

April 2022

From the East...

From the East

I have been happily noting the turn of the seasons and the official start of spring marked by the arrival of the Vernal Equinox on Sunday, March 2022, at 9:33 a.m., New Mexico time. At this precise moment, the Earth's axis is tilted neither away nor towards the sun, but is rather perpendicular to the sun's rays. The word "equinox" derives its name from the Latin term "eqi" which means "equal" and "nox" which means "night". According to the astronomical almanacs, there are two equinoxes each year in March and September, when the day and night are approximately 12 hours each. On this day the sun rises due east and sets due west on the horizon, a phenomena commonly marked by the orientation of architectural structures around the world. The Spring, or Vernal Equinox celebrates the awakening, rebirth, growth, and fertility of life on earth. The marking of this point on the horizon was particularly important to farming peoples as the appropriate time to plant seeds and the beginning of a new agricultural cycle. I find pleasure in again witnessing the first emerging green represented by tufts of grass, seedlings, budding leaves, along with the high winds and the tumbling tumble weeds accumulating along the fences.



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Regular Meetings

RECURRENCE

First Monday Fourth Wednesday Second Tuesday Third Tuesday Second Wednesday First Thursday

EVENT Regular Communication at 7:00 PM, Dinner at 6:00 PM Property Management Board at 6:00 PM Regular Communication at 7:30 PM Regular Communication at 5:30 PM Regular Communication at 7:30 PM, Dinner at 6:30 PM Regular Communication at 7:00 PM, Dinner at 5:30 PM

ORGANIZATION

Montezuma Lodge No. 1 Montezuma Lodge No. 1 York Rite Bodies Santa Fez Shrine Club Cerrillos Lodge No. 19 Santa Fe No. 19 Eastern Star

We have been holding our Quest meetings every Saturday morning at 10:00 AM. Quest Club is a forum for everyone. Mason and non-Mason alike can voice ideas and discuss any topic.

_____ Special Notices And Events

Property Management Board

The next monthly meeting of the Property Management Board will be held on **Wednesday**, April 27th at 6:00 PM. in the library.

<mark>Sickness & Distress</mark>

Melessia Helberg suffered a recent fall and sprained an ankle and bruised a rib. She is in a great deal of pain.

Degrees Conferred

On Friday, April 1, 2022 the Master Mason degree was conferred on Brother Nathan W. Metheny. On Friday, April 8, 2022 Brother Christian Talamontes was initiated as an Entered Apprentice.

Installation of Officers

Brother Nathan Metheny was installed as Junior Steward by Past MWB Jeff Johnson assisted by RWB Scott Jaquith.



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a sprig, a bush, or a tree. Cut it down and it grows back. Burn it and it grows back. Dig it up and leave one root and it will grow back. The Acacia can survive floods, droughts, and poor soil. No wonder the Acacia h long been viewed as a Masonic symbol of immortality. So, just a seasonal meditative thought about rebirth, immortality, and what George Washington documented as Rule #110 in his rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation: "Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience."

Fraternally,` Charles Hannaford Worshipful Master





Conferral of the Master Mason Degree for Brother Nathan W. Metheny.



Bro. Nathan Metheny is installaed as Junior Steward



Bro. Greg Pringle shows a children's book, "The Magic Field:

The yearly agricultural cycle of rebirth has long been a symbol of immortality of the soul and I am reminded of the humble Masonic Sprig of Acacia at our recent Master Mason Degree. We are taught that "the good Freemason is revived by the evergreen and everliving sprig of Faith, which blooms at the head of the grave". An evergreen reminder of an immortal spark in man, which shall survive the grave. The ancient Egyptians and Hebrews viewed Acacia as a symbol of immortality and innocence because of its durability, evergreen nature, and its hardness. Osirus as the once King and God of the Egyptians had a green face symbolically demonstrating his immortality. Legend has it that the god Osiris lives in the spirit of all Acacias. Similarly, Acacia was a sacred Hebrew wood known in the scripture as "shittah". It was selected over all other wood for the creation of the Ark of the Covenant. Acacia can be



Montezuma Lodge conferres the Entered Apprentice degree on Christian Talamantes, April 8, 2022.



Bro. Christian Talamantes is Initiated as an Entered Apprentice

RWB Jose Montano receives his certificate as a Life Lecturer







GUEST EDITOR'S WORD



The 'Fringe' Connection

The interest in "Fringe Masonry" has grown in recent years as Brothers have turned their attention, once again, towards the esoteric. Yet, the term itself may be alien to many regular Freemasons. Writing in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* in 1972, Ellic Howe states that Fringe Masonry is "not 'irregular' Masonry because those who promoted the rites did not initiate Masons, i.e., confer the three Craft degrees or the Holy Royal Arch. Hence they did not encroach upon Grand Lodge's and Grand Chapter's exclusive preserve."

Nevertheless, Howe's description is too broad. Fringe Masonic Rites and Orders are *not* those (such as the Order of the Temple or the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite) that are recognized by regular Grand Lodges. Rather, active Fringe Masonic organizations are those that exist outside of the world of regular Masonry but that often rub up against it (often claiming to be, in some sense, Masonic). Such organizations have included the Rite(s) of Memphis and Misraim, the Swedenborgian Rite, and the Ancient Order of Zuzimites.

Historically, the members of these organizations have taken a serious interest in spirituality and, as Howe says of Fringe Masons in England during the late 19th century, many were "identified with occultism."

The Fringe Masonry of that place and time was composed of "a small and amorphous group of men, most of whom knew one another," says Howe. Nevertheless, Memphis and Misraim, the Swedenborgian Rite, the Zuzimites, and many other Rites and Orders of the 19th century, represent a continuation of the explosion of "Masonic" and quasi-Masonic Rites and rituals of the preceding century.

Extremely popular during their day, some of these rites and orders were absorbed into regular Freemasonry (the Rite of Perfection forming the basis of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, for example), while others collapsed and disappeared, or were absorbed into later Fringe Masonic Rites.

In this issue of the *Fraternal Review*, we focus on the Egyptian Rite, the Asiatic Brethren, and the Ancient Order of Zuzimites. As you read through this issue, you might notice certain themes, or the names of individuals, reappearing. Some of these themes (such as Kabbalah, alchemy, and Rosicrucianism) also appear in the degrees of Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (most obviously in the alchemical- and Rosicrucian-influenced Rose Croix degrees). As such, we hope that our combined labor here will enable our readers to grasp the context in which more familiar Masonic Rites evolved.

Fraternally and sincerely,

Angel Millar, Guest Editor

Author of *The Path of The Warrior-Mystic: Being A Man In An Age of Chaos* and *The Three Stages Of Initiatic Spirituality: Craftsman, Warrior, Magician*, Interim Editor-in-Chief of *Fraternal Review*, and Fellow of the Philalethes Society.

©2022 SCRL FRATERNAL REVIEW: Fringe Masonry

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COVER IMAGE: Third Degree Tracing Board By Angel Millar

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COVER STORY

FROM FREEMASONRY TO FRINGE MASONRY

BY ANGEL MILLAR

While its origin lies in the British Isles, as Freemasonry spread across western Europe during the 18th century, numerous new high "Masonic" degrees and Rites were created, especially in France and the territories of Germany. These often used, and not infrequently blended together, the symbols and teachings of alchemy, hermeticism, Rosicrucianism, Christian esotericism, chivalry, and Kabbalah (originally a Jewish mystical tradition which, by then, had also been adopted and reinterpreted by Christian thinkers).

Among these Rites were the Strict Observance (which claimed a Templar origin), the Asiatic Brethren, and the "Order of the Royal Secret" (often called the "Rite of Perfection").

Founded by Freemason and theurgist Martinez de Pasqually during the 1760s, the Élus Coëns (aka Elect Cohen) practiced a form of ceremonial Christian theurgy. And De Pasqually himself influenced Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, the Christian esotericist often referred to as "the unknown philosopher."

Under Adam Weishaupt, the Illuminati attempted to attach itself to Freemasonry, and to draw Brothers into its fold with the aim of furthering its political agenda. Another important Order to emerge was that of the Gold and Rosy Cross (sometimes referred to as the "Golden Rosicrucians"). Although it restricted its membership to Freemasons, it taught the practice of alchemy, claimed to possess the elixir of life, and claimed to be able to raise spirits with the aid of a ghost raising machine. Surprisingly, being more conservative, it also opposed the Illuminati.

In his Masonic dialogue *Lessing And Falk* (published 1778), the playwright Gotthold Lessing (1729-81) has the character Falk inform Lessing about the Freemasonry of the day. At one point, Falk states the following:

"Whether it is really possible to manufacture gold or not is all the same to me. But I am quite convinced that intelligent men will wish to be able to manufacture it only with respect to Freemasonry. Also the first person to whom the philosopher's stone will be vouchsafed, will in the same instant become a Freemason. And it is nonetheless remarkable



that all reports which the world tells of real or supposed gold-manufacturers confirm this."

Yet, more peculiar still, when Lessing questions Falk about the conjuring up of spirits, he responds, "The same applies practically to them. Spirits cannot possibly listen to the voice of any other person than a Freemason."

While many disappeared, the influence of some of the Rites and Orders of this time remains with us. The twenty-five degrees of the Rite of Perfection formed the basis of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. De Pasqually's Élus Coëns was revived and is still active in various forms. Saint-Martin's teachings were codified by the French esotericist and medical hypnotist Gérard Encausse (Papus), who founded the Martinist Order.

And, while there are several Martinist Orders today that initiate both men and women (often as a precursor to the Élus Coëns), the Hermetic Order of Martinists is only open to "Master Masons of a Lodge under the authority of the United Grand Lodge of England, or of a Grand Lodge recognised by them." Again, the degree structure of the Gold and Rosy Cross was adopted by the *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* (S.R.I.A.), that restricted its membership to regular Freemasons, after its establishment in London in 1866.

In an address to the SRIA titled "The Rosicrucians, Past and Present, At home and Abroad," William Wynn Westcott said the following:

"The aim of our own Society at the present day is to afford mutual aid and encouragement in working out the great problems of Life, and in discovering the Secrets of Nature; to facilitate the study of the system of Philosophy founded upon the Kabbalah and the doctrines of Hermes Trismegistus..."

Two of the leading lights of the S.R.I.A.—William Wynn Westcott and S. L. MacGregor Mathers—went on to found the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn which practiced ceremonial magic based on Hermeticism, alchemy, Rosicrucianism, and other subjects explored, intellectually, by the aforementioned Masonic Rosicrucian society. Although adding two new degrees, the Order also adopted the degree system of the Gold and Rosy Cross and *Societas Rosicruciana*.

While it attracted prominent figures, such as actress Florence Farr and poet W. B. Yeats, the Golden Dawn's most notorious member was, undoubtedly, Aleister Crowley. He would later be initiated into an irregular Scottish Rite in Mexico City in 1900 A.D. and, a few years later, into Anglo-Saxon Lodge No. 343 in Paris, in 1904; although it too was not recognized by the United Grand Lodge of England.

"THE INFLUENCE OF SOME OF THE RITES AND ORDERS OF THIS TIME REMAINS WITH US."

The following year, Crowley—the world's most notorious occultist—completed a Sufi-inspired book of mystical poetry called *The Scented Garden Of Abdullah*. Apparently seeing Sufism and Freemasonry as parallel Orders, in the introduction to *The Scented Garden*, Crowley writes, "I cannot here discuss the curiously patriarchal system of the mystic fraternity in vogue among Muslim[s], if only because I am a Freemason."

Later, he would join, and eventually head, the *Ordo Templi Orientis* (O.T.O.), itself founded by Freemasons Theodor Reuss and Carl Kellner. Reuss had received a charter to establish a branch of the *Societas Rosicruciana* in Germany and, in 1902, was in regular communication with Westcott, who suggested that Reuss print a list of the society's High Councils in his periodical, *Oriflamme*.

Nevertheless, claiming legitimacy from older fringe Masonic Rites, the O.T.O. would later profess to teach sex magical secrets that would unlock the Mysteries of Freemasonry and religion. In 1912, *Oriflamme* announced that a branch of the O.T.O. for Great Britain and Ireland had been established. Named *Mysteria Mystica Maxima*, this was to be headed by Crowley. Today, however, the O.T.O. notes that "membership" in the Order "does not, of itself, confer any status in Freemasonry."



One of the lesser-known Orders on the fringes of English Freemasonry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Ancient Order of Zuzimites was put together by a group of Freemasons who formed part of what has been referred to as the Occult Revival. John Yarker (1833-1913), a Manchester based merchant, and Henry William Quilliam (1856-1932), a solicitor from Liverpool, had both started their Masonic careers in Craft lodges under the United Grand Lodge of England, and both subsequently joined other side Orders, such as the Royal Arch and the Mark degree. These men, however, desired more, and the Antient and Primitive Rite (a condensed version of the Rite of Memphis Misraim) attracted both of them. A myriad of other Orders became linked to this Antient and Primitive Rite, such as the Swedenborgian Rite and the Zuzimites.

Quilliam is now more famous for converting to Islam and founding England's first Mosque, in Liverpool in 1889. He was very much the Victorian polymath; he was a novelist, a poet, a campaigner for equal rights and Temperance, and he was also a

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Freemason. It was as a Mason that he could explore the lost esoteric; Masonry allowing him to open the hidden door to the possibilities of becoming involved in certain fringe Rites. Quilliam gained a senior position in John Yarker's Antient and Primitive Rite, being described as Grand Examiner of the Grand Mystic Temple, 32-94° of the Province of Lancashire in 1883. Quilliam was also the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Ancient Order of Zuzimites, an Order that was possibly formed in 1881, worked 21 degrees, and met mainly in the north-west of England. There is a brief record of the Order meeting in the elegant Victorian Scarisbrick Hotel in the seaside resort of Southport, in Lancashire, for their 33rd annual sojourn in 1907.

Quilliam's life changed drastically the following year, when he was mysteriously summoned to Istanbul; and in 1909 he was struck off the rolls, being disqualified from practicing as a Solicitor. Quilliam seemed to have kept his involvement in these Rites at a local level, and even though his membership in these Rites was extremely prominent, he managed to stay active in regular Freemasonry; unlike Yarker, who had



who had effectively parted ways with the United Grand Lodge of England, apart from his membership in the Quatuor Coronati Correspondence Circle. Quilliam was also involved in a number of Liverpool and Birkenhead Craft lodges; he was a member of Liverpool Lodge No. 1547, was prominent in the Royal Arch, and was an active Mark Mason; but, like Arthur Edward Waite, Kenneth Mackenzie and John Yarker, Quilliam was eager to explore other Orders and Rites, searching deeper within the Masonic structure in an attempt to find lost knowledge.

Not much is actually known about The Ancient Order of Zuzimites; it seems to have been based in Liverpool and the Order gradually faded away with the demise of Quilliam, though their ritual is preserved in an edition of *Collectanea*, by the Grand College of Rites.

The ritual of the Ancient Order of Zuzimites was based on pharaonic Egyptian myth, but secularized; and involved the figures of Osiris, Isis and Set, creating not only an Egyptian landscape for the setting of the ritual, but, as such, a direct link to the Egyptian themed Antient and Primitive Rite that Yarker and Quilliam were also involved with. Indeed, in the third degree of the Zuzimite ritual, we have the pilgrim (the candidate) as having trodden the path of Osiris, Osiris being termed as the Grand Master, who found the lost body of Isis; thus a theme of life, death and rebirth is portrayed. According to the ritual detailed in *Collectanea*, there were nine degrees in total, ending with the climax of "The Knights of Zered." The ritual also reminds us of the interest the late Victorians had with Ancient Egypt, and the mystical and romantic ideas that Ancient Egypt could offer.

BIO:

Dr. David Harrison is the author of twelve books on the history of English Freemasonry. Having gained his Ph.D from the University of Liverpool in 2008, his thesis, *The Genesis of Freemasonry*, on the development of English Freemasonry, was published in 2009 by Lewis Masonic.

Harrison's other works include *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry* (2017), *Rediscovered Rituals of English Freemasonry* (2020), and *The Rite of Seven Degrees* (2021). Harrison is also a Past Master of the Lodge of Lights No. 148 (West Lancashire Province under the U.G.L.E.) and a Fellow of the Philalethes Society in the U.S.A.

MASONIC POP CULTURE

READ IT



The Last Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry By David Harrison Lewis Masonic, Hardcover ©2017

The Lost Rites of Freemasonry examines the mysterious and influential Rites created in continental Europe during the 18th century by such figures as Count Cagliostro, Martinez Pasqually, and Baron Von Hund. Author David Harrison examines the influence of these lost Rites on the occult revivalists a century later, and how prominent occultists and esotericists such as John Yarker, George Irwin, and Frederick Hockley were inspired by them. - Angel Millar

SEE IT

THE MASONIC ROUNDTABLE

Masonic Roundtable: *The Rite of Memphis* Episode 159 65 minutes, March 21, 2017

The Masonic Roundtable discusses the rise and fall of the Rite of Memphis in France, the USA, Britain, and Canada. The hosts also question why practicing the Rite of Memphis is prohibited by regular Grand Lodges in the U.S.A. when other Rites, such as the Order of the Temple, are recognized as a legitimate part of American Freemasonry.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bUyorIuySk

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OCCULT OF PERSONALITY



HEAR IT

Occult of Personality Podcast Freemasonry & Western Esotercism Episode 0344 61 minutes, February 8, 2015

ESOTEFIC POOCOST EXtraoraina

A discussion led by Greg Kaminsky with Angel Millar from 2015. Subjects explored include the development of Freemasonry's higher degrees; the Masonic influence on the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, the *Ordo Templi Orientis*, and Aleister Crowley; and the Western esoteric tradition more broadly.

https://occultofpersonality.net/angel-millar/



hen American Brothers travel to London, they almost always visit the home of the United Grand Lodge of England—Freemasons' Hall at 60 Great Queen Street perhaps before grabbing lunch or a pint at the nearby Freemasons' Arms pub.

A little under two miles away, at 86 St. James's Street, however, is the lesser-known but equally impressive Mark Masons' Hall. This is the home of the higher degrees in London, where Orders such as the Mark Master Mason, Royal Ark Mariners, Knights Templar, Allied Masonic Degrees, and Knights Beneficent of the Holy City are conferred.

Since this issue of *Fraternal Review* is dedicated to Fringe Masonry, we should note that the early Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn rented out rooms in an earlier Mark Mason Hall (not at this address) for their initiations (including that of Aleister Crowley). In his autobiography, Crowley says, "I took the Order with absolute seriousness. I was not even put off by the fact of its ceremonies taking place at Mark Masons' Hall." Quite right, too (especially as Crowley seemed to have spent much of his later life trying, but ultimately failing, to join regular Freemasonry).

Since the early 18th century, taverns and private clubs have operated on the site of 86 St. James's Street.

Williams' Coffee-House, a popular spot for literati, was established there in 1702. Then, in 1749, the premises became a tavern. During the early 19th century, the site was home to the Union Club and Carey's Map Makers.

In February, 1862, however, the building was demolished so that a new building, for a new clubhouse and chambers, could be built on the site. Designed by Sir James Thomas Knowles (1831-1908), this was finished in 1865.

A little over a century later, on December 3, 1977, The Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons of England and Wales obtained a lease for the property, for a term of 99 years. And, after renovations, Mark Masons' Hall was formally opened on September 1, 1979.

Today, the hall features several Masonic temples, dining rooms, and a licensed bar.

Mark Masons'' Hall is located at 86 St. James's Street, London, SW1A 1PL, and can be contacted via email (webenquiries@mmh.org.uk) or by phone (+ 44 (0)20 7839 5274). If you are planning to visit, please make arrangements ahead of time. You must wear a business suit when visiting.



During the late 18th century, a set of tracing boards was painted by Philip James de Loutherbourg (1740-1812) for the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry. While there are a total of eight tracing boards in the Egyptian Rite, we will limit our exploration of the Rite's symbols to those of the degrees of Apprentice, Companion and Master.

THE SEVEN STEPS TO THE TEMPLE

The temple, as depicted on the Apprentice's tracing board, is accessed by seven steps. In the Masonic context, this alludes to the seven liberal arts and sciences on the Winding Staircase of the Fellowcraft. Viewed more broadly, the seven steps may be seen to correspond to the seven planets.

SLEEPING MERCURY AND THE SWORD

On the Apprentice's tracing board, the Roman god Mercury is seen sleeping while being threatened by the Master Mason's sword. The sword is a symbol of air and the intellect. This seems to imply that, through the application of the Master Mason's intellect, the forgotten Mysteries of Hermeticism (Mercury being the Roman equivalent of the Greek god Hermes) may be awakened from their slumber. Above Mercury's head, the words "Rough Ashlar" are inscribed, referring to the unfinished state of the work, which is presumably alchemical in nature—alchemy being one of the three Hermetic Arts.

THE TEMPLE IN THE HEART

On the Companion's tracing board, we encounter a heart at its center, enclosing a temple. This symbolizes the microcosmic temple in the heart of man and is in reference to the inner aspects of the work. The central project of Freemasonry is temple building—and the Mason is a temple builder.



THE PHOENIX ON THE BURNING PYRE

At the top center of the Master's tracing board, a Phoenix on a burning pyre is depicted. Alchemically, this may denote the calcination of the *prima materia* and the resurrection of the "Secret Stone." In many systems, the phoenix represents death and rebirth. The burning pyre represents the *athanor*, or furnace, in which the First Matter is calcined. Rising from the ashes of this intense heat and fire is the perfected stone, the goal of the philosophers, much like the Phoenix is immolated and restored to eternal life in the mythological cycles of the ancient world.

THE CROSSED SWORD AND STAFF OF MERCURY

Below the Phoenix on the Master's tracing board, the sword is in a saltire formation, with the *caduceus*, or staff of Mercury. The sword, representing the intellect and the powers of discernment, is combined with Mercury's staff, which he uses to guide the souls of the dead to Hades, the underworld. This is in reference to the penetration of the Hermetic (Mercurial) Arts (i.e., alchemy) by philosophical means, which is central to the Egyptian Rite.

THE HOURGLASS AND SCYTHE

At the feet of the Mason on the Master's tracing board, Time's hourglass ("an emblem of human life") and his scythe ("an emblem of time") lay inverted and broken. The Philosopher, having overthrown Time himself, has finally achieved immortality by means of the realization of the *Arcanum Magnum*, or "Great Secret," in which this initiatory cycle culminates.

BIO:

Jaime Paul Lamb is the Worshipful Master of Ascension Lodge No. 89, Phoenix, AZ. He is the author of *Myth*, *Magick & Masonry* (The Laudable Pursuit, 2018), *Approaching the Middle Chamber* (The Laudable Pursuit, 2020) and *The Archetypal Temple* (Tria Prima Press, 2021).



Philippa Lee, Author

Philippa Lee is the author of *The Masonic Magician: The Life And Death of Count Cagliostro and His Egyptian Rite* and *Cagliostro: The Unknown Master*, among other books. She is also the editor of the British, online Masonic magazine *The Square* (www.thesquaremagazine.com), and a researcher, and Egyptologist. INTERVIEW BY ANGEL MILLAR. INTERIM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Q: Who was Count Cagliostro?

A: He comes over as this incredibly charismatic, very knowledgeable, bombastic, colorful character. Obviously, there were many of those characters in that era... Saint Germain. Martinez de Pasqually [founder of the Élus Coëns], that bunch of people... Mesmer, Mozart. These guys were

all hanging around together.

Cagliostro came over to England and was initiated into Freemasonry in London, in 1777; and I think it was at that time that he met quite a few people who were on the very esoteric outskirts of Freemasonry. He lived very close to where Swedenborg had lived and he was very good friends with Rabbi Falk, who was called "the Baal Shem of London," and who was a very knowledgeable Kabbalist. And, not only had he got this group of people in England, he also had many little subgroups around Europe.

He traveled through Strasbourg, Russia, and everywhere he went he caused this little bit of chaos and was basically kicked out of all these places. And, of course, he created the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry and set up the mother lodge in Lyon.

Q: Can you tell us a little about the Egyptian Rite?

A: Well, firstly, there is nothing Egyptian in the Rite at all. It's Christian esotericism, Kabbalah, alchemy; a real melting pot of traditions.

Q: So, why did he call it the "Egyptian Rite"?

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A: At that time, people were starting to travel to Egypt and some artifacts, such as mummies, were coming back. I'm sure that, from Cagliostro's point of view, Egypt was already a very interesting and mystical place for him to want associations with.

Q: Freemasonry as we know it emerged pretty early on during the eighteenth century. Obviously, there's a prehistory there as well. But when it went to Europe, all of these other "Masonic" Rites sprang up and became extremely popular. (You mentioned Pasqually, the founder of the Christian occult Order of the Élus Coëns.) So how did the Egyptian Rite fit into that world?

A: I think Cagliostro was probably influenced by Pasqually. There's a lot of crossovers, such as the use of the angelic names. And the whole premise with Cagliostro's Ritual, and with Pasqually's, is the redemption of man after the Fall. So, there's this massive self-improvement goal within these rites, not only to become a better person but to become divine.

Cagliostro had quite a few things that went alongside the ritual. He had what he called his "quarantines," whereby you were made to go into the woods, or some kind of special building (he actually had some built), where you could go and do these "quarantines," where you would purge, pray, meditate; and by the end of it you were meant to be reborn as practically divine. Women were privy to this as well, because his Rite was one of these rites of adoption.

Q: Right, so men and women could both join?

A: Yes. They didn't actually do the rituals together. The women had a much shorter and a bit more flowery ritual. And at the end, the men could come in. There are some rumors that there was a sexual element, or that there was a form of sex magic occurring.

Q: How long did the Egyptian Rite last?

A: No more than ten years. I think it did, perhaps, continue within the lodge in Lyon. And it said that there still is an Egyptian Rite lodge there, but I've never been able to get any confirmation.

ESOTERICA

THE ASIATIC BRETHREN AND KABBALAH BY JEDEDIAH FRENCH

"Several prominent Jewish members of the Asiatic Brethren were followers of—or were connected to—the movement in the history of Judaism referred to as Sabbatarianism."

he Order of the Asiatic Brethren (aka *Fratres Lucis* and *Die Brüder Sankt Johannes des Evangelisten aus Asien in Europa*) represents one of the earliest attempts to deliberately bring Jews and Christians together in a Masonic context. Moreover, the Order was strongly influenced by the esoteric Jewish tradition of Kabbalah (Hebrew: אָבָבָלה, "reception" or "tradition"). As such, it remains an essential key to understanding the influence of Kabbalah on some high-degree Masonic rites, especially in Europe.

Several prominent Jewish members of the Asiatic Brethren were followers of—or were connected to the movement in the history of Judaism referred to as Sabbatarianism. This movement is named after the early-modern Kabbalist, Sabbatai Zevi (1626–1676), and inspired the later proclaimed reincarnation of Zevi in Poland, Jacob Frank (1726–1791), who founded what is now referred to as "Frankism."

The Sabbatians and Frankists practiced Lurianic Kabbalah, a system named after the rabbi who developed it: Isaac (ben Solomon) Luria Ashkenazi (1534–1572). Previous systems of Kabbalah had been abstract and sought to *understand* the wisdom of Creation. Lurianic Kabbalah was more occult and, with a focus on theurgy and conjuration, sought to *effect change* in Creation.

A central figure in the Asiatic Brethren was Moshe Dobruschka (1753–1794), also known as Baron Thomas von Schoenfeld—the first cousin once removed of Jacob Frank. Schoenfeld was an apostate Jew who translated Kabbalistic manuscripts for the Order. In his history of the Asiatic Brethren, Franz Josef Molitor (1779–1860), writing in 1820, claimed that Schoenfeld was the grandson of rabbi Eibeschutz (1690–1764), a prominent member of a Sabbatai Zevi sect; and that he had inherited many rare manuscripts of the sect upon which he based the rituals of the Asiatic Brethren. Molitor emphasized a strong connection between the Asiatic Brethren and the Sabbatians. Schoenfeld was also active in the Frankist Movement, and historian Gershom Scholem informs us that he brought certain Jewish candidates of the Asiatic Brethren to Jacob Frank's court in Brünn to be initiated therein.

Although the story of the Order's beginning is somewhat patchy, according to their foundation myth, as written by Molitor, the original teachings had been given to them by a Franciscan monk named Justus who had spent years in the "Orient," particularly in Jerusalem (at that time, Europeans considered the area of Jerusalem to be "the East" or "the Orient"—i.e., where the light of the Old Testament had originated). In Jerusalem, Justus had learned secrets from the Jewish Kabbalists before returning to Europe with rare manuscripts that became the source of the theosophical doctrines and rituals of the Order of the Asiatic Brethren. Credible sources relate that Justus was given these manuscripts by a Jew named Azariah, who belonged to a Sabbatean sect in Jerusalem.

The Order of the Asiatic Brethren was founded in Vienna during the 1780s by Hans Heinrich von Ecker und Eckhoffen (1750–1790) and his younger brother Hans Karl (1754–1809), and became extremely popular in Central Europe, especially among Jews and aristocratic European Masons.

The brothers were both of Bavarian descent and active in European Freemasonry. Hans Heinrich had been a member of the Orden des Gold und Rosenkreutz (Order of the Golden and Rosy Cross-a Rosicrucian Order that only accepted fourth degree Freemasons as members), though he had departed under bad conditions and wrote a book denouncing the Rosicrucians. Nevertheless, in his study, A. E. Waite stressed that the rituals of the Asiatic Brethren were, to some extent, a recreation of the Rosicrucian Order's ritual; and that the Asiatic Brethren's highest degree, the Knight Priest of Melchizedek, drew specifically from the Golden and Rosy Cross, circa 1777. Hans Heinrich had also drawn on the alchemy and angelic evocations of the Gold and Rosy Cross for the degrees of the Asiatic Brethren.

Yet, being unfamiliar with the language of the Kabbalistic manuscripts used for the inner teachings of the Asiatic Brethren, Hans Heinrich and Hans Karl had relied on the Jewish members, such as Schoenfeld, to interpret them. Thus, it was specifically a Sabbatian/Frankist interpretation of the Lurianic Kabbalah that the members of the Asiatic Brethren received.

The Sabbatians and Frankists followed a doctrine that was based on a reversal of the mitzvahs (divine commandments), incorporating transgressive sexual and antinomian behavior for the purpose of self-purification through sin to achieve illumination. Their movements appeared as "occult groups" in the modern sense, with ritual and mystical practices, both Kabbalistic and magical.

Although the Order of the Asiatic Brethren was eventually dissolved, the presence of Kabbalistic elements in some high-degree Masonic rites can be traced in part to the activities of the Sabbatian/Frankist members of the Asiatic Brethren. One of these was likely Karl XIII, who became one of the leading lights of the Swedish Rite of Freemasonry.

BIO:

Jedediah French is a founding member of Templum Rosae Lodge N_{2} 863 in Oakland, CA, as well as a member of Geheimrat Goethe Lodge in Weimar, Germany. He is also the co-editor of *The Art & Science of Initiation* (Lewis Masonic, 2020). "The brothers were both of Bavarian descent and active in European Freemasonry.

FINAL WORD



Bro. Piers A. Vaughan

Since its inception, Freemasonry has been a two-headed beast, embracing both a middle-of-the-road school of morality and a more esoteric interest flying under the radar of Enlightenment rationality. Following Ramsay's Discourse in 1737, European Masonry went off into many Alchemical, Theurgic, Kabbalistic, Hermetic and Rosicrucian tangents; and the 19th Century saw the rise of Rosicrucian Masonic Orders, the Theosophical Society, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and the Ordo Templi Orientis, among many others. While there are those who see Masonry as little more than a charitable organization with quaint rituals, many others have seen it as a springboard to far deeper currents and use it as a pronaos to more profound teachings and applications. The veritable explosion of so-called Fringe Masonry clearly indicates that it fulfilled-and continues to fulfill-a real need among many spiritually-inclined Freemasons and other seekers after Truth. This issue looks at a number of these currents, including Mark Masons Hall in London, which hosted a number of the more interesting Orders of those fascinating times.





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Join us on May 2^{nd} for dinner at 5:30 PM before the stated meeting. The entire family is invited. Our chefs have planned an excellent menu. If you have any dietary restrictions please contact the secretary so that we may arrange suitable alternatives.

Lasagna Vegetables Tossed Salad Garlic Bread Desserts Coffee, tea, and sodas



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What is the purpose of Freemasonry?

"To admit, make and pass Freemasons according to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge. To advance the moral and social interests of its membership; to foster good citizenship, honest industry and upright living; to cultivate the exercise of charity in its best and broadest sense; to assist the widows and orphans of its deceased members; to stimulate friendship, harmony and Brotherly love and generally to promote, in its own way, the happiness of mankind — it is a fraternity of good men, linked together by honorable and indissoluble bonds, to accomplish these noble purposes, eschewing all interests in factional politics and sectarian religion and free from the dictation of both."

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