

FRATERNITY AND HISTORY

FREEMASONRY IN TAIWAN

By Shih-Ho (Simon) Chao



Freemasonry in Taiwan originated from Mainland China. The first lodge appeared in China in 1767 in Canton (Home State of Dr. Sun Yat Sen), the No. 407 Yi Lodge which belonged to the Grand Lodge of England. All the Masonic membership in that Lodge were foreigners without Masonic descent. It was not until March 18, 1949, that the Grand Lodge of China was established in Shanghai, under the sponsorship of the Grand Lodge of Philippines.

However, all Masonic activities were suspended in 1951 due to civil war between Communist Government (the current Chinese Government) and KMT Government (The Government in Taiwan before 2000). The Grand Lodge was reactivated in Taipei in 1954 after the KMT Government retreated to Taiwan. Under the excellent leadership of all the Grand Masters, including many from the United States and General Chiang, son of Chiang Kai-Shek, the Lodges grew stronger. Currently, there are 13 Lodges in Taiwan,

with thousands of brothers. It is worth mentioning that the No. 7 Liberty Lodge is composed of Brothers all of whom are from other countries. Some of them were already



Masons in their “Mother Countries” but needed to keep their light in Masonry growing and glowing.

In addition to all the Lodges, the other Masonic bodies in Taiwan include: 1) The Ali Shan Oasis Shrine Club of

Taipei, working on the care and foundation of Crippled and Burned Children); 2) YangMingShan Chapter No. 5, O.E.S. The Order of the Eastern Star is not an auxiliary of the Masonic Order but is an independent organization of its own. Its members are the wives, daughters, widows, mothers and sisters of Master Masons. 3) The Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. Valley of Taipei, Orient of Taiwan. There are now 816 members in total and 32 Brethren have been coronated with the Thirty-third degree (33°).

At this time, due to the business activities between China and Taiwan, a host of Brethren have stayed in China, mostly in Shanghai. The former Worshipful Master of No. 9 Tang Lodge, the author's Blue Lodge, just went to Shanghai on Nov. 1st, 2004, and serves as the manger of a Company. It has been proposed by some brother in Shanghai that a regular Masonic meeting be begun so that they can continue the Masonic activities.

Hopefully, Masonic bodies can return to Mainland China in the near future.



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