



20th Century Architecture: From Modernist to Contemporary Guide to Architecture



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## Architecture of the 20th Century

The present book is a somewhat different overview of 20th century architecture in Slovenia. The selection of presented buildings is austere since it was dictated by the purpose of the book and its scope. The selected works are not only the outstanding buildings that came into existence in Slovenia in the last century. The authors of the book, architects and art historians, have selected typical creations of the past, characteristic evidence of progress in land development, theoretical thinking and architecture in our surroundings. The purpose of this selection is to encourage public debate and conservation evaluation, and to facilitate better and more professional protection of all the outstanding historical buildings of the 20th century, not only cultural monuments and the creations of famous authors, the mainstays of the development of fine arts. The artistic value was one of the principles of selection, since individual buildings and entities are to be considered as to their function, social value and historical relevance. We attempted to include as many architects as possible and all regions of Slovenia.

The chronological context of the book is defined as the period after the First World War, since the architecture created before 1920 has already been presented in another publication within The European Heritage Days Series. The final chronological limit of the selection was close to the year 2000, although it is usually preferred to conclude the period somewhat earlier and evaluate the artefacts from a more distant point in time. The chronological definition of the beginning was further conditioned by a new creative enthusiasm after the First World War and the establishment of the first university in Slovenia in Ljubljana with a department of architecture. The beginning of the university coincided with the return of Jože Plečnik, the greatest authority of Slovene architecture, to Ljubljana. It was history together with the school of architecture that emphasized the importance of the Slovene capital and the Ljubljana School of Architecture named after it.

The present selection of Slovene architecture is not the first to be made, since several theoreticians, art historians (mostly conservators) and architects were engaged in the analysis of individual architectural periods, particularly in theoretical magazines. The magazine of the inter-war period was *Architecture (Arhitektura)*, to be followed by *Architect (Arhitekt)*, *Synthesis (Sinteza)* and *AB – Architect's Bulletin (Arhitektov Bilten)*, the only one still existing at present. France Stele was the first to treat 20th century architects as at least equal to other artists working in the fine arts in his *Outline of the History of Fine Arts of the Slovenes (Oris Zgodovine Umetnosti pri Slovencih)* that was pub-

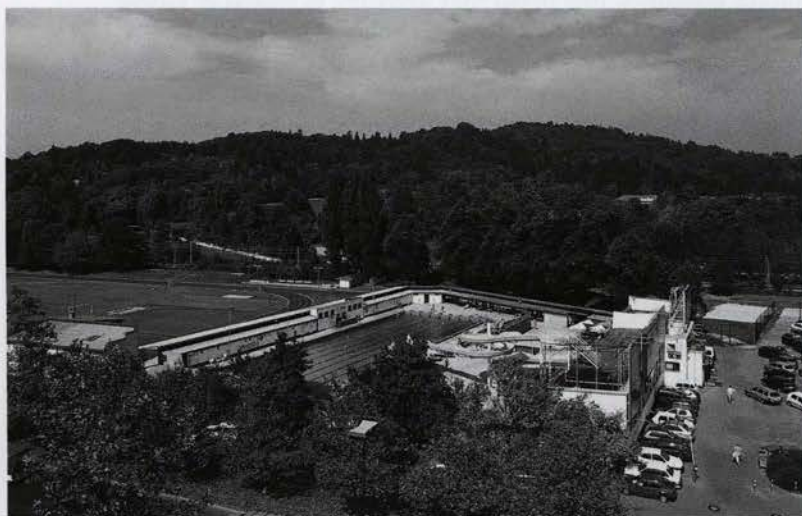
lished in serial form in the magazine *Home and the World* (*Dom in Svet*) in 1923. Conservator Stele did not shrink from the evaluation of contemporary architecture; he was aware that debate was vital for a better understanding of all historical buildings, for architectural creativity itself and conservation. The art historian Stele even wrote monographs on Plečnik, supervised his work and encouraged town planning. "Art as an expression of all-embracing national culture can only be based, in my opinion, on architectural art that subordinates all the energy to uniform formality and a qualitative trend."

The number of books on architecture in Slovenia increased after 1945 as well as the number of publications in magazines. Since the 1980s the number of publications is almost impossible to follow; some articles are published even in reputable foreign magazines. Nevertheless, books on architecture are still a rarity in Slovenia. A long pioneering study, without a strict selection yet with numerous valuable data, was the work of France Šijanec. Nace Šumi often wrote in-depth analyses and directed students towards the discussion of modern architecture. An indispensable basis of all the analyses of 20th century architecture was made by Stane Bernik in his catalogue to the 1945–78 exhibition that reached to the middle of the 1970s and linked the creativity of architects, photographers and designers. His evaluations were published in the *Views (Pogledi)* series. Architect Dušan Grabrijan presents a bridge between the moderate functionalism of the 1930s and the post-war creation, and the cosmopolitan Marjan Mušič next to him. The architects indispensable for Ljubljana are: Braco Mušič, Aleš Vodopivec, Marko Pozzeto and others. Various authors wrote monographs on Jože Plečnik, Maks Fabiani, Milan Mihelič, Ivan Vurnik, Vladimir Šubic, Edvard Ravnikar, Marko Mušič and Danilo Fürst and introduced their work to the general public. Individual books deal with regional characteristics or stylistic periods. There are few comprehensive analyses containing comparisons with the European context and no comprehensive overviews of all the layers of architectural creation. The history of the last century was dynamic in its search of new values and protection of the old ones. Let this book be an encouragement for the co-existence of architecture, both newly emerging and that recognized as our heritage by history and experts, yet as living heritage, the architecture of dignified functions of physical and spiritual existence.

Slovenia was not filled with new architecture after the First World War. With the exception of Ljubljana enriched with Secessionism [Art Nouveau], Historicism prevailed, a sterile search for a synthesis of the new inside the old framework. Jože Plečnik surpassed that boundary; he relied on the town planning principles of Maks Fabiani and rendered them a new significance in Ljubljana. He erected symbolic architecture that transformed the provincial city into a capital with a stadium, markets, accentuated bridges, a large library and a main cemetery. He creatively restored Roman town walls and carefully preserved an old bridge framed by new footbridges and balustrades of the Three Bridges (*Tromostovje*). He simultaneously worked in Prague and transposed the models from Hradčani Castle to his native city or used the regulations of Ljubljana as tests for his Czech solutions. Plečnik did not work in Ljubljana only; his personal

impression on the Prekmurje region in north-eastern Slovenia was the church in Bogojina and his tribute to the then capital of Yugoslavia was the great Church of St. Antony in Belgrade, a pendant to Avala by Ivan Meštrović.

The inter-war period was a break-through of new ideas and materials. Modernism, usually termed functionalism here, assumed various theoretical and practical principles in Slovenia and transformed the town planning theory, introducing garden towns, workers' communities (the so-called colonies), and the marking of zones and types



Stanko Bloudek: Ilirija Baths, Ljubljana 1929–1931

of buildings that did not exist before. The modern villa with a flat roof appeared, a residential tower block, industrial workshop, cinema auditorium, and various sports buildings. Functionalism and its variations became the leading style of Slovene architecture in the 1930s and prevailed until the 1960s. Socialist realism was only a variation of the basic functionalist trend with its forms and materials. The same holds true of conservation that developed with France Stele and Marjan Mušič into a coordinated, theoretically and practically open branch based on experiences of the renovation of the Gothic church on Ptujška Gora, the monastery of Friars Minor in Ptuj and individual castles. It began with the renovation of castles that were demolished and abandoned under the new regime in the economic and political sense and of discriminated churches.

In the Kingdom of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, and subsequent pre-war Yugoslavia, the structure of investors changed. The Catholic Church that used to assume a leading position enabling it to follow international trends and invite important European architects became a marginal investor under the new regime of religious plurality and often also the instigator of poor taste and models. Except for few commissions, primarily of religious orders to Jože Plečnik, the level of quality decreased. The quality was partly preserved by some students of Plečnik, who regrettably fell into decorativism in view of political pressure after the Second World War and lesser creativity. With the exception of the unique church ambience in Dravlje in

Ljubljana (by architect Marko Mušič) the once leading field was directed into forced transformations of former churches, in the construction of combined functions and gaudy accumulation of forms and materials.

Self-confident and rich citizens and artists sought their new dwellings in villas with gardens. Workers' colonies were constructed according to financial resources, the ambitions of individual factory owners and new living standards, from bathrooms to central heating. More economic floor plans were gradually introduced, as well as kitchen appliances. New trends were developed in parallel by various architects. Josip Costaperaria found his source of inspiration in worldly models by Maks Fabiani, France Tomšič developed from the core of Plečnik's school and the influence of Le Corbusier, Ivan Vurnik and his students rejected the ornamentation of Secessionism and followed the social housing of Vienna, Vladimir Šubic developed the Prague School and the social models of Vienna into Classicist Modernism realized in the cases of the Skyscraper (Nebotičnik) in Ljubljana, workers' huts and cinema auditoriums. Avgust Černigoj stimulated changes in his own way by provocative experiments and models, Jaroslav Černigoj, together with Aleksander Dev, planned a modern bank, and Ivo Spinčič spread the echo of Bauhaus. Emil Navišek created the floor plan of a school without corridors, and the Bata factory owner created the facade with a series of continuous windows of the modern department store. A special occurrence, often forgotten at present, was the architect and designer of the first Slovene automobiles and airplanes, Stanko Bloudek. He designed the Ilirija Baths in Ljubljana and, together with construction engineer Rožman, the ski jumps in Planica that have far exceeded the size and glory of the Skyscraper in the contemporary Europe. New functionalist buildings came into existence in the coastal region as a reflection of the official fascist state. Schools, railway stations and industrial buildings were constructed in Italy. Doblar power plant, the blocks in Anhovo and individual villas have preserved their functionalism with a touch of fascist ideology that has rendered impossible any objective critical evaluation ever since.

After his arrival at the University of Ljubljana, Plečnik created the firm basis of the Ljubljana School of Architecture together with Vurnik as his partner and competitor. Painters and sculptors had to attend academies in Zagreb, Belgrade or even in Prague, while the young architects studied at home. Their influence and number can be traced in the field of culture to the present since they have become the leading town planners, civil servants, planners, professors, designers, writers, film directors and set designers. Few of them were educated in Vienna, some individuals even returned from there disappointed like Edvard Ravnikar. The separation from Italian schools was more prominent due to political circumstances, while French influences became so only after the Second World War. The quest for the Slovene, Slavic and Classical roots was the secret principle even in artistic forms, at least in decorative sculpture and architecture. The grief of the Slovenes cut away from the sea and the Karst region emanates from the red stones on the facades of the National and University Library in Ljubljana (NUK). Symbolic heads of the lares were



erected in the foyer of the Skyscraper, St. George on the block in Miklošičeva Ulica (Miklošič Street) killed the dragon, and the bronze Moses on the National and University Library led the chosen people into the future.

The Second World War created a smaller caesura in architecture than in other arts in Slovenia. The post-war heyday was based on knowledge, principles and even materials developed after 1941. The National and University Library and the Museum of Modern Art (Moderna Galerija) were the links with the past: both the buildings were restored and completed after 1945. Some methods of work were new, like the striking or sudden construction of roads and buildings in the new collectivized "social property". These "shock" works left traces in co-operative construction and the independently organized self-help of local citizens, in construction during weekends, even in the professionally very questionable voluntary restoration of cultural monuments. A system of numerous DIY magazines supported such building as well as standardised planning and replacement construction. Banal construction prevailed with the encouragement of illegal buildings and their legalization in the new state of Slovenia, without any consideration for the heritage or architecture or even areas not designated for building.

The self-confidence of the liberators in the Second World War introduced a new generation of architects – partisan winners. Edvard Ravnikar, a member of the Liberation Front and a student of Plečnik, assumed the leading position at the School of Architecture. Two former partisans played important roles as professors: Boris Kobe and Edo Mihevc, and several others among the students: Vlasto Kopač, Svetozar Križaj and others. The School developed and gradually became independent. The basic town planning principles of garden towns could be fulfilled with the help of politics. The town of Nova Gorica came into existence in an open field, the Litostroj industrial quarter on the periphery of Ljubljana and the students' quarter in Rožna Dolina. The mining town of Velenje followed, as well as the factories in Kidričevo, on the coast and elsewhere. Architects enjoyed some privileges derived from their pre-war reputation and their links with the regime. They could plan abstract forms of public monuments and buildings. Plečnik was marginalized, although decorated with awards (e.g. the national Prešeren Award). The old architect helped with the renovation of monuments damaged during the war: the bombed National and University Library and the churches in Stranje and Železniki. He created a summer theatre out of a mediaeval monastery of the Teutonic Knights in Križanke in Ljubljana. His method of work, knowledge of the materials, procedures and balanced proportions and his ability to create new entities out of known elements left a heritage of an independent field of renovation of monuments to his followers. Individual students took over the works to be renovated and influenced the service for the protection of cultural monuments until the late 1980s, apart from their prominent guidance of the school and search for new trends. The outstanding individuals were: Anton Bitenc, Boris Kobe, Marjan Mušič, Vlasto Kopač, Špelka Valentinčič, Staša Blažič and Nataša Šumi. Oton Jugovec was an exception with his idiosyncratic concepts. The most

prominent personality for years had been Marjan Mušič who lectured at the Faculty of Architecture and co-operated in the renovation of cultural monuments in the then Yugoslavia and in Egypt. So far he is the only conservator who has proved successful outside of Slovenia.

Other architects were among the outstanding creators in Yugoslavia with new daring works that are among the best architectural achievements of Slovenia and could be presented in an independent book. Individual architects who succeeded abroad mostly worked in non-aligned countries on account of their political and building industry connections rather than actual quality architecture. Nonetheless, some individuals, e.g. Edvard Ravnikar and Janez Kobe, imposed their style on individual buildings from Baghdad to Belarus.

Before their break-through abroad, architects had to prove themselves successful at home. The post-war boom with the construction of carefully landscaped roads, industrial complexes and large residential areas and schools was of great help to them. The construction of the Commercial Exhibition Centre (Gospodarsko Razstavišče) in the 1950s was backed by financial and political support so that concrete and glass could encourage new forms of the last echoes of Modernism. The construction was not only a Slovene denial of socialist and emotional realism since the architects led the way ahead and created the first large new square in the capital city of Ljubljana. The architect was Branko Simčič with assistants. A subtle attitude towards cultural heritage was simultaneously confirmed by the Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius by Jože Plečnik. It was moved to a new location, which has remained a unique occurrence in Slovenia to the present.

The post-war period could be named, with some poetic licence, the era of Edvard Ravnikar. He and his school marked Slovene architecture of the second half of the 20th century. Ravnikar became prominent with tenders in the then Slovenia, Yugoslavia and abroad. His position was finally established after the completion of the monument complex on the isle of Rab in Croatia, the construction of the Regional People's Committee in Kranj and winning the tender for Trg Revolucije (Revolution Square) in Ljubljana. His charisma had emanated from the Ljubljana School of Architecture for long, so much so that it lost its prominence after he moved away. Successful architects mostly established their own bureaus and set new, very high architectural standards with their younger assistants.

The 1960s was the period of the most diverse creativity in architecture and probably the pinnacle of Slovene architecture of the second half of the 20th century. Artists wrenched out of the austere framework and began planning in stylistic variations and syntheses. The characteristics of the School became prominent again with the sensible structures by Savin Sever, with combinations of materials and careful facade coverings with masterly details by Stanko Kristl and others. Milan Mihelič was an idiosyncratic follower of the Ravnikar School. With the recognizable elements of his teacher and a careful structure, he came close to the minimalist surfaces of the painter Donald Judd with the facade of the department store in Osijek, Croatia. He further surpassed foreign and native models with the glass facade of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange in Ljubljana. Regionalism was among the prominent trends in

Slovenia; the inclusion of regional features in the construction of buildings that were carefully planned as far as their floor plans and functions. The Prisank Hotel by Lajovic in Kranjska Gora is an outstanding example, as well as the Šorli Cottage on Krim and the works by the Kras Group. The latter was guided by Vojteh Ravnikar through Postmodern forms to minimalism and towards new attempts of connecting landscape and architecture in individual villas, in the Teharje Monument and Srebrniče Cemetery.

Architects often faced the search of a synthesis of the new and the old. Andrej Kemr created a restaurant out of the abandoned walls of Laško Castle without any support from magazines. His further achievement was one of the most comprehensive galleries for sculpture by Boljka in Volčji Potok, created out of a former tool shed. The planning of Jurij Kobe was at the limits of the impossible when he designed a functional museum out of the Baroque Cekin Castle (Cekinov Grad) in Ljubljana and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs out of the Secessionist school for girls (Mladika).

Marko Mušič follows the challenges of the development of the archaeological network of the Roman city of Emona at the location of present-day Ljubljana, so dear to Edvard Ravnikar. Mušič attempts to join elements of Slovene culture by the National and University Library and thus connect the remnants of the past with the requirements of contemporary architecture.

GOJKO ZUPAN

## Preservation of 20th Century Architectural Heritage

### Starting-points for discussion

The relationship between modern architecture and conservation is usually understood as an opposition between two different views on the area we live in. The purpose of conservators is to preserve the values of the “historical environment” in the name of the public interest. Architects, on the other hand, create primarily new values by interventions in the built-up area or the “green belt”. It is typical of the circumstances in Slovenia that the monument protection service employs fewer architects than art historians, that there is a general lack of architects qualified for work on architectural heritage and that the study of “conservation” at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (Filozofska Fakulteta), Faculty of Architecture and other institutions is not connected. That may be one of the reasons for the seemingly unbridgable gap between the two professional circles. Such a state of affairs actually harms both. Instead they should divide the work and co-operate to reach a common solution for urgent problems.

After careful consideration it turns out that modern architecture and conservation have more in common as can be concluded on the basis of their present insistence on their contrasting positions. Both fields have their roots in the 19th century. Monument protection was firmly connected with architecture while it was still on the level of conservation in its development. Let me point out only two personalities: Violet-le-Duc and Friedrich von Schmidt. An increasingly antagonistic attitude has developed between architecture and conservation since the turn of the 19th century. The first forerunner was



Miloš Bonča, store, Hrastnik 1962–1965; heavily transformed at present

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Georg Dehio with his principal opposition to the reconstruction of Heidelberg Castle (Dehio 1988: 34–42). If we limit our attention to the circumstances in Slovenia, it could be said that monument protection developed a rather reserved, if not negative attitude towards modern architecture since France Stele.<sup>1</sup> Research on Secessionist architecture revealed several examples of rejected architectural projects due to their supposed questionable character as far as monument protection characteristics were concerned.

There were severe complications with the construction of the Great Coffee-House (Velika Kavarna) (Pirkovič, Mihelič 1997: 26), the Scherbaum mansion in Maribor (Pirkovič 1997: 11) and the Drogenig house in Ljubljana. At present these architectural “encroachments” do not seem so questionable by far as they were at the time of their appearance – rather the contrary is true: it could be said that they fulfilled their architectural function and contributed to the contiguity of the urban area. The principle of Alois Riegl confirms such an attitude: the artistic values are relative since they depend on contemporary sensitivity and the trends and convictions of their propagators (Riegl 1988: 46). It should only be added that the same holds true of their values as monuments.

When speaking of the common background of architecture and conservation, the intention of both to create monuments for future generations should be mentioned as well as their tendency to establish creations in an “empty space”, out of context. However, let us not discuss the question that Dehio considered as a “family scandal” (Dehio 1988: 97–98).<sup>2</sup>

We are interested in another kind of attitude, the one concerning the preservation of modern architecture as a contribution to the quality, recognizability and variety of the historical environment. In a word, we are going to talk of 20th century architectural heritage.

The theme is fairly new in our circumstances. Conservators and architects are prompted to consider the preservation of the latest architectural creations by increasingly common demolitions and inappropriate interventions in modern architecture. Instances of past demolitions of the works of the beginners of Slovene architecture were quietly taken into account: the House of the Falcons [pre-war left-wing gymnastics society; Sokolski Dom] by Vurnik in Kranj, the baths in Radovljica, or Plečnik’s gingerbread store in Kongresni Trg in Ljubljana. The demolition of the MPs Club (Klub Poslancev) by Marko Župančič shocked experts in 1991 since it was sacrificed for the extension of the National Gallery (Narodna Galerija). Less is known of the transformations of the store by Miloš Bonča in Hrastnik and of the lost interiors of numerous public buildings, shops and flats.

Even less is done when instances of important Secessionist, Art Deco, Modernist and other buildings are falling into decay due to

- 
- 1 That does not hold true of Jože Plečnik and France Stele. However, their relationship cannot be described as that of architect/conservator but rather as creator/interpreter.
  - 2 What I have in mind is the quotation by Dehio speaking of conservation as a legitimate child and of architectural restoration of monuments as an illegitimate child of its time.

negligence, lack of maintenance or even vandalism.

The intention to remove the Workshops (Učne Delavnice) in Bežigrad in Ljubljana was more publicized. Architects launched a campaign to save the building – but in vain: it was pulled down last year. A positive consequence of this act was a project to document and evaluate modern Slovene architecture, which was carried out at the Faculty of Architecture and the results were published in book form (by Gregorič, Koselj and Zorec).

Models of the successful preservation, renovation and revival of architectural monuments of our time do exist in other cultural environments, for instance, in Austria. Although their monument protection is probably more conservative than ours, a planned renovation of Viennese Secessionism and Modernism and also of the social housing construction of the 1920s and 1930s was instigated more than a century ago. Moreover, a typical example of post-war “official functionalism” was renovated perfectly in 1994: the building of the District Head Office in Horn, Niederösterreich (built between 1957 and 1959) including the interior furnishings and artistic decorations (Madritsch 1995: 107–110).

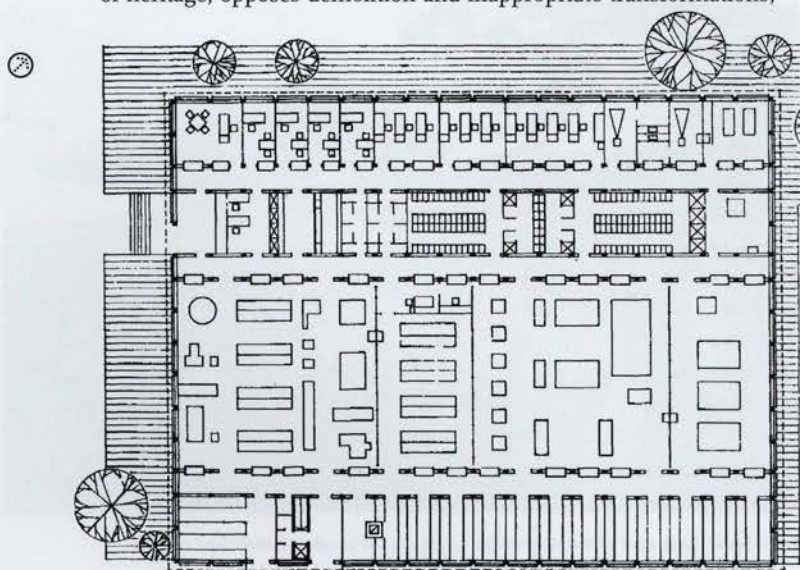
Two organized international initiatives for the preservation of 20th century architectural heritage should be mentioned. The first was launched and led by the Council of Europe. During the preparation of a basic international instrument for the protection of architectural heritage of Europe, which was to become the Granada Convention, it became clear that the notion of heritage had to be expanded so as to include the so far discriminated varieties and develop common principles for their protection. Thus the European ministers responsible for the cultural heritage passed the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe at the Third European Conference of Ministers in Granada in 1985 (Petrič 2000: 74–89). From the point of view of the relationship between modern architecture and conservation, Article 17 is of importance stipulating that the Convention states are to exchange information on their policies governing the preservation of heritage including the encouragement of architectural creativity as a contribution of our time to the heritage of Europe.

A further resolution was passed for the promotion of architectural heritage as a factor contributing to living standards (Second European Conference of Ministers 1998: 40–41). The governments of the member states of the Council of Europe were recommended to include the architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries in their policy of preservation, particularly technical and industrial architecture with the surrounding areas. A proposal was made to prepare studies at the European level with the purpose of defining the chronological, qualitative and typological criteria suitable for the heritage of that kind.

In co-operation with the Austrian Federal Office for Monument Protection The Council of Europe organized a colloquy under the title “Twentieth-Century Architectural Heritage: Strategies for its Preservation and Promotion” in Vienna in 1989. A special group of experts prepared the text of the Recommendation that was passed by the Committee of Ministers with the Council of Europe. That was Recommendation No. R (91) 13 on the protection of 20th century architectural heritage. It included the basic principles for a planned regis-

tration, the criteria of selection, measures for normative and physical protection, administration, development of the public awareness and international co-operation in this field.

The second international initiative is known under the name **DOCOMOMO** – an international association for the documentation and preservation of buildings, areas and neighbourhoods of modern migrations.<sup>3</sup> **DOCOMOMO** draws the attention of the general public to the importance of architectural heritage and town planning, encourages the collection of data and sources about it, develops the preservation of heritage, opposes demolition and inappropriate transformations,



Savin Sever, floor plan of the workshops of the Institute for Deaf Children (Zavod za Gluho Mladino), Ljubljana 1963–1964; demolished in 2000 (scale 7:3mm = 1m)

raises funds for the documentation and preservation and disseminates the knowledge of modern migrations.<sup>4</sup>

### Definition of 20th century architectural heritage

The current regulation on the protection of cultural heritage in Slovenia does not contain any stipulations that would hinder the inclusion of 20th century architecture in heritage, regardless of its architectural typology, time of origin, condition or the size of the area it occupies.

However, only few (individual) works of living architects have experienced the benefit of being declared scheduled monuments. Thus the Ljubljanska Banka head office by Edvard Ravnikar in Trg Republike (Republic Square) in Ljubljana was declared an urban monument in 1989. However, the declaration did not suffice to en-

3 The website of **DOCOMOMO** is at the address: <http://www.bk.tudelft.nl/docomomo/>

4 Quoted after the Eindhoven Declaration passed at the founding congress of **DOCOMOMO** in 1990. There are members of the organization in Slovenia as well. **DOCOMOMO** publishes a magazine with selected themes from the field of protection and preservation; it is available in the library of the Cultural Heritage Office in Ljubljana.

force the protective regulations when essential works were performed in the interior. The MPs Club by Župančič enjoyed the protection of the same decree, yet it was pulled down – regrettably even with the consent of the architect and the respective monument protection office.

There are three reasons why such buildings are not included in the monument protection procedures. The first and foremost is the difficulty of recognizing modern architecture as a monument protection problem – conservators are simply not qualified for it. The second reason is the general negative attitude of the public to modern



Savin Sever, floor plan of the workshops, Ljubljana 1963–1964; demolished in 2000

architecture and town planning – a problem we shall discuss later. The third reason is the inarticulate attitude of the architects themselves towards “their” history and, to be honest, towards cultural heritage in general.

The first and the third reasons are connected with the fact that architecture and urban planning in Slovenia in the 19th and 20th centuries have hardly been investigated. No comprehensive study has been made on the problems of construction, commissioning, the role of the state and towns in urban planning, education of architects and builders, lifestyle in urban areas, internal design and the like. Ljubljana has been satisfactorily investigated, while the rest of Slovenia has remained relatively unknown. Among the architects, Jože Plečnik was the most discussed subject of scholars, Maks Fabiani and Ivan Vurnik to a lesser extent, while other individuals and phenomena are only of marginal importance to architects and art historians.

Why should we discuss architecture and urban planning in Slovenia in the 19th and 20th centuries? In my opinion, the present is connected with the 19th century to a much greater extent than it is generally accepted and, additionally, most of the characteristics that supposedly distinguish modern architecture from the architecture of previous periods actually have their roots or origins in the 19th century. What I have in mind is the social, functional and technical dimensions of architectural phenomena and primarily the common system of values (Maroevič 1990: 147–149). However, structural in-



novations are not to be sought in academic architecture, but in the engineering tasks of the construction. On the other hand, the first signs of utilitarianism, a sense of order and minimalism can be traced in the official Austrian architecture of the 19th century – and there are several other parallels and similarities.

The “evolutionary” paradigm of modern architecture is certainly not new; it has been discussed since Henry Russell Hitchcock (Hitchcock 1958). In the case of Slovenia, the overview is hindered primarily by the prejudice that Slovene architecture began only with Maks Fabiani, Ivan



(John) Jager, Jože Plečnik and Ivan Vurnik, although the main infrastructural elements and industrial buildings did not come into existence at the turn of the 19th century. My point is that national perspective actually poses a limitation for the investigation of broader horizons and evaluation of the phenomena as an entity.

The second hurdle is the paradigm of “stylistic development”. It is typical primarily of those architectural historians who discuss the stages of the development of a style or movement and neglect the untypical, regional, local or otherwise characteristic architectural phenomena. The case of Plečnik in Slovenia – from rejection of his work to promotion of his architecture as an internationally recognized icon – has probably taught us the lesson not to depend on the “progressionist model” only.

The definition of 20th century architecture as cultural heritage must take into account its chronological definition. An overview of the protective policy of member states of the Council of Europe indicates that most of the regulations do not recognize chronological limitations. The only exceptions are Portugal and San Marino since their legislation does not facilitate the protection of modern architecture.<sup>5</sup> In Great Britain, more precisely in England, the limitation of thirty years was applied in practice until recently to be abolished for exceptional cases in 1988. Nevertheless, the entire monument protec-

5 The website of the Council of Europe with reports of national policies on the preservation of cultural heritage is at the address: <http://culture.coe.fr/pat/eng/patlist.htm>

tion fund includes less than 0.1 percent of buildings constructed after 1945 (Macdonald 1996: 10). In the USA, for instance, the first work by Frank Lloyd Wright, the house of Thomas Hardy in Racine in Wisconsin, was entered in the register of historical places only in 1974, 15 years after the death of the architect and 69 years after its construction. The attitude towards modern heritage has substantially improved in the USA in the last quarter of the century.

The chronological limit in monument literature is best known from the proposal of the Austrian Bill from 1904 drafted by Alois Riegl (Bacher 1995: 115).<sup>6</sup> Riegl took into account primarily practical reasons, i.e. the large quantity of modern architectural output that hinders a serious scientific approach in the collection and documentation of important buildings. The same consideration is even more valid at present. On the other hand, the fact remains that distance in time contributes to a more objective evaluation. It alleviates the psychological effects of superficial enthusiasm over novelty as well as superficial rejection of everything “out of fashion” and also of emotional rediscovery of “lost time”. Thus the present middle generation is characterized by a typical yearning for the time of their youth encouraged primarily by the entertainment industry and manifested in the collection and revival of the styles of the 1950s and 1960s. However, the veritable heritage of those times is falling into decay so rapidly that there is hardly anything left, except for the bits and pieces that museums manage to collect.

The overview of 20th century architecture in Slovenia in the present book contains primarily the “main stream” of architectural creativity. It does not include all the types characteristic of the previous century. The part that I miss most is industrial and engineering architecture – with the exception of the sports stand in Ljudski Vrt (People’s Gardens) in Maribor by Pipan. The outstanding industrial buildings of the modern period should include at least some examples: the Rog factory in Ljubljana, Doblar power plant near Most na Soči, the silo in Zalog, Hall A of the TAM factory in Maribor by architect Milan Černigoj, the Litostroj complex in Ljubljana by Edo Mihevc and Miroslav Gregorič, the complex of Kidričevo by Danilo Fürst and some bridges on the motorways in Slovenia. The same holds true of social housing construction by Ivan Vurnik represented only by the workers’ colony in Maribor. In the future the architectural and urban plans of individual periods are to be evaluated as well as larger infrastructure facilities (e.g. the so-called “Road of Fraternity and Unity” through the then Yugoslavia), not to mention shopping centres and entertainment and tourist complexes to be focused on a few decades later.

The qualitative definition is even more important than the chronological and typological ones, which is true of cultural heritage in general. I have written several papers on the fact that evaluation is the core of conservation procedures. Let me therefore discuss the criteria suitable for such an evaluation. But first some light must be shed on the basic prejudices that hinder the positive evaluation of 20th cen-

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6 Monuments are defined in Article 1 as anything made by human hands that is older than 60 years.

ture architectural heritage. The negative attitude of the general public towards modern architecture was mentioned above. People have difficulty in comprehending modern art in general. That is perhaps more understandable in the case of the visual arts, literature and music, since they often employ an hermetic expression or art for art's sake. However, it is astonishing in the case of architecture that most of the buildings are built for people, yet they fail to appropriate them. The buildings seem too utopian, alienated and mechanical. However, these are the characteristics that feature at the core of the Modernist movement. Utopia as a non-place, unconnected with memory and tradition, is one of the unconscious foundations of modern architecture; its alienation is the mirror-image of modern society, yet I am not going to discuss any mechanical architectural metaphors here.

It is also true that there are some instances of modern architecture in the world that have achieved exceptional popularity and are visited by masses of tourists: the Sydney Opera House, the Hundertwasser house in Vienna (although not by an architect) or the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao by Frank O. Gehry. However, there is no such example on a smaller scale in Slovenia. Again with the only exception of Jože Plečnik, yet more as an attraction for tourists than a native audience.

The second reason for a negative evaluation undoubtedly lies in the fact that a large amount of architecture in Slovenia after 1945 is burdened with ideology. What I have in mind is a series of monuments of the National Liberation Movement (NOB), the Parliament building by Vinko Glanz, transformation of Bled Villa and Brdo Castle and a series of complexes in larger towns in Slovenia: from the most notorious "improvement" of Koper [an ancient coastal city inhabited mostly by Italians before the Second World War] with tower blocks to the monumental Trg Republike (Republic Square) in the capital of Ljubljana. As for the first case, I believe the time has come when the tower blocks should be removed. The rest are to be treated with caution; their ideological origins are no reason for *damnatio memoriae* that regrettably takes place with the removal of the Slovene socialist arms in the Rohrman office building in Gregorčičeva Ulica in Ljubljana, with the transformation of the great hall of the Parliament building and elsewhere.

As far as the criteria of evaluation are concerned, I shall point out three principles. The first is based on the traditional Viennese, or more precisely, Riegl's doctrine of values. Andreas Lehne from the Austrian Federal Institute for Monument Protection analysed the validity of such an evaluation for present use and for 20th century heritage (*Twentieth-Century Architectural Heritage* 1989). His general assumption was that the Riegl system was still useful on account of its universality. The only difficulty is that the aesthetic criteria are in the foreground due to the lack of distance in time and, worse still, it easily happens that the artefacts are evaluated through the prism of "prominent names" with prominence often being the result of good marketing and "unbiased" support of experts gathered in tender juries, commissions for awards, editorial boards of magazines, etc. Lehne therefore legitimately admonishes that in evaluating modern architecture conservators must take into account various criteria

other than the aesthetic, ranging from social and historical significance to the broader cultural importance of a particular creation. Another aspect must be emphasized in this context. Only realized plans are valid, i.e. those actually located in real life. The genesis of planning can only be of secondary importance, as an insight into the intentions of architects, while the evaluation must concentrate on the material substance in space including all the incomplete features, deficiencies and limitations.

The second view of the criteria is more pragmatic. It was formed as an aid by English Heritage at the beginning of the 1990s when it was commissioned to establish the foundations for the evaluation of modern architecture. It concerns primarily general recommendations on how to select artefacts for monument protection with regard to their architectural quality, innovation in the technical or conceptual sense, rarity or connection with a historical personality or event (Stratton 1997: 7). The third view is formalized in the above-mentioned Recommendation of the Council of Europe on the protection of 20th century architectural heritage (Second European Conference of Ministers 1998: 206).

The Recommendation emphasizes the importance of criteria as generally as possible that facilitate choice regardless of architectural styles, typology, materials or fame of the architect. The evaluation is to take account not only of the aesthetic criteria, but also of the contribution to the political, cultural, economic and social history and development of technology. The fact that some creations are actually repetitions, doublets, should not be considered as a negative criterion. A typical example is the Giles-Scott telephone booth in Great Britain; about a thousand of them are protected at the local level. In Slovenia, this category includes artefacts of urban features, typical blocks of flats, garages, maybe some individual houses, etc. The Recommendation also highlights the importance of evaluating the interior, not only the exterior of architectural creations.

In view of these reflections I can estimate the validity of the criteria that I have recently drafted as a basis for conservation practice of that kind (Pirkovič 1993: 118–122). Let me recapitulate them here:

- the criterion concerning the architect and development that facilitates the selection of exceptional individual works and areas;
- the typological criterion concerning the typical, standard nature of a particular phenomenon and its clarity;
- the criterion of historical expression concerning the importance of buildings and areas as the environment where prominent personalities worked or witnessed historical events and processes (actual or symbolic);
- the cultural-civilisational criterion that facilitates the evaluation of past phenomena connected with the present culture and history and their contribution to variety and interrelation of various cultural influences;
- the spatial criterion that determines the role of a concrete artefact or area in its physical, experiential, social and economic environment.

I assume that the criterion concerning the architect and development is to be applied with caution since a lack of distance in time easily leads to the employment of current aesthetic and personal

judgments. My recommendation is therefore to apply primarily the typological, cultural, civilisational and spatial criteria in the evaluation of modern architecture as cultural heritage. Thus a broader range of phenomena of various trends and creative idioms shall be included that merit at least minimal protection. In a few decades, conservators, together with architects and the general public, shall be able to undertake a more precise evaluation and selection of the outstanding monuments from a broader range of possibilities.

### Protective measures

#### Opposition between monument protection and copyright

Numerous instances abroad and at home indicate that the protection of modern architecture often causes doubts on whether it is necessary at all since the creations of living architects are already protected by copyright laws. The same consideration prevailed in the decision whether to protect the Ljubljanska Banka head office in Trg Republike in Ljubljana as an individual monument. In several cases architects agreed with substantial transformations to their works, apart from the consent of Marko Župančič for the removal of the MPs Club, especially if they were invited to participate as planners. The fact that copyrights in Slovenia are valid for fifty years after the death of the signatory poses an additional difficulty. In such cases the heirs must agree with the intervention, although no prerogatives in planning can be asserted.

In Denmark the complications with the two forms of protection are pragmatically solved: in the case of living architects the monument protection policy can only supervise transformations of a technical and functional nature and not any formally-aesthetic changes that are under the prerogative of copyright (*Twentieth-Century Architectural Heritage* 1989: 82). If that principle were put into force in Slovenia in cases similar to the intention of Edvard Ravnikar to extend and transform the layout of his work in Ljubljana from 1939 at the behest of the National Gallery, the monument protection service could demand the preservation of the principal features of the Museum of Modern Art.

#### Documentation, recording and legal protection

The basic purpose of the broad campaign for the protection of 20th century architecture is primarily to collect basic data for the fund and to investigate it. The main protective measure is therefore to ensure the protection of documentation in a suitable manner. The authors of such documents, i.e. architects, their bureaux, planning companies and administration, are to be informed to keep models, plans and other documents on various media for the purposes of monument protection. The attempt was made some time ago to draft such recommendations at a meeting of the Archival Society of Slovenia (*Arhivi IX*, 1986).

It would be extremely useful to continue the records of such heritage in the manner and form presented in the publication *Recording and Evaluation of the Buildings of Modern Architecture between 1945–1970*. The deficiency of the publication is that it does not include the entire 20th century since it summarizes already published results

without the inclusion of all architectural types and purposes of construction and without the interiors and it does not cover all the regions of Slovenia to the same degree.

More precise records present a common task for architects and conservators so as to create the foundation for the inclusion of modern architecture in the Collective Heritage Register and for the future scheduling of monuments. The records would also play an important role in the development of public opinion on the importance of modern architecture as part of a quality environment.

### Directing changes

Most people are prejudiced against monument protection with the argument that it maintains a certain condition and prevents normal life in a protected building. So far monument protection might actually have been too rigid in the insistence to "preserve the material substance, layout and appearance" and lack of consideration for justifiable demands on the part of the people for changes brought about by the way of life. Modern monument protection is based on different premises. Our purpose is not to oppose changes but to direct and plan them in dialogue with all the participants in such a way as to bring about positive effects for the people, heritage and the environment in general. Modern architectural heritage must also be adapted to new uses, expectations and demands. New uses must certainly be sought within the range of the same or similar functions for which the building was constructed. If that is not possible, new functions suitable to the building must be sought. Most damage to architectural heritage is caused by leaving the buildings empty and abandoned for long periods of time.

Difficulties occur in cases where the structure is difficult to adapt to a new usage for various reasons. Modern architecture cannot be compared to traditional buildings as to its adaptability. The same holds true of the monumental Historicist architecture of the 19th century. A case in point was the former Savings Bank (Mestna Hranilnica) in Maribor: it was adapted by architect Boris Podrecca for the head office of the University of Maribor. The building was erected by architect Adolf Baltzer between 1881 and 1886.

Although modern architecture is functional by definition, it is its specialized nature for specific purposes that hinders its adaptability to new functions. Once their use expires, it is impossible to use them in their entirety, except as museums. The size of the buildings is sometimes also a problem, such as industrial complexes, hospitals and barracks. However, there are numerous instances of new uses for industrial, technical and utilitarian complexes worldwide, e.g. the adaptation of one of the gas storage facilities in Vienna for a discotheque or the renovation of the old ropeworks in Turku in Finland from 1934 into an academy of music (*Tomorrow's Heritage* 1999: 40–41).<sup>7</sup> In Slovenia, such endeavours have only been begun and have not yielded any results yet. The attempts to save the Rog factory in Ljubljana as one of the first ferroconcrete constructions in Slovenia, have regrettably not been successful so far. Moreover, it is very prob-

7 The work that was finished in 1994 was executed by architect Mikko Pulkkinen.

able that the area will be cleared for a new purpose, which means the demolition of an important architectural monument from the beginning of the 20th century.

Even when the buildings are not adapted to new purposes, difficulties arise from the conservation principle that the material substance (i.e. structure), exterior and the interior design are to be preserved. The greatest problems are the dilapidation of the ferroconcrete, inappropriate glazing, exchange of prefabricated parts that are no longer manufactured, adaptation to new requirements concerning thermal insulation and protection against noise, etc. Unfortunately, practical experiences with the renovation of modern architecture are very scarce. Most renovation was achieved with the works by Jože Plečnik. There are very few other models like the renovation of the Festival Hall in Bled by architect Ivo Spinčič. The dilapidated condition of several buildings by Edo Mihevc, Edvard Ravnikar and others indicates the acuteness of the problem that must be solved as soon as possible.

The principle of preservation of the patina is difficult to follow in the renovation of modern architecture. When the ravages of time begin to show, they are not perceived as patina or an additional delightful feature, but rather as a deficiency that has to be mended. Therefore more frequent whitewashing is required than on "old" monuments, the simultaneous exchange of damaged panelling of the floors and facades, cleaning and the like. Such interventions contribute to the impression of "firmness", "cubic nature" and formal clarity, which are the values of modern architecture.

The bad attitude of owners or administrators towards the internal furnishings and functional and decorative elements of the buildings we attempt to preserve has to be pointed out. Thus the movable galleries in Hall A of the Commercial Exhibition Centre by architect Branko Simčič have been cut to pieces and disposed of some time ago. The galleries were constructed in an original way and would have been a contribution to the technical heritage of Slovenia. Furthermore, the Hall is an artefact of historical heritage since it was the site of various political, cultural and sports events. The same fate befell the internal furnishings and artistic decoration of the restaurants Daj-Dam, Slon and others. Therefore the internal designs to be preserved are to be defined as soon as possible, namely those testifying to the achievements of certain periods that are to be preserved with adequate measures.

The greatest problems with providing protection are to be expected with residential architecture, primarily in the cases of large quarters and complexes. Such architecture was usually constructed rapidly and with bad materials. It has to be renovated, which poses a great organizational and financial problem due to accumulated social and ownership problems.

Let me illustrate the principle of protection within the context of an actual example. The AMZS Centre (Motoring Association of Slovenia) in Ljubljana by Savin Sever has been preserved, but degraded to the utmost by added structures. Such indirect demolition could have been avoided by implementing appropriate protective measures.

### Developing public awareness

Developing the awareness of the public is probably the most important part of 20th century heritage preservation. The present book is to be comprehended primarily as a contribution in this direction. The interest of the general public will be encouraged by speaking publicly and by collecting and distributing information also in the form of special records, exhibitions and conferences.

A double change of thinking is required here. The first concerns the consistent inclusion of the public in all important decisions concerning transformations and improvements to our environment. Architecture and conservation as separate disciplines are too isolated in their ivory towers and do not take into account the everyday cares, desires and expectations of the common man. They have to build upon working with the young and developing "spatial awareness".

The second message is based on the simple recognition that models are the best way to develop public awareness. If politicians, public authorities (including the public protection service) and even architects act contrary to the interests of the preservation of modern heritage, no more can be expected of common citizens. Did we act according to this principle in the cases of the extension to the National Gallery, renovation of the Parliament building and transformation of the hall in the Town Hall of Ljubljana?

JELKA PIRKOVIČ



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## Today is the Son of Yesterday and the Father of Tomorrow

### Slovene architecture in the 20th century

The architecture of a certain environment is connected with the world and history by thousands of threads. Some are strong and eternal, others thin as cobwebs, yet no less important in order to comprehend the whole. My comprehension of Slovene architecture of the past century that is not strictly limited as a discipline, yet based on the field of architecture, gradually yields a fresco of time as a continuously discontinued, coherently incoherent yet recognizable portrait in the sense of a family saga, from a complex mixture of relationships, personalities, influences, beliefs, coincidences and also spots and stains befitting an impressionist image.

The architectural scene is similar to a reception-room with protagonists, primadonnas, carpet-knights and foreigners coming and going, as well as soap actors and extras. The story is complex, complicated, yet often fragmentary and difficult to comprehend. Even absent ancestors and contemporaries are sometimes of equal importance as direct performers, regardless of their distance in time and space.

Similarly as with other arts and literature, architecture is subject to certain cycles that can only be interpreted in retrospect when the critics and historians label them with names or even classify them into a gallery of styles. On closer inspection the styles of various periods seem surprisingly similar. Even something resembling a psychological structure can be discovered, not permanent, yet assuming ever changing new forms. In short, architecture too is unconsciously structured as an idiom.

Houses are actors in space. They are born, live and die. The more valuable ones can outlive centuries. They have a right to exist. In the present they are threatened to be ruined or replaced through interventions based on shallow and simplified commercial culture. This phenomenon is not new, yet it spreads. Let me enumerate some current examples of such impoverishment in Ljubljana: last year's demolition of the Workshops by architect Savin Sever, in spite of the opposition of architects; the construction of a new AMZS Centre (Motoring Association of Slovenia) in Dunajska Cesta (Dunajska Road) that is



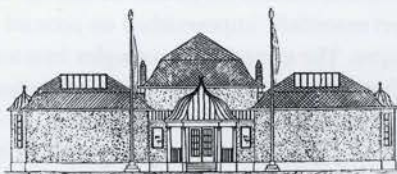
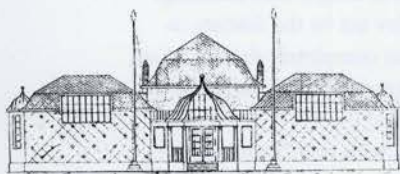
Maks Fabiani: The Jakopič Pavilion, Ljubljana 1907–1908; demolished 1964

banal as to its architectural value and therefore not fit to be located along the main street of the capital, particularly since it depreciates the existing building of the Motoring Association of Slovenia of much greater quality, the work of Savin Sever; and the demolition of a small modern villa by architect Klopčar from 1929 at the corner of Barjanska Ulica (Barjanska Street) and Cojzova Cesta some years ago in order to acquire space for the gaudy railings and car park of the French Embassy. The questionable renovation of the interior of the Ljubljanska Banka head office originally by Edvard Ravnikar in Trg Republike must also be mentioned since the area under monument protection was impoverished in a consumerist manner. The forced settlement of the Enka agency next to the column at the entrance to the Maximarket gallery is a lesser offence against Ravnikar's architectural heritage as to its size, yet of no less importance. The enumeration could be continued endlessly.

The preservation and protection of quality architecture is of great importance for architects and architectural heritage since it concerns a vital part of architecture. In order to protect architecture, it must be appreciated; to be appreciated it must be known and comprehended by everybody: the architect commissioned to intervene in a quality construction, the investor, official, the public and society. Thus we come back to the core of the problem: a lack of basic artistic culture and education from primary school to university. The architects themselves are not in a much better position since they assume roles on both sides: as protectors and destroyers of the inherited architecture. Knowledge of the future of architectural culture can only be sought in the past.

Slovene architecture of 20th century is probably mostly indebted to the theory of Semper connecting the area of Germany, France, Switzerland and as far as imperial Vienna in the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. The Viennese architect Wagner, a student of Semper, taught Plečnik, who raised Slovene architecture of the first half of the 20th century to the European Olympus. He also helped to form the still prominent Slovene architectural originality (as well as frustration) that was focused in Edvard Ravnikar, a student of Plečnik as well as Le Corbusier, in the second half of the century.

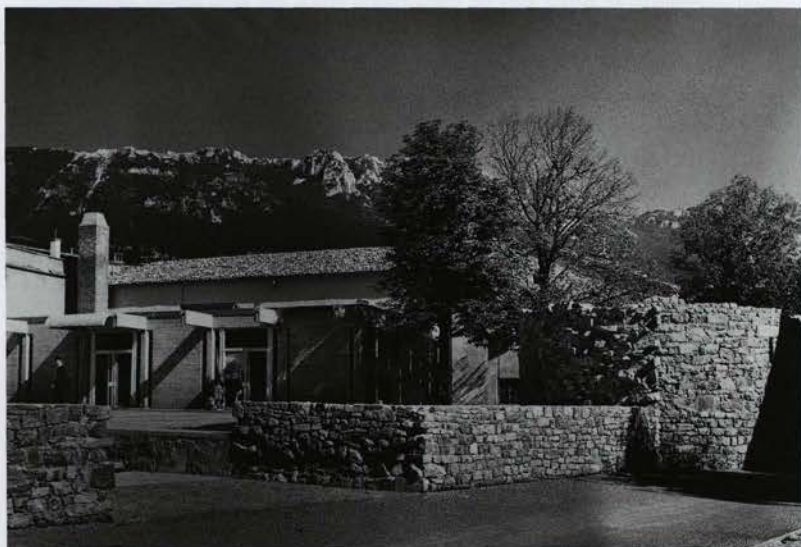
The body of the 20th century Slovene architecture was fragmentary, yet also fatally interdependent. The internal continuity of the first half of the century spanned from the cosmopolitanism of the first years over the tragedy of the First World War and the establishment of Yugoslavia, to the stratified twenty years of the inter-war period with the first pinnacle. Bourgeois values and liberalism developed, on the one hand, and the deeply-rooted ideology of the native soil that influenced the genius of Plečnik on the other. The first half



of the century was concluded by the bloodshed of war.

At the beginning of the century, the territory of Slovenia was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Ljubljana was renovated after the devastating earthquake of 1895 and the Secessionist style prevailed. Architecture became a privileged expression of the modernization of society. Several Slovene as well as Croatian, Czech and Austrian architects and building engineers took part in it.

The most important Slovene architectural creations came into existence in Vienna: the best works by Maks Fabiani, e.g. the Portoise & Fix



Svetozar Križaj: Cinema auditorium, Ajdovščina, 1964

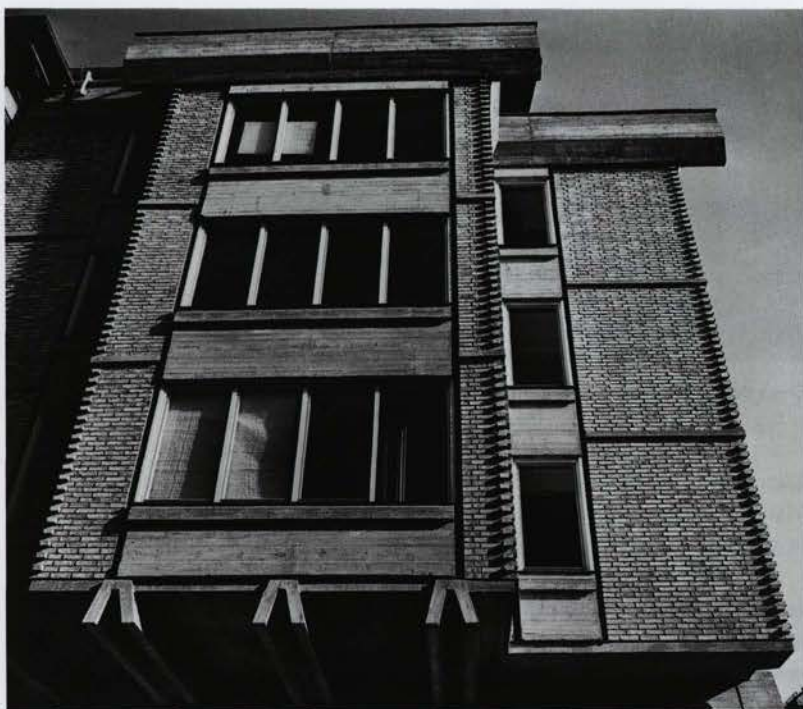
building (1899–1900), Urania (1909–1910) and Artaria (1900–1901) as well as the Zacherl house by Jože Plečnik (1903–1905). Fabiani also worked in Ljubljana: the Krisper house from 1901 still displayed Secessionist characteristics, the Hribar house from 1904 with Baroque undulation (*baroccus fabianensis*) reaching his pinnacle with the Bamberg mansion in 1907. The Jakopič Pavilion from 1907–1908, demolished in the winter of 1961–1962, is of particular importance for the present book. The Pavilion with studios, premises of the Jakopič school of art and exhibition rooms was a modern exhibition centre, while its layout was based on the study of classical proportions and modern functions. The Hribar mansion was likewise violated with the transformation of the ground floor front facade in the 1950s.

The third centre of Slovene architecture was Trieste with Maks Fabiani as the outstanding Slovene architect. The House of the Slovenes (Narodni Dom) from 1902–1905 was one of the first modern multifunctional houses in Trieste. The building is still standing, yet essentially impoverished on account of fire set by the fascists in 1920. The exceptionally complex interior was completely destroyed at that time, among others the painted glass screens by the Viennese Secessionist artist Koloman Moser.

Plečnik's Viennese period was continued with the Church of the Holy Spirit from 1910–1913, one of the first ferroconcrete churches in the Central European area.

The period between 1910 and 1920 was marked by war. Cemeteries and memorials were built. The church in Javorca above Tolmin is an outstanding example, the work of the Austrian Remigius Geyling from 1916. Part of western Slovenia was assigned to Italy after the First World War. Some modern Italian quality architecture was built there in the 1920s and 1930s.

Ivan Vurnik, a student of Fabiani at the Polytechnic in Vienna established the Ljubljana School of Architecture in 1919. He persuaded Fabiani to take part in it and subsequently Plečnik too. The



Jože Koželj: Agroprogres office building, Ljubljana 1966–1967; detail of the facade

latter worked simultaneously on Hradčani Castle for President Masaryk in Prague and taught at the Prague School of Applied Arts. He began to lecture in Ljubljana in 1921.

The second decade of the century continued and intensified national Romanticism, widely spread in contemporary Europe, and introduced Realism and the concepts of modern architecture. The buildings of Vurnik are models of the former as well as the Co-operative Commercial Bank (Zadružna Gospodarska Banka) in Ljubljana from 1921–1922 with an Expressionist painting inspired by national motifs, and the House of the Falcons (Sokolski Dom) in Tabor in Ljubljana from 1923–1926. Vurnik passed over to the principles of modern architecture in the late 1920s, as manifested in the public baths in Radovljica from 1932–1933, a creation that has recently undergone impoverishment and dilapidation.

The initiatives and influences of modern architecture originated from various sources. Avgust Černigoj was the only Slovene who studied in Bauhaus. His role at the architectural scene of Ljubljana was only an episode, albeit very influential. The avant-garde function-

alism and constructivism that presented a direct contact with the core of the most progressive artistic trends in Europe of that time were not acceptable for Ljubljana in the middle of the 1920s, yet they helped to create the conditions for the breakthrough of more modern architectural ideas.

Socially motivated architecture came into existence at the same time. The social democrat ideas caused, similarly as in Vienna, the need for new typological solutions and social housing. Thus the Meksika building (municipal residential building with public ser-



Grega Košak: The Tunist Motel, Grosuplje, 1968–1969

vices) was erected in 1922, the Workers' Chamber (Delavska Zbornica) in 1927, both by Vladimir Šubic, and the Red House by Vladimir Mušič in 1927–1929. Vurnik constructed a workers' quarter in Maribor (the Workers' Colony) in 1927–1929.

The development of the new, economically and culturally influential liberal bourgeoisie facilitated a gradual realization of revolutionary ideas. Architects were commissioned to build villas, rented houses and also some public buildings. Modern architecture flourished in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The first issue of *Arhitektura* magazine came out in 1931 and was published until 1934.

Despite that, Plečnik was the most prominent architect in Ljubljana. He was commissioned for larger plans, like the National and University Library, and he also influenced urban planning and the school of architecture.

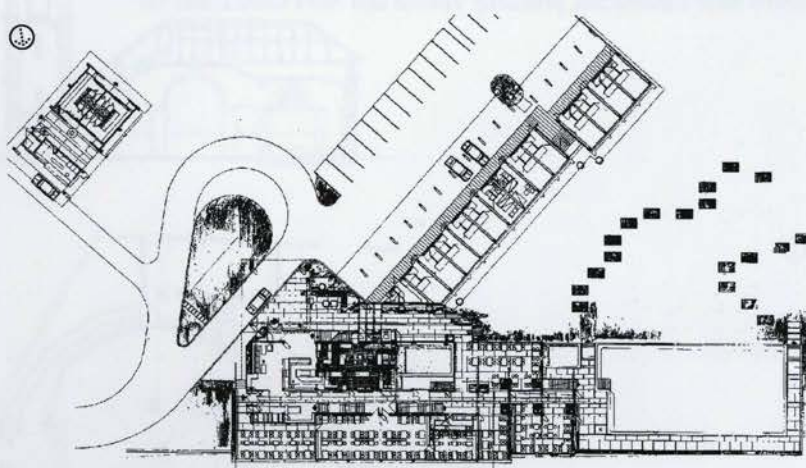
He regulated the river banks of the Ljubljanica, Vegova Ulica and Kongresni Trg, built churches and planned elsewhere in the then Yugoslavia. His constitutive role in the formation of national architecture is well known and studied; he finally appears on the bank-notes of the Republic of Slovenia.

However, modern architecture developed simultaneously with the bourgeois culture of Modernism. The authority of Plečnik was threatened; even his closest assistant France Tomažič abandoned him and built some of the outstanding examples of Slovene functionalism: the Oblak villa in 1931–1933 and the Grivec villa in 1934, both in Ljubljana.

The architecture of the new trend in Slovenia followed the models of Loos, Behrens and Perret more than more radical Mies and Le Corbusier. The moderate functionalist trend was represented by Vladimir Šubic, particularly with the construction of the Skyscraper (Nebotičnik) in 1930–1933, and several others: Josip Costaperaria,

Maks Strenar, Boris Kobe, Herman Hus, Vladimir Mušič, Ivo Spinčič, Stanko Rohrman, Ivan Sivec, Domicijan Serajnik, Janko Omahen, Jaroslav Černigoj and others.

The radically modern architecture inspired by the international architecture of Le Corbusier and Hitchcock was less successful. The most consistent Modernist was architect Feri Novak in Murska Sobota with some villas, the House of Workers (Delavski Dom) and the Grammar School from 1940–1943. His most consistent realization of the five points for new architecture by Le Corbusier was the



Grega Košak: floor plan of the Turist Motel, Grosuplje, 1968–1969 (scale: 1:1mm = 1m)

Šerbec villa from 1928, planned in the period when he was working in the studio of Le Corbusier in Paris.

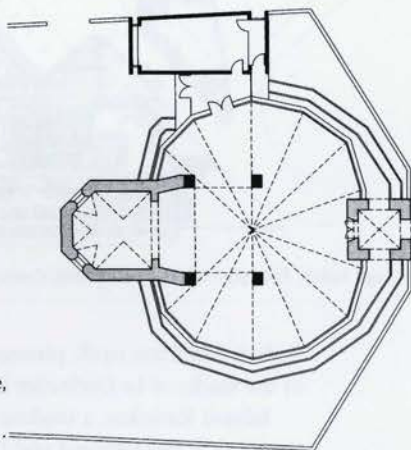
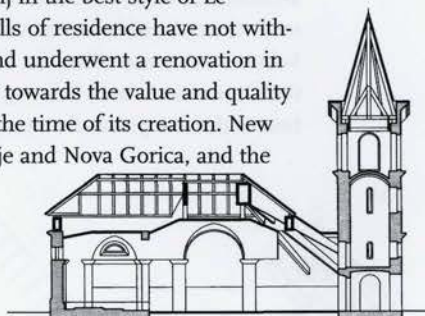
Edvard Ravnikar, a student of Plečnik and his assistant in the construction of the National and University Library in Ljubljana, was one of the numerous students to visit Le Corbusier's studio in Paris. He subsequently built the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana.

The period between 1939 and 1951 was a transition from the dynamic classicism of Plečnik towards modern architecture and function. The Second World War swept away the established idyll. It marked the beginning of the second half of the century of architecture, which extends till now.

The ideological blockade after the war excluded an important part of the architectural potential in the post-war period. Some careers were ended more or less tragically, others could not have even begun. The regime initially prescribed architecture according to its taste, following the models of autocratic countries. However, socialist realism had never become an integral part of Slovene artistic tradition, although it had existed for decades as a distant yet actual threat. A break with Stalin took place after a few years of renovation, and Slovene architecture took advantage of it and rejected socialist realism in favour of the latest models from Europe, primarily from Scandinavia, Great Britain and the USA.

The knowledge and experiences of most of the architects in Slovenia originated from before the war and facilitated a stable level even in the case of ideologically motivated constructions of the earliest

post-war period. Edvard Mihevc built the Litostroj factory in Ljubljana with his assistant Miroslav Gregorič, including blocks of flats for the employees. Edvard Ravnikar adapted and completed the barracks in Rožna Dolina into the student halls of residence. The administrative building was planned by architect Štrukelj in the best style of Le Corbusier. Unfortunately, the student halls of residence have not withstood the pressure of impoverishment and underwent a renovation in the last decade, without a proper attitude towards the value and quality that inspired the original architecture at the time of its creation. New towns were constructed, primarily Velenje and Nova Gorica, and the



Oton Jugovec: renovation of the church in Reteče, 1974; floor plan, section (scale: 1mm = 1m)

Commercial Exhibition Centre was constructed in Ljubljana.

The architect and professor Edvard Ravnikar was the central personality of the architectural universe in Slovenia in the second half of the century, similarly as Plečnik was in the first one. As a student and assistant of Plečnik of long standing and an apprentice in the studio of Le Corbusier for a short period, he developed an attitude of deep respect, yet also criticism towards both masters.

At that time Ravnikar sought a way back from mature international Modernism towards architectural decisions based on contextual, cultural and regional principles. He was able to enrich the artistically perfect compositions based on the principles of the asymmetric balance of Modernist aesthetics with his knowledge of the Classical symbolic and formal syntax acquired in Plečnik's school. He was also familiar with international trends; he admired Aalto and Scharoun and firmly developed the modern Ljubljana School of Architecture. His architecture was a materialization of a clarified concept. In his works, writings and lectures he joined the classical and modern approaches; the actualization of history by Plečnik with formal Modernist features from contemporary artistic and architectural trends. The cemetery of hostages in Draga in 1953 and of the internees on the isle of Rab in Croatia in 1954 are the best early examples of



that synthesis. The OLO (Regional People's Committee) building in Kranj was built in the late 1950s when Ravnikar was investigating the autonomy of the architectural idiom together with the best architects in the world.

Edvard (Edo) Mihevc was the other outstanding architect and professor, apart from Ravnikar, until the 1970s when they both retired. If Ravnikar's school was intellectualistic and critical, that of Mihevc was more practice-oriented. His architecture constructed the metropolitan character of the capital following cosmopolitan models overseas, on the one hand, and anticipated regionalism with its Mediterranean nature, on the other. The Impex office building (1953–1955), the office and residential building of the Kozolec block in Bavarski Dvor (Bavarian Court) (1953–1957) and the Metalka office building (1959–1963), all in Ljubljana, are some examples of the former, while his schools, terraced houses and holiday homes on the coast are examples of the latter. The hotels in Portorož and the tower blocks in Koper that damaged the skyline of the ancient city are somewhere in between as (un)successful attempts to surpass the still present antagonism between globalism and regionalism. Mihevc also took part in the realization of the Bernardin and Emona complexes in Portorož as fine examples of globalist inspiration: the hotel buildings were executed in a regionalistic idiom in the 1970s.

The 1960s were a period of great changes in Slovene society and politics. The reform attributed greater importance to the economy and science and greater liberty to art and architecture.

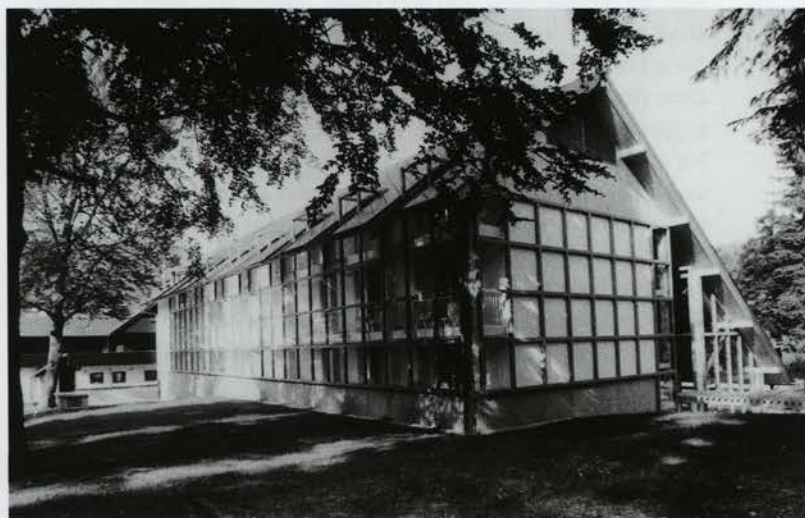
The students and adherents of Ravnikar formed their own architectural lyricism either by following or rejecting the knowledge of the master and all the prominent influences from the West. The architecture of Savin Sever is an outstanding example on account of its formal clarity and austerity. The Ljubljana School of Architecture reached its pinnacle leading in the direction of structuralism, constructivism and new monumentality in his works: the Workshops (1962–1963), Mladinska Knjiga printing house (1963–1966) and Astra and Commerce office blocks, all in Ljubljana.

Architect Milan Mihelič is a master of investigating the expression of a building and its span. The Konstrukta building in Dunajska Cesta in Ljubljana (1965–1966), department store in Osijek in Serbia (1963–1968) and the International Automatic Telephone Exchange in Ljubljana (1972–1978) are still the outstanding creations of technologically, formally and structurally advanced architecture. Architect Miloš Bonča built a department store in Šiška in Ljubljana (1960–1964), an exemplary building of the Ljubljana School, and continued with his investigation of the potential of the architectural expression with his creations of the Ljubljanska Banka branches in Kočevje, Mozirje, Celje and in Ljubljana in Šmartinska Cesta. Architect Danilo Fürst began with the study of prefabricated residential and industrial architecture. He built the primary school in Stražišče near Kranj (1954–1959) and the Forestry Administration building (Gozdno Gospodarstvo) in Bled (1958–1960). After their experience in Sweden, architects Majda and France Ivanšek built the Murgle residential quarter of terraced houses in Ljubljana (1965–1978) as an example of northern rationalism and residential culture brought to Slovenia.

Housing construction has reached a high architectural level, stretching from the block of flats in Velenje (1960–1963) by architect Stanko Kristl to the BS3 complex in Ljubljana (1969–1977) by architect Ilija Arnautović.

The open and unorthodox modern idiom of Ravnikar also experienced an excellent encounter with regionalism, e.g. in the case of the Prisank Hotel in Kranjska Gora by architect Janez Lajovic (1960–1962) and the Turist Motel in Grosuplje by Gregor Košak (1968–1969).

More complex, multifunctional buildings began to appear in the



Aleš Vodopivec: extension to the Jezero Hotel in Bohinj, 1990

late 1960s, i.e. the Plava Laguna ('Blue Lagoon') complex by architect Usenik and the Medical Centre by Stanko Kristl (1967–1975), which anticipated the two most important works by Edvard Ravnikar in Ljubljana: the office and residential complex Ferantov Vrt (Ferant Gardens) (1966–1968) and the office and trade centre in Trg Revolucije (Revolution Square), at present Trg Republike (Republic Square) (1960–1984) as a forum of the new Slovene self-confidence. Ravnikar's assistant Tone Bitenc accompanied the master in the details, renovations and interior designs.

Architect Oton Jugovec preserved the essence and freshness of the Ljubljana School in the 1980s. He undertook each task as a specific architectural theme to be solved in an exemplary way and with great originality. In the case of the archaeological remnants of Gutenwerth in Otok near Dobrava (1974) and Base 20 in Kočevski Rog (1986–1988), he exploited the symbiosis of architecture with nature and the regional architectural heritage of timber structures. The theme of the Jožef Stefan Nuclear Institute in Podgorica (1961–1966) was a container with a high technology content located in a rural environment. The renovation of the church in Reteče (1970–1974) focused on the active attitude towards heritage and innovation in the treatment of the sacred area, while the Spanish Combatants Art Centre (Kulturni Dom Španski Borci) in Ljubljana was based on monumentality and contrast in the attitude towards anonymous surroundings.

There were certainly also architectural victims in the 1960s: the Kozler house was pulled down for the widening of Titova Cesta through Ljubljana, the Jakopič Pavilion was demolished and some ambitious plans already begun were never realized appropriately. The Northern Gate of Ljubljana by Milan Mihelič is such an example: it remained a torso and is at present undergoing the final degradation of its exceptional architectural layout. The demolition of the former MPs Club (Klub Poslancev) by architect Župančič for the construction of the new National Gallery was also a loss. Some other plans



Skyscraper by Vladimir Šubic; The Main Co-operative Union building by Emil Medvešček; in the background Trg Republike by Edvard Ravnikar, Ljubljana 1932–1984

that were essential but not realized present further problems: Južni Trg (Southern Square) and the reconstruction of Kongresni Trg (Congress Square), while others are planned, but inappropriate: Mesarski Most (Butchers' Bridge) according to a plan by Plečnik half a century too late or the Olympic swimming pool in Tivoli Park.

The 1970s were a continuation, on the one hand, and a rapid decline of the Ljubljana School, on the other. New ideas attempted to transform the world; suddenly nothing old was worth anything. Any rejection of tradition, whether by beat or pop or as a rebellion and non-conformity, is questionable in architecture. It means the denial of experience, therefore architecture loses its physis. The attempts of technological and design visionary works based on Archigram, like the Argonavti Hotel in Nova Gorica (1975) by architect Niko Lehrman and some designs by Bureau 71 (architects Štefan Kacin, Peter Kerševan, Jurij Princes and Marjan Uršič), e.g. the military grammar school, were lost since they were not technically appropriate for actual use.

The 1980s introduced Postmodernism that dispersed architecture and initiated relativization and a crisis of values. The 1980s in Slovenia were a transitional period without a core of its own. It was distinguished by the decline of the Ljubljana School when some of its outstanding representatives abandoned the open experimental character and modern expression of architecture and replaced it with superficial eclecticism, academic art and personal mannerism. Some

architects denied the original integrity of their own creations by additions and transformations. Jože Koželj completed some of his best works in the Postmodern manner: the buildings of Agrostroj, Faculty of Economics and the Kompas car park building. Even the Museum of Modern Art was threatened by Edvard Ravnikar himself.

Marko Mušič developed his personal style from the initial structuralism towards a neo-Baroque expressionism, from the cultural centre in Kolašin in Montenegro (1971–1977) to the church in Dravlje in Ljubljana (1980–1985) and the new part of Žale Cemetery in Ljubljana.

A new generation appeared in the late 1970s, the so-called AB generation [gathered around the architectural magazine AB]. The outstanding representatives are Vojteh Ravnikar, Janez Koželj, Aleš Vodopivec and Jurij Kobe, while the rest include Matjaž Garzarolli, Božo Podlogar, Peter Gabrijelčič, Janez Kobe, Igor Skulj and others. The principles of this generation could be traced in contextualism and rationalism and the urban theory originating from Italy (Aldo Rossi, *L'architettura della città*, Marsilio Ed., Padua, 1966). The initially rigid and theoretical architecture based on the aesthetics of the square soon surpassed its narrow principles and permeated the contemporary European ties of the regionally coloured rationalism, either Mediterranean or Alpine, and more personal lyricism of individual architects. The Town Hall in Sežana by Vojteh Ravnikar (1980), the Peglezn ('Iron') building in Ljubljana by Janez Koželj (1986–1988) the Jezero Hotel in Bohinj by Aleš Vodopivec (1990), and the renovation of the Cekinov Grad castle in Ljubljana by Jurij Kobe (1990–1992) introduced architecture as a new cultural discipline.

The renovation of Ljubljana Castle by Edo Ravnikar, Jr., Majda Kregar and Miha Kerin has continued since the 1970s with several interruptions. Despite its fragmented execution, the renovation managed to establish some outstanding dialogue between heritage and modern architecture.

The search for a central personality of Slovene architecture of the 1980s must be resumed in Vienna. Boris Podrecca is the most Central European of all the outstanding Slovene architects of recent decades. He is a point of reference for Slovene architects and a mediator of European architectural trends. Podrecca taught numerous architects of younger generations in his bureau.

In the 1990s the cards were mixed up once again. Former values gradually became relative and disintegrated. Despite great changes, a substantial part of architecture remained inside the line of continuity; e.g. the buildings of Vojteh Ravnikar: the office and residential building in Koper (1995), library in Nova Gorica (1999); Secondary Medical School in Ljubljana by Jurij Kobe (1997–1998); residential quarter in Graz in Austria by Janez Koželj (1991–1998); residential complex in Kotnikova Ulica by Janez Koželj, Božo Podlogar, Peter Pahor, Jure Sadar, Milena Todorič and Jurij Kobe and the Srebriče Cemetery near Novo Mesto by Aleš Vodopivec and Nena Gabrovec (1998–2000). The representatives of the youngest generation introduced themselves with successful tenders and their first projects. The most exposed buildings are the creations by Aleš Prinčič, a Slovene architect from Udine in Italy, by the Sadar Vuga Arhitekti bureau from Ljubljana and by Nande Korpnik from Celje.

The architecture in Maribor is of special significance in the last decade. The most important buildings are: the Farmadent office building by Tone Lešnik (1995) with the Gačnik fruit market (1994–1998) and some schools by Janko Zadavec.

The architectural scene in Ljubljana has been very pronounced since the 1980s. Older architectural magazines like *AB (Architect's Bulletin)*, published since 1970 and *Piranesi* were joined by some more popular ones. The Dessa architectural gallery is active and the Architectural Museum was established. The turn of the 1990s was like the calm before a storm, like a budding tree before new sprouts grow. Slovene architecture may again become a recognizable phenomenon in Europe. Young architects are becoming prominent and a new culture of commissioners is gradually being formed – yet this is made possible only with the broad support of the general public.

Slovene architecture of the 20th century was, together with Central Europe, chronically behind the avant-garde trends. Plečnik and his successors were ahead of time and simultaneously behind it in various aspects and periods of their work. The core of Slovene architecture, or rather the spiral approaching and distancing itself from that core, followed the psychological structure from the introduction of the present text.

The Slovene architectural cosmos was and still is structured hierarchically. Plečnik the Father, Ravnikar the Son and Redeemer, and next to them a mass of Saints and the Blessed. There is no Hell, yet it is felt and used as a threat as just punishment for heresy. Slovene architecture has preserved its immanent resistance towards radicalism and innovation. Continuity, respect for tradition and bonds to the teachers are exceptionally strong. They are probably caused by the Christian and peasant mentality, attachment to the soil and family. Cosmopolitanism is a marginal phenomenon that has left no marked traces similar to those of the roots in the native soil and nation.

Patricide is necessary for a revolution to begin, yet such acts resembled more a break, e.g. of Ravnikar with Plečnik and of younger generations again with Ravnikar; they were more adolescent deviations than final patricides and their final consequence was the return to initial positions.

20th century Slovene architecture was obsessed with creating an identity. The cause of that was probably national identity. Perhaps it is the expression of a centuries-old tendency for national independence when national identity could not have developed. For centuries Slovenia had existed, despite its cultural identity, as a more or less autonomous yet fragmented national territory within the stronger neighbour states that it helped to form: Austria, Italy and Yugoslavia. Even the 20th century was concluded in a ruthless struggle for survival, for the joining and preservation of its territory. Certainly, architecture was involved in the project of national emancipation, although belatedly in comparison with other European nations.

That characteristic was exhausted out only with the establishment of an independent state. It seems that the project of renovation of national architecture and lagging behind the global avant-garde were thus concluded. From a decade ago the turning-point can be seen as vital – as a conclusion of a certain period and the beginning of an-

other. However, time will show whether the turn of the millennium and the arrival of new generations have finally broken the Slovene national traits and introduced general globalisation, or the next period is to follow the above-mentioned scheme so that Slovene architecture will again find its own way to retire into seclusion and preserve its contact with tradition. The fluctuation between traditional architectural behaviour and modern expressionism was the essence for Edvard Ravnikar as well as Slovene architects of the second half of the century to be followed from both ends: from Classicism to Modernism or again vice versa. Thus the circle was complete.

The present text cannot discuss in-depth all the elements that make up 20th century Slovene architecture. It was written as an imperfect abstract of more detailed studies of individual periods (Bernik 1998; Koselj 1995; Hrausky 1993; Prelovšek 1998). Thus it is a provisional framework, on the one hand, and therefore open for supplements and corrections, on the other. Finally, I would like to draw attention to the fact that architecture cannot be judged independently, neither of the society and politics, nor of the technology, industry, or economic and creative potency of the time in which it was created. Thus the architecture of the previous century was constantly fluctuating between dreams and reality, between Heaven and Earth. We entered Athens (or Rome), turned round again and left. We are none the closer to the goal at present than we were a century ago; without knowledge of the quality of steps towards the gates of the City we even slide back to mediocrity. With each architectural realization that does not improve the precedent, the twilight is thicker and each loss makes it poorer. Simultaneously, however, each experiment and each act of daring and freshness are essential in order to move on. Architects should not set boundaries, but rather ensure appropriate conditions for development. They should find ways for demanding tasks to be assigned to the best architects and then have faith in their creativity.

MIHA DEŠMAN

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**Recommendation No. R (91) 13**  
**of the Committee of Ministers to Member States**  
**on the Protection of the Twentieth-Century Architectural Heritage**  
(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 9 September 1991  
at the 461st Meeting of Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

- Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members;
- Having regard to the European Cultural Convention signed in Paris on 19 December 1954 and Article 1 thereof in particular;
- Having regard to the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe signed in Granada on 3 October 1985, and Article 17 thereof in particular;
- Having regard to Resolution 813 (1983) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on contemporary architecture;
- Having regard to Resolution No. 2 of the 2nd European Conference of Ministers responsible for the Architectural Heritage held in Granada on 3 and 4 October 1985;
- Observing that twentieth-century architecture is an integral part of Europe's historical heritage and that the preservation and enhancement of its most significant elements serve the same aims and principles as those of the conservation of the architectural heritage as a whole;
- Noting that because this section of the heritage is recent, abundant in examples, wide-ranging and diverse in character, it is less well recognized by official organisations and by the public than other parts of the architectural heritage;
- Emphasising that a lack of a specific interest in conserving this heritage would lead to irreparable losses and deprive future generations of this period of European consciousness.
- Recommends that the governments of the member states develop strategies for the identification, study, protection, conservation, restoration and public awareness of twentieth-century architecture with reference to the principles set out in the appendix to this recommendation, as part of their general policy for conserving the built heritage and, where necessary, by means of specific measures.

Instructs the Secretary General to transmit the text of the present recommendation to non-member states party to the European Cultural Convention and/or the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe.

## Appendix to Recommendation No. R (91) 13

Principles for the conservation and enhancement of the architectural heritage of the twentieth century

### I. Identification of the twentieth-century heritage

#### 1. Promoting knowledge and study of heritage

Since the end of the nineteenth century, architecture and urban planning have undergone profound changes due to industrialisation, the introduction of modern materials, the transformation of construction techniques and new uses. This trend has gathered pace, at the same time as technological progress, in order to meet the needs of contemporary society. Buildings of the twentieth century are many in numbers and of varying character: they reflect both traditional and modernist values. With the exception of the work of certain pioneers, the buildings produced in the twentieth century are not recognised as having heritage value. It is therefore necessary to encourage better knowledge and understanding of this part of the heritage by drawing attention to its qualities and the wealth and diversity of its different forms. The research required for such a fuller understanding should take into account the whole conspectus of available sources, whether in the form of original graphic or photographic material, of information published at the time of the works in question, or of any other type of information which enables them to be considered in their appropriate context and on comprehensive understanding of buildings.

#### 2. Making systematic inventories

The aim here is to assemble systematic documentation on twentieth-century buildings either in the form of national lists covering all periods or by drawing up lists specific to twentieth-century architecture. These lists should be:

- open-ended rather than selective, and amenable to continuous updating, revision and extension in the light of fresh information;
- drawn up without prejudice as to style, type of building, method or period of construction;
- designed, presented and published in such a manner that their content is available to the broadest possible public, in terms of vocabulary used, illustrations and arrangements for distribution;
- compiled where possible so as to take account of survey practices in the different European countries, so as to promote mutual com-



munication and understanding of these informative and analytical methods throughout Europe.

## II. Protection of the most significant heritage items

### 1. Criteria for selection

The authorities responsible for protection should adopt specific criteria based on the following considerations.

- the desirability of acknowledging the value of significant works taken from the whole range of styles, types and construction methods of the twentieth century;
- the need to give protection not only to works of the most famous designers in a given period or style of architecture, but also to less well-known examples which have significance for the architecture and history of the period;
- the importance of including, among the selection factors, not only aesthetic aspects but the contribution made in terms of the history of technology and political, cultural, economic and social development;
- the crucial importance of extending protection to every part of the built environment, including not only independent structures but also duplicated structures, planned estates, major ensembles and new towns, public spaces and amenities;
- the need to extend protection to external and internal decorative features as well as to fittings and furnishings which are designed at the same time as the architecture and give meaning to the architect's creative work.

### 2. Practical measures for legal protection

It is the task of the relevant authorities, in accordance with the procedures applicable in each country:

1. to make use of such legislation as already exists on conservation of the heritage, urban planning or the environment in respect of the architectural heritage of the twentieth century in order to:
  - protect buildings or artefacts by including them among lists of items to be protected or areas designated for conservation;
  - make active use of the procedures for planning permission and control that are afforded by such measures of protection;
2. to supplement existing legislation by specific measures where this recent heritage is not protected, or is inadequately protected.

## III. Management and conservation of the heritage

### 1. Use of the heritage

The relevant national, regional or local authorities have a duty to encourage the most appropriate use to be made of the protected heritage of this period, whether it be used for cultural or museum purposes or more generally for economic, commercial or residential purposes. Encouragement should be given to finding new uses which take account of the needs of present-day life so that

buildings are not allowed to fall derelict, provided the new use does not run counter to the architectural or historical significance which was the reason for their protection.

## 2. Physical conservation

Atmospheric pollution and the ageing of materials result in deterioration and require maintenance and restoration of the heritage, even when it is recent. It is important to:

- promote scientific, theoretical and practical studies into methods of construction, maintenance and restoration of these structures and the various materials used in twentieth-century architecture and the corresponding decorative arts;
- respect the same fundamental principles as are applied to other elements of the architectural heritage in planning programmes of maintenance and restoration of these structures;
- create a full and careful record of observations made and action taken within the context of conservation;
- set up at the appropriate national or regional level a system of information and architectural record, so that the history of buildings can be elicited and their future maintenance ensured.

## 3. Training of specialists

It is important to improve and enhance the knowledge and use of appropriated building materials and technologies for construction and conservation. This will require the in-depth training of construction firms which carry out the physical work of conservation on site. The particular nature of twentieth-century architectural techniques entails specialisation on the part of the professionals whose task it is to study and preserve this heritage. The authorities of the member states should arrange for special training to be given, either as part of general architectural training or in the framework of specialist training courses in the restoration of the built heritage.

The essential training should cover methods of study, investigative methods for this type of heritage and practical maintenance and restoration techniques. A special effort should be made in respect of specialised restoration techniques and crafts. Sufficient resources should be made available by the authorities for research and the training of experts.

## IV. Promotion of awareness among persons in positions of responsibility and among the public

It is for the authorities of the member states to take a range of initiatives promoting awareness of the value and distinctive character of the various forms of twentieth-century architecture among elected representatives, building owners and users, professionals, the media and the public at large. This action will entail:

1. Encouraging programmes of education at every level both inside and outside schools, particularly as the majority of schools operate

within a twentieth-century environment. This knowledge of a heritage which is close to the pupils should go hand in hand with discovery of the significance of architecture, urban planning and the environment;

2. Use of all available forms of media for campaigns of publicity, support for specialist publications, public debates or educational experiments in the broadest sense.

#### **V. The necessity for future European co-operation**

European co-operation is vital for the protection of the twentieth-century heritage because of the similarity and complexity of the construction techniques used, the problem of criteria for selection, and practical maintenance and conservation methods.

For this purpose, member states are invited to:

1. encourage the regular exchange of experts, technical understanding and experience between educators, historians, architects, technicians and other professionals involved in protection and conservation;
2. develop mutual technical assistance, in particular by means of the machinery for technical assistance operated by the Council of Europe;
3. encourage increased understanding of the heritage and a co-ordination of effort at European level in order to solve problems concerning selection criteria and techniques of physical conservation;
4. promote policies to generate awareness of the twentieth-century heritage through publications and media campaigns under the auspices of the Council of Europe;
5. study the possibilities for multilateral conservation projects which could be set up at the European level for particularly important aspects of the twentieth-century heritage.



In Ljubljana



## Skyscraper (Nebotičnik)

IRN376

*Location* Ljubljana

*Address* Štefanova 1

*Planning and completion* 1930–1933

*Architect* Vladimir Šubic, *Building engineers* Ivan and Josip Bricelj and Karel Kavka

*Investor* Investor Pension Fund (Pokojninski zavod Ljubljana)

*Contractor* Ljubljana Construction Company (Ljubljanska gradbena družba d.d.)

*Building type* Office and residential block

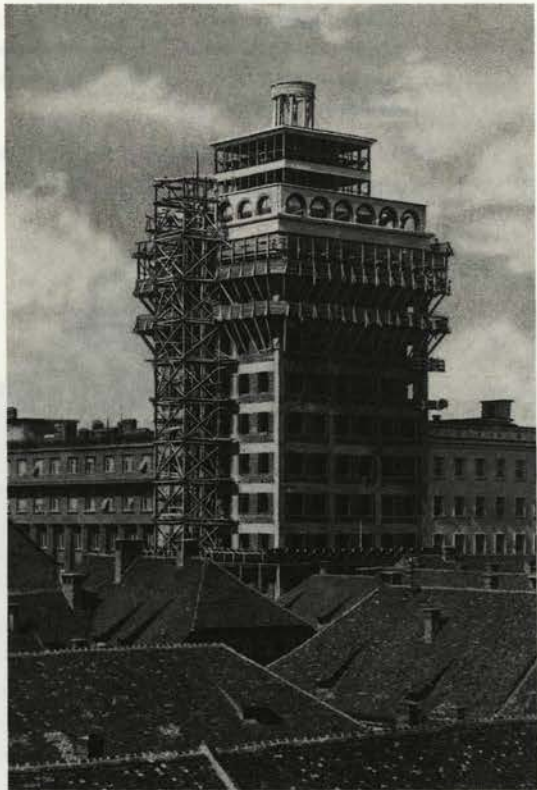
*Other buildings by the same architect* Meksika (municipal residential building with public services), Ljubljana 1922; Chamber of Labour (Delavska Zbornica), Ljubljana 1927; residential buildings of Pension Fund (Pokojninski Zavod), Ljubljana 1927; residential building of Chamber of Commerce, Trade and Industry (Zbornica za Trgovino, Obrt in Industrijo), Ljubljana, 1929; House of Commerce building (Trgovski Dom), Ljubljana, 1929; Commercial Academy (Trgovska Akademija), Ljubljana, 1930.

In 1928 Vladimir Šubic, the main architect and head of the construction department of the Pension Fund (Pokojninski Zavod) was



- ▲ Model ... "The architect drafted several variants (at least four) for the construction that would acquire a special symbolic significance for the city, apart from its profitability."
- ◀ "The juncture between the Skyscraper and the adjacent bank was accentuated by the architect with a four-metre female statue on a high console, the work of sculptor Lojze Dolinar."

commissioned to draft a plan land development at the most prestigious location in the city centre, i.e. the corner of the then Tyrševa Ulica and Gajeva Ulica. After the construction of the adjacent Slavija Credit Bank, the opportunity arose for construction in a larger area that would complete the block of houses. The architect drafted several designs (at least four) for the construction that would subsequently acquire a special symbolic significance for the city, apart from its profitability. The first solution adapted the layout of the Grafika manor to the location and won the tender in 1929. In 1930 the Pen-



“With its height of 70 metres the Skyscraper was the ninth tallest building in Europe in 1931 [...]. It was constructed simultaneously with the Rockefeller centre in New York (1931–1940) and it was expected to assume similar symbolic significance.”

sion Fund called for tenders for the construction. However, none of the thirty drafts fulfilled the expectations of the Fund represented by Šubic as a member of the jury. It was only on the basis of the proposal for a corner tower by Plečnik that the municipal authorities allowed the project to exceed in principle the height of the existing construction that corresponded to the regulation height of five storeys at the utmost. The architect was not sure whether to design the tower as a tall building with a heightened upper endpiece or to follow the model of a church tower. Therefore he gradually heightened the upper endpiece of the corner tower from the initial nine to the final eleven storeys. Three students of architecture were invited to participate in planning the conclusion. Bojan Stupica drafted the Historicist crest of windows between the arcaded columns, and Marjan Mušič the plain upper endpiece with semi-circular windows above it (similar to the building of Grafika). Ivan Medved planned the functionalist cube made of steel and glass, while Marjan Mušič provided, in Plečnik’s manner, a gloriette in the form of a classical *tempietto* with a



tall mast on the top of the fourteenth storey.

The layout of the Skyscraper (Nebotičnik) is to be understood within the context of the construction of the series of buildings of the Pension Fund along Štefanova Ulica. As a matter of fact, the tower accentuated the height of the structure including two further buildings by the same architect, housing various facilities and a shopping mall. With its height of 70 metres, the Skyscraper was the ninth tallest building in Europe in 1931 and the first skeletal tower in the Balkans.

It was constructed simultaneously with the Rockefeller centre in



“The Skyscraper followed the idea of a vertical city: the shops reached from the ground to the first floor, to be followed by business premises and flats and, finally, a coffee-house with a terrace on the top.”

New York (1931–1940) and was expected to assume similar symbolic significance. The verses of [the contemporary Slovene poet] Oton Župančič inscribed in the foundation stone of the Skyscraper indicate the demanding and risky nature of the construction: “May there be a patch for our corn, and a safe shelter for our harvest!”

The Skyscraper followed the idea of a vertical city: the shops reached from the ground to the first floor, to be followed by business premises and flats and, finally, a coffee-house with a terrace on the top. The ground floor contained a monumental flight of stairs panelled with polished stone from Podpeč, with semi-circular stairs leading to the spiral staircase. The hall was decorated with Classicist heads of Penates, the work of sculptor France Gorše. The facade was panelled with stone on the ground floor and decorated with protruding brick borders on the first floor, while the rest was executed in artificial stone made of white Portland cement. The juncture between the Skyscraper and the adjacent bank was accentuated by the architect with a four-metre female statue on a high console, the work of sculp-

tor Lojze Dolinar. The monumental statue represented the allegory of Genia regarding distant horizons.

The technically demanding construction necessitated precise calculations and an advanced structural design resistant to earthquakes, innovative engineering solutions and flawless organization of construction works.

Additionally fast elevators, modern air-conditioning, oil-fired central heating and other modern technical facilities had to be installed in order to ensure the faultless operation and maintenance of the tower.

Staircase ... "The Skyscraper is part of the tradition of the city with a cultural history of its own, and still a symbol of the aspiration for progress. The building is one of the sights of the city expressing a distinctly cosmopolitan spirit."



The coffee-house was fitted with comfortable furniture and decorations following American models and was accentuated with a spiral chestnut staircase leading to the night-club furnished in the same style.

The adjacent house designed by the architect as a free-standing building only in the final stage of the construction was intended for shops, offices of the Pension Fund and flats. The building was characterized by a shopping mall, the first to be constructed in Ljubljana according to the design of galleries in large cities.

The Skyscraper is one of the landmarks of architecture in Ljubljana, marking the skyline of the city together with more recent high buildings. It is part of the tradition of the city with a cultural history of its own, and still a symbol of the aspiration for progress. The building is one of the sights of the city expressing a distinctly cosmopolitan spirit.

Unfortunately, the city has not succeeded in preserving the atmosphere that could have been created by the tradition of having a coffee-house and night club in the city centre. The once prestigious premises have lost their reputation by frequent exchanges of tenants and mismanagement; the furnishings of the coffee-house and bar were partly changed and impoverished, and part of the fittings of the entrance hall was transformed. Access to the vault of the bank was pierced through the adjacent house. The shopping mall was likewise modernized in the 1970s in such a way that its original gleaming appearance was lost. Since the building was constructed in durable materials of high quality, its cultural significance in the life of the city should be protected.

The Skyscraper and Commercial Academy group of buildings from the same period represent the best work by Vladimir Šubic, which is characterized by a monumental expression of its otherwise rational and modern architecture of moderate functionalism typical for the contemporary conditions in Slovenia.

JANEZ KOŽELJ



"The once prestigious premises have lost their reputation by frequent exchanges of tenants and mis-management; the furnishings of the coffee-house and bar were partly changed and impoverished, and part of the fittings of the entrance hall was transformed. Access to the vault of the bank was pierced through the adjacent house."

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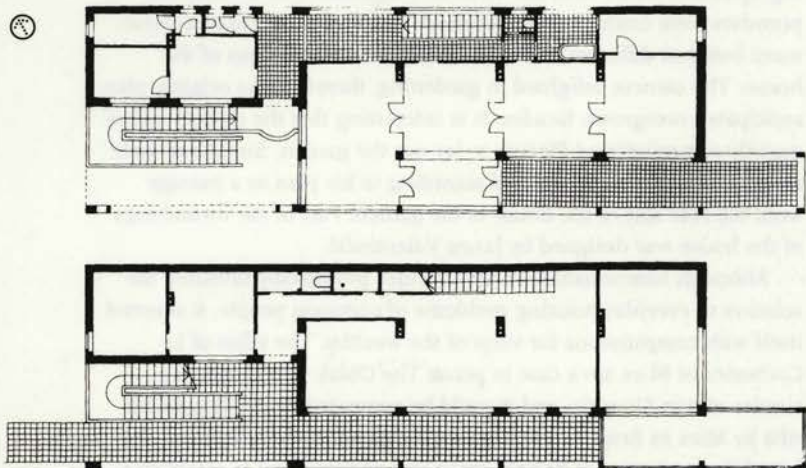
# The Oblak Villa

IRN1588

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Rakovniška 5a
Planning and completion	1931–1933
Architect	France Tomažič
Investor	France Oblak
Contractor	Matko Curk Construction Company
Building type	Residential Villa

*Other buildings by the same architect* Residential colony in Dermotova Ulica, Ljubljana 1931; the Grivec villa in Prule, Ljubljana 1934–1936; Institute of Mechanical Engineering (Zavod za Strojništvo), Ljubljana 1937; Institute of Mineralogy and Mining (Zavod za Mineralogijo in Rudarstvo), Ljubljana 1938; Institute of Construction (Gradbeni Inštitut), Ljubljana 1948–1951; block of flats, Koper 1957

Architect France Tomažič (Moste near Ljubljana 1899 – Ljubljana 1968) was a student of Jože Plečnik and his first assistant. He followed his professor conscientiously and supervised his constructions in Slovenia during Plečnik's frequent visits to Prague. Plečnik repaid his services by inscribing the name of Tomažič as the architect on the plaque of the Chamber of Commerce (Trgovinska Zbornica) in Ljubljana (1925–1927). Nevertheless, Tomažič distanced himself gradually from Plečnik and became more and more interested in functionalist architecture. In 1930 he left his professor, took the civil exam in the following year and opened his own bureau. After his first successful project, the terraced houses of the Insurance Company (Vzajemna Zavarovalnica) in Ljubljana (1931), he distinctly turned away from the principles of his teacher and designed several residential houses that represent the pinnacle of functionalist architecture in Slovenia. The villa of Dr. Franc Grivec in Prule (1934), basically following the architecture of Le Corbusier, testified to that, apart from the Kopac villa (1936), which was regrettably demolished in 1973. It seems that Tomažič was committed for the Oblak villa through the mediation of Plečnik, since the master knew the merchant Oblak



▲ Floor plan (scale: 3mm = 1m)

◀ "Although functionalism in architecture professedly favoured the solution of everyday housing problems of common people, it asserted itself with commissions for villas of the wealthy."

who intended to build the villa as a wedding present for his fiancée.

The oblong building was situated by the foot of a hill facing the slope on its northern side. The house was modular, consisting of three differently shaped cubes. The first one was the entrance with a two-storey vestibule marked by an arch. The second cube contained the living rooms and the third one the bedrooms. The floor plan was arranged in three parallel sections: the northern one is filled with corridors and auxiliary rooms, the central one with the main rooms, and the southern one with terraces, arcades and a conservatory. The ser-



"A distinctive feature of the Oblak villa was the vestibule with the external staircase marked by a large concrete arch."

vants' quarters were on the ground floor, while the first floor was intended for the family. The skeletal construction facilitated the opening up and connection of rooms in all directions. Additionally the premises were connected by a corridor that facilitated circular movement between different levels and the external extensions of the house. The owners delighted in gardening, therefore the original plan anticipated overgrown facades. It is interesting that the owners subsequently commissioned Plečnik to lay out the garden. Simultaneously an external staircase was added according to his plan as a passage from the rear side of the house to the garden. Part of the furnishings of the house was designed by Janez Valentinčič.

Although functionalism in architecture professedly favoured the solution of everyday housing problems of common people, it asserted itself with commissions for villas of the wealthy. The villas of Le Corbusier or Mies are a case in point. The Oblak villa assumed a similar role in Slovenia, and it could be compared to the Tugendhat villa by Mies in Brno. It was furnished with all modern facilities, followed the principles of flexible space and endeavoured to establish a contact with nature by means of large windows. A distinctive feature of the Oblak villa was the vestibule with the external staircase marked by a large concrete arch. Such a classical entrance element as was commonly used by Plečnik was, however, introduced in a modern

way. The architect adhered to the models of arches used by Auguste Perret in the Esders sewing mill in Paris in 1919.

ANDREJ HRAUSKY



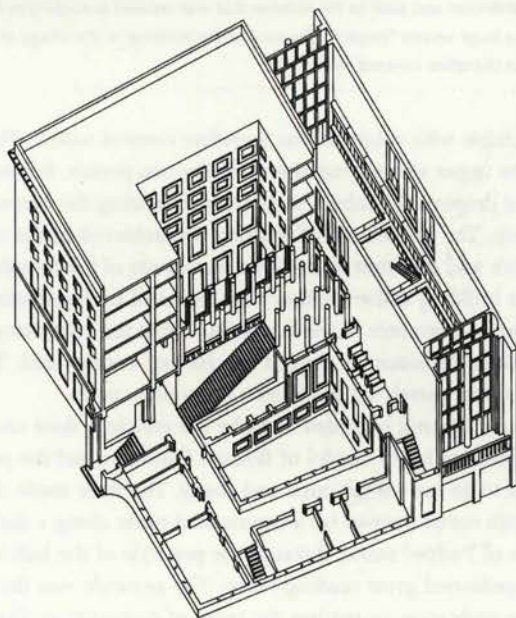


# National and University Library (NUK) IRN 373

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Address</i>	Turjaška Ulica 1
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1930–1931; 1936–1941
<i>Architect</i>	Jože Plečnik
<i>Investor</i>	King Alexander University of Ljubljana, Government Administration of Drava Governorate (Banska Uprava Dravske Banovine)
<i>Contractor</i>	Matko Curk and others
<i>Building type</i>	Library
	<i>Other buildings by the same architect</i> Zacherl Mansion, Vienna 1903–1905; Church of the Holy Spirit, Vienna 1910–1913; Church of St. Francis, Ljubljana, 1925–1927; Parish Church of the Ascension of Our Lord, Bogojina 1925–1927; Church of the Heart of Jesus, Prague 1928–1931; Insurance Company (Vzajemna Zavarovalnica), Ljubljana 1928–1930; royal hunting lodge, Kamniška Bistrica 1932–1933; Peglezn building in Poljanska Cesta, Ljubljana 1933–1934; Church of St. Michael in Barje, Črna Vas 1937–1938; Parish Church of St. Benedict, Zgornje Stranje 1946–1947; renovation of Križanke (former monastery of the Teutonic Knights), Ljubljana 1956

The University Library in Ljubljana, also named the National Library since 1947, is one of the main works by Jože Plečnik. Together with the Asplund City Library in Stockholm, it represents one of the outstanding examples of the architectural style parallel to international functionalism.

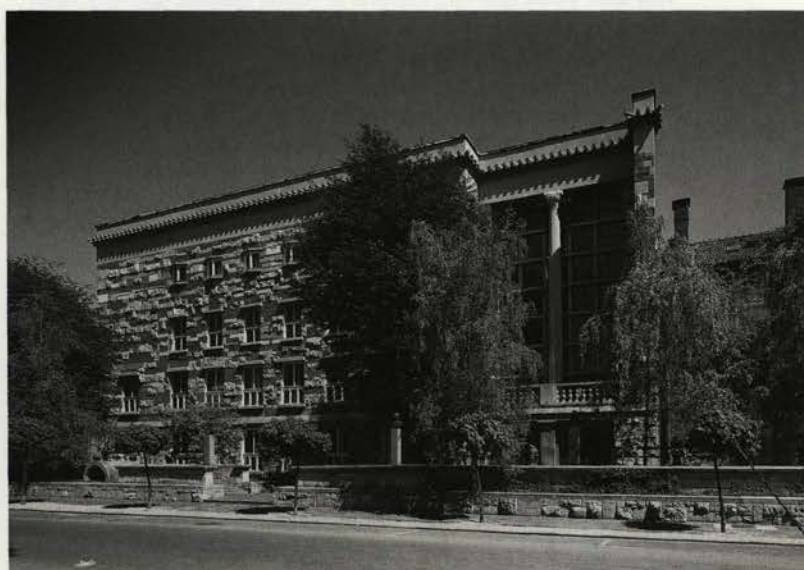
The protracted endeavours for the construction of the Library were connected with efforts to establish Slovene cultural independence within the former monarchy in the Balkans. The memory of the late Renaissance Princely Palace (Knežji Dvorec) that used to occupy the same location until the beginning of the 20th century played an important role in the planning of the Library. Plečnik was primarily solving the problem of a wound in the historical urban landscape



▲ Section in axonometric projection

◀ Reading room ... "The furniture was reminiscent of Greek models, while the two galleries in the centre followed the industrial aestheticism of the 19th century."

[caused by the disastrous earthquake in Ljubljana in 1895] with a huge mass of the building. Simultaneously he endeavoured to emphasize the symbolic values of the house of national learning within the given construction programme. In the artistic sense, the Library was a synthesis of his experiences demonstrated by the Zacherl Mansion in Vienna and the building of the Insurance Company (Vzajemna Zavarovalnica) in Ljubljana. Particular attention was paid to the exterior that was created according to the Semper theory of dressing as a huge woven "carpet". The core of the building in the image of



"Particular attention was paid to the exterior that was created according to the Semper theory of dressing as a huge woven "carpet". The core of the building in the image of a Greek temple with columns was therefore covered with it."

a Greek temple with columns was therefore covered with it. The windows of the upper storeys, together with the two portals, followed the logic of the draping of a fabric, without emphasizing the tectonics of the building. The impression of weaving was achieved by the mixture of bare brick and different stone slabs. Remnants of the foundation of the former building at the location were included in the construction as well as Roman remnants of the city walls so that the legitimacy of the Library within the historical context was further emphasized. The temple roof was merely indicated by a decorative crown.

Originally Plečnik intended to make the entrance door cast in bronze according to the model of Roman Pantheon, yet the process turned out to be too complicated and costly. The door made of timber covered with metal opened up a ceremonial route along a dark staircase made of Podpeč stone, through the peristyle of the hall to the laterally positioned great reading-room. The peristyle was the most persuasive ambiance, recreating the spirit of Antiquity in Slovene architecture. The high reading-room was lit by daylight through two windows filling up the smaller sides of the room. The wooden coffered ceiling imitated a carpet. Three chandeliers were attached to it according to the logic of textile decorations, not matching the lat-

eral axis of the room. The furniture was reminiscent of Greek models, while the two galleries in the centre followed the industrial aestheticism of the 19th century. The metamorphosis of antique textiles in the fashion of Semper was also used for the entrance to the exhibition hall, the portal of which was made of "petrified" curtains of reddish stone from Hotavlje.

The Library underwent its first renovation directly after its construction, when a military mail aeroplane crashed into it. After the war Plečnik added a new ceiling and chandeliers to the damaged



"The door made of timber covered with metal opened up a ceremonial route along a dark staircase made of Podpeč stone, through the peristyle of the hall to the laterally positioned great reading-room."

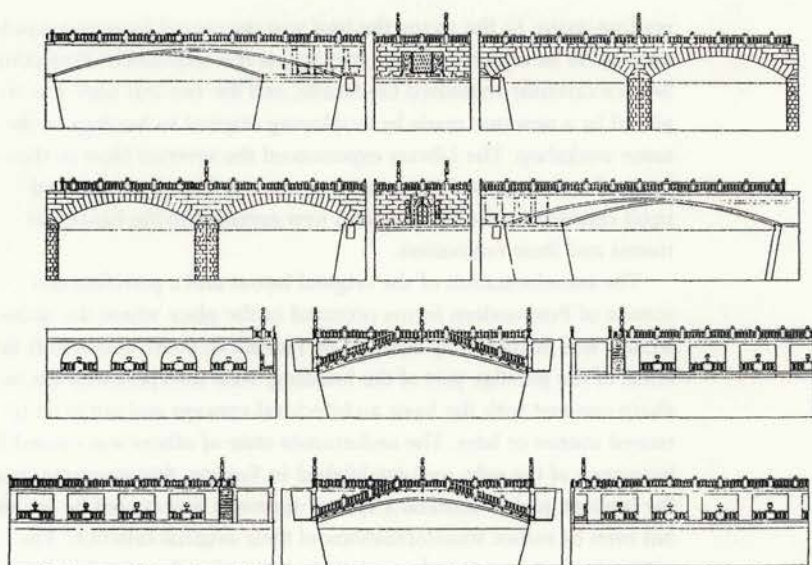
reading-room. In the 1970s the roof was uncovered by strong winds and had to be replaced. In the mid 1990s the Monument Protection Service carefully renovated the facade, and the two-leaf door was replaced by a new one made by employing original technology in the same workshop. The Library experienced the severest blow in the form of ambitious architectural interventions between 1997 and 1998 concerning the opening of a new entrance to the basement rooms and their renovation.

The transformation of the original layout and a pointless crescendo of Postmodern forms occurred in the place where the architecture was purposefully silenced by Plečnik in order to intensify the effect of the prestige part of the building. New interpolations are in sharp contrast with the basic architectural concept and are to be removed sooner or later. The unfortunate state of affairs was caused by ignorance of the rule, well established in Europe, that monuments of the highest quality demand a special approach and cannot be spoiled, not even by minor transformations of their original function. The matter is even more unpleasant since it has already caused indignation in Slovenia as well as abroad. A particularly offensive manner of renovation can be traced even in the reading-room.

## The Three Bridges and Markets IRN 398

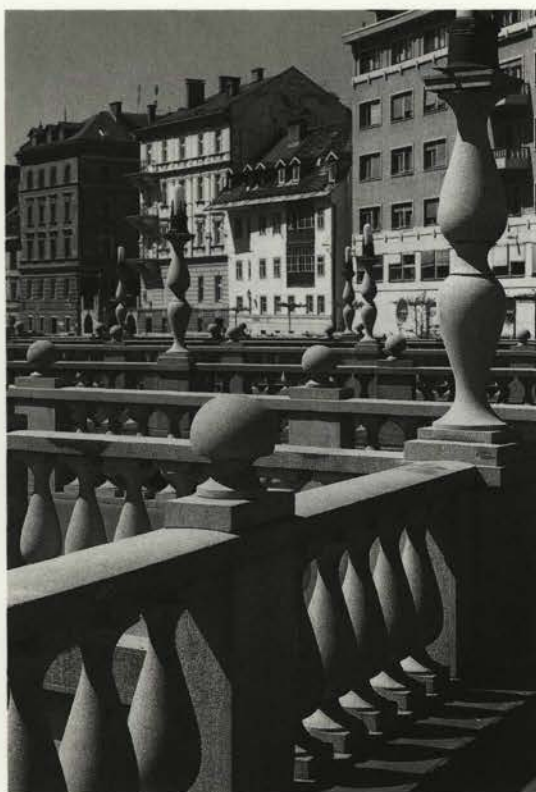
	Ljubljana	<i>Location</i>
	Adamič-Lundrovo nabrežje	<i>Address</i>
The Three Bridges 1929–1931; 1931–1932; Markets 1940–1942		<i>Planning and completion</i>
	Jože Plečnik	<i>Architect</i>
	Town Council	<i>Investor</i>
	Matko Curk (Markets)	<i>Contractor</i>
	Bridge, market	<i>Building type</i>

The planning of the Three Bridges and the Markets was connected with the solution of the traffic intersection in Prešernov Trg and the anticipated construction of a new town hall on the opposite side of the River Ljubljanica. At first, Plečnik thought of covering the entire river-bed with a concrete slab, following the model of Vienna, and regulating a new boulevard on it. The economic depression and the consequences of it in the 1930s favoured public works like the regulation of the river-bed, while the construction of the town hall was postponed. Plečnik offered the cheapest solution with the preservation of the old stone bridge (Špitalski Most) from the middle of the 19th century. He added two new bridges for pedestrians on both sides of the old bridge, thus creating a funnel-shaped construction between Prešernov Trg and the narrower Stritarjeva Ulica. The difference in the width of the old and new river-bed was filled up with tall pyramidal poplars that created a formal entrance to the old city beneath the Castle. Part of the existing river terrace was also included in Plečnik's composition, i.e. the part constructed before the First World War according to the plan of architect A. Keller from Graz. Both the new bridges were connected with the river terrace by slanting access routes, which established a formal similarity between the Three Bridges of Ljubljana and the bridges of Venice. The curve of the river



▲ View of the left and right interbridges and the left and right pedestrian bridges (scale: 0.5mm = 1m)

was determined by lamps and mushroom-shaped endpieces on the parapet, which simultaneously created the impression of continuous movement between the two banks. Since Plečnik was unable to construct the market stalls beneath the arches of the new town hall, which seemed to him the most appropriate solution for Ljubljana in view of the vicinity of the Mediterranean, he was forced to solve at least the most pressing problem of the butcher's stalls. He located them along the river and constructed an arched gallery in front of them. The composition based on models of Antiquity was liberated



"The Three Bridges and the Markets underwent a thorough renovation at the beginning of the 1990s. They were structurally restored and the dilapidated parapets and lamps were replaced."

with two intermediate spaces with fountains. The river front was constructed in the form of Greek temples. Plečnik left a caesura in the middle of the Market intended for the never constructed Butchers' Bridge, which was expected to extend the area of the Market to the opposite bank of the river. A long gallery according to the model of the Greek stoa was created opposite the building of the District Hall (Kresija). A smaller pavilion with a doubled Palladian upper endpiece was erected at the beginning of the gallery. The spindle-shaped staircase in the juncture of the two buildings is particularly interesting. It leads to the fish market and is the only Mannerist element in the strictly classical architecture of the Markets by Plečnik.

The Three Bridges and the Markets underwent a thorough renovation at the beginning of the 1990s. They were structurally restored and the dilapidated parapets and lamps were replaced. They consisted merely of concrete shells and central parts of poor quality. The replacements were manufactured from a unified concrete mass and were polished on the surface. Since the renovation presented the first

major attempt to restore the once advanced technology of artificial stone, the replacement was not entirely successful. The parapets crack due to their too small dilatation. The renovation of the Markets performed between 1994 and 1995 was no less complex. The area of the cellars was extended and the shops arranged according to modern hygienic regulations. Some ill-placed interventions from the 1960s were removed and several lamps and other fittings that had never been installed were completed according to the original plans. The interior of the Markets was thus standardized, with the exception of



“Plečnik left a caesura in the middle of the Market intended for the never constructed Butchers’ Bridge, which was expected to extend the area of the Market to the other bank of the river.”

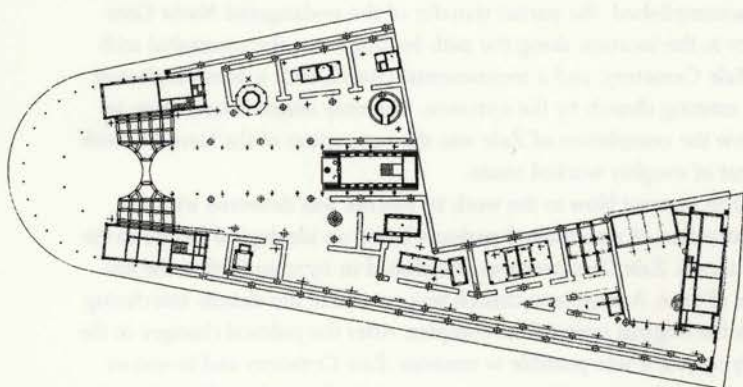
the interpolated tavern, and they were transparent on the river front, which was the basic idea of Plečnik’s construction. Wooden parts were carefully renovated, contrary to the original intention of their replacement. The roof of the gallery by the District Hall was uncovered and the inappropriate covering of asbestos-cement corrugated sheet was replaced with copper plates. The stone parts of the Markets, even on the river front, were sanded instead of just washed, which would have been cheaper and safer. The once open staircase to the fish market had to be enclosed by glass walls due to safety measures. The original tiles and the elegant iron railings by Plečnik were replaced in the 1980s for no good reason. A pointless Postmodern cone was erected in the direct vicinity of the Markets soon after the renovation, thus causing unnecessary confusion in the area of Plečnik’s Markets and the staircase by the Pogačarjev Trg.

## Žale Cemetery

IRN 384

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Address</i>	Žale
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1937–1940; 1938–1940, fittings and installations by 1944
<i>Architect</i>	Jože Plečnik
<i>Investor</i>	City Funeral Parlour (Mestni Pogrebni Zavod)
<i>Contractor</i>	Matko Curk and Emil Tomažič
<i>Building type</i>	Cemetery architecture (funeral parlour)

Žale Cemetery by Plečnik, for which he insisted on the name The Garden of All Hallows, is a unique combination of a mortuary, workshops and the office of the Funeral Parlour. In contrast to the traditional type of mortuary he knew from Vienna and Prague, Plečnik endeavoured to create a more reverential form for the funeral service, which would also correspond to the character and habits of the Slovenes. Instead of a single building he planned several separate chapels named after the patrons of the parishes of Ljubljana, by means of which he attempted to preserve the traditional manner of the funeral service from the province. The entire complex was planned as a huge park with benches, chapels, a fountain and a magnificent triumphal arch at the entrance. He planned another exit portal facing the Cemetery at the opposite end of the area. Since there was no money for it, he decorated more richly the exterior of the adjacent workshop building. In order to avoid the disturbing atmosphere of mortuaries typical of large cities, he used white on the facades and surrounded the chapels with greenery. Numerous chandeliers and the interiors formed according to the model of Pompeii had a similarly soothing effect. Plečnik emphasized the function of the complex discreetly, by means of vases reminiscent of the ones used for embalming in Egypt. They were located as balustrades in the windows of the central sacred building, thus avoiding modern glass surfaces. Although Plečnik utilized references to folk tradition, the composition in no way copied folk architecture, but rather followed the model of the Acropolis from Athens as to the arrangement of individual buildings. Žale Cemetery presented an opportunity for Plečnik to create ideal architecture, the symbolic value of which considerably surpassed its mere practicality.



▲ Ground plan (scale: 0.6mm = 1m)

The construction of the complex was a demanding financial task for the Ljubljana Town Council. The fate of Žale Cemetery was therefore uncertain to the very end. The architect was forced to reach some compromises, which, in turn, he was able to exploit skilfully and turn to his advantage. Since it was impossible to acquire the entire anticipated area, he planned some double chapels and erected a catafalque with a baldachin in front of the so-called prayer hall. In the typological sense, the complex presented a conglomerate of various models from Antiquity and the Renaissance on which Plečnik had histori-



Magnificent triumphal arch at the entrance ... "In the typological sense, the complex presented a conglomerate of various models from Antiquity and the Renaissance on which Plečnik had historically based his architecture."

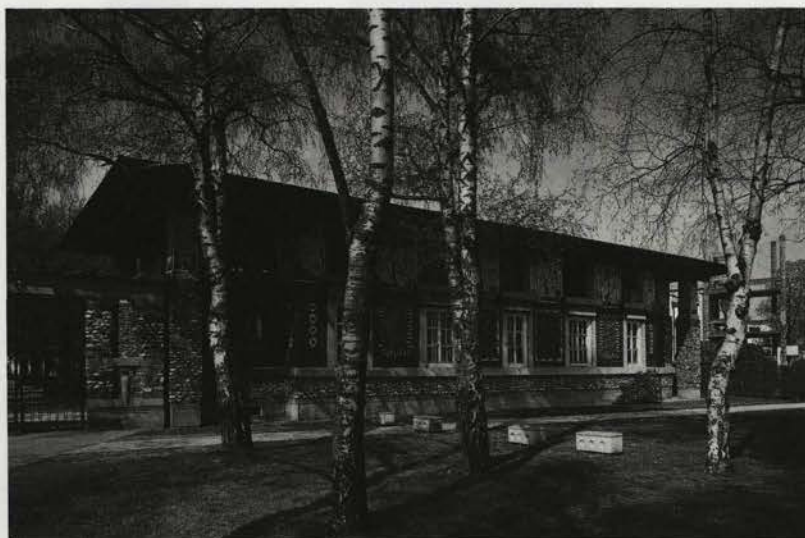
cally based his architecture.

The simplest chapel of St. Achatius, originally overgrown with grass and designed as an Etruscan tumulus, expresses the secret belief of the architect that the original inhabitants of the Apennine Peninsula were the Slavs. During the Second World War, Plečnik planned the so-called Soldiers' Cemetery, but it has never been executed. Two of his further ideas have likewise remained unaccomplished: the partial transfer of the endangered Navje Cemetery to the location along the path leading from the triumphal arch to Žale Cemetery, and a monumental church with a dome replacing the existing church by the entrance. The only major intervention to follow the completion of Žale was the renovation of the tumulus with a coat of roughly worked stone.

The severest blow to the work by Plečnik was delivered with the construction of new funeral parlours based on ideological motifs in the late 1970s. Žale Cemetery was abandoned in 1979 and left to the ravages of time. A large new church was erected in the vicinity interfering with the original unity of the complex. After the political changes in the early 1990s, it was possible to renovate Žale Cemetery and to restore its original function. The work was carefully directed by Vlasto Kopač, who had helped Plečnik in drawing plans as a student. The only mis-



understanding took place in the case of the entrance propylaea where the original crystalline structure of the plasterwork was covered with whitewash, which damaged the expressive value of the monument. New copper surrounds leave ugly green traces on it. The original creeper used by Plečnik to colour the walls of the chapels was uprooted for fear of maintenance costs. In the case of such a delicate artistic monument as Žale Cemetery, the present inappropriate candle stands should be replaced and the wreath stands made of plexiglas installed by the management of the Cemetery removed.



"He planned another exit portal towards the Cemetery at the opposite end. Since there was no money for it, he decorated more richly the exterior of the adjacent workshop building."

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# Museum of Modern Art

IRN 1587

Location Ljubljana

Address Tomšičeva Ulica 14

Planning and completion 1939–1951

Architect Edvard Ravnikar

Investor Dr. Izidor Cankar and Ministry of Culture

Contractor Karel Kavka Construction Company

Building type Exhibition gallery

*Other buildings by the same architect* Institute of Forestry (Gozdarski Inštitut), Ljubljana 1947; urban planning and blocks of flats in Nova Gorica 1947; Faculty of Natural Sciences, Skopje, Macedonia 1948; Weak Current Institute (Inštitut za Šibki Tok) in Mirje, Ljubljana 1949; monument complex, Begunje 1953; cemetery of internees, Rab, Croatia 1954; two subsidiaries of National Bank (Ljubljanska Banka), Kranj and Celje 1961–1962; Faculty of Architecture, Construction and Geodesy (FAGG) in Mirje, Ljubljana 1963–1966; residential complex in Ferantov Vrt (Ferant Gardens), Ljubljana 1964–1969; petrol station of Petrol, Ljubljana 1968–1969; Globus department store, Kranj 1970–1973; extension of the National Gallery (Narodna Galerija), Ljubljana, 1991–1994

Since its opening in 1948, the Museum of Modern Art (Moderna Galerija) has been the central exhibition venue for contemporary art in Slovenia and simultaneously also a museum of modern art. At the behest of Dr. Izidor Cankar, the construction of the Museum was substantially funded by the heirs of industrialist Dragotin Hribar. Initially Cankar intended to engage Jože Plečnik for the planning of the Museum, but due to a difference of opinion that arose between them concerning the appreciation of modern art, he invited Edvard Ravnikar instead. Simultaneously Cankar drafted the programme for the premises of the Museum of Modern Art that was to include: “three main tasks and parts: halls for current exhibitions, a collection of the Impressionists that were so dear to him and a study centre” (*Nova Revija IV*, 1985, 297–298). At the time of its construction, the Museum of Modern Art was a pioneering work in several respects: it was the first gallery to be constructed with native knowledge, an innovation with respect to its technical layout, and also one of the early works by Ravnikar still manifesting numerous similarities with the architecture of Plečnik, like his first independent construction – the Ossuary of the victims of the First World War in Žale Cemetery in Ljubljana (1939).

The construction of the Museum of Modern Art began before the Second World War, to be concluded only in 1951. This long time span was responsible for the already visible marks of Ravnikar’s search for a synthesis of the classical and modern that was typical of his subsequent work. His quest took the form of respect for the tradition, on the one hand, and revolutionary thinking of modern art and architecture on the other, which was the way of thinking that he encountered while working in the studio of Le Corbusier for five months before the war, precisely at the time of the beginning of the construction of the Museum of Modern Art.

The building has a simple, geometrically correct and clear architectural layout. The floor plan is axially symmetric, although some of

◀ “The combination of relief and smooth slabs of various depths and structures created the plastic dynamism of the outer integument of the building.”

the exhibition halls are of a different size, according to the specifications of the commissioner. The whole is divided into three levels: the exhibition premises are on the ground floor that is raised above the terrain so that the basement is exposed to daylight, the depots and workshops are in the basement, while the administration and cabinets with the library are on the first floor. Equal consideration of individual artistic works or rather artists was achieved by exhibition premises of the same size located on the same level. The central hall that is higher and located at the axis of the building was designed as a lobby



"The subsequent removal of the pond has caused the loss of a typically modernist elegance of the dynamic equilibrium of the entrance-hall."

with adjoining minor halls. Such an arrangement of the premises facilitates good orientation for visitors. The compositional axis is extended outside the building on the northern side, at the beginning of Plečnik's Promenade, by the main foyer and entrance marked by a high colonnade with a baldachin, and by two long, symmetric ramps for the delivery of exhibits on the southern side of the building.

The building of the Museum is serene, extended and above all compact, and it is subordinated to classical symmetry that is emphasized by the central part and the entrance baldachin. The original plans even envisaged a facade integument with a geometrically correct structure of interchanging horizontal sections. However, the subsequent execution of an utterly free and asymmetric composition of the stone facade had already indicated visible signs of the oncoming Modernism. The combination of relief and smooth slabs of various depths and structures creates the plastic dynamism of the outer integument of the building. The transition from the rigidity of traditional rules to more open interpretations of Modernism is visible in the treatment of the corner where individual relief slabs interfere with the classical order of the base, pilaster and architrave. The symmetrically accentuated composition of the entrance-hall with a stair-

case and a broad landing has likewise acquired elements of a freer composition in the park-like arrangement, particularly with an asymmetrically located shallow pond. The subsequent removal of the pond has caused the loss of a typically modernist elegance of the dynamic equilibrium of the entrance-hall.

The building is preserved in its original condition. Minor transformations in the interior have not endangered the original architectural features and qualities. Some elements of the facade are dilapidated, i.e. the wooden window frames, doors and fences, the insulation of



"The renovation of the Museum is to be carried out with strict observance of the original architecture and all the features of the exterior as well as the interior of the building."

the roof and the zenithal lighting of the exhibition premises. The ramps on the southern side are in a critical condition. The installation fittings of the building are outmoded. The renovation of the Museum is to be carried out with strict observance of the original architecture and all the features of the exterior as well as the interior of the building. The recent renovation of the staircase in front of the main entrance was only a segment of the urgent reconstruction of the park-like arrangement with the water mirror in the broader area between the building and the Tivoli Promenade.

ALEŠ VODOPIVEC

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## The Main Co-operative Union

IRN357

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Slovenska 41
Planning and completion	1953–1956
Architect	Emil Medvešček with Oton Jugovec
Planner	Slovenija Projekt bureau
Investor	The Main Co-operative Union (Glavna Zadružna Zveza)
Contractor	GIP Gradis construction company
Building type	Office building

*Other buildings by the same architect* Sava Kranj factory buildings, Kranj 1948; Institute of Physics (Fizikalni Inštitut), Ljubljana 1948; Makedonka textile factory, Štip, Macedonia 1950–1954; terraced houses, Ljubljana Vič 1950; office building of BPT spinning mill, Tržič 1953; Intereuropa, Koper 1956; Lev Hotel, Ljubljana 1958–1963; Koteks Tobus building, Ljubljana 1959

In 1953 tenders were invited for the design of a new office building of the company Slovenija-Avto at a prominent location along the then Titova Cesta (present Slovenska Cesta) (*Arhitekt* 1953: 15–17). After the demolition of the old Figovec inn, which had been overgrown by the structure of a new urban scale, the dominant corner between the Slavija mansion by architect Ivo Medved from 1937 by Titova Cesta and the Zalta building in Puharjeva Ulica had to be solved. Architect Emil Medvešček received one of two equal second awards and was subsequently commissioned to execute it when the Main Co-operative Union became the investor. He was assisted in implementing the plan in the Slovenija Projekt bureau by Oton Jugovec, a young architect who had just taken his degree at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana.

The constructed building of the Main Co-operative Union differs from the tender plan according to its programme and layout. It is characterized and distinguished by a felicitous combination of principles of modern architecture and the context and is connected with those elements that seem essential to it: the street facades follow Slovenska Cesta and Puharjeva Ulica, and the side facade forms a square by the Figovec inn. However, in comparison with the adjacent buildings, the new structure displays a new, modern and open design. The skeletal construction, monolithic volume, an open ground floor and a flat roof – all these are clearly expressed Modernist elements.

The house is determined by an element on a large scale – the central monolithic block on the exterior creates the impression of a frame protruding from the level of the two adjacent buildings and hovering above the transparent ground floor. It consists of two tracts with offices: the first follows the line of Slovenska Cesta, while the other leans on Puharjeva Ulica. An open, wedge-shaped area is left between them intended for the corridor between the offices. The monumental structure of the facade along Slovenska Cesta reflecting the arrangement of the interior, forms the open, empty side of the frame (Bernik 1998: 292–330). The network of a subtly divided grid with ceramic fillings and wooden windows with a structure of their own addresses the vicinity as the main facade and is a specific identification element of the house. The regular rhythm of the facade is subtly broken by a

◀ External facade ... "In 2000, all the wooden windows were replaced by aluminum ones, their method of opening was changed..."

change indicating the special character of the ambience behind it, i.e. the position of the council hall on the third floor. The transparent ground floor presents an important novelty, while the huge glass surfaces create a better fusion between of the shops and the street. Glass panes in thin aluminum profiles encircle the supporting construction and are extended around the corner without hindrance. The roof of the restaurant on the top floor hovers above the glass terrace independently of the grid of the block beneath it. The main entrance to the office floors from Puharjeva Ulica is emphasized by a vertical caesura formed by bal-

"... and is connected with those elements that seem essential to it: the street facades follow the line of Slovenska Cesta and Puharjeva Ulica, and the side facade forms a square by the Figovec inn."



conies in the conclusion of the internal wedge-shaped corridor. The transition of the grid of the adjacent buildings along Puharjeva Ulica to the height of the central block is ingeniously executed on two levels, with an intermediate plastered tract above the passage to the back yard.

Particular attention was paid to the use of local natural materials (stone, ceramic, wood) and all the details: the form of window openings, parapets and railings, especially the metal railings on the balconies of the facade. The interior furnishings were the work of Oton Jugovec, Svetozar Križaj and Jože Kregar and the office cabinets, desks, chairs and lamps were all specifically designed.

The Main Co-operative Union was the first successful instance of the initiative to devote one percent of the investment for the purchase of works of art for the improvement of the general ambience in public buildings in Slovenia. The new bronze door to the back yard, the work of Stojan Batič, was made as part of this initiative, as well as the etched bronze shields by Bogdan Grom on the columns of the inn on the ground floor, five relief sculptures made of bronze, stone, wood, ceramic and copper plate by Vladimira Bratuž, the mosaic in the entrance hall by Lojze Spacal, the sgraffito painting of the ceiling of the restaurant on the terrace by Ivan Seljak Čopič and the "Ceres and Pomona" fresco by France Mihelič in the conference room.

The proprietor of the house changed in 2000, i.e. of the shop on the ground floor and all the office floors. During the renovation of the ground floor the mezzanine was removed together with the system of the original glazing, and all the panels of the floors, columns and ceilings were renovated. The principle of a transparent, non-tectonic facade positioned in front of the level of the supporting columns was



preserved by the new glazing. However, the interior layout of the shop hid the distinctly geometric layout of the house. The entrance hall and the office floors had been partly changed and transformed even before 2000, and the movable furnishings and lamps were likewise removed. In 2000, all the wooden windows were replaced by aluminum ones, their method of opening was changed, the external railings were renovated as well as the electric installation, and the wooden dividing cabinets were removed. All the works of art, with the exception of the fresco by France Mihelič and the reliefs by



"The skeletal construction, monolithic volume, an open ground floor and a flat roof – all these are clearly expressed Modernist elements."

Vladimira Bratuž, are still preserved at their original locations.

The Main Co-operative Union is an example of a quality construction in Slovenska Cesta with respect to the grid of the building as well as the felicitous synthesis of modernist principles and the important elements of the context. The characteristic features of the building are to be preserved: the grid, the division of the volume, the structure of the facade in original materials, the layout of the interior with all the important public surfaces – the entrance hall, the vertical core and the wedge-shaped corridor in front of the offices. Other features of special importance are primarily the transparent, non-tectonic ground floor, the facade with fillings, the roof of the terrace and all the used materials: stone, vitrified facade brick, wood and metal. The works of art are integral parts of the whole, therefore they are to be preserved in situ.

#### MARUŠA ZOREC

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## Kozolec Block

IRN 8811

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Slovenska Cesta 51-53
Planning and completion	1953-1957
Architect	Edo Mihevc, <i>statics by engineers Lapajne and Treppo</i>
Investor	Gradis I. M. M. Ljubljana Directorate
Contractor	Gradis I. M. M.
Building type	Office and residential block
	<i>Other buildings by the same architect</i> Litostrój, factory and school (with architect Miroslav Gregorič), Ljubljana 1947; Intex factory, Kranj 1948; Litostrój residential blocks, Ljubljana 1948-1950; Vault of National Heroes (with sculptor B. Kalin), Ljubljana 1949; Impex office building, Ljubljana 1953-1955; Palace Hotel, Ohrid, Macedonia 1955; Belvedere residential blocks, Koper 1958; Metalka office block, Ljubljana 1959-1963; terraced houses, Piran 1959; holiday camp, Strunjan 1959-1960; residential blocks in Vojkovo Nabrežje, Koper 1960; Žusterna tourist centre, Koper 1962; hotel complex, Portorož 1964-1967

In 1953 the Gradis I.M.M. company, Ljubljana Directorate, commissioned architect Edo Mihevc to build a residential block on Slovenska Cesta in Ljubljana, between the Medjat house dating from the 19th century and Bavarski Dvor (Bavarian Court), the former hotel built in 1851 that had operated until 1910. Subsequently the hotel was in possession of the Commercial Union (Gospodarska Zveza), yet it was pulled down in 1962 due to the construction of pedestrian subways and the transformation of the then Titova Cesta (present Slovenska Cesta) connected with them.

According to the plan of the Office for the Urban Planning of Ljubljana, the site adjacent to Titova Cesta was intended for the construction of a large residential block with shops on the ground floor, a restaurant and club on the first floor, and a cinema auditorium in the back yard.<sup>1</sup> According to the regulation plan, the block was removed by 13 metres from the street kerb, since a 6-metre pavement and a 7-metre parking lane were planned there.

In comparison with the otherwise modest residential architecture of the 1950s in Slovenia,<sup>2</sup> the block that acquired the nickname Kozolec (i.e. 'hay-rack') was a luxurious residential building. It was built by Gradis, the largest construction company in the Slovenia of that time, while the ambitious project had political support, which facilitated state funding. The concept of the residential block was in accordance with the post-war political ideology that supported collective awareness and regarded block construction as a possibility for its realization. It was therefore no coincidence that the exhibition termed "A Flat for Our Circumstances" in 1956 was opened on the ground floor and the mezzanine of the as yet unfinished Kozolec block.<sup>3</sup> The exhibition was one of the most important manifestations of architectural creativity in Slovenia in the 1950s.

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1 (ZAL, MLO LJ, Komunalna+gradnje (LJU 474), MLO GO, No. 1181/55)

2 The block was constructed at about the same time as the first part of Savsko Naselje (Sava Quarter).

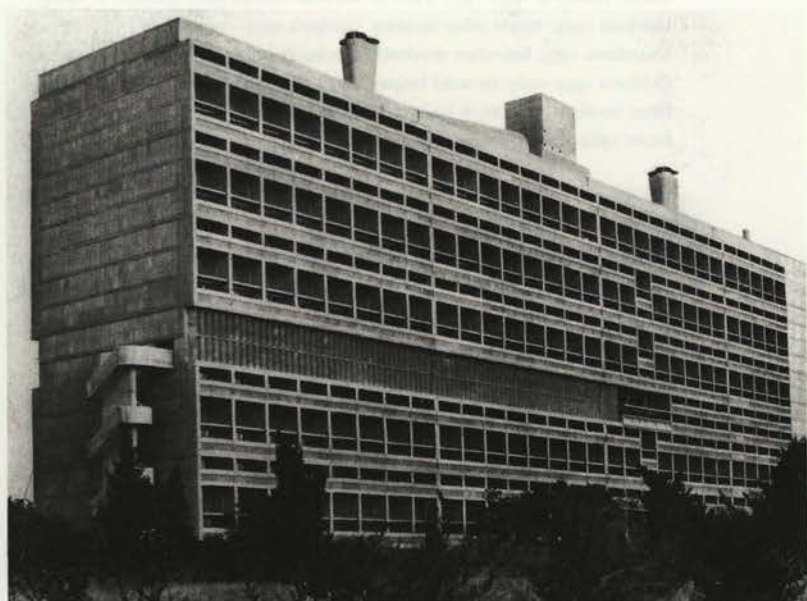
3 "A Flat for Our Circumstances", Ljubljana, 1957. The exhibition was organized during a conference on the condition of residential architecture.

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◀ "Due to the skeletal construction and horizontal balcony sections the building had been nicknamed the Kozolec even in its unfinished condition while it was being built."

Some of the flats were bought by the Army,<sup>4</sup> others by various companies, while the fact remains that the social structure of the inhabitants of the new block was, in general, considerably above average. The block was considered one of the best quality residential blocks in Ljubljana and living there became prestigious. The flats were above average standard, their floor plans were good and the furnishings of quality. According to the residents, the flats still correspond to current living standards, without any adaptations.

The Kozolec block presented a completely new type of residential



“The direct model for it was undoubtedly Le Corbusier’s concept of *Unité d’habitation*, a vertical city within a city combining all those functions that facilitate perfect family life of the inhabitants in a single building...”

building and it also had a symbolic value for the city, since it brought a new measure characteristic of large cities to the city centre. The direct model for it was undoubtedly Le Corbusier’s concept of *Unité d’habitation*, a vertical city within a city combining all those functions that facilitate perfect family life of the inhabitants (car parks, shops, a kindergarten, laundries, premises for entertainment and recreation) in a single building. The architectural concept was derived from his famous “five points of modern architecture”, which he defined as early as 1926 (Le Corbusier and P. Jeanneret 1956): the house on piles, the roof as a garden, an open floor plan, horizontal windows and a freely designed facade. Le Corbusier first erected such a block in Marseilles (1945–1952), then in Nantes (1948–1955), and later in other French towns (Firminy-Vert, 1955–1967; Briey-en-Foret, 1955–1967).

The architecture of the Kozolec block took over the functional, structural and formal design of its model. The block was designed as

4 The Army (Yugoslavia People’s Army, JLA) was among the most important investors of residential construction (Mihelič 1983).

a multifunctional office and residential building, but, contrary to the blocks of Le Corbusier that were located in greenery, as a city block closed on the ground floor that was intended for shops.<sup>5</sup> A two-storey restaurant connected with a club was planned on the first floor. In summer, it was to be extended to a large terrace supported by five stout columns reaching to the street as a projecting roof above entrances to the shops and as a hall on the ground floor.

The original design envisaged a cinema auditorium on the rear side that would have been connected with the block on the basement



"The front and side facades are faced with stone slabs made of Jurassic limestone, which renders a more refined appearance of the building in comparison with those by Le Corbusier that were executed in crude concrete as a rule."

and on the first floor. Access to it would have been from Slovenska Cesta through the central corridor of the building, and it would have been connected with the restaurant through the foyer.

An installation storey was fixed above the lower one, a two-storey trade floor for all the infrastructure furnishing the flats, and there were six floors of flats above it that were arranged around three main staircases. Four flats of various sizes were connected to each landing, and they stretched, with the exception of bed-sitters, over the entire breadth of the building. There was a total of 66 flats in the block, and they were designed in six different types.

A flat terrace covered the central part of the building comprising the residential area, and there were three two-storey cubes; the lower storey was originally intended for servant quarters and drying rooms,<sup>6</sup> and the upper one for artist studios.

The Kozolec block was certainly a modest and somewhat reinter-

5 It is interesting that the first self-service store in Ljubljana was opened in the block in 1959.

6 A kindergarten had been in operation there for some time.

preted variant of *Unité d'habitation* in Marseilles;<sup>7</sup> nevertheless, it stood out of the standard of contemporary residential architecture in Slovenia and also the standard of the then city centre of Ljubljana due to its exceptional length (93m) and height (10 floors). With the public ground floor, the Kozolec block transformed the area of Slovenska Cesta.

The architecture of the block is very interesting and unique not only on account of its monumentality and as a typological novelty, but also as a construction achievement and an example of a distinctly modern design in Slovenia at the beginning of the 1950s. All these



"The present problem of the Kozolec block is appropriate renovation."

features resulted in the Kozolec block being decreed a scheduled monument as early as 1993.<sup>8</sup>

The building was designed as a ferroconcrete skeleton supported by three longitudinal series of columns 6 metres apart. The columns were circular and covered with a mosaic of black limestone on the ground floor and mezzanine, while they were square on the residential floors. Such a construction facilitated a completely free arrangement of the floor plan in the lower part as well as the upper residential floors. It enabled an arbitrary arrangement of rooms and partition walls, the division or joining of shops on the ground floor, the construction of a hall on the mezzanine floor and also an arbitrary division or joining of residential rooms and units on the floors. The installation floor between the mezzanine and the residential part of the

7 The block in Marseilles was 135m long, 24m broad and 56m high and it comprised 330 independent residential units with 23 various floor plans (Le Corbusier and P. Jeanneret 1957).

8 Republic of Slovenia Official Gazette No. 1993/60.

building also performed the structural function of strengthening the construction at the location where it could break should an earthquake occur.

Due to its skeletal construction and horizontal balcony sections, the building had been nicknamed the Kozolec even in its unfinished condition while it was being built. Most inhabitants of Ljubljana still know it by that name.

The multifunctional concept of the building is also expressed on the facade integument. The northern and southern facades are divided and finished as blind facades, while the front facade is divided horizontally by uninterrupted sections of balcony banisters. The ground floor with shops is entirely glazed. The two-storey mezzanine is connected on the exterior by visible circular columns of the skeleton with alternate glass fillings.

The installation floor and the residential part of the building protrude as consoles above the ground floor on the street facade. The front and side facades are faced with stone slabs made of Jurassic limestone, which renders a more refined appearance of the building in comparison with those by Le Corbusier that were executed in crude concrete as a rule.

The protrusions on the roof are removed back to provide enough room for residential terraces intended for various purposes according to Le Corbusier's concept of the roof-terrace (*toit-terrasse*). A kindergarten had operated on the roof for a certain period of time.

Quality furnishings of the flats were an important innovation of the block. All the flats were namely fitted with built-in laboratory-like kitchens, while the closets designed as partition walls between the rooms were part of the standard furnishings.

The present problem of the Kozolec block is appropriate renovation. The ownership of the flats, divided among the former tenants after the denationalization act, is more of a problem than an advantage. The social standard is rather low due to aging proprietors who are unable to renovate the block as a whole on their own. If the City Council wishes to actually protect and renovate the monument, it will have to fund the renovation substantially. The Kozolec block is namely one of those buildings that express most originally the dynamic development of modern Slovene architecture in the 1950s and the creative atmosphere that prevailed in the architecture of that period.

BREDA MIHELICH

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# Parliament

IRN 8825

*Location* Ljubljana

*Address* Šubičeva Ulica 4

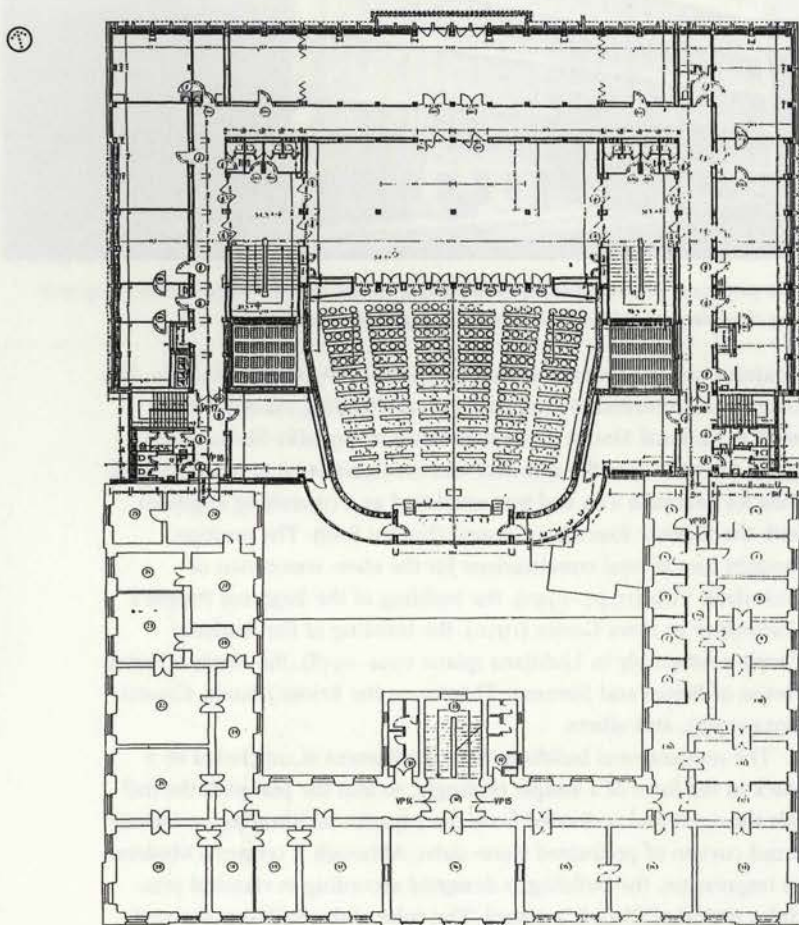
*Synonyms* People's Assembly, State Council (Ljudska Skupščina, Državni Zbor)

*Planning and completion* 1958–1960

*Architect* Vinko Glanz

*Other buildings by the same architect* Vič Grammar School (Gimnazija Vič), Ljubljana 1939; Slovenija Avto office and residential block, Ljubljana 1954; Neptun Hotel, House of Brioni and Summer Theatre, Brioni, Croatia 1954–1955

The idea for the Slovene Parliament appeared with Plečnik's plan for the parliament building at Ljubljana Castle in 1947. The architect planned a huge octagonal building in place of the old castle. A call for tenders for the Parliament building in Tivoli Park was published in the same year. The plan by Edvard Ravnikar that was awarded the second prize (the first not being awarded), was not executed, while the proposition by Plečnik became famous. Plečnik took part in the tender only at the instigation of Ferdo Kozak, the then Minister of



▲ Floor plan (scale: 1,5mm = 1m)

◀ "The portal is a distinctive feature of the building, reaching over two floors and designed as a figurative sculpture without classical architectural elements."

Culture, who did his best to entice the famous architect to participate in the post-war construction. His famous plan with a circular hall and a cone-shaped tower disregarded the defined location (he located the parliament next to Tivoli Pond), therefore it was considered as non-competing. The building of the Parliament (then termed the People's Assembly) was built between 1958 and 1960 according to the plan by Vinko Glanz. The architect was from Dalmatia (Croatia) by birth (Kotor 1902 – Ljubljana 1977) and was a student of Plečnik at the instigation of conservator Dr. Kosta Strajnica. The intention of



"The purpose of the renovation was to modernize the hall so that it would express the spirit of new democracy symbolized by the circular arrangement of seats."

Strajnica was to acquire a skilled architect for Dubrovnik, Croatia, but Glanz soon returned to Ljubljana. An outstanding example of his work is National House (Slovenski Dom) in Rogaška Slatina from 1938. After the war, the architect was commissioned to renovate Bled Villa for Marshall Tito and was employed as a consulting engineer with the Slovene Executive Council (Izvršni Svet). The position brought him several commissions for the state: restoration of Podrožnik Villa (1949–1950), the building of the Regional People's Committee in Nova Gorica (1950), the building of the Regional People's Assembly in Ljubljana (plans 1954–1958), the Neptun Hotel, House of Brioni and Summer Theatre on the Brioni islands, Croatia (1954–1955), and others.

The monumental building of the Parliament is concluded by a block in the form of a simple rectangle, so that the part with the hall fills the court and is divided from the adjacent building by a relatively broad curtain of perforated stone slabs. Although it creates a Modernist impression, the building is designed according to classical principles typical of Plečnik's school. The cube of the building, the roof projection and also the stone panelling of the interior walls follow the National and University Library, the monumentality of which served the architect as a model. The building of the Parliament is axially symmetric with the accentuated decorative portal. The facade is di-

vided into a base, middle part and upper endpiece. The constructed network in front of the windows creates a unified surface framed by the projection and corner walls coated with bright stone, while the panelling of the parapets of darker stone emphasizes the depth of the internal structure. The perforated upper endpiece conceals the windows of the upper offices. The portal is a distinctive feature of the building, reaching over two floors and designed as a figurative sculpture without classical architectural elements. The sculpture made by Zdenko Kalin and Karel Putrih is an allegory of the working people.



"The monumental building of the Parliament is concluded by a block in the form of a simple rectangle, so that the part with the hall fills the court and is divided from the adjacent building by a relatively broad curtain of perforated stone slabs."

The interior of the building likewise indicates a recognizable treatment of the doors, walls and floors typical of Plečnik. The building expresses Plečnik's simplified Classicism combined with the refined pathos of socialist realism.

The building underwent several renovations in the independent Slovenia. The kitchen was renovated and the cabinet of the President of the State Council was refurbished between 1996 and 1997 according to the plans by architect Miloš Bonča. The major intervention in the building was the renovation of the great hall of the State Council. On the basis of a call for tenders the design of a group of young architects was selected, consisting of: Sonja Miculinič, Albina Kindlhofer, Darja Valic and Goran Đuričić. The original hall panelled with wood and furnished with a conventional arrangement of seats was replaced by a circular floor plan and lighter and brighter furnishings. Two thirds of the circle are intended for MPs and a third for the Government and the Presidency. The purpose of the renovation was to modernize the hall so that it would express the spirit of new democracy symbolized by the circular arrangement of seats. Both the vestibules were renovated likewise.



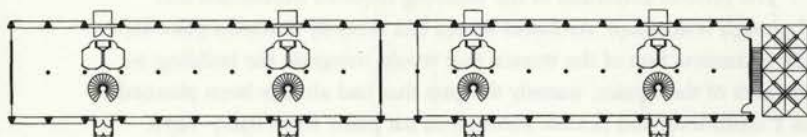
## Department Store of the Communal Centre in Šiška IRN 14293

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Celovška Cesta 111
Planning and completion	1960–1964
Architect	Miloš Bonča
Investor	Ljubljana Šiška Town Council Fund for Housing Construction
Contractor	Obnova Construction Company
Building type	Department store

*Other buildings by the same architect* Part of the Communal Centre, Hrastnik 1962–1965; shopping pavilion in Šiška, Ljubljana 1964–1966; renovation of the branch NLB bank, Ribnica 1970; renovation of the branch NLB bank in Vodnikova Ulica, Celje 1972–1975; commercial and shopping centre, Mozirje 1972–1976; branch NLB bank, Kočevje 1976–1978 and 1986–1988; branch NLB bank, Krško 1977–1979 and 1997–1998; Technical centre of NLB bank, Ljubljana 1978–1983 and 1984–1985; regulation around the Drama SNG theatre, Ljubljana 1980; office and residential building of NLB bank in Trg v. Kongresa, Celje 1984–86; renovation of the building of NLB bank in Vrunčeva Ulica, Celje 1990–1991; renovation of several interiors in the Parliament building in Šubičeva Ulica and Tomšičeva Ulica, Ljubljana 1995–1997; renovation of the protocol reception area and buildings, Brdo 1995–1997

At the beginning of the 1960s, modern Slovene architecture was unexpectedly marked by the appearance of a building expressing the modernist spirit by its consistent structure and convincing architectural idiom that was indicated in the realization of architectural paradigms announced decades before. The design of the department store in Šiška by Miloš Bonča is an exceptional creative achievement, although it expresses the creative ambience that is known as the Ljubljana School of Architecture, which originated on the principles of Jože Plečnik, Ivan Vurnik and Edvard Ravnikar and expressed architectural ideas through the functional and semantic expressivity of the form, articles and entire systems condensed in a convincing architectural sign. The department store by Bonča is an early example of architecture that indicates an eloquent geometricalized lyrical quality understood as a continuation of the rational aesthetics of modern architecture already begun in the inter-war period that was characterized by structuralist architectural initiatives and a sensitive reference to contemporary brutal experiences. Unfortunately, the building, for which the architect received the most important awards, is severely dilapidated at present, as is the building in Hrastnik (1962–1965) designed in a similar style, which indicates an utter lack of understanding and responsibility towards the tradition of modern architecture.

The building was located along Celovška Cesta, thus creating an internal square together with the building of Šiška Town Council and



▲ Floor plan (scale: 1:3mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... "The refined sense of form expressed in exposed concrete..."

other buildings in the vicinity (the cinema, hotel, shopping pavilion) in one of the centres that were called “communal centres” of the administratively fragmented city of Ljubljana. The intentionally longitudinal form of the building designed in a mirror-image was supported on the longer sides by two-part concrete supports that were formed as columns on the lower parts and as pilasters on the upper parts. The glazed exterior was designed in the classical spirit with a dynamic image created by the structural rhythm of the pilasters. The building with its glazed exterior opened up the volume of the square as a mod-

“The building was located along Celovška Cesta, thus creating an internal square together with the building of Šiška Town Council and other buildings in the vicinity (the cinema, hotel, shopping pavilion) in one of the centres that were called the ‘communal centres’...”



ernist continuum. The refined sense of form expressed in exposed concrete marked the interior of the building as well. The interior, together with the cellar utilized as a warehouse, functioned as an internal system so that the upper area of the building was unified in the sense of “department store landscapes”. The central spiral staircases and framing construction elements materialized the glazed integument and thus indicated the interest of the architect for the problem of defining the edges of an architectural body to be investigated so devotedly and effectively in his subsequent works.

The present condition of the building requires immediate and thorough renovation. Architect Bonča has recently drafted a plan for the reconstruction of the terrace that would integrate the building in the area of the square, namely the part that had already been planned as a multi-level and flexible solution in his plans from 1969–1970.

STANE BERNIK



"Architect Bonča has recently drafted a plan for the reconstruction of the terrace that would integrate the building in the area of the square..."

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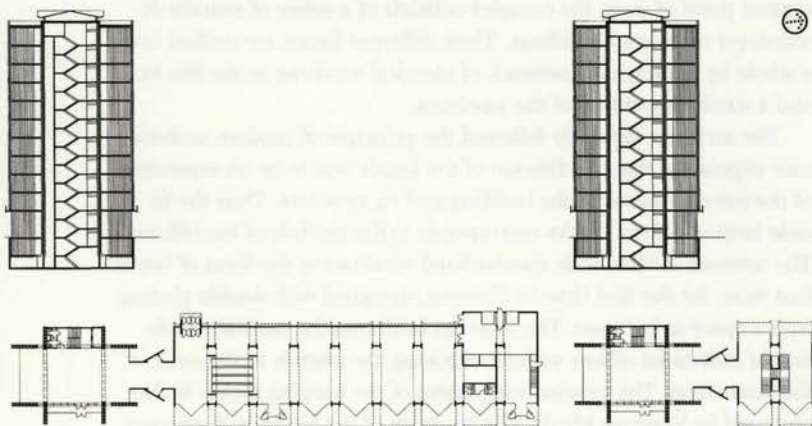
# Astra Office and Shopping Centre IRN14297

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Address</i>	Dunajska Cesta 47–53
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1964–1970
<i>Architect</i>	Savin Sever, engineer Davorin Žitnik
<i>Investor</i>	Astra and Commerce trade
<i>Contractor</i>	SGP Grosuplje
<i>Building type</i>	Complex of office blocks and a department store

*Other buildings by the same architect* Workshops of the Institute for Deaf Children (Zavod za gluho mladino, ZGM), Ljubljana 1962–1963, terraced houses in Bežigrad, Ljubljana 1963–1970, Mladinska Knjiga printing house, Ljubljana 1963–1966, Triplex-A garage car park, Ljubljana 1966, AMZS offices and technical centre (Motoring Association of Slovenia), Ljubljana 1967–1968, Merkur department store, Ljubljana 1968–1970, AMZS building for technical inspections, Ljubljana 1980–1981, portal structure of the Karavanke tunnel, Hrušica 1983–1991

Architect Savin Sever designed three office and industrial building complexes along the present Dunajska Cesta in Bežigrad (Ljubljana) in the 1960s. They are characterized by their distinctive appearance, although in different versions of the design. They include the Mladinska Knjiga printing house (1963–1966) and the Merkur department store (1968–1970), the AMZS centre (Motoring Association of Slovenia) (1967–1968), and the workshops of the Institute for Deaf Children (1962–1963), next to the Astra shopping centre (1964–1970).

The Astra shopping and office centre is a continuation of an ambitious urban planner's vision of a business centre along the main city thoroughfare, beyond the railway line, that was initiated with the construction of the Commercial Exhibition Centre (Gospodarsko Razstavišče) in the 1950s and concluded by the World Trade Center complex in the 1990s. The Astra centre consisted of two lower department stores and two office blocks. Both the office blocks for the companies Astra and Commerce were constructed in the first phase (1967), while the department store and a shopping pavilion were added in the second phase (1970). The series of buildings comprises



▲ Floor plan (scale: 0.9mm = 1m)

- ◀ "The architect faithfully followed the principle of modern architecture stipulating that the division of the facade was to be an expression of the internal organization of the building and its structure. Thus the facade network of the blocks corresponds to the module of the offices. [...] The windows on the blocks are technical innovations, functioning as mechanical air-conditioning."

the entire side of the building block. Initially the motif of a high block was exposed in the corner of a vital intersection, and it was concluded on the opposite side by the lower shopping pavilion. The department store shops are less exposed and they conform to the average scale of the street, while the two identical blocks are covered with a glass network integument, thus determining a new scale typical of a large city. The architect developed his idea primarily on the effect of contrasts between the high vertical lines and horizontal building masses that were created by means of serial elements set in a row. From a con-



"The department store shops are less exposed and they conform to the average scale of the street, while the two identical blocks are covered with a glass network integument, thus determining a new scale typical of a large city."

ceptual point of view, the complex consists of a series of visually divided, yet connected buildings. Their different forms are unified into a whole by employing a network of identical windows in the blocks and a similar repetition of the pavilions.

The architect faithfully followed the principle of modern architecture stipulating that the division of the facade was to be an expression of the internal layout of the building and its structure. Thus the facade network of the blocks corresponds to the module of the offices. The network is filled with standardized windows in the form of boxes that were, for the first time in Slovenia, designed with double glazing with a space in between. The solution facilitates the natural ventilation of individual offices without exposing the interior to the noise of the busy street. The exterior integument of the hanging facade is also protected by Venetian blinds. The structure of the blocks with supporting corner walls positioned cross-wise creates the area of four corner offices, while the rest of the surface has no supports. The idea of an open floor plan is likewise supported by the cores of staircases and auxiliary rooms removed to the rear of the building. On the ground floor, the area between the corner walls is not filled up and the glass walls of the shop windows are removed from the street line, thus creating the

impression of a hovering cube above the open ground floor.

The design of the two department stores can be compared with the contemporary layout of the Mladinska Knjiga printing house in Dunajska Cesta 123. It is a modular layout of the so-called additive architecture, created with ferroconcrete frames with interpolated cubic bodies. Closed cubes display the supporting structure and are not joined. They are divided by double frames and horizontal slots creating a network of illuminating sections including the entire volume of the building. The lighting slots removed from the level of the facade



Department store ... "It is a modular layout of the so-called additive architecture, created with ferroconcrete frames with interpolated cubic bodies."

accentuate the plastic impression and the rhythm of the facade consisting of a series of standardized elements. The effect is enhanced by the base of the ground floor that is removed from the street line and consists of a diagonal series of glazed shop windows without parapets. It creates the impression of the mass of the building supported by a fragile emptiness.

The windows on the blocks are technical innovations, functioning as mechanical air-conditioning, and the fillings of the department store facades are made of artificial stone with prominent granulation. The stone panels are not joined, so that a typical modular network is created by their slots. The solutions of the lowered ceilings and some details of the interior design are not so fortunate. All the windows in the office storeys of the former Astra block were replaced and appropriately modernized in 2000.

Apart from the renovation of the interior, several studies were drafted for the transformation of the exterior of the shopping pavilion that was to acquire a commercially more attractive exterior. In order to avoid the fate of the AMZS centre (Motoring Association of Slovenia) by the same architect that was utterly degraded by a new office building, the Astra centre should be protected as an architectural whole.

JANEZ KOŽELJ



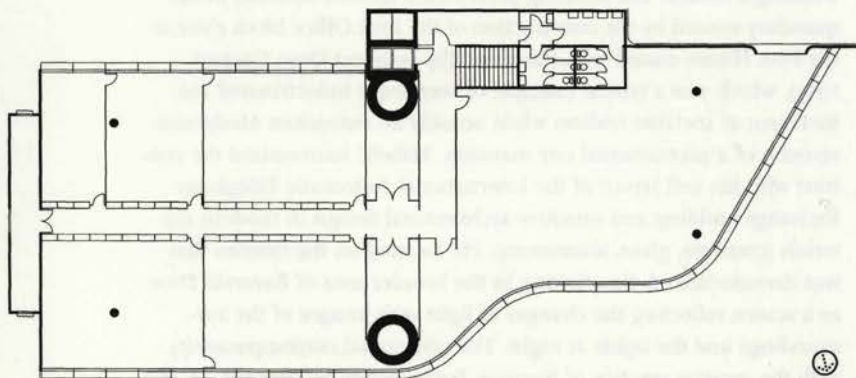
# International Automatic Telephone Exchange

IRN 14296

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Pražakova Ulica 3
Planning and completion	1972–1978
Architect	Milan Mihelič
Investor	PTT company, Ljubljana
Contractor	SCP Grosuplje, Grosuplje
Building type	Office and technical building

*Other buildings by the same architect* Residential tower blocks in Savsko Naselje (with architect Ilija Arnautović), Ljubljana 1957–1962; private house in Bežigrad, Ljubljana 1955, 1957–1959, transformation 1974–1975; Hall B of the Commercial Exhibition Centre (Gospodarsko Razstavišče), Ljubljana 1960–1961; office block s1/s2 (executed part of s2), Ljubljana 1963; Market department store, Osijek, Croatia, 1963–1967, renovation after fire 1982–1985; terraced houses, Sempeter near Gorica 1964–1968; Hall C of the Commercial Exhibition Centre, Ljubljana 1965–1967; office building of the company Konstrukt, Ljubljana 1965–1967; petrol station of Petrol in Prešernova Cesta, Ljubljana 1967–1968; Stoteks department store, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia (Serbia) 1968–1972; residential blocks in Kersnikova Ulica, Ljubljana 1969–1971; Slovenijales department store and extension to Hall B of the Commercial Exhibition Centre, Ljubljana 1974–1979; house of painter F. Novinc, Godešič 1982–1996; extension to the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts (SAZU), Ljubljana 1988–1991; parish church in Stožice, Ljubljana 1989–1994

The building of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange (IATE) in Ljubljana is part of a larger layout of the Bavarski Dvor district (Bavarian Court) for which architect Milan Mihelič received several awards. The appearance of this part of the city is utterly discordant and incomplete, in contrast to the concepts of the original tender. The result is due to inappropriate urban and investment policy in the city – under the former and present regimes that the urban planners of Ljubljana served – as architectural criticism has pointed out several times. The consequences of such urban practice are confirmed by the recent construction of Bavarski Dvor, since the voluptuous “capital” succeeded in integrating into it the coloured glass-house of yet another shopping centre in the city and shift it to the very edge of Prešernova Cesta. That means that Mihelič has failed in the construction of his original fine idea of a triangular graded

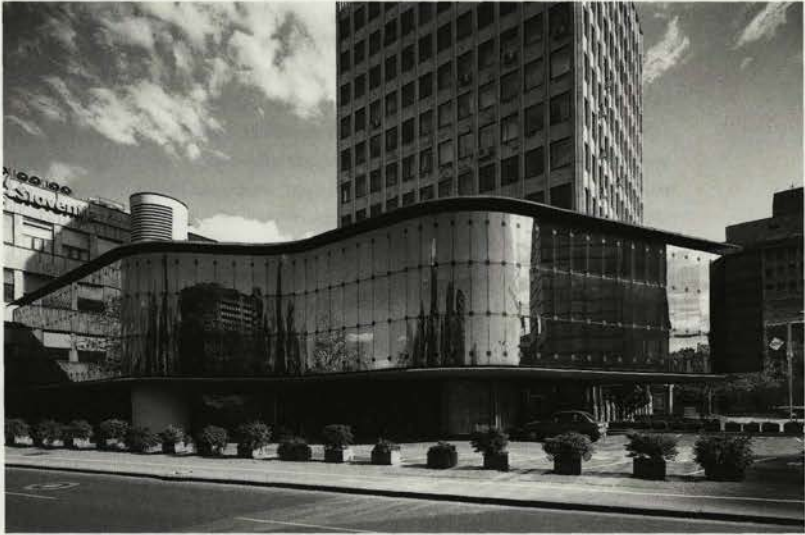


▲ Floor plan (scale: 2.9mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... “He focused on the exterior that was dematerialized, functioning in the broader area of Bavarski Dvor as a screen reflecting the changes of light with images of the surroundings and the lights at night.”

“northern town gate.” Originally the architect planned an integral dynamic composition of a divided glazed building at the northern entrance to the present Slovenska Cesta, with a doubled height dominant of the s1/s2 blocks, from which only the s2 was erected (1969–1980) and is now, regrettably, creating the impression of a torso of the excellent original layout.

The composition was to be graded and concluded with the building of a typical (now abandoned!) petrol station. On the other hand, the complex by Mihelič was to be broken in the lowered location of



“The building presented a creative solution to the quandary caused by the construction of the Post Office block close to the Post Office House coated with travertine [...]. Mihelič harmonized the contrast with his soft layout of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange building and sensitive architectural design in modern materials (concrete, glass, aluminum).  
.....

the undulating glass integument of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange, for which the architect was commissioned after winning a tender. The building presented a creative solution to the quandary caused by the construction of the Post Office block close to the Post House coated with travertine (by architect Oton Gaspari, 1953), which was a typical example of seemingly indoctrinated aestheticism of socialist realism while actually an outspoken Modernist revision of a monumental city mansion. Mihelič harmonized the contrast with his soft layout of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange building and sensitive architectural design in modern materials (concrete, glass, aluminum). He focused on the exterior that was dematerialized, functioning in the broader area of Bavarski Dvor as a screen reflecting the changes of light with images of the surroundings and the lights at night. The conceptual contemporaneity with the creative practice of Norman Foster has to be stressed, i.e. the emphasis on the integument at the expense of the structure, which was expressed to perfection in the case of the Willis-Faber&Dumas building in Ipswich (1974–1975). A more precise definition of the planning of both the buildings indicates contemporary origins, and thus also the progressive position of Mihelič at the end of high Mod-

ernism, since he has intentionally wrapped the upper part of the building in a glass integument with discernible structural elements and the use of similar technology to that of Fraser. It has to be stressed that Mihelič has already used it in the case of the glass walls of the facade on a department store in Novi Sad (1968–1972). The standardized body of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange building touches Post Office House with its narrower functional frame in the upper part, while the northern side above Cigaletova Ulica creates the appearance of a glazed gallery. Mihelič has thus solved the difficult connection with the Post Office House. Unfortunately, some of the “skilled” critics have never managed to grasp the sensitive solution as an effective answer to the quandary of the context.

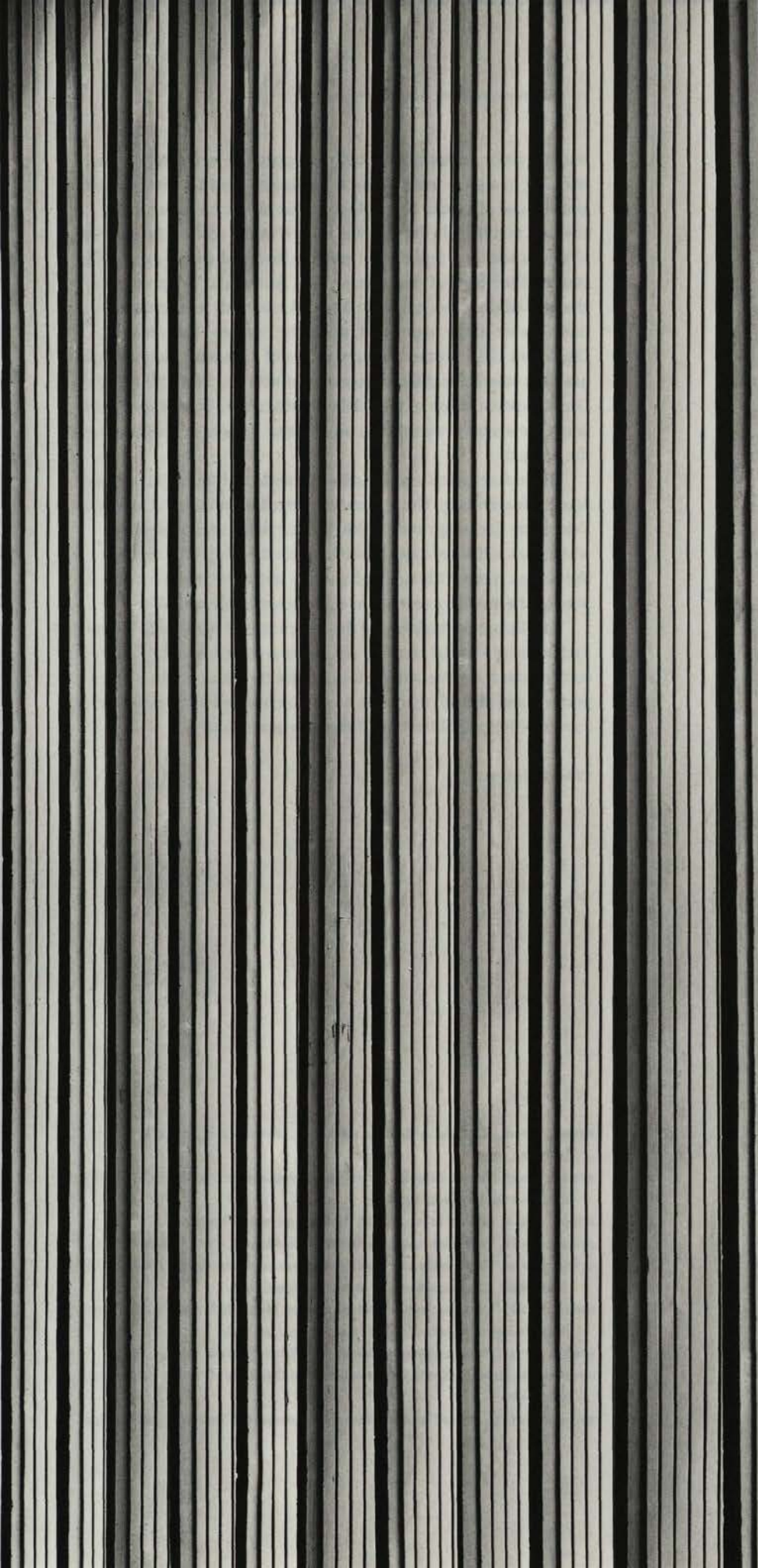
The technological and functional solution of the building was equally demanding. The apparatus of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange and its functioning demanded a large area, which was solved by a double cellar with the telephone exchange and the engine room with air-conditioning, while the upper storeys housed the auxiliary services and the accounts department.

The distinctive building of the International Automatic Telephone Exchange by Mihelič received several awards and was the focus of contemporary architectural criticism and the press in the former Yugoslavia and abroad, therefore it can be classified as an outstanding icon of Slovene architecture of the previous century.

STANE BERNIK

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## Commercial Exhibition Centre

IRN 337

*Location* Ljubljana

*Address* Dunajska Cesta 10

*Planning and completion* 1954–1958; 1960–1979

*Architects* Branko Simčič, Milan Mihelič, Marko Šlajmer, Zoran Kreitmayer

*Building type* Exhibition complex with exhibition premises, office and trade buildings

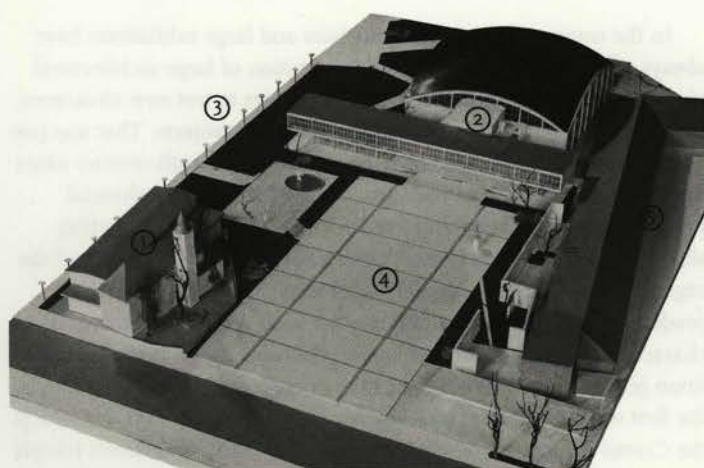
In the course of history, various fairs and large exhibitions have always offered opportunities for the execution of large architectural plans and challenged architects and engineers to test new structures, technologies and materials in such prestigious projects. That was particularly true of the period since the middle of the 19th century when the rapid development of industry, the need to spread industrial products to new markets and the desire to establish new relationships between producers, merchants and consumers encouraged the organization of large industrial exhibitions and fairs of industrial products. After the first exhibitions that were mainly of a national character for the protection of home products against foreign competition (e.g. the first exhibition of French industrial products in Paris), the first world exhibition was organized in London in 1851, for which the Crystal Palace was built according to the plans of architect Joseph Paxton, a monumental building made of glass and steel that was a model for a series of subsequent exhibition palaces.

The world exhibitions to follow the one in London (Paris 1867, 1878, 1889, Vienna 1873, Philadelphia 1876, etc.) competed not only in the quality and diversity of the exhibited artefacts, but also in the planning of famous exhibition halls that were unique achievements of contemporary architectural engineering and design (e.g. Galerie des Machines, Eiffel Tower) and exceptional technological undertakings, which still feature as milestones in the development of architecture.

The Commercial Exhibition Centre in Ljubljana is part of this complex, although it was of no similar international importance. The construction of trade fair complexes in the former Yugoslavia was encouraged by the rapid post-war development of the economy and the desire for economic co-operation with foreign countries. In the 1950s other commercial exhibition premises were constructed in the then Yugoslavia: in Zagreb, Belgrade, Skopje, Leskovac and Novi Sad (Divac 1962: 3–4). The cities competed among themselves and were prepared to invest substantial funds in the construction of representative and innovative architecture. On account of the great expense, most of the complexes were constructed for various purposes, from commercial exhibitions to cultural and sports events. The Commercial Exhibition Centre in Ljubljana, which was selected for the venue of the Seventh Congress of the Communist Union of Yugoslavia in 1957, was the first fair complex in Yugoslavia with daring modern architecture executed with a new technology using advanced materials.

The Commercial Exhibition Centre was the first post-war land

development in Ljubljana to the north of the railway station. The location in the area of the abandoned cemetery of St. Christopher between Dunajska Cesta, the Baraga Seminary, the old Žabkar factory and the Church of St. Christopher was selected by the Regulation Office of Ljubljana and the first plan for it was also prepared by the Office. The plan anticipated the construction of a new hall with an extension, new premises for the fair on the northern side of the old Žabkar factory, regulation of the concourse along Dunajska Cesta in front of the new hall between Vilharjeva Cesta, the Žabkar factory



Model of the planned construction: Church of St. Christopher (1), Hall A (2), avenue of trees (3), concourse (4), Žabkar factory (5)

and the Church of St. Christopher,<sup>1</sup> and a new connection of the Church and the Baraga Seminary with the avenue of trees on the northern edge of the complex. The Ljubljana Fair Company (Ljubljanski Velesejem) published a call for tenders in 1953 for the land development of the exhibition complex (*Arhitekt*, 1954: 23–24). The layout for the tender was far more ambitious than the first proposition; it included a large hall, a small hall, central exhibition premises, administrative buildings, restaurants and a bazaar. The urbanist plan for the new fair was made in the same year, including the location and a draft of the main buildings, while the People's Committee of the Town Council issued a decree,<sup>2</sup> according to which the area between Vilharjeva Cesta, Dunajska Cesta, Linhartova Cesta and Župančičeva Jama was assigned to the fair. The decree implied permission for the demolition of the Church of St. Christopher, while the Baraga Seminary was cut away from Dunajska Cesta.

The construction of the fair complex began in 1954.<sup>3</sup> The beginnings were modest; they comprised primarily the adaptation of the existing buildings in the area of the former Žabkar factory for the purposes of the fair. The construction expanded properly in 1959 after the decision of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to organize the Seventh

1 Model, photograph by B. Simčič.

2 (GO No. 561/1–54/No./MZ, cf. ZAL, MLO Ljubljana, "Komunala in gradnje" (Lju 474), MLO-GO, No. 2478/55)

3 Ljubljanski Velesejem (Ljubljana Fair Company) was transformed into Gospodarsko Razstavišče (Commercial Exhibition Centre) in 1954.

Congress in Ljubljana in April 1958. Thus the enterprise obtained political support and funding, so that the ambitious plan was carried out in less than a year. Branko Simčič as the executive of the plan invited a group of young architects<sup>4</sup> of the post-war generation. Since the autumn of 1957 when the preparations began, until the Congress in 1958, they erected Hall A with the extension, the large concourse, the small concourse with a fountain and the sculpture of Urška and the water sprite [i.e. characters from a ballad by the greatest Slovene poet France Prešeren] by Stojan Batič, the obelisk of the Seventh Congress, the



Jurček pavilion (1), Hall A with the glass pavilion in front of it, small concourse with a fountain and the sculpture of Urška and the water sprite by Stojan Batič (3), large concourse (4).

steel pavilion, the large concourse and adjacent wall, the extension to the Festival Hall, the whole infrastructure and all the sculptural decorations.<sup>5</sup> A monument of Tito, the work of Antun Augustinčić, had been erected on the concourse in front of Hall A for the duration of the Congress, and was subsequently removed to the location in front of the Museum of the People's Revolution<sup>6</sup> in Tivoli Park.

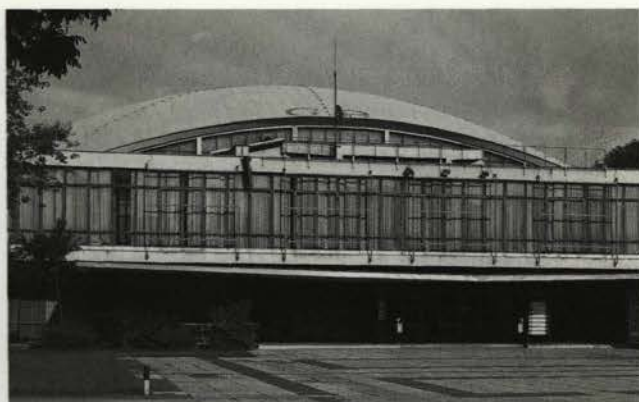
Hall A, planned by architect Branko Simčič and his assistants, was a novelty at the time of its construction and the first shell structure in the then Yugoslavia. Subsequently it was copied for the exhibition halls in Belgrade and Skopje trade fairs (*Arhitektura urbanizam* 1962: 3–31). The shell with a floor plan equal to the dome of the Church of St. Peter in Rome covers the Hall of a square floor plan with a side of 42 metres without intermediate supports.<sup>7</sup> It is placed on four columns, 8m high, that are connected with horizontal ties made of prestressed concrete. The columns are not plastered, the shell is made of concrete, protected at the top with a coating of silver varnish, and the interior is insulated

- 4 I. Arnautović, B. Gaberšček and M. Mihelič and structural engineers D. Smrekar, J. Uršič and M. Marinček. The fittings were designed with the assistance of B. Mušič, M. Amalietti and J. Kregar (*Arhitekt* 1960: 65–70).
- 5 Branko Simčič and his assistants received the Prešeren Award for the construction of the first phase of the complex in 1958; cf. "Petdeset let Prešernovih nagrad: 1947–1996", Kranj, 1996.
- 6 Present Museum of Recent History.
- 7 Statics by D. Smrekar.

with cork panels. Originally, the top was additionally covered with a rosette of acoustic plates that were subsequently removed.

A distinctive feature of the Hall was the uniquely designed internal fittings, especially the movable galleries that were manufactured by the Litostroj factory according to the plans of engineer Miloš Marinček. They were designed as multifunctional internal equipment that could be moved electrically, reassembled at will and removed or transformed into a circumferential two-level gallery. Why the equipment was removed, sawn to pieces and taken to a rubbish dump is still a mystery –

"Hall A planned by architect Branko Simčić and assistants was a novelty at the time of its construction and the first shell structure in the then Yugoslavia."



even more so since the demolition took place at the time of the exhibition of Jože Plečnik set up in the Hall by architect Boris Podrecca in 1986. It is evident that the distance in time was still too short then to evaluate the architecture of the fair objectively. It is probably true, according to the Norwegian historian Madsen, that a building has to survive three generations before history can evaluate it.

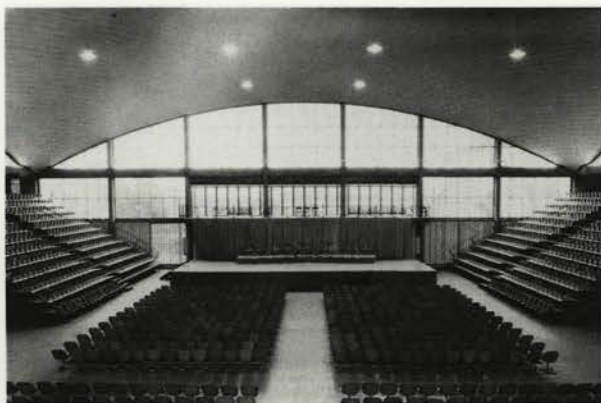
A minor extension was added to the Hall for cloakrooms, and a multifunctional glass pavilion was constructed in front of it for exhibitions and other purposes during cultural events (smoking room, cloakrooms, etc.).

Other buildings constructed within the Commercial Exhibition Centre in the first phase before the Congress and directly after it displayed new technological, formal and construction approaches that had not prevailed yet in the modest architectural production of the post-war era. The new obelisk was thus not only a new dominant vertical feature in the city, but also an important functional core of the complex and a structural novelty (plans by engineers Farčnik and Uršič). The central lighting of the square was located on it, and it additionally functioned as a flag pole, lightning conductor and television antenna.

The steel pavilion by Dunajska Cesta constructed according to the plan of architect Marko Šljajmer (the present Citroen showroom) was the first prefabricated skeletal construction coated with prefabricated panels and made entirely in Yugoslavia. At present the pavilion is heightened and transformed. In 1960 the circular pavilion was constructed according to the plans of architect Marko Šljajmer at the northern edge of the complex, at the location of the former Church of St. Christopher. It consisted of an innovative ferroconcrete, mushroom-shaped structure coated with a glass integument, on account of which it was nicknamed "Jurček" (i.e. 'boletus').

The land development of the Commercial Exhibition Centre was also important for the area of Dunajska Cesta. The composition of new buildings located around the open square set up the concept for the regulation of the periphery of Dunajska Cesta as developed subsequently by Edvard Ravnikar (Ravnikar 1960). In 1965 the concept prevailed in the general urban plan of Ljubljana as well.

After the Congress, the construction of the Commercial Exhibition Centre continued. The Chamber of Commerce (Trgovska Zbornica) invited tenders for the construction of an office building in



Hall A ... "A distinctive feature of the Hall was the uniquely designed internal fittings, especially the movable galleries that were manufactured by the Litostroj factory according to the plans of engineer Miloš Marinček."

1960. The most important Slovene architects took part in it (*Arhitekt* 1960: 71–73), since the Commercial Exhibition Centre was one of the few construction works in the then Ljubljana and therefore of prestigious importance. The first prize was awarded to the plan by architects Grega Košak, Mirko Mrva and Živa Baraga with the concept of having two glass blocks, similar to the work by Mies, located in the east-west direction. Most of the other participants likewise designed the building as a new spatial dominant. In spite of their interesting quality concepts, none of the plans were realized, and Hall B by architect Milan Mihelič was subsequently constructed at the location of the anticipated office block.

The regulation plan of Bežigrad Town Council was passed in 1963 including the proposition of a new land development concept for the Commercial Exhibition Centre, connecting it with the new centre to the north of Linhartova Ulica. Architect Milan Mihelič drafted the construction plan on the basis of these starting-points. His plan expanded the premises and connected them with a series of pavilions that could be joined at will or extended if necessary.<sup>8</sup> They were designed as mushroom-shaped structures in the form of octagonal umbrellas resting on flexibly profiled ferroconcrete ceilings. The glass integument was coated up to the middle of the upper section with panels functioning as shades refracting the light to the interior. The renovation of the pavilions is in progress.

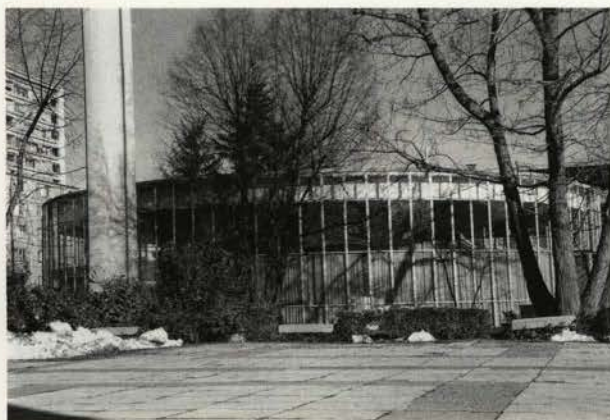
The construction plan included the Baraga Seminary in the premises, so that the building would have been transformed into a representative building with a multifunctional hall. The complex was concluded towards the east by a series of residential blocks located in a

<sup>8</sup> Only 4 out of the anticipated 26 in 3 rows were constructed in a line to the north of Hall A.

double arc from Vilharjeva Cesta to Linhartova Cesta. At the corner of Vilharjeva Cesta and Dunajska Cesta, at the location of the Žabkar factory between the railway line and the newly planned motorway, Mihelič planned a block in the form of a double spiral growing from an open square on the basement level, with an underground gallery beneath the railway line to Masarykova Cesta or rather to the terrace square at Bavarski Dvor. The construction plan also envisaged new premises for trade, restaurants and office buildings along Dunajska Cesta.

The question of the office building for the Chamber of Commerce

"In 1960 the circular pavilion was constructed according to the plans of architect Marko Slajmer. It consisted of an innovative ferroconcrete, mushroom-shaped structure coated with a glass integument, on account of which it was nicknamed "Jurček" (i.e. 'bol-etus')."



and a hotel became topical again in the late 1960s. A call for tenders was published in 1969 and a new land development plan for the Commercial Exhibition Centre was designed. The first prize was awarded to architects Milan Mihelič and Kamilo Kolarič (the plan for the hotel) for their monumental composition that was in complete contrast to the light composable concept of the first plan by Mihelič. The complex was dominated by two blocks with an eccentric centre in the northern part of the complex by Linhartova Cesta. They were located facing one another and emphasized the longitudinal orientation of the entire complex between the centre by Linhartova Cesta including the two blocks, the new office building and the extension to Hall A and as far as the terrace square by Vilharjeva Cesta. The building of the Slovenijales store was located by Dunajska Cesta with an extended pedestrian course and an office building at the rear surrounded by low exhibition premises in the scale of the existing pavilions.

In 1977 a call for tenders was published for the Slovenijales office building, and the land development plan of the entire complex was changed again on account of that. The tender had ultimately prevented any further possibility for the development of the Commercial Exhibition Centre at that location. The transformation influenced primarily the concept of the office building that was changed from a unified building to two independent architectural bodies. The winner of the tender was architect Zoran Kreitmayer for a monumental, undivided building protruding from the scale of the light and transparent architecture typical of the Commercial Exhibition Centre. Before that, the Slovenijales store was constructed according to the plan by architect Milan Mihelič that was light and efficiently dominated the street area of Dunajska Cesta, in contrast to the large cubic mass of the

office building. The single-storey skeletal construction rests on mighty columns supporting the longitudinal and lateral supports of the first floor. The ground floor between the columns is entirely glazed, and the first floor is extended and emphasized horizontally with strong, concrete crests curved to the side, framing the facade of the first floor that is pierced with circular windows.

In 2000 architect Milan Mihelič drafted a new plan for the expansion of the Commercial Exhibition Centre as far as Linhartova Cesta at the behest of their administration. He repeatedly included the two blocks by Linhartova Cesta (the office building of the Chamber of Commerce and the hotel from his plan of 1969), a new exhibition hall behind the Slovenijales building and three new pavilions, while basements were created in the entire complex. The underground floors on the northern side were intended for parking, while the floor beneath the main platform was designed as a multifunctional hall. Such a solution should suffice for the present requirements of the complex.

The Commercial Exhibition Centre has an important place in the development of Slovene post-war architecture, since new architectural and structural ideas had been realized there already in the 1950s. They were innovations that were not possible at other, less prestigious locations due to modest economic resources in the post-war period. However, the area had been gradually privatized and closed since the completion of the first phase and illegal buildings began to appear inside the complex. The representative city area, one of the most prominent post-war urban complexes in Ljubljana, is still badly degraded at present due to inappropriate construction and renovation interventions. However, one of the main problems is whether to develop the exhibition premises at the existing location or to move the entire complex to a new location. The Town Council as the proprietor has to determine the purpose of the present location and should primarily insist on consistent interventions in the area, according to its historic, urban and architectural importance. The Town Council should also consider the possibility of a renovation for other purposes, more suited to the city centre, and assure appropriate financial means for the renovation.

#### BREDA MIHELIČ

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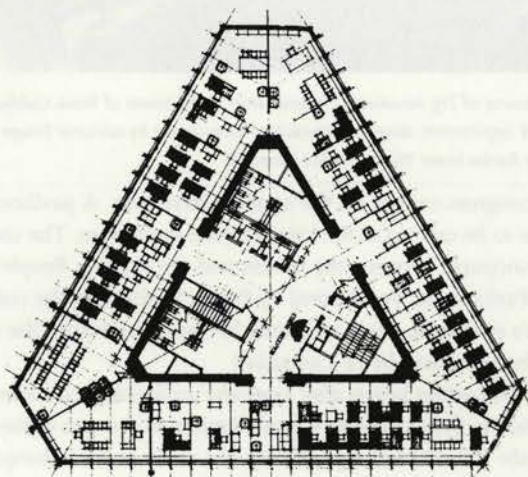
# Revolution Square

IRN 9756

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Address</i>	Republique Square
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1956–1981; 1962–1984
<i>Architect</i>	Edvard Ravnikar
<i>Planners</i>	Anton Bitenc, Miloš Bonča, Jože Koželj, Anton Pibernik, France Rihtar, Vladislav Sedej; <i>Structural engineer</i> Ervin Prelog <i>and assistants</i>
<i>Assistants</i>	Jože Barši, Janja Barši, Mika Berlič, Radko Blažič, Dejan Bleiweis, Boris Briški, Judita Černič, Barbara Demšar, Sergej Dolenc, Monika Fink, Miroslav France, Damjan Gale, Ana Gospodarič, Vojka Ivanek, Tomo Jurčič, Štefan Kacin, Mirko Kajzelj, Andrej Kasal, Rasto Konič, Fedja Košir, Majda Kregar, Tine Legat, Majda Lukan, Igor Lunaček, Ana Mavko, Črtomir Mihelj, Braco Mušič, Roza Pajević, Marija Pipan, Edo Ravnikar, Jr., Božo Rot, Majda Sevšek, Mitja Simoniti, Bogdan Spindler, Sonja Spindler, Aleš Stanovnik, Cveta Stepančič, Marta Tobolka, Marijan Uršič, Filip Vraber
<i>Sculptors</i>	Slavko Tihec, Drago Tršar
<i>Graphic design</i>	Peter Skalar <i>and</i> Studio mssv
<i>Investor</i>	Executive Council of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (Izvršni Svet srs), City of Ljubljana (Town Council), Ljubljanska Banka, Emona, Iskra, Avtoservis, National Museum (Narodni Muzej), Cultural Community of Slovenia (Kulturna Skupnost Slovenije), etc.
<i>Contractor</i>	IZTR (Executive Institute for the Construction of Republic Square, Director Jurij Jenšterle), SGP Tehnika, Gradis, Slovenija Ceste, IMP, Alprem, Griesser, Schindler, etc.

Trg Republike (Republic Square, former Revolution Square) has been a mirror of life and architectural creation of the Slovene capital since the 1960s. The area of the former Turjaški Vrt or Nunski Vrt (Turjak Gardens or Convent Gardens) has remained a green area since the fall of the Roman city of Emona and until 1959. The new communist authorities decided to erect a central monument of revolution in the centre of Ljubljana, in front of the People's Assembly (Ljudska Skupščina). Tenders were invited for the new square. Edvard Ravnikar won with a plan for a political and administrative

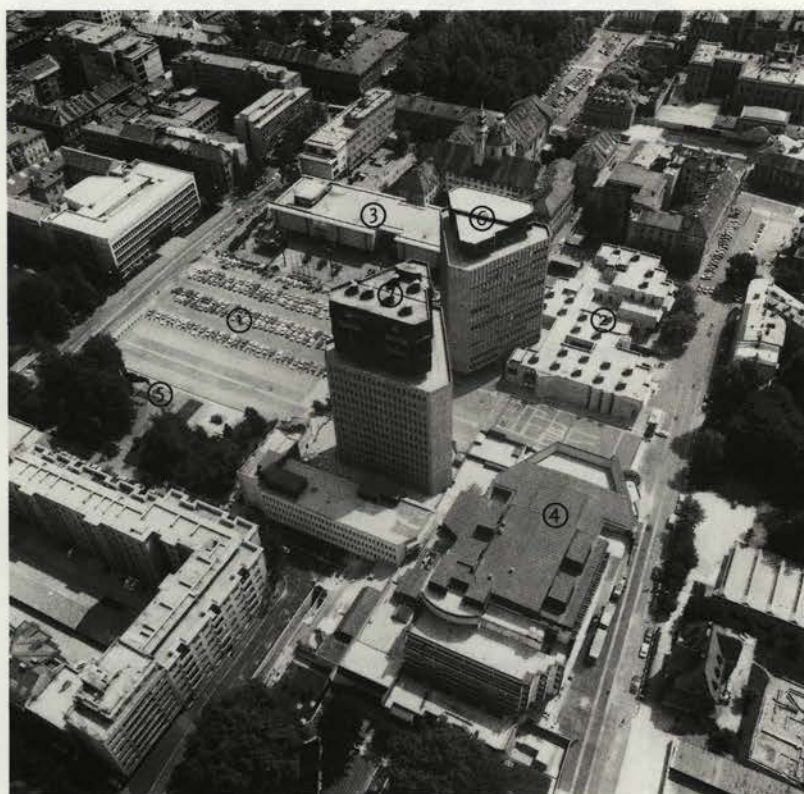
- 1 The planning was initiated by Ravnikar himself in 1956, four years before the call for tenders to regulate the square.



▲ Floor plan (scale: 1:7mm = 1m)

- ◀ "The unified facade integument with undulating granite slabs additionally emphasized the thicket cubes – the new height accents of the city."

centre with an expansive, raised concourse and a pair of staircases – a symbolic image of the victory of the Slovene nation in the Second World War. Ravnikar was busy with the idea for land development in the area of Gardens even before the call for tenders, yet he designed the plan for the tender in a different way. The government and political offices were to be located in two high, prismatic towers, graded from the concrete base with branched consoles. The edges of the platform oriented towards the north were to be closed by the cubes of the library on the eastern side and the administrative centre (subse-



Main concourse of Trg Revolucije (1), extension to the tower of Nova Ljubljanska Banka (2), Maximarket department store (3), Revolution Monument by sculptor Drago Tršar (5), Nova Ljubljanska Banka tower (6), TR3 office tower (7)

quently congress centre) on the south-eastern side. A pavilion monument was to be erected at the axis between the towers. The concept of a large concourse between the towers and the existing People's Assembly (Parliament) was derived by the architect from the concept of the square next to St. Mark's Church in Venice and from the influence of the urbanism by Le Corbusier.

The construction began after extensive archaeological surveys. The intervention in the city centre was not limited to the area of the new square only: it reached along Igriška Ulica as far as the subsequently constructed blocks in Ferantov Vrt (Ferant Gardens), the area of Erjavčeva Ulica was transformed, and the ground floor of the Ursuline Convent was pierced. Archaeology remained one of the starting-points or at least supplements to the basic concept by Ravnikar. The important buildings or their corners were decorated with original stones

from Antiquity, the core of the staircase and the edge of the department store disregarded the line of individual streets, but they followed precisely the border of the northern walls of the Roman city.

The towers were half built when the entire concept of the square was re-evaluated in 1965 due to economic reforms in the then Yugoslavia. Even prior to that, the architect had turned the towers so that their broader facades were no longer parallel, thus emphasizing the line of the town walls of the Roman town of Emona and creating the tension of the city gate of Ljubljana. New conclusions were added to



“Ravnikar endeavoured to preserve the exposed position of the two towers, therefore the extensions formed a contrast.”

the towers: different caps of several storeys accentuated with copper plates. The unified facade integument with undulating granite slabs additionally emphasized the thickset cubes – the new height accents of the city. The transformed purpose of the towers required additional construction in the form of tower extensions, which were filled with banks and offices. Ravnikar endeavoured to preserve the exposed position of the two towers, therefore the extensions formed a contrast: they were graded as cubes above Erjavčeva Ulica and Igriška Ulica.

Ravnikar and his assistants took care of the internal furnishings of the buildings. The range of artefacts included the luxurious chandelier in the lobby of the bank and carefully selected sculptures, pictures and tapestries by famous Slovene artists in individual rooms. The details testify to various ideas and their execution, sometimes finished to perfection, sometimes only partly, as if awaiting new artists, fresh energy or more money. The graphic features were a story of its own. No square in Slovenia is furnished with such a careful series of signs and symbols. The starting-point of the corporate identity of Ljubljanska Banka by Peter Skalar and his assistants has remained a standard, as yet surpassed. The sign system of Emona with the signs on shops and the emblem “e” have hardly been of less quality. Another addition to it was the graphics of Cankarjev Dom (Arts and Conference Centre) with the symbolic white chrysanthemum [based

on a symbolic image of the greatest Slovene writer Ivan Cankar].

The Maximarket department store was constructed parallel to the two towers in 1971. The store had replaced the originally planned library. The skeletal construction was wrapped in a rigid stone integument, with glass walls and light sections on the exposed sides. The main element of the store is an underground passage constructed along the department store with smaller shops. The architect furnished the passage with fine glass openings, each in the form of a transparent atrium. An underground garage car park was constructed by the passage and beneath the concourse even before (in 1963), although the prevailing opinion then regarded more than 35 parking spaces as superfluous.

Ravnikar's assistant, Anton Bitenc, skillfully executed the connection of the new square with the existing Kongresni Trg (Congress Square or Zvezda Park). He planned the underground passage with the statue of a citizen of Emona and added the decorations of the ground floor facade integument along the Ursuline Convent, at the edge of the new Plečnikov Trg and along Šubičeva Ulica.

A carefully designed cube with classrooms and a bookshop on the ground floor was added to the grammar school in 1970, and all the shops on the ground floor were decorated with a transparent overhanging projecting roof.

Revolution Monument, initially the basic element of the concourse, underwent a story of its own. The layout was prepared by sculptor Drago Tršar in 1962, after winning the Yugoslav call for tenders. Some years later the monument had lost its primary importance; it was therefore moved to the edge of the platform and had nearly been forgotten for ten years. The statue was cast only in 1975 when an appropriate background was sought for the anniversary of the liberation. The monument, erected in haste, remained without the planned background of water curtains and was provisionally patinated in the shade of trees. In 1982 the monument of the communist theoretician Edvard Kardelj was erected next to it (by Drago Tršar, 1981), according to the then political directions. The pair of sculptures by Slavko Tihec were more artistically free. The graded Genesis (1973) had no symbolic historical elements; the portrait of Ivan Cankar caught in a bronze cube paid homage to the great writer and connected the square with the Arts Centre (1982).

The last building to be constructed at the edge of the square was Cankarjev Dom, an Arts Centre colossus with four large auditoriums and auxiliary rooms. New plans for the centre came into being after 1975. The Centre was finished in 1982, the main stage only in 1984. Ravnikar had to conform to the transformed purpose and size of the plot in his plan. He located the building further underground so as not to endanger the dominance of the adjacent form of the tower. The building was covered with hanging facades of white stone and the main entrance was carefully designed by Prešernova Cesta and the side entrance with a projecting roof at the edge of the square. Despite the limited area, the architect managed to elaborate on the scheme of the double Church of Assisi in the entrance lobby and hall. He followed the desire of the investor and anticipated the location for the fountain by Francesco Robba [originally located in front of the

Town Hall of Ljubljana] in the hall. Instead of it, the lobby was subsequently decorated with an exceptional series of tapestries by outstanding Yugoslav artists, especially members of Grupa 69, and some shiny panels and chandeliers.

The land development of Trg Revolucije (Revolution Square), subsequently named Trg Republike (Republic Square), manifested considerable architectural knowledge. The architect skilfully controlled the flowing of space and did not limit it neither to emphasizing the town gate of Ljubljana, nor to creating a banal north-east axis or narrow geometry of a hexagram or triangular staircases. He purposefully surpassed the existing ground plan of the city by shifting the complex from the street line and creating a new design for a raised square, while the dynamics were accentuated with the irregular height of the stairs. He connected the area with the former Roman forum and Christian centre, seeking a symbolic and visual link with the mediaeval and Baroque city centre containing axes by Maks Fabiani and designs by Jože Plečnik. Ravnikar's creation in the area was self-confident. He completed the existing architecture together with his assistants and artists by employing concrete supports and graphical features of concrete walls reflecting even Secessionist models. Despite the rational use of new materials, he included lace patterns of old railings and precisely formed chandeliers, flag posts or variations of staircases. Individual elements included the influence of Scandinavian models with Zen dry gardens. The square was sanctified with sculptures and other ornamentation. Venice, Florence and Classicist elements of Antiquity were an inspiration to Ravnikar, yet not a pattern to be copied. Experts had soon highly evaluated the design of Trg Revolucije. Ravnikar received the Plečnik Award in 1974 and the Borba Award a decade later.

The square with its functions is a dynamic area. Therefore the first transformations took place even before it was completed. The independence of Slovenia marked the edge of the square with a badly designed flag-post and a linden tree in a concrete container [and changed its name]. The car park developed into a metal chaos and the underground car park is protected with barriers. Younger architects transformed the interior of the department store with no sense for the original; they filled the underground gallery with various thrash and degraded the carefully formed design on the ground floor of the bank. Only the renovation of the hall was an exception (by Aleš Vodopivec), together with some selected offices of the bank (by Vesna and Matej Vozlič) and the transformation of the Iskra tower to the Central Technical Library (Centralna Tehniška Knjižnica, by Marko Mušič). The public area has remained a typical barometer of creativity and the political atmosphere of our time and place.

#### GOJKO ZUPAN

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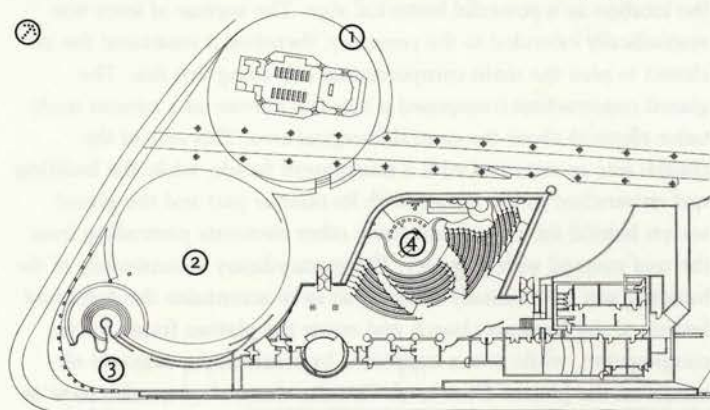
# Church of Jesus Christ Incarnate in Dravlje

IRN4158

Location	Ljubljana
Address	Vodnikova Cesta 283
Planning and completion	1980–1985
Architect	Marko Mušič
Investor	Parish office, Dravlje
Contractor	SGP Grosuplje

*Other buildings by the same architect* University Centre, Skopje, Macedonia 1967–1974; memorial house, Kolašin, Yugoslavia (Montenegro) 1970–1975; memorial house, Bosanski Šamac, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1973–1985; house and studio of J. Bernik, Breznica near Žirovnica 1973–1974; restaurant on Mt. Lovčen, Yugoslavia (Montenegro) 1975–1978; House of the Revolution, Nikšić, Yugoslavia (Serbia) 1976; Mlakar family house, Selo near Brdo 1978–1981; New Žale Cemetery, Ljubljana 1982–1988; lobby of Ljubljana railway station, 1983–1988; Franciscan Church, Kotor Varoš near Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1986–1991 (demolished in 1992); regulation of Domus Slovenica, Vienna 1987–1988; Miran Jarc Library, Novo Mesto 1987–2001; bus station, Novo Mesto 1989–1994; renovation of the National and University Library, Ljubljana 1994–1999 (1st phase)

In the interwar period, modern sacred architecture in Slovenia was distinguished by the works of Jože Plečnik. His early works in Vienna and subsequently in Prague focused on the rich tradition of church architecture, which he interpreted through his personal lyricism guided by classical ideals. Sometimes his works were more open to modernist incentives, like in the case of the church in Bogojina in eastern Slovenia (1924–1927). Although the Slovene architects had endeavoured to create the form of a modern church in the interwar period (an outstanding example was the design of the church on Bloke by architect Ivo Spinčič, 1924), the architecture remained incomplete. Anton Bitenc, a student of Plečnik and his assistant of long standing, became more independent and moved away from the dogmatism of Plečnik, which prevailed in the construction of churches after the Second World War. The innovative solutions of three contemporary Slovene architects were important for the development of the Slovene church architecture: Oton Jugovec with his daring renovation and extension of the church in Reteče (1974),



- ▲ Floor plan of the Baroque Church of St. Rock (1), square of encounters (2), fountain on the crossroads (3), amphitheatrical church area (4) (scale: 1:9mm = 1m)
- ◀ “Mušič derived his design for the church from the dialogue with the Baroque pilgrim Church of St. Rock which marked the context of the location as a powerful historical sign.”

where he emphasized the continuity of the sacred area, Marko Mušič with the church in Dravljje that is the subject of this paper and presents the most radical break with the described tradition, and last but not least Milan Mihelič with a plan for the church in Nove Stožice in Ljubljana (1989–1994), which transformed the expressive quality of the building with a free morphological interpretation in the spirit of Modernist tradition. All three works are among the most mature works of Slovene Postmodernism, while the church in Dravljje by Mušič, despite its original design and idiosyncratic form, confirms



“The church [...] was entrenched in the terrain with its oblique part and the glazed screen behind the chapel and some other elements protruding from the roof covered with greenery.”

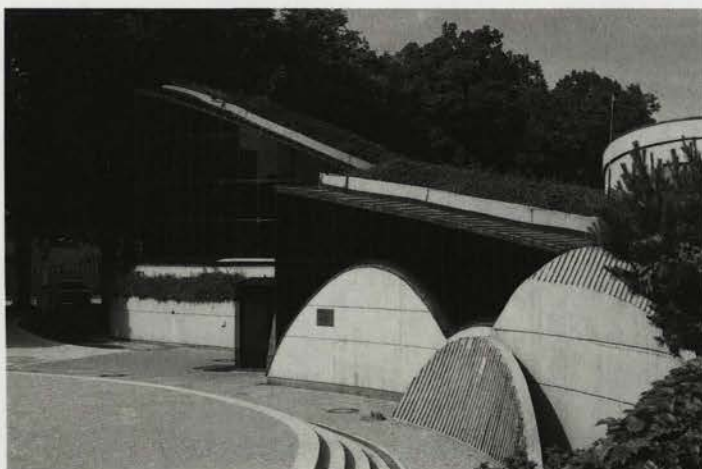
the role of Plečnik as a prophet of Postmodernism that was recognized first in Paris at the time of the Plečnik exhibition and subsequently around the world as well.

Mušič derived his design for the church from the dialogue with the Baroque pilgrim Church of St. Rock which marked the context of the location as a powerful historical sign. The avenue of trees was symbolically extended to the cemetery, therefore it motivated the architect to plan the main compositional axis along this line. The glazed construction transposed it into the interior as a natural meditative element above the central liturgical area. This side of the church was accentuated with a transparent facade, while the building was entrenched in the terrain with its oblique part and the glazed screen behind the chapel and some other elements protruding from the roof covered with greenery. The extraordinary voluminosity of the building was intentionally sculpted so as to accentuate the dominant feature of the Baroque church and create the plateau frame for the congregation, while it was supported by semicircular concrete elements on the ground floor level. Circular elements were also used in the structure of the oblique ferroconcrete roof structure covering the exceptional amphitheatrical sacred area which was delineated with a glazed integument, the lower part of which consisted of stone arches and white columns. Despite the unusual character of the church and demolishing conventional ideas of the sacred area, the architect was



guided by a clear design for the church. The design for the fittings and other architectural details was subordinated to the same goal, although the first impression of the whole might seem elevated.

Mušič undoubtedly stated his concept in the presentation of the church in the magazine *Sinteza*: "The building of the house of God must be simple, even modest, yet never spatially poor; it must be easily comprehensible, yet not banal; universal, yet distinct and original." An encounter with the materialized design opens up into a true dialogue set up by the architect as his goal. Nace Šumi wrote about



"The extraordinary voluminosity of the building was intentionally sculpted so as to accentuate the dominant feature of the Baroque church and create the plateau frame for the congregation, while it was supported by semicircular concrete elements on the ground floor level."

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the church by Mušič in an in-depth analysis (1988). He concluded his paper with the following statement: "Nothing similar could be found in Slovene architecture. The building has an exceptional 'freedom' of the spatial design. The freedom of other architects has always been limited by the plans of regular spatial types. The architecture by Mušič indicated initiatives that must be described as organic, as an opposition to crystalline forms."

STANE BERNIK

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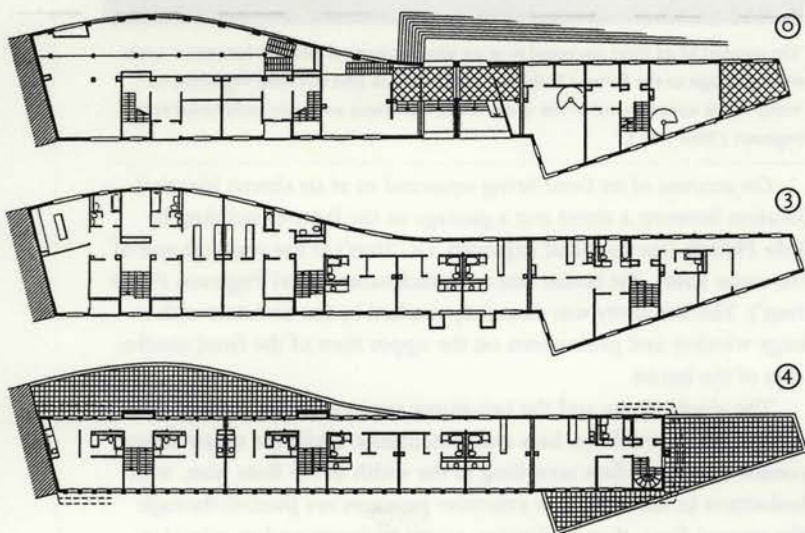


# Office and Residential Building in Poljanska Cesta IRN 14283

<i>Location</i>	Ljubljana
<i>Address</i>	Poljanska Cesta 22
<i>Synonym</i>	New Peglezen
<i>Planing and completion</i>	1986–1988
<i>Architect</i>	Janez Koželj
<i>Investor</i>	Self-Managing Residential Community (Samoupravna Stanovanjska Skupnost), Ljubljana
<i>Contractor</i>	Grosuplje Construction Company
<i>Building type</i>	Office and residential building

*Other buildings by the same architect* Poljane Gymnasium, Ljubljana 1990–1991; residential quarter in Kotnikova Ulica (with architects Božo Podlogar, Peter Pahor and Jure Sadar), Ljubljana 1989–1992; residential houses in the quarter Radegunder Strasse, Andritz, Graz, Austria, 1991–1998

The building was added to the blind facade of a tall block and it formed the conclusion of a series of houses in the street. The construction filled up the gap at the location of the former girls' boarding school that was pulled down for the expansion of the road. The building comprises a relatively narrow and oblong plot located at the transition between the lower and upper terraces of the river Ljubljanica in the street bend. Due to the anticipated construction of a gymnasium in the back yard of the former school, the plot by the street was supposedly suited only for the regulation of a car park. Instead of the gap that spoiled the ambience of the Ambrožev Trg, the architect attempted to justify the construction at the problematic location with his search for still acceptable limits between the unfavourable conditions and the constructed volume. He connected various spatial directions and construction lines, considered the smallest variations and followed the indication of the height of the surrounding buildings. He utilized the height difference of the terrain for a variable cross-



▲ Floor plan of the ground floor (0), third floor (3) and fourth floor (4) (scale: 1:9mm = 1m)

◀ "Two extensive passages are pierced through the ground floor thus facilitating access to the secondary school in the background of the house. The direction through the narrowest part of the house is marked by an abstract sculpture in baked clay, the work of Mojca Smerdu."

section and distribution of entrances to the house. The auxiliary rooms of the flats were located towards the busy street, while the sitting-rooms and bedrooms faced the back yard. Through gradual adaptation to the conditions of the location a complex building came into existence with its dynamic forms corresponding to the surroundings. The exterior comprised four different facades following the change in geometry and the width of the building, from the curve in the street corner to a wedge-shaped front and the conclusion in a straight surface of a typical residential facade in the back yard.



"On account of its front squeezed in at an almost identical location between a street and a passage as the famous building by Jože Plečnik (the so-called Peglezen, i.e. 'Iron') at the opposite end of the same street, the house was soon nicknamed Novi Peglezen ('New Iron')."

On account of its front being squeezed in at an almost identical location between a street and a passage as the famous building by Jože Plečnik (the so-called Peglezen, i.e. 'Iron') at the opposite end of the same street, the house was soon nicknamed Novi Peglezen ('New Iron'). The similarity was discretely marked by the architect with a large window and protrusions on the upper floor of the front conclusion of the house.

The single-storey and the two-storey sections of the ground floor are intended for offices, bars and restaurants, while the upper floors consist of various flats according to the width of the floor plan, with bed-sitters in the attic. Two extensive passages are pierced through the ground floor, thus facilitating access to the secondary school at the back of the house. The direction through the narrowest part of the house is marked by an abstract sculpture in baked clay, the work of Mojca Smerdu.

A gymnasium of the same architect was constructed in the back yard. According to the area available for it, the large cubic body is

partly entrenched and divided into three lamellas lit from the above. Access to the hall is through an amphitheatre from the opposite side.

The office and residential building is an example of a consistent derivation from the so-called contextual approach in architecture, which develops new items from the interpretation of visible and concealed parts of the existing area. According to this approach, each new intervention re-evaluates the former condition by defining the relationship between the adaptation and the transformation. In that sense the new house has solved a series of spatial problems that were



"The office and residential building is an example of a consistent derivation from the so-called contextual approach in architecture, which develops new items from the interpretation of visible and hidden parts of the existing area."

caused by the demolition of the old house at that location.

The new building was introduced in contemporary publications as an example of continuity in Slovene architecture, in which novelties take place modestly while respecting local characteristics. The architect received the national Prešeren Award in 1988 for the design of the house.

The exterior of the building is the most damaged part on account of ruthless use of the shops and bars on the ground floor. Various shop signs have accumulated and the public area around the house is appropriated for profit. The owners and temporary tenants do not repair the current damage and do not contribute to the repairs of the exterior on the ground floor. The house is built at an exposed location and thus marks the street line with its form. It creates a suitable spatial frame from the riverside and a background to the protected ambience of the park and the water sluice designed by Jože Plečnik.

ANDREJ HRAUSKY

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# Secondary Medical School

IRN14282

Location Ljubljana

Address Poljanska Cesta 61

Planning and completion 1997–1998

Architect Jurij Kobe

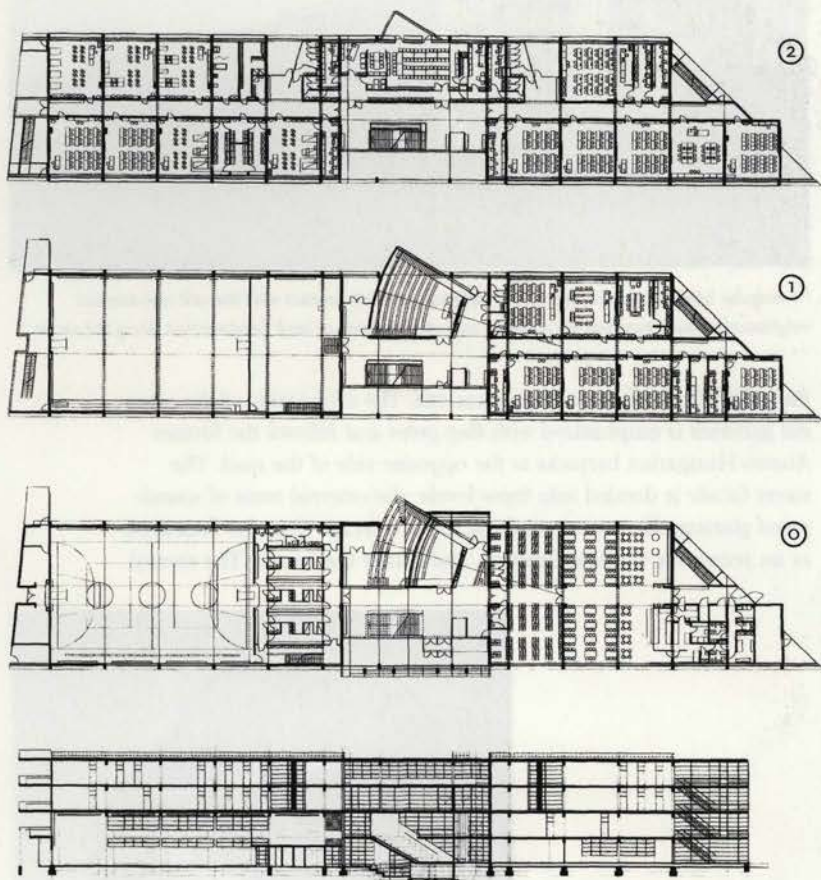
Investor Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia

Contractor Energoplan construction company, Ljubljana

Building type School

*Other buildings by the same architect* Bogatin Hotel (with architect Aleš Vodopivec), Bled 1985–1986; Globtour Travel Agency, Ljubljana 1986–1988; Biotechnical Faculty Ljubljana 1987–1992; residential buildings (with architect Milena Todorić), Ljubljana 1989–1993; Barje petrol station (with architect Aleš Vodopivec), Ljubljana 1989; renovation of the Museum of Recent History, Ljubljana 1990–1992; renovation of Mladika, Ljubljana 2000

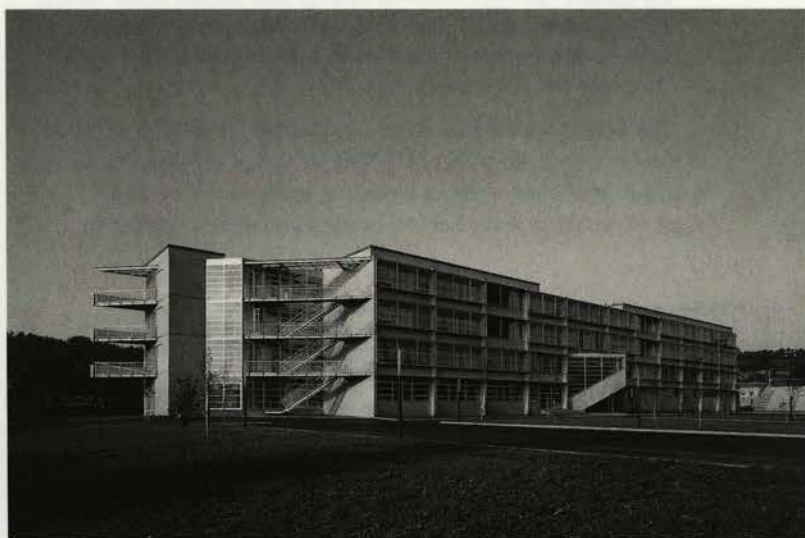
The Secondary Medical School in Ljubljana is located at the edge of the city centre. Architect Jurij Kobe designed the building as a city mansion by the main street, according to the model of similar designs by architect Maks Fabiani in his plan for the reconstruction of



▲ Cross section and floor plan of the ground floor (0), first floor (1), second floor (2)  
(scale: 1:9mm = 1m)

◀ "The street facade is divided into three levels: the external zone of soundproof glazing, the zone containing the fire escape that also functions as an access for window cleaning, and finally the facade."

Ljubljana after the earthquake in 1895. The oblong building is located along the road, with an entrance in the middle where all the central communications and common rooms are located. The classrooms are to the left and right of the entrance, and the gymnasium is on the ground floor beneath them. The dividing walls of the classrooms above the hall simultaneously function as lateral supports. Thus the architect combined various functions of the school into a single body of the building and obtained a larger area for the back yard. Galleries for sports events are located at its edge and they are connected with



"Triangular balconies at the end of the building establish contact with the still non-existent neighbouring buildings that are planned as a continuation of land development along the street."

the galleries of the internal gymnasium. The orientation of the external galleries is emphasized with flag-poles and follows the former Austro-Hungarian barracks at the opposite side of the road. The street facade is divided into three levels: the external zone of sound-proof glazing, the zone containing the fire escape that also functions as an access for window cleaning, and finally the facade. The central



"The back facade is marked by a large lecture room which pierces the level of the facade with its circular design. "



part of the facade is displaced from the external level since the sound-proof glazing is unnecessary there. Through that the architect accentuated the entrance and opened the vista towards the court. The back facade is marked by a large lecture room which pierces the level of the facade with its circular design. Triangular balconies at the end of the building establish a contact with the still non-existent neighbouring buildings that are planned as a continuation of land development along the street.

The architecture of the Secondary Medical School is an outstand-



"The building of the school is in good condition; only the fittings and furnishings were changed, since the building planned for 960 pupils accommodates 1,200 people at present."

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ing model of a modest and rational approach that does not follow the direction of formal appeal. It is more related to the tradition of the post-war Slovene architecture known as the Ljubljana School of Architecture. Jurij Kobe followed the development of contemporary international architecture and simultaneously continued his native tradition. On account of that his designs are fresh and interesting. The building of the school is in good condition; only the fittings and furnishings were changed, since the building planned for 960 pupils accommodates 1,200 people at present.

ANDREJ HRAUSKY

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Elswhere in Slovenia



# Workers' City Colony

IRN 429

*Location* Maribor

*Address* Betnavska Cesta, Ulica Zmage, Fochova Ulica, Koseskega Ulica

*Planning and completion* 1927–1929

*Architect* Ivan Vurnik

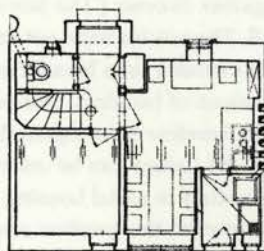
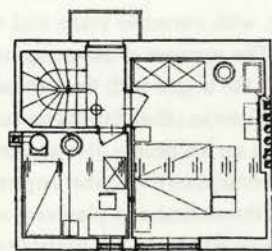
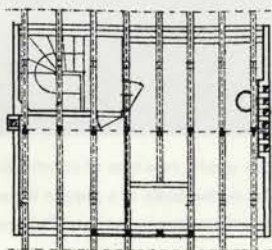
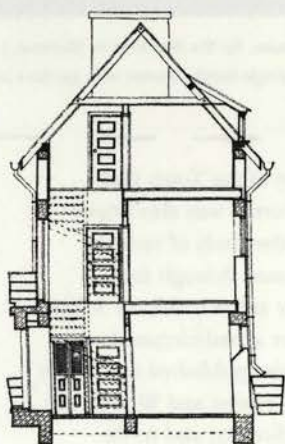
*Investor* District Office for the Protection of Workers of Maribor, City Hall and individuals

*Building type* Series of residential houses

*Other buildings by the same architect* Anatomy Institute (Anatomski Inštitut), Ljubljana 1919–1920; sanatorium for lung patients, Golnik 1920–1922; Co-operative Commercial Bank (Zadružna Gospodarska Banka), Ljubljana 1921–1922; House of the Nation (Narodni Dom), Kranj 1922–1923; House of the Falcons [pre-war left-wing gymnastics society; Sokolski Dom] in Tabor, Ljubljana 1923–1926; series of residential houses, Maribor 1928; summer swimming-pool Obla Gorica, Radovljica 1932–1933

A casual visitor to Maribor would notice a series of residential houses in while walking through the suburbs of Tabor. The houses are not of an outstanding design, yet they are carefully planned. Their uniform facades and the streets planted with trees create the impression of a peaceful neighbourhood. If questioned, most of the inhabitants would state that living in the houses is pleasant, although they are modest and small. The gardens and green areas in the inner side of street islands enhance the quality of life in the neighbourhood.

Those interested in the history of Maribor know that the subject



▲ Floor plan (scale: 5mm = 1m)

◀ "The houses are not of an outstanding design, yet they are carefully planned."

under discussion is the creation of one of the pioneers of Slovene modern architecture, the Workers' City Colony by Ivan Vurnik. The quarter is an important element in the development of Slovene town planning, fulfilling the idea of a garden city. Apart from that, Vurnik used a new type of construction, the terraced house, for the first time in Slovenia. Furthermore, the quarter represents the first instance of social housing, since the quarter – called a colony at that time – was not constructed by the owner of the company for “his” workers, but by the workers themselves: according to the plan of the famous archi-



“Vurnik used a new type of construction, the terraced house, for the first time in Slovenia. [...] He proved on the basis of a precise financial estimate that single-family houses with gardens were cheaper than flats in the ‘new Colosseum’ in Ljubljana.”

tect, with attractive loans and with the support of the Town Hall.

The manner of planning undertaken by Vurnik was also important. He began with theoretical thinking and the study of various practices in other European countries and passed through test designs on his desk – also as part of his seminar at the Ljubljana School of Architecture – to the implementation under actual circumstances. His theoretical and planning solutions were also published in a series of four articles in the magazine *Dom in Svet*, (‘Home and World’) the *Calendar* of Mohorjeva Družba (Hermagoras Society) and in the magazine *Slovenec* (‘The Slovene’) in the period between 1927 and 1928. The articles were not instances of architectural theory; they were intended for a broader audience and can be considered as presentations of his ideas. Our presentation of the Workers' City Colony could therefore be compounded from Vurnik's quotations, or *vice versa*, the Colony can be understood as the illustration or realization of his study in social housing.

However, the question remains of which were the sources for Vurnik in his research. He quoted the book by Ebenezer Howard on

1 Ebenezer Howard, *Garden City of To-morrow*, 1898. The book was published in a German translation in 1907, and Vurnik probably knew it from that source.

a garden city<sup>1</sup> and mentioned a publication of the British Ministry of Health (without the proper title) where typical plans for single-family houses were supposedly published, as well as the magazine *Bauwelt* from Berlin and the publications of *Deutsche Gartenstadt-Gesellschaft* ('German Garden City Company'). According to Vurnik, the latter were the main source for his articles.

It seems that the final initiative which drew Vurnik to the field of residential architecture took place in the autumn of 1926, when he took part in a "congress for the construction of residential cities" in



...“The uniform effect of the quarter is spoilt at present by numerous transformations of the houses and various ‘additions’ to them. [...] Some houses have, fortunately, remained unchanged [...] All the works [on them] are to be performed according to a consistent conservation programme and with appropriate financial support from public funds.”

Vienna.<sup>2</sup> He reported that one of the participants of the congress was Raymond Unwin, co-architect of the first large garden city in Lechworth and “one of the first world authorities on the construction of cities” (Vurnik, *Dom in Svet*, 1927: 145).<sup>3</sup> A number of planners, financiers, heads of construction firms and others presented their experiences in the field of housing problems in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany and Austria. Vurnik was mostly impressed by the solutions of his English and Dutch colleagues who advocated the idea of a terraced city and opposed the construction of blocks of flats.

2 It was an international congress of housing and town planning organized in Vienna by the socialdemocrat city authorities in 1926, with the purpose of encouraging the debate on the most suitable forms of residential construction. Two main streams “clashed” at the congress: the “progressist” one favouring the construction of large residential quarters according to the model of Viennese “courts”, and the “romantic” one favouring the single-family construction in the form of garden cities; “Internationaler Wohnungs- und Städtebaukongress”, Vienna, 1926.

3 It is known that Cornelius Gurlitt and Joseph Stübben also attended the congress, although Vurnik does not mention them since they were supporters of the “unhealthy” several-storey high residential “barracks”.

In the following year (i.e. 1927), Vurnik studied foreign possibilities and compared them with his experiences and his knowledge of the conditions in Slovenia. He reached a solution that can be considered a modest variant of the garden city and a typical floor plan of a terraced house with a garden.

The demand for economy was of primary importance. "Not only out of health, social and ethical aspects does one support the single-family house with a garden of its own, but also out of economic considerations." (Vurnik, *Slovenec*, 1928: 3). He proved on the basis of a precise financial estimate that single-family houses with gardens were cheaper than flats in the "new Colosseum" in Ljubljana, i.e. a residential house in the present Njegoševa Cesta.<sup>4</sup> In the case of the Maribor Colony, he carried out an attractive financial plan: the District Office for the Protection of Workers offered loans at low interest rates, while the Town Hall of Maribor covered the utility expenses and undertook the supervision and organization of the work for free. The loans were paid in the form of monthly rents, so that the tenants became the owners of the houses in 20 years time.

Vurnik chose the study of the floor plan on the smallest possible surface as his basic planning method. His structural design was published in the magazine *Slovenec*. The plan shows the house on three storeys with the basic floor plan of 20m<sup>2</sup>. The ground floor consisted of a residential kitchen and a utility room, the first floor of a bedroom and a study and the attic of two further bedrooms. Two houses together formed a unit with a party fire wall. Such pairs were therefore designed in mirror images. The buildings constructed in Maribor varied slightly from the published design: some of them were lower since there were no residential attics. The houses had partial basements and the kitchens on the ground floor were divided from the residential quarters. Chimneys were located at the centre of the houses and not in the fire walls, which transformed the design to a certain extent. One row of houses faced north, which was in contrast to the purpose of the architect "to provide each house with an equal share of sunlight". In some rows the gardens were essentially shorter, which was caused by great interest for the construction and additional allocation of the plots. In spite of that, there were more candidates for houses than available plots.

The City Colony consisted of 147 single-family houses, which was a considerable quantity for those times. The houses were located in series parallel to the streets that were designed in a fan-shape in a north-south direction. Two shorter rows were located laterally. A large green area came into being on the inside as the core of the quarter in the island between Betnavska Cesta and Cesta Zmage "that is to become the common of the entire colony, where the old and the young gather for their common entertainment" (Vurnik, *Slovenec*, 1928: 3). The external streets were planted with "lines of tall trees" which created a clear border between the quarter and the rest of the city.

Common brick roofs used to contribute to the uniform effect of the quarter. The facades were also uniform, accentuated with entrances and projecting roofs functioning as minor balconies and

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4 By Vladimir Mušič, 1926.



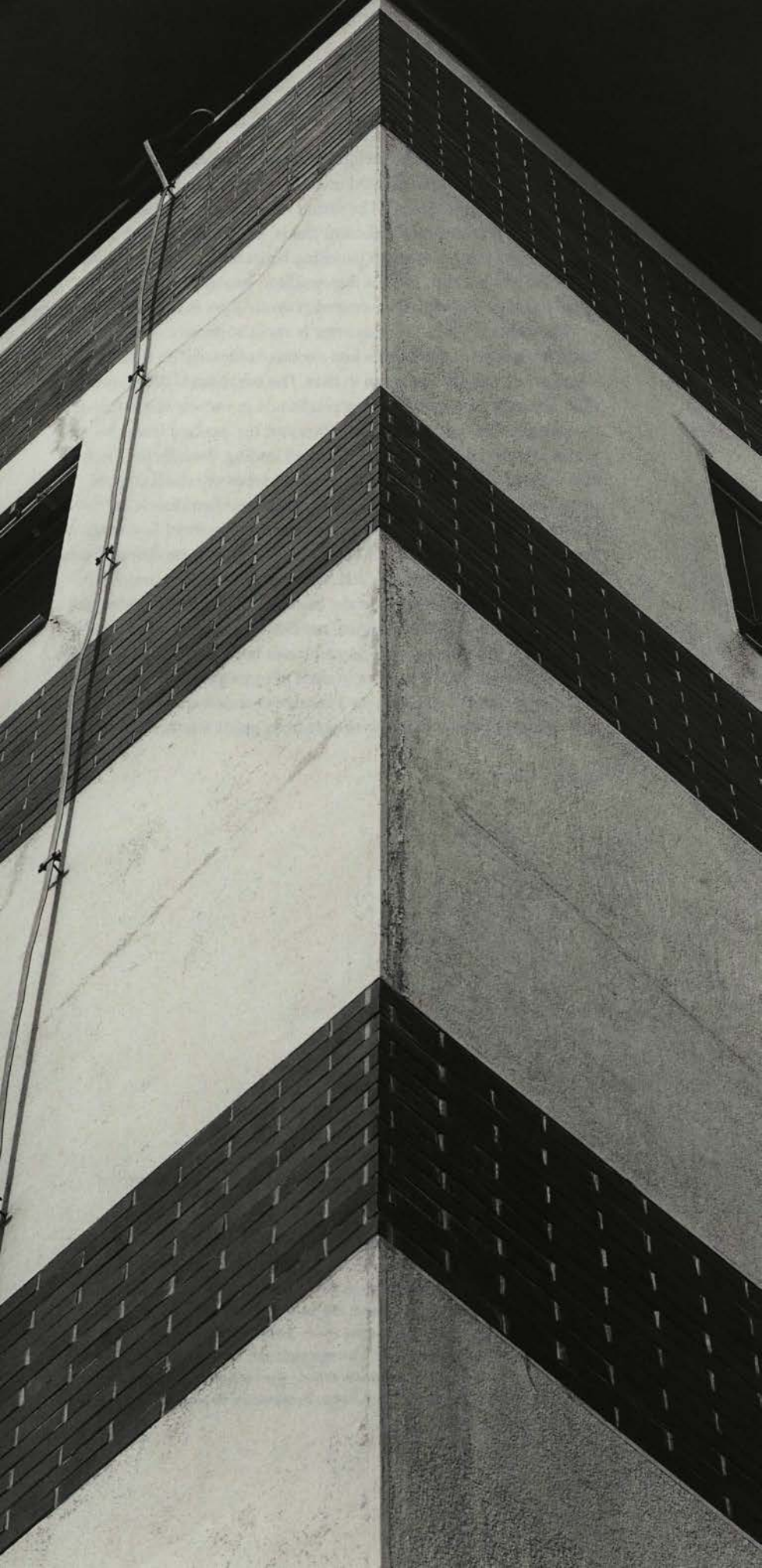
simple metal railings. The architect respected the desire for individuality so the houses were painted in various colours in natural shades (ochre, brown, olive green). The doors, windows and banisters were painted in a uniform reddish-brown shade. Vurnik mentioned in one of his articles that the wooden panelling beneath the projecting roofs was to be painted blue, yet it is impossible to establish whether that detail has ever been actually executed (Vurnik, *Dom in Svet*, 1928: 84).

The uniform effect of the quarter is spoilt at present by numerous transformations of the houses and various "additions" to them. Personally, I do not see any harm in that. The inhabitants just improved their basically very modest living conditions in various ways. Just as an example: the houses had no bathrooms, the passage from the ground floor to the garden was ill-suited leading through the kitchen and without a hallway. The windows were relatively small and the bedrooms had single windows facing the street. Fortunately, all the extensions were erected in the gardens so that the street facades have preserved a relatively uniform appearance – with the exception of various roof coverings, new doors and windows, new borders around the entrances and new banisters on the balconies. It is recommended that the re-establishment of the original condition be demanded in future applications for interventions. Some houses have, fortunately, remained unchanged, yet they are in need of renovation. All the works are to be performed according to a consistent conservation programme and with appropriate financial support from public funds.

JELKA PIRKOVIČ

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# Bank in Tyrševa Ulica

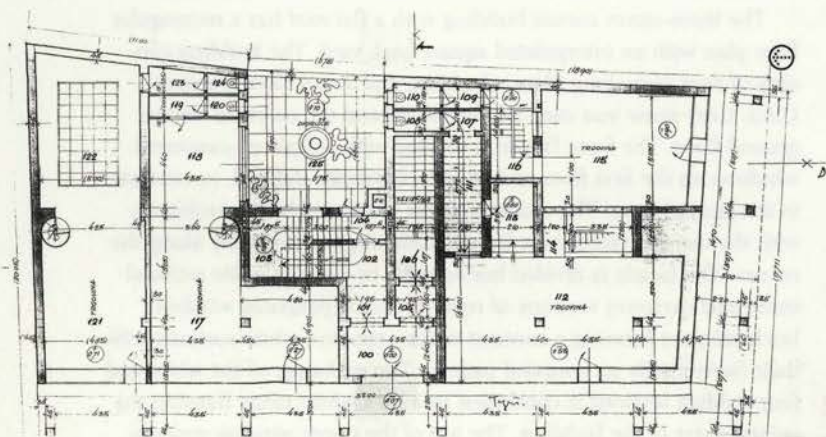
IRN433

Location	Maribor
Address	Tyrševa Ulica 2
Synonym	New Credit Bank (Nova Kreditna Banka) Maribor
Planning and completion	1930–1932
Architects	Jaroslav Černigoj, Aleksander Dev
Investor	Savings Bank of Drava Governorate in Maribor
Contractor	Jelenec-Šlajmer construction company
Building type	Office and residential building

*Other buildings by the same architects* JAROSLAV ČERNIGOJ: TAM Car Manufacturers, Maribor 1949–1950; TAM block of flats in Glavni Trg, Maribor 1952–1953; primary school in Tezno, Maribor 1953–1956; regulation plan of Maribor, 1938  
ALEKSANDER DEV: Building of Central Institute for Workers' Insurance, Maribor 1930–1931; Gradišče block of flats (Hutter's block), Maribor 1940–1941; alpine huts, Pohorje after the Second World War; residential area by the power station, Vuhred 1945

The economic development of Maribor was already in full swing in the 1920s, despite the First World War and its location away from the main transportation route on account of the new traffic axis along the river Sava. The construction of large factory complexes brought about changes in the architectural approach, since constructivism and rationalism prevailed as early as the decade after the war. The tendency to omit superfluous formal and decorative features and construction elements became prominent. The appearance of the inter-war architecture of Maribor was substantially transformed by the arrival of architects Jaroslav Černigoj and Aleksander Dev at the beginning of the 1930s. They were both students of Plečnik at the Technical Faculty in Ljubljana and they established the Černigoj-Dev planning bureau after their arrival in Maribor.

Soon after that, in 1930, their preliminary design for the City Savings Bank of the Drava Governorate (Hranilnica Dravske Banovine) in Maribor was selected as the best solution at the call for tenders for the bank building in the city centre, at the corner of



▲ Floor plan (scale: 2.7mm = 1m)

◀ "The monotony was prevented by the architects with the use of a two-colour facade stretching continuously along the corner."

Slovenska Ulica and Gosposka Ulica.<sup>1</sup> The plan was supported by the then city Housing Board.

The Savings Bank made a contract with the Town Council in the autumn of the same year, stipulating that the purchased house in Slovenska Ulica 12 be pulled down by April 1931 at the latest, and that the construction of a new one begin immediately afterwards. The purchased house was the birth-place of the famous Austro-Hungarian Admiral Wilhelm Tegetthof.

The entire row of houses in Slovenska Ulica concluded by the corner building in question was uniform as to the height and the street line. The houses were of mediaeval origin with subsequent transformations and they remained as single-storey houses with the ground floor intended for businesses and shops, while the first floors comprised residential quarters. The row of houses continued in Tyrševa Ulica was higher and the houses that were mostly built in the 19th century were two storeys high. It was to be expected that the new corner building was to respect the difference in height between the two rows of houses and attempt to interpret it in the juncture of historical construction. However, that was not the case. A simple cubic mass came into existence, with its floor plan protruding from the street lines at the exposed location. Additionally, it was three storeys high, concluded by a flat roof with its clear horizontal line dominating over the ridge roofs covered with brick.

The public commission, the investor of which took into consideration the new concepts of the construction due to economic reasons, was the appropriate address for the realization of "the first ferroconcrete skeletal building and the first sculptorally designed architecture of the functional type in Maribor" (Curk 1991: 550). The official opening and blessing of the building took place on 2 June 1932.

The building has a ferroconcrete skeletal frame construction. The structure is visible on the exterior where the supporting columns form an external gallery, while they support the ceiling in the interior. The external walls are filled with hollow brick insulated with heraclite slabs also used for the insulation of the terrace and roof.

The three-storey corner building with a flat roof has a rectangular floor plan with an interpolated square back yard. The building consists of four axes along Slovenska Ulica and seven along Tyrševa Ulica. Grey stone was used for the facade and the columns on the ground floor. The front facade is divided with simple six-casement windows on the first floor and is not sculptorally defined, in contrast to the ground floor. The monotony was prevented by the architects with the use of a two-colour facade stretching continuously along the corner. The facade is divided horizontally by slabs of white artificial stone and narrower sections of reddish-brown patinated vitrified brick (clinker) forming a contrast to the extensive white surfaces with their horizontally accentuated pattern. The exchange of the white and four reddish sections is concluded by a thin white stripe framing the central mass of the building. The top of the upper window series is divided by the only sculpted decorative detail: a small square console

1 The upper part of the street was changed into Tyrševa Ulica in 1933 and the bank acquired its present address of Tyrševa Ulica 2.

above the middle of each window. The consoles do not function as supports; they are a feature of Modernism and simultaneously a reference to Plečnik.

The roof began to soak due to deficient technology and in spite of modern materials. The Savings Bank put in an application at the City Building Office for the construction of a ferroconcrete projecting roof. The work was again undertaken by the Jelenec-Šljajmer construction company. The existing supporting columns were extended with low ferroconcrete ones and a ferroconcrete slab covering the



“A simple cubic mass came into existence, with its floor plan protruding from the street lines at the exposed location. Additionally, it was three storeys high, concluded by a flat roof with its clear horizontal line dominating over the ridge roofs covered with brick.”

roof was placed onto them. The roof projection that came into existence in the process had considerably transformed the appearance of the entire facade since it extenuated the former clearly cut conclusion of the building. Since a similar motif was used by Černigoj and Dev in the construction of the Hutter block of flats, it can reasonably be assumed that they took part in the construction of the projecting roof in Tyrševa Ulica.

The next intervention in the building documented in the archive was necessary on account of the consequences of the Second World War.

The interior of the building was functionally planned, since the location of the building in the city centre and its business character dictated a combination of activities. The ground floor was originally intended for trade that was profitable for the investor – the Savings Bank – which was located on the first floor. The second and third floors were intended for flats. The large terrace was originally furnished with flower beds and showers. The cellar was intended for depositories and central heating. Special attention was paid to the first floor: valuable materials were used for the premises of the bank, i.e. marble from Podpeč and Carrara, oak and alpaca, and also modern macasar, cork and wallpaper. The folding entrance door was a

monumental creation of Modernist design. It was manufactured by Pavel Kager from Maribor. All the internal furnishings for the Savings Bank were designed by Černigoj and Dev.

The flats had modern, simple doors made of plywood wood and horizontal movable windows. The kitchens had Junkers stoves and automatic gas cookers.

The office and residential building in Tyrševa Ulica has been associated with monument protection problems since its beginning in the 1930s. The very fact of its origin indicated the attitude to the preserva-



"The interior of the building suffered most on account of functional transformations."

tion of the past, i.e. the historical city centre as well as individual houses, in the case of the demolished Tegethof house. The opposition between planning of the new and preservation of the existing had already been highly prominent in very radical attitudes. The magazine *Arhitektura* ('Architecture') wrote in 1932 on the occasion of the presentation of the new Savings Bank: "The entire surrounding area will be pulled down sooner or later since it stands out of the construction line. Therefore it was to no purpose to depend on the surrounding area neither in scale not in form. A new step was necessary, transforming the regulation of this quarter substantially..." (*Arhitektura*, 1932)

The interior of the building suffered most on account of functional transformations. The building still serves its original purpose – banking, which, however, took over all the floors so that the original office and residential character of the building was lost. Subsequent transformations degraded the interior. With the exception of the formal staircase leading to the first floor, panelled with grey marble, the interior furnishings were not preserved, apart from the partly recog-

nizable basic division of the rooms. A house still functioning as office premises could not have been turned into a museum with the original furnishings and fittings. The protection of the recent past is only possible with substantial compromises reached in advance and a simultaneous presentation of the value of the building to the general public.

In the case of the bank in Tyrševa Ulica, information boards and brochures with presentations of the former conditions of the building, primarily the interior, might attract the attention of visitors to the bank and thus promote the tradition of the bank in an unobtrusive manner.

EVA PEZDIČEK

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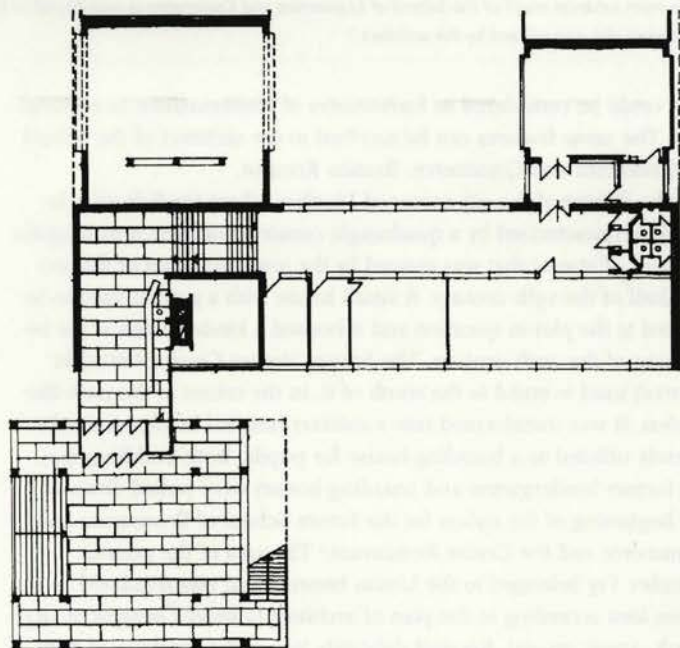
# School of Economics and Commerce

IRN14288

Location	Maribor
Address	Razlagova Ulica 14
Synonym	Faculty of Economics and Business (Ekonomsko-Poslovna Fakulteta)
Planning and completion	1960–1962
Architect	Branko Kocmut, Mirko Zdovc (interior design)
Contractor	Gradis
Building type	School

*Other buildings by the same architect* Terraced houses in Kosarjeva Ulica (with architects Bogomir Ungar and Ivan Kocmut), Maribor 1955–1956; residential tower block in Tomšičeva Ulica (with architects Ivan Kocmut and Milko Mirnik), Maribor 1955–1956; Secondary Technical School (Srednja Tehniška Šola), Maribor 1957–1959; office building in Partizanska Ulica, Maribor 1961–1964; Faculty of Education (Pedagoška Fakulteta), Maribor 1973–1979; University Library, Maribor 1978–1988; Health Resort, Radenci 1991

The building in Razlagova Ulica in Maribor is an outstanding example of the so-called Maribor School of Modern Architecture, the first representatives of which are the brothers Branko and Ivan Kocmut (the former born in 1921 and the latter in 1926). Both studied at the Ljubljana Faculty of Architecture with Edvard Ravnikar and Branko Kocmut had been Ravnikar's assistant for five years. In 1954 he got a job at Komuna Projekt, a new planning bureau in Maribor, and remained there until his retirement. His work of almost four decades enriched the city with various town planning solutions and numerous public buildings, e.g. the Secondary Technical School in Gosposvetska Cesta (1957–1959), Faculty of Education in Koroška Cesta (1973–1979), TIM office building in Trg Borisa Kraigherja (Boris Kraigher Square)

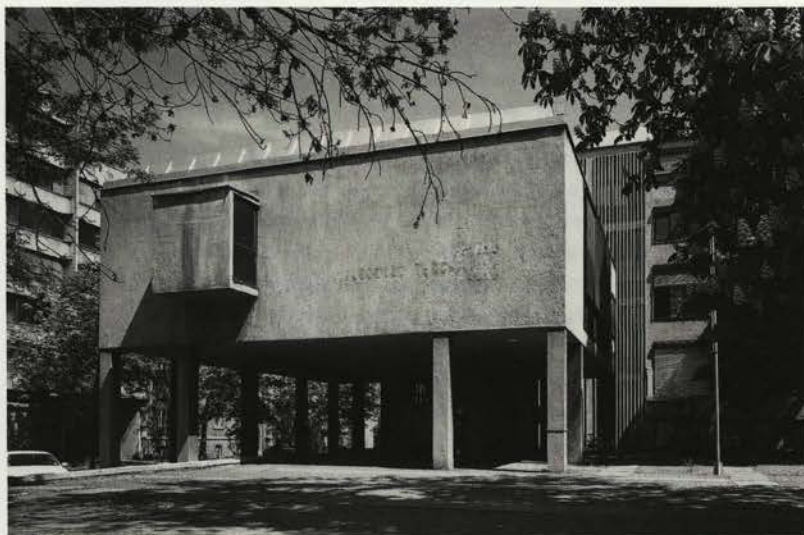


▲ Floor plan (scale: 2mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... "Their architectural expression can be described as consideration for permanent features of the surroundings, pragmatism and reserve in the use of forms and materials."

(1978–1980), University Library in Gospejina Ulica (1978–1988) and Slovene National Theatre (SNG) in Slomškov Trg (1977–1991).

The expression Maribor School has to be considered with reserve, since the Kocmut brothers had no actual adherents, let alone students. The circle consisted of architects Magda Kocmut, Vlado Emeršič, Rudi Zupan and Borut Pečenko. They mostly worked in the Komuna Projekt bureau. Their architectural expression can be described as consideration for permanent features of the surroundings, pragmatism and reserve in the use of forms and materials. At present



"The main urbanist motif of the School of Economics and Commerce is manifested in the manner the corner plot was utilized by the architect."

they could be considered as forerunners of contextualism or regionalism. The same features can be ascribed to the architect of the School of Economics and Commerce, Branko Kocmut.

The district of the city centre of Maribor where the School is located is characterized by a quadrangle construction with a rectangular network of streets that was created by the town planning of the second half of the 19th century. A small house with a garden used to be located at the plot in question and it housed a kindergarten at the beginning of the 20th century. The former Vetrinjski Dvorec used to stand to the south of it, in the centre of the park-like garden. It was transformed into a military hospital in 1831 and subsequently utilized as a boarding-house for pupils. Both buildings (i.e. the former kindergarten and boarding-house) were pulled down at the beginning of the 1960s for the future School of Economics and Commerce and the Centre Restaurant.<sup>1</sup> The area of the present Rakušev Trg belonged to the Union brewery and was regulated as a green area according to the plan of architect Jaroslav Černigoj in 1937 (Curk, 2000: 70–71). Kocmut delicately joined the greenery of both areas with his design for the School. Apart from that, the opportunity arose after the completion of the plan (i.e. 1964–1965) to plan the

<sup>1</sup> Rudi Zupan, 1960–1962.

new regulation of the park in Rakušev Trg.

The main urbanist motif of the School of Economics and Commerce is manifested in the manner the corner plot was utilized by the architect. The plot is located at the intersection of Prešernova and Razlagova Ulica, or in other words, on the north-eastern edge of Rakušev Trg with the highest point of the city centre. The architect could have levelled the somewhat raised plot to the height of Razlagova Ulica, which would have facilitated the connection between the street and the entrance to the School. However, Kocmut



“The administration of the building is to be commended for their care in preserving the interior and exterior of the building.”

decided to preserve the “irregularity” of the terrain and locate the building “naturally” at the elevated plot. It was enriched by a pavement in the form of low steps graded in a geometrical pattern towards Rakušev Trg. The value of Kocmut’s solution is two-fold. Firstly, the building thus acquired an additional scenic position which opens different vistas on it from the two main directions of Rakušev Trg and Razlagova Ulica. Secondly, the chosen solution facilitated the preservation of a group of trees from the former garden. Moreover, the sixteen columns supporting the large lecture-room, the expression of which is too strong according to some opinions (Murko, 1968: 29), can be understood as a repetition of the motif of trees growing in the landscaped area in front of the school.

The console precipice facilitated the connection of the newly created area of the “park-like forest” in front of the building and the area of both streets. Simultaneously the area in front of the lecture-room is a mixture of the “inside” and “outside” since it serves as an open colonnade hallway expressing the invitation to enter the building. The entity of the building consists of two bodies: apart from the already mentioned large lecture-room on columns, also the main part with offices, cabinets, a library, reading-room and smaller lecture-rooms. Two central lecture-rooms are located in the eastern, backyard extensions. The communication core of the building consists of

a simple staircase with two flights of steps and halls located along the back facade on each floor. Such a distribution is logical since the staircase and the halls are located in the less illuminated and less important part of the building, while the more advantageous position is intended for classrooms and other rooms for students. However, the route from the entrance colonnade to the staircase and further to the upper floors is therefore less emphasized and less formally designed, which was probably not part of the architect's intent.

Most architectural theoreticians in Slovenia agree that the console motif is a kind of trade-mark of the architecture of the Kocmut brothers. It can be traced in different variations in most of the public buildings they created. The School of Economics and Commerce was the first in that series and the most prominent example of the use of this motif. Apart from the large volume of the main lecture-room on columns, the motif is repeated twice more. The first instance can be traced on the western, main facade of the large lecture-room. Its form is reminiscent of a balcony of a mediaeval castle positioned above the main entrance with the function of monitoring the entrance. The functional role of the motif is limited in the case of the School by Kocmut since it is intended for lecture-room projection equipment. It can be safely said that the purpose of the architect was to play with the motif of the balcony and simultaneously to emphasize the full, firm wall of this part of the building. The second console motif can be traced on the main facade of the three-floor wing. A glazed balcony protrudes from the level of the facade on the first floor, the *piano nobile*, and it marks the core of this part of the building, i.e. the principal's office as the main official room of the School and also the centre of administration.

Despite four decades of use and the transformation of the School into a Faculty, the building has preserved its essential elements and architectural value. The same holds true of the internal design created by Mirko Zdovc.<sup>2</sup> The wall of the hall on the first floor is decorated with a painting by Janez Vidic. According to the architect, the internal design was mostly assembled out of standard items (*Arhitekt*, 1963: 11). Fortunately, the lecture-room is still furnished with the original seats and tables, the rooms are lit with lamps from the early 1960s, and only some window frames have been exchanged. It is desirable that the protection service register all the fittings and furnishings and prepare the conservation directives for the preservation of the essential items of the interior, since there are not many buildings from the 1950s and 1960s in Slovenia that have their interior furnishings preserved. The administration of the school is to be commended for their care in preserving the interior and exterior of the building. Only some visible damage to the external ferroconcrete parts (window frames on the main facade) are a cause for concern. The ferroconcrete supporting structure is to be inspected since it is well known that four decades of use can cause fatal damage to the junctures between the two diverse materials, such as iron and concrete.

JELKA PIRKOVIČ

2 Only the administration rooms were newly furnished, but not according to the opinion of the author of the original furnishings.

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## Branik Sportsground Stand

IRN 14290

Location	Maribor
Address	Mladinska Cesta 27a
Planning and completion	1960–1965
Architect	Boris Pipan and assistants
Investor	Communal People's Committee of Maribor–Centre
Contractor	Tehnogradnje construction company
Building type	Sports building
	<i>Other buildings by the same architect</i> Series of Drava power plants, the type with columns, Mariborski Otok 1948, Vuzenica 1948–1956, Vuhred 1954–1959, Ožbalt 1957–1960; Senj power plant, Croatia 1965; planning and construction of the Drava bridges, Ptuj 1959, Podvelka 1960, Maribor 1963; three Euphrates bridges, Syria 1963–1970; roof above the stadium stand in Ljudski Vrt, Maribor 1963

The first sports society in Slovenia, the Maribor Sports Society, was established in 1900. Despite the change of name, it continued uninterrupted in the inter-war period and in the altered circumstances after the Second World War. In 1920 the Town Council assigned Ljudski Vrt (Public Gardens) to the Society and thus turned it into the central sports venue of the city. The football club was already among the most successful and popular sports clubs at that time. The buildings and playgrounds that were destroyed during the war were renovated with voluntary work.

Extensive works in the entire Ljudski Vrt began in 1949, and the main architect of the then construction committee for the sports ground was Milan Černigoj. In 1949 the newly established football society was obliged to construct a stadium. The mound for spectators consisting of concrete steps with seats on the western part was finished in 1952. Several years later the construction committee planned the largest project in the sports ground – a new stand. The preliminary design was made by Milan Černigoj himself, but engineer Boris Pipan was soon to join him (*Večer*, 1960).

Pipan with his team of experts from the construction company Tehnogradnje as the main contractor undertook the construction of one of the boldest structures in the sports architecture of the then Yugoslavia and even Europe. Engineers Pipan and Žnidarič drafted the plans without reference to any relevant literature of similar buildings. The stand in the form of an elegant curve, 138m long and 16.8m high, is unique since it has no standard supports (Pirkovič 1982: 83). The supporting curve executed in concrete in September 1961 was slanted in such a manner as to reach a few metres above the race tracks. The contemporary newspapers praised it on account of its fine line as more elegant than the stand in Bilbao, Spain, the only comparable building with the roof supported by a curved structure instead of supports (*Večer*, 1961).

The solution in Maribor is based on the bold concept of a pre-stressed reinforced concrete curve as the central superstructure, the slant of which additionally complicated its execution. Two strong isolated foundations were located at its sides. The back supporting element was a smaller curve of reinforced concrete resting on columns.

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◀ Supporting curve ... "on account of its fine line it was praised as more elegant than the stand in Bilbao, Spain, the only comparable building..."

The roof structure was erected between them as a system of supporting steel load-bearing cables forming a network with metal plates serving as the roof covering placed directly on it.

The chief architect of the structure, Boris Pipan, was assisted by Milan Černigoj who undertook the planning of basement rooms, the distribution of changing rooms, club rooms, toilets, repositories, sick-room, two 24m gymnasia and a press room. His other assistants were engineers Vlado Emeršič and Leopold Hvastja, with engineer Franjo Runovec as construction site supervisor and subsequently en-



“The stand in the form of an elegant curve, 138m long and 16.81m high, is unique since it has no standard supports. [...] The solution in Maribor is based on the bold concept of a prestressed reinforced concrete curve as the central superstructure, the slant of which additionally complicated its execution. Two strong isolated foundations were located at its sides. The back supporting element was a smaller curve of reinforced concrete resting on columns.”

gineer Jože Mušič.

The use of prestressed concrete facilitated several important achievements for Tehnogradnje. Boris Pipan as the manager of long standing (1953–1965) and head of the planning took credit for that. He had used the technique of prestressed piers in the construction of bridges since 1953. He introduced a series of innovations in the technical solutions, assembly and equipment and reached the international level of innovation by employing the system of a free cantilever construction of bridges with prestressed piers – the achievement that facilitated the subsequent construction of bridges across the Euphrates in Syria. Pipan also introduced a new method of sealing construction pits and successfully managed large construction sites of the Drava power plants by using cable cranes.

The 40th anniversary of the beginning of the construction of the stand in Ljudski Vrt in Maribor was in 2000 – not the usually long period before a building is decreed a scheduled monument. Although the stand is recorded as part of the architectural heritage, it would undoubtedly merit the title of a national monument. The title is easily



acquired in theory, but the practice of protection is the actual problem. The football stadium is frequently used by the audience and players. The function of the building must therefore be adapted to the needs and safety precautions of public premises. The protection of the building should therefore be consequent in practice as well as on paper. At present, the stand is not yet in danger of transformation due to safety precautions. However, it could easily happen in the future that it would be removed on account of lack of knowledge of its aesthetic, historical and functional value.



Although the stand is recorded as part of the architectural heritage, it would undoubtedly merit the title of a national monument.”

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EVA PEZDIČEK

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# Farmadent Building

IRN 14289

*Location* Maribor, Tezno  
*Address* Minařikova Cesta 6

*Planning and completion* 1993–1995

*Architect* Anton Leřnik, assistant Tone Turk

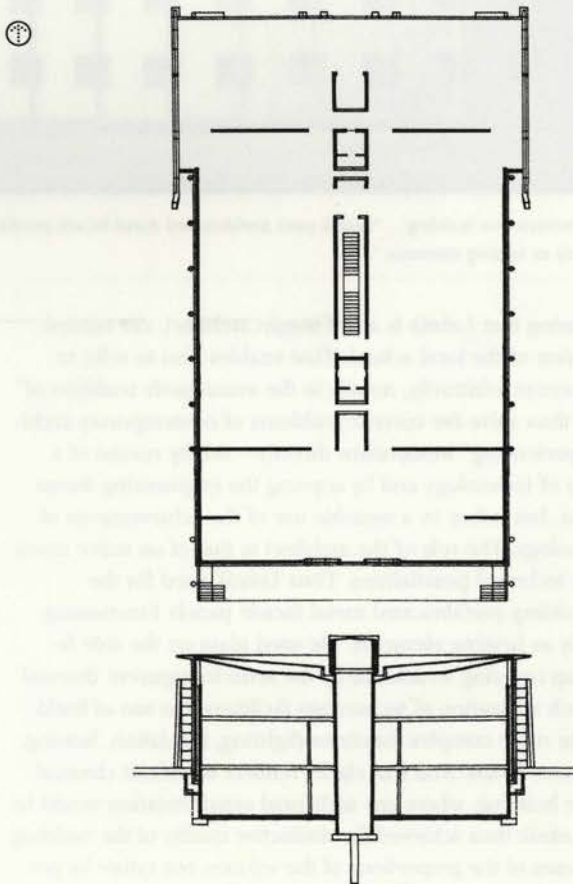
*Investor* Maribor Pharmacies (Mariborske Lekarne)

*Contractor* Konstruktor construction company, Maribor

*Building type* Business premises and repository

*Other buildings by the same architect* Carfema office building, Graz (Austria) 1991; pharmacy near Graz, 1995; Dermota residential building, Maribor 1999; Center Pharmacy, Maribor 2000

Architect Anton Leřnik from Maribor (1937) has attracted attention with his work for several years; initially with interior design and subsequently with his architectural interventions. The adaptation of the Carfema office building in Graz in Austria from 1991 is a case in point as well as numerous pharmacies. The Farmadent building is the first building that was built entirely anew and was based on a plan by Leřnik. The building is located in the suburbs of Maribor and serves as a regional repository and distribution centre for medicines. Neither the function of the building nor its location called for a more



▲ Floor plan (scale: 2.1mm = 1m)

◀ "The building is characterized by special attention paid to the details and its execution, far above the average standards current in Slovenia – a trait typical of all plans realized by Leřnik."

ambitious architectural realization. However, the architect decided to avoid the usual schematic solutions. The building is divided into the administrative section and the repository with packaging premises connected by a covered back yard. The facade is positioned perpendicularly to the main thoroughfare. It can thus be viewed in a perspective accentuated by the slight curve of the facade divided by vertical lines. The building is characterized by special attention paid to the details and its execution, far above the average standards current in Slovenia – a trait typical of all plans realized by Lešnik. It is well



Facade of the administrative building ... "Lešnik used prefabricated metal facade panels functioning simultaneously as heating elements."

worth mentioning that Lešnik is a self-taught architect, not tainted with the tradition of the local school. That enables him to refer to different influences arbitrarily, mostly to the avant-garde tradition of Graz. He can thus solve the current problems of contemporary architecture "re-experiencing" Modernism directly – not by means of a blatant display of technology and by copying the engineering forms as in the 1930s, but rather by a sensible use of the achievements of modern technology. The role of the architect is that of an active investigator of new technical possibilities. Thus Lešnik used for the Farmadent building prefabricated metal facade panels functioning simultaneously as heating elements. He used glass on the side facades as the top covering structured by the semi-transparent thermal insulation. Such utilization of technology facilitated the use of building elements in more complex functions (lighting, insulation, heating, etc.), yet in clearer forms. And that clarity renders an almost classical elegance to the building, where any additional ornamentation would be superfluous. Lešnik thus achieved the distinctive quality of the building not only by means of the proportions of the volume, but rather by precious materials and the light reflected in them. These, however, are the principles that modern architecture attempts to follow.



"The building is divided into the administrative section and the repository with packaging premises connected by a covered back yard."

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## Summer Baths

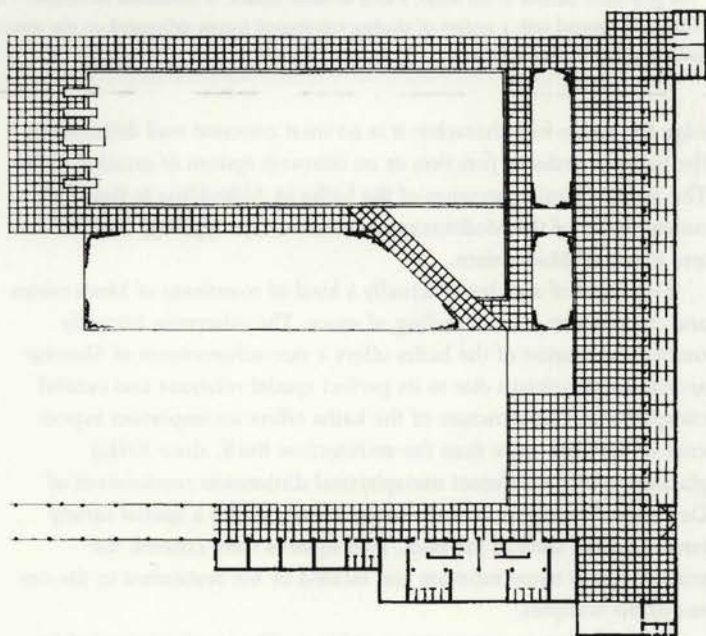
IRN14294

Location	Ajdovščina
Address	Cesta 5. Maja 13
Planning and completion	1961–1963
Architect	Svetozar Križaj
Investor	District of Ajdovščina
Contractor	Slovenija Projekt bureau, Ljubljana
stavbi tip	Public baths

*Other buildings by the same architect* Mercedes Benz office building (Avtocommerce) (with architect Oton Jugovec in Uroš Vagaja), Ljubljana 1953; Tkanina shop (with architect Oton Jugovec), Ljubljana 1954; Radiocenter shop (with architect Oton Jugovec), Ljubljana 1959; primary school in Mrzla Vas, Brežice 1959; terraced houses, Vipava 1960–1961; cinema auditorium, Ajdovščina 1964; primary school and gymnasium, Slovenske Konjice 1965; Tkanina shop, Ljubljana 1966

The summer baths in Ajdovščina is a creation of architect Svetozar Križaj that seemingly bears the least attributes of the expression otherwise typical of his work: a rich repertoire of forms, colours and materials, the source of which could be traced in Križaj's knowledge and reference to Italian culture. Križaj was born in Ajdovščina [not far from the Italian border] and was therefore more receptive to the influences of his area. That idiosyncrasy distinguishes his architectural work from other outstanding Slovene architects of his generation: Savin Sever, Stanko Kristl, Milan Mihelič and Oton Jugovec.

Svetozar Križaj, one of the best Slovene interior designers, proved himself as an independent designer of exposed concrete (*beton brut*). This holds equally true of his cinema auditorium in Ajdovščina (1964) and the square in front of it with its ingenious positioning of

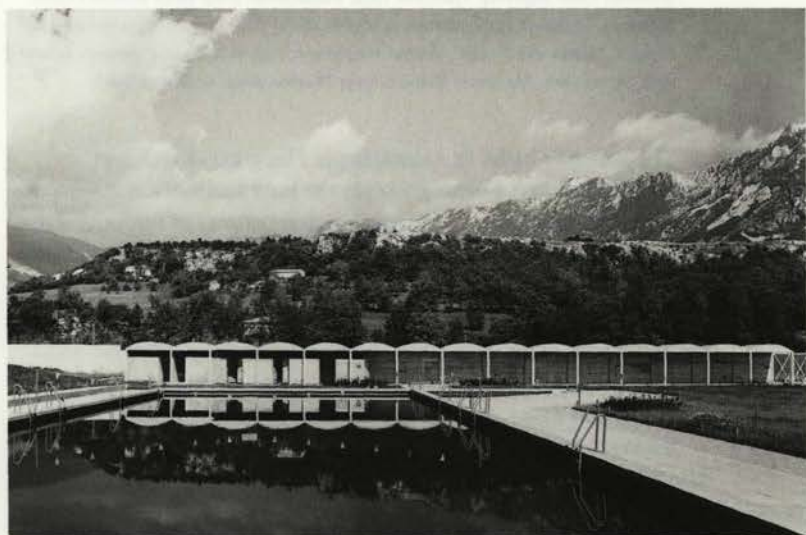


▲ Floor plan (scale: 1:3mm = 1m)

◀ "The clear and extremely austere approach of the summer baths in Ajdovščina with its elementary rationalism is the most representative work by Križaj."

the portrait of Ivan Cankar [the greatest Slovene writer] by Veno Pilon, a fellow countryman from Ajdovščina.

The clear and extremely austere approach of the summer baths in Ajdovščina with its elementary rationalism is the most representative work by Križaj. The geometric surface of the water, a kind of water square, is concluded by arcades – a concrete colonnade covered with a system of shallow tub-shaped curves delineated on the stone pass-out of the Trnovska Planota. However, the edge of the baths simultaneously forms the edge of a town in the Karst province. The



"The geometric surface of the water, a kind of water square, is concluded by arcades – a concrete colonnade covered with a system of shallow tub-shaped curves delineated on the stone pass-out of the Trnovska Planota."

edge has a two-fold character: it is an inert concrete wall delineating the baths in order to function as an introvert system of arcaded halls. The architectural expression of the baths in Ajdovščina is thus a fortunate union of the Mediterranean construction typology and the austere idiom of Modernism.

The motif of arcades is actually a kind of manifesto of Modernism and the modern understanding of space. The otherwise formally modest expression of the baths offers a rare achievement of Slovene architectural lyricism due to its perfect spatial relations and careful composition. The structure of the baths offers an important experience of the area more than the architecture itself, since Križaj planned it with an almost metaphysical dimension reminiscent of Dechirico. The division of the integument created a spatial variety encircling the shell of the pool. Two squares were created; the smaller one is more intimate and located by the restaurant in the corner of the complex.

The baths are in a very poor condition. The arcades intended for changing-rooms that were closed only with partition panels so as not to disturb the prevailing rhythm of the arches have recently been rebuilt with a complete lack of regard. The original condition is to be re-established and the complex protected in full. Future essential



technological improvements can only be performed with the co-operation of an expert or someone familiar with Križaj's work.

VOJTEH RAVNIKAR



"The baths are in a very poor condition. [...] The original condition is to be re-established and the complex protected in full."

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#### Literature

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# Boris Kidrič Student Hostel

IRN 14285

Location	Črnomelj
Address	Otona Župančiča 7
Planning and completion	1952–1955
Architect	Marjan Rupar
Planning	Slovenija Projekt Ljubljana
Investor	Regional People's Committee (OLO) of Črnomelj and Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Slovenia
Contractor	Črnomelj construction company
Building type	Public building – boarding hostel for students

*Other buildings by the same architect* Railway station, Kršan in Istria, Croatia 1959; Bela Krajina Hotel, Metlika 1962; Prežihov Voranc primary school, Ravne na Koroškem 1967

At the beginning of 1944 a grammar school was established in the liberation zone of Črnomelj,<sup>1</sup> beginning a new period in the development of the region of Bela Krajina. Soon after the war the ambitious citizens ascertained that schooling was a great opportunity for the development of the economy and culture. The living standards of pupils and students in poverty-stricken villages were bad and road connections with the centre of Bela Krajina poor, so that a student hostel was necessary, apart from a grammar school.

The Board of Education with the People's Committee in Črnomelj drafted a construction plan in March 1951. The first preliminary designs were prepared in July<sup>2</sup> and the Slovenija Projekt<sup>3</sup> bureau from Ljubljana was commissioned. The preliminary designs were signed by architect Marjan Rupar<sup>4</sup> from the bureau led by Stanko Rohrman. Initially the building was planned for 300 pupils.<sup>5</sup> The main plans were dated 27 July 1953; the construction began in the same year and was completed in the following two years.

The location of the hostel as part of town planning must be emphasized in order to reveal the importance of the architecture of the building. A smaller centre began to develop half-way between the rail-

- 1 "The first partisan grammar school (the first classes) in Slovenia was established in Črnomelj on 10 March 1944 to become a full grammar school for natural sciences on 9 October 1944 with 164 students in six classes" (Jarc 1981).
- 2 Janez Žunič, President of the Regional People's Committee (OLO) of Črnomelj, Niko Belopavlovič, Head of the Economics Department, and Karel Štrbenk, President of the Education Council of OLO Črnomelj, were responsible for the idea of the hostel, raising funds and the construction.
- 3 Slovenija Projekt was the most powerful planning bureau in Slovenia. It was a state company with its head office at Cankarjeva Ulica 1 in Ljubljana (in the Nama department store building). A planning bureau of the same name is still active at the same address. Copies of the original plans are preserved in its archive.
- 4 Marjan Rupar (Ljubljana 1916–1969). He took his degree in architecture at the Technical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana in 1946 and took the specialist exam in 1951. His first job was in the State Development Company for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo (Zemaljsko Projektno Preduzeće). He was employed by Slovenija Projekt between 1949 and 1969.
- 5 The revisional commission for the investment programmes of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Slovenia assessed the idea and reduced the plan to 128 beds. At present (2001) the hostel offers accommodation for 96 students.

◀ "It is interesting and encouraging that the metal elements of the railings on the balconies and staircases are preserved in their original material, only with a different coat of paint."

way station in the north and the old city centre on a meander of the river (Melik 1964: 89), on the plain by the side road that branched off in the direction of Griček<sup>6</sup> and beneath the elevation of Sadež. The urban character of the new area was already determined by House of the Falcons<sup>7</sup> [pre-war left-wing gymnastics society; Sokolski Dom] erected by the city thoroughfare. The location of the hostel was determined as an interruption in the series of private residential houses. A half-finished pre-war house built as far as the slab above the cellar had to be removed. Such a decision emphasized the urban complex



“The entire student hostel is one of the largest building complexes in Bela Krajina and an outstanding example of modern post-war architecture.”

of public functions including the Art Centre<sup>8</sup> (Kulturni Dom – renovated Sokolski Dom), grammar school (present Miran Jarc primary school), a handball stadium and the buildings of the then Road Company (Cestno Podjetje).

The side wings of the plan extenuated the extreme spatial contrast created by the central body of the building of the hostel and indicated the direction of the future development of the street. Unfortunately, the street (Ulica Otona Župančiča) still does not have a consistent urban character on account of inconsistent urban planning.

The student hostel is a rationally and carefully designed building that has proved its utility in almost fifty years of uninterrupted operation. The central wing of the two-storey building was built for students and still serves the same purpose.

The upper floor has the same floor plan and an unexpectedly clear height of 3.30m. The hall in the middle divides the rooms in a mirror

6 The central memorial of war casualties of the Bela Krajina region from 1941–1945 was constructed at the Griček elevation, the work of architect Marko Župančič with reliefs by sculptor Jakob Savinšek.

7 Building engineer Viljem Treo (1845–1926), the time of planning 1925.

8 Plans for the adaptation were made by architect Branko Simčič (1916) with the assistance of architect Viljem Strmecki.

image distribution on the eastern and western sides, while the washrooms, toilets and bathrooms are on the northern side. The entrance landing on the top of the stairs leads to the room of the floor tutor. The sanitary complex is ideally located beside the cold, northern facade.

The ground floor is extensive and was intended for the administration and a sickroom; at present there are two offices for the administration. A large sun-lit and glazed dining room with a winter garden faced the south with a view of the street and thus contributed to more humane architecture in an original way. The kitchen wing was located



“Both the wings facing the sun are protected with wooden sunshields on circular columns that were to be overgrown with creepers – a solution rather unusual for Bela Krajina.”

at the shaded northern facade with a back yard and exit to the street.

The two single-storey side wings were constructed on each side of the main building. The sickroom wing was on the north-western side facing the street with a glazed wall; at present it is used for student accommodation and still retains its basic character. The classroom wing is concluded on the south-eastern side. Both the wings facing the sun are protected with wooden sunshields on circular columns that were to be overgrown with creepers – a solution rather unusual for Bela Krajina. The agitated relief of the terrain and the existing handball playground in the vicinity dictated the plan of the south wing with two storeys. The cellar was intended for sports activities in the playground (dressing rooms, showers, toilets) and the ground floor for rooms for daily activities. The main access from the street over the entrance staircase, through the park<sup>9</sup> and across the entrance landing to the large hall has remained unchanged. The composition

<sup>9</sup> The park contains a monument to engineer Janez Marentič (a bust in bronze by sculptor Zdenko Kalin) and a stone sculpture “Youth” (a full-size female sculpture by Julijan Renko).

of typical, regularly rhythmical windows on both the longitudinal facades of the main building was an architectural design feature of the late functionalist period.

The distinctive external appearance of the building is still accentuated by the roof formed with a slight curve. The main part of the upper terrace, originally intended for laundry, ironing and drying, as well as the outdoor activities of students, is covered by a curved roof partly with reference to the utilitarian shape of industrial buildings, thus concluding the relatively tall height of the public building.

The entire student hostel is one of the largest building complexes in Bela Krajina and an outstanding example of modern post-war architecture. The mighty image of the complex is also discernible in some less typical vistas of the town of Črnomelj.

After five decades since its construction the building is still functional and houses the student hostel. There is no damage to the structure and the facade plasterwork is in a satisfactory condition. The Venetian floor pavings in the communication rooms that are rarely used at present are well preserved. It is interesting and encouraging that the metal elements of the railings on the balconies and staircases are preserved in their original material, only with a different coat of paint. The interior doors and windows had to be changed; this caused some transformations that do not correspond to the original appearance of the architecture from the early 1950s, although they facilitated the uninterrupted operation of the hostel.

The external appearance of the building was substantially changed by new window frames.<sup>10</sup> The original composition with displaced asymmetrical fields in a white oil-based coat was preserved on the vertical window section lighting the internal staircase vertical. The rest of the windows on the other facades were replaced with symmetrical double-casement windows with fanlights and frames with crossbars of wood painted in a dark tone. Such a composition of glazed surfaces has reduced the optical frivolity of the original architecture. The impression of size and the dialogue between the whole and the detail has been lost. The conventional solution has diminished the originality of the architectural integument.

The entire ground floor functions perfectly in the interior. It is evident that the installations have to be modernized, primarily in the kitchen that is of sufficient size but has to be re-furnished with modern appliances.

The juncture of walls and floors of the single-storey wings are in a critical condition. As the waterproofing is insufficient it is necessary to install ventilation shafts or fit horizontal additional waterproofing by cutting the walls in contact with the floors.

The library located in the southern wing is pressed for room and in need of larger premises. Its removal to a new location would facili-

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<sup>10</sup> The original matrices of the preliminary design (Plan No. 901/1, scale 1:100, 14 July 1951), the data of the main plan for the architecture, statics, installations and external image (Plan No. 901/1, scale 1:100, 27 July 1953) are kept in the archive of Slovenija Projekt, apart from the folder containing the matrices of the plans of original details of doors and windows (Plan No. 901/1, details, 2 November 1953). The latter facilitates the reconstruction of the joiner's work.

tate expansion of the daily syllabus that would suit the students even more. The cellar next to the playground has remained without a proper function after the construction of the adjacent gymnasium and is therefore falling into decay.

The partial renovation<sup>11</sup> in 1964 undertaken for the requirements of a visiting grammar school comprised the essential transformations that have not altered the design of the building in any substantial way.

Last but not least, it can be concluded that the careful design of the student hostel has proved a high level of utility in the course of its continuous operation. Since the essential adaptations have preserved the basic characteristics of the architecture, it can be safely said that there are sufficient elements and also initiatives available to preserve it for future generations. With the careful preparation of a detailed renovation plan the complex could be preserved within the context of the urban image of Črnomelj.

The student hostel in Črnomelj, the work of architect Marjan Rupar, has remained an example of the unobtrusive spatial composition and a design approach that testified to the zeal and creativity of the intellectual elite of Bela Krajina and Slovenia in a period of material poverty.

JOVO GROBOVŠEK

- 11 Plans for the adaptation of some rooms were made by Bureau for Architecture, engineer H. Brnčič from Slovenija Projekt in Ljubljana: Plan No. 901/2, dated 17 July 1964, planned by Stanko Uršič, commissioned by OLO Črnomelj. The adaptation comprised parts of the ground floor (new toilets, transformation of former ones into cabinets for physics and chemistry, transformation of classrooms) and an additional classrooms was made on the first floor from the original bathrooms.

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<i>Location</i>	Base 20, Kočevski Rog
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1986–1988
<i>Architect</i>	Oton Jugovec
<i>Investor</i>	SCT Ljubljana
<i>Contractor</i>	LIZ – Engineering Ljubljana
<i>Building type</i>	Memorial building

*Other buildings by the same architect* Central Co-operative Union (Glavna Zadružna Zveza; with architect Emil Medvešček), Ljubljana 1953–1956; terraced houses in the park, Ljubljana 1954–1956; Jožef Stefan Nuclear Institute – Reactor, Podgorica near Ljubljana 1961–1966; residential quarter Selo, Ljubljana 1965–1969; villa at the foot of the hill of Golovec, Ljubljana 1969–1978; renovation of the church in Reteče, Reteče 1970–1974; two weekend cottages, Zasip 1972–1973; protection of archaeological excavations of Gutenwerth, Otok near Dobrava 1973; Spanish Combatants Art Centre (Kulturni Dom Španski Borci), Ljubljana 1979–1981

The central building of Kočevski Rog is the last work of architect Oton Jugovec and it is quite different from all his previous projects – a feature characteristic of him. As a true student of Edvard Ravnikar, Jugovec followed the principles of modern architecture in all his works, and as a good architect also the concepts and ideas of the context. In his early works the dialogue with the context was subordinated to the concept or construction and was realized on the level of abstract language; i.e. as the volume in the case of the Reactor in Podgorica, as a cube in the case of the house in Mirje, as the vertical in the Selo neighbourhood, or as the horizontal of the villa at the foot of the hill of Golovec. After 1970 the dialogue of the architect with the surrounding area became more prominent and found its expression in modernist derivations of the archetypal of the roof or the wall. A ridged roof symbolizing a home covered the new church in Reteče (1970–1974) or two weekend cottages in Zasip (1972–1973). The protection of archaeological excavations of the Gutenwerth settlement in Otok near Dobrava (1973) was purified in its form and construction to the essence of its function. The roof marked and protected the area, and it was supported by two columns, while the space of the field fluctuated beneath it without hindrance. That roof was also a predecessor of the complex project executed in the case of Base 20 in Kočevski Rog.

The memorial of the partisan Base 20 is located in a specific area of the woods of Rog, at the foot of a hill, with the Base huts hidden among rocks, trees and sinkholes.<sup>1</sup> The plan for the central building of Base 20 was developed in the middle of the 1980s, while the construction was completed only after the death of the architect.

The basic concept of the building is an internal dialogue with the wilderness of the woods. The building is located on the edge, at the axis between two sinkholes. The terrain slopes into an open atrium between two central areas. The areas narrow in perspective through two large glass openings and finally meet in the form of a balcony and the background of the woods. The internal area is delineated by a fragile panelled facade made of washed slabs reminiscent of wooden panelling, and the roof hovers over them as a symbol of refuge. The concept of the roof as an open complex wooden structure of a ridged

◀ Wooden roof construction ... "Base 20 is unique in the same way as all his other projects; it is the invention of a construction, internal area and the concept of the roof."

roof is a supplement to the design from Otok near Dobrava. Furthermore, it can be understood as an interpretation of the traditional roof construction of the typically Slovene hay-rack, the so-called *topljar*. The construction is simple, consisting of two large pole-shaped supports resting on four piles with a console-shaped conclusion above the common balcony. In the case of the building in Otok near Dobrava, the columns and the ridged roof were the only elements of the design, while in Base 20 Jugovec added the element of the wall or an independent facade integument. The treatment of the integument



"The basic concept of the building is an internal dialogue with the wilderness of the woods. [...] The partisan memorial of Kočevski Rog is hidden in the surroundings in the same manner as the original huts used to be."

as a textile covering of the house, the non-tectonic juncture in corners and the visual stratification of the facade in open conclusions emphasize the non-supporting nature of the integument. The integument is more closed in the direction of the entrance platform, while it disintegrates into individual surfaces along the side facade, thus allowing for vistas and finally opening up into a large window onto the woods. Light shining between the trees is transferred into the interior by means of sensitively designed sections of light. Similar modulations of light are characteristic of Aalto and modern Scandinavian architecture. Respect for local tradition (the roof, wood) and simultaneously for the elementary principles of Modernism (innovation, a bold construction, the non-tectonic facade integument), together with consideration for the light of the selected location are characteristics of the architecture of critical regionalism (Frampton 1980: 317).

The regional element of the roof with its hovering character is raised to the symbolic level of a shelter. The weight of the historical

- 1 Base 20 is an area in Kočevski Rog where the residence of the partisan leadership of the national liberation movement was located between 17 April 1943 and December 1944. Members of the Executive Board of the Liberation Front (Izvršni Odbor Osvobodilne Fronte), Supreme Plenum of the Liberation Front (Vrhovni Plenum OF), Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovenia (Centralni Komitee Komunistične Partije Slovenije) and others resided there. The Base consisted of 26 huts with several partisan hospitals and workshops in the surrounding area. Their history is presented in the form of an exhibition in hut No. 16.

memory is not monumentalized (Ravnikar 1995: 104–111). The partisan memorial of Kočevski Rog is hidden in the surroundings in the same manner as the original huts used to be.

The final plan by Jugovec represents a synthesis of ideas implied by his former works. The outstanding one is the connection with nature, represented here by the direct context of the woods and the huts near-by, and also the original interpretation of the archetype of the roof as a symbolic and contextual element. The interpretation is manifested in the bold concept of the construction, indicating the



“The treatment of the integument as a textile covering of the house, the non-tectonic juncture in corners and the visual stratification of the facade in open conclusions emphasize the non-supporting nature of the integument.

.....

dedication of the author to the spirit of Modernism, with its essence in transcending known concepts. Base 20 is unique in the same way as all his other projects; it is the invention of a construction, internal layout and the concept of the roof. In the process of creation, Jugovec does not invent new forms, but rather interprets classical elements, construction, materials and their use – the roof, wooden materials, structure and architectural principles. He used his favourite materials in Base 20: washed concrete, plywood, stone and metal.

The central building of Base 20 has never served its purpose better; however, the most questionable aspect of the renovation is the function which would revive the memorial area.

MARUŠA ZOREC

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## Building of the Regional People's Committee (OLO) IRN 1579

*Location* Kranj

*Address* Slovenski Trg 1

*Synonym* Building of the Kranj Town Council

*Planning and completion* 1958–1960

*Architect* Edvard Ravnikar

*Investor* Regional People's Committee of Kranj

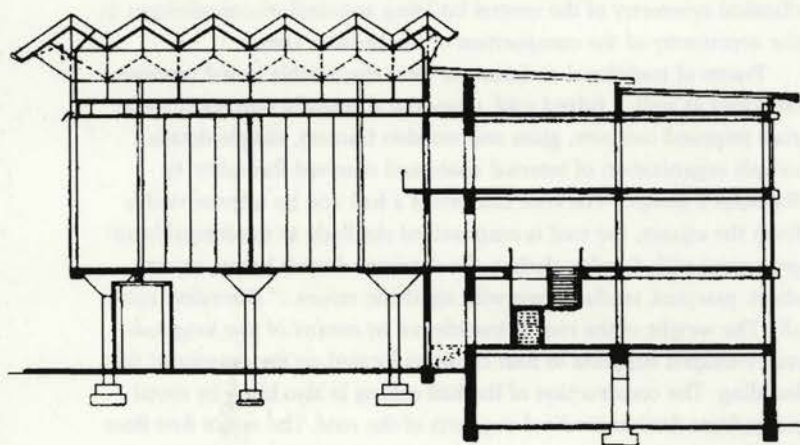
*Contractor* SGP Tehnika

*Building type* Hall

The Regional People's Committee hall in Kranj (present-day Kranj Town Council) was evaluated as early as the 1960s as "the most revolutionary achievement of the 1950s and simultaneously the pinnacle of that period" (Šumi 1968: 10), while today it undoubtedly represents the outstanding architectural work of Slovene Modernism. The building is also the best illustration of the architectural principles of Edvard Ravnikar. With the winning project of the internal tender in 1955, he demonstrated that it was possible to connect a new building with the existing state of affairs, thus creating a completely new ambience, not reminiscent of the pre-war architecture of Landrat (i.e. provincial town hall). The hall of the tender project was still a relatively anonymous element of a broader, geometrically regulated modernist construction surrounding the newly created square.

Ravnikar subsequently positioned the symmetrically planned hall as a free-standing building at the axis of the broader composition and thus created a firm spatial dominant. The building acquired a geometrically correct, clear and simple layout that was a modernist paraphrase of a Classical temple. The basic volume of the building supported by a visible, accentuated structure was raised. The roof seemingly hovered above it in the form of a draped slab. It was precisely the modern interpretation of the roof that became one of the central themes of Ravnikar's architecture.

Ravnikar never conceded to the division of architecture and urban



▲ Floor plan (scale: 3,5mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... "The Regional People's Committee hall is an outstanding illustration of Ravnikar's interpretation of the classical ideal as a combination of a perfect platonic form and construction expressivity."

planning. For him, the spatial context was always the starting-point of an architectural concept. In this case he therefore divided the complex into several buildings enclosing the external area, despite the modest scale: a four-storey extension to the block of flats of the Pension Fund (Pokojninski Zavod, by Vladimir Šubic, 1929), a single-storey building of the coffee-house, the central hall and a three-storey tract of offices. Thus a *piazza* was created with the hall determining the visual axis of the area. A tent-shaped roof covering the hall actually delineated part of the square in the city centre, thus transforming



"The basic volume of the building supported by a visible, emphasized construction was raised. The roof hovered above it in the form of a draped slab."

it into a symbol of a common house, or a common home. The central building was designed as an independent architectural volume with a formal facade determining the hierarchy of the broader area. The classical symmetry of the central building acquired its complement in the asymmetry of the composition of the broader area.

Traces of traditional architecture were discernible in the modernist layout as well: a ridged roof, economical construction, local materials (exposed concrete, glass and wooden frames), simple details, simple organization of internal space and reserved formality. In Ravnikar's words: "The core comprises a hall and its interior visible from the square, the roof is emphasized similarly as the formal head-gear worn with Sunday clothes, the entrance door is heavy, etc. in short, practical, useful forms with symbolic values..." (Ravnikar 1960: 18). The weight of the roof is transferred by means of two longitudinal, V-shaped supports to four columns located on the exterior of the building. The construction of the hall ceiling is also hung by metal joints from the longitudinal supports of the roof. The entire first floor thus has no supports in the interior, which facilitates the joining of the three halls into a unified area.

The Regional People's Committee hall is an outstanding illustration of Ravnikar's interpretation of the classical ideal as a combination of perfect platonic form and structural expression. He simulta-

neously demonstrated his vision of regionalism that was neither sentimental nor populist.

Despite its age, the building is still in a relatively good condition. The facade elements and part of the internal furnishings were replaced with inappropriate materials, colours and finishes. The paving of the piazzetta is in a very bad condition, mostly completely deteriorated. In view of the importance of the Regional People's Committee hall in the recent history of Slovene architecture, the renovation should guarantee complete authenticity of the original facade as well



"In view of the importance of the Regional People's Committee hall in the recent history of Slovene architecture, the renovation should guarantee complete authenticity of the original facade as well as the internal area and furniture."

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as the internal area and furniture. The aluminium window frames and parapets in the office tract are to be replaced since they have utterly transformed the character of the building with a different colour; copies of the original seats and other furniture in the halls are to be made and the memorial in the great hall is to be removed (or placed at a more suitable location) since they disrupt the integrity of the building.

ALEŠ VODOPIVEC

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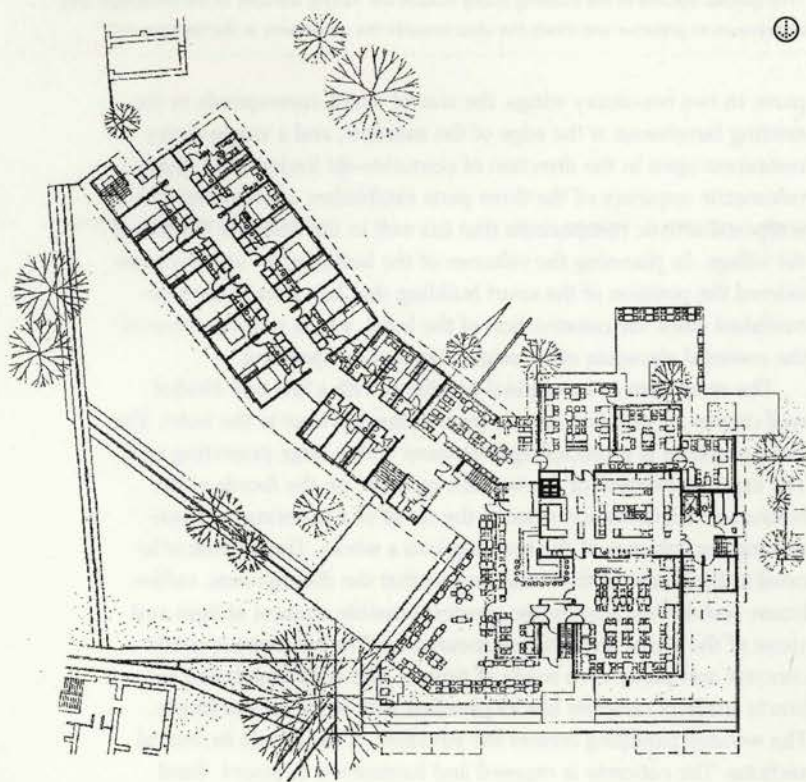
# Prisank Hotel

IRN14287

Location	Kranjska Gora
Address	Borovška Ulica 93
Planning and completion	1960–1961; 1961–1962
Architect	Janez Lajovic
Investor	Jesenice Town Council
Contractor	Tehnik from Škofja Loka
Building type	Hotel

*Other buildings by the same architect* Terraced houses in Črnuče, Ljubljana 1963–1965; Miran Jarc primary school, Ljubljana 1964–1965; Kanin Hotel, Bovec 1969–1973; Kraigherjeva Ploščad office and shopping complex, Ljubljana 1969–1976–1989; Boris Zihelr primary school, Ljubljana 1975–1976

The Prisank Hotel in Kranjska Gora is one of the first and best examples of Slovene regionalism in architecture. The expression regionalism denotes a willful use of certain basic archetypal elements and artistic principles corresponding to the natural circumstances of the location. The period of the so-called new sensitivity came into existence within this context in the 1960s as the antipode of technological internationalism. The concrete example of the hotel presents a modernist treatment of traditional elements of architecture (i.e. the roof) and materials (i.e. wood). The spread of regionalism in Slovenia was connected with the notion of the leisure civilization or rather the



▲ Floor plan (scale: 1.5mm = 1m)

◀ "The structure is partly concrete and partly even made of timber. The accommodation section is made of concrete blocks panelled with wood on the facade."

beginning of tourism for the masses.

In contrast to city hotels with their bedroom wings extended upwards on account of small and expensive plots while the restaurant is extended on the ground floor, a horizontal composition of the two-storey bedroom wing with a protruding centre is a typical feature of the Prisank Hotel in Kranjska Gora.

The divided volume of the building subtly follows the features of the landscape and endeavours to preserve and direct the vista towards the mountains in the background. The hotel is designed in three



“The divided volume of the building subtly follows the natural features of the landscape and endeavours to preserve and direct the vista towards the mountains in the background.”

parts: in two two-storey wings, the size of which corresponds to the existing farmhouse at the edge of the meadow, and a single-storey restaurant open in the direction of centuries-old linden trees. Such a volumetric sequence of the three parts establishes a functional and sculptural artistic composition that fits well in the sensitive context of the village. In planning the volumes of the building the architect considered the position of the court building that has already been demolished since the construction of the hotel, which mutilated one of the essential elements of its original spatial composition.

The restaurant in its original condition with a low and divided roof creates an intimate area in front of the entrance to the hotel. The main entrance is protected against snow with a large projecting roof. The exposed element of the wooden juncture on the facade of the restaurant originally accentuated the motif of a hovering roof connecting the volumes of the building into a whole. The kitchen is located at the centre of the restaurant so that the dining-room, coffee-house and the bar acquire the greatest possible amount of light and vistas of the Razor and Prisank mountains. The structure is partly concrete and partly even made of timber. The accommodation section is made of concrete blocks panelled with wood on the facade. The wooden panelling creates the structure of the facade in vertical sections. The concrete is exposed and hammered in places. Sand from the near-by river Pišnica was used as a building material. All the interior furnishings, including the chairs, were made according to the plans of the architect in light shades of natural wood, with the exception of the red lamps and seats. The architect received the na-

tional Prešeren Fund Award for the Prisank Hotel in 1964.

The hotel is endangered at present and transformed to such an extent that it is almost unrecognizable. The interior rooms that used to be made of light wood are painted black and red. The extension to the restaurant erected without the knowledge of the architect damaged the hierarchy of individual elements of the originally growing composition and interrupted the principal element of the overhanging connecting roof. It was executed in white plastic profiles that are in contrast to other facade elements. The demolition of the court



A chair made according to the design of architect Janez Lajovic for the Prisank Hotel received the Gold Prize at the first Biennial of Industrial Design in Ljubljana in 1964.

building destroyed the spatial relations that had substantially contributed to the location quality of the hotel. Another key element of the composition is endangered – the meadow in front of the main hotel restaurant, the anticipated location of another building that would finally seal the vistas of the restaurant – the main quality of that part of the hotel.

The original state of affairs in materials, colours and furnishings should be established in co-operation with the original architect and the extension removed. The external spatial relations should be protected as well, including the meadow in front of the restaurant.

NATAŠA KOSELJ

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## Belvedere Hotel Complex

IRN 14286

Location	Loret above Izola
Address	Dobrava 1a
Planning and completion	1961–1970
Architect	Edo Mihevc, assistant Ivo Prelec
Investor	People's Committee of Izola, Community of Izola, Zora Hotel company Izola
Contractor	Stavbenik construction company Izola
Building type	Hotel complex

*Other buildings by the same architect* Blocks of flats in Belvedere, Koper 1958; Ankaran tourist complex, Ankaran 1959; Ankaran Convent tourist complex, Ankaran 1959–1962; Lucija tourist centre near Portorož, Lucija 1960–1970; Simonov Zaliv tourist centre near Izola, Izola 1959–1971; Portorož tourist centre, Portorož 1964–1972; Strunjan tourist quarter, Strunjan 1960–1961; Semedela residential quarter near Koper, Semedela 1961–1962; Žusterna tourist centre near Koper, Žusterna 1962–1964; terraced houses, Piran 1960; prefabricated houses, Šalara near Koper 1962

The Coastal Region (Obala) assumes a special position in an overview of the architecture of the 20th century architecture in Slovenia. Next to the existing contiguous towns of Koper, Izola and Piran new tourist, spa and industrial complexes took over the area of the Coastal Region at the beginning of the 20th century, apart from the dispersed construction of coastal villas with parks, primarily in the style of the old Austro-Hungarian Classicist architecture. In the second half of the 20th century the area of the Coastal Region was marked by the uniform seal of the work of architect Edo Mihevc, primarily with his residential and tourist architecture.

Belvedere above Izola is an outstanding example of a well preserved tourist complex according to its functional and spatial design that was planned by Mihevc. The complex is located by the main road between Izola and Piran, on the exposed cliff of a natural funnel-shaped amphitheatre above the coast, with beautiful vistas of Izola and the Bay of Trieste, Karst Ridge and Alps in the background.

The distribution of the buildings is formally clean and functionally clear. The tourist complex is located along the path leading from the upper edge of the amphitheatre to the beach. The main restaurant building is positioned by the entrance to the complex, at a central location that facilitates a classical vista of Izola. A series of residential units covered with lush Mediterranean vegetation is located towards the west and a camp is located behind them. Separate car parks conclude the original part of the complex from 1962 that was planned by Edo Mihevc. In 1970 free-standing outbuildings were erected according to his plans as well as another outhouse at the eastern edge of the complex, in contrast to the original plans. In the 1980s and 1990s the complex was extended with an entrance pavilion, a pool, sports grounds and additional car parks. The camp was also extended and a central restaurant building was erected according to the new plans of various architects. Their spatial locations are a continuation of the organic concept of Mihevc, although he did not envisage them in the land development plans. A discotheque was adapted in recent years, residential units were renovated with Postmodern details and the out-

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◀ Roof structure ... "In the second half of the 20th century the area of the Coastal Region was marked by the uniform seal of the work of architect Edo Mihevc, primarily with his residential and tourist architecture."

houses painted in striking shades. Thus they assumed a dominant position, particularly for vistas of Loret from the direction of Izola. Although the interventions are in contrast to the original organic concept of Mihevc, the Belvedere complex has preserved its basic spatial and architectural values.

The restaurant represents the centre of tourist life. A low single-storey building with a broad rectangular floor plan opens up in the direction of the sea with two floors of the conclusive polygonal pavilion and an open terrace has been constructed along the entire build-



"The string of residential units located parallel to the path and diagonally displaced creates the desired intimate atmosphere among the lush Mediterranean vegetation."

ing. The complex consists of individual buildings distinguished according to their structure as well as materials that are adapted to the function of the complex. The public area with the entrance, bar and restaurant facing the sea is formally open with glazed walls beneath a broad projecting roof, while the service section is formally closed with plastered brick walls. The modern ceiling structure of the public part is made of exposed unilateral ferroconcrete perforated supports that direct the vistas towards the sea where a surprising projecting roof is located on massive stone columns as protection against the heat. The roof structure is visible, traditionally made of timber with brick filling and covered with semi-circular ridge tiles typical of the Mediterranean. The use of glass walls and a common ceiling structure with open roofings facilitate the connection of the internal rooms with the covered and open terraces and the landscape. The internal walls of the restaurant are executed in smooth plaster or visible brick with accentuated white grouting, while the external walls are made of massive stone slabs. The floor is paved with orthogonal slabs of black stone-flagged paving with brass grouting. The bar is made of alternate narrow oblong slabs of white marble and sections of mosaic in blue. The internal fittings followed the white colour used by Mihevc in tourist buildings of that period, e.g. for perforated lamps or wrought-iron coat-hangers. The eastern part of the restaurant located in the direction of Izola is concluded by a glazed pavilion with a polygonal floor plan and a special four-part ridged roof that

emphasizes the outstanding quality of the building. The earth shades of the plasterwork on the service section of the complex and the ornamental use of brick on the facade of the polygonal pavilion accentuate the hierarchy of the buildings. Various carefully built chimneys made of brick conclude the diverse exterior of the single and multi-ridged roofs of the otherwise austere floor plan of the ground floor. Low parapet walls, wrought-iron lamps in the form of Chinese lanterns and lawns complete the external appearance of the restaurant building.

The string of residential units located parallel to the path and diagonally displaced creates the desired intimate atmosphere among the lush Mediterranean vegetation. The architectural concept is similar to that of the restaurant. The residential units of the austere rectangular floor plan have an open staircase that facilitates direct contact of individual units with the landscape. The single-storey buildings hardly protrude from the surrounding pine trees due to their height and earth shades and their volumes faithfully follow the design of the entire complex. The subsequently erected two-storey centrally arranged outbuildings do not destroy the homogeneous impression since they form a continuation of the complex with their careful location as well as the use of structural and formal elements.

The composition of the Belvedere complex by architect Edo Mihevc is clear in its architectural and urban design, in structural and formal solutions as well as in its technology and materials. The main spatial motif is the view and the special concept of having parts equal in their volumes, yet architecturally recognizable, derived from it. The architecture is characterized by a clear distinction between the private and public rooms and by a harmony of modern and traditional materials. The Belvedere complex deserves to be preserved since it represents the architectural typology of a certain period and an outstanding example of regional architectural continuity in Slovenia by an individual architect.

DANIELA TOMŠIČ

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# Extension of Sežana Town Hall

IRN14295

Location Sežana

Address Partizanska Ulica 4

Planning and completion 1977–1979

Architect Vojteh Ravnikar and assistants Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli, Egon Vatovec (Kras Group)

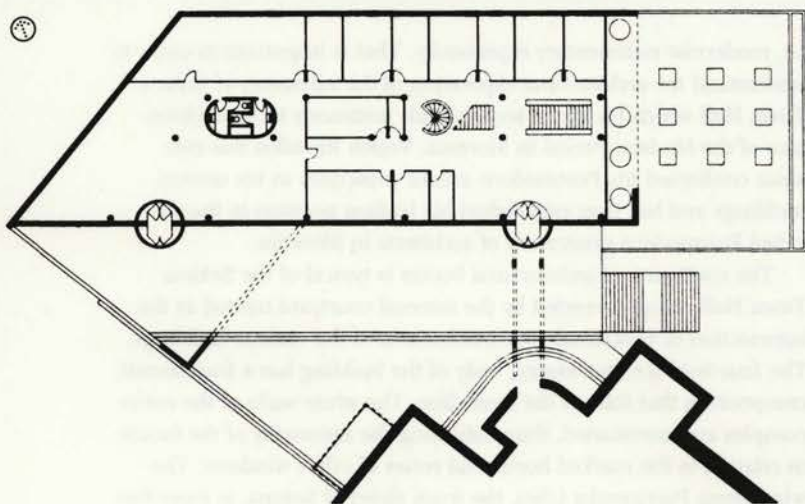
Investor Sežana Community of Sežana

Contractor SGP Kraški Zidar construction company

Building type Town hall

*Other buildings by the same architect* Department store, Kozina 1977–1978 (with Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli, Egon Vatovec); store and post office, Vremški Britof 1978 (with Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli, Egon Vatovec); Srečko Kosovel Art Centre (Kulturni Dom), Sežana 1978–1980 (with Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli); Club Hotel, Lipica 1980–1981 (with Marko Dekleva, Matjaž Garzarolli, Egon Vatovec); wedding suite, Lipica 1980–1982; Piran Hotel, Piran 1982–1986 (with Mladen Marčina, Irena Ložič, Matjaž Garzarolli); cemetery, Sežana 1983; residential house in Resljeva Ulica, Ljubljana 1985–1990; office building, Sežana 1985–1986; post office building, Zadar, Croatia 1985–1988

Sežana Town Hall is located in the former Scaramanga villa, a typical Historicist building from the turn of the 19th century with a park functioning at present as a botanical garden. The extension to it has functionally integrated the otherwise centrifugal architectural area in the eastern part of Sežana, by the main road between Trieste and Ljubljana. The design of the building considered contextuality as the basic principle, although that was not the main argument for criticism that evaluated the complex as one of the first mature responses to the current Postmodern view of town planning and architecture in Slovenia. Vojteh Ravnikar received the national Prešeren Fund Award soon after the construction. Thus the architect and his colleagues from the Kras Group have clearly indicated their orientation within the frame of the multilateral morphological acquisition of



▲ Floor plan (scale: 2.1mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... "The building is one of the milestones in the development of contemporary Slovene architecture since it undoubtedly expresses the character of the exciting time in which it originates by means of its mature, thoughtful and clear design."

the Postmodern vocabulary. The decision to erect a contextual construction within the existing urban and rural surroundings (the construction of the store and post office inside a closed stone-built courtyard in Vremski Britof was particularly paradigmatic in this sense) testifies to the most careful selection of theorems that re-evaluate the residential quality of the tradition. That comprises the direct formal elemental quality of the architecture of the Karst region and reference to the practice of functionalism, more precisely Italian rationalism, which was captured by Ravnikar and his assistants in its minimalist,



"The wing along Partizanska Ulica, the main street of Sežana, is more free since it is basically a front facade that can be considered as a portal of the courtyard typical of the Karst region doubled by the front facade of the old Town Hall building."

i.e. modernist rudimentary expressivity. That is important in order to understand the architectural expression of the extension of Sežana Town Hall which became a recognizable testimony to the architecture of the Modern Period in Slovenia. Vojteh Ravnikar has ever since confirmed his Postmodern artistic principles in his erected buildings and has thus established his leading position in the so-called Postmodern generation of architects in Slovenia.

The contiguity of architectural bodies is typical of the Sežana Town Hall complex erected by the internal courtyard treated as the intersection of functional communications of the various buildings. The four-level (i.e. two-storey) body of the building has a fragmented composition that follows the street line. The white walls of the entire complex are accentuated, thus indicating the rationality of the facade in relation to the marked horizontal series of office windows. The wing along Partizanska Ulica, the main street of Sežana, is more free since it is basically a front facade that can be considered as a portal of the courtyard typical of the Karst region doubled by the front facade of the old Town Hall building. It can also be regarded as a triangular protruding balcony that is visually broken by means of a dynamic feature of the integument, thus adding depth to the common external

area. The ground floor of the extension that is located diagonally as the longest side of the street edge is entirely glazed and thus symbolically and functionally open and inviting. The conflicting stylistic discourse is concluded in the depth of the courtyard by an arched gallery that connects the new building with the old one as an independent architectural element leading to the entrance of the park that is thus turned into a public area. The reception of that sign forms a typically scenic Postmodern address. It can be re-experienced in the interior that is an orderly, visually clear area of several storeys dominated by an accentuated staircase that assumes symbolic importance with its exposed position.

The building is one of the milestones in the development of contemporary Slovene architecture since it undoubtedly expresses the character of the exciting time in which it originates by means of its mature, thoughtful and clear design.

STANE BERNIK

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# Srebrniče Cemetery

IRN14291

<i>Location</i>	Srebrniče, Novo mesto
<i>Address</i>	Srebrniče Cemetery
<i>Planning and completion</i>	1989; 1998–2000
<i>avtorji</i>	Aleš Vodopivec, <i>architecture and interior design</i> ; Dušan Ogrin, Davorin Gazvoda, <i>landscaping</i> ; Nena Gabrovec, <i>interior design</i>
<i>Investor</i>	Novo Mesto Town Council
<i>Contractor</i>	Novo Mesto road company (Cestno Podjetje)
<i>Building type</i>	Cemetery

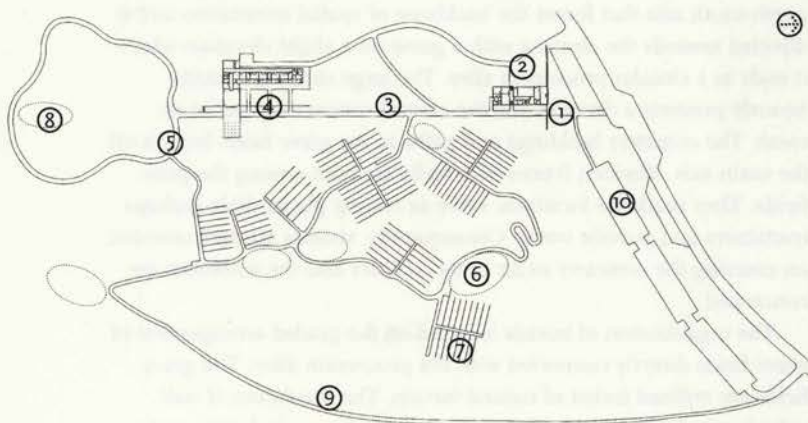
*Other buildings by the same architect* Blocks of flats in Bežigrad, Ljubljana 1988; adaptation of Festival Hall (Festivalna Dvorana), Bled 1989; extension of the Jezero Hotel, Bohinj 1990

The construction of Srebrniče Cemetery in Novo Mesto introduced a new type of civil cemetery in Slovenia – the forest and park cemetery that represents a typological antipode to the traditional Slovene cemetery.

The cemetery is located in the forest by the main road leading from Novo Mesto to Dolenjske Toplice. It came into existence as a consequence of a more than two decades long search for a suitable location and a decade long lapse of time between the call for tenders and execution.

The modestly undulating relief with abundant woods consisting of green pine, spruce, indigenous beech and white beech offered a favourable setting for a forest cemetery. The continuous growth of trees along the main road delineates the northern side of the area and functions as a natural wall of the cemetery. The southern edge likewise contains elements of a natural border along a gentle slope towards a narrow valley with a brook.

The concept of a subtle landscape design of the cemetery by Dušan Ogrin and Davorin Gazvoda was to preserve and use the natural data, the spontaneous morphology of the terrain and the spirit of the area for their forest cemetery.



- ▲ Main entrance (1), Service buildings (2), Alley (3), Farewell hall with individual halls (4), Procession alley (5), Urn fields (6), Grave fields (7), Anonymous burial (8), Side entrance (9), Car parks (10) (scale: 0.2mm = 1m)

- ◀ "The modestly undulating relief with abundant woods consisting of green pine, spruce, indigenous beech and white beech offered a favourable setting for a forest cemetery."

More trees collapsed due to unexpected circumstances during the construction than the plan anticipated so that the original idea of a forest cemetery was transformed into a park cemetery located in a forest. Through this the dramatic gradation of natural light was likewise transformed. However, an assessment of the planned ambience will be more objective in a few years when the plantations of trees and bushes are fully grown and acquire their patina. So far only the first phase was executed – 10 hectares out of the anticipated 36. If the entire plan is realized consistently, it will be the largest cemetery with



"The organization of burials is based on the graded arrangement of grave fields directly connected with the procession alley."

a homogeneous design in Slovenia.

The basic spatial feature is a linear layout of the main alley at the north-south axis that forms the backbone of spatial orientation and is directed towards the clearing with a grove on a slight elevation where it ends as a circular procession alley. The large clearing simultaneously presents a division and the central connecting spatial element. The cemetery buildings and paths to the grave fields branch off the main axis. Wooden fences with wells are built among the grave fields. They mark the locations, serve as resting places, hide garbage containers and provide water. Consequently, visitors are well oriented on entering the cemetery as far as its facilities and the ambience are concerned.

The organization of burials is based on the graded arrangement of grave fields directly connected with the procession alley. The grave fields are stylized forms of natural terrain. The regulation of individual units inside a grave field is based on a linear grid that creates an innate artistic tension. Three types of burials are possible: traditional inhumation, urn burials and anonymous burials. The traditional inhumation that requires larger plots is planned in clearings as an arrangement of graves overgrown with grass. Urn burials are located in elliptical areas beneath the trees in the woods. The area for anonymous burials is planned in a grove in the centre of the clearing

on the elevation that presents the optical focus of the entire cemetery. A better spatial orientation is achieved by the allocation of burial types and the required range in structural and atmospheric variations of the landscape simultaneously taking the form of a forest, park forest, park and cemetery.

The service and farewell buildings of the Srebrniče cemetery that were awarded the Piranesi Award last year were designed by architect Aleš Vodopivec, with the assistance of Nena Gabrovec in the execution and interior design. The basic idea of the layout was to create a



"The basic idea of the layout was to create a classical order of geometrically correct architecture as a dynamic dialogue with the spontaneous forms of the natural surroundings."

classical order of geometrically correct architecture as a dynamic dialogue with the spontaneous forms of the natural surroundings. The dialogue between the constructed and the natural is established by contrasts between the suggestive line of the main alley and the forest, the horizontal distribution of architecture and the slim vertical lines of the trees, the whiteness of the walls and the dark forest, and in the gradation of light and shade as an image of day and night, life and death.

The long, linear concrete wall with a bench along it indicates the entrance to the cemetery. It serves as a screen for the service courtyard and functions symbolically as a fragment of the former appearance of a cemetery. The service building is located perpendicularly to it, beginning with the large window of a flower shop and continuing with a series of service rooms and offices.

The farewell building is located at the axis of the cemetery, in front of the clearing for anonymous burials. It consists of two parts: the farewell wing and mortuary. The farewell wing comprises three parts. A covered vestibule is located at the axis of the alley. The visitors and their views are thus directed from the entrance to the alley further into natural surroundings through the farewell wing. The right side of the vestibule leads to a farewell hall that is very transparent and open to the forest by means of a large window. Natural scenery forms the basis for the internal ambience. The volume of the hall is repeated on the left

side in a dense colonnade reminiscent of the structure of the forest that provides intimate shelter in case of mass burials.

The farewell wing is an independent unit that facilitates further construction in phases. The linear series of the mortuary is divided by a light atrium. A wooden fence indicated already on the facade of the service building is built between the alley and the intimate groves of the mortuary. It acquires additional metaphorical value as a screen in connection with the farewell building. It is designed as a transparent line between life and death and its significance is determined not



"The right side of the vestibule leads to a farewell hall that is very transparent and open to the forest by means of a large window."

so much by its volume as by its shade. The fence is concluded by tube-shaped bells that are tolled for a funeral service as a substitute for the traditional death-knell.

The Srebrniče cemetery received the national Plečnik Award for architecture in 2001.

The renovation should consider and preserve all the typological and formal characteristics of the external and internal design and the rules of the existing cemetery regulation. All possible transformations are to be performed exclusively in dialogue with the architects.

NATAŠA KOSELJ

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"The Srebrniče cemetery received the national Plečnik Award for architecture in 2001."

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# Stražišče Primary School

IRN 14281

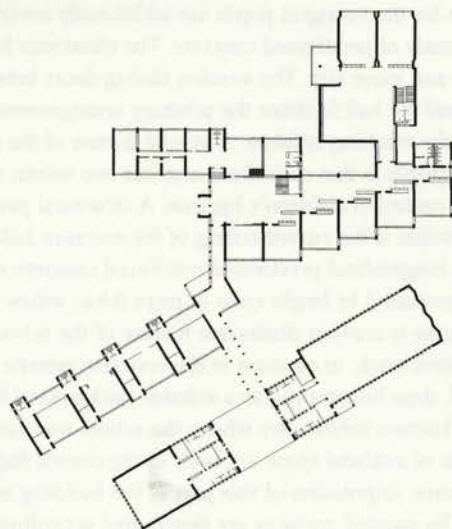
Location	Stražišče near Kranju
Address	Šolska Ulica 2
Planning and completion	preliminary design 1954, first extension 1959, second extension 1968, third extension 1974 <sup>1</sup>
Architect	Danilo Fürst
Investor	Regional People's Committee of Kranj
Contractor	Project construction company, Kranj, Sava construction company, Jesenice (extension)
Building type	šola

*Other buildings by the same architect* Rectory, Bled 1938–1939; administrative building of the bauxite and aluminium factory, Kidričevo 1947–1948; the first prefabricated four-storey house in Slovenia (Ptujška Ulica), Ljubljana 1949; factory of cellulose and natron paper and pertaining buildings, Maglaj, Bosnia and Herzegovina 1951; terraced houses in Peričeva Ulica (tender plan and implementation), Ljubljana 1956–1957; building of the Forestry Administration (Gozdno Gospodarstvo) (tender plan and implementation), Bled 1958–1960; Term residential tower block in Prekmurska Ulica, Ljubljana 1960; therapy block in the baths, Rogaška Slatina 1964; parish Church of the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Kisovec 1983; narthex in front of the south portal of the Plečnik church in Šiška in Ljubljana and extension to the rectory, Ljubljana 1988–1997

The advantages of the new method of education were discussed by architects, teachers and doctors at the conference “From the Old to the New School” that took place in Ljubljana in 1954. The conference was accompanied by an exhibition of modern school buildings, and a call for tenders for the new school was published at that occasion.

The demands for changes of the method of education have been widespread at least since Bauhaus and were the focus of the 7th CIAM Congress in 1954. In contrast to the old classical and rigid school, the new one should be more dynamic and facilitate a more suitable design of school premises. One of the common assumptions was that the child was the focus of education and therefore also the focus of

1 Source: Directorship of the Stražišče Kranj Primary School.



▲ Floor plan of the school (scale: 0.6mm = 1m)

◀ External facade ... “New principles of individual education in schools abroad and a more relaxed concept of teaching demanded a classroom of new dimensions.”

the design of the new school. The importance of contact with nature and light was being emphasized. The old system of an undivided several-storey school block gave way to a ground floor pavilion building or a single-storey building with a central hall. New principles of individual education in schools abroad and a more relaxed concept of teaching demanded a classroom of new dimensions. The old rectangular form was thus transformed into a square.

The primary school in Stražišče near Kranj is the realization of the winning tender of 1954 that was published at the conference "From



"An important element of the new concept of the school complex was the surrounding park."

the Old to the New School". It soon became a model for the construction of primary schools all over the then Yugoslavia.

All the classrooms are doubly illuminated. Those on the ground floor pavilion for the youngest pupils are additionally covered with a curved roof made of prestressed concrete. The classroom has thus become higher and more airy. The wooden sliding doors between the classrooms and the hall facilitate the arbitrary arrangement of space according to the teaching syllabus. A special feature of the pavilion for the youngest pupils is that each classroom has two toilets, which facilitates a better control of children's hygiene. A structural particularity inside the pavilion is the curved ceiling of the entrance hall supported by a massive longitudinal prestressed reinforced concrete support. The feature is accentuated by bright coats of paint (blue, yellow and red).

The staircase is another distinctive feature of the school. It is covered with glazed brick, in contrast to the concrete exterior of this part of the school, thus functioning as a suitable background for the sculpture of Lucijan Seljak after whom the school was named. Flower troughs made of artificial stone are built in the central flight of steps. A more dynamic impression of this part of the building is achieved by colours. The painted surfaces are distributed according to the *Psychology of Colours* by Anton Trstenjak: the final walls of long and narrow halls are coated with reddish shades so as to contract the rooms, and blue shades in the opposite cases where the rooms are visually extended. Architect Fürst has also designed all the interior furnish-

ings. The cloakrooms in the central part should be mentioned. They are divided by closets made of artificial stone and plywood, thus serving as closets on one side and as showcases for artefacts made by children on the other.

The latest, third part of the school consists of two gymnasia and the extension for tutorial studies. The large gymnasium is connected with the smaller one by means of an enormous projecting roof on metal pole-shaped supports. The external walls are coated with hollow facade brick. One of the walls of the large gymnasium has the form of a sine



"The architect received the Award of the Association of the Architects of Yugoslavia in 1959."

curve, which facilitates additional structural rigidity. The sine curve wall is one of the distinctive features of Fürst's architecture.

The department for tutorial studies, organized around an extensive multifunctional room, is covered with exposed concrete, wood and red facade brick. An interesting detail of the room is that the area in the wall between two supporting columns is used for benches. The entrance walls of the cabinets were also a novelty since they were prefabricated (made of masonite and glass) and transparent, in accordance with the new spirit of education; the pupils were to have as much contact as possible among themselves and with their external and internal surroundings.

An important element of the new concept of the school complex was the surrounding park, for which Fürst used his knowledge of landscaping acquired during his stay at Bled.

The architect received the Award of the Association of the Architects of Yugoslavia in 1959.

The renovation of the complex should consider all the enumerated features, including the external regulation.

NATAŠA KOSELJ

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# The Ferrari Villa

IRN 9187

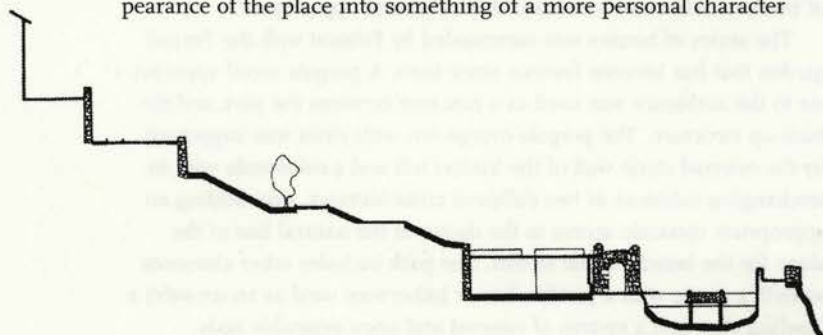
Location	Štanjel in Karst
Address	Štanjel 12
Planning and completion	1920–1935
Architect	Max Fabiani
Investor	dr. Enrico Ferrari
Building type	Villa

*Other buildings by the same architect* Building of the Portois & Fix furniture company, Vienna 1899–1900; head office of the Artaria cartographic house, Vienna 1900–1901; the Krisper house, Ljubljana 1901–1902; City Lyceum for Girls (Mladika military hospital), Ljubljana 1904–1907; the Hribar house, Ljubljana 1905; the Kleinmayr-Bamberg house, Ljubljana 1906–1907; Urania Public University, Vienna 1909–1910; the Reithoffer building, Vienna 1912–1913

Enrico Fabiani, the nephew of architect Maks Fabiani, bought a house that was part of a mediaeval complex of buildings at the outer edge of Štanjel ('St. Daniel') in the Karst region from Gustav Fabiani in 1920. Maks Fabiani transformed the house into a villa. The stone roof was renovated by placing the tiles on a reinforced concrete slab. Other parts of the house, e.g. the openings and the plasterwork, remained unchanged. However, an open loggia supported by five arches and a terrace were added. A conservatory and a repository for gardening utensils were built beneath the terrace. The two stone staircases were connected to the loggia and the entrance. A Venetian ridge was added to the house. Toilets and other auxiliary rooms were added to the villa and other houses in the series as well. The renovation was completed in 1923. All the houses between the renovated villa and the south-eastern tower were sold in the following six years. The circular tower and the house belonging to it were badly damaged in 1944. Some further houses of the series with flats, a saw mill, butchery and a stable came in the possession of the villa.

The complex was supposedly renovated by Maks Fabiani without plans drafted in advance. According to hearsay, he supervised the works in weekly visits to the construction site.

Maks Fabiani and his nephew planned the purchase of two further houses that would have been renovated as a smaller sanatorium. The purpose would have surpassed the importance and dimension of the old settlement of Štanjel. How to advance the existing rural appearance of the place into something of a more personal character



▲ (scale: 3mm = 1m)

◀ Balustrade ... "How to advance the existing rural appearance of the place into something of a more personal character and of broader importance was the task that Fabiani completed to perfection."

and of broader importance was the task that Fabiani completed to perfection. The Štanjel hill with its mediaeval settlement functioned as the resource from which he created his architectural design: the cone-shaped form of the hill with a spiral access route beginning at the foot of the hill and ending in the new centre of the composition represented by a triphora of a mansion. A portal marked access to the spiral path towards the villa.

Fabiani added a system of buttresses to the rural appearance of Štanjel culminating with a motif of triphora between two columns as



Series of houses with Ferrari gardens ... "The ownership of the still inhabited triphora pavilion presents the major problem..."

an image of a more expansive design of a country mansion. The use of merlons and crenels enhanced the majestic appearance.

The series of houses was surrounded by Fabiani with the Ferrari garden that has become famous since then. A pergola motif appropriate to the ambience was used as a juncture between the park and the built-up structure. The pergola overgrown with vines was supported by the external stone wall of the Štanjel hill and a colonnade with interchanging columns of two different cross-sections, thus adding an appropriate dynamic accent to the *ductus* of the natural line of the slope for the benefit of the viewer. The park includes other elements as well: a grotto with a pond, a bower (otherwise used as an ice-safe) a bowling alley and a system of covered and open vegetable beds.

Despite all the efforts and funds invested, the renovation of the Ferrari garden was not satisfactory; e.g. the pond was not professionally renovated. The ownership of the still inhabited triphora pavilion presents the major problem since the Town Council had decided to sell that part of the Ferrari gardens that was to become public good.



The “mistake” should have been corrected and the area transformed into a museum or gallery.

With a more substantial inflow of funds directed to Štanjel by the State, the entire series of buildings between the two towers should be renovated, including the demolished square tower. It would also be sensible to reconstruct the engineering idea of Fabiani – the water-works from the Štanjel hill.

The recent attempt to introduce *forma viva* in the area of the Ferrari gardens does not seem felicitous and should be abandoned.



Pergola ... “With a more substantial inflow of funds directed to Štanjel by the State, the entire series of buildings between the two towers should be renovated, including the demolished square tower.”

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VOJTEH RAVNIKAR

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# Shopping and Residential Block

IRN14292

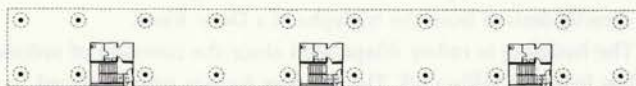
Location	Velenje
Address	Saleška Ulica 19, Prešernova Ulica 10
Planning and completion	1960–1963
Architect	Stanko Kristl
Investor	Community of Velenje
Contractor	Vegrad construction company Velenje
Building type	Shopping and residential building

*Other buildings by the same architect* Block of flats in Prule, Ljubljana 1956–1959; semi-detached house in Rožna Dolina, Ljubljana 1960–1964; terraced houses in Trnovo, Ljubljana 1960–1965; France Prešeren Primary School, Kranj 1960–1968; University Medical Centre (Univerzitetni Klinični Center), Ljubljana 1965–1975; Mladi Rod Kindergarten, Ljubljana 1973; Medical Faculty and Medical Centre, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia (Serbia) 1976–1984

The shopping and residential block by architect Stanko Kristl in Velenje is one of the models of the so-called Ljubljana School of Architecture. It is basically a continuation of similar solutions by Stanko Kristl from Ljubljana where two blocks in Tabor and Prule were erected between 1956 and 1959. At least two further works by the same architect are to be mentioned: the France Prešeren primary school, Kranj (1960–1968) and the Mladi Rod kindergarten in Ljubljana (1973).

If the two blocks in Ljubljana are modest in their execution with the flats reaching to the ground floor, the one in Velenje is more representative on account of its role within town planning. It is covered with vitrified brick (clinker) and the ground floor is intended for shops. The architect discharged the ground floor almost completely and raised the upper floors on a reinforced concrete slab supported by mushroom-shaped columns. A minimal glass integument concluding the commercial section facilitated a sufficiently transparent ground floor to create the principle of an open ground floor developed by Le Corbusier. Two final pairs of columns located in front of the glass facade contributed to that effect. The intermediary concrete slab is of substantial breadth since the skeletal construction of the ground floor is substituted with a brick construction on the upper floors and all the elevation cables and conduits are located in it.

The floor plans of the flats are carefully elaborated and economic to facilitate various adaptations of the flats. The architect designed two separated, sometimes unconnected entrance halls in the case of the larger flats, which provided a consistent division between the residen-



▲ Floor plan (scale: 1:4mm = 1m)

◀ Back yard facade ... "The main facade has vertical sections of windows with glass parapets, while the surface of the back yard facade is perforated with windows of various sizes and a brick network creating the impression of an array of graphic surfaces."

tial area and the bedrooms. The designs of the other rooms are likewise simple, yet innovative. The facades are of a different appearance. The main facade has vertical sections of windows with glass parapets, while the surface of the back yard facade is perforated with windows of various sizes and a brick network creating the impression of an array of graphic surfaces. The kitchen windows protrude in the form of modern bay windows that provide variety for the facade facing the west.

The building represents an unusual combination of modern and classical architecture typical of Edvard Ravnikar. The proportions, the



"The design of the open and transparent ground floor should be urgently protected since it has lost its original character with the adaptation of shops and the walls being closed in."

open ground floor on "piles", and a flat roof in a graphic design of the back yard facade indicate the origins in functionalist architecture. However, the facade of the building is still designed in a tripartite form with a clear roof projection typical of the National and University Library in Ljubljana by Jože Plečnik or the Parliament building by Vinko Glanz. The flirtation with classical architecture is even more prominent in the case of the lateral supports of the facade on the ground floor since they are directly derived from the triglyphs of a Doric frieze.

The building is rather dilapidated since the covering of ordinary hollow bricks is falling off. The window frames were replaced in the past so that they are white at present, and the exposed concrete was protected with paint. Blinds were added on the southern side of the facade and the air-conditioning boxes appeared on the facade. The design of the open and transparent ground floor should be urgently protected since it has lost its original character with the adaptation of shops and the walls being closed in. The frames in white have also changed the original composition of colours between brick and natural wood.

ANDREJ HRAUSKY

Colour Reproduction





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Ljubljana: Skyscraper (Nebotičnik)



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Ljubljana: The Oblak Villa





Ljubljana: National and University Library (NUK)

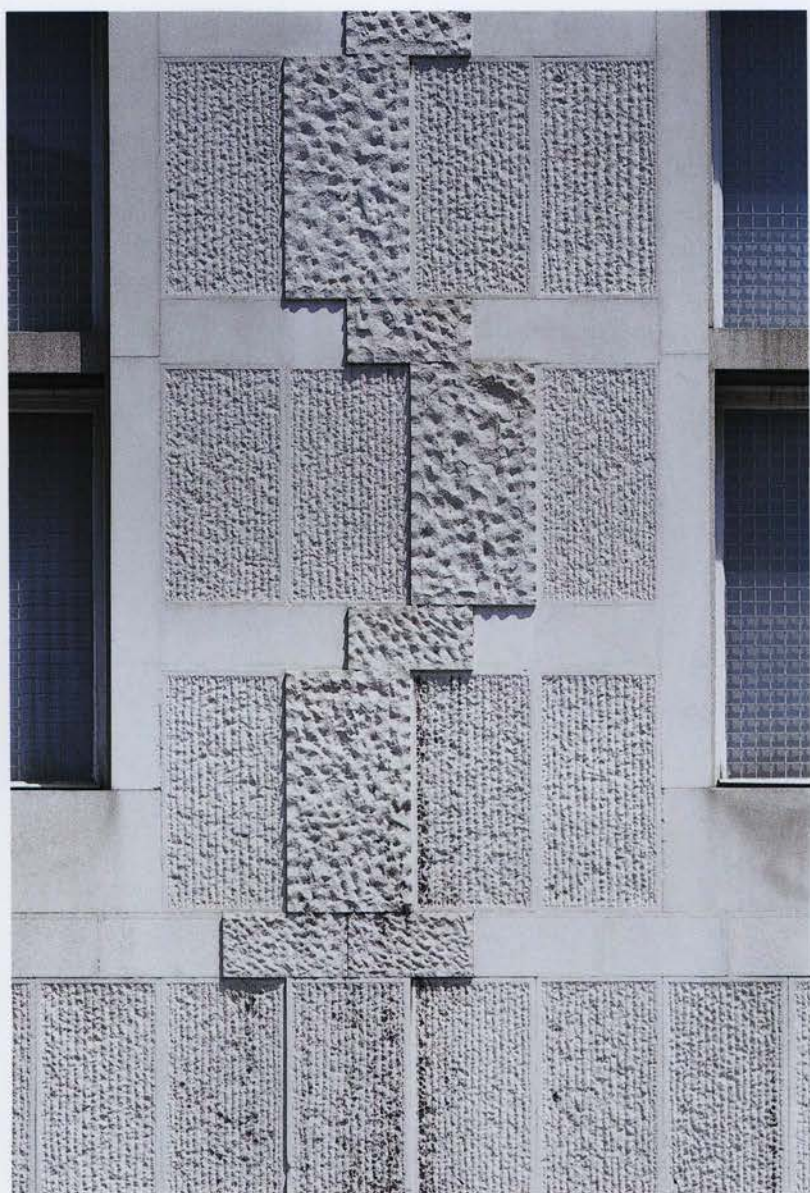


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Ljubljana: The Three Bridges and Markets



Ljubljana: Žale Cemetery



Ljubljana: Museum of Modern Art



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Ljubljana: The Main Co-operative Union



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Ljubljana: Kozolec Block



Ljubljana: Parliament

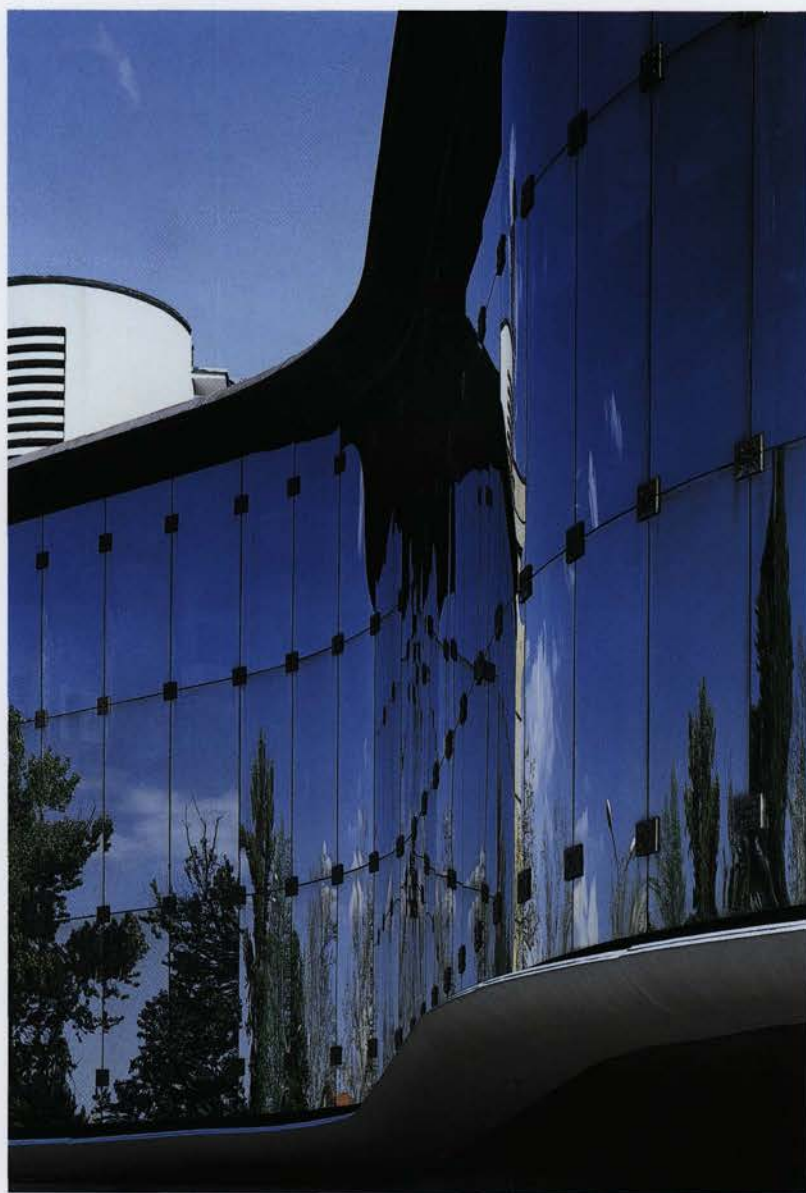


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Ljubljana: Department Store of the Communal Centre in Šiška







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Ljubljana: International Automatic Telephone Exchange



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Ljubljana: Commercial Exhibition Centre



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Ljubljana: Revolution Square



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Ljubljana: Church of Jesus Christ Incarnate in Dravlje



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Ljubljana: Office and Residential Building in Poljanska Cesta



Ljubljana: Secondary Medical School



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Maribor: Workers' City Colony



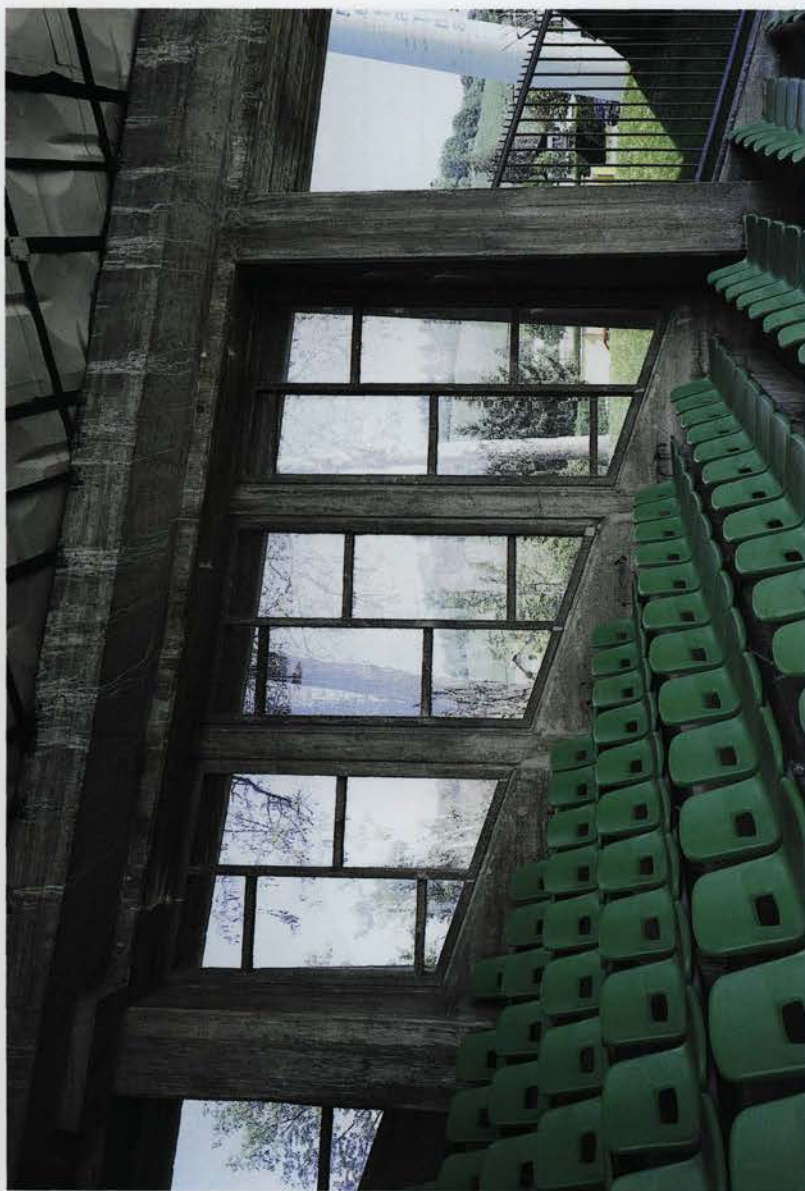


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Maribor: Bank in Tyrševa Ulica



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Maribor: School of Economics and Commerce



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Maribor: Branik Sportsground Stand



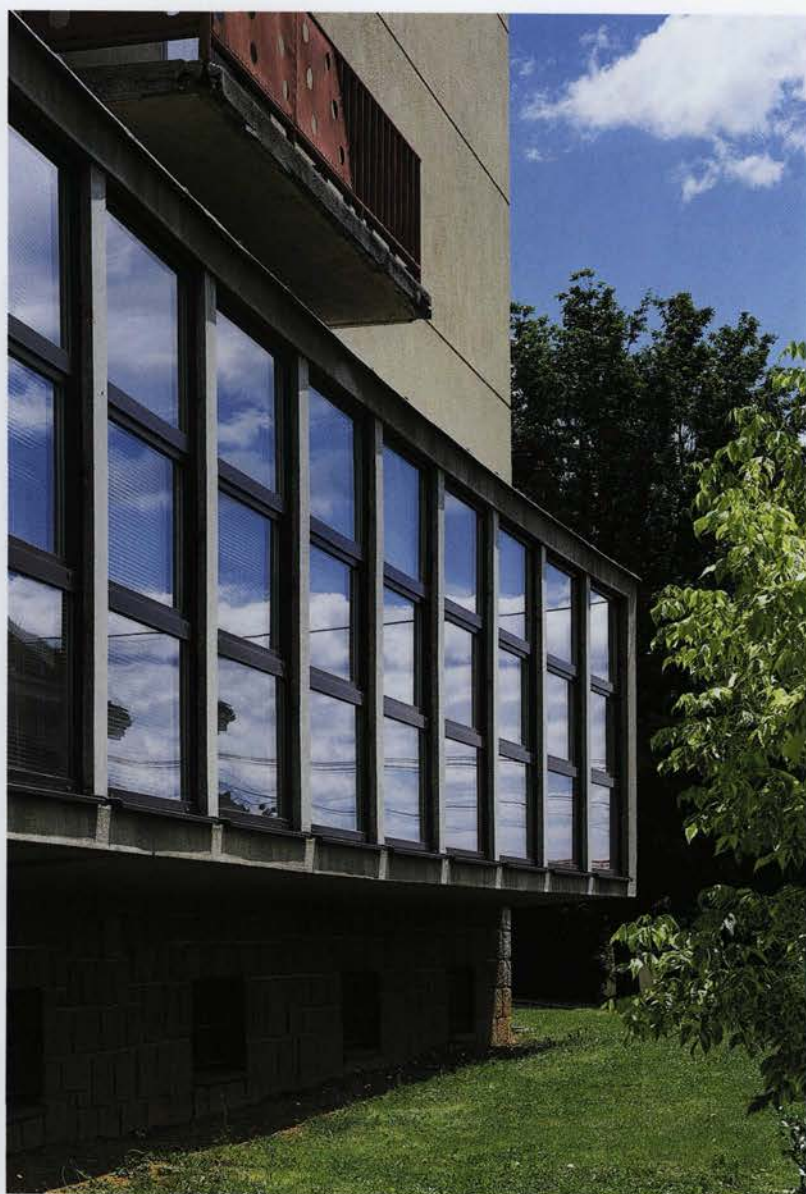
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Maribor: Farmadent Building



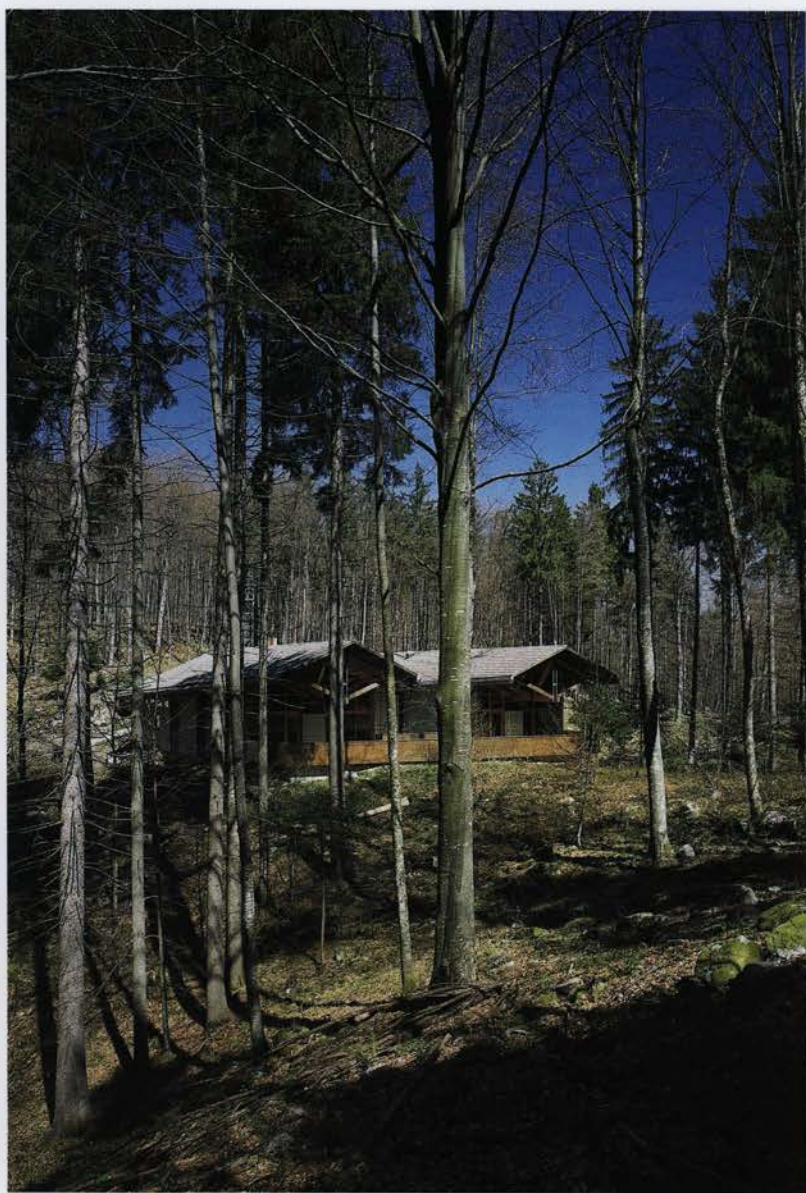
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Ajdovščina: Summer Baths



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Črnomelj: Boris Kidrič Student Hostel



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Kočevski Rog: Central Building of Kočevski Rog, Base 20



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Kranj: Building of the Regional People's Committee (OLO)





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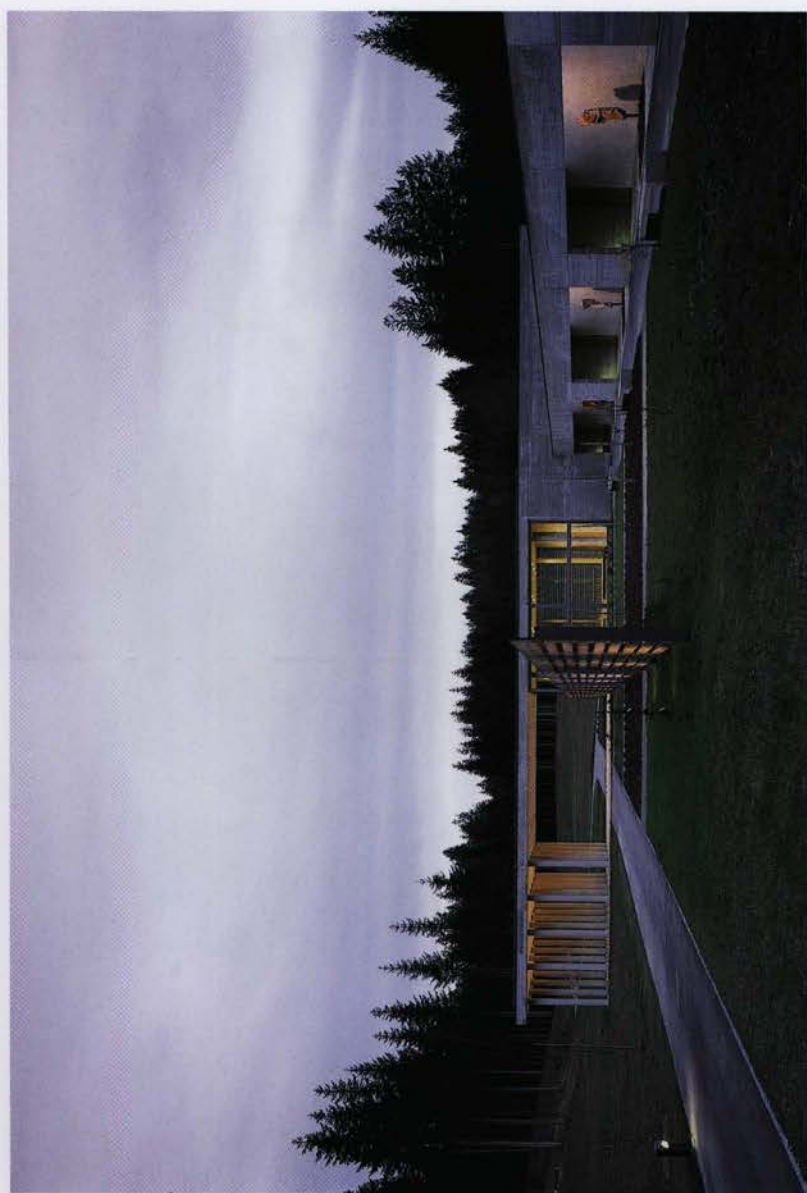
Kranjska Gora: Prisank Hotel



Loret above Izola: Belvedere Hotel Complex



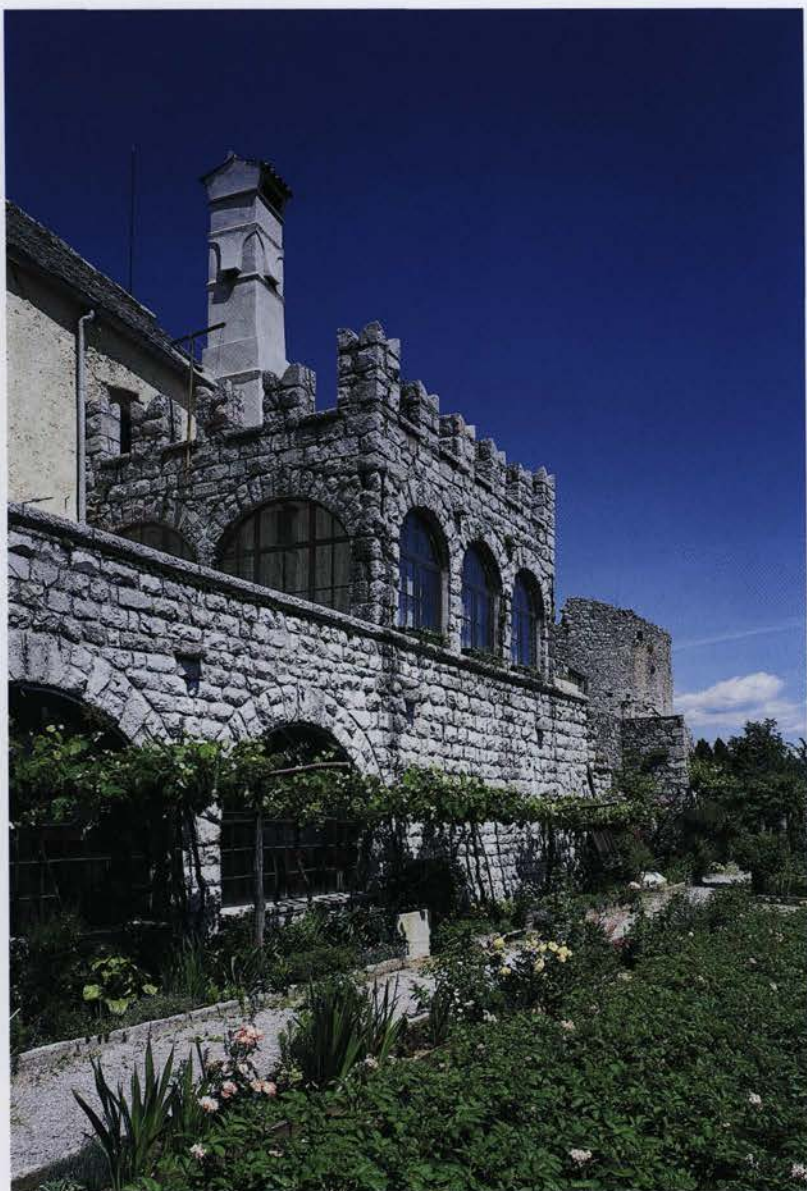
Sežana: Extension of Sežana Town Hall



Srebrniče, Novo Mesto: Srebrniče Cemetery



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Stražišče near Kranj: Stražišče Primary School



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Štanjel in Karst: The Ferrari Villa



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Velenje: Shopping and Residential Block

14287 • Kranjska Gora

1579 •  
14281

14294 • Ajdovščina

• Vipava

9187 • Štanjel in Karst

14295 • Sežana

14286 • Loret above Izola





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