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DAVAO

87th ANCOM (DAVAO April 2003)

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MASONIC CENTER



Samboangan Masonic Tempe still on the making ...
... its completed Blue Lodge Hall is consecrated by
Grand Chaplain VW Nerville Peñalosa.



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Our Cover: *The largest Masonic edifice in Mindanao, the 3-storey Davao Masonic Center in the heart of Davao City. It has a total floor area of 1,250 square meters, plus 432 square meters set aside for store spaces. The 1st floor houses the Social Hall and lobby, the 2nd floor houses eleven offices and the 3rd floor has the Red and Blue Lodge Rooms, the Board of Governor's Room and a Room for the distaff side.*

GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

In a short time, my term as Grand Master comes to conclusion. The experience of managing the affairs of the Craft in our jurisdiction has been challenging and very enlightening, but most of all, humbling. I, however, upon my installation, forthrightly announced that while I will endeavor to make a difference, I will also see to it that harmony will be a major consideration in my decisions and advocacies. My previous three messages in this our Cabletow bear witness to that concern. As I wind up my affairs as Grand Master and with some skirting towards immodesty, I believe that I have been consistent to my word.

Unsettling developments that gestated way before my term have given rise to disharmony in our ranks. Issues about finances, election for the post of Junior Grand Warden and foreign travel are but some of those areas of concern. All these are developments that impinge on our survival as a respected institution in our national life. While their resolution require probity and courage from the leadership ranks of the Craft , it is equally important that the Brethren at large adhere to our priceless tenet of the tolerance *that our desires remain circumscribed and our passions stay within due bounds.*

Management of finances is precisely what it implies, a function of management where generation of funds, its disposition and accounting are reconciled with management policy and decisions (within a fixed term of office) authorized by organizational charters and mandates (that define the continuing context). For a society - *especially of ours*- where membership is based on fraternal relations arising from a commonly shared belief system that is founded on the desire for the sublime, issues arising from management of finances is a continuing sensitive concern of the leadership sector that is elected. Election of leaders therefore must be a balance of relevant processes and the fidelity by the individual Mason to the value system of the Craft. This calculus needs to be understood by all Masons, lest the ANCOM that is supposed to be the *"assembly of the honorable"* degenerates into a *"rabble of ruffians"*. Proposals for organizational changes that seek to address these two issues will be presented during the 87th ANCOM in Davao. Again I encourage the Brethren to attend and actively participate in the proceedings, instead of merely enjoying the pleasures found in our renowned venue. To coin a common adage in political science and without intending to be frivolous - in an elective milieu, *the leadership that you get is that which you elect.*

With regards to travels by the Grand Lodge leadership, I wish to reiterate the peculiarities of our jurisdiction that I feel is not fully understood by many of the Brethren. The sovereignty of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines reaches out to lodges located in four nations, the bulk being in the Philippines and the few, but still under the GLP, in US territory (Guam and Saipan), in South Korea and in Okinawa, Japan. In the 50 states of the United States of America, there reside about two thousand Masons (out of our nearly 16,000) who are dues paying members of mother

lodges paying obedience to the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. These two thousand Masons actively link with Plaridel Temple thru the Philippine Masonic Association of America, Inc. and its eighteen chapters that are recognized as sojourning Masonic entities by the American grand lodges exercising territorial sovereignty in the states where they are located. Visitation by an incumbent Filipino Grand Master to these Brethren, as with those within Philippine territory, is a mandated official task as well as a moral duty. To say otherwise is to say that we, the Masons of this jurisdiction, are now disowning them. If this is an issue that needs to be addressed, then so be it, we address it formally on the ANCOM floor in Davao.

In closing, I wish to thank all those Brethren who spent considerable time, effort and personal resources to support my administration. To the Brethren at large let me just quote MW William C. Councell, PGM *"I am not Albert Mackey, but to the best of my ability"* and may I add my own - *"I am not Emilio Aguinaldo or Jose Abad Santos, but as relevant as I can".*



MASONIC EDUCATION

POWERS OF FREEMASONRY

By: VW VICTOR A. YU, SGL

(A View of the Forest)

Freemasonry is powerful. So powerful that despite its being persecuted, maligned and ostracized by parties that misunderstand or purposely misunderstand our fraternity, Freemasonry still exists today. Despite the adverse propaganda hurled against us, eminent persons still persist to join our Fraternity and actively participate in our various ceremonies and endeavors.

What kind of powers does Freemasonry have that brought down oppressive regimes and laid the framework of democracy in nations? What kind of changing powers do we also see in Freemasonry that caused the great improvement of the managerial and communication skills of Masons arising from their active involvement in Masonry? Freemasonry is so powerful and has great depths. It changes not only society and also internally changes Masons supposedly for the better.

How do the powers of Freemasonry work? The human eye cannot easily see the powers of Freemasonry. But a true Masonic mind and heart sees the powers of Freemasonry not seen by the human eye. This is the reason we are called a

mystic society for we gain knowledge not by seeing but by reflecting internally.

Upon reflection, the most obvious is the power of knowledge. When we are initiated as Entered Apprentice Masons, we are introduced to a different world --- a world not only of old English language but a world full of symbols and lessons in morality, both simple and complicated --- sometimes even intriguing and incomprehensible. With such initiating experience, the Mason feels that there is a world beyond him. That there is much to learn in life and that he should continuously search for more knowledge not only in Masonry but also in life.

There are a lot of organizations that do not require the study of rituals, and symbolisms. Masons who do not want to study and learn should consider joining those organizations. Freemasonry is not for everyone. If one is not interested or refuses to study about Masonry, he will never appreciate the true essence of Freemasonry and he will consider our rituals as an unnecessary burden. For it is in our search for knowledge that is imbedded in our rituals that we learn more about our true selves and our individual destinies in life. With our solemn rituals and the lessons of morality imbedded therein, we experience the peace not of the outside world but the peace and harmony of the Lodge. We are then supposed to naturally bring this peace and harmony instilled in us to our respective families and our respective communities.

In Freemasonry, we also experience the power of friendship. United States President and MW Harry Truman once told young GIs who were sent to war that when they see a Mason, they should tell them that they are sons of Masons and they will be treated like sons. How many of us have met a brother Mason somewhere and felt as if we have found a long lost sibling causing our host to inquire if we have already known each other. When introduced to us as such, how many of us have felt obliged in our hearts to treat wives, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters of Masons like our own? Masonry indeed proves that people who undergo a common experience are supposed to share common values; hence we have this strong bond of friendship among us and our kin.

There is also power in our history. Because of the sacrifices of our departed brethren, we have reaped the benefits of a glorious past. When our role in the Philippine revolution was highlighted in the Centennial celebrations in 1998, there was a sudden interest and increase in petitioners for degrees in Masonry. When the public learns that men preeminent for their social and intellectual achievements are Masons, we tend to command respect. Without the sacrifices of those brethren who have gone this way before, Freemasonry will not be standing so powerful today.

Nowadays, has our fraternity been so much influenced by the divisive and materialistic nature of world? Do we see now in Masonry a battle of "egos" instead of a mystic circle where "hypocrisy and deceit are unknown among us" and "sincerity and plain-dealing distinguishes us"? Instead of using the powers of knowledge and friendship to promote Masonic ideals, do we have the tendency to misuse the powers of knowledge, history and friendship for our own aggrandizement and self-interest?

Are Masons today different from the respectable citizens who once wear the same lambskin aprons? Do we see

young Masons today becoming bold not because of their ideals but because they boast and abuse their relationship with Masons who are in important stations in society? Instead of being ideal Masons to emulate, do we also see elder Masons who are so egotistical that they degrade Freemasonry into an activity club wherein their pride are massaged and their narrow minds are accommodated?

Have we reduced Freemasonry today to mere fellowships, mandatory adulation of our leaders and self-centered advancements of brethren? In the ritual of the Degree of Entered Apprentice Mason, we have definite answers as to what we intend to achieve in becoming a Mason and where we were first prepared to be a Mason. All the answers point out to the internal aspects of our selves and are consistent with our Masonic goal of "making good men better". In our Opening and Closing ceremonies, we are supposed to gain wisdom that we could only relate to the real world. Once we can relate such wisdom to the real world, we will soon learn that such ceremonies are not just empty words and actions; but ancient wisdom couched in symbolism relevant to the present times.

To appreciate Freemasonry, a Mason should constantly relate Masonic principles to the real world. The mystery is that: the more we reflect internally the principles of Freemasonry, the more sincere and effective we are in our outer selves. Proficiency in our rituals is meant to improve the character of Masons. It was never meant to induce competition among us nor was it meant to cause self-adulation and self-righteousness. In our efforts to gain proficiency in our rituals, we learn time-management, patience, communication skills and other things vital to the fulfillment of our respective destinies and endeavors outside of Masonry. Such is the purpose of Freemasonry: making good men better men and not a competition for vanity.

In the performance of every ritual, we should constantly reflect upon how these rituals are supposed to make us better "persons". While we strive for uniformity in our rituals, we learn that there can never be a perfect conferral or performance of a ritual because only the Great Architect of the Universe is perfect and man can only strive for perfection and will never reach perfection. There will be some natural kinks and lapses. But perfection should be the goal of every Mason; and such perfection should consist of doing the best we can under our present circumstances. This principle of doing the very best with the substitute is a vital lesson for every Mason and is constantly referred to in our rituals. In the real world, such is also the case. We have ideals of what we want in the world, but we often make the best of the substitute we have because the ideal or perfect was never meant to be found in our lifetimes.

In every Lodge meeting and performance of our rituals, we should: constantly ask ourselves if we come out of those meetings and rituals as better persons; and reflect how we can sustain and enhance that improvement learned from Masonry.

Without directly mentioning it, the last few paragraphs of this article dealt with the second most important power of Freemasonry --- the power of transformation. This power was what removed tyrannical regimes and produced eminent Masons worthy of emulation. Such power starts from within the Mason and does not concern his status in society. For once a true commitment to Masonic principles is made in the heart, the Mason's destiny is

set towards: a better understanding and endurance of life's journeys, a better relationship with his family and community; and a better eventual peaceful union with the Supreme Grand Master in the celestial lodge above.

Some men have really become better persons after joining the Masonry. Others seemed to have misused Freemasonry and become worse after joining the Masonry. In history, Masons were real craftsmen with impressive skills in building temples and edifices. Today, we are no longer operative and use only the symbolism of the craft or trade. There are no magnificent temples or edifices being built today except our respective spiritual temples---or our inner selves. Being called Master Craftsmen (or Master Masons), are we Masters in improving ourselves?

The mentioned powers (knowledge, friendship, history and transformation) are available to every Mason. We are all adults in this Fraternity, let us each ask honestly ask ourselves--- have we harness those powers of Freemasonry to become better persons? Have we become better persons after joining Freemasonry? If our answers to both questions are negative, we have no right to remain as Masons and may find better destinies in other social organizations.

For Freemasonry demands sacrifice, the same sacrifice made by our departed brethren. For if the present Freemasonry today remains unreformed and becomes the past of future Freemasonry, we should fear for the future existence of our beloved Fraternity.

But we still have hope because we still have the greatest power of Freemasonry --- the power of prayer. Before entering into any great or important undertaking, we, Masons, are taught to invoke the blessings of God. If a Mason has only a few moments to live and want to learn the most about Masonry in the so little time that he has, the best thing to do is to read the prayers used in our rituals. If we really start to comprehend what we say in our Opening and Closing prayers during meetings and the various prayers we use in our rituals, Philippine Freemasonry has a bright hope and a bright future.

Overnight change is impossible and even hypocritical or what we call "plastic" in our lingo. But overnight decision to change is possible. Let us all make a Masonic commitment to harness the powers of Freemasonry for a better Freemasonry and a better Philippines. Freemasonry has not changed and failed men. Men failed Freemasonry. Let us together end this failure and redirect our journey towards a brighter path. Together, Brethren!

Proficient, Yes, but Masonically Educated?

By: Bro. FELICIANO B. ALAGAO Maranao Lodge No. 111

(A View of the Trees)

Worship Master, Very Worshipful Sirs, Worshipful Sirs, my Brothers, Good Evening. When I was asked by your Worshipful Master to give the Masonic Education tonight, I had no second thoughts. I knew it was a distinction and I am honored and flattered. But as I keep on treading, searching for an appropriate topic, I found more

questions that answers. I started to doubt if I was qualified to give a Masonic Education. Brethren, allow me to give my piece, I wish it educates. I promise it will be brief, it will be over before you decide to leave, but I only hope that it will linger long in your hearts and minds.

Masonic District No. 36 has achieved great lengths of success in the proficiency of rituals and lodge instructions. In attest to that, no less than a Grand Lodge recognition. Brethren, our district, in honest affirmation of this can modestly claim distinction from among other Districts. And thanks to the many pillars that we have. We are proficient, but are we Masonically educated?

There are a good number of us who can read and put to memory the Monitor from front to back and back to front, but do we understand the esoteric meanings of all the symbols and allegories in the rituals? If we do understand them, do we believe and practice them?

Take the case of the Opening & Closing of the Lodge. Every time we attend stated meetings, we always see and witness the same ritual of opening and closing. To most of us these rituals must be done solemnly and with dignity. What is its symbolism? Why can't the Master just open and close the Lodge in any way he desires? III. H.P. Oliveros said that every Mason must symbolically open & close his own personal Lodge with the same dignity. And that all the parts of his body must function distinctively in harmony for the performance of his labors. Is every Mason thinking similarly that the Masonic Lodge is also a spiritual portrait of the typical man?

How much do we know about the ritual of the mystic journey, *i.e.* From East to West by way of the South? Does the average Mason know its origin? That, as a ceremony tens of thousand years ago, it was done in imitation of the movement of the sun across the sky, to make sure that the sun would continue to pour down on them its light and warmth? To the modern day speculative Mason, what is its significance?

We may have been taught of the symbolism & meaning of the metallic substances. We were taught to be divested of all biases, unhappy prejudices, petty ambitions, anger, hatred, etc. all for harmony and harmony's sake, yet we are witness to Lodges fighting each other, brothers unwilling to forgive and forget as with the case of personalities during past two years at the Grand Lodge level. How much have we understood and how much have we lived?

Is Hiram Abiff for real? Or should I call him Khurum Abi? What is the symbolism of his murder? The Ruffians? We religiously memorize everything but we lose the very essence of the ritual. There are hundreds if not thousands of symbolisms hidden in the very beautiful rituals that we perform and yet unfortunately despite our proficiency, to the average Mason, they remain hidden.

Another thing is, of these that we study and read, which one is pure and which one is adulterated? Allow me to read an excerpt from Morals & Dogma by A. Pike, p. 105:

> *"So Masonry jealously conceals its secrets, and intentionally leads conceited interpreters astray. There is no sight under the sun more pitiful and ludicrous at once, that the spectacle of the Prestons and the Webbs, not to mention the later incarnations of Dullness and*

Commonplace, undertaking to 'explain' the old symbols of Masonry, and adding to and 'improving' them, or inventing new ones.

"To the Circle inclosing the central point, and itself traced between two parallel lines, a figure purely Kabalistic, these persons have added the superimposed Bible, and even reared on that the ladder with three or nine rounds, and then given a vapid interpretation of the whole, so profoundly absurd as actually to excite admiration."

Brethren, the ritual is the core of Freemasonry and it is taught by allegories and symbols. Unfortunately, the rituals never explain their meanings. We commit to memory everything in the monitor and yet we do not know the science and philosophy of the Craft. Some of us are letter perfect in the monitor, but ignorant of the real meaning of Masonic symbology and know so little of their esoteric teachings. How can we live as Master Masons?

We need Masonic Education, the real one, one that will bring dedication and put Masonic virtues into action, one that will translate the beautiful language of the rituals into the respectability and dignity of a Mason. Remember as Albert Pike said, "He who does right is better than he who thinks right."

In closing, allow me to share with you a story. A devoted follower of Socrates asked him the best way to acquire knowledge. Socrates responded by leading him to a river and plunging him beneath the surface., the man struggled to free himself, but Socrates kept his head submerged. Finally, after much effort, the man was able to break loose and emerge from the water. Socrates then asked, " When you thought you were drowning, what one thing did you want most of all?" Still gasping for breath, the exclaimed, "I wanted air!" the philosopher wisely commented, "when you want knowledge as much as you wanted air, then you will get it"

Thank you for the attentive ears.

DIRECTORIES AND THE STORIES THEY TELL

(Facts and Figures from: GLP General Directory MY1999-2000; Souvenir Program, 18th Convention, Philippine Masonic Association of America Inc, Aug. 30, 2002; List of Lodges, Partagas Printing House, Illinois, USA)

By: Bro. ASIONG ILLENBERGER, PM

(A View of the Undergrowth)

In 1999, the Grand Lodge of the Philippines authorized Labong Lodge No. 59 to publish a general directory of Active Masons, Lodges and Districts. The data was provided by the computer files of the Grand Lodge updated as of December 1999. The General Directory came out in time for the 84th ANCOM held in Iloilo City in April 2000. Copies of this three year old, 344 page convenience book are still on sale at the GLP Masonic Supply Store at Plaridel Temple since no updated version has yet been published. Shortly before his trip to the United States and

Canada, the Cabletow staff overheard GM Labitoria make inquiries about statistics on Filipino Masons residing in those two countries. The Cabletow since then has been giving the 2000 General Directory a close look. Listed therein are 15, 997 active Masons under GLP. What the figures reveal is a mix of curiosities:

Of Life Members, Long Living Members and Missing Members: There are 2,071 Masons above 70 years old; 506 are above 80 years old; 155 are above 90 years old; 12 are turning 100 years in 2003; 34 are already 100 years old and older. Our conclusion is that these oldsters are life members who became Masons under GLP before and shortly after the 2nd World War and whose life status cannot be determined. Why this conclusion? Because of their birthdays and supported by the inclusion of 31 (mostly with American sounding names) who are listed as ADDRESS UNKNOWN. Clarifying this is a challenge to the statisticians of the Office of the Grand Secretary. Meanwhile, it sure is great being a Pinoy Mason and live that long (albeit on paper).

Of Apple Pie with Binagoongang Adobo and the Pinoy Mason: There are 1,838 registered Pinoy Masons in US territory (except Marianas and Marshall Islands) to include those listed in US military post offices. The following is the distribution of dues paying Masons under the GLP jurisdiction now residing in 50 jurisdictions in the United States of America.

ALABAMA: 21
ALASKA: 6
ARIZONA: 40
ARKANSAS: 12
CALIFORNIA: 511
COLORADO: 24
CONNECTICUT: 6
DELAWARE: 2
FLORIDA: 154
GEORGIA: 39
HAWAII: 56
IDAHO: 4
ILLINOIS: 41
INDIANA: 13
IOWA: 2
KANSAS: 10
KENTUCKY: 7
LOUISIANA: 14
MAINE: 7
MARYLAND: 40
MASSACHUSETTS: 4
MICHIGAN: 14
MINNESOTA: 5
MISSISSIPPI: 13
MISSOURI: 18
MONTANA: 4
NEBRASKA: 2
NEVADA: 35
NEW HAMPSHIRE: 7
NEW JERSEY: 32
NEW MEXICO: 8
NEW YORK: 36
NORTH CAROLINA: 50
NORTH DAKOTA: 2
OHIO: 30
OKLAHOMA: 11
OREGON: 29
PENNSYLVANIA: 31
RHODE ISLAND: 1
SOUTH CAROLINA: 16
SOUTH DAKOTA: 2
TENNESSEE: 18
TEXAS: 144
UTAH: 5
VERMONT: 2
VIRGINA: 94
WASHINGTON: 86
WASHINGTON D.C: 4
WISCONSIN: 5
WEST VIRGINIA: 6

Of Soldiers, Sailors, Policemen and Masonry: We stopped counting the Masons listed as members of either the

Armed Forces of the Philippines or the Philippine National Police when we reached 500. However, it appears that the influence of the American bases in Subic and Clark (closed in the early 90s) are still much evident in the number of American servicemen who became Masons under the GLP. 104 are listed as members of the US Navy, thought so by their Fleet Post Office addresses and 78 are either US Army and Air Force personnel, thought so by their Army Post Office addresses.

Of Pinoy Mason Sojourners in the USA: The Philippine Masonic Association of America is the biggest of such groupings with chapters in Bremerton, State of Washington; Chicago, Illinois; Hampton Roads, Virginia; Jacksonville, Florida; Memphis, Tennessee; New Jersey City; New York City; San Diego, California; Seattle, State of Washington; Houston, Texas, Charleston, South Carolina; Washington D.C.; Vallejo, California; Great Lakes, Illinois; Los Angeles, California and Pensacola, Florida. There is also a number of Pinoy Mason organizations other than the PMAAI.

GLP jurisdiction is (awesome) MULTINATIONAL: Aside from the multitude of blue lodges located among our 7,100 islands, GLP extracts obedience from four lodges in US territory (Guam and Marshall Islands), two in Japan (Okinawa and Tokyo) and one in South Korea (Seoul).

The Grand Lodge

Most Ancient and Honorable Society
of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of New Jersey

Be it known by all Freemasons wherever so disbursed on the face of the Earth that after careful and thorough review of the principles and precepts of;

The Philippine Masonic Association of New Jersey

we have found that it is an organization well founded on acceptable Masonic principles and is engaged in the laudable Masonic endeavors of Brotherly Love and Charity. It requires of its members a strict adherence to the rules and regulations of Freemasonry and is dedicated to the universality of Freemasonry .

I, Gerald H. Grosskopf as Grand Master of Masons for the State of New Jersey due hereby proclaim and decree that the aforementioned Philippine Masonic Association of New Jersey is worthy of the recognition, respect and esteem of all Freemasons.

In Testimony Whereof, I have caused this certificate to be created and have had my seal hereto affixed.Signed in the Township of Burlington, in the State of New Jersey on this third day of October, A.D.1997, A.L. 5997.

Grand Master

We are in the same league as the highly respected Grand Lodges of Scotland (which has a blue lodge in Manila, Perla de Oriente), England, Ireland, France and other European jurisdictions, and of course there are those, uuh, number of Prince Hall lodges found in Africa, South America, the Caribbean (and yes, in Angeles, Pampanga). There must be something about Pinoy Masonry that allows us to be, ah, tolerated in those, uhm, non-3rd World Countries.

A Non-Mason Organized the 84th ANCOM: Hosting the Iloilo ANCOM was VW and Illustrious Severino C. Aguilar, then the DDGM of MD20 and the incumbent SGIG of the Panay Bodies. His name does not appear in the MY 2000 General Directory.

ON MAKING ONESELF KNOWN AS A MASON

By: Bro. JULIO M. CABALI, PM,PDDGM
Secretary, Hiram Lodge No. 88

(A View from really Up Close)

For so many years I have been traveling all over the country either as part of a Masonic undertaking in the blue lodges or in the Scottish Rite or during my business trips in earlier years when I was still working. During these trips I get to meet Masons and most of them shake my hand using the "SGOTLP" even during daytime and even when I notice many non-Masons observing. During these instances I disengage my hand and return the handshake with an EAM grip or when their grip is tight I merely cover their hand with mine. I especially remember two incidents where there was a remarkable misunderstanding over the grips other than the "SGOTLP".

Many years ago, Bro. Marcelo Gorrion (Batong Buhay Lodge No. 27), my fellow member of the famous Brothers of Harmony the Scottish Rite Chorale, was attending the Australian Machinery Show at the Inter Continental Hotel where he happened to extend physical assistance to an elderly Australian exhibitor setting up by himself his machinery for sugarcane planting. On the second day, Bro. Mar invited me to the show and related to me how he was moved to help the elderly Australian because he saw the Square and Compass logo in one of his notes but when given the "SGOTLP" did not respond. I went to see both of them in the Australian's (who I remember only as Bro. Hodge) hotel room. I introduced myself and gave him my usual handshake, whereupon he hugged me and said he was very happy to meet a brother. When I told him Bro. Mar is one of us, the Australian was surprised, "Really?, but he never attempted to test me."

Bro. Mar was surprised why Bro. Hodge immediately understood my handshake while his was not. I explained that I used only the EAM grip then shifted to the FCM grip after he answered. This clearly indicated that Masons coming from the Australian and British Isles Grand Lodges as well as those from Europe do not understand the "SGOTLP" as the true grip for a MM but the "SGSOTR" . However, their EAM and FCM grips are the same as ours. Only the American and Taiwanese brethren use the "SGOTLP".

Bro. Mar was later hired by the company of Bro. Hodge in Queensland, Australia and has been living there with his family for more than 15 years.

The other incident involved a now deceased lawyer friend who though not a Mason, was aware of many Masonic practices and knew that I am a Mason. My lawyer friend wanted to introduce me to his neighbor who was also a Mason. The occasion for us to meet came when our paths crossed along UN Avenue. My lawyer friend introduced me to his neighbor while closely watching our handshakes. My lawyer friend's neighbor tried to force the SGOTLP on my hand, but knowing that we were being closely

watched I instead gave him the EAM grip. He ignored the EAM grip and continued on forcing the SGOLP. When I also ignored it, he addressed my lawyer-friend "Pare, hindi siya Mason". I told him I was a Mason but since there was no point correcting him in the presence of a non-Mason, I excused myself.

It turned out that this newly introduced brother was proceeding to Max Restaurant where I knew there was a big Christmas Party of Shriners and he was a Shriner! In the restaurant, many brothers knew me and greeted me, further proving to him that I was indeed a Mason as I earlier told him. I decided that it was the proper place to correct him.

I showed him my 33rd degree ring as it was the only Masonic paraphernalia I had in my person at that time. I also reminded him that in our 3rd degree conferral, we were taught that if we execute the SGOTLP we do it as a prelude to the FPOF, and we could not do that in the middle of the street or when there are non-Masons observing. I don't remember how he responded to my admonition.

Up to now we continue to meet at the Grand Lodge but we just acknowledge each other by "kindatan", hesitant to bring up that awkward incident, so much so that his names escapes my memory.

Those two incidents continue to make me wonder why many brethren in our jurisdiction use the SGOTLP to introduce themselves when the EA or FC should be the proper grip. We should bear in mind the lecture in the 1st degree where PRUDENCE is espoused when in strange or mixed companies, never to let fall the least sign, token or word whereby the secrets of Freemasonry may be unlawfully communicated.

A TESTIMONIAL TO EXEMPLARS

By the 84th Grand Master for Hon. SIMEON A. DATUMANONG, Secretary of Justice (Kutang Bato No. 108) and Lt.General GREGORIO M. CAMILING, JR, Commanding General, Philippine Army (Kamayo No. 255) Manila Hotel, February 13, 2003

(A View of the Grand Master)

Much has been said about the exemplary conduct of the two brothers we are honoring tonight. But one of the pleasures of being Grand Master is that he is the last to speak and therefore his message, like the first, is the one of the better remembered. Speaking at tonight's affair is indeed a pleasure.

In my many years as a Mason, I have never ceased to be awed by the incalculable volume of mankind's accumulated wisdom that has gone into this virtual discipline the modern world has come to know as Freemasonry. As this is so, when can one be adjudged as a *compleat* Mason, one who has possession of all that there is to know about the Craft? I am sure that it is the very brave Mason who will standup and say that he knows all there is to know about the Craft. If there are no such Masons, then we have a problem we don't have *compleat* Masons who



From left sitting: PGM Bunda, LGen. Camiling, Sec. and Mrs. Datumanong, GM E. S. Labitoria, PGM Herrera.

can act as exemplars to the rest of society, attracting like minded men through the tongue of good report. On my part however, I personally think that *compleat* Masons who become the fraternity's exemplars need not be repositories of ancient wisdom alone but more importantly those who are able to translate this wisdom into a remarkable demeanor and a generally laudable conduct both personal and official. There are such Masons in our midst, not so many perhaps but there are, and our two honorees tonight are two of such exemplars.

Our two honorees, Brothers Datumanong and Camiling represent that breed of Masons who by their mere presence and demeanor exude the aura of exemplars. This aura reinforces the sense of calling or vocation which they have stamped on their respective work environments. Their professional achievements which we are in testimony tonight, give us a model to emulate. However, such a model needs to be explained that we might also become like them.

The community of philosophers have described a vocation or calling as that urge to devote a lifetime to a field of human activity that is essential to mankind. When one feels his daily work constitutes a vocation, he gives to it not merely the majority of his time but in a real sense becomes identified with it. Furthermore, viewing one's work as a vocation seems most likely to permit us to find in that work the meaningfulness, the sense of accomplishment, that all human beings require. Those who do not satisfy that need in their work will seek it elsewhere, those who do not find it at all will fall short of what humanity promises and will find their existence empty of meaning. That is why vocations are often just limited to only those fields of human endeavor that represent the pillars of human existence as well as, those that require a servitude that transcends the temporal and the petty.

Doctors take the Hippocratic Oath that healing benefits mankind and not institutions. Socrates preferred the cup of hemlock that he may remain true to the cause of learning and not to the temporal position of the powers that were in ancient Athens. Clerics are elevated to sainthood by the miracle of faith. Lawyers remain true to their clients that the objective concepts of justice are served. A soldier offers the supreme sacrifice to secure of a way

of life and accepts that when his ashes are scattered to the four winds that is part and parcel of his calling. At the risk of treading the path of the parochial, I daresay Freemasonry reinforces vocation and allows the Mason to become an exemplar when given the opportunity to lead. And when he does leave the organization he leads, he leaves a mark on the followers, the tongue of good report.

As I traveled the length and breadth of the archipelago in line with my obligations to this jurisdiction, I have been told by many that during the term of Bro. Datumanong in the different important government posts he held, many of his subordinates there became Masons. Likewise, in whatever military post Bro. Camiling was assigned Masons proliferated. Some of the brethren say that these trends were hallmarks of "sip-sip sa Boss". Whenever I hear this I just smile because I have been Boss myself many times and I know of another reality in organizational cultures.

There is a standing joke in the Philippine Army intimated to me by Masons who are soldiers. They say "the handsomest in the Army is the incumbent CG or the Commanding General and all the boys of the immediate past CG are the ugliest". I will tell you another joke, that is also true in the Department of Justice, the Department of Public Works and even inside the iron grilled dormitories of Muntinglupa. So becoming a Mason just to make sip-sip is not often a very healthy way to rise in an organization.

Men choose to become Masons of their own accord and in many instances by the unspoken influence of the tongue of good report from exemplars such as Brothers Datumanong and Camiling.

In behalf of the Brethren of this jurisdiction, I thank our two honorees tonight, as their achievements bring honor to all of us Freemasons. We bask in the tributes given them as much as do their immediate families, who we congratulate for inspiring Bro. Datumanong and Camiling to reach such heights in their respective calling.

Good night and may TGAOTU bless us all.

ESOTERIC REALM

BROTHERLY LOVE AN OBSERVATION

By: Bro. **FLORENCIO Y. SY,** PDGL, Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4

Love, as defined by Webster, is an affection or liking for someone or something. According to the Krishnamurtic, Love, for most of us, is a sort of

response to either pleasure or pleasant sensual feelings insofar as we are presently clothed in this garment of flesh and bone, which has not attained certain level of evolutionary stage. He further stated, "Where you are, love is not." At first, this will seem to be a controversial phrase. The real meaning refers to those of us where the "I", "Me", "We" and "Ours" are still dominantly adhered to, thus, we cannot be expected to express the "love" to all men and things, as will be explained later.

Brotherly Love is one of the principal "tenets" of Freemasonry. As shown in the lecture of the 1st Degree, as quoted "By the exercise of Brotherly Love we are taught to regard the **whole** human species as **one family**, the high and the low, the rich and the poor who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabit of the same planet, are to **aid, support and protect** each other. On this principle Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinions; and causes true friendship to exist among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance." The obligatory object of the Theosophical Society regarding the Brotherhood of Humanity is explained thus "The recognition of this principle of brotherhood is intellectual and the endeavors to live it practically are very stimulative to the higher nature of man. To live it even to a small extent cleanses the heart and purifies the vision, to live it perfectly is to eradicate all sense of separateness". Similarly, it has been shown that with most of us who are still un-evolved, our intellect is a separative principle, spontaneously combative and self-assertive, its very nature being to assert itself as separate from others. On the lower planes (of evolution) this sense of separateness and conflict of interest, brotherhood and love cannot be realized. Thus the Theosophist has explained that brotherly love will be difficult to express in the lower planes but can be fully realized on the **spiritual planes,** the Atmic and the Buddhic wherein their only foundations are found and which attainment requires a long evolutionary process.

The "self" in man, as explained by theosophist, is likened to a ray of the universal "Self". Unity resides in the "Self" and that unity will be felt with perfect sympathy once the Buddhic plane is attained. Once a man becomes conscious on **that** plane a certain stage of one's pilgrimages here on earth (called the first great initiation) he will then realize the union of living things as everything have the same **Divine Life within** them.

In Masonic lecture pertaining to the phrase "on the level" stresses equality of mankind. In the question is usually raised if brotherhood connotes equality of man. A distinction is made by the teachings from the Theosophist regarding the term "equality". If it is thereby meant that all men are equal in their origin and that everyone, born of the divine nature, will, after having **unfolded** their the potentiality into the power to ultimately **reach the manifested Divinity**, then in that sense Equality is true." However, the teachings also stress that "in the course of evolution, in the long changing struggle between spirit and matter, **inequalities** will arise; while in **spirit** all men are equal, in the **flesh** they are radically unequal."

We must further realize that in the light of **that** high ideal we see that inequality of age means inequality of capacity and power, therefore, resulting in inequality of duty. The

strong exists not for tyranny but for service, not for trampling the weak under foot but for protecting them with tenderness and compassion. In such qualities for the concern for others as shown above, there is a parallelism with our Masonic installation teachings. Each age has its own duty, the **younger** to **learn and to serve**, the **older** to **direct and protect**, all alike in loving and helpful in the great family of humanity.

Clarification is also needed to make distinction between "inequality" in people and that of nations. Insofar as the people are concerned, it has been shown that different stages of evolution contribute to this situation of inequalities. In the case of nations, it is basically the congregation of the souls belonging to a common stage of spiritual development. As such, further emphasis is made that we do not despise the flower because it is not yet the fruit, nor despise a babe because it is not yet the man; we do not despise ourselves because we are not yet as Gods, and so we need not despise **baby souls** not yet as developed as we are.

As a consequence of the above explanations, we can now understand that the basis of why men shut themselves out from their brothers' hearts by differences of caste, creed, class, clan, country or color is due to ignorance of the laws of nature. On the other hand, the evolved or wise man rising above all those external differences sees all as part of the family, as children of one father, with identity of essentials of life. Thus, to further magnify the above mentioned concepts, following verses are hereby quoted:

Small souls inquire, 'Belongs this man
To our own class, kitch or clan?'
But larger-hearted men embrace
As brothers all the human race.

To one who might be curious about India's Caste System, the above explanations provide the understanding. As explained that brotherhood does not imply. The old theory of castes was based on the law of Brotherhood, which recognized **inequality in the age** of the soul - of thus the inequality of development. It is on this **truth** that differences among the various castes and classes of society rest, brothers of different ages in the human family having different duties, occupations and responsibilities.

On the matter of how we can now exercise the hastening of the realization of brotherhood or love in this physical life, we can hasten it on the physical plane by the practice of altruism. However, as a caution, we shall have to keep in mind that different brothers need different kinds of help owing to their inequality of development, and that it is of great importance to help our brother to grow than to save him from physical suffering.

Regarding helping the lower kingdoms, we are told to develop our attitude towards our younger brethren of lower kingdoms which should not be one of hardness, injustice and thoughtlessness or of cruelty for self amusement and personal gain, but that of protection and guardianship with gratitude for their service to us. The important aspects that we have to understand is that they are brought in contact with us in order that we may do something in fostering the budding mentality within them, and as well as to raise them to higher level emotionally and thus quicken their individualization. We should also refuse to share the sin of slaughter by eating meat or fish, or by wearing articles obtained only by the slaughter of animals, like sealskin or feathers of birds.

The teachings include that we

have a duty even towards lower forms of life than the mineral kingdom, i.e., the elemental essence which surrounds us everywhere and forms the three elemental kingdoms. The essence progresses by means of the effect which we produce upon it by our thoughts, passions, emotions and our duty towards those kingdoms will be fully discharged only if we carry out our higher ideals and see that our thoughts and emotions are of the highest possible type. It is the expansive aspect of considerations toward our whole surroundings which might puzzle us why this is so. This is because the Theosophist regards that all things, animated or not, have the **divine life within** them.

In conclusion, let me further quote the following: "It is the law of the spirit that, unlike matter, which perishes in the using, it leaves by giving, and increase by using. Truth never diminishes in the sharing. Knowledge, if not shared, becomes cancer in the brain, but if shared with our ignorant brethren, the torch of knowledge might light a thousand other torches without any diminution in the original flame. We are pure only in order to go to the impure, for real purity can never be stained or soiled, though it may purify others and lead them to a higher standard. So the law of Brotherhood or love of humanity lays on us as a duty - to raised the sinner and the debased to our own purity, to teach the ignorant , to rescue the miserable, to feed the starving, to nurse the diseased. Parts of this Brotherhood or love, we live in and for others, influencing all and being influenced by them. We cannot slip a single step backward without weakening the whole of humanity, nor to rise one step higher without lifting the whole towards purity. We should therefore strive to work for the good of the whole of human family with perfect peace and harmony."

We hope that this article provides sufficient background for our own developments and understanding of esoteric parallels of Freemasonry, as it is said that "Thus all kinds of pain that a soul has in his imperfection are, as it were, the stones with which the temple of the perfect Spirit is finally built. Pain in the end there will not be, though pain in the building there must be. But as the Spirit goes onward and grows freer, peace takes the place of struggle, and joy takes the place of pain. Moreover, pain lies merely in the sheaths in which the Spirit is clothed and not in his essential nature. The Spirit is bliss, not sorrow; he is joy, not pain. And as pain is passing, bliss is eternal."

APPENDANT BODIES

THE SCOTTISH RITE

(Condensed from Cabletow sources and Clausen's Commentaries on Morals and Dogma)

Historically, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry as we know it evolved as the Rite of Perfection over 200 years ago on the continent of Europe under the Constitutions of 1762. Later, the Grand Constitutions of 1786 were enacted and became the creative laws for us

and all our descendant Supreme Councils of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Our Supreme Council was organized at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1801 as the Mother Supreme Council of the World from whence all regular and recognized Supreme Councils throughout the world trace their pedigree.

Ecossais (Scottish) Masonry bubbled to the surface in some form at various times and places in Scotland, England and France. It seems impossible to trace the original wellspring but we know now that a confluence of tributary streams flowed into a reservoir at Bordeaux, France. This developed into regular units there known as the Rite of Perfection that Stephen (Etienne) Morin was empowered in 1761 to bring into the Western Hemisphere. The label of "Ecossais" or Scottish" put upon these developments did not refer to Scotland but gave them the status of an established brand. Through Morin's first appointment about 1765 in the West Indies of Henry Andrew Francken as Deputy Grand Inspector General, and the successive descendant appointments, there finally was established at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1801, the first Thirty-third Degree Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. Today all the regular and recognized Supreme Councils that exist in the world stem from this source.

Bordeaux apparently was the oldest provincial Masonic center in Europe and it was the home of Morin. He was made a Mason there in Loge Francaise. This was the eldest of more that fifty daughter Lodges of Loge L'Anglaise, a Lodge that British Masons founded at Bordeaux in 1732. These daughter Lodges gave birth to a proliferation of degrees that resulted in the progenitors of our Scottish Rite.

The original reason for the organization of separate Lodges to confer these "higher" degrees may have been a desire to limit the membership to those of the Christian faith. Anderson's Constitutions of 1723 had widened the field of Masonry to men of all denominations who believed in the Deity and in the hope of immortality. In this connection it should be observed the ultimate Scottish Rite Constitutions of 1786 similarly opened the doors to men of all religions and provide that only four of the governing nine need profess the prevailing religion.

Later, these Lodges flourished and blossomed in the fertile fields of Masonry for more important reasons. They became repositories for revelations through sequential degrees of great truths derived from the arcane wisdom of the ages, including discoveries original Freemasonry concealed in the secret knowledge, symbology and the Lesser and Greater Mysteries that came down across drifting centuries, even long before the riddle of the Mystic Sphinx first puzzled men's minds.

The development and expansion of degrees into those of our Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite thus evolved out of Bordeaux's Rite of Perfection, out of Paris' aristocratic Chapter of Clermont that the Chevalier de Bonneville founded at the College of Jesuits in 1754, out of the Council of Emperors of the East and West, and out of several other tributary systems. Later, the renowned Sovereign Grand Commander and classical scholar, Albert Pike, brought order of chaos and edited or rewrote the rituals for these degrees.

On February 21, 1802, the Charleston Supreme Council granted to Comte Auguste de Grasse-Tilly, a French nobleman who acquired American citizenship, a patent to establish other Scottish Rite organizations under the Grand Constitutions. Upon returning to Bordeaux, de Grasse established the Supreme Council of France in 1804, of Italy in 1805, of Spain in 1809 and of Belgium in 1817. Thus from the labors, leadership and promotional successes of Morin and Francken, they launched the Scottish Rite into a creative and developing orbit, first in the West Indies and the United States and then around the world.

But the actual roots of the Scottish Rite go far deeper. Tracing them is a romantic and exciting quest for adventure in the realm of the mind and the spirit. It is a superb story of success - more intriguing than the storied search for the Holy Grail and more rewarding than a successful probe for the philosopher's stone.

Its teachings and symbols preceded its formal organization by thousands of years. They go deep into ancient ages. The signs, symbols and inscriptions come to us from across long, drifting centuries and will be found in the tombs and temples of India to those of Nubia, through the valley of the Nile in Egypt down to its delta, as well as in what was then known as Chaldea, Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome and even Mexico and Yucatan. The Scottish Rite, therefore is a treasure house in which there is stored the ageless essence of immutable laws, the accumulation of thousands of years of Masonic experience.

We learn its mission through a system of progressive degrees of instruction. We teach our members the



This is the oldest known representation of the double-headed eagle found in Eyptian tombs which competent Egyptologists estimate an age of no less than 7,000 years B.C.

highest ethics, the wise expositions of philosophy and religion, the blessing of charity. Our code of personal conduct stems from the precepts of chivalry, the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule. We reveal truly the wisdom of the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries and their symbols of words and phrases long considered lost. These were the truths that Plato, Pythagoras, Socrates, Homer and other intellects of the ages held in high esteem, that have reappeared in later religions, and that never were disclosed until after timely preparation and purification of selected and trusted Initiates.

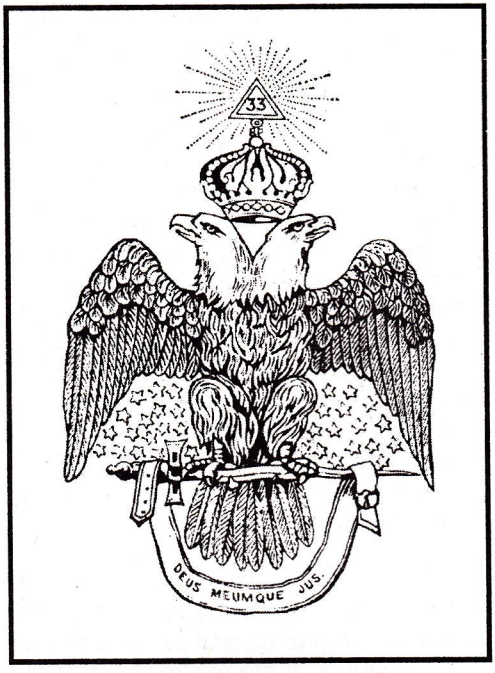
Our degrees represent the study and reflection of many men during many years and at a heavy cost, the culling of

hundreds of volumes for effective portrayals and illustrations and more labor than the accumulated endeavors of a lifetime engaged in efforts to attain eminence or riches. Our members therefore receive a gift of the greatest value. They gain a comprehensive knowledge of our heritage of history, philosophy, religion, morality, freedom and toleration, and of their relationship to their Creator, their country, their family and themselves. These well may lead us also to that understanding of identity, clarity of mind and energy of will that propel toward personal success in life.

We carry out our mission in a series of spiritual, charitable and moral programs. We make living, breathing, vital parts of our activities the recovery and maintenance of moral standards and spiritual values, the pride of patriotism and love of flag and country, the dispensing of charity without regard to race, color or creed.

We stand for positive programs but fight with moral courage and enthusiasm every force or power that would seek to destroy freedom, including spiritual despotism and political tyranny. We believe and teach that sovereignty of the state resides in control by the people themselves and not in some self-appointed dictator or despotic totalitarian. We therefore advocate complete separation of church and state, absolute freedom and protection of religion, press and assembly, and the dignity of every individual. Those we consider vital for the ultimate liberties and independence of our people.

Ours therefore has been a strong voice for human dignity, political justice, moral values and civic responsibility. Through our teachings



The Double-Headed Eagle of the Ancient Scottish Rite

millions of men and women have discovered an opportunity to lead more rewarding lives. The example of our actions has been as stirring and inspiring as that of our collective commitment to true human progress.

The Scottish Rite can be likened to a tree of sparkling symbolic jewels, surmounted with the Blazing Star of Truth that displays the dazzling splendor of the Mystic Doctrine of the Universe and the reflected glory of the Deity.

The introduction of the Scottish Rite in the Philippines followed closely on the heels of the establishment of Blue Lodges. The first Grand Jurisdictions to set foot in our country were of the Orient type, which had authority not only over Blue Lodges, but also over the Scottish and Adoptive Rites, unlike our present Grand Lodge which has control over Blue Lodges only. It was but natural therefore, that they also endeavored to organize

Scottish Rite Bodies here.

Thus when the Gran Oriente de España approved a plan to organize a District Grand Lodge in the Philippines in the 1870s, it also called for the organization of a Chapter of the Royal Arch, a Sovereign Chapter of the Rose Croix and a Chamber of Knights Kadosh. We read that by 1879 the Grand Oriente de España was able to form a nucleaus of lodges in Manila, Iloilo, Cebu, Cavite and Zamboanga and in each one of these cities a Chamber of Knights Kadosh, Chapter of Rose Croix and a Grand Triangle of the Royal Arch were constituted.

When the Gran Oriente Español set foot on Philippine soil in the 1890s, it also established Scottish Rite Bodies. Among these were the Camara del 30 No. 7, Caballeros de Rosa Croix No.18, Real Arco No. 20, Elegido del Nueve No. 21 and Consejo Progresso No. 71, all in Manila.

All these Scottish Rite Bodies ceased working during the revolution against Spain, but activities were resumed upon the return of normalcy with the occupation of the country by the Americans. In 1907 the Gran Oriente Español authorized the formation of Noli Me Tangere Chapter of Rose Croix No. 53 and four years later, on December 5, 1911, it chartered Hermanos del 96, Council KK. In the meantime, the Americans also took steps to established their own Scottish Rite Bodies here. In an allocution delivered in 1903 at the session of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Southern Jurisdiction, USA, Grand Commander Richardson announce that his Supreme Council was assuming jurisdiction over the Philippines.

Four years later, the Southern Jurisdiction passed a resolution that all Masonic matters in the Philippines be left to the judgment of Illustrious Brother W. Frank Pierce, 33rd , the Sovereign Grand Inspector General in charge. As a result of this action, a Scottish Rite Lyceum of the Philippines was organized on January 29, 1908 with Judge Charles S. Lobingier as Venerable Preceptor. The Lyceum spearheaded the establishment of Scottish Rite Bodies, which culminated in the chartering of Manu Chapter of Rose Croix No. 1, Confucius Council KK No. 1, Gautama Consistory No. 1 and Mount Arayat Lodge of Perfection No. 1 in 1911. This set of bodies now constitutes what is known as Manila Bodies.

In 1916 another set of bodies was formed to accommodate the large number of Filipino Masons who preferred to work in the Spanish tongue. Letters temporary were extended to Lakadola Lodge of Perfection No. 2, Burgos Chapter of Rose Croix No. 2, and Malcampo Council No. 2 KK to form the nucleaus of the new Philippine Bodies.

The following year the great unification of Philippine Masonry took place and the members of Noli Me Tangere Chapter and Hermanos del 96 Council were absorbed by the Philippine Bodies. Their affiliation precipitated the closure of Noli Me Tangere Chapter and Hermanos del 96 Council under the Gran Oriente Español, but led to the organization Rizal Consistory No. 2 of the Philippine Bodies.

After the unification of Philippine Masonry, Scottish Rite Masonry in our country prospered. By 1939, we find the following additional bodies on its roles: Lopez Jaena Lodge of Perfection in Iloilo, and Del Pilar Consistory, McKinley Council of Kadosh, Mabini Chapter of Rose Croix and Cebu Lodge of

Perfection, all in Cebu.

The outbreak of the Second World War, brought about the closure for the second time of Masonic Lodges and Bodies in our country. But when peace returned, the Scottish Rite Bodies were once again re-established. Additional Bodies were organized.

On July 4, 1946 Philippine Independence was proclaimed and Scottish Rite Masons began agitating for their own independence. In 1949 they petitioned the Mother Council of the World of the 33rd Degree of the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States for authority to create a Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Republic of the Philippines. The petition was approved on October 21, 1949 and on the same day a charter was issued. On January 1, 1950 the new Supreme Council came into being. From that day on Scottish Rite in the Philippines enjoyed a phenomenal growth such that today we have over fifty set of Bodies, serving the higher degree aspirations of countless Filipino Master Masons all over the archipelago

FEATURES

THE CABLETOW TURNS 80

(Condensed excerpts from THE BRETHREN IN THE DAYS OF EMPIRE by MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM and THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MANILA LODGE NO.1 by MW William C. Councell, PGM)

In 1922, the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands took steps to publish an official organ. At that time several worthy Masonic reviews were being published by individual lodges and bodies. Sinukuan Lodge for example, had its *Acacia*, Nilad Lodge its *Hojas Sueltas*, Manila Bodies its *Far Eastern Freemason* and Philippine Bodies its *El Aguila*. These publications, however, did not satisfy the needs of the Grand Lodge, so Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 proposed "a Masonic newspaper, either weekly, semi-monthly or monthly which shall be the official organ of the M.W. Grand Lodge." On January 22, 1922, the Grand Lodge endorsed the proposal to the incoming Grand Master. A publication called *The Level* was published but it only lasted four issues, the last of which was not even distributed. Its editorial quality was unsatisfactory and the funds for it were insufficient.

At the Annual Communications of (January) 1923, a resolution to revive the official organ was approved. In June of that year, the first issue of the CABLETOW came out. Shortly after his installation, Most Worshipful Brother Frederic H. Stevens set about to carry out this resolution which was approved by the Grand Lodge on January 24, 1922 at its annual meeting. Brother Stevens, an experienced printer and publisher, thereupon engaged Brother Samuel Stickney, with many years of experience in the journalistic field, as

Business Manager, and Brothers George R. Harvey, Teodoro M. Kalaw and Leo Fisher as Associate Editors.

In its maiden issue of June 1, 1923, the CABLETOW editorial announced the aims and purposes of the publication:

"No progressive Mason will deny the necessity of Masonic periodicals. The time when Masonry was obliged to work in the dark is a thing of the dim past. Our Brethren demand more light in Masonry; they are anxious to keep informed of what the Craft is doing in the Islands and abroad; they are ready to welcome with open arms any Masonic literature they know to be regular and authorized in these times when clandestine masonry is rampant, and year after year we have heard expressed desire that our Grand Lodge publish something in the nature of "Official Gazette", informing the Craft in the Islands of the edicts, circulars and decisions of the Grand Master, giving them other news of interest, and if possible, containing articles on Masonic subjects for the enlightenment and instruction of the thousands of Masons dispersed throughout our wide-spread archipelago.

"This necessity the CABLETOW has come to fill and we have no doubt that it will fill it adequately. Owing to the lack of funds in the treasury of the Grand Lodge it has been found necessary to make advertisements a feature of this paper in order to enable its management to get a copy to each Mason of the Islands instead of furnishing only five copies to each Lodge, as contemplated in the Grand Lodge resolution, and to give its readers a credible, well gotten-up paper of which no Grand Body of the world need to be ashamed.

"Each issue will contain articles embodying the fundamental features of Masonry beginning with the 'Old Landmarks', which will be found in this issue. The 'Ancient Charges' and other important Masonic documents not available to every Mason and which every Mason ought to know, will follow, and the CABLETOW will thus become a valuable library of reference to the Philippine Mason, in addition to being a collection of edicts , circulars and decisions published from time to time. The Lodge or Mason having a complete file of the CABLETOW will soon wonder how the Grand Lodge and Masonry in these Islands ever got along without this paper, and we predict that in a few years, the first issues of the CABLETOW will be sought after to complete collections, and we therefore recommend to all Brethren and Lodges that they carefully preserve this and succeeding numbers, because the Grand Lodge cannot guarantee and extra supply for the future. A word to the wise is sufficient".

The CABLETOW met with some criticisms at first. But as the second, third and fourth issues came out, even the scoffers were won over. The *word to the wise* was indeed prophetic. Since its first issue, THE CABLETOW has consistently been an official gazette and a library of reference for the Craft in the Philippines, the concern for which is always an agenda item during every Annual Communication thereafter. The Masonic careers of many of our most respected elders in the Craft include "tours of duty" with the CABLETOW. Sadly that warning about keeping copies for posterity also came true, our library at Plaridel Temple does not contain all the intact copies of the CABLETOW, including tragically, that of the maiden issue. IVI.

THE TREEHOUSE DIALOGUES

And so it has come to pass that after the labors of the lodges at Plaridel Temple, the Brethren would retire to the treehouse by the acacia trees in the temple courtyard and partake of refreshments, discussing deep into the night matters sublime. Acacia trees abound nationwide as do treehouses. Attending a gathering of Masons during the hours of refreshment can be an enlightening experience even to the initiated.

During one such gathering, some newly raised brothers brought up the topic of exchanges of signs of recognition in a public place. VW Ben Tan was explaining the proper way to conceal the communication of tokens. During the conversations, the topics about tokens drifted to other forms practiced by other jurisdictions and their rites. VW Flor Y. Sy commented that the so-called Chinese Masons practiced a lot of secret recognition exchanges, much more than we do in Freemasonry. Brought up during the conversations were stories about the numerous secret societies which proliferated in China especially in the aftermath of the rebellion staged by a group of monks called the Society of the Right Harmonious Fists or known to most of the world as the Boxers. Their rebellion of the late 1800s plunged Imperial China into the inevitable spiral towards oblivion and ushered the age of Sun Yat Sen's republican movement. Bro. Sy added that there are presently latter day remnants of five of China's secret societies that can be found in the Philippines. They are called by us Freemasons as clandestine Chinese Masons. Bros. Tan and Sy clarify however that their being called Masons are purely incidental and that their history, philosophy and rites, though containing parallels with ours, in detail and objectives they are much different.

In keeping with the objective of Treehouse Dialogues to diffuse these discussions of the sublime to the bigger treehouse audience that is the Cabletow readership, a research on the matter was embarked on two geographical areas. VW Flor Sy researched on the evolution of the Chinese Masons of the Philippines as part of the upheavals in China at the turn of the 1900s. On the other hand a wide ranging look was made at the so-called Asia Minor. This was triggered by the book of a past grand master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines endorsed by no less than our Grand Secretary, MW Reynold Fajardo, himself a past editor-in-chief of Cabletow. The introduction chapter of this book presented a veritable Pandora's Box of secret societies, arcane schools and tribal lineages whose histories, philosophies and rituals have contributed directly or obliquely to a body of knowledge that now guides Freemasonry. This compilation of short articles shows that the idea of "mankind being one big family where brotherly love reigns in consonance of the design of TGAOTU" was a derivative from many proto-Freemasons that lived in those parts of the world where the clouds of war periodically appears. *Welcome to the gardens of the temple where immersions into the sublime pain and reactionaries entertain. IVI*

POSSIBLE ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY

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Who the early Freemasons really were, and whence they came, may afford a tempting theme for inquiry to the speculative antiquary. But it is enveloped in obscurity, and lies far outside the domain of authentic history. In proceeding retrogressively, and attempting to trace the origin of our Fraternity, when we reach the Fourteenth Century, the genealogical proofs are exhausted. Still, from the documentary evidence which has carried us this far, we shall at least be justified in assuming that the Masonry practiced in the Lodges in that period was of no recent institution. Beyond this conclusion, nothing further can be confidently laid down with regard to the more remote past of the sodality. Certain possibilities are, indeed, suggested by the evidence, and to these attention will again be directed; but as my own inferences may be found to differ in some material respects from those of other writers, it will be best if a short summary is first proceeded with the leading theories of Masonic origin that will give my readers a background and then proceed with the history and possible origin of Freemasonry in the Philippines, then to Manila Lodge No.1 which is the real reason for this labor of love.

Freemasonry has exercised a remarkable influence over all other oathbound societies for a long period. What that period is, cannot be absolutely, though it may be approximately, determined. The second quarter of the Eighteenth Century constitutes a sort of zone that will illustrate my meaning. About the year 1725, Freemasonry was beginning to be widely known, and about the year 1750 it has become thoroughly so. If, therefore, we can trace the customs of any other oathbound societies as they existed, let us say before 1725, there is a strong probability, amounting almost to certainty, that such were in no way influenced or affected by Freemasonry. But directly that line is passed, and we are introduced to usages which prevailed at any later date, the suspicion will arise that the influence of our own Craft may have made itself felt, and it will resolve itself into a mere question of degree, becoming extensive or the reverse, according to evidence dating earlier or later in the century. As we pass, moreover, from the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Century, what was previously suspicion will merge into strong probability or more. Evidence of customs now existing by no means proves that they are of very old standing. If the ceremonial of the Craft to a certain extent finds a parallel in the observance of the DRUSES and the ANSARIYEH - that is to say, if the writers, by whom we are so informed, have not been misled by resemblances more or less fanciful and imaginary - then I believe that these Sectaries of Mount Lebanon adopted some of the practices of the Freemasons. The same may be said with respect to the rites of many other so-called secret societies, for example, the BEGTASCHI of Turkey, and the YESIDIS of Armenia and Asia Minor. Still, I must not pass over in silence an alternative supposition, namely, what has been called "the doctrine of chance coincidences", which may possibly be held to apply in some cases I have already cited, and which certainly apply to myself to fully account for the great bulk of stories that are related to so-called "Masonic Signs" having been exchanged by travelers with Arabs, Abyssinians, Dervishes, North American

Indians, Australian natives, and the various tribes of Africa.

Examples of older types of such associations may be found in the SUFIS of Persia; in the KUMOSO of Japan (now extinct), who challenged one another by signs; and very possibly in the leading secret societies of China, which claim to have existed for several centuries, and admit their members with ceremonies approximating more or less closely to our own.

The late Sir Chaloner Alabaster, an indefatigable student of Masonry, tells us "Going then into the records we possess of the earliest historic times in China, I find clear evidence of the existence of a Mystic Faith expressed in allegorical form and illustrated, as with us, by symbols. The secrets of this Faith were orally transmitted, the Chiefs alone pretending to have full knowledge of them. I find, moreover, that in these earliest ages this Faith took a Masonic form, the secrets being recorded in symbol buildings like the Tabernacle Moses put up in the desert, and the Temple his successor, Solomon, built in Jerusalem; that the various offices in the hierarchy of this religion were distinguished by the Symbolic Jewels held by them during their term of office, and that, as with us, at the rites of their religion, they wore leather aprons, such as have come down to us, the Compasses and Square are used as the symbols of right conduct. The man who had the Compasses and Square, and regulated his life thereby, being then, as now, considered to possess the secrets and to carry out the principles of true propriety. Finally, I find one of the most ancient names by which the Deity is spoken of in China, is that of the First Builder, or, as Masons say, the "Great Architect of the Universe".

The first of the secret societies of China in age, dignity, and importance, is called the Triad from the native name of San-ho-hwi, or "three united" the three being Heaven, Earth and Man. Another term by which it is known is Thian-Ti hwi, or "Heaven, and Earth Alliance" (Hung-League), the explanation of both names being the same, vis., that when Heaven, Earth, and Man unite in restoring the Ming Dynasty, the perfect triangle will be formed, and universal peace will be the result.

Although a good deal was whispered about them, the ways of the Society were enveloped in mystery, so long as the members were confined to the "Middle Kingdom". But when they began to spread into Sumatra, Java and the Straits Settlements, their doings were made public.

Until the overthrow of the Ming dynasty (1644), the Triad Sodality seems to have been a benevolent association of the most exalted character - mystical, philosophic and religious - but the Manchu Conquest transformed it from the year 1674 into a band of rebels and conspirators.

The Grand Symbol of the Society is a Triangle, which appears in every ceremony; while the Foot-rule, the Scales, and Weights are laid in the sacred "bushel" upon the Altar before the opening of the Lodge. The Altar and the Seat of the Presiding Officer are in the East. The members call each other brother, worship one God, and possess a system of grips and signs. On his admission, a candidate becomes dead to everyone except to members of the League, and considers himself (after entering the Society) to have been newly born. The last ceremony is drinking blood a few drops of his own in a cupful of

Arrack, emphasizing the vow of secrecy. The blood sacrifice is a very ancient custom, and covenants sworn to in the same manner as is done by the Triad Sodality, viz., by the shedding of blood, are recorded as having taken place as early as the period of the Chan dynasty, i.e., 1122 B.C.

Very much later, but still at a time comparatively remote from our own (1520), Fernando de Magalhaens, or, as we like to call him, Magellan, discovered the Philippines, and the king of Cebu proposed a treaty, to be ratified by the ceremony of blood-brotherhood, after the native custom. Magellan assented and the ceremony was performed.

As in Masonry, there were Lodges of Instruction for the benefit of zealous members of the Triad family.

On examining the ritual, a difficulty is encountered in the numerous allusions to the Buddhist and Taoist Symbolism. Concerning the former, we are fairly well informed, but about the latter very little is known.

Enough has been said, perhaps, to show that the analogy between the Chinese society and Freemasonry is possibly something more than a coincidence. In the view of the leading authority on the history and procedure of the Triad Fraternity, - "For those who believe in the unity of the human race, it will seem less strange that there exist a marked resemblance between both societies, and they will more readily comprehend the similarity of the symbols and institutions of these societies. If the theory of the unity of the human race be the more correct one, it would be very likely that the nations, when, they spread themselves from the supposed cradle of mankind the Plains of Middle Asia over all the world, retained the notion that they were once all brethren and formed one family perhaps Masonry divided itself into two branches: one passing to the West and the other directing itself to the East, and, finding a fertile soil for its development in China.

On the other hand Mr. Herbert A. Giles, while admitting that, - "From time immemorial we find the Square and Compasses used by Chinese writers, either together or separately, to symbolize precisely the same phases of moral conduct as in our own system of Freemasonry," goes to say, - 'It has been accepted as a physical axiom in China that 'Heaven is round, Earth is Square'; and among the relics of the nature-worship of old, we find the Altar of Heaven at Peking round, while the Altar of Earth is square. By the marriage of Heaven and Earth, the conjunction of the Circle and Square, the Chinese believed that all things were produced and subsequently distributed, each according to its own proper function. And such is, in my opinion, the undoubted origin of the term "Square and Compasses" as figuratively applied to human conduct by the earliest ancestors of the Chinese people.

Then there is the coincidence to which Sir Chaloner Alabaster called attention, as existing between the old religion of China and the ritual and observances of our Craft; and after pointing out that a Chinese character, relied upon by the latter, had only been introduced some four hundred years after Christ, when the period of the old religion of China had long passed away, expresses himself in the following terms: - "The Chinese language contains many characters apparently Masonic in form, but almost all the coincidences vanish for the most part into thin air when we recollect that the written symbols of China are no longer what they were".

The extracts from the oldest of the Chinese Classics which refer to the symbolism of the Mason's art might be greatly multiplied, but a sufficiency has been advanced to warrant the assumption that among a very ancient people, and long prior to the Christian era, there was a moralization of the implements of the Mason's trade, together with a symbolical teaching which, in course of time, became lost or obscured.

THE ANSYREEH

(From: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Internet Sources)

A sect found in the mountains of Lebanon, of Northern Syria. Like the Druses, toward whom, however, they entertain a violent hostility, and the Assassins, they have a secret mode of recognition and a secret religion, which does not appear to be well understood by them. "However," says Rev. Mr. Lyde, who visited them in 1852, "there is one in which they all seem agreed, and which acts as a kind of Freemasonry in binding together the scattered members of their body, namely, secret prayers which are taught to every make child of a certain age, and are repeated at stated times, in stated places and accompanied with religious rites."

The Ansyreeh arose about the same time with the Assassins, and, like them, their religion appears to be an ill-digested mixture of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. To the Masonic scholars these secret sects of Syria present an interesting study, because of their supposed connection with the Templars during the Crusades, the entire results of which are yet to be investigated.

In modern times the Ansyreeh of Mackey's time (Circa 1916) have come to be known as the ALAWITES.

The ALAWITES are an Islamic sect, stemming from the Twelver Shi'is. They live in Syria, mainly in the mountains near the city of Latakia, but many also live in the cities of Hama and Homs, and in recent decades there has been a migration to Damascus. Their exact number is not known, but estimated to be between 1,5 and 1,8 million. Most of them live from agriculture, but the Alawites are also central in the leadership of Syria, as the incumbent president Dr. Bashar al-Assad is an Alawite (like his late father and predecessor, Air Force General Hafez Assad).

Their name is a recent one earlier they were known as Nusairis, Namiriya or **ANSARIYYA.** The names 'Nusairi' and 'Namiriya' came from their first theologian, Muhammad bin Nusairi n-Namiri. The name 'ANSARIYYA' came from the mountain region in Syria where this sect lived.

In their view, Ali, cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, is the bearer of divine essence, and that he is the second most elevated prophet (second only to Muhammad). The Alawites have 7 pillars in their religion. 5 of these are similar to other Muslims, (the creed, the prayers, alms, pilgrimage to Mecca and fasting during the month of Ramadan), but the Alawites consider these as symbols, and therefore they do not practice what other Muslims consider as duties. The other 2 pillars are jihad, holy struggle, and waliya (devotion to Ali, and struggle against his enemies).

The Alawites celebrate the same festivals as most other Shi'is, like Idu l-

Fitr, Idu l-Kabir and Ashura. But they also celebrate some of the same festivals as the Christians, like Christmas and Epiphany, as well as Nawruz, which originally is the Zoroastrian New Year.

Through their history, the Alawites have often been in conflict with the rulers as well as other Muslims, who often have claimed that they are not Muslims. The Alawites consider themselves to be moderate Shi'i Muslims.

In 857, Muhammadu bni Nusair claimed to be the gate (Bab) or representative to the 10th imam among the Shi'is, Ali al Hadi. In the 10th century, the sect was firmly established by Husayn ibn Hamdan al-Khasibi, during the Shi'i Hamdanid dynasty of Aleppo. In !004: The Hamdanid dynasty falls, and the Alawites are driven out of Aleppo, and centuries of hardship begins and the advent of the secret oathbound leadership sectors. In 1256 Alamut fell to the Mongols and shortly thereafter the Mamluks regained the area. The Mamluks proceeded to stamp out the Ismailis in Syria. The Nusairi allies among the Ismaili offered to ally themselves with the Crusaders and to become Christians. The offer was enthusiastically received by the Christian King of Jerusalem and his court, but nullified by the Knights Templar, who put the Nusairi envoys to death.

1971, the Alawite Hafez al-Assad becomes president of Syria. This meant the end of the Alawites being an outcast group in the Syrian society. Since then their status has strongly improved, as well as their living standards. In 1974, the Lebanese leader of the Twelver Shi'is, Imam Musa al-Sadr, issues a legal decision saying that the Alawites were Shi'i Muslims.

THE DRUZE

(From: Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Druzenet-Lebanon)

Mackey describes (and spells) them *as a* sect of mystic religionists who inhabit Mounts Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, in Syria. They settled there about the 10th Century, and are said to be a mixture of Cuthites or Kurds, Mardi Arabs and possibly of Crusaders; all of whom were added, by subsequent immigrations to the original stock to constitute the present or modern race of Druses. Their religion is a heretical compound of Judaism, Christianity and Islam; the last of which is greatly modified, predominates their faith.

They have a regular order of priesthood, the office being filled by persons consecrated for the purpose, comprising principally the emirs and sheiks, who form a secret organization divided into several degrees, keep the sacred books, and hold secret religious assemblies. Their sacred books are written in antiquated Arabic. The Druses are divided into three classes or degrees, according to religious distinctions. To enable one Druse to recognize another, a system of passwords is adopted, without an interchange of which no communication is made that may give an idea of their religious tenets.

Dr. Clarke tells us in his ***Travels*** that "one class of the Druses are to the rest what the initiated are to the profane, and are called Okkals, which means spiritualists; and they consider themselves superior to their countrymen.

They have various degrees of initiation".

Colonel Churchill in his ***Ten Year's Residence on Mount Lebanon***, tells us that among this singular people there is an order having many similar customs to the Freemasons. It requires a twelvemonth's probation previous to the admission of a member. Both sexes are admissible. In the second year, the novice assumes the distinguishing mark of the white turban, and afterward, by degrees, is allowed to participate in the whole of the mysteries. Simplicity of attire, self-denial, temperance and irreproachable moral conduct are essential to admission to the order.

All of the above facts have led to the theory that the Druses are an offshoot from the early Freemasons, and that their connection with the latter is derived from the Crusaders, who, according to the same theory, are supposed to have acquired their Freemasonry during their residence in Palestine. Some writers go so far as to say that the degree of Prince of Lebanon, the Twenty-second in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, refers to the ancestors of these mystical mountaineers in Syria.

Mashiakhat El-Akel, the highest Druze Spiritual Reference in the Middle East and world wide, declares that the Druze is not a religion, it is a faith; and while the historical identity of the Druze as a community brought together by language, land or tradition, may date back 1000 yrs to Fatimid Egypt, the Spiritual Identity of El-Mowahideen El-Druze as Preservers of the Ancient Wisdom is as old as the creation of time. If anything, this testimony should, once and for all, answer the 1000-year old question, "who are the Druze?", because most of the accounts written on the Druze yet, some of which (unfortunately) written by Druze themselves for non-authentic objectives, do not represent the Druze Identity. And if the Ancient Wisdom has truly survived the test of time and has successfully maintained a brotherhood of authentic descendants for 1000 years in one of the most politically tense areas of the world and throughout the most critical times of Middle East's religious history, it has done so, not in virtue of the Druze's historical identity, but through the ability of the Druze Mind to rise above the facade of man-made identities and trace the differences among those identities (including the religious one) into their ancient origins in the Behavioral Self of Man.

Believe then what you read in this testimony about Man's Truth or fiercely defy it. Do not assume the behavioral stance of a pragmatist (which when measured to the Truth-in-Finality amounts to a form or ignorance disguised by a mask of compassion). What you read in this page is not a nostalgic effort to revive the ancient gnostic spirit or to celebrate the rediscovery of the Qumran scriptures. This is the testimony of El-Mowahideen El-Druze - real people who have carried the Five-Colored Flag of the Ancient Wisdom on earth for 1000 years after they had carried it in their souls for thousands and thousands of years prior to that, and have sacrificed their blood, children and all their possessions in all their lives to preserve its doctrines, not through secret orders, mysterious rites, or hidden organizations, but through conscious actions.

Yes, the spiritual identity of the Druze has survived the test of time, not because of the mystery that shielded the Druze people as a historical sect, but because of real choices which El-Mowahideen El-Druze took on the level of

Adamic thought and action - it has survived through their continuous investment in the Sacred Doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom, life after the other; and, thanks to a Divine Doctrine of Brotherhood and a Divine Law of Transmigration (Reincarnation), the Unity of their Spiritual Identity is unchallengeable. No religion or race, no history or geography, no nation or civilization, no government or law can ever stand in the way of the hidden path of the Soul as it shapes its destiny across time and throughout its countless reincarnations.

It may shake you to imagine that every human soul is as ancient as existence and that every human soul has experienced on earth incalculable lives and have clothed itself with thousands of man-made identities - millions of years worth of EVE-ENDS, all in the hope that one day the soul may recollect its sacred ADAMIC-BEGINNING. It may shake you to imagine that you may be a Christian fighting a war against Moslems in one life only to be born to a Moslem family in another - or a soldier killing your enemy (in the name of defending a nationality), while your pregnant wife back home is delivering birth to the very enemy that you have just killed - all in the service of a much higher identity and a much deeper Wisdom than what identities are designed to serve. What this may imply on the level of Power & Politics on earth? To imagine the answer to this question can help you understand why traces of most doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom were repelled and removed from all the sacred texts, not only by the political but also by the religious. It may also help you to understand why so much controversy surrounds the Faith of the Druze of the Levant.

The Ancient Wisdom reveals, through a humble effort, the origin of the struggle that has ruled religions and philosophies, nations and civilizations, thought patterns and spiritual directions, oppositeness and contrariety, since the beginning of time, bringing it back to its Authentic LIMITS (within the boundaries of the Adamic Soul): its ancient home in where the Logic that separates between the Realm of Space & Time and the Realm of Eternity manifests.

Special thanks to Samahat El-Sheikh Bahjat Ghaith (Sheikh Akel El-Mowahideen El-Druze) for dedicating all his Mental and Material assets for the Message of Tawhid - an expedition that started early in his life (prior to being appointed as Sheikh El-Akel), and throughout the years, it grew to surpass all numbers and expectations. In the hope that one day this message will support itself by itself and reflect its blessings upon El-Mowahideen (Spirit & Body - Theory & Practice), everywhere and whichever country they belong to or language they speak.

Deep gratitude to His Imminence for taking up the Message of Adam and sponsoring this page which enthroned his long undertaking to spread Authentic Consciousness and Tawhidic Awareness, despite all the obstacles and difficulties that stood in his way; and blessed is the experience that guided this undertaking, because it revealed the character of a True Mowahid in this day and age, and rose in the language of expressing the Essence of Spirituality and its close link to what is happening on the Ground of Reality above religious, spiritual or Sufi appearances and beyond the Deceptive Modesty which conceals a spirit of egoism - rose into the simplicity expressive of the Adamic Truth: the pivot at which the Greatness of the Heavens converge with the Earthliness of this World.

THE BEKTASHI

(Condensed from: "Encyclopedic Dictionary of Islam" - Moscow: Nauka, 1991)

The study of mystic orders like *The Bektashi Order of SufisBektashiya of* Islam is one of particular importance if the Moslem world is to be adequately understood. The religion left by Muhammad very early developed in two directions. On the one hand it produced a rigid, scholastic theology with an inflexible religious law. At the same time, even from within the first two centuries, a tendency away from this fixed, external system showed its beginning and quickly developed into individuals and groups who emphasized the ascetic life and the mystical approach to direct knowledge of God. As orthodox canonists and professional theologians objected to this tendency to "search the conscience" on the ground that the ultimate result would be in the direction of heresy, organized bands or brotherhoods began to develop, based on the fundamental idea that "the fervent practice of worship engenders in the soul graces (fawaid), immaterial and intelligible realities, and that the 'science of hearts' (ilm al kulub) will procure the soul an experimental wisdom (ma'rifa)."

Among the many dervish (Islamic order espousing a school of thought) fraternities which have exercised their influence over the lives of a large proportion of the Turkish people of the Ottoman Empire the Bektashis have held a unique place. From the point of view of mere numbers they have been significant. BEKTASHIYA -- Sufi order (fraternity -- tarika), established in Asia Minor at the end of 13th or at the beginning of 14th centuries and prevalent among the native Turkish nomadic and non-nomadic population. The order was named after its founder, an itinerant preacher Hadji Bektash Wali Nishapuri Horasani (1208-1270), who proclaimed his spiritual lineage as having originated from Turkestan Shaikh Ahmad Yasawi (d. 1166). Hadji Bektash soon obtain wide popularity in Asia Minor. In 1340 he took active part in the uprising of "Turkish Freemen" led by dervish Baba-Iskhak against Konya Sultan Giyas ad-din Kai-Husrau.

There is no authentic documentation on Hadji Bektash. Bektashiya tradition believes that he was an author of Arabian treatise "Maqalat" that is based only two Turkish poetical translations handed down from the 14th and16th centuries. Later prayer books, rite manuals and rules presuppose that Hadji Bektash authored the preachings. Gradually, the Bektashiya became an established religious fraternal order with a developed net of "monasteries" and communities with strict hierarchy, unified ritual system, rites of initiation as well as with definite symbols and special garments.

This transformation of the order into established organization was connected with the activities of "Grand Master" Balim-Sultan (d. 1516) whose religious title among the believers was "The Second Elder". Balim-Sultan proclaimed himself to be the descendant of Hadji Bektash Rumi and reformed structure of the communities and "monasteries", subsequently, the rites of initiation and (probably) established the practice of celibacy. But some members of the Order rejected the reforms of Balim-Sultan.

There appeared two fighting groups of the followers. The first one consisted of Chelebis, i.e. the descendants of Hadji Bektash Rumi and followers of the reforms of Balim-Sultan. The second one consisted of religious leaders who claimed exclusivity as authorities on the teachings of the Founder of Bektashiya and resisted the reforms and thus led to a schism. As a result, Chelebis preserved their control of the maternal tekke ("monastery") Pir-evi as well as the leading role in the Order including the rank of the head of the Order (until the second half of 17 century there existed elections of the head of the Order; after this date this place became hereditary).

In the second part of 16th century the head of Bektashiya Order Sersam-'Ali-baba (d. 1589) established the highest apostolic position of the Order -- Dede-baba. Though the Chelebis preserved their real power within the Order (control over wakfs, distribution of the profits, nomination of the heads of the local tekke, etc.), only Dede-baba could give a member permission to be appointed to the position of the head of Bektashiya. This position was elective, and eight babas of the central "monastery" participated in the elections of Dede-baba. The members of Bektashiya participated in a number of uprisings against the Ottoman regime (e.g., in the movement of Kalendar-oglu in 1526 which was supported by 30 000 members of Bektashiya). After the Ottoman conquests, Bektashiya spread in Syria, Palestine, Egypt where its "monasteries" and communities had been established. Village groups scattered throughout Anatolia, under the names Kizilbash (Redheads), Tahtaci's, Abdal's, Çepni's, in ways that will be later enumerated, are related intimately with the Bektashi organization by belief and tradition and religious ceremony and often in organization as well.

Not a mystical fraternity alone, the Bektashis have played their important military role all through Ottoman history down to 1826 through their intimate connection, apparently from the beginning, with the Janissary Army Corps. During the leadership of Balim-Sultan the Bektashiya propaganda enjoyed the greatest success among the members of the Janissary Corps. Bektashiya was exceptionally influential among the Janissary soldiers. This circumstance determined the growth of the political importance of the Bektashiya Order in the Ottoman Turkey. In turn, the connection between the elite Janissary Corps and highly organized fraternity of Bektashiya transformed the corps into a closed separate institution. In 1826 Sultan Mahmud II deleted the Yanissary troops and began to perscute the Bektashiya Order: Its activities were forbidden, three leading heads of the order (Dede-baba, Chelebi and Dede, who was the leader of the celibate dervishes) were executed, new "monasteries" were destroyed, in the capital the old "monasteries" were also destroyed, the real estate (wakfs, land, buildings, etc.) of the Order was confiscated, many shaikhs and simple members of the Order were exiled, and the local "monasteries" were given to the Sufi Nakshbandiya Order.

This persecution stimulated the emigration of the Bektashiya members to the Balkans, especially, to Albania where new important tekkes were established in Tirana and Akche Hisara. Whole communities of the native people there became members of the Order, protesting against the Sunnite Islam of the Turkish conquerors. The women in Bektashiya were allowed to participate in

their services. But during the reign of Sultan Abdul-Medjid (1839-1861) the Order was officially revived and its lost centers returned.

During the leadership of Ahmad Jalal ad-din Chelebi there took place the final conflict between Chelebis and Babas. The fraternity became (unofficially) divided into three branches: the proper Bektashi, Dedes (their enemies called them "kajars", i.e. "bandits", "gangsters") and Chelebis (who were called by the first group as "murtads" -- "apostates", "schismatics").

It is difficult to explain the unitary system of the Bektashiya's doctrines. Religious eclecticism/syncretism is a very important feature of its doctrine. Besides this, very complex and controversial relations between different Bektashiya groups must also be noted. These groups entered the Order as its units to obtain protection from persecution but even in Bektashiya's clothes their members continued to preach their own ideas. Here lay origins of Bektashiya's religious tolerance.

In 1925 the Republican government of Turkey abolished all the Sufi orders, including Bektashiya. There is information that in Albania the Bektashiya was active even up to 1967. It is still active in Yugoslavia. Until 1965 there existed the Albanian tekke in Cairo. In Turkey (1952) there existed about 30, 000 members of Bektashiya.

Syncretic by its roots, the teachings of Bektashiya exerted powerful influence not only on the formation of the religious world-view of the Turkish people but also influenced the development of the Turkish culture, music and, especially, literature.

THE YEZIDIS

(Condensed from Internet sources)

The Yezidis generally live in Iraq, Turkey and Syria. A part of them in 1830 escaped from depressions by the Turks and the Kurds migrated to Armenia from where in the further they spread all over Trans-Caucasus, while the largest center of Yezidi Diaspora stayed in Armenia (about 50.000). The total number of the Yezidis by the latest estimation reaching about 200,000 members. The language of the Yezidis as it is called by Yezidis and is also spoken by the North Kurds Kurmanji and belongs to the northwestern branch of Iranian language group.

There are numerous unstudied and unclear issues about the Yezidi belief and the information is often contradictory. For example in the religious legends about some Yezidi idols, their location and functions are contradicting, depending upon their sources among the many Yezidi spiritual figures. Such condition can be explained by the late occurrence of Yezidism (12-13 cc) and the lack of a strong basic consolidating spiritual center, characteristic to all dogmatic religions. The religion of the Yezidis may possibly be characterized as a fusion of different beliefs in contrast to dogmatic religions such as Christianity or Islam.

The Yezidi religion is one the oldest controversial religions of the world. And though the Yezidism have been studied for 200 years, the problem of formation of this religious direction hasn't found any resolution. Separate questions were certainly explained in literature but not completely and today many questions remain unanswered. People wrote a lot about Yezidis but as a rule next to

suppositions having scientific value there also were rather common opinions. It is enough to notice that we can't find any research dedicated to Yezidis that does not refere to the syncretic character of their beliefs. This belief system consists of a blend of Zoroastrism, Christianity, Islam and even Mosesism and Buddhism. Such taken elements exist in the Yezidism and their roles can't be exaggerated.

For example it is very noticeable that Sun, Moon and Fire worshiping is taken by Yezidis from Zoroastrians. It can also be said that worship based on natural phenomenon and elements are included in the basic system of any nation's belief and, obviously, it can't be taken as adoption. It is enough to notice that Sun, Moon and Fire worshiping as well as its spread among the Yezidis can be come across in original beliefs of the Persian, Armenians, Tajiks and other nations.

The origin of the word Yezidi has been much discussed. Most probably it is related to Av. Yazata, 'deity,', Pers. Yazdan, 'God'. It was given to them in contrast either to the Zoroastrians or to Islam. Although their priesthood is of the Islamic type and they recognize Muhammad and Abraham as prophets, they are far from being a Islamic sect. Nor are they Nestorians, although they have baptism and regard Christ as an angel in human form. In fact, they perpetuate with various admixtures a doctrine of the Magian type, combining Iranian and Assyrian elements. Their cult of fire is Iranian. They profess that the devil is a creative agent of the supreme God, inasmuch as he produced evil. Hence he deserves our adoration.

The influence of Mithraism on Yezidis outweighs that of Zorasthrianism. Yezidis being a minority wasn't confronted by other religions before the invasion of Islam. From extensive study of the Yezidi feasts, it is clear, that not only did these two Iranian religions influence it, but that they also had Jewish and Christian influences. Even today there are many feasts and religious customs which are similar to those of the Jews and Christians. Circumcision and the Feast of Offerings (the story of Abraham and Isaac) and the Star of David is on the Sheik-Adi's temple wall, which most probably was begun during the ban on Jews: Yezidi-Kurdistan was the 1st historical country of exile for the Jews - several hundreds of Jewish prisoners were sent to Kurdistan, after King Hosea's refusal of to pay tribute to the Assyrian King Salmanesser (727-22 B.C.). As in the Christian Easter, the names of Mary and Jesus are expressly mentioned in the Yezidi religious texts, where they have an honored place for saints. The Christians also took over some customs from the Yezidis: the coloring of Easter-eggs and the decoration of the doors with flowers.

The Yezidi religious centre and object of the annual pilgrimage is the tomb of Shaykh Adi, located at a former Christian monastery in the town of Ash-Shaykh 'Adi, north of Mosul. Two short books written in Arabic, Kitab al-jilwah (Book of Revelation) and Mashaf rash (Black Writing), form the sacred scriptures of the Yezidi, and an Arabic hymn praise of Shaykh Adi is held in great esteem.

According to the 'Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics': *"The name Yezidi has been given to a religious sect numbering about 50,000 persons, scattered from Mossul to the Caucasic region (districts of Mossul, Van, Diarbekr, Bitlis). They call themselves Dasni and speak a Kurdish dialect. At the head of the community is a khalifah, who is a descendant of Shaikh Adi. Under him are*

shaikhs, kavvals, and faqirs. Priesthood is hereditary. Morality is above the average in that part of the world. They are brave and shrewd. Their temperament is cheerful but calm. They have cleanly habits. Their women are not veiled and may receive strangers.

"They feel great repulsion for the color blue. Being illiterate, they handed down their traditions orally. Their greatest festival is on 10th Aug., when a procession of flagellants takes place in the village of Ba'adri. There is the grave of their great saint, Shaikh Adi ben Musafir, who died in A.D. 1155. All around fires of naphtha and bitumen are kept burning".

The available Yezidi-texts give the impression, that it is a new religion, because of several Islamic terms: the important personalities, Mohammad, Ali, Hassan, Abubhakir, Omer etc. are regarded as saints. There are Islamic poets, who wrote critically on the Yezidi religious texts during Sheik-Adi's time - most of these bear their names: Hashid Al-tawri, Pise Cemi, Pir Dawood, Sheik Fakhre Adia, Pir Sheref and Pir Khidir. Islam extended its power after Sheik-Adi's arrival. A decisive majority of Feasts, Customs and oral religious transmission stem from the Post-Islam period.

Dr. R. C. Zaehner in 'The Hutchinson Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths,' considers the Yezidi faith as an "aberrant form of the Sufi movement". Joseph T. Parfit writes in his book, 'Marvellous Mesopotamia', "The Yezidees or 'Devil-worshippers' inhabit a number of unkempt villages near Mosul and in the Sinjar Mountains. They seem to belong to a Kurdish stock, and speak Kurdish as well as Arabic. There are probably some forty thousand Yezidis in Mesopotamia and six thousand in the Caucasus. Their headquarters are at Sheikh Adi, a weird place North-East of ancient Nineveh.

Wigram and Wigram write, "The Yezidis or 'Devil Worshippers' congregate principally in the vilayet of Mosul. 'Devil worshippers' they are indeed, for they themselves do not scruple to admit that the being whom they seek to propitiate is actually identical with the 'Sheitan' of the Christians and Moslems and Jews. But, fortunately for the morals of the neighborhood, their homage stops short of imitation. Theirs is a religion of faith, and not of works. They are under no obligation to make evil their good according to the boast of Milton's Satan, but only to 'respect the great place' of their divinity, and see to it that he is sometimes honored for his burning throne. The Yezidis form one of the recognized 'millets' or subject religious sects, existing in the Turkish empire. But recognition in their case by no means implies toleration. They are universally abhorred as outcasts".

THE KUMOSO-SOHEI

(Condensed from Internet sources)

One of the more unusual sights in feudal Japan was the Kumoso *the Monks Of Emptiness* - of the Fuke-shu, a sect of Zen Buddhism. The origins of the Kumoso are something of a mystery, though they can trace their start to the wandering priests in China and Southeast Asia. The traditional dress of the Kumoso was a dark blue or black kimono, a kesa worn over the left shoulder and a tengai basket-hat that entirely covered the head. The tengai symbolized their *detachment from life* and was made of

tightly woven reeds everywhere except in front of the eyes so that the wearer could see the world but not be seen by it.

During the Tokugawa Shogunate (1615-1868), they were given official protection by the government and in return they became spies and informers for the oppressive regime. In addition, it was easy for ronin (rouge samurai) and bandits to adopt the disguise of the Kumoso for their own purposes and the sect was soon looked upon with suspicion. The Fuke sect was dissolved during the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912) but its traditions have been revived in recent years. The primary discipline of the Kumoso was the playing of the Shakuhachi, an end-blown bamboo flute that came to Japan from China in the late 6th century. It is thought that its melancholy sounds echo the Japanese *feelings of the fleetingness of life.* Besides being a musical instrument, the Shakuhachi could also be used as a club. True, the Kumoso did carry a sword, but it was kept in a cloth bag tied with the two cords symbolizing the principles of yin and yang, the duo forces of the universe. The drawing of the sword and its use were complicated by rituals that at times made the Shakuhachi the preferred weapon.

Not a few ronin joined the ranks of the Kumoso, and were able to preserve their anonymity as well as the right to carry arms, i.e. the wakizashi and a staff, while requesting alms. The borderline between extralegal, illegal, and outright criminal activities tends to be a tenuous one, and it is not difficult to understand why certain Kumoso became involved with the criminal urban subculture, and why the characteristic tengai basket-headgear provided welcome cover for those whose affairs did not bear close scrutiny by the authorities. Among the men of arms who took up the ways of the Kumoso, none were more famous than the legendary Sohei.

The Sohei are often considered the greatest warriors of feudal Japan. Originally they were monks of the great temple Enryaku, built in the year 788 among the cypress groves of Mt. Hiei. Their mission was to protect the emperor's new capital of Kyoto from evil spirits. But the pressure of constant attacks by marauding samurai intent upon the treasures of their temple forced them to take up arms. Eventually the Sohei abandoned the teachings of the Buddha to follow the path of war - and it was a bloody path.

Soon transformed to masters of war, the Sohei priests became mercenaries who fought constantly, leading the armies of conflicting samurai lords in furious combat. In arrogance, the Sohei began to dream of themselves as the masters of Japan. Unlike the samurai lords who were careful not to bring their wars to the capital, the Sohei sought to control the nation with the dual levers of their religious influence and their military might. By the 1400s the monks of Mt. Hiei were raiding precincts of Kyoto belonging to the very samurai clans that had once preyed upon them. It was then that Shogun Nobunaga ordered the destruction of the Sohei's Kyoto temple and its inhabitants. An unholy alliance of the Sohei's bitter enemies, the Nara monks and the armies of the Shogun, finally defeated the Sohei, leaving the survivors dispersed, powerless and in hiding.

These survivors then assumed the ways of the Kumoso. Dressed in kimono robes of lowly black fabrics and the large, braided reed hats that hid their faces, they relied on their commitment to a sacred code of honor to see them through

their dark days - for they had nothing else left. Facing road bandits, rogue samurai and the relentless wrath of the shogunate, these wandering monks soon built a reputation as teachers, warriors and heroes whose feats were immortalized in story and song. But the Kumoso-Sohei found more than adventure they re-discovered enlightenment, peace and humility.

After many years as outcasts, at last a new temple was permitted to be built in Kyoto upon the ruins of the old, and the wandering Kumoso-Sohei came home as monks of a new school. Now forbidden to practice their warrior arts openly, the monks began to lead an outwardly tranquil way of life of prayer and meditation. Within the confines of their temple however, they imposed upon themselves the vow not to forget the bitter lessons of their bloody past and rededicate themselves. In secret they preserved their martial traditions and created an oath bound fraternal order of shadowy warrior-monks whose continued existence caused the rogues of feudal Japan to tread the dark alleys and country pathways in tiptoes. The story of the Kumoso-Sohei spread worldwide and they became objects of emulation of similar minded secret societies and the grist of modern-day Japan's samurai movies.

CHINESE MASONRY OF THE PHILIPPINES

By: Bro. FLORENCIO Y. SY
(Condensed from Local and Internet Sources)

Understanding the phenomenon we Freemasons call as Chinese Masonry requires revisiting the events in China and the Philippines during the turn of the 1900s. The introduction chapter of the book of MW WILLIAM C. COUNCELL already mentioned the very enlightening revelations on the common symbols and practices by proto-Freemasons from Asia Minor and their links with the ancient monasteries of China. What we will embark upon is a synopsis of developments after the fall of the Ming Dynasty of the Han people, the advent of the Triads and how they found their way to Manila to assume a unique existence.

Before their criminal enterprising, the Triads actually began as a resistance movement to the Manchu emperors. The Manchu were from a country north of China (Manchuria) and were seen as foreign rulers, who took China's northern capital (Peking) by force, and established their dynasty in 1674.

In the thirteen year of rule of the second Manchu emperor (Kiang Hsi), a monastery of fighting monks SIU LAM were recruited by the emperor to defeat a rebellion in Fukien. These monasteries received some imperial power as a reward. Due to court jealousies, these Fukien Buddhist monks were then themselves seen as a threat, and an army was sent to suppress them. Eighteen monks escaped, but only 5 survived further. In legend, these survivors founded 5 monasteries that spawned five secret societies, dedicated to overthrowing the Manchu (also known as the Ching) dynasty, and restoring the previous Chinese Ming dynasty, which was seen as a golden age for China. Their motto became "Crush the Ch'ing, establish the Ming".

The family name of the Ming

emperors was "Hung", and their color was red, so both Hung and red are associated with Chinese secret societies. The societies called themselves the **"HUNG MUN".** Secret codes were developed, to frustrate the emperor's spies. This secrecy, and the martial arts training, much later led to the associations being used for criminal purposes, instead of political ones. However, during their early years many Hung Mun were seen as protectors of the people against a repressive and sometimes vicious regime of the emperor.

These secret societies played roles in several rebellions against the Manchus, notably the White Lotus Society rebellion in Szechuan, Hupeh and Shansi in the mid-1790's; the "Cudgels" uprising in Kwangsi province, 1847 to 1850; and Hung Hsiu Chuan's Kwangsi-based rebellion 1851-1865. (Hung called himself Christ's brother), and the rebellion (called T'ai Ping) was crushed with the aid of the Western powers. The Boxer Rebellion in Peking in 1896-1900, involved the White Lotus Society, as well as other triads called the "Big Swords" and the "Red Fists".

The use in English of the word "Triad" ("a group of three") denotes the sacred symbol of these secret societies--a triangle enclosing a modification of the Chinese character known as hung. The use of hung derived from Hung Wu, the royal title of the patriot who founded the Ming Dynasty in 1368 A.D. Hung Wu's reign heralded a golden age of prosperity in China, ended by the Manchu conquest in 1644. Hung, by itself, had no meaning, but its enclosure within the three-sided geometric figure symbolized the union of Heaven, Earth and Man. When Triads--the offspring of ancient societies--formed after 1644 to fight for independence from Manchu rule, they devised the triangle-protected hung as a holy symbol of their purpose, which was to drive out the conqueror and again achieve for China that perfect union of Heaven, Earth and Man.

Triads were variously known, from the 17th century to the present day, as Hung Mun ("Hung Association"), Tin Tei Wui ("Heaven and Earth Association"), Saam Hop Wui ("Three United Association") and, more recently, as Hak Sh'e Wui ("Black Society Association"), a name befitting their descent from patriotic glory into criminal infamy.

Membership in a Triad society traditionally began with apprenticeship leading to full initiation involving three days of ritual called Hung Mun. On the walls of the chosen place, designated a "lodge," were hung Triad insignia including representations of the mythical Triad capital city, Muk Yeung. A Heung Chu, "Incense Master," presided over the rites. Blood was drawn from one of each recruit's fingers by the Heung Chu, tasted first by the recruit himself, then added to a communal bowl from which everyone drank to signify blood-brotherhood. Adherents subscribed to 36 oaths, 21 codes, 10 prohibitions, 10 penalties and 10 mottos.

In 1956, most ritual initiations were suspended for security reasons, but at least one oath of allegiance continued to be sworn. Of the old 36, most telling was the 13th: "If I should change my mind and deny my membership of the Hung family, I will be killed by a myriad of swords." Spoken or not, that oath never lay far from implementation if forsworn.

It was believed that ritual entry into the sacred bond of Taoist-oriented

Triad confraternity signified rebirth. Recruits took part in the ceremony of Kwa Lam Tang Lung, "Hanging the Blue Lantern." In China, a blue lantern placed outside a house--paralleled in Occidental culture by the black wreath hung on front doors --announced a recent death. One had to "die" before resurrection into new life as a Triad brother.

The Triads became a wide-ranging revolutionary movement and eventually became the dominant force behind the resistance not only to Manchu rule but to the stay of the Western powers and Japan who virtually raped China, enforcing opium drug sales by war, stealing gold and heritage antiques, and demanding huge recompensation for any affront. Sun Yat Sen, the soul of the resistance movement was allied with the Hsing Chung Triad society.

Financial and political issues were intimately linked in Sun Yat-sen's early career because raising funds to carry out revolutionary activities was one of his principal occupations from 1894 to 1911. His persuasive rhetoric, dedication, and integrity appealed to a broad range of people who contributed to his causes. In his fundraising he drew from family, supporters, and the overseas Chinese communities in Hawaii, North America, Southeast Asia, and Japan. Moreover, he recognized the mutual benefit of establishing relations with other nationalist movements, such as that in the Philippines against American imperialism.

After the establishment in Tokyo of the T'ung-meng-hui (United League), successor to his first revolutionary party, the Hsing-chung-hui, Sun successfully raised funds by issuing different types of bonds, redeemable at a premium after the creation of a Chinese republic. He also joined and used his ties with Hung-Mun secret societies to gain their financial help.

Motivated by the lofty principles of freedom and equality, Sun naturally enough was willing to help people other than Chinese who were in a similar predicament. It did not go unnoticed, of course, that these arrangements promised potential financial and strategic gains for Sun's own movement. For example, it was difficult in 1899 to ignore the imperialist actions of the United States in the Philippines, and Sun vigorously condemned those actions. He warmly received Mariano Ponce, a representative of the Philippine national movement, and the two became friends. Together they organized a system that enabled Sun and his forces to aid the Aguinaldo government in its struggle against the United States. In late 1899, Hung Mun from the US, mostly originating from Guangdong province came to the Philippines and organized the "Hong Shun Thong".

It is at this point that we need to emphasize that the HUNG MUN came to the Philippines and proceeded to call themselves Chinese Masons. There are Hung Mun chapters worldwide but it is only in the Philippines that they call themselves Masons. This is where we speculate on the reasons.

Sun Yat-sen was baptized a Christian during his student days in Hawaii, became a life long practicing Christian and was even buried in Christian rites. There were rumors that he became a Freemason but these have not been confirmed. Sun was however an avid student of history and Chinese culture and he would not have been

ignorant of the findings of MW Councell about the similarity of Triad practices and symbols with those of Freemasonry. Mariano Ponce was a Mason as was Aguinaldo and both belonged to the Magdalo faction of the revolution which was dominated by Masons. The Bonifacio brothers (of Magdiwang faction) who founded the Katipunan were Masons who brought the Masonic symbols and rituals to the core of the Katipunan secret revolutionary society. Both the Hung Mun and the countless Filipino Masons in the revolutionary movement were fighting off foreign domination and they shared a similar fraternal lineage. As it was inevitable for the Katipunan to emulate the Craft, we speculate that the Hung Mun proceeded to be called Masons (probably as suggested by Ponce and Aguinaldo) themselves in order that their assimilation into their host country's struggles are facilitated more expeditiously. In other countries where there were no such revolutionary struggles, they remained their true selves, an expatriate nationalist secret society.

At first, Sun acted as a middleman in the supply of arms to the Philippines. Soon, a sense of Asian community developed, and Sun and Ponce agreed that they would fight for each other's movements. First, Sun's forces would join the struggle for Philippine independence, and if that succeeded, the Philippines would aid in the overthrow of the Ch'ing dynasty.

This was a bold and well-conceived plan, but neither man was adequately equipped to play power politics. The first shipload of arms to the Philippines was mysteriously swallowed by the sea off Shanghai. Sun tried to organize another shipment, but the United States forced Japan to halt the movement of all military supplies to the Philippines. Unable to equip the Filipinos with the necessary weapons, Sun was preparing a group of Hsing-chung-hui members for combat in the Philippines when news arrived of the United States' victory there.

In proposing to cross swords with the United States, Sun took a great risk, but he was blinded by the bright prospects of the Philippines as a strategic base for fighting the Manchus. Had Aguinaldo's army posted a victory, Sun would have reaped enormous financial support, and the Chinese revolution might have progressed much more rapidly. As it was, Sun was given $100,000 by the defeated Aguinaldo government, and he learned much in his attempt to finance his own activities by associating with foreign governments. It is a wonder that the victorious American forces tolerated their continued stay in the Philippines despite their siding with Aguinaldo's anti-American forces.

In 1900, Dr. Sun Yat-sen changed directions for the Hung Mun, after all he was preparing for the final rebellion of 1906 that eventually caused the downfall of the Manchu Ching in 1911. He sent over Mr. Pi Yeong Lian to cause the change of the Hung Shun Tong to Chee Kung Tong, officially launching the first legal Hung Mun organization in the Philippines that to this day is even recognized by the People's Republic of China. Today, the Chee has four branches.

In 1909, "Ghi Hock Tong" was organized. After a series of transformations in 1912, 1913 and finally in 1962 it was officially named as Progressive Chinese Masons of the Philippines. It is also the biggest with 14 branches throughout the country today.

The third Hung Mun is the Tiock Lim organized in 1928 and is now known

as the Tiock Lim Chinese Masons of the Philippines with five branches.

The fourth Hung Mun is the Hiap Ho Kieng Giap organized also in 1928. The Hiap Masons have two branches.

The fifth and the last Hung Mun is the Peng Kong Chinese Masons of the Philippines. Although they are the youngest in the country being established only in 1931 and is found only in Binondo, it is the most popular among the Chinese "baby boomers" of the post WW2 era who find them "cool". When Freemasons talk of the so-called Chinese Masons it is always the name of the Peng Kong that is first mentioned.

By 1931, all five Hung Mun branches founded by the five legendary Siu Lam monks who survived the Fukien rebellion were firmly emplaced in the Philippines. The local HUNG MUN are an aberration in Triad history in that they have not been known to be involved in organized crime.

When WW2 broke out, the anti-Japanese resistance in China spilled over to the Philippines. Amid the world famous resistance waged by Filipino guerillas was a little known small but dirty war waged by local urban guerillas of the Hung Mun secret societies who lost many gallant members in their fight against the Japanese Kempetai (secret police) in the Chinatowns all over the country.

After the Pacific War, the surviving Hung Mun moved to strengthen their organization which was now pursuing a different undertaking, that of preserving the legacy of the China of their forefathers in the midst of the Communist takeover of their homeland. The five Hung Mun societies in the Philippines agreed to organize a national organization named as the Hong Men Overall Office. The Hong Men consists of members from each of the five societies and exercises control over the subsidiary organizations, a Grand Orient, if you wish. The present main activities of the Hong Men are maintaining their ancient teachings and rituals and making their existence relevant to the community through charitable, civic and cultural activities.

After fighting two wars for their adoptive country in the company of Freemasons, the Hong Men have chosen to remember the unique circumstances of their journey to these islands by remaining to be called - CHINESE MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

OF FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP

By Bro. FELICIANO B. ALAGAO
Secretary, Judge Valerio V. Rovina Lodge No. 259, MD#36

Freemasonry is a fraternity or sacred band of men with mutual respect of each other, united by exceptional friendship and brotherly love. Allow me then to discuss on this light, feel good subject of friends and friendship in out of the Fraternity.

What is a friend? Webster defines friend as, "one who cherishes kind regard for another person; an intimate and trustworthy companion." Friendship being a mutual regard cherished by kindred minds. Friendship

then is a relationship between two equals. In the Craft, this is well exemplified in the closing of the Lodge when the Master asks the Senior Warden how Masons should meet, which is answered, "on the level." Unfortunately, we still see Masters of some lodges who carry their Oriental Chairs outside the Lodge and assert their position over the members. These Masters who refuse to meet you on the level outside the lodge do not want to consider you as a friend, just as a Manager who insists on being addressed as "Sir" by subordinates in public places refuses friendship.

A friend is one who knows all about you and still likes you, he is one who comes in when the whole world has gone out. Each one of us holds dear one or more individuals whom we call our friends. This means that all of us are capable of making friends as well believe that there is no possession more valuable than a good and faithful friend. But some friends are not necessarily the kind we expect them to be especially in time when their own interest and security are at stake. Let me tell you a story about Juan and Pedro who were bosom friends. One day, they went hiking in a suburb when a big vicious looking dog was growling at them. Juan froze in his feet but Pedro quickly put on his running shoes and shorts from his back pack. Juan hissed, "you can not outrun that big Doberman!" But Pedro said, "I don't have to, I just have to outrun you."

In our Masonic Fraternity, when one is raised to the Sublime Degree, a brother becomes a part of that big circle of friends. This friendship is much exemplified by the five points of fellowship, which form part of the ritual when one is raised. The five points of fellowship to recall is; foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back and mouth to ear. These express the kind of friendship we have with one another. Foot to foot denotes that we never to hesitate to go on foot and out of our way to assist a distressed worthy brother; knee to knee, that in our adoration of the Ever Living God we will remember the welfare of a brother Master Mason as our own; breast to breast, that we will keep the secrets of a brother Master Mason as our own, when given to us in charge as such, murder and treason excepted; hand to back, that we will be ever ready to stretch forth a helping hand to raise a fallen brother, and mouth to ear, that we will whisper good counsel in his ear, gently admonish him of his errors and in the most friendly manner possible endeavor to bring about a reformation.

Unfortunately, some of us may not fully understand the message of the five points of fellowship. We sometimes add the "sixth point" which is "foot to back", worst the "seventh point" which is the "fist to face" whether physically or verbally.

What happens when the bond of trust is violated or abused? Then the cord that binds the friendship is threatened. Preserving friendship depends on tolerance and acceptance, two virtues exemplified by the compasses. But the compasses can only stretch that much beyond which is can no longer draw the line. Our Masonic Law Book provides a very tedious procedure to trials in cases when tolerance and acceptance fail. But remember, he who is judge between two friends losses one of them.

Brethren, to be friendly, you don't have to make yourself interesting but become interested in others in that way even the least likeable person can still be a friend.

FREEMASONRY: THE FINAL ANSWER

(A Curtsy to Bro. Romulo Tolentino)

By: VW CARLOS S. BRIONES, PM, PDGL, PDDGM
Naga City Lodge No. 257

With all the uncertainty, monotony and broken dreams in this world, I am persuaded to write on Freemasonry. Since time immemorial and to the present days of disorder and ugliness, we look for answers to our never-ending search for peace. That elusive state of things so much desired but too difficult to attain, lay embedded into the very gut of craft masonry. An incisive exploration therefore to the inner workings and nature of the craft may provide an assuring clue to catch the elusive answer to lasting peace.

Whether it be peace with ourselves, peace in our labors and aspirations or in the noisy confusion of life. Peace with God and for God, whatever we conceive him to be could be the greatest aspiration we can ever hope for. Because whether it is clear to us or not, we must regard the whole specie of mankind as all children of the universe under the fatherhood of one Almighty God. Irrespective of race, color or creed, and no less than the trees and the stars, we have a right to be here. And we have a right to be heard.

Masonic tradition has established that the superstructure of peace in its noble and glorious eminence has always been masonically sustained, preserved and advanced. In whatever country and time, the harbingers of peace, from Moses, who led the children of Israel across the Red Sea to Solomon, our first and most excellent grandmaster in biblical era, to Jacques DeMolay, to Cromwell, Bolivar, Garibaldi, Churchill, Roosevelt and MacArthur; and from own soil: Rizal, Aguinaldo, Bonifacio, Mabini, Quezon, Roxas and many more, all stood up for peace and led in the building of their respective nations. Incidentally, they were all products of the Masonic trestle board.

Alexander the Great, a votary of the ancient mysteries, is the precursor of Freemasonry, left a legacy in his immortal words: "Nothing is nobler than work". In like manner, our very own President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was reported by the Daily Inquirer (Jan. 20, 2002 issue) to have said that "the work never stops because the President never stops working". In allegorical manner, we should not stop spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection to unite the creation of God into one sacred band or society of friends and brothers who want to prove to all and sundry that we best can work who best agree. It is only work that can keep kings and presidents respectable. For the rest that follows labor should be sweeter than the rest that follows rest.

Will GMA be pleased to surrounded by working masons? Will our nation, with well-grounded hope, aspire to reflect that order and beauty which must reign forever in the land of the free? Does masonry still have a collection of men who would set aside personal needs to advance their patriotic duties? Are we still clothed with virtuous quality to lead our people? Seriously, can Philippine masonry in its present state produce a

son who can bring back sanity and respect to government? Can we assure this generation that masonry is still capable of producing men of strong will and with dignity and honor? The answers to these questions, Sirs, will determine genuinely whether or not we can still offer Freemasonry as the final answer.

But, why not?

Brethren, it would be painful to relegate the colorful history of the men in our craft to oblivion. For over two generations of contemporary masons, we have yet to find one who would display his true Masonic principles in the wake of unrest, disorder and corruption that have plagued this nation since World War II.

All we need to do perhaps is go back and review the lessons that have been inculcated in our minds. The luster of their wisdom may have been obscured by the cobwebs of negligence. For instance, do we still recall that we are to zealously practice, indiscriminately and with universality the truly Masonic virtue of charity for all? Have we forgotten that it is directed towards relieving the distressed, soothing the unhappy, sympathizing with their misfortunes and to be compassionate with their miseries? Those are truly divine attributes and foundation of every virtue guide us to regulate our conduct according to the dictates of our conscience. Thus we learn to subdue our passions and submit to temperance which enable us to have due restraint upon unreasonable feelings. It is the same state which renders the body tame and governable and free the minds from the allurements of vice.

Or have we forgotten the virtue of fortitude which is that noble and steady purpose of the mind which, likewise enable us to undergo pain, peril or danger when prudence deemed expedient? Prudence, likewise, teaches us to regulate our lives and action agreeably to the dictates of reason, and that justice provides us the standard or boundary of right enabling us to render unto every man his just due without distinction. Yes, these virtues in their glorious simplicity provide the key to a life of peace and harmony with the rest of creation. By the constant practice of these cardinal virtues, we avoid hypocrisy and deceit, for sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us, and being in good terms with all persons without surrender, but with the heart and tongue, we join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing in each others prosperity.

We wear the lambskin as a badge and not just a functional cover to prevent us from getting soiled. It is to remind us of our aspiration to live a fulfilled existence through the practice of selflessness which, in reality, brings ultimate fullness to our spiritual life. Before God's celestial throne, its pure and spotless surface shall constantly remind us of the purity of life and rectitude of conduct so essentially necessary to gaining admission into His many mansions. Fearing not what man can do unto us, why must we be intimidated by the loss of benefits or influence, or for that matter, material wealth? Confronted with a choice on whether to directly confront a evil or remain seemingly unaffected do not make a mason fret for he knows exactly the choice he will make. Watching others do the fight for us should make us cower in shame for it is never the nature of a mason to be such.

To keep our peace by the due exercise of circumspection and silence, to listen to others after we have spoken our truth, for even the dull and the

ignorant, they too have their story; to enjoy our achievements as well as our dreams, to be interested in our own careers, these are inherent needs for personal satisfaction that can only find fulfillment when conceived and applied having the rights of others in mind. We, as masons should know these by heart.

We need that steady purpose and concentration of energy. As the "Credenda" taught us, we need to have direction and purpose because to be everywhere is to be nowhere. Pay attention to that almost inaudible voice that whispers: "learn to live with honest poverty, if you must, and turn to more important matters than transporting gold to your grave. Let us also learn from others, for he who teaches himself has a fool for a master. Have we discovered the wisdom of those who worked everyday as if it were their first, yet tenderly treat the lives they touched as if they will all end at midnight? Many have yet to find out that he who delivers with one hand, will always gather with two.

Brethren, these are simple rules and simple laws that if applied daily to suit applicable situations in our lives can set us free from any fear: the fear of the unknown, the unseen and even the unexpected. The Credenda teaches us to be unafraid for nothing here can harm us except ourselves. We are not to blame our condition on others. We must be aware that we are what we are by our choice alone. The ultimate aspiration, therefore, which we must seek when we depart is the establishment of a legacy that by our deeds we made this a better world than the one we found.

Lastly, allow me to paraphrase the undying words of Bro. Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th U.S. president who said of the post World War 1 reconstruction: "It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again because there is no effort without error and shortcomings, who know the great devotion; who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows in the end the high achievement of triumph and who at worst, if he fails while daring greatly, knows his place shall never be with those timid and cold souls who know neither victory nor defeat".

A HISTORY OF MONEY MEMORIES

By: MODESTO L. NONATO, PM
Hiram Lodge No. 88

History is defined as a narration of facts and events arranged chronologically with their causes and effects. Memory is that faculty of the mind by which it retains the knowledge of previous occurrences, facts, thoughts, etc.

We have transactions and events that happen everyday in our lodges that should be recorded for posterity. Besides, our memory of facts and figures, especially of receipts and disbursements of monies, is quite short. Hence, it is to the best interest of all of us that they be recorded. However, to

cover all transactions and events will take us all eternity to accomplish. Therefore, this article is limited only to the accounting of financial transactions.

Accounting is defined as the art of recording, classifying and summarizing in a significant manner and in terms of money, transactions and events, which are in part, at least of a financial character, and interpreting the results thereof. Under this are four (4) constructive and mechanical phases of the accounting process recording, classifying, summarizing and interpreting financial data.

Recording is the journalization of the transaction in the journal, or book of original entry. It is the routine and mechanical process of recording transactions in the journal in accordance with generally accepted principles (GAAP). It is oftentimes called the booking of transactions.

Classifying involves sorting or grouping of similar and interrelated transactions into their respective classes. It is termed posting to the books of final entry, the ledger. The ledger contains groups of accounts, assets, liabilities, equity, revenue and expense accounts.

Summarizing refers to the preparation of trial balances, financial statements, statements of receipts and disbursements, statements of financial condition, balance sheet. These may be prepared monthly, quarterly, annually or other periodical terms as required.

Interpreting is the analytical phase of accounting wherein the liquidity and solvency of the entity is determined.

This article is limited only to the constructive and mechanical aspect of accounting, that is recording, classifying and summarizing and as applied to the lodges with a view of strengthening the virtue of truth and morality.

The monthly report of receipts and disbursements is only a part of the work of the Treasurer. His greater labor is the accounting of transactions of the lodge which is in compliance with Edict Nr. 165 dated February 3, 1994. The Treasurer would be reminded by the Auditor of the accounting phase of his work which should always be updated. This will not only lend transparency in our money transactions but also give the impression that we are always on the level with our money memories.

The constructive and mechanical aspect of accounting as applied to our lodges is fairly easy to learn and apply to the financial data. Transactions and events that are financial in nature are quite few within a month. On the average the work can be completed with one to two hours a day in a month. It is simple to understand and use. Anyone with common sense, patience and perseverance can be able to do it. To say that it is a technical job is a lame alibi.

MASONIC EDIFICES

Through Brotherly Love, Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion and causes true friendship to exist among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance." From this very important Masonic Principle, the brethren of

Samboangan Lodge No. 310 under the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines will now have a house of its own, where brethren of all ages all men and true can practice the esteemed Masonic tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

SAMBOANGAN MASONIC TEMPLE

(Reprinted from Sun Star, January 23, 2003 Issue)

The two-storey edifice is located at Dona Nene Drive, Sta. Maria, Zamboanga City. Along this line a Temple Consecration and Dedication Rites will be held on January 25, 2003 at nine o'clock in the morning. No less than the Grand Chaplain of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in the Philippines, the Very Worshipful Nerville P. Penalosa and other visiting dignitaries shall officiate in this Landmark of a Masonic activity.

We are therefore inviting all brethren and sojourning brothers to come and witness this impressive ceremony. In the afternoon, at 3:30 P.M. of the same date, the 10th installation Ceremonies of Samboangan Lodge Officers for Masonic Year 2003-2004 will also be held in this newly consecrated Samboangan Temple.

The new Officers are headed by: Worshipful Master Daniel F. Ilagan; Senior Warden Erwin L. Enriquez; Junior Warden Bashiruddin U. Adil; Secretary Joel L. Tinoe; and Treasurer Suresh U. Parmanand.

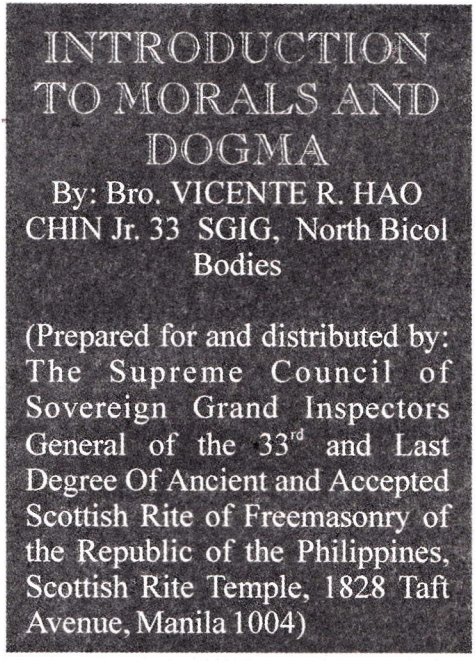
The invited guest of honor is Very Worshipful Nerville P. Penalosa, Grand Chaplain of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. There will be a dinner and grand fellowships of Masons at the Garden Orchid Hotel, Grand Ballroom, following the above affair. All Masons, sisters and friends of Masons are invited.

(The SMT was designed by Bros. DANIEL A. TAN and JOSE R. LUNA, both professional architects. The building of this newest Masonic edifice in Mindanao was a realization of years of fund raising which culminated in the ground laying and start of construction during the term of WM DANNY F. ILAGAN. The base structure itself is not yet completed. The consecration rites were instead held inside the already completed Blue Lodge Hall of the Temple. Editors)

BOOK CORNER

The book MORALS AND DOGMA (by Albert Pike) has always been a source of bewilderment among Masons. One senior Scottish Rite brother half-seriously said that he always kept a copy by his bedside and whenever he could not sleep, he would just read the Morals and Dogma and it is guaranteed that in thirty minutes he would be sound asleep.

Indeed, the Morals and Dogma has developed the reputation of being an incomprehensible work. Consequently, it remains unread, unappreciated and, sadly, practically out of print.



Yet, on the other hand, this same book that causes yawns and befuddlement among Masons is considered to be one of the most important books on esoteric wisdom ever written. The well-known sage and scholar, MANLY P. HALL, in his book WORDS TO THE WISE, included the Morals and Dogma as one of the ten most important books that one should study in one's lifetime if he is to learn the accumulated wisdom of mankind. In addition, its author, Albert Pike, is widely considered as one of the greatest and wisest Masons in history, and his book, the Morals and Dogma, as perhaps the profoundest Masonic work ever written.

If we look back into the pages of history, we can see that Masonry has played a significant role in important facets of human development. Masons have changed the histories of many Western nations. Masons have pioneered the adoption of democratic principles in many lands. Masonry has also bridged gaps that separate people of different races and creeds.

But there is another significant role that Masonry has played in the modern world one that has been indirectly known by all those who enter Masonry, but which have not been well studied within its halls. We are referring to the higher purpose of Masonry to bring about the inner transformation of man. To do so we have to appreciate the origins of Masonry and the inner meaning of its symbolisms. We have to understand that the symbolisms and rituals of Masonry have multiplied levels. Those that are given us in lectures are its outermost levels, and it is necessary for each serious student of Masonry to unearth the deeper layers of meaning.

The present book (INTRODUCTION TO MORALS AND DOGMA) is an attempt to introduce the Masonic student to the profound message of the Morals and Dogma. It endeavors to simplify the degrees by focusing on the dominant themes and teachings of each section. It tries to tie the important threads which run throughout the massive book, so that the reader can "see the forest" first, before he attempts to study each tree.

But this is no substitute to the reading of the Morals and Dogma itself. Pike's *magnum opus* covers so much ground that an introductory work such as this can only hope to awaken a genuine interest in the reader's mind and hope that he will boldly undertake the study of the main book itself.

The exposition starts with the 4th degree, and is preceded by an introductory essay on the "Deeper Purpose of Masonry", which is a necessary background study on the mystical roots of Masonry, without which the higher degrees will never be understood. This work covers up to the 14th degree only, and it is hoped that it will not be too long before similar expositions of the other degrees will become available to our brethren.

May these pages serve as a useful bridge in the Masons' journey towards that ideal of the Mystery Schools and of Freemasonry the life of a true Initiate. *(from Introduction)*

THE ANCIENT WISDOM

By: Annie Besant

(Published by The Theosophical Publishing House, 306 West Geneva Road, Wheaton, Illinois 60187; 1970; Distributed by Stellar Books, No.1 Iba St. cor Florentino St., Quezon City 1114; PLDT (02) 741-5740)

Annie Besant (1847-1933), second President of the Theosophical Society (1907-1933) was described as a "Diamond Soul" for she had many brilliant facets to her character. She was an outstanding reformer and orator of her time, a champion of human freedom, educationist, philanthropist and author with more than three hundred books and pamphlets to her credit. She also guided thousands of men and women all over the world in their spiritual quest.

In her earlier days in England, she did remarkable work as a Freethinker and Fabian Socialist, and supported many noble causes including women's suffrage. From 1893, she lived in India and worked indefatigably for the cultural and spiritual renaissance of the country. She organized the Home Rule movement and inspired Indians with a dynamic vision of India's future.

This book is intended to place in the hands of the general reader an epitome of Theosophical teachings, sufficiently plain to serve the elementary student, and sufficiently full to lay a sound foundation for further knowledge. It is hoped that it may serve as an introduction to the profounder works of H.P. Blavatsky, and be a convenient stepping stone to their study.

Those who have learned a little of the Ancient Wisdom know the illumination, the peace, the joy, the strength, its lessons have brought into their lives. That this book may win some to consider its teachings, and prove for themselves their value, is the prayer with which it is sent forth into the world (Preface)

PUBLIC PROPERTIES

Masons who are active in the affairs of the Craft inevitably experience the gentle guiding hands of those elderly Masons who always seem to be present in every meeting of lodges. They perform roles in rituals as fillers when the lodges cannot find performers from among their own members. They also render those small services

that we often take for granted. These little known and seldom appreciated elders burst into our consciousness only when they suddenly drop their working tools. We then get to miss them with a profound sense of loss that never fails to remind us that we are Masons who need to prepare for that which we will inevitably come to. Then we get to wonder, "Who would take their places?" "I would, if only I could fill their shoes, but can I?" Every now and then some of us unconsciously take over, and when we do, we feel this need to ensure that appreciation is forthcoming to those "alalay ng bayan" or "public properties" who still remain with us, the living. The Cabletow is thankful that two such potential successors have seen it fit to contribute to this endeavor and we extend our appreciation to Bros. Cleofe and Garcia.

THE TALE OF TWO CAVITEÑOS

Contributed by: WB TEODULO P. CLEOFE (Bagong Ilaw No. 97) and Bro. ANTONIO G. GARCIA Jr. (Bagong Buhay No. 17)

BRO. HIGINO OLAES y TABANAN. aka *Maestro Higino* aka *Guardia Fiel.* BROTHER OLAES was born on January 11, 1908 in Noveleta, Cavite. He belonged to the courtly era of Spanish speaking Cavite when courtesy in language and dignity in demeanor as well as loyalty to duty were the hallmarks of good breeding. As a result, Bro. Olaes, despite his relatively limited education was elected many times as *Teniente del Barrio* of Barrio San Jose, Noveleta. He was also elected several times to the *Consejo Municipal.* One would think that as a politician of long standing he would have been engaged in a livelihood of some means, but he was not. Testimony to the esteem accorded to him by his constituents they continued to elect him even as they knew that he earned a living only as a barber shop operator in the old Spanish Navy's Fort San Felipe, the home of the Philippine Navy's Naval Shore Establishment.

At the advanced age of 60 years Bro. Olaes retired from politics, joined the Craft and decided to dedicate his remaining years to Masonry. He drove a tricycle but remained a practicing barber. Through the years he saw the transfer of many members of his lodge to jobs nearer to Manila. Stated meetings on the 1st Saturday at 5:OO PM would see many loyal brethren hurry to head for home and forego with the fellowship, citing the heavy traffic along the Noveleta and Kawit junctions as their reason for leaving early. Bro. Olaes would convince them to stay awhile during the fellowship by assuring them of breezing through the traffic via his tricycle. This service he offered for a long time until it was apparent that his advancing years was making it difficult for him to drive with a heavy load of passengers. In appreciation of his role as "Master of Fellowship" the brethren began to call him by the honorific *Maestro Higino.*

When he retired from driving a tricycle, he parlayed his barber skills to entice the transferred brethren to come much earlier as he would be there to give free haircuts while describing the life of a much different Cavite of a different era. For years, his free haircuts ensured a lively attendance during stated meetings. The brethren took advantage of his

unfailing attendance by designating him Tyler for 14 continuous years. For this service, Bro. Olaes earned another honorific, *Guardia Fiel* - the loyal guard or maybe more accurately *Tyler ng Bayan.*

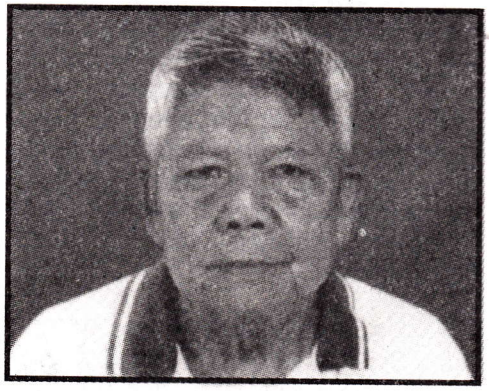
Bagong Ilaw many times elected him as light, but he always declined in favor of the younger brethren who he said were more capable intellectually and had the energy needed for lodge leadership. Though some of them were young enough to be his grandsons, *Guardia fiel* never failed to bow to the East in deference.

In December 2001, *Maestro Higino* declined his 15th year designation as Tyler. His bones creaked and it was getting embarrassing, he said - also he found it painful to sustain the bearing of a Tyler. He simply could not handle the job anymore, he was 93 years old and he had served the Craft for 33 years. The brethren were shocked into action, they had taken it for granted that their *Guardia Fiel* would always be available. They hurried to bestow upon him the Hiram Award and in the nick of time.

On July 11, 2002, *Maestro Higino* dropped his working tools - he was 94 years old. To the brethren of Bagong Ilaw, they are one in saying that in their lifetime they would not see a Mason in the mold of BROTHER OLAES again.

BRO. FRANCISCO E. EXPECTACION, aka *PAKING* aka *Examiner ng Bayan.* He was born on June 30, 1927 in Cavite City. *Bro. Paking* earned a living as an aircraft mechanic until he decided to retire and become a fulltime Mason. *Bro. Paking* became a Mason in 1974. As was the practice in the old Cavite lodges, rising through the ranks demanded a high level of proficiency. Ten years later, *Bro. Paking* became Master of Bagong Buhay No. 17 Testimony to his dedication to the Craft, he was designated GLI twice at Indang Lodge No. 115, DGL of Masonic District 2 and Venerable Master of Cavite Bodies, A&ASR. Along the way, *Bro. Paking* earned the reputation as a "Walking Monitor" whose mentorship was sought after in the 14 lodges of the Cavite district.

But what has endeared *Bro. Paking* to the younger Masons was his concern for candidates during their proficiency examinations. *Dikit sa Kandidato* the Cavite brethren would tease him, so much so they would jokingly call him *Paking Electioneering.* Understanding the anxiety of candidates during proficiency examinations, *Bro. Paking* would corral them way ahead of stated meetings and grill them rigorously until they became confident to face the officially designated examiners. Through the years, sponsors of aspiring candidates become worried when they learn that *Bro. Paking* was not around as examination time neared.



"Examiner ng Bayan"

After 28 years of valuable service to the Craft, a grateful Bagong Buhay Lodge No. 17 bestowed on BRO. EXPECTACION the Hiram Award.

Public Properties abound in the lodges and masonic centers all over the country and they deserve to be known to the Filipino brethren at large. Thus, the Cabletow reiterates its encouragement to the next generation of elders to write about these unforgettable "characters". They are an endangered breed. *IVI*

TRAVELLERS' JOURNAL

MT. MAINAM LODGE No. 49: January 11, 2003 at the Naic Covered Court. VW Rodolfo Ancheta, DGL Masonic District 2 was installing officer, Rev. Fr. Inocencio Poblete, Naic's Catholic Parish Priest led the opening prayer. MW Eugenio S. Labitoria was Guest Speaker. Installed as WM Efren C. Nazareno, the incumbent municipal mayor of Naic, Bro. Cesar Catubo as Senior Warden, and Bro. Ruel Ditan as Junior Warden.





NORTHERN SAMAR LODGE No. 211: January 11, 2003 at the Farmers' Training Center, University of Eastern Philippines in Catarman, Northern Samar. VW Romeo A. Yu, JGL of South Central Mindanao was installing officer, Governor Raul Daza was Guest Speaker. Installed were WM Jose A. Balite III vice WB Romeo D. Atencio.

FATHER AND SON INSTALLATION: A father DDGM, VW Reynaldo I. Reyes of MD20 installed his son WM Charles Reginald D. Reyes of Podomo Lodge No. 294 at the Davao Masonic Center last February 1, 2003. Father and Son face the daunting task of hosting the 87th ANCOM in April.



LABONG LODGE No. 59: February 1, 2003 at the Scottish Rites Temple, Taft Avenue, Malate, Manila. The installing officer was VW Emilio A. Andrion and the Guest Speaker was Chief Supt. Avelino I. Razon Jr. Installed were WM Nelson Yau, SW Winston Chingkiat and JW David Resus.



Right: Labong Outgoing, WB Mar Reyes.

Left: Bro. Razon is received into the Lodge



Right: Labong incoming, WM Nelson Yau.





NEW NAVY CHIEF FROM ISLAND LUZ MINERVA No. 5: Rear Admiral Ernesto H. De Leon assumed as the 27th Flag Officer-In-Command of the Philippine Navy last March 6. Islanders proudly flank their 3rd Flag rank member, from left Tony Tuason, Larry Wei, Bunny Cruz, Ronnie Parilla, Admiral Ernie, Zoilo Oris, Ronnel Briones, Camilo Parilla, Edmund Sin Hao, and Aris Parilla.

GM LABITORIA FULFILL VISITING OBLIGATIONS TO GLP PACIFIC AREA ISLAND LODGES. Last February 5-7 GM Labitoria embarked on his task of visiting the GLP lodges under Masonic District 15 in Guam (Charleston No. 44, Milton C. Marvin No. 123 and Micronesia No. 173) and Saipan (Emon No. 179), where he was received by the Masons under the GLP jurisdiction and sojourners from other jurisdictions. The visit has brought to remembrance the exile of Filipino revolutionary heroes to these islands at the turn of the 1900s. Last March 7-12, the GM visited Okinawa Lodge No. 118 at Naha.



GM Labitoria at the Apolinario Mabini Guam Exile Memorial.

HIRAM AWARD FOR V W VICTOR TANTEKSIAN: Kuya Vic was honored by his mother lodge Biak Na Bato Number 7 and MD3 in recognition of 21 years service as Plaridel Temple Junior Warden ng Bayan and a Masons' Public Property. The Hiram Award for Kuya Vic was presented last February 8, 2003.



THE 84TH GRAND MASTER IS KNIGHTED: The Supreme Council of the Order of the Knights of Rizal has knighted GM Eugenio S. Labitoria and Grand Chaplain Nerville P. Penalosa during a Special Knighthood and Conferment Ceremonies at the Antonio C. Torres Hall of the K.o.R. Building along Bonifacio Drive last February 14, 2003. The rites were presided by SIR VICENTE P. PALMON, KGCR the Supreme Commander of the Order.

PGM CLUB CREDO

We meet in a friendly and congenial atmosphere; to relax, enjoy each other's company and on the sideline discuss informally any issue under the sun

We pledge as ever our allegiance and obedience to the Grand Lodge. We are at the beck and call of the Grand Master and ready, if asked by him, to share our opinion and counsel, etc.

To the brethren of the jurisdiction we make likewise our pledge to silently monitor, referee and critique the hierarchy of leadership on the governance of the Grand Lodge always bearing in mind that we, PGMs should not encroach into the preserves of the Grand Master, he having the supreme power and prerogatives at his disposal.

To pay respect to our fellow PGMs by way of roasting ,exchanging jokes, anecdotes, pleasantries, etc., and hereby keeping the flame of kindred joy and affection ever burning in our hearts.

We, the PGMs, believe that we will always be around "come rain or come shine".

From: MW AGUSTIN V. MATEO, PGM
CLUB SECRETARY

TOUR OF DUTY REPORT

March 16, 2003

Dear Brethren:

In March last year, the outgoing Grand Master MW Napoleon A. Soriano endorsed us to then Deputy Grand Master RW Eugenio S. Labitoria to serve in the editorial staff of THE

CABLETOW during MY 2002-2003. Of the three of us, only Bro. Nerville Penalosa was previously known to the incoming Grand Master. To "Justice Gene", Bro. Rudy Ong was known only as the Business Manager of the outgoing editorial staff. Bro. Asiong Illenberger was not known previously to the incoming GM at all. His first policy guidance was for us to reconcile editorial policy with the visions and plan of action for his term. We summarized his guidance as "making a difference within the context of harmony and duty".

Confronting us was the stark reality that inflation was running much faster than the increase in subscription rate paid by the Brethren (the present annual rate of =P= 80 was set in 1992) and that the Brethren at large as a source of articles is a disappointment (there is an average of only three feature articles submitted monthly and we have to contend with the criteria of quality of language, relevance and non-repetition of the same themes). As to the first problem, our solution was to forego with the monthly honoraria in favor of the so-called "labor of love". In so doing we immediately generated =P= 300,000, enabling us to finance the other heretofore unfunded aspects of CABLETOW operations, among others, the consistent delivery to the some 2,400 foreign subscribers (paying US $20 annually but whose last copy sent was during the term of MW Enrique Locsin) and travel expenses for Bro. Nerville who in his concurrent capacity as Grand Lodge Chaplain and frequent stand-in for the GM during provincial visitations, also acted as our roving correspondent and jive-delivery service.

We also resorted to bulk mail delivery to cut costs - first to the Lodge addresses then later to the residence addresses of the Lodge secretaries who in turn took care of dsitributing the individual copies to their members, bringing down the delivery cost of about =P= 140,000 to a little over =P= 50,000.

As for the second problem of the dearth of suitable articles, we resorted to new formatting and writing condensed articles composite of excerpts from the Internet and libraries on

subjects we felt were not being made available to majority of the Brethren.

To us then these were the most that we could do under the circumstances. All these intentions were contained in a handbook distributed during the 86th ANCOM in Olongapo and reiterated in the first issue of the CABLETOW. But the *"best plans of mice and men"* do not necessarily translate to success when implemented.

The 1st issue was met with failure by contents (per criteria of our operating program) to meet the deadline. There were snags in the (GLP administrative prerogative) of awarding to and extracting performance from the first printer. The final draft was submitted for printing on August 11 (as against the program's June deadline), the first batch of 200 copies came out August 26, the second batch of 11,000 was received in October (delivered to provincial lodges and foreign subscribers) and the final batch of 2,500 was received in November (picked up by the NCR lodges). The 2nd issue was submitted for printing (by a different printer) on December 10 with all copies received by January 7. By February the 2nd issue save for a few NCR lodges, were delivered to the provincial and foreign subscribers. The 3rd issue was submitted for printing on March 3, all copies received by March 14 and delivered by March 21. This 4th and final issue, we intend to complete deliveries before the 87th ANCOM.

We will also complete the financial reports (insofar as the transactions we in the editorial staff initiated as those pertaining to CABLETOW operations only) in time for perusal during the plenary sessions of the ANCOM in Davao.

Serving in the editorial staff of the CABLETOW was both a pleasure and a challenge, and we thank the Grand Lodge leadership not only for giving us this opportunity to be of service to the Brethren but also bestowing upon us their confidence and allowing us the freedom to formulate contents. All three of us are in agreement that our knowledge of the Craft as well as

understanding the make-up of our jurisdiction have increased exponentially as a result of our year-long labor. We are also in agreement that a "Tour of Duty" with the CABLETOW be considered a crucial step in the Masonic career ladder that should be open to as many serious and aspiring Masons as can be made practicable.

As we close our own Tour of Duty and hand over the reins to the next team, we thank those who contributed to the CABLETOW in the many different ways that they have. May TGAOTU continue to bless our jurisdiction.

Fraternally,
Rudy L. Ong
Editor-In-Chief/Business Manager

Asiong V. Illenberger
Managing Editor

Nerville P. Peñalosa
Circulation Manager &
Roving Correspondent

The Cabletow Crowd





Bro. Nerville

Ms. Evangeline T. Rodrigo, Bro. Asyong, Bro Rudy with "Justice Gene".

From the 625 "MASONIC TRIVIA AND FACTS" by Allen E. Roberts, Anchor Communications, Highland Springs, Virginia, USA, 1994

605. What was "The Masonic Editor's Vow" that was printed in THE CABLETOW of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in 1927, and reprinted by the Editor of THE PHILALETHES in 1959?

I am firmly resolved:

To write only that which is clean and true and for the best interest of the Craft; to endeavor to instruct and enlighten the readers of my paper; to let Brotherly Love, tolerance and charity guide me in my judgment of persons, things and events; to be temperate in expression, show fortitude under attack, display prudence in dealing with questions of moment, and endeavor to do justice to all, whether friend or foe.

I will not mock or belittle that which others firmly believe to be right, just and holy, nor will I hurt the feelings of any person, great or small, If I can help it.

I will not allow my judgment and policy to be influenced by mercenary motives, but will proceed without fear or favor and prefer honest poverty to ill-gained affluence.

Towards my colleagues of the press I will ever be courteous and honest, abstaining from borrowing their thoughts and ideas and copying their work without giving due credit in each case, and I will do all I can to bring Masonic journalism to the high level which it should and must occupy.

The Cabletow Crowd with the consultants:
Standing from left, MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM;
RW Ricardo P. Galvez, PGM; Seated Right, MW Reynato S. Puno, PGM.



The Cable Tow

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OF THE

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OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

FOR AND IN THE INTEREST OF THE MEMBERS
OF THE SUBORDINATE LODGES OF
THIS JURISDICTION