

# The World disenchantment, re-enchantment, neo-tribalism and the Free Masonry

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**Abstract:** This contribution of mine, which addresses the themes of intellectualisation, rationalisation, disenchantment, death, civil religion, autonomy of styles, fourth secularisation and re-enchantment, seeks to outline the context in which to frame the current state of Italian Freemasonry. The question I am trying to answer is: “How did we get to this point?”. These are reflections on some of the writings of Max Weber (the themes of intellectualisation, rationalisation and disenchantment), Philippe Ariès (the theme of death), Luigi Berzano (the themes of the autonomy of styles and the fourth secularisation), Robert Neelly Bellah (the theme of civil religion), Michel Maffesoli (the theme of re-enchantment) and on two earlier research papers of mine on cognitive social deviance, already published. The first research work concerns a Masonic Academy in the Sicilian hinterland which, in the second half of the 18th century, worked in a network with other Academies in Palermo and Catania and with the Roman Arcadia and which can be traced back to the Neapolitan Masonic circles of Raimondo di Sangro, prince of San Severo, and the Sansevero Chapel. The second research work was conducted, both in the Masonic Order and in various Masonic Rites, using the method of participant observation, after initiation, within the two most important and numerous Italian Masonic Obedience’s, in terms of number of Freemasons: the GOI, Grande Oriente d’Italia Palazzo Giustiniani (Grand Orient of Italy – Giustiniani Palace) and the Gran Loggia d’Italia degli ALAM – Palazzo Vitelleschi (Grand Lodge of Italy of the ALAM – Vitelleschi Palace).

**Index Terms** – disenchantment, civil religion, autonomy of styles, re-enchantment, cognitive social deviance.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In «Science as a profession», Max Weber writes: «I only ask: how can a believing Catholic on the one hand and a Freemason on the other – in a course on the forms of church and state or on the history of religion – ever be led to an equal assessment of these topics? It is excluded. Yet, the university teacher must wish and aim to be of help, with his knowledge and methods, to one and the other» (Weber, 2004, p. 31), he must give himself this task and he must self-limit himself. The background to this question followed by a statement is the age-old question of «disenchantment».

It was Max Weber himself who introduced the concept of “disenchantment” in the social sciences, on 7 November 1917, in Munich, with his lectio magistralis «Wissenschaft als Beruf» (The Science as a profession), delivered at a conference organised by some young university students. On that occasion, he said to these young people: «You will remember the marvellous image at the beginning of Book VII of Plato’s Republic [See Platone, *Repubblica*, VII, 514a-517c.]: those men in a cave chained up, their faces turned to the rock wall in front of them, while behind them stands the source of light that they cannot see, and therefore they only look at the shadows it casts on the wall and try to understand its connection. Until one of them manages to break the chains, and he turns and sees: the sun. Dazzled he gropes inside and babbles about what he has seen. The others call him crazy. But gradually he learns to see into the light, and then his task becomes that of descending among the cavemen and leading them into the light. He is the philosopher, but the sun is the truth of science, which alone does not hunt for ghosts and shadows but for true being. Well, who today stands in this way before science? Today, the way of feeling of youth in particular is the opposite: the conceptual constructions of science are a subterranean world of artificial abstractions that try, with their exanguious hands, to capture the blood and sap of real life, but never succeed in doing so. Here in life, in what for Plato constituted the play of shadows on the walls of the cave, true reality pulses: all the rest are phantoms drawn from it and devoid of life, and nothing else» (Weber, 2004, p. 21-22). The distance from Durkheim and the difference in the approach to the problem are obvious. Max Weber places disenchantment, i.e. the processes of rationalisation and intellectualisation, as the foundation. Hence, the notion of the idealtype. Émile Durkheim, on the other hand, the elementary forms of religious life (*see* Durkheim, 2020), the sacred and the profane, the force of social facts.

The question Weber posed to the young academics at this point was of fundamental importance, and it is also of fundamental importance for understanding “the current state of Freemasonry”: “How did such a turnabout come about? How did we arrive at the “situation of meaninglessness of all science”? This was his answer to that question: the turning point came about with the increasing intellectualisation and rationalisation, with the disenchantment of the world. «Increasing intellectualisation and

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rationalisation does not mean [...] an increasing general knowledge of the conditions of life under which one is subjected» (Weber, 2004, p. 20). As Harari writes, hunter-gatherers did not have to wait for the Agricultural Revolution to know the secrets of nature. They had already known them for a very long time and much better than farmers, because their survival was intimately and profoundly linked to an accurate knowledge of the animals they hunted and the plants they harvested (see Harari, 2019, p. 108). «It means something different: the consciousness or faith that, if one only wished, one could at any time come to know, that is, that mysterious and unpredictable forces are not at play, but that one can - in principle - master all things through rational calculation. But this means the disenchantment of the world. It is no longer necessary to resort to magical means to dominate spirits or to ingratiate oneself with them, as the savage does for whom such powers exist. Technical means and rational calculation take care of that. Above all, this is the meaning of intellectualisation as such» (Weber, 2004, p. 20).

I warn the reader that the texts quoted in inverted commas, with the exception of a few quotations from Maffesoli, have been translated by me from Italian.

## II. THE LOSS OF SENSE OF DEATH AND SCIENCE

Weber, after the theme of the cave and of light (to which both esoteric and esoteric science can be linked), after that of the conceptual constructions of science contemporary to him (and to us), after the question of intellectualisation of rationalisation and disenchantment, of the dominion of all things by means of rational calculations, he introduced the theme of death (the search for light, the science that deals with it, and death are intimately and profoundly connected), saying to young people the following words «But does this process of disenchantment, which has continued for millennia in Western culture, and in general this “progress”, of which science constitutes an element and a driving force, have any meaning beyond the purely practical and technical level? You will find this question formulated in fundamental terms above all in the works of Lev Tolstoy. He arrived at it by a route that was peculiar to him. His central problem increasingly addressed the question of whether death was a phenomenon endowed with meaning or not. And his answer is that for civilised man it is not» (Weber, 2004, p. 20). So: processes of rationalisation and intellectualisation, disenchantment with the world, loss of the sense of death. But, not only death, even science no longer makes sense. Even on the subject of death, the distance from Durkheim is evident (see Durkheim, 2010).

Not only death, but also science, transformed over time (part of this history is certainly Platonic science sacred /philosophy) by the processes of intellectualisation, rationalisation, disenchantment, no longer makes sense to Weber. Nor can it have any more. At first it was «the way to true being» (see Plato's myth of the cave), later it became «the way to true art» (see Leonardo and Piero della Francesca), «the way to true nature» (see Descartes and Galilei), «the way to true God», the «way to true happiness» (This concept was destroyed by Friedrich Nietzsche). The simplest answer, Weber told the young people, was given, once again, by Tolstoy: «“It is meaningless because it gives no answer to the only question that is important to us: what are we to do? How are we to live?”» (Weber, 2004, p. 26).

But how can we address the subject of the disenchanted world, that is, of contemporary science and meaningless death, without considering, in a diachronic manner, the fundamental, and foundational, question of God, of the Supreme Being, of the Great Architect? (For this concept of God, see the notion of “American civil religion”, see Bellah, 2009). At the time of the origin of the exact sciences of nature, Weber continued in his lecture to the young academics in Munich, a great deal was expected of modern science. «If you remember Swammerdam's saying “I bring you here the proof of God's providence in the anatomy of a louse”, you can see what scientific work, under the (indirect) influence of Protestantism and Puritanism, then regarded as its own task: the way to God. This way was no longer to be found in philosophers, in their concepts and deductions [in their conceptions of science: see, in this connection, the whole question of the crisis of the proofs of God's existence, from Anselm and Gaunilone up to Kant]: that God could not be found by the path [on the one hand Platonic and on the other Aristotelian] by which the Middle Ages had sought him, well knew all the pietistic theology of that time, [knew it above all] Spenner [the founder of the pietistic movement]. God is hidden, his ways are not our ways, his thoughts are not our thoughts. But in the exact sciences of nature, where one could physically grasp his work, there one hoped to trace his intentions concerning the world. And today?» (Weber, 2004, p. 24-25). It is clear that Weber's answer is: not any more. Today, science is meaningless because the world is disenchanted.

As is well known, Weber relates the Protestant ethic not only to a certain historical phase of modern science, but also to the spirit of capitalism (see M. Weber, 1991).

I also quote here a passage from Morris Kline on Kant: «If Kant had paid more attention to the mathematical activity of the time, he would at least have been more cautious in arguing that the mind must organise spatial sensations in a Euclidean manner. The indifference and even rejection of a God legislator of the universe, combined with Kant's theory that laws are intrinsic to the structure of the human mind, provoked the reaction of the divine architect. God decided to punish the Kantians, particularly the egocentric, proud and conceited mathematicians. And so He began to favour non-Euclidean geometry» (Kline, 1985, p. 88).

Kline, who was Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at New York University and a contributor to «Mathematics Magazine» and the «Archive for History of Exact Sciences», recounts an anecdote in his «Matematica la perdita della certezza» (Mathematics the Loss of Certainty) about Lagrange's *Mécanique analytique* (Analytical Mechanics, 1788), a work which, according to him, can be considered the best example of Newtonian mathematics (i.e. mechanics treated mathematically, with a quantitative mathematical method, without any reference to physical processes or geometrical diagrams). «When Sir James Jeans in his work *The Mysterious Universe* (1930) revealed that “The great architect of the universe is now beginning to assume the appearance of a pure mathematician”», Kline writes, «he was at least two centuries too late» (Kline, 1985, p. 68). Apparently, Lagrange, to Napoleon's remark «“I have been told that you have written this big book on the system of the universe without having mentioned

its Creator even once”», replied: «“I have no need of this hypothesis. Nature had now taken the place of God», Kline continued, «as Gauss said, “you, O Nature, are my divinity and to your laws are my services”» (Kline, 1985, p. 83).

Weber’s references to Freemasonry, to Plato (to the myth of the cave, to be more precise) and to Tolstoy, to Light and death, to traditional philosophical science (which can also be called sacred science, which is both esoteric and esoteric), to medieval science and then to modern and contemporary science, in my view, are not accidental (Weber, comparing German and American universities, expressly mentions American associationism of all kinds. In my view, such “all kinds of” associationism can also include American Masonic associationism, which evidently differed from German associationism). In fact, all these themes, directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, are present in a very specific “literary place” in Tolstoy’s novel War and Peace. This is how the Russian intellectual recounts the Masonic initiation of Pierre Bezuchov in his masterpiece. Pay particular attention to the suggestions about light and death, in relation to God, to the Great Architect of the Universe, to the role of the Master (i.e. the one who, in the Platonic sense, *gradually learns to see in the light, and then his task becomes that of descending among cavemen and leading them to the light*), to the meaning of life and the relative plan to realise this meaning.

A week after his arrival, the young Polish Count Willarski, [...] addressed Pierre. [...] – I have come to you, Count, with a proposal and an assignment, – he told him without sitting down. [...] Do you wish to enter the brotherhood of free masons under my guarantee? [Yes, I do, – said [Pierre]. [...] – One more question, Count, – said [Willarski], – to which I ask you to answer in all sincerity, not as a future Freemason, but as an honest man (galant homme): have you repudiated your past convictions, do you believe in God? [here the reference is to atheism and the processes of intellectualisation and rationalisation] Pierre became pensive. – Yes ... yes, I believe in God, – he said. – In that case ... – Willarski began, but Pierre interrupted him. – Yes, I believe in God, – he said again. – In that case, we can go, – said Willarski. – My carriage is at your disposal. [...] [Arrived at the Masonic house] Having taken a handkerchief from the cupboard, Willarski placed it over Pierre’s eyes and knotted it behind him, painfully imprisoning his hair in the knot. [...] When you hear a knock at the door, blindfold yourself, – Willarski added. [...] The five minutes that [Pierre] spent blindfolded seemed to him an hour. [...] He was glad that the moment had come when he would finally take that path of renewal and an actively virtuous life that he had been dreaming of [This path also has to do with understanding of science and sacred science, both exoteric and esoteric, of Plato]. [...] Pierre removed the blindfold and looked around. It was pitch dark in the room: only in one place was a lamp lit inside something white. Pierre approached and saw that the lamp stood on a black table, on which an open book was placed. The book was the Gospel; the white thing in which the lamp was burning was a human skull with its holes and teeth. Having read the first words of the Gospel: «In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God», he walked around the table and saw a large open coffin filled with something. It was a coffin full of bones. [...] The skull, the coffin, the Gospel: [...] «God, death, love, the brotherhood of men», he said to himself, linking vague but joyful images to these words. The door opened, and someone entered. In the dim light, to which, however, Pierre had already become accustomed, a rather short man [the Lodge’s Worshipful Master] entered. Having evidently passed from light into darkness, he stopped [...] – Why have you come here? – asked [the rather short man] turning to Pierre’s side [...] – Why have you, who do not believe in the truths of the light and do not see the light, come here, what do you want from us? Wisdom, virtue, enlightenment? [...] – Yes, I ... I ... want renewal, – Pierre articulated with difficulty. – Well, – said Smol’janinov and immediately resumed: – Do you have any idea of the means by which our sacred order will help you attain your goal? ... said the speaker quickly and calmly. – I ... hope ... for guidance ... help ... in renewal, – said Pierre [...] – Did you look to religion for the means to reach your end? – No, I considered it wrong and did not follow it, – said Pierre in such a low voice that the speaker did not hear him and asked what he said. – I was an atheist, – Pierre replied. – You seek truth in order to follow its laws in life; consequently, you seek wisdom and virtue, do you not? – said the speaker [...] – Yes, yes, Pierre confirmed. [...] – Now I must reveal to you the principal end of our order, – said [the speaker], – and if this end coincides with yours, you will profitably enter our brotherhood. The first and most important end and at the same time the foundation of our order, on which it is built and which no human force can demolish, is the custody and transmission to posterity of an important mystery ... which has come down to us from the most ancient centuries and even from the first man, a mystery on which perhaps the destiny of the human race depends. But since this mystery is of such a nature that no one can know it and take advantage of it unless he is prepared by a long and diligent purification of himself, not everyone can hope to attain it soon. Therefore we have a second end, which consists in preparing our affiliates, as far as possible, in emending their hearts, purifying and enlightening their reason with the means revealed to us by tradition by men who have laboured in the search for this mystery, and thereby making them capable of receiving it. Lastly, by purifying and correcting our affiliates, we also seek to amend the whole human race, proposing in our affiliates an example of devotion and virtue, and by this we seek with all our strength to oppose the evil that reigns in the world (Tolstoj, 2019, p. 477-482). [...] Willarski coughed, they answered him with the Masonic wooden hammer, and the door opened in front of them. [...] Then they led him away again, without blinking their eyes, and as he walked they spoke to him in allegories of the hardships of his journey, of sacred friendship, of the eternal Architect of the universe, of the courage with which he had to endure hardships and dangers. [...] Then they blew out the candles, lit some alcohol, as Pierre guessed from the smell, and said he would see a small light. They removed his blindfold, and by the faint light of the spirit flame Pierre saw [...] Among them [among the Freemasons present] was one with a bloodied white shirt. At that sight, Pierre advanced with his chest against the swords, wishing they would pierce him. But the swords moved away, and immediately the bandage was put back on him. – Now thou hast seen the little light [together with the blood of death], – said a voice to him. Then they lit the candles again, said he should see the full light, and again they removed his blindfold, and suddenly more than ten voices said: *sic transit gloria mundi*. [...] A blazing star was embedded in the wall (Tolstoj, 2019, p. 484-486). [...] The session was over, and on his return home Pierre had the impression that he had returned from a long journey that had lasted decades, during which he had changed completely and had detached himself from the previous order and habits of life. [...] The day after his admission to the lodge Pierre was at home reading a book, trying to penetrate the meaning of the square that represented God on one side, the moral world on the other, the physical world on the third and their fusion on the fourth. From time to time he would detach himself from the book and the square and work out his new life plan in his imagination (Tolstoj, 2019, p. 488). [...] (It was now such a joy for him to rid himself of free will and submit his will to him and those who knew an indubitable truth) (Tolstoj, 2019, p. 482-483).

Concerning disenchantment with death (which, as we have seen, in Weber, through Tolstoy, is as fundamental as disenchantment with God, with the Supreme Being, with the Architect of the Universe, and with light and its pursuit, because disenchantment with these “things” goes hand in hand with disenchantment with death, and because the meaning of life goes hand in hand with the meaning of death), one text to refer to is Philippe Ariès «Storia della morte in Occidente» (History of Death in the West) (see Ariès, 2006). Here too, as with Max Weber’s conference on science as a profession and the disenchantment of the world, we are dealing with an essay that originated from four lectures given at conferences organised at Johns Hopkins University (with the addition of some articles, previously published by Ariès), intended this time not for young German university students but for the American public. Appearing in print in English in 1974, these conferences were actually supposed to focus and argue not on attitudes towards death in Western Christian cultures, but on history and national consciousness.

It is certain that, in Free Masonry, there exists, along with a personal and dramatic feeling (the «Death of the self» and of Master Hiram), a «filial, familiar feeling» (the Sons of the Widow, the Brothers) of death and that one of the aetiological/founding myths of it is precisely that of Hiram (on the Founding Myths of Free Masonry, see Durand, 2021). Ariès writes: «I had just

finished a long study on family sentiment, in which I realised that this sentiment, which was said to be very ancient and rather threatened by modernity, was in fact recent and linked to a decisive stage of this modernity. I therefore wondered whether it was not necessary to generalise, whether we had not still retained [despite Weberian disenchantment], in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the habit of attributing distant origins to collective and mental phenomena that were in reality very recent, which would be tantamount to recognising in this age of scientific progress the capacity to create myths» (Ariès, 2006, p. 6-7), to reenchant ourselves and to know how to reenchant, as Michel Maffesoli put it. The concept of re-enchantment I will explain later.

The problem is this: how are such myths to be “understood”, given that we are dealing with processes of disenchantment and re-enchantment of the world? How is re-enchantment to be interpreted? Are we dealing with a single type of re-enchantment or with several types of re-enchantment, linked and interlinked, synchronically and diachronically. My idea, which I cannot go into here, is that we are in the presence of several types of re-enchantment. After all, Weber himself, in his lecture on science as a profession and disenchantment, complained to the Munich students that «science as a way to nature» would have sounded like blasphemy to their ears. For many of them, indeed for the greater number, «liberation from the intellectualism of science», i.e. re-enchantment (I should point out that this concept is not Weber’s, but Maffesoli’s), was the way «back to one’s own nature and thus to nature in general» (Weber, 2004, p. 24). Let us be careful: here the concept to be taken into consideration, albeit by way of contrast, is “liberation from the intellectualism of science”, i.e. liberation from the processes of rationalisation and disenchantment of modern and contemporary science, in order to arrive at one’s own nature and, consequently, at the re-enchantment of nature in general, and not “science (modern and contemporary, disenchanted) as the way to arrive at nature”!

The thesis put forward by Ariès in his essay, the drafting of which had begun some time before with the study of the cult of cemeteries (better said, of necropolises and cemeteries) and of pilgrimage to the tombs, is that the changes in man’s mentality towards death, for millennia, have been very slow, sometimes unnoticed, or have been located between long periods of immobility, to the point of seeming to be acronic. Contemporaries have not felt them, have not been aware of them, because the time of change has spanned many generations and has exceeded the capacity of collective memory. [«Contemporary historians», writes Ariès, «have discovered that traditional cultures are almost static. Even the economic and demographic balance do not evolve; if by chance they are shaken, they have a tendency to return to the initial situation. See the works of E. Le Roy Ladurie (in particular *Le territoire de l'historien*, Paris, Gallimard, 1973) and of P. Chaunu, *Histoire science sociale*, Paris, SEDES, 1975»] (Ariès, 2006, footnote no. 1 on p. 17). At a certain point, however, in the midst of disenchantment as Weber put it, they became faster and more conscious. In methodological terms, «The historian of death must not read them with the same lenses as the historian of religions. [...] He must decipher them in order to find, beneath the ecclesiastical language [filled with elitist lessons of spirituality or morality], the banal background of common representation that seemed obvious and made the lesson [to be derived from death] intelligible to the public» (Ariès, 2006, p. 13).

A brief summary makes it easier to read the essay on death considered here, which, in the first part, consists of four reports: «The first is rather in synchronicity. It covers a long series of centuries, in the order of a millennium» and concerns «domesticated death» (this is a definition introduced by the author), that is, «family death». It is with the second paper that we enter «the diachrony: what changes in the Middle Ages, from around the 12th century onwards, began to modify the achronical attitude towards death, and what sense we can make of these changes. Finally, the last two papers [are] devoted to contemporary attitudes, the cult of cemeteries and graves, and the interdict launched against death in industrial societies» (Ariès, 2006, p. 17-18).

With regard to “tamed death”, also taking into consideration the *Novels of the Round Table*, the *Chanson de Roland*, Ariès distinguishes between “death forewarned” (when one has time to know one is about to die) and “terrible death” (sudden, which must be presented as exceptional and which one must not, or cannot, talk about) (In the aetiological myth of Hiram, the “terrible death” and the “lost word” are at work). Human beings have been dying “in a warned way”, for millennia, and in an enchanted way as Weber puts it. «The warning, we observe, was given by natural signs or, more often still, by an intimate conviction, rather than by supernatural or magical premonition. It was a very simple thing, which has persisted through the centuries and which we still find today, at least as a residue, in industrial societies». This is “spontaneous recognition”. «Something alien both to the supernatural and to Christian piety» (Ariès, 2006, p. 19). Knowing that death is imminent, one begins to foresee, to prepare and to formalise the ceremony and the dispositions of last will.

If Weber, during the conference held in Munich, had spoken to the young university students about the importance, in general, of the theme of death and its meaning in Tolstoy, Ariès points out that in the Russian author it is possible to identify the theme of “death forewarned”: Tolstoy’s mugiki (see Ariès, 2006, p. 20-21). The French historian also refers to the ritual attitude of the “giacent statues”, prescribed by 13th-century liturgists: «“The dying man” [...] “must lie on his back, so that his face may always look up to the sky”» (Ariès, 2006, p. 22). From the Old Testament we learn that the dying Hebrew people, on the other hand, turned towards the wall.

Death forewarned was awaited in bed, usually in one’s own bed, in one’s own home, «“lying in bed sick”». It was «a public ceremony [the dying man’s room became a public place] and organised. Organised by the dying person himself who presides over it and knows its protocol» (Ariès, 2006, p. 24). It was conducted in a ceremonial, but not dramatic and overly emotional manner. It was necessary for relatives, friends and neighbours to be present. Until the 18th century, children also had to be present. This last aspect is very important, given the «precautions taken today to keep children away from the things of death!» (Ariès, 2006, p. 25). It is, as we shall see, the “forbidden death”, the “turning away from the things of death” that also concerns adults and has to do with the sense of life, the sense of death and the disenchantment of the world.

Ariès calls “tamed death” «The old attitude in which death is at once familiar, close and attenuated”. This contrasts sharply with our attitude of “wild death”, in which death is hospitalised, distant (we try to entrust it to others: carers, doctors, specialists, old people’s homes, funeral parlours, morgues, etc.) and frightening, just as it is frightening to grow old, «to the point that we no longer dare pronounce its name» (Ariès, 2006, p. 26), preferring instead to talk about, desire, or practise the right diet



(Mediterranean, macrobiotic, vegetarian, vegan, etc.), cosmetic surgery, sports, body care (creams, gym etc.), delayed ageing, the avoidance of ageing, eternal youth. In reality, it is the ageing that scares us and not the dead. This says a lot about the sense (or missing sense) that we attribute to the dead and to death, ours or that of others, a sense (or missing sense) which, inevitably, also concerns Masonic initiation, sacred science, in the same way as intellectualisation, rationalisation, disenchantment, above all with regard to God, the Supreme Being, the Great Architect of the Universe.

The ancients, on the other hand (the reference is to the centuries before the Middle Ages), were not afraid of ageing, nor of death, but of the dead. «Despite their familiarity with death, the ancients feared the proximity of the dead and kept them apart». (One must keep these concepts separate and distinct from the “forbidden death” of disenchanting industrial societies, about which I will speak later). «The world of the living had to be separated from that of the dead. [...] For this reason, cemeteries [necropolises] were located outside cities, on the edge of roads» (Ariès, 2006, p. 26-27). (This is interesting for understanding the aetiological myth of Hiram: could the Master’s dead body have been transported to the Holy of Holies in the Temple of the city of Jerusalem?). Burials in cities, in city temples, etc., were forbidden. The dead began to enter the cities «with the [Christian] cult of martyrs, of African origin» (Ariès, 2006, p. 27). In the Middle Ages, and again in the 16th and 17th centuries and up to the Enlightenment, there was no distinction between the church and the cemetery (the necropolis): «the parish church includes “nave, bell tower and cemetery”» (Ariès, 2006, p. 29) and ossuary.

Throughout the Middle Ages, and at least until the 17th century, i.e. for more than a millennium, the living no longer feared the dead and lived in promiscuity with them, within their cities and church spaces. It is in this sense that Ariès speaks of “domesticated death”, specifying, in the chapter on the “Death of the self”, that, however, already from the 11th and 12th centuries some small changes began to occur that, without replacing it, altered the familiarity between man and death, introducing personal, individualistic and dramatic elements.

It is to these dramatising alterations, to the “Death of Self” and to the combination of individual, personal, and familial elements, that, in my view, can be traced the aetiological myth of Hiram and the meaning it has (or rather, it is better to say had, in fact we Westerners, as I will say later, live the time of the “forbidden death”) for the initiatory death and initiatory life of each Freemason. «Familiarity with death», writes Ariès, was «a form of acceptance of the natural order, an acceptance at once naive in daily life, and learned in astrological speculation» (Ariès, 2006, p. 34) (Astrology, namely the Sun, the Moon, the starry sky, the constellations). It was within this millenary idea of the collective destiny of human beings, that, according to Ariès, little by little, new elements of concern «for the particularity of each individual» were introduced, until the definitive paradigm shift: from «family death» to «death of the self», to the «death of the other», and finally to today’s “forbidden death”.

The phenomena that the French historian chose for the demonstration of the presence of individualistic elements (the “death of self”) within the paradigm of “domesticated”, “familiar” death are: «the representation of the universal Judgement, at the end of time», i.e. the common and collective death of the entire species, the common and collective end; «the displacement of the Judgement» from the end of time to the end of each individual life, «at the precise moment of death» of the individual (controversial and extremely complex has become, with the passage of time, the theme of personal responsibility, i.e. free will or servant arbitrariness); «the macabre themes and the interest nurtured in images of physical decomposition; the return to funerary epigraphy and a principle of personalisation [individualisation] of burials» (Ariès, 2006, p. 35).

«The worms that eat corpses do not come from the earth, but from inside the body, from its natural “liquors”», writes Ariès, «Decomposition is the sign of man’s failure, and this is undoubtedly the profound sense of the macabre, which makes it a new and original phenomenon. To understand it properly, one must start from the contemporary notion of failure that, unfortunately, is very familiar to us in today’s industrial societies» (Ariès, 2006, p. 43).

All these elements (however, I cannot demonstrate them in detail here), together with those of the “family death”, are present in the aetiological myth of Hiram. This means that they, although traceable to the “death of self” (it is the Freemason who dies in/with Hiram, not so much “the other”, it is the “death of self” and not the “death of the other”), can still be located within the ancient paradigm of “familiar death”. It means that the aetiological myth of Hiram is a child of its time. Think, for example, of how, in the sense of a symbolic and metaphorical “initiatory universal Judgement”, the death of Master Hiram caused the impossibility of continuing the construction work on the Temple and how, at the same time, the death and “rebirth” of Master Hiram are also the individual death and rebirth of each Free Mason, i.e. a symbolic and metaphorical “initiatory universal Judgement” shifted onto each individual Free Mason. Think also of the fear, not towards death, which on the contrary is seen as an initiationally necessary and inevitable event, but towards the type of dead represented and representable through Master Hiram’s assassins, who are certainly not Freemasons but anti-Masons. Think again of the signs used to recognise Master Hiram’s burial place and the emotional taming of those (the Sons of the Widow) who, at least initially, would have wanted to avenge him.

Ariès makes a remarkable observation, which is also very useful for understanding the meaning of the failures of the alchemist’s transmuting operations: «between our contemporary sense of personal failure and that of the late Middle Ages, there is a very interesting difference. Today we do not relate our life failure and our human mortality. The certainty of death, the fragility of our life are foreign to our existential pessimism. In contrast, the man of the late Middle Ages had the acute awareness that he was a near-dead man, and death, ever present within him, shattered his ambitions, poisoned his pleasures. And this man nourished a passion for life that we can hardly understand today, perhaps because our life has become longer» (Ariès, 2006, p. 44). Here the author expressly refers to «the man of the proto-capitalist ages – that is, in which the capitalist and technical mentality was in the process of being formed (perhaps not until the 18th century?)» (Ariès, 2006, p. 44).

Ariès also writes that, in ancient Rome, the dead were identifiable in their burial places and tombs. To make them identifiable, funerary inscriptions and portraits were used as markers. Such inscriptions, around the 5th century, became rare, until they disappeared altogether, depending on the location. The dead thus ceased to be identifiable for eight to nine hundred years. Funerary inscriptions reappeared in the 13th century, on the tombs of illustrious personages, and with them effigies, which were not, however, true portraits. In the 18th century, plaques with a simple inscription became increasingly common (Ariès, 2006, p. 45-47).

From the 18th century onwards, again according to Ariès, attitudes towards death began to change radically: in the paradigm (Kuhn, 2009) of “familiar”, “domesticated” death, in addition to the individualistic elements of “death of the self” (rise of the individual conscience), elements relating to the “death of the other” began to enter (the death accepted with greater difficulty, more feared, was not so much one’s own death, but that of the other, the “death of the you”), occultism (ghosts and séances, or mediumistic séances, which allowed contact with the “dead you” from whom one did not want to separate oneself, with the “death of the other”), the exaggeration of mourning in the 19th century, the “new cult of tombs and cemeteries” of the 19th and 20th centuries (new and completely different, “fractured”, “broken”, from the ancient, pre-Christian cults) and sadism. «Like the sexual act in the Marquis de Sade, death is a rupture. Now, let us keep this in mind, this idea of rupture is completely new» (Ariès, 2006, p. 51).

What does rupture mean? «Like the sexual act, death is now increasingly seen as a transgression that tears man away from his daily life, his reasonable society, his monotonous work, to subject him to a paroxysm and throw him into an irrational, violent and cruel world» (Ariès, 2006, p. 51). (On these issues, see for example Horkheimer and Adorno, 2010). The death, which before was familiar, domesticated, even when it was the “death of the self” and the “death of the other”, becomes terrifying, haunting: a rupture, precisely. «Death in one’s own bed, as it once was, had the solemnity but also the banality of seasonal ceremonies. Everyone expected it and lent themselves to the rituals prescribed by custom». Instead, in the 19th century, a new passion took hold of the bystanders. Emotion stirred them, they cried, they prayed, they gesticulated. They did not reject the gestures dictated by custom, on the contrary, they made them by stripping them of their banal and customary character. Now these gestures were described as if they had been invented for the first time, spontaneous, inspired by a passionate grief, unique in its kind. Certainly, the survivors’ expression of grief was due to a new intolerance for separation. But the upset did not survive only at the bedside of the dying or the memory of the missing. The mere idea of death moved (Ariès, 2006, p. 53).

One cannot understand “forbidden death”, i.e. the 20th century’s “great rejection of death”, the revolutionary paradigm (see Kuhn, 2009) shift from “domesticated”, “familiar” death, if one does not have a clear understanding of this concept of “rupture”. It is in fact from it that, for Ariès, originated the “brutal revolution of traditional ideas and feelings” about death, that “absolutely unprecedented phenomenon” of death as an object of shame and prohibition. The transition from “domesticated death”, “familiar death”, “death of self” and “death of the other” to “forbidden death” is characterised by the fact of «avoiding, no longer to the dying person, but to society, to the relatives themselves, the excessively strong, unbearable disturbance and emotion caused by the horror of agony and the simple presence of death in the midst of a happy life, since it is now generally accepted that life is always happy or must always look like it» (Ariès, 2006, p. 69).

### III. THE AUTONOMY OF STYLES AND THE FOURTH SECULARISATION

On the subject of the “happy life”, it is useful to consider Luigi Berzano’s essay «Quarta secolarizzazione. L’autonomia degli stili» (Fourth secularisation. The autonomy of styles, see Berzano, 2017). Secularisation is another way of understanding the Weberian concept of disenchantment. The concept of “fourth secularization” is used by Berzano to explain that society which is contemporary to us and which, as we shall see, Maffesoli defines as neo-tribal, re-enchanted. I have already mentioned that Ariès, in order to explain disenchantment, with regard to Westerners’ attitudes towards death, proposed two paradigms: the paradigm of “domesticated”, or “familiar” death, with elements of “death of self” and “death of the other”, and the paradigm of “forbidden death”. Berzano, addressing the general issue of secularisation, in turn, started from the observation of the weakening of the «vertical processes of reproduction, i.e. those through which cultural models are transmitted from one generation to the next», a weakening that has configured contemporary Western societies as «“horizontal societies” with “horizontal lifestyles”» and with «increasing complexity of organisational models» (Berzano, 2017, p. 8) and he identified four of them: three already established and one, the fourth, which he proposed to the scientific community. It is this fourth paradigm that I will now briefly address.

The four paradigms are: 1) the secularisation from Greek mythology to classical philosophy (first secularisation); 2) the secularisation from the abstract *Logos* of classical Greek philosophy to the *Christian Logos* (second secularisation); 3) the secularisation of the sciences, which occurred at the beginning of the modern age (third secularisation); 4) the secularisation of the autonomy of styles (fourth secularisation).

Regarding the state of the art of religion, or rather religions, and the publications on the subject in Italy, a recent research by Franco Garelli bears the title «Gente di poca fede» (People of little faith) (see Garelli, 2020) and, among other things, deals with so-called “cultural Catholicism”. Luigi Berzano used the expression “devout atheism”, referring to the autonomy of styles and the theorisation of the fourth secularisation. The title of another very recent research study edited and directed by Roberto Cipriani is «L’incerta fede» (The uncertain faith) (see Cipriani, 2021), and that of the research edited by Cecilia Costa and Barbara Morsello is «Incerta religiosità» (Uncertain religiosity) (see Costa e Morsello, 2021). Stefania Palmisano and Nicola Pannofino, in turn, used the title «Religione sotto spirito» (Religion under spirit) for their research (see Palmisano e Pannofino, 2021), in the sense that there are many in Italy today who declare: «I am spiritual, but not religious», as if to say that «being spiritual» means engaging in a search for meaning and that organised religions, for the purposes of this search, are obstacles, because with their structures, with their hierarchies, with their statuses and with their religious roles, with their liturgies, with their ceremonies, with their history, in fact prevent an authentic relationship with nature, with the environment and, consequently, the attainment of an authentic condition of inner well-being, in relationships with oneself, with one’s exterior and with others. Another research, however, has also detected a different trend. This is anatheism, i.e. the return of God, albeit in different, albeit organised, hierarchical and top-down forms, after the death of God, in the countries of the former USSR (the Soviet Union), or under the influence of the former USSR, where state atheism was in force. This is the 2017 research by Cooperman, Sahgal and Schiller (see Cooperman, Sahgal, Schiller, 2017). Ours has been called the «era of susceptibility» (see Soncini, 2021), or the time of «Cancel Culture».

Lifestyles are «the ways in which individuals organise their existence [...] the profiles through which individuals communicate, to themselves and to others, who they are, to whom they feel similar and from whom they want to distinguish themselves, outlining a unitary meaning for their living and behaving». These are the ways in which each of us tries to portray our “happy life” to others, *because it is now generally accepted that life is always happy or must always look that way*, as Ariès argued in his second revolutionary paradigm on death, “the forbidden death”. «They are peculiar to today’s society, in which it is often no longer values, ideologies or even social position that explain the behaviour of individuals, but rather tastes, sensitivities, personal interests, fashions» (Berzano, 2017, p. 8-9).

Religions, churches, practices, beliefs, spiritualities, including the Masonic one I would add, for Berzano today cannot be understood outside the paradigm of the fourth secularisation, which, precisely, is characterised by the autonomy of styles, that is, by dependence on the choices of individuals. What I am interested in pointing out here is that, in this context which, as we shall see, can also be defined as neo-tribal and re-enchanted, individuals without a fixed religious status and in search of a spirituality of their own, for the construction of their own “stylistic” project of material and, at the same time, spiritual life, are constantly increasing. Thus, «new spiritual profiles take shape, which are fascinating precisely because of their free nature and their horizontal and personalised practices» (Berzano, 2017, p. 11), and this also happens within «weakened “vertical” reproduction processes», whether religious (religious traditions) or Free Masonic (Masonic Tradition). It is a matter of “spiritual styles” that, even if framed within «weakened “vertical” reproduction structures» of a hierarchical type, such as those of churches or Masonic Obediences, are proper to «individuals who choose on the basis of personal needs, interests, sensibilities» (Berzano, 2017, p. 11).

The word *spirituality* has now entered our everyday vocabulary. We encounter it more and more often and on the most diverse occasions, just as the number of those who define themselves using the formula is growing: *I am spiritual, but not religious*. To be spiritual is to engage in a search for meaning (for sense) without affiliating or recognising oneself in a specific organised religion, following paths that usually lie outside the traditional enclosures of the sacred drawn by churches or historical confessions (or civil religions). In Italy too, there is an increase in those who set out on the path of spirituality to rediscover a deeper relationship with nature, to achieve a state of inner well-being and in their relationship with others, to unveil the mysteries that surround us. From being a marginal phenomenon, spirituality has acquired a new visibility in our country (see Palmisano e Pannofino, 2021, *synthesis of the introduction*).

As Berzano writes, lifestyles, in relation to groups, perform a dual function: *ab intra* they characterise a group and cement it, *ad extra* they differentiate it from other social groups. It is for this reason that the issue of lifestyles is intimately connected to neo-tribalism and re-enchancement.

#### IV. THE DISENCHANTMENT, POSTMODERN RE-ENCHANTMENT AND NEO-TRIBALISM

In one of his articles, entitled «From society to tribal communities» (see Maffesoli, 2016), Maffesoli writes that there were three fundamental factors that, between the Eighteenth and Twentieth centuries, contributed decisively to the Weberian disenchantment, that is to say, using his vocabulary, to the birth of modernity: rationalism, individualism and the social contract. On the other hand, the fundamental factors that contributed decisively to the postmodern re-enchancement were two: the powerful return of the need for collective emotions and communitarian impulses (i.e. neo-tribalism, the existence of emotional tribes: «l’Ombre de Dianysos» in the collapse of the welfare state); the “tribal person”, or “plural person”, which is plural because it is fragmented (fragmentation, i.e. neo-tribalism, is the “heartbeat” of the post-modern social bond) and because, precisely because it is fragmented, it identifies with or is part of several neo-tribes, also rediscovering the importance of territory (it is the theme of roots and borders) and of “comradeship”, i.e. a new way of being whose main characteristics are emotions, desire and passion. Sexual indecision is also a manifest expression of the “plural person”. «The heir of the culture of reason [subjectivism seen as governed by Apollo], of a history we can control and of a consensual social bond is a culture of instinct where people want to face up to destiny» (Maffesoli, 2016, p. 740).

Maffesoli is clear in stating that, in order to study the neo-tribal phenomenon, one cannot use the 1960s toolbox (groupings, gangs, subcultures, etc.), because postmodern neo-tribes are specific. The three important characteristics of the neo-tribal phenomenon, i.e. the neo-tribal sense of belonging, are: the importance of the territory (the neighbourhood, for example, or the Masonic Temple) in which the neo-tribe is located (neo-tribal localism), the sharing of common tastes and the return of the eternal child.

To get a clearer picture of the concept of fragmentation, think of role-playing games and, above all, social media and social networks, the fragmentation of identities into a multiplicity of identifications. Maffesoli’s concept of identification can be understood as a hook for the autonomy of styles in Berzano’s fourth secularisation hypothesis. If we consider the educational system proper to modernity, Maffesoli writes, we can argue that its aim was to lead the child from the status of an animal to that of a civilised human being, conforming to the social contract. First there was sexual identity, which was either male or female. Then there was the professional identity, which had to be stable, established and unchanging throughout the course of a career. Together with these two identities, there was the ideological identity, which could be either political, intellectual or religious. These identities, which tended to be predictable and secure, allowed for the identification of individuals through boxes, namely social classes or socio-economic groups to which they belonged. This “social edifice”, made of boxes, has been demolished, Maffesoli continues, by advertising, fashion and role-playing games, i.e. by lifestyles, those autonomous lifestyles that the 19th century instead eradicated. Maffesoli makes it clear that we can think of post-modern neo-tribes as ways of sharing specific tastes (musical, sporting, sexual, religious, spiritual tribes, etc.), sometimes territorially localised, and tastes as the social cement of them.

The two factors indicated by Maffesoli clearly imply and express the crisis of the wisdom we have received from «increasingly weakened “vertical” processes of reproduction» and which is based on the conviction that everything must be based on the individual, which has been the emblematic sign of the time of modernity. «The individual as a rational and consenting figure in stable institutions and functioning as a predictable counter in political science - for instance, the political science of the increasingly meaningless opinion poll - is being replaced by a much more shadowy person whose instinctive will to live will not be denied» (Maffesoli, 2016, p. 740).

## V. CONCLUSION

If I had to hazard an identikit of a Freemason of today I would say that he is certainly a human being (*see* Pinello, 2021) of the fourth secularisation, a “plural person” and neotribal. If I also had to hazard a sketch of a Masonic obedience of today, I would say that it is a neo-tribe. It is this identikit of the contemporary Free Mason that I had in front of me, by difference and similarity, albeit not yet so clearly delineated, when I wrote «Sociologia della Massoneria» (Sociology of Freemasonry, *see* Pinello, 2017) and «Il Decoro» (The Decorum, *see* Pinello, 2020). The latter study/research, which deals with historical issues relating to order and social deviance, especially cognitive, was carried out by me with sociological imagination, following the original approach of the work of the same name by the American sociologist Charles Wright Mills (*see* Mills, 2014) and his conception of literature. It therefore concerns the quality of the mind, in response to a *Promise*, and is useful to «ordinary men» for the development in them of sociological imagination regarding the socio-historical-theological supernatural-preternatural-supernatural-artificial continuum in Southern Italy at the turn of the mid-eighteenth century, in relation to the civil sacred and so-called civil religion (*see*, Bellah, 2009), transformed, over time, by the autonomy of styles (fourth secularisation) and processes of re-enchantment. Civil sacredness was then emerging in an increasingly widespread and viral manner and would later explode, thanks also to long reflections and meditations on the European Wars of Religion and on the Tolerance (*see* Locke, 2005; Voltaire, 2020), with the American Revolution of 1775-1783 and with the Civil War; or with the Parisian Revolution of 1789; or, in Palermo, with the Freemason jurist patriot Francesco Paolo Di Blasi, nephew of the Jansenist Archbishop of Messina Gabriello Maria Di Blasi, beheaded in the piazza; or, in Potenza, with the assassination of the Jansenist bishop Giovanni Andrea Serrao by Sanfedists, after he had taken part in the events of the Neapolitan Republic; or, in Naples, with the gallows that was erected, *in Piazza Marcato, in that widening where Corradino di Svevia's head was cut off, and the heads of intellectuals and aristocrats fell* (Domenico D'Alessandro); or, in Rome, with the Roman revolution of 1848 etc. In Italy, the ideal cultural line is that from Arcadia and Ludovico Antonio Muratori's “Repubblica delle Lettere” (Republic of Letters) to Cesare Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene* (Of Crimes and Punishments).

[...] civil religion. The expression, introduced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the Social Contract, enjoyed a moment of glory in the late 1960s and early 1980s, only to pass into that limbo of ideas that have never been fully clarified, to which reference is made more or less quickly, suggesting that everyone knows what they are talking about». It is necessary «to really grasp what “lies beneath” facts and events that are only apparently self-evident [...] from a research perspective, civil religion can be a tool to identify comparative areas for empirical analysis and framing possibilities that are too often ignored or, which is the same thing, taken for granted; finally, from the point of view of a social science that does not want to be only professional but also “public”, tackling the problem of civil religion is a way to engage in widespread discussions and sensitivities among our fellow citizens, in Italy and in America [...]. The argumentative architrave of *Civil Religion in America* is that even a modern, liberal and secularised society like the United States has its own religion, “articulated and well institutionalized” [religious dimension of American political life], which can and should be studied like any other. According to Bellah, the constitutional separation of church and State does not prevent the existence of “a set of common elements of religious orientation shared by most Americans”, which “have played a crucial role in the development of American institutions and still provide a religious dimension to the whole of American life, including the political sphere”. In short, the lack of a State church is compensated for by a set of shared beliefs, symbols and rituals endowed with an incontrovertible reality. Although its main reference is biblical culture, civil religion is not traceable to any specific creed - it is in fact “authentically American and authentically new”. Introduced in public ceremonies by the first presidents and initially linked to their personal beliefs [...] The United States will have to transcend itself by contributing to the creation of a “World civil religion” capable of overcoming fictitious divisions such as that between dictatorships and the free world [...] Is the plane on which America historically moves an exclusively immanent plane? The American tradition, Bellah answers, has already answered with “no” (Bortolini, 2009, p. 7-10).

For Italy, where the situation, also historically, is more complex than in the United States, «Bellah and his writings on civil religion in Italy and America can be an excellent starting point, and not an end point, for a reconsideration of the relationship between religion and politics in our country. Beyond the accuracy of his interpretations, in fact, the comparison made by Bellah tells us that in order to understand Italy and its civil religion, we must not look for punctual analogies with the American model, but rather articulations that trace the distinctions and historical events in our Country [Italy]. Beyond any theory of Italy's shortcomings compared to the Anglo-Saxon model, it is *our* “moments of truth”, *our* outbursts of passion and mission, and *our* most bitter defeats that are the places in which to trace the themes and figures of *our* civil religion [Italy]» (Bortolini, 2009, p. 22). The dynamics and processes of the sacred and of civil religion in Italy, as Elvira Chiosi writes in the Preface to Lucia Annicelli's book “Il Codice massonico di Ischia” (The Masonic Code of Ischia), *contributed to the growth of a civil conscience opposed to any form of despotism and increasingly intolerant of the censorship and repression implemented by the clergy. The supernatural, the holy and the religious sacred were joined, taking root more and more each day, by the civil sacred* (the sacredness of the Constitutional Charter, the sacredness of the Homeland, the sacredness of private property, the sacredness of the home, the sacredness of the Masonic temple, the sacredness of the Masonic fraternity, etc.).

Heresies, excommunications, royal sanctions (of the King), alchemy and freemasonry constitute phenomena of cognitive social deviance and, at the same time, symptoms and indices of social change. Using a comparative method, based on written texts, paintings, frescoes, statues, palaces, biographies, social structures, history – all synchronic data –, with the quality of mind



promised by Charles Wright Mills' sociological imagination, I was able to understand what happened in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily during the second half of the 18th century and before the French Revolution, regarding the virality of certain Jansenist, alchemical and Masonic information, which spread through a network of academies (Pinello's research on the Accademia degli Industriosi di Gangi, Second Colony of the Accademia Palermitana del Buon Gusto and Colonia Arcadia, in the second half of the 18th century in Sicily. *See*, Pinello, 2015a; 2015b; 2018; 2020; 2022).

My research on cognitive social deviance and social change has had as its *focus* a particular pre-revolutionary Christian-Masonic initiatory path from the second half of the 18th century (the reference is to the French Revolution). Applying Berzano's model of the four periods of secularisation to Western culture and history in a paradigmatic (and therefore conventional) manner, we find ourselves in one of the transitional phases between the second and third secularisations, within certain well-defined processes of disenchantment as Weber puts it. Today, on the other hand, we are in the midst of the fourth secularisation or, as Maffesoli and Ariès put it, in the midst of a neo-tribalism of "plural people" for whom death is forbidden (*see* my research published in *Sociology of Freemasonry*, Pinello, 2017).

The fourth secularisation, which is that of our contemporary times, is characterised not only by the autonomy of styles, but also by anatheism, to use Berzano's words (*see* Berzano, 2018), and other types of atheism. Anatheism, i.e. the return to the religious sacred after the death of God, according to another model used by Luigi Berzano, researchers at the University of Turin and others, is one of the five types of atheism found in Italian society today (and beyond). The term atheism, in this perspective, must not, however, be understood in its simple literal meaning of an attitude that denies the existence of God. The first type of atheism is the traditional anti-clerical atheism (scarcely present today and very much present, instead, at the time of the French Revolution and, in Italy, until the breach of Porta Pia, and even beyond). The second type is anatheism. The third is devout or devotional atheism towards the Roman Catholic Church and the Vatican (very widespread in the Italian political world, and not only). The fourth is methodological atheism (typical of the sciences, which cannot be conditioned by religions and religious values). The fifth is the atheism of the autonomy of styles. This last type of atheism (the fifth) actually also concerns those who profess to be believers and practitioners, for example of the Catholic religion. This is why the term atheism today can no longer be used in its simple literal sense of an attitude that denies the existence of God.

These classifications and typifications help us to understand how today's Freemasonry is profoundly different from that of the second half of the 18th century. Indeed, that of today cannot but be Freemasonry at the time of the open society, the secular state, complexity, the fourth secularisation, anatheism, the autonomy of styles, other types of atheism, the globalised information society (both vertically and horizontally), neo-tribalism, the "plural person", "fragmentation" and "forbidden death", of the civil religion of the autonomy of styles and neo-tribalism.

In this sense and in this direction, the model I proposed in «Sociologia della Massoneria. Lavoro massonico, solidarietà e progettualità sociale» (*Sociology of Freemasonry. Masonic work, solidarity and social planning, see* Pinello, 2017) concerns Freemasonry today, which is not a religion (the issue is much more complex for the second half of the 18th century, due to the processes of secularization, or disenchantment, underway at that time), which leaves Freemasons free to follow the initiatory path that suits them best and that they deem to be more suited to their own chords, regarding their own "very personal inner work" (autonomy of styles), and which, as far as group work is concerned, can be understood through seven paradigms, which I proposed in the work. Such a model is based on the distinction between Freemasonry and meta-Masonry, inner work and group work, *visio ad intra* and *visio ad extra*, as well as on the consideration of Masonic work as a function of solidarity (internal and external) and social planning (internal and external).

The focus of my essay «Il Decoro. Dalla Cappella Sansevero a Palazzo Bongiorno» (*The Decor. From the Sansevero Chapel to Palazzo Bongiorno, see* Pinello, 2020), on the other hand – we are in the transition phase from second to third secularisation, or third disenchantment, in Sicily –, is on the supernatural, as understood by the Christian religion (mind you: I did not write Catholic!), in its Jansenist and alchemical version, and the "civil religion". It is a Jansenist and alchemical version, also Masonic, socially deviant and not only cognitively deviant, condemned by the pope and the Roman curia as heretical, in agreement with the king (hence the cognitive deviance), and therefore sanctioned, labelled and stigmatised not only as a serious social deviance, but also as a "crime" that could cause literary works to be put on the *Index of prohibited books*, imprisonment, torture and capital punishment.

The object of my study was the behaviour of the *Decorous Man*, inside the academies and outside «tralle genti» (among the peoples). In the case I studied, the exemplary behaviour, to be imitated, conforming to a well-defined model of Man, of the *Hermetic Warrior*, was rewarded with «"Corone di Sonetti" o "Sonetti a Corona"» (Crowns of Sonnets or Crown Sonnets), «Catene (di Unione)» (Chains of Union), fraternal (metric-literary) embraces, whose symbol, or emblematic *body*, was *the Amaranth* and whose motto was «Sic Floret Decoro Decus», to be translated «Honour for the Decor flourishes in every age, like Amaranth» (*see* Pinello 2015a; 2015b; 2018; 2010).

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