

THE VERMONT LODGE OF RESEARCH #10

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY AND TEMPORAL POWER

In the original primordial age of mankind, there was but one caste, the Hindus called it *HAMSA*. This showed the primary unity of the two functions of spiritual authority and temporal power. The Hindu *LAWS OF MANU* instituted the division of mankind into castes. The caste system is completely misunderstood in western and for this reason it is necessary to understand the spiritual reasons for these class distinctions.

In the Hindu classic *THE BHAGAVAD GITA* the principle of class is discussed at length. The natural order requires that there be a distribution of social functions based upon natural abilities. The GITA says “ Always do your duty without attachment. Even a wise person follows his own nature, as all beings follow their own natures. It is better to do your own dharma even imperfectly, than someone else’s dharma perfectly. Even better to die in your dharma than in another’s, which brings great fear. “

This social law is determined for the evolution of humanity throughout the Aryan epochs and further described by Rene Guenon as follows.

“Caste is not in principle strictly hereditary. Since there can not be two persons identical and equal in all respects, there are inevitably some differences among those belonging to the same cast. There are more common characteristics, within a given species, among individuals belonging to the same caste than there are among those of different castes. One could say that the distinction between castes in the human species constitutes a veritable natural classification to which the distribution of social functions necessarily corresponds, in effect, each man, by reason of his proper nature, is suited to carry out certain definite functions to the exclusion of all others. And in a society established on a regular traditional basis, these aptitudes must be determined according to precise rules, so that, by the correspondence of the various functions with the principle categories in the classification of individual natures, each finds his proper place. .thus, the social order exactly expresses the hierarchal relationships that result from the nature of the beings themselves.”

When the primordial unity of the single caste *HAMSA*. ruptures, it separates into the respective functions of spiritual authority and temporal power as represented in the Hindu classes of Brahmins and Kshatriyas. The Brahmin class corresponds to the traditional priesthood. Its essential function is to transmit traditional esoteric and religious doctrine, in which every social

organization finds its fundamental principles and reason to live. Knowledge and teaching are its attributes and wisdom its symbol. The source of the traditional doctrine is revelations directly from the spiritual world, transmitted thru a series of avataras, manus and rishis.

The Kshatriyas class corresponds to the traditional royal class of which the divine king is its supreme representative. This class includes all types of governmental functions. The king and his court represent the administrative function. The judges represent the judicial function and the king's army represent the military function. These three functions of administrative, judicial and military regulate and stabilize society. They protect the social order while maintaining outward power to insure compliance. While spiritual authority is the province of the Brahmins, temporal power is the province of the Kshatriyas.

From these two classes derive the terms sacerdotal power and royal power. Spiritual power operates from the divine sources and is invisible. It is affirmed only by itself and is independent of any exterior support. Temporal power is visible and affirms itself thru the military force. In the natural order of things, the Brahmin class informs the Kshatriyas class. The knowledge of the Brahmins is of a higher order, more transcendent, than that of the Kshatriyas. Here begins the distinction between exoteric and esoteric knowledge. Esoteric knowledge belongs to the Brahmins, whom in place form the doctrines of the traditional sciences, religious practices and cultic rituals, which are then passes down to the Kshatriyas in a lower exoteric form, suitable for understanding by the lower classes. Esoteric above, exoteric below.

This two fold hierarchy also forms the distinction between the so-called greater mysteries and lower mysteries of the ancient wisdom. The higher mysteries were reserved exclusively for the Brahmin class and the lower mysteries were reserved for the Kshatriyas class. This distinction corresponds to the sacerdotal initiation and the royal initiation. The content of the royal initiation was the scientific knowledge of nature, including geometry, astronomy, mathematics, architecture, language, etc. The knowledge conferred in the sacerdotal mysteries was beyond nature, the realm of metaphysics and pure divine intelligence. Obviously, the priestly class performed the initiations for both classes while preserving the legitimacy of its members for both classes. The divine right of kings derives from this initiation into the lower mysteries. For example, we know historically that the kings of Egypt were always initiated by the priests into the mysteries. Throughout the middle ages, the kings of Europe, from Charlemagne in the 9th century to

Maximilian in the 16th century, were anointed with holy chrism oil by the popes. And in the last centuries, the kings and royal families in England were all initiated York rite masons.

Herein too we find the distinction between the sacerdotal art and the royal art. These classes designate the practical application of the knowledge taught in the corresponding initiations together with the working tools of the craft respective to their domains. For sure, the ancient craft guilds and the cathedral builders of the middle ages were well prepared adepts of the sacerdotal arts up to the times of modern speculative masonry which is often called a royal art.

Wisdom and strength are the respective qualities of these two classes and of the sacerdotal and royal powers, as well the symbols of the two pillars of masonry. The word Druid can be broken down into the two words DRU and VID. DRU or DERU translates into oak and strength. The sanscrit word for wisdom is VID and relates to mistletoe. Thus, dru-vid is the mistletoe of the oak, wisdom and strength united in one single word. The ancient Egyptian sphinx is also a symbol of the two powers united in one. The human head represents wisdom and the lion body represents strength. The head directs and the body acts. Spiritual authority directs and informs temporal power. In our lecture on the symbolism of Janus, the two functions were united in one god of initiation, Janus, who also holds both the two keys of sacerdotal and royal power.

In christianity we have the two functions of priesthood and royalty united in the person and two names of Jesus and Christ. Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah and the House of King David. In the Dead Sea Scrolls we see the prophecy that in the end of days there would appear “the prophet and the (two) messiahs of Aaron and Israel.” The priestly line was represented as the messiah of Aaron and the kingly line by the messiah of Israel or Judah. Also, in the genealogy given in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we see the descendants of the two children of king David separate into the lines of Solomon and Nathan, only to unite again 28 generations later in the parents of the Jesus child.

The third class ordained by the *Laws of Manu* is called the *Vaishyas* which corresponds to the merchant class and the fourth class is called the *Shudras* which corresponds to the serfs or working class. The *Laws of Manu* say, “the King should order the Vaisya to trade, to lend money, to cultivate the land or to tend cattle and order a sudras to serve the twice born castes. The vaysia must know the value of gems, of metals of cloth and perfectly know all measures and weights. He must know the excellence and defects of commodities, be acquainted with the wages of servants,

know the various languages of men, with the manner of storing goods and the rules of purchase and sale. The Sudras are servants of his betters, may be compelled to do servile work, shall not commit an offense, which shall cause loss of caste, and may not read the sacred texts.”

We in the western world have seen such class division in the middle ages. The clergy or priesthood corresponds to the Brahmin; the kingly nobility and knighthood warriors correspond to the Kshatriyas; the third estate Burgers correspond to the Vaishyas and the serfs and indentured farming tenants to the Shudras.

Each class depends on the higher for its transmission of temporal power. The practice of the anointing of Kings during the middle ages showed the transmission of sacerdotal power to royal power and a king was not legitimate until such investiture occurred. Properly speaking, the world order supports itself on this ancient fourfold class structure. However, the world order collapses when this division of labor revolts. It is interesting to look at world history from a different prospective , that of the decline of the royal power invested in the Kings of Europe.

REVOLT OF THE KSHATRIYAS

The modern western mind now accepts the reality of the progress of cultural civilizations, that they rise and fall. The concept of progress is relative, not cumulative.

The Knights Templar were founded in 1119 to protect the pilgrims travelling to the holy land. Hughes De Payens and several other french knights organized the order which rapidly spread throughout Europe. They were at the first hand a militant army of christian warriors. The order was organized in the traditional manner with four orders, the knights, sergeants, chaplains and servants. They fought military battles in the east, winning some and losing some. They were always respected as fierce warriors.

Secondly, they were financial geniuses, having invented the modern checking account system. They were bankers whose castles had safe storage vaults. They loaned money and the order became wealthy.

Lastly, the order was informed by the Cistercian priesthood and initiatic in the traditional sense above described. They penetrated the initiatic orders of Islam and returned home with great occult secrets.

The demise of the order is well known in western history. On Friday, October the 13th 1307, King Phillip the Fair ordered all the Knights arrested and imprisoned. He stole all their money and closed their banking network. While in prison, the Knights were tortured and confessions extorted.

King Phillip's accomplice in this nasty affair was Pope Clement V. He was the pope of the great schism, when the papacy was removed from Rome to Avignon, France in 1305. He was a pawn to King Phillip. At the council of Vienne in 1311, the anti-pope Clement issued a papal bull dissolving the order of the Templars. Between 1307 and 1312, Jaques De Molay and his fellow knights languished in prison. A panel of cardinals sentenced the remaining Templars to life imprisonment. Upon hearing this, the Templars recanted their confessions. Unfortunately, upon also hearing this recantation, King Phillip immediately had the imprisoned Templars burned at the stake in March 1312.

This horrible demise of the Templars left social scars at many levels. At one level, it can be said that this was the first revolt of the royal power of the king against the sacerdotal power of the priesthood in western civilization. Modern people underestimate the middle ages, with that horrible expression, the dark ages. Truth be told, during the middle ages, the spiritual authority of the priesthood still had a direct connection with the spiritual center of the world, called the Omphalos. At no time in the history of western civilization, was traditional society more connected with that hidden source of all spirituality. Beginning the 14th century, western civilization ruptures from its own unique tradition. Henceforth, the temporal power of the kings usurped the spiritual authority of the priesthood for its own political ends. Pope Clement and Philip the Fair were very evil, satanic persons, who ushered in the revolt of the Kshatriyas in the west. Unfortunately, temporal power brings about its own ruin when it denies its subordination to the spiritual authority.

Fortunately, both the pope and king died within a year from the murder of Jaques De Molay. The legacy of the Templars lived on into the founding of the Scottish rites of freemasonry and further into the Jacobite causes of the French revolution. However, the European feudal system of government began its fatal decline. The history of France since the 14th century is a microcosm of the larger decline of traditional forms in western civilization. It is surprising to observe that the feudal system was the best suited for the king to perform his traditional functions.

But when, the king rejects the sacerdotal power, he begins a process of centralization of the government functions. These spread out thru the nobility and soon, the king finds his most dreaded enemies in the same nobility he created after rejection of the priesthood. Thus, the king works to create a nation as a substitute for the feudal system. And in doing so, he relies on the Vaishyas caste to help him. In the courts of Louis XI and Louis XIV, we see a large bourgeoisie arise and surround the kings as the third estate. However, in doing so the king sows the seeds of his own destruction. In France, we see the first European country to abolish the monarchy because of the nation building of the bourgeoisie.

During the middle ages, we had a unified christian culture populated by separate feudal kingships. There were rules for warfare. During the french revolution, we find for the first time, a frenzy of murder, rape and pillage, not of the conquered nation, but between the revolutionary citizens themselves. The guillotine in Paris was a symbol of the hatred of the bourgeoisie for the monarchy. We will see this same revolutionary zeal repeated when the sudras caste revolts against the bourgeoisie in the Russian revolution. No feudal war between kings ever saw such devastation and destruction as seen in a class war between castes.

Along with nation building comes national religions. King Henry the 8th was the first to invent a state religion. The sole purpose of the subjugation of the priestly order to the will of the royal order was to ensure the domination of the political order. With the rise of Protestantism came the first national churches. In every country where there was a protestant revolution, a state church arose to entrench its establishment in political power. The reformation was the most visible symptom of the rupture of that unified christian culture that so marked the high spirituality of the Middle Ages. By the end of the reformation, all Europe had been swallowed by the fervor of revolution, all national boundary lines had been established and the christian unity of Europe had been finally destroyed. It can be said that a major purpose of the first world war was for England to destroy the last monarchy in Europe, the Hapsburg empire of Austria.

Throughout the western world, we have seen the historical pattern, where the kings usurp the spiritual authority of the priesthood. Then the kings share their new found temporal power with the lower castes of the bourgeoisie. Then the bourgeoisie subsequently abolishes the monarchy. It does not matter much if the monarchy lives on nominally as in England, the end result is the same. The economic sphere of the bourgeoisie gains supremacy of the political

sphere. We also see this pattern in modern democracies.

This pattern of the revolt of the castes leads to only one tragic result. Usurpation calls forth further usurpation, which can only lead to the final usurpation of the Sudras over the third estate. This is what happened in the Russian revolution, when the lowest caste rose up in murder, rape and pillage against the higher. Bolshevism is the final chapter of the demise of the traditional caste order, because it can go no lower. And as we saw in the collapse of Russian communism in 1989, it has to be a short lived phenomenon, because it marks the last phase of a given historical cycle.

THE HINDU CYCLES OF THE YUGA

Now when I say the end of a given historical cycle, I am referring the Hindu yuga cycles. It is only in the last cycle, that of kali yuga, that the breakdown of the traditional order can occur, when the lower caste can usurp the higher. These four Hindu cycles are also found in traditional Greek and Roman tradition here referred to as the four ages of mankind, the golden age, the silver age, etc. they refer to the four stages that mankind progresses in the path from the primordial unity of Hamsa, thru a process of increased materialism away from the center to a final end of an entire cycle of manifestation.

They are also referred to by the book of Daniel in the dream of Nabuchudonsor with the man made of gold, silver, bronze and iron, each referring to a kingdom of mankind.

The first cycle is called the Krita yuga that begins about 58 thousand BC. This was the golden age of mankind referred to by Hesiod, an age of wisdom and primordial unity with the world center. The second age is called Treta yuga beginning about 32 thousand BC. This was an age of agriculture and urbanization and the institution of royalty and feudal kingships. The third age is called Dvarpara yuga which began about 14 thousand BC. It was an age of religion and philosophy, an age when mankind begins its move away from tradition. The final age is called Kali yuga which began in 3,102 BC. This final age lasts about 5,000 years and ends at the beginning of the 20th century. It has a twilight holdover of about 500 years.

The lengths of the ages themselves last in a ratio of 4 : 3 : 2; 1. Thus, the first age lasted some 25 thousand years, the second age some 18 thousand years, the third some 12 thousand

years and the final kali age, lasted some 5 thousand years, for a total of about 60.5 thousand years. Each cycle of four yugas lasts this 60.5 thousand years . There are 7 human cycles of manifestation, each lasting some 60.5 thousand years each. Thus, for this last big cycle, we have the first appearance of humanity around 419 thousand BC; the second cycle around 359 thousand BC; the third cycle around 298 thousand BC; the fourth around 238 thousand BC; the fifth around 178 thousand BC; the sixth around 118 thousand BC and the seventh and last big cycle around 58 thousand BC. The sixth cycle beginning about 118 thousand BC probably corresponds to the age of the neanderthal man and the seventh cycle to the age of the cro-mangan man, with homo-sapiens appearing around 32 thousand BC, which corresponds well with the age of the cave drawings in France.

For the Hindu tradition, the cycle of manifestation of humanity ends at the end of kali yuga, about 2,442 Ad. This is not good news for anyone making plans for the 21st century. However, western occultism extends the yugas into another cycle.

Regardless of the merit of the lengths of these yuga cycles, the final cycle of Kali yuga is called the Dark Age, similar to what western historians called the middle ages. It is the hindu god Shiva age of the destruction of traditional forms. This destruction follows the path of the separation of temporal power from spiritual power. Knowing that the Chinese civilization is far older than western culture, extending back to the seventh root race Age of Atlantis, we can see humanity living thru those ancient yugas, when we come to a point in history, where the western cycle seem to recapitulate the entire preceding cycles, that took place in the east, many thousands of years ago. We can see the middle ages characterized by the unity of christianity and its close proximity with the center. Then, during the 14th century, we see the initial break from unity with the revolt of the royalty of King Philip from the priesthood of the Templars. Then, for a short time, the sharing of power between King Philip and Pope Clement. Later, there comes the sharing of power between the monarchy of the King Louis courts and the third estate and finally, with the French revolution, the complete abolition of the monarchy. The three fold devolution was nearly complete, first, the abolition of the sacerdotal power, then the abolition of the royal power and finally, the rule of the third estate. Modern western society is the rule of the third estate, that of the merchant class bourgeoisie over the two higher castes.

Then along comes Karl Marx in the 19th century. He said that the history of humanity was

the history of economic power of the bourgeoisie. He also created the theology of the fourth revolution, that of the Sudra against the third estate. With the Russian revolution, the cycle was now complete. All three lower castes have revolted against the higher. For the Hindus, it was no surprise that the end of Kali yuga came during the time of the Russian revolution. The cycle of manifestation was complete.

THE TRANSMISSION OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

Our dear brother Eric said in his last lecture said that masonry affects different people in different ways, which is very true. He also mentioned that he was not sure that the masonic rituals in themselves worked equally on each candidate who experienced them, such that a very large number of initiated masons, leave the order, retaining nothing of its intrinsic worth. Nothing could be further from the truth!

First, in each masonic ritual, there is a transmission of spiritual authority from the spiritual world to the temporal world. In each lodge, during each ritual there is the presence of angelic spirits. Geoffrey Hodson in his book, THE KINGDOM OF THE GODS says,

“all valid ceremonial orders throughout the world, and especially those which, like Freemasonry, originated in the Lesser and Greater mysteries and are still representative of them, also receive benediction, the presence and the cooperation of angels and archangels.”

He goes on to describe a certain angelic type called the rose angel and also says,

“Rose angels any be thought of as incarnations of divine wisdom and love. When in the performance of certain rituals of Freemasonry, angels of this kind are likely to respond to the invocation and cooperate in the distribution of power and its application to general and individual needs. This particular rose angel stands some 12 feet tall.”

Second, there is the general feeling, that during the performance of the masonic ritual, nothing special is felt by the initiate, such that he feels different about himself after the ritual than before. Again, nothing could be further from the truth!

Although the initiate may not actually feel the reception of the spiritual influence into himself, this in itself does not mean that nothing passed between worlds. For example, when a

person takes a consecrated Eucharistic host on his tongue during the sacrament of communion, most people do not experience the real presence of Christ on his tongue or in his body. However, this lack of feeling in no way diminishes the spiritual fact that transubstantiation has occurred. There is in fact no disadvantage that the initiate suffers no consciousness awareness of the transmission of a spiritual influence. One might say that the transmission creates a potency that lays dormant in the initiated until further personal development occurs on the path to enlightenment.

Third, this latent state of dormancy has an analogy in the natural world. At one time in the evolution of this planet, the earth was ALL LIFE. Then, some of the life forms passed on, leaving their non-living bodies over as a shell. A large accumulation of these shells form together to form the foundation for the emergence of a new, higher form of life. Such is the geology of Cambrian life forms such as corals, that later form limestone and even later form marble. This process is represented by the washing of the feet at the last supper, where a lower hierarchy of life, forms the foundation of a new, hierarchy of life forms.

At the present time in planetary evolution, the earth can not produce a living plant spontaneously. Plant life can only come forth from a seed from a pre-existing plant. However, we know intuitively that the age of ALL LIFE did once exist, otherwise, there could have been no beginning, there could have been no chicken without an egg! In our present age of earth, one cannot reap without first having sown. This is also true for the transmission of spiritual influences. A seed must be planted in each initiate before he can advance in spiritual development.

This is precisely what ritual initiation gives to the candidate at any masonic service. The seed of future spiritual development is implanted by the communion between master and neophyte. It is not without merit that the meaning of the word 'neophyte' in the ancient mysteries meant 'new plant'! In fact we can say that the definition of initiation is the initial transmission of a spiritual influence in a seed state. With this initial transmission, one joins a spiritual affiliation with the corresponding elementals and angels in the spiritual world. And this affiliation lasts both in this lifetime and the next.

No brother mason can look at another mason and say that nothing happened when they were initiated by the master into the first, second and third degrees of the fellow craft. Even if one says that the fellow mason, took nothing in this life and left the craft, we cannot say anything

about what effect such initiation will have in the next life. It is often said that many of the prophets of the Old Testament were reincarnated at the same time during the Life of Christ so as to help accomplish the great deed of mankind. There are still many other great deeds to be accomplished before the prodigal son returns home to his father.

A final aspect of the latent state of dormancy to consider is what 18th century masonry referred to as “unknown superiors.” These so-called mysterious travelers seem to pop up out of nowhere, plant a seed of esoteric knowledge and then disappear as fast as they appeared and for the most part, remain nameless.

It was said of Dante, that while traveling in Spain he met a mysterious stranger, who took him to a mountain top, where Dante saw in vision the spiritual worlds, above and below, without which vision, he never could have written his fabulous poems. A certain person named Brunetto Latini, did live in Spain at that time and Dante did recognize him as his master and mentor. But it is difficult to say that this Latini was Dante’s unknown superior, since Dante assigned him a place in hell with the sodomites!

In the late 12th century, a strange but inspiring new form of literature appeared in Europe. It was called the era of courtly romance and its precursor was a certain Frenchman named Christian de Troyes. He created the motif of the Arthurian romances and was the first author to speak of Lancelot, Camelot and the Fisher King. The cycle ended with the most fabulous christian drama of the age in The Story of the Grail (Perceval). But from where did his source material come from? The unfinished Grail story was dedicated to a certain Philip of Flanders, whom Christian credited as the original source of his manuscript of the Grail story. Philip died in the Crusades at Acre in 1191, which is also about the time that Christian died, or at least at the same time that the Grail story became unfinished. Philip was christian’s secret master, was he also his unknown superior?

A more familiar case was with the great German occultist, Jacob Boehme, to whom appeared a mysterious stranger at his shoemaker shop. Boehme said he never appeared again and Boehme went on later in life to write many occult treatises and become the founder of the German theosophy.

Likewise, a certain gardener and botanist appeared one day to the Austrian, Rudolph Steiner, in his youth. Years later, Steiner lectured extensively on the life of Christian Rosenkruetz

and the secret occult Rosicrucian brotherhood of the 16th and 17th centuries. Modern scholars now believe the Rosicrucians were the founders of the Age of the European enlightenment as well the writers of the first masonic rituals.

The spiritual fact is that any person who has been initiated may never have any clue as to what this means to him spiritually. He may have no awareness of the true nature of the initiation nor where it will lead him in life. The mysterious traveler may appear anytime, anywhere, to anyone, unannounced and afterward, one's life is forever changed.

The spiritual fact is that masonry is an initiatic chain with an affiliation with known and unknown superiors whose souls reside above, in the spiritual world of angels. Membership in this chain ensures an uninterrupted transmission of spiritual influences by ritual and deed. Traditionally, the transmission has been oral, however, there is a large corpus of books on masonry, its rites, symbolism and history. However, no one who only reads these books can ever be a mason nor participate in the chain, because the transmission requires a vital element for which books could never serve as a vehicle. This vital element is the oral transmission combined with the signs, seals and oaths of masonry.

THE THREE PATHS TO HEAVEN

My purpose in explaining the traditional caste system is to show the correspondence between the different types of initiation and their relationship to the caste system. Before one can understand to what level of initiation the masonic craft degrees aspire, it is necessary to show the overall picture.

As we started with the Hindu classic *THE BHAGAVAD GITA*, so we shall end this lecture. The GITA is different from many Hindu treatises in that it teaches of both a supreme god and a personal god, much like the christian Father and Son. The GITA also teaches of a personal immortal soul, in contrast to Buddhism, which denies any personal ego or immortality. In the GITA, the personal soul, after death, ascends to MOKSA which is like our traditional heaven, wherein the soul unites with the supreme god. And unlike other traditional Hindu doctrines, where knowledge is the only supreme path to Moksa, the GITA teaches of three paths to god.

The first path is called the Jnana Marga. This is the path of wisdom, thru knowledge of divine things, similar to the traditional Hindu doctrines above mentioned. It is characterized by knowledge thru the mind or intellect and also of wisdom achieved thru intuition of divine truths. It is also the path of traditional yoga practices.

The second path is called Bhakti Marga. This is the path of love and devotion. It is characterized by charity with religious faith and prayer to a personal god and gods, much like the christian practice of prayer to Jesus and the angels and saints in heaven.

The third path is called Karma Marga. This is the path of work and duty. It is characterized by devotion to the social order and requires work in agreement with the law of one's being and the duties imposed by caste. God intends every man to work in connection with society and the social order is considered to be divine. This part is directly in opposition to the Buddhist practice of inaction and intentional withdrawal from society by living in seclusion and begging for food.

Thus, whatever path is chosen, that of wisdom, devotion or service, the path leads to the same final end, which is union with the supreme god head in heaven. When the mind is purified from desire, and personal egoism is destroyed by love and charity and the body is fulfilled by service, the person becomes one with god. Body, soul and spirit are fulfilled by each of the three paths.

Now, cultic initiation is appropriate to each of the three paths. The Jnanaic path corresponds to the "greater mysteries" of which we have spoken in past lectures. The bhaktic and karmic paths are more appropriate to the "lesser mysteries." In the lecture on the Mysteries of Mithras, I made the comparison that the three degrees of masonry correspond more to the lesser mysteries and the four higher degrees of Mithras correspond more to the greater mysteries. Within the greater mysteries lie the source of the destiny of nations.

Also, the three paths correspond to the traditional caste system. For the Brahmin caste, corresponds the Jnanaic path. For the Kshatryas caste, corresponds the Bhakti Marga and for the Vaishyas caste, corresponds the Karma Marga. This classification is in accordance of the traditional principle that people are organized according to their birth given individual nature. The Brahmin or priestly class is particularly suited for the Jnanaic path which aspires to wisdom. The Kshatryas or royal and warrior caste is particularly suited to the Bhakti Marga which aspires to

devotion and religious practice. And the Vaishyas or merchant caste is particularly suited to the service and worker path.

Following this path of analysis, it is also a certain result that as the three paths correspond to the three castes, so do the traditional forms of initiation correspond to the same threefold order. The Brahmin caste is informed by the manu of the cycle. As such, this is the domain of the greater mysteries and of the initiatic degrees of the Mithraic Persian, Sun Runner and Father. These are the initiates and their corresponding angels who lead nations, make the laws, create the language, create the musical and art forms and bear the karmic destiny of the nation. The primal wisdom of the manu for the cycle was given to the Brahmin caste in the vehicle of the Hindu Vedas. The word Veda means wisdom and these hymns are the oldest expressions of wisdom extant on the planet. They are intended to last the entire cycle. The Vedas teach of art, science, philosophy, religion, medicine, diet, health and discipline, nothing more is really needed for civilization to evolve. The authorship of the Vedas is attributed to the seven rishis. Each rishi represents the cumulative wisdom of each of the seven root races of Atlantis. Thus, as each successive rishi incarnated in Hindu culture and disclosed his wisdom thru song, the cumulative wisdom of the past age is recapitulated and revealed to the more modern age. In addition to the Vedas as a book of wisdom, there was given to the Hindus the seven yogas which form the most rigorous method to achieve complete metaphysical union with the god head thru the Jnanaic path of the priesthood.

In the west, it cannot really be said that there has been a continuous historical transmission of initiatic forms that strictly conform to the three castes as is the case in the eastern forms. The western tradition is characterized by mixed forms, that apply to more than one caste at the same time. The Jnanaic initiations that correspond uniquely to the priestly sacerdotal path were those of the religious orders in the various catholic monasteries, such as the Cistercians, Carthusians, Charterians, Dominicans and Franciscans and of course, some cultic monasteries such as the Manichaeans, Ebionites, Albigenes and Catharists.

It can be said that each monastery held a certain occult secret that was shared by its membership after the appropriate vows and rituals. Usually it related to some event in the Life of Christ not revealed by the Gospels. It was no mistake that the complete first century writings of Dionysius the Aeropagite turned up in a small Parisian monastery dedicated to this same patron

saint. At the Court of Charles the Bald in the 9th century, these manuscripts were translated by John Scotus Eriugena and preserved until the 12th century, when they became the source texts of the Cistercians order that founded the School of Chartres, an esoteric neo-platonic christian revival.

Or that Nicholas De Cusa happened to be on the same ship traveling back from Constantinople in 1437 when he met a mysterious man named Gemistos Plethon who happened to be carrying with him, all the great original Greek texts of Plato and Aristotle secreted from that great library just before the Islamic invasion and fall of the byzantine Empire. These texts of the Greek philosophers and scientists, that had been lost for 1200 years, were brought to the court of Cosimo de' Medici, translated and published which, in turn, ushered in the Renaissance.

Those orders in the west that correspond to the royal initiations of the Kshatriyas caste arose in the medieval orders of Chivalry and cults such as the Fedeli d'Amore and Knights Templar. The Knights were a classic example of the mixed forms of initiation. They were priests and warriors, members of both the royal and warrior castes. The Templars were informed by the priesthood of the Cistercians, an order founded only 2 years after the beginning of the first crusade. As spiritual patrons of the Templars, St. Bernard of Clairveaux was the prime mover of the order, incorporating into it the ancient esoteric wisdom of the Irish Celtic church. These Bhakti-marga paths of initiation have now completely disappeared in the west, since the demise of the Knights Templar in the 14th century.

And this finally brings us to craft masonry. Our masonic cultic rituals specifically correspond to the karma-marga path of the Vaishyas caste of merchants and craftsman, for by definition, the original masons exercised a craft, as did the carpenters and architect-designers of the great medieval cathedrals. With the separation of masonry into the operative and speculative branches in the 18th century, the practice of a craft (operative masonry) is no longer required for initiation into speculative masonry. Our York rite craft masonry is also a hybrid mixed form since the creation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717, which separated off any supposed Scottish origins of the rituals. The purpose here was to forever keep British masonry dedicated to the protestant House of Orange and dismiss outright the catholic Stuart dynasty and its implications with the Templars and the Scottish origin of freemasonry.

With the Templars, we saw the hybrid form of priest and warrior, a combination of the

first and second estates. With British masonry, we see a hybrid of the royal families of the Hanoverian kings initiated into the speculative masonic craft, a combination of the second and (split) third estates. Without a priesthood, there is no transmission from a sacerdotal source in the latter British form. One certainly could argue, that the Templar masonry brought over from Scotland with the Stuart King James I in 1603 was a higher initiatic form than that crafted by Anderson with the revised rituals for the constitution of the Grand Lodge of England in 1723. We know fairly well that an Invisible College existed for around 100 years whose members included Robert Moray and the Royal Society, Elias Ashmole and Francis Bacon. It is safe to say that they practiced ancient masonry in the true hermetic Anglo-Saxon form brought over by King James. Within 15 years of the death of the last Grand Master of the ancient form, Christopher Wren, a new form of masonry appeared in 1717. This new form had been stripped of any Hermetic and religious symbolism that existed in the operative masonic guilds of the middle ages. The oath of fealty in the ancient rituals dedicated to the Stuart monarchy and the catholic church were controverted into an oath of fealty to the Grand Lodge of England. This reconstructed form of masonry continues to this day in England and America.

IN CONCLUSION

My intention in this lecture was to show the place that craft masonry fits in the overall scheme of traditional forms of initiatic transmission of spiritual influences. First we have the four traditional castes and the historical revolt of the lower castes against the higher. The degeneration of the caste system went hand and hand with the devolution of time thru the corresponding cycles of the four Hindu yuga ages. This is the path of human evolution thru the ages and may be called many things from the historical dialectics of Hegal and Marx, to the decline of civilizations described by Spencer, to the clash of civilizations also described by the modern political analyst, Samuel Huntington. In each correspondence, there was a decline from a higher order to the lower, not a Darwinian evolution from a lower order into a higher. For each order there was a corresponding form to transmit spiritual influences from the sacerdotal to the royal and from the royal to the crafts. Unfortunately, as did the traditional castes decline into disorder, so has the transmission of spiritual influences also declined thru the initiatic orders. In the west, craft masonry may be the last initiatic order to survive.

Respectively submitted,
By: Stephen Cosgrove
September 24, 2008