

*Strand 1: Art Nouveau Cities: between cosmopolitanism and local tradition*

## **From Local to Cosmopolitan: Art Nouveau in Subotica – Szabadka<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Introduction**

After the era of absolutism, in which the leading centres of art and culture had been related to courts and capitals, 19<sup>th</sup> century industrialization released the energy accumulated in the provinces, and all over Europe the artistic explosions occurred in the provincial areas, each of them essentially being a different manifestation of the very same tendency. The wish for individuality and one's own identity, often accompanied with the need for articulation of one's national sentiments, resulted in the creation of the art movement which assumed various names in different environments: in England it was *Arts and Crafts Movement*, in France: *Art Nouveau*, in Germany: *jugendstil*, in Catalonia: *Modernisme*, in Vienna: *Secession*, etc. Many of these countries' provinces saw the birth of a local, autochthonous style based upon the common ideas. In Subotica,<sup>2</sup> however, even though this town towards the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was bigger than Belgrade, Zagreb and Bratislava, a

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<sup>2</sup> Subotica in Serbian, or Szabadka in Hungarian, is situated in the North of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in the Republic of Serbia, on the very border with the Republic of Hungary. Throughout the Middle Ages it was a part of the Kingdom of Hungary, subsequently conquered by the Turks who governed the town for some 150 years. After the Turkish retreat, Subotica was included in the Habsburg Empire. Providing that the settlement did not have a river, it developed at slow pace up until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the railway was built, which facilitated the export of agricultural goods from the vast farmlands of Subotica. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Subotica population quintupled, resulting in the town which had 100,000 citizens at the turn of the century, even though it was predominantly agricultural.

special, autochthonous variant of secession failed to be created. In spite of successful creation of a common identity, the town's mixed multinational and multi-confessional citizenship did not succeed in attaining unique and uniform architectural style, so the town became a stage on which various European influences interwoven, the stage which presented the entire Europe in miniature.

### 1.0. Initial Challenges

During their final mighty expansion, the Turks managed to arrive to Vienna in 1683, yet this siege failed and was followed by the swift retreat of the Turkish army. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Habsburg army completely expelled the Turks from the Hungarian territory. After the Turkish threat ceased to exist and the Treaty of Karlovac was signed, Austrian claim to the Bačka province, and thereby Subotica, was confirmed, and the establishment of the Military Frontier along the river Tisa basin began, accompanied with simultaneous sorting out of political and administrative issues in the settlement nowadays known as Subotica.<sup>3</sup> In 1702, the first meeting of the Committee established to organize the military frontier was held in Szeged (today Hungary), where, among other things, the citizens of what would eventually become Subotice were given a huge territory of some 195,000 cadastral acres.<sup>4</sup> Establishment of the military frontier had the purpose of creating a protective buffer against Turkish intrusions, as well as developing the area's economy.

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, once scruffy settlement that at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was situated on the very borderline between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, and had population of only 1969 people, was riding on the wave of economic prosperity initiated by the introduction of railway and industrial progress in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Habsburg Empire, so at the turn of the

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<sup>3</sup> István IVÁNYI, *Szabadka szabad királyi város története I.* Szabadka, Bittermann József könyvnyomda, 1886, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> Slaven BAČIĆ, *Povelje slobodnih kraljevskih gradova Novog Sada, Sombora i Subotice*, Subotica, Slaven Bačić, 1995, p. 49 – 61.

century it attained the population of almost 100,000 people. From the settlement that, at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had Christian population still living in pit-houses, hiding from potential Turkish intrusions, in mere 200 years, Subotica became a town of extraordinary Art Nouveau buildings, the buildings that nowadays, even though they are still insufficiently recognized, belong to the group of highly representative artefacts of the global cultural heritage.

## **2.0. Emergence of Art Nouveau in Subotica**

Although Subotica got the status of free royal town as early as in 1779, under the name of Maria-Theresiopolis, its government was under strict control by the state, after the establishment of centralized Emperor Joseph's governing system.<sup>5</sup> This predominantly agricultural town, situated far from waterways, with its poorly developed craftsmanship and trade, could not compete with the neighbouring towns up until construction of the railway in 1869. The railway enabled export of the great amount of agricultural products from the farms of Subotica and introduced accelerated economic development in the final two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Influences that will mark 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> turn of the century architecture in Subotica can only be explained by relationships that Subotica citizens had with other parts of Europe. But before the railway, the journeys to faraway European countries were rare and the town life was mainly characterized by isolation. First records of travelling to distant places originate from 1862, when Baron Josip Rudić Jr. and Šandor Vojnić of Bajša applied for passport in order to travel to England for 6 months.<sup>6</sup> They were both members of the richest families of landowners in Subotica. In 1864, a letter was sent from Buda to inform the public in Subotica that on May 9<sup>th</sup> of the same year, international exhibition of industry and art would be held in Dublin, yet, providing that since London exhibition of 1862, which representatives of the town had not attended either, local art and industry failed to provide significant

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<sup>5</sup> A.J.P. TAYLOR, *Habsburška Monarhija 1809 – 1918*, Zagreb, Znanje, 1990, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Historical Archives Subotica (In further footnotes: HAS), F:2, 1708 i 1709/polg.1862.

number of excellent achievements, the citizens of Subotica once again decided not to participate.<sup>7</sup> According to the records the first visit to the world exhibition by the representatives of Subotica was in 1867, when attorney-at-law Benedek Mačković and Dr Güln György applied for passports in order to attend the Paris International Exposition and also to visit other parts of France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.<sup>8</sup> The same year, Jám bor Pál and Lengyel Dezső Geza, full time teacher in the Subotica Gymnasium, asked for passports in order to visit France.<sup>9</sup> It is hard to imagine that they went to France without visiting the world exhibition. From 1869, the journeys were increasingly frequent, while the information about the first Subotica citizens awarded on international exhibitions originates from 1875, when Jakab Bilić and Albert Govorković were honoured on the international exhibition in Vienna.<sup>10</sup>

The evidence of engineers' travelling may be found in the Historical Archive of Subotica, which could explain their pioneering enterprises materialized in Subotica, as well as various European influences that interwoven in town's architecture, especially when it comes to Art Nouveau. Furthermore, many engineers that worked in Subotica came to town from other parts of Habsburg Empire. Construction engineer Scultéty János (1806 – 1873) came to Subotica in 1842 from Satu Mare and was named town construction supervisor. Upon his arrival, he was ordered to design a hotel with theatre, to replace the Big Inn which ceased to provide for the towns ever increasing needs. In 1844, he sought the permission of the Magistrate to visit some towns that already had smaller capacity, well-built and established theatres, in order to design a similar venue in Subotica based on those examples.<sup>11</sup> His route remains unknown, and there is no evidence as to whether he travelled outside the Habsburg Empire. However, his appeal testifies to the tendency of the local engineers to expand their knowledge travelling and observing buildings in other parts of the world.

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<sup>7</sup> HAS, F:2, 5199/polg.1864.

<sup>8</sup> HAS, F:2, 1690/polg.1867.

<sup>9</sup> HAS, F:2, 2182/polg., 1867. 3272/polg.1867.

<sup>10</sup> HAS, F:2, 920/polg. 1875.

<sup>11</sup> HAS, M, 18.A.33./aec. 1844.

The result of Scultéty's enthusiasm was the first monumental public building built in Subotica in 1854: the building of hotel and theatre (today building of a "National Theatre").<sup>12</sup>

Titus Mačković (1851 – 1919), an architect from Subotica, applied for a passport when he was just a student to travel for a year to Germany, Switzerland, Holland and Italy.<sup>13</sup> Not only the travelling, but also the engineers' studying in Vienna and Budapest as well as in other European cities; Graz, Zurich, or Aachen, influenced the arrival of new ideas into the local environment.

Another renowned architect was invited to Subotica to design a rental palace for Simeon Leović and his wife Jelisaveta. In Subotica in 1875, Simeon Leović was named royal notary public. In 1892, he contracted architects Lechner Ödön (1845 - 1914) and Pártos Gyula (1845 - 1916) to design a two storey rental palace in the new avenue being built by the Train Station.<sup>14</sup> Lechner Ödön studied architecture in Budapest, and later on in Berlin, on the Schinkel Academy. Upon his return to Budapest, he partnered with Pártos Gyula. Their firm was getting many contracts during the building boom of the 1870's. After his wife had deceased in 1875, shortly after their marriage, Lechner went to Paris where he worked for three years under the tutorship of Clement Parent. He participated on restoration of a number of chateaus in France, simultaneously familiarizing with the emerging Art Nouveau. In the late 1889's, he stayed in London, and his work consequently kept less and less characteristics of historicism. He designed the Museum and School of Applied Arts in Budapest in 1896 for the Millennium celebration in Hungary.<sup>15</sup> Lechner decorated this building with the ornaments inspired by Hungarian folk art motifs which he believed to be of oriental origin. This fact was then still unconfirmed by

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<sup>12</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: „Od Velike gostione do pozorišta“, *Zbornik radova Građevinskog fakulteta*, 14, 2005, p. 4 – 10.

<sup>13</sup> HAS, F:2, 5302/polg. 1870.

<sup>14</sup> Gordana VUJNOVIĆ PRČIĆ; Viktorija ALADŽIĆ; Mirko GRLICA, *Gradotvorci I*, Subotica, Gradski muzej, 2004, P. 104 – 109.

<sup>15</sup> János GERLE; Attila KOVÁCS; Imre MAKOVECZ, *A Századforduló magyar építészete*, Budapest, Szépirodalmi könyvkiadó – Bonex, 1990, p. 117 - 127.

scientific research. His vision of new Hungarian art was based on the re-birth of pre-Christian Hungarian culture, with folk art as its authentic source. He developed his unique individual style. Searching for national and Asiatic, he created international and modern architecture.<sup>16</sup> The palace of Simeon Leović was not inspired by Art Nouveau, yet it certainly demonstrated the influence that work in France and England had on Lechner. The use of brick and stone on the façade of the Leović Palace, as well as the ornaments, resemble the renaissance architecture of chateaus and palaces. The dome of the little tower above the side risalit uncannily resembles the domes of the Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest which Lechner designed almost concurrently with the Leović Palace.

The story of Art Nouveau in Subotica, which in the mid-nineteenth century was still agricultural, feudal and strictly clerical, begins with a relief of a nude sleeping woman laid down on a crescent ark, showering in a setting sunlight (Fig. 1). As if a French symbolist painting was reproduced on a tympanum of an unsightly single storey house in the recently emerged town. The house was designed in 1899 by Ferenc J. Raichl as a rental property (Vase Stajića Street, no: 11), together with another building that had the façade in the style of Vienna secession (Vase Stajića Street, no: 13). It remains unknown what inspired Raichl to present such an audacious composition on the façade of his house in the environment which was still rather conservative. On the other façade showed decorative masks of female faces with the locks of their hair interwoven, inspired by the female faces on the entrance of the “Secession” building in Vienna. Obvious similarity implies that Raichl visited Vienna immediately before that, or at least saw the illustrations of the “Secession” building, which had been finished in Vienna in 1898.

Raichl Ferenc (1869 – 1960), born in Apatin, moved to Subotica after he had finished his studies in Budapest. He got married in Subotica and started living in the rental palace owned by Subotica Mayor, Lazar Mamužić, the

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<sup>16</sup> Ákos MORAVÁNSZKY, *Competing Visions – Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867 – 1918*, Cambridge, London, The MIT Press, 1998, p. 18, 97.

building that still exists in the Lenin Park no. 7.<sup>17</sup> He was already known for his experimenting with styles of the buildings he designed, since he designed the façade of the “Nacional” hotel in Subotica in neo-renaissance style, and the façade of the “Nacionalna Kasina” building in the style of neo-baroque.

The year 1899 saw the making of yet another Vienna Secession building in Subotica: a three storey rental palace designed by Titus Mačković and commissioned by Fazekas Lajos, who was also an architect.<sup>18</sup> Apart from the geometrical secession influences present on the façade, which heralded new tendencies in architecture and art, Mačković envisaged the use of reinforced concrete in constructing floor structures, instead of Prussian vault built between rolled steel I-girders, which was first introduced in Subotica architecture also by Mačković at the beginning of the 1880's. These three Art Nouveau houses introduced the series of extraordinary buildings, all erected in Subotica in the two decades that followed.

Vienna secession was also utilized in constructing Austro-Hungarian Bank in 1901, now in Dimitrija Tucovića Street 15, which was designed by Raichl Ferenc.<sup>19</sup> After the founding of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1867, and the exhausting negotiations on the two states' mutual relations within this federation, the issue of the central bank was not raised. Only in 1878, the central bank was successfully transformed into institution with the equal shares for both Austria and Hungary. After the transition phase lasting for eight years, silver florin was replaced by golden crown as the valid currency of Austria-Hungary. After the common central bank was established, the trust of the people all over the Monarchy had to be gained. Apart from the building of the central Austro-Hungarian Bank in Budapest, the authorities commissioned building of the

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<sup>17</sup> Kata MARTINOVIĆ CVIJIN, *Subotički opus Ferenca K. Rajhla*, Subotica, Izdavačko odeljenje časopisa Rukovet, 1985. P. 8 – 11.

<sup>18</sup> HAS, F:2, ép. eng. VI kör 13/1899.

<sup>19</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: „Zgrada Austrougarske banke u Subotici“, *Arhitektura i urbanizam*, 36, 2012, p. 44 – 49.

banks in towns all over the state.<sup>20</sup> The architect Hubert József (1846 – 1916) designed the buildings for 32 branch offices of the Austro-Hungarian Bank all over Hungary. However, the building of the Austro-Hungarian Bank in Subotica was designed by Raichl Ferenc. Original Raichl's design was not discovered yet, but the part of it was printed in Austrian journal "Der Architect" in 1901.<sup>21</sup>

The tendency to build recognizable offices for the Austro-Hungarian Bank throughout the Monarchy was also evident in Subotica. Some basic elements of the façade were modelled after the original building in Budapest. Even though the original building was finished in 1905, it is obvious that Raichl was acquainted with the awarded design of Alpár Ignác (1855 – 1928).<sup>22</sup> The building of the Austro-Hungarian Bank in Subotica was built on a corner plot of land with prominent risalites on the corner and ends of the building and vertical pilasters stretching from the ground level to the cornice, as well as horizontal strips just like those on the building of the central bank in Budapest. The building of Subotica branch office, although of eclectic design, has characteristic decorative elements of Vienna secession: on the façade, in the fields above windows, there are reliefs of female faces with interwoven strands of hair, the symbol of sunflower on the cartouches of the side pilasters on the risalite, relief of Mercury's face in the fields bellow the windows of the risalite, as well as the ornaments on the gate: sphinx-shaped door handle, the carved key and Mercury's face. Apart from their decorative role, these ornaments also had symbolic meaning, indicating the building's function and institution of bank as the guardian of treasure.

### **3.0. Erection of Subotica Masterpieces**

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<sup>20</sup> Dr János ZÁDORI, *The Buildings of the National Bank of Hungary*, Budapest, TDI Promotion Agency, 1996, p. 2-5.

<sup>21</sup> HAS, F:47. inž. 1047/1921. Österreichisch-ungarische Bank in Szabadka Vom Architekten Franz Raichl, *Der Architekt VIII*, Jahrgang 1901: wiener Monatshefte für Bauwesen und decorative Kunst, Verlag von Anton Schroll and Co, Wien.

<sup>22</sup> Dr János ZÁDORI, *The Buildings of ...*, p. 4.



Hungarian secession was introduced in Subotica by architects Komor Marcell (1868 - 1944) and Jakab Dezső (1864 - 1932) who designed the Synagogue built in 1902.<sup>23</sup> The designs for this building were made for competition organized in Szeged in 1899 for the design of Szeged Synagogue. The competition was won by Baumhorn Lipót (1860 - 1932). Jewish community of Subotica, providing that they also opted to build a new Synagogue, accepted the Komor and Jakab design without hesitation.<sup>24</sup>

Contrary to the majority of other synagogues built in Central Europe at the time, that had longitudinal base, the Synagogue in Subotica has the central space with eight steel pillars arranged along the edges of a truncated-corner square. These pillars are simultaneously the basis for the building's extraordinary structure. In their upper zone, the pillars are mutually connected with horizontal steel beams 80cm high which serve as a support for the massive octagonal circumferential brick wall (tambour). Above the tambour stretches a concrete dome with "rabic" netting, 8-10 centimetres thick, whose rigidity and bearing capacity were provided by the ribs which are 50 centimetres high and arranged in the shape of a star. Near the apex of the dome there are eight of these ribs, each of them branching into two separate ribs, and with addition of 16 more ribs on the bottom, creating the total of thirty two ribs near the base of the dome. Above the concrete dome rises a wooden construction of the roof and tower which shields the rabric dome from the weather, while simultaneously emphasising the dome's position viewed from the outside. Four smaller towers above the corner areas of the Synagogue serve to achieve the balance of the masses, as well as to emphasise the verticals of the Synagogue's four stairways.<sup>25</sup> In this way, by supporting the central dome by pillars, exterior walls remain unburdened, being just sheet-walls as they mimic the structure of a tent (Fig. 2).

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<sup>23</sup> HAS, F:2, ép. eng. VII kör 4/ 1901.

<sup>24</sup> Kata MARTINOVIĆ CVIJIN, *Subotički opus Komora i Jakaba*, Subotica: NIO „Subotičke novine”, 1988, p. 34 – 41. VÁRALLYAY Réka, *Komor Marcell Jakab Dezső*, Budapest: Holnap Kiadó, 2006. p. 52 – 61.

<sup>25</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: „Sinagoga u Subotici“, *DaNS*, 48, 2004, p. 42 – 44.

Complemented by decorative elements including stained glass windows made in the famous workshop of Róth Miksa in Budapest, as well as the elements made of unglazed terracotta produced in the Zsolnay factory in Pécs, and decorative painting of the interior, the building of Synagogue represents an extraordinary example of turn of the century Hungarian national style. Stylized motifs of rose, carnation, tulip, peacocks feathers and branches with leaves, which originate from Hungarian folklore art, are present in all decorative elements: from stained glass, plaster ornaments, decorative painting to terracotta. The Synagogue is thus entirely original and unique edifice of Hungarian secession style which is present in all the aspects of the building, from the most general concepts of design, shape and construction, to its smallest detail.

The important influence on architecture in Subotica, especially the architecture of the secession style, was the one of Pártos Gyula, the architect, even though he did not design a single building in Subotica on his own. However, he was born in Apatin, just like Raichl Ferenc and possibly influenced Raichl's work. As a youth, he was also probably acquaintance with Simeon Leović, who was born in nearby Sombor, which resulted in Lechner being contracted to design the Leović's Palace in Subotica.

Just across the street from the Mayor Mamužić's house, in which Raichl resided, Raichl bought a plot of land (now Raichl Ferenc Park, no: 5) to design a luxurious family palace there in 1903. In designing the palace, Raichl was majorly influenced by Hungarian folklore art, thus extensively using the ornaments made of ceramics from the "Zsolnay" factory in Pecs. Furthermore, the façade in the colour of butter is richly adorned with the folk-influenced turquoise mosaic. Raichl represented the ancient architecture of the Transylvania Hungarians by the decorative wooden bay windows on the façade (Fig. 3).<sup>26</sup>

Functionally connected rooms in the palace, as well as their grouping in separate zones, made this palace a comfortable place for living. The first floor of

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<sup>26</sup> Gordana VUJNOVIĆ PRČIĆ, ... *Gradotvorci I...*, p. 88–93.

the palace contained series of circularly arranged rooms, starting with a dining hall and a winter garden overlooking the yard, which also doubled as ballroom. From the dining hall one would enter a male smoking salon decorated as Turkish lounge, than a billiards parlour and finally a music room which was also directly connected to the dining hall. Next to the music room there was a female salon which provided a direct access to a bedroom. All the salons and the bedroom were oriented to the street. The bedroom was connected to a bathroom and a dressing room which provided access to a nursery. The last room on the first floor, oriented to the yard, was a small dining room for intimate family breakfast with a food elevator in the immediate vicinity, which connected the dining room with the kitchen below. The servants used service staircase, while all the service facilities were located on the ground floor. Thus the palace was divided into a number of zones, while the zones were interconnected in accordance with their function.<sup>27</sup> The palace was finished in 1904. Its building was followed by the construction of a few more very important architectural ventures in the style of Hungarian secession.

Town hall as a symbol of power and prosperity is usually the most dominant and imposing building in a town, together with church. With the construction of Theatre in 1854, the old baroque Town Hall in Subotica, built in 1828, lost its central place. A number of residential and rental palaces that were built at the turn of the century totally eclipsed the existing Town Hall.<sup>28</sup>

The Mayor Biró Károly, who had succeeded Lazar Mamužić in 1902, initiated construction of a new Town Hall. Due to the contrasting opinions about the building's erection, a competition was organized in 1906, where the designer was able to decide whether he would design a new building in baroque style, or reconstruct the existing Town Hall.<sup>29</sup> The first prize of the competition was awarded to Komor Marcell and Jakab Dezső, the second to Bálint Zoltán and

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<sup>27</sup> Kata MARTINOVIĆ CVIJIN, *Subotički opus Ferenc...*, p. 17 – 27.

<sup>28</sup> Gordana VUJNOVIĆ PRČIĆ, *Grad i gradske kuće – urbanistički kontekst*, in Gordana VUJNOVIĆ PRČIĆ (ed.) *Gradska kuća Subotica – Várpszáza Szabadka: 1912 – 2012.*, Subotica, Međuopštinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, p. 24.

<sup>29</sup> HAS, XV 87/1906.

Jámbor Lajos from Budapest, while the third place was won by Raichl Ferenc. Towards the end of 1907, at a meeting of the Committee for building of Town Hall, Jakab Dezső proposed that the new Town Hall should not be built in the baroque style, but rather in the style of secession. One of Jakab's strong arguments to support this shift was that this would significantly reduce the costs of construction.<sup>30</sup> Town's Construction Committee approved of this change, as well as the Mayor Biró, while the town's Assembly adopted it on December 31<sup>st</sup> 1907. However, the problems set in when, on March 28<sup>th</sup> 1908, the letter arrived from the Ministry in Budapest that the design had been rejected, while the State Council for Civil Engineering had found a lot of flaws with the design, and demanded many changes.<sup>31</sup>

Providing that, at the time, in the town of Târgu Mureș, now Romania, the Town Hall was being finished which was also designed by Komor and Jakab, Biró Károly visited the Mayor of Târgu Mureș, Mr Bérnady György, and subsequently the both mayors went to Budapest together where they finally managed to get the approval for the erection of Town Hall in Subotica in the style of Hungarian secession. Subotica Town Hall was being built between 1908 and 1910, while two additional years were spent in finishing all the interior work (Fig. 4). Due to its location, magnitude and flamboyant architecture of the new national style, Town Hall became "the monument to an epoch of high aspirations, great potentials and great achievements".<sup>32</sup>

In its layout, Town Hall drew on the baroque concepts, yet the introduction of a series of innovation such as four court yards, separate location for sanitation facilities and staircase in the transverse tracts that divide the yards, as well as opening of shops and a town tavern on the ground floor, resulted in the creation of a contemporary building in line with present demands. Premises of the town's management were no more excluded from urban life, since opening of the shops, and especially the restaurant on the ground floor, made it

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<sup>30</sup> VÁRALLYAY Réka, *Komor Marcell Jakab Dezső...* p. 110 – 125.

<sup>31</sup> Laslo MAĐAR: „(...) Po stilu naš je projekat sasvim originalan“, *Rukovet* 4-5-6, 1998, p. 29.

<sup>32</sup> <sup>32</sup> Kata MARTINOVIĆ CVIJIN, *Subotički opus Komora ...*, p. 48.

possible for the building to stay busy daily, living to the rhythm of the town. Simultaneously, this provided funding for the maintenance of this multifunctional building.

The first floor featured town's government and administration, the second had town's police, while the third constituted town's prison.<sup>33</sup> All the offices were oriented to the street; corridors were oriented to the yard, while sanitations and stairways were in separate tracts, almost equally away from all the rooms. Within the building, there was a hierarchy of areas according to their attractiveness. The grand hall, offices of the Mayor and Great Prefect were oriented to the Square of the Republic and had the most opulent furnishing.

Out of all technical achievements, it should be emphasised that, due to the terrain issues, the tower of the Town Hall lies on a concrete slab mounted on wooden piles, while a concrete foundation walls were built to protect the building from groundwater. Steel structural elements on the building were masked by secession style ornaments. Steel pillars of the Town Restaurant were hidden behind rabic netting and mortar, just like the ceiling construction of the grand hall which is 14 meters wide and was made of steel grid 50 centimetres high.

The building incorporated a large number of different materials: trachyte, artificial stone, wrought iron, copper sheets, marble, terrazzo tiles, brass, frosted glass, Zsolnay ceramics<sup>34</sup>, as well as stained glass windows designed by the famous Hungarian painter Nagy Sándor. Decoration of the building in the style of Hungarian secession was inspired by the motifs taken from Hungarian folklore art of Transylvania. It was made based on the drawings of Jakab Dezső, through the joint effort of the architect and craftsmen.<sup>35</sup>

After the Town Hall had been finished, the town authorities ventured in construction of yet another building: Town's Rental Palace (now Branislava

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<sup>33</sup> HAS, F:275, kutija 52.

<sup>34</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: "Zsolnay Ceramics in the Civil Architecture of Szabadka (Subotica)" in Éva CSENKEY, Ágota STEINERT, *Hungarian Ceramics from the Zsolnay Manufactory 1853 – 2001.*, New York: The Bard Graduate Center, 2002, p. 217-222.

<sup>35</sup> Henrik BRAUN, *Városháza felavatásának ünnepére*, Nagyvárad, 1912, p. 19.

Nušića Street, no. 2).<sup>36</sup> The competition was won by a young architect Vadász Pál (1874 - 1944) born in Szakcs.<sup>37</sup> The Town's Rental Palace demonstrates evident influence of the Viennese artistic circles in its ceramic medallions, reliefs and other secession-style ornaments. Decorative elements of the façade and staircase made of Zsolnay ceramics, a glazed loft including a painter's studio, an electrical elevator, masks, wrought iron railing and flag holders, all these elements were incorporated into a uniform four-storey building which came quite close to epitomizing an artistic ideal at the turn of the century, the one of a total work of art – *gesamtkunstwerk*.<sup>38</sup>

#### 4.0. Other Influences

After Viennese and Hungarian secession, Subotica also got Munich *jugendstil* on the façade of the “Golden Lamb” hotel, which was renovated in 1904, with Titus Mačković being the architect redesigning it. The “Golden Lamb” hotel was probably built around 1856, right after the construction of the “National Theatre” building, and in its immediate vicinity, its present address being Korzo, no. 3. It was owned by the Lichtneckert family. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the façade had already been dilapidated, and since in 1904, the classicist theatre building was undergoing comprehensive restoration, adaptation and upgrading in the secession style, the owners of the “Golden Lamb” wished to keep pace with these tendencies. Titus Mačković thus adapted the building in the style of Munich *jugendstil*, achieving the perfect harmony between decoration, shape of the openings, joinery and function, so characteristic for secession.

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<sup>36</sup> HAS, F:2, ép. eng. I kör 3/1913.

<sup>37</sup> János GERLE, Attila KOVÁCS, Imre MAKOVECZ, *A Századforduló magyar építésze*, Budapest, Szépirodalmi könyvkiadó – Bonex, 1990, p. 203.

<sup>38</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: “New ideas at the Turn of a New Century – architecture of secession in Subotica”, in Ljubica MILOVIĆ (ed.), *Ideologies II Ideals – contribution to the research of the 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture in Vojvodina*, Novi Sad: Muzej savremene umetnosti Vojvodine, 2010, p. 114 – 125.

Not long afterwards, a Belgian enterprise named "Compagnie de Services Urbain - Bruxelles", majority owners of Subotica tram company at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contracted Titus Mačković in 1907 to devise a design for the head office in Subotica.<sup>39</sup> This was yet another opportunity for Mačković to transcend the architectural designs usually required by the citizens of Subotica, and, providing that the commissioners were originating from the environment in which Art Nouveau gave birth to its prettiest and most intricate floral designs, to erect a structure in line with European artistic standards. The result was a two-storey building, simple and functional, with four façades and clean wall surfaces (now Segedinski Put, no. 22). Reminiscence of Viennese secession which was applied in the design was changed during construction, so the building got two protruding gables modelled on Darmstadt *jugendstil*.<sup>40</sup> This detached cubical building was totally "modern", directly or indirectly derived from cubic shapes which were utilized by Peter Behrens, initially subtly in his Darmstadt works, only to become totally obvious in his later works. As Titus was shortly studying in Aachen, he must have had visited Darmstadt as well.

## 5.0. Conclusion

The Art Nouveau brought the influences of different local European styles to the provincial town of Subotica, thus promoting the town's multicultural spirit and creating cosmopolitan atmosphere. Although after the First World War, Subotica was incorporated into the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and consequently into the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia after the WWII, while today is part of the Republic of Serbia, in the aftermath of the 1990's wars, Subotica did not lose its cosmopolitan appearance. In the meantime, some important town buildings were torn down: the building of the

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<sup>39</sup> HAS, F:2, ép. eng. 0 kör 66/1907

<sup>40</sup> Viktorija ALADŽIĆ: "Turn of the Century Buildings and Architects in Subotica", *Edinburgh Architecture Research*, 30, 2006, p. 82- 91.

National Theatre, which truth be told, was not in the style of secession, but represented the essence of urban and cosmopolitan spirit, as well as Raichl's rental houses in the Vase Stajića Street no. 11 and 13. Cosmopolitan spirit is still preserved not only in architectural Art Nouveau heritage but also in the campaigns led by NGO's and the citizens of Subotica in order to protect this rich cultural heritage.