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212-225 **MLADEN OBAD ŠČITAROCI**
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IN THE AGE OF HISTORICISM

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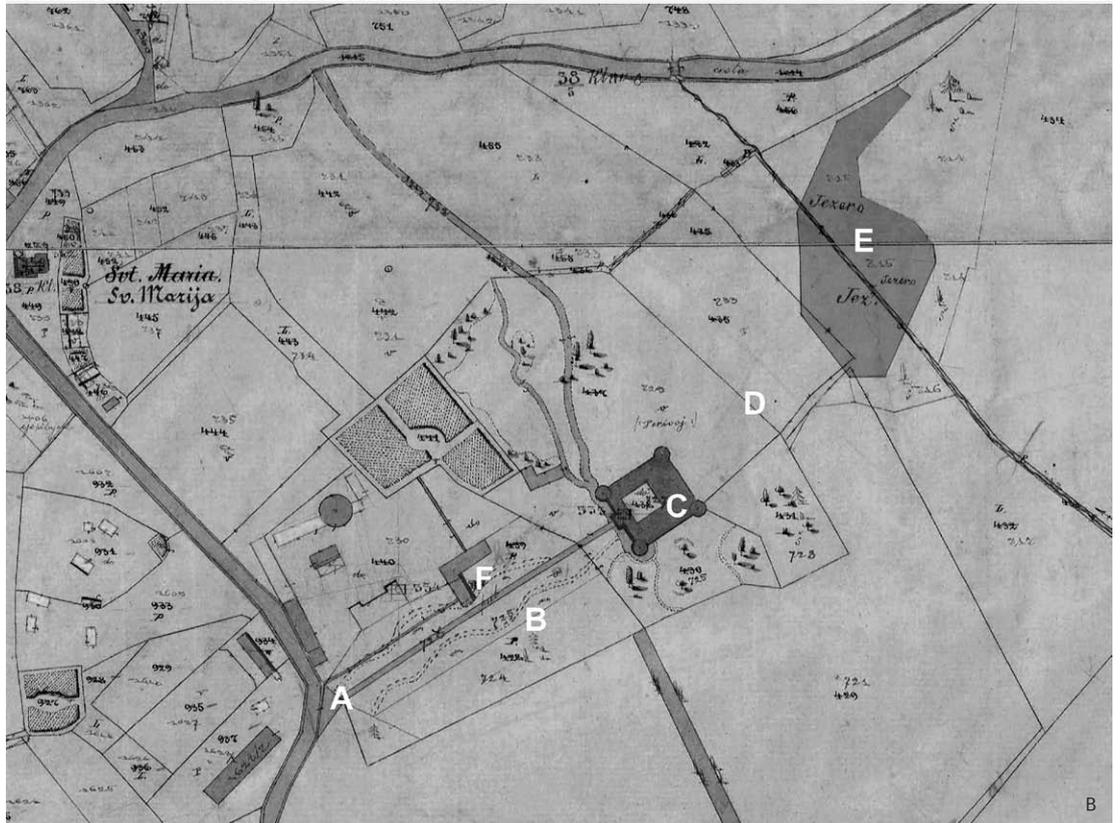


FIG. 1 VRANYCZANY-DOBROINOVIC
 MANOR HOUSE OROSLAVJE GORNJE:
 A – GARDEN ENTRANCE,
 B – PARTERRE GARDEN,
 C – MANOR HOUSE,
 D – ROMANTIC GARDEN,
 E – LAKE,
 F – ORANGERY/WINTER GARDEN)



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GARDENS OF VRANYCZANY'S MANOR HOUSES IN HRVATSKO ZAGORJE IN THE AGE OF HISTORICISM

CROATIAN ZAGORJE / HRVATSKO ZAGORJE
HISTORICIST GARDENS
MANOR HOUSE GARDENS
OROSLAVJE MANOR
VRANYCZANY-DOBRINOVIĆ FAMILY

The Vranyczany-Dobrinović family (short: Vranyczany) is an aristocratic family that rose to power in Croatia in the second half of the 19th century. Members of the family possessed five manor houses surrounded by gardens with historicist features from the late 19th and early 20th century. All five are located in the hilly region of Hrvatsko Zagorje, which boasts the highest density of castles and manor houses in Croatia, built in continuity from the 17th until the beginning of the 20th century. The aim is to determine the features of the gardens of the explored castles, on the basis of photographs from the beginning of

the 20th century as well as cartographic sources. A wealth of photographic documents from the beginning of the 20th century shows carefully landscaped and kept gardens and parks, with a full life flourishing in them. Vranyczany's manor houses' gardens are based on the Biedermeier and romantic tradition of garden culture. Towards the end of the 19th century, many gardeners trained in Vienna, Prague and other Central European cities, lived in Zagreb and the surrounding area. They passed down ideas related to the historicist garden culture and competed in artistic and horticultural gardening.

INTRODUCTION

The manor houses portrayed in this article are located in Hrvatsko zagorje, a region in north-western Croatia, north of Zagreb, the capital. Hrvatsko zagorje is a region with the continuity of human settlement since the Neanderthal times. Before Romans, it was inhabited by Celts, who left traces just like Romans did. Burgs (castles) were built in the Middle Ages. Manors were built between the beginning of 17th and 20th century. Hrvatsko zagorje is a region with the highest density of manors in Croatia. It is a sort of an example of late Renaissance, early Baroque, Baroque, with classicist, romantic and historicist features.

The Vranyczany-Dobrinović family (hereinafter: Vranyczany) was a noble family that rose to power in Croatia in the second half of the 19th century. They were great patriots and patrons of Croatian culture and art.¹ Members of the family possessed five manor houses north of Zagreb (Fig. 2). These manor houses were surrounded by gardens with historicist features from the turn of the 19th century. The motivation for this article came from old family photo albums which document the condition of the gardens and parks at the beginning of the 20th century.

This article illustrates the level of garden and landscape culture of Croatia as part of Central Europe and Habsburg Monarchy. Gardens of Vranyczany's manor houses were chosen for the research and publication as prime examples of gardens from late histori-

cism. The manor house's gardens landscaping began at the second half of the 19th century, but they were at their best in the years preceding the First World War. After the war ended, that is, after 1918, they were no longer as kept up as before and their glory began to fade. The Second World War brought an end to the continuity of life in the manor houses as they were confiscated from their owners and began to decay. A large majority of manor houses has not been satisfactorily renovated to the present day.²

Four out of five Vranyczany's manor houses have been preserved. All gardens have been preserved at least in part. They are all in need of thorough renovation and this article might stimulate such a comprehensive renovation, just like the exhibition on the Vranyczany family, held in Zagreb in 2016, did.³

This article shows five manors in Hrvatsko Zagorje. The sixth manor, which is not shown, is located in Slavonia, in Strazeman, near Požega. This manor was bought at the end of the 19th century by countess Clotilda Buratti, born baroness Vranyczany-Dobrinovic. The castle had a large landscape park (26 hectares) of which only a few old trees remain (Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanic Obad Šćitaroci, 2001: 274-277).

¹ The first mention of the Vranyczany family dates back to the 13th century. They were awarded nobility in 1391, which was re-confirmed in 1822, and in 1862 the five Vranyczany brothers were given the hereditary Hungarian-Croatian barony. Their motto was *Fratrum concordia*. Members of the family distinguished themselves in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in economy and politics. The most prominent role in the 19th century Croatian social life was held by Ambroz (1801-1870) the first Croatian finance minister, who financially supported the founding of the national Academy of Sciences and Arts, the national theatre and other national institutions. Ljudevit-Lujo (1840-1922) stood out in political struggle for Croatian independence, and he was also known as a patron of many artists. By the end of the 20th century, a prominent role in public life was held by Janko (1920-2015) the minister of tourism (1990-1991) for the first Government of the Republic of Croatia, and later the first Croatian ambassador in the Kingdom of Belgium, the EU and NATO (Obad Šćitaroci, 2005: 134-135).

² After the First World War maintenance funds were gone, so it became difficult to sustain the manor house life. No one knew what the second half of the 20th century would bring. The tragedy that struck Croatian manors in 1945 (after the Second World War and the rise of socialism) came unexpected, at least for their owners, who continued the long tradition of manor culture in Croatia and Europe. Today, we think about the manors with nostalgia, pondering about the times they were lived in, worked in, socialized in, when they were centers of economic and cultural life of smaller milieus. Out of two hundred manors and castles in northern Croatia, half is in a bad or derelict state, and about a quarter of them have a permanent function that ensures their future existence. Only a handful of manor houses have successors of old aristocratic families living in them. All manors of the Vranyczany family today have a purpose and an owner which is a prerequisite for their preservation.

³ The Magnificent Vranyczany – artistic, historic and political framework of an aristocratic family – is the name of the exhibition held at the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb, 14 May – 21 August 2016. The exhibition only

METHODS

The main source for research was a photo album of the garden of the Oroslavje Gornje manor from the beginning of the 20th century.⁴ Most of the photos from the album have not been published. Other photographs collected from various sources and cadastral maps were also used. The original designs of the garden have not been preserved.

While a number of papers have been published on manors⁵, the gardens have been less researched due to a lack of historical sources, which remains a problem, and any new research contributes limited results.

The main goal of the research is to determine the common features of the manor gardens that belonged to members of the Vranyczany family. The research was conducted in three steps: 1. determining the essential features of each garden because each of them has some peculiarities; 2. a description of the garden next to the Oroslavje Gornje manor, based on a photo album and 3. recognition of common features since they all underwent renovation and new landscaping at the end of the 19th century. The first step was done as a concise interpretation of previous research. The second step is a new interpretation and description of the garden of the Oroslavje Gornje manor based on a photo album. On the basis of this, in the third step, the gardens of Vranyczany manors were seen in the context of the landscape architecture of the late 19th and early 20th century when numerous gardens of villas, summer houses and manors were created, as well as public parks in Zagreb and other Central European cities.

briefly mentions the parks and gardens, illustrating them with a handful of photographs, without a more thorough representation. A large catalogue was published, under the same name (ISBN 978-953-7641-35-1, Muzej za umjetnost i obrt).

⁴ Baron Janko Vranyczany-Dobrinović (1920-2015), the owner of the photo album, made it possible to copy and use the photographs.

⁵ More details about manors and their owners in Hrvatsko zagorje in: Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2015; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci 2016 a, b, c.

⁶ Towards the end of the 19th century, five members of the Vranyczany family bought five manor houses with accompanying estates: Ljudevit-Lujo bought Gornje Oroslavje, Janko bought Sv. Križ Začretje, Viktor bought Gornja Bedekovčina, Ernest bought Mirkovec and Vladimir became the owner of Laduč. In Zagreb, the family members had several palaces built. Ljudevit-Lujo built the largest palace (today the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts) with a view of the Nikola Šubić Zrinski Square. Ambroz and his daughter Klotilda, married as countess Buratti (1838-1912), owned the palace Dverce in Gornji grad / Upper Town in Zagreb (Klotilda donated the palace to the city of Zagreb). Dragan built a palace at Zrinjevac, which today houses the Archaeological Museum. Other members of the family built several other palaces in Zagreb.

VRANYCZANY'S MANOR HOUSES AND GARDENS

At the end of the 19th century, members of the Vranyczany family bought baroque manors and curias in northwestern Croatia, redecorated and modernized them, and restored and enlarged the gardens. They revived old manors creating an ambience pleasant for country life, combining baroque buildings with romantic-historicist architectural elements (Botica, 2016). The Vranyczany did not build manor houses – they bought old manor houses and reconstructed them only slightly. These were manor houses built in the 17th and 18th century, with the exception of Laduč which was built in the 19th century as a large extension of an old building. Vranyczany's manor houses belong to the model of north Croatian manor houses which combined several main functions – an estate, permanent residence and country-house living (temporary residence). Manor houses were seats of their respective estates; each estate was run from its manor house; each manor house had many outbuildings nearby and each employed a lot of people.⁶

Just like each manor house is characterized by different historical and architectural features, so is each garden different. Any difference in garden appearance was primarily conditioned by the terrain configuration and the state of an earlier garden-park, if there had been one from the first half of the 19th century (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005: 21-29). Plans for the gardens have not been preserved and we do not know who their authors were, even the gardeners are unknown. Only some remains *in situ* are left, as well as photographs documenting traces of their ideas and realizations.

Oroslavje Gornje (Fig. 1) – Vranyczany owned the manor Oroslavje Gornje, one of the two manors in settlement Oroslavje. On the site of an old curiae / old building, a Baroque manor house was erected in the first half of the 17th century. The manor house had a square ground plan with an inner courtyard and round towers at the corners. It was burned down by a fire in 1949. The manor house as such does not exist nowadays, only some remnants of the walls of one tower. The garden from the Vranyczany's time was partially preserved (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005: 216-223; Žmegač, Vojtici, 2013: 247-254; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2015). The present-day garden dates from the early 20th century, the time of Lujo Vranyczany. Prior to that, there were remains of the garden from the late 18th and early 19th century of which we know little. According to an old cadastral map from 1907, there was a 200-meter-long tree-lined path (alley), leading from the street

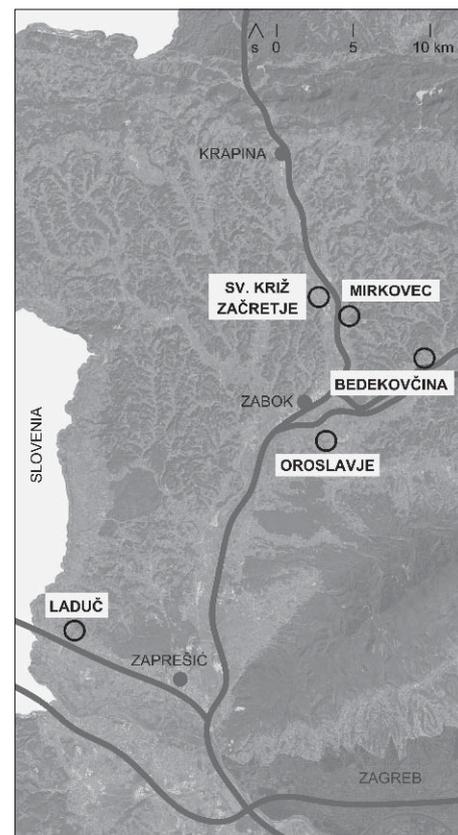


FIG. 2 POSITION OF VRANYCZANY'S MANORS IN HRVATSKO ZAGORJE

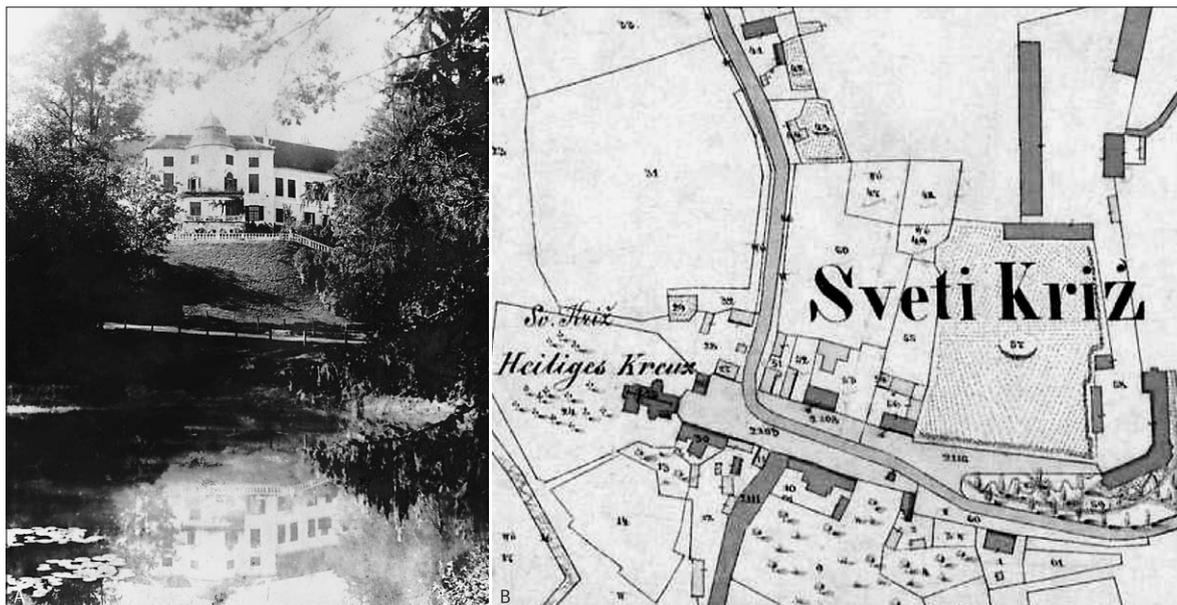


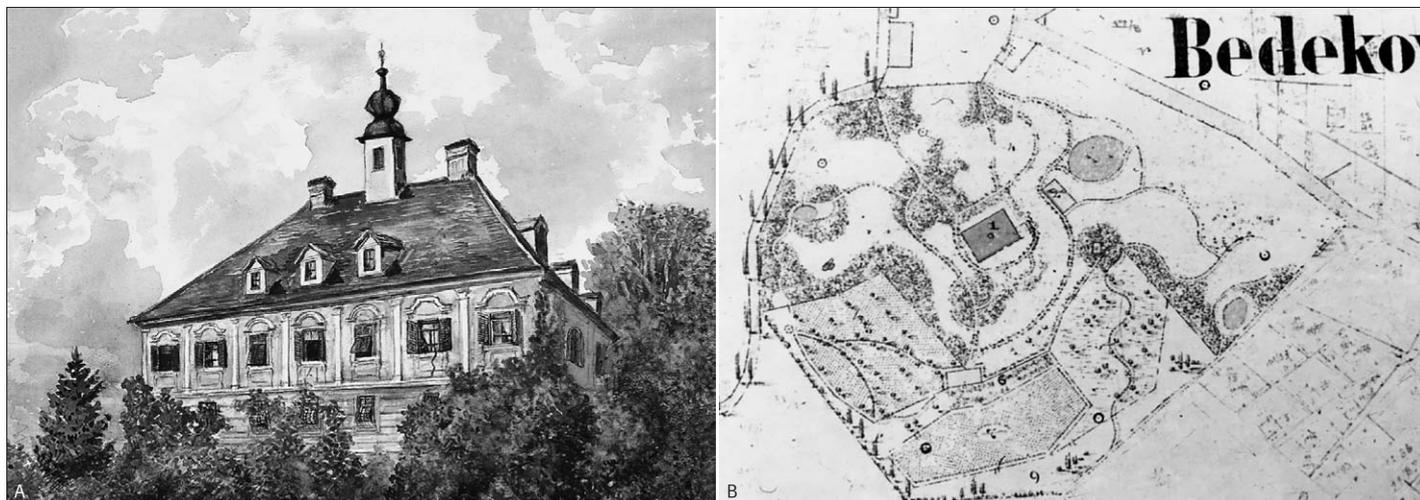
FIG. 3 VRANYCZANY-DOBRINOVIC MANOR HOUSE SVETI KRIZ ZACRETJE: A – MANOR AND LAKE, PHOTO BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY; B – CADASTRAL MAP, 1860

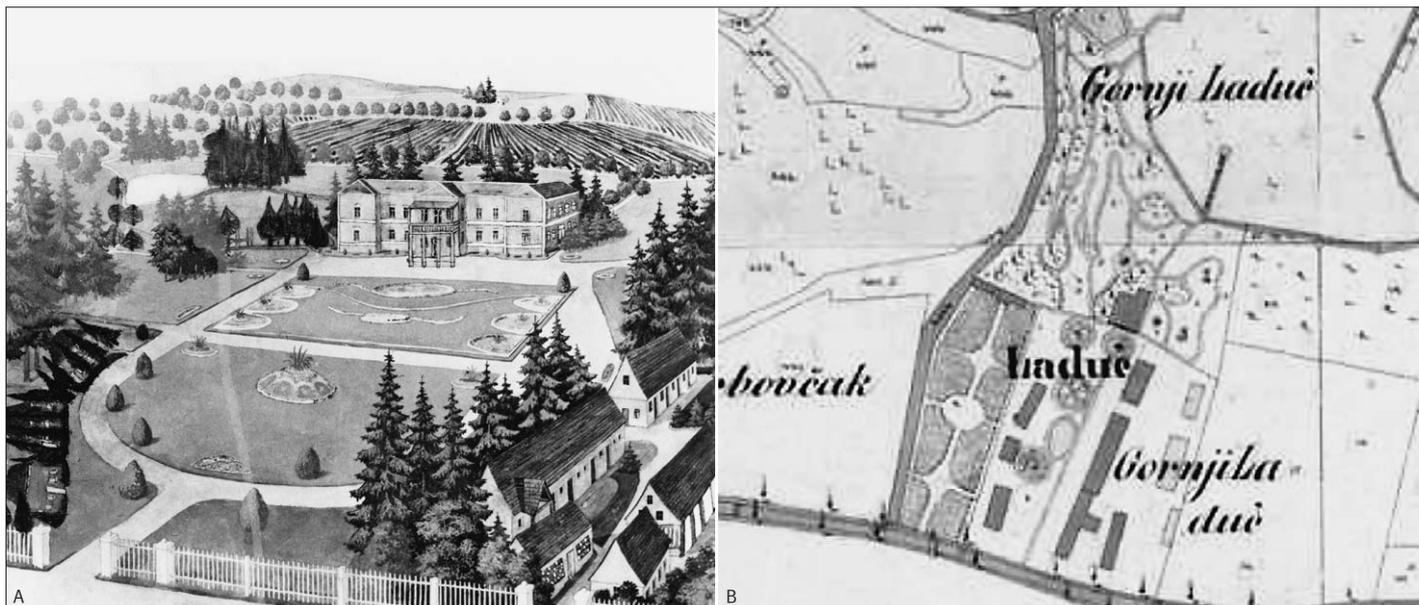
entrance portal to the main, western facade, with a garden of 1.3 ha on either side of the path. Behind the eastern facade lay a park of 4.4 hectares. Lujo Vranyczany introduced large changes to the park. He had the neglected garden re-landscaped, giving it historicist features. Between the two world wars the garden was maintained, but not as well as before. During the second half of the 20th century, it was devastated and abandoned. Its restoration began in 2008 and has still not been finished. A more detailed description of the garden based on the photo album is presented in the next chapter.

Sv. Križ Začretje (Fig. 3) – The manor house is located on a hill in the middle of the village, its main south-eastern facade overlooking the valley and access roads. It was built in several stages during the 18th century. Its V-

shaped floor plan is very rare. In 1887 Janko Vranyczany bought it (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005; Flögl, 2010; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2016 c). At the end of the 18th century, when the construction of the manor house was completed, only small parterre gardens in front of the entrance to the manor house seem to have existed, along with a large vegetable garden (*Gemüsegarten*). The romantic garden was landscaped after 1860. It was then that the terraces of the manor houses were built offering the views, a descent to the garden and a path to the lake. The large vegetable garden in the vicinity of the manor house was very attractive, and although utilitarian (for growing vegetables), flowers and decorative shrubbery were also grown there. This type of a garden was very common for Croatian manor houses.

FIG. 4 VRANYCZANY-DOBRINOVIC MANOR HOUSE BEDEKOVČINA GORNJA: A – MANOR, WATERCOLOR BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY; B – CADASTRAL MAP, 1897





Bedekovčina Gornja (Fig. 4) – The manor house is located on a prominent hill above the village of Bedekovčina with views of the surrounding landscape. It was built between 1740 and 1750. Viktor Vranjiczany purchased the manor house in 1887 (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2016 a). Three development stages/phases of the garden, located on the slope of the hill, are noticeable. For the oldest, Baroque stage (second half of the 18th century) we do not have any data. The second stage was documented on a cadastral map from 1897, when the park stretched on 4.7 hectares. It was a landscape-romantic garden with three small lakes, two utilitarian gardens and a small decorative flower garden in front of the entrance to the manor. A 540-metre-long driveway led to the manor

house atop the hill. In the early 20th century (third stage) a pavilion, a bowling alley and a tennis court were added to the garden and a new access road lined with wild chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) was built. A classicist winter garden was built as well, most likely in the first half of the 19th century, today significantly modified with respect to its original state.

Laduć (Fig. 5) – Laduč manor house was built in the late 19th century on the foundations of an older manor house / curiae from the Renaissance. It was built according to a design by architect Kuno Waidman, commissioned by the new owner, Vladimir Vranjiczany. His family lived in the manor house until the end of the Second World War (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad

FIG. 5 VRANJICZANY-DOBRINOVIC MANOR HOUSE LADUĆ: A – MANOR, GOUACHE, 1918; B – CADASTRAL MAP, 1862

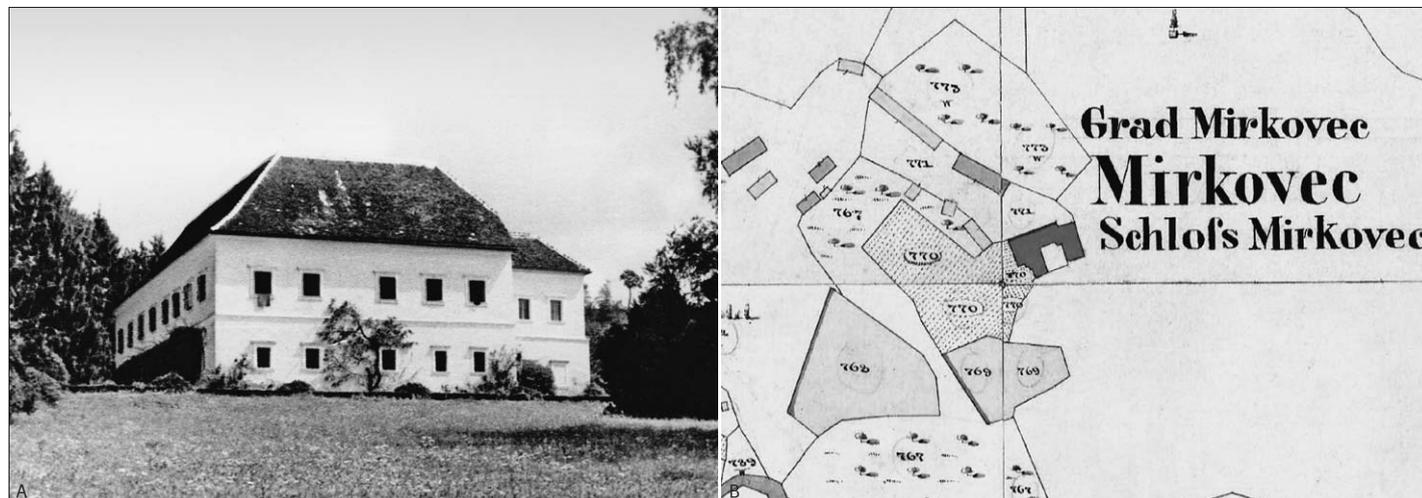


FIG. 6 VRANJICZANY-DOBRINOVIC MANOR HOUSE MIRKOVEC: A – MANOR, PHOTO 1936; B – CADASTRAL MAP, 1860



FIG. 7 ORANGERY (WINTER GARDEN), OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Šćitaroci, 2016 b). The fully formed landscape-romantic garden existed already by the old manor house, before the building of the current manor house from the late 19th century, which is visible on the old cadastral map from 1862. Its surface area amounted to about four hectares. The garden consisted of two spatially and compositionally different parts: a decorative parterre garden in front of the south (entrance) facade and a landscaped garden north of the manor house on hilly terrain. All around were vineyards. With the construction of the new manor house the garden was transformed as well, especially the parterre part as a representative access to the manor house, renovated in the 1980s.

Mirkovec (Fig. 6) – This manor house was built by extending an old curia in the 17th century, with two more wings added in the 18th



FIG. 8 GARDEN ENTRANCE, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

century, whereby the manor house assumed a U-shaped ground floor plan. Ernest Vranyczany bought it in 1892. (Obad Šćitaroci, 1992, 2005; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2016 b). The landscape-romantic park was landscaped towards the late 19th century, at the time of the Vranyczanys. It was built on the site of a former orchard and a pasture land, which was concluded on the basis of a cadastral map from 1860. The garden lies on the wavy hill slopes, atop which lies the manor house, twenty meters above the valley. To date, preserved some exotic trees, planted in the gardens in the second half of the 19th century.

VRANYCZANY'S MANOR GARDEN OROSLAVJE GORNJE

Next to all the manors of the Vranyczany family, there were gardens. Lujo Vranyczany's garden in Oroslavje Gornje was the special one. Thanks to the preserved photo album, it is possible to explore and describe it in more detail. It was the most complete historicist garden. Since it had been photographically documented in the beginning of the 20th century, it serves as a good example for illustrating historicist attributes – not only those seen in Vranyczany's gardens but also in other contemporary manor gardens in Croatia. Oroslavje Gornje was "... by the end of the 19th century, at an international level of style and taste of that period (late Napoleon III, *Ringstrassen-epoche* crossing over to *Jugendstil*), inspired by parterres of Schönbrunn and Laxenburg".⁷ The garden was designed as a completely new garden, and the financial prowess of its owner, Lujo Vranyczany, allowed for the work of numerous gardeners who maintained and cultivated it daily. There were also several hotbeds (greenhouses) and a large orangery (winter garden) for growing plants, especially those from warmer climates (Fig. 7). The garden entrance and the manor house driveway are marked with a grand portal (Fig. 8).

The garden in Oroslavje Gornje demonstrates the following properties, all regarded as factors of identity: Neo-Baroque parterre garden in front of the main façade, the romantic landscape garden on the hilly terrain behind the manor house, a wide variety of flower gardens (horticultural artistry of artistic gardeners), variety and great number of trees along with numerous exotic varieties, lots of buildings on the edge of the garden (winter garden / orangery, greenhouse, farm buildings), diversity and an abundance of garden structures (the entry portal, pavilions, bridges, stairs, a

⁷ Quote from a letter written by baron Janko Vranyczany, from 29 June 1989.

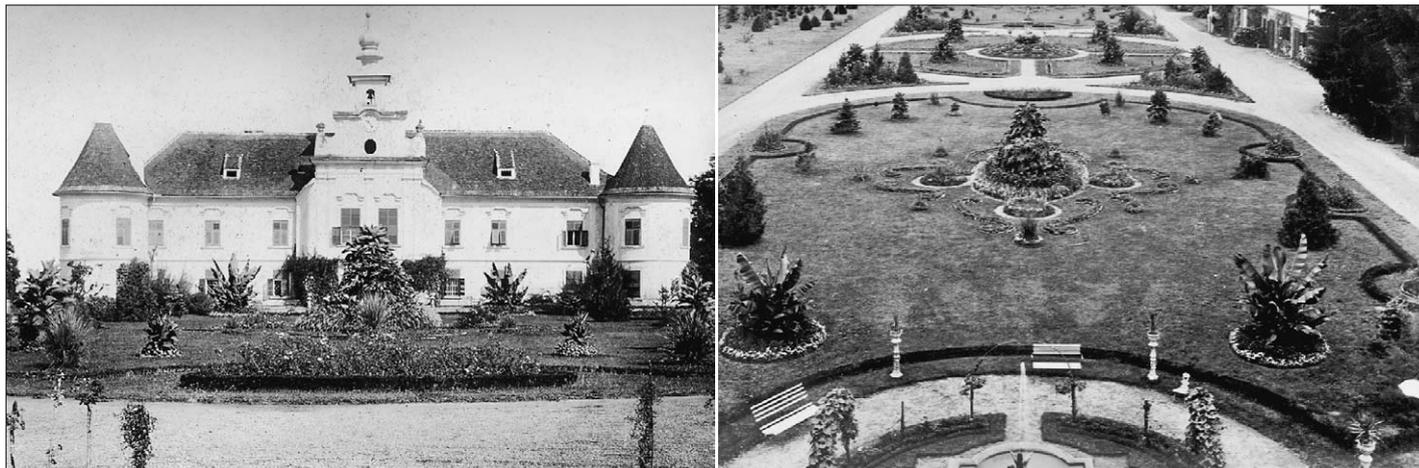


FIG. 9 PARTERRE GARDEN IN FRONT OF THE MANOR HOUSE, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

nymphaeum, gazebos, enclosures, sculptures, ceramic and stone flowerpots, ceramic and stone flowerpot pedestals, benches and garden chairs). The gardens are typified by events during which they were regarded as the center stage and enchanting scenery.

The parterre garden demonstrates horticultural artistry and a great love for garden architecture. Lots of flowers and topiaries (Fig. 10), sculptures, fountains, a barrow/mound with an urn, benches with lion and sphinx motifs, ceramic flowerpots – scenery that fascinated each guest at the driveway of the manor house (Fig. 9). Symmetrically placed in regard to the manor's main façade, stood Baroque stone sculptures of *Flora* and *Satyr* (Fig. 13). The orangery constituted the northern façade of the parterre garden (Fig. 7).

The romantic landscape garden on the east from the back of the manor house was not visible from the entrance. Entering this park, picturesque vistas of the park and the surrounding landscape revealed themselves (Figs. 11, 14). The landscape garden was filled with a romantic ambiance and historicist scenery, such as: a lake with an islet, a swan dwelling, fisherman's cottage, the temple of goddess *Flora*, a round pavilion called *Tempietto* (Fig. 15), a small bridge leading to the islet on the lake, etc. Terraces were built in the vicinity of the manor house, situated on the highest

point of the terrain, a tall column with a sculpture of an eagle was placed on the northern terrace, and also, a wide stone stairway was built leading to the lake (Fig. 12), below the staircase a cave/nymphaeum, and on the coast of the lake – a stone pier (Fig. 16).

The garden, which was designed as theatre scenery, rich with elements and various scenes, was ideal for events and meetings. The July Garden parties celebrating the birthday of Lujo Vranyczany were famous. Numerous guests from Zagreb and its vicinity came to celebrate in the garden, as evidenced by numerous family photographs.

COMMON FEATURES OF VRANYCZANY'S MANOR GARDENS

For the researched gardens, as well as for the vast majority of gardens in Croatia, there is no archival material that would clarify the many unknowns. Old photographs and various cadastral maps are the only sources of data because there are no original drawings, cost estimates, job descriptions, construction bills, names of designers and gardeners, etc. Despite limited sources, the research provided new insights into the context of garden architecture in northwestern Croatia and manor culture. The available historical material was uneven for the five manors surveyed.

FIG. 10 FLOWERS AND TOPIARIES IN THE GARDEN, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY



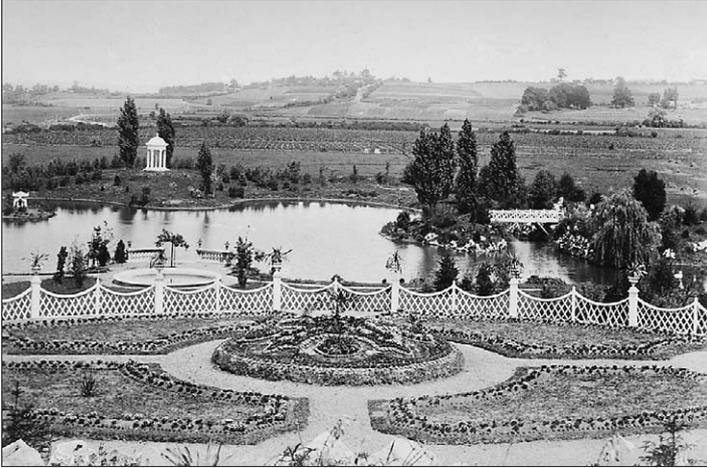


FIG. 11 ROMANTIC GARDEN ON THE EAST OF THE MANOR HOUSE, VIEW FROM THE MANOR, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY



FIG. 12 STONE STAIRWAY FROM THE MANOR TO THE LAKE, COLUMN WITH A SCULPTURE OF AN EAGLE, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Only for the garden of the Oroslavje Gornje manor is there a preserved entire photo album with depictions of the garden. For the rest, only a few photographs have been preserved where the garden is an incidental theme as an ambient background.

- The location:

- The manors and parks are part of the settlement's fabric in Oroslavje, Bedekovčina and Sv. Križ Začretje, while in Laduč and Mirkovac they are located in a landscape without urban tradition.

- All gardens are located on hilly terrain so there are large height differences.

- Relation to the economic part of the property – A comparison of the garden and the production structure of the manor revealed the following:

- in Sv. Križ Začretje and Bedekovčina, the manor and the garden are accessed by an alley that does not pass through the farmyard;

- in Laduč, the manor is accessed by a parterre garden, which is bordered on two sides by outbuildings;

- in Oroslavje, the manor is accessed by a large parterre garden, and the economic complex of the manor is separate and cannot be seen from the garden;

- in Mirkovac, the manor and the garden are accessed through a farm without a parterre garden;

- only in Mirkovac is the vegetable garden located next to the manor, while in the other four manors a vegetable garden is visually and functionally distinct.

- Stylistic features – All parks have historicist features. The following recognizable areas were observed:

- the historicist parterre garden next to the manor, on flat terrain, in front of the main facade of the manor with topiary and flower plants (Oroslavje, Laduč);

- in some manor parterre gardens are very small or reduced to smaller flower beds (Bedekovčina, Mirkovec);

- the landscape neo-romantic garden is found in all manors, often "behind" the castle, on undulating terrain with height differences.

FIG. 13 BAROQUE STONE SCULPTURES FLORA AND SATYR IN PARTERRE GARDEN, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY





- Buildings in the park:

- Orangery (winter garden) with a noticeable appearance, located in a prominent place in the garden, can be found in Oroslavje and Bedekovčina. They all had a nursery (greenhouse), simple functional buildings.

- Until the end of the 20th century, there was a Tempietto pavilion in Oroslavje (Fig. 15). The cadastral map of Laduč indicates a garden pavilion, probably a lookout (Fig. 5).

- Old photographs indicate the existence of pedestrian bridges in Oroslavje and Sv. Križ Začretje (Figs. 11, 14).

- Large wide stairs with balustrades existed in Oroslavje (Fig. 12) and Sv. Križ Začretje.

- Garden entrance – The entrance in the parterre garden in Oroslavje is the largest and the most picturesque (Fig. 8). Smaller portals also existed in other Vranjczyany manors. They are partially preserved in Laduč, Bedekovčina and Sv. Križ Začretje.

- Water in the park – Water is present in several ways:

- decorative lakes which are also fishponds (Oroslavje, Sv. Križ Začretje; Figs. 3, 11, 14, 16);

- small decorative pools, often circular or elliptical in shape (Bedekovčina, Laduč; Figs. 4, 5);

- small fountains and nymphs – are known only in Oroslavje;

- fishponds that were primarily used for fish farming (Mirkovec).

- Sculptures – The stone sculptures have been preserved in only two parks, although they are not in their original place today:

- Baroque sculptures Flora and Satyr, Oroslavje Gornje (Fig. 13), today in the garden of the manor Vojković, Oroslavje Donje;

- sculpture of an eagle on a high pillar, Oroslavje Gornje (Fig. 12), today on the square in Oroslavje;

- historicist sculptures from 19th century in Laduč, personifications of the seasons, today in the Museum in Brdovec.

- Garden equipment:

- Numerous and diverse garden equipment and contents that we find in the photographs of the manor in Oroslavje Gornje have not been recorded in other gardens according to the sources available so far. However, some of the garden equipment from the beginning of the 20th century undoubtedly existed (benches, stands with ceramic and stone flower pots, etc.).

- The remains of the original benches from the beginning of the 20th century, with concrete parts with the motif of lion heads have been preserved in Oroslavje, and the same were in Sv. Križ Začretje.

- Benches made of metal and wood have been preserved only in photographs, as well as tables and garden chairs (Oroslavje, Laduč).

- The nymphaeum was recorded only in photographs in Oroslavje.

FIG. 14 ROMANTIC GARDEN AMBIENT, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

FIG. 15 TEMPIETTO PAVILION, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, 1925

FIG. 16 PIER ON THE LAKE WITH A VIEW OF THE MANOR HOUSE, OROSLAVJE GORNJE, BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY



VRANYCZANY'S GARDENS IN THE CONTEXT OF GARDEN ARCHITECTURE AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY

The garden architecture of Vranyczany's manor houses is based on the Biedermeier and the romantic tradition of garden culture of the first half and mid-19th century in Zagreb and its vicinity (Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, Obad Šćitaroci, 2004; Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci and Dundović, 2013). Great inspiration was drawn from the episcopal garden Ribnjak in Zagreb (1830), public park Maksimir in Zagreb 1830s and 1840s (Obad Šćitaroci, 1994), the park of Trakošćan castle around 1860 in the vicinity of Vranyczany's manor houses (Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2010) and numerous 19th century gardens surrounding villas and summer residences on the northern hilly edge of Zagreb. (Mestrovic, Obad Šćitaroci, 2014).

In the historicist period, towards the end of the 19th century, numerous gardeners educated in Vienna, Prague and other parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, resided in Zagreb and its vicinity. They spread ideas of historicist garden culture and competed in artistic and horticultural gardening. Such a climate made it easy for the barons Vranyczany to find gardeners for their manors' gardens.

Vranyczany's gardens indicate a high garden culture and the recognition of role-models in Vienna, Prague, Budapest and Zagreb. In such a large country (Austrian/Habsburg Monarchy, from 1867 Austro-Hungarian Monarchy) there were no boundaries in spreading ideas, skills and the exchange of experts. Members of the Vranyczany family often resided in Vienna and in manors across the Monarchy, so they were familiar with current architectural and landscape design trends.

The Vranyczany family moved to Zagreb and Hrvatsko Zagorje towards the end of the 19th century and arrived into an ambiance of distinctive Central European urban, country, and garden high culture. Zagreb fulfilled the urban planning concept of Donji grad in accordance with the master plans from 1865 and 1889. From 1870s onward, historicist garden squares inspired by the Viennese are built in Zagreb, often with the participation of Austrian artistic gardeners. A string of garden squares soon came to be, known under the name the 'Green Horsehoe' (Knežević, 1996). In Croatia, the influences of the gardening tradition and the fashion of botanical collections were predominant in shaping city promenades, public parks and villa gardens. The historicist garden design has undoubtedly influenced the shaping of Vranyczany's gardens (Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2014)

Within the Austrian Monarchy, all cities and spas had gardens and promenades built in the first half and the mid-19th century, so that by the end of the century there were numerous gardens which made a patterned effect and influenced the manor house garden design. In the year when Lujo Vranyczany purchased Gornje Oroslavje (1885), there was a historicist redesigning of Városligeta, the largest public park in Budapest (Hungary), and the Türkenschanzpark was built in Vienna (1885-1888). Numerous other public parks in Vienna and across the Monarchy were already built or redesigned mid-19th century, e.g. Stadtpark, Volksgarten and Rathauspark in Vienna; Margaret Island and Népliget in Budapest; and spa gardens in Salzburg and Bad Ischl (Hajós 2007).

In the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the turn of the 20th century was marked by building a monument to the Empress and Queen Elisabeth Habsburg (Sissy). After her assassination in 1898, numerous city parks and promenades were immediately designed, while the existing parks were renovated and decorated with sculptures of her. These parks' colorful historicist flowery compositions have significantly influenced all contemporary parks and gardens – the private ones beside manor houses and villas, and also public parks in cities and spas.⁸ This influence can be observed in parks and gardens of manor houses too. In the beginning of the 20th century, there were less new parks, the influence of Art Nouveau was very weak, and experimenting with garden design ceased. All the way to the end of the First World War, garden design followed the beaten paths of neoclassicism, neo-romanticism and late historicism. Such a state also remains in manor house garden design. The end of the 19th century brought forth the fashion of historicist annexes to contemporary manor houses spreading across Central Europe, the rest of Europe, and Croatia as well. Neo-Gothic annexes to manor houses are common for the period, and they were often followed by historicist garden design surrounding the manor houses, whereas the larger part of the parks had romantic features (Dundović, Obad Šćitaroci, Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, 2012).

⁸ In the last decade of the 19th century in Croatia, numerous new historicist parks and gardens were built, the influence of which can be recognized in Vranyczany gardens as well: Sakuntala (today the Preradović promenade) in Osijek, the town park in Pula (dedicated to the Emperor and King Franz Joseph I), Valeria park in Pula, the town park in Šibenik (today the Robert Visijani park), the park of the Grand Duke Joseph Hotel (later known under the name *Therapia*) in Crikvenica, Nikola Host park in Rijeka, Vrbanic park in Karlovac and many others. Seaside promenades in Opatija and Mali Lošinj were renovated, and the spa gardens in Stubičke Toplice and Lipik were given their final appearance (more: Bojanić Obad Šćitaroci, Obad Šćitaroci, 2004)

DISCUSSION

The aim was to identify the historicist features of the Vranyczany family manor gardens, to look at them in the context of 19th century garden culture in order to make the restoration of the gardens more credible in the future. This was accomplished as much as possible given the limited historical sources.

Four out of five manor houses presented in this article have been preserved, while one is long gone. The preserved manor houses are in use, which allows them to continue. All five gardens are partially preserved so all of them require renovation and far greater care than the one they are currently receiving.

There are two reasons for the exploration of historical parks and gardens. The first one speaks of exploring the creation and the development of the garden in the context of its time and garden architecture in Croatia and Europe. In that process, factors of identity are explored – those common characteristics of the period, but also special attributes which give the garden its distinguishing quality. The second reason speaks of recognizing the starting points for establishing models and criteria for renovation and revitalization. Parks and gardens, as well as cultural heritage, are not a historically finished tale. They exist or may exist today and, in the future, in an authentic way or by adapting to current or future necessities and possibilities. But, in doing so, they must not lose their identity traits, which make them what they are.

The research presented in this paper sets the starting points for a quality renovation, in accordance with the criteria for renovating the historical garden architecture. Old photographic documentation allows for an authentic renovation. Even though the original plans have not been preserved, there are plans of vegetation dating from the second half of the 20th century. Also, there are historic remains at the site. The current state of the gardens points to changes and plant growth as evidence that parks and gardens are living organisms and that we cannot preserve them as depicted in old photographs.

The greatest potential for a comprehensive renovation of historicist gardens is possessed by Gornje Oroslavje, despite the fact that the manor house is no longer there. This is exactly what allows it to take over the role of a public garden, as the owner Lujo Vranyczany originally intended, since he used to open the garden to all interested visitors. It would repay him as well as all previous owners. The garden is the most attractive example of historicist garden architecture in Croatia, but also an excellent example of overall garden archaeology. Most of the buildings

are preserved, at least in their foundations, and with the help of photographs, an excellent restoration is possible, and also a partial, acceptable reconstruction.

Due to their current state, the remains at the site, and archival data, a quality renovation of all Vranyczany's gardens is possible. In some places, there are problems with ownership; often the current purpose is also a problem, as well as the inability to establish a permanent function for them, combined with a lack of preservation funds. However, these are general issues encountered by all dealing with preservation of historic parks and gardens, as well as cultural heritage. This makes exploration of gardens and heritage history all the simpler, if for no other reason, than to document their existence and to record that their limited duration contributed to the enrichment of the cultural landscape of an area, a community, and an age.

Today we think about the ways to ensure a different life and a new purpose for manor houses and historic buildings, one that is different from its original function, and which could contribute in a modern way to the economic and socio-cultural life and development of areas where they are located. And they are most commonly located in villages and small towns. The manor houses could become modern epicenters of these areas, away from large cities, in a cultural landscape that confirms the possibility of coexistence of man and nature.

CONCLUSION

The research showed that there are limited sources for studying Croatian historical gardens. Thanks to a photo album that was purposefully made to document the condition of the garden in Oroslavje soon after the opening at the beginning of the 20th century, it was possible to conduct an analysis and determine the original condition and characteristics of the garden. In addition to old photographs, a valuable source for research and conclusions are the old cadastral maps from which we conclude about the layout of the garden, as well as the position and forms of architectural and horticultural contents and elements.

Among the five explored gardens belonging to the Vranyczany family, the garden in Oroslavje is unique in relation to other Vranyczany manors in terms of area, number and size of garden buildings and the variety of architectural equipment and plants. Such a conclusion stems from the fact that this garden is better documented than the others. The second reason is that Lujo Vranyczany-Dobrinovic, the owner of Oroslavje Gornje,

had great financial opportunities, but also a special preference for garden architecture.

Although all Vranjazyany parks have common basic features, mostly historicist and neo-romantic, each of the five gardens possesses peculiarities arising from the accommodation and spatial context. In Oroslavje and Laduč, you enter a large parterre garden which approaches the manor (the impression of representativeness), and "behind" the manor, there is a hidden garden (*giardino segreto*) with a romantic landscape atmosphere. The garden in Sv. Križ Začretje is small in area, on a slope in front of the manor, but the borrowed landscape seen and experienced from the manor, as well as the view of the manor from the garden, leave a recognizable scenography impression.

The garden in Bedekovčina located on a hill-type hill (burg position) hides a relatively small manor. The garden is like an exhibition with a variety of horticultural and architectural content that creates an artificial atmosphere significantly different from its surroundings. The garden in Mirkovac is recognizable by its mimicry landscape features because it was created from an autochthonous forest in which new exotic tree species were introduced, with few artificial elements.

Members of the Vranjazyany family showed great interest and sensibility for garden architecture. We have concluded that on the basis of a wealth of photographic documents from the beginning of the 20th century, which testify to carefully landscaped and kept gardens and parks as well as a very full life in them. During the time of the family's greatest prominence, at the turn of the 19th century, Vranjazyany's manor houses and gardens reflected not only the financial and economic strength of their owners but also the central European taste of the time.

The original historical appearance has only been partially preserved, so the results of the research are important for the restoration. Although the article does not compare the gardens of the Vranjazyany family manors with the gardens of other manors in Hrvatsko zagorje, the findings so far suggest that Vranjazyany gardens at the beginning of the 20th century were among the best arranged and maintained gardens in Croatia, close to reaching the Central European level.

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ILLUSTRATION SOURCES

- FIGS. 1A, 3A, 4A, 7, 9-14, 16 Archiv of Authors, reproductions from family photo-albums *Oroslavje Gornje*, with the permission of the owner baron Janko Vranjazyne-Dobrinović
- FIGS. 1B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B Habsburg Empire – Cadastral maps (19th century)
- FIG. 2 Illustration preparation: Marin Duic, mag.ing.arch.
- FIGS. 5A, 6A Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia, Fototeka, Zagreb
- FIG. 8 Vienac, vol. 34, 1902, n. 9
- FIG. 15 Archiv of Authors

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