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the Francke Foundations.

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"Supposed magnificence". The Building Typology and Symbolic Character of the Francke Foundations

Aims

This report considers the architectural design of the Francke Foundations. The objective is to verify whether, in terms of architectural history, they can be considered to be of "outstanding universal value". This is to be established on the basis of analysing the architectural evidence of the buildings proposed for inscription on the World Heritage List.

Materials

The site itself as well as contemporary depictions in prints, models and descriptions.

Thesis

The new formulation of a building type combining elements of municipal prestige buildings (town halls), educational institutions (schools, orphanages), religious community buildings (monasteries) and secular prestige buildings (palaces) resulted in the creation of an architectural language adapting and varying elements of all these building tasks, and united them in a new type of architecture appropriate to the innovation and autonomy of the educational concept. At the same time, it was necessary to ensure that sufficient formal distance was maintained to all the above related building types to avoid prompting one-sided associations or misinterpretations incompatible with Francke's philosophy and the function of the Francke Foundations. Such cautious consideration led to an entirely autonomous architectural language which can, in the words taken from Francke's *Segensvolle Fußstapfen* published in 1701, be described as *vermeinte Kostbarkeit* ('supposed magnificence'). This embodies a new approach to prestige public buildings which, in this form, can hardly be found in any other contemporary example of architecture and thus can be ranked, also from the perspective of architectural history, among the World Heritage of humankind. In this context, the ensemble of buildings represents one aspect to which too little attention has been given in the past, namely German Protestantism's part in developing the architectural language of the Baroque, pre-

viously mainly associated with buildings informed by Catholic beliefs.¹

It is, though, precisely the autonomous and ultimately outstanding character of this building complex which explains the comparatively little consideration it has received in those surveys whose focus has been, in accordance with a linear narrative, on the much-travelled main paths and not the unique special cases. In contrast, writing in 1998, Robert Suckale certainly did recognise the exemplary character of the Halle ensemble when he described it as the "most remarkable monument" of the movement known by the misleading term of 'Pietism' which, in the final analysis, actually facilitated "the rise of the third estate in Protestant Germany".²

Formal analysis

a) Unity and diversity

One characteristic feature of the Francke Foundations is their extreme complexity. Only at first glance do they appear conventional, coherent and uniform; on closer examination, though, they prove to be highly differentiated with many layers of meaning.

Initially, the entire ensemble appears to be a coherent three to four-winged, very deep courtyard complex with a formally unified design. In fact, though, this is a rather loosely arranged ensemble of differentiated buildings which are distinctly different in terms of materials, construction, architectural details (e.g., roof forms, eaves height, and other elements). Rather than merging the wings down the sides of today's *Lindenhof* courtyard into a continuous unbroken and uniform front, the building sections, constructed in succession, are separated with clear breaks.³ This is especially evident in the oblique view from 1740.⁴ At the same time, the ensemble's individual buildings evidence a high degree of seriality and stringency, e.g. in the rigidly systematic articulation of the window bays and the uniform shapes of the windows⁵ which actually contradicts the traditions and possibilities immanent in half-timbering, yet reflects

the tendency to formal unity in the prestige buildings of the day.⁶ In comparison, the stone buildings added later, such as the new building housing the bakery and brewery,⁷ as the construction drawing shows on the hierarchically 'higher-ranking' forms of the main building (mansard roof and rendered façade). The structure and arrangement of the courtyard buildings emphasise the connective design principles, yet do so without conveying the formal uniformity or architectural insularity of the introverted cloister courtyard (*claustrum*=enclosed). The development's iterative character appears to resonate with the image of the "footsteps of the yet living, governing, loving and faithful God" which Francke chose for his apologia.⁸

The main building also shows this striking differentiation, since the three stone-built walls facing outwards (towards the 'world') are smoothly rendered, while the 'more modest' half-timbered construction is clearly visible in the inner walls fronting the courtyard. The prints depicting the building from the time of its construction demonstrate that the legibility of this differentiation was an integral part of the aesthetic design. When comparing such prints, for example, with etchings of the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel's summer palace in Salzdahlum, constructed from 1688 to 1694 by Johann Balthasar Lauterbach and Hermann Korb as a half-timbered building to save costs, one notes that the cladding on the palace walls was apparently designed to create the impression of a stone building, which had a higher status in the architectural hierarchy. It is difficult then to avoid identifying in Francke's architectural ideal the moralising aesthetic category of 'honesty' or 'truthfulness', first canonised in the modern period.⁹ In contrast, no importance was attached to the external legibility of the functions within the individual buildings and their hierarchy (e.g. the library, the hall for prayers and hymns, or the building housing the bakery and brewery). Unlike in palace architecture, the *Bet- und Singesaal* ('prayer and singing hall'), as the prominent 'representational and assembly hall' of the complex, is located in a corner of the south wing in a position not visible from outside and which, in palaces, tended to be reserved for a chapel rather than a ceremonial hall.¹⁰ Here, the Orphanage significantly differs from monastic and conventual architecture, where the church is always located in a central position easily visible from outside.¹¹ In the sequence of rooms on the main floor, the centre of the building, always particularly highlighted in palace architecture, remains strangely unaccentuated.¹²

The early depictions in particular show a continuable linear structure, opening to the east, which appears to be extendable as desired from the core, the main building.¹³ With this generally open structure, Francke's *Schulstadt* ('school town') differs from the other ideal designs typical of their day for utopian buildings and cities such as, for example, those developed by the Moravian Church¹⁴ or Protestant exponents of architectural theory such as Nikolaus Goldmann,¹⁵ since they are usually marked by an enclosed and largely symmetrical structure built around a focal centre. Instead, the courtyard's character tends to recall a streetscape flanked with houses which are recognisably individual, yet designed to a fixed pattern.¹⁶

b) Between *cour d'honneur* and city palace:
on the building type

At first glance, the Orphanage's ground plan suggests that this is a variation of the French three-winged style of *hôtel entre cour et jardin*, generally found around the 1700s, with a *cour d'honneur*. However, this would be incorrect in as far as the principal block, the *corps de logis*, in these complexes¹⁷ is set at the end of a courtyard faced by the main façade, a design creating a fitting distance to the 'outer world'. In contrast, the Orphanage's high-status front façade meets the front of the street directly, while the building's wings frame an interior courtyard at the rear on the side not visible to the public. Hence, the Orphanage represents a hybrid design integrating architectural elements of the traditional, central European inner city palace which were also commonly used for municipal prestige buildings.¹⁸ As is evident from the example of *Palais Trautson*, designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach and constructed from 1712 in a similar position outside the walls of Vienna, this style of building was also of architectural interest for contemporary suburban aristocratic houses.

At the same time, this building type with its strongly vertical lines (in contrast to the modern, French-style *cour d'honneur* complex) references the late medieval tradition of the enclosed four-winged building, often topped by a tower in the inner courtyard, which may have served as the model for the Orphanage's external staircase.¹⁹ In the region of Saxony and Thuringia particularly, contemporary palaces in princely resident towns often used a hybrid design of the older courtyard with tower and the more modern three-winged complex.²⁰ Since the late Gothic period, the enclosed staircase extending into the courtyard was a reminiscence

of the *Wendelstein* spiral staircase tower, widespread in the region, set in front of the principal block; what may be the most prominent example of this type can be found in nearby Torgau. Adopting such an accentuated grand architectural style may well have expressed the privileged position, granted in 1698, of being “under the protection of the Prussian eagle”; this offers an analogy to such monastic sites in southern Germany-speaking territories as, for example, Melk,²¹ which often integrated elements from the buildings of the nobility to underline their quasi-autonomous position and yet still convey proximity to the ruler in a strictly hierarchical society.

c) The Orphanage façade – “Rather a fine structure and order”

The Orphanage’s main façade, facing west, represents the face and architectural centre of the entire ensemble of buildings. Set on gently rising terrain between Halle’s city walls and the small suburb of Glaucha outside the walls, the Orphanage stands out conspicuously above the surrounding buildings²² – a quality of the building which Francke would have been glad to intensify further, even if his arguments for it were purely functional.²³ Nonetheless, the confident ‘ascendancy’ of this main structure, precisely in contrast to the older adjacent rectory, has a strikingly impressive effect, particularly since Francke interprets it in his programmatic gable inscription²⁴ as the visible expression of the eagle-like power granted (the commissioner) by God. Francke’s treatise of 1701²⁵ proves all too clearly that this building was understood by contemporaries as the statement it was intended to be and regarded with some suspicion as self-aggrandisement and presumptuous extravagance. Hence, in the following, the main façade’s dialectic expressed in stone and mortar, a dialectical superimposition of an aspirational status and an overt refusal to employ the corresponding repertoire of decorative²⁶ forms, will be analysed as exemplary of the Foundations’ architectural language.

The building is structured into four floors with banded rustication uniting the lower two floors into a high base. The two upper floors, in turn, are connected by the identical design of fifteen vertical rectangular window bays, undifferentiated by pediments or similar ornamentation. Through their height, the two central storeys are defined as being of equal status, while in contrast the top and ground floors are interpreted, in accordance with contemporary palace architecture, as being lower in status and therefore

defined as subordinate.²⁷ The façade is vertically articulated in three sections of five window bays each – with a median *avant-corps*, only faintly prominent, and the flanking sections set back in line with the main façade. The non-hierarchical equal treatment given to the three vertical sections is certainly uncommon for Baroque prestige buildings²⁸ and could be read as alluding to the Trinitarian God, whose blessing is evoked in the gable inscription. The individual centring of the sections is evident from the minimal emphasis given to each median axis by a unified door, previously with a round arch, and now with a segmentally or jack arched shape.

Just a few elements (three again) emphasise the median *avant-corps*: the triangular gable pediment with its relief, the closed round-arched central doorway²⁹ on the ground floor, and the double-flight staircase set in front leading up to it. In its present unrendered state, the staircase gives the impression of being too strongly separated from the main building, while a coloured drawing of the front elevation from the time of building underscored the staircase’s place in the overall design of the façade.³⁰

This drawing shows fewer differences to the building’s present condition, though ones that do have a structural effect. For example, the banded rustication originally ran across all three vertical fields and unified them while the keystones locked the intermediate cornice, separating the base together with the window lintels. The windows on the two upper storeys were set in simple plaster frames (mouldings). Since Francke expressly described this as an unwanted decoration,³¹ it is hardly surprising that there was no use made of any other elements in classical architectural ornamentation, such as the order of the columns or window pediments. In contrast, though, some of the precisely calculated deviations from the norm are so fine that they hardly show in any drawings or pictures, and can only be seen directly on the building itself. For instance, the vertical rendered corner surfaces are not (projecting) pilaster strips; instead, these are actually setbacks cut 4 cm deep and indicating a third, as it were, neutral base level underneath the two façade layers, yet again referencing the design’s threefold structure, as already noted above.

In this way, the building’s austere grandeur and impressive proportions stand out even more prominently as a new, autonomous and quite original notion of an architectural display of prestige.³² It shows a noteworthy analogy to the ideal design from 150 years previously of another city of God as-

sociated with the Jerusalem Temple, the UNESCO World Heritage Site near Madrid of the Monastery and Site of the *Escorial*. What is posited here is a formally reductionist style expressing an ascetic, functional purity which has passed into art history under the apposite term of *Estilo desornamentado*, a 'stripped' or 'unornamented' style.³³

It is precisely the contrast between well-proportioned, impressive, aspirational grandeur through selecting a building type instantly locatable within the display style of palatial architecture and the demonstrative refusal to apply the conventional status signs of decorum which lends the Orphanage such an autonomous and original character that, from the perspective of architectural history too, there can be no doubt of its "outstanding universal value".

Emulation and autonomy of the architectural ensemble

Aside from the largely unaltered, surviving structure, one needs to consider the ensemble's equal importance as a model defining a style of building in reformed Protestant architecture in central Europe, as over the following decades alternatives were increasingly sought to conventional orthodox Lutheran prestige architecture. Here, one example would be the *Bet- und Singesaal* ('prayer and singing hall'), where form and function are still easy to read in the present buildings (though unfortunately neither the original substance is documented nor are there any known contemporary pictures or drawings). This was a laterally-oriented multifunctional room, most likely largely unstructured and aligned with the hall's centre, which served as an important model for the innovative 18th-century transept churches³⁴ popular, first and foremost, in the regions of Germany influenced by reformed Protestantism. The most prominent example here (which, sadly, also has not survived) is the *Garnisonkirche* in Potsdam,³⁵ built from 1730 to 1735 by Francke's sovereign, the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm I after the latter had visited the Francke Foundations on 12 April 1713.

In this context, the 'model nature' of the ensemble is to be understood as more intentional than factual. In its architectural language, the Orphanage was too specific and new to trigger broad emulation, a fact that rather underscores than relativises its uniqueness. A comparison could be made here with a potential successor building, the Zurich Orphanage, built from 1765 to 1771 to plans by Gaetano Matteo Pisoni.³⁶ The block-like free-standing building, which echoes the prestige palace style, adopts key elements from the Halle model, such as the five window bays and a median avant-

corps crowned by a triangular gable. However, this characteristic style is then modified by conventional devices in late-Baroque architecture for representation, revoking the Orphanage façade's overtly 'unadorned' character by adding an arrangement of massive Ionic pilasters and textured key stones above the window arches on the two main floors.

In conclusion, one can note that the multiplicity of innovative characteristic architectural features, in some cases unique and in this combination most likely inimitable, suggests that inscription under Category IV is eminently plausible and well founded.³⁷

Postscript on the optical integrity of the Francke Foundations

The qualities described in this report in terms of the typology, architecture, and the iconography of the buildings, depend to a significant extent on an unimpeded view. The ensemble must remain clearly discernible, also in future, as cohesive and connected, and formally independent from the neighbouring city of Halle as well as the former suburb of Glaucha. Here, despite the undeniable adverse impact of the noise, vibration and, in some parts, interference with the view, the elevated highway, which is considered part of the buffer zone, also provides a positive contribution that should not be underestimated. Even today, this makes the city boundary, which determines the ensemble's layout and the walls and moat clearly defined at the time of building as a distinct spatial area, highly visible as a caesura and lends it a physical presence. If at a later point in time, the elevated highway were to be lowered – a possibility that should be examined on the basis of general urban planning criteria quite independently of the Foundations' inscription as World Heritage – steps would have to be taken to ensure that this caesura, highly conspicuous even now through this traffic-related structure, retains its visibility in an appropriate manner afterwards. In any case, it is essential to prevent any blurring of this distinctness through the Foundations' 'integration' into the city of Halle by disguising the buildings' pre-eminence and uniqueness in urban planning through, for example, oversized or formally inadequate developments on adjacent plots.

Conclusion

As the report above demonstrates, within its own historical period the Francke Foundations' architectural design represents a unique special case which, at the same time, distinctly

references numerous other, usually dissimilar yet coexistent, contemporary building tasks. By combining the most diverse elements, from the functional wooden building to a palace built of stone, in a coherent, programmatically innovative and original use of form, demonstrating the maximum of painstakingly planned prestige design, while yet pursuing an overt formal reduction, the ensemble's supremely original

hybrid character appropriately expresses an equally new kind of programme which represents, in a pre-eminent way, a combination of the World Heritage List's Criteria IV and VI. The inscription of the Francke Foundations would close a palpable gap. In the view of the author of this report, no other building complex – national or international – can occupy this specific position in the same way.

¹ The Würzburg Residence, the Pilgrimage Church of Wies, the Castles of Augustusburg and Falkenlust at Brühl, as well as, for example, such sites in neighbouring countries as the Wachau Cultural Landscape with its many monasteries or the Abbey of St. Gall are examples of Baroque World Heritage Sites influenced by the Catholic faith. The Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica in former Silesia, now Poland, are among the few examples of buildings whose style, though very different, was influenced by Protestant thought.

² Robert Suckale, *Kunst in Deutschland von Karl dem Großen bis heute*, Köln 1998, 402ff.

³ Despite the suggestions that this design of single buildings was a means of preventing the spread of fire, such prevention could also have been ensured in other ways, as is evident in a comparison with the fire walls (only evident as breaks in the roof) in the Prelate's Courtyard, with its architecturally enclosed design, at Melk Abbey.

⁴ Claus Veltmann, "Und würde dann nicht ein solches Werk als eine Stadt, die auf dem Berge liegt, jedermann in die Augen fallen? Die Bau- und Entwicklungsgeschichte der Franckeschen Stiftungen bis 1750," in Holger Zaunstöck (ed.), *Gebaute Utopien. Franckes Schulstadt in der Geschichte europäischer Stadtentwürfe*, Halle 2010 (Kataloge der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 25), 93–107, here 105.

⁵ This is especially clear in the elevation of the 1741 building containing the brewery and bakery, cf. Veltmann, "Bau- und Entwicklungsgeschichte" [see note 4], 99, Nr. 3.18. Remarkably, there is no attempt to elaborate the façade's diagonal braces, actually structurally essential though disrupting the aesthetic pattern. This is evident in a comparison with the stable, which was conventionally constructed, since it was not a prestige building, cf. Claus Veltmann, "Raum 3: eine Stadt, die auf

dem Berge liegt – die Baugeschichte der Glauchaschen Anstalten," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 118–129, here 122–123, Nr. 3.25.

⁶ On this, see such monastic ensembles as Obermarchtal or Melk, developed over a comparably long period of time, yet seeking to disguise that fact by aligning façades as far as possible and seamlessly connecting the structures built in succession.

⁷ Veltmann, "Bau- und Entwicklungsgeschichte" [see note 4], 100, Nr. 3.22.

⁸ Paul Raabe/Thomas Müller-Bahlke, *Das Historische Waisenhaus. Das Hauptgebäude der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle*, 2nd revised edition, Halle 2005 (Kataloge der Franckeschen Stiftungen, 1), 19.

⁹ On the discussion of the ensemble's immanent modernity, also see the expert report by Thomas Eißing.

¹⁰ See for example Frederiksborg (Denmark), Neu-Augustusburg in Weissenfels or the Würzburg Residence.

¹¹ E.g. Obermarchtal, Melk, Escorial.

¹² See the broadsheet from 1705, in *Das Historische Waisenhaus* [see note 8], 8.

¹³ E.g. the 1713 plan of the Foundations in Holger Zaunstöck, "Gebaute Utopien – Franckes Schulstadt. Zur Einführung," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 9–15, here 10, Nr. 3.16, or the 1715/18 ground plan, Holger Zaunstöck, "Gestaltete Räume. Die Zukunft der Stadt in der Frühen Neuzeit und Franckes Schulstadt," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 27–45, here 34, as well as the general view from around 1740, Veltmann, "Bau- und Entwicklungsgeschichte" [see note 4], 105, Nr. 3.40.

¹⁴ On this see *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 158–193.

¹⁵ Design for a *Hohe Schule* (university) from Nicolai Goldmann *Vollständige Anweisung zu der Civil-Bau-*

Kunst, 1708, printed in Holger Zaunstöck, "Es leuchten die Gebäude. Francke, Neubauer, von Gedeler, Freystein – die Architektenfrage," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 109–117, here 115, Nr. 1.23; etching of Christianopolis from Johann Valentin Andreae, *Reipublicae Christianopolitanae*, printed in Claudia Drese, "Auf dem Weg ins Universelle. August Hermann Franckes Erfahrungshorizont und die Formung eines Ideals," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 67–77, hier 72, Nr. 2.25.

¹⁶ On this compare Dismar Degen's view of the construction of Friedrichsstadt near Berlin, printed in Zaunstöck, "Gestaltete Räume" [see note 13], 43, with a view of the Francke Foundations courtyard in an etching by Gottfried August Gründler from 1750, printed in *Das Historische Waisenhaus* [see note 8], 11.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. Friedenstern near Gotha, Oranienbaum near Wörlitz or Charlottenburg near Berlin, and, to a certain extent, Oranienburg.

¹⁸ For example, the town halls in Amsterdam or Augsburg, see Leonhard Helten, "Die Stiftungen August Hermann Franckes im architektonischen Kontext," in *Gebaute Utopien* [see note 4], 133–137, here 134–135.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. Hartenfels near Torgau, Frederiksborg in Denmark, Aschaffenburg near Mainz or Weilburg on the River Lahn, and, to a certain extent, the Moritzburg in Halle.

²⁰ For example, the Heidecksburg in Rudolstadt or Schloss Neu-Augustusburg in Weissenfels. Also Schlüter's Berlin Palace, also built for the electors of Brandenburg, which would have had a very similar character if the planned Münzturm had been built.

²¹ This is especially evident in the façade of the Torwarthof courtyard inspired by Fischer von Erlach's princely Palais Trautson.



