

# RENE GUENON & DENYS ROMAN

~ CORRESPONDENCE ~



# **BERSERKER**

---

## **BOOKS**

---



## RENÉ GUÉNON: 25 LETTERS TO DENYS ROMAN (MARCEL MAUGY)\*

25-3-1948; 3-5-1948; 21-6-1948; 31-7-1948; 31-8-1948; 16-9-1948; 30-9-1948; 8-10-1948; 19-10-1948; 5-11-1948; 26-12-1948; 13-1-1949; 23-1-1949; 12-3-1949; 30-4-1949; 14-5-1949; 10-6-1949; 8-9-1949; 11-11-1949; 6-12-1949; 6-3-1950; 4-6-1950; 4-7-1950; 24-7-1950; 14-9-1950

\*  
\*      \*

### Letter of 25 March 1948.

Cairo, 25 March 1948. Dearest

Brother,

I learned a few days ago from Brother Maridort that my reply to your letter had never reached you; as that dates back to the end of December, there may no longer be any occasion for you to receive it, and I have also ascertained that there were other letters which had gone astray about the same time. This is all the more annoying as I can no longer remember exactly all that I said to you; but I intended to try to remember again at least the gist of it, when your letter of the 16th March reached me the day before yesterday.

I have also learned from Brother Maridort that you are going to receive the degree of Companion without further delay, and I even believe that it should be today. I am very happy about this news, and I can only hope that the deadlines<sup>1</sup> can also be shortened, which would mean an advance of almost a year; I think more and more that, for many reasons, it would be in your best interest to have all three of you as soon as possible....

Brother Maridort also communicated to me the information that you had sent him concerning J. B.<sup>2</sup> and the Chéops Lodge; there are some rather special things in all this, and especially this story of the Ritual of the "Three Lights", which seems to me to involve some rather fanciful innovations, which, moreover, does not surprise me if it is really by J. Chaboseau as has been said; there are things in all this that it would be good to clarify if possible.

Another thing not to forget: Brother Mordvinoff, the last time he wrote to me, gave me the list of the Officers, but, as he sometimes distorts the proper names, I have not been able to understand which is that of the 2nd Vig. Would you please tell me? I have also made an observation about this list: have not the functions of the Deacons, which are considered to be of great importance in the English Mas.°, been re-established in the Grand Triad, as they were in the past in Thebah<sup>3</sup>? I would also like, for a similar reason, to ask you where the 2nd Vig. sits: this is a point which could lead to changes.

---

<sup>1</sup>In the original French there are some Masonic characters which in this translation have been replaced by the ordinary letters. N. of the T.

<sup>2</sup>For the degree of Master. N. of T.

<sup>3</sup>Probably Jules Boucher, author of *La Symbolique Maçonnique*. N. of the T.

<sup>4</sup>Loge Thébah No. 347, of the Grand Lodge of France, to which the author belonged. N. of the T.

especially in the opening ritual; if you do not know the one that was in use in Thébah, which was an adaptation of an old English operational ritual, I will have to try to find it and send you a copy.

I am a little surprised at what you tell me about the way the members of the Rituals Commission have become disinterested in their work; but, if Brother Mar<sup>4</sup> is not disheartened by it, and if the others are content to simply approve what he has done, that will perhaps indeed be the best thing, as you say; it may avoid many useless discussions, as well as unsatisfactory compromises into which one runs the risk of ending up. - It would be good if things were not delayed too long and that a result could be reached as soon as possible; I have already had requests from Italy and Lebanon about the possibility of obtaining rituals in a truly traditional spirit... But it is clear that, on the other hand, we should not rush things to the point where important questions are not examined sufficiently well.

The question of the "Table Lodge", of which you speak to me this time, is a little embarrassing, indeed; in any case it is true that the people of 1717 have attributed to it an excessive importance; but I believe nevertheless (and I see that this is also what you think) that at least some elements are to be found which are of really ancient origin and must have come from operative Freemasonry. In this respect, it seems to me that it might be good to maintain (or re-establish) it, on condition that it is not allowed to become too invasive; after initiation services, and also (I would even say above all) at solstitial feasts, that would certainly be worth much more than a profane banquet!

I now come to what you said in your previous letter, and to what I had replied in the one that has been lost. First, I fully approve of the idea of re-establishing as completely as possible certain ritual usages which have more or less fallen into disuse, for example, not only that of the Mas.<sup>5</sup> calendar of which you speak, but also that of the alphabet which many seem not to know (I have sometimes had occasion to notice this in my correspondence, even with Brothers of the higher grades); the same also for the traditional acclamation. *U. L. L.* - As for the reweaving (and I was surprised by what you say in this regard, because in my time, in the G. L. L., it was still done very seriously), it would be necessary for each Brother to be so used to it that he never has the slightest doubt when answering; this is more important than one might think in order to maintain the required state of mind. In the same vein, the three questions that the Venerable must ask visitors on entering the Lodge, and which most of them have long since ignored, should be reinstated; I remember the embarrassment they caused the Venerable of a Parisian Lodge one day when he visited a Lodge in the provinces that had kept them! In addition to such questions, there is another which is in common use in Anglo-Saxon Masonry, but which is totally unknown in France, where it would be impossible to answer it for a reason which you will see later....

I would point out incidentally the difference between the French formula "To the Glory of the Great Architect of the Universe" and the English formula "In the Name of the G. A. S. of the U. L. L."; there is something there which seems to me to be more than a simple nuance and which would certainly deserve to be studied with a little attention; it is especially in relation to the initiatory consecration that the matter is perhaps not unimportant.

Now, a particularly important point would be, if it were possible, to re-establish the picture or layout of the L. L. as it existed in the eighteenth century; but there is still another more essential point, since it is generally considered as constituting a *landmark*: it is the presence of the altar bearing the V. S. L. (Volume of the Sacred Law), represented in the West practically by the Bible, which symbolises the whole of all the sacred Scriptures, and which must regularly, as I have reminded you in the West, be represented by the Bible. L. (*Volume of the Sacred Law*), practically represented in the West by the Bible, which symbolises the whole of all the sacred Scriptures, and which must regularly, as I have recalled elsewhere in *the Aperçus*<sup>5</sup>, be open at the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John, on which

---

<sup>4</sup>It appears to be Roger Maridort. N. of the T.

<sup>5</sup>*Aperçus sur l'Initiation*, 1946. N. of the T.

the compass and the square are placed in a different position for each of the degrees. Moreover, this is what immediately answers the question to which I alluded earlier: "*And now, my Brother, can you tell us what degree we are working?*"

As far as initiation rituals are concerned, there is no doubt that it is that of the 2nd degree that will cause the most problems, as it is the one that has been most deteriorated and deformed in every way, under the pretext of "modernisation". Your idea of borrowing from *Mark Masonry* seems to me to be right in principle, for it is very likely that, originally, the particular "mark" was given to the Companion, who, in France, was sometimes also designated in the past by the name of "Expert"; moreover, you may be aware that even the *Royal Arch* is considered to have a special and more direct link with the Companion degree, even if the reasons for this are not very explicitly stated.... You also speak of the "mark" as a "*tessera*"; I suppose you mean the "*Mark Master's token*", which is a reproduction of what are called the "Temple coins", a modified reproduction in that the inscriptions are in square Hebrew, whereas on the real coins there are characters of an older form. -But, if what you are considering is perfectly admissible in principle, it would perhaps be rather difficult to realise; and, on the other hand, there is something there which seems to me even more important and which goes to the very essence, one might say, of the degree of Companion: and it is in this degree above all that the elements of Pythagorean origin must intervene, that the

The "speculative" ones have always forgotten too much, although some very clear traces remain, especially the Blazing Star and the predominance attributed to geometry (since even the Great Architect of the Universe becomes here the Great Geometer of the Universe). In my opinion, it is on this side above all that research should be directed for a correct restoration of the degree, and this would certainly be an excellent occasion to bring to light the elements in question, which, as I have once indicated in passing, really come from a regular and uninterrupted transmission, and which are therefore far from being something that is entitled to be treated as almost negligible.

I think that must be approximately what I told you, at least according to what I can remember from rereading your letter. If it is agreeable to you, as I hope it will be, to keep me informed of what will be done, I could of course add further details; perhaps you yourself will find some more particularly difficult or doubtful points to point out to me....

I just suddenly remembered that the all too famous Marquis-Rivière had reproduced the entire Thébah ritual (opening, initiation to the 1st degree and closing) as an appendix to his book *La Trahison spirituelle de la Franc-Maçonnerie*: perhaps you might find it there if you have not seen it elsewhere; in any case, it would certainly be useful for you to know about it.

I hope that next time you will think of sharing with me, as you promised, some of your reflections on various other questions. In particular, I would be very interested to know exactly what it is about certain modes of "projection" of evil influences; on the "flying chest", I have also made some observations of my own which I could also share with you. We must hope that this time there will be no new impediments to our correspondence....

Very fraternally,  
R. G.

Cairo, 3 May 1948.

Dearest Brother,

I am glad that my letter reached you safely this time; I received yours of 18 April a few days ago, and if I did not reply immediately, it is because I had first to finish my articles for the June issue of "E.T."<sup>1</sup>, for which I was rather late as usual....

It is really good news that you have decidedly obtained the waiver of the deadlines and that you will be able to receive the third degree before the holidays; this will indeed be a serious step forward!

Nobody has yet told me about the seal of the Great Triad: couldn't you send me an engraving so that I can better analyse what it is all about? Until now, I knew nothing about your 2nd Watcher either: what you have told me is, all in all, quite satisfactory, at least in a relative sense; it is inevitable that the aptitudes of some are more or less limited, and it is not necessary to be too demanding...

I am surprised that none of you have Marquès-Rivière's book, since I thought at least Clavelle must have it, but perhaps you will find it. On the other hand, it would be possible to otherwise have knowledge of the ritual in question if it is still in use in *Thébah*, which I don't know for sure. There must be, at most, only the old members left there; moreover, after the war of 1914, there was a great change, and that was certainly not in a favourable sense; it is, moreover, the reason why many stopped attending....

However, I think it would be useful for you to visit this Lodge to see what its present situation is. In this ritual you will find a definition of the function of the Deacons; what is quite remarkable is that this function, which is no doubt of operational origin, corresponds almost exactly to that of the *nuqabâ* in the Islamic *Turûq*.

On another note, the 2nd Warden naturally took his seat in the middle of the Noon Pillar, as it should normally be: the French usage is due, in short, only to the necessity of establishing a sort of false symmetry between the positions of the two Watchers. I would still point out a detail of the same ritual which is in conformity with what exists in English Masonry: the presence, above the seats of the Watchers, of a small wooden column; during the works, that of the first Watcher is raised and that of the 2nd Watcher is lowered, while when the works are finished it is the other way round.

On the question of the Bible, there are really curious things in this discussion which you have attended in the "*Réveil Masonique*"; what was said with regard to the Grand Orient would seem to indicate that, even on this side, there has been a serious change in recent years; however, I do not know how far this can go, because unfortunately there are otherwise indications of a very untraditional spirit, among other things a proposal to admit as visitors members of the Human Right, including the Sisters! I must say that, in my time, the use of the Bible had not been re-established even in *Thebah*, and perhaps the central power would not have tolerated it; at that time, in the Grand Lodge<sup>2</sup>, the use of the formula To The Glory of the Great Architect of the Universe was only optional. For the modification of the above-mentioned formula, what you propose seems to me to be very good and it would be in

---

<sup>1</sup>*Études Traditionnelles*. N. of the T.

<sup>2</sup>Grand Lodge of France. N. of the T.

The effect is to fix everything by nature. What you say about the "nostalgia for universality" is certainly true, and what is quite singular is that it seems to manifest itself especially in countries where Freemasonry is most divided (as for example in Italy). We are also very much in agreement on the questions to be put to the visitors; it remains only to know exactly how they could be introduced into the initiation ritual.

Is it the proposals for the rituals of the three degrees that will have to be submitted to the next Convent, which would really leave only very little time, or only for that of the first degree, which is certainly not the most difficult to arrange, but which nevertheless implies that questions of general order must be resolved?

The Masonic alphabet was used in correspondence (I do not believe there were ever inscriptions on the layout of the Lodge) for words that one did not wish to write "clearly" for fear of indiscretion, and also for certain abbreviated formulas, such as the final formula of letters (i.e.: I greet you, Triple Fraternal Embrace, by the mysterious names you know and with all the honours due to you). There remains a vestige of the alphabet in the sign, moreover distorted because it was thought to show the image of a "long square" when in fact it should simply be to say Lodge.

For the origin of the Scottish acclamation, what Vuillaume means, even if he has expressed it inaccurately, is related to the name of *El-Uzzâ*, a female divinity of the ancient Arabs, who would have had the acacia as her symbol (but I do not know on what this assertion is based, which seems to me rather dubious). It is much more likely that it is the word '*ezzah*', which belongs to the same root (which is also found with a prefix, in the name of the Boaz Column), and which has the meaning of glory, strength, power. I must say that there is another interpretation, which is particular to the 18th degree, according to which it is due to a deformation of the Hebrew word *Hoshi'a*, Saviour; but no doubt this is only an explanation added *after the fact*, as is often the case with many of the things found in the rituals of the higher degrees. I would still add that, in English, "*huzza*" is an acclamation employed even in the profane world; but, as the etymology is entirely unknown, this does not settle the question, and it is most likely to be no more than an "externalisation" of some thing which primitively belonged properly to the initiatory organisations; at any rate it is much more plausible than to suppose the contrary.

The pictures of the different degrees suspended on the walls mean absolutely nothing, since they are oriented according to the four cardinal points; their place can only be on the floor, in the central part of the Lodge (in the third degree, it is the coffin of Hiram that occupies this place). In the beginning, the tracing was to be done with chalk (or charcoal) before the opening of the work (I believe, without being quite sure, that it was the Wise Brother who was in charge), and was erased after the closing by the last Apprentice received; I have never seen anywhere that there was any particular order to be observed for this tracing, though this is not impossible; at any rate, it is only to simplify matters that the use of folding cloths was adopted later on, which has removed much of its significance.

For the altar, the triangular form is certainly more normal than the cylindrical form; but on the other hand, the altar of Apollo, as far as I know, was cubic, and it may have been a modification which took place at a more or less distant period. Your remarks on various place-names are curious, but I do not know exactly what consequences can be drawn from them.

I do not think that a relationship can be established between the three steps of Vishnu and those of the Apprentice's march: are these described as the "first steps in the angle of a long square"? But there is something else which, by contrast, is in direct relation to the three steps of Vishnu, or rather to the corresponding "stations": they are the places occupied by the first three Officers (provided, of course, that the 2nd Watcher's is normal). Another remarkable point is that there is, in the Chinese initiatory organisations, a ritual march called "Yu's step", which is very similar to the Masonic march, although a little more complicated. I had heard about J.P.S.'s lecture from Maridort, but had had no other details about it. I had seen a portrait of him some time ago, and was indeed struck by his ugliness; what you say about his attitude is surely also a very unfavourable sign... It is truly astonishing that anyone could say that he would have his place in the Grand Triad!

Take all your time for the questions of a different order that you intend to talk to me about, because they are obviously much less urgent than the ritual. The reindeer's antlers must surely add something particular to the general symbolism of the horns; this also makes me think of the figuration of the Gaulish god Kernunnos.

Send me the draft ritual when it is ready: I will try to take as little time as possible to examine it.

Please convey to Brother Mar. my congratulations on his report of the last Convent, of which I have just become aware and which I find excellent.

Very fraternally to you.

R.G.

P.S. I would like to point out a ritual detail that seems to be completely unknown in France: Officers should always, in order to reach their seat and to leave it, conform to the sense of circumambulation.

**Cairo, 21 June 1948.**

Dearest Brother,

Your letter of 4 June reached me 5 or 6 days ago, but I have not been able to answer it as soon as I should have liked, having first had to finish my articles for the July-August issue of the "E.T.", which I was preparing at the time. On the other hand, I have been rather fatigued during this time, which has delayed me in everything more than ever; and, although that is now going better, it has not yet entirely passed. It is to be hoped that it will be over by the time you send me the draft ritual, and I would like to believe that, on your part, the health disorders which you have also had lately are now over and will not recur again.

What Marty has told you about his report is accurate, but it proves at least that he has assimilated some ideas well, and also, as you say, that he has been able to present them to an unprepared audience, which is certainly not easy....

Thank you in advance for the imprinting of the seal; ordinarily, it is used to stamp all pieces that have an official character, in order to give them a guarantee of authenticity. As for the application of the seal on the arm of the recipient, according to the indications of all the rituals I have had the opportunity of seeing, it is only a simulacrum of it; and I must say that I do not know whether it was really done in the old days; it is certainly not impossible, but I do not know where the proof of it could be found.



The three candles that frame the picture must be placed to the East, Midday and West, the North not being illuminated; otherwise they correspond to the places occupied (at least normally) by the three principal Officers (and the three Vishnu's "stations"). It is very likely, as you say, that these three candles in the "ritual of the three lights" are involved, but, without knowing exactly this one in detail, I have the impression that there must be quite a lot of fantasy involved!

The wearing of gloves is most certainly of operational origin; just as the wearing of swords in certain circumstances, the use of coats of arms, etc., in the Middle Ages constituted one of the privileges granted to certain guilds, which assimilated them to a certain extent to the nobility; there would be very curious research to be done on this subject, which obviously has a very direct connection with the question of the relations existing between craft initiations and chivalry. On the other hand, from a symbolic point of view, the white colour of the gloves expresses the idea of purity (in the ritual sense), so that wearing them while working corresponds to the statement, found in the Islamic tradition, that "while a man works, his hands are always pure". You see then that it is not indifferent to maintain or re-establish, as far as circumstances permit, this use of gloves, which, moreover, English Masonry has always preserved. I think, however, that the gloves should be considered only as forming part of the decoration, in the same way as the cord (which was originally the talabarte from which the sword was suspended), the vesture being constituted exclusively by the apron; and, in this connection, I call your attention to the necessity of requiring the wearing of the Master's apron, which has been so generally abandoned in France. With regard to the cord, its regulation length must be exactly four inches (=108 mms.); I point this out to you because I know that some set makers have believed that they can "round off" this figure to 11 cms. without any inconvenience, which is a mistake. One other thing, while I am on the details: the Venerable should always be covered during vestments, because he is considered as always working in the Master's degree; in Master's vestments, all Brothers must have their heads covered.

The "*Tracing board lecture*" is the explanation of the symbols in the grade table; it goes without saying that, in general, it is unfortunately rather superficial and has a mainly "moral" character...

On the use of "jargon" in the drafting of the minutes, we are in full agreement.

I think, although I have never seen anything formal about it, that the picture should already be drawn before the first question posed by the Venerable and that it is part of the opening ritual; on the other hand, it is obvious that, from that moment on, a way should be found to avoid more or less profane conversations. I entirely agree with your assessment on the "pillars of harmony"; some chants would certainly be preferable, but on condition that we find those which are of a "harmonious" character.

"Unfortunately, those of the 18th and early 19th century, at least according to those I know, are rather insignificant and of no initiatory or symbolic value, and I am not sure how this gap could be remedied.

As to the meaning of the journeys, there must indeed be some confusion, and that probably goes back a long way; it would seem, according to various indications, that those of the first degree must be "solar" and those of the second "polar", but it is not quite clear what reason could be given for this difference.

The enumeration of Officers could certainly be introduced, but I don't think that is really very important.

I don't know if there are rituals where the works are closed by the first Watcher instead of the Venerable: have you seen anything of that kind?

The little columns of the two Watchers should certainly, as you say, be of a different order; if so, that of the first must certainly be of Doric order, but that of the second would it not be of Ionic rather than Corinthian order?

For the instruction to be given to new initiates, Marty's idea seems to me excellent, as it does to you, and entirely worthy of approval; it is quite true that the commentaries should not be incorporated in the text itself and that there would be the greatest advantage in replacing them by explanatory notes or one could indeed introduce many indications of all kinds. The difficulty seems to me to be above all not to make these notes too long; in any case, it is obvious that you could send me the draft and that, for that too, I am ready to help you in any way I can.

The modification of certain forms for the sake of expediency, as you propose, seems to me to present no inconvenience, for "Truth" is, in all traditions, one of the principal names of God, and "Wisdom, Strength, Beauty" can only be considered as divine attributes, so that there is not the slightest "idolatry" there. - The invocation should be pronounced by the Orator, since it is he, in France, who takes the place of the chaplain; moreover, this invocation is called in English "prayer", and I have always thought that the very designation of the Orator came in reality from a misunderstanding of the meaning of that word.

Another thing I am thinking of, you know that, in order to be placed in order in the first degree, there is a certain difference between French Masonry and English Masonry; in the latter, the hand and forearm must be placed horizontally, which seems to agree better with the meaning relating to the "penalty"; but it would probably be very difficult to modify on this point the acquired habits....

One point on which opinions differ is whether the sword should be held in the left hand or in the right; I remember having, a long time ago, a discussion on this subject with Brother Dyvrande, who was then a member of the Council of the Order of the Grand Orient. He found it ridiculous to hold the sword in the left hand, whereas it seems to me that this can be justified by the fact that it is primarily for protection and not for attack. This naturally entails a slight modification in the ritual, for it is obvious that if the sword is held in the right hand, it is not possible to stand in order at the same time; in that case one could not say: "Stand in order, my Brothers, sword in hand", but one would have to delete the words "and in order" and then say: "Put down your swords and stand in order", which is indeed found in some rituals. I am content to point the matter out to you; you will tell me what you think about it.

No doubt there are still many other details that need to be examined a little more closely, but it's impossible to think of everything at once, and I can't see anything else for today....

Brother Maridort will be able, when he has the opportunity, to inform you of what I have written to him concerning the 2nd degree journeys, although of course this is not of immediate urgency; it is especially with regard to the corresponding tools that there are relatively discordant versions.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 31 July 1948.**

Dearest Brother,

Your letter of 9 July reached me a few days ago, just at the same time as the draft ritual transmitted by Brother Maridort, or at least what is already done, because it is still incomplete and it seems that the rest will not be ready until the end of the year.

It would therefore probably be better to send it to me without waiting. I thank you for all the explanations you have given me on the conditions under which this project has been drawn up; certainly, especially in view of the delay with which the necessary documentation was provided, you had very little time, and this may have been somewhat detrimental to the drafting. As for the modifications made by Marty, I cannot see exactly what they are, without having seen the original project, and it may be that some, such as the one you pointed out to me concerning the Union Chain, are a little regrettable; but if some concessions of detail were necessary to maintain the essential, it is certainly better not to insist, and surely Marty must know what is possible with the present means. In any case, the strange formula "let the columns stand on their bases", which I have never seen anywhere, is fortunately not to be found in the draft I have received! I am enclosing some observations, of which I am also sending a copy to Maridort for greater security, because it is always to be feared that a letter may get lost along the way. Some of these remarks concern only formal defects, but some are more important; I would like to point out in particular the fact that, unfortunately, the formula of consecration has been forgotten, in harmony with that of the opening! It should also be noted that nowhere is there any mention of the compass and square placed on the Holy Book; I think it would be necessary for this to be expressly mentioned, as it is an absolutely essential point. As for the questions to visitors which remain incomplete, I wonder whether this is not simply a consequence of the fact that a sheet of paper is missing at the end of the opening ritual. The most debatable question is that of the different direction in which the journeys are made; I cannot find a plausible reason, and I do not really know what should be done in this respect; in any case, it is quite certain that the final passage through the middle of the Lodge is an impossibility as soon as the use of the tableau is restored....

I remember having seen somewhere the indication of the "magic square", but I don't know where; it did not appear in Thébah's ritual, of which, on the other hand, I recognise well some other points, particularly concerning the "little light" (although this can also be found elsewhere). What I saw of Brother Minot in his *Revue Maçonnique* was far from being transcendent; I am also rather surprised by this praise of the symbolism he has inserted into his ritual. As for the English (?) ritual used by G.T., I wonder, in view of the singularities you have pointed out to me, whether it is not simply a ritual of "Co-Masonry"; I am curious to see it in more detail when you have the time. The mention of the Orders of Chivalry, in connection with the restoration of the apron, has unfortunately disappeared, and that of the "Grand Honours" has taken its place; I suppose this must be one of the points on which the Commission must have objected....

It is true that the value of the ritual of "Emulation" is quite controversial, especially in America, and I have seen several articles on the subject in the past; it is a pity that you have not had other English rituals to make comparisons with; I could not tell you anything precise on the subject, except that some claim that it is the ritual of the Grand Lodge of Ireland which is the closest to that of the "Ancients". It is surely astonishing, on the other hand, that older French texts could not be found; there must, therefore, be a fairly large number of manuscript notebooks of the eighteenth century; the library of the Grand Orient should be provided with them, but I do not know for certain in what state it is at present.

I fully approve of the way you have proposed to proceed in the second and third degrees; it would be better, in fact, to leave it to Marty to then incorporate the "adaptations" required by the mentality of the majority. For the awkward points of the second degree, I have always had the impression that the enumeration of

The five orders of architecture was a little artificial, because of the inclusion of the last two; but it would certainly be good to see what is said on this point in Vitruvius, which I believe to be the only "source" to which one can turn. Not having at my disposal any reproduction of the English painting, I would ask you if it would be possible to send me one, in order to be able to analyse the differences that exist with the French painting. I will try to talk to you later about the other questions: just remind me of them in time. As to the meaning of the second degree journeys, in connection with Pythagoreanism, I have just been sent a book which may contain some indications; I will tell you about it also when I have had time to read it.

I have also received J. B.'s book, but I have not read it yet either: I was a little surprised to see that it was published by a profane publisher.... I did not think that the correspondence of the Speaker and the Secretary with the Sun and the Moon had ever been questioned!

I do not yet have the ritual of the closing, but I think that the closing of the work must ultimately be done by the first Watcher, according to the phrase found in the ritual of the opening. There is indeed an apparent discordance between sunset and the midnight hour, but, for the opening, is it not also similar to that between sunrise and the midday hour? The sacred word and the word of passage of the third degree (which are inverted in the French Rite) seem in reality to be nothing more than different deformations of the same word, which, moreover, cannot have in Hebrew any of the meanings attributed to it?

What you say about the ritual elements by which the transmission of spiritual influence can take place, in the absence of the consecration which is the normal support, seems to me to be quite right, and it would indeed seem that, in the Masonic ritual, everything has been arranged in order to remedy the effects of possible negligence or alterations, as if the risk that they might in fact occur had been foreseen. It is well understood, however, that it had to stop at a certain point, even if it is difficult to specify exactly: the Great Light, and even the obligation (completed by the proclamation) can indeed serve as a support, but is it possible to go much further in this respect? The comparison you make with what can also take place in certain rites of an exoteric order, and particularly with regard to priestly ordination in Christianity, is very interesting; I have no doubt, moreover, that it must be the laying on of hands that is the most essential element here. I was completely unaware of what you have pointed out to me concerning apostolic succession in the Scandinavian Church, but I have just read today, in issue 12 of *Dieu Vivant*<sup>1</sup>, the review of a book devoted precisely to this question.

Many thanks for the engraving of Dürer; the mountain in the background, with the fortified town at its summit, clearly makes me think of Montsalvat. The biographical sketches concerning Dürer are also interesting, and certainly raise rather complex questions; the initiatory character of many of his works, and also of some of the marks he has made, is in any case not in doubt; he was undoubtedly linked to certain craft initiatory organisations, and therefore also had relations with people belonging to other initiatory organisations of a more or less different character (Hermetic and perhaps Rosicrucian); But the more difficult question is, of course, to know to what degree he could have effectively attained, and whether, at least to some extent, he could have served above all as an "instrument" for transmitting and expressing certain things before modern obscurity had forced them to remain entirely hidden in the shadows. As for his Lutheran sympathies (which were not, however, such until the accession), I admit that there is something in this which seems to me as embarrassing as to you; it is true that one should not always refer to outward appearances, which sometimes cover up very different things; and, when you say that there are Protestants and Protestants, there are indeed, even outside what you have quoted, indications which might lead one to think so. In this connection, I have heard it said some time ago that

---

<sup>1</sup>French Catholic magazine. N. of the T.

The theses of Canon Paquier, who had become an expert in the study of Luther, were, according to him, in fact quite commonplace for a long time in the Augustinian Order to which he belonged: According to him, the theses held by Luther had in fact been commonplace for a long time in the Augustinian Order, to which he belonged, and the causes of the break with Rome were much more political than doctrinal, so that the responsibility should be imputed not to Luther himself, but to certain German princes who had used him for their own ends; And he particularly considered it as proof that the Augustinian general Seripando, holding at the Council of Trent views very similar to those of Luther, only more moderate in form, far from being excommunicated or even punished for it, was, on the contrary, made a Cardinal! On the other hand, Pastor Lecerf, a professor at the Protestant Faculty of Theology, who was strictly Calvinist and not very sympathetic to Lutheranism, maintained that Calvin's theology was, at bottom, perfectly in accord with that of St. Thomas, and he did not hesitate to declare himself openly a Thomist. The opposition between Luther and Calvin would thus have been nothing more than a new form of that which already existed between Augustinianism and Thomism. All this is obviously a far cry from the ultra-modern spirit of the so-called "liberal" Protestants....

The F.-D. affair is indeed something truly regrettable and gives a sad idea of the mentality of certain people and certain circles; it will be necessary for me to occupy myself these days with arranging extracts from his pamphlet and replying to it, because I think, like Clavelle, that it would be really harmful to leave such a document in oblivion; it seems, from the latest news, as Brother Gilliard has informed us, that this individual now intends to write a whole book against me! The plates where the serpent appears in the ornamentation of the chasubles and stars are all the more curious because the source from which they come cannot give rise to the slightest suspicion of "esotericism"; but I believe that there is too much vanity and bad faith in Mr. F.-D. for anything to make him admit that he has asserted wrong things. We can evidently expect anything of this kind, but I did not, however, expect such an inconceivable outpouring of "satanic" hatred and coarseness....

As for the Carmelites, it seems to me, of course, that for quite some time now, and no doubt after their "reform" in a purely mystical sense, there no longer remains any esotericism in them; but I do not know to what period the modifications that were made to their liturgy go back; in any case, it seems that nowadays (this remark comes to me from a Trappist Father) they push external formalism to an extent that surpasses anything one can imagine. The mention of Pythagoras alongside Elijah in the old Carmelite liturgy had been pointed out to me by Charbonneau-Lassay, who also showed me the symbols of an incontestably initiatory character, and even some specifically Rosicrucian ones, which the Carmelites of the 15th or early 16th century had traced on the walls of their old monastery of Loudun; and I would add that I have the impression, although it is not easy for me to justify it, that this is perhaps not as far removed as we might think from the question of the organisations with which Dürer may have had some connection.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 31 August 1948**

Dearest Brother,

I received your letter of 16 August a few days ago; thank you for sending me your ritual project. I am glad to hear that you are going to be able to procure the other English rituals; I do not know for certain what this so-called "*Sound Usage*" might be. The remarks made to you by Brother Mercier, from what you have told me, seem to me to be fair, and I do not see that there can be any objection to the "transmission" of the *cablé-tow* in the instruction. As far as the instruction is concerned, you do not find

naturally on what I have of Brother Marty's project, and stops just after the delivery of the two pairs of gloves.

I must point out something which I had forgotten the last time, and which is also found in your version: the addition of the words "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" after the traditional acclamation seems to me to be completely unjustified, and is even rather profane in character; in Thebah, in the old days, it was not allowed. What is more curious is that the true origin of this motto is to be found in an anti-Masonic writing of the 18th century; unfortunately, I cannot now find the exact reference. Needless to say, the occult legend attributing it to Louis Claude de Saint Martin has no basis in fact, any more than so many others of the same genre.

One more thing: in the drawing of the picture, the stars seem to be in any number (I have seen 16); it seems to me, however, that there should regularly be only seven.

It is possible that, as you say, Marty has not had time to work out what concerns the restatement of the picture; moreover, I see that, in his version, certain passages have been cut out and others, on the contrary, lengthened, I don't quite know for what reason. It would scarcely be possible for me to point out to you in detail these various changes, many of which are no doubt of no great importance; but I think, on the other hand, that you must have seen all this by now if, as is probable, Marty has returned to Paris.

I think we should write "*cabinet of reflection*" as Mar. has done, rather than "*of reflections*" in the plural as I see it in your manuscript; moreover, the substitution of the word "*cabine*" for "*room*" seems to me to be rather unusual here.

In the opening, the enumeration of the officers is not found in Mar.; its interest evidently lies in the division "3-4" and five, which gives the right triangle of Pythagoras, and which could be regarded as a reminder of the role it played in the opening of a working Lodge.

You are quite right to mention in a footnote the case where the oath was to be taken on a sacred book other than the Bible; this too has disappeared.

For the points you have made to me, the uncovering of the Great Architect's name is merely a concession to Western usage; we can certainly retain it, but it must nevertheless be emphasised that it is entirely at variance with the Hebraic elements of the ritual, although it would be better if the Venerable One were always to remain covered.

Speaking of the accessories used to produce the noises, I am thinking above all of a kind of metal barrel filled with stones, which I find interesting because it probably goes back a long way in time. Carl Henz, in his book *Lunar Myths and Symbols*, points out that, in a sacred dance of a certain Indian tribe, "*the sound of thunder is produced by a box full of stones which they shake*" (I have just realised, looking it up, that it is in this same book that we find the figuration of the "*deer dance*" of which I have spoken to you). I even wonder if, on the other hand, this instrument might not have some relation to the "rhombuses" of the mysteries of antiquity, of which no one seems to know exactly what it was.

For the oath, I have also often seen the formula you have adopted, but I believe it is linked to the fact that the essential use of placing the 3 Great Lights on the altar had been abandoned. In any case, the compass given to be held by the recipient must be other than the one placed on the Book, which, like the square, must never be moved during the work. If the sword part of the formula is to be retained, the flaming sword of the Venerable must of course be brought before the recipient.

I fully approve of the "improvements" which you have pointed out to me, and also, for the "little light", the suppression of the "corpse" which has always seemed to me a little theatrical. For the consecration, it seems right that the three blows should be made only on the crown of the head and not repeated on each shoulder, as this would mean a total of nine blows, a number which belongs only to the Master's degree and not to the Apprentice.

For the sake of instruction, I will only point out, for the moment, that in the old catechisms, the first question was formulated as follows: "*What is there in common between you and me? Answer: one truth*". For the dimensions of the Lodge, we find: "*Its height? From the earth to the sky. Its depth? From the surface of the earth to its centre* (or still, according to another version, *innumerable cubits*)".

Of the two arrangements which you have indicated for the Chain of Union, I cannot tell you which of them is preferable; but I wonder why, in either of them, the positions of the Treasurer and the Master of Ceremonies, and also those of the Hospitaller and the Expert, are reversed; is there any reason for this?

I do not have the book by J. T. Lawrence of which you have told me, but only another entitled *By-ways of Freemasonry*; it seems to me that the *coat of arms* of the ancient corporation of the Freemasons was much less complicated than the one he describes, and it is possible that there are many more or less recent additions there; unfortunately, I cannot always remember where I could find this....

The planetary correspondences of the officers indicated by J.B. are indeed strange; it is fortunate, at least, that he has not kept them in his book! With regard to his book, it must be admitted that he has found the solution to some difficult questions (especially the explanation of the acclamation, which is very much in conformity with the one I had indicated to you); but, on the other hand, there are interpretations which are too much influenced by occult ideas and above all by "magical" concerns, and also some fantasies which belong to him (such as his project of an apron in an unpublished form), not to mention some linguistic and other errors. In short, it is a book which is certainly not lacking in interest, but which should be used with caution; what I really don't understand, despite what he says about it to justify himself, is that he has edited it in such a way that it is available to laymen (and I even suppose that this must be why he has not offered it to Gloton, who would certainly not have volunteered for this dissemination).

From what you tell me about Brother Reghini, his great work on Pythagorean arithmetic, which he had just finished when he died, unfortunately does not seem to be easily edited in the present circumstances, because of the enormous expense of printing (it comprises 1500 or 1600 pages full of mathematical formulae); following his instructions, it has been handed over to one of his friends, Professor Del Guercio, who will take care of the edition when possible, but who is not a Freemason. As for his notes and documents relating to Freemasonry, they are in the hands of Brother Giulio Parise, a member of the Supreme Council, but I do not quite know what can be found there, nor what part he will remove. In any case, you will at least be able to see his posthumous book, *I Numeri Sacri nella Tradizione Pitagorica Massonica*; I do not remember now whether it is R. Allar who has it, or someone else in Paris, but I have asked him, in reply to his last letter, if it would be possible for him to lend it to you, or for you to lend it to him; if not, I will have to ask Brother Rocco if he could send you a copy. Just bear in mind that Reghini had so "specialised" in Pythagoreanism that he came to regard all the elements incorporated in Freemasonry as somehow accidental, or even over-added *after the fact*, which is evidently quite exaggerated.

On the subject of Pythagoreanism, I have read the book to which I alluded last time in connection with the meaning of the circumambulations: "*The Right and the Left in the poems of Homer in accordance with the Pythagorean doctrine and the Celtic tradition*", by Joseph Cuillandre (Éditions des Belles Lettres, 1944), but I must say that I have not been able to get much out of it. However, you could perhaps see this in any library; you could, on the other hand, omit the first two chapters (it does no more than fix certain points by referring to the topography of the fighting around Troy). In the rest, and especially in the last chapter, there are considerations which are not without interest, but the exposition as a whole is terribly confused: the author reproaches Aristotle for not having understood the Pythagoreans, in which he is probably right, but I am not quite sure that he himself understood them much better in reality. The *crux* of the matter is, it seems to me, that he has become fascinated by the only "solar" point of view, to the point of not seeing any other, even when he cites facts or texts which seem, therefore, to have no connection; unfortunately, I have not had enough time to clarify all his argumentation; perhaps you could try to do so when you have the opportunity. There would also be relations to establish with other traditions which, no doubt, he ignores more or less completely. It would be enough for him, therefore, to read the Bible, without going any further, to realise that the orientation towards the Levant is not particularly Indo-European. I am thinking in particular, in this connection, of the question of the position of the two Pillars, the right in Hebrew always being the South and the left the North; the Arabic names of the cardinal points are, moreover, no less significant in this respect, and the inversion which occurs in the French Rite has always seemed to me to be difficult to explain.

I have not yet received your two works of which you have announced the shipment; Perhaps we shouldn't be too surprised, as parcels by post usually take quite a long time!

Thank you for your good wishes regarding my health, which is not too bad at the moment, although I can't say that the fatigue has completely disappeared; anyway, one shouldn't complain too much when it's like this...

Very fraternally to you.

### Letter of 16 September 1948

Dearest Brother,

Thank you for your letter of 5 September, which I received yesterday, and for the various things you have enclosed; I am reassured because, thinking I understood that you had sent me your two works some time ago, I was beginning to fear that they had been lost. Of course, you could not yet have received my last letter of the 31st August, but I think you must certainly have it by now.

As far as the rituals of the G.T.<sup>1</sup> are concerned, I consider, like you, that there is nothing really abnormal except the passage on the "Spiritual Archives", which recalls the lucubrations of the theosophist "clairvoyants"; but it is the question of the real origin of this ritual which seems very obscure, and what you tell me about it is not very reassuring....

As far as the incensations are concerned, I had observed well what you point out to me in J. B.'s book<sup>2</sup>, and I even wanted to ask any of you which was this book of the

---

<sup>1</sup>La Grande Triade. N. of the T.

<sup>2</sup>Could be *La Symbolique Maçonnique*, by Jules Boucher. N. of the T.



Doctor R. whom he quotes and of whom I had never heard until now; I do not understand how it could have seemed good to Allahabad (unless this is a purely fanciful indication, which would not surprise me very much on R.'s part). I should also like to ask you if you have any reviews of this "Report of Pétrus Talémarius" to which J.B. so often refers, and which has been published by Véga; I do not remember whether it was Clavelle or someone else who pointed out its existence to me some time ago, but I have never been able to find out exactly what it was about.

The English Apprentice picture is rather complicated, and has details that are not very clearly distinguishable. I think what you see under the book must be the particular IOI symbol of Anglo-Saxon Freemasonry; do you know it? There are 7 stars, just as I was telling you there must be regularly; but the respective positions of the sun and the moon seem to me to be reversed in a rather inexplicable way.

Thank you in advance for the forthcoming dispatch of your draft of the ritual of the third degree; I did not think you would have dealt with it before the second; it will certainly cause much less difficulty. As it is always good to gather as much information as possible, I am going to ask Marius Lepage if he could send you a copy of the ritual he has drawn up for his Lodge: I have pointed out to him an anomaly regarding the situation of the three doors, which he has recognised, due to the situation of the Watchers in the French Rite, so that he did not quite know how to solve it; this further confirms the need to re-establish<sup>3</sup> their true place, which, even in the Scottish Rite (at least in France), has been altered by a need for false symmetry.

What you say about Alexander's role is certainly quite accurate; moreover, I should have mentioned it in my article on the symbolism of the horns, which I cannot find at the moment; what is said in the Islamic Tradition about his relations with Al-Khidr is very significant, and there are also, among other things, Roman legends which are extremely curious. As for the passage in II Thessalonians that you mention, it is indeed possible that it is related to the Roman Empire and its continuation, but I am not sure that there could not be other interpretations as well, so I would not know too much more to tell you about it; if this one were to be adopted, it would obviously not be very reassuring for the immediate future...

I am very interested in your letter to Clavelle, because it contains many historical details of which I was unaware. I have often heard it said that, in Rome, the validity of Anglican ordinations was considered doubtful, because there is no certainty that there had not been, at a certain moment (I think this would be during the Revolution), an interruption in the transmission, and for this reason the ordination was redone "on condition"; but it is clear that the intervention of the orthodox bishops must have changed things and amounted, in short, to a "regularisation". Another point to note in the same vein: the objects used at the coronation of the kings of England were destroyed by Cromwell, so that those now in use are merely recent reproductions; is there not something there which, apart from any other consideration, might be aimed at disturbing, in such a case, the action of spiritual influences? For the cure of scrofula, I believe there are two contradictory versions: one which gives the origin, for the kings of England, to Edward the Confessor, and the other which considers it as linked to the quality of king of France; what is there to think of it? The parallel which you have drawn between the way in which the irregularities of the Anglican Church have been remedied and that of the Grand Lodge of England is truly curious and seems to me very just.

---

<sup>3</sup>T. Note: According to the author in another letter, the correct position of the 2nd Watcher would be in the middle of the Noon Pillar.

I have not yet read your Apprentice and Companion works more than in passing, and I will tell you about them on a future occasion; but they seem to me to be very good indeed, and, apart from what you yourself have indicated about the eye, I do not think there is much to rectify. As for the role of the triangle 3 - 4 - 5 in operative Freemasonry, I will return to the subject at the end of my article on the "lost word". I think that J.B. should have taken into account my suggestion on the irregularity of the branches of the Venerable's square, even if he omitted to quote me on the subject. It seems to me, according to what you have said about Reghini, that you must already know his book of which I spoke to you last time; in this case, what I said to you about it is, of course, no longer necessary.

Very frat .-. to you.

**Cairo, 30 September 1948**

M.-.Q.-.Brother,

It is now eight days since I received your letter of 12 September, and I apologise for not having been able to find time to reply to it earlier. Fortunately, matters are now of less immediate urgency than when it was still possible to make some modifications to the Ritual before the Convent; I hope that all will go well there, and that one or other of you will give me news very soon.

For the formula Liberty Equality Fraternity, I see that you have found the reference which I could not pass on to him in hand, and of which I now, in fact, remember very well: this origin is evidently most suspicious, all the more so as all the pretended rituals and catechisms contained in this book, *Les FF. MM.: écrasés* are entirely invented and surpasses all that we can imagine as fantasy, not to mention an implausible story about the foundation of Freemasonry by Cromwell! In spite of this, I understand very well the reason why you think it is better at present to keep the above-mentioned formula after the ritual acclamation; as the essential thing is, in short, the re-establishment of the same, this question certainly does not present, in fact, a great inconvenience; it is true that one should not want to go too fast in the whole matter.... As for the addition of the word "*semper*", it seems obvious that it was not part of the original acclamation, but I am not sure when or how it was introduced.

With regard to the ritual of the 3 Lights, I finally understand, reading J.B.'s book, the reason for blowing out the candles with a mallet: it is so as not to blow on them! But isn't it known that there is an instrument made for this purpose, called a candle snuffer, and that if it is not as commonly used as it was at the time when candles were lit, it must at least still be used in churches today?

While I am thinking about it, I must point out that I have found the dates of the first printed English rituals: 1838 (G. Claret), then 1869 (A. Lewis); previously, there were only manuscript rituals in England. I have found as an indication of the different rituals in use: Promulgation (1809-11), Reconciliation (1813-16), Stability (1820), Emulation (1823). Another point: it is inaccurate to designate as "York Rite", as is often done, that which is currently practised in England; the York Rite was that of the "Ancients", and that which exists after the "Union" is, in reality, a sort of compromise between it and that of the "Moderns".

For the triangle 3 - 4 - 5, the numbering of the Officers by three and four only does not change anything essential as far as the symbolism is concerned, since it can be considered as corresponding to the two branches of the Venerable's square: the third side is

It is therefore somewhat implied, and its "invisibility" is in some way related to the death of Hiram. As for the role played by the triangle in question in the opening of the operative Lodges, you have guessed it rightly: it is a triangle made of three canes whose lengths are in the proper relationship; if I did not insist on this when I spoke to you at the time, it is because I intended to deal with this point more fully in the last part of my article on the "Lost Word". For the information on operative Freemasonry contained in *Speculative Masonry* and its supplement, some things are certainly accurate, but this does not mean that they are entirely accurate on all points; what has given me some doubts on this point, is above all an allusion to the meaning of the circumambulations which did not seem to me to be correct. On the other hand, it is quite clear that an operational organisation which admits women cannot be regular; I have already had the opportunity to speak to Clavelle about this; it is, moreover, the reason which led me to look for more information on this side, as was my intention at a certain moment. I have previously seen, in an American Masonic magazine, articles containing more reliable data, but unfortunately, as it is more than thirty years ago, I do not know where to find them; however, perhaps I will get down to it one day or another. It seems to me, without being able to say for certain, that it must be in *The American Tyler Keystone*; one would have to look for this between 1909 and 1914; but who knows whether a collection of this magazine could be found in the library of the Grand Lodge or the Grand Orient?

Since I have already spoken about the meaning of circumambulations, I would like to draw your attention, in the book on the right and the left that I have pointed out to you, to the passages where the question of the priority of night over day is discussed (we could perfectly well add, moreover, relations with traditions other than those mentioned there, beginning with the first chapter of Genesis); it is one of the things that indicate most clearly that the author's exclusively "solar" interpretations must not be accurate, both for Pythagoreanism and for the Celtic tradition.

The rod of the Deacons is the ancient insignia of messengers, heralds and ambassadors, representing the power delegated to them; it has, therefore, no relation to that of the three MM.-. of the working Lodge (which is essentially a "measure"), but it is no less worthy of preservation. As to the crossed rods above the recipient's head, I must admit that I do not know exactly what it corresponds to, nor whether it is really a very ancient usage, and I do not quite see where we could enquire into it; but, at any rate, I do not think there is any objection to retaining it. In the case where there is no initiatory consecration properly so called, you are quite right in thinking that the transmission of spiritual influence takes place at the moment when the Light is given: but, to tell the truth, the French ritual does not seem, on this point, to be more complete than the English ritual. On the other hand, I have always had the impression that certain particularities had been preserved in France prior to 1717 which have not been maintained or re-established in England; only, it is rather difficult to say where they could have come from, the question of the existence of the "Stuart" Lodges in the 17th century, which would naturally explain everything, being always very controversial.

In my time, in the G.-.Lodge, only in Thébah did the Masters wear the apron; in the Grand Orient, about the same time, Brother Blatin vigorously demanded its reinstatement, but, in spite of his authority as Grand Commander of the Grand College of Rites, he was never able to obtain any result.

The coats of arms of the different Scottish degrees, which bring together the principal symbols of each of them, have nothing to do with the coats of arms of the ancient guilds; but the *coat of arms* of the English guild of Freemasons is well known; unfortunately, I do not remember at the moment where to find the description. I do not know of any work on this question of the quasi-nobiliary privileges of the guilds, which is, moreover, one of those subjects on which the "official" historians

They judge it good to keep them silent; it is Charbonneau-Lassay in particular who had spoken to me before; but I do not know whether he could find any notes of this among his papers; I shall try to find out as soon as I have the opportunity.

It is not doubtful that Doric and Ionic are generally considered (and not only as far as the orders of architecture are concerned) as somehow complementary, the former corresponding to the masculine principle and the latter to the feminine principle, which even their names themselves seem, moreover, to indicate quite clearly.

I think that the use of the sword held in the left hand should definitely be retained; you are quite right to speak, in this respect, of a use of the "power of the points". By a rather curious coincidence, I have just seen a very clear passage on this question in Brother Fauré-Frémiet's recent book (page 38), which, however, contains very few allusions to Masonic symbolism.

As regards the position of the hand in the Order of Apprentice, you are right as to the difficulty of maintaining the English attitude for a long time; as this is not of primary importance, there is, therefore, no doubt, nothing else to do but to retain the French usage, but it would at least be necessary that it should be "unified".

Thank you for the stamp impression; it is very nice, but isn't it a bit too big to be easily inserted on certain documents?

The figure of the "sorcerer" in the grotto of the "Trois Frères" (Three Brothers) is really curious, and reminded me of a representation, which I cannot find at the moment, of the "*deer dance*" of the Hopi Indians (North America); this relationship is as singular as the one you have made with the Siberian Shaman.

I hope to receive very soon your two works of which you have announced their dispatch; it is well understood that I will not fail to tell you very frankly what I think.

I am glad to hear that you are fully recovered; as for me, although I am much better now, I still suffer from some fatigue, but we must hope that this will pass completely.

Very fraternally to you

**Cairo, 8 October 1948.**

M.-.Q.-.Brother,

Your letter of 27 September reached me these last few days, at the same time as a letter from Brother Maridort enclosing Brother Marty's report; but, contrary to what you think, it does not tell me about the last meeting of the Convent, no doubt because he did not have time (he obviously did not want to wait any longer to send me the report), and only gives me the list of the new Grand Officers.

You can imagine how happy I am with the good news of which you have informed me, and I thank you for having shared it with me so promptly. I would still ask you to convey to Brother Marty all my congratulations, first of all for his report itself, which is excellent, and then for the great success he has obtained, and which truly surpasses all that we could have hoped for! I understand that you feared

that this exposition seemed too long and arduous to an audience whose majority is certainly not accustomed to considerations of this order, but I see that fortunately there was nothing of the sort. It is remarkable that there were no protests on any point, nor was there any contradiction throughout the discussion, since all those who spoke there did, on the contrary, do no more than support in the same direction. Everything you tell me about the attitude of the delegates, which is otherwise as good as that, is certainly very interesting and clearly shows that something really has changed..... I think it would be a good idea, in order to take advantage of this first success, to prepare the rituals of the other grades so that they can also be presented as soon as possible, as Brother Marty intends to do.

The vote asking that there should be no more than one Federal Council per Lodge was indeed rather threatening to the Grand Triad, and it is to be welcomed that it was rejected; however, I wonder whether, if it had been adopted, the fact that it involved Brethren belonging at the same time to other Lodges would not, in spite of everything, have enabled the difficulty to be circumvented.

Concerning the Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, I am always wondering what exactly could be the reasons for the hostility between him and Cerf<sup>(1)</sup> (the latter even pretended that it also implicated me, whereas everything I know otherwise proves the contrary); do you know anything about it?

I am happy to hear that you were able to meet Brother Granger<sup>2</sup>; as I told Brother Maridort, I have an excellent impression of him; in his last letter, he told me that he hoped to be able to arrange a meeting when he went to Paris, but he did not know that it would be on the occasion of the convent.

I think, according to the conclusions of the report, that the draft ritual will be printed before long for the study of the Lodges: if so, I hope it will be possible to send a copy to our Brethren in Naples who intend soon to be able to found a Lodge to work in a truly traditional spirit, and would like to have this ritual as soon as possible, not only for their own use, but also to be able to present it to the authorities of the Grand Orient of Italy. You are perhaps aware that this is now a regular Scottish Obedience, having obtained, in spite of the efforts of many rival Obediences, the recognition of the confederated Supreme Councils.

As regards operative Freemasonry, I forgot to tell you last time that Marius Lepage has mentioned to me a book which has recently appeared in England, entitled *The Genesis of the Freemasonry*, and which contains, it seems, many new, or at least little known, documents on the subject. I have given directions to Clavelle to order it for the "E. T."; let us hope he will get it, though certain publishers do not always show much kindness in this....

Very fraternally to you.

---

<sup>1</sup>Refers to Ivan Cerf, member of the "La Grande Triade" Lodge. N. of T.

<sup>2</sup>Alias Jean Tourniac. N. of T.

Cairo, 19 October 1948.

Dearest Brother,

It is already a week since I received your letter of 3 October, and I would have answered it sooner had it not been for a severe influenza from which I am just now beginning to recover; the cold has come very early this year, and we have at this moment a temperature which here is usually found in the month of December!

The reason you have explained to me for not beginning the drawing of the Table until after the inspection of the Columns seems to me, in short, very just; though it is certain that there is sufficient time to finish it at the proper time (it is of course easy to check it), there will therefore be nothing else to do but to proceed thus; it goes without saying that all must be finished during the proclamation of the opening. I agree with you also on the convenient moment for the lighting of the three Lights: although it is definitely necessary that this should be done by the principal Officers, I see no great inconvenience in it after all, but I think like you that it would be better to use simple candlesticks, which should certainly be placed around the Table; as for putting them out, I think it would be good to bear in mind what I told you last time about the use of the candle snuffer instead of the trunk...

I am familiar with the caricature representing a Lodge of animals, but I admit that I had not noticed the similarity of all its details to those of the engraving reproduced by Alice Joly; it is quite striking, indeed, and it is very likely, as you say, that it is a "plagiarism". As for the arrangement of the three lights, I do not think it is incorrect; it is indeed in relation to the positions of the first three foundation stones in the order N.E., S.E., S.W.; the fourth angle, N.W., is naturally that which remains in darkness, and this is very much in accordance with the march of the sun. The correspondence of the three Lights must also follow the same order: Wisdom in the N.E., Strength in the S.E., Beauty in the S.W.; thus, if we suppose them to be placed in the same angles of the Lodge, each of the three principal Officers would have on its right the corresponding Light; it is to be noted, moreover, that the direction of the sun's march is thus from this Light towards it, which is not without significance either. As to the side where the hinge of the door should be, I do not quite understand your idea, since this door is generally a double hinged door, so that there are hinges on each side.

As for the manner of addressing the candidate, one must take into account the fact that, in English, it is common practice, in the lay world, to address someone by name, whereas in French, on the other hand, this is considered, depending on the case, either as a sign of a lack of education (for example among peasants), or as indicating a somewhat contemptuous intention (when one wants to make someone feel that they are considered to be an inferior). In these conditions, I believe that it is not possible to call the candidate by any other name than "Sir" without further ado, and it is only the candidate himself who must repeat his name and surname out of obligation.

It seems to me that there would indeed be an interest in restoring the symbols...; for the first, you must remember that I set out in the *Grande Triade* some considerations which relate to it. As for the second, you are no doubt aware that it is considered to be the most particularly related to the two St. Johns; in fact, it represents the annual solar cycle limited by the two solstices; we have sometimes pointed out that, for this representation to be entirely correct, the two tangents should be horizontal; but it is very probable that their vertical position is due to an assimilation with the two Columns, which in fact, under one of their aspects, also have a vertical position.

this significance (cf. especially the symbolism of the Pillars of Hercules). What I have just said also has a certain bearing on certain points in Brother Mercier's work, which are among those which he does not seem to have been able to disentangle completely.

The tools of the Apr.-. are perfectly well the "*heavy maul*" and the chisel; I do not know whether there is any difference between this "*heavy maul*" and the "*common gavel*" which I have also seen mentioned on occasion, but I think they are two names for the same thing; at any rate, it is a tool used for roughing the stones before the actual cutting; I do not see what connection it could have with the idea of sacrifice. With regard to the English picture, there is a study on this question in the July issue of the *Speculative Mason*; reading it, I finally understood what the objects are that I could not make out in the drawing you sent me: they are the emblems of the three theological virtues, placed on the rungs of Jacob's ladder. According to the historical information contained in the same article, the present form of this Table dates back no further than 1849; previously, there was a great variety in the drawings; it seems that the introduction of Jacob's ladder was an innovation. With regard to the *Speculative Mason*, Brother Mercier's idea seems to me an excellent one, if you have at your disposal a complete collection (I have but a rather small part); it would certainly be an enormous job, but it is so difficult to find anything in there, that carefully classified extracts would certainly be of great service.

It will be very interesting if Brother Granger can give you precise information on the Swiss rituals; the comparison you have made between the coin and the medal is at least not implausible, in the circumstance that *Mark Masonry* is considered to have a more direct link with the Companion Degree.... The "white stone" is evidently an allusion to the Apocalypse; I recall that a study of the *Pilgrim's Progress* was published in *Speculative Mason*, where this question also appeared. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that, in *Mark Masonry*, there are in fact two distinct degrees, *Mark Man* and *Mark Master*; in any case, the "*Mark Master's token*" (I do not think the name "Tessera" is commonly used) is the "Temple coin" modified as to the form of the characters as I have told you (I have one here); the figure of this same coin has likewise been for "King Solomon's Temple Lodge", which is one of the most "selective" Lodges in England. It represents, on the one hand, the cup of manna, and on the other the rod of Aaron, which were two of the objects preserved in the Ark of the Covenant; the reproduction of the authentic coin (with the characters in the old form) is to be found on one of the plates in S. Munk's work on Palestine (Collection Univers Pittoresque).

I do not believe that the Operative Rituals have ever been written down; at least, if they are written down today, it can only be a recent development, but even this seems doubtful to me. Speculative Masons are certainly not admitted as visitors to the operative Lodges; the same is true of the *Compagnonnage* (except in the very degenerate and very untraditional organisation which calls itself the "Union Compagnonnique"). What you say to me about the possible way of performing the Pythagorean triangle at the time of the Chain of Union seems to me, in general, admissible, even if of course this can never be the real equivalent of the operative rite of opening. In the operative Lodges, the name of *El-Shaddai* is expressly mentioned in the invocation pronounced at the opening by the Chaplain (Bro.-. Jak.-.); your point about the number 345 of this name is a fair one, but there are still other things quite remarkable. *Shaddai* alone has as its number 314, which is also important; it is at the same time the number of *Metatron*, and furthermore in Arabic it is the number of the "developed" name of Muhammad (Brother Maridort will be able to communicate to you the explanation I gave him on this last point). On the other hand, 345 is not only the number of *El-Shaddai*, but also that of *ha-Shem* (the Name), thus

as that of *Moshe*, the Hebrew form of Moses' name, which is also the exact inverse of *ha-Shem*. I wonder whether "*The special sign of the Triangle*" refers well to the Pythagorean triangle, or whether it is not rather a sign analogous here to that of the "*Royal Arch of Henoch*", apparently derived from the sign of the blessing of the *Kohanim* to which I have alluded in my article on the "Lost Word", and consequently perhaps a more singular, though hardly unrecognisable (which may also be done deliberately in this case), deformation could be found in the "sign of horror" of the Master's degree.

I have not yet had the information concerning the two works cited by J.B.; for the rest, I have not had a letter from Clavelle for some time, but I certainly hope to receive one very soon, as he has now several of mine to which he has not yet replied.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 5 November 1948**

Dearest Brother,

I received your two letters dated 11 and 18 October at the same time, about eight days ago; if I have not been able to reply this time either, it is because I had to finish my work for the December issue of the "E.T.", on which I was a little behind schedule, after which I received the proofs of the Italian translation of the "Aperçus" and which I also had to correct as soon as possible.

I thank you first of all for having given me a summary of the speeches of the Convent's closing session, which did indeed make as satisfactory an impression as possible. Brother Maridort told me that if he had not said anything to me about it, it is because he thinks that the review will not be long in print and he intends to send it to me as soon as it comes out. The only point that is a little disturbing in what you have pointed out to me, is the intention that some would have of increasing recruitment, which evidently could only be to the detriment of quality....

What you tell me of the reason for Cerf's animosity towards the Grand Commander is, in fact, not at all implausible, knowing all that we know about his character; this claim he has to know everything is really extraordinary; but then, has he ever done anything with modern scientific inventions? As for his project of founding a Royal Arch Cap.-., I see no more than you do how this could be possible, unless he begins by affiliating himself to the National Grand Lodge<sup>1</sup>, which might open a "door" to English Masonry; but, even then, this would in any case only be realisable in the fairly long term!

With regard to Brother Mercier, what you tell me corresponds well with the impression I had; I believe, like you, that this defect which I pointed out in his work, and which indeed contains a little of the "spirit of the system", should be corrected little by little through reflection. For your project for the "True Experts", it is necessary to make one point: the "servants" are in reality something quite different from the Deacons; they are the subordinate employees who can never have any other degree than that of Apprentice, and who, moreover, do not take part in the work and only enter the Lodge when they are called upon to pay them a commission.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> N. of T.: Grande Loge Nationale de France, that recognised by the United Grand Lodge of England.



I heard about the vote of the Convent of the Grand Orient on the question of the Sisters of the Human Right; the minority, in spite of everything, was stronger than would have been desirable.... It seems that the speaker emphasised the initiatory aspect of the matter, using my article on female initiation; it was, moreover, Lepage who asked me to write it for this occasion.

I quite agree with your opinion of Marius Lepage's ritual; it should certainly not be followed in its oversimplification; he seems to have been struck by the often clumsy and more or less ridiculous way in which the "walks" of which he speaks are conducted, but it goes without saying that a solution can be found to remedy this without simply suppressing them; the relations which you have established with the ancient mysteries are entirely justifiable. It is very detrimental to always bear the persistent influence of O. Wirth in this way, for on the other hand he is very sympathetic and certainly full of goodwill.

For the extinguishing of candles, the use of the mallete is undoubtedly an innovation which has no *raison d'être*, and I consider that in any case the candle snuffer is preferable, as it is made expressly for this purpose; but, as for the prohibition of blowing on them, as far as I know, it exists only in Mazdeism.

With regard to the elements existing in French Freemasonry which, not being able to come from the Grand Lodge of England, must have originated before it, it is rather curious that Mr. Lepage, in a letter I received the day before yesterday, also made the same reflection without my having spoken to him about it at all. He again comments to me on the book *The Genesis of Freemasonry*, which seems to have been preceded by two other books, *Early Masonic Pamphlet* and *The Early Masonic Catechisms*, I do not know if it would be possible to obtain them, but I think it would be very important, because there are things in them totally unpublished about symbolism and operative rituals. It is in this connection that he says: "It stands out from this reading that French Freemasonry, even in its present state, is nearer to the primitive spirit of ancient Masonry than the G.-. Lodge of England. I have found in Knoop astonishing pages on this subject, especially as regards the wording of Anderson's Constitutions". On the other hand, you will see in my next reviews that I have made an allusion to the plausible anteriority of French Freemasonry, following a note in *Masonic Light*. Another thing still: I have been impressed by the fact that the French "Tracing Board" is of an incontestably older character than the English; what I pointed out to you last time, about the more recent date of the latter in its present form, provides otherwise a sufficient explanation.

For your reflections on the same subject, it is quite certain that the impression made by French Masons visiting foreign Lodges is born above all by the fact that everything is done there with a seriousness and a dignity to which they are not accustomed; this is certainly not the proof of a greater understanding, but it is nevertheless not at all unimportant. As to the explanation of this attitude of foreign Masons, I believe that the practice of exoteric rites, at least to some extent (since they are naturally much reduced among Protestants), must probably contribute not a little to it.

The absence of ancient documents in France is, no doubt, rather singular, the more so as it is not to be supposed that they have been subjected to a destruction like that which took place in England between 1717 and 1723, and to which some, however, escaped; but it must be said that it does not seem possible to find more than documents concerning the Lodges which existed in France in the first half of the eighteenth century and even a little later (approximately up to the foundation of the Grand Orient); I do not know too much how this can be appraised....On the other hand, if it were a question of a Freemasonry introduced into

France in 1688, it would not be so ancient, but neither would it be notably earlier than 1717, which is essential to the question before us. I would also point out that, if this Masonry was "Scottish", it would show that this designation has not been applied primarily to the higher degrees as is generally pretended. It is evident that, if rites of different origin agree on certain points, this provides at least a strong premise that these points should be regarded as incontestable; I do not say a certainty because, nevertheless, there may have been among these rites later "contaminations".

Brother Mercier is quite right in attaching great importance to the symbolism of numbers, and I think, like you, that it is very interesting to introduce them as often as possible into the rituals as you see fit. For the number of the questions of the instruction of the three degrees, the distribution is  $3 \times 33 + 1$  and should be quite easy to realise; it seems to me, like you, that it is therefore quite right to ask for the sacred word in the last question of the third degree and to have the answer followed by the "sign of horror". Regarding the sacred word, I would like to ask you something: the verb meaning "to build" in Hebrew is *banah*, but, in the lexicon I have at hand, I cannot find the derived noun (which in any case must not be very different from the Arabic *bannâ*, "builder"); could you verify, or have it verified, which is the exact form? Let's see the reason: in the English form of the word, the first two syllables at least are correct, while it is not so in the others; but the third one seems to me still disfigured, and I would like to be able to analyse what exactly it consists of...

As far as the ritual itself is concerned, I fully approve, for the first degree, of the arrangements which fix the number of answers to be made by the recipient at  $15 = 12 + 3$ , completing this number as you indicated in your last letter. As for the number of things that "go by three", one could very well, in fact, leave it at 33 but, let it be understood, on condition that one does not do as Ragon did who, in order to enumerate it as much as possible, has introduced ternaries which are not of the slightest interest from the symbolic point of view, not to speak of those which are purely fanciful or imaginary. For the latter, I want to speak above all of those which are supposedly drawn from Eastern traditions: either the things mentioned are deformed beyond recognition, or they themselves do not correspond to anything real: it must be said that, in the present day, not much is known of these traditions, and that the imagination has often been abused in their regard.... I hope that, for the rituals of the second and third degrees, you will also be able to find the means of introducing the other numbers as you have done for the number 3 in that of the first degree; for the rest, we can return to it when the projects are more advanced; but I see that, for the third at least, you think that this can be ready fairly quickly; surely it is for the second that there is more to do....

I was completely unaware of what you say about the 14 hills of San Francisco and "Twin Peaks"; it is quite curious indeed, but what is also curious, from another point of view, is the insistence, which I must have pointed out somewhere, with which the founders of the United States have introduced the number 13 wherever they could!

A. Coën<sup>2</sup> gave a lecture on the 24th October in Laval, in a white tenida, on "The evolution of Christianity"; I am rather curious to know in what way he has been able to deal with this subject...

Very fraternally to you.

---

<sup>2</sup>Antonio Coën. N. of the T.

Cairo, 26 December 1948

Dearest Brother,

Yesterday I received your letter of 14th December; but what happened to the preceding one, which I was unaware of when I spoke to Brother Maridort, is even more annoying than a pure and simple loss: owing to the abbreviated formula of greeting, because it seemed incomprehensible, it was intercepted by the censorship, which caused a request for explanations, and a disturbance for M. Lings (because of the address); for my part, I got off with sending the translation with all its letters. It is something we could hardly have foreseen in a country where Freemasonry is not at all concealed, and where it has even, as in England and for similar reasons, an almost "official" character; but obviously we cannot demand that all officials be omniscient... I would also ask you, so that there may be no further risk of this happening again, to be careful not to put up anything that might unnecessarily intrigue people and cause them entirely unjustified worries. The most annoying thing is that, although they have promised to forward this letter to me, I have not yet got it, though I wonder if it has not been mislaid in any office; I shall try to claim it through a police officer of my acquaintance. If, however, it is definitely lost, I shall tell you next time, as, fortunately, I see that you could repeat what it contained without too much effort; I am at least glad to know that my two letters have reached you safely, as it would certainly have been much more difficult for me to reconstitute all that I had written to you....

Thank you for the "Blazons of Death", which are really very curious and make one think a lot about hermetic symbolism; I was waiting for what you intend to tell me about the "Blazons of the Rooster" to comment more on the subject. Could you tell me who the saint on the reverse is? Despite the lion that accompanies him, I don't think it is St. Mark; I would rather think of St. Jerome, but I am not at all sure. What I find particularly striking about this other engraving is the shape of the mountains which, despite the great differences in the "technique" of the drawing, are rather strangely reminiscent of certain Taoist landscapes.

As for the Hebrew name meaning "builder", your delay is entirely justifiable and has, in short, no great inconvenience; now I can explain why it is not found as a distinct name in the lexicon I have, since it is really only a verbal form. I see that the English form of the name is much less distorted than the others, and not only because the ending has become mute; this confirms what I think, and basically it is only about the correctness of the vowel O that I had doubts, because of the Arabic form which is different; in short, the correct transcription of the whole would therefore be: "*Mah ha-bônah*".<sup>1</sup>

Of course, it is with great pleasure that I will answer, to the best of my ability, the questions you put to me concerning my latest articles; there are indeed things to which I have made only incomplete allusions, not only because I could not dwell on them indefinitely, but also sometimes with intention, for, as you can imagine, I do not wish to imitate J. B.'s way of proceeding in his book; the reasons for which he pretends to justify it do not entirely convince me!

It is a pity that Brother Marty cannot get his project ready as quickly as he thought; one thing that surprises me is that Cerf, as Maridort told me, seems to think that there will be difficulties in adopting it, which, however, does not seem to indicate the way in which the events of the last Convent happened; let us hope that these suppositions are in vain.... Be that as it may, in order not to wait for some time more or less

---

<sup>1</sup>This seems to be stated in the original French. N. of the T.

I find your idea of sending your project to our friends in Italy excellent, since you now possess several transcribed copies; I would therefore ask you to send it to Brother Corrado Roc., via Luca Giordano, [...], Naples (it will perhaps be safer for him to recommend it). Having taken cognizance of it, he will pass it on to Brother Giuseppe Palomba, professor at the University of Naples, who is a dignitary of the Grand Orient and who intends to present it to the authorities of the Palazzo Giustiniani in view of what he intends to do; it is especially for this reason that the matter is quite urgent. Thank you in advance, as well as for the other copy of which you have announced the sending and for the project of the third degree (I think it will be good to recommend it too, as well as the minutes of the Convent when they appear). In this connection, another thing still pending in my mind: my old friend Brother Emmanuel Hillel writes to me that he would like to be informed of the project which will be submitted to the study of the Lodges: I do not know if we should send it to him "by right" in his capacity as a dignitary of the Delphes Lodge (Orient of Alexandria), or if we will send it only to the Lodge; in the latter case, I hope that it will be possible for you to send him a copy (when it is ready and printed, naturally, since there is no urgency), and, so as not to forget it later, I am enclosing his address now: [...], Saint Jean Le-Thomas (La Manche).

I have nothing more important to tell you for the moment; as for the rest, it will obviously have to wait until I have your previous letter one way or the other.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 13 January 1949**

Dearest Brother,

Your letter of 9th November finally reached me ten days ago; moreover, I think you will already know it from Brother Maridort if you have had occasion to see him in the meantime.

Clavelle has not spoken to me of the two books quoted by J. B. in any of his letters I have received, and therefore does not seem to be missing; perhaps he has forgotten; at any rate, I have asked him to do so when he replies to my last.

There is some doubt as to the exact place of the annual assembly of the Druids: it could have been in the country of the Carnutes or on their borders, because of the double meaning of the Latin expression "*in finibus*" used by Caesar; incidentally, I have said something about this in my article on "The triple Druidic enclosure" (June 1929). In any case, your points about the Biturigos and Bordeaux are curious, and the one about York seems to me even clearer. On the other hand, as I pointed out in "The Land of the Sun" (January 1936), it should be noted that the Templars often chose for their settlements places where prehistoric vestiges, megalithic monuments or others were found; there is in all this the sign of a "continuity" that must go back a long way in time... It is curious also that the ancients often united Druidism and Pythagoreanism; this sort of affinity which they observed between the two might well have existed also in a case like that of York.

I don't quite know why I am thinking at this moment of a strange thing, of which I unfortunately cannot find the reference, and which you point out at least by way of curiosity: someone, although I don't remember who, has revealed that, in the documents of the

In the Middle Ages concerning the building of churches, mention is made on numerous occasions of workmen who fell from the scaffolding, working on the vault, but who otherwise escaped unharmed from their fall; and I found it strange that so many people should fall from so high a height without ever getting hurt! I wonder if these so-called accidents were not in reality a disguised way of indicating something connected with a "trial of the air"?

It is precisely in Granet's "*Danses et légendes*", volume 2, pages 549-550, that we find a description of the "passage of Yu"; it is not, moreover, very clear, and I suppose it must be due to a defect in the translation. I seem to remember that there is, in one of Fr. Wiegner's works (but which one? I don't have it here to verify it) a figure representing "an alchemist performing the passage of Yu".

It is curious, as you point out, that the quantity of 108 millimetres is found for the length of the cord expressed in the metric system; but it seems to me that the question which might be raised in this connection is rather that of the nature of the relations existing between that metric system and the ancient measurements: why is the metre nearly equal to three feet (more exactly to three feet and an inch)? The definition of the metre is well known, but is it known how, originally, the length of the foot was determined and what it actually corresponded to? This is, above all, what would have to be investigated, since I do not think that those who established the metric system could have had the idea of "establishing" the length of the metre in order to make certain "coincidences" possible.

As for the direction of movement of the officers, it is clear that it can only apply from the opening proclamation; it would be logical that, as you say, it should be the same for all the members of the Lodge when they have to move, although I have never seen any precise indication on this point. As far as the direction of travel in the second degree is concerned, Brother Mordvinoff's account is accurate, but it does not yet seem to settle the question completely.

Your idea about the "power of the name" is certainly right, and the reminder of the definition of the "duties" of the officers could also be compared with the importance that the Chinese Tradition attaches to "correct designations". For the officers called "*by name*", I now understand the sense of your point, and I think you are also right on this point. It is certainly a mistake to put the surname before the given name; this is only a very modern and essentially profane usage (administrative papers, etc.), which I find all the more shocking as the expression "given name" itself means precisely "before surname", and it would obviously be more normal to call the recipient "Profane" rather than "Sir", which in the end means nothing.

For the three Orders of knighthood, I think we should look at the ones you have chosen, and then also include in the formula "most ancient and most honourable".

As for the priority of night over day, there are, as you may have already seen, some indications in "*La Droite et la Gauche*", but one could well point out a few more: thus, for the "days" of Genesis, evening is named before morning; also following Islamic usage, sunset marks the beginning of the day. The expression "*high time*" means exactly noon; it is also "*high twelve*", and likewise "*low twelve*" for midnight. As for the relation between noon and midnight with the two solstices, it is probably on this side that we should look for the real reason for the work "from noon to midnight"; we should only ask ourselves why this work is done during the descending period (of the day or of the year, it is the same thing from the symbolic point of view); but it seems to me that this question would not be impossible to answer.

I will try, for my part, to think about it as well.

On a call for papers which Maridort sent me, I saw that the imprint of the seal was indeed smaller than the one which you yourself sent me before. What you have found concerning J.K.'s will is, in short, still only a hypothesis, and I cannot say to what extent it is plausible, in case he belonged to the Lodge (?) it would change things, first of all because of his condemnation, and then because of J.K.'s foreign status; it is to be hoped that you will be able to tell me how far it is plausible that he belonged to the Lodge. K.; we must hope that you will be able to find out something more when you return to the same library; I do not think that historians have been so much occupied with this personage, whom I must admit I was completely unaware of before Clavelle spoke to me of him, or before his portrait by Dürer.

There is indeed a certain similarity between the orientation of the Nile and that of the Rhone, although in the opposite direction (South-North and North-South), and also between the situation of Cairo and that of Arles in relation to the delta of these two rivers, facts which had never struck me before; but as for the position of Salon in relation to the Rhone, I do not see it clearly enough to be able to say anything.

Concerning the secret name of Rome, I have seen many hypotheses, but none of them seemed to me very convincing: some have supposed that it was simply the inversion of "Roma", that is to say, "Amor", which is perhaps only too easy a fantasy; others have claimed that this name was that of "*Ops Consivia*", which would have been, it seems, a tutelary divinity of Rome, but of which I know nothing at all. Still other suppositions must have been conjectured, but I do not remember any more, and in short no one knows what it really is; this name must have been lost eventually, probably from the disappearance of the ancient priestly colleges along with the establishment of Christianity. In any case, the reason why this name was secret (and it is probable that the case of Rome was not, in this respect, the only one) is that the enemies who had succeeded in knowing it, could have used it to occupy the city, since the knowledge of the true name of a being (or of any "entity") gives in a certain way power over him, because this name is identified with his very essence of which it is the most adequate expression.

The connection between comedy in the ancient Greeks and the "carnival feasts" seems to me to be quite justified; however, in order to be more solid, it would be necessary to have further details about the origin of comedy and about the circumstances in which it was first performed; this should not be impossible to find, but I have nothing here on the subject; the very name of the comedy indicates that it must have been connected with a feast, but this is not a sufficient indication.

For the closing of the third degree, I consider, as you do, that a "word found" and a "substitute sign" do not go very well together, but I do not quite see what could be done for the sign: it seems to me that the best thing would be simply to keep the usual acclamation, especially as the word and the acclamation are in fact two clearly different things. On the other hand, the inclusion of the sign of horror after the sign of recognition, as M. Lepage has done, seems to me to be fine and could be kept, but it is really difficult to insert the sacred word between the two as you have considered. It would also be good if the exclamation accompanying the sign of horror were in the Hebraic form, which is "*Adonai Eloha*", as I have lately pointed out to Clavelle following his work on Elijah.

I did not know that J.C. had asked you to deal with the ritual of the second degree: it is not an easy job, but it is obvious that you could not refuse. What you have considered for the journeys seems to me to be very good, but it would be necessary to look even more closely into the question of tools, which is really the only point that really needs to be examined.

doubtful: what do you think of the suggestions made by Brother Menard in the *Symbolism of July*?

On the subject of rituals, I received the review of the Convent a few days ago, but I have not yet had time to read it.

I think you must have read in the July *Speculative Mason* the article on "The Letter G and the Swastika": there are some very curious facts there, and I intend to write something about it; what surprised me a good deal is the mention of the relation of the digits of the number 345 to the sides of the right triangle, a fact which we spoke of some time ago. This makes me think of something else (it is about *God* and *iod*, a relationship which J. B. has been kind enough to reproach me with, as if I had been responsible for it): the three letters of the word *God* were formerly considered as representing the initials of three Hebrew words, "*Gomer*, *Oz*, *Dabar*" (Beatitude, Strength, Wisdom); I have found it at least in this way, but *Gomer*, with this meaning, seems to me surprising, and I think, from similarity with the Arabic, that it should rather be *Gomeh*; unfortunately, I have not been able to find any indication which would enable me to be sure of one or the other; would it be possible for you to verify, or have you verified, which it is? Thank you in advance for this information.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 23 January 1949**

Dearest Brother,

I received at the same time, only three days ago, your two letters of 29th December and 6th January. -There is no need to apologise so much for what has happened, for these are things which it is hardly possible to foresee; otherwise it was more annoying than really serious, and, as you will see from my last letter, everything is finally back to order!

I am glad to hear that you have been interested in Reghini's book on Numbers<sup>(1)</sup> and in this connection, and apart from what can be gleaned from it for the second degree (that was especially the reason why I had thought it useful for you to know about it); I wanted to ask you if you could not do a review for the magazine, as I have not yet been able to deal with it myself so far, and I have so many books in backlog that I am very much afraid I shall never be able to get through it all....

For the "Tracing Board" of the third degree, I must say that, if I knew of the existence of the English chart, I have never seen the drawing of a French chart for that degree, and that, moreover, Vuillaume<sup>2</sup> expressly gives (Pl 2. 4) the figure of the coffin with the mention "Tracing of the Master's Lodge", That explains what I had written to you on that subject. Now, according to what you tell me, I see that you have found a picture in other manuals, which I probably do not have; but then another question arises: what should be, under such conditions, the respective places of the picture and the coffin? It seems to me that one possible solution would be this: the coffin is placed on the painting itself, so that the latter only appears when the coffin is raised; what do you think? Otherwise, we would have to suppose two different flats for the reception, which, I believe, does indeed exist in some rituals; and, on the other hand, the coffin has no reason to exist in third degree services which do not involve reception, so that then, if there was no picture, the

---

<sup>1</sup>Arturo Reghini, *I numeri sacri nella tradizione pitagorica massonica*. N. of the T.

<sup>2</sup>Refers to Vuillaume's *Manuel Maçonnique*. N. of the T.

central place would be left empty. -Returning to the English picture, if you have not been able to read the inscription, it is perhaps because you have not taken into account that the English alphabet differs from the French alphabet in that it counts *q, j, k, v, w* as distinct letters; the distinction between *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*, seems also to give it a less archaic character.

For the position of the three lights in relation to that of the principal Officers, I think it is clearest to trace the accompanying figure, where it is seen that the arrow going from each light to the corresponding tray is well directed in the direction of the sun's march. It might be said that each light, or the influence which it represents, is thus received in a certain sense as a sunbeam by the Officer to whom it corresponds.

For the four cardinal virtues, I do not remember whether there was a very precise intention in the note to the translation of the "Philosophumena"<sup>(3)</sup> ... "apart from the idea that the moral point of view is only a particular application, and that a transposition is always necessary to arrive at a meaning of a more principled order; as for a relationship with the four Aristotelian causes, that is not impossible, but I had never thought of it and I do not see how it could be established term by term;

Would you have any idea about it yourself? In any case, the figurations in the English Lodges of the four cardinal virtues would in a sense complete the three lights in so far as these can be related to the three theological virtues.

As far as the two-leaf gate is concerned, it seems to me that it should be required above all for reasons of symmetry, in accordance with the position of the two columns on each side of the gate; if it has only one leaf, one could quite logically think that it should not open on the same side, depending on whether one is working on the first or the second degree!

I suppose that your letter written by Riom must be the one that has been withheld so long, but nevertheless nothing is found there concerning the times of Christ's birth and death; as to the former, the correspondence between midnight and the winter solstice is evident, but, for the latter, three hours after noon cannot have any relation to the date of Easter closely following the vernal equinox, for the corresponding hour would be six hours in the morning; but I do not know whether that has any bearing on the question which you think you have asked, and which you have probably forgotten, for I do not think there is another letter of yours which has been lost. -Nor do I know of any *Dionysiacs* of Nono other than the portion which has been translated by Marius Meunier, but I also have the impression that there must be some very interesting things in them from the symbolical point of view. Your remark regarding the letters B and J, as initials of place-names, is no doubt curious, but I wonder what consequences could justly be drawn from it; in this connection, perhaps you are also aware that in the degree of Knight of the East, the same letters are taken as signifying Judah and Benjamin.

-In the article on the Archaeometer of which you speak, it is not an *iod* but a *lamed* that is indicated as being described by the Master's march, which is quite different and seems to me otherwise correct; I do not quite see what the Z could mean in that case. In fact, the Z appears in the fourth degree, where it is given as the initial of a Hebrew name, but I do not know who has issued the hypothesis that it would actually be rather that of the Greek ζωε.... "Life". One should also be suspicious of the deformations of Hebrew letters which have sometimes occurred, such as the result of replacing them by Latin letters to which they have no relation, as in the case where an *iod* has been changed to S, when the two letters have an opposite meaning, the first representing unity and the second multiplicity!

I do not believe that there is an "Order of Za-Ga-Zig" which would be a different organisation, but only a "Za-Ga-Zig Temple" belonging to the "Ancient big Order of the Noires of the Mystics rite", (?) The rite has the particularity of being reserved to the Masons of the

---

<sup>3</sup>A work once erroneously attributed to Origen of Alexandria and now to Hippolytus of Rome. N. of the T.



third degree (in the United States, they are otherwise extremely numerous); I seem to remember that President Harding was a member of this "Za-Ga-Zig Temple". Actually, Zagazig, or more correctly *Ez-Zaqaziq*, is the name of a city in Egypt; as for writing it by separating the syllables, it is obviously pure fantasy!

King Solomon's Temple Lodge" was founded, I believe, on the initiative of the historian R. F. Gould, but, notwithstanding that, I do not think it has ever been considered as a Lodge of Research; on the other hand, it is possible that its foundation may be somewhat later than the publication of Rev. Lawrence's book. An article on the subject appeared at the time in the London "Freemason", but, though I must surely have it somewhere, I am utterly unable to find it at present; there is so much which lack of space prevents me from arranging in a sufficiently accessible manner....

The "inventions" of I. C.<sup>4</sup> may be harmless in themselves, but this excess of imagination is equally a little annoying; nevertheless, one has to go over many things thinking that, without him, the realisation of the "Grande Triade" would certainly not have been possible, and that is a consideration which deserves to be taken into account.

The fact of belonging simultaneously to several Obediences is certainly nothing abnormal in itself, but, in the special case of which you speak, I do not see that the National Grand Lodge, given its relations with the Grand Lodge of England, could allow one of its members to continue at the same time to be a member of an Obedience not recognised by the latter, for English Masons are very strict in this respect; I have put the question in this respect to Brother Peilon, from whom I have just received a letter, and who will be able to tell us with more certainty what is in fact the case.

Maridort sent me a letter from Brother Mercier, in which he speaks to me about what you say and about some other questions; I suppose that when he spoke to you about it, he had not yet decided to write to me directly. I have not yet had time to answer him, but of course I am going to do so at once; you can ask him to tell you what I would say to him in this regard, so as to avoid rewriting the same things twice. According to what he says, it seems that the adoption of the French Rite by "Akademos" is already definitively decided; it is perhaps better in one sense, for, since the constitution of the Grand Priory of Gaul, the Grand Orient should no longer be recognised as being in regular possession of the Rectified Rite; I think, moreover, that this is one of the reasons why the attempt made by Gloton in Switzerland could end in success, even if it were addressed, not to the Grand Alpine Lodge, but to the Grand Priory of Helvetia, which is in fact the only one concerned. -Concerning the Strict Observance, against which there has been perhaps a little too much prevention on the part of many,

Do you know if the text of Baron de Hund (whose name is indeed rather curious) has ever been deciphered? I have that text, but I have never had the time or the patience to try to understand much of it; I don't even know what language it is written in, Latin or German, although Latin seems more likely to me.

What you tell me about modern Christianity is certainly very fair; but, for what was written in the newspapers on the occasion of the last Christmas festival, I must confess that I do not know what it is all about....

For the Gospel passages you quote concerning Peter, the interpretation of them is certainly not easy, and I do not know how far their application can be extended, although, at least in principle, it could always be said that Peter represents exotericism; as for the appellation "son of Jonah" thus exceptionally employed, it must answer to some particular intention, but what seems most clear is the relation which may exist between the very meaning of those passages and the symbolism of the whale.

Returning to Dürer, I wonder whether, in the "Blazons of the Cockerel", the strange shape of the lion's tail does not conceal some numerical symbolism, but otherwise I would be unable to justify this idea in a somewhat precise manner; as for the inclined position of the shield, I believe it is very frequent in German heraldic figurations. -The shape of the coiled vine tendrils on the lamp of "St. Jerome in his cell" also seems to be a very common one in German heraldic figures.

---

<sup>4</sup>It appears to be Ivan Cerf. N. of the T.

It is often in these apparently insignificant details that many things are hidden, but it is not always easy to find the key! On "The Knight, Death and the Devil", I have seen its reproduction at another time, but I do not remember the details; I therefore accept your offer to send it to me, and I thank you in advance; in the number of the *Études Carmelitaines* on Satan, only one fragment has been presented, the figure of the Devil, which looks very much like that of a pig, with something of a goat too, and perhaps of an ass.

What you tell me of the reasons for fearing that the draft ritual will not be adopted seems indeed a little disturbing; but it seems to me that the essential thing would be to be able to admit it "officially" by the Convent, even if, afterwards, one could not insist that it be observed by all the Lodges in a perfectly uniform manner. -Your idea of giving more importance to "verbal" forms than to "plastic" forms is no doubt in conformity with present needs and could remove many difficulties; but how exactly can this be done without in any way altering the proper character of a "builders" ritual? For the formula now used in "Chéops", the supposition you make about the way in which J.B. has known it is indeed very plausible.

Thank you for the dispatch to come; will you be so kind as to thank Marty also for coming up with that idea for the typed copy.

I think you will not forget to speak to me again next time about what you say about the initiatory consecration and about your reflections on the mode of action of the rites.

I thank you for your good wishes and send you all mine in turn, only regretting that they can only reach you a little late; the last time I wrote to you, I was so preoccupied with responding to so many things that I forgot that it was the beginning of the year!

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 12 March 1949.**

Dearest Brother,

I received five or six days ago your letter of February 24th with the ritual of the third degree; this reassured me because, thinking that you would not have to do all this work, which indeed perfectly justifies your delay, I was beginning to fear that something had gone astray. You speak of my letter of 23rd January, but I think I understand that you must also have received the letter of the 13th, since it is in it that I reply to yours of 29th December.

I have not yet received the copy of the ritual of the first degree, but that is not surprising; I knew some time ago that the one you sent to Brother Rocco had reached him perfectly, and I think he must have written to you since then. Thank you in advance for sending this copy and for the other things you mention; Maridort will no doubt send me Dürer's engraving soon, if he has not already done so.

I think you will very well be able to get the review of Reghini's book, and that you really have no reason to distrust you in this way. As for the "Gabaon" article, there are certainly interesting things to comment on; I don't think he has ever written much about it, or at least I am not aware of it, and, apart from Ragon, I don't know for certain what you might find. I see in the ritual that you have translated this word as "hill", which is quite accurate, but a rounded hill is more accurate, since it is the idea of "roundness" that is expressed by its root, as I wrote to him recently.

to Maridort, who had also asked me a question on this subject and who, not knowing the exact Hebrew spelling, had established relations with other roots which were totally different. I have no doubt that the main reason for the choice of this name is the manifestation of God to Solomon "in this place" (2 Kings, 3; 2 Chronicles, 1), especially as it has a direct connection with the project of the construction of the Temple, and you would certainly do well to mention it in the ritual, or rather to remember it when this name is given to the new Master; I realise, while performing the ritual, that this is already indicated at the beginning of the legend of Hiram: possibly, the text of Joshua that you have quoted could also be included. I have just received Vuillaume's book: he mentions the name of Gibeon only in the French Rite, I do not know for what reason, and speaks of the role of the Gibeonites as guardians and keepers of the Ark of the Covenant (cf. 1 Chronicles, 21) (which is in fact another reason to add to the previous ones); this is the only explanation he gives and, as far as the meaning is concerned, he translates by "*habitaculum exesum*" in a two-word breakdown which is entirely fabulous.

One point I wanted to point out to you, although it is not of too much importance, is this: in France, it is customary to say Hiram-Abi, and there is no doubt nothing more than the preservation of this form; but in England they say Hiram-Abif, which puzzles people a good deal. Let us see the explanation: Abi evidently means "my father"; as for Abif, it is a deformation of Abin, "his father"; both expressions are found in the Bible, and in both cases the possessive pronoun relates to Hiram, king of Tyre, who, it seems, gave the other Hiram this name of "Father" as a mark of respect, for he was certainly not his son in the proper sense of the word. On the other hand, I do not think that the name of Hiram's father was *Aor* (light) as you have written; I have always seen it as *Har* or *Hor*, which is usually interpreted as "fire", which cannot be strictly accurate, but which at any rate expresses the idea of "heat", which seems to have a quite direct connection here with the working of metals. As for the name Hiram itself, it is very curious that it is presented in many variants: in some biblical passages, in fact, it is found under the forms of Hûram and Hirôm; for the rest, I do not know exactly what we could get out of it...

As far as the ritual itself is concerned, I find it very good as a whole, and I do not see many remarks to make, except perhaps on one important point: it concerns the instruments of the murder of Hiram, since there are several different versions as far as the first two are concerned; I do not know exactly where you have got the one you have adopted, but I do not think it is the most correct one. In my opinion at least, that must be the way it is: First, 24-inch ruler (blow to the throat); second, square (blow to the heart); third, mallet (blow to the head).

Thus, the progression follows that of the divisions of time; first, 24-hour day; second, season (quarter of the year); third, annual cycle (based on the cylindrical shape of the mallete). This temporal symbolism is here far from negligible, especially if we consider in certain respects a connection with the formula of the *Shatapatha Brâhmana* according to which "Prajâpati is the Year", at least under a certain aspect, which also has its correspondence with the number of bricks used in the construction of the Vedic altar; You will perhaps remember, in this connection, that I spoke of the close connection between the sacrifice of *Prajâpati* (or *Purusha*) and the slaying of Hiram and Osiris in my article "Gathering the Scattered" (October-November 1946 issue). It should be noted that the 24-inch rule is somewhat of an "anomaly", most probably deliberate, since it is normally denary divisions that suit rectilinear measurements, while duodenary divisions apply to circular measurements. I recall that, in *Speculative Mason*, someone raised a rather naive question: "What has become of the 24-inch rule in French Freemasonry after the adoption of the metric system?" The truth is that this measure has never been changed and should not change, no more so than that of the four inches for the length of the cord of which we have already spoken.... In the past, in Thebah, I gave an exposition on the symbolism of the legend of Hiram.

I must keep some notes, but I am quite unable to find them at present; in any case, if I remember anything, I will tell you about it next time, but it is above all on this question of the tools that serve as weapons in the third degree that I think it is necessary for you to devote your attention.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 30 April 1949**

Dearest Brother,

It is some time since I received your letter of 31 March-10 April; I think Brother Maridort must have let you know, as I asked him to do, for I foresaw that it would be quite impossible for me to answer you immediately, being obliged to finish first an article for the *Cahiers du Sud* which had been urgently requested of me for quite some time. Thank you for all the things you enclosed with this letter; I was a little uneasy about the initiation ritual which, in the previous letter, you told me you would send me separately by ordinary mail, but since I found it with this one, I think that nothing is missing.

With regard to Gibeon (the Hebrew pronunciation of which is actually *Gibe'on*), the exact translation is indeed, as you say, "*round hill*" or "*rounded eminence*"; this form is certainly frequent (though not absolutely constant) for the representations of the "sacred mountain", and it is also that of the tumuli which, moreover, may be considered as images of this same mountain. The rounded shape on the summit is symbolically related to the human skull and to the crown of the head; I think I have alluded to this in an article, but I do not remember in which one. The correct number is 131; I do not see at the moment what other names have, in Hebrew, the same number, though naturally there may be more. I wonder whether what has caught Clavelle's attention might not simply be the story concerning the numbers 1331 and 313 found in G. R. Dell'Acqua's very fabulous pamphlet, of which I reviewed in the September 1948 issue. As for the relation to the idea of "vengeance", it does not seem to me to be entirely clear, in spite of the passages in "*2 Samuel*" which you indicate and which I have just re-read; independently of this, your interpretation of vengeance is certainly correct, but I do not think that we can say that all the degrees following the third are, indistinctly, degrees of vengeance; usually, this character is attributed in a special way to the degrees of "Chosen". As for the relationship between verses (2, 23) and (20,12), which I quoted on page 4 of *Le Roi du Monde*, there is certainly something curious about it, but, at least for the moment, I do not quite see how we can justify it...

The *Ming* character consisting of the sun and the moon means "light"; the other *Ming* terms meaning "name", "command", "destiny", are written with two entirely different characters; but it is no less certain that, between homophones such as these, there is often a certain relation of meaning (on these *Ming* words, see *La Grande Triade*, pages 116 and 122). As for the character which appears on Chinese sacrificial aprons, I could not say, having never seen any reproduction; but it seems to me, at least, very plausible that it must be *i*, unity, in connection with the Pole Star, which would be associated here with the seven stars of the Great Bear; however, it could also be the word *Yi*, which means cyclic mutation, as in the title of the "*Yi- King*".

The Greeks assimilated the Tyrian *Melkart* to Herakles, but the relation between these names seems to me very doubtful; many fantastic interpretations have been given to the name of Herakles (including Jacolliot's "*Hara-Kâla*"), and that of Fabre d'Olivet, without being absolutely impossible, is in any case very hypothetical. On the other hand, his explanation of Melkart's name is certainly wrong: it is not Melck-Aretz, King of the Earth, but a contraction of Melek-Earth, King of the City.

Brother Roc. informed me that he received perfectly well all that you sent him, and that because of influenza he was not able to answer you as promptly as he would have wished; but I see that his letter did not take so long to reach you. As for the solution which he considered, otherwise without much hope, for the annexation of the projected Lodge, I then passed it on to Maridort and, on inquiry, the thing is indeed impossible for the reason you think, and will be so as long as there are official relations between the Grand Lodge of France and the Grand Orient of Italy (where the situation, moreover, is more confused than ever, following the disputes which have arisen after the death of Grand Master Guido Lai); I informed Rocco of this perfectly predictable negative response and he told me that he was not at all surprised.

As for the instruments of Hiram's death, I see, from what you tell me about the "Emulation" ritual, that there are variants, but the more I think about it, the more it seems to me that the version I have indicated to you is definitely the most correct. The "pincer", where it is used, is certainly a lever, the shape of which does not really lend itself to any relation with that of the compass. As for the expression according to which the Master asks to be tested by the square and the compass, there is no doubt that it is something else, and that it is related to the symbolism which I explained in *La Grande Triade* (including the figuration which was detailed there more particularly with regard to the form of the ancient Chinese ritual vestments). The objection to the blow on the shoulder comes from the fact that it would not be in direct correspondence with any of the subtle centres of the human being, unlike the others. As for the blow on the head, it seems to me that it should be given more exactly on the forehead, and not on the crown of the head, since the consideration of the latter should not really intervene except in the degree of *Royal Arch*, because of the supra-individual character of the centre concerned. Incidentally, the blow on the forehead makes me think of the rite (nowadays fallen into disuse, it seems) which consisted in striking with a silver hammer the forehead of the Pope who had just died; but these two rites are, in a way, in an inverse relation, since here it was a question of a last effort at "revivification"; we find, then, still in this the double power of the *vajra* or of the instruments which symbolise it. After sending my last letter, I realised that I must have explained myself insufficiently with regard to the 24-inch rule: in reality, 24 inches constitute two feet, and it is obvious that if we say 24 inches, it is to indicate explicitly the allusion to the division of the day into 24 hours. On the other hand, what is really unusual is the very fact that the foot, as a rectilinear measure, is divided into 12 inches and not 10; we need to know where this could have come from and, as I pointed out to you on another subject (4 inches = 108 millimetres), the question of the origin of the ancient measures of length raises a number of enigmas that do not seem very easy to solve... The day, being in reality a cycle, has nothing strange in its duodenary division, but only in its representation by the length of a ruler does its application reflect an equally duodenary division. In China, the length of the foot has varied, in the course of the ages, correlatively to that of the "average man" (the height of the mast of the royal chariot), but it has always been correctly divided into 10 inches and not into 12.

I have carefully reread your "definitive" project for the ritual of initiation into the first degree, and this time I have not found any observations on it, even in regard to the form. Likewise, for the instruction, its arrangement for the purpose of

to get a total of 33 questions seems fine to me, and I don't really see any modifications to suggest.

I am very surprised at what you have informed me about the draft which has been sent to the study of the Lodges, and which, contrary to what you think, I have not yet seen until now; since I received your letter, I have spoken of it to Maridort, and I hope that either he or you could forward it to me. What reasons have prompted Marty to act thus, without showing anyone the last draft of this project, and how could he introduce or allow to remain in it so many incorrectnesses, not only in substance but also in form? It is extremely annoying from every point of view and, as you say, we can wonder what will happen in the next Convent; I understand very well your displeasure, after all the effort you have made to try to do something suitable. I thank you for all the explanations you have given me on the subject; it is good, indeed, that I know exactly everything concerning this matter, but on the other hand it must be clear that, even if I had had prior knowledge of the text in question, I would never have had the idea that you had of considering this as a kind of "blemish". I also understand that you must already have been surprised to note that the indications in my letter of 31 July almost all referred to modifications made by Marty, of which you were unaware at the time.

I return now to the question of the ritual now in use in the Grand Triad, but first of all, I must tell you that I am very glad of your clarifications as to the reflections you made to Mercier, for the manner in which he had related them caused serious disquiet to Clavelle and Maridort, and consequently to myself when I was made privy to them. You must, like them, do all you can to remain in the Great Triad, and it is to be hoped that, in spite of the threats of which you have spoken, you will never be obliged to leave it against your will; For the rest, in spite of the imperfect or even unpleasant things that may still exist, I think it would be impossible to find any better place, and then it is also necessary to think of the results that this could give later on, for it is clear that only little by little can we arrive at something more satisfactory, on the condition that we do not let ourselves be discouraged in the meantime.... As for the ritual in question, there is certainly something there, after all that you have explained to me, which is quite disturbing for several reasons, and first of all because the way in which its origin has been presented constitutes an obvious mystification; even if we cannot discover the concrete motives and the precise intention, this observation is enough to make us seriously suspicious. It is quite clear that, as you say, there is nothing English about this ritual, or at least I see only one common point in it: the answer to the question about the Master's clothes, and it is even inaccurately translated, since it is in fact "*Yellow jacket and blue trousers*" (allusion to the compass). On the other hand, I would point out a few things that are quite incorrect: the correspondence with the elements is reversed in the second and third trips; the noises transferred from the first to the third are not justified either; the dragging chain, instead of the rope, does not correspond very much to the symbolism of the "*cable-tow*", and this alone would be almost enough to show that it cannot be an English ritual. With regard to the questions which are taken from the catechism of the Apprentice Chosen Coën, and which, moreover, are totally out of place in the ritual of a symbolic degree, it is clear that this statement is decisive; Thus, if you had not had the opportunity to find the source, perhaps I would not have thought to look for it where it is (for I must say that it is a long time since I looked at this book by Papus), but at least I realised at the outset that certain characteristic expressions, such as "Great Universal Temple", could only come from an imitation of the *Élus Coëns*;

And what can we say, in the case of a symbolic Lodge, about the substitution of a long square for the equilateral triangle? I think, like you, that unfortunately there is a good chance that J. B. is the real author of this ritual, and this is certainly not reassuring, especially when we know how common this kind of "operation" is with him. Wouldn't there be some way of getting

the replacement of this ritual by a more normal one, for example by providing J.C. (though of course I don't mean that you have to take care of it, and I think it would be better to leave this matter to someone who has a better relationship with him) with the proof of the mystification that lies at its origin, and of which he is most probably not aware?

### Opening

It would be more normal to always say East, West and South, and not West and South; it is obviously the same thing, but there is an old habit here which it seems preferable to preserve.

The question of whether the Verable should be uncovered is debatable; according to some, he should, on the contrary, always remain covered, because he is supposed to be always working in the Master's degree.

In the opening formula, it would be necessary to say: "In the Respected Lodge of St. John constituted, etc...."

"The building of our building is not very accurate; why not put "of our Temple"?

Questions to visitors. -In the answer to the 2nd question, I have always seen dungeons; Why has that word been substituted for graves? -The full answer to the third question is: "Submission to the Venerable, health, prosperity and good welcome to all the Brothers".

-The rest of the questions are missing; I guess it must be an oversight.

-----  
Initiation

Page 4, it is necessary to "fight hard against the passions".

Page 5, it seems that "To put a salutary restraint on our passions" and "to teach us to calm the ardor of our passions" are somewhat duplicated; one of the two would certainly suffice.

Journey 1. "From East to West" must be a mistake, and it seems that the opposite is necessary.

-The three journeys are not made here in the same direction, and even only the second is in the "solar" direction; it is true that there are many divergences in this respect, but the reasons for this are not very clear, and this point should perhaps be examined more closely.

The "noise discs" are really a bit too modern; why not simply keep the accessories that were in use in the old days?

3rd Journey -- It is not well understood how it is possible to carry the recipient "through the middle of the Lodge," since that middle is occupied by the square on which one should never walk; moreover, circumambulation would not be complete in such a case.

Page 11, an inadvertence to be corrected: "by the characters known only to true Masons" (and not only known).

Page 12, the mention of the square and the sword over the sacred Book must be inaccurate; it must always in reality be covered by the compass and the square, arranged in the manner which characterises the grade at which it is worked.

Page 14, the formula of the consecration should be worded in a manner exactly conforming to that of the opening: "In the Name of the Great Architect of the Universe"; and not forgetting to re-establish there "the Respected Lodge of St. John", etc.

For the questions at the end, I have already spoken to you at the time about the meanings given to the letter G. On the other hand, it is rather curious that one of the pillars built by Henoch was subsequently found again by Hermes, and it so happens that the latter is very often identified with Henoch himself; but it must be said that confusions of this kind are far from being rare in the ancient versions of the legendary history of Freemasonry: if you have found it in any document referring to such a source, we have, then, only to keep the thing as it is; the general remark on the anachronistic character of some of these matters suffices, moreover, to rule out in advance any objection to it.

You have written Athelstone; I seem to have always seen Athelstan, which must be the true spelling of this name.

One thing I am thinking of in passing: in the old days, the second degree was often designated by the name of "Expert"; although this is surely not very important, I wonder if we could not find a way of mentioning it at some point in the ritual; what do you think?

I see nothing more to point out to you, and I hope I have not missed anything important. There is but a week exactly to the Convent, and that is why I am hastening to examine all this; I hope my letter will still reach you in time before that date!

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 14 May 1949**

Dearest Brother,

I received your letter of April 17th soon after I replied to the preceding one; but since then, the preparation of my articles for the June number has obliged me to postpone my correspondence, which is why I have delayed writing to you. Of course, you can always write to me whenever you feel like commenting on any matter; I would only ask you, once and for all, to excuse me if I am ever unable to answer you at once.

Thank you for your additional explanations concerning the rituals you sent me; I have not yet received Marty's project. Nor have I had any news from Saint Jean-Le-Thomas for quite some time, which is even beginning to worry me; I cannot, therefore, tell you what Marty has done about it, and it is best to wait until further notice.

I hope, according to what you tell me, to receive your review of Reghini's book shortly; you can be sure that I will give you my honest opinion.

I have never heard of this book by Claudel that you have seen recently; Who is Abbot Tardif de Moidrey?

The German princes who supported or encouraged Luther are generally considered, I believe, as having had no more than political intentions in this, and in any case this was the opinion of Canon Paquier of whom I spoke to you last



But surely it may well be that this explanation is insufficient and that there was another reason, at least in some of them. It may even be that the reform was actually caused by "cyclical" reasons, and, as you say, the "quality" of the instruments used does not always count for much in such a case. What would be interesting to know is whether the affirmation of "free examination" was clearly taken from the original, since it is this that would open the door to all individualistic deviations; your indication of the "ternary aspect" and its applications is certainly interesting; However, it seems difficult for Protestantism, which has no real unity (this is precisely a consequence of "free examination"), to be, even beyond all consideration, on the same level as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in completing the ternary in Christianity; as for the correspondence of the three branches with the apostles Peter, John and Paul, I do not really know too much what to think about this. Be that as it may, the passages from "*Protestant Positions*" which you have quoted to me are, indeed, quite remarkable, and they surprise me as much as they do you; it seems as if some thing has now changed in the minds of several thousand Protestants, especially perhaps in those who are concerned with the question of the union of the Churches; but, To what extent could this change be interpreted as a return to, or at least an approximation of, the original spirit of the Reformation?

As for Albert of Brandenburg, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order is certainly better known than his namesake and contemporary, but I cannot tell you with which of the two Dürer had a connection; perhaps you have already been able to verify this question elsewhere. I have never known when Luther's Rosicrucian (or apparently Rosicrucian) symbol first appeared; this symbol has, moreover, a rather particular appearance: the cross is placed on a heart, and the heart has its outline on a rose; it seems to have been the proper seal of the "*Militia Crucifera Evangelica*", but the difficulty is to know whether it (which it has been attempted to revive in America) really had any connection with Rosicrucianism.

I am familiar with Jean Kleberger's portrait but, on the other hand, I am not at all familiar with those by Dürer himself, of 1499 and 1500, of which you speak to me. In the former, what is most curious, and also most enigmatic, are the three rings; this would seem to represent, in some way, the meeting of three cycles, but what cycles could they be? The interpretation you are considering is certainly not implausible, but should it be applied here only within Christianity, or in a wider domain comprising various traditional forms? We could also ask ourselves whether it is not rather a question of the meeting of three different initiations, and it would certainly be necessary to be able to establish relations with other indications in order to be more precise? As for the other portrait, what I find a little surprising is that Dürer calls himself by the epithet "Noricus", as in Kleberger, because if this epithet could have a hidden meaning, I do not think that it could have been applied at the same time to two different characters; this leads us to think that for one of them (who would then probably be Dürer), it must be considered only in its literal and geographical sense, while for the other, would it be otherwise? Clavelle, in his last letter, told me that he asked Brother Granger of Lyons to investigate in the library of his town to see if he could find anything concerning Kleberger; he was certainly a very mysterious personage, and it seems that he would have played, in a certain way, a "linking" role between different initiatory organisations, among which were those to which Dürer belonged. I could not claim that it was to him that the letter of Landolfo quoted by Reghini refers, but at least it seems to me quite probable, since we do not see to whom else it could apply so well.

Very fraternally to you.



## Letter of 10 June 1949

Dearest Brother,

I received your letter of 30th May yesterday; I heard from Clavelle that the first of my two letters had reached you, and I see that the second did not take long to do so also.

I have indeed spoken to Clavelle about the question of the review of J.B.'s book, and I thank you for having agreed to take charge of it, since it seemed necessary to me to do one, for the same reason that you considered it more urgent than that of the "*Numeri Sacri*", in which you are certainly right. Let us hope that this will not take you too long, and also that you will very soon be able to get back the books you are waiting for to finish your article on Gibeon, which Clavelle, according to what he tells me in one of his last letters, seems anxious to have without too much delay. You should not be so surprised at his insistence on asking for your collaboration, for, like him, I am convinced that you will be able to contribute interesting things; and I assure you that, as soon as we know how to write properly, the rest of the "schooling" is not really of much importance in this respect!

Do not worry about what Clavelle has told me about Brother Mercier; he has undoubtedly exaggerated the extent of some of the reflections that you have made to him, and I even have the impression that the restlessness that he has shown still persists a little in him; but, in the end, this same restlessness is rather a favourable sign as far as he is concerned, since it testifies to the interest that he takes in the work of the Great Triad.

I thank you for the correction concerning the portrait of the three rings; like you, I am completely ignorant of who Hans Tucher may be, and I have never even seen this name until now; but then it would seem, if the three rings really relate to this personage as is feasible, that he too must have played some part in the initiatory organisations of his time. As far as Clavelle has indicated to me, he has not yet been able to ascertain what precisely is meant by the function which the name "*Noricus*" would designate; I do not know, therefore, how far he is sure that it cannot be fulfilled at once by more than one character, and it is possible that at present it is only a supposition. Brother Granger must look in the library at Lyons to see if any notes concerning Kléberger are to be found there; perhaps he might discover something interesting on that side. As to the relations with the Waldensians and Calvinism to which you allude, I do not know exactly what they may be, and I hope you will be able to tell me about them later on.

As far as Protestantism is concerned, your point about the almost complete abandonment of rites is certainly quite correct and, even leaving aside all doctrinal questions, this is obviously one of the most serious shortcomings, which indicates that something essential has been lost as far as doctrine is concerned; I hope that you will be able to find more details on the question of "free examination", since it is clear that, from the traditional point of view, it is much more important than the more or less subtle theological nuances which have only been accentuated *a posteriori*, as a consequence rather than a cause of the split.

As to the non-initiatory character of the Christian rites, at least in their present state, the indications you have given me only confirm what Clavelle and I think, and also tend to indicate that it must have been so very early on, although as regards the origin itself, the question is always very obscure. It seems to me that the term used by the Byzantine Church must have the double meaning of "initiation" and "consecration" (the latter may also be of an exoteric order), as, moreover, it is the same in Sanskrit for the word "*dīkshā*", which must be translated by one or the other, according to the

cases to which it applies. The retention of the word "*Amen*" in its original Hebraic form (which is moreover common to both Christian and Islamic traditions) is certainly far from being unimportant, but I do not think that we can consider it as making up for the absence of a traditional language; this is a particularity which certainly has its reason, but, whatever we may think, we must recognise in any case that it is far from facilitating the study of the Christian tradition...

I know nothing about Abbot Tardif de Moidrey or his relations with Léon Bloy, and I must say that I have never known anything precise about the story of A.M. Roullé, which seems very strange indeed; moreover, in all that concerns La Salette, there is always a rather disturbing side to it. As for the case of Léon Bloy himself, it goes without saying that it is above all his "consequence" which is of great interest; the "authority" which tends to be attributed to him, as you say, is largely due to the influence of the Maritain group. Were you present when Cerf expressed his excessive admiration for Maritain? The proposal he made to enter into a relationship with him, and, having had the opportunity to do so, I find it particularly suspicious, because of the hostility, as bitter as it is hypocritical, which he has always displayed towards me.

I am astounded by what you tell me about Cerf's "inventions"; in spite of everything I already knew, I would not have believed that he could go so far! The most annoying thing about this story is that nothing of what he promised Clavelle has been fulfilled, and this makes me understand even better the disappointment he must have felt when he realised that everything finally came down to the occupation he has now.... I must admit, on the other hand, that I have not been able to guess who the person is that Cerf was having his imagination so use, since I have never heard of any project for a dictionary of Sanskrit terms in my work; this is something entirely new to me, and even unexpected.

You spoke of a "History of the Dukes of Burgundy", but I can't remember anything about it; could you tell me or remind me who the author is?

Very fraternally to you.

Cairo, 8 September 1949

Dearest Brother,

I apologise for having been so late in replying to you this time; I received successively, in all this time, your three letters, the first of which dates back to June 30th! But, in the meantime, I have always been very busy with things which, in one way or another, have prevented me from writing to you; I must also say that, after your first letter, I waited for your article which you mentioned to enclose with the next dispatch; moreover, I was not worried that it would take a little while, having heard from Maridort that you were then on holiday; but it is especially after it reached me that I completely lacked the time, and I think moreover that perhaps Maridort has already told you.

First of all, thank you for having given Hillel a message and for having sent me his reply, which reassured me about his health; I then wrote him a few words. As for the other problems I mentioned to you, I was not surprised, as I knew that your situation is, unfortunately, far from brilliant; the most annoying thing is that it is impossible to find any way of helping you to liquidate the interests you still have in Romania, which is not surprising given the current state of affairs in this country...

Going back to your article, I think it would only be a review of the book by J.B.<sup>(1)</sup> but I think it is an excellent idea that you have considered it as an opportunity to deal with a number of questions concerning symbols, and that you can very well continue in this direction, as is your intention; as for your fear that it might become a little "disjointed", I do not think that this is sufficient reason to stop it, since it allows us to deal with different points which, although each one separately would not be sufficient to be the subject of an article, are no less interesting. All in all, I think that this is very good; naturally, you were able to correct, on your return to Paris, the few inaccuracies of genre which you pointed out to me in your last letter, and no doubt thus complete what you had left blank (in "*The Grand Mystery laid open*", I think it must be a palette and a sword, but which hand should each of these objects be held in?) One small detail I saw while I was thinking about it: I think you should write "*graffiti*" and not "*grafiti*"; I am sure at least that this is the Italian spelling, and that it must have been preserved as it is in French, but perhaps it would be safer to check it. As regards the signs of the Carmelite monastery of Loudun, I point out to you incidentally that, in addition to the forms you have indicated, there is still another: where we see clearly not only the letters A and M, but also the V; but no doubt there is no place to make any mention of it, no more than the fact that the letters J. M. J. are in use in the *Compagnons* Carpenters (no doubt because they have St. Joseph for their patron saint). Another thing: the word "*Fert*" exists in Latin and, in the case in point, it could mean "he supports" or "he sustains", which obviously has a connection with the idea of "force" that you indicate; this same idea is also found, on the other hand, in the interpretation according to which this word would be formed by the meeting of the initials of "*Fortitudine ejus Rhodum Tenuit*". I must say, moreover, that I do not know at what time the siege of Rhodes to which allusion is made took place and where a prince of the house of Savoy must have intervened; I remember that, on the coins prior to Italian unity, mention is made of the title of "King of Cyprus and Jerusalem", which perhaps has some connection with the same events. One thing I have never been able to explain to myself is why, according to Vuillaume, the F.E.R.T. coin thus interpreted would also appear among those of the Rose-Cross of Heredom degree. As far as the question of *Al-Jidr* is concerned, you may perhaps

---

<sup>1</sup>This may be Jules Boucher's *La symbolique maçonnique*. N. of the T.

could you refer in a note to Coomaraswamy's article, and also indicate the exact reference of the following quotation from the Koran (76, 21). I think I have seen the relationship between "*vitis*" and "*vita*" mentioned somewhere (perhaps by Ragon?), but I have not been able to find it; this is of no great importance. As to the word "*evergreen*" for which you tell me you have enclosed a note, you know that the designation of evergreens is in English; but, as when we use the expression "green trees" in French in the same sense, I wonder to what extent the colour green is expressly intended in this case; What matters rather is the uninterrupted persistence of vegetation, which is a symbol of immortality (and it is evidently because of this meaning that this name has been given to the American Lodges); it is true that the colour green is indeed associated there, but in some way secondarily.

What you say for the forked snake tongue seems fair enough, but what is the origin of the word "*bisse*" and what exactly does it mean? I wonder if it might also have some connection with the idea of duality, or if it is just an onomatopoeia imitating the hissing of the snake; have you found any explanation for this?

I believe, without being quite sure, that it is Wirth who established a relation between the form of the palette and the alchemical sign of sulphur; I do not know quite what importance should be attributed to it, but in any case this is in no way contradictory to what you say, since it is always a question of an essentially active principle. I do not see anything else I can point out to you, and as I have just reread it all once more with attention, I hope I have not missed anything.

Turning to the other questions contained in your letters, I would first of all draw your attention to something that is inaccurate: there is no such thing as the root GAB, since in Hebrew, as in Arabic, every root is made up of three letters (it being understood that vowels do not count). In fact, the roots GB' (I transcribe as best I can the letter '*ain*'), "to be round", and GBR, "to be strong", are totally different, even if they have the first two letters in common. On the other hand, there is in the two languages a certain relationship of meaning between the roots GBR, "to be strong", and KBR, "to be big"; moreover, this is quite often the case for two words which differ only by the respective presence of the letters G and K in their root (it is, moreover, remarkable that there are regions, in Iraq, where K is replaced by G in the vulgar pronunciation). On another note, as far as the numbers are concerned, GB' = 75, GBR = 205, KBR = 222; I don't quite see what can give 131; perhaps you could explain to me where this number comes from, and whether there has been confusion with some other word or just a miscalculation.

In the case where the number three suffices to make the work possible, there is no need to look very far, since in Freemasonry itself three members are sufficient to form a "simple Lodge" (commonly called for this reason "triangle"), which can work regularly as such, but which naturally cannot proceed to initiations, since it is neither "just" (5)<sup>2</sup> nor "perfect" (7)<sup>3</sup>. In operative Masonry, the workings of the Seventh Degree are always performed by three persons only, representing the three Grand Masters, and outside the presence of any other assistants. In this connection, I must point out to you, in case you have not yet seen it, that in the *Speculative Mason* of last April, there is a very interesting description of the annual rites of operative Freemasonry; there are things which relate to some of the matters I spoke to you about in connection with the "Lost Word", and also others which confirm what Mercier has written in his article on the *Landmarks*. In the *turûq*

---

<sup>2</sup>Five members are required for this. N. of T.

<sup>3</sup>Seven members are needed for this. N. of T.

In the Islamic religion, seven people are necessary to perform the *dhikr* in its complete form together, but three are sufficient to perform certain parts.

The sacred word of the third degree, in the form it has in the French Rite, is totally unknown in England; it is certainly in France that it has been used as a passing word, but I cannot now remember whether it is in the Adonhiramite Rite or in some other rite now defunct.

I do not see much better than you how to explain the absence of the *Royal Arch* degree in France; however, one must take into account the fact that, in England, many things have been reintroduced little by little to fill, as far as possible, the gaps in the organisation of 1717<sup>(4)</sup> starting incidentally with the Master's degree itself. It is also remarkable that this corresponds in part to the seventh operative degree, I mean as far as the legend of Hiram is concerned; no doubt it is because the degrees of the *Mark* and even of *Royal Arch* are generally regarded as developments which relate rather to the degree of Companion; but it is evident that no truly logical order has been restored in all this, which indicates how difficult it was to repair the "damage" done by Anderson and his associates. Wirth has written somewhere that "Anderson was above all very apt to spoil everything he touched", and this assessment seems to me to be entirely justified!

The differences between the "techniques" of Freemasonry and Hermeticism naturally correspond to those between building work and what we might call "metallurgical" work as the basis of their respective symbolisms; it is, however, remarkable that the symbol of the "stone" is used in both cases equally, and with closely related meanings (see on this subject the notes on pages 88 and 89 of the *Grande Triade*, 1946 edition, La Table Ronde).

Your indication concerning the possibilities offered to some by the additional degrees is correct, although it is perhaps not the only reason for their existence, since we must take into account a sort of "conservation" role played by Freemasonry with regard to the forms they represent, as a consequence of the fact that it is the only initiatory organisation that subsists in the West with sufficient vitality to ensure this conservation, at least relatively; Clavelle has, moreover, made quite clear allusions to this question in his work for the third degree.

What you tell me about Danier, J. Madaule, etc., is really very singular; whatever the intentions of the one or the other, I have no doubt that any infiltration by Maritain or his group is aimed at preventing it as far as possible. I believe that J.B., like Ambelain, has been on rather bad terms with J. Chaboseau for quite some time now; from something that Bastien told me, and which I have not fully understood, I wonder if it is not because of this hostility that Ambelain has apparently ceased all activity in the Rectified Regime (contrary to what his pamphlet on Martinism would seem to imply). As for P. Mariel<sup>(5)</sup> it is really curious that he never appeared in the library as he had announced; it is probable that he was aware of the reviews made about him by Clavelle, and that this was enough to immediately remove from him all desire to fulfil this intention! You should have noted, on the other hand, that what I wrote about the "collective unconscious" is partly related to the article he published in *Le Symbolisme*<sup>(6)</sup> in May. I was completely unaware of the location of the Château de Barenton: it must be said, moreover, that I have never had the opportunity to visit this region...

---

<sup>4</sup>Official founding date of Speculative Freemasonry (the "Moderns"). N. of T.

<sup>5</sup>This appears to be Pierre Mariel. N. of the T.

<sup>6</sup>French Masonic Journal. N. of the T.

Granger has also told me of his discoveries about J. Kleberger, but with less complete details than those you have given me; there are always, in the interior, many things which seem to me very difficult to elucidate, and it is understandable that the written documents can only relate to the "external" activity of the personage. It is strange that the two medals bear the same date and the same age as Dürer's portrait; would one have to conclude that everything was really made in the same year, which would be rather surprising, or else that these indications have a purely symbolic value? As for the supposed "trade mark", which is undoubtedly a totally different thing, I do not know whether you have pointed out its resemblance to certain "signatures" such as are found particularly in Agrippa, and which are in fact combinations of characters grouped together in a manner quite comparable to that of shorthand abbreviations.

For the protection that would have been granted to Dürer by several successive emperors, the chronological errors that you have revealed surprise me on the part of Barmont, since I thought that he had at his disposal historical "sources" that were more reliable and less "available to everyone" than Bouillet's dictionary; at least this is what seems to be deduced from some quotations, for which I must admit that I have never really understood the reasons for the mystery surrounding them.

As to the Waldenses, Granger has told me that he would endeavour to obtain information from Italy; I only wonder to what extent those still surviving in Piedmont may have retained the original doctrine and rites; have not their association with Protestantism, and the influence they may have suffered, altered their character? Some think that the Waldensians grew out of a movement of Franciscan origin, of which they would only have exaggerated the tendencies; if it was really so, the possible links with the "Faithful of Love" could perhaps be quite easily explained; this reminds me also that I have once heard some disciples of Maritain accuse the Franciscans of being "camouflaged Gnostics"! I point out in passing that Brother Saverio Fera, who was Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of Italy, was a Waldensian pastor.

I know of the *Histoire des Religions*, published by Quillet, only the one chapter by Lantoine on Freemasonry, of which he had sent me a separate edition. I had not been aware of the facts you speak of concerning Japan, but I am not at all surprised, especially as regards Shinto.

To return to J. K. and his "affinities", it is a little difficult to recognise him in the midst of so many characters who are certainly not very well known; I do not know at all, for example, where one could find precise accounts of Tucher and other Nurembergers, nor how one can explain their hostility towards J. K., all the more so as this is complicated by the enigma of the three rings, even though it is of Tucher himself that Dürer has painted the portrait. What seems certain, however, is that J. K., having always professed to be a Catholic, was above all on the side of the Reformers; in this respect, the problem is more or less the same for both him and Dürer, except that, according to what you indicate, it would seem that Dürer had rather "worked" with the Lutherans and J. K. with the Calvinists. Whatever it was, there must surely have been some hidden reason for all this, and it could not have been simply a question of individual sympathies, which would explain nothing at bottom, considering that it is not simply a question of two or three isolated cases; that on the other hand J.K.'s financial activity served to "cover up" something else, is quite probable.... Another point which is rather obscure concerns J.K.'s will and his night burial; admitting for this the explanation which you consider plausible (since it goes without saying that he cannot in any case be considered as having been a "disciple" of Calvin), there remains a question which cannot be solved:



What could have been the reasons why his death was concealed for several days? I knew that this sometimes happens for sovereigns, for dynastic or political reasons of any kind; but for a private individual, it seems rather more abnormal.

Let us hope that you will be able to find more precisely when and how the affirmation of "free examination" made its appearance; it is quite certain that, in Calvin himself, it would have been very little compatible with the intransigent attitude which some reproached him with, especially after the death of Servetus. I understand perfectly well how you have been led to take an interest in this question of Calvinism after that of Lutheranism, and I must tell you that, for my part, I find nothing disturbing in it. As far as your "exoteric choice" is concerned, I see that you have first of all considered a solution other than Anglicanism; do not forget to tell me about it as you promised me, for I do not know exactly what it is.

Regarding the Paraclete<sup>(7)</sup> I remember that Clavelle once alluded to the possibility that some of its members might have had a relationship with J.K., but he said nothing about Briçonnet; otherwise, he always comes back to me about certain people in François Premier's entourage, but no doubt, as other things always come up that require more immediate urgency, he has not been able to find the time so far.

The question of the origin of the Christian priesthood is very obscure, like everything that concerns the early days of Christianity, and I am convinced that this obscurity was necessary to conceal certain changes that took place in this period; moreover, I deal precisely with this subject in the article the first part of which appeared in this month's issue (an article which I was led to write rather reluctantly, as Clavelle will be able to explain to you<sup>8</sup>). (8) It is not, moreover, about the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but if the changes have been introduced there, they may well have been linked to the rest, although I must admit that I do not know exactly how. Be that as it may, according to some, the primitive hierarchy would have comprised only the bishops and deacons; the priests would then have been only, according to the etymological meaning of their designation, the "elders" of the community, exercising only purely administrative functions. I particularly remember having seen this thesis developed, some time ago, by a certain Father Tramblay, a Trappist elder who was perhaps not very orthodox in all his reports, but who certainly had a remarkable erudition (he was, moreover, a doctor of theology). Only, if this were really the case (I cannot, of course, affirm anything myself, without having the necessary documentation), the existence of the episcopate, with the apostolic succession which it implies, would remain no less an absolutely essential element; Fr Tramblay himself insisted very much on this, even stating clearly that any Church without bishops should be considered as non-existent. If we admit this, there is in the case of the Reformation, and more particularly in Calvinism, something which seems truly inexplicable and impossible to justify; I wanted to point this point of view out to you, and you will tell me what you think.

On the other hand, why should a hierarchy similar to the pontifical hierarchies of antiquity necessarily have been "borrowed" from them, and why could it not also have existed in Christianity from its origin? If early Christianity had an initiatory character, as it would seem, such a similarity seems, on the other hand, to be perfectly natural and even somewhat necessary. In any case, it is not doubtful that the essential modifications, whatever they may have been, were already completed at the time of Constantine, as you say, and even a little earlier, and that it is especially at this time that the work to disguise what was not so essential must have been done.

---

<sup>7</sup>Fraternité du Paraclet. N. of the T.

<sup>(8)</sup> [*Études Traditionnelles* of September 1949, number 27 and following, L.J.'s margin note]).

If this is a shift from esotericism to exotericism, the reasons for such a cover-up are fairly easy to understand.

The texts of pastors which you quoted at the end of your letter are very interesting, and in short I find in them some of the ideas once held by Pastor Lecerf; only that, at that time, those who followed him were very few in number, whereas it would seem that now, on the contrary, this tendency has predominated in France over that of the "liberals". There remains the question of Calvin's "Thomism", which does not seem to be confirmed by what you tell me; I do not believe, therefore, that Lecerf, who opposed it to Luther's Augustinianism, could have held such a thing lightly.

The article in which Father Daniélou refrains from raising the question of the episcopate seems to me, as it does to you, to come from a "tactic" of which the least we can say is that it lacks frankness; And, unfortunately, your conclusion on this point is probably very fair, especially when one thinks of the way in which the Eastern Churches linked to Rome have been treated, where certain concessions were first presented with the aim of making people believe that they had a definitive character, while they were later transformed into mere provisional tolerances!

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 11 November 1949**

Dearest Brother,

It is a long time since I received your letter of the 1st and 4th of October, and I think Maridort must have communicated it to you in order that you should not be anxious, especially as at present there are still some things out of the ordinary in the correspondence. My apologies for being so late with you this time; the truth is that I am less and less able to accomplish all that I have to do, and this itself is beginning to be very disturbing. It would be a good time for me to get on with my work for the December issue, so I don't want to take perhaps another week to write to you. I hope to finish for this issue my article on "Christianity and Initiation", which has developed much more than I thought it would when I began; the incidents which have forced me to write it are very regrettable indeed, as you say, and, even if the first part has not provoked the "outburst" I feared, I wonder what will finally come of it all; Clavelle will surely tell you about it....

Thank you so much for your good wishes on the occasion of Ahmed's birth; he has just turned two months old and is behaving wonderfully; let's hope that this continues, as children's health is often a matter of great concern....

Our friend from Saint-Jean-le-Thomas wrote to tell me that he was unable to attend the last convent for "economic" reasons; unfortunately, it seems that his situation does not always improve in this respect. As for the Convent, the impression I got from it is certainly not very favourable this time, and this difference with last year is even rather surprising, even if, to tell the truth, such a lack of continuity is not exceptional in the "behaviour" of all kinds of assemblies. Marty's bad mood is understandable in general, but what is particularly annoying for the Big Triad is that everything seems to point to J.C. as the one to blame.

responsible for the failure of his project; surely there was still no need for this new cause of disharmony!

With regard to the F.E.R.T. motto, it is rather singular that this site in Rhode to which it alluded, according to one of the interpretations given to us, seems in reality never to have taken place; where could this "legend" have come from? I had never heard of the name "Count Green" given to the founder of the *Annunciates*; do historians have any explanation? For the word "*bissa*", I had not thought of this Italian etymology; in any case, this word is certainly curious in itself; Do we know at what time it was adopted as a heraldic term? I hope you can tell me about the 131 value attributed to Gibeon, as this intrigues me; I don't quite see how it can be obtained.

The "initiatory dress" of the different grades in England seems to be inspired, in some way, by reasons of symmetry; I do not know whether this usage is really very ancient, which would evidently make it of greater importance. At any rate, the uncovered right arm is a somewhat more widespread thing; in the various examples you have cited, we may add that of the "*ihrûna*" of the pilgrimage; but the reason why it is in the second degree does not appear very clearly. It is, however, as it were, in opposition to the left arm uncovered in the first degree, and this, which would be, in a general way, like an anomaly in a traditional costume, may correspond to the condition of the profane. What makes me think of this is that, in the Maghreb, the dressing gown is worn with the opening on the right, in order to free the right arm; but at one time Jews were obliged to wear it with the opening on the left as a distinctive sign. As for the third degree, the connection with the figurations of Zeus, without being impossible, seems to me very doubtful. What you have pointed out about the statues of Gudea is curious; the connection with the text of Isaiah which you quote seems to me very plausible; it is also possible (but I would not venture to assert anything about this) that this same text might have inspired the application of the seal of the Lodge, although on the other hand this is done on the arm of the recipient and not on his shoulder. One more thing on this subject: according to Islamic tradition, the Prophets have a particular "seal" or mark on their body; only in this case it is not on the shoulder, but apparently on the upper back, a little below the cervical region, that is to say, in short, between the two shoulders.

As for the "corpse" of the "little Light", if we take it as symbolising the death of the "old man", it would be somewhat redundant with the skull in the cabinet of reflection. It seems to me that the most plausible explanation is the one related, as you indicate, to the ancient "human sacrifice" for the foundation of a building; some have also considered a similar interpretation for the death of Hiram himself, but unfortunately I can't quite remember where I have seen it and consequently be able to pass on the references. In any case, what is certain is that the "human sacrifice" (in Sanskrit, *purusha-mâdha*) is a representation of that of the primordial *Purusha* according to the *Veda*; you may refer on this question to my article "*Gathering the dispersed*", and you will see that I have also considered there this meaning for the death of Osiris and that of Hiram. It is not without interest to point out, as far as this interpretation is concerned, that in the first degree, the recipient sees the "corpse" only from afar and more or less indistinctly, whereas he will have to identify himself with it in the third degree; it is easy to understand that anyone who has hardly left the profane state is not fit to be the victim of this sacrifice, which implies a kind of "divinisation".

For the passage in the "Inferno", where Virgil forces Dante to turn around so that he does not see Medusa, it seems to me that the essential point is this: it is a question of avoiding the "petrification" caused by the gaze of the aforementioned Medusa; however, in general, the fact of turning around or looking back, on the contrary, is precisely said to result in "petrification"; there is, therefore, a kind of inversion in this, which may be in

The "petrification" idea, I think, is the very idea of "petrification" where the explanation must lie above all. I think that, in short, it is in the very idea of "petrification" that the explanation must lie above all; I do not quite see at the moment how exactly we could formulate this, but perhaps you can give it some thought and tell me what you think. As for the "envoy from Heaven", the ordinary interpretation considers him to be an angel (and, moreover, "angel" means "envoy"): the difficulty lies in knowing, more precisely, what he represents here. I find it just as unlikely as you do that it is Aeneas, and it probably even makes no sense to try to identify him with a specific historical figure;

Why do we not rather consider him, according to the very words he utters, as a sort of personified expression of the divine Will, in accordance with the doctrine according to which an angel is above all, in reality, the manifestation of a divine attribute? With regard to the story of Ulysses, verses 94-96 would be more particularly suitable to justify your interpretation; on the other hand, the mention of the Pillars of Hercules, as a limit that man must not cross, is remarkable, in connection with what I pointed out at the end of my article "On the two St. Johns"; They seem to indicate here that Ulysses has followed an illegitimate path and, although he perceives the mountain of Purgatory in the distance, he cannot reach it, in spite of the stronger reason of reaching the "earthly Paradise" which lies at its summit.

Baptism, in early times, was conferred exclusively by the bishops, and only on a particular day (I think it was the Easter Vigil); the extension of the right to confer it to every Christian, and at any time, is evidently a consequence of the fact that it was regarded as an indispensable condition for "salvation", so that it was necessary to make it as easily accessible as possible; of course, this is what also explains why it was agreed to give it to children as soon as possible after their birth. This way of considering baptism seems not to have existed originally, and it even appears that, at least in some churches, those born of parents who were already Christians were considered as Christians by right and were not baptised, which has led some to think that Christian baptism was derived from the baptism of proselytes that was in use among the Jews. I discussed this question with Clavelle some time ago; it is, in short, as complex and as obscure as anything that relates to the origins of Christianity. Be that as it may, I do not think we have ever discussed the validity of Protestant baptism; but the other rites cannot be performed in the absence of priests, and there can be no priests where there are no bishops to confer ordination; in short, we come back, then, always to the question of episcopacy and apostolic succession. On the other hand, it is true, as you say, that Christ has set no other conditions to his presence than that of meeting in his name; but it would still be necessary to know all that is really implied, especially from the ritual point of view, by the words "*in his name*", the meaning of which is different, and much more "technical", than what they may represent for modern people; I have already made some allusions to this, and perhaps I shall have occasion to return to it one day or another. The formula "*Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia*" must, no doubt, be regarded as connected with this very question, the name "*Ecclesia*" being properly applied to the gathering "in the name of Christ". The discussions concerning the "ecumenical movement" are, no doubt, interesting, but what they seem to me to prove above all is that, at present, there are everywhere many divergences concerning the very notion of the Church; and it may be that the more or less complete forgetfulness of the original meaning of the expression "in the name of Christ" is, for many, at the heart of all these difficulties. If we consider an initiatory origin of Christianity, there must have been in it, in this respect, a ritual form of invocation fulfilling the role of a regular transmission; this became impossible with "externalisation", at least for the generality of Christians, but something of this kind has been preserved to this day in Hesychasm, and is, moreover, one of the reasons which enable us to consider it as having a really initiatory character.

The new information concerning Dürer further confirms his close links with the Reformation, and now I can explain something I had not been able to understand until now: in connection with Barmont's article, someone (I think, without being quite sure, it must have been Préau) had raised the question of Dürer's "Lutheranism" and quoted the words he would have uttered on hearing of Luther's death; now, as Clavelle pointed out, there would be a chronological impossibility in this, since Dürer died first; but I believe it was in fact what he wrote when the rumour of Luther's death was falsely spread; the impossibility in question was therefore only apparent, and, as far as I remember, these words were the ones you reproduce.

With regard to the Franciscans, the story of Brother Elias is indeed very curious and would seem to indicate that there was "something" there at the beginning, but that it does not seem to have lasted very long; however, it could be that this was still preserved for some time in some members of the Order (I am thinking here, especially, of Joachim of Fiore), but in any case, it goes without saying that nothing of it remains at the present time. There is often in the Capuchins (I am not speaking of the other branches of the Friars Minor) a certain intellectual extravagance, but it certainly does not indicate any esoteric knowledge; I remember that, in connection with the extraordinary linguistic lucubrations of Father Hilaire de Barenton, a priest one day made the following reflection to me: "*We will never know all that can go through the head of a Capuchin!*" I knew that Saint Anthony of Padua specialised in finding lost objects, but I did not know that he was more particularly concerned with keys, which, considering the role he seems to have played, is indeed rather ironic. A very amusing story is that of the jealousy that the popularity of this saint aroused in the Dominicans, always in rivalry with the Franciscans, and which gave birth to Saint Expeditus; Do you know her?

To return to the main question, it is true that the failure of the attempts to straighten out Catholicism might have led to the search for another solution; what is certainly surprising in this case is that the Reformation had such unfortunate consequences from the traditional point of view.... On the other hand, it is true that there is also the circumstance that there seems to have been, as you say, since the sixteenth century, quite a considerable number of genuine initiates among the Protestants; but would this not be explained, at least to a certain extent, by the growing hostility of the Catholic authorities to the consideration of all esotericism? On the other hand, it must be admitted that some, like Jacob Boehme, have also been the object of persecution in their own Church.

Canon Paquier was a specialist in the study of Luther and Augustinianism; it was not he who spoke to me about Calvin's Thomism, but Pastor Lecerf; he insisted especially on the theory of "psychic premonition", but I admit that nowadays I would be unable to explain exactly what it is, since these are things that one forgets very easily. As for the criticisms of St. Thomas which you have pointed out in Calvin, perhaps they only deal with more particular aspects; the absence of any mention of St. Thomas does not prove much, since, at that time, the custom of expressly citing the authors from whom one had adopted the ideas was not very widespread, whereas, on the contrary, they were named when one wanted to point out that there were discrepancies of opinion with them. With regard to the question of Father Daniélou and what you have said about the Last Supper, I increasingly have the impression that there is, depending on the circumstances, a somewhat "political" attitude that does not inspire me with much confidence...

After the clarifications you have given me, it seems that it cannot be considered a forgery of J. K.'s will; the enigma of the burial always seems to me to be difficult to solve. I know nothing of the history of Berne in the sixteenth century, but it is possible, in

I have always thought, moreover, that the bear after which this town is named must have a symbolic value, probably going back to the Celts. It would also be interesting to study the case of Briçonnet in greater depth, if that were possible; Clavelle told me some time ago that he would tell me about certain characters in the entourage of François I, but he had so many more urgent things to do that he must not have found time for it. With regard to François I, I pointed out to him the passage in Ambelain's book on Martinism where the question of the "*Agl'a*" appears; there are certainly fanciful assertions there (the four digit, for example, is not at all a particular sign of the printers as he claims), but there are also points that would need to be examined more closely.

I think Clavelle and Granger will bring you up to date with what I replied to what they both wrote to me as a result of the daily personal work. Dutoit Mambrini was a Protestant pastor, though I believe he was no longer in the ministry when he wrote his work; I have it here, but I have not reread it for a long time; in spite of the interesting things it certainly contains (I seem to have quoted two or three in *L'Erreur spirite*), I must say that, on the whole, it left me with the impression of something a little too nebulous and diffuse.

Don't forget to tell me about your "*polytréviste*" solution and the "*Dia Dia*" cult; Can you also tell me what is the similarity in geographical location between Arles and Cairo that you have pointed out?

Very fraternally to you.

Cairo, 6 December 1949

Dearest Brother,

I have just received your letter of 29 November, and I am happy to see that mine did not take long to reach you.

I thank you for the various questions you have been willing to communicate to me on behalf of Clavelle and Maridort. The "leads" of the corporations (I vaguely remember having seen them some time ago in the Cluny museum) were no doubt the same thing as what are called "*tokens*" in English. The name Saint Blaise (Saint Blaise), corresponds to the old word "bleiz", meaning wolf; there is also Saint Loup, which is the Latin translation of the same name, and Saint Leu, which is only a variant. The symbolism of the wolf is generally connected with light; it was particularly so in the Greeks (LUKOS, wolf, and LUKE, light, whence the name Apollon Lycien), and it seems very likely also in the Celts; I have never found anywhere the indication of a connection with lightning or thunderbolt, but as lightning is also a light, such a thing is not absolutely impossible.

The story of the burial and resurrection of Hallelujah, which I did not know at all, is really very curious, and it does not seem doubtful indeed that it implies a sort of assimilation with Christ, since I do not see how else these rites could be understood; but then we may ask ourselves when and how this word, which is in reality neither a name nor an epithet, could have been thus taken to designate Christ; have you found no indication of it?

What you tell me about Clouard's book seems to indicate that his sympathies are not with A. F.<sup>1</sup>; it is true that he may have been at odds with her, as were Maritain and others; in any case, his admiration for Claudel seems truly excessive!

On the question of baptism reserved to bishops, it is probable, according to what you have pointed out to me, that it does not go back entirely to the origins of Christianity, but it is nevertheless mentioned in any case by the Fathers before the Council of Nicea (I seem to remember that we find it mainly in Origen); But what I do not understand very well is the reason that could have induced this restriction at a certain moment, while, on the other hand, the later generalisation of the faculty of baptising is easily explained. The exclusion of women from this right, according to the "*Didascalia*", is also quite singular; all of this is, of course, extremely obscure, and it seems all the more so if we want to examine it more closely... I would like to ask you about what an "*andien*" bishop is, since this word does not remind me of anything at all; there is also the question of the "*Apostolic Constitutions*" about which I have never seen much; but obviously we would never finish with all this. I would point out in passing that we must be wary of the works of Mgr Duchesne, whose modernist tendencies are strongly accentuated, an influence which is reflected in his very exposition of the historical facts. As for the date on which baptism was conferred, we can say that there were differences according to the Churches, but I believe that in any case the Easter Vigil was completely general. For Pentecost it seems, logically at least, that it must rather be confirmation, but to tell the truth I have never found anything on this point.

For the story of the secretary of the *Eudiac Order*, I asked Maridort if he could give me some explanations; I was particularly intrigued by the allusion he made to an attack against St Paul, and I was far from suspecting that it was a

---

<sup>1</sup>Probably *Action Française*. N. of the T.

"discovery" of such a magnitude; where could this have come from? I am also surprised at D. de G.'s recommendation, but I thought I at least knew him personally; what you have told me makes it all the more extraordinary. It is true that, in general, it is better to listen to a candidate to find out more exactly what he is, but in this particular case, I think that the reading of his "curriculum vitae" was more than enough! As for the altruistic surgeon, whose projects I already know from Clavelle, he is certainly not very dangerous, but I fear that there is a risk that he could be rather tiresome. I had thought I understood that it was mainly Cerf who supported his candidature; I did not know that Marty was equally interested in this point.

Thank you for the historical overviews concerning the F.E.R.T. motto and the founding of the Annunciata; this non-existent Rhodes site is really strange. I would also like to point out that the currencies of the "Green Count" are rather enigmatic; I suppose that "*mo anstre*" should, by anagram, be considered as "my star", but what could "*Alahac*" mean? The article on Nostradamus which I have reviewed is, in fact, published in a separate pamphlet, and I have never seen any other in the magazine in which it would have appeared.

St. Expeditus did not really belong either to the Order of the Friars Preachers or to any other, for the simple reason that he never existed. At a chapter of the Dominicans, they were lamenting the great success of St. Anthony of Padua, and it was said that a saint would be needed who could rival him, to which someone replied: "*Expeditus*", that is, "this is convincing". This word seemed to be a new-found name for the new saint; another of its meanings determines his "speciality", which was that of bringing urgent matters to a successful conclusion; and, as he had to be "placed" historically somewhere, he was considered one of the martyrs of the Theban Legion, something which was evidently impossible to verify. In connection with the role attributed to him, he is represented as crushing with his foot a crow which, by its cawing, says "*cras*" (tomorrow), to which the saint replies "*hodie*" (today), a word inscribed on a cross which he carries in his hand; it must be admitted that all this was very cleverly combined, but I believe, like you, that St. Anthony of Padua has in any case a larger "clientele".

About the "*rhombo*" I think there is nothing very precise in the ancient texts, but only allusions, since we have never been able to find out what exactly they were; I have a vague recollection that there must be something about them in one of the treatises of Jamblichus, but I would not venture to assert it. I don't see anyone better than Marius Meunier to be able to give information about it, and on the other hand I seem to remember that he spoke to me on some occasion; if Clavelle always sees him from time to time, perhaps I could ask him about it on the next occasion.

The arrangement you propose for the questions at the beginning of the instruction is perhaps, in fact, the best solution; in any case, it is perfectly acceptable in this way.

The journal *Ur* was edited by Evola; as he was then at odds with Reghini, the latter founded *Ignis* as a continuation of *Atanòr*, but I am not sure whether Parise also collaborated in *Ur* despite these dissensions.

As you have thought, it fits entirely into the role of the Agitator who shakes the barrel of stones. I do not know whether I have pointed out to you that all I have told you about thunder, etc., helps to justify the interpretation of the enigmatic "*faculty of abrac*" by "*ha-baraq*" (in Hebrew) or "*el-barq*" (in Arabic), the lightning or the thunderbolt.

Regarding the "*Zuzimites*", let us take a look at what we can find in a series of news items entitled "*Arcane Associations*" and edited by the "*Societas Rosicruciana in America*" (1905): "Ancient Order of Zuzimites". -- The Order of Zuzimites are not much known in the United States, except by membership in the Order abroad. The Order is a secret society, analogous to Freemasonry but in no way antagonistic to it, nor to the various rites and



ceremonics of Masonry. The Order is claimed to date back to the second century A. M. Authentic chronicles mention the Zuzimites in the year 2097 A. M., or about 3809 years ago, as being "a people great and many" (Gen., 14, 5). There are 51 recogniez degrees, subdivided into several series. The first three are Neophyte, Graduate and fellow ; these constitute Zuzimitism proper. The next two degrees constitute Marked Zuzimitism. Then the series are denown as Celestine Zuzimitism. Then follow the series Arch, Acetasite, Cabbalite, and Armite Zuzimites ; and finally Zam Zuzimites, or Zamzuminus. They have their Tents, and Grend Tabernacles. The work of the Order is claiened as marly perfect. Seven members may organize a Tent.

This answers your question; I do not remember very well the exact title of the Order, which singularly deforms the Hebrew word (which is found more correctly only in the demonstration of the first degree); the imitation of Freemasonry is evident in many points. Apart from this, I have never found any other mention of this organisation.

I have the volume entitled *Médecine officielle et Médecines hérétiques*; the best article, in my opinion, is that of Dr. Galimard, in spite of certain inaccurate or doubtful "correspondences" which, moreover, I have pointed out to you that, as for that of Dr. Winter, it was only a summary of a more important work which he had in mind, but which he seems not to have been able to find time to do so far. What you have revealed in the article on miraculous cures is, indeed, really important; I need hardly tell you that I fully approve of your reflections on the subject!

Your indications concerning traditional "affiliations", as far as the Islamic tradition and Hermeticism as an "inheritance" from the Egyptian tradition are concerned, are also absolutely justified. In this respect, I must point out to you that, in pre-Islamic times, there has always existed among the Arabs, at least in a minority (which has undoubtedly been diminishing in recent times), what we would call "*ed-dīn el-hanīf*", which was considered to be identical with the religion of Abraham himself; continuity has thus been maintained from Ishmael to Islam.

I cannot say whether anything of the influence of the "Ancients" has actually survived in the American rituals now in use; I only know that there were, as you have pointed out, Lodges established by both "Ancients" and "Moderns", and that the members passing from one to the other of the two Obediences must have been "regulars" (the thing being reciprocal). One question for which I have never been able to find an explanation is the origin of the remarkable difference between the English and American rituals of the Royal Arch degree. The maintenance of bodily disqualifications is now being discussed even in America, and for entirely profane reasons; I have, moreover, said a few words on the subject in a review of *Speculative Mason* (in the March 1948 issue of the "E.T.").

The question of the relationship between the cock and the mercury would certainly need to be examined in more detail; I hope you will be able to talk to me about it on a future occasion. For the cock on the drum, I had not thought of addressing Lanoi-Villedieu, whose interpretations, it must be said, are often rather debatable; in any case, as far as the "holy war" and the "Great Peace" are concerned, you are absolutely right.

What you tell me about this ancient apron worn by the Venerable of the Avignon Lodge would be natural to confirm that the cord should perfectly well go round the waist twice: I would certainly be interested in re-establishing the thing in a general way, because of what we have said about the "*cable-tow*".

Very fraternally to you.

Cairo, 6 March 1950

Dearest Brother,

I have perfectly received your two letters of the 6th and 10th February, but I have been much longer in replying than I should have wished; I hope you can excuse me. In the first place, thank you for your good wishes for us all; I hardly dare send you mine, which, though now out of place, are nevertheless no less sincere! The illnesses caused by the cold have done much to delay me in everything; fortunately, this seems at last to be over.

Thanks also for the information on Gomer; I see I was right in thinking it was a mistake; but I'm not quite sure I read it right: is it exactly Gamel or Gomel?

I have received the new ritual of the "*Trois Anneaux*" ("*Three Rings*"), which I find very good on the whole; as your letter had made me foresee, there is an inaccuracy for the "*G. and R. S.*" (also called "*S. of joy and exaltation*"), but I have given Maridort due indication to rectify it. (also called "*S. of joy and exaltation*"), but I have given Maridort due indication to rectify it. For the change of the picture in the third degree, I see no other way to proceed than what you say, but I don't quite know if one can really establish a connection with the "shifting of the lights" of the Kabbalah, which seems to refer in reality to the transfer of the centre of consciousness of the heart's content.

*Tokens* are not pieces of currency properly speaking, but medals of various forms; the *Speculative Mason* has given some reproductions, but I do not see exactly of what date, and cannot find it at present. There was also in the ancient Romans something of the same kind, which bore, if I remember rightly, the name of "*Tessera*". The phonetic assimilation of Saint Louis and Saint Loup or Saint Lou is, in fact, not at all impossible. Louis and Clovis happen to be the same name, and the old Germanic form is *Hludwig*, with a strong guttural aspiration at the beginning.

I believe, like you, that it is not modern "critical" works that will be able to dispel the obscurity surrounding early Christianity. As for the "Andeans", I have not yet received the "Didascalia", but I hope, after what you tell me, that I will receive it soon, so I thank you for letting me know.

You were telling me about Mordvinoff's illness; almost immediately afterwards, I received the sad news of his death, which I had not expected at all; I was all the more saddened as I had known him well for a long time; he was the first of the members of the G. T. disappearing...

The story of the altruistic surgeon's candidacy is really quite extraordinary through and through; it is also surprising that Marty has taken this matter so much to heart! As for B., I was very happy, as you can imagine, to learn that the rejection of his application is supported by a large majority; but what is not very reassuring, however, is that it was necessary, in order to arrive at this result, that there were other reasons than his disability to be put forward...

As for the motto "*Alahac*", it can indeed be none other than "*Allah Haq*", i.e. "*God (is) Truth*"; I am surprised that this was not immediately thought of. As for the words found in "*The Great Mystery laid open*", I admit that I do not know what it is; could you please tell me?

I am not familiar with Campbell-Everden's book, and I do not know exactly what the expression "downwards" may relate to, but perhaps it is the fact that, in operative Freemasonry, Solomon's throne is in the West (which corresponds, moreover, to the actual orientation of the Temple of Jerusalem, the entrance to which was in the East). As far as the seventh degree is concerned, it is quite correct that it is conferred by three members only and without the presence of any other assistants.

The use of giving confirmation immediately after baptism is not peculiar to the Armenian Church, but it exists equally in the different branches of the Orthodox Church; this evidently implies that it may be conferred by a simple priest, and not only by a bishop as in the Catholic Church. I believe that in all Christian Churches it is admitted that, in case of necessity, baptism can be legitimately conferred even by a non-Christian, and in any case it is so in Catholicism; it has been pointed out to me lately that this seems quite normal, even for an exoteric rite, since it is another sacrament which someone can transmit even if he himself has not received it. To tell the truth, I don't really know what to think about it, nor how this could be justified; it is still one enigma among many...

Your remarks about Hippocrates and Galen seem to me to be entirely justified and, even if it is still rather difficult to know what the current attempts to "return to Hippocrates" will lead to, it is certainly not impossible that they may have some connection with the "de-solidification" of the world; but this would perhaps go a little further than wanting to consider repercussions of the same kind in terms of rituals, and in any case I do not quite see what indications we could find at the present time.

It is rather singular that, in "Parthénon" (Respectable Lodge), so much importance has been attached to philosophical questions and other matters of an equally profane order; one must at least hope that you can get out of it without too much difficulty.... For your work, I see no other examples of change of name than those you cite, but this certainly does not mean that there cannot be; certainly, in this respect, what was in use in the Strict Observance has been retained in the higher degrees of the Rectified Regime. For reflection, there are perhaps also the African Architects, but I can find no precise information to enable me to say so. I do not think that there is room to consider the currencies which served as signatures for the members of such a "phantasmagorical" organisation as the *Golden Dawn*, which, moreover, has never claimed to have any Masonic character whatsoever; this would also oblige us to speak more generally of Rosicrucian and pseudo-Rosicrucian organisations, which would complicate the question a great deal. In any case, an allusion to the *Compagnonnage* would perhaps be more appropriate, given its obvious relationship to operative Freemasonry.

The author of the *Symbolisme* articles signed "The Letter G" is François Ménard; this must have been a sort of collective signature, but, in fact, so far no one else has made use of it except him. As for Persigout, Lepage has simply "eliminated" him because he was exasperated by his continual display of ill-assimilated erudition, which he even compares with that of F. D.! The signature "*Eques a Paraclete*" naturally indicates that the aforementioned Persigout must have the degree of C. B. C. S.<sup>(1)</sup> but I am not entirely sure who could have received it. It is, moreover, the same case as Probst-Biraben; I was completely unaware that he had this qualification, but the last letter I received from him is signed "*Eques a Palmo Resurgente*".

Mer. has spoken to me of the project of founding Franco-Italian Lodges; he also wrote "G. Lodge of Italy", but this is not, however, a reason because it is not really about the Grand Orient, since, after the international recognition of the Supreme

---

<sup>1</sup>Knight benefactor of the Holy City. N. of T.

Council, the Symbolic Workshops of this Obedience are constituted, under the title of National Grand Lodge, in an autonomous organisation whose situation with regard to the Supreme Council is in short the same as that of the Grand Lodge of France. Be that as it may, not only is what you say perfectly fair, but there are still other reasons to be prudent, as I have just explained to you in reply to your letter. Indeed, the situation is still far from being clarified; even as far as the Grand Orient is concerned, in spite of the recognition in principle, the American Supreme Councils maintain an extremely reserved attitude; moreover, the various dissident Supreme Councils which still existed in Italy merged a few months ago, and this has resulted in the formation of a new Supreme Council which could well succeed, sooner or later, in putting things back on the right track.

I do not remember the letter of the Russian bishops whose question was once dealt with in the "R.I.S.S."<sup>1</sup>; it is true that, at that time, I had no reason to be particularly interested in it. I never knew the name of the religious whom Father Bouyer had approached after Father Poucel's departure, but I thought I understood, I don't quite know why, that he was also a Jesuit.

I had not thought of talking about the story of this "monster" which would have run aground on the coast of Egypt, so that I should be unable to say what there is truth in it; it must be admitted that I have no time to look at the newspapers, unless something of special interest is pointed out to me. I'd better try to think of talking this over with Lionnet the next time I see him, as I don't know much of what he, from his duties in the Suez Canal, might be accurately informed about it.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 4 June 1950**

Dearest Brother,

I received your letter of 22nd May some days ago, but I have been so much disturbed lately by a whole series of things, that I have not been able to answer you promptly. I was very glad to hear from you, as I had not heard from you for some time, and was even a little worried, Mercier had told me in his last letter that you were rather fatigued, but I see with pleasure that you seem to be better now. He did not tell me that you were suffering from the liver; what Clavelle has told you on the subject is very exact, and it is not doubtful that there is a connection between the sensibility of this organ and the importance which was formerly attributed to it for divination; I seem to remember that models of livers have been found in Chaldea which were apparently intended to serve for studies of this order.

The last letter I wrote to you must be dated March 6th; did you receive it in time? I wonder, however, if you have not written to me since then, for there are many things which you seem to have spoken to me about already; after some time, I note almost daily that letters or other despatches are lost on the way, which seems really abnormal and in any case very annoying. Clavelle, in sending me a copy of two lost letters, enclosed a note to the effect that he would write to me soon, but it is quite some time since then, and I have received nothing; I hope my work for the June number has reached him. On the other hand, I am very anxious about Maridort, of whom I have had no news for at least two months; I hope that the state of his affairs

---

<sup>1</sup>*Revue Internationale des Sociétés Secrètes*. N. of the T.

is not the cause of this silence, but I have not had many details about it (only a few allusions from Clavelle and Mercier), and I would like to know exactly how he is; has this forced him to be absent? I would still prefer this to be the reason, for I fear above all that troubles and worries have made him ill....

I found your article very good; were you able to prepare the next one? Marius Lepage seems to have thought that this article was mine, perhaps thinking that I had signed it under another name on account of J. B.'s bad character; naturally I told him it was not, and thought there was no harm in making the real author known to him.

I had asked you a question regarding Gomel or Gamel, not being sure that I had read the word correctly in your last letter (or at least the last one I received); although the vowels are of only secondary importance, would you be so kind as to give me the exact form again, for I may allude to it in a future article, where I hope to return to what has been said in *Speculative Mason* regarding the letter G and the swastika.

I did not know that you had written to Brother Debenhane; I would be grateful if you would let me know the important parts of his letter; it is all very interesting, but the point that remains a little disturbing is that the information always comes from Clément Stretton, who is said to have "restored" the ritual in a way that we cannot entirely trust. Mr. Bardon's name reminds me a little vaguely of something that must be related to articles that appeared some time ago in an American magazine which, unfortunately, I can't always have at hand. I have never been able to understand what this story of "*Slant Masons*" represents, or even what exactly this expression may mean; I remember that this question had already been dealt with in *Speculative Mason*, but I have never heard of anything of the kind here; I don't know why Europeans always give Egypt fabulous things of all kinds....

As regards the passage which you have not been able to decipher completely, it is the first words of the Gospel of St. John in Greek: "*En Arché en to Logos*"; but I doubt whether there can be anything more than a simple phonetic approximation between the Greek "*arché*" and the word "*arco*"; we might think of a common root, whatever the first meaning might have been, but this is not plausible, because it would require the Greek word to be written with a *kappa* and not with a *chi*. Approximate transcriptions often give rise to completely unjustified assimilations; we see this especially in the case of Hebrew and Arabic words written more badly than well in Latin characters... Your hypothesis concerning the possible confidences of certain operative Masons is certainly very plausible, but there is an objection to this: Brother Bothwell-Gosse has claimed to hold the seventh operative degree, and this makes me think that there must still be some dissident organisation admitting women; this is a point which is not yet very clear.

As for the rituals, I believe that those of Scotland and Ireland may have retained some elements older than those found in the more widespread English rituals of today (and it is possible that the same is true of some American rituals derived from the former); I know nothing about the Oxford one. In any case, the passage you have quoted is very curious, and the mention of the symbolism of navigation is particularly clear.

I can't remember at the moment for what purpose the phrase "light in darkness and darkness in light" comes from; I will set myself the task of finding this.

I see nothing on the Islamic side that could indicate that Abraham received elements of the "Pharaonic" Tradition; according to Joseph, followed by a large number of authors of the Middle Ages, it would be on the contrary he who would have taught some sciences to the Egyptians.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 4 July 1950.**

Dearest Brother,

I received your letter of 15 June some time ago; what prevented me from answering you sooner was that a few days earlier I received a huge packet of letters which I thought were lost (most of them dated 2 or 3 months ago) and which were found again in a manner as inexplicable as their disappearance; I have not yet got round to checking them all up to date! Among these letters, there were of course many from Clavelle and Maridort, so that I have learned about the accident at his farm in Gabon, and I have also had news of his trip to North Africa. On the other hand, it is only from you that I learned that Danier was able to do anything to settle the situation of Clavelle, from whom, moreover, I am very astonished that I have not yet received any more recent letter than the last one of 9th May. To tell the truth, I am still missing a certain number of things, which are perhaps definitely lost; among them must be the letter in which one or other of our friends gave me the answer regarding the spelling of "Gamel", etc., since this question does not appear in any of those which have reached me (it is the absence of these letters which had made me think that one of yours had gone astray).

I have indeed, as you think, the *Early Masonic Catechisms*, as well as most of D. Knoop's works, but unfortunately I have not yet had time to read it all; if I had thought that "*The Great Mystery laid open*" was to be found in this volume, I would have referred to it as soon as you told me about it. Among the words in it is especially "*Lâ ilaha illâ Llah*" (the translation of which is, moreover, quite correct: "*There is no other Got but God*"). I also read, for the inventor of the secret name, "Shaikh Shihâb ed-Dîn", followed by a second name (or rather a "laqab") which is probably distorted and which I cannot guess (there is, as a known *Shaij*, Shihâb ed-Dîn Sahrawardi, but it does not seem possible that it is this one), As for the rest, at least for the moment, it seems to me to be completely unintelligible; I have tried hard to pronounce these words in every way, in case it is a sort of rough approximate phonetic transcription, but it does not give anything that I can identify.

It is only four or five days since I received the June issue of *Symbolisme*; it is therefore only after I received your letter that I was able to read Lepage's review; it is rather tiresome, indeed, but, on close examination, it seems to me that, when he speaks of the "undisputed Master", his intention was only to express his own opinion (which I find, moreover, disconcerting) and not to attribute it to you yourself. It is no less regrettable that he might have been mistaken in that, and even that your article was taken as a pretext for such praise; but I do not quite know what we could do, and it will still be necessary for me to reconsider this. I do not know whether it would really be inconvenient for you to write to Lepage (Clavelle has perhaps some idea on the subject which escapes me); I could also speak to him myself on a future occasion, but I am afraid that, if I intervene in all this, he will not attribute it to some resentment caused by the

more or less furious manifestations of J. B. towards me; what do you think? It is rather astonishing that the said J. B. should have written to you kindly, as it does not seem to be very usual with him; surely you have done better, in replying to him, not to disclose the sentence which concerns me. For the rest, you know that if I prefer not to review his book, it is mainly because I think it is better not to risk provoking unpleasant reactions from him.

Thank you for your explanation of the origin of your correspondence with M.C.D.; I think that this must also be the source of the information reproduced by Lepage in his article on the "*Jachin*". Dr. Thomas Carr, who is mentioned there, is the author of the articles of which I spoke to you and which unfortunately I can never find; I had forgotten his name, but I recognised him as soon as I saw him. Regarding Maurice Gloton, Clavelle told me that he had made a good impression; it is only a pity that he is hampered by a familiar environment which is obviously totally contrary to traditional ideas.

I do not understand how Cerf could have waited so long to speak to you again about the second degree ritual, because there is so little time left: under these conditions, you had better do as you say, for a complete "restoration" would be very difficult, and it is certainly above all the usual "speeches" which are really regrettable; I hope, therefore, that you can get through it without too much trouble, and that you will carry it through in time. Of course, it will not be possible for you to send it to me soon enough to include my remarks, but I am counting on you to send it to me anyway as soon as it is finished, since I am in any case interested in it.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 24 July 1950**

Dearest Brother,

Your letter of 15 July reached me on the 21st; it seems that the correspondence is going much better at present, and let us hope that this will continue to be the case?

I am not surprised that you have been very busy in the preparation of the ritual of the second degree; you must not be anxious to have it finished, and let us hope that you will arrive at as satisfactory a result as possible; thank you in advance for sending me a copy. What you say about the proof by the square seems to me good, but I do not think that we should consider in this respect an assimilation of the recipient to the hypotenuse of the right triangle, since, in fact, it seems to me that the square should rather be placed flat on its surface (it is not by the vertices of a square that the straightness of an angle is verified). As for the compass used at the beginning of the "raising", I do not know if there is a definite rule for the angle through which it must remain open, but I seem to have seen somewhere that it is 60 degrees (the angle of the equilateral triangle).

You have certainly done well to delete the five "philosophers"; as far as the two spheres are concerned, there is indeed not much to comment on, since it is not doubtful that their introduction is very recent, but as they have manifestly taken the place of some ancient symbol of Heaven and Earth, it seems that it is this particular meaning that we should speak of in this connection, relating it to the consideration of dualities.

This is all the more natural since the spheres are placed on the two columns.

Let it be understood that I fully approve of the introduction of a summary biography of Pythagoras and of notions on the traditional history of the Order. As for *the "ravenous birds of the air"*, I wonder whether there might not have been in former times some established relations between the penalties and the elements (taken, no doubt, in the same order as for the proofs), and this because it deals elsewhere with "the ebb and flow of the sea": unfortunately, I have seen nothing, as far as fire is concerned, to confirm it, but nevertheless I find no other possible explanation than the one commented on.

The letters of the Phoenician or "Cadmese" alphabet, which would have been introduced early in Greece, are generally considered to be 16: I was not aware that Aristotle had indicated, according to Pliny, the number of 18. In any case, it is certain that the letter *khi* must have been among the letters included later: it would doubtless be difficult to know how they were formerly represented (perhaps by complex sets), but in any case there must have been some way of distinguishing *khi* from *kappa*, since by comparing Greek words with those of other languages having common roots with the former, we realise that their distinction corresponds to something which goes back beyond the formation of the Greek language itself; and *khi* must have had a sound very close to that of *sh* (or to that of the German soft *ch*), which is very far from the sound of *k*.

It is clear why Marius Lepage has written about your article; I shall not speak to him about it, since you think it is ultimately better that way. As for revealing, if it comes to that, J.B.'s acrimony towards me, I certainly see no objection; I only prefer not to have to do it myself; I hope you have finally been able to find his letter, for I am very curious to see it.

I think that Cornéloup's article of which you speak must be in the July *Symbolisme*, which I have not yet received; but I realised quite some time ago that this absurd idea of a supposed "lay exotericism" was on his mind; more precisely, it goes back to his relationship last year with the Grand Chapter.

It is quite possible that the Pythagoreans, when they were persecuted, "took refuge" in the colleges of craftsmen, as you point out, but at least certain links must have existed beforehand, just as they certainly existed in the Middle Ages between the Orders of Chivalry and the initiations by trade before the destruction of the Templars; it is, moreover, these same links which, in the end, explain why they could indeed have found a refuge there at the right time.

It is really curious that Luther, in his manifesto, took Tertullian's phrase that you quote almost verbatim: I do not know exactly how Tertullian himself could have understood it, since ordination must have existed in his time. Perhaps it was only a "way of speaking", comparable to that of the Jews when they describe themselves as a "priestly people", even though the priesthood itself has always been reserved exclusively for members of certain families. As for the transformation of "Christian freedom" into "free examination", it would be interesting to know when and how this occurred; have you never been able to find any other details on this subject?

If most of the recent "Marian apparitions" (among which there are, moreover, those of a rather suspicious nature) have had only children as witnesses, it is undoubtedly because they are more sensitive to certain influences; moreover, they are more sensitive to certain influences,



Many children have natural psychic faculties which are gradually disappearing, partly because of the education they are given, but perhaps also for other, more general reasons, which are connected with the "solidification" of the earthly world itself.

Very fraternally to you.

**Cairo, 14 September 1950**

Dearest Brother,

I received the day before yesterday your project of the ritual of the second degree; I think that my letter of 24 July must have reached you in due time, and no doubt you will speak to me about it in this one you are announcing to me.

What you point out to me about the number of the mallet strokes is indeed curious, since I suppose you have not prepared it expressly to coincide so exactly with those of the English ritual. I wonder if this number 115 (23 x 5) might have some particular meaning; I admit that I do not see it, at least for the moment; with the translation in Hebrew letters you get nothing, or rather a word appears which means "to vomit", which evidently has no acceptable meaning....

I had thought that what you told me before concerning the two celestial and terrestrial spheres applied to those situated on the two columns, since I had not understood that they were also on the fourth cartouche; naturally, under these conditions, I have nothing to add to the explanation based on the zodiacal signs traced on the apparent part of the celestial sphere.

To sum up, on the whole the ritual seems to me to be fine, at least as far as possible, since I do not think we can arrive, for this grade, at anything that is entirely satisfactory on all points. Perhaps some of the explanations are a little "shallow" but, on the other hand, I think you have done well to reduce them somewhat to a minimum, which, moreover, is still justified by the observation that in the old days no verbal explanation was even given at all. All the more so as it is always possible to develop them as much as you like in the subsequent instructions. In this respect, I wonder if we could do something similar to the "readings" which exist in England for each degree, but, of course, without the "moralising" character which has been given to them to the detriment of the properly symbolic and initiatory point of view... In any case, in the ritual itself, the essential thing was to bring out the role of Pythagoreanism above all, as you have done.

There is one point which seems to me to call for a quite necessary rectification: it is the application of the square by the points, which does not really correspond to anything plausible; as I told you in my last letter, there is no doubt that it should be placed flat on the chest of the recipient, the corner being turned upwards. It is rather difficult with the Venerable's jewel, so that this should perhaps involve a modification in this respect also; on the other hand, it seems to me that, even leaving aside this consideration, it would be preferable to use a larger square than that. Be that as it may, the objection concerning the manner of applying the square is certainly the most serious objection to be raised about the whole content of the ritual; what is essential in a square, as a measuring instrument, is the right angle, and not the points, and otherwise the respective lengths of the sides, which in other cases is very important, is

I think it would even be advantageous in this case to use a square with equal arms, in order to correspond to the symmetry of the human body.

You know that there are many differences of opinion as to the equipment to be carried on the various journeys; but the solution you have adopted seems to me to be acceptable and as valid as the others; it is certainly one of the points which will always be the most difficult to fix in a truly definitive manner.

We could argue about the order in which the five senses are enumerated; I do not know exactly where you have found the one you indicate, which does not seem to me to correspond to any traditional data. Perhaps we need not be so rigorous in all the details, which would take us too far: but in any case, if we simply want to arrange the senses in their order of importance, shouldn't touch be placed before smell and taste?

I must point out a Greek error to be corrected: it is *gnôthi* (and not *gnosì*) *seauton*.

As regards the acanthus, it should be noted that the shape of its leaves is related to the symbolism of the spiral, but it would certainly be rather difficult to introduce this consideration into the ritual. The spiral is also found in the form of the fifth journey, where its path from the outside to the inside leads naturally to the centre.

With regard to the letter G as the initial of five words taken from the Greek, the thing is not exact for "generation", which is purely Latin; the equivalent word of Greek origin would in fact be "genesis". On the other hand, among these five words, the one which relates most particularly to the second degree, and which should therefore be mentioned first, is "geometry"; it is even the only one which is essential, the others being only entirely secondary and somewhat artificial additions. While I am at this point, I would add that "*gammadion*", besides the fact that it somewhat "double-uses" the "*gamma*" from which it is directly derived, has never really been used in ancient times to designate the swastika; on this I would refer you to my article in the July-August issue (it is long overdue, but perhaps it has finally appeared now, though I have not yet received it). Rereading, I notice that you have written "*ganuna*" and not "*gamma*" as I had first read it; but the objection which refers to the real meaning of the word "*gammadion*" does not subsist there any less.

There is nothing to emphasise as far as the biography of Pythagoras is concerned, except that it would be good, perhaps, to underline his relationship with the Delphic (and hyperborean Apollo, since he was properly speaking the "God geometrician", so that this is a point of even more particular importance for the second degree).

What you have considered on the subject of second degree travels seems to me very good in principle; I shall have to think about it still, but these studies on numerical correspondences should be quite easily realisable. For the third degree, I wrote to Marius Lepage these last few days and asked him to send you a copy of his ritual, and I have no doubt that he will be happy to do so; let me know what you think.

Brother Parise is, in fact, the former editor of the magazine *Atanòr*; last year, a certain Brother Porciatti had the idea of taking up this magazine again, and he even enrolled me "ex officio" on the editorial board without waiting for the acceptance he had offered me; I received the first issue, which was, moreover, quite insignificant and in no way resembles the old magazine of the same name, and it seems to me that things have remained there, since then I have never thought of talking about anything.

I am pleased with what you inform me on the question of the relationship of the Grand Orient with Human Right: it is only very true that the obligation of a "reinitiation", instead of a simple "regularisation" as before, is excessive as you say, and even quite incorrect from the initiatory point of view.

Brother Maridort sent me, in a letter which reached me at the same time as yours, Brother Mercier's work; I have not yet had time to examine it in sufficient depth, but it seems to me that there are things there which are not entirely ready, and that the fact of taking as a basis the particularities of the French Rite has caused some confusion, or more precisely some inversions in the symbolic correspondences....

I think you must have already received my letter of 16 August; on the exoteric question raised in your letter to Clavelle, your argument seems to me to be correct; the only point on which it would be necessary to be certain in order to rule out any doubt is this: has the "regularisation" brought about by the intervention of the Orthodox bishops now been extended to the whole of the Anglican Church? On the other hand, it is true that the use of a vulgar language seems a little inopportune; but, as you say, there is the fact that the Orthodox Church, in addition to the various truly liturgical languages recognised as such since ancient times, also admits others which are quite unexpected!

Thank you for the depiction of the Siberian shaman; it certainly bears a striking resemblance to that of the prehistoric "sorcerer" and the "deer dance". The *Hopis* are one of the factions of the Indian Peoples, and seem to be the ones who have best preserved certain traditions.

To return again to the instrument intended to imitate the sound of thunder: the fact that, in some peoples, such an instrument is carefully hidden from women, in addition to what you tell me and which is also certainly founded, seems to me to be connected with the essentially masculine character which is, always and everywhere, attributed to the symbols of lightning, the *vajra* and its various equivalents. In this connection, you may also see the curious Chinese legend of Yu the Great and his wife (in Granet, *Danses et légendes de la Chine ancienne*; here, the instrument used is a stone drum. With regard to the barrel in question, the more I think about it, the more I find that it is of much more importance than we might at first sight believe. In some Indian tribes, in order to bring rain, a man goes up on a roof (like the roofer in the old operative Lodges) and shakes a gourd filled with stones; there is, then, in this something directly connected with the rites of the "rain-makers" or so called. Now, the real meaning of these rites, as I have indicated, is an appeal intended to bring about the descent of the spiritual influences of Heaven upon the Earth; in Masonic initiation, the answer to this appeal is given, during the consecration, by the mallete, equivalent to the *vajra*, and the flaming sword, which has, among its various meanings, that of lightning; the concordance between the appeal and the answer appears, then, as clear as possible. Here we are further away from the unfortunate "sound effect discs"; it would perhaps be interesting if you could communicate these observations to our G. T. Brothers, so that they can be taken as a starting point for further developments. For Obedience in general, it goes without saying that it would be useless to mention considerations of this style, which would doubtless not be very well understood, and that it is sufficient, in order to justify the barrel of stones in the ritual, to say that it was in use in former times. I would add that it seems to me that this instrument should normally be placed in the West, this corresponding to the Earth from which the call to spiritual influences is directed, while the East, from which the response to this call comes, corresponds to Heaven (which is why it should regularly have a semi-circular shape, not included in the dimensions of the "long square", and equivalent, in the horizontal plane, to the dome crowning a building with a square base). On the rites of rain and weather, and particularly in connection with the Dodona oracle and the "staircase" of the Barenton fountain, there is interesting information in a book entitled *Classical Mythology and Arthurian Romance*, by Charles Bertram Lewis (Oxford University Press, 1952); but I don't know if we can find it in France in any library.

The name of the *Zomzomim* in the Bible is generally interpreted to mean men who speak an unintelligible language, which in short would be an equivalent of the Sanskrit term "*mlichchchha*"; but it is curious that they are spoken of as a people of giants. By way of curiosity, do you know that there exists in America an "*Order of the Zomzomim*", which, moreover, is only one of the innumerable pseudo-Initiatic organisations whose forms are more or less imitations of those of Freemasonry? Now, the name in question is considered to be of Arabic origin, and has, as you have supposed, the same derivation as that of the wells of Zamzam; these are situated within the very enclosure which surrounds the Kaabah, and are said to have sprung up at the instant when Ishmael was about to die of thirst in that place which was then nothing but a desert. I myself have drunk of the water of Zamzam; it has a very particular and difficult to define taste (I can find nothing to compare it with, perhaps that of the liquid found in fresh coconut nuts), and, although it is undeniably charged with a special "*barakah*" which has a particularly healing power in certain cases, we could certainly not drink it in large quantities at a time. The name *Zamzam* has a sense of "murmuring" or "humming" and may naturally relate to the noise made by water gushing abundantly (this is how it is more usually explained); but it is accurate that, as Brother Maridort has told you, it also designates the rumbling of thunder, which is perhaps more interesting in relation to the question before us, and which might lead us, in a rather singular and unexpected way, to something comparable to the fountain of Barenton. Perhaps it is not easy to explain completely, especially as the memory of certain things has been lost for a long time, but it is also necessary to think, in this respect, of the symbolic correspondences of the "black stone" which is very close by... In this connection, it is clear that the "staircase" of Barenton was, in the ancient sense of the word, a block of stone, and not, as I have seen it explained in some book, a staircase leading to the entrance of a castle!

There is something in all this which not only obviously relates to a truly universal symbolism (like that of which Mircea Eliade spoke in his article on Shamanism, which I reviewed in the July-August issue of "E.T."), but which also, and for that very reason, touches more particularly on what we might call the "prehistoric" origins (or links, if you prefer) of Freemasonry. It is just that we cannot talk much about these things with the generality of today's Freemasons, who would probably imagine (especially if they are also always influenced by the current ethnological and sociological theories, which many were in my time) that, by establishing such relations, we simply want to assimilate them to the "sorcerers"!

I have carefully reread your two works, and I have not found much to rectify in them; there seems to me to be only one small inaccuracy, moreover on a purely historical point: according to what I have always seen, it is not in Scotland as you say, but in Ireland, where the Culdean Church would have remained for the longest time. According to Eugène Beauvois, the Culdean monks of Ireland would have founded settlements in North America, as did the Templars; I am not sure what to think, having never had the opportunity to see their works for myself, but it seems that this would be based on serious reasons.

Regarding the rooster, I am not familiar with the two Dürer engravings you mention; could you give me an idea of what they represent? I have not been able to read exactly what is symbolised in Shintoism by a cockerel on a drum; I think I read "peace in the world", but this does not seem to be related to the context, and I do not quite understand this symbolism, which I have never heard of. Now, as regards the assimilation of the cockerel to a figure of the hermetic mercury, the general objection that could be made is the following: it is generally considered that, in the cabinet of reflection, sulphur and salt appear alone, because it is there a state of isolation in relation to the environment to which the mercury corresponds; if this is so, how can one justify the

presence of the cock, unless it has no other meaning in this case? I indicate only this difficulty, and you will tell me how you think it could be solved.

In what you tell me about the apron, I have still seen a justification for the relation you make between the cord of the apron and the *cable-tow*: it would then be necessary, in order to be completely exact, for this cord to be twice the circumference of the waist, as Brother Mercier, for his part, has rightly pointed out.

With regard to the letter S taking the place of the Hebrew IOD, this confusion of form seems to have been made quite often, and is all the more singular in that it gives a totally opposite meaning, since IOD and I represent unity, while S normally represents multiplicity. In the Scottish degree of Knight of the Sun, the three IODs in a triangle thus become three S's which, in order to find a plausible explanation, have been interpreted as "Wisdom, Wisdom, Holiness". I do not know if we still see, along the façade of the Temple of the Rue Froidevaux, the three iron S's that were there in the past; I always wonder if those who placed them there had not had, more or less consciously, some symbolic intention of the same kind.

The altar at Delos had the shape of a cube, but was it exactly a cubic stone? According to some, it was formed by an accumulation of ox horns; this would explain, on the other hand, that it would have been possible to double it without destroying it, i.e. not by replacing the old stone with a new one which would have had double volume, but simply by adding other horns to those already there until the volume was doubled, while keeping the same cubic shape. The symbolism of the horns is here more particularly related to *Apollon Karneios*, whom the Christian Bretons assimilated to Saint Corneille, considered for this reason to be the protector of horned beasts.

Finally, I must stop here, as this letter seems to have no end in sight!

Very fraternally to you.

R. G.

# **BERSERKER**

---

## **BOOKS**

---

