

CABLE TOW

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES

DEPUTY GRAND MASTER



**MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING
WITH RW CESAR E. VIRATA, HDGM
DURING THE 111TH GLP ANNIVERSARY
DINNER FOR THE PGMS**

THE Volume 100, No. 2
CABLE TOW
The official publication of the most prestigious Grand Lodge of the Philippines

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EDITOR'S NOTE

BY VW ROLANDO F. ROCHA

Fraternal greetings!

With utmost pride and appreciation, I humbly present the second issue of The Cable Tow during its centennial year. This 84-page issue represents the efforts and contributions of the staff as well as those brethren who took the time to put substance into each and every page of this issue.

It is hoped that this gift which we now present to the brethren of the Craft may provide further instruction and illumination in their continuing travel in the realm of Freemasonry.

We also extend to the Grand Master, MW Don Terng Ramas-Uypitching together with the rest of the GLP staff, our gratitude for his support and guidance in coming out with every edition of this 100-year publication.

Mabuhay kayong lahat, mga Kuyang!


VW Rolando F. Rocha, GScr
Editor-In-Chief

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OUR COVER

THIS ISSUE'S COVER FEATURES THE GRAND MASTER, MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING TOGETHER WITH RW CESAR E. VIRATA HDGM, DURING THE 111TH GLP ANNIVERSARY DINNER FOR THE PAST GRANDMASTERS.



HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS: THE GRAND MASTER, MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING SHARING A LIGHT MOMENT WITH THE U.S. BRETHREN.

MW Ramas-Uypitching Attends GLC AnCom

LAST October 26, 2023 the Grand Master, MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING, left Manila to attend the Grand Lodge of California Annual Communications slated from October 27 to 29, 2023 at the City of San Francisco, California in the United States of America. The flight to California officially kicks off what would be the start of a ten-day masonic sojourn

in the cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles.

On the morning of October 29, 2023, the Grand Master left for Los Angeles with

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THE GRAND MASTER'S ROW: THE GRAND MASTER, MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING (3RD FROM LEFT), IN QUEUE WITH GRAND MASTERS OF OTHER MASONIC JURISDICTIONS, AWAITING TO BE RECEIVED.

... continued from page 5

the LA brethren and arrived at the LA around night time.

The following morning, MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING rested and joined the LA brethren for a Welcome Dinner at the Noypits Restaurant at 6:00p.m.

The next day, the Grand Master visited the El Bekal Shrine of Anaheim at around 10:00a.m. and lunch followed at Garden Grove L351, Acacia Parkway Garden Grove, Los Angeles. After lunch, the MW Don T. Ramas-Uypitching attended 2nd Degree Conferral at Andres Bonifacio Lodge No. 879. An early yet sumptuous dinner followed at 5:00p.m. The Grand Master rested from morning to afternoon the following day to attend to personal needs and matters. In the evening at 6:00p.m., he attended a 3rd Degree

continued on page 8 ...

THE MW KUYANG: THE GRAND MASTER, MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING (VARIOUS PICTURES) IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE KUYANGS OF CALIFORNIA DURING HIS 10-DAY TRIP TO THE U.S. TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA.







SPREADING HAPPINESS: THE GRAND MASTER, MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING (VARIOUS PICTURES) IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE KUYANGS OF CALIFORNIA DURING HIS 10-DAY TRIP TO THE U.S. TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA.

... continued from page 6

Conferral at Palos Verde Lodge, UD at Gardena Moneta, 155th St Gardena, Los Angeles, California. The next day, November 2, 2023, the Grand Master flew back from Los Angeles to Manila to attend the National Capital Region Multi-District Convention on November 4, 2023 at the Plaridel Masonic Temple in the City of Manila.

During his recent U.S. trip, the Grand Master was accompanied by his entourage composed of the following: VW Reynaldo P. Mabaylan, AGT, VW Jimmy S. Ngan, DDGM NCR-B, VW Henry C. Kok, DDGM RIII Bulacan West, VW Lino S. Ong, DDGM RIV-Rizal, VW Philip Mark U. Olivan, DDGM RV-Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, and Catanduanes, Chief Aide-De-Camp VW Augusto C. Roxas, PDGL, VW Manolo Dybongco, PDDGM, and GLI VW Ralph Jason Contrevida, PDDGM.



Building Temples Within

By VW Edgar S. Bentulan, DDGM

THE BEEHIVE is one powerful metaphor used in the mystic domain of Masonry to signify the brethren's industry working together in harmony, love and perseverance to pursue building in themselves the temple of character. This in essence, in fidelity to the ancient wisdom from which our Craft evolved, is our integrated individual philosophic aspiration designed towards becoming the better man. And by custom of common endeavor we never stop: always aiming for the higher plane.

In my best modest effort, may I attempt to offer my own synthesis of the theme crafted by the Grand Master, MW Don Terng Ramas-Uypitching -- himself considerably exemplified as an "operative

temple builder" -- as his ideals and dreams to guide us in his directions of the Grand Lodge this MY 2023-24. Focusing our lexicon here on temples and hearts, perhaps, there is no more convenient approach to unlock the import of this verbiage than by the speculative symbolisms and meanings of these two big terms.

By biblical origin, as time and again mentioned, a temple was built to serve as a sanctuary for worship and assembly of the people in ancient past. In the time of Prophet David a temple was, accordingly, specially mandated by God to make His presence in mankind felt among the Israelites, and as constant reminder of the infinite power of His creation of

humanity and the entire universe. So under the aegis of David's kingship, was the First Temple at the hallowed ground of Mt. Moriah, Jerusalem, erected by his son King Solomon primarily as a home for the final rest of the Ark of the Covenant which contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments received from Him by Moses, to be man's guide of his actions. The temple, hence, has been generically considered the seat of the spiritual realm of knowledge.

The heart is not simply the blood-red ideograph commonly shaped to represent

and energy. To philosophers, the heart is the focal center of man's entire physical and spiritual life. A Russian philosopher, Boris Petrovich Vysheslavtsev considers it as "the organ of communication between a person and God, and therefore it is an organ of higher knowledge."

So, in our modest take, in a way, the heart is itself a temple.

Now, Masonic studies tell us that in our journey in pursuit of higher knowledge in this world, we tend to lose interest in the labors and benefits we normally

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man's vital organ and as fountainhead of love by long established tradition, as symbolic lure for romanticism, like what the inventors of Valentine's Day are hitherto persisting to induce lovers every year in their commercial artifice through flowers and cards, or post amorous greetings in Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. And, everywhere in the world reached by Western bourgeois culture, celebrate in parties every February 14, even in the midst of hardships.

In medical science, the heart is one complex organ that pumps the fuel (blood) to energize the entire machine of man's physiological system to keep him alive and nourishing. It is his source of life

have in our day-to-day endeavors. We are not content. Intellectually, we long for more. Because we, true Masons particularly, realize that behind the stare of our obligation something is yet lacking, missing from what we have. So, we pursue into the inner chamber of ourselves.

Bro. Walter Leslie Wilmshurst (The Meaning of Masonry) puts it in this perspective: “. . . we turn back upon ourselves, to seek and knock at the door of a world within and it is upon this inner world, and the path to and through it that, Masonry promises light, charts the way, and indicates the qualifications and conditions of progress . . .” We probe deeper into the inner world to assimilate

the mysteries of our being and existence. Some join the Scottish Rite, York Rite and other Higher Bodies to heighten their grasp of the mysteries of the Craft and master the esoteric message of Masonry. This is the profounder sublime notion of it.

As Masons, we are philosophers. By the lights of our realization and transcendent contemplation, as in the light that this Grand Master prods us to pursue, we see the way in somewhat of an odyssey to build temples inside man's hearts as our higher means to find contentment and self-fulfillment. Allegorically, the familiarity of the way should be clear. For, after all, it is where we were earlier, first prepared to become a Mason. The heart. This state of contentment, Bro. Albert Pike reminds in his *Morals and Dogma*, is fulfilled when one "lives not for himself alone, but others also, who need his assistance and have a claim of his sympathy." A strong sense of altruism, charity, if you may, occurs in us to embrace other persons, our brothers in the Craft, as part of our life.

From this point, Bro. Pike may counsel us that we should aim for the higher purpose of Masonry, and that is "to bring about the inner transformation of man." This can be construed as our own transformation and the other man's by our exemplary influence to pursue the journey.

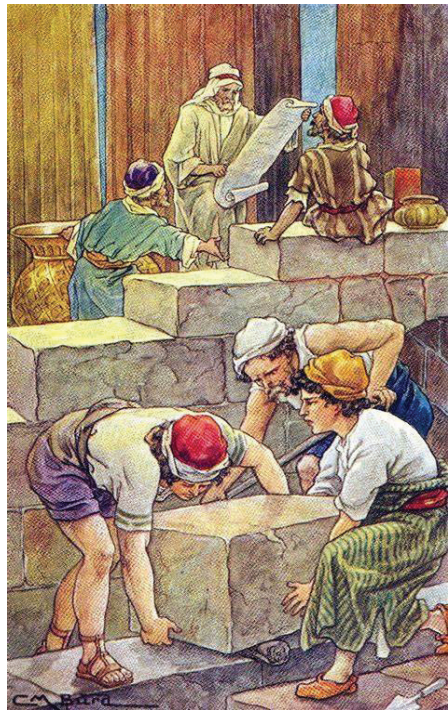
The temple "inside" the heart, can be more of a hyperbole than just metaphor, as it suggests more emphasis and somewhat intensely specific beyond ordinary human capacity, an amplification with defined directness more than the figurative meaning of an occurrence or object.

In semantics or grammar, the generic preposition or adjective of it may be "in," because this connotes one's position

or location in a basic or indefinite dimension. Since the GM's preference is "inside," we are of the understanding that he wants us endeavoring to deliver with certainty a stronger and deeper sense in our labors of building a temple, more specifically in the innermost part of our heart, i.e., right inside the enclosed space of its labyrinth, where it should be pure, undiluted and uncontaminated.

As once described by scientists in Gresham College, an institution of higher learning in London, the heart consists of manifold layers of a tough muscular wall, the myocardium, and its physical texture is "spiral in organization" composed of various "logarithmic spirals" and muscles. So entrenched, mathematically mazed, sort of, and secured, as we can see.

Bro. Pike, in our interpretation, points the bringing about of the inner



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transformation of man right inside the repository of pure altruistic love and all pious virtues and principles of Masonry, which is the heart, that, which inside its fortified and intricate enclosure ascertains the greatest percentage of assurance of truth, presumably free from any stint of hypocrisy or pretense and vanity. For, isn't the heart after all, the greater temple of moral architecture where God communicates to man in higher plane of knowledge, as what that, earlier, unpronounceable Russian thinker Boris Petrovich was trying to say?

The temple being the sanctuary of God's presence, and the heart as the central source of love, emotion, energy and humanity -- the seat of our soul in commune with Him -- in combined metaphors, aggregately suggests our endeavor for our highest goal of unconditional, total submission to our selfless, deepest self in mystic union with the Supreme Being. Again, this supposes the undeletable divine venue of a greater temple: the heart itself.

The theme, ergo, in its symbolisms presupposes temple within the temple, the greater temple which is the heart. From the lessons of the First Temple building and allegory of the Tragedy, for anyone to even start building a temple, he must first be pure, impeccable and firm in his character like Hiram Abiff; and for him to finish its erection inside a greater temple he must have an emulation worthy of the highest discernment and wisdom, and moral grit of King Solomon.

Viewed from the genre of these descriptions, building temples inside our hearts in its hyperbolic sense, in our modest prognosis, may not be that superficial and ephemeral, or simple and easy a

Bro. Pike, in our interpretation, points the bringing about of the inner transformation of man right inside the repository of pure altruistic love and all pious virtues and principles of Masonry, which is the heart, that which inside its fortified and intricate enclosure ascertains the greatest percentage of assurance of truth, presumably free from any stint of hypocrisy or pretense and vanity.



process. It may require more stringent, hard qualifications, and take morally more calculated and extra-conscious, diligent devotion. It necessitates even constant meditation, in complex efforts directed by the transcendent meanings of our obligation and tenets, aimed at enhancing our ourselves for the greatest moral and spiritual architecture of human perfection.

Morally complex, challenging and spiritually ponderous, yes, but as Master Masons, assures Albert Pike, our life will be fully under the control and guidance

of our higher self in fulfillment of this highest goal. This distinguishes us as Master Masons.

Grand salute to him, MW Don Uypitching in his administration's theme fittingly champions and impels, nay, challenges the Brethren in this grand jurisdiction to engage very seriously in this beehive of spiritual and moral endeavor as a mass of individual members of this venerable Fraternity to labor and pursue, all together, this higher plateau of life, rather leading us towards ultimate human quality of the perfect ashlar.



DESPITE STRINGENT AND METICULOUS PROCESSES, MERCENARIES HAVE FOUND THEIR WAY INTO THE FIELD OF FREEMASONRY.

BY BRO. JOEY A. VILLEGAS

WE MASONS welcome to our lodges those who have sought Masonry freely without our personal invitation, for they express their own initiative and desire to further themselves as men of God and as brothers of men. Yet hither we address those who lurk among us, having somehow managed to pass through the gates of Masonry, and have become Masons despite hidden and mercenary motives. You know who you are. This article is for you.

Masonry makes good men better... and bad men worse. By “good men,” we refer not to those possessed with impeccable piety and righteousness, rather those who humbly recognize their own imperfections and have thus come to Masonry seeking to improve their moral and ethical character. By “bad men,” we refer not to those deficient of such moral and ethical precepts, rather those who have come to us seeking to exploit Masonry for ill will or material gain.

You may have your own personal reasons and motivations in seeking Masonry

for selfish ends. You may have come in search of wealth, glory, or fame. None, we assure you, Masonry provides. If such is what you sought, you would soon come to realize, or may already have realized, that indeed you have come to the wrong place. But such are your reasons, and yours alone, and there is admittedly no dependable filter out of which you could effectively be strained. We can only wish, and hope, and pray that, if you do manage or have somehow already managed to enter our gates to become one of us for the wrong reasons, such reasons would not unjustly abuse the kindness of our brethren, much less infect them with your pomp and malice – ruining the entire mode by which Masonry is supposed to make good men better.

Some of you may have joined Masonry to build and establish a network of contacts – perhaps for the purpose of gaining preferential treatment in business dealings or of furthering one’s political career and agenda – for Masons certainly comprise of ordinary and influential men alike who are all but willing to

assist brethren in need. Some of you in the military and uniformed professions may have joined Masonry in the hopes of expediting your promotions into higher ranks or positions – for certainly many of your superiors do belong to the Masonic fraternity and may perhaps be easily swayed towards your favor. Some of you may have joined Masonry looking to expand your markets to a larger base of potential clients and customers. Some of you may have joined to seek monetary assistances, gain popularity, or simply rub elbows with the who's who in society. I have seen some Masons in the habit of

and destroys his rectitude, his honor, and his integrity. He then becomes more selfish, more greedy, and more corrupt. Therefore, though Masonry does make good men better, it also makes bad men worse.

So if you have come to Masonry with mercenary motives, and have penetrated the guard at the West Gate, then beware even more, for the wages and benefits you would unworthily receive in Masonry shall make you a worse person than you were before, spoiling you and luring you to abuse them, thus making Masonry a harm

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systematically taking photos or selfies of themselves together with their prominent Masonic brothers who are either Senators, Congressmen, Governors, Mayors, Chiefs-of-Police, or even Judges; then posting the pictures online for bragging rights. Indeed, many of these a mercenary Mason can easily achieve, if that is all what Masonry means to him. Doing so, however, dilutes and nullifies the original intent of making good men better. By abusing and misusing “Masonic wages” – a term normally used to refer to the due rewards and benefits of Masonic labor – one actually accomplishes the opposite,

to your character rather than something that should improve it. Masonry is not a reformative organization, rather one that promotes self-improvement. If there is none to improve, one cannot expect to become better. If one possesses a character other than good, then such is the trait that Masonry would inadvertently magnify and amplify in the long run.

THE WEST GATE

The successful intrusion of new members with mercenary motives through the gates of Masonry prompted many protective brethren to exercise vigilance, becoming

what some are now calling the self-appointed “guardians of the West gate.” The West gate, in Masonic parlance, is the first door through which the candidates of Masonry pass before becoming actual Masons. It is guarded by outer and inner guards who inquire and challenge the candidates’ motives for joining the fraternity, and likewise warn them of the consequences of mercenary motives.

Noticeably, these guardians of the West gate are a ruthless and zealous lot. They are protective of the fraternity against the entry of what they deem “unworthy” petitioners. They are even, by extension, more protective against what they call “Masonic wannabes” – those pretenders who claim to be Masons for whatever reasons, whether to boast or to use Masonry for their own gains. Some of these wannabes have become actual “cowans and eavesdroppers” – another term in Masonic parlance to generally denote those who intrude into a body of Masons for the purpose of learning their secrets, thus becoming capable of passing themselves off as Masons themselves. These are the kinds of people whom the guardians of the West gate have personally sworn to defend against. But what of those who have already penetrated the West gate and have already become their Masonic brothers, with some even becoming guardians of the West gate themselves? The irony is actually more real than we would like to believe: wannabes who have become cowans, who have become Masons, who have become the very guards against the entry of those whom they once were. More often, they let such people in and sometimes even keep the worthy ones out; for who do we suppose they feel are worthy except their own kind? Thus our gentle and noble fraternity becomes infested with

mercenary Masons.

MERCENARY MASONS

It is easy to spot mercenary Masons. They are the ones more interested in rings than in aprons; more active in refreshment than in labor; more inclined to pursue entitlement than to render services.

Let us take for instance the wearing of Masonic rings, which is purportedly less about letting others know that you are a Mason, and more about reminding yourself that you are. But the wearing of jewelry and apparels with the square-and-compasses emblem had eventually turned into a boastful attempt to self-brand and self-elevate. If you, as a true Mason, really love and value this emblem and for what it stands, then wear it only when you truly believe that you yourself are worthy enough to wear it. Otherwise, you should strip yourself of it, lest you blemish it with your mere attempt to dignify yourself. Remember that you are to bring honor to the symbol instead of using the symbol to unjustly honor yourself. This, of course, is a concept difficult to comprehend for the mercenary Mason who believes himself entitled to it – having “worked hard” to earn the right to wear it and brag about it.

Such manner of thinking – a sort of misplaced superiority complex – is something even non-Masons see, whether we are aware of it or not. They see it when you “confiscate” Masonic rings worn by non-Masons. They see it when you proudly stick Masonic decals behind your cars, while demanding non-Masons to remove them from theirs if any be found. They see it when you go around boasting your “Masonic connections” to friends and people at work.

Who then do we blame if those who

petition for membership into our fraternity do so with mercenary motives – thinking that they too could become as “prominent, wealthy, and influential” as we? More importantly, who then do we blame if petitioners are sponsored and accepted for no other reason other than their prominence, wealth, and influence – taking advantage of them for a lodge’s material gain?

Indeed, it is the mercenary Mason among us that causes all of these and more. He

within the fraternity, and easily find it, then exposing Masons as immoral. Such, however, are extremely rare. More often, the mercenary Mason is just an ordinary freeloader who seeks to gain from and at the expense of his brethren.

If you are any one of these, know that we still consider you our Masonic brothers, and that we only appeal to your kind hearts to not allow your inherent nature jeopardize the good name of the fraternity you fought so long and hard to infiltrate.

Let us take for instance the wearing of Masonic rings, which is purportedly less about letting others know that you are a Mason, and more about reminding yourself that you are. But the wearing of jewelry and apparels with the square-and-compasses emblem had eventually turned into a boastful attempt to self-brand and self-elevate.

may be the one sitting beside you at lodge soliciting your vote in the coming election. He may be the one selling a bundle of raffle tickets that have nothing to do with Freemasonry. He may be the one who keeps calling you at work for your personal or professional favor – whether to help him with his traffic violation or simply get ahead in line at a government counter. Worse yet, he may even be you.

There are those unremarkable few who have joined Masonry for the sole purpose of discrediting it, finding its fault, and thus “exposing” it as a supposed malevolent organization out to destroy either the church or the state. Sometimes they have come in search of practices of debauchery

“Own it,” at least. Try to still become the true Masons you claim to be. We believe that everybody has the capacity for change. Maybe, just maybe, you are indeed good Masons deep inside after all, just waiting for the right inspiration and enlightenment to take you out of the dark whence you came.

To the few worthy Masons out there, I reiterate: Masonry makes good men better and bad men worse. Be careful who you accept into our fold. Indeed, there are times when we forget about quality membership and become trash collectors instead – mixing rotten men with the few that are good, and allowing their decay to consume the entire fraternity. Caveat emptor.

BACK IN 2011 AND 2012, a real-life treasure hunt was mysteriously announced and commenced over on Facebook (FB) for the benefit of Philippine Masons. It began as a series of riddles which served as clues or maps to finding actual artifacts hidden all over Metro Manila. The said artifacts included old photographs, postcards, and rare bills which have intrinsic and sentimental value to Masons. Those who stumbled upon the treasure hunt online were not only challenged to solve the riddles that revealed the locations of the “treasures,” but to actually go out and find the said treasures and retrieve them from their hiding places.

The first announcement (www.facebook.com/1561955390772228) came out on August 18, 2011 with the following riddle:

I hid your prize where no one knew.
To discover where remember this clue:

Visions of the Possible you must uncover
Under Filipiniana b’neath the dustcover.
Claim your prize inserted thereunder
But its location first you must uncover.

Go to FB while on the High street
Named after him a Hero and Mason.
‘Tis a public place so be very discrete.
Why you’ve come tell no one the reason.

Hurry now if you know this place
Before this prize someone else could
take.

If someone does I cannot replace
This prize you lost by your own mistake.

A number of Masons heeded the call and, together, they solved the riddle line by line. The High street mentioned in the riddle, named after a hero and Mason, was found out to be Boni High – a street within Bonifacio Global City (BGC). The street and the mini-city was named after Andres Bonifacio – Philippine



revolutionary hero and Freemason.

So why would one, as the riddle suggested, go to FB – known to be the acronym for Facebook – while in Boni High? What other clue could possibly emerge from going there while logged in to Facebook? As is turned out, FB did not stand for Facebook, but an actual establishment so prominently visible in the area. FB was actually Fully Booked – a large bookstore located in the heart of Boni High.

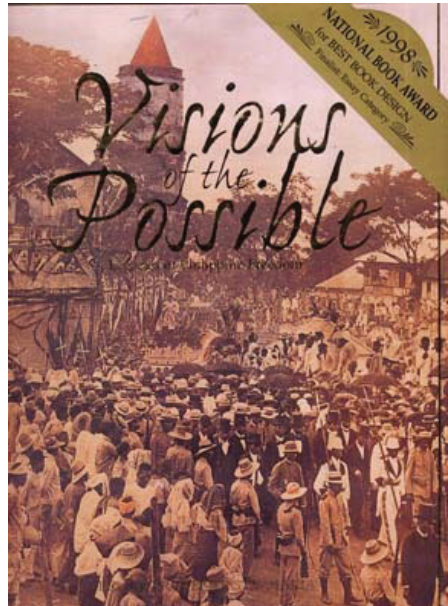
That made a lot of sense, since the riddle instructed that one must uncover something under Filipiniana, and beneath the dustcover. Could it be pointing to a specific book in the Filipiniana section? No one could possibly have known unless somebody went there to find out. Since some of the Masons who were able to crack the riddle were unavailable to investigate, the treasure hunt faced unanticipated stump. It wasn't until a few days later when Bro. Albert So (+) went to the said location and discovered a book in the Filipiniana section. The book was even mentioned in the riddle by name: "Visions of the Possible" by Ms. Felice Prudente Sta. Maria. It was a large and beautiful hardbound book with remarkable historical pictures. And tucked snugly beneath the dustcover, Bro. Albert was able to retrieve what was hidden there, waiting to be found.

The hidden treasure was actually a very old five-peso bill. And on that bill was the face of – you guessed it – Andres Bonifacio – hero and Mason. As an added treat, the bill itself, being no longer legal tender, was stamped with an imposing Masonic emblem at the back. Bro. Albert then claimed his prize and immediately reported his find back on Facebook, at the amazement of the rest of his brethren,

thus concluding the first part of the treasure hunt. Bro. Albert said he would be keeping his find in his own Masonic scrapbook.

On August 26, 2011, a second riddle (www.facebook.com/1561958190771948) came out:

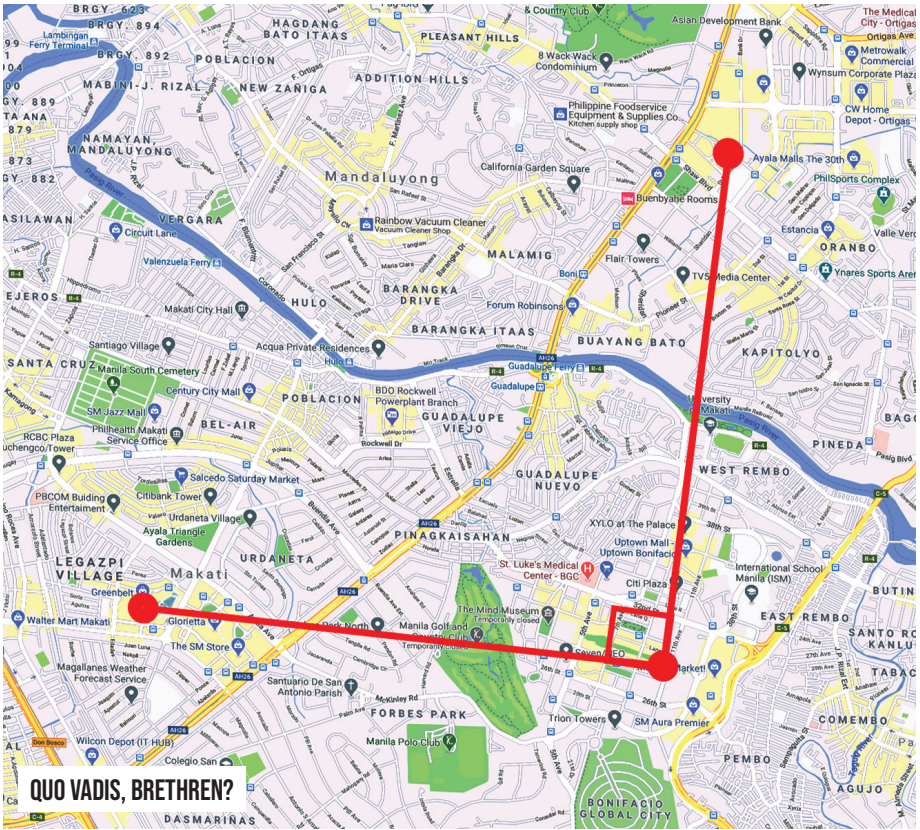
There are Two other Treasures
That go to whoever discovers,
Aside from the very First one



CLUES IN THIS MASONIC TREASURE HUNT ARE TO BE FOUND IN THE MOST UNLIKELY PLACES SUCH A BOOK OR A BILL OF CASH.



The Cable Tow Centennial Edition Vol. 100 No. 2



That Bro. Albert had won.

To complete your journey and end this game.

An angle of a Square you must draw forth
From that location of the previous quest.
One path leads three kilometers North
While the other, three kilometers West.

At the North you must find that book
On the 150th year of the School of Rizal
At the West you are tasked to look
For the biography of Winston Churchill.

Remember these branches are not the same
Though similar they are in form and name.
But in both cases a regalia you must claim

The riddle spoke of two other treasures hidden in two separate places which, when connected with each other and with the previous treasure, formed an angle of a square – a symbolism prominent in Freemasonry. The two new locations were also said to be 3 km apart from the old treasure location in Boni High, and that “these branches” were “not the same yet similar in name.” Could they have been two other branches of the same bookstore, Fully Booked? As is turned out, when one used a map and plotted 3 km away, northward from the location of the first treasure, then plot another of the same distance from the first going westward,

forming an angle of a square, you would find exactly two other branches of Fully Booked – one in Garden Way, West Façade of the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel (now closed) in Mandaluyong City; and the other in the basement of Greenbelt 5 Mall in Makati City.

Many participating Masons have been relatively quick to solve the above riddle, having taken a cue from the previous. But as before, it was ultimately the persistence to actually travel that led Bro. Albert So to find the next two treasures. The first one he found in the Greenbelt branch, inserted in the pages of a book about Bro. Winston Churchill. The other he found in the Shangri-La branch in Mandaluyong City, inserted in the pages of the 150th year anniversary book of Ateneo De Manila. The treasures were both antique photographs of Masons wearing Masonic regalia, as described in the riddle.

Months later, due to insistent demand, another treasure had been planted. On January 16, 2012, this third riddle (www.facebook.com/1561958190771948) came out:

There is something hidden inside The
 Vatican
 Conspiracies, Codes, and the Catholic
 Church
 Many Freemasons clad in a thing called
 Apron
 That is the only thing you are asked to
 search.

If you would recall in the last Treasure
 Quest
 To the North you were led and also to
 the West
 Now turn your eyes to East would you
 please
 Enter FB again so this Treasure you may

seize

And once found, this Treasure you must
 show
 Here on my Wall so that everyone would
 know
 That you were he who found it fair &

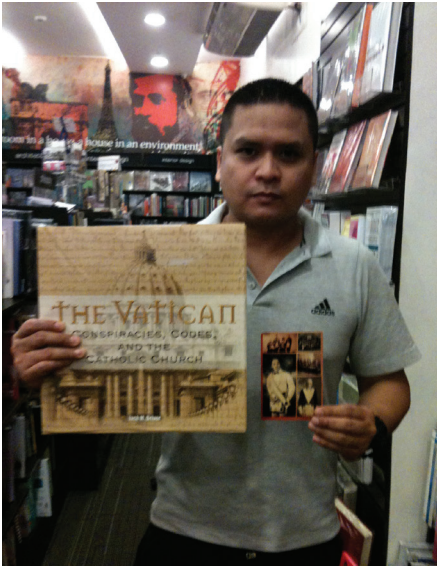


**WHERE IS THE TREASURE? THIS SEEMS TO BE
 WHAT THE LOOK ON BROTHER, SIR
 WINSTON CHURCHILL, SIGNIFY.**

square

And for that, a prize to you we shall
 share.

Based on the past treasure hunts, it could easily be guessed that this next one was another book quest, most likely in another branch of the same bookstore. It was also observed that hidden yet obvious clues were actually embedded in the riddles themselves. In this case, the riddle spoke of “The Vatican: Conspiracies, Codes, and the Catholic Church” which is – and you guessed it – the title of an actual book. As to where it is, the riddle said something about turning the eyes “to East would you please.” But East here did not refer to a direction, but the location itself. The play on words on “East” followed by “would” could only have meant “Eastwood.” Eastwood City is actually a small yet high-end commercial and residential



IS IT HIDDEN IN THE VATICAN, PERHAPS?

community in Quezon City where a Mall stood bearing the Eastwood name. And yes, a branch of the very same bookstore could be found inside. It was all too easy. The treasure was eventually retrieved and claimed by Bro. JC De Leon (see right picture) who was able to decipher the riddle and thereby won an extra prize, which was a copy of the 2012 Masonic Planner. The treasure itself was actually an antique Masonic postcard showing Masons in aprons, as told in the riddle. On the back of the postcard were the final words:

If you have come searching for this,
Hurry now and go to Facebook.
Tell us that you were the first
So no one else for this would look.
But if you have found this by mistake,
Put it back where it was found.
It is the right thing not to take
What is not yours to own.

The last half of the above message would eventually prove fateful, as not all planted

treasures were meant to be found by a worthy Mason. On January 27, 2012, another treasure had been hidden. This time, it was in a location of far more historic significance. It was announced (www.facebook.com/1419239438377158) as such:

No more riddles, no more tricks. I will tell you where it is. It hides behind the Sign of the Double-headed Eagle, meant to mark the Art of Francisco Domingo. The Art, supposedly Jordan, portrays one of the Holy Saints John, which adores the middle of a Winding Stairs.

The place was called Convento De San Agustin. Pay your dues to gain admission therein. Turn left after the Bell, then right towards Paseo De Galende. But before reaching the exit door, keep your eyes alert for Escalera Principal.

Never lose sight of that Double-headed Eagle. It is your path towards the end of your goal. And once you have recovered that Token which you sought, take a snapshot of it and the place, as a memento of your adventure. Post it here as proof of your success so that a prize we may give you to chronicle this quest.

The place was obviously the San Agustin Church in Intramuros, Manila – the oldest stone church in the Philippines, completed 1607. But the treasure or Token hidden inside its adjacent Museum was never reported found, as it was lost on site, probably taken by someone else who stumbled upon it by accident.

Nevertheless, another few days after, on February 1, 2012, the last of the series of treasures had been hidden in a location of greater historical significance to Masons themselves. The announcement (www.



a small wax sealed envelope. Inside were a vintage photograph and an old currency bill with a Masonic stamp – both from the time of the Japanese occupation of Manila – a time in our history when about 200

facebook.com/1419239435043825) however did not just come in the form of a riddle. It came with a cipher:

The Scottish Rite Temple in Taft
 Holds the Key for you to draft
 The message revealing the place
 Behind which your Token awaits.

6-4. 8-10-61-72-1. 68-15-8-6-21-61.
 5-31-35. 99-1-11. 17-29-32-37-43-45.
 53-62-69-21.90. 130.

The cipher obviously needed a key, according to the riddle, in order to decode the hidden message which, in turn, would reveal the whereabouts of the treasure or Token. That key was actually the historical marker of the Scottish Rite Temple building in Taft Avenue, Manila. The numbers above corresponded to the letters in the texts on that marker, thus forming the phrase:

It hides behind the 1st mirror among 3.

The hidden message was deciphered by two people, but it was only Bro. Jefferson Uy who, after more than a month, was able to go to that place with the 3 mirrors and retrieve the treasure hidden behind the first. That place was the men's washroom of the Scottish Rite Temple. The hidden treasure or Token was actually

innocent Filipinos were said to have been herded and killed by the Japanese Marines inside the very premises of the Scottish Rite Temple. (Note: as of time of writing of this article, the hidden treasure is still there, left there by Brother Jefferson for future generations to stumble upon. We can only hope that nobody would steal it.)

The above series of Masonic treasure hunts began more than a decade ago, when Masons were given a rare and exclusive chance to experience firsthand a real-life treasure hunt, similar to those depicted in movies like National Treasure, Da Vinci Code, and Angels & Demons. Maybe someday, after the pandemic is finally over, we could again engage ourselves in fun learning activities such as these.





Freemasonry, Hermeticism and the Kabbalah

BY VW ALEXANDER B. MADAMBA, PSGL

THERE ARE SEVERAL ARTICLES, books, and references on Freemasonry in relation to its origin, doctrines, philosophies and its transformation from Operative to Speculative Masonry. As to its origin, Masonic scholars and historians shared a common belief that the actual origin of Freemasonry, per se, is lost in the mist of antiquity. There are, however, various theories proposed by some erudite Masons. Bro. W.L. Wilmschurst, for one, believed that “Egyptian ceremonial system, some 5,000 years old, taught precisely the same things as Masonry does.....” (The Deeper Symbolism of Freemasonry, Chapter 1). Another brother, Albert Churchward claimed that

he can read and interpret hieroglyphics and papyri of the ancients, ergo, by going through them, he can give with confidence, an accurate account, more or less, of the ancient mysteries. In his studies, he traced back the Masonic signs, symbols and rituals to ancient Egypt (Albert Churchward, Arcana of Freemasonry, p. 9). He further revealed that the birthplace of “operative masons” was in Egypt; the builders of Roman Collegia, were only carriers of the “operative masons” (Ibid. p. 12). Another theory is presented by Bro. Manly P. Hall, that “Masonry came to Northern Africa and Asia Minor from the lost continent of Atlantis, not under its present name but rather under the general designation Sun

and Fire Worship” (The Secret Teachings of All Ages, p. 176). The Occultists and Theosophists hold the idea that Atlantis, a continent and the abode of the 4th root race called the Atlanteans, sunk sometime in 9,600 BC. The present humanity is the 5th sub-race (Indo-Caucasian) of the 5th root race called the Aryan race.

With regard to the emergence of Speculative Freemasonry, some brethren maintained that it originated its initiatory rites from ancient mysteries, e.g., Egyptian, Greek’s Eleusinian and Dionysian, Hindu, Jewish, Persian’s Mithraic, Druidical (Britain), to name some. Bro. John Fellows, on p. 15 of his book entitled *Mysteries of Freemasonry*

the Roman Colleges of Architects when King Numa, 2nd emperor of Rome, in about 700 years BC, brought artificers from Attica, Greece for the purpose of organization. The legendary H.... Ab... of Freemasonry was said to be member of both guilds. Dionysian Artificers were members of the Fraternity of Dionysian Architects based in Greece and were initiated in the Dionysian mysteries. Said Fraternity was established a thousand-year BC. Thus, “Freemasonry most of all owes to the Dionysiac cult the great mass of its symbols and rituals which are related to the science of architecture” (Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Teachings...op. cit.* p. 175). Perhaps, such a perception is the basis on what is given in the Masonic

The primary doctrine that Freemasonry gives emphasis is the belief in the Supreme Being and immortality of the soul. This is conveyed in the legend of H.... Ab..., and such legend was borrowed from the ancient mysteries. H... Ab... was slain and was raised through the medium of prayer.

said that, “the principles and dogmas of Freemasonry contained in the ancient mysteries from which it is derived existed long before the birth of Jesus Christ”. My view on this is that part of the rituals and ceremonies of Speculative Masonry may have been derived from these ancient mysteries; while the present Masonic Lodges, their structure and organization were borrowed from the Operative Masons – stone builders, including their implements, signs, and symbols. There are articles about Masonry written by prominent Masons saying that the Masonic and architectural influence of the Greek’s Dionysian Artificers reached

lecture, which I quote: “to the Greeks therefore and not to the Romans, we are indebted for what is great, judicious and distinct in architecture”.

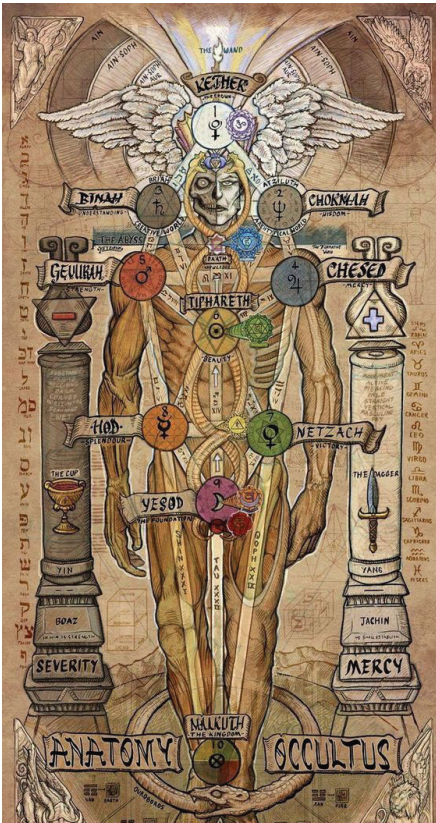
According to legend, when the barbarians brought chaos in Rome, after the latter’s empire fell in about three (3) centuries AD, the guild of stone builders (Operative Masons) who survived the holocaust, settled in Lake Como, located in Northern Italy, where they continued their trade and Lodge activities. Bro. H.L. Haywood, author of “Freemasonry and the Comacine Masters”, wrote that “a collegium, or a few collegia, of architects

and their workmen continued in the diocese of Como". These "few collegia of architects" in all probability refers to the members of Roman College of Architects. The excellent works of art connected with buildings by the Operative Masons in Lake Como gained recognition in Europe where they extended their influence and activities. They were called "comacini" which literally means "early medieval Italian Masons", which is the etymology of Comacine Masters. This Comacine theory likewise explains that Masonic lodges were established in other parts of Europe (e.g., Britain, France, Germany) after the guilds had established connections and had been given by the monarchs and churches the freedom to travel to build temples, cathedrals, bridges, and other stately edifices.

From the ancient mysteries and the movement of Operative Masons, came modern Speculative Masonry. Bro. W.L. Wilmshurst, the author of *The Deeper Symbolism of Freemasonry* (Chapter 1, *The Meaning of Masonry*), wrote, "our rituals and ceremonies having been compiled round about the year 1700". I take this to mean that in the said year, the rituals, ceremonies and doctrines of the ancient mysteries and the Operative Masons were consolidated, studied, organized, and written down to form the basis of Speculative Freemasonry. Albert Schutz supported the claim of Bro. Wilmshurst by saying "a group of intellectuals in London rediscovered the occult in the early 1700s and organized the Speculative Masons that became today's Free and Accepted Masons" (*Call Adonoi Manual of Practical Cabalah and Gestalt Mysticism*, p. 5). The group referred to comprised of priests in the United Kingdom called the Druids, who were said to be responsible for the compilation of occult

sciences, rituals and ceremonies of the ancients and that of the Operative Masons. The Druids are said to be the "oldest Masons". Being such, some Freemasons, such as Preston and Hutchinson, have suggested that Freemasonry was derived from the Druids. There may be truth in this because "the oldest Lodge record is that of the Aitcheson Lodge, date 1598; that is one year older than No. 1 Lodge of Edinburgh, 1599" (Albert Churchward, *The Arcana of Freemasonry*, p. 108). This record could be the Kilwinning Manuscript also called Edinburgh Kilwinning Manuscript.

The primary doctrine that Freemasonry gives emphasis is the belief in the Supreme Being and immortality of the soul. This is conveyed in the legend of H... Ab..., and such legend was borrowed from the ancient mysteries. H... Ab... was slain and was raised through the medium of prayer. Similarly, the Priest Dionysus (Bacchus of the Romans) of the Greek's Dionysian mystery was slain by the Titans, Adonis of Greece was killed by a wild boar, Balder of the Scandinavian mystery was killed by Loki, Osiris of the Egyptian mystery was killed by Typhon. These legends have something in common, in that all the slain protagonists or heroes were later resurrected. Mithraic mystery of the Persians likewise believe in the resurrection of the flesh. These legends have a succinct message - man's soul is immortal. Another similarity in the way the initiates of these ancient mysteries, Freemasonry and those of the students of Socrates, Aristotle, Pythagoras and Hermes, undergo through the rites of initiation is the taking of the oath of secrecy. This is one of the reasons Freemasonry has been branded as a secret society. Moreover, the ceremonies are dramatizations and funeral in



KABBALA IS ESSENTIALLY AN ORAL TRADITION IN THAT ITS DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES IS CONDUCTED BY A PERSONAL GUIDE TO AVOID THE DANGERS INHERENT IN MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES.

character. In Hindu mystery, according to Bro. George Oliver author of History of Initiation, the initiation for higher degree is done in a cavern where the initiate goes in circumambulation three times, and in every round, he stops at the south, west and east in imitation of the course of the sun. The blazing star at the center of the mosaic pavement of a Masonic Lodge is an emblem of the sun, which in ancient times was the symbol of the Deity.

The lessons taught in Freemasonry are exhaustive and evidently religious. The words of wisdom are intermixed which

make it hard to trace their sources except the biblical passages. Having said that, several Masonic scholars contend that Speculative Masonry has a direct link with the teachings and the occult science of Hermeticism and Kabbalah. “Masonry is thoroughly Hermetic and Kabbalistic, and the framers of these degrees were evidently Kabbalistic and Hermetic philosophers.....” (John Fellows, Mysteries of Freemasonry, p. 85). Even a well-known Masonic scholar, Illustrious Albert Pike, admitted the connection of Masonry with Hermeticism. He said “there is no doubt that the true signification of many of the symbols of Blue Masonry is to be looked for in the Books of the Hermetic Philosophers.....” (Albert Pike, The Book of the Words, p. 64). It now appears that aside from the wisdom of the ancient mysteries and that of the Operative Masons, the occult sciences of Hermeticism and the rituals and ceremonies of the Kabbalah were incorporated in the body of Freemasonry. In my opinion, the sources of knowledge on occult sciences and philosophies gained by the ancients and the Operative Masons were possibly derived or originated from the remotest ages and most ancients - Hermeticism and Kabbalah. In such a case, it is not a supplement, but a reiteration or rediscovery of the most ancient occult sciences and philosophies of Hermeticism and Kabbalah, which were embodied in Speculative Masonry and presented in ritualistic and ceremonial form. For purposes of clarification, the word “occult” is not something sinister or negative as what some people and religious denominations think. Occult means “hidden, concealed or secret”. The term “occult sciences” refers to astrology, alchemy and natural magic including the study of esotericism. Since Masonic rituals and some of the teachings are kept secret

from the public except to the initiates, and Freemasonry being a repository of mysteries, it follows that Freemasonry is unequivocal both esoteric and occult.

But what are Hermeticism and Kabbalah? With regard to Hermeticism, Hermes was the legendary founder and namesake of occult science called "Hermeticism". There are numerous articles written about Hermes, and most of the authors, if not all, were Masons. Bro. C. W. Leadbeater in his book "Glimpses of Masonic History", p. 13 par. 60 stated: "It was to this people about 40,000 B.C. that the World Teacher came forth from the White Lodge, bearing the name of Tehuti or Thoth, called later by the Greeks Hermes...". The Greeks named him Hermes Trismegistus, meaning "thrice great". In Rome, he was Mercury, messenger of God. In Egypt, he was Thoth. Some Mohammedans believed that he was Idris, the prophet. The Greeks believed that Enoch, Hebrew's patriarch, was the same as Hermes Trismegistus. "According to our traditions, Enoch was a very eminent Freemason, and the conservator of the true name of God, which was subsequently lost ..." (Albert G. Mackey, A Lexicon of Freemasonry, p. 137). Illustrious Mackey mentioned in his other book entitled Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, p. 322, that in the old manuscript record of the Craft, Hermes was mentioned as one of the founders of Masonry. Bro. Manly P. Hall commented that Hermes was the author of the Masonic initiatory rituals, which were borrowed from the Mysteries established by Hermes. "Nearly all of the Masonic symbols are Hermetic in character" (Manly Hall, The Secret Teachings.... op. cit. p. 91). Medieval Kabbalists held Hermes in great veneration and some of them considered him as having given the Kabbalah to Moses. Pythagoras was

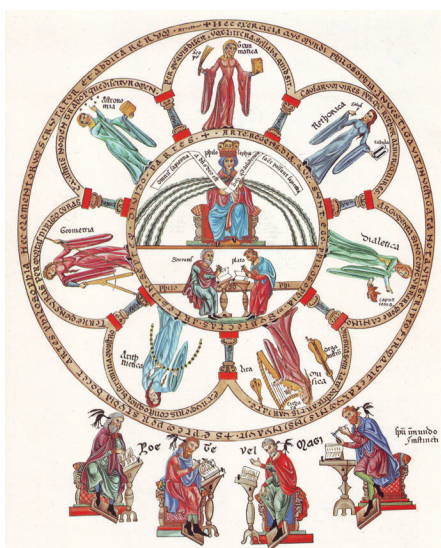
cited in Masonry as wise philosopher who gained knowledge on geometry. Accordingly, he learned this subject from Hermes. "The Hermetic philosophers, on the other hand, say that all the sages of antiquity, such as Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, and Pythagoras, were initiated into the secrets of their science; and that the hieroglyphics of Egypt and all the fables of mythology were invented to teach the dogmas of Hermetic philosophy" (Arthur E. Waite, Some Deeper Aspects of Masonic Symbolism, p. 323). The expression "Hermetically sealed" means maintaining of secrecy, or nothing must escape or be revealed. Hence, Masonic obligations are Hermetically sealed.

Given the background of Hermes, one may ask, what are the contributions of Hermes to mankind, in general, and to Masonry, in particular? The Greeks called him Hermes Trismegistus, "thrice great", because he is the father of occult wisdom and sometimes referred to as God of letters and sciences. He introduced medicine, chemistry (originally it was alchemy), law, astrology (later developed into astronomy), music, rhetoric, magic, philosophy, geography, mathematics (especially geometry), and psychology, among others. Bro. C. W. Leadbeater, a Theosophical writer, added that "the constitution of the universe, and the principles in man, according to the occult law were formulated by Hermes Trismegistus and adopted by Rosicrucian, alchemists and students of the Kabbala in later ages" (C.W. Leadbeater, Glimpses.... op. cit. P. 9-10). He formulated the seven (7) principles, or natural laws, of mentalism, correspondence, vibration, polarity, rhythm, cause and effect and gender. The notable axiom "as above, so below, as below, so above" is about the principle of correspondence. Christians

applied this axiom in their prayer and teaching, e.g., “... on earth as it is in heaven” and “the kingdom of heaven is within you”. Ms. Helena Blavatsky, a Theosophist, interpreted this axiom in this manner, God is the macrocosm (universe) while man is the microcosm (God in miniature).

For better appreciation, let me cite some passages, items and works in masonic rituals and ceremonies which I believe have connections with or influenced of Hermeticism, as follows:

- Hermetic Principle of Correspondence. Isaac Newton commented: “Tis true without lying, certain, and most true. That which is below is like that which is above and that which is above is like that which is below.” Another way of saying this is, everything is connected; “and the grasping of this Principle gives one the means of solving many a dark paradox, and hidden secret of Nature” (The Kybalion by the Three Initiates, p. 10). The following passages in Masonic rituals have direct relationship between the macrocosm and the microcosm, to wit: (1) “By it we discover the power, wisdom and goodness of the Great Architect of the Universe, and view with delight the proportions which connect this vast machine”; (2) “thereby fitting our minds, as living stones for that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”, (3) “Lord of all, below – above” (Pleyel’s Hymn) and (4) ”By Geometry we may curiously trace nature through her various windings to her most concealed recesses”.
- The seven (7) liberal arts and



THE 7 LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES.

sciences. Hermes was the inventor, framer, and originator of these sciences which are emphasized in the Masonic lectures, thus, “..... to inculcate in the mind of the novitiate the importance of the study of the liberal arts and sciences especially of the noblest science of Geometry, which forms the basis of Freemasonry.....”

- Hermetic Principle of Polarity. “Everything is dual; everything has its pair of opposites”; e.g., hot and cold, high and low, positive and negative, etc. Related hint is given in the mosaic pavement of the Masonic Lodge, emblematic of human life, which is checkered with white and black denoting good and evil. Life has a pair of opposites, good and bad, ups and downs, joy and sorrow, love and hate, etc.
- Hermetic Principle of Mentalism. This covers the subject on “mental transmutation” which tells us that

mind may be transmuted from state to state, condition to condition. A rough ashlar or an impure mind can be transmuted to a perfect ashlar or pure mind; and good men can be made better if the rude or imperfect state/condition of the mind is transmuted to a perfect or better state/condition. This mental transmutation is likewise similar to the application of alchemy on the physical and mental planes. On the physical plane, it is the changing of metal into gold; and on the mental plane, it is the changing of mind-set from evil to good.

- Hermetic Principle of Rhythm. “Everything flows, out and in; ... all things rise and fall”. This is likened to the movement of the pendulum, to the river that ebbs and flows and to the day and night. The lines, “as # sn rs i # € to op @ ad # da”, “as the sn is i # W at # cls % da”, “By it we account for the return of the seasons and the variety of scenes...” and “w t t r ebbs and flows” are in consonance with this principle.
- The Point Within a Circle. The spiritual interpretation of this is given in the Masonic lecture. From the astronomical point of view, the point represents the sun while the circle is the course of the planet orbiting around the sun. Masonry has two astronomical symbols in its ritual, namely the sun and the moon.
- Circumambulation has been practiced in ancient initiations and alludes to the movement of the sun which is from east to west. In the ritual, the initiates go around the

altar, “imitating the example of the sun and following his beneficent course”(Charles H. Vail, *Ancient Mysteries and Modern Masonry*, p. 108). This rite is Hermetic imitation of the sun’s apparent path among the stars.

- The Caduceus (The rod of the Senior Deacon). “The Caduceus then-the original meaning of which word is a herald’s staff- as the attribute of a life-restoring God, is in its primary meaning the symbol of immortality; so, in Freemasonry the rod of the Senior Deacon, or the Master of Ceremonies, is but an analogue of the Hermean Caduceus” (Albert G. Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, p.127).
- Certain phrases in the ceremonies that are related to astronomy are the following, to wit: (1) “... and are induced to encourage the study of astronomy, geography, navigation, and the arts dependent upon them ...”; (2) “... is to illustrate and explain the phenomena arising from the annual revolution of the earth around the sun ...”; (3) “... the astronomer is enabled to make his observations and to fix the duration of times and seasons ...”; and (4) “Numberless worlds are all around us, all framed by the same Divine Artist, which roll to the vast expanse and are all conducted by the same unerring law of nature”.

Kabbalah, on the other hand, is the sum of all the esoteric teachings in Judaism. This is according to Albert L. Schutz, who further said that it is generally translated as “oral tradition” (Call Adonoi *Manual of Practical Cabalah and Gestalt Mysticism*).



HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

p.1). The word comes from the Hebrew meaning “to receive”. Another definition is given by Illustrious Albert G. Mackey, it is “the mystical philosophy of the Jews” and that the maxims and ceremonies are intimately connected with the symbolic science of Freemasonry (The Symbolism of Freemasonry, p. 119). He claimed that David and Solomon were first initiated into the Kabbalah. There are other Masonic writers who strongly believed that the ancient traditions and secrets of the Hebrews were introduced into the Masonic system. Rev. F. de P. Castells wrote: “Freemasonry originated with certain Hebrew mystics associated with the Temple of Jerusalem, and that they are represented by the Kabbalists of historic times” (Our Ancient Brethren the Originators of Freemasonry, 1932, p. 24). Bro. C.W. Leadbeater likewise believed that Kabbalistic students were responsible for the introduction of Speculative Masonry (Glimpses... op. cit. p. 50).

During the early period of Reformation,

there was much interest in the Kabbalah. The framers of Speculative Masonry could be one of those who were influenced by the mystical philosophies of Kabbalah. There are positive indications that Hebrew’s traditions, beliefs and practices were injected into the system of Speculative Masonry. Hebrew influences are manifested through the use of names, places or words, although some may be distorted, such as Solomon, H... Ab..., Kadosh, Jephtha, J...n, Sh...th, Solomon Temple, Joppa (now Jaffa), etc. Interestingly, the “Ahiman Rezon” by Laurence Dermott, which is the edition of the Book of Constitutions for the Ancient Grand Lodge, was said to be Hebrew language. Hebrew words and kabbalistic exercises were used by secret societies all over Europe and “this knowledge was the core of the cults of the Middle Ages, such as the famous Templars, Knights of the Grail, Rosicrucians, Freemasons and Illuminatics” (Schutz, Call Adonoi...op. cit. p. 4).

“The Lost Word in Masonry is derived from a Kabbalistic thesis of imperfection in the Divine Name Jehovah, by which the true pronunciation--that is to say, the true meaning-- is lost” (Arthur E. Waite, Some Deeper Aspects of Masonic Symbolism, p.11). The Kabbalists devised the code system called Temurah and Gematria where letters are changed/transposed, anagrammatized or turned into numbers, it is in this manner that they concealed many of their mysteries. The substitute for the L..t M...s W...d in Freemasonry may be an application of this code system and until now no one, can conclude as to its exact words and true meaning. Ill. Albert Pike, on page 89 of the book entitled “The Book of the Words”, analyzed and experimented on the substitute for the L..t M...s W...d and gave a theory about

its true words and meaning which is not conclusive.

The staircase with seven (7) steps between two (2) pillars of Masonry is an allusion to the Tree of Life of the Kabbalah. The two (2) of the ten (10) Sephiroth (God's manifestations) are named Firmness and Splendor. Albert Mackey in his book *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, p. 377, stated: "Firmness would be more naturally symbolize B... z or Strength, as Splendor would J... n or Establishment". Charles W. King in his article entitled *Gnostics* (p. 12), refers the right-hand pillar to the Pillar J... n, and the left-hand

into Masonry by the non-operatives who were Kabbalists, ... the common men who made up the lodges substituted for the Hebrew initial of the Divine Name the English initial" (Ibid. p.179). This English initial refers to the letter "G" of Freemasonry.

The spiritual exercises in Kabbalah are termed awakening, activating, purification and perfection; and the "Freemason call them entered apprentice, journey-man, master-mason and master-of-the-lodge" (Schutz, *Call Adonoi...* op. cit. p. 11). These exercises involve body movements (gestures), especially those

he origin of the letter "G" in Masonic symbol may be traced back to the Hebrew's mystery about the correct form and pronunciation of the name of God. The "Ineffable Name" of God consists of four consonants which are represented in English by the letters J (or Y) HWH.

pillar to the Pillar B... z which stood at the porch of the Temple and these two pillars; he says, "figures largely amongst all the secret societies of modern times".

The origin of the letter "G" in Masonic symbol may be traced back to the Hebrew's mystery about the correct form and pronunciation of the name of God. The "Ineffable Name" of God consists of four consonants which are represented in English by the letters J (or Y) HWH. Bro. H.L. Haywood wrote in his book, *Symbolical Masonry*, p. 179, "not having the Name itself the Kabbalists were wont to inscribe a Hebrew 'Y' to the centre of a triangle" ; and that "it is supposed that this symbol was brought

of the hands and fingers, stances, grips, etc. These exercises, called in the Oriental as asanas (body posture) and mudras (symbolic hand gestures), are practiced by the yogis, Hindus and Buddhists for spiritual purposes and for good health. Schutz said, "we are told to place our feet in the various asanas of the yoga, in the stances of the freemasons ..." (ibid. p. 18). Various energies from the elements of fire, water, air, earth and ether are emanating from and flowing in the hands and fingers that create stimuli from the sense of touching and in the process produces certain power as in the laying of hand and pranic healing. It's interesting to note that Masonic d...g...s (dg) and s...s (\$) are the same gestures and stances

This presentation affirms that Freemasonry is an esoteric and occult organization and the keeper of the ancient mysteries thereby making it the oldest organization in the world. Its teachings are centered on morality, expressed either in simple terms, allegories or symbols, but by and large, they are religious, comprehensive, universal in application and practically embraced the basic doctrines of all faiths.

that the Kabbalists used in their spiritual exercises like in meditation; after which, Schutz explained, that “all exercises are concluded by drawing the hand swiftly diagonally across the body to the right side just as if cutting with a knife” (ibid. p.20); and that gesture after meditation, “...is like cutting off, scratching, or ripping parts of the body...they are phrased as ‘slaughter, killing, sacrifices, mutilation,’ etc...” (Ibid. p. 46). The body parts include the (1^o) throat, (2^o) breast and (3^o) navel. In the work of Bro. C.W. Leadbeater, The Hidden Life in Freemasonry, p.144, he said “Oriental occultism are aware that there are seven great force-centres (called in Sanskrit chakras) in the human body”. These chakras are: root (base of the spine), sacral or spleen, solar plexus or navel, heart, throat, third eye, and crown or top of the head. In brief, when a MM gives the § of a particular degree, it is believed that he is actually activating a certain chakra (center of energy/power). Bro. Leadbeater further said “that in the course of occult progress all of them (chakras) have to be opened, developed and made effective” (ibid. p.144) (the word “chakras” inserted).

This presentation affirms that Freemasonry is an esoteric and occult organization and the keeper of the ancient mysteries thereby making it the oldest organization in the world. Its teachings are centered on morality, expressed either in simple terms, allegories or symbols, but by and large, they are religious, comprehensive, universal in application

and practically embraced the basic doctrines of all faiths. There is no doubt that the framers of Speculative Masonry were intellectuals, highly spirituals, and possessed the great knowledge on occultism and esotericism. An in-dept study of the profound lessons given in the rituals and ceremonies will show, aside from the aspect on morality, the correspondence between man and Nature and will provide the idea of the mystical and wonderful properties of Nature, the glorious works of the creation, and the perfections of The Great Architect of the Universe.

“Om Mani Padme Hum”



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Notes On The Recently-Held Davao Ritual Olympics

BY VW GUILLERMO B. LAZARO, JR., PDDGM



RESULTS OF THE MASONIC RITUAL OLYMPICS HELD LAST OCT 28, 2023 AT THE DAVAO MASONIC TEMPLE, DAVAO CITY.

- CHAMPION - PODOMO MASONIC LODGE NO. 294**
- 1ST RUNNER-UP - TORIL MASONIC LODGE NO. 208**
- 2ND RUNNER-UP - BEACON MASONIC LODGE NO. 213**
- BEST WM - BRO. SW VIRGILIO BIMBO MABABA**
- BEST MARSHALL - BRO. ARNEL NAMUAG**
- BEST JR. DEACON - VW ORLINO BOBOY PACIOLES JR.**
- BEST SR. DEACON - BRO. IGGI DE MENDOZA**

THE RITUAL OLYMPICS held on October 28, 2023 at the Davao Masonic Temple, under the auspices of Masonic District R-XI (Davao del Sur & Davao City), aimed at 3 things: first, providing an opportunity for newly-obligated brethren to become well-versed in Masonic Rituals; second, compliance in proficiency for future Lodge officers, and; third, uniformity in floor works.

District Deputy Grand Master (DDGM) VW Anthony O. Padua stressed that these objectives were in consonance with the Grand Master's prescription to conduct conferrals of degrees along what Lodges have to be opened, which should not take place during Regular Stated Meetings. The focus for the Ritual Olympics was, thus, for the first and/or second degrees. The peculiarity of the challenges of "purging" and of the "collection of the pass" in the FCM Degree and the time constraint to appraise the proficiency of the 8 Lodges necessitated a ramble scheme.

With the two Lights of Davao Masonic Lodge 149 being out of town, it automatically lost by default. That left the 7 to perform the Opening/closing of a FCM Lodge. Proficiency was to be gauged on the floor works and the talking parts, based on the 2015 Monitor that was printed out with additions in 2019. The rationale was such that those who could perform best the FCM were likely to do the same in the Sublime Degree. The top three Lodges would thus progress to a final round to contend along the selected sections of a Lodge of MM.

VW Jun Cornel, PDGL, who has been our rituals specialist at the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES) and myself were assigned as judges. We had to closely assess both the floor works and the talking

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parts right from the moment the brethren were invited in, to the end, in other words from the beginning rap to the ending one. We, as judges, concurred with the hosts to adopt a point system where 1 to 3 points would be given to poor performances, 8 to 10 points to exemplary performances, while 4 to 7 points were to be given to those in between. Ten (10) points scores the highest.

For facility in comparing performances, the first Lodge would necessarily be the benchmark. The flaws surfaced from the beginning rap, or there was none at all. No visible Tyler as well. The opening section was fairly even. The variance began to surface in the purging. The first performer did not do it at all. Were the instructions not clear to them? Purging was started only by the second performer.

The three had lesser mistakes than the rest in the “purging of the lodge”, differing as they were on what to do with the lesser informed person. No lodge tried to verify the integrity of the unknown, thus none demonstrated a scenario where the unknown would return to the Lodge after having proven himself worthy or well-qualified.

The collection of the pass had a similar scenario, only three attempted, but even then, had minor flaws. There were divergent practices. The Dcns do not face the brn, nor should they step toward them. Likewise, in the giving of the pass to the East where it is to be whispered only with a right foot advance. The conduct of the rituals from then on was generally acceptable. Common miscues revolved around foot work and the timing or





RITUAL OLYMPICS PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE FORUM FOR BRETHREN TO GAUGE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND PROFICIENCY OF CRAFT LITURGY.

synchronization of movements, as in moving ahead of the proper sequence. More problems in floor works than in the talking parts. On the whole, the foregoing affirmed that much effort is still needed to fine tune the 2D. And by extension, the 1D. Moreover, that Grand Master's prescription was proven valid. And the DDGM and his able team are also on the right track. Time was, however, not on our side for a detailed enumeration of the flaws and remedies.

Moving on to the final round, the top three appeared to be in a tight race, where correct performances, both in floor works and in talkies, generated close scores. The first finalist was graded with 8 points, the second 7 points. Their opening, dignitaries' receptions, flag, and balloting were almost the same, in other words, uniformity, even in the minor miscues, as in the following: foot work

in the E after receiving the jewels; the d-g of the 3D; the giving of the grand honrs; the synchronization of movements of the actors with the flag; the RevC also moving in squares; the sidestep at the altar of the SD. The last three here were what set the last performer apart. But what proved crucial was the demonstration of an "inspection of the box", an integral part of the whole section where the absence of which could render the whole exercise invalidated, if an MM raises the issue. That was the clincher actually.

A day after-consultation with DDGM Anton affirmed that a session on Rituals alone should be conducted district-wise with dispatch. The priority should be on the 1D/2D and on fine tuning of the 3D. The District Director on Rituals can easily handle these, more effectively probably if done thru focused lodge reviews. No need to wait for a next IMES.



The Number 3, The Triangle, and The Three Lesser Lights: Their Relationship

BY VW ALEXANDER B. MADAMBA, PSGL

THE SUBJECT MATTERS about the triangle and the Lesser Lights in Freemasonry contain a common number- three (3). The number three is significant and considered a sacred and mystical number in ancient mysteries; it is a numerical symbol of

God. Many world religions contain triple deities or concepts of trinity. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris was -Father God, Isis was -Mother Goddess and Horus was - Son, representing the Egyptian trinity. Likewise, Christianity believes in the three aspects of God, the Holy Trinity (God the

Father, God the Son and Holy Spirit). The Hindus' Trimurti (three forms of God) comprises of Brahma (Creator), Vishnu (Preserver) and Shiva (Destroyer). The Buddhists take refuge in the Three Jewels or Threefold Refuge comprising of the Buddha (enlightened one), Dharma (doctrine, teaching) and Sangha (monastic order, community of noble disciples). Persian's Zoroastrian theology taught the importance of the Threefold Path of Asha (spiritual force of Ahura Mazda, the Creator) on Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. Three Purities or the Three Pure Ones are the three highest gods in Taoism consisting of Lord of Primordial Beginning, Lord of the Numinous Treasures, and Grand Pure One. In Islam, there are three core principles in Shia tradition: Tawhid (Oneness of God), Nabuwwa (Concept of Prophethood), Imama (Concept of Imam).

Nature had shown the significance of the number three; example, the triplicity of the cosmos (sky, earth and water), triad of lights, or light-givers (sun, moon and stars), three states of matter (solid, liquid and gaseous), and the three phases of life (birth, life and death).

In numerology, number three is a symbol of confidence and self-reliance.

Masonic historian and scholar, Illustrious Albert Mackey, in his book "Encyclopedia of Freemasonry", wrote with reference to number three: "In the philosophy of Plato, it was the image of the Supreme Being, because it includes in itself the properties of the first two numbers, and because as Aristotle says it contains within itself, a beginning, a middle, and an end. The Pythagoreans called it perfect harmony" (Ibid. p. 784).

In Freemasonry, the number three has been adopted and is likewise considered a prominent symbol. There are three degrees, three principal Officers, three movable jewels and three immovable jewels, three principal tenets, three Great Lights and three Lesser Lights, three ornaments of the Lodge, three rounds of Jacob's ladder, three Ruffians, three great pillars (wisdom, strength and beauty), to name some.

With regard to shape, triangle is an important shape filled with symbolism and represents the number three, which is one of the most significant numbers. It has three sides or surfaces and three angles. It has no loose ends, so to speak, unlike the square or the five or more-sided figure. This means, any adjustment on the length of any side of the triangle, the shape will remain a triangle; either an equilateral, an acute, an obtuse, a scalene, an isosceles, or a right-angle. Whereas, in the four-sided (quadrilateral) figure such as the square, any adjustment on the length of one or two sides of it will produce another shape either of a rectangle, parallelogram, trapezium, rhombus or kite.

It is said that a triangle, similar to a circle,



is without either beginning or ending. The Supreme Being, as we all know, has no beginning and no ending. Therefore, the ancient people regarded the figure as mystical and associated it with God which later made it the symbol of God or Holy Object. The book entitled “The Number Three, Mysterious, Mystic, Magic”, p. 71, and authored by Emory B. Lease, cited that the Pythagoreans considered the triangle as, “the most perfect geometrical figure, inasmuch as it was the first form complete in itself”. Brother Albert Churchward wrote in his article, “The Arcana of Freemasonry”, p.181, that “Another form, or combination, of the Triangle must be especially interesting to Welshmen, because you find it so often portrayed in Wales, and this was a Sacred Symbol amongst the Druids”.

The Hindus use yantras (Sanskrit word for “instrument”) that contain triangle symbols to help them during meditation or in worshipping God. Triangle in Buddhism, called Trikaya, represents the three bodies of Buddha, i.e., body of essence, the body of enjoyment and the body of transformation.

Many years back, Christians have been using the equilateral triangle with the All-Seeing Eye in the midst of it as an emblem of the Holy Trinity. Freemasonry as well as the Illuminati have, likewise, adopted the same symbol. It is the jewel of the Grand Bible Bearer of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. In the world of magic, there are talismans bearing the shapes of triangle or double triangle being used with figures and words in them. On page 221 of the “Ceremonial Magic” written by Arthur Edward Waite, the Triangle of Solomon is depicted and the equilateral triangle has a circle inside it touching all three sides and strange names inscribed outside the three sides.



THE HOLY TRINITY: GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND THE HOLY GHOST.

The pyramids of Giza, numbering to three, are in the shape of a triangle. Each has three outer triangular surfaces and a base which is square. Is it possible that the basis of building the pyramids has something to do with esotericism or occultism? A. P. Sinnet, in his book entitled “Pyramids and Stonehenge”, p. 12, stated that “the pyramids were really built, or, in other words, a little more than two hundred thousand years ago”. He continued saying that “And though as long as the ancient wisdom religion survived in Egypt to any considerable extent the pyramids continued to fulfil their purpose as temples of initiation, by degrees.....” (Ibid. p. 15). The striking phrase, “temples of initiation, by degrees”, is very familiar to Freemasons; it is a simple phrase and free of ambiguity.

Moreover, some people, Masons and non-Masons alike, may be intrigued in the statement written in the book “The Arcana of Freemasonry”, p.99, by Brother Albert Churchward, a famous Masonic writer, which says “After the glacial epoch has passed away, the remains of the present humans, and their works, will be rediscovered by a future generation. What Great Masonic Temple will be left to the world? The first and greatest of all— The

Great Pyramid of Egypt” (underscoring supplied). Does this mean that the Great Pyramid is a Masonic Temple, or it is just a comparison? Brother C.W. Leadbeater said something in relation to this: “The Masonic square was well-known, and was called neka. It is to be found in many temples, and also appears in the great pyramid” (The Hidden Life in Freemasonry, p.14).

Robert G. Bauval, an Egyptian writer, wrote in his article “The Great Pyramid and The Freemasons”:

“Pyramids, especially with the ‘eye of providence’ in them, feature very

the less informed brethren an idea and understanding of the significance of the triangular formation of the stations of the three Principal Officers and that of the three Lesser Lights.

The three Lesser Lights in Masonic Lodges undoubtedly illuminate the three Great Lights and the Lodge work. It is the belief of Masonic scholars that these three lights in Masonry originated from ancient mysteries, one of which is the Eleusinian Mystery which existed in Greece many years BCE (Before the Christian Era). In the rituals of said mystery, there are three lights around the holy place; also

In Freemasonry, the number three has been adopted and is likewise considered a prominent symbol. There are three degrees, three principal Officers, three movable jewels and three immovable jewels, three principal tenets, three Great Lights and three Lesser Lights, three ornaments of the Lodge, three rounds of Jacob’s ladder, three Ruffians, three great pillars (wisdom, strength and beauty), to name some.

prominently in Masonic rituals. The symbol can be seen on the face of the US one-dollar bill and also on the Great Seal of the United States. In Freemasonry, the glowing pyramid and eye represents the so-called Great Architect of the Universe or the Supreme Being, both epithets for God. This Masonic symbolism was used prominently in France during the 1789 Revolution and was embossed on front of The Declaration of Human Rights.”

The information given above will provide

present are the Hierophants representing the Creator of the world or the torch bearer, symbolizing the sun, the altar man, symbolizing the moon, and the herald named Hermes or Mercury, among others. In Greece, Hermes refers to Hermes Trismegistus (thrice great), a spiritual man, a sage, who lived a thousand years BCE. “The Kybalion”, p.6, which is a study of the Hermetic philosophy of ancient Egypt and Greece written by The Three Initiates mentioned that “Egyptians deified Hermes, and made him one of their gods, under the name of Thoth”. On the other hand, the Greeks

and Romans identified Hermes with their pantheistic god Mercury. Likewise, the Hermetics believed that Melchizedek of Judea was referring to Hermes. It appears that Hermes, Mercury, Thoth and Melchizedek are one and the same person who was one of the Hierophants in the Eleusinian Mystery. Rosicrucian's doctrines are purely based on Hermetic philosophies, which Freemasonry partly inherited. The teachings of Kabala are said to be another source of Masonic doctrines.

Masonic scholar and historian, Illustrious Albert Pike, commented, "They are still the Three Lights of a Masonic Lodge, except that for Mercury, the Master of the Lodge has been absurdly substituted." In contemporary Freemasonry, the three Lesser Lights symbolize the sun, the moon and the Master of the Lodge (instead of Hermes or Mercury) that represent the three Principal Officers. Perhaps, the substitution is justified and sensible. The lights provided symbolically by the sun (JW) and moon (SW) inside the Lodge may not be sufficient without the light provided by the Master of the Lodge who sits in the East. Such substitution may likewise imply that the

sun rises in the east, is at the meridian height in the south and sets in the west. With such arrangement, the Master, during the first-degree conferral, should point to the lesser lights at the S, W and E when referring to the sun, moon and Worshipful Master, respectively.

Additional explanation is given by another Masonic scholar and writer, Brother W. L. Wilmshurst in his article entitled "The Deeper Symbolism of Freemasonry", p. 6, in that the sun symbolizes our spiritual consciousness, and the moon is our intellectual faculties; while "the Master of the Lodge is a symbolical phrase denoting the will-power of man, which should enable him to be master of his own life, to control his own actions and keep down the impulses of his lower nature, even as the stroke of the Master's gavel controls the Lodge and calls to order and obedience the Brethren under his direction". Relatedly, when the WM utters "s sd # WM end, wth eq rgl, t rl @ gv # :: ov wch h is cld t prs", he is referring to the Lodge within himself. The WM is therefore reminded "to master his own life and to control his own actions" by adhering to the lessons taught by the 2nd and 3rd Great Lights. This does not

The Grand Lodge of the Philippines adopted the right-angled triangle as the formation of the Lesser Lights grouped around the altar. In the opinion of some brethren, the Lesser Lights should be closed to the altar where the three Great Lights are placed, which I agree, for reason that one cannot read the VSL (the First Great Light) and cannot see the square and compasses without the aid of the Lesser Lights. No matter how the three Lesser Lights should be grouped, the fact remains that in placing them anywhere inside the Lodge, they will always be in a triangular form.

only apply to the WM, but to every MM as well.

The setting of the Lesser Lights in Masonic Lodges is such that they are grouped together, close or around the altar, in the form of a triangle. However, there is no fixed rule as to their locations, on account thereof, there are Lodges in other jurisdictions that placed one light at each of the stations of the three Principal Officers. In others, the Lesser Lights are placed close or around the altar in the form of either right-angle, equilateral or sometimes isosceles triangle. The Grand Lodge of the Philippines adopted the right-angled triangle as the formation of the Lesser Lights grouped around the altar. In the opinion of some brethren, the Lesser Lights should be closed to the altar where the three Great Lights are placed, which I agree, for reason that one cannot read the VSL (the First Great Light) and cannot see the square and compasses without the aid of the Lesser Lights. No matter how the three Lesser Lights should be grouped, the fact remains that in placing them anywhere inside the Lodge, they will always be in a triangular form. They may differ in shape and size, as a result of the distance of said lights from each other but the triangular form will ever be in accordance with the Masonic Order.

As previously mentioned, the equilateral triangle was considered by ancient mysteries and our ancient brethren as symbol of the Deity. It has three equal sides and three equal angles. The right-angled triangle, on the other hand, has one 90° angle and three lines, the base, the perpendicular, and the hypotenuse. In Freemasonry, this is the 47th Problem of Euclid or the Pythagorean Theorem. It is sometimes called the 3:4:5 ratio. Applying this to mathematics, the square of 3 is 9

plus the square of 4, which is 16, is equals to 25, and the square root thereof, is 5, thus the 3:4:5 ratio. Number three (3) is the perpendicular (male), number four (4) is the base (female) and number five (5) is the hypotenuse, or the progeny. In Egyptian mythology, this is the Trinity comprising of Osiris (male), Isis (female) and Horus (product of the two). To the ancients, the right-angled triangle represents “Humanity”.

When the three Principal Officers of the Lodge step down to the mosaic pavement, they group themselves to form the equilateral triangle, which is an emblem of the Deity. Inside the equilateral triangle formation is the altar with the three Lesser Lights in a right-angled triangle arrangement, which symbolizes humanity. With such a setting, Freemasonry can be appropriately described as “The Brotherhood of man, under the Fatherhood of God.”

OM MANI PADME HUM



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“Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth.”

WE NOW LIVE in the Age of Disinformation – ironically ushered in by the Information Age itself. Social media played a huge part in the dissemination of false knowledge on a global scale. Trolls and influencers have diligently been spreading fake news to the point where the average person could no longer distinguish right from wrong – truth from lies. Some of these are done unintentionally as a result of mistakes and misconceptions posted over and over again. Others are done maliciously or self-servingly for the sole purpose of revising history and established truths without the benefit of academic methodology. Examples include the holocaust denial, the moon-landing conspiracy theory, and the flat-earth deception. In this time of the pandemic, anti-mask and anti-vaccine advocates are fuelled mainly by their constant reading of false information and

conspiracy theories, repeatedly fed to them by the algorithms of social media. In Facebook and TikTok, for instance, whatever people read more of, click more of, or search more of, more of such content will appear for them to read and watch, thus giving them an impression of validity and correctness.

In politics, fake news and smear-campaigns over social media have been so weaponized that they further polarized and even upturned the political landscape of many countries like the U.S., Myanmar, and the Philippines. Disinformation became a mercenary motive that preyed on the gullible, the indifferent, and the conspiracists.

Freemasonry itself is not spared from this growing trend of disinformation. In fact, Masons have constantly been victims of

vicious propaganda for hundreds of years. They have been accused of countless false accusations, such as being atheists, anti-church, worshiping the devil, and plotting to take over the world. These, however, are just noise – easily dismissed and debunked. This article is not about that. It is about certain false notions about Freemasonry that Masons have been propagating amongst themselves – time and time again – until they became acceptable “truths.” We enumerate some of them below and expose the inaccuracies they contain so that, in so doing, we prevent the spread of fake news and avert the triumph of falsehood over truth.

ORIGIN OF FRIDAY THE 13TH

People have been spreading the idea, even memes, that the “unlucky” Friday-the-13th superstition was borne out of the arrest of the Knights Templar on Friday, October 13, 1307, as claimed by the novel. In truth, there is currently no verifiable connection between the two.

The origin of the Friday the 13th superstition is yet unknown, although the fear of the number 13 and the negative superstitions ascribed to it have been around for centuries. According to folklore historian, Donald Dossey, the unlucky nature of the number 13 might have originated with a Norse myth about 12 gods having a dinner party in Valhalla. Loki, the god of mischief, who was not invited, arrived as the 13th guest, and arranged to have Balder killed. It was said that the whole Earth got dark and mourned over Balder – indeed a bad and unlucky day.

Some say that the Friday the 13th superstition related to the story of Jesus’ last supper and crucifixion, in which



FRIDAY THE 13TH AND THE BURNING OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS.

there were 13 individuals present in the upper room on the 13th of Nisan, Maundy Thursday – the night before his death on Good Friday.

While there is evidence of both Friday and the number 13 being considered unlucky, there is currently no authentic record prior to the 19th century of the two items being referred to as especially unlucky. Whatever superstition that came after had nothing to do at all with the day of the Templars’ arrest. In fact, it might be possible that the publication in 1907 of T. W. Lawson’s popular novel “Friday the Thirteenth,” was the one that contributed to popularizing the superstition.

The idea that the Friday the 13th superstition originated from the day of the Templars’ arrest was merely a recent invention – mentioned in the 1989 book “Born in Blood” by John Robinson, and later sensationalized by Dan Brown’s “Da Vinci Code.”

THE FORGET-ME-NOT LEGEND

Masons have likewise been circulating memes in social media, like Facebook, that the Forget-me-not flower was adopted by Masons during the Nazi period to identify themselves in secret inside concentration camps, like a sort of substitute for the Square-and-Compass emblem. Inspiring as the story may be, it is, nonetheless, considered by many Masonic scholars to be just a myth.

Although it is true that the Nazis did outlaw Freemasonry in World War II, and that Masons were indeed sent to concentration camps where they allegedly met in secret, there seems to be no record of the Forget-me-not flower, or the pin depicting it, ever having been used or worn by Masons as a substitute for the Square-and-Compass during the war anywhere in Germany, much less in concentration camps, as the legend would have it.

What really happened was that, in 1926, the Grand Lodge zur Sonne of Bayreuth in Bavaria commissioned a pin to be given as gifts to delegates attending their annual meeting. The pin depicted the Forget-me-not flower, it being a symbol for love, fidelity, and remembrance in the region and the whole of Germany.



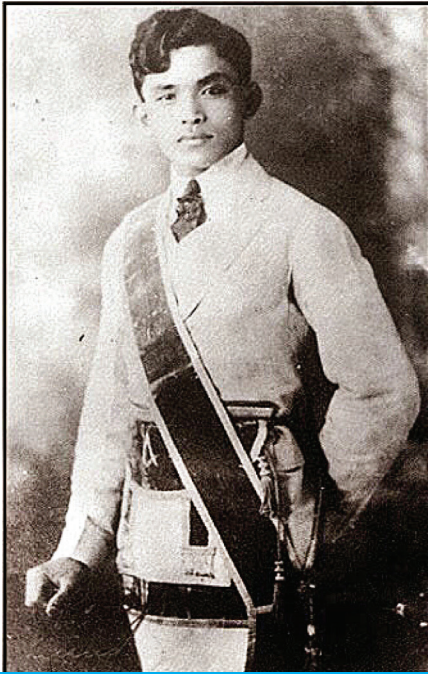
THERE SEEMS TO BE NO RECORD OF THE FORGET-ME-NOT FLOWER, OR THE PIN DEPICTING IT, EVER HAVING BEEN USED OR WORN BY MASONS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE SQUARE-AND-COMPASS.

It was manufactured in a Selb factory in Bayreuth. Later, between 1934 and 1938, the Nazis instituted the Winterhilfswerk, which involved youths collecting money for rearmament. To encourage donations, different pins and badges were given to contributors for them to wear during that collection period. The badge used by the Nazis for the collection made in March 1938 coincidentally was the same Forget-me-not pin chosen by the Masons in 1926. The pin was manufactured in the same Selb factory using the same molds it did for the Grand Lodge zur Sonne. It was unlikely, however, that anyone dared to wear the pin beyond the month of the annual Winterhilfswerk, because it became a criminal offense to wear any pin not authorized by or originated from the Nazi.

After the war, the Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of Germany, Dr. Theodor Vogel, distributed the same pin as a token of friendship whenever he made official visits abroad, most notably at a Conference of Grand Masters in Washington DC in 1953, where he recounted the tragic tale of Freemasonry under the Nazis. He there expressed the hope that the pin would be worn in remembrance of that oppression. This probably explains how the blue Forget-me-not became an adopted emblem by German Masons after the war, and why, when American Freemasons later founded military lodges in Germany, at least one chose that flower as the lodge name. Many lodges in Germany, at least up until recently, presented a Forget-me-not pin to newly raised Master Masons.

RIZAL PHOTOGRAPH IN REGALIA

There is a very popular photograph, appearing in some Masonic publications,



MS. GEMMA CRUZ-ARANETA, FAMILY MEMBER OF RIZAL HIMSELF, HAD BEEN CATEGORICALLY STATING THAT THE MAN IN THE PHOTO IS NOT RIZAL.

that depicts Jose Rizal in Continental or possibly even Scottish Constitution regalia. However, the said photo has already been contested by historians and relatives of Rizal, claiming that it is not him.

The alleged Rizal photo has been circulating for years, as can be found in past issues of the Cable Tow publication and in Reynaldo Fajardo's book "Dimasalang" (1998). At first glance, the Mason in the picture was clearly not Rizal, but because it was labeled as being him, many readers tended to find resemblance and ultimately agreed with the label. Like scotoma, the mind sees what it chooses to see. Psychological Scotomisation is the tendency in people to see what they

want to see and not see what they don't want to see – in situations, in themselves, in anything, even in straightforward photographs – due to the psychological impact that seeing, or not seeing, would inflict.

Ms. Gemma Cruz-Araneta, family member of Rizal himself, had been categorically stating that the man in the photo is not Rizal. Other Rizal experts, such as Philippine historian and author, Ambeth Ocampo, agree. He said that this prewar "fake Rizal photo," sourced from the US Library of Congress, also appeared in David Haward Bain's "Sitting in Darkness: Americans in the Philippines" (1984). The photo later found its way in the front cover of the June 1986 issue of the Cable Tow, the official publication of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. Since then, it has taken on a life of its own. It therefore underscores our need to always give everything a second look, and verify what we think we know.

Another local author, Felice Prudente Sta. Maria, who admittedly made the same mistake of using the said photo in one of her books that portrayed Rizal's life, already made arrangements with her publisher to rectify the mistake.

Some have speculated that the man in the picture was actually Benigno "Ben Ruben" Ramos, founder of the group "Sakdal," although further research would be necessary to make it a viable theory. There are also suggestions indicating that the man is actually an unknown Mason, either from Mexico, Cuba, or Puerto Rico.

What we do know for certain is that there is a higher likelihood that the Rizal photo we have been passing around within our Masonic circles is not our national hero

at all. Then again – who knows? Even the National Historic Institute was said to have certified the photo as being that of Rizal, prompting groups like the Knights of Rizal to display a replica of it in their headquarters. Yet, until further and authoritative proof from the academic and historical community has been found, we recommend local Masons to desist using the said photo in illustrating Rizal as a Mason... just to be sure.

USE OF “LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND FRATERNITY”

The phrase “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,” as a motto, has been generally considered to be universally Masonic, though it had been used elsewhere. It was once the watchword of the French Revolution and later the slogan of the French Republic.

Relief, and Truth.”

“Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth” seem at odds with “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity,” as the former is more focused on the promotion of Peace and Harmony, while the latter is more revolutionary in design, as if meant to promote Humanitarian Rights and the Freedom of its adherents. While the former was meant to establish Morality, the latter was more inclined towards Liberal thought. It can be said that mainstream Masonry is centered on improving the self by “making good men better,” while Continental Masonry is more on improving society itself. Many old lodges in Europe even encourage debates pertaining to religion and politics, precisely because of their inherent inclination to be actively involved in societal reform, even if it meant



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Yet, Masonic as it may be claimed, nowhere can this phrase be found, or even suggested, in the rituals and teachings of Craft Masonry as we know it. That is because it appears instead in the rituals and lessons of Continental Masonry, specifically French Masonry, and not in regular mainstream jurisdictions whose official tenets are instead “Brotherly Love,

possible rebellion. This also explains why many of our local national heroes, who belonged to such Continental Masonic obediences, had unwavering political and revolutionary tendencies in the cause of “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.”

It makes us wonder, though, why, as late as 1972, “Liberty, Equality, and

Fraternity,” instead of “Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth,” had been adopted in the preamble of the Masonic Law Book of this jurisdiction practicing mainstream instead of Continental Masonry. Regardless of the historical fact that Continental Masonic lodges were indeed absorbed into our Grand Lodge as way back as 1917, “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” is simply something we do not generally teach in its collective form... except, of course, in the Scottish Rite, but that’s another topic for discussion some other time.

“THERE IS NO DEGREE HIGHER THAN THE THIRD DEGREE”

No other phrase has been repeatedly uttered by Masons, ad nauseam, than the insistence that “there is no degree higher than the Third Degree.” The Third Degree, as we all know, is that of Master Mason of the Blue Lodge under a Grand Lodge system.

Majority of Masons believe this claim as canon and dogmatic, even criticizing those who believe otherwise as being arrogant and deluded by the “higher degrees” they have acquired, for instance, in the appendant bodies of the York Rite and the Scottish Rite.

Let us revisit this often repeated claim. Where exactly did it come from? The oldest reference, from where it might have evolved, comes from the Articles of Union of what eventually became the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) in 1813, which stated that “Pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely those of (1) Entered Apprentice, (2) Fellow Craft, and (3) Master Mason...” The declaration did not categorically say that the highest degree in all of Masonry was the third, only that pure ancient Masonry consisted of only three and no more.

Articles of Union

BETWEEN

THE TWO GRAND LODGES

OR

Freemasons of England.

I. There shall be, from and after the day of the Festival of St. John the Evangelist next ensuing, a full, perfect, and perpetual union of and between the two Fraternities of Free and Accepted Masons of England above described; so as that in all time hereafter they shall form and constitute but one Brotherhood, and that the said community shall be represented in one Grand Lodge, to be solemnly formed, constituted, and held, on the said day of the Festival of Saint John the Evangelist next ensuing, and from thenceforward for ever.

II. It is declared and pronounced, that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees, and no more; viz. those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch. But this article is not intended to prevent any Lodge or Chapter from holding a meeting in any of the degrees of the Orders of Chivalry, according to the constitutions of the said Orders.

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It should be noted that, during that time, there existed other degrees beyond the Third Degree that were worked outside of the Ancient Craft. Scotch Masonry, which appeared sometime around the 1730s, is a perfect example. Another is the Royal Arch, which appeared sometime between in the 1740s or earlier. In fact, the complete and full declaration above was actually: "Pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely those of (1) Entered Apprentice, (2) Fellow Craft, and (3) Master Mason including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch." This implied that the Master Mason degree, being what we consider the Third Degree, supposedly included that of the Royal Arch. Therefore, the Royal Arch, being a completion of the Third Degree, is technically the last and therefore highest degree even in pure Ancient Masonry, not just Master Mason.

So where did the current notion come from that the Third Degree, or to be more specific, the Master Mason degree, is the highest degree in Masonry? The early Grand Lodges, most likely. For in order to maintain their power over all of Masonry, they have to declare that the Master Mason is the highest degree because that is the last degree under their control. The Royal Arch, in most jurisdictions, is controlled by separate Chapters. For Grand Lodges to say that the Royal Arch is superior to the Master Mason degree would imply that the Grand Lodge is inferior to the Royal Arch Chapter. Such would be a political faux pax.

For the sake of argument, let us assume for a moment that the Master Mason is indeed the highest degree in Masonry, ignoring the above original declaration. Still, this is not true in other jurisdictions.

In Continental Europe, for instance, Scotch Masonry evolved into and became part of what is historically known as the Haut Grades, which literally meant "High Degrees," and are worked in systems of Masonic Rites where the Third Degree is not the last nor the highest at all. Some of these Masonic jurisdictions are still considered regular and are even recognized by many mainstream jurisdictions. Examples are the Swedish Rite, consisting of 10 integrated degrees, and the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of French Masonry, consisting of 33 degrees. In these regular and recognized Masonic systems, the Third Degree is not the highest degree, and each degree is a natural progression and continuation of the previous.

What then is the highest degree of Masonry? That depends, of course, on the adopted Masonic system. If you are asking about the highest degree in Ancient Craft Masonry under the current Grand Lodge system of regular mainstream Masonry, then, without dispute, the answer is most definitely the Third Degree or Master Mason. Or is it?

Most mainstream Masonic jurisdictions work within their Grand Lodges and Craft Lodges something called an Installed Master Degree or a Past (passed) Master Degree. Some jurisdictions treat them as mere ceremonial investitures while others as actual Masonic degrees given after the Master Mason degree to presiding Worshipful Masters. In this case, therefore, even under the modern Grand Lodge system, the Past Master Degree, being a "Chair Degree," is technically higher than that of Master Mason, for the position of Worshipful Master is indeed of higher rank than those of the other brethren in the lodge. How then could we

say that there is no degree higher than the Third Degree, even in regular mainstream Freemasonry? Even in the York Rite, the Past Master Degree is a prerequisite to the Royal Arch Degree.

There are those who argue in defense of the Third Degree being the highest by stressing the fact that if one is expelled as a Master Mason, he likewise loses membership in the appendant bodies that supposedly confer “higher degrees” like the Royal Arch. Such argument is most definitely true, but it does not establish that the Third Degree is the highest, rather that it is the basic – the minimum requirement in order to be considered a full-fledged Freemason – just like the base of a pyramid, without which, all of its higher structures, including the apex, would crumble down. Hence, the Third Degree is not the highest, but it is, fundamentally, the most important, without which, none of the subsequent “higher” degrees could exist.

The notion, therefore, that “there is no degree higher than the Third Degree” is technically, historically, and academically incorrect. Educated Masons would do well to avoid parroting such a simplistic claim, if perhaps what they truly meant is that “there is no degree higher than the Third Degree in the Blue lodges working under a mainstream Grand Lodge system.” That seems more correct – politically, contextually, and semantically.

“FREEMASONRY IS NOT A SECRET SOCIETY”

People most often tag Freemasonry as a secret society, and Masons are always quick to claim that it is not, but rather “a society with secrets.” Masons further defend that their schedules of gatherings are publicly known; that their places

of meeting are adorned with Masonic signposts; and that their membership roster are open for anyone to see. Secret societies, they claim, never reveal such information to the public. Such claim, unfortunately, is a poor characterization of a “secret society.”

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a secret society is “any of the various oath-bound societies, often [but not always] devoted to brotherhood, moral discipline, and mutual assistance.” Freemasonry definitely fits that description. Collins Dictionary also defines secret society as “an organization that conceals its rites, activities, etc. from those who are not members.” In large part, Freemasonry likewise fits that description. Dictionary.com says that a secret society, as a fraternal organization, consists of “members that take secret initiation oaths, share secret passwords and rites, and are bound to assist each other.” Again, such a description fits Freemasonry perfectly, almost describing Freemasonry itself.

Encyclopedia Britannica goes further by describing Freemasonry as “the largest worldwide secret society – an oath-bound society, often devoted to fellowship, moral discipline, and mutual assistance, that conceals at least some of its rituals, customs, or activities from the public,”



NO SECRET SOCIETIES HERE, RIGHT?

further explaining that secret societies “do not necessarily conceal their membership or existence,” thus seemingly, though indirectly, justifying Freemasonry as being one. It goes on to comprehensively define a secret society as “any of a large range of membership organizations or associations that utilize secret initiations or other rituals, and whose members often employ unique oaths, grips (handshakes), or other signs of recognition. Elements of secrecy may vary from a mere password to elaborate rituals, private languages, costumes, and symbols.”

So, is Freemasonry a secret society? By general consensus of those defining the term, it would appear that it is. Perhaps the confusion lies in certain definitions of a secret society that include membership concealment, which, of course, does not apply to Freemasonry. However, it is only one characteristic of some secret societies, and not all of them necessarily conceal their membership. One such definition of a secret society that includes membership concealment as a characteristic is from Encyclopedia.com, which states: “The term secret society can be used to describe all groups whose [1] membership or very existence is unknown to nonmembers, OR [2] keep certain of their practices or conceptions hidden from nonmembers, no matter how public or recognized they are as a group.”

By almost all standards of definition, it would seem that Freemasonry being a secret society is something that the whole world agrees on, with the notable exception of the Masons themselves. They are perhaps the only ones who refuse to accept themselves as such, and with good reason – since there is always a negative, even sinister, connotation to being called a “secret society.” And that is the reason

why Masons refuse to call themselves as such.

“MASONS DO NOT RECRUIT”

That Masons are prohibited from inviting new members into the Fraternity is a mere time-honored tradition, borne out of a conservative interpretation of Masonic ritual stating that candidates should come knocking at the doors of Freemasonry out of their own free will and accord, voluntarily offering themselves to receive its degrees, unbiased by friends, and uninfluenced by mercenary motives.

This simply means that the candidates should possess the genuine intent of joining Freemasonry, and are not just being solicited or coerced into doing so against their wishes. It does not say that Masons could not recruit, recommend, or sponsor new members whom they believe are interested, qualified, and could eventually become assets to the Fraternity.

The Grand Master of the UGLE, the Duke of Kent, even explained why recruitment should be every Mason’s responsibility whatever his rank. He said, “I am particularly concerned to hear that very few members recruit at all, and that there is an unacceptably high loss rate.” He then went on to charge the Masons in his jurisdiction to actively participate in recruiting new members because of their



continuously declining numbers. They even have an official Recruitment and Retention program in place.

Recruitment seems commonplace in other jurisdictions as well. Some conduct lodge open houses, white table events, and other information campaigns about Freemasonry in the hope of attracting new members. Some even have ads, booths, and flyers with details on how and where to join. Some, though openly engage in such campaign drives, have avoided calling their activities “recruitment” because of the negative connotation it acquired from those who insist that Masons do not invite new members.

Yes, there are some Masons, Filipino Masons among them, who seem to believe that theirs, and theirs alone, are the true and correct practices of Freemasonry. I remember an anecdote from one Filipino Mason visiting a lodge in Australia, who was told politely to be open-minded of their practices which may be different from what the visiting brother may have been accustomed to, including, I presume, the matter on recruitment. It would appear that many Filipino Masons have acquired the notoriety of judging other Masonic practices different from theirs, accusing such practices as “irregular” or “clandestine.” That is because, in the Philippines, the custom of not inviting new members into Masonry, for instance, is strictly enforced by individual Masons, taking their cue from their collectively-agreed interpretation of Masonic ritual. It should be noted, however, that there seems to be no current legal prohibition in most jurisdictions that hinders a Mason from recruiting new members, with corresponding penalties on its violation. As such, the question of whether or not recruitment is a Masonic offense is still

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open for debate. Nevertheless, it has become common and general knowledge among local Masons that the act of recruiting is fundamentally wrong, even asserting that those who practice it belong to a “clandestine” jurisdiction.

Incidentally, in other regular jurisdictions, Masonry does not just recruit, it is even by invitation only – through the sponsorship of a current member of a lodge. Yet even then, one has to formally ask in order to be invited and sponsored to join. After which, there are still qualifying procedures, investigations, and balloting conducted prior to being actually accepted, thus further filtering prospective candidates. The notion, therefore, that recruitment guarantees acceptance is a misnomer.

MEANING OF THE SQUARE AND COMPASS

Some local Masonic Education materials have been teaching Masons themselves that the Square is a symbol of the lower, earthly, and physical qualities of man, while the Compass (Compasses) is a symbol of the higher, heavenly, and more divine attributes of spirituality. Elegant and epiphanic as this may sound, such

interpretation, unfortunately, is not the official teaching of regular Craft Masonry – at least, not in the type of Freemasonry we practice here in the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. As far as the rituals of mainstream Freemasonry are concerned, the Square, as a speculative working tool, is used to “square” one’s actions, meaning a reminder to be equitable, moral, and good. It is therefore a symbol for rectitude or righteousness. On the other hand, the Compass, as a speculative working tool, is used to restrain one’s passions, meaning a reminder not to do bad. It is therefore a symbol for self-control and tolerance.

Some rituals may have additional symbolisms for the Compass, such as the unerring and impartial justice; the width and limits of attainment; and the containment of the most important tenets of Freemasonry. In the Symbolic degrees of the French Rite and in the 4th degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, there is a term called “passed from the Square to the Compasses” to denote that one has already become a Master Mason. The idea that the Square is an emblem of what concerns the earth and the body, and the Compass being that of the heavens and the soul, was taken from Albert Pike’s



Masons are, of course, free to interpret or “speculate” on Masonry’s symbols according to their own observations and conclusions, but it is incorrect to suggest that their views are what Masonry officially teaches.

ideas in “Morals and Dogma,” which Preface clarified that “everyone is entirely free to reject and dissent from whatsoever herein may seem to him to be untrue or unsound.”

Masons are, of course, free to interpret or “speculate” on Masonry’s symbols according to their own observations and conclusions, but it is incorrect to suggest that their views are what Masonry officially teaches. Although Freemasonry is speculative in nature, the term “speculative” refers to the symbolic meaning Masonry bestows on the stonemasons’ working tools outside of their operative uses, instructing Masons to regard them according to Masonry’s own moral and ethical teachings, which are, by the way, already clear and spelled out in Masonic ritual and corresponding lectures. The use of “speculative” therefore does not necessarily imply that every Mason can ascribe personal meanings to Masonry’s symbolisms that are not taught by Masonry, and expect other Masons to accept them as Masonic. In other words: it is okay for you to believe what you want to believe, but it is not okay for you to demand others to believe what you believe.

One Masonic Dictionary even described Speculative Masonry as merely the knowledge of the science or theory of building, as against Operative Masonry which is putting that knowledge into practice. When Operative Masonry was dropped out of the Craft in the 18th century, only the speculative elements remained, and these became the basis of modern-day Freemasonry. The word “speculative” back then had nothing to do with philosophical speculation, or with theorizing merely for its own sake.

CONCLUSION

We invite all Masons to be the vanguards of truth and the agents that dispel false information regardless of personal interests and inclinations that could favor one to such. Break the cycle. Stop the spread of fake news dead on its tracks by educating yourselves and others. Side with Truth regardless of its detriments, instead of siding with lies that promise you its benefits.

It is true that the triumph of fake news and other forms of disinformation can be attributed to the lack of credible fact-checkers and the equal lack of will and determination to do further research in order to confirm, validate, and corroborate sources. However, more than that, the triumph of fake news, as can be seen in some of the enumerated examples above, is also attributed to its own inherent nature and characteristic – seemingly offering a better interpretation, a better explanation, and a better stimulation than the plain and simple truth.

Often, in Freemasonry, there is a susceptibility to embellish and add profoundness to the simplicity of Masonic history and teachings – ascribing significance where none was intended, and mistaking coincidental appearance or artistic license for symbolic depth – thus consequently depreciating Masonry for what it is and appreciating it for what it is not.

Never underestimate the power and seduction of disinformation. Without a keen sense of discernment, it can influence perceptions and cloud the distinction between fact and fallacy. Read... question... research... and discern. Who knows? – maybe this article IS the fake news all along.



Removing Masonic Emblems From Non-Masons

BY SATOR

THERE IS A DISTURBING online phenomenon concerning the questionable activities of certain local Masons who have taken the role “protecting” their Fraternity against Masonic pretenders and impostors. Many of these Masons have taken to proudly posting their efforts on Facebook, wherein they expose these pretenders whom they labeled “Masonic wannabes.” They further showcase how they successfully persuaded these impostors to remove Masonic decals from their vehicles. Within the comments section of these posts, an overwhelming chorus of praise and approval from fellow Masons resonates, lauding their brethren for their displays of “Masonic protectiveness” and urging other Masons to undertake similar actions – namely, to identify and demand the removal of Masonic decals from vehicles owned or driven by non-Masons, as well as confiscating their Masonic rings if any be found.

You may even have seen some of the

videos on other social media platforms (e.g. “Hindi Kayo Mason” on Youtube. [com/watch?v=cjnnOUYU7us](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjnnOUYU7us)), which portray instances of zealous Masons who probably belong to law enforcement, stopping motorists on the road and compelling them to remove Masonic decals from their vehicles. In certain cases, these Masons have accused the motorists in question of being “cowans,” following interrogations that revealed neither the vehicle owners nor the drivers belonged to the Masonic Fraternity.

These occurrences give rise to a thought-provoking query that warrants meticulous examination: Is it legally permissible, or indeed endorsed by the Fraternity, to insist that non-Masons remove Masonic emblems, particularly the Square-and-Compasses, from their personal belongings or property?

Before addressing this query, it is essential to comprehend why many Masons demonstrate heightened sensitivity and protectiveness concerning their Masonic

emblems, often going to great lengths to prevent non-Masons from using the Square-and-Compasses for any purpose. The rationale behind this behavior is that certain individuals do exploit Masonic emblems in an attempt to pass themselves off as Masons themselves, hoping to gain advantages such as evading traffic violations, receiving preferential treatment, or seeking protection from the Fraternity during times of trouble – thus abusing Masons for mercenary motives and consequently tarnishing the reputation of Freemasonry itself with their selfish ways. It should be unequivocally stated, however, that the Masonic Fraternity does not confer such privileges upon its members. Regardless of their Masonic affiliation, no individual is exempt from the law or placed above it. It therefore becomes incumbent upon genuine Masons to desist from creating misconceptions that could potentially lead to the abuse of their organization and their identity.

Let us now turn our attention to the question of whether Masons possess the authority to insist upon the removal of Masonic emblems from the property of non-Masons. Consider a scenario in which a Mason encounters a stranger driving a vehicle adorned with a Masonic decal, only to ascertain that neither the stranger driving the vehicle nor its registered owner holds Masonic membership. Does the Mason possess the legal prerogative to demand the removal of the decal from the vehicle, possibly even taking it upon himself to effect such removal?

The following facts must be taken into account:

1. It is unlawful to deface another

person's property through removal or confiscation. Engaging in such actions may lead to the filing of criminal charges, subject to penalties under the Revised Penal Code of the Philippines, including fines, imprisonment, or both.

2. One potential charge is "Malicious Mischief," which pertains to the destruction of another person's property, and could be invoked if damage occurs during the removal of a Masonic emblem.
3. Another charge could be "Simple to Grave Coercion," particularly if evidence demonstrates that the other person was pressured or coerced into removing an emblem from his property against his will, irrespective of the perceived rightness or wrongness of the act.
4. A charge of "Simple to Grave Threat" may also be applicable if the act is accompanied by harassment or the implicit threat of imminent harm to the other person, often accomplished through intimidation, whether overt or subtle.
5. "Unjust Vexation" may be another charge brought against you for causing significant emotional distress to the other person.

Concerning internal Masonic policies, it is important to note that the Grand Lodge of the Philippines has not issued any law, edict, or directive that empowers Masons under its jurisdiction to remove, confiscate, or deface Masonic emblems, logos, or symbols from properties other than their own. Instead, the Grand Lodge has established a series of preventative

measures to deter non-Masons from utilizing, misusing, or abusing the Masonic name and identity.

One such measure is Edict No. 273 of Past Grand Master Tomas Rentoy III, which regulated the production, sale, purchase, and use of promotional Masonic items. Vendors of these items were required to be accredited by the Grand Lodge to ensure exclusive distribution to its members. This Edict also extended its regulation to encompass other Masonic signs, figures, words, phrases, and symbols, not limited solely to the Square-and-Compasses emblem. Regrettably, the Edict and its corresponding penalties for violation applied solely to Masons within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, as it did not have authority anywhere else. Consequently, non-Masons remain at liberty to employ Masonic emblems on rings, decals, apparel, and other items without incurring legal repercussions, while Masons could only adhere to their own Edicts in order to aid in preventing such misuse.

Similar delimitations exist in other Masonic restrictions of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, such as the prohibition of the unauthorized use of the title “Masonic,” as detailed in its Masonic Law Book, which asserts that “the Grand Lodge is the Supreme Masonic authority in the Philippines, and it is improper for any society or organization to prefix the word ‘Masonic’ in its name without authority from this Grand Lodge (Proc. 1926).” Yet, this is directed to Masons only, leaving non-Masons unhindered in their use of the term. Such a situation presents a curious paradox in which legitimate Masons and legitimate Masonic organizations

are seemingly restrained from using the term “Masonic” without the Grand Lodge’s approval, while other entities not subject to the Grand Lodge’s authority may freely employ the term, devoid of legal consequences. This discrepancy underscores a legislative misalignment, akin to gun control measures that disarm law-abiding citizens but not the criminals who disregard the law with impunity.

It is noteworthy to mention that in certain places like Georgia and Indiana, the wearing of the emblems of some fraternal orders may be prohibited if the wearer is not a member. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Grand Lodge of Scotland registered the Square-and-Compasses in their respective jurisdiction. The Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of Michigan stated that “any non-Mason that uses the names and emblems (Square-and-Compasses) can be taken to court.”

And there lies the ultimate limitation. Even if the Square-and-Compasses and other Masonic emblems, crests, and insignias are somehow registered and protected by trademark laws, that is the most that Masons can actually do – to pursue legal avenues by filing charges and complaints instead of taking matters into their own hands. It is beyond their power and authority, and they should not behave as though they have such power and authority. It imparts upon Masonry a far worse impression than those caused by the “Masonic wannabes” against whom they are trying to protect their Fraternity. More importantly, Masons who are trying to rid non-Masons of Masonic emblems are subjecting themselves to lawsuits and criminal cases.

MASONIC HUMOR

FROM THE QUARRIES

SOURCE: ONLINE MASONIC FORUMS

Two candidates were elected to enter on the same lodge night, one was a butcher and the other a salesman. On the night of initiation the butcher went in first. When it came to the charge at the north east corner, it was discovered that he had a quarter pound of liver in his pocket that he was going to deliver on his way home. Obviously this had to be taken away. The JD took this to the Tyler and said this is the butcher's liver and to this day the lodge haven't seen the salesman.

* * *

A pot-holer decided one day to investigate some above ground caves. He came across a very narrow cave and went down it. When he reached the end, he found a skeleton which had a sword in its hand. Turning a corner, he passed through a doorway into a large cavern. He found this cavern contained a great many skeletons. Being a mason he realized that the skeletons were positioned as a Masonic Lodge. Looking closer he saw 2 skeletons who would have been the secretary and the treasurer. One of them has a piece of paper in his hand, he removed the paper and read "If someone doesn't prompt the Worshipful Master soon we'll be here all night.

* * *

A ragged tramp stopped a Mason on his way home from the lodge and asked him for money for food. "I'll do

better than that!" said the Mason. "Come into the pub, and I'll buy you a drink!" "Thank you!" said the beggar. "But I've never drunk and I never will!" "Well, let me buy you some cigarettes then!" said the Mason. "No, thanks!" said the tramp, "I've never smoked and I never will!" "Okay", said the Mason. "Come back to the lodge with me and I'll see you get a meal!" "No, thanks", said the man. "I've never entered a masonic lodge and I never will!" "Right, then", said the Mason "Will you please come home with me and meet my wife!" "Why?" asked the tramp. "Well", said the Mason. "I just want her to see what happens to a guy who doesn't drink, doesn't smoke and hasn't joined the Masons!"

* * *

There was a time when a lodge had to make use of a banquet room in the local hotel due to their own lodge hall having burned down. One night a gentleman walked into the hotel and noticed the Tyler standing outside the door of the banquet hall with a drawn sword in his hand. He asked the desk clerk "What is that man doing with that sword?" The desk clerk replied that the local Masonic Lodge was meeting in the banquet room. The gentleman then said "Oh the Masons. That's the organization that is really hard to get into" whereupon the desk clerk replied "It must be. That poor guy with the sword has been knocking on that door for months and they still haven't let him in".



JUAN LUNA'S SPOLIARIUM, 1884

Celebrating the Artistry of Juan Luna: A tribute to the 166th Birth Anniversary of Brother Juan Luna

AS WE COMMEMORATE the 166th birthday of our Brother Juan Luna, many would wonder why we regard such world-renowned painter as a national hero. A lesser known part of his life is that he was also member of the delegation of the then Philippine government that actively worked for the recognition of such government during and following the signing of the treaty that ended the Spanish-American War in 1898.

However, his greatest contribution to our nationhood was the breaking of the chains that shackled the consciousness of the Filipino people. During the colonial times, generations were told that we were an inferior race and unfit to govern ourselves. However, Brother Luna's works won over those of European painters



JUAN LUNA DE SAN PEDRO Y NOVICIO ANCHETA (OCTOBER 25, 1857 – DECEMBER 7, 1899) WAS A FILIPINO PAINTER, SCULPTOR AND A POLITICAL ACTIVIST OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION DURING THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. HE BECAME ONE OF THE FIRST RECOGNIZED PHILIPPINE ARTISTS.

despite his non-western county origins and liberated our minds from such imposed and undue limitations.

human greatness, we can always see the handiwork of the Great Architect of the Universe.

When he was unfairly discriminated and denied the prestigious Medal of Honor inspite of his excellent work Spoliarium just because he was a colonial subject, even the then King Alfonso XII of Spain commissioned Brother Luna to make a painting of the "Battle of Lepanto" to properly compensate him and give him due honors.

While we may not all be bestowed by our Almighty Creator with the genius or talents of Brother Luna, we are indeed granted with other capabilities and potentials, especially that of goodness. Therefore, it is indispensably necessary for each Mason to enter into the Temple of his Heart daily and there to seek wisdom from Him to progressively improve his life for stability (strength) and fulfillment (ornament) as well.

Brethren, while Brother Luna did not engage in bloody battles, he fought the mental wars against prejudices of the mind against Filipinos and humanity as well. In his paintings, imbedded are moral and political undertones that elicit our human sense of justice and social responsibility. In his tribute to him, Brother Jose Rizal said: "Genius has no country, genius bursts forth everywhere, genius is like light and air, the patrimony of all: cosmopolitan as space, as life and God." Hence, in encountering

Let us therefore not be limited by what others may say of us or how others may regard us. Instead let us ever keep in mind that the All-Seeing Eye is always over us. His mercy and glory has no bounds and shall lead us to our individual and personal destinies. Together, Brethren.

MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING
Grand Master of Masons



THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS A SPEECH DELIVERED BY VW PHILIP OLIVAN, DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER, MASONIC DISTRICT RV CAMARINES NORTE, CAMARINES SUR & CATANDUANES DURING THE DISTRICT CONVENTION OF MASONIC DISTRICT RIV - MINDORO DISTRICT HELD LAST SEPTEMBER 9, 2023.

IT IS SAID that silence is golden. But who knew it could also be Masonic? Today, I stand before you not only as a Master Mason, but as the first Deaf Master Mason in the history of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines.

Now, some might think that a journey in Masonry is all about listening –

listening to the wisdom of our elders, listening to the ancient teachings of our rituals, listening to the will and pleasure of the Master in the East, listening to the whisperings of good counsel from the brethren ...

But my journey? It has been a bit different.

Instead of hearing the words, I felt them. Instead of listening to the rituals, I experienced them in a way that is uniquely mine.

I have been asked many times, “How did you do it?” To which I reply, with a smile, “I didn’t hear any objections!”

But all jokes aside, my journey was not merely about breaking barriers. It was and still is about building connections.

In a world that shouts a lot, I have learned the value of whispers. In silence, I discovered the profound resonance of our Masonic tenets.

Brotherly love, relief, and truth are not only letters and words.

They are feelings, they are vibrations, they are intentions that goes beyond the spoken language.

Let us consider, for instance, a working tool of a Mason. The common gavel, that little instrument. It does not scream or shout.



But when wielded with patience and persistence, it can shape the mightiest of stones, breaking off the rough and superfluous parts, the better to fit them for the builder's use, all in profound silence.

Just like the common gavel, my journey as a Deaf Mason was not about making the loudest noise.

It was about making a meaningful impact, bit by bit.

There were times I felt like I was trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. But isn't

and adapt—these were the true signs of that bond of sincere affection.

In my Masonic journey, I realized one undeniable truth: our fraternity's strength lies not in the volume of our words, but in the depth of our actions.

In the end, while I may be the first Deaf Master Mason, I hope I am not the last.

For I see a world of Masonry where doors are not specially opened to a select few, but opened a bit more widely to accommodate individuals, regardless of their abilities, to find their Northeast corners and start

“For I see a world of Masonry where doors are not specially opened to a select few, but opened a bit more widely to accommodate individuals, regardless of their abilities, to find their Northeast corners and start their Masonic journeys to become true and perfect Master Masons.”

that the essence of Masonry?

To take a raw and rough material and shape it into something more refined, something more worthy.

I became that stone, silently but steadfastly shaped by the hands of our brotherhood.

And to you my brethren, I owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude.

For it was you who taught me that communication isn't only about speaking and listening.

It's about understanding. Your gestures, your patience, your willingness to learn

their Masonic journeys to become true and perfect Master Masons.

To those who come after me, remember this: it is not about hearing the call, but answering it. Not about the words spoken, but the impact made.

Our journey together, after all, is about building not barriers, but temples inside the hearts of men.

So here's to silence, to the unspoken bonds that bind us together, and to the bright future of Masonry – where every stone, silent or otherwise, has a place in that grand edifice not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.



REGARDED AS ONE OF THE FIERCEST GENERALS OF HIS TIME, HE SUCCEEDED ARTEMIO RICARTE AS THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY. HE SOUGHT TO APPLY HIS BACKGROUND IN MILITARY SCIENCE TO THE FLEDGLING ARMY. A SHARPSHOOTER HIMSELF, HE ORGANIZED PROFESSIONAL GUERRILLA SOLDIERS LATER NAMED THE "LUNA SHARPSHOOTERS" AND THE "BLACK GUARD" WITH SENYOR MICHAEL JOAQUIN.

REMEMBERING THE PATRIOT: Grand Master's Message for the 157th Birth Anniversary of General and Brother Antonio Luna

AS WE COMMEMORATE the 157th birth anniversary of General and Brother Antonio Luna, let us revisit the life he sacrificed in service of our country and our people. Raised in an affluent family, Brother Luna was endowed with natural talents, access to superior education and exposure to various cultures.

As a pharmacist and chemist, his doctoral thesis “El Hematozoario del Paludismo” (On Malarial Pathology) was well-received by the scientific community in Europe in 1893. Had Brother Luna not joined the fight for independence against the American colonizers, he would have acquired immense material wealth and achieved high honors in the field of science.

revolutionaries. His atrocious murder remains a painful stain in our history that continues to haunt us.

Brother Luna built a temple of tenets and virtues in his heart. Dictated by his faithful heart to develop a disciplined and effective armed resistance to hinder the conquest of the Americans, he remained steadfast to his principles up to his last breath just like the chief architect of King Solomon’s temple in our allegory.

Nowadays, the greatest fights and struggles for the Craft in our grand jurisdiction persist not in the battlefields but rather in our individual hearts and minds. Our greatest enemies and threats are within, similar to Brother Luna’s time. Such formidable ruffians consist of greed, mercenary

**By His grace and our own labors may we be ever like General and Brother Luna
in his pure and selfless service to Him, our fellowmen and Freemasonry until
the moment when we drop our working tools of life.**

However, his conscience barred him from any disregard of the sufferings of the Filipinos under whatever colonial rule. Upon returning from exile in Europe and realizing the futility of peaceful reforms, he committed his “knowledge and science for the liberation of the Motherland.” By then, his newfound skills were no longer in chemistry but those concerning armed wars and battles. Fortified with a brave heart and a strategic mind carved by his past scientific experiences, he fulfilled his destiny as the ablest general in our fight against the Americans invaders.

Despite his sacrifices for our nationhood, it was not the bullets or swords of the colonial usurpers that resulted in the gruesome death of Brother Luna, but rather by the vicious hands of his fellow

motives, vanity and worst, the disregard of the indispensable character building purpose of our ancient and honorable institution. Unless we build temples of Masonic tenets and virtues within our own hearts, we will not be enabled to confront and circumscribe such inner ruffians.

Let us therefore go forth and pray to our Supreme Creator for wisdom and strength to fortify the temples of character in our respective hearts. By His grace and our own labors may we be ever like General and Brother Luna in his pure and selfless service to Him, our fellowmen and Freemasonry until the moment when we drop our working tools of life. Together, Brethren.

MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING
Grand Master of Masons

E PLURIBUS UNUM
BY VW MARLON M. CASTOR
SENIOR GRAND LECTURER



A RESOUNDING SUCCESS: THE RECENTLY-HELD NATIONAL CAPITOL REGION MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTION LAST NOVEMBER 4, 2023 PROVIDED A DISPLAY OF PROFICIENCY AND GOOD MANAGEMENT OF MASONIC GATHERINGS.

THIS IS A COPY OF THE MASONIC EDUCATION LECTURE GIVEN DURING THE NCR MULTI-DISTRICT CONVENTION, WHICH FOCUSED ON THE FIVE POINTS OF FELLOWSHIP. THE LECTURE WAS THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN THE SENIOR GRAND LECTURER, VW MARLON M. CASTOR AND THE NCR JUNIOR GRAND LECTURERS, NAMELY: VW SHERWIN S. CAPIN, VW JASON V. ROCHA, AND VW RAYMUNDO L. NOBLE.

TO THE GREAT ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE, from Whom all Wisdom and Beneficence into every lawful assembly of Free and Accepted Masons we offer this great gathering.

To VW Sonny Ubania, District Deputy Grand Master for Masonic District NCR-A and our presiding officer for this year's NCR Multi-District Convention, To MW Don Terng Ramas-Uypitching, Grand Master of Masons of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines and our Guest of Honor and Speaker, To our Past Grand Masters here present, namely MW Santiago T. Gabionza and MW Tomas G. Rentoy III, Dignitaries in the East, Dignitaries on the

Floor, VW Sirs, Worshipful Sirs, Brethren, good morning to each and every one of you at Magandang Buhay po sa lahat!

It is customary during Multi-District Conventions that the SGL delivers the Masonic Education. But for this year's NCR Multi-District Convention, the NCR JGLs and I have decided to do a collaborative masonic education focused on the topic the five points of fellowship which as our rituals provide, outline how we should act towards and for our brethren.

With your indulgence, allow me to provide the first point of fellowship.

FOOT-TO-FOOT

delivered by VW Marlon M. Castor
King Solomon Masonic Lodge #150
Senior Grand Lecturer

delivered by VW Jason V. Rocha
Taga-Ilog Masonic Lodge #79
Junior Grand Lecturer NCR-C & NCR-D

Always assist a distressed worthy brother. As masons, it should be in our very nature to be of service---ergo, that is one of the reasons why we wear aprons. Our obligations enjoin us to help those brethren who despite being in dire situations, have earned the right to be assisted. Freemasonry rewards those who labors in its name and glory. It bestows wages for every mason that has rendered true labors at the quarries.

It was once said, one reaps what one sows. If you sow good deeds, you will also be rewarded with good deeds. If you sow evil acts, then shall you reap the fruits of one's evil deeds.

The first point of fellowship enjoins us to sometimes remove ourselves from our own comfort zones to aid our worthy brethren. However, there are times that we find ourselves too immersed in our usual professions, in the safety and comfort of our homes, our hobbies and recreations that we turn blind eye to those brethren who likewise helped the Craft and the brethren but have found themselves at the unfortunate bottom of fortune's wheel. Thus, our obligations and indoctrination as members of this noble fraternity expects us to lend assistance if and when, we are capable to do so.

Masonry is serious labor. That is why we wear our aprons. It is not mere lip service nor a propaganda to lift ourselves higher but one where we work with gentle hands and with benevolent hearts towards our worthy brethren.

KNEE-TO-KNEE

In our ancient and noble fraternity, there exists a deeply ingrained principle – the unshakable commitment to remembering the welfare of a Brother Master Mason. And as we recall the lecture of the five points of fellowship. Knee to Knee, the second point of fellowship teaches us to think beyond ourselves and think of our brethren, especially those that have seemed to stay beyond a perpetual distance. As

As Brethren, we must always account for each other's happiness and needs. This principle is not just an abstract idea; it is a guiding light that illuminates the path of Masonic values and brotherhood. Over the centuries, Freemasonry has thrived on its fundamental tenet of caring for and supporting its members, particularly those who have attained, gained and or distinguished as one of being called a worthy Brother Master Mason.

Brethren, we must always account for each other's happiness and needs. This principle is not just an abstract idea; it is a guiding light that illuminates the path of Masonic values and brotherhood. Over the centuries, Freemasonry has thrived on its fundamental tenet of caring for and supporting its members, particularly those who have attained, gained and or distinguished as one of being called a worthy Brother Master Mason.

The title of "Master Mason" is not just a rank; it is a symbol of wisdom,

experience, and dedication to the craft. Those who have reached this pinnacle of Masonic achievement have gone through a transformative journey, both as individuals and as Masons, from a rough to a perfect ashlar. With this transformation comes an added responsibility – the duty to watch over and remember the welfare of our Brother Master Masons.

The concept of remembering a Brother's welfare goes beyond simply recognizing their presence at Masonic gatherings. It encompasses a profound commitment to their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. It means extending a helping hand when needed, lending a listening ear in times of distress, and providing guidance on the Masonic path, even going as far as to try reaching out to those brethren who at one time or another we felt have wronged us. This commitment is grounded in the principles of practicing Humility, Charity, Compassion, and Fraternity, which are at the heart of our beloved Craft.

As Master Masons we are expected to be the role model, demonstrating the virtues of Masonry through our actions. We are entrusted with the responsibility of setting an example for other Masons, particularly our newly raised members in our respective lodges, by living a life that reflects the teachings and values of the Craft. By doing so, we do not only contribute to their own self-improvement but also inspire others to follow our footsteps.

Remembering the welfare of a Brother Master Mason also involves preserving their dignity and respecting their privacy. In times of difficulty, Masons are encouraged to offer support discreetly

and without judgment. The essence of True Masonic charity lies in the genuine desire to alleviate suffering and aid those in need, without seeking recognition or praise.

Furthermore, our Masonic obligation to remember a Brother Master Mason's welfare extends beyond the confines of the Lodge room. As Master Masons we are encouraged to build true and lasting bonds with our brethren free from any mercenary motive, forging connections

As Master Masons we are encouraged to build true and lasting bonds with our brethren free from any mercenary motive, forging connections that extends into our daily lives. This support system ensures that no Master Mason faces life's challenges alone and reinforces the notion that Freemasonry is not just a fraternity but indeed a genuine brotherhood.

that extends into our daily lives. This support system ensures that no Master Mason faces life's challenges alone and reinforces the notion that Freemasonry is not just a fraternity but indeed a genuine brotherhood.

In conclusion, remembering the welfare of a Brother Master Mason is a cornerstone of Freemasonry. It embodies the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth that lie at the heart of our Ancient and Honorable Institution. A

Master Mason is not merely a title but a commitment to serving as a guardian of the Craft and a beacon of light for their fellow Master Masons. By upholding these values and fulfilling our obligations, We Master Masons ensure that the spirit of Freemasonry endures, and the welfare of our Brethren are cherished, protected, and nurtured. Under the leadership of our Grand Master Most Worshipful Don Teng Ramas-Uypitching, we can show the world that Philippine Masonry is thriving and will continue to thrive by continuing to carry out the masonic theme of the year. "Freemasons altogether, building temples inside the hearts of men"

Thank you and blessed afternoon to us all.

BREAST-TO-BREAST

delivered by VW Raymundo L. Noble
Muntinlupa Masonic Lodge #414
Junior Grand Lecturer NCR-G & NCR-H

Do we have SECRETS? Put it the other way around, do we, as Masons, keep SECRETS?

"... THAT I WILL KEEP THE SECRET OF A MASTER MASON AS MY OWN, WHEN GIVEN TO ME INCHARGE AS SUCH, MURDER AND TREASON EXCEPTED..."

Do we have SECRETS?

Is Masonry a secret Society? What Masonry has is our modes of recognitions veiled in allegories and illustrated in symbolic meanings. To the uninitiated, that has always been a parody. But Today's technology allows us to seek information's within a click of our fingers. Just google it and you have almost all the answers to your question. Even our monitor is

not spared from these technological advancements.

Let us recall that in our first admission into a Masonic Lodge, we were asked, "To whom do we put our TRUST?" Our Trust being in God, we were told to arise, follow our guide and fear not what man can do unto you. Totally helpless, left with no choice, we obliged. Our guide, though a complete stranger, is a brother Mason and one who can be truly TRUSTED!

Thus, we were also taught that the three precious jewels of a Fellowcraft Mason are the attentive ear, the instructive tongue and the faithful breast. The attentive EAR receives the sound from the instructive TONGUE and the mysteries of Masonry are safely lodged in the repository of the faithful BREAST.

Our Obligation as Master Mason also states that...

"... I furthermore promise and swear that I will keep the secret of a brother Master Mason as my own, when given to me in charged as such, murder and treason excepted..."

The Third point of Fellowship, Breast to Breast relates to TRUST. Either you have it, or don't. Something given in confidence. "You must be trustworthy to be part of a brotherhood built on trust and you want your fellowship to be with people you trust."

It requires that whatever a brother informs you, he is telling you in confidence, and that you have an obligation to keep that confidence with some narrow exception. This goes to two core values important to any sense of fellowship. First, how can you be of assistance to your brothers, if

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they cannot share what their needs are with you in confidence. Secondly, few things undermine a sense of brotherhood as fast as gossip and broken confidences.

We keep our brother's secrets, guilt or innocent, but let us not assume that every secret is of a guilty variety. He may have a secret ambition, a secret joy, a secret hope – if he confide these to us, are we compelled by our obligation? Is our teaching merely to refuse to tell them or keep them in the fine old sense of that word – to hold, to guard, to preserve.

The cable tow being released around our naked body signifies that indissoluble bond of brotherly love and friendship and uniting us under the fatherhood of the Great Architect of the Universe.

Our faithful Breast, Brethren, are like crystal balls. Held in Trust! Our lips are sealed... No broken vows. No broken promises... Afterall, I am a Mason, I got your BACK, brother !!!

HAND-TO-BACK

delivered by VW Sherwin S. Capin
Service Masonic Lodge #95
Junior Grand Lecturer NCR-A & NCR-B

Brethren, the fourth point of fellowship reminds us that we are our brother's keeper. Our brethren may from time to time err and fall off the right path, it also reminds us that we should ever be ready to ensure that each one of us may rise and continue that journey that we have started when we entered the doors of Freemasonry. A brother may fall because of his own errors and omissions.

Worse, he may continue to be unremorseful and even commit further unworthy acts to conceal or even justify

his unworthy conduct, Our ritual also teaches us that "we should be ever ready to stretch forth a helping hand to raise a fallen brother". But at times, trials and tribulations may come to a brother because misfortunes strikes him even if he has been always sincere and diligent.

As symbolized by "hand to back", we should never further bring down fallen brothers. But we should rather aid and assist distressed brother. However, our aid and assistance as stated in our obligation should be in "so far as we can do so without serious injury to ourselves and our families." So such obligation to help raise a fallen brother, is not without limits. If with the *ve points of fellowship given to him, the fallen brother has shall not reformed, it is no longer our obligation to exert further efforts to stretch the helping hand that was given.

Mga kapatid, hand support the fallen brother's back, para hindi po mahulog ang aking kapatid. Pero ito po ay tulong din sa kapatid na sumusuporta para hindi siya mahila pababa, so that both brothers will remain standing. Kahit ikaw ang tumulong or ikaw ang tinutulungan, kailangan po nating suportahan ang isat-isa dahil Bawat isa sa Masonerya ay Mahalaga. At kung ang pagpapahalaga po natin sa ating mga kapatid sa masonirya ay kaya din po nating i-extend sa mga kapwa po natin sa labas ng masonirya and we can practice out of the lodge ang magagandang turo ng ating kapatiran, ito po ay napakalaking tulong to our beloved Grand Master MW Don T. Ramas-Uypitching's theme "Freemasons Altogether, Building Temples Inside the hearts of Men".

Let us enter the temple daily, to view our lives to examine the level of humility in

us. Because with humility in our hearts will strengthen our hand to back, Then, let us regularly offer our devotions to our Supreme Creator so that He may always grant us the fortitude to remain humble in all aspects of our lives.

MOUTH-TO-EAR

delivered by VW Marlon M. Castor
King Solomon Masonic Lodge #150
Senior Grand Lecturer

Be The Tool To Make Good Men Better.

Endeavor to bring about a reform. This is the ultimate aim of Freemasonry: to make good men become better. This entails constantly reminding ourselves of adhering to our noble principles and making sure that we remain worthy of wearing the aprons of service and humility as we go about building temples inside the hearts of men. Freemasonry gives us the tools to change for the better but the greatest tool given to us to make this possible is none other than each other. By helping one another, correcting one another, and guiding each other in bringing about positive change---brother to brother, that is what I believe is the true secret of Freemasonry.

Masonry creates the greatest tools for mankind in the personality of each and every mason. For each member of our beloved fraternity is not only a catalyst of positive change but also are the implements of bringing happiness and beauty into the world, thus becoming temple-builders in their own right.

Brethren, the JGLs and I of the NCR have decided to provide the Masonic Education as a team, putting emphasis that the labors of the brethren are based on those who best work and best agree.

At times, the tasks posed before us may seem insurmountable but if we all work together towards a common goal, a common understanding, we may finally give fruition to what Freemasonry intends to bring out: making good men better.

This collaborative masonic lecture also underlines the fact that our each master mason of this grand jurisdiction is an important part of a magnificent structure and that every part of the edifice must be as strong as the other to ensure strength and stability. If one part is defective or weak, then it compromises the other parts of the building. If one member is weak or defective, then it provides a fault for the whole Craft.

This year, our Grand Master, MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING has adopted the theme, "Freemasons Altogether, Building Temples Inside the Hearts of Men" thereby signifying the call to make us worthy to host the presence of the Great Creator inside ourselves.

In closing, allow me to gift you all with a prayer for your safe and fruitful travels through our Craft and leave you thought with a thought from our brother William Howard Taft, who once said:

"The real secrets of Masonry are never told, not even from mouth to ear. For the real secret of Masonry is spoken to your heart and from it to the heart of your brother. Never the language made for tongue may speak it, it is uttered only in the eye in those manifestations of that love which a man has for his friend, which passeth all other loves."

Maraming salamat ulit, mga Kuyang at magandang buhay muli sa inyong lahat.



FATHER OF PHILIPPINE FREEMASONRY: BRO. MARCELO H. DEL PILAR WORKED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FILIPINO MASONIC LODGES. IN 1891, HE SENT SERRANO Y LACTAO TO THE PHILIPPINES TO ESTABLISH NILAD, THE FIRST FILIPINO MASONIC LODGE.

Grand Master's Message for the 173rd Birth Anniversary of Brother Marcelo H. Del Pilar

AS WE COMMEMORATE the 173rd birth anniversary of our Brother and National Hero Marcelo H. Del Pilar, let us duly venerate him for his great contributions to our nationhood and Philippine Freemasonry.

Despite being from an affluent family, Brother Del Pilar never turned blind to the injustices and cruelty that prevailed during our Spanish colonial times. On the contrary, it spurred him to be even more ardent in his fight for freedom and equality for all Filipinos.

Having wrote 150 essays and 66 editorials, Bro. Del Pilar is generally regarded as the "Father of Philippine Journalism." His writings provided the necessary enlightenment and inspiration to the Katipunan members despite the gigantic odds against them. His influence caused

former Governor-General Ramon Blanco to declare in 1897 that Brother Del Pilar was "the most intelligent leader, the real soul of the separatists, very superior to Rizal." Having seen how our worthy European brethren sacrificed to create better societies, he obtained the authority of the then Grand Master of the Gran Oriente Español, MW Miguel Morayta, to organize masonic lodges for Filipinos because we were previously prohibited from memberships in Spanish lodges and lodges of foreign colonial powers.

So Freemasonry subsequently flourished amongst the progressive Filipinos notwithstanding the intense persecutions by the Roman Catholic clergy and conservative Spanish officials. Brother Del Pilar believed that our Masonic ideals, tenets and virtues strengthened not only our resolve to fight for independence but

also laid the cornerstone to build a nation worthy of its citizens.



“In the Filipino colony there should be no division, nor is there: one are the sentiments which move us, one the ideals we pursue; the abolition in the Philippines of every obstacle to our liberties, and in due time and by the proper method, the abolition of the flag of Spain as well.”

BRO. MARCELO H. DEL PILAR

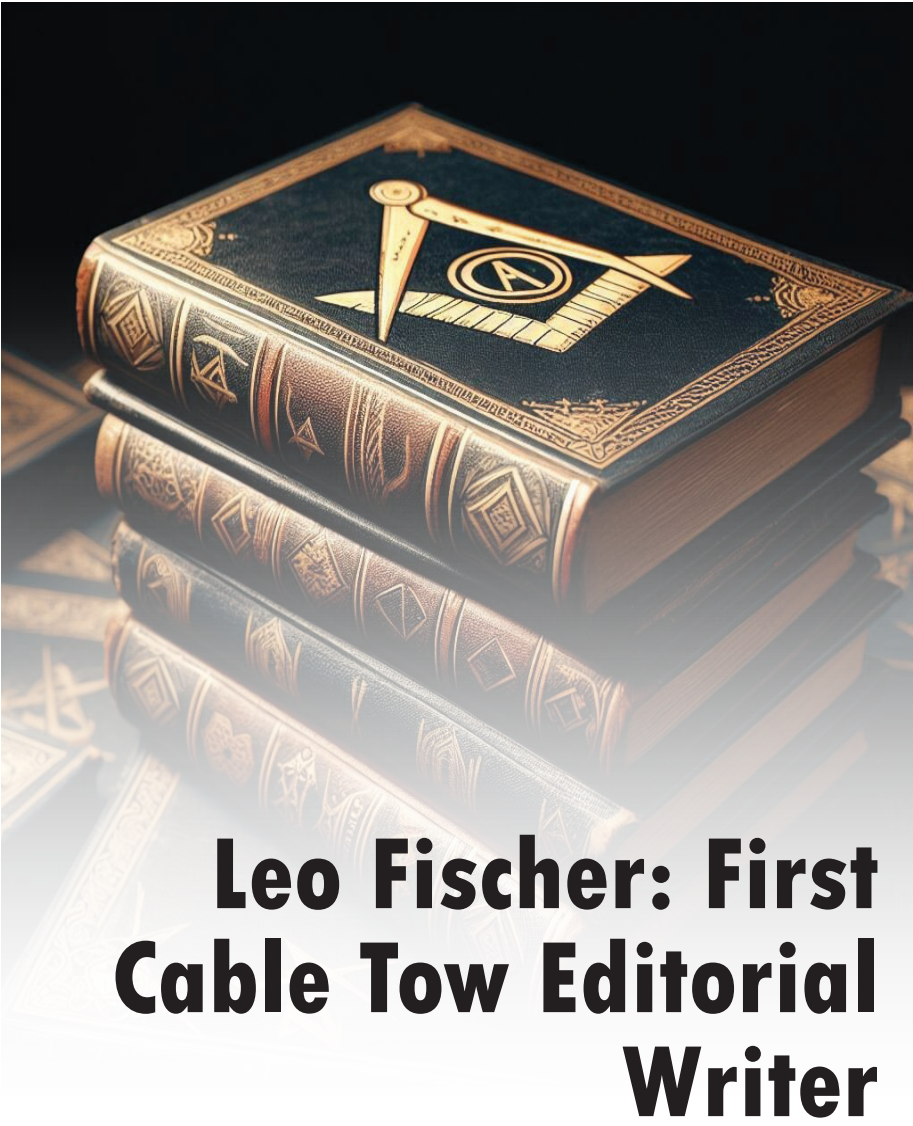
In our age of ready access to information, the cacophony of voices and words tend to devalue our regard for truthfulness. Tools for distinguishing hypocrisy and authenticity have become increasingly scarce. Hence, the more we should ever remember this thought from an anonymous writer who said that:

I do not give much for your Freemasonry unless it can be seen. Lamps do not talk but they shine... So let your actions shine out Masonry. Let the main sermon of your life be illustrated by your conduct and it shall not fail to be illustrious.

Brother Del Pilar was a person of worthy words and actions. Up to the last breath of his frail body, Brother Del Pilar’s devotion to attain freedoms and dignity for all Filipinos remained unimpaired. Such character can only be developed from within. Thus, it is most essential that we should altogether give utmost importance to the building of the temples within our respective hearts. For that is the sanctum sanctorum where we can stand naked and alone before our Supreme Grand Master to reflect if we have honored the sacrifices of our esteemed brother who not only bequeath Masonry to us Filipinos but also immensely galvanized the awakening of our national identity and pride.

Together, Brethren, let us preserve the heroic legacy of our Brother Del Pilar, among Masons and men, through the grace of our Almighty Creator and our labors.

MW DON T. RAMAS-UYPITCHING
Grand Master of Masons



Leo Fischer: First Cable Tow Editorial Writer

BY VW SAMUEL P. FERNANDEZ, HA, PGLI, PGSB, PGP, PGH, PGC

LEO FISCHER, polyglot, translator, interpreter, lecturer, journalist and a wordsmith, dedicated his pen essaying his thoughts and knowledge particularly on then existing masonic journals like The Cable Tow, Far Eastern Freemason, Lambskin of the Bagumbayan Lodge, and El Aguila of the Philippine Bodies.

Leo Fischer edited The Cable Tow from 1923 to 1937, a good fourteen years.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCE

Born in Bohemia (in Czechoslovakia) on July 10, 1875, Bro. Fischer went to various schools in Saxon (East Germany). He migrated to the United States of America and was naturalized as US citizen in

Omaha Nebraska. He served his adopted country in three wars as an enlisted man and officer.

Bro. Fischer came to the Philippines in October 1899 with the 32nd U.S. Vol. Infantry Regiment and served as a sergeant in the battlefields of Bataan and Pampanga until January 1901.

LINGUIST

During Bro. Fischer's brief stint in Bataan and Pampanga, he learned Tagalog and Pampango. He was not only fluent in English and Spanish languages but also German, French, Italian, Dutch and Portuguese. No wonder the Insular Government appointed him as chief translator. Bro. Fischer translated a good number of articles for The Cable Tow and the Far Eastern Freemason.

MASONIC LIFE

Bro. Leo Fischer saw the light of Masonry in Manila Lodge No. 342.

Initially, Manila Lodge 342, Cavite Lodge No. 350 and Corregidor Lodge No. 386 did not admit Filipinos into their fold.

On July 28, 1914, a petition for dispensation was signed to form Bagumbayan Lodge. On February 5, 1915, the Lodge received her charter. On February 10, 1915, Grand Master George Harvey instituted Bagumbayan Lodge and installed its officers.

Bro. Fischer served as Secretary of Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 from 1914 to 1918. He was elected as its Worshipful Master in 1922. Fluent in Spanish, Bro. Fischer was comfortable with Spanish-speaking brethren.

Illustrious Leo Fischer was a 33rd degree Mason of the Philippines Bodies, Scottish

Rite.

A Sojourner, Bro. Fischer was a Past Patron of Mayon Chapter No. 1, Order of the Eastern Star, Grand Representative of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands to the Grand Lodges of Vienna and Belgium.

THE LEVEL

On January 11, 1922, a simple resolution passed by the Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 gave birth to an official gazette and a library reference for the Craft in the Philippine Islands.

In this resolution, Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4 recommended to the Grand Lodge

There was no issue of The Cabletow during the Japanese occupation. The Grand Lodge officers were incarcerated by the Japanese including the editor of the Cable Tow.

that it adopted at its Tenth Annual Communication the foundation of a masonic newspaper, either weekly, semi-monthly or monthly, which shall be the official organ of the M.W. Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands and the exponent of Ancient Craft Masonry in these Islands, and shall be published under the auspices of this M.W. Grand Lodge.

On January 24, 1922, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence which gave the following recommendation "that steps be taken by him (the Grand Master) at an early date

as practicable to carry out each and every one of the recommendations contained in the said resolutions all of which will, in the opinion of your Committee, if properly undertaken, redound to the benefit of the Craft.” The report was approved by the brethren.

MW Quintin Paredes, the Grand Master at that time, proceeded to carry out the terms of the resolution by appointing Bro. Manuel Artigas, a journalist and historian. Sixteen pages of the paper was at the disposal of the Grand Lodge and three copies of it were furnished to each

Level with a board of three members to act as editorial staff and board of control. The members of the board were to take charge of the administration of the paper.

THE CABLE TOW

Grand Master Frederic H. Stevens sought to carry the resolution after his installation but journalistic pride prevented Bro. Artigas from accepting the terms and conditions set by the Grand Lodge. The Level being the property of Bro. Artigas, MW Stevens had to call a meeting of his officers to decide what course to follow. It was decided that the Grand Lodge

“I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Bro. Leo Fischer for the splendid assistance and cooperation he has given your Grand Master in getting out this publication. A great many of the articles were from his facile pen, articles that have been quoted in some of the leading Masonic Journals of the States.”

subordinate Lodge. Some copies were given to the Grand Secretary’s office.

Thus was born The Level, predecessor of The Cable Tow. The publication was to make itself self-supporting with the help of advertisements but because of insufficiency of funds it saw only four issues, the last of which was not distributed.

At the 11th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, a resolution was presented providing for the continuation of The

continue with the publication under a name other than The Level.

As an experienced printer and publisher and one of the members of the Committee on Publications and Library of the Far Eastern Freemason since its publication in 1916, Grand Master Stevens knew how to go about solving his problem. He engaged the services of Bro. Samuel Stickney, who had many years of experience in the journalistic field as business manager of the new review. One Past Grand Master, MW George R. Harvey, and two Past

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Masters, WB Teodoro M. Kalaw and WB Leo Fisher, were appointed associate editors. Brother Fisher became the official translator of the group and F.J. Herier the Advertising Advisor.

Two brother Masons, Stickney and Herier, suggested that the name of the publication be called The Cable Tow. The June issue was ready for distribution on May 29 and was "a credit to the Grand Lodge and Philippine Masonry in general from the literary, typographical and other points of view." The fact that the first issue of the 8 ½ by 12 ½ Cable Tow had thirty-seven advertisements from large companies showed that the business manager was on the job.

The Cable Tow was entered as second class matter at the post office in Manila and was in English and Spanish.

The Brethren directly concerned in the publication were recipients of numerous accolades. As expected there were criticism from the brethren who doubted the wisdom of such a venture. But they became warm supporters of The Cable Tow later.

THE MEN BEHIND THE CABLETOW FROM 1923-1940

This paper will be incomplete without mentioning the brethren who worked hard so that Masons in our Grand Jurisdiction here and abroad will be kept informed of our activities and at the same time be instructed in the tenets of our Craft.

Six months after the first issue of The Cable Tow, Leo Fischer was the only Associate Editor left in the staff. George H. Harvey and Teodoro Kalaw became contributing editors. In the April issue of 1927 Fischer appeared as Managing

Editor, a position he held until February 1936. In March 1936, the Managing Editor was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Correspondence.

By February 1938, Bro. Pablo Samson became the new Business Manager. It was not until May 1938 that a new set of brethren were appointed to be members of The Cable Tow editorial board. MW Teodoro M. Kalaw was chairman with George Roger Harvey, PGM; Conrado Benitez, PGM; John Robert McFie, PJGM; and Joseph Francis Boomer, PM.

MW Antonio Gonzales, was editor of The Cable Tow from May 1938 to May 1940. He wrote both in English and Spanish.

In May 1940, MW Gonzales had his Swan Song issue. In his editorial he wrote that the brethren had cast their lot with Britain and America. There was no issue of The Cabletow during the Japanese occupation. The Grand Lodge officers were incarcerated by the Japanese including the editor of the Cable Tow. Lucky for MW Gonzales he did not suffer the fate of MW Jose Abad Santos, MW John McFie, and the rest of the brethren who paid the prize of freedom. He took charge again of the mighty Cable Tow right after the war.

FISHER'S FACILE PEN

Grand Master Wenceslao Trinidad had only high praises for the effort and contribution of Bro. Leo Fischer to the success of the publication. "xxx, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Bro. Leo Fischer for the splendid assistance and cooperation he has given your Grand Master in getting out this publication. A great many of the articles were from his facile pen, articles that have been quoted in some of the leading Masonic Journals of the States."

AUTHOR HARRY LEROY HAYWOOD in his book, *Famous Masons and Masonic Presidents*, describes Bro. Dr. Robert Morris, thus: “He was assiduous, pervasive, loquacious, inventive, audacious, zealous, and extraordinarily miscellaneous.”

Scholar Bro. Dr. Albert G. Mackey, on the other hand, says it all:

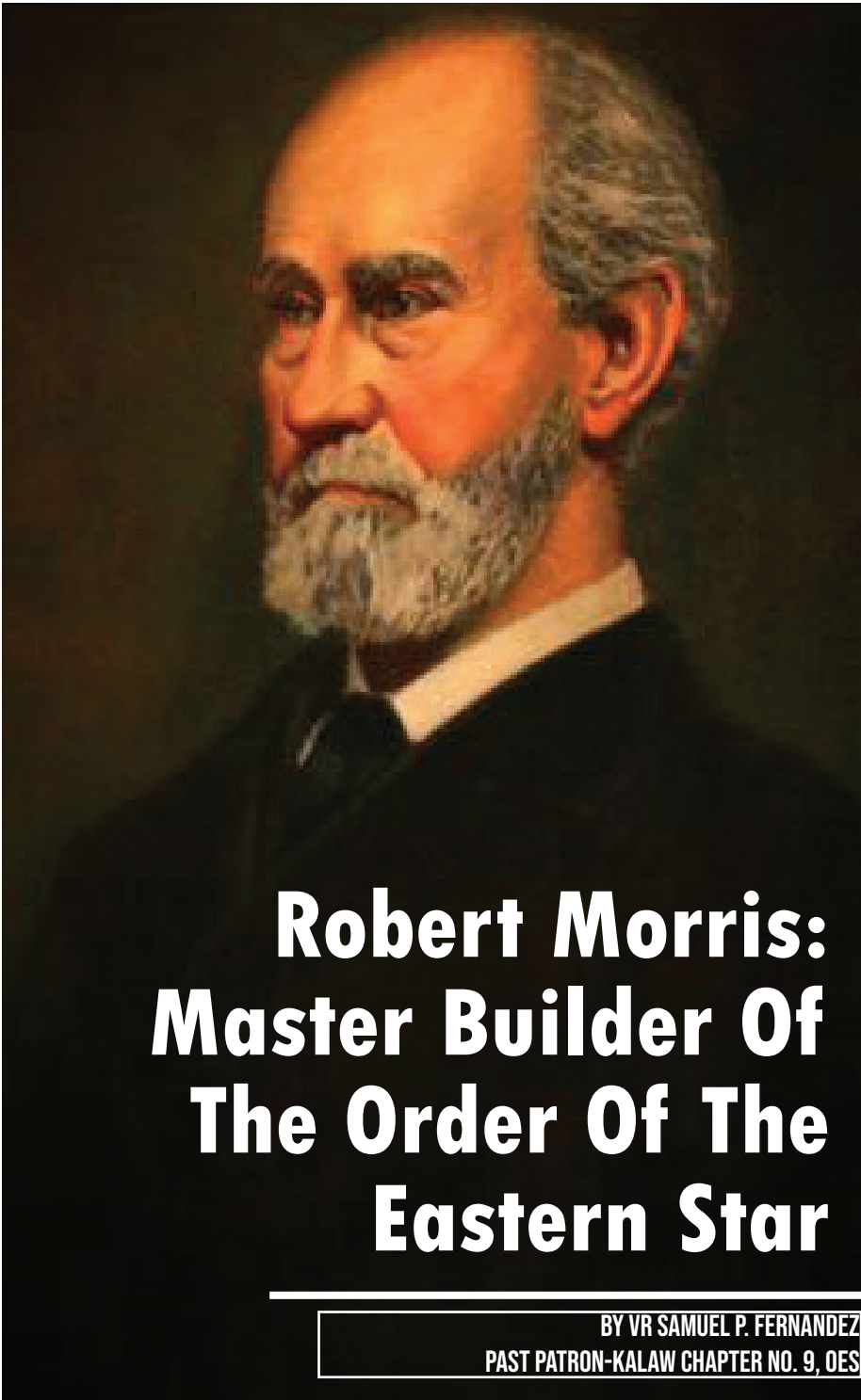
“The life of Brother Morris was an active and untiring for the benefit of the Institution of Freemasonry, that he had the opportunity of filling very many positions in all the departments of Freemasonry, and was Grand Master of Freemasons of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky in 1858-59. His service to the Order of the Eastern Star was devoted and valuable. He was also an organizer of the Conservators, Brethren who aroused much interest and some resentment over proposed changes and standardization of Masonic ceremonies. His writings cover Masonic jurisprudence, rituals and handbooks, Masonic belles-letters, history and biography, travels and contributions to the *Review*, *Keystone*, *Advocate*, *New York Dispatch* and other papers and periodicals. His Masonic songs and poetic effusions stand out prominently.”

Few Brethren in our fraternal association can equal the exceeding energies which Bro. Morris gave to our Fraternity. Bro. Morris led a busy life with Masonic focus. He founded and organized the Order of the Eastern Star, an organization that reaches out to our wives and relatives, who otherwise will be in perpetual darkness as to our Masonic creed and conviction. Bro. Morris wrote in 1854:

“First in the array of Adoptive Degrees, highest in the ranks of brilliant and impressive though, comes the Eastern Star, with its fixed points of Jephthah’s Daughter, Ruth, Esther, Martha, and Electa. Those who have heard our lectures in different sections of the United States are aware that we value it both for what it has done and for its future promise. We have personally communicated The Eastern Star to more than three thousand ladies, the wives, daughters, sisters and widows of Master Masons. The degree is never communicated as from man to man – to impart it at all requires the consent and presence of five or more ladies who must be, if unmarried, at least 18 years of age. This degree is of French extraction, and has all the embellishments of that fanciful race. It is properly conferred in a regular organization styled a Constellation, which in its American form will shortly be placed before the public – when generally adopted in our fraternity, as we doubt not it will be, it will add greatly to the practical importance of the degree.”

Bro. Morris partly got his inspiration from Bro. William H. Stevens. In 1874, Bro. Morris wrote:

“When I was initiated into Masonry in 1846, I received my Third Degree from Brother William H. Stevens, afterward Grand Master of Mississippi. He was a Mason of considerable ability, burning zeal, and a warm advocate of Ladies’ Masonry. In 1847, he conferred upon Mrs. Morris and myself the Degree of Heroine of Jericho; and from him I acquired my first appetite for this whole system of Adoptive Masonry.”



Robert Morris: Master Builder Of The Order Of The Eastern Star

BY VR SAMUEL P. FERNANDEZ
PAST PATRON-KALAW CHAPTER NO. 9, OES

TWO BIRTHS

Dr. Morris was born on August 31, 1818 in Massachusetts. He spent his academic formation in New York. A successful lawyer, pulpit minister, Masonic instructor, and writer, he devoted many years in research and creative writing.

Bro. Morris wrote valuable works on Masonry, among them, *The Lights and Shadows of Masonry*, and *Free Masonry in the Holy Land*, which was a result of his travel to Syria, Damascus, Joppa and Jerusalem. It was while sitting on the shores of Galilee that he wrote the song, "Memories of Galilee." After his second trip to the Holy Land Bro. Morris wrote: *Free Masons' Monitor*, *Eastern Star Manual*, *Rosary of the Eastern Star*, *Funeral Book of Freemasonry*, and many others. The first ritual containing Eastern Star degrees under the authority of Dr. Morris was published in 1855. He contributed articles in practically all Masonic publications.

Bro. Morris wrote more than four hundred (400) poems. It was while sitting on a fallen tree near his home that he wrote his most famous Masonic poem, *The Level and the Square*. Let's meditate on his wisdom:

THE LEVEL AND THE SQUARE

We meet upon the Level and we part
upon the Square.

What words of precious meaning,
those words Masonic are!

Come, let us contemplate them!

They are worthy of a thought;
In the very walls of Masonry the
sentiment is wrought.

We meet upon the Level, though
from every station come.

The rich man from his palace and

the poor man from his home;
For the rich must leave his wealth
and state outside the Mason's door,
And the poor man finds his best
respect upon the Checkered Floor.

We act upon the Plumb – 'tis the
orders of our Guide.

We walk upright in virtue's way and
lean to neither side;

The All-Seeing Eye that reads our
hearts doth bear us witness true
That we still try to honor God and
give each man his due.

We part upon the Square, for the
world must have its due;

We mingle with the multitude, a
faithful band and true,
But the influence of our gatherings
in memory is green,
And we long upon the Level to
renew the happy scene.

There's a world where all are equal –
we are hurrying toward it fast,

We shall meet upon the Level there
when the gates of Death are past;

We shall stand before the Orient,
and our Master will be there

To try the blocks we offer with His
own unerring Square.

We shall meet upon the Level there,
but never thence depart.

There's a Mansion – 'tis all ready for
each trusting, faithful heart.

There's a Mansion, and a welcome,
and multitude is there

Who have met upon the Level and
been tried upon the Square.

Let us meet upon the Level, then
while laboring patient here;

Let us meet and let us labor, though
the labor be severe;

Already in the Western sky the signs
bid us prepare
To gather up our Working Tools and
part upon the Square.

Hands round, ye faithful
Brotherhood, the bright fraternal
Chain.
We part upon the Square below to
meet in Heaven again!
What words of precious meaning,
those words Masonic are –
We meet upon the Level and we part
upon the Square.

Bro. Morris' second birth was when he became a Master Mason at Gathright Lodge No. 33 in Oxford, Mississippi on March 5, 1846. He was then President of Mt. Sylvan Academy.

Bro. Morris began to explore the idea of how to share the knowledge and wisdom of our fraternal Order. He wrote:

“Our mothers, sisters and daughters, cannot, it is true, be admitted to share the grand mysteries of Freemasonry, but there is no reason why there should be also a Masonry for them, which may not merely enable them to make themselves known to Masons, and so obtain assistance and protection, but by means of which, acting in concert through the tie of association and mutual obligation, they may cooperate in the great labors of Masonry by assisting in, and in some respects, directing their charities, and toiling in the cause of human progress.”

Mrs. Charlotte Mendenhall Morris, wife, inspiration and helpmate of Dr. Morris for nearly 50 years, assisted him in all his Masonic endeavors.

Purity Chapter No. 1, the first Eastern Star Chapter was established at the Union Church, where he also organized the Masonic Lodge.

The first Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star was organized in Michigan in 1887, and since that time the Order has encircled the earth. Chapters have been organized, subordinate to the General Grand Chapter, in Alaska, Aruba, Bermuda, Taiwan, Panama, Germany, Guam, Hawaii, Japan, Mexico, Okinawa, Italy, Philippines and Saudi Arabia.

The General Grand Chapter bestowed on Dr. Morris the title of Master Builder of the Order of the Eastern Star in 1880. The same General Grand Chapter set apart August 31, the birthday of Dr. Morris, as a Festal Day of the Order of the Eastern Star, to be observed by having a special program.

MW Rob Morris served as Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Kentucky in 1858-1859. He drafted the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky in 1860.

MW Morris passed through the chairs of the Royal Arch Chapter, Council and Commandery and was considered one of the most versatile learned scholars of his day.

MW Morris was conferred the Degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Laws later in his life for his monumental works in Freemasonry.

The zenith of Dr. Morris' outstanding and extraordinary life occurred in 1884 when 500,000 Master Masons throughout the world expressed their desire that Dr. Morris be crowned the laurel wreath symbolizing Poet Laureate of Masonry.

The Cable Tow Centennial Edition Vol. 100 No. 2

Bro. Morris was conferred the honor of Poet Laureate before the presence of seven hundred (700) dignitaries and admiring Brethren, one hundred years after the first Poet Laureate, Robert Burns, received a similar honor.

There are other independent Grand Chapters around the world, a tribute to the vision of Rob Morris which has multiplied in the hearts of his Brethren and Mason relatives to spread the tenets of "Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth."

Bro. Morris has gone to his reward. But before crossing the Great Divide, he wrote a note to his friend, Bro. H.B. Grant, thus: "I have composed this poem as under the shadow of impending death. I have made a few copies and sent them to particular friends only, asking that they should not be published, or any public use made of them, until I am gone."

Meditate on this message with a poetic outpouring on Bro. Rob Morris' dedication to Freemasonry.

A MESSAGE FROM THE GRAVE

Brothers in June or in December,
Honoring the memory of the dear
St. John,

Then let some kind participant
remember
The name of him who wrote this but
is gone;
Let some kind brother rise, while all
are silent,
And with deep pathos and fond
friendship say;
He is a Mason, gentle, true, not
violent,
And loved old things that do not
pass away.

He loved his friends, in them his

heart found anchor,
Bound in affection as with books of
steel;

As for his foes, he be few signs of
rancor,
But bore their slanders patiently and
well.

He loved to make in simple verse
that rhyming
Where ancient signs and emblems
smoothly lie,
Where deeds of brother love and
truth are chiming,
And Masonry is wed to poetry.

He loved the word of God; its hopes
eternal
Grew sweeter as the end of life drew
nigh;

A sinful man, but saved by Grace
supernal,
Trusting in Christ, he dreaded not
to die

At times a cloud the promises
disguising
And deep humility obscured the
scene
But the bright Sun of Righteousness
uprising
Dispelled the gloom and warmed his
soul again.

He gave the widows and the orphans
duly
A portion of his hard-earned scanty
store,

And though the amount might seem
but trifling truly,
He gave so cheerfully it seemed the
more

His heart was in his work, to Build
the Temple
In fervency he toiled through many
years,

To "build the temple" spiritual and
mental,

The Cable Tow Centennial Edition Vol. 100 No. 2

He triumphs now – is freed from
toils and tears.

He's gone; the problem that so long
he studied,
That mystery of “the world to come”
profound

Is solved; his tree of life which only
budded,
Bears now full harvest in Celestial
Ground.

In his Great Presence, with the
wearied resting
He has his wages and is well content.
Brothers, in silence stand; your love
attesting –

This is the word your dying brother sent.

Bro. Morris welcomed Death not as
a tyrant, but as a kind messenger to
translate us from this imperfect world
to that perfect celestial Lodge above. He
died to live in the hearts of his Fraternal
Brethren and relatives who cherish the
tenets and virtues of Masonry.

GRAND CHAPTER OF THE
PHILIPPINES,
Order of the Eastern Star

The Most Worthy Grand Matron
and the Most Worthy Grand Patron
of the General Grand Chapter, whose
see is in Washington D.C., will
personally come over to Manila to
preside in the Constitution of the
Grand Chapter of the Philippines, Order
of the Eastern Star, on February 27,
2024, together with other Past Grand
Matrons and Past Grand Patrons
from the USA. The installation of the
first set of officers will immediately
follow.

Elected during the National Convention
of subordinate Chapters held in Davao
City on April 21-23, 2023, are the
following top eight officers:

Worthy Grand Matron
Remedios M. Azarcon
Teodora Alonzo Chapter No. 4

Worthy Grand Patron
Jose SP Redor
Kalaw Chapter No. 9

Associate Grand Matron
Corazon Tandoc
Mayon Chapter No. 1

Associate Grand Patron
Edward Y. Chua
Morning Star Chapter No. 12

Grand Secretary
Alma A. Alterado
Teodora Alonzo Chapter No. 4

Grand Treasurer
Maria Teresa A. Fajardo
Mayon Chapter No. 1

Grand Conductress
Minerva M. Santiago
Morning Star Chapter No. 12

Grand Associate Conductress
Maria Rosario C. Cabrerros
Maria Cristina Chap No. 13

With the formation of the Grand
Chapter of the Philippines, we anticipate
Brother Masons to join with their
wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, and
other female relatives. We foresee the
interest and involvement of Brethren to
encourage and bring their Atengs to be
OES members.

Let not Bro. Robert Morris' works and
efforts be in vain. Bro. Rob Morris will
live in the hearts of his Fraternal Brethren
and relatives who cherish the tenets and
virtues of Masonry.



THE FINAL WORD FROM THE GRAND MASTER MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING

YULETIDE GREETINGS, MY BRETHREN!

God-willing and through the efforts of its very able staff, the second edition of our 100-year old official publication, *The Cable Tow*, will be released and ready for distribution to the various subordinate lodges.

During the same time, the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines will be celebrating its 111th founding anniversary---adding yet another chapter in its fabled history.

For the past few months, your Grand Lodge team have been diligently laboring towards the betterment of the Craft as well as instituting changes which we believe will inure to the benefit of our members as well as to other masonic stakeholders.

The process has never been easy yet your GLP team has been up to task so far. While recent developments and circumstances may have constrained us to take hard and difficult paths, our undertakings are meant towards the realization of my vision: to build temples inside the hearts of men with our brethren.

Thus, I enjoin our brethren to be temple-builders themselves and labor towards improving oneself in Freemasonry and become better men.

And that is after all, the real mission of Freemasonry.



MW DON TERNG RAMAS-UYPITCHING
Grand Master of Mason