

Between Villa Rafut and Rafut Park: Monument's Protection History

The central theme of my bachelor's thesis was an analysis of Villa Rafut (1909–1914) in Pristava near Nova Gorica – designed by the architect Anton Laščak (Antonio Lasciac) – in relation to the accompanying park, within the context of heritage protection. Villa Rafut is widely recognised in international academic literature as an example of the direct transfer of architectural stylistic innovations. Laščak's international renown stems from his pioneering contributions to Neo-Islamic – more specifically Neo-Mamluk – style, which emerged in Egypt at the turn of the twentieth century.

Following nationalisation, the villa was designated to house the district Hygienic Institute, while the area encompassing the park was recognised as a natural heritage site of national significance. Significant changes took place only in 2003, when the villa was formally recognised as heritage and incorporated into the park complex. Since then, the villa and park have constituted a single cultural monument of local importance, representing garden-architectural heritage.

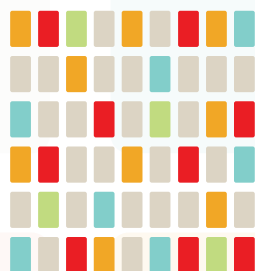


Figure 1 Villa Rafut (<https://www.rafutskipark.si/sl/zgodovina/>)



Figure 2 Portrait of Anton Laščak, c. 1906–1908 (ERPAC – Servizio Musei e Archivi Storici, Fototeca Musei Provinciali di Gorizia; in Kovšca, 2017)

The current decree reveals inconsistent and fragmented protection of the two parts of the monument complex, as evidenced by the naming of the monument unit as 'Rafut Park with the villa.' The unit's unusual name not only indicates the consequences of past functional separation but also points to possible echoes of unjustified neglect of the monument's historical, artistic, and architectural values in representational strategies currently discussed in the context of the monument's revitalisation.



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