

BRAZILIAN FREEMASONRY IN THE 21st CENTURY

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1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Brazilian Freemasonry is the second largest in the world, with more than 230 thousand regular Freemasons. The Brazilian grand lodges of the *mainstream* form three major national strands: the Grand Orient of Brazil, with its state districts; the state Grand Lodges of Brazil, confederated with the CMSB – Confederation of Symbolic Freemasonry of Brazil; and the independent State Grand Orients, gathered in COMAB – Masonic Confederation of Brazil.

1.1. Grand Orient of Brazil - GOB

The Grand Orient of Brazil, commonly called by its acronym, GOB,¹ was founded on June 17, 1822, in the city of Rio de Janeiro. It was the second Masonic grand body created in Brazil. The first was the "Brazilian Grand Orient", founded in 1809, in Salvador, which had its work ended on March 30, 1818, by virtue of the royal charter of King John VI.² However, the Grand Orient of Brazil was the first Brazilian masonic body created in a regular Masonic way (regularity of origin) and is the oldest grand body still in operation in the country.

Its creation was achieved through the division of the Lodge "*Commercio e Artes na Idade do Ouro*" into three, giving rise to the Lodges "*União e Tranquilidade*" and "*Esperança de Niterói*". Thus, from these three lodges, it was possible to found the Grand Orient of Brazil, which had José Bonifácio as its first Grand Master, followed by the then Prince Regent, Peter, who on September 7, 1822 would declare the Independence of Brazil, becoming Emperor King Peter I, and would soon close Freemasonry on suspicion of conspiracy, with the support of José Bonifácio, the first Grand Master.

Only after the abdication of King Peter I, in 1831, the columns of the Grand Orient of Brazil were rebuilt, with José Bonifácio, again, as its Grand Master. In 1842, the Grand Orient of Brazil began to have its first permanent headquarters, an old theater renovated to become the Masonic Palace of Lavradio, whose temple complex is the oldest still in operation in Brazil.

From the Grand Orient of Brazil originated the other national Masonic strands: the Grand Lodges that make up the CMSB, from 1927; and the Grand Orients confederated to COMAB, from 1973.³

Adopting a diversity of rites, such as Adonhiramite, Brazilian, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Modern, Schröder's, Ritual of Emulation, and Rectified Scottish Rite, the Grand Orient of Brazil has more than sixty thousand members, divided into almost three thousand lodges present in all Brazilian states, in addition to the Federal District.

With the move of the federal capital to Brasília, in 1960, the Grand Orient of Brazil began the construction project of its new headquarters, concluding it at the end of the 80s. In addition to housing its offices, a temple, an auditorium, a studio and a ballroom, the complex has a museum and a library. On its premises is also the building of the "Estrela de Brasília" Lodge, the first lodge in the new capital and original owner of the land.

Due to its federative model, developed over the decades, the Grand Masters of the District Grand Orients have limited powers compared to a conventional Grand Master, which has generated

¹ Official website: <https://www.gob.org.br/>

² MOREL, M.; SOUZA, F. J. O. *The power of Freemasonry: the history of a secret society in Brazil*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2008.

³ ISMAIL, K. *History of Brazilian Freemasonry for Adults*. Londrina: A Trolha, 2017.

conflicts and interventions throughout history. Also, the lodges are linked to the Grand Orient of Brazil in an "indissoluble" character, and it is theoretically not allowed to disconnect from the federation.⁴

1.2. Confederation of Symbolic Freemasonry of Brazil - CMSB

Founded on November 12, 1965 and installed on July 27, 1966, the Confederation of Symbolic Freemasonry of Brazil – CMSB⁵ brings together the 27 Brazilian State Grand Lodges, present in all states and in the Federal District, and which, together, add up to approximately 110 thousand Freemasons, being the largest Masonic branch in the country, both in number of lodges and members.

The first Grand Lodges emerged in 1927, with the rupture of relations between the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the United States of Brazil⁶, member of the World Conference of Supreme Councils, and the Grand Orient of Brazil, which insisted on the irregularity of simultaneously governing the symbolic degrees and the high degrees. The Supreme Council, then, declared the Grand Orient of Brazil as irregular and the Brazilian territory Masonic unoccupied, opening the doors for the emergence of Grand Lodges. The Grand Orient of Brazil, on the other hand, would only correct this irregularity in 1951, when it promulgated its new constitution.

The CMSB replaced the Round Table system: a kind of conferences in which the Brazilian Grand Lodges sought to coordinate joint actions. However, the Round Tables did not provide permanent national representation to the Grand Lodges, nor continuous actions, which led to the founding of the confederation.

Governed by a General Secretariat, the CMSB has two deliberative bodies: the General Assembly and the Conference of Grand Masters. It also has a Secretariat of Foreign Relations, which coordinates the Foreign Relations Seminars of the confederated Grand Lodges.

Among the services provided by the CMSB to Brazilian Freemasonry in general and to Grand Lodges in particular, the following stand out: the virtual library, with thousands of exclusively Masonic titles and of public access, having been the first of its kind in the country; UniCMSB, which works as a kind of corporate university, being a distance learning platform, with free courses on Masonic and management topics; and its publishing house, through which it publishes printed books and e-books, some of which are the result of literary contests open to all regular Freemasons of the three strands (GOB, CMSB and COMAB).

As a confederation, the Grand Lodges remain affiliated to the CMSB of their own free will, being sovereign as to this affiliation. As examples, Grand Lodge of the Mato Grosso do Sul left the CMSB in 1990, returning the following year; and Grand Lodge of the Rio Grande do Sul too, in 2017, returning a few months later.

1.3. Masonic Confederation of Brazil - COMAB

The Masonic Confederation of Brazil – COMAB – is the permanent body that brings together the state Grand Orients commonly called "independent", present in almost all Brazilian states.

Restricting the birth of COMAB⁷ to the election for Grand Master General of the Grand Orient of Brazil in 1973 would be a oversimplification. The tension between the Grand Orient of Brazil and its District Grand Orients was clear since at least 1962, when six District Grand Masters published a

⁴ ISMAIL, K. *Masonic Breviary of the XXI Century*. Brasília: No Esquadro, 2025, p. 174.

⁵ Official website: <http://cmsb.org.br/>

⁶ It changed the end of the name, from *the United States of Brazil* to *the Federative Republic of Brazil*, in 1968, due to the change in the official name of Brazil and its national symbols.

⁷ Official website: <https://comab.org.br/>

document demanding more autonomy and suggesting the change of the federative model by the confederative, similar to the Grand Lodges.⁸

Ten years later and without their demands being met, the Grand Masters of 7 District Grand Orients of the Grand Orient of Brazil, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, Goiás, Pernambuco and Minas Gerais, met in São Paulo and organized a slate of opposition to the Grand Master General. In response, the Grand Orient of Brazil suspended the Grand Master and decreed intervention in the District Grand Orient of São Paulo, which was overturned in the common courts.

Then, at the beginning of 1973, the election for Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Brazil took place, with the Deputy Grand Master, Osmane Vieira de Resende, as the candidate of the situation; and from the opposition, the one who was District Grand Master of the District Grand Orient of Minas Gerais, Athos Vieira de Andrade. The opposition won with almost 2/3 of the votes. However, in the month following the election, the Superior Electoral Court of the Grand Orient of Brazil annulled more than seven thousand votes, approximately six thousand of which were in favor of the opposition. This led to requests for annulment of the election, ignored by the Superior Electoral Court of the Grand Orient of Brazil.⁹

To make matters worse, the then Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Brazil, at the end of his term, summoned the District Grand Masters to a meeting on May 27, 1973, and his offenses led most of the State Grand Masters present to withdraw. Then, gathered in a hotel, they wrote a proclamation that would prepare the ground for, on August 4, 1973, eleven District Grand Orients that had disassociated themselves from the Grand Orient of Brazil to meet in Belo Horizonte - MG and found what was called "College of Grand Masters", and which would later change its name to Masonic Confederation of Brazil - COMAB: MG, SP, CE, RN, DF, MT, PR, SC, PE, MA and ES.¹⁰

The estimated numbers of the sum of the Grand Orients of COMAB are more than 45 thousand Freemasons divided into almost two thousand lodges, and its official headquarters is located at the headquarters of the Grand Orient of Minas Gerais – GOMG.

2. RESEARCH PRESENTATION

This research aimed, in general, to know the opinion of Brazilian regular Freemasons members of 32 grand lodges and grand orients confederated to the CMI – Inter-American Masonic Confederation, about their perception of Freemasonry and the Masonic perspectives for this 21st century.

With its results, it seeks to know a little more about the opinions and perceptions of the Brazilian Freemason about the strengths and weaknesses of his Freemasonry, as well as his desires for its realization for the coming years. Thus, in addition to an analysis of the internal environment of Brazilian Freemasonry, which can serve as useful information for the development of action plans by the different grand lodges and grand orients; One can, above all, understand the different organic strands of thought that stand out among the Freemasons who form the base of the Masonic pyramid.

3. METHOD

In this chapter, the structure of the data collection instrument, the procedures that led to the collection, the methods adopted for the analysis of the collected data and the sample participating in the research are presented.

⁸ ISMAIL, K. *Brazilian Freemasonry: the hidden history*. Vol. I. Brasília: No Esquadro, 2021, p. 162-164.

⁹ SOBRINHO, O. S. *A Light in History: the meaning and formation of COMAB*. Florianópolis: Ed. O PRUMO, 1998.

¹⁰ Op. cit., p. 227-238.

3.1. Data collection procedure and instrument

The survey was carried out through a virtual questionnaire, developed and made available via link by a research tool provided free of charge by Google, and disseminated in the Brazilian Masonic environment via websites and social networks in the period between February 21 and March 18, 2018, that is, for 25 full days. A total of 12,818 responses were obtained, which, after proper cleaning of the database, resulted in 7,817 valid responses.

The questionnaire was structured in such a way as to provide brevity in the answer, thus seeking to reduce its rejection among the target audience. Of the six questions that made up the questionnaire, three had the character of collecting basic profile data, which were: 1) Grand Lodge; 2) Age; 3) Order time. These data were collected in order to verify whether there are trends by geographic region, age group, or time in the institution. Two other quantitative issues were, in a way, opposite and complementary. One basically asked his brother what, in his opinion, Freemasonry "should do and is not doing" (repressed demand), while the other asked what Freemasonry "should not do and is doing" (dissatisfaction). The other question was open-ended, that is, of a more qualitative nature, and consisted of the following question: "How would you like to see Freemasonry in this twenty-first century?" (expectation).

Considering the number of variables available in questions 5 and 6 of the questionnaire, which allowed multiple markings, so as not to favor a concentration of markings in the first variables, the random distribution tool was used.

The questionnaire header explained the purpose of the survey and guaranteed the anonymity of the respondents, as well as the non-commercial use of the answers. Participants who answered the open question in an illegible way or with words out of context, such as "yes" or "no", were disregarded. Also, those who reported their year of birth under 18 years of age or over 114 years of age.

3.2. Participants

The valid sample obtained, in a total of 7,817 respondents, is equivalent to approximately 4% of the universe of Brazilian regular Masons, proving to be unprecedented and significant.

The representativeness of the sample was also verified by the distribution of valid answers among all the 32 Brazilian Masonic grand lodges and grand orients currently confederated to the CMI, following a certain proportionality to the declared number of members of each one. Of the respondents computed, 58% are members of Grand Lodges confederated to CMSB – Confederation of Symbolic Freemasonry of Brazil, 28% are Grand Orients confederated to COMAB – Masonic Confederation of Brazil, and 14% are members of the Grand Orient of Brazil - GOB.

3.3. Data analytics strategy

To obtain a preliminary knowledge of the quantitative data collected, an exploratory statistical analysis was performed. Such analysis allowed the identification and treatment of problems inherent to the data, such as the existence of *Outliers* and incomplete answers. Considering this step, the sequential analyses could be interpreted with more confidence, both by the researcher's knowledge of the characteristics of the data and by the recognition and treatment of the possible problems detected.

To perform the data analysis set of the present study, Microsoft Excel 2013 and SPSS 23.0 software were used. The first step performed was the description of the basic estimates of the variables, calculating their percentage, mean and standard deviation at the aggregate level of the sample. Correlation matrices were also obtained, indicating the relationship between the variables.

As a complement to this quantitative study, a content analysis of the answers collected in the open question (number 4) present in the questionnaire, which deals with the Freemason's expectation for Freemasonry in this twenty-first century, was carried out. Understanding the different expectations of Freemasons can contribute to a better understanding of their organizational views and opinions, which are not examined in quantitative questions 5 and 6.

The process of analysis of the content of the essay answers used is based on and main reference Bardin (2009). For this author, content analysis is seen as a method of textual analysis to interpret its message and understand its meanings. The method used emphasizes the presence of a certain characteristic or set of characteristics in a message in order to find the element that gives meaning to communication. In the case of multiple elements, it was decided to categorize the first element presented, as it was understood that it was the first that the respondent wished to expose. From there, categorization is carried out, grouping the data and defining common themes for the answers.

Categories are usually defined in two distinct ways. Following a positivist orientation, they can be defined a priori, based on hypotheses that guide the study. Or they can be defined a posteriori, based solely on the interpretation of the content obtained (BARDIN, 2009). In this case, it was decided to categorize by the second mode.

It is important to note that the analyses performed are interpretations that confer meanings to the messages collected. The texts exhibited can differ from the originals collected only by minor corrections regarding the correct use of the Portuguese language, but without modifying the meaning of their contents.

Following the method suggested by Bardin (2009), during the exploration of the collected data, the themes were coded to obtain the thematic representation of the content. The data were coded and aggregated into units according to the identification of the common characteristics between the answers. The categories and subcategories were then determined, containing units selected according to criteria of mutual exclusion, homogeneity, pertinence, objectivity and fidelity (BARDIN, 2009).

Also observing Bauer's (2002) suggestion, all the registration units were categorized, even if it is necessary to create a category such as "others", as was the case in this study. After the analysis strategy was delimited and the categories and subcategories were defined, the content of the answers was analyzed, which will contribute to the discussion of the results of the quantitative study.

3. RESULTS

The results of the questions that made up the questionnaire as described in the method, their crossings and their correlations are presented below.

3.1. Distribution

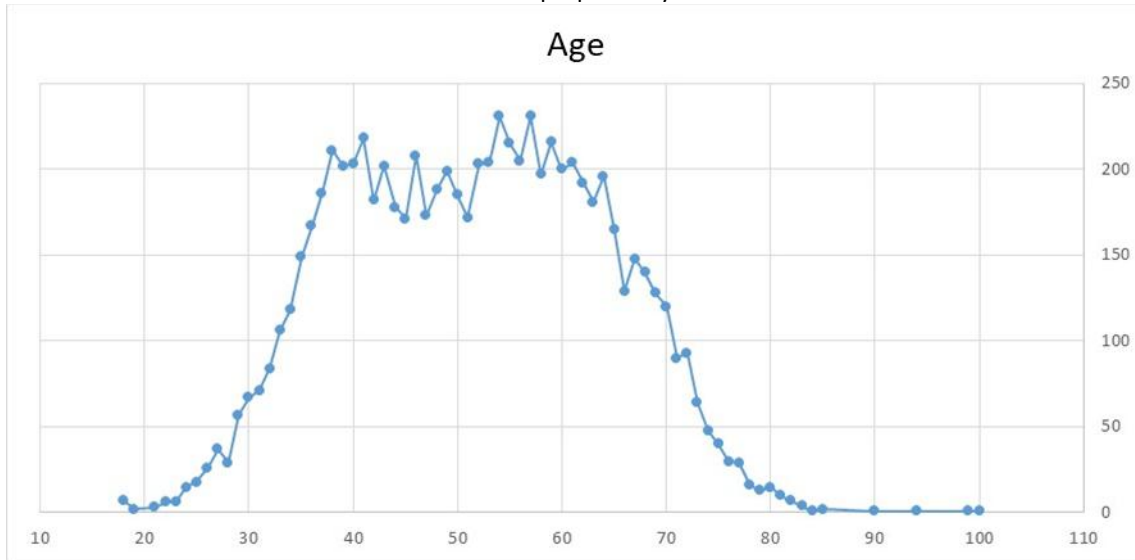
The participants of the research have a distribution relatively representative. It is observed that, of the 32 Brazilian Masonic grand lodges and grand orients considered, 12 of them (37.5%) accumulate approximately 80% of the participants. And they coincide exactly with the most populous Masonic grand lodges and grand orients in Brazil. Thus, there is almost a "Pareto", but distancing itself a little from the "20-80" concentration, thus presenting a greater distribution: "37-80", which is a positive point of Brazilian Freemasonry.

Table 1: Distribution of participants by Obedience
Source: prepared by the author

GRAND LODGES and GRAND ORIENTS	QTD	%
Grande Oriente do Brasil	1114	14,25%
Grande Loja Maçônica de Minas Gerais	888	11,36%
Grande Loja de Santa Catarina	755	9,66%
Grande Oriente Paulista	713	9,12%
Grande Oriente de Minas Gerais	539	6,90%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Mato Grosso do Sul	472	6,04%
Grande Loja do Paraná	379	4,85%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de São Paulo	377	4,82%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul	268	3,43%
Grande Oriente do Paraná	256	3,27%
Grande Oriente de Santa Catarina	254	3,25%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado da Bahia	208	2,66%
Grande Oriente do Rio Grande do Sul	199	2,55%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Espírito Santo	166	2,12%
Grande Oriente de Mato Grosso do Sul	160	2,05%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte	151	1,93%
Grande Loja Maçônica de Pernambuco	137	1,75%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Rondônia	135	1,73%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Distrito Federal	117	1,50%
Grande Oriente do Estado de Mato Grosso	82	1,05%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Mato Grosso	79	1,01%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Maranhão	63	0,81%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Goiás	62	0,79%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Pará	61	0,78%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Amapá	40	0,51%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Piauí	33	0,42%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Sergipe	29	0,37%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Roraima	20	0,26%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado de Alagoas	19	0,24%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Amazonas	15	0,19%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Acre	14	0,18%
Grande Loja Maçônica do Estado do Tocantins	12	0,15%
Total Geral	7817	100,00%

3.2. Age

Figure 1: Distribution chart of participants by Age
Source: prepared by the author



As can be seen, the age range of concentration of the participants is between 38 and 64 years of age, with a peak at 57 years and an overall average age of 52. Considering the current national legislation, which determines the status of elderly from the age of 60, 37% of the sample participating in this research is elderly Masons and, in just 05 years, the majority of respondents, approximately 51%, will be elderly.

Considering that the life expectancy of the Brazilian man, according to the IBGE¹¹, is less than 76 years old, it is believed that, following the current standards of levels of initiation and voluntary and involuntary evasion, in 2033 Brazilian Freemasonry will reduce the number of members by 1/3.

3.3. Membership Time

Table 2: Distribution of participants by membership time range
Source: prepared by the author

Membership Time	Qty	Part.
10 years or more	3877	49,60%
From 5 years to less than 10	1717	21,97%
From 3 years to less than 5 years	868	11,11%
From 1 year to less than 3	864	11,04%
Less than 1 year	491	6,28%
Grand Total	7817	100,00%

The data indicates that there is a concentration of approximately 50% of participants with 10 years or more of Masonic membership, followed by almost 22% in the range between 5 and 10

¹¹ Source: <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/pesquisa-e-inovacao/noticia/2017-12/expectativa-de-vida-do-brasileiro-e-de-758-anos-diz-ibge>

incomplete years, with rates falling by range with less time of membership, and those who joined less than 1 year ago corresponded to approximately 6%.

An estimated annual gross growth of 6%, although it seems positive, means an average of less than 2 initiated Masons annually per lodge in Brazil, when considering that Brazil has an average of less than 30 regular Masons per lodge, historically verified through different editions of the *List of Lodges*. Also, this data of gross growth must be compared with that of dropout, whether voluntary or involuntary (such as exclusion and death). As the sum of regular members in Brazil has not shown relevant growth, it is assumed that this dropout level is close to the gross growth rate.

3.4. Age Range versus Membership Time

To test the propositions that emerged from the analysis of the time of order data, these data were crossed with the age group, in order to verify if there really is a problem of selection and retention of younger Masons.

Table 3: Age x Membership Time
Source: prepared by the author

Age Range	Less than 1 year	From 1 year to less than 3 years	From 3 years to less than 5 years	From 5 years to less than 10 years	10 years or more
20,00 - 29,00	10,82%	9,50%	3,92%	1,34%	0,18%
30,00 - 39,00	42,24%	37,78%	31,03%	24,61%	3,54%
40,00 - 49,00	29,39%	34,41%	36,68%	34,69%	14,71%
50,00 - 59,00	12,65%	14,48%	20,42%	26,88%	31,89%
60,00 - 69,00	4,90%	3,36%	7,04%	10,61%	35,80%
70,00 - 79,00	0,00%	0,46%	0,81%	1,75%	12,92%
80,00 - 89,00	0,00%	0,00%	0,12%	0,12%	0,96%

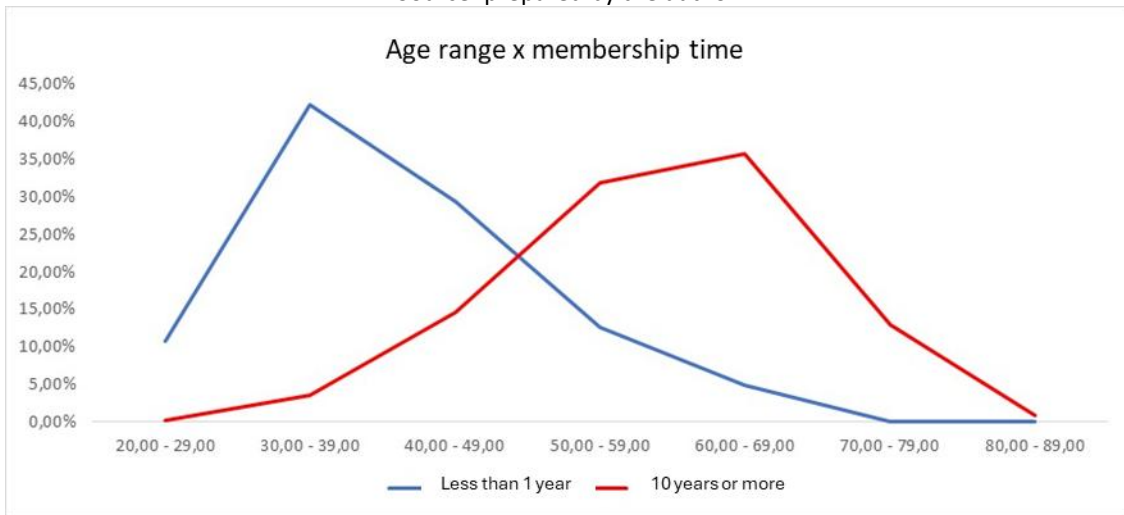
The table indicates a phenomenon in which, below 40 years of age, the number of Masons is inversely proportional to the membership time, while, from the age of 50, the number of Masons is proportional to the membership time.

What can also be observed is that, while more than 10 years ago the range of initiated candidates was, on average, between 40 and 69 years of age, in the last 05 years this range has been reduced to candidates between 30 and 49 years old.

Still, these data reinforce the sociological hypothesis presented by Ismail (2017), that there is a clash of two generations in Brazilian Freemasonry, having as a generational dividing mark, approximately, the year of birth in 1972, from which the new generation currently present (approximately 35%) and entering Freemasonry was born, with a diverse profile and incongruous with the predominant and governing profile of the institution, of Masons born before 1972.

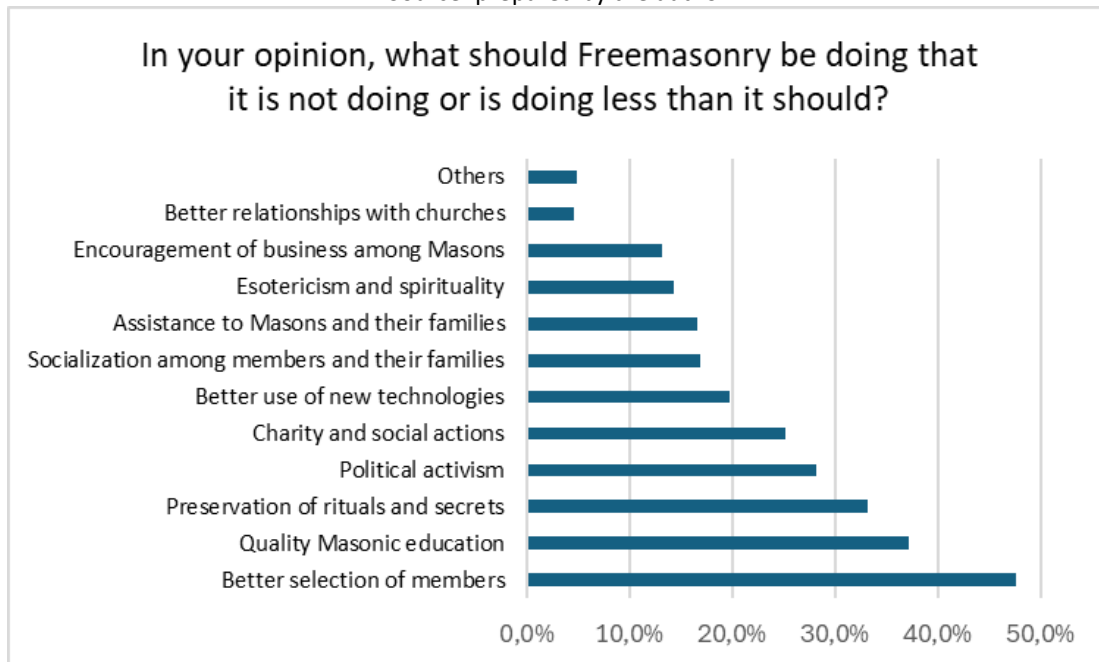
The following graph contributes to the visualization of these two generations:

Figure 2: Age Group x Time Order Chart
Source: prepared by the author



3.5. What Freemasonry should do and isn't (or is doing little)

Figure 3: Graph – What Freemasonry should do...
Source: prepared by the author



In a closed question of 11 automatically randomized options, so as not to favor the marking of the first options, in addition to the possibility of writing up to 03 options of their own, the participant was invited to select up to 03 options with which they believed that Freemasonry should do and is not doing or is doing little. In first place, with approximately 47%, there is "Best selection of members", followed by the option "Quality Masonic Education", with 37%, and the "Preservation of rituals and secrets", with 33%.

It is interesting to note that this closed question was presented in the questionnaire in order after the open question, which asks "How would you like to see Freemasonry in this twenty-first

century". It is noteworthy that the participants did not see this question about "What should Freemasonry do" before writing their comments on how they would like to see Freemasonry in this century. And, as can be seen, the 06 most voted options in this closed question coincide with some of the categories mapped in the content analysis of the answers to the open question, which evidences both the correct selection of options for the closed question when the questionnaire was developed, as well as the confirmation between the quantitative and qualitative data obtained, as well as the coherence and seriousness in the answer to the questionnaire by the participants.

It is important to emphasize that, despite similar themes, the approaches to this closed question and the open question that preceded it are different. While this closed question deals with a diagnosis of dissatisfaction, the open question deals with demand, that is, with desire, with the search for satisfaction. In any case, they are related, since dissatisfaction impacts what is expected. Thus, with content analysis, it will be possible to better understand the thoughts of the participants regarding these three variables that have generated the most dissatisfaction: selection of members, Masonic training and preservation.

What is even more interesting is the result of the intersection of this closed question with the two proposed generations, the younger and the older, seen through the prism of correlation. The correlation indicates the relationship between two categories; it can be positive (or direct) and negative (or inverse):

Table 4: What Freemasonry should do by Generation
Source: prepared by the author

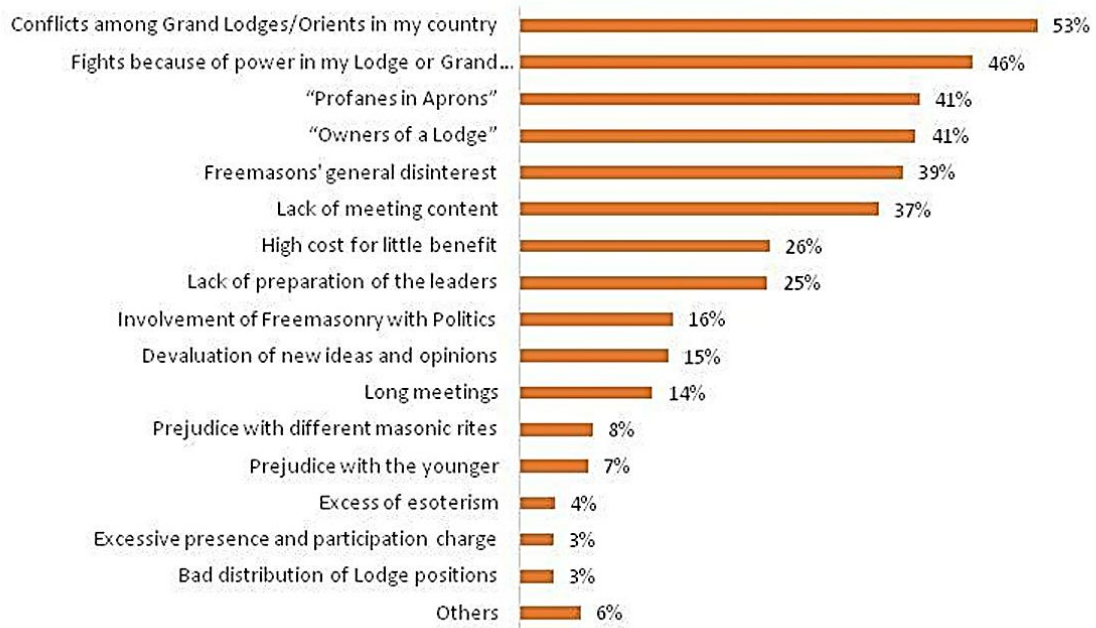
Focus	Until 1972	After 1972
Encouragement of business among Masons	,654	-,116
Assistance to Masons and their families	,633	,069
Quality Masonic education	-,559	-,284
Better use of new technologies	-,092	-,726
Preservation of rituals and secrets	-,062	,639
Political activism	,096	-,156
Socialization among members and their families	,108	-,065
Charity and social actions	-,167	,051
Esotericism and spirituality	-,03	,117
Better selection of members	-,247	,402
Better relationships with churches	-,073	,062

As verified with the crossover, younger people tend to expect more benefits from Freemasonry, such as business incentives and mutual aid to Freemasons and their families, probably because they are still in the financial and professional phase of seeking stability. By contrast, elders tend to advocate the preservation of Masonic rituals and secrets and better selection of members for the Order, while rejecting the use of new communication and information technologies in Freemasonry.

3.6. What do you dislike most about Freemasonry today?

This question aimed to verify the level of dissatisfaction of the Brazilian Freemason with the variables presented. Similar to the previous closed question, in addition to the possibility of creating new unforeseen options, the participant could select from one to five options, including the ones he created. It is noted that the options were also automatically randomized. Here is the result:

Figure 4: Graph – What do you dislike most about Freemasonry today?
 Source: prepared by the author



The data collected indicate that the main reasons for dissatisfaction are the conflicts between the Masonic powers, probably leveraged by the national uproar involving the issue of intervisitation that has lasted in Brazil in recent years, followed by the struggles for power.

In third and fourth place, respectively, there are the so-called "profane aprons", as Freemasons who do not have Masonic behavior are known in Brazil; and the so-called "Lodge owners", a phenomenon in which a Worshipful Master or a small group of them seeks to concentrate decision-making power in a Lodge.

As will be seen in the content analysis of the open question, these four main factors of dissatisfaction, the only ones to reach rates above 40%, according to the perception of the participants, are related to moral issues and, as many defend in their comments, are the result of poor selection and the precarious Masonic education offered today.

3.7. "Shouldn't and does" & "Should and doesn't"

Table 5: "Shouldn't and does" & "Should and doesn't"
Source: prepared by the author

		Age Range							Difference 20 x 80
		20,00 - 29,00	30,00 - 39,00	40,00 - 49,00	50,00 - 59,00	60,00 - 69,00	70,00 - 79,00	80,00 - 89,00	
"Should not do and does"	"Owners of a Lodge"	40,2%	42,1%	41,9%	42,6%	41,6%	44,7%	47,4%	7,2%
	"Profanes in Aprons"	40,7%	42,2%	42,4%	41,7%	43,9%	43,1%	55,3%	14,5%
	Fights because of power in my Lodge or Grand Lodge/Orient	51,0%	47,4%	49,5%	47,8%	49,3%	42,9%	36,8%	-14,2%
	Freemasons' general disinterest	41,8%	39,5%	39,9%	42,3%	40,7%	42,6%	31,6%	-10,2%
	Devaluation of new ideas and opinions	10,8%	15,6%	16,2%	16,3%	16,0%	14,7%	18,4%	7,6%
	Involvement of Freemasonry with Politics	17,0%	17,0%	16,0%	16,2%	17,8%	11,8%	7,9%	-9,1%
	Lack of meeting content	39,7%	38,2%	39,9%	36,3%	37,8%	40,6%	26,3%	-13,4%
	Long meetings	16,5%	14,6%	13,4%	14,0%	14,4%	13,5%	23,7%	7,2%
"Should do and does not do"	Charity and social actions	37,2%	30,3%	27,0%	24,5%	22,4%	17,7%	7,5%	-29,7%
	Masonic education with quality	39,3%	34,8%	33,6%	37,8%	41,6%	43,5%	45,0%	5,7%
	Business Incentive between freemasons	16,3%	18,7%	14,9%	12,6%	9,5%	7,4%	2,5%	-13,8%
	A better member selection	41,3%	43,3%	43,3%	48,1%	53,9%	58,4%	77,5%	36,2%
	Better use of new communication and information technologies	24,5%	20,9%	19,3%	19,6%	19,1%	21,0%	30,0%	5,5%

With a view by age group, we selected, for better visualization, those factors that presented the greatest difference between the younger and older groups, indicating, as can be seen in the intermediate groups, a change in focus according to age.

Thus, among the factors of dissatisfaction, that of "store owners" is directly proportional to age, as well as "profane people in aprons", the "devaluation of ideas and opinions" and, amazingly, the "long meetings". In other words, they generate more dissatisfaction among the elderly. On the other hand, the factors of "power struggles", "lack of interest of siblings", "involvement with politics" and "lack of content of meetings" are inversely proportional, that is, it bothers the younger generation more and bothers the older generation less.

In the same sense, among the factors of dissatisfaction (it should do), the factor of "better selection of members" showed an extremely marked directly proportional evolution among the older ones compared to the younger ones. As well as the factor of "charity and social actions" presented inversely proportional, with great appeal among the younger people and losing relevance with the advancement of age groups.

3.8. Content analysis

As already discussed in the method, here will be presented the results of the categorization and content analysis of the 7,818 answers to the open question, that is, the most qualitative one, which consisted of the following question: "How would you like to see Freemasonry in this twenty-first century?"

The categories identified were as follows:

Figure 5: Focus of the Brazilian Freemason by categories
Source: prepared by the author

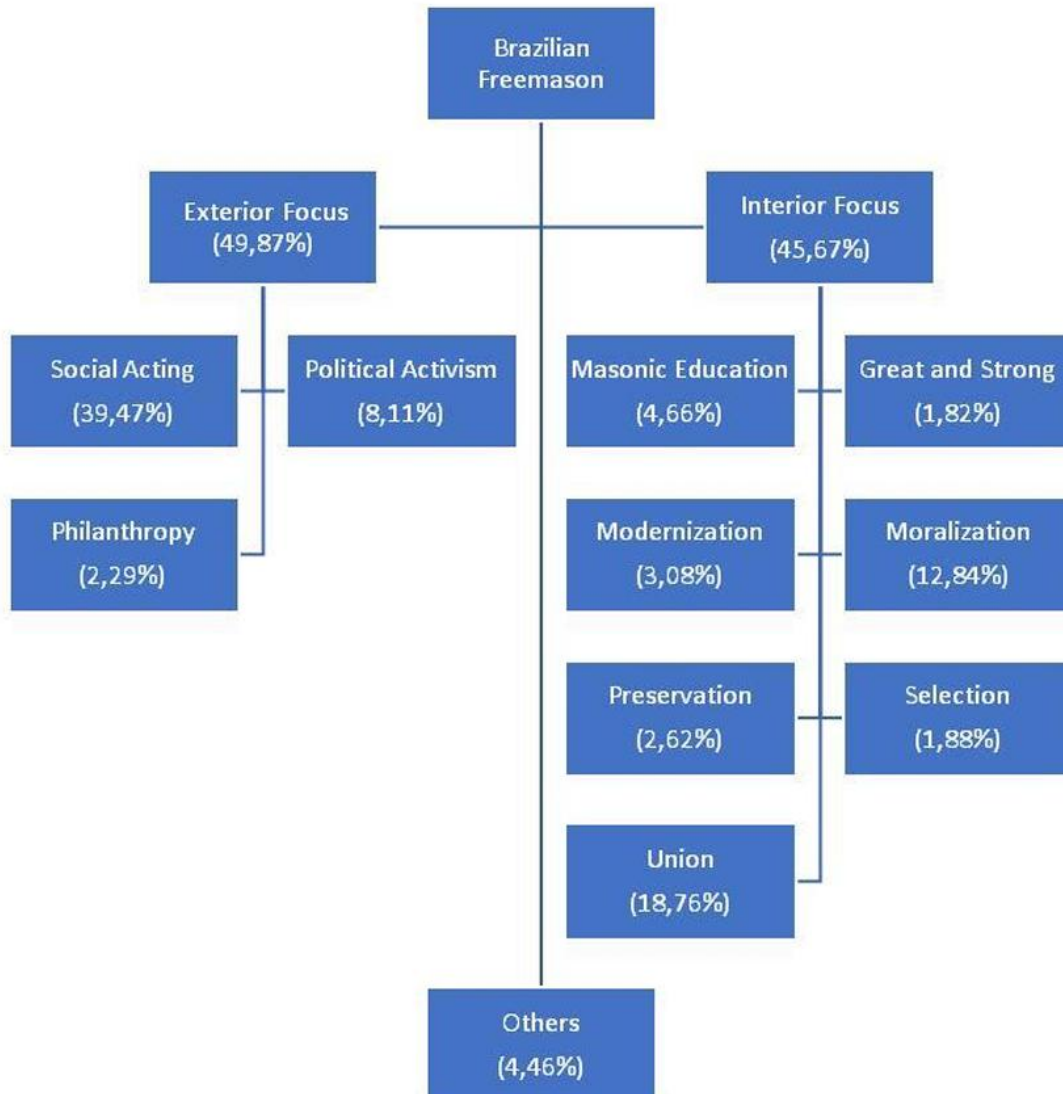
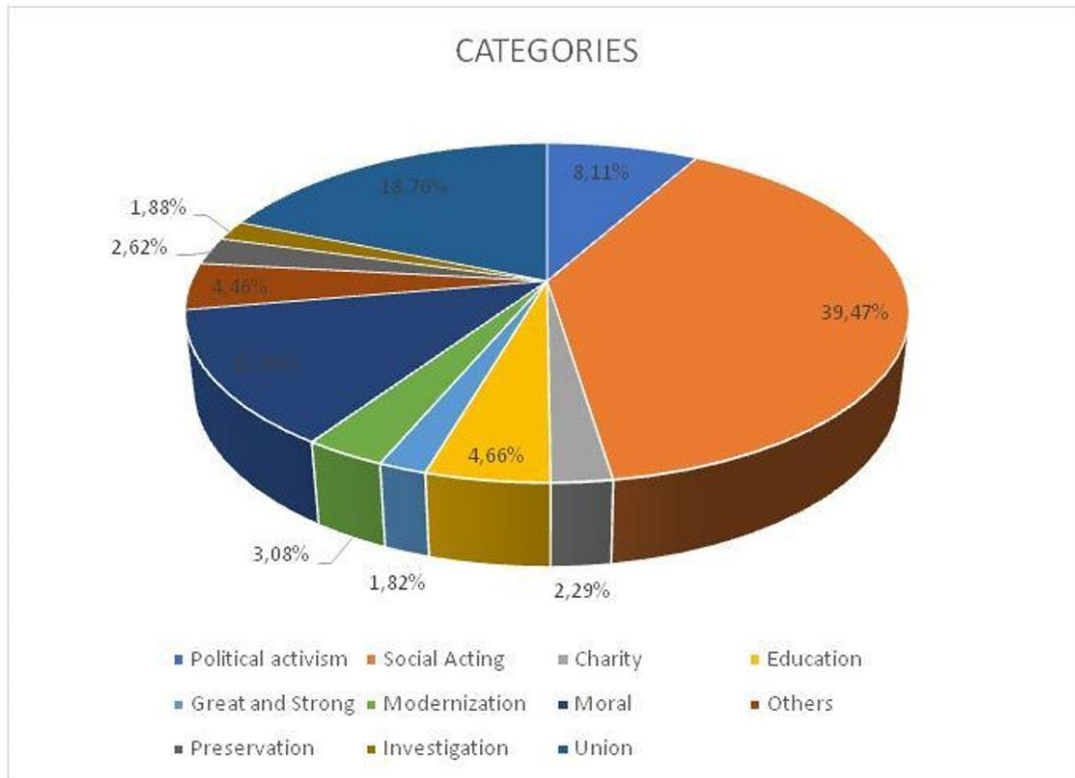


Figure 6: Categories
 Source: prepared by the author



As can be seen, the categories were divided into two groups, one of categories whose focus is the exterior of Freemasonry and the other of categories with an internal focus. Those with an outward focus indicate a greater concern of Freemasons in how Freemasonry presents itself or acts in society, as a cell of organized civil society. On the other hand, those focused on the interior reveal a greater concern of Masons with the problems, points of attention or priority issues perceived by them within the institution. Below is a brief report of the analysis of each category, accompanied by real phrases from respondents selected in order to represent the other answers classified in that category.

3.8.1. Outer Focus

Categories in which the concern of the participants with the presentation and performance of Freemasonry before society predominates. They are: social action, political activism and charity.

3.8.1.1. Category: Social Action

The Freemasons of this category, who represent the largest portion, approximately 40% of all participants, want a Freemasonry more focused on social action in a more generic way, that is, not only through philanthropy, but mainly in a more "macro" way, such as through the development of large social programs in sectors such as education, health, public safety, income distribution, intolerances and prejudices. They show some resistance to the involvement of Freemasonry with politics and believe that Brazilian Freemasonry is too "theoretical" and not very "practical" and should act more "outside the temple". His understandings are in the sense that there is no way to "make humanity happy" without social action.

The most used terms were: active, active, proactive, participative.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"More participatory in social issues, such as public security, education and health. Less concerned about getting closer to government institutions." (R50).

"I would like to see a Freemasonry more engaged in social problems, less interested or, at least, more impartial towards the political class of all levels" (R645).

"More active in issues that affect the population in general, such as democracy, education, health, public security, eradication of the level of poverty, etc." (R667).

"More active and less concerned with irrelevant issues. That is, more active in the social and moral sphere of our country" (R711).

"I would like it to be more active, participating effectively in the areas of health, education and security, encouraging morals and ethics and defending the virtues proposed in our manuals" (R2074).

"Interacting with more dynamism in society. To act in a more objective way, concerned with the problems that afflict the community and to contribute to the creation of better perspectives for society and for Brazil" (R2270).

"I would like to see Freemasonry stand up in defense of equality of all before the law and, above all, before the opportunities to obtain access to health, education and work, regardless of their origin, ethnicity, religion or gender" (R5119).

"Active, focused on its essence in the noble and perhaps unattainable mission of making humanity happy. However, without political engagements that unfortunately, at this moment, disgrace and contaminate the Order. We are discreet, let's keep it up." (R5322).

"I would like to see the Order becoming less and less a club of personal favoritism and more and more an altruistic and socially responsible entity" (R6929).

"Less involved in party politics and much more involved in social policy. More participatory with the citizen, especially in social causes" (R3184).

3.8.1.2. Category: Political Activism

The group in this category, formed by 8.11% of the participants, probably impacted by the series of corruption scandals at the federal level that have, since 2016, occupied the national media, and by the fact that this year 2018 is an election year, with elections at the federal and state levels, aspire to a Brazilian Freemasonry more focused on political activism, seeking to elect political Freemasons and expelling from their ranks Freemason-politicians involved in corruption. They believe that Freemasonry can assert its ethics in the legislative houses through elected brothers and, thus, resume its position as one of the protagonists of the Brazilian political elite, as it was in the nineteenth century.

The most used terms were: corruption, politics, politicians, ethics.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"As our country is going through a very serious political phase, I would like a more active Freemasonry in the political field." (R79).

"Participating closely in political life and rigorously demanding that political Freemasons guide their acts according to what they have learned from the Order" (R313).

"Acting in a systematic way through Masonic representatives in Brazilian politics, because if it is by this means that actions that impact the evolution of our country are achieved, then that is where we should be, each city, each state should have the largest possible number of Freemasons in politics" (R317).

"More active in political issues, that we had our representatives in the chamber, Senate, brothers to whom we had access to try to change the course of our country together" (R848).

"I would like to see Freemasonry more participatory in political decisions of a social nature, more energetic with political Brothers involved in corruption, defending the collective interest in favor of the population, both in the area of health, education, security and in other areas necessary for the well-being of the population, in short, to be more Just and Perfect" (R2943).

"That the brothers take positions in their communities, especially in the political party sphere. I see Freemasonry quite cowardly in this aspect. If the good ones don't occupy positions, the bad ones do!! I understand that there is no democratic way out outside politics" (R5091).

"I would like to see her active with regard to Brazilian politics. To make a real dossier of the candidates, and perhaps even to elect brothers to the positions" (R5104).

"I would like to see Freemasonry presenting to society good citizens for politics and not seeking ill-intentioned politicians to compose our board of Brothers" (R6460).

3.8.1.3. Category: Philanthropy

This category yearns for a Freemasonry more concerned with others, especially needy communities. They believe that only in this way, acting directly with those who need it most, Freemasonry can collaborate directly with the happiness of humanity. The profile of this category is very close to that of the Social Action category in terms of being, in general, against the involvement of Freemasonry with profane politics and believing that Freemasonry needs to act outside its temples as well. For these reasons, this category can also be considered as a "subcategory" of Social Action.

The most used terms were: philanthropy, charity, humanitarian, needy.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"More committed to society and working on its maximum virtue, which is philanthropy. Seeking more effective ways to build a fairer, more honest and more equal country" (R107).

"A society of good morals, of good men and that does good to humanity through the practice of charity" (R322).

"With more philanthropy, good men, without fanaticism for politics, religion and football" (R715).

"More supportive, more philanthropic, more transparent, less political" (R1056).

"More open to philanthropic proposals and that its ranks start to have fewer self-centered and proud brothers" (R1149).

"Fulfilling their social purposes more vigorously, in aid, charity and guidance of the less favored and demanding from the authorities the full fulfillment of their obligations, denouncing the ills that affect people, all this in a discreet way as befits the good Mason" (R2928).

"Directed to philanthropic actions and assistance to the population and less focused on internal policies and vanities" (R3033).

"More active in humanitarian causes, being attentive to issues involving minority conflicts, contributing with impartial manifestos and without partisan political manifestations, such as the shameful ones that were supporting the removal of Dilma Rousseff and shouting dungeons to communism" (R6286).

"More active in philanthropy, engaged in social programs and less entangled in some discussions and speeches that do not add anything to us..." (R6368).

3.8.2. Inner Focus

These are the categories that concentrate the respondents' greatest concern with the problems, points of attention or priority issues perceived by them within the institution.

3.8.2.1. Category: Masonic Formation

Almost 5% of the respondents expect Brazilian Freemasonry to turn more to Masonic training, assuming itself as a school of morality and social ethics and fulfilling its institutional mission of improving Freemasons, so that they can make a difference in their communities. This group is bothered by the existing Masonic policy for the dispute of positions and credits this to the vanity of the Freemasons, understanding that this reflects the deficiency or absence of a quality Masonic education, which has been, in their opinions, neglected by the grand lodges and grand orients and, consequently, by the lodges.

The most used terms were: formation, instruction, study, moral, intellectual.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"With less politicking, more fraternal and carrying out actions in favor of the training of Freemasons. Today the studies are in charge of the lodge, which most of the time has no basis" (R454).

"A Freemasonry focused on study, knowledge. A Freemasonry that explores debate, discussion, contradiction. That he dares, that he leaves his comfort zone. That understands that we are not a service club, that our raw material is the light of knowledge. Our contribution is to expand minds" (R741).

"Fulfilling its true purpose, to instruct the Mason man to become better, with the ability to contribute to the improvement of society. Without political involvement, especially within the grand lodges" (R1186).

"I understand that Brazilian Freemasonry should be focused on the moral and intellectual growth of its members. I would like to see more philosophical and symbolic works within the Lodge, more brothers engaged in study, in the search for knowledge, in their personal formation. The vast majority of grand lodges and grand orients have become a means of profitability and not of conscious management of their areas of activity" (R1925).

"Freemasonry in the 21st century that I hope is a Freemasonry more concerned with the formation of its members through the transfer of knowledge in a full way, helping in the personal growth of each brother" (R3470).

"Most effective in teaching, learning, and practicing the teachings contained in the Masonic Instructions. Less proselytism and more opinion-forming, focused on studies and not on parties" (R5509).

"I would like a Freemasonry that is less political and more focused on the instruction and moral and intellectual growth of its members" (R6400).

"Serious Freemasonry, encouraging and demanding reading and study for the improvement of the Freemason man, and not turning into a club watered by alcohol and parties..." (R6980).

"A Freemasonry that gives less importance to Masonic politics and is more dedicated to the improvement of the human being" (R7639).

3.8.2.2. Category: "Great and Strong"

The freemasons who make up this category are concerned with the quantitative future of Brazilian Freemasonry. They believe that Freemasonry may not be attractive to the new generations, are concerned about the high rates of voluntary evasion, and want Freemasonry to be strengthened in its quantity, in order to guarantee its future and social relevance.

The most used terms were: large, strong, largest, evasion.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"I would like to see the stores fuller, less sleeping siblings. Freemasonry with purpose and making men better for our future. Leaving aside individual and political interests and prioritizing the commons" (R248).

"A more professional Freemasonry; stronger; with a greater capillarization in society, contributing to the well-being of the community in a more effective way" (R360).

"Strong. Active. Respected by all. A reference for the whole society, an example, that all brothers think about the interests of all and not only the individual interests" (R982).

"I would like to see our Freemasonry maintaining customs as much as possible, striving for transparency and continuing to gather as many brothers as possible, to strengthen our columns and have a larger continent, helping to discriminate against our ideals" (R1121).

"Attractive for the new members accepted and not as it is today with a very large evasion of initiates who do not even reach 5 years in the order!" (R3432).

"I would like to see Freemasonry growing and solidifying in Brazil" (R4160).

"I would like to see it growing, many brothers are leaving our staff due to lack of interest and lack of motivation, because the meetings are often unproductive" (R5469).

"Strengthened to play a more important role in society" (R6277).

"With strengthening of the columns and more active before society, to be more recognized and that non-Masons do not create false ideas and prejudice against our order" (R7693).

3.8.2.3. Category: Modernization

The category named "Modernization" concentrates a little more than 3% of the brothers participating in the survey, who declared a desire for Freemasonry to undergo modernization in the coming years. This modernization would be more focused on administrative, communicative and didactic aspects, including the format of the meetings. There is in his comments a concern with the technological and pragmatic profile of the new generations in the face of the outdated image that Freemasonry has. In other words, just like the members of the "Big and Strong" category, the concern of this group is with the future of Freemasonry. However, the "Modernization" group argues that this organizational update is the solution.

The most used terms were: evolve, modernize, technology, update.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"Less dull. Less overloaded with symbology. Following the evolution of society so as not to die. Considering the proposal of Grand Lodges of the USA with lean rites and rapid evolution in the degrees" (R1262).

"Maintaining its traditions, but modernizing itself in the way of communicating, in the way of relating and interacting with its people, in decentralization and allowing everyone to actually participate" (R1411).

"With the real practice of the concept of brotherhood. More humanistic and less mystical. Dealing with current and future issues using available technologies so that we can evolve, without just looking and speaking nostalgically of a glorious past" (R1709).

"I wish Freemasonry was less repetitive and boring. Boring meetings and the instructional system is just stupid" (R1972).

"Freemasonry needs to modernize and reduce bureaucracy, so that the Freemason goes to the meetings to do Freemasonry and not deal with bureaucracies. Today's Freemason does not have the time that the ancients had, there are many commitments. There is an urgent need to review the administrative processes" (R2528).

"I would like to see modern Freemasonry, adapted to current times, using technology to its advantage, but preserving its secular origin without mischaracterizing it with procedures that do not match its origin" (R3663).

"Better adapted to technologies and updated to the times we live in. I see Freemasonry still very much rooted in the past, which also has its value. But it is necessary to keep up with the evolution of the times" (R5750).

"Freemasonry needs to modernize, following the molds of the Order of DeMolay, with online processes, by website and/or applications, to give greater support to the Workers, administrative processes, ritualistic, dissemination of charitable work and studies" (R6580).

"Caring for tradition, morals and good customs as always. However, updating in administrative terms, leaner and more productive meetings" (7612).

3.8.2.4. Category: Moralization

The category entitled "Moralization", the third most concentrated among all the ten valid categories, concentrating almost 13% of the answers, highlights a dissatisfaction with the current Freemasonry, aiming at an improvement for the coming years through an internal cleansing, achieved through an awareness and transformation of the current members and exclusion of those who maintain a moral standard below the expected in the Masonic environment. The word "vanity", registered by many members of the group "Masonic Formation" as one of the evils that plague current Freemasonry, appears even more frequently and prominently in this category of "Moralization". The difference is that, while this category focuses on highlighting the need to combat vanity in the Masonic environment, the category of "Masonic Formation" pointed to the improvement in Masonic education as a solution to this problem.

The most used terms were: good manners, humility, seriousness, vanity.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"That men who claim to be men of good morals would stop their egos of being Freemasons, honor Freemasonry more with virtues, without lies, with seriousness, sparkle in their eyes and really having good morals, honesty and shame in their faces" (R20).

"With Ilr.'. present at the Masonic sessions and willing to work. What is lacking is humility from the superb rooks that are produced, all with the feathers of peacocks. Simple as that" (R365).

"As a more serious and fraternal institution, where brothers who had problems in the justice system could not attend meetings and stayed away until their problems were solved" (R503).

"May the Brothers be less vain, presumptuous, less ambitious and more prepared. Far from party politics, fairer and less prejudiced" (R553).

"May the fraternity be more transparent with the Ilr.'. , being less complacent with OObr.'. that do not comply with Masonic laws" (R1171).

"Without vanity, without astrology and inventions such as "egregore", without boasting about being what it is not (e.g., influential in the country's politics), following its own rules. Powers declaring support for Aécio in an election is irregular and deplorable" (R3453).

"I wish that the problems and profane vanities were outside the Order. I justify my response in the various examples of misconduct in the Order, it seems that the teachings we have received have been in vain" (R5092).

"A Freemasonry that follows the main Masonic principles and that begins to purge the bad Masons. Cleaning has to start in our backyard. A Freemasonry that does not get involved in partisan politics and that is not greedy for power" (R6449).

"That we do not have this policy that we are experiencing in Freemasonry. That this vanity inside the lodges, where there are more conflicts between brothers than between the profane, put an end" (R7683).

"I would like to see Freemasonry as an institution that is really committed to the ideals that are present in its philosophy. A Freemasonry that consumes less time with issues of an administrative and internal political nature and more time with the formation of the Freemason and his Lodges. I cannot imagine how Freemasonry could continue to contribute to humanity if not by training good Masons" (R7777).

3.8.2.5. Category: Preservation

The group of answers classified in this category claims greater caution in the media exposure of Freemasonry, rejects constant updates in rituals, wants an Order that is more closed to the profane, traditionalist world, because it believes that modifications can hurt its essence. Thus, it can be seen that the understanding of this group is in line with that of the group in the "Modernization" category.

The most used terms were: traditions, ancient, discreet, essence.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"Rescue their original values; preserve their traditions, uses and customs; to be aware that Freemasonry is not a modern institution and that its teachings, although of ancient origin, are current in the face of the chaos we are experiencing" (R1125).

"More traditional, focused on its essence, with less technological influence, where its ritualistic works respected what was originally created without this excess of ritualistic changes" (R1455).

"Hermetic, without profanation as it is today, and in any medium we find everything related to order. Also that we are proud of those who have gone before us, and that we can make the world a more just and perfect world..." (R2068).

"To go back to the roots. A misinterpretation of the concept "progressive" is scrutinizing our Order. Unfortunately, we have lost all the tradition of yesteryear. I think we should go back to being a Secret Order and not a discreet one. Stricter selection and less media. Let us return to traditions" (R2533).

"I would like a Freemasonry that does not try to adapt to the new generations, but the opposite, the new workers understand the old rules and adapt to them" (R3224).

"A Freemasonry without reforms, with the same rituals as before, without each grand master modifying the previous rituals. I wanted to see a Freemasonry without fashion, preserving the old customs" (R4894).

"Resuming its most fundamental traditions rather than incorporating profane values and procedures, especially with regard to its administration" (R4974).

"I would like to see it more secretive and focused on the perpetuation of what brought it to the present day. Unfortunately, our Sublime Institution is very trivialized and debauched, making initiations of people who do not understand its nature" (R5897).

"At least discreet, because Freemasonry was once secret, it was once discreet, and it is very open due to some brothers who post things of the order on social networks for everyone to see. For me, who started in 1989, this open opening is all very wrong!" (R7241).

3.8.2.6. Category: Selection

The Masons who make up this category make, in a way, a counterbalance with those of the "Great and Strong" category, because, while the latter aims for Freemasonry to become more accessible as a way to grow quantitatively and, thus, become more relevant; this group of the "Selection" category wants the opposite, that is, a greater rigor of Freemasonry in the selection of its

members. A term that was often repeated by the brothers who make up this category was "less quantity and more quality", as if quantity and quality were incompatible. This category was correlated with "Moralization".

The most used terms were: selective, quality, inquiry, criterion.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"With greater rigor for the admission of candidates. More selective, indicating profane people who really fulfill the principles and requirements" (R599).

"More selective, with better quality investigations and with a greater emphasis on studies and training of more qualified and committed Masons (R2206).

"Freemasonry is becoming a "club" of friends, where profane people are being appointed who certainly do not deserve to be part of the Order. I believe that the first thing to do is to rethink how selections are made and increase the rigor in the choices" (R2650).

"Everyone has the right to polish their personality and enhance their spirit, but I think it should be more rigorous in the selection of candidates, many frictions and problems are due to this" (R3044).

"A Freemasonry where only free men and good morals are accepted, but this has to be respected, so that the institution is respected. We need quality and not quantity, where principles and virtues should be rules of conduct" (R3807).

"Strong, thriving, serious, we have to greatly improve our selection of members. We are full of embezzlers and criminals. Strive for quality" (R4282).

"I wish Freemasonry would have more focus on guiding its members towards the importance of initiation and be more selective in the choice of its initiates" (R6122).

"I would like to see it more selective, indications with more responsibility with regard to candidates for initiation, educated, because most of our Brothers are not in the habit of reading both Masonic culture and general culture" (R7695).

3.8.2.7. Category: Union

The desire of this category for the coming years of Freemasonry seems to have been influenced by the problems of intervisitation imposed by the Grand Orient of Brazil on the Grand Orients confederated to COMAB in recent years. The brothers who make up this category want there to be broad intervisitation, credit these problems to the vanity of some leaders, believe that Brazilian Freemasonry should unite in favor of common social actions, which shows a correlation with the category "Social Action", and defend that the proliferation of irregular Masonic obediences on Brazilian soil is due to the lack of union between regular obediences. It is also worth noting the majority opinion of this group regarding the vanity of leaders, and vanity is a variable that also stood out in other categories: Philanthropy, Masonic Formation and Moralization.

The most used terms were: united, cohesive, integrated, base.

Some direct quotes from selected answers in this category:

"More United and with wide recognition among all regular Lodges. This union can only bring benefits to help solve the issues of the world, the country and the regions. Tyranny, fanaticism and ignorance do not cease their attacks and will never cease. In fact, currently, they seem to grow every day" (R1405).

"It is visible how much the Masonic powers in Brazil have taken short steps with regard to joint actions and mutual tolerance" (R1726).

"Integrated, in joint actions, united as "universal brothers", although each one honoring their vows with their Power!" (R1621).

"It is inadmissible to see brothers who should be the first to give examples of humility, to be concerned only with their positions and their pomposity, contributing nothing to the growth of the Order" (R3635).

"More united and with less vanity, especially on the part of those who think they are superior to others, for occupying positions of leadership in Masonic powers. I sincerely hope that Man does not corrupt with his foolish vanity one of the most sublime and ancient Institutions that exists on Earth: FREEMASONRY" (R5427).

"I would like to see the obediences more united. Less ego and more fraternal actions. Sometimes it gives the impression that one wants to be more than the other and this leaves a somewhat negative image of our fraternity" (R5658).

"I would like to see a more united Freemasonry, with the ideal of strong brotherhood among the brothers of all Powers. I would like to see the Grand Masters less concerned and focused on political issues of low relevance, and seeking the union and development of Universal Freemasonry" (R7270).

"Brazilian Freemasonry, especially, should be more united and not divided by the vanities of arrogant grand masters. I hope for more wisdom and fraternity in the years to come..." (R7708).

3.8.3. Correlations

The correlation indicates the relationship between two categories, it can be positive (or direct) and negative (or inverse). The two types of correlation were identified in the mapped categories. Positive correlations were highlighted in blue, while negative correlations were highlighted in red. The spaces left blank indicate that no significant correlation was identified.

Chart 1: Correlation between Categories
Source: prepared by the author

	Social Acting	Political Activism	Philantropy	Masonic Education	Great and Strong	Modernization	Moralization	Preservation	Selection	Union
Social Acting		Red	Blue	Blue	Blue		Blue		Blue	Blue
Political Activism			Red	Red	Blue		Red		Red	Blue
Philantropy				Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue		Blue	Blue
Masonic Education						Blue	Blue		Blue	Blue
Great and Strong									Red	Blue
Modernization								Red		
Moralization									Blue	Blue
Preservation										
Selection										
Union										

The categories that showed the greatest isolation from the others, computing a general negative correlation, were Political Activism and Preservation. While those that presented greater proximity to the others, computing a strong positive correlation in the overall total, were the Union in

first and, with close results, the following categories: Social Action, Philanthropy, Masonic Formation, Large and Strong.

It can be seen that the ideas of the Union category are the only ones shared between two excluding groups, having on one side Political Activism (8.11%) and on the other those with a negative correlation to political activism (61.14%).

4. CONCLUSIONS

From this point, the final considerations about this research and its main results are presented, as well as the practical contributions provided by them.

4.1. The Brazilian Freemason does not know what Freemasonry is

Apparently, less than 5% of Brazilian Freemasons identify Freemasonry as a system of morality, according to the most used concepts and definitions in the world. To better understand the consequences of this problem, comparative exercise is enough: Everyone knows what a hospital is: an organization dedicated to the treatment of health problems. A school, on the other hand, is an organization focused on the collective teaching of students. And a penitentiary is an organization that holds inmates people sentenced to deprivation of liberty. There are countless types of organizations that any average man, with absolute certainty, knows how to conceptualize them. So, when you ask a Freemason with years of Order what Freemasonry is and he stutters, there is a serious problem. And when you ask two experienced Masons what Freemasonry is, and get two totally different answers, this problem is even worse.

When you have members who are not sure what the organization to which they belong is, you have the organization in a situation similar to that of a boat adrift, in which there are no tailwinds simply because you do not know where you want to go. And what is the real size of this problem? Considering that members who do not know for sure what Freemasonry is are the same ones who invite, union, scrutinize, initiate and instruct new members in the Order, this problem is practically the same size as Brazilian Freemasonry: gigantic. And in a vicious cycle.

The most common definition of Freemasonry in use around the world is that Freemasonry is "a beautiful system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols" (ZELDIS, 2011). This definition is derived from another, authored by William Preston, who considers Freemasonry "a regular system of morality, conceived in a tension of interesting allegories, which unfolds its beauties to the sincere and hardworking applicant" (PRESTON, 1867).

The respected *Coil's Masonic Encyclopedia* presents a definition that contributes to a realistic and, at the same time, philosophical view of Freemasonry:

Freemasonry, in its broadest and most comprehensive sense, is a **system of morality and social ethics**, and a philosophy of life, of a simple and fundamental character, embodying a **broad humanitarianism** and, while treating life as a practical experience, subordinates the material to the spiritual; **it is moral**, but not self-righteous; **it demands sanity** instead of holiness; **he is tolerant**, but not indifferent; **it seeks the truth**, but does not define the truth; **it encourages its adherents to think**, but does not tell them what to think; that despises ignorance, but does not reprove the ignorant; that **promotes education**, but does not propose any curriculum. BROWN, 1961, p. 159. EMPHASIS ADDED).

This definition, as well as the first, cited as more common, presents Freemasonry as a system of teaching morality. And when consulting other renowned authors on the same subject, very similar phrases are replicated. Christopher Hodapp, in his famous work *Freemasonry for Dummies*, states that Freemasonry "is a philosophy and a **system of morality and ethics** and it's pretty basic in that" and yet

she **"teaches lessons of social and moral virtues** based on the symbolism of the tools and the language of the ancient craft of construction".

Thus, according to these concepts and congruent definitions presented, it can be stated that Freemasonry is, essentially,

1. **a system of morality:** "beautiful system of morality"; "regular system of morality"; "system of morality and social ethics"; "system of morality and ethics";
2. **which is taught and learned:** "inculcate"; "encourages its adherents to think"; "promotes education"; "teaches lessons";
3. **through a teaching method:** "veiled in allegories and illustrated by symbols"; "by the symbolic application of the work instruments of the masons and by allegories, lectures and obligations"; "based on the symbolism of the tools and the language of the ancient craft of construction".

However, if the Brazilian Freemason does not know what Freemasonry is, then he does not know what should really be done in Freemasonry, which means that he can distort the organization of its mission, its reason for existing, at any and all times. And this explains much of what was identified in a comparative study between Freemasonry in the USA and in Brazil, which concluded that the deficient Brazilian Masonic education "leaves room for many brothers, restricted to local Masonic knowledge, to question whether charity has a place in Masonic purposes" (Ismail, 2013, p. 48).

And from what could be seen in the content analysis, the change in the Masonic focus is common and of considerable size. And this is because, without knowing what it is and what one should really do, one is prone to follow any course that is in vogue in the media and news. In the case of Brazil today, the perception of widespread corruption and total loss of faith in civil authorities. Freemasonry, then, becomes "multifunctional". Any subject that a brother considers himself dissatisfied with, from the environment to traffic, through elections and laws, is eligible to become a new Masonic objective, by introducing him to the broad and flexible generic objective of "making humanity happy". And the legitimate Masonic objective, of teaching morality, of transforming good men into better ones, is being passed over, ignored, forgotten among the lines of rituals periodically modified by ritualists who often do not know what Freemasonry is.

Thus, only from this premise, from the understanding of what Freemasonry is and its real mission, can information, methods and efforts be guided to define and achieve its organizational objectives efficiently and, in this way, fulfill its mission.

4.2. The Brazilian Freemason is dissatisfied with two aspects of Freemasonry

Nearly half of the respondents said they were dissatisfied with the infighting in their grand lodge or lodge, with the "shop owners" and the "profane in aprons." These factors are of a moral order. Since Freemasonry is a "system of morality", there is a red alert.

The second group of factors that generate dissatisfaction is of an administrative nature: general lack of interest from the brothers (39%), lack of content of the meetings (37%), high cost for little benefit (26%) and lack of preparation of the directors (25%).

Both moral and administrative aspects are internal and the competence and responsibility of the grand lodges or grand orients and their lodges. Such points should be corrected or made up, prioritizing those of a moral nature, to reduce the levels of dissatisfaction and the rate of dissatisfaction.

4.3. Conflicts between two Brazilian Masonic generations

The results obtained with this research reinforce the theory of two great distinct generations in the Brazilian Masonic environment, the youngest, up to 46 years of age, of approximately 1/3 of the current Brazilian Freemasons. This generation was educated by post-Piagetian teaching methodologies (from 1970 onwards), in which questioning, the exercise of antithesis is encouraged, which seems to be, in a way, frowned upon by the older generation. The younger generation also presents more critical characteristics, has a higher average level of education and reading habits, and other characteristics that corroborate the results obtained and presented in item 3.7 of this report, such as, for example, discomfort with the lack of content in meetings, more concentrated in the younger generation than in the older generation.

A piece of data that also reinforces this conflict is in the same item 3.7, with regard to the selection of members. The older generation is currently the majority, but it is a minority among the new entrants, as it was possible to observe in item 3.4. There is an extremely greater concern among this generation with a better selection of members than that observed in the younger generation, currently in the minority, which may be an indication of the concern with the end of hegemony.

However, conflicts will always exist and cannot be seen as problems to be avoided, but to be managed. Conflict management is a field that has gained attention from behavioral researchers over the past few years, and there is a wealth of information and training that can help managers in this regard.

The management of this specific generation conflict is of strategic importance for Brazilian Freemasonry, as it can impact the behavior of the wave parable mentioned in item 3.4, which refers to the issue of evasion, addressed in other studies (e.g.: DE MORAIS, 2017) and the contingent of Brazilian Freemasons in the long term.

4.4. Interest groups

The content analysis (item 3.8) revealed that there are ten groups with distinct interests in Brazilian Freemasonry. Some of these groups have a majority of the younger generation and others of the older generation. Some of these interests are directly correlated, while others are negatively correlated. There are those who want a more exclusive, closed and preserved Freemasonry, while there are others who want a more democratic, larger, open and modern Freemasonry. There are those in favor of political activism in Freemasonry and those totally opposed. Meanwhile, everyone at the base wants unity, and a better Masonic education, as well as a little more social action and charity pleases almost everyone.

In this sense, it is suggested to the leaders of the grand lodges and grand orients to focus on the majority, correlated and non-exclusive interests, while seeking clarification and awareness of the interests considered incompatible.

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