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226-237 **DOMONKOS WETTSTEIN**

RESORT ARCHITECTURE IN REGIONAL PERCEPTIONS MULTIPLE ASPECTS
OF A REGION IN IVÁN KOTSIS' DESIGN METHOD FOR BALATON LAKESHORE

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FIG. 1 LIMNOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, TIHANY, 1926-27

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RESORT ARCHITECTURE IN REGIONAL PERCEPTIONS MULTIPLE ASPECTS OF A REGION IN IVÁN KOTSIS' DESIGN METHOD FOR BALATON LAKESHORE

INTERWAR PERIOD
KOTSIS, IVÁN
LAKE BALATON, HUNGARY
LANDSCAPE MODERNIZATION
REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE
RESORT DESIGN

The regional aspirations of resort architecture give specific perspectives on the history of regionalism. The development of the shores of Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Central Europe, was determined by this particular regional aspiration. Iván Kotsis was a defining figure of Hungarian architecture between the world wars, and had a significant impact on the period – not only with his work as an architect, but also as a university professor and a public activist. This paper examines his activity around Lake Balaton on different scales, since it represented a peculiar perspective within the history of regional ideas. The

research concludes that Kotsis' regional perspective focused on resort architecture was an independent conception separated from both modern and local interpretations. Based on his university work and the knowledge transfer resulting from his international relations, he developed an integrated perspective on the region from an academic position. Reflecting on the problems of holiday resorts, he formed an autonomous method with which he experimented, to mediate between the universal modern approach and the local features of the landscape.

INTRODUCTION: REGIONALISM IN A MULTI-SCALE PERSPECTIVE

The interpretation of “regional architecture” is one of the recent focuses of architectural theory (Canizaro, 2007; Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2012). In particular, the style pluralism of the interwar period highlights complex issues in historical perspectives (Meganck, Van Santvoort and De Maeyer, 2012). Within this, the regional aspirations of the resorts that emerged in the era of the double squeeze of intensive modernization and the protection of local traditions and values refer to an autonomous phenomenon. But what was the real goal of the resorts’ regional aspirations? Research often projects concepts of defensive perceptions of regional architecture on the phenomenon (Pavlidis, 1991: 305-321), however, it would be worthwhile to examine the issue in the dual context of modernization and local conditions – as a mediation tool between the “dialectical oppositions” (Canizaro, 2000, 21-23). Investigating Iván Kotsis’s (1889-1980) work in the Balaton region provides an opportunity to draw the special position of the regional architecture of resorts.

The paper examines regional activity in a multi-scale analysis model. This prism-like resolution provides an opportunity to look at the complex regional concept in different aspects, and to critically examine the specific features and internal contradictions of the idea system. In the scope of the analysis, the external global idea of modernity and the in-

ternal local vernacular aspirations provide starting points. What follows is the positional question of the regional mediating idea, emerging between the two points of view which provide the analysis’ focus.

The concept of regional architecture has a diverse interpretation in the history of Hungarian architecture, and this problem was already present between the two world wars (Ferkai, 1998: 275-303).¹

The shore of Lake Balaton with its leisure functions has always been a special region, which is also reflected in the architecture of the area (Wettstein, 2018: 18-21). As a university professor, Iván Kotsis (1889-1980) had a great impact not only on the formations of Hungarian architecture between the two world wars, but also on the regional architecture of Lake Balaton with his local attachment (Kotsis, 2010: 64-83). It is worth looking into the question: what do local and modern perspectives mean in the history of architecture of this region? How can the regional position of the university professor Iván Kotsis be defined in this period? The paper deals with the conceptual interpretation, using the method of historical analysis based on archive sources, and focuses on a historical reconstruction in a broader context.²

The legacy of Iván Kotsis does not only consist of drawings and buildings, but it also consists of his thoughts in publications, university notes and recollections, another important starting point of this research altogether.

¹ The question of the architectural perceptions of the Hungarian countryside was constantly present in the twentieth-century architectural history. Different interpretations have emerged in relation to modernization, landscape features and local architectural traditions.

² The legacy of Iván Kotsis is preserved in the Hungarian Museum of Architecture and Monument Protection Documentation Centre (MÉM MDK), also processed within the framework of this research. The research is based on the architectural processing of the interwar period (Pamer, 2001), the Balaton region (Wettstein, 2018), and the processing of the oeuvre of Iván Kotsis (Szontagh, 2003; Kotsis, 2010). His own memoirs were edited by Endre Prakfalvi.

³ Within Iván Kotsis’s family we found numerous architects. His father Lajos Kotsis (1854-1922) obtained his architectural qualification at the Technical University in Munich, and then at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. His brother, Endre Kotsis designed buildings with a similar approach, putting great emphasis on materials and structures. Iván Kotsis himself studied at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics between 1907 and 1911. Among his teachers, we found Alajos Hauszmann, Samu Pecz and Frigyes Schulek (Szontagh, 2003: 7-11; Kotsis, 2010: 13-25).

⁴ In 1911 he joined the Department of Historical Architecture of the Modern Age (In Hungarian: Újkori Építészet Tanszék) at Budapest University of Technology. During this period, design education took place in the history departments. As a teaching assistant he then made longer study trips to Italy, Germany and Austria (Szontagh, 2003: 12). Besides teaching, he also undertook independent design work and participated in several competitions. In 1918, after the First World War, he obtained his doctorate in engineering, and in 1920 he qualified as a private teacher

POSITION ANALYSIS: ACADEMIC APPROACH AND INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The regional conceptualization of local architecture in Hungary has developed primarily in academic workshops as an external perspective, and not in local regional communities and movements. Ivan Kotsis had a decisive role in this work, and had an autonomous position within Hungarian architecture between the two world wars.³ His integrative personality is perfectly demonstrated by the fact that he had an extensive personal network both domestically and internationally. In addition to his design work, he actively participated in public life as a university professor, taking positions in professional organizations and performing awareness-raising activities.⁴ He participated in the editing of the *Perspektíva* journal⁵, which was published to serve as a platform for alternative regional trends. In the editors' introductory article, they critically reviewed modern architecture and "the aesthetics of new objectivity turning into dogma" (Möller et al., 1935; Pamer, 2001: 109).

During his professional career as a teacher and as an architect, he was committed to the ideas of transition and continuity between historical and modern architecture (Fig. 1). In this endeavour, international relations had a great impact on his career. Therefore, it is worth examining the European effects of regional perceptions on Kotsis's thinking. At the beginning of his career (1918-1930), he designed in Neo-Baroque style; and then his work was influenced by the Italian Novocento

in Italian architecture. From 1922 he taught at the Department of Architectural Design (In Hungarian: Építettervezési Tanszék), where education in historical forms was gradually abandoned and the department started to open to modern trends. In 1945 he became a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Kotsis, 2010: 169-191). In 1949, he was retired and expelled from the university. From 1955 to 1966 he worked for the Public Building Design Office.

⁵ *Perspektíva* (Perspective) was published as an appendix to the journal *Vállalkozás-Építkezés* (Enterprise-Building) from 1935. The editor-in-chief was Károly Möller and his colleagues Károly Weichinger, Lajos Kozma, Iván Kotsis.

⁶ The influence of the Stuttgart School appeared in Hungarian architecture through Pál Virágh. Although Virágh had previously attended the 1929 CIAM Congress in Frankfurt and was a member of CIRPAC, he spent a year at the university with Schmitthenner in 1930-31, after having received the Humboldt Fellowship (Virágh, 1983: 6). Like Kotsis, Pál Virágh also took an active part in shaping the regional architecture of the shores of Lake Balaton. In his Balaton buildings, he mainly used natural building materials, like raw natural stones, bricks, tiles, wood and shingles. These motifs can be discovered in the Kanyó and Garsó houses in Balatonrendes and the Asbóth villa in Balatonakarattya (Pamer, 2001: 105-106).

⁷ They mutually recognized each other's work, and Bonatz taught Kotsis' work at university. The transformation of Hungarian architectural education (Karácsony and Vukoszávlyev, 2019: 42-53) was a significant task for Kotsis, for whom the practical approach of the Stuttgart School was an inspiring example.

in the early 1930s. Although he later opened up to the ideals of modernity, he was also influenced by contemporary alternative regional trends. He primarily followed the South-German Stuttgart School in developing his own regional set of instruments, attentive to local circumstances.⁶ The focus of his approach was on the problem of 'objectivity', which he reconciled with the interpretation of appropriateness. Among the outstanding personalities of the school, we can find Paul Bonatz and Paul Schmitthenner (Bonatz, 1950: 104-105).

Kotsis developed personal relationships and an intensive knowledge transfer with Schmitthenner and Bonatz, which had an impact not only on his career but also on his teaching methodology.⁷ The Hungarian professor wrote a review of South German architecture in his later years, highlighting its role in his own life path (Kotsis, 1974: 50-53). "Searching for the middle course" appears as a central concept that can also present a possible direction for modern architecture. He highlighted the "aesthetic discipline", which keeps both Romanticism and "technical stiffness without a soul" away (Kotsis, 1974: 53). All this meant a local referential set of instruments for the adaptation of modern functions.

Kotsis's professional role could be considered as that of a mediator, which is also true regarding his positions in institutions and his vision of architectural design. Throughout his career he was influenced by various trends, but he was not fully committed to any of them. In the beginning, his work was characterized by stylistic pluralism. Although Kotsis's approach aspired to create connections between historical forms and the refined functional spatial formation, his adaptive conception came into conflict several times, when he intended to establish the 'harmony' between the different architectural styles in an urban context (Kotsis, 2010, 127-135). In this perspective, his designing work on the freshly developed shores of Lake Balaton appeared as an especially free territory for architectural experiments. He could design his buildings without complex constraints, adapting them to the environment.

THE REGION AS A NEW SCALE: THE PROBLEM OF LANDSCAPE MODERNIZATION

The region as a conceptualization scale level appeared in close connection with the modernization problems between the two wars (Magyari and Kiss, 1939; Ferkai, 2011: 308-313; Wettstein, 2018: 34). In Kotsis's thinking, the unity of Lake Balaton did not yet mean regional planning, but a directive that appeared in an architectural scale and forms,



FIG. 2 NEW PLOTS ON THE SOUTHERN SHORE OF LAKE BALATON, 1920

and was developed at the regional level. For him, in the diversity of stylistic pluralism of the era, the regional character raised the question of new cohesion.

Resorts on the shore of Lake Balaton, which developed rapidly at the time, showed a very heterogeneous overall picture (Wettstein, 2017: 159). The phenomenon was closely related to the ambivalent modernization of the country. Hungarian architecture was characterized by pluralization from a political, ideological and artistic point of view between the world wars, especially after the years of the economic crisis (Ferkai, 1998: 275-303). In his publications, Kotsis dealt with style pluralism as a problem of modernization, primarily examining the issue presenting the shores of Lake Balaton as an example. The problem was only exacerbated by the fact that a significant portion of the buildings were built by unskilled masons and craftsmen who applied the trends of the era in a naive manner (Fig. 2; Wettstein, 2017: 140-145).

Due to his academic position, Kotsis examined style pluralism in a broader context and viewed the processes with criticism, although the effects of changing style trends can also be observed in his own previous work (Kotsis, 1931: 8-10). According to him, style pluralism stems from a diverse cultural organization of a complex society. In the free territory of Lake Balaton, these effects are intensified even more. At freshly parcelled resorts, different trends appeared next to each other; historicism, folk architecture and national aspirations coexisting in a confusing overall picture (Medgyaszay, 1931: 27-28; Toroczkai Wigand, 1927: 1-38).⁸ In parallel with conservative perceptions, modern architecture had an increasingly definite impact (Molnár, 1931: 297-298). Although Kotsis, as previously analysed, was reluctant to adopt the dogmatic way of modern architecture, he ap-

plied the technological and spatial results of modern architecture in a moderated tone. His intention was to harmonize the 'objectivity' of modern architecture with local conditions and thus establish a global-local connection (Kotsis, 1931, 8-10), even if his design was controversial when looking at his buildings. Besides regional adaptation, influences of Italian and German alternative trends were also outlined in his work, which point to the problem of interpreting local modernity. However, the concepts of modern architecture and modernization did not necessarily overlap in his case. He just slowly and gradually adopted the principles of modern architecture and was not a participant of the Hungarian group of CIAM, but in the meantime he was actively involved in modernizing the institutionalization of architecture at both the national and regional levels. These two levels of modernization scale are presented below.

At the national scale, modernization efforts were reflected in standardization. Movements were organized to increase architectural quality at both national and regional levels, in which Iván Kotsis participated actively. During the economic crisis, the art and public construction departments of the Association of Hungarian Engineers and Architects⁹ "launched a propaganda movement to boost construction activities", in which the education of building promoters was also an important point (Nyíri, 1932: 169). The movement had its greater influence on the building promoters by their series of exhibitions called "How to Build?", where they presented building materials and structures alongside plans, and provided professional advice. The exhibition, where Kotsis also reported on the problems of contemporary housing construction, featured billboards gained from the CIR-PAC exhibition, and several lectures on modern architecture, including by Farkas Molnár and Virgil Bierbauer (Bierbauer and Kende, 1932: 97-103). A special event was organized for the construction projects at Lake Balaton during the exhibitions, which also contributed to the spread of modern forms and new structures in the Lake Balaton area (Nemes, 1935: 69-77).

⁸ Historical architecture had representative monuments in the Lake Balaton region (Dundovic et al, 2012: 363).

⁹ In Hungarian: Magyar Mérnök- és Építész-Egylet. The organization was an important professional forum for Hungarian engineers and architects between the two wars, holding a number of conferences and promotional events.

¹⁰ In Hungarian: Balatoni Intéző Bizottság (BIB). The aim of the organization was to settle the cultural and architectural issues of the shores of Lake Balaton. The organization aimed at the unified development of the region, although its scope was limited to coastal settlements.

¹¹ Architecture was an important area of the Commission's work, as shown by the technical committee, which

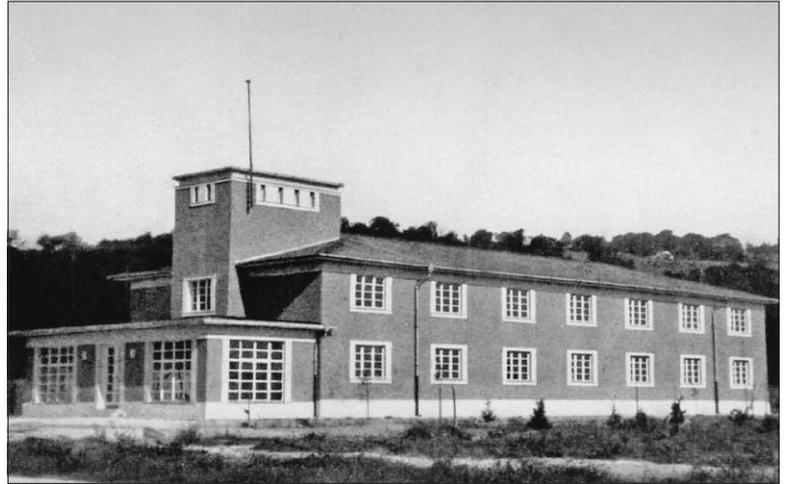


FIG. 3 BALATONBOGLÁR, CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1931-32

FIG. 4 TIHANY, STUDENT HOSTEL, 1931

At the regional scale the modernization of Balaton is also reflected in the establishment of the regional institutional system. The Balaton Management Committee¹⁰ was established in 1929 in the Balaton region with special administrative and cultural organizational powers (Wettstein, 2018: 22-23). Among its broad range of activities, constructions became a priority due to the heterogeneous view of the lakeshore (SML X.208; VeML XIV.28).¹¹ Iván Kotsis had a major role in the operation of the organization (Kotsis, 1931: 8-10). He promoted the principles of modern holiday home design in his publications, organized exhibitions and holiday home design contests, and participated in determining the authority powers of the regional organization.¹² Furthermore, we should emphasize Kotsis' active personal presence: he undertook face-to-face consultations and provided further training for local builders in his leisure time during the summer. Due to his pedagogical character, his aim was primarily to create a community framework for architecture, although in the meantime he also necessarily propagated his own vision of design. Instead of the vernacular cultural landscape, in line with the modern idea, he mostly sought the connection with natural landscape features. In this connection, the glob-

al-local tension inherent in the theory of regionalism is plasticized.

As we have seen, the regional scale in the context of modernization primarily appeared in institutionalization. The phenomenon was in parallel with international processes. During this period, the issue of regional management of landscape units also appeared at the 5th Congress of CIAM, especially with regard to the modernization of holiday landscapes (CIAM, 1938). This regional perspective did not focus on the protection of local traditions, but aimed at adapting new functional and technological results from the top down (Mumford, 2000: 104).

LOCAL CONDITIONS: THE INTERPRETATION QUESTION OF VERNACULAR PATTERNS

Contrary to the universality of modern architecture, the local attachment of architecture became one of the defining issues of the 1930s in Europe. In Hungary, more and more skilled architects discussed the architectural problems of the countryside since the mid-1930s. In contrast to modern architecture, the variety of vernacular architecture was presented, and the new kind of architecture focusing on landscape would have been based on regional traditions as 'regionalism' (Ferkai, 1998: 302). This approach was represented by Jenő Padányi Gulyás, Dezső Antal, László Miskolczy, Miklós Nászay and Kálmán Tóth. They founded the Friends of Hungarian House¹³ initiative in 1935 (Pamer, 2001: 189). The goal of the movement was to process the decaying vernacular architectural heritage of the regions (Tamáska, 2013: 49-52). Their first work was written on the vernacular architecture of the Balaton region in 1936, and then processed other regions in the country (Tóth, 1936: 2-3).

An alternative tendency tried to adapt the achievements of modernity to local condi-

also has an independent branch office in Siófok. Its president was Adolf Czákó, a professor at Technical University Budapest, his deputy chairman was Iván Kotsis and the head of the branch was Dezső Kaáli Nagy.

¹² Special building rules and regional control were developed at Lake Balaton for the first time in the countryside of Hungary. In 1937, Ferenc Harrer introduced the urban planning regulation, which was passed as Act VI in 1937 (Pamer, 2001: 202-210).

¹³ In Hungarian: A Magyar Ház Barátai. The aim of the group was to study the vernacular architecture of rural landscapes. The results of their research have been published in thematic publications since the mid-1930s.

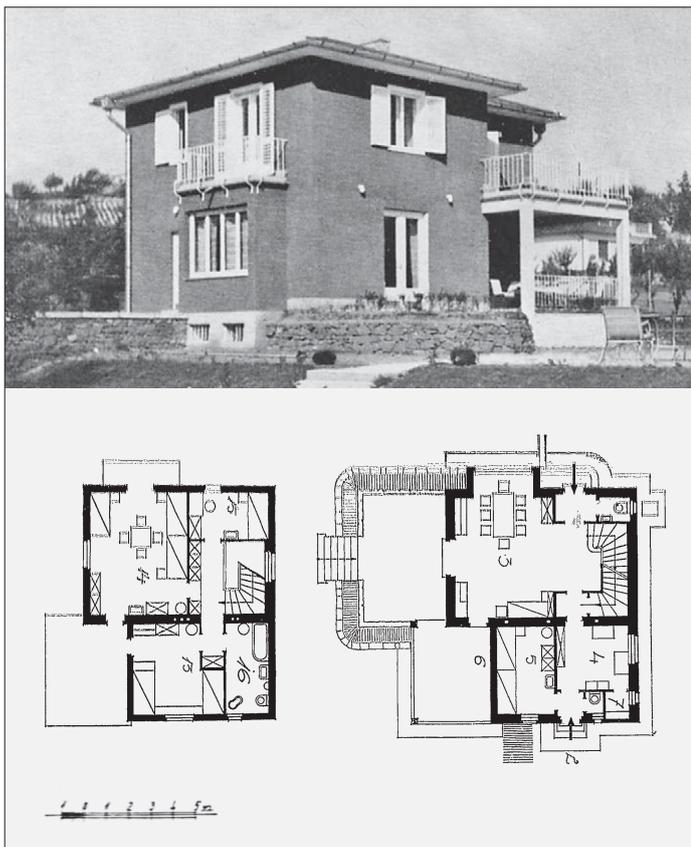


FIG. 5 BALATONKENESE, HOLIDAY HOUSE, 1934

tions, and the autonomous search for forms by Iván Kotsis was close to this trend. The so-called ‘peakers’ meant a special path between the modern and the vernacular tendencies, which was named after Farkas Molnár’s critique of the “Flaters and Peakers” (Pamer, 2001: 92). Their international references can be found mainly among the regional architectural trends in Central Europe.¹⁴ In Hungary, the method of regional adaptation appeared as an alternative to modern formation, looking for a middle ground between conservative and avant-garde perceptions. The correct functional, structural and contextual approaches were the main guidelines of the design. They considered building promoters’ needs, as well as the climatic and economic conditions.

Different interpretations of regional architecture at Lake Balaton led to a debate in the second half of the 1930s. The Friends of Hungarian House movement took a stand in favour of holiday homes using vernacular architectural forms, which would fit the character of the region. This was against Kotsis’s approach, as he believed that the cumbersome vernacular forms were too far removed from the modern leisure. Kotsis, as an organizing member of the Balaton Management

Committee, published an essay competition to settle the debate, which got increased publicity. It shows that the problem was not primarily a practical issue, but rather an ideological debate designed to clarify the identity of the resort landscape and the character of holiday homes. The title of the competition “Can the Elements of Hungarian Vernacular Architecture in Transdanubia Be Applied in the Modern Design of Holiday Homes along Lake Balaton?” shows Kotsis’ critical attitude. In the end, 9 applications were received for the competition, however it was not possible to build a regional theoretical framework on the basis of these, which could have established a later design competition for sample plans. Nevertheless, this competition can be considered one of the first attempts to develop a regional theory in the architectural history of Lake Balaton. The value of the initiative is shown by the community aspect, as it was not intended to be developed on the basis of an individual concept but on the basis of a discourse.

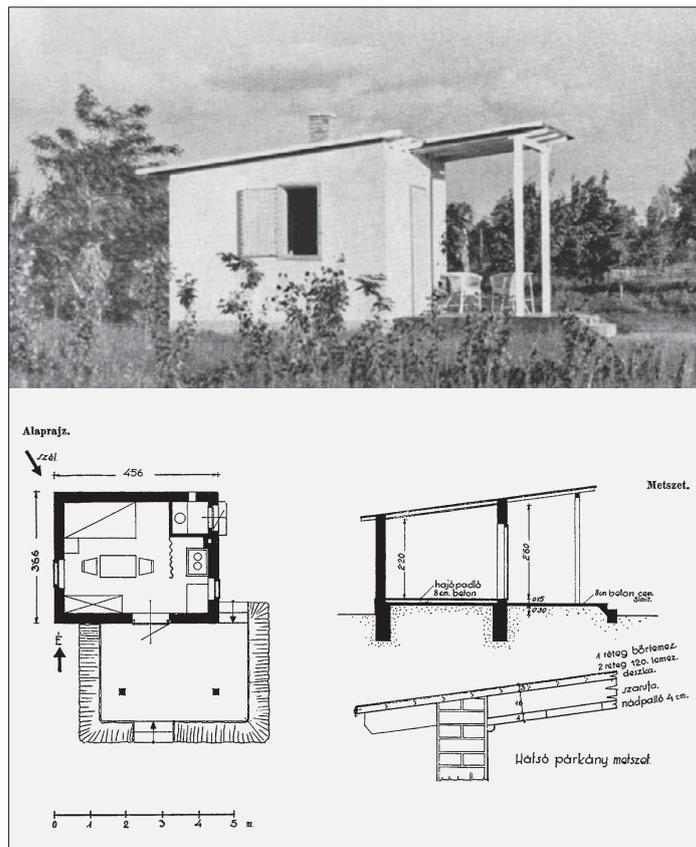
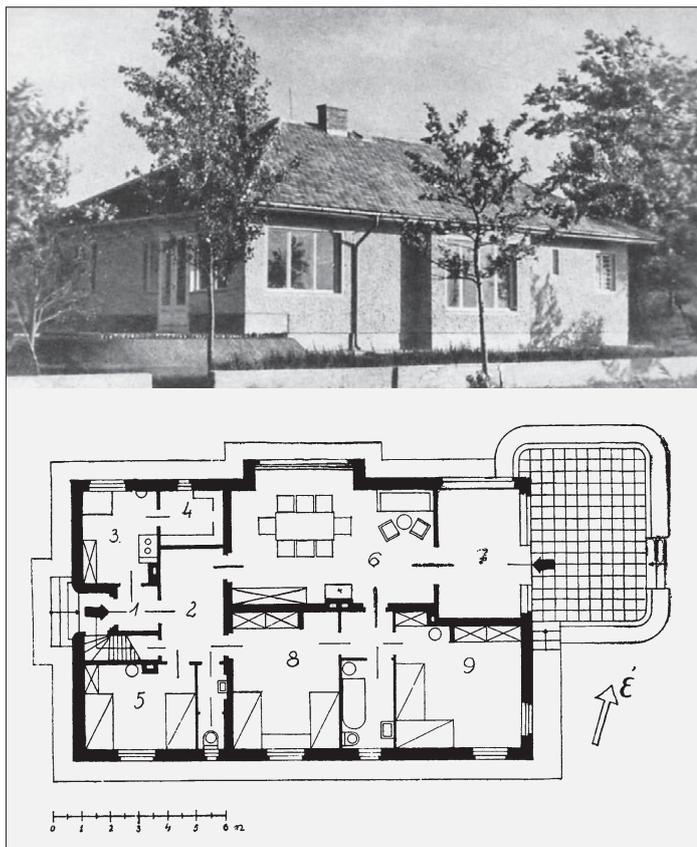
The debate pointed out the different perspectives and interpretations of regional architecture in Hungary. Based on the traditions of the region, approaches seeking continuity emphasized local attachment, while the approach focusing on the functional, structural achievements of modern architecture emphasized global progression. The interpretation of place and the protection of values are very different in several approaches. This is also in line with international regionalisms between the two wars of the time (Meganck, Van Santvoort and De Maeyer, 2012; Missinne, 2012: 150-159). While conservative tendencies propagated a defensive region conception and suggested the use of vernacular forms for new functions as well, mediating regionalisms sought interaction and dialogue between global and local trends (Pavlidis, 1991: 305-321). This more open conception was characteristic of the work of

¹⁴ In Italy Giuseppe Pagano wrote a book on vernacular architecture in 1936, in which he presented rich variations of Italian farmhouses (Pagano and Daniel, 1936: 6). He put emphasis on the functional and aesthetical connection of each region.

¹⁵ Both the concepts of Iván Kotsis and Kálmán Tóth had an impact on the architecture of Lake Balaton in the 1960s. The problem of resort architecture and vernacular architecture remained present in the post-war period. As a university professor, Kotsis had a great influence on the Balaton chief architect Tibor Farkas, and the BIB chief engineer Károly Polónyi. Kálmán Tóth worked as a BIB member in his time (Wettstein, 2018: 92).

¹⁶ This regional approach would have been reinforced by the resort chapel planned for the nearby Jankovich site, which was eventually not built (MÉM A-XII/170; Kotsis, 1945: 76-77).

¹⁷ The holiday lifestyle on Lake Balaton defined its buildings (Sebestyén, 2016: 32-36). Not all hotel plans were finally built: the hotel designs in Boglár and Tihany were ultimately not implemented (Kotsis, 1945: 129-131).



Iván Kotsis and his circle, although the concept necessarily resulted in more uncertain formal contours in the regional path-finding.¹⁵

THE AUTONOMY OF RESORT ARCHITECTURE — A REGIONAL DESIGN METHOD

The perception of the regional character appears most plastically in the individual works of Iván Kotsis. The question is, how did he interpret the dialogue between pragmatic functional principles and local conditions? The shores of Lake Balaton meant an experimental territory for Kotsis for the application of his regional architectural concept. In 1923, Kotsis built his holiday home in Balatonboglár, and experienced the problems of constructions at Lake Balaton up close (MÉM A-III/80; Kotsis, 1926: 20-23; Kotsis, 1942a: 4-7). His originally classicist-style holiday home in Boglár was expanded several times and adapted to his holiday lifestyle. During the design process of his own house he developed the principles that he later applied to his other lakeside constructions.

In the freshly parcelled resort area on the shores of Lake Balaton, he was able to experiment with the creation of a new regional formal language without any restrictions. Af-

ter having designed his own holiday home, he got major works in the region. In 1924-25 the holiday castle of Archduke József was built on the Tihany peninsula based on his plans, and for the adjacent parcel he was commissioned to design a biological research centre three years later (MÉM A-III/82; MÉM A-V/102; Kotsis, 1928b: 143-162). The historicizing buildings followed the characteristics of neo-Renaissance garden palaces (Fig. 1). Due to its climatic similarities and holiday lifestyle, the Italian influence was considered an appropriate starting point for the experimentation of his architecture at Lake Balaton. In the early 1930s, the Catholic church in Balatonboglár was already influenced by the new Italian trend of Novecento (Fig. 3). Near the church in Boglár he also created the plans for the parish house and the community centre (MÉM A-XVII/174; Kotsis, 1933: 107-110; Kotsis, 1942b: 61). These houses show the more plastic formation of the South German Stuttgart School.¹⁶ In addition to community constructions, the new type of building at Lake Balaton in the era was large hotels. He took an active part in the elaboration of the Balaton typology. The student hostel in Új-Tihany (Fig. 4) and the gendarmerie resort in Füred are characteristic examples of the functional building type (Kotsis, 1930: 189-190).¹⁷

FIG. 6 HOLIDAY HOUSE, BALATONSZEMES, 1942-43

FIG. 7 HOLIDAY HOUSE, BALATONÚJHELY, 1937

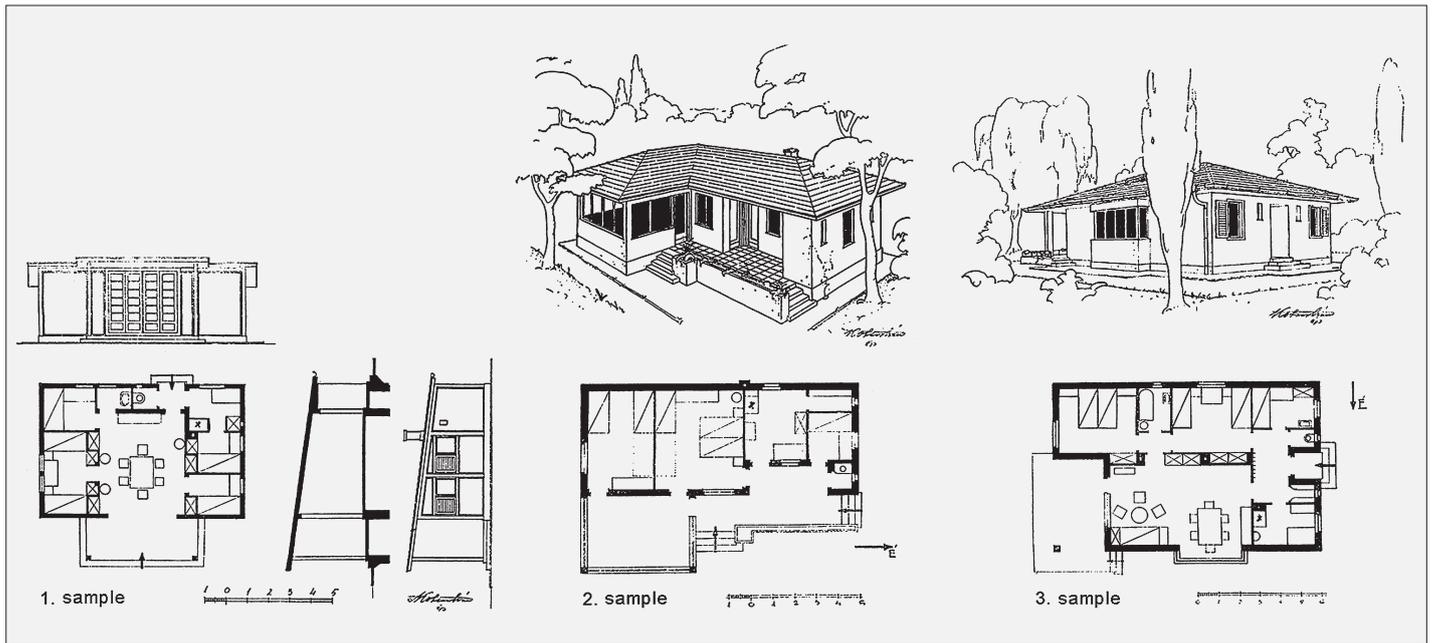


FIG. 8A SAMPLE PLAN COLLECTION OF IVÁN KOTSIŠ, 1934

This new task necessarily led to the achievements of modernization as well. He combined modern technology and local conditions in the functional design of the hotels.

While he was working on the plans of public buildings, he also paid close attention to the proper design of smaller holiday homes (Kotsis, 1928a: 3-4). The early influence of Italian historic architecture could be observed in the holiday home for Sándor Sámy in 1928 (MÉM A-VII/115; Kotsis, 2010: 83). In his later plans, the Stuttgart School approach prevailed, although its formulation was much clearer. His regional perception was most clearly reflected in the two-storey holiday home for Károly Kresz built in Kenese in 1933. In the refined form of the building, the modern and local character appeared in undeniable unity (Fig. 5; MÉM A-X/164). Publication by the German journal *Baumeister* enabled the international recognition of its particular design approach (Kotsis, 1935: 110-111). Following this approach, Kotsis designed Erich Mátyásfalvy's one-storey holiday home in Balatonszemes in a similar way during the war years (Fig. 6; MÉM A-XVIII/249). In addition to family holiday homes, he created plans for minimal cottages that meet simple, almost modern structural and functional requirements. An example of this is Marianne Vízzy's one-room home in Balatonújhely, finished in 1937 (Fig. 7; MÉM A-XIII/199). The practical layout of the building completely undressed the historical influences. His holiday home plans also include a series of sample plans prepared as part of his civic engagement (Kotsis, 1934: 102-106). He made the plans for lower mid-

dle-class people, as many couldn't afford to hire an architect because of the economic crisis between the two world wars. His general "Balaton sample plans" show a great correlation with his holiday homes specially designed for individual locations (Fig. 8). Some of the samples were created on the basis of existing buildings, while he adapted his own samples in his later realized works.

The applicability of his "sample plans" is also shown by the widespread use of this approach. Kotsis found it important to shape the perception of society. In addition to his university work, he wrote his wide-range publications not only for architects but for building promoters and constructing masters. In the summer, he provided further training for master builders in Balatonboglár (Kotsis, 2010: 64-83). It was a voluntary leisure activity, but it provided an interesting opportunity for free professional experimentation. In this period, the majority of buildings in the countryside were designed and constructed by unskilled builders and masons, so that the elaboration of simple design principles was tailored carefully in line with their level of qualification. The effectiveness of the approach can be recognized in the holiday resorts of the southern coast built in the 1930s, especially the settlements around Boglár (Lelle, Szemes, Ószöd, Szárszó), though these buildings were not designed by him but mostly by masons from Boglár (Fig. 9).

Based on the examined works of Iván Kotsis, his design approach could be summarized in a regional design method. His resort architec-

ture was primarily influenced by simplicity and practicality, as he intended to develop principles that could be followed by the sample plans for people with limited financial resources (Kotsis, 2010: 64-83). His aim was not only to have one individual building of “artistic quality”, but also to make the overall picture of buildings following similar ‘objective’ principles harmonious (Kotsis, 1931: 8-10). In the design process, the local conditions were the starting point: he considered the climate of the region, as well as the seasonal lifestyle and the economic power of the vacationers. Due to the strong southerly wind, he proposed a low-sloping roof and a simple mass, while with the purpose of adapting to the summer lifestyle, he promoted a practical layout and a garden-connected veranda. The facades were designed in a simple way without historic articulations, in pastel colours. He also had to use low pitched roofs due to the constraints pertaining to the local construction industry: local master builders could not make flat roofs professionally and reliably back then. While designing the resorts, he did not use the traits of vernacular architecture consciously. As he stressed, the modern lifestyle of leisure required a light, functional design. These principles, which reflect new functionality, were novel in the era compared to the cumbersome historical villa architecture. His pragmatic approach and designs striving for simplicity reflected an alternative concept of modernization; however, formally it prevailed in a more plastic, moderate tone. His method was a sort of a mediation tool, creating a connection between modernity and local traits, while also keeping a distance from both dogmatic modernity and the adoption of vernacular forms. In this perspective, resort architecture produced an autonomous formal language.

CONCLUSION

Iván Kotsis’ work provides a complex interpretation of the question of regional architecture. The different aspects that emerge from his regional activities can be systematized in a multi-scale perspective. This method can also be placed in the space of the global-local tension in the discussion of regional theories (Pavlidis, 1991: 305-321). As in the Introduction mentioned Vincent B. Canizaro pointed out, although regional strategies are too close to either modernization or defensive locality, mediating dialogue would actually be their task (Canizaro, 2007: 21-23). Similar to this interpretation is the conception of Iván Kotsis, although with his autonomous method for resorts it also opens up a new possibility of interpretation. Resort regionalism identifies a functional aspect of regionalisms

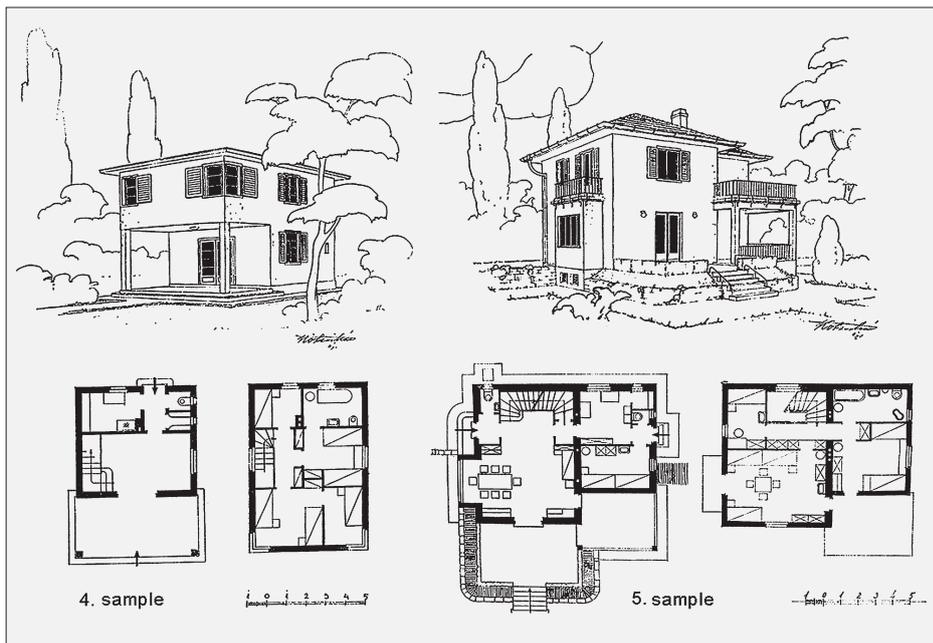


FIG. 8B SAMPLE PLAN COLLECTION OF IVÁN KOTSI, 1934

and an independent set of issues for further research.

In terms of architectural design, this particular concept was primarily not based on the local vernacular culture but on the phenomenon of leisure on a general regional scale. Although the new functional aspects of the seasonal lifestyle were an inspiration, the concepts of modernization and modern architecture must be distinguished in Kotsis’ perspective. The autonomous position also means that, although Kotsis’ work is often mentioned as a regional adaptation of modern architecture, it cannot be considered as a local application of the dogmatic idea. For him, the archetypal villa devoid of layers of ideological meanings gave way to “objective formation”, keeping a distance from the universal influences of modern architecture. At the same time, due to this archetypal form search, the autonomous mediating role of the strategy is more controversial in relation to historical traditions. Although it keeps its

FIG. 9 BALATONSZEMES, HOLIDAY HOUSES BY UNSKILLED LOCAL BUILDERS FOLLOWING THE SAMPLE PLAN OF IVÁN KOTSI IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 1930S



distance from vernacularity, it is already more open to historical references and foreign influences.

The community aspect of the method is also reflected in its free applicability. Kotsis' design concept not only provided guidance for his own individual buildings, but also kept adaptability in mind when developing it. The simplicity of the toolbox adapts simultaneously to the finite possibilities of a society weighed by the economic crises and the skills of local builders. The aim was to improve the confusing overall picture with houses that add to each other in an additive way, following common principles, even though the forms strongly reflected his personal architectural taste. The strategy was closely linked to the bottom-up view of the region as a community.

All these aspects were in line with his professional positions: as an architect with a metropolitan and academic status he participated in international knowledge transfers, while as a seasonal resort resident and voluntary organizer he was also aware of local conditions and construction opportunities. However, not only his architectural forms but also his personal character and attitude give a method for the community participation of the architect. Both in the aspects of architectural design and community organizational life, he tried to keep distance between both unilaterally global and defensive local ideas, while his regional perception emerged as a pragmatic mediation tool between horizons of different scales.

[Translated by:
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