

Henrik Bogdan

"Frimureri, initiering og esoterisme«

Om foredragsholderen:

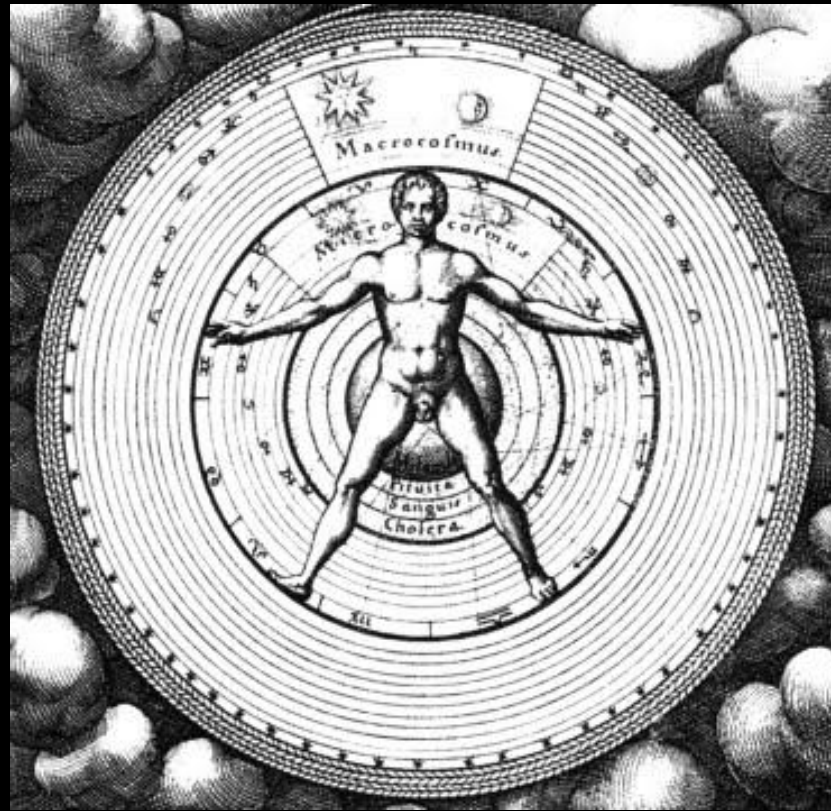
*Henrik Bogdan er dosent i religionsvitenskap ved Gøteborgs universitet. Hans tre primære forskningsområder er ny- religiøse bevegelser, vestens esoterisme og frimureri. Bogdan er forfatter av blant annet *Western Esotericism and Rituals of Initiation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), samt medredaktør med Prof. Jan Snoek for boken *The Brill Handbook of Freemasonry* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012).*

Frimureri, initiering og esoterisme



Föredrag hållet vid Forskningslogen Niels Treschow
Henrik Bogdan, docent i religionsvetenskap, 2011

Freemasonry and Western Esotericism?



Western Esotericism as a Form of Thought (Antoine Faivre, 1992)

- The idea of correspondences
- Living nature
- Imagination and mediations
- Experience of Transmutation
- The praxis of the concordance
- Transmission



Wouter J. Hanegraaff

- Western Esotericism as *Gnosis* (the quest for absolute knowledge)
- The grand polemical narrative



Kocku von Stuckrad

- Esoteric discourse in Western culture.
- "The pivotal point of all esoteric traditions are *claims* to 'real' or absolute knowledge and the *means* of making this knowledge available."
- Secrecy as a discourse.



Secrecy as an Esoteric Discourse in Freemasonry



Jan A.M. Snoek

- ”Nowadays it is fashionable among Freemasons to claim that Freemasonry is not a secret society. Clearly, that attitude results from the desire to clear Freemasonry of undeserved blames that it would conceal anti-social activities. However, it also betrays that most Freemasons are not aware that the term “secret society” is not only used for groups that try to hide their existence, or of which the members try to hide their membership, but also for groups which guard a secret. And in that last respect, Freemasonry is a secret society.”

The use of secrecy in Western Esotericism (1) [Faivre]

- Esoteric texts that ‘seem to be designed to mean something other than what they appear to mean at face value’.



Antoine Faivre

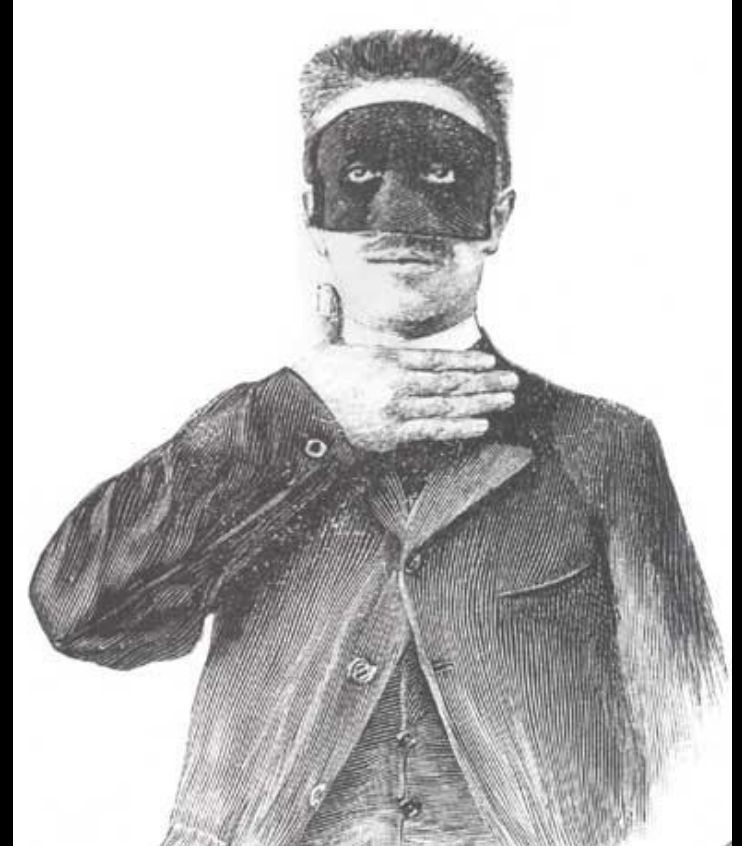
- "Even so, the person who makes the effort to read all (or, rather, as many as possible) of the texts hinted at, finds himself nevertheless confronted by a circular discourse made of images and symbols, a veil, as it were. It is as if that veil constituted the message itself. The circularity or paradox is that the text says countless things and, at the same time, says one main thing to which we readers are not privy."

Jan A.M. Snoek

- The allusive method always refers to more than one layer of meaning. There are not only the primary meaning of the phrase used, and the immediate allusive meaning, but, for someone who is amenable to it, at least one extra meaning is added because the text quoted refers to another text, either from the same, or from another book within the referential corpus.



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- Secrecy and the importance of *experience*.
 - The importance of keeping that which is *non-communicable* secret.



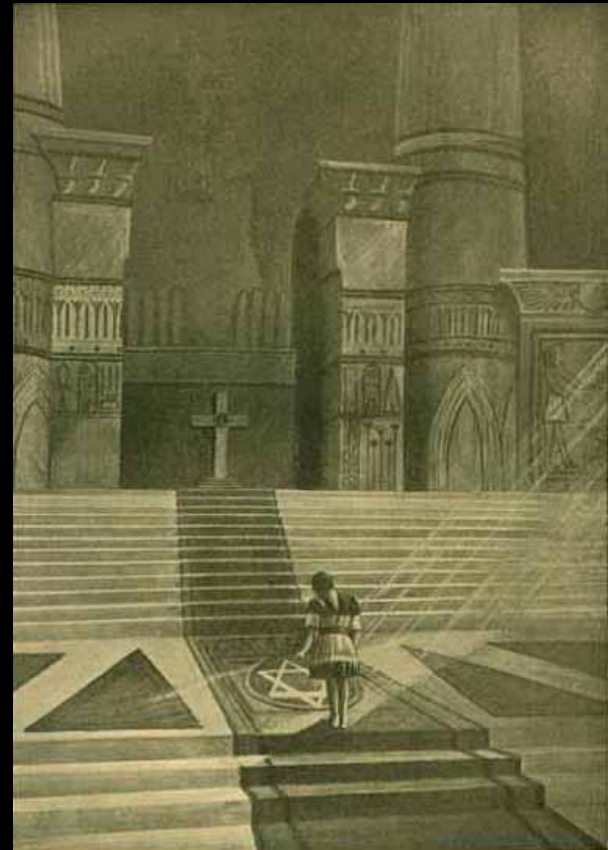
The use of secrecy in Western Esotericism (2) [Faivre]

- The 'secret of a text is the noncommunication of something that is not transmissible'.
- "Esoteric transmission cannot, so it seems, unveil secrets. Rather, it is the non-communication of what is not transmissible that constitutes the secret."

Jan A.M. Snoek

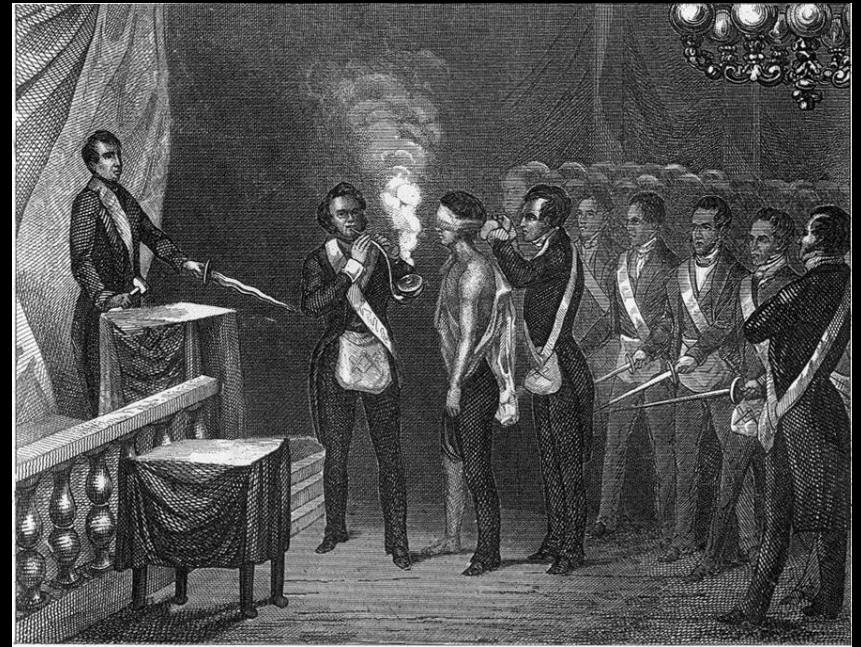
- "The secret concerned, however, is nothing unethical, but just the experience of going through the ritual of the first degree, which turns one into an Entered Apprentice Freemason. Like any other experience, this cannot be communicated to someone else in any other way than letting that person go through it as well, which will turn him automatically into a Freemason too. So, this is the kind of secret which cannot be divulged."

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- Masonic initiation leading to the realisation of *gnosis*, the non-communicable experience of the self and union with the godhead.

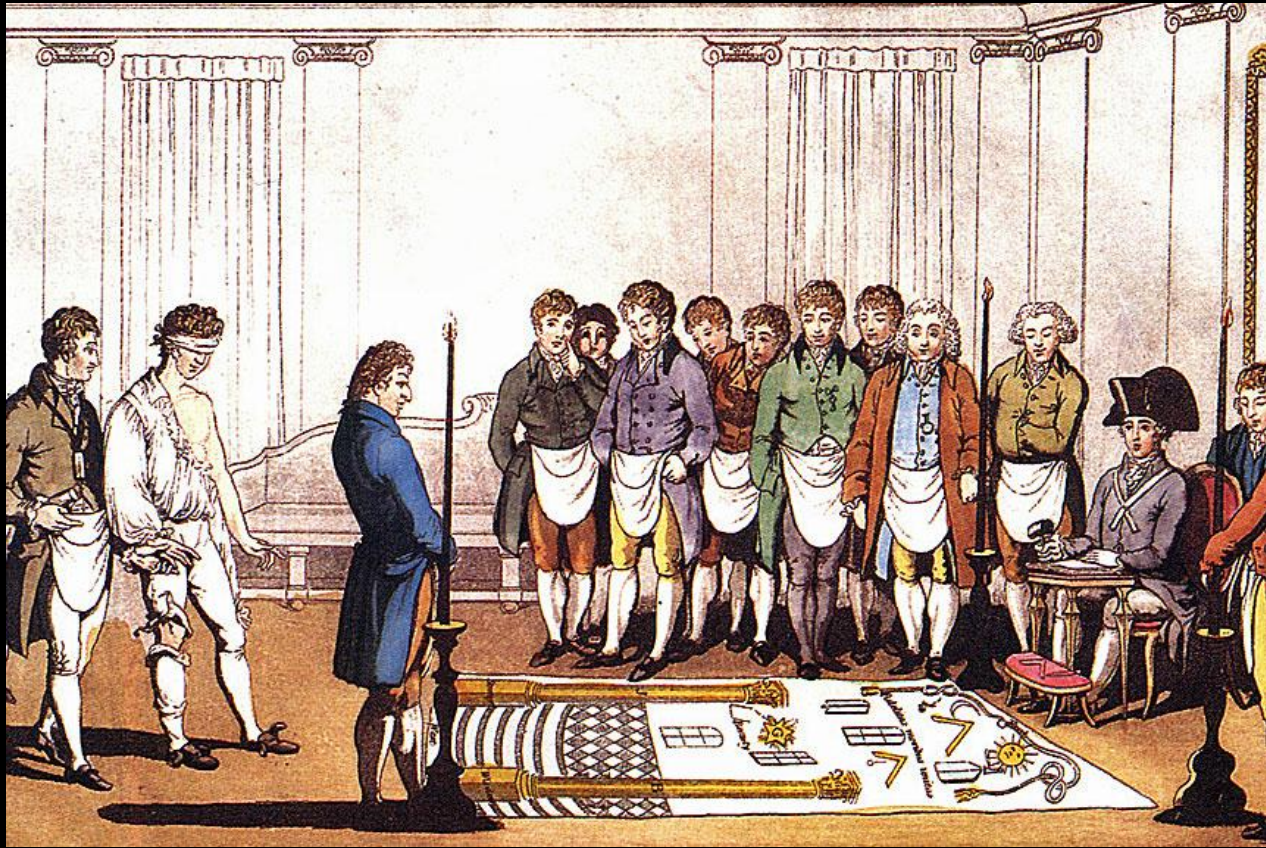


The use of secrecy in Western Esotericism (3) [Faivre]

- Desoccultation of the occult:
 1. The ritual of initiation
 2. Traditional secrets
 3. Legends and teachings connected to specific degrees.



Is Freemasonry a Secret Society?

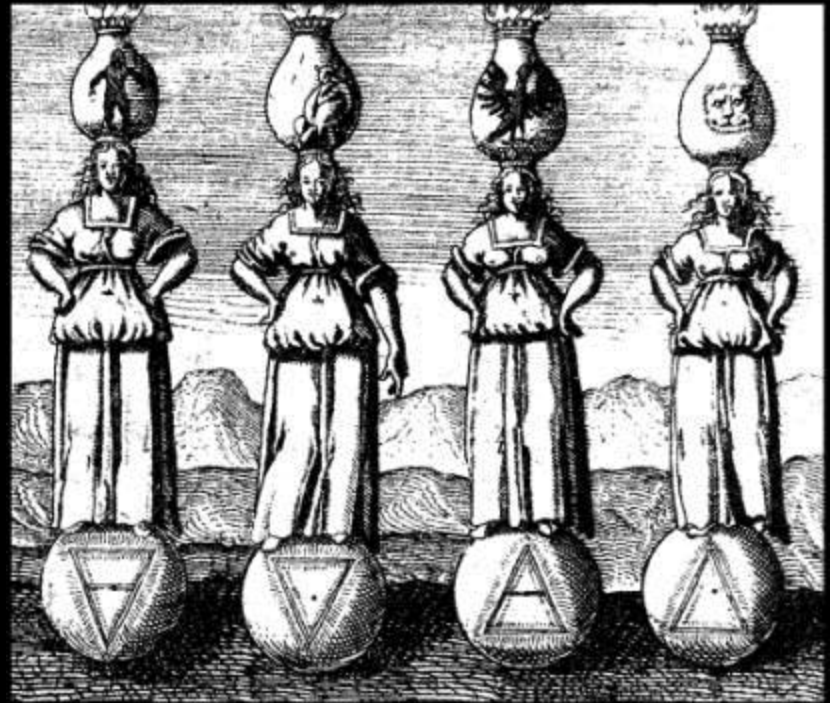


Alkemi



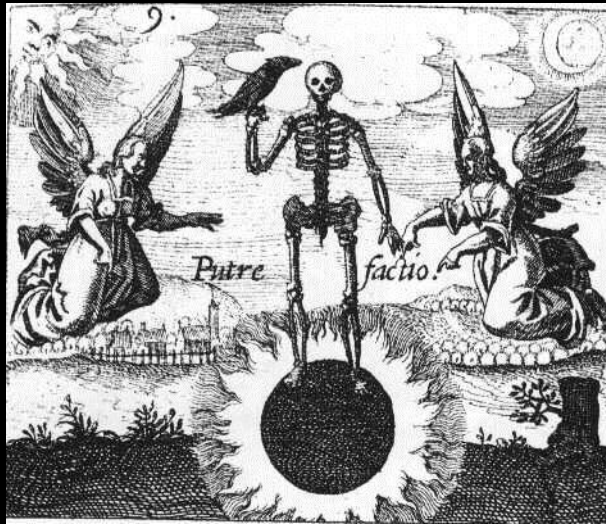
Alkemi: från bly till guld, eller andlig upplysning

- Andlig transmutation eller förädling
- Alkemisk teori: jord, vatten, luft och eld i fullkomlig balans = guld
- Solve et Coagula (dela och sätt samman)
- Den alkemiska processens tre stadier



(1) Nigredo, eller det svarta stadiet

- Kemisk allegori: metallen smälts ned
- Andlig tolkning: det gamla jaget ”dör”



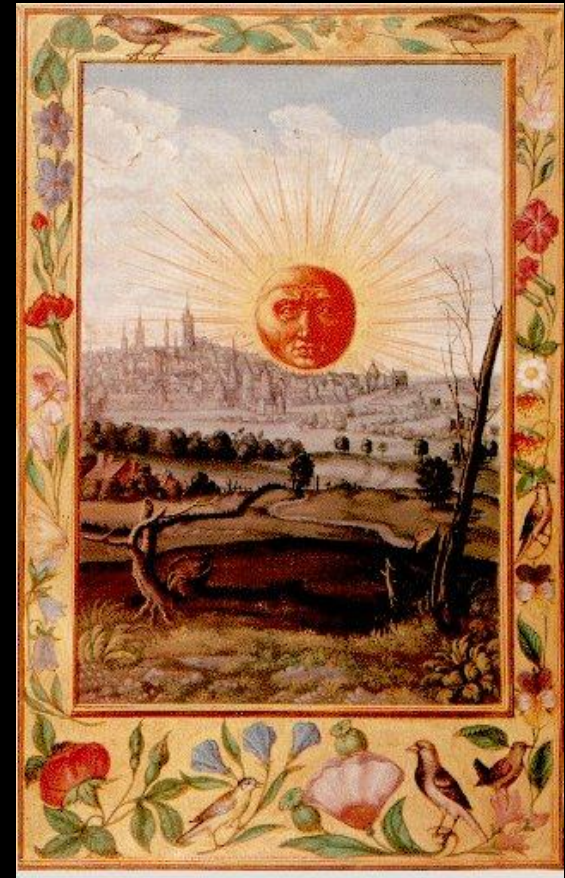
(2) Albedo, eller det vita stadiet

- Kemisk allegori: metallen renas, de fyra elementen balanseras genom att det femte elementet som håller dem samman avlägsnas
- Andlig tolkning: jaget renas (själen frigörs)

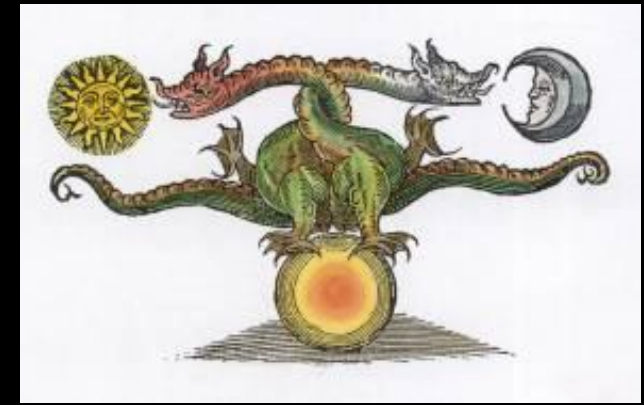


(3) Rubedo, eller det röda stadiet

- Kemisk allegori: metallen har förädlats till silver eller guld; det femte elementet återförenas med de fyra elementen som nu är i fullkomlig balans
- Andlig tolkning: andlig upplysning, unio mystica, deifikation
- Alkemiskt bröllop



Det alkemistiska bröllopet: balans mellan manligt och kvinnligt, de fyra elementen, guld, *gnosis*



Alkemi som en passagerit

- Arnold van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage* (1909)
- Tre faser i en passagerit som leder från ett gammalt livsstadie till ett nytt:
 - (1) avskiljande från det gamla jaget
 - (2) den liminella fasen
 - (3) infogandet i den nya gemenskapen

- Fas 1 → Avskiljande → Nigredo
- Fas 2 → Liminella → Albedo
- Fas 3 → Infogande → Rubedo

Avslutande reflektioner och frågor

