



HARIŠ CHAPEL IN ZEMUN IN THE LIGHTS OF INTERACTION AND INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE IN THE HABSBURG EMPIRE



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ABSTRACT

Theophil von Hansen was one of the most important and influential architects of the 19th century Viennese architecture. In our comparative study we will observe how this architect's deep understanding of the Antique heritage as well as medieval and classical inspiration opened space of a tremendous impact when it comes to transferring his teaching in Serbia. We will observe the Hariš Chapel in Zemun, Serbia a piece of Hansen's devoted student Svetozar Ivackovic to understand resonance and impact of the Historicist Viennese style in the second half of the 19th century in the field of funerary architecture.

KEYWORDS

Hansen, Hansenatics, Ivackovic, Historicism, Serbia, Hariš Chapel

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL – HISTORICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR RAISING THE HARIŠ CHAPEL IN ZEMUN

The chapel of St. Demetrius the Great Martyr, better known as the Hariš Chapel is an important 19th century cultural and memorial monument located at the Orthodox cemetery within the Zemun cemetery at Gardoš Hill (Dabižić, 2015: 12 – 16). Today, Zemun is a municipality of the City of Belgrade, but in the beginning it was a separate town on the river Danube (Detelić, 2007: 478). Due to its strategic location near the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, speaking in terms of the late modern period, Zemun was set in continued border conflicts between the Habsburg and the



The Hariš Chapel at the Zemun Cemetery

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Ottoman Empires. Since the 18th century, from 1717, Zemun fell to the rule of the Habsburgs and it stayed integrated into the Monarchy for the following two centuries (Škalamera, 1966: 5). Having in mind the problems Austrians faced in conquering Belgrade, Zemun became the most protruding imperial city facing the Ottomans. Furthermore, after signing the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739 which finally set the border between the two empires, the Military Frontier was organized and the town of Zemun was granted the rights of a military commune in 1749 (Najhold, 1993: 9).

All of the above affected the urban development of the city. The prominent geopolitical role made the city an important military and commercial seat wherein sanitary cordon, headquarters of the military command and customs were located (Škalamera, 1966: 8). Additionally, having gained such a crucial importance, Zemun experienced a period of economic expansion and population growth. Therefore, it developed into a multiethnic, multi – confessional and multicultural space. Regardless of migrations, the Orthodox community (mostly Serbs, and few Greeks and Aromanians) has almost continuously represented the majority of Zemun's population while the rest were Catholics (mostly Germans), Protestants and Jewish (Ibid: 9 – 18). Zemun remained one of the most important seats of Serbs within the Habsburg Empire (Najhold, 1993: 18 – 25). In such a complex ethnic and confessional society, the act of raising religious buildings and cemeteries held a profound role of self manifestation and affirmation. On the other hand, although the court in Vienna advocated promotion of religious tolerance, the Magistrate carefully monitored and took care of the „proper“ distribution of permits for raising religious edifices. This specific close scrutiny of the state authorities in particularly with reference to the construction activities of church buildings caused the prevalence of single – nave churches with one or two western towers shaped in classicistic architecture (Jovanović, 1987: 15, 46). Thus, in the 18th and the first half of the 19th century, the Serbian Orthodox churches didn't differ from churches of other confessions relating to their architecture, keeping them integrated into the greater community of the Habsburg Empire.

An important change occurred in the middle of the 19th century. Zemun had a key role during the Serbian Revolution and 1848 – 49 Serbian revolts in Vojvodina (Gavrilović, 1981: 15 – 22, 45 – 54). The outcome of the revolutions in the southern parts of the Habsburg Empire was the abolishment of feudalism, creation of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy, cancellation of the Military Frontier and the Magistrate as well, and Zemun was also granted a free royal city status in 1871 (Škalamera, 1966: 22). Additionally, after signing the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement in 1868, many Hungarians and Croatians inhabited Zemun so the society became even more complex and multilayered (Milovanović, 2017: 186 – 188).

Therefore, the overall climate conditioned a rising national awareness and brought a shift in style toward Romanticism and a specific reviving of the past (Kadijević, 1997: 11 – 14;

Jovanović, 1987: 67 – 81). The reawakened identity, both religious and national, needed to be confirmed through architecture as well. However, the process of visual (re)affirming of the national identity faced a dichotomy. The self difference within a community needed to be visualized in an authentic architectural style, but at the same time there was a persistent attempt to be acknowledged as a member of the modern European family. Ethnic uniqueness sought its contextualization within the national modernity. Artists and architects played a key role in this course. Thus, according to the current ideas of the Historicist movement in Europe, Serbian artists started searching for their distinctive national traits in medieval experiences and that was imposed in particular within religious architecture (Makuljević, 2007: 219 – 224).

Serbian inhabitants in Zemun looked closely at the events in the neighboring Belgrade wherein newly established Ministry of Construction enacted a decree by which Serbian Orthodox churches had to be built in Byzantine – like style (Ibid: 220). However, this process faced many technical, objective and ideological difficulties and it developed rather gradually (Kadijević, 1997: 11 – 14). Researches needed to be conducted, architects needed to be trained, formulation of the desired style needed to be precisely put together. A serious influx of understanding what should be regarded as Byzantine architecture came through the filter of European Historicism, from teachings of Viennese intellectuals. This orientation was additionally supported by the state as the Serbian king Milan Obrenović (1868 – 1889) acted under Austrian influence. Many talented Serbian students were sent for their education and training in Vienna. The most prolific and the most influential state architects of the Kingdom of Serbia who were appointed during the last quarter of the 19th century at the Department of Architecture of the Ministry of Construction were students of Professor Theophil Hansen: Svetozar Ivačković, Jovan Ilkić, Dušan Živanović and Vladimir Nikolić. Due to their special praise and implementation of Hansen's teachings and stands, the entire opus of his Serbian students is named Hanzenatika (Hansenatic style) (Jovanović, 1985: 235 – 236). All of them were born in what is today Vojvodina, at the territory of Habsburg Empire. The invention of neo – Byzantine style in architecture of Professor Hansen as well as his broad eclectic approach that enabled creation of a suitable “national” style certainly attracted these students from multi confessional and multinational outskirts of the empire. Byzantium tradition was regarded as a keeper of Orthodoxy and imperial past, and that is why the neo – Byzantine style was so appealing for Serbian architects and important factor of their quest for national identity in architecture at the time.

SVETOZAR IVAČKOVIĆ – THE MOST INFLUENTIAL DISSEMINATOR OF HANSEN'S IDEAS

With around 40 church projects he designed, and influential positions he held within the Ministry of Construction, wherein he had prospered to the position of the head of the Department of Architecture, Svetozar Ivačković was without a doubt the dominant architect in the field of religious architecture in Serbia of the last quarter of the 19th century (Nikić, 1978: 273 – 283; Maskareli, 2003: 416 – 419). Svetozar Ivačković (1844 – 1924) (Nestorović, 1937: 78) was the first Serbian student who studied under Professor Hansen just a year after he had initiated a course named Byzantine Architecture at the Vienna Academy. Ivačković entered the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 1869 (Nestorović, 1937: 78) when this imperial city experienced ongoing transformations and experiments with styles from the past and their modern reinterpretation (Šorske, 1998: 24 – 43). His talent was recognized in the early stages of his studies. It was already in 1870 when Ivačković received a prize for his design of a library and in the following year he was rewarded for his design of „a Serbian church in Byzantine style“ (Stanić, 2010: 138 – 139). The latter prize encompassed a study tour in Italy with Professor Hansen. This was certainly a great opportunity for the young Serbian architect to be familiarized with his professor's ideas, and also a unique chance to get an immediate and direct insight into classic resources (Kadijević, 1997: 38). He graduated in July 1874 with excellent grades and official recognition for his work (Nestorović, 1937: 78). It was in April 1874 (Škalamera, 1969: 200), hence prior to Ivačković graduation, when he finished a plan for a family chapel of Grigorije Hariš, a notable trader in Zemun and Novi Sad (Najhold, 1993: 73).

Corresponding to the increased level of individualization and self – identification within the 19th century European society (Thomas, 1980: 20 – 22), privately commissioned family funerary chapels and mausoleums at the territory of the Austro – Hungarian Monarchy, represented important features of remembrance culture peaking in popularity in the second half of the century after revolutionary events in 1848 (Damjanović, 2016: 35, 38 – 41). The enduring custom of burying the deceased as close as possible to the cemetery church that was grounded in medieval practice (Dabižić, 2015: 11) was now shifted toward growing popularity of raising the monumental family funerary chapels. What was once in recent past an exclusive privilege of rulers and nobility of the highest rank, now became a desirable priority of wealthy patrons coming from both nobility and prosperous citizens. Besides their private (mourning and memorial) function, family chapels were commissioned as public visual references of the newly acquired status and aesthetic preferences of the middle class.

The widespread adoption of the domed form of the funerary family chapels in European funeral culture coincided with important discoveries of funerary monuments of both European and non – European civilizations (Damjanović, 2016: 38 – 39). Also with the dome being such a powerful and durable symbol ever since the Antique and Early Christian tradition (in particularly referring to its symbolic reference to the idea of Resurrection), it isn't coming as a surprise that the domed design dominated in the European architecture of the family mausoleums in the late 19th century (Ibid: 39).

At the time when Grigorije Hariš decided to fulfill his wife Marija's testamentary will to raise a family chapel, he lived in Budapest (Najhold, 1993: 73). Therefore, he was acquainted with significant contemporary ideas in the field of funerary architecture. It is unknown how he became in touch with Svetozar Ivačković, but it isn't hard to guess that as a member of a notable wealthy family (Dabižić, 2009: 80) he wanted to employ the best artists, and Ivačković was already a well known architect having won important architectural competitions, such as the funerary chapel and ossuary in Unterfrauenheid (1872), and the Church of the Transfiguration in Pančevo (1873) (Stanić, 2010: 139). It was probably due to the architect's engagement in construction of the church in Pančevo that he did not finish detailed plans, nor able to supervise the construction process of the Hariš Chapel, and so it was executed by Joseph Marx, a builder from Zemun (Anonim, 1881: 174).

FORMAL FEATURES AND SYMBOLIC CAPITAL OF THE HARIŠ CHAPEL

The construction of the Hariš Chapel dedicated to the family patron St. Demetrius the Great Martyr in Zemun started in 1874 and it lasted until 1876 (Dabižić, 2015: 11). With the above-mentioned political and social changes in Zemun, this funerary chapel inaugurated an influential model, Byzantine yet modernized, that would prove suitable and applicable for Serbian Orthodox churches both at the territory of Austria – Hungary and Kingdom of Serbia. The Hariš Chapel demonstrates a series of references to the Hansen's solutions he had used on the similar type of objects such as the chapel in the park of the House of Invalids in Lviv (1855) and the cemetery chapel at the Matzleinsdorf Cemetery in Vienna (1857) (Jovanović, 1985: 245 – 246).

The Hariš Chapel is a cross-in-square church with a single dome rising at the crossing on a tall drum. Its cruciform floor plan is logically and effectively reflected in the elevation. This specific gradual cascading growth of roof masses develops into an attractive silhouette focusing at the dome and creating a visually prominent building. Ivačković paid special attention to this feature and even invented the term gamma – shaped churches for those whose corners in exterior and interior projected as if they were creating the shape of the Greek letter "γ" or the Cyrillic "Г". (Ivačković, 1893: 109)

The façades are simplified, decorated only with shallow horizontal grooves. Reducing the façade decorations to a minimum, the architect highlighted the structural aspects of the building, its blocky symmetry and solemn simplicity (Kadijević, 1997: 42). Echoing the Hansen's concept used at the chapel in Lviv, Ivačković emphasized the entrance façade with the flanking staircase ramps. Additionally its vertical contour is stressed with a bell – gable, a feature that Hansen used at the chapel at the Matzleinsdorf Cemetery. Since spikes, pointed arches and towers that Hansen frequently used when designing family chapels were associated with Gothic, thus western tradition, Ivačković omitted them here using exclusively round semicircular windows and distributing them functionally to contribute ritual needs in interior. Their symmetrical layout disciplined the rhythm of the façades creating well-balanced and harmonious impression. The church is crowned with a tall eight-sided drum so the dome receives the full attention of a viewer. This feature Hansen didn't use that often, but we find the polygonal drums in his designs for the Greek Orthodox Church in Fleischmarkt, Vienna (1858) and the Filišanu Chapel in Filasi.



The Hariš Chapel, view of the entrance

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Taking into account the function of the building and its liturgical requirements, as Hansen advocated, Ivačković here created a well-organized, rationally-unified and highly acoustic interior. Organic flow of masses expanding from the dome, drum and pendentives to the barrel vaults, blind calottes, and four massive round columns with simple cubic capitals adds to harmonious spatial distribution. This impression is further highlighted with alternation of dark and light revetments. The architect intentionally let the space breathing allowing good visibility and readability of iconostasis from various standing points within the church and creating vast spaces for visual images within the interior. The central dome holds an image of the Eye of Providence in the technique of fresco-



View of the Interior of the Hariš Chapel

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secco. The eye is enclosed within a triangle representing the Holy Trinity, surrounded by rays of light and angels. Four blind calottes are decorated with individual images of the four Evangelists and their associated symbol. The semi-calotte of the apse has a much damaged image of the Pentecost. These monumental images, as well as all other images in the interior of the Hariš Chapel, are works of Pavle Simić (Šelmić, 2013: 131 – 218), a notable painter from Novi Sad and one of the most significant representatives of the Nazarene painting which he had adopted during his studies at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts.

The founder's inscription plaque is located on the west wall of naos, on the right side from the entrance. This pink stone plaque testifies that the chapel of St. Demetrius the Great Martir is raised to honor the Petrović family (father of Hariš's wife Marija was Dimitrije Petrović owing to whom Grigorije prospered), but also to be a place of worship for the faithful (Dabižić, 2015: 43). On the left side, there is a stone plaque containing the names of the members of families Petrović and Hariš buried in the crypt. The Episcopal and Virgin's thrones are decorated with Pavle Simić's icons of St. Gregory the Theologian and St. Demetrius, the patron saints of Grigorije Hariš and Dimitrije Petrović. Iconostasis made by Jovan Kistner, a woodcarver and Samuel Kolmajer, a goldsmith, encompasses 17 Simić's pictures made in technique oil on canvas glued to board (Ibid: 60 – 63).

The family crypt is located beneath the sacred space occupying the same area as the ground floor. The floor is covered with mosaic decorations. There are two semicircular images in fresco secco above the central burial places. Due to the high humidity that was present over the long period of time they are extremely damaged. Considering some remnants, we can conclude that on the north wall there is a scene of the Lamentation of Christ. On the opposite wall is probably depicted Noli me tangere. Such vis-à-vis positioned images in the crypt offered thematic and symbolic links with this architectural setting for private mourning and provided a relief to the suffering via the idea resurrection. Next to the chapel, a house for the priest was built. The overall cost for raising the Hariš Chapel was around 36.000 forints (Najhold, 1993: 73) which was a considerable amount of money for that type of object (Damjanović, 2006: 168). The use of luxury materials in the interior, undoubtedly contributed to the high expenses.

Besides the memorial function, the chapel of St. Demetrius the Great Martyr was turned into a public church and important topos of Serbian community. There is a visitor's book preserved from 1875 (Najhold, 1993: 73) witnessing on visits of many renowned Serbs, members of the intellectual elite and ardent advocates for the Serbian national cause such as: Ilarion Ruvarac, a historian and archimandrite of Grgeteg monastery, Jovan Subotić, a lawyer, playwright and member of the Serbian Learned Society, then Milorad Popović Šapčanin, a dramatist, educational reformer and also member of the Serbian Learned Society, Steva Todorović, a notable painter and Petar Ubavkić, a sculptor who created many public Serbian monuments at the time. Those visitations continued in

the following years, and soon the entire area around the Hariš Chapel and the priest's house was encircled with a decorative iron fence and arranged with grass planted areas intersected with brick paved paths. There is a record witnessing that the Hariš Chapel was a popular venue for a field trips or just a walk (Dabižić, 2015: 21).

The position of the church was carefully chosen and its pedestal purposefully elevated so it showed up clearly in panoramic view of Zemun. By mapping the area of historically important and culturally multi-layered Gardoš Hill (next to remnants of the medieval fortress) with such a representative and dominant church that stood out among uniformly modeled churches of other confessions, the Hariš Chapel also implied the intact power and prosperity of the Orthodox community in Zemun. This obvious affirmation of national and political identity in the area that Hungarians considered as their-first class political landscape didn't stay unnoticed. In this regard, when about two decades later, Kálmán Thaly, a Hungarian poet and politician, visited Belgrade Fortress to check the Millennium Tower in Zemun, he wrote down an important remark that the Orthodox building in Zemun strikingly dominated the skyline and the entire area, and so he immediately ordered the architect to change the design of the millennium memorial in order to overcome the Hariš mausoleum (Milovanović, 2017: 204).

The Hariš Chapel was badly damaged in September 1914, during the WWI. Later, in 1931 (Najhold, 1993: 73 – 74) it was renovated and consecrated, and since then was used as the funerary chapel of the Zemun cemetery. The funerary chapel of the Hariš family is of wider European significance in the context of its artistic accomplishment. For its extraordinary cultural, artistic and historical values it was declared in 1993 as a cultural monument of the Republic of Serbia. Since 2017 the chapel has undergone detailed renovation.

INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

The Hariš chapel prove that the historicist Rundbogen style, or to be more precise its idealized version of the neo-Byzantine style, left a significant mark on the sepulchral architecture at the territory of the Habsburg Empire. Orthodox communities didn't have their own national architectural language that they could have applied when constructing churches or chapels. The 19th century marked a great awakening and quest for national styles. The neo-Byzantine style, as defined by Theophil von Hansen, was widely accepted and easily adapted to the functional demands of the time and identity of different communities for which they were built. Interestingly enough, Professor Hansen never considered this to be a genuine national style. For him, choosing a style was a matter of function, so the style chosen for each building was the one that was held to best express its purpose. And yet this eclectic supra-national vocabulary was recognized as an

appropriate architectural appearance used to express a distinctive local style for so many different nations across the Central Europe, with slight changes as shown on our example, the Hariš Chapels. The Hariš chapel is a product of a characteristic cultural climate of the second half of the 19th century. Being an impressive reminder of the local elite families, this mausoleum demonstrate how it had a capacity to be turned into important ideology topos showcasing its carefully chosen position vital for the local community. It was a powerful emblem, visually compliant, yet distinctive in its immediate surroundings. The applied visual uniformity and diversity demonstrate how architecture took an active part in shaping national identities, and how Orthodox community recognized a (re)invented Byzantine tradition as key strategy in this process.

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IMAGE SOURCES

Fig. 1 – The Hariš Chapel at the Zemun Cemetery, photo from the private collection of the author

Fig. 2 – The Hariš Chapel, view of the entrance, photo from the private collection of the author

Fig. 3 – The interior of the Hariš Chapel, photo from the private collection of the author

