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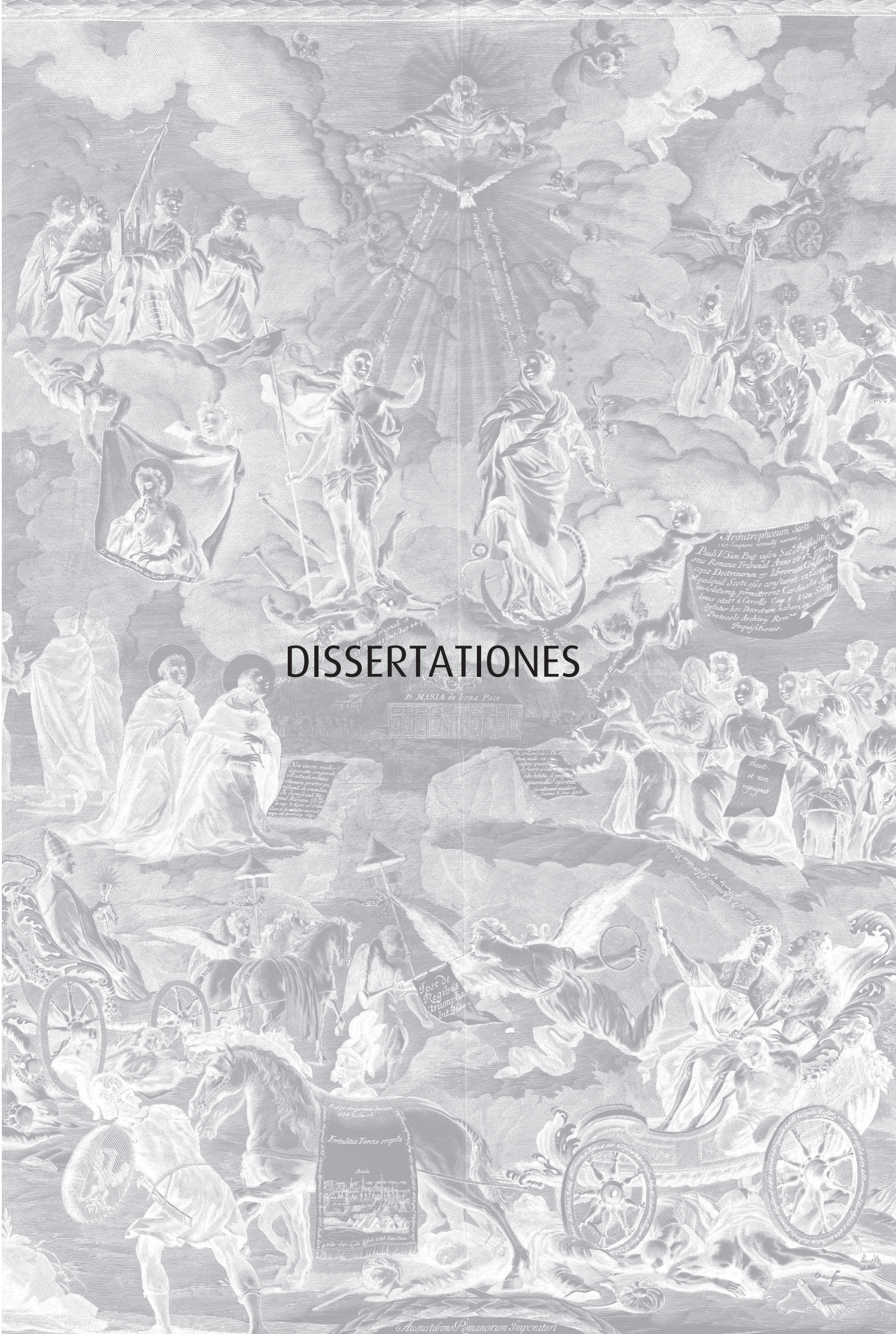
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DISSERTATIONES

B. MARIAE de bona Pace

Non unum videtur  
 speculum in  
 tabernaculo  
 quod est in  
 monte Sinai  
 sed et in monte  
 Sion. 2<sup>o</sup> Epist. ad  
 Cor. 13<sup>o</sup> cap. 12<sup>o</sup> v. 18

In primis. Quia  
 non modo  
 in monte Sinai  
 sed et in monte  
 Sion. 2<sup>o</sup> Epist. ad  
 Cor. 13<sup>o</sup> cap. 12<sup>o</sup> v. 18

Proet  
 et non  
 respiciat

Arcanum hoc  
 Pauli P. Sum. Pont. visum Sac. Congregationis  
 Romanae Tribunal. Anni 1717. P. P. P.  
 eorum Doctrinarum et Librorum Congregationis  
 ut quaedam scilicet et confiterentur. Hanc  
 tunc etiam in Cavella Cap. 1<sup>o</sup> v. 12  
 et in Decretum subrepsit  
 Protocola Archiep. Romae  
 Inquisitionis.

Corollaria Turcs erigite  
 Italia  
 1717. 1718. 1719. 1720. 1721. 1722. 1723. 1724. 1725. 1726. 1727. 1728. 1729. 1730.

# Oto Bihalji-Merin and the Concept of the “Naïve” in the 1950s

## Bridging Socialist Realism and Non-Figurative Art

Tanja Zimmermann

### Reflecting on Naïve Art in the 1950s

The exhibition *50 Years of Modern Art*, part of the 1958 World's Fair *Expo 58* in Brussels, was destined to present the development of art since the beginning of the 20th century. Its aim was, as announced in a preliminary statement, to introduce into contemporary art, to give a résumé of present aesthetic values and to demonstrate the spiritual interconnectedness of humanity.<sup>1</sup> Various pre-war avant-garde currents from East and West were shown, including fauvism, cubism, futurism, expressionism, suprematism and constructivism, metaphysical art, dadaism and surrealism, followed by contemporary Western non-figurative art and Soviet socialist realism, termed as “social realism”. Among the artists exhibited were canonical painters, such as Isaac Brodsky, Alexander Gerasimov, Alexander Deineka, Semen Chuikov, Martyros Sarian and the artist group Kukrynksy. In the exhibition catalogue, their paintings were reproduced in juxtaposition to works by American realists such as David Hopper.<sup>2</sup> A separate section was dedicated to naïve art, and it included artists such as Paul Gauguin, Henri Rousseau and other French naïve artists discovered by art dealer Wilhelm Uhde, but also Yugoslav naïve artists, such as the academic artist Krsto Hegedušić, who painted peasant motifs in Bruegel's manner (fig. 1) and who in 1930, together with the autodidact Ivan Generalić, founded a peasant art group in the Croatian village of Hlebine (fig. 2).<sup>3</sup> Hegedušić was also praised as a highly successful socialist painter. His monumental canvas *The Battle of Stubica* (1948), showing the Slovene-Croatian peasant uprising of 1573 decorated the office of the Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito in his residence in Belgrade.<sup>4</sup>

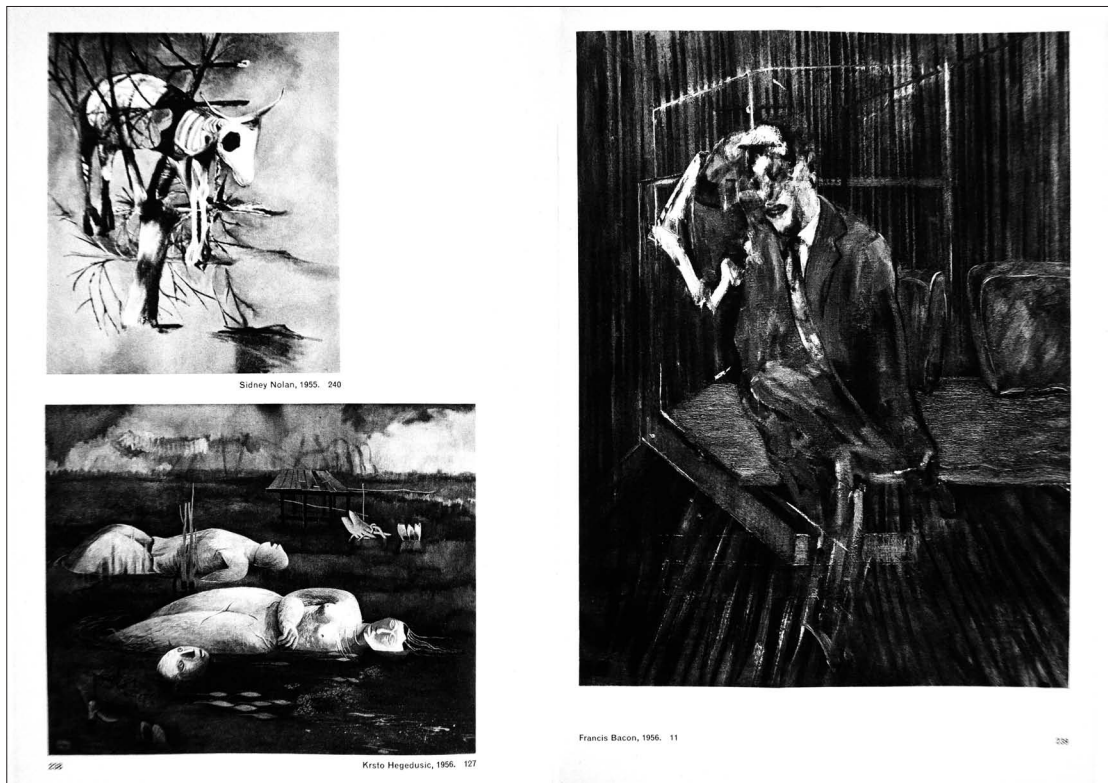
The term “naïve” artist was used to denote artists who pursued different aims: painters inspired by non-European cultures or folk art, non-academic autodidacts, but also academic artists who painted in a naïve manner. The phenomenon of the naïve originated in the 1930s, and the artists

<sup>1</sup> Emile LANGUI, Einführung, *50 Jahre moderne Kunst* (ed. Emile Langui), Köln 1959, p. 8: „Gedacht sowohl als Einführung in die Kunst unserer Zeit wie auch als Bilanz der ästhetischen Werte der Gegenwart, wird die Ausstellung eine hervorragende Manifestation der geistigen Verbundenheit der Menschheit sein.“

<sup>2</sup> LANGUI 1959 (n. 1), pp. 200–204.

<sup>3</sup> Other Yugoslav artists whose works were exhibited were the painter Peter Lubarda and the sculptor Vojin Bakić.

<sup>4</sup> For the discussion on Hegedušić's *Battle at Stubica*, which won first prize from the Yugoslav government, see Tanja ZIMMERMANN, *Der Balkan zwischen Ost und West. Mediale Bilder und kulturpolitische Prägungen*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2014 (Osteuropa medial, 6), pp. 224–232.



1. Krsto Hegedušić juxtaposed to Francis Bacon, in: 50 Jahre moderne Kunst, Köln 1959



2. Krsto Hegedušić and Ivo Generalić juxtaposed to French naïve artists, in: 50 Jahre moderne Kunst, Köln 1959



were assembled under that name in three large shows beginning with *Un Siècle de Peinture Naïve* in 1933 in Paris (Galerie des Beaux-arts),<sup>5</sup> *Les Maîtres Populaires de la Réalité* in 1937<sup>6</sup> in Grenoble (Musée de Grenoble) and Zurich (Kunsthaus), and *Masters of Popular Painting: Modern Primitives of Europe and America* in 1938 in New York (MoMA).<sup>7</sup> The first time after the Second World War that the naïve regained public attention was 1958.

Three years before the Belgian exhibition, in 1955, French ethnographer Claude Lévi-Strauss published his very influential travel report *Triste Tropiques*, in which he argued against an exclusively scientific approach to primitive cultures and linked scientific endeavor to colonial exploration, which was fatally deemed to destroy the object it was exploring: "When we make an effort to understand, we destroy our attachment, substituting another whose nature is quite different."<sup>8</sup> He resigned to accepting as unavoidable a nostalgic distance from foreign and past cultures. As cultures fade away under the exploring eye, they can never be completely understood, but only reconstructed in the process of *bricolage* based on fragments. His post-war approach towards primitive cultures differed from that of the avant-gardes, which tended to perceive the people labeled as naïve and primitive as companions, on the same path as they themselves when they tried to return to the primeval elements of art. For Lévi-Strauss, a traveler through time and space must choose between two alternatives:

Either I am a traveler in ancient times, and faced with a prodigious spectacle which would be almost entirely unintelligible to me or might, indeed, provoke me to mockery or disgust; or I am a traveler of our own day, hastening in search of a vanished reality.<sup>9</sup>

Both the colonial and the post-colonial nostalgic approaches can never reach the goal of an authentic encounter, which is located out of time. In contrast to the first, pre-war approach, the latter in the post-war period calls our attention to what has been lost, destroyed or made inaccessible by the very act of inquiry, and it forces us to link interest and mourning.

*Triste Tropiques* sensitized the public to primitive and naïve art, and prepared the foundation for its inclusion into modern art production as an integral part of human creativity. In the next two decades, numerous large exhibitions of naïve art in West and East followed: 1958 in Knokke-le-Zoute in Belgium, 1960 in Paris, 1961 in Baden-Baden, Frankfurt and Hanover, 1962 in Edinburgh, 1963 in Recklinghausen, 1964 in Rotterdam, Paris, Salzburg and Oldenburg, 1966 in Bratislava (Triennial of Naïve Art) and Tokyo, 1969 again in Bratislava and Lugano, 1970 in Dortmund and Zagreb, 1971 again in Recklinghausen, 1972 again in Bratislava, 1973 again in Lugano, Zagreb and Acapulco, 1974 in Milan and Amsterdam, and 1975 in Munich and Zurich.<sup>10</sup> The Yugoslav art historian, art critic and curator of Serbian-Jewish origin, Oto Bihalji-Merin (1904–1993), was involved in most of these events. While interest in naïve and primitive art grew, the traditional, dichotomist concept of the 'primitive', interpreted as inferior or being in an early stage in comparison to civilized

<sup>5</sup> *Un Siècle de peinture naïve* (ed. Raymond Cogniat), Galerie des Beaux-arts, Paris 1933.

<sup>6</sup> *Les Maîtres populaires de la réalité* (eds. Raymond Escholier, Maximilien Gautier), Paris 1937.

<sup>7</sup> *Masters of Popular Painting. Modern Primitives of Europe and America* (ed. Alfred Hamilton Barr Jr.), Museum of Modern Art, New York 1938.

<sup>8</sup> Claude LÉVI-STRAUSS, *Tristes Tropiques*, London-New York 1961, p. 394.

<sup>9</sup> LÉVI-STRAUSS 1961 (n. 8), p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> *Die Kunst der Naiven. Themen und Beziehungen* (ed. Oto Bihalji-Merin), Haus der Kunst, München 1975, p. 30.

culture, began to be disputed and revised in ethnography and anthropology—particularly under the impact of the decolonization of the African states.<sup>11</sup>

The Brussels exhibition was organized by Emile Langui (1903–1980), director of the Department of Fine Arts and Letters at the Ministry of Public Education of Belgium, who took part in Belgian resistance and closely collaborated with the Monuments Men during the Second World War.<sup>12</sup> In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Langui attributed a certain archaic core to all real modernist movements, considering archaic cultures as a common precursor.

In fact, all the artistic movements of the last 50 years—as far as they are modern—have their origins in a distant past, and their precursors in the most remote cultures. It was the hallowed traditions of the nineteenth century, or more generally those of ancient Greco-Roman culture, which measured a contemporary phenomenon as a brutal and lamentable break with the past, when in reality it followed world-wide and millennial developments.<sup>13</sup>

Whereas at the beginning of the 20th century, avant-garde art rejected the Western European canon of classical antiquity, accepting instead the results of new optical discoveries as a foundation in the search for new perception, after the Second World War, canonical, classic art was also rejected for ideological reasons—owing to its abuse by fascist as well as Bolshevik propaganda. In comparison with the *documenta* 1955 in Kassel, where the revival of forbidden avant-garde art and its inclination to Cubism and Expressionism, abstraction and non-objectivity were celebrated,<sup>14</sup> the Belgian exhibition also included realistic trends. The later *documenta II* in 1959 claimed to exhibit international trends in art since 1945; however, it showed mostly American and Western European work thereby focusing exclusively on abstraction.<sup>15</sup> Several contemporary Soviet artists were presented at the exhibition and two curators from Eastern respectively South-Eastern European communist countries, Mihkail Alpatov and Oto Bihalji-Merin, were members of its international organizing committee. To Langui, who praised the archaic core of modernist art and naïve work, given their closeness to ordinary people and the masses, they were not only behind the avant-garde movements, but also behind socialist realism.

<sup>11</sup> Francis L. K. HSU, Rethinking the Concept 'Primitive', *Current Anthropology*, 5/3, 1964, pp. 169–178.

<sup>12</sup> Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art, Monuments Men. Emile Langui (1903–1980), <https://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/intl/de/the-heroes/the-monuments-men/langui-emile> (accessed: 3 April 2018).

<sup>13</sup> LANGUI 1959 (n. 1), p. 11: „Eigentlich alle künstlerischen Bewegungen der letzten 50 Jahre – soweit sie modern zu nennen sind – haben ihren Ursprung in einer fernen Vergangenheit und ihre Vorläufer in entlegensten Kulturen. Es waren die geheiligten Traditionen des 19. Jahrhunderts oder ganz allgemein die der alten griechisch-römischen Kultur, an denen gemessen ein zeitgemäßes Phänomen als brutaler und beklagenswerter Bruch mit der Vergangenheit erschien, während es doch in Wirklichkeit an weltweite und vieltausendjährige Entwicklungen anknüpfte.“

<sup>14</sup> [www.documenta.de/de/retrospective/documenta#](http://www.documenta.de/de/retrospective/documenta#) (accessed: 3 April 2018).

<sup>15</sup> Werner Haftmann, the co-organizer of the *documenta II*, argued that only works of art produced in “creative freedom” (schöpferische Freiheit) could be exhibited, whereas realist currents closely linked to politics ranging from socialist realism to Renato Guttuso in Italy, had to be excluded; see Werner HAFTMANN, Einführung, II. *documenta* '59. *Malerei nach 1945*, Köln 1959, p. 15. Only early Russian avant-garde artists, such as Vassily Kandinsky and Marc Chagall, working most of their lives in Western Europe as well as a few contemporary non-figurative Polish (Tadeusz Kantor, Adam Marczyński, Jan Lebensztejn) and Yugoslav artists (Gabrijel Stupica) were shown in the exhibition and reproduced in the catalogue.

One might regard the naïve as the only ones who, connected to the people, make art for the people. They are the individualists of folk art, which is however a collective phenomenon. But there is another conception of art, which is more or less voluntarily fulfilled by hundreds of artists and which has to serve the ideology that, among other things, aims to emancipate the masses through culture.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, he admitted that socialist realism, which reverted to the realist aesthetics of the period before 1914, was, at an early stage after the October Revolution, in fact capable of representing the oppressed masses and expressing a true revolutionary spirit, before art fell victim to "the knife of dogmatic orthodoxy".<sup>17</sup> Thus, realist forms, whether naïve or the result of social realism, were rehabilitated to some extent by Langui.

At this stage, when art voluntarily served a cause, the movement in the USSR, Mexico, France, and Italy—wherever artists opposed the existing government and might express their opinions freely—it experienced its best time. The future will determine whether what Social Realism really wants was not much better represented by Fernand Léger, Diego Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, Guttuso, Ben Shahn and Picasso than by the masses of those who confused the revolutionary motive with the spirit of revolution.<sup>18</sup>

The specific realism of naïve art was not only situated at the hinge-point of non-figurative and figurative-art, but it was also perceived in social terms as a 'rough' expression of 'small people', of the peasant and proletarian masses. In communist Yugoslavia, however, naïve art had to fulfill further functions.

### Naïve Art in Socialist Yugoslavia

In 1948, after having raised acclaim to political autonomy and succeeding in dominating South-eastern Europe, Yugoslavia was excluded from the Cominform and forced to pursue its own communist path without Soviet support even on issues of artistic expression. A few years later, at the Third Congress of Yugoslav writers in 1952 in Ljubljana, the canon of socialist realism was abolished, but none of the participants had a clear concept of what form should replace it.<sup>19</sup> Prominent

<sup>16</sup> LANGUI 1959 (n. 1), p. 51: „Man könnte die Naiven als die einzigen betrachten, die, dem Volke verbunden, eine Kunst für das Volk machen. Sie sind die Individualisten der Volkskunst, die selbst ein kollektives Phänomen darstellt. Es besteht jedoch eine andere Konzeption, die von Hunderten von Künstlern mehr oder weniger freiwillig erfüllt wird und nach der die Kunst einer Ideologie zu dienen hat, die unter anderem darauf abzielt, die Massen durch Kultur zu emanzipieren.“

<sup>17</sup> LANGUI 1959 (n. 1), p. 51.

<sup>18</sup> LANGUI 1959 (n. 1), pp. 51–52: „In dieser Phase, als die Kunst sich freiwillig in den Dienst einer Sache gestellt hatte, erlebte jene Bewegung in den UdSSR, in Mexiko, in Frankreich und Italien, überall da, wo Künstler, die gegen die bestehende Regierung opponierten, ihre Meinung frei äußern durften, ihre beste Zeit. Die Zukunft wird entscheiden, ob das, was der Soziale Realismus eigentlich will, nicht von Fernand Léger, Diego Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, Guttuso, Ben Shahn, und Picasso weit besser vertreten wurde als von der Masse derer, die das revolutionäre Motiv mit dem Geist der Revolution verwechseln.“

<sup>19</sup> Miroslav KRLEŽA, Govor na kongresu književnikov u Ljubljani (1952), *Svjedočanstva vremena. Književno-estetske varijacije* (ed. Ivo Frangeš), Sarajevo 1988, p. 44. For the dispute about socialist realism in Yugoslavia, see Ljilja-

Yugoslav writer, Miroslav Krleža, founder of the Yugoslav Encyclopedia and vice-president of the Yugoslav Academy of Science and Arts, called for a new artistic expression for the entire nation.<sup>20</sup> He required Yugoslav artists to depict rebellious peasants like the painters of the Reformation and called Hegedušić a contemporary role model.<sup>21</sup> Two years earlier, in his preface to the Paris exhibition of *Medieval Yugoslav Art* at the Palais de Chaillot in 1950, Krleža had interpreted certain cultural phenomena on Yugoslav territory, such as the heretical movement of the Bogomils in Bosnia, the autocephalous Serbian-Macedonian church and the Glagolitic culture in succession of the Slavonic apostles Cyril and Method, as medieval anticipations of the socialist Third Way, developing cultural-political concepts independent from both East and West.<sup>22</sup>

Our medieval civilization was born out of the antithesis of Byzantium and Rome, and thus out of the secular conflict between the Byzantine Patriarchate and the Popes. Our artistic civilization—which throughout its history has adhered neither to the Orient nor to the Occident—emerges within those coordinates of spirit and style in art as a third component, which in itself and by means of its interior law of movement was strong enough never to be stopped and resistant enough not to be passively subdued by forces stronger than itself.<sup>23</sup>

Whereas Krleža laid the foundation for an autonomous cultural policy, Bihalji Merin contributed a new aesthetic concept of art a few years later, deriving its forms from the same medieval anticipations: “Contemporary art of Yugoslavia has its backing and background in a medieval high culture. It is nevertheless looking forward, into the future.”<sup>24</sup> Naïve painters attached to popular folklore were particularly believed to be the true successors of their medieval predecessors. They were also able to use figurative forms to replace Soviet socialist realism.

Although earlier historical events such as peasant uprisings were interpreted as the anticipation of the socialist revolution in other communist countries as well, especially the German Democratic Republic, the concept of a peasant-naïve artistic expression in Yugoslavia was unique. The idea of primitivist artistic perception anticipating the political Third Way was introduced by

na KOLEŠNIK, Prilozi interpretacije hrvatske umjetnosti 50ih godina, *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti*, 29, 2005, pp. 308–309; Goran MILORADOVIĆ, *Lepota pod nadzorom. Sovjetski kulturni uticaji u Jugoslaviji 1945–1955*, Beograd 2012, pp. 104–107, 142–180; ZIMMERMANN 2014 (n. 4), pp. 168–178.

<sup>20</sup> For Krleža’s role in Yugoslav cultural policy, see MILORADOVIĆ 2012 (n. 19), pp. 157–159, 306–309; ZIMMERMANN 2014 (n. 4), pp. 219–224, 232–247.

<sup>21</sup> ZIMMERMANN 2014 (n. 4), pp. 227–230.

<sup>22</sup> Miroslav KERLEJA, Preface, *L’art médiéval yougoslave. Moulages et copies exécutés par des artistes yougoslaves et français* (ed. Paul Deschamps), Paris 1950, p. 15. For Krleža’s cultural model of the Third Way, see ZIMMERMANN 2014 (n. 4), pp. 232–246.

<sup>23</sup> KERLEJA 1950 (n. 22), p. 14: «Notre civilisation médiévale est née sur l’antithèse de Byzance et Rome, c’est-à-dire dans l’espace du conflit séculaire entre le Patriarcat de Byzance et la Papauté. Notre civilisation artistique – au cours de son histoire elle ne fut jamais ni d’Orient ni d’Occident – apparaît, dans cette coordination de l’esprit et du style dans l’art, comme une troisième composante qui, par elle-même et par sa loi intérieure de mouvement, fut assez forte pour ne pas s’arrêter et assez résistante pour ne pas subir passivement des forces plus civilisée qu’elle.»

<sup>24</sup> Oto BIHALJI-MERIN, Tradition und Perspektiven, *Jugoslawien. Zeitgenössische jugoslawische Malerei* (eds. Otto Bihalji-Merin, Momčilo Stevanović, Aleksa Čelebonović), Beograd 1957 (Jugoslavija, 14), p. 3: „Die zeitgenössische Kunst Jugoslawiens hat Rückhalt und Hintergrund in einer mittelalterlichen Hochkultur. Ihr Blickpunkt ist dennoch vorausgerichtet.“

Krleža in the Paris exhibition catalogue, where he ascribed to medieval Bogomil sculptors a sort of primeval, independent virginal perception.

Freed from the artistic canon of their epoch, the Bogomil sculptors observed the things and events that surrounded them in their own way and, in this work of exploration they were, without a doubt, inventors. /.../ Is this sculpture wild or barbaric? These are naïve and fresh observations of a virgin country, of 'terra vergine' in the artistic field, which for the whole world has remained 'terra incognita' until now. It is a conception of the world and the life of a whole Bogomil cosmogony, about which we unfortunately know only little today and what we know, we have drawn from the documents of the inquisition, which led a merciless war against the Bogomil heresy.<sup>25</sup>

Although the sources of the naïve derived from non-European art, early Western European genre painters like Pieter Bruegel the Elder and autodidact painters such as Henri Rousseau, Bihalji-Merin perceived them as successors of Yugoslav medieval and folk art.

### Oto Bihalji-Merin's Concept of Naïve and Contemporary Art

Oto Bihalji-Merin was born in 1904 in Zemun close to Belgrade. He studied art and art history first in Belgrade and later in Berlin, where he joined the German Communist Party in 1924.<sup>26</sup> During the late 1920s and early 1930s, he regularly published literary criticism in the left-wing press, such as the *Rote Fahne* (Red Flag) and the *Linkskurve* (Left Curve), signing his texts with various names, such as Otto Biha, Peter Merin and Peter Maros. When he proffered aesthetic judgment, he followed the Soviet example of proletarian literature, adoring Maxim Gorki<sup>27</sup> and participating in the campaign against Boris Pilnyak when the latter was accused of counterrevolutionary tendencies after having published his novel *Mahogany* (1929), in which he criticized Soviet agricultural policy.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, together with his brother Pavel, Merin founded the renowned publishing house of Nolit in Belgrade, which published authors such as Isaak Babel, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, Egon Erwin

<sup>25</sup> KERLEJA 1950 (n. 22), p. 47: «Libres de tout artistique de l'époque, les sculptures bogomiles observaient les choses et les événements qui les entouraient, à leur façon personnelle et, dans ce travail de pénétration, ils étaient, sans aucun doute, des inventeurs. /.../ Cette plastique est-elle sauvage ou barbare? Il s'agit des observations naïves et fraîches d'un pays vierge dans le domaine artistique 'terra vergine' qui, pour le monde entière, est restée, jusqu'à nos jours 'terra incognita'. Il s'agit d'une conception du monde et de la vie de toute une cosmogonie bogomile que nous connaissons aujourd'hui malheureusement peu et ce que nous en savons, nous l'avons puisé dans les documents de l'inquisition qui menait une guerre sans merci contre l'hérésie bogomile.»

<sup>26</sup> For the biography of Oto Bihalji-Merin, see Fritz Joachim RADDATZ, Bihalji-Merin 80. Unbändige Energie, *Die Zeit*, 30 December 1983, p. 36; Jean-Michel PALMIER, *Weimar in Exile. The Antifascist Emigration in Europe and America*, Lausanne 1987, p. 329; Oto Bihalji-Merin, *Lexikon der deutsch-jüdischen Autoren*, 2, München 1993, pp. 432–440; Dieter SCHILLER, Zur Arbeit des Bundes proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller in Exil, *UTOPIE kreativ*, 102, 1999, pp. 57–63; Andrej IVANJI, Lepi život u paklu, *Vreme*, 8 January 2004, <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=363249> (accessed: 18 February 2018); Dieter SCHILLER, *Der Traum von Hitlers Sturz. Studien zur deutschen Exilliteratur 1933–1945*, Frankfurt am Main et al. 2010, pp. 288–290; Jürgen CLAUS, *Liebe die Kunst. Eine Autobiografie in einundzwanzig Begegnungen*, Karlsruhe 2013, pp. 147–158.

<sup>27</sup> Otto BIHA, Vierzig Jahre Maxim Gorki, *Linkskurve*, 4/10, 1932, pp. 1–4.

<sup>28</sup> Otto BIHA, Der Fall Pilnyak und seine Folgen, *Linkskurve*, 1/5, 1929, pp. 13–15.

Kisch and others. In the 1930s, he lived in Spain (1932), Czechoslovakia (1933), France (1933–1934) and Switzerland (1935). In 1936 and 1937, he reported from the Spanish Civil War,<sup>29</sup> before he was imprisoned by the Germans as a Yugoslav soldier from 1941 to 1945. During the period of nomadic activism, he remained in contact with all the important leftist European intellectuals of his time, including Johannes Becher, Willi Bredel, Bertolt Brecht, Georg Lukács, Arthur Koestler and Manès Sperber, as well as left wing Surrealists such as Louis Aragon and André Malraux etc. Herbert Read wrote an introduction to Merin's book *Modern German Art*, published in 1938 in London under the pseudonym Peter Thoene.<sup>30</sup> Here, Merin defended avant-garde art against its insulting presentation at the *Degenerated Art* exhibition in Munich in 1937, and he declared that expressionism was an authentic, genuinely German style that ultimately derived from medieval gothic art.<sup>31</sup>

Ernst Barlach is one of the most powerful of German sculptors since Tilmann Riemen-schneider, the friend of the German peasants in their struggle, and Veit Stoss, the man marked with the stigmata of Jesus, and has kinship with both of them. /.../ His art is German through and through, uniting the oldest sources of the Nordic interpretation of life with the latter-day will of Expressionism.<sup>32</sup>

After the Second World War, Bihalji-Merin became one of the most important cultural theorists and administrators in Tito's Yugoslavia. Immediately after the war, he advocated the doctrine of socialist realism. Nevertheless, in 1949 he promoted the enthusiastic style of socialist heroism, and following the Soviet dispute of the 1930s, insisted on its difference from naturalistic, mimetic realism.<sup>33</sup> His model was Lenin, who after the October Revolution had called for monumental propaganda. Similarly, he encouraged Yugoslav artists to participate in the building of a new socialist collective through monumental works of art shown in public spaces. He praised Antun Auguštinčić's monument to the Soviet Army on the Danube and derived its stylistic idiom not only from Soviet socialist realism, but also from the neoclassicist Statue of Liberty by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi in the New York Harbor, erected, according to him, when the United States was still a democratic country and not a capitalist, imperialist state as it was in his time.<sup>34</sup> At the first exhibition of Yugoslav artists in 1949, shown first in Ljubljana and later in Zagreb and Belgrade, he welcomed the liberation from avant-garde formalism, bourgeois decadence and individualism.<sup>35</sup> At the same time he started to edit the lavishly illustrated magazine *Yugoslavia* (until 1959), promoting culture and art in various regions of the socialist Republic.<sup>36</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, he published several books on medieval as well as

<sup>29</sup> Peter MERIN, *Spanien zwischen Tod und Geburt*, Zürich 1937.

<sup>30</sup> Peter THOENE, *Modern German Art* (Introduction by Herbert Read), Harmondsworth 1938; see the cover endorsement: "The author is a well-known German art critic who for special reasons must hide his identity under the name of Peter Thoene."

<sup>31</sup> THOENE 1938 (n. 30), p. 105: "German art is held in contempt and suppressed in the country in which it has grown up. /.../ It is accused of reflecting the world in a manner which is untrue and distorted."

<sup>32</sup> THOENE 1938 (n. 30), p. 101.

<sup>33</sup> Oto BIHALJI-MERIN, Povodom slike Bože Ilića. Sondiranje terena na Novom Beogradu, *Borba*, 9 January 1949, p. 5. For the reference to Bihalji-Merin's articles published in 1948 and 1949 in *Borba* and *Književnost*, I am indebted to the anonymous peer reviewer.

<sup>34</sup> Oto BIHALJI MERIN, Dve statue slobode, *Književnost*, 1, 1948, pp. 21–27.

<sup>35</sup> Oto BIHALJI MERIN, Prva izložba Saveza likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije, *Borba*, 22 May 1949, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> For the design and the aims of magazine *Yugoslavia*, see ZIMMERMANN 2014 (n. 4), pp. 265–273, 278–283;

modern Yugoslav, European and World art.

Analogously to how he derived the origins of German expressionism from gothic art, he established a close link between contemporary Yugoslav art and its medieval anticipations on Yugoslav territory in his writings during the late 1950s.

Although covered by the universality of modern stylistic idioms, every art has its roots in the depth of the landscape from which it derives. The contemporary art of Yugoslavia has its backing and background in peasant-archaic tradition and in the Slavonic-Byzantine visual world of medieval frescoes. Nevertheless, its point of view is pre-directed.<sup>37</sup>

According to Bihalji-Merin, naïve artists maintain particularly close bonds with medieval as well as archaic folk art. Therefore, he considers them to be heirs of the past, testifying to an unbroken creativity that had continually evolved over centuries. He thus revived an analogical, mythical image of the world, transgressing borders in time and space, in his art historical interpretation of naïve works of art.

The naïve artists in Yugoslavia can still—albeit unconsciously—draw on the underground streams of old and ebbing folk art. The past is not completely broken off, the forms of Bogomilian sarcophagi, Serbian farmyard gravestones, carved shepherd's sticks, embroidered and woven peasant robes and votive paintings behind glass live on into our time.<sup>38</sup>

In his publications, he arranged paintings belonging to different epochs according to principles of mutual analogy, trying to establish close links between them: Krsto Hegedušić's *Alone* (1956) with arms raised in despair, faces the Macedonian frescos with the plaintive Rachel over her dead children (fig. 3), Vojislav Stanić's *Oxen* (1956) are placed in dialogue with the prehistoric cave painting in Lascaux (fig. 4), Lazar Vojević's *Pietà* (1956) takes up the pathos formulas of the medieval fresco of a *Deposition from the Cross* in the Nerezi monastery in Macedonia (fig. 5).<sup>39</sup>

His method of comparing images from different cultural contexts based on transcultural similarities is indebted to Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne image atlas<sup>40</sup> and André Malraux's concept of the musée imaginaire.<sup>41</sup> According to Bihalji-Merin, contemporary art, especially when it shows

Srdan RADOVIĆ, Channeling the Country's Image. Illustrated Magazine *Yugoslavia* (1949–1959), *AM. Journal of Art and Media Studies*, 15 September 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.25038/am.v0i13.180> (accessed: 3 April 2018).

<sup>37</sup> Oto BIHALJI-MERIN, Richtungen und Versuche zeitgenössischer jugoslawischer Maler, *Die Kunst und das schöne Heim*, 57/6, March 1959, p. 201: „Wenn auch überdeckt von der Universalität moderner Formensprache, hat jede Kunst ihre Wurzeln in der Tiefe der Landschaft, der sie entstammt. Die zeitgenössische Kunst Jugoslawiens hat Rückhalt und Hintergrund in bäuerlich-archaischer Überlieferung und in der slavisch-byzantinischen Anschauungswelt mittelalterlichen Fresken. Dennoch ist ihr Blickpunkt vorausgerichtet.“

<sup>38</sup> Oto BIHALJI-MERIN, *Die naive Malerei*, Köln 1959, p. 141: „Die naiven Künstler in Jugoslawien können – wenn auch zumeist unbewußt – noch aus den unterirdischen Strömen alter und verebbender Volkskunst schöpfen. Die Vergangenheit ist nicht völlig abgebrochen, die Formen bogumilischer Sarkophage, serbischer bauerngrabsteine, geschnittener Hirtenstäbe, gestickter und gewebter Bauerngewänder, hinter Glas gemalter Votivbilder leben bis in unsere Zeit fort.“

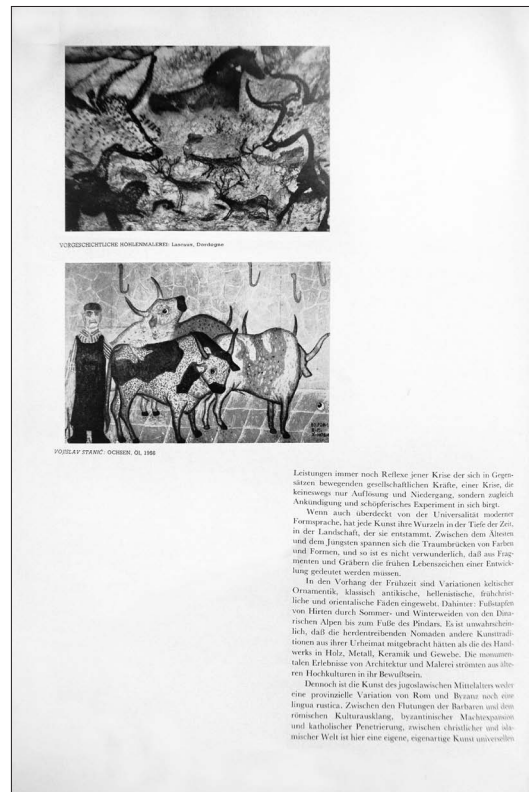
<sup>39</sup> BIHALJI-MERIN 1957 (n. 24), pp. 3–16.

<sup>40</sup> For Warburg's Mnemosyne image atlas, see Aby WARBURG, *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne* (eds. Martin Warnke, Claudia Brink), Berlin 2000 (Gesammelte Schriften, 2/1).

<sup>41</sup> For Malraux's dealing with reproduced images in his concept of the musée imaginaire, see Walter GRASSKAMP,



3. Krsto Hegedušić's *Alone* (1956) with arms raised in despair faces the Macedonian frescos with the plaintive Rachel over her dead children, in: Oto Bihalji-Merin, *Tradition und Perspektiven, Jugoslawien. Zeitgenössische jugoslawische Malerei, Beograd 1957*



4. Vojislav Stanić's *Oxen* (1956) in dialogue with the prehistoric murals in Lascaux, in: Oto Bihalji-Merin, *Tradition und Perspektiven, Jugoslawien. Zeitgenössische jugoslawische Malerei, Beograd 1957*

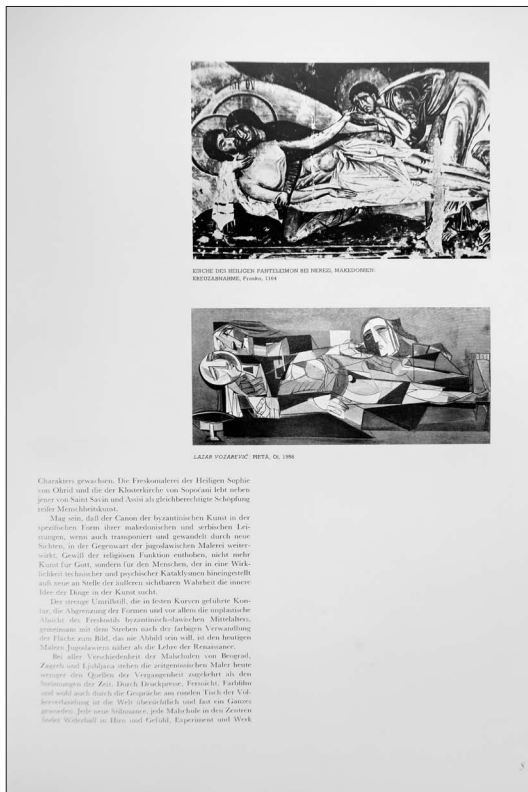
archaic and folkloristic features, is capable of overcoming distances in time and space with its synthetic, universal forms. Such art can also transgress the limits of the visible world and reveal the hidden laws underlying it and its interconnection with the cosmos.

One of the main features of contemporary art is its universality. Regional and national elements contribute to synthetic manifestations, uniting all times and spaces. And not only by overcoming geographical and historical distances, but by permeating matter, by including hitherto invisible structures uniting microcosm and macrocosm, generally by expanding its interest into the non-human landscape of the inorganic, the stylistic forms and the tendencies of contemporary art are marked by universalist tendencies.<sup>42</sup>

André Malraux und das imaginäre Museum, München 2014; Antonia von SCHÖNING, Die universelle Verwandtschaft zwischen den Bildern. André Malrauxs *Musée imaginaire* als Familienalbum der Kunst, *kunsttexte.de*, 1, 2012, <https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/7596/von-schoening.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (accessed: 3 April 2018).

<sup>42</sup> BIHALJI-MERIN 1957 (n. 24), p. 3: „Eines der Hauptmerkmale der Gegenwartskunst ist ihre Universalität. Die regionalen und nationalen Elemente sind Beiträge synthetischer Manifestationen, die alle Zeiten und Räume in sich vereinen. Und nicht nur die Überwindung geographischer und geschichtlichen Fernen, sondern auch die Durchdringung der Materie, die mikro- und makrokosmische Einbeziehung bisher unsichtbarer Gebilde,





5. Lazar Vozarević's *Pietà* (1956) and the medieval fresco of *The Deposition from the Cross* in Nerezi monastery in Macedonia, in: Oto Bihalji-Merin, *Tradition und Perspektiven, Jugoslawien. Zeitgenössische jugoslawische Malerei*, Beograd 1957

bearers of the Great Real, using Kandinsky's term for the counterpart to the Great Abstraction.<sup>45</sup> He thus defended figurative art while at the same time distinguishing it from mimetic naturalism and its negative connotations with socialist realism.

They have various names: painters of instinct, painters of the sacred heart, maître populaires de la réalité, neo-primitives and also Sunday painters. However we may call them, it

Owing to its close links to archaic and folk tradition, contemporary Yugoslav art can overcome the gap between figurative and non-figurative worlds, between bare simplicity and the complex emblematic language of high art—and thus, also between the figurative aesthetic of the communist East and the non-figurative canon of the post-war West.

In a time of estrangement from the object, dissolution and abstraction, the desire to make a new contact with the figurative world inspired some artists in Yugoslavia to synthetically combine archaic imagery and folk traditions with the procedures and insights of modernity.<sup>43</sup> /.../ That is why the peasant painters growing from archaic ties and the artists striving for simplicity and emblematic demonstration met each, united by their common search for the pictorial sign of their expression.<sup>44</sup>

In his book *Naive Painting* published in 1959 in Cologne and translated into several European languages, Bihalji-Merin finally declared contemporary naïve painters to be the

bearers of the Great Real, using Kandinsky's term for the counterpart to the Great Abstraction.<sup>45</sup>

die Erweiterung des Interesses für außermenschliche Landschaft des Anorganischen geben den Stilformen und Tendenzen der Gegenwartskunst einen universellen Charakter.“

<sup>43</sup> BIHALJI-MERIN 1959 (n. 37), p. 204: „Der Wunsch, in einer Zeit der Entfremdung vom Gegenstand, der Auflösung und Abstraktion, eine neue Berührung mit der figuralen Welt herzustellen, regte einige Künstler in Jugoslawien an, archaische Bildsymbolik und volkstümliche Traditionen mit den procédés und Erkenntnissen der Moderne synthetisch zu verbinden.“

<sup>44</sup> BIHALJI-MERIN 1959 (n. 37), p. 205: „So begegneten die aus archaischen Bindungen wachsenden Bauernmaler und die nach Einfachheit und Emblematis strebenden Künstler einander auf der Suche nach dem bildhaften Zeichen ihres Ausdrucks.“

<sup>45</sup> For Kandinsky's understanding of the Great Real, see Tanja ZIMMERMANN, *Abstraktion und Realismus im Literatur- und Kunstdiskurs der russischen Avantgarde*, München-Wien 2007, pp. 58–65.

is certain that in an epoch of dissolution and abstraction in art they have become carriers of the re-appropriation of a lost reality. When we think of the affinity of the present for the poor in spirit, which is behind the 'profession' of the naive artist of the twentieth century, it might occur that in the stream of the amateurish and the untrained also some unresolved and rudimentary elements go along with the 'Great Real' of authentic naiveté.<sup>46</sup>

For Bihalji-Merin, naive art, as well as contemporary art relying on primitive, archaic elements, should become a counterpart to non-figurative tendencies. At the same time, they were destined to replace socialist realism. He thus established a link between the avant-garde Great Real and the Yugoslav positive interpretation of figurative art, which was not understood as opposing, but as complementing abstract art.

## Conclusion

What were the political aims behind Bihalji-Merin's concept of naïve art in Yugoslavia? His aesthetic conception helped to unite different nationalities, ethnicities and cultures in socialist Yugoslavia under one common denominator and to find a common Yugoslav artistic expression in spite of ethnic diversity. An alternative socialist art canon was established, differing from Western abstraction as well as from Soviet socialist realism. It replaced the blood-and-soil ideology of the 1930s and early 1940s, also present in the various Nazi-affiliated nationalisms in Yugoslavia through archaic-telluric art, founded not on race bound to the soil, but on patriotic time-space coordinates in the territory of Yugoslavia, anticipating spatial studies. Art in the territory of Yugoslavia was no longer presented as a hybrid of East and West, but as a cradle of autonomous art. Naïve painting was destined to establish a specific Yugoslav expression in art, merging the artistic expressions of different religious and ethnic cultures in one common Yugoslav project of national diversities. Naïve painters, who in the 1930s painted poverty and the hard life of peasants struggling with nature, were now appropriated for the new communist ideology. In the 1960s and 1970s, their topics adopted new political realities; life in socialist Yugoslavia was portrayed mostly as the primordial bond of people and nature, as an earthly paradise. The pejorative backwardness of the Balkans was replaced by positively connoted archaism. But foremost, naïve art accompanied Tito's politics of using the military neutrality of the country to make it the stakeholder of the international movement of non-aligned countries. While Tito's Third Way between East and West was translated into the ideology of the Third World, naïve art became the trans-regional, trans-national, trans-European and, finally, trans-cultural idiom of mankind nostalgic of an origin, which was, while it was remembered, recognized as forever lost. In a broader, international context, Bihalji-Merin's concept of naïve art established a post-national, universal language of art, made for being shared by Eastern and Western, European and non-European artists on equal foot-

<sup>46</sup> BIHALJI-MERIN 1959 (n. 38), p. 15: „Mit mancherlei Bezeichnungen und Namen werden sie benannt: Maler des Instinkts, Maler des heiligen Herzens, maître populaires de la réalité, Neo-Primitive und auch Sonntagmaler. Wie wir sie auch heißen mögen, sicher ist, daß sie in einer Epoche der Auflösung und Abstraktion in der Kunst zum Träger der Wiedereignung verlorengegangenen Realität geworden sind. Bei der Affinität der Gegenwart für die im Geiste Armen, die im gewissen Sinne die ‚Profession‘ der naiven Künstler des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts möglich machte, mag es geschehen, daß im Strom des Dilettantischen und Ungeschulten neben dem ‚Großen Realen‘ der authentischen Naivität zuweilen Unbewältigtes und Rudimentäres mitzieht.“

ing. It was sustained as an authentic, primordial expression of transcultural creativity, anticipating post-colonial theories of artistic culture.

Bihalji-Merin attributed to naïve art a central place among contemporary post-war art, ascribing it the ability to mediate differences between tradition and the present. During the 1960s, Yugoslav art historian of the younger generation Zoran Kržišnik (1920–2008), director of the Modern Gallery and one of the founders of the Graphic Biennale in Ljubljana (since 1955), started to develop a new approach to contemporary art. At the *Profile VI* exhibition of contemporary Yugoslav art in Bochum, he presented his more skeptical point of view on the naïve.

I leave it up to my colleague with whom I composed and designed this exhibition, Oto Bihalji-Merin, who is at the same time a special connoisseur and lover of the art of Yugoslav and international naïve, to speak the final words about them. In my opinion, they are extremely interesting as a phenomenon and achieve sometimes a very high level of quality. However, in rich and varied contemporary art they are a side arm. But, as I said, I do not want to presume a final judgment on that.<sup>47</sup>

During the 1960s, Kržišnik became the most important promoter of Yugoslav contemporary art at home and abroad, belonging to a new post-war generation when socialist Yugoslavia was at the peak of the Non-Alignment Movement. At the same time, abstract painting was no longer as highly estimated as in the late 1950s, if we give credence to the Munich left-wing art magazine *Tendenzen international*, which in 1963 reported about the symptoms of fatigue on the art market when trading non-figurative paintings.<sup>48</sup> An anonymous author saw the reasons for its decline in the prevalence of abstract art, which started to dominate contemporary artistic production. Abstraction thus stopped representing artistic freedom and became a dictation. On the following pages, however, there is a report by the correspondent of the East German journal *Neues Deutschland* on the cultural struggle in Yugoslavia that explains the departure from abstraction and the return of figurative art as the result of a political-ideological turn: President Tito, who had tolerated non-figurative art for over a decade, challenged artists not to flee into abstraction, but to depict living reality.<sup>49</sup> There were various reasons for the popularity of naïve art during the 1960s and 1970s in the West and in Yugoslavia. In the first case it was a return to figurative art after a decade ruled by abstraction, in the second, a political-ideological vehicle for manoeuvring between East and West without giving up the socialist paradigm.

<sup>47</sup> Zoran KRŽIŠNIK, Jugoslawische Kunst heute, *Profile VI. Jugoslawische Kunst heute*, Bochum 1966, unpaginated: „Meinem Kollegen bei der Zusammenstellung und Gestaltung dieser Ausstellung, Oto Bihalji-Merin, der zugleich ein besonderer Kenner und Liebhaber der Kunst jugoslawischer und internationaler Naiver ist, überlasse ich es, das Schlusswort über sie zu sprechen. Meinem Urteil nach sind sie äußerst interessant als Erscheinung und erreichen stellenweise ein sehr hohes Qualitätsniveau; im reichen und bewegten zeitgenössischen Schaffen in der Malerei sind sie jedoch ein Seitenarm. Doch, wie gesagt, darüber möchte ich mir kein endgültiges Urteil anmaßen.“

<sup>48</sup> Auszug aus dem *Darmstädter Tageblatt* vom 6. 12. 62, *Tendenzen international*, April 1962, unpaginated.

<sup>49</sup> Nickel GRÜNSTEIN, Bauernmaler und Abstrakte. Geschichte des modernen Realismus XIII. Jugoslawien, *Tendenzen international*, April 1962, unpaginated.

## Oto Bihalji-Merin in koncept »naivnih« v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja Most med socialističnim realizmom in nefiguralno umetnostjo

### *Povzetek*

Jugoslovanski pisatelj, umetnostni kritik in kustos Oto Bihalji-Merin (1904–1993) je v dvajsetih letih prejšnjega stoletja živel v Berlinu, kjer se je pridružil nemški komunistični partiji in objavljala literarno kritiko v levičarskem tisku pod sovjetskim vplivom. Rojen v židovski družini v Zemunu, je po vzponu nacističnega režima v tridesetih letih emigriral najprej na Češkoslovaško, potem pa v Francijo in Švico. V letih 1936 in 1937 je poročal o državljanski vojni iz Španije. V tem obdobju je vzpostavil tesne stike z levičarskimi intelektualci iz vse Evrope – Nemčije, Francije, Velike Britanije in Sovjetske zveze –, ki so se borili proti fašizmu in nacizmu. Leta 1938, leto po razstavi Degenerirana umetnost (*Entartete Kunst*) v Münchnu, je v Londonu pod psevdonimom Peter Thoene objavil knjigo o nemškem ekspresionizmu kot avtentični nemški umetnosti, ki se navezuje na gotski umetnostni izraz. Ob izbruhu druge svetovne vojne je kot jugoslovanski vojak padel v nemško ujetništvo. Po vojni je postal eden najpomembnejših kulturnih teoretikov in administratorjev v Titovi Jugoslaviji. V prvih letih je goreče zagovarjal socialistični realizem po sovjetskem vzoru, po sporu Tita s Stalinom 1948 – ki mu je sledila prekinitve političnih in kulturnih stikov ter v začetku petdesetih let tudi prelom s sovjetskim umetnostnim kanonom – pa je začel iskati novo orientacijo za jugoslovansko umetnost. Našel jo je v konceptu »naivne« ljudske umetnosti, v kateri je videl tudi pristen, prvobiten izraz proletarske in kmečke ustvarjalnosti. Pod vplivom gibanja neuvrčenih, ki ga je sredi petdesetih let pobudil Tito skupaj z Nehrujem in Naserjem kot samostojno srednjo pot med nasprotujočima si političnima blokoma, pa tudi nove jugoslovanske kulturne teorije »tretje poti«, ki jo je zastopal Miroslav Krleža na razstavi jugoslovanske srednjeveške umetnosti v plači Chaillot v Parizu (1950), je »naivna« umetnost služila za premostitev ideoloških in estetskih razlik med vzhodom in zahodom. Poleg tega je doma pod skupnim imenovalcem združila različne narode in kulture ter našla skupni jugoslovanski umetnostni izraz kljub etnični raznolikosti, v tujini pa je predstavljala univerzalni, nadnacionalni in transkulturni idiom človeštva. Med letoma 1949 in 1959 je Bihalji-Merin urejal tudi bogato ilustrirano revijo *Jugoslavija*, ki je izhajala v več evropskih jezikih in propagirala folkloro ter umetnost v različnih jugoslovanskih republikah. Njegov umetniški koncept je mogoče razumeti tudi kot anticipacijo prostorskih in postkolonialnih študij. V šestdesetih in sedemdesetih letih je izdal številne knjige o srednjeveški in sodobni jugoslovanski, evropski in svetovni umetnosti ter organiziral razstave jugoslovanskih »naivnih« slikarjev doma in v tujini.

Odgovor na to Pismo!

Proklita ma.

<sup>Ami</sup>  
že pada prvi, drugi,  
Semmi se Indii ~~in pravi~~ ~~in pravi~~ moja soba,  
na cesti zunanaj, glava mre in korak...  
in jaz sem karkol breedi' groba.

Moj Bog! Proklita ma. In je, zopet tu!  
Kot čro se ~~in~~ zija, pači' se oba,  
pre knji' bolest do jezda, a broj glavn  
in prvi mi razieda, besen onraj-  
obup in dovm nida svetom in seloj.

APPARATUS

Obup, prijatelj, moj!

Hoteti vse! ~~in nečem ma~~  
~~in nečem ma~~ ~~in nečem ma~~

In znati vse! - ne znam, ~~in nečem ma~~ ~~in nečem ma~~

In moči vse! - ne znam, ~~in nečem ma~~ ~~in nečem ma~~

Vse moči, mati, vse hoteti!

In znam nič, nečem nič in znam nič,

ke gripi' znam se in šteti

bejati v ~~in~~ moči kot raijen pič! -

Ah, neumnat vse! Prizpomo luč,  
svetleba zdravja in moči je rešje!

Šla ka ka ta! Na prvi mi legi  
soustil in obočil <sup>otilo</sup>

Oh, te verze, raznarjane ja dolo,  
odkrenit' je in stvaranje Tenno,  
in duša hoči, poteti am do,  
na plati' se in plati' legi do!



# IZVLEČKI IN KLJUČNE BESEDE

## ABSTRACTS AND KEYWORDS

**Jasmina Čubrilo**

*Jugoslovansko: toponim ali ideologija v umetnostnozgodovinski sistematizaciji umetnosti 20. stoletja v besedilih Miodraga B. Protića*

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Prispevek analizira ideološki kontekst in zgodovinske okoliščine, v katerih je Miodrag B. Protić snoval in realiziral umetnostnozgodovinsko sistematizacijo pred- in povojne jugoslovanske umetnosti. Avtorica problematizira koncept »jugoslovansko« v sintagmi »jugoslovanska moderna umetnost« in ga interpretira kot večpomenko. Prispevek obravnava učinke različnih diskurzov o »jugoslavizmih« na Protićevo razumevanje koncepta.

**Ključne besede:** Miodrag B. Protić, jugoslovanska umetnost, moderna umetnost, sistematizacija umetnosti, Muzej sodobne umetnosti Beograd

**Vesna Krmelj**

*France Stele v luči mladostne korespondence z Izidorjem Cankarjem*

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Prispevek obravnava korespondenco med dvema ključnima predstavnikoma dunajske umetnostnozgodovinske šole v slovenskem prostoru – Francetom Steletom in Izidorjem Cankarjem. Razprava sledi njenemu dopisovanju od začetka študija do konca leta 1913 in se osredotoča na Steletovo uredniško in javno delovanje v obdobju pred prvo svetovno vojno.

France Stele je kmalu po vpisu na Dunajsko univerzo prevzel uredništvo *Zore*, glasila katoliškega akademske-

**Jasmina Čubrilo**

*Yugoslav: Toponym or Ideology in Miodrag B. Protić's Art-Historical Systematization of 20th-Century Art*

1.01 Original scientific article

The article analyzes the ideological context and historical circumstances in which Miodrag B. Protić initiated and realized the art-historical systematization of 20th-century art from the territory of pre- and postwar Yugoslavia. The concept of "Yugoslav" in the syntagm "Yugoslav modern art" is problematized, interpreted here as a polysemy whose meanings were produced by various discourses about Yugoslavism; the effects of those found in Protić's articulations are mapped and examined.

**Keywords:** Miodrag B. Protić, Yugoslav art, modern art, art criticism, art systematization, Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade

**Vesna Krmelj**

*An Insight into France Stele through his Early Adulthood Correspondence with Izidor Cankar*

1.01 Original scientific article

The article deals with the correspondence between two key representatives of the Vienna School of Art History at the University of Ljubljana, France Stele and Izidor Cankar. The discussion follows their correspondence from the start of their studies until the end of 1913, and focuses on Stele's editorial and public activities in the pre-WW1 period.

Soon after enrolling at the University of Vienna, France Stele became the editor of *Zora*, a bulletin of the Catholic Academic Society Danica and invited Cankar, who was

ga društva, in k sodelovanju povabil Cankarja, ki je tedaj študiral v Louvainu. Stele in Cankar sta se spopadla s predsodki ob sprejemanju moderne umetnosti med slovenskimi katoliškimi izobraženci zlasti v primeru sodobne cerkvene arhitekture.

Steletov esej Apologija moderne umetnosti, objavljen leta 1911, lahko razumemo kot prvi neposredni naslon na dunajsko šolo umetnostne zgodovine. Vsebina članka in odzivi nanj sicer niso neposredno odmevali v ohranjeni korespondenci med Steletom in Cankarjem, vendar pa je sam način, kako sta se kolega kasneje dopolnjevala in podpirala, zelo značilen za njuno vodenje javne polemike.

**Ključne besede:** France Stele (1886–1972), Izidor Cankar (1886–1958), korespondenca, zgodovina umetnostne zgodovine, Dunajska umetnostnozgodovinska šola, slovenska umetnostna zgodovina, študentska društva, slovenski katoliški izobraženci, slovenski študenti na Dunaju

#### **Barbara Murovec**

*Historizirana podoba naročnika. Attemsova družinska portreta in Rembov avtoportret iz brežiškega gradu*

##### 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

V prispevku sta analizirana družinska portreta Ignaca Marije grofa Attemsa (Ljubljana, 15. avgust 1652 – Graz, 13. december 1732) s sinovi in Marije Regine grofice Wurmbrand, poročene Attems (Graz, 3. junij 1659 – Brežice, 24. april 1715) s hčerko in sinovoma, ki sta bila v oljni tehniki naslikana za veliko dvorano gradu Brežice (nem. Rann). Od leta 2010 sta hranjena v Dvorcu Eggenberg Deželnega muzeja Joanneum. Naslikal ju je Frančišek Karel Remb (Radovljica, 14. oktober 1674 – Dunaj, 23. september 1718), ki je sebe upodobil v celopostavni figuri v fresko tehniki na reprezentativnem mestu sredi dvorane, in sicer kot edino osebo iz sedanosti. Ignac Marija, ki se je arhivsko izpričano udeleževal kot arhitekt pri gradnji in prezidavah svojih bivališč, je na portretu predstavljen kot arhitekt-ustvarjalec in kot arhitekt-začetnik nove štajerske družine. Pretehtana inscenacija historiziranih portretov, s katerima sta želela ponosna starša za večnost ohraniti podobo umetnostno darežljive in ambiciozne družine, ki prosperira v miru in ljubezni, se nam v povezavi s slikarjevim avtoportretom kaže kot izjemna. Čeprav lahko pokažemo na številne mogoče vzore, so ti slikarju in naročniku služili le kot inspiracija za edinstveno umetniško celoto.

**Ključne besede:** Štajerska, Frančišek Karel Remb, Ignac Marija grof Attems, Marija Regina grofica Wurmbrand, družinski portret, avtoportret, naročnik-arhitekt, 1700, baročno slikarstvo

studying in Louvain, to participate. After 1911, when both studied in Vienna, Stele and Cankar directly addressed prejudice on the acceptance of modern art among Slovene Catholic scholars, especially in cases of contemporary church architecture. Stele's essay "The Apology of Modern Art", published in 1911, can be understood as his first direct application of the principles of the Vienna School of Art History. The content and critical responses to the article were not directly recorded in the preserved correspondence between Stele and Cankar; however, the way in which the two colleagues later complemented and supported one another is highly characteristic of how they also led public discourse.

**Keywords:** France Stele (1886–1972), Izidor Cankar (1886–1958), correspondence, history of art history, the Vienna School of Art History, Slovenian art history, student associations, Slovene Catholic scholars, Slovenian students in Vienna

#### **Barbara Murovec**

*The Patron's Historized Image. Attems' Family Portraits and Remp's Self-Portrait in the Brežice (Rann) Castle*

##### 1.01 Original scientific article

The paper analyzes the family portraits of Ignaz Maria, Count of Attems (Ljubljana/Ger. Laibach, 15 August 1652–Graz, 13 December 1732), with his sons, and Maria Regina, Countess of Wurmbrand with her daughter and sons, painted in oil technique for the Great Hall in the Brežice Castle (Ger. Rann). The portraits have been kept at Schloss Eggenberg of the Landesmuseum Joanneum since 2010. They were painted by Franz Carl Remp (Radovljica/Ger. Radmannsdorf, 14 October 1674–Vienna, 23 September 1718), who depicted himself in fresco technique in full figure in a representative place in the center of the hall as the only person from the present. In the portrait, Ignaz Maria, who, according to archival sources, participated as an architect in the construction and rebuilding of his residences, is presented as an architect-creator and an architect-founder of the new Styrian family. A careful arrangement of historized portraits, with which the proud parents wanted to preserve for eternity the image of an artistically generous and ambitious family that prospers in peace and love, in connection to the painter's self-portrait, is exceptional. Even though numerous possible sources for the paintings can be named, they served only as an inspiration for a unique work of art.

**Keywords:** Styria, Franz Carl Remp, Ignaz Maria, Count of Attems, Maria Regina, Countess of Wurmbrand, family portrait, self-portrait, patron-architect, 1700, Baroque painting



**Mija Oter Gorenčič***Pro remedio et pro salute animae nostrae.**Memoria v srednjeveškem umetnostnem okrasju cisterce v Stični kot odsev tesne povezanosti s plemstvom*

## 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Članek prinaša sistematičen pregled nad listinskimi omembami pokopov laikov v cistercijanskem samostanu Stična in njihovim vplivom na umetnostno zasnovo cisterce. Najstarejši dokaz povezav s plemstvom je krog z grbovnim ščitkom tik nad nekdanjim nižnim grobom v severovzhodnem kotu križnega hodnika ob prvotnem meniškem vhodu v cerkev. Naslikan je bil pred obokanjem križnega hodnika, ki se postavlja v čas okrog leta 1228. Do tega leta arhivski viri med pokopanimi v samostanu omenjajo le soustanovitelje samostana, Višnjegorske grofe in njihovo rodbino. Po sredini 13. stoletja so v skladu s prakso v drugih cistercijanskih samostanih pokopi laikov postali pogostejši. Najstarejša listina, ki se najverjetneje nanaša na pokop laika v cerkvi, sega v leto 1293. Avtorica v članku argumentirano podaja številne nove interpretacije in razpravlja o identifikaciji grbov, mestu, kjer so bili pokopani soustanovitelji samostana, identifikaciji oseb, ki so bile pokopane v pokopališki kapeli, in nižnem grobu pod najstarejšim grobom v križnem hodniku.

**Ključne besede:** cistercijanski samostan Stična, plemstvo, srednji vek, pokopi, križni hodnik, grbi, nagrobniki, nišni grob, turjaška kapela, Auerspergi, Višnjegorski, Čreteški, Svibenski

**Friedrich Polleroß***Brezmadežna, cesar Leopold I. in rimski tezni list ljubljanskih frančiškanov*

## 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Članek obravnava tezni list Jana Onghersa iz leta 1700, ki je bil doslej neznan oz. smo poznali le pripravljeno risbo zanj, hranjeno v Budimpešti. Grafika vključuje naslednje ikonografske teme: habsburško češčenje Brezmadežne, zmagoslavje nad Otomani, rivalstvo med frančiškanskim ter jezuiti in njihove tezne liste. Obenem osvetljuje politično-umetnostne zveze med Dunajem, Ljubljano, Augsburgom in Prago.

**Ključne besede:** Pietas Austriaca, Brezmadežna, Habsburžani, tezni listi, frančiškani, dominikanci, jezuiti, Joannes Duns Scotus, Otomani, Jan Onghers, Elias Nessenthaler

**Mija Oter Gorenčič***Pro remedio et pro salute animae nostrae.**Memoria in Medieval Architectural Decoration of the Stična Cistercian Monastery as a Reflection of its Close Connection with the Nobility*

## 1.01 Original scientific article

The paper offers a systematic overview of the documented burials of laymen in the Cistercian monastery in Stična and of their influence on the artistic design of the monastery. The oldest proof of its connection to nobility is a circle with a coat-of-arms above the former tomb niche in the northeastern corner of the cloister, next to the original monastic entrance to the church. It was painted before the vaulting of the cloister, which is dated around 1228. According to archival sources, until that year, only the co-founders of the monastery, the Counts of Weichselberg, and their families were buried in the monastery. After the middle of the 13th century, the burials of laymen became more frequent, in accordance with the practice in other Cistercian monasteries. Probably the oldest document referring to the burial of a layman in the church dates back to 1293. The authoress of the paper argues several new interpretations and discusses identifications of the coat of arms, the monastery co-founders' locations of burial, the identification of persons, who were buried in the burial chapel, and the tomb niche under the oldest coat-of-arms placed in the cloister.

**Keywords:** Cistercian monastery Stična, nobility, Middle Ages, burials, cloister, coats-of-arms, tombstones, *arcosolium*, Auersperg chapel, Lords of Auersperg, Counts of Weichselberg, Lords of Reitenburg, Lords of Scharffenberg

**Friedrich Polleroß***The Immaculata, Emperor Leopold I, and a Roman Thesis Print by the Franciscans from Ljubljana*

## 1.01 Original scientific article

The paper presents a Roman thesis print by Jan Onghers from 1700 that had been unknown until now; we only knew its preparatory drawing in Budapest. The graphic combines different themes: the veneration of the Immaculata by the House of Habsburg, the triumph over the Ottomans, the rivalry between the Franciscans, and Jesuits and their influence on the development of thesis prints. Moreover, it discusses the political and artistic relations among Vienna, Ljubljana, Rome, Augsburg and Prague.

**Keywords:** Pietas Austriaca, Immaculata, Habsburg, Thesis Print, Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, Joannes Duns Scotus, Ottomans, Jan Onghers, Elias Nessenthaler

**Damjan Prelovšek***Plečnikov prizidek k bratovi hiši v Trnovem*

## 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Vpogled v doslej neprebrano arhitektovo pisemsko zapuščino in nekatere druge zgodovinske vire temeljito spreminja vedenje o nastanku in opremljenosti Plečnikovega domovanja v Trnovem. Glavni namen gradnje valjastega prizidka (1923–1924), ustvariti skupen dom za brate in sestro, se ni posrečil zaradi njihovih različnih življenjskih usod. Sprva so se vsi navduševali za hišo na sedanjem Ciril-Metodovem trgu 10, v kateri je stanovala sestra, a se je Andrej Plečnik po vrnitvi iz Idrije raje odločil za nakup hiše za trnovsko cerkvijo v Ljubljani. Popraviti je treba tudi trditev, da naj bi se Jože sprl z najmlajšim Janezom, nakar naj bi ta zapustil hišo v Trnovem. V resnici oba v njej nikoli nista skupaj stanovala. Tudi starejši Andrej svoje posesti ni dolgo užival, ker ga je disciplinska komisija spodila iz ljubljanske realke, na kateri je poučeval verouk. Odšel je za kateheta v Kočevje in se ni nikoli več za stalno vrnil v Ljubljano. Na koncu je arhitekt v hiši ostal sam in si jo po svoje opremil.

**Ključne besede:** arhitektura 20. stoletja, Jože Plečnik, Andrej Plečnik, Janez Plečnik, Marija Matkovič, adaptacija Gabrovkine hiše, hiša v Trnovem, načrt prizidka, oprema prizidka, utopija o skupnem domu.

**Janez Premk***Mariborska sinagoga pod drobnogledom*

## 1.02. Pregledni znanstveni članek

Mariborska sinagoga spada med najpomembnejše ohranjene srednjeveške sinagoge v Srednji Evropi. Od prenove oziroma delne rekonstrukcije v letih 1992–1999 dalje objekt služi v kulturne namene. Prenova, ki je potekala pod vodstvom ZVKDS, se je izkazala za veliko zahtevnejšo, kot se je sprva predvidevalo. Izvedene prenove vsaj v strokovni literaturi niso problematizirali in je služila tako po arhitekturni lupini kot stavbnih elementih za referenčni primer pri poskusih (vizualnih) rekonstrukcij sorodnih spomenikov v tujini. Vendar je že sama prenova pustila veliko odprtih vprašanj, predvsem kar se tiče stavbnih faz v času judovske in kasnejše krščanske uporabe stavbe. V članku je predstavljena zgodovina spomeniškovarstvene dokumentacije in po-

**Damjan Prelovšek***Jože Plečnik's Extension of his Brother Andrej's House in Trnovo*

## 1.01 Original scientific article

Insight into the architect's previously unread epistolary heritage and some other historical sources profoundly changes our knowledge about the origin and furnishings of Plečnik's home in Trnovo. The main reason for the construction of the cylindrical extension (1923–1924) was to create a common home for the brothers and sister, but it was not successful because of their different destinies. At first, they were all enthusiastic about the house at present-day 10 Ciril-Metod Square, where the sister lived, however, when Andrej Plečnik returned from Idrija, he decided to buy a house behind the Trnovo church in Ljubljana. The claim that Jože quarrelled with the youngest Janez, who then left the house in Trnovo, also needs to be corrected. In reality, they never lived there together. Moreover, the older brother Andrej did not enjoy his property for long, since the disciplinary committee drove him away from the Ljubljana Realschule, where he taught catechesis. He left to be a catechetic in Kočevje and never permanently returned to Ljubljana. In the end, the architect remained alone in the house and furnished it according to his own liking.

**Keywords:** 20th century architecture, Jože Plečnik, Andrej Plečnik, Dr. Janez Plečnik, Marija Matkovič, Terezija Gaber's house, Plečnik house in Trnovo, extension plans, extension furnishings, utopia of a common home

**Janez Premk***Maribor Synagogue Reexamined*

## 1.02 Review Article

The Maribor Synagogue is one of the most important preserved medieval synagogues in Central Europe. Since undergoing renovation and partial reconstruction from 1992–1999, the facility has served as a cultural centre. The renovation, which was supervised by the ZVKDS (Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia), proved to be much more demanding than was originally foreseen. While the outcome of the renovation has not been scrutinised in professional literature, its architectural shell and elements have served as a reference point for the (visual) reconstruction attempts of similar monuments abroad. However, the renovation itself has left numerous unanswered questions, especially in regard to the building phases during the Jewish and later Christian

segov na objektu v 20. stoletju v luči napredka stroke pri raziskavah srednjeveških sinagog. Na primeru sporne interpretacije nekaterih stavbnih členov in neupoštevanja arheoloških raziskav je postavljena pod vprašaj celotna rekonstrukcija.

**Ključne besede:** judovska dediščina, sinagogalna arhitektura, srednjeveške sinagoge, srednja Evropa, Maribor, spomeniško varstvo

use of the building. The article examines the history of the monument's documentation and preservation in the 20th century in light of recent progress in medieval synagogue research. Owing to the controversial interpretations of certain architectural elements and the failure to take archaeological research into account, the entire reconstruction is called into question.

**Keywords:** Jewish heritage, synagogue architecture, medieval synagogues, Central Europe, Maribor, heritage protection

### **Tanja Zimmermann**

*Oto Bihalji-Merin in koncept »naivnih« v petdesetih letih 20. stoletja. Most med socialističnim realizmom in nefigurualno umetnostjo*

#### 1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek

Jugoslovanski pisatelj, umetniški kritik in kustos Oto Bihalji-Merin (1904–1993) je v dvajsetih letih prejšnjega stoletja živel v Berlinu, kjer se je pridružil nemški komunistični partiji in objavljaval literarno kritiko v levičarskem tisku pod sovjetskim vplivom. Rojen v židovski družini v Zemunu, je po vzponu nacističnega režima v tridesetih letih emigriral najprej v Češkoslovaško, potem pa v Francijo in Švico. Ob izbruhu druge svetovne vojne se je kot jugoslovanski vojak znašel v nemškem ujetništvu. Po vojni je postal eden najpomembnejših kulturnih teoretikov in administratorjev v Titovi Jugoslaviji. Po sporu Tita s Stalinom je postal goreč zagovornik naivne ljudske umetnosti kot prvobitnega in pristnega izraza proletarske in kmečke ustvarjalnosti. Merinova doktrina, ki je služila za premostitev razlik med socialističnim realizmom in zahodno nefigurualno umetnostjo, je temeljila na teoretskih idejah o tretji poti Mirolsava Krleže in gibanju neuvrščenih.

**Ključne besede:** Oto Bihalji-Merin, naivni, primitivni, socialistični realizem, nefigurativno slikarstvo, abstrakcija, »tretja pot«, Expo 58, gibanje neuvrščenih, Jugoslavija

### **Tanja Zimmermann**

*Oto Bihalji-Merin and the Concept of the "Naive" in the 1950s. Bridging Socialist Realism and Non-Figurative Art*

#### 1.01 Original scientific article

Yugoslav writer, art critic and curator Oto Bihalji-Merin (1904–1993) lived in Berlin during the 1920s, where he joined the German Communist Party and published literary critique in the left-wing press. Born into a Jewish family, he moved to Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland, and Spain after the rise of the Nazi regime. In this period, he established close contact with left-wing intellectuals from all over Europe. During the Second World War, he was imprisoned as a Yugoslav soldier by the Germans. After the war, he became the most important cultural theorist and administrator in Tito's Yugoslavia. After Tito's break with Stalin, he promoted the concept of naïve folk art as an authentic, primordial expression of proletarian and peasant creativity. His doctrine, destined to bridge the gap between socialist realism and Western non-figurative art, was inspired by Miroslav Krleža's cultural theory of the Third Way and by the non-aligned movement.

**Keywords:** Bihalji-Merin, naïve, primitive, socialist realism, non-figurative art, abstraction, Third Way, Expo 58, Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia



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