



The "Heresy of the Builders"

Author Master Mason George Kar, Lodge Ionnis Kapodistria No 92, Corfu

We already know that in the West, for the Catholic Church the presence of the Freemasons was known in its circles and in the highest ranks of the Church from its first steps.

Sometimes we wonder if the other pillar of Christianity in the East, the Orthodox Church, the "Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople", was aware of the Freemasons.

The answer is, probably, yes....

To the Orthodox Church, it seems that there was relative knowledge of Freemasons, as early as the 1740s, from the operation of a Masonic Lodge in Ismir (Smyrne), in the East Mediterranean (the so-called Levant Region), in 1747. It is the book of "Cesario Daponte", an orthodox priest from the island of Skopelos, of the Aegean Sea, contained in his 'Book of Kings' - (Βίβλος Βασιλειών in Greek – Vivlos Vasilion // Bible of the Kingdoms) which indicates that, the presence of Freemasonry was known to the Orthodox Church.

Saved in 2 volumes in the Lavra Monastery Library, numbered 13-14, position L, and found in the late 19th century, by Alexander E. Lavriotis, became known to the general public through the pages of a weekly magazine called 'Neologos', in 1893, published in the capital of the, then Ottoman state, Istanbul.

In his books, among others, he mentions in a separate chapter, on the "Heresy of the Builders". The chapter starts, "If you want to be a - Free Builder (Koniates=Κονιάτες, in Greek) - , in the society of Free Builders", and continues, step by step all the way from the beginning and how exactly one man is chosen to be a Brother, and ends with the literal description of the process of initiation to the first degree, as we know it to this day.....

Likewise, makes extensive references to "they all after are gathering at a tavern where they drink and eat...", as well as, all the toasts, each in turn.

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The way of description is so revealing that one could say that surely !!!, the author was present at the time of initiation.
But We do not know that.....

After finishing with the descriptions, our beloved author and priest, Cesario Daponte, goes on to say that "the news of this new institution was conveyed to Patriarch "Paisios" by a man called - Neophytos -, who, as described in the text, said that he, himself, was attending these gatherings.

The Patriarch after hearing, he threatened him with excommunication and other threats, and also saying that both he and they - "These Builders" - were heretics and contrary to the teachings of God. Unfortunately, the author does not go on to describe what eventually happened to Mr. Neophytos

Concluding his text, the author mentions that "These Builders" also went to Galata/Pera in Istanbul, and did a "society" there, but when the Ottoman authorities learned of it, they pursued them, and closes his description by saying that, "these Bbuilder's first appeared in England 70 to 80 years before today, in 1747".

-End-

Thank you for taking the time to read this short paper

Master Mason George Kar

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Remarks – January 2020, was the start of Brother George, of his second year with the Lodge of Research 200 (Ireland), in this short time, George as shown excellent commitment to the lodge, and in deed, enlighten other members with his excellent knowledge and experience of Freemasonry in Greece and on the Island of Corfu. At this time, George, as submitted his second short paper to be post on the Lodge's Web-site, again this paper demonstrates the expertise and knowledge which George as brought to Lodge of Research 200 (Ireland), this paper in my view is well researched, and provides others, with a valuable insight how Freemasonry was viewed by some in the 1740s within the Eastern Region Mediterranean; well done Brother George.

W Bro Ian MacIntyre, Treasurer, Lodge of Research 200 (Ireland)
