



The Politics of Sociability: Freemasonry and German Civil Society, 1840-1918 (Hardback)

By Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann

The University of Michigan Press, United States, 2007. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 232 x 158 mm. Language: German,English . Brand New Book. This is the first cultural and political history of German Freemasonry in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The practice of Masonic sociability, Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann shows in this ambitious and original work, reflected an enlightened belief in the political significance of moral virtue for civil society, indeed, for humanity. Freemasons self-image as civilizing agents, acting in good faith and with the unimpeachable idea of universal brotherhood, was contradicted not only by their heightened sense of exclusivity; Freemasons unintentionally exacerbated nineteenth century political conflicts by employing a universalist language. Using a wealth of archival sources previously unavailable, Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann shows how Freemasonry became a social refuge for elevated and liberal-minded bourgeois men who felt attracted to its secret rituals and moral teachings. German Freemasons sought to reform self and society, but, Hoffmann argues, ultimately failed to balance modern politics with a cosmopolitan ethos.



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