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**Classical Themes as Iconographic Motifs in Historical Allegorical Painting
Examples by Gustav Klimt in the Rijeka Municipal Theatre and Ivan Tišov at the
University Library in Zagreb**

In 19th-century humanistic education, Antiquity was considered to be the artistic and ethical peak of Western civilization. Based on ancient mythological and historical themes and motifs and generating new iconographic interpretations adapted to a wider spectrum of activities that developed as a result of strong civic culture, historical allegorical painting as a genre reached its climax at the turn of the century. Public architecture most often served as the framework for such allegorical representations whose content and messages conveyed the spirit of Antiquity. The Municipal Theatre in Rijeka and the University Library in Zagreb as the examples of historical allegorical paintings commissioned for Croatian public institutions will serve as the basis for discussing allegory as a genre, provide iconographic analysis and iconological interpretation, and the manner in which it transmits ancient culture, its continuity and concrete and symbolic presence in the context of civic culture and cultural institutions at the turn of the century in Croatia. The objects of analysis are the two paintings by Gustav Klimt: *Orpheus and Eurydice (Allegory of Poetry)*, and *Mark Antony and Cleopatra (Allegory of Tragedy)*, painted in Vienna in 1884-1885 and placed in the auditorium vault of the *Teataro Comunale* in Rijeka in 1885, and the paintings by Ivan Tišov, *Artes Liberales* and *Scientiae Naturales – Scientiae Scolasticae*, painted and mounted as overdoors in the professors' reading room of the University Library in Zagreb in 1913-1914.