

300 Years of Freemasonry: **The Craft and Civil Society**

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Outline

- Origins and Background
- Freemasons and Civil Society
- Freemasonry and Academia
- Some examples of research
- Conclusions

Background

- This year Freemasonry arrived to its 300th anniversary. On June 24, 1717, four London lodges met to create the first Grand Lodge*.
- Long before that, Masonic Lodges had existed, but operated independently of each other.
- The new Grand Lodge provided Freemasonry with a structure, common rules, visitation rights and a modern philosophy: the Enlightenment. It was the beginnings of modern Civil Society.

Revolutionary concepts for their time

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

What are the Freemasons?

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

What is Civil Society

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

Contributions to Civil Society

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

The XVIII Century: England, France, Dutch Republic, USA (Jacobs*)

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

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

The XIX Century: L.A. & the Spanish Caribbean (Romeu*)

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

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

Freemasonry as an Academic Topic

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

Academic Forums

CEHME - Pagina Web

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

REHMLA C – Pagina Web

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

Casa Altos Estudios Don Fernando Ortiz (UH)

<http://www.filosofia.cu/site/institucion.php?id=15>

Masoneria en Asturias – Pagina Web

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

Ars Quatuor Coronatorum

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

Simposium de Cuba 2007

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

Simposium UNAM – Mexico 2010

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

Simposium UCLA - 2011

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

Simposium de Costa Rica 2015

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

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

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

Simposium de La Habana 2017

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

Gran Logia de Cuba (2017)

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

Grand Master and officers of the GLC At the July 2017 UH Simposium.



Freemasons and Political Leadership (*)

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

(*) Romeu, J.L. and L. Otero. *Statistics in Support of Masonic Historical Studies*. ASA/JSM Proceedings of Social Statistics. (Baltimore, MD. 2017)

Contingency Table Results:

Observed/Expected

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

Statistical Analysis Shows:

Strong Association between Leadership and membership in Freemasonry

Conclusions

- **GLC/GLSPR were Schools of Leadership**
- **Contribution of *Authoctonomous* Freemasons to Cuban/PR autonomy is incontrovertible.**

Thank-You

Questions?