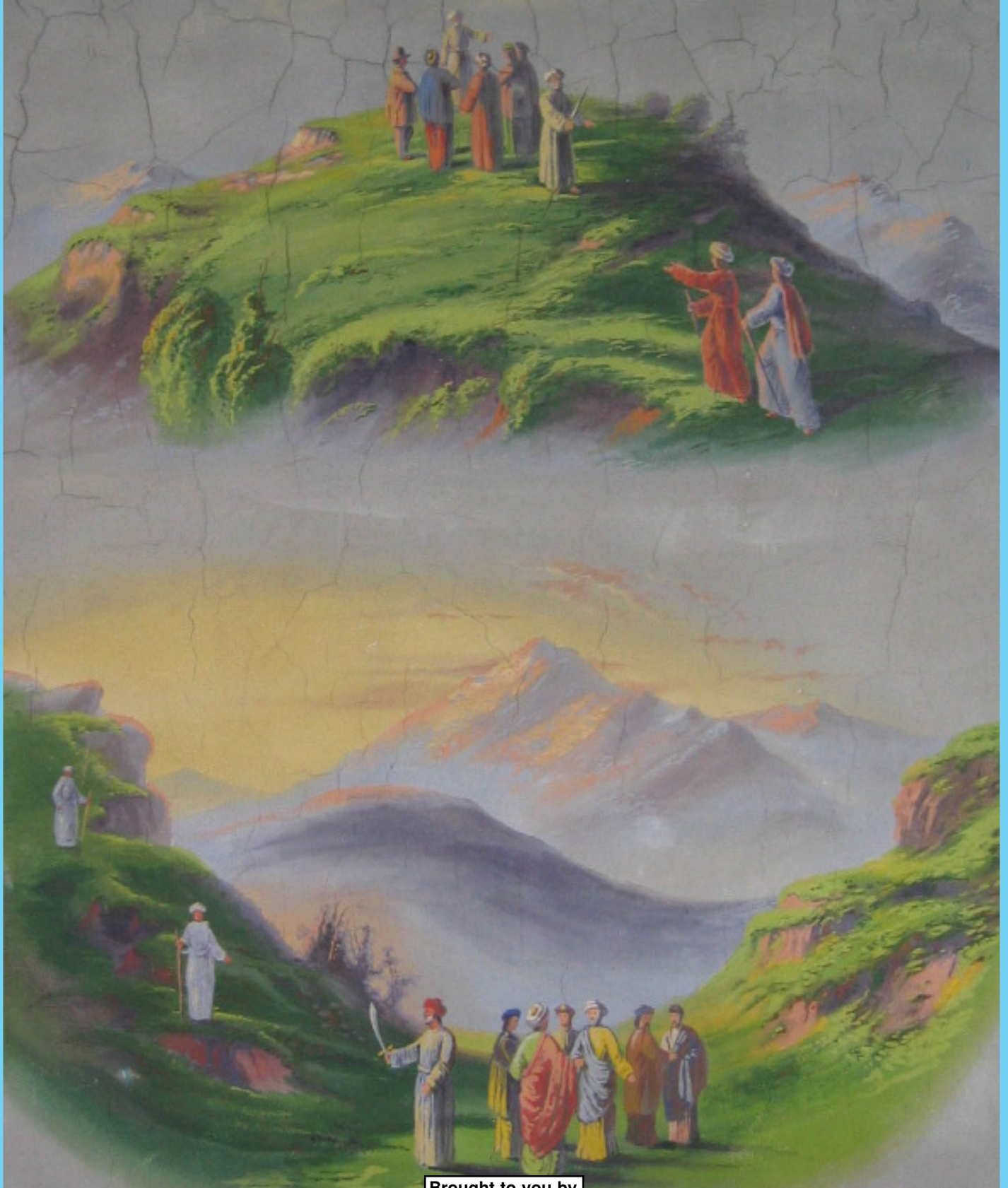




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Between The Pillars

Obligations

By R. Theron Dunn

One thing that distinguishes Freemasons and binds them together is our oath and obligation. Each of us, since time immemorial, has sworn certain things before our brethren and before g-d.

It is the golden tie which binds us, our obligation to all brothers, withersoever dispersed around the globe, and their obligation to US in return. We know that we can, in time of trouble, call on a brother to aid and assist us, so far as he can do so without serious injury to himself or his family.

What are we to make then, of brethren who declaim they do not feel bound to the rules and regulations of their grand lodge(s). These brothers state that **THEY** are the sole arbiter of which rules/edicts they will obey, and which they will not obey. This, despite the fact that all of us, in one version or another, swear to abide by and conform to all the laws, rules and regulations appertaining to the degree of master mason, and to support the constitution and edicts of the Grand Lodge.

These brothers offer a variety of rationales for this behavior, from the puerile to the... intellectually dishonest. In all cases though, the excuses are, at the very best, disingenuous, selfish, and unmasonic. More about unmasonic later in this entry.

If a brother is willing to compromise his integrity on any point of his obligation to Freemasonry and to his brethren by rationalizing his obligation, he is proving that he cannot be trusted on any level. Truly, a man is willing to compromise his ethics, which is what keeping or not keeping an obligation freely taken is, then how can he be trusted on any level?

Yet, according to our obligations, this man is still a Mason. It is incumbent upon us, who keep our obligations, to aid, support, defend and assist these brothers who clearly do not feel the same obligation to us, **BECAUSE** we keep our obligation regardless of what others do.

And here, I point to my Masonic motto:

**Its not about me changing them,
its about me changing me.**

I can't change them, I can only do my best to keep my obligations, and hope that by my example, I can encourage my brothers to do the same. It is my considered opinion that as masons, we should fight always in all ways to keep our obligations. If a man cannot honor his obligation, he should consider carefully why he is still calling himself a Mason.



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Ideas For Worshipful Masters



by Chris Hodapp

I have received many requests for a copy of the posting I made on the Indiana Craft Mailing List.

So here are some of the things we have done over

the last few years at Broad Ripple Lodge, some of which were started by PGM Roger Van Gorden, our Master in 2000. Bear in mind that most of these suggestions are not original. Steal them, improve them, claim them as your own.

Let me reiterate: our PMs and general membership have left us alone to have our way with the place, and the PMs and older members who regularly participate have been totally supportive of us. We have NOT had to deal with sideline insurrections over ANYTHING we have tried. I have heard horror stories from other Masters, and I am relieved to say I have none.

1. ALL Stated Meetings were Table Lodges for a year.
2. Redecorated Lobby and entry area. (Ratty furniture, no art, and accessories from when Truman was president make a terrible first impression on potential new members. If you think it's ugly, how will a new member see it? If you don't know, ASK YOUR WIFE!)
3. Landscaped front yard. (Ours was full of rocks and overgrown shrubs.). If your building looks tired, unkempt and decayed, what does that say about Freemasonry to a potential new member? What does it say about your own pride of membership?
4. Professionalized look of website and kept it up to date. If a potential member sees that your site is dated 1997 and none of the hyperlinks work, they'll move on.
5. Monthly Trestle Board with photos. Make Lodge look fun, and if they don't come, they're missing great experiences.
6. Stopped charging for meals, including Thanksgiving. Catered or convenience food rather than the same few brothers chained to the kitchen. They will burn out.
7. Added stereo system and big screen TV to dining room. (Football and basketball nights next year after Craft practice. Make Lodge a place to hang around in, not eat, meet and flee)
8. Purchased motorized stairclimbers to assist

our older members (we have lots of steps)

9. Started Masonic Angel Fund for local kids (see our website for details)
10. Made \$100 donation to Masonic Home Foundation for every month a member (or members) died.
11. Poinsettias hand delivered to Lodge Widows at Christmastime by Master. They'll love you forever. Get them on your side and their grandson may join.
12. Started Annual Chili Cook-Off with permanent trophy at Lodge. The noisier the rivalry gets, the better. Encourage outlandish claims and bragging rights...
13. Presented Lifetime Achievement Award to older member 64 years a Mason who comes to every meeting and degree. These men built our Lodges. Acknowledge their achievements publicly.
14. Insisted on post-meeting gathering at local tavern for members, spouses, friends. Do

NOT hang out in the parking lot of the Lodge bitching after meetings. That's not how to forge new friendships.

15. Regular dialogue with OES Matron. Kept them involved in our public events.
16. Sought out degree help from other Lodges. Liberal use of honorary memberships for regular visiting helpers.
17. If you are a young Master who does not know all ritual for all degrees, learn ONE of them well, and have your Wardens do the same for the other two. Performing a smaller number of parts well is more important than stumbling through many of them badly. Do NOT get pressured into doing more than you are able by the "In MY year you had to know all of these degrees" crowd. If they know it all, ask THEM to take a part. Remember: a man gets to hear each of his degrees for the first time ONLY ONCE. If you can't do it properly with feeling and meaning, GET SOMEONE WHO CAN.
18. Joint Lodge picnic with other Lodges

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The Philosophy of Masonry

Five Lectures Delivered under the Auspices of the Grand Master of Massachusetts Masonic Temple, Boston

BY Br. Roscoe Pound
Professor of Jurisprudence
Harvard University
Lecture IV — PIKE

Albert Pike's works are prodigious. Anti-Masons, however, fixate on one work alone. Here, less than 20 years after his death, a distinguished attorney, scholar, and Mason attempts to define and explain the philosophy of Pike. This work, published in the Masonic magazine, The Builder, in April, 1915 is itself detailed but it should give the more serious inquirer a wealth of information from which to determine the validity of the smears that anti-Masons make on the character and intent of this Trinitarian Christian, poet, and enormously popular man of his day.

Our thanks to the late Brother George Helmer, FPS - a man who treasured Masonic history and scanned thousands upon thousands of old Masonic writings to preserve them for the future. This piece was reprinted in his 'One More Time Please' mailings which were truly a treasure to read. Brother Helmer provided a great service to

Freemasonry making long-forgotten material available to current Masonic scholars; his loss at age 42 is inestimable. You are remembered, Brother Helmer!

THE BUILDER MAY 1915 - THE PHILOSOPHY OF MASONRY

WE come now to a radically different type of Masonic philosophy. To Preston Masonry is a traditional system of knowledge and its end is to impart knowledge. Hence he thinks of the relation of Masonry to education. To Krause it is organized morals and its end is to put organized mankind behind the universal moral ideas of humanity. Hence he thinks of the relation of Masonry to law and government. To Oliver it is a mode of approach to God and its end is to bring us to the Absolute by means of a pure tradition. Hence he thinks of the relation of Masonry to religion. Pike gives us instead a metaphysic of Masonry. To him Masonry is a mode of studying first principles and its end is to reveal and to give us possession of the universal principle by which we may master the universe. Hence he thinks of the relation of Masonry to the fundamental problems of existence. In part this view was inevitable in one who thought and wrote in a country under the influence of the transcendental philosophy. In part also it was to

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The Grail of the Alchemist and the Speculative Worker

by Athos A. Altomonte

The spiritual Alchemist and the speculative Worker have a postulate in common. The former calls it: 'the transmutation of metals' (to purify one's character); the latter calls it: 'the smoothing of the stone' (to sublimate one's character). This means to use different 'instruments' in order to reach the same goal.

Freemasonry is a silent and particularly complex container, where it is possible to re-gain ideas lost and forgotten elsewhere. By refining his intellectual abilities, the speculative Worker creates the most efficient tool of research, which is his mind (see Psyche, the first instrument of the initiate). By working for refinement, the mind digs in the past

in the search of its 'Grail', which everybody keeps in the most 'private' part of himself. It is the 'Cup of the heart' where it is accomplished the emulsion of the 'philosopher's Stone', which reveals the mystery of our essence.

We are saying this so that people don't suppose that it is enough to reason on words, forms and numbers to access the most confidential hall of true Masonic initiation. Beyond a certain point pragmatism can become a limit, which the speculative Worker must cross by abstracting his intelligence. In order to reach certain mental images it is necessary to transcend the ordinary mind with a match that the common Mason dislikes, because he doesn't like to hear about spirit. The ordinary religious man doesn't like it either, since he doesn't

want to hear about logic. Yet, history teaches us that man's greatness consists of finding a balanced combination between science and passion, love and reason, logic and soul.

In any case the initiate, either Alchemist or speculative Worker, can't lack mind or spirit. In order to 'take the blindfold off' it is necessary that head (logic) and heart (intuition) become one. This synchronicity makes the human being greater. Therefore don't be surprised if we will talk again about top and bottom, or in and out; if this didn't happen, we would never work in the initiatory dimension but in any other place.

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On Starting a New Lodge



By Cliff Porter

I was asked the other day by a Brother why I decided the Traditional Observance concept was right for me, how I assisted in starting a lodge, and would I do it over

again. It would not be the first time I have heard such questions and thought putting pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) might assist those on their own journey.

It was a dark and stormy night. Alright, I will admit that I had simply desired my whole life to start a story like that. The process was more gradual than one might think. I will try to break it down into some sort of logical progression such as 97 degrees that can be read and understood in a matter of 27 minutes. Once again, I jest, I am addicted to sarcasm.

It was a bit of a reverse trek for me. First, I reached a conclusion and then a made a decision. The conclusion I reached was not a happy one. I concluded that given the present state of Freemasonry in the average blue lodge I was not going to find what Masonry told me was there. I refuse to insult the Masonic reader or the Craft itself by recapitulating all of the pitfalls and short comings that led to this conclusion, but it is reasonable for you to assume that I did search. I looked for philosophical education and a system that would teach the practical application of morality in order that I might improve myself. Talking to brothers, seeing other groups, it became evident that in most cases this system no longer existed. This might sound grave and I assure you that it is. I found that the philosophies of the Craft had become the Lost Word.

That is not to say that my Masonic education ceased. No it persisted and consisted of classes such as:

1. Its never been done that way 101
2. They will never allow it 202
3. Sentimentality is more important than progression 303

Assuming that the Craft degrees were a gateway to higher learning, with organizations such as the Scottish Rite available, I joined as my hunger grew and the meals were meager. Imagine my surprise when I realized that the Rite, as a gathering of men from many lodges, only served to magnify the present Craft lodge condition. Instead of being able to convince myself it must be better somewhere else I was forced to realize exact problems I saw in my lodge were systemic throughout Craft lodges. It really hit home just how vital the Blue Lodge is to the Fraternity as a whole.

I did the only thing that was left, I concluded.

I concluded that I was never going to be fulfilled in Masonry and with Masonry without real change in my local lodge experience.

I concluded that there had to be something to Masonry that was missing. If not, I had to believe that the founders of this country, the promoters of French freedom, the harmonious renderings of Liszt and Mozart, the artistic impulses of Kipling were moved by nothing more than a business meeting and sloppy ritual. No. Logic dictated and the empirical evidence found in the mountains of ancient and modern tomes on the subject indicated that there was something that used to be in the Craft streaming below the surface of the dinner club and waiting to emerge.

I concluded that the appendant bodies were never going to save the Craft.

I concluded that if Craft lodge lived Masonry, the appendant bodies would as well.

I concluded that I was likely not alone.

So, heavy with the weight of conclusion on my weary shoulders, I took to the mean streets of e-Masonry with little knowledge and slight expectations. I found a world of conspiracy theorist, anti-Masonic evangelical pseudo Christians, nut jobs, and colorful characters. I also found a number of deeply longing Masons communicating openly, debating in Masonic fashion, and challenging themselves and one another to learn. I was invigorated. Discussions of Neo-Platonism, Hermeticism, Mystical Christianity, Kabbalah, and the Rosicrucianism abounded.

I was rushing home from work, tiding up the house, playing with the boy, and hoping for just a few minutes that I could catch up on a discussion and learn. At first, I did little but lurk and learn. Later, as I had caught a glimpse and stolen a hint at which authors might be interesting I dove headlong into bibliophilia and never emerged. I believe I love the smell of old books like someone with an eating disorder begins to drool at the smell of pizza pie. This particular addiction has served me well and I have gained much from it.

It would be nice to brag that it was then, with this new found knowledge and a quickly growing library that I took the next step and decided; decided to act. Alas, I can not allege such a glorious victory for myself. It was a simple conversation as a result of passionate disapproval that led to the next step. I had been in a rather long lodge meeting.

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Science, Tradition and Magic

by Alessandro Orlandi

After a short digression on the achievements of science and math in the last century and the perspectives open for our future, we face the problem of relationships between science, traditional teachings and 'magic thought'.

We will try to answer some questions:

Must Tradition look for confirmation in scientific discoveries?

How do we have to consider in the 21st century the vision of the world belonging to the 'magic thought'?

It is now necessary to reflect on the relationship between Science and Tradition; It can be very fruitful and stimulating, but it can also be extremely misleading. As a negative example I offer the many New Age movements which make use of science, such as Scientology's Dianetics or the 'holistic' pseudo-arguments we can all see in any pseudo-traditional nonsense. These "scientific" arguments often refer to quantum mechanics, the theory of relativity or modern cosmologic theories which are used to 'explain' or 'justify' hideous combinations of different forms of belief or practice.

Certainly the way science views the world has changed significantly in the last hundred years. Some examples are:

- The quadripartition of the fundamental forces concerning the electromagnetic force in the universe, both in a macroscopic and microscopic level;
- Gravitational force;
- Strong and weak interaction;
- Quantum mechanics discoveries about nature, both wave and corpuscular of sub-atomic and light particles mechanics;
- The importance of the observer in determining some characteristics in the observed phenomenon (Heisenberg's Uncertainty).

All these achievements have changed our idea of causality and led us to conceive the 'ultimate nature' of the world as statistics. For instance, 'string theory' offers a possible explanation that fit the phenomena of the sub-atomic world into a unitary picture.

The theory of relativity led us to change our ideas of space, time and matter; Lorentz' ideas replaced the Galilean transformations showing us that the reference system for observing phenomena can determine dilations or contractions of space and time and therefore it is impossible to consider them separately.

Our rigid idea of time suffered a blow as the idea of

the simultaneity of events, so important in the usual idea of cause, has been questioned. Some people (Hawking, even Goedel in some of his less known works in the '40s) hypothesized the possibility of strong singularities in the space-temporal continuum which would allow to travel in time, different from the so-called 'black holes'. Concerning three-dimensional space,

Euclidean geometry has been abandoned and replaced with Riemannian theories in Minkowski's version: a space that 'bends' in the presence of strong concentrations of mass and where the shortest line between two points is not a segment but a geodetic line.

A review of the second principle of Thermodynamics has led us to the the concept of the evolution of the universe being ruled by probability and less by rigid determinism. This is a universe condemned to thermal death by entropic growth.

Mathematics has undergone great revolutions; the dream of building a coherent and complete logic structure, where all the statements of mathematically rational thought could find their place, deriving from fundamental assumptions, as Hilbert's dream was, was shattered by Goedel's discoveries.

Scholars such as Russell, Peano, Frege, Brower,

Cantor, Dedekind, Von Neumann, Tarski, Wittgenstein, etc. made great contributions to explain the nature of logic structures and propositions, the rules of inference that make them, the basis that support them, the same relationship between language and reality, the nature of the concept of infinite. On the real world's phenomena we have 'superimposed' more and more sophisticated mathematical models: From the theory of catastrophes to dynamic systems, chaos theory to the theory of fractals, to Prigogine's theories on dissipative structures; we have applied all these models to physical, chemical, social and biological phenomena.

The increasing application of various mathematics discoveries against old perceptions of reality is leading us to abandon the positivist vision of a world 'written in the language of mathematics'. In the positivist vision, the world must be decoded to the advantage of that vision, which requires us to superimpose several 'languages' to the studied realities.

In this fashion, each of these languages establishes a mathematical analogy between the model and reality and demonstrates a 'form' or phenomena we wouldn't otherwise have noticed. Nevertheless we still must verify if mathematical models have an ontological value, viz. if the forms and properties that they bring to light are properties of the world or of our preconceived ideas describing it.

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A Strange Little Book



By Steinarr Omarsson

When I passed the VI° a brother and a friend of mine lent me a strange little book he had found in an antique bookstore a few years earlier.

The book is in Norwegian and is called Frimureriets Avsløring or "Freemasonry Exposed". The book is a typical anti Freemasonry book in many ways, but with a difference that makes it special.

The book was originally published in Germany in the year 1927 and translated at least into Norwegian and published there in 1928 where it ran though at least three printings.

The first sentences of the book tell a lot about the spirit of the book and loosely translated into English they sound something like:

"The Jew's work towards winning world dominations is camouflaged in many ways. One of them is the international order of Freemasons. Another is the Catholic order of Jesuits which was founded by the Jew and freemason Ignatius of Loyola".

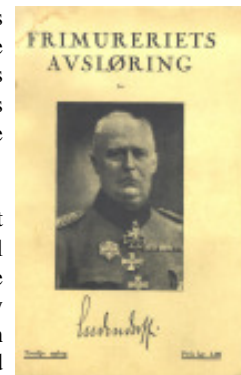
This I think says enough, but we have to keep in

mind the times this was written and of course the end justifies the means and misinformation was a useful tool in those times.

One of the things that makes this book special is that it tries to expose Freemasonry by describing the Swedish system as it was practiced by Die Grosse Landesloge

der Freimaurer von Deutschland and manages only to expose the first six degrees (That's why I was only given this book after completing that degree), but fails to mention the other degrees that come on top of that. Also it attacks the only Masonic system that does not accept Jews as members. The book accurately gives away the passwords and it seems the author might have read the rituals or some parts of them, but fails in many ways to understand or comprehend what they are about.

Another thing that makes this book special is the author. The author is Erich Ludendorff, better known



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Catechism Corner

By Br. John S. Nagy

An Occasional Contribution of Light from A Not So Accessional Contributor.

MASONIC WARNING: Although all of what is written below is openly available to everyone with access to archaic books, if you're on a Masonic track, it's wise that you save reading this until after you're raised a Master Mason.

The Significance of the Orders of Architecture

Ritual tells us that Order in Architecture is an important aspect of our Masonic understanding. What many do not gather though is the significance of our development and success as Masons is symbolized in this Order. – Dr. John S. Nagy

Summary:

The Orders of Architecture are replete with many beneficial Masonic symbols. Many a Mason hears them disclosed in lecture but few may see the significance of them in our work as Masons today. To the casual listener, they may come across lofty and appear to be added to bolster our connection to operative builders of the past. Far from this conclusion, they are metaphorical representations of what we must *be* as Masons to have any worth in our world.

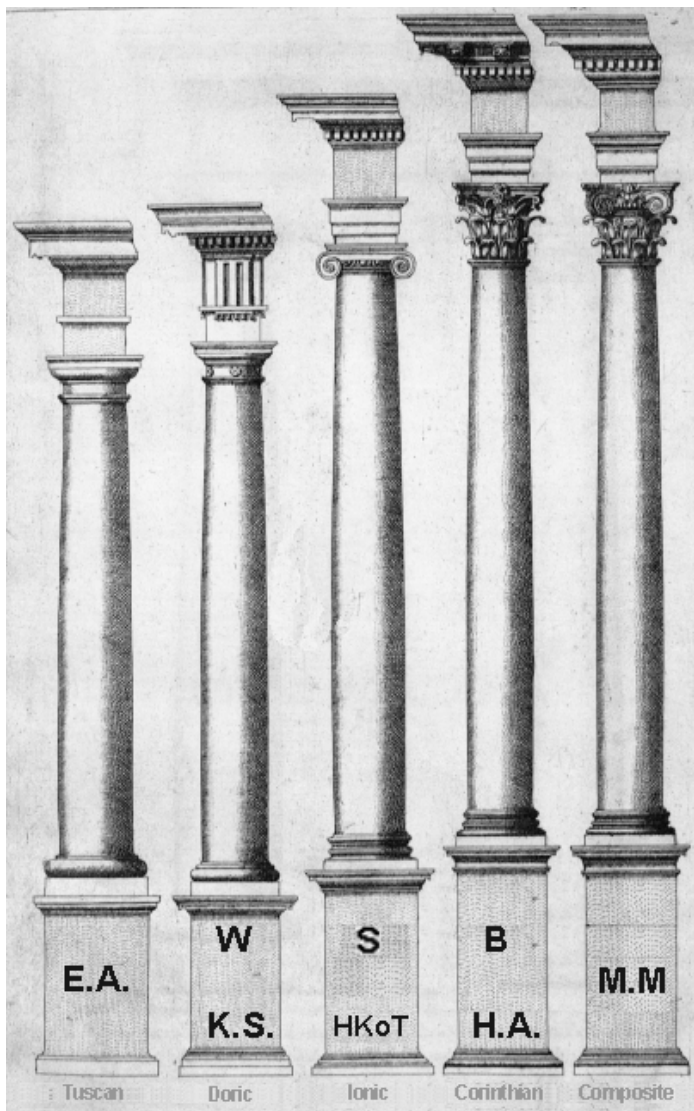
I confess, I “bought into” some misinformation about the Fellow Craft degree. Somewhere in my early Masonic education I was told that around the time when Freemasonry’s “first” Grand Lodge was formed, the second degree (the then highest degree at that time) was split and separated into two degrees – what we now know as the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason degrees. I was told too that some of the Fellow Craft lecture was put together to “fill it out” due to this split. Sure, I thought the additional material and symbols were great to hear and provided me with an “oh and ah” moment at times, but it — The Orders of Architecture specifically — seemed like it had been thrown in to give some historical foundation for what “*them great masons*” did way back in the beginning. To me, the pillars described therein were just a bunch of differently carved stones that supported the roofs of buildings in an archaic fashion.

Because of the false conclusion that I arrived at, most of the time I sat during Fellow Craft degree lectures listening and thinking to myself, “Yup. This all sounds like filler to me.” I didn’t see that the lecture was not about “them then,” but “me now!” Therefore, I sat through lectures that made known to me *the importance of Architecture* never realizing how the disclosed information tied into both my own development and my work as a Mason in the world at large.

That changed one day. An uncomfortable awareness came to me immediately after I gave a Masonic Education presentation at my lodge. I had made mention of the Three Great pillars of Masonry during my presentation. The secretary of our Lodge inquired quite innocently, as to where the Three Great Pillars of Masonry existed inside the Lodge. He wasn’t trying to be facetious or to test my knowledge; he really wanted to know. I told him I did not know but would have the answer next time we met. Had I remembered my “The Support of the Lodge” section of the Entered Apprentice lecture, I would have easily told him immediately. I didn’t though and knew that I had some research to do.

Over the next few weeks, I looked into this topic with intent to learn as much as I could about the subject in preparation for future questioning. I knew that there was a mention of Pillars in the first-degree lecture and an extensive section talking about them in the second lecture but I didn’t recall anything that was spelled out in the third lecture. This added to my original thoughts and attitude.

I found that I was skimming through my own ritual books for answers. Some answers came but I wanted to know more – something was missing from all this and I was driven to find out what that was. I found myself cruising through encyclopedias on Architecture, centuries old ritual books and monitors and any other arcane tome I could find. I diligently searched for further light and I began connecting the dots more and more as I progressed slowly.



I found my notes expanding. As more insights came to Light, I was very challenged to put into writing what I was uncovering. I was frustrated — most of what I could write about my discoveries would be considered a bit too academic for presentation in a lodge. The last thing that I wanted to have occur as a result of sharing in Lodge was to receive back a glassy eyed stare from any Brother who might show up for a long drawn out technical treatise on Columns. I had to keep it short and to the point!

I had an idea. I knew what would work and work well. My vocational training and business practice requires me to use this technique with my clients all the time – especially when time is short and the point had to be made in such a way that it would sink in quickly and be grasped firmly. Suffice it to say the technique works with wonderful success.

Of course, my Masonic training told me so too. And I’ll bet you have had this training too!

I know from my experience in my Lodge that one of the most “*sit on the edge of your seat*” events

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Ritual and Moral Points of View



Bro. René Guénon
From *Initiation and
Spiritual Realization*

As we have remarked on various occasions, similar phenomena can proceed from entirely different causes. This is why phenomena in themselves, which are only outward appearances, can never really constitute proof of the truth of any doctrine or theory, contrary to the illusions of modern 'experimentalism' in this regard. The same is true of human actions, which moreover are also phenomena of a kind: the same actions, or to speak more exactly, actions that are outwardly indistinguishable from one another, can relate to very different intentions among those who perform them; and more generally, two individuals can even act in similar ways throughout almost all the circumstances of their lives even though the points of view that regulate their conduct in reality have almost nothing in common.

Naturally, a superficial observer who limits himself to what he sees and who goes no further than appearances will never fail to let himself be

deceived in this regard and will uniformly interpret the actions of all men in relation to his own point of view. It is easy to understand that this can be the cause of many errors, as in the case of men belonging to different civilizations for example, or with historical facts dating from distant ages. A very striking and as it were extreme example of this is provided us by those of our contemporaries who, because 'economic' considerations in fact play a preponderant role for themselves, seek to explain all of human history by appealing exclusively to matters of this order, without even thinking to ask whether this has been true in all times and places. This is an effect of the tendency, also to be observed among psychologists, to believe that men are always and everywhere the same, a tendency perhaps natural in a certain sense, but nonetheless unjustified, and we think one of which we cannot be too mistrustful.

There is another error of the same kind that risks, even more easily than the one we have just described, escaping the notice of many people and indeed of the great majority, because they are too accustomed to envisaging things in this manner, and also because, unlike the 'economic' illusion, it does not seem to be directly linked to any

particular theories. This error consists in attributing the specifically moral point of view to all men without distinction, that is, in translating into 'moral' terms, with the special intentions these imply, every rule of action whatsoever, even when it belongs to civilizations completely different from theirs in every respect, simply because it is from this point of view that modern Westerners derive their own rule of action. Those who think in this way seem incapable of understanding that there are indeed other points of view that also can furnish such rules, and that, as we were just saying, the outward similarities that may exist in men's conduct in no way proves that it is always governed by the same point of view. Thus the precept to do or not to do something, which some may obey for reasons of the moral order, can be observed equally by others for wholly different reasons. It must not be concluded from this that in themselves and independently of their practical consequences, the viewpoints in question are all equivalent, far from it, for what could be called the 'quality' of the corresponding intentions varies to such a degree that there is, so to speak, no common measure between them; and this is more particularly true when comparing the moral point of view to the ritual point of view that belongs to integrally traditional civilizations.

According to the original meaning of the word itself, and as we have explained elsewhere, ritual action is what is accomplished 'in conformity with order. It consequently implies an effective consciousness of this conformity, at least to some degree; and where tradition has not undergone any diminishment, every action whatsoever has a properly ritual character. It is important to note that this essentially presupposes the knowledge of the solidarity and correspondence that exist between the cosmic order and the human order; this knowledge, with the multiple applications deriving from it, exists in all traditions, whereas it has become completely foreign to the modern mentality, which sees nothing but fantastic 'speculations' in everything that does not fall within its crude and narrowly limited conception of what it calls 'reality'. For anyone not blinded by prejudice, it is easy to see the distance separating a consciousness of conformity with the universal order, and the participation of the individual in this order by virtue of that very conformity, from the mere 'moral conscience' that requires no intellectual comprehension and is guided by nothing except purely sentimental aspirations and tendencies, and what a profound degeneration in the general mentality of humanity is implied by the passage from the one to the other. Moreover, it goes without saying that this passage is not accomplished all at once and that there can be many intermediate degrees where the two corresponding points of view intermingle in different proportions. In fact, the ritual point of view always exists in every traditional form of necessity, but some traditional forms, such as those that are properly religious, give a greater or lesser



ESOTERIC



By Ed King

www.masonicinfo.com/esoteric.htm

Something about Freemasonry which both attracts and repels is Freemasonry's ostensible 'connection' with things esoteric. It is both a blessing and a curse.

The charge against Freemasonry is two-fold: first, that its members engage in "esoteric practices" and second, that Masons are engaged in esoteric study. Whenever these charges are hurled, we are reminded of the total lack of word definition that those who engage in such activity exhibit. It is very much akin to the famed hoax by entrepreneur P.T. Barnum who caused people to move quickly through his displays by having a large sign saying, "This way to the Egress". The crowd, not knowing the definition of the word soon found themselves outside not realizing that 'egress' meant 'exit'.

Any attempt to explain esoteric interests to those whose ideas about the world are based on a black-letter text interpretation of the Bible is generally fruitless. To them, ANYONE whose curiosity about the origin of life might lead to questions about faith-based beliefs is heretical and, probably, satanic. Questions about the 'great mysteries' of the universe and man's part therein are answered in their own interpretations of the Bible; all else is "wrong". Because of this, religious intolerants find Freemasonry an anathema.

Freemasonry came into its present form in the Age of Enlightenment and its members were considered 'free-thinkers'. It was not an irreligious or anti-political act but a simple curiosity at a time when 'established rules' were not subject to challenge. Those inquisitive minds created paranoid fear in leaders of autocratic governments and religions. Freemasons perceived their inquiries as normal curiosity; the Catholic Pope and others felt that such actions were morally wrong - and condemned Freemasonry as a result.

And so we arrive at today: having gone through a couple of generations of youth unwilling to accept the 'status quo', having passed through the so-called 'Age of Aquarius' with so many experimenting with strange and often internally inconsistent 'religious' beliefs, Freemasonry's history of 'free thinking' is very attractive. Some perceive it (incorrectly) to be a religion in and of itself; others imagine that it somehow is the mystical/magical 'key' to the universe. Drawing on the writings of those with strong esoteric interests, they come to Freemasonry or rail against it, because of the perception that the organization is the heir to this 'mystic stream' which is said to underlie mankind's history. In particular, they leap on writings of those like Manley Hall, ignoring the fact that the work they dearly love to cite ("The Lost Keys of Freemasonry") was written when he was but 21

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The Old Charges of Freemasonry

By H. L. Haywood

Publishers Note: The Old Charges, written by Dr. Robert Plot and published in 1723 can be read below on this page.

WHAT THE OLD CHARGES ARE

I have just come from reading an article in one of the more obscure masonic periodicals in which an unknown brother lets go with this very familiar remark: "As for me, I am not interested in the musty old documents of the past. I want to know what is going on today." The context makes it clear that he had in mind the Old Charges. A sufficient reply to this ignoramus is that the Old Charges are among the things that are "going on today." Eliminate them from Freemasonry as it now functions and not a subordinate lodge, or a Grand Lodge, or any other regular masonic body could operate at all; they are to what the Constitution of this nation is to the United States government, and what its statutes are to every state in the Union. All our constitutions, statutes, laws, rules, by-laws and regulations to some extent or other hark back to the Old Charges, and without them masonic jurisprudence, or the methods for governing and regulating the legal affairs of the Craft, would be left hanging suspended in the air. In proportion as masonic leaders, Grand Masters, Worshipful Masters and Jurisprudence Committees ignore, or forget, or misunderstand these masonic charters they run amuck, and lead the Craft into all manner of wild and unmasonic undertakings. If some magician could devise a method whereby a clear conception of the Old Charges and what they stand for could be installed into the head of every active mason in the land, it would save us all from embarrassment times without number and it would relieve Grand Lodges and other Grand bodies from the needless expenditure of hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. If there is any practical necessity, any hard down-next-to-the-ground necessity anywhere in Freemasonry today, it is for a general clear-headed understanding of the Ancient Constitutions and landmarks of our Order.

By the OLD CHARGES is meant those ancient documents that have come down to us from the fourteenth century and afterwards in which are incorporated the traditional history, the legends and the rules and regulations of Freemasonry. They are called variously "Ancient Manuscripts", "Ancient Constitutions", "Legend of the Craft", "Gothic Manuscripts", "Old Records", etc. etc. In their physical makeup these documents are sometimes found in the form of handwritten paper or parchment rolls, the units of which are either sewn or pasted together; of hand-written sheets stitched together in book form, and in the familiar printed form of a modern book. Sometimes they are found incorporated in the minute book of a lodge. They range in estimated date from 1390 until the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and a few of them are specimens of beautiful

Gothic script. The largest number of them are in the keeping of the British Museum; the masonic library of West Yorkshire, England, has in custody the second largest number.

As already said these Old Charges (such is their most familiar appellation) form the basis of modern masonic constitutions, and therefore jurisprudence. They establish the continuity of the masonic institution through a period of more than five centuries, and by fair implication much longer; and at the same time, and by token of the same significance, prove the great antiquity of Masonry by written documents, which is a thing no other craft in existence is able to do. These manuscripts are traditional and legendary in form and are therefore not to be read as histories are, nevertheless a careful and critical study of them based on internal evidence sheds more light on the earliest times of Freemasonry than any other one source whatever. It is believed that the Old Charges were used in making a Mason in the old Operative days; that they served as constitutions of lodges in many cases, and sometimes functioned as what we today call a warrant.

The systematic study of these manuscripts began in the middle of the past century, at which time only a few were known to be in existence. In 1872 William James Hughan listed 32. Owing largely to his efforts many others were

discovered, so that in 1889 Gould was able to list 62, and Hughan himself in 1895 tabulated 66 manuscript copies, 9 printed versions and 11 missing versions. This number has been so much increased of late years that in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, Volume XXXI, page 40 (1918), Brother Roderick H. Baxter, now Worshipful Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge, listed 98, which number included the versions known to be missing. Brother Baxter's list is peculiarly valuable in that he gives data as to when and where these manuscripts have been reproduced.

For the sake of being better able to compare one copy with another, Dr. W. Begemann classified all the versions into four general "families", The Grand Lodge Family, The Sloane Family, The Roberts Family, and The Spencer Family. These family groups he divided further into branches, and he believed that The Spencer Family was an offshoot of The Grand Lodge Family, and The Roberts Family an offshoot of The Sloane Family. In this general manner of grouping, the erudite doctor was followed by Hughan, Gould and their colleagues, and his classification still holds in general; attempts have been made in recent years to upset it, but without much success. One of the best charts, based on Begemann, is that made by Brother Lionel Vibert, a copy of which will be published in a future issue of *The Builder*.

The first known printed reference to these Old

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Old Charges - 1723

By Dr. Robert Polk

I. Concerning GOD and RELIGION.

A Mason is oblig'd by his Tenure, to obey the moral law; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist nor an irreligious Libertine.



Dr. Robert Plot of Magdalen Hall, Oxford.

But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

II Of the CIVIL MAGISTRATES SUPREME and SUBORDINATE.

A Mason is a peaceable Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides or works, and is never to be concern'd in Plots an Conspiracies against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, nor to behave himself undutifully to inferior Magistrates; for as Masonry hath been always injured by War, Bloodshed, and Confusion, so ancient Kings and Princes have been much dispos'd to encourage the Craftsmen, because of their Peaceableness and Loyalty, whereby they practically answer'd the Cavils of their Adversaries, and promoted the Honour of the Fraternity, who ever flourish'd in Time of Peace. So that if a Brother should be a Rebel against the State he is not to be countenanced in his Rebellion, however he may be pitied as any unhappy Man; and, if convicted of no other Crime though the Loyal Brotherhood must and ought to disown hi Rebellion, and give no Umbrage or Ground of political Jealousy to the Government for the time being, they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his Relation to it remains indefeasible.

III OF LODGES.

A Lodge is a place where Masons assemble and work; Hence that Assembly, or duly organized Society of Masons, is call'd a Lodge, and every Brother ought

[Continued on Page 35 - 1723](#)



Tim Bryce On...

By W^r. Tim Bryce, PM, MPS
timb001@phmainstreet.com
Palm Harbor, Florida, USA
"A Foot Soldier for Freemasonry"

NOTE: The opinions expressed in this essay are my own and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of any Grand Masonic Jurisdiction or any other Masonic related body. As with all of my Masonic articles herein, please feel free to reuse them in Masonic publications or to re-post them on Masonic web sites (except Florida). When doing so, please add the following:

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The Price of Freemasonry

all of the books, magazines, trinkets and clothing Masons like to buy, such as pins, auto decals, hats or shirts. If you're a Lodge officer, you'll probably have to invest in a new suit, tuxedo or dinner jacket (not to mention new shoes).

"You get out of it what you put into it." - Anonymous

for charity. One way or another, you always kick in an extra \$50 to \$100 to the Lodge.

I recently had a young man ask me about membership in Freemasonry. After discussing the virtues of the fraternity, which he had no problem with, he asked me about the price of participation. This caused me to think about all of the various expenses associated with Masonry.

First, you have the normal out-of-pocket fees which varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction:

Initiation Fees - in North America this typically ranges anywhere from \$150 - \$300. I understand there are European jurisdictions that charge well over \$1,000.

Annual Dues - this too varies; in the States it is anywhere from \$35 - \$300. If you wish to have a perpetual membership (you never have to pay annual dues

again), it is typically twenty times the current annual dues which translates into a one time fee of anywhere between \$700 - \$6,000.

Endowment Fund - this is an annual fee used to support a specific Masonic charity or home and, in most cases, is optional. Inevitably, most Masons contribute to the fund even if they have a perpetual membership and ranges anywhere from \$3.65 to \$15.00.

Donations & Fund Raisers - this too is optional and many Lodges organize a variety of events to generate funds either for a Lodge project or

Mite Box Donations - at the conclusion of a

Allied and Appendant Masonic Bodies - if you

want to progress past the Craft Lodge and join an affiliated Masonic body, such as the Shrine, Scottish or York Rite, Grotto, High Twelve, Eastern Star, the Philaethes Society, etc., there are separate initiation fees and annual dues.

Then there is the number of hours you typically volunteer to help the Lodge, either for a charity event or perhaps something involving building maintenance or improvement. Although I would like to think all Masons freely donate their time to such endeavors, the 80/20 rule usually applies (where 80% of the work is performed by 20% of the Brethren).

Currently, I am paying annually about \$500 for the fraternity which is relatively cheap compared to others who are more heavily involved with other Masonic bodies and pay upwards to \$1,000 each year to participate. Some would consider this an expensive proposition but that depends on your perspective.

To be among men that you can trust, who will help you at the drop of a hat, where their word is their bond, where honor and integrity still mean something; frankly, I consider that priceless.

Social Events - throughout the year, there may be a special dinner or social event where spouses are invited to attend. Although some lodges do not hold such functions, the lion's share typically do, which means another \$100 or more.

Publications and paraphernalia - then there are

Keep the Faith!



Masonic Humor



Freemasonry: It's not about me changing *them*, it's about me changing me.

Funny Definitions

1. Ratio of an igloo's circumference to its diameter = Eskimo Pi
2. 2,000 pounds of Chinese soup = Won ton
3. 1 millionth of a mouthwash = 1 microscope
4. Time between slipping on a peel and smacking the pavement = 1 bananosecond
5. Weight an evangelist carries with God = 1 billigram
6. Time it takes to sail 220 yards at 1 nautical mile per hour = Knotfurlong
7. 16.5 feet of silver in the Twilight Zone = 1 Rod Sterling
8. Half of a large intestine = 1 semicolon
9. 1,000,000 aches = 1 megahurtz
10. Basic unit of laryngitis = 1 hoarsepower
11. Shortest distance between two jokes = A straight line
12. 453.6 graham crackers = 1 pound cake
13. 1 million microphones = 1 megaphone
14. 2 million bicycles = 2 megacycles
15. 365.25 days = 1 unicycle
16. 2,000 mockingbirds = 2 kilomockingbird
17. 52 cards = 1 decacards
18. 1 kilogram of falling figs = 1 FigNewton
19. 1,000 milliliters of wet socks = 1 literhosen
20. 1 millionth of a fish = 1 microfiche
21. 1 trillion pins = 1 terrapin
22. 10 rations = 1 decoration
23. 100 rations = 1 C-ration
24. 2 monograms = 1 diagram
25. 4 nickels = 2 paradigms
26. 4 statute miles of intravenous surgical tubing at Yale University Hospital = 1 IV League
27. 100 Senators = Not 1 decision



Cowboy Traffic Stop

A cowboy from Texas gets pulled over by an Arizona DPS Trooper for speeding. The trooper started to lecture the cowboy about his speeding, and in general began to throw his weight around to try to make the cowboy Feel uncomfortable.

Finally, the trooper got around to writing out the

ticket. As he was doing that, he kept swatting at some flies that were buzzing around his head.

The cowboy says, 'Y'all havin' some problem with them circle flies?'

The trooper stopped writing the ticket and said, 'Well yeah, if that's What they're called. But I've never heard of circle flies.'

'Well, sir,' the cowboy replies, 'circle flies hang around ranches. They're called circle flies because they're almost always found circling around the back end of a horse.'

The trooper says, 'Oh,' and goes back to writing the ticket. But, a moment later he stops and asks, 'Are you callin' me a horse's ass?'

'No, sir,' the cowboy replies, 'I have too much respect for law enforcement to call y'all a horse's ass.'

'That's a good thing,' the trooper says and goes back to writing the ticket.

After a long pause, the cowboy, in his best Texas drawl says, 'Hard to fool them flies though'.



Letter from Camp

Hi Mom,

Our Scoutmaster told us to write to our parents in case you saw the flood on TV and are worried. We are okay. Only one of our tents and 2 sleeping bags got washed away. Luckily, none of us got drowned because we were all up on the mountain looking for Adam when it happened.

Oh yes, please call Adam's mother and tell her he is okay. He can't write because of the cast. I got to ride in one of the search and rescue jeeps. It was neat. We never would have found Adam in the dark if it hadn't been for the lightning.

Scoutmaster Keith got mad at Adam for going on a hike alone without telling anyone. Adam said he did tell him, but it was during the fire so he probably didn't hear him. Did you know that if you put gas on a fire, the gas will blow up?

The wet wood didn't burn, but one of the tents did and also some of our clothes. Matthew is going to look weird until his hair grows back.

We will be home on Saturday if Scoutmaster Keith gets the bus fixed. It wasn't his fault about the wreck. The brakes worked okay when we left. Scoutmaster Keith said that with a bus that old you have to expect something to break down; that's probably why he can't get insurance.

We think it's a neat bus. He doesn't care if we get it dirty and if it's hot, sometimes he lets us ride on the fenders. It gets pretty hot with 45 people in a bus made for 24. He let us take turns riding in the trailer until the highway patrol man stopped and talked to us.

Scoutmaster Keith is a neat guy. Don't worry, he is a good driver. In fact, he is teaching Jessie how to drive on the mountain roads where there isn't any cops. All we ever see up there are logging trucks.

This morning all of the guys were diving off the rocks and swimming out to the rapids. Scoutmaster Keith wouldn't let me because I can't swim, and Adam was afraid he would sink because of his cast, it's concrete because we didn't have any plaster, so he let us take the canoe out. It was great. You can still see some of the trees under the water from the flood.

Scoutmaster Keith isn't crabby like some scoutmasters. He didn't even get mad about the life jackets. He has to spend a lot of time working on the bus so we are trying not to cause him any trouble.

Guess what? We have all passed our first aid merit badges. When Andrew dived into the lake and cut his arm, we got to see how a tourniquet works.

Steven and I threw up, but Scoutmaster Keith said it probably was just food poisoning from the leftover chicken. He said they got sick that way with food they ate in prison. I'm so glad he got out and became our scoutmaster.

He said he sure figured out how to get things done better while he was doing his time. By the way, what is a pedal-file

I have to go now. We are going to town to mail our letters buy some more beer and ammo. Don't worry about anything. We are fine and tonight it's my turn to sleep in the Scoutmaster's tent.

Love, Jimmie



Lodgeroom International Store

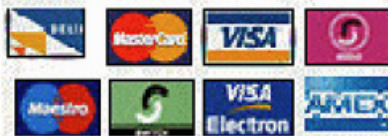
<http://lodgeroomuk.net.wwwserver.net/catalogue.php?shop=1>

Below is a small sampling of the extensive variety of Masonic items available at the Lodgeroom International Store. In addition to regalia in Craft, Royal Arch, Provincial and Rose Croix, we also offer a large selection of gifts, lodge room supplies, and printed materials, from rituals and administrative manuals to research to fiction.

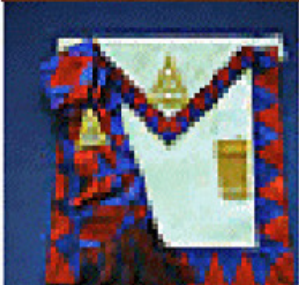
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http://www.lodgeroomuk.net//phplists/public_html/lists/



Ideas

Continued from Page 3

19. Let a Lodge from a Temple that goes dark in summer hold Craft practice at our place. Joined in with them.
20. Dramatically expanded library. Write book reviews of new ones and promote it in your Trestle Board.
21. Started book exchange open to everyone in Lodge family. Bookshelf in the dining room.
22. Officers chairs left empty for two years rather than push new members into them immediately.
23. Make sure Lodge name is seen out in the community. Business cards, pins, jackets with S&C and Lodge name, who to contact for info on door of Lodge along with web address. If the building is closed, how will a new man find someone to ask?
24. Extend invitations to Prince Hall Lodges for visits. Current leadership within Prince Hall Masonry in Indiana requires that the PHA Lodge get permission to visit from their Grand master, so check with the Master of the PHA Lodge you contact for their latest rulings on this matter. In 2004, we assisted a group of PHA lodges with their annual Thanksgiving Dinner for the poor, and in 2005, we made Indiana Masonic history by conferring the Master Mason degree on two Prince Hall candidates.
25. Always keep petitions in your car. Let me say that again: Always keep petitions in your car.
26. If 200 members stay away, get new ones who won't! If only seven show up, have fun with each other.
27. Made up a new member's notebook, containing: Introduction to Lodge etiquette Lodge history List of Masonic websites, research, recommended book list Lodge directory of all members, their addresses and phone numbers. Introduction to Freemasonry for a Mason's lady List of all Lodge widows List of all Lodge Committees List of area lodges to visit Lodge By-Laws. Brochures from the York Rite, Scottish Rite & Shrine - not petitions from them (discourage joining them for 1 year). Our Lodge Masonic Angel Fund brochure The latest Lodge Trestle Board (newsletter) Three petitions and Grand Lodge Masonic brochures and DVD Masonic License Plate form
28. Freemasonry IS NOT RITUAL. If you can

do all parts flawlessly, yet never have candidates and no one comes to meetings, how will the ritual save your Lodge?

29. Plan with your Wardens so there is continuity for years to come - stop reinventing the wheel every year. Do NOT hide good ideas from your Master so you can claim victory during your year. Do NOT pass on problems to the next Master. Solve them now!

One thing we shamelessly cribbed from another Lodge was to make the three newest members of the Lodge the Junior Warden's Committee, making them responsible for food and cleanup, in association with the Stewards. It rotates as you get new men in, instead of saddling the Stewards with the job for an entire year. If they like doing it, it develops camaraderie among the new guys. If they hate doing it, it encourages them to go out and get a new man to join. Our guys jumped in with vigor and tout themselves as the KFC (Knife and Fork Committee). They now meet together on Friday nights at area restaurants, and are promising restaurant reviews for the newsletter. Believing there are no small parts, only small actors, they have padded their parts and are having a ball. Be sure to buy them a knife and fork Mason tie clip.

Masonry isn't just about food <grin>. These guys want knowledge, information, and STUFF! They are proud of their membership. They want medals, aprons, regalia, certificates, books, jewelry... Ours is a Craft with a long heritage, and they WANT things that will make their friends and family envious and - more important - curious about Masonry too. That's what first made THEM notice us to begin with. Don't think it's shallow to interest potential new members with a "made you look" brashness. Rings, jackets, license plates - all of these things attract attention and at least nudge men into asking what it's all about. Remember, I said INTEREST new members. It's up to your Lodge to get them through their degrees and keep them interested after that. The point is, they want their friends to join with them, and the "stuff" might get those friends to at least ask.

Upon raising, we give a new Master Mason a S&C lapel pin, a commemorative pin for our Lodge, an engraved pocket name badge, and a boxed set of miniature working tools. For a year on Masonic 'birthdays' we also passed out a small, brass trowel. These things don't cost much, but go a long way towards making a man feel that the Lodge is immediately investing in them.

I became an Entered Apprentice in November 1998, and was raised in March 1999. So it was with no little terror that I found myself installed in the East for the year 2001. We had lost 5 officers from the Line in 1999 for a variety of circumstances. A wise Past Master agreed to step in at the VERY last minute to be Master that year, but as 2000 wound to a close, the sentiment was that we should look into selling our building and

closing, moving or merging. We were lucky to have seven guys come to Stated Meetings and we did virtually no degree work that year. The most important thing our outgoing Master taught me was to stop dwelling on the numbers game. Our Lodge has regular income, a paid-for building and some assets. If 220 members never set foot in the place, didn't participate, didn't communicate, IT DIDN'T MATTER. If some of the officer's chairs went unfilled, IT DIDN'T MATTER. What DID matter was that the little group of Masons who DID come had a good time with each other. We held every Stated Meeting as a Table Lodge, paid our bills, always had a great meal (paid for by the Lodge - no hat passing), maybe had a guest speaker, voted money to charities, and had a couple of hours of true fellowship. THAT was what was important. A year ago, we had seven guys who truly liked each other's company, who got along, who cared about what was going on in each other's lives, and maybe went for a beer afterwards. And the other 200 members were paying for us to have a great time and practice Freemasonry. What a deal!

My year, we raised eight men, all under 40 (and most under 30), had two more being voted on, three transferring in from out of state lodges, and more petitions on the way. Sure, we still need the help of brothers from other Lodges to help us put on degrees, but they come if we ask, and they have a good time with us. They come to our Lodge because we have new candidates all the time now, and why just practice when you can be conferring a degree?

We redecorated to make sure our Lodge no longer looks and smells like Grandma's front parlor. We had picnics and dinners and cook offs and events with other Lodges. We've tried hard to let young men know that their input is welcome and that we will change our activities to reflect what THEY want out of Lodge, instead of demanding that we adhere to the same annual events planned during the Coolidge Administration. We publish a monthly newsletter that doesn't look like it was surreptitiously Xeroxed after hours at work. In it, we thank those brothers who have helped or showed up or contributed because people like to see their name in print and like to be acknowledged for doing a good job. We try to keep our website up to date and looking fresh and professional, and it has become the electronic front door that so many of our newest members first knocked on. Those new members are enthusiastic and want to dive right into our activities and degree work - and we encourage them. They are telling their friends about Lodge and some of those friends are asking for petitions. And our post-meeting gatherings at the local watering hole have gotten larger and last a lot longer now.

My Senior Warden and I were too new at this to know the "way it's always been done in past" so we were willing to try whatever works. And guess what? Those same 200 members still stay home,

Continued on Next Page

don't participate, and don't communicate. But then, they didn't show up at meetings to vote down big expenditures, or veto by-law changes, or stop us from starting a Masonic Angel Fund, or any of the other things we did my year that I was told would cause heart attacks within the membership. So, those same 200 guys are now paying for 15 or 20 of us to have a good time. We had a full officer's line the next year, and some disappointed men who we didn't have chairs for. I don't know if we have truly turned our Lodge around in the long term - only time will tell. But it's a far cry from the year before, and no one is talking about selling our building now.

Before I became Master, I was privately told to take my time, rock no boats, hide good ideas from the Master ahead of me, pass problems along to the Warden behind me, just learn my ritual, read my Blue Book rules, and I'd get along just fine. Otherwise, I risked insurrection and eternal damnation from the Old Guard. I was just too stupid to listen. As a Mason I may have been wet behind the ears, but I was smart enough to know that the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.

The ultimate point I'm making is that if you are disappointed by your Lodge and it is not living up to the lofty goals of the fraternity you thought you joined (as I morosely thought just a year ago), GET IN THERE AND CHANGE IT. Be the Master of your Lodge. Lead with a vision and MAKE IT STICK. If you enrage a lineup of cranky Past Masters who are forcing your lodge to remain mired in the 19th century, what will they do? If you are afraid your lodge is shrinking and failing at its mission, yet you allow "buzzard's row" to keep you going down that same path year after year, you are doing a great disservice to your Lodge and those men who built it to begin with. The men who started your Lodge had ideas and strength and they were the leaders of your community. If they saw their Lodge losing members and failing now, I promise you they would not be complacent. They would try everything they could.

They would be Builders, Masters of their Craft. They would give their workmen good and wholesome instruction for their labor. Accept no less from yourself.

Wr. Chris Hodapp PM - Broad Ripple #643; PM - Vitruvian #767 Indianapolis Author of:
Freemasons For Dummies
Templars for Dummies



Philosophy

Continued from Page 3

be expected in a member of a profession whose philosophical ideas, so far as its leaders held any at all, were thoroughly Hegelian. In part it grew out of Pike's wide reading in the philosophical writings of antiquity and his bent for mysticism. Thus his philosophy of Masonry is a product of

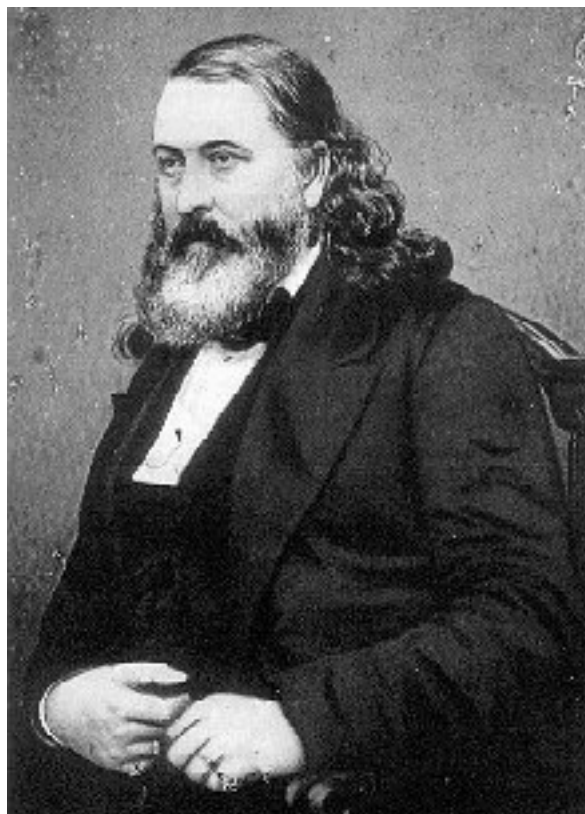
the man and of the time and we must look first at each of these in order to treat it intelligently.

The man.

Albert Pike was born in Boston, December 29, 1809. His parents were poor. He was educated in the public schools in Boston and it is interesting to know as a means of comparing those days with these that, although he passed the examinations for admission to Harvard College, he was unable to enter because in those days the requirement was that two years' tuition be paid in advance or secured by bond. He became a school teacher and taught in country schools in Massachusetts from 1825 to 1831. In 1831 he went west and joined a trading party from St. Louis to Santa Fe. Santa Fe was then in Mexico and the journey at that time was a perilous one through a wilderness inhabited only by Indians. On his return he traversed the Staked Plains and the Indian Territory and settled finally at Van Buren in Arkansas where he opened a school.

At that time political feeling in Arkansas was very bitter. The territory was divided between the Conway party who were politically democrats and in truth were a sort of clan as well, and the Crittenden party who were Whigs politically but were in truth more a personal faction than a political party. Bloodshed was frequent and in many respects there was a feud between the factions quite as much as a political rivalry. The early experience of this era of feud and private war on the frontier is worth remembering in connection with many things in Pike's lectures upon Masonry. Pike was a Whig and as such published in the Whig organ at Little Rock some articles of such force as to attract general attention. Accordingly Crittend, the Whig leader, sought out Pike in his country school-room and induced him to go to Little Rock as one of the editors of the party organ. This was his opportunity and he improved it to the full by studying law while, also at work upon the paper. In 1834 he was admitted to the bar and he rose rapidly to the first rank in the profession in Arkansas. Among his earlier achievements was the preparation of the first revision of the statutes of that state. The book does not bear his name but contemporary accounts tell us that he had the chief part in framing it. By general consent it is a model of what such a work should be.

At the outbreak of the Mexican war Pike entered the service and was in action at Buena Vista. His courage, proved already in the political conflicts of territorial days, was again shown in events that grew out of the campaign in Mexico. Pike felt it his duty to criticize the military conduct of Governor Roane and as a result was compelled to fight a duel. The duel took place over the line in



the Indian Territory. Happily it was bloodless and ended in reconciliation. There is good reason to suspect that some traces of this experience are to be seen in his lectures. From 1853 to 1857 Pike practiced law in New Orleans. Thus he was led to make a diligent and characteristically thorough study of Roman law, the basis of the French law which obtained then, as it does now, in Louisiana. In 1857 he returned to Arkansas and afterward sat upon the supreme bench of that state. At the outbreak of the Civil War he cast his lot with the South. As he had great influence with the Indians he was sent to raise a force in the Indian Territory. In this work he was vigorous and untiring. But his utmost efforts could not make obedient or efficient soldiers out of the large force which he was able to raise. Some of the doings of this force have left a stain upon his memory, which, according to the best authorities obtainable, seems to be undeserved. In truth his experience was not very different from that of the British officers during the Revolution and during the War of 1812 who sought to make military use of Indian allies. In any event the project failed. This experience also has left more than one trace in his Masonic lectures. After the Civil War he practiced law for a time in Memphis. In 1868 he went to Alexandria, Virginia, and in 1870 moved across the river to Washington where he practiced law for twenty-one years. He died in 1891.

Albert Pike was a man of the widest and most varied learning. He was a strong and successful common-law lawyer. He had studied the Roman law to good purpose and left a manuscript of a three-volume book upon the principles of the

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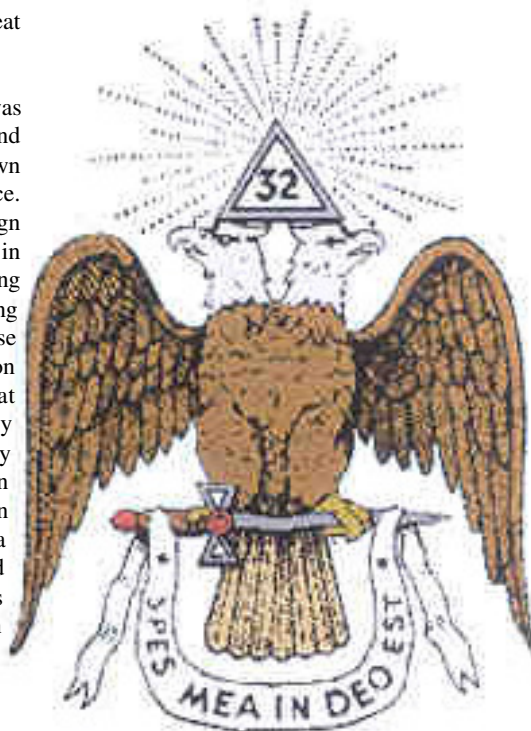
Roman law which is now in the library of the Supreme Court of the United States. But he had many scholarly interests outside of his profession. He left among his papers a manuscript translation of the Zend Avesta and of the Rig Veda in twenty-two large volumes copiously annotated. Moreover he made some mark as a poet. Some of his poems, particularly a striking one upon the battle of Buena Vista, are still to be found in school readers and his verses were formerly much in vogue. Reviewing his extra-Masonic record for a moment, we see a man born and educated in New England, a pioneer in the southwest in its frontier period, a soldier in two wars, a successful lawyer under each of the two great systems of modern law, for a season judge of a supreme court and withal, though largely self-educated, a man of learning and culture who, along with a treatise upon the principles of Roman law which bore immediately upon his profession, could write verse of some merit and could busy himself in the translation of the great books of Oriental philosophy and religion.

But the field of Pike's most fruitful labors was Masonry. His career as a Mason is too recent and his standing as a Masonic scholar is too well-known to all of you to call for any statement in this place. But I may remind you that he became Sovereign Grand Commander of the southern jurisdiction in the Scottish Rite in 1859 and devoted the remaining thirty-two years of his life in continually increasing measure to the work of that rite. Excepting Krause no mind of equal caliber has been employed upon the problems of Masonry. And Krause, great scholar and philosopher as he was, had lived only in the cultured serenity of German university towns whereas Pike had lived in staid Boston and turbulent territorial Arkansas, had been compelled by local public opinion to fight in a duel, had fought in two wars and had commanded Indians. Moreover, Krause's Masonic experience was negligible in comparison with that of this veteran of American Masonry. Accordingly we need not hesitate to pronounce Albert Pike by far the best qualified by nature, experience of life, Masonic experience and Masonic learning of those who have thought upon the problems of Masonic philosophy.

Now as to the time.

In the earlier part of his career, Pike was brought into contact with the eighteenth-century political philosophy which became classical in American political thought because it was the philosophy of the framers of our constitutions and bills of rights and entered into the framework of our institutions in their formative period. Also in this part of his career, in his study of law, he came in contact with the eighteenth-century legal philosophy of the American common-law lawyer. In the latter part of his career, in his wide philosophical studies, he was brought into contact with the prevailing metaphysical method of the nineteenth century, with the conception of the Absolute, which governed in English philosophical writing, and with the method of unifying all things by reference to

some basic absolute principle which prevailed down to the new century. This same period saw the general rise of materialism in the wake of decay of dogma and the triumphant advance of the natural sciences, and this movement so far affected his thought as to turn him, by way of reaction, to mysticism. Indeed a mystic element is to be found not uncommonly in thorough-going idealists. For example the leader of the new school that builds on Hegel's philosophy has been reproved for dragging mysticism into so prosaic a subject as the philosophy of law. But mystics are made by nature, and nature made Pike one of the greatest of them. Hence we may be confident that reaction from materialism merely accentuated an element which in any event would have been prominent in his thinking and writing. Each of the four points of contact with American thought in the nineteenth century requires a moment's consideration.



American political philosophy in the first half of the nineteenth century was a compound of English law and French speculation. Prior to the Revolution in the Declaration of Rights of the Continental Congress the colonists had relied upon the common-law rights of Englishmen as asserted by English lawyers and English judges against the Stuart kings in the seventeenth century. But the Declaration of Independence relied instead upon the natural rights of man, a supposed body of universal, eternal, inalienable rights deduced by reason from the nature of man in the abstract. Under the influence of English thinkers of the seventeenth century and of the Continental philosophy of law in the period after Grotius, the French writers of the eighteenth century had developed this theory of natural rights to a high degree, and the founders of our government were deeply read in their writings. But they were also deeply read in Blackstone and in Coke, the oracle of English law. Naturally they combined the general

theory of the French speculators and the concrete details of the English lawyers and came to hold that the common-law rights of Englishmen found in their law books were the natural rights of man found in their French political philosophy. Hence in our bills of rights they laid down the former section by section and enacted them in fixed and precise rules on the authority of the latter. This had important consequences for the American legal philosophy which Pike absorbed in the formative period of his study for the bar.

In the contests between the English judges and the Stuart kings the judges had claimed to stand between the rights and liberties of the individual Englishman and arbitrary oppressive action on the part of the crown. When we took over the theory of eternal, inalienable natural rights and combined it with the theory of the English lawyers, the result was a doctrine that law stands and must stand between the individual on the one hand and state and society on the other hand and that its function is to secure the individual in his natural rights against the aggressions and oppressions of organized society. This idea of the mediating function of law, as a reconciling of the individual and the whole, which the lawyer of the last century took for the first article of his creed, is to be seen throughout Pike's lectures and lent itself readily to his generalization of equilibrium or balance as the Ultimate Reality. For if law was a mediation, a harmonizing, a reconciling, and the universe was governed by law, the fundamental principle of the universe was the mediating or harmonizing which he called equilibrium.

When, in his later studies, Pike came upon the metaphysical method of nineteenth-century philosophers, it was easy to confirm the views to which his acquaintance with the classical American political and legal philosophy and his reading of French Masonic writers of the eighteenth century had led him. For the generation that followed Hegel sought to explain the universe as the realization of an idea. History was the unfolding of that idea in human experience. Philosophy was a logical unfolding of the same idea. Hence the quest was for the one fundamental idea of which the seemingly complex order of the phenomenal world was but a manifestation. Hence the task of the philosopher was to unite and reconcile all differences in the Absolute which he reached through this idea. Traces of the transition from the legal and political analogy to this metaphysical foundation may be seen here and there in those parts of *Morals and Dogma* which, we may suspect, remained in their earlier forms despite his repeated and thorough-going revisions.

In his later studies Pike was also compelled to take account of the materialism which held its head so high and with "a mouth speaking great things" grew so confidently dogmatic during the last third of his life. If Pike, who was naturally a mystic, seems sometimes to rely on intuition more than on reason,

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study and reflection upon the work and the symbols. Thus he stood for thorough going individual Masonic development. He stood for a Masonry built up within each Mason by himself and for himself on the solid foundation of internal conviction. This Masonic Protestantism, as it might well be called, is especially interesting in one who was so thoroughly filled with French writings upon Masonry. Secondly he gave us a genuine interpretation of the symbols which came into Masonry through the hermetic philosophers. Hutchinson and Preston and even Oliver in many cases did not understand these symbols at all. Indeed Preston was much less interested in what they really were than in how they might be made instruments of education in his time and place. Accordingly Preston and Oliver gave currency to inadequate and often ignorant explanations of ancient symbols. Pike studied their history and development. He mastered their spirit and perceived their place in the evolution of

to put faith, which is self-justifying, at the bottom of knowledge, to find a reality in the occult, and to show a conviction of the relation of the symbol to the thing symbolized, in contrast with the rigorous metaphysic of the lectures where he argues and demonstrates instead of prophesying, we must consider the impatience of an idealist and a mystic with the mechanical universe of the positivists and the economic ethics and belly-philosophy of the materialists which a new generation was asserting all about him.

3. Let us turn now to Pike's Masonic Philosophy

Pike did not leave us any compendium of his philosophical views. Hence we cannot, as in the case of Oliver, apprehend them at a glance from a concise exposition. The student of Pike's Masonic philosophy must read and study the teeming pages of *Morals and Dogma*. After reading and reflection the system of philosophy expounded will make itself felt. But it is quite impossible for the reader to put his finger upon this sentence or that and say here is Pike's philosophy in a nut-shell. For the first thing to bear in mind in reading *Morals and Dogma* is that we must discriminate closely between what is really Pike and what is not.

Indeed he has told us this himself.

"In preparing this work, the Grand Commander has been about equally Author and Compiler; since he has extracted quite half its contents from the works of the best writers and most philosophic or eloquent thinkers. Perhaps it would have been better and more acceptable, if he had extracted

more and written less.

"Still, perhaps half of it is his own; and, in incorporating here the thoughts and words of others, he has continually changed and added to the language, often intermingling, in the same sentences, his own words with theirs."

In some measure the author is unjust to himself in this statement. In a sense the book is all his own. He read and digested everything. He assimilated it. He made it part of himself and worked it into his system. But for this very reason texts from Pike and excerpts from *Morals and Dogma* are more than usually deceptive. We may fasten almost any philosophical idea upon him if we proceed in this way. We may refute almost any page by any other page if we look simply at the surface and do not distinguish matter which he is adapting or is making use of to illustrate the development of thought upon the subject from dogmatic statements of his philosophy. *Morals and Dogma* must be read and interpreted as a unit. As Immanuel Kant said of his own writings, it is a book to think through not merely to read through.

Three contributions of the first moment to Masonic science deserve to be noted before taking up Pike's philosophy of Masonry in detail. In the first place Pike was the apostle of liberty of interpretation. He insisted in season and out of season that no infallible authority speaking ex cathedra could bind the individual Mason to this or that interpretation of the traditional symbols of the Craft. He taught that the individual Mason instead of receiving a pre-digested Masonry ladled out to him by another should make his own Masonry for himself by

human thinking. Hence he was able to replace the crude symbolism of the end of the eighteenth century by a real science of Masonic symbols. In the third place not only did he interpret our symbols but he enriched the symbolism of the Craft from a profound acquaintance with the ancient and modern literature of symbolism and mysticism. Thus he made us aware that the science of Masonic symbols is but part of a much wider subject, that it is not self-sufficient and that the serious Masonic Student has much more to study than he can find within the covers of an exclusively Masonic library.

I can do no more than give you a key to what I conceive to be Pike's philosophy of Masonry. Perhaps the first point to make is that in nineteenth-century America philosophy was regarded, under the influence of Herbert Spencer, as the unification of knowledge. Moreover the metaphysical method of the first half of the nineteenth century, when Pike's ideas were formative, was to endeavor to explain everything in a "speculative, metaphysical way by a spiritual, logical principle." But it so happened that all antiquity had been making a like search for the One but for a different sort of One. The earlier Greek philosophers sought a single element to which the whole universe might be reduced. The Ionian philosophers sought to find such elements in air or fire or water or, as one of them put it, "a primordial slime." Oriental thinkers had usually sought an absolute word which was to be the key of all things. Others among the ancients had sought an absolute principle. With vast labor Pike brings together all that ancient and

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Oriental peoples thought and wrote and all that mystics have since thought and written with the ideas of the Orient and of antiquity as a basis and upon this foundation he sets forth to work out a system of his own.

Pike starts with a triad. This is suggested by the ancient conception of the number three as the symbol of completion or perfection. The singular, the dual and the plural, the odd and even added, was thought of as a complete system of numbers. Hence the number three was perfection in its simplest form; it was the type or the symbol of perfection. He finds a triad everywhere in ancient thought and in every system of the occult and in every mystic philosophy. He finds it also in all Masonic symbolism and from end to end in our lectures. Accordingly he seeks to show that in its essentials this triad is at all times and in all its forms the same triad. Wisdom, strength, beauty; intelligence, force, harmony; reason, will, action; morals, law, social order; faith, hope, charity; equality, liberty, fraternity—all these he shows are the same triad in various forms.

There is a fruitful passive principle which is energized and made productive by an active, creative principle and there is a product. As he shows, Osiris, Isis and Horus symbolize this with the Egyptians and he traces the same reduction of the universe to these fundamental through every type of ancient mystery and all mystic speculation. In Morals and Dogma he makes all manner of application of this idea to politics, to morals and to religion. He carries it into every type of human spiritual activity and gives the most copious and learned illustrations.

But this of itself would be barren and would end in pluralism. Accordingly he conceives that these three things are emanations, or better, are manifestations of the Absolute. This idea again he subjects to the test of application to all that has been thought and written by mystics down to his time. We find a unity in the Absolute. But how do we unify the manifold, the infinite manifestations of the Absolute in our experience? Is there here some one principle? Pike says there is and that this unifying principle is equilibrium or balance. The result of the action of creative, active energy and productive, passive receptivity is in the end a harmony, a balance, an equilibrium. He then applies this idea of equilibrium to every field of thought. One example will suffice.

“It is the Secret of the Universal Equilibrium:—
“Of that Equilibrium in the Deity, between the Infinite Divine Wisdom and the Infinite Divine Power, from which result the Stability of the Universe, the unchangeableness of the Divine Law, and the Principles of Truth, Justice, and Right which are a part of it; . . .

“Of that Equilibrium also, between the Infinite Divine Justice and the Infinite Divine Mercy,

the result of which is the Infinite Divine Equity, and the Moral Harmony or Beauty of the Universe. By it the endurance of created and imperfect natures in the presence of a Perfect Deity is made possible;

“Of that Equilibrium between Necessity and Liberty, between the action of the Divine Omnipotence and the Free-will of man, by which vices and base actions, and ungenerous thoughts and words are crimes and wrongs, justly punished by the law of cause and consequence, though nothing in the Universe can happen or be done contrary to the will of God; and without which co-existence of Liberty and Necessity, of Freewill in the creature and Omnipotence in the Creator, there could be no religion, nor any law of right and wrong, or merit and demerit, nor any justice in human punishments or penal laws.

“Of that Equilibrium between Good and Evil, and Light and Darkness in the world, which assures us that all is the work of the Infinite Wisdom and of an Infinite Love; and that there is no rebellious demon of Evil, or Principle of Darkness co-existent and in eternal controversy with God, or the Principle of Light and of Good: by attaining to the knowledge of which equilibrium we can, through Faith, see that the existence of Evil, sin, Suffering, and Sorrow in the world, is consistent with the Infinite Goodness as well as with the Infinite Wisdom of the Almighty.

“Sympathy and Antipathy, Attraction and Repulsion, each a Force of nature, are contraries, in the souls of men and in the universe of spheres and worlds; and from the action and opposition of each against the other, result Harmony, and that movement which is the Life of the Universe and the Soul alike...

“Of that Equilibrium between Authority and Individual Action which constitutes Free Government, by settling on immutable foundations Liberty with Obedience to Law, Equality with Subjection to Authority, and Fraternity with Subordination to the wisest and the Best: and of that Equilibrium between the Active Energy of the Will of the Present, expressed by the Vote of the People, and the Passive Stability and Permanence of the Will of the Past, expressed in constitutions of government, written or unwritten, and in the laws and customs, gray with age and sanctified by time, as precedents and authority;

“And, finally, of that Equilibrium, possible in ourselves, and which Masonry incessantly labors to accomplish in its Initiates, and demands of its Adepts and Princes (else unworthy of their titles), between the Spiritual and Divine and the Material and Human in man; between the Intellect, Reason, and Moral Sense on one side, and the Appetites and Passions on the other, from which result the Harmony and Beauty of a

well-regulated life.”

Well, we have got our idea of equilibrium and the profane will say: What of it? Pike would answer that this universal unifying principle is the light of which all men in all ages have been in search, the light which we seek as Masons. Hence we get our answers to the fundamental problems of Masonic philosophy.

1. What is the end of Masonry?

What is the purpose for which it exists? Pike would answer: the immediate end is the pursuit of light. But light means here attainment of the fundamental principle of the universe and bringing of ourselves into the harmony, the ultimate unity which alone is real. Hence the ultimate end is to lead us to the Absolute—interpreted by our individual creed if we like but recognized as the final unity into which all things merge and with which in the end all things must accord. You will see here at once a purely philosophical version of what, with Oliver, was purely religious.

2. What is the relation of Masonry to other human institutions and particularly to the state and to religion?

He would answer it seeks to interpret them to us, to make them more vital for us, to make them more efficacious for their purposes by showing the ultimate reality of which they are manifestations. It teaches us that there is but one Absolute and that everything short of that Absolute is relative; is but a manifestation, so that creeds and dogmas, political or religious, are but interpretations. It teaches us to make our own interpretation for ourselves. It teaches us to save ourselves by finding for ourselves the ultimate principle by which we shall come to the real. In other words, it is the universal institution of which other spiritual, moral and social institutions are local and temporary phases.

3. How does Masonry seek to reach these ends?

He would say by a system of allegories and of symbols handed down from antiquity which we are to study and upon which we are to reflect until they reveal the light to each of us individually. Masonry preserves these symbols and acts out these allegories for us. But the responsibility of reaching the real through them is upon each of us. Each of us has the duty of using this wonderful heritage from antiquity for himself. Masonry in Pike’s view does not offer us predigested food. It offers us a wholesome fare which we must digest for ourselves. But what a feast! It is nothing less than the whole history of human search for reality. And through it he conceives, through mastery of it, we shall master the universe.

<http://www.masonicinfo.com/pikesphilosophy.htm>





Other Masonic Publications of Interest



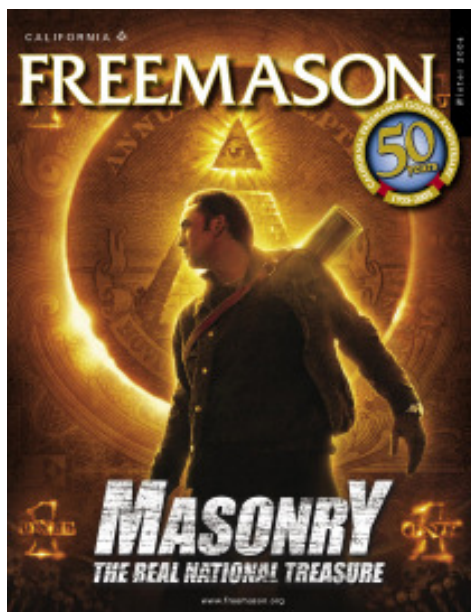
Man of the Year
 Honorable Robinson Wallace
 The United Grand Lodge of England
 Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry
 The Royal Household, U.K. & I.
The Honorable Robinson Wallace

Phylaxis Magazine

Phylaxis magazine is published quarterly by the Phylaxis society. The First Quarter issue covers diverse issues, including the Man of the Year.

In this issue, we feature an article about two Texas Masons, one of whom marries a woman of color, and the other who struggled for purity of the blood of the white race. We have an excellent review of the recognition process in Ontario, Canada.

We have a heated debate about the actual date the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts was established, and the new president of the Phylaxis Society urges Prince Hall Masons to correct the errors in their history perpetuated by those who may not have our interests at heart.



The California Freemason is published six times

annually by the Grand Lodge of California. It may be downloaded free by going to:

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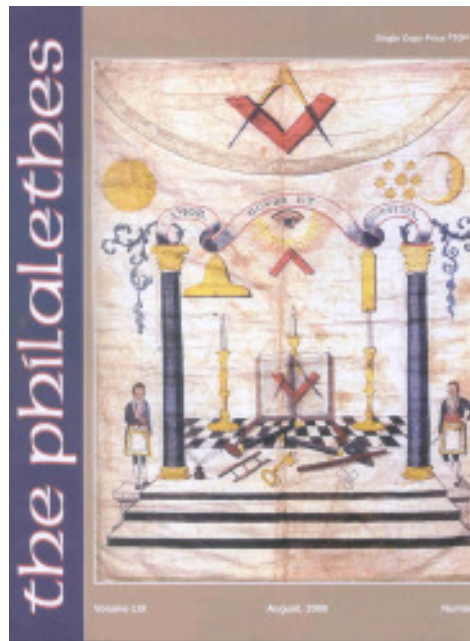


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THE PHILAETHES

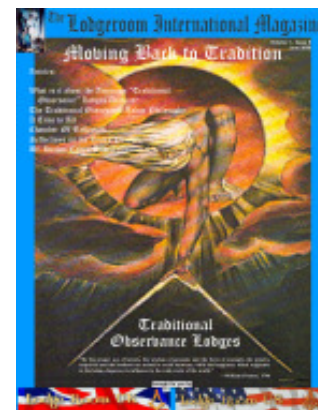
The International Masonic Research Society

The name of the Society is pronounced fill a [as in a-bate] lay thess with the accent on the third syllable - lay. It is derived from two Greek words, philos and alethes. It means lover of truth. The Philaethes Society was founded on October 1, 1928, by a group of Masonic Students. It was designed for Freemasons desirous of seeking and spreading Masonic light. In 1946 The Philaethes Magazine was established to publish articles by and for its members. And to this day publishes 6 times a year. The sole purpose of this Research Society is to act as a clearing house for Masonic knowledge. It exchanges ideas, researches problems confronting Freemasonry, and passes them along to the Masonic world.

Its membership consists of Members and 40 Fellows who are Master Masons in good standing in a Regular Masonic Lodge anywhere in the world. Today the Society has members within 185 Regular Grand Lodges. More information about the Society can be found at <http://freemasonry.org>

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Lodge

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The minutes had rolled along at a slower than normal pace, the lodge was saving money by discontinuing the use of the air conditioner, and I was suffering the effects of a long and tiring workday upon my psyche. An argument had erupted in the meeting when a Brother had the audacity to recommend spending a small stipend in donation toward a local public school. It was feared a Brother commented, that this enormous amount could be abused, misused, maybe even embezzled if we were not careful in how we distributed such funds. Knowing that we had claimed public education as one of our lodge's potential beneficiaries, I was disheartened to hear that even this was suspect in the eyes of those who desired to spend nothing on nothing. I was even more troubled at the inability to produce harmony in the lodge and wondered how improved I was for having spent this evening away from my family.

I moved down the stairs with a steady bead fixed upon the exit, only to be stopped by a friendly voice. I recognized the Brother as a Past Master of my lodge and a well known and widely respected member of the local Masonic community. He asked me how I was doing and how lodge was that night. He was in the building for another reason, a committee meeting or some appendant body function. I lamented a bit that I wondered how the current system improved men. I recalled my recent readings from a no longer existing Masonic forum called The Lodge Room (TLR). A few of the Brothers gathered there had expatiated upon the Traditional Observance concept and the few lodges that were attempting such a thing. I pontificated that such a change would not be possible in Colorado, that it had never been done that way, and it was most likely against the rules. This kindly Brother said, "Brother Cliff, never say

never." The conversation moved away from Traditional Observance Masonry and I moved towards the door with little afterthought given to the conversation.

Weeks later, having not returned to lodge in those weeks, I received a phone call. Again, it was the friendly voice of the Brother who had successfully stockaded the bottom of the stairwell that day. "Brother, tell me more about this T.O. concept." The conversation would end with him recommending that we try our hands at starting a Traditional Observance lodge. So it began.

A few of us decided to meet at a Brother's house and see if would or could agree on a course of action. We decided that we could convert a lodge as our first choice and form a lodge as our second.

We agreed that in order to do this properly and for it to succeed, we should inform the Grand Lodge and receive their blessing whether it was a requirement or not. I can not express to you how glad I am that we did this. We prepared a nice PowerPoint presentation, limited the number of attendees to ensure ease of communications, and educated ourselves so as to provide a good foundation for answering any questions with confidence. The ideas were received with measured enthusiasm.

We advised of our intentions to form a club and for the club, to one day, be a lodge. The first big monkey wrench came at this meeting. We were asked not to take over an existing lodge and to form a new lodge if we were going to do this. Why? The person making this request said that he would like it to succeed upon its own merits and thought that a new lodge would have less baggage. It was not what I wanted to hear because it was not going to be the quickest route from A to B. Additionally, forming a brand new lodge had not

been done in my state in 25 years, so it was something of a new thing for most. In retrospect, it was a sage request and very smart move.

We met with all the men who had expressed an interest and insured that those whom we knew were unfulfilled and looking for change were invited to our breakfast meetings for our planning stages, because at this point we were not even a club. At this vital phase, we decided on some things that really helped us move forward:

1. Membership to the club would be limited to encourage effective communication and positive progression. We also established guidelines for new members. A member would be proposed, if there were two objectors then the nomination died without further comment. Brothers proposing the man had to stand up and speak about him and inform the brethren as to the nature of the nomination. I will tell you that we decided that this was not going to be a guaranteed yes club. We debated passionately those nominations for members and agreed from the start that we would not allow an objecting or questioning Brother to be considered a point of contention, but instead laude them for the courage to do so.
2. We recognized the need to insure that those present were serious about moving forward. We decided the club would form and that it would require dues at the next meeting. We personally set our dues at \$300 for affiliation and \$25 a month or \$300 a year. This helped to insure that those who remained were committed to the idea and willing to fund it. It is important to do this early so that many of your decision makers are not men who are not actually going to see it through. If you need a minimum number of men to forum a lodge, as our state constitution requires, you will have a better understanding of your numbers. Stay true to your goals here and don't sway yourself into a membership drive. No need, the good men are out there and you will end up with them naturally gravitating towards your group as they are as desirous of change as you are.
3. We decided that education, philosophy, and the Initiatic experience were of paramount importance. We incorporated an educational presentation at the club meetings so that Brothers knew we meant business when we said we desired change.
4. We focused our charity on helping one another and helping the lodge. We decided that charity met helping other Masons and not giving money away to groups that had little interest in Masonry. We realized that



Continued on Next Page

if we helped a good man who was a Brother, the community was necessarily improved as a result.

5. We kept the Grand Lodge informed of our progress.
6. We had Brothers draw plus and minuses on pieces of paper and they had to speak pro or con about the education paper. We believe that the ability to disagree, but state so in a respectful manner, to use rhetoric to persuade those around you, is completely Masonic. Everyone's participation is required.
7. We decided that for us the initiation is a spiritual event of special importance. Only one candidate is initiated on the night in question.
8. The focus for us in all things is a quality of experience that removes distraction and provides a mental sublimity and focus so that the profundity of the Craft can permeate all things.

So we decided on our Lodge, a Traditional Observance Lodge, and we created it.

We knew that for a lodge to move forward we could not focus on the negative. We knew, and it was unspoken, that many of us had experiences in Masonry that brought us to that point. Nonetheless, anyone can gather together and complain. It takes good men doing hard work to get together and move forward. We never discuss those issues that brought us to the building site; we simply picked up our working tools and built anew. We continue in the Work to this day.

We met some resistance from those that felt that the lodge we were forming was an "elitist" lodge made up of those who were more about self aggrandizement than practicing Masonry. We met these statements with Masonry. We extended the hand of friendship and Brotherly love. It is important in starting your lodge, however, that you not continually share the business of this lodge. Number one, this is against the principles of Masonry. A lodge is entitled to be the keeper of its business. Number two, there are those who will seek to use all information in a negative manner. This is not right to do, it is not Masonic to do, but it will get done. Answer questions honestly that deserve an honest answer. Other than that, keep the business of the lodge within the faithful breast of its members.

We are kidding one another if we allow ourselves to believe that one particular type of lodge experience will save the current state of the Craft. Does this suggest that the Fraternity in its present condition does not need saving? Hardly. Does it contend that anyone with any certainty can adumbrate the future of this gentle science? No. That being said, we should recognize systems such



as the Traditional Observance Lodges, Esoterika Lodges, Krucible Lodge, Vitruvian Lodge, and others like them, are likely the only thing that might resuscitate and revitalize the Fraternity as a whole. The Masonic experience is as varied as the men who walk through the doors of our buildings and call themselves Brothers. This is as it should be. As the symbols are ours to interpret, so the experience is ours to create.

In my estimation, we are foolish for not assisting one another in achieving these goals, regardless of the title we hang outside of the building or upon a particular banner. If Esoterika meets the need of a particular group of men, wonderful, let s build a lodge. If the Traditional Observance model provides the need infusion of philosophy for another group, excellent, let s build it.

Once we, as Masons, can collectively recognize that the Craft has gone astray, that progression, change, and Masonic philosophy are needed as a major infusion back into the Fraternity, that new lodges are often the only way to get this done, and we organize loosely to assist one another in achieving this, we put egos and titles and system names aside we will have truly achieved the next step in Fraternal evolution.

Masonic memories seem to be longer than they should, what I mean is that we schism often and forgive little in certain circumstances. Masons desiring change should loosely organize, should promote one another with positive ideas for change and progression. We can not allow for a certain label to control the direction of change. If a particular system does not work for a particular

lodge, but that lodge is in need of change, then change and throw out what does not work, and go with what does.

The most common detractors from this effort claim that there is no need to start new blue lodges and we can simply change the existing lodges. Maybe, for some, this is the case. I would argue, however, that the present condition of the Craft is a direct result of their failure to change. Their current desire to elevate sentimentality and status quo to deific dictate has been the obstacle to change and the downfall of American Craft Masonry. There has been nothing stopping them from change, nothing that required the Craft to fall into a rut in the first place. We need change now, and the best way to do this without having to apologize for it, is the starting of a regular and well governed lodge. There is simply no substitute for a group of like minded men working together towards a common goal without having to convince and cajole a group of individuals who have no interest in change. The sad truth is that there are a certain group of men who would rather be Captains of a sinking ship than sailors on a successful voyage.

The process as a whole has grown me in many ways just has Masonry is supposed to do. I recommend the process and I recommend that we assist one another in doing so.

I will close with the following. I speak for no one group. I am a man and Mason. My voice is my own. I do not represent any organization except and insofar as I can speak for my personal experiences in Masonry. It is my hope that in some small way my experiences can assist another on their path.



Science

Continued from Page 5

Some people have seen in these revolutions of scientific thought as a clear sign of the 'spiritualization' of science. Fritjof Capra, in his 'Tao of Physics', draws picture of the relationship between modern science and eastern spirituality. He compares the idea of the world emerging from physical theories to Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist traditions. Nobel Prize for physics Abdus Salam did the same, outlining a parallel between the theories of particle physics and the Muslim religion. Likewise Nobel Prize for chemistry Ilya Prigogine (for example in 'La Nuova Alleanza' [The New Alliance]) sees a new humanism on the horizon, the possibility of reconciling science and man's fundamental values.

Finally, the revolution of information science and the simulations of reality are very important in 're-defining' the universe. The world wide web cancels distances, makes coeval realities that were so far separated by space-temporal abysses, disarranges and re-arranges any cultural product like a jigsaw

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puzzle and turns everything in consumable goods. In the future we will have virtual reality, with helmet and gloves to immerse the user. Currently the technology is imperfect and used only for games and archaeological or architectonic reconstructions.

Tomorrow we will have a virtual reality that provides a complete illusion of reality, with smells and tastes which will conclude a subtle process started in the Renaissance: the objectivation of our inner ghosts, our forms of thought and the elimination of frustrations and limitation that mark the bounds of the ego and form the character of individuals. Nothing will stop us from this use of the virtual space, time and matter that characterize the cyberspace, feeding our psyche on virtual and gratifying relations. Users will be able to commit virtual crimes to express rage and anger, giving life to all the unexpressed 'Selves' that sleep inside us.

Who will stop a lame person from having a program of virtual reality where he is an Olympic champion of the 100 meters? Who will stop us from planning romantic dinners with a lover that abandoned us, from having sexual intercourse with a star from the jet set or family gatherings with relatives who died years ago?

As it is already happening with the web, cyberspace will lead us to turn inward into our own homes. Bureaucrats will be able to carry out their duties or to deliver documents and customer do their shopping without leaving their houses. Doctors will be able to operate remotely across oceans from one continent to another, musicians to hold a virtual concert playing in different cities, complex technical operations will be carried out using a simulator as an interface, and planes operated from the ground.

Our 'ultimate reality', then, will become the interface we dialogue with. It will be a fictitious space-time where we will be able to project our wishes as well as objectivate and animate them, intervening both on the 'external' reality and on our dreams.

The fundamental intention behind the scientific thought remains the domination of nature and the transformation of man's desires into reality. The ascent of science as we know it is simultaneous with the ascent of merchant classes; it reflects the need to achieve safe procedures and models whose purpose is to force the universe to conform to man's needs and dreams, transforming them into action and reality.

The world around us is Mephistopheles' answer to the wishes expressed by Faust.

All has become goods. Space and time have lost their 'objective' nature and are going to become a white board where we can write what happens in

our day, shaping our emotional life. From the psychic point of view a process of 'reversal' of our inside in the outside is in progress. Modern technologies allow us to 'give life' to the several 'Selves' that make the person, objectivating the imagined elements.

As noted above, among the positive aspects of these technologies there is the possibility to 'act from the distance'; artistic creations will be conceived with strong interactive characteristics. In geography, history, archaeology and experimental sciences, it is already possible to experience, through models and simulations, visiting an Egyptian tomb or the effects of the force of Lorentz on an electric charge. Through this technology, we can imagine a three-dimensional 'cinema' taking place in the cyberspace and with a 'variable plot', depending to

do in the cyberspace) and the 'journeys in time', intended as the virtual experience of historical events of the past or true reconstructions, undistinguishable from the original, of lost places, cities and ages will be possible. Likewise it will be possible to live virtual 'events' where time is slowed down or accelerated to our liking; an instant between birth and death, like in the lives that Vishnu makes his initiates live, to show them the illusoriness of earthly incarnations. On the other hand, matter becomes an abstraction determined by the parameters that rule forms and covers of virtual reality.

Eroticism and pornography currently occupy a big space on the internet, and so it is not difficult to forecast the creation and use of interactive programs in the cyberspace that will allow us to seduce, as Indiana Jones look-alikes, the woman of our dreams, perhaps with the face of Kim Basinger, the body of Marylyn Monroe and the intelligence of Marie Curie.

The gloomy reality pictured in films such as 'Matrix', 'Johnny Mnemonic' or 'The Truman show' is already in progress, behind advertising slogans and the drive to consume, behind the future possibility of chat lines where the fictitious identities that we create will not only be nick or fancy names, but will have bodies and feelings.

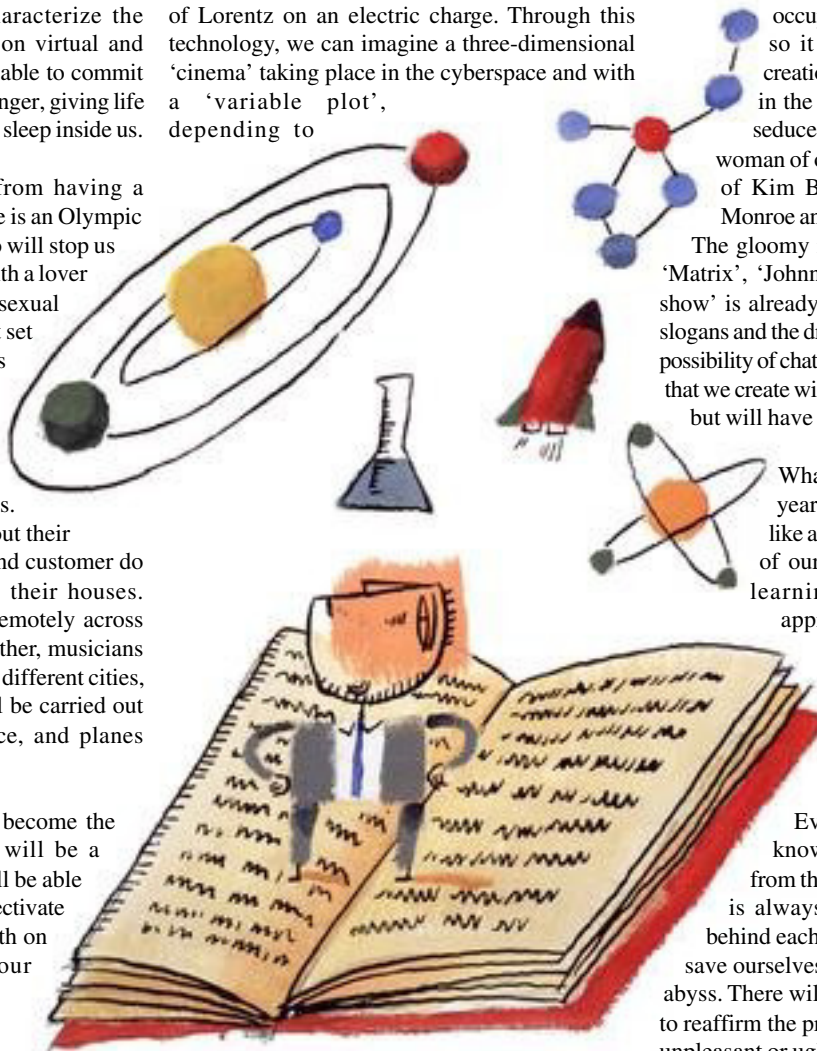
What has happened in six hundred years is that man is turning inside out like a glove, revealing the hidden debris of our psyche like a dustbin. We are learning, like any self-respecting apprentice wizard, to embody our forms of thought, to make them walk around the earth. Who will be able to stop them? Who will stop us from the delirium of almightiness?

Every good reader of fairy tales knows that when the djin, released from the bottle grants three wishes, there is always some terrible deceit or curse behind each one. Like Faust, we will have to save ourselves at the end, from the edge of the abyss. There will have to be someone who fights to reaffirm the principle of reality, no matter how unpleasant or ugly.

We shouldn't look at the creations of science candidly, like shadows projected on the walls of Plato's cave, able to lead man from the sensitive world to the world of archetypes. We shouldn't blindly trust the forms of thought produced in these centuries to 'explain' the world.

The creations of physics, from quarks to the string theory, are fascinating, and they strike our imagination. Some physicists wrote books together with great psycho-analysts (Jung and Pauli wrote about synchronicity)

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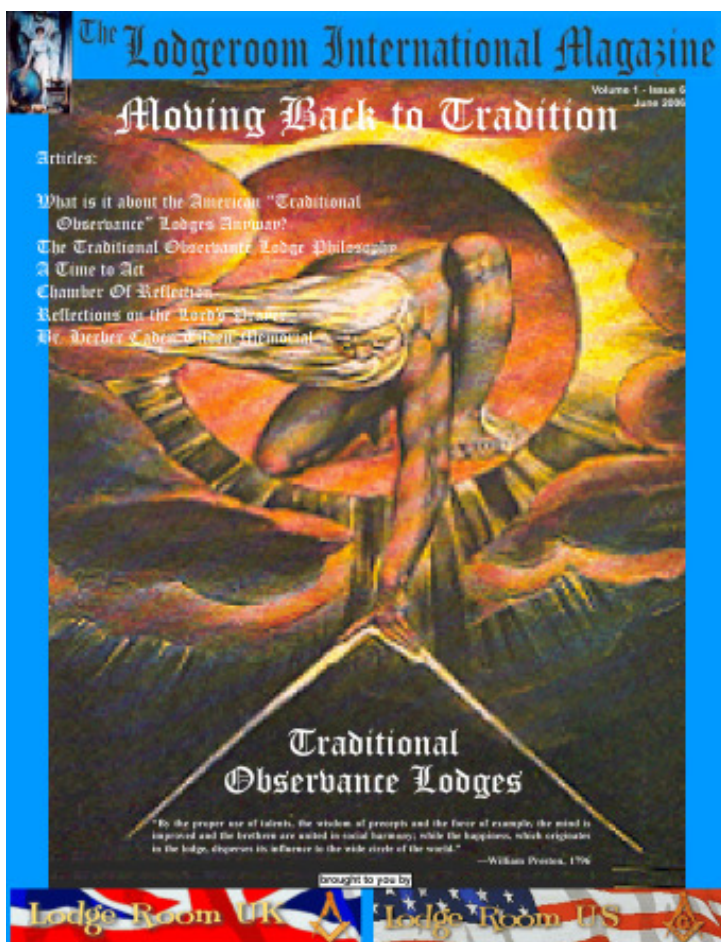
the interactions of the viewer with the protagonists of the show.

From an epistemological point of view it will become more and more difficult to distinguish between reality and the 'interface' we use to reach the virtual reality, between the interfaces that touch the external reality and those that end with the products of our fantasy. The interface is going to be a proper 'filter' between the subject and the world, a filter that redefines space, time, and matter.

Space is dilated or contracted to our liking through the possibility of action from a distance; time can be dilated or contracted artificially (very easy to

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or with Indian yogi (Bohm with Krisnamurti), but this doesn't mean that we should not wonder about the purpose of science and the purpose of Tradition.

They have two opposite purposes: in one case it is about knowing the universe in order to transform and adapt it to man's needs; in the other it means knowing the universe and man as part of the cosmos, in order to transform man.

Scientific theories must never become 'devices' or fetishes to adore and to use recklessly to interpret reality; they have their own domain of applicability. After all, in the 18th century scientists thought that to 'explain' a phenomenon it was sufficient to build a robot or a device that showed its internal cause-effect relations in terms of mechanical interactions. Today this model is in the middle of a crisis. Therefore we can't trust science to 'justify' traditional teachings.

We should, instead, reconsider the way Tradition deals with the technè it uses, viz. Traditional magic and rites. Every tradition requires particular processes to transform man and his reality (interior or exterior, it doesn't matter). To study this subject means to understand the relationship between science and Tradition.

In cultures where the idea of sacredness is active, the material conditions of man are interpreted in light of what he perceives as 'cosmic laws'. The fundamental aspects of existence follow the patterns of sacred rites and myths that surround them.

Both rites and myths serve the purpose of connecting every new action to a primordial archetype, which must give it sense and reality by annulling and re-founding time (cf. For example 'Sacro e Profano' [Sacred and Profane] and 'Il mito dell'eterno ritorno' [the myth of the eternal return] ' by Mircea Eliade). In this way we want to demonstrate that what man is going to do in the changeable world he lives in has already happened in the world of gods, or mythical progenitors, or archetypes, at the beginning of times. It also means that since the present situation re-performs the primordial action, it has a sense and it magically inherits the 'power to do'.

Every action is indeed conceivable as a way to draw order from chaos, thanks to its similarities with celestial archetypes. Therefore there are 'sacred' places and periods of time whose destiny is to establish a contact between human events and divinity.

In an archaic civilization rites were carried out and myths re-evoked as they cyclically re-actualized main aspects of social life. Members of that society 'participated' in an archetype, to till the soil, fight a war, reach puberty, join in marriage, generate children, catch prey during a hunt, and become ill and die.

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In participating in these rites, they mimed their emersion, for the first time, from the undifferentiated chaos of shapelessness created by a God or a mythical progenitor. This mechanism of re-actualization works like a proper purifying bath, an immersion in the waters of Nothing that allows the forms of actions to receive the sense, the life and reality from a primordial Logos uncorrupted and incorruptible by time.

Whoever is into such a vision of the world has an idea of his own 'being', an image of himself, a sense of self much less rigid and limited than modern man. According to this view, all that is perceivable and exists in man is founded on a homologue principle outside him and vice versa; conscience is not given a priori, but it consists of a precarious balance between an internal and an external pole, which define and identify each other. Furthermore, there is always the possibility that the conscience follows the invisible thread that joins our inside to our outside and that we can lose ourselves, 'waking up' dismembered in what

surrounds us.

We must put initiatory rites and the various magic techniques and practices in the perspective of this perception of relationships among people. From this point of view, the human condition is characterized by imbalance among various polarities and dualisms that characterize each individual, by a blindness that prevents the twin self from reflecting in his polar opposite, the world.

Knowledge and wisdom are not synonyms of gathering notions and general laws to control nature and subject it to our desires. The man who knows can transform himself to the point of making laws that rule his inner microcosm identical to those that rule the macrocosm. The wise man has recognized those laws and has learned how to apply them to himself. The initiatory rite, which is the transmission of a spiritual influence, has the sense and the purpose of ratifying a change of status, a step in the individual conscience on the path of the harmonization of himself with the cosmos, in

the individuation of the whole in a part.

This journey usually requires two stages. The first consists of acknowledging one's 'double', seeing in proportion one's own individual status, recognizing one's 'outside twin', perceiving that the characteristics of the single, his place in time and space and the personal epics don't have their own existence. They are nothing. This stage can only end with the symbolic death of the individual, the destruction of all his identifications with the mask-person, from whose ashes a new man will be born.

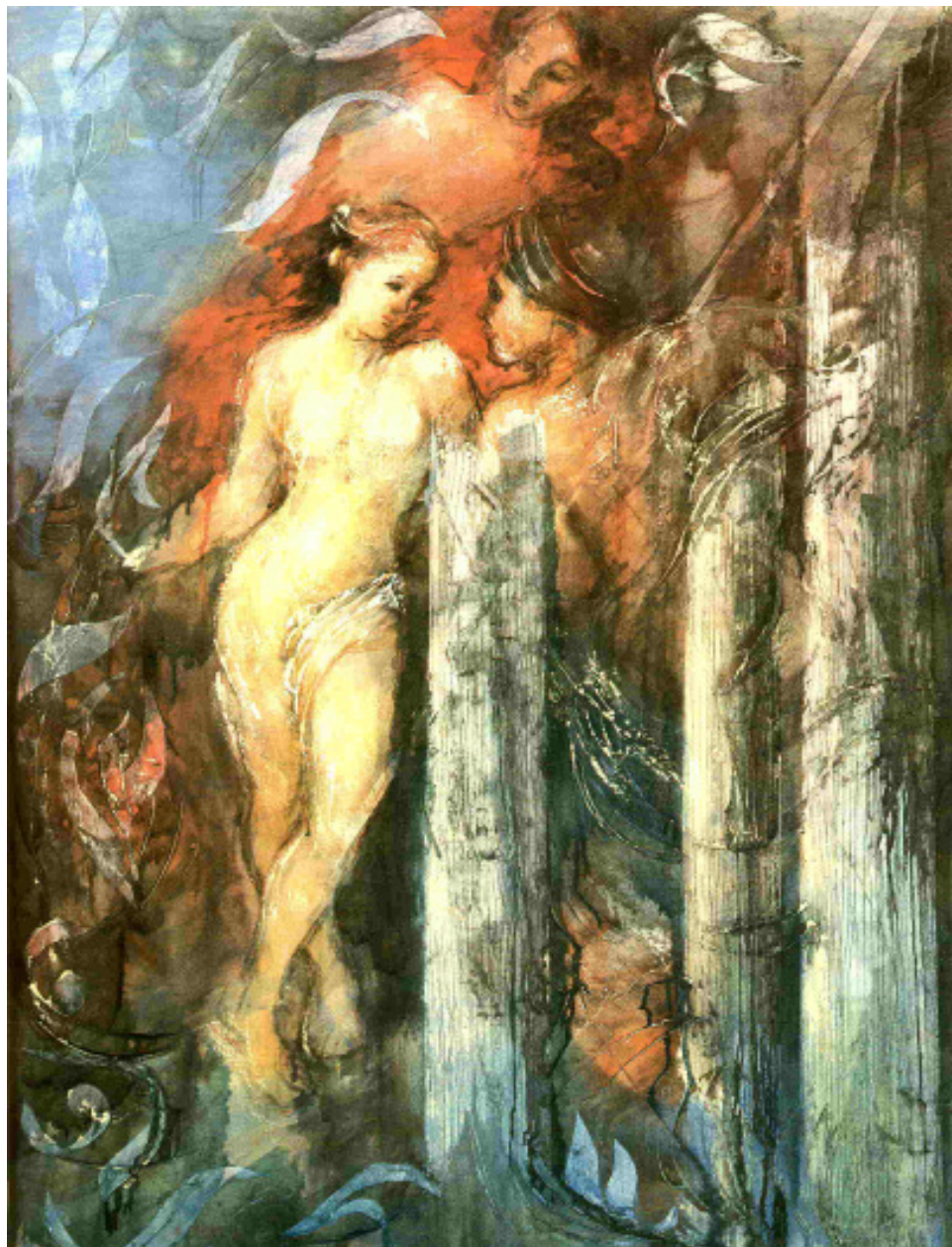
This stage is followed by another, a vertical ascent towards subtle realities. The overcoming of dualisms is internal as well as external: man gets what he wants and he wants what he gets. The spiritualization of the body and the materialization of the spirit pursued by initiations will show the conscience truths that were before unattainable and can now be lived and embodied.

Every initiatory language declares primordial sacred origins, which are placed outside the 'becoming' and described through its specific myths. According to this view, symbols receive their sense (and their power to unify the conscience) thanks to this link with transcendence; the initiatory organization itself is considered to reflect the cosmic order, which is 'transferred' into its hierarchic system (this lays itself open to easy degenerations, as unfortunately we can see).

The man who occupies a certain place in the hierarchic system, independently from his individual value, will be able to carry out particular tasks on behalf of the initiatory organization. In such occasions he will exist only as a 'transmitter', representative of tradition (from an exoteric point of view this is similar to the case of the excommunicated priest whose masses have a sacramental value).

This view of things belongs to most of the past and present initiatory organizations (Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry, Compagnonage, Martinism) and to many mystery cults of the past (Eleusinian mysteries, of Dionysus, Mithras, Attis and Cybeles, Zoroastrianism, etc.). It is not possible to mix the rites of different traditions.

Only the Form that complies with the rules of one and only tradition can receive in itself the spiritual energy and transmit it. The aspirant initiate either has or hasn't the qualities necessary to approach the 'Mysteries'. If he doesn't, he won't be able to aspire to the transmutation of himself in 'Universal Man', no matter how many efforts his intellect makes (on this subject, cfr. Guenon: 'Aperçus sur l'initiation' [Perspectives on Initiation]). On the contrary, if he is 'predestined', the Providence itself will send him a sign that he will recognize, as a result of his interior and exterior work. Thanks to a series of apparent coincidences he will get in touch with the initiatory organization.



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According to these organizations, the man who carries out his journey anarchically, viz. the mystic, can't go beyond a modest degree of self-awareness, of harmonization of the contraries, except for extremely rare cases of initiates descended to bring the Word (this is the case of Buddha, Christ, Mohammed or Laozi). Myths, rites and symbols can't be 'modified' because of their own essence; the result would be a charlatanic decay of the initiatory organization. The whole configuration of myths and rites is indeed what keeps the 'spiritual influence' in them.

There are 'esoteric' forms of the rites which only the aspirant or the initiate can access. Being initiated doesn't mean only to learn the use or meanings of symbols and rites of a certain Tradition, for example by reading them on a book. Initiation consists of the transmission of a 'spiritual influence'; in order for this to happen it is necessary that place, time, way and vehicles used for this influence to be spread are 'charismatic', viz. they keep their aura intact. If we take rites and symbols out of their synchronic context we pervert their sense.

The purpose of rites is to create a current of communication between human and non human. In an initiation the rite is seen like a whole of 'technical' means to get in touch with sacredness. The initiate experiences a purifying bath, source of life and renewal. As it happens in the alchemic process, he must go through the lowest in order to reach the highest, he must recover and integrate the archaic infantile animal in order to reach the mystic condition of 'homo maximus'.

Some initiatory rites are carried out only once in the lifetime of an individual; their influence is definitive and it can't be revoked, no matter how the man who completed them changes later on (christening and priesthood are an exoteric equivalent in Christianity). The spiritual influence lasts even after the initiate has materially left the places and the ministers of cult to which he belonged.

There is a parallelism between the ways symbols and rites work. Rites are a space-temporal and dynamic succession of symbols and symbolic actions. From this point of view, the rite is nothing more than an organized series of symbols whose fabric gives power to the rite. The symbols further synchronize it with an archetypical configuration from which the candidate magically inherits or receives its charisma.

On the other hand, the myth consists of a whole of symbols (passed on through oral and written tradition, painting, sculpture, etc.) which can have different degrees of influence on the aspirant, depending on how they are arranged and interpreted. In other words, in the myth there is a rite in progress; in fact many rites in progress (since the same myth can be penetrated with different levels of depth at different times).

The rite is a means, an instrument to get in touch with sacredness, although the officiant doesn't

understand its true sense. On the contrary the Myth, which comes from the root 'mu' and from Latin 'mutos', dumb, is as such only if the person using it has revealed its deep meaning, when he possesses the inner qualifications to interpret the symbols that make it, orienting in the maze of images and distinguishing the outline that leads to the goal from the closed paths. The essential element of the myth is what it keeps secret so the hidden analogy that, when revealed, makes the myth active and gives it the evoking power that the rite already owns intrinsically. We could say that the myth acts from the inside while the rite acts from the outside.

In the representation that many traditions give of sky and earth, the existence of several 'planes or levels of reality' is stated; they are considered the manifold ways used by the One to manifest itself. The level of reality that our senses and rationality can perceive is considered the lowest, linked to the world of matter. Next to such level, it is said, there are many others called 'subtle' which are perceivable after man, even through symbols, rites and myths, have re-integrated in the 'primordial status' of harmony with the cosmos.

These subtle levels, far from being better or more desirable than ordinary reality we access through senses and rationality, are indeed the seat of forces and energies of any kind. The man who hasn't achieved a condition of inner harmony, of victory on egoistic and self-affirmative drives, of deep contact with his Self, can still equally search for and obtain contacts with the 'subtle forces', but he exposes himself and others to serious danger. Indeed, the man in this condition doesn't normally use the forces he doesn't know, but he is used by them and he is passively exposed to influences of all sorts.

There is also the case of 'counter-initiation', a path that leads to a total decentralization of the being, practiced by those who promote the development of Self, rather than its dissolution. Those who look for a domination of the subtle forces aimed at the will for power and not their harmonization with the cosmos but the domination and transformation of the cosmos in order to adapt it to an immobile and hypertrophic Ego undergo these rites. This pursues a way opposite to the initiatory one, a progressive detachment from the Center, from the condition of Universal Man, which is a perverted condition obtained by strengthening the bonds to the lowest levels of the being.

Elemire Zolla wrote in 'Uscite dal mondo' (Exits from the world): 'In evil initiations the Self must face sacrifices like in all the others; the difference here is that they don't aim at its total extinction, on the contrary they isolate a nucleus of the self made of pure vindictiveness towards the cosmos, of vampire-like longing for other people's life, of furious and naked will. The tremendous sacrifice is made to this nucleus, and the mutilation of any other part of man is dedicated to it.' The self becomes therefore a fetish elevated above the same

personal and circumstantial destiny.

Let's go back to the point of view of the initiate. For him symbols and rites are linked to a project of self-transformation. This conscious use of the 'subtle forces' requires an organized relationship with Tradition. Here, magic is seen as a 'traditional science' that subtends the execution of rites and the ability to re-awake the power of transmission of symbols and myths. Furthermore, the attitude of the initiate towards symbols is to consider them reality, the being, while the changing images coming from the world are only reflections of the unchangeable and a-temporal reality.

While counter-initiation and profane science use symbols to control the world's images considered as reality, the initiate does the opposite: through traditional magic he tries and transcends images and stages to reach the true reality of symbols, the archetypes whose force he wants to draw. This point of view belongs to religious and traditional teachings worldwide and it is paradoxically identified by westerners as 'Plato's philosophy'.

We must imagine a traditional science that studies subtle forces with intentions opposed to those used by the 'profane' physical science to study material forces. In this context, 'psychic powers' and the ability to produce 'miraculous phenomena' (healings, clairvoyance, telepathy, telekinesis, etc.), to dominate and control others and to turn perceptions into procedures that transcend the senses, don't help the spiritual journey of a man but on the contrary they hinder it.

The man who uses magic and the man who possesses 'paranormal faculties' work in the same domain. The former appeals to a 'technè', the latter to his own natural gifts. From the point of view of the initiate this doesn't help either of them to get closer to a spiritual evolution, but on the contrary it creates the illusion of being well on a way that they haven't even started yet.

'Powers' are indeed obstacles along the spiritual journey, bonds that tie to the material plane and to the dimension of individuality. The proof requested to progress along the path of initiation is the mere refusal of one's own 'powers', to show that one prefers the research of knowledge rather than 'powers'. On this subject the 'Yoga sutra' by Patanjali, which deals precisely with the development of powers by the yogi, prescribes the renunciation to such powers as an indispensable condition for his spiritual evolution.

Let's see the main aspects common to magical languages as they were determined, rightly or wrongly, by Frazer in the 'Golden Bough' and by Hubert and Mauss in 'Outline of a general theory of magic'.

First of all it is necessary to distinguish between magic connected to 'rites of transmission' and to 'rites of generation'.

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1 – Rites of Transmission

These rites are aimed at forcing the transfer of occult powers and properties from an object to another. The type of magic that uses such rites is called ‘sympathetic magic’. The rites of sympathetic magic can be divided into rites of contagion and imitative and homeopathic rites.

The Rite of Contagion originates from the abstract principle that what happens to the part and to the whole is connected by a ‘symbolic’ correspondence’ and that by symbolically working on the part there are real effects on the whole. The word ‘part’ must be intended in the widest possible sense; two objects which have been in contact keep acting on each other even after the contact stops.

For example: the sorcerers of the Marquesas Islands take hair, saliva or some other element from a man they wish dead and bury them in a fabric bag, accompanying this act with complex rites. The victim of the spell dies slowly and death can be avoided only by digging up the content of the bag – the ‘defixiones’ of ancient Romans were very similar. The Apaches throw water on the rocks to obtain rain and the Ottawa Indians say that ‘each flame contains fire, each bone of a dead contains death’.

Imitative rites originate from the ‘similia similibus’ principle, which means that there is attraction between ‘similar’ things. This works both as principle of attraction, viz. one thing draws all that is similar to it, and as principle of imitation, viz. a series of symbolic operations on an object have similar effects on another object with the same configuration. In the so-called spells the pain and torture inflicted to a doll of wax or fabric or to a mandrake are transferred on the enemies of the sorcerer (which often uses rites of imitation and contagion as well, by attaching hair or nails of the victim on the doll).

On the other hand imitation can also work on the opposite, depending on how analogies are perceived. This leads to a fundamental matter: each object is comparable to an infinite number of other objects by analogy. The magical rite therefore ‘favors’ some analogies among the possible ones and the same rites can have opposite effects in different cultures (for example to throw water on the ground means to beseech rain in a culture and dryness in another). In actual fact there isn’t an

‘objective similarity’ between things. The similarity is in the eyes of the man who perceives it, in the language and tradition of a certain culture.

To summarize, we have the following table:

Homeopathic	magic	<-----
SYMPATHETIC	MAGIC	----->
contagion magic		

2 – Rites of Generation

The main purpose of these rites is not to ‘transfer properties from an object on another’, but to suddenly create properties from nothing. Such rites are mainly verbal and their success is linked to the pronunciation of words or ritual song while carrying out the due operations. If rites of generation are understood in depth, they can be considered as a part of the previous case. What is really created in rites of generation is a whole of symbols, sounds, gestures or letters on which to operate.

These sensitive data play the same role as the ‘similar’ object in rites of transmission, which was the target of magic operations. We find the same ‘similia similibus’ principle, but on a more abstract level. While in rites of transmission the sorcerer ties a thread (analogy) between two opposite poles, which he connects invisibly, in the rites of generation a pole is the symbolic representation of what we want to obtain, an organized whole of words, gestures or sounds and the other is the object of representation that is ‘picked’ in the empyrean of ideas and forced to manifest itself in reality.

Some elements are necessary in order for science to deal with magical rites; one is the use of some language, representation or analogy and another the conviction that images, languages and analogies can reverse their energetic relationship with reality, and rather than form from reality through abstraction, reality forms from images and words.

Ethnology, history of religions and cultural anthropology, want to deal with so-called magical phenomena and all that is related with the sphere of sacredness. While doing that, they struggle in an irremediable contradiction created by the attempt to mediate between modern science and the view of the world and criteria of truth belonging to archaic culture.

In 1944 Ernesto De Martino published ‘Il mondo

magico’ (The magic world). Talking about the embarrassment and the difficulties of the researcher when he aims at verifying the reality of magical and paranormal phenomena, he wrote:

‘ In our exploration of the magic world we must start by verifying the alleged ‘obvious’ unreality of magic powers, that is we need to determine if these powers are real and in what extent. But a new difficulty arises, complicating to the extreme what seems at the end of the day only a modest matter of fact, a simple problem of assessment. When we face the problem of magic powers we are tempted to assume that we know what reality means, as if it was a concept owned by the mind, free from aporia; we take for granted that the researcher must or must not ‘apply’ this concept as a predicate to the subject of the judgment to express. After having started this research or carried it on for a short period of time, though, we realize that the problem of magic powers doesn’t only concern the quality of such powers, but also our concept of reality and the investigation involves the judging category (concept of reality) as well as the subject of the judgment (magic powers)’.

Further on, trying an acrobatic solution to the problem, he says:

‘ ...We can also translate this event in our cultural language and say, for example, that spirits are second existences or projections and personifications of our dearest; but in the historical world that belongs to the spirits, they are real as they are pictured and experienced by ‘belief’; only a polemic misunderstanding can lower them to ‘arbitrary imagination’. To the question: ‘do spirits exist?’ the answer is: ‘If by reality we mean the established and guaranteed data of our cultural world, spirits don’t exist. But if we recognize a form of reality which, during the magic existential drama historically determined, emerges as redemption of a risky presence in a risky world, we must welcome the reality of spirits within magic civilization. In this sense spirits don’t exist, but they did exist and they can come back whenever we relinquish the character of our civilization and re-descend on the archaic plane of the magic experience’. (E. De Martino)

As an amused Eliade points out in a short essay on the ‘Magic world’ by De Martino, if this reasoning is pushed to the extreme, it leads to the schizophrenic conclusion that there are two realities and two worlds that seems to deny each other. One is Galileo’s, Newton’s and Descartes’ world, where the laws of physics and other sciences are the only form of true and possible knowledge of phenomena, the other is the world of primitive shamans, where magic phenomena actually happen, spells have the desired effects, it is possible to fly, to communicate with the afterlife, to talk with animals, to walk on fire, to divide oneself in two, to see past and future reflected in a mirror.

Another possible view of the problem is proposed



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by Erich Neumann who, in 'Storia delle origini della coscienza' (The history and origins of consciousness), talking about the rites connected with hunting in primitive peoples, says:

'Although we can scientifically establish that an objective influence of the rite on the prey is unlikely, this doesn't mean that the magic rite is illusory, childish or simply a thought based on desire. Indeed the magic effect of the rite is real and not illusion. It also affects the success of the hunt, as man believes; only that it acts on the subject rather than the object. The magic rite, like any other magic or higher intention, included religion, acts on the subject that practice the religious or magic rite, increasing his ability for action. In this sense the result of the action, hunt, war, etc, certainly feels the effects of the magic ritual.

The fact that magic work in the reality of the soul rather than the reality of the world is a discovery of modern psychology; at the beginning the reality of the soul was projected on an external reality. Still today, for example, the prayers for victory are not intended as an endo-psychic modification but as a way to ask for God's intervention. Likewise the magic used in hunting is considered as an influence on the prey rather than the hunter. In both cases our rational and illuminist attitude, proud of having scientifically demonstrated that the object can't be influenced, misunderstands magic and prayers as pure illusion. This is a mistake because the effect, which is the change in the subject, is objective and real.' (E. Neumann).

The main worry of scientists seems to be the setting up of techniques that guarantee the reproducibility and forgeability of the phenomena they deal with. From the point of view of a scientist the phenomena related to the sphere of sacredness or 'paranormal' can be taken into account if they are reproducible or forgeable, while the main characteristic of these phenomena is to be strictly connected to the place and time where they occur and to their symbolic value, to the fact that they address a particular person at a particular time. The main aspect seems to be the 'aura' of the phenomenon, its immediacy, its uniqueness, its connection to a whole of states of things with the function to 'indicate' archetypal and symbolical aspects, therefore precisely its non-reproducibility.

Finally we must remember the risks taken by those who deal with phenomena linked to parapsychology or to the sphere of sacredness. In just over a century and half the inquisition managed to cancel the image of Diana – Perchta from the rites for fertility, remains of traditional cultures now forgotten; they survived in European popular cultures and were transformed into witchlike Sabbaths and adoration of the devil. This doesn't mean that they became as such only in people's perception, but also for those who took part in them – compare Carlo Ginsburg's studies on the matter: 'I Benandanti' (The Good Walkers) and 'Storia notturna' (Nighttime story) .

Witches and wizards ended up by conforming and identifying with the domineering models in the collective consciousness. They were plagiarized by the ruling catholic culture and eventually burnt, while paradoxically sharing the same view of the world as their executioners, of which they represented the 'shady side'.

A mythical imagery, which had resisted for over a thousand years in the European folk wisdom after the end of paganism, was extinct in less than two centuries.

It is a general law: what collective consciousness considers to be true gains the 'power to do', vice versa for what is considered false. Reality is (also) a collective dream. 'Witches' were devoted to practices whose sense was lost, expression of marginal and dying cultures. Because of their 'diversity', they were particularly exposed to the risk of incarnating the darkest sides of the Judaic-Christian imagery (needless to say that these characteristics have hugely increased in pseudo-initiatory modern organizations that follow witchcraft, such as Wicca and similar).

When subaltern cultures, especially those that follow symbols and deities of extinct civilizations, as opposed to the domineering culture, they inevitably end up by embodying the Shadow. When through the centuries an archetype disappears in the darkness of consciousness (like it happened to the feminine energies connected to the Great Mother and the masculine Dionysian energies) it will acquire evil and negative characteristics, even for those who still enjoy their miraculous aspects.

What happened in the first 1,400 years after Christ 'on a small scale' to Artemis, Dionysus, Pan, Hecate, Demeter and Persephone, Cybele, Mithra, Osiris, has happened on a 'bigger scale' in the last 500 years thanks to science. The whole relationship of man with the 'subtle' world and sacredness (Gods, Nymphs, gnomes, Satyrs, goblins, ghosts, angels, demons, spirits, phenomena linked to the manifestation of sacredness, paranormal abilities, magic, canonic rites of great religions, initiations to traditional organizations) have gradually changed.

Science denies the reality of the above mentioned phenomena for the simple reason that it can't deal with them. They are not measurable, reproducible or forgeable.

On this matter the activities of the C.I.C.A.P. (Italian Committee for the Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal) , have some amusing ideas: they want to falsify phenomena that, because of their nature, can't be included in the domain of science. ' If all the phenomena that concerns our relation with the Spirit and the invisible are recorded as 'altered states of conscience', then there isn't any difference between a 'trip' with Peyote and Moses' Burning Bush, between the mystic vision of Saint Teresa of Avila and the

visions inspired by L.S.D., between the witchlike experiences of shamans that turn into animals or visit the afterlife and the hallucinations of a schizophrenic.'

To have an idea of how science approaches this problems you can consult 'Orizzonti scientifici della parapsicologia' (Scientific horizons of parapsychology) (Boringhieri) or the discussions between Popper and Adorno about social sciences: it is uncertain if psychology and sociology as well can ever aspire to the title of sciences. The common man thinks that 'explaining' something (a physical, psychic or other phenomenon), in the sense of understanding its ultimate causes, means 'reducing' the phenomenon to a chain of sub-phenomena presentable as a model that can refer to one of those accepted by the scientific community.

The results are statements such as: 'they've discovered that neuroses, happiness or falling in love, suffering or schizophrenia depend on a particular enzyme' or: 'one or the other chemical substance is released' or: 'they are in actual fact electromagnetic phenomena'.

This arbitrary notion of cause hides the translation that the various classes make of phenomena, in languages created to intervene on them and subject them to the will of human power, favoring mechanical aspects, reproducible and controllable. The latter end up being the 'true reality' in the collective consciousness, while the sphere of sacredness and 'subtleness' is dealt with in the way we saw before, the destiny of the pagan gods that embodied archetypes removed from the common perception.

The forms of cult and veneration of sacredness, the surviving forms of 'magic thought' (the Christian esthetics of sacredness itself) have become barbaric and vulgar as they are subjected to science (the Shroud of Turin, the Blood of Saint Januarius, the exact location of Mt. Ararat, statistics on astrology, the Church scientology, Dianetics, the comparison between Taoism and atomic physics, etc.).

The 'operators of sacredness' care to demonstrate to an imaginary illuminist interlocutor (the alter ego interiorized by the domineering culture) that the 'subtle worlds' really exist. They try to produce, like retarded pupils in front of a strict teacher, proofs and phenomena that can eventually and definitely 'persuade' positivists, inducing them not to consider mad or visionary the man who believes in the unseen.

A similar attitude was taken by the poor Canterville Ghost in Oscar Wilde's homonymous novella, when he faced the skeptical American bourgeois who went to live in his ancient castle and mocked him for his claims to be a ghost. For the younger generation, we can compare it to the witch Hazel with Goofy, who refuses to believe in the

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supernatural powers of the old sorcerer.

There is an analogy between two facts. The first is that Dionysus and Diana became the devil and the witches his followers. The second regards those who believe in sacredness and invisible things, who become unreliable visionaries (destined to the criticism of people like Piero Angela), deceivers of the masses, manipulators of consciences, swindlers and charlatans who use cheap tricks to cheat their victims, superstitious and ignorant simpletons, followers of the worst sub-cultural products, unscrupulous profiteers who exploit people's weaknesses for their own interest.

These are indeed the reasons why, according to the 'scientific' collective conscience, a person should not believe in sacredness or perceive 'subtle' realities. Exactly like it happened to the participants of the Sabbaths during the Inquisition, the modern followers of magic or sacredness often assume in actual fact such negative characteristics, taking on themselves the shadows of the collective conscience.

There is something that perhaps not many people realize. When we produce an 'irrefutable demonstration' of the reliability of a subtle or paranormal phenomenon, it doesn't let us access the subtle world; indeed, it sends us straight into the prosaic world of materialization and heaviness of the being, viz. in the world of our positivist interlocutors; the latter, now convinced, are therefore more victorious than when they were skeptical.

This was one of the senses of silence and discretion of ancient people about Mysteries: the quality of the motivation to divulge them.

Why all these words? Only to say: before justifying Tradition with science, think twice and look around!

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Book

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as General Field Marshall Ludendorff. He was second in command of Germany (both the army and the country) during the second half of the First World War. Later he was relieved of duty and became nationalistic in politics and at a time supported Hitler. He participated in the failed Munich Putsch and was elected to the Reichstag for a quasi Nazi party in 1924 where he sat until 1928 when he retired after he had fallout with the Nazis.

When he retired he with his wife founded the "Bund für Gotteserkenntnis" or Society for the knowledge of God, a small esoteric society

where he furthered his theories that the world's problems were the results of Christians, Jews and Freemasons.

Anti-masonry has been a way for many who have tried to succeed in politics and is a well known and used method. But in this case anti-masonry became a selling point for an over the hill General and a politician. Strange.



Catechisms

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that can occur in lodge is "Catechism" – as simple . Brothers love listening to them to see how well these Q&A interactions are performed. Catechisms are entertaining, informative and open us to responding to the questions and request put forth – even when we are just listening. I guess that's because they activate our "Seeker" mode and engage us. Catechisms do indeed serve many purposes, any one of which would serve my purpose to keep the attention of the Brothers present. It was decided!

I thought too that a catechism on Pillars might well help me to connect the dots too – as much as it would for any one who might hear it. Therefore, I started asking questions about the Orders of Architecture and a wonder-filled Catechism started to unfold that was quite unexpected. By taking this direction, I began to see how truly significant the Orders of Architecture was in Masonic development and in the work that a Mason does in life. I was taken back by how much information could be conveyed in such a simple question and answer session.

Drawing on this insight, I put together a Catechism that would assist those Brothers interested in seeing the significance as I did. By shining a light upon the topic, as I did for myself, a Catechism was created that would help others connect the dots as it did for me. I did so and performing a Catechism with a like inclined Brother with much success.

Putting this Catechism together was a revelation for me and from what I am told, other Brothers who have heard it too. After going through it several times, it was clearly apparent that there is so much more to ritual than immediately meets the eyes and ears. Sure, we've heard all this before but it was doing the Catechism that drove this point home. For my own sake, I have come to understand once again how important it is to understand and live what is being communicated and revealed to us.

Here now for your perusal, enjoyment and possible further enlightenment is a Catechism I provide during a Masonic Education spots in Lodges around my area.

One final note of two: The greatest challenge many Masons have is to make sure one honors their Obligation and the laws of their Jurisdiction. Keeping this in mind, I made sure that this specific

Catechism came from historical documents and not from current day ritual. It may not match your Jurisdiction's ritual exactly but the Light it has to offer is as significant today as it was then.

For those interested in where this Catechism was created from, the sources are "Duncan's Ritual and Monitor of Freemasonry" (1866 Edition) and "Webb's Masonic Monitor" (1865 Edition). I've inserted page numbers for those interested in looking things up.

May this Catechism shine a bright Light on your current day ritual!

Enjoy!

Brother Dr. John S. Nagy
<http://www.coach.net>

PS – Everything herein can be found within Blue Lodge Masonry.

The Significance of the Orders of Architecture Catechism

I: Are you a Master Mason?

R: Indeed I am.

I: Are you well versed in building?

R: I am in Word indeed.

I: What be your building basis?

R: Architecture.

I: What Orders be there of such?

R: They number five.

I: Giveth them me.

R: Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite.¹

I: Which Greek in origin be?

R: The Middle Three.²

I: What remain?

R: Those of Roman origin.³

I: Who be the first Pillar?

R: The first pillar or the Tuscan Order,⁴ be at first Candidate then Entered Apprentice, whom enters into Masonry without the full Light that Masonry offers.

I: Why be this so?

R: The Entered Apprentice has yet to develop beyond his Tuscan Order and be thus positioned to support the lodge and himself accordingly.

I: Who else be this Order?

R: The general member whom supports the Lodge as only this Order can.

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- I:** What other Orders be found in Lodge?
R: The Doric, Ionic and Corinthian Orders.⁵
- I:** Tell me how so positioned?
R: In the East, West and South.⁶
- I:** Why so?
R: To support the Lodge.⁷
- I:** What offices symbolize these Center Orders Three?
R: The Worshipful Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden.⁸
- I:** Explain me the First Officer so Ordered.
R: The Doric Worshipful Master be so positioned as to open and govern the Lodge by Wisdom.⁹
- I:** Explain me the Second Officer so Ordered.
R: The Ionic Senior Warden be so positioned to give Strength to the Worshipful Master and so be the resource to which the Worshipful Master and the craft of the Lodge as a whole draws upon to assure just support and due payment.¹⁰
- I:** Explain me the Third Officer so Ordered.
R: By his position the Corinthian Junior Warden be best able to observe the time and call the craft from labor and refreshment in accord with what Wisdom dictates and hence be the Beauty and Glory of the day.¹¹
- I:** What other Pillars doeth these three Orders and Offices so represent?
R: The Three Great Pillars of Masonry?¹²
- I:** What represent they?
R: Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.¹³
- I:** Explain me them.
R: Wisdom to Contrive; Strength to Support; and Beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.¹⁴
- I:** What be Wisdom?
R: Wisdom is *Informed Choice* that be of Supreme Benefit.¹⁵
- I:** What be Strength?
R: Strength is *Useful Resource* provided by a Supreme Benefactor.¹⁶
- I:** What be Beauty?
R: Beauty is *Craftsmanship Realized and the result of Applied Craftsmanship*. Craftsmanship be the rendering of Supremely Beneficial results which function physically and spiritually.¹⁷
- I:** Whom do the Three Great Pillars represent?
R: King Solomon, Hiram, king of Tyre and Hiram Abif.¹⁸
- I:** Who be King Solomon?
R: The Doric who Contrives the Great Temple.
- I:** What doeth King Solomon inculcate in a True Master Mason?
R: King Solomon's symbolic presence continually reminds a True Master Mason that his temple must be opened and governed with Wisdom.
- I:** Who be Hiram, king of Tyre?
R: The Ionic who Strengthens the Ionic by making possible the resources for the Great Temple.
- I:** What doeth Hiram, king of Tyre inculcate in a True Master Mason?
R: Hiram, king of Tyre's symbolic presence continually reminds a True Master Mason's that his efforts must be provided with resource for his endeavors to be properly supported through to fruition.
- I:** Who be Hiram Abif?
R: The Corinthian whose skill and cunning adorns the Great Temple.
- I:** What doeth Hiram Abif inculcate in a True Master Mason?
R: HA's symbolic presence continually reminds a True Master Mason that his craft must always be a creation of Beauty.
- I:** What pillar be left?
R: The Pillar of the Composite Order.¹⁹
- I:** What Lodge member doeth this Order represent?
R: A True Master Mason who hath so been positioned as to be transformed from the simplest of Orders to that most illustrious Order which encompasses all the qualities found in the center Three.
- I:** Where be he so positioned?
R: The answer with the Senior Warden lay.
- I:** What must be asked of the Senior Warden afford proper answer?
R: "What interested you in becoming a Master Mason?"²⁰
- I:** His response?
R: His travels will determine his response since what he has inculcated in becoming a True Master Mason allows him to work and earn according to his Word and his Abilities.²¹
- I:** How do the Pillars support this?
R: They must present be for a True Master Mason to give and be his Word.²²
- I:** Explain me this.
R: In becoming a Pillar of the Composite Order, a True Master Mason's travel and ability to earn is only limited to the Word that he gives, which will always be governed by the three.
- I:** How so?
R: Nothing of any great value will come ever from a Mason's work should the presence of the Three Orders of Architecture, whom and what they so symbolically represent, be not within a Master Mason's Word when given.
- I:** What value these Three be to a True Master Mason?
R: Their presence assuredly maketh Word Flesh when given by a True Master Mason.
- I:** What maketh a True Master Mason's Word Flesh?
R: Cultivation and application in every day life of the Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.²³
- I:** Where might we read about the Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty?
R: It is alluded to by what is held atop a Pillar found on the Porch of King Solomon's Temple.²⁴
- I:** To what does it allude?
R: To the Heavens Above, where we find Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty when we seek it.²⁵
- I:** What of the other Pillar on said Porch?
R: It holds a symbol of our earthly World Below the Heavens Above.²⁶
- I:** What be their names?
R: Any person educated in Holy Scripture will tell you that they are so named after the great-grandfathers of King Solomon himself.²⁷
- I:** Of that be atop these pillars, what are their principle Masonic use?
R: They are instruments to symbolically illustrate and explain every day life.²⁸
- I:** What be their end?
R: To improve the mind, solve problems, inspire reverence and induce courage to benefit all.²⁹
- I:** What do these Two Topped Pillars collectively represent?
R: The passage we must take in our journey to obtain Unity, Peace, and Plenty within and without for all who employ such instrument.³⁰
- I:** How does a Master Mason assure such be visited upon him?
R: By drawing on the strength of the Almighty Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, As is provided from Above, a True Master

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Mason So Establishes it Below in the World in all matters.

I: What other type of Pillar be there in Ritual herein?

R: None save the Foundation of one alluded to by Justice.³¹

I: What be Justice?

R: What every person be duly rendered without regard to distinction.³²

I: What else it be?

R: The measure of a good person, consistent with Divine Law and the very cement that holds society together.³³

I: How ought to be it practice?

R: Without any deviation thereof.³⁴

I: How do we know it to be Foundational?

R: It be the last of Four Cardinal Virtues alluded to by the Perfect Points of Entrance.³⁵

I: Name the One associated with Justice.

R: Pedestal³⁶

I: What doeth this say?

R: No column shall ever stand well save for that which be founded on a firm Pedestal of Justice.

I: Shall any Composite have viable stability without such Pedestal?

R: No and neither shall any True Master Mason should he so stand without.

I: How do I know all this be so?

R: Be I not a Master Mason?

I: I know you to be as such.

R: Then you have the Word of a Master Mason that this be all true.

- 1 Duncan's Monitor and Ritual, Pg 75; Webb's Masonic Monitor By Thomas Smith Webb, Edition 1865, Pg 57
- 2 Duncan id. at Pg 52; Webb id. at Pg 61
- 3 Duncan ibid; Webb ibid
- 4 Duncan id. at Pg 85; Webb id. at Pg 57
- 5 Duncan id. at Pg 52; Webb id. at Pg 61
- 6 Duncan ibid
- 7 Duncan ibid
- 8 Duncan ibid
- 9 Duncan ibid
- 10 Duncan ibid
- 11 Duncan ibid
- 12 Duncan ibid
- 13 Duncan ibid
- 14 Duncan ibid
- 15 Webb id. at Pg 53
- 16 Webb ibid
- 17 Webb ibid
- 18 Duncan id. at Pg 127
- 19 Duncan id. at Pg 75; Webb id. at Pg 60

20 Duncan id. at Pg 135

21 Duncan ibid

22 Duncan id. at Pg 105

23 Webb id. at Pg 71

24 Duncan id. at Pg 74

25 Webb ibid

26 Webb id. at Pg 55

27 Straight out of Holy Scripture – I'll let you look this one up!

28 Webb id. at Pg 54, 55, 56

29 Webb ibid

30 Duncan id. at Pg 56

31 Duncan ibid; Webb id. at Pg 44

32 Duncan ibid; Webb ibid

33 Duncan ibid; Webb ibid

34 Duncan ibid; Webb ibid

35 Duncan id. at Pg 55; Webb id. at Pg 42

36 Duncan ibid



Esoterics

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years of age and some 31 years BEFORE he became a Mason.

Masonicinfo Note: We've often wondered how the self-described 'Christian Fundamentalists' who write to us citing the works of Hall would feel if we were to cite works about Christianity written by someone who was barely 21 years of age, was not a Christian himself and did not become one until more than 30 years later! We think there'd be a pretty large cry of 'unfair'. This, of course, doesn't stop them - even knowing the facts of Hall's life.

Is Freemasonry the logical inheritor of this mystical past as proclaimed by a 21 year old who was NOT a part of Freemasonry but rather had some stylized, youthful impression of it? Who can say.... What we do know, though, is that the interest displayed by some Masons in matters esoteric is neither evil nor anti-religious.

This is not to say that a small handful of Masons might not 'go off the deep end' with their fantasies about Freemasonry's past. Consider: there is no 'theology' of Freemasonry - no specific 'creed' to which all Freemasons must adhere. As a result, any Mason is free to think most anything about -- well, about ANYTHING! Ergo, some Freemasons feel that there's a connection to the Knights Templar while others can argue persuasively that there's no proof of this whatsoever. A small group of Masons maintains an interest in things esoteric - but this does not mean that (a) Freemasonry is in and of itself esoteric or (b) that an interest in esoteric matters is wrong.

This site's owner frequently finds irrational attacks against Freemasonry which could easily be compared with the witch hunts of Salem, Massachusetts. Small groups of people, feeding on each others' fears and paranoia, look in every nook and cranny for tell-tale signs of evil. Since



they ignore all evidence which does not support their pre-conceived notions, they - not unexpectedly - find that 'evil' in those small numbers of Freemasons who have an interest in esoteric matters.

It can be easily proven simply through discussions with any group of Masons that the 'esoteric connection' is non-existent in most and fanciful based on limited understanding in the great majority of the rest. Within Freemasonry there are precious few who have a true and continued interest in esoteric matters. A couple have even gone so far as to use (abuse?) Freemasonry by creating organizations which ostensibly amplified it's "true" beliefs that had been ignored by those who were willfully ignorant of the organizations' 'real' heritage. There have been organizations of like-minded folks claiming that it was "true" Freemasonry (Crowley's OTO and the so-called Modern Rite of Memphis as two examples) but what's the truth?

Are several millions of those who deny any such connections simply wrong and the dozen or so who want to claim Freemasonry's roots are provably in some secret stream of mystical thought right? The answer should be obvious - but it is ignored in its entirety by those whose minds have wandered FAR beyond the ritual and teachings of the Fraternity.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is esotericism, and how does it differ from the "esoteric work" of Masonic ritual?
 - a. Here is the entry for "esoteric" from Miriam-Webster:
Etymology: Late Latin esotericus, from Greek esOterikos, from esOteroO,

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comparative of eisO, esO within, from eis into; akin to Greek en in -- more at IN

1 a : designed for or understood by the specially initiated alone <a body of esoteric legal doctrine -- B. N. Cardozo> b : requiring or exhibiting knowledge that is restricted to a small group <esoteric terminology> <esoteric strategies>; broadly : difficult to understand <esoteric subjects>

2 a : limited to a small circle <engaging in esoteric pursuits> b : PRIVATE, CONFIDENTIAL <an esoteric purpose>

3: of special, rare, or unusual interest <esoteric building materials>

b. In Masonry, "esoteric work" refers to the elements of Masonic ritual and teaching that are to be communicated only to a properly qualified member and are unlawful to write or publish. Esotericism is a broader field of studies and practices.

c. For a good summary of what esotericism means in a scholarly context, we refer to Antoine Faivre, Professor of Esoteric and Mystical Currents in Modern and Contemporary Europe at the Ecole Pratique des Huates Etudes (Sorbonne), in Paris. Perhaps his most notable works are his contributions to the SUNY series in Western Esoteric Traditions.

Faivre says that since its first use in 1828, the term "esotericism" has generally referred to three different areas of interest:

i. Secret knowledge or secret science preserved as arcana and passed on to only a select few. Masonic ritual is performed in secret, and it may be thought of as a science by which Masons become more educated in the principles, virtues and obligations of the fraternity. Drama, symbolism, and allegory are key methods in this science. In the field of education, these methods are widely understood to have instructive value, yet nowhere are they practiced and preserved as they are in Masonry.

ii. Paths or techniques addressed to the truths hidden or secluded within Nature or Man, the knowledge of which is attained by only those who have achieved or received a gnostic or transformative experience. Our own ritual teaches us that Speculative Masonry "leads the contemplative to view with reverence and admiration the glorious works of creation and inspires him with the most exalted ideas of the perfections of his Divine Creator." "By it [Geometry] we discover the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Grand Artificer of the Universe, and view with delight

the proportions which connect this vast machine." Clearly these statements are not limited to the issue of morality, but neither do they specify practices or doctrines peculiar to any one religion.

iii. Groups of works and currents dealing with perennial philosophy, Hermeticism, alchemy, astrology, Kabbalah, Christian theosophy, and so on, which can be subjected to historical studies. Although our Craft ritual does not refer directly to such traditions and teachings, rightly or wrongly many esotericists believe that there are allusions to them throughout the teachings and symbolism of our rituals. Some historians, both Masonic and non-Masonic, hypothesize that various esoteric traditions and ideas influenced the founding and/or development of Speculative Masonry, especially when considering the plethora of rites and degrees with overt references to such traditions that began within a few decades after the founding of the Grand Lodge of England. Such references continue to exist today in certain degrees of the appendant rites, but they do not require Masons to accept the doctrines or practices of any specific religion.

2. What are Masonic esotericists and what do they do?

a. In all other respects they are usually ordinary Masons, and typically are serving the fraternity in every jurisdiction, appendant body, and official capacity. They pursue esotericism because it is a personal interest, and not because they believe it is a requirement of Masonry. To many people, Albert Pike is the epitome of a Masonic esotericist.

b. They are men trying to improve themselves in Masonry by:

i. Examining the great questions of life. - Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? What is the essential nature of reality? What is wisdom, truth, or beauty? Etc.

ii. Practicing introspection ("Know thyself"). - What do I really believe and value? What are my virtues and vices? What are the secret hopes and fears that influence how I think, feel and act? How do I need or want to change? Etc.

c. They are historians researching esoteric influences on the ritual, symbols, and philosophies of Masonry. They ask questions such as: To what extent were early Masons interested in such things as ? Why were they interested in them? How did those interests affect the principles, values and ideals of Masonry as we know it today?

d. They are scholars performing

comparative studies of ritual, symbolism and teachings among Masonry and other fraternal, philosophical and spiritual traditions. They ask questions such as: What are the parallels and differences between Masonry and other traditions? How might those parallels and differences shed more light on the meanings of our ritual, symbols, and myth?

e. They are students of life pursuing more light through studies in psychology, sociology, anthropology, mythology, philosophy, religion, history, languages, etc. Masonry teaches us to polish and adorn our minds, to advance ourselves in learning, to improve our relationships with others, to always seek more light, and to search for that which has been lost. Each of these noble pursuits is advanced by studies in the humanities, the liberal arts and sciences that address the individual human being, society, and culture, all of which are Masonic concerns.

f. They are contemplatives practicing various disciplines of meditation, including prayer. The most revered saints and respected sages of history have practiced meditation and extolled its virtues, as have a considerable number of modern psychologists and clergy. Meditation has been identified as the key that opens the door to spiritual enlightenment, and lauded as an indispensable means to attain the fullest measures of peace, joy, health, artistic creativity, personal productivity, philosophical insight, and understanding and compassion for our fellow human beings. In short, meditation is understood to be a valuable working tool in achieving everything that Masonry values.

3. Why haven't I seen or heard more about Masonic esotericists?

a. They may not want to force their views on others. Many esotericists have learned that the insights and inspirations that come through the study and practice of esotericism are often very personal and not easily communicated to others, especially those who have not done the same kinds of work.

b. They may not want to fuel anti-Masonic attacks. While Masonic esotericists know that no single person or sub-group of the fraternity speaks for the whole, they are well aware that anti-Masons have often based their intolerant criticisms of the fraternity on the opinions and beliefs of a few Masonic esotericists. Of course, these attacks are always based upon very narrow religious views, which almost automatically rule out the generally open-minded willingness of esotericists to investigate

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different beliefs and practices.

- c. They may want to avoid conflict with anti-esoteric brothers. It is unfortunately the case that some Masons have significant prejudice of their own, and thus esoteric brothers who have spoken up have too often been ridiculed as misguided zealots, incompetent scholars, ignorant dupes, deluded crackpots, or even malicious phonies.

4. Why would anyone object to esotericism in Masonry?

- a. Some people may misunderstand esotericism as un-Masonic. Most Masons who consider themselves esotericists are individuals practicing "regular" Masonry in duly constituted lodges in accordance with the ancient charges and landmarks. Masonic esotericists are not making a religion of Masonry, though they are often exploring its spiritual implications. Some of these regular Masonic esotericists may also belong to unofficial Masonic clubs or groups based upon their shared interest in esotericism. However, there are a number of unrecognized, spurious, or clandestine organizations claiming the right to make Masons and emphasizing esotericism as central to their teaching and aims. Being a Masonic esotericist does not mean that one belongs to any such organization.
- b. Some people may be concerned that esotericism is incompatible with the "Abrahamic" faiths, or even "satanic". Masonic esotericists believe in the same principles, virtues, and ideals that unite all Masons, no matter what their specific religious preferences. From a radically conservative or fundamentalist point of view it may be impossible to think of esotericism as anything but heresy and even evil, but the same is true of Masonry. From such a perspective it is almost always the case that one's own beliefs are the only ones that are good or true while everything else is evil or false. The fact is that there have been and are now esoteric traditions in all three of the great Western religions. In Christianity there are the contemplative practices of monastic orders like the Jesuits, as well as apostolic denominations and churches that are Gnostic in orientation. In Judaism there are a number of esoteric currents, including the orthodox Chabad Kabbalists of the Chasidim. In Islam there are the Sufi orders.
- c. Masonic esotericists have not always exercised the highest standards in



their historical research of Masonry and, as a result, have made claims about the fraternity's origins that are easily discredited. Often this pattern has been more about incomplete research, unreliable or discredited sources, and overconfidence in speculations than it has been about any intention to mislead anyone. The most scholarly of Masonic esotericists know the difference between speculations and substantive conclusions, and they are comfortable in acknowledging which kinds of thoughts they are voicing.

- d. Some Masons have publicly accused Masonic esotericists of intellectual conceit and elitism. In their enthusiasm for what they have personally discovered in their esoteric studies and practices, some Masons have been overzealous in presenting them as the secret or true meanings of Masonic ritual and symbolism. Such authors are at times offensive in their claims that a "real" Mason must be an esotericist who thinks just as they do. Intolerance and narrow-mindedness is no more acceptable from esotericists than it is from any other Mason. Conscientious Masonic esotericists understand that no single Mason or group of Masons speaks for the entire fraternity. They also warmly acknowledge that there are many different interests that men can explore in Masonry, that we are all equal in our obligations to one another, and that our fraternity is united in its dedication to God and by the cement of brotherly love and affection.

5. How can I learn more about Masonic esotericism or get in contact with Masonic esotericists?

Apply for membership in the Yahoo Esoteric Freemasonry Group at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GloriaRegum/>



Ritual

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part to the moral perspective alongside the ritual point of view, and we shall see the reason for this shortly. However this may be, once one finds oneself in the presence of the moral point of view in a civilization, one can say that it is no longer integrally traditional, whatever the appearances in other respects; or in other words, the appearance of this viewpoint can be considered to be linked in some way to that of the profane point of view.

This is not the place to examine the stages of this degeneration which leads finally to the modern world, to the complete disappearance of the traditional spirit, and thus to the invasion by the profane outlook of all domains without exception; we will only note that in the present order of things it is this last stage that is represented by the so-called 'independent' ethics which, whether they call them-selves 'philosophical' or 'scientific' are really only a degeneration of religious ethics, that is to say, they are to this latter much as the profane sciences are to the traditional sciences. Naturally there are also corresponding degrees in the incomprehension of traditional realities and in the errors of interpretation to which they give rise; in this regard the lowest degree is held by the modern conceptions which, no longer content even to see in ritual prescriptions only ethical rules, and thus already misunderstanding their profound reason, go so far as to attribute to them vulgar preoccupations with hygiene or cleanliness; it is obvious indeed that, after this, incomprehension could hardly be pushed further!

There is another question that is more important for us at present: how could authentic traditional forms have conceded a place to the moral perspective, as we were just saying, even incorporating it as one of their constituent elements, instead of remaining at the pure ritual point of view? It was inevitable that this happen once the human mentality as a whole fell to a lower level in the descending course of the historical cycle; in order to direct men's actions efficaciously it is necessary to have recourse to means appropriate to their nature, and when this nature is mediocre, the means must also be so in a corresponding degree, for this is the only way to save those who can still be saved in such conditions. Once the majority of men are no longer capable of understanding the reasons for ritual action as such, in order that they should nonetheless continue to act in a still normal and 'regular' fashion, it is necessary to appeal to secondary motives, ethical or otherwise, but in any case of a much more relative and contingent—and, we might add, thereby lower—order than those inherent in the ritual point of view. In this there is really no deviation but only a necessary adaptation; the particular traditional forms must be adapted, to the circumstances of time and place that determine the mentality of those to which they are addressed,

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since it is this that is the very reason for their diversity, especially regarding their most outward aspect which must be common to all without exception, and to which all rules of action naturally relate. As for those still capable of another order of comprehension, it is obviously their responsibility to effect the transposition by placing themselves at a higher and more profound point of view which always remains possible as long as the link with principles has not been broken, that is to say, as long as the traditional point of view itself continues to subsist; thus they need only consider ethics as a mere outward mode of expression that does not affect the very essence of things clothed by it. Thus, for example, there is surely as great a difference as possible between one who accomplishes actions for ethical reasons and one who accomplishes them in view of an effective spiritual development to which they can serve as preparation; their mode of acting is nonetheless the same, but their intentions are wholly different and in no way correspond to the same degree of comprehension. But it is only when morality has lost all traditional character that one can truly speak of deviation; emptied of all real meaning and no longer possessing anything that could legitimize its existence, this profane ethics is properly speaking nothing more than a 'residue' without value and a pure and simple superstition.(1)

(1) From Latin *super-stare*, to be in excess, thus superfluous[ED]



Old

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Charges was made by Dr. Robert Plot in his *Natural History of Staffordshire*, published in 1686. Dr. A.F.A. Woodford and William James Hughan were the first to undertake a scientific study. Hughan's *Old Charges* is to this day the standard work in English. Gould's chapter in his *History of Masonry* would probably be ranked second in value, whereas the voluminous writings of Dr. Begemann, contributed by him to *Zirkelcorrespondenz*, official organ of the National Grand Lodge of Germany, would, if only they were translated into English, give us the most exhaustive treatment of the subject ever yet written.

The *Old Charges* are peculiarly English. No such documents have ever been found in Ireland. Scotch manuscripts are known to be of English origin. It was once held by Findel and other German writers that the English versions ultimately derived from German sources, but this has been disproved. The only known point of similarity between the *Old Charges* and such German documents as the *Torgau Ordinances* and the *Cologne Constitutions* is the *Legend of the Four Crowned Martyrs*, and this legend is found among English versions only in the *Regius Manuscript*. As Gould well says, the *British MSS.* have "neither predecessors nor rivals"; they are the richest and rarest things in the whole field of masonic writings.

When the *Old Charges* are placed side by side it is immediately seen that in their account of the traditional history of the Craft they vary in a great many particulars, nevertheless they appear to have derived from some common origin, and in the main they tell the same tale, which is as interesting as a fairy story out of Grimm. Did the original of this traditional account come from some individual or was it born out of a floating tradition, like the folk tales of ancient people? Authorities differ much on this point. Begemann not only declared that the first version of the story originated with an individual, but even set out what he deemed to be the literary sources used by that Great Unknown. The doctor's arguments are powerful. On the other hand, others contend that the story began as a general vague oral tradition, and that this was in the course of time reduced to writing. In either event, why was the story ever written? In all probability an answer to that question will never be forth-coming, but W. Harry Rylands and others have been of the opinion that the first written versions were made in response to a general *Writ for Return* issued in 1388. Rylands' words may be quoted: "It appears to me not at all improbable that much, if not all, of the legendary history was composed in answer to the *Writ for Returns* issued to the guilds all over the country, in the twelfth year of Richard the Second, A.D. 1388." (A.Q.C. XVI page 1)

II. THE TWO OLDEST MANUSCRIPTS

In 1757 King George II presented to the British Museum a collection of some 12,000 volumes, the nucleus of which had been laid by King Henry VII and which came to be known as the Royal Library. Among these books was a rarely beautiful manuscript written by hand on 64 pages of vellum, about four by five inches in size, which a cataloger, David Casley, entered as No. 17 A-1 under the title, "A Poem of Moral Duties: here entitled *Constitutiones Artis Gemetrie Secundem*." It was not until Mr. J.O. Halliwell, F.R.S. (afterwards Halliwell-Phillipps), a non-Mason, chanced to make the discovery that the manuscript was known to be a masonic document.

Mr. Phillipps read a paper on the manuscript before the Society of Antiquaries in 1839, and in the following year published a volume entitled *Early History of Freemasonry in England* (enlarged and revised in 1844), in which he incorporated a transcript of the document along with a few pages in facsimile. This important work will be found incorporated in the familiar *Universal Masonic Library*, the rusty sheepskin bindings of which strike the eyes on almost every masonic book shelf. This manuscript was known as "The Halliwell", or as "The Halliwell-Phillipps" until some fifty years afterwards Gould rechristened it, in honour of the Royal Library in which it is found, the "Regius", and since then this has become the more familiar cognomen.

David Casley, a learned specialist in old manuscripts, dated the "Regius" as of the

fourteenth century. E.A. Bond, another expert, dated it as of the middle of the fifteenth century. Dr. Kloss, the German specialist, placed it between 1427 and 1445. But the majority have agreed on 1390 as the most probable date. "It is impossible to arrive at absolute certainty on this point," says Hughan, whose *Old Charges* should be consulted, "save that it is not likely to be older than 1390, but may be some twenty years or so later." Dr. W. Begemann made a study of the document that has never been equalled for thoroughness, and arrived at a conclusion that may be given in his own words: it was written "towards the end of the 14th or at least quite at the beginning of the 15th century (not in Gloucester itself, as being too southerly, but) in the north of Gloucestershire or in the neighbouring north of Herefordshire, or even possibly in the south of Worcestershire." (A.Q.C. VII, page 35.)

In 1889 an exact facsimile of this famous manuscript was published in Volume I of the *Antigrapha* produced by the Quatuor Coronati Lodge of Research, and was edited by the then secretary of that lodge, George William Speth, himself a brilliant authority, who supplied a glossary that is indispensable to the amateur student. Along with it was published a commentary by R. F. Gould, one of the greatest of all his masonic papers, though it is exasperating in its rambling arrangement and general lack of conclusiveness.

The *Regius Manuscript* is the only one of all the versions to be written in meter, and may have been composed by a priest, if one may judge by certain internal evidences, though the point is disputed. There are some 800 lines in the poem, the strictly masonic portion coming to an end at line 576, after which begins what Hughan calls a "sermonette" on moral duties, in which there is quite a Roman Catholic vein with references to "the sins seven", "the sweet lady" (referring to the Virgin) and to holy water. There is no such specific Mariolatry in any other version of the *Old Charges*, though the great majority of them express loyalty to "Holy Church" and all of them, until Anderson's familiar version, are specifically Christian, so far as religion is concerned.

The author furnishes a list of fifteen "points" and fifteen "articles", all of which are quite specific instructions concerning the behaviour of a Craftsman: this portion is believed by many to have been the charges to an initiate as used in the author's period, and is therefore deemed the most important feature of the book as furnishing us a picture of the regulations of the Craft at that remote date. The Craft is described as having come into existence as an organized fraternity in "King Adelstoune's day", but in this the author contradicts himself, because he refers to things "written in old books" (I modernize spelling of quotations) and takes for granted a certain antiquity for the Masonry, which, as in all the *Old Charges*, is made synonymous with Geometry, a thing very different in those days from the abstract science

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Engraved by John Pine on Abbreviation of Great Lodges 1788

over which we laboured during our school days.

The Regius Poem is evidently a book about Masonry, rather than a document of Masonry, and may very well have been written by a non-mason, though there is no way in which we can verify such theories, especially seeing that we know nothing about the document save what it has to tell us about itself, which is little.

In his Commentary on the Regius MS, R. F. Gould produced a paragraph that has ever since served as the pivot of a great debate. It reads as follows and refers to the “sermonette” portion which deals with “moral duties”: “These rules of decorum read very curiously in the present age, but their inapplicability to the circumstances of the working masons of the fourteen or fifteenth century will be at once apparent. They were intended for the gentlemen of those days, and the instruction for behaviour in the presence of a lord—at table and in the society of ladies—would have all been equally out of place in a code of manners drawn up for the use of a Guild or Craft of Artisans.”

The point of this is that there must have been present among the Craftsmen of that time a number of men

not engaged at all in labour, and therefore were, as we would now describe them, “speculatives.” This would be of immense importance if Gould had made good his point, but that he was not able to do. The greatest minds of the period in question were devoted to architecture, and there is no reason not to believe that among the Craftsmen were members of good families. Also the Craft was in contact with the clergy all the while, and therefore many of its members may well have stood in need of rules for preserving proper decorum in great houses and among the members of the upper classes. From Woodford until the present time the great majority of masonic scholars have believed the Old Charges to have been used by a strictly operative craft and it is evident that they will continue to do so until more conclusive evidence to the contrary is forthcoming than Gould’s surmise.

Next to the Regius the oldest manuscript is that known as the Cooke. It was published by R. Spencer, London, 1861 and was edited by Mr. Matthew Cooke, hence his name. In the British Museum’s catalogue it is listed as “Additional M.S. 23,198”, and has been dated by Hughan at 1450 or thereabouts, an estimate in which most of the

specialists have concurred. Dr. Begemann believed the document to have been “compiled and written in the southeastern portion of the western Midlands, say, in Gloucestershire or Oxfordshire, possibly also in southeast Worcestershire or southwest Warwickshire. The ‘Book of Charges’ which forms the second part of the document is certainly of the 14th century, the historical or first part, of quite the beginning of the 15th.” (A.Q.C. IX, page 18)

The Cooke MS. was most certainly in the hands of Mr. George Payne, when in his second term as Grand Master in 1720 he compiled the “General Regulations”, and which Anderson included in his own version of the Constitutions published in 1723. Anderson himself evidently made use of lines 901-960 of the MS.

The Lodge Quatuor Coronati reprinted the Cooke in facsimile in Vol. II of its Antigrapha in 1890, and included therewith a Commentary by George William Speth which is, in my own amateur opinion, an even more brilliant piece of work than Gould’s Commentary on the Regius. Some of Speth’s conclusions are of permanent value. I paraphrase his findings in my own words:

The M.S. is a transcript of a yet older document and was written by a mason. There were several versions of the Charges to a Mason in circulation at the time. The MS. is in two parts, the former of which is an attempt at a history of the Craft, the latter of which is a version of the Charges. Of this portion Speth writes that it is “far and away the earliest, best and purest version of the ‘Old Charges’ which we possess.” The MS. mentions nine “articles”, and these evidently were legal enforcements at the time; the nine “points” given were probably not legally binding but were morally so. “Congregations” of Masons were held here and there but no “General Assembly” (or “Grand Lodge”); Grand Masters existed in fact but not in name and presided at one meeting of a congregation only. “Many of our present usages may be traced in their original form to this manuscript.”

III. ANDERSON’S CONSTITUTIONS AND OTHER PRINTED VERSIONS

One of the most important of all the versions of the Old Charges is not an ancient original at all, but a printed edition issued in 1722, and known as the Roberts, though it is believed to be a copy of an ancient document. Of this W. J. Hughan writes: “The only copy known was purchased by me at Brother Spencer’s sale of masonic works, etc. (London, 1875), for 8 pounds 10s., on behalf of the late Brother R. F. Bower, and is now in the magnificent library of the Grand Lodge of Iowa, U.S.A.” This tiny volume is easily the most priceless masonic literary possession in America, and was published in exact facsimile by the National masonic Research Society, with an eloquent Introduction by Dr. Joseph Fort Newton in 1916. The Reverend Edmund Coxe edited a

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famous reprint in 1871. It is a version meriting the most careful study on the part of the masonic student because it had a decided influence on the literature and jurisprudence of the Craft after its initial appearance. It appeared in one of the most interesting and momentous periods of modern Speculative Masonry, namely, in the years between the organization of the first Grand Lodge in 1717 and the appearance of Anderson's Constitution in 1723. It is the earliest printed version of the Old Charges known to exist.

Another well-known printed version is that published in 1724 and known as the Briscoe. This was the second publication of its kind. The third printed version was issued in 1728-9 by Benjamin Cole, and known as the Cole Edition in consequence. This version is considered a literary gem in that the main body of the text is engraved throughout in most beautiful style. A special edition of this book was made in Leeds, 1897, the value of which was enhanced by one of W. J. Hughan's famous introductions. For our own modern and practical purposes the most important of all the versions ever made was that compiled by Dr. James Anderson in 1723 and everywhere known familiarly as Anderson's Constitution. A second edition appeared, much changed and enlarged, in 1738; a third, by John Entick, in 1756; and so on every few years until by 1888 twenty-two editions in all had been issued. The Rev. A.F.A. Woodford, Hughan's collaborator, edited an edition of The Constitution Book of 1723 as Volume I of Kenning's masonic Archeological Library, under date of 1878. This is a correct and detailed reproduction of the book exactly as Anderson first published it, and is valuable accordingly.



Anderson's title page is interesting to read: "The CONSTITUTION, History, Laws, Charges, Orders, Regulations, and Usages, of the Right Worshipful FRATERNITY of ACCEPTED FREE MASONS; collected from their general RECORDS, and their faithful TRADITIONS of many Ages. To be read At the Admission of a NEW BROTHER, when the Master or Warden shall begin, or order some other Brother to read as follows, etc." After the word "follows" Anderson's own version of masonic history begins with this astonishing statement:

"Adam, our first Parent, created after the Image of God, the great Architect of the Universe, must have had the Liberal Sciences, particularly Geometry, written on his Heart, etc."

Thus did Dr. Anderson launch his now thrice familiar account of the history of Freemasonry, an account which, save in the hands of the most expert masonic antiquarian, yields very little dependable historical fact whatsoever, but which, owing to the prestige of its author, came to be accepted for generations as a bona fide history of the Craft. It will be many a long year yet before the rank and file of brethren shall have learned that Dr. Anderson's "history" belongs in the realm of fable for the most part, and has never been accepted as anything else by knowing ones.

The established facts concerning Dr. Anderson's own private history comprise a record almost as brief as the short and simple annals of the poor. Brother J.T. Thorp, one of the most distinguished of the veterans among living English masonic scholars, has given it in an excellent brief form. (A.Q.C. XVIII, page 9.)

"Of this distinguished Brother we know very little. He is believed to have been born, educated and made a Mason in Scotland, subsequently settling in London as a Presbyterian Minister. He is mentioned for the first time in the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of England on September 29th, 1721, when he was appointed to revise the old Gothic Constitutions—this revision was approved by the Grand Lodge of England on September 29th in 1723, in which year Anderson was Junior Grand Warden under the Duke of Wharton—he published a second edition of the Book of Constitutions in 1738, and died in 1739. This is about all that is known of him."

In his 1738 edition Anderson so garbled up his account of the founding of Grand Lodge, and contradicted his own earlier story in such fashion, that R. F. Gould was inclined to believe either that he had become disgruntled and full of spleen, or else that he was in his dotage. Be that as it may, Anderson's historical pages are to be read with extreme caution. His Constitution itself, or that part dealing with the principles and regulations of the Craft, is most certainly a compilation made of extracts of other versions of the Old Charges pretty much mixed with the Doctor's own ideas in the premises, and so much at variance with previous customs that the official adoption thereof caused much dissension among the lodges, and may have had something to do with the disaffection which at last led to the formation of the "Antient" Grand Lodge of 1751 or thereabouts. The "Anderson" of this latter body, which in time waxed very powerful, was Laurence Dermott, a brilliant Irishman, who as Grand Secretary was leader of

the "Antient" forces for many years, and who wrote for the body its own Constitution, called Ahiman Rezon, which cryptic title is believed by some to mean "Worthy Brother Secretary." The first edition of this important version was made in 1756, a second in 1764, and so on until by 1813 an eighth had been published. A very complete collection of all editions is in the masonic Library at Philadelphia. A few of our Grand Lodges, Pennsylvania among them, continue to call their Book of Constitutions, The Ahiman Rezon.

Anderson himself is still on the rack of criticism. Learned brethren are checking his statements (see Brother Vibert's article in The Builder for August), sifting his pages and leaving no stone unturned in order to appraise correctly his contributions to masonic history. But there is not so much disagreement on the Constitution. In that document, which did not give satisfaction to many upon its appearance, Anderson, as Brother Lionel Vibert has well said, "built better than he knew," because he produced a document which until now serves as the groundwork of nearly all Grand Lodge Constitutions having jurisdiction over Symbolic Masonry, and which once and for all established Speculative Freemasonry on a basis apart, and with no sectarian character, either as to religion or politics. For all his faults as a historian (and these faults were as much of his age as of his own shortcomings), Anderson is a great figure in our annals and deserves at the hand of every student a careful and, reverent study.

IV. CONCLUSION

In concluding this very brief and inconclusive sketch of a great subject, I return to my first statement. In the whole circle of masonic studies there is not, for us Americans at any rate, any subject of such importance as this of the Old Charges, especially insofar as they have to do with our own Constitutions and Regulations, and that is very much indeed. Many false conceptions of Freemasonry may be directly traced to an unlearned, or wilful misinterpretation of the Old Charges, what they are, what they mean to us, and what their authority may be. In this land jurisprudence is a problem of supreme importance, and in a way not very well comprehended by our brethren in other parts, who often wonder why we should be so obsessed by it.

We have forty-nine Grand Lodges, each of which is sovereign in its own state, and all of which must maintain fraternal relations with scores of Grand bodies abroad as well as with each other. These Grand Lodges assemble each year to legislate for the Craft, and therefore, in the very nature of things, the organization and government of the Order is for us Americans a much more complicated and important thing than it can be in other lands. To know what the Old Charges are, and to understand masonic constitutional law and practice, is for our leaders and law-givers a prime necessity.



1723

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to belong to one, and to be subject to its By-Laws and the General Regulations. It is either particular or general, and will be best understood by attending it, and by the Regulations of the General or Grand Lodge hereunto annex'd. In ancient Times, no Master or Fellow could be absent from it especially when warn'd to appear at it, without incurring a sever Censure, until it appear'd to the Master and Wardens that pure Necessity hinder'd him. The persons admitted Members of a Lodge must be good and true Men, free-born, and of mature and discreet Age, no Bondmen no Women, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good Report.

IV OF MASTERS, WARDENS, FELLOWS and APPRENTICES.

All preferment among Masons is grounded upon real Worth and personal Merit only; that so the Lords may be well served, the Brethren not put to Shame, nor the Royal Craft despis'd: Therefore no Master or Warden is chosen by Seniority, but for his Merit. It is impossible to describe these things in Writing, and every Brother must attend in his Place, and learn them in a Way peculiar to this Fraternity: Only Candidates may know that no Master should take an Apprentice unless he has Sufficient Employment for him, and unless he be a perfect Youth having no Maim or Defects in his Body that may render him incapable of learning the Art of serving his Master's Lord, and of being made a Brother, and then a Fellow-Craft in due Time, even after he has served such a Term of Years as the Custom of the Country directs; and that he should be descended of honest Parents; that so, when otherwise qualifi'd he may arrive to the Honour of being the Warden, and then the Master of the Lodge, the Grand Warden, and at length the Grand Master of all the Lodges, according to his Merit. No Brother can be a Warden until he has pass'd the part of a Fellow-Craft; nor a Master until he has acted as a Warden, nor Grand Warden until he has been Master of a Lodge, nor Grand Master unless he has been a Fellow Craft before his Election, who is also to be nobly born, or a Gentleman of the best Fashion, or some eminent Scholar, or some curious Architect, or other Artist, descended of honest Parents, and who is of similar great Merit in the Opinion of the Lodges. These Rulers and Governors, supreme and subordinate, of the ancient Lodge, are to be obey'd in their respective Stations by all the Brethren, according to the old Charges and Regulations, with all Humility, Reverence, Love and Alacrity.

V. Of the MANAGEMENT of the CRAFT in WORKING.

All Masons shall work honestly on Working Days, that they may live creditably on Holy Days; and the time appointed by the Law of the Land or confirm'd by Custom shall be observ'd. The most expert of the Fellow-Craftsmen shall be chosen or appointed the Master or Overseer of the Lord's Work; who is to be call'd Master by those that

work under him. The Craftsmen are to avoid all ill Language, and to call each other by no disobliging Name, but Brother or Fellow; and to behave themselves courteously within and without the Lodge. The Master, knowing himself to be able of Cunning, shall undertake the Lord's Work as reasonably as possible, and truly dispend his Goods as if they were his own; nor to give more Wages to any Brother or Apprentice than he really may deserve. Both the Master and the Masons receiving their Wages justly, shall be faithful to the Lord and honestly finish their Work, whether Task or journey; nor put the work to Task that hath been accustomed to Journey. None shall discover Envy at the Prosperity of a Brother, nor supplant him, or put him out of his Work, if he be capable to finish the same; for no man can finish another's Work so much to the Lord's Profit, unless he be thoroughly acquainted with the Designs and Draughts of him that began it. When a Fellow-Craftsman is chosen Warden of the Work under the Master, he shall be true both to Master and Fellows, shall carefully oversee the Work in the Master's Absence to the Lord's profit; and his Brethren shall obey him. All Masons employed shall meekly receive their Wages without Murmuring or Mutiny, and not desert the Master till the Work is finish'd. A younger Brother shall be instructed in working, to prevent spoiling the Materials for want of Judgment, and for increasing and continuing of brotherly love. All the Tools used in working shall be approved by the Grand Lodge. No Labourer shall be employ'd in the proper Work of Masonry; nor shall Free Masons work with those that are not free, without an urgent Necessity; nor shall they teach Labourers and unaccepted Masons as they should teach a Brother or Fellow.

VI. OF BEHAVIOUR

I. In the LODGE while CONSTITUTED.

You are not to hold private Committees, or separate Conversation without Leave from the Master, nor to talk of anything impertinent or unseemly, nor interrupt the Master or Wardens, or any Brother speaking to the Master: Nor behave yourself ludicrously or jestingly while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; nor use any unbecoming Language upon any Pretense whatsoever; but to pay due Reverence to your Master, Wardens, and Fellows, and put them to Worship. If any Complaint be brought, the Brother found guilty shall stand to the Award and Determination of the Lodge, who are the proper and competent Judges of all such Controversies (unless you carry it by Appeal to the Grand Lodge), and to whom they ought to be referr'd, unless a Lord's Work be hinder'd the meanwhile, in which Case a particular Reference may be made; but you must never go to Law about what concerneth Masonry, without an absolute necessity apparent to the Lodge.

2. BEHAVIOUR after the LODGE is over and the BRETHREN not GONE.

You may enjoy yourself with innocent Mirth,

treating one another according to Ability, but avoiding all Excess, or forcing any Brother to eat or drink beyond his Inclination, or hindering him from going when his Occasions call him, or doing or saying anything offensive, or that may forbid an easy and free Conversation, for that would blast our Harmony, and defeat our laudable Purposes. Therefore no private Piques or Quarrels must be brought within the Door of the Lodge, far less any Quarrels about Religion, or Nations, or State Policy, we being only, as Masons, of the Universal Religion above mention'd, we are also of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds, and Languages, and are resolv'd against all Politics, as what never yet conduct'd to the Welfare of the Lodge, nor ever will.

3. BEHAVIOUR when BRETHREN meet WITHOUT STRANGERS, but not in a LODGE Formed.

You are to salute one another in a courteous Manner, as you will be instructed, calling each other Brother, freely giving mutual instruction as shall be thought expedient, without being ever seen or overheard, and without encroaching upon each other, or derogating from that Respect which is due to any Brother, were he not Mason: For though all Masons are as Brethren upon the same Level, yet Masonry takes no Honour from a man that he had before; nay, rather it adds to his Honour, especially if he has deserve well of the Brotherhood, who must give Honour to whom it is due, and avoid ill Manners.

4. BEHAVIOUR in presence of Strangers NOT MASONS.

You shall be cautious in your Words and Carriage, that the most penetrating Stranger shall not be able to discover or find out what is not proper to be intimated, and sometimes you shall divert a Discourse, and manage it prudently for the Honour of the worshipful Fraternity.

5. BEHAVIOUR at HOME, and in Your NEIGHBORHOOD.

You are to act as becomes a moral and wise Man; particularly not to let your Family, Friends and Neighbors know the Concern of the Lodge, &c., but wisely to consult your own Honour, and that of the ancient Brotherhood, for reasons not to be mention'd here You must also consult your Health, by not continuing together too late, or too long from Home, after Lodge Hours are past; and by avoiding of Gluttony or Drunkenness, that your Families be not neglected or injured, nor you disabled from working.

6. BEHAVIOUR toward a Strange BROTHER.

You are cautiously to examine him, in such a Method as Prudence shall direct you, that you may not be impos'd upon by an ignorant, false

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Pretender, whom you are to reject with contempt and Derision, and beware of giving him any Hints of Knowledge. But if you discover him to be a true and genuine Brother, you are to respect him accordingly; and if he is in Want, you must relieve him if you can, or else direct him how he may be relieved; you must employ him some days, or else recommend him to be employ'd.

But you are not charged to do beyond your ability, only to prefer a poor Brother, that is a good Man and true before any other poor People in the same Circumstance. Finally, All these Charges you are to observe, and also those that shall be recommended to you in another Way; cultivating Brotherly Love, the Foundation and Cap-stone, the Cement and Glory of this Ancient Fraternity, avoiding all wrangling and quarreling, all Slander and Backbiting, nor permitting others to slander any honest Brother, but defending his Character, and doing him all good Offices, as far as is consistent with your Honour and Safety, and no farther.

And if any of them do you Injury you must apply to

your own or his Lodge, and from thence you may appeal to the Grand Lodge, at the Quarterly Communication and from thence to the annual Grand Lodge, as has been the ancient laudable Conduct but when the Case cannot be otherwise decided, and patiently listening to the honest and friendly Advice of Master and Fellows when they would prevent your going to Law with Strangers, or would excite you to put a speedy Period to all Lawsuits, so that you may mind the Affair of Masonry with the more Alacrity and Success; but with respect to Brothers or Fellows at Law, the Master and Brethren should kindly offer their Mediation, which ought to be thankfully submitted to by the contending Brethren; and if that submission is impracticable, they must, however, carry on their Process, or Lawsuit, without Wrath and Rancor (not In the common way) saying or doing nothing which may hinder Brotherly Love, and good Offices to be renew'd and continu'd; that all may see the benign Influence of Masonry, as all true Masons have done from the beginning of the World, and will do to the End of Time.

AMEN, SO MOTE IT BE

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No Hope...

A cold March wind danced around the dead of night in Dallas as the doctor walked into the small hospital room of Diana Blessing. Still groggy from surgery, her husband David held her hand as they braced themselves for the latest news.

That afternoon of March 10, 1991, complications had forced Diana, only 24-weeks pregnant, to undergo an emergency cesarean to deliver the couple's new daughter, Danae Lu Blessing. At 12 inches long and weighing only one pound and nine ounces, they already knew she was perilously premature. Still, the doctor's soft words dropped like bombs.

"I don't think she's going to make it," he said, as kindly as he could "There's only a 10-percent chance she will live through the night, and even then, if by some slim chance she does make it, her future could be a very cruel one."

Numb with disbelief, David and Diana listened as the doctor described the devastating problems Danae would likely face if she survived. She would never walk. She would never talk. She would probably be blind. She would certainly be prone to other catastrophic conditions from cerebral palsy to complete mental retardation And on and on.

"No! No!" was all Diana could say. She and David, with their 5-year-old son Dustin, had long dreamed of the day they would have a daughter to become a family of four. Now, within a matter of hours, that dream was slipping away.

Through the dark hours of morning as Danae held onto life by the thinnest thread, Diana slipped in and out of drugged sleep, growing more and more determined that their tiny daughter would live and live to be a healthy, happy young girl. But David, fully awake and listening to additional dire details of their daughter's chances of ever leaving the hospital alive, much less healthy, knew he must confront his wife with the inevitable.

"David walked in and said that we needed to talk about making funeral arrangements," Diana remembers "I felt so bad for him because he was doing everything, trying to include me in what was going on, but I just wouldn't listen I couldn't listen.

I said, "No, that is not going to happen, no way! I don't care what the doctors say Danae is not going to die! One day she will be just fine, and she will be coming home with us!"

As if willed to live by Diana's determination, Danae clung to life hour after hour, with the help of every medical machine and marvel her miniature body could endure. But as those first days passed, a new

agony set in for David and Diana. Because Danae's underdeveloped nervous system was essentially "raw," every lightest kiss or caress only intensified her discomfort- so they couldn't even cradle their tiny baby girl against their chests to offer the strength of their love. All they could do, as Danae struggled alone beneath the ultra-violet light in the tangle of tubes and wires, was to pray that God would stay close to their precious little girl.

There was never a moment when Danae suddenly grew stronger. But as weeks went by, she did slowly gain an ounce of weight here and an ounce of strength there.

At last, when Danae turned two months old, her parents were able to hold her in their arms for the very first time. And two months later-though doctors continued to gently but grimly warn that her chances of surviving, much less living any kind of normal life, were next to zero - Danae went home from the hospital, just as her mother had predicted.

Today, five years later, Danae is a petite but feisty young girl with glittering gray eyes and an unquenchable zest for life. She shows no signs, whatsoever, of any mental or physical impairments. Simply, she is everything a little girl can be and more-but that happy ending is far from the end of her story.

One blistering afternoon in the summer of 1996 near her home in Irving, Texas, Danae was sitting in her mother's lap in the bleachers of a local ball park where her brother Dustin's baseball team was practicing. As always, Danae was chattering non-stop with her mother and several other adults sitting nearby when she suddenly fell silent.

Hugging her arms across her chest, Danae asked, "Do you smell that?"

Smelling the air and detecting the approach of a thunderstorm, Diana replied, "Yes, it smells like rain."

Danae closed her eyes and again asked, "Do you smell that?"

Once again, her mother replied, "Yes, I think we're about to get wet it smells like rain."

Still caught in the moment, Danae shook her head, patted her thin shoulders with her small hands and loudly announced, "No, it smells like Him. It smells like God when you lay your head on His chest."

Tears blurred Diana's eyes as Danae then happily hopped down to play with the other children before the rains came. Her daughter's words confirmed what Diana and all the members of the extended Blessing family had known, at least in their hearts, all along.

During those long days and nights of her first two months of her life when her nerves were too sensitive for them to touch her, God was holding Danae on His chest-and it is His loving scent that she remembers so well.

