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CRAFT • CAPITULAR • CRYPTIC • TEMPLARY • A.A.S.R.

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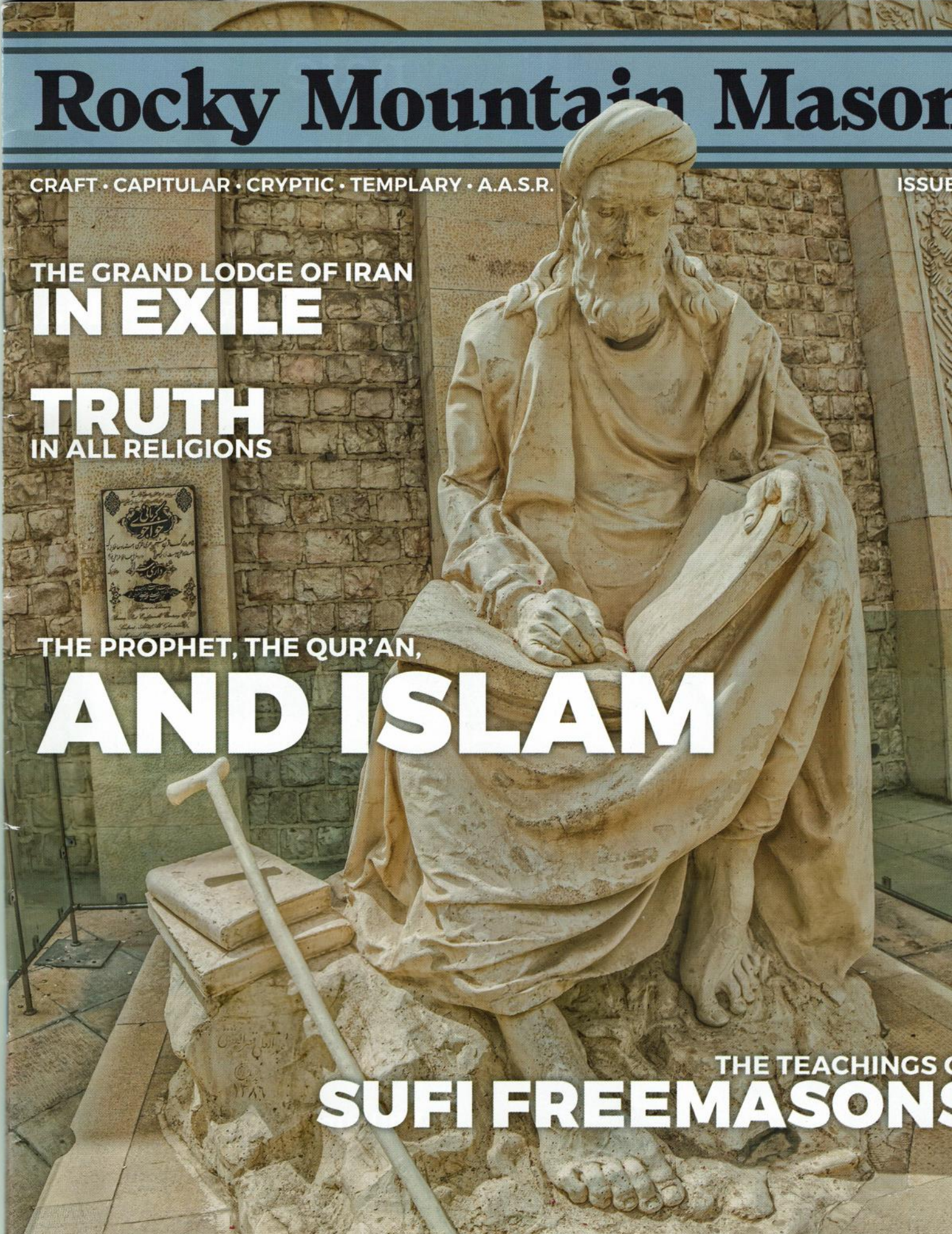
THE GRAND LODGE OF IRAN
IN EXILE

TRUTH
IN ALL RELIGIONS

THE PROPHET, THE QUR'AN,

AND ISLAM

THE TEACHINGS OF
SUFI FREEMASONS



Author/Staff Bios



Ben Williams, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief, is a Past Master of Norwood Lodge No. 111 and Telluride Lodge No. 56 A.F. & A.M. in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado. He currently serves the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Colorado as the Grand Commander. He has worked multifariously as a soil scientist, an award-winning journalist, a waiter, a ski instructor, a banker, among other haphazard occupations, before becoming a Registered Patent Agent authoring patents on behalf of inventors. He lives in Littleton, Colorado, with his wife, Tiffany; their baby girl, Adelyn; and their beagle, Warwick.



Patrick M. Dey, Editor, is an officer of Nevada Lodge No. 4, Colorado's only ghost town lodge. He is an avid researcher of Masonic legendry, symbolism, and evolutionary history, as well as a student of ancient mystery cults. Beyond Masonry he is an architectural designer in downtown Denver and teaches architectural drafting at the Community College of Denver, with a Masters of Architecture from CU Denver and a Certificate of Classical Architecture from the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art.



Pablo Colomaban, Art Director, is a Past Master of Denver Lodge No.5. He is also a member of the Scottish Rite at the Denver Consistory. Pablo brings with him over 10 years of experience in magazine art direction, branding, and web design. He is a graduate from FAU and now lives in Denver with his wife Annie and their two sons. He pretends to fly fish in his spare time.



John Moreno is an award-winning photographer who runs Lost Images Photography in Edgewater, Colorado. He is the in-house photographer at the Denver Consistory for the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Denver. His photos have appeared in the periodical of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, The Scottish Rite Journal. His photos have been nationally recognized, winning the People's Choice Award (multiple times) in the Journal's annual photo competition.



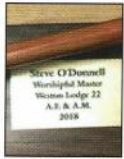
Salman Sheikh is a member of St. Alban Lodge No. 529 in Pennsylvania, as well as Temple-Melita Chapter No. 183, Joppa Council No. 46, A.A.S.R. Valley of Philadelphia, and LuLu Shriners. He believes that "As we see a time of great division in our country, we can look upon the Craft and how it brings us all together as mankind and dissolves our differences. If we practice our virtues, we can show the world that we as Masons, regardless of our race and religion, can love each other, then so can they." His writings reflect upon the esoteric teachings of Sufi Islam and how they relate to Freemasonry.



Michael Dean Burnett is Colorado Mason and Knight Templar, member of Boulder No. 14 and Nevada No. 4, as well as the Lafayette York Rite bodies. He lives in Virginia with his wife, Christina. He is currently a candidate for ordained ministry at the Tabernacle United Methodist Church. He hopes to return to school in order to work on a Master's of Divinity at Regent University.



Jeff Bolstad is the Northwest Department Commander of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the USA. He is from Helena, Montana, where he works as a State Farm agent. There he became a Mason, served as Worshipful Master at Helena Lodge No. 9, as well as the Helena York Rite Bodies, Scottish Rite, and several invite only bodies. In 2003 was appointed as Personal Representative of the SGIG of the Scottish Rite in Montana. In 2005 he was coroneted with the 33rd Degree.



Steve O'Donnell is from Denver, Colorado. He was a Marine and later a sheet metal worker. He became a Mason six years ago, and is the sitting Worshipful Master of Weston Lodge No. 22. He lives with his wife of thirty-seven years, Wendy, and has a son, Shawn (a Master Mason and a B-52 pilot), and a daughter, Julia.



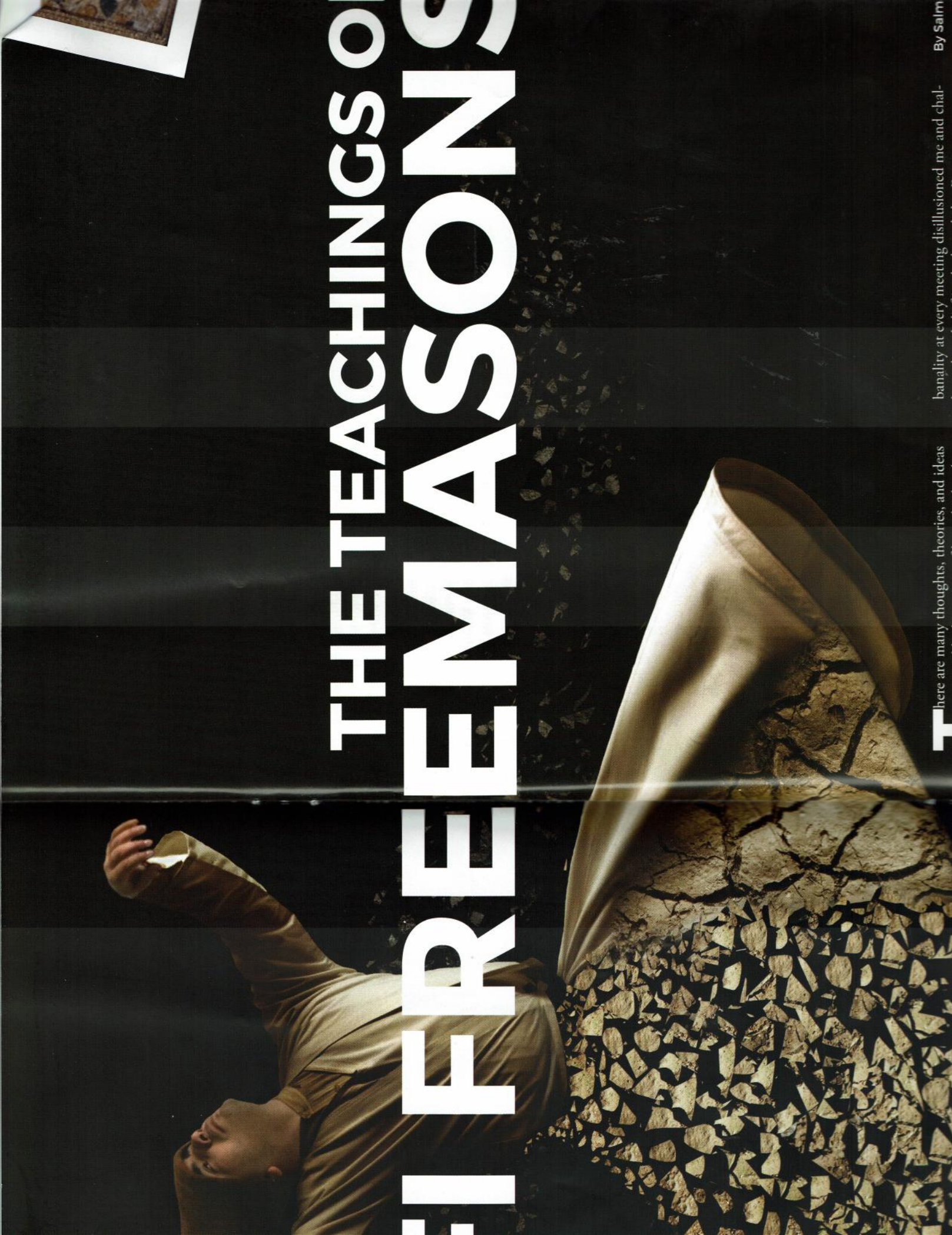
John Richard Balzer is a member and Past Master of Paul Revere Lodge #130, and a member of several other lodges. He is both a Scottish Rite and York Rite Mason. Professionally, he is registered Professional Engineer (P.E.—civil) in Colorado and a Certified Safety Professional (CSP). He holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Oregon State University, an M.S. in Education from the University of Southern California (Germany campus), and a Certificate in Leadership and Management from the U.S. Army Management Staff College.



Scot M. Autry Scot was born in Junction, Texas, and eventually landed in Colorado Spring, Colorado. Scot married his high school sweetheart, which after the I do's raised his stature by ten points at least. He has been an apartment maintenance man, QA inspector, illustrator, lead illustrator in research and development, space planner, real-estate project manager, office administrator and is currently Grand Secretary of Colorado. He was Initiated, Passed and Raised in Centennial Lodge No. 84 in 2002. He was Past Master of El Paso Lodge No. 13 in 2013.



Scott E. Olson is a Past Master of South Denver Lodge No. 93 and is currently the Director of Education there. Scott serves as photographer for South Denver as well as the Denver Consistory, where he is a member and officer in the Rocky Mountain Chapter of Rose Croix. When not photographing, Scott lives and works on a small farm in Erie, Colorado with his wife and two daughters, two dogs, two cats, and around twenty-five chickens.



THE TEACHINGS OF FIFTEEN MASTERS

There are many thoughts, theories, and ideas

banality at every meeting disillusioned me and chal-

By Salm



A Sufi in Ecstasy in a Landscape

It is not my intent to say that all of Freemasonry came from the Orient, but there is little doubt that, throughout history, many persons of the Western World have sought enlightenment in the Orient to discover their purpose in life. For example, during the European Dark Ages, the knowledge given to Western society by the Moslem Moors during their 800-year reign of Spain and Andalusia helped many groups and societies prosper in Europe.

One group that promotes similar teachings to

sion of Islam, extant since the 6th Century. The term "Sufism" originates from the word "Tasawuf," which is a form of meditation devised to ascend spiritually and subconsciously. Sufis are known for their love and devotion to God, their purpose is to have His presence in their life always. Sufism is divided into different orders and each has its own Grand Master. Each Grand Master has disciples under him who go through different degrees of initiation to attain enlightenment.

Any person that is initiated into Sufism is given the task of purifying his heart for himself and others. Through love and patience he will find God. The process in Sufism of cleansing oneself is similar to the saying "Know Thyself" – of learning esoteric knowledge and having the privilege of God's presence in one's life. The initiate is made a disciple of Sufism in his heart, just as Masons are first made a Mason in their heart. The disciple under the leadership of a Sheikh (i.e. Elder) is taught certain limitations and restrictions, to live his life in moderation.

We can see that these teachings of the Sufis are also in our rituals and initiation ceremonies.

The Sufi candidate, who is similar to an Entered Apprentice, empties his heart and soul of his old life to begin a new cycle of existence in a spiritual paradigm, and, as he goes through the ranks, he eventually experiences the death of his ego and is raised to be an ascended spiritual master, similar to what we see in the Master Mason degree.

Sufi Grand Masters believe that the enlightenment of the candidate comes in various degrees because doing everything at once will overwhelm the candidate and drive him away. We see the same thing in modern Masonry, where candidates are not provided explanation or taught fully what they went through why. At every meeting of the congregation, the candidate, under the direction of his Master and fellow disciples, is taught something new. The Dervishes of the Bektashi Order of Sufis in the Orient of Turkey are allowed to have relations of fraternal love with the modern Freemasons that operate there, because they both share the same agenda.

The Master Mason's Word we are given is similar to what the Sufis are called in the Orient; that is, the "Al Mahabyn" which means "the loving people of God."

In the end, as we face the realities of the modern world, we come to a realization and ask: Are we in a social club? A secret society? Or just another fraternity that merely wants a dues payment once a year, one that is not willing to help you or teach you anything?

The answer is none of the above, we are all Sons of Light and our ties bind each of us together regardless of our race and religion. I believe Freemasonry will be the same force that saves this country once again.

at a time of future division, just like Freemasonry did when it founded our nation that gave freedom to those who sought it.

When I became an Entered Apprentice, as a Muslim, I took my oath on a Holy Bible. I was obligated by a Jewish Past Master. My question to all modern Masons – who would rather be in their own small groups and exclude other brothers – is this: Where else in the world do you see such unity where all mankind can come together to love and respect one another under the guidance of the Most High Creator?

Freemasonry is the salvation for humanity, and will continue to be so.

In the American Civil War brother Masons spared each other. The same took place in the Crusades between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart. Salahuddin Al Ayyoubi (also known as Saladin, 1138-1193) was the first Sultan of what is now Egypt and Syria, and the founder of the Ayyubid Dynasty. He is known in the West for defeating the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin, which, in turn, allowed him to recapture the City of Jerusalem after an eighty-eight-year reign under the Fatimid Egyptians and the Crusaders. Historians have noted that part of Saladin's fame stemmed from his noble character and chivalrous behavior, which earned him the respect of his allies and his enemies alike.

Upon the loss of governing Jerusalem, King Richard of England led the Third Crusade to reclaim the city. Despite various deadly battles between the Muslim army and the Crusaders, historians agree that the relationship between Saladin and Richard was atypical. When Richard's horse was killed at the Battle of Arsuf, Saladin is said to have sent two fine Arabian horses as a present for his rival, King Richard. On another occasion, when King Richard was said to have been sick with fever, Saladin sent to him foodstuffs and provisions, such as fruits and vegetables, as a gift.

It has been documented that King Richard proposed that his sister, Joan of England (also known as Queen of Sicily) be offered in marriage to Saladin's brother which would allow the city of Jerusalem to be a wedding gift.

One cannot help but wonder whether there was some sort of mystic tie between these two leaders. According to Arab-Masonic tales, when King Richard was injured by a poisonous arrow, Saladin and some of his men traveled in disguise to Richard's tent to help cure him. The tales suggest that Saladin and King Richard "shook hands" by the Strong Grip of a Master Mason. To honor King Richard the Lion heart, it is said by some that from this occasion the strong grip of a Master Mason became known as the Lion's Paw. The tales we have researched claim that both men were decedents of similar secret, esoteric schools. (Thank you to Mohamed A. Yatim for this part).



Dance of Sufi Dervishes

As a Muslim growing up in America, this Masonic Brotherhood engendered my acceptance into American society, and the boundaries of race, religion, socio-economic status, and other factors were eliminated. Those same men I never knew became my brothers and, unbeknownst to me, were watching over me my whole life. I never had that awareness until the Most High blessed with me the eyes to see and the heart to feel, and I knew the power of this international brotherhood.

I encourage you all to continue to inspire yourself and others, and to live a good life in accordance to the laws of God and Freemasonry. Peace to all (As Salam Aleikum). ❀