

*Strand 3. The New Frontiers: Unveiling Art Nouveau Cities*

**CZECH ART NOUVEAU ARCHITECTURE IN THE CITIES OF PRAGUE, BRNO  
AND HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ**

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**Abstract:**

The contribution presents the best of Art Nouveau architecture in Czech cities of Prague, Hradec Králové and Brno. In the Czech capital it was usual to decorate in the new style only facades and interiors, whilst in Brno and Hradec Králové arose whole Art Nouveau buildings. Prague architect Osvald Polívka, inspired by Parisian stream, created many colourful projects for the banking houses, insurance company palaces or department stores. Most of the other architects were inspired by Vienna (especially the architect Otto Wagner), just like one of the most respected Czech architect Jan Kotěra, who designed a lyrical district house in Hradec Králové and only a few years later monumental and moderate City Museum. At the beginning of the 20th century were built two interesting villas in Brno: the first modern house in the Habsburg monarchy, Reissig villa by Leopold Bauer, and Dušan Jurkovič's own villa inspired by Slavic folk art.

**Key Words:** Art Nouveau, architecture, Prague, Hradec Králové, Jan Kotěra, City Museum, Brno, Leopold Bauer, Reissig villa, Dušan Jurkovič

Czech Republic used to be a part of Habsburg Monarchy during the era of Art Nouveau. There are three historical Czech lands – Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia – and all of them were among the best developed parts of the monarchy. Thanks to the industrial prosperity there were constructed buildings of good quality and there were also first-rate technical high schools.<sup>1</sup> The architects were inspired especially by visiting

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<sup>1</sup> Selected bibliography related to this topic:

the exhibitions – in 1891 General Land Centennial Exhibition and in 1895 Czechoslovak Ethnographic Exhibition were held in Prague. The second one showed growing interest in Czech and Moravian folk art. For Art Nouveau architecture was especially important Prague Exhibition of Architecture and Engineering, held in 1898 and the 8th Exhibition of the Vienna Secession in 1900, where concept of English modern house was presented. Apart from that architects were inspired by Otto Wagner's book *Modern Architecture*.<sup>2</sup> He separated creating of the space via construction and decoration. Moreover he requested architecture to be as refined and comfortable as possible. In my paper I am going to present you Art Nouveau architecture in three cities: Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, Hradec Králové, a city where modern architecture was patronized by a liberal mayor, and finally Brno, the capital of Moravia. In view of the fact that Prague Art Nouveau heritage is better known than the other ones, I will focus less on Prague and more on Hradec Králové and Brno.

### PRAGUE ART NOUVEAU ARCHITECTURE<sup>3</sup>

Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic and from time immemorial it was a cultural centre of the Czech Lands.<sup>4</sup> Art Nouveau in Prague architecture is presented mainly on the facades and in the interior decoration, but rarely in the ground plan, brought about the routine, that constructors built the structure and then hire an architect to design the frontage. The other speciality of Prague is that facades are often decorated with frescoes or mosaics, which are inspired by Czech sgraffitos used in Neo-Renaissance architecture.<sup>5</sup> Building boom at the turn of the century was caused especially because of the redevelopment law from 1893, which caused that 600 structures were torn down in the city centre. First buildings decorated with Art Nouveau

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Jindřich VYBÍRAL, *Česká architektura na prahu moderní doby: devatenáct esejů o devatenáctém století*, Praha, 2002.

Petr WITTLICH, *Česká secese*, Praha, 1985.

Pavel ZATLOUKAL, *Příběhy z dlouhého století: architektura let 1750 – 1918 na Moravě a ve Slezsku*, Olomouc, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Otto WAGNER, *Das moderne Architektur*, Wien, 1895.

<sup>3</sup> Selected bibliography related to this topic:

Rostislav ŠVÁCHA, *Od moderny k funkcionalismu*, Praha, 1995.

Marie VITOCHOVÁ, *Praha a secese*, Praha, 1997.

Petr WITTLICH, *Secesní Prahou: podoby stylu*, Praha, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Current population of Prague is 1 million inhabitants.

<sup>5</sup> The Czech Neo-Renaissance style was popular in the 80s and 90s of the 19th century.

motifs started to emerge after Prague Exhibition of Architecture and Engineering, held in 1898.

Friedrich Ohmann, a professor of Prague School of Applied Arts, designed in that year the facade and the interior of the Corso Café. Apart from Art Nouveau elements there are still visible the Historicist reminiscences. Just a year later, in 1899, he projected the facade and the interior of Hotel Central, completed by his students Alois Dryák and Bedřich Bendelmayer.<sup>6</sup> Sotlfy modelled floral decoration was presented also on one of the first lifts in Prague.

At the turn of the century a controversial building was built by Jan Kotěra, Otto Wagner's student. Peterka's House is inspired not only by Wagnerian scheme, but also by Horta's Tassel palace in Brussels. Reflecting the location on a shopping boulevard the building features unusual generously open parterre and mezzanine. Its sober decoration was criticized by Josef Hlávka, the representative of Historicism: "So this is the saviour from Vienna! The facade looks like some dog has licked it!"<sup>7</sup>

Architect Osvald Polívka is known as an author of banking houses, department stores or insurance company houses. The facades remind of the Art Nouveau posters - not only with its colourfulness, but especially with the flatness of decorations. Polívka's style was undoubtedly inspired by Parisian Art Nouveau, whilst most of other Art Nouveau architects in Prague were inspired by the Viennese one.<sup>8</sup> Even when he collaborated with painters and sculptors, he designed the facade decoration on his own. In 1903 he projected the palace of insurance company Praha (fig. 1), which is richly decorated also with inscriptions: under the cornice is the name of the company "PRAHA" (in every letter there is a little window), made of the colourful floral ceramic mosaic, above the oriel window is written "insure" and above the windows you can read what can be insured: life, capital, pension and dowry. The insurance theme is also implicated in ceramic relief made by sculptor Ladislav Šaloun. The neighbouring publishing house Topič was also projected by Polívka, it was built in 1906 – 1908. The decoration and colourfulness is moderated, on rounded gables there are mosaic

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<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Ohmann had to leave Prague to project the modification of Viennese Hofburg.

<sup>7</sup> Daniela KARASOVÁ et al., *Jan Kotěra 1871 – 1923: zakladatel moderní české architektury*, Praha, 2001, p. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Prague City Council preferred Paris to Vienna because of political ideology and for this reason the Council commissioned Polívka (and not other architects) to project the public commissions.

inscriptions “TOPIČ“, the name of the publisher is presented also on a balcony. Figural embossments between windows portrey a painter, a writer and a philosopher. Polívka designed these two neighbouring buildings in a different way on purpose – he aimed to differentiate female (Praha) and male (Topič) elements.

Francis Joseph Station was built in 1901 – 1909.<sup>9</sup> Josef Fanta designed it as a temple of a new era and also as a modern city gate – the glassed semicircular arch dominates the facade and the gable is clamped between two pylons with the globes on their top. The organically curved shape trackage’s roofing is made from metal and glass and in the interior are depicted the symbols of state ideology.

The last Prague building I would like to mention is the Municipal House (1903 – 1911) which was meant to be a centre of Czech culture. The structure was multifunctional, it combines representative, exhibition and commercial premises. Two architects projected the complex, but each of them had another vision how the building should look like. Most likely Osvald Polívka designed the interior and Antonín Balšánek had a bigger deal on exterior, which is constructed in Neo-Renaissance and Neo-Baroque forms. In contrast, the interior decoration was made by the best painters and sculptores at that time.<sup>10</sup>

## ART NOUVEAU ARCHITECTURE IN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ<sup>11</sup>

Hradec Králové is a city situated in Eastern Bohemia and has population of 100 000 inhabitants.<sup>12</sup> Since the half of the 18th century there was a fortress, but after defeat at the Battle of Hradec Králové in 1866 it was obvious, that the fortress is not needed anymore. Moreover, it was braking the city development, so the fortress was sold to the City Council. The money earned by selling the estates was used for building development, because the City Council wanted to have high quality architecture. For

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<sup>9</sup> Currently the Main Station.

<sup>10</sup> The artists participated in the interior decoration: Mikoláš Aleš, Max Švabinský, František Ženíšek, Ladislav Šaloun, Karel Novák, Josef Mařatka, Josef Václav Myslbek, Alfons Mucha, Jan Preisler and Karel Špillar.

<sup>11</sup> Selected bibliography related to this topic:

Marie BENEŠOVÁ, *Salón republiky: moderní architektura Hradce Králové*, Hradec Králové, 2000.

Jakub POTŮČEK, *Hradec Králové: Architektura a urbanismus: 1895 – 2009*, Hradec Králové, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> The distance to Prague is 100 kilometres.

this reason city regulation plans were designed, which was rather unusual at the end of the 19th century. The person who started this successful era of Hradec Králové was a deputy mayor Ladislav Jan Pospíšil, after his death continued in his work the new mayor František Ulrich – an attorney and very capable man, who ruled the city for incredible 34 years.<sup>13</sup> The redevelopment law was passed in 1897 and new structures were free from property tax for 18 years. At the turn of the century industrial development increased and the city was also financially supported by numerous banking-houses.

František Ulrich wanted to change Hradec Králové into a modern city. When a new school building was needed, he asked Wagner's students to design it. Contemporary critics described Ottokar Böhm and Hubert Gessner's Academy of Commerce from the years 1896-1897 as the first non-style (modern) building in Hradec Králové.<sup>14</sup> A monumental symmetrical free standing building with subtle floral as well as historicism decoration is modern especially in the work with space and construction. Above the firm cornice four figures of Atlantes are carrying globes on their backs.

Next modern building was designed by another Wagner's student, Jan Kotěra. In 1900 he wrote an essay called *On New Art*.<sup>15</sup> His primary idea was "the constructive creation of space" and "in the second place, beautification."<sup>16</sup> The final appearance of a building is thus derived from the floor plan layout, which was supposed to be as functional as possible, while the facade only divides and supports "the clearly constructively expressed masses."<sup>17</sup> That unity between interior and exterior of the building he finally achieved in the project of the District House (1902 – 1904). It could be seen especially on the commercial ground floor, which is almost entirely opened onto the street. The restaurant and café were situated there, the first floor was used by the district council and the second floor was used as a hotel. The luxury interiors of the restaurant were designed by Jan Kotěra and his colleagues, painter Jan Preisler and sculptor Stanislav Sucharda. The asymmetric facade consists of two parts. The left side is

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<sup>13</sup> He was in function of the mayor of the city in years 1895 – 1929.

<sup>14</sup> Karel HERAIN: "Ulrichův Hradec Králové", *Umění III*, 1930, p. 313.

<sup>15</sup> Jan KOTĚRA: "O novém umění", *Volné směry IV*, 1900, p. 189.

<sup>16</sup> Idem.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

accentuated by softly modelled oriel. Under the undulated cornice there is a stucco frieze, richly decorated with vegetal ornaments and also with coat of arms of Hradec Králové. The right part of the facade is decorated with figures of lions above the cornice, there is presented a loggia and a portal. Visual impression is based on contrasts, it is a fight against static using organic naturalism.

The only national cultural monument of the city is a building of City Museum (fig. 2). Despite museum's foundation in 1880, its own building was not built until the end of the century. After finding appropriate space located near the historical centre, the Board of Trustees commissioned Jan Kotěra to create a project for the new museum building. His first sketches with decorative forms on the facade are dated to 1905 – 1907. This project was refused by the board because of its high cost, so Kotěra modified it, but only in details. The main difference abandoning the ornamentation (and its geometrization), thanks to which its monumental proportions are pointed up. This new version is dated to 1908 and as the architect proposed a solution how to lower the costs, his project was accepted and new museum was constructed in 1909 – 1913. In the five-storey building is located: lapidarium in the basement, on the ground floor there is a big vestibule, lecture hall with the capacity of 200 places and a little gallery, general manager's office, library reading room and its cloakroom, on the first and second floor are situated exhibition halls and on the third floor a photographic studio. The ground plan is dynamic and asymmetrical, resembling Wright's concept of the so-called "free ground plan." According to Jakub Potůček Kotěra conceived the building as a temple with its attributes – an asymmetrical floor plan layout in the shape of a Latin cross, polygonal termination of the nave with indications of the load-bearing system, a cupola over the crossing, and a side monumental entrance.<sup>18</sup> It was supplemented by contemporary architectural elements, inspired by industrial motifs, which shows "Kotěra's attempt to transform an old-fashioned sanctuary of science and arts into a modern temple of labour."<sup>19</sup> The interior decoration of the museum was created by Jan Kotěra and his collaborators – painter Jan Preisler, sculptors Jaroslav Horejc and Stanislav Sucharda etc. Sucharda was also the author of the sculptural decoration on the museum's facade. Two ceramic statues guarding the entrance were probably created as

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<sup>18</sup> Jakub POTŮČEK (ed.), *KOTĚRA. Po stopách moderny...*, 2013, p. 10-11.

<sup>19</sup> Rostislav ŠVÁCHA – Milena SRŠŇOVÁ: "Muzea a galerie", *Stavba VI*, 1999, p. 30.

personifications of the most important periods in the town's history, which corresponds with the stylised mural crowns on their heads. The statue on the left with the attribute of so called Queen Eliška's belt symbolises the dowry town of the Czech Queens, Hradec Králové. The second figure, with a stole laid on the armrests of the cathedra represents Hradec Králové as the bishop's seat. This figure is holding on its hand a small bronze statue of a young man, who is getting rid of his armour, liberating himself from the bondage of fortification preventing him from further growth. Most likely the figure could be identified with the deputy mayor Ladislav Jan Pospíšil – the man who started the new era of the modern city.<sup>20</sup> The exterior decoration is based on contrast of the red bricks and light plastered surface – materials representing the truthfulness of the architecture. Kotěra also designed the museum's vicinity - candelabras and the fountain in front of the building, the pavement mosaic and also the park.

In 1910 Jan Kotěra was asked to modify the Prague Bridge and the bridgehead in a modern way. He designed not only the stone railing, but also four kiosks at the bridgehead. The bridge was meant to be a solemn gate to the modern city, because in its vicinity stands not only the Academy of Commerce (first modern building in the city), but also other new structures. This is why the kiosks are different on the opposite river banks. On the left river bank two kiosks are in the shape of stylized bastion (since the left river bank is a place of historical settlement), whereas on the right river bank the kiosks are oval shaped and decorated with elements of modern architecture (linking to the new academy). Kotěra also designed the candelabras, flagstaffs with coat of arms of the city on the top and two metal arches used as ceremonial gates. The architect's work was criticized by the citizens and in newspapers: "Look, Hradec built a public toilet for 30 000 crowns!"<sup>21</sup>

Hradec Králové was often afflicted by the floods and the regulation of the rivers Labe and Orlice was needed, for this reason new bridges and hydro power plants were also built. One of them was projected in Art Nouveau style in 1909 – 1912 by an architect and engineer František Sander, who specialized in hydro constructions. The Labe hydro power plant, locally called *Hučák* is supplemented by a sluice and a bridge. Modern technique is glorified by solemnity and representative impression of the

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<sup>20</sup> See note 18 – J. POTUČEK (ed.), *KOTĚRA...*, p. 10 – 11.

<sup>21</sup> "Proti dnešnímu podnikání Hradce Králové", *Kraj Královéhradecký IV*, 1912, n. 36, p. 6.

structure. Fine ornament subtilizes the robust constructions and together with candelabras evoking lighthouses it appeals romantically. Sander is also an author of two other bridges in the city, situated in city center (1914) and Plácky (1912-13). Inspired by dynamics of the water, the parapets are in form of tildes and the cyclic forms evoke the life rings.

## ART NOUVEAU ARCHITECTURE IN BRNO<sup>22</sup>

Last but not least I would like to focus on Brno. It is situated in Moravia, has a population of 400 000 inhabitants and the distance to Vienna, one of the most Art Nouveau centres, is only 120 kilometres. Thanks to its location (but not only) Brno used to be a bilingual city until 1918. Despite the fact that two thirds of population were Czechs, Germans still dominated the city hall, just like most of the factories and commerce. Majority of Germans was also among artists, they created Moravian Art Society in 1882. Eight years later *Czech Club of Friends of Art* was founded. The members were interested mainly in Moravian art. At the end of the 19th century the city undergone a remarkable industrial development and started to be called *Manchester of the Monarchy*. That had an impact on explosive population growth, mainly of workers, which was connected with increased demand for new flats. Brno city centre was no longer suitable for the fastly growing city – in 1896 the redevelopment law was passed to improve the hygienical, structural and transport standards. Almost half of the buildings were torn down, new were constructed and helped to transform Brno into a modern city. New structures were – just like in Hradec Králové – free from property tax for 18 years. As a consequence there was a building boom of mainly tenement houses, whereas the facades were decorated using Historicism or Art Nouveau motifs. Most of the future architects from Moravia and Silesia were studying German School of Applied Arts in Brno and afterwards the best ones (such as Leopold Bauer, Hubert Gessner and Josef Hoffmann) enrolled in the school of architecture at Viennese Academy led by Otto Wagner.

One of the first Art Nouveau buildings in Brno is a part of Grandhotel situated near the main station. It was built in 1901 as an annex of a narrow wing on the pushed

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<sup>22</sup> Selected bibliography related to this topic:

Jan SEDLÁK, *Brno secesní*, Brno, 2004.

Jan SEDLÁK, *Brno v době secese*, Brno, 1995.

back construction line and the author was for a long time unknown. 17 years ago Zdeněk Humpolík<sup>23</sup> attributed it to architects Lindner and Schreier, few years later Pavel Zatloukal<sup>24</sup> specified them as Viennese architects Ernst Lindner and Theodor Schreier. The design of the hotel represents radical Central European stream, which differs from Wagnerian line. But the content is the same – it celebrates youth, spring and nature as a new inspirational source. The central motif is a fresco scene of Paris' judgement, which is roofed with a marquee. On the facade there are also present vegetal stucco ornaments. One week before the hotel was opened to public, the newspapers wrote: “The building with its winter garden and its splendid hall indisputably belongs among new landmarks of our city.”<sup>25</sup> According to this source the interior was richly decorated and in the dancing hall there original light effects were used.

Next building was created at the same time as the hotel, but in completely different style. Villa of advocate Karl Reissig was built in 1901 – 1902 by an architect Leopold Bauer and critics characterized the villa as a *first modern house in the Habsburg Monarchy* (fig. 3). To understand why that is so, it is necessary to mention one fact. In 1899 Bauer wrote an essay (“Old and Modern Trend in Building Art“) in which he described his modernistic tendencies. He refused development of new art from the old one and the attributes of new architecture were, according to him, purity, simplicity, comfort and solidity.<sup>26</sup> Probably because of this publication the Reissig spouses had chosen Bauer to project their villa in Brno, which is designed in geometric stream of Art Nouveau. The basic shapes used in ground plan as well as decoration of both exterior and interior are square and rectangle. The house is formed from the inside to the outside and this is why the external articulation is rich and windows are not always the same size. The core of the layout of the ground plan is a two-storey anglicanised hall with a fireplace and an open gallery leading upstairs. Next to the hall are dining room, library and parlour on the ground floor and private rooms in the upper storey. Guest rooms and playroom for kids are placed in the garret, whereas the

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<sup>23</sup> Zdeněk HUMPOLÍK, *Secesní architektura v Brně*, Brno (master thesis), 1998, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup> Pavel ZATLOUKAL, *Brněnská architektura 1815 – 1915*, Brno, 2006, p. 152.

<sup>25</sup> *Tagesbote*, 14. 12. 1901.

<sup>26</sup> Jindřich VYBÍRAL, *Reissigova vila v Brně a reforma rodinného domu po roce 1900*, Brno, 2011, p. 15.

background of the house, kitchen and housekeeper's flat are situated in the basement. White colour dominates the interior and is used on different materials – plaster, stucco and wooden coating. The shining white-out is contrasted with refined accents of colorful glass squares, used for example between the pillars of the railing.<sup>27</sup> The whole interior space should be seen as a play of colours, light and shadow. In this Bauer's work we can see his inspiration by Charles Rennie Mackintosh - not only in implementing a central hall, but also in the usage of glass as a material and in creating intimate cosy corners.<sup>28</sup> The exterior decoration is sober, using chessboard grid and white colour, under the roof we can see stucco decoration with glass squares. What is unusual here is the fact that the villa does not open to the garden, but forms a closed structure. High hedges on the terraces, grids in windows and as well as brick fence are creating an impression of fortress – on the other hand, the inhabitants must have felt very safe. Bauer could realized in here some ideas of the *House of an Art Lover*, which he projected for one competition in 1900.<sup>29</sup> Spatial composition in this villa meets the highest operational (technical and hygienical), aesthetic and representative standards and deserves to be called the *first modern house in the Habsburg Monarchy*.

In 1903 – 1904 was built District Hospital Treasury by another Wagner's student Hubert Gessner. The structure faces street with window palace facades enclosed by continual bay windows with a high entrance portal and a projecting crowning cornice. An office, residential and also commercial building is decorated in a radical way - it shows simplicity and truthfulness. Decorative elements emerge out of the surfaces of unplastered brick. Instead of stucco, sober usage of glazed ceramic, stone, glass and metal elements were used there. Their function is to help to emphasize the composition, based for example on contrast of regular geometry (convex bay windows and concave balconies). The red bricks and green glazed tile complement each other and are easily kept clean. This building was important not only for Gessner's next production but also for other architects, to whom it served as an inspiration.

Dušan Jurkovič was an architect who was inspired especially by Slavic folk culture. He was a member of *Czech Club of Friends of Art* and he designed in the city

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<sup>27</sup> Textiles and accesories were also colourful.

<sup>28</sup> Bauer projected them in the dining room and also in the library.

<sup>29</sup> On the roof of the villa there is a little stylized owl, representing Minerva. It should be a symbol of a wise House of Art Lover.

couple of interiors for the Club and also for his friends. His major realization in Brno is definitely his own villa, another example of House of Art Lover (fig. 4). The house, built in 1906, is situated in Žabovřesky.<sup>30</sup> Jurkovič bought a large building site there, because he wanted to create an artist colony, just like Olbrich in Darmstadt.<sup>31</sup> The core of the house is two-storey hall opened to the roof and connected to the library with loggia winding around from two sides. On the ground floor Jurkovič projected his own showroom, dining room, kitchen, children's room, bedroom, bathroom and an open staircase leading to the next floor. Atelier and guest room are accessible from the gallery. In the basement is placed technical background, housekeepers' flat and wine bar. There were used technical amenities in villa like central heating or special distribution of water. Rich external articulation of the structure reflects the principle of forming building from inside to outside. There is a rich material composition - the architect used the traditional (stone) as well as experimental building approaches (framed wall masonry, cork linings filled with various mixtures etc.). The elements on the facade are coloured in white, red, yellow and blue and the whole building can evoke us a fairytale house – there was even a mosaic with a fairytale scene on the gable.<sup>32</sup> The wooden entrance gate is decorated with peacock motif and villa is opened to the garden and combines elements of Slavic folk culture and an English cottage house.<sup>33</sup> Jurkovič also designed furniture, but in the interior he also placed pieces of art by other artists,<sup>34</sup> so his villa can be called as *The House of an Art Lover*. And not only that – it is also a good example of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

As a *Gesamtkunstwerk* should be considered also the Art Nouveau Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was designed by Viennese architect Franz Holik. The foundation stone was consecrated in 1910 on the occasion of the Emperor's eightieth birthday and the new structure was completed in 1914. The church has a Latin-cross plan with a built-in front tower. The forms were inspired by late Baroque, as well as by the approach of Wagner's sacral spaces in the vaulting of the

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<sup>30</sup> It used to be a small village near Brno, now it is a Brno district.

<sup>31</sup> Only two villas were realized.

<sup>32</sup> The scene was from the fairytale "The shepherd and the dragon" and the mosaic was designed by Adolf Kašpar.

<sup>33</sup> Apart from the two-storeyed hall there was also presented a bay window.

<sup>34</sup> Sculptural work by Jan Štursa, paintings by Antonín Slavíček, Joža Úprka and Antoš Frolka and tapestries by Rudolf Schlattauer.

single nave interior. Under the influence of the renewal movement of Catholic Modernism and the ideals of Gesamtkunstwerk, the church was decorated with rich ornamentation primarily by Viennese and Brno artists.<sup>35</sup>

Now I would like to present you two architects, who designed dozens of tenement houses in Brno. The first one is Max Matzenauer and his production is dated mainly in years 1902 – 1906. An interesting fact is that on every single facade he created there, is a stucco sign with a year and inscription *Matzenauer fecit*. He was a very creative architect. In Charlotte Deutsch Tenement House (1904) he attempted a synthesis of several streams of Art Nouveau and the Modern Style and melted them into an individual style. The house is also unusual for its distinct colourfulness and two dominant Bacchic mascarons. On the other hand Matzenauer was also able to use monumental Baroque tendencies – Eduard Till Tenement House (1906) is abounded with balconies and bay windows and culmination of the decoration is a helmet cupola which has a belvedere function.

The next architect will also be the last one I am going to mention. His name is Franz Pawlu and he was the most productive architect from Brno at the turn of the century. One of his masterpieces is a three part group of buildings on Konečného square, realized in 1900 – 1902. On one side he used palace scheme with three frontal zones supplemented by cupolas and basilica formed roof, while on the second side he used an inventive mass articulation and Art Nouveau decor flowing over the facades. For the second building the Neo-Baroque became the defining attire with inspiration from the late Roman classical period including bizarre detail of the holey cupolas. The last facade is conceived in a Neo-Baroque style with half-columns articulating the aedicule supplemented by rich sculptural and stucco ornamentation. Every building is original and they are united by an expression of grandeur and triumph. In 1903 Pawlu projected a tenement house on Veverí street. The regular raster of window openings is supplemented by stucco decoration in high relief forming vegetable garlands falling downward. Horizontal elements on the facade are metal continuous balcony and firmly created cornice above which are standing two figures of geniuses. This building is

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<sup>35</sup> Statues by Carl Wollek, altar paintings by Hans Wacha, Eduard Csánk, glazing windows by Jaroslav Malý, painting work in the interior by Hans Kalmeister etc.

another example of architect's triumphal structures; it should represent the apotheosis of the young renewal style.

In my paper I wanted you to present the best of Art Nouveau architecture in three cities. Each one of these cities was in a different situation, but they had something in common – free space for buildings, educated architects, capital and desire to built something valuable. The architects were designing in different streams of Art Nouveau - floral, geometrical ones and in one inspired by folk art. Even though they were inspired by Vienna, England and Paris, they found their own ways. The Art Nouveau heritage is adorning the cities until nowadays, all three cities had continued in a tradition of high-quality architecture even before and after the WWI – Prague is well known for its Cubist architecture, Brno is known for its Functionalism architecture, especially Villa Tugendhat, and Hradec Králové had gone through a golden architectural era in the age of Functionalism and in the city there are many first-class functionalist buildings. For this reason it has been called *Salon of the Republic* for almost one hundred years. In my opinion, deservedly. To conclude, even if the Czech Art Nouveau heritage (except from Prague) is not well known, I hope that I convinced you that it is worth mentioning.