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Reason, Speculative Freemasonry and Nature

These are Hector Mujica's own acquired concepts and ideas. Some of these concepts were extrapolated, learned or extracted from essays, works and thinking expressed by multiple Philosophers, Freemasons and Brothers that have influenced me through my quest for knowledge. Among some of them are Voltaire, R. Hutchens, Henry Clausen, David Hume, Thomas Khun, Patrick Norman, Brent Morris, George Lakkopf, Charles Geringer, Andrew Hammer, and Michael Lynch, just to mention a few.

One of the reasons for me, daring to make this presentation is my deep concern of how I perceive the issue of Freemasonic Philosophy and the processes used to impart Masonic knowledge to our Brethren. I think this process might be a critical factor in educating our new Master Masons.

A phenomenon I have perceived in our current labor as freemason and that still puzzles me, it is the fact that we rarely speak openly in Lodge about certain Freemasonic esoteric, and philosophical concepts. We presume our brethren have to acquire these concepts and knowledge all by themselves. Maybe we need to keep looking and thinking on ways to improve our paths to develop deeper thinking skills concerning these two issues.

I am of the belief that when we share thoughts and we compare perceptions, we as Freemasons make progress in the path towards "more Light". So please indulge me, as I want to express some of my thinking concerning Reason in the light of the freemasonic learning process; which by all means only represents some of my limited understanding concerning just a few of the Universal concepts of Freemasonry.

Speculative Freemasonry Reason and Nature

Reason is to me and many other Speculative Freemasons the capstone in the pyramid of ideas, which we may describe as the "Search for MORE Light". It is to many of us the foundation to the never-ending quest we are set in the search for knowledge, the search for the empirical truth of our nature and the search for Enlightenment of our minds.

Reason as a process of thinking and as it is used by a Freemason becomes a key to understand our surrounding Universe. We use reason in addition to our acquired knowledge of nature in addition to the current studies of the natural processes in our Universe - it is, as I say used by many of us, as a tool to seek truth and intellectual Enlightenment.

As we add and apply this tool to the appropriate use of all scientific findings, we may accept or reject the formulation of theories, and we make use of the foundations of a logic-thinking pattern. To me these concepts are without a doubt some of Freemasonry

most critical components, and we used them in understanding the Craft. These foundations – seeking knowledge - many scholars will argue are the primordial building blocks of our Order; we as Freemasons must acknowledge these time tested key principles of the human intellect, as we continue searching for more Light.

As I dwell in the implications that the acquire knowledge of nature that Science as provided us, using basic Logical thinking elements, and using reason as a process, with all the implications attached to it, and connecting these to the multiple freemasonic concepts learned by us, I shall discover new paths leading me to a better understanding of many esoteric Masonic components, thus helping us – me and my Brothers – to comprehend the principles and landmarks of the Craft.

In our limited understanding of the universal forces that govern nature, we make great efforts in the attempt to comprehend our true nature and our human existence in time and space. Thus, once we dwell into this intellectual arena, while using Reason we cannot ignore the questions that will arise in any inquisitive mind. We come suddenly to the realization that we have created ourselves an intellectual conflict - inherently bound to happen - as we process all the acquired knowledge and our own set of acquired beliefs.

This conflict is that of being the concept of reason per se - as it is universally understood - and as we are supposed to use it as Freemasons, and the “imposed or dictated” beliefs and dogmas of multiple doctrines we find in our society, which presented to us as truth by so many institutions.

If we are given time to process and think about these doctrines, each one of us develops a conceptualization about critical issues such as faith, morality, ethics, about concepts of deity and about concepts of religion.

We find ourselves in this “conundrum” when we think about any type of driven belief, which involves any of the hundreds of religions, faith and multiple deities that we humans have created through the history of mankind. Because without a doubt, different cultures through the history of mankind and in the eons of time of human existence, have created all those religions and deities to satisfy the hungry need of a faith that we humans have.

Studying our Freemasonic landmarks, and our learned philosophical principles, I came to realize that any of these religions and their gods and their multiple concepts, shall and must be the inherently reserved right of every person’s mental and spiritual “decision making process” and thus it is his choice while using his free intellect.

By using these words I express my most solid conviction of the freethinking philosophy that is underpinning this short presentation, and I happen to believe this freethinking it is

one of the key principles of Speculative Freemasonry. As I found it is necessary to establish a priori, that in my mind, any divine revelation, any miracle or divine intervention and any religious dogma must never be part of the Freemasonic creed.

I furthermore dare to postulate, that it is possible this could be the explanation of why, in the Book of Constitutions, as well as in our worldwide fundamental landmarks of our Freemasonic order; it is demanded of us not to ever promote, question, discuss or criticize any of the religious belief of a brother, nor exert or influence in any form a brother thinking process with respect to religion, while inside our Temples.

Once these fundamental thinking principles are understood and are used with wisdom, we could come to realize and discover that by using Reason as a foundation, adding logic in the processing of concepts, basing our understanding in all scientific knowledge, Mathematical and Geometric concepts, we as Freemasons may now really search for more Light.

Light which in turn will guide us to the concept of truth thus we may seek deeper understanding, and while in the process acquiring more knowledge. That is how, I have found the path to intellectual freedom and with it arriving, as a result of thinking freely, I discover one more of the so called "Freemasonic Secrets" which in my mind it is – That we must always liberate the intellect and the human spirit by allowing the mind to explore and seek new knowledge.

Our Order has eclectically selected and adopted allegories, used representations, and has imparted accumulated knowledge. We have chosen multiple ways of presenting these Freemasonic ideas. Many past civilizations have contributed in the building blocks used by our Craft, this' acquired knowledge has been inherited by us.

We esoterically represent this knowledge, these ideas, with symbols and we are the possessors of current and ancient wisdom, as I repeat, we express these ideas, concepts and wisdom through many symbols. Freethinking as a process has been frequently inculcated and forcefully recommended as it is one of our most basic tenets; it is and must continue to be one of the foundations of our Freemasonic philosophy. We, I, us, have inherited these Freemasonic principles; it is my duty, it is our duty to preserve them for future Freemasons.

We have used reason as a force in helping our understanding of the universe, we have learned through its use, about geometry, architecture, astronomy and all the sciences. We have found and discovered which are the governing laws of nature, which are the known facts about life on Earth and what it's our precarious place in the Universe.

Thus we have captured a glimpse of the fundamental principles of our existence. Not only as biological entities but as complex multidimensional creatures of this Universe, a

universe as it is known to us and perceived by our senses and mind in this moment in space and time.

Multiple philosophers, and many great Speculative Freemasons of the past and present day, have held that Reason alone, being the product of thoughtful contemplation, could reveal the archetypical truths we so obstinately search, in much the same way our well known Geometricians and Philosophers such as Euclid and Pythagoras, used reason to deduce their geometry theorems, centuries before others could find them and figured out the implicit scheme.

Other thinkers have maintained and believed that reason involved an empirical faculty, as well as the practical application of it. Epistemologically speaking, Reason cannot be defined as a process in which reason is used, as this assertion will be per se a circular argument. This dilemma has been the source of endless arguments, papers and essays written by hundreds of Philosophers, ergo: I will find myself in much deeper water that I am capable to handle if publicly attempt to elucidate the issue. Therefore I am assuming the comfortable position of letting each person dwell into that parameter and assess the definition. More simply put, I reserve the right to let my private convoluted brain processes handle the topic of what this human faculty – Reason - is.

In either case, I find reason to be intermeshed, intertwined with nature, but I think that unlike nature, mans' way of reason has become nowadays tainted, vitiated, clouded – which in my mind, it is in the present day much less excusable than it was in the past for our ancestors; as we have nowadays easy access to the proper and necessary ways to improve our understanding of the surrounding Universe. We now have access to all sorts of information and the tools to use these pieces of information, in order to acquire knowledge.

As Freemasons we know this is as part of our daily reality, but we must sort them out and should grasp these speculative concepts as they are constantly presented and placed right in front of us; to understand them and to learn from them it is our intellectual challenge and duty.

Reasoning as a process, as I say earlier, it's unfortunately nowadays tainted, clouded - similarly - as I have no doubt it was in the past - by those notorious and ever present enemies of the human intellect; these factors are thus hindering our Freemason's path in the quest for freethinking and the search for truth. As we may see and witness this phenomena now a days in the cloud of ignorance that surround us, in the lack of religious tolerance displayed publicly, in all the superstitions promoted by blind minds, in the rule of fear instigated by shrewd manipulators, in any and all dogmas imposed on our society by many institutions, in our persistent socioeconomic and racial rankings, in our cultural prejudices and on every imposed agenda of any religion.

Reason, then, it is for me the faculty used in comprehending nature and ourselves, a tool to learn about nature, and will always be a fundamental part or key element of the speculative Freemasonic thinking process and therefore as an extension the enlightenment of our minds. Nature was and is, just that – Nature. It is the natural status of the real world that surrounds us. It is not in my mind the realm of something supernatural, as I see nature not divine or demonic, nor something godly, but the empirical or rational "entity" of which the Universe was, is, and will be.

Nature could be understood as I said earlier through reason; through logic, through scientific inquiry and discovery; using these elements a Freemason who seeks knowledge and with the use of an open mind of free inquiry, will find that nature shall yield it's secrets. We as Freemasons must seek this knowledge and through it seek the truth of our existence.

Finally then Brethren, there is progress in our minds as reason used as a process will yield a better understanding of the nature of our Universe, it shall enhance our quality of life, it will guide us in our pursue of happiness, thus, allowing us reaching harmony, tolerance and acquiring wisdom. For each and every one of the enlightened Freemasons, who wish to achieve equilibrium in the context of the Universe, Reason becomes its revelation. Understanding nature its real connection to us, and thus each one of us may find and connect to what each one of us believes is the Great Architect of the Universe. (GAOTU)

In my mind it is this enlightenment, which I can only find in Freemasonic Philosophy, which it does not abolish nor opposes the myths, fantasies and illusions created by religions concerning the nature of deity; at best it reduces our limited concept of GAOTU to a sort of unique deity. A God internally defined by each and every Freemason brother, a unique entity in his own conceptual spiritual universe, whom is nevertheless subject to the laws of nature.

Some brothers could consider my intellectual position or Freemasonic thinking rather extreme or maybe a philosophical position border line heretic from the religious point of view, they could not be more wrong or farther from the reality of my mind. As we study examples of a similar philosophical thinking in existence; that is for example the thinking of many of our nation founding fathers. Some people may called it Deism; a position that originated from the same fertile soil in the era of Enlightenment and the same time of the foundation of our Speculative Freemasonic Order, in France, in England, in Scotland and in Germany.

We as Freemasons in our early stages of existence were postulating our freethinking, and were structuring our underlying philosophy and finally setting our landmarks as the Craft has them nowadays. The establishment and the prevailing religions of that era,

immediately accused Freemasons as being twisted, satanic or atheistic. Without a doubt it is possible many "Deists", "Humanists" "Freethinkers", became actually labeled, Atheists, but the malicious use of the term did not stop all those who created the foundations of Speculative Freemasonry in Europe, and brought it to our country.

These Philosophical thinking brought a label to our believe in a supreme being that was symbolized in the original and ancient Masonic lodges as the "Great Architect of the Universe", certainly it was not conceived as any of the pre established Gods. What I mean as an example: any of the Greek gods, or a Jewish Elohim god, or any of the Egyptian gods, or the Christians god or the Muslims god. It was thought not to be called Oauramazda, Allah, or Zeus, or Jesus or Isis, or any other name from any older or present religion or culture.

Therefore Brethren I must strongly state my believe that Freemasonry has given us a key to our intellectual freedom and stated that we must always defend the right of each Freemason brother and of any human being to be absolutely FREE to use reason to conceptualize GAOTU as he chooses it to be; as it is a Freemasonic principle that it was carefully thought out to be a foundation of our order and it always must remain like that. I postulate that: Never ever any Religion shall dictate the inner workings of the spirit and mind of a Speculative Freemason.

I am that I am. To the Glory of the GAOTU -

Sincerely and Fraternally --

Hector N. Mujica -- Master Mason -