

The Conflict between Authoritarianism and Individualism – An Assessment of the Characteristics that Inhibit Freemasonry in a Non-Free World

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Abstract:

Within the overall concept of conflict expressed in the ANZMRC 2018 Conference theme of 'Freemasonry in War and Peace', the aspect addressed in this paper is the on-going conflict between the coercive power of the state and the personal freedoms of its citizens. All states constrain the liberty of their citizens to some degree, but between the outer limits of authoritarianism and individualism, there are many nuances both within and between states. This study addresses the nature of the conflict by providing an answer to the question: 'How free do I have to be before I can freely participate in Freemasonry?' A statistically based analysis is undertaken on three hypotheses measuring the proposition that 1) the likelihood of any Masonic activity occurring will be greater in those countries with higher levels of freedom; 2) the extent of Masonic activity (as measured by membership numbers) will be higher in those countries enjoying greater freedom, and 3) the propensity for masonic activity will increase as the level of freedom increases. The analysis provides support for all three hypotheses. A model is then developed on the level of 'freedom' which must be enjoyed to enable one to become a Freemason. The model indicates that he must be 'very free', suggesting that the freedom to freely associate with like-minded individuals, such as by participating in Freemasonry, is not independent of wider freedoms. Men who live in the freest 20% of countries have ample opportunity to participate in Freemasonry, those in the next 20% are generally able to participate, those in the middle 20% have mixed opportunities, whilst (with a few exceptions) those who live in the bottom 40% of countries have no opportunities to freely participate in Freemasonry.

Introduction:

Very early on in their Masonic journey, the newly initiated Freemason is taught that Freemasonry is 'a peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols' and is informed that only 'just, upright and free men of mature age, sound judgement and strict morals' can be made Masons.

He also learns that 'the sun was at its meridian' at the time of his initiation, with the apparent paradox being explained as the result of 'the earth constantly revolving on its axis in its orbit around the sun, and Freemasonry being universally spread over its surface, it necessarily follows that the sun is always at its meridian with respect to Freemasonry'.

As such, being 'free' is a central tenet for a man to be initiated into Freemasonry. However, in a world in conflict and in an absence of universal acceptance of the rights of the individual, the concept of being free cannot be considered as 'absolute'.

We likewise note the concept of Freemasonry (or at least its ideals) being universally spread over the surface of the earth. Nevertheless, in line with the allegorical nature of the concept, there are many nations in the world where organised Freemasonry is not present. In many of these nations, there are severe restrictions on the right of individuals to assemble peacefully with like-minded individuals or organisations of one's choice. The nature of these restrictions also can and does vary in both existence and degree between countries of similar outlook.

All states maintain a level of coercive powers over their citizens. Our personal freedoms are never absolute and are constrained to varying degrees. This constraint may have arisen from the consent of the governed or it may be arbitrarily imposed by the ruler. Between the conflict inherent in the two extremes that '*the state exists for man*' on one hand, and that '*man exists for the state*' on the other, there are many nuances and indeed within a state, it may change over time and as a factor of changes to the external environment.¹

As such, in a world where the nature of freedom is fluid and where the geographical spread of Masonic organisations are far from universal, the question arises as to:

'How free do I have to be before I can freely participate in Freemasonry?'

This paper will provide a statistically based analysis to ascertain the characteristics of those countries where Freemasonry occurs.

To do so, the 2016 data set contained within the '*The Human Freedom Index*'² (HFI) will be used as a base to provide a relative measure of freedom experienced in most countries of the world. The index will then be cross-referenced against a listing of countries where Freemasonry is practised (and to the extent to which it flourishes in those countries).

After testing various hypotheses on the relationship between such rankings and the ability to become a Freemason, a model will be developed of the level of 'freedom' which must be enjoyed to enable one to become a Freemason. In developing the model, consideration will also be given to whether there are some aspects of freedom more predictive of Masonic activity than others.

Authoritarianism and Individualism – The Civil Power and 'Secret' Societies – An Ongoing Conflict:

The nature of the debate relating to the term 'free' in freemason is somewhat tangential to the purpose of this paper. Nevertheless, a brief outline of some of the arguments as to whether 'free' refers to a man who is neither slave nor servant, or to some other meaning, is germane to what follows.

¹ Even in a country where the inhabitants enjoy high levels of personal freedom, much greater constraints over individual freedom (eg: the imposition of being conscripted to fight for the state) may be accepted by the governed during times of heightened threat to the continued independence of the state. The ability of a democracy to successfully prosecute and achieve its aims during time of war appears to owe much to the level of support for those aims being maintained within its own population.

² Vásquez, I. and Porčnik, T. 2016. *The Human Freedom Index 2016: A Global Measurement of Personal, Civil and Economic Freedom*. Cato Institute, Fraser Institute and Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom.

One view was summarised by Bro. Eric Ward³, who on expanding on the work of previous authors argued that the derivation of the word 'freemason' as it applies to masons employed in the building trade was compounded from 'freestone' and 'mason', denoting a mason who worked primarily on the type of limestone which could be freely cut and carved with elaborate ornamentation.

He noted that the limestone belt from which the freestone was quarried passed through the south of England with very little of this stone available to be quarried in Scotland. As a result, whilst he can find numerous references to the word 'freemason' in denoting a craftsman in the English literature, it does not appear to occur in the Scottish records.

Over time, he argued as men formed themselves into small autonomous societies or lodges whose connection to the building trade was no more than incidental, the term 'accepted masons' started to be used at a time when the old trade name of 'freemasons' was still being used as of right by professionals unconnected with lodges.

As such he provides evidence⁴ of the use of the terms Adopted Masons, Accepted Masons, and Free Masons (together with the purgative Free-Masons) in the 17th and early 18th centuries, but not the term 'freemasons'. Indeed the 1813 Act of Union was between the Grand Lodges of Free-Masons and to this day the Constitutions are addressed to 'Free and Accepted Masons'.

Having arrived at 'Free and Accepted Mason', the diminutive Free-Mason became a natural contraction and by the end of the 18th Century the easily ignored hyphen started to be dropped and we are left with the familiar 'freemason'.

For a different perspective, Bro. Geoffrey Belson⁵ links the term 'free' to ideas that have most prominently survived in Geoffrey Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales'⁶, set in the middle of the 14th century where we are introduced to a cast of travellers who resonate in their thoughts and actions to this day. Amongst others, we meet the 'Gentil Parfait Knight'.

Belson points out that the word 'gentil' should not be modernised as 'gentle', as the 14th-century emphasis was more related to having the qualities considered proper in a gentleman, i.e.: having consideration for others. He further argues that the word 'gentil' was in Chaucer's writings, interchangeable with 'free' and meant 'forgiving, generous, confident in one's own integrity'. He quotes from one of the 'Canterbury Tales' ('The Parsons Tale') to demonstrate what Chaucer means by 'gentlesse' or being 'free':

'It is folly, he says to be proud of 'gentrye'; often the 'gentrye' of the body, that is, good birth, takes away from the 'gentrye' of the soul. We are all of one father and mother and of one nature. The signs of being 'free' are eschewing vice and ribaldry and following virtue, coutesy and cleanness, and being 'liberal', that is generous, but generous within reason, not to the point of extravagance and folly.'

³ Ward, E. 1955. The Crisp English Word Freemason. *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* (AQC) Vol 68, p58 and again in Ward, E. 1978. The Birth of Free-Masonry. *AQC* Vol 91, p77

⁴ *AQC* Vol 91, p79

⁵ Belson, G. 1996. The 'Free' in Freemason. *AQC* Vol 109, p250

⁶ Chaucer, G. 1342-1400. *The Canterbury Tales (in middle English and modern English)*. www.librarius.com/cantales.htm (Retrieved 11/1/18)

All of which will no doubt resonate in the qualities we seek to imbue as Freemasons today. Arguably had language evolved differently there might be lodges comprised of Gentilmasons instead of Freemasons.

Nevertheless, as we have previously noted, the concept of being 'free' as described in the ordinary usage of the term, is a central tenet for a man to be initiated into Freemasonry.

The Oxford Dictionary includes such definitions as '*not in bondage*', '*having personal rights and social and political liberty*', '*not restricted or impeded or confined*', '*at liberty*', '*able to act or be done as one wishes*', '*not under the control of another*', '*able or permitted to take a specified action*', '*not or no longer confined or imprisoned*', '*not physically obstructed or fixed*' and perhaps most relevant to this paper:

'(of a state or its citizens or institutions) subject neither to foreign domination nor to despotic government.'

And this last definition leads us to the concept of an underlying conflict between authoritarianism and individualism, which forms the basis of this paper.

This concept of what is meant by freedom in the context of the contest between personal liberty and state power has been on-going for as long as humankind has been organised into settled communities.

On one side of the continuum, the Athenian philosopher, Plato⁷ defined freedom in a way that justified rule by a small cohort (the aristocracy) rather than a democracy. The 17th century English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes⁸ supported this extensive or absolutist rule over society by addressing what life would be without government in a state of anarchy, or as Hobbes describes it as the 'state of nature':

*"In such conditions, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."*⁹

In order to avoid this condition, Hobbes view was that people establish a civil society and accede to rule by a sovereign authority to which individuals cede rights in exchange for protection. As this power derives from the individuals surrendering their own power, all decisions made by the sovereign cannot be resisted because the individuals are the ultimate source of this power. The justification for absolute rule follows from that construct.

The alternative is views aligned with Thomas Locke¹⁰, whose contribution to liberalism in the context of political philosophy was such that he is considered by many to be the father of modern political philosophy¹¹, wrote that:

⁷ Plato. Ca 380 BCE. *Republic*. Numerous translations are available, but for an annotated version able to be downloaded see Bloom, A. 1968. *The Republic of Plato*. http://www.inp.uw.edu.pl/mdsie/Political_Thought/Plato-Republic.pdf (Retrieved 11/1/18)

⁸ Hobbes, T. 1651. *Leviathan*. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3207/3207-h/3207-h.htm> (Retrieved 11/1/18)

⁹ Hobbes 1651. Ch13: Of the Naturall (sic) Condition of Mankind (The Incommodities (sic) of Such a War).

¹⁰ Locke, J. 1691/1960. *Two Treatises of Government: The Second Treatise*. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/locke-the-two-treatises-of-civil-government-hollis-ed> (Retrieved 11/1/18)

*'freedom implies that an individual not be subject to the arbitrary will of another, but freely follow his own'*¹²

It is this last view that we will follow for the rest of this paper. As noted and elaborated on in the Human Freedom Index:

*'Freedom in our usage is a social concept that recognises the dignity of individuals and is defined by the absence of coercive constraints (that contracts with a mechanistic concept whereby anything that limits a person's ability to do what she wants – be it a natural, physical barrier or another person who happens to be standing in her way – is considered an infringement on her freedom). Freedom thus implies that individuals have the right to lead their lives as they wish as long as they respect the equal rights of others.'*¹³

This does not mean the existence or otherwise of democracy (or indeed unrestrained democracy) alone is the sole determinant of freedom. Certainly, some of the aspects usually associated with democracies, such as freedom of speech, assembly, public demonstrations and the press, are important. However, arguably a combination of structural separations of power and the willingness to uphold conventional norms are as important if not more important. As an example, the United Kingdom has no written constitution, but it would be a difficult argument to justify that its citizens enjoy a lower level of personal freedom than those of many nations around the world which have written constitutions.

At the extreme end of the non-free spectrum, it would be easy (but wrong) to define 'totalitarianism' as the exemplar of authoritarianism. Hannah Arendt, in her seminal work, 'The Origins of Totalitarianism'¹⁴ cautioned against the glib application of the T-word. She argued that the distinction between totalitarianism and authoritarianism in political theory is not one of degree – with totalitarianism at the top of an ascending scale of evil – but one of kind. Totalitarianism combines a system of terror, single-party rule, a centrally planned economy, command over the army and media, and an all-encompassing ideology. Such states exercise total control over the lives of their citizens, whereas authoritarian ones stipulate the observance of certain rules and allow limited liberty as long as it does not challenge political power. Where totalitarianism mobilises the people, authoritarianism breeds passivity.

The 'control' characteristics of a totalitarian state would appear to leave little likelihood that fraternal societies using coded regalia, secret passwords, rituals and signs would be allowed to operate. Arguably this applies even more so to Masonic organisations. As US Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crime trials said in 1948:

'It is not generally understood that among the earliest and most savage of the many persecutions undertaken by every modern dictatorship are those directed against the

¹¹ As an example, his influence on the framers of the US Declaration of Independence was such that Thomas Jefferson identified Bacon, Locke and Newton as 'the three greatest men that have ever lived, without any exception, and as having laid the foundation of those superstructures which have been raised in the Physical and Moral sciences'. Jefferson, T. *The Letters: 1743 – 1826 Bacon, Locke and Newton*. <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/presidents/thomas-jefferson/letters-of-thomas-jefferson/jefl74.php> (Retrieved 11/1/18)

¹² Locke 1691/1960. Ch VI, p241-2, para 57

¹³ Vásquez and Porčnik (2016), p6

¹⁴ Arendt, H. 1951. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. p435 ff. The references are from the revised 1973 version which can be accessed at <https://archive.org/stream/ArendtHannahTheOriginsOfTotalitarianism1979/> (Retrieved 11/1/18)

*Free Masons... dictators realise that its membership are not likely to support the police state, which lays so heavy a hand on the freedom of the individual.*¹⁵

In our current world, North Korea would appear to be the complete example of such a state. Clearly, the non-existence of Freemasonry in that state and freemasonry's dismal experience during the 20th century in other nations which exhibited totalitarian characteristics would appear to support this view. Though it is also noted that with the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union arguably ceased being a totalitarian state, but it remained an authoritarian state until its demise in the early 1990's. Similarly, the death of Mao resulted in a shift in China from totalitarianism to authoritarianism. In neither case did it result in any ability to re-establish freemasonry in that country.¹⁶

The example of Cuba, which has had a non-interrupted masonic presence notwithstanding the 1959 revolution and extended periods where the state has exhibited totalitarian characteristics does, however, provide a counterpoint to this argument. That presence is unique insofar it is the only Masonic presence to have been tolerated (and indeed to have prospered) in a Communist country. The Grand Lodge of Cuba is regular and widely recognised abroad and represents some 30,000 brethren. After a steady decline during the three decades to 1991, regulatory conditions eased and the craft appears to have since grown. Romeu¹⁷ provides a perspective of why this might be the case and a detailed analysis as to the specific factors (both contemporary and historical) as to how an accommodation between the regime and the Grand Lodge of Cuba has occurred.

So, in essence, our measurement of freedom will be an assessment of the extent that individuals enjoy freedom from interference (in most cases by the government) in their ability to choose to do, say, or think anything they want, provided that it does not infringe on the rights of others to do likewise. The freedom to freely associate with like-minded individuals is clearly a defining feature of this measure.

Hypothesis Development:

As previously enunciated, our research question is:

'How free do I have to be before I can freely participate in Freemasonry?'

In developing a methodology to answer this question, we will first hypothesise the (perhaps fairly self-evident) proposition that the likelihood of being able to enjoy the benefits of Freemasonry will be greater in those countries with higher levels of personal and economic freedom.

Stated in the null form:

¹⁵ Hamilton, C.G. 1948. Freemasonry: A Prisoner of War (Introduction to a series of articles), *The New Age* (journal of the Supreme Council 33 A&A Scottish Rite Southern USA Jurisdiction) Vol 56, p652. This was the first of a series of articles on the impact to Freemasonry in Germany and Occupied Europe during WW2. A summary can be found at Bessel P.M. *Bigotry and the Murder of Freemasonry*. www.bessel.org/naziartl.htm (Retrieved 11/1/18)

¹⁶ It was only following the demise of the Soviet Union that freemasonry was re-established in a number of its constituent republics (including Russia), as well as in Eastern Europe.

¹⁷ Romeu, J, 2014. The Grand Lodge of Cuba in the Later 20th Century: a Historical and Statistical Examination. *AQC* Vol 127, p217. In particular, he suggests that a mix of historical factors unique to Cuban freemasonry, a willingness to come to an accommodation with the regime, coupled with the perceived benefit of maintaining foreign contacts arising from the regular nature of the Grand Lodge have been factors. Furthermore these contacts have been perceived as being beneficial both from an ability to raise hard currency but also with linkages to some of Cuba's African allies, where freemasonry might be limited but membership largely comprises a local elite.

$$H_0 : \mu - \mu_{(m)} = 0 \text{ (Hypothesis 1)}$$

where: μ = the mean human freedom index score of all countries.

$\mu_{(m)}$ = the mean human freedom index score of those countries where masonic activity is evident.

As an extension of Hypothesis 1, it is further proposed that the level of freedom enjoyed in those countries which have a meaningful level of Masonic activity will be higher than the mean freedom score of those countries with any Masonic activity.

Stated in the null form:

$$H_0 : \mu_{(m)} - \mu_{(y)} = 0 \text{ (Hypothesis 2)}$$

where: $\mu_{(m)}$ = the mean human freedom index score of those countries where masonic activity is evident.

$\mu_{(y)}$ = the mean human freedom index score of those countries where the proportion of the population who are freemasons is greater than a benchmark level 'y'.

As a further extension, it is also suggested that the propensity for masonic activity will increase as the level of freedom increases. In other words, if the country cohorts are based on human freedom index scores, as we move upwards through the cohorts, the proportion of countries within each of the cohorts with masonic activity should also increase.

Stated in the null form:

$$H_0 : \hat{p}_n - \hat{p}_{n+1} = 0 \text{ (Hypothesis 3)}$$

where: \hat{p}_n = the proportion of countries in cohort n where masonic activity occurs

If the data analysis leads to a rejection of the three null hypotheses, we will then be in a position to assess where on the continuum of countries is the cut-off point where masonic activity can be reasonably assured. An analysis of the characteristics of the cohort of countries around that point will be undertaken to ascertain what lessons regarding freedom and Masonic activity can be drawn.

Research Design:

This study is concerned with ascertaining the extent of freedom which is necessary to be present in a country to enable freemasonry to flourish. As a first step, it, therefore, becomes necessary to discern evidence of a correlation across countries between these two aspects by testing the previously enunciated hypotheses. Once ascertained, we can then review the characteristics of those countries which sit at various points along the freedom continuum.

Accordingly, the relevant population for this analysis can be considered to be independent nation states. There are 193 such countries which are members of the United Nations¹⁸ and

¹⁸ In addition to the 193 members of the United Nations, the Vatican City and Palestine have observer status whilst Taiwan is not a member. There are also several other partially recognised states having some form of de facto control over disputed territory which are not members. For the purposes of this study, the Vatican City has been excluded due to its small population and unique status, as has Palestine due to lack of data and competing internal regimes within that country. The partially recognised states have also been excluded for similar reasons. Taiwan (Republic of China) has been included for consistency to reflect the inclusion of both China (Peoples Republic of China) and Hong Kong in the sample.

which can form the basis of our study population. The inclusion of Hong Kong and Taiwan takes the total number of potential countries to 195.¹⁹

The Human Freedom Index 2016 (HFI)²⁰ has been used to provide an independent, authoritative and comprehensive assessment of the level of freedom enjoyed within each of the countries included in the index. There are a number of independent indexes which could have been used, but the HFI was chosen due it being the most comprehensive of the widely available such indexes and the reputation which it has developed for being an authoritative resource. The HFI assesses 79 distinct indicators of personal and economic freedom, with freedom, understood to be the absence of coercive restraint. These indicators cover the aspects of rule of law; security and safety; movement; religion; association, assembly and civil society; expression; relationships; the size of government; legal system and property rights; access to sound money; freedom to trade internationally; and the regulation of credit, labour and business.

At the time of preparing this paper, the most recent HFI was that published in November 2016, covering 2014 data from 159 countries (157 United Nations members plus Hong Kong and Taiwan). The survey now has time series data for most of these countries on at least a bi-annual basis stretching back to 2008.

On a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 represents more freedom, the non-weighted average rating for the 159 countries in the most recent survey was 6.93. The top 10 jurisdictions (with their scores) in order were Hong Kong (1 – 9.06), Switzerland (2 – 8.83), New Zealand (3 – 8.67), Ireland (4 – 8.64), Denmark (5 – 8.62), Australia (eq 6 – 8.61), Canada (eq 6 – 8.61), the United Kingdom (eq 6 – 8.61), Finland (9 – 8.55) and the Netherlands (10 – 8.54). The United States was ranked 23rd (8.27). At the other end of the scale, the Central African Republic (4.87), Syria (4.72), Iran (4.63), Yemen (4.56) and Libya (4.42) bring up the rear.

The HFI data is now a little dated (e.g. it would be surprising if Hong Kong were to maintain its position in subsequent surveys) but the Masonic data utilised will also have a similar vintage, so this should not be a limiting factor.²¹

For the purposes of this paper, each country has been categorised by population size²² using a 5-grade logarithmic scale as follows:

Table 1 – Countries by Population Size			
Category	Population Range	In the HFI	Not in the HFI
A	Greater than 100m	13	0
B	Between 10m & 100m	66	8
C	Between 1m & 10m	65	4

¹⁹ The term ‘country’ will be used for consistency when referring to the jurisdictions included in this study. This should not be implied as offering any comment on jurisdictional issues relating to the Peoples Republic of China, Taiwan (Republic of China) and the Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region.

²⁰ Vásquez, I. and Porčnik (2016)

²¹ It is outside the scope of this paper to assess the impact of movements in freedom over time, but the implications will be noted when considering findings later in the paper.

²² Population has been ascertained as per United Nations estimates contained within the paper – United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables*. Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP/248

D	Between 100,000 & 1m	14	14
E	Less than 100,000	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>
		159	36

Of the non-HFI countries, the 10 Category E micro-nations have a median population of 38,000.²³ The excluded Category D countries are also mostly clustered at the bottom end of the relevant range with a median population of 183,000 which is much less than the HFI Category D median of 541,000. As such, excluding the 24 non-HFI Category D & E countries from our study will not make any material difference to our results.

The 12 remaining Category B and C non-HFI countries²⁴ exhibit data collection difficulties due to their war-torn nature or the perceived authoritarian nature of their regimes. The US NGO, Freedom House, does, however, include the 12 countries in its annual survey,²⁵ ranking all of them in the bottom 2 grades of a 7-point scale, assessing each as ‘non-free’. During the course of our hypothesis testing, we will run tests both before and after inclusion of these countries, making some subjective assumptions about their appropriate ranking.²⁶

Masonic data was ascertained primarily from two sources. In the first instance, the website of the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) provides a listing of ‘foreign’ Grand Lodges recognised by the UGLE, as well as those countries which host District Grand Lodges under the auspices of the UGLE.²⁷ The primary source for the extent of Masonic activity within each country was the publication ‘List of Lodges – Masonic 2016’,²⁸ which based on information provided by the individual Grand Lodges, lists the number of members within most of these jurisdictions, together with the name and location of individual lodges.

Once again, the countries were categorised using a 5-grade logarithmic scale, this time by member number as follows:²⁹

Table 2 – Countries by Masonic Activity			
Category	Number of Freemasons	In the HFI	Not in the HFI
A	Greater than 100,000	3	
B	Between 10,000 and 100,000	11	1
C	Between 1,000 and 10,000	34	
D	Between 100 and 1,000	44	
E	Less than 100	7	8
	None	<u>60</u>	<u>27</u>
		159	36

²³ The HFI Category E nation of Seychelles has a population of 94,000.

²⁴ Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Iraq, North Korea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

²⁵ The most recent report is Freedom House (2017). *Freedom in the World 2017. Populists and Autocrats: The Dual Threat to Global Democracy*. For consistency with the HFI survey, the 2016 survey has been used (*Freedom in the World 2016. Anxious Dictators, Wavering Democracies: Global Freedom under Pressure*). There is no material difference over the two years for the scores and rankings of the 12 countries.

²⁶ It is noted that one of these countries (Cuba) has a relatively high level of Masonic activity.

²⁷ www.ugle.org.uk/about/foreign-grand-lodges (Retrieved 11/1/18)

²⁸ *List of Lodges – Masonic 2016*. Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co, Bloomington, Illinois, USA

²⁹ There is a log 3 relationship between the two alpha-identified data sets in Tables 1 and 2.

The 'List of Lodges – Masonic 2016' also enabled a reasonable estimate to be made of the level of Masonic activity where there is no Grand Lodge but lodges are organised under the jurisdiction of another Grand Lodge (or where jurisdiction is shared).

In those countries where member numbers were not available, an estimate was made based on the number of individual lodges listed. Whilst the estimate is to some extent subjective, the use of a logarithmic scale should lead to a non-material level of categorisation error within the 5 categories.

In relation to membership data, it is acknowledged that this survey and the data utilised only covers bodies that are generally considered regular. In determining the extent of 'masonic' activity in a country, this could be a potential limitation of this study, particularly in Francophone countries where the influence of an irregular Grand Orient might be more pronounced.

In a small number of countries, masonic activity only appears to occur in locations outside the jurisdiction of the civil power, such as foreign military bases with membership open only to personnel on those bases. In such circumstances, they have been included in the 'None' category.

In order to test Hypothesis 1, basic distributional statistics (Mean, Median, Standard Deviation and Variance) were calculated as well as a measure of skewness (Fisher-Pearson Co-Efficient) for the two base data sets (i.e.: 'Countries in the HFI' and 'HFI Countries where Masonic Activity Occurs'). The standard deviations were then compared using a 'z' test to provide a probability measure for the null hypothesis.

The 12 largest countries not in the HFI were then included in the test population (utilising a subjective measure of freedom) with a revised Mean calculated to provide an eye-check to the first series of calculations.

Hypothesis 2 was tested in a similar manner. Firstly, by comparing the group comprising those countries where the level of Masonic activity was highest as a function of population size, to the grouping comprising all countries where Masonic activity was evident. Then secondly, by undertaking further calculations on both the individual masonic activity cohorts, as well as progressively on the population following the dropping of the smallest cohort from the population.

Hypothesis 3 was tested by dividing all 159 countries into equally sized cohorts based on their HFI score. Two separate series of tests were performed, one based on deciles and the other using quintiles, with the proportion of countries where masonic activity is evident within each cohort then compared.

Having undertaken an assessment of the base dataset via testing the aforementioned hypotheses, we will then make some observations relating to those countries which sit at various points along the freedom continuum. In particular, those characteristics which appear to be reflective of the ability to freely associate and form masonic organisations will be concentrated on.

Data Analysis:

The first of the three Hypotheses developed earlier (Hypothesis 1), stated in the alternative (or positive) form is:

(H₁): The likelihood of being able to enjoy the benefits of Freemasonry will be greater in those countries with higher levels of personal and economic freedom.

General descriptive statistics relating to the investigation of Hypothesis 1 based on data obtained from the HFI are:

Table 3 – Descriptive Hypothesis 1 Statistics		
	Countries in the HFI	HFI Countries where Masonic activity occurs
Number (η)	159	99
Mean (\bar{x})	6.93	7.43
Median (\tilde{x})	6.82	7.37
Variance (σ^2)	1.11	0.78
Standard Deviation (σ)	1.05	0.89
Fisher-Pearson Co-Efficient (g_i)	-0.14	-0.38

Given that the η values are well in excess of the Central Limit Theorem benchmark of 30, that σ is close to 1 and that g_i is close to zero, we can assume two relatively symmetric distributions. We will therefore compare the two populations by using the standard normal distribution (i.e. the Z-distribution) with a z-score. Taking data for those countries in the HFI as Population 1 and data for those HFI countries where masonic activity occurs as Population 2, the calculation is as follows:

$$z = \frac{(\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2)}{\sqrt{\frac{\sigma_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{\sigma_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

$$= -4.10$$

For a one-tailed test, the critical value at $\alpha = 0.05$ (i.e. the 2 standard deviations (or 95%) confidence level, enabling us to reject the null hypothesis is -1.645. Via the z-score table, a score of -4.10 results in a probability measure in the vicinity of $p = 0.001$ or 0.1%, leading to a rejection of the null (H₀) version of Hypothesis 1. It provides support for the argument that the likelihood of being able to enjoy the benefits of Freemasonry will be greater in those countries with higher levels of personal and economic freedom.

Re-running the calculations with the inclusion of the 12 largest countries not in the HFI provides additional support for the foregoing. Freedom House ranks all 12 countries in their bottom two grades with an average rating below the average of the bottom 5 countries in the HFI survey. Subjectively applying this second average to all 12 countries results in means of $\bar{x}_1 = 6.77$ and $\bar{x}_2 = 7.40$, and standard deviations of $\sigma_1 = 1.17$ and $\sigma_2 = 0.92$. An even more pronounced z-score of -4.97 (and lower probability for the null hypothesis) ensues.

Stated in the alternative form, Hypothesis 2 is:

(H₁): The level of freedom enjoyed in those countries which have a meaningful level of Masonic activity will be higher than the mean freedom score of those nations in the survey with any Masonic activity.

Having previously categorised countries by the level of their masonic activity (refer Table 2 – ‘A’ being the most active, ‘E’ the least), there are 34 countries in the sample which have a Masonic Activity Cohort letter equal or higher to the letter grade equating to population size. There is a consistent log 3 relationship between the two scales, so this sub-group can be considered to be those countries which have the highest level of Masonic activity relative to population.

In terms of their ranking on the HFI, they appear weighted towards the top end of the table with all 16 top-ranked HFI countries being within this group. Mean ranking is 35 and median ranking is 26. Descriptive HFI score statistics are mean = 7.94, median = 8.15, variance = 0.59 and standard deviation = 0.77.

Applying a z-score calculation for this sub-group vis-à-vis the 99 countries where any form of activity occurs, results in a Z-score of 3.21 and a probability in excess of 99% that the null hypothesis of there being no difference between the two groups can be rejected.

Hypothesis 2 was further tested by undertaking additional calculations on both the individual masonic activity cohorts, as well as progressively on the population following the dropping of the smallest cohort from the population.

General descriptive statistics relating to these calculations are as follows:

Table 4 – Descriptive Hypothesis 2 Statistics					
Masonic Activity Cohort	A	B	C	D	E
Number (η)	3	11	34	44	7
Mean (\bar{x})	7.90	7.87	7.50	7.27	7.18
Median (\tilde{x})	8.27	8.08	7.42	7.32	7.17
Variance (σ^2)	0.61	0.55	1.00	0.67	0.38
Standard Deviation (σ)	0.78	0.74	1.00	0.82	0.62
Masonic Activity Cohort	A	AB	ABC	ABCD	ABCDE
Number (η)	3	14	48	92	99
Mean (\bar{x})	7.90	7.88	7.61	7.44	7.43
Median (\tilde{x})	8.27	8.06	7.91	7.45	7.37
Variance (σ^2)	0.61	0.57	0.90	0.83	0.78
Standard Deviation (σ)	0.78	0.75	0.95	0.91	0.89
t - statistic (t)	0.0444	1.3470	1.2398	0.1054	n/a

The smaller individual cohort populations make this set of tests somewhat problematic. As a result, the assumption of a normal distribution is not appropriate, so instead of the standard normal z-test, a t-test will be used whereby:

$$t_{n-1} = \frac{(\bar{x}_1 - \mu_0)}{\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

where: t_{n-1} is a value from the t-distribution with $\eta-1$ degrees of freedom

\bar{x}_1 = the mean of the cohort being analysed

μ_0 = the mean of the immediately larger cohort

s = sample standard deviation

n = the number of observations in the cohort being analysed

The t-statistic result for the A cohort (c.f. the AB cohort), driven by the small value for η , does not enable the null hypothesis to be discounted for that calculation. Similarly, the small difference in the sample size between the ABCD and ABCDE cohorts provides similar difficulties when assessing the ABCD cohort.

However, the t-statistic values for the AB cohort (c.f. the ABC cohort) and the ABC cohort (c.f. the ABCD cohort), do provide probability estimates for the likelihood of the null version of the hypothesis of only approximately 10% on a one-tailed basis.

Whilst this second series of tests does not enable rejection of the null hypothesis at the 2 standard deviations (or 95%) confidence level, the t-statistic derived probability estimates coupled with the progressively decreasing value of \bar{x} as we move downwards through each of the cohorts does provide some additional support for the validity of Hypothesis 2.

The remaining hypothesis (Hypothesis 3), stated in the alternative form, is:

(H₁): The propensity for masonic activity to occur will increase as the level of freedom increases.

Two series of tests were undertaken, one based on decile cohorts and the other on quintile cohorts. The proportion of countries within each cohort enjoying masonic activity was compared to the adjoining cohort by way of a two-population proportion z-test, viz:

$$z = \frac{(p_i - p_{i+1})}{\sqrt{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p})\left(\frac{1}{n_i} + \frac{1}{n_{i+1}}\right)}}$$

where: $\hat{p} = (x_i + x_{i+1}) / (n_i + n_{i+1})$

$\hat{p}_i = x_i / n_i$

x_i = the number of countries in cohort 'i' experiencing masonic activity

n_i = the number of countries in cohort 'i'.

The z-score table was then used to ascertain a probability measure.

Results are as follows:

Table 5 – Descriptive Hypothesis 3 Statistics					
Decile	x_i	n_i	\hat{p}_i	z_i	Probability (%)
1	16	16	1.00	n/a	n/a
2	16	16	1.00	1.46	92.79%
3	14	16	0.88	-0.61	n/a

4	15	16	0.94	1.46	92.79%
5	12	16	0.75	1.46	92.79%
6	8	16	0.50	0.71	76.11%
7	6	16	0.38	0.76	77.64%
8	4	16	0.25	-0.76	22.36%
9	6	16	0.38	1.54	92.51%
10	2	15	0.13	n/a	n/a
Sum	99	159	0.62		
Quintile	x_i	n_i	\hat{p}_i	z_i	Probability (%)
1	32	32	1.00	1.77	96.16%
2	29	32	0.91	2.66	99.61%
3	20	32	0.63	2.50	98.38%
4	10	32	0.31	0.48	68.44%
5	8	31	0.26	n/a	n/a
Sum	99	159	0.62		

The results when using a decile cohort structure are not reflective of a rejection of the null hypothesis at the $\alpha = 0.05$ or 2 standard deviation level. They are, however (with two exceptions) significant at a 1 standard deviation level.

When the cohorts are increased in size from a decile to a quintile structure, 3 of the 4 comparisons were significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. The only exception was the comparison between the two least active cohorts, though the result was still on the borderline of being significant at a 1 standard deviation level.

To summarise:

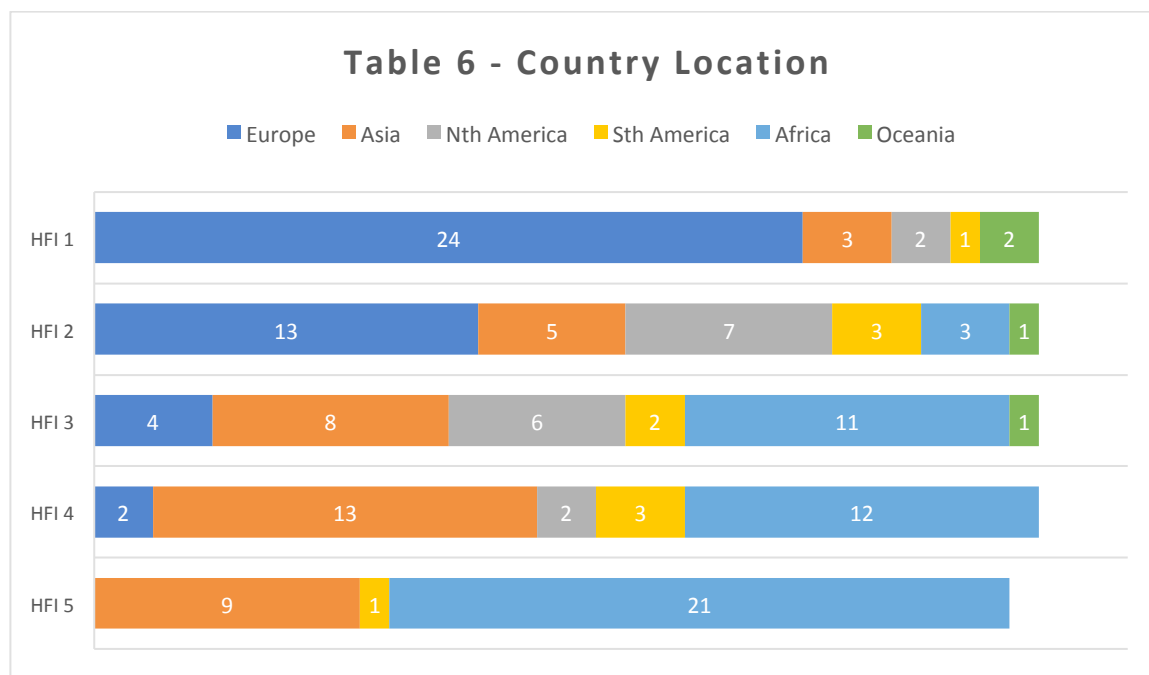
- There is a statistically significant probability for the proposition that countries, where Masonic activity occurs, will have a higher level of ‘freedom’ than those countries where it doesn’t (Hypothesis 1);
- There is also a statistically significant probability for the proposition that as the level of ‘freedom’ increases, the extent of Masonic activity within a country also increases (Hypothesis 2); and
- Whilst the results were mixed on a statistical proof basis, there is also evidence that as we move along the freedom continuum, there is a steadily increasing propensity for a country to experience masonic activity (Hypothesis 3).

Conclusions and Implications:

The foregoing analysis has established that there is evidence of a correlation between the level of freedom as measured by the score generated by the HFI survey and the prevalence of Masonic activity. This informs the following commentary as to:

‘How free do I have to be before I can freely participate in Freemasonry?’

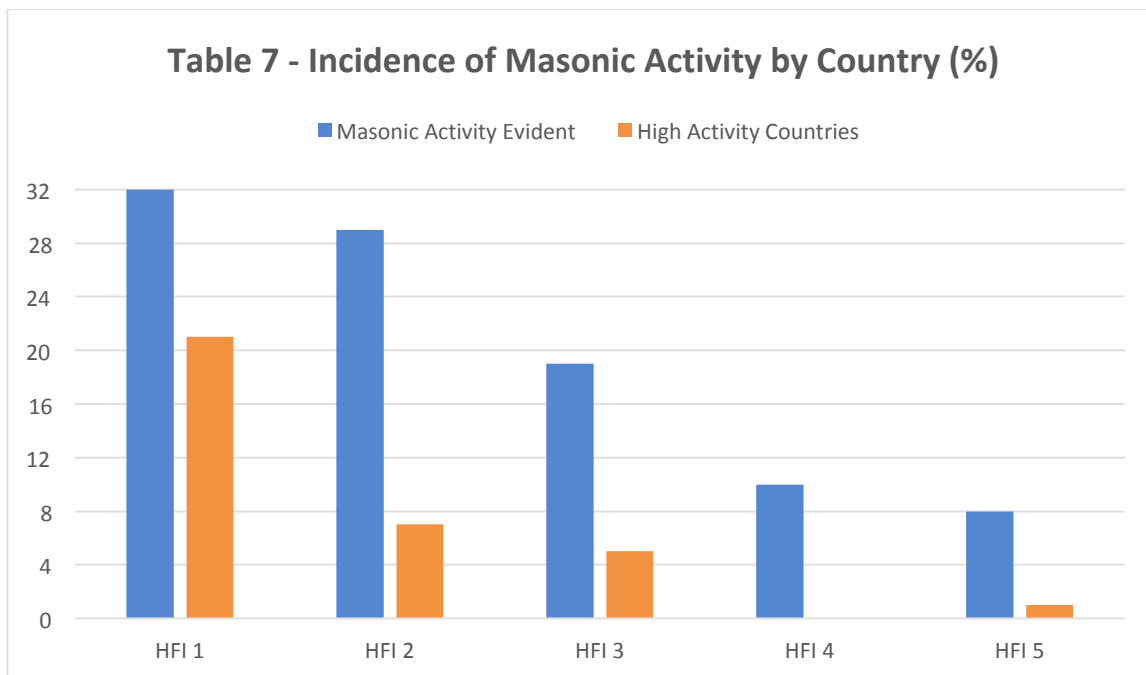
As previously noted, for data analysis purposes, each country was allocated to one of 5 cohorts based on HFI score. The greatly differing geographic spread of these countries as we move downwards through the cohorts can be seen clearly in the following table:



Quintile 1 is dominated by Europe (24 countries) with the remainder of the cohort located in Asia (3), Nth America (2), Sth America (1) and Oceania (2). The next three quintiles are more diverse (with Quintile 3 the most diverse) before the heavily concentrated Quintile 5 is reached comprising countries located in Asia (9), Sth America (1) and Africa (21).

As we have also previously ascertained, the incidence of Masonic activity decreases as we move downwards through the HFI quintiles. Also as described in the results to Hypothesis 2, there are 34 countries which have been classified as High Activity Countries being those countries with the highest level of Masonic membership relative to population size. The number of High Activity Countries also decreases as we move downwards through the HFI quintiles.

Both characteristics are clearly evident in Table 7:



All countries in the first quintile (i.e. 1-32) have some form of Masonic presence and in most cases, this is reasonably substantial. In particular:

- Countries in the first quintile enjoy a significantly higher per capita income than those of other quintiles (approximately five times that of the least-free quintile) with 27 being members of the OECD.³⁰ Of the remaining 5 countries in this quintile, there is little doubt that other than aspects related to their political circumstances, Hong Kong and Taiwan would also be OECD members.
- All, with the exception of Hong Kong, are democracies.
- Seven are countries which were formerly communist controlled³¹ and where Freemasonry has been established (or re-established) since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989.
- All first quintile countries scored highly across all categories in the HFI. Overall scores ranged from 8.04 (Japan) to 9.06 (Hong Kong), remembering that the mean for all countries in the survey was 6.93. Personal freedom scores ranged from 8.34 (Chile) to 9.58 (Denmark) and economic freedom scores from 7.06 (Iceland) to 9.03 (Hong Kong).
- With only a small number of exceptions, the rating achieved by each country for each of the 23 groupings of variables (comprising a total of 79 distinct measures for each country) was above (and generally well above) the mean for that category.
- Of the 34 High Activity Countries, 21 are in this cohort.³² Given the growth in masonic activity (from a non-existent base) over the past 25 years in the former communist countries, some of them may also in time join this sub-group.
- In essence, the citizens of countries in this group enjoy across a gamut of measures, a consistently high degree of freedom from interference in their ability to choose to do,

³⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development – often described as the ‘rich countries club’.

³¹ Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia and Romania.

³² Hong Kong, Switzerland, New Zealand, Ireland, Denmark, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Finland, Luxembourg, Austria, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Malta, USA, Iceland, Italy, Chile, Romania and France.

say or think anything they want, provided that it does not infringe on the rights of others to do likewise.

- This freedom is backed by the appropriate application of the rule of law; high levels of personal security and safety (including gender-specific measures applying to women); freedom of movement; freedom of religion, association, assembly and the press; and freedom of and rights within relationships (including same-sex relationships).
- In summary, men living in these countries who meet the rules of the relevant order are freely able to participate in Freemasonry

The second quintile of 32 countries (i.e. 33-64), includes 29 where a Masonic presence was ascertained. In particular:

- They are not as wealthy as the first quintile countries, with only 6 being OECD members.
- All are at least nominally democratic, albeit, in a number, the concept of free and fair elections are more honoured in the breach.
- There are 12 former communist countries in this group.³³
- The 3 countries in this quintile with no apparent masonic presence are all ex-communist controlled (Georgia, Mongolia and Cambodia).
- Overall HFI scores ranged from 7.08 (Cambodia) to 8.03 (Cyprus), with a much wider spread of scores in the two sub-categories. Personal freedom scores ranged from 6.92 (Armenia) to 9.07 (Slovenia) and economic freedom scores from 6.41 (Ghana) to 8.71 (Singapore). The diversity within a country can be illustrated by highlighting Singapore with its 7.01 score for personal freedom but 8.71 for economic freedom (the second highest of all countries) and Slovenia whose citizens enjoy a 9.07 personal freedom score but have to put up with a 6.73 level of economic freedom.
- In relation to the individual variables, those scores relating to the rule of law, personal security and safety had a wide range. Ratings applying to freedom of movement; freedom of religion, association, assembly and the press; freedom of and rights within relationships; and gender-specific rights all generally scored highly.
- One interesting outlier is an ex-communist country (Bulgaria), which scored poorly on variables relating to freedom of association and assembly but has a significant masonic presence (it is one of the 34 High Activity Countries).
- In addition to Bulgaria, there are 6 other High Activity Countries in this quintile.³⁴ The quintile also comprises a few countries where it would be fair to say that Freemasonry only at best enjoys a toehold and the craft is largely comprised of expatriates.
- In summary, there is an opportunity for males living within these countries to generally be able to participate in Freemasonry, though undoubtedly economic and social considerations start to have a bigger impact than they did in the first group.

Masonic presence declined in the third quintile c.f. the second quintile with freemasonry only being apparent in 19 of the 32 countries. Details relating to this quintile (countries ranked 65-96) are:

³³ Hungary, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Montenegro, Croatia, Mongolia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Armenia, Cambodia.

³⁴ Bulgaria, Uruguay, Seychelles, Israel, Suriname, Armenia and Jamaica.

- Four are ex-communist countries with only Serbia enjoying a Masonic presence.³⁵ The other three ex-communist countries are all located within the former Soviet Union.
- Seven of the countries are predominantly Muslim with Turkey being the only one with a Masonic presence.³⁶
- Five are High Activity Countries³⁷ with the standout being Brazil, which (albeit from a very large population) is one of the three countries in the world with the largest Masonic membership.³⁸
- Overall HFI scores ranged from 6.64 (Kazakhstan) to 7.05 (Madagascar), personal freedom from 5.65 (Jordan) to 7.56 (Madagascar) and economic freedom from 6.02 (Burkina Faso) to 7.82 (Jordan).
- The countries in this quintile enjoyed peace so rated highly on variables relating to personal security and freedom of movement. In relation to religious freedom, women's rights and LGBT rights, there was little middle ground with scores clustered around both tails of the distribution. The ratings relating to freedom of association, assembly and the press were generally mid-range. Despite being the middle quintile, ratings relating to the rule of law averaged only 4.7 (c.f. 5.2 across all countries) suggesting some issues with the practice of the due process, equal treatment under the law, accountability of government officials, the absence of corruption, and notions of fairness, predictability and justice.
- In summary, this is the cohort where it starts becoming problematical as to whether there is an opportunity for men to participate in Freemasonry. In addition to those countries where there is no masonic presence, a number of others have their lodges coming under foreign jurisdiction with freemasonry seemingly largely contained within a small local elite and expatriate community.

Within the fourth quintile (countries ranked 97-128), there are lodges in existence in only 10 countries. Details are as follows:

- By far the most prominent country in masonic terms is the Philippines, with the only other countries to have in excess of 1,000 freemasons being Argentina, Cote d'Ivoire and Colombia.
- Overall HFI scores ranged from 6.12 (Vietnam) to 6.60 (Ecuador). The variability within scores is best illustrated by the examples of Argentina and the United Arab Emirates. With a personal freedom score of 8.22 (by far the highest in this cohort), Argentina should be firmly within the top quintile. It was brought down by the difficulty in doing business in that country with its score for economic freedom of 4.81 being the lowest for the cohort. At the other extreme, the United Arab Emirates also had both the lowest and highest scores within this cohort for the two categories (4.73 and 7.98 respectively).
- Generally, countries arrived in this cohort not because of weak ratings across the board, but rather because of a much more pronounced weakness in one aspect. Using

³⁵ Serbia, Moldova, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.

³⁶ Recent events in Turkey are likely to place continuing increasing pressure on its traditionally secular nature, coupled with a reduction in its HFI score.

³⁷ Serbia, Paraguay, Brazil, Barbados and Liberia.

³⁸ At the other extreme is Indonesia (with a broadly similar population) where freemasonry was previously in existence but banned along with other civil society organisations in 1962. Since the arrival of democracy and the rescission of the original order, a number of these organisations have resumed operations but freemasonry has not.

the countries with a Masonic presence as examples, such weaknesses may be in the rule of law coupled with internal conflict (Philippines, Cote d'Ivoire, Colombia, Ukraine), economic freedom (Argentina), media and NGO repression (Ecuador and Russia), religious oppression (Senegal) or the oppression of women (Mali).

- In summary, men living in fourth quintile countries have very limited opportunities to freely participate in Freemasonry.

Amongst fifth quintile countries (ranked 125-159) there is masonic activity in only 8 countries. Details are:

- Togo is one of the High Activity Countries, but only Nigeria and Venezuela also have more than 1,000 members each.
- Unlike the previous quintile, countries generally arrived in this quintile because of weaknesses across the board, not in just one particular aspect.
- As noted earlier in this paper, there are also 36 countries not included in the HFI (mostly because of their small size) but 12 of these are larger countries where the reason for their absence was due to data collection difficulties arising from their war-torn nature or the perceived authoritarian nature of their regime. Subjectively, they would all sit firmly within this quintile and indeed a number of them would be candidates for the last few places in the table.
- Of those 12 countries, only Cuba exhibits a Masonic presence and this is at a level significant enough that it would have been included as a High Activity Country if it had been within the HFI.
- Nevertheless, notwithstanding Togo and Cuban exceptions, it is appropriate to say that there is no scope for men who are citizens of fifth quintile countries to freely participate in Freemasonry.

In conclusion, this paper has attempted to provide an answer to the question of:

'How free do I have to be before I can freely participate in Freemasonry?'

The short answer is that you need to be very free:

- Men who live in the freest 20% of countries have ample opportunity to participate should they so desire.
- Those who live in the next 20% of countries are generally able to participate however the extent of Masonic activity generally starts to reduce. Men who for example live outside the major cities might start to find geographic considerations intrude.
- Within the mid-range quintile, there is no hard and fast rule. In some instances, there is a fairly active masonic presence whereas in others there is no opportunity to establish such a presence.
- With minor exceptions (generally pertaining to local elites and expatriate populations), there is no opportunity to freely participate in Freemasonry in the least free 40% of countries.

We earlier defined a measure of freedom as the extent to which individuals consistently enjoy freedom from interference in their ability to do, say or think anything they want insofar that it does not infringe on the rights of others to do likewise. These freedoms include aspects related to movement, religion, association, assembly, the press as well as gender and LGBT specific rights.

The freedom to freely associate with like-minded individuals such as by participating in freemasonry is not independent of these wider freedoms. Countries, where those freedoms are stronger, have an increasing propensity for masonic activity.

When any aspect of that level of personal freedom starts reducing, so does the ability to freely participate in Freemasonry.

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