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MOORISH CATHEDRAL FOR THE "ASIATES OF EUROPE"

ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER
UDC 726:296/7.035(439 PEŠTA)"18"L.FÖRSTER

LUDWIG FÖRSTEROV *DOHÁNY TEMPEL* U PEŠTI
MAURSKA KATEDRALA ZA „AZIJATE EUROPE"

IZVORNI ZNANSTVENI ČLANAK
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FIG. 1 VIEW OF THE TEMPLE FROM THE KÁROLY RING
THIS IS MOST TYPICAL VIEW OF THE TEMPLE, BEARING SOME
SIMILARITY TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM. HOWEVER, THE NEW
PERPENDICULAR CUT OF THE LEFT PROJECTION FLANKING THE
ENTRANCE COURTYARD EMPHASISES EVEN MORE THE
OBLIQUE CHARACTER OF THE RIGHT PROJECTION. FÖRSTER'S
VISION OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN RELATION TO ITS
ENVIRONMENT, I.E. THE MERGE OF THE MAIN BULK OF THE
BUILDING WITHIN THE URBAN FABRIC, BECOMES EVIDENT,
WITH THE TWO-STOREY-HIGH CONSTRUCTIONS ABOVE THE
GROUND FLOOR, BUT ALSO HIS WISH TO INSERT THE
SYNAGOGUE, WITH ITS TALL, SLIM TOWERS, INTO THE
SKYLINE OF PEST, SEEN FROM THE BUDA MOUNTAINS.

SL. 1. POGLED NA HRAM S BULEVARA KÁROLY
OVO JE NAJTIPIČNIJI POGLED NA HRAM KOJI NAJVIŠE
PODSJEĆA NA IZVORNI IZGLED. NOV PRAVOKUTNI REZ
DESNOG RIZALITA KOJI FLANKIRA ULAZ JOŠ VIŠE ISTIČE
UKOŠENOST DESNOGA. FÖRSTEROV KONCEPT SINAGOGUE U
ODNOSU PREMA GRADSKOM KONTEKSTU TAKODER POSTAJE
OČIT: VELIK DIO OBJEKTA UTAPA SE VISINOM U GRADSKO
TKIVO S DVOKATNICAMA OKO SEBE, DOK SE IZ VIZURA S
UZVISINE BUDIMA HRAM ISTIČE SVOJIM VITKIM TORNJEVIMA.

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LUDWIG FÖRSTEROV *DOHÁNY TEMPEL* U PEŠTI MAURSKA KATEDRALA ZA „AZIJATE EUROPE“

COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE
JEWS
ORIENTALISM
SYNAGOGUES
19TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

KOLONIJALNA ARHITEKTURA
ŽIDOVİ
ORIJENTALIZAM
SINAGOGE
ARHITEKTURA 19. STOLJEĆA

This paper analyses the orientalising architectural language of reform synagogues in the 19th century, exemplified by the Dohány Temple (Tabak Temple or Dohány Street Synagogue) in Pest built between 1854 and 1859. The paper reflects on the cultural context of the synagogue, its style and debates in the press of the period, that praised 'Moorish Style', but emphasised its inferiority vis-à-vis the Gothic or 'Germanic', Christian idiom. The paper deals partly with similarities between the 19th century synagogue and colonial architecture. It ends with a discussion on the historic significance of this genre.

Ovaj se članak bavi istočnjačkim jezikom arhitekture sinagoga 19. stoljeća na primjeru Dohány Tempela (Tabak Tempel, Sinagoge u Dohány ulici) u Pešti, građenog između 1854. i 1859. godine. Analizira se kulturološki kontekst ove sinagoge, stil i razmatranja u onodobnom tisku koji cijeni maurski stil, ali podvlači njegovu inferiornost prema gotici ili 'germanskom' kršćanskom jeziku arhitekture. Članak se kratko osvrće i na sličnosti sinagogalne arhitekture 19. stoljeća s kolonijalnom arhitekturom, a završava diskusijom povijesnog značenja ovoga jezika arhitekture.

INTRODUCTION: THE BIRTH OF ORIENTAL STYLE

UVOD: RODENJE ORIJENTALNOG STILA

There are few instances in western history showing such a strong link between cultural identity and architecture as 19th century synagogues in orientalizing styles. Still, this link is far from being spontaneous and organic like the one that characterised churches and mosques before modernity. Architects of synagogues from the 1840s onwards attempted to create an architectural identity *ex-nihilo* in order to convey the message of their clients: emancipation, loyalty and integration into the economy and culture of the host nation states.¹ However, the situation was more complex. 19th century synagogue architecture in Western countries represents two identity crises: the one of the reform Jews, who abandoned their traditional ways of life and found themselves in a cultural vacuum; and the one of modern European societies in the stalemate of political and cultural changes in the capitalist transition.² Concomitantly, Western societies felt a fatigue about their own cultural foundations – the Jewish-Christian paradigm and Greco-Roman antiquity – and embarked on a grand cultural opening that followed colonial conquests. 19th century architects in order to overcome the intellectual fatigue, created numerous hybrids and revivals by adapting elements of alien systems: Islamic, Chinese, Japanese and other non-Western architectural/artistic heritage, at that time coherent and relatively untouched by modernity. Synagogue architecture was

one of the most fertile experimental grounds for these endeavours.

Ludwig Förster's *Tabak* or *Dohány Tempel* of Pest, called today Dohány Street Synagogue of Budapest, the largest place of Jewish worship in the world during the times of its construction – today the third – displays all aforementioned dilemmas; its design and construction attest to the period's deliberations on how to project Jewish identity onto architecture in Central Europe and beyond. There were other pioneering synagogues in the 19th century, which displayed oriental language, first in their interior, retaining Western idiom on the exterior, like Gottfried Semper's Dresden synagogue in 1838-40. After the revolutions of 1848, oriental styles found their way to the façades too: Viennese Tempelgasse Synagogue, 1852; synagogue in Mainz, 1853; synagogue in Leipzig, 1853; Tabak Temple 1854; synagogue in Berlin-Johaniss-Strasse, 1854; synagogue in Berlin-Oranienbergerstrasse, 1859; synagogue in Stuttgart, 1861. Oriental style³ – whatever it meant at that time – became the hallmark of Jews, the 'Asiates of Europe'. In evoking the spirit of the Arabian Nights, the Tabak Temple remained representative in terms of size, pomp and urban prominence.

In this paper I shall investigate the creation of its synthetic identity based on the one hand on Western traditions, and on the other, the imported and transfigured oriental elements

¹ This condition applied mainly to continental Europe, France, German Lands, Austria (Austria and Hungary), Scandinavia and partly to the Pale of Settlement – today Ukraine, parts of Russia, Baltic States, Poland – where just a small minority of Jews were emancipated, living a western life style. The emancipation in Holland was somehow different, as it started much earlier than elsewhere and therefore the great 19th century 'Jewish boom' was less visible.

² Interestingly, Jews contributed greatly to these changes in numerous ways. Being denied property ownership in many European countries, they accumulated wealth in cash/gold that was easy to invest into capitalist economy. Historically they were also close to trade and commerce, so 19th century European changes represented a great opportunity for them to expand their economic activities. Due to frequent persecutions in pre-modern times they became an easy moving population, which usually spoke many languages and were able to integrate, albeit superficially, to any milieu. That led to a symbiotic relationship in many countries between Jews and gentiles that became more symmetrical than in previous epochs. Fredric Bejdore even relates the eclectic mentality of the 19th century to Jewish presence in many centres of continental Europe. See: BEJDORÉ, 2004.

³ Throughout this paper I will use the term "oriental style" instead of terms such as neo-Islamic or even Moorish style, the latter used often in the 19th century, because the idiom at stake neither matches any historic style, nor their revivals. The idiom of these synagogues was a projection of the West, a manner in which Europe projected its imagination onto a supposed Orient, which never existed. This projection mixed together Arabic-Islamic, Indian and even Byzantine motives, and therefore no specific term can express its fictive and hybrid character.

for the erection of one of the most trendsetting synagogues in 19th century Europe.

CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

KULTURNO-POLITIČKI KONTEKST

It may be debated whether Jews had survived four millennia as a distinct ethnic-religious group mainly due to the hostility of the environment or their internal cohesion, but it is doubtless that after the Enlightenment both agencies began to wane, paving the way for some kind of convergence in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. However, after initial optimism, first cracks appeared soon on the newly established common Jewish-gentile platform. Still, it was sustained a century or so in continental Europe, from the 1830s to the 1930s, coincidentally with the birth of economic and cultural modernity. (Traditional or Orthodox Jews remained at all times more suspicious of this development, but with a time lag of a few decades their optimism followed suit and their synagogue architecture too, albeit without substantial changes in the religious service.) After a century, however, modern time European Jewish Renaissance was brought to an abrupt end: a major part of the Jewish population disappeared from the continent due to Nazism;⁴ a substantial proportion of Central European synagogues were destroyed during the *Reichskristallnacht* (November 9, 1938) and after

also, mainly in the post-war years up until the fall of the Iron Curtain (1989). Unlike the spectacular Nazi destruction of Synagogues in 1938, the Communist regimes were not openly hostile to Jews, but their opposition to traditions and religion resulted in the destruction of a great number of synagogues in Central Europe, particularly in settlements where Jews population had disappeared.⁵

At the onset of modern Jewish Renaissance some emancipated Jews did not consider Christianity as Jewish apostasy any more, but rather the universal religion, or better still, a cultural common denominator of the 'civilised world' as they put it, i.e. Western societies. For the secularly educated Jews the hustle and bustle of the *Gründerzeit* seemed to herald the commencement of Messianic times, prompting them to give up their religious/cultural particularity, including the strife to return to the Land of Israel. Post-Enlightenment secularism and universalism moved away the upper strata of Jews from their traditions and initiated their economic, cultural and to some extent political integration into European and North American societies. Indigenous middle class gentile were not always pleased with the Jewish advance, fearing competition. In Central Europe middle class gentiles tried to delay emancipation as long as possible, but the need for financial capital, that some Jews were ready to deliver, proved to be stronger. Even after formal emancipation was achieved in the 1860s, middle class gentiles still attempted to keep Jews away from culture and politics. This explains why synagogues were built in a style that sharply differentiated them from the majority of the urban fabric, visually distinguishing Jews from gentiles until the end of the 19th century.

But due to leaving the Ghetto behind, synagogue architecture was destined to change in any case. Inconspicuous appearance as a consequence of Jewish indifference to the visual and the absence of the need for social manifestation were abandoned soon in favour of visual integration and land-marking in the gentile urban fabric. Architectural integration was gradual, its first stage was just characterised by taking on a visual identity readable in Christian terms, acquiring cultural distinction from the mainstream Western societies, expressed in the slogan 'Jews, the Asiatics of Europe'.⁶ Later, after the fashion of oriental style abated, from about the 1880s, synagogues acquired more and more leading 'Christian styles' – neo-Romanesque, neo-Byzantine, sometimes even neo-Gothic, particularly in Germany.⁷ In the Habsburg Empire oriental modes remained in use until modernism, albeit mixed with traditional Western

4 It is estimated that some six million Jews have lost their lives and although the accuracy of this number is being challenged by some, it is clear that Jewish life in Europe has changed forever due to Nazism; the majority of Jews live today outside Europe. Apparently, their disappearance from Europe between 1933 and 1945 – either due to murder or emigration – anticipated the later scientific and economic weakening of this continent vis-à-vis America, at least until the early 21st century.

5 Communist Anti-Semitism was disguised as Anti-Zionism or hatred towards the rich bourgeois Jews.

6 Minor oriental features also appeared sporadically on numerous synagogues prior to emancipation as for instance the Großenhof synagogue in Prague (1760!) and in German lands as well: Ingenheim (1832), Kircheim-Boland and Binswangen (1835), Speyer (1837), and Heidenheim (1849) See: HAMMER-SCHENK, 1981, images 182-185. However, these synagogues were not full-fledged Oriental-style buildings with rich surface decoration, but displayed only some minor Moorish details such as horse-shoe arches, for instance. Their scale also did not differ from that of other modest period synagogues.

7 Architect and theoretician Edwin Oppler argued, if German Jews were ethnic Germans, oriental style was not justified. Therefore he advocated the use of 'German historic styles', mainly Neo-Romanesque, that was the most German and supposedly less linked to Christianity than Gothic. Gothic in the 19th century represented the *par excellence* 'Christian style.' Even before him, Abraham (Albrecht) Rosengarten (1809-93), the Jewish architect of the Hauptsynagoge in Kassel also stressed the European identity of Jews, opposing oriental style and advocating German *Rundbogenstil*, a special neo-Romanesque idiom, among others in the Viennese *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* in numerous instances.

FIG. 2 SITE PLAN OF THE SYNAGOGUE AROUND 1900
THE PLAN REPRESENTS THE SITUATION SIMILAR TO THE ONE AT THE TIME OF CONSTRUCTION, EXHIBITING THE CROWDED CONDITIONS CHARACTERISTIC OF FORMER GHETTOS OR JEWISH QUARTERS, ALBEIT THERE WAS NO REAL GHETTO IN PEST. ON ITS SOUTH-WESTERN SIDE, THE NARROW, IRREGULAR SITE OPENS ON TO THE TABAK-GASSE (DOHÁNY UTCA), BUT THE MAIN ENTRANCE IS OBLIQUE; ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE, IN PFEIFFER GASSE (SÍP UTCA), THERE ARE AN APARTMENT BLOCK AND A SCHOOL.

SL. 2. POLOŽAJNI NACRT SINAGOGE, OKO 1900.
PLAN PREDSTAVLJA SITUACIJU SLIČNU KAO U DOBA IZGRADNJE: POKAZUJE GUSTOCU PRIJAŠNJIH GETA, ODNOSNO ZIDOVSKIH ČETVRTI, IAKO U PEŠTI NIJE POSTOJAO PRAVI GETO. NA SVOMU JUGOZAPADNOM OBODU PARCELA SE OTVARA NA TABAK-GASSE (DUHANSKU ULICU), ALI GLAVNI JE ULAZ SKOŠEN. NA DRUGOM KRAJU PARCELE, PREMA PFEIFFER-GASSE, NALAZILA SE STAMBENA ZGRADA I SKOLA.





FIG. 3 THREE ALTERNATIVES

LEFT: JOSEPH HILD, THE CATHEDRAL OF ESZTERGOM
MIDDLE: FRITZ FESSL ET AL., PROJECT FOR THE TABAK-TEMPEL
RIGHT: LUDWIG FÖRSTER, PROJECT FOR THE TABAK-TEMPEL
AS HILD'S VERSION DID NOT SURVIVE TO OUR DATE, IT HAS
BEEN SUBSTITUTED HERE WITH THE CATHEDRAL IN ÉGER.
PRESUMABLY, HIS SYNAGOGUE PROJECT HAD BEEN ALSO
NEO-CLASSICAL WITH A MAJOR CENTRAL DOME. WHILE HILD
AND FESSL FOLLOWED THE BRIEF AND CREATED
'SYNAGOGUES', FÖRSTER OPTED FOR A MOORISH CATHEDRAL
WHICH HE CALLED TEMPEL.

SL. 3. TRI ALTERNATIVE

LIJEVO: JOSEPH HILD, KATEDRALA U ESZTERGOMU
SREDINA: FRITZ FESSL, DRUGI PROJEKT TABAK-TEMPELA
DESNO: LUDWIG FÖRSTER, PROJEKT TABAK-TEMPELA
KAKO HILDOVA VERZIJA DANAS NIJE POZNATA, UMJESTO
NJE PRIKAZUJEMO KATEDRALU U ESZTERGOMU ZATO
STO SE MOŽE PRETPOSTAVITI DA JE PROJEKT SINAGOGE
TAKOĐER SADRŽAVAO VELIKU SREDNJU KUPOLU. DOK SE
HILD I FESSL PRIDRŽAVAJU PROGRAMU I PROJEKTIRAJU
'SYNAGOGU', FÖRSTER PREDLAŽE MAURSKU KATEDRALU KOJU
NAZIVA „TEMPEL“.

neo-styles.⁸ The Tabak Temple marks the first stage of this evolution, when a large synagogue stepped onto the urban stage, wrapped into a rich, oriental garb.

JEWIS OF PEST AND THEIR DEBATES ABOUT THE STYLE AND CHOOSING THE ARCHITECT

PEŠTANSKI ŽIDOV I NJIHOVE RASPRAVE O STILU I ODABIRU ARHITEKTA

The Pest Jewish Community experienced a spectacular growth in the second third of the 19th century after residence permits were obtained in the 1840s for the Jews in the suburb of Terézváros, today the 6th district of Budapest. Historically Budapest was a compound of three independent municipalities united in 1871, four years after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise or *Ausgleich*. The oldest town is Óbuda (Roman: *Acquincum*, German: *Alt Ofen*) which dates back to the 2nd century as a key Roman settlement on the eastern fringes of the empire and which probably had Jewish burghers, as Jewish gravestones were found in the region. Further to the south is Buda (German: *Ofen*) the medieval royal seat of Hungarian kings and place where the largest medieval synagogue stood, today buried underneath the pavement in the Castle District. Finally, Pest, partly based on Roman and medieval foundations, became famous in the 19th century as a modern, cosmopolitan metropolis, with the Tabak Temple and other synagogues as part of it.

The most prominent Jewish families of Pest were not so much immigrants from provincial towns or faraway lands, but established and well connected people from Óbuda (today the 3rd district of Budapest), who were allowed to move into Pest, the nascent capital of Hungary from the 1840s. (Previously they had just been permitted crossing the river for attending markets and fairs.) In today's terms, they just moved from one district of the city to another. The precise number of Jews in Pest in the mid-19th century remains in obscurity. Grossman mentions 12,000 in

1852,⁹ Katona speaks about 27,101 in 1857.¹⁰ Anyhow they must have been powerful to be able to embark on the construction of the largest synagogue in the world without any proportionally smaller antecedent in the city of Pest.¹¹

The majority of Pest's Jewish Community members wanted to retain the tradition of smaller prayer houses, but the ambitious leadership needed a manifesto of achievement and a showpiece of loyalty to the Christian culture and the host nation.¹² Although the leadership was resolute to join the brave new world, even its board members, who prepared the brief for the architects, could not agree upon architectural features of the synagogue: style, composition of masses, and relationship with the immediate surroundings. Apparently, the board members were not quite clear about cultural identity and political message for the large synagogue with 3000 seats (!), to be built in the vicinity of the

⁸ The Habsburg Empire was more inhomogeneous than Bismarck's united German Reich – both in ethnic, political and architectural terms – and therefore tolerated better oriental looking edifices. Moreover, in the Hungarian territories orientalism referred to the myths of the Hungarians' oriental origin, albeit the actual population was more German and Slavonic by descent than eastern. Orientalism became a common platform for Jews and Hungarians for a certain period of time.

⁹ GROSSMANN, 1923: 86-94

¹⁰ KATONA, 1949: 5

¹¹ The previous major synagogue was in Óbuda, still built in the neo-classical style in 1821, the period of early emancipation in Austria-Hungary. Its original surroundings have been remodeled, but the building survives and serves as a TV studio.

¹² Community membership was rather inhomogeneous due to different origins. Three major sources could be identified in the mid-19th century: 1. Immigrants from Hungarian estates, who were well connected tradesmen. 2. Immigrants from Moravia, Lower Austria, East-Prussia arrived to Pest due to their business connections. 3. Immigrants from Poland, Ukraine and Habsburg Galicia were more traditional, far more religious than the former two and despised by the formers, called *Ostjuden*. The *Ostjuden* were the most conspicuous target for the anti-Semites. (CSORBA, 1998: 62-105)

¹³ It is important to stress that the location of the great synagogue was second rate: not only in the suburbs, but

old city core of Pest.¹³ Therefore the building committee for synagogue construction has commissioned projects from two architects; first, from the local Joseph Hild (Hild József), an established neo-classicist, who had also built the cathedral church in Eger and who had previously built for the Jewish community; and second, from another local Fritz Feßl (Feszl Frigyes), a younger and less established figure, whom history accounts for initiating the Hungarian national architectural idiom in the framework of Romanticism.¹⁴ These two architects highlighted not only the two major currents in Hungarian architecture of the period, but reflected the two main models of reasoning among the Pest Jews: building upon the conservative local gentile traditions and embarking on the romantic Hungarian nationalist project inspired by the events of 1848.

However, by the unexpected turn of events on May 18, 1854, the building committee rejected projects of both of the aforementioned architects and commissioned a project from the Bavarian born Vienna-based architect Ludwig Förster (1797-1863), who had just begun in 1853 building his synagogue in Vienna's Leopoldstadt district. Presumably some prior parallel negotiations must have taken place with Förster behind closed doors that echoed conflicting interests of the board members. But beyond these and the ensuing arguments, Förster's involvement meant much more than the outcome of usual factional fighting when major sums of money were changing hands.

Christian Friedrich Ludwig Ritter von Förster (Baron Förster) was neither a traditionalist,

nor a nationalist. He was just the opposite: a partisan of modernism and cosmopolitanism which included the notion of global-eclectic. This must have been very appealing to the upcoming Jewish middle classes, who were fascinated by the Enlightenment and industrial revolution. Förster was holding a professorship at the prestigious Viennese Art Academy and created the first sketches for the famous *Ringstraße* well before the announcement of the competition and the revolution of 1848.¹⁵ Interestingly, the initiatives to construct this magnificent street were 'grassroots' and not government or municipality initiated, although it later became the largest public work of the empire: Baron Adolph Pereira, the Jewish magnate asked Förster to create a sketch for the urban development,¹⁶ having on his mind the aspirations of the upcoming Jewish upper middle class that would later inhabit this boulevard along with some real nobility and major public buildings: the Opera, Stock Exchange, Parliament, City Hall, University.¹⁷ Furthermore, he excelled as a successful entrepreneur, with a firm grip on the professional press, launching the *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (General Building Journal), one of the most influential professional journals in Central European architecture. For the Jews of Pest, Förster's appearance on the scene meant a *deus ex machina* in ending the deadlock of the extremely ambitious but incoherent community leadership. He was the right man in the right place and the right time. Förster, the favourite of Viennese Jewish high bourgeoisie, incorporated for the first time elements of 'eastern cultural identity' into a piece of architecture for his patron, Baron Adolph Pereira as early as 1846. Pereira had approached Förster in order to create an oriental style fairytale castle in a dramatically beautiful landscape by the Danube, in Königstatten at Greifenstein constructed in 1847.¹⁸ The castle was to "express the romance [of the place] and to approach forms in the Byzantine and related Arab way of building" with the intention of evoking the "Moorish aesthetic of his [Pereira's] own [Sephardic] ancestors in Spain!"¹⁹ The Romantic corner-towers of this castle would find their way to the façade of the Viennese Tempelgasse Synagogue, and the Moorish arcades of the side-façades to the interior of the Tabak Temple in Pest.

Subsequently, gentile architects marketed the oriental style among assimilated Jews as a reference to the previous 'Jewish Renaissance', the medieval Jewish-Christian-Islamic coexistence and cross-fertilisation on the Iberian Peninsula from the 8th century until the expulsion in 1492 (Spain) and 1496 (Portugal). Factually, however, the choice of this so-called Moorish style was more pragmatic: it was the only free idiom, seldom used in Cen-



FIG. 4 ALBERT REGEL'S MONTHLY COMPETITION (MONATSKONKURRENZEN) ENTRY FOR THE IDEAL SYNAGOGUE, 1841

THIS PROJECT WAS ANOTHER IMPORTANT SOURCE FOR FÖRSTER'S COMPOSITION.

SL. 4. NATJECAJNI RAD ALBERTA REGELA ZA MJESEČNE NATJEČAJE (MONATSKONKURRENZEN) ZA IDEALNU SINAGOGU IZ 1841.

TO JE BIO DRUGI IZVOR FÖRSTEROVA RJEŠENJA.

FIG. 5 FRAUENKIRCHE IN MUNICH, ARCHITECT JÖRG VON HALSBACH, 1468-88

THE GIANT LATE GOTHIC CATHEDRAL, WITH ENOUGH STANDING SPACE FOR 20,000 WORSHIPPERS, MUST HAVE MADE A PROFOUND ARCHITECTURAL IMPACT ON THE BAVARIAN-BORN LUDWIG FÖRSTER.

SL. 5. FRAUENKIRCHE U MÜNCHENU, ARHITEKT JÖRG VON HALSBACH, 1468.-1488.

VELEBNA KATEDRALA S DVADESET TISUCA STAJAČIH MJESTA, PO SVEMU SUDEĆI, SNAŽNO JE UTJEČALA NA BAVARCA LUDWIGA FÖRSTERA.



in a curvy street adjacent to the Royal Tobacco Factory, to which it owns its name. The site was cramped; it needed several remodelling in order to keep up with the rising status of the Jews in the city.

14 KOMÁRIK, 1991: 3. There is no reason to challenge Komárik's assertion, but one may surmise that not only the stylistic dilemma stood behind ordering projects from two architects. It may have been also an issue of cost effectiveness, already established business relationships, although it is not possible to substantiate these hypotheses.

15 He also won a prize at the competition and his entry was highly regarded, but later he withdrew from the team that created the final *Grundplan*.

16 *** 1985: 71, 196

17 This highlights in the best way the shift of power, political and intellectual, from the static, feudal city centre – Cathedral of St. Stephen and the Royal-Imperial Castle – to the dynamic new boulevard, the Jews and other bourgeois elements yearned for and contributed to.

18 Jewish nobility, bourgeois by origins, tried to acquire feudal lifestyle of which architecture became an important constituent. But, it is not exclusively a Jewish phenomenon. In the interiors of Garnier's grand Opera in Paris a 'bourgeois Versailles' emerges, a cheaper and slightly overdone version of the royal original. What is specifically Jewish is the almost ironic and self-mocking overt richness of these castle interiors.

19 *** 1849: 107



FIG. 6 THE TABAK-TEMPEL, AROUND 1890, PHOTOGRAPH FÖRSTER FRAMED HIS COMBINATION OF THE MUNICH FRAUENKIRCHE AND REGEL'S PROJECT WITH TWO PROJECTING WINGS WITH WHICH HE TRIED TO MASK THE ASYMMETRIC LAYOUT. THESE WINGS, SUGGESTED IN THE SPECIFICATIONS, CREATE A FORECOURT, GIVING THE ENSEMBLE A CERTAIN MONUMENTAL ASPECT.

SL. 6. TABAK-TEMPEL OKO 1890., FOTOGRAFIJA FÖRSTER JE SVOJU KOMBINACIJU FRAUENKIRCHE I REGELOVA PROJEKTA UOKVIRIO DVAMA IZBAČENIM RIZALITIMA KAKO BI MASKIRAO ASIMETRIČNOST TLOCRTA. DVA IZBAČENA RIZALITA, ŠTO SU BILA DIO PROJEKATNE ZADAĆE, DJELOMIČNO ZATVARAJU PREDVORJE KOJE PRIDONOSI MONUMENTALNOSTI KOMPOZICIJE.

FIG. 7 FRONTAL VIEW OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE TEMPEL

THE ENTRANCE FORECOURT, DIVIDED FROM THE STREET BY A WROUGHT IRON FENCE, IS VISIBLE WHEN THE DOHÁNY STREET SYNAGOGUE IS VIEWED FROM THE FRONT. TODAY, PEOPLE USE THE LEFT-HAND ENTRANCE BECAUSE OF SECURITY CHECKS.

SL. 7. FRONTALNI POGLED NA GLAVNI PORTAL HRAMA ULAZNO PREDVORJE OGRAĐENO JE OD ULICE OGRADOM OD KOVANOG ŽELJEZA, A VIDI SE SAMO KADA SE STANE ISPRED GLAVNOGA ULAZA. DANAS POSJETIOCI ULAZE PREKO LIJEVOGA KRILA ZBOG SIGURNOSNOG PREGLEDA.



tral European architecture, except for buildings in zoos and other orient- or amusement related buildings as well as arsenals. The Jews were, on the one hand flattered by getting into the 19th century masquerade of styles that confirmed their partial social acceptance, endowing them with architectural visibility and love for lavish decoration, but on the other, they felt that orientalism barred them from the mainstream architecture and society.

However, beyond following architectural fads, Förster was committed to the use of advanced technical solutions in almost all of his constructions – cast iron columns, trusses and a functionalist approach.²⁰ Förster succeeded in uniting traditional aesthetic values with a modernist call for the use of new materials and methods of construction. He argued that the quest for beauty must respect function, and architecture must reflect the technical methods used. In a way he was a modernist, and both of his synagogues erected in capital cities – of which only the Dohány Street survived – account for this. (His third synagogue, built in Miskolc in 1863, is more modest in scale and outfit due to the taste and social position of the local Jewish community.) This represented a bonus for the Jewish community leaders, who were either industrialists or involved in industrialisation of the relatively backward country, but at any rate, committed to the pioneering of technology and modernization.

The message of Förster's plan – oriental pomp, modernity, cosmopolitanism, the fictive metropolitan glittering – captured the imagination of Pest's wealthy Jews, much more than the neo-Classical solidity of József Hild or a slightly more daring provincial Romanticism of Frigyes Feszl, neither of them really embodying the ideals of the upcoming

Jewish bourgeoisie. It is striking that Förster omitted the mandatory dome and a lot of functional requirements prescribed in the brief by the synagogue building committee. Still, he understood better the spirituality of his clients than his colleagues in Pest, Hild and Feszl.²¹ He knew that the program written by the community leadership mattered less than the meaning of the building – he could easily scrap the prescribed dome, if his building conveyed the required monumental appearance with other means.

Presumably, Förster taken by the idea of Solomon's Temple decided not to build a central dome, because period reproductions of Solomon's Temple were without domes, and if there had been some, they would not have been dominant in the way domed synagogues or churches were in that period. In the Tabak Temple there is a small internal dome over the Ark, visible only when one comes close to it. Moreover, the large, merely decorative, domes on the façade, like in the case of Feßl's proposal and Edward Knoblauch's Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin,²² were probably not convincing for functionalist

²⁰ He built the first partly metal structure for sacred use, the Lutheran Church in Gumpendorf in 1846, followed by the Leopoldstadt or Tempelgasse Synagogue in 1853 and finally the Tabak Temple in 1854.

²¹ In functional terms Förster's design was rather problematic: seven staircases, of which some are very narrow and dark, connected different levels, unclear traffic of believers and employees, etc. The Building Committee made some polite remarks, but the architect failed to address the shortcomings.

²² Edward Knoblauch's building was inaugurated in 1867, much later than the Tabak Temple, but it has had smaller predecessors in terms of dome arrangement that should have been known to Ludwig Förster.

²³ Feszl's project could not have been built on such a narrow slot, but according to the records he was not at-



Förster. The site was also too narrow to create an effective looking dome, since the ones envisaged by his competitors were simply not realistic.²³

ARCHITECT LUDWIG FÖRSTER ON JEWISH IDENTITY AND ITS ARCHITECTURAL PARALLEL

POGLEDI ARHITEKTA LUDWIGA FÖRSTERA NA ŽIDOVSKI IDENTITET I NJEGOVO ODRAZ NA ARHITEKTURU

As it has been often in the 19th century, Förster marketed his preferred formal solutions with some impressive theories. For the Tabak Temple he put forward some quasi scholarly considerations, but in fact Förster had little time to visit far away locations, such as Spain, the Maghreb or the Middle East, or to study architectural history from books, being occupied with his prosperous office and busy public life. Nevertheless, he tried to justify his architectural language in a scholarly manner: "... For an Israelite Temple neither Egyptian, nor Greek, neither Romanic nor Gothic should be applied but Oriental-Byzantine

style..."²⁴ He put into the same basket Byzantine and Islamic architecture, the products of conflicting cultures, as they were both seen as 'eastern' relative to Western Christianity. For him, as for the majority of 19th century westerners the Orient was an arbitrary projection. More importantly, in architectural terms Förster's statement means that dematerialising styles were preferable to material- tectonic ones. Moreover, beyond architectural issues Förster touched upon some supposed characteristics of the Jews and their identity which he wanted to represent in the style of the synagogue:

"...the newest excavations in Corsabad, Nineveh and Babylon are repositories of the ancient oriental building styles. They could have been the basis of the oldest Jewish Temple, albeit it cannot be substantiated that the Arabs and Persians had a building style in Solomon's time..."²⁵ ...But the forms of these peoples are suitable for the traditional Jewish service and the fantastic and wonderful elevated mood (*Gemüths-erhebungen*) of the Jews with the prophets and they explain the otherwise not quite clear descriptions about Solomon's Temple. This Temple should be the prototype of every synagogue and it has been the model for the oldest Christian churches, rather than the Roman basilicas, as Christianity is entirely rooted in Judaism."²⁶

Förster's statement was incorrect: both the synagogue and the church had evolved from antique basilicas and not from Solomon's Temple. The link between the basilicas on the one side, and the synagogues and churches on the other, is not merely formal, but functional as well: both the synagogue and the church were houses to be entered, closed spaces with interiors cut off from the surrounding – man-made and natural environ-

FIG. 8 THE TEMPLE WITH THE NORTHWARD EXTENSION IN THE 1930S THE SYNAGOGUE'S LOT WAS OPENED AND EXTENDED: TO THE LEFT THE HEROES TEMPLE COMMEMORATES JEWISH HEROES IN WORLD WAR ONE, TO THE RIGHT THE HUNGARIAN JEWISH MUSEUM HOUSES JUDAICA COLLECTION AND IN-BETWEEN HAS BEEN THE REPRESENTATIVE GARDEN WHICH IS TURNED INTO MASS GRAVEYARDS DURING THE NAZI ERA.

SL. 8. PROŠIRENJE PARCELE SINAGOGUE PREMA SJEVERU PARCELA SE 1930-IH GODINA PROŠIRUJE S LIJEVE STRANE HRAMOM HEROJA, MEMORIJALOM ŽIDOVSKIH JUNAKA PALIH U PRVOMU SVJETSKOM RATU, A S DESNE STRANE MAĐARSKIM ŽIDOVSKIM MUZEJOM KOJI SADRŽI KOLEKCIJU JUDAICE. IZMEĐU NJIH NALAZI SE REPREZENTATIVNI VRT U KOJEM SU DANAS MASOVNE GROBNICE ŽRTAVA NACISTIČKOG RAZDOBLJA.

FIG. 9 THE LOBBY OF THE TEMPLE AFTER ENTERING THE LOBBY, THE VISITOR IS OVERWHELMED BY ORIENTAL SPLENDOUR, BUT IN THE SPACIOUS INTERIOR ANYONE FAMILIAR WITH NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE CAN RECOGNIZE MODERN CONSTRUCTION AND INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY. THIS IS THE MESSAGE OF CONTEMPORARY JEWRY: ITS ANCIENT ORIENTAL HERITAGE COUPLED WITH THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.

SL. 9. ULAZNI PROSTOR NA ULAZU POSJETIOCA POZDRAVLJA ORIJENTALNA RASKOS, ALI TKO POZNA ARHITEKTURU 19. STOLJEĆA, UOČIT CE MODERNU KONSTRUKCIJU I INDUSTRIJSKU TEHNOLOGIJU. TO JE UJEDNO I PORUKA TADAŠNJIH EMANCIPIRANIH ŽIDOVA: DREVNO ORIJENTALNO NASLIJEĐE U SPOJU S INDUSTRIJSKOM REVOLUCIJOM.

tacked like Förster. He envisaged a *court d'honneur* between two community buildings leading to a great domed synagogue for which there was simply not enough space left.

²⁴ Ludwig Förster's technical description of the synagogue appended to the drawings, February, 1854, Magyar Zsidó Múzeum és Levéltár, II-C-I-1, Dohány utcai zsinagóga iratai (Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives, Documents of the Dohány Street Synagogue).

²⁵ Relating Solomon's Temple to the Arabs – nomadic tribes at that period – is controversial and attests for Förster's little familiarity with ancient art. Still, this has little relevance to his successful architectural practice. Mid-19th century architecture in the Habsburg Empire evolved in the direction of a free style in which scholarly knowledge was not a necessary precondition.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

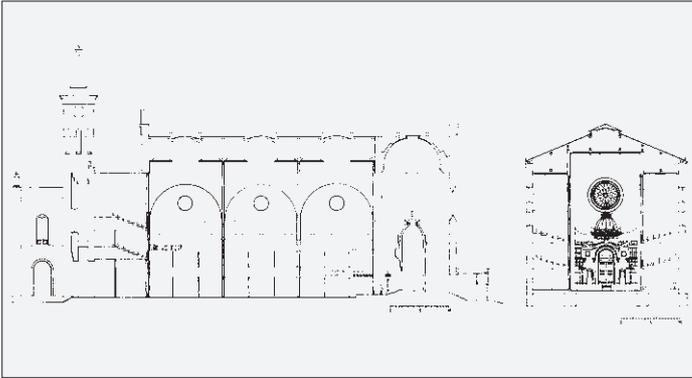


FIG. 10 TRANSVERSAL AND LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

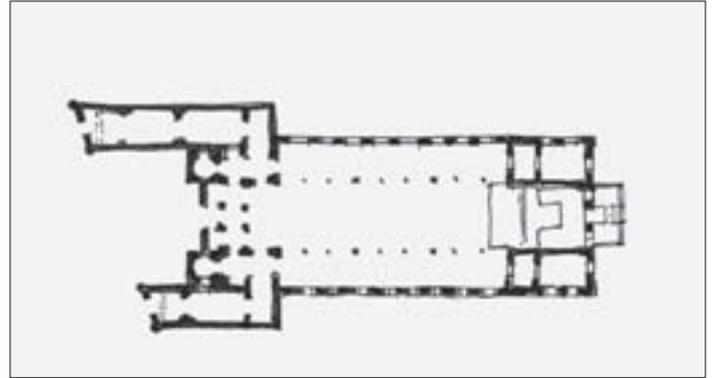
THE ABSENCE OF DECORATION FROM THE DRAWINGS ACCENTUATES THE INDUSTRIAL CHARACTER OF THE SYNAGOGUE. THE LONGITUDINAL SECTION REVEALS ITS DUALITY: TOWARDS TABAK STREET IT APPEARS TO BE AN ORIENTAL BUILDING WITH CHISELLED SURFACES AND MASSES, WHILE HIDING BEHIND A LARGER AND SIMPLER EDIFICE CREATED IN THE SPIRIT OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE AND A NEO-ROMANESQUE VERSION OF ROMANTICISM, CALLED *RUNDBOGENSTIL*.

SL. 10. POPREČNI I UZDUŽNI PRESJEK SINAGOGE NEDOSTAJANJE DEKORACIJE NA CRTEŽIMA PODVLAČI INDUSTRIJSKI KARAKTER SINAGOGE. UZDUŽNI PRESJEK OTKRIVA NJENU DVOJNOST: PREMA DUHANSKOJ ULICI SVOJIM BOGATO UKRAŠENIM PLOHAMA I RAZBIJENIM MASAMA POKAZUJE ISTOČNJAČKU RASKOŠ, DOK SE U UNUTRAŠNOSTI POKAZUJE KAO VEĆE, JEDNOSTAVNIJE ZDANJE KOMPONIRANO U DUHU INDUSTRIJSKE ARHITEKTURE I NEOROMANIKE ZVANE *RUNDBOGENSTIL*.

FIG. 11 THE FLOOR PLAN OF THE SYNAGOGUE BEFORE THE 1930S EXTENSION.

THE GREAT CATHEDRAL INTERIOR IS PRECEDED BY AN OBLIQUE COURTYARD CUT BY TABAK (DOHÁNY) STREET. WOMEN ENTERED THE WINGS, MAN THE CENTRAL GATE.

SL. 11. TLOCRT SINAGOGE PRIJE PROŠIRENJA 1930-IH GODINA U VELEBNI KATEDRALNI INTERIJER ULAZI SE KROZ KOŠO PREDVORJE KOJE SIJEČE TABAK-GASSE (DOHÁNY UTCA). ŽENE SU ULAZILE KROZ IZBOČENA KRILA, A MUŠKARCI KROZ SREDIŠNJI PORTAL.



ment, as Roman basilicas had been. Solomon's Temple, on the other hand, was not meant to be entered, save for the high priests; believers were kept away from it. The Temple's main function was to house the Ark of the Covenant. However, it is hard to believe that Förster would have been so unaware of its architectural history. It is more probable that he wanted to be 'politically correct' i.e., to highlight the Jewish roots of Christianity, often stressed by partisans of emancipation, Jewish and gentile ones alike. Emphasizing common roots was supposed to pave the way for religious and cultural convergence of Jews and gentiles. Moreover, Förster intentionally glossed over the functional differences between Solomon's Temple and the synagogue – originally just a replacement for the Temple, that was destroyed for the last time in 70 AD and never rebuilt thereafter. In the medieval and early modern Jewish tradition Solomon's Temple referred to Jerusalem and the idea of Jews living in their homeland, whereas the synagogue was rather an element of the Exile. (Historically there has been an overlap of the Second Temple and synagogues, during which the former was the holiest place of the Jews, and synagogues served more for the everyday religious practice.) As emancipated Jews felt more and more at home in modern 19th century nation states – at least officially – they refused to return to Jerusalem, and they upgraded their synagogues into 'temples,' both in common parlance and in terms of architecture.

Förster's controversial philosophy resulted in an architectural hybrid concerning interior arrangement and architectural language. The Tabak Temple's large, elongated, basilical plan resembling a catholic church rejects the small scale and centrality of former synagogues, albeit ritual elements are largely kept intact, apart from moving the bimah²⁷ to the east, in front of the Ark.²⁸ The synagogue's architectural language mixes German *Rundbogenstil* (semicircular Romanticism in the 1840s and 1850s) and Islamic stylistic elements. Furthermore, the latter are not genuine; they only create a decorative layer over a modern metal

bearing structure. The aforementioned synthetic, hybrid style sends the message of the newly acquired Jewish identity, based on Western and Eastern traditions as well as on commitment to modernity, to its economic, political and cultural dimensions, as witnessed by the press – Jewish and gentile alike.²⁹

MEDIA ECHO

MEDIJSKI ODJEK

The Media echo during the period testifies to a proper understanding of the message Ludwig Förster and his clients sent to the public. The Viennese journal *Illustrierte Zeitung* reports on the style of the Tabak Temple in Pest:

"The style is Moorish, which is so suitable for synagogues [...]. The intellectual characteristics [*geistige Eigenschaften*], the language and religious service of Jews and Arabs display some similarities: leaning of speculative sciences [*Hinneigung zu den spekulativen Wissenschaften*], turning away from the living nature, which generates formless spiritu-

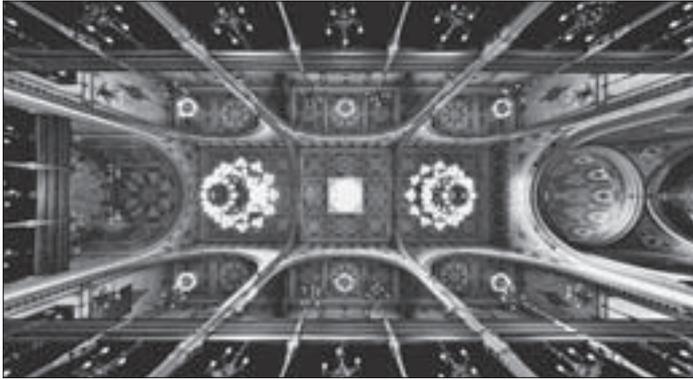
²⁷ Elevated platform on which the Scripture is read.

²⁸ The Ark is the place where the Scripture is being kept. It is directed to the east, referring to Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. Moving the bimah in front of the Ark was a common feature of synagogues built for reform service from the 1820s onwards that caused a lot of disagreement throughout the 19th century among traditionalistic and reformist Jews.

²⁹ The *Magyar Sajtó's* reporter wrote on the inauguration ceremony: "The holy table in the sanctuary [actually on the bimah] was suddenly transformed into a pulpit to the great amazement of the audience." (** 1859: 21) Note that the author uses the term "audience", not "worshippers". Indeed the service had been transformed into a theatrical performance with a silent and passive audience, instead of the active participation and congregational reading/singing of a traditional Jewish service. This "miracle" – the work of Frigyes Feszly – seems a bit ridiculous today. At that time, however, it was not simply a piece of circus legerdemain, but proof positive of technical advance, a hymn in praise of modernity. Jewry wanted to show that their religion might be ancient, but they themselves did not eschew progress, in this particular case using a technical innovation in their holiest place.

³⁰ ** 1860: 48–49

³¹ There is a link between oriental modes and art nouveau called *Sezession* in the Habsburg Empire both in the



ality [gestaltloser Spiritualismus] and artificial way of thinking [erkünstelte Denkweise] as well as rich fantasy. All these emerge like a *fata morgana* in the Moorish forms in front of our eyes, while the decoration displays the most conspicuous penchant for pomp. High Gothic, on the other hand, contrary to Arab architecture, structured individual architectural elements into harmonic and organic unity. The oriental spirit differs from the Germanic (Sic!). Arab architecture impresses with richness and mechanical repetition and not with organic structure."³⁰

The author's beliefs testify to the typical misunderstanding of Islamic architecture and Muslim spirituality of the age that, following the Judaic ban on images, avoids translating ideas into tangible material form. He condemns not only Islamic architecture from a 'Germanic' standpoint, but also Semper's Theory of Cladding, the theoretical base to 'oriental style' and precondition for Art Nouveau³¹ and eventually the 20th century modernism. The emphasis of the Germanic versus Arabic spirit echoes Carl Schnaase's ideas,³² and the

supposed Jewish 'floating' foreshadows some twentieth-century anti-Semitic arguments in the theory of arts, as formulated by the proponents of the National Socialist concept of *entartete Kunst* (degenerate art). Still, in that period Schnaase's theories remained in the framework of political correctness, in which Christian superiority over other cultures, including Jewish was a matter of fact.

The *Illustrierte Zeitung* pointed out in a pseudo scientific justification the use of oriental language. It related Avicena (Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn Abd Allah ibn Sina, 980-1037) and Averhoes (Abu al-Walid Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Rushd, 1126-98) to Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, 1135-1204), referring to the famous Iberian cultural symbiosis of Jews, Christians and Muslims. Despite referring to great Jewish and Muslim thinkers, there was something belittling in the way Germans (Austrians) suggested the Jews they should use the 'Moorish Style' – a mix of many oriental idioms, Turkish, Egyptian, Moorish or Indian – due to their kinship with the Arabs, in order to keep 'synagogue style' a second rate idiom.

The application of oriental forms has had a history in Western architecture, of equally subordinated character. *Turquerie*, Turkish pavilions in the gardens of castles were a common place; John Nash initiated the use of oriental style in the Royal Pavilion in Brighton (1815-18), Karl Ludwig von Zanth³³ created Villa Wilhelma (1837-51), the "Moorish Palace" for King Wilhelm I of Württemberg (1816-64). In all instances a borrowing from the Orient was limited to less prominent public buildings in Central European architecture too.³⁴ In addition, some aesthetically not entirely established elements in public buildings – as metal structure – rounded up this genre, which sometimes inadvertently became avant-garde. The new idiom contained, however, much more: Europe's opening towards the East, colonialism – the idea of an 'Enlightened World Empire' – and with it, the realisation of the idea of permanent global progress (actually a secularised version of

FIG. 12 THE CEILING OF THE SYNAGOGUE. THE INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT IS SIMPLE AND CLEAR-CUT. THE MAIN PART IS A THREE-BAYED BASILICA IN WHICH BOTH THE NAVE AND THE AISLES CONSIST OF THREE BAYS, EACH WITH AN EXTENSION TO THE WEST (LOBBIES FOR THE MEN AND FOR THE WOMEN'S GALLERIES UPSTAIRS), AND TO THE EAST: THE BIMA AND THE ARK. IN THE REMAINING FOUR CORNERS ARE THE MAIN STAIRCASES. THE BARREL VAULT OF THE WESTERN EXTENSION AND THE EASTERN EXTENSION WITH ITS DOME ARE BOTH MADE OF LIGHT MATERIALS.

SL. 12. STROP SINAGOGUE. INTERIJER JE JEDNOSTAVAN I PREGLEDAN. POSRIJEDI JE TROBRODNA BAZILIKA, A NJEZIN GLAVNI BROD I SPOREDNI BRODOVI IMAJU PO TRI POLJA I PRODUZENJA PREMA ZAPADU – PRETPROSTOR ZA MUŠKARCE I GALERIJE ZA ŽENE. GLAVNI BROD PROŠIREN JE PREMA ZAPADU ZA BIMU I ZAVJETNI KOVČEG. U ČETIRI UGLA NALAZE SE GLAVNA STUBIŠTA. BAČVASTI SVOD ZAPADNOG PROŠIRENJA I ISTOČNOG, S MALOM UNUTARNJOM KUPOLOM, TAKODER SU OD LAGANIH MATERIJALA.

FIG. 13 VIEW TO THE EASTERN WALL. AT THE LEVEL OF THE FIRST WESTERN GALLERY THE AREA IS MORE SPACIOUS AND BRIGHTER. OVER THE BIFORAS (COUPLED WINDOWS), LARGE OCCULI (ROUND WINDOWS) OPEN TO THE SOUTH AND NORTH, AND EACH BAY OF THE NAVE HAS ITS OWN SKYLIGHT. THE TWO LARGE CHANDELIERS HUNG IN THE NAVE WERE CREATED DURING THE LAST RESTORATION AND DO NOT ACCORD WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE BUILDING. THE SLENDER ARCHES CONCEAL A MODERN METAL STRUCTURE.

SL. 13. POGLED NA ISTOČNI ZID. NA RAZINI PRVE GALERIJE ZA ŽENE PROSTOR JE ŠIRI I SVJETLIJI. IZNAD BIFORA VELIKI SU OKULUSI, OTVORENI PREMA SJEVERU I JUGU, A SVAKO POLJE IMA JOŠ I SVOJE NADSVJETLO. DVA VELIKA LUSTERA KOJI VIŠE U GLAVNOM BRODU PRIPADAJU POSLJEDNJOJ OBNOVI I NE ODGOVARAJU IZVORNOM DUHU ZGRADE. VITKI LUKOVI SKRIVAJU SUVREMENU METALNU KONSTRUKCIJU.

evolutional line of Austrian architecture and also in the Hungarian. In the first instance Otto Wagner's synagogue in the Rumbach Street in Budapest (1872) and his Viennese Secessionist opus show certain similarities: colourful flat ornament that replaced traditional Western plastic decoration. In Hungary Fritz Feßl's orientalism and Ödön Lechner's architecture have the same common features as early and late Otto Wagner. See in detail: KLEIN, 2006: 117-134

32 SCHNAASE, 1869: 404

33 Born Zanic, son of a Jewish doctor, Zanth, a practitioner and a theoretician of architecture, received his Doctorate from the University of Tübingen for his work on Pompeian domestic architecture. He propagated polychromy in architecture that corroborated with the principle of oriental decoration.

34 In the case of Johann Fischer von Erlach's *Karlskirche* in Vienna the iconography of the main façade included two minaret-like Trajan's columns to symbolize the defeat of Islam in Central Europe after the expulsion of the Turks from Eastern Austria and Hungary in 1686. (Some scholars, like Paul von Naredi-Rainer, interpret these columns as a re-reading of Yachin and Boaz from Solomon's Temple. See: VON NAREDI-RAINER, 1994.) Anyhow, Islamic and Chinese architecture were known to Fischer von Erlach, as witnessed by his seminal work, *Entwurf einer historischen Architektur*. Leipzig, 1725, Book Three, p. TA II-VIII, p. TA X-XV



FIG. 14 THE EASTERN FAÇADE OF THE SYNAGOGUE UNLIKE THE ORIENTALLY FLAVOURED WEST FAÇADE, THIS ONE IS ALMOST ENTIRELY WESTERN WITH ITS TYPICAL NEO-ROMANESQUE STYLE. IF THERE WERE NO RED STRIPES OVER THE YELLOW BRICK IT COULD BE A PROTESTANT CHURCH. THIS FAÇADE WAS NOT VISIBLE FROM THE STREET AT THE TIME OF CONSTRUCTION; IT ONLY BECAME VISIBLE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY WHEN WESSELÉNYI STREET WAS EXTENDED TO THE KÁROLY RING. IN FRONT OF THE SYNAGOGUE STANDS THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL, ERECTED AFTER THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL.

SL. 14. ISTOČNO PROČELJE HRAMA ZA RAZLIKU OD ISTOČNJAČKOGA ZAPADNOG PROČELJA, OVO JE GOTOVO POSVE ZAPADNJAČKO SA SVOJIM TIPIČNIM NEOROMANIČKIM OBIJELJIMA. KAD NE BI BILU HORIZONTALNIH TRAKA CRVENE FASADNE OPEKE NA BIJELOME, HRAM BI IZGLEDAO KAO PROTESTANTSKA CRKVA. TO SE PROČELJE NIJE MOGLA VIDJETI S ULICE U DOBA IZGRADNJE, ALI POKAZALO SE NAKON PROŠIRENJA U 20. STOLJEĆU, KADA SU ULICU WESSELÉNYI PROBILI DO BULEVARA KÁROLY. ISPRED HRAMA JE SPOMENIK HOLOKAUSTU, PODIGNUT NEPOSREDNO NAKON PADA KOMUNIZMA.

FIG. 15 FAÇADE DETAIL IN WINTER THE WESTERN FAÇADE IS COVERED WITH A CARPET-TYPE PATTERN WHICH, TOGETHER WITH THE ONION SHAPE SPIRE, GIVES THE BUILDING AN ORIENTAL FLAVOUR.

SL. 15. DETALJ PROČELJA ZIMI ZAPADNO PROČELJE PREKRIVENO JE ISTOČNJAČKIM ORNAMENTOM KOJI PODSJEĆA NA ORIJENTALNI SAG. LUKOVIČASTA KUPOLA PRIDAJE DOJAM ISTOČNJAČKE GRADEVINE.

FIG. 16 FAÇADE-DETAIL FROM THE GROUND FLOOR THE HORIZONTAL STRIP-DECORATION CIRCUMVENTS THE OCTAGONAL CORNER-PILLAR.

SL. 16. DETALJ PROČELJA U PRIZEMLJU HORIZONTALNA TRAKASTA DEKORACIJA OBILAZI OKTOGONALNE STUPOVE NA UGLOVIMA.



Messianism), to which emancipated Jews subscribed and significantly contributed. Furthermore, there was a romantic overtone: nostalgia for the Orient, the miraculous world of Arabian Nights. Paradoxically, in terms of architecture, Jews have integrated into European culture by leaving it first.

PARALLELS TO COLONIAL BUILDINGS, 'LEISURE ARCHITECTURE', AND ARSENALS

USPOREDBA S KOLONIJALNIM GRADEVINAMA, „ARHITEKTUROM ZABAVNOG SADRŽAJA” I ARSENALA

There are certain similarities between the oriental language of Western synagogues and 19th century colonial architecture. They both express a double condition, double bind, which is basically asymmetric: the more mature and developed West *vis-à-vis* the colourful, exotic East (or the rest of the globe), but the one which is positioned lower along the 'evolutional line of culture'. (The whole idea of 'development' or 'advance' is highly western, a product of a linear conception of history, Hegelian, but its roots go back as far as the first passages of the Old Testament.) Both in the case of synagogues and the case of colonial architecture the encounter of the two different cultures is amply accentuated, not without political intentions – justifying the lower status of the exotic Orientals *vis-à-vis* the westerners. No matter that in the case of Jews the 'exotics' have written the Old Testament – they somehow had to be rendered



'Arabic' in order to keep a low-grade position among Christians.

This double condition translates into architecture as the deployment of Western floor-plans, principles of composition, but seasoned with some aboriginal motifs, either to accommodate climatic demands or just for highlighting double-identity or political 'good will' of the 'enlightened' people towards the indigenous.

Real and profound encounters of cultures in 19th century colonial architecture were largely avoided and considered as futile. How can one acknowledge the equality of cultures and maintain a colonial relationship? (An equal footing merger occurred later in the 20th century through the adoption of Japanese and Chinese elements by modernists – Frank Lloyd Wright, Adolf Loos, Gerrit Rietveld, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Richard Neutra, Carlo Scarpa, etc.) For instance, in the Maghreb, French urban planners were eager to separate their modern 'hygienic' urban fabric from the native one, often treating the former as a kind of 'natural reserve', integrating it vaguely into a new grid of avenues but leaving it practically untouched. In order to establish some kind of continuity between the old and new urban fabric – in the eyes of westerners – some cosmetic measures has been taken. Architects applied selected decorative motives from the buildings seen in the old *medina* to new buildings. Probably the most grotesque – and charming – examples is in Casablanca, where the art nouveau and déco high-rise blocks of flats stand in stark contrast to Moslem traditions, but embellished

with some Moresque decoration on certain façade surfaces.

Synagogues were not the only oriental genre in 19th century Europe, albeit the most widespread. Oriental style in the Habsburg Empire was spearheaded by the Viennese Arsenal Building created by Theophil Hansen and Ludwig Förster in 1850-56. Its oriental style may have referred to the successful wars Austrians fought with the 'Orientals', the Ottoman Turks in the 1686 campaign. Subsequently, some Jewish community buildings in the empire took up this idiom too, even in such a remote example as the Jewish Hospital in Lemberg (today L'viv, Ukraine).³⁵ This building figures oddly in the predominantly western architectural context of the Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Greco-Catholic city, more so than the Arsenal in Vienna, a city that did have some contact with the Orient, not only in pastry and coffee culture, but in the already mentioned Karlskirche facade.

Colonial synagogues represent a special case: oriental language brought back to the Orient, where the Jews – even indigenous ones – unanimously represented the West. Their quasi oriental language stood in opposition to the 'original Orient' – Mumbai, Tunis or Cairo – highlighting the special social and political position of their builders. In other words, colonial synagogues are oriental not in a genuine oriental manner, but the way the centre perceived the periphery. Jews living in the periphery wanted to emphasise their allegiance to the centre, its supposed social and technological progress. While in the West they were the 'Asians of Europe', here they were 'western Orientals' of a supposed 'real Orient'.

CONCLUSION

ZAKLJUČAK

In this paper I tried to show the historic context of oriental style used widely for synagogues in the second half of the 19th century in continental Europe and North America on the example of the Tabak Tempel, the grand synagogue of Pest.

The issue of mid-19th century synagogue architecture is not merely academic. It also relates to the dilemmas, shortcomings of a post-colonial, globalized world, in attempts to reconcile universal Western and supposed oriental (Jewish and Arabic) modes, to patch up the 'centre' with the 'periphery'. Two distinct cultural identities, two contexts represented by the great synagogue can be found in colonial architecture too, creating another hybrid. In both cases there is an element of indigenous – Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, etc. – 'supported' by



the universal, i.e. Western modes. In stylistic terms it translates as a set of 'exotic' motifs embedded into a Western syntax and structural principles. The idea behind this is that these particularities are going to dissolve into a universal human paragon, which is as a matter of fact, defined by the more developed West. Thus, both in synagogue and colonial architecture there is a paternalism of the 'advanced people' over the indigenous or Jewish ones- both equated in the 19th century with the vague concept of 'orientalism'.

In architectural terms the 'oriental style' of the grand synagogue of Budapest and its sequel furnished a *tutti frutti* backdrop against which 'Gothic purity' and organicity or in other words Western/Christian superiority could be assessed and demonstrated. However, we know today, that the *tutti frutti* was more a projection, a Western construct than reality. The *tutti frutti* got into the heart of the 'centre'. The supposedly organic and pure West, whose modes by the 19th century became impure, lost its *raison d'être* as the 'order maker'. A further century was needed until the 'centre' – pre-eminently the French philosophy – realised in structuralist and post-structuralist thought, - started losing its superiority to the periphery. Today we use the term *globalisation* through which the cultural supremacy of the 'centre' dissolves itself: centripetal and centrifugal forces form the contemporary world. The 19th century synagogues seem to have anticipated this in cultural and architectural terms.



FIG. 17 THE SPIRAL STAIRS IN THE TOWERS THESE STAIRCASES SERVE AUXILIARY SPACES: OFFICES, THE ARCHIVES, ETC. SEVEN STAIRCASES CONNECT THE SIX GALLERIES OF THE SYNAGOGUE: THE ONE SEEN ABOVE, TWO SETS OF SPIRAL STAIRS IN THE TOWERS, AND TWO PAIRS OF STAIRCASES AT THE ENDS OF THE SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN GALLERIES. THE SYNAGOGUE BUILDING COMMITTEE WAS ALREADY OBJECTING TO THE BUILDING'S COMPLICATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, BUT THE PRESIDENT OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY PROBABLY DID NOT WANT TO SOUR HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS STAR ARCHITECT BY REQUESTING A CHANGE AT THE VERY BEGINNING.

SL. 17. SPIRALNE STUBE U TORNJEVIMA TA STUBIŠTA POVEZUJU UREDSKE PROSTORE ARHIVA I MUZEJA. SEDAM STUBIŠTA POVEZUJE ŠEST GALERIJA SINAGOGE: JEDNA KOJA SE VIDI NA SLICI, PO DVIJE U TORNJEVIMA I DVA PARA STUBIŠTA NA ISTOČNIM I ZAPADNIM KRAJEVIMA SPOREDNIH BRODOVA. SAVJET ZA IZGRADNJU PREDBAČIO JE ARHITEKTU TAJ KOMPLICIRANI SUSTAV KOMUNIKACIJA, ALI PREDSDJEDNIK ŽIDOVSKE OPĆINE NIJE HTIO POKVARITI ODNOS S ARHITEKTONSKOM ZVIJEZDOM TRAJEĆI PROMJENE NA SAMOM POČETKU GRADNJE.

FIG. 18 SPIRE TOPPED BY A CROWN
SL. 18. LUKOVICAŠTA KUPOLA S KRUNOM

³⁵ Architekt K. Moklowski has built the Jewish Hospital in 1898-1901, today Rappoport Street 8. In: ***2007: 249

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IZVORI

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- KM – T.14. Tervek a Kereskedelmi Minisztérium anyagából, 2. téka, folio 148
- TUB – Plansammlung der TU Berlin, MK 16-015 und MK 16-016. Motto: "Nehmt's nicht übel!"

ILLUSTRATION SOURCES

IZVORI ILUSTRACIJA

- FIG. 1, 7-9, 12-18 Photos: author, 2008
- FIG. 2 HJMA, documents of construction
- FIG. 3A ZÁDOR, 1981: Fig. 72
- FIG. 3B TKM
- FIG. 3C *** 1860:48-49
- FIG. 4 <http://www.bild.de/BILD/muenchen/serien/unsere-stadt/frauenkirche/-fakten-und-service.html>
- FIG. 5 TUB
- FIG. 6 FSZEK
- FIG. 10 HJMA, documents of restoration
- FIG. 11 Drawing: author, 2008

SUMMARY

SAŽETAK

LUDWIG FÖRSTEROV DOHÁNY-TEMPEL U PEŠTI
MAURSKA KATEDRALA ZA „AZIJATE EUROPE“

U članku se analizira nastanak istočnjackog, tzv. maurskog stila kao tipičnog jezika arhitekture sinagoga u 19. stoljeću na primjeru Försterova Tabak-Tempela, odnosno sinagoge u Dohány Utca (Duhanskoj ulici) u Pešti, danas Budimpešti. Uporaba ovoga stila objašnjavala se istočnjackim podrijetlom Židova, „Azijata Europe“, kako su ih u to doba obilježavali. Istočnjacki stil imao je dvostruku funkciju: da osigura identitet novom žanru, sinagogalnoj arhitekturi, ali i da je ujedno odvoji od kršćanske. Naime do vremena emancipacije sinagoge nisu imale neki osobit arhitektonski identitet; nalazile su se na zabavnim mjestima, često u dvorištima, bile su malog mjerila i nisu imale posebna stilska obilježja. U getu ili židovskoj četvrti nije bilo potrebe iskazati značenje sinagoge (i njezinih graditelja), kao kasnije u europskim gradovima, u doba brzoga razvoja u 19. stoljeću. (U predmoderno doba toga proturječja još i nema.)

Židovska zajednica u Pešti bila je jedna od najdinamičnijih u Europi pa nije čudno što je naumila izgraditi najveću sinagogu na svijetu. I danas je ona najveća u Europi, a treća na svijetu, poslije sinagoga Hekal Šlomo u Jeruzalemu i Emanu El u New Yorku, koje su neznatno veće od nje. Broj Židova u Pešti naglo je rastao od 1840-ih godina kada im se dopušta da se naseljavaju u predgrađu Erzsébetváros (Elisabeth-Stadt). Doseljednici su bili heterogenog sustava: neki su dolazili iz udaljenih krajeva Habsburškog imperija (Moravske ili Galicije), neki iz provincijskih gradova Mađarske Kraljevine, ali elita je stizala iz Staroga Budima (Altofen, Óbuda), gradica svega nekoliko kilometara uzvodno na Dunavu pod zaštitom plemićke obitelji Zichy, koji poslije 1871. postaje 3. kvart novoosnovanoga glavnoga grada Mađarske, Budimpešte. Žitelji toga naselja bili su urbani Židovi, dobro povezani s ekonomskim i političkim strukturama kraljevine, a i šire, što je očito iz bogatstva klasičističke sinagoge (1820.) i njezine ritualne opreme koja će se postupno prenositi u Tabak-Tempel 1860-ih godina.

Novi doseljednici iz sjevernih krajeva imperija, kao i Židovi iz provincije, bili su pretežito konzervativni i čvrsto su se držali tradicije, dok su oni iz Staroga Budima bili blizu visokom mađarskom društvu i imali potrebu da se potvrde među kršćanima. Asimilirana elita bila je u manjini, ali utjecajna. Ona

je odredila projektnu zadaću i povjerila je dvojici arhitekata – Josephu Hildu koji je već prije gradio za njih manje objekte i Fritzu Feßlu. Dok je Hild, kao arhitekt nadbiskupa iz Esztergoma, već bio etablirani protagonist klasicizma, Feßl je bio početnik koji se okrenuo romantizmu s mađarskim nacionalnim motivima. Obojica su poštovala programske uvjete: veliku srednju kupolu i monumentalan pristup sinagogi. Ipak će na proširenom sastanku savjeta za gradnju njihova rješenja biti odbačena, a projekt povjeren bečkom arhitektu Ludwigu Försteru, stvaraocu glasovitog bulevara Ringstraße u Beču, „tajnom savjetniku“ cara Franje Josipa I. i osnivaču najutjecajnijega arhitektonskog časopisa toga doba, „Allgemeine Bauzeitung“. Od 1840-ih godine Förster je već radio za židovske naručitelje. Nije se držao programske uvjeta: odbacio je veliku središnju kupolu zbog skučenosti prostora, a svoj je koncept utemeljio na dva uzora – Gospinoj crkvi (Frauenkirche) u Münchenu i projektu Alberta Rigela za idealnu sinagogu iz 1841. godine.

Pročelje s predvorjem i dva vitka tornja, velikom rozetom i lukovićastim kupolama prema Duhanskoj ulici (Dohány Utca) Förster je projektirao kao katedralu, ali u maurskom stilu. No ostala tri pročelja imaju obilježja stila okrugloga luka (Rundbogenstil), dok je interijer svojevrsna mješavina orijentalne građevine i velike industrijske hale. Ovo je posljednje i poruka ekonomski uspješnih Židova sredinom 19. stoljeća: podrijetlom su s Bliskog istoka, podržavaju industrijsku revoluciju i priklanjaju se modernizaciji u svim aspektima – djelomično sekularizaciji, univerzalnom modelu napretka, kozmopolitizmu i liberalizmu.

Svoje rješenje Förster opravdava kvaziznanstvenim argumentima o pretpostavljenoj karakterologiji Židova, koji odaju utjecaj povjesničara umjetnosti njemačkoga govornog područja. Čitajući novine može se zaključiti da su kritičari i dnevni novinari bili istoga mišljenja. Svi su suglasni u pohvalama novoga hrama u Pešti koji je tada najveće sakralno zdanje u gradu. No gotovo svi ističu inferiornost istočnjackog stila koji odgovara židovskom „izvjestacenoj načinu mišljenja“ (*erkünstelte Denkweise*) i sklonosti spekulativnim naukama (*Hinneigung zu den spekulativen Wissenschaften*), koje dijele s Arapima. Prema opcem mišljenju sve je to

daleko od organskoga koncepta gotike germanskih naroda i kršćanstva. Spomenuti pisci nisu shvacali da judaizam i islam iz religijskih razloga ne žele pretočiti ideju u formu, a ne da to nisu sposobni.

O drugorazrednosti tzv. maurskog stila svjedoči i njegova primjena za cirkuse ili zoološke vrtove. No taj stil nije samo posljedica (negativnih) kulturoloških i antropoloških razmatranja povezanih sa Židovima i Muslimanima. Maurski stil bio je uspješna strategija za odijevanja metalnih konstrukcija kako bi bile prihvatljivije za poimanje arhitekture 19. stoljeća. Istočnjacki stil javlja se i u kolonijalnoj arhitekturi, gdje se također preklapaju dva (kon)teksta: zapadni kao univerzalni i orijentalni kao lokalni. Ovaj posljednji rabi se samo kao citat koji izražava „simpatiju“ i paternalizam modernog čovjeka prema urođenim/egzotima. Židovi su objerucke prihvatili taj paternalizam i relativno nizak status svoga „arhitektonskog stila“ jer su tako mogli stupiti na veliku pozornicu stilova, odnosno društva 19. stoljeća. Za asimilirane Židove kršćanstvo više nije značilo otpadništvo od njihove drevne religije, nego prihvaćanje univerzalne religije razvijenoga Zapada. Za njih je kršćanstvo zajednički nazivnik svih razvijenih kultura, koji pospješuje opći napredak – to kršćanstvo zapravo i jest – pa je stoga dobro i za Židove. Tako se činjenicu što su se Židovi oko 1850. arhitekturom sinagoga prerusili u Arape moglo smatrati tek malom, prolaznom taktičkom epizodom u dalekosežnom projektu opće emancipacije, što se potom potvrdilo u povijesti 19. stoljeća.

Pitanje sinagogalne arhitekture 19. stoljeća nije samo akademsko. Ono anticipira probleme 20. i 21. stoljeća, odnosno tenziju između centra i periferije – projekcije Zapada na Istok, a poslije i dekonstrukciju tih pojmova. Devetnaesto stoljeće koristilo je istočnjacki stil (a ujedno i čitav Orijent) kao *tutti frutti*, svojevrsnu mješavinu, spram koje se jasno potvrđuje suverenost okcidentalne umjetnosti (i civilizacije). No u stvarnosti Zapad se pretvorio u *tutti frutti*, a periferija je ostala još neko vrijeme kompaktna, kako su to otkrili strukturalisti sredinom 20. stoljeća. Poststrukturalizam dovodi u pitanje valjanost pojma centra i periferije te nastaje opća zbrka koju zovemo globalizacijom kulture. Korijeni toga fenomena vode orijentalnim sinagogama, kao što je Tabak-Tempel u Pešti.

RUDOLF KLEIN

BIOGRAPHY

BIOGRAFIJA

RUDOLF KLEIN (1955), Architect, Dr. Eng. Dr. Phil., is professor of 19th and 20th century architectural history and theory. His special interest is the link between architecture and ideas, interaction of civilizations in the field of architecture and the arts. He is author of seven and co-author of three books. He has published over 40 reviewed papers. He teaches modern architectural history at Saint Steven University's Ybl Faculty of Architecture in Budapest, formerly at Tel Aviv University, School of Architecture.

Dr. sc. **RUDOLF KLEIN** (1955.), dipl.ing.arh., profesor je teorije i povijesti arhitekture 19. i 20. stoljeća. Posebno se bavi poveznicom arhitekture i ideja, međusobnog djelovanja civilizacija na polju arhitekture i umjetnosti. Autor je sedam, a suautor tri knjige. Objavio je više od 40 recenziranih radova. Predaje modernu povijest arhitekture na Saint Steven University's Ybl Faculty of Architecture u Budimpešti, a prije je predavao na Tel Aviv University, School of Architecture.

