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THE ROLE OF THE CHOIR – ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY OF SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN HUNGARY

Since three centuries a peculiar architectural tradition arisen from Byzantine culture complex - scattered throughout the country - has been eternalized. There are Serbian orthodox churches in settlements along the Danube and Baranya County, the most concentrated in the regions of Budapest and Szeged.

These churches built mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries are well definable architectural monuments within the Hungarian history of architecture.¹ Their form is typically that of the western middle-towered single-nave baroque churches standardized by Austrian architect Lorenz Landner's designs.² Their interiors exhibit, however, the world of decorations of eastern Christian, byzantine sacral spaces.³

These relics in Hungary are unique for the Serbian orthodox church architecture.⁴ In the 18th century an outstanding development of Serbian culture and so of architecture shifted to Hungary. Delivered from strict constraints typical of eastern Orthodox Christian architecture this peculiar byzantine tradition

¹ ГАВРИЛОВИЋ, Славко – ЈАКШИЋ, Иван: Грађа о православним црквима Карловачке митрополије XVIII века. In: *Споменик САНУ СХХIII*. Одељење историјских наука 2. (Београд) 1981.

² KELÉNYI, György: Az Építési Igazgatóság és a „hivatalos” építészet Magyarországon a XVIII. század végén. In: Zádor, Anna – Szabolcsi, Hedvig (ed.): *Művészet és felvilágosodás*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1978. pp.123-159.

³ See references to the building activity of greek-catholics in Hungary of the same period: TERDIK, Szilveszter: „...a mostani világnak ízlése, és a rítusnak módja szerint”- *Adatok a magyarországi görög katolikusok művészetéhez*. Nyiregyháza, Szent Atanáz Görög Katolikus Hittudományi Főiskola, 2011. and also: PUSKÁS Bernadett: Adalékok a XVIII. századi görög katolikus egyházi építészet kutatásához. In: NAGY, Márta (szerk.): *Posztbizánci Közlemények V*. Debrecen, A KLTE Művészettörténeti Tanszékének kiadványa, 2002. pp.122-137. See references also for other nationalities: KRÄHLING, János: *Evangélikus templomok a mai Magyarországon*. Veszendő templomaink III. Nemzeti Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 2004.

⁴ ДАВИДОВ, Динко: *Споменици Будимске Епархије*. Београд, Просвета, 1990.

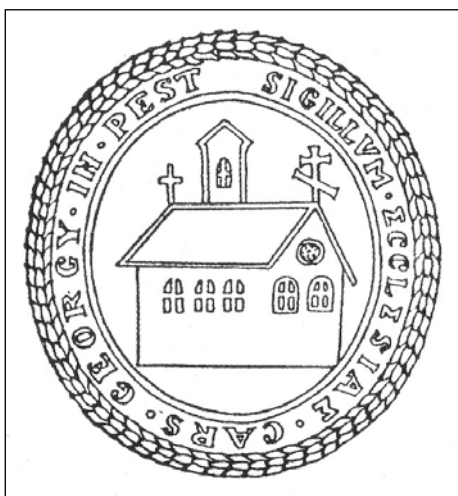


Fig. 1 Seal of Orthodox Community of Pest, end of XVII. century (Presented in Vujicsics 1997.)

Сл. 1 Печат српске црквене општине у Пешти, крај XVII века (Извор: Вујичић 1997)

alloyed with baroque animation.⁵ This well definable building period provided for further development and historical continuity of Serbian sacral architecture.⁶

In our research paper we focus on the main category element of typological formation, the position of choir (pevnica). The specified investigation focusing on architectural planning gives us possibility to underline periodization of development in composing representative church typical of that type in Serbian sacral architecture of 19th century.

The Byzantine rite monastery-churches in the area of Hungary were already mentioned in the 10th century. Their first artefact is the convent of Ráckeve in the heart of the Hungarian Kingdom.⁷ In the Late-Gothic church that has a special historical background the congregation

created an Orthodox liturgical space at the end of the 15th century. There are a significant amount of references about Serbian churches since the 16th century which usually only mention the Schismatic churches but they don't present concrete data concerning the design of the buildings. A remarkable construction activity started following the immigration of a large number of Serbs in 1690: new Serbian churches were built in Baranya nearby Syrmia, along the Danube up to Szentendre (and even further in the cities of Esztergom, Komárom and Győr) and in the area between the rivers Tisa and Maros neighbouring the region Bačka-Banat. Some seal-drawings show the characteristic form of churches of the era – in the cases of Komárom and Pest.⁸ (**Fig. 1**)

The first churches were built with wooden or adobe walls; afterwards stone buildings were erected replacing these temporary churches. This presentation focuses on the analysis of these monuments, describing the layout typology

⁵ NAGY, M.: National Self-Preservation in 18th Century Serbian Church Architecture in Hungary. *Centropa*. VIII/2., 2008. pp.134-147.

⁶ ВУКОСАВЉЕВ, Зоран: Историјски развој архитектуре српских православних цркава у Мађарској од XV до XIX века. In: *Друштвене науке о Србима у Мађарској*. Будимпешта, Српска академија наука и уметности - Самоуправа Срба у Мађарској, 2003. pp. 267-270.

⁷ МАТИЋ, Војислав: *Српски Ковин православни манастир – The Serbian Ráckeve Orthodox Monastery*. Нови Сад, Платонеум, 2009.

⁸ VUJICSICS, D. Sztoján: *Szerbek Pest-Budán*. Budapest, Fővárosi Önkormányzat Főpolgármesteri Hivatala és Szerb Fővárosi Önkormányzat, 1997.

of Serbian Orthodox churches in Hungary in the 18-19th centuries.⁹ First it is presented how the Serbs used the architectural tradition of the new cultural environment. Afterwards we review the way how not just the interior but also the external form of the churches was transformed according to the particular ecclesiastical-liturgical demands. (Fig. 2)

The 41 still intact churches managed by the Serbian Orthodox Episcopate of Buda form a well-definable collection of monuments, providing an opportunity to analyse the development tendencies as well. The research at the Budapest University of Technology at the Department for History of Architecture gave a complete overview of Serbian churches in Hungary: including the deconstructed ones and also those now in hand of other denominations.¹⁰ The doctoral dissertation finished in 2003 contained several personal surveys that are expected to be published in a book this fall. Concluding the results of this research we focus on the appearance of the choir (pevnice) because its forming plays an important part in the typological systematization.

With one exception, the monuments show the influence of Western Baroque architecture and of the era's characteristic local building traditions. The specific exception is represented by the monastery of Garbóc built in 1741 that shows a direct Byzantine link regarding both exterior and interior styling. (Fig. 3)

Four church types can be categorized among the monuments (assignable to periods taking account of some time overlapping).

The characteristics of the first typological class are definable by the church volume with pitched roof and a pediment, without a tower. Therefore these churches follow late medieval traditions where the space of the altar has a polygonal or semi-circular apse, and the intersection of the nave and the altar apse shows no discontinuities using the same layout width. (With a technical term: no triumphal arch /arcus triumphalis/ is present.) The period of 1730-1750 was a characteristic construction phase of these monuments – they were built directly on the site of earlier, simpler churches by wealthier congregations. The tower was added to the church posteriorly without exception; however, it gener-



Fig. 2 Hidas (1764), destroyed in 1949.
(Archive of Svetozar Vasvari)

Сл. 2 Српска црква у Хидошу, срушена
1949. г. (Архивска фотографија: Светозар
Вашвари)

⁹ ЈАКШИЋ, Иван: *Из пописа становништва Угарске почетком XVIII. века*. Нови Сад, Војводђански Музеј, 1966.

¹⁰ VUKOSZÁVLYEV, Zorán: *Magyarország szerb ortodox templomépítészete – a XVIII–XIX. századi fejlődés tipológiai vázlatja*. Budapest, PhD, 2003.



Fig. 3 Grábóc (1741) (Photo by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 3 Грабовач, манастирски храм Св. арханђела Св. Михаила и Гаврила (1741) (Фотографија: Зоран Вукосављевић)



Fig. 5 Szentendre, Preobraženska (1746) (Photo by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 5 Сентандреја, Преображенска црква (1746) (Фотографија: Зоран Вукосављевић)

ally fitted well to the nave. As far as the subject of the study, the choir appeared only as a piece of furniture, without its own spaciousness. This pattern is demonstrated by Preobraženska, the large town-church of Szentendre. (Fig. 4, 5)

The real criterion of the second period is the appearance of the altar apse becoming individual in the building volume narrowed by the triumphal arch. It is believed that the reason of the appearance of the triumphal arch in Serbian churches in the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom could be the single-nave church type covered by pitched roof with a western central tower that spread and became general due to the expansion of the Baroque style. The limit of this type could be drawn at the beginning of the 1750s. The fulfilment of this type is linked to the Edict of Tolerance in 1781-1786 when also the type designs of the Chamber widely dispersed. The small village church of Sárook in South-Baranya shows example of this category: a difference of volumes at the line of the iconostas and the posterior addition of the tower is well recognisable. Yet in

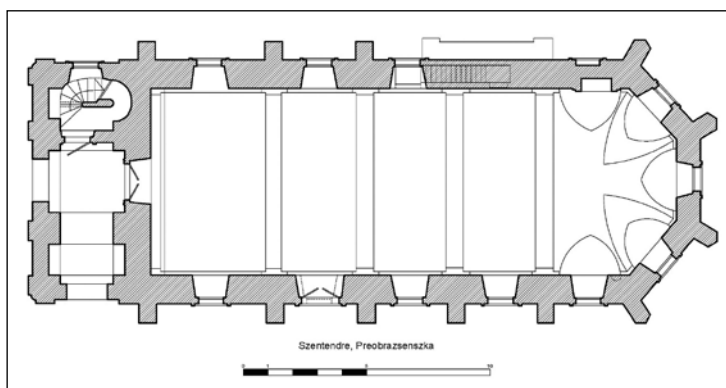
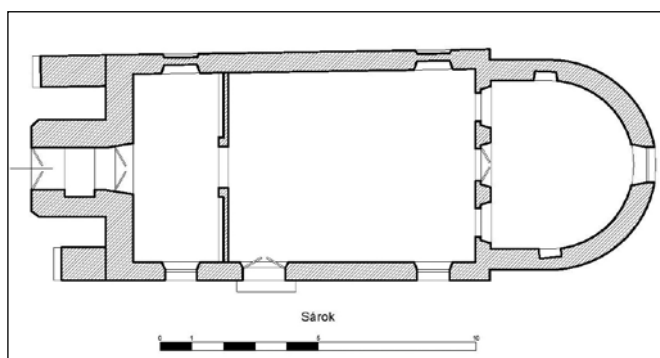


Fig. 4 First typological class of Serbian orthodox churches in Hungary: Szentendre, Preobraženska (1746), plan (Drawing by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 4 Први тип српских православних храмова у Мађарској: Сентандреја, Преображенска црква (1746), основа храма (Цртеж: Зоран Вукосављевић)

Fig. 6 Second typological class of Serbian orthodox churches in Hungary: Sárok (1784), plan (Drawing by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 6 Други тип српских православних храмова у Мађарској: Шарок, Храм Св. великомученика Димитрија (1784), основа храма (Цртеж: Зоран Вукосављевић)



this case the space of the choir doesn't form a separate volume, as these buildings follow the construction practice of the era, the patterns based on demand of Catholic churches. (Fig. 6, 7)

Beyond what was already mentioned, the characteristic of the third, transitional era is that the choir forming an internal special unit started to appear also in the exterior, as an independent volume element. The liturgy was accompanied by choir and the builders also emphasized this: the space of the choir started to form a characteristic piece of volume since the middle of the 1760's. The "pevnices" got their own internal space in front of the altar, a space with an individual covering. In the temporary seat of Patriarch Csarnojevity Arzen, in Dunaszekcső in Baranya this space remained inside the volume of the nave, but in the case of Majs there is already a small difference of surfaces. (Fig. 8, 9)

The fourth, completed type of layout structure according to the previous statements can be originated in the 1760's, but its significant appearance was allowed by the moderate construction regulations since 1781. To erect towers that form an organic part of the church composition is allowed for the Orthodox Church since 1786. The triple volume unit of the tower – choir – altar space resulted in the classic form in churches built in the 19th century. As we see at the church of Siklós, the space of the choir appears as a dominant building volume at the triumphal arch: it is a higher volume in the exterior and a significant special element in the interior. (Fig. 10, 11)



Fig. 7 Sárok (1784) (Photo by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 7 Шарок, Храм Св. великомученика Димитрија (1784), основа храма (Фотографија: Зоран Вукосављевић)

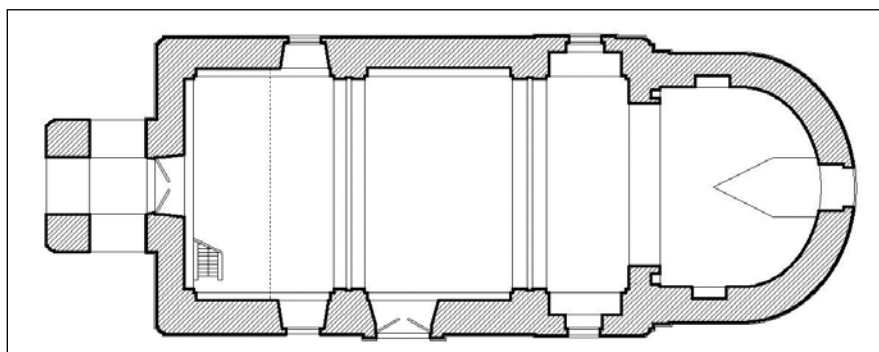


Fig. 8 Third typological class of Serbian orthodox churches in Hungary: Majs (1781), plan (Drawing by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 8 Трећи тип српских православних храмова у Мађарској: Мајш, Храм Св. Параскеве (1781), основа храма (Цртеж: Зоран Вукосављевић)



Fig. 9 Majs (1781) (Photo by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 9 Мајш, Храм Св. Параскеве (1781) (Фотографија: Зоран Вукосављевић)

Naturally these categories do not form a united system based on the date of the construction. The local building circumstances, the knowledge of the builders and building communities, following of trend or custom can result in churches differing from the period-categories. The financial possibilities of the building community are also relevant – yet in time all these appeared in churches without reference to the wealth of their congregation. We should remember that the development of the practice of ecclesiastical music accompanying the liturgy is also an important aspect of the analysis related to the theme. The study adds more detail to this issue. It should be emphasized that the solutions providing a thwart space for the choir are more adequate for the Byzantine liturgy giving the church a more representative appearance that is not an ignorable intention in a basically Catholic country. (**Fig. 12**)

As a conclusion it can be pointed out that among the Serbian Orthodox monuments in Hungary a process started around 1760 according to the liturgical special needs that created a separate space for the choir in the interior of the church. Soon this space element appeared also at the intersection of the nave and the altar space creating the building type that is characteristic

Fig. 10 Fourth typological class of Serbian orthodox churches in Hungary: Siklós (1806), plan (Drawing by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 10 Четврти тип српских православних храмова у Мађарској: Шиклош, Храм Св. великомученика Димитрија (1806), основа храма (Цртеж: Зоран Вукосављевић)

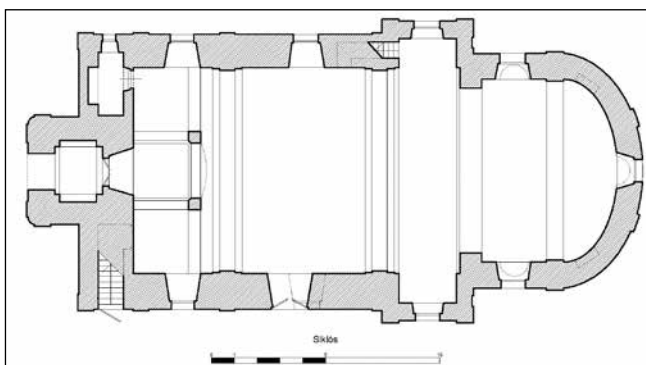


Fig. 11 Siklós (1806) (Photo by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 11 Шиклош, Храм Св. великомученика Димитрија (1806) (Фотографија: Зоран Вукосављевић)

for Serbian churches. The exactness of the typological system was confirmed by periodising independently the individual architectural elements. In our opinion the new Serbian publications¹¹ also prove the correctness of this scheme. Accordingly, the book under edition¹² is based on the doctoral dissertation finished in 2003 and it will demonstrate the architecture of Serbian Orthodox churches in Hungary in a representative form.



¹¹ ЂУКАНОВИЋ, Дубравка: *Српске православне цркве XVIII и XIX века у Бачкој*. Нови Сад, Покрајински завод за заштиту споменика културе, 2009.

¹² ВУКОСАВЉЕВИЋ, Зоран: *Архитектура српских православних цркава у Мађарској – Историјски развој и типологија / Vukoszávlyev Zorán: Szerb ortodox templomépítészet Magyarországon – Építészettörténeti áttekintés és tipológia*. Српски институт, Будимпешта – Terc Kiadó, Budapest, 2013.

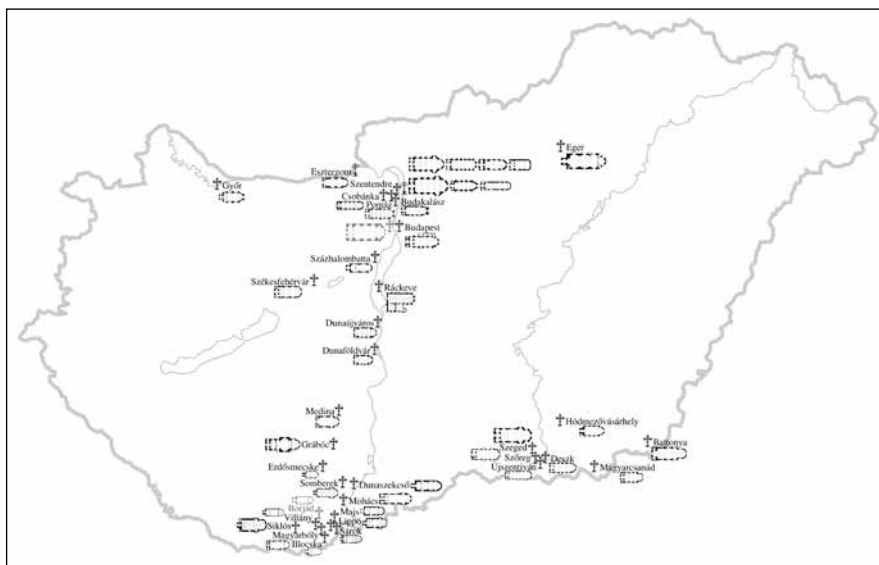


Fig. 12 Serbian Orthodox churches in Hungary (Drawing by Zorán Vukoszávlyev)

Сл. 12 Српски православни храмови у Мађарској (Цртеж: Зоран Вукосављевић)

Зоран Вукосављевић

УЛОГА ПЕВНИЦА – ТИПОЛОГИЈА АРХИТЕКТУРЕ СРПСКИХ
ПРАВОСЛАВНИХ ЦРКАВА У МАЂАРСКОЈ

У Мађарској већ 300 година специфична архитектура византијске традиције оставља своје споменике. Са српским црквама сусрећемо се првобитно у околини Дунава и жупанији Барања, а највише у околини Будимпеште, Сегедина у Печуја.

Цркве које су грађене у 18-19. веку стварају добро дефинисани споменички материјал унутар мађарске архитектуре. Једнобродне цркве са средњезападним торњем прате барокну градњу аустријског архитекте Ландер-а. Унутрашњост истовремено показује православне карактеристике.

Ове грађевине у Мађарској претстављају јединствено архитектонско благо у српској православној црквеном градитељству. Српска култура 18-ог века, тако и архитектура, деценијама се везује за Мађарску. Православни сакрални простори ослободивши се од византијских традиција, стапа се са западном бароком. Ово добро дефинисано раздобље значи развој и континуитет српске црквене архитектуре. Архитектура Срба у Мађарској носи на себи обележја Византијске архитектуре која се меша са западном барокним елементима и тако обогаћује Мађарску архитектуру.

Овај текст је засновано на најважнијем типолошком елементу – своју пажњу посветићемо изради певница. Анализа фокусирана на основу зграде даје могућност одређивања и периодизације развоја, током којег је настала репрезентативна форма српске сакралне архитектуре 19-ог века.