

Lovorka Magaš
Bilandžić

Department of Art History,
Faculty of Humanities and
Social Sciences, University of
Zagreb

**1930S COMPETITIONS FOR THE
DECORATION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE KINGDOM OF
YUGOSLAVIA IN BELGRADE AND
CROATIAN ARTISTS***

Abstract

Keywords: art competition,
National Assembly in
Belgrade, 1930s, Vladimir
Filakovac, Dragutin Filipović,
Frano Kršinić, Mate
Meneghello Rodić, Petar
Pallavicini, Vanja Radauš

The paper is dedicated to three competitions for the decoration of the National Assembly building in Belgrade in 1936 and 1937, and the participation of numerous Croatian artists who received awards for their frescoes and sculptures. Based on archival and periodical sources, the paper analyzes various aspects of the competition and its role in establishing the visual narrative of the state and the representation of its multinational political identity. Special emphasis is placed on the interpretation of the works of Croatian artists who created monumental frescoes and statues for various representative spaces of the National Assembly, thus visually shaping the interior of a key political institution in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

<https://www.doi.org/10.17234/9789533792170.12>

155

INTRODUCTION

The first competition for the decoration of the National Assembly in Belgrade in 1936 was one of the largest public contests in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the interwar period, and attracted great interest from artists from different parts of the country, who applied with approximately 356 artworks.¹ In a centrally organized state that was experiencing nationalist-based turmoil, the National Assembly was a building of special political importance, which is why great attention was paid to its decoration. A jury composed of prominent representatives of the cultural and social life of the three entities – Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia – chose the frescoes and sculptures in the entrance and communication zones, major representative spaces and parts of the building dedicated to social contents. Three competitions were held in 1936 and 1937, in which numerous Croatian artists received awards, ranging from already established authors who had experience in memorial sculpture (Frano Kršinić) or had participated in the decoration of sacral and public buildings (Mate Meneghello Rodić) to painters and sculptors who created frescoes and sculptures of monumental proportions

* This work has been supported in part by the Croatian Science Foundation under the project IP-2018-01-9364 *Art and the State in Croatia from the Enlightenment to the Present*.

1 “Podjeljene su nagrade za umjetnička djela u novoj Narodnoj skupštini” [Prizes Awarded for Works of Art in the New National Assembly], *Novosti*, November 6, 1936, 19.

for representative public institutions for the first time (Sergije Glumac, Vanja Radauš, Dragutin Filipović).

Until now, there has been no detailed discussion about the involvement of Croatian artists in the decoration of the Belgrade National Assembly,² and the information published in the texts dedicated to the building and its interior decoration was mostly reduced to recording the authors of the completed paintings and sculptures.³ In the biographies of the second- and third-prize winners, information about their participation in the competitions is usually not mentioned or is mentioned inadequately,⁴ except in the case of Sergije Glumac.⁵ Based on archival and periodical sources, this paper analyzes the participation of Croatian artists in competitions for the creation of artworks for the National Assembly building, as well as the implementation, requirements and results of a competition of that scope. Furthermore, the finished artworks and the conditions for their completion are interpreted in detail, and for the first time, all Croatian painters and sculptors who won second and third prizes are documented. Special attention is given to the role of the National Assembly's representative spaces as a platform for the realization of artworks of monumental scale and symbolic significance, and emphasis is also placed on the modalities of using an artistic program to send political messages in the context of the turbulent political situation in the then Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

156 THE BUILDING

The monumental building of the House of the Parliament in Belgrade was dedicated in October 1936, 29 years after Serbian King Petar I Karađorđević laid the foundation stone on August 27, 1907.⁶ (**fig. 1**) Preparations for the construction of the building began in 1892, when the project for the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbia was commissioned from the Serbian architect Konstantin Jovanović, but the construction of his neoclassical edifice

2 Finished works for the National Assembly are mentioned only in a few monographs of awarded painters and sculptors, e.g. Jelica Ambruš, *Vladimir Filakovac 1892–1972*. (Osijek: Galerija likovnih umjetnosti; Zagreb: Institut za povijest umjetnosti, 2009.), 200–201.

3 Basic information about the first competition and the awarded artists, as well as the catalog of completed works, were published in: Milojko Gordić, “Ukrašavanje zgrade Narodnog parlamenta Kraljevine Jugoslavije od 1936. do 1939. godine” [Decoration of the Building of National Assembly of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia between 1936 and 1939], *Nasleđe*, no. 2 (1999): 95–104. See also: *Dom Narodne skupštine: umetničke vrednosti / The National Assembly: Artwork: 1936–2016*. (Beograd: Služba Narodne skupštine Republike Srbije, 2016); Aleksandar Rastović, Mirjana Roter Blagojević and Igor Borozan, *Narodna skupština: ogledalo volje naroda Srbije / National Assembly: Mirroring the Will of Serbian People* (Novi Sad: Pravoslavna reč, 2022).

4 In Grgo Antunac's monograph, it is incorrectly stated that he received the second prize for the sculpture of King Petar II (instead of Petar I). Vesna Mažuran-Subotić, *Grgo Antunac* (Zagreb: Gliptoteka HAZU, 2001), 11. Juraj Škarpa's biography incorrectly states that he won several awards (for *Maritime Affairs*, *Agriculture*, *Tsar Dušan* and *King Petar I*). Vinko Zlamalik, “Kronologija” [Chronology], in *Juraj Škarpa* (Zagreb: Gliptoteka HAZU, 1988), 25–26.

5 In the first competition, Glumac won the third prize for the fresco in the Small Plenary Hall. For more on this topic, see: Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić, *Sergije Glumac: grafika, grafički dizajn, scenografija* [Sergije Glumac: Print, Graphic Design, Stage Design] (Zagreb: Društvo povjesničara umjetnosti Hrvatske, 2019), 146–147.

6 Marko Popović, “Zdanje Narodne skupštine – pravci istraživanja i principi obnove” [The National Assembly Building – Research Directions and Principles of Reconstruction], *Nasleđe*, no. 4 (2002): 13.

Fig. 1. National Assembly in Belgrade, early 1940s, photograph, private collection.



was postponed for financial reasons. With the adoption of the new Constitution in 1901 and the introduction of a bicameral parliament, the issue of construction became relevant once again, and another competition was held that selected Jovan Ilkić's project "made in the spirit of academicism with elements of the Italian Renaissance."⁷ The future of the building in the subsequent years was a complex and turbulent one, and its construction was marked by several phases and various delays, as well as project alternations resulting from changes of the constitution and the political situation in Serbia before and after 1918. During the next three decades (1907–1936), the project of the architect Jovan Ilkić faced financial difficulties and two Balkan Wars, and the formation of the new, much larger Yugoslav state after World War I also necessitated reconstruction. After Ilkić's death in 1917, his son Pavle was hired to renew the design in the 1920s, but then, in 1929, King Aleksandar I Karađorđević proclaimed his dictatorship. A new phase in the history of the construction of the House of Parliament came after the death of the King Aleksandar Karađorđević in 1934, and was marked by the appointment of Nikolaj Krasnov, an architect of Russian origin employed by the Ministry of Construction, who created a project for the design of the entire interior decoration – from the furniture to the lighting.⁸

157

FIRST COMPETITION – JUNE 1936

In the months prior to the completion of the National Assembly, special attention was paid to the future decoration of the edifice's representative

⁷ Ibid., 9–11. See also: Aleksandar Kadijević, "U traganju za uzorima Doma Narodne skupštine" [In Quest of the Models for the National Assembly Building], *Nasleđe*, no. 6 (2005): 45–53.

⁸ Popović, "Zdanje Narodne skupštine," 13–18.

spaces. Based on the decision no. 2743 of the Assembly President Stevan Ćirić from June 19, 1936, a competition for the creation of artistic works for the National Assembly building was announced in the *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije* on June 24, 1936. It included the paintings and sculptures in the representative areas of the building – from the vestibule, the Conversation Hall (today the Central Hall), the Great and Small Plenary Halls, and the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers, to the stairway, the Great Club and the buffet – and clearly defined all participation requirements.⁹

The paintings had to be frescoes, and the style monumental. In choosing the content, the jury left “complete freedom to the artists, on the condition that they choose images from our national life and our national history, paying attention to the style and purpose of the building itself and its interior chambers.”¹⁰ Artists submitted conceptual sketches in tempera, in the dimensions of 1:10 (Small and Great Plenary Hall) and 1:5 (Cabinet of the Council of Ministers, Great Club and the buffet), a detail of the fresco in real size and original material in the format of 50×50 centimeters. The competition called for the creation of frescoes on the front walls of the Great Plenary Hall (24×5.5 and 2×3×6.3 meters, prize 200,000 dinars) and the Small Plenary Hall (14.30×5.6 meters, 120,000 dinars), three paintings 1.92×2.10 meters on the ceiling of the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers (30,000 dinars per painting), two frescoes 1.7×5 meters on the side wall in the Great Club Hall (50,000 dinars per painting), and three semicircular paintings on the front wall of the buffet – one measuring 2.36×3.32 (35,000 dinars) and two 1.78×3.38 and 1.48×2.84 meters (30,000 dinars per painting).¹¹

Unlike the paintings, the content of the sculpture program was defined in detail. The four male statues in the vestibule were supposed to represent “state organization and legislation in the figures of Prince Kocelj, King Tomislav, Tsar Dušan and King Petar I the Liberator.”¹² In the Conversation Hall, four female figures symbolically embodied agriculture, crafts, industry, and maritime affairs, and two decorative figures in the niches of the main staircase represented justice and education. The first prizes were: 100,000 dinars per sculpture for four standing white marble figures in the vestibule niches (they were 3 meters high together with a 20 centimeters plinth), 90,000 dinars for each of the four white marble figures in the niches of the Conversation Hall (they were 2.40 meters high together with a 20 centimeters plinth), and 60,000 dinars for each of the two figures in gilded bronze on the staircase (1.80 meters

9 All the information on the competition and quotes from the competition text are from: “Konkurs za izradu umetničkih radova u zgradi Narodne skupštine” [Competition for the Creation of Works of Art in the National Assembly Building], *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, June 24, 1936, 3.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid. The second and third prizes were: Great Plenary Hall (10,000 and 7,000 dinars), Small Plenary Hall (7,000 and 5,000 dinars), Cabinet of the Council of Ministers (4,000 and 3,000 dinars), Great Club (6,000 and 4,500 dinars) and buffet (4,000 and 3,000 dinars).

12 Ibid.

high together with a 10 centimeters plinth).¹³ For the sculptural works, the artists had to submit plaster models in a ratio of 1:4, as well as details in plaster and in the original size.

The competition was open to all artists who were citizens of Yugoslavia, living in the Kingdom or abroad. It was anonymous, and the artists entered with a code and sealed envelopes with personal data. The deadline for the delivery of sketches for the paintings in the Great and Small Plenary Halls was three months, and for all other painting and sculpture two months from the date of announcement of the competition in the *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*. The National Assembly would become the owner of all awarded sketches, but the artists retained the author's rights.¹⁴ With the subsequent decision of the Committee for the Completion of the National Assembly Building, all defined deadlines were extended until October 1, 1936.¹⁵

The members of the jury were prominent cultural figures from different parts of Yugoslavia, appointed on the basis of the so-called national key: Serbian architect Aleksandar Deroko, associate professor at the University of Belgrade; Serbian art historian Milan Kašanin, director of the Museum of Prince Pavle; Croatian painter Branko Šenoa, professor at the Royal Academy of Arts in Zagreb; Toma Rosandić, a Croatian sculptor living in Belgrade; Slovenian art historian France Stelè, conservator of the National museum in Ljubljana; and, the already mentioned Nikolaj Krasnov, architect of the Ministry of Construction. The technical reviewer for the jury was engineer Vladislav Čeh, head of the Parliament's Technical Department. The jury was in charge of selecting fresco sketches and sculpture models, and its members could intervene and make suggestions to selected artists on the changes or improvements in the content, style and formal aspects of selected artworks. Before transferring the sketches to the walls and making sculptures in marble or bronze, artists had to have the jury's written permission, and the jury was also the one to determine when a work was completely finished.¹⁶ The jury began evaluating artworks on October 26, 1936; the sessions were held in the Assembly building in Vračar and went on for eleven days.¹⁷

13 Ibid. The second and third prizes were: vestibule (8,000 and 5,000 dinars), Conversation Hall (6,000 and 4,000 dinars) and staircases (4,000 and 3,000 dinars).

14 Ibid.

15 *Produljenje rokova za predaju skica umetničkih radova za novu zgradu Narodne skupštine* [Extension of Deadlines for Submission of Sketches of Works of Art for the New Building of the National Assembly], August 8, 1936, Folder 387, Box 125, Fond 72. National Assembly of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Archive of Yugoslavia, Belgrade (hereafter cited as AJ-72-125-387).

16 "Konkurs za izradu umetničkih radova u zgradi Narodne skupštine" [Competition for the Creation of Works of Art in the National Assembly Building], *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, June 24, 1936, 3.

17 Letter to the jury members regarding the start of the jury process, AJ-72-125-387; VII zapisnik [Minutes no. 7], 1, AJ-72-125-387.

RESULTS OF THE FIRST CONTEST AND SUBSEQUENT COMPETITIONS

Croatian painters and sculptors triumphed in the first competition for the decoration of the National Assembly in Belgrade and received awards for most of the works that were commissioned in the contest, except for the fresco painting for the Great Plenary Hall.¹⁸ They won the following awards:

- the painting for the Small Plenary Hall: the first prize was not awarded, second prize went to Mirko Rački for the painting under the code title *Omikron* (Omicron), and third prize to Sergije Glumac for the sketch under the code title *Bogatstvo Jugoslavije* (The Wealth of Yugoslavia);
- the painting for the Great Club: Vladimir Filakovac received the first prize for the work under the code title *Obala* (Shore);
- paintings for the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers: the first prize was not awarded, and the second prize went to Mirko Rački for the work under the code title *Omicron*;
- the statue *Kralj Tomislav* (King Tomislav) in the vestibule: Vanja Radauš won the first prize for the sculpture under the code title *Reks I*, and Marin Studin was awarded the third prize for his work under code 14;
- the statue *Knez Kocelj* (Prince Kocelj) in the vestibule: Marin Studin received the second prize for the work under code 14;
- the sculpture *Poljoprivreda* (Agriculture) in the Conversation Hall: Vanja Radauš received the second prize for the work under the code title *Ceres*;
- the sculpture *Zanat* (Crafts) in the Conversation Hall: Petar Pallavicini received the first prize for the work under the code A 4;
- the sculpture *Pomorstvo* (Maritime Affairs) in the Conversation Hall: Petar Pallavicini received the first prize for his work under the code A II, and Juraj Škarpa the third prize for his work under the code title *Strela* (Arrow);
- the figure of *Prosveta* (Education) for the niche of the main staircase: Frano Kršinić received the first prize for the work under the code X, and Joza Turkalj the second prize for the work under the code title *9 u krugu* (9 in the circle);
- the figure of *Pravda* (Justice) for the niche of the main staircase: Frano Kršinić received the first prize for the work under the code X, and Joza Turkalj the second prize for the work under the code title *9 in the circle*.¹⁹

Croatian sculptors participated in the competition with several models for various sculptures, and Vanja Radauš was awarded for all submitted models. Petar Pallavicini received an award for his sculptures of the *Crafts* and *Maritime*

¹⁸ The first prize was won by the Serbian painter Milo Milunović, and the other prizes went to the Slovenian Tone Kralj and the Serb Mladen Josić.

¹⁹ "Rezultat konkursa za izradu umetničkih radova u zgradi Narodna skupštine" [Results of the Competition for the Creation of Works of Art in the National Assembly Building], *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, November 7, 1936, 1.

Fig. 2. Article featuring sketches and models of awarded works by Frano Kršinić, Petar Pallavicini, Milo Milunović and Vladimir Filakovac, in: *Politika*, November 11, 1936, 7.



Affairs in the Conversation Hall, and also proposed sketches for the *Education* and *Justice* sculptures in the niches at the bottom of the staircase, which were not awarded. Dalmatian sculptor Marin Studin submitted models for all four statues in the vestibule, and received awards for *King Tomislav* and *Prince Kocelj*. Sculptor Joza Turkalj was awarded for *Justice* and *Education*, and submitted sketches for *Agriculture* and *Crafts* as well.²⁰

After the announcement of the results, all the submitted works were exhibited in the Manjež building (**fig. 2**), where they could be viewed free of charge between November 10 and 16, 1936. The awarded authors were to report immediately to the Presidency of the National Assembly for further arrangements regarding the execution of frescoes and sculptures, and all the other artists were to collect the non-awarded works in the Technical Department between November 20 and December 1, 1936.²¹

The competition aroused great public interest, the results were published in the daily press throughout the Kingdom of Yugoslavia,²² and the exhibition

20 A list of all the authors who participated in the competition is not preserved in the archival documentation, but only a list of awarded artists. By comparing the serial numbers under which the applied sketches were received (they are listed in Minutes no. 7) with their codes and the list of awarded artists, it can be inferred for which other works the awarded authors also sent sketches and models. Data reconstructed based on: VII zapisnik, 9–23, AJ-72-125-387.

21 “Rezultat konkursa za izradu umetničkih radova u zgradi Narodna skupštine,” 1.

22 “Podjeljene su nagrade za umjetnička djela u novoj Narodnoj skupštini,” 19; “Veliki umetnički konkurs završen: Nagrade za slikarske i vajarske radove u novoj skupštini” [Big Art Competition is Over: Prizes for Paintings and Sculptures in the New Assembly], *Politika*, November 6, 1936, 8.

of awarded and non-awarded works in the six rooms of the former National Assembly attracted a large audience.²³ At the same time, both the competition and the organized exhibition did not pass without criticism. On the one hand, the importance of the project was highlighted, since the selected works of art “would leave a mark on the artistic level, content and form of our present-day society for hundreds and hundreds of years to come.”²⁴ On the other hand, the implementation of the competition was criticized on several levels – from the unfavorable timing of the announcement during the summer and the short deadline given the scope of the task, to the insufficiently high prizes and the composition of the jury,²⁵ as well as the topics and realization of individual works.²⁶

The participation and great success of the Zagreb artists in the competition for the decoration of the National Assembly was reported by the Zagreb daily press at the time, and *Novosti* published the statements of award-winning artists Frano Kršinić, Vanja Radauš and Sergije Glumac, accompanied by their portraits and photos of the awarded works by Kršinić and Radauš.²⁷

During the June 1936 competition, the first prizes were not awarded for works in several key spaces of the National Assembly – the fresco in the Small Plenary Hall, the three paintings on the ceiling of the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers, and the statues of Tsar Dušan and King Petar in the vestibule. For this reason, on November 7, 1936, the *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije* published the results of the first competition as well as a new call for the creation of artworks. The conditions and the jury were the same, and the deadline for submitting the sketches was January 15, 1937.²⁸ Croatian artists again triumphed at that competition, winning two first prizes: the Split painter Mate Meneghello Rodić for the fresco in the Small Plenary Hall (work code 33) and the Zagreb sculptor Dragutin Filipović for the sculpture of Tsar Dušan in the vestibule (work code 324). Vanja Radauš participated in the competition for the sculpture of Tsar Dušan and won the second prize for the sketch under the code title *Imperator*.²⁹ The awards given to the Zagreb artists once again

23 “U Manježu su izložene skice slikarskih i vajarskih radova kojima će se ukrasiti nova zgrada Narodne skupštine” [Sketches of Paintings and Sculptures That Will Decorate the New Building of the National Assembly are Exhibited in Manjež], *Politika*, November 11, 1936, 7.

24 Đorđe Popović, “Slikarski i vajarski radovi za Narodnu skupštinu” [Paintings and Sculptures for the National Assembly], *Pravda*, November 16, 1936, 4.

25 Ibid.

26 For example, Stojanović believed that, in terms of content, Filakovac’s successfully portrayed fishermen pulling a fishing net “certainly cannot replace the great events of our history and the struggle for people’s rights”. Sreten Stojanović, “Izložba skica sa konkursa za novu zgradu Narodne skupštine” [Exhibition of Sketches from the Competition for the New Building of the National Assembly], *Vreme*, November 11, 1936, 11.

27 [I], “Veliki uspjeh zagrebačkih umjetnika” [Great Success of Zagreb Artists], *Novosti*, November 8, 1936, 23.

28 “Ponovni konkurs za izradu umetničkih radova u zgradi Narodne skupštine” [New Competition for the Creation of Works of Art in the National Assembly Building], *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, November 7, 1936, 1. This time, for the paintings in the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers, each participant was required to submit all three paintings, and the prize was 60,000 dinars.

29 IX zapisnik [Minutes no. 9], AJ-72-125-387. Jury sessions were held on February 9–12, 14 and 16–18, 1937. Again, no awards were given for paintings in the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers.

received media attention, and the new success was reported by *Novosti* with an interview with Filipović and Radauš.³⁰

In the second, repeated competition, the 16 proposals did not yield the winner for the sculpture of King Petar I the Liberator in the vestibule,³¹ while the second prize went to Grga Antunac for his work under the code title *Sliva*.³² Since no adequate model was chosen in two consecutive tenders, the jury proposed to the President of the Assembly that the creation of the monument be entrusted to Ivan Meštrović or, if he did not accept, to Antun Augustinčić; if still no agreement was reached, the jury would propose “a third suitable person.”³³ The negotiations were obviously not successful, and there was also a significant change that happened in the meantime – the sculpture dedicated to King Petar as the recent ruler who had also laid the foundation stone for the National Assembly was replaced by the historical figure of Đorđe Petrović Karađorđe, the founder of the Karađorđević dynasty. On March 19, 1937, the President of the Assembly decided to announce the competition for the creation of the statue of Karađorđe according to the conditions for the creation of sculptures in the vestibule from the 1936 competition and with a deadline of July 1, 1937, but without explaining the reasons for the replacement of the depicted ruler.³⁴ The creation of the statue was eventually entrusted to Frano Kršinić.

EXECUTION OF AWARD-WINNING WORKS – FROM CONTRACT TO COMPLETION

163

In the months following the first competition, the jury and the artists defined the parameters of the contract, which specified the conditions and various aspects of future realizations – from deadlines and work schedules to payment dynamics. In February 1937, the first prize-winning painters and sculptors received a standardized decision form, which was also a contract with detailed conditions for the execution of the works. The artists were obliged to comply with the conditions of the competition and accept the remarks of the jury. The sculptors had to do the work at their own expense, pack and secure the finished sculptures for transport and load them onto the train. The National Assembly accepted the costs of rail transport of the finished statues, their transfer to the place of installation, and the costs of transport insurance, but without the

30 [M.], “Lijep uspjeh zagrebačkih kiprara Dragutina Filipovića i Ivana Radauša te Grge Antunca na konkursu za izradbu figura u zgradi nove Narodne skupštine” [Notable Success of the Zagreb Sculptors Dragutin Filipović, Ivan Radauš and Grga Antunac at the Competition for the Creation of Sculptures in the Building of the New National Assembly], *Novosti*, February 19, 1937, 10.

31 Figura kralja Petra [Figure of King Petar], Belgrade, February 18, 1937, AJ-72-125-387. The jury session was held on February 9–11, 1937.

32 IX zapisnik, AJ-72-125-387.

33 Figura kralja Petra, Belgrade, February 18, 1937, AJ-72-125-387.

34 “Konkurs za izradu figure ‘Karađorđe’ u jednoj od niša u glavnom vestibulu zgrade Narodne skupštine” [Competition for the Creation of the Sculpture of “Karađorđe” in One of the Niches in the Main Vestibule of the National Assembly Building], *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, March 29, 1937, 3.

liability for damages during transit and installation and all other possible costs incurred during delivery. The Parliament undertook to create a scaffolding for the installation of the statues, with the condition that the authors themselves unpack and install the sculptures. The painters were obliged to create cardboard versions in their studios at their own expense, according to the selected sketch and in colors that were suitable for the fresco technique, and to submit them to the jury for inspection and acceptance, and then make the painting according to the defined parameters. The National Assembly undertook to prepare the space for the frescoes and build a mobile scaffolding with curtains, remove the plaster and install a wire mesh for the application of new paint. The deadline for making models in clay and cardboard for the frescoes, which the jury had to review, was three months from the conclusion of the contract, and for finished frescoes and sculptures four months after the jury accepted the work. The method of payment of the total amount of the contracted fee was also clearly defined: the artist received 10% upon signing the contract and accepting the conditions, 40% after the jury approved the model in clay or the sketch on cardboard, and the other 50% after the jury accepted the installed sculpture and the finished fresco transferred to the wall. The Assembly also paid half of all taxes.³⁵

164 The completion of the awarded works did not go smoothly; the archival documentation and the artist's correspondence with the Technical Department and the President of the National Assembly make it possible to reconstruct all the challenges and difficulties they faced at different levels, which then give an insight into the modalities of the realization of monumental works of that type during the interwar year. Soon after signing the contract, the Zagreb sculptors Radauš, Filipović and Kršinić started making sculptures of King Tomislav, Tsar Dušan and the allegorical figures of Justice and Education, and the clay models were ready for the jury as early as April 1937.³⁶ The realization of the artworks was affected by changes in the market, which is why the artists requested allocation of funds to settle the advance fee for the stone they had ordered for carving the accepted models.³⁷ They also asked for an increase in the contracted amounts due to the rise in the price of materials for making sculptures.³⁸ The

35 All mentioned data is from: Decision of the President of the National Assembly on the creation of the figure of *Education*, Belgrade, February 25, 1937, Folder 388, Box 126, AJ-72 (hereafter cited as AJ-72-126-388); Decision of the President of the National Assembly on the creation of a fresco on the front wall in the Great Club Hall, Belgrade, March 5, 1937, Folder 389, AJ-72-126 (hereafter cited as AJ-72-126-389).

36 Letter from Vanja Radauš to the Technical Department of the National Assembly, Zagreb, April 6, 1937, AJ-72-126-388. Radauš writes on behalf of himself, Kršinić and Filipović and notes that they will be ready by April 20 and that in case of a longer wait, the models will dry. He also states that they have contacted Ljubljana artists who have not yet started working on sculptures and will be finished only at the end of May.

37 For example, Vanja Radauš for the statue of King Tomislav. Letter from Vanja Radauš to the Technical Department of the National Assembly, Zagreb, May 4, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

38 Vanja Radauš, Frano Kršinić, Tine Kos, France Gorše and Petar Pallavicini have attached invoices for stone and bronze and were asking for their costs to be reimbursed – 20,000 dinars for the marble sculptures (*King Tomislav* and *Prince Kocelj*), 10,000 dinars for the sculptures of stone (*Agriculture*, *Maritime Affairs*, *Industry* and *Crafts*) and 8,000 for Kršinić's gilded bronze figures of *Justice* and *Education*, so a total of 96,000 dinars. Letter from V. Radauš, F. Kršinić, T. Kos, F. Gorše and P. Pallavicini to the President of the National Assembly S. Čirić, Zagreb, November 27, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

financial aspect affected the completion of works, so they were looking for a way to reduce the costs of sculptures' transportation and installation. Since most of the awarded sculptures were made by artists from Zagreb and Ljubljana, a joint train transport to Belgrade was proposed,³⁹ but this proved difficult due to the delay in the completion of some sculptures,⁴⁰ and in the end, the statues of Kršinić, Radauš and Filipović were delivered separately.⁴¹ Financial reasons, difficulties with the supply of materials and public procurement procedures influenced the extension of the planned deadlines. It was thus only in October 1937 that the task of installing the sculptures was awarded to the most favorable bidder, Dobra Milenović, an entrepreneur from Belgrade,⁴² who in the end did not install all of the sculptures. Most of the work was completed by the end of 1937,⁴³ but Filipović's sculpture *Tsar Dušan* and Kršinić's *Karadžorđe* were only moved to the vestibule in the second half of 1938.⁴⁴

WORKS OF ART AS CARRIERS OF (POLITICAL) MESSAGES

A competition of this importance gave artists the opportunity to try their hand at creating works of monumental proportions for a building of great political significance. The entire interior of the National Assembly was richly decorated, and the paintings and sculptures intended for key representative halls, communication zones and areas of social content also represented the bearers of messages about the political, social, economic and cultural life of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The art program emphasized the foundations on which the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was built – from the depiction of personalities who played a prominent role in the history of the people of the joint state to symbolic figures representing activities that ensure economic development (industry, crafts, agriculture and maritime affairs), legal order (justice) and social and intellectual progress (education). The focus was also on

39 For example, the National Assembly requested exemption from municipal excise duties for statues made in Zagreb and Ljubljana. Letter from the President of the National Assembly to the President of the City Council Vlado Ilić, Belgrade, October 2, 1937, Folder 390, AJ-72-126 (hereafter cited as AJ-72-126-390).

40 In early October 1937, Kršinić wanted to deliver the finished sculptures, and stated that Radauš would be finished soon, and Filipović only later. Letter from Frano Kršinić to the engineer [Vladislav Čeh], Zagreb, October 1, 1937, AJ-72-126-390.

41 The Zagreb company Slavija was paid 16,785 dinars for the transport of *King Tomislav*, and an amount of 17,285 dinars was provided for *Tsar Dušan*. This included delivery from the studio to the National Assembly (pick-up in Zagreb, transport and loading on the train, freight to Belgrade, transfer from the train to the National Assembly and insurance for the estimated value of the sculpture of 70,000 dinars and handling costs). Otprema spomenika "Cara Dušana Silnog" od vajara g. Filipovića [Transport of the Monument of Tsar Dušan the Mighty by the Sculptor Filipović], Zagreb, November 10, 1937, AJ-72-126-390; Troškovnik br. 1457 [Cost Sheet no. 1457], Zagreb, October 13, 1937, AJ-72-126-390.

42 Builders Bora P. Panić and Gruja Milovanović and stonecutter Avanti Bertoto also made offers, and Milenović's offer of 34,968 dinars was accepted. Komisijjski zapisnik [Commission Minutes], October 16, 1937, AJ-72-126-390.

43 Report on the work performed on the installation of sculptures in the National Assembly building, January 19, 1938, AJ-72-126-390.

44 Letter to the President of the National Assembly with the estimate for moving the figures to the vestibule, August 18, 1938, AJ-72-126-390.

different aspects of life of the multinational and multiconfessional state, which was indicated through the visual arts program.

Vestibule – Foundations of the State

The entrance area of the National Assembly had a strong symbolic and political message, and its decorations emphasized the role and significance of the building, as well as the foundations of the leading states of the multinational Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The representative vestibule is marked by the intertwining of architecture, sculpture and craftsmanship and the richness and colourfulness of the materials used: its marble floor, polychromatic stucco decorations, marble columns, monumental dome and four marble sculptures of former rulers placed in the niches and in accordance with the renaissance models (**fig. 3**). Four monumental, slightly stylized sculptures represent figures that symbolize the historical development of the three nations / constituent peoples: Tsar Dušan, King Tomislav and Prince Kocelj, and the founder of the royal dynasty Karađorđe. As it has already been mentioned, three of them were made by Croatian artists – *King Tomislav* by Vanja Radauš, *Tsar Dušan* by Dragutin Filipović and *Karađorđe* by Frano Kršinić – while *Prince Kocelj* was done by the Slovenian artist Tine Kos.

King Tomislav was the young artist Vanja (Ivan) Radauš' first sculpture for a public building. The first Croatian king to be crowned in 925, who is considered to have expanded the Croatian state by unifying the Croats of Pannonia and Dalmatia, was depicted in a dignified pose with a crown on his head, a sword in his right hand and a book in his left. The jury chose Radauš's model from among the seven submitted works and assessed it in the following way: "Plastically successful. Conceptually excellent. The spirit of the statue is convincingly achieved by its plastic directness and seriousness of the idea."⁴⁵ Despite Radauš's desire to start the work as soon as possible, the completion of

166



Fig. 3. Vestibule with sculptures *King Tomislav* and *Tsar Dušan*. Photograph by Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.

the sculpture of King Tomislav was delayed, and the block of Nebregovo white marble, roughly hewn with dimensions of 3×1.1×1.15 meters, was not paid for until the beginning of October 1937.⁴⁶

The awarded proposal for the sculpture of Tsar Dušan, selected in the second competition from November 1936, was made by the now almost completely forgotten 24-year-old sculptor from Glina, Dragutin Filipović, whose model was chosen from among 20 sketches.⁴⁷ Filipović's sculpture of a Serbian ruler from the 14th century, during whose reign Serbia had the largest territory, was given a very high rating by the jury. They thought that it embodied the idea, that it was well placed and "expressive in attitude and gesture", while "the detail of the hand reveal a master sculptor."⁴⁸ Filipović was asked to adapt the physiognomy of the head to the "authentic figure of Tsar Dušan"⁴⁹ and, in March 1937, received four photographs through an intermediary from Milan Kašanin, the director of the Prince Pavle Museum.⁵⁰ Filipović's sculpture depicted the emperor with an expressive face and in an imposing moving pose, holding his Code of Law in his left hand at head level, and with a scepter in his right hand suggestively pointing to an important legal document of medieval Serbia. The completion of the sculpture and its transport were covered by the daily newspaper *Novosti*, which also announced that the marble for the sculpture was delivered from Prilep and that it was carved by the sculptor Grga Antunac (fig. 4).⁵¹



Fig. 4. Vanja Radauš, *King Tomislav*, 1937, marble / Dragutin Filipović, *Tsar Dušan*, 1937, marble / Frano Kršinić, *Karadordže*, 1938, marble. Photographs by Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.

46 Invoice of the *Industrija mramora i granita sa strojnim uredjajem Jaroslav Strecha*, Zagreb [Marble and Granite Industry with Machinery Jaroslav Strecha, Zagreb], Zagreb, October 5, 1937, AJ-72-126-388. The block cost 15,000 dinars.

47 *Figura cara Dušana* [Figure of Tsar Dušan], Beograd, February 18, 1937, AJ-72-125-387.

48 *Ocena i napomena žirija za figuru Cara Dušana nagrađenu izvođenjem* [Evaluation and Comments of the Jury for the Figure of Tsar Dušan Awarded with the Execution], February 25, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

49 Ibid.

50 Letter from Milan Kašanin to the President of the National Assembly, Belgrade, March 26, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

51 [Mk], "Kipar Dragutin Filipović dovršio je kip cara Dušana za Narodnu skupštinu" [Sculptor Dragutin Filipović Completed the Statue of Tsar Dušan for the National Assembly], *Novosti*, November 18, 1937, 11.

According to the propositions of the first competition, three sculptures in the vestibule were dedicated to key figures in the national history of Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia – King Tomislav (10th century), Tsar Dušan (14th century) and Prince Kocelj (9th century) – while the fourth person was supposed to represent a recent ruler, King Petar I Karađorđević, who died in 1921.⁵² After the second competition, Petar I was replaced by Karađorđe, a historical figure from an earlier period, the leader of the uprising in which Belgrade and parts of Serbia were liberated from Ottoman rule in 1806. The statue of Karađorđe was ultimately awarded to Frano Kršinić, a professor at the Royal Academy of Arts in Zagreb, and another award went to the sculptor Petar Pallavicini.⁵³ At the end of September 1937, the jury accepted the model *Zakletva 2* (Oath 2), on the condition that the sculptor pay attention to the proportions between the hands, head and body and the appearance of the costume, achieve greater static in the figure's attitude and make the head more masculine.⁵⁴ Kršinić soon made the changes to the sculpture according to the remarks of the jury, which accepted the new clay model already at the session held in late December,⁵⁵ after examining the model a few days earlier in Zagreb.⁵⁶ The sculpture was supposed to be carved in the famous Belgrade stonework company Bertoto, but by the end of February 1938, the stone for the sculpture had not yet been delivered,⁵⁷ and the carving and installation were prolonged until August.⁵⁸

168

The monumental sculpture depicted Karađorđe with his right hand raised at the moment of taking an oath, while his left hand rested on a saber, and he was dressed in a stylized suit that “preserved the forms of the folk costume.”⁵⁹

Central Hall and Staircases – Affirmation of Economic and Intellectual Progress and Legal Order

The former Conversation Hall is the second largest space in the building, richly decorated and with a portal-like structure. In the more narrow parts of the hall, on the side of the doors and flanked by pilasters with Corinthian columns, there are two niches with marble sculptures that symbolize commerce in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Four female figures personify the four branches of the economy: *Agriculture* and *Industry* were made by the Slovenian sculptor

52 He was the father of King Aleksandar I Karađorđević, the grandfather of the 13-year-old heir to the throne Petar II Karađorđević and the uncle of the then regent and viceroy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Prince Pavle Karađorđević.

53 Kršinić submitted the work under the code title *Ustanak* (Rebellion), and Pallavicini under the code 804. Spisak skica umetničkih radova [List of Sketches of Works of Art], AJ-72-125-387; XIV zapisnik [Minutes no. 14], AJ-72-125-387; “Nagrade Kršiniću i Palavićinju,” *Novo doba*, July 8, 1937, 4.

54 XIX zapisnik [Minutes no. 19], AJ-72-126-388. Jury session was on September 22, 1937.

55 XXIII zapisnik [Minutes no. 23], AJ-72-126-388. Jury session was on December 27, 1937.

56 Letter to Branko Šenoa, Belgrade, December 22, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

57 Letter from Frano Kršinić, Zagreb, February 28, 1938, AJ-72-126-388.

58 Telegram from Frano Kršinić to the engineer [Vladislav] Čeh, AJ-72-126-388. He authorizes Grassi to install the sculpture because he is prevented from coming in person.

59 Đorđe Oraovac, “Skulpture u Narodnoj skupštini” [Sculptures in the National Assembly], *Umetnički pregled*, no. 2 (1939): 55.



Fig. 5. Petar Pallavicini, *Maritime Affairs*, 1937, marble / *Crafts*, 1937, marble. Photographs by Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.



Fig. 6. Frano Kršinić, *Justice*, 1937, gilded bronze / *Education*, 1937, gilded bronze. Photographs by Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.

France Gorše, and the figures of *Crafts* and *Maritime Affairs* were created by a Croatian artist who lived in Belgrade, Petar Pallavicini, a professor at the Art School. The sculptures in the niches followed the idealized model of the female figure that is common in the decoration of public buildings. A nude figure symbolizing maritime affairs holds a ship and has a dolphin under her feet, while *Crafts* is shown with tools in her hands. The jury received 12 sketches for the *Crafts* and 16 for the *Maritime Affairs*, and both of Pallavicini's sculptures were evaluated as well-posed and beautifully modeled (**fig. 5**).⁶⁰

169

The sculptures in the niches of the staircases leading to the first floor and the diplomatic chambers were made by Frano Kršinić and personify Justice and Education, the backbones on which the state is based. Kršinić depicted female figures with the attributes of justice (scales) and education (a torch), and followed the same model as Pallavicini (**fig. 6**). He had to cast the figures of *Justice* and *Education* in bronze and gild them with real gold leaves.⁶¹ Both sculptures completely satisfied the jury, which accepted them unconditionally, with the assessment that they fully fit the purpose and were well executed.⁶² Moreover, Milan Kašanin and the other members of the jury wanted to own the head (a detail of *Education*) and were informed about the price of its execution in bronze.⁶³ In October 1937, Kršinić transported the sculptures *Justice* and *Education* to Belgrade and, in accordance with the requirements,⁶⁴ soon installed them personally.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ VII zapisnik, 18–19, AJ-72-125-387.

⁶¹ Decision of the President of the National Assembly on the creation of the sculpture of Education, Belgrade, February 25, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

⁶² *Ocena i napomena žirija za figuru Glavnog stepeništa / Prosveta / nagrađenu izvođenjem* [Evaluation and Comments of the Jury for the Figure of Education Awarded with the Execution], February 25, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

⁶³ Letter from Frano Kršinić to the engineer [Vladislav Čeh], Zagreb, July 29, 1937, AJ-72-126-388. Kršinić said that the casting in the Zagreb Academy art foundry would cost 1,500 dinars.

⁶⁴ Letter from Frano Kršinić to the engineer [Vladislav Čeh], Zagreb, October 8, 1937, AJ-72-126-388.

⁶⁵ Letter from Frano Kršinić to the head of the Technical Department of the National Assembly [Vladislav Čeh], Belgrade, October 15, 1937, AJ-72-126-390. He engaged the company Slavija for transport.



Small Plenary Hall – Allegory of Life

One of the most representative spaces in the National Assembly building was the Small Plenary Hall, a semicircular amphitheater-type chamber located in the left wing of the building. In the first competition, the fresco in the Small Plenary Hall was not selected, and the second and third prizes, as already mentioned, were awarded to Croatian artists Mirko Rački and Sergije Glumac.

In the second competition, in February 1937, among 23 submitted works, the jury selected a fresco by Mate Meneghello Rodić under the code 33.⁶⁶ In the fresco *Velika alegorija rada* (Great Allegory of Work), the jury highlighted the original theme, colours and good drawing, and noted the mass proportions, small figures and excessively large background in the form of architecture as shortcomings. They requested that the artist expand the foreground so that the figures would not stand on the frame, and make the part with the figures larger in relation to the entire background (architecture and sky).⁶⁷ Rodić corrected his work, and in September 1937 the jury accepted his cardboard for the fresco in the Small Plenary Hall.⁶⁸ The artist from Split was known for decorating the interiors of public buildings, and in this wall painting with more than 30 figures he depicted many aspects of life in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – various branches of the economy such as agriculture, fishing, cattle breeding, construction and industry. In the background, he presented various religions of the people of Yugoslavia, showing a mosque, a Catholic monastery and an Orthodox church (fig. 7).

Twelve pendants in the Small Plenary Hall, which show female and male bust-length portraits in folk costumes of various Yugoslavian nations, were painted by the Croatian artist Kristian Kreković.⁶⁹

Fig. 7. Mate Meneghello Rodić, *Great Allegory of Work*, 1937, fresco. Photograph by Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.

66 *Slika za Malu salu* [Painting for the Small Plenary Hall], February 18, 1937, AJ-72-125-387.

67 AJ-72-126-389, *Ocena i napomena žirija za sliku male sale nagrađenu izvodenjem* [Evaluation and Comments of the Jury for the Painting in the Small Plenary Hall Awarded with the Execution], AJ-72-126-389.

68 XIX zapisnik, AJ-72-126-388.

69 *Dom Narodne skupštine*, 133.

Great Club and the Buffet – Everyday Life of the People

The artist from Slavonia, Vladimir Filakovac, who moved from Osijek to Belgrade in 1930, and the Slovenian painter Rajko Slapernik received awards for paintings in the hall of the Great Club. The jury chose their solutions from among 23 received works, and for Filakovac's sketch under the code title *Shore*, they concluded that "in terms of idea, composition and painting process, it fully corresponds to the place for which it is intended."⁷⁰ The elongated horizontal composition in the form of a frieze shows a group of fishermen with fishing nets and women walking with baskets full of fish next to them, being welcomed by mothers with children. Monumental, corpulent figures eliminate the surrounding space of the coast, which is only indicated by fragments of the sea and ships, thus emphasizing that hard work can lead to prosperity. In July 1937, Filakovac finished the fresco *Shore*,⁷¹ and was, at the suggestion of the jury, soon awarded the creation of another fresco in the hall of the Great Club. It was to be placed in the spot intended for Slapernik's work and realized under the same conditions as the first painting.⁷² In less than a month, Filakovac completed the work *U brdima* (In the Hills),⁷³ which depicted a frieze of six young men and women in national costumes on horses, with mountains visible behind them. He used the oil painting *Svadba – Konavljani na konjima* (Wedding – Konavljani on Horses) from 1936 as a sketch, which he transferred to the wall in a more synthetic version (fig. 8).⁷⁴



Fig. 8. Vladimir Filakovac, *Shore*, 1937, fresco
/ *In the Hills*, 1937, fresco. Photographs by
Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić.

70 VII zapisnik, 4, AJ-72-125-387.

71 Letter from Vladimir Filakovac to the Presidency of the National Assembly, Belgrade, July 15, 1937, AJ-72-126-389.

72 Decision of the President of the National Assembly to entrust Vladimir Filakovac with the creation of one more fresco painting, Belgrade, July 24, 1937, AJ-72-126-389.

73 Letter from Vladimir Filakovac to the Presidency of the National Assembly, Belgrade, August 11, 1937, AJ-72-126-389.

74 It is a painting with dimensions of 78.5×96.5 cm, which is owned by the Croatian Parliament in Zagreb. Cf. Ambruš, *Vladimir Filakovac*, 258.

OTHER WORKS BY CROATIAN ARTISTS

In addition to the competition, the National Assembly also engaged artists to create artworks outside of the competition. Painter Kristian Kreković realized the already mentioned pendentive paintings in the Small Plenary Hall. The Split-born sculptor Toma Rosandić, who was also a member of the jury, was hired for the execution of the sculpture *Igrali se konji vrani* (Black Horses at Play), which was placed on pedestals on the side of the staircase leading to the entrance portico of the National Assembly.⁷⁵ Rosandić was also the author of the bust of the Serbian politician Nikola Pašić (1937), the head of Government of the Kingdom of Serb, Croats and Slovenes in the 1920s, which used to be in the Great Plenary Hall,⁷⁶ and is today located in the vestibule.

Seven representative portraits were commissioned for the Diplomatic Salon from the professor of the Royal Academy of Arts in Zagreb, Vladimir Becić, depicting members of the Karađorđević family – the late King Aleksandar I, Queen Marija, King Petar II and the regent Prince Pavle (two portraits) – and regents Radenko Stanković and Ivo Perović who, together with Prince Pavle, formed the Viceroy's Council and assumed royal powers until Petar II came of age.⁷⁷

At the same time, artworks for the National Assembly were also being purchased, and numerous artists and private collectors from different parts of the Kingdom offered paintings and sculptures – from landscapes to portraits of the members of the royal family.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

The fresco and sculpture program of the National Assembly and the awarded works correspond to the direction of the contemporary policy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and are inseparable from the complex political situation in the multinational state community founded after World War I, which after the promulgation of the 1921 Vidovdan Constitution functioned as a constitutional centralized parliamentary monarchy under the rule of the Karađorđević dynasty. The third decade of the 20th century was marked by constant changes of government and conflicts between government radicals and opposition parties that fought for federal organization, equality and the affirmation of national distinctiveness. With the proclamation of the January 6 dictatorship in 1929, King Aleksandar I Karađorđević dissolved the National Assembly, limited the work of political parties, changed the

⁷⁵ His fee of 1,050,000 dinars was several times higher than the fees of authors awarded in the competition. Overview of expenditures for works of art from November 1936 until September 17, 1937, AJ-72-125-387.

⁷⁶ Oraovac, "Skulpture," 57–58.

⁷⁷ Decision on the payment of 175,000 dinars to Vladimir Becić for the creation of a portrait for the Diplomatic Salon, March 19, 1938, AJ-72-126-389. The portraits were ordered in November 1936.

⁷⁸ For example, the Croatian sculptor Marin Studin, who was staying in Belgrade at the time, offered his bust of King Petar II at a price of 15,000 dinars. Letter from Marin Studin to the President of the National Assembly, Belgrade, March 26, 1936, AJ-72-125-385.

previous division of the state and changed the name of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which nominally indicated integral Yugoslavism “as the new political-national ideology of the dictatorship.”⁷⁹ The Octroic constitution of 1931 again established a bicameral National Assembly, but any nation-based activities were still prohibited. More substantial changes came after the death of King Aleksandar I, with the establishment of the Viceroy’s Council, the formation of the new government and the establishment of the Yugoslav Radical Community party, as well as the softening of integral Yugoslavism and the emphasis on the “particularities of the historical development of individual provinces.”⁸⁰ As can be seen in the art program in the building of the National Assembly, the choice of historical figures and depicted national types emphasized the multinational, multicultural and multiconfessional character of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as well as the affirmation of general principles and values, such as justice and education, along with those activities on which a geographically rich and diverse country based its economy – agriculture, crafts, industry and maritime affairs. The competitions held in 1936 and 1937 gave artists the opportunity to try their hand at creating monumental works for a space of great symbolic significance, in which Croatian artists were particularly successful, creating the largest number of award-winning frescoes and sculptures and thus visually shaping the interior of a key political institution in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

79 Ivana Žebec Silj, “Pregled općeg političkog stanja u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, kasnije Kraljevini Jugoslaviji” [Overview of Political Situation in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Yugoslavia], *Studia lexicographica*, no. 22 (2018): 36.

80 *Ibid.*, 39.

