

ORDO AB CHAO

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Maybe there is no that is more delicate and bearing consequences as this one: ORDO AB CHAO, order from chaos. We stay, for the moment, in a profane ambience, the phrase immediately calls up the idea of the necessity of having to establish an a group of rules and procedures, of conventions, which, with reference to an ideal model of justice, can regulate the entire existential field of individuals to take them out from the state of disorder and to order their lives and the conflicts in which they are naturally led to fall into. It establishes therefore, the necessity, to give order to peoples' lives, without excluding any of the fields of action in which it is carried out. One can therefore speak of a social/political order, in relation to the organizational model which regulates the relationships between citizens and between nations; of an economic order, based on the development model adopted, and also of a religious order, based on the influence exercised by the institutionalized religious organizations, within the collective and individual sphere. But also culture, fashions, trends, the communications media, all together contribute to channel the thoughts of individuals, so that each one may identify oneself within well defined social models. One of the greatest aspirations of humanity still remains that, of searching for and finding a context, in which all individuals can identify themselves and in which they can freely express their personality. The problem rises in the identification of the parameters, within which all can effectively identify themselves, and feel protected and respected. As this is a blatant utopia, one falls back on a realistic compromise program which can satisfy the largest possible number of individuals (in the best case), that is which can answer to the will of the strongest and the most capable of imposing itself on others, as often, unfortunately, has happened and happens. The order, the organization with the ideas and ideologies underlining it, are identified in the concept of civilization, of which all the course of history offers numerous examples: on the contrary we could say that history is nothing more than the evolution, in time and space, of human civilizations, of their birth, development and death; of their mutual interactions; of the great progress but also of the enormous tragedies and evils in which humanity has been involved; therefore, in extreme synthesis, History is the story of the evolution and interaction of ideas of what is order and justice, whose common characteristics can be found in their impermanence and transience.

One therefore understands why the concept of order is so important in human thought. It cannot arouse wonder therefore that even an Institution, such as the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, has adopted as its identifying motto, the enunciation ORDO AB CHAO. But let's immediately clear the ground from any possible doubt about this: the fact that Freemasonry can recognize itself in a similar enunciation, indeed that it indicates it as its distinctive sign, does not mean that it wants to become the proponent of its own model of social. Political, economical and religious order, to be carried through its followers in this profane world, so that this can conform to Masonic ideas. This

is what the supporters of the conspiracy theory, who see plots everywhere and think that the main occupation of Freemasonry is that of finding a way of bending the world to their will.

I would therefore like to try and frame, in a more appropriate perspective, what Scottish Rite Freemasonry intends to affirm in this motto, and to do this, I cannot but adopt the initiates' point of view, which, through exoteric teachings which belong to it, is that which better characterizes the Masonic institution. This approach goes beyond the analysis of the consequences that the phenomena being examined, have on the material plane of apparent existence, to face the vast field of research into the essential nature of the being intended both as an individual and as existence in itself – that is as that which is – of its origins, or creation, and of its final end, or salvation. I don't absolutely have the pretension to exhaust the subject, but I intend only to fuel our reflections on the questions that we will make about this case, because I also am always searching for the possible answers.

ORDO AB CHAO, therefore, but an order of a different nature, because it does not correspond with the acceptance of a set of orders, laws, precepts which regulate our existence, it is the more or less spontaneous adherence to something that others had caused, it is not the recognition of revealed truths, of immovable dogmas, the maintenance of a status quo, for as long as possible. It should, in the first place, be the search of an interior order, which can spring up only after we have created silence within us, after having silenced the turbulence of the passions, sensations, desires and anguishes, pleasure and pain. Only in this way will we be able to tune in our feelings with the superior order to which all cosmic manifestations, visible and invisible, answer and which establish a role for each of them. We identify this order with the project of the G. A. of the U., of whom we become channels for the realization of his will, but not in the form of blind obedience of a series of commandments, but as a discovery and knowledge that what I feel necessary in me, what answers my interior need of order reflects its own. We will not be simple executors, but we will create within us and through us the design of the G. A. Of the U. Because it will become our own design, we will then know what is correct for us to do, in the same way in which a Master, naturally finds his place within the columns.

One could object that to act in deference to commandments, rather than to act because we feel the same as rising within us, produces the same effects for the aim of the salvation of the individual. Ultimately, to obey is what is required from us, both in the social/political ambience as well as in that of institutionalized religions. However, to do something only because we are ordered to do this, even if with conviction, because it is deemed just in any case, it leads to a continuous repetition of the same things, in the same way in which nature proposes its own cycles, where there is no place for an evolution as it brings us back to what has already been said, already been done. Religions also consider their truths as given and final, so that the events that must be reconciled with them and which must adapt to them and not vice-versa. Creation is considered a closed fact, and the space which we inhabit already defined in all of its aspects. For a change to happen in this context, it is generally necessary that traumatic event happen, just like in nature every evolution has, as its effect a mutation which transforms the pre-existing balance. If instead we free ourselves from all external conditioning to adhere to what our conscience feels as necessary for ourselves, so we place ourselves at the service of one sole principle: that of Truth, to reproduce it in ourselves and through

us into the world we become free men, capable of evolving our thoughts in function of what changes around us, while rendering alive, the substrate from which our conscience draws. Space is in continuous transformation, in permanent creation, because in continuous evolution, is our capacity to acquire knowledge of our real nature and of the real nature of the G. A. Of the U. *It is not the act itself that guarantees salvation, but the implicit knowledge of the act, which expresses itself in our way of being.* It is a slow process, of fine tuning, which can lead to the identification between the thinking subject and the object thought about, up to the point in which the initiates secret, will be revealed to the Mason adept and he can finally affirm: *I am the G. A. Of the U..* In this perspective the final aim or the salvation does not consist in meeting in an enchanted place where one can satisfy ones desires, but, rather, in the re-unification and re-integration with the unity, in the condition of non-separation with the G. A. Of the U.

What has separated us, what keeps us divided on this plane? Many answer: sin, disobedience, fate, karma, but we prefer to answer: ignorance, the lack of knowledge of the divine design, motivation to which we can finally conduct the previous things. We must reach the knowledge of the G. A. Of the U., to reproduce the order that he has established for all manifestations of the being. But how can we recognize and re-propose this order? The serious risk which is inherent to the knoetic approach to truth is that of continuing listening and to tune in oneself to the frequencies of what we desire more intensely, to what, even on a subconscious level, the influence of culture, of the people close to us, of the environment, of life's experiences, induce us to recognize as just and true. Independent from considerations of the moral order, because it is not necessarily what we desire, represents evil, in any case, the aspirations of our spirit are not the will of the G. A. Of the U.. it is the error committed by the Demiurge, who, taken up by the desire to imitate the emanations of the Father, has created a world where he has placed his person and his desire at the centre of it, while superimposing his own law to that of the Father. It is easy to fall into a similar error, and place ourselves, in turn, as demiurges that follow the aspirations of their soul, convinced that they are re-proposing the divine order. To overcome this filter and go back to the Origin, to the ordering Principle of existence, to the matrix of all forms, requests a great effort of will to abandon every pre-existing criterion of value in ourselves, every effort of our reason to reduce the manifestations to ones capacity of comprehension, to allow our conscience and our intuition, the possibility to perceive the spark of the primeval message and to recognize ourselves within it. It is a message that reverberates everywhere, that animates matter, that has always been but which renovates itself and incessantly re-acquires a new shape, every time that we re-propose it within ourselves and through us, transforming and determining the reality that surrounds us. The mind, thought, have influence on matter, whether we are aware of it or not. We can continue to adapt to the laws of nature, and influence on its evolution in a traumatic and casual nature, or, in recognizing the necessity and aim of our existence on this plane, we can draw on the spiritual planes to recognize ourselves in the G. A. of the U's project, and accomplish it. When the mechanical Id gives way to the spiritual Id, the individual stops doing what is more probable, to do an act of conscious volition which brings about a conscious and finalized change, which re-proposes the creative act. The key for salvation, the final aim of creation necessarily passes through the consciousness of its origin: from the Principle.

The esoteric approach carried forward to this point, is based on the will of man to search for Truth, through an introspective knowledge of one's nature, of the internal microcosm, as it is in an

analogue correspondence with the external universe, the macrocosm. It is based on the intimate conviction that the primordial information that orders the whole universe, is inscribed within us and we possess it memory, which we must bring up from the subconscious level to the conscious one what we are on this plane is a reflexion of what we were, and what we were is what we could return to be again. It does not use logic as an instrument of investigation, but it relies on intuition, it does not deduce, but it proves for itself; it does not execute, but it verifies; it does not believe, but it feels within itself. It is easily understood how a criterion that is so subjective could be considered absolutely improper and unreliable, because it is not supported by evidence that is objective. In other words it cannot be compared with a scientific method which offers data and answers that are certain to the questions concerning the laws of nature. But is it so? I would like to attempt a brief look at the main scientific theories of physics to extract some ideas about the representation of reality that they offer.

1900 – the German physicist Max Planck, in trying to explain how the electric field remains in balance within a hot box, must insert in his equations a hypothesis that up till then was unthinkable: energy is not a continuous unicum, but it travels in indivisible packets of defined proportions and which are proportionate to the frequency (i.e. the colour) of the electromagnetic waves, which he calls “quanta” of energy. At that moment he could not understand the reasons at the base of this behaviour of energy, but the formula works.

1905 – an unknown clerk in the patent office in Bern, who answers to the name of Albert Einstein sends to a scientific magazine, 3 articles in which he expounds and equal number of revolutionary ideas. In the first he proves the corpuscular nature of matter, while being able to carry out the measurement of the dimensions of the atom. After 2300 years the intuition of Democritus, the Greek philosopher who was the first to have postulated the atomic composition of matter, was proven. In the second article he explained the photoelectric effect, i.e. the reason why some metals, if they are bombarded by a beam of light, will emit electrons. It is the work for which he received the Nobel Prize: to explain the phenomenon he had to confirm Plank’s hypothesis that even that particular electromagnetic wave, which we call light, is divided into “Quanta”, into light corpuscles, to which he gave the name of photons. In the third article he illustrated the first version of what would become his masterpiece: the Theory of Relativity

Two events whose further developments would change forever, not only the empiric knowledge of all humanity, but also the way of doing science and interpret reality up until then Newtonian mechanics was unanimously accepted, and according to it the universe is constituted of a container called space, within which the bodies moved, attracted to one another by a force called gravity, which is transmitted instantaneously and directly from one to the other and which obliges them to abandon linear motion. All this happens along the axis of an absolute measurement called time, on the basis of which every event can be classified as having happened before or after in respect to the others. Within the classic mechanics, given the initial conditions of a physical system, it is possible to know precisely its future evolutions, within space and along time. As well as that of gravity, there is another force that governs nearly all the phenomena of nature: electromagnetic force. Around the middle of the 18 hundreds, they study about electricity and magnetism, e visionary genius called Faraday imagines that the forces cannot be transmitted instantaneously from one body to another,

but are transmitted and travel along a dense web of “force lines” which today we call “a field”, which, by interposing between the electric and magnetic sources and modifies them, and in the same way it is modified. But are they real lines? How can we see them? Based on Faraday’s intuition, the great Scottish mathematician James C. Maxwell formulated in a series of equations, the action of the fields and of electromagnetic force. The first consequence is the discovery that magnetism and electricity are two aspects of a single force, which explains an amazing series of phenomena, including the working of atoms and the way that particles are kept together, but the most beautiful discovery is that the equations explain what light is. They highlight how Faraday’s force lines can vibrate and undulate like the waves in the sea, and which run at a speed that Maxwell calculates and which is equal to that of light! Therefore they are not only real but we “see” only the Faraday lines that vibrate, and this is not all: they can vibrate with a different intensity and these frequencies are nothing else than the colours of the spectrum of visible light, but they can also produce waves with frequencies that had never been seen until then.... it will be Hertz who will discover these waves, with which Marconi will build the first radio.

On these premises Einstein reformulated completely Newtonian mechanics: with the special theory of relativity of 1905 he hypothesized that time and space are not two absolute and independent dimensions, but they are connected to form a dimension called space-time, which, on the basis of the postulate of the constancy of the speed of light (independently from the speed of the source of emission and the state of motion of the observer), keeps the validity of physical laws in all reference systems this means that two observers in two different systems, in relative motions between them, will perceive, one in respect to the other, different values of space and time, allowing (for significant speeds, close to that of light) to the phenomenon of the contraction of space and time. The two observers will not be able to perceive the simultaneousness of events, because according to their relative speed, they will see the facts in different times: it is not possible to establish an absolute before or after. At the same time we have a dilation of what is present time, for an observer, equal to the time that light requires to carry information of an event (for an inhabitant of the earth this extended present lasts: a few seconds from the Moon, 15 minutes from Mars, 2 million years from the constellation of Andromeda). Our idea of a present and of a succession of events is only due to the limits of our perceptions. Esoteric tradition has always sustained that, when we refer to the totality of the being (the entire universe?), there is no reason to speak of a before and an after, but rather of an eternal present where all is in context. In 1915, after 10 years of gestation, Einstein’s theory finds its completion with the formulation of general relativity: the last bastion of classic mechanics, which related to space and gravity. Einstein has a great intuition in understanding that space, is nothing other than the gravitational field, which folds and curves under the effect of the mass of matter. We are not immersed in an empty container, but space, or better still, space-time is like a flexible mollusc (it is Einstein’s definition) which deforms because of the weight of matter, and it is these deformations that define the orbits of the planets. It is an impressive simplification of the world: it is only made of fields and particles, all material elements that move, undulate, dilate and bend. In this vision, space-time lengthens and shortens on the basis of the nearby masses: it is not only in relation with the different relative speeds of the observers. The distortion of time becomes objective: it flows more slowly in proximity of the great masses, general relativity foresees also that space-time is not closed but it expands and the expansion originated in

the explosion of a minuscule and extremely hot universe: this is the Big Bang. Few wanted to believe, until they heard the scream of Sophia. The Gnostic cosmogonies tell that the Father and his emanations lived in harmony within the Pleroma, essence of completeness and union. But the son of Sophia tried to imitate the creative action of the Father, but he gave life to the world of dualities and division, outside the fullness of the Pleroma. When Sophia, knowledge, realized that the fruit of her own womb had corrupted the divine order, she emitted a scream both of pain and of hope, which should act as a lighthouse for all those who wanted to start the search of the lost unity, and which still resounds in the universe. In 1964 the American astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert W. Wilson discovered the background cosmic radiation which still pervades the entire universe. That of Sophia is a metaphor born of an ancient knowledge, which had captured the essentiality of cosmic order. It tells us that from the Big Bang, from the beginning, a signal departed, a vibration which is sound and light, a message that still reverberates in all of creation and that contains all the information of the initial order. That information is in all matter; it is in space and in time, both of them also matter; it is in each one of us, who are made from that same matter: a combination of atoms and particles that the stellar Athanors have distilled, starting from that initial explosion. It is due to the limitation of our senses if we cannot perceive the full valence: an observer who, from the beginning, has travelled at the speed of light, would find himself at the edges of the expansion of space time, and he would be living a continuing present with the instantaneous perception of all that for the universe has been and still must be.

From the immensely large to the immensely small. Plank's quantum studies, carried on by the Danish physicist Niels Bohr, and by other brilliant physicists, that create a new mechanics called quantum, Bohr was the first to hypothesize that even the energy of electrons was "quantized", that is it can assume only certain discrete values, and that these can only jump from one to the other of the allowed atomic orbits (quantum jumps). In 1925 the change: Heisenberg formulates the first equations of quantum mechanics by hypothesizing that electrons do not always exist, but that they materialize only when they interact with another system, through quantum leaps, that are the only moments in which they are real. Between one leap and another, when no one interacts with them, they are in no precise place, and it is not possible to determine precisely position and speed, but only probabilistic criteria. It is not even possible to establish precisely where the electron will reappear. Probability takes the place of classic determinism. Material reality is not objective, but it depends on the interactions between subject and object. Quantum mechanics does not describe the intrinsic characteristics of a physical system, but only how this physical system is perceived by another physical system, which, with its interaction, modifies the evolution of the first. Reality can be perceived only as interaction. In the meantime new elementary particles are discovered (neutrinos, quarks, bosons, gluons, positrons), whose nature is described by quantum mechanics. In effect they are not particles, or corpuscles: it is the energy quanta of the respective fields, as the photon is the quantum of the electromagnetic field. They take on the nature of particles or waves on the basis of the system with which they enter into a relationship, or better, depending on the nature of the system they relate with, we expect them to take on. To this end, the experiment with the double slit is illuminating. If make a stream of electrons or photons pass through a slit, on the screen placed behind we identify their nature of particles. If we make it pass through two slits onto the same panel, we notice on the screen behind, the typical interferences that the waves create (like

those of the sea when they pass through a strait: past it they overlap and interfere among themselves). Then if only one electron or photon has been allowed to pass at a time through only one slit, we again notice the corpuscular nature. But, and this is the extraordinary thing, the same single electron or photon shot against a panel with two slits, on the panel behind it has produced the same wave interference, as if it had passed through both of the holes! By changing the way we look at a physical event, we also change the nature of the event; not only does reality manifest itself only when we observe it, that is when we interact with it, but we also define “the form of manifestation”. We can still affirm that science is only exactness and determinism, an objective description of reality, while thought and awareness called up by the esoteric tradition, they are only fantasies, without any point of contact with objective reality? What is real, what is objectively so? The physicist James Jeans (1877 – 1946) in the book “The Mysterious Universe” writes: “the current of consciousness goes towards a mechanical reality: the universe starts to resemble evermore so, to a great thought rather than a great machine. The mind doesn’t seem to be an accidental intruder within the reign of matter (....) it should instead be received at the creator and governor of the reign of matter.

De Broglie was the first to hypothesize the wavelike nature of matter, now universally accepted. We have seen how the force lines of the fields oscillate and how the elementary particles at the base of all matter are nothing more than the vibrations of the respective fields, where they fluctuate continuously between existing and not existing. The vibration is nothing more than a sound, and all Cabalistic tradition is based on the assumption that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are associated with special vibrations at the basis of creation and transformation of matter. Everything has its own name, in the sense that it corresponds to a precise sound/vibration which has “called it into existence”. Think of the Book of Genesis, where it is said that God led to Adam, the animals that he had shaped so that he could give them “a name”: in whatever way he called them, that would have been their name, so that they would have been the result of the vibration corresponding to their name. For Cabala, the names and things are similar to “tremulous flames” rising from one single root: the name of God, which has infinite variants, but all unpronounceable.

The probabilistic vision of reality, as it is presented by quantum physics, calls up an order that underlies the same reality which exists potentially in all possible forms, and which then find their expression in an exterior order, fruit of one of the many possible expressions. One owes to the physicist David Bohm the vision of a conventional universe, where there is an implied plane in which all is pure energy which contains all potential manifestation. In it the implications are formed, that is the instructions, the message, and the matrix of what then finds form in the explicit order, which is the phenomenon reality. The transmission of information between an implicated and an explicated order does not come about by means of a physical passage between two separate worlds, but through a “resonance”, a “holo-movement” as he defines it, so that all the original information is instantaneously transferred in any of the various forms that become real.

A non local connection, at a speed higher than that of light (which in Einsteinian physics instead represents the speed limit at which they can travel) which today finds a confirmation in the phenomenon of Entanglement. The particles of the world visible to us are not therefore individually fragmented entities, but extensions of a single fundamental totality; the reflexes issued by a single light are many. According to Bohm we live in an in-formed universe, where the manifestations on

the sensory plane, however many they can be, are only a reflexion of a single underlying reality. The example of the fish in the aquarium is famous. Suppose we have two TV cameras that film a fish in an aquarium: one in front and the other on the side. If we stop at the two images transmitted to the two monitors. We could think that we have two different fish, given the different angle from which they are filmed by the cameras. Instead, when the fish moves the cameras transmit the movement instantaneously, and an observer who ignores the real situation could think that the “two” fish are moving simultaneously when in reality they are different images of a single underlying reality. The instrument at the disposal of all beings, to understand the Truth, is given by conscience, which creates a direct bond between the implied and explicated order, so that the one can recognize himself in the other, so that they can cancel the appearance to unveil the real order of the being. Don’t these affirmations sound familiar?

The theory of general relativity and standard quantum theory of particles. Two monuments that have changed the perception of the world also for science. Two theories built on mathematical equations on the basis of which many phenomena have been foreseen, which have been proven by the facts (one for all: the discovery of the anti-electron or positron, was foreseen by Dirac’s formulas. A little later said particles were identified: it is the discovery of anti-matter). Two theories that work. Are they therefore exact? Even Ptolemy’s formulae to calculate the orbits of the planets work, even Newton’s formula, and yet their representations of their underlying realities have been successively confuted and replaced by other visions. The state of understanding of the Truth is therefore an ongoing process depending on the knowledge that we have of it. Until said knowledge does not extend to the successive degrees, what we know can appear partial, but anyhow true. I mean that in every age what was “believed” as true, it was so because it was what was allowed by human capacities at that time. But I also mean to say that we cannot believe that we know the Truth because of this, as unfortunately many, too many organizations of all kinds claim. This is why we must cultivate doubt, this is why we must be tolerant, that I interpret it as an invitation to let everyone to cultivate their doubts and follow their intuitions.

What we know is true but it isn’t the Truth. The Theory of General Relativity and Standard Quantum Particle Theory are true, but incompatible between each other: for Einstein the world is a curved space where all is continuous. For quantum theory the world is a flat space where “quanta” quiver, finished packets of energy. Science is making many attempts to integrate the two theories into one single theory of all for the unification of forces. We speak of String Theory, where we foresee 11 dimensions (the same as the Sephirot!), of multi-verses, of loop quantum gravity. This last theory proposes an interesting vision. It abandons the continuous space and assumes the shape formed by quanta, gravity particles that are not in space, but “are” space, which forms, materializes for their interaction with other particles. But the most innovative thing is that, from the formulas, the variable of time disappears, in the sense that time is not an external element of the world to which the events relate, anymore, but it is totally born within the world, it is also the result of the interaction between particles. Time is born in the world, and it is functional to the system for which it is born. There isn’t any more, a space that contains the world. Time and space don’t exist, except as a function of the needs of a physical system to express itself in relation to other physical systems. Once again a world made of relations rather than things.

How does all this relate with what our senses normally transmit to us about the passage of time, to the succession of the events, to the consistency of matter and to the same possibility that, given certain conditions, the systems evolve according to deterministic, rather than probabilistic laws, as quantum physics teach? The answer resides in the concept of relationship. Even when the esoteric tradition affirms that time and space do not exist, it does not intend to negate experience of phenomena, nor does physics say that every system of physics does not have its own intrinsic reality. Rather they intend to say that, since every system exists as an interaction and relation with others, with which they enter into a relationship, and with which they can enter into a relationship. This is also true for man: it is true that at a sub-atomic level all is probabilistic and anything could happen, but it happens when systems enter into a relationship with us, and when we enter into a relationship, what is more probable will happen for us, given the few aspects for which we relate. If we could enter into a relationship with more or even all the aspects of a system, or in a way that is different from the actual one, then we will be able to it a completely different manner. Therefore, by saying that reality or time do not exist, we intend to say that time and reality may not be only as we perceive them at our present level of experience/knowledge. We know how to use only part of the potential of the human brain, just as we use only part of the genes in our DNA, in the same way in which the universe there exists a form of energy and of matter, still called dark today, of which we notice the effects but which we have not been able to identify. By becoming aware of all this, we may reach the capacity of interacting with reality, fuse our mind with the universal mind and be capable of integrating ourselves with the order that governs it. Where can we find the necessary energy and information necessary for this aim? Maybe the answer had already been given more than 2500 years ago, when an unknown sage wrote the exhortation “Nosce te ipsum” on the pediment of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

ORDO AB CHAO. We have made a quick examination of many aspects tied to the esoteric tradition and to scientific research, while risking being unorganized and superficial. But at the centre of the concept of Order, object of this seminar, there is the necessity to bring to a unity, to a unitary and homogenous vision, all the aspects that contribute in defining our perception of reality, of Truth, so as to capture its most intimate essence. Even if the paths and fields of improvement are multiple, we must never lose sight the purpose of the whole. Otherwise we risk becoming like the technicians who, after having dismounted a radio to see all the pieces, ask themselves where the music has gone This is what Freemasonry tries to promote through the work of the Lodge: to put together the experiences and the sensibilities of each Brother to be able to join what is separated, along the path towards the light which unites us.