

ROSICRUCIAN "HEALING" IN MASONRY
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Over the course of many years, I've read a great many articles telling about 18th and 19th Century-era Freemasons belonging to competing factions (for lack of a better word) jockeying for acknowledgement and reciprocal acceptance. "Masonic Regularity" is basically an official seal-of-approval of purity, legitimacy, and honor-based precepts and goals. "Official Recognition" in the Masonic World was something to be cherished as much as an honorable birthright in polite society.

Various writers sometimes broadly use the phrase "Illegitimate Freemasonry" to describe any deviation from the mainstream fraternal circle. While this may be technically correct as far as semantics goes --- it is not as precise as our Masonic fore bearers defined in our Ancient Landmarks. "Illegitimate Freemasonry" and "Irregular Freemasonry" are somewhat similar although not exactly alike. Both terms deal with facets of the fraternal design that are not quite square, plumb, and true. Something that is illegitimate or irregular hints that something of material substance unquestionably exists, but that its existence was borne out of questionable circumstances. Therefore, anything deemed illegitimate or irregular has room for corrective measures to improve its quality...or improve its status of distinction. As in stonemasonry: if a stone still had rough edges to its nature, it could be pounded, contoured, and corrected with a mallet to make it more refined and acceptable to the builder's eye.

"Spurious Freemasonry" and "Clandestine Freemasonry" are in a wholly separate category. Those terms are more in sync to be synonymous with each other. Both terms allude to fraudulent groups which quite frequently have evil intentions, hidden motives or rely on deception. They may outwardly look similar to mainstream groups, but inwardly have different philosophies, different attitudes, and strive for strikingly dissimilar goals from that of the mainstream. Nearly every Masonic Lodge, Rite, or Association urges their initiates to be especially careful in preserving their Masonic dignity and reputation by only associating with those groups who are given official recognition by the respective Grand Lodge of the particular State, territory or other designated Jurisdiction in which the person resides or holds membership in. Such competent authority is what delineates geographic boundaries as well as circumscribes specific boundaries of what constitutes lawful and honorable Masonic Conduct.

Allegations of un-Masonic Conduct usually, but do not always involve breeches of law. Charges can be preferred for breeches of morals, acts of moral turpitude, or anything that besmirches the dignity of a Lodge of Masons or the character of the Masonic Fraternity as a whole. Sadly, some countries have welded Masonic principles and political gamesmanship together ----such practices have delved into a murky mire of surreptitiously and stealthily trying to achieve selfish gains by attempting to ride on the coat-tails of honor. They play games via a mechanism, which I call "Name Association." They purport to be under the banner of Freemasonry; yet they taint the good name of our Fraternity by words, deeds, actions, and propaganda which is un-Masonic to say the very least.

Several fraternal societies (including Masonry) are said to be "secret societies." However, that label is widely misunderstood by the public. Our signs, symbols, modes-of-recognition and our most valued ritualistic renditions or phrasings of honorable lessons are precepts by which to live an upright life. Those aspects of Masonic Ritual are easy to read, but difficult to practice. An imposter may copy a supposedly "secret sign" or "secret word"... but they cannot copy the genuine friendships of men who sincerely acknowledge "The Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of Almighty God." Anyone who lacks purity of heart cannot (and should not) achieve full and lawful Masonic Recognition.

In this day and age of impersonators, shams, and fakery --- it is good to know that a little bit of intimate knowledge can help one good man recognize another good man --- even in foreign lands. Various "passwords" or "personal identification codes" are widely accepted in areas such as computer usage and in banking transactions to preserve privacy and to assure authenticity with access. Just as we try to ward-off "viruses" or "hackers" in the technological world, we have to fight similar invaders in the fraternal



world. Such groups which are generally deemed clandestine and spurious are seen and denounced by most American Grand Lodges. But, there are a few whose identity and true colors are not always known to us.

In different cases, there may be a few Masonic groups which are knownbut who have previously been deemed to be legitimate and regular --- yet they strayed from the fold in some fashion for one reason or another. On occasion, there is room for various types of reuniting when relatively minor deficiencies are corrected. However, the major flaws and deficiencies held by clandestine and spurious Masons can generally not be reconciled.

The purpose of this paper is to simply focus on precisely defining "Illegitimate Masonry" and the process of "Healing." Such terminology was entirely unknown to early Masons. From all indications, the term "heal a Mason" is of Rosicrucian origin.

One 'Masonic' group given a bad reputation by historians is the branch of Scottish Rite Masonry advanced by Joseph Cerneau, a jeweler and goldsmith. Cerneau was born at Villeblevin, in Yonne, in central France. He went to Cuba and was very active in Masonry. Cerneau had eventually obtained the 18th Degree of Knight of the Rose Croix. In July 1806, Antonie-Mathieu Dupotet was Master of Lodge No. 47 and was a Prince of the Royal Secret, when he (Dupotet) communicated the Degrees of the Rite of Perfection from the 19° to 25°. Joseph Cerneau's patent certificate was signed by Bro.: Dupotet giving Cerneau the power in the northern part of Cuba to initiate and promote Brother Masons from the 4° to the twenty-fourth Degree and only one candidate per year was allowed to receive the 25°. Furthermore, all candidates that Joseph Cerneau chose to initiate or advance were supposed to be Officers of recognized Lodges. Overstepping his bounds, Joseph Cerneau established his own Sovereign Grand Consistory in New York in 1807. Cerneau really did not establish a "Rite", but only a leg of what has now become The Supreme Council, 33° for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States.

Bro. Arturo de Hoyas and Bro. S. Brent Morris illustrated a fairly good (but brief) account of Cerneauism in the May-June 2010 issue of The Scottish Rite Journal (of the Southern Jurisdiction of the USA). Unfortunately, they titled their article: "Cerneauism & Anti-Masonry." That was a poor title for an article since those topics are not synonymous. Cerneau was a legitimate Mason at one time. His passion, zeal, and fortitude prompted him to seek acceptance in realms in which he had no expertise. He sought recognition and "acceptance" for a system promoting a tier of Degrees which he hadn't earned and had no competent Jurisdiction over which to govern. Seeking refuge in New York, Joseph Cerneau joined the York Rite Masonic Bodies and was a Royal Arch Mason and a Knight Templar. He later died in his homeland of France in comparative obscurity and almost destitute.

Joseph Cerneau was like Albert Pike in many ways. Both mingled with a wide spectrum of society. Both Cerneau and Pike were gifted at making friends and cultivating alliances. Cerneau befriended New York Governor DeWitt Clinton, who was the first Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar in the USA. DeWitt Clinton was also Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of New York; and General Grand High Priest of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the United States. Joseph Cerneau knew that Clinton's prominent name would lend credence to any Cerneau-sponsored Masonic faction. The Scottish Rite Journal article claims that Governor DeWitt Clinton didn't care "one whit for the honors conferred on him by the Cerneau Scottish Rite Supreme Council." That isn't exactly true. Clinton died on February 11, 1828. His early death was the primary reason he didn't give Cerneauism an added boost.

Governor DeWitt Clinton and the Marquis de Lafayette were both recognized by a wide variety of Masonic Lodges, Royal Arch Chapters, Cryptic Councils, Templar Commanderies, and Scottish Rite Consistories. Quite often, both men were escorted by Masonic Brethren to and from various public occasions. Lafayette was a Royal Arch Mason in Jerusalem Chapter #8, RAM and was a Knight Templar in Columbian Commandery #1 in New York City. Lafayette was even made a member and Grand Representative of the Cerneau Scottish Rite Body. The noted Masonic historian James R. Case noted that Lafayette was being smooth-talked by representatives of a Cerneau group when "the Knights Templar came to the rescue" (in Case's words) by inviting him (Cerneau) to a legitimate KT gathering ---seemingly taking him kindly by the elbow and ushering him away from the Cerneau orbit of fraternal



mingling. Various distinguished Masons of legitimate Masonic Bodies endeavored to keep Lafayette's reputation unsullied until his death in 1834 in France. Lafayette outlived DeWitt Clinton by only 10 years -- but neither man lived to see the Scottish Rite in the United States in anything more than a struggling or primitive condition. In the years since, more than 75 Masonic Bodies in the USA have been named after Lafayette--including 39 Lodges, 18 RAM Chapters, 4 Councils, 4 Commanderies, and 7 Scottish Rite Bodies. In 1825, when addressing the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, Lafayette himself stated that he was initiated into Freemasonry before he ever came to America. Both he and DeWitt Clinton had a deep interest in Masonry. Both men were affiliated with Cerneauism on their "own free will and accord." Had each man lived longer, it is almost certain they would have been "Healed" in the A & A Scottish Rite...as others were.

Albert Mackey defines the word "Heal" in a Masonic context, as a technical term which signifies making valid or legal. Hence one who has received a Degree in an irregular manner or from incompetent authority is not recognized until he has been "healed." The precise mode of healing depends upon the circumstances. Mackey says that if the Lodge which conferred the Degree is clandestine, the whole ceremony of initiation would have to be repeated. But, if the question was really an issue of who had competent authority, it is only necessary to require an updated and modified clause indicating obedience or allegiance while retaining the basic body of the covenant. I agree with Mackey's latter statement about the simplicity of "healing" as a simple modification, addendum or proclamation of an updated or newer allegiance to competent authority. However, his earlier preceding statement is one of the few times when I disagree with Mackey. Clandestine and Regular Masons are forbidden to converse on topics of Masonry, let alone ritualistic matters. That proves my point: Irregular and Illegitimate can be dealt with. Negotiations and conferences can lead to mutual reconciliation, resolution of grievances or removal of barriers of minor prejudice. However, Clandestine or spurious Masons cannot be dealt with. Motives and methods are so divergent that there can be no coming together. Spurious Masonry and Regular Masonry have an inverse magnetism....each side repels the other. If something is spurned, it is cast away --- usually forever. Mackey's train-of-thought still remains correct if a man had mistakenly joined a clandestine group: he would have to disavow it and be initiated in the Regular Body as if his past record was a clean slate. Such instances are so rare that it isn't worth splitting-hairs.

In Rosicrucian circles, many members engaged in studies of Medicine and related fields. They found that the human body has to be purged of toxins and poisons. Rosicrucians were the first to apply such principles in defining and applying those same standards among the so-called "Friendly Societies" of Europe, which were academic, fraternal, social, or charitable in nature. Rosicrucians were a hybrid of the religious Mendicant Orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and others) and an equal blending of scholarly academics with many members being recruited while students and professors from some of Europe's oldest universities. The Society of the Rose & Cross had no real competition. But, as the years wore on ---- it had a great many imitators. The purity of the institution or the Society was contingent upon the purity-of-heart of its members. You can only heal what is treatable. If something (such as a terminal cancer) has eaten-away too much of the vital organs, the prognosis is death. Verbal pronouncements are of no value unless there is rational or "just-cause" for Healing.

The "Body" must have some strength if it is to "heal." Application of a healing ointment, balm or liniment is intended to soothe and relieve pain or discomfort. This concept is equally appropriate with Organizations and religious Orders. In a religious context, priests of the Roman Catholic Church performed the Sacrament of Extreme Unction (formerly known as "the last rites") as an act of anointing those who were seriously ill or on the threshold of death. Early Rosicrucians always deferred that task as the sole province of clergy, but Rosicrucians readily utilized their belief in Almighty God combined with the Holy Bible as their principal means of spiritual healing ----- combined with additional applications of ancient medicinal practices (which they regarded as God-given knowledge) .

By crisscrossing Europe, the Mediterranean, the Muslim Territories and various other parts of The Holy Land, Rosicrucians heard and shared ancient knowledge based on proven ancient traditions. Albert G. Mackey notes that the ancient Hebrews anointed their leaders with oil mingled with the richest spices. They also anointed themselves and Mackey quotes the Biblical verse found in the Psalms: "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness."



Corn, wine, and oil are used at Masonic ceremonies open to the public, such as the laying of cornerstones. These emblems came to Masonry via the early Rosicrucians who were concerned with all things which were life-sustaining. Even the most leaned cooking experts of today utilize such things as vegetable oil, olive oil, corn oil as well as wine in the kitchen. For many, enhancement of taste is an added bonus of sustaining life. In a symbolic manner: Corn signifies 'abundance' or 'plenty'; wine is the emblem of 'refreshment'; while oil is an emblem of 'joy', 'smooth harmony' or 'happiness' and 'contentment'. It also could be said that the 3 elements represent: health, prosperity and peace.

Most of us are familiar with a Biblical Psalm "It is like the precious ointment which ran down the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments." After the birth of Jesus Christ, the 3 Magi brought the emblematic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Some Rosicrucians studied alchemy while others discovered the effects of minerals and herbs which were found to have therapeutic effects. Rosicrucians re-discovered or modified primitive medical tools, as well as made additional discoveries in metal compositions which enabled more reliable medical instruments and procedures.

In areas where stonemasons had no knowledge, Rosicrucians literally provided the oil which lit the lamp of knowledge and Enlightenment.

To heal, was to take the initial steps to turn back disease and death. On that score, action had to be quick and decisive. Rosicrucians focused on the vital importance of equilibrium more than stonemasons ever would (or could). The sensory functions of mankind were associated with Life or Death. The All-Seeing Eye as a symbol referring to Almighty God was used in Rosicrucianism long before it was adopted by Speculative Freemasonry. In bygone times when food was hard to find (and even harder yet to preserve) the senses enabled man to discern good from bad. Rotted food was foul to the smell and repulsive to the taste-buds. Just as mankind developed preservatives for food --- Rosicrucians developed literal and figurative means of identifying, preserving, and protecting solemn alliances and sacred friendships. While stonemasons may have been illiterate and used signs, symbols, and passwords like a union-tradesman of today shows his credentials.....Rosicrucians adopted a type of means-testing to screen attributes. Just as flour is poured through a sieve or sifter (such as a mesh or net) to separate 'wanted material' from 'unwanted material'---- Rosicrucians, by thorough examination were able to devise a sort of intellectual strainer which sorted-out and kept elevated the "wanted virtues" of Loyalty, Obedience, and Duty to the World (among others).

An operative stonemason had the knowledge of his trade. If he were a dishonest scoundrel or who used dubious shortcuts: generally the failings of one bad craftsman did not taint the actions of other workmen in the quarry. Loyalty wasn't as much of a criterion as long as a stonemason could do the job at hand. Loyalty was more important to Rosicrucians because they lived by "Rules" laid down as did the Cistercian monks, the Benedictines, and others. They had closer interactions, less privacy, and needed assurances that their philosophical partners were compatible and amenable. The Rosicrucian Society emphasized ethical and moral behavior expected within the Society and outward to the profane world. The Society of the Rose & Cross was always preoccupied with preserving one's reputation. Again, stonemasons were more interested in getting the tasks done at the job-site. Stonemasons strived for level cornerstones which were laid on a firm foundation in order to allow a solid structure to be built. Rosicrucians looked deeper to study the composition of man and the world around him. Comparable to modern-day geologists, a Rosicrucian might study a stone's material composition, denseness and resiliency to erosion. Then, the Masonic Rosicrucian would study the workman's physical ability, his muscle, and his intellectual capability in doing the labor. Stonemasons honed skills. Rosicrucians honed knowledge, formulas, and wisdom. When some Freemasons became members of the Rosicrucian Order: the best of all worlds was attained: The skill of knowing the "how to do a task" combined with the wisdom of knowing "the value of performing that task." Both groups sought official sanction and recognition for their Work. But, Rosicrucians were more interested in long-term residual effects. Rosicrucians looked upon the world as a civilization crocheted from the fabric of man's blood, sweat, tears intermingled with the Faith, Hope, and Charity as bestowed by the Creator.



While an atheist could have theoretically been a stonemason; it was impossible for an atheist to become a Rosicrucian. A belief in Almighty God was deemed essential in Rosicrucian circles. This sentiment was adopted by some operative Masons, and by the time Speculative Freemasonry gained momentum, a belief in Almighty God was nearly universally regarded as an "Ancient Landmark." The Rosicrucians were similar to Jesuits in that they were a preaching society and educational society. However, the Jesuits became primarily interested in Law and Education whereas Rosicrucians dealt mostly with Medicine, Philosophy and Education.

Education, quite noticeably, was the great area of overlap. While some Orders feuded with each other, Rosicrucians became more reclusive. They were far fewer in number and had few earthly possessions. Freemasons grew in numbers due to great numbers of men interested in mingling together in a social and fraternal atmosphere. The successors to the ancient Rosicrucians who evolved into the Masonic Rosicrucian groups we see today, remained comparatively few...but their ranks remained stable with devoted members.

I would compare the two groups in medical analogies: While the pulse-rate (number of total members of Masonry) accelerated in the 20th Century --- the longevity (the long span of satisfaction and contentment) accorded to Masonic Rosicrucians increased significantly as well.

Today, there is very little use of the word "healing" in Masonry in its technical sense because legitimate authority has prevailed due to the hard work and diligence of Brethren who have gone before us. They have cultivated a good image of Masonry to the public. It is up to us to keep that good image intact.

As for "healing" in Rosicrucian circles: We need to continue to strive to preserve wisdom, to preserve truth, and to preserve any action which enhances Life and promotes Faith. In any event, let us use our wisdom to heal our hearts...and let us begin with our own, first!!!! So Mote It Be!!!!

SOURCES / RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences by Albert G Mackey, M. D., 33° and a KT.

-The Scottish Rite Journal. May-June 2010 issue. The Supreme Council, 33°, S.J. of the USA.

-'Lafayette and the Knights Templar' James R. Case, 33° and a KT.

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