



THE FIVE DECOMPOSITION SIGNS OF THE ANGEL

Allocution taken by the Grand Lodge on the 17th April 2009 from the Grand Master of the Regular Grand Lodge of Italy Fabio Venzi

We find ourselves in a world of ruins. The problem to suppose is: do there still exist people standing in the middle of these ruins? And what can they still do?

Julius Evola

Guidelines

The five decomposition signs of the angel are an allegory yield from the Buddhist thought, they are listed in the text *Abhidharma Mahavibhasasastra*.¹

¹ *Abhidharma Mahavibhasasastra* describes in the particular the five major signs and the five minor signs. The first five minor signs are: 1) when an angel flutters and pirouettes, he creates such a marvelous music that no musician, orchestra or chorus is able to imitate; but when his death is near, the music disappears and his voice becomes tight and weak. 2) In normal conditions, day and night, from an angel has its origin a very bright light that doesn't allow shadows; but with the approaching of the death the light suddenly becomes lower and his body is wrapped by light shadows. 3) An angel's skin is smooth and covered by ointment and, even if immersed in a delicacy lake, he repels the liquid like the Loto leaves; but if the death gets near, the water adheres tenacious persistence. 4) Generally, an angel, similar to an agitated wheel of fire, he never stops, we can't find him in a determined place; when we think he's here, he's there, and he moves, he launches freely anywhere; but with the approaching of the death, he hesitates in one place and he can't get away. 5) The body of an angel is full of energy and his eyes never have thrills; but with the approaching of death his body weakens and his batting continually his eyelids. Here are the five major signs: the wears, once intact, become dirty, the flower garland on his head dies and falls down, the sweat leaks from the armpits, a persistent stink

We got inspired by this allegory to analyze the serious health state in which the Freemasonry, trying to understand which are the causes that brought it to this point and which may be the correctives for a survival. We will do it listing five degenerative phases of the Freemasonry, all deriving from its inside. It's obvious that when we talk about Freemasonry we're referring to the disappearing of the "traditional", "original", conceived and intended as the "Initiatory Society". My vision on the status of the Freemasonry could seem, at first sight, extremely critic, especially because the fact that many mason European Obedience have publicized a notable numerical increase of the members. And it's from here that I'd like to start.

The first of the five signs that mark the end of the Freemasonry can be noticed by the inaccuracy in choosing or in the total selection lack of the new candidates in the initiation for Freemasons.

Before retaining possible an initiation it's necessary to have people able to "initiate". But we also necessarily need the "candidate" to be "suitable". In fact we need to check if in the candidate is present the raw material of the Opera that he already has to own. We talk about a determinate internal constitution, an inborn predisposition, in an initiative vision that does of the Freemasonry experience not a supernatural operation, but an oratorical operation. This is the Socratic technique that brings in light things that already are in us, like in the process of improvement it reappears, with a ritual and the symbology, the knowledge that is already deep in the anime of a Freemason, and wakens to himself.

To use in the Freemasonry the concept of equality is incompatible and astray. If the sense of life takes place in his continuous evolution and in the route of Freemasonry it's the representation, the distinction of the stages of development determines necessarily a differentiation between the individuals.

In the world of Tradition the initiation, in its most elevated forms, was conceived as an intensely real operation, able to change the ontological state of the individual and

adheres his body, he loses the joy of being. How we can see, the other sources list major signs. As long as only the minor signs demonstrate, we can avoid death, but once the major signs demonstrate death is inevitable (Mishima Yukio, *The decomposition signs of the angel*, cit., pp. 1546-1547).

insert in him powers of the world of being.² For the modern laity mentality every ritual, when it's not considered ridiculous and past superstition, it's seen as a simple ceremony that brings curiosity for its symbolic value, esthetic or emotional. We even lost the etymological meaning of the ceremony, in fact we remind that it derives from the roots of "creo" identical to the Sanskrit "kr" that means "to do", intended as "create", so the ritual ceremony must be seen as a proper creation action. The most evident manifestation of the phenomenon which we're talking about can be come up in some Obedience of the USA where frequently we find true "mass initiations". Beyond being an obvious contradiction in terms, I leave you imagine what a deep esoteric aspect can have a ceremony executed contemporarily with thousands of people.

An initiatory society can't make the increasing number a strength point, because the numerical development of a reality that for its constitution should have been exclusive (culturally and spiritually), is an evident absurdity. The rush for who as the most members is by now the area on which we compare even on an international level, inevitable is the question turned every time we meet with other represents of the Freemasonry Obedience: "How many members do you have?". If instead we could try to move the interest on the essence, on the real nature of the Obedience that we represent, in the future we could compare on our Research Lodges, on common projects with the only cultural appearance, abandoning the improbable "political" projects of Masonry that in the last years have destroyed the image of the Freemasonry. I'm referring to initiatives that should have brought the "light" of the Freemasonry in the countries, for example, of Eastern Europe. On the other hand important initiatives have been realized thanks to the commitment of the Pro-Master Mason of the English United Grand Lodge, Lord Northampton: the foundation of Canonbury Center, the Corneston Society, the Masonic Study Center of the University of Sheffield have given the opportunity to hundreds of researchers of the history, of the symbology and the Freemason thought, to divulge their writings making the knowledge of the Freemasonry grow in the world. International on the History of the Freemasonry will be taken on the end of May in Edinburgh and in which I have the honor to participate as a relater, it's one of the best results of these initiatives.

² Julius Evola, "Revolution against the modern world", first edition Hoepli, Milano, 1934, next, Mediterranean, Rome, page 108.

Unfortunately it got lost with time the capacity of decipher the real message of the great men of culture that composed the rituals let us in heredity. The memory performance, should always be accompanied to the knowledge of the deep meaning that these rituals contain. The attitude mustn't be passive, emotional, and ready for the reception of a truth revealed by others. The Freemason route presumes in fact a dynamic relationship with the Sacred, it is a route of a progressive realization, a "Way that exists only for who wants to walk". The separation from the deep comprehension of the ritual has brought to the abandoning of the esoteric components and in the mean time the indiscriminate initiation of candidates, nearly always not ideal for the initiation, lowers the spiritual and cultural tension of an Obedience, as well as the request of a traditional address. The hope is to return to a real selection of the candidates for the initiation and to abandon the idea that for being Freemason it's sufficient to join Obedience and to tribute a formal and conformist homage to the Grand Master.

We can find the second sign in the incapacity of the Freemasonry to involve the right historical, philosophical, esoteric information and especially to explain the differences that have made of it a complicated phenomenon and not united.

In a recent Convention in London, organized by the Canonbury Masonic Research Centre, in which I have participated as speaker, another participant, member of the Grand Orient of France, irregular Masonic Obedience, since its atheist, and they have cited from its script on the Lodge of the New Sisters of Paris, that the Freemasonry isn't an initiatory society, but an associative phenomenon. Good. The problem is that I had just concluded my speech, relative to the influence of the alchemic thought on the symbology and on the principles of Freemasonry, intended, obviously, as an initiatory society. Between the participants maybe there has been someone that knew the complex historical problems on the regularity, but most of them remained confused by the terminology that in the end of the two interventions have symbolized. If we can obtain it only in this sphere of such a complex and big reality, we should worry to contextualize the arguments on which we have intention to talk publically, to supply in good faith the right information and to avoid talking in name of the Universal Freemasonry.

This project of divulging should start from the same Freemasonry Institutions, so that we can avoid that the many detractors of the Freemasonry, always ready to accuse of every possible atrocity, could give a modified vision and distant from the reality. The first mistake of the anti masons consist in fact in searching to define in general

the Masonic spirit starting from the assertions of the single Freemasons, chosen generally in disloyalty. The second mistake of the anti masons consist in the fact that they don't consider that the masonry ideally it's united, but materially it's divided. Its prerogative and social importance changes in function of the belonging country and often also inside the country, in case there are more Obedience, as well as for the environmental and historical age circumstances. As consequence that none of the political acts carried out by an Obedience can be attributed to the Masonry in general, because it can be the sum, like very often happens, of political circumstances or ideas of a single Master Mason that can't, obviously, involve and penalize the image of the Freemasonry.

We can find the third sign in the vulgate of some historical of the Masonic thought, that have attributed to it the origins or the synergies with the illuminist and rationalist thought of the 18th century.

Attributing to the Masonic thought that should traditionally be an initiate Society rational origin, typical of the positive thought, has been a huge mistake that has caused a series of problems and incomprehension that the Freemasonry is still trying to solve. Presenting the Freemasonry as an associative phenomenon from which should have derived even the modern political parties, has surely changed the mind of all those detractors that have always accused of commissions with the profane life. These authors have never had the suspect that the traditional knowledge and political action belong to two completely different spheres, this that in the Anderson's Constitution of 1723 is explained very clearly. For an initiatory society, that in origin the Freemasonry was, based on the "traditional" thought, the modern progress, son of the 18th century's rationalism, even if representing an improvement at a material level, spiritually can represent worsening. The authors that see in the rationalist and positivist thought the Freemasonry's origin should remember that in an initiatory society the way of communicating is fundamentally different from that of any profane association. This way of communicating we can define, as Guènon would, "*intuition intellectuelle*" intellectual intuition. According to one of the major traditionalists of the 20th century, Frithjof Schuon:

the intellectual knowledge overtakes the prospective specifically theological that, on the other hand, is still exceptionally superior to the philosophical or more precisely rational, because, as the metaphysical knowledge, it emanates from God and not from mankind; but while the metaphysic derives entirely from the intellectual intuition, the religion proceeds from the Revelation; this is the word of God as He

turns to His creatures, instead of an intellectual intuition that is a direct and active participation to the divine Knowledge, and not an indirect and passive participation as faith...the intellectual knowledge doesn't proceed from a belief neither from a reasoning, it overcomes the dogma in the sense that, without contradicting it, enters the internal dimension, or rather the infinite Truth that dominates every form." So the intellectual knowledge for intuition is the only that can penetrate the Truth over any dogma, overcoming and composing every contraposition between Churches and religious thought. This is the reason why the Freemasonry isn't a religion and why in it the single believer will never be in conflict with his own religious thought, in the event that he has one. And to clarify this concept I would like to refer not to a philosopher or traditionalist, but to a scientist, the paleontologist anti evolutionary Roberto Fondi:

"This intellectual intuition is a type of gnoseologic experience that, even if it's immediate like the intuition act, it doesn't have nothing of confused and vague that characterizes it and it's, in opposition, certain like the most impeccable of the logical-mathematical evolution and crystal clear as the most transparent of the mountain waters. It talks about a type of knowledge based on the super-sensible perception and super rational of Being in "pure" state, or of its reality, even before the individual ration and the senses make it seem divided in many "things" or manifestations that have a particular meaning...From this type of absolute knowledge and disinterested, founded essentially on the intellectual intuition has derived a vision of the world united and coherent-a cosmology in the antique sense-which is indivisible, under exterior forms sometimes completely different, from all the wisdom and sacred traditions of the pre-modern humanity and not modern, having invested of him every aspect of the communitarian life: from politics to art, from war to relationship between sexes, from work to culture. And it's exactly this cosmology that forms the nucleus of what Guénon and Evola call "Tradition".³

The mistake of the supporters of an Illuminist and Modernist origin of Freemasonry depends substantially on the ignorance of the "transcendent dimension" of it as an Initiatory Society. To clarify better the different contexts that characterize a "Traditional" Initiatory Society compared with a profane association we could also use the spenglerian dichotomy of "Kultur" and "Zivilisation", where the first term sets the forms of civility with the qualitative, organic, differenced characters, while the second term sets the form of a society with rationalistic, mechanic and shapeless character. It's obvious that the Freemasonry, as an initiatory society with an own

³ Roberto Fondi, the critics to the science and the refuse of the evolutionism, from "Testimonianze su Evola" Mediterranee, 1973, pag.262-263.

spiritual identity, moves in the world of Culture, against a Civilization based above all on material progress and on the technical control of the world. The modern world, consequence of the “necessary progress” for the supporters of the deterministic theory, guided towards the material possibilities towards the concept of quantity, towards the multitude, where the individual disappears crushed by the mass and by his induced needs, can’t have originated an initiative society, for his extemporal and meta-historical nature, and it can’t have nothing to do with the Tradition thinking and with the Freemasonry of the origins. But approaching the Freemasonry to the great revolutions of the 18th century is by now a fact nearly pre-determined.

My conviction is that the traditional Freemasonry thought is substantially “anti-illuminist”, for his refuse of the progressive myth and for his consciousness of the impossibility of the simple reason to represent the spirit, in the Freemasonry “method” in fact there is the use of a symbolic language that expresses the integration between material and spirit, so it’s an esoteric language that differences radically from the rational and scientific language because communicated by images that intend arouse the knowledge with intuition instead of with ration. The intellect becomes a way of knowledge of inferior grade compared to the creative process that conduces to the illumination-intuition. The ritual of freemasonry teaches us that the natural cycle of life and death has the purpose of recomposing us with the Divine, in a space-time dimension where time doesn’t have a linear course, but cyclical, according to the of the eternal return and the idea of indefinite progress, typical of the illuminist vision. The purpose of an initiative society isn’t the social progress because if collocated out of time, it collocates out of the history, it doesn’t inspire to create a better society, if not as a secondary and eventual consequence of the real unique aim that it follows: to supply a context and favor the discovery in every initiate of his own Self Devine. This walk starts, happens and concludes in the inside of every individual, the society and its dynamics remain on the same background and his grade of evolution won’t be nothing but a reflex, a projection of the consciousness on the individual Self. We can state with Evola that: *“Tradition is, in its essence, something of meta-historical and, in the same time, dynamic; it’s a general strength in function of princes having the charisma of a superior legitimacy-if we want, we can also say of princes from above-strength that acts along with the generations, in continuity of spirit and inspiration, across institutions, laws, ordainments that can also present a notable variety and diversity...also where these princes objectifies in an historic reality, they aren’t from this conditioned, they always remand to a superior floor, meta-historical, that is*

they're natural place where the changing doesn't exist. In this manner the ideas that we call traditional should be conceived."⁴

The fourth sign is a direct consequence of the precedent sign, it's the phenomenon of the "disillusionment" of the Freemasonry.

The freemasonry, a short time after his birth; immediately had to face the hardest prove. The Cartesian vision, for which the nature is a motionless machine without vitality at the mercy of men, has started that process of non-veneration of the world that has had as terminal point the modern cult of science, his omnipotence, in the conviction that the technical progress goes on with an interior and spiritual evolution of men. But this vision of the necessary progress has brought to what Max Weber calls the "disillusionment", or the reduction to laic state, caused by the scientific rationalization, the old vision of the world of mythological-religious origins, representing the "tradition", replaced by an objective vision of the reality. Unfortunately the separation from the Freemasonry from its "tradition" is slowly taking it to the "disillusionment", transforming it more and more into an associative phenomenon.

We know that an initiatory society is reserved for its nature to an élite, but how we already said, recently in the Freemasonry it's very present the rush for the number of the members. It's obvious that also the "Initiatory Societies" operate in the world and appears inevitably that some affiliates remain convolved in esoteric dynamics. In the inside of the Freemasonry it produces what in Muslim confraternities is the difference between the *mutabarik*, that nearly never go out from the esoteric prospective and the *salik* (who is in march) that travel in the ways of the initiative tradition. Mutatis mutandis, in Freemasonry the superior presence of the *mutabarik* is dragging an Initiatory Society to the "disillusionment" and to the mortification of the esoteric. The mission of these élites, mission of the Freemasonry, is to invert the process and to bring in men the consciousness of the spiritual nature of the existence producing, through this return to the transcendence, the "re-illusion".

The fifth and last sign is the transformation of the Freemasonry from Initiative Society to contemporary representative of the "Kitsch".

⁴ Julius Evola, the men and the ruins, Mediterranee, pag.64.

The consequence of what we have been saying is visible in the contradiction, in the inside of Freemasonry, between an overabundant symbolic and ritual system and a radical emptiness of meaning. So Freemasonry becomes, in this modern version, a representative of the “Kitsch”, to recall a term with which Herman Broch describes the decline of the Austro-Hungarian empire: *“A minimum of ethic values had to be covered with a maximum of esthetic values which weren’t anymore and couldn’t be such because an esthetic value that doesn’t develop on an ethic base is exactly the proper the opposite, that is artifice, sophistication: in one word Kitsch”*.⁵ Unfortunately the actual Freemasonry is slowly becoming a manifestation of the Kitsch, an esthetic representation without substance, without values, this is mainly caused by its progressive and constant involving in the profane dynamics. Even before demanding who will be the Freemason. He, for predisposition, inborn attitude, talent, research of that immutable Truth that is besides history, besides progress, besides society with his dynamics and thematic. In this sense he is independent from the outside, he has nothing to do with it and he travels along his walk unique and original. He knows instinctively that history repeats herself infinitely and that to break the vicious circle of history he has to exit ideally. The dimension in which he intends operating till the end is the dimension of the eternal “I” and not the one mutable, incomprehensible and frustrating of the events. There is no Safety nor Truth besides Ourselves, there isn’t reason of existence without the constant tension towards what we intend becoming: free beings and conscious of our dignity and our power.

The Freemason doesn’t belong to anything besides himself, he simply is. The figure of the Freemason is independent from any evolution instance, because his origin and his status unhook him from time and from the event of which he seems been generated. He reminds for some aspects what Evola calls “the differentiate man” and Junger “the anarchist”: tied up intimately to a transcendent dimension, he isn’t run over by the existential anguish and by the frustration, but he finishes his own duty till the end, in complete independence and dignity. So the Freemasonry situates over the contingent an especially over any historical limits, in an “extemporal” dimension where the actual “problem” doesn’t find solution. We don’t have to think that the Freemason would be in consequence a passive figure. In the contrary, he has the courage to raise in solitude in the middle of the worlds’ ruins and reclaim his own power. He is the one that, to take back an indiums’ definition could represent the Kshatriya, the fighter that embodies the control of

⁵ Hermann Broch, the Kitsch, page 93-94

himself, the power, the superior order, the spirits' aristocracy. Being faithful to the tradition doesn't mean simply remembering the rituals and the symbols, but succeeding in making reliving the essence, the meaning, embodying it in the new forms in which it asks to demonstrate today. The order in this sense becomes a real "militia", where the Freemason-militant regains in the conquer of a different territory and much wider of the one that the profane world contends. The existence of this order produces what Ernst Junger calls "an inclusion", that is a sort of condensation and of laceration of the historical plot, a petrification or crystallization of the histories' structure. The traditional Freemasonry in our time constitutes, a permanence or irruption of the sacred, of the elementary, of the mythic and the fantastic in the rational union of the world. The Freemasonry in the centuries has constituted a body, but this body unfortunately has lost its anime. The transformation of an association with esoteric suggestions in a real and proper initiatory society is an objective that could be conquered only with a radical changing, a real jump ahead towards our most deep and authentic.