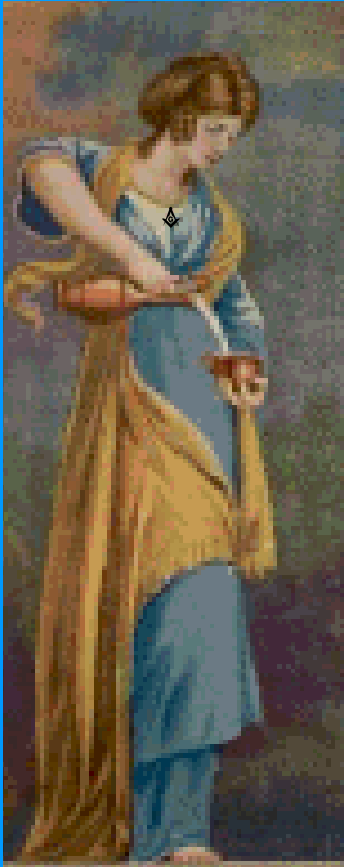
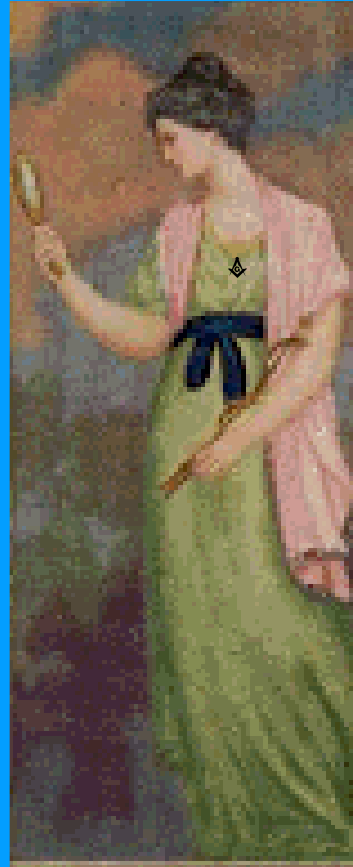




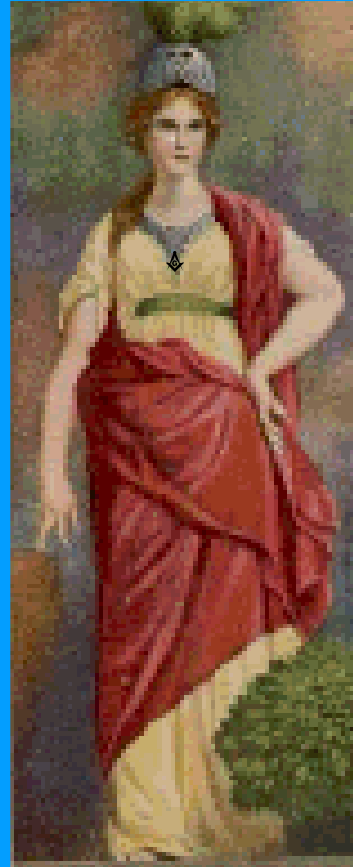
The Philosophical Tradition



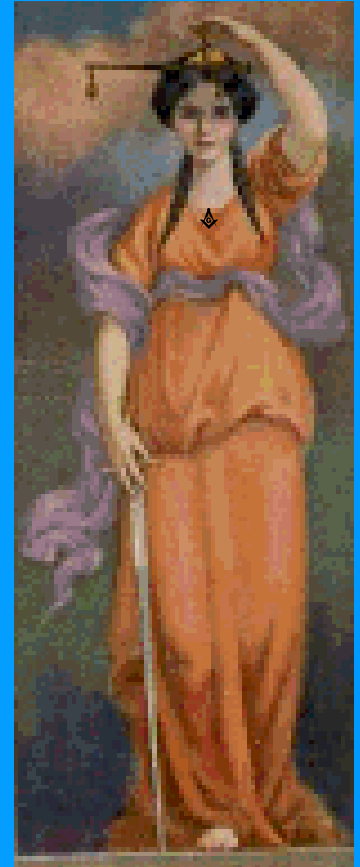
Temperance



Fortitude



Prudence



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Between The Pillars An Editorial Masonic Philosophy



By R. Theron Dunn

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy. (Shakespeare, Hamlet, I, V. 166-7)

Freemasonry is, at its core, a philosophical society. The legend of our start in the stonemasons lodges demonstrate that, and the actions of our brothers show it. What the philosophy of Freemasonry might be is quite beyond the scope of this forum, as whole forests of paper and gallons of printers ink have been expended by much more luminous minds than mine in this endeavor.

We live by the Masonic philosophy, the moral lessons of our fraternity are inculcated in the mind of the novitiate during the three degrees. Each brother seeks within Freemasonry the depth he is comfortable with seeking. For some, the philosophy as it is presented in the degrees is sufficient, for others there is much more.

The Masonic philosophy is veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, a layered philosophy like an onion. Each layer simply overlies another, each with greater meaning to the seeker. The beauty of the symbols and allegory is it allows each brother to bring to bear on the question of the philosophy his life experiences and understanding.

There are some brothers as have no faith in deeper

meanings, content as they are with the surface lessons. There are others, Pike, Mackey, and Coil to name but a few who see deeper and more significant meanings within our freemasonic philosophy. These luminaries of Masonic thinking are not just historical. There are many alive today who are peeling that onion and bringing more light to our world.

Last month, we looked at the growth of the Masonic Restoration movement, what is often called the Traditional Observance lodge in the United States. It is having a significant effect because people who join masonry today are seeking meaning for their lives. Today, at least in the United States, young men are seeking something greater than themselves, they are seeking meaning in lives circumscribed by the acquisition of goodies and temporary relationships.

Freemasonry holds out the promise of this meaning. Unfortunately, the reality they often find is much different. We have all heard tales of shoddy ritual, hurried meetings, and men who ridicule and belittle Masonic philosophy as being nothing more than what they find in the degrees. Some brothers claim members have no interest in philosophy, and put down and resist any attempt to discuss or study in lodge those great social and moral philosophies.

The numbers tell us they are wrong. Today, one in five Entered Apprentices continue to the sublime degree of Master Mason. And a significant number of those men do not actively participate

in the lodge. In some jurisdictions, Masonic education has been dropped entirely, or significantly reduced, as "men don't have time to memorize the work", and as a result, we end up with men who do not care about the ritual, and so the problem continues.

Traditional Observance lodges may not be the solution to the problem, but the movement demonstrates there IS interest in the philosophical side of masonry. The Grand Lodge of California has undertaken what is being called Masonic Formation, a comprehensive program with the overarching goal of Forming Masons. A future issue of the Lodgeroom International Magazine will be dedicated to a look at this program.

What we are seeing here is a palpable demonstration of the claims by our more esoteric brethren, of there being interest in the esotericism of

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The Lodgeroom International Magazine

Cover: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice and Masons who embodied them

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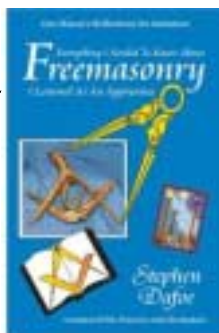
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Everything I Needed to Know About Freemasonry I Learned As An Apprentice

Stephen
Dafoe

\$15⁰⁰



There are many lessons of vast importance contained in the Entered Apprentice Degree of Freemasonry. These lessons are so important to the author of this book that he has been so bold as to

title the book, Everything I needed to know about Freemasonry; I learned as an apprentice.

Worshipful Brother Stephen Dafoe is not a Freemason who takes his craft lightly. He is often fond of saying, "We do not need more men in Masonry, but more Masonry in men." Every page of this book reflects that expression. The book is one man's reflection on the lessons learned in that first degree and is a thorough examination of the philosophy taught with each step, pace and gesture. In so doing, Dafoe has not created a dry account of the first degree, but rather a book that will inspire all Freemasons to get back to the basics.

To order this or any book in this magazine, Click this link or go to:

<http://mason-defender.net/recommend.htm>

Initiation, Mystery and Salvation: The Way of Rebirth

By Dennis V. Chornenky
President, Masonic Restoration Foundation

It is the intention of this essay to show that the terms initiation, mystery and salvation are deeply interrelated within the context of the teachings of the ancient Graeco-Roman mystery schools. The main thesis is that the three terms combine to create a sacred triad which forms the esoteric teaching of rebirth found in most initiatic organizations.

A proper understanding of the words initiation, mystery and salvation is not an easy task, however, and requires serious examination of their application in the ancient rituals of mystery cults, the way in which their meaning was described by ancient thinkers, including the biased exposes of early Christian critics, and their etymology. While it is difficult to determine exactly what occurred within the rituals of the ancient mystery schools, numerous mystical texts and ancient commentaries regarding the lessons taught within the *mystery* schools are available to us, which along with etymological knowledge can provide useful insight. As a precaution, however, it should be noted that most interpretive endeavors to categorically attach meaning to ancient terms and

usages must necessarily be speculative and should not be treated as anything more than stepping stones on the path of discovery.

The term "initiation" comes from the Latin word *initiare*, which is a late Hellenistic translation of the Greek verb *myein*. The main Greek term for initiation *myesis*, is also derived from the verb *myein*, which means "to close." It refers to the closing of the eyes which was possibly symbolic of entering into darkness prior to reemerging and receiving light and to the closing the lips which was possibly a reference to the vow of silence taken by all initiates. Another Greek term for initiation was *telete*. In his *Immortality of the Soul* Plutarch writes that "the soul at the moment of death, goes through the same experiences as those who are initiated into the great mysteries. The word and the act are similar: we say *telantai* (to die) and *telestai* (to be initiated)." The fact that *myein* means "to close" and its translation, *initiare*, is derived from the earlier *inire*, which means to "to go in" or "to begin," further suggests that a notion of endings and beginnings was inherent to the ancient understanding of these terms.

The term "mystery," *mysterion* in Greek, is also derived from the Greek verb *myein*. The plural

mysteria, was first used in application to the Eleusinian Mysteries". The Greek terms for initiation, *myesis* and *telete*, also became first widely used at the Eleusinian cult of Demeter. It should be noted that while the modern meaning of the term mystery seems simply to mean something unknown, to the ancients *mysterion* meant something divine, deeply profound and worth knowing.

The term "salvation" comes from the Greek word *soteria* which is derived from the word *soter* meaning "savior." It appears that the most important gods were all

worshipped in search of salvation. Egyptian gods in general were referred to by the Greeks as *soteres*, or saviors. And there are numerous references in primary source materials, of gods "saving" the initiate from moral vices or physical dangers. As the common era progressed, the concept of salvation became more closely identified with Christianity, as the main role of Jesus Christ was the salvation of mankind.

In the cult of Isis the notion of salvation was specifically applied to the current life as salvation from vice and passion. Book 11 of *The Golden Ass*, by Apuleius Madauros,³ clearly depicts how the goddess Isis saves man from his animal passions.

Lucius, the main character in the story, having through false notions and desire completely become an animal, is saved from this state by the grace of the goddess. In his quest to regain his real self, or symbolically his purity, Lucius makes his way to a quiet beach late one night in complete despair. He invokes blessings under the full moon and in his sleep he is approached by a vision of the beautiful goddess who reveals herself as Isis and assures him of salvation. In the morning, Lucius approaches a ceremonial procession of her cult and when the Hierophant sees Lucius he takes him with them to their temple. Lucius regains his true form, is initiated into the mysteries of the cult, and becomes a devout servant of the goddess Isis. This is the text from which we receive the greatest knowledge of the Hellenistic cult of Isis, as the novitiate period and the initiator are described in some detail.

In *The Golden Ass*, as well as other writings, the goddess Isis was said to be able to free her followers from fate. This particular trait is important because it can be interpreted to mean that as one's natural condition is subject to arbitrary dangers and is inherently full of vice and temptation, one can transcend this condition and be saved through devout service to the goddess.

The Persian god Mithras, the Redeemer, also offered salvation to his followers. A salvation which could be achieved through inner transformation based on the strict adherence of his initiatic rites and passage through the mysteries of the seven degrees.

Continued on Page 11 - Initiation

It's About TIME!

It's About Time! is the report completing a study undertaken by a special task force of the Masonic Information Center Steering Committee. This report marks the beginning of a Masonic Public Awareness Program started at the request of the 2004 Conference of Grand Masters in North America.

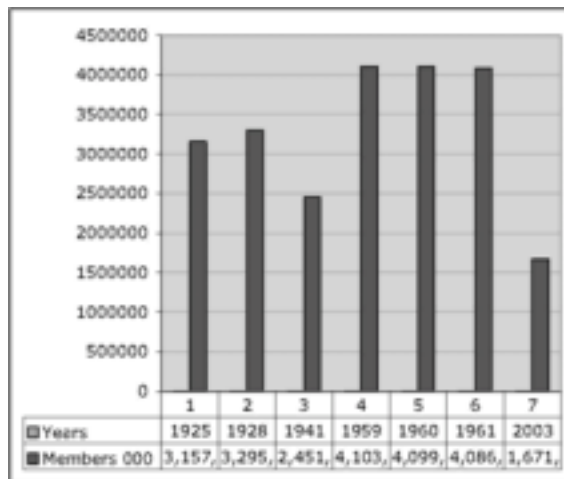
Why a Study - Why a Report?

The 2004 report from the Masonic Information Center (MIC) to the Conference of Grand Masters focused on the need for Masonic Public Awareness. The collective body of Grand Masters gave overwhelming approval to the MIC to move forward. No resources beyond those of the MIC were committed nor were any asked for at the time. We accepted the challenge and established a highly qualified task force from the Steering Committee of the Masonic Information Center. Our group continues to meet on a regular basis.

The Task Force realized that past attempts at public awareness and promotional campaigns had produced disap-

pointing results. If past campaigns with supporting budgets did little to solve the problem, how would our approach be different? Our group resisted the temptation to jump into the "fun" of a creative project, brainstorming activities and designing catchy slogans. We accepted the fact that a traditional PR campaign works only if you know what you want to communicate. The task for our group was to tackle the question of Ma-

Continued on Page 13 - Time



Continued on Page 11 - Initiation

The Architect's House: A Pompeii Mason?



By **Giovanni Lombardo, P.M.**

Lemmi Lodge #400
Grande Oriente D'Italia

*Habentibus symbolum facilis est
transitus Iamblicus*

In Pompeii, in the Architects' House, there is a particular mosaic, the photography of which is often shown in Masonic texts. It was the emblem in the floor of the *Triclinium* and man thinks that the naturalistic representation of the skull and of the mason's tools is an allegoric reference to the lapsing of the human life and the looming death. In my opinion, however, the tile conceals a deeper meaning. I strove to find it and I want, therefore, to share with you my thoughts.

The level measures the horizontality, being a precision tool which ensures stability and balance. It guarantees that all the horizontal levels are perfect and in line with that of the foundation, which will have been controlled in the same manner. The level in the illustration is a composite one, from the superior angle descends a plumb: it is worth of notice the circumstance that the horizontality is measured through the verticality – its contrary! – and this happens when the plumb has divided the ruler – which unifies the arms of the level – in two equal parts, thus forming two angles, each measuring 90°. The crossing point of the plumb and of the level is said *fire line*, which demarcates Time from Eternity.

The calm and smooth horizontal line of the level is quite opposite of the chaos and of the confusion that reign in the profane world. Even more, in the book of Isaiah, man reads: *Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.*¹ In this verse the level symbolizes the justice since it represents the perfect union of the verticality with the horizontality.

Other thoughts are however possible, if man considers the arms of the level as two rays of a circumference departing from the "centre", i. e. from the Being towards the Manifestation. Such an interpretation is strengthened by examining the remaining objects that are represented in the tile. A skull, then, tied to the arms of the level: the royal purple and a sceptre (at left of the observer); a sack and a stick. In the middle, under the skull, a butterfly over a six-spoked wheel.

The world of the manifestation, in that we actually live, is produced by the emanation of the One: the radiation from the centre towards the circumference. It is the kingdom of the duality,

of the variety. In it, poverty and richness live together. This is the meaning of the royal purple and of the sceptre, which are symbols of the royal power and of wealth, opposite to the sack and the stick, symbols of poverty and weakness. All in perfect equilibrium.



They are aside the wheel, which is the symbol of the world. The circumference is symbol of the variety, to be considered in its perennial becom-

ing; the rays delimit a portion of this circumference, such a portion is therefore symbol of the cyclic time, in which are alternated the various aspects of life.

The butterfly symbolizes the man's soul. In ancient Greek *psyché* means both butterfly and soul. The man's task consists in living with wisdom and balance and, above all, with the consciousness that all that appears, the mundane reality, with its contradictions, is not the "true" reality, the metaphysic one, *the Truth in which every intellect eventually rests.*² Here is the reason for which the butterfly is over the wheel: the soul of the initiate is "superior" in respect of the profanity.

The human being who carried his life walking "in the middle", along the ideal line between the black tiles and the white ones of the chequered pavement, at equal distance from both, that can face the death – the skull – the supreme initiation and, ascending along the plumb, outrun the *fire line* and eventually arrive to the edge, the Centre, the siege of the GAOTU, thus mixing with Him: "If you can distinguish a drop in the great sea – wrote Angelus Silesius – then you will also be able to distinguish my soul within the great God".³

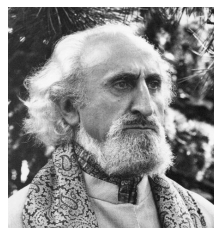
¹ Isaiah 28, 17

² Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Paradiso XXVIII, 108

³ A. Silesio, *Cherubinisches Wandersmann*, cit. by A. Coomaraswamy, *Time and Eternity*, Italian Editor Luni 2003 pag. 119



Norms and Paradoxes in Spiritual Alchemy



by Frithjof Schuon

Metaphysical thought essentially presupposes intellection, or let us say intellectual intuition; the latter is not a matter of sentiment, of course, but of pure intelligence. Without this intuition, metaphysical speculation is reduced either to an opaque dogmatism or to an imprecise ratiocination; and quite evidently, speculative thought deprived of its intuitive foundation would be unable to prepare the ground for Gnosis: for direct, concrete and plenary Knowledge. Let us specify that the eventual gaps in the human mind are due, not to fortuitous causes, but to the very conditions of the "dark age," the kali-yuga, which has as an effect—among other modes of decadence—a progressive weakening of pure intellection and of the ascending tendencies of soul; whence the necessity of the religious Revelations, and whence also the problematical phenomenon of gratuitous and divergent philosophies. But man always remains man "made in the image of God"; nothing could

prevent—even in these millennia of darkness—the flowering of wisdoms pertaining to the Sophia Perennis: such as the Upanishads, the Brahma-Sûtras and the Advaita-Vedânta.

The content of the universal and primordial Doctrine is the following, expressed in Vedantic terms: "Brahma is Reality; the world is appearance; the soul is not other than Brahma." These are the three great theses of integral metaphysics; one positive, one negative, one unitive. Let us specify that in the second affirmation, it is important to understand that "appearance" gives rise to two complementary interpretations: according to the first, the world is illusion, nothingness; according to the second, it is Divine Manifestation; the first point of view is upheld by Shankara and Shivaism, and the second by Ramanuja and Vishnuism; roughly speaking, for there are compensations in both camps. The third of the fundamental affirmations in a way marks the passage from the "Truth" to the "Path," or let us say from the Doctrine to the Method; the

Continued on Page 18 - Norms

The Pillars and Triangle in Masonic Symbolism

It is certainly no secret that the Masonic system is a peculiar one, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbol. Many Masons err in studying this system by regarding the events of the allegory as literal and historical, and the key characters therein as actual people. Such interpretation could not be farther from the truth.

The main characters of the legend are, significantly, three in number: Solomon of Israel, Hiram of Tyre, and Hiram the master craftsman, the Masons' tragic martyr. The first two are noteworthy only for their roles in the Third Degree drama; the last is a mythic archetype. Peering beneath the veneer of the allegory reduces these 'men' to three seats (Master and Wardens;) three symbols (Square, Level, and Plumb;) and three ideals (Wisdom, Strength, Beauty.)

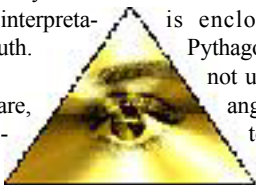
Key to understanding their symbolism is recognizing how this triad of Pillars is situated within the Lodgeroom itself. The Square, Level, and Plumb are each represented by a specific seat, each seat is a point of a triangle which overlaps the whole of the floor. This must be noted, as the triangle has long been an emblem of Divinity. If the Senior Warden were seated in the south-west rather than due West, the triangle would- more fittingly, perhaps- be equilateral. As it is, his position due West creates an isosceles with a rather wide base, yet he still forms a triad and a triangle.

Consider the arrangement of the Great Lights when at labour in the Third. The Compasses, when opened to 60°, naturally evoke the triangle, and when laid atop the Square of earth, repeat- in microcosm- the symbolism of 'overlapping' divinity. This is especially significant when considering that 'no man can enter upon any great or important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of G-d.'

The Candidate is given varying interpretations of these three seats and symbols, and their meanings. Of the Square, Level, and Plumb, the Apprentice is told they denote morality, equality, and rectitude of life. The Fellowcraft is told the three seats stand for three great supports: Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. The Master is taught to regard these ideals as Pillars which uphold the symbolic Lodge. What he is not told, what he must figure out for himself, is that these three ideals form the points of the triangle which overlaps the Lodge. In so doing, these ideals transcend the concepts of good conduct, become more than supports for a metaphorical Temple. With the three thus aligned, these ideals become divine.

In the California Apprentice Degree, as the candidate kneels to take his first obligation in Masonry,

he is flanked on three sides by the pillar officers, all three within feet of the candidate. Their position, relative to the candidate, mirrors the position of the three Seats relative to the altar. With the candidate at the center of the Three, a monad is enclosed within a triad, the perfect Pythagorean diagram of Divinity... an emblem not unlike an All-Seeing Eye within a triangle, the symbolism of which is repeated to full effect in the Royal Arch Degree.



In addition, the Pillars and Candidate create a 'lodge within a Lodge,' again a microcosm. As the great supports are crucial to uphold the symbolic Temple, they are also needed for the Candidate's inner, microcosmic temple; 'it being necessary that there should be Wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.'

This symbolism is echoed in the Second degree. The Fellowcraft, of course, is charged mainly with educating himself. He attains knowledge in language and communication, the powers and properties of the physical world, and the senses by which he receives and assimilates this information. Before he makes that symbolic journey up the staircase, to the mystic chamber at the centre, he is placed at the 'outer porch' of the Temple,

where he encounters two brazen pillars.

It is important to note here that the Candidate is already portraying Hiram, though he doesn't yet know it. Recall that Hiram is a living symbol, an archetype of both hero and martyr. He is a master of his craft and foreman of a massive workforce. If we believe the Freemason's Pocket Companion (1771) he is skilled in metalwork of all types, not to mention embroidery, sculpture, and architecture. Having been a Fellow of the Craft himself, he would also be highly educated in the Arts and Sciences. Let us not forget his 'truly exalted and exemplary character.' Masonry has, in Hiram, the superlative Man realizing his ultimate potential, the "man's man" who is artist and craftsman, intellectual and moralist. The Candidate, upon that outer porch, is preparing to walk in this symbolic man's shoes; here, he assumes the role of Hiram in those first stages of becoming.

In the Lodge, the Junior Warden sits where Hiram would sit: in the South where the light at noon would be brightest, from which (we are told) he can most easily direct the workmen. On his left, in the West, is the Pillar of Strength. And on his right, the Pillar of Wisdom in the East.

Compare the Junior Warden's situation with the Candidate's on the porch. On his left stands a brazen pillar whose name is said to denote strength. On his right, another pillar whose name, we are told, signifies 'to establish.' The correla-

Continued on Page 21 - Triangle

Freemasonry in the Movies

Masonry has appeared as the subject of and as a reference in many of the movies that have been recorded since the very first silent movies. In this article, scenes from movies with masonic references are shown.

There are many, many more movies with verbal references which were not included here.



Dolores Claiborne (1995)

Delores' bank manager—who is wearing a square and compasses lapel pin—tells her that her husband has emptied their account. Kathy Bates, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Christopher Plummer.



The Affair of the Diamond Necklace

Christopher Walken plays Cagliostro, Grand Master of the Illuminati!, while Bishop Rohen, hides his personal correspondence behind a panel in a desk decorated with masonic symbols. Hilary Swank, Christopher Walken..



Elmer Gantry (1960)

Edward Andrews as real estate agent, George F.

Continued on Page 22 - Movie

A Practical Guide to *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* By Joseph Campbell

In the long run, the most influential book of the 20th Century may turn out to be Joseph Campbell's THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES.

It's certainly true that the book is having a major impact on writing and story-telling, but above all on movie-making. Aware or not, filmmakers like John Boorman, George Miller, Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, and Francis Coppola owe their successes to the ageless pattern that Joseph Campbell identifies in the book.

The ideas in the book are an excellent set of analytical tools. With them you can compose a story to meet any situation, a story that will be dramatic, entertaining, and psychologically true.

With them you can always determine what's wrong with a story that's floundering, and you can find a better solution to almost any story problem by examining the pattern laid out in the book.

There's nothing new in the book. The ideas in it are older than the Pyramids, older than Stonehenge, older than the earliest cave painting.

Campbell's contribution was to gather the ideas together, recognize them, articulate them, name them. He exposed the pattern for the first time, the pattern that lies behind every story ever told.

Campbell is a mythographer — he writes about myths. What he discovered in his study of world myths is *they are basically the same story* — retold endlessly in infinite variation.

He discovered that all story-telling, consciously or not, follows the ancient patterns of myth, and that all stories, from the crudest jokes to the highest flights of literature, can be understood in terms of the "HERO MYTH"; the "MONOMYTH" whose principles he lays out in the book.

Campbell was a student of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, and the ideas in THE HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES are often described as Jungian.

The book is based on Jung's idea of the "Archetypes" constantly repeating characters who oc-

cur in the dreams of all people and the myths of all cultures.

Jung believed that these archetypes are reflections of the human mind — that our minds divide themselves into these characters to play out the drama of our lives.

The repeating characters of the hero myth, such as the young hero, the wise old man, the shape-shifting woman, and the shadowy nemesis, are identical with the archetypes of the human mind, as shown in dreams. That's why myths, and stories constructed on the mythological model, are always psychologically true.

Such stories are true models of the workings of the human mind, true maps of the psyche. They are psychologically valid and realistic even when they portray fantastic, impossible, unreal events.

This accounts for the universal power of such stories. Stories built on the model of THE HERO OF A THOUSAND FACES have an appeal that can be felt by everyone, because they spring from a universal source in the collective unconscious, and because they reflect universal concerns. They deal with universal questions like "Why was I born?" "What happens when I die?" "How can I overcome my life problems and be happy?"

Continued on Page 25 - Hero

Gold; Silver; Brass; Iron or The Four Masonic Values in the Euclid Lodge

By Robert Morris

Euclid Lodge is a good Lodge for work, and far beyond the ordinary, for practical benevolence and fraternity. Strangers who have visited "Watchall county, have declared it to be a matter of surprise to them how so well-governed and so well-informed a Lodge as Euclid ever got there. Although it is not situated at the county seat, and is but one amongst six in the county, yet there is no Lodge in the State with a sounder membership, and it is not at all uncommon for applicants to obtain permission from the Lodges nearest which they live, to come up, from a considerable distance, to Euclid, and, if found worthy, to be made Masons there.

The membership of Euclid Lodge, however, is not numerous, but little over the old standard, in fact, for they do not follow the modern notion of making members of all whom they make Masons;* {The Ahiman Rezon declares that "more than forty or fifty members, when they can attend regularly, as the wholesome rules of the craft require, are generally found inconvenient for working to advantage." The declaration is true to this day.} far from it. The last report of

the Secretary, Bro. Plumbe, to the Grand Lodge, gives fifty-four Master Masons as the total of membership. The reasons why they have no more, are found in a small handful of black marbles at the further end of the ballot box. Those reasons are considered amply sufficient.

The Worshipful Master of Euclid Lodge, Brother Coverly, has somewhere picked up the following tradition, and seems never so happy as when he is telling it once a month to his brethren in open lodge: "At the building of King Solomon's Temple, bands of the Fellow-crafts, eighty men in each, were sent to Mount Lebanon to examine the cedar trees, while the ten thousand Jews, under Adoniram, followed after to cut them down. Every tree was scrutinized by eighty pair of eyes, and if any one of them observed the minutest defect, such as a crook, crack, wind-shake, knot-hole, decay or flaw of any sort, he marked it, (not being called upon to give his reasons) and that cedar tree stood rejected."

So well known abroad is Euclid Lodge for the virtue of good fellowship, that its representative in the Grand Lodge is invariably appointed chairman of the Committee of Complaints and Ap-

peals, an office for which he is considered well qualified on account of the many compromises he has witnessed at home. For the Supreme Court itself is not better known as a tribunal of last resort than is Euclid Lodge. Whenever a serious difficulty springs up between brethren of a neighboring Lodge, or between a member and one of those amphibious creatures, styled demitted Masons, it most assuredly finds its way to Euclid Lodge at last; and it is worth any man's twenty-five dollars to see Brother Coverly, sitting behind his monstrous big goggles (he declares that he can't sit up late at night unless he guards his eyes with green glass) presiding at one of these appeal cases.

The code of practice at his court is uniform and simple. First, he requires a pledge from both parties that they will stand to and abide by the decision of the Lodge; then he hears both sides with unwearied patience, ("it has been whispered that he goes to sleep behind the goggles aforesaid); then he makes both parties acknowledge themselves partly wrong, and shakes hands over the holy spot. Then comes a speech from Brother

Continued on Page 28 - Gold

Chain of Union



By Giovanni Lombardo, P.M. Lemmi Lodge #400 Grande Oriente D'Italia

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy. (Shakespeare, Hamlet, I, V. 166-7)

Freemasonry is a "Peculiar Morality, veiled in allusion and illustrated by symbols." Of course, there are many types of symbols, there are visual symbols, pictures, oral symbols, which primarily make up speech, and demonstrated or enacted symbols. The Chain of Union is an "enacted" symbol, that is, a rite by gesture.

Generally, it is formed at closing a lodge, and usually only in the first-degree. Some do it immediately before the closing, others after, and some as a part of the ritual of initiation where it is done in an evocative manner: Immediately after closing the works, the novice is placed "between the pillars" where he is able to see the formation of the chain. After it is formed, by order of the master, the circle is opened towards the West so the candidate, crossing the threshold, is welcomed into and becomes an integral

part of it. The chain is closed, locked "with force and vigour," having assimilated the new ring in an almost organic way.

The Chain of Union is ancient, going back to the Compagnonnage — the 12th century French stonemason corporation — where it is known as "alliance's chain." Francisco Ariza thinks this ritual acted as support for a sacred invocation, it being a collective practice of "enchantment." Enchantment is a sacred invocation, and is just a mean to activate a memory of what is already inside the agent, awakening his inner faculties.¹



To this end Bro. René Guénon wrote:

By the comparison they allow, these considerations will make it easier to understand what we will now say about 'incantation'. It is essential to note that what we designate with this name has absolutely nothing to do with the magical practices to which the name is sometimes given; besides, we have already said enough about magic so that no confusion should be possible and no further comment necessary.

In contrast to prayer, the incantation we spoke of is not a petition and does not even presuppose

the existence of anything outward, which every petition necessarily supposes, because outwardness cannot be understood except in relation to the individual, which is here precisely surpassed. It is an aspiration of the being toward the Universal in order to obtain what we might call in somewhat 'theological' language a spiritual grace, that is, essentially an inward illumination that can naturally be more or less complete according to the case.

Here the action of the spiritual influence must be seen in its pure state, if one can speak thus;

instead of seeking to make it descend, as in prayer, the being tends on the contrary to rise toward it. The incantation thus defined as an entirely inward operation in principle can nonetheless in many cases expressed and 'supported' outwardly by words or gestures that constitute initiatic rites, such as the mantra in the Hindu tradition or the dhikr in the Islamic tradition, which must be thought of as a producing rhythmic vibrations that reverberate throughout a more or less extensive domain in the indefinite series of the states of the being.

Whether the result obtained be more or less complete, the final goal is always the realization in oneself of 'Universal Man' by the perfect communication of all these states in proper and harmonious hierarchy and in an integral expansion, both in 'amplitude' and 'exaltation', that is, both as to the horizontal expansion of the modalities of each state and the vertical superposition of the different states, according to the geometrical figuration that we have explained in detail elsewhere.²

* * *

Let us now examine the shape of the chain. The Brethren remove their gloves and gather themselves, forming a circular frame around to the Tracing Board or altar in lodges where the altar is in the center of the lodge. Each Brother crosses his right arm on the left so to form a symbolic cross of Saint Andrew, joining hands to those of his neighbour from both sides, so that one's right-hand grips one another's left: the former 'covers' and the latter 'supports'. In the Far-East tradition the right side matches to the yang, or the masculine element, it being 'the way of Heaven', while the left one is that of yin, feminine, representing the Earth: 'Heaven covers and Earth holds'. For some reading this, a recollection of the due guard of the first degree will also illustrate the concept, the left hand supporting, the right resting upon...

Man has to interpret the terms as complemen-

The Silence of the Initiate



by Br. Enrico Franceschetti

PREAMBLE

Dearest Brethren,

The subject I am going to introduce tonight with Your brotherly support, regards an aspect (or rather a preamble) of our initiatory work, today so difficult to pursue because we are so confused by the deafening daily life.

Before getting to the heart of the matter, though, we must make two preliminary considerations.

The first one concerns the most remarkable characteristic of the western tradition and experience of thought and method; it diverges considerably from the most known (in the profane world) 'oriental tradition'.⁽¹⁾

In the latter the first element that appears to the western observer is the contemplating-passive disposition that the student or the researcher takes whilst waiting for an illumination. It can be resumed in the sentence: "in one instant a man becomes a perfect Buddha". Man's consciousness is immersed in a meditation that annuls in-

dividuality and conscience of self, from the Samsara to the Nirvana.⁽²⁾

The western tradition is the result of different environmental and historical experiences and therefore it applies methods of an active nature; it means that in them the instruments of thought of the initiate must be refined to allow an introspection that exalts our consciousness; this will lead to superior states of conscience-knowledge. When we talk about 'superior states of conscience' we mean as Guénon says: "not super-individual states, but to lead the being beyond any conditioned state".

The second necessary consideration remarks the environment where our initiatory work is faced and accomplished.

In the reality of our days the Brother Mason is a man who, in a sense, leads a double inner life. One of them is the citizen, father and husband, fully integrated in the mechanisms of profane life and tied to it in order to contribute properly to the development of human society. The other life is the initiate's, as a man in search of the meanings of the symbol and a traveler in the maze of

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House of History: Part 3



affiliated member of Union Lodge # 1, December 27th, 1793 was upon admittance to the lodge, was selected to be its new secretary.

His primary business when he arrived in Albany was making wallpaper. This would be the start of his diversity of businesses he would be associated with in the coming years

On January 8th, 1796 an announcement appeared in the Albany

Register of the partnership of Thomas and Henry Spencer, and Thomas S. Webb. This was where he got into the book business and printing.

On September 14th, 1797, as it appears from the copyright, he published "The Freemason's Monitor, or Illustrations of Masonry," securing his fame as a Masonic ritualist and author. This book was a distillation of Preston's ritual.

Webb is credited with the addition of more allegory figures used in this, his "americanized" publication. He was Freemasonry's first real ritualist that traveled far and wide to enlighten Brothers to this new "American Ritual." Webb was the Founding Father of the York Rite of Freemasonry here in Albany.



Thomas Smith Webb

Many other Freemasons have passed through Albany and into history. In our own Temple's history it's seen both the famous and infamous as quests.



Benjamin Franklin, Past Grand Master of Pennsylvania, wrote the "Albany Plan of Union", the rough draft of the Constitution of the United States, in June of 1754. Though it's not officially known, I'm sure

he was a guest of quite a few lodges during his time in town.



During the winter of 1778, Major General John Stark was made a Mason in Masters' Lodge

No. 2.



General George Washington was said to have come through Albany on many occasions as well as his fellow Freemason Marquis de Lafayette, a personal friend. Upon one of his visits to Albany, was even moved to present one of his swords to George Washington of Masters Lodge # 5, in our Temple.

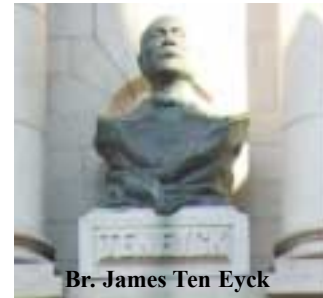
In those times, Masters Lodge was known a Masters Lodge # 2.

"In Masonic circles, James Ten Eyck was known and identified with the fraternity since his initiation into Masters Lodge, November 23, 1863." He was a personal friend to one of my other relatives and was responsible for his becoming a Freemason. T.G Younglove, a business man,



Marquis de Lafayette

lawyer and Speaker of the New York State Assembly.



Br. James Ten Eyck

'Mr. Ten Eyck was the oldest thirty-third degree

Mason in Albany. He became Master in 1873, continuing until 1877, passing all the chairs. He was elected Grand Master of Masons in the state of New York, June 8th 1892, and on being unanimously re-elected, declined. In this capacity he had a larger jurisdiction than any other Mason in the world, accepting only the Prince of Wales, and had the honor of presiding over eighty thousand Masons.

He officiated at the laying of the corner-stones of the New York State Armory in Albany, of Hermanus Bleecker Hall, the Albany Masonic burial lot and of the Burns monument in Washington Park.

He presided at the jubilee of the Masonic fraternity when it celebrated the final payment of debt on the Masonic Temple of New York City, April 24th 1889, and bore a large share in the work upon the erection of our handsome Temple here in Albany."

This gentleman truly was an accomplished fellow that truly enjoyed and took seriously his charge when he was made a Mason. All of Al-

Continued on Next Page -- House of History



By Br. Lansing V. Ten Eyck, III

In Part 2, I covered the first steps of Albany's flourishing colony of Freemasonry in what would be a true center of many revolutionists

during this country's formation. Dr. Samuel Stringer was Freemasonry's first true benefactor.

In this third and final part of the series I will take you through some of the history that was made that added to the interesting history of this upstate New York capitol city on the Hudson River. Not to mention that this town was known

as the northern trade route to the West and with that Freemasonry traveled to the West.



Dr. Samuel Stringer

Through out the history of the temple we've had many notable Freemasons visit both before and after the Revolutionary War. Even in our last century's history many notable Brothers have been visi-

tors.

The lodges in the Temple, some of which are the original lodges founded here in Albany, possibly one of Freemasonry's oldest historic sites in the country.

Where the temple sits is on a small piece of property that Dr. Stringer acquired with the help of some fellow Freemasons, making it the oldest established continually owned property, by Masons to this day.

What is astonishing is that many Masons in this District don't realize that one of Freemasonry's best known Brothers, Thomas Smith Webb, who arrived in Albany in early December of 1793.

Having been raised in Rising Sun Lodge # 3 in Keene, New Hampshire, appears that this newly

House of History

Continued from Previous Page

bany was thankful for this man and his abilities.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

Nineteen of New York's Governors were Freemasons and visitors to our Temple at one time or another.

One of the more notable visitors to our temple was Franklin D. Roosevelt who, came to lodge when he could and at one point, after a meeting he filled out a petition to become a member of the Shrine.

It can be noted that many more Masonic events happened and are too numerous to mention in



Front Entrance to the Temple in Albany, New York

Seeking "Further Light"



by Wt. Tim Bryce, PM, MPS
timb001@phmainstreet.com
Palm Harbor, Florida, USA
"A Foot Soldier for Freemasonry"

As Masons we are taught lessons of Faith, Hope, Charity, Fellowship, Morality, and Brotherly Love. As such, the underlying principles include Spirituality, Patriotism, Citizenship, Compassion, Freedom, Justice, Democracy, Tolerance, Prudence, Equality, Honor, and Dignity.

More simply, Masons are taught to lead honorable and peaceful lives in the world. These lessons reinforce our religious beliefs but it is certainly not a substitute for it. But because of our cloak of secrecy, Masonic motives are often misinterpreted by the public and Masons are viewed as religious cults. We're not. Masons are simply a fraternal organization that enjoys the concept of Brotherhood where we help, aid, and assist each other as well as our communities. Frankly, it is a simple yet powerful concept that more people should be practicing.

Masons are also taught to seek "Further Light" and as such, Freemasons tend to be creatures of curiosity and students of the liberal arts and sciences; history, literature, music, social sciences, humanities, etc. This is why Masons write voluminous books and articles about our teachings, our history, and our administration. Because we are taught to speculate, we investigate and question the rationale of our heritage, our degrees, and our internal government. Such intellectual curiosity is healthy as it clarifies the concept of the fraternity and is conducive for promoting refinements to it.

such a small article. I'm hopeful in the future to publish a book of a complete history of Freemasonry in and around Albany's Masonic Temple.

There may be larger, more architecturally appealing Temples, which have more contemporary Masonic celebrities but, ours was at the center of many historic periods of our country's History. We should be proud of our Masonic Brotherhood and its positive aspects in our lives

Author's Note:

There may be better facts but, as I'm only privy to a limited amount of research outlets and family archives, I can only cover so much. However, if there is someone who feels they have better sources please feel free to correct those parts but, please advise me on your sources for future references.

I should like to credit various authors for their published materials that have allowed

Unfortunately, such discourse is often at odds with the current power brokers of Grand Lodges who suspect there are ulterior motives behind it. To illustrate, consider the Philalethes Society, an independent body of freethinking Freemasons who research and debate Masonic topics. Throughout the organization's long history, there have been Grand Lodge officers who have misinterpreted the Society's work as subversive to the fraternity.

In reality, these officers simply do not like their authority questioned and are adamantly opposed to anything that might affect their control over the fraternity. Consequently, open and candid discussions pertaining to Freemasonry are occasionally censored. Such censorship conflicts with the Brethren's right to seek "Further Light."

Basically, it comes down to an interpretation of Freemasonry. Some perceive it as nothing more than a civic or service-oriented organization, such as the Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, Jaycees, etc. Some, see it as simply a social organization or club, such as a special interest group (SIG). And others see it as a philosophical band of Brothers who are looking for spiritual and intellectual enlightenment. Freemasonry is actually not any one of these but, rather, an interesting blend of all three whereby we serve our community, provide a social venue to promote camaraderie, and seek "Further Light."

When we omit any one of these elements, the others begin to dominate. Unfortunately, too often, it is the philosophical side of the fraternity that is often forgotten, turning Freemasonry into something it is not.



me to compile this for you. Ossian Lang and Herbert T. Singer's "New York Freemasonry (A Bicentennial History) Copyrighted 1981 by The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York.

Herbert T. Leyland's: Thomas Smith Webb (Freemason-Musician-Entrepreneur) The Otterbein Press - Dayton, Ohio - Copyright (c) 1965 The Chapter of Research of the Grand Chapter R.A.M. of Ohio

This information is from Vol.1, pp. 414-415 of Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical and Family Memoirs, edited by Cuyler Reynolds (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1911) It is in SCPL's Reference collection at R 929.1 R45. Some of the formatting of the original, especially in lists of descendants, may have been altered slightly for ease of reading.

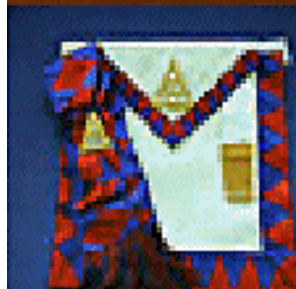
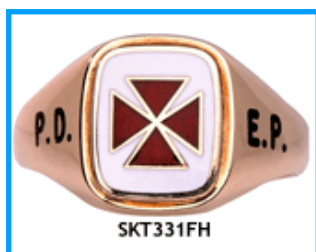


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Philosophy

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freemasonry, of a need by our new brothers for deeper meaning. These men are seeking the meaning we hold out to them, the meaning we claim to possess and do possess. Their time is valuable to them, rightly so, and they will participate in something GIVING the meaning they are seeking.

Fraternal friendship is one side of Freemasonry, to be sure, but fraternity without philosophy is an old man's supper club. The time has passed for supper clubs. Today, there are hundreds of restaurants within a few miles of our homes, and many demands on our time, MANY demands. If we want to continue, we must offer value, and we HAVE value, its just some of us have forgotten the value.

Freemasonry is changing, look around you. Masonic Restoration is a symptom of the change, it is a recognition of the wants and needs of society. In many ways, consumers (the public and our new brothers) are changing the fraternity. Freemasonry is very slow to change, it took sixty years to get where we are today, slowly bending what the lodges are supposed to be into a fish fry, stale coffee and donuts club.

These young men, like Mr. Dennis Chornenky, the current president of the Masonic Restoration Foundation, knew what they wanted from Freemasonry. Not finding it, he sought out like minded brethren, examined the problem, and took steps to change what they saw into what they needed. More than that, they have convinced the Grand Lodge of California of the value in what they are doing. They have spread the concept across the United States.

Some Grand Lodges have accepted the concept and adopted it as a subset of the existing lodge structure. California has chartered at least two Traditional Observance lodges. There are also several Traditional Observance Clubs working toward earning a dispensation to operate as a lodge and eventually to receive a charter.

The philosophy of Freemasonry is alive and well, and once more growing in the lodges. The philosophy is who we are, and is what sets us apart from the Elks, Moose, Rotarians and Eagles.

Society is searching for meaning, and our philosophy of life and morality, of brotherly love, faith, hope, and charity is needed. More, the nature of the masonic philosophy and its depth offers men a way of thinking and living greater than: *He who dies with the most toys, wins.*

Society is seeking, we have the answers, its time to step up to the plate and stop being what we were never meant to be. Without our philosophy, Freemasonry is nothing more than Rotary with Regalia.



Initiation

Continued from Page 3

The more one continues to examine the terms initiation, mystery and salvation the more inter-related they appear. Within the Graeco- Roman context, one had to be initiated, into the mysteries of life and death in order to attain salvation. It should be noted, however, that initiation into the mysteries was not simply a means of attaining intellectual knowledge, or "learning" (*mathein*). Aristotle wrote that it was actually the "experience" (*pathein*), and not knowledge learned, that allowed the initiate to comprehend the secret meaning of the mysteries.

This enlightening, transformative experience has generally been termed rebirth (*renatus*) and appears to be the central theme of the most important rituals of almost all the ancient mystery schools as well as modern initiatic organizations.

At Eleusis, the teaching on rebirth was revealed through the symbolism of Kore's descent into the underworld, her ascension from it and the subsequent return of fertility

In the cults of Osiris, Dionysus, Attis, and Adonis, the main rite is their violent death and rebirth. In Mithraism we find representations of Mithras slaying a bull whose blood turns into grain. In Christianity, the unjust crucifixion of Christ leads to the ultimate redemption of mankind. And within Freemasonry we learn of the murder of our beloved Grand Master Hiram Abiff by three impatient craftsmen and his subsequent raising.

According to many enlightenment thinkers the three strikes to our Grand Master's 5 body symbolize the same vices that combined together to slay Christ. Namely, the corruption of the church, the oppression of the state, and the ignorance of the mob. Whether or not the blows are indeed symbolic of the same social vices that had combined to take the earthly life of Christ is probably a matter of opinion, but what is clear is that the ruffians had not been able to "subdue their passions" and were thus driven by them to commit the terrible act. Because the Fellowcrafts allowed themselves to be governed by their passions they murdered the qualities of a Master within themselves. It is for us therefore to learn to subdue our passions so that the Master within each of us may be raised.

Masonic ritual informs us that the Master's murder leads to the loss of the Word, leaving it to be discovered in future ages. This may suggest that mankind is yet to find the key to its salvation as a whole, while at the same time revealing the path to individual enlightenment within the allegory of the legend. But however one may wish to interpret the Hiram Legend, it is clear that the death and raising of Hiram presents some

kind of teaching on rebirth. It only follows then that the doctrine of rebirth is something every dedicated Mason should become familiar with.

But before proceeding to rebirth, it may first be necessary to understand what causes the death in the first place. It appears that all the violent deaths-of Osiris, of Christ, of Hiram-have something in common. They symbolize vice, ignorance and chaos inevitably slaying the pure self and thereby making rebirth necessary for salvation. These legends reveal the nature of our circumstances and enlighten us to the trials that we must overcome. Only through the death of one's imperfect self, the leaving behind of the old and acceptance of transcendent truth, can one truly be reborn into a new self- no longer tainted by the sins of one's past. In a certain sense, and depending on one's perspective or religious background, rebirth or regeneration is a process that is constantly occurring. With such an understanding, which is certainly in accord with the modern scientific notion of constant biological regeneration, it is up to the initiate to ensure that he is constantly transforming into something better than he was before.

It should be recognized that the doctrine of rebirth as a means of regaining one's purity or rediscovering one's true self has had great influence on the Christian doctrine of original sin. Christianity teaches that because of the Fall following the transgression of Adam all humanity has inherited a state of sin, with rebirth in Christ the Savior as the only way to salvation. Within Islam, on the other hand, the doctrine of original sin is rejected because Allah accepted the repentance of Adam after the Fall (Qur'an 2:36-37) and thereby showed that each man is responsible only for his own actions, though still subject to temptation and folly. While it seems unclear which understanding is closer to

what was taught in the various mystery schools of the ancient world, it does seem clear that regardless of the tradition one looks at, most would agree that man is constantly subject to temptation and almost always gives in sooner or later.

A good source for Freemasons to examine in the quest to overcome vice and temptation and understand rebirth is cited in the Cooke manuscript of the Old Charges (operative Masons in England (1450)4. This manuscript regards Hermes Trismegistus as the principal patron of the Craft. Some writers have even speculated that the name Hiram Abiff actually comes from Hermes Ibis. While this seems unlikely, this connection may have merit only if Hiram is considered to be a symbol of the knowledge professed by Hermes that has become lost for most of humanity due to the vices of men.

The main body of surviving Hermetic Wisdom is

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Initiation

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called the *Corpus Hermeticum* 1'. and incidentally, book 13 of the *Corpus* is entitled *On Rebirth*. The text is in the form of (dialogue between Hermes Trismegistus and his son Tat. Tat begins by asking his fathel to reveal the teaching on rebirth, by saying that he is now "ready to become a stranger to the world," as this was the corrlition that Hermes had previously set forth. Hermes then explains that all things come from God and are one with God and it is His will only tha1 determines who shall achieve rebirth. The dialogue continues with Hermes teaching Tal that it is only through mastery of self and transcending: of the senses that the divine intellect, or *Nous*, can be discovered.

Eventually, Hermes gives an account of the way in which the transformation of rebirth is to be attained by laying out clearly the inherent vices of man and the illusions of the material world that must be conquered and replaced with the qualities of a virtuous life. The following excerpt from *Corpus Hermeticum* XIII: *On Rebirth* is taken from th~ Everard translation (1650)J;

Tat. Now, O Father, thou hast put me to silence for ever and all my former thoughts have quite left and forsaken me, for I see the greatness, and shape of all things here below, and nothing but falsehood in them all. And since this mortal Form is daily changed, and turned by this time into increase, and diminution, as being falsehood; what therefore is true, O Trismegistus?

Hermes. That, O Son, which is not troubled, nor bounded; not coloured, not figured, not changed: that which is naked, bright, comprehensible only of itself, unalterable, unbodily.

Tat. Now I am mad, indeed, Father; for when I thought me to have been made a wise man by thee, with these thoughts thou hast quite dulled all my senses.

Hermes. Yet is t so, as I say, O Son, He that looketh only upon that which is carried upward as Fire. that which is carried downward as Earth, that which is moist as Water, and that which bloweth or is subject to blast as Air; how can he sensibly understand that which is neither hard, nor moist. nor tangible. nor

perspicuous, seeing it is only understood in power and operation; but I beseech and pray to the *Nous* which alone can understand the Generation, which is in God.

Tat Then am I. O Father, utterly unable to do it.

Hermes. God forbid, Son, rather draw or pull him unto thee (or study to know Him) and he will come, be but Willing, and it shall be done; quiet (or make idle) the Senses of the Body, purging thyself from

And there came no more any torment of Darkness, but being overcome, they are all fled away suddenly. and tumultuarly.

Thou hast understood, O Son, the manner of Rebirth; for upon the coming of these Ten. the Intellectual Generation is perfected. and then it driveth away the twelve: and we have seen it in the Generation itself.

Whosoever therefore hath of Mercy obtained this Generation which is according to God. he leaving all bodily sense. knoweth himself to consist of divine things. and rejoiceth. being made by God stable and immutable.

The *Corpus Hermeticum*, often called the cornerstone of the Western esoteric tradition. is truly one of the most significant volumes of wisdom coming from the ancient world and deserves attention in its entirety. Albert Pike wrote the following:

He who desires to attain the understanding of the Grand Word lild the possession of the Great Secret, ought carefully to read the Hermetic philosophers, and will undoubtedly attain initiation. as others have done; but he must take. for the key of their allegories. the single dogma of Hermes. contained in his Table of Emerald.

Judging by the Dumfries No.4 catechism', another manuscript of the Old Charges. seventeenth-century Masons may have equated the two pillars of Solomon's Temple with the two legendary pillars of Hermetic knowledge identified with the Emerald Tablet. One part reads:

Q. Where [was) the noble art or science found when it was lost?

A. It was found in two pillars: the one would not sink the other would not burn.

The two pillars of Hermetic knowledge, supposedly of Egyptian origin, have often been described by notable authorities throughout history as being made in such a way that one would not bum and the other would not sink. The pillars were said to be inscribed by

Thoth, who is traditionally equated with Hermes, prior to the Great Flood as a means of oreserving the highest wisdom of the ancients.

It appears that the ancient conception of the terms initiation, mystery ~nd salvation and the wisdom contained within the Hermetic tradition is of vital imoortance to understanding the doctrine of rebirth as it relates to Masonic initiation and ritual.

Initiation, to once again consider its Greek parent *myein*, "to close", and its Latin counterpart *initiare*. "to begin". is essentially equivalent to *renatus*. "rebirth." To be initiated is to die and b

unreasonable brutish torments of matter.

Tat Have I any revengers or tormentors in myself, Father?

Hermes. Yes, and those, not a few, but many and fearful ones.

Tat. I do not know them, Father.

Hermes. One Torment, Son, is Ignorance, a second, Sorrow, a third, Intemperance, a fourth Concupiscence, a fifth, Injustice, a sixth, Covetousness, a seventh, Deceit, an eighth, Envy, a ninth, Fraud or Guile, a tenth, Wrath, an eleventh, Rashness, a twelfth, Maliciousness.

They are in number twelve, and under these many more; some which through the prison of the body. do force the inwardly placed Man to suffer sensibly. And they do not suddenly, or easily depart from him, that hath obtained mercy of God; and herein consists, both the manner and the reason of Rebirth.

For the rest, O Son, hold thy peace, and praise God in silence, and by that means, the mercy of God will not cease, or be wanting unto us.

Therefore rejoice, my Son, from henceforward, being purged by the powers of God, to the Knowledge of the Truth. For the revelation of God is come to us. and when that came all ignorance was cast OUT!

The knowledge of Joy is come unto us, and when that comes, Sorrow shall fly away to them that are capable of it.

I call unto Joy, the power of Temperance, a power whose Virtue is most sweet; Let us take her unto ourselves, O Son, most willingly, for how at her coming hath she put away Intemperance.

Now I call the fourth, Continnence, the power which is over Concupiscence. This, O Son, is the stable and firm foundation of Justice.

For see, how without labour, she hath chased away injustice and we are justified, O Son. when Injustice is away.

The sixth Virtue which comes into us, I call Communion, which is against roVi"to\<."i"<:<

And when that (Covetousness) is gone, I call Truth; and when she cometh, Error :mti ni"l'pit v~"i<:heth.

See, O Son, how the Good is fulfilled by the access of Truth; for by this means. Envy is gone from us; for Truth is accompanied with the Good. toether also with Life and Light.

Continued on Next Page - Initiation

Initiation

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be born again-to begin a new life. It is an experience, a transformation of the self. And it is also the goal of the Masonic Quest.

1. For a discussion of Greek initiatic terminology consult: Burkert. Walter. *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1987); and Mever. Marvin W .. *The Ancient Mysteries* (HarperCollins 1987)
2. For the principal works on the mysteries practiced at Eleusis in ancient Greece consult: Mvlonas. G.E .. *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton Univ. Press. 1961): and Kerenyi, Carl, *Eleusis* (New York, Bollingen Foundation, 1991)
3. Mever. Marvin W .. *The Ancient Mysteries* (Harper Collins 1987) 0.176.
4. Cooke MS dated to approximately mid -fifteenth-century. Under custodianship of British Museum.
5. A newer and more comprehensive translation can be found in: Salaman. van Oyen, Wharton and Mahe, *The Way of Hermes: New Translations of the Corpus Hermeticum and The Definitions of Hermes Trismeglistus to Asclepius* (Inner Traditions 2000)
6. Pike, Albert, *Morals and Dogma* (Supreme Council SJ, 1871) p. 777.
7. MS from Dumfries Kilwinning Lodge No. 53 (early 1700s?). Hermetic connection discussed in: Stevenson. David. *The Oriflins of Freemasonry* (Cambridge Univ. Press 1988) D. 146.



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sonic public identity.

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Moving Masonry into the 21st Century

Foreword

"When Memories exceed dreams, the end is near." — Michael Hammer

Examining the need for Masonic public awareness

It is no secret that participation in the Masonic fraternity has been dropping for at least 50 years. Evidence of our decline is the fact that our membership totals are at their lowest levels in more than 80 years. Hoping to stop the attrition, Ma-

sonic leaders have tried numerous initiatives: one-day classes, shortened proficiencies, and a lowered minimum age at which one can petition for membership. Grand Lodges have hired public relations firms and have paid for promotions in numerous media outlets, including newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio, and television. Each initiative, while hinting at success, has failed to arrest our declining numbers and has fallen short of rejuvenating our fraternal spirit.

For instance, one-day classes attracted many new members, but they did little to halt the ever-increasing numbers of demits and NPD's. We realized that getting new members was only a part of the challenge. Clearly, Masons were not satisfactorily addressing ways of keeping our members involved and enthusiastic about Masonry. The time had come for us to take full responsibility for our sad state of affairs and begin to move forward, embracing the fact that we have a lot of work to do.

The work began in 2004 when the Conference of Grand Masters asked the Masonic Information Center (MIC) to look into the possibility of creating a National Masonic Public Awareness Program. We accepted the challenge. By accepting that challenge, we assumed a greater responsibility: to test the integrity of what we wanted to communicate to the public about Freemasonry. We had to ask the tough question of ourselves: Who are we as a fraternal organization within the context of the 21st century?

There was little argument among our group that Masons were not the first organization wanting to improve their public image, and we knew that we could no longer gloss over our situation's complexity. In his book *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman quotes business organization consultant Michael Hammer:

One thing that tells me a company is in trouble is when they tell me how good they were in the past. Same with countries. You don't want to forget your identity. I am glad you were great in the 14th century, but that was then and this is now. When memories exceed dreams, the end is near.

Our Masonic memories are to be treasured, but our Masonic dreams have faltered. Simply put, we have forgotten our Masonic identity so that our memories truly do exceed our dreams. It is about time we brought our actions in line with our aspirations.

Thus began our study. Over a year later, we offer this report as a fraternal call to action. It is neither a step-by-step plan nor a scholarly document. It is our way of communicating to our fraternity the need to focus on making Masonry relevant to our changing communities and our 21st century lives. The style of the report is conversational and easy-to-read, representing the deliberations, fact-finding, and talking points of the Task Force. We ask

you, as fellow Masons, to heed the call and to take the initiative to participate in building our own destiny, brother by brother, lodge by lodge.

Part I – Introduction

"Change is the one constant and Freemasons have done little to keep pace with change."
— MIC Task Force

"It's about time!" When spoken forcefully, the phrase means an action is about to be taken addressing a situation needing immediate attention. Sometimes the words are said softly, "It's about time; I don't have any," thereby making "time" the excuse for doing nothing. How best to illustrate this conclusion?

Since the end of World War II, population figures in North America have soared. Masonic membership increased also until 1959. Since that time, while the general population has had dramatic increases, Masonic membership has dropped.

To further illustrate this trend, the Masonic Service Association (MSA) has tracked membership figures for Masons in the United States since 1925. The numbers tell a very sad tale of the decline of one of the world's most important fraternal organizations, slowly fading away, as T.S. Elliot says, "not with a bang, but a whimper."

This chart on page 5 illustrates the rise and fall of Masonic membership from the 1920s to the year 2003.

Even at our membership's lowest point in 1941, which included the Depression years (the worst depression in US history), Freemasonry still had 800,000 more members than we do today. In short, Freemasonry is at its lowest membership level in at least 80 years.

Interpreting the numbers

Four familiar excuses have frequently been touted as the cause of the decline.

1. *We are in a downward cycle.*

History demonstrates that fraternal membership is always cyclical. Although national membership statistics prior to 1925 are very difficult to compile, the figures that are available clearly show cyclical ups and downs. However, our current membership total is at its lowest point in 80 years. This clearly indicates that the trend is not of a cyclical nature and must be viewed with the clear understanding that other factors are at work.

2. *We lost the Vietnam generation.*

The Vietnam generation resisted joining traditional mainstream organizations. This was a gen-

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eration turned off by anyone over 35; to this group, any organization that embraced traditional values was distrusted. However, many years have passed producing diminished membership figures. We have no choice but to conclude the problem runs far deeper than one generation.

3. *We are all so busy.*

Busy lifestyles complicate time commitments. No question about it. Where one spouse used to be the major source of the family's income, now both spouses work. When they come home in the evening, they want time together rather than separate functions to attend, if indeed there is a desire to participate at all. This clearly means that any organization wishing to attract members must offer something of great interest to even be considered worthwhile.

4. *People no longer join the way they used to.*

Joining is no longer fashionable. Clearly true. In his book *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam conclusively shows that people simply do not join organizations as they did in the past. Since the World War II generation, volunteering (which is what we do when we join an organization) has become almost nonexistent. Every fraternal organization, many religious denominations, service clubs, and community organizations such as the PTA/PTO have all suffered membership declines.

While these are valid reasons (yes, they did contribute to a decline in membership), we have failed to accept the fact that the world is a different place than it was in the 1940s and 1950s. If you live in a metropolitan area, your 15-minute commute time to work is now 50 minutes—if you are lucky. We spend more time going to and from work than ever before.

Current lifestyles often require two spouse incomes. Family time is squeezed into the evenings and very often the children have their own activities. The technology explosion has provided a source for entertainment/activity that competes with any organization requiring a time commitment. In short, change is the one constant. What have Freemasons done to keep pace with change? Very little!

Isn't it about time to be realistic about our membership statistics? Population figures in North America for the last 50 years have soared. At the same time membership figures for the Masonic population have dropped. This can only mean that Masons have simply not kept pace with our changing lifestyles. For example, communications technology has exploded—cell phone vs. landline; PC vs. typewriter; e-mail vs. regular mail. While these kinds of changes surround everyone living in a modern world, Freemasons still

grouse about any increase in dues or per capita. It is time to readjust our thinking and come to realize that both time and money are necessary factors in creating a quality organization.

Resisting and denying change

With few exceptions over the last several decades, we have been content to listen to excuses, avoiding examination of the complicated set of changes that has weakened Masonry's relevance to our contemporary lives. Even today, we want to think of "loss of membership" as our major problem. This report argues that membership loss is not the major problem. In fact, our study asks that we shift our thinking to consider our loss of membership as merely a symptom of the problem.

Based upon its study, the Task Force proposes that our core problem is twofold:

1. Loss of Masonic identity
2. Lack of energy invested in Masonry

This means our fraternity has suffered a loss of Masonic identity as an observable way of life, and our lack of energy invested in Masonry no longer makes the fraternity relevant to our busy contemporary lifestyles.

Seeking a lost identity

As Masons we have taken our fraternity's identity for granted, and we have allowed the general public to forget how important we are to the fabric of society. We forgot that what we DO for each other, our lodges, and ourselves enriches the quality of life for our families and communities. Only recently has Masonry found a new place in popular culture with the introduction of Dan Brown's book, *The DaVinci Code*, and the movie, *National Treasure*. Now we see our public identity positioned in the context of historical fiction. We owe the public more than fiction; we owe them facts, and we owe them our best performance every day. Members ask the familiar questions such as:

- Can't we just purchase the solution to our image and membership decline?
- Can't we just fix lethargy with a new PR campaign, developed and implemented by outside PR agencies?

It would be convenient if traditional approaches alone would change the status of Freemasonry in the minds of the general public. However, it would be like trying to convince the public that Pepsi without "fizzy" is just as satisfying. We know that it might be a fine drink, but the truth is—it just wouldn't be Pepsi.

Claiming our Masonic identity

The Masonic Information Center proposes that

Masons must first take ownership of an identity that distinguishes Masonry from other men's organizations. That is a complex but exciting challenge. It is time to face it; Freemasonry is not an off-the-shelf product whose value can be assessed only in quantifiable terms. One Task Force member reminded the group that Masons are not marketing soap or ketchup. Masonry is a process of lifelong learning and discovery that delivers a way of living a principled life, observable in the simplest behaviors, whether at lodge, at home, or in the workplace.

The task facing Masonry is to define our Masonic identity in a rapidly changing world. The public wants to know:

- Who are the Masons?
- How do we know them in our lives today?

When we can answer these questions, then we can move forward with traditional programs for public relations, marketing communications, membership, and more.

It is about time that we did something as a fraternity for our fraternity—brother by brother, lodge by lodge.

Part II - Facing the Facts and Accepting the Masonic Challenge

"Freemasonry evolved from 18th century European enlightened thinking. Today, Masonry is shaped by the 19th century concept of social benevolence and the 20th century emphasis on ritual as the completion of a Mason's education about the fraternity." — MIC Task Force

In order to evaluate present-day Freemasonry, we had to assess the Fraternity's strengths and weaknesses. The Task Force proceeded methodically to question Masonry's past, present and future. We asked a series of penetrating questions, listed our findings, and then completed each section with a summary formed by observations and conclusions.

In order to properly determine a course of action for a Masonic Public Awareness Program, we believe it imperative that we understand, as a fraternity, where we have been, where we are today, and what happened in the intervening years.

Forthright answers to the questions we posed did not come easily and required an enormous amount of soul searching and critical evaluation.

Much of the data used in this report came from United States sources because those were the ones most readily available and accessible to our Task Force. We have pointed out where data was specifically from a United States source, but we have reason to believe that data from Canada would be almost identical.

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For instance, there were no Canadian membership statistics available to us unless we laboriously went through, year by year, the figures from each Grand Lodge to determine if the same trends occurred as in the United States. Because we have had many discussions with Canadian Masons, there is no doubt in the minds of the Task Force that the data trends are the same.

So this report needs to be considered in the context of North America, including the United States and Canada, even though, on occasion, we list a United States source.

Exploring the patterns of Masonry

The deliberations of the Task Force were lengthy and lively. Below are the questions that guided the discussions and the summaries of our findings.

1. What has Freemasonry done in the past?

For a fraternity that is centuries old, this question is extremely significant. It asks how Freemasonry developed and what Masonic affiliation meant to Masons of an earlier time. The Freemasons of the 1700s set a very high standard. In the late 1700s, Freemasons helped build two new nations founded on Masonic principles. Patriots chose to help create the United States; Loyalists chose to help strengthen Canada. Both groups had many Masons in their midst. For detailed information, we turned to the historians on our Task Force who led a review of our Masonic past. The key points and summaries are listed below.

In the past, Freemasonry accomplished the following for its members:

- Provided camaraderie
- Created elite status
- Served as a stepping stone to military, arts, business and social contacts
- Attracted leaders to its membership

Guilds of Masons (early labor unions) probably originated in Scotland in the 1600s. Early Masons concentrated on the following tasks:

- Protecting workers' interests
- Helping Masonic families
- Operating lodges
- Opening lodges to non-stonemasons
- Formally ritualizing the method of creating new members

In colonial America, Freemasonry provided leadership during the American Revolution and throughout the nation's history. It also provided a moral philosophy relevant to the individual and to communities. In early America, Freemasonry:

- Promoted a philanthropic focus supporting fraternal kinship.
- Inspired authors to create a body of popular literature, offering satiric views, i.e. Benjamin Franklin and Mark Twain.
- Stimulated thought consistent with Masonic values. Lodges became sites of Revolutionary debating, responding to contemporary thought.

We looked for historical trends that reshaped our Masonic identity. We found several pivotal events:

- Freemasonry evolved from 18th century European enlightened thinking.
- In the late 1800s, Victorian values influenced Masonic priorities both in Europe and North America by placing emphasis on heightening social awareness and stressing social idealism.
- Twentieth-century Freemasonry sustained Victorian idealism and reinforced philanthropic emphasis of fraternity.
- During World War II, President Truman said that men should join the Masonic fraternity before going to war, which reinforced a rise in Masonic membership.
- Masonic tradition became locked in ritual as an end, not as a process.
- Today Masonry is shaped by the 19th century concept of social benevolence and the 20th century emphasis on ritual as the completion of a Mason's education about the fraternity.

Summary: Throughout history both European and North American Masonic values consistently influenced people's daily lives by encouraging the right to question existing dogma and by upholding our right to express one's own thoughts and ideas. These values promote toleration of all religious and philosophical views. The fraternity has been a constructive, stabilizing, and enlightening force throughout history.

2. What is currently happening within Freemasonry?

Obviously, this question has no right or wrong answers because—like public opinion—it asks for personal perceptions and observations. The Task Force members agreed that there were and are tensions inherent in our organization today, including but not limited to the following perceptions:

- There is a slight movement toward wanting to educate the public about the fraternity.
- There is recognition that traditional communications tools have failed to heighten public awareness.
- The inclusion of family members at Masonic events has produced mixed results.
- Masonry is no longer identified as an elite organization.
- There are disagreements regarding priori-

- ties of financial commitments to Masonic buildings and charitable obligations versus starting new programs.
- Current Masons do not understand the true meaning of our fraternity.
- A reliance on historic heroes inhibits Masons from achieving contemporary significance.

3. How does the public perceive Freemasonry as it exists today?

In today's world of high-speed communications, the public's perception is often based on insufficient information. Research suggests that today more people are impressed by what they see and hear than by what they read. We believe that the public's perception and opinion of Freemasonry can be summarized briefly in the following ways:

- Confused. Are the Masons a fraternity, a religious organization or an alternative religion?
- Mistaken. Only grandfathers could be in such an old-fashioned organization as Freemasonry.
- Oblivious. People are not even aware Masonry still exists.

Summary: Masons are not visible in the daily life of their communities. Their identity is frequently misunderstood and misrepresented in the press and by religious critics. There is little reserve of positive memories of Masonic activity remaining in our communities. Within eye and ear range of the public, Masons have failed to perform what they profess; consequently, they have lost their significance within the context of community.

4. What is the desired image of Freemasonry?

From our difficult discussions of the current environment in which Freemasonry finds itself, we turned to consider Masonry's identity under ideal circumstances. The model Masonic fraternity would be one that defines itself in terms of thought, energy, and action.

Under perfect circumstances, the public would know Masons according to the following observable accomplishments:

- Building community based on shared Masonic values
- Constructing a positive environment for personal growth
- Encouraging education, idea sharing, and open discussion
- Welcoming diversity across religious denominations, ethnicity and age
- Growing leadership ability
- Establishing the relevance of Masonic values to contemporary life
- Advocating concern for the well being of other Masons and their families

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Ideally, Masons would be defined as members of a fraternity, that fits the following descriptions:

- Masonry is a serious men's organization, dedicated to self-improvement coupled with community involvement.
- Masonry is a provider of camaraderie, trust in each other, instant fellowship, and brotherhood.
- Masonry brings together a group of people who emphasize individual excellence.
- Masonry is a provider of an atmosphere of inclusiveness.
- Masonry is an organization that makes good men better.

Summary: The model Masonic fraternity member would be easy to identify in the community by his actions and words. Public awareness of Masonry begins at a grassroots level. Masons must be visible in the community to demonstrate Masonic values in many aspects of their lives.

5. What are the benefits of Freemasonry within the context of our 21st century world?

Masonry offers an opportunity for a principled way of life rooted in the following Masonic values:

- Integrity
- Diversity
- Inquiry
- Community
- Vitality

Summary: Masons are men who build community through brotherhood that is based on a principled lifestyle. A Mason's life is deeply rooted in a system of values. Masonry cannot be kept inside the individual; it is a philosophy of fraternity that must be shared in action through numerous experiences, which are lodge-based, personal, and professional.

6. Who needs to be made aware of the message of Freemasonry?

Freemasonry's significance to our culture is timeless and offers a major stabilizing influence within our communities.

The Masonic identity needs to be understood and observed by the following:

- The general public, specifically the individuals who seek knowledge about themselves and their humanity
- Our existing members
- Potential members who need information about the fraternity's benefits
- Members of the media community
- Religious leaders who need to understand the distinction between Masonry and religion
- Civic leaders

7. Whom do we want to attract as potential members?

Masonry is a fraternity not limited by age, ethnicity, race or religious denomination. Masons are individuals who respect a quality of life, which is uniquely fulfilling. Among their many and diverse qualities, Masons are men who:

- Seek fulfillment through multiple levels of experience, including body, mind, and spirit
- Enjoy brotherhood
- Desire a community enriched by participation, dialogue, and inquiry
- Are principled, disciplined, and compassionate

Summary: Freemasonry wants to attract fellow journeymen who are seeking enrichment in body, mind, and spirit through participation in a brotherhood committed to good works and personal growth.

8. What is at the core of our worthy fraternity's identity?

Masonry offers opportunity for expressing individuality, but at this critical time in our history, the Task Force strongly recommends that Masonic programs focus their efforts on constructing a fraternal identity that is true to the following themes:

- Freemasonry must be lodge-centered, giving members opportunities to express themselves through activities that improve the experience of the lodge and benefit the life of the community.
- Freemasonry sustains its viability as a fraternal organization through its performance of Masonic rituals and values. Masonic values guide Masons both in the lodge and through everyday life. As trustees of Masonry's rich and valuable heritage, members must continually invigorate their approach to Masonic participation, making it an experience that is rewarding, enriching, and relevant to its members, their families and the greater community.

Part III – Taking the Next Steps

"Our Masonic resources are great! Our resource management skills are rusty." — MIC Task Force

1. Generating energy and transforming thought into action

We acknowledged that our identity as Masons must include work on ourselves both as individuals and as a brotherhood. We recognized that our decline in membership over the past 50 years is merely a symptom of the loss of Masonry's relevance to our lives and our communities. We have individually and collectively allowed our lethargy to encrust the jewel of Masonry, which has been bequeathed to us to pass on to the future.

Our focus on the past has blinded us to the challenges of the present. And it is the present that we must address both as individuals and as a fraternal organization. Our reliance on former brothers' successes has weakened our commitment to achieving our own Masonic identities.

Without excusing our recent apathy, suffice it to say that we have been wooed by the world of clever advertising into believing that symbolizing something makes it so. We have succumbed to the agenda of corporate advertising. But we can no longer delude ourselves into thinking about Masonry from the outside in. We must look squarely into the challenge of performing Masonry to the betterment of our fraternity and ourselves.

The Square and Compasses, the best known symbol of a Mason, cannot replace the identity of living the life of a Mason, which is itself perpetually in a state of improving ourselves in body, mind, and spirit. Masonic imagery is a valuable resource when it inspires us to take new action consistent with our personal growth and enlightened thought. We must discover our own Masonic calling, our own place in the history of Masonry, by making authentic Masonic performance our top priority.

2. Breaking out of a pattern of lethargy

Borrowing from our Masonic symbolism, we ask that Masons consider the Rough Ashlar that hides the natural beauty of the stone within. What values and actions have we allowed to slip out of sight? How can we find the resources to emerge from the layers of lethargy that block the natural beauty of Masonry from the general public? We must uncover the Mason within us so that we can present Masonry in fact and not in fiction.

Neither a public relations agency nor an advertising campaign will substitute for the personal journey that will establish the presence of Masonry in the public's view. Each of us has a responsibility to steward our respected fraternity into the future, calling on our own spirit rather than deferring to those of our predecessors. We must exercise the same determination that we admire and celebrate in our heritage.

3. Assessing our tangible and intangible assets

Relying on the Rough Ashlar as a metaphor for the Mason's journey toward enlightenment, the Task Force considered the now dormant natural resources of Masonry. From the value of the individual brothers who sit among us to the lodge-centered assets and systems that link us on a national and international level, we have a wealth of untapped Masonic resources. It is our work to uncover these resources for the immediate and long-term good health of our fraternity.

The Task Force recommends taking an inventory
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of individual lodge strengths in terms of tangible and intangible resources. Consider the assets that are within immediate reach of the lodge and can easily be adapted to meet new needs. These are just a few suggestions to help lodges take an inventory. They are not listed by priority.

Tangible resources may include the following:

- Existing physical structures
- Network of over one and one-half million Masonic members
- Extensive North American geographic coverage
- Lodge facilities with their community centrality—kitchens, libraries, collections, artifacts, exhibits, archives
- Existing programs
- Masonic clinics and hospitals
- Current Masonic publications
- Phone and e-mail networks
- Lodge-based websites
- Financial assets (even if limited)
- Contemporary books and films

Also consider the following examples of intangible resources:

- Our good name for doing good works
- Centuries of history in multiple countries
- Individual talents of each brother
- Historical and contemporary cultural associations
- Community relationships
- Family links
- Educational and arts partnerships
- A legacy of leadership
- Respected values system
- Tradition of diversity
- Rituals
- Mystery
- Symbols
- Opportunities for self-improvement
- Fellowship
- Recent positive media exposure through books and films
- Community history

4. Maximizing our resources

Once we inventory our resources, we need to find ways to manage them. We need systems to monitor our progress. We need ways of recognizing success, encouraging creativity, and rewarding accomplishments. Small actions, kind words, and expressions of concern for others are just a few examples. Our work on Masonry's public image begins with work on ourselves, using our wealth of resources to dislodge the sediment that has encrusted our riches and has diminished the value of our Masonic identity

Our work begins by applying our resources and

improving ourselves in the Masonic tradition of body, mind, and spirit. We need only look in the mirror or offer a handshake to crack the encasement of the Rough Ashlar that screens the natural beauty of the stone.

Our Masonic resources are great! Our resource management skills are rusty. The tools for honing the Perfect Ashlar are at our disposal, but they lie scattered across lodges, hidden in fading relationships, and atrophied by lack of use. We must put them to good use.

We urge each lodge to inventory its tangible and intangible assets, such as people, places, artifacts, relationships, and systems. Although each lodge has an individual and valuable identity within the context of Freemasonry, there is much to learn and share from one another's lodge-based activities. With more than one and a half million members in North America, Masons are poised to discharge our crews with the newly sharpened tools of our craft to improve ourselves and to fulfill the promise of the stewardship of Freemasonry.

The words from William Preston's Masonic lecture succinctly inform us of our Masonic identity in terms of action:

By the Rough Ashlar, we are reminded of our rude and imperfect state by nature; by the Perfect Ashlar, of the state of perfection at which we hope to arrive by a virtuous education, our own endeavors, and the blessings of God.

Masons are unique in their commitment to "virtuous education." By this we mean appreciating Masonry's commitment to life-long learning, self-improvement and personal growth. We are reminded that Masonic identity is distinctive because Masons are men of thought and action.

Part IV – Time to Energize Masonry

"What is a man without energy? Nothing. Nothing at all." —Mark Twain

1. Take action now

- Beginning at the lodge level, plan meaningful activities that put Masonic values into action. Consider how you and your lodge can make each and every activity uniquely Masonic. Listed below are just a few suggestions that place a focus on using your time to its greatest Masonic advantage:
- Apply concepts of education and self-improvement to current print and non-print communications tools of individual lodges, Grand Lodges, and national Masonic organizations and societies.
- Improve the environment of lodge-based fellowship; refresh the look of the lodge; welcome new members; improve presentation skills; provide mentoring to study degrees;

and strengthen communications skills.

- Organize group activities based on education and self-improvement that can enrich lodge-centered fellowship such as: welcoming committees, lodge renovation and cleanup campaigns, leadership development conferences, mentor meetings, workshops on such things as Masonic ritual, history, symbolism, architectural works, arts and cultural works.
- Initiate workshops on personal growth topics. Learn more about Masonry.
- Call on local educational faculty: expert lecturers on topics of unique interest to the lodge members that enrich the body, mind, and spirit of the brothers.
- Tap the talents of individual members and build a community of experts to help Masons to help themselves and their communities.
- Improve community accessibility to Masonry through public outreach and program hosting.
- Offer Masonic recognition and incentive programs for educational initiatives, visitor programs and Chambers of Commerce presentations.
- Honor the Mason within yourself.
- Share success stories with other lodges.

2. Move Masonry into the 21st century

Our initial focus for our public awareness campaign requires imagination, open-mindedness, and discipline—the discipline to say "Yes." Put aside old habits of saying simply, "Ah, that's been tried." Or "Yes, but..." Cast off negativism. Turn the objection around to a challenge. Encourage and reward open and positive communication throughout each stage of change. Share ideas and ask yourself to take ownership of transforming the identity of Masonry through each and every action, regardless of how small. Make it the fraternity that you want—brother by brother, lodge by lodge.

3. Make the commitment now for the future

Our Task Force enthusiastically offers this report and our support to help move Masonry into the 21st century, upholding the honor of membership and the joy of a Masonic way of life. It's about time for us to take the concept of Masonry off the shelf and put the values of Masonry into action.

As we go forward moving Masonry into the 21st century by improving our lodges, personal Masonic skills, and community visibility, there will come a time when financial investments will be needed to support continued growth and public awareness.

Through this progress report, the MIC has shared with you our vision about Freemasonry. We felt it was absolutely critical that we examine our fraternity's past in order to properly understand our current needs. This was only the first step.

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4. Call to action

Now, we must move forward both individually and fraternally. We encourage you to think carefully about how you invest your time, which is everyone's most valuable asset, and we ask that you use your time on programs and actions that are uniquely Masonic. As we work together, we must ask each other how a program, a meeting, or an event improves and demonstrates our experience of being a Mason.

We have not a moment to lose.



Norms

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soul not being "other than Brahma," its vocation is to transcend the world. In other words, since the human intellect has by definition the capacity to conceive and to realize the Absolute, this possibility is its Law; from speculative discernment results operative and unitive concentration. To theology is joined orison; "pray without ceasing."

But there is yet another dimension to be considered, and it is the moral—in certain respects "aesthetic"—climate of spiritual alchemy; this climate basically constitutes what has been called the "initiatory qualification." To the Truth and to the Path must be joined Virtue, namely the qualities of humility, charity, justice and dignity: rigorous knowledge of oneself, benevolent understanding of others, impartial perception of the nature of things, inward and outward participation in the "Motionless Mover"—in the immutable Archetype or the majesty of Being. There is no sâdhana without dharma; no spiritual alchemy without nobleness of character; "beauty is the splendor of the True."

The point of departure of the Path is the Doctrine; the origin of which is Revelation; man accepts Revelation through intellectual intuition or by that feeling for the True—or the Real—which is called faith. There is little likelihood of a man being born with knowledge of the integral Doctrine; but it is possible—very exceptionally—that he possess from birth the certitude of the Essential.

Intelligence, by which we comprehend the Doctrine, is either the intellect or reason; reason is the instrument of the intellect, it is through reason that man comprehends the natural phenomena around him and within himself, and it is through it that he is able to describe supernatural things—parallel to the means of expression offered by symbolism by transposing intuitive knowledge into the order of language. The function of the rational faculty can be to provoke—by means of a given concept—a spiritual intu-

ition; reason is then the flint which makes the spark spring forth. The limit of the Inexpressible varies according to mental structures: what is beyond all expression for some, may be easily expressible for others.

It is all too readily believed that a metaphysical text is a creation of reason because it has the form of a logical demonstration, whereas reason in this case is but the means of transmission. There are mystics who are disinterested in a text because it is logical, that is, because they believe it is necessary to transcend this plane; as if logic were a sign of ignorance or illusion, whereas it is a reflection within our mind of the universal Causality.

The desire to transcend the plane of logic is combined, in a certain sectarianism hostile to discursive expression, with the desire to transcend the "scission" between the subject and the object; now this complementary opposition does not prevent the known—whatever the situation of the knower—from being of the loftiest order.

The subject and the object are not adversaries; they unite in a fusion that—according to the content of the perception—can have an interiorizing and liberating virtue, of which aesthetic enjoyment and the union of love are the foremost examples. In *Atmâ*, the triad *Sat*, *Chit*, *Ananda*—"Being, Consciousness, Beatitude"—is not a factor of scission; similarly, on earth, the dimensions of physical space do not prevent space from being one, so that we perceive no fissure in it.

What we blame in those who are contemptuous of "metaphysical ratiocination" and the "subject-object opposition" is not so much a given perspective as the exaggeration resulting from it or nourished by it. Excess is in the nature of man; pious exaggeration is inevitable on the whole, as is the sectarian mentality. We do not remember who said "all that is excessive is insignificant"; this is quite true, but let us not lose sight of the fact that on the religious plane, hyperbole veils an intention that in the end is merciful; it is then a question of *upâya*, of a "saving stratagem". Doubtless, the voices of wisdom that esoterically either condemn or justify "holy absurdities" may appear "heretical" from the standpoint of a given literalistic orthodoxy, but "God knoweth His own"; the Divine Intellect is not limited by a given theology or a given morality. According to the norm, that which is true saves; according to Grace, that which saves is true.

Unquestionably, the partisans of a symbolist and anti-intellectual intuitionism make a mistake in reproaching speculative intelligence for not being Knowledge as such—which it does not claim to be—and in concluding that it is an obstacle in the Path, whereas, quite evidently, theoretical knowledge is an indispensable stage of the pilgrimage towards total Knowledge. Man is a thinking being, and he cannot evade thought; and "in the beginning was the Word."

There is the perspective of Transcendence and there is the perspective of Immanence; each must be found in the other, as is shown in its own way by the Taoist Yin-Yang. There is a subjective Transcendence as there is an objective Immanence: the intellect is transcendent in relation to the individual, as the Creator is immanent in created things.

But here also—in the face of these two Mysteries—there are the divergent options of those who make of every complementarity an alternative: some believe that everything has to fall from Heaven; others believe that everything can and must come from our own efforts. Now human intelligence, being theomorphic, possesses in principle a supernatural power; but whatever be the prerogatives of our nature, we can do nothing without God's help: for it is He who causes us to participate in the Knowledge He has of Himself.

In Japanese Buddhism, one distinguishes between "self-power," *jiriki*, and "Other-power," *tariki*; the first refers to Immanence and the second to Transcendence. The first means that everything, in the Path, depends on our own strength and initiative; the second means that everything depends on celestial Grace. In reality, even if one of the viewpoints predominates, both viewpoints have to be combined; for on the one hand, we cannot save ourselves by relying entirely on our own strength, and on the other hand, Heaven will not help us if we, who are created intelligent and free, do not collaborate in our own salvation.

* * *

We have seen above that the practice of unitive concentration proceeds from a speculative discernment that justifies and even requires it; now the supports of this concentration are infinitely diverse by reason of the complexity of man, distant reflection of the Infinitude of God.

The modes are not always intelligible at first sight; for example, one might wonder what the relevance is of a discipline such as the Tea Ceremony, which combines ascesis with art, while being materially based on manipulations that seem a priori unimportant, but are ennobled by their sacralization. First of all, one must take into account the fact that in the Far Easterner, sensorial intuition is more developed than the speculative gift; also, that the practical sense and the aesthetic sense, as well as the taste for symbolism are at the basis of his spiritual temperament. In the Tea Ceremony, the symbolic and morally correct act—the "profound" act if one will—is supposed to bring about a sort of Platonic anamnesis or a unitive consciousness, whereas with the white man of the East and the West it is the Idea that is supposed to lead to correct and virtuous acts. The man of the yellow race goes from sensorial experience to intellection, roughly

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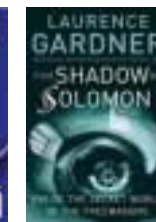
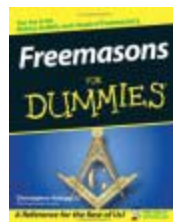
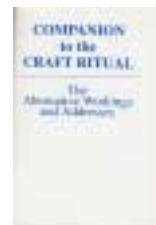
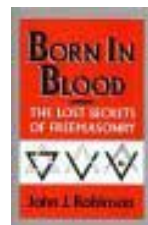
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Norms

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speaking, whereas with the white man, it is the converse that takes place: in starting out from concepts, or from habitual mental images, he understands and classifies phenomena, without, however, feeling the need to consciously integrate them into his spiritual life, except incidentally or when it is a question of traditionally accepted symbols.

Men are different; some like to express themselves by subtle allusions, for fear of limiting the real, while others prefer direct and analytical expression, for fear of remaining imprecise—it takes all kinds to make a world—but all the possibilities can be combined, man not being a closed system. Besides, one cannot help defining things, but care must be taken not to limit them too much in defining them; and if discursive expression is a double-edged sword, it is because reality presents a thousand facets.

The Tea Ceremony signifies that we ought to perform all the activities and manipulations of daily life according to primordial perfections, which is pure symbolism, pure consciousness of the Essential, perfect beauty and self-mastery. The intention is basically the same in the craft initiations of the West—including Islam—but the formal foundation is then the production of useful objects and not the symbolism of gestures; this being so, the stone mason intends, parallel to his work, to fashion his soul in view of union with God. And thus there is to be found in all the crafts and all the arts a spiritual model that, in the Muslim world, often refers to one of the prophets mentioned in the Koran; any professional or homemaking activity is a kind of revelation. As for the adherents of Zen, they readily seek their inspiration in “ordinary life,” not because it is trivial, to be sure, but because—inasmuch as it is woven of symbolisms—it mysteriously implies the “Buddha nature.”

* * *

All this evokes the question of the Symbol and of symbolism; what is the role of the Symbol in the economy of spiritual life? We have just shown that the object of concentration is not necessarily an Idea, but that it can also be a symbolic sign, a sound, an image or an activity: the monosyllable Om, mystical diagrams—mandalas—and images of the Divinities are in their way vehicles of consciousness of the Absolute, without the intervention of a doctrinal element; the “contemplation of the naked Lady,” in certain circles of the troubadours or the *Fideli d’Amore*, suggests a vision of the Infinite and of Pure Being—not a seduction, but a catharsis. The pre-eminence either of the Idea or of the Symbol is a question of opportuneness rather than of principle; by the nature of things, the modes of the Path are as diverse as men are, and as complex as the hu-

man soul. But whatever be our points of departure—Idea or Symbol or their combination—there is also, and essentially, concentration on the Void, concentration made of certitude and serenity; as Shankara said: “That which is the ceasing of mental agitation and the supreme Peacefulness that is the true Benares, and that is what I am.”

For a certain mysticism met with in all traditional climates, only sentiment—not intelligence—offers the solution to the main problem of our existence, namely the meaning of life; eschatology then takes on the function of metaphysics. In this promotion of feeling, the word “truth” is still used, but it means that which liberates us while granting us a happiness that we experience as being fundamental and lasting; truth is then no longer a principle comprising the most diverse contents, it is simply a given content dogmatized; it is forgotten that the true is the nature of things, and that nothing can take precedence over this in the vision of the real. Still within this mental and moral climate, intelligence—presented as “analytical” and “separative”—is opposed to sentiment viewed according to its synthetic and unitive aspect; and what is constructed is a deformed image of man, as if he were the victim of a deceptive intelligence, and liberated by some sentimental solution.

This is not to say that sentiment could not, for its part, be a mode of knowledge as well, for to love something worthy of being loved is to “know” it in a certain way; but this is no reason for believing that sentiment, because of its spontaneous, unarticulated and quasi-magical character, is the only mode of knowledge possible, or the loftiest mode.

A fact that seems to justify the sentimental intuitionists in question—but the real bearing of which they hardly suspect—is the following, and it is incontestable: a phenomenon of beauty can be more suddenly and more profoundly convincing than a logical explanation, whence this maxim: “The Buddhas save not by their preaching alone, but also by their superhuman beauty.” Also, the Platonic opinion that “Beauty is the splendor of the True” expresses without equivocation the profound, intimate, ontological relationship between the Real and the Beautiful, or between Being and Harmony; a relationship that implies—as we have just said—that Beauty is sometimes a more striking and transforming argument than a discursive proof; not logically more adequate, but humanly more miraculous.

* * *

To say Beauty is to say Love; and it is known how important this idea of Love is in all religions and all spiritual alchemies. The reason for this is that Love is the tendency towards Union: this tendency can be a movement, either towards the Immutable, the Absolute, or towards the Limitless, the Infinite; on the plane of human rela-

tions, a particular love is the support for Love as such; and the love of man for woman can be compared to the liberating tendency towards the Divine Infinity—woman personifying All-Possibility—whereas the love of woman for man is comparable to the stabilizing tendency towards the Divine Center, which offers all certitude and all security; however, each partner participates in the other’s position, given that each is a human being and that in this respect the sexual scission is secondary. As regards sexuality in itself, the Sufi Ibn Arabi deems sexual union to be, in the natural order, the most adequate image of Supreme Knowledge: of Extinction in Allâh of the “Knower through Allâh.”

The initiatory journey comprises an Enlightenment that is produced either gradually, or at one single time, or again at the moment of death, when the psychosomatic drama favors this irruption of Light. It is, at one degree or another, Moksha, Bodhi, Satori; ecstasy is an analogous mode, but of a different order, for of itself it does not produce a lasting station. Enlightenment—which moreover presupposes persevering efforts and quite often severe trials—has often been presented as a mystery of Love, precisely because it is a question of an integral and quasi-existential reality that transcends the mental play of conjectures and conclusions; *l’Amore che muove il sole e l’altre stelle*.

* * *

The initiatory journey presents two moral dimensions of primary importance, one exclusive and ascetical and the other inclusive and symbolist or aesthetic, if one may say so. Among aspirants to Liberation, there are first of all those who, in the name of Truth, withdraw from the world, such as monks or *sannyâsis*; then there are those who, in the name of the same Truth, remain in the world and seek to transmute into gold the lead the world offers a priori, such as the adepts of the knightly and craft initiations. If Shankara recommended the ascetical path, that is because it is the surest, given human weakness; but he specified in one of his writings that the “one delivered in this life,” the *jivan-mukta*, can harmoniously and victoriously adapt himself to any social situation conforming to universal Dharma, as is shown at the highest level by the example of Krishna. On the one hand, one must see God in Himself, beyond the world, in the Emptiness of Transcendence; on the other hand and *ipso facto*, one must see God everywhere: first of all in the miraculous existence of things and then in their positive and theomorphic qualities; once Transcendence is understood, Immanence reveals itself of itself.

In the Buddhist as well as the Hindu climate, one encounters a mystical altruism that protests against “seeking a selfish salvation”: one should not wish to save oneself, it seems, one should at

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Norms

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the same time wish to save others, indeed everyone, at least according to one's intention. Now a selfish salvation is a contradiction in terms; an egoist does not obtain salvation, there is no place in Heaven for the miser. Altruists do not see that in the Path, the distinction between "I" and "others" disappears: any salvatory realization is so to speak realization as such, and this being so, a realization obtained by a given person always has an invisible radiance that blesses the ambience. There is no need for a sentimentalism that intends to come to the rescue of Truth; for with Truth, Love is already given, the circle closes with a transpersonal and infinitely generous Beatitude. Love of the Creator implies Love of creatures; and true charity implies Love of God—of Divine Reality, whatever be its Name.

* * *

The Advaitic Doctrine comprises the crucial idea of hierarchized Truth: first of all there is the one and absolute Truth, but this latter does not exclude the diverse and relative truths; on the contrary, it supports them, since they offer to common mortals all they are able to understand and all that can save them. On the one hand, what is true saves ipso facto; on the other hand, that is true which possesses a saving power.

This is what must not be lost sight of when considering the perplexing diversity of liberating Paths—not just any sects, but the intrinsically orthodox Paths, whatever the demerits of the men who represent them. Doubtless there are demanding doctrines that cannot satisfy every need for causal explanations; but there are truths all men must acknowledge, actions all must perform, beauties all must realize; which is to say that there is a Message for the least of mortals. Truth, Prayer and Virtue; everything is there.



Triangle

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tion is interesting. Both the Hiram-that-was and the Hiram-that-will-be are bordered on the left by Strength, on the right by Wisdom/establishment. (We are told that Wisdom is necessary to contrive; might it also be necessary to establish?) In both instances, he is part of triangle and triad.

As a FellowCraft, the exemplar Hiram-that-will-be begins his journey from the western-most point, and as we know, he travels from west to east in search of that metaphorical light. As Junior Warden, the Hiram-that-was has found the best seat in the house, just below that mystic centre where the light at meridian is brightest and fullest.

Now consider this triangle of Pillars in the Master's degree. The three pillar seats correspond

with the gateways to the Temple of allegory. If the building is viewed as symbol of the individual, the self, then the great undertaking, yet unfinished, is the 'building' of the Mason into a better man. The three pillars (Wisdom, Strength, Beauty) are the noble attributes by which this Work is undertaken, yet the fact that these 'supports' are three in number, arrayed in a triangle, makes them not only noble but divine, and the gates of the Temple take on a mystical significance. As 'Hiram' passes each of these mystic 'gates' he is not hailed, but assailed, by three low men who together form a lower triad.

These ruffians, obstacles on Hiram's rough and rugged road, are natural antitheses, not only of the moral qualities illustrated by the specific working tool of each office, but particularly of the divine attributes whose gates they are obstructing. As literal opposites, they may be named ignorance, weakness, and ugliness. They may be better termed Ignorance, Superstition, and Fear, those three enemies that Hiram must encounter from within as well as without.

We have already dealt with the Lodge as metaphor (and macrocosm) for individual development, and with Hiram as both a literary archetype and Renaissance Man ideal. What if we reverse the model and regard it as microcosm? The Lodge, with its four cardinal directions, ground floor, and star-decked heaven, is an easy microcosm of the created world; the 'great and important undertaking' expands from the building and shaping of Man to that of Mankind.

Hiram's death and quasi-resurrection could then be said to represent an ideal Humanity forsaking the lower triad of vice and embracing that higher triad of virtue.

Writes M. P. Hall:

If, as there is ample reason to suspect, the modern Freemasonic Order was profoundly influenced by, if it is not an actual outgrowth of, Francis Bacon's secret society, its symbolism is undoubtedly permeated with Bacon's two great ideals: universal education and universal democracy. The deadly enemies of universal education are ignorance, superstition, and fear, by which the human soul is held in bondage to the lowest part of its own constitution. The arrant enemies of universal democracy have ever been the crown, the tiara, and the torch. Thus Hiram symbolizes that ideal state of spiritual, intellectual, and physical emancipation which has ever been sacrificed upon the altar of human selfishness. (See the chapter on the Hiram legend in his Secret Teachings.)

Hall further injects his own political and secularist views with this comment: "When the mob governs, man is ruled by ignorance; when the church governs, he is ruled by superstition; and when the state governs, he is ruled by fear." It is well to

note that the Roman state and Sanhedrin church both had a hand in Jesus' murder, but the ignorant mob had much influence. Pope Leo XIII, in penning the 1884 encyclical *Humanum Genus*, ostensibly attacked Freemasonry, when in reality he demonized education and democracy; incidentally, the Pope wears a tiara. Henry VIII, one of many tyrants to wear a crown, dealt with dissidents by having them their bellies slit open, their entrails taken thence and burnt to ashes, before they were 'mercifully' decapitated. It seems that Hall was right. What Hall misses, however, is that Ignorance, Superstition, and Fear are embodied by the three low ruffians. As they seek to waylay Hiram on his eastward quest for light, and literally threaten his life, they are quite naturally his enemies; as Hiram is the 'hero' of Freemasonry, they are its enemies as well; as Hiram is the symbolic pinnacle, the Renaissance ideation of Man's ultimate potential, so are ignorance, superstition, and fear the enemies of Mankind.

The candidate, in 'being' Hiram, must understand that these are not only his outward enemies, but inward as well; he cannot pass through these mystic gates, nor adopt their attributes, without knowing their antitheses, without realising the duality of his own nature. In other words, he cannot reach that spiritual center—the Holy of Holies, the monad where unity reigns—without first knowing and reconciling the duad within himself.

The key to the Masonic drama is not that Hiram is accosted by these three evils, but that he ultimately dies by them. It would at first appear that, in murdering him, the ruffians are the victors. Remember, though, that Hiram is the hero/martyr of this 'mystery drama'. In nearly every tale in which the hero is killed (or martyred) he dies for a Greater Good, or a particular Noble Cause or greater Ideal.

In the telling, it is his virtue, his exalted and exemplary character, which emerge victorious. So it is with Hiram. We are told that he was willing to lay down his life rather than forfeit his integrity, an example worthy of all imitation. To the new Master Mason, the Noble Cause is his particular 'great and important undertaking,' to embody Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty and in so doing, to seek that attainment of being: the idealized Man.

The story ends with Hiram being interred near the sanctum sanctorum where he offered up his devotions, and had he been a real person, that might have been (to him) a victory of sorts. To the exemplar Hiram, the new Master, the outcome is not nearly so dire. His symbolic resurrection is meant to impart his elevation into a new philosophic paradigm of thought and life.

In Masonic parlance he is raised from a dead level to a living perpendicular. What is more signifi-

Triangle

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cant is that he is raised from the his low and profane nature — where ignorance, superstition and fear run riot— to a more noble and divine temple supported by Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty.

He becomes one (and by extension, all) of the divine ideals and the pillars supporting them, part of the divine triangle which overlays the Lodge of his own existence.



Movies

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Babbitt, says, "Do you realize that practically every American president was a mason and a Protestant?" He later exclaims, "I'm in business! I'm a thirty-second degree mason!" Burt Lancaster, Jean Simmons, Shirley Jones.

Flash Gordon (1980)



Ming's chief henchman and torturer, Klytus, is shown wearing what appears to be a square and compasses on the front of his uniform. Sam J. Jones and Melody Anderson, with Max von Sydow.

From Hell (2001)



Implicates the Craft as being responsible for the Whitechapel murders in London. The many masonic images and references places this movie in the category of intentional anti-masonry. Johnny Depp, Heather Graham, Ian Holm.



Ghosts of Mississippi (1996)

In a depiction of a true story, convicted murderer, Byron "Delay" De La Beckwith — played by James Wood—is shown driving a car with a Shriners symbol attached to his rear view mirror and, in several scenes, wearing a Shriners lapel pin. His victim, black activist Medger W. Evers,

is shown in his coffin with his Order of Elks fez placed on his chest. In real life, Byron De La Beckwith was raised in Greenwood Lodge No. 35, Mississippi, on 30 September, 1954 and was expelled from the lodge on 2 January, 1978. Alec Baldwin, Whoopi Goldberg, James Woods.



The Godfather Part III (1990)

This fictional film echoes several events of the 1981 Italian P2 scandal. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, written by Mario Puzo, Francis Ford Coppola. Al Pacino, Diane Keaton, Talia Shire, Andy Garcia, Eli Wallach, Joe Mantegna, George Hamilton, Bridget Fonda, Sofia Coppola.



Hollywood Homicide (2003)

Keith David as Leon, Detective Joe Gavilan's supervising officer, wears a masonic ring [00:55:50], clearly seen on the hand he's holding the phone with. Harrison Ford, Josh Hartnett, Lena Olin, Bruce Greenwood, Isaiah Washington, Lolita Davidovich, Keith David, Master P, Dwight Yoakam, Martin Landau, Lou Diamond Phillips, Gladys Knight.



Lara Croft: Tomb Raider (2001)

Although no link is made with Freemasonry, in this movie the Illuminati are perceived as a group

of "devious dangerous men who seek to fulfil an ancient prophesy." The Illuminati has no contemporary masonic link, and the eye in a triangle has no unique masonic significance. But their popular association with Freemasonry in fiction requires that their use in this movie be noted. Directed by Simon West, written by Sara B. Cooper and Mike Werb. Angelina Jolie, Jon Voight.



League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (2003)

The square and compasses appear four times: twice in close-ups of an oversize masonic ring worn by the Phantom, a villain who tries to ignite a world war at the turn of the last century in order to create a market for his futuristic weapons and once on the office doors of the founder of the League, "M", who is later revealed to be the same person. Sean Connery.



Like Water for Chocolate [Como agua para chocolate] (1992)

A masonic funeral is briefly seen through a window. Later, the young doctor shows the main character a drawing incorporating the square and compasses and an all-seeing eye. Marco Leonardi, Tita Regina Torné, Iván Martínez.



Lone Star (1996)

Corrupt sheriff Charley Wade, played by Kris Kristofferson, is identified as a freemason by his ring as the movie begins. The ring is clearly seen

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Movies

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in a later scene as he accepts a bribe. Stephen Mendillo, Stephen J. Lang, Chris Cooper.



Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (1985)

Edwin Hodgeman as Dr. Dealgood, the announcer introducing the fight between Max and Blaster wears a square and compasses image on his shirt front. Frank Thring, as the Collector, wears a lapel jewel that may be from a concordant masonic body. Mel Gibson, Tina Turner, Bruce Spence.



Magnolia (1999)

Just before gameshow host Jimmy Gator, played by Philip Baker Hall, goes on stage, Burt Ramsey, played by Ricky Jay—who is wearing a masonic ring—asks him, "You with me, Jimmy?" Jimmy says, "The book says we may be through with the past but the past ain't through with us." to which Burt replies, "We met upon the level and we're parting on the square." Jason Robards, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Julianne Moore, Tom Cruise, Philip Baker Hall, Melora Waters, John C. Reilly, Jeremy Blackman, William H. Macy.



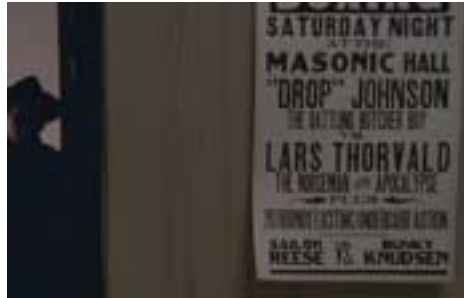
The Majestic (2001)

Unrelated to the story, the square and compasses symbol can be seen once on a mausoleum in the cemetery scene and once on a building on Main Street in the later half of the movie. Jim Carrey, Bob Balaban, Jeffrey DeMunn, Hal Holbrook, Laurie Holden, Martin Landau.



The Man Who Would Be King (1975)

Based on a Rudyard Kipling story. Mercenary soldiers convince Kafiristan tribespeople that they are gods after discovering masonic symbols on religious artifacts. Sean Connery, Michael Caine.



Miller's Crossing (1990)

Seen on "Drop" Johnson's apartment wall is a poster for a fight Saturday Night at the Masonic Hall. Gabriel Byrne, Marcia Gay Harden, John Turturro, J.E. Freeman, Albert Finney, Mike Starr, Al Mancini, Steve Buscemi.



Mississippi Burning (1988)

Willem Dafoe as Agent Alan Ward talks to Gene Hackman as Agent Rupert Anderson: Gene Hack-

man, Willem Dafoe, Frances McDormand.



Nashville (1975)

While Ronee Blakley sings at an outdoors concert the camera pans across the audience, several of whom are Shriners. David Arkin, Barbara Baxley, Ned Beatty, Karen Black, Ronee Blakley, Timothy Brown, Keith Carradine, Geraldine Chaplin, Robert DoQui, Shelley Duvall, Allen Garfield, Henry Gibson, Scott Glenn, Jeff Goldblum



National Treasure (2004)

Benjamin Franklin Gates, played by Nicholas Cage, descends from a family of treasure-seekers. This movie is yet another fictional attempt to link the freemasons, the Knights Templar and the founding of the USA. Nicolas Cage, Justin Bartha, Sean Bean, Diane Kruger, Harvey Keitel, Christopher Plummer, Jon Voight.



Overboard (1987)

In the beginning of the movie, as Dean (Kurt) is driving into town, the camera pans past the "Welcome to Elk Cove" sign. Attached is a very obvious large blue masonic emblem. Goldie Hawn, Kurt Russell, Edward Herrmann, Katherine Helmond, Michael G. Hagerty, Roddy McDowall.

Revelation (2001)

The Knights Templar are searching for an ancient relic, the Loculus, so that they can resurrect Christ. Lord Martel tells the story of a masonic order called the Knights Templars (sic); a Knights Templar ceremony, several all-seeing eye symbols and pentagrams are depicted. A TV newscast mentions an illegal



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Movies

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masonic order called the P2 CIA; the camera then pans to the word "Masonic" on a newspaper headline. The overall theme of the movie is anti-masonic. Terence Stamp, James D'Arcy, Natasha Wightman, Liam Cunningham, Heathcote Williams, Derek Jacobi.



Rosewood (1997)

Based on an actual incident in 1923, this movie has played fast and loose with the historical facts but none-the-less presents a scathing and realistic indictment of the times. While there is evidence of a masonic angle, the movie gives it far too much prominence. Masonic symbols are prominently displayed in several scenes. Jon Voight, Ving Rhames, Don Cheadle.



The Searchers (1956)

In a scene where Wayne rides into a Comanche camp after a battle, one of the dead Comanches is lying sprawled face up, wearing a blue cloth apron, similar in size to a masonic apron, with white ribbons sewn in the shape of a square and compasses. John Wayne, Jeffrey Hunter, Vera Miles, Ward Bond, Natalie Wood.



Sons of the Desert (1933)

Fezz-wearing Stan and Ollie go to a convention styled after the Shriners, returning home to learn that honesty is the best policy. Stanley Laurel and freemason Oliver Hardy



Time Bandits (1981)

A time travelling epic fantasy. One of the band of dwarves is seen wearing a heavy medallion possibly incorporating a square and compasses. John Cleese, Sean Connery, Shelly Duvall.



The Time Machine (1960)

Based on H. G. Wells' 1895 novel. David Filby, played by Alan Young, says to George Wells, played by Rod Taylor: "George, I speak to you as a friend, and even more, as a brother..." although the characters are not related. This line does not appear in the novel. Filby and his four friends all wear watch fobs but none are seen in enough detail to determine if they are masonic. Refer-

ring to a hypothetical time traveller, George alludes to another H. G. Wells novel when he says, "Can he change the shape of things to come?" Rod Taylor, Alan Young, Yvette Mimieux, Sebastian Cabot.



Tombstone (1993)

A retelling of the gunfight at the OK Corral and its aftermath. Jon Tenney, as John Behan, Cochise County Sheriff wears a square and compasses watchfob. Buck Taylor, as Turkey Creek Jack Johnson, wearing a square and compasses pendant responds to Val Kilmer's Doc Holliday saying he has no friends by saying, "Hell, I've got lots of friends." Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer.



True Grit (1969)

Kim Darby's character, Matty, on viewing her recently deceased father in a coffin in a funeral parlour, tells the farm hand, "When you get home, you put him in a better coffin and you bury him in a mason's apron." This line is based on the 1968 novel by Charles Portis. John Wayne, Glen Campbell, Robert Duvall.

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Movies

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U-Turn (1997)

A married real estate salesman, Jake McKenna played by Nick Nolte, in Superior Arizona later married his daughter by his Apache mistress then hires a gambler on the run to kill her. He wears a masonic ring, seen in a close-up. Sean Penn, Nick Nolte, Jennifer Lopez, Powers Boothe, Claire Danes, Joaquin Phoenix, Jon Voight, Billy Bob Thornton



Who Framed Roger Rabbit (1988)

Roger hides out in a theatre house, and sees a news reel highlighting a Shriners parade. Bob Hoskins, Christopher Lloyd, Joanna Cassidy, Charles Fleischer, Kathleen Turner.



What Planet Are You From? (2000)

Garry Shandling plays Harold Anderson who is an extraterrestrial working as a loans officer in a bank. His manager, Don Fisk played by Richard Jenkins, wears a masonic lapel pin. He is also wearing a wedding band and claims to be having an affair with one of his employees. Garry Shandling, Annette Bening, John Goodman, Greg Kinnear, Ben Kingsley.



What's Eating Gilbert Grape (1993)

A masonic ring is worn by Ken Carver, a small-town Insurance salesman trying too hard to be an attentive father. Johnny Depp, Leonardo DiCaprio, Juliette Lewis.



Hero

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The ideas in the book can be applied to understanding any human problem. They are a great key to life as well as being a major tool for dealing more effectively with a mass audience.

Christ, Hitler, Mohammed, and Buddha all understood the principles in the book and applied them to influence millions.

If you want to understand the ideas behind the HERO MYTH, there's no substitute for actually reading the book. It's an experience that has a way of changing people. It's also a good idea to read a lot of myths, but it amounts to the same thing since Campbell spends most of the book illustrating his point by re-telling old myths.

Campbell gives a condensed version of the hero myth on p. 245. However, since he uses some specialized technical terms that require going back to his examples in earlier chapters to find out what he's talking about, I've taken the liberty of amending his outline slightly, re-telling the hero myth in my own way. Feel free to do the same. Every story-teller bends the myth to his own purpose. That's why THE HERO HAS A THOUSAND FACES

The stages of the HERO are:

1) THE HERO IS INTRODUCED IN HIS ORDINARY WORLD.

Most stories take place in a special world, a world that is new and alien to its hero. If you're going to tell a story about a fish out of his customary element, you first have to create a contrast by showing him in his mundane, ordinary world. In WITNESS you see both the Amish boy and the policeman in their ordinary worlds before they are thrust into alien worlds — the farmboy into the city, and the city cop into the unfamiliar countryside. In STAR WARS you see Luke Skywalker

bored to death as a farmboy before he takes on the universe.

2) THE CALL TO ADVENTURE.

The hero is presented with a problem, challenge, or adventure. Maybe the land is dying, as in the Arthur stories about the search for the Holy Grail. In STAR WARS again, it's Princess Leia's holographic message to Obi Wan Kenobi, who asks Luke to join in the quest. In detective stories, it's the hero accepting a new case. In romantic comedies it could be the first sight of that special — but annoying someone the hero or heroine will be pursuing/sparring with the remainder of the story.

3) THE HERO IS RELUCTANT AT FIRST.

Often at this point, the hero balks at the threshold of adventure. After all, he or she is facing the greatest of all fears — fear of the unknown. At this point Luke refuses Obi Wan's call to adventure, and returns to his aunt and uncle's farmhouse, only to find they have been barbecued by the Emperor's stormtroopers. Suddenly Luke is no longer reluctant, and is eager to undertake the adventure. He is motivated.

4) THE HERO IS ENCOURAGED BY THE WISE OLD MAN OR WOMAN.

By this time many stories will have introduced a Merlin-like character who is the hero's mentor. In JAWS it's the crusty Robert Shaw character who knows all about sharks; in the mythology of the Mary Tyler Moore Show, it's Lou Grant. The mentor gives advice and sometimes magical weapons. This is Obi Wan Kenobi giving Luke Skywalker his father's light sabre.

The mentor can only go so far with the hero. Eventually the hero must face the unknown by himself. Sometimes the wise old man is required to give the hero a swift kick in the pants to get the adventure going.

5) THE HERO PASSES THE FIRST THRESHOLD.

He fully enters the special world of his story for the first time. This is the moment at which the story takes off and the adventure gets going. The balloon goes up, the romance begins, the plane or spaceship blasts off, the wagon train gets rolling. Dorothy sets out on the Yellow Brick Road. The hero is now committed to his journey... and there's no turning back.

6) THE HERO ENCOUNTERS TESTS AND HELPERS.

The hero is forced to make allies and enemies in the special world, and to pass certain tests and

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In 1857, Albert Pike published his Scottish Rite rituals of the 4th to 32nd degrees. This is the classic Pike Rituals in photographic reproduction of

Hero

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challenges that are part of his training. In STAR WARS, the cantina is the setting for the forging of an important alliance with Han Solo, and the start of an important enmity with Jabba The Hut. In CASABLANCA, Rick's Cafe is the setting for the "alliances and enmities" phase, and in many westerns it's the saloon where these relationships are established.

The tests and challenges phase is represented in STAR WARS by the scene of Obi Wan teaching Luke about the Force, as Luke is made to learn by fighting blindfolded. The early laser battles with the Imperial Fighters are another test which Luke passes successfully.

7) THE HERO REACHES THE INNERMOST CAVE

The hero comes at last to a dangerous place, often deep underground, where the object of his quest is hidden. In the Arthurian stories the Chapel Perilous is the dangerous chamber where the seeker finds the Grail. In many myths the hero has to descend into hell to retrieve a loved one, or into a cave to fight a dragon and gain a treasure. It's Theseus going into the Labyrinth to face the Minotaur. In STAR WARS it's Luke and company being sucked into the Death Star where they will rescue Princess Leia. Sometimes it's the hero entering the headquarters of his nemesis; and sometimes it's just the hero going into his or her own dream world to confront his or hers worst fears... and overcome them.

8) THE HERO ENDURES THE SUPREME ORDEAL.

This is the moment at which the hero touches bottom. He faces the possibility of death, brought to the brink in a fight with a mythical beast. For us, the audience standing outside the cave waiting for the victor to emerge, it's a black moment. In STAR WARS, it's the harrowing moment in the bowels of the Death Star, where Luke, Leia and company are trapped in the giant trash-masher. Luke is pulled under by the tentacled monster that lives in the sewage, and is held down so long the audience begins to wonder if he's dead. E.T. momentarily appears to die on the operating table.

This is a critical moment in any story, an ordeal in which the hero appears to die and is born again. It's a major source of the magic of the hero myth. What happens is that the audience has been led to identify with the hero. We are encouraged to experience the brink-of-death feeling with the hero. We are temporarily depressed, and then we are revived by the hero's return from death.

This is the magic of any well-designed amusement park thrill ride. Space Mountain or The

Great White Knuckler make the passengers feel like they're going to die, and there's a great thrill that comes from surviving a moment like that. This is also the trick of rites of passage and rites of initiation into fraternities and secret societies. The initiate is forced to taste death and experience resurrection. You're never more alive than when you think you're going to die.

9) THE HERO SEIZES THE SWORD.

Having survived death, beaten the dragon, slain the Minotaur, the hero now takes possession of the treasure he's come seeking. Sometimes it's a special weapon like a magic sword, or it may be a token like the Grail or some elixir which can heal the wounded land.

Sometimes the "sword" is knowledge and experience that leads to greater understanding and a reconciliation with hostile forces.

The hero may settle a conflict with his father or with his shadowy nemesis. In RETURN OF THE JEDI, Luke is reconciled with both, as he discovers that the dying Darth Vader is his father, and not such a bad guy after all.

The hero may also be reconciled with a woman. Often she is the treasure he's come to win or rescue, and there is often a love scene or sacred marriage at this point. Women in these stories (or men if the hero is female) tend to be SHAPE-SHIFTERS. They appear to change in form or age, reflecting the confusing and constantly changing aspects of the opposite sex as seen from the hero's point of view. The hero's supreme ordeal may grant him a better understanding of women, leading to a reconciliation with the opposite sex.

10) THE ROAD BACK.

The hero's not out of the woods yet. Some of the best chase scenes come at this point, as the hero is pursued by the vengeful forces from whom he has stolen the elixir or the treasure. This is the chase as Luke and friends escape from the Death Star, with Princess Leia and the plans that will bring down Darth Vader.

If the hero has not yet managed to reconcile with his father or the gods, they may come raging after him at this point. This is the moonlight bicycle flight of Elliott and E.T. as they escape from "Keys" (Peter Coyote), a force representing governmental authority. By the end of the movie, Keys and Elliott have been reconciled, and it even looks like Keys will end up as Elliott's father. (The script not the final cut, guys).

11) RESURRECTION.

The hero emerges from the special world, transformed by his experience. There is often a replay here of the mock death-and-rebirth of stage 8, as the hero once again faces death and sur-

vives. Each ordeal wins him new command over the Force. He is transformed into a new being by his experience.

12) RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR.

The hero comes back to his ordinary world, but his adventure would be meaningless unless he brought back the elixir, treasure, or some lesson from the special world. Sometimes it's just knowledge or experience, but unless he comes back with the elixir or some boon to mankind, he's doomed to repeat the adventure until he does. Many comedies use this ending, as a foolish character refuses to learn his lesson and embarks on the same folly that got him in trouble in the first place.

Sometimes the boon is treasure won on the quest, or love, or just the knowledge that the special world exists and can be survived. Sometimes it's just coming home with a good story to tell.

The Short Form of the Hero Story

The hero is introduced in his ordinary world, where he receives the call to adventure. He is reluctant at first but is encouraged by the wise old man or woman to cross the first threshold, where he encounters tests and helpers. He reaches the innermost cave, where he endures the supreme ordeal. He seizes the sword or the treasure and is pursued on the road back to his world. He is resurrected and transformed by his experience. He returns to his ordinary world with a treasure, boon, or elixir to benefit his world.

As with any formula, there are pitfalls to be avoided. Following the guidelines of myth too rigidly can lead to a stiff, unnatural structure, and there is danger of being too obvious.

The HERO MYTH is a skeleton that should be masked with the details of the individual story, and the structure should not call attention to itself. The order of the hero's stages as given here is only one of many variations. The stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically reshuffled without losing their power.

The values of the myth are what's important. The images of the basic version — young heroes seeking magic swords from old wizards, fighting evil dragons in deep caves, etc., — are just symbols, and can be changed infinitely to suit the story at hand.

The myth is easily translated to contemporary dramas, comedies, romances, or action-adventures by substituting modern equivalents for the symbolic figures and props of the hero story. The Wise Old Man may be a real shaman or Wizard, but he can also be any kind of mentor or teacher, doctor or therapist, crusty but benign boss, tough but fair top sergeant, parent, grandfather, etc.

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Modern heroes may not be going into caves and labyrinths to fight their mythical beasts, but they do enter an innermost cave by going into space, to the bottom of the sea, into their own minds, or into the depths of a modern city.

The myth can be used to tell the simplest comic book story or the most sophisticated drama. It grows and matures as new experiments are tried within its basic framework. Changing the sex and ages of the basic characters only makes it more interesting, and allows ever more complex webs of understanding to be spun among them. The basic characters can be combined, or divided into several figures to show different aspects of the same idea. The myth is infinitely flexible, capable of endless variation without sacrificing any of its magic.

And it will outlive us all.



Gold

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Coverly, a heartfelt prayer from grayheaded Parson Logue, a shaking of hands and handkerchiefs all around, and then the Lodge closes and that's the last you ever hear of it.

People outside may go wild with curiosity; it makes no difference — the thing is locked up, and the key lost. They may waylay the Masons on their road home, and try to entrap them with questions; all in vain. "How did that trial come out?" "a solemn stare is the only response. "Did the parties make their statements?" "No answer. "Didn't Higgs call Diggs a liar?" "A gentle whistle, tune, freemason's March. "Well then, how was the thing settled?" "A smile and a turning away, a scratching of heads and a general disappointment. That's just the way they did when Stovall was accused of kicking Marcus, knowing him to be a Mason, and to this day old Mother Phlote has labored in vain to get at the particulars.

Ah, bless your heart, there's no leaky barrels in Euclid Lodge; the bungs are well drove in, the hoops hammered down and riveted; the whole Lodge is tight as a drum. The members have often enough been cautioned that the manner in which Masons settle their difficulties, is one of the impenetrable secrets of the art. This is in accordance with the well known views of Dr. Oliver, the sage historian of Masonry, who advises that "all differences which may occur amongst us, ought to be kept secret from the world: the degree of Provost and Judge was instituted by Solomon to hear complaints and decide differences."

The amiable character of Euclid Lodge is so noted that the colonies which go out from her every year

or two to organize new Lodges, as a beegum expands itself in new swarms, may be recognized by their family resemblance. The sapient Sam Slick, in his book of travels, says "the character of the mother is a sure index to the character of the daughter;" and so it proves here, for no Lodges in the State rank higher on the books of the Grand Lodge than these offshoots of Euclid.

But highly exalted as Euclid Lodge is and deserves to be, it has nevertheless a variety amidst its membership, and this variety it is that has suggested the title of this sketch, Gold, Silver, Brass, and Iron. Four grades are distinctly marked even as these four metals were used in the temple of King Solomon, and we greatly err if it does not prove upon examination that every other Lodge possesses nearly the same variety. Let us commence at

The Iron Value

Squire Blunt is a fair specimen of this material. He became a Mason principally because his neighbors did, and he continues his membership in the Lodge because he likes to hear it said that he is a Mason. He wears a Masonic breastpin, and has painted a square and compass on his sign, both being for the purpose of affording prima facie evidence to the same effect. He pays his Lodge dues only occasionally; is always astonished to find they have run up so large; is convinced that the Secretary forgot to enter his last payment; hunts over his papers at home for the receipt; fails to find it, then gives it up with a grumble. Whenever he visits the Lodge, which is very rarely the case except at elections, installations, and funeral occasions, he has a resolution to offer that the quarterage dues be reduced one half, declaring that for the life of him he doesn't see what becomes of all the money. He would like very much to hold office, and frequently proposes that Euclid Lodge should fall into the modern practice of holding elections semi-annually, in hopes that his turn would come the sooner.

When a stranger falls into the neighborhood to visit an acquaintance or to look for land, Squire Blunt is usually foremost to hail him as a Mason, to examine him, and then who but he is ready to take him by the hand, introduce him into the Lodge room and boldly vouch for him. Squire Blunt invariably objects on the score of expense, to the employment of the authorized lecturer when he comes around, and as one noisy man can sometimes do much more harm than a score of sensible folks can remedy, he did once succeed in preventing an engagement of this sort, greatly to the injury of the Lodge.

The Squire has no Masonic books, but being fond of reading such things, he depends upon borrowing from others; he adopts the same economical rule concerning Masonic magazines and newspapers.

Squire Blunt has very limited notions of the Cable Tow. It is not more than three miles long in his

opinion, and some of the brethren have whispered that the particular rope which he holds on to, is somewhat warped at that — perhaps for the want of use. It was on this account that when Bennington Lodge lost its hall by fire, and when Crosswell Lodge appealed to Masonic charities on behalf of their Orphan school, and when the poor Hungarian brother who was collecting means to bring his family to America, came with a recommendatory letter from the Grand Master, none of these things moved the heart of Squire Blunt. He declared "they were not within the length of his Cable Tow," and who could gainsay his declaration.

Squire Blunt is more liable to be imposed upon than other Masons in his vicinity. For instance, he was overtaken one day on the road by a cute Yankee fellow in the rifle trade, who passing himself off on the Squire as a Royal Arch Mason, got a five dollar bill out of him for an old copy of Alien's Ritual, that veritable exposition of all the degrees and a good deal more. But when Squire Blunt brought his costly purchase to the Lodge and triumphantly exhibited it, Brother Coverly put on his large green goggles, looked it through from end to end and then dropping it softly into the stove, he remarked in his sweet mild way, "either this exposition is true or false; if true you have no right to handle the perjured leaves, if false, you have no use for it: in either case you are acting unmasonically to patronize the enemies of morality by paying out your money for these works!" — and so Squire Blunt lost his five dollars.

Brethren, who read this little sketch, have you any member of the Iron value in your Lodge ?

The Brass Value

Brass is not so much a metal in itself as a compound of other metals, and the mixture is very little like the original. Dr. Swazey is a specimen of the Brass value in Euclid Lodge. Dr. Swazey has many excellent Masonic qualities. He pays his quarterage dues like a hero. His cable tow reaches to the furthest parts of the earth and comprehends all mankind in a single coil. The fact is the Doctor is so good hearted and benevolent to all men that he can hardly proportion his bounties to any particular class above the rest.

Dr. Swazey is extravagantly fond of side degrees. He has got them all, and glories in having them all. He has been ground over in the Button factory degree; burnt his fingers in the Call-and-Answer; plead to scandalous charges in the Blue hen ; tussled manfully in the Row-your-own-oar; shot his arrow; eat his words; held on to his cable tow; been down to Joppa; conquered divers temptations — in short, his education in this branch is complete. Finding the thing so easy he manufactured a side degree for himself called the Pestle-and-

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Mortar; but as none but physicians can take it, we are in the dark as to its mysteries; but we have been told that the candidate commences by swallowing twelve pills in succession as a trial of his fortitude.

And here now lies the error of Dr. Swazey, Ms metal is too much compounded. He has more zeal than discretion.

No person in the Lodge is better prepared to be a bright, Mason than he. His library of Masonic books is large, the largest in the district. He has the education to understand them, and the talent to apply them, but his Masonic reputation is not first rate, for he attaches himself to every secret society that springs up, and devotes as much time and means to one as the other. He seems unable to discriminate between an association born within half a century and one that has stood the brunt of twenty-eight centuries. In the tenets of Masonry Dr. Swazey is as apt as any other person, in Brotherly Love, Belief and Truth; likewise in the cardinal virtues of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. But even here his brassy-compound value is visible, for he has got his temperance so much mixed up with temperance societies and his relief with mutual relief associations that for the life of him he cannot see the difference.

But it is much more pleasant to commend than to blame. The charitable disposition of Dr. Swazey is so well understood by his brethren, that when a contribution is to be made up they always put his name down, whether present or not, and he fulfills their expectations like a Trojan. When Brother Joon died, leaving his family in a destitute condition, the Doctor sent in his account for medical attendance receipted in full, and furthermore declared himself indebted to the estate Seven dollars — (it was a falsehood, but the angels smiled over it and refused to report at the heavenly east,) — and he paid over the seven dollars to the widow.

Yet there is another fault this brassy brother has. He has got into the erroneous idea that as Masonry doesn't take away any privileges which a man possessed before he joined the Order, therefore if a person insults you, you may knock him down, Mason or no Mason. This doctrine is not pure gold, like Electa's; it is brass. The Doctor is wrong in his premises, therefore he errs materially in his conclusions. He goes beyond the parallels and the book: no wonder then if his orbit becomes in this respect a lawless one.

Brother Swazey belongs to the progressive party in Masonry. He believes in going ahead. He thinks that because King Solomon never heard the puff of a steamboat, nor saw a newspaper, nor smelt chloroform, therefore all the wisdom

didn't die with him; and so he is in favor of improving Masonry.

He forgets that perfection in the art of architecture is lost. He thinks he has a patent way for the grips; a new kink in giving the signs; one grande flourishe, as the Frenchmen say, for the words. The year he attended the Grand Lodge he made a three hours' speech developing his ideas; but unfortunately that stubborn body voted them down, seriatim, and Dr. Swazey has never been there since.

Brethren, who read this little sketch, have you any members of the brass value in your Lodge?

The Silver Value

Silver is a white, ponderous, costly and pure metal, much sought after, both for mechanical and ornamental purposes. In its nature it is indestructible. It is rather scarce among the fifty-five elementary bodies, but very widely diffused throughout nature.

The finest specimen of the silver value in Euclid Lodge is Parson Logue. This reverend brother comes from a silver family, morally speaking, for his brother Robert was so universally beloved both by Mason and Cowan, that after he died and his poor wife followed him to the grave on account of her grief, their children were raised at the expense of Masons, and more than seven years afterwards, a Lodge, organized in a room that overlooked his grave, was named Logue Lodge in honor of his memory.

Parson Logue is equal to that deceased brother both in morals (Masonry) and religion; and resembles him as well in his holy walk and conversation, as in the lineaments of his face recorded in the portrait suspended on his parlor wall.

The brethren of Euclid Lodge highly appreciate the silver value of this pure hearted brother, and they manifest it by using his talents freely in the various Lodge offices and duties. He has filled all the elective stations so frequently, and it has become so much a matter of course to elect him, that when an absent brother meets one after St. John Evangelist's day, his enquiry is "and what did you make of parson Jim this time?" In fact he has perambulated the Lodge room from East to South and from South to West so frequently, and occupied all the intervening places so thoroughly, that the work of Masonry comes as pat to him as it does to preach a sermon on Free Grace.

Brother Logue is emphatically a working man. Had he been present at the building of King Solomon's Temple, the King would certainly have employed him, and put him in an honorable station and given him Master Mason's wages.

But there are soots in the sun. We must now turn the picture. The good old gentleman lacks some-

thing. We cannot elevate him to the highest standard of Masonry, and it is for this reason, he does not know the lectures and cannot elucidate the landmarks. The consequence is that he is often compelled to defer his judgment to far younger men, and it injures his Masonic character to do so. Furthermore, when he has conferred a degree he depends on some brother present to give the lecture, or in default of that, sends him home without it, which is a fraud (however innocent the motive) upon the candidate.

Again, this Reverend brother of the silver value is sadly deficient in the disciplinary regulations of a Lodge. He is uninformed as to the principles on which the most vital questions are founded. For instance, he cannot say what rule governs in vouching for visitors; or whether a fellow-craft Mason is or is not to be admitted into a funeral procession; or whether a motion to reconsider can be entertained after balloting; or how it can be discovered which member of the Lodge cast a black ball.

He believes that side degrees are injurious to the interests of Masonry, but he cannot prove it, and this gives Dr. Swazey, who is extravagantly fond of such things, as we have said before, a great advantage in the debate. He thinks that Squire Blunt ought to pay his quarterage dues more punctually and attend the stated meetings more regularly, and study the work of Masonry more completely, but he has no unanswerable argument with which to meet that selfish cry, "It isn't within the length of my cable tow" — and thus the Squire wins the argument.

Yet there are many precious virtues in this silver value of Parson Logue. He preaches all the Masons' funerals in the county, and most beautifully does he perform it too. His independence of thought, his Masonic reputation, his long experience, and his incorruptibility of character, are a sufficient guarantee to every hearer that he shall have a mental feast. These occasions bring out a large concourse of people who acknowledge their gratification at his success in presenting Masonry so appropriately as the adjunct to Christianity. This excellent brother is generally installed agent in all the Masonic charities of his brethren. Is there a widow to be visited? — an orphan family to be provided for? — a sick brother to be comforted? Parson Logue is the man ever ready, always willing, ever efficient. Whole chapters might be written to illustrate his silver value, and a volume of anecdotes paraded to show it up, but a single instance must suffice.

The two Masonic brothers, both amphibious, Thomas Lane and Jacob Hall, had quarreled. The original difficulty was an insignificant one, connected with some church matter, but the sore had come to a head, on a five dollar account which Hall bought up against Lane, and a bad offensive sore it proved to be. Many a stamp with the foot had

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well nigh led to a smite with the hand, but thus far the Lord had led them on and they had not come to blows. Mischief however had been heaped upon mischief, and rumor upon rumor, and the breach was every day widening, when Brother Logue, the silver Mason, declared that the quarrel had proceeded far enough, and he would go a frogging himself to settle it. His first motion was to buy up the aforesaid five dollars account, and present it to Brother Lane receipted in full. Then he took back Brother Lane's thanks and respects to Brother Hall; then Brother Hall's warm good wishes to Brother Lane. Then he brought the two parties face to face at his house (accidentally of course) and the whole thing was reconciled in five minutes, natural as a turnip. The best of it was they both handed in their demits to Euclid Lodge, were elected without a demur, and became active members — thus diminishing the number of croakers by two.

It is just such things as these that the old brother lives for, and if he didn't believe there was a Mason Lodge in the next world, he would care very little about going there.

Brethren, who read this little sketch, have you any members of the silver value in your Lodge? "then let every Mason prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

The Gold Value

Gold is about sixteen times more valuable than silver. Estimating iron at four cents a pound, gold exceeds that metal in value nearly five thousand times; in other words it will nearly take five thousand pounds of iron to purchase one of gold. We do not know the relative value of the four metals in King Solomon's time, but there must have been great disproportion, for we observe the numbers 8, 17, 18, and 100 representing the number of talents respectively that were consumed in the Temple. The division of officers and artificers is also indicative of great disproportion, viz, 3, 300, 8,800 and 80,000.

A fine specimen of the gold value in Euclid Lodge is Bro. Coverly, and would that we could worthily display his character. But who can describe the refined gold of the Temple as it flashed answering back to the god of day, from every pinnacle and spearhead upon the roof. No foul bird was to alight there and defile it; no vile flesh was to encumber it: it was to reflect nothing but Holiness to the Lord.

When Brother Coverly first became a Mason (it was long, long ago: not a hand which then hailed him with a brother's grip but is now consumed in death,) he embarked in it as a man would encounter some abstruse science that demands time, and

toil and talent to comprehend. He had his choice between the four values, gold, silver, brass, iron. He might have come up to the iron value merely by possessing himself of the grips and a few technicalities of the order; but this had no temptation for him. "Once a Mason always a Mason," is a severe truth, and Brother Coverly early declared "that when a man enters any state of existence either with or without his own consent, prudence dictates that he should make it as tolerable as he may." So he took hold of the thing vigorously and vowed to see the end of it.

He might have attained to the brass value with great facility. By uniting the more obvious beauties of Masonry to those engrafted into other secret societies he could have displayed his talent and gained high honors with the mass. But he declared himself opposed to polygamy; didn't believe in breeding in-and-in: loved pure blood; would sew no new patches upon old garments. Therefore he never joined any other secret society, and jested at the idea of dipping water from the spring-branch below, when he could have free access to the spring-head above,

He might have gone up to the silver value, and stood side by side with that exemplary brother, Parson Logue.

He had all the qualifications in advance of a prepared heart, a consistent life, a good education, experience for this world, and religion for the next; Masonry can add but little to such as that, to bring her votaries up to the silver value. This little was soon acquired. He learned the work of Masonry in a few days, while after a year's novitiate none could preside with more dignity or wield the gavel with more propriety than he. The honors of the Lodge and of the Grand Lodge were awarded him; the brethren had respect to their own interest in his speedy elevation, and soon Brother Coverly began to be looked upon as an embodiment of the principles and practice of Freemasonry both at home and abroad.

But all this was far from satisfying his mind. The silver value however precious and pure, ranks but second in the scale of Masonic values, and his heart aspired excelsior. Having the beauty and skill of the Widow's son, the strength and fulness of the Tyrian monarch, he sighed for the wisdom of the King of Israel, and he made the gold of Ophir his standard of Masonry. Those who aim high may not hit their mark, but they will assuredly send their missiles to a more extensive flight.

These considerations influencing the mind of Bro. Coverly, he resolved to make three sacrifices on the altar of Masonry, yea four: time, study, will, money. The expenditure of the latter procured Masonic books for his study, and the personal experience of Masons for his guidance. The outlay of the former gave him that further experience of Masons which is recorded in books; to these he added the stock he had gathered in his

own person.

The sacrifice of his will — he was delighted with the old symbol, the Masonic slipper — purchased for him one of the principal secrets of Masonry, a secret which thousands who pass through our Lodges, Chapters, Councils, &c., and incur much expense of money never do acquire; and the knowledge of that secret it was more than all the rest which ennobled him.

Brother Coverly early adopted the opinion that the work of Masonry is to the senses, what the lectures are to the mind, and that the lectures themselves should only be considered as a text to the development of those principles, wise, strong, and beautiful, which underlie, like the immense stones which were in the Temple's base, the whole moral system.

Pursuing the subject by the aid of tradition, revelation and the study of symbols, he arrived at this sketch of Masonic theology; — that there is a God; that he created man and placed him in circumstances of happiness; that man forfeited his blessings and was banished to an inferior state; that to repenting humanity God promised restoration; that the unrepentant were destroyed by water; that miracles were worked to release the people of God from bondage and to strengthen them with hope; and that a tabernacle and afterwards a temple were constructed on a divine plan to fix the promises by symbols and types. Who that has stood by him in the sanctuary of Euclid Lodge and heard his thrilling illustration of the doctrine of the Resurrection through Judah's Lion, but what has felt like declaring his feelings in Jacob's own words, this is no other than the house of God and this is the very gate of heaven, — and then has gone forth with a firmer faith in the religious tendencies of the order than he had before.

The course of Masonic labor drafted on his Trestle Board, being actively pursued for many years, elevated Brother Coverly to the gold value. He can see why Masons should pay quarterage dues punctually, and attend the stated meetings promptly, and study Freemasonry diligently. He can tell not only that Masons must not gamble, drink, swear, and fight, but why they must not; and his why is an overwhelming why, irresistible, unanswerable.

In addition to an exposition of the landmarks of Masonry, Brother Coverly has devoted himself at great cost of time and money to the disciplinary regulations of a Lodge. When he commenced the study of this topic it was in vast confusion. The various Masonic journals in America had not touched upon it. There was no standard authority of faith and practice on this head. To acquire the necessary information then, demanded patience, study, correspondence and travel.

But Brother Coverly has it plumbed, squared, and leveled now. Be knows whether or not each Lodge

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must be opened and closed separately; what code of Masonic laws is universal and universally binding; what amount of Masonic knowledge is comprehended in the term suitable proficiency; what are the privileges and what the responsibilities of a demitted Mason - to which Lodge the petitioners for a new Lodge belong - whether an adjournment of the Lodge can be made an motion — and a myriad of the same sort.

Not only is he able to give you a satisfactory answer to such questions, but he advances such arguments and offers such reasons, (all based upon the ancient and admitted landmarks,) that you yourself are perfectly convinced, and you feel able to convince every one else who has got an ear to hear.

Brother Coverly is not an opponent of side degrees as such. On the contrary, he knows too well that all the degrees, save the first three, are in strictness such, but yet that some of them are essential to the understanding of symbolic Masonry. Instead therefore of offering a blind opposition to side degrees in mass, he separates such as are instructive from such as are merely impressive and rejecting those (far the larger part) which are neither, he gives their relative place to the rest.

This good brother of the gold value is opposed to all innovations from whatever source or motive they may spring. He opposes such large numbers in a single Lodge; such irregular hours; such a rush of work; so much demitting; opening the Lodge doors so wide; so much gewgaw and tinsel in decoration; the modern bastard politeness in Lodge work; the arbitrary by-laws; and other things not lawful to mention here. He makes his

opposition practical. When Triangle Lodge, in his vicinity, imitated the Oddfellows and fixed a sliding panel in the door of their Lodge room, for the convenience of the tyler, Brother Coverly, being Deputy Grand Master at the time, nailed it up with his own hands, and terrified the members by asseverating that curiosity once killed a tyler, and that he thought another one was in great danger of his life!

There is a tradition afloat in his county that seeing the tyler peep into the room one day while he was presiding, he threw his gavel at him, and with so much precision as to strike that respectable functionary directly upon the forehead, and thus to knock off considerable of the vices and superfluities of his life. Whether this tale be true or not, we know that the tyliers all dread Brother Coverly as far as they can see him. Such is our understanding of the gold value in Euclid Lodge. Brothers, you who read this little sketch, have you any such in your Lodge? If you have, prize them; for, as our Grand Master saith, wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it. You will miss them when they die, and well for you if the loss do not prove to be irreparable. The same plumb, square, and level, with which you level the footstone of your mansion, will be used to level the block above your grave, but oh with what different emotions. So when we assay the metals of our Lodge, and pronounce this one or that to be up to the gold standard, we enjoy far happier feelings than when called upon by the stroke of death to declare in the words of Jeremiah. "How is the fine gold become dimmed?"

Prize them, brothers, while yet they walk and work and shine among you. Your iron and your brass may be replaced;

Your silver, although its loss will be greatly mourned, can be supplied; for the mine is large and the metal widely diffused: but who shall replace your fine gold.

Brethren, young and zealous, who look forward to the double aim of Masonry, getting good and doing good, aim for the gold value. Slight the other metals, but strive for the crown, for the pure, yellow, glittering gold of Masonry.

Who amongst you will attain to the gold value. His God be with him and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (HE is THE God,) which is in Jerusalem. Amen.

So mote it be.



Chain

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tary, rather than opposite, bearing in mind that "in all manifested things [other than Heaven and Earth] there is no yang without yin and no yin without yang, for everything by nature partakes simultaneously of both Heaven and Earth".³ This is the duality of man and masonry.

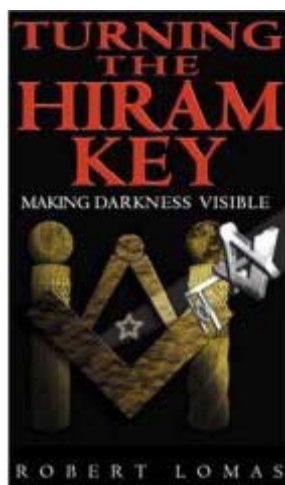
The Master Mason, perfectly balanced, is always 'in the Middle', mediator between the two elements, and thus becomes the third leg of the triad, that which joins the duad into a triad and thus becomes the MONAD. I am reminded of the Masonic formula, according to which the initiate must know how 'to discern the light in the darkness (the yang in the yin) and the darkness in the light (the yin in the yang)'.

As the brothers' hands are joined to form the circle, each Brother unites his own heels so to form a square and opens the points, in order to let them contact the ones of his neighbours. The chin is on to the chest, the eyes closed and everybody concentrates on "the Worshipful Master's intent", even if it remains undisclosed. The Brethren are silent and meditative. After some time the Worshipful Master shakes his arms three times and so do all the Brethren and thereafter loose their hands and "break" the Chain. If the works are still to be finished, the Brethren return to their places.

* * *

The Chain of Union is a continuous physical symbol and as such, it reminds us of the sign of the Pythagoreans, which had to be traced in a continuous way. From that man can deduce that the Chain testifies in a tangible way to the invisible tie that joins all the members of a lodge, and truly, in a more general way, to all Freemasons withersoever dispersed.

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Turning the Hiram Key

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The Real Secrets of Freemasonry? Robert Lomas (co-author of The Hiram Key) has finally tackled the big unanswered questions about The Brotherhood. What is the purpose of Freemasonry? What do Masons gain from working its Rituals? Can anybody benefit from the Spiritual Teachings of 'The Craft'? Are Masonic rituals simple moral plays designed to encourage people to behave well? Are they a secret tradition preserved from a long lost civilisation? Are they meaningless formalities? ...Or do they serve some deeper purpose? In this ground-breaking work Lomas describes his personal journey through the mystical rituals of Freemasonry.

Drawing from personal spiritual insights, hidden Masonic texts and modern scientific knowledge, he reveals why people join Freemasonry, what they expect to find and how they benefit. In the past, these inner secrets have been preserved for a select few, until this book Synopsis Turning the Hiram Key invites readers to join a gripping journey of discovery to find the real secrets of Freemasonry. Robert Lomas - co-

author of best-selling The Hiram Key - has finally tackled the big unanswered questions about The Brotherhood... What is the purpose of Freemasonry? What do Masons gain from working the Rituals? Can anybody benefit from the spiritual teachings of The Craft? Does Freemasonry hold the secret to unlocking the hidden potential of the human mind? Are Masonic rituals simple moral plays designed to encourage people to behave well? Are they a secret tradition preserved from a long lost civilisation? Are they meaningless formalities?

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The reference to the Universal within the chain is clear if we imagine it as being seen from above. Its shape is roughly a circle, the centre of which is shown clearly. Therefore, if on the one hand the circle represents the temporal and the dynamic expression of the initiatic chain — the world of the Manifestation — while on the other hand the point recalls the permanent origin, or the Immutable Being.

Last, but not the least, we must examine another aspect of the Chain, which refers itself to the interaction between the 'thick' and the 'subtle'. From physics we know that each geometric solid figure causes waves which vary according to the form of the figure. These waves are known as form-waves, or shape-waves, which can be measured according to their vibratory frequency.

Egyptians knew of this phenomenon, and in fact used it to protect the Kings' chambers by emitting waves which are vibrating in the electrical phase, harmful for living entities: man commonly speaks about the "curse of Tutankhamen". To the contrary, churches and pyramids emit waves, which vibrate in the magnetic phase, so they are favourable for men. In ancient times, Freemasons were aware of this peculiarity and therefore they protected their constructions through the cornerstone, which has a trapezoidal shape.

There is no 'magick' in this, no witchcraft, just an acknowledgement of physical facts. The interpretation of their effect is subject to discussion, to be sure. However, there is nothing in Masonic ritual of which we should be ashamed. Initiates reject the artificial distinction between physics and metaphysics; they are aware that "rites and symbols are fundamentally only two aspects of a single reality, which is, after all, none other than the 'correspondence' that binds everything together through all the degrees of existence in such a way our human state can enter into communication with or at least dimly perceive, the higher states of being."¹

Let's turn back to the Chain. The Worshipful Master, as the focus and exciter, by initiating the chain starts the energy, which passes to his neighbour and so on around the chain. The energy so amassed and strengthened comes back to the Worshipful Master and therefore launched to the 'astral', from which it turns back on earth, like a rocket on the target, to carry out the "intent" which was mentally expressed by the Worshipful Master at the beginning of the ceremony. Thus the ceremony projects the will of the brethren.

1 El símbolo y el rito masónico de la cadena de unión, in the Review Symbolos n. 3, 1992, pp. 14-5

2 René Guénon, Perspectives on Initiation,

Sophia Perennis, Gent, NY, chap. XXIV, pp. 163-164

3 René Guénon, The Great Triad, Quinta Essentia, Cambridge, 1991 p. 31

4 René Guénon, Rite and Symbol, in Perspectives on Initiation, chap. XVI, p. 114



Silence

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himself.

The specific task of the Brother Mason is to make these two aspects of his existence live together; he wouldn't be a Brother if he wasn't committed to the perfection of Man and of the human Family, if he wasn't productively present in his society.³

He is not a distant hermit, neither an abstract observer; he is at the same time Initiate Man AND Civil Man. This means that it is necessary to harmonize the great work of refinement of one's inner stone with the life that we call profane; the latter must represent to the outside the Sacred Temple inside each of us.

Well, then, how to prepare heart and soul to refine one's consciousness? How to obtain the 'moral strength' that allows him to fight against adversities and to be an Initiate Brother Mason?

Reaching ... the Silence.

The Beginning

The word initiation, from initium, means 'access' or 'start' and it refers to a 'second birth' (or we could say a 'second start'). Such 're-generation' opens to the being the doors of a world other than the world where the activity occurs in the normal corporeal way; it leads him to the restoration in himself of the 'primordial status' which is fullness and perfection of human individuality.

The primordial status, though, is nothing but the quiet status of the new creation, of the tabula rasa on which we can write the words of knowledge, on which we can erect the first bricks of the Sacred Temple⁴

From the creation of a new status of conscience is derived the first Silence induced by the lack of notions and information. In this sense the Brother just initiated faces the moment of the first exploration of the Sacral Vacuum created around him.

This vacuum, not to be confused with the Mystical Nothing⁵ of the Zen tradition, is a 'fertile' vacuum, a direct consequence of the 're-creation' occurred; it becomes an immediate preamble to the following step of understanding and analysis of the new space which the initiate is in.⁶

We must be Silent to get – essentially, that is in essence - in touch with the deepest Self.

Only Silence allows us to perceive the apparently unperceivable sound, the faint noise in the background that, at this stage, is the vibration⁷ of one's own being.⁸

Silence leads to the reflection on one's own inner status, it allows one to focus the attention on what was overwhelmed by the noise of a previous unconscious existence and therefore it was kept unsaid; or it might have being unheard because it was covered by noises of every kind.

During the ceremony of initiation to the First Degree some 'journeys' are imposed to the profane. In this process he is accompanied by noises which are strong, invasive and obsessing at first and then they slowly become weak and discreet.

Let's remember the words that the Venerable Master says in this occasion: *Profane, the symbolic journey you've carried out is the picture of human life. The noise you heard reminds of the passion that moves it; the obstacles you've faced are the difficulties that man faces and he can win or overcome only by acquiring the moral strength that allows him to fight adversities...*

This status so well described precedes the tradition of Light; it changes and turns during the Rite, when the initiation's conferrer becomes the proper 'transmitter' and 're-creator'; he acts not as an individual but as a link of a 'chain' whose starting point is outside and beyond humankind.

This new status is produced by the advent of Light; the Apprentice must analyze and take it in (that is to take it in himself, make it his own) from his new and next point of view.

The violent contrast experienced during this difficult stage and the sudden change from racketing noise to deep silence can confuse the man who feels it; sometimes it can be quite disconcerting. In actual fact the Apprentice must undergo a period of 'material silence' in the Masonic Temple; this will give him the time to mature the new rule, to absorb the choc induced by the occurring of such apparently antithetical experiences.

The Development

Once the initiate has accomplished the first and most urgent work, once he's explored and 'recognized' (known again) the space around him, he will turn his eyes further beyond and he will start the work of 're-creation' of the world.

Now the Silence expresses the Time of the advent of the Logos, of the waiting for the Word. In the Silence the Sound will appear.

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In India the sound of Krishna's flute originates the world by magic. Pre-Hellenistic divinities play the lyre with the same meaning. Many traditional doctrines consider the sound as the first created thing that originated all the other things, such as light, air and fire.

J. R. R. Tolkien⁽⁹⁾ in his *Silmarillion* derives the birth of the world from the Gods' singing; even disharmony which creates Evil is included in the glory and the great mechanism of the creation.

All this must be 'caught on' by the initiate, in order for him to be part of his conscience and to learn how to talk.

It is very interesting to study the definition of phonetic symbolism in some mithraic rituals as it was derived from the Egyptian tradition, mentioned in the *Book of Dead*: ... *the word, which is basically an acoustic phenomenon, has more value as a sound than as an expression of ideas, because the sound contained in it and emanated by it is in certain vibrations the modulation of the cosmic breath,⁽¹⁰⁾ to pronounce 'correctly' a word and synchronize it, so to speak, with the different rhythms of the cosmos, means to give it back its elemental power.*

This belief in the phonetic power itself led Gnostics and the followers of Mithra⁽¹¹⁾ to include parts without any literal meaning in their verses and ritual speeches. The aim was to originate a kind of symbolical music that could act only thanks to the power of the phonetic meaning.

The Om (Aum) of Tibetans concentrates the whole universal essence (A, principle; U, transition; M, end, deep sleep). In other words this is the Word that can be heard only if we can be Silent, necessary prerequisite for inner search and authentic knowledge and understanding.

Unfortunately today the Word has lost its sense and with it the Word of God. Since the sense of the Word is lost or misunderstood, profane man tends to do the same with Silence, feeling it like a status to run away from, like an expression of his anguish, unsaid fears and inability to 'see'.

The Initiate Brother has undergone 'a new start', has started to move his first steps, has 'recognized' the Sacred Vacuum surrounded by the Silence generating the Sound; he has perceived the Cosmic Sound as an element that starts Life.

Can he walk along the streets of the new world⁽¹²⁾ created in himself without being a victim of contradictions, contractions and deformities deriving by the contrast between the ever-present profane noise and the clear white received Light?

Once again the answer is... in the Silence.

The Rite, The Instrument, The Guardian

Once again Silence has the role of clarifying and catalyzing in the soul of the Initiate; only the latter knows how to obtain it and to make it a meek instrument in his hands, a fertile preamble and a safe comfort.

There's more.

In the 're-creation' of the Initiation the profane experiences for the first time the Silence, as we said. Therefore the Silence as a first manifestation of a new creation constitutes the intimate ritual of the Brother Mason.

Every rite symbolizes and reproduces creation in its essence. For this reason rites are connected with ornaments and symbols whose intimate identity with the rite is such that they are part of it. The slowness in the ritual moves in ceremonies is similar to the rhythms of astral movements; on the other hand all rites are meetings, confluences of forces and ordinations, concentrations of energies. Its meaning and its power is derived by the accumulation and the combination of the concentrated powers.

The rite as a common character to all traditional institutions of every order, both exoterical and esoterical, has always the purpose of putting the human being in direct or indirect relation with something beyond his individuality that belongs to other states of existence.

In many cases the communication established is not even conscious although it is absolutely real.

When the Initiate Brother is going to work in order to open the doors of his inner Temple to himself, the rite re-focuses the condition in which he found himself straight after the initiation, which is the Silence. This will re-create the ideal conditions for a fruitful work.

We can say, then, that the Silence becomes the path used by the Initiate Brother to get in touch with the higher states; thanks to it he will acquire Knowledge.

The latter, which is the direct knowledge of the Transcendent, is in itself incommunicable and inexpressible; every expression used to transmit it is a formal and therefore human instrument and it is obviously inadequate to represent it.⁽¹³⁾

The Silence becomes also an attentive guardian of the acquisitions achieved by the Initiate. It becomes the case where the jewels of Knowledge are kept.

The Synthesis

We have already said that the spiritual power of Silence is great. Without it the Word is not possible and therefore truth, seriousness and life are

not possible either.

For the Initiate Brother Silence is not a sterile gap but a fertile reflection; it is not an end in itself but it generates consequences. Therefore the Master will be able to make Silence inside himself for every step he wants to make; on the other hand, when he will be immersed in the profane world and he will picture himself as a Civil Man, he will necessarily need it to distill and make more understandable the transparent Temple inside him.

Through his soul's transparency he will bring in the profane world and the human dimension the precious material effects of the Light of Initiation; the latter will turn from the virtual into the real and he will have then accomplished this part of his duty and commitment as a Mason.

1. Oriental mysticism has been made famous because it has been made banal; its most spectacular aspects (levitation, ability to stop the heartbeat) have been given relevance. It is less known, on the other hand, what is the fundament of that tradition, which is the authentic aspiration to knowledge even when pursued through methods different from the ones we are used to.
2. From the pain of continuous birth and death to the eternal peace. The continuation of individual existence in any form, even as a god, means pain, because existence means to become and to become is the shadow of being, a renewed bribe, a never satisfied desire, an implacable pain. The peace is in the unconscious dissolution in the colorless light where all things are originated and that, without us knowing it, shines in us.
3. The presence of the Brother Mason in the civil society must be intended as presence in itself and not coordinated intervention. The transparency of his Inner Temple will affect whoever is around him and will produce the elevation and the improvement mentioned in the Old Charges.
4. Doctrinal knowledge is necessary to the initiate. Its theoretical understanding is a prerequisite to any 'realization' and it doesn't have anything to do with whatever is exterior education or profane 'knowledge'. Indeed, the latter can be an obstacle rather than a help.
5. The following short Zen tale explains this concept: "the Master Joshu asked one of his disciples one day: - What are you? - the disciple answered: - I'm in meditation, in the status of Nothing and therefore I'm nothing - the Master Joshu then told him: - you must abandon the thought of being nothing, you

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Silence

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- must abandon your thoughts!"
6. Virtual initiation, like the transmission of 'light', is in a certain sense suffered by the candidate, because it is a conveyance and a transmission of a spiritual influence from a regular traditional organization. It obtains a true 'new creation' that upsets the inner balance of the initiating, bringing new Light to him.
 7. Many scholars have dealt with the analogies between Vibration-Sound-Light, taking the analogy as far as between Creation and sound.
 8. A great character of Italian theater, Edoardo De Filippo, invited to listen to the 'Voices inside'.
 9. Tolkien is a famous English writer born on the 3rd January 1892 in South Africa. He wrote many fantastic sagas that share a unique vision of an imaginary world; their reading has many levels. We can find in them clear and deep esoterical references.
 10. The value of sound for all traditions is decisive. It is the manifestation of the first and most elementary duality deriving from the creation (Emptiness = Silence = Darkness / Life = Sound = Light). It permeates and expresses the idea of Life itself, of Cosmos as a sensitive manifestation of the environment where Life shows itself. Therefore the vibration induced by sounds is the 'bearing harmonics' of Life itself; the word is a coded organization of sounds and ends up by representing meanings, re-calling sensations that go beyond the mere linguistic conventions.
 11. Ancient deity of the Iranian and Persian religion. He was then identified with the Sun and Apollo and it became the center of a mystical cult; the main Mithra's exploit was the killing of the Cosmic Bull that, by dying, originates life. Mithraic mysteries were celebrated in underground sanctuaries (mitrei) and ended with a sacred banquet.
 12. Juan Cirlot in his Dictionary of Symbols identifies it as 'The Domain where a stage of the existence develops... Twenty-first arcane of the Tarots, it corresponds to the complex of union of the manifested, which is the space world as a reflection of a permanent creative activity'.
 13. Guenon writes: "human language is strictly connected to the practice of rational faculty for its own nature. As a consequence, all that is expressed or translated through this language naturally takes a form of 'reasoning', more or less explicitly." – And again: "...such a simply theoretical knowledge is obtained through the mental process, whilst effectual knowledge occurs 'through the spirit and the soul', viz. through the whole being".

Valuable Links To Masonic Works

If you have any links to masonic works, please send them to us and we will publish them here every month.

These are clickable Links.

Ahimon Rezon

Ancient Charges

Book of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry (1884)

Book of the Words by Albert Pike

The Builder Magazine 1915 - 1930

Ceremonial Explanation of the Entered Apprentice Degree

Ceremonial Explanation of the Fellowcraft Degree

Concise History of Freemasonry

The Craftsman and Freemason's Guide; Cornelius Moore; 1851

David vs. Goliath?

The Dionysian Artificers

English Speculative Freemasonry

Focusing on What Matters Most

General Regulations Of Freemasonry

The History of Freemasonry; James William Mitchell; 186?

Illustrations of Masonry, By One Of The Fraternity, Who Has Devoted Thirty Years To The Subject; Captain William Morgan; 1826, 1851

Initiation, Mystery and Salvation

Is It True What They Say About Freemasonry?

Landmarks and Old Charges

The Lights and Shadows of Freemasonry;

Rob Morris; 1852

The Lost Keys Of Freemasonry by Manly P. Hall

Masonry and Religion

The Masonic Manual, A Pocket Companion For The Initiated;

Robert Macoy; 1867

Masonry CAPT. WILLIAM. MORGAN'S

The Meaning Of Masonry by W.L. Wilmshurst

Misrepresentation of Freemasonry

Morals and Dogma by Albert Pike

More Light

My Ideal Mason

Mysticism of The Royal Arch

Opinions on Speculative Masonry; James Creighton Odiorne; 1830

The Principles of Masonic Law; Albert Gallatin Mackey; 1858

The Regius Manuscript

Richardson's Monitor of Free-Masonry;

Jabez Richardson; 1860

The Secret Teachings Of All Ages by

Manly P. Hall

The Symbolism of Freemasonry; Albert Gallatin Mackey; 1869

Symbols

Tales of a Masonic Life; Rob Morris; 1860

The Taxil Confessions

The Theocratic Philosophy of Freemasonry, In Twelve Lectures;

George Oliver; 1866

The Truth About Freemasonry

The Virginia Text Book; John Dove; 1866

Webb's Freemason's Monitor;

Thomas Webb Smith; 1865



21 Rules for Life

There's some mighty fine advice in these words.

1. Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully.
2. Marry a man/woman you love to talk to. As you get older, their conversational skills will be as important as any other.
3. Don't believe all you hear, spend all you have or sleep all you want.
4. When you say, "I love you," mean it.
5. When you say, "I'm sorry," look the person in the eye.
6. Be engaged at least six months before you get married.
7. Believe in love at first sight.
8. Never laugh at anyone's dream. People who don't have dreams don't have much.
9. Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely.
10. In disagreements, fight fairly. No name calling.
11. Don't judge people by their relatives.
12. Talk slowly but think quickly.
13. When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, smile and ask, "Why do you want to know?"
14. Remember that great love and great achievements involve great risk..
15. Say "bless you" when you hear someone sneeze.
16. When you lose, don't lose the lesson
17. Remember the three R's: Respect for self; Respect for others; and responsibility for all your actions.
18. Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.
19. When you realize you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.
20. Smile when picking up the phone. The caller will hear it in your voice.
21. Spend some time alone.

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The Last Word: Three Yellow Roses



I walked into the grocery store not particularly interested in buying groceries. I wasn't hungry. The pain of losing my wife of 7 years was still too raw. And this grocery store held so many memories. She often came with me and almost every time I'd pretend to go off and look for something special. She always knew what I was up to as I got the three yellow roses.

You see, she loved yellow roses.

With a heart filled with grief, I only wanted to buy my few items and leave, but even grocery shopping was different since she had passed on. Shopping for one took time, a little more thought than it had for two. Standing by the meat, I searched for the perfect small steak and remembered how we had barbecued and how she had loved her steak.

Suddenly a woman came beside me. She was blonde, slim and lovely in a soft green pantsuit. I watched as she picked up a large pack of T-bones, dropped them in her basket, hesitated, and then put them back. She turned to go and once again reached for the pack of steaks.

She saw me watching her and she smiled. "My husband loves T-bones, but honestly, at these prices, I don't know." I swallowed the lump in my throat and met her pale blue eyes.

"My wife passed away eight days ago," I told her. Glancing at the package in her hands, I fought to control the tremble in my voice. "Buy him the steaks. And cherish every moment you have together." She shook her head and I saw the emotion in her eyes as she placed the package in her basket and wheeled away.

I turned and pushed my cart across the length of the store to the dairy products. There I stood, trying to decide which size milk I should buy. Quart, I finally decided and moved on to the ice cream. If nothing else, I could always fix myself an ice cream cone. I placed the ice cream in my cart and looked down the aisle toward the front.

I saw first the green suit, then recognized the pretty lady coming towards me. In her arms she carried a package. On her face was the brightest smile I had ever seen. I would swear a soft halo encircled her blonde hair as she kept walking toward me, her eyes holding mine. As she came closer, I saw what she held and tears began misting in my eyes.

"These are for you," she said and placed three beautiful long stemmed yellow roses in my arms. "When you go through the line, they will know these are paid for." She leaned over and placed a gentle kiss on my cheek, then smiled again.

I wanted to tell her what she'd done, what the roses meant, but still unable to speak, I watched as she walked away as tears clouded my vision. I looked down at the beautiful roses nestled in the green tissue wrapping and found it almost unreal.

How did she know? Suddenly the answer seemed so clear. I wasn't alone.. Oh, you haven't forgotten me, have you? I whispered. She was still with me, and she was her angel.

Every day be thankful for what you have and who you are.

