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Scenes of Secession: National Identity in the Art and Architecture of Southern Slavic Crownlands of the Late Austro-Hungarian Empire

Preston Alport Hereford

SCENES OF SECESSION: NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF
THE SOUTHERN SLAVIC CROWNLANDS OF THE LATE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN
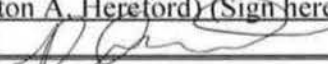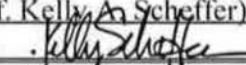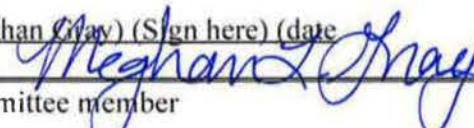EMPIRE

by

Preston A. Hereford

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Art History
at
Lindenwood University

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SCENES OF SECESSION: NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF
THE SOUTHERN SLAVIC CROWNLANDS OF THE LATE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN
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A Thesis Submitted the Faculty of the Department of Art History and Visual Culture
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At Lindenwood University

By

Preston A. Hereford

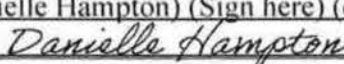St. Charles, Missouri, United States

August, 2020

Abstract

SCENES OF SECESSION: NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE CROWNLANDS OF THE LATE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE

Preston Hereford, Master of Art History, 2020

Thesis Directed by Prof. Kelly Scheffer

Set against the backdrop of the segmented power of the Double Monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, artistic Secession movements reminiscent of the influential movement in Vienna took shape in the smaller cities of the Southern Slavic crownland territories of the Empire. However, despite strong cultural ties to Vienna and other large artistic centers like Munich, Secession took on different ideological and artistic forms in Zagreb and Ljubljana than in the imperial capital. As the Hungarian-administered capital of Croatia-Slavonia, Zagreb was an early adopter of educational and cultural infrastructure, like schools of applied arts and new theaters, that doubly demonstrated an imperial interest to improve the cultural status of the city, but also offered an outlet by which Croatian artists could express nationalistic and generally anti-Hungarian sentiments. In Ljubljana, the Carniolan capital, Secession took on a more theoretical manifestation, considering a distinct lack of exhibiting space and cultural infrastructure. Still, despite local administrative support for Secession, a strong national style would not develop until 1900 and onward. Also complicating matters was the Austro-Hungarian Empire's agenda of cultural unification, which seemed to ensnare the smaller regional capitals into a double-sided relationship which centered cultural affairs in Vienna and Budapest, but also enabled Croatian and Slovenian artists to grow artistically, bringing innovation and modernity back to their home regions. This cultural homogeneity is best demonstrated through the design aesthetics of Viennese theatre architects Fellner and Helmer, whose designs were executed and evoked in numerous iterations in both Vienna and the regional centers of the Empire. A broadly Marxist and post-structuralist approach assists in taking into consideration the influence of transnational identities and a complex political environment on artistic and cultural movements within the Empire. Ultimately, this paper seeks to understand the cultural interplay between Empire and the numerous national identities within it, concluding that while Austro-Hungarian cultural consolidation had lasting effects, it ultimately failed to quell nationalistic desires expressed through Secession.

Dedication and Acknowledgements

   I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Kelly Scheffer, Meghan Gray, and Danielle Hampton for their guidance as well as helping me find a clear direction in my research. Your encouragement has been so comforting during the difficult year that 2020 has been. I would also like to thank Dr. James Hutson for his patience and kindness, welcoming me into a field of study that was completely new to me. Additional thanks is due to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art for assisting in procuring print sources and interlibrary loans without which this thesis would not be possible. Finally, but certainly not lastly, I thank Miha Valant for not only introducing me to what was for me an entirely unfamiliar world of Central European art, but for exhibiting patience in explaining concepts and translating numerous sources for me over the past two years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iii.

II. List of Figures

III. Introduction/Background Information

The impetus for this thesis lies in the Secession movements that swept through Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most basically defined in the context of art, Secession indicates a modern movement that broke or "seceded" from a more established and generally academic style. When one thinks about Secession, it is likely that Paris, Berlin, Munich, or Vienna comes to mind. However, Secessionism was not a movement confined to these cities and nations alone. It was also a robust and influential artistic and politically-linked movement that can be found in the Austrian Crownlands (territories incorporated by the Austrian Empire that were granted regional administrative status during the mid-19th century). Like art history in general, the louder, more influential narratives tend to win out and become more studied, eventually relegating unique expressions of the same movement elsewhere into obscurity. There is almost certainly no doubt that population size, regional wealth, the state of art history in each country, and the World Wars that quickly followed the Secession movement made it difficult to study in anything but its most robust forms in the largest and most influential cities. Still, the profound impact Secession had on the Austrian Crownlands deserves a closer look. Therefore, this thesis will explore several ideas related to Secessionism and its effects in the modern-day countries of Slovenia and Croatia. Firstly, one may assert that Secessionism posed several political and trans-national problems, challenging the concept of a unified Austrian artistic ideal, namely because Secessionism in Slovenia and Croatia was so intrinsically tied to nationalism and independence movements in those regions. Secondly, it can be established that the Austrian government and cultural elite pursued a policy of cultural unification across the

Empire, especially the Crownlands, being most robustly and successfully expressed in the guise of theatre architecture.

However, it would be remiss to continue without noting the seeming lack of interest of the English-speaking world and scholarship shows towards Secession and Slavic art in general. There seem to be considerably fewer articles and sources (in English) for what can be asserted as popular, influential European movements like Secession and its relatives Art Nouveau/Jugendstil and Hagenbund compared to the abundance of studies on roughly contemporaneous movements like French Impressionism. Studies on Slavic art are even more sparse. This is despite the fact that the Austrian and German governments presented their iterations of the aforementioned styles at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and other international exhibitions like the Chicago Columbian Exhibition of 1893 and Venice Biennale.[1] This shortage exists perhaps in part due to Impressionism and other forms of Modernism. Overlapping heavily with Secessionist movements, the Impressionists were well-marketed and appealed greatly to the American and British markets. With influential dealers like Durand-Ruel and Ambroise Vollard representing the Impressionists abroad through a well-connected network of sale galleries, one would be hard-pressed to find equivalent dealers for the Secessionists. Impressionism also successfully transferred as an artistic movement across the Atlantic. This is not to say that Art Nouveau did not have an impact in the United States, but the only equivalent "Secession"-labelled movement was the New York Photo Secession of the early 20th century. Perhaps the United States' conflicts with Austria and Germany during the course of the World Wars and shortened exposure

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[1] "Austria on Display at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, 1893: A Collection of Sources." *Journal of Austrian-American History* 1, no. 2 (2018): 117-27. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lindenwood.edu:2048/stable/10.5325/jaustamerhist.1.2.0117

also diminished interest in Secession-associated artists amongst American and English-speaking scholars.

Undoubtedly, one of the other great obstacles facing Secessionist scholarship from the beginning was its lack of focus and cohesiveness as an artistic movement. Secession meant different things, implied different styles, and carried with it different philosophical and political connotations in each of its different iterations. In some regions, Impressionists were considered to be part of Secession (like several important Slovene Impressionists), whereas subject matter and intention could even denote paintings in an academic style as Secessionist in nature (as was the case with certain works by Croatian painter Vlaho Bukovac (1855-1922)). As one might glean from the ensuing paper, some Secessionist movements were defiant breaks from the most conservative forms of academic art (Vienna), while others were highly politically charged with nationalistic sentiments (as in Slovenia and Croatia). Therefore, by its very nature, Secession carries with it ties to incredibly complex and difficult political and socio-economic contexts that are also typically poorly understood or underestimated in importance and influence by American scholars. That is not to say that this paper holds all of the answers, or that the writer has a complete grasp of these concepts considering that difficult research is ongoing in Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia to uncover the true extent of their artistic traditions. With that in mind, a rather Marxist approach has been taken to ensure that elements of a legible narrative and general context are established so that a deeper understanding of Secession as a multi-faceted movement may be possible.

On the note of multiple facets, this paper will attempt to incorporate several artistic disciplines, though it will mostly focus on theatre architecture in Rijeka, Zagreb and Ljubljana as

well as individual artists of Croatia and Slovenia in the pursuit of comprehending Secession and national identity in these regions. In theatre architecture, one finds a fair amount of imperial and conservative resistance to the modernizing sympathies of Secessionist art and unique expressions of nationhood that were not entirely Austrian. To counterbalance new progressive movements, Austria-Hungary invested in city planning, architecture and cultural infrastructure to bring cohesion to the sprawling empire. Thus, architecture is worth noting since it offered both an outlet for Secessionists (with Gustav Klimt; 1862-1918) and the Künstlercompagnie decorating the Rijeka Theatre, albeit in a conservative style) as well as the strongest aesthetic antithesis to their movements. As an extremely public and visible expression, it is the artistic discipline in which one can uncover an imperial desire and generally successful policy of cultural unification across the Empire.

It is my hope that this paper can combine the study of art and theatre architecture in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and specifically the Southern Slavic Crownlands, to effectively assess the lasting legacy of Secessionism. There is an incredible wealth of art, culture and meaning yet to be explored, as well as a vigorous and productive art history community in Slovenia and Croatia that would greatly benefit from additional studies, interest, and scholarly collaboration from those outside their region.

IV. Literature Review

Secession and centralization: two ideas at odds with one another. This dichotomy seems to be at the core of the tempestuous and highly complicated artistic, cultural, and political climate of the late Austro-Hungarian Empire and its Crownlands at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Inclinations towards nationhood in present day Slovenia, Croatia, and elsewhere in the Empire threatened to destabilize the already delicate power balance held by Austria-Hungary's dual monarchy, while the resulting cultural-political expressions in art posed similar disunity culturally. Though it would take a number of years to reach full effect, artistic and aesthetic movements had the cultural power to help build new nations or assert nationhood from within the late Empire. Even so, echoes of Austrian cultural unification and centralization are still easily seen, particularly in the realm of architecture and in cultural institutional infrastructure.

Few, if any, of the topics addressed in this paper are simple to understand, or research for that matter. Thus, a variety of seemingly disparate sources have been compiled in order to better synthesize the different, but intertwined, forms of art and architecture (with an emphasis on theatre architecture). All of these art forms were heavily impacted by burgeoning nationalistic movements as well as more conservative centralizing forces that more closely aligned with the will of the state. Making comprehension of these forces more difficult is a general lack of completely specified studies. Few studies of state-sponsored art and Austrian cultural policy are available in English, though much of this can be inferred from sources on Secession movements.

Perhaps the most valuable and comprehensive study of this region and period thus far can be found in Elizabeth Clegg's *Art, Design, and Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1920,*[2] which offered much of the backbone of my basic understanding of the period's cultural and political situation in Slovenia and Croatia. Here, Clegg moves region by region and offers astute political and socio-economic commentary to enrich the discussion of relevant art works. Though relatively comprehensive, the research is beginning to show its age with several more recent sources (especially those dealing with exhibiting traditions and connectivity) offering updates that build upon it. While Clegg covers a vast swath of Central Europe, other studies, like those of Stella Rolling et al. in *The Challenge of Modernism: Vienna and Zagreb Around 1900*, focus on the difficulties faced by progressive Secessionist artists in organizing and finding exhibitioning power.[3] This direct relationship and close link between Austrian and Croatian capitals underlines certain political and artistic resistance to Secessionism in both cities. Željka Deronjić brings to light some of the issues of identity and Secessionist/Modernist art in that the movement was criticized in Croatia as being "too Germanic/Austrian" and based on their models, even though its purpose was at times to oppose Austrian-associated influences, like the Hungarian state-sponsored groups and stylistically and politically conservative art associations.[4] For Slovenia, its less conventional Secession took place without the necessary infrastructure.

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[2] Elizabeth Clegg, *Art, Design, and Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

[3] Darija Alujević, et al., *The Challenge of Modernism: Vienna and Zagreb around 1900* (Vienna: Belvedere, 2017), 10-11.

[4] Željka Metesi Deronjić, "Polemika O Secesiji U Hrvatskoj: Franjo Ksaver Kuhač I Ivo Pilar," *Cris* 11 (January 2009): , accessed May 1, 2019, https://core.ac.uk/display/14423227, 237.

Taja Čepič and Janja Rebolj address the role of the press, the *Narodni Dom* (National Center,

now *Narodna Galerija* (National Gallery)), and local politicians had in making Ljubljana the

progressive Slovene cultural capital.[5] A recent thesis and forthcoming dissertation by Miha

Valant explores the network of artists working in and around Ljubljana as well as previously

unknown and unresearched traditions of frequent art exhibitions in Carniola.[6] The

aforementioned articles and studies all serve this thesis in that they explore convoluted and often

contradictory elements of forming national and artistic identities, both for Austria as a whole, and

the smaller ethnic populations of the Crownlands.

Theatre architecture, too, offers an interesting dilemma for national identity and

expression. Their visible nature as a public gathering place notwithstanding, it seems that the

study of the cultural-political implications of theatre architecture as a political device during this

time period has remained relatively underdeveloped, despite the fact that one can somewhat

readily procure scholarship on the history of such buildings. Still, they are one of the most

striking successes of Austrian cultural centralization (especially theatrical houses that host

operatic events), capitalizing on the popular art form to champion Austrian artists and culture.

Opera houses by the architectural firm Fellner and Helmer can be found dotted throughout the

Empire with some of the finest Viennese artists, including Secessionists (like Klimt and the

Künstler Compagnie), contributing to their interiors. Plans, data, information, and photographs

of many European theatres can be found on the EU Theatre Architecture database. Studies of the

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[5] Taja Čepič and Janja Rebolj, *Homo Sum--: Ivan Hribar in Njegova Ljubljana: Zbornik Ob Razstavi Mestnego Muzeja Ljubljana* (Ljubljana: Mestni Muzej, 1997), 213-14.

[6] Miha Valant, "Likovno Razstavljanje v Ljubljani v Kranjskih časopisih v Nemškem Jeziku (1850-1918)" (Master's thesis, Filozofska Fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2018), 31-59.

influence of Klimt and his circle, like that from Agnes Husslein-Arco et al., find that such

interiors offered an additional opportunity to spread imperial influence beyond Vienna.[7]

Therefore, in this paper, emphasis will be placed on an actual Fellner and Helmer design for the

theatre now known as the Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc, and a theatre modelled after

both Austrian and German ideals, the Ljubljana Opera House, and how their presence has been

used to assert or upend Austrian cultural dominance in the region.

 Secession and centralization beg for an analysis of nation, identity, and culture.

However, the answers do not come readily, nor are these concepts often understood or studied by

those outside of Central Europe. In addition to the print and digital resources listed here,

exhibitions and information from regional and national museums in Austria (Graz), Slovenia

(Museum of Contemporary History, Slovenian National Gallery), and Croatia (Modern Gallery)

were visited in-person in order to gain a more exhaustive perspective of Austrian, Slovene, and

Croatian identity and what such a term as "identity" or "ethnicity" implies.

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[7] Agnes Husslein-Arco et al., Klimt Und Die Ringstrasse: = Klimt and the Ringstrasse (Vienna: Belvedere, 2015), 36-39.

V. Methodology

For this research, a multi-pronged approach was necessary. Because late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Central European art usually exists on the mere periphery of the cannon of history and art history that is studied in the United States, care has been taken to include a great deal of historical and socio-political context that influenced the functioning of cultural life in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire. This aligns this paper with a heavily Marxist approach. The findings often tie artistic and cultural action with political expression, both in support of and counter to Secessionist movements.

To complement this methodology, something akin to post-structuralism and post-modernist theories has been employed. By looking at the political, social, and artistic structures that were prevalent in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire, we can break down how each policy, artwork, and building can be framed within multiple contexts. Often, one may find that the same work of art or building hold vastly different connotations for different viewers and different people. There is no one correct way of "reading" such works, but they do carry cultural weight that exists outside of the work itself. This is also useful when attempting to understand the multitude of forces that comprise identity on the personal, local, and national level. For this there is no easy and straightforward answer, therefore an identity that exists beyond conventional structures must be asserted.

To deal with some of the multiplicities and interconnected social webs of people involved in constructing the reality of Secession movements, a connectivist approach assists greatly. Not only can social ties between people directly within artistic movements be established, but also to those in related movements, indirect ties to philosophers, influential artists, and more well-

known names can create a more compelling framework for the research, but also justify the very

study of the subject itself. In this case, though movements in the Austrian Crownlands seem

small in scale, they were reactions to not only the political and cultural state, but to other

movements, thus increasing the oeuvre, presence, legacy, and weight of Secessionist movements

as a whole. Additionally, Secession, as an early Modern movement, even in its less-known

iterations, was connected into the increasingly international art market of late nineteenth and

early twentieth-century Europe, thus lending it additional credibility as an influential and visible

movement.

An effort has been made to include as much Feminist theory as possible. Women artists

were critical in developing, inspiring, and spreading Secession movements, yet their

achievements are often overlooked in the male-dominated   However, the unfortunate barriers

that make Feminist theory so essential are ever-present in many of the resources utilized for the

research. Because scholarship on many of the topics covered in this paper are not as well-

developed and studied as they could be (or study began much later), the research lags behind

more often researched topics that have been given a more Feminist treatment. Notable exceptions

include recent scholarship by Beti Žerovc on the important Slovene artist, Ivana Kobilca.[8] It is a

sincere hope that others (and myself) may further utilize this methodology for this topic more

thoroughly and meaningfully in the future.

Lastly, a formalist approach is sometimes called for. As always, this is particularly useful

when describing and analyzing the salient visual and technical features of a piece of art or

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[8] Beti Žerovc, "The Exhibition of Ivana Kobilca in Zagreb in 1890," *Peristil* 57, no. 1 (June 18, 2014): 147–58, https://hrcak.srce.hr/136378.

architecture. Here, it is most useful in drawing a contrast between the art of various Secession movements and their more conservative academic counterparts. It is also a useful methodology when identifying architectural features and their implications, as well as enabling an understanding of how certain features permeated throughout architecture in the Empire.

To complete this research, a wide range of academic publications were taken into consideration. This included books, articles, upcoming dissertations, and art publications. Language was often a barrier, as many publications were written in German, Slovenian or Croatian. For some articles, the assistance of a translator was procured, while others were translated through Google Translate or other online translation services. While imperfect, this certainly widened the field and array of scholarly publications, as most research for the topics at hand come from the countries in which the events occurred and artists lived (i.e. Austria, Croatia, and Slovenia). In addition to publications, as mentioned before, several field visits were made over the course of the past two years to observe buildings, take photographs, physically tour locations, and visit pertinent museums and artistic institutions. Some helpful institutional visits include the City Museum of Zagreb, National Gallery of Slovenia, City Museum of Graz, and the Museum of Contemporary History- Ljubljana. Online databases and catalogues from cultural institutions and governing bodies like the European Union (and their theatre architecture database) flushed out research and greatly enriched the number of visual figures and images available to include in the thesis.

VI. Results

A. Setting the Scene for Secession: Austria-Hungary in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

By the onset of the First World War in 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, long ruled by the Habsburg dynasty, was one of the most ethnically diverse and sprawling nations on the European continent (Fig-1). Spanning from the Swiss border in the west, past Lviv and Kronstadt (now Brasov) in the east, beyond Prague in the north, and Dubrovnik in the south, Austria-Hungary's territory reached into the current-day countries of Austria, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Czechia, Slovakia, Romania, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. Organization of the Empire had varied greatly over the years, but by the early 19th century was generally organized into hereditary Kronenländer (Crownlands), territories inherited or acquired by the Habsburgs that also served as administrative districts for the imperial government. Ruled over by governors, each Crownland also had its own regional system of governance usually based in a regional capital. These regional capitals (like Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Trieste) served not only as important administrative centers for the Austro-Hungarian government, but also served as cultural centers with strong ties to imperial Vienna.

The political structure of the Empire and cultural movements that formed around 1900 were in many ways founded on those that came before, namely nationalist movements of the early nineteenth-century. In 1848, a revolutionary spirit descended upon the European continent and Austria-Hungary was no exception. A convoluted melange of nationalistic, liberal, conservative, and religious movements created a chaotic political climate that nearly completely

fragmented the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many of the nationalistic movements in particular

were initiated in reaction to the decidedly anti-democratic regime of Austrian Foreign Minister

and Chancellor Prince Klemens von Metternich (1773-1859). While his diplomacy did ensure a

certain level of stability for the Habsburg monarchs as well as Austria as a whole within the

political systems of Europe, his strict centralization of government in Vienna created long-lasting

tensions in the multi-ethnic and multi-national empire. One particularly noteworthy idea that

gained some political traction around this time is the concept of Pan-Slavism (an idea that all

Slavic ethnic groups should unite, or at the very least, express solidarity in creating a unique

Slavic identity), with a Pan-Slavic Congress even being held in Prague in the summer of 1848 as

a response to the Frankfurt Parliament of the same year that focused on the unification of

Germany. Still, even in Prague there was no consensus as to whether ethnic Slavs should

advocate for increased rights and autonomy within a preserved Austro-Hungarian Empire, or

push for independence from the Habsburg regime. While many of the pertinent issues facing

Slavic peoples continued to be ignored or suppressed by the Austrian government, the intense

political pressure forced the regime to open itself up to some concessions (whether in terms of

investments, language tolerance, or citizenship rights) in order to preserve the integrity of the

Empire. Some of the liberal officials who encouraged the revolutions were temporarily instated,

though their "radical" ideas were generally not supported by a conflicted populous, with many

Austrian citizens exercising their new voting rights to elect more moderate or even conservative

politicians. This resulted in a rapid succession of new constitutions over the next twenty years,

each enacted by different political factions that either widened or narrowed the imperial

government's tolerance of regional and ethnic autonomy. As a whole, German nationalism took

prominence in Austria, and Pan-Slavism was condemned by the imperial administration.

However, Austria too was snubbed by being excluded from the Frankfurt Parliament, with the

elected representatives effectively excluding the Habsburg monarchy and the Austrian Empire

from being included in their idea of a German state. This question would endure into the next

decades, while Pan Slavism and nationalistic sentiments would far outlast Metternich after his

ousting in 1848.

The late 1860s and early 1870s were another formative period in the Empire. A rift had

developed between Austria and Prussia, with the Austro-Prussian War taking place in the

summer of 1866. German unification and the methods by which to achieve it had been long-

contested, thus leading to a series of wars and political jostling, especially between rivals Prussia

and Austria-Hungary, both seen as the most dominant Germanic political and military powers in

Europe. Both regimes threw their diplomatic weight into courting independent or undecided

German cities and states, though because of the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848, Prussia boasted of

a greater political and cultural legitimacy in the formation of Germany. The two-front war with

Prussia and Prussian allies in Italy proved disastrous for Austria, who not only lost the territory

of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia (including the wealthy cities of Milan and Venice) to the

newly formed Kingdom of Italy, but also failed to assert itself as the stronger German influence

in the proposed unification of Germany. Therefore, Austria was excluded from the creation of

the unified German Empire in 1871, and through conflicts throughout the 19th Century, also

became culturally estranged from German Romanticism and German Nationalism.

The loss of the war was increased twofold in 1867 by continued unrest in the Hungarian

part of the Empire that had been pushing for more autonomy since the Hungarian Revolution of

1848. Austrian Emperor Franz Josef, narrowly avoiding a complete collapse, enacted the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, thus initiating a restructuring of the Empire. The Kingdom of Hungary would be reinstated, rendering the empire the Austro-Hungarian Empire with the Emperor of Austria also holding the title of King of Hungary. Along with this ceremonial status came more genuine autonomy for Hungary including the re-establishment of the Hungarian Constitution, a separate parliament and prime minister, and a true Hungarian branch of administration based out of Budapest. As part of the Compromise, the hereditary Habsburg Crownlands (Cisleithania) were administered by the Austrian government in Vienna, while the Hungarian lands (Transleithania) were ruled from the Hungarian regime in Budapest. However, the Transleithanian lands were larger and somewhat less centralized than the Austrian Crownlands, with the state of Croatia-Slavonia (which fell under the Hungarian administration) being granted its own semi-autonomous status. When Bosnia and Herzegovina were later incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian Empire, joint administration from both Austria and Hungary was established.

B. Crownlands and Hungarian States

To understand Secessionist art in the Crownlands and territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it is imperative to grasp the multi-ethnic and transnational nature of the territories. While this research largely focuses on the artistic developments in lands with large Slovene and Croatian populations, it must be noted that each Crownland had a distinct personality, purpose, and regional government that shaped their own characteristic expressions of broader cultural and artistic movements, many of which also warrant further study.

The Austrian Crownlands were administered by the imperial capital of Vienna at the center of Lower Austria. Beyond that, each of the fifteen Cistheilanian lands had their own regional capitals, usually with a regional governor and representative body. One also finds that the regional capitals were also hubs of cultural life and development, especially in some of the predominantly rural Crownlands like Carniola. Ljubljana had long served as the Carniolan capital, having been recognized as an important regional center throughout the duration of numerous regimes, including the Napoleonic occupation of the territory early in the 19th century which positioned the city as the capital of all the Illyrian Provinces. When the territory was re-established under Austrian rule, Ljubljana remained the capital of the Kingdom of Illyria, and later in the century, the Crownland/Duchy of Carniola (*Krain*/*Kranjska*) which constituted a large portion of the modern-day country of Slovenia. It was here that the concept of an ethnic Slovene nation began to form early in the 19th century, especially with the tolerance of Slovenian as a recognized language of the region during the Napoleonic period.[9] However, the ethnic Slovene population was divided amongst several crownlands after they were restructured in the mid 19th century. Slovenes could be found in large numbers in the Austrian Littoral (*Österreiches Küstenland*/*Avtrijsko primorje*), the Duchy of Carinthia (*Kärnten*/*Koroška*), and Duchy of Styria (*Steiermark*/*Štajerska*).

The Austrian Littoral was home to the coastal capital of Trieste (*Trst*), a largely Italian, Slovene, and Croatian port city that gave Austria-Hungary access to the Adriatic and Mediterannean seas. Here, there was a significant Slovenian cultural presence, with a so-called

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[9] Pieter M Judson, *The Habsburg Empire : A New History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press Of Harvard University Press, 2018), 277.

Narodni Dom (National Home) being established in a multi-functional building designed by

Italian and Slovene architect Max Fabiani (Fig-2). The building hosted numerous theatrical

performances, cultural events, and art exhibitions, but always faced severe opposition from

Trieste's Italian population. The tension was made most clear in 1920 when the Italian Fascist

government, in a continued campaign of oppression of the large Slovene minority, burned the

building as an act of ethnic cleansing.[10] After the world wars, the lands of this territory were

divided between Italy and Yugoslavia, of which Slovenia and Croatia were a part.

Slovene minorities and culture had also long been present in Klagenfurt, the regional

capital of Carinthia, as well as the Styrian capital, Graz. Slovenia's second-largest city, Maribor,

was also part of Styria during Austrian rule. In these Crownlands, the linguistic barrier

delineated a generally lower-class Slovene minority from the ruling German middle and upper

classes, a trend that was somewhat replicated even in the majority Slovene Carniola.

Suppression of the significant Slovene minority in Graz manifested with the governmental

tampering of censuses to indicate that many citizens' first language was German instead of

Slovene, thus falsely indicating a larger German/Austrian population and therefore feeding into

an ethnic "othering" of Slovenes and other Slavic peoples in the Empire.[11]

The Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia was under the control of the Hungarian administration

in the empire, though its status as a kingdom granted it a relatively high level of autonomy.

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[10] The facade of the building survived and the inside was restored with a different layout. Recent research starting in 2016 by the Slovenski Klub, Narodna in študijska knjižnica (National Library of Slovenia) and Cizerouno Associazione Culturale has aimed to reconstruct the history of the building, including 3-D renderings of the original layout. More information can be found at narodnidom.eu/en.

[11] Wall text, *Postcarding Lower Styria*, Graz Museum, Graz, Austria.

Though it still answered to the upper administration in Budapest, Croatia-Slavonia granted the separate title of King of Croatia-Slavonia to the Austrian Emperor/Hungarian King. The administrative duties of the kingdom fell to the *ban* who was appointed by the king. Zagreb served as the provincial and regional capital of this territory and was the largest Southern Slavic outpost of the empire, creating the southernmost tip of the Vienna-Budapest-Zagreb triangle of cultural exchange. Yet, despite its semi-autonomous status, the territory was limited by the presence of the Hungarian administration as well the lack of desired unification with the Austrian-administered crownland, the Kingdom of Dalmatia, which Croatia-Slavonia viewed as the missing third region of their ethnically Croatian "Triune Kingdom." Still, the many Italians and Dalmatians in Dalmatia carried conflicting views about unification with Croatia-Slavonia, with many asserting themselves as separate ethnic and cultural entities.

C. A Note on Ethnicity

There is no easy way to define ethnicity as discussed in this paper. However, for the purpose of this research, ethnicity will loosely be treated as a shared perceived historical cultural heritage sometimes assisted by a common linguistic tradition. It is also proposed that while similar, nationality does not necessarily indicate the same elements of identity. Nationality will be roughly considered to be a shared regional, cultural, and administrative (and hence political) status.

D. Theatre Architecture

One of the most obvious ways that a centralizing cultural exchange (if one can call it such) was established between the northern parts of the Empire and the Southern Slavic lands was through architecture. While this thesis will focus nearly exclusively on theater architecture, it is worth noting that architecture had very nearly always been a means by which to unify the empire to some degree. Even today, buildings bearing the signature yellow hue and the distinctly Austrian neo-Baroque style hearken back to the Austrian expansion of the 18th and 19th centuries. The proliferation of a shared style also hints at the exchange of architects throughout the empire in the same manner by which Austrian, Czech, and Hungarian theater architects and artists designed and constructed theaters in Slovenia and Croatia.

1. **Rijeka, Croatia-Slavonia**

The first theater that exhibits the qualities set forth in the introduction is the Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc in Rijeka, Croatia (Fig-3). Originally built as the Teatro Comunale Fiume (bearing an Italian name due to the largely Italian municipal administration that propagated the use of the Italian language, referring to the city as its Venetian name, Fiume), renamed Teatro Verdi,[12] and then finally its current title after World War II, the theater is widely regarded for its excellent architecture and decorations and paintings by Gustav Klimt, Ernst Klimt, and Franz Matsch (otherwise known as the *Künstler Compagnie*).[13] The theater opened in

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[12] Vlado Kotnik, Opera, Power and Ideology: Anthropological Study of a National Art in Slovenia (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 2010), 163.

[13] Agnes Husslein-Arco et al., Klimt Und Die Ringstrasse: = Klimt and the Ringstrasse (Vienna: Belvedere, 2015), 36-39.

1885 and displays a pastiche of different architectural and artistic styles. The Neo-Renaissance

exterior (with some Baroque elements) appears as a standard for opera houses throughout

Europe, especially those built by the Austrian architectural firm Fellner and Helmer.[14] These

Viennese architects completed commissions throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire and

outside of it, including theaters in Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, and Poland. Their

structures utilize Neo-Baroque interiors, often gilded with gold and ornamented with paintings

and sculpture. It was in this way that theaters could consolidate the many disciplines of art into

one setting—not only the trinity of fine arts (architecture, sculpture, and painting) but the musical

arts (instrumental music, vocal music, and sometimes ballet) as well. Additionally, the Neo-

Baroque interior could serve to reflect and pay homage to the historical glory of the Austrian

Empire, particularly under the rule of Empress Maria-Theresa in the Baroque era, often

interpreted as an Austrian "golden age." Noticeably, this does not refer to an exclusively

Croatian or Illyrian nationality. It is a unified Austrian reference that evokes the memory of

Austria as a prominent cultural, scientific, and political power on the European stage that also

asserts a powerful Habsburg dynasty. The inclusion of Viennese painters and architects in the

commission for the building of a theater in Croatia-Slavonia plays into the idea that the Viennese

administration likely still desired to be viewed as the *de facto* imperial seat of power and artistic

influence in Rijeka (and the rest of semi-autonomous Croatia-Slavonia), despite Hungarian

control. This gesture of domestic artistic diplomacy also indicates that while ethnically unique,

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[14] "Croatian National Theatre in Rijeka „Ivan Zajc"," European Theatre Architecture, , accessed
April 29, 2019, https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/db.html?filter[label]=&filter[city]
=rijeka&filter[state_id]=0&filter[on_db]=1&filter[on_map]=1&searchMode=&searchRe
sult=&theatreId=1448.

many regional governments in the Empire were willing to allow a spread of style and artistic influence from Vienna, as well as accept assistance in building up important cultural infrastrcuture. Therefore, they could take on a generally Austrian quality and identity.

The concept of transnational identity seems particularly potent in the example of the theater in Rijeka because at the time of construction, most ethnic Croatians were under the administration of the Hungarian part of the dual monarchy at the time, not the Austrian. However, the semblance of cultural unity and openness that must have been in place in order for Viennese artists and architects to be accepted and complete such a centrally-located and culturally important commission for the city cannot be ignored. It may also have been perceived that having artists and architects from the imperial capital brought prestige and high culture to less centrally located regions of the Empire, granting smaller cities the feeling of a "mini Vienna," an idea that was also expanded with experimental city-planning in Zagreb and Ljubljana. On the other hand, the establishment of an Austrian-style theatre in Rijeka, designed and executed by Viennese artists could also be viewed as a sort of cultural and architectural imperialism—a forcing of Viennese and Austrian tastes upon a local population. This assessment is not entirely unfair, and it is such sentiments that led not only to the name change of the theater to Ivan pl. Zajc after World War II in line with Croatian and Yugoslav nationalistic tendencies, but also the separation of Croatian and Italian theatrical companies.[15] The original name itself was even one that served the interests of the large Italian population that had long inhabited the city, indicating yet another ethnic group in addition to the Croatian population of the city vying for recognition, thus exacerbating the importance of the careful power balance the imperial

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[15] Kotnik, Opera, Power and Ideology, 163-4.

government had to navigate. One must note that generally, aside from national separatist movements in the mid-19th century, nationalistic tendencies did not take on their most mature forms until the turn of the 20th century as evidenced by the onset of Secession art movements.

The paintings by the *Künstler Compagnie* in the Croatian National Theatre Rijeka are also of particular interest, as they indicate an experimental trend in the completion of theater commissions for the group (Fig-4). Previously, the group had completed ceiling paintings and a curtain for the Stadttheater Liberec (Reichenberg), now called F. X. Šalda Theatre.[16] This marked their first independent theater commission and first time collaborating with the Fellner and Helmer architectural firm. The Liberec theater is located in present-day Czechia (which was also part of the Austrian Empire at the time) is built in a neo-Renaissance style with a neo-Rococo interior.[17] As assessed by Dr. Markus Fellinger, curator at the Belvedere Museum in Vienna, the Liberec ceiling paintings draw the viewer's attention back to the surface, instead of the expected "opening up" associated with the Rococo.[18] When commissioned for the theater in Rijeka, the group's style evolved and is slightly more classicized and clearly still more academic than their later Secessionist inventiveness. Fellinger notes that the paintings are almost "key-hole"-like in their perspective.[19] This hints towards the classical and almost "Ingresque" style of the paintings completed for the Burgtheater in Vienna (Fig-5).[20] This indicates another important function that commissions in smaller cities in the Empire served. Quite simply, they could be

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[16] Husslein-Arco et al., Klimt und die Ringstrasse, 36-39.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

used as prototypes or experiments for more prestigious commissions in the imperial capital, just

as Rijeka's theater could be seen as practice for the aforementioned Burgtheater. Such a trend

further culturally incorporated and slightly homogenized architecture throughout the empire, yet

again centering upon Viennese dominance. As previously mentioned, experimentation was

common throughout the empire in its smaller cities, not only in theater commissions, but in city

planning as well, later illustrated through proposals for urban city planning in cities like

Ljubljana who seemed generally willing to accept Austro-German ideas and design assistance in

the late 19th century.[21]

2. **Zagreb**

The Croatian capital, Zagreb houses one of the finest theaters in the region, the Croatian

National Theatre (*Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Zagrebu*) (Fig-6). Completed in 1895 as the

Kroatisches Landestheater (Croatian Land Theater), the building is yet another Fellner and

Helmer design in the broadly architecturally conservative tradition of historicizing Neo-Baroque

and Renaissance.[22] Unique from Rijeka in that it includes a greater amount of collaboration

between Viennese/Austrian and local, ethnically Croatian artists, the theater has a notable 1905

addition to the grounds in the form of a fountain by well-known Croatian Secessionist sculptor

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[21] Andrew Herscher, "Städtebau as Imperial Culture: Camillo Sitte's Urban Plan for Ljubljana," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 2 (2003): 220, accessed April 15, 2019, doi:10.2307/3592478.

[22] "Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb," European Theater Architecture, accessed April 29th, 2020,https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/db.html?filter%5Blabel%5D=&filter%5Bcity%5D=zagreb&filter%5Bstate_id%5D=0&filter%5Bon_db%5D=1&filter%5Bon_map%5D=1&searchMode=&searchResult=&theatreId=1449.

Ivan Meštrović (1883-1962), *The Source of Life* (*Zdenac života*). The collaborative nature of the

theater is most apparent in the selection of painters used for the interior. Among them are

Croatian painter Vlaho Bukovac (1855-1922) and Hungarian-Viennese painter Alexander

Demetrius Goltz (1857-1944). Bukovac is perhaps the more pertinent artist of the two, given his

prominent position in both the Viennese and Croatian Secessions, and in many regards can be

considered the father of the Croatian Secession. His contribution to the theater is significant, in

that he was able to produce a large-scale work with Croatian nationalistic elements to be

displayed in the highly visible public environment of a state-sanctioned performance space.

Bukovac's painting entitled *The Reformation of Croatian Literature and Art* (*Hrvatski

preporod*, sometimes *Ilirski preporod*)(1895-96)(Fig-7) serves as the ceremonial drop curtain of

the theater. Here, the Croatian arts are granted historical-mythological status as the work follows

the form of neo-Classical and semi-Baroque history paintings, complete with a fictionalized,

ceremonial setting and allegorical figures present. Seated on the dais is Croatian/Illyrian Baroque

poet Ivan Gundulić (1589-1638), from whose literary works and plays Bukovac sometimes

borrowed as inspirational source material, most notably Gundulić's play, *Dubravka*, in the

painting, *The Performance of the Dubravka* (*Dubravka*).[23] His presence is emphasized to

suggest a marriage of northern Croatian and southern Croatian (Dalmatian) arts and culture, thus

underlining Croatia-Slavonia's desire to unify with the Austrian-controlled Kingdom of

Dalmatia, which as a crownland did not enjoy the same level of semi-autonomy that Croatia-

Slavonia did under Hungarian administration. Further underlining that projected desire is the

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[23] "O Zgradi: Svečani zastori," Hrvatsko Narodno Kazalište u Zagrebu, Accessed May 15, 2020,
    https://www.hnk.hr/hr/o-nama/o-zgradi/sve%C4%8Dani-zastori/

background of Bukovac's curtain, which displays Dubrovnik (which was located in Dalmatia), seen as an important center of Croatian and Dalmatian culture and literature in the upper left background and Zagreb on the far right background, a Classical temple of the arts cosmically joining the two cities together into one tradition in the foreground.[24] The work is also populated by influential Croatian actors and writers who revived the reformation of Croatian literature and art in the nineteenth century.[25] The presence of putti, nymphs, satyrs, and muses imbibe the work with classicizing mythological importance, while the folk dancers in national costume in the middle background render the work distinctly Croatian, upholding Croatian arts and culture amongst the Greco-Roman classical traditions of Western Art. This is a particularly potent mixture of ideas, one that is simultaneously nationalistic and pro-Croatian but cognisant of a historical artistic ideal that placed emphasis on the tradition of classicism, and therefore frames it in such a context in order to render its message clear to audience members attending performances.

Further complicating the identity of the theater are the circumstances of its opening. By 1895, several influential cultural and educational institutions had been built in Zagreb with the support of the imperial government, including a university, a music conservatory, and a refreshed urban plan.[26] The rapid developments were in part due to the pro-Hungarian Ban of Croatia, Károly Khuen-Héderváry (1849-1918) who pursued an aggressive cultural plan of magyarization (or Hungarianization) in Croatian lands, hoping to culturally align them more closely with the

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Kraševac, "The Challenge of Modernism," in *Vienna and Zagreb around 1900*, 10.

Hungarian half of the monarchy.[27] However, the effort to make Croatia more Hungarian alienated a large portion of the population that desired independence for Croatia-Slavonia and unification with Dalmatia, therefore causing the Hungarian flag to become synonymous with cultural and institutional oppression of Croatian nationalistic sentiments. This became all too apparent with the opening of the Kroatisches Landestheater and imperial visit of Emperor Franz Josef to Zagreb (called Agram in German) and the subsequent student-led protests that coincided with the imperial ceremonies. In the ceremonial retinue was not only the emperor and ban Khuen-Héderváry, but at the time, Minister of Education and Religion in Croatia-Slavonia, the painter and art historian Izidor Kršnjavi (1845-1927), who had been instrumental in forging artistic connections between Vienna and Zagreb and who had helped to establish new educational reform and centers for artistic training.[28] Still, it was the very students for whom Khuen-Héderváry and Kršnjavi had improved educational facilities and updated curriculum that led the anti-Hungarian protests in Ban Jelačić Square and burned Hungarian flags during the emperor's visit.[29] In many regards, this laid bare the fragile balancing act the dual monarchy had attempted to achieve. Stranger still that the students may very well have approved of the distinctly Croatian musical programming of Ivan Zajc (1832-1914) during the opening of the theater, as well as the special exhibition of Croatian artists at the Kršnjavi-headed Department of Religious Affairs and Education that presented Croatian artistic achievements to the emperor, thus

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid, 11.

[29] Ibid.

acknowledging their existence within the Empire.[30] However, despite Kršnjavi's generally

Croatian-centric cultural program that sought to heighten the cultural standing of Zagreb in the

empire, the students involved with the anti-Hungarian protests were expelled from Zagreb

University, and not even a year later, Kršnjavi was removed from his post due to the protests and

later involvement with similar demonstrations.[31] Ironically, this left few options for Croatian

students, many of whom ended up studying in Vienna, following Kršnjavi's example and

adapting Viennese ideas to Croatian ends, thus inspiring the Croatian Modernists.[32] Therefore, in

Zagreb, architecture and cultural-educational infrastructure, while sanctioned and funded by the

imperial administration, provided a public space by which Croatian artists could express desires

for nationhood and hone skills, yet such institutions were also beholden to the scrutiny of the

imperial administration. The tension between those forces are also seen clearly in Croatian

Secessionist art.

3. **Ljubljana**

The Carniolan Provincial Theatre (now known as The Slovene National Theatre Opera

and Ballet Ljubljana) is slightly older than the theater in Zagreb, and was completed in 1892

firmly amidst the backdrop of Secession in Vienna and during its stirrings in Ljubljana (Fig-8).[33]

Though not designed directly by Fellner and Helmer, the analogous style of the theater in

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[30] "O Zgradi: Povijest Zgrade," Hrvatsko Narodno Kazalište u Zagrebu, Accessed May 15,
2020, https://www.hnk.hr/hr/o-nama/o-zgradi/povijest-zgrade/

[31] Irena Kraševac, "The Challenge of Modernism," in *Vienna and Zagreb around 1900*, 11.

[32] Ibid, 11-12.

[33] Kotnik, Opera, Power, and Ideology, 57.

Ljubljana does seem to suggest that theaters by the Viennese architects executed throughout the

Empire set an architectural and cultural precedent for the design of new theaters that serviced the

smaller provincial capitals of the Empire. The the familiarity of the style and plan owes itself to

the fact that a Hungarian associate of the Fellner and Helmer firm, Antonín Hrubý (1863-1929)

assisted the local provincial building office engineer in Ljubljana, Jan Vladimir Hraský

(1857-1939) in designing the theater.[34] Portions of the design are even based on the floorplan of

the theater in Rijeka as well as the Dresden Semperoper in Germany (albeit on a smaller scale)

(Fig-9).[35] Therefore, in some ways, the theater is not terribly original but displays a developed

archetype of Austrian theater design in the late 19th century. However, unlike even some larger

cities in the Austrian Crownlands, Ljubljana was able to secure a new theater in the latest

cosmopolitan style. This would have greatly heightened the cultural profile of Ljubljana, not

only as a Slovene center, but an Austrian one as well. Importantly, while the plan was largely

executed by Viennese and Czech artists, it is a unique source of national pride for the Slovenes

due to the large and well-executed neo-Classical/Baroque allegorical sculptures of Comedy and

Tragedy in the main niches and Genius with Drama and Opera on the main risalit created by

Alojz Gangl (1859-1935) (Fig-10).[36]

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[34] Igor Sapač, "The Slovene National Theatre Opera and Ballet Ljubljana," trans. Maja Visenjak
    Limon, European Theatre Architecture, , accessed April 29, 2019,
    https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/db.html?filter[label]=&filter[city]=ljubljana&filter[st
    ate_id]=0&filter[on_db]=1&filter[on_map]=1&searchMode=&searchResult=&theatreId
    =249&detail=history&page=2.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

Like many Carniolan provincial artists at the time, Gangl was trained in Vienna (since

there was no university in Ljubljana until the early 20th century and no Academy of Fine Arts

until after World War II) and commissions in his native province might have been perceived as a

sort of homecoming, spreading Viennese high culture and artistic training to Carniola.[37] This

certainly positions him at a crossroad of multinational identities. One one hand, there is a sense

of pride and prestige in training and adopting the styles popular in Vienna, one of the main

artistic and educational centers in Europe, thus elevating the cultural status of Ljubljana to that

not only of a regional administrative center, but cultural center one as well. This would seem to

reinforce Austrian centralization and cultural consolidation. On the other hand, one can sense an

undercurrent of Slovene nationalistic accomplishment in that a more local artist executed what is

one of the more striking and immediately noticeable visual elements of the structure. To further

the significance of Gangl's contributions, sculpture of such large scale and quality is not common

in Slovenia, and the fact that it can be found in the Slovene capital reinforces an inclination

towards Slovene nationhood. Though the theater design shares features and design elements

with theaters in other European cities, it is that comparability to other well-known theaters that

rationalizes end encourages comparability of Ljubljana itself to other national capitals, therefore

projecting an image of Ljubljana and Slovenia amongst the array of European nations.

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[37] France Mesesnel, *Gangl, Alojzij: (1859-1935)*, Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti,
    Slovenska Biografija, 2013, Accessed July 1, 2020
    https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi196550/.

E. Secession in Art

Secession was manifested differently in the various cultural centers of the Southern Slavic Crownlands. While the Imperial status-quo is established through the quasi-colonial culturalal form of theatres and opera houses, painting and other visual art offered a plurality of styles to Croatian and Slovenian artists by which to express new ideas and exhibit them internationally. To understand how, one must first consider what it means to have a Secessionist art movement. Generally speaking, it indicates what the name implies—that a group of artists secedes from the conventional and often older established tradition of art in a political/ geographical area. For many, the first movement of this kind that comes to mind is that of Vienna, with the brothers Gustav and Ernst Klimt and Franz Matsch of the *Künstler Compagnie* breaking away from the established association at the *Künstlerhaus* in Vienna. This liberation meant the advent of new styles and Modernism that not only broke away from the strongly academic style of previous generations, but also appealed to the desires of the art market.[38] It can also be said that Secessions often adopted a policy of financial solidarity with other associated artists in an attempt to wrest more control over the art market away from the older associations.[39] Other cities soon followed suit, and the capitals of the Southern Slavic crownlands of the Austrian Empire were no exception. The examples of Zagreb and Ljubljana will be offered to explore the implications and challenges of Secession movements in the crownlands.

[38] This is due to the expansion and exploration of the international market as well as new styles, subject matter, and breaking with convention. Most of these ideals can be found in the Vienna Secession journal *Ver Sacrum* (Sacred Truth).

[39] Elizabeth Clegg, *Art, Design, and Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1920* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 88.

1. **Munich**

Before turning to the smaller cities, it is worth establishing the importance of nearby

Munich as an artistic and cultural powerhouse, particularly for Slovenian artists. Nearly

equidistant to Vienna from Ljubljana, Munich proved to be a fertile and well-connected

international training ground for several generations of Slovenian and Croatian artists, namely

because of the presence of the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (Academy of Fine Arts

Munich, or simple the Munich Academy). In addition to offering quality instruction, the Munich

Academy offered an attractive alternative to the academies in Vienna and Budapest considering

Munich's strong connections to the international art market.[40] Here, artists like influential

painter and professor Anton Ažbe (1862-1905) were able to train under German artists, form a

career, and set up studios (with some like Ažbe later becoming a professor at the Munich

Academy). Ažbe was particularly influential and attracted many students from the Slavic world,

creating his own school of influence including the prominent Slovene Impressionists Ivan

Grohar, Rihard Jakopič, Matej Sternen, and Matija Jama; Croatian Modernists Josip Račić and

Oskar Herman; as well as a slew of Russian artists, including a young Wassily Kandinsky.[41]

Though working predominantly in a Realist style, like in his *Zamorka* of 1889 (Fig-11), Ažbe

was able to adapt to newer styles later in his career (as demonstrated by his Cézanne-like *Harem*

of 1903 (Fig-12 and Fig-13) and was associated with the Munich Secession, and therefore many

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[40] Janez Dolenc, "Zapis o slikaru Antonu Ažbetu," (0 120 letnici rojstva), *Loški razgledi*, vol. 29, issue 1, 1982, Accessed July 15, 2020, <http://www.dlib.si/?URN=URN:NBN:SI:DOC-JA5QEQR0>, 48-49.

[41] France Mesesnel, "Ažbe, Anton (1862-1905)," ed. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, *Slovenska Biografija*, 2013, https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi132240/.

of the prominent figures of the Blaue Reiter movement.[42] Through fostering a community and

working as a conduit to an international market, Ažbe, the Academy, and Munich signified a

promise of what Vienna could not offer—a progressive city with well-established art institutions,

a diverse range of patrons, and high standing within the European and international art market, in

some regards on-par with Paris. As a testament to its progressiveness, the regulations imposed

on women artists were greatly reduced in Munich, especially compared to initially conservative

and academic Vienna. Here, in private studios, women were able to draw from life and nude

models (or at the very least busts of male and female anatomy), counteracting a centuries-old

embargo on the practice.[43] This gave rise to the careers of artists like Ivana Kobilca, Nadeža

Petrović, and Marianne von Werefkin, all of whom went on to have prolific and influential

careers throughout Europe.[44]

2. Croatia

Turning first to Croatia and the capital, Zagreb, one must be aware that the political and

cultural condition was rather unique from the rest of the crownlands. Though administered by

the Hungarian administration of the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary, Croatia and Zagreb

maintained a semi-autonomous status within the empire. Therefore, to some degree they had

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Ivana Kobilca et al., *Ivana Kobilca (1861-1926) : "Slikarija Je Vendar Nekaj Lepega ---" : Vodnik Po Razstavi* (Ljubljana: Narodna Galerija, 2018), 14-16.

[44] Hildegard Reinhardt, "Elisabeth Epstein: Moscow–Munich–Paris–Geneva, Waystations of a Painter and Mediator of the French-German Cultural Transfer" In *Marianne Werefkin and the Women Artists in Her Circle*, ed. Malycheva Tanja and Wünsche Isabel, 165-74. LEIDEN; BOSTON: Brill, 2017. Accessed August 11, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctt1w8h0q1.18., 165-166.

been able to retain a somewhat independent Croatian identity and proto-national identity, thus

amplifying their distaste for magyarizing policies from the Hungarian administration that seemed

to threaten the Croatian ethnic expression. This can be seen to have helped shape the very

forward and prominent Secession and "Croatian Salon" established in Zagreb in the final years

of the nineteenth century. It can be seen to generally have unfolded in two phases: the first being

the starting of exhibitioning by the *Društvo Umjetnosti* (Art Association) and the beginnings of

the so-called "Croatian Salon," followed by the fracturing break away from the Art Association

by the *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika* (Society of Croatian Artists) and its subsequent reabsorption

into the *Društvo Umjetnosti*.[45]

The foundation of the *Društvo Umjetnosti* can be viewed as a general cultural success for

the autonomy of the Croatian nation within the dual monarchy. Its establishment in 1868 came

on the heels of diplomatic reform and political restructuring following nationalistic uprisings

throughout the Empire.[46] It was also the first time in many years that the near entirety of the

Croatian lands had been unified under one regime, thus prompting a renewed desire to express

Croatian national identity (the Croatian Reformation alluded to in Bukovac's ceremonial curtain)

in art, literature, religion and education. In the power shift from a solely Austrian centered seat

of power, to the double monarchy of Austria-Hungary, Croatia-Slavonia was able to gain a

certain confidence that greatly worried the Magyar administration. In spite of the tension that

came with semi-autonomy, important cultural institutions and infrastructure such as the *Muzej za*

Umjetnosti i Obrt (Museum of Applied Arts; 1880) and *Škola za Umjetnosti i Obrt* (School of

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[45] Clegg, *Art, Design, and Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1920*, 88-92.

[46]Arijana Kolak, "Između Europe I Azije: Hrvati I Mađari U Propagandnom Ratu 1848./49.*,"
    Povijesni Prilozi 34 (2008): , https://hrcak.srce.hr/27875, 175-7.

Applied Arts; 1882) could be said to be established as an extension of Imperial cultural life in the

following years.[47] While this aided in the training of Croatian artists and enriched Zagreb

cultural life, the influence was seemingly an attempt to centralize culture around Austrian

models, an idea promoted by Kršnjavi. The *Društvo Umjetnosti* had also succeeded in opening a

museum and school by the mid-1890s, providing valuable exhibition space and public exposure

for Croatian artists.[48] Still, however progressive and seemingly nationalistic the association

might have seemed, it was considered a concerted "pacification" of Croatian nationalism by the

overarching Hungarian administration.[49] Through providing an officially sponsored outlet for

Croatian artists, the Imperial government could not only garner favor from certain artists, but

"trick" the cultural elite of Zagreb into thinking they had more freedom than they actually did.

In this way, the Imperial government was still acting as a monitor and sponsor of a more unified

and generally conservative artistic style.

The *Društvo Umjetnosti* was led by Croatian critic and artist Izidor Kršnjavi (1845-1927),

who, seeing that the association did not have much exhibiting power, recruited the Croatian

painter Vlaho Bukovac (1855-1922), who had gained international acclaim by exhibiting abroad

in Vienna, Munich, and beyond, to not only exhibit with the group, but also take on leadership.[50]

This was a shrewd move that significantly increased the exhibiting potential of artists in the city,

with the first major collaborative exhibition (National Art Exhibition) taking place in 1894 in the

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[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid.

[50]Ibid.

Southern Slav Academy founded by great art patron and politician Bishop Josip Juraj

Strossmayer (1815-1905).[51] Even the title carries with it strong nationalistic connotations,

drawing a distinct line between ethnic Slavs and the Hungarian half of the monarchy. Further

establishing a new tradition of exhibitions in the mid-1890s, Bukovac helped lead a Croatian

contingency to display again in Zagreb (at a so-called "artists' bazaar"), in Budapest, and as a

partially self-determined group in an international exhibition in Copenhagen.[52] The Croatian

press was generally pleased with the high quality of the artwork and the implementation of

Croatian themes, particularly in Bukovac's patriotic and academic history paintings like *A

Performance of "Dubravka"* (1894; Fig-14), which as mentioned before, take on themes from

Croatian-language literature by Ivan Gundulić.[53]

The work, presented in a rather academic, idealized realist style, is reminiscent of

Watteau's *Embarkation for Cythera* (1717; Fig-15) in that the eye is led in a serpentine fashion

over the heads of a group of nobles. In Bukovac's painting, to the right, "outside" of the viewing

gallery, we see actors playing out the mythological and pastoral plot of the play. However, it is

not the play that immediately grabs our attention, but the focalizing gaze of the woman in the

yellow floral dress on the left. As she gazes towards the viewer's entrance into the covered

arcade, another woman (in green), above her and to her right on the raised platform, gazes at her

knowingly, suggesting a complex relationship between viewer and the painting. In the

meantime, men seem to discuss and bicker about the play, some clearly enjoying the

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[51]Ibid.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid.

performance more than others. Are they discussing the performance itself, or the political

implications of the plot? The entire work plays on the ideas of identity, being seen, public

perception, and performance, not entirely unlike the unsavory balance that sometimes had to be

negotiated between the creators of Croatian Secessionist art and conservative patrons and

cultural ministries with heavily-lined pocketbooks. It is especially interesting that paintings with

such subject matter were successfully displayed in Budapest (the seat of Magyar power) and

alongside Hungarian artists abroad. There is an added dissonance in the implementation of

highly international styles like the French-inspired *pleinairisme* used by Bukovac and the

positive press that the exhibition received in Zagreb (Fig-16). Stranger still is that the press

outwardly embraced and implied the idea that cultural life in Zagreb was echoing that of Vienna

or Budapest through the terminology and labelling of a Zagreb "salon" society. This

simultaneously could be seen to invigorate Zagreb's cultural standing in the Empire by adhering

to the centralized, Imperial cultural conventions, but also as a threat to some of Austrian cultural

imperialism through the highly slavicized subject matter and international techniques.

The anxiety surrounding the generally well-supported *Društvo Umjetnosti* and its

Viennese and Hungarian ties (under the leadership of Kršnjavi) caused its foremost members (led

by Bukovac) to break away from the association in 1897, thus forming the *Društvo Hrvatskih

Umjetnika*.[54] This was on the heels of student protests in the two previous years that included the

burning of a Hungarian flag during the Emperor Franz Josef I's visit to Zagreb to open new

cultural institutions like the Croatian National Theatre Zagreb.[55] The new society aimed to

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[54] Clegg, 89.

[55] Kraševac, "The Challenge of Modernism," in *Vienna and Zagreb around 1900*, 10-11.

promote "Croatian art" not only in Zagreb, but throughout the Empire and internationally, thus

rather forwardly "seceding" and publically displacing the *Društvo Umjetnosti* from its position as

the foremost Croatian art association. It was also during this time when Croatian artists in the

Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika were able to participate in significant exhibitions outside of Zagreb

and therefore validate the society's position within Croatia. Most notably, Bukovac was able to

successfully exhibit in the 1897 Venice Biennale and in 1898's inaugural presentation of the

Vienna Secession. Such international success made Bukovac an easy target for the more

conservative allies of Kršnjavi and the *Društvo Umjetnosti*. Those like the Croatian musicologist

Franjo Kuhač (1834-1911) criticized Bukovac and his contemporaries for spreading "Austro-

German" Modernism to Croatia, and thus spreading dangerous foreign ideas.[56] He even went so

far as to label the aesthetic "anarchy."[57]

Despite the negativity coming from the conservative elite and press, some were quick to

defend the Zagreb Secessionists and Secession movements in general, claiming that they were

indicative of a pan-European cultural movement that could manifest wherever the conditions

were right. Of those that used this idea to defend the Zagreb Secessionists, Elizabeth Clegg

proposes critic and historian Ivo Pilar (1874-1933) as the foil to Kuhač, suggesting that

Secessionism was a "liberating movement" that further expanded the art market into "everyday

life."[58] Such a statement is not unfounded, considering the flourishing of applied arts in Zagreb

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[56] Clegg, 89.

[57] Željka Metesi Deronjić, "Polemika O Secesiji U Hrvatskoj: Franjo Ksaver Kuhač I Ivo Pilar," *Cris* 11 (January 2009): , accessed May 1, 2019, https://core.ac.uk/display/14423227, 237.

[58] Clegg, 89.

that paralleled developments in Vienna, oftentimes with academically trained "fine" artists

delving into the applied arts. The creation of glassware, ceramics, and printing brought the

design and ideals of Secession into Croatian homes, bolstered by a taste for such goods from

Vienna (Fig-17).[59] He also blames criticism on a provincial lack of understanding and insisted

that interaction with new "Modern" art was necessary to understand it.[60] Perhaps easing this

transition for the public at large was the re-installation of the Croatia-Slavonia art pavilion

(*Umjetnički Paviljon*) from the 1896 Hungarian Millennial Celebrations in Budapest in Zagreb in

1898(Fig-18).

The *Umjetnički Paviljon* is rife with patriotic and nationalistic imagery, including

numerous allegories for Zagreb, the arts, and sciences, and evokes lavish materials through the

imitation of stone and gilding. However its inclusion in the Millennial Celebrations of

Hungary's 1000th anniversary implies Croatian loyalty and passivity to the Hungarian

administration, contradictory to the image and ideals that many artists and Croatian politicians

were trying to project. Still, when reinstalled in Zagreb, several additions were made to the

structure to impart a sense of permanence.[61] Interestingly, though the original structure was

designed by the Budapest-based firm Danubius (and architects Flóris Korb and Kálmán Giergl),

most of the additions made for the Zagreb move were devised by Helmer and Fellner, the

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[59] Darja Alujević, "Women Artists of Croatian Modernism," in *The Challenge of Modernism: Vienna and Zagreb around 1900*, (Vienna: Belvedere, 2017), 130-132, 204.

[60] Deronjić, 232-33.

[61] Mladen Perušić, "Gradnje I Obnove Umjetničkog Paviljona U Zagrebu," *Portal : Godišnjak Hrvatskog Restauratorskog Zavoda*, June 2015, , accessed May 5, 2019, https://hrcak.srce.hr/149930,186-7.

Viennese theatre architects.[62] Like many of the theaters of the time, the structure is generally

designed in a Neo-Renaissance style on the exterior with more Neo-Baroque and Classicized

elements in the interior, including the prominent central dome. One also finds that the exterior is

painted yellow, a color that signifies the imperial presence of the Habsburg monarchy. With so

many "foreign" elements from outside of Croatia, it would seem an odd setting for the *Društvo*

Hrvatskih Umjetnika to present their first full exhibition. At the same time, it provided

additional cultural infrastructure for the city and an impressive (if slightly extravagant) place for

the competing art societies to present exhibitions.

The first *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika* exhibition (also known as Zagreb Salon) took

place in December of 1898 in the *Umjetnički Paviljon* and included the exhibition design of

Modernist architect Viktor Kovačić (1874-1924; a student of Otto Wagner) with art from the

likes of sculptors Robert Frangeš (1872-1940) and Rudolf Valdec (1872-1929); painters Ferdo

Kovačević (1870-1927), Oton Iveković (1869-1939); graphic artist Menci Clement Crnčić

(1865-1930); and Munich-trained Symbolist painter Bela Čikoš Sesija (1864-1931). Bukovac,

however, displayed the most paintings, numbering about 50 works.[63] Though the conflict over

the state of "national" art in Croatia that the establishment of the *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika*

and their exhibition caused continued well after the completion of the first exhibition, it must be

noted that the exhibition was rather popular, running into the spring of the next year.[64] The

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[62]Ibid, 190.

[63] Clegg, 91.

[64] Ibid, 92.

success also prompted many of the artists involved to display more vigorously internationally

(including with joint Austro-Hungarian and Imperial delegations), exhibiting in Saint Petersburg

the 1900 Paris "Exposition Universelle," and beyond.[65] The continued rifts that were exposed

because of these international ventures echo the political tension between Croatia's semi-

autonomous status and the Hungarian administration, as well as the critical nature of the Zagreb

press. Both are best expressed by a quote from Clegg:

> "While the first of these ventures revealed the society's [*Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika*] precarious financial situation, the success of the second made new enemies among both Hungarian and Croats, the former annoyed to find Croatia-Slavonia yet again being granted separate representation, the latter nonetheless complaining that the exhibitors had meekly settled for insufficient space."[66]

Two further exhibitions increased the profile of the *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika.* A

second large exhibition in 1900 widened the field of artists involved, including a number of

Slovene artists.[67] This seems to circle back to a sense of pan-Slavic identity that had formed

with the Pan-Slavic Congress in 1848 and would continue to play into the realm of politics and

art throughout the 20th century, its highest manifestation being that of the establishment of the

Kingdom and later Republic of Yugoslavia. The second of these exhibitions was a tour of works

by artists in the *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika* that traveled to towns in the Croatia-Slavonia

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[65] Irena Krašvac and Željka Tonković, "Umjetničko Umrežavanje Putem Izložaba U Razdoblju Rane Moderne – Sudjelovanje Hrvatskih Umjetnika Na Medunarodnim Izložbama Od 1891. Do 1900. Godine," *Rad. Inst. Povik. Umjet.* 40 (2016): , accessed May 3, 2019, Umjetničko umrežavanje putem izložaba u razdoblju rane moderne ... https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/262676, 216.

[66] Clegg, 92.

[67] Ibid.

region by train, thus establishing an artistic network with smaller towns.[68] This can also be seen

to have solidified Zagreb as a feasible cultural center towards which smaller towns oriented

themselves while also expanding the network of Croatian artists in closer proximity to Serbian

and Bosnian artists. However, despite the positive outcomes of these two exhibitions, the

financial strain became too great and the *Društvo Hrvatskih Umjetnika* re-merged with the

Društvo Umjetnosti in 1903, the very association from which they seceded.[69]

The lasting implications of this were not a failed Secession however, and the *Društvo*

Hrvatskih Umjetnika was able to serve as a model for later associations. With the two groups

merged, state financial support once again became a reality. A name change from *Društvo*

Umjetnosti (Art Association) to *Hrvatsko Društvo Umjetnosti* (Croatian Art Association) in 1906

solidified the combination of the two associations into one and therefore implied that some

progressive ideas of the newer group would continue to be implemented, though tempered to

ensure continued patronage from the imperial administration.

3. **Slovenia**

In the example of Slovenia and its capital Ljubljana, one finds a more unconventional

Secession. As suggested earlier, Secession implies a liberation or breaking away from an

established group or institution. Unlike the other major cultural centers of the Empire, Ljubljana

lacked not only an established art association, but also the cultural infrastructure (such as

museums, art academies, etc.) to support any sort of "break" from the status quo. However, it

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

can be found that the Ljubljana Secession (in all of its peculiarities) perhaps had more to do with establishing a national tradition to a conflicted and culturally unprepared public. Not only did the Secessionists face opposition from the German-speaking cultural elite, but (like in Zagreb) from conservative Slovene nationalists as well. Having very nearly always subjugated to either Austrian or Italian rule, Slovenes were not consolidated into one region of the Empire. While Ljubljana served as the capital of Carniola, Slovenes could also be found in Carinthia, the Austrian Littoral, and Styria (Steiermark). Therefore, in the mid to late 19th century, the idea of Ljubljana as a Slovene capital of an ethnically Slovene nation was a fairly new one.[70]

The conditions into which Slovene artists attempted a Secession were not ideal. Since no institutions of higher artistic training were established in the Slovene capital until early in the 20th century, most artists from Slovenia were forced to train abroad, mostly in Vienna and Munich, both major cultural and artistic centers with art markets far more outward-reaching than Ljubljana. This also reinforced a transnationalism and the widespread use of the German language amongst the educated elite, further complicating and placing barriers in front of those wishing to assert a Slovene nation and artistic identity. Ljubljana, as a smaller city and regional capital, had a much smaller population and therefore a less robust art market and less consistent history of art exhibiting than larger centers like Graz or Zagreb.[71] The main exhibiting bodies came from outside the city and from mostly Austrian associations like the Austrian Art Society

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[70] Andrew Herscher, "Städtebau as Imperial Culture: Camillo Sittes Urban Plan for Ljubljana," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 2 (2003): , accessed May 10, 2019, doi:10.2307/3592478, 217.

[71] Miha Valant, "Likovno Razstavljanje v Ljubljani v Kranjskih časopisih v Nemškem Jeziku (1850-1918)" (Master's thesis, Filozofska Fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2018), 31-59.

from Vienna and the Styrian Art Society from nearby Graz.[72] The very conservative academic

style of such well-established societies inevitably made a lasting impact on the Ljubljana public

"centralizing" their tastes to more closely align with Austrian ones. Therefore, even though there

were influential and successful Slovene artists exhibiting abroad like Ivana Kobilca (1861-1926),

whose works (including *Poletje* (Summer), 1889-90; Fig-19) were accepted at the Paris

Académie three times, and opening art schools abroad like Anton Ažbe in Munich, they were

underappreciated and at times struggled for recognition in the Slovene lands and capital.[73]

Though Kobilca can be considered the first major Slovene artist to begin to cultivate the

art scene in Ljubljana with her successful solo exhibition in 1890, it was her colleagues and a

slightly younger generation of artists that began to create a network of Slovene artists that would

eventually turn their attention to Ljubljana.[74] Among the artists that assembled around Ažbe

were Ferdo Vesel (1861-1946), Rihard Jakopič (1869-1943), Ivan Grohar (1876-1911), Matija

Jama (1872-1947), and Matej Sternen (1970-1949), the Slovene Impressionists. Their

experiences in Munich not only exposed them to international ideas and influence, but imbued

within them an idea for what art life in Ljubljana had the potential to be. It is because of this

quasi "outsider" and "foreign" status that even first attempts at an exhibition in Ljubljana were

not particularly welcomed.[75] Janez Evangelist Krek (1865-1917) had established the thought

that a Slovene nation could only come about through the idealized vision of Slovene peasantry

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[72] Ibid.

[73] Clegg, 94.

[74] Michel Mohor et al., *Ivana Kobilca (1861-1926): "Painting Is Something Beautiful ---":
    Guidebook to the Exhibition* (Ljubljana: Narodna Galerija, 2018), 27.

[75] Clegg, 96.

and conservative Christian ideology.[76] This created additional barriers for the newer and

seemingly radical Modernist styles of the *Slovensko Umetniško Društvo* (Slovene Art

Association) founded by several of the aforementioned artists in 1899.[77]

To that end, the styles of some of the artists involved in the *Slovensko Umetniško Društvo*

were truly unique for the region and artistically progressive. Jakopič's distinct Impressionist

style (which continued to develop in the following years) might have appeared especially

unfamiliar and alien to the Ljubljana public. However, despite the public's trepidation towards

"foreign" styles, the association was able to gain an important ally in the culturally-minded

mayor of Ljubljana, Ivan Hribar (1851-1941), who allowed the "First Slovene Art Exhibition" to

be hosted in the Ljubljana Town Hall in the fall of 1900.[78] It was also he who approved of

Kobilca's large scale (and strongly Slovenian) painting for the Ljubljana Town Hall, *Slovenija se*

klanja Ljubljani (Slovenia Bows to Ljubljana), 1903 (Fig-20). In addition to the aforementioned

artists, the sculptor Alojzij Gangl (a crucial member of Ljubljana cultural life and contributor to

the Ljubljana Opera House) and a number of Slovenes living abroad were exhibited (Fig-21).

This propagated a connection between the city administration and cultural progressiveness that

would assert Ljubljana as a cosmopolitan and national center for the Slovene nation in the

coming century. In addition to the support of the municipal government, the *Slovensko*

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Herscher, 222-225.

Umetniško Društvo found a press sponsor in the liberal newspaper *Slovenski Narod* (Slovene

Nation), which bought into the idea of a uniquely Slovene expression of nation through art.[79]

As mentioned previously, several of the artists that exhibited in the "First Slovene Art

Exhibition" also exhibited with the Second Zagreb Salon in 1900. Clegg proposes that seeing

the impressive exhibition space for "national" art in Zagreb encouraged Jakopič to seek similar

accommodations in Ljubljana.[80] He set his sights on Ljubljana's *Narodni Dom* (now *Narodna*

Galerija), one of the few and most important well-established cultural institutions in Ljubljana at

the turn-of-the-century. He was successful in securing the Main Hall for 1903's "Second

Slovene Art Exhibition," though this event encountered a number of problems which the first did

not. The first issue was that of political affiliation. The previous exhibition (and the *Slovensko*

Umetniško Društvo for that matter) had issued a statement claiming apolitical status. While this

may have been a moot point, simply by the nature of the support they received in progressive

nationalists, the association had never been outwardly political.[81] However, the grand opening of

the Second Exhibition was heralded by a highly political speech by Miljutin Zarnik which

praised the art being displayed as an example of the "Slovene Nation's" cultural and artistic

virility that attempted to compensate for what he believed was a passive national political and

economic state.[82] The second problem that the Second Exhibition faced was the sheer volume of

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[79]Taja Čepič and Janja Rebolj, *Homo Sum--: Ivan Hribar in Njegova Ljubljana: Zbornik Ob
        Razstavi Mestnego Muzeja Ljubljana* (Ljubljana: Mestni Muzej, 1997), 213-14.

[80] Clegg, 96.

[81] Ibid, 97.

[82] Ibid.

works by Jakopič, Jama, Sternen, and Grohar.[83] Their works consisted of a great number of

small landscapes, with many bearing striking similarity to each other due to the collaborative

nature of the artists and their simultaneous artistic experimentation on joint trips to paint *en plein*

air in the Slovenian countryside.[84] However, with this exhibition came the emergence of what

might be considered a national school of Slovene Impressionism, with the aforementioned artists

creating a number of works that have become stalwarts of Slovene art and national expression

due to their rural settings, depictions of common people, and celebration of nature (Fig-22-

Fig-24).

Ultimately, the extremely polarized press, reacting both against the opening speech by

Zarnik and the "foreign" style of the works presented, led to the temporary failure of a

progressive and modern art movement in Slovenia. The irreconcilable differences between the

Ljubljana public, press, and artists of the Second Exhibition drove many of the artists involved

away from Ljubljana. This seemed to indicate that if they could not establish a Slovene artistic

presence in Slovenia, they would have to do so elsewhere. They did so quite successfully,

exhibiting with the Vienna Secession and as the *Sava* art group at the Miethke Salon in Vienna in

1904.[85] Most scholars agree that finding and establishing a connection with Miethke was quite

fortuitous, though it is difficult to conceive that Slovene art and Slovene Impressionism had a

greater and more widely accepted presence and identity abroad than it did in the lands and nation

it aimed to represent. After earning acclaim abroad and exhibiting in Trieste (where there was a

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[83]Kristina Preininger and Andrej Smrekar, *Slovene Impressionist and Their Time 1890-1920: A Guide to the Exhibition:* (Ljubljana: National Gallery of Slovenia, 2008), Foreword.

[84] Ibid, "Icons of Slovene Impressionism," unpaginated.

[85] Ibid.

large Slovene population) in 1907, Secession and a progressive art scene returned to Ljubljana,

where it had struggled to flourish before, with Jakopič establishing an Art Pavilion in Tivoli Park

(designed by Maks (Max) Fabiani (1865-1962; Fig-25) and opening a school of painting around

1909.[86] From this period came some of the most iconic works of Slovene Impressionism,

including Ivan Grohar's *Sejalec* (Sower) of 1907 (Fig-26).

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[86] Ibid.

VII. Conclusion

It is difficult to fully assess the implications of the Zagreb and Ljubljana Secessions in so few pages. However, it can be said that to some degree they both achieved certain levels of success, though both were plagued with heavy opposition and difficulty, whether in terms of financial support from the Austro-Hungarian administration (Zagreb) or popular support from the press and society (Ljubljana). Artists in both cities were able to establish associations that could be seen as representatives of Modernism and new progressive artistic styles for each nation, though Zagreb's is more easily identifiable as seceding from an established art association that was tied to an older academic tradition, as opposed to the more theoretical Secession of Ljubljana that lacked the built-up cultural infrastructure that Zagreb enjoyed. The artists involved in Zagreb and Ljubljana Secessions were also able to effectively exhibit at home and abroad both separately and amongst other artists from throughout the Empire, though the Slovenes encountered more problems initially due to poor press and public opinion. Perhaps it was the fact that Croatians and Slovenes were exhibiting abroad that led the more conservative press and public to interpret Secession artists as "foreign" or Germanic influences, adding to the difficulty of finding widespread amongst certain sectors of the public. While this may be true of their styles in some cases (considering the number of artists trained in Germany and Austria), it does not necessarily apply to the *ideals* behind Secessionism, which could be seen in some iteration throughout European society as a whole. This can be said to be particularly applicable in the Southern Slavic crownlands considering how strong of a nationalist timbre much of the art takes on, oftentimes in search of identity for a nation within a nation. Vlaho Bukovac's usage of

Reformationist Croatian literature is a prime example. Slovenes adapted modern styles like Impressionism to celebrate nationalistic themes of nature and labor in a similar fashion.

While Secession is often thought of largely as a Viennese and Austrian movement, it is important to understand that it is part of a much more robust, international narrative of developing Modernity and nation-building, of which the Southern Slavic crownlands are included. Art offered not only an outlet for evolving identities, but political territory in a culture war between old and new European regimes, some of which were taken to their extreme iterations in the World Wars. With that in mind, one can also consider that Secession was not limited to Central Europe, with a number of cities including Paris, Berlin, Cologne, and even New York (with their "Photo Secession") experiencing similar phenomena, speaking to the creative endurance of a generation of artists in effecting change through art. Going forward, while some work has been done to cast these movements into a comparative and connective context with other artistic Secessions in Vienna and Munich, more research needs to be done to address the cultural dialogue between Croatian and Slovenian art, literature, and music during this time, as nearly all art forms seemed directly affected by or reactive to Austrian policies of cultural centralization and the rise of Slavic nationalism.

VIII. Figures

Fig-1: Austria-Hungary c. 1914, Accessed and Edited August 11, 2020, https://

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Austria-Hungary_map.svg

Fig-2: *Narodni dom* (National Home) in Trieste around 1904,

photograph, architect Max Fabiani (1865-1962), http://www.narodnidom.eu/wp-content/uploads/

2016/03/pan_4_1.jpg,

image courtesy of OZE NŠK.

Fig-3: Hrvatsko narodno kazalište Rijeka, Ivan pl. Zajc (Croatian National Theatre Rijeka),

built 1885, Ferdinand Fellner (1847-1916) and Hermann Helmer (1849-1919) - architects,

Accessed August 11, 2020, https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/res/archive/313/043281.jpg?

seek=1499181680

Fig-4: Gustav Klimt,

Opera seria, c.1885,

Fresco,

Croatian National Theatre Rijeka, Ivan pl. Zajc,

Rijeka, Croatia

Fig-5: Gustav Klimt,

The Globe Theatre in London, 1888,

Fresco,

Burgtheater, Vienna, Austria

Fig-6: Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Zagrebu (Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb), 1895,

architects Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer,

Zagreb, Croatia,

image courtesy of Diego Delso, 2014

Fig-7: Vlaho Bukovac,

Hrvatski preporod (The Reformation of Croatian Literature and Art), c.1895,

oil on canvas,

Croatian National Theatre Zagreb,

Zagreb, Croatia

Fig-8: Slovensko narodno gledališče Ljubljana (Slovenian National Theatre Ljubljana),

built 1892, Jan Vladimír Hráský and Anton Hrubý, architects,

Ljubljana, Slovenia,

photo courtesy of Mihael Grmek, 2012

Fig-9: Dresden Semperoper,

 second reconstruction (1985) based on the first reconstruction of 1878,

Gottfried Semper, architect,

Dresden, Germany,

photo courtesy of Avda, 2013

Fig-10: Alojzij Gangl,

Genius with Drama and Opera, c.1892,

 Slovenian National Theatre Ljubljana,

Ljubljana, Slovenia,

Photo Courtesy of Luka Esenko, 2014

Fig-11: Anton Ažbe,

Zamorka, 1889,

 oil on canvas,

Narodna Galerija,

 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-12: Anton Ažbe, *V haremu* (In a Harem), sketch, 1903, oil on canvas, Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-13: Paul Cézanne, *Une moderne Olympia* (A Modern Olympia), 1873-4, oil on canvas,

Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

Fig-14: Vlaho Bukovac,

Dubravka or *A Performance of the Dubravka*, 1894,

oil on canvas,

Magyar Nemzeti Galéria (Hungarian National Gallery),

Budapest, Hungary

Fig-15: Antoine Watteau,

L'embarquement pour Cythère (The Embarkation for Cythera), 1717,

oil on canvas,

The Louvre,

Paris, France

Fig-16: Vlaho Bukovac,

Hochsommer (Midsummer), 1903,
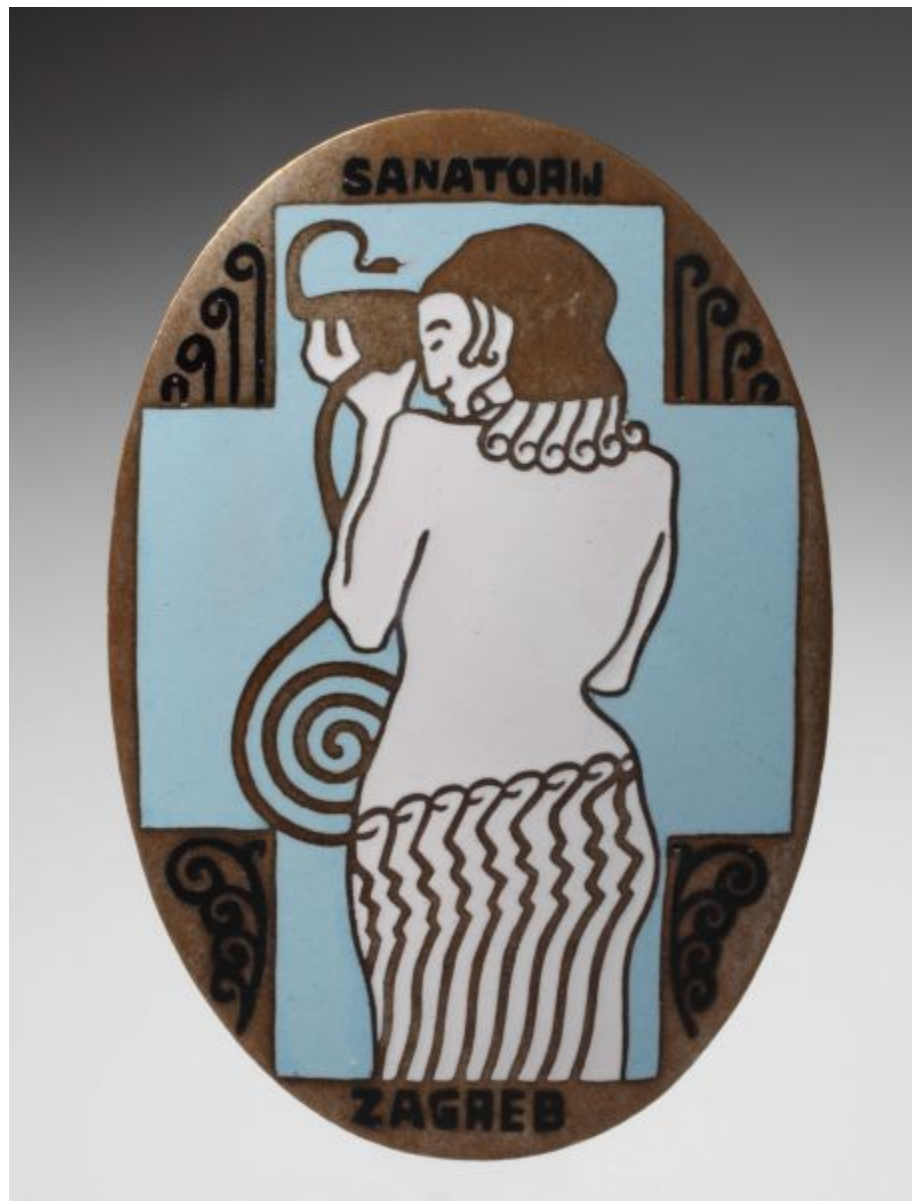
 oil on canvas,

Belvedere,

Vienna, Austria

Fig-17: Tomislav Krizman,

Badge, c. 1908,

Museum of Arts and Crafts,

Zagreb, Croatia

Fig-18: Umjetnički Paviljon (Art Pavilion), 1896-8,

Flóris Korb and Kálmán Giergl, architects (original structure),

with additions and alterations by Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer (Zagreb),

Zagreb, Croatia,

photo courtesy of Diego Delso, 2014

Fig-19: Ivana Kobilca,

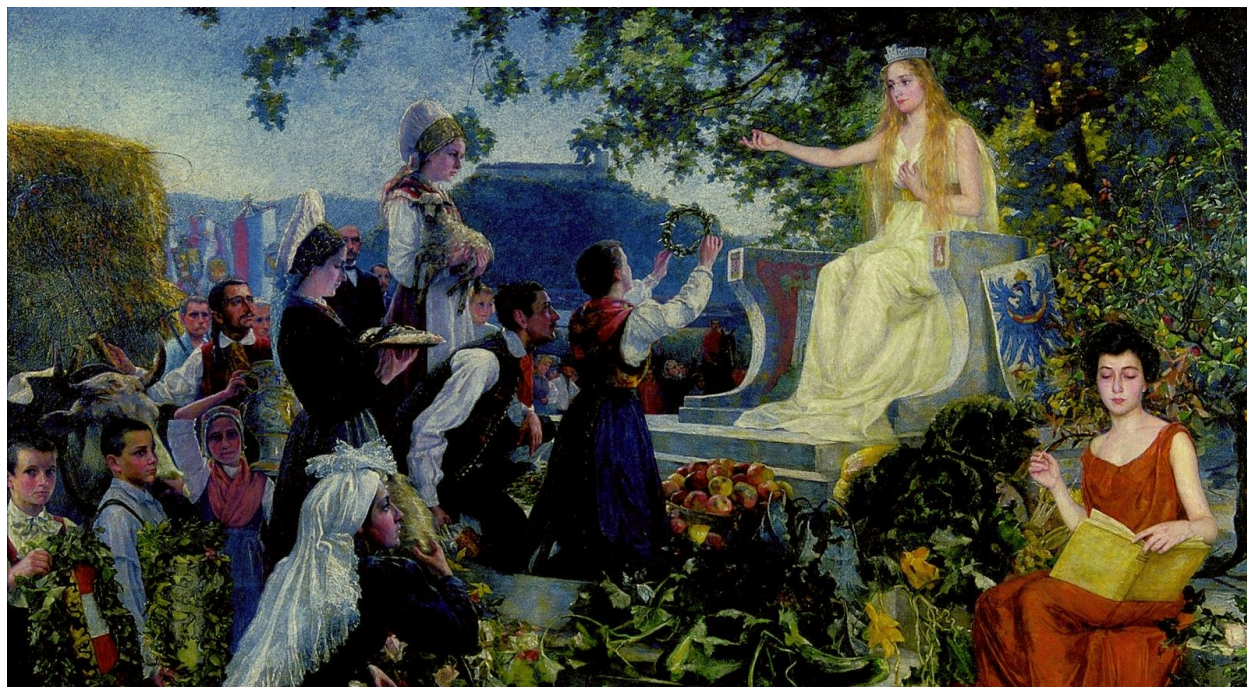*Poletje* (Summer), 1889-90,

Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-20: Ivana Kobilca,

Slovenija se klanja Ljubljani (Slovenia Bows to Ljubljana), 1903,

oil on canvas,
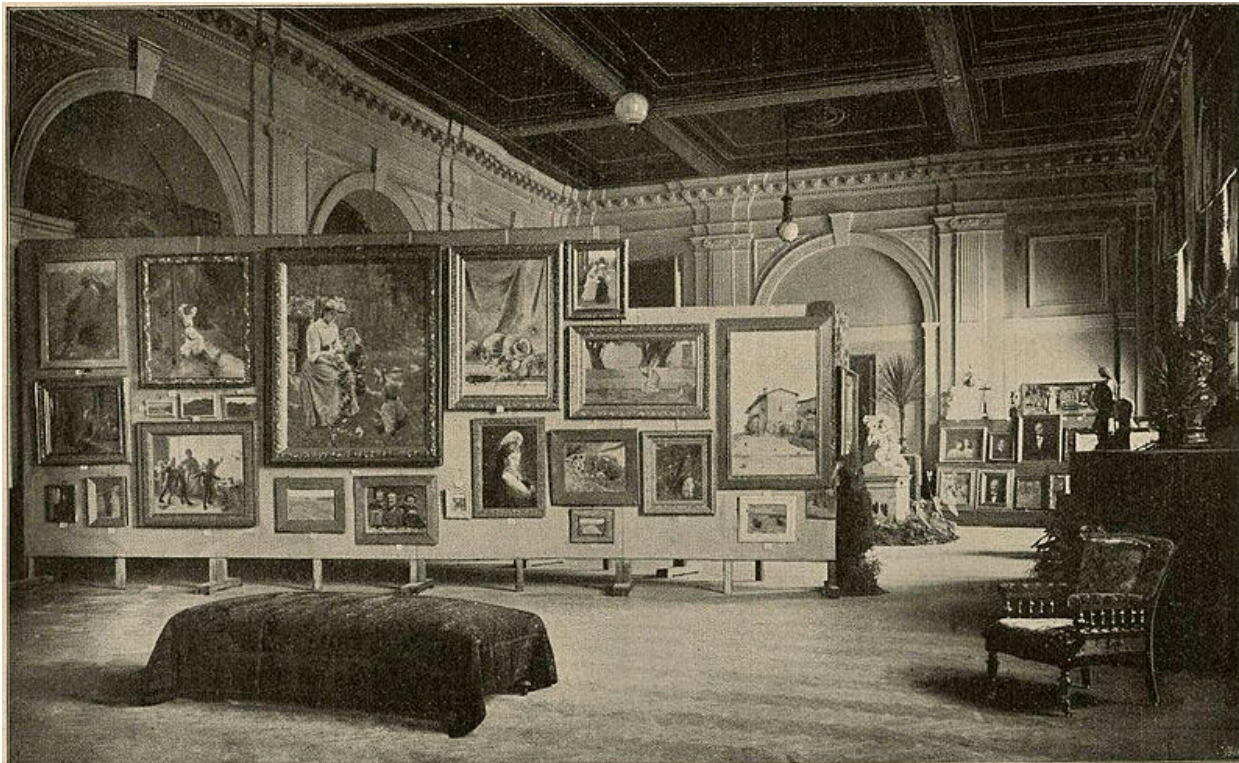
Ljubljana Town Hall,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-21: *Prva slovenska umetniška razstava v Ljubljani*

(First Exhibition of Slovene Art in Ljubljana), 1900,

Unknown photographer,

Public Domain

Fig-22: Rihard Jakopič,

Kopalke (Bathers), 1905,

Oil on canvas,

Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-23: Matija Jama,

Leo Souvan, 1900,

oil on canvas,

Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-24: Matej Sternen,

Rdeči parazol (The Red Parasol), 1904,

oil on canvas,

Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

Fig-25: Jakopič Pavilion (now demolished), c.1909,

Max Fabiani-architect,

 Tivoli Park, Ljubljana, Slovenia,
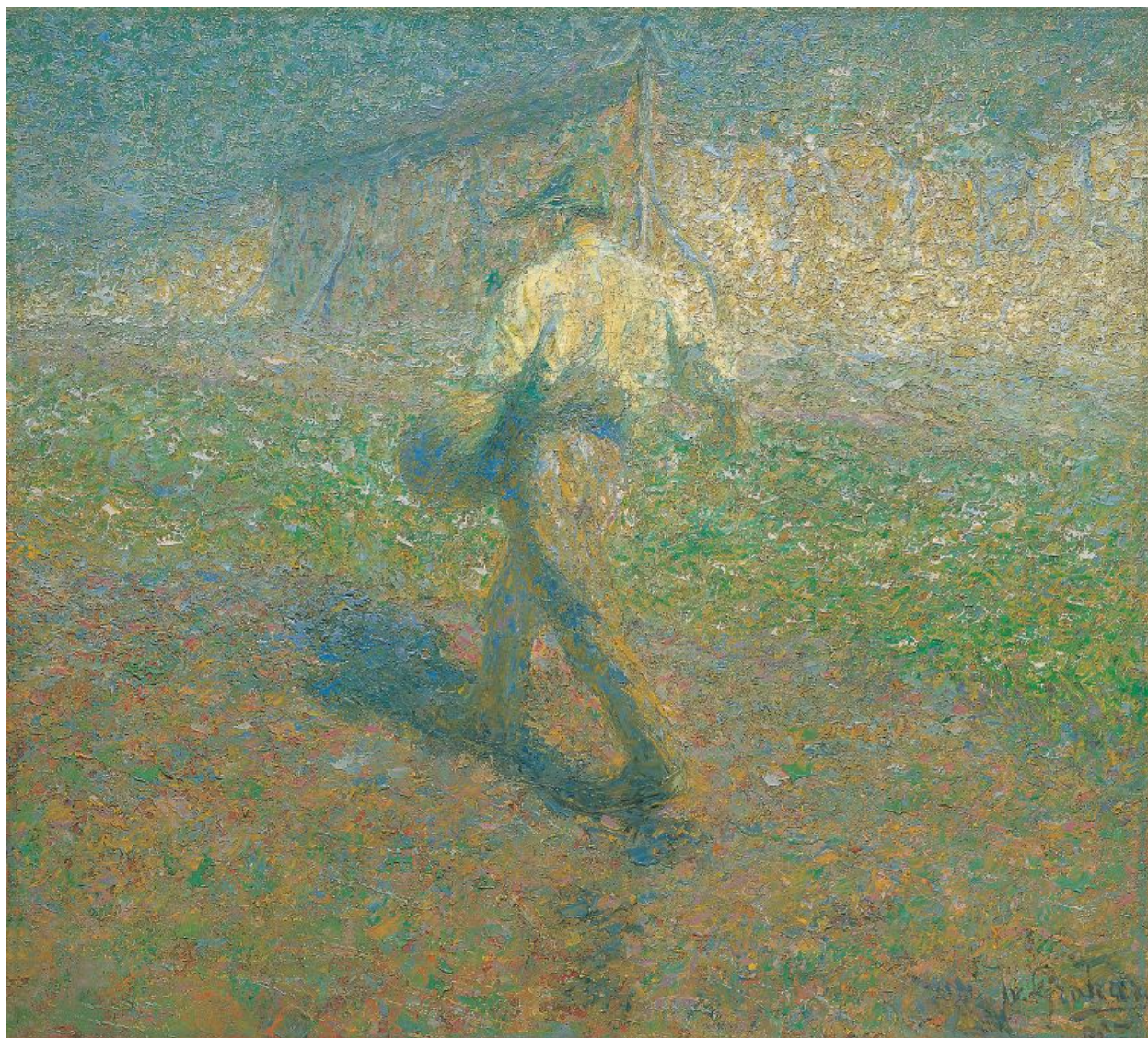
Photo, Fran Vesel, courtesy of dlib.si

Fig-26: Ivan Grohar,

Sejalec (Sower)*,* 1907,

oil on canvas,

Narodna Galerija,

Ljubljana, Slovenia

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