



**Internet Lodge 9659**  
**United Grand Lodge of England**  
**Province of East Lancashire**  
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**Short Papers Competition 2007**

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**Paper 19/2007**

**Title** **Some Thoughts on the History of Freemasonry**  
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Modern Freemasonry as we know it today is said to have begun with the advent of the Gothic architecture in the twelfth century. It was crystalised with the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717. We can say this because we have proof for saying so. But if you want to know what really inspired the evolution of Freemasonry this does not answer the question.

If we look more closely at this accepted history, you will notice that it refers mainly to the administrative setup. It does not touch on the Masonic Philosophy and its deeper spiritual origins. For me the word history is not correct, because history refers to events and the dates when they occurred. Freemasonry cannot be dated as it is an evolution of human thought on spirituality and man's search for his origins. Hence the study of man, from the time he set foot on this earth, and his progress from a single individual looking for food and shelter should answer the question "What is Freemasonry".

Freemasonry is not just a fraternity or an order with rituals and symbolisms. These are merely pointers to the truth. It is something closer and deeper to a man's heart for which he has been striving from the day he could think of the wonders he saw before him and the origin of those wonders and who made them possible.

Masonry is the evolution of man's thinking about the miracle of life and the One Who controls it. If we accept this hypothesis, then the evolution of man's thinking could teach us what Freemasonry is all about, because this is the basis of Freemasonry. Many will say that there is no proof of this. How can one find proof of thinking which is abstract and not something that one feels and sees. Even today, in spite of the advances in science, we do not know what thought is. We know it today only as an electric activity in our brains.

Heywood and Graig in their "History of Freemasonry" say : "**Freemasonry as it exists today , is part of the stream of culture which has flowed down through the ages. It is heir of all the past and its own priceless treasures which have come into its possession from innumerable ancestors.**" They continue to say that, "**Modern FM is in the truest sense a reservoir into which the cult lore and social experiences of countless eons of human experiences have poured their treasures.**"

This only means that Freemasonry is the distillate of all religions. It came from all places where man evolved and started to think of all the wonders he saw and could not find an explanation. Hence the 'history' of Freemasonry is the evolution of human thoughts on his relations with God, his neighbour and himself.

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