

## Public Sculpture in Zagreb in the Second Half of the 19th Century

Typology and Style of Monuments in the Urban Gesamtkunstwerk "Green Horseshoe" (*Zelena potkova*)

Irena Kraševac

### Abstract

The Zagreb Green Horseshoe, or *Zelena potkova* in Croatian, is an original urban evocation of the Ringstraße in Vienna that represents an effort to create a characteristic urban space during the era of Historicism. This distinctive 19th-century urban project provided an appropriate setting for monuments and sculptural decoration. Squares, parks and main streets thus became a stage where contemporaries encountered monuments to personalities whose memory was to be preserved. The evocation of historical figures as a part of the collective memory is one of the fundamental ideas behind erecting monu-

ments in any public place. Zagreb, as a national metropolis, favoured monuments dedicated to persons who recalled the nation's glorious past and to highly regarded individuals, artists and poets. This paper focuses on thirteen monuments that were erected from 1866 to 1914 in this model part of the city and discusses issues related to the clients, the artists and the individuals to whom they were dedicated. The monuments that extend along the *Zelena potkova* can match the monuments on the Ringstraße, both examples are part of a common heritage from the reign of Franz Joseph I of Austria.

## Urban planning and construction of the Zagreb Green Horseshoe (*Zelena potkova*)

[1] Zagreb took part in the rapid development of cities that followed the strategy of the *Gründerzeit* ("founders' period"). In the second half of the 19th century, the city developed into a genuine Croatian national centre where modern civil society was to emerge thanks to the establishment of central cultural and scientific institutions and the increase in industrialization. Imperial Vienna was the model for other cities throughout the Monarchy, and many of them were designed as reduced versions of the cosmopolitan capital, while the tradition of educating architects in Vienna contributed to the creation of similar urban features.<sup>1</sup> The contacts that smaller communities had with the Viennese culture, imitation thereof, and the position between centralist and autonomous governance marked the entire epoch during the reign of Franz Joseph I of Austria.<sup>2</sup>

[2] The famous Ringstraße in Vienna became synonymous with the social progress of the imperial age and was the architectural model that other cities of the Monarchy sought to transpose to their particular setting. Zagreb succeeded in coming close to the Vienna model thanks to the original urban planning of *Zelena potkova*, a parkway of eight squares forming a monumental frame for the central part of downtown Zagreb (Donji grad), as evident in the following names: Eastern Park (consisting of three park-squares, then named: Zrinski Square, Academy Square and Franz Joseph Square), Western Park (consisting of three park-squares, among which University Square), and Southern Park (consisting of Ante Starčević Square and the Botanical Gardens). *Zelena potkova* thus became a kind of evocation of the Ringstraße and was an effort to create a representative urban space during the era of Historicism, that took the form of a continuous sequence of public cultural and educational institutions and bourgeois palaces.<sup>3</sup>

[3] If one wished to emphasize the comparability of these two urban projects, one could point to the fact that the history of the Vienna Ringstraße began with a grand opening on 1 May 1865, the year in which the first general regulatory framework for the expansion of the city was adopted in Zagreb to determine the location and layout of what was called New Square (later renamed Nikola Šubić Zrinski Square). It became the model and provided the scale for the subsequent

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<sup>1</sup> Jacek Purchla, "Wien, Krakau and Lemberg auf ihrem Weg in die Moderne", in: *Mythos Galizien*, exh. cat., ed. Jacek Purchla, Vienna 2015, 136-145; Dragan Damjanović, *Bečka Akademija likovnih umjetnosti i hrvatska arhitektura historicizma. Hrvatski učenici Friedricha von Schmidta* [Croatian Architecture of the Historicist Period and the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Croatian Students of Architect Friedrich von Schmidt], Zagreb 2011; Dragan Damjanović, *Otto Wagner und die kroatische Architektur*, Zagreb 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Telesko, "'Zentrum' und 'Peripherie' in der österreichischen Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts – zur Bedeutung der 'Kunstpolitik' der österreichischen Kronländer in ihrem Verhältnis zu Wien", in: *Brno Vídni, Vídeň Brnu. Zemské metropole a centrum řv 19. století / Brünn – Wien, Wien – Brünn. Landesmetropolen und Zentrum des Reiches im 19. Jahrhundert*, eds. Lukás Fasora et al., Brno 2008, 235-266: 254.

<sup>3</sup> Thorough research on the genesis, planning and construction of *Zelena potkova* was conducted by Snješka Knežević in her doctoral dissertation published under the title *Zagrebačka Zelena potkova* [Zagreb Green Horseshoe], Zagreb 1996. The author has published numerous studies on the individual squares that make up the *Zelena potkova*, and is largely responsible for its registration in the Register of Cultural Goods of the Republic of Croatia in 1999.

comprehensive expansion that started south of the city's main square, or Ban Jelačić Square, and was later re-affirmed in another regulatory framework adopted in 1887.

[4] Unlike Vienna, where the space for the new urban development was made by demolishing the former fortifications, the 19th-century expansion of Zagreb was planned as a city lying at the foot of the old fortified "upper" towns of Gradec and Kaptol, on undeveloped terrain that had been crossed by a railway line since 1862. This enabled proper orthogonal planning of streets and blocks following the principles of symmetry within a given square grid. While the Vienna Ring was planned and built as a dynastic and state project that aimed at the apotheosis of the Habsburg Empire and the glorification of the so-called upper class, *Zelena potkova* was exclusively a municipal project organised in a province of the Monarchy, with liberal citizens taking an active part as the exponents of modernization. However, the biggest difference between the urban planning in Vienna and in Zagreb is that the Vienna Ring is a continuous circular system of streets and alleys along which parks, palaces and representative public institutions are located, whereas in Zagreb "the green ornamented rug unfolds"<sup>4</sup> in the form of a green belt with the buildings of public institutions in the fields of education and culture set in its very centre.<sup>5</sup>

[5] The regulatory basis of 1887 aligned the architectural and artistic expression of the epoch with the postulates developed by Austrian architect and urban theorist Camillo Sitte, who regarded the project of a city as a work of art whereby the aesthetic design incorporates horticulture, architecture and sculpture to equal extents to create a Gesamtkunstwerk.<sup>6</sup> The completeness and aesthetic unity of the newly planned part of the city was ensured by Milan Lenuci (1849–1924), head of the city construction office, who from 1891 to 1894 worked on the detailed regulation of all the squares that formed part of the park frame and thanks to whom *Zelena potkova*, the largest Gesamtkunstwerk of Croatian urban planning, was realized (Fig. 1).<sup>7</sup>

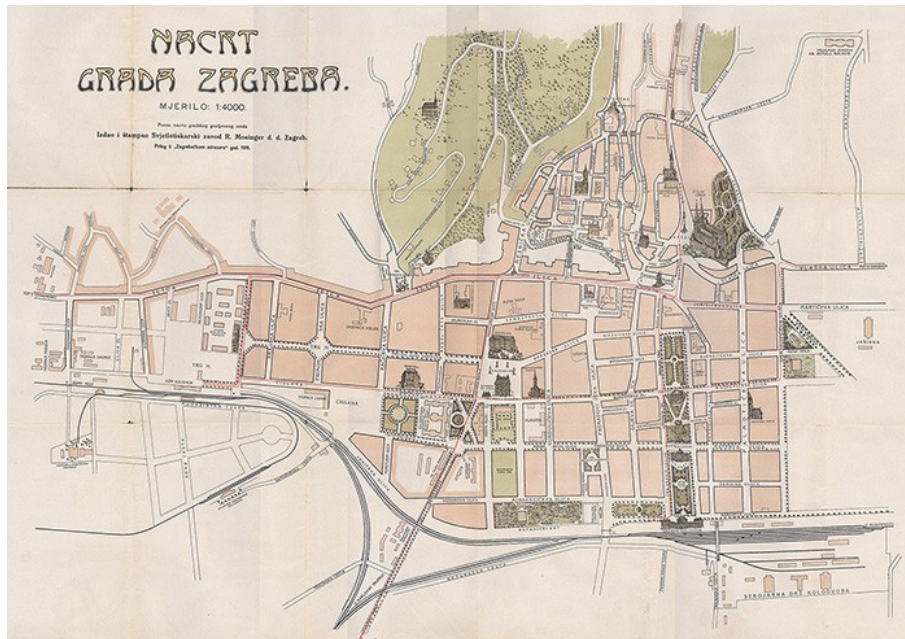
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<sup>4</sup> Olga Maruševski, "Arhitektonsko-urbanističke veze Zagreba i Beča na prijelomu stoljeća" [Architectural and Urban Links Between Zagreb and Vienna at the Turn of the Century], in: *Fin de siècle. Zagreb – Vienna*, Zagreb 1997, 197-228: 203.

<sup>5</sup> Institutions from east to west: the Academy of Sciences and Arts (1879), the Chemical Institute (1883), the Art Pavilion (1898), the Botanical Gardens with the adjacent scientific infrastructure (1891), the University Library (1913), the National Theatre (1895), the University Rectorate (1859).

<sup>6</sup> Camillo Sitte (1843, Vienna – 1903, Vienna), *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*, first published in Vienna 1889.

<sup>7</sup> Urban planner and architect Milan Lenuci (1849, Karlovac – 1924, Zagreb) graduated from the Polytechnic School in Graz; in 1891 he was appointed head of the city construction office in Zagreb. Lenuci laid the foundations for the modern city of Zagreb, especially with regard to designing park-squares along the line of *Zelena potkova*, which is also often called the *Lenucijeva potkova* (Lenuci's Horseshoe).



1 Plan of the City of Zagreb, 1911. Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb (photograph © Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb)

[6] Despite the political ties to Budapest that resulted from the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, the culture of Zagreb mostly reflected the Viennese model, as is shown by the fact that Viennese architects were invited to participate in the design of some of the key institutions: Friedrich Schmidt proposed a reconstruction of the Cathedral and designed the building for the Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Fellner & Helmer studio designed the building of the Croatian National Theatre and oversaw the reconstruction of the Art Pavilion, and Otto Hofer designed Ljudevit Vranyczany's palace. Herman(n) Bollé, Schmidt's assistant for construction projects outside Vienna, remained in Zagreb to become the leading architect of Croatian Historicism, completed numerous projects and initiated educational programmes in the arts, crafts and construction.<sup>8</sup> In this situation, Zagreb also came close to the stylistic pluralism of the *Ringstraßenstil* with elements of Gothic Revival, Neo-Renaissance, Neo-Baroque and Jugendstil, as a result of the universal cultural and urban ideals of the late 19th century.

[7] The period that started with the passing of the first regulatory framework in 1865 and ended with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 was marked by a major urban transformation of the city and a construction boom supported by both private and state investment. *Zelena potkova* is ultimately a result of the efforts of several generations of Zagreb urban planners, builders, city authorities and investors, who created a representative social space as an aesthetic framework for the *Gründerzeit* and the culture of Historicism, which can be considered an original mutation of the Vienna *Ring*. As a part of this endeavour, there was also a need for comprehensive planning of the urban fabric that included the landscaping of parks, the erection of monuments and the addition of other urban inventory.

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<sup>8</sup> Dragan Damjanović, *Arhitekt Herman Bollé* [Architect Herman Bollé], Zagreb 2013.

## Public sculptures in Zagreb from 1866 to 1914 extending along the *Zelena potkova*

[8] Previous publications on the *Zelena potkova* in Zagreb mention individual monuments erected in the area, which, in the history of Croatian art, have been examined mostly in the context of their sculptors' comprehensive art production. Although 19th-century sculpture is a very significant field, so far Croatian art history has produced only one synthetic publication on the topic.<sup>9</sup> This paper presents a more detailed study taking into account the overall urban planning and the cultural and political context. It attempts to answer questions raised at the 2018 international workshop in Ljubljana titled "Vienna as a Sculptural Centre in the 'Long 19th Century'": Who commissioned the sculpture? Who was allowed to design a monument, when and where? Who was supposed to be honoured and by whom?<sup>10</sup>

[9] The impetus for this research came from the publications by Gerhardt Kapner, Maria Pötzl-Malikova and Walter Krause on the sculpture of the Ringstraße.<sup>11</sup> I will try to further expand the links between Zagreb and Vienna by explaining the typology and stylistic characteristics of the sculptures in question, the provenance and place of education of individual artists, and the circumstances of private or public commissions and acquisitions of artworks. To this end, I will extend the line of *Zelena potkova* from its spatial starting point, i.e. Ban Jelačić Square, to the intersection of Frankopanska and Ilica Streets and the widening of the junction of Mesnička Street, thus completing the outline of the city's development, along which we note the erection of thirteen monuments – most dedicated to particular historical persons, some decorative sculptures – in the period from 1866 to 1914 (Fig. 2).<sup>12</sup>

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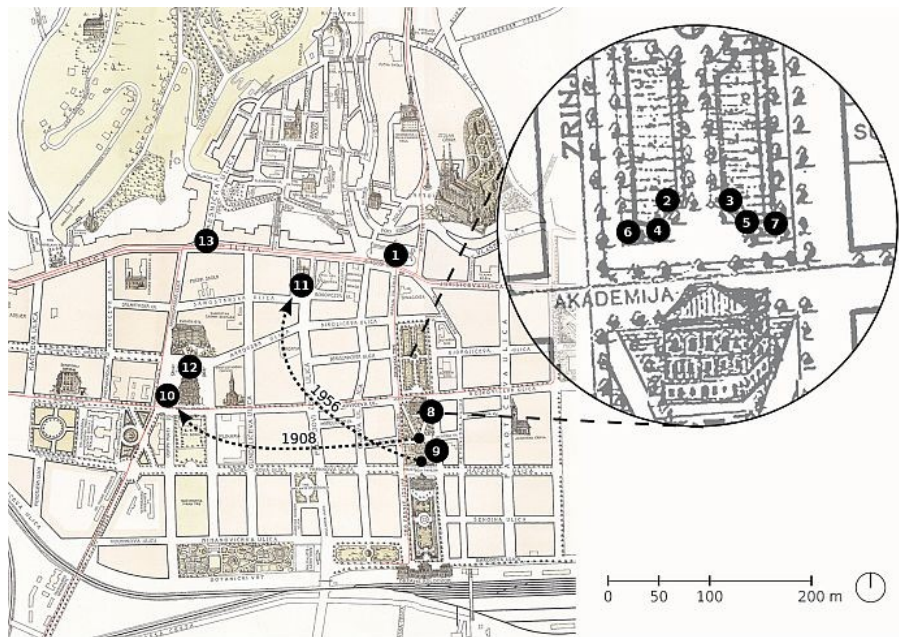
<sup>9</sup> Grgo Gamulin, *Hrvatsko kiparstvo 19. i 20. stoljeća* [Croatian Sculpture of the 19th and 20th Century], Zagreb 1999.

<sup>10</sup> "Vienna as a Sculptural Centre in the 'Long 19th Century' / Wien als Zentrum der Bildhauerei im 'Langen 19. Jahrhundert'. Aktuelle Forschungen zur Skulptur in Mitteleuropa", International Workshop, France Stelé Institute of Art History, Ljubljana, 05-06 February 2018. Professional concept: Ingeborg Schemper-Sparholz (Vienna) and Barbara Murovec (Ljubljana).

<sup>11</sup> Renate Wagner-Rieger, ed., *Die Wiener Ringstraße – Bild einer Epoche*, 11 vols., Vienna/Graz/Cologne and Wiesbaden 1969–1982: Gerhardt Kapner, *Zur Geschichte der Ringstraßendenkmäler*, Wiesbaden 1973 (= *Die Wiener Ringstraße – Bild einer Epoche*, 9/1); Maria Pötzl-Malikova, *Die Plastik der Wiener Ringstraße. Künstlerische Entwicklung 1890–1918*, Wiesbaden 1976 (= *Die Wiener Ringstraße – Bild einer Epoche*, 9/2); Walter Krause, *Die Plastik der Wiener Ringstraße. Von der Spätromantik bis zur Wende um 1900*, Wiesbaden 1980 (= *Die Wiener Ringstraße – Bild einer Epoche*, 9/3).

<sup>12</sup> The timeline begins with the erection of the first public monument, the equestrian statue of *Ban Josip Jelačić* by Anton Dominik Fernkorn in 1866, and ends with the First World War, with the monument to *August Šenoa* by Ivan Rendić erected in 1914. This period is also marked by strong development, modernization and quality urban planning.





2 Plan of the *Zelena potkova* with marked positions of monuments: **1** Anton Dominik Fernkorn, *Ban Josip Jelačić*, 1866 | **2** Ivan Rendić, *Andrija Medulić*, 1878 | **3** Ivan Rendić, *Juraj Julije Klović*, 1879 | **4** Ivan Rendić, *Krsto Frankopan*, 1884 | **5** Ivan Rendić, *Nikola Jurišić*, 1886 | **6** Rudolf Valdec, *Ivan Maružarić*, 1911 | **7** Rudolf Valdec, *Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski*, 1911 | **8** Toma Rosandić, *Ruđer Bošković*, 1910 | **9** Ivan Rendić, *August Šenoa*, 1893 | **10** Anton Dominik Fernkorn, *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, 1854 | **11** Ivan Rendić, *Petar Preradović*, 1895 | **12** Ivan Meštrović, *The Well of Life*, 1906 | **13** Ivan Rendić, *Andrija Kačić Miošić*, 1891 (graphic design © Boris Dundović, Institute of Art History, Zagreb).

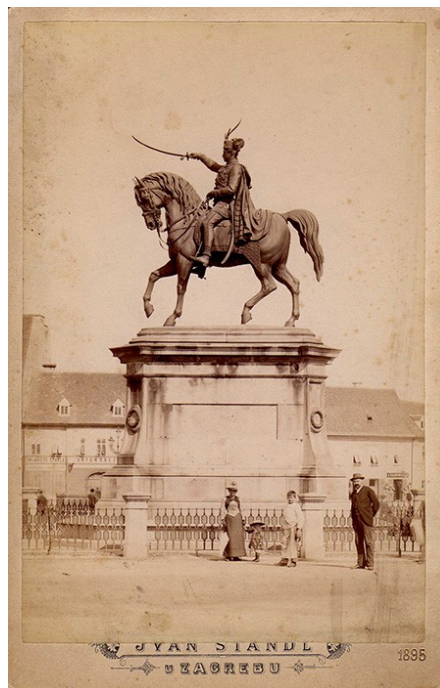
[10] The monument is one of the most significant and demanding tasks of 19th-century sculpture, reflecting a specific class manifestation or state representation of a political conviction or opinion.<sup>13</sup> The evocation of historical figures as a part of collective memory is one of the fundamental ideas behind the erection of monuments in a public place. The art of the second half of the 19th century shifted from mostly ecclesiastical and private spheres of the nobility to the public domain. As a result, city committees were set up to erect monuments while relevant decisions were taken by the city government. Squares, parks and main streets thus became stages where contemporaries encountered important historical figures who should be remembered for the future. Zagreb, as a national metropolis, favoured monuments dedicated to persons who evoked the nation's glorious past and to highly regarded individuals.

## The monument in the main square: *Ban Josip Jelačić* by Anton Dominik Fernkorn

[11] In terms of space and chronology, the sequence begins with the monument to Ban Josip Jelačić, which was solemnly unveiled in 1866 as the first secular monument in Zagreb.<sup>14</sup> This

<sup>13</sup> Cornelia Reiter, "Der Denkmalkult", in: *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich*, vol. 5: 19. *Jahrhundert*, ed. Gerbert Frodl, Munich/Vienna 2002, 504-507.

monumental memorial, ten meters high, bears a bronze equestrian statue created by Anton Dominik Fernkorn (Fig. 3).<sup>15</sup>



3 Anton Dominik Fernkorn, *Ban Josip Jelačić*, 1866. Photographer: Ivan Standl, 1895 (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

Its history began with the decision made by the city government in 1854 to erect a monument to the meritorious Ban in the city's main square during his lifetime. The square has borne his name since 1848. At that time, it was the only space that could take such a huge monument, centrally positioned on the vast square.<sup>16</sup> The development of Croatia has been strongly influenced by Ban Josip Jelačić Bužimski (1801–1859), who played a key role in the revolution of 1848 and the

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<sup>14</sup> Until that time, there were only two public monuments in Zagreb, an obelisk on the east side of the archbishop's palace, at the entrance to Ribnjak Park, and a dilapidated Baroque St. Mary's Column on Saint Mark's Square in Gradec.

<sup>15</sup> Anton Dominik Fernkorn (1813, Erfurt – 1878, Vienna) was trained by Ludwig Schwanthaler in Munich. In 1840 he moved to Vienna and later headed the arts foundry established in 1856. In addition to the equestrian monument of Ban Josip Jelačić, Fernkorn's other monumental sculptures in Zagreb are a *St George Slaying the Dragon* (a tin cast from 1854, which had been brought to Zagreb in 1867, was taken down; the second cast, in bronze, dates from 1908) and a *Madonna Immaculata* with four angels, symbols of the Cardinal virtues Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Courage (1873), erected in front of Zagreb Cathedral according to Herman Bollé's design from 1882. Fernkorn is the author of a total of four equestrian monuments, of Archduke Charles and of Prince Eugene in Vienna, of Ban Josip Jelačić in Zagreb, and of Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in Brunswick. See: Bruno Maria Wikingen, *Anton Ritter von Fernkorn, der Bildhauer und Erzgießer 1813–1878*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Vienna 1936; Selma Krasa-Florian, "Antike versus Zeitkostüm. Die süddeutsch orientierte Spätromantik", in: *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich*, vol. 5: 19. Jahrhundert, ed. Gerbert Frodl, Munich 2002, 458-462: 460.

defence of the homeland against Hungarian hegemony. His commitment brought about the democratic and social changes in Croatia that had already spread across Europe after the French Revolution, such as the abolition of the feudal system of social classes and serfdom, introduction of civil society institutions, strengthening of the country's economic independence, and creation of preconditions for overall national and cultural development.

[12] The construction of the monument was entrusted to Anton Dominik Fernkorn (1813–1878), one of the best-known sculptors of the time, who worked in Vienna where he headed an arts foundry that was able to accept such demanding commissions. Fernkorn's monumental bronze statue matches the size of its immediate predecessors, the equestrian monuments to Archduke Charles, executed in 1859–1860, and to Prince Eugene of Savoy, realized in 1860–1865, that face each other on Heldenplatz, in front of the Hofburg in Vienna. The monuments to Archduke Charles and Prince Eugene were commissioned by Emperor Franz Joseph I, whereas the monument to Ban Jelačić was commissioned by what was called the Committee on the Erection of Monuments, which, by order of Ban Josip Šokčević (in office from 1860 to 1867), published a public call for proposals. Voluntary contributions for the monument were collected throughout the country, and the description of the official unveiling ceremony on 17 December 1866 explicitly emphasized: "The people erected this monument to the Croatian Ban, not to an Austrian general".<sup>17</sup> Vatroslav Donegani (1836–1899) also responded to the public call for proposals but the Committee opted for Fernkorn's design, probably because of his reputation and the expected quality of the work of an established, mature artist, in contrast to Donegani, who was a young Croatian sculptor at the start of his career.<sup>18</sup>

[13] The erection of the monument just two years before the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement of 1868 took place at the very last possible minute: In view of the political constellation of Croatia and Hungary the monument to Ban Jelačić might not have been approved later on as it represented opposition to Hungarian nationalism. The orientation of the monument, popularly interpreted as "a threat directed at Hungary", is differently described in a letter that the sculptor Fernkorn wrote in 1865 to the Committee on the Erection of Monuments, in which he advised

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<sup>16</sup> One of the most important aspects of a monument is the question of its location in the city. Cornelia Reiter, "Der Denkmalkult" (p. 505, note 12), says: "Grundsätzlich wandelt sich die Aufstellung eines Denkmals als Mittelpunkt eines repräsentativen Platzes, dessen Gestaltung auch verstärkt in die formale und inhaltliche Konzeption einbezogen wird, zur Positionierung des Denkmals am Ende einer großen Raumflucht entsprechend den theoretischen Überlegungen von Camillo Sitte."

<sup>17</sup> Božena Kličinović, "Anton Dominik Fernkorn. Spomenik banu Josipu Jelačiću" [Anton Dominik Fernkorn. The monument to Ban Josip Jelačić], in: *Anton Dominik Fernkorn – Spomenik banu Josipu Jelačiću*, exh. cat., Zagreb 1990, 5-25. The publication includes reproductions of letters by A. D. Fernkorn to the *Committee for the Erection of Monuments*, acknowledgements of receipts, and the contract signed by Fernkorn, Pönninger, Röhlich and other craftsmen who assisted in the design and erection of the monument. The documentation is kept at the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb.

<sup>18</sup> Vatroslav Donegani (1836, Rijeka – 1899, Đakovo), Croatian sculptor educated at the Art Academy in Venice. One of his first works was the model for the monument to Ban Josip Jelačić, bought by Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer who invited him to Đakovo, where he worked on the interior of the renowned cathedral, built to plans by Viennese architects Karl Rösner and Friedrich Schmidt. The model for the unrealized monument to Ban Jelačić has not been preserved.



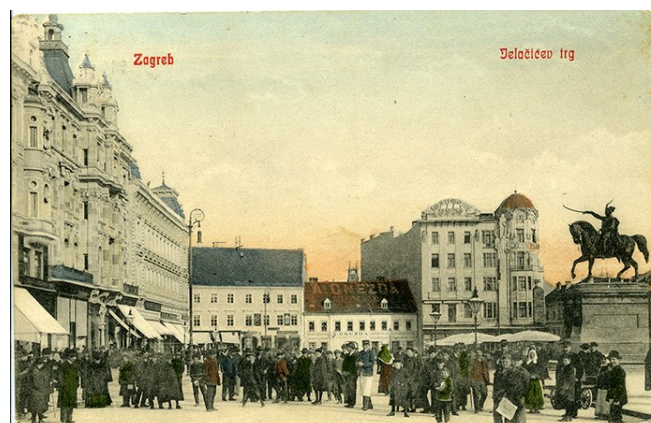
that the monument should face towards the most vibrant part of the city. At that time, this meant the "upper town" of Gradec and Kaptol bearing in mind that the southern part of the city was made up mostly of fields and meadows.

[14] The plinth of the monument, made from Moslavina granite, was constructed by Janko Jambrišak and Franjo Klein, builders from Zagreb. Its stability was clearly demonstrated by the fact that the monument suffered no major damage during the earthquake of 9 November 1880. The space directly around the monument is bordered by decorative wrought-iron fencing, as a sort of a barrier between the 'untouchable' statue and the citizens, a characteristic feature of monuments of that period. This setting survived until 1909 when the square was levelled and paved, and the plinth was raised by two granite steps in accordance with architect Edo Schön's design, thus creating a perfectly elegant aesthetic solution at the dawn of modernity.

[15] With the erection of the monument to Ban Jelačić, Zagreb literally began to follow the central ideas of urbanism and urban development of the 19th century, since the new buildings erected around the monument adapted to its monumental dimensions. The existing modest, classicist, Biedermeier two-storey commercial buildings were gradually replaced by historicist and secessionist multi-storey buildings (Figs. 4-5).



4 The unveiling of the monument to Ban Josip Jelačić in Zagreb on 17 December 1866. Photographer: Franjo Pommer, 1866 (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)



5 Ban Jelačić Square, Zagreb, 1911. Vintage postcard (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

## Monuments to great figures of Croatian history in the park at Nikola Šubić Zrinski Square

[16] While Ban Jelačić Square, due to its position, became the central city square and an important intersection of all urban communication (historically, it had a utilitarian function as the city's largest marketplace), the planning of new squares and parks along the north-south route and their design in the form of a greenbelt resulted in a completely new and representative urban space for a rather different purpose, i.e. a place intended for leisure and pastimes (promenade, music pavilion) as well as relaxation (park greenery).

[17] After the first regulatory framework of 1865, the former livestock market in the immediate vicinity of Ban Jelačić Square was transformed into a new representative square. It was the idea of the city planner Rupert Melkus to turn it into a park-square.<sup>19</sup> In 1866, the year in which the monument to Ban Josip Jelačić was erected, the idea emerged of erecting a monument dedicated to Nikola Šubić Zrinski to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Battle of Szighet.<sup>20</sup> Novi trg (New Square) was later transformed and named after him (Zrinski Square, or Zrinjevac). However, the monument was never realized.<sup>21</sup> In the context of the national enthusiasm borne on the wave of the Illyrian Revival (ca. 1835–1874), which was already losing something of its vigour, and shortly before the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement (1868), Zagreb celebrated the military heroes of Croatian history, such as Nikola Šubić Zrinski and Ban Josip Jelačić.

[18] Zrinski Square was laid out between 1870 and 1874. The parterre of the park with flowerbeds was designed according to a project by Rudolph Siebeck, director of the city parks in Vienna.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, a more concrete proposal for the sculptural decoration of the square was made. The Academy of Sciences and Arts, built in the Neo-Renaissance style to a design by Friedrich Schmidt, was the first building positioned on the central axis of the greenbelt of the Eastern Park.

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<sup>19</sup> Rupert Melkus (1833, Moravská Bystrica – 1891, Zagreb) was a graduate of the Polytechnic Institute in Graz. From 1865 he worked as a city planner and architect in Zagreb, and in 1882 he became the head of the building authority.

<sup>20</sup> The fortress of Szighet (Szigetvár, Großsiget) in southern Hungary occupied a very significant geostrategic defence position in blocking the Ottoman line of advance towards Buda and Vienna. The Battle of Szighet that took place in 1566 was a key battle. Croatian general Nikola Šubić Zrinski and Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent fought the battle and Nikola Šubić Zrinski died courageously on 7 September 1566. This historical event, which stopped the Ottoman onslaught towards the west, is a recurring motif in both Croatian and Hungarian literature and arts.

<sup>21</sup> An improvised plaster monument to Nikola Šubić Zrinski was erected on the occasion, and it was announced that a permanent monument would be erected at the location once the square was refurbished. Although the idea of the monument to Zrinski remained topical for some time, and, in his atelier in Zagreb, sculptor Ivan Rendić presented a sketch for a monumental fountain to be built at the centre of the square, the monument never saw the light of day and in 1891 the music pavilion was erected in its place. Designed by Herman Bollé, the music pavilion was donated to the city by wholesaler Eduard Prister.

<sup>22</sup> The proposal to entrust the project to Rudolph Siebeck was adopted at the session of the Economic Council on 18 December 1872 (Croatian State Archive [hereinafter HR-DAZ], The City Council of Zagreb, general municipal acts of 1872, no. 6909). The original design has never been found. However, all lists of Siebeck's works include what is called the "Stadtpark zu Agram": [http://www.biographien.ac.at/oeb1/oeb1\\_S/Siebeck\\_Rudolph\\_1812\\_1878.xml](http://www.biographien.ac.at/oeb1/oeb1_S/Siebeck_Rudolph_1812_1878.xml) (accessed 14 April 2020).

It raised the question of communication with the northern section of Zrinski Square. The proposal of 1874 to build "a museum under the open sky" which would recall the nation's glorious past, put forward by writer Ladislav (Lacko) Mrazović, was reintroduced. Subsequently, publicist Zlatko Halper outlined his vision of a "Pantheon of the Croatian People".<sup>23</sup> The proposal to create a memorial setting in the park was supplemented by the idea to place a series of busts of distinguished Croats along the paths, modelled after Monte Pincio in Rome, a well-known example of classicist park landscaping with statues. The idea was welcomed by the public:

*And we want to have what the Romans have on the Aventine [sic], the Padovans in the Prà della Valle, and the Florentines in the courtyard of the Uffizi. We want to have a whole gallery of eminent Croats, a living example for us and our children.*<sup>24</sup>

The notion of the Pantheon, a temple dedicated to all deities, points to the sacralization of ideals, and is entirely in the spirit of the culture and art of Historicism. However, the idea was never fully realized, but remained only in fragments.

[19] Monuments were usually erected on the occasion of the anniversaries of important historical figures or in relation to various efforts to improve the city. *Matica hrvatska* (*Matrix Croatica*), the influential Croatian cultural institution founded in 1842,<sup>25</sup> made a proposal for the erection of a marble bust of miniaturist and illuminator Julije Klović (Giulio Clovio) to mark the 300th anniversary of his death in 1878, and suggested that the sculptor Ivan Rendić (1849–1932) be commissioned to make the monument.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, Rendić also made available a bust of painter Andrija Medulić (Andrea Schiavone), which would create a logical symmetrical whole, and suggested that the busts be placed at the corner of one of the sections of the park.<sup>27</sup> The city government accepted his proposal, and Rupert Melkus defined the position for the two monuments in 1878. He placed them facing the Academy building, on the rounded corners of the existing greenbelt, next to the central alley.<sup>28</sup> The discussion about the location of the busts also involved the Viennese architect Friedrich Schmidt, who had a personal interest in decorating the

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<sup>23</sup> Ladislav (Lacko) Mrazović (Zagreb, 1849–1881), secretary of *Matica hrvatska*; Zlatko Halper Sigetski (Zagreb, 1854–1878); both were prominent young Zagreb intellectuals during the 1870s, publishing art critiques in the *Vienac* and *Obzor* journals.

<sup>24</sup> Zlatko Halper suggested to position allegorical groups of figures at the centre and busts of some renowned Croats along the paths. He envisioned a monument representing "Our Homeland Croatia", surrounded by allegories of Unity, Social Culture and Material Welfare, which, as he put it, are "a necessary precondition for the future greatness of the Croatian people"; quoted according to *Obzor*, 21 July 1877.

<sup>25</sup> *Matica hrvatska* was founded in 1842 with the aim of promoting national identity in the fields of art, science, intellectual creation, economy and public life, and to ensure social development. Since 1869 it has published the magazine *Vienac* (from 1910: *Vijenac*; engl. wreath), the central national periodical dedicated to Croatian literature and culture in the 19th century.

<sup>26</sup> "300 godina smrti Klovijeve" [Three Hundred Years after Klovije's Death], in: *Vienac*, 30 June 1877; "Umjetničke viesti. Klovijevo poprsje" [Art News. Klovij's Bust], in: *Vienac*, 26 August 1877.

<sup>27</sup> "Poprsja za Zrinski trg" [Busts for Zrinski Square], in: *Obzor*, 20 October 1877.

<sup>28</sup> Rupert Melkus, *Nacrt smještaja dvaju poprsja na južnom kraju zrinjevačkog perivoja* [Plan for the erection of two busts on the southern side of Zrinski park], 1878, in: HR-DAZ/The manuscript legacy of Ivan Ulčnik (reproduced in: Knežević, *Zagrebačka Zelena potkova*, 72, note 3).

immediate environment of the building he had designed. He liked the idea of symmetrically placing the busts in a semicircle opposite the Academy building (Fig. 6).<sup>29</sup>



6 Zrinski Square, Zagreb, 1903. Vintage postcard, photographer: Rudolf Mosinger (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

[20] The monuments to Andrija Medulić and Julije Klović were unveiled in 1879, only one day apart. Both were made by Trieste-based sculptor Ivan Rendić who at that time settled briefly in Zagreb and opened an atelier with the aim of securing further commissions.<sup>30</sup> These first two

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<sup>29</sup> "Poljepšanje grada Zagreba" [Embellishment of the City of Zagreb], in: *Vienac*, 3 November 1877. Friedrich Schmidt proposed that the bust be placed in niches of greenery. On Schmidt's project for the Academy Palace see: Dragan Damjanović, "Projektiranje palače Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Zagrebu 1875.–1877. Renesansa renesanse u hrvatskoj arhitekturi" [Designing the Palace of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb (1875–1877)], in: *Prostor* 27 (2019), no. 1, 14-35.

<sup>30</sup> Ivan Rendić (1849, Imotski – 1932, Split), Croatian sculptor educated at the Art Academy in Venice and trained by Giovanni Dupré in Florence. In the late 1870s, Rendić moved to Zagreb and opened his own atelier. After 1880, he spent most of his life working in Trieste. See: Duško Kečkemet, *Ivan Rendić. Život i djelo* [Ivan Rendić. Life and Œuvre], Supetar 1969 (still the only exhaustive monograph dedicated to the "first Croatian sculptor"). In 1879 Rendić exhibited four portraits at the Christmas exhibition at the *Künstlerhaus* in Vienna and enjoyed considerable success. It is interesting to note that sculptor Viktor Tilgner persuaded Rendić to move to Vienna, saying that he would obtain far more commissions for portraits there. In February 1880, Rendić exhibited a portrait (probably the portrait of Stjepan Vrabčević) at the *Künstlerhaus*. "Naš Rendić na bečkoj umjetničkoj izložbi" [Our Rendić at the Vienna Art Exhibition], in: *Obzor*, 30 December 1879; "Presse donosi u podlistku..." [Presse Brings the Story in the Feuilleton...], in: *Narodni list*, 31 December 1879. Rendić's letters to his wife Olga Forio reveal that he returned to Vienna in 1898, hoping to receive commissions for sculptures for the Imperial Court and portraits since "after Tilgner's passing, there is only one good portraitist. I could also find a lot of work at cemeteries (...)" ; see: Art Gallery, Split, archive, letter from Rendić to Olga Forio, Vienna, 8 July 1898. – A recognized authority in the field of art criticism, Ranzoni wrote in the issue of *Neue Freie Presse*: "A new bust by sculptor Rendić exhibited in the Stiegenhaus [of the *Künstlerhaus*] is once again marked with all those advantages we had emphasized when this talented artist recently appeared", as quoted in: "Naš Rendić u Künstlerhausu" [Our Rendić at the *Künstlerhaus*], in: *Obzor*, 21 February 1880; "Počimlju nas poznavati!" [They Are Beginning to Know Us!], in: *Narodne novine*, 25 February 1880.

busts were dedicated to famous painters who were originally from the Croatian Adriatic coast, but worked in Italy where they were known as the *Schiavoni*. Their fame in their homeland grew during the era of the national revival and they became particularly popular thanks to a publication entitled *Slovník umjetnikah jugoslavenskih* [Dictionary of South-Slavic Artists], edited and published by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski in 1858.<sup>31</sup> The miniature painter Julije Klović (Giulio Clovio, 1498–1578) was born in Grižana in the Croatian Littoral (Hrvatsko primorje), worked in Italy and Hungary, and was known as the "Michelangelo of miniature painting". Andrija Medulić (Andrea Meldolla, or Andrea Schiavone), painter and graphic artist (around 1500–1563), was born in Šibenik, educated in the circle of Titian, and lived and worked mainly in Venice. He was one of the first landscape painters in Italian painting. The sculptor Rendić was able to immediately 'react' to *Matica hrvatska's* proposal, which was supported by the City Council, and offered two finished busts of the Croatian artists in question. Rendić had made the plaster model of Andrija Medulić in Florence in 1875 on his own initiative – a self-portrait of Medulić in the Uffizi Gallery served as a model<sup>32</sup> – and the marble bust in 1878.

[21] The unveilings took place on 8 April (Medulić) and 9 April 1879 (Klović) to commemorate these two eminent artists separately and to honour and pay respect to each one individually. The occasion was certainly an extraordinary event for Zagreb, since these two monuments were the first public monuments to be erected after the one dedicated to Ban Josip Jelačić, and all the cultural institutions involved, *Matica hrvatska*, the Academy of Sciences and Arts, and the City Government, participated.<sup>33</sup> Made of Carrara marble, the busts were placed on identical, simply profiled square plinths. Each bust is 85 cm high, and the total height of the monument is 280 cm (Figs. 6a and 6b).

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<sup>31</sup> Ivana Mance, *Zércalo naroda. Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski: povijest umjetnosti i politika* [The Mirror of the Nation. Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski: Art History and Politics], Zagreb 2012.

<sup>32</sup> "Mladi naši umjetnici..." [Our Young Artists], in: *Narodne novine*, 15 May 1875; "Ivan Rendić", in: *Vienac*, 8 May 1875, 312.

<sup>33</sup> "Spomenici na Zrinjskom trgu" [Monuments at Zrinski Square], in: *Obzor*, 9 April 1879.





6a Ivan Rendić, *Andrija Medulić (Andrea Schiavone)*, 1878, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)



6b Ivan Rendić, *Juraj Julije Klović (Giorgio Giulio Clovio)*, 1879, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

[22] The City Government sought to continue the series of busts of Renaissance personalities and commissioned new sculptures from Rendić.<sup>34</sup> The busts of two warriors were thus added to the series: Krsto Frankopan (1482–1527), Ban and military commander, who participated in the defence against the Ottomans in 1525 and died during the siege of Varaždin, and Nikola Jurišić (1490–1545), baron and military commander of Kőszeg, who successfully resisted the Ottoman siege of his town and thus prevented the Ottoman advance towards Vienna.

[23] In October 1881, Rendić reported from Trieste to the Zagreb City Council that he had completed the "commissioned statues of Frankopan and Jurišić for Zrinski Square". At the session of the City Council it was decided that they should be installed as soon as possible. However, they were only delivered in 1883 and the bust of Krsto Frankopan was erected in May 1884 (Fig. 6c).<sup>35</sup> Although Rendić managed to finish the marble bust of Nikola Jurišić in 1881, due to some irregularities in the marble that had emerged during the carving phase, he had to start again using new stone, so that the bust was completed and erected only in 1886 (Fig. 6d).<sup>36</sup>



6c Ivan Rendić, *Krsto Frankopan*, 1884, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

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<sup>34</sup> The idea to continue with the erection of busts of distinguished Croats was warmly welcomed, and the City Council decided to allocate 1,000 forints every year for additional monuments. "Spomenici na Zrinjskom trgu" [Monuments at Zrinski Square], in: *Obzor*, 9 April 1879.

<sup>35</sup> "Poprsje Krste Frankopana" [Bust of Krsto Frankopan], in: *Vienac*, 10 May 1884, 308.

<sup>36</sup> "Jurišićevo poprsje" [Jurišić's Bust], in: *Obzor*, 1 September 1886; "Nikola Jurišić", in: *Vienac*, 16 October 1886, 671.



6d Ivan Rendić, *Nikola Jurišić*, 1886, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

Rendić's memorial busts, made at intervals of five or seven years, were created in a realistic style. The busts of Medulić and Klović were mounted on simply profiled square-section stone plinths, while those of Frankopan and Jurišić stand on round ones.

[24] The initial enthusiasm that arose in 1879 with the erection of the first busts subsided when Rendić left Zagreb, making communications with him difficult; but most likely because of the problems caused by the limited city funds available following the earthquake in 1880. The series of monuments dedicated to prominent figures of Croatian history was discontinued until 1911, when the busts of two contemporaries, equally famed for their contribution to culture and politics, were added to the series that formed a semicircle on the outer corners of the southern sections of the park. Those busts were dedicated to Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (1816–1889), writer and politician, who gave the first speech in the Croatian language in the Croatian Parliament in 1843 (Fig. 6e), and Ivan Mažuranić (1814–1891), Ban and politician, author of the heroic epic titled *The Death of Smail-aga Čengić*, which brought him fame as a poet (Fig. 6f). These monuments were made by sculptor Rudolf Valdec (1872–1929), who entered the art scene at the end of the 19th century.<sup>37</sup> He used the given form of a herm, and placed the busts on square plinths with discrete Secessionist details, noticeable in the upper parts, which are decorated with stylized leaf twigs carved in low relief. These busts were erected as part of a comprehensive

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<sup>37</sup> Rudolf Valdec (1872, Krapina – 1929, Zagreb) graduated from the Royal Male Crafts School in Zagreb in the first generation of students and won a scholarship in 1889 to continue his education in Vienna. He spent two school years at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* and attended a training course with August Kühne, after which he continued his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. Enes Quien, *Rudolf Valdec. Život i djelo* (Rudolf Valdec. Life and Œuvre), Zagreb 2015.



redevelopment of the city on the occasion of two major events, i.e. the Zagreb Fair (Zagrebački zbor) and the Sokol Gymnastic Festival (Sokolski slet), which took place in 1911.<sup>38</sup>



6e Rudolf Valdec, *Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski*, 1911, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)



6f Rudolf Valdec, *Ivan Mažuranić*, 1911, Zrinski Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photo taken by Paolo Mofardin, 2020 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

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<sup>38</sup> Ana Adamec, *Rudolf Valdec*, Zagreb 2001, 56, note 76; "Dvie biste Rudolfa Valdeca" [Two Busts by Rudolf Valdec], in: *Obzor*, 13 August 1911, "Novi spomenici" [New Monuments], in: *Narodne novine*, 10 August 1911.

[25] On the opposite side, next to the Academy of Sciences and Arts, the bust of Ruđer Bošković (1711–1787), scientist and philosopher, mathematician, physicist, astronomer, poet and diplomat, author of a *Philosophiae naturalis theoria*, was erected to mark the 100th anniversary of Bošković's death, and was also entrusted to Ivan Rendić in 1887. However, the sculptor replied that he could not accept the order due to work overload, so it was not until 1910 that the project was assigned to a young sculptor from Split, Toma Rosandić<sup>39</sup> who also opted for a simply profiled square plinth and created a head with a strong dramatic expression.

[26] The last monument erected in a conceptual sequence of important figures from the Croatian history was dedicated to August Šenoa (1838–1881), writer and senator from Zagreb. During his lifetime, Šenoa was widely known as the author of numerous novellas and feuilletons, and in the history of Croatian literature he is known as the father of the modern Croatian novel. For many years Šenoa worked as an editor of the magazine *Vienac* published by *Matica hrvatska*. It was this institution that re-launched the idea of a monument to one of the best-known citizens of Zagreb of the 19th century, which closed the circle begun in 1877. Of the personalities immortalised in stone, Šenoa was a contemporary of Ivan Rendić, and the sculptor realistically modelled the physiognomy of his subject. Rendić had made the plaster model in Trieste in 1892 and executed the sculpture in stone in 1893, but it was not erected until the spring of 1914.

[27] Although this "pantheon of great figures of Croatian history" remained unfinished (the series, planned to extend along the north-south axis of the park, was discontinued) and merely eight monuments in total were erected by 1914, it is a unique example on a wider Croatian scale. In place of allegorical figures of Homeland and Nation, characteristic of the 19th century, a series of concrete historical figures was made and the realistic, descriptive portraits were elevated on simple herm-like pedestals. Nineteenth-century civil liberalism placed learned individuals from the worlds of science and art on a pedestal; in Zagreb this took the form of busts of the Renaissance artists Julije Klović and Andrija Medulić, scientist Ruđer Bošković and contemporaries Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski, Ivan Mažuranić and August Šenoa, who advanced Croatian culture. The envisioned iconographic programme for a public space characteristic of the *Gründerzeit*, and the tradition of teaching history by constantly recalling distinguished individuals, rooted in Enlightenment proclamations that continued to exist in a specific understanding of monuments during the era of Historicism.<sup>40</sup> It was realized by successively erecting eight typologically similar busts made of Carrara marble and placed on stone plinths in the period 1879–1914.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Toma Rosandić (1878, Split – 1958, Split), stonemason, associate in various workshops, worked under the influence of Ivan Meštrović.

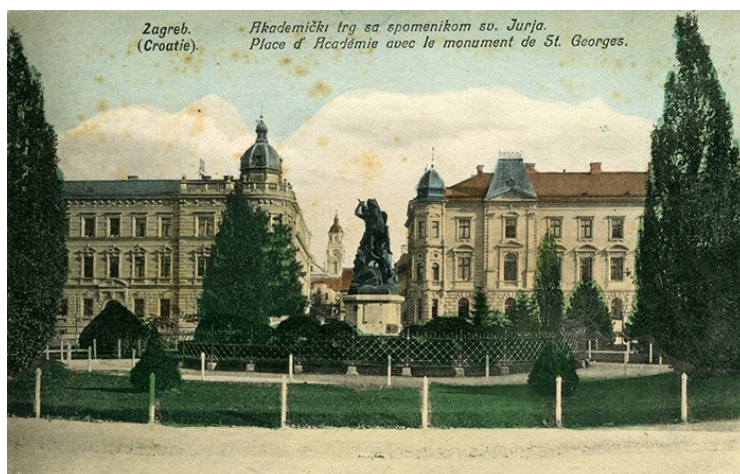
<sup>40</sup> Ingeborg Schemper-Sparholz, "Der Arkadenhof im Hauptgebäude der Universität Wien: Ruhmeshalle, Geschichtsgalerie oder Campo Santo?", in: *Der Arkadenhof der Universität Wien und die Tradition der Gelehrtenmemoria in Europa*, eds. Ingeborg Schemper-Sparholz et al., Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2017, 11-34: 15: "Geschichte lernen über Porträtreihen war ein Erziehungskonzept der Aufklärung, das im Denkmalverständnis des Historismus fortlebt."

<sup>41</sup> As they were affected by atmospheric pollution the original busts were replaced by artificial stone copies in the early 21st century. The marble originals are kept in the Museum of the City of Zagreb.



## In search of a better position: relocation of sculptures

[28] The equestrian statue of *St George Slaying the Dragon* originally stood in a different section in the Eastern Park, and when erected was the largest sculptural accent in that part of *Zelena potkova*. The statue was designed in 1853 by Anton Dominik Fernkorn and was initially intended for the Montenuovo Palace in Vienna. The second tin cast was exhibited at the *Industrie-Ausstellung* in Munich in 1854 and subsequently at the World Exhibition in Paris in 1855. In 1867, the Archbishop of Zagreb, Cardinal Juraj Haulik, purchased the statue in Vienna and placed it at the entrance to Jurjaves (later: Maksimir) Park outside the city; it was the second monument commissioned from the same sculptor in Vienna, one year after the unveiling of the monument to Ban Jelačić. As the tin monument had begun to downfall rapidly, Archbishop Josip Mihalović decided to donate it to the Academy of Sciences and Arts in order to save the cost of repairing it. In 1884, the Academy handed this monument over to the Zagreb municipality to erect it at the park-square between the Academy building and the Chemical Institute (Fig. 7).



7 Anton Dominik Fernkorn, *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, 1854, Academy Square within the Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Photographer: Rudolf Mosinger, 1900, vintage postcard (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

[29] As it had continued to decay, the monument was removed from that location in 1907 and placed in permanent storage.<sup>42</sup> A new bronze casting was commissioned in Vienna in 1908. It was made by Fernkorn's pupil, caster Hans Frömmel, and the sculpture was erected at a third location where it still stands today, a small green triangle between the Museum of Arts and Crafts and the Croatian National Theatre in the Western Park of *Zelena potkova* (Fig. 7a).

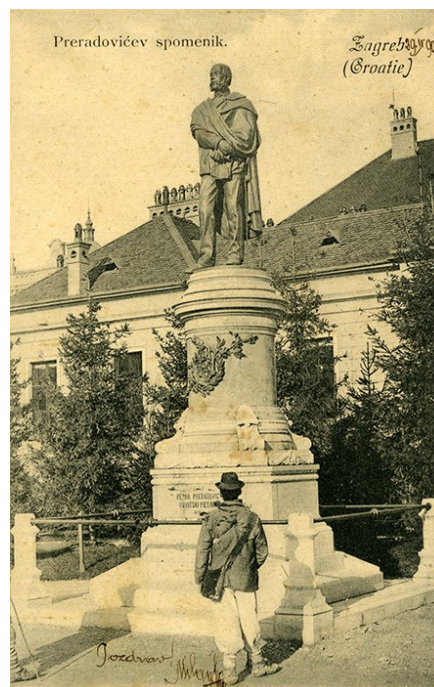
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<sup>42</sup> The damaged sculpture is kept in the storage of the Zagreb City Museum. In 1926, a monument to Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer by Ivan Meštrović was erected in its place.

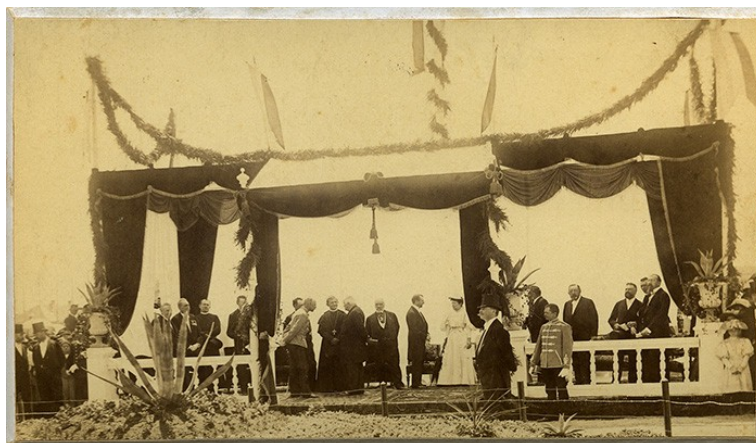


7a Anton Dominik Fernkorn, *Saint George Slaying the Dragon*, bronze cast from 1908, Western Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Unknown photographer, after 1908 (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

[30] The monument to poet Petar Preradović (1818–1872) by Ivan Rendić was commissioned and financed by patron Stjepan Miletić, at that time artistic director of the National Theatre. Following his proposal, the monument was erected on the central axis of the Eastern Park, at the rear of the Chemical Institute, and was incorporated in the greenbelt (Figs. 8, 8a).



8 Ivan Rendić, *Petar Preradović*, 1895, Academy Square, Eastern Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Vintage postcard, photographer: Rudolf Mosinger, 1905 (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)



8a Ceremonial unveiling of the Preradović monument in Zagreb on 23 May 1895, photographer: Mosinger & Breyer (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

[31] Ivan Rendić designed the first version of the monument in Trieste in 1892. In that version the poet was shown with a sabre and a general's hat.<sup>43</sup> The second version omitted the attributes of a military officer and the emphasis was placed on Preradović the poet, as the idea was to preserve his memory as a poet. The general's hat was discarded, and the general's uniform was covered with a cloak. The sphere of poetry is emphasized by symbolic applications on the plinth: a laurel wreath and a lyre. The statue was cast in Vienna in 1893, in the arts foundry of which Fernkorn had been the first director and which continued under his student and collaborator Franz Pönninger. The ceremonial unveiling took place on 23 May 1895, but from the very beginning, the monument's position, at the rear of the Chemical Institute, was regarded as unfitting and provoked controversial debates. In 1956 the monument was then relocated to Petar Preradović Square in mid-downtown Zagreb.

## Viktor Kovačić's sketch for the Emperor's Monument

[32] The position of the Preradović monument closed the space of the Academy Square and opened a vista in the direction of the third park-square within the Eastern Park, which was developed at that time (1897) and called Franz Joseph Square. The comprehensive urban design of this third park-square was entrusted to Milan Lenuci. It was planned to erect a monument to the emperor on a green parterre and a call for proposals was published in 1904. Four designs were selected: two proposals by architect Viktor Kovačić,<sup>44</sup> one by architect Stjepan Podhorsky and one by Marko Peroš, a decorative painter at the School of Crafts. Only one sketch of Kovačić's winning project has been preserved; it shows a monumental architectural frame with a sculpture of the monarch seated on a high pedestal at the centre, surrounded by high pillars with flying

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<sup>43</sup> A reproduction of Rendić's drawing was published in *Vienac*, 30 May 1895, 333.

<sup>44</sup> Viktor Kovačić (1874, Ločka Vas – 1924, Zagreb) graduated from the School of Masonry in Graz. After five years of apprenticeship with Herman Bollé in Zagreb he enrolled in the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 1896 to study architecture under Otto Wagner. Viktor Kovačić is considered the father of modern architecture in Croatia.



eagles on both sides and groups of admirers at the foot of the monument. This was the only monarchist monument to mythologize the living emperor that was proposed for the city of Zagreb. The project did not take root and never saw the light of day.<sup>45</sup>

## The first modern sculpture in Zagreb: The *Well of Life* by Ivan Meštrović

[33] During his education at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts (Akademie der bildenden Künste) Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) had already begun to show his work in various exhibitions of the Vienna Secession.<sup>46</sup> *The Well of Life* (Fig. 9a) was exhibited for the first time in 1906 on the occasion of the XXVIth Spring Exhibition. The plaster cast was listed under catalogue number 59 (*Am Brunnen des Lebens*) and reproduced in the exhibition catalogue.<sup>47</sup> It was praised by Viennese art critics and brought the young artist great success.<sup>48</sup> *The Well of Life* was presented in Zagreb for the first time at the exhibition titled "Meštrović-Rački" held in the Art Pavilion in 1910. On the initiative of Iso Kršnjavi,<sup>49</sup> the city purchased the sculpture from the City Water Supply Fund and erected it "to permanently preserve the memory and immortalize the city's water supply system". A bronze casting was commissioned from the Srpek Foundry in Brandýs nad Labem (Brandeis an der Elbe), near Prague. Discussions about a location for the sculpture quickly led to the suggestion of University Square as the last park area to be designed within *Zelena potkova's* Western Park. Architect Ignjat Fischer saw that Meštrović's *Well of Life* could become the central symbolic motif for the layout of the square and establish communication between the university buildings and the National Theatre. As it had no pedestal, the sculpture was installed below the level of the square and shielded by an amphitheatre-like arrangement of steps, a row of benches and a sheltering wall enclosure (Figs. 9, 9a).

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<sup>45</sup> Snješka Knežević, "Spomenici i perivoji. O ostvarenim i zamišljenim spomenicima na zagrebačkoj Zelenoj potkovi" [Monuments and Parks. On Realized and Planned Monuments Along Green Horseshoe in Zagreb], in: *15 dana* 43 (2000), no. 1-2, 26-37: 31.

<sup>46</sup> Ivan Meštrović (1883, Vrpolje in Slavonia – 1962, South Bend, USA), graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna where he studied sculpture under Hans Bitterlich and Edmund Hellmer and architecture under Friedrich Ohmann. He lived in Vienna from 1900 to 1908.

<sup>47</sup> XXVI. *Ausstellung der Vereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs Secession, Wien, März–Mai 1906*, exh. cat., Vienna 1906.

<sup>48</sup> Irena Kraševac, *Ivan Meštrović i Secesija. Beč–München–Prag, 1900–1910* [Ivan Meštrović and the Secession. Vienna-Munich-Prague. 1900–1910], Zagreb 2002, 81-93; Irena Kraševac, "'Der Kunst ihre Freiheit'. Gustav Klimt und Ivan Meštrović", in: *Herausforderung Moderne. Wien und Zagreb um 1900*, exh. cat. Belvedere, Vienna, eds. Stella Rollig, Irena Kraševac and Petra Vugrinec, Vienna 2017, 112-117 (English edition: "'To Art its Freedom'. Gustav Klimt and Ivan Meštrović", in: *The Challenge of Modernism. Vienna and Zagreb Around 1900*, exh. cat. Belvedere, Vienna, eds. Stella Rollig et al., Vienna 2017, 112-117).

<sup>49</sup> Iso (Izidor) Kršnjavi (1845, Našice in Slavonia – 1927, Zagreb), art historian, painter, university professor and doctor of law. Kršnjavi studied in Vienna under Rudolf Eitelberger. He was the founder of the Art Society (1868), the Department of Art History and Classical Archeology at the University of Zagreb (1877), the Museum of Arts and Crafts (1880) and School of Arts and Crafts (1882) in Zagreb. He was Minister of Education and Religion of the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia 1892–1896 and one of the most influential persons in matters of art and culture.



9 Ivan Meštrović's *The Well of Life* in front of the Croatian National Theatre, University Square, Western Park of *Zelena potkova*, Zagreb. Vintage postcard, early 20th century (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)



9a Ivan Meštrović, *The Well of Life*, 1905/1906 (bronze cast 1910). Photographer: Milan Drmić, 2002 (photograph © Institute of Art History, Zagreb)

At the dawn of the 20th century, the square, whose architecture became synonymous with the historicist pluralism of styles, thus received the first modern public sculpture in Zagreb that evokes August Rodin. Its function is purely to decorate the space as a symbolist work of art devoid of any evocations of someone's glory or merits.

## The right location for the monument to Andrija Kačić Miošić

[34] In 1887, Ivan Rendić made a sketch design in Trieste for a monument to Andrija Kačić Miošić (1704–1760), friar and poet, author of the popular textbook *Razgovor ugodni naroda slovinskog* (Pleasant Conversation of the Slavic People). In 1889, the plaster model was made and the bronze was cast by Franz Pönninger in Vienna. The monument was erected in 1890 in Makarska,



Dalmatia, the place of Andrija Kačić Miošić's birth. In 1891, on the occasion of the Jubilee Economic Exhibition, the city authorities wanted to embellish Zagreb with new monuments and so they commissioned a cast of the same statue from the same workshop. The ceremonial unveiling of the statue at the intersection of Mesnička and Ilica streets, at the foot of the Upper Town, took place on August 16, 1891 (Fig. 10).<sup>50</sup>



10 Ivan Rendić, *Monument to Andrija Kačić Miošić*, 1891, Mesnička/Ilica Street, Zagreb. Vintage postcard, photographer: Rudolf Mosinger, 1900 (photograph © Museum of the City of Zagreb)

[35] Iso Kršnjavi, then active in the Art Society and interested in city planning, wrote a short note about finding the right location for the monument:

*In order to find an ideal spot for the monument dedicated to Kačić, I supported Rendić because the head had asked me to do so. We tried to find the best spot and we used a painted model. The statue is life-size and we had to find a better position for it than in Makarska where it appears to be smaller than it actually is. Rendić wanted to erect the statue either in St Catherine's or St Mark's Square. He was sceptical when I proposed the current location, as he believed that I was his opponent. All artists maintain friendships only with people who praise them, and tend to take an honest, yet unfavourable judgment as an insult or a sign of hostility. When we placed a full-size image of the monument where it stands today, Rendić realized that my advice was good and that I wanted to help him succeed.<sup>51</sup>*

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<sup>50</sup> Kečkemet, *Ivan Rendić*, 501-503.

<sup>51</sup> Iso Kršnjavi, *Pogled na razvoj hrvatske umjetnosti u moje doba* [An Overview of the Development of Croatian Art During My Lifetime], Zagreb 1905; reprinted in: Iso Kršnjavi, *Zapisci iza kulisa hrvatske politike* [Notes from the Background of Croatian Politics], Zagreb 1986, 394 f.

To date, this is the only monument that still has its fence with four stone columns and a stylized iron grid made after Rendić's design. A further special feature is the preserved historicist pedestal decorated with original mosaics and ornamental stone profiles.

## Summary

[36] The fact is that in the mid-19th century there was not a single professional sculptor active in Zagreb. Local stonecutters met the needs for small-scale stonecarving projects and gravestones. The idea to commission the first monumental equestrian statues from Anton Dominik Fernkorn in Vienna is, therefore, especially interesting and important. With the emergence of greater cultural needs, from privately commissioned portrayals of the bourgeoisie or the creation of more lavish tombs to public city monuments and the furnishing of churches, an opportunity arose for the only formally educated sculptor of Croatian descent to reside permanently in the city: Dalmatian Ivan Rendić, who acquired his formal education in Italy, moved to Zagreb in 1877, where he was soon commissioned by the City Council to create the busts of Renaissance painters Julije Klović and Andrija Medulić, and presented a plaster model for a monument to Nikola Šubić Zrinski, which, however, was never realized. Due to a shortage of commissions, and principally to the devastating earthquake that struck Zagreb on 9 November 1880 and destroyed his studio, Rendić decided to leave Zagreb and moved to Trieste. However, he continued to work on a number of monuments for Zagreb and finished the stone busts of Krsto Frankopan, Nikola Jurišić and August Šenoa for Zrinski Square and the bronze figures of Petar Preradović and Andrija Kačić Miošić.

[37] The monuments erected in Zagreb, which extend across *Zelena potkova* can match the *Ringstraße* monuments as part of a common heritage during the reign of Franz Joseph I of Austria. The newly created representative urban space provided a suitable frame for monuments. The erection of monuments in Zagreb was initiated entirely by the bourgeoisie, which indicates the development of a liberal civic culture at that time. Prominent citizens, who gathered in the key cultural association *Matica hrvatska*, were the initiators of the idea to erect monuments to a number of distinguished Croats in new representative urban areas (Zrinski Square). The series began with the painters Julius Klović and Andrija Medulić and was later expanded to include contemporaries: the writers and politicians Ivan Mažuranić, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski and August Šenoa. For the erection of individual monuments, the *Matica hrvatska* organized committees and collected donations (e.g. for the monuments to Jelačić and Kačić) or adopted individual initiatives (e.g. Stjepan Miletić's initiative for the monument to Petar Preradović). Citizens identified with the important figures from national culture, and thus supported the erection of such monuments. This is also evident in the names given to the new streets emerging in the urban grid of the Lower Town inside the *Zelena potkova*. Most of them were named after Croatian writers (Junije Palmotić, Ignjat Đorđić, August Šenoa, Ljudevit Gaj, Petar Preradović, Ivan Gundulić). The monuments they called for in fact mirror themselves: self-confident members of the bourgeoisie saw themselves reflected in their glorious predecessors and could identify with their proud demeanour and wise expressions.

[38] The city authorities backed the realization of these monuments. The bureaucratic apparatus behind the competition committees consisted of distinguished individuals from the field of politics, the arts and culture, and their aim was to have the monuments properly executed,

preferably by a local artist. The city government commissioned the artworks and decided where they would be placed. For the erection of individual monuments (Jelačić, Kačić) money was raised from citizens, and the rest was paid from the city funds. The erection and unveiling of the monuments was linked to various ceremonies and was extensively reported in the daily press and periodicals (*Obzor, Vienac, Narodni list, Naša sloga, Narodne novine*).

[39] The monuments erected between 1866 and 1914 were dedicated to historical figures, except for two: *St George* was not originally intended for Zagreb, but for Vienna, and was purchased years later by the bishop; Mestrovic's symbolic *Well of Life*, erected after the turn of the century, has outgrown the historicist age and already belongs to the modern era. The two monumental equestrian statues erected in Zagreb (Jelačić, *St George*) were designed and cast in Vienna, by Fernkorn, who had great experience in this genre as well as in the casting technique.

[40] Four sculptures were cast in bronze (Jelačić, Kačić, Preradović, *Well of Life*), while the others were carved in stone. The monument to Ban Jelačić was cast by Fernkorn in Vienna, as was the first cast of *St George Slaying the Dragon*, while the second cast was made at Erzgießerei A.G. in Vienna. Rendić's sculptures of Kačić and Preradović were cast by Franz Pönninger in Vienna, and Meštrović's *Well of Life* was cast in the Srpek foundry, near Prague. Of the total of five statues cast in metal, three are unique, while there is another casting of Kačić's statue in Makarska, and Fernkorn's *St George* in Vienna. Together with imperial Vienna, Zagreb was the only city in the Monarchy to commission a monumental equestrian statue from Fernkorn, right after the success of the foundry he headed with the monuments at Vienna's Heldenplatz.

[41] The usual iconographic principle, according to which military heroes are depicted in the form of an equestrian statue (Ban Josip Jelačić) and persons from the world of culture in the classical form of a herm on a pedestal (the 'pantheon' in Zrinski Square), was also applied to the Zagreb monuments. Among the historical persons are two Renaissance *Schiavone* painters (Klović and Medulić), the Franciscan folk writer Kačić and the physicist and philosopher Ruđer Bošković from the 18th century, and two heroes of the Ottoman period (Frankopan and Jurišić). The other monuments commemorate contemporary figures (Jelačić, Kukuljević-Sakcinski, Mažuranić, Šenoa, Preradović). In Zagreb, no public monuments were erected to glorify the Habsburg dynasty. The liberal civic culture preferred national heroes and artists (painters and writers), without succumbing to influences from Vienna and Budapest. Instead, an attempt was made to define an independent national cultural policy.

[42] With the exception of the monument to Ban Jelačić which was removed in 1947 and returned in 1990, all other monuments erected during the period of the Monarchy survived the political changes of the 20th century. All remained in their original locations except for two: the monument to Preradović and *St George Slaying the Dragon* were moved to other places within the Green Horseshoe as it was felt that their original locations were not appropriate.

[43] The plans for monuments to Nikola Šubić Zrinski and to the Emperor and King Franz Joseph I of Austria, which were to be erected in the eponymous park-squares located in the Eastern Park, were never seriously considered and remained just sketches. The reason may have to do with the fact that they were overly monumental and expensive to build and the city administration was unable to fund the projects.

[44] Diverse schools and influences are apparent in the sculptors' education. Fernkorn was educated in Munich and worked in Vienna, while Rendić belonged to the Italian neo-classical school of Venice and Florence and had exhibited successfully in Vienna (Künstlerhaus). The only two Croatian sculptors to have a thorough Viennese education in sculpture were Rudolf Valdec at the *Kunstgewerbeschule* and Ivan Meštrović at the *Akademie der bildenden Künste*. With regard to style, the sculptural expression of the monuments can be grouped as follows: The neo-Baroque sculpture of *St George Slaying the Dragon* offers powerful movement and expression. Realism characterizes the statue of Ban Jelačić, the busts of prominent Croatian personalities on Zrinski Square and the monuments to Kačić and Preradović. Transition towards the Secession is noticeable in the works by Rudolf Vadeć, especially in the stylized decoration on the plinths, and in the expressively Secessionist symbolic style of Meštrović's *Well of Life*.

[45] Rich historicist decoration with applications in bronze and mosaic is characteristic of the monuments to Preradović and Kačić. The latter is surrounded by a decorative iron fence that has been preserved. The plinths of the monuments to the important figures of Croatian history are simple circular or square forms, while through the use of plant-based ornament Valdec's works already display Secessionist elements.

[46] The sculptures placed along *Zelena potkova* in Zagreb, the Croatian equivalent to the *Ring* in Vienna, resulted from the idea of representation and glorification that is characteristic of mature Historicism. Thus, they concur with the *Gründerzeit* and urbanistic ideas of a town as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a total work of art, C. Sitte). In contrast to the monumentality of the *Ringstraße*, *Zelena potkova* in Zagreb is an example of humanization in architecture, where the space of squares with parks was made more intimate and subordinated to its aesthetic and psychological function. The resulting symbolic and representative programme, created at the beginning of the *Gründerzeit*, has been preserved to this day, reaffirming the typical ideological and urban planning tradition of Historicism, autonomously created by the city administration and enlightened citizens, following the model of more developed Central European centres.

### About the Author

Irena Kraševac is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb. She graduated from the Department of Art History of Zagreb University, receiving her MA in 1999 and her PhD in 2005. Among her publications and exhibition collaborations related to topics of Croatian art within the European context are: *Ivan Meštrović i Secesija. Beč – München – Prag 1900–1910* [Ivan Meštrović and the Secession. Vienna – Munich – Prague 1900–1910], Zagreb 2002; *Zagreb – München. Hrvatsko slikarstvo i Akademija likovnih umjetnosti u Münchenu* [Zagreb – Munich. Croatian Painting and the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich], Art Pavilion, Zagreb, 2009; *Alegorija i Arkadija. Antički motivi u umjetnosti hrvatske moderne* [Allegory and Arcadia. Motifs from Antiquity in the Art of Croatian Modernism], Klovićevi dvori Gallery, Zagreb, 2013; *Izazov moderne: Zagreb – Beč oko 1900* [The Challenge of Modernism: Vienna and Zagreb around 1900], Klovićevi dvori Gallery, Zagreb, 2017, and *Belvedere, Vienna, 2017/18*; and *Nepoznati Klimt – ljubav, smrt, ekstaza* [Unknown Klimt – Love, Death, Ecstasy], Rijeka City Museum, 2021. Since 2007, she has also been a tutor in the Art History Doctoral Studies section of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Zagreb University.

### Translation

Mirna Herman Baletić

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