

FREEMASONRY AND MODERNIZATION IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY SLOVAKIA

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Following decades in which the lodges concentrated on philanthropic activities and supporting the arts, it was not before the 1890s that Freemasonry entered public consciousness, in connection with the dispute about the so-called ecclesiastical legislation in Hungary, and at the beginning of the 20th century a debate started in the lodges on the issue of Masonic participation, both by lodges and by individual members, in the social changes underway. By analyzing that debate in terms of social history, the present contribution offers rare insights into a cultural and historical dimension of Slovak life before World War I. The issue of the actual significance of Masonic influence is also treated, with regional and social differences being taken into consideration.