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## The Romanian Freemasonry. Historical facts and self image in some journals of the National Grande Lodge of Romania

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**Abstract:** This article's aim is to investigate how the reflection on the Freemasonry's role in Romanian history is being built: on the one hand, there is a scientific, historical approach, based on facts; on the other, there is a "mythological" reflection in which the document is replaced with a more or less imaginary hermeneutics. I was interested in observing how "self-image" is constructed, by a juxtaposition of positivism and fiction. I tried to corroborate the writings of positivist historians about Freemasonry with those authored by Freemason authors, focusing especially on a body of texts published between 2009 and 2014 in *Trivium*, the only journal of this kind in Romania. I chose *Trivium* because it is the only scientific publication that approaches with scientific means the role of Freemasonry in important moments of Romanian history and, especially because its team of Freemason and profane collaborators are reputed authors in the fields of history, anthropology, communication studies, or history of mentalities.

**Keywords:** imagology, freemasonry, romanian history, imaginary/imaginal, lodges conspiracy, *Trivium*

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*La Franc-maçonnerie roumaine.*

*Faits historiques et auto-images dans les revues de la Grande Loge Nationale de Roumanie*

**Résumé:** L'objectif de cet article est d'étudier comment la réflexion sur le rôle de la franc-maçonnerie dans l'histoire roumaine est en cours de construction: d'une part, il existe une approche scientifique, historique, basée sur des faits; d'autre part, il existe une réflexion « mythologique » à travers laquelle le document est remplacé par une herméneutique plus ou moins imaginaire.

**Mots-clés:** imagologie, franc-maçonnerie, histoire roumaine, imaginaire/imaginal, conspiration des loges, *Trivium*

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### Introduction

Freemasonry is, by definition, an eclectic phenomenon as regards its doctrinal, ethnic-religious configuration, as a social phenomenon, but also in respect of its inner perfection. From the modern perspective, freemasonry exemplifies perhaps a singular coincidence of opposites, namely the dynamic relation between national-universal and between identity and cosmopolitanism.

In the field of social reception, Masonry is a double phenomenon distal. Being, by definition, discrete, i.e. inaccessible directly, public opinion build its image about Freemasonry first of all through various "filters" and then through the media. This poses a double danger of distorting the message and a double risk of generating communicational "febrilities" within the public of which the most obvious are anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories.

But the most surprising paradox about Masonry comes when we realize that an imagological reflection about it is not possible, because there is not "one masonry", but several: first, that before the sixteenth century called operative, and then the post-1717 one to which we refer to as a speculative Masonry. And the meaning of the latter is even more threatened by a diversity of hypostases, because the English deistic Freemasonry is one thing, and quite another is the secular Freemasonry of the Grand Orient of France; likewise, the first three degrees, so-called blue degrees are one thing, and quite another are the various rites of perfection.

Therefore, an approach from the perspective of communication sciences of such complex difficulties would be extremely difficult within the time confinements of communication. This determined me to simplify the problem of such communicational pathologies about Freemasonry by approaching it not from the distal perspective of profane Romanian press, but by indicating some aspects of its diversity from the perspective of "self-image". More exactly I will refer to insiders' approaches, whether Freemasons, or specialists in Masonic history. In what follows I will examine especially texts published in the journal *Trivium*, a publication that defines itself as an interface of the Grand National Lodge of Romania with the secular world<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The first issue appeared at the end of 2009. The publication, with quarterly appearance (ISSN: 2067: 192X) has the subtitle "Symbolic culture magazine. Published by the Institute for Symbolic Research Iași with the support of Fratres Association". Editorial board: Alexandru Dan Ciochină (director), Bogdan Mihai Mandache (editor), Radu Ciobotea (deputy editor), Radu Rosca (editorial secretary), Radu Comănescu, Lucian Dârdală, Emilian M. Dobrescu M. Mircea A. Tămaș and Marcel Tolcea. On the title page appear three important details: "Trivium Magazine collaborates with the Grand National Lodge of Romania and aims to approach, predominantly, the Masonic phenomenon in all its complexity; The texts published are not the views of GNLR; The status of editor or contributor is not conditioned by membership of the Craft." The first issue is opened by an article by Eugen Ovidiu Chirovici, Grand Master of the Grand National Lodge of Romania. Since year III, no. 3 (8), July-September 2011, the cooperation with NGLR

### 1. Imagology, imaginary, myth and masonry

I could have entitled my paper "Why is Freemasonry different?", as any approach to Masonry is obliged to consider the double regime of image, namely diurnal and nocturnal, as Gilbert Durand would say (1977, pp. 79-81 and 237-244). Not in a dual antinomic register, but rather complementarily, since the understanding of Masonry as mythical phenomenon (the legendary operative period) and as historical phenomenon (speculative, modern, period) requires from our contemporary paradigm, essentially positivist, to be much more skeptical both in relation to the premises of research and its tools, but especially to the employment value of its conclusions. I mean that, on the one hand, the history of Masonry has a mythological (desiderative) reading and a historical, strictly factual one, where the former is not necessarily wrong, but could fulfill a social function more complex than we can imagine: from the etiology of historical events to the saturation of moments of discontinuity in the sequentiality of historical stages. Simply put, Freemasonry has, on the one hand, the role to explain in a much easier and thus in a more attractive way, and to act like a cement between the bricks of history, on the other. This means that the imaginary, together with its ancient relative, namely mythologizing, participate intensively in this hermeneutic effort. And I will begin my argument with a quote from Lucian Boia's study *History and Myth in the Romanian Consciousness*:

"I want to be clear: I have not started a war against myths. [...] I know very well that we cannot live outside the imaginary and mythology. [...] I have not proposed at any stage the cancelation of myths [...]. I know we cannot live without myths, but I, as a historian, cannot justify my existence without trying to understand them. It will be said that a myth will crack and crumble when interpreted. That may be so, but then what should I do: not to interpret? Once again, we want either an intelligent history, or (to put it euphemistically) unintelligent". (2011, p.18)

The final question — rhetoric of course — is more complicated than it sounds because, in the case of a historical approach, the relation between facts presented (as cold, objective, rational discourse) and mythology (as warm, subjective, imaginary discourse, but not necessarily mendacious!) mirrors the relation between the operative and the speculative Masonry.

In other words, we will refer to Freemasonry as both real and imaginary a construction (which, again, does not mean either real nor unreal, but arranged according to the logic of the imaginary), designed to highlight the essence of cosmic and social phenomena, in close connection with the fundamental values of the community, aiming to ensure its cohesion. (Boia, 2011, p. 56)

For the readers who are unfamiliar with the "esoteric" text, I will make two references. For Ibn al-Arabi – the par excellence doctor of Sufism – the imagination can be

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is expressed as follows: "Trivium magazine is the interface of Grand National Lodge of Romania with the profane world."

conceived on three levels: at the level of the cosmos itself; as an intermediary of the macrocosm; and as an intermediary of the microcosm. No matter what level we relate to, it is always *barzakh*, i.e. an isthmus or an interworld. Inspired by this model of Islamic gnosis, H. Corbin coined the term *imaginal world*, which he defined as an intermediate world between the sensible and the intelligible worlds, between matter and spirit, being perceived by the active Imagination (*Apud* Riffard, 1993, pp. 170-171)<sup>2</sup>.

My second reference is to Moses Maimonides, actually to his famous treatise *Guide for the Perplexed* where the apparently aleatory relation between dream, prophecy, and truth is structured differently compared to how we would imagine it today:

"You know already the actions (*peulot*) of this imaginative faculty (*ha-coah ha-medame*) consisting in keeping the memory of sensory things (*ha-muhashim*) in their composition (*harcavatam*) and in the recovery (*ha-hikui*) [of images] which is in its nature; but its greatest (*ha-gedola*) and noblest (*ha-nichbedet*) work occurs only when the senses (*ha-hushim*) rest and stop working - then inspiration (*shefa*) pours over it according to its disposition (*ha-hachana*), and this is also the cause of the true dreams as well as of prophecy." (Săsână, 2002, p. 114)

## 2. Facts vs. myths

Returning to the initial rapport between factual and imaginary, I allow myself to note, even if I'm not a professional historian, that when we refer to Freemasonry, the historical document is in a fragile position. Much too often, the documents relating to Freemasonry are subjected to the most natural censorship / self-censorship: secret societies do not keep reliable documents about what is being discussed behind closed doors, and the relevance of documents on numerous historical contexts in which Freemasonry was involved is a rather questionable. When dealing with Masonry as an ethnic diversity phenomenon, invoking archival documents has only relevance under strictly quantitative aspects, i.e. highlighting statistics regarding the number of Romanians' and other ethnic groups' membership in different moments of our history. To give an example from my immediate geographic proximity: the Resita lodge "Licht und Wahrheit", founded on 4 October, 1873, about which we find that it was composed of the following officers: Venerable Master of the Lodge: Georg Adam Heinbach; Venerable Deputy Master and Secretary: Petre Broșteanu<sup>3</sup>;

<sup>2</sup> See also William C. Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds. Ibn al-Arabi and the Problem of Religious Diversity*, State University of New York Press, 1994, Ch. „Revelation and Poetic Imagery”, pp. 67–82. About „creative imagination” I have also written in *Ezoterism și comunicare simbolică*, Timișoara, Editura Universității de Vest, 2004, pp. 118-119.

<sup>3</sup> On the Masonic volume of parables in prose by Broșteanu, see Varga Attila, „'Calea unui Mag' – Semper fidelis patriae. Traista cu povești a unui francmason bănățean”, *Trivium*, Year IV, nr. 4(13), 2012, pp. 646-657.

First Supervisor: Ludwig Fessler; Second Supervisor: Wenzel Scheible, Orator: Johann Pantyik; Treasurer: Anton Heger; Master of Ceremonies: Alexander Schonberger; Archivist: Johann Wachlinger. (Georgevici, 2014)

And when Tudor Sălăgean, one of the historians of Transylvanian Freemasonry produces a list of initiated or affiliate members, covering the period during which St. Andrew Lodge activated in Sibiu (1767-1790), the value of this document consists solely in making an ordinary enumeration: of the 276 Masons, Catholics were predominant, (147), followed by Evangelical Lutherans (73), the least numerous being the Orthodox members, eight in number, and the Unitarians - only two. And, the author stresses, at the ethnic diversity chapter, that Sibiu lodge members included the Romanian oculist Ioans Piuaru Molnar, the first Transylvanian Romanian university professor and Baron Brukenthal's personal physician; Prince Alexander Moruzi, who became later Prince of Moldavia and Wallachia; Martin Hochmeister the Elder, mayor of Sibiu and pressman, the founder of the first public library in Sibiu and of the first German theater in Transylvania; Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of a revolutionary pharmaceutical discipline - homeopathy; Franz Müller von Reichenstein, the discoverer of the chemical element "tellurium"; Phillipp Collignon, owner of the hotel „Împaratul Romanilor” (Sălăgean & Eppel, 2009). Undoubtedly the accession of Transylvanian Romanians to lodges is much more nuanced a problem than the Craft's declared cosmopolitanism. Vasile Lechițan signals in this respect, an unsigned article in the magazine *Familia*, published in 1884, entitled „Ceî dintâiu francmasoni români. Schiță istorică” (The first Romanian Freemasons. Historical sketch) where we learn that the first Transylvanian lodge set by nine brothers was "St. Andreas zu den drei Seeblättern Lodge in Orient at Sibiu" in 1767. (Sălăgean, 2010, p. 251)

But beyond such lists of names and statistics, what could be effective in a imagological research refers, first of all, to the relationship between social stereotypes about Masonry and the self-image of the Craft. From reflections on imagology we know that the self-images have several levels of perception. First, there is, allegedly, an archetypal image which is the image an ethnic group has about itself, mostly based on a supposed ancient consciousness found in paremiology. Then we have the self-image taken from foreigners and endorsed over time, which is the direct result of peoples living together in the same geographical areas. Here we talk about identification, recognition and intuitive knowledge codes which turn into self-identification, self-recognition and self-knowledge codes. Finally, we must take into account the image a people wants to create about himself, i.e. those exclusively positive features considered ideal for its citizens. (Chiciudean & Halic, 2003, p. 17)

Starting with Abbe Barruel's book from 1796, Freemasonry was a phenomenon demonized and blamed for virtually all the ills of humanity. As is well known, Barruel blamed Masonry for its anti-Christian dimension that would have had, as social action, the antimonarchic demarche. And *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinisme* highlight a myth that seems to have not in the least exhausted its inspiring force: the universal conspiracy myth (1911, pp. 14-22, 47-51, 198-219). It

would be interesting to discuss whether the parainformation process, together with tabloidization and infotainment, are an ideal gemination bed for such a phenomenon or not. What I find particularly interesting about the universal conspiracy theory is that some of the most effective promoters of this understanding of the world are none but the Masons themselves. Involuntary promoters, of course, but that's not an excuse.

Thus, in terms of self-image of Freemasonry, we are compelled to conclude that, at least in case of Romania, there is practically no moment in our history from the eighteenth century onwards, which cannot be qualified as being beneficially linked with Freemasonry. And I should enumerate at least a few of these historical moments in which the story of Good Masonry reveals a powerful entity that acts mostly like a *deus ex machina* from the Greek tragedies. One of the most modish Masonic historians, Paul Ștefanescu, goes as far as to say that modern European history begins on Masonic foundations, as the initiators of the French Revolution were Freemasons. Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Turkey (not to mention the U.S.A., the first Masonic state in history) would be all, in his view, the fruit of Masonic activity. Moreover, he believes that Freemasonry is responsible for removing the tsarist regime in Russia, with the revolution of 1917:

„The Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920) will certify the absolute victory of Masonic ideals in Europe: everywhere democratic governments, free states and peoples. Freemasonry efforts will be crowned on 10 January 1920, when it was founded the Society (League) of Nations, considered the first great step towards the world government, the ideal dreamed of by Freemasons”. (2002, p. 275)

As for the history of Romania or of Romanians, in 1784 we have the myth of the freemason Horea, who allegedly went to Vienna and attended a Masonic meeting where he gave a speech in Romanian. Ovidiu Pecican, in a review of the excellent study by Tudor Sălăgean cited above, after noting that the historian from Oradea Gh. Gorun dealt with Horia's possible ties to Freemasonry, "which shows that the hypothesis has already gained ground within the realm of local historiography" concludes that "for now, the territory of conjectures and hypotheses can not be abandoned in favor of certainty based on unequivocal evidence. "Just the fact that, on 23 February 1783 in the Vienna lodge "Zur Wahren Eintracht" it was delivered a speech in Romanian that had a popular flavor cannot entail the certainty that the speaker was Horea. (2009)

In 1821, Tudor Vladimirescu and the Eteria movement posed, in terms of mythological perspective, a difficulty hard to overcome: that belonging to other secret societies (Carbonari, Eteria, Brotherhood, Rosicrucianism, etc.) is not synonymous to the membership in Freemasonry. Hence the various associations that both the authors close to Freemasonry and its opponents make. Like in the cases of Horea or Cantemir, Tudor Vladimirescu was hastily considered Freemason by these authors. Radu Comănescu and Emilian M. Dobrescu are skeptical about

Vladimirescu's alleged membership to Masonry, showing that it is certain that he belonged to Cărvunarism, a secret society, but also a social movement supported even by Prince Ioniță Sandu Sturdza (1992, p. 242). In the mirror of the image's "nocturnal regime", let us quote an excerpt from the interview of Costel Iancu, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree and Ultimate for Romania, given to *Masonic Forum* magazine:

„The most important personalities belonged to Freemasonry. We must mention Prince Dimitrie Cantemir - historian, philosopher and fighter for the independence of Moldavia, in the period between the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century; Horea and Cloșca, who led the uprising that resulted in the abolition of serfdom (1785); Tudor Vladimirescu, who became the symbol of the struggle for independence in the early nineteenth century. Most cultural, political and military figures of the 1848 period were Freemasons: among them we find Bălcescu, Constantin Rosetti, Kogălniceanu, Alecsandri, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Costache Negruzzi, George Magheru, Ion Brătianu etc. As it is known, Modern Romania owes its existence to these freemasons”. (2003)

Regarding the year 1848, the sources are more generous and clearly documented with regard to the role of Freemasonry in the three Romanian countries or with respect to Bălcescu's role; besides this, it is worth emphasizing the existence of an idea of a confederation of Danubian countries, which would have had completely changed the Romanian-Hungarian relations. (Varga, 2010, p. 464)

Problems arise with regard to the union of 1859, more precisely with respect to Al. I. Cuza's certain membership in Freemasonry certain of AI, but also when we are talking about the Masonic involvement in the coup that led to the Prince's departure from the country. Constantin Turluc, for example, takes the necessary precautions when dealing with the question of the Prince's belonging to the Craft and, in the absence of compelling evidence the author is inclined to believe that the membership hypothesis refers to a period prior to 1859. (2010, pp. 58-65)

The same is true for the great union of 1918 regarding which the books on the Romanian Freemasonry mention the role of Jean Pangal, Vaida-Voevod, Traian Vuia and other members of the delegation that attended the peace talks in Trianon. Legend has it that in the morning of the Paris Peace Conference — which sanctioned internationally the union of Transylvania with Romania —, five members of the Romanian delegation became Freemasons: Al. Vaida-Voevod Caius Brediceanu, Voicu Nițescu, Gh. Crișan, Mihai Șerban and Traian Vuia. Three of them were from Banat, and two from Transylvania. In reality, they "received the light" according to all hearings rules, in the *Ernest Renan* lodge workshop in Paris, on August 4, 1918, and thus, the Romanian delegation's participation in the Conference gained a much heavier weight. Moreover, all Romanian delegates participated as special guests in the annual convention of the closing ceremonies of the Grand Orient of France's annual Convent, in September 1919! The importance of this presence is better un-



derstood if we add that at that time in Hungary Freemasonry had been suspended, meaning "it had become dormant" – a state which lasted until 1926. (A special detail about this aspect: the brief period of Bela Kun's communist Republic meant, among other things, the confiscation of the Grand National Lodge of Hungary's Palace by the ... doormen's union.)

Al. Vaida-Voevod explained that the unexpected entry of the aforementioned people into the Freemasonry was a diplomatic action meant to persuade the Masonic circles, and thus the French political circles. Moreover, it seems that the action had the endorsement of I.I.C. Brătianu and the Royal House. Ironically, Queen Mary was also in Paris during the Peace Conference, where she held a number of important meetings with her English relatives. It is worth mentioning here her meeting with her uncle, Duke Conaught, Grand Master of English Freemasonry. Furthermore, her personal aide was sent, after the Union, to initiate in Brasov, the center of the Transylvanian Masonic lodges. Moreover, in 1925, Queen Mary was decorated with the Masonic Order "Green Cross of England".

But the Union was not only associated with great political figures. The shadow architect – so to speak – of this strategy seems to have been Jean Pangal, the most important and subsequently controversial personality of Romanian Freemasonry in the first 3 decades, as we learn from *Inorogul* (The Unicorn), the first scientific publication published under the patronage of the Great National Lodge of Romania<sup>4</sup>. After a brilliant doctorate in Paris in 1914, Pangal carried out a laborious activity in the French capital in 1918, as secretary general of the National Council of Romanian Unity. According to some historians of Romanian Masonry, he founded in August 1918 a Supreme Council of Romania of which he was Sovereign Grand Inspector General. In this quality it is likely that he met the most influential personalities of European and American Freemasonry, as the Lodges from Romania were at that time under various foreign jurisdictions, of which the most present was that of the Grand Orient of France. What we can assume is that Romanian Masons, especially Pangal, have negotiated the jurisdiction of the Romanian lodges in order to obtain the de rigueur benefits. What is certain is that from 1922 Jean Pangal led the National Romanian Freemasonry, which detached and differentiated itself from the Grand Orient of France, becoming a sovereign order. In 1924 Pangal declared that the National Grand Lodge of Romania's goal was to "to consolidate the Romanian national unitary state". And about the Freemasons who were obedient to foreign orders, he said "a Romanian who stays under a foreign Masonic obedience, when in

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<sup>4</sup> The publication appeared in 2001, under the directorate of the regular Romanian Freemasonry's historian, Horia Nestorescu Bălcești. Among the collaborators, there are names from the Craft and from the profane world: H. Radu, Octavian Petruș (founder and Master Venerable of "Al. I. Cuza" Lodge, from Iași according to his public profile.); N.A. Ursu (at that time corresponding member of the Romanian Academy), Mihai Dim. Sturdza (former political detainee, exiled, high government agent at Quais d'Orsay); genealogist and university professor Mihai Sorn Rădulescu; Romanian Academy member Cornelia Bodea. The publication, of which only one issue appeared, was edited by the National Center for Masonic Studies, Bucharest and had no editorial board.

his country there is a National Masonry, is consciously or unconsciously the tool of foreignness and foreign interests, alien to the nation". (Fotescu, 2001, pp. 233-262, Teodorescu, 2001, pp. 263-286)

Interestingly, not even Freemasonry's most virulent detractors denied the role of great Masonic personalities in these key moments; there are clear documents, and testimonies of the fact that, for instance, Marshal Antonescu did not take aggressive measures against Romanian Freemasons, precisely due to this positive mythologizing that circulated among Romanian intellectuals. (Dogaru, 2013, pp 117-125)

And with regard to "mythology" I would like to signal a totally unexpected juxtaposition between Romanian and Jewish spiritualities that was current currency in the B'nai Brith lodges' "ideology", namely that the Jews and the Getae were — Origen and Celsus dixerunt — peoples with very similar mental structures. Radu Cernătescu notes that such a tenet was also present in Eminescu without speculating on the idea that such a depth — a descent deep down to the sources of mythic history — belonged, in Eminescu, to the inventory of a cosmological valuing of the Romanian culture. (2012, pp. 755-757) The remarkable researcher from Banat makes a subtle reference that „glides” from the moral values of Freemasonry to what has been called „the religion of communism”.

As for the modern dimension of Freemasonry, some aspects which — as far as I know — have not yet been addressed, should be detailed. When talking about Freemasonry as a phenomenon of proto-diversity, it would be more epistemologically polite to refer, first, to the doctrinary eclecticism. The eighteenth century brought, together with Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, a new dimension of spirituality that put together elements of religion, on the one hand, and elements of the esoteric paradigm, on the other. In a way, we are looking at a revival of a Renaissance dimension Pico della Mirandola would have been proud of.

If, however, things would have stopped there, we would probably have had a remake of the famous conjunction between Christianity, Kabbalah, alchemy and magic. Things are, however, closer to a "social barter" in which elements of Christianity, Judaism, alchemy, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, are doubled with an extremely severe Protestant ethics. That is so because, it must be said firmly, Masonry is a Protestant phenomenon in its moral dimension and social usefulness.

In fact, the perception, the image Freemasonry hoped to have within the community were exactly the same as those Max Weber was talking about when he was analyzing the pride of the job well done and the social utility of work in Luther's Protestantism.

The concept of Protestantism and that of public sphere, indissolubly related to each other as it is well known, led to the need for acceptance what modern studies of interculturality call diversity, that is, otherness. This form of coexistence between religions and denominations — within Freemasonry — was able to create not only

an epistemological break between religious and ethnic groups holding usually irreconcilable positions, but also to provide premises for the occultist movements of the second half of the nineteenth century. Therefore a careful reading of Freemasons' works from that time leads one to easily notice that they are tributary to a "philosophical crossbreeding" vision such as theosophy and other forms of that period's occultism.

In fact, only in the lodge and in the Craft's magazines one can meet theosophes, disciples of Papus, of Rudolf Steiner, of Guénon, protochronists, a.s.o. Like in a Spanish inn of trencher for the mind.

### Conclusions

Freemasonry's self-image in any country of the world is one constantly self-flattering. Romanian Freemasonry is no exception, for it was involved - through representatives or as an institution simultaneously secret and discrete - in the movement for emancipation, in the building of the national state, or in the creation of Greater Romania. This fact is visible in the writings of the main freemasonic authors published after 1989, when Freemasonry ceased to be banned, as it was between 1948 and 1989. The endeavour of these authors is understandable at least on three grounds: they are not professional historians or anthropologists; they had to build a whole positive campaign of the Craft after a 50 years of banning and demonizing; they were taking part in the building and consolidation of a mysterious and magic paradigm, that of Freemasonry.

Before comparing the positivist historians' writings about the role of Freemasonry in Romanian history, to approaches signed by freemasonic authors less skeptical towards speculation, I assumed I was going to find big epistemological differences between them. It was not so! On the one hand, the researchers who studied the archives do not deny the hypotheses of involvement that are hard or impossible to verify, or the mythology about the undeniable presence and role of the Craft in practically all important moments of our history from the eighteenth century onward. They simply signaled the fact that the documents do not say anything clear in this respect. On the other hand, the "mythological" approach of the Freemasonry's role in the history of Romania does not distort the historical fact, but invest it with deep significances and mystery which the necessarily skeptical positivism cannot put forward. Last but not least, the texts examined highlight the presence within the Romanian Freemasonry of a heterogenous bulk of philosophical, moral and spiritual approaches — often irreconcilable outside the Temple — hard to imagine on other layers of the Romanian society.

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