



# Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite

## Taipei Bodies News

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*Orient of Taiwan, on which the sun never sets*

Newsletter #37, March 2020

### A word from the Venerable Master

Dear Brethren,



This month started in sorrow in the Taipei valley with the departure of Illustrious Kok Cheong Cheah a high figure in Malaysian Freemasonry. I present my sincere condolences to his family and to all Malaysian brothers. We shall miss him.

Life continues and we are preparing the Spring Reunion in Kuala Lumpur, an opportunity to pay a last homage to KC. I hope to see you there.

We are at the eve of the Year of the Rat, and I wish you and your family an Happy and prosperous New Year

Fraternally yours,

Charles Teng,  
Venerable Master

### The 24<sup>th</sup> degree - Prince of the Tabernacle

*"Reason, Knowledge and Faith"*

This degree illustrates common features of some of the world's major religion, and we approach the greater mysteries, which are reserved to the initiates.



It first presents the attributes of the initiate, the lamp of the Trismegistus, or reason illuminated by science, the mantle of Apollonius, or full and complete self-possession, which isolates the sage from blind tendencies, the staff of the patriarchs, which is the help of the secret and everlasting forces of Nature. These attributes have been presented by Eliphas Levi, a French occult author and ceremonial magician, who joined Freemasonry for a short while.

The initiate shall be armed with reason, knowledge and faith, to defend himself against the blind forces of evil and achieve harmony or equilibrium, until he attains the science and power of the Magi (from Zoroaster)

The degree insists upon the necessity of evil, as a balancing force. (*very strong reference to dualism*)

The degree starts with the reference to the 4 elements, common to ancient philosophies to explain the nature: the fire, the water, the earth and the air, strong symbols of alchemy, representing the basic elements of the life. In four journeys, the candidate is tried with these 4 elements. (note that these journeys appear in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree of AASR).

The degree then turns towards the cycle of life, resurrection and immortality of soul, illustrated by common features in ancient religions: Egyptian, Hindus, Persians, Phrygians, Phoenicians, Greeks, with a murder and a rebirth, a succession of light and darkness.

This emphasizes equilibrium of forces, a dualistic approach of the world.

To better illustrate, the candidate is at that moment featuring Osiris in his coffin, in a ritual very similar to the tragedy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree.

The coffin is hidden under a tamarisk (similar to the acacia), and priests try to raise him unsuccessfully with Apprentice and Fellowcraft grip, which proved unable to demonstrate the existence of soul. Only the Master's grip, symbol of faith, can raise Osiris. Faith is the conviction that soul will survive the death of the body.

The conclusion is that the soul is immortal. It is a spark of the Universal Soul, which is for a while imprisoned in a terrestrial body, with all its imperfection. Life is accordingly a struggle between the Divine will and the natural will.

The initiate has to understand the great mysteries, and not to follow the worship taught to the common people by idols or allegories. (*different levels in the religious teachings*)

The murder of Hiram is re-interpreted, the first blow to the throat, again freedom of speech, the second on the heart, seat of the affection, and the third on the head, seat of intellect and reason.

To summarize, this degree offers a synthesis of the religious creeds of humanity:

- Immortality of the soul,
- Necessity of evil,
- Spark of universal Soul in an imperfect body

## **Spring Reunion 2020**

The 2020 Spring Reunion is fixed on May 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The venue selected by our Malaysian Brothers is Royal Chulan Damansara Hotel. Detailed information will be communicated in due time.

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|----------------|---|
| - 4th Degree   | - Malaysia (East Malaysia) - David Shen     |
| - 14th Degree  | - India / Singapore / Malaysia - Umashankar |
| - 18th Degree  | - Malaysian / Hong Kong (West Malaysia) -   |
| Lee Kok Choong |   |
| - 29th Degree  | - India - Umashankaer                       |
| - 30th Degree  | - India / Malaysia - Bharat Epur            |
| - 32nd Degree  | - Thailand confirmed - Christopher Moore    |

## **Dues 2020**

Still 242 members are late in Dues payment, 73 for 2020 (payable before end of 2019), and 169 with more arrears.

Payment can be made

- Online in US\$ only, the best way ([http://scottishrite.org/Pay your Dues](http://scottishrite.org/Pay%20your%20Dues))

**the best way**, or

- by bank transfer to the following account

Megabank International Commercial Bank

Account Holder: Claude Robert Soucaille

Account Number: 021-10-42184-9

Swift Code: ICBCTWTP021

- or in cash.

**We are sorry not to accept any more payment by check** as they are rejected by our US bank.

## **Goodbye**



We are sad to announce the departure for the Grand Lodge above of our Illustrious Brother Cheah Kok Cheong. He was a very important member of the Malaysian Freemasonry. He joined the Taipei Valley in 1982, was invested Knight Commander Court of Honour in 1993, and coroneted Inspector General Honorary in 1997. He played a great role in our Reunions and was very instrumental for hosting our next one in Kuala Lumpur.

Our heartfelt condolences to the family and love ones on this sudden departure. His absence will be sadly missed by many.

## **Contribute to our letter**

Contribute to the life of our Valley, send your contribution to [taipei.bodies@gmail.com](mailto:taipei.bodies@gmail.com)

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Taipei Bodies, China Masonic Temple  
#10 Lane 201, Chang An East Rd Sec. 2, Taipei  
Or PO Box 34-154, Taipei 10499  
Phone +886227713310, [taipei.bodies@gmail.com](mailto:taipei.bodies@gmail.com)

