University of Szeged
Faculty of Arts
Doctoral School of English and American
Cultures and Literatures

Róbert I. Péter:

# The Mysteries of English Freemasonry:  Janus-Faced Masonic Ideology and Practice Between 1696 and 1815

Ph.D. Dissertation Overview

Supervisor:
Prof. György E. Szőnyi

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## 1. English Freemasonry as a Neglected Subject

Although the past twenty years have produced some important studies, the major phenomenon of Freemasonry, especially in Britain, is still ignored despite the fact that the masonic fraternity is one of the socio-religious movements of British origin, which has had the biggest international impact. The reasons for the neglect of the subject include (1) the lack of access to primary materials in Masonic archives prior to the mid-1980s; (2) the paucity of thematic and critical bibliographies to inform scholars about research sources; (3) lack of interest in researching the history of the fraternity.

Most scholarly works on English freemasonry are concerned with the secular, social and political aspects of masonic ideology and praxis at the expense of the mythic, protoromantic, and above all religious dimensions, which distinguish masonic lodges from other clubs and fraternities of the English Enlightenment. Scholarship on English freemasonry often undermines or oversimplifies the religious nature of masonic practice and ideology. For example, some writings, relying on the statements of the official masonic rhetoric of the long eighteenth century, depict masonic practice with the adjectives non-sectarian or non-partisan.

## 2. The Objective and Methodology

If we consider the deficiencies of the present-day literature on freemasonry and the fact that recent studies on the Enlightenment and religion still hardly make any reference to the fraternity, although, as Margaret Jacob has persuasively argued, it provides an excellent case study to understand the living enlightenment, there is a clear need to re-examine the relationship of English freemasonry to the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment. Therefore, the objective of this dissertation is to explore the religious aspects of English masonic rhetoric, ideology and practice, as well as their consistency with one another, between 1696 and 1815. Of course, this does not mean that the study will concentrate on the simple yes or no question of whether English freemasonry can rightly be labelled as religious in its nature, since this should be almost natural in the light of the dominating views of the English Enlightenment, emphasising its rootedness in religious discourses and practices. The applied methodological frameworks, that is, the positioning of the fraternity on the spectrum of the English Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment as well as Ninian Smart's seven-dimensional typology of religions, will hopefully help highlight the complexities of this lived out masonic experience during the long eighteenth century.

My thesis is that although eighteenth-century English masonic rhetoric emphasized (religious) inclusiveness, harmony and tolerance, accompanied by the de-christianization of masonic practice, conviviality and social networking, many facets of masonic practice, during the rivalries between the masonic modernisers and the 'Antient' popular Counter-Enlighteners, remained religious and became more Christian in their contents, and exclusive towards the "Other" (women, people of low social status and sometimes Jews). It cannot be emphasised too strongly that this so far neglected study of the divergence between masonic rhetoric and practice does not intend to deny or relegate the convergence between masonic rhetoric and practice by any means since it is clear that English freemasons admitted Jews into their lodges or assisted the poor through masonic charity.

Although, the constitutions prohibited discussion of religion during masonic meetings, close examination of the relevant primary sources will show that, in many ways, English freemasonry preserved its distinctive religious nature in the age of Enlightenment and its Christian components became more prominent from the 1740s. It will also highlight how the debate on this caused dissension among masonic lodges and even Grand Lodges. Thus, a number of members of the fraternity do not seem to have been any more tolerant than the average

member of contemporary English society despite the claims of its eighteenth or twentieth-century advocates. Of course, this is not to deny the importance of business networking, convivial or political aspects of English masonic ideology and praxis, which most studies on English freemasonry have so far concentrated on.

The incorporation of English freemasonry in a wider cultural and religious context will hopefully contribute to several ongoing scholarly debates on the nature of the English Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, the current reconsideration of the secularization thesis, the problems regarding the parameters of the formation of British national identity as well as the question of political and social stability in the eighteenth century. For instance, the findings of this dissertation will strengthen the fairly recent scholarly thesis that the Enlightenment and Christianity were not opponents but were married to each other to create modernity. These days the myth of an anti-religious and overwhelmingly secular Enlightenment has significantly lost its appeal. More and more studies acknowledge that the Enlightenment cannot be properly understood without considering its Christian context, and that it is no longer analogous with a process of secularization. We shall see that the case of Freemasonry provides an excellent illustration of the fact that the phenomena of the Enlightenment cannot be explained away satisfactorily with the dichotomies of secular versus religious, Christian versus deist, rational versus irrational.

## 3. Definitions

As for the definition of **English freemasonry** in this dissertation, it is not restricted to masonic lodges where only the Craft degrees (Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, Master Mason) and the Royal Arch were performed. It is clear that in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Royal Arch and other higher degrees were practised by many regular Modern as well as irregular freemasons in spite of the fact that the Modern Grand Lodge did not acknowledge these degrees. Although, I am aware that official or regular freemasonry of the eighteenth century only acknowledged the practice of the first three degrees, for these reasons, I cannot exclude the analysis of either the so-called higher degrees or of those irregular and often regular freemasons who performed them. Thus, I will define English Freemasonry as containing both the basic or Craft degrees and the additional or higher degrees, the latter of which first occurred in the 1730s.

**Masonic ideology** is determined by the philosophical, religious, mythical and political tenets of the fraternity as they were embodied in its constitutions, sermons, charges and other proclamations of the different Grand Lodges.

**Masonic rhetoric** is restricted to those principles of masonic ideology, which characterised an ideal picture of English freemasonry that masonic authorities intended to convey towards the Establishment and the general public. The watchwords of masonic rhetoric such as tolerance, loyalty and harmony were frequently repeated in masonic orations and official publications of the order.

**Masonic practice** is concerned with English freemasonry in action, that is, the lived experience of freemasons in their lodges and Grand Lodges. We can reconstruct this by analysing, among others, concrete lodge minutes, the text of the actual rituals and songs used during meetings. Naturally, masonic practice is much more ambivalent and contradictory than the apparently reasonable and acceptable masonic rhetoric. It is important to stress at this point that masonic rhetoric, after its crystallization in the 1720s, was clearly less sensitive to either the inner transformations of the order or the cultural, political and religious changes of the 'profane' world that left their marks on the history of English freemasonry at a practical level.

**Enlightenment.** The concept of the Enlightenment (c. 1680s-1790s) will here be taken as being associated with the ideas of equality, toleration, individual rationalism, deism and secularization, which were lived out and popularised in coffee-houses, literary clubs, masonic

lodges and the new journals of the time such as the *Spectator* edited by Addison and Steele. In these networks of institutions, "private people come together as a public."[1] **Constructive and critical deism.** In the history of ideas and philosophy of religion, we usually differentiate between two streams of deistic arguments, namely, positive or constructive and negative or critical. The first type can be well observed in certain writings of Lord Herbert or John Locke. Although, the radical deists such as John Toland, Matthew Tindal and Thomas Woolston agreed with the arguments of the moderate ones, but they often went much further and attacked the historical and rational basis of Christian revelation.

In the dissertation **secularization** will refer primarily to the retreat of Christianity from everyday thought and practice. This would include the neglect of religious festivals such as the saints' days as well as an active and intentional de-christianization of 'ancient' sacred texts and rituals. It is important to note that the term does not necessarily imply an anti-religious or anti-clerical activity carried out by irreligious infidels.

**Counter-Enlightenment.** The guardians of orthodox Christianity upholding faith against individual rationalism, deism and atheism, what I call in this dissertation, the representatives of the Counter-Enlightenment in Ireland and Britain.

## 4. The Examined Primary Sources

The dissertation draws on a wide range of primary materials including constitutions, rituals, exposures, songs, funeral and consecration services, sermons, masonic speeches, pamphlets, newspaper and magazine articles, letters, lodge minutes, cash records, masonic apologetic writings as well as proceedings of grand lodges. Of these types of sources academic scholarship on the long eighteenth century has mostly neglected the analysis of rituals, the services and the so-called higher degree songs. Excerpts from some these are, to the best of my knowledge, are quoted here for the first time. The latter includes, for example, a hand-written Knights Templar prayer appearing on the flyleaf of the 1778 edition of Ahiman Rezon (Bodleian Library), which might be the earliest passage from a Knights Templar ritual in England. Another highlight is the anonymous work entitled *Free-Masonry A Word to the Wise!..* (1796), a masonic apologetic writing, which contains, among other items, catechisms from higher degree rituals. Comparison of this work with Richard Carlile's influential *Manual of Masonry* (1825) reveals the authenticity of rituals that Carlile exposed.

## 5. The Structure and the Argument

In order to achieve our objective, in the second chapter (Enlightenment, Counter-Enlightenment and Religion), we will provide a theoretical platform to investigate the religious dimensions of English freemasonry in the context of the English Enlightenment. Consequently, we begin by reviewing the history of the scholarship on the Enlightenment and its relationship to religion with reference to old and recent debates in the field. Of course, this is not the place to give a full summary of the whole historiography of the Enlightenment with all its complicated issues but surveying it will provide the necessary background for our discussion as well as an explanation of how this project relates to the present state of research in eighteenth-century studies. As the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment varied from country to country, the paper will introduce how they were lived out in the British Isles before it clarifies how the terms Enlightenment, Counter-Enlightenment and secularization are used in this study. These definitions are essential since in the third and fourth chapters the method adopted will be to place

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[1] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 27.

the practice and ideology of English freemasonry within the spectrum of Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment debate.

Then, the third chapter (Masonic Rhetoric and Ideology: Inclusion, Harmony and Unity) is primarily concerned with the analysis of masonic rhetoric and the masonic worldview. It will examine how the previously Christian principles of the fraternity, reflected both in the ancient constitutions and rituals of the order, were radically 'modernised' shortly after the genesis of modern freemasonry as an organisation in the 1720s, and highlight how these modifications were received in masonic circles. The content analysis of the early rituals and constitutions undoubtedly reveals that James Anderson and John Desaguliers, the prime movers of the fraternity, radically modernised the language and principles of the ancient documents used by the actual cathedral builders. As the men of letters in the early eighteenth century modernised Shakespeare and the classical literature, they also dressed these old writings, some of which smacked of medievalism, in accordance with the new fashion of the English Enlightenment.

This chapter will also investigate the changes in the masonic constitutions between 1723 and 1815 from the perspective of religion, not forgetting the worldly and political motivations of the new publications. We shall examine how most of the founding fathers were able to reconcile the deistic principles of the constitutions and their personal religious beliefs which they proclaimed on Sundays. A significant part of these constitutions was concerned with the legendary history of the fraternity. We shall see that the attitude of the modernizers of masonic ideology to the Enlightenment is seemingly ambivalent—although they managed to revolutionise masonic tenets of the 'illiterate past', but at the same time they replaced the ancient legendary history of the order with a more elaborated mythical history, which contained as many 'gross errors' as the old ones that they had criticised. However, this is not as strange as it at first appears. Contemporary intellectual giants such as Newton, Locke, Montesquieu and Paine also used a mixture of archaic sources, either from the Bible or classical traditions to support their reasoning. These examples clearly indicate how significantly the understanding of rationalism in the twenty-first century differs from that of the Enlightenment.

The fourth chapter (Masonic Practice: Rivalries, Inconsistencies and Exclusion) will primarily focus on how the actual practice diverged from masonic rhetoric. First, we shall see that, unlike the first *Constitutions* of the fraternity (1723), the rituals preserved several unmistakable Christian allusions between 1723 and 1730, and even after. Secondly, by analysing the rivalries between the Premier Grand Lodge and the Antient Grand Lodge as well as the independent lodges, we shall show that the relationship between lodges was not as harmonious and tolerant as the contemporary masonic rhetoric suggested. These conflicts will shed new light on the contribution of freemasonry to the formation of British national identity, too. We shall see that despite the cosmopolitan rhetoric, the English Premier Grand Lodge did not regard the other national Grand Lodges equal with itself. Then, the paper will look how the de-Christianisation of official masonic ideology and practice contributed to the creation of new rituals of explicitly Christian nature. These ceremonies including the Royal Arch, Heredom, and Knights Templar were perhaps formulated and played out by the advocates of the popular Counter-Enlightenment, who attempted to preserve the orthodox Christian landmarks of the brotherhood. The disagreements on the fundamental principles of the order caused ill-feeling and even schisms within freemasonry, which originally intended to become the "Center of Union" and "the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance." The analysis of these conflicts will indicate that the actual masonic praxis was far from being as universal and all-embracing as its rhetoric indicated.

At this point an important preliminary remark should be heeded. The conflicts between the different masonic bodies of the era had social, political, religious as well as bureaucratic undertones. However, my analysis is primarily concerned with the somewhat neglected investigation of the religious causes.

One of the areas where masonic ideology and practice corresponded was the exclusion of women from the fraternity. Although certain masonic systems on the European continent began to admit both sexes as early as the 1740s, the world-wide *regular* masonic lodges, which are associated with the United Grand Lodge of England, still exclude women by principle. Having discussed the circumstances under which this secret fraternity emerged as a single-sex organisation, the last section of the fourth chapter will explore how the ideology and practice of regular freemasonry could contribute to the underpinning of gendered hierarchies in lodges in the long eighteenth century. We shall examine the way in which masonic apologetic writings, rituals and symbols reflect gendered constructions and reinforces gendered structures.

The fifth chapter (Religious Aspects of Masonic Ideology and Practice) attempts to identify the religious elements of English freemasonry from various perspectives. First, we should problematize the definition of religion since, it is clear that the approach adopted has a profound impact on the conclusions reached. Therefore, we shall test some classical definitions of religion by E. Durkheim, E. B. Tylor, R. Otto and C. Geertz and apply them to the case of eighteenth-century English freemasonry. Having observed the strengths and shortcomings of these, I will argue that Ninian Smart's seven-dimension framework would provide us with the most comprehensive understanding of the religious nature of the masonic phenomenon. Thus, critically adopting Smart's framework as an analytic tool, I will attempt to locate the religiosity of masonic ideology and practice from the perspectives of ethics, ritual, narrative and myth, emotion, institution, doctrine and art. Hopefully this method will reveal the complexities of the masonic experience rather than focusing on the simple question whether English freemasonry of the eighteenth century could be regarded as a religion *per se* or not.

## 6. Masonic Rhetoric and Ideology: Inclusion, Harmony and Unity (Chapter 3)

This chapter has endeavoured to examine the rhetoric and ideology of English freemasonry from the time of medieval building stonemasons to the amalgamation of rival Grand Lodges (1813). We have seen how the basic principles of the fraternity were radically modified in the 1720s by James Anderson in agreement with the leadership of the new organization. It has been argued that although the newly accepted religious tenets of masonic ideology primarily mirror the natural religion of the moderate deists, Anderson's work did not intend to demolish Christian doctrines, which are characteristic of all critical deistic writings. That is why many of Anderson's contemporaries did not see a conflict between the affirmative deism of the First Charge Concerning God and Religion (Anderson's *Constitutions*), which was valid during masonic meetings, and the sincere profession of revealed religion, which they preached or gave testimony to on Sundays. Furthermore, according to the present stage of research, we do not know any English radical deist who was initiated into the society of freemasonry.

We have also attempted to explain how the enlightened and learned freemasons of the Grand Lodge could accept the corrected version of the legendary history of the brotherhood, as an integral part of masonic ideology, which, like its predecessors, contained several faults in history and chronology. This and certain members' fascination with the druids underline that mythic lore could intervene with rational principles in the minds of the enlightened. Thus, it can be argued that the so-called Age of Reason was far from being as rational as it was once depicted.

The last section of this chapter aimed to investigate the development of masonic ideology based upon the modifications of the *Constitutions* between 1738 and 1815. We have concluded that this process correlated with the general struggle for religious toleration in British society. Accordingly, the culmination of the most liberal masonic attitude to religion was reached in 1815, two years after toleration for Unitarians (1813) and fourteen years before the repeal of the Test acts (1828) and the announcement of the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829). The long eighteenth century saw a masonic ideology and rhetoric, the watchwords of which were harmony,

unity, tolerance and equality. As the masonic *Constitution*s were to ignore creedal differences, freemasons did not have explicit political and theological quarrels in their lodges. Yet, as we have briefly indicated, this new cosmopolitan outlook, accompanied by the de-Christianization of masonic practice, did not please a number of freemasons, who clung to the ancient and orthodox traditions of the fraternity. These disagreements on the essentials of freemasonry led to the emergence of rival lodges and even Grand Lodges as well as the creation of more pious rituals.

## 7. Masonic Practice: Rivalries, Inconsistencies and Exclusion (Chapter 4)

In this chapter we have primarily concentrated on which sense the practice of freemasonry failed to correspond to the enlightened rhetoric of Anderson's *Constitutions*. First, we have seen that despite the deistic turn in the ideology of the fraternity and the beginning of the process of the de-Christianisation of masonic practice, many of its rituals preserved orthodox Christian elements between 1723 and 1730s. Although, they managed to remove almost all the Christian elements from the earlier constitutions of the society, they failed to follow this process to its logical conclusion by applying this "modernization" to the rituals as well. Thus, there was clearly an inconsistency between masonic rhetoric and practice at a textual level, but we should not necessarily interpret this discrepancy as a cognitive dissonance on the part of early freemasons since many of them, coming from a Christian background, could easily reconcile the natural religion of the First Charge with orthodox Christian allusions in the rituals. However, this reconciliation was more problematic for the Antient freemasons who disagreed with the radical changes brought about by the *Constitutions* in the ideology of freemasonry and intended to preserve the Christian foundations of the fraternity.

Despite the all-embracing and harmonious rhetoric preached by masonic clergy and the leaders of the fraternity, the ideology of Freemasonry was not devoid of the tensions caused by the conflict between the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment. For instance, preceding their late Swedish and German brethren, British and Irish popular Counter-Enlightenment freemasons tried to preserve the Christian foundations of the fraternity and create more mystical rituals (higher degrees) partially as a response and opposed to a deistic orientation in masonic praxis. Disagreements about the essence of freemasonry were manifested in the rivalry between the Antients and Moderns, which, at an ideological level, started well before the foundation of the Grand Lodge of Antients in 1751. If we consider the profound ideological roots of the literary battle between the Antients and Moderns in the seventeenth century, we can conclude with Richard Foster Jones that this war was "of wide significance in the history of ideas, rather than simply an episode in the history of literature" At a deeper level the Moderns such as Francis Bacon, Thomas Sprat and William Wotton attacked the idea of authority and critically reassessed the canonical writings of Antiquity including the Bible, which the Ancients such as William Temple defended. In a similar vein, freemasons like Anderson, with the agreement of his fellow masonic antiquarians, also modernised the ancient constitutions known as the *Old Charges* to create better ones. Echoing the central modern idea of progress in religion, masonic teachings, with an emphasis on morality rather than personal religious concerns, were also revealed by degrees during the rituals. If we recall that the classical debates between the Ancients and Moderns resumed in England and Scotland in the 1730s and 1740s, it is not difficult to argue that the rivalries within English freemasonry, from the above perspective, can be relevant to this intellectual war, though, to my knowledge, no scholarly works on the subject have integrated the masonic rift into the general history of the "battle of the books."

As we have observed, Antient freemasons, who can be seen as the representatives of the popular Counter-Enlightenment, were not alone in their fight to defend the ancient tradition. In a much more sophisticated manner, Hutchinsonians, Nonjurors, Methodists, the Irish Counter-Enlighteners and later Swedenborgians, among others, also struggled in different ways, against

the repression of mysticism and orthodox Christianity. This was a general European tendency. For instance, the German Rosicrucians, regarding themselves as "true freemasons", were keen to refute the principles of the Aufklärung. In France the illuminist and theosophist followers of L. C. de Saint-Martin, Mesmer and Cagliostro, all with notable masonic connections, were also heavily involved in a flight from rationalism. In the context of freemasonry, Andrew Michael Ramsey with his *Oration* (1737) gave a new turn to masonic history since his famous speech provided a great impetus to the creation of many mystical higher degrees along with the re-Christianization of French rituals.

It is no wonder that a number of studies on the fraternity could not integrate masonic rituals into the history of freemasonry relying on the model of Habermas's public sphere since the essential secretive aspects of masonic practice are strangely opposed to the transparency and openness of the practices of the new civil and bourgeois society, which, according to the German philosopher, occurred in a true sense in the coffee-houses, masonic lodges and clubs of eighteenth-century England. The findings of this chapter also illustrate some other weaknesses of Habermas's concept of public sphere, which he depicted as fundamentally secular. The problem with his approach is that he failed to assign due importance to religion. Yet religious issues were *not only important to English freemasons, as we have seen, but they provoked controversies in* the age of Enlightenment throughout Europe.

All the above indicates that there is a clear need to provide a more systematic and comprehensive analysis of masonic religiosity, which I intend to carry out in the next chapter of the dissertation.

## 8. Religious Aspects of Masonic Ideology and Practice (Chapter 5)

This chapter has been a attempt to reconstruct the religious dimensions of eighteenth-century English masonic practice and ideology, some of which most social and political histories of the fraternity have either underestimated or ignored. We have seen that these religious aspects of English freemasonry can be easily associated with other classical forms of religiosity. English freemasons created an organisation and, like religious orders, formulated their own constitutions and regulations in the 1720s. They established a hierarchical leadership, the titles of which (Most, Right and Very) seem to have been directly borrowed from the Church of England. In the name of God, they not only consecrated their leaders into the different masonic offices in the presence of a clergyman but their lodges as well, were often dedicated to saints such as St John. During the consecration ritual, solemn music was played and incense was scattered over the lodge. However, freemasons were most famous for their secret rituals, several components of which can be associated with religious worship. Like the consecration services, these rites often started with an intercessory prayer during which freemasons sometimes knelt down before the altar of the lodge, on which the Bible was placed. During these "religiously observed" ceremonies the new candidates were instructed about the universal principles of ethics, which were illustrated by myths, symbols, and allegories figuring biblical characters. Masonic icons also indicated the distinction between the sacred and profane realms in the ritual space and on the regalia that the practitioners of these rites were wearing. Before being admitted into a new degree, the initiate's knowledge of masonic mysteries was tested in the form of catechisms. Certain masonic rituals as journeys "from darkness to light" had the classical characteristics of the traditional rites of passage, during which the initiate symbolically dies and then is reborn as a new enlightened member of the community. The language of these sublime ceremonies and symbols explicitly or implicitly contained references to certain theological doctrines such as the belief in God, the reward and punishment after death, the concept of divine revelation and the immortality of the soul. These tenets could be clearly associated with the basic principles of constructive deism, the Rousseauian civil religion or the teachings of certain forms of Unitarianism. The pious rituals

inculcated religious truth upon the members, who, building their spiritual temples, had to take a solemn, secret oath to obey the laws of God and society. Moreover, some higher degree ceremonies and songs such as the Royal Arch and Knights Templar have explicit Christian allusions; the latter ceremony even centred around the passion and death of Jesus Christ. These masonic prayers, songs and sermons not only had an emotional impact on the participants but undoubtedly also had the potential to create a religious atmosphere in the lodges. Furthermore, English freemasons organised special church services for their larger gatherings, during which the choir sang masonic hymns. They also conducted a special religious funeral ceremony by the coffin of their deceased fellow-brethren.

In this chapter we have seen that freemasonry had many elements of a religion or at least a religious institution. Yet, there are marked differences between the religious "dimensions" of English freemasonry and a Christian sect, which we should take into serious consideration.

To begin with, the founding fathers of the fraternity did not originally intend to form yet another denomination since they were already discontented with the disputes and schisms of contemporary "sects." That is why the brotherhood was interdenominational (though overwhelmingly Christian) in character from its early days. If we consider, for instance, the early history of British Israelism or the utopias of Christian cabalists from Pico through Reuchlin to Postel, it is clear that freemasonry was not unique for its interdenominational nature. Furthermore, freemasonry as a separate social unit never proclaimed an elaborate doctrinal system to its members apart from the basic tenets of a mild and constructive deism mixed with a vague Christian piety. That is why the society did not require a personal faith that was specific to freemasonry. The stories in masonic sacred writings are based on semi-biblical legends or myths, which the candidates were not required to accept as unquestionable true accounts of a distinct masonic religion.

Although, as we have seen, there were many elements of masonic ceremonial practice which can be associated with religious worship, William Hutchinson, a leading modern freemason, claimed that "Our LODGES are not now appropriated to WORSHIP and RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES; we meet as A SOCIAL SOCIETY."[2] The profane nature of masonic meetings is also shown by the fact that "leg of mutton masons" dubbed "any idle Fellow a Free Mason, who give them a Dinner."[3] Although, the masonic constitution prohibited drinking, they often got intoxicated during these epicurean lodge nights, which is well documented in contemporary caricatures of the brotherhood, including Hogarth's *Night*. These "fork and knife" masons did not join lodges to satisfy their spiritual needs. Thus, it is clear that many joined the fraternity for recreational, convivial, political and social purposes rather than religious ones.

## 9. Findings and Further Areas of Research

Relying on the analysis of archival materials, some little known, this dissertation attempted to investigate the religious facets of English masonic ideology and practice and examine the convergence and divergence of the two in the course of the long eighteenth century. All the evidence presented has questioned the easy categorisation of masonic ideology that many social and political histories have long taken for granted and showed that eighteenth-century English freemasonry cannot be considered as either "secular... as distinct from religious", or,

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[2] William Hutchinson, *The Spirit of Masonry in Moral and Elucidatory Lectures* (London: Wilkie and Goldsmith, 1775), 221.
[3] *Letter of Verus Commodus* (1725) reproduced in D. Knoop, G. P. Jones and D. Hamer eds. *Early Masonic Pamphlets* (Manchester: Manchester University Press: 1945), 145. P. Clark,. *British Clubs and Societies 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World, Oxford Studies in Social History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 319.

with regard to their 'sacred' writings, religiously universal or non-denominational as certain prominent historians of the fraternity have maintained from the eighteenth century onwards.

This dissertation has been an attempt to reconstruct the religious dimensions of masonic ideology and practice of English freemasonry during the long eighteenth century, without denying the earthly interests of masonic lodges and their members. By doing so, it tried to highlight some so far hidden intellectual currents such as the popular Counter-Enlightenment dimensions of masonic worldview and practice. I hoped to prove that not only did masonic practice sometimes not correspond to its politically motivated rhetoric when, *inter alia*, it excluded the "Other", but many aspects of its practice and ideology remained religious, in particular, Christian.

The exclusion of the "Other" was most clearly manifested—both in masonic ideology and practice—in the ban on women joining masonic lodges. We have seen that the rhetoric and iconography of English freemasonry tended to articulate the values of the dominant culture in the age of Enlightenment. By using the rhetoric of male power and privilege, the principles of masonic thought only reinforced the existing socially constructed stereotypes. Thus, the justification of their gender-exclusiveness was naturally built on contemporary stereotypes such as the curiosity of women and their inability to keep secrets. These all reinforced the existing gender hierarchies. However, if we consider the historical development of masonic ideology and rituals, it is clear that masonic ceremonies and iconography were hardly deliberately anti-women. Relying on the medieval tradition of stonemasons and contemporary British cultural norms, it was natural for modern speculative masons to bar women from their lodges.

Yet, it has been increasingly difficult for freemasons to defend the continual exclusion of women since the foundation of the fraternity. Like other clubs and societies born in the age of Enlightenment, masonic lodges have continued to confirm the sharp gender division in English society. However, on the Continent enlightened reformers managed to break down the gender boundaries characteristic of masonic practice as early as the 1740s. As a result, women lived out the enlightened ideas of liberty and equality in mixed-gender lodges, which can be seen as the first stages of the feminist movement. This examination has also reinforced that gender analysis is of great assistance for students of fraternal associations since it helps to categorise single-sex or mixed gender organisations and better understand their inter- and inner relationships.

It is crucial to emphasise that this is not to downgrade the fact that English freemasons often lived up to their rhetoric and ideology when they admitted Jews in their lodges or provided charity to the needy. English masonic lodges accepted Jews almost 130 years before the first Jew could enter into the British Parliament (1858). However, unlike Jewish freemasons in the eighteenth century, when elected as an MP, Lionel Nathan de Rothschild did not have to take a Christian oath.

This study has also demonstrated a hitherto neglected Christianising tendency in masonic practice, which deliberately and directly ran counter to the radical modifications of the masonic worldview and practice in the 1720s by preserving and retrieving the supposedly ancient Christian tradition of the order. By Christianising masonic practice, certain freemasons could express their disagreements with the gradual secularization of English culture. Hence, the mere presence of this Christianization provides yet another blow to the old secularization thesis, according to which, as sociologists such as Peter Berger and Bryan Wilson and historians of religion including Sherdian Gilley and W. J. Sheils once argued, the necessary consequence of modernisation is the decline of religion both at a social and individual levels. The overtly Christian ceremonies of the Royal Arch and Knights Templar also had potential to fill a gap left by the spiritually void traditional church services of the period. At the time of the exposures and papal condemnations, another possible reason for the increasing prominence of Christian elements in English freemasonry could be to indicate the innocent nature of the fraternity towards the political and the ecclesiastical establishments. This became especially important in the wake

of the French Revolution, when freemasonry was seen as a possible threat by some politicians. We have seen that the revival of some of these Christian degrees during this national peril could be related to military purposes, too—Thomas Dunckerley (prime mover of the Christianization) as Grand Master asked the patriotic and loyal Knights Templar and the Royal Arch Mariners to join their county military troops in 1794 to "defend the Christian religion, our gracious Sovereign, our laws, liberties and properties, against a rapacious enemy [France]."[4] The political activities of higher degree English freemasons and their lodges would be an intriguing area for further research. I assume that it is not a mere coincidence that freemasons in the north of England were heavily involved in the introduction and propagation of these additional degrees as well as radical and conservative political happenings.

The preliminary observations of this dissertation about Scottish and Irish freemasonry also indicate that they, although in different ways, were more religious than English masonic practice and ideology and require further investigation. This is confirmed by the apologetic zeal of Irish (later Antient) immigrant freemasons in England, and is further suggested by the comparison of the religious contents of Anderson and Pennell's *Constitutions* as well as the early fascination of Irish freemasons with the Christian higher degrees. Scotsmen dedicated many more lodges to saints than did their English counterparts and they were also active in the development as well as the propagation of Christian higher degrees such as the Royal Order of Scotland. Furthermore, Bishop Samuel Horsley, a classical Counter-Enlightenment figure, became a member of a Scottish lodge.

Considering the currently dominant interpretations of the English Enlightenment, which see it as decidedly religious, the religiosity of English freemasonry is not surprising. Nor is there the tension between masonic rhetoric and practice since it is natural that there are inconsistencies between the different layers of masonic experience. That is how English freemasonry in action, as a lived experience of individual lodges and freemasons celebrating concrete rituals, could differ from the grandiose proclamations of the constitutions or the teachings of masonic sermons or 'charges.' As we have peeled off the different layers of this official rhetoric, we have more clearly observed how the actual practice was shaped by the interplay of events, traditions and interests of the "profane" world. Any institution is the creation of real men and women with inherited and acquired motivations, influenced by the actual circumstances of their lives. These explain the complexities of the lived masonic experience of religion, which this dissertation has attempted to explore. The interrelationship of English freemasonry with the contemporary social, political and religious milieu accounts for the major developments and crisis of the fraternity over the long eighteenth century and even after.

We may well ask why the inconsistent elements and the religious aspects of English freemasonry have been ignored by scholarship for so long. There is no doubt that the works of the radical deists and the "modernizers" of masonic ideology are closer to the present intellectual climate of opinion, according to which it is sometimes suggested that Western societies should de-Christianize their cultural heritage, laws and traditions. Among other things, recent controversies about the European Constitution perfectly illustrate this tendency. That is why certain scholarly quarters like to emphasize the secular, liberal and radical aspects of the Enlightenment and project twentieth-century ideological conflicts and principles back to the eighteenth century. They try to find the roots of secular modernity in the Enlightenment, for which coffee-houses and masonic lodges seem to provide good proofs.

A classical example of the latter would be Jürgen Habermas' original theory of the public sphere and civil society, which the German philosopher regarded as a non-religious domain. He argues that this new bourgeois sphere came into existence in its true form in the clubs and

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[4] The facsimile of Dunckerley's original circular to the Knights Templars is reprinted in R. Chudley, *Thomas Dunckerley: A Remarkable Freemason* (London: Lewis Masonic, 1982), 110.

societies of eighteenth-century London. Margaret Jacob adopted his model of the public sphere to investigate European freemasonry. Accordingly, she concentrated on the secular aspects of masonic ideology and practice in her writings. Other historians such as Peter Clark and Cécile Révauger brilliantly investigated the political and social aspects of masonic rhetoric and practice and highlighted that masonic lodges were schools of morality where they did not have theological disputes. However, as we have seen, they underestimated, *inter alia*, the ritualistic, mythic and emotional dimensions of masonic religiosity, which was manifested in, among others, masonic rites of passage and songs. As opposed to Clark, we have argued that the interpretation of rituals and other ceremonies is relevant to understand how English freemasonry was lived out in the eighteenth century. Unlike Révauger, I contend that many English freemasons, though they avoided theological discussions in their lodges, consciously or unconsciously did grant great importance to the aforementioned religious dimensions of masonic practice. The concluding remark of her recent paper that the British freemasons trusted reason more than religion is only applicable to the advocates of de-Christianization within English freemasonry, since the others including William Stukeley, Thomas Dunckerley and Ebenezer Sibly did not seem to observe a conflict between the two. Not surprisingly, some of the neglected aspects of masonic religiosity seem to be more associated with the ancien regime rather than the secular and transparent public sphere of the Enlightenment.

Having examined the different facets of masonic ideology and practice, we can conclude that English freemasonry as a whole was simultaneously religious and secular, exclusive and inclusive, elitist and egalitarian, and that it successfully combined the mystical, ritualistic and hierarchical elements of the ancient regime with the rational and tolerant imperatives of the new enlightened culture.

My contention is that it is hardly possible to interpret the phenomena of the Enlightenment with the binary oppositions of religious versus secular, rational versus mythical, or occult versus scientific since they were not necessarily irreconcilable polarities at that time. Although, current Western scholarly vocabulary prefers to use these dualisms, these erected boundaries do not seem to function when we analyse the lived experience of particular societies and their members. The example of eighteenth-century English freemasonry has reinforced the view that we should rather speak about an interplay between the opposites of these dichotomies. First, it is clear that the Durkheimian artificial heterogeneity between sacred and profane is oversimplistic and we should consider the religious and the secular as part of a continuum. If in an organisation such as freemasonry secular and religious values co-exist, and even if the balance of the ideas and practices appears at certain moments to be manifestly on the side of the secular (e.g. de-Christianization, conviviality, business networking), this does not nullify a designation of that institution as a religious one, as the Smartian analysis of English freemasonry have clearly demonstrated. Secondly, a considerable number of freemasons in our epoch belonged to the Royal Society and popularised the new science in masonic lodges, but at the same time, they were attracted to the ancient mysteries and the secret arcane knowledge offered by masonic rituals. In the minds of these intellectuals including John Desaguliers, Richard Rawlinson, William Stukeley and John Byrom, science and religion were not polarities but formed a unity. This also suggests that the rise of science was not analogous with the process of secularization, as it has been seen for most of the twentieth century. The ecumenical religiosity of these ceremonies, flavoured with some esoteric truths, responded to the emotional and spiritual needs of British people, who had been longing for such a comprehensive religious utopia and praxis since the Reformation.

Accordingly, eighteenth-century English freemasonry may be seen as the first religious fraternity on the protean religious scene in Great Britain, which attempted to revitalize the "mysteries" of a pristine gnosis that were partially discredited with the Protestant reformation. These ancient mysteries of freemasonry fascinated such different figures of the Enlightenment as

William Stukeley and Tom Paine. It is well known that reformed theologians and preachers, especially the followers of John Calvin, were always more suspicious of mysteries than their Catholic counterparts. The interpretation of certain masonic ideas and practices as the manifestation of an enlightened form of "mystery religion", which, to a large extent, disappeared with the Reformation in England and Scotland, might explain certain religious phenomena of the brotherhood.

In accordance with the Grand Lodge, Anderson in his quest for common-denominator religiosity compatible with the rising modern science was satisfied with the theologically cheap but socially more functional adoption of the deistic natural religion. Apart from not being suspect by the authorities, the requirement of a religious belief and good moral standards also served a useful social function. This *modus vivendi* religion, the product of a typical English compromise during the pragmatic English Enlightenment, was "a half-way house between orthodox Christianity and outright atheism."[5] Whether the Grand Lodge wanted or not, the different forms (de-Christianized or re-Christianized) of this natural religion were becoming the special religion of freemasons, and were *practised* during the first three degrees of masonic ceremonies. As for certain higher degrees such as the Royal Arch, Rose Croix or the Knights Templar, with their explicit Christian allusions, iconography and ritual equipments, they were more akin to Christian liturgies.

In the last chapter we have also seen that masonic religiosity did not end in the lodges: among other things, they practiced charity, buried their deceased brethren according to a special funeral service, gave orations and sermons about the perfectibility of the brotherhood. The analysis of these materials with their semi-Pelagian references to heavenly rewards make it clear that the morality of eighteenth-century English freemasonry relied heavily on Christian principles rather than on any form of pre-Kantian philosophy, which established ethics as independent of religious authority. By offering an arcane hermetic knowledge, masonic religious practices, especially the sublime rituals, not only had the potential to supplement Christianity with their elements of religious worship but made the syncretic masonic religiosity a 'true' form of Christianity since the religious worldview of freemasonry, as characterized by masonic preachers and orators, was the most ancient, perfect and ethical of all religions.

The clergy were also instrumental in this process. They became increasingly involved in masonic activities by preaching sermons and exhortations to freemasons about the superior values of the fraternity as well as participating in masonic parades, ceremonies and funerals. Unlike today, the Anglican Church was closely affiliated with the fraternity in the Age of Reason since English freemasonry indeed supported the Warburtonian alliance between Church and State.

Although, of course, this work did not aim to provide a doctrinal evaluation of masonic ideology and practice, the findings on the religious aspects of English freemasonry indicate that certain parts of the past church condemnations of the fraternity were either ill-conceived or at least did not mirror the practice of freemasons in the British Isles. However, it seems doubtful that the authors of the accusations on the part of the Catholic Church or the Presbyterian Church of Scotland knew much about the religious content of masonic ceremonies, especially the Master degree, the Royal Arch, the Knights Templar and the Rose Croix. Had they been aware of the essential plot of these rituals centring around the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, they, as conservative clergymen, must have seen these ceremonies as dangerous or perhaps even heretical parodies of Christ's life, which had a potential to substitute church liturgies.

A number of denominations such as the Presbyterians and Quakers were split due to their different attitudes to the Enlightenment. Of course, the ideology of Freemasonry, which began to

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[5] James M. Byrne, *Religion and the Enlightenment: From Descartes to Kant* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 121 (reference to deism).

crystallise in the eighteenth century, was also not devoid of the tensions caused by the conflict between the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment. For instance, as we have seen, there was a religious conflict between the advocates of de-Christianization and the promoters of the more mystical and Christian higher degrees. This even led to schisms in the ideally universal and united fraternity. The Antients, along with the independent lodges who continuously joined them, defended the former position since their image of freemasonry was more pious than those on the other side of the fence. I have tried to make it clear that it would be a failure to regard the Moderns as the classical and consequent representatives of the enlightened values, and the Antients as the unenlightened advocates of the Counter-Enlightenment. Such an oversimplified dichotomy does not work here, either.

The analysis of the inconsistencies between masonic rhetoric and practice in the fourth chapter has shown, *inter alia*, that though the Moderns preached equality and tolerance, they occasionally failed to admit Jews or excluded the Irish immigrants of low social status from their ranks. In other words, the Moderns were discriminatory towards the "Other." By doing so, despite their egalitarian rhetoric, they increased the gap between the upper and lower classes of the society, the propertied and the labouring poor, the educated and the non-educated. The Jews might have preferred the Antient lodges, the constitution of which, unlike that of the Moderns, contained a separate Jewish prayer and where they reached high offices of the masonic hierarchy earlier than in the Modern Grand Lodge. However, if Jewish brethren had participated in the explicitly Christian rituals of the Antients, this was an example *par excellence* for cognitive dissonance on their part.

The fact that masonic lodges offered an excellent clandestine social and political network for Anglicans, dissenters with restricted constitutional rights as well as the second-class citizens of minority religious groups such as the Jews shows that the fundamental motivation of these individuals to join the fraternity was unlikely to be religious as they used the lodges, where their legally stigmatized identities were partially ignored, to help themselves assimilate in the larger British society. Thus, the primary reason for their joining the fraternity was social—for instance, they could benefit economically from their masonic contacts in the profane world. Furthermore, the fact that many facets of the masonic worldview relied on the Old Testament (e.g. masonic legends related to the building of Solomon's Temple) could also make freemasonry attractive to them or at least ease their accommodation to the atmosphere of the lodge.

Consequently, though this dissertation primarily focussed on the religious aspects of English freemasonry, this is not to deny the equally important political, conspiratorial and social facets of masonic ideology and practice in Great Britain. To my mind, the hitherto largely neglected integration of the social and political aspects of the masonic Counter-Enlightenment into the cultural developments of the era would give many new insights to eighteenth century scholarship. For example, the woefully neglected involvement of Jacobites, Catholics, high Anglicans as well as Swedenborgians in British freemasonry has yet to be explored. However, the representatives of these groups did not join freemasonry *en masse*, but many of the initiated ones reached high ranks within the order including the Grand Mastership. Apart from the interest of these conservatives in English freemasonry, this fact alone shows why more scholarly attention should be devoted to their study since this would shed new light, *inter alia*, on the religious, social and political motivations of these right-wing individuals. By doing so, we could integrate the mentalité and habits of these persons into the wider European history, which was greatly enriched by José A. Ferrer Benimeli's similar investigation of the involvement of Catholics in freemasonry in his seminal four-volume *Masoneria, Iglesia E Ilustración: Une Conflicto Ideológico-Politico-Religioso*, published in the mid-1970s. Furthermore, recent studies and dissertations by Natalie Bayer, Györgyi Ágnes Pálfi, Andreas Önnerfors, Yuri Stoyanov and Giovanna Summerfield also highlight the common intellectual and political links between these possible popular Counter-Enlightenment freemasons in France, Germany, Russia, Scotland and

Sweden, which makes us reconsider the fragmented nature of the European Counter-Enlightenment, pointing towards a more essentialist and pan-European view, as has been suggested by James Schmidt and John Robertson in the case of the concept of the Enlightenment.

The arrogant attitude of the leaders of the English Modern Grand Lodge towards the Scottish and Irish masonic bodies in the middle of the eighteenth century partially strengthens Linda Colley's thesis that it was the English who turned out to be the greatest obstacles to the formation of British national identity between 1707 and 1837. For example, we have seen that English freemasons modified the passwords of the first two degrees, of which, of course, their Irish and Scottish "brethren" were not aware. That is how they could exclude these freemasons of low social standing from English "gentlemen" lodges. The Grand Lodge of Scotland and many other independent lodges and Grand Lodges developed a much better relationship with the Antient Grand Lodge, established by Irish Catholic immigrants in London. That is why, although their headquarters was in London, the Antients almost always appointed either an Irish or a Scottish Grand Master rather than an English nobleman. Furthermore, the Grand Lodge of Scotland and that of the Antients had the same Grand Masters (3$^{rd}$ and 4$^{th}$ Dukes of Atholl) in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Unlike other institutions of the early nineteenth century, British freemasons did not create a British organisation when they had an historical opportunity at the time of the union of the Antients and Moderns in 1813. Thus, though the London-based Grand Lodge freemasonry was mostly pro-Hanoverian, the superior stance of their leadership might contribute more to national conflicts and instability within freemasonry than any other British masonic body, especially in the middle of the eighteenth century. This provides yet another example of the tension between the cosmopolitan and universal rhetoric of freemasonry and the actual practices.

This might also give new insight into the highly debated question of political and social (in)stability in the long eighteenth century. Although a few lodges such as the ones in Leeds and Warrington used masonic gatherings as a cover for radical and subversive activities, according to the present stage of research, most lodges operated as a significant stabilizing force in society. This was achieved, among others things, by their advocating and practising a nationally agreed, Rousseauian civil religion with a strong emphasis on morality. Furthermore, masonic lodges, several of which can be seen as 'melting pots' of different national identities, undoubtedly contributed to the forging of British national consciousness since, at least during their rituals, identity-related issues were submerged by masonic egalitarianism and cosmopolitanism. Before the Grand Lodge of Scotland was established in 1736, six Scottish noblemen were elected Grand Masters of Grand Lodge of England. Having completed the "work", they frequently sang songs about the excellence of the brotherhood to the tune of what eventually became the national anthem, *God save the King*. Furthermore, freemasons often held their large provincial gatherings on the birthdays of the members of the British royal family, many of whom were initiates and patrons of the "Royal Art."

The struggle between Antients and Moderns, the deep structure of which we could link to the contemporary literary and artistic intellectual war between Antients and Moderns, has not only continued to the present-day within freemasonry but, observing the ideological roots of the current major European conflicts, it can be said that it has its own relevance to our wider contemporary society, too. This indicates that modernity has never been straightforward phenomenon rather it is a constant interplay between the forces of the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment.

As we have seen, the ideology and practice of British freemasonry was not devoid of the tensions of the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, but they did not prove to be detrimental to the overall growth of masonry during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Despite the rivalries, both Grand Lodges were expanding. And if we consider that in the latter half of the eighteenth century a number of freemasons visited both Antient and Modern lodges,

despite the reciprocal bans of the rivalling Grand Lodges; and that certain lodges, such as Lodge no. 85 of Sheffield discussed in the introduction, were constituted by both authorities, the differences between Antients and Moderns were becoming less and less relevant at a micro level as the century advanced. This indicates that, along with social networking and conviviality, in the so-called "Age of Reason" many still yearned for elements of mystery, ritual secrecy and the quest for hidden truth, which might have helped lead the Enlightenment into Romanticism. It may be said that the Age of Reason coincided with the Age of Religion not, however, according to Carl Becker's interpretation.

The findings of this dissertation might also contribute to the secularisation debate between Roy Porter and Paul Langford on the one side and J. C. D. Clark and Owen Chadwick on the other. The conflicts between the ideology and practice of freemasonry highlight the fact that although the basic tenets of the English Enlightenment were laid down by the 1730s, in practice they reached their semi-logical conclusions only in the next century. It is the nineteenth century that saw the acceptance of the Catholic Emancipation Act as well as the publication of the most comprehensive masonic *Constitutions* of 1815, most charges of which have not been modified since then. Yet at the end of the long eighteenth century, although the rivalling Grand Lodges merged in the Union of 1813, the problem of religious universalism was not solved, rather it was simply transferred to another level, and the overtly Christian and mystical themes, were merely relegated to the higher or additional degrees.

These findings also have two particular methodological implications. First, when investigating eighteenth-century phenomena, one should not be content with emphasising the protean facets of the Enlightenment(s), which is fashionable these days. Introducing working definitions of both the Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment in national contexts has served as useful analytical tools. Had we failed to do so, the meaning of the term Enlightenment covering a theme and its anathema would have been extremely broad and thus almost empty. We need these parameters to locate a movement in the context of the contemporary intellectual climate.

Secondly, we have adopted an interdisciplinary approach by using the philosopher, Ninian Smart's seven-dimensional framework of religion to map out the religious aspects of English freemasonry, which, to my knowledge, has not been utilized by historians of the long eighteenth century so far. Yet, my contention is that Smart's sophisticated method could operate as an excellent methodological tool to better understand the complex religiosity of a number of pseudo-religious (another ill-defined term) movements including the Orange Order or the Cult of the Supreme Being during the French Revolution. Of course, Smart's method can function across the centuries and help members—and researchers—of such quasi-religious formations to explore their religious, social and political self-awareness.

Of course, one could adopt other classical or more recent methods such as the church-sect typology or the new networking theories relying on cell-biology to examine these materials but, with all their related methodological implications, they should be the subjects of separate dissertations.

There is no doubt that research on freemasonry has much offer to these and other scholarly debates as well. This dissertation has indicated that there is a clear need to reconsider those histories of English freemasonry, which largely rely on the misleading statements of official masonic rhetoric, emphasising the non-partisan and non-denominational nature of masonic practice. Future research will probably shed more light on the involvement of British masonic lodges in radical and subversive activities, their intolerant attitudes to the "Other", their contribution to the formation of national identities and question the universal nature of masonic religiosity. The analysis of the materials in hitherto closed and unmapped masonic libraries as well as Home Office papers might refine the findings of this study and give many new insights into present-day scholarship. However, future research on these issues would be much more

fruitful and accepted by the wider academia if, among others, the early ritual archives in British masonic libraries ceased to be black holes for non-masonic scholars with serious academic interests so that the information held in them could be integrated into academic studies.


## Publications Pertaining to the Dissertation

"Szabadkőművesség és természetes vallás" *Valóság* 42 (1999): 18-36

"Freemasonry and Natural Religion" *Freemasonry Today* 12 (2000): 40-43

"The Influence of Hermeticism on English Freemasonry?" in Donald E. Morse, Tamás Bényei, Péter Szaffkó and Zsolt Virágos (eds) *HUSSE Papers 2003 (Literature and Culture): Proceedings of the 6th Biennieal Conference of the Hungarian Society for the Study of English* (Debrecen, 2004) 92-100

"A 18. századi szabadkőművesség és a brit nemzeti identitás kialakulásának problematikája" *Aetas* 19.3-4 (2004):134-147.

"Unio Mystica in the Dramatic Revelation of Masonic Secrecy?" In Kathleen E. Dubs ed. *Now You See It, Now You Don't: Hiding and Revealing In Text And Performance* (Piliscsaba: Péter Pázmány Catholic University, 2006), 166-179.

"Masonic Religious Rhetoric in England during the Long Eighteenth Century" In Trevor Stewart ed. *Freemasonry and Religion: Many faiths – One Brotherhood. Canonbury Papers* Vol. III. (London: Canonbury Masonic Research Centre, 2006), 154-190.

"Secular British Masonic Rituals?" In Susan Conner ed. *35th Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, 1750-1850: Selected Papers* (Lakeland: Florida Southern University, 2006), 13-24.

"The Gendered Constructions of Masonic Iconography and Rituals" In György E. Szőnyi and Attila Kiss (eds.) *The Proceedings of the Iconography of Gender Conference* (Szeged: JATEPress, 2007) forthcoming