

300 Years of Freemasonry: **Impact of the Craft in Civil Society**

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Outline

- Origins & Relevance
- Historical Overview
- Freemasons and Civil Society
- Freemasonry and Academia
- Example of masonic research
- Conclusions

Background

- Last year (1717) Freemasonry arrived to its 300th anniversary.
- On June 24, 1717, four London lodges met to create the first Grand Lodge.
- Some recent researchers doubt this date.
- Before that, Masonic Lodges had existed, but operated independently of each other.
- Even before that, Masonic Lodges existed for Operative Masons, and allowed Speculative Masons (e.g. Elias Ashmole: 1649)

The Four Founding Lodges

- Four existing Lodges gathered at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house in St. Paul's Church-yard in London and constituted themselves as Grand Lodge
- All four lodges were simply named after the public houses where they were accustomed to meet:
- 1) at the *Goose and Gridiron Ale-house* in St. Paul's Church-yard (now called *Lodge of Antiquity No. 2*);
- 2) at the *Crown Ale-house* in Parker's Lane off Drury Lane;
- 3) at the *Apple-Tree Tavern* in Charles Street, [Covent Garden](#) (now called *Lodge of Fortitude and Old Cumberland No. 12*);
- 4) at the *Rummer and Grapes Tavern* in Channel Row, Westminster (now called *Royal Somerset House and Inverness Lodge No. IV*).

The Movement Leaders

- Jean (John) Desaguliers (GM in 1719)
- James Anderson (Constitutions of 1723)
- George Payne (GM in 1718, 1720)
- Pro-Hanoverian Dynasty & Whig politics
 - Opposed return of King James' Descendants
 - Overthrown by the Glorious Revolution (1688)
- Martin Folkes, Alex Chocke, John Beale, etc.
 - Fostered the Enlightenment ideals

New Features of Freemasonry

- The New Grand Lodge provided Freemasonry:
- With a formal structure,
 - common rules,
 - visitation rights
 - a modern philosophy:
- **And the Enlightenment.**
- It was the beginnings of modern Civil Society.

Revolutionary concepts for their time

- Men were assessed by their merits, and not by their wealth or social status.
- Lodge leadership was elected –not hereditary.
- Members observed religious tolerance.
- Such ideas had a strong impact in developing modern Western thought, as well as in the history of Europe and The Americas.

What are the Freemasons?

- “The Institution of morality”
 - ‘To make some good men, better.’
- Independent of the government
- Discourages partisan politics or religion
- Admits adult men of all races, professions,
 - Political persuasions, religions, class, etc.
- Based on tolerance and brotherhood

Civil Society is:

- A continuum -not a “dichotomy”
 - It always exists, in some form or degree
- Groups are Independent from the state
- Not necessarily antagonistic to the state
 - Pro, against, and indifferent to establishment
- Not necessarily politically motivated
 - Also cultural, sports, social, religious, etc.
- **A strong indicator of a free society**

Freemasons' Contributions to Civil Society

- Incubators of Citizens
 - Independent thinkers
- Incubators of new Ideas
 - Open discussions; environment of respect
- Increases “Social Capital”
 - Interaction between different groups/social strata
- Tolerance and Acceptance
 - Of new/different ways of thinking
- Democratic rules and procedures
 - Election of leaders and judicial system

XVIII Century: England, France, Dutch Republic, America

- Jacobites => moved to France
 - French colonies (Etienne Morin/Haiti)
 - French Revolution Ideals (1789)
- The Dutch Republic (King William)
 - Seamen and merchants
- The Rest of Continental Europe
- England => to American Colonies:
 - United States (First Lodges)
 - Jamaica (Francken in Albany)

The XIX Century

- Freemasonry in the American Continent
 - The US independence from England
 - Caribbean: Haiti and the Slave Revolution
 - Spanish Colonies: Caribbean & So. America
 - The Scottish Rite: Louisiana & Charleston
- Freemasonry in Continental Europe
 - France, Spain, Italy
- Freemasonry in the Rest of the World

Assessment of Margaret Jacobs*

- First and foremost, Lodges were schools of government (p. 124)
- (Lodges foster) the creation of constitutionally governed civil societies (p.135)
- Lodges were spaces in a new zone of civil society (p. 57)
- Merit should be the sole criterion for status within the Lodge (p. 56)
- Promotion within the lodge grounded upon “real worth and personal merit only” (p. 54)

(*) Jacob, Margaret. *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasons and Politics in XVIII Century Europe*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Freemasonry in the XX Century

- In the First Half of the Century
 - Growth of The Craft
 - The two World Wars
- In the Second Half of the Century
 - Stabilization of Membership
 - Then, Decay of Membership
- The Future: renewal efforts

Freemasonry as an Academic Topic

- **CEHME** (a European academic organization) holds an international meeting every three years (the last one, in Gijon, Spain; the next one in Lisbon, Portugal).
- **REHMLAC** (its sister Latin American academic organization) also holds similar meetings (the last one in the University of Havana, Cuba).
- **UCLA** History Dept. has held seminars in 2011 and 2012, among other US academic institutions.
- Many PhD dissertations are been submitted, in the US, Europe and Latin America, on Masonic topics.

English Speaking Forums

American Lodge of Research (ALR)

<https://www.facebook.com/americanlodgeofresearch/>

Western New York Lodge of Research

<http://wnylodgeofresearch.us/>

Livingston Library/Grand Lodge of New York

<https://nymasoniclibrary.org/>

Library/Grand Lodge of Iowa

<http://grandlodgeofiowa.org/library-2/#/77/1750>

Ars Quatuor Coronatorum Web Page

<https://www.quatuorcoronati.com/>

UCLA : Simposium - 2011

<http://www.victorguerra.net/2013/02/2-conferencia-internacional-sobre.html>

Spanish Speaking Forums

Logia Bloise de Investigacion/GLSPR

<http://www.opusartis.net/RLIJGB113/Portal.html>

Gran Logia Soberana de Puerto Rico

<http://www.granlogiapr.org/>

Gran Logia de Cuba

<http://www.granlogiacuba.org/node/1021>

CEHME

<http://www2.uned.es/dpto-hdi/museovirtualhistoriamasoneria/0/cehme/cehme.htm>

REHMLA C

<https://revistas.ucr.ac.cr/index.php/rehmlac>

Masoneria en Asturias

<http://www.asturmason.net/search/label/Ivan%20Pozuelo%20Andr%C3%A9s>

Other Forums

Simposium de Cuba 2007

<http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00008953/00001/citation>

Simposium UNAM – Mexico 2010

<http://www.historicas.unam.mx/eventos/2010/masoneria.html>

Simposium de Costa Rica 2015

<http://ivsimposiohistoriamasoneriaucr.blogspot.com/>

<https://www.ucr.ac.cr/noticias/2015/10/29/simposio-tras-los-pasos-de-la-masoneria-y-sus-aportes.html>

<http://revistas.ucr.ac.cr/index.php/rehmlac/article/view/22769/23164>

Simposium de La Habana 2017

<http://www.tiempodehistoria.com/2016/12/05/el-v-simposio-internacional-de-historia-de-la-masoneria-latinoamericana-y-caribena-en-la-habana-del-26-al-30-de-junio-de-2017.html>

Research in XIX Century Spanish Caribbean (Romeu*)

- ***Connecting*** Function:
 - establish contacts/interact
- ***Spreading*** Function:
 - discuss the new ideas
- ***Incubator*** Function:
 - create new organizations
- ***School of Leaders***
 - In the Spanish Caribbean

(*) Romeu, J.L. *Cuban Freemasons: Analysis of a Unique Niche. Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*: Vol. 127 (2014; pp. 217+)

Freemasons and Political Leadership (*)

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| | | Factor A: | Masons | |
| Factor B: | | Not Masons | Masons | Total Factor-B |
| Participation in Autonomic | Outside the Governm ent | Persons not in the government, nor masons | Masons Outside the Governm ent | Total Outside the Governmen t |
| Puertorrican Politics | In the Governm ent | Not Masons inside the government | Masons inside the governme nt | Total of Governmen t Secretaries |
| | Total Factor-A | Total of Non Masons | Total of Masones | General Total |

(*) Romeu, J.L. and L. Otero. *Statistics in Support of Masonic Historical Studies*. **ASA/JSM Proceedings of Social Statistics**. (Baltimore, MD. 2017) & *Revista Estadística; Inter-American Institute (IASI)*

Contingency Table Results:

Observed/Expected

| | Factor A: | Masons | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Factor B: Leadership | Not Masons | Masons | Total-B |
| Outside the Govment. | 6997/6992.3 | 2992/2996.7 | 9989 |
| Paart of Govment. | 3/7.7 | 8/3.3 | 11 |
| Total-A | 7000 | 3000 | 10000 |

The Statistical Analysis Shows:

A Strong Association between Leadership and Membership in Freemasonry

The number of Leaders in the Autonomic Movement is much larger than the size corresponding to Number of Masons.

Conclusions

- **GL of Cuba & GLS of Puerto Rico**
 - were true Schools of Leadership
- **Contribution of *Authoctonomous* Freemasons**
 - To Cuban/Puertorrican autonomy
 - Is incontrovertible.

Thank-You

Questions?