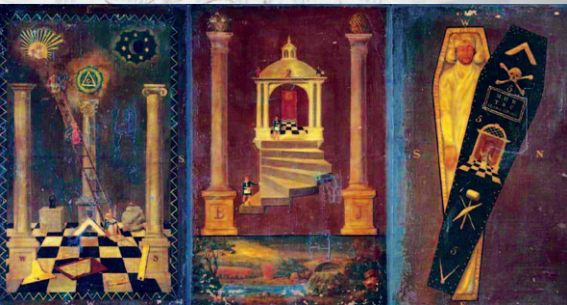


To THE
Right Hon: the Lord King
 Grand Master



The legend of Hiram
 18th century Allegorical painting

all Regular Lodges of y and



ABOUT THE SACRED IN AND AROUND FREEMASONRY

PIERRE NOËL

SUPREME COUNCIL OF BELGIUM

Some like to repeat that the sacred is the specific dimension of regular Masonry while the *circulation of the word* is emblematic of a masonry embedded in the so-called real world. True or false, I will not dilate on the debate but content myself with considering Masons *at work within the boundaries of Sacred*. In this context, the relationship of Freemasonry and religion cannot be ignored, all the more that it seems so important to many, either to extol or to minimize it. I will thus ask the mandatory question but answer it in a quick and very incomplete manner, so that it can carefully be put onto a shelf and let to its dreams!

As the founders of anthropology, of which Durkheim summarized the lesson, have shown, a religion among many other things is a system of interdicts and collective rites, entailing a clear separation between the profane and the sacred which, in various forms, seems to have a universal extension:

"What is characteristic of the religious phenomenon is that it always supposes a bipartite division of the known and knowable universe into two kinds which comprehends all that exists, but which are mutually exclusive. [Durkheim, Les formes élémentaires de la religion, 1912, p. 36].

In this sense, Masonry meets Durkheim's definition since it presupposes a two-fold division of the universe, the everyday life's world on one hand, with its hazards, vagaries and dangers, and the organized, closed, reassuring initiate's world on the other.

This definition leaves entirely aside the affective and personal aspect of religion, the direct relation of the individual to what he conceives as divine or as a manifestation of a possible transcendence. In this sense, Masonry does not fall under what is commonly understood by religion. It does not offer either the assurance of a life after death as the religions of salvation do (JB Willermoz tried to alleviate this want by the quasi-magic practices of the Elus Coens and the inspired slumbers of the mediums', seeking therein a material sign from the intermediate spirits, the proof of eternal life and the assurance of his own salvation) or any real mystic experience in the standard Masonic practices (which led the truly religious Saint Martin losing interest in the ritual experiences of his youth and abandoning all Masonic practice in the second part of his life).

1 - Les *Sommeils* de Jean-Baptiste Willermoz. Une étude de Emile Dermenghen, 1926. pp.96-103.



REFLECTIONS ON THE INITIATORY PATH AS A SPIRITUAL WAY

Preparing the road, not only for oneself but also for all those who are going to follow, such is the aim of the initiatory journey

JACQUES-NOËL PÉRÈS

FRENCH LUTHERAN THEOLOGIAN
HONORARY PROFESSOR OF PATRISTIC
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CHURCH AT THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

More than thirty years ago now, I published a work in the 10th number of Research Works of the National Lodge - Villard de Honnecourt, in which I highlighted the double path that the Freemason commits to by practicing the Royal Art. In referring to the two Saints John, both honoured in masonic rituals, I drew attention to the fact that Freemasonry with the Baptist, also called the "Precursor", invites one to follow the initiatory path and, with the Evangelist to follow the mystical path¹. I do not want to go over again what I said and, without recanting it in any way, I would like, over the next pages, to come back to the initiatory path. While paying attention to this path, I do not mean to neglect the other. However, it seems important to underline, today, as we are invited to reflect on the spiritual path, how much initiation and spirituality go together.

1 - Discovery and self-discovery

What do we see on each initiatory evening in each of our Lodges. A man embarks and successfully completes three journeys. The circumambulations to which he is subjected – and, let's admit it he subjects himself willingly – have never been a simple stroll, the difficulties of the path are enough to prove this. If, in certain rites, such as the Emulation Rite, the tests that he undergoes consist mainly in being able to answer certain questions, helped in this, it is true, by the Second Expert, in other rites, such as the French Rite, to mention only this one, the hazards to be overcome are much more physical. It is true to say, as did Arnauld d'Abbadie d'Arrast²:

"Being used to perilous situations tends to liberate man from the intoxication that is provoked by danger."

1 - PÉRÈS Jacques-Noël, *La Franc-Maçonnerie, voie initiatique et voie mystique in Travaux de la Loge Nationale de recherche Villard de Honnecourt n° 10*, éd. GLNF, Paris 1985, pp. 31-37

2 - ABBADIE D'ARRAST Arnauld d', *Douze ans de séjour dans la Haute-Éthiopie*, Hachette, Paris 1868, p. 4

To THE
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our modern society. This society, in itself, functions in the gap between the values put forward by each person, the first-tutors themselves and their practically realties in behavior and actions; this gap can reveal itself to be an abyss. The one must understand that the one who is suggested, the initiated, she, to be able to realize the principles and the values that the rite itself imposes, as a terrestrial Jerusalem from there later and astly to hope to reach the celestial Jerusalem which enlightens the revelation of truth so looked for in Masonry — because everything comes from above — in the search for what we

ed. Guy Fredaniel Paris, 1996, pp.126-127.

here is a quotation from the metaphysicist Louis Lavelle (2); he instructs and, above all, inspires us in how to conduct ourselves in order



SEARCHING FOR A LOST ETHIC

"Only the forces of love allow for mutations"

[Ct, 8, 6]

ANNICK DE SOUZENELLE
AUTHOR, ACADEMIC AND THEOLOGIAN

The upheaval which led me to take to the pen fifty years ago, when I saw the superposition in Roman basilicas and orthodox chapels, of the drawing of the tree of Sephiroth and that of Christ in glory, this same upheaval has now seized my pen again today. This pen will only stop speaking with my last breath!

At this first stage, discovering the intimacy of Man with Our Lord, I never thought that this attempt to lift the veil was going to give birth to a completely new Christian anthropology which seeks to take form in order to reply to the growing demands of man in his quest for meaning. Before now more than one tsunami had come to defeat me so that my life had meaning but the one which is multiplying and engaging in the deconstruction of the world at the moment, calls for real questions. If the body of man and that of his Lord are united in an intimate dialogue, matter and spirit are as well. Our quantic physicists have confirmed this point. This is why I purposely use the word "tsunami" to designate the illness of the great adamic body that are man and the world in which he lives. This illness is known to the Lord only, since he is affected in his own body. In the same way, He is alone in knowing the cause and the key to its cure.

1 - Let's question the sacred texts

The day of the gigantic tidal wave in Japan, the waters came to cover the earth and, like a monster, they devoured all that was life.

In the Bible the psalmist praising God is amazed that [Ps 104, 9]:

"He set a boundary that they may not pass so that they might not again cover the earth"

In this quotation "earth" is the Hebrew substantive designating the waters dried upon divine order on the third day of Genesis; in the light of this and given the fact that the act of creation in its principle and not at its beginning,



Dschami, Haft Aurang, the Seven Thrones
(1468-1486) in Mechhed or Tabriz
Washington Art Gallery



THE GROTTA AND THE EXPERIENCE OF HOLINESS IN ISLAM AND SUFISM

"The mirror of the heart reveals itself by means of retreat, by invocation, by fasting, by ritual purity, by silence, by rejecting conscious thought, by the initiatory link and the confirmation of Unity."

THIERRY ZARCONÉ

HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR
RESEARCH DIRECTOR AT THE CNRS

Numerous religious traditions teach that the first great meetings of man and the sacred took place in mountain grottos and caves. These special places constitute a frontier between the visible and the invisible worlds, be they heavenly or chthonian and it is only caves and the hidden creatures who shelter there which inspire the feeling of terror (*tremendum*) and fascination (*fascinans*) – to quote Rudolf Otto in 1917 (*Das Heilige, The Sacred*) – and where the origin of the sacred can be found.

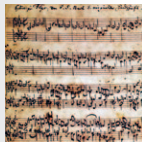
The invisible is the world of spirits or Death. The ascetic, the sage or the shaman, whatever be his cult or his religion, is a communication specialist between the world of man and that of incorporeal beings. He knows how to question the dead, how to become close to certain spirits and to ally with them to fight against evil spirits which afflict the living. Above all he knows how to move among the invisible¹. However, to come into contact with spirits and the dead, to be able to move in their space, one has to have learnt to die and be reborn; to die in this world to accede to the plane of existence of incorporeal beings, then to be reborn in order to return amongst his own people. This death and rebirth later gave their structure to the so-called initiatory societies which do their utmost to enable those who join them to discover this experience. Thus it is astonishing that a grotto or similar space – an underground passage, a cellar for example – were chosen as the place for the death-rebirth rituals, as was the case, amongst others, of the spelaeum of Antiquity where the Mithra initiations took place.

1 - I have qualified this primary sacredness as "pre-religious sacredness" since it precedes the major religious systems. Cf. ZARCONÉ Thierry and HOBART Angela (eds) *Pilgrimage and Abiguity. Sharing the Sacred*, London, S. Kingston; 2017, introductionpp. 2-6.



Harmony

Johannes Kepler, universe model
from the five polyhedra Plato's regulars,
in *Mysterium Cosmographicum* (1596)



A SYMBOLIC WAY, THE MUSIC

*A bridge between divinity and man,
as an earthly manifestation
of divine order*

OLIVIER PINO
PIANIST AND MUSICIAN
EDUCATIONALIST AND MUSICOLOGIST

Because of its immaterial nature and its emotional power, music has always had a special position in relation to the other arts. Because its essence is spiritual, music has long been thought to be esoteric, symbolic and divine; the other arts, painting, literature, architecture will not always reach this level.

Considered as a bridge between divinity and man, as an earthly expression of divine order, music most often has its effect in a special context, whether it be religious, magical, spiritual or processional, etc.

It is not enough for music to be an art which charms our senses, through the powerful sensations of its rhythm, its melody or its harmony, it is also an art of emotion.

Over thousands of years music has been performed, mostly in a special context, with strong initiatory, religious, prophetic, political or festive connotations. Music as a spiritual path is linked to the ancient idea of reproducing numerical concepts contained in the cosmos, with the help of sound and rhythm.

In these pages we are going to try to study the musical concepts which have reigned since ancient times and to which we are the unconscious heirs. At the end of this article we will look at a few special cases which provide evidence of this ancestral inheritance.

I - Definition and characteristics

It is indeed difficult to define the word "music", since, for many of us, it refers to a meaning which often involves personal judgement.

TO THE



The Almoner

Monumental sculpture in wood
early 18th century

All the pictures of this article represent objects from the Museum
of the Grande Loge Nationale Française



A SYMBOL PATH THROUGH MASONICS OBJETS

MARC-HENRI CASSAGNE

ESSAYIST AND LECTURER
ASSISTANT CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM
OF THE GRANDE LOGE NATIONALE
FRANÇAISE

The subject of this paper is the masonic object, but this is also the object of this paper, because we are less going to establish a list of masonic objects, their history and evolution than to ask ourselves about the masonic object in his essence. We will look at the masonic object and its identity as an object but also at its characterization as "masonic", which we will call it "masonicity". What is it that gives a masonic object its "masonicity"?

When the hoodwink is removed, come to light the first manifestation of the masonic Dispositive, understand as an organized structured complex present in the space and the temporality of masonic rituals and ceremonies. It is truly an organized, structured, even regulated ensemble which presents itself in this somewhat limited space of the Lodge. The eye will then behold a sum of objects, spread around, that will firstly only be under his gaze *[ob-jectum]* and perceived, in his globality. In the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, the first individualisation to take place within the manifestation of the masonic Dispositive is when the Worshipful Master asks the new Apprentice to see whether there is an "old enemy" amongst those present in the Chain of Union.. This question corresponds in fact, to a first phase in the differentiation of beings to be seen by the Apprentice.

This global manifestation of the masonic Dispositive makes world, not in the sense of *κοσμος* (the All of Being) but in the sense of what can be seen, what surrounds us, in the same way as one speaks of *the Little World of Don Camillo* (French movie). Masonry makes world in the way it is defined in the French *Littre* dictionary: *"all that we notice of space, of bodies, of beings, and named thus because of the arrangement and the regularity which reigns".*