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**Masonic Discrimination Against Ethnic, Gender, and Religious Groups: Fraternity without Brotherhood?**

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DR. DE LOS REYES: Good morning. Today’s panel touches on exclusions and inclusions particularly the issue of race in US Freemasonry, however we will also discuss the role of women in fraternalism. In this first paper we analyze recent developments concerning the role of African-Americans in US Freemasonry.

The segregated nature of American Freemasonry raises questions about how through many years the lodges have failed to be inclusive. It is very appropriate to share this panel with scholars of minority movements, which have had more than their share of discrimination to face and which still face formidable obstacles. Sexual and racial prejudice have not by any means been banished from fraternalism, and by knowing their history we can perhaps contribute to how the situation has or can progress. We also need to remember that this is the Twenty-First century, we cannot ignore issues of discrimination with the justification that tradition needs to be preserved. No tradition should be above social justice.
Pessimistically, a case can be made that American Freemasonry perhaps remains the most prejudiced of any large American association, one that remains discriminatory in 2019. Despite flowery language about brotherhood, it is open to charges of bigotry in important instances. Currently six American states still refuse to recognize the Prince Hall Affiliation African-American grand lodges. The claims made in recent decades about resolving the dilemmas presented by racial discrimination have centered on the recognition of African-American grand lodges named after Prince Hall, who along with other free men of color were initiated by a British regimental lodge garrisoned in Boston in 1775.

We propose that serious thought is needed as to whether by recognizing in some instance the Prince Hall lodges that segregation in American Freemasonry been eliminated. To the contrary, we hold that the supposed resolution of segregation by recognizing only Prince Hall Affiliate or PHA grand lodges is a gesture that shows a lack of understanding of the African-American Masonic scene. Alton Roundtree and Paul Bessel write, “The National Grand Lodge and state Grand Lodges under it claim the came heritage, history, and lineage, as Prince shall Grand Lodges, from African Lodge No. 459…few contemporary Masons know the principal details of the National Compact…The Prince Hall Grand Lodge histories and other writings on the National Grand Lodge present few traceable
facts.”¹ Note that African American lodges sometimes had white members.²

The tools for examining this are a good illustration of how in the years that we have been holding these conferences on fraternalism and on Freemasonry, research has taken us down paths in ways we could not have anticipated. This paper is an example of how re-examination, including the availability of documents, either online or in other forms, has seriously changed our perception of fraternalism. We add that there is no longer a question as to the validity and credibility of online archives (as long as they are from a reputable source). Indeed, it is almost the opposite -- the lack of online access to sources is definitely a handicap. Thus, we are great promoters of Digital Humanities that contribute to the development of serious digital archives.

For the purpose of this presentation we will highlight the contributions made by three scholars in particular, Brother Alton Roundtree, whose passionate collecting of documents relating to the Prince Hall and segregation issues is an extraordinary researcher and very much deserve to be more widely known. His willingness to include hitherto unavailable documents is extraordinary.³ Dr. Brent Morris and Dr. Paul Rich have opened doors on the topics we are discussing today. In sum, as their scholarship shows, history does change with time.

¹ Alton G. Roundtree and Paul M. Bessel, Out of the Shadows: The Emergence of Prince Hall Freemasonry in America: Over 225 Years of Endurance, KLR Publishing, Camp Springs (Maryland), 2006, 47.
³ See e.g. A Fractured Legacy: United Supreme Council, Southern Jurisdiction (TN), 2018, KLR Publishing, Camp Springs (Maryland), passim.
Harold Van Buren Voohis, a fourth *savant* and long gone to the lodge above, is part of this conversation because his changing views of the Prince Hall lodges through years of study offer a good example of how an open mind can lead to new perspectives.

Prince Hall, for whom many African American grand lodges are named, is one of the most important individuals to come out of the formative days of American Freemasonry; his history is well known. He was initiated on March 6, 1775, with fourteen other African-Americans by Sergeant John Batt of Irish Lodge No. 441 of the 38th Regiment of Foot, then stationed in Boston. Initially granted a “permet” to march on St. John’s Day and to bury their dead, Bro. Hall applied to one of the two most significant grand lodges then functioning in England, the “Moderns,” for a charter that was granted in 1784 and finally delivered in 1787. Thus was born African Lodge No. 459 on the rolls of the Modern Grand Lodge of England, which eventually transformed itself into “African Grand Lodge No. 1,” from which Prince Hall Masons in various varieties today descend.

Adelaide M. Cromwell in her study of Black leadership in early Boston considers that four African-Americans stand out: the poetess Phillis Wheatley; the victim of the Boston Massacre, Crispus Attucks; the fiffer of Revolutionary War folklore, Brazillai Lew; and Prince Hall. She asks, “If they and other Black Americans of historical significance are less known than one might ponder why.”

By excising Prince hall, the African

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American role was diminished because the legends of New England had become the nation.\(^5\) We conclude that the press in the late 1790s treated Prince Hall and African Lodge in about the same fashion as it did other Masonic lodges. One cannot say the same for all Masonic commentators during the ensuing two centuries. A good example is Charles Mitchell’s often reprinted, *The Early Introduction of Bogus Freemasonry in the United States and Texas Among Colored Masons.*\(^6\)

Harold Van Buren Voorhis writes in *Negro Masonry in the United States*, “Over a period of many years I have read hundreds of discussions and opinions in Grand Lodge proceedings on this subject – among which are some of the most vitriolic attacks on Negroes and Negro Freemasonry. Yet, during the times when these attacks were in especially full bloom, as well as during periods of quiescence, there is only the evidence of our Negro brethren facing the issue very calmly as gentleman.”\(^7\)

Despite this acknowledgement of African American tactfulness, Harold V. B. Voorhis was responsible for propagating doubts about the origins of Prince Hall lodges with his book *Negro Masonry in the United States*, and he later withdrew the book. He wrote that, “…he based his book on the writing of Grimshaw, which he had taken for being OFFICIAL,

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but new research disclosed that many of the statements published by Grimshaw were found to be without fact.”

Roundtree has examined many of the historians of American Freemasonry and shown how erroneous and perhaps duplicitous they have been in their treatment of Prince Hall lodges. Dr. Brent Morris remarks: “Alton is a dogged researcher… His work on the National Compact Grand Lodge/PHO is pretty amazing. He’s overturned years of anti-PHO propaganda with a simple presentation of facts.”

Generations of Masonic historians spewed misinformation that helped sustain the segregation of Masonry in the American lodges. African American Freemasonry had as solid and honest a beginning as any of America’s other Masonic lodges.

Prince Hall is especially important because of the role that his Boston played in creating the American mythology. The events such as the Tea Party, Paul Revere’s Ride, Battle of Bunker Hill are so important in the creation of the American story that the exclusion of Prince Hall from the account is a sort of historical genocide. Unquestionably the assertion that Prince Hall Freemasons really had no claim to having been chartered in the 18th century and no genuine genealogy linking them to a supposed first lodge of blacks in Boston was driven by prejudice rather than scholarship. While this view was repeated frequently,

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9 Email correspondence between Brent Morris to Paul Rich, 3 June 2019.
it was incorrect, as Brother Roundtree has shown in his examination of many books and papers that incorrectly challenged the genealogy.

If that first African American lodge in 18th century Boston had its trials and tribulations, keep in mind that this was a tumultuous period, and many of the oldest white lodges in America shared with the Prince Hall lodges in the confusion and disarray arising out of the American Revolution. By no means did the transition go smoothly. Voohis writes, in truth we have more evidence of what was going on in African Lodge than we have in the case of many of the most important of the old lodges in the Colonies — several of which appear to have worked without any charter for many years.”

Moreover, a generation later the Anti-Masonic era in American political history closed many lodges, which then later were revived. So to apply to the African-American lodges a test of consistency and unbroken lineage that if used would disallow some of the most important historic white lodges is questionable.

Certainly the situation after the American Revolution for the lodges was ambiguous at best, and the view of African-American Freemasonry was confused. Albert Pike gave perhaps the most notable example of the ambiguous behavior towards Black Masonry. In 1875 he wrote to the white Grand Lodge of Ohio, “Prince Hall Lodge was as regular a lodge as any lodge created by competent authority, and had a perfect right (as other lodge in Europe did) to establish other lodges, making itself a

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mother Lodge.” And yet in the same letter he said, “I took my obligations to white men, not to negroes. When I have to accept negroes as brothers or leave Masonry, I shall leave it.” But Pike later generously gave a copy of his Scottish Rite rituals to Thornton A. Jackson, Prince Hall Grand Commander, S.J., sometime after 1887, when Jackson assumed office, and before 1891, when Pike died.

DR. RICH START: We are not denying some progress in racial attitudes over the years and do acknowledge that attitudes have changed, and that the white grand lodges have embraced to an extent the idea that Prince Hall Affiliate lodges (PAA in contrast with PHO are terms we will explain) did have a claim on regularity and of the favor of the “modern” grand lodge of England in the 18th century. This certainly has been bolstered by the work of Dr. Brent Morris and myself, as we have collected transcripts of early newspaper references to “African Lodge” and “Prince Hall.” During a forty-five year period, starting in the 1780s, Morris and Rich located thirty unique articles, some often reprinted, each giving us insight to the earliest days of the reception of Prince Hall Masonry. Two seminal articles about this research: Morris, S. Brent and Paul J. Rich, “Early Newspaper Accounts of Prince Hall Freemasonry,” (2013) The Phylaxis and a related article published at Heredom (2014)\(^\text{12}\) are both available online.\(^\text{13}\) They found these references by relying primarily on the electronic databases such as “America’s Historical


\(^\text{13}\) See Scottish Rite Research Society site http://scottishriteresearch.com/
Newspapers” published by Readex, a division of NewsBank, and Genealogy Bank. The optical character recognition of these digitized scans varies in quality, and databases don’t include every newspaper of the period nor every issue of those papers they have. Thus it is possible—indeed likely—there are other articles their searches didn’t find.

This cache of articles provides ample evidence of early interaction and recognition between white Masons and Prince Hall and his African Lodge and its offspring. Some of the banter is witty. For example, Bro. Nathan Willis’s Independent Chronicle newspaper in Boston published Prince Hall’s dignified response to a sarcastic story about African Lodge’s 1782 celebration of St. John’s Day, and Bro. Benjamin Russell’s Massachusetts Centinel published a series of positive stories about African Lodge, including a poem celebrating the receipt of African Lodge’s charter.

The earliest newspaper reference found is for December 30, 1782, only seven years after Prince Hall was initiated, and the arbitrarily stop to our collecting in 1827, the year of the “Declaration of Independence of African Lodge” when dependence on an English charter ceased and the African-American lodges develop their own modus vivendi.

We cite for example on December 30, 1782, The Independent Ledger, and the American Advertiser, Boston, vol. 5, no. 243, published by Edward Draper and John West Folsom

BOSTON, Dec. 30. [1782]

…
On Friday laft (27th inft)
the feast of St. John the
Evangeliſt was celebrated by Saint Black’s Lodge of Free and Acc-pt-d M-f-ns, who went in proceſſion, preceded by a band of muſick, drefsed in their aprons and jewels, from Brother Gl-pions, up State-Street, and thro’ Corn hill to the house of the Right Worſhipful Grand Master, in Water Street, where as elegant and splendid entertainment was gi-ven upon the occasion.

This brief notice seems to be mocking African Lodge with its sarcastic reference to “Saint Black’s Lodge,” though the rest of the article is neutral and presumably accurate.

To this Prince Hall himself replied in the press on January 9, 1783, The Independent Chronicle and Universal Advertiser, Boston, vol. 15, no. 530, published by Bro. Nathan Willis

Mr. Willis,
OBSERVING a sketch in Monday’s paper, printed by Mr. Draper and Folson, relative to the celebration of the feast of St. John, the Evangelist, by the African Lodge — the Master of the said Lodge being Possessed of a charitable disposition towards mankind, we therefore hope the publisher of the said sketch meant nothing else but a candid description of our procession, &c. — therefore, with due submission to the public our title is not St.
Black’s Lodge, neither do we aspire after high titles, but our only desire is, that the Grand Architect of the Universe would diffuse in the hearts the true spirit of Masonry which is love to God, and universal love to all mankind: These I humbly conceive to be the two grand pillars of Masonry. Instead of a splendid entertainment, we had an agreeable one, in brotherly love. With humble submission to the
above publisher
and
the public, I beg
leave to subscribe
myself your humble
servant,

PRINCE
HALL,
Master of the
African Lodge
No. 1.

dedicated to
the St. John.

N. B. Neither
do we dedicate
our
Lodge to St. John, but by
being Christians, and made
under that
denomination, chuse to do
so; but were we to de-
dicate for
anciency, or for
honour, we
could trace it
from the creation.
This is Prince Hall’s dignified response to the jibe at “St. Black’s Lodge” published eleven days earlier in a competing paper. It is worth nothing that Nathaniel Willis, the publisher, was a member of a white lodge, St. Andrews Lodge No. 235, and perhaps provided a sympathetic venue for Bro. Hall’s rejoinder. This is one of numerous instances of a brother Mason publishing positive material about African Lodge and its members.

The lodge formed by Prince Hall was expecting its formal charter, much delayed, as an article makes clear on October 20, 1784, Massachusetts Centinel, Boston, vol. 2, no. 9, published by Bro. Benjamin Russell

LSIX SHILLINGS
Reward.
OST, the
CHARTER of
a certain GRAND
LODGE: Any
person that has
found the same, and
will leave
it with the Printers
hereof shall be
intitled to
the above reward.

P. H—LL, Grand
Secretary.
This advertisement was another dig apparently written by someone familiar with the delayed status of African Lodge’s formal charter from England. On March 2, 1784, Prince Hall had written to William Moody in London and asked that he present African’s lodge’s request for a warrant before the Grand Master of England. The charter for African Lodge No. 459 was issued on September 20, 1784, but not sent to Boston because the fee had not been paid. (The fee paid was over £6 0s. 8d., so the reward of six shillings was a trifling, less than one-twentieth of the charter fee.)

Benjamin Russell (1761–1845) was a member of Rising States and St. John’s Lodges of Boston, Jr. Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, 1811–12, Sr. Grand Warden, 1813, and Grand Master, 1814–16. After this one dig at the delay, Russell’s Centinel thereafter published sympathetic notices of African Lodge and Prince Hall.

Very importantly on May 2, 1787, we read in The Massachusetts Centinel, Boston, vol. 7, no. 13, published by Bro. Benjamin Russell

AFRICAN LODGE
BY Captain Scott, from London, came
the CHARTER, &c. which his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and the Grand Lodge of Great Britain, have been graciously pleased to grant to the African Lodge, in Bolton. All the Brethren have a desire to acknowledge all favours shewn them, then in this publick manner return particular thanks to a certain Member of the fraternity, who offered the so generous reward in this paper some time since, for the Charter supposed to be lost; and to assure him, though they doubt of his real friendship, that he has made them many
good     friends.
PRINCE HALL
   Boston, April 30.
1787.

This announcement from Prince Hall is his great triumph: the Grand Lodge of England recognized the initiations and the legitimacy of African Lodge and granted it a charter. His response is restrained like that to the sarcastic notice about “St. Black’s Lodge,” and yet he deftly kills his detractor with kindness when he refers to his “so generous reward.” He goes on to say that the detractor, presumably a White Mason, has made African Lodge “many good friends.” It’s possible that one of those new friends was Bro. Benjamin Russell, publisher of the Centinel. After the hoax notice of the “so generous reward” for the missing charter, the subsequent coverage of African Lodge in the Centinel was uniformly positive.

The news of the arrival of the charter was reprinted—

An example of the good standing of Prince Hall is the letter to Prince Hall of August 20, 1792 from the Grand Secretary of the English Grand Lodge, W.M. White, addressing him as Right Worshipful and asking for information about a number of lodges as “we have never heard from them, since the commencement of the last war in America”. Brother White adds that he wishes
African Lodge success for the year and is “happy to have it in my power to contribute thereto”\textsuperscript{15}

This research took place because Dr. Rich had purchased a copy of the Massachusetts Centinel for May 5, 1787. He bought it because of a story about George Washington declining to be head of the Society of the Cincinnati, giving his reasons as being his obvious involvement in government, and of interest because of Washington refusing to head a proposed grand lodge of the United States. His declining of the presidency of the Cincinnati illustrates how he wanted to avoid more responsibilities while trying to launch the Federal government, and contradicts any notion that he didn’t respect the Craft. By happenstance, in the same issue, we noticed the following poem, which we quote from the May 5, 1787, Massachusetts Centinel, Boston, vol. 7, no. 14, published by Bro. Benjamin Russell.

\textbf{MASONRY.} \textit{THRO’OUT the globe’s extensive round,} 
\textit{The fire of love extends,} 
\textit{Which glows in true masonick hearts—} 
\textit{That family of friends!}

\textsuperscript{15} William H. Grimshaw, \textit{Official History of Freemasonry Among the Colored People in North America}, Broadway Publishing, Montreal, 1903, 88-89. Would that all of Grimshaw was based on archives!
Ev’n Afric’s Sons—
ill-fated race!
Now feel its genial
heat;
With charter’d rights,
from England’s Duke
The sable Lodges
meet.

No more shall colours
disagree;
but hearts with hands
unite;
For in the wond’rous
mystry,
There’s neither black
nor white.

And lest a bleached
Brother shou’d,
in scorn turn up his
nose—
Know that a Prince*
may favours take,
From Dukes, nor
honour lose.

* A Prince—Mafter
of the African
Lodge—H-ll
is only an American addition to his name.

This poem expresses the inter-racial ideals of Freemasonry and is remarkable for transcending the racism of the period with idealistic optimism. It gives positive publicity to African Lodge and Freemasonry and includes the clever wordplay of a duke giving favors to a prince.

Considerable further space could be given to recognition of African-American Masonry, but one extraordinary example will have to suffice. We are informed in the February 18, 1788, The American Herald, Boston, vol. 7, no. 332, published by Edward Eveleth Powars

Af infamous an a ion has been has been perpetrated with-
in a few days past as ever blotted the annals of humam nature. The Captain of a vessél, in the employ of a foreigner, engaged a number of ne-
groes, to go down to one of the islands in the vicni-
ty of this town, to work: having got them on board his boat, he dire ly proceeded to the vessél and confined them: this
being done he immediately set sail, and having arrived off Salem, he sent on shore and inveigled a number more of unfortunate black on board. Having thus far succeeded in his detestable purpose, he pursued his voyage, either to some of the southern states, or to the West-Indies, where, in all probability, he will dispose of them to linger out a wretched existence in the worst of Slavery. Blush humanity! And recoil civilizations, at the condu of men who profess to be guided by thy principles.

This infamous kidnapping inspired Prince Hall to petition the Massachusetts legislature to abolish the slave trade. In the February 26, 1788, The New York Packet, New York City, no. 779, published by Samuel and John Loudon

Messes Printers,
TEARING the unhappy African from his native country, and from all that is dear to man, into
a land of strangers and perpetual servitude, is an evil upon which the ablest pens have been exercised in the most pathetic addresses to the feelings of the benevolent: But the more execrable practice of man-stealing, where the devoted victim has obtained his manumission, in reward for many years faithful service, is so truly diabolical, that we may rely upon the concurrent censure of all, who are not destitute of generous sentiments, and their united efforts to relieve distress, and bring the perpetrators of such nefarious crimes to
condign punishment. To this purpose the Printers are generally requested to insert the following extra of a letter dated -Charlestown, Massachusetts, Feb. 13, 1788.

‘Solomon Babson, master of the sloop Ruby, under pretence of employing them to labor, decoyed three free Negro men, belonging to Boston, and has carried them off. The sloop cleared out for Martinico, but I suppose he is either gone to Charlestown, S.C. or to Georgia. The Negroes were quiet, industrious men, and have left wives and children in distress, as well as a burden to the commu-
nity. Every lover of Justice must feel resentment against such an outrage upon human nature. One of the unfortunate men was a faithful servant of mine, made free in reward of his fidelity; and if you can discover the author, or gain any intelligence of these unfortunate fellows, you will oblige a number of respectable citizens, and subservise the cause of humanity. The names of these injured men were Wendham, Cato, and Luck.’

The kidnapping of three free Black men in Boston Harbor for sale as slaves in Martinique involves Solomon Babson who was the owner, bonder, and commander of the Massachusetts brig Ruby and received a letter of Marque to act as a privateer
against the British. His kidnapping of Americans was an illegal entrepreneurial activity.

However, one of his three victims, “Luck,” was a member of Prince Hall’s African Lodge.

See —


Prince Hall reacted and on April 8, 1788, The New York Morning Post and Advertiser, New York City, no. 1268, published by William Morton

The following is a copy of a petition presented to the General Court of Massachusetts; which is taken from the original in the hand writing of the signer, who is a free Negro in the town of Boston:

________________________
To the Honorable the Senate and Houſe of Repre-
mantatives of the Commonwealth of Massachu-
ſetts Bay, in General Court assembled, on the 27th of February 1788.
The Petition of the great number of BLACKS,
Freemen of this Commonwealth.
Humbly sheweth,
THAT your petitioners are juſtly alarmed
at the inhuman and cruel treatment that three
of our brethren, free citizens of the town of
Bolton lately received. The Captain under pretence that his veſſel was in diſtrefs
on an island below in this harbour, having got them on board, put them in irons, and carried them off from their wives and children, to be sold for slaves; this being the unhappy state of these poor men, what can your petitioners expect but to be treated in the same manner by the same sort of men?—What then are our lives and liberties worth, if they may be taken away in such a cruel and unjust manner as this? May it please your Honor’s, we are not insensi-
ble, that the good laws of this state, forbid all such bad actions; notwithstanding we can assurance your Honors, that many of our Free Blacks, that have entered on board of vessels, as seamen, have been sold for slaves; and some of them we have heard from, but know not who carried them away. Hence it is that many of us, who are good seamen, are obliged to stay at home through fear, and the one half our time loiter through the streets, for want of employ; whereas if thy were protected in that lawful calling,
they might get a livelihood
for themselves and theirs, which in the situation they are not in, they cannot. One thing more we would beg leave to hint, that is, that your petitioners have for some time past been held with grief, ships cleared out from this harbour for Africa, and there they either steal, or cause others to steal, our brothers and sisters, fill their ships holds full of unhappy men and women, crowded together, then set out to find the best market, to sell them there like sheep
for the slaughter, and then return here like honest men, after having sported with the lives and liberty of their fellow men, and at the same time call themselves Christians. Blush, O Heavens! At this, these our weighty grievances! We cheerfully submit to your Honors, without dictating in the least, knowing by experience that your Honors have, and we trust ever will in your wisdom do us that justice that our present condition requires, as God and the good laws of this
commonwealth shall dictate you.
And as in duty bound, your petitioners shall ever pray.
PRINCE HALL

This letter shows Prince Hall as a leader of the African-American community in Massachusetts. The results was an act passed on March 26, 1788, one month after Hall’s petition, “to prevent the Slave Trade, and for granting Relief to the Families of such unhappy Persons as may be Kidnapped or decoyed away from this Commonwealth.”

Reprinted—
April 8, 1788, The New York Packet, New York City, no. 791, published by Samuel and John Loudon
April 12, 1788, The Independent Gazetteer; or, the Chronicle of Freedom, Philadelphia, vol. 7, no. 728, published by Bro. Eleazer Oswald
April 16, 1788, Connecticut Journal, New Haven, no. 1,068, published by Thomas and Samuel Green
April 24, 1788, Thomas’s Massachusetts Spy: Or, the Worcester Gazette, Worcester, vol. 17, no. 786, published by Bro. Isaiah Thomas
April 24, 1788, The Cumberland Gazette, Portland, Maine, published by Thomas B. Wait

Masonry enters the picture again because on August 23, 1788, The Pennsylvania Mercury, and Universal Advertiser, Philadelphia, no. 278, published by Daniel Humphreys

Extract of a letter from Boston.

…
An Extract of another letter from the same place.
“ I have one piece of good news to tell you—
The negroes who were kidnapped from hence last winter, are returned—
They were carried to St. Bartholomew’s and offered for sale—One of them was a sensible fellow, and a Free-mason—
The merchant to whom they were offered, was of this
fraternity—they were soon acquainted—they were carried before the
governor, with the ship-master and supercargo—
The story of the negroes was, that they were dec oyed on board, under pretence of working—the
story of the others was, that they were purchased out of gaol, wherein they had been confined for robbery—The Governor detained them—the vessel put off immediately from the island—they were kept within certain limits, & a
gentleman of the island was bondsman for them for six months; in which time they sent here for proofs; which arriving, they were liberated.

"The morning after their arrival here, they made me a visit, being introduced by Prince Hall, who is one of the head-men of the blacks in this town. The interview was affecting—

"There, (said Prince) this is the gentleman that was so much your friend, and petitioned the court for us"—alluding to the share which I had in the petition against the slave trade—They joined in thanking me—and really, my dear Sir, I
felt, and do still feel, from this circumstance, a pleasure which is a rich compensation for all the curses of the whole tribe of African traders, aided by the distillers, which have been liberally bestowed on the clergy of this town for their agency in the above petition.”

Prince Hall’s death notice appears December 5, 1807, Columbian Centinel, Boston, no. 2471, published by Bro. Benjamin Russell

Yesterday morning, Mr. Prince Hall, Æt. 72, Master of African Lodge. Funeral on Monday afternoon
at 3 o’clock, from his late dwelling house in Lendell’s-Lane; which his friends and relations are requested to attend without a more formal invitation.

The needs to establish the African-Americina lodges as American institutions is discussed in an article on June 18, 1827, Boston Daily Advertiser, Boston, vol. 18, no. 40, published by Nathan Hale.

AFRICAN LODGE—

No. 459.

GREETING:

BE it known to all whom it may concern,—

That we, the Master, Wardens, and Members of the African Lodge, No. 459, city of Boston, (Mass.) U. S. of America, hold in our possession a certain unlimited Charter, granted Sept. 29, A. L.'5784, A.D. 1784, by
Thomas Howard, Earl of Effingham, Acting Grand Master, under the authority of his Royal Highness Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, &c. &c. &c. Grand Master of the most ancient and honourable Society of free and accepted Masons. Be it further known, that the Charter alluded to bears the seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge at London, England, and was presented to our much esteemed and worthy brethren and predecessors, Prince Hall, Boston Smith, Thomas Sanderson, and several others, agreeably to a humble petition of their, sent in form to the above Grand Lodge.—Be it remembered, that according to correct information as regards this instrument, and the manner in which it was given, it appears to have been confined exclusively to the Africans, and to certain conditions. Whether these conditions have been complied with by our ancestors, we are unable to say; but we can
add, that, in consequence of the decease of the above named brothers, the institution was, for years, unable to proceed, for the want of one to conduct its affairs, agreeably to what is required in every regular and well conducted Lodge of Masons. It is now, however, with great pleasure, we state, that the present age has arrived to that degree of proficiency in the art, that we can, at any time, select from among as many, whose capacity to govern, enables them to preside, with as much good order, dignity and propriety, as any other Lodge within our knowledge. This fact can be proved by gentlemen of respectability, whose knowledge of masonry would not be questioned by any one well acquainted with the art. Since the rise of the Lodge to this degree of proficiency, we concluded it was best and proper to make it known to the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge from whence we
derive our Charter, by sending written documents and monies, to fulfill the agreements of our ancestors, giving information of the low state to which it had fallen, its cause, &c. with its rise and progress; and also, soliciting further favours, whereby we might be placed on a different and better standing than we had heretofore. And notwithstanding this, has been long since done, and more than sufficient time has elapsed for returns, yet we have never received a single line or reply from that Hon. Society. In consequence of this neglect we have been at a stand what course to pursue. Our remote situation prevents us from making any verbal communication whatever. Taking all these things into consideration, we have come to the conclusion that, with what knowledge we possess of masonry, and as people of colour by ourselves, we are and ought by rights
to be, free and independent of other Lodges.—
We do, therefore, with this belief, publicly declare ourselves free and independent of any Lodge from this day—and that we will not be tributary, or governed by any Lodge than that of our own.—
We agree solemnly to abide by all proper rules and regulations which govern the like fraternities—discountenancing all imposition to injure the Order—and to use all fair and honourable means to promote its prosperity; resting in full hope, that this will enable us to transmit it in its purity to our posterity, for their enjoyment.
Done at the Lodge, this, the 19th June, A. D. 1827, A. L. 5827. In full testimony of what has been written, we here affix our names.

JOHN T. HILTON, R. W. M.
THOMAS DALTON, Sen.
LEWIS YORK, Jun. Warden.
J. H. PURROW, Secretary
June 26
This is the famous “Declaration of Independence by African Lodge.” It marks the end of the first phase of Prince Hall Masonry when African Lodge worked as an English lodge.

END OF DR. RICH’S PART
DR. DE LOS REYES CONTINUES

Clearly the claims that there was no initiation by the regiment, no chartering by any English grand lodge, no evidence of meetings is all entirely without foundation although many times asserted by those who should have known better. In the case of collateral bodies, there is also evidence of their descent from the Prince Hall tradition. Voohis notes that by 1872 there were at least five African American Scottish Rite Supreme Councils operating, two of which were National Compact.¹⁸

Only in the last thirty years has truth spoken out loudly enough to make American Masonry less hypocritical. A majority of American white grand lodges now recognize in some fashion grand lodges known as PHA, Prince Hall Affiliation. The recognition takes various ways, not all off which are satisfactory. For example in Florida, Prince Hall Masons cannot visit a white lodge, but grand lodge officers of the white and Prince Hall grand lodges exchange yearly visits. And regardless of the recognition of Prince Hall Affiliation lodges, local lodges of white obediences that recognize PHA

may still refuse entrance. Ironically, the charter Prince hall received, “…is believed to be the only remaining charter issued by the Grand Lodge of England that is still possessed by any lodge, of any Masonic stripe, in the United States.”

But overlooked and importantly, Prince Hall Affiliated grand lodges are only a part of the African-American grand lodge scene. Hence the enormous importance of Brother Roundtree’s work. During the 19th century the original lodges owing existence to the chartering of the Prince Hall Boston lodge multiplied and divided, consolidated and united. Faced by this, while Washington never became a grand master for a grand lodge of the entire United States, the African-American lodges did achieve a national grand lodge as the National Compact. This national lodge still exists, despite claims by the PHA grand lodges that it disappeared, and has lodges in twenty-five states. Its lodges are known as Prince Hall Origin lodges rather than those grand lodges that left the national grand lodge and are named PHA or Prince Hall Affiliate. None of the PHO lodges are recognized by the white grand lodges.

The consequences of the various splits, schisms, reconciliations, are all part of the story that Brother Rondtree has put together. The result of the disputes and separations means that the number of different grand lodges invert American state are astonishing. Cécil Révauger points out that they have come and gone and come again, so to speak, mentioning, “…the Grand Orient of the US but of course it no

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20 See as an example of the spread of PHA https://princehallfrance.fr/0. Both PHA and PHO lodges are found in a number of countries.
longer exists unless it was revived by a few people. The Grand Orient withdrew its charter several years ago. The regretted John Slifko had contributed to it.\textsuperscript{21} So for example the list produced by an internet search of Masonry in the state of Ohio produces more than 70 groups not recognized as regular Masonic bodies, including:

Abba Grand Council  
Grand Adah Chapter  
Most Worshipful National Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Ancient York Masons  
Alpha Omega, SOMA Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter  
Benevolent Grand Lodge AF & AM  
Buckeye Grand Lodge, International F & A  
Central Grand Lodge System of Masonry AF & AM  
Colored Supreme Lodge and Grand Lodge of the Ohio AF & AM  
Electa Grand Chapter  
Elizabeth Grand Chapter  
The Grand Emily  
Emmanuel Grand Lodge  
General Grand Masonic Congress AF & AM Grand Lodge of International Masons  
Grand Orient of the United States of America  
Hadassah Grand Chapter OES  
Hosanna Grand Chapter

Imperial OES Grand Council International Ira J. Robinson
Grand Lodge, # 149
International Sovereign Council of Masonic Brotherhood
King George Grand Lodge AF & AM
The Human Rights
Morning Star Grand Chapter, OES of Ohio
Most Serene National Grand Lodge
MW Enoch Grand Lodge AF & AM (incl. Scottish Rite)
MW Eureka Grand Lodge Free & Accepted Ancient York
Masons, Prince Hall Origin National Compact
MW Grand Lodge AF & AM Under the Authority of Haiti
MW Habakkuk Grand Lodge AF & AM
MW Hiram Grand Lodge AF & AM
MW John A. Bell Grand Lodge AF & AM
MW Ohio Mount Moriah Grand Lodge AF & AM
MW Mount Sinai Grand Lodge
MW National Grand Lodge F & A Ancient York Rite Masons,
Prince Hall Origin National Compact
MW Ohio Grand Council
MW Rising Heights Grand Lodge of Ohio AF & AM
MW Royal Craft Grand Lodge MW & FW
MW Saint John's Grand Lodge AF & AM
MW Saint Peter's Grand Lodge AF & AM, Masons of the World
MW Saint Thomas Grand Lodge AF & AM of the State of Ohio
Mount Calvary York Rite YAF & A Mason Grand Lodge
Mount Horeb Grand Lodge AF & AM
National Grand Lodge F & A United Ancient Scottish Rite
Masons of the World
National Supreme Council of Sovereign Grand Inspector
General & National Grand Orient of the AASR
National Supreme Grand Lodge & Chapter Free American Rite Masons (FARM)
Northwestern Grand Lodge of the Ohio Jurisdiction Foundation
Queen Esther Grand Chapter OES
Rose of Sharon Grand Chapter, OES
St. Martin Grand Lodge AF & AM
St. Mary's Grand Chapter of the International F & Sov
Sovereign Grand Lodge AF &AM of the United States of America
Sovereign Inspectors General of the Supreme Council Supreme Council of the United States of America
Supreme Council of the Supreme Council of the United States
United States Masons of North America
Titus Grand Lodge AF & AM
Twelve Supreme Council Disciples AF & AM of the World OES
United States Supreme National Council of Grand Chapters
United States Supreme National Council of Grand Lodges AF & AM
United Nations Supreme Council of Ancient Scottish Rite 33rd and Last Degree of Freemasonry

Others you will recognize as having a standing here in France, for example the Federation of Human Rights, the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis Misraim, Nation-Post-Modern Freemasonry
MW United Grand Lodge AF & AM of Democratic Republics
Order of International Regular Co-Freemasonry Great Lodge of England (aka "The Masonic High Council, The Mother High Council")
The Most Worshipful National Grand Lodge Free & Accepted Ancient York Masons Prince Hall Origin National Compact USA (also referred to as Prince Hall Origin as well as Compact Masons)

If Grand Lodges must have a lineage to the old African Lodge No. 459, then a question is must they trace their lineage as well to the Most Worshipful National Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Ancient York Masons Prince Hall Origin – National Compact USA. It seems arguable that other African-American grand lodges are worth considering for recognition and have valid historical claims to the Prince Hall lineage besides the PHA lodges that white American lodges have recognized.

Those white grand lodges which have as yet not recognized any African American grand lodge present another difficulty. An ancillary problem is that obviously if you are an African American and cannot become a Freemason in a regular lodge then you cannot join any of the other bodies that depend on blue lodge or third degree initiation. Therefore de facto segregation exists in the American Scottish Rite, the Royal Arch, the Cryptic rite, the Knights Templar, the Eastern Star and other organizations that require membership in what they consider a regular blue lodge. We suppose that if an African American Mason were raised in a regular blue lodge, for example in Massachusetts, rather than a Prince Hall lodge, that he could petition a Scottish Rite Valley in West Virginia. When these collateral bodies claim they are not segregated, their claim rings hollow because it is impossible for someone in a number of American jurisdictions to become a Master Mason and thus eligible for the other bodies. And let it be said that, “However high a man proceeds through Masonic degrees of whatever sort,
there is much to suggest that, spiritually at least, it is the third degree, the Master Mason qualification, that is most significant.”

So Masonry remains in 2019, segregated. Indeed those European grand lodges that recognize segregated American grand lodges are compromising their moral principles. Recognizing Prince Hall Affiliated grand lodges in no way settles things. The historical claims of many other African-American grand lodges have been ignored. The solution to segregation has been to recognize only one branch of African-American Freemasonry.

The Scottish Rite and other bodies are segregated because some grand lodges refuse to recognize any African American lodge and their lodges simply do not initiate anyone of color. They are segregated because membership in associated Masonic bodies is impossible given the fact that someone living in one of the segregated states cannot receive the three degrees essential to further memberships.

There is a strong emphasis in three and more centuries of Freemasonry of brotherhood, universality, and reinforcement of moral values. “It is a matter that prompts profound misgivings that aspects of this long ingrained situation still exists in the United States of America.” Should a grand lodge which is open all races recognize and fraternize with a grand lodgewhich is closed to some? More could be said about the exclusion of Jews in some jurisdictions, about the issue of women’s

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participation, and other aspects of the case we make today. We leave you to ponder, is Masonry segregated?

Thank you.