelphté*³⁷

The word *fraternity* has aroused much reticence in the past – much of it forgotten today; it has the power to arouse usage concerns today. The fight of women for their emancipation has compelled the word “sorority” into common usage. Today, the ideal of a society where we would go beyond the notion of gender to bring together only human beings in solidarity with each other leads to the neologism *adelphty*, which is not as new as one might think.



As a preamble: Fraternité vs Fraternities

This is what most Americans think of when we think of “fraternity”.

Generally, membership in a fraternity or sorority is obtained as an undergraduate student but continues thereafter for life. Some accept graduate students as well. [Check https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fraternities_and_sororities]



³⁷ Masonic Coffee # 35, April 8th, 2023. Article published in *La Chaîne d'union* n° 101, July 2022, p. 45-51 (file: “Du féminin en Loge”).

Individual fraternities and sororities vary in organization and purpose, but most share five common elements:

- secrecy,
- single-sex membership,
- selection of new members on the basis of a two-part vetting and probationary process known as rushing and pledging,
- ownership and occupancy of a residential property where undergraduate members live,
- a set of complex identification symbols that may include Greek letters, armorial achievements, ciphers, badges, grips, hand signs, passwords, flowers, and colors

Greek Life Organizations



Alpha Phi Alpha



Alpha Kappa



Kappa Alpha Psi



Omega Psi Phi



Delta Sigma
Theta



Phi Beta Sigma



Zeta Phi Beta



Sigma Gamma
Rho



Iota Phi Theta

Fraternities and sororities engage in philanthropic activities, host parties, provide “finishing” training for new members such as instruction on etiquette, dress and manners, and create networking opportunities for their newly graduated members.

Fraternities and sororities can be tax-exempt 501(c)(7) organizations in the United States.

Fraternities and sororities have been widely criticized for practicing **elitism and favoritism**, discriminating against non-white students and other marginalized groups, conducting **dangerous hazing rituals**, and facilitating alcohol abuse.

Fraternities specifically have been further criticized for encouraging misogynistic behavior and perpetrating sexual violence. Many colleges and universities have sought to reform or eliminate them due to these concerns, but these efforts have typically been met with intense controversy.

As a result of a 1978 hit movie, many modern Americans associate the word Fraternity with rites of Bacchus without knowing who or what those rites (or Bacchus) even were.

Nepotism: If your great-grandfather graduated from the same college you're expected to attend, and belonged to a Greek Fraternity on campus, and then your grandfather did the same, and then your father did the same – you're guaranteed admittance to the same university and fraternity because you are grandfathered

in – meaning that your character, your grades, your criminal record simply don't matter in the scheme of things. It is nepotism.

Once you are in “the Frat” you will join other young men who have mostly been accepted because of who their parents are, and how much is donated annually to the Frat.

There is a system of rotating brothers to attend classes and take notes for all, tutors help with or actually to do your homework, to take tests for you, etc. Your job as a brother in the Frat is to do whatever your older brothers deem necessary. This is often preparing for large and raucous symposiums, or literally: drinking parties. Only other Greeks may come, of course, and only Greek Sorority sisters...of course, civilian ladies may come if invited by a brother.



Every major college has a Frat House more infamous than all the others put together – it is a tradition, after all, and brothers who have graduated return to their alma mater to relive the debauchery of their youth.

This is what the average American over the age of 18 usually thinks when they hear “fraternity.”

Of course, it is not fair. Many sons of the rich are doing their own work and living virtuously amongst all the temptations, maybe.



Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

The word *fraternity* is of Latin origin and had been exclusively assigned to religious male groups. It evolved into one of the fundamentals of masonry and then of the French Republic.

Freemasons, desiring action in world of human affairs shared by women cannot remain inside the temples deaf to the gender language questions agitating society.

In 2018, the High Council for Equality in France, in its text *For a Constitution Guaranteeing Equality between Women and Men*, recommends “a reflection on the use of the term fraternity in the motto of the Republic” which could be replaced by *adelphity*, *solidarity*, etc. An outcry!

ADELPHITÉ

Have we forgotten that in 1896, the freemason Léon Bourgeois proposed the word *solidarity* instead of *fraternity* in the French motto?

As for the word adelphity, coined thirty years ago as a neologism, it has already made its way into society, and can reactivate the universalist ideal. Doesn't it mean integrating the feminine part of the fraternity? And even go beyond the reference to sex or gender?

And if we take out of oblivion the word adelphotes, adelphity is enriched by a tradition: it is a word that comes from the past and tends towards the future.

Fraternity, a word in question

The word fraternity has a vast semantic field. Is it the utopia of a universal love towards which we tend? Or is it the feeling that unites a group: Christians, freemasons, revolutionaries, fighters, workers, the nation?



Universalism or exclusion?

The historian Mona Ozouf reminds us of the reticence we may have had towards the word. Fraternity was not the first notion that imposed itself on the French Revolution³⁸.

The first demand was that of liberty, then came equality, two rights that were inscribed in the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* of 1789.



Fraternity is of a different nature: Robespierre evoked the “duties of fraternity that unite all men and all nations”. However, in the revolutionary process, by a dialectical movement studied by Sartre, it becomes in 1792 a fraternity of terror, that of a small group that unites in its fight against other groups. The oath of brotherhood becomes an oath of hatred, giving the brother the right to punish the traitor, the false-brother: “Brotherhood or death”. Brotherhood of arms because there is a common enemy. Brotherhood of the Khmer Rouge, of the Jihadists, of the Taliban. The one that sends tanks to “brother” countries to call them to order.

38 Mona Ozouf, “Fraternité”, in *Dictionnaire critique de la Révolution française*, tome Idées, ed. Flammarion, 1992, p. 199-215.

Secular or Christian?

The French Second Republic, in 1848, realizes in politics the Masonic ideals³⁹. It “has for principle Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity”. The motto of the ephemeral Republic became that of the G.:O.:D.:F.:., which wrote its Constitution in 1849, specifying that freemasonry “has as its basis the existence of God and the immortality of the soul”. The Brotherhood flourishes in the context of a revolutionary romanticism combining Christians and Republicans, it comes to perfect the trinity of the “holy motto”. By its emotional dimension, it arouses great lyrical elan in the electoral proclamations, it is for Edgar Quinet “the social justice that the Gospel promised to the earth”, for Victor Hugo, “the sublime word (...) written by the hand of God”.

When, after the Second Empire, the French Third Republic wanted to reappear the motto, it was not without resistance. In this anticlerical period, some people rejected the word *fraternity* for its Christian connotations⁴⁰. It was not perpetuated until 1879, and on the

DOSSIER

CONSTITUTION DU GRAND ORIENT DE FRANCE

ARTICLE PREMIER

La franc-maçonnerie, institution essentiellement philanthropique, philosophique et progressive, a pour objet la recherche de la vérité, l'étude de la morale et la pratique de la solidarité; elle travaille à l'amélioration matérielle et morale, au perfectionnement intellectuel et social de l'Humanité.

Elle a pour principes la tolérance mutuelle, le respect des autres et de soi-même, la liberté absolue de conscience.

Considérant les conceptions métaphysiques comme étant du domaine exclusif de l'appréciation individuelle de ses membres, elle se refuse à toute affirmation dogmatique.

Elle attache une importance fondamentale à la Laïcité.

Elle a pour devise : Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité.



39 André Combes, “February-June 1848. The Masonic Republic”, in *L'Histoire* 256, July-August 2001.

40 Cf site diplomatie.gouv.fr.

occasion of July 14, 1880, it was decided that it would be engraved on the pediment of public buildings. It took a century for the Fraternity to become a republican principle⁴¹.



Fraternity or solidarity?

However, at the end of the 19th century, the word *solidarity* was increasingly substituted for *fraternity* in political speeches. In 1879, the banner of the Socialist Congress in Marseilles, France, bore the words “Liberté Égalité Solidarité”⁴². The freemason Léon Bourgeois, in his book *Solidarité* (1896), theorized the idea of social debt of some towards others, in the present as well as with past and future times. He applied it politically and legally at the national and international level with the creation of the League of Nations, an action for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize. This freemason, a great politician, proposed to replace in the motto the word *Fraternity*, an “abstract and unsanctioned” notion, by *Solidarity*.

41 Mona Ozouf, “Liberté”, in *Le 1* n° 305, 14 juillet 2020.

42 Mona Ozouf, in *Les lieux de mémoire*, III, 3, Gallimard, 1992, p. 618.

Closer to today, the opinion of the French Constitutional Council of July 6, 2018, about aid to migrants, reminds us that fraternity is a principle of constitutional value, that from this principle, superior to the law, derives “the freedom to help others with a humanitarian purpose”. However, public opinion was indignant about what was called not the crime of *fraternity*, but the “crime of solidarity”.



Fraternity thus remains a republican principle, but it is frozen in the tradition of the motto, when in society solidarity has taken over in the current vocabulary to express the mutual aid that we owe each other between human beings. Fraternity, of the order of feeling and of the sacred, has indeed given way to solidarity, of the order of action and of the profane. It is part of contemporary ethics: to help those who need it, whether at the collective level through public policies and humanitarian associations or at the individual level through punctual aid. Solidarity, writes Cynthia Fleury, “is perhaps our surest way, even if it is exclusively profane, of living fraternity”⁴³.

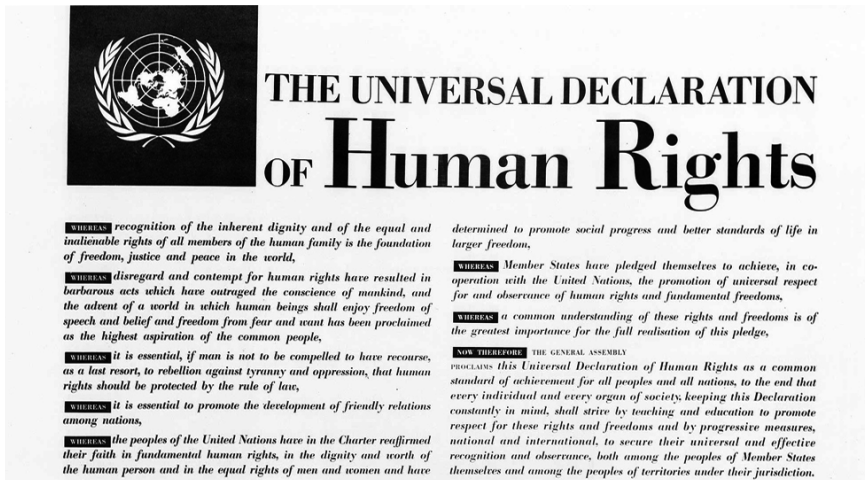
Universal or masculine?

The women, although often the first in the revolutions, were excluded for a long time from the “universal” fraternity. The rights of the man and the citizen, affirmed in 1789, concerned only the men – only the male. The “universal” suffrage established by the French 2nd Republic, in spite of the “holy” motto, is for men in the masculine sense. For women, no freedom, no equality, no fraternity.

43 Cynthia Fleury, Mona Ozouf and Michelle Perrot, *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, Le 1 en livre*, ed. de L'Aube, 2021, p. 71.

It is necessary to wait a century and a half so that the women find their rights clearly specified with equality to the men, in the *Universal Declaration of the Human rights* of 1948: “All the human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

Today, it is recommended to say in French “droits humains” rather than “droits de l’homme”, on the model of the English *human rights*, without ambiguity.

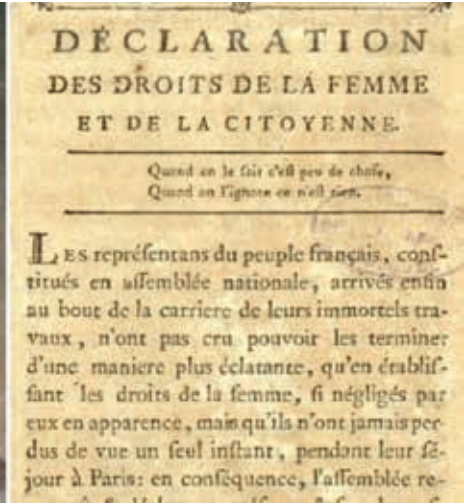


Sisterhood, solidarity between women

The Latin etymology is indisputable: the *frater* is the brother; the sister is called *soror*. Olympe de Gouges, in the “Preface for the ladies” of her *Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Citizen* addressed her “very dear sisters”.

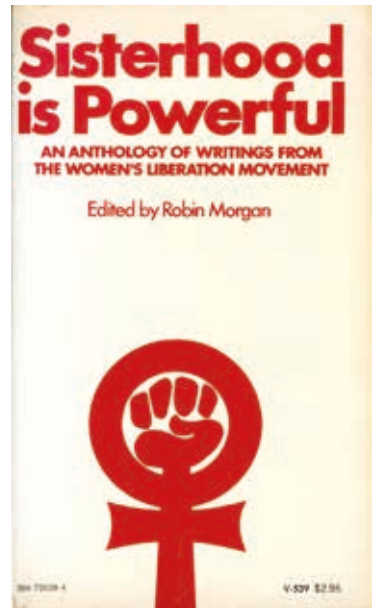
In 1848, faced with the injustice of the so-called universal suffrage reserved for men, women gathered in the awareness of being sisters.

The great turning point came in the 1960s, when feminists became aware of the need for union for their emancipation. It was time for female



solidarity. Since men had fraternity, women would have sorority. The word appeared in English in 1970 with the anthology of the American Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is powerful*. We saw in demonstrations in France on a banner: “Liberté Egalité Fraternité Sororité”.

The word already existed. In the Middle Ages, it designated a female community, religious or not. During the Renaissance, we find it in the *Third Book* of Rabelais, chapter XXVII. It had gradually disappeared, the feminist movement found it in the communities of American students, and made it enter again in the dictionaries. The #MeToo movement has given it new vigor. The recent manifesto of the Women's Foundation, organized in three parts, Liberty, Equality, Sorority, proclaims, “it is time to bring to our republican motto the point of view of this second half of humanity, because without us it is only a view of the mind”.



Adelphity, a universalist ideal of a united humanity

However, if sorority has become a reality, it is not for us freemasons an ideal of society to juxtapose fraternity and sorority. We want to reunite what is scattered, to move towards a society where harmonious relationships would reign between all human beings, free and equal in dignity and in rights, in fact as in words.

Are sisters like brothers?

In a 2013 issue of the French publication *Chain of Union*, Pierre Auréjac was astonished that Sisters are comfortable in a masculine symbolic universe, evoking “the absent one”. Why have the freemasons not kept the mythical figure of Noah, the architect of the first rituals, the one that the painter Bassano (16th century) represents building the Ark with his wife, his sons, and their wives? Or Balkis, the Queen of Sheba? Or Mary Magdalene looking for the body of the crucified one?



It is as for the word *man*, women are persuaded that they are brothers like the others. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has shown how language hides mechanisms of social domination. How by the language one can make acceptable a symbolic violence of domination, accepted, and internalized at the same time as the language which conveys it: "The characteristic of the dominant ones is to be able to make acceptable their particular way of being as universal". He calls for "the questioning of the obvious."⁴⁴

When our lodges were composed of Brothers and Sisters, some proposed to replace *fraternity* by *friendship*, a term used in many distinctive titles, in reference to the first article of Anderson's *Constitutions*: "Masonry becomes the Center of Union and the means of establishing a true *friendship* among people who should have remained perpetually distant"⁴⁵.

The adelphotès

The ideal of the first Christians is that of the human family. Now, in the first three centuries, the common language of diffusion of ideas in the Roman Empire was Greek. A new religion required new words. Peter, to designate the community of Christians, invented the noun *adelphotes* from the Greek root *adelph-*, which means both *adelphos*, Brother, and *adelphé*, Sister.

44 Pierre Bourdieu, *La Domination masculine*, coll. Liber, Seuil, 1998, p. 69 et 96.

45 Les Constitutions d'Anderson, English text and French translation by Daniel Ligou. EDIMAF; 4th edition (1995), pages 178-9.



The word appears for the first time in his first epistle⁴⁶: “Respect everyone. Love adelphity” (in Greek *adelphoteta*, the community of Brothers and Sisters). The word was found and studied in a 1991 work by Michel Dujarier, *Église-Fraternité*, tome I, *Les origines de l'expression adelphotès-fraternitas aux trois premiers siècles du christianisme*⁴⁷.

The research continues with a study in English published in the journal *Vigilae Christianae*: “Adelphotès - two frequently overlooked meanings”. These two meanings are: “religious community” and “community of men and women living together”⁴⁸. We find this word *adelphotès* in the first Christian communities of North Africa, among the Fathers of the Church in Cappadocia, then among the Apostolic Fathers Irenaeus, Origen and especially among Tertullian and Cyprian. The Cappadocian Basil of Caesarea enacts rules for community life. Rule 33 deals with decision-making in adelphacy, by the vote of the Brothers and Sisters.

Early Christians used the word *philadelphia* to refer to the love that reigns in *adelphotès*, which etymologically means “love between Brothers and Sisters”. In America, in 1682, William Penn named “Philadelphia” the new city founded in an ideal of religious tolerance. The noun *philadelphia*, which was proposed in the 18th century to designate political solidarity, has not been preserved in everyday language. But in 1852, in London, the Lodge “Les Philadelphes” affiliated or initiated French political exiles.



46 Peter, 1st Epistle, 2,17 and 5,9.

47 Éditions du Cerf, 107 pages.

48 Daniel F. Stramara, Jr, “ADELPHOTES - Two frequently overlooked meanings”, in *Vigilae Christianae*, vol. 51, n° 3 (Aug. 1997), pp. 316-320, published by Brill.

The root adelph - and its current derivatives

Although the adelphic adjective only made a brief literary appearance at the end of the 19th century, the adelphic adjective, from the Greek *adelphikos*, has existed since the Middle Ages and is found in legal texts. It is used in anthropology for relationships between brothers and sisters. It is on this form that the adverb *adelphically* was created today.

Adelphie, created in botany (Liné, 1814: welding of stamens in *adelphous* plants), has been used since 1990 instead of *fratrie* in anthropology, history, and genealogy.

Today, the noun *adelphe* is spreading to go beyond any assignment to a gender: “To you, my sister, my brother, my adelphe” is the title of a column by a collective against transphobia in the French newspaper *Libération*⁴⁹.



49 https://www.liberation.fr/debats/2020/02/26/a-toi-ma-sœur-mon-frere-mon-adelphe_1779666/

The current feminist trend, haking up language habits and what theyunconsciously convey, promotes the term *adelphity*. The *Manifesto of the Watchdogs against Macho Violence*⁵⁰, launched on March 8, 1999, by Florence Montreynaud, introduces the word: “We, women and men acting for freedom, equality, adelphity and tolerance, ask that a law against sexism be voted in our country”. She defines in a note *adelphity* as “harmonious relations between women and men”. The word was proposed by Jean-Pierre Bacot in the masonic context⁵¹.

We thought it was a new word, but we discover that it comes from a forgotten past, that of *adelphotès*, which gives it the roots that can allow it to strengthen itself to accompany the future society.

Conclusion

The movements that agitate society and make it evolve are accompanied by an exploration of language: we look for the right words, we find forgotten words, we create them.

Let us listen to the revolutionary Louis-Sébastien Mercier who, like many others, had written a dictionary of neologisms to reflect the new society⁵² : “I have dared, braving vain and passing clamors, considering the language as it has been spoken, as it will undoubtedly be spoken one day, or as finally it should be spoken, (...) I have grafted onto the trees of a vast forest several wildlings, if you will, but I have endeavored to make people eat new fruit”.

In our turn, should we not dare?

50 <https://chiennesdegarde.fr/qui-sommes-nous/manifeste/>

51 Jean-Pierre Bacot, *Les Femmes et la Franc-maçonnerie en Europe : Histoire et Géographie d'une inégalité (Women and Freemasonry in Europe: History and Geography of an Inequality)*, Véga, 2009, p. 164.

52 L.-S. Mercier, *Néologie ou Vocabulaire de mots nouveaux : à renouveler, ou pris dans des acceptions nouvelles*, an IX, 1801. He invented the word *fraternisation*, which Louis Blanc preferred to *fraternity* (cf. Mona Ozouf, *Idées*, opus quoted p. 211)

Annex 1 – Fraternal American Organizations

Prominent fraternal American organizations (as of today): *The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Freemasons, Odd Fellows, Loyal Order of Moose, Knights of Columbus, The Shriners*. Some *Fraternities, Brotherhood* and *Sisterhood* or para-masonic organizations in USA bear these words in their titles.

Most of them follow the pattern of masonic meetings, and rituals have much the same form as the York rite: passwords, signs of recognition, grips, odes, or prayers. (All rituals of the organizations listed below are available at the Sot2W library).

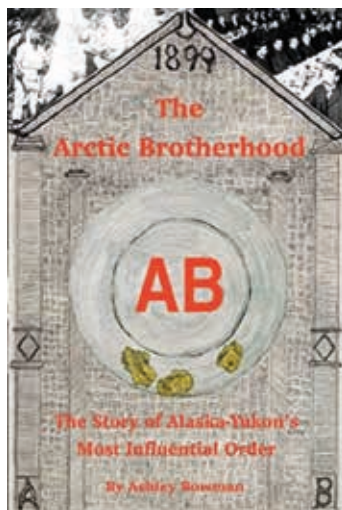
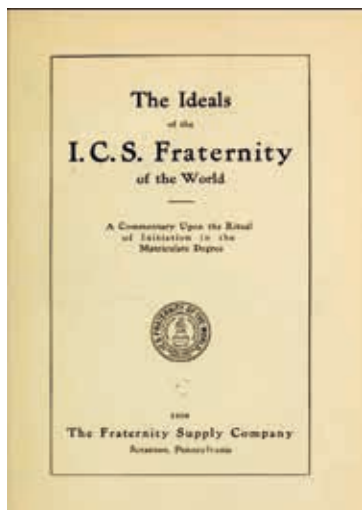
Fraternities, Brotherhood, and Sisterhood

- I.C.S. Fraternity of the World

Ritual of the Matriculate Degree, 1907.

More information:

- *The Ideals of the I.C.S. Fraternity of the World; a Commentary upon the Ritual of Initiation in the Matriculate Degree*, by I.C.S. Fraternity of the World, 1908 Publisher Scranton, Pa,
- <https://archive.org/details/idealsoficsfrate00icsf>



- **Arctic Brotherhood, 1904–present**

Founded in Skagway, Alaska in 1899 following the arrival of the Ocean Steamer “City of Seattle”. The founding membership roster boasted 11 members but soon swelled to more than 300 as the roots of the Brotherhood spread amongst the miners readying themselves for the trip up and over the Chilkoot Pass enroute to the Klondike gold fields. The lodge provided health and death insurance for its members, and generally improved educational and social conditions of the booming mining camps. Its original Lodge #1 building currently serves as home of the Skagway Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Initiation Ritual, 1904.

More information: <http://arcticbrotherhood.org/>

- **International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers , 1880–present**

“An elite membership of skilled craftsmen, skilled craftswomen, and industrial workers trained and committed to stand apart as the best. We’re the choice for workers who want an innovative, forward-thinking union that looks out for its members today and tomorrow. And we’re the choice for owners, contractors and other employers who want to get the job done right – on time, within budget and safely. Every time.”

International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers, and Iron Ship Builders Ritual, 1892.

More information: <https://boilermakers.org/>

- **Daughters of Sphinx, 1893–present**

Pwara-masonic, like OES, (member of the Supreme Departments Combined Convention Enterprise).

Fraternal Degrees ritual, 1912.



- **Loyal Americans of the Republic**

Ritual of the Fraternal Degree, 1911.

- **Fraternal Aid Union, 1915-1933**

Founded circa 1915 by various fraternal benefit societies that had broken down due to an inadequate assessment program. They used a new method called the “American Four” plan which combined the American Experience table with a 4% interest. This had successfully put the union in financial order by 1919. Among the groups that merged into it were the *Improved Order of Heptasophs* in 1917. In 1920 there were 94,000 members according to *Statistics, Fraternal Societies*. By 1923 this fell to 79,045 benefit members in 1,908 lodges. Then it went down to 67,385 by 1930. Became *Standard Life Association* in 1933. The union was governed by a supreme lodge and an advisory board, and its officers included a supreme president and supreme secretary.

Initiation Ritual, 1916.

- **Scandinavian Brotherhood, 1894-1992**

The Scandinavian Fraternity of America was founded in 1894 as the Scandinavian Brotherhood of America but changed its name in 1915. It was principally a beneficial group to aid its membership when threatened by sickness, unemployment, or death.

Ritual, 1905, *Initiation Ritual*, 1941.

More information: http://www2.hsp.org/collections/Balch%20manuscript_guide/html/sfa.html



- **Fraternal Order of American Lions**

Ritual 1st and 3rd degree, 1910

- **Fraternal Order of Eyes**

Ritual of the Second or Right Eye Degree, Ritual of the third or master's degree, 1954

- **Scandinavian Sisterhood**

Ritual and Order of Business, n.d.

- **Fraternal Order of the Free**

Ritual of the Male and Female Lodges, n.d.

- **Sunbeam Fraternity**

Initiation Ritual, 1926.

- **Benevolent Order of Deer**

Ritual of the Degree of Service, Ritual of the Degree of Purity, 1913

- **Supreme Chapter of Delta Sigma Delta Fraternity, 1882**

Delta Sigma Delta, founded on November 15, 1882, is the oldest and largest of the international professional dental fraternities.

Ritual, 1899

More information: <http://www.deltsig.com/>

- **The Fraternal Tribunes**

Initiation Ritual, 1905.

- **Fraternal Order of Police**

The Fraternal Order of Police is a fraternal organization consisting of sworn law enforcement officers in the United States. It reports a membership of over 355,000 members organized in 2,100 local chapters, state lodges, and the national Grand Lodge.

Ritual, 1963.

More information: <https://fop.net/>



- **The Provident Fraternity**

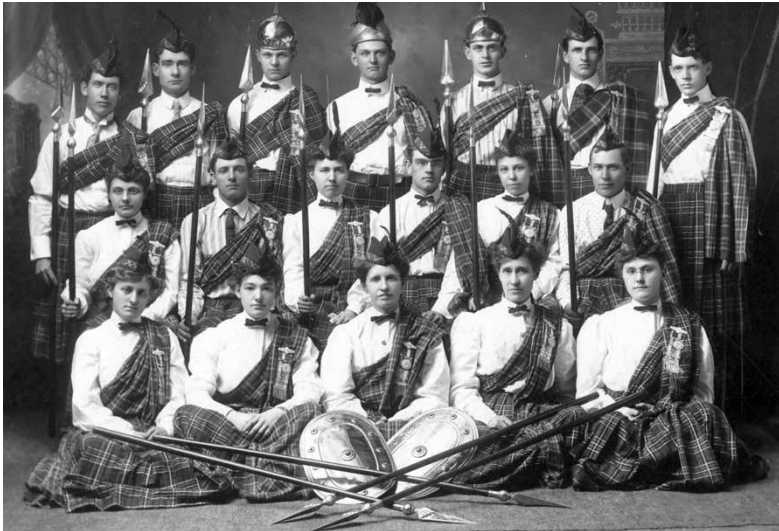
Initiation Ritual, 1916

- **Equitable Fraternal Union, 1917**

Founded in August 1897. It admitted men and women regardless of religious or political belief. Had 29,310 members in 504 lodges in 1923. In 1979 it had 45,000 members. And 29,733 in 1993. Lodges called "Assemblies", national structure "General Assembly". There was a ritual which mentioned God and Heaven, but not Jesus, which led to criticism from some religious groups. The society still had a ritual in 1979 with an Inner and Outer Guard and a blackball system for choosing new members. When the Equitable Fraternal Union merged with the Fraternal Reserve Association in 1930, they became the Equitable Reserve Association. Absorbed *Germania Mutual Life Assurance* in 1949 and the *Royal League* of Berwyn, Ill. at a later point. In addition to insurance the group sponsors scholarships, softball, junior league baseball, and kids Christmas parties (usually through the local units).

Ritual of the E.F.U. Ceremony for the Initiation of Men only, 1917.

- **The Royal Highlanders**



The Royal Highlanders was a “benevolent and fraternal corporation” originally established in Aurora, Nebraska in 1895. The goal of The Royal Highlanders was “to unite for mutual benefit and fraternal

protection all white persons who are in good health, of exemplary character, and between the ages of 16 and 65". The Royal Highlanders headquarters building in Aurora was supposedly modeled after Balmoral Castle in Scotland.

Ritual of Tower Building, 1897, Ritual of Fraternal Degree, 1897

More information:

<https://history.nebraska.gov/the-royal-highlanders/>

- **Great Southern Fraternal Union**

Ritual of the First Degree of Adoption, Ritual of the Fourth Degree, 1922.



- **United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America**

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, often simply called the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, was formed in 1881 by Peter J. McGuire and Gustav Luebker.

It has become one of the largest trade unions in the United States, and

through chapters, and locals, there is international cooperation that poises the brotherhood for a global role.

Ritual, 19xx

More information: <https://www.carpenters.org/>



- **Fraternal Order of Eagles, 1898**

It is an international fraternal organization that was founded on February 6, 1898, in Seattle, Washington, by a group of six theater owners

including John Cort (the first president), brothers John W. and Tim J. Considine, Harry (H.L.) Leavitt (who later joined the Loyal Order of Moose), Mose Goldsmith and Arthur Williams. Originally made up of those engaged in one way or another in the performing arts, the Eagles grew and claimed credit for establishing the Mother's Day holiday in the United States as well as the “impetus for Social Security” in the United States. Their lodges are known as “aeries”.

Initiation Ritual, 1955

More information: <https://www.foe.com/>

- **United Brotherhood or Fenian Brotherhood**

The Fenian Brotherhood was an Irish republican organization founded in the United States in 1858 by John O'Mahony and Michael Doheny. It was a precursor to Clan na Gael, a sister organization to the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Members were commonly known as “Fenians”. O'Mahony, who was a Gaelic scholar, named his organization after the Fianna, the legendary band of Irish warriors led by Fionn mac Cumhaill.

Initiation Ritual, 1860.

More information: fenians.org

Annex 2

Other organizations related or founded by freemasons

Social clubs, philosophical or esoteric societies, some of which are called groups, are open to men and women and function like trade unions for the benefit (health, insurance...) of the members.

- **AMORC, 1700s-present**

Activated in the USA in 1915, by a freemason Harvey Spencer Lewis, the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosæ Crucis operates as worldwide philosophical and humanistic, non-sectarian, and apolitical fraternal order in the mystical tradition, and supports secular research and learning in the arts and humanities. Open to both men and women.

More information: <https://www.rosicrucian.org/>



- **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ~1820s-present**

The Mormonism is the religious tradition and theology of the Latter-Day Saint movement of Restorationist Christianity started by Joseph Smith (1805-1844) in Western New York in the 1820s and 1830s.

The endowment resembled the rites of freemasonry that Smith had observed two months earlier when he had been initiated “at sight” into the Nauvoo masonic lodge. At first, the endowment was open only to men, who were initiated into a special group called the Anointed Quorum.



For women, Smith introduced the Relief Society, a service club and sorority within which Smith predicted women would receive “the keys of the kingdom”.



- **The Rotary International, 1905-present**

Rotary International is one of the largest service organizations in the world. Its stated mission is to “provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders”. It is a non-political and non-religious organization. Membership is by invitation and based on various social factors. Founded by Paul Percy Harris (1868-1947) along with three friends, Coal Merchant Sylvester Schiele, German American Mining Engineer (and freemason) Gustav Löhner, and Confectioner Hiram Shorey.

- **Eclectic Assembly, 1893-1920s**

Among the founders were several freemasons. Membership was open to men and women. The ritual was based on “mythology” and its signs refer to “God’s covenant with Man”. There are also references to the “...red men, the early inhabitants of America.” The orders emblem was an anchor inside of an equilateral triangle with the words “Hope, Truth, and Charity” emblazoned on each side. The organization was apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Empire Knights of Relief, 1889-1920s**

Among the founders were Freemasons, Oddfellows, members of the Royal Arcanum and the Ancient Order of United Workmen. Open to “temperate, industrious” men ages 20–55 years who could pass a medical examination. While they had no secrets or oaths, members did have a “solemn obligation” to help each other, and the supreme secretary did say that the group counted as a secret society. The ritual was based on the Golden Rule and inculcated “obedience to moral and civil law”. The motto of the order was “Benevolence, Philanthropy, and Charity”. It was apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Equitable Aid Union, 1879**

Four of the founders were freemasons. Membership was open to men and women above the 36°30' latitude (The Missouri Compromise of 1820 designated the latitude, 36 degrees 30 minutes, as being a dividing line—slavery was allowed below the line, but not above) who were 15 to 55 years old. Locals called Unions, state and provincial organizations called Grand Unions and the highest organ was the Supreme Organ. In April 1897 the union went into receivership.

More informations:

https://nationalheritagemuseum.typepad.com/library_and_archives/equitable_aid_union/



- **Fraternal Mystic Legion, 1884**

The founders were several freemasons, some of whom had attained the 32° in the Scottish Rite. Other members were Pythians. Membership was open to acceptable men ages 18-49 who were “business and professional men”. Locals were called Subordinate Rulings, state organizations Grand Rulings and the national structure the Supreme Ruling. Subordinate Rulings were founded in “healthful localities,

where a sufficient number of good, eligible and desirable candidates are found”. Officers included the supreme mystic ruler, supreme treasurer, and supreme medical director. In June 1894 the Supreme Ruling moved from Columbus to Philadelphia. Each Subordinate Ruling had a “Worthy Chaplain” who opened and closed meetings with prayers.

- **Fraternal Union of America, 1896-1920s**

Founded by F. F. Rose and F. A. Falkenburg. Rose was a member of several fraternal groups including freemasons, Heptasophs, Red Men, JOUAM, AOUW, Modern Woodmen, Pythians and Phi Delta Theta. Open to men and women. Had 5,000 members in the late 1890s. Offered death, sickness, disability, and old age benefits. However, it had no secret features. It was still around as of 1912 but had apparently become defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Grand Fraternity, 1885-1936**

Its founders included freemasons, Knights of Honor, members of the Royal Arcanum, the American Legion of Honor, and the Order of Chosen Friends. Membership was open to acceptable white persons over the age of 18, of good moral character who believed in a supreme being. All members known as Fraters, regardless of gender. Its emblem was a four-leaf clover with the letters spelling out “Help” on the leaves. The ritual involved no mysteries or historical incidents but was limited to an explanation of the orders principles. The order merged with the Tribe of Ben-Hur in 1936.

- **Home Circle, 1879**

Founded as an auxiliary degree of the Royal Arcanum, open to members of the latter as well as their wives, mothers, daughters, and women friends. In addition to the Royal Arcanum, all the founders were freemasons and members of the Knights of Honor; some were also Oddfellows, and members of the Ancient Order of United Workmen.

Membership was open to men and women 18-55 who could pass a medical exam and were accepted by ballot. The ritual of the order was based on the Golden Rule and stressed morality and correct living. The order's emblem was an H and a circle.

- **Home Forum Benefit Society, 1892-1920s**

Founders included freemasons and members of the Modern Woodmen of America. Membership was open to men and women 16-55 who lived in healthful areas and were not engaged in a hazardous occupation. Members who became intoxicated were suspended for three months and were expelled for a second offense. The ritual was based on ancient Roman motifs, hence the name “Forum”. Its emblem was a gold star with the initials of honesty, fraternity, benevolence, temperance, and patriotism at the angles. The initiation ceremony involved teaching the initiate the Forum Signal and using a fasces and Bible to explain the goals of the order.

- **International Fraternal Alliance of Baltimore**

Founders included freemasons, Oddfellows, Red Men, and Pythians. Membership was open to men and women. There were 10,000 members in 30 states and Canada in the late 1890s. The order's ritual showed signs of masonic influence. It combined aspects of a fraternal order with a building and loan association. In addition to paying sick, disability and death benefits, it also helped members secure homes on favorable terms.

- **Iron Hall, of Baltimore City, 1892**

Founders included Freemasons, Pythians, members of the Knights of Honor and of the Order of Chosen Friends. Membership was open to acceptable white persons 16-65 who believed in a supreme being and were “competent to earn a livelihood”. It had 9,000 members in the late 1890s. The order has a “brief and pointed ritual”. Offered sick, death and old age benefits.

- **Knights of the Globe, 1889-1920s**

The order itself was fraternal, but not beneficiary. A connected organization, the Knights of the Globe Mutual Benefit Association was created in 1890 and open only to members of the order or to its female auxiliary, the daughters of the Globe. Among the founders were Scottish Rite freemasons, Oddfellows, members of the AOUW, the Royal Arcanum, American Legion of Honor, Woodmen of the World, and the Grand Army of the Republic among others. The M.B.A. was open to members of the parent organization between ages 18-56. Worked four degrees – Volunteer, Militant, Knight, and Valiant Knight. It was apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Knights and Ladies of America**

Founders included freemasons, members of the American Legion of Honor, Royal Arcanum and the JOUAM. Open to men and women 16-60. The locals were called Subordinate Councils and the overall group the supreme council.

The ritual work of the group was described as “not elaborate”. Motto “Love, Truth, Justice”. Provided death, sick and disability benefits as well as building and loan features.

- **Mystic Workers of the World, 1882**

Founder was C. W. Clendenen of Fulton, Illinois who was a freemason, Pythian, Maccabee and a member of both the Woodmen of the World and the Modern Woodmen of America. Membership was open to men and women between 16 and 55 years old. Those unable to pass a physical examination were denied benefit membership but could become social members. Workers of the “customary list of hazardous occupations” were not eligible for membership.

The ritual of the order emphasized charity and was based on 1 Corinthians 13. The orders emblem consisted of two pillars topped by two globes with an open Bible, the scales of justice, and a plane and square. Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee examined the constitution

and rituals of the order and could find nothing in it that would make it objectionable to Catholics. The organization became Fidelity Life Assurance in 1930.

More informations:

https://www.encyclopediadubuque.org/index.php?title=MYSTIC_WORKERS_OF_THE_WORLD

<https://www.rarenewspapers.com/view/615631>

Mystic Workers of the World, The Motive Degree, 1925; Ritual 1925.



- **National Fraternal Union, 1889-1920s**

Founders included freemasons, Oddfellows, and Pythians. Membership was open to men and women and stood at about 10,000 in the late 1890s. The three degrees of the ritual corresponded to the three words of its motto “Advancement, Protection, and Fraternity”. Its emblem was a six-pointed star containing an NFU monogram, surrounded by a chain with the orders motto. The order offered sickness, disability, and accident insurance as well as endowment funds. It was the first fraternal order to also loan surpluses to building and loans association plans. It was apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **National Protective Life Association, 1891**

Founders were freemasons. Open to acceptable men and women. Originally locals were called Legions with state organizations called Grand Legions and the overall organization the National Legion. By

1923 the organization had 372 “subordinate lodges”. Offered benefits on a semi-endowment plan by which part of the death benefits could be given during life. Also offered sick and disability benefits and a cash surrender after five years. A historic building survived until 2015.

- **National Reserve Association, 1891**

Founded by F. W. Sears who was a 32-degree freemason, an Oddfellow, Pythian and member of other several other fraternal orders besides. Membership was open to both men and women. There were about 5,000 members in the late 1890s. Offered “permanent, total and death benefits”.

- **National Union, 1881**

Among the founders were Dr. A. E. Keyes, who had been Supreme Director of the Knights of Honor and Supreme Regent of the Royal Arcanum, N.N. Leyman who had been on the Committee of Laws of the supreme council of the Royal Arcanum, George W. Cole, freemason, and others who were experienced in fraternal affairs. Membership was open to white male citizens of good moral character, sound bodily health aged 20-50. There were 48,000 members at the end of 1896. At some point the name was changed to National Union Assurance Society. The group was intensely patriotic, and its ritual was based on the American flag. Its emblem was a “badge representing a shield” in the national colors.

- **North American Union, 1893**

Changed name to North American Union Life Assurance Society in 1925. Membership originally open to Protestant, Catholic and Jewish white males who could pass a medical examination. There was also a women's department. By the 1970s women had their own Councils (local organizations) and the status of the racial restrictions was unclear. However, by the mid-1990s the order was open to men and women of all races. The Unions motto was “One for all, and all for one”. The

organization had prayers and burial services, but no Chaplains. They claimed that they did “not interfere with any man’s religion”. Over the years the union was known to sponsor recreational and leisure activities and as well as civic and charitable causes “especially those promoted by the freemasons”.

- **Order of the Continental Fraternal Union, 1890-1920s**

Among the founders were freemasons, Oddfellows, members of the Royal Arcanum, Knights of Honor, and the Ancient Order of American Workmen. Open to men and women. Had approximately 3,000 members in the late 1890s. Its emblem was a shield with clasped hands with the letters U.H.F. above and the word “Union” below. It offered sickness and death benefits, attempting to charge as near the actual cost as possible. They were apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Order of Equity, 1889**

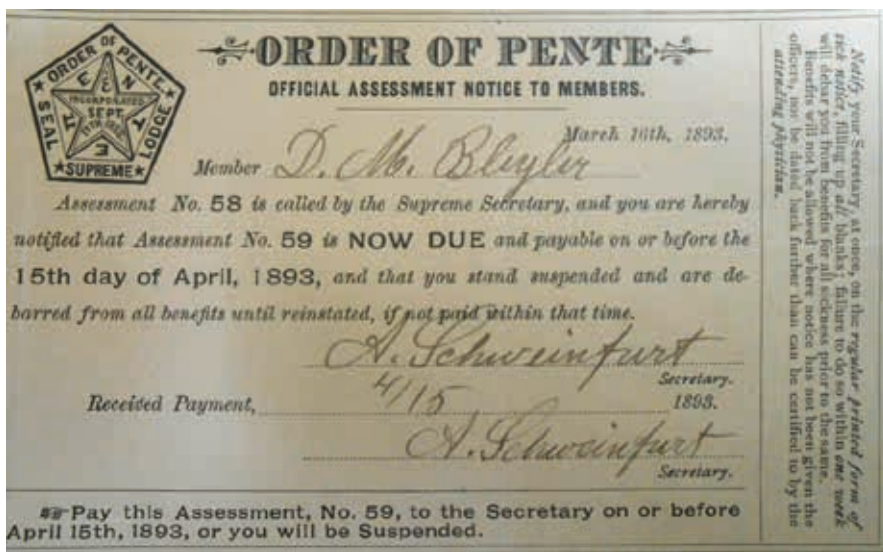
Founders included freemasons, Pythians, and Oddfellows. Open to men and women. Had about 4,000 members scattered over 20 states, though concentrated in the Midwest. Ritual based on the Biblical stories of the Good Samaritan and the healing of the lepers. The order paid sick, temporary disability and funeral benefits, as well as operating as a short-term assessment society, i.e., members in the order for a specified amount of time could cash in their certificates.

- **Order of the Golden Chain, 1881-1920s**

Founding members included freemasons, members of the Knights of Honor, American Legion of Honor, and the Royal Arcanum. Open to men 21-55 years old. There were 11,000 members in the late 1890s. The ritual was based on the idea of a “golden chain of friendship”, as illustrated in the order’s emblem: twelve links of a gold chain surrounding the letters O.G.C. with the motto of the society written in Greek. Paid life, sick and total disability benefits. Apparently defunct by the early 1920s.

- **Order of Pente, 1888-1920s**

Membership was open to men and women between 16 and 65. Had 7,000 members, mostly in Pennsylvania, in the late 1890s. The seal of the order was a five-pointed star inscribed with a pentagon. Founders included feemasons, Oddfellows, Pythians, and members of the Grand Army of the Republic. The name was related to the insurance scheme of the order which included a five-year maturing certificate.



- **Progressive Endowment Guild of America**

Founders included freemasons, Pythians, and members of the Royal Arcanum. Membership was open to white men and women 18-65. Had 5,000 members in the late 1890s. Locals called Subordinate Chapters, highest organ the supreme chapter. While claiming not to be a secret society, it had obligations, signs for recognizing members, and “private work”. Had three classes of membership. Gov. Charles T. O’Ferrall was a member.

Progressive Endowment Guild of America, Initiation Ritual.

- **Royal Benefit Society, 1893**

Founders included freemasons, Oddfellows, Pythians, and members of the Royal Arcanum. Membership was open to men and women. Tended more toward the financial than the social or fraternal aspect of secret societies. Had a very “plain and bushiness-like” ritual.



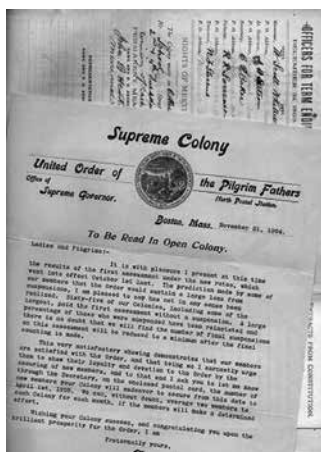
- **Royal Society of Good Fellows, 1882-1905**

Founders included freemasons, Oddfellows, Knights of Honor, members of the AOUW, and members of the Royal Arcanum. Membership was open to men and women. The order had about 15,000 members concentrated in New England and the “Middle States” in the late 1890s. The society's emblem

was a crown surmounted by a Latin cross surrounded by a ring of 12 tangent circles with the letters spelling “Good Fellows” in the 11th and a five-pointed star in the 12th.

More informations:

<https://www.mvtimes.com/2020/03/18/royal-society-good-fellows/>



- **United Order of Pilgrim Fathers, 1878**

Founded by a group of gentlemen and their wives, some of whom were freemasons, Oddfellows, members of the Royal Arcanum, Knights of Honor, Ancient Order of United Workmen, and other fraternal orders. Formed an insurance order that would be limited to the states of New England.

Membership was open to men and women between 18 and 50.

More informations:

<https://www.petrillabooks.com/pages/books/036739/massachusetts-pilgrim-fathers/supreme-colony-united-order-of-the-pilgrim-fathers-office-of-the-supreme-governor-boston-mass>



• **Vesta Circle, 1901-1917**

Admitted men and women 16-55. Had 4,036 benefits and 100 social members 55 lodges in 1917. Operated in Ohio. Officers included the supreme archon, supreme scribe, supreme treasurer, supreme medical examiner, and general counsel. Headquarters were at 1619 masonic Temple, Chicago. Merged with the American Insurance Union in 1917.

• **Masonic Life Association, 1872**

Founded in 1872. Reorganized on a sounder financial basis in 1919. Membership in 1923 was 18,825.

• **Masonic Mutual Life Association, 1920s**

One North Carolina masonic mutual life insurance was established in 1867 but closed in 1870. Many masonic mutual insurance companies providing insurances for masons are in business as today, mostly in UK (Thompkins Masonic Insurance, in San Diego; Masonic Mutual, est.2014, <https://www.themasonicmutual.co.uk/>)



NORTH CAROLINA
Masonic Mutual
Life Insurance Company.

PRINCIPAL OFFICE: NEW-BERSE, N. C.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.
D. T. CARRAWAY, PRESIDENT.
A. T. JENKINS, R. H. ROYSTON,
L. DIMONWAY, E. CURRA,
S. BLISS, F. C. JENNINGS,
P. M. HARPER,
S. H. HOUTMAN, Kingston,
O. W. DELL, Morehead City,
T. W. DEWAY, Charlotte,
DR. W. G. HILL, Raleigh.
J. P. DILLINGHAM, Sec & Treas.

See For Explanatory Circulars sent to the Secretary & Treasurer, or to either of the Directors

Labors in Continental freemasonry lodges

*Freemasonry is a method, a discipline
and assiduity to achieve its goals, a duty.
Are we freemasons without working in a lodge?⁵³*



Abstract

Freemasonry is a discipline that involves assiduity towards achieving its objectives and is a duty shared by all members. The question of whether a freemason without one can be working in a lodge is closely linked to the duty of assiduity. Freemasonry commits its members to working tirelessly to improve themselves

⁵³ Masonic Coffee # 36, May 13th, 2023

and contribute to the betterment of humanity. Although this mainly involves attending lodge meetings and working diligently, there are other ways to fulfill this duty. However, the low level of assiduity in lodge meetings has been a problem for many lodges, including the Grand Orient of France, long before the pandemic, and this issue has been worsened by COVID-19, which has paralyzed physical interactions necessary for the creation of the Egregore.

The pandemic has forced lodges to innovate and find new ways to continue their work remotely, including the use of videoconferencing and thematic meetings like the lodge Star of the Two worlds “Masonic Coffee”. The strength of freemasonry lies in its collective work, made possible through discussions and the diffusion of ideas and methods that facilitate the transmission of tradition. It is crucial to maintain continuous discussions between Brothers and Sisters, even outside masonic meetings, to ensure the continuity and assiduity of their work.

Despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic and the limitations of working remotely, freemasons can and must continue to work for the good of humanity wherever they are. The technological means available today should not prevent them from fulfilling their masonic duty. The answer to the question of whether a freemason without one can be working in a lodge is unequivocal: freemasons can and must always act for the good of humanity, no matter the place or circumstance.



Let us recall that the General Regulations of the G.:O.:D.:F.: defines the lodge as a group of freemasons who meet to work and who “exclusively participate in masonic life” (Art. 24 of Book Two, Title One). It is its members who form and constitute the lodge (“seven make it just and perfect”), and this, in certain cases, independently of any material notion of place.

The topic: “Freemasonry is a method, a discipline, and assiduity to achieve its goals, a duty. Are we freemasons without working in a Lodge?” highlights, diligence, to achieve our goals, an essential duty which we, freemasons, fully share; and asks the following central question: are we still freemasons without working in a lodge?

These two issues, attendance, and work are closely linked. When we were initiated, we took the oath to work tirelessly to improve ourselves intellectually and morally for the good of humanity. This mainly concerns being present at the meetings and working with diligence at the lodge. But not exclusively.



A method

Although being defined both as an esoteric and initiatory association, freemasonry is always assimilated to a thought society.

Its humanist orientation and its traditional foundations, to which must be added the esoteric specificity and its approach to the practice of introspection, characterize its working method.

A journey whose main components are initiation, symbolism, the use of speech, the transmission of the masonic tradition, and the teaching resulting from work in the lodge.



While the orientation of the method stems from the origins of Operative freemasonry, Speculative freemasonry, created in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, was influenced by ideas of Renaissance humanism, transmitted by the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the foundations of empirical science.

The approach of the freemason is therefore based on the search for the truth of the thinker and the sage, on nature in general and

human nature in particular. It is an approach that can be compared to myths that explore how nature and its laws are hidden under the veil of appearances.

A brief description of the foundations brings us the formulas of initiation as an introduction to esoteric knowledge and awareness of the knowledge of science, in order to transmit what an ancient tradition has taught, and the method to seek the truth and the to examine for oneself, free from all superstition and all dogma... here is the transmission of an audacity and a method, which imposes itself on a truly non-dogmatic freemasonry, that is to say contrary to dogmatism, refraining from using authority to impose a belief and ideas that are not. Rationally justified. Non-dogmatism leaves everyone the right to believe what they want but obliges them to accept contestation.

Freedom is therefore the first value to cultivate in a non-dogmatic lodge. This in its three essential forms for the spirit: freedom of conscience, freedom of thought and freedom of expression. Freemasonry transmits this audacity of a method that freely seeks the truth, because, according to Oswald Wirth, one is never initiated except by oneself. The orientation of masonic work consists in carrying out research on the human being, which one wishes to perfect in a spirit of freedom.

Symbolism is central to the method. Masonic work is thus characterized by philosophical reflection, developed from the interpretation of signs, images and myths. It develops in him the intuition of the human, the empathy which allows him to put himself in the place of the other and to feel for him the solidarity and the affection which are the basis of fraternity.

A discipline

From the Greek root *Disciplos*-indicating the work of a disciple. It is an obedience and submission to the rules of the order which one has joined. A set of regulations formulated by the obedience (group) which serve as the basis for the exterior and interior life of the lodge.

A discipline can denote the specific branch of knowledge associated with a community of specialists adhering to the same research practices. Discipline is the mother of success. Thus, we speak of a scientific or literary discipline, e.g., psychology, or physics.

A discipline can refer to a set of laws or obligations which govern a community, intended to make order reign. The rules. For instance, we submit to a discipline for the good of society. In this sense discipline refers to the rules that properly order society so that it may function correctly.

The notion of discipline provides a framework for comparing forms of development, stabilization, or decline of institutions and networks. The universal nature of discipline allows for its ability to designate a body of knowledge as the articulation of an object, method, or program on one hand, and as an easily recognized mode of occupation for a larger system, on the other. We can then propose a general definition of discipline as: “a body of knowledge inscribed in texts, contained in paradigmatic examples, or in forms of instrumentation, which is the subject of a pedagogical transmission (it can be taught)”.

This leads to the notion of making discipline the central criterion for the institutionalization of a branch of knowledge. What is a discipline? It can be said that is a matter of stabilizing an object of knowledge, securing the borders around that knowledge, and of establishing modes of processing previously cut objects. Discipline is also its own standardized style of presentation, that includes the presentation of both the self and the object, thus defining the meaning and history of the disciplinary body.

The present organization of knowledge by discipline is the product of historical transformation. Disciplinary order is not the product of a history of struggles to secure an institutional niche, but rather a function of the differentiation of knowledge.

We admit without difficulty the universal character of discipline and its ability designate and delineate a body of knowledge. Freemasonry has a doctrine – even if it is not explicitly formulated – and thus it has a discipline since it disseminates a teaching.



As defined in our rules and regulation of our obedience, the assiduity and zeal concern to work within the lodge. However, said zeal and assiduity of each brother and sister exist within them and can be observed in their everyday lives outside the lodge in the profane world. With this concept in mind, the lodges face a greater nemesis; attendance, participation, and presence of the member to do work. If zeal, freedom, fervency, and assiduity are truly attributes of an individual; then why are lodges plagued with a lack of enthusiasm in the lodges attendance and efforts to zealously do work.

Now, keeping in context to the world events over the past three years; the pandemic that re-shaped the way people live, act, work and play is largely to blame. Covid 19 creating very innovative ways to live, work and socialize; lodges suffered prior to this pandemic but it appears that lodges are still vexed with such concerns upon life's social stage of return or the lack thereof for the lodge. The question is how or even what can the lodges and obedience's do to counter this uneven proposition to even the playing back to the status quo? Every lodge and obedience have created new innovations to combat such a self-imposed separation and/or lack of enthusiasm, by providing alternative ways to be active but still our numbers suffer a great deal.

Therefore, lost for answers and riddled with questions of hopeful resolution; the lodges and obedience's have not produced the answers to the ever-fleeting questions of attendance and lack of assiduity within the works of our sacred temples.

An Assiduity, as Attendance, Diligence, & Perseverance

Although we seldom experience the word "assiduity" in common English, it is worth knowing because we are likely to encounter it in translated French masonic works in the future. I've chosen to interpret it

as three different English words for this paper, and we'll see together how fitting it may be, and what we as a group might add or subtract from this. "Showing up is half the battle." – unknown.

If you've ever shown up for a competition and the other team fails to take the field, they forfeit, and the "victory" is yours. At work if you show up for the meeting on time and prepared, while your competitor may be physically present (I.e., they've "shown up") their lack of mental attendance to the details and flow of the meeting may cost them the project even if their preparation had been adequate.



Assiduity as Attendance is both the physical act of being there, but also being there in the sense that you're alert and engaged. We have all experienced physical attendance as our minds wandered and we were anywhere but "there." Motivation is a key factor in building the habit of attendance in frequency and consistency. The habit aspect can help us show up for others even when we are not particularly interested in the content or outcome of some group activities. Such group membership, while voluntary, is a blend of benefits but also responsibilities. Motivation to show up for benefits comes easier than motivation to show up for responsibilities, especially less pleasant ones. Habit can be our friend, enabling us to maintain attendance. After all, if we are not motivated, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain frequency and consistency. Real attendance forces you to step out of your comfort zone: to be a reliable team member, you will have to take on certain responsibilities and fulfill them successfully.

The mason who consistently attends in both these senses of the word is in the position where **diligence** and **perseverance** can come into play.

Assiduity as Diligence is essential for development and quality in all areas of our lives and is a source of constant and progressive enrichment. We generally mean putting the appropriate amount of mental and physical effort timely here, with timely being the key component: diligence presupposes attendance in both senses discussed, but getting the task done by allocating our resources is a skill that we can develop. We learn from our mistakes here when we miss deadlines and disappoint ourselves and others. Motivation is key, but so is rational application of our energy and there are many learned behaviors in the practice of due diligence in nearly every time-sensitive field – which is really all fields today, or soon will be.

People who show up and practice diligence therefore have an easier time advancing in their careers, creating meaningful connections with others, and achieving their individual and team goals.

Without this characteristic, it is extremely difficult to evolve in any meaningful way. Fortunately, **attendance** can be improved by practice, **diligence** trained and developed. Motivation can come from without in terms of reward and punishment, but it is more effective when it comes from within – so this is an individual choice to be optimal. It is certain that without personal effort upstream, the attendance of the Lodge is of little interest, and diligence applied to the work will ebb and flow with that.

Assiduity as Perseverance: imagine sticking to something (that we committed to) which requires years of effort to attain, and in a group setting that forces us out of our comfort zones; and then sticking to



that commitment even when we have more immediate pleasures and interests available all around us. So long as we can show up, apply ourselves diligently to the work, and persevere through the rough spots then each of us contributes to the energy of the whole and can help motivate others in the lodge through example and inspiration. The positive energy generated by the group rebounds on everyone, and the virtuous cycle can build for generations. There are such lodges today, so we know it can be done.

The abnormal circumstances of the pandemic, coupled with several other issues, has left lodges unable to function as they were designed to do. Consequently, reaching a group minded collective was impossible. Lack of lodge attendance was also a consequence, and Lodge participation suffered as a result.

The resulting discussions have been on how we [do] adapt to future situations that may [in the same way] affect our ability to both meet, work, and function fraternally.

As masons, we are expected to labor continuously without regard to individual personality and circumstance, to reach a summit of betterment for all of humanity. We work together, under the banner of unity, alliance, and one accord, Laboring towards a better understanding of ourselves, humanity and how we may better serve it.

A Duty

Freemasonry draws its rules and duties from tradition. The Freemason voluntarily submits to these duties or obligations. Primarily these come in the form of solemn oaths to work diligently on moral and intellectual improvement, and additional requirements of attendance and milestones of achievement are designed to aid the mason on the path by providing feedback and encouragement. By executing these duties, the mason shows himself worthy and capable of receiving additional light from the sublime precepts and noble objectives of the Order. To receive this light is the original purpose and drive to join a lodge. It requires work, since nobody can achieve the light without the work required and

LES DEVOIRS MAÇONNIQUES

APPLIQUÉS AUX SEPT GRADES DU RITE FRANÇAIS

Ain : Peuple Français, ô toi dont la victoire,

L'Impie a dit : « L'aveugle destinée
« Règle ici-bas l'inévitable cours
« D'une existence au malheur condamnée,
« Ou qui n'aura jamais que d'heureux jours. »
N'écoute pas ce funeste langage,
Du fatalisme attristante leçon ;
Paix et bonheur deviendront ton partage,
Si tu souscris au code du *Maçon*.

Va, ne crains rien ! son touchant évangile,
Comme son culte, est sans austérité ;
A la raison être toujours docile,
Et respecter la sainte vérité ;
Aider le faible, honorer la vieillesse,
Sous l'humble chaume ou les riches lambris ;
De l'indigent soulager la détresse,
Telle est la loi des *Maçons apprentis*.

Soit que ta main porte le cimcterre
Qui, dans les camps, défend nos étendards ;
Soit que, marin, tu changes d'hémisphère,
Et que des flots tu braves les hasards,

committed to in the first initiation. Without fulfilling the obligations, the mason fails to progress on the path, fails to uphold their oaths, and either goes dormant (“they are sleeping”) until they are again committed and able, or until they self-select out of the organization altogether. Both outcomes have consequences that extend beyond the individual mason.

The impact of the mason striving to reach the goals encourages others in the lodge: brothers and sisters influence and energize each other when they work together in these obligations. An inspired worker inspires others. The converse is also true: the impact of failing to apply oneself to the obligations freely taken can dispirit and discourage others in the lodge from exerting themselves. Fulfilling our duties energizes our brothers and the sisters in the lodge, and facilitates the progress of all present in the Royal Art.

Several lodges of the G.:O.:D.:F.: have expressed the fact that to ensure the assiduity and continuity of our work, we have innovated, and should continue to innovate.



With technological innovations and increased flexibility in our mode of operation, we perform our masonic duties remotely, without ever stopping the work. The results of our work are gathered in a collective framework to achieve our goals and fulfill our masonic duties. In this regard, most of the lodges emphasize the importance of continuous discussion between Brothers and Sisters, even outside of work meetings, regardless of the means used, but always in accordance with the masonic method.

To do this, and to ensure the assiduity and continuity of our work, we have innovated in two main areas:

1. Long before the pandemic, we had recourse to videoconferences in our lodge, that is *suis generis* because the lodge is in a masonic desert (some members reside thousands of kilometers away); then



2. When our local members were confined, in addition to videoconference meetings, we developed the concept of "Masonic Coffee" which continues to this day. On the second Saturday of each month since March 2020, the Respectable Lodge Star of the Two Worlds, organized thematic meetings, lasting 60-90 minutes depending on the subject. We share our knowledge and reflections, both live and by videoconference, which allows us to educate each other on masonic ideals,

history, and symbols in parallel with the work and the meetings in the lodge. The "Masonic Coffee" meeting turned out to be an effective and dynamic source of interaction that has allowed us to combat the physical isolation caused by pandemic, personal illness, travel, temporary and permanent geographical remoteness, etc.

From the answers to our topic, we can affirm that the individual growth and development that results from both the collective and individual work is beneficial for our institution as well as the whole of humanity and is enhanced through the various ways that we can share this experience with others through written means, oral means, electronically, and through video meetings. Thus, provided that each one of us works conscientiously and assumes our commitments and functions within the lodge in a wholehearted manner, the work of the masonic way is strengthened, being based on our collective work and now able to be disseminated through new technological means that facilitate a more conducive method for the transmission of our tradition.

Thanks to these new innovations and the flexibility that they provide, specifically for the operation of the lodge remotely, we are never forced to cease work, even when the profane world grinds to a halt and traditional meetings are rendered impossible, we are still able

to come together for the collective work, to achieve our objectives, and fulfill our masonic duties.

Thus, we stress the importance that have these all electronic and hybrid meetings provide for the continuation of the work, but also stress the importance of their use for the continuation of discussions between brothers and sisters outside the formal structure of masonic meetings. The growth, both individual and collective, that results from the means is immeasurable and their use should be encouraged at every possible turn.

Are we freemasons working in a lodge?

Are we freemasons without working in a lodge?

Are we freemasons working outside of the lodge?

1. Masons working in a lodge.

- In regular meetings, attending, presenting P.O.A.s.
- In instructional meetings, participating in the lodge management in the college and committees.

2. Masons and profanes working outside of the lodge.

- A duty of the initiates to share the truths in the profane word.
- To continue outside of the lodge the labors initiated within, with the other members and the profanes.
- To continue the masonic work, whatever the circumstances, even not in a lodge.
- Improvements done by benefactors of humanity but without been initiated, usually called “a mason without apron.”

3. Masons not working in lodge and outside.

- Not attending, not participating in the lodge management, not replying to the summons, not making any P.O.A.s, not caring about the other members.

A mason without an apron

To our question (“Can one be a mason without working in a lodge?”), we will hear ourselves explaining the case which arises from the expression widely used in continental freemasonry of a “Mason without an apron”.

The popular expression, “un maçon sans tablier”, “a Mason without apron”, used by initiated freemasonry referencing an individual that is not an initiated Mason recognizes the potential qualities of a profane that possess the intimate qualities of initiated masons per Article 1 of the G.:O.:D.:F.: constitution.



Emmanuel Arago par Nadar

Emmanuel Arago : du maçon sans tablier au haut dignitaire

Publié par Géplu Dans Divers

But this expression has two different interpretations; the first one is commonly an individual who is working as an initiated mason should, in the profane world, and the second one, an initiated mason that is not working to add to the intellectual growth of the lodge and the other being who is working as an initiated mason should in the

profane world. With this clear delineation of interpretation, does there exist such a duality that could create a paradoxes comparison of the question. The question can be unfortunately misunderstood as one can only be a mason by being initiated and wearing the badge of a mason, the apron.

Indeed: “The apron is the emblem of work” says the Venerable Master when the Master of Ceremonies girds for the 1st time the Apprentice who has just been created, received, and constituted, referring to the 1st paragraph of the article 1 of the Constitution and in article 4, an emblem “whose high symbolic meaning can only be revealed by initiation” (article 5).

The profane acting as a mason

Can an individual be considered a mason without being initiated? Freemasonry is an initiatory experience. Freemasonry is a brotherhood; it is a connective experience that binds one member to another member through the process of initiation. This cannot be overstressed nor overstated, nor can it be substituted. One can only be a mason by first being initiated and working with the apron on, which is part of the Order.

While we must give credit to those who have a desire to serve humanity, we must not forget that freemasonry is a community made of individuals (masons) who have decided to join a lodge, thereby committing themselves to self-improvement and took the time to become a mason.

The profane, despite their charitable work, has not taken the time nor process to become a mason.

Freemasonry is proprietary, it is codified by a Grand Lodge or Grand orient. It is not for public intellectual consumption. It requires dedication, cooperation, and commitment to the Order. A profane has not made that commitment not have they been though the initiatory process.



What is a mason?

What is a freemason? A freemason is one that has been duly initiated and presented with the badge of the order, the apron. The freemason must always wear their badge in the lodge to show their work. To describe the attributes of one that possess the qualities of a freemason we focus on the selfless work that the individual possesses in their everyday life. One must give of themselves their time, as time can never be renewed; one must obtain a moral compass that circumscribes them with due bounds of community, high thought, and self-enlightenment.

The masons represent the different grades of workers which were present at the work site. A mason is a member of a lodge, or local group of freemasons who is always desirous of self-improvement.

A mason not working



Consequently, the apron does not make the mason. We notice it bitterly sometimes on the columns at our expense (because it is we who covered it). It is not enough to put on an apron before work begins to become a mason... The French expression *l'habit ne fait pas le moine* (don't judge a book by its cover) means the same thing. Being initiated and then not attending the meetings, not doing the duties, not sharing his experience and expertise with the other members, not participating in the life of the lodge, not answering to the summons and queries of the officers don't make you a mason. The same can be said of those who come to meetings without preparation and without participation as “we put our feet under the table” or to expect to be “waited on hand and foot”. One of our American brothers defined his lodge as being only “knife and fork”: “the only thing that interested the Brothers was to free themselves from their wives twice a month, to eat, and to talk about nothing”. The French Brothers and Sisters use (fraternally...) the expression *maçon pot au feu* (beef stew mason) as well.

A mason not working is not even a “sleeping mason” or with a “leave of absence”, whose quality is defined by the Rules and regulations to adapt a member to the vicissitudes of his life.



Similarly, having a sumptuously decorated apron is not synonym of elevation of knowledge. We say, “dressed like a Christmas tree” in France, or here, “dressed up for Halloween”. This is why our lodge advocates simplicity in our regalia, placing us below level, according to our grades and qualities, but in full equality.

We recommend licensed continental masonry suppliers, rather than a blind search on the internet:
<https://www.lunesoleil.com> (our choice),
<https://www.jakin-boaz.net/>
<https://www.la-boutique-maconnique.com>



A profane with an apron

Regarding the uninitiated with human qualities and undeniable heart who works according to the principles of our order, it would then be preferable and logical to use the expression “a profane with an apron”. Some benefactors of humanity, whom we honor as examples of what humanity is in the 2nd degree, are not necessarily great initiates.



Glory to work

Just as a Lodge is constituted by the union of its members, it is the work that constitutes the mason.



Whatever the circumstances and the location. **A freemason is someone who works, he cannot be without an apron.**

In conclusion, one of the ideas that we bring to our question is that, within the framework of our masonic duty, and this whatever the place and the circumstances, we can and must always, and without stopping our activities, work for the good of humanity.

In this respect, several of us propose to reflect on a question that many of us have asked ourselves in our lodges, particularly in our respectable “Star of the two Worlds” lodge, in the Orient of Lauderdale (Florida), which have not stopped their work during the pandemic: given the technological means available, what prevents us from doing (good) masonic work while remaining physically outside our lodges?

The answer to this question seems unequivocal: nothing should prevent us from continuing to work, because we freemasons can and must always act for the good of humanity, regardless of the place and circumstances. Attendance is and must remain the intangible principle of our obedience. Otherwise, how can we continue to call ourselves the Children of the Enlightenment?



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 XXIst 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.

Content volume 1 – 2022

• The masonic approach of the Continental Liberal and non-dogmatic freemasonry of the Grand Orient de France	17
• America, where freemasonry gave birth to a nation	27
• History of Prince Hall	61
• Freemasonry in Italy	71
• Freemasonry in Russia	83
• Questions we study in lodge: what do freemasons think about?.....	95
• Ladies and masons	109
• Masonic transmission: its values, and specificities via the various means of communication	135
• United States of America: a wall of separation between Church and State	141
• National Committee of Public Health and Bioethics	153
• Masonic Genesis	161

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

MASONIC COFFEE

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



Volume 2 – 2023

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 six 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.

Content volume 2 – 2023

• Buddhism and freemasonry	19
• The origins of freemasonry	29
• Man of Enlightenment: Jean François Champollion and the Second Degree	35
• The history of Turkish Masonry 1909 onwards	45
• The Historical Origins of The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite for symbolic degrees	55
• The National Digital commission of the G.:O.:D.:F.:	69
• The French Rite: a traditional and modern rite	71
• Freemasonry from Saint Domingue to Haiti	87

Both publications Masonic Coffee vol. 1 and vol. 2 are available for free,
additional printed copies on-demand as well.

Contact us at lodge.sot2w@gmail.com

Completed printing in December 2024

To built on solid foundations

Welcome to this journey through masonic ideas and symbols, a journey that takes us through the sands... or swamps! of the South Florida masonic desert to an oasis of knowledge and understanding. This book is a collection of Pieces of Architecture written by Brothers and Sisters who contribute to the labors of our lodge, united by initiation into freemasonry but enriched by the diversity of our backgrounds, languages, and levels of education.

Our lodge embodies the ideal of Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, bringing together what is scattered. In our workshop, we practice no exclusion of gender, creed, origin, or social status. We speak a common language, that of symbols, but we are also enriched by our different rituals of origin as much as our cultures, traditions, and backgrounds.

Our aim is to consolidate our basic knowledge, on which we build this unique lodge, with which we build ourselves and our lives tomorrow. We emphasize the practice and explanation of the rituals we have freely chosen to use, so that our new members can pass these rituals on to the next generation and perpetuate the values, principles, ceremonies and organization that have enabled the GODF to be the reference obedience of non-dogmatic freemasonry worldwide since 1728.

Our philosophical reflections are based on our shared and common knowledge, so that all can embark on and elevate new theories and principles to enlighten us. To this end, our Masonic Coffees insist on this basic knowledge of our history and philosophies, so that the force of our ambitions for the betterment of mankind and society retains all the power of our initial will and impetus.

The body of knowledge and principles that enable lift-off requires a solid foundation to support impressive and ambitious achievements. We invite you to join us on this journey, to explore the ideas and symbols that form the core of our masonic practice, and to contribute to the dissemination of the universal principles and values of liberty, equality, and fraternity.