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Historical and Architectural Development of the Old Hospital Complex in Topolčany

Historyczny i architektoniczny rozwój starego kompleksu szpitalnego w Topolčanach

Słowa kluczowe: historia urbanistyki, rozwój architektoniczno-historyczny, zespoły szpitalne XX i XIX w., Topolčany, Słowacja

Keywords: urban history, historical-architectural development, hospital complexes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Topolčany, Slovakia

Introduction

The area of the old hospital in Topolčany represents a unique historical and architectural complex with significant potential. Originally serving as a county hospital in the nineteenth century, this complex played an important role in the town of Topolčany, its inhabitants, and the surrounding area. Its foundation and development are closely linked to key figures who established and financed the hospital.

The complex is distinguished by its unique architecture, which blends historical elements with modern trends. The most striking example is the infectious diseases pavilion, one of the most important architectural works of the 1940s in Slovakia. The entire old hospital area forms a harmonious whole, with buildings interspersed with green spaces, creating a pleasant environment. The “old” hospital in Topolčany is part of a conservation zone, designated by the Regional Monuments Office in Nitra through a generally binding decree [Decree No. 7/2000]. The original hospital premises, known as the Augustine Hospital, is recognized as a national cultural monument. The cultural and historical value of this site lies in the comprehensive development of the old hospital complex, particularly during the 1940s when the fourth

construction phase culminated with the completion of the infectious diseases pavilion. The integration of the built environment with the natural surroundings forms an important core of the town’s historic identity [Gregor, 2008, p. 69].

Unfortunately, the area is currently in a state of neglect. Abandoned buildings, overgrown vegetation, and an overall sense of disrepair paint a bleak picture. This situation is not only an aesthetic concern but also poses a threat to the preservation of its cultural and historical significance.

It is urgent to save this site. It holds great potential for revitalization and could once again serve the community. Preserving it would benefit not only Topolčany but all of Slovakia, contributing to the nation’s cultural and natural heritage and preserving the uniqueness of this place.

The aim of our article is to focus on the historical and architectural development of the hospital complex, highlighting and emphasizing its monumental values.

Methods and sources

The focus of this study is shaped by the specific approaches and foundational field research, particu-

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Cytowanie / Citation: Tišliar P. Historical and Architectural Development of the Old Hospital Complex in Topolčany. *Wiadomości Konserwatorskie – Journal of Heritage Conservation* 2024, 80:

Otrzymano / Received: 9.09.2024 • **Zaakceptowano / Accepted:** 19.09.2024

doi: 10.48234/WK80HOSPITAL

Praca dopuszczona do druku po recenzjach

Article accepted for publishing after reviews

larly in-depth archival research. These approaches are grounded in the study of urban history, intersecting with social, cultural, and economic history, as well as monumentology [Storchová et al., 2014, p. 338]. In addition to archival documents, primarily housed in the state archives in Nitra and Topolčany [MVSR – The State Archives in Nitra, based in Ivanka pri Nitre (ŠA Nitra), f. Nitra county I., 1464–1922; f. Servant Office in Topolčany, 1851–1922; f. Topolčany estate in Tovarníky, (1347) 1589–1942; f. Nitra county II., 1923–1928; f. Nitra county III., 1940–1945; f. Regional National Committee in Nitra, 1949–1960; MVSR – The State Archive in Nitra, based in Topolčany, f. District National Committee in Topolčany (f. ONV Topolčany), 1945–1989; f. Notarial office in Topolčany, 1873–1945 (1957); f. Municipal National Committee in Topolčany, 1945–1990; f. Collection of chronicles and commemorative books, 1952–1999], which provide both contextual information and technical plans for building reconstructions, the research also relies on detailed cadastral maps that illustrate the site's gradual development [Archive of Geodesy and Cartography of the Slovak Republic (GKU), f. Original Cadastral Operat, Topolčany; Cadastral Department of the District Office in Topolčany (KoOÚ Topolčany), cadastral maps from 1913, 1960 and 1982; Tribeč Museum in Topolčany, collection of photographs.]. Contemporary photographs depicting selected parts of the site also contribute valuable insights. These sources collectively form the foundation of the heuristics used in this study.

Regarding the available literature, a key resource is a comprehensive publication resulting from a broader research project on the hospital campus [Gressnerová and Tarao Vošková, 2023], which we conducted between 2017 and 2019 in collaboration with a team of authors from several Slovak universities. The hospital campus in Topolčany was the central focus of this project, approached through selected interdisciplinary methods primarily aimed at the protection of cultural and natural heritage. In addition to this publication, several other books and articles should be noted, which focus on local and regional history [Hulová, 2010; Píry, 2016; Janto et al., 2023], as well as the history of the hospital and the preservation of its grounds [Brázdil, 1986; Gažiová, 2010; Tišliar et al., 2020].

On the one hand, there is historical research with its standard approaches to studying historical monuments [Tišliar et al., 2020]. On the other hand, there is high-quality monument research (architectural-historical, archaeological, restoration etc.), which is based on the in-situ analysis of historical architecture and significantly contributes to understanding the material source [Kvasnicová, 2011, p. 14; Paulíni, 2017, pp. 5–6]. Together, these approaches can uncover, explain, and interpret important historical contexts that help clarify the monument's values.

Historical contexts of the establishment and development of the hospital complex in Topolčany

The Topolčany region (Upper Nitra) was one of the most developed areas of Nitra County as early as the eighteenth century. By 1733, a county doctor had already been providing health care in the region. When the first county hospital opened in Nitra in 1834, it also served the inhabitants of Topolčany [Tišliar et al., 2020, p. 36]. Although this was the first county hospital, it was not the first medical facility in the area. In Topolčany, records from 1770 indicate the existence of a municipal hospital for the elderly and sick, privately founded by Count Žigmund Forgáč. About a century later, another private hospital was established by Alexander Stummer to serve the villages of Obdokovice, Oponice, and Tovarníky. This facility, with fifty beds, marked the first medical institution founded by the local noble Stummer family [Brázdil, 1986, pp. 22–27, 130].

Despite the existence of the aforementioned small hospitals in Topolčany and its surrounding areas, health-care in the region during the last third of the nineteenth century was inadequate [Bokesová-Uherová, 1989]. This situation prompted the construction of a new, larger hospital, which began in 1885 [Brázdil, 1986, p. 28]. August Wilhelm Stummer, the elder brother of Alexander Stummer, became the patron of this entire project.

Baron August Wilhelm Stummer (1827–1909) lived in nearby Tovarníky and was one of the wealthiest landowners in the Topolčany district. The hospital was constructed remarkably quickly, taking just about a year, and was officially inaugurated on January 2, 1886. After its completion, Baron Stummer donated the hospital to Nitra County, thereby giving it a public character. The hospital's subsequent financing primarily came from the county's budget, though Baron Stummer continued to contribute to its operation and maintenance in the years that followed. Initially, the hospital functioned as a branch of the Nitra hospital, but it gained independence in 1887. The nuns of the Order of St. Vincent from Graz served at the hospital [Brázdil, 1986, pp. 28–32].

While Baron Stummer was undoubtedly motivated by a desire to contribute to the region's development, his decision to fund the hospital's construction was also driven by personal interests. Lacking a male heir, he sought to secure the baronial title he had recently acquired by passing it on to his two daughters. To achieve this, he needed to support a significant project that would benefit the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Ultimately, the monarch approved the adoption of Baron Stummer's sons-in-law and confirmed the baronial title for his lineage [Píry, 2016, pp. 19–20].

The new hospital complex comprised several of buildings constructed in a historical revival style, with predominant elements of Classical Revival. According to the cadastral register of 1895, Nitra County had already become the owner of the hospital complex, which at that time consisted of four buildings and a



Fig. 1. Detail from the Orientation Map of the Hospital Complex in Topolčany. Author: Ing. arch. Peter Mészáros. In: Gressnerová, Laura – Terao Vošková, Katarína (eds.). *Príbeh starej nemocnice v Topolčanoch: Interdisciplinárny prístup k ochrane kultúrneho a prírodného dedičstva*. Bratislava: Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave, Spektrum STU, 2023, pp. 31–32.

Description of buildings: 1. Chapel, 2. Main Building (Main Pavilion), 3. Administrative Building, 4. Utility Building, 5. Dermatology Pavilion, 6. Infectious Diseases Pavilion, 7. Laboratories and Boiler Room, 8. Storage, 9. Gatehouse, 10. Original Morgue, 11. Garage, 13. Transformer Station, 14. Well, 15. Fountain, 16. Current Gatehouse (The main buildings 1–4 form the oldest part of the hospital complex, to which were gradually added buildings 5 and 6).

Ryc. 1. Fragment mapy orientacyjnej kompleksu szpitalnego w Topolčanach; autor: Peter Mészáros, [w:] Gressnerová Laura, Terao Vošková Katarína (eds.), *Príbeh starej nemocnice v Topolčanoch: Interdisciplinárny prístup k ochrane kultúrneho a prírodného dedičstva*, Bratislava: Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave, Spektrum STU, 2023, s. 31–32.

Opis obiektów: 1. kaplica, 2. budynek główny (pawilon główny), 3. budynek administracyjny, 4. budynek gospodarczy, 5. pawilon dermatologiczny, 6. pawilon chorób zakaźnych, 7. laboratoria i kotłownia, 8. magazyn, 9. budynek bramny, 10. oryginalna kostnica, 11. garaż, 13. stacja transformatorowa, 14. studnia, 15. fontanna, 16. obecny budynek bramny (główne budynki/obiekty 1–4 stanowią najstarszą część kompleksu szpitalnego, do którego stopniowo dobudowywano budynki/obiekty 5 i 6).

yard, covering a total area of 5,250 m² (Fig. 2) [GKU, cadastral survey of Topolčany, 1895]. The hospital chapel (Fig. 1, Building 1) emerged as the dominant feature and quickly became a symbol of the hospital. For some time it also functioned as a mortuary, but primarily as a spiritual place, important for religious, spiritual and social needs [Wierzbicka and Arno, 2022, pp. 63–64]. The main single-story building opposite the chapel (Fig. 1, Building 2) housed the surgical and internal wards, providing 70 beds. This building also contained accommodations for staff, including order nurses and a porter. The side buildings, originally single-story, were used for administration (Fig. 1, Building 3) and an auxiliary building (Fig. 1, Building 4), which housed storage spaces, a laboratory, and an autopsy

room [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Masaryk Provincial Hospital No. 53.]. These four buildings occupied a total area of 1,700 m². The initial architectural design prioritized optimal functionality, centering the complex around a courtyard to which the main entrances of the buildings were oriented.

The earliest depiction on the cadastral map from 1895 (Fig. 3) shows the area with four main buildings under the name “Augustus Hospital” (Hungarian: Ágoston közkórház), named after its patron. At that time, the hospital was situated on the outskirts of Topolčany, near the Chotina stream. Subsequent cadastral maps from 1905 [Tribeč Museum in Topolčany, collection of photographs], 1913, 1954 [GKU, cadastral survey of Topolčany], 1960, and 1982 [KoOÚ Topolčany] doc-

| Birtok- száma | | Székely | Dátum megne- vezése | Birtok- részlet száma | Ház száma | vezeték- és keresztneve | lakhelye |
|------------------|-----|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------|
| 7 | 634 | 171 | Ágoston | 171 | 171 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 635 | 172 | Ágoston | 172 | 172 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 636 | 173 | Ágoston | 173 | 173 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 637 | 174 | Ágoston | 174 | 174 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 638 | 175 | Ágoston | 175 | 175 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 639 | 176 | Ágoston | 176 | 176 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 640 | 177 | Ágoston | 177 | 177 | Ágoston | Ágoston |
| | 641 | 178 | Ágoston | 178 | 178 | Ágoston | Ágoston |

| Birtok- száma | | A részlet | | | | Jegyzet | | Éves adó |
|------------------|--|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----|---------|--|-------------|
| | | művelési ága | térfoglata | évi tízosa jó redelme | | | | |
| | | a felszárított | hold | el | frt | kr | | 1901 55 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1902 36 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1903 37 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1904 38 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1905 39 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1906 40 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1907 41 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1908 42 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1909 43 |
| | | szőlőföld | | | | | | 1910 44 |

Fig. 2. Cadastral survey of Topolčany from 1895, information about the original hospital complex; GKU.
Ryc. 2. Pomiar katastralny Topolčan z 1895, informacje o pierwotnym kompleksie szpitalnym; GKU.



Fig. 3. The earliest map depiction of the hospital area in Topolčany; cadastral map of Topolčany from 1895; GKU.
 Ryc. 3. Najwcześniejsza mapa przedstawiająca obszar szpitala w Topolčanach; mapa katastralna Topolčan z 1895; GKU.

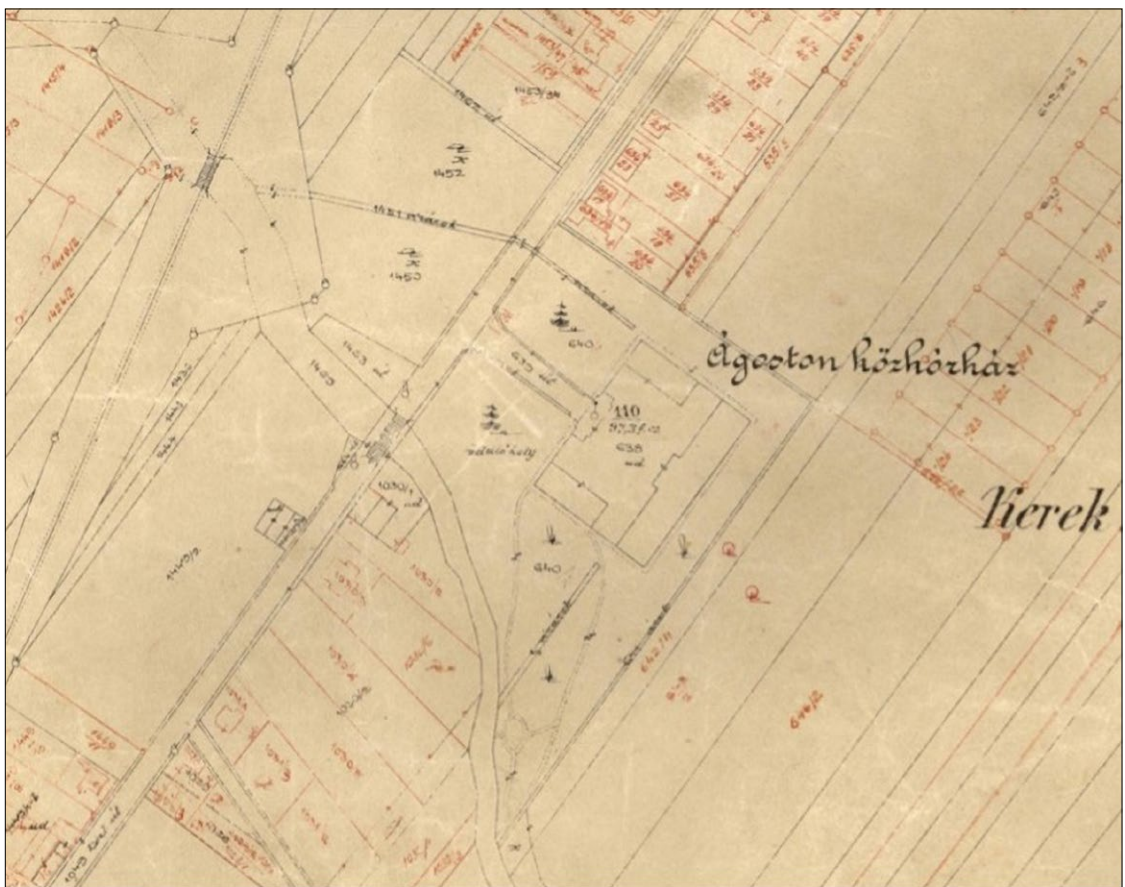


Fig. 4. The area of the "Augustus Hospital" in Topolčany. Cadastral map of Topolčany from 1913; KoOÚ Topolčany.
 Ryc. 4. Obszar „Szpitala Augusta” w Topolčanach. Mapa katastralna Topolčan z 1913; KoOÚ Topolčany.



Fig. 5. Main entrance to the hospital from 1937; Tríbeč Museum.
Ryc. 5. Główne wejście do szpitala z 1937; Muzeum Tríbeč.

ument the major changes in the hospital area, as well as modifications to its immediate surroundings. These changes reflect the continued development of the surrounding area, as the hospital gradually became an integral part of Topolčany's built-up area and its center on Stummerova Street.

Soon after the hospital opened, it became clear that the existing facilities were inadequate. Consequently, in 1899, construction began on new premises, including a kitchen and a woodshed (Fig. 1, Building 4). The water tank was also relocated to the attic of the main building (Fig. 1, Building 2). During this second phase of construction, a twenty-bed skin conditions pavilion (Fig. 1, Building 5) was added. This pavilion was a single-story structure that had originally been a pulmonary-infectious ward. With these improvements, the total number of beds increased to ninety-eight. It is likely that this phase of construction was financially supported by Baron Stummer and may have been completed after 1904 [Brázdil, 1986, p. 37; ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONV Topolčany. Construction of the state hospital, folder No. 1136.].

In 1922, further development of the premises continued with the renovation of the original gatehouse (Fig. 1, Building 9) [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Completion plan for the guardhouse of the district hospital in Topolčany. Nitra, December 3, 1922.]. Four years later, additional buildings were constructed, altered, or rebuilt, including outbuildings, a garden house, greenhouses, a laundry, an engine house,

a boiler house, as well as an autopsy room and a mortuary (Fig. 1, Buildings 8, 10, 11) [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Provincial Hospital in Topolčany, October 31, 1928. Inventory of buildings and their technical condition, No. 53]. Most of these were service buildings. It is also likely that smaller extensions were added between the main building (Fig. 1, Building 2) and the administrative and economic buildings (Fig. 1, Buildings 3 and 4) during this period.

The development of the hospital campus influenced the process of preparing the city's master plan. Although the city's leadership adopted initial principles as early as 1927, significant preparations did not begin until the 1930s [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Regulation of Topolčany 1933]. However, the adoption of the spatial plan was repeatedly delayed, and the draft of the Topolčany spatial plan by architect Artur Szalatnai-Slatinski was not completed until 1940 [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Szalatnai, Artur: Regulation plan of the municipality of Topolčany, 1940, additional materials, 1936–1941].

As the town expanded south and southeast, where the hospital complex was also located, it became necessary to address the regulation of the Nitra River and the Chotina Stream to prevent construction in their floodplains. From the beginning of the hospital's existence, groundwater and flooding from the Chotina Stream had caused ongoing problems, particularly with dampness in the basement and ground-floor areas, which the hospital administration had to manage continuously.

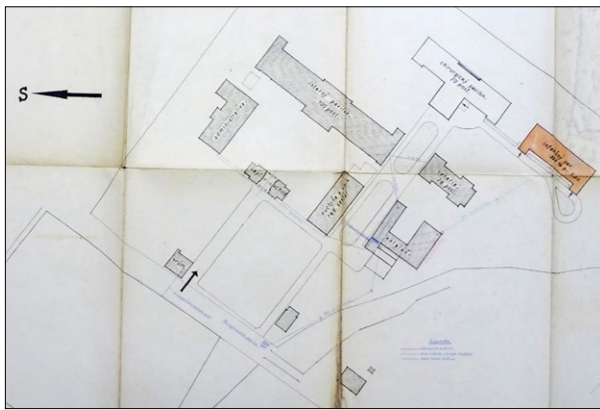


Fig. 6. Hospital campus with the under-construction infectious diseases pavilion (in orange) from 1941, which also includes a proposal for the location of the ultimately unbuilt surgical pavilion (ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany).

Ryc. 6. Kampus szpitalny z pawilonem zakaźnym w budowie (w kolorze pomarańczowym) z 1941, który zawiera również propozycję lokalizacji ostatecznie niezrealizowanego pawilonu chirurgicznego (ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany).

In 1936, the first floor was added to the administration building, and its extension (Fig. 1, Building 3) was constructed. This marked the beginning of the third construction phase, during which nearly all the main hospital buildings were modernized. The extension of the administration building included ten additional patient rooms, kitchens, and sanitary facilities, adhering to contemporary hygiene standards. The approval for the rebuilding emphasized: "It is strongly recommended that a well, cesspool, toilet, and manure pit be constructed according to the standard plans issued by the State Institute of Health in Prague" [*"Dôrazne sa doporučuje postavenie studne, žumpy, záchodu a hnojišťa dľa typových plánov, vydaných štát. zdravotným ústavom v Prahe"*, ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONÚ Topolčany. Order dated October 22, 1936. The reconstruction was carried out by the company Rahas in Malacky and the Topolčany builder Eugen Škopec.].

Modifications were also made to the main building (Fig. 1, Building 2), increasing bed capacity from 70 to 100, and to the chapel (Fig. 1, Building 1), which saw changes in both wings [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 72].

A significant milestone was the construction of the infectious diseases pavilion (Fig. 1, Building 6), which began in 1939 and continued through 1943 [Brázdil, 1986, p. 37; ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONV Topolčany. Construction of the state hospital, folder no. 1136]. Plans at the end of the 1930s also included the expansion of the complex with a new surgical pavilion, designed to accommodate up to seventy beds (Fig. 6). The construction of the infectious diseases pavilion, regarded as the most architecturally valuable building on the hospital campus, signified the start of the fourth construction phase [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 74]. This three-story block building, featuring a semi-closed basement and two end stair projections (buttresses), was constructed independently of the original urban plan, similar to the nearby skin conditions pavilion. In 1944, a fountain was installed in the courtyard (building 15).

During its first sixty years, the hospital underwent numerous changes, including significant expansion, modernization of facilities, and improvements in patient care. The original site consisted of several distinct zones: the entrance park between the gatehouse and the chapel, and the hospital area itself, defined by the chapel, the internal pavilion, and the administrative and kitchen buildings, which included accommodation for the order nurses (Fig. 1, Building 4).

A new area was developed towards the Chotina River, intended to be enclosed by a proposed but ultimately unrealized surgical pavilion. During the interwar period, there were substantial efforts to create parkland in the courtyard and around the hospital. The surviving design included symmetrical flower beds in the courtyard, extending from the chapel to the gatehouse, and behind the main building, taking into account the future skin conditions pavilion. Although this plan was not realized, subsequent efforts aimed to enhance the courtyard with a park featuring fixed walkways connecting the various building entrances and surrounding a central green area [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 72]. It is likely that the trees now prominent in the courtyard were also planted during this time.

Further modifications and changes to the site began after the Second World War, with the initiation of the final five construction phases. In early 1947, a plan was developed for the construction of up to eight new buildings: a gatehouse with a waiting room for visitors, housing for nurses and hospital staff, an outbuilding with a kitchen, a boiler house, a surgical, gynecological, and obstetric pavilion, and an internal medicine pavilion. Recognizing the financial and time demands of the entire project, the hospital proposed a phased approach to construction based on priority. As a result, the expansion of the hospital complex was implemented gradually [ŠA Nitra, b. Topolčany, f. ONV Topolčany. 26. 4. 1948. Construction of the state hospital, folder No. 1136.].

In 1954, the administrative section of the hospital was renovated, increasing bed capacity to 170. A transformer station was built (Fig. 1, Building 13), utility networks were modernized, and a laboratory with a new boiler room was completed (Fig. 1, Building 7). The laboratory was constructed on the site of the original boiler house and technical facilities.

In 1964, a proposal was made for a new hospital building, which was constructed between 1969 and 1977. This new building was situated outside the original hospital site, and after its opening, it provided new premises for the former gynecology and obstetrics ward. In 1970, a new staff lounge for 36 employees was also established. In the second half of the 1980s, efforts were made to begin the second phase of the new hospital complex [Brázdil, 1986, p. 50 et seq.].

Monumental values and restoration

The hospital complex is distinguished by its architectural value, characterized by the above-average quali-



Fig. 7. Chapel (building 1), photo by the author, 2017.
Ryc. 7. Kaplica (obiekt 1), zdjęcie autora, 2017.



Fig. 8. Main building (building 2) of the old complex, photo by the author, 2017.
Ryc. 8. Budynek główny (obiekt 2) starego kompleksu, zdjęcie autora, 2017.

ty of its historical revival style design, which features harmonious and balanced facades with prominent side projections. The authenticity of the site is exceptionally high. With the exception of the administrative pavilion, the urban structure and exterior of the buildings are almost entirely preserved. Some interventions, such as non-historic extensions and the replacement of window and door panes, have partially affected the authenticity. However, these changes are reversible and

can be restored to their original state. The compactness and urban structure of the complex represent a unique and significant value in Slovakia, unmatched in nineteenth-century medical buildings elsewhere [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 75]. Additionally, the hospital's foundation by Baron August Stummer adds considerable historical value, as it stands as one of the few surviving examples of his philanthropic activities, which had a profound impact on the economic, cul-



Fig. 9. Skin conditions pavilion (building 5), photo by the author, 2017.
Ryc. 9. Pawilon chorób skóry (obiekt 5), zdjęcie autora, 2017.

tural, and social developments in the Hornonitrian and Topoľčany region at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The highest monumental value of the hospital complex primarily lies in its urban concept, which is notable for both the arrangement and placement of individual buildings and their functional use. The group of buildings from the first construction phase, arranged around a central courtyard (Fig. 1, Buildings 1–4), created ideal conditions for the efficient operation of all hospital functions while fostering an intimate and cohesive environment [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 74]. The entrance to the premises, passing through the chapel, is unique in Slovakia. The chapel, with its distinctive passage and dome, dominates the entire space. Among the buildings from the first construction phase, their urban value is the most significant. The chapel, main building, and the two laterally opposite structures sensitively enclose the central courtyard with the fountain. The architectural value is marked not only by the balanced proportions and the overall positive impact of the exteriors but also by the craftsmanship evident in the architectural and decorative elements [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 82]. The economic and administrative buildings have undergone several later interventions and reconstructions. However, these changes have not diminished their urban value [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, pp. 86, 89]. The two central buildings—the skin conditions pavilion and the infectious diseases pavilion—were situated outside the original urban layout of the old hospital. The skin conditions pavilion has experienced several phases of alteration but has maintained its fundamental layout. The high quality of craftsmanship, particularly on its facades, has helped

preserve its authentic value. The Infectious Diseases Pavilion, designed in a functionalist style, is the most recent addition to the site, with its design prepared mainly in the late 1930s. Architect Josef Nowotný designed this single-wing, two-story building with a basement. The building remains almost entirely intact in its original state, with only a later addition of an elevator [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 97], which further enhances its value.

Despite the current state of the green spaces, the hospital site retains significant park and landscape values that could be greatly enhanced through proper maintenance and revitalization of vegetation [Gécová and Putrová, 2023, pp. 119–140]. The greenery around the approach to the chapel suggests a park-like character, with notable landscape features especially visible in the western part of the site near the Chotina Stream and in the areas between the old and new hospital buildings [Dzurňáková et al., 2023, p. 75]. The primary monumental value of the site lies in its urban concept. Therefore, any restoration efforts should take this unique feature into account and aim to preserve it. The hospital complex constitutes the core of the conservation zone: “Conservation Zone Topoľčany – Stummerova Street,” which includes the area of the “old” hospital and is protected by both territorial and building-level monument protections [Gažiová, 2010]. The goal of revitalization should be to restore the spatial unity of the complex while integrating new functions to maintain its cultural and historical value for the future [Botek and Polomová, 2023, p. 179; Ebejer et al., 2023, p. 43]. Except for the original main building (the pavilion), other structures have lost their original purpose and function and have been deteriorating for



Fig. 10. Infectious diseases pavilion (building 6), photo by the author, 2017.

Ryc. 10. Pawilon chorób zakaźnych (obiekt 6), zdjęcie autora, 2017.

some time. Therefore, it is essential to identify new uses for these buildings alongside their restoration. Suitable options could include repurposing them for regional needs [Botek and Polomová, 2023, p. 181], such as an elderly care home, social care facility, or rehabilitation center [Bašová and Kristiánová, 2023, p. 169; Kristiánová and Bašová, 2017, pp. 1079–1086]. Additionally, revitalizing the external park areas and immediate surroundings of the complex could further enhance its utility. The revitalization of the buildings

would particularly require structural and architectural restoration of five buildings due to their prolonged deterioration [Botek and Polomová, 2023, p. 194].

Conclusions

Unique in Slovak environment hospital complex in Topolčany was established in the last quarter of the nineteenth century through the private investment of Baron August W. Stummer. Following its swift construction, it took on a public role and became a vital medical facility for Upper Nitra and the Topolčany region. Initially comprising four buildings, the complex was later expanded through both partial rebuilding of the original structures and the addition of two significant pavilions—the skin conditions and infectious diseases pavilions. Overall, six buildings and their surrounding exterior, constructed during four main phases, define the architectural character of the hospital complex.

The most valuable heritage aspect of the site is its harmonious urban design, particularly from the first construction phase, and its high level of authenticity, which has remained largely intact despite subsequent modifications. Architecturally significant are not only the oldest buildings (the chapel and the main hospital building) but also the later additions, including the skin conditions pavilion and the notable functionalist infectious diseases pavilion. The park and exterior areas also hold considerable value.

The primary shortcoming is the deterioration of the monument over the years. It is hoped that a future functional use will be found for the complex, which would contribute to its overall revitalization.

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Abstract

This paper discusses the historical and architectural development of the unique Old Hospital complex in Topolčany, which was established in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and gradually developed until the 1940s. It defines the complex, its individual building stages, and presents them in the relevant historical context using archival materials, especially historical maps and cadastral documents, presenting the key figures who had contributed to the hospital's founding, construction and its maturation. The study also explores the monumental values of the urban and architectural design and layout of the complex and its buildings. Likewise, the territorial and building-specific protection and conservation measures for the campus are presented and discussed.

Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia historyczny i architektoniczny rozwój unikalnego kompleksu Starego Szpitala w Topolčanach, który powstał w ostatniej ćwierci XIX w. i stopniowo rozwijał się do lat 40. XX w. Tekst definiuje kompleks oraz poszczególnie etapy jego budowy i przedstawia je w odpowiednim kontekście historycznym, wykorzystując materiały archiwalne, zwłaszcza historyczne mapy i dokumenty katastralne, oraz prezentując kluczowe postaci, które przyczyniły się do powstania, budowy i osiągnięcia przez szpital jego ostatecznej formy. Artykuł analizuje również zabytkowe wartości projektu urbanistycznego i architektonicznego oraz układ kompleksu i jego budynków. Omówiono też środki ochrony i konserwacji kampusu, specyficzne dla danego obszaru i budynku.