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THE HIDDEN TREASURE

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Abstract

The paper describes the forgotten realization of the forgotten creator – Edgar Kováts, a Polish architect of Hungarian origin, operating at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries in Vienna, Zakopane and Lviv, the rector of the Lviv Polytechnic. The neo-baroque church in Mystków was the subject of research and inventory using a laser scanning as well as design work carried out by the author of this paper.

Keywords: sacred architecture, neo-baroque architecture, laser scanning

Streszczenie

Artykuł opisuje zapomnianą realizację zapomnianego twórcy – Edgara Kovátsa, polskiego architekta węgierskiego pochodzenia, działającego na przełomie XIX i XX wieku w Wiedniu, Zakopanem i we Lwowie, rektora Politechniki Lwowskiej. Neobarokowy Kościół w Mystkowie był przedmiotem badań i prac inwentaryzacyjnych przy pomocy skanowania laserowego, a także prac projektowych prowadzonych przez autora artykułu.

Słowa kluczowe: architektura sakralna, architektura neobarokowa, skanowanie laserowe

1. Introduction

Mystków is located 10 km to the south east of Nowy Sącz. A structure erected in accordance with a design by the architect Edgar KOVÁTS has survived in this small locality. The subject of this paper is a building survey of the facades of the historical parish church of the Apostles Phillip and Jacob the Younger in Mystków, documenting the extant state of the structure, with particular emphasis on elements of historical value.

2. The Main Theoretical Part

2.1. Historical outline

The history of the parish in Mystków dates as far back as the fourteenth century – it was established between 1320 and 1326, founded by king Wladyslaw the Elbow-high and his wife, queen Jadwiga [5]. The current parish church of the Apostles Saint Phillip and Jacob the Younger was built in the years 1905–1910, in accordance with a design by the architect and painter Edgar KOVÁTS [3, 6, 7], as a result of the efforts of its then-parish priest, father



Fig. 1. Parish church in Mystkow – aerial view, photo by Kamil Ogórek

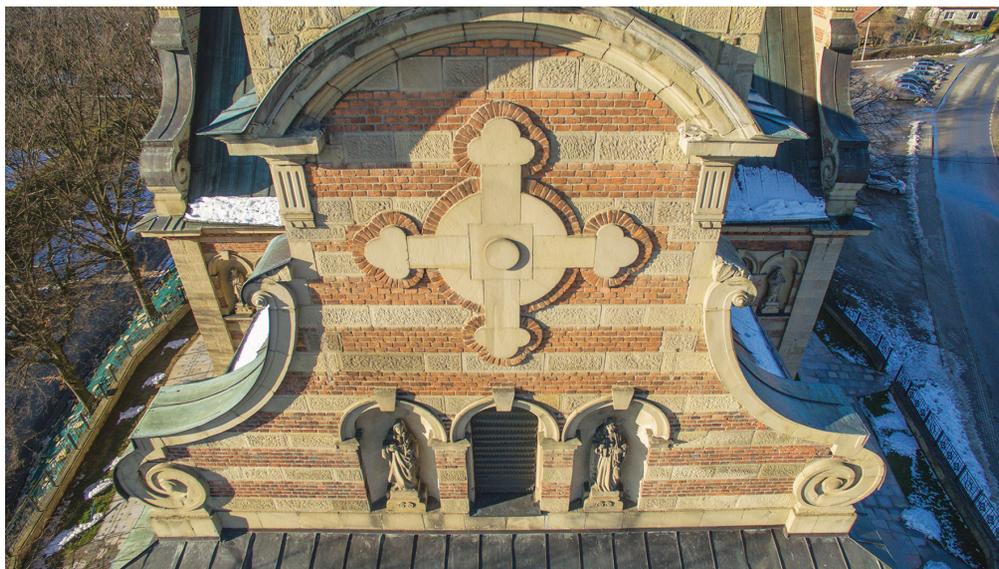


Fig. 2. Parish church in Mystków – façade details

Jan JARZEBIŃSKI. The design of the church was developed probably in 1902, which is supported by documents that have been preserved at the Diocese Archives in Tarnów (*Akta lokalne parafii Mystków 1881–1946*) [7].

In 1924 the church was consecrated by the Tarnów diocese bishop, Leon WAŁĘGA.

The building became a site listed in the voivodship historical sites registry under the number A-81, by decision of the 15th of November 1988 (NSz) [8].

2.2. Description of the building

The parish church in Mystków is a freestanding building, situated atop a hill in the centre of the locality, near powiat road no. 1573 K, which runs between Nowy Sącz and Cieniawa.

The church property is surrounded by a low, openwork fence. A procession path with a stony surface has been delineated around the temple. A line of around a dozen grand, long-lived deciduous trees has been planted along the fence – consisting of sycamore maples (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and largeleaf lindens (*Tilia platyphyllos*).

The single-nave temple has been built on a Latin cross-shaped plan, with a semicircularly enclosed presbytery. The lower parts of the building, housing a sacristy and a chapel, have been built adjacent to the sides of the presbytery. A square tower, which dominates the facade, has been placed at the front of the nave. The brick walls of the nave and the transept have a thickness of around 89 cm (3½ bricks), while the walls of the sacristy and the chapel – of around 51 cm (2 bricks).

The body of the church is covered by a steep, gabled roof, its roof surfaces having an incline of around 45 degrees. The roof truss is made out of timber and is open, with collar beams and struts in the shape of St. Andrew's cross. The tower is covered by an onion dome



Fig. 3. Parish church in Mystkow – façade details

topped with a spire. Above the intersection of the nave and the transept there is a ridge turret with a lantern. The roof and dome surfaces are covered with copper sheets placed on timber boards. The parapets around the outline of the facade, as well as the volutes of the gables and the transept, are also covered by copper sheets.

2.2.1. Facades

Locally available materials were used. Magura sandstone, grey and yellow in colour after weathering, was obtained from the currently inactive quarry on the slopes of Mount Rosochatka. The brick used in the construction – rough, formed by hand – was manufactured at the construction site, with the use of seasoned clay obtained from the parish's field.

Father Jarzebiński – the coordinator of the work – laid out the segregation of duties. Residents of the village of Cieniawa were assigned the task of performing excavations (removing the surfaces of the stone deposit) at a private stone quarry at Mount Rosochatka, cutting the stone into large, almost 70 cm thick blocks and delivering them to the pickup site. Afterwards, the residents of the village of Mszalnica, as the owners of sturdy carts and strong workhorses, were to transport them to a square in front of the church. The stone was delivered from Ptaszkowa, which was located at a distance of almost 9 km away. Due to the considerable distance and the small number of means of transport, only two courses per day could be made, and thus only two stone blocks could have been transported daily. Their sorting took place in front of the temple, as did the selection of their front face according to scale, hardness and colour, as well as their processing, all the way to giving the cut precisely set dimensions, concordant with its place of setting within the wall of the church. The residents of the village of Królówka Polska had the duty of transporting sand, which had been gathered at the edges of Królówka Creek, to the construction site. The residents of Mystków were assigned to produce bricks [1].

The facades of the church are decorated with belts of alternately laid coarse-textured stone elements and bricks, starting at the stone plinth. They have been crowned with a decorative stone and brick parapet along the perimeter. The corners were accentuated with smooth stone lesenes. Large arched windows were placed within the walls of the naves, in addition to semicircularly enclosed, horizontal window openings. Large semicircular openings filled with blinds were placed in the upper storey of the tower.

A somewhat similar colour diversification of the facade of a religious building was used by Jan Zawiejski in the parish church in Krynica, in this case making a reference to early Italian Renaissance. This distinct form of the shape of the surface appeared, however, much earlier in Berlin circles, including in designs by August Stüler. The temples that constitute comparative material for the church in Mystków – e.g. the design by Carl Haybäck for Brno of 1887, or the Viennese Kaasgrabenkirche of 1909 – appear as referring to more visually expressive Baroque forms.

The main entrance in the frontal facade (the eastern one) features a stone portal flanked with smooth pilasters, with a broken jerkinhead and a round window placed above. Windows in the facades of the transept (the north and south) also possess such decoration, in addition to the filled-in niche in the western facade.

The top of the facade and the arms of the transept are framed with volutes and crowned by segmental arches. The surfaces of the gables are filled in with axial compositions: three semicircularly crowned, blind openings – a window with a blind and shallow niches with statues symmetrically placed at either side, while above there is a stone and brick decoration in the shape of a Greek cross.

We can observe the qualities of E. KOVÁTS' individual style here, which he himself considered to be the "principles of modern architecture" [4] – a flat wall design, with the simultaneous accentuation of the decorative value of the line and contour, a "horizontality of classicism in lines", an expressive highlighting of the structure and material. The church building can be described as neo-baroque – the historical revival decoration of the facade constitutes a formal reference to Roman Baroque, including the use of semicircular windows, whilst in the design of the gables and the transept there are clear references to the eighteenth-century Baroque church of St. Anthony in Lviv [7]. KOVÁTS' many years of work on Baroque building restoration projects (including in Vienna) and a particular fondness for the art of the Baroque surely had an influence on the selection of forms from the repertoire of this historical style [6, 7].

The window openings located in the lower parts of the facade are protected by steel trellises composed of horizontal flats and vertical bars, which have ends decorated in the shape of lilies.

The door openings are filled in with massive timber doors with decorative panels, elaborate fittings and handles – double doors in the main entrance have additionally been decorated with a blind, semicircular fanlight.

Considering the over one-hundred-years-long period without considerable renovation work, the facades have been preserved in relatively good technical condition. There are a few spots in which mortar and stone elements are slightly damaged due to atmospheric factors (in accordance with annotations contained in the graphical part of the survey documentation and in the photographic documentation). Considerable areas of surface delamination have been observed on a portion of

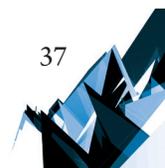




Fig. 4. Parish church in Mystkow – main entrance façade, photo by Kamil Ogórek

the plinth. In the brick parts of the walls there are also traces of punctures and hammering which occurred during the many years of occupancy – and which were later infilled with mortar. There are elements of contemporary illumination and sound installations on the facades (above the entrance to the sacristy and to the technical space underneath the chapel).

A gravel bed, enclosed with a concrete border, has been built along the facade in contemporary times.

Shaft stairs that run along the northern facade of the chapel have recently been covered with a styleless covering from polycarbonate, supported by a steel substructure. A gas connection box has been installed – in the colour yellow – in the outer wall which fulfilled the role of a protective barrier, in addition to that of the covering's foundation.

2.2.2. Interiors

The walls inside are divided by pilasters. Vault ceilings with lunettes span the presbytery, nave and transept. The architectural decoration was focused on the external facades, while the interior of the temple was treated relatively modestly by the author of the design. The interior furnishings and the polychromes that decorate the interior, both figurative and ornamental, are outside of the scope of this paper.

The windows of the temple are filled with stained glass, assembled according to a design by the painter and stained glass window artist Stefan W. MATEJKO, at the S.G. Żeleński Krakow Stained Glass Production Plant in 1907 [2].

The largest, figurative stained glass windows, are located in the presbytery – *St. John of Nepomuk*, *St. Kinga* and in the transept – *St. Stanisław Szczepanowski* (bishop) and *St. Kazimierz the prince from Poland*. In the lower part of the figurative stained glass windows, we can also read, apart from their title, the name of the artist, the name of the production plant and the date of assembly.

In the semicircular windows of the nave there are also stained glass works with hieroglyphs, placed in golden cartouches – *IHS*, *MARIA*, *IOZIF* (JOSEPH), *A and Ω*.

In the side windows of the arms of the transept, in the sacristy and in the chapel near the presbytery there are simple, geometric and floral stained glass works.

The remaining stained glass windows placed in round openings, also designed by S. MATEJKO, were probably assembled around the year 1927 [2]. Above the altar is *The Lord's Ascension*, in the facade - *St. Cecilia playing a portable organ*, in the upper window of the transept to the left – *the Heart of Mary*, and in the upper window of the transept to the right – *the Heart of Jesus* [2].

The stained glass windows are preserved in good condition, although in the lower parts of the figurative stained glass windows there is some damage to the stained glass. The stained glass windows in circular openings have recently been secured from the outside through sheets of acrylic glass mechanically fastened to the frames of the openings.

2.3. Surveying measurements

The author of this paper, at the request of the parish, carried out a number of design and survey works related to the planned restoration. The measurements of the building's facade were performed using the FARO Focus 3D Sensor laser scanner. Thanks to modern 3D laser scanning



W1 — Prezbiterium - witraż "św. Jan Nepomucen"
skala 1:20

Hp = 129 cm



W3 — Prezbiterium - witraż "św. Kinga"
skala 1:20

Hp = 130 cm

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Fig. 5. Parish church in Myszków – stained glass – survey drawings, by Filip Suchon

technology it was possible to precisely project the tectonics of the facade in detail, in addition to the building's complex architecture details – which are typically not accessible from ground level. A camera placed on a drone was used in order to collect photographic documentation in hard-to-reach places and from perspectives that were difficult to obtain under normal conditions. All this allowed to obtain not only very precise measurements and data, but also significantly accelerated the performance of these activities in the field. Most of the work on site was done in one day.

3. Conclusions

A significant part of the original construction was supervised on site by the parish priest, and the original design documentation has not been preserved [1, 7]. The more interesting and valuable it is, that with the help of modern technical means it was possible to make complete drawings documenting the said church building. This testimony efforts not only of eminent creators, who have gone into oblivion, but also of many anonymous residents involved in construction over a century ago.

Quickly and accurately performed inventory, measurements, and research becomes necessary in the process of designing and proceeding permits of heritage offices. Laser scanning is a documentation method that is more and more a standard in the conservation of monuments. Combined with photogrammetry it allows for not only accurate, but also impressive documentation.

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