



Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite

Taipei Bodies News

Orient of Taiwan, on which the sun never sets

Newsletter #15, May 2015

A word from the Venerable Master



Dear brethren,

Fraternal greetings to all!

It is amazing how time flies. In a blink we have closed our Spring Reunion in a grand success! The well-delivered rituals were stunning as usual. The debut of the 27th degree long form was especially an eye-opener to all. We had a record high attendance of more than 160 people to the gala banquet, yet the venue generously hosted everyone with great comfort. The opening entertainment by children and young talents of the Thai Karen tribe (which our Taipei Bodies support all the years) was very impressive. The Lanna dance performed by the beautiful wife of Bro. Shoji was even more stunning. All of these reflect the joint effort of all who were part of it. I sincerely thank the organizer, the ritual teams, and everyone who made efforts to attend.

I give my hearty congratulation and welcome to the 32 new brethren of the Class of Lanna Thai 2015. I urge all of you to continue your journey in the search of more light, and soon become vital force of our Craft.

In no time it will be our Fall Reunion in Taipei held on 25 and 26 September, 2015. For those who have missed the great Spring Reunion in Chiangmai and for those who enjoyed it so much, please mark this great event in your agenda. Come join the magical event which connects all of us. I look forward to seeing you all.

Best regards to you and your love ones.

Fraternally yours,
Dennis Liao, 32° KCCH
Venerable Master
Dear brethren,

THE 2015 SPRING REUNION

The Reunion took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on May 1st and 2nd. 32 candidates from 12 nationalities have been raised from the 4th to the 32nd degree, and are now Masters of the Royal Secret.



The Class Lanna Thai 2015

Five degrees were performed in long form: the 4th, the 14th, the 18th, the 27th (for the first time), the 30th and the 32nd. The Reunion was closed by a banquet gathering over 160 guests, with entertainment provided by the talents of the Karen tribe and Bro Shoji's wife.

Some pictures taken during the Reunion are accessible on:

<https://plus.google.com/photos/100901639906252472369/albums/6147556904323729009?sort=1>

FOURTEENTH DEGREE, PERFECT ELU

"The Glory of God is to conceal the Word"



This degree which closes the First Body, Lodge of Perfection, is the last of the Ineffable Degrees. We remember that in the 13th degree, 3 craftsmen have discovered an underground vault of 9 levels (vault of Enoch) and, in the deepest one, a cubic stone of agate bearing a golden triangle with some Hebrew inscription. They brought this jewel to King Solomon who recognizes the Ineffable Name of God.

In this degree, we finally discover the Word, which can only be lettered.

The cubical stone is now placed in a horizontal vault of 9

chambers, built by King Solomon (note that we are passing from the heavenly vertical direction to the earthly horizontal one).

The brethren are familiar with this degree as it is always performed in long form. The candidate is reminded the values of charity, benevolence, self-improvement and correction of the fault of his brethren. He purified symbolically his heart and mind in the laver, and his lips are anointed with oil as he is taught to practice the Truth. He shares bread and wine to remind the charity he owes to his brethren and all human beings. He is finally presented with the symbolism of the nonagon.

In this degree, Albert Pike in *Morals and Dogma* insists on the necessity of a free government. He mentions in particular the motto "*liberty, equality, fraternity*". Accordingly, the lesson from this degree is that the Perfect Elus are bound by their obligations and free from prejudice, intolerance and envy.

This degree concludes the Lodge of Perfection, and summarizes the teachings of the 13 preceding degrees, which are worth to be recapitulated in *A Bridge to Light*:

- 4th Practice Silence
- 5th Cultivate honesty, sincerity, good faith
- 6th Be zealous, faithful, disinterested & benevolent, act the peacemaker
- 7th Decide justly, impartially; do justice to all men
- 8th Inculcate benevolence and charity
- 9th Destroy ignorance
- 10th Contend against tyranny and fanaticism
- 11th Be earnest, true, reliable; be the advocate and champion of the rights of the people
- 12th Seek truth and right
- 13th Be guided and directed by honor and duty
- 14th Be devoted to virtue and the cause of humanity

The 14th degree is also the last one related to the Temple of Solomon.

There are several symbols introduced in this degree.

The hexagram, comprised of two interlaced triangles, is a symbol of dynamic equilibrium, of the Deity, and of the World. It is the symbol of the Macrocosm. One triangle is directed upward the other downward, which reminds us "as above, so below". This symbol appears also in the Pythagorean Tetractys, which also generates the cube.

Upon the cubical stone is represented a golden triangle, with two forms of the Ineffable Name, in Sanskrit at the center and around in Phœnician characters, both glittering in gems of different colors. On the side of the



triangle are the traditional words of the Royal Arch degree in Phœnician. Triangle is always the symbol of Deity.

The pentagram is the symbol of Man, the microcosm. Upon it is the Hebrew word *shalamot*, "perfection". It may also refer to the 5 elements (Plato and Wu Xing). It is also the emblem of the Eastern Star.

The lustration is the symbol of devotion and purification of heart and soul since times immemorial by most of civilizations. This word has been chosen instead of baptism, which may have a strong Christian meaning (however "lustration" is the word in communist country for the purge of governments, so it is difficult to stay out of politics)

The bread and libation are reminders that hospitality is a true Masonic virtue, and that we owe our brethren kind services, graceful courtesies and cheerful assistance and relief.

The oil is a symbol of consecration to the service of justice, right and truth.

The gold ring is a visible mark of this degree. Its motto is *Virtus junxit, Mors non separabit*, "Death shall not separate what virtue has united". The Hebrew letter *Yod* within the triangle is the first letter of the name of Deity.

The candelabra, or *menorah*, is a one, and the most famous, ornament of the Temple. It originates from Moses on Mount Sinai, and represents the light which emanates from God. Its seven branches are in relation with the seven planets. It can also be representing the seven pillars of wisdom (Proverbs, IX, 1-6).

Besides this reference to number 7, which is also present in the candles arrangement, we find also in this degree the number 9 (=3 x 3): the number of vaults, the nonagon presented in the ritual¹, the candles of Venerable Master. Nine is associated with the duration of pregnancy. It announces the end of a cycle (the Lodge of Perfection?)

In China, note that nine is a very important male number, which plays an important role in the Yi-Jing. The Li-Ji enumerates also 9 rites. We can also mention Lu Bu Wei (heaven has 9 fields, etc ... the 9 headed dragon of Emperor Yu, and the realm of dead "9 wells" (jiu quan).

An old timer in Taipei

¹ Both nonagon and heptagon are in the Grand Masonic Camp.



Sir Knight Bill Hoffmark visited Taipei and enjoyed a sumptuous beer-and-burger dinner with Deputy Ill. Norman Pin, Venerable Master Dennis Liao, and Secretary Sir Knight Claude. Bill became a Mason of the Grand Lodge of China in 1966, and has contributed to our Craft through generous donation and personal service.

Administration

Although the collection of Dues for 2015 is not completed yet, the collection for 2016 will start in coming months. We would like to remind you that the yearly Dues shall be paid before end of December of the preceding year. You will receive accordingly a Dues Notice, recapitulating your situation.

The Yearly Dues are 2,000 NT\$ for Taiwan members, and 50 US\$ for Overseas members.

The Life membership is 1,000 US\$.

Payment can be made

- in cash
- online in US\$ on <http://scottishrite.org/> (**the best way**),
- by check in US\$ worded to Taipei Bodies A&ASRSJ,

It can be also made by TT in convertible currency to the Secretary account but this is the most expensive way for both parties:

Mega International Commercial Bank

Account holder: Claude Robert Soucaille
Account number: 021-10-42184-9
Swift code: ICBCTWTP0201

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Plastic card replacement costs 5 US\$.

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