

**OCENE
RECENSIONI
REVIEWS**

Ines Unetič:

KULTURA VRTOV. OBLIKOVANE ZELENE POVRŠINE
V LJUBLJANI OD SREDINE 18. STOLETJA
DO ZGODNJEGA 19. STOLETJA. Ljubljana, Univerza v
Ljubljani, Znanstvena založba Filozofske
fakultete, 2016, 206 strani.

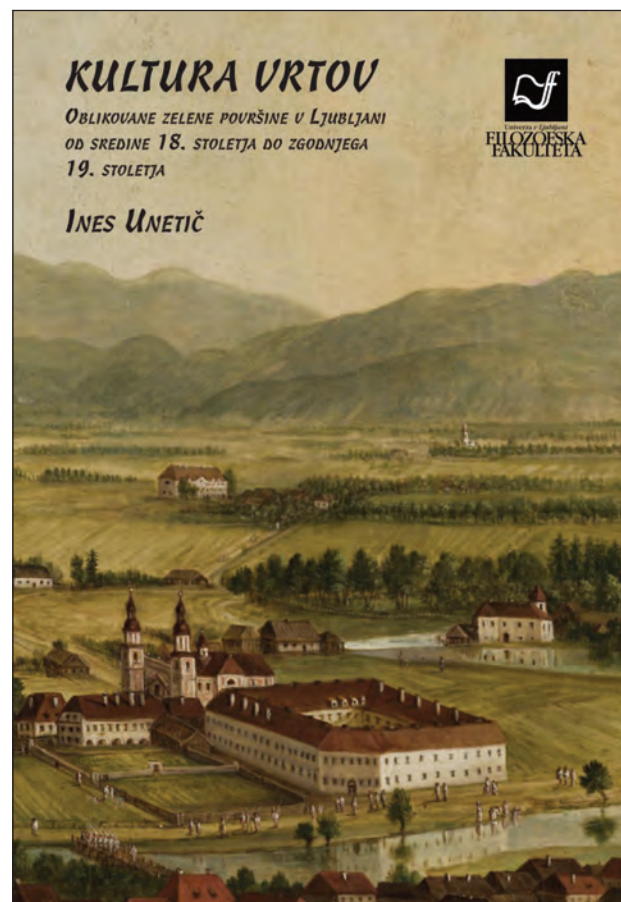
To speak about gardens and their dwellings means to speak about special spaces of the history of art. This is a space of art; a literary, sociable, social and political space. A space where people willingly change the nature with their interventions, so gardens are invariably viewed from the perspective of the relationship between man and nature, as a way of representation and integration of the nature in culture. The presence of gardens therefore testifies to their history and simultaneously to the history of the area into which they grew, their splendour and frequently their transformation as well.

The fact that studies about the art of gardens in Slovenia are few makes *Kultura vrtov* by Ines Unetič even more valuable. The historiographic overview of the garden art in the present book is explicit, as it employs the positioning and placement of gardens to portray the vivacious cultural and social life in the late 17th, 18th and early 19th century. The chapters are structured through the historic intersection of the emergence of the garden art of the capital and its close surroundings, and its integration in the broader European space and time. Categories such as space and time are inseparable in a certain sense. Both meet in the garden. Speaking of space, it can be physical as well as metaphysical. Although the former is subject to the rules of the land, its designer may be daring enough to change it and subject it to his own vision of placing nature into space. Change and changeability are certainly the constants of the design and life of gardens. Gardens have always been a reflection of the metaphysics of the period of their emergence; they form an intersection of ideas, which is partly revealed by the present study, too.

Each chapter focuses on the influences, examples and particularities of the gardens that emerged in Slovenia's capital Ljubljana and its surroundings. Noble gardens of Ljubljana certainly represented a status symbol of their owners. Numerous noble families dared to surround their homes with exquisitely designed gardens that are, as the author stresses, "a clear indicator of the erudition and education of the nobility." Not much information has been preserved about the gardens of the palaces in the 17th century. The book points out the suburban, noble garden of the Auersperg family in Gradišče whose description we owe to Valvasor's *The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola* and which is an

example of early Baroque garden designs in the territory of Slovenia with a central axis. The Auerspergs also devoted a lot of attention to the roof garden of their palace in the city, which was extraordinary because of its opulence as well as because it contained potted orange and lemon trees. Libraries of noble families were of extreme importance for finding examples; the books about plants and spatial planning, i.e. garden design possessed by the nobility are clearly recognisable as a source of inspiration for the design. An example listed by the author is precisely the Auersperg garden in Gradišče, which combined the elements of German and Italian spaces: a perspectivaly-designed garden with a touch of intimacy; an inward-oriented world.

The 18th century Carniola was not unfamiliar with the imaginarium and repertoire of gardens made for nobility and the highest authorities after the example of royal gardens around Europe with Versailles as the unbeatable peak of magnificence. This century thus brings the examples of French garden, especially in the famous embroidery parterre and its patterns that were modified through time. These examples were also engendered by books, precisely a multitude of theoretical works about garden design that essentially influenced the development of the garden art at the time and the



expansion of the Baroque style to Carniola. Leopoldsrue or today's Cekin castle, which was owned by count Lamberg, represented a typical example of Baroque garden design with the central axis connected with the entrance to the castle followed by side axes and a transverse axis; the central part of the four-part surface was designed as an embroidery parterre. This garden evokes several examples: a rather precise Viennese example of the Strozzi palace that count Lamberg, as indicated by the author, had to be familiar with. One can also recognise details from the Althan garden palace in Vienna and from the garden of the Lietzenburg palace in Berlin, today's Charlottenburg.

A notable example among the gardens of noble families is that of Baron Codelli, who rearranged the former vegetable garden in 1749 into a geometrical segmented garden with the typical Baroque axis "*through an arranged avenue that reached as far as the thickly planted river bank.*" It was rounded off by a rondo, the successor of Baroque bosquets. The book also acquaints readers with unrealised projects such as a splendid plan for the summer residence with garden of baron Raigersfeld in Poljane, the author's assumption being that the architectural plan was made by Francesco Robba, a sculptor working in Ljubljana.

Although Unetič does not point out this fact explicitly, it is evident that authors, designers of gardens, are difficult to identify in most cases, especially earlier ones; these were presumably the owners of palaces who were interested in garden design and who demonstrated their interest by their libraries and their selection of literature. Their actual impact on the formal garden design is still difficult to assess in most cases. The common denominator of all nobility's gardens is their intended function: these are spaces of emotional and sensual comfort as well as spaces of pleasure intended for celebrations and entertainment. The nobility of Ljubljana demonstrated their importance also through the idiom of the tamed nature. Gardens thus grew into an indispensable part of the city image.

The development of humanity occasionally encounters major changes, changes in paradigm. Ideological, religious, metaphysical as well as scientific contexts change. The same applies to the changes in mentality, culture and aesthetic expression of man. Enlightenment certainly brought about such changes at the end of the 17th and especially in the beginning of the 18th century: they were evident in the social field as well as in the development of technology and science. Reason and progress are actually Enlightenment terms *par excellence*, leaving their traces in the art of gardens with the development of technology and especially natural science. All those changes led to the emergence of a new garden style, landscape or English landscape style that developed from the tradition of relations between Great Britain and France and the still influential tradition of French Baroque gardens, as well as from newly establi-

shed connections with the Dutch and Northern German space. All circumstances of the time are reflected in the visual, garden expression and determine both its form and its contents: there emerge asymmetrical elements, winding paths and rivulets that are the first indicator of the deviation from the design of French Baroque gardens. A man is thus not only the measure, but also the counter-measure of nature; art is that which draws from inspiration and transcends nature. Intense changes opened the way to new aesthetic norms, new expression and new marks of garden art, too.

In the second half of the 18th century, the new garden style moves to the continent where it is marked by an immense interest in and enthusiasm about botanic, and cabinets of curiosities began to appear as a sign of intellectual erudition and scientific interest of many individuals. The German area as well as other parts of the continent saw a boom in the production of garden literature and publications, which was undoubtedly important for the development of the garden art in the territory of Slovenia as they constituted the foundation for the development of individual gardens. As pointed out by Unetič, the key point of interest for the Carniolan nobility was the Viennese court, from which they drew the interest in botanic and nature that became a fad at the end of the 18th century. The chief figures of the Enlightenment in the Slovenian territory were undoubtedly Žiga Zois and his brother Karl Zois, credited with the first botanical Alpine garden in Slovenia, naturalists Giovanni Antonio Scopoli and Baltazar Hacquet, and slightly later Ksaverij Wulfen and the indispensable Franc Hladnik, the founder of the lyceum botanical garden in Ljubljana. Intellectual enthusiasm undoubtedly brought about the upgrade of this garden that slightly later, in the early 19th century, became the only designed green area of Ljubljana with an educational function: in 1810, in the era of the French power, the Botanical Garden was established. There was also an extreme growth in the interest in new, foreign plant species that were, as a rule, placed in newly-made gardens – not only by intellectuals and natural scientists, but also by other owners of private gardens.

The new era brings another novelty: opening of a garden to the public, or a public park – willingness to open to the people something previously reserved for the chosen. The main credit for this achievement in Ljubljana certainly goes to Žiga Zois; when the author details the baron's gardens, readers catch a glimpse of some of his gardens of extraordinary dimensions that were still privately owned, but open to public; they had an extraordinary impact on the social and cultural life of the people of Ljubljana for they represented not only a place of recreation and comfort, but also a venue of social, ceremonial events. The area of these gardens is now built over, which evokes one of the essential components of the art of gardens: transience.

In the 19th century, it was the French authorities that made a clear mark in the design of green areas of Lju-

bljana that are still visible today. The author comprehensively illustrates the new, English landscape garden style in Ljubljana by examples such as highly interesting, but nowadays non-existent garden design of the episcopal or governor's garden by the Episcopal Palace dating to 1812 at the latest, which belongs among the earliest examples of new garden designs of the landscape design in the central Europe. Because the French authorities arranged their palace as a government palace, a private garden and a public promenade was arranged besides it. The same century saw the arrangement of public parks in Ljubljana, with Tivoli as the biggest among them and Zvezda with a star-like design that follows a typical element of French urbanism whose parks and avenues became an indispensable part of town planning; this also marks an indirect influence of the French on the green areas in Ljubljana. In this period, the city was enriched by numerous walkways such as Latterman's avenue, a "promenade leading from the town to the Tivoli and Cekin mansions or to the foot of the Rožnik hill"; the existing walkway from Kodeljjevo to Fužine castle and back to town on the opposite bank of the Ljubljanica was upgraded, there was also a walkway from Prule to the Rakovnik palace and back to the Zvezda park, as well as a walkway to the popular Castle Hill.

Talking of time, a garden is extremely vulnerable; neither do plants defy time very well nor is it possible to avoid town planning changes that a city undergoes as a living organism. Therefore a garden is initially extremely changeable and vulnerable, and finally transient. The gardens examined and described in the book have, with a few exceptions, mostly disappeared or become a part of a differently planned space, possibly of a larger garden or park plan. It should not be forgotten that the only thing that now testifies to their existence is actually the available archival material. The value of Unetič's book is precisely in the examination of this material, so the book as a whole is an invaluable document of the development of designed green areas of Slovenia's capital related to historical circumstances in the 18th and 19th centuries. It should be mentioned that the present study is the first of the necessary stages of today's examination of the history of gardens since the history of gardens cannot be anything but interdisciplinary and requires a "panoramic approach". A garden is designed in a narrow, close connection with all components of the place where it is located; topography, hydrology, climate etc. Environmental archaeology helps us understand more and more that a garden is not an abstract image but a created, designed construction in interaction with the climate and consequently with the passage of time, in interaction with the environment, with that which surrounds it, and only in this context can a garden be understood in its full historic "volume", i.e. in the extensive, long history.

Just as we would reach for books and draw inspiration for the design and planting of gardens in the past,

we must now, to revive the representations of garden art, reach for *Kultura vrtov* by Ines Unetič to be able to take a retrograde trip to the sensitive heritage of the Slovenian capital Ljubljana from the mid-18th century to the early 19th century. A careful, minutious work and a considerable contribution to both the field of art history and the field of landscape architecture in Slovenia. A lavishly documented walk, a winding stroll among boxwoods, flowers and avenues of the past in the space that is also a part of our present.

Erika Bordon

Tomaž Grušovnik:

ETIKA ŽIVALI. O ČEZVRSTNI GOSTOLJUBNOSTI.

Koper, Annales, 2016, 235 strani.

Prve vtise po prebrani monografiji dr. Tomaža Grušovnika bi morda povzel v dveh vprašalnih stavkih, in sicer: Je etika živali v resnici etika družbe? Mar ni odnos med človekom in živaljo kompatibilen z vladanjem, ki preprečuje vsakršen pristop in na splošno predstavlja

