THIS INCIDENCE OF 1900 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE IN THE CENTRE OF SALONTA CITY

MARIAN Daniela Georgeta

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ABSTRACT

Starting with the beginning of the 20th Century the - Secession architectural phenomenon was a means by which the Salonta’s community is present with representative buildings built in downtown [1]. As beneficiaries of financial power, the age’s sleeping partners appealed to those architects skilled in the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s architecture schools and who honoured the orders by making a synthesis of Art Nouveau architecture in the small provincial city of Salonta.

Keywords: community, sleeping partners, synthesis architecture

INTRODUCTION

The historical past of the small city of Salonta within the county of Bihor, testified at the beginning of 13th Century, is connected to the exit from Ottoman rule in 1692, when General Heisler reconquered the Oradea [2] city and neighbouring territory Salonta had developed in the vicinity of the Culiser city in a plain area suitable for agriculture, with rural characteristics.

By the time one shifted from German to the Hungarian administration, Salonta was one of seven small rural districts the Southern Bihor was split into, with a planimetry spontaneously formed by network of medieval streets and a zone defined as centre – a small square –, the Freedom Square of today. One could find once the following emblematic buildings: Truncated Tower built in 1636 [3], Reformed Church erected from 1750 to 1755 and the Reformed School built in 1847. Within the administrative centre of Salonta city there was the House of Fogany (located on the emplacement of the present city hall) and the Roman-Catholic religious education was operating in its proximity.

Demographic growth of population, cultural and religious events in the area strengthened the role of smaller settlements Bihor County. The new rule, namely the Habsburg Empire led to taking over by influence of the urban image in the existing structure of building fund of the city, just like

1 Ph.D. Lecturer Architect, University of Oradea, Faculty of Architecture and Constructions, e-mail: mdgmarian@yahoo.com, Romania
the other settlements throughout the empire. Thus, the interest shown by authorities to enhance the status of Salonta market town was demonstrated by the visit undertaken by Emperor Franz Josef, and his wife on 18\textsuperscript{th} of May 1857 [3], on his way to Oradea city.

At the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, within the delimited urban centre of the Salonta city since middle age, one highlighted both the towers’ morphological shapes of the churches (Reformed Church, Roman Catholic) and the particularities of the built in areas considered as landmarks (Truncated Tower, park of artizanal fountains).

\textbf{Fig. 1.} Truncated Tower – perspective [4]

\textbf{Fig. 2.} Artizanal fountains [6]
MATERIAL

In the late 19th Century Europe, the innovatory art style called the Art-Nouveau - the style of youth – arose: it decoupled itself from the historicism of the previous stage and manifested plenary in the fields of architecture and arts. This style known as Secession in the Central Europe – penetrated in Salonta after 1900, this penetration period extending to 1920; in the meantime, other art and architectural styles were gaining field throughout Europe.

If neighbouring towns, Oradea and Arad received a new volumetric and plastic planning, following the concepts of time - with reference to the "centre" as an area for social life coagulation, of identity value -, in the Salonta city the local community committed itself to promoting architectural phenomenon too while following the models of European capitals, Vienna and Budapest.

The architects trained in the spirit of 1900 style with the schools of Vienna, and Budapest namely: Komor Marcell, Hidi Z., Dvorak Ede, László Székely, Toásó Pál, but also the local craftsmen i.e. József Nagy who designed various buildings following by the architectural programme.

A change of towns centre image was operated in 1900, by partial replacement of the previous building fund and arrangement of street fronts, while leaving the original features of the settlement. The first urban planning arrangements started in the late 19th Century. Thus, in the second half of the 19th Century, the first public utility works were developed both on roads and railways, facilitating the movement of goods and persons.

These are as follows: road connecting the cities of Oradea and Arad (started in 1850); paving the Republic Street and its sidewalks (started in 1891 and completed in 1895); Railways’ Station Street (in 1897) and the central square (in 1898); the Oradea-Rijeza railway station was inaugurated in 1871, with its track passing through to cities of Szeged, in Békéscsaba, Gyula and Kőtegyán [5], there were also undertaken repair works to existing buildings – “Truncated Tower” called the “Donjon”.

This growth of economic, trade, finance and banking sectors was supported by the increasing number of craftsmen, officials and intellectuals living and working in Salonta.

Several new buildings were erected within the perimeter of the current Liberty Square. Influences of architectural nature are evidence in these buildings, which can be explained by the desire to join the concept of beauty which was manifested in the large neighbouring settlements. To this one added the new space-style formal unity of the new buildings and last but not least the atmosphere created by city-inhabitants relation.
At collective beneficiary (city council)’s order one built the City Hall as institutional body (designed by Salonta’s architect Lázslo Székely), after winning architecture contest launched in 1905. Dominated by the image of the corner, with three triangular attics, the whole volume of the City Hall consisting of ground level and one floor belong to the second phase of the 1900 Style, the Vienna type geometric phase, specific for the style of this creator, remaining the dominant built part of the Freedom Square of today.

Whether by means of City Hall along with the building erected in the earlier stages one made the emblematic building of the entire community, the presence of those buildings constructed in the following years all in the spirit of 1900 architecture i.e. Central Hotel (1910), Roth Armin's House (1910), Polyclinic (1911-1914) and Arany Palace (1912) [7] are paramount building for Jewish and Salonta’s community as evidence of their financial strength. This was due to the fact that they were overwhelming in the crafts and trade, then in education and culture, health, agriculture and small industries fields which have contributed to raising the status of the urban status of Salonta city.

These buildings are the creations of architects who used as formal sources of inspiration Vienna’s and Budapest’s Seccession architecture. With regard the urban planning approach, the perimeter of the square was already
set in 1900, of a rectangular delimitation and endowed with representative buildings of high architectural value. Thus:

- The East Wing is populated by: Armin Roth's house, the Orthodox Church, the Truncated Tower (the “Donjon”), Arany Palace;
- The North-west wing is occupied by the City Hall along with the Reformed Church building;
- The North-side hotel is occupied by Central Hotel and a series of buildings with commercial functions [8].

These building built in 1900 and located in the central area as well as many of those in Salonta outskirts provide us on one hand with the plastic image of this provincial burg, as a result of the taste for beauty of the whole Salonta community.
CONCLUSIONS
The ruling class and the various social strata of Salonta’s community have demonstrated by the fund built in since 1900, their membership to the European cultural values, as they get closer to European culture by borrowing architectural styles, - the Art Nouveau style mainly - while the image of city they have been living in has been a source of pride.

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