

# ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN EDUCATION AS PRACTICED AT THIS INSTITUTE

by

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The Institute of History and Theory of Architecture offers architectural design education by means of so-called complex design exercises to higher, 4th and 5th grade courses.

This facultative course is attended by students interested in history of architecture or sympathizing with our relation to architecture. This period is felt to be decisive for the professional life of to-be architects.

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Lessons or design problems related physically or mentally to some historical environment likely to develop an effective approach, are assigned. Namely, there are few outstanding architectural works of this period somehow related with their environment. Though, a somewhat inferior building well related to its environment is better than a remarkable creation with no environmental relation.

I had good chance to place some modern buildings in mediaeval setting, or even to superpose them to mediaeval ruins, so I would suggest as principles for this kind of design:

1. to have a modern building in historical setting adapted by
  - order of magnitude,
  - scale,
  - mood.
2. modernness of such a building has to be manifest by
  - sincerity,
  - mass effect,
  - structurality.

A building designed according to these principles, thus, fitting its mediæval setting imagined to be picked out and placed elsewhere, it still would represent its age.

Our task to give instruction in architectural design proved rather difficult. Just as for training, e. g. to pilot an aeroplane, the operations involved have to be presented in possibly few words, but so that the student accompagnies

us along the process of design, evolving "his" ideas. It is felt to be better to have the student designed a good building by common work than to have him made a poor one by himself. (Of course, the degree of "common" has to be decided from case to case.)

Thereby the architectural activity rate of the student will continuously raise during the design exercise, and — if all goes well — by the end he will get to the first step of being a "real" architect.

In this method, the teacher conceives alternatives of the problem for himself at the first encounter, but displays small steps each lesson, permitting the student to proceed, leaving him enough freedom for individuality by flexibly changing alternatives. This is a demanding but successful method as shown by five Ybl-prize winners among my 100 students graduated during 20 years, hence a higher than average percentage. To illustrate the presented method, let me present some recent students' designs:

### 1. Ócsa — *community centre*

This village in the Budapest region is featured by a perfectly well kept Romanesque church outside its actual centre.

MÁRIA PATÓCSKAY, and BALÁZS BALOGH, who graduated in 1976, designed a little, modern, closed garden, a "piazza" around the church, restoring its urban character. The church and two new building wings are an up-to-date complex.

The south wing would house a primary school and a cultural centre, while the north one a shopping centre and a maternal school.

In this project, the historical building is somehow a staffage.

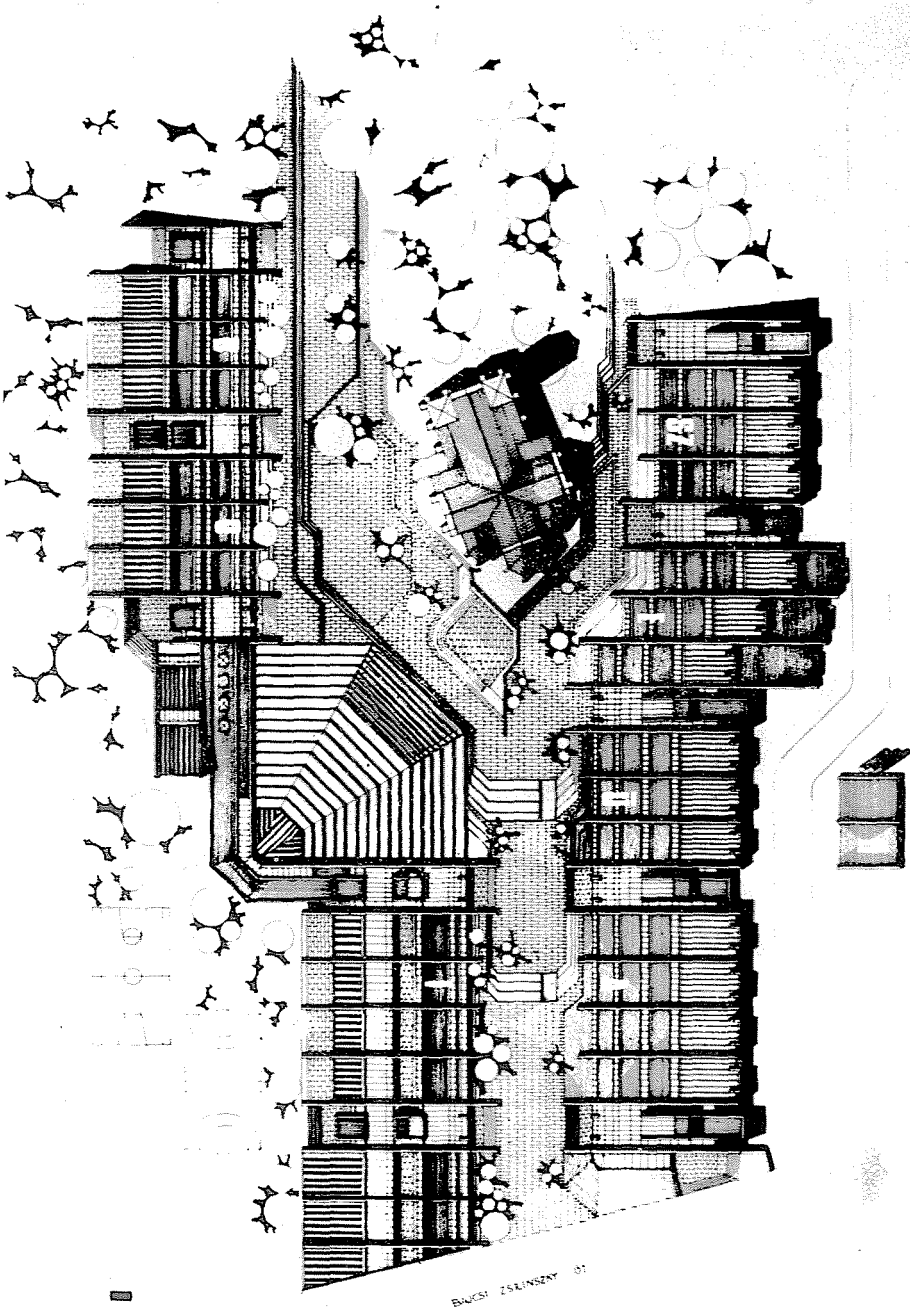
The subsequent designs are suggested for vacant lots between historical building complexes, strictly relating environment and new building.

### 2. *Reconstruction of the surrounding of an Eastern Church building in Budapest downtown.*

The church is surrounded by a fine, implanted garden with a masonry fence from that period. Neighbouring blocks of flats show bulkheads 20 to 25 m, spoiling the streetscape. KONSTANTIN VUKOV designed multistorey blocks of flats to hide them.

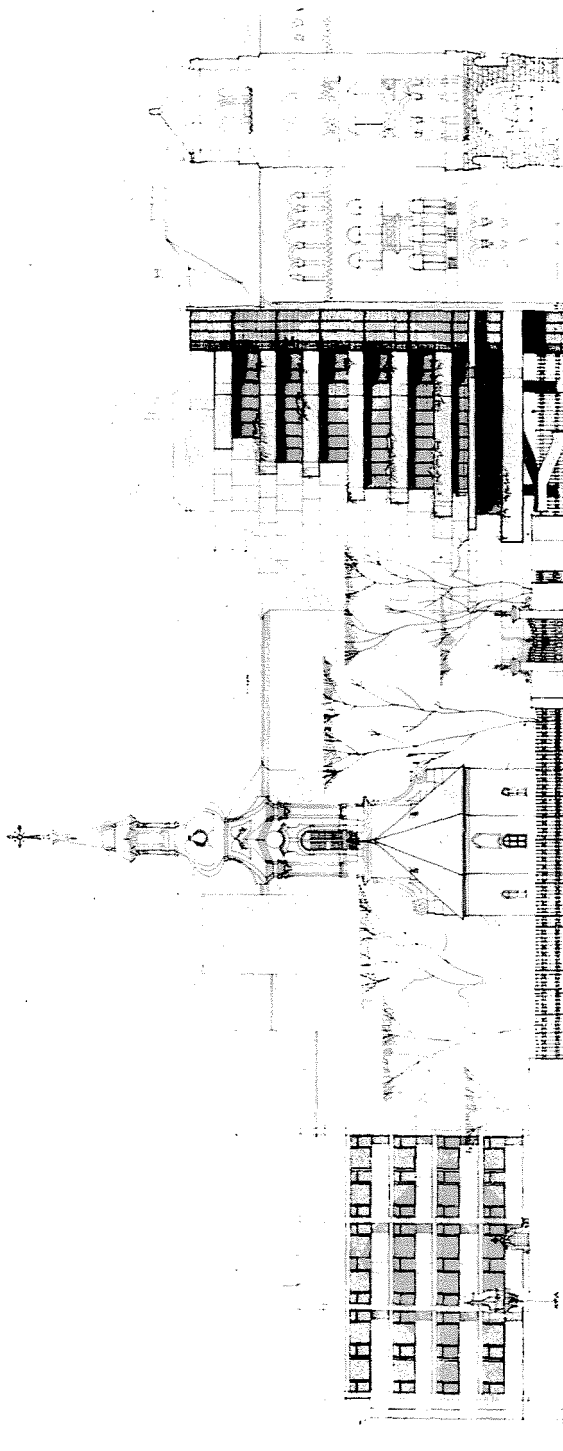
### 3. *Exhibition building in Győr*

Győr, one of the greater, dynamically developing Hungarian towns, has preserved her historical town core. In a vacant lot adjacent to the cathedral, a modern cubic building of copper surfacing, connected to the pre-existing buildings by neutral vitreous surfaces, had been designed by ÁGOTA TATÁR, 4th-year student.

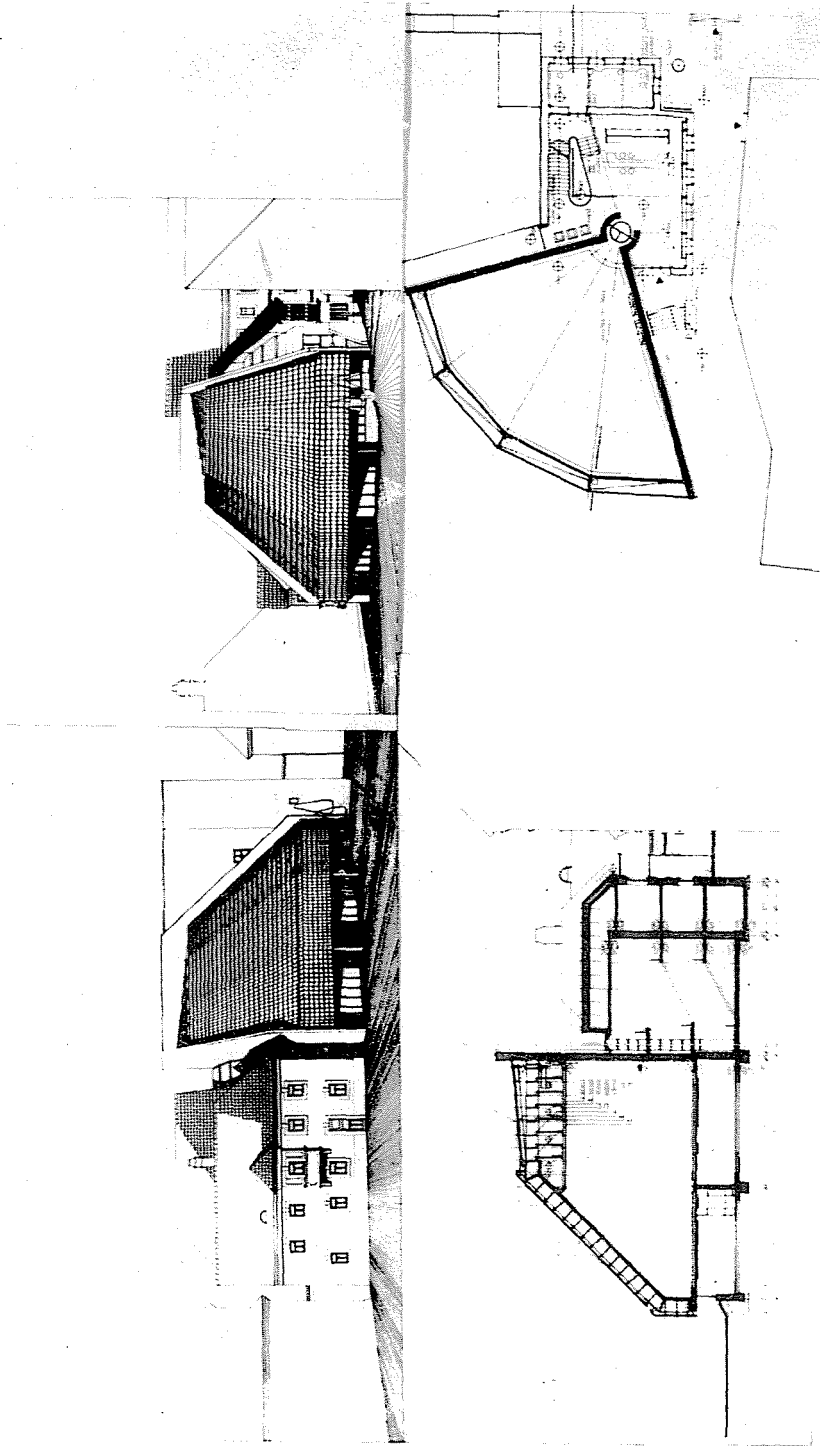


I. Ócsa — community centre

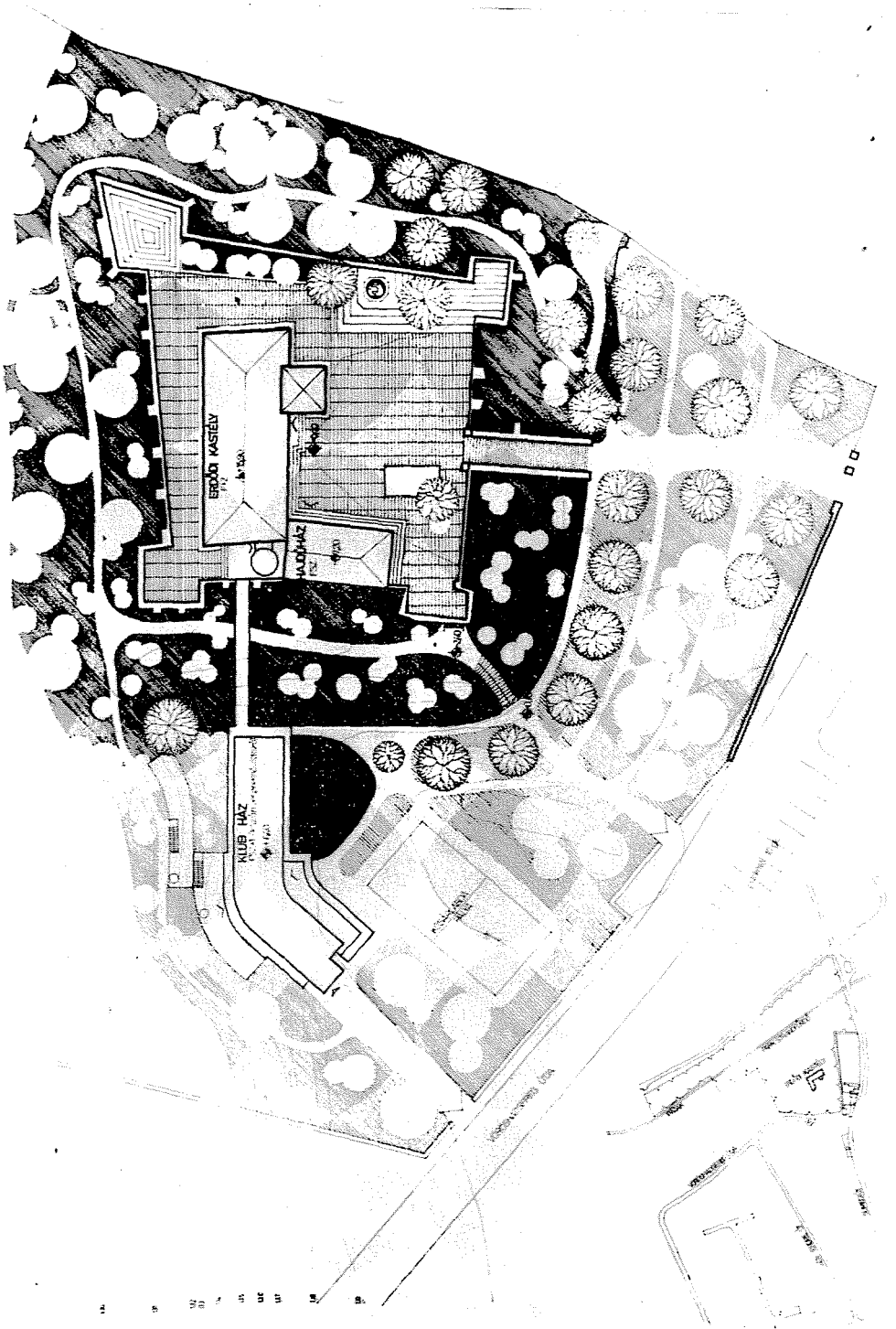
BALCSEI ZSÓFIA 01



2. Surrounding of an Eastern Church



3. Exhibition building in Győr



4. Reconstruction of the Erdődi manor house

#### 4. *Free time centre, Sopron*

This construction under a special glass dome includes

- a disc-jockey club in its lower storey exhibiting Roman building excavations;
- a club room and study circle premises in the medium storey;
- a multi-purpose studio stage in the top storey.

This structure would be supported on three pylones arranged in corners of a triangle. This is a rather inventious design of a geometric form and a structure composed on the amorphous but somewhat affine mediaeval front line, an example of the quoted cubic design. Designed by Mihály KUBINSZKY, graduate student.

#### 5. *Reconstruction of the Erdődi manor house, Jánosháza, into a village cultural centre*

Reconstruction of this manor house of mediaeval origin, with baroque and eclectic extensions, transformations, has been designed by ILDIKÓ BÁLIS, architect graduated in 1973.

The following two cases exemplify exhibition, demonstration of rests of ruined or destroyed monuments by complementary or superposed building parts.

#### 6. *Rest-house for sculptors and painters on ruins of the Alesut manor house*

Design by ÁGNES VARGA, graduate student. The old manor house consisted of a rectangular block with two wings embracing a court of honour. After World War II, the entire building has been destroyed except the main portico.

This main portico would be incorporated in a neutral glass cube of the same order of magnitude as the original building, raised on its basement walls to represent it.

#### 7. *Pilisszentkereszt monastery museum*

designed by LÁSZLÓ SZABÓ, architect graduated in 1972.

The fine Romanesque monument of which only basement walls and floors have subsisted, would be covered by a suspended roof so as to demonstrate the once church and ambulatory interior, to protect them from weathering and to serve as roof for the museum where visitors will walk on raised platforms.

This design seems to be typical of utilizing and rehabilitating monumental ruins.

### Summary

The Institute of History and Theory of Architecture offers education in architectural design to 4th and 5th grade students who selected it from among departments concerned with architectural design.

The assigned problems involve modern buildings fitting historical setting. A close fitting may be that of assigning an up-to-date function to, or didactically "reconstructing" a ruin.

The method of training is to have the student design together with the instructor who shares the work to a degree depending on the activity and abilities of the student.

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