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Illustration from "Figures de la Bible" (1728) by Gerard Hoet, which depicts Enoch ascending into heaven.

Political Lesson of The 13°: The Keystone of the Royal Arch

By ADAM B. OLIVIER 32°
Editor-in-Chief

The 13° Royal Arch of Solomon is one of the most memorable degrees, especially in the Houston Valley. The spectacular vertical views that are presented to the candidate bring more than just an interesting story with Adoniram, Yehu-Aber, and Satolkin.

Illustrious Brother Albert Pike 33° implies rather frankly that what happens in the degree is an allegory. The search for the true name represents the long-time search that man has experienced for the proper understanding of deity. He explained that even the Hebrews, the chosen people, consistently venerated or outright worshiped other gods in the Old Testament, which angered God and brought his wrath.

Notably, he also states in *Morals and Dogma* that there is something that the reader is entitled to know (presumably after successfully observing the degree).

"The keystone of the Royal Arch of the great Temple of Liberty is a

Continued on the back.

The Double-Headed Eagle: An Ancient Symbol of Storied History

By ADAM B. OLIVIER 32°
Editor-in-Chief



The Attack (1899) by Finnish artist Edvard Isto. The painting shows a double-headed eagle (representing the Russian Empire) taking/destroying a law book from the "Finnish Maiden" which is the national personification of Finland. This was painted as the Russian Empire was trying to destroy the national identity of Finland.

The double-headed eagle is not an invention of the Scottish Rite, nor is it an invention of Freemasonry. In fact, the symbol predates the Scottish Rite, Freemasonry, England, and even the English language. The symbol may have its origins in the lost annals of history, but some of the earliest known examples of it being used are from the Bronze Age in Mesopotamia, Anatolia (modern day Turkey), and ancient Greece.

An argument could easily be made that the entity which made the double-headed eagle famous was the Eastern Roman Empire during the Medieval Period. Although the Western Roman Empire fell in 476 A.D., the Eastern Roman Empire survived for almost another millennium to 1453. The House of Palaiologos (the last Roman dynasty to rule in Constantinople) took control of the Eastern throne in the thirteenth century. The double-headed eagle was the family cypher of the Palaiologos dynasty and effectively became the state symbol of the Eastern Roman Empire by its fall in the fourteenth century.

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Fundamental law, charter, or constitution; the expression of the fixed habits of thought of the people, embodied in a written instrument, or the result of the slow accretions of the consolidation of centuries; the same in a war as in peace; that cannot be hastily changed, nor be violated with impunity, but is sacred, like the Ark of the Covenant of God, which none could touch and live."

Illustrious Brother Pike's mention of a "constitution" might quickly invoke the concept of the American Constitution which is a written document that has been in force for over 230 years. The United States Constitution is the oldest, still in use, charter of government in the world. However, there are other versions of "constitutions".

The United Kingdom lacks any codified constitution, rather it is a combination of written and unwritten laws and principles which are largely respected by a few sacrosanct institutions. These laws and principles have been acquired over centuries in Britain. The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom "interprets" the British Constitution and ensures that it is not being infringed.

Illustrious Brother Pike makes it clear that both of these governing charters are acceptable. What is important, above all else, is that there are measures to protect the constitution, it cannot be hastily changed, and that it reflects the will of the people.

This lesson from the 13° fits together perfectly with the idea of an enlightened citizenry from the 4°, 5°, and 6°; an independent judiciary in the 7°, an economic order based on capital and labor in the 8°, an upper house of legislation in the 9°, a lower house of legislation in the 10°, the right to a trial by jury in the 11°, and the concept of a chief executive in the 12°.

Together, following the aforementioned lessons, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people can be created not just to last, but to ensure the liberties of the citizenry.

Announcements

Robert Burns Supper

On January 28, 2023 the Houston Valley of the Scottish Rite is pleased to host a Robert Burns Supper featuring the Scottish singer Ed Miller and a special four course meal. Tickets cost \$70-\$80 depending on the location. The event will be approximately four hours long from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. Seating is limited.

2022-2023 Capital Campaign

Join us in building the Next Chapter of the Houston Scottish Rite's Library Story by contributing to the expansion of the main library shelves. Donations of all sizes welcome!

With a minimum donation of **\$500**: You will have a bookshelf dedicated to you or someone you admire. A nameplate will be engraved and placed on a bookshelf in the Main Library.

Minimum donation of **\$100**: You will receive an Architect's Circle kit (limited supply!) including: Architect's Circle Commemorative Book Bag, Architect's Circle pen, Architect's Circle Certificate, and a book from the Premium book list.

Minimum donation of **\$50**: You will receive an Architect's Circle pen, and a Book from the Premium book list.

Minimum donation of **\$25**: You will receive a book from the Premium book list.

For more info visit www.HoustonScottishRite.org and click "Education Foundation" under the "Philanthropy" tab.

Per Capita Program

The endowed, life members, and dues exempt members are encouraged to donate \$30 or more per year to offset their per capita membership assessment. Donations can be made through the Valley's website at: www.HoustonScottishRite.org.

Click "Dues Donations and Meal Fees" under the "Membership" tab.



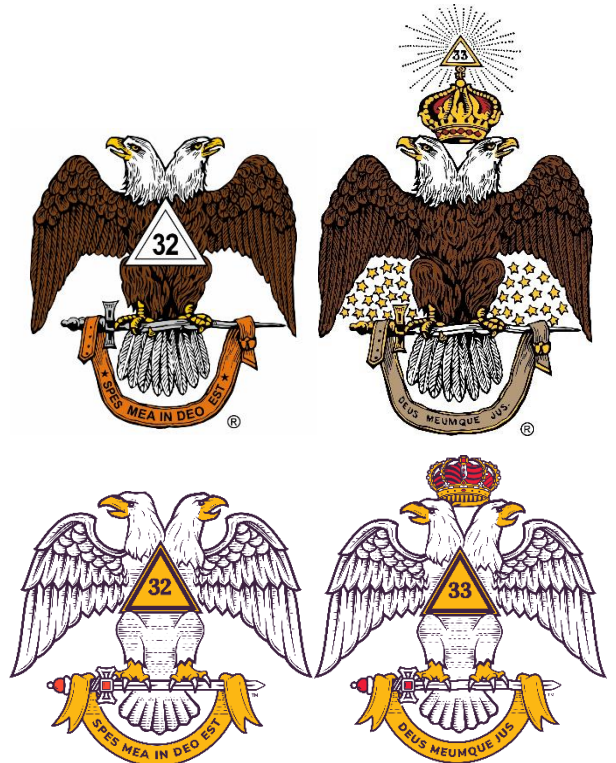
Flag used to represent the Greek Orthodox Church.

The symbol continues to be used by the Eastern Orthodox Church today. While the Eastern Roman Empire was no more, many countries, entities, and families claimed to be the legitimate successor to Rome and used some version of the symbol.

Rump states of Rome, the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Serbia, the Kingdom of Albania, the Holy Roman Empire, and various Islamic states used the double-headed eagle. In fact, the symbol is still used on the flags of Serbia and Albania as well as the standard of the Russian President.

Masonic legend says that Frederick II "The Great" of Prussia was a Freemason, was Grand Commander of The Order of Prince of The Royal Secret and had high authority over Masonry, and that he was instrumental in the creation of what we know today as the Scottish Rite. Legend also says that he granted permission for the Scottish Rite to use the double-headed eagle, which he used as his personal emblem. Unfortunately, this is mostly untrue. Frederick II was indeed a Mason and he did use the double-headed eagle as a personal emblem, but that that is about all of the legend that actually stands up to facts.

The double-headed eagle was, however, officially adopted in 1801 when the Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction was created.



Depictions of how the Southern Jurisdiction (top row) and Northern Jurisdiction (bottom row) use the double-headed eagle today.

Today the Southern and Northern Jurisdictions of the Scottish Rite use the double-headed eagle to represent the Supreme Council, Inspector Generals Honorary, and 32° Scottish Rite Masons. The Southern Jurisdiction always displays the eagle with the wings "down". The Northern Jurisdiction almost always displays the wings down as well, *except* on the caps and lapel pins of Active and Active Emeritus members of the Supreme Council, in which case the wings are displayed in the "upward" position.

Contributing to The Houston Valley Herald

If you are interested, contact Brother Adam B. Olivier 32° at HoustonValleyHerald@gmail.com if you wish to contribute articles or pictures for future issues of *The Houston Valley Herald*.