

HISTORY OF FREE MASONRY IN SERBIA

In the 18th century by the weakening of absolutism, Freemasonry continued its development all over Europe. At that time, lodges were in Belgrade, Vidin and Vlaska, who were in a relationship and agreement, and they made an Alliance. For the Lodge in Belgrade it is unknown which year it was founded, under by which name, in what language it was done. But it is known that in the Alliance were Belgrade vizier Hadzi-Mustafa-Pasha (known as the Serbian "Mother"), metropolitan of Belgrade Methods, Duke Janko Katić, Petar Ičko, brothers Cardaklija, Greek patriot Riga from Fera.

Mitropolit Stratimirović, deeply moved by the principles of Masonic Brotherhood, to which he belonged, founded in 1791 the Karlovac Gymnasium, which was an inspiration to many intellectuals and more advanced people of that time to get closer and to join the Brotherhood, which started the process of expansion in Serbia.

After the liberation of Serbia at the beginning of the 19th century, many of the Masons came from Southern Hungary as patriots to Serbia to help form the state authorities, law writing, education of the judiciary, education, culture and other institutions.

There are no data about individual lodges in the city of Belgrade first the 19th century, but it is known that until 1848 there was a Turkish one in Belgrade, Lodge "Ali-koc", in the building where the city clinic was located, and whose façade decorated the triangle and Egyptian poles at the entrance. The Lodge has been moved from town in the township below the Main Police building and was there until 1862.

In the face of advanced and national ideas that in the middle of the 19th century moved Europe, more favorable opportunities for working on the expansion of the Free masonry. Idea have been created. Stella Orientalis Lodge was established in Zemun which worked in German language, and had no influence on the spiritual development and cultural progress of the Serbian people. The Lodge was later moved to Pancevo, where it ended.

In wartime in 1875 in Belgrade, near Vojni Senjak,, a volunteer legion was formed, largely from the Italians, in which, based on the influence of the Italian consul, a Free Mason Lodge was founded.

The first Serbian Lodge "The Light of the Balkans" started in Belgrade in 1876 and worked under Italian protection. The lodge has advanced rapidly according to the number of members, and she had taken care of the wounded and hospital's aides and dealt with them by caring for the suffering population of Knjazevac County. Due to the increase in the number of members, the Lodge "Srpska Zadruga" was formed in 1881. Both lodges worked until 1883, when they went to sleep.

Instead of these Lodges, a new Lodge "Unity, Work and Persistence" started in 1883, which collected a large number of their members, and worked under Italian protection too.

Soon it became necessary to open another lodge, so in 1890 lodge "Pobratim" was founded. This lodge was first who requested and received the protection of the neighboring and closer the Great Lodge of Hungary.

As the "Pobratim" Lodge received a part of the members from Nis, it was necessary to establish a new lodge in that city, which was organized in 1892 under the name "Nemanja".

There was an interesting moment in the Serbian free masonry, which took place in the National Assembly, held in Niš in 1899. When a lawmaker attacked Free Masonry, then the Minister of Education rose and publicly admitted that he himself was a free mason, and stood in defense of this humane, cultural and patriotic institution.

The Free Mason movement gets stronger in Vojvodina, with the foundation in Vršac of the Lodge "Aurora" (1905), the "Budućnost" lodge in Sombor (1909) and in Subotica the Lodge "Creation", all under the protection of the Grand Lodge of Hungary.

Also, the movement is stronger in Belgrade, where from a large number of members of the lodge Pobratim were formed three new lodges: "Šumadija" under Hamburg protection, "Unification" under French protection, as well as the "Kosovo" in Skopje.

Thanks to this development of free masonry, with donations of the members, a Free Masonry Building was built in order to achieve the independence and more masonic administration, and was ceremoniously opened in Belgrade (Studenička street No. 46a in Vracar) on April 1912.

May 9, 1912 is a very important date in Serbian Free Masonry, when it entered into a new phase by establishing THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF SERBIA (Supreme Conseil pour la Serbie), at the presence and organization of the Greek representative of the Supreme Council of Greece. For The Grand Master (Commandeur) was elected honorary chief of "Pobratim" lodge and a distinguished free mason Djordje Weifert. By this act, the Serbian Masonry became independent, and entered into regular relations with the world's great Masonic authorities. Under protection The Supreme Council found the "Pobratim", "Sumadija", "Sloga, Rad i Posojanstvo" and "Kosovo".

During the wars of 1912-1913, Serbian Free Masonry stopped a regular Masonic work, and has exercised patriotic duties to the country. A large number of Serbian and Croatian free masons were expelled, but they developed an activity to get political circles to be interested in uniting the People. Zagreb lodges "Love your neighbor", "Maksimilijan Vrhovac" and "Budnost" from Osijek in 1917, they resolved Hungarian protection, and became independent. After the war, an agreement was reached between her and the Supreme Council of Serbia on unification.

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed on December 1st 1918.

On June 9, 1919 in Zagreb, at the Extraordinary Assembly there was a proclamation of the Uniting and Establishing of the Grand Lodge of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians "Yugoslavia", headquartered in Belgrade, where there was an election of officers and members of the Federal Council. Djordje Weifert was elected as the Grand Master. Then the symbolic degrees (pupil, assistant, master) were separated, and two separate independent systems were created: Grand Lodge of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians "Yugoslavia" and Supreme Council of Old and the Scottish Order accepted for the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

The Grand Lodge soon established Masonic links with more than 80 Great Lodges and Orients of the whole world, and cooperated with the international Freemasonry Association A.M.I. in favor of world peace. Under the protection of the Grand Lodge there were 18 free masonry workshops with about 1000 members.

The Grand Lodge of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes "Yugoslavia" in Belgrade in 1926 was a host to the International Masonic Congress called "In peace." Under the auspices of the International Masonic Association, the Congress was attended by fifty-six representatives of twenty national unions from fifteen European state and representatives of two overseas unions.

On January 6, 1929, the name of the state was changed, the same year on The Annual Assembly decided to change the name of the Grand Lodge in Great Lodge "Yugoslavia". The number of workshops has risen to 30 with over 2000 members.

The Lodges of Serbian masonry were engaged in charity and mercy work that mitigated the situation of many poor, but also by establishing human and cultural funds. So the first was established charity institution "Society and the Institute for the Poor and Abandoned Children" as a human and educational institution, and with the help of the Municipality, it has built it's Home. Patriotic "Saint Sava Society" in non-liberated areas opened and supported schools, printed books for them, and helped the church and monasteries. In the House of this society, the Evening School was founded, through which thousands of children have passed, the Teacher Training School, as well as Pansionat, in which it supported the young men who came to study in Belgrade schools. A Patriotic Fund was founded in the "Pobratim" Lodge, while with influence of masons on the Minister of Education, they established Free Kitchen for poor pupils and students. Soon it was formed "The King Decani Society" and his Home for Deaf Children. On the the initiative and material support of Brother George Weifert, "Disability Fund of Sv. Djordje " was founded, supported by a great endowment the goodwill of Nikola Spasic, with intention to make life easier for our war disabled and taking care of their orphans.

In the beginning of August 1940, the Great Lodge "Yugoslavia" due to imminent danger of war makes a decision to suspend all work in the lodges under her protection and go to "self induced sleep"s.

Preparatory actions for restoring free mason work was done with registration of the three Serbian lodges: "Pobratim", "Sloga, Rad I Postojanstvo "and" Maksimilijan Vrhovac ". United Great Lodge of Germany offered to reactivate the Great Lodge "Yugoslavia". The Act of ceremonial renewal of work was carried out on June 23, 1990 in Belgrade, marking a new beginning with the recognition of the United Great Lodge of Germany.

Part of the Fraternity of the Great Lodge "Yugoslavia", March 1993, in Rimini, Italy, held an extraordinary Assembly, where they made the elections and made a decision to change the name to Regular Grand Lodge "Yugoslavia", which was confirmed by the United Grand Lodge of Germany, and then others. Nevertheless, a certain number of brothers and lodges continues to work under the protection of the Great Lodge "Yugoslavia".

In 2006, the Regular Great Lodge "Yugoslavia" changed the name into Regular Great Lodge of Serbia, but that same year, a large part of brothers and lodges from the Regular Grand Lodge of Serbia and brothers and logs from Grand Lodge "Yugoslavia", as well as regularized brothers from the former Great Lodge

The National Hostages of Serbia and Montenegro, are united in the United Great Lodge of Serbia (all free masonry workshops, as well as U.V.L.S. are registered by the competent state authorities).

The year 1990 was of great importance for us, because that's when Free ;asonry in our country was reactivated, but unfortunately it emerged in the years of unrest, years that many generations will remember with bad memories for the events in our country. The fact is that among the bearers of this noble idea in so difficult times there were imposters and persons who are not and can never be called free and independent people, and thus the development of free masonry in the period from In 1990, until 2006 was burdened with many human weaknesses and flaws. That is precisely why, as well with the desire to start the true and sincere development of free masonry based on the basic postulates and principles, there was a unification of the brethren and lodges, and that created Alliance of the United Grand Lodges of Serbia