

THE TÖNNIES' PATH THROUGH LJUBLJANA

INTRODUCTION

In the hundred years since 1844, the Tönnies family had a significant impact on the economic and social development of the city of Ljubljana. In 2017, on the initiative of the Slovenian-Swedish Society, the Scientific Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts organised a conference on the scale of the family's work, diversity and international activities. In the same year, the City Council of the Municipality of Ljubljana adopted a decision to name the park by the Koseze pond (Koseški bajer) after Gustav Tönnies, where an exhibition was set up about the family's life and work. The exhibition was also hosted at the Technical Museum of Slovenia in Bistra and the Archives of Slovenia and the Museum in Litija. An exhibition is now being prepared in the glass atrium of Ljubljana City Hall, where a new leaflet – Tönnies' Path through Ljubljana – will also be available.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE TÖNNIES FAMILY

Gustav Tönnies was born in 1814 in Stralsund near the Baltic sea. His father, a ship carpenter, moved there from the southern Swedish province of Småland. Gustav trained as a carpenter in Hamburg, then embarked on a long educational journey through the then most developed European countries. In 1844 he was invited to Ljubljana to erect a roof on the Colosseum, then the largest building in this part of Europe. Following his successful work and an invitation from the mayor of Ljubljana, Janez Nepomuk Hradecky, Gustav became a city carpenter. Ljubljana became his second home. He married Amalija Malovrh from Ljubljana, with whom he had nine children. After school, all five sons joined their father's companies and later continued his work in Ljubljana, Trieste and Nabrežina. He worked on the construction of railway stations on the Celje–Ljubljana–Trieste and Ljubljana–Tarvisio railway lines, built industrial facilities (Kozler brewery, textile factory, renovated Cukrarna), was involved in construction of the Tobacco Factory, moved the ironworks in Dvor pri Žužemberku to Ljubljana, and founded Machine Factories and Foundries and The Brickyard company in Koseze. Modernising the quarries in Nabrežina, Repentabor and Momjan enabled the sale of stone across Europe and overseas to Japan, New Zealand, Argentina and North America through new rail and shipping services. In 1883, Emperor Franz Joseph awarded Gustav the high decoration of the Golden Cross with a crown. Gustav died in 1886. At that time he employed over six hundred workers in his companies, mostly Slovenes, took care of their professional training, paid them well and was thus very popular among his employees.

His sons Gustav, Adolf, Wilhelm, Emil and Rudolf continued his work. At the time of the Ljubljana earthquake in 1895, their construction company was one of the largest, therefore it is not surprising that they were among the main contractors in the renovation and construction of public, private, military and religious buildings. Machine Factories and Foundries became the driving force of the emerging wood processing, machine industry and energy industries in Carniola and the forerunner of the post-war development of the company Litostroj. After studying architecture in Vienna, Rudolf went to Zagreb and then to Sarajevo, where he was the leading architect of the Bosnian government for twenty years. After the end of the World War I, he returned to Ljubljana and took over the family construction company and also worked in Zagreb, Sarajevo and Belgrade.

During this period, Ljubljana became an important capital of the region of Carniola. Wars, the emergence of new states, inter-ethnic conflicts and economic crises also affected the Tönnies family and its activities, which gradually died out in the period up to World War II and with it the memory of their rich heritage. Years ago, the Slovene-Swedish Society began to revive the memory of their life and work, which made an important contribution to the integration of the region of Carniola and later Slovenia into the society of developed European countries.

THE TÖNNIES'S PATH THROUGH LJUBLJANA

The journey through the heritage of the Tönnies family begins in the central Art Nouveau square in Ljubljana – Prešeren Square, which is surrounded by palaces, the post-earthquake-restored Hauptman House **1**, Mayer's Palace **2** (now the National Institute of Public Health), along Trubarjeva cesta **3** and **4**, a residential building and across Tromostovje to Kresija **5**, the seat of the Administrative Unit of the City of Ljubljana and the Tourist Information Centre. Continue along Stritarjeva ulica **6** to Mestni trg (City Square). Opposite City Hall, the family renovated Souvan's house (house number 24) **7**, house number 10 with its rich atrium **8**, then Pod Trančo **2**, **9** where Gustav Tönnies built a bridge to Jurčičev trg (Jurčič Square) in 1867. This bridge was moved to Moste in 1922 according to the plans drawn up by the architect Jože Plečnik and in 2009 to the current location between Prule and Kraków embankment, which was named the Hradecky Bridge in memory of the mayor of Ljubljana who served for the longest time in this profession, from 1822 to 1847. The bridge with a special steel structure and joint was the first in the world with concrete foundations. A meeting between Gustav Tönnies' and with Dobner, the director of Fužine from Dvor near Žužemberk where the bridge structure was made, led to the relocation of production to Ljubljana, which significantly marked the development of industry in Carniola. The path leads along the Gallusov nabrežje embankment **17** **10** to Levstikov trg (Levstik Square): in 1901 a Girls' primary school **11** was built here, which today is a primary school with an adapted programme. From here continue to Stari and Gornji trg **34** (Old and Upper Square) **12** then return to the parish and the St. Jacob's church **13**, which was renovated in 1897. Continue along the Grudnov nabrežje embankment and cross the Ljubljanica river over the aforementioned Hradecky Bridge **14**. Next go along the Krakovsko nabrežje embankment, along Križevniška and Gosposka ulica to Turjaška ulica, where the Jadranska banka building **15** was renovated. Return to Trg Francoske revolucije (French Revolution Square), today house number 6 is home to the Conservatory of Music and Ballet **16**, on Rimska cesta there are renovated residential houses from number 1, today the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage **17**, to 5 and 6 **18**, **19**, onwards along Slovenska cesta and Gregorčičeva ulica to Vegova ulica, home to the first post-earthquake laboratory of Dr. Albin Belar, a world-renowned seismologist for whom seismograph instruments were manufactured at Machine Factories and Foundries. The Tönnies' sons met Belar during their schooling at the Realka high school **20**. After World War I, when Belar fell out of favour with the new government and moved to Višče pri Gorjah near Bled, they continued to cooperate and make instruments for his new laboratory. A beautiful house with a laboratory was designed for him by the architect Maks Fabiani, with whom the Tönnies family also collaborated on many Art Nouveau buildings in Ljubljana. The path leads back to Gosposka ulica **21** and on to Kongresni trg **15** (Congress Square) **22** and left along Dunajska cesta to Gradišče 8 do 10 to the German House – today the Drama Theater **23**. Visiting this house is interesting from both sides, also from Gregorčičeva ulica. Continue along Dunajska and Rimska cesta from number 20 to 22 **24** to the beginning of Tržaška cesta, where the Tönnies were involved in construction of the Tobacco Factory Ljubljana **25**

in 1872, which they moved from the burnt down Cukrarna building. More than two thousand people were employed at The Tobacco Factory, mostly women, and it was an important industrial activity. Today it is the administrative seat of the Technical Museum of Slovenia, numerous companies, institutes and the Administrative Unit of Ljubljana. Return to Prešernova ulica 1 to 3, Anton Korzika's residential building 26, to number 25 – Mladika, the girls' lyceum and boarding school dating from 1907, designed by the architects Maks Fabiani and Metod Koch – today home to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 27. Next go along Šubičeva ulica and across Valvazor park to reach the Carniola Regional Theatre, today the Opera House, Zupančičeva 1 28, built by Adolf Tönnies in 1892. On Cankarjeva ulica 16, 10 and 3 there are residential and commercial buildings 29, 30, 31, cross Slovenska cesta and enter the Post 32 building, whose interior was built in 1896 by Adolf Tönnies. Return to the intersection of Slovenska cesta and Cankarjeva ulica, where the building of the then Ljubljanska kreditna banka, today Banka Slovenije 33, was built in 1923 by Rudolf Tönnies. Continue along Beethovnova ulica to number 9, the residential building 34 designed by the architect Maks Fabiani and then along Štefanova ulica to the residential buildings on Zupančičeva ulica 7 and 8, 35, 36 and then to Prežihova ulica, where the Classical Gymnasium was built in 1906. The Prežih Voranc Primary School 37 was designed by the architect Maks Fabiani. Now head along Zupančičeva ulica past the former Coliseum 38, where the new Schellenburg Residential Palace is being built. At the crossroads with Gosposvetska ulica is the Primož Trubar Evangelical Church 39, renovated in 1921, where the architect Rudolf Tönnies is buried. Follow Celovška cesta to the Pivovarna Union brewery, the successor to the Kozler pivovarna brewery 40, built in 1876 by Gustav Tönnies, where there is also a Brewery Museum, with a corner dedicated to Tönnies. The land between the Gorenjska railway and Dunajska cesta used to be home to the Tönnies' Machine Factories and Foundries; today there is a new Muslim centre with a mosque. Return to the city centre along Celovška cesta to Vošnjakova and Dvoržakova ulica number 9, where Rudolf built a new home in the English Art Nouveau style in 1922 41, today's Villa Selena with tourist apartments. Follow Kersnikova ulica, along which the original land and now demolished Gustav Tönnies residential building stretched to Dunajska cesta, to return to Celovška cesta, home to Figovec, and Tavčarjeva ulica, where the Hribar palace 42, designed by Maks Fabiani and built by Gustav Tönnies Jr, is located, numbers 3 to 5 are a residential buildings 43 and number 9 is the Court building 44, built in 1922 by Rudolf Tönnies. At Miklošičeva ulica 20 is Krisper's Palace 45, at number 16 is Bamberg's Palace 46, both designed by Maks Fabiani in 1907 and built by Gustav Tönnies Jr. This is followed by Kolodvorska ulica and the public baths from 1901, designed by the architect Maks Fabiani and built by Gustav Tönnies Jr, today the Mala ulica Family Centre 47. Next head along Kolodvorska ulica towards the railway station, at number 26 there is a restaurant and residential building 48, at number 11 Ljubljanski dvor from 1923, designed by the architect Maks Fabiani and built by Rudolf Tönnies, today it is the seat of Slovenian Railways and the Dvor cinema 49. Continue to Trg Osvobodilne fronte (Liberation Front Square) and Ljubljana railway station 50. Gustav Tönnies was involved in construction, carpentry and locksmithing of the railway station in 1847, when the first train arrived in Ljubljana from Vienna. Continue to the residential buildings on Resljeva cesta 16 51 and Čufarjeva ulica 20 and 22 52 and Trubarjeva cesta 32, where there are residential and commercial buildings 53. Continue along Trubarjeva cesta to the St. Peter's church, which was rebuilt after the earthquake 54. Now go along Roška cesta then cross the Ljubljanica river past Cukrarna 55, Gustav Tönnies restored the building twice following fires in 1858 and 1868. In 2021 it was renovated into the Cukrarna Art Gallery. The Roška barracks home guard 56 was built in 1899, and in addition to the artillery barracks on Dunajska cesta and the military hospital on Zaloška cesta, it was an important part of the projects of the Tönnies' construction

company. Continue along Poljanska cesta 26 and 28, where the Marijanišče orphanage was located, today it functions as the administrative building of the City of Ljubljana and the Ivan Cankar student dormitory 57. Ulica Janeza Pavla II features residential buildings, number 7 58, 12 to 14 is Zrinjski House 59. A residential building 60 is located on Poljanska cesta 13. The path leads on to Poljanski nasip 2, where the first reinforced concrete building of the Catholic Printing House from 1908 is located. Later it housed the Human Rights Printing House, today the Faculty of Law 61. This concludes the first part of the Tönnies' route through Ljubljana, which visitors can walk in a day. It takes about 4 to 5 hours.

You can also go to more distant points in Ljubljana, e.g. to the Gustav Tönnies Park in Koseze and to the family tomb in the Žale cemetery, by city bus or city bicycle (Bicikelj bike sharing scheme), or on foot to the water reservoir on Tivoli Hill along the Jakopič promenade, where the Jakopič Pavilion was erected according to the plans of Maks Fabiani and Gustav Tönnies, to Tivoli Castle and further along the forest path to Tivoli Peak. More remote places where members of the Tönnies family worked in Slovenia (Bled, Žirovnica, Litija, Novo mesto, Kostanjevica, Vrhnika, Bistra) are accessible by public transport.

In the Završnica Technical Museum in Žirovnica an old power plant with Pelton turbines is on display, built in Machine Factories and Foundries in Ljubljana in 1911. It is the work of Wilhelm Tönnies. The Technical Museum in Bistra displays a collection of wood processing machines built in Machine Factories and Foundries.

Along the Tönnies' route through Ljubljana, you can see a number of other museums, galleries ([links](#)), parks, modern buildings, inns, cafes and other attractions of the city of Ljubljana.

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