

# SACRED BUILDINGS OUT OF NECESSITY ARTICULAR CHURCHES IN HISTORIC WESTERN HUNGARY (1681–1781)

JÁNOS KRÄHLING – DÓRA DANIELISZ

KRÄHLING, János – DANIELISZ, Dóra. Sacred Buildings out of Necessity. Articular Churches in Historic Western Hungary (1681–1781). *Historický časopis*, 2020, 68, 1, pp. 37–53, Bratislava.

The articular churches of Protestantism represent a particular group of monuments in East Central Europe, particularly in historic Hungary. In our paper we present our researches and analyses of these churches in historic Western Hungary, a specific historic region between Austria, Hungary and Slovakia. By summarizing the architectural heritage of this building type, we may sketch the possibilities and tendencies of spatial formation, and put them into the context of European Protestant church architecture. The holistic outline of the church type includes the characteristics of the articular churches of the former Vas, Sopron and Pozsony/Prešporok Counties, while also exploring the Hussite connections of the oratory of Réca.

Keywords: Articular Churches. Protestant Churches. Hussite Prayer House. Historic Western Hungary.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/histcaso.2020.68.1.2>

## Introduction

From the end of the 17th century to the 1780s, the articular churches of Western Hungary were the typical Protestant churches in the territory of the kingdom held against Ottoman rule.<sup>1</sup>

In the field of Protestant church research, articular churches now appear as a group of monuments of great interest all over Europe.<sup>2</sup> Both the Slovak<sup>3</sup> and

- 
- 1 KELÉNYI, György. Hungarian Architecture in the Eighteenth Century. In SISA, József – WIEBENSON, Dóra (Ed.). *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*. Cambridge-London: The MIT Press, 1998, p. 138. ISBN 9780262231923
  - 2 HARASIMOVICZ, Jan. Longitudinal, Transverse or Centrally Aligned? In the Search for the Correct Layout of the ‘Protesters’ Churches. In *Periodica Polytechnica Architecture*, 2017, vol. 48, no. 1, p. 1–16. ISSN 0324590X, <https://doi.org/10.3311/PPar.11309>.
  - 3 BIATHOVÁ, Katarína. *Drevený Panteón. (Wooden Pantheon)*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1976, p. 110; DUDÁŠ, Miloš. *Drevené Artikulárne a Tolerančné Chrámy na Slovensku. (Wooden Articular and Toleration churches in Slovakia)*. Liptovský Mikuláš: Transcius, 2011. ISBN 9788071403753; KOWALSKÁ, Eva. *Evanjelické a.v. spoločenstvo v 18. storočí. Hlavné problémy jeho vývoja a fungovania v spoločnosti. (The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession community in the 18th century. The main problems of its development and func-*

the Hungarian<sup>4</sup> architectural historiography emphasize the importance of their discussions.

The phenomenon that is most relevant to Slovak researchers is the wooden articular church (drevený artikulárny kostol), which – based on the architectural features of the remaining five major wooden churches<sup>5</sup> – represents a specific type: a mass formed on a Greek-cross floor plan, with jerkinhead roof without tower, and a central spatial form surrounded by galleries, with centrally located pulpit and altar.

Hungarian researchers have carried out significant research on Hungarian articular sites one by one;<sup>6</sup> however, an overview of sufficient depth is still mis-

---

tioning in society). Bratislava: VEDA, vydavateľstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, 2001, p. 14. ISBN 9788022407045; KOWALSKÁ, Eva. Der habsburgische Staat und die protestantischen Kirchen vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert. In *Annales Universitatis Apulensis – Series Historica*, 2003. vol. 7, p. 25-34. ISSN 14539314; KRIVOŠOVÁ, Janka. *Evanjelické kostoly na Slovensku. (Evangelical churches in Slovakia)*. Liptovský Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 2001, p. 75-104. ISBN 8071402133; KRIVOŠOVÁ, Janka. *Architektúra Reformácie. (Architecture of the Reformation)*. In MORAVČÍKOVÁ, Henrieta (Ed.). *Architektúra na Slovensku – stručné dejiny*. Bratislava: Slovart, 2005, p. 80-81. ISBN 8080850798; ŠENSEL, Ludevít. *Album. Tolerančných a artikulárnych chrámov. (An album of Toleration and Articular churches)*. Liptovský Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 1931.

- 4 BIBÓ, István. *Protestáns templomépítészet*. In SISA, József (Ed.). *A magyar művészet a 19. században. Építészet és iparművészet. (Hungarian Art in the 19th Century. Architecture and Applied Arts)*. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2013, p. 134-150. ISBN 9789633898994; CSEPREGI, Zoltán. „Artikularorte“ im Königreich Ungarn. 2010 (Manuscript) (the work is accessible on-line: [https://www.academia.edu/8446863/\\_Artikularorte\\_im\\_K%C3%B6nigreich\\_Ungarn](https://www.academia.edu/8446863/_Artikularorte_im_K%C3%B6nigreich_Ungarn)) [cit. 2019-04-28]; CSEPREGI, Zoltán. *Artikularis helyek. (Articular Places)*. In KOLLEGA TARSOLY, István – KOVÁCS, Eleonóra (Eds.). *A reformáció kincsei I. A Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház*. Budapest: Tarsoly Kiadó, 2015, p. 60-65. ISBN 9789639570764; KELÉNYI, ref. 1; KEMÉNY, Lajos – GYIMESY, Károly. *Evangélikus templomok. (Lutheran Churches)*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1944; KRÄHLING, János. Adalékok a hugenotta imaház-típus magyarországi elterjedéséhez – a Charenton-típus. (Data to the Spreading of Huguenot Prayer Houses in Hungary – the Charenton-type). In *Műemlékvédelem*, 2009. vol. 53, no. 4, p. 190-196. ISSN 05412439; KRÄHLING, János – NAGY, Gergely Domonkos. *Príspevok k výskumu architektoktonického dedičstva slovenských evanjelikov v Uhorsku – tradícia Barokovej centrality – Contributions to the architectural heritage of Slovak lutherans in historic Hungary – the tradition of Baroque centrality*. In *Architektúra a Urbanizmus*, 2011. vol. 45, no. 1-2, p. 2-19. ISSN 00448680; LEVÁRDY, Ferenc. *Magyar templomok művészete. (Art of the Hungarian Churches)*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1982. ISBN 9789633601778; WINKLER, Gábor. *Építészettörténeti áttekintés. (Architectural History in Outline)*. In DERCSENYI, Balázs et al. (Ed.). *Evangélikus templomok Magyarországon*. Budapest: Hegyi&Társas Kiadó, 1992, p. 27-45. ISBN 9637592105
- 5 DUDÁŠ, ref. 3, p. 43-44: Késmárk/Kežmarok (built 1717; later articular place), Leštiny (1725-26), Garamszeg/Hronsek (1725-26), Isztebnye/Istebné (1730-31), Nagypalugya/Veľká Paludza-Svätý Kríž (1773-74).
- 6 CSEPREGI, *Artikularis helyek*, ref. 4; DANIELISZ, Dóra – KRÄHLING, János. *Supple-*

sing. Further detailing of the overview can be achieved by the involvement of the church of Felsőőr (Oberwart, Austria), and some of the monuments that have not been researched so far – such as the Hussite house in Réte (Reca, Slovakia). In this article, we will address these shortcomings, partly by presenting new research results, and partly by publishing and analytically summarizing the surveys.

### The concept of articular space

The conflict of the Counter Reformation – a religious movement unfolding in 17th century Hungary – ending in armed resistance was settled with the provisions of the 1681 Diet of Sopron, namely the Clauses (=articuli) No. 25 and 26. These “articuli” (aiming to regulate the practice of religion) listed 24 localities – basically two settlements per county – which were the places designated for free religious practice in the 11 counties of the western and northern peripheries of the Kingdom of Hungary.<sup>7</sup> In the records of monuments, this narrower concept of „articular space“ is also a well-defined circle of church (house of prayer) construction. In a broader sense, articular place means all the locations – including free royal and mining towns, and the fortresses – where the law allowed free religious practice to Protestants.<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 1.)

Any place of worship erected in an articular location is called an articular church, or as prescribed by the regulations: house of prayer. The architectural formation of this house of prayer was not specifically defined, the term obviously represents a smaller place of worship built from non-durable materials, without

---

ments to the theoretical reconstruction of the articular church of Vadosfa. In *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 2018. vol. 46, no. 3-4, p. 371-401. ISSN 00139661; G. GYÖRFFY, Katalin. Magyarország legrégebbi szószék-oltára a nemeskéri evangélikus templomban. (Hungary's Oldest Pulpit Altar in the Nemeskéri Lutheran Church). In *Diakonia*, 1979, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 24-31. ISSN 01391593; NAGY, Elemér. A kétszázötven éves nemeskéri templom köszöntése. (The Greeting of the 250 Years Old Church of Nemeskér). In *Diakonia*, 1982, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 22-29. ISSN 01391593

7 Articular places according to law (most of them are Lutheran, the Reformed ones are emphasized): in Vas County: Dömölk (Nemesdömölk/Celldömölk; HU), Nemescsó (HU), Felsőőr/Oberwart (A) (Reformed); in Sopron County: Vadosfa (HU), Nemeskér (HU); in Pozsony/Prešporok County: Réte/Réca (SK) (Reformed), Pusztafödémes/Pusté Úľany (SK); in Nyitra/Nitra County: Nyitraszerdahely/Nitrianska Streda (SK) (Reformed) Strázsa (Vágőr/Nemesőr; HU)/ Stráža (SK); in Bars/Tekov County: Simonyi/Partizánske (SK), Szelezsény/Sľažany (SK); in Zólyom/Zvolen County: Osztróluka/Ostrá Lúka (SK), Garamszeg/Hronsek (SK); in Turóc/Turiec County: Necpál/Necpaly (SK), Ivánkafalva/Ivančiná (SK); in Liptó/Liptov County: Hibbe/Hybe (SK), Nagypalugya/Veľká Paludza (SK); in Árva/Orava County: Felsőkubin/Vyšný Kubín (SK), Isztebnye/Istebné (SK); in Trencsén/Trenčín County: Szulyó(váralja)/Súľov-Hradná (SK), Zay-Ugróc/Uhrovec (SK); in Szepes/Spiš County: Görgö/Spišský Hrhov (SK), Toporc/Toporec (SK), Batizfalva/Batizovce (SK).

8 CSEPREGI, Artikuláris helyek, ref. 4, p. 60.

a tower or belfry. It is generally true that churches, that were allowed to be built in articular places, were not subject to uniform architectural regulations. Among the examples there are many solutions from simpler prayer houses to more impressive churches without towers, or from private houses to transformed barns and castle chapels as well.<sup>9</sup> In another context: the surviving monuments do not exclusively represent the buildings erected in 1681 or immediately after this year, they much more mean the totality of buildings that were reconstructed several times, distributed in time and space, and partially vanished or taken away. Spatial and typological distribution can be further refined by the 18th century practice of applying the 1681 Provisions on articular churches in the areas recaptured from Ottoman rule. Comprehensive research on this issue is a task for the future.

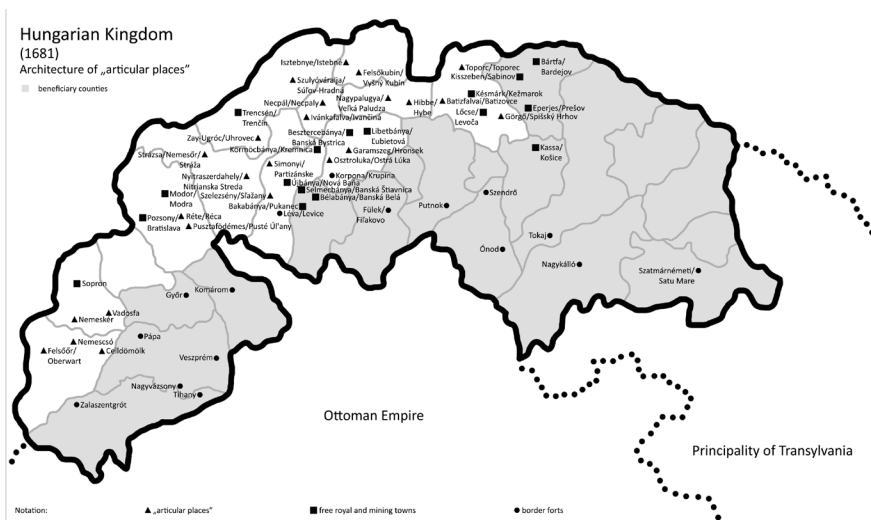


Fig. 1.: Articular places in the Historic Hungarian Kingdom (1681) (Figure by the authors)

When studying churches built in different periods, one can observe the survival and continuation of the same floor plans or spatial forms, which ultimately represents these buildings' identity-building role and respect for tradition (e.g.: Necpaly, Celldömölk, etc.). In Protestant church architecture, expression of identity – either in floor plan design, choice of structures or stylistic issues – is pronouncedly present, because, according to the research so far, architectural formation is closely related to denominational and ethnic affiliation. As an exam-

9 A private house was used in the late 17th c. in Nemesdömölk, while a castle chapel was used in Zay-Ugróc/Uhrovec.

ple: the articular churches in Northern Slovakia with their oblong Greek cross floor plan are the typical church buildings of the Lutheran church architecture of a particular region – that of Slovakia. On the one hand, the origin of the floor plan can be traced back to the technical requirements of wooden construction – and the choice of material results from environmental conditions. In addition, the transmission of the form can be observed in the brick or stone churches that were built in this region, in place of former articular, central wooden churches (e.g.: Lőcse/Levoča; SK, Toporc/Toporec; SK), or in places where Lutherans from this region have settled down in today’s Hungary following resettlement or emigration (e.g. the Slovak congregations in Domony and Maglód).<sup>10</sup>

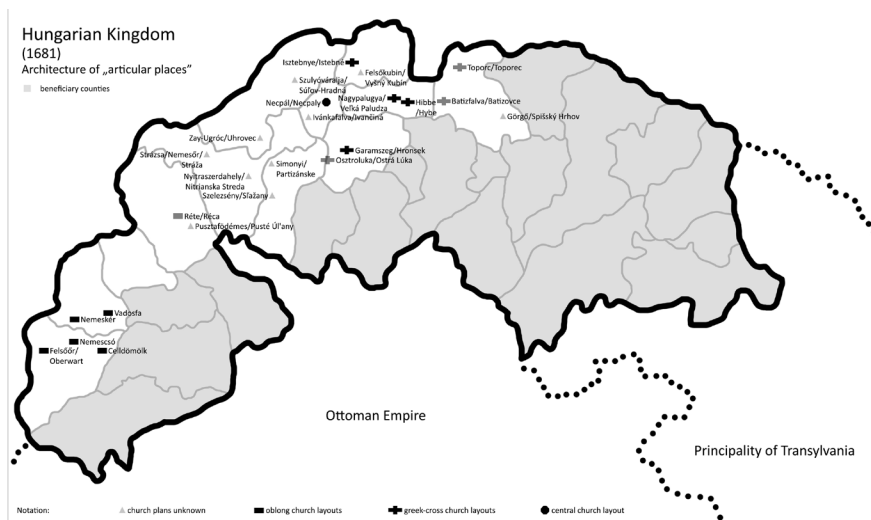


Fig. 2.: Typological and geographical context of articular churches in Historic Hungary (Figure by the authors)

The Slovak historiography of architecture – with regard to the five remaining original articular churches and the larger number of monuments following the type – characterizes the concept of articular churches with the wooden churches originating from the Greek cross form.<sup>11</sup> As a large number of examples show, this means an elongated – reduced – Greek cross floor plan in the northern counties of Upper Hungary (Zólyom/Zvolen, Árva/Orava, Liptó/Liptov, and Szepes/

10 KRÄHLING – NAGY, ref. 4

11 KRIVOŠOVÁ, *Architektúra Reformácie*, ref. 3, p. 80.

Spiš),<sup>12</sup> while in the western counties – such as Vas, Sopron, and Pozsony/Prešporok – it means an oblong floor plan and an interior embraced by galleries on three sides.<sup>13</sup>

Most of them – mainly in the historic Upper Hungarian region – could not be built from durable materials, but brickwork was allowed in the case of the monuments in Vas and Sopron Counties. They have a common urban architectural feature – and this is also true of legally authorized sites in Silesia with similar status – that these churches were often built on the outskirts of the settlement or in less significant villages with a small population, sometimes even in settlements without Protestant traditions.<sup>14</sup> They were usually placed on a plot with unfavourable access, being symbolically and actually excluded from society.<sup>15</sup> In general, tower construction was prohibited and the representational appearance on the exterior was strongly limited, often with the requirement of repeating several pitched roofs in a row, which resulted in a less outstanding mass form.<sup>16</sup>

### Architecture of articular places in Western Hungary

In a broad sense, the topic discussed here is the articular architecture of Historic Hungary. After discussing the research history and architecture-historical features of this group of monuments, the buildings of Vas, Sopron and Pozsony/Prešporok counties, making a separate group from the Upper Hungarian types will be discussed in detail.

When examining the typological and geographical context of church architecture of the time, it can be seen (Fig. 2.) that the region of the former Trencsén/Trenčín-Nyitra/Nitra-Bars/Tekov counties constitutes the boundary to east and west from which the discussed articular churches or prayer houses typically have different floor plans and structures. The reason for this lay in the building materials available in the area: because of the extensive woodland, timber became the typical building material in the eastern and northern parts of the former Upper Hungary, while brick was used in the flat lands of the western areas. On the other hand, the reason for the different forming was that – due to the proximity of

---

12 DUDÁŠ, ref. 5

13 Nemescsó, Nemeskér, Nemesdömölk (today: Celldömölk), Vadosfa.

14 PAYR, Sándor. *A vadosfai artikuláris egyházközség Rábaközben. (The Articular Church of Vadosfa in the Rábaköz)*. Budapest: Luther Társaság, 1910, p 27.

15 For the symbolic meaning and use of the Protestant place of worship cf. GRUK, Wojciech. Alle drey Ding vollkomen sind! On the Meaning of Naming the Church after Holy Trinity According to Josua Wegelin, Preacher in Pressburg, Anno 1640. In *Periodica Polytechnica Architecture*, 2017, vol. 48, no. 1, p. 26-27. ISSN 0324590X <https://doi.org/10.3311/PPar.10125>.

16 The most important example is the church in Nemeskér with its doubled simple roof.

Vienna – the appearance and parameters of Protestant religious buildings could have been subject to stricter regulation and control in the western counties. In Western Hungary, this led to the characteristic oblong form of the articular churches and their architectural design recalling former Baroque manorial granaries. Although no uniform regulation is known for the construction rules of articular churches, this building type of the late-18th century had a uniform appearance and spatial organization in the western part of the country. (Fig. 3.)

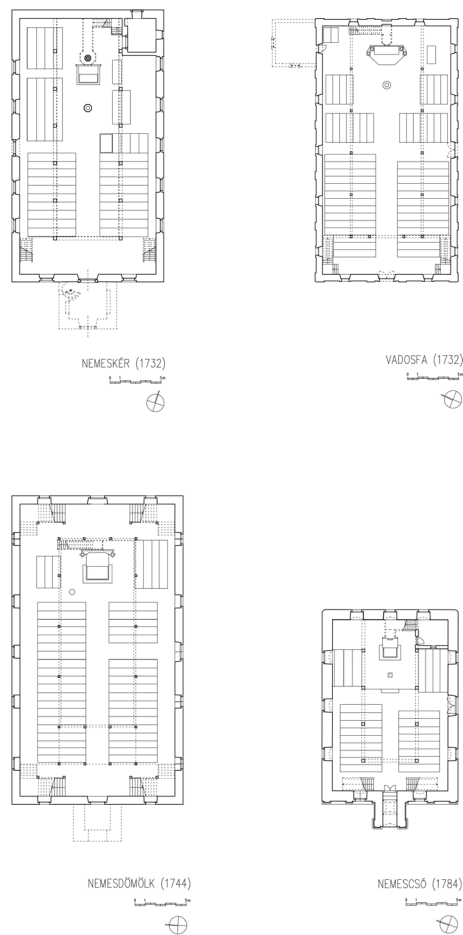


Fig. 3.: Ground plans of articular churches: Nemeskér (1732; before the reconstruction); Vadosfa (1732, theoretical reconstruction); Nemesdömök (today Celldömök, 1744, theoretical reconstruction); Nemescsó (1784). (Figure by the authors)

When considering the churches of the articular places in the historical Western Hungary, seven churches attract our attention: Celldömölk (Nemesdömölk), Nemescsó, Nemeskér and Vadosfa are located in today's Hungary, Felsőőr (Oberwart) is in today's Austria, Réte (Reca) and Pusztafödémés (Pusté Úfany) can be found in Slovakia. The articular churches of Felsőőr and Réte deserve special attention, since among the locations designated for church construction only these two settlements were in the spiritual service of the Calvinist faithful.

Since the Reformation, the Lutherans of Nemeskér had used the medieval church, which also served the believers of the surrounding settlements in this village declared articular in 1681. In 1731, the local Catholic minorities regained the medieval church through litigation, therefore, as a substitution, a new articular church was built in 1732, which is still largely preserved in its original form – although modified by the 18th century reconstruction, but being essentially original in its interior.<sup>17</sup> In Hungarian architecture-historical summaries, Nemeskér embodies the type of articular church as a surviving – although in a way transformed – house of prayer, which is the model building of the type.<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 3., 4.) The extremely valuable furniture – in particular the pulpit – is an important relic of the 18th century Protestant European relationships, representing the ecclesiastical relations between the Protestant areas of Hungary and Saxony.<sup>19</sup>

The church of Celldömölk (Nemesdömölk) was rebuilt by keeping the foundations and partly the wall structure,<sup>20</sup> while the church in Nemescsó is preserved in its rebuilt form.<sup>21</sup> When analysing spatial formation and space usage, the fact is worthy of attention that they kept the system typical of articular locations in Western Hungary. In the composition of the population Nemesdömölk, the

17 PAYR, Sándor. *A nemeskéri artikuláris evangélikus egyházközség története. (History of the Lutheran Articular Church of Nemeskér)*. Sopron: Székely és Társa, 1932, p. 82.

18 E.g. LEVÁRDY, ref. 4, p. 166.; WINKLER, ref. 4, p. 29.; KELÉNYI, ref. 1, p. 138.

19 G. GYÖRFFY, ref. 6; HARMATI, Béla László. *Késő barokk szószékoltárok, oltárképek és festett karzatok a dunántúli evangélikus templomokban. (Late Baroque Pulpit Altars, Altarpieces and Painted Galleries in the Transdanubian Lutheran Churches)*. PhD-disszertáció. ELTE Bölcsészettudományi Kar (PhD dissertation, Eötvös Lorán University Faculty of Humanities, Manuscript, online accessible at <http://doktori.btk.elte.hu/art/harmati/diss.pdf>), [cit. 2019-04-28] 2006.

20 In the case of Celldömölk, the use of the foundation structure of the former church has been proven by the sondage excavation completed by András Koppány archaeologist – see KOPPÁNY, András. *Celldömölk, Evangélikus templom. Előzetes kutatási jelentés. (Celldömölk. Lutheran Church. Preliminary Research Report)*. (Celldömölk, Lutheran Church, Preliminary Research Report, Manuscript) KÖH (the former National Office of Cultural Heritage), 2010; The authors would like to thank András Koppány for his generous help and support.

21 KOPPÁNY, András. *Nemescsó, Evangélikus templom. Előzetes kutatási jelentés. (Nemescsó. Lutheran Church. Preliminary Research Report)*. (Nemescsó, Lutheran Church, Preliminary Research Report, Manuscript) KÖH (the former National Office of Cultural Heritage), 2010.



number of Lutherans was not significant at time of issuing the articular clauses, and a small prayer house was enough to serve them. The need for a larger building arose from the ever more stringent restrictions against the congregations of the neighbouring Kemenesalja region. From that time on, the church of Nemesdömölk had to serve the believers of several settlements. As a result, first a wooden chapel was built in 1711 and then a larger church in 1744.<sup>22</sup> (Fig. 3.) The old articular church from 1744 was rebuilt in 1897 by the plans of Péter Stetka.<sup>23</sup> In the church, which was erected on top of the remaining foundations by partially keeping the walls, part of the equipment: the altar, the pulpit and the organ still exist today.<sup>24</sup> On the basis of the surviving spatial structure we can add that today's church basically follows the old interior both in its use of space and in the placement of the equipment. (Fig. 5.)



Fig. 4.: Lutheran Church of Nemeskér, 1732, (Photo courtesy of Erzsébet Urbán, 2017)

Fig. 5.: Lutheran Church of Celldömölk, 1744, (Photo by the authors, 1999)

22 PAYR, Sándor. *A dunántúli evangélikus egyházkerület története. (History of the Transdanubian Lutheran Church.)* I. Sopron: Székely és Társa Nyomda, 1924, p. 354; C. HARRACH, Erzsébet – KISS, Gyula. *Vasi műemlékek. Településtörténet, építészettörténet, művelődéstörténet. (Monuments of Vas County. History of Settlement, Architecture and Culture).* Szombathely: Vas Megyei Tanács Művelődési Osztálya, 1983, p. 68-69. ISBN 9630316773; KEVEHÁZI, László (Ed.). *A reformációtól – napjainkig. Evangélikus gyülekezetek, egyházmegyék, kerületek a Dunántúlon, 1–2. kötet. (From the Reformation to the Present. Lutheran Congregations, Dioceses, Districts in Transdanubia, Vol. 1–2).* Győr: Kiadja a Nyugati (Dunántúli) Egyházkerület, 2011, p. 602-603. ISBN 0559001418791.

23 KEVEHÁZI, p. 606, ref. 22, s. XY; KEMÉNY – GYIMESY, ref. 4, p. 199.

24 KOPPÁNY, ref. 21

The small Lutheran congregation of Nemescsó also became a significant place in Vas County after the laws of 1681.<sup>25</sup> There were three Lutheran places of worship in the village of 175 people. In 1698, according to a visit ordered by the bishop of Győr, the medieval St. Peter's church („templomotska”= small church) was used by the almost entirely Lutheran population, and there were two other Lutheran houses of prayer too, one for the Hungarian and the other for German believers. In addition, the place became an important centre for the Wend (=Protestant Slovene) minority as well.<sup>26</sup> After the Patent of Toleration, the continuously deteriorating medieval church was demolished and a new one was built in 1784.<sup>27</sup> (Fig. 3., 6.)



Fig. 6.: Lutheran Church of Nemescsó, 1784, (Photo by the authors, 1999)

On basis of probes of the foundations performed by archaeologist András Koppány it is probable that the 1784 construction was implemented on new foundations, and the remains of the medieval building were not used.<sup>28</sup>

The literature has so far provided little information on the architectural design of the Lutheran congregation's articular church in Vadosfa (1732–1912).<sup>29</sup> The latest research –studying the issue of the theoretical reconstruction of the building – proves that the church of Vadosfa fits in the line of the above mentioned articular churches.<sup>30</sup>

In its original form, the Lutheran church of Vadosfa could have been a granary-like building without tower, its façade was articulated with wall panels and 24 windows were placed in two rows.<sup>31</sup> The bells were hanging on a wooden structure, and the tower was attached to the prayer

house only in 1785, after the Patent of Toleration.<sup>32</sup> In the axially designed build-

25 PAYR, ref. 22, p. 247.

26 KEVEHÁZI, ref. 22, p. 688.

27 KEMÉNY – GYIMESY, ref. 4, p. 617.

28 KOPPÁNY, Nemescsó, ref. 21

29 PAYR, ref. 14

30 DANIELISZ – KRÄHLING, ref. 6

31 DANIELISZ – KRÄHLING, ref. 6

32 KEVEHÁZI, ref. 22, p. 557.

ing there was a wooden gallery on three sides of the interior, and at the end of the interior there was the liturgical centre of space marked by the pulpit and the baptismal font. (Fig. 3.) The rows of benches, the clerical and noble bench around the baptismal font and on the galleries all turned to the liturgical centre, as well as in case of the articulated churches that are still standing or known in Hungary.<sup>33</sup> This layout demonstrates the aspirations towards centralization even within the axial church form. (Fig. 7.)



Fig. 7.: Former Lutheran Church of Vadosfa, 1732, at the beginning of the 20th century (Source: Archives of Lutheran Diocese of Vadosfa)

Today's Reformed church at Felsőőr (Oberwart)<sup>34</sup> was built in 1773, however, previous churches of the congregation are also known.<sup>35</sup> The inhabitants of Fel-

sőőr converted to Protestantism in the 1580s, and there are followers of both the Lutheran and the Reformed Church in the settlement.<sup>36</sup> The first church of the village was probably a stone church from the Middle Ages, to which a stone tower was attached in 1656 by pastor János Szeremley.<sup>37</sup> In 1663, along the re-Catholicization efforts, the church was recaptured with violence on the orders

33 This is proved by a photo from the Lutheran Diocese Archive of Vadosfa.

34 About the Calvinist Diocese of Felsőőr (Oberwart): GYENGE, Imre. *Der Ödenburger Landtag. Die Artikulargemeinden und die reformierte Gemeinde Oberwart*. In *Evangelisch Im Burgenland. 200 Jahre Toleranzpatent*. Eisenstadt: Herausgegeben von der Evangelischen Superintendentialgemeinde, 1981, p. 58-77; FELHŐSNÉ CSISZÁR, Sarolta et al. *Magyar Református Egyház javainak tára. A magyar református gyülekezetek templomai, felszerelési tárgyai, könyv- és iratanyaga. VIII. Horvátországi, Szlovéniai és Burgenlandi Református Egyház. (Repository of the Goods of the Hungarian Reformed Church. Churches, Equipments, Books and Documents of the Hungarian Calvinist Congregations. VIII. Calvinist Church of Croatia, Slovenia and Burgenland)*. Debrecen: Országos Református Gyűjteményi Tanács, 2005, p. 121-139. ISBN 9638711701.

35 GYENGE, Imre. Oberwart H. B. In REINGRABNER, Gustav. *Das Wort unseres Gottes bleibt ewiglich. Aus Geschichte und Leben der Evangelischen im Burgenland*. Wien: In Kommission beim Evang. Presseverband, 1979, p. 107.

36 GYENGE, Oberwart, ref. 35, p. 106.

37 GYENGE, Oberwart, ref. 35, p. 106.

of Péter Tormási Archbishop of Kalocsa.<sup>38</sup> Then the Calvinist believers – in the absence of a church made of durable material – held their worships in a wooden prayer house.<sup>39</sup> After the 1681 Diet of Sopron, although Felsőőr (Oberwart) was also listed as an articular place, the faithful were forced to use the wooden prayer house built in the mid-17th century. No resources for the architectural appearance



Fig. 8.: Calvinist Church of Felsőőr/Oberwart, (Photo by the authors, 2017)

of the prayer house are available to us. The first military survey (1769–1787) already marked the Calvinist congregation site, which is identical to that of today's church, however, it can be assumed from the name – „Reform: Bëthhaus” – that it refers to a simple house without tower, perhaps with a jerkinhead roof. The prayer house was located in the immediate vicinity of the then basin of the Pinka River, on the border of the settlement.

In 1769, the Empress's grace granted a permission for the Calvinists of Felsőőr to use durable materials for building the church, which – apart from its tower – was the same as today.<sup>40</sup> (Fig. 8.) The architectural appearance of today's church, despite the fact that it was built half a century

after the well-known articular churches – Nemeskér, Nemescsó, Nemesdömölk and Vadosfa – shows the same stylistic features that could be observed already on the early 18th century buildings. On its façades, a double row of windows run around, placed in wall panels framed by pilaster strips. The size of the windows is small, the appearance of the building evokes the form of a granary. The semicircular top closure of the upper row of windows and the opening framing of higher standard give a look to the church more impressive than in the case of earlier examples. All signs indicate that with regard to the permission of Protestant church constructions there was some kind of relief already before the Patent of Toleration, in the last quarter of the 18th century.<sup>41</sup>

38 GYENGE, Oberwart, ref. 35, p. 106.

39 GYENGE, Oberwart, ref. 35, p. 107.

40 GYENGE, Oberwart, ref. 35, p. 108.

41 REINGRABNER, Gustav. Der Kirchenbau der Toleranzzeit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Westungarns. In RASCHZOK, Klaus – SÖRRIES, Reiner (Eds.). *Geschichte des protestantischen Kirchenbaues – Festschrift für Peter Poscharsky zum 60. Geburtstag*. Erlangen: Junge&Sohn, 1994, p. 160. ISBN 3873880253.

The example of Felsőőr (Oberwart) shows well that the “articular place” status was not associated with any measures that promoted or made the building of churches mandatory. The term ‘articular place’ should be exactly understood what the name itself means: a place specified in articles, which cannot be connected to a building but only to spatial orientation.

We have little information about the churches of Réte (Réca) and Pusztafödemes (Pusté Úfany) – in contrast to other articular churches in today’s Slovakia.<sup>42</sup> The church of the Lutheran congregation of Pusztafödemes (Pusté Úfany) was rebuilt in 1820 and 1849 after two conflagrations.<sup>43</sup> The church was designed with a single-nave floor plan with apse and without tower. The tower standing today was built in 1933.<sup>44</sup> According to Janka Krivošová the congregation’s earlier church building – that is, the church existing even in the articular period – was built in 1660, however, neither pictorial nor written material is known about the material or form of this church.

The Reformed church of Réte (Réca) was built between 1769 and 1771, and its tower was erected in 1862.<sup>45</sup> There are only a few sources mentioning the history of today’s church. There are no references to the existence of an earlier articular (wooden) church.<sup>46</sup> However, the building standing behind today’s church should be taken into consideration, called “Hussite House” in today’s common language too. (Fig. 9.) The building today serves as the sexton’s apartment, and it has undergone several transformations over the centuries, thus its present form no longer reflects its former look. Certain sources date the building back already

---

42 Réte/Réca (SK): ASZTALOS, Miklós. *A Pozsony-megyei Réte református egyházának feljegyzései és keresztelési könyve. 1701–1711. (Records and Baptismal Books of the Calvinist Church of Réte/Réca in Pozsony/Prešporok County. 1701–1711)*. Pécs: Dunántúli Könyvkiadó és Nyomda Részvénytársaság, 1924; CSÉPLŐ, Ferenc. *Réte. Bástya és menedék. Helytörténet két egyházi könyv köré építve. (Réte/Réca. Bastion and Shelter. Local History of Two Churches Built around a Book)*. Dunaszerdahely: Gyuresó István Alapítvány, 1995; DUDÁŠ, ref. 5, p. 80-84; BALLA, Terézia et al. *Magyar Református Egyház javainak tára. A magyar református gyülekezetek templomai, felszerelési tárgyai, könyv- és iratanyaga. XXXII. Szlovákiai Református Keresztény Egyház XV. Pozsonyi Református Egyházmegye II. (Repository of the Goods of the Hungarian Reformed Church. Churches, Equipments, Books and Documents of the Hungarian Calvinist Congregations. XXXII. Calvinist Christian Church of Slovakia XV. Calvinist Diocese of Bratislava II)*. Debrecen: Magyar Református Egyház Gyűjteményi Tanácsa, 2016, p. 103-111. ISBN 9786158013338; Pusztafödemes/Pusté Úfany (SK): DUDÁŠ, p. 80-84, ref. 5; KRIVOŠOVÁ, Evanjelické kostoly na Slovensku, ref. 3, p. 71.

43 KRIVOŠOVÁ, Evanjelické kostoly na Slovensku, ref. 3, p. 71.

44 KRIVOŠOVÁ, Evanjelické kostoly na Slovensku, ref. 3, p. 71.

45 CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 8.

46 In his thorough book, Miloš Dudáš considers Réte/Réca as an evangelical articular place and searches for a wooden church – cf. DUDÁŠ, ref. 5, p. 84. His approach shall be revised at this point.

to the 15th century, since they connect its construction with the Hussites fleeing from the Kingdom of Bohemia to Upper Hungary.<sup>47</sup> The assumption may be confirmed by the fact that – even during the 20th century – some people could see a painted red chalice<sup>48</sup> over the front door, which refers to the moderate Utraquists (Calixtines) of Hussitism.

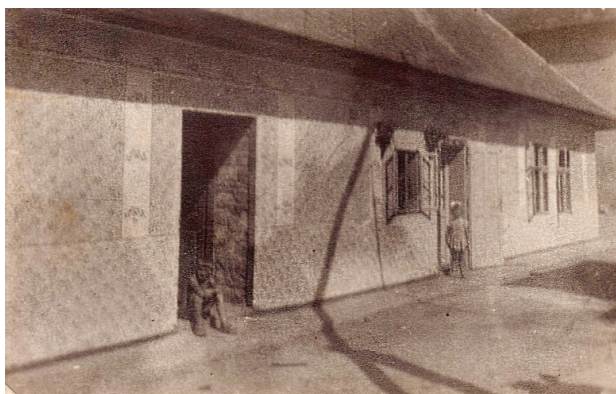


Fig. 9.: „Hussite House“ of Réte/Réca, in the middle of the 20th century (Source: Archives of Calvinist Diocese of Réte/Réca)

It is verifiable that János Valesius, pastor of the Hungarian Calvinist Congregation of Réte was the first to establish the Czech-Hungarian relationships of the church. He himself was a refugee from Moravia.<sup>49</sup> He was elected the Reformed pastor of Réte in 1714, and besides his believers, he also visited the “Czech brothers” twice a year to provide spiritual service.<sup>50</sup> This tradition still lives in Réte, in connection with which the village carries a brotherly relationship with the town of Nosislav, Southern Bohemia. In the village, the origins of the Czech-Hungarian relations are traced back to 1590, and were later extended by Czech refugees after the Battle of the White Mountain (1620).<sup>51</sup> The latter assumptions, however, cannot confirm that the Hussite house was indeed constructed in the 16th – 17th century. The dating of the building could only be determined by means of detailed archaeological research, although it can be assumed that from the end of the 17th century the building could actually serve the congregation as an articulate prayer house. After the site visit of the building, the authors assume that the prayer house could be a three-wing building, the north section of which contained the rooms of a service flat (pastor, schoolmaster

47 CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 8.

48 CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 8.

49 CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 22-42.

50 ASZTALOS, ref. 42, p. 41; CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 24.

51 CSÉPLŐ, ref. 42, p. 22-23.

or caretaker), in the middle section a foreground and a fire bench, while in the southern end the prayer room itself could have been placed. The original roof structure of the building was dismantled after World War II, while an original vault of the interior has recently been demolished. The window distribution of the side façade has somewhat changed, but on the southern façade the three-axis window layout remained the original. There is a vaulted cellar in the narrow area between the building and today's church, which is certainly the same age as the building, it could probably be the old cellar of the service apartment.

The „Hussite House“ at Réte exemplifies that the architectural design of Protestant religious buildings in articular locations was diverse, and their architecture-historical research and evaluation cannot be considered complete even today. They need to be methodized, typologically reviewed, and the re-evaluation and more detailed discussion of their role in architectural history is necessary. All these can help to preserve the monumental values of the buildings.

### **Summary and outlook**

The research reviewed the architectural issues of the articular churches in Western Hungary. The mass and space formation, and also the typical forms of the space usage allows an independent type to be distinguished, which is called the Western Hungarian articular church type. It is characterized by the oblong (elongated square) floor plan and the brick wall structure. The articular churches studied by the researchers of the Slovak churches can be marked as the northern articular type, which typically means the wooden churches with central Greek cross floor plan or a layout derived from it. The separation of the two types can be defined roughly by the territories of the historic Trencsén-Turóc-Bars Counties. There are several explanations for the difference between the two floor plan types.

Brick churches with oblong floor plan are the typical buildings of the western type, being defined by a more advanced building culture of the plain regions that were less well-supplied with timber. In the case of the northern central Greek cross type, the form is based on the tradition of wooden architecture, the structurally correct technology of wood constructions – rectangular, cross-shaped – providing stiffness, and also the influence of similar churches in Silesia and Scandinavia can be taken into consideration.

Several European tendencies or parallels can be identified in the architectural formation of the articular churches. The Silesian Schweidnitz (Świdnica, PL) can be seen in the elongated central arrangement, the regular Greek cross floor plan (like e.g. of Kežmarok) recalls the Noorderkerk in Amsterdam, while in case of the prayer houses in Western Hungary the design of the Charenton-type (Bratislava, first Lutheran church of 1638) can be observed.

The precedent for the Western Hungarian oblong floor plans is the Lutheran church in Bratislava, a building of European significance (1638–1672), the layout, the use of interior spaces and arrangement of which were adapted by the articular churches in Western Hungary. The articular church types played a decisive role in the church architecture of the period that lasted until the Patent of Toleration issued by Joseph II.

The Reformed articular prayer house of Réte (Reca), Slovakia (located in the former Pozsony/Prešporok County) – today the sexton's apartment – represents, even in its radically transformed form, the memory of rich inter-denominational and national relations in Central European Protestantism, which deserves special attention from the point of view of monument preservation in the near future.

#### SAKRALBAUTEN AUS DER NOT - ARTIKULARKIRCHEN IM HISTORISCHEN WESTUNGARN (1681-1781)

JÁNOS KRÄHLING – DÓRA DANIELISZ

Die Artikularkirchen des Protestantismus stellen eine besondere Denkmalgruppe in Ostmitteleuropa dar, insbesondere im historischen Ungarn. Eine umfassende architektonische Untersuchung der erhaltenen Artikularkirchen des historischen Nordungarn – in der heutigen Slowakei – wurde größtenteils durchgeführt, während die Analysen ähnlicher Kirchen in Westungarn noch fehlen. In diesem Artikel konzentrieren wir uns auf die Zusammenfassung und Untersuchung des architektonischen Erbes dieses westlichen Teils des Landes und ergänzen es mit den Ergebnissen der jüngsten Forschung. Indem wir die Möglichkeiten und Tendenzen der Raumgestaltung skizzieren, versuchen wir den Typ der Artikularkirchen des westlichen Teils zu identifizieren und gleichzeitig die architektonische Merkmale der Artikularkirchen im Gebiet der ehemaligen Komitate Vas (Eisenburg), Sopron (Ödenburg) und Pozsony (Preßburg) – parallel mit dem Gebäudetyp des Königreichs Ungarn – zu definieren. Die bekannten Kirchen mit kreuzförmigem Grundriss, die oblongförmigen rechteckigen westungarischen Kirchen und sogar das reformierte Gebetshaus von Réte (Réca) sind Erben der reichen interkonfessionellen und nationalen Beziehungen des mitteleuropäischen Protestantismus. Mit den Forschungsergebnissen versuchen wir, die Ergebnisse der slowakischen, ungarischen und österreichischen Architekturgeschichte zu vervollständigen und in ein neues Licht zu rücken.



János Krähling PhD. habil., CSc

Professor, head of department, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Faculty of Architecture, Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation

H-1111 Budapest, Műegyetem rakpart 3. K. II. 82.

e-mail: krahling@eptort.bme.hu

Dóra Danielisz

PhD student, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Faculty of Architecture, Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation

H-1111 Budapest, Műegyetem rakpart 3. K. II. 82.

e-mail: danieliszdora@gmail.com