

# VERŐCKE ON THE HAMBIT

## THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF IPOLYTÖLGYES<sup>†, 1</sup>

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Surveying monuments and historical buildings at the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation of Budapest University of Technology and Economics dates back to age-old traditions. The tradition of survey camps, that played an all-important educational role, had been kept alive for decades by our tutors Gyula Istvánfi and Miklós Kalmár, thus winning the affection of the students – and so ours – towards observing, drawing and studying historical buildings and structures. In our study, we wish to incorporate the memory and lessons of the 2017 survey camp organized by the Department in Ipolytölgyes, Pest county, with a historical and an ethnographical outlook. During the camp, we studied, surveyed and documented ten vernacular houses with their service buildings, mainly from an architectural point of view, but we could also inspect the everyday life and values of the village.

**Keywords:** Ipolytölgyes, monument survey, history of architecture, monument preservation, cultural heritage

<sup>†</sup> The illustrations of this article are available in the Hungarian version, which contains the bibliography too (pp. 377–379). (The Eds.)

<sup>1</sup> With this study, we would like to pay tribute to the essential work of Gyula Hajnóczi, aiming at the introduction of a settlement-level historical building survey in the education of architecture students. We wish to express our appreciation to our professors, Gyula Istvánfi and Miklós Kalmár, for their oeuvre as university lecturers emphasizing the education of the methodology of the historical building survey. We also express our appreciation to Tamás Mezős for his support regarding this paper. We would like to express our gratitude to Judit Fehér, monument supervisor, and Bertalan Radnai, mayor of Ipolytölgyes, for their support at the survey camp in Ipolytölgyes. We would like to express our gratitude to Judit Fehér, conservation officer of Érd District Office of Pest County, for the help she provided us with during our research, the realisation and organisation of the Ipolytölgyes survey camp, as well as for the cheerful memories. Thanks are due to Ágnes Gyetvainé Balogh and Péter Rabb, teachers at the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation. We offer our thanks to Bertalan Radnai, mayor of Ipolytölgyes for the devoted work he carries out for the benefit of preserving the municipality's values and their well-deserved presentation, and also to László Daragó, for putting the survey drawings of Ipolytölgyes cellar village at our disposal. Last, but not least we gratefully thank the exemplary work of the architect engineer candidates participating in the camp, namely that of Bianka Fekete, Viktória Gyömbér, Eszter Jobbik, Noémi Kis, Domonkos Koller, Rita Georgina Kovács, Andrea Magyarai, Dorottya Miklós, Bálint Somogyi and Zita Zöllner. This work was supported by the Hungarian National Cultural Fund (NKA) under Grant Number A2022/N7022.

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## INTRODUCTION

Ipolytölgyes village, situated at the western foothill of Börzsöny in the Duna-Ipoly National Park, having a population of about 400 people – with its history dating back to the Middle Ages –, can already be identified on the early eighteenth century military survey maps. The historical village structure and the system of plots of the ancient village of Tölgyes can be easily recognised even today – a vast number of buildings and lots can be found in the municipality that preserved the construction system characteristic of the nineteenth century.

The buildings found here were documented in 2017 by a group of architectural students from the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics in cooperation with the Municipality of Ipolytölgyes and the Department of Building and Heritage Preservation of the Érd District Office of the County Government Office of Pest County. While surveying the ten lots in the village certain unique features could be recorded that classify the vernacular architecture of Ipolytölgyes into a high rank among those neighbouring municipalities – like Nagybörzsöny – that represent the region's typical building characteristics.

During its 150-year history of the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation the task of documenting and surveying architectural heritage of our country has always been of special significance. All this, namely the direct study of two kinds of scientific fields – history of architecture and monument preservation – with the help of practical examples, has always played a crucial role in the education program of the department. During all the work in progress, the knowledge one may acquire does not only include folk architecture, but also structure and exterior design. Moreover, after the study is concluded, it may provide the basis for further scientific research as well as tasks related to monument preservation. There is hardly anyone among the former architect engineer students who would not remember these camps with a warm heart; and later they could make good use of the acquired knowledge in their daily work. At the same time, our paper is an effort to attract the readers' attention to this village in the Ipoly region, that has important heritage sites and holds a vast number of agenda.

## THE PLACE AND ETHNOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF IPOLYTÖLGYES

The village of Ipolytölgyes, situated in an exquisite natural environment, approximately 80 km away from Budapest, has a population of about 400 people. The river Ipoly runs along the border of the village; the settlement has been protected from the

flood by a dam since the 1970s, and the Ganádi stream also flows here.<sup>2</sup> According to the national census of 2001, its population amounts to 444 people.

At the time of the data collection of ethnographical beliefs and written records that was carried out in the 1960s, the elderly considered Tölgyes as the hub of the universe – their church being the proof for this assumption, whose tower, unusually, is not situated in the front but in the back of the church.<sup>3</sup>

Ipolytölgyes belongs to the Ipoly region dialect group of the Palóc dialect area.<sup>4</sup> According to ethnographer Károly Csáky, the region is considered to be a transition area between the Palóc region and the Little Plain. This land is mainly characterised by the Western Palóc people, but, when looking at certain cases of the local customs, one can also discover traits of the Little Plain.<sup>5</sup> As regards its costumes, once it had similar features to those of Letkés, Ipolykiskeszi and Ipolyszalka.<sup>6</sup>

In terms of husbandry, the settlement was characterised by agriculture, and live-stock breeding taking place on the meadows surrounding the village, that have perfect conditions in this respect.<sup>7</sup> Nándor Ikvai describes the village as one of the municipalities of Börzsöny<sup>8</sup> that was well-known due to its characteristic agricultural tools, because one can make a clear distinction between the trapezium-shaped harrow made of wood characteristic of Ipolytölgyes and Vámosmikola, and the common yoke.<sup>9</sup> According to his catalogue, in the eighteenth century the main harvested materials and agricultural goods of the village were provided by beekeeping, and the cultivation of wine, rye, lentil, pea, corn and hemp.<sup>10</sup> During the ethnographical data collection he made between 1961 and 1962, Zoltán Erdélyi had established the fact that, although the material remains had been mainly lost due to the destruction of World War II, certain beautifully carved and decorated tools can still be found in the village often inscribed with the manufacture year, too.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Before discharging into the river Ipoly, the streams of Bánya, Hosszú and Nyerges also traverse through the village.

<sup>3</sup> Bády 1977. 507.

<sup>4</sup> Kiss 2017. 203.

<sup>5</sup> Koczó 2005. 53; Csáky 2003. 38.

<sup>6</sup> “*Letkés, Tölgyes, Ipolykiskeszi, Ipolyszalka. These four municipalities had common characteristic costumes. Baráti, Bernece, Kemence had common characteristic costumes yet again.*” See: Diószegi 1962. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Quite a few names of the meadows and fields surrounding the village survived, among other things: Dávidréve and its allonyms (Dávidréve 1270, Dávid Saag-i n.: 1318, 1386, The border goes along before Dávid’s village, 1332, Daudriewe: 1396, Dawidriue: 1447, Dávidrévy Zewk Sebestyén: 1498, Dávidréve: 1679, Dávidrév; Szentmárton and its allonyms: Szentmárton: 1225; Sagisidoud: 1266, Szent Márton: 1318, Szent Márton: 1664; Szentmárton p. (Blk.); 1993; Szentmárton fields). In 1967 the following names were mentioned: Csergemalom, Erdészlak, Malom, Pincékalja. 1995: Csergemalom, Erdészlak, Gátórház, Malom, Pincékalja. See: Klinger 2000. 113–114.

<sup>8</sup> Significant settlements of Börzsöny, according to Ikvai: 1. Bernece-Barati, 2. Tésa, 3. Kemence, 4. Perőcsény, 5. Vámosmikola, 6. Nagybörzsöny, 7. Ipolytölgyes, 8. Letkés, 9. Ipolydamásd, 10. Szob, 11. Márianosztra, 12. Kóspallag, 13. Szokolya. (Ikvai 1977).

<sup>9</sup> Ikvai 1993. 99–100.

<sup>10</sup> Ikvai 1993. 99–102.

<sup>11</sup> Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum shelf mark 7209

## RESEARCH HISTORY

A sizeable amount of collected data and a wide range of written documents are at our disposal about the ethnography, folk customs and beliefs of Ipolytölgyes.<sup>12</sup> László Vargha wrote an essay on the folk architecture of Pest County in 1958, that only remained in unpublished manuscript form. The manuscript mentions one of the houses situated in Kossuth Street, built in the beginning of the nineteenth century (39–40 Kossuth Street).<sup>13</sup> During the 1960s ethnographical data collections were carried out at different times in the Börzsöny region by order of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum. Among the documents preserved in the Ethnographical Archives of the museum, customs, beliefs, and traditions related to the everyday life can be found, and also detailed and generous descriptions, narratives about folk architecture, the process of the construction and the use of the house.<sup>14</sup> József Koczó published his monograph entitled *Sagh* alias *Twlges* in 2005 as part of Volume 7 of the *Honti Füzetek* (*Honti Booklets*) series that he edited in cooperation with Renáta Koczó.<sup>15</sup> The aim of the authors was to release the subsisting sources, local history records and events that had happened in the one-time significant settlements of Dél-Hont (South Hont) and Alsó-Ipoly (Lower Ipoly)<sup>16</sup>. The almost eighty-page long volume contains the treatment of geographical data, archaeological research, husbandry, ethnographical presentation, beliefs and traditions, as well as a significant photograph appendix and bibliography too, all related to the village.

Gábor Tóth, postgraduate student in monument preservation, wrote his essay about Ipolytölgyes in 2010, during the seminar of Gyula Istvánfi entitled *The architecture of the Hungarian village* within the framework of the Postgraduate Course for Monument Preservation at the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation in Budapest University of Technology and Economics. In the essay, he enumerated on how to survey the values of the village and wrote his proposal on its local protection.<sup>17</sup>

From a present-day point of view, it is crucial to protect and preserve the historical values of the settlement; in this respect, mayor Bertalan Radnai sets a good example by his devoted work. The official publications issued by the municipality, entitled *Tölgyesi hírmondó* (*Tölgyes Courier*) and *Tölgyesi gyökerek* (*Tölgyes Roots*)<sup>18</sup>, published in two parts, extend the collection and study of intellectual and cultural heritage of the municipality, as well as its photographic sources.

<sup>12</sup> Ikvai 1977. 627–646; Bády 1977. 507.

<sup>13</sup> Vargha 1958. 27. (found in: Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum E19113)

<sup>14</sup> Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum shelf marks E7070, E7209, E9076, E10404, E14856, E19113

<sup>15</sup> Koczó 2005.

<sup>16</sup> Vámosmikola, Peröcsény, Tésa and Ipolytölgyes

<sup>17</sup> Tóth 2011.

<sup>18</sup> *Tölgyesi Gyökerek*. Vol. no. 1. and 2.

Originally our survey camp was a contribution to this aspect and activity. In 2018 a publication was released including the survey drawings entitled *Tölgyesi ténykép album (Tölgyes “facture” – fact-picture – album)*.

## THE HISTORY OF IPOLYTÖLGYES

The material remains found in the territory, the surroundings and the fields of Ipolytölgyes testify that the area had already been inhabited long before the Hungarian Conquest. This is proven by the telltale signs of diverse archaeological findings dating back to the Ancient (mainly Copper and late Bronze Age), Roman, and Migration (mainly Celtic and Quadi)<sup>19</sup> Periods.<sup>20</sup> The area had also been inhabited in the Árpád Age<sup>21</sup>, when – according to Anonymous – leader Huba was sent to this territory.<sup>22</sup> It seems that we can mention two predecessor settlements of the present-day Ipolytölgyes: *Zsidód* and *Ság*. Several hypotheses exist with regard to the exact place of these villages. Certain archaeological assumptions place *Zsidód* (*Ságizsidód*, *Sagisidoud*) into the region of the Szentmárton fields, a territory safe from the floods, about two kilometres away from the river Ipoly, while *Ság* is believed to had been situated in the region of the present day Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit, within the great bend of Ipoly.<sup>23</sup> The bigger, upper part of the latter settlement has been named Tölgyes since 1387.<sup>24</sup> This name (“oaken” in English) quite probably stems from the oak-forest in the flood area, as *Ság* also has a meaning of *forest*.<sup>25</sup> After the Mongol invasion of Hungary, the two villages became united under the name of *Ság*. However, the location of and relationship between the anci-

<sup>19</sup> Mainly combs were uncovered from the south-eastern part of the county, at the late-Roman bridge-head (Nógrádverőce) of the opposite side of the Danube, and from late Quadi as well as early Suebi sites, sometimes together with fine-grained pottery from fourth century habitations (for example Vác-Csörög, Ipolytölgyes); besides a family grave group that already dates back to the second part of the fifth century. See: Ottományi 2008. 151.

<sup>20</sup> New Stone Age tableware fractions, Copper and Late Bronze Age artefacts, mass tumuli and Celtic findings came to light on the Öreg-hegy. Traces of a settlement dating back to the Prehistoric and Roman Emperor Ages were excavated in the territory of the Cooperative of Producers manor in 1965, as well as artefacts of a late Bronze Age urn grave culture, Celtic pottery fractions and the traces of a Quadi settlement. The excavation was led by archeologist István Erdélyi. Koczó. See: Koczó 2005. 7.

<sup>21</sup> During the excavations of 1969 the remains of a tenth–eleventh century settlement were found, besides, approximately 40 graves surfaced around the territory of the Letkés brick-works. See: Castiglione 1971. 142.

<sup>22</sup> Anonymus, 91–92.

<sup>23</sup> “*The dwellers of Tölgyesi used the church of Ság until the sixteenth century, which, from then on served only as a burial place until the middle, end of the eighteenth century. According to the 1697 canonica visitatio, the church built by rubble and having a flat-ceiling nave, and a vaulted sanctuary and vestry might have been built in the sixteenth century. The present-day church was raised in this place at the end of the eighteenth century.*” See: Tari 2000. 77.

<sup>24</sup> Koczó 2005. 22.

<sup>25</sup> However, all this is terminologically debated – among others, Lajos Kiss reckons that the nationwide frequently reoccurring settlement name could have meant hill, forest on high ground or forest. Kiss 1997. 434.

ent villages still remain uncertain. The equivalent predecessor settlement names make the research quite difficult, and adding to that, the written records dating back to the Middle Ages mention the municipality of Ipolyság also as *Ság*. Nevertheless, it is probable that the place of the first settlement was in the Szentmárton fields.

Although various sources mention different names, the settlement preserved the form of *Tölgyes* until the turn of the 20th century.<sup>26</sup> The distinctive prefix, *Ipoly*, has been in use since 1907.<sup>27</sup> According to the slightly exaggerated narration of the local inhabitants, *two-hundred years earlier*<sup>28</sup> the village was around Szentmárton hill, East of the present-day Ipolytölgyes.<sup>29</sup> Tradition has it that in those times there was a big oak forest on site of the village, that gave the name of the settlement. The first charter to mention it was written in 1225, naming it *Sagisidoud*, and then as *Sagh alias Twlges* in 1412. Excavations made in the territory of Szentmárton-dülő (St. Martin fields) justified the narratives about the former placement: archaeologist Kornél Bakay uncovered the remains of a Hungarian village dating back to the Árpád Age, a church from the thirteenth-fourteenth century and the surrounding traces of a cemetery from the Middle Ages.<sup>30</sup> According to tradition, the village drew close to Ipoly due to water shortage.<sup>31</sup> As it is written in the charters, the Western relocation of the village had happened already after the Mongol invasion, which must have led to the decline of the first settlement. The new village in its present-day location was named *Ság*, meaning hill, forest on high ground, or forest.<sup>32</sup>

We might only have vague ideas on the medieval condition of the village. Studying some factors, however, could shed light on certain points of interest in terms of the late community structure. The first photographic sources popped up in the eighteenth century. Ipolytölgyes can be clearly identified on the First and Second Military Survey Maps (1763–1787, 1806–1869)<sup>33</sup>. The present-day view of the village firmly represents the historical community structure and the parcelling and development method of the plots. Looking at the First Military Survey Map, it can be pointed out that the whole village was made up of the present day Kossuth Street, and its end from the then uncontrolled Ipoly side was closed by the church, in other words, the settlement was a dead end village.

However, it is most likely that the original structure of the settlement relocated here around the time of the Mongol invasion did not follow this structure. This is referred by the medieval origin of the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit. In

<sup>26</sup> 1412: *Sagh* alias *Twlges*, that was the land of the Lévai-Cseh family, 1443: *Thewlges*, 1523: *Thewlgyes*, 1664: *Tölgyes*, 1733: *Tölgyes*, 1808: *Tölgyes*, 1856, 1895: *Tölgyes*. See: Klinger 2000. 113.

<sup>27</sup> Klinger 2000. 113.

<sup>28</sup> Ikvai 1977. 629.

<sup>29</sup> “*The village was not here in the old times, but under the forest, there is a quite flat part. Its name was Szentmárton. So our old ancestors moved in here accordingly, because no water was there. Oak trees were here, and Ipoly run here. Thus they call it Ipolytölgyes*”. See: Diószegi 1962. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Hála 1977. 616.

<sup>31</sup> Ikvai 1977. 629.

<sup>32</sup> Tóth 2010–2011. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Online documents: <http://mapire.eu/hu/> (Accessed: 10 July 2020)

its early period, the door (according to medieval traditions) opened at the western side, opposite to the present-day entrance. The medieval origin of the church at the end of Kossuth Street is proven by the remains of the door and the eyelet above it. The tower being on the western side, behind the present-day altar, is a telltale sign, because this feature is very unusual among the churches built in Baroque style.<sup>34</sup> There might have already been a tower above the original western door – also in accordance with medieval traditions –, but in order to give an accurate definition on this subject, further research would be necessary. The relocation of the present-day entrance to the eastern side was carried out during the renovations of the Baroque period, and the Gothic chancel might have also been demolished around this time. Therefore, the church in the Middle Ages was not accessible from the direction of the village (as it is today), but from the side of the river Ipoly. Hereby, the dead end village structure depicted on the First Military Survey is probably not corresponding to the original community structure, as, on the eighteenth century map, the end of the main street was signified by the church and the houses surrounding it in a semicircle shape. The fact that the church originally came into view from the western side raises the possibility of a closer connection of the village to the riverside in the Middle Ages. As a result, in the Middle Ages, we can imagine the end of the Kossuth Street in a totally different way – where the church, the schoolhouse founded by Miklós Ormándy, the Saint Elisabeth Health and Child-Care Centre and the turning place for the buses are marking the border of the village today.

In the period of the Ottoman rule, while the neighbouring settlements of Ság in Szentmárton, Dávidréve along the Ipoly and Ganád lost their population, Tölgyes remained a continuously populated village. During the occupation period between the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries the territory's significance was attributed to the nearby roads that were running towards the rich commercial towns of Northern Hungary. The area was fortified by some smaller strongholds: the castles of Damásd, Pásztó, Drégely and Ság (the present day Ipolyság). The commercial road also crossed the territory of Tölgyes. After the Ottomans reached the flow of the river in 1544, the lower Ipoly area became the peripheral region of the rule, therefore it had seen a lot of battles throughout time. The two strong points of the region were the

<sup>34</sup> *“A lot of big rocks were found around the church, and there is ‘a kitchen sized foundation’ by the cross in front of the church. The predecessor of the present-day village stood at our archaeological site, on the East by the inner settlement area, that was originally called Ság. The village got its new name from the expression of ‘oak forest’, that was only used as an alternative between 1412–1424, but starting from 1443, it has been used exclusively... At the time when Ság became depopulated the relocating people increased the number of residents living in the settlement that was called Tölgyes later on.”* See: Tari 2000. 76.

ledge<sup>35</sup> of Dzsigerdelen<sup>36</sup> and the ledge under Drégely. According to the Peace of Zsitvatorok – that closed the Long Turkish War – the territory became the border region of the Hungarian Kingdom, but it had to face further Ottoman break-ins and plundering. Hard times were associated with religious division too. The decline of the Order of Saint Paul the First Hermit from Márianosztra and the Premonstratensians from Ság made it possible for Lutheran and Calvinist congregations to appear.

The appearance of council schools became characteristic at the end of the Ottoman rule, then, the quality of education became particularly high by the 1900s. The son of the village – a cult of personality in the settlement –, Miklós Ormándy<sup>37</sup>, built a new school in Tölgyes in 1907. The building – that is already depicted on the 1861 map of Lipót Marther (*Fig. 1: p. 363*), still standing on the Ipoly-side border of the village – was made up of a classroom, a staffroom and an apartment for the teacher.

In the second part of the eighteenth century, the process of borders and plot-relations of the villages was initiated by Maria Theresa's 'Robot Patent', first to be carried out in Tölgyes, amongst the neighbouring settlements.<sup>38</sup> The regulation established 2 Bratislavan meters (about 0.4 ha) as the internal surface of the plots of the feudal tenants owning one hide of land, and this measurement also determined the system of the thin strips of lands allocated with an engineer's precision, characteristic of the municipality.

<sup>35</sup> The two known basic types of the Ottoman-built barbicans are: kale and ledge. The castles that had been captured and damaged during the fight were generally rebuilt, recovered, reconstructed; the general name of these castles made of solid rubble or earth – or in other words: burnt bricks – is *kale* (among others in case of Buda, Esztergom, Szeged, Eger, among others). All of these establishments were important authority and administrative centers. The newly found settlements or those that had not had such fortifications prior to the rule, and those other villages that had already had similar defensive walls before got plank castles, so-called ledges (*parka* or *palanka* in Turkish) built according to lightweight construction by buried wood piles with hedges and banking mainly by earth filling.

<sup>36</sup> Dzsigerdelen is a geographical name located in the territory of Esztergom (Ledge) and literally means "Lung-perforating". The most evident geographical name origins created by the population migrating into the territory of the Ottoman rule are those connected to concrete events (for example Hangman hill – Nagyharsány), the names formed by words of soldier encouragements (for example Dzánkurtaran – soul saviour, place of retreat), the names developed by numerals and the toponyms shaped by body part names. The body parts many times truly refer to the human organism (for example in terms of Dzsigerdelen), whereas in other cases the body parts refer to geological formations too (for example: Bulgar-bogázi (literally means Bulgarian throat, but here it means "strait" and refers to the area South of Tótfalu on the Danube). In greater detail see: Fekete 1936. 289.

<sup>37</sup> Miklós Ormándy (1846–1911) member of the Piarists was ordained in 1873 after he finished his theological studies in Nyitra. He got his teacher's diploma in the University of Cluj from natural history and chemistry in 1880, and he received his doctorate in 1881. Starting from 1888 he had been prior and principal for 10 years in Sátorajújhely, and he had been a practicing teacher in Budapest from 1900 until his death. His research and textbooks in the field of natural history are of significant importance, his favourite work was published in 1911, entitled *Mesék a virágokról* (*Tales about flowers*). Ormándy is the great son of Ipolytölgyes, his house is a building of priority. Since 2018, a memorial plaque has been advertising his work.

<sup>38</sup> Koczó 2005. 41.



Throughout its history, Ipolytölgyes has been mainly populated by Hungarians (*Fig. 2: p. 364*).<sup>39</sup> Its population has not been reasonably fluctuating since the 1780s, it has amounted to about 400, except between 1920–1960, when the number of inhabitants exceeded 500. Slovakian and other nationalities' appearance has not been characteristic of its population.<sup>40</sup>

The present-day structure of the municipality partially preserved the historical conditions, however, as a result of its growth and development its lay-out has somewhat changed in relation to its original state. Looking at the First Military Survey Map, it can be pointed out that the whole village was made up of the present-day Kossuth Street; its end from the then uncontrolled Ipoly side was closed by the church, in other words, the settlement was a dead end village. The one-time main street, where one can find most of the traditional houses, is quite wide. According to local reports and the First Military Survey, once there were buildings on the strip of land situated in the centre, today converted into a park.<sup>41</sup> The lots that were documented in the survey camps due to their historical importance and values are (with one exception) all to be found in Kossuth Street.

The part of the commune outside the territory of the one-time dead end village was formed later on. Petőfi Street perpendicular to Kossuth Street obtained its main street character of today when the North–South direction road was finished, that was constructed to connect Szob with Vámosmikola. This particular road is present only on the Third Military Survey (1869–1887) – a result of an alteration that occurred in the nineteenth century.

The administrative categorisation of the municipality underwent several changes throughout the nineteenth–twentieth centuries. In the 1880s Tölgyes belonged to the Szalka district of Hont county, then, in the year of the turn of the century it was listed under the district of Szob, while later on in the 1910s it was catalogued under Vámosmikola, whereas in the 1920s it was once again entered into the district of Szob. Same changes took place in terms of the county categorisation of the area, until finally it became part of Pest county, after 1960.<sup>42</sup> During World War II, in 1944 or 1945, Ipolytölgyes was a seat of war, therefore the population was relocated to Nagymaros, causing extensive damage to the material remains and the cultural values of the village.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> All this is proven by the names of feudal tenants characteristic for the years before 1526, like: Wagó, Luce, Polgár, Horváth, Sagy. See: Koczó 2005. 25.

<sup>40</sup> Klingner 2000. 113–114.

<sup>41</sup> Tóth 2010–2011. 2.

<sup>42</sup> However, in the 1920s the county categorisation was changed, as this time the administratively temporary unity of Hont and Nógrád became a broadly defined county categorisation, the same way as later on Bars and Hont were listed under an administratively temporarily united comitat in 1941. Yet in 1949, Nógrád county was the official administrative unit – in fact, more narrowly, together with Szob district until the district became part of Pest county, thus the data from 1960 already show this particular unity – as it is so today as well, after all. See: Koczó 2005. 45.

<sup>43</sup> Ethnological Inventory of the Museum of Ethnography, shelf mark: E14856

## THE SURVEY CAMP

According to the long tradition<sup>44</sup> of the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation, a survey camp was organised between 21 and 26 of June 2017 in this area, that is rich in natural and architectural values.<sup>45</sup> Apart from the fact that we had the opportunity to personally study and interpret the structures of historical architecture, we were also allowed to inspect a settlement that has a rich history and a living tradition. The vast number of values characteristic of the village – one-by-one seeming to be small, but priceless from the point of view of the national culture of Hungary – were gradually unfolding before us. During the survey, besides the local peculiarities of space distribution and unique structural implementations, we also had the opportunity to make ourselves familiar with the names characteristic of the region and the traditions related to the different parts of the house.

All but one of the houses we have surveyed are in Kossuth Street, which is the oldest main street of the village. Beside the drawings, data sheets were also created in each case recording the pieces of information related to development method, main building structures, stokers and other installations, building conditions and utilisation types. In terms of each house – except for the one under 19–20 Kossuth Street, where we only inspected the exterior elevation – we created a general layout and a scale of 1:50 ground-floor and loft layout, longitudinal section, cross-sections, exterior elevation and yard elevation drawings, as well as detail drawings. Field work included the production of scaled manual drawing and measurements. The field work was followed by the drawing of final, accurate survey documents, with the help of digital CAD program. According to the drawings and observations made in the survey camp, in the following section we aim to summarise the structure, the lots and the vernacular architecture characteristics of Ipolytölgyes.

The lots we surveyed during the camp were the following: 1 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Rita Georgina Kovács, Eszter Jobbik); 15 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Bianka Fekete, Domonkos Koller, Bálint Somogyi); 19–20 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Krisztina Fehér, Máté Gergő Kovács); 26 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Eszter Jobbik, Domonkos Koller, Rita Georgina Kovács, Andrea Magyarai, Dorottya Miklós); 44 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Viktória Gyömbér, Noémi Kis, Zita Zöllner); 51 Kossuth Street (surveyed by: Andrea Magyarai, Dorottya Miklós); 17 Petőfi Street (surveyed by: Bianka Fekete, Viktória Gyömbér, Noémi Kis, Bálint Somogyi, Zita Zöllner).

The villages of today – and so Ipolytölgyes, too – located along the one-time flood area of the bank of Ipoly, on the typically diked plain area of sandy, gravelled ground,

<sup>44</sup> Kalmár 2010.

<sup>45</sup> The survey camp was organised by the cooperation of the Local Government of Ipolytölgyes Municipality, the Department of Building and Heritage Preservation of the Érd District Office of the Governmental Office in Pest County and the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics under the professional supervision of doctoral candidates Krisztina Fehér and Máté Gergő Kovács, as well as that of assistant professors Ágnes Gyetvainé Balogh and Péter Rabb.

are characterised by streets allocated with an engineer's precision and a plot distribution perpendicular to them.<sup>46</sup> Similarly to many other areas of the Carpathian Basin, the lot was designed according to the needs of the joint family system, a special characteristic of the area. This feature has the closest relationship with the Eastern Palóc lands. The lot populated by more than one family is called "folyás" (flow) or "hosszú folyás" (long flow) due to the length of the pile of buildings. The first, smaller plot section is the complex of residential and farm buildings, that is usually followed by a fruit- and a pot-garden separated by fences. A unique type of double-in-lot system is also noticeable in Ipolytölgyes, as a line of wine-cellars, a whole cellar village is situated in that part of the municipality which is farther from the river Ipoly, around the hilly region. In the past, beside storing wine, potato and fodder, this area was also used as a processing area; but today it mostly serves as a place of relaxation. The architectural students of the Department of History of Architecture and Monument Preservation surveyed the line of wine-cellars under László Daragó's supervision during a former summer camp in 2002. During the survey, detailed drawings of the houses, the general layout of the line of wine-cellars and the characteristic streetscape were created (Fig. 3: p. 367).

The traditional Ipolytölgyes lots are characterised by their two-row layout,<sup>47</sup> where the residential house is situated on the one side, followed by the farm buildings behind it in a longitudinal order. The farm-buildings could either be the stable, or the covered-open *cart-shed*. Additional auxiliary buildings were built on the other side of the plot in a similar longitudinal order (Fig. 4: p. 367), that were quite frequently cookhouses. Therefore, the streetscape is determined by the rhythm of the elevation of the residential houses and the subsidiary buildings, that were somewhat smaller in size (Fig. 5: p. 368). The *footed pen* standing on high pedestals was also a characteristic farm-building that was present around almost all of the surveyed lots. The special feature of the house under 51 Kossuth Street is that there is a small-sized storage room under the cookhouse, that served as a place to store milk, thus it is called *dairy*, even today. Barns were frequently built perpendicular between the front plot and the garden in the back (Fig. 6: p. 369). It was common to have 3–4 families living together in such pieces of lands in the first part of the twentieth century.

*"There was no cross-aisle at the time, like now. When it was needed, they always added to the building, and it was also easy to cover its roof because they were wood-shingled. Well, those houses had big porches, they did, I tell you! But then these houses were burnt down and they rebuilt these, covered them with clay-shingles. There was only one window on the house, but it was small, only just a little bit bigger than a handkerchief well spread out, and then well, there was an iron plate on the window outside. This was, more common in the village, but jalousie was also found here and there."*<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> All this means typically a plot of two Bratislavan metres according to the socage regulation of Maria Theresa. See: Koczó, 2005. 54.

<sup>47</sup> Istvánfi 2006. 126.

<sup>48</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark: E7209

The usually double- (house + kitchen) or triple-compartment (front house + kitchen + room) houses are situated on the two sides, perpendicular to the street. These typical arrangements can be seen on the layouts of the surveyed houses too, but additions were built meanwhile in most cases (Fig. 7: p. 370). Drawings and documentary descriptions made in the 1960s about quite a few such traditional-layout houses can be found in the Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum. These houses were surveyed in the Rákóczi and Dózsa György streets, that connect the Kossuth and Petőfi streets in a curve.<sup>49</sup> The attic of the building made up of the *house* (room) and the *atrium* is typically accessible from outside, through a ladder – as we could see it in the houses documented in the survey camp. According to the traditions, in terms of the old double-compartment arrangement the elderly slept in the room at the street front, whereas the newly married couple spent the night in the shed, “*however, at that time there was no warm kitchen*”.<sup>50</sup> It is uniformly illustrative for the positioning of the houses that the typical Tölgyes porch, named *hambit*, is situated on the eastern side of the house.

*Hambit* is a word of Latin origin that stems from the expression of “going around”, “space surrounding a given object” and means corridor with columns, namely *ambit*. The word migrated to some other European languages, its allomorph called *ambit* is used around the Czech and Polish, while *hambit* is known in the Slovakian language areas. Although, the word form *ámbitus* is mainly characteristic of the Hungarian language area, its other form *hambit* is still in use along the river Ipoly and thus in Ipolytölgyes, too – a result of the Slovakian linguistic effect.<sup>51</sup> *Hambit* is a covered, open space that is an important part of the everyday life of the house. Unfortunately, today more and more of them are becoming to be walled up, but some houses still present it in its original state (Fig. 8: p. 371). Beside *hambit*, the word form *isztori* is also frequently used. As Zoltán Erdélyi noted in 1962, if a house does not have a *hambit*, then it has an *isztriáll*.<sup>52</sup> Apart from being the scene of everyday life, *hambit* is also significant from a sacral point of view, namely, that the bier was either set up in the first room or here, whereas in the event of an illness it served as resting place, as well. All this is frequently mentioned in the beliefs collected in Ipolytölgyes: “*his wife, when she wanted to die, then she could not lie down in the house, but a bed was set up for her out under the isztori. There she laid. I was just leaving for the church in the morning when she caught sight of me: Oh, my dear sister, come in, pray for me a Lord’s Prayer, when we present to the Lord. So did I pray for her. Then when I was going in, I asked: well, how are you? – Oh, my dear sister I do not fear nothing now, I do not see anything. And so she died on the same day. [...] She was a witch.*”<sup>53</sup>

A similar case was recorded by László Bády: “*For me, I do not believe in witches, but it happened once when I was already married, that someone was knocking on the*

<sup>49</sup> Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark E9076

<sup>50</sup> Ethnological Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark E7209

<sup>51</sup> Benkő 1967. 147.

<sup>52</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark: E7209

<sup>53</sup> Diószegi 1962. 4.

*window at night. I went out to the hambit, but could not see anyone there, then did I strive in vain to find the door, I could not get in, only at dawn. The witch led me to a false trace.*"<sup>54</sup>

The peculiarity of the decorated door opening from the hambit to the street was that the level of its doorstep was raised about 1 metre above the ground – this feature can also be attributed to customs related to death and funerals. The door was open while the bier was on display and when the coffin was taken out. The construction of a lot of porches around the Börzsöny region dates back to the post WWI period, the time when *porch rafters* were introduced enabling houses to become wider.<sup>55</sup> Doors with elevated doorsteps might also have appeared this time. However, their number was certainly higher before, certain examples in Nagybörzsöny and Kemence<sup>56</sup> still prove it today that this type had been characteristic not only for Ipolytölgyes, but for the whole region. Doors that only have laying-up under their elevated doorsteps can still be found in Nagybörzsöny and Kemence. No such door can be found in Ipolytölgyes anymore in its original form, as all of the present ones have some steps that were added to them later, therefore, they practically do not have a cultic function anymore (*Fig. 5: p. 368*). The ornamented door – serving as a corridor through which the coffin was given out – is also characteristic of other regions, such as the counties of Baranya (Feked) and Tolna (Závod).

The yard can be accessed from the hambit through the *verőcke*, an ornately carved gate (*Fig. 9–10: p. 372*). *Verőcke* is the typical door of the Börzsöny region too. The door that prevented the fowl getting into the house through the open door, directly leading into the house in summertime was called *verőce* in Perőcsény and Szokolya, *summer door* in Diójenő, while generally they called it *saráglya* or *saragla*. This door was not made of slats but of planks.<sup>57</sup> The word also has Slovakian origins, and it means little gate.<sup>58</sup> The words of *dverce* or *dvercek* (little door) are formed by a diminutive suffix from the word *dvere*, meaning door.<sup>59</sup> A lot of its word forms are known in Nyitra county, the most typical from these are: *dévércé*, *verecce*, *verice*, *vericé*, *verőcke*, and *verekce*. The word *verőcke* – used by the Western Palóc People too – originates from here.<sup>60</sup>

The back elevation of the house under 15 Kossuth Street was later on walled up, but originally it also had an open hambit with a *verőcke*. One of the archive photographs preserved in the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, most probably, depicts the *verőcke* of this house (*Fig. 10: p. 372*). According to our comparison, the *verőcke* that can be seen on the picture is the same as the one installed on the barns belonging

<sup>54</sup> Bády 1977. 507–516.

<sup>55</sup> Halász–Suda 1977. 328.

<sup>56</sup> A house in Kemence built in 1925 (244 Felszabadulás Street, Kemence), see: Novák 1977. 253, and Csáky 2010. 93.

<sup>57</sup> Halász–Suda 1977. 319.

<sup>58</sup> Imre–Kálmán 1954. 506.

<sup>59</sup> Valló 1904. 562.

<sup>60</sup> Szinnyei 1897–1901. 596.

to the house (*Fig. 9: p. 372*). A reconstruction drawing of the back elevation was also made according to the experiences of the surveys (*Fig. 11: p. 373*).

As a matter of fact, the roof structure of the hambit is created by the extension of the building's roof structure. The rafters, that are held by the *dowel wood* above the eaves, end in a tilting-filet – another Ipolytölgyes speciality. The roof structure is assembled by carved rafters together with locust wood nails, according to Ferenc Ese's narrative told to us during the survey camp. This feature was already recorded in Zoltán Erdélyi's collection of the 1960s, that also mentioned the beaten roofing by rye-straw in detail. The rafters were only adzed (*scaled off*) – we could also witness it on numerous sites of the survey camp. If a longer rafter was in need, the lengthening element was called *German joint*.<sup>61</sup> The use of prop was popular around the Börzsöny region and Ipolytölgyes. Its Hungarian name is either *ágasfa* or *ágas*.<sup>62</sup> The traces of this type of archaic architectonics can still be found in the village. The single-pitch roofs connecting to the farm buildings of the lot under 51 Kossuth Street are held by longitudinal beams supported by props (*Fig. 12: p. 374*).

The following names are used to describe the stokers in Ipolytölgyes: stove is called *siska*, oven is *kürtös*, *búbos* or *gurullyó*.<sup>63</sup> The latter one refers to the top of the oven where the children used to sleep sometimes.<sup>64</sup> There was a *chimney-corner* in the room in the old times where thin-chopped wood, so-called *kucifa* was burnt; its light passed through to the atrium. Before the introduction of stokers exterior chimneys were typically used – Zoltán Erdélyi recorded many houses in 1968 that still had a kitchen with an exterior chimney.<sup>65</sup>

It is generally characteristic of the houses that small-sized ceramic decorative motifs appear both on the exterior faces and the back elevations as decorations. The coating of the frontal plinth was frequently built by decorated cement tiles that were originally used for paving. Arched ornament dressing made by lesene or pilaster strip is also recurrent on the principal fronts. The door leaves of the porch doors on the original street front are beautifully wrought, carved framed doors, whose upper parts have a luminescent surface chamfered by colourful panes of glass (*Fig. 13: p. 375*). The street front porch end door is also characteristic of, among others, the Northern house-type mainly situated along the river Galga.<sup>66</sup> A similar door can be found in Galgamácsa, but it is separated from the elevation in terms of wood type, plain and colour, and has a relatively simpler shaping. The carved works have a rich design on the window frames too – a lot of them can still be found on the street and back elevations, fortunately.

Zoltán Erdélyi recorded a rich source of data on the architecture of the houses during the data collection he made for the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum.

<sup>61</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark E10404

<sup>62</sup> Ikvai 1977. 634.

<sup>63</sup> Ikvai 1977. 634.

<sup>64</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark E10404

<sup>65</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum, shelf mark E9076

<sup>66</sup> Istvánfi 2006. 207.

According to the narrative of Ipolytölgyes resident Mihály Hegedüs, when building a house, a 50–60 cm deep base was dug that was later backfilled by compacted earth and rubble, and thin-liquid adobe clay was poured on the top of it. The base course of the house was built by rubble up until a height of 40–100 cm. Masonry was made up of mud wall in the old times, then it was exchanged by 10–30 cm thick cob wall. The *mud bed* was made near the house: “*The wall was built by using a fork. The earth was carried into the yard beforehand where mud bed was made out of it. The earth was laid out on the ground, watered, then chaff and straw were strewn on it, kneaded by horse or cattle. Then it was cut by a hoe and kneaded again.*” The wall was built in 80–90 cm high sections (called *vereszla*, three *vereszla* concluded the full height), that were carved by spade, then let the wall dry for 1–2 months. A 12/12 cm wall plate was laid down – used for stiffening – into the second section of the longitudinal walls (*vezérfal* [control wall]). A 10/10 cm mud rim was put onto the completely dry wall.<sup>67</sup> The rubble used for building originates from the stone-quarry found in the outskirts of the village. Bányahegy (quarry hill), listed among the names of fields, stands for the stone-quarries found in the hillside. There may be bigger recesses within the quarries, because they have cavernous sound at some spots, and according to local reports a resident of Tölgyes once disappeared in the holes.<sup>68</sup> Beside the greyish-brownish rubble found in Bányahegy a lighter rubble was quarried in the so-called Régibánya (old quarry). The main construction materials were rubble and gravel found in the stream bed, as well as clay, straw, reed, and wood lumbered from Börzsöny. Today the municipality is situated in the one-time flood area, thus well-sinking proved to be a successful venture on the gravel-pebbly ground. The bored wells that have a diameter of 1–1.5 m did not require to be dug too deep due to the high level of groundwater – as it was told by data providers of Ipolytölgyes.<sup>69</sup>

Fortunately, the characteristic, archaic houses of Ipolytölgyes are still in existence, often in their unaltered forms. However, changes in either the functional use of the one-time lot or in the formation of certain buildings are recurrent. Although it frequently occurs that farm buildings can be found in their original form and function, still, due to the collapse of the joint family system in the post WWII period, the functions of certain buildings or wings have changed in many instances, and farm buildings have been converted into residential houses. Furthermore, perpendicular extensions at the street front section of the houses are also characteristic – the house under 44 Kossuth Street is a good example for that. As a result of the L-shaped extension the traditional shape of roof, the fenestration and the shape of the windows and doors have also changed. Today, a door and two large-sized windows are opening on the elevation of the house under 44 Kossuth Street, but it is most likely that originally it had the same layout as the ethnographic village museum next to the church

<sup>67</sup> Ethnographical Archives of the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum shelf mark E10404

<sup>68</sup> Hála 1977. 614.

<sup>69</sup> Koczó 2005. 56.

with its four-window arrangement, that has also been extended in L-shape. On this basis and with the help of the survey drawings we created the schematic reconstruction drawing of the elevation of the house under 44 Kossuth Street.

Walling up the hambit and converting it to an enclosed space is also a type of expansion. We encountered this phenomenon when looking at many houses during the survey camp. On the basis of the survey drawings we endeavoured to present a proposal to the method of an authentic restoration by the reconstruction drawings of the original shape of the hambit. The spaces between the columns of the hambits under 15 and 51 Kossuth Street have been walled up and furnished with large-sized windows. However, inside the walled-up hambit, the original columns could still be seen because their foot-stalls bent over the ashlar line. As a result, it was possible to create the schematic reconstruction drawings of the original view of the back elevations with the help of the survey drawings.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The survey camp had very important and significant experiences.<sup>70</sup> The field work carried out in cooperation with the architectural students revealed the architectural heritage, and cultural–historical values of Ipolytölgyes. Visiting the lots, houses, and talking with the local owners made it possible to record data that may immortalise these values. Drawing the manual survey drawings created during the survey camp enhanced the drawing skills and developed the structural knowledge of the students, who, in the meantime, experienced that vernacular architecture heritage is closely related to local people tell-tale stories, the wide range of furnishings in their rooms and attics, and the tools they used during their everyday life.

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<sup>70</sup> Nagy 2017.