

RITE OF MEMPHIS: PIKE VS MARCONIS DE NÈGRE

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Outline

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Disclaimer

This presentation/show is done purely for education on the Memphis Rite, the author does not endorse, nor believe that the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis has any place in Regular Freemasonry. The views and opinions expressed here are of the authors and not of any Masonic organization or the Grand Lodge of Texas.

Memphis Rite According to De Negre

- ❑ The Rite of Memphis is the sole depository of high Masonry, the true primitive Rite, the Rite par excellence, which has come down to us without any alteration, and is consequently the only Rite which can justify its origin and the combined exercise of its rights by constitutions, the authenticity of which cannot be questioned.
- ❑ The Rite of Memphis, or Oriental Rite, is the veritable Masonic tree, and all systems, whatsoever they be, are but detached branches of this institution, venerable for its great antiquity, and born in Egypt
- ❑ The real deposit of the principles of Masonry written in the Chaldee language is preserved in the sacred Ark of the Rite of Memphis, and in part in the Grand Lodge of Scotland, at Edinburgh, and in the Maronite Convent on Mount Lebanon.

The Beginnings of Egyptian Rite

- ❑ Bro.: Marconis de Negre, the Grand Hierophant, is the sole consecrated depository of the traditions of this Sublime Order
- ❑ Marconis de Negre claims, that a certain Samuel Honis, a native of Cairo, brought it from Egypt, in 1814
- ❑ With Gabriel Mathieu Marconis (father of Marconis de Negre), Baron Dumas, and the Marquis de la Rogne
- ❑ Was granted permission from the Grand Orient of France to practice the Rite, and established several short lived lodges in Paris
- ❑ In 1860 de Negre brought the Rite to New York to try and start the Rite in America
 - Degrees were conferred (4°-95°) in an hour and a half
 - Councils were established in New York, Michigan, Louisiana, and Oregon

Grand Orient of France

- ▣ Recognized the Rite of Mizraim (French Rite) which is what the Rite of Memphis is based off of
- ▣ Had lodges up until the early 1900s in America and was considered a regular form of Freemasonry
- ▣ Was corrupted by French social elites in the mid-1800s
- ▣ In 1877 the Grand Orient of France declared that Atheist be allowed into the Fraternity.
 - Caused off shoots and muddled the already confusing Masonic landscape in France

Comparing of Degrees

- "4° Discreet Master. – The duties are to guard the furniture of the Temple. Teaches through Solomon the reverence we owe to God. Corresponding degrees – Royal Arch Mason: 4° Ancient and Accepted Rite; 4° Rite of Memphis, and 4° Rite of Mizraim.
- "6° Sacred Arch. – Alludes to the concealment of the ineffable name of God as given to the Patriarch Enoch, and discovery thereof by the Sojourners. Corresponding Degrees – Royal Arch; 13° Ancient and Accepted Rite; and 11° Rite of Mizraim.
- "7° Secret Vault.- – Professes to reveal pronunciation of the Sacred Name in all time. Corresponding Degrees – Royal and Select Master; 14° Ancient and Accepted Rite; 20° Rite of Mizraim.
- "11° Rose Croix. – In this Degree the candidate becomes a Disciple of the Great Benefactor of our race; is instructed in the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, and ascent to Elysium. Corresponding Degrees – Knight Templar; 18° Ancient and Accepted Rite; 18° Rite of Mizraim: Royal Order of Scotland.
- "16° Knights of Kadosh. – Traces the descent of the Knights Templar from the Builders of the Ancient Temple at Jerusalem through the Knights of the Dawn and of Palastine. Corresponding Degrees – Knights Templar; 30° Ancient and Accepted Rite; 65° Rite of Mizraim.
- "17° Knight of the Royal Mystery. – Third Degree is here explained by Christian Allegory, and the leading tenets of the nine principal religions of the World are described. Corresponding Degrees – Knight Templar Priest; 32° Ancient and Accepted Rite; and 48° Rite of Mizraim.
- "18° Grand Inspector. – Inculcates a spirit of toleration, of love, and of charity, especially addressed to those who are, or may become, rulers in Masonry. Corresponding Degrees – 33° Ancient and Accepted Rite; and 77° Rite of Mizraim."

Albert Pike's Take on the Memphis Rite

- ▣ First Pike ignored the degrees and did not care if they were being conferred in Grand Orient Lodges
- ▣ Pike later found out about the degree peddling, selling of degrees that were conferred in an hour and a half for ~\$100 at the time (~\$2,000 today)
- ▣ Pike said that men who received the degrees were not allowed to use their degree numbers after the name, as it wasn't a recognized Rite

Current Status of the Rite

- ▣ Not currently being practiced by any recognized US Grand Lodge (including Prince Hall)
- ▣ The degrees are held by the Grand College of Rites, which was spurred to archive the degrees of Rites no longer practiced in the US
- ▣ Current Lodges that US Grand Lodges recognize and practice the Rite of Memphis include:
 - Grand Orient of Italy
 - Swiss Grand Lodge Alpina
 - National Grand Lodge of Romania
 - Grand Lodge of the Dominican Republic

Current Incantations in the US/Degree Peddling

- ▣ The Memphis Rite is still used today for degree peddling, and attempts to build empires (much like what Pike accused Marconis De Negre and his American counterparts of doing

Modern Rite of Memphis

- ▣ Was initially started as a “study group” later was found out by the Grand Master of Georgia as a Rite and that degrees were being conferred.
 - The Members that started the group were suspended for 200 years and an edict went out forbidding any member to join, this edict was repeated in North Carolina and Indiana Grand Masters in 2002.
 - The dissidents went on to start and fail at multiple irregular Masonic organizations including, calling themselves the Grand Lodge of America, Rose Cross of Gold, etc.
 - In 2009 the group mis-represented itself to the Grand Orient of France, was granted a treat of amity and became the Grand Orient of the United States
 - In the 2011 Grand Oreint of France Grand session the amity was yanked and the Grand Orient of France voted to no longer recognize the Grand Orient of USA

The Regular Grand Lodge of England / High Masonic Council

- ❑ Internet scam started in Canada by business man and self proclaim Duke, Rui Gabirro
- ❑ Mixed his Masonic degree peddling of the Rite of Memphis with his online businesses including selling oil, stamps, etc.
- ❑ Claims to be the international head of the Rite of Memphis
- ❑ Membership is clouded and only a couple of verified people have been associated with his work
- ❑ SFC Leslie G. Harmanson was peddling degrees in Iraq under dispensation from a fake Masonic organization called Regular Grand Lodge of North Carolina
- ❑ Intiation fee is \$5,000 and annual dues are \$1,500

Conclusion

- ▣ The Rite of Memphis conception is suspect at best, and shows one mans desire to be the head guy
- ▣ The Rite will continue to be abused as a degree peddling scheme because of the lack of any consistent governing body, and eschewed by regular Masons
- ▣ Alluring men and women with promises of a 94° title, higher than most any other regular mason in the world
- ▣ Men (or Women) who are looking to start their own irregular lodge have a blue print

Sources / Acknowledgements

- ▣ Egyptian Masonic History of the Original and Unabridged Ancient and Ninety-Six Degree – Rite of Memphis
- ▣ The Spurious Rites of Memphis and Misraim
- ▣ A Standard History of Freemasonry in the state of New York Volume 1
- ▣ Dr. S Brent Morris
PM Patmos Lodge No 70
PM Quatuor Coronati Lodge No 2076 EC

Br. Jack Buta
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