

# *The UFL in the context of the global Freemasonry*

Titus Robert Feigl

President of the German Group  
Vice President of the UFL international

## Content:

Content: .....	1
The UFL in the context of the global Freemasonry .....	2
1. foundation of the Universal Freemason League (UFL) .....	2
2. historical roots of the FM .....	2
3. status quo of the FM.....	4
4. goals of the UFL.....	5
5. ways to the goals .....	6

# The UFL in the context of the global Freemasonry

Titus Robert Feigl

President of the German Group  
Vice President of the UFL international

## 1. foundation of the Universal Freemason League (UFL)

The Universal Freemason League is an association of Freemasons registered in Switzerland who live and promote the binding aims of the Confederation beyond the obedience of their country. The UFL is a neutral platform for all Masonic exchanges and is therefore open to all regular Masonic groups. The sisters and brothers who can prove that they are members of a Masonic lodge, which works under the roof of a grand lodge, which in turn is recognized by other grand lodges, are regarded as working regularly.

The first Esperanto World Congress took place in August 1905, and the Esperanto Framasona Association was formed as a subgroup of the Esperanto Association. At the Bern Esperanto Toworld Congress in 1913, during which an international masonic temple work was celebrated in Esperanto, this association was renamed Universala Framasona Ligo. In December 1924, Freemasons from France, Germany, Holland, Luxembourg and Switzerland met in Luxembourg for the first time after the World War II in order to initiate reconciliation again after the war disruptions.

When the idea of international Masonic manifestations was revived in 1925, the League helped to organise the Basel manifestation.

In 1926, at the suggestion of Eugen Lennhoff, the League was developed into an independent organisation. In the spirit of its universal ideal of peace and unity, the League's leadership wanted to include members from the USA in particular, which it succeeded in doing before the world economic crisis - one thousand people took part in the 1928 Congress of Vienna. After that, the meetings increasingly "Europeanized" themselves.

In 1928 the German group was also founded by the brothers Leo Müffelmann and Raoul Koner, which almost five years later expired with the strengthening of the National Socialists and only entered the international circle in Brussels in 1950.

Until the 90's the UFL-Germany in particular also grew strongly, but today not only the Germans but also the entire UFL has strongly declined again, which can certainly be partly attributed to the general masonic negative member movement.

## 2. historical roots of the FM

In order to learn how the UFL is set in the context of Freemasonry, we must briefly look back at the development of Freemasonry.

For most external observers, Freemasonry presents itself as a monolithic block, as the great world Freemasonry. But if you take a closer look, you will see that this "block" is divided into countless facets, groups and sub-groups, from the lodges as the smallest units to the grand lodges, also called obedience, to the united grand lodges, the grand obedience.

Like the governments of great powers, the Grand Obedia are confronted with each other in many questions, recognize each other or do not recognize each other, talk to each other or remain silent, so that there is no real chain of all Freemasons in the world, which of course should be valid beyond their own Grand Obedia.

In order to understand the basis on which the UFL is built, it is necessary to briefly outline the historical ramifications of Freemasonry. Without going into the legendary early history

of Freemasonry, we will go straight to its historically documented origins. The first verifiable real lodges can be found in Scotland at the beginning of the 17th century - not in England.

Edinburgh is the only "castle" in which a guild (Guild/Corporation) and a lodge (Lodge), which existed Mary's Chapel Lodge, are proven side by side by protocols. The protocols of the lodge begin in July 1599.

Since after the first classification of the Scottish lodges it turned out that some very early lodges were not integrated into the counting, these were "put in between". The Kilwinning Lodge received the title "Mother Kilwinning" and the privilege of number 0 in the list of lodges belonging to the Grand Lodge of Scotland. Behind the lodge of E-dinburgh Nr.1 the lodges of Melrose (Nr. 1<sup>2</sup>) and Aberdeen (Nr. 1<sup>3</sup>) were inserted.

"On 20 May 1641, Sir Robert Moray - 'the Very Honorable Mr Robert Moray, General Quaternary Master of the Army of Scotland' - was admitted to the old Mary's Chapel Lodge of Edinburgh in or near Newcastle. This was the first documented recording ritual on English soil. Mr. Moray is said to have been Lieutenant Colonel of the Scottish Guard in France as a young man, the Royal Guard whom we will meet again below.

In the course of the Scottish-English conflicts, these lodges naturally stood on the side of the Scottish Monarchy. During this period, England was also the origin of subversive "Jacobite" lodges on English soil from Scotland.

At the beginning of the 18th century, after the regained sovereignty of Scotland, the English lodges, now isolated from Scotland, were about to reorient themselves. Thus four lodges founded the first English grand lodge in 1717. This "foundation", however, was much more far-reaching than it could be seen at first glance. With this foundation the English Freemasonry went "into the public". In order to survive in royal England, it had to submit to the king, the political and religious leader of the British. A visible sign of this is that to this day the Duke of Kent is the nominal head of the UGLoE, the United Grand Lodge of England. This also meant that the political and religious positions of the royal house could not be called into question.

Hence the following cornerstones of British bricklaying:

- No debates on politics and religion in the lodges
- Voluntary submission to the politics and religion of the country in which the lodge works, provided that the essential human rights are not called into question by the leadership.

Anderson dogmatized the British cornerstones and elevated them to regularity.

The trade links between London and Hamburg brought English Freemasonry to Germany. Even though it split into different grand lodges over time, the so-called "Humanitarian Freemasonry" essentially remained true to the mainstream of Freemasonry in Germany and the Anderson Statutes.

It behaved similarly with Sweden, especially through its monastic relations with England. In contrast to England, however, stronger references to religion came into the teaching building, which colored it strongly Christian. The clearest sign for this is that in the Swedish Masonic Order the place of the ABAW is occupied by Christ. In principle, however, also this variation adheres to the "English regularity".

French Freemasonry followed a completely different path. In constant political competition to England France was mostly allied with Scotland. In this respect, it is understandable that the original, anti-British Freemasonry came here. In particular by the "Scottish Guard" at the French court, which we already met above, the Scottish Freemasonry arrived in France.

Parallel to the French Revolution, which was, one forgets, not only a revolution against the crown, but also against the tiara, the world of ideas of the Grand Orient developed, which is basically religion-tolerant but at the same time anticlerical and sees itself as a true true of freedom, equality and brotherhood and thus also as a political power.

From the Scottish-French basic direction, which is far less dogmatically underpinned, the most diverse masonic forms developed in France, bricklaying opened itself in particular also to the female sex and by publishing a "White Book" also to atheism.

### 3. status quo of the FM

What are the main currents of international Freemasonry?

- The Anglophile ethical-symbolic Freemasonry, which is the most numerous Masonic group in the world. It is mainly represented in the "ger-manic" countries, England, Germany, Austria, Canada, USA and Australia, to name but a few. It has the recognition of the U.G.L.o.E. and is "regular" from a British point of view.
- The Scandinavian Christian Freemasonry, which has the Christian confession to the pre-requisite and regards Jesus Christ as the ABAW. Also this variation has the recognition by the U.G.L.o.E. and is therefore also "regular" from a British point of view.
- The francophone secular-liberal Freemasonry, which is represented in particular by the G.O.d.F with anticlerical features. It sees itself as a philosophical, philanthropic institution with social and political commitment. The G.O.d.F.: and similar similarly structured grand lodges in other countries are "irregular" from the British point of view.
- Furthermore, there are various mixed as well as purely female Masonic obediences, whose grand lodges have joined together to form international associations such as C.L.I.M.A.F. and C.L.I.P.S.A.S. and define their regularity. From a British point of view, these varieties, most of which have grown up on French soil, are also "irregular". The strongest group from this spectrum is probably the Droit Humain, whose lodges can appear partly female, partly male or mixed.

At first sight the Anglo-Germanic and the Franco-Roman Freemasonry are diametrically opposed. The cornerstones of Anglo-Germanic Freemasonry are opposed by different points of view, depending on the Franco-Roman obedience.

- Gender problem:

How long classical English Freemasonry (UGL) will be able to defend itself against the regularity of feminine or even mixed lodges now seems questionable. The purely masculine orientation of the English lodges is owed to the old society, which is consistently male-dominated throughout English society, the last bastion of which, alongside Freemasonry, is the English club system. But this bastion is also falling. A few years ago, more and more renowned clubs were still offering pure heresy - and now offer full membership for women. In addition, more and more feminine lodges are being founded in England. Most recently, I myself saw literature designed for purely feminine lodges in the shop of Freemason's Hall, the temple of Orthodox Freemasonry.

- Politics and Freemasonry:

We have already mentioned the development of basic political orientations in the historical realm. While the G.O.d.F, for example, virtually demands political activity from its members and its lodges, at first glance Anglican-dominated masonry seems to be forbidden from political activity. More precisely, however, it is the party-political debates, and not politics as such, that are subject to this verdict, since all too often these

party-political debates would poison the climate of the lodges only uselessly. On the other hand, Freemasonry itself is highly political. All its fundamental themes, such as freedom, equality, fraternity, tolerance, to name but a few, are highly explosive political themes. The mission at the end of a TA: Go out into the world / the West and prove yourself a Freemason, is almost a political manifesto.

- Religion and Freemasonry:

If, in the field of politics, a distinction was made between the superordinate concept of politics as a confrontation with the fundamental values of humanity and the subordinate party politics, a similar distinction must be made here as well. In the ethical sector, religion must be seen as a subdivision of philosophy. Also here the narrower concept of religion tempts quickly to unobjective arguments and is to be kept as outside as possible with regard to the tolerance concept in the lodge life. But it is different with the superordinate concept of philosophy. This basically comprises the whole human being and is at the same time closely connected with the concept of politics. Philosophy is, so to speak, the intellectual superstructure that finds its reference to reality through politics. Under these circumstances Freemasonry is of course an absolutely philosophical building, which, by the way, is not disputed in any obedience.

## 4. goals of the UFL

Within this conglomerate of Masonic units, which is partly competing, cooperating or tacitly tolerating each other, there are some institutions which have made it their business to be binding forces between the obedience forces in their own way. These include in particular the research lodges Quatuor Coronati and the Masonic Artists' Association Pegasus. But this also includes in particular the Universal Masonic League.

It would be absolutely presumptuous if the UFL were to claim to unite Freemasonry in a worldwide super-obedience with a single claim to independence.

It has, however, set itself essential goals:

- Solidarity of obedience:

Freemasonry as a whole could do profound work on the construction of humanity in global Masonic solidarity through the use of synergy effects. This requires on the one hand the recognition of the differences, but in particular also the similarities of the different obedience on the globe. Respecting the differences, a concerted cooperation on the common fields of interest could very well be found.

- International understanding, to avoid further wars

Freemasons, who are loyal to the League and its goals today, who are committed to international understanding, unite the ideal that all people who talk to each other and understand each other cannot possibly become involved in wars. The dialogue is more important and will promote the understanding between Masons in this world than any special greeting in the temple by a chair master who, in case of doubt, "violates the rules". Love for the fatherland and global thinking must not be presented as insurmountable opposites.

- Defence of human rights:

However, the UFL is also determined to engage itself in the defence of Freemasons, as well as profane individuals with Masonic ideas, in the profane world, if they are disadvantaged for political reasons or imprisoned for reasons of their commitment to Masonic goals. It goes thereby offensively and concretely as organization from the reserve, if it is indicated.

- Individual FM:

The UFL also wants to encourage the individual member to take responsibility in his or her entire social, political and economic environment, also by allowing his or her members to network within a global framework.

## 5. ways to the goals

The UFL offers different ways of achieving these objectives.

Every year at least one national and one international meeting take place, both at different locations if possible, so that the members can meet in new surroundings. In particular, the international meetings are held in different countries, so that there is the possibility of getting to know more and more countries with their peculiarities over the course of time and, in particular, to come into contact with different Srr. and Brr. and to develop these contacts.

At the same time, national and international meetings make it possible to experience the different obedience very closely in discussions, if necessary also through lectures - even without joint lodge work. On the other hand, it would also be worth considering whether there is not a kind of TA which - on the lowest denominator - would be acceptable for all obedience, similar to the Winter Anniversary celebrations which are also accessible to profane people. There must have been such a ritual at the end of the 19th century / beginning of the 20th century in Switzerland, so far I could not verify it.

In the past, international youth camps were organized for children of the liguers. This should be taken up again in order to integrate the youth as early as possible into a united Europe.

Masonic networking could initiate European and global internationalisation processes in scientific, economic, artistic or socio-political sectors.

Since the UFL keeps itself away from any problems of regularity and is only committed to the human rights and humanitarian and tolerant ideas accepted by all obedience, there is no valid justification for exclusion by a Masonic obedience or for a ban on the participation of its members in the UFL.

What is and remains important in all these proposals for concerted activities is that the UFL should act as a quasi-ecumenical platform through which - at least loosely - a world freemasonry can come together.