

SOUTH TRANSDANUBIAN LATE BAROQUE LUTHERAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE¹

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In Hungarian history of architecture, Lutheran church architecture in South Transdanubia belongs to hardly known, uninvestigated subjects. Beyond of this narrow domain being unelaborated, it can be stated in general that fundamental investigations to disclose this subject are missing².

Some remnants, regional features of Hungarian Protestant — within that, Lutheran — church architecture have been treated in several important studies in the past decade³. This paper is expected to briefly survey

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²To now, the only detailed survey of this scope is: LAJOS KEMÉNY — Dr. KÁROLY GYIMESI (Editors): *Evangélikus templomok [Lutheran Churches]* (Athenaeum, Budapest, 1944). Its third chapter topographically handles churches of that data were given by congregational pastors. Because of this way of data collection, the work remained deficient, even, because of war circumstances, only pictures of the topographic part got into the volume, the text got lost. (For instance, out of 35 Lutheran churches of Tolna county, 26 ones are mentioned, missing ones are mostly affiliated churches). After 1945, several topographies (e. g. GENTHON: *Magyarország művészeti emlékei [Art Monuments in Hungary]*) adopt data by Kemény — Gyimesi. For a fundamental typological recapitulation of Hungarian Protestant church architecture from the late 18th — early 19th centuries see ISTVÁN BIBÓ: *Der protestantische Kirchenbau in Ungarn um 1800. (Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Vergleichende Kunstforschung in Wien. 1984. Sept. pp. 1-4; 1985. Febr. pp. 1-5.)* Further on: BIBÓ: *Der protestantische Kirchenbau ...*

³Among the most important ones: concerning the Great Hungarian Plain see I. BIBÓ: *Az Alföld későbarokk és klasszicista építészetének néhány kérdése [Some Problems of the Late Baroque and Classicist Architecture in the Great Hungarian Plain]* in: *Építés és Közlekedéstudományi Közlemények Budapest 1967.* 3-4. pp. 525-564 and by himself: *Egy sajátos későbarokk építészeti emlékesoport az Alföldön [A Peculiar Group of late Baroque Architectural Monuments in the Great Hungarian Plain]* in: *Építés és Közlekedéstudományi Közlemények 1974.* 3-4. pp. 509-515.

A fundamental work on essential monuments of Lutheran church architecture in West Hungary is GÁBOR WINKLER: *A soproni evangélikus templom helye Sopron építésze-*

provincial Lutheran church architecture within the framework of Hungarian Protestant church architecture.

Reformed and Lutheran church architecture are essentially distinguished by layout, space formation differences. This boundary is of course less sharp than that between Catholic and Protestant church architectures. Most of churches built by Protestants date from the decades after the Edict of Tolerance by Joseph II (1781). In counter-Reformation times, Reformed and Lutheran congregations often used oratories in common, and their church architecture boosting by the time of religious tolerance is also featured by several typical 'Protestantisms', such as — among others — both church and liturgy centered on pulpit in addition to the altar, as well as by the necessity of choirs imposed by room shortage. Beyond all that, an essential layout difference between the two Protestant denominations is that in Reformed churches the strive to central space is met not only intellectually — by uniting sermon (pulpit) and Lord's supper (Lord's Table) as main functions into one centre, but also functional organization of the space is central: Lord's table with the pertaining pulpit are possibly between seats, centrally to them. Here the pulpit and the affronted Lord's table are in the middle of the longitudinal sidewall of the nave or nave and aisles. This layout (so-called 'wide church') has generalized in Hungarian Reformed church architecture at all intermediary aspiration levels, from the wooden church in Mánd to the 'Big Church' in Debrecen. While for Lutherans such a layout is typical, exclusively for the Great Hungarian Plain⁴ where it prevails (e. g. Tótkomlós ... 1775, and so on). Further marked deviations affect the interior. The Reformed interpreted verbally the Second Commandment ('thou shalt not make carved images thyself') so every 'figural' representation was forbidden⁵. This relied on the Old Testament law and the Prophets' messages valid up to St. John Baptist, becoming needless

tében [Position of the Lutheran Church in Sopron within the Architecture of Sopron]. in: ZÁDOR – SZABOLCSI (Editors): *Művészet és felvilágosodás* [Arts and Enlightenment] Budapest, 1978. pp. 161–207 and GÁBOR WINKLER: *Korai nagy templomaink térművészete* [Space Art of our Early Great Churches] in 'Diakonia' Budapest 1986/2. pp. 52–60. Concerning early Lutheran churches in Upper Hungary, see among others KATARINA BIATHOVÁ: *Dreveny Panteón*, (Tatran, Bratislava 1976) and ALEXANDER FRICKÝ: *Drevené artikulárne kostoly na Slovensku* (Vlastivedný Casopis 1978/2. pp. 89–93)

⁴In the manual 'Egyházi épületek és műtárgyak gondozása' [Maintenance of Ecclesiastic Buildings and Art Objects] (Budapest, 1971) IVÁN KOTSIS states in chapter 'Lutheran Aspects' that the so-called 'Wide churches typical of the Great Hungarian Plain originate from the Netherlands and Prussia, adopted by Lutherans with the intermediary of Calvinists'.

⁵Cf. IDA BOBROVSZKY: *A XVI. századi magyar református zsinatok végzéseinek művészeti vonatkozásai* [Artistic Aspects in Decisions of Hungarian Reformed Church Councils in the XVI. Century] in: *Ars Hungarica* 1976/1. pp. 65–70.

with Christ's Redemption. Lutherans principally adhered to interior objects occurring in Old and New Testament. Accordingly, in the examined region, South Transdanubia, there is a sharp distinction between Reformed and Lutheran church interiors, and between ornament topics. On painted timber ceilings and choirs of Reformed churches in South Baranya, motives of 'flowering Renaissance' survive. In South-Transdanubian Lutheran churches, there are pulpit-altars, with altar-pieces and sculptural (figural) ornaments, choir parapets exhibiting provincial salvation representations of the 'biblia pauperum' type, with profuse representations of the Old Testament, unfrequent in Hungary. Thereby Lutheran and Reformed churches may be distinguished according to layout and interior.

Territorial delimitation follows from regional features of Lutheran church architecture. Earlier, it was referred to the peculiar 'wide' layout of Lutheran churches in the Great Hungarian Plain. Such an interior belonged to a polygonal or straightly ended, long-naved exterior with a tower in, or before the façade, as usual in Catholic churches. Remind that the interior layout was adopted from the Reformed, but the strive to assimilation at any cost to the Catholic church form may be explained by psychological factors. Counter-reformational architectural restrictions for Protestants cannot be listed here⁶, but as a general rule, these affected always the exterior (prohibition of tower, ornaments, apsis, direct access from the street, dimensional restrictions). After the Edict of Tolerance, the effect of these prohibitions multiplied: congregations endeavoured to build 'normal', 'church-type' churches with tower and apsis, like those of Catholics, even, if possible, with still higher towers. Among churches in the Great Hungarian Plain, there is a group peculiar by a set of arched recesses along the side façade⁷.

The other distinct group of monuments is that in Western Hungary, the so-called no-tower hall churches⁸. Here the polygonal closing referring in other buildings to the apsis is 'straightened', of a barn-like, closed cubic aspect, with a hipped pitch roof. Originally, this was the kind of churches in Pozsony, Sopron, Győr, Tét, Somorja — among the most important ones. The interior is characterized by a pulpit altar at the shorter side, embraced on three sides by galleries. This is likely to have been influenced by architecture theoreticians of German Protestantism and by church architecture of Huguenots⁹.

⁶BIBÓ: *Der protestantische Kirchenbau ...* 1984. pp. 2–3.

⁷See note 3: BIBÓ, I.: *A peculiar late Baroque group of monuments ...*

⁸Cf. BIBÓ: *Der protestantische Kirchenbau ...* 1984. p. 3.

⁹Cf. among others: LEONHARD CHRISTOPH STURM: *Vollständige Anweisung alle Arten von Kirchen wohl anzugeben* (Augsburg 1746), WINKLER GÁBOR: *Győr, Evangéli-*

In the northern and central parts of this country (thus, in Upper Northern Hungary, and in the Pest region), a central type of layout prevailed: oval, Greek cross plans and their reduced or extended varieties, clearly under the effect of Silesian and Saxonian German Protestant prototypes (Hirschberg, Landeshut, Schweidnitz, Grossenhain)¹⁰.

This type is encountered in Upper Northern Hungary (today: Slovakia), among others, in Késmárk (Kežmarok), Kassa (Košice), Garamszeg (Hronsek), Nagypalugya (Palúdz), Lőcse (Levoča). It is from here that it might spread to the Pest region: Maglód, Domony, or on the Great Hungarian Plain, in new Slovakian Lutheran settlements. Maybe this type from Northern Upper Hungary served as model to extend the church in Orosháza to T-form, the small church in Békéscsaba to a Greek cross¹¹.

Remind that the late 18th century types typical of certain regions are not exclusive, change with time, and types are not definitely distinct. Layout categories may be considered as varieties of pulpit — gallery dispositions in a long rectangle layout form, and a façade with or without a tower¹².

After this sketch of Lutheran church architecture in Hungary, it is justified to speak of 'South-Transdanubian' Lutheran church architecture, namely, according to the Author's surveyings, characteristics of types from the Great Hungarian Plain, Western and Northern Hungary do not occur in this area in definitely clear form. As a recapitulation of surveys: by the late 18th century, in South Transdanubia, longitudinally naved, axial, gallery-sided, pulpit-altar in the apsis-type Lutheran churches prevail. These marks may be interpreted as resulting from the 'marriage' of towered, polygonal apsis exterior from the Great Hungarian Plain, and the longitudinal interior type arrangement from Western Hungary, hence, as an intermediary type.

Why the exclusivity of the 'traditional', 'churchy' layout in Southern Transdanubia?

This problem is answered by the denominational structure and settlement history of that area. After the Turkish occupation of 150 years, several, almost completely eradicated villages remained only in ruins. Repopulation was made in the 18th century in three great settlement surges,

kus öregtemplom (Tájak, korok, múzeumok kiskönyvtára 200. 1985), p. 14. [Lutheran Old Church in Győr] [Small Library of Landscapes, Ages, Museums, 200. 1985.] p. 14.

¹⁰BIBÓ, I.: Der protestantische Kirchenbau ... 1985. p. 2.

¹¹KEMÉNY – GYIMESY op. cit. pp. 178–180.

¹²BIBÓ op. cit. 1984. p. 4.

among them the first, mightiest one was in the early 1720s¹³. Lutheran congregations in Tolna, Vas and Somogy counties consisted in lesser part of indigenous people of the area, but rather of Hungarian Protestants from Győr and Sopron regions, and of settlers from German territories¹⁴.

Whether German settlers brought with them building traditions? Based on church surveys, this question has to be answered by an unambiguous 'no'. They did not entrain architectural traditions and space forms, but their churches exhibit a wide range of elements hinting to German origin, such as German inscriptions on gallery parapets and doors, use of a combination of Hungarian and some kind of Austrian coat-of-arms and crown. Comparing e. g. the 'Hungarian' church of Sárszentlőrinc and the 'German' church of Györköny, beyond different inscriptions, there is rather a high number of similarities of ground plan, space formation and ornaments. According to contracts with the landlord, settlers were agreed freedom of worship, and the right to construct barn-shaped oratories of some non-solid material¹⁵.

According to canonica visitations, these oratories were built with mud walls, wattle and daub walls or log walls, seldom exceeding bigger than 4 by 8 fathoms, with reed or straw thatch roofs.

Interior furniture is centred on the 'pulpit', before it the wooden altar made by a cabinet-maker. Also galleries were carpented to increase the capacity. Other essential inner furniture comprised benches made by joiners. Sometimes school and oratory were under the same roof (e. g. in Bikal, Gerényes). Consolidation, or even, slight improvement of the first third of the 18th century was interrupted by the Carolina Resolutio in 1731. This was increasingly followed by official impediments, or even, after the mid-century, by rigorous restrictions. Popularity of ancient oratories of nave, apsis layout may be attributed to several factors¹⁶. First, oratory and living house are structurally similar, affine by mass, so a carpenter skilled in house building could easily construct it. Second: the church had to be 'shaped like a church', motivating insistence on apsis imitation. The third factor is a technical one: among spaces of the same floor area, an oblong

¹³Cf. WEIDLEIN JÁNOS: A tolna megyei német telepítések (kiadja Tolna Vármegye közönsége 1937) pp. 16–21. [German Settlements in Tolna County] Published by Tolna County, 1937. pp. 16–21.

¹⁴Essential data are found in the so-called Egyed registration from 1829 in the Tolna County Archives, Szekszárd.

¹⁵After reference matter 'Canonica Visitaciones in Tolna-Baranya-Somogy counties', Transdanubian Archives fasc. 5–7 in the National Lutheran Archives.

¹⁶BIBÓ ISTVÁN: Az Alföld későbarokk és klasszicista építészetének néhány kérdése. [Some Problems of Late Baroque and Classicist Architectures in The Great Hungarian Plain] in ÉKTK Bp. 1967. 3–4. pp. 542–544.

rectangle is easier to be spanned than a regular square, contributing to the perpetuance of the nave layout. This form of oratories was later adopted in stone architecture. Archival matter relevant to church constructions boasting after the Edict of Tolerance in 1781 often contains hints that the new church was built adjacent to, or in place of, the old oratory, maybe often using its basement walls. (The existing church of Kalaznó stands near the old oratory¹⁷; that of Bábonny in place of the old oratory¹⁸, the church of Iharosberény on the traces of basement walls of the old oratory¹⁹).

Thereafter, in stone architecture, the nave layout did not develop further, motivated psychologically as above. A further cause of this persistence is that architecture in this region was ineffectuated by any outer factor, and isolatedness, closedness of these villages persisted also later on. Thereby Lutheran late Baroque church architecture in South Transdanubia is characterized by exclusivity of a 'transient' layout taken from oratory architecture with log or mud walls. Such 'commonplace' churches are frequent in rural Lutheran church architecture in this country. Beyond singular artistic values — if any — their appearance significantly adds to the villagescape. The problem of reconstruction and upkeep is likely to come to the foreground in the years to come.

¹⁷National Lutheran Archives (EOL) Transdanubian Archives fasc. 5. Canonica visitatio in Kalaznó, May 15, 1801 '... oratorium jam antea habeant, templum novum exstructum ...'

¹⁸EOL. Transdanubian Archives fasc. 6, pp. 45–77. Canonica Visitatio Bábonny 1814, máj. 15.

¹⁹EOL. Transdanubian Archives fasc. 5. pp. 8–22. Canonica Visitatio Iharosberény 1814. máj. 7.