TROUBLING MODERNITY: SPATIAL POLITICS, TECHNOLOGIES OF SEEING,
AND THE CRISIS OF THE CITY AND THE WORLD'S EXHIBITION
IN FIN DE SIÈCLE BUDAPEST

by

DOROTHY LYLY JULIANNA BARENSCOTT

B.A., Okanagan University College, 1999
Diploma in Art History, University of British Columbia, 2000
M.A., University of British Columbia, 2002

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Fine Arts)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 2007

© Dorothy Lyly Julianna Barenscott
ABSTRACT

Conflicts and concerns around representing ethnic, class, and national identities within the context of modern national ideologies have come to the fore in recent years. Yet these same problems were current and actively being negotiated in the nineteenth century in Central and Eastern Europe’s Austro-Hungarian Empire. This dissertation takes as its focus the role of visuality, new technologies, and social space in the articulation of competing identities in fin de siècle Budapest, Hungary. In 1896 the city hosted a Millennial Exhibition designed to simultaneously celebrate the history of the Hungarian people and the entry of Hungary into the larger European world economy. But, preparations within the city of Budapest itself—urban modernization, a state of the art transportation system, new architectural projects, and the design of mass entertainments—argued in different ways for Hungary’s legitimacy as a progressive and modern state within the broader jurisdiction represented by the ruling Austrian Hapsburgs, and the imperial capital of Vienna. My thesis explores how different forms of mobility and circulation within both the shifting urban fabric of the city of Budapest, and the officially sanctioned spaces of its World’s Fair, played a key role in re-defining Hungary’s status under imperial rule. The four chapters of the dissertation which focus at their broadest level on the re-ordering of the spaces of the city, panorama spectacles, photography, and early cinema, thus consider the ways in which new modes of subjectivity, embodied vision and media forms, in dialogue with nationhood, gave form to a complex set of social and political tensions and debates at the time of the international exhibition.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .............................................................................................................. ii

Table of Contents ............................................................................................. iii

List of Illustrations ........................................................................................... vi

List of Maps ........................................................................................................ xxiii

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................... xxiv

Dedication ........................................................................................................... xxv

**INTRODUCTION** ............................................................................................ 1

The Modern City as Catalyst for National Reconfiguration and Resistance .......... 8

The Urban Mediascape: Preparing To See and Preparing To Be Seen ................. 13

Critical Geography, Contested Subjectivity, and the Policy of Magyarization ....... 14

Re-Envisioning Frameworks of Modernity, Tradition, and Visual Culture .......... 22

**CHAPTER ONE: Built Space, Style, and the Dis/ordering of Fin de Siècle Budapest** ...... 29

Budapest’s Nineteenth Century Urban Fabric: Linking Technology and Culture ........ 35

Andrássy Avenue and the Sightlines of Budapest ................................................. 45

The “Paradigmatic Urban Ensemble” and the Constraints of Dualism ................. 55

Architectural Compromise and the Hungarian Parliament Building ..................... 57
The Photographer as Patriot—The Photograph as Revolutionary

Private Mourning, Public Ritual, and the Cult of Kossuth

The Power of Proliferation: Reordered Power and the 1896 Millennial Exhibition

Mobility, Capital Expansion, and the Economy of the Fin de Siècle Photograph

Conclusion: Reconfiguring Understandings of Truth, Solidarity and Identity

CHAPTER FOUR: “Life: Caught in the Act!” Mobilizing Budapest’s Cinematic Gaze

The Cinematograph as Emerging National Eye: Expanding New Spaces of Publicity

Reappraising Early Cinema Historiography and Spectatorship

The Radical Potential of Budapest’s Early Cinema

Tracing the Story of Hungarian Film Exhibitor Arnold Sziklai

Conclusion: Contingency and the Deterritorialized Structures of Modern Life

CONCLUSION: Urban Modernity’s Janus Face

Bibliography

Appendix

Maps

Illustrations
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

INTRODUCTION


I.4 Unknown Illustrator, Section from map of Budapest (1896). Illustrated Antiquarian Map. Owned by author.................................................................310


I.7 Lipót Kellner, Constantinople in Budapest (1896). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library..................................................312


I.9 Unknown Illustrator, Orient Express Advertisement (c.1890’s). Poster. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Aff_ciwl_orient_express4_jw.jpg.................313
CHAPTER ONE

1.1 David Károly, Roof-Raising Ceremony of Parliament on May 5, 1894 (1894). Photograph. Kiscell Collection, Budapest History Museum.................................316

1.2 György Klösz,, Parliament Building (c.1900’s). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library..................................................317


1.4 Unknown Photographer, Parliament Building with Buda Hills and Royal Castle in Background (1930). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library......319

1.5 Unknown Producer, Lajos Kossuth (c.1850-60’s). Photograph of lithograph by Prinzhofner. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C..............320

1.6 Unknown Artist, Jellasics Crosses the Chain Bridge (1849). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library...........................................321

1.7 Unknown Artist, View of Buda and Pest (c. 1859-70). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library..................................................321

1.8 Weinwurm Brothers, Chain Bridge (c. 1870). Daguerreotype. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library..................................................322
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Annotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>György Klösz, Andrássy Avenue, View from Opera House towards City Grove (c.1890). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>György Klösz, View of City Grove (c.1890). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Budapest Municipal Planners, Plan for Sugár (later Andrássy) Avenue (1870). Drawing. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>Mór Erdelyi, The Danube Promenade (c.1900). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>Károly Divald. View from Buda (c.1900). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.</td>
<td></td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>György Klösz, Café Reitter on Andrássy Avenue Opposite the Opera House (1896). Photograph. Kiscell Collection, Budapest History Museum.</td>
<td></td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>Unknown Producer, Vienna Parliament (c.1890-1900). Photochrome Print. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images</td>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>Unknown Photographer, Berlin Reichstag (c.1900). Photograph. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images</td>
<td></td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.19 Unknown Photographer *Original Canadian Parliament (before 1916 fire)* (c. 1870). Photograph. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Original_Canadian_parliament.jpg ........................................... 333


1.28 Siemens and Halske, Franz Joseph Underground Subway (c.1894). Illustration. Budapest Metro Museum ................................................................. 342

1.29 György Klösz, New Art Gallery/Exhibition Hall (c.1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library ............................................ 343


CHAPTER TWO


2.2 Mihály Munkácsy, Conquest (1896). Oil painting on canvas (459 x 1855 cm). Hungarian Parliament Building..........................351

2.3 Anonymous, Árpád Feszty posing in front of the panorama (c.1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library...........352

2.4 György Klösz, Feszty Panorama Rotunda in City Grove (1895). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library...........353

2.5 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas (15 x 120 meters). Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 1......................354

2.6 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 2..........................355

2.7 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 3..........................356
2.8 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 4 ..................................................357

2.9 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 5 ..................................................358

2.10 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 6 ..................................................359

2.11 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 7 ..................................................360

2.12 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 8 ..................................................361

2.13 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 9 ..................................................362


2.22 Béla Grunwald, *Comeback After the Tatar Invasion* (1896). Oil painting on canvas (dimensions unknown). Hungarian National Gallery.
Herkó Páter 26 July 1896 ................................................................. 372


2.27 Jan Styka and Pál Vágó, The Battle of Sibiu or Bem and Petofi in Transylvania (1897). Panorama, oil painting on canvas (original dimensions unknown). Sections in museum and private collections throughout Europe. Images reproduced on Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Museum, Hungary website:
http://www.djm.hu/archiv/erdely.html ................................................................. 376

2.28-2.29 Jan Styka and Pál Vágó, The Battle of Sibiu or Bem and Petofi in Transylvania (1897). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Sections in private collections throughout Europe. Image reproduced on Museum of Tarnow, Poland website:
http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/panorama/panorama.html ................................................................. 377


3.3 Unknown Illustrator, “You Can’t Pass Here!” (1851). Newspaper Illustration. *Punch, or The London Charivari* vol. 21, 1851.................................381


3.11-3.12 Gustave Courbet, *The Painter's Studio, A Real Allegory Summarizing My Seven Years of Life as an Artist.* (1854-1855). Oil painting on canvas (361 x 598 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris. 387


3.19-22 Mor Erdélyi, *Kossuth Funeral Procession (Series)* (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library. 393
3.23 Mor Erdélyi, Waiting for Kossuth’s Body’s Return to Budapest at Western Railway Station (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library

3.24 Mor Erdélyi, Paying Respects to Kossuth at Hungarian National Museum (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library

3.25 Mor Erdélyi, Watching Over Kossuth’s Casket (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library

3.26-3.27 Mor Erdélyi, Paying Respects to Kossuth at Hungarian National Museum and Watching Over Kossuth’s Casket (1894). Photographs. Reprinted as steel plate engravings in Le Monde Illustre 14 April 1894


3.29 Mor Erdélyi, Kossuth’s Funeral in Budapest (1894). Photograph. Reprinted as a steel plate engraving in “Louis Kossuth” L’Illustration 14 April 1894

3.30-3.31 “Louis Kossuth” L’Illustration 31 March 1894

3.32 A.W., One of the People's Saints for the Calendar of Liberty 1852 (1852). Lithographic Print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

3.33 Front Page, Vasárnap Ujság (Illustrated Sunday News) 41.14 1894

3.34 György Klösz, The Old Stock Exchange Building (c.1873). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library
3.35 György Klösz, Budapest Street Scene (1894-95). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library

3.36 György Klösz, Electric Tram Yard (c.1890) Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library


3.42 Cover, Képes Kossuth naptár (Illustrated Kossuth Calendar) (1896). Day Calendar. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library


3.44 György Klösz, Millennium Exhibition Opening (1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library
CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Film Stills from the First Ten Lumière Films Debuted at the Salon Indien du Grand Café in Paris on December 28, 1895 with Accompanying Program. Reproduced on the Institut Lumière website:
http://www.institut-lumiere.org/english/frames.html

4.2 Unknown Photographer, Old Buda Castle Cabaret (1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.


4.7 Unknown Illustrator, Nem ugy van ma, mint volt régen, más csillagzat jár az égen [Today is not like it was long ago, another prophecy lies in the stars] (1896). Illustrated Cartoon, Herkő Páter, February 23 1896.

4.8 Advertisement Page from Pesti Napló (Pest Daily) 24 May 1896.

Institut Lumière.................................................................416

Film Still. Institut Lumière....................................................417

Institut Lumière........................................................................417

Film Still. Institut Lumière........................................................418

Film Still. Institut Lumière........................................................418

4.15 Lumière Brothers, “Gardener Makes Young Man Look at Hose” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.................................419

Film Still. Institut Lumière........................................................419

Institut Lumière........................................................................420

4.18 Lumière Brothers, “Young Man Looks Directly at Audience” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.................................420


**CONCLUSION**

C.2 Nineteenth Century Photographs Blown Up As Posters in Budapest Street Walkways (2005). Photograph by author.................................................................427

http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200609/s1747334.htm.........................................................428

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1: Architectural and Urban Planning Features of Nineteenth Century Budapest..................302

Map 2: Panorama and Painting Exhibition in Budapest (1894-1896)........................................303

Map 3: Procession of Lajos Kossuth’s Funeral and Areas Photographed (1894).........................304

Map 4: Cinema Screenings and Theatres in Budapest During 1896 Fair.................................305

Map 5: Overlay of Maps 1-4.....................................................................................................306
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For her constant support, encouragement, and insightful observations, I would like to thank my main advisor, teacher, and mentor Dr. Maureen Ryan—an individual from whom I have truly learned to read visual images and ask questions that provoke and push boundaries beyond the expected and predictable. I also credit her for instilling in me a true love of nineteenth century art, and the ability to both share and teach about the passion for new ideas to others. I would also like to thank my thesis committee, most notably Dr. John O’Brien, to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude for first encouraging me to pursue studies in the Department of Art History, Visual Art, and Theory at UBC, and for providing the very best advice and guidance in every phase of my graduate program. Thanks are also extended to Dr. Sherry McKay for her patience and key critical questions that pushed me to think about the spaces of Budapest and the shifting contours of its urban fabric in new ways. Outside of my committee, I was also fortunate to have the input of Dr. Serge Guilbaut in the early phases of my research—many thanks to him for provocative discussions about film, humour, and the notion of “failure” that shaped aspects of the final chapter and conclusion of this dissertation.

This thesis was researched and written with the support of a doctoral fellowship from Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and with the invaluable aid of a UBC Art History Travel Research Scholarship. I am also indebted to the kindness and assistance of a number of Budapest librarians, archivists, and technical support people who helped me to locate, gather and document much of the visual material that I have amassed for this project. Thanks as well to Nick Neisingh for his amazing map making skills. Within my department, I would also like to acknowledge the graduate students and faculty who contributed to the debates and exchange of ideas that informed aspects of my research. In particular, I want to thank Lara Tomaszewska for her constant friendship, valuable support, and critical feedback, especially in the final phases and months of this project, and also thank Martha Sesin for her ability to bring calm, perspective, and hope at some very difficult junctures of my doctoral program.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family and closest friends (a special thanks to my parents Maria and Levente Kovacs, and Cobi Falconer)—for supporting and providing me with the space and unconditional understanding to see this project through to completion. But most of all, I want to thank my husband and life partner, Brian Barenscott, for believing in me and this project (and for many cups of coffee, engaging discussions, and walks along our beloved Kitsilano Beach), and especially for supporting me in those fragile moments when I did not.
For Nagypapa with love—

The first and most passionate historian of Budapest
that I ever had the pleasure of knowing.
Introduction: Budapest 1896—Re-Envisioning Frameworks of Modernity and Tradition

Tradition, as a word we tend to take for granted as expressing a cultural value to be endorsed or rejected, is complicated by tradition as a concept, thus serving as a searchlight to illuminate the process, performance, and performativity whose subjects are seduced into realizing that they are doing the acting.

-- Mieke Bal, Cultural Theorist (2004)¹

Can we consider the modern as something existing—as something relatively expressive and important? We can say a decisive yes or no only when we answer the question whether our culture is really culture.

-- György Lukács, Hungarian Philosopher (1909)²

The Budapest Millennial Exhibition opened to an international audience on May 2, 1896, and at first glance, all of the expected attractions and features of a nineteenth century World’s Fair were present. Located in the second imperial city of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the six-month long exposition, while holding fast to the perceived expectations of tourists new to the city, encompassed the full range of predictable monuments to nation. Thus, readable statues of ancient heroes, historical architecture and paintings, as well as markers of the host nation’s civilization, such as Hungary’s newly completed neo-classical Palace of Art (modeled on the German Kunsthalle) and situated at the entrance to the fairgrounds, were offered up to visitors.³

Turning to an illustrated layout and map of the official Fair (figs.1.1-1.2), the visible traces of exhibition organizers’ attempts to exhibit Hungary’s more public and readable “Western” face indeed manifested itself in a typical, if not all together ordinary, nineteenth century exhibition.⁴ Here, visitors navigated officially sanctioned spaces and beautifully manicured green space with a carefully detailed map that led them on foot or via the small park train through a series of clearly delineated


³ Also known as the New Art Gallery (Műcsarnok), the building was completed in 1895 by architects Albert Schickedanz and Fülöp Herzog and situated at the entrance of the Millennial Exhibition fairgrounds.

⁴ This was also reflected in foreign press accounts that praised Budapest officials for putting on a Fair up to Western standards. See for example: "Hungary's Great Celebration," New York Times, June 9 1896.
pavilions and points of interest (fig.1.3). Temporarily staged in a large city park located on the farthest edge of Budapest’s industrial district, the exhibition was also strategically located at the end of the city’s widest and most luxurious new boulevard and between the cities two largest train stations (fig.1.4). Modeling elements of other similar World’s Fairs and Universal Exposition venues dating back to London’s Great Exhibition of 1851, the Budapest Fair simultaneously displayed an assortment of technological and industrial advancements along with a cross-section of the Empire’s cultural offerings. These, together with the requisite sprinkling of amusements and a spectacle or two thrown in for good measure, complied with the standard recipe for successful events of this type. Created with city visitors and tourists in mind, the International Exhibition’s primary function was to familiarize and educate spectators with the broader themes of progress and modernity endorsed at the exposition, while normalizing the very same ideas within the context of national advancement. In this sense as well, the Budapest Fair did not deviate very much from what was anticipated.

But by the summer of 1896, the focus of popular and international interest increasingly coalesced around the city of Budapest itself, and what could be described as more unofficial spaces of exhibition. One reason for this development was that the promotion and advertisements of the city’s most visually and technologically interesting attractions and entertainments drew public attention beyond the fairgrounds. One such attraction was the much anticipated inauguration of Continental Europe’s first electrically powered underground subway, an engineering marvel bisecting the newest part of an expanding metropolis and punctuating Budapest’s distinction as the fastest growing city in Europe. In turn, the phenomena

---

5 When researching 1896 tourist guidebooks on Budapest, I continued to find the same map shown in fig. 1.2 reprinted largely unchanged both in Hungarian and English editions, suggesting to me a kind of continuity and control over how the Fair was officially pictured and charted out for visitors.

6 Budapest’s Millennial Exhibition is referred to throughout this thesis interchangeably as a World’s Fair, and/or International Exposition/Exhibition. This reflects the way the exhibition was described in the international press (as all of these), and understood by the public of the time as something more than a localized National Exhibition. Indeed, I have found conflicting accounts of whether the official sanctioning body of World’s Fairs, the Bureau International des Expositions (or BIE), has recognized the Budapest Exhibition of 1896 as a registered “Universal Exhibition.” Much of this confusion, in turn, relates to Hungary’s status as a dual partner in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a point that will be explored extensively in this study.

7 This is a fact that is largely undisputed in the contemporary literature on European urban history, although Berlin follows closely on Budapest’s heels. For statistics on Budapest’s growth, see Thomas
of emphasizing off-site venues of the Fair was perhaps best recorded in a whole host of international guides and books about Budapest that sprung up in the mid-1890’s. For example, the guide titled *Budapest’s Amusements (A Múlátó Budapest)*, published in English, French and Hungarian, described the various attractions and nightlife of the city, emphasizing all of the bohemian adventures available to its readers (figs.1.5-1.6). This included exhaustive lists of cafes, concert halls, cabaret restaurants where gypsy bands played, private exhibitions of panoramas, paintings, and cinema, along with detailed descriptions of local haunts, such as the sumptuous Turkish baths and mineral spas dotting the city, all of which made Budapest a desirable tourist destination by the turn of the century.

One locus of such urban attractions was undoubtedly found in the grand reconstruction of a virtual Constantinople (Konstantinápoly Budapesten) on a large island on the lower right bank of the Danube (figs.1.7-1.8). Advertised as a place of unparalleled amusement where visitors could experience a semblance of the Turkish and significantly Islamic capital, “with all of its peculiar characteristics and romance,” the venue blurred aspects of Hungary’s imagined and real connections to its eastern nomadic ancestry and life under Turkish occupation (from 1541-1699). Still, what was successfully promoted at this site was the ability of tourists to “visit” Constantinople while still safely within Hungary—this, a nod to the nation’s attempted distinction from more negative associations with its eastern past. With an

---


11 The reconstruction of a Constantinople inspired theme park and place of amusement was the brainchild of Károly Somossy, a circus promoter and eventual owner of a well known Budapest cabaret in the 1890’s called the Somossy Club (Somossy Múlátó). Somossy leased the large tract of land on the edge of the city’s lower west bank to put up the temporary venue. What little is known about the place can be made out in local press accounts and through detailed advertisements taken out by Somossy to bring attention the daily events at the venue. See "Konstantinápoly Budapesten (Constantinople in Budapest)," *Vasárnapí Ujság (Sunday Illustrated News)* 36, no. 43 (1896).
emphasis on night-time theatricality, costume, and illusionism, together with the
display of new visual technologies and spectacles, the site operated in stark contrast
to the more traditional pavilions and tidy daytime promenades of the Millennial
Exhibition. Moreover, the evocative setting of a place at once associated with the
former Byzantine, East Roman, and present day Ottoman Empires, managed to
successfully promote a sense of the risqué and unexpected; feelings that were
necessary to impart the belief that visitors had seen and experienced something they
would otherwise not have at the official fairgrounds at the other end of the city.

The final encounter of visitors to Budapest in 1896 could therefore be
described, both spatially and metaphorically, as oscillating between varieties of
perception, viewpoints that could be understood to be more “Western” or “Eastern” in
flavour. To be sure, wherever the emphasis on Hungary’s oriental connections
emerged, they most often translated with popular fin de siècle audiences into
associations with a form of unexpected, clandestine and hybrid exoticism. These
ideas, relating to how visitors experienced Budapest, were already promulgated for
example with the new high speed Orient Express traveling between Paris and the real
Constantinople, located at the farthest outpost of Europe’s eastern border. In business
since 1883, the long-distance passenger train operating out of France became the
fashionable way to travel in the period, adding Budapest onto its route in 1889 as a
featured stop between the two distant locales—a literal manifestation of being
situated between east and west (fig.1.9). Budapest entrepreneurs, understanding the
financial gain to be made from the potential tourists to their city, were savvy enough
to recognize and highlight what would be understood by discerning fin de siècle
tourists as the more fashionable bohemian and exotic flavours of Budapest. All of
these mounting discourses, in turn, shaped people’s pre-existing and often jumbled
together fantasies and projections about the “exotic east” as it pertained to the new
metropolis, whether it related to Bohemia and bohemian culture, nomadic peoples
(such as the wandering Gypsies made famous by their musical concerts around
Europe and America), the sexual availability of local women, or the frightening
amalgam many associated with what was constructed as the largely indistinguishable

12 For studies on the history of the Orient Express, see Garry Hogg, Orient Express: The Birth, Life and
Death of a Great Train (London: Hutchinson, 1968); and on the changing perceptions of space and
time brought about by the new high-speed trains, see Wolfgang Schivelbusch, "Railroad Space and
cultures of Eastern nations. Consequently, not unlike in Paris, where the exploitation of the city’s bohemian element for profit had driven a new category of bourgeois tourist to the cabarets of Montmartre, there was a way in which the forbidden and exotic had become simultaneously normalized, popularized, and profitable in Budapest by the end of the nineteenth century.

At its broadest level, my argument in this thesis concerns the discourses of “otherness” attached to the Budapest Millennial Exhibition by the time of its opening in 1896, which encouraged visitors and tourists to seek out and experience the “real” Hungary through a close association with the newest and most technologically advanced facets and attractions of the city—a nexus that existed on the edges of the most deregulated and unofficial realms of World’s Expositions by the fin de siècle period. As my dissertation chapters with their inter-related focus on architecture and urban planning, panorama spectacles, photography and early cinema suggest, the accompanying and new regimes of seeing promoted through the modernizing city naturally pushed the locus of attention away from more traditional associations and perceptions of nation into entirely new directions. But what is particularly intriguing in the case of Budapest, and makes this study of wider interest to scholars of modernity in its many guises, is how ideas associated with an eastern exoticism were promoted from within Hungarian history and celebrated at the Fair through a connection to a class of mythic ancestor heroes that ennobled seemingly modern ideas in the form of nomadic traditions. These traditions, instead of emphasizing associations with a continuing pattern of cultural beliefs and practices emanating from a historical past to influence the present, ceremonialized an ethnic heritage of Magyar origins founded on present-day concepts and values that were cast back and closely associated with the founding myth of the Hungarian nation. This coincided, not insignificantly, with the very same core values and concepts associated with the burgeoning metropolis of Budapest: increased mobility, accelerated transport of

---

13 For examples of these stereotypes, see Victor Tissot, Unknown Hungary (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1881); Elizabeth Robins Pennell, “To Gipsyland,” The Century 45, no. 2 (1892) and “The Mystery of the Magyars,” New York Times, March 22 1896.

peoples, technological prowess, new networks of power, and the supporting strength of a liberal government founded upon ideals of democracy and freedom.  

Therefore, what I describe in this thesis, not unlike my opening allusion to the popularity of the Orient Express Railway, is that the promotion of Budapest’s transportation and communication innovations was firmly rooted in a forward-looking technological modernity, one which not only moved publics across boundaries, but which also engaged them with notions of fantastical illusionism and the techniques and instruments associating boundlessness with entirely new dimensions of power. Consequently, what I also suggest is that the focus on the emerging spaces of leisure, spectacle, and mobility of an urbanizing Budapest gave primacy to a far less public and more overtly private engagement with the new regimes of visuality proffered through a wide range of technologies celebrated at Budapest’s Millennial Exhibition. I explore in my thesis to what ends this visuality—which I argue imparted a sense that the city must be experienced through a kind of flaneury of the second imperial capital—privileged the more ephemeral, subterranean, eclectic, and modern urban fabric of the city as it gave shape and dimension to an emerging Hungarian consciousness.

In this sense, the kind of orientalism taken up in Hungary was very distinct from those notions taken up in nations such as France, Germany or Britain. With no colonial holdings or distant colonial subjects to control and manage, Austria-Hungary possessed a far different set of stakes related to the political and social implications of the constructed “Other” in the national imaginary. As architectural historian Ákos Moravánzsky argues in *Competing Visions: Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867-1918* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), using the example of the orient taken up in Austrian intellectual and cultural circles by the nineteenth century, orientalism was “invented” “not as a way to establish a relation of hegemony but to dissolve the limits of particularity, to find the universal principles of harmony by observing other cultures” (4-6). This was especially important for Austrians as a means through which to manage a multiethnic Empire. But for Hungarians, notions of the orient held out more radical potential. More than just facilitating the appreciation of other cultures, the idea of true cultural difference took political shape and was used strategically in Hungary. This was not only for Hungarians to directly trace their Magyar nomadic heritage to Eastern roots, but also to bind their past to liberal principles with which many politicians approached the folding in of “the people” to the nation. It was a powerful set of ideas that also strongly undermined important tenets of Habsburg imperial power. One aspect of this perceived difference was extended to the modern urban subject and their sense of home, a topic I explore in Chapter One.

The figure of the flâneur (or the idle-man-about-town) was famously described by the French poet Charles Baudelaire in many of his writings and has been a topic of interest for the philosopher Walter Benjamin in his meditations on Parisian culture. The term comes from the French verb flâner, which means “to stroll,” and thus characterizes a person who walks the city in order to experience it. For critical discussions on the role of the flaneur in the context of urban modernity, see: Susan Buck-Morss, "The Flaneur, the Sandwichman and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering," *New German Critique*, no. 39, Second Special Issue on Walter Benjamin (1986); Keith Tester, *The Flaneur* (London: Routledge, 1994); David Scobey, "Commercial Culture, Urban Modernism, and the Intellectual Flaneur," *American Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (1995).
The phenomena of coexisting and often competing official and unofficial exhibition venues dovetailed with how World’s Fairs had become promoted by the end of the nineteenth century. And this observation underpins other important aspects of my thesis. Whereas the first generation of World’s Fairs beginning in the mid-nineteenth century championed a public education angle for their attractions and sites of interest, the fin de siècle exhibitions came to increasingly focus on spectacle and fantasy as a way to continue attracting audiences to the stock World Exhibition format. At the same time, the commercialization and financing of Fairs, away from strictly national interests and into the hands of private investors, meant that many of the more novel attractions of the later exhibitions occurred outside the traditional venue of the exhibition fairground. For Budapest, following closely on the heels of Chicago’s successful World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, I contend that there was a prevailing sense of wanting to outdo what had been shown in earlier expositions. Indeed, in Chicago in 1893, the display of new technologies and spectacles had helped catapult the mid-Western city to international stature and attention as a modern metropolis—a fact that did not go unnoticed by Budapest Fair organizers. As political historian Freifeld notes, a “[Hungarian] delegation scouted the Chicago World’s Fair for ideas, returning with a bag full of tricks for sedate entertainment, improved security, and profit.” As I will argue in the course of this study, however, the less sedate entertainments would emerge precisely outside the

---


19 Ibid., 270. This awareness of the 1893 Exhibition in Chicago is not surprising since details about the Fair (from Hungarian visitors and correspondents) spread through local newspaper accounts of the event through the 1890’s.

20 Freifeld, 270.
control of Budapest Fair planners and arise as private ventures off-site of the official exhibition grounds. What I develop in my thesis then is that there existed a desire within elements of the Budapest public to extend the perceived boundaries of the Hungarian nation through the mechanisms of publicity and attention generated by the city as it prepared for its worldwide debut. In turn, these elements, together with Budapest Fair organizers, recognized both the desire and need to meet the expectations of the Budapest public and Fair visitors, many of whom anticipated the entertainments and off-site attractions of the Fair as much, if not more, as the traditional displays.

In raising the imagined geography of fin de siécle Budapest at the outset of my thesis, I also want to situate and draw attention to how the "Orient" functioned in fin de siécle European culture as a kind of mirror to itself, providing a way of expressing its hidden or illicit aspects. As Mary Gluck has persuasively argued in her recent study, *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth Century France*, the stereotypes associated with “Bohemia” and the “Bohemian lifestyle” were created out of conflicting elements that were “profoundly in tune with [a] middle class public who longed for realism and lighthearted wit after the failed idealism of revolution and social upheaval.” Consequently, Gluck explores how a specifically modern aesthetic culture in nineteenth century Paris came about, not in opposition to commercial popular culture, but in close alliance to it. I contend that something of the same was at play in Budapest by 1896. But in the case of Austro-Hungarian Empire, a place that was arguably on the very periphery or liminal border between European and North Americans’ mental map of the East and West, the stark contrasts and spatial dichotomies between perceptual worlds held out a particularly loaded set of stakes.

**The Modern City as Catalyst for National Reconfiguration and Resistance**

To be sure, this “newness”, this promoted “modernity” in such an unlikely city was located at the heart of an even more unlikely place. The Austro-Hungarian Empire under the Habsburg monarch Franz Joseph I was by the close of the nineteenth century a weakening and fractured body that was a fusion of no less than a dozen different ethnic groups speaking as many different languages, brought together

---

21 Gluck, 16.
reluctantly and by force to create what was the anomaly and negation of national
development in Europe.22 Adding to the Empire’s problems and attempts to keep
nationalism in check was the lack of traditional colonial relationships and distant
exotic others outside its European boundaries, a situation that tended to forge far less
of a homogeneous national identity than in Western nations such as France, Britain
and Germany. As a result, a perplexing quasi-colonial situation emerged in Austria-
Hungary that manifested in forms of discrimination within the Empire whereby a
hierarchy of ethnic groupings cast orientalist stereotypes of alterity and backwardness
onto particular minorities who were most often geographically furthest South and
East in the Empire.23 This not only strangely replicated the geography of a wider
global colonialism, it also created a climate whereby national mobilization of
previously subordinate peoples paralleled the mobilization of workers, artisans and
peasants in other “modernizing” European societies. Hungary, as Austria’s
disgruntled yet functionally sovereign partner in the dual monarchy, took full
advantage of the situation and forged its national identity through a carefully
orchestrated role of mediator or “modern alternative” predicated on its historical
origins as neither Slavic nor Germanic.24

On the one hand, what I argue was made most visible by the time of the 1896
Fair was Budapest’s contestation over its spatial make-up, a factoř that was

22 For a discussion, see Nancy M. Wingfield, Creating the Other: Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in

23 I want to acknowledge Dr. Merje Kuus, Professor of Geography at the University of British
Columbia for discussions I had with her on Central and Eastern European political geography in 2005
to help me arrive at this understanding of the political makeup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The
broader contours of these ideas are explored in: Merje Kuus, “Europe’s Eastern Expansion and the

24 The Hungarian (Magyar) language is one of only a small number of European languages part of the
Finno-Ugric family (along with Finnish and Estonian), which is not related in any way to other
languages spoken in Europe as part of the Indo-European language family (such as French, German,
English, and all the Slavic languages spoken in Central and Eastern Europe). As such, it has remained
one of the most valued and protected aspects of the Hungarian identity. At the same time, historians
have traditionally disputed the material origins of the Magyar people and to what degree the linguistic
and ethnographic arguments about the Magyar peoples (many of which emerged in the nineteenth
century) can be relied upon to make a conclusive argument. One uniting factor among historians,
however, is that the ancient Magyars came to Europe in one large migratory tide from territories of the
Far East at around end of the tenth century, hence the Millennial Exhibition of 1896 celebrating one
thousand years of Hungarian history. To this day, the prehistory of Hungary remains a contentious
topic in the public sphere and has become even more highly politicized in the post-communist era with
the rising tide of ethnic nationalism throughout Central and Eastern Europe. For a study examining a
number of the theories related to Hungary’s prehistory, see István Fodor, In Search of a New
Homeland: The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest (Budapest: Corvina, 1982).
manifested both literally in the layout of the city and its built spaces, but also in the public’s consciousness concerning Hungary’s broader role in the Austro-Hungarian Empire leading to moments of outright protest. The latter had come about not only in tandem with the legacy of failed revolution in 1848 and fractured “compromise” with Austria in 1867—two events that will be revisited shortly and discussed at length in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation—but also with the growing pains of a city experiencing accelerated and rapid urbanization in the few short decades between 1870-1890.

On the other hand, I also argue that Budapest was seen internationally, and especially by 1896, as a very modern, cosmopolitan, and technologically progressive place, a kind of urban model for an emerging international community of “great bourgeois cities” like Chicago, Berlin, and New York. As a nation becoming modern and, looking to flex its technological muscles and extend beyond its feudal past and geographical bounds, Hungary was indeed intent on rising into representation on a global scale. In turn, the active build-up and move towards modernizing the Austro-Hungarian Empire became part of Hungary’s larger effort to present a unified image to the rest of Europe, with Budapest often held up as a kind of multinational model. With the output of the Hungarian economy growing at least threefold between 1867 and 1914, transforming an underdeveloped agrarian country into a more rapidly developing agrarian-industrial one, the pace of growth and

---

25 Hungarian socialist worker parties staged a series of demonstrations in Budapest both as part of May Day celebrations on May 1, 1896, and then subsequently on numerous occasions throughout the time of the Fair. The official Exhibition did not open until May 2, the day following these protests, but many of the events were still headline news around the country. The calls for protest can be readily found in Budapest’s daily socialist newspaper Népszava (Nation’s Voice) during the week prior to the opening celebrations.


subsequent income levels were far greater in the urban labour force than in the rural sector. This once again reinforced the superiority of the urban model as vehicle for the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s future progress.

But unlike the rest of the world which increasingly came to regard Hungary and the city of Budapest as an emerging modern metropolis, the leaders in Vienna feared what forces of resistance and radicalism the upstart Hungarians were going to ignite and expose with an international Millennial Exhibition deep within the heart of the precarious and crumbling Empire. Therefore, another question I explore in my thesis relates to why and how the seemingly incongruent theme of Hungary’s 1896 Millennial Exhibition strategically pushed for a reconfiguration of how the place called Hungary was to be seen and experienced. This occurred both inside and outside Hungary’s physical boundaries, and within the context of celebrating one thousand years of statehood and achievements in modern Hungarian technology.

Importantly, what I discuss in the thesis chapters is how the rapidly changing spaces and visual terrain of Budapest became the catalyst for this new realization and reconfiguration of Hungary, while the preparation and staging of a World’s Fair became the most obvious vehicle for instant visibility. Keeping in mind that the venue of the International Exhibition, as a kind of “laboratory of modernism,” was viewed as an opportunity unmatched by any prior event in the emerging capital to showcase and market new inventions, attract new investors, and present the Hungarian industrial complex as fully modernized, if not on the cutting edge, of technological advancements, I am interested in highlighting the drive to normalize the idea of technological vanguardism as an integral part of the Hungarian heritage and national character in 1896. This in turn opens up ways of thinking about the precarious balance between notions of the local “homeland” in relationship to both an alienating modern urban environment and a larger global community both in the past and the present.

What my analysis also reveals is that the tradition-modernity dynamic, instead of a stark dichotomy, became the perfect foil through which to express and frame a newly emerging national vision. It was a vision that gave form to the fraught seeing from within the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a kind of framework of resistance for a place that existed within many layers of duality and historicity. Stated slightly

29 Kontler, 293.
differently, what I suggest is that the venue of the World’s Fair as it had emerged by the late nineteenth century, with its simultaneous interest in spectacle and history, intersected almost perfectly with the desires of particular political and social elements within Hungary to fashion a new kind of seeing for their often interconnected national and commercial projects—a seeing that by its very nature projected beyond traditional boundaries and presented a viable model for succeeding in an increasingly connected international community. What I also mean here is that there was a way in which the very need for a World’s Fair was being generated in the decades of Budapest’s rapid development as a way to express and resolve a number of brewing tensions within the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a whole.30

It is within this context, as I have alluded to already, that the emphasis and privileging of the private bourgeois viewing subject emerges as an important corollary to these arguments, and I raise this phenomenon at a number of points in the subsequent chapters of my thesis. Crucially, since the model for modern seeing and embodied visuality could be argued to have been perfected in the laboratory of the World’s Fair—through an emphasis and interest in individual viewers, education, new techniques of display, and illusionism—I explore how the spectatorship encouraged around the Budapest Exhibition also promoted a kind of self-determined, individuated, and embodied visuality, one that was not always directed or easily affected by what was shown, but existed as a self-inventing force in the co-creation of reality. This spectatorship was also closely tied to the potential freedom and expansion of boundaries promised through the mechanisms of capitalism, another reoccurring theme of the dissertation.

As I suggest, the increase in new experiences offered up in a rapidly changing Budapest held out very real possibilities for the reconfiguration of perception and difference necessary to oppose the status quo that emanated from Vienna and the West. At its most extreme, the push for new experiences was seen as a chance to rival Vienna politically as the “real” capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and at its

30 Notably, Budapest did have something of an exhibition history prior to the 1896 Fair. In particular, Budapest hosted a successful National Exhibition in 1885 celebrating aspects of Hungary’s technological progress, and held in the same city park that the 1896 Fair was set to take place. The planned Millennial Exhibition, however, was conceived as an event of far greater and more monumental proportions, signaling Hungary (and by extension Budapest’s) legitimacy and concurrent arrival on the international scene as worthy modern participant. It is also in this sense that the 1896 Fair must be understood in broader terms (as per my discussion in note 6).
most benign, this offered a way for Fair visitors and locals to temporarily escape into
a different kind of experience of themselves and the spaces they occupied. Indeed, as
I have already stated, the preparations for the Fair, although still “infected” to a high
degree with the taint of capital interest and self-conscious irony, took clear advantage
of Budapest’s geographic position between Eastern and Western Europe to
manufacture a unique identity in contradistinction to the imperial center of Vienna.
The end result was to fashion a kind of safe and fantastical oriental playground, with
all of its associated allure of eastern alterity, firmly within the context of a forward-
looking urban modernity that was invested in new technology and progress. All this,
while attempting to downplay its brewing political and social crises.

The Urban Mediascape: Preparing To See and Preparing To Be Seen

The anxiety and subsequent management of circulating visual, textual, and
spatial information about Budapest in the lead-up to the Fair forms another key facet
of my thesis. This area of documentation provides a useful point of departure to begin
exploring how the city would be negotiated in all of its contradiction and complexity.
The following quote from Budapest’s Millennium Exhibition Informer (Millenniumi
Kiállítási Értesítő) commenting on the city’s image in the eyes of the world suggests
just this point. The paper writes that it will not be “the gypsy, or the Turkish bath,
paprika, Tokai wine, or Jókai (a Hungarian poet), but enterprise, honest work,
education, progress, civilization, all of these moral values which they will now say
about us.”31 To be sure, the tremendous outpouring of Budapest newspapers, journals,
books and pamphlets related to the day-to-day affairs of the Exhibition is worth
mentioning here briefly.32 What these many publications attest to are the broader
concerns of the Budapest public in the 1890’s about how the city was being seen,
perceived, and understood by the foreign press, and then how these ideas were

31 In my archival research in the Budapest Collection of the Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library
(Budapest), I discovered the daily newspaper Millenniumi Kiállítási Értesítő [Millennium Exhibition
Informer] that took up the sole function of recording every detail, statistic, and episode related to the
Exhibition throughout its six month run, and relaying any press reports (favourable and unfavourable,
and sometimes translated in full) to the Budapest public. It was partly through this invaluable resource
that I was able to arrive at a larger picture of how the foreign press was reporting on the events in the
city, providing me with a great bibliographic tool to track down articles of the period. This specific
quote was taken from the June 30, 1896 edition of the paper.

32 In Budapest alone by 1896, the combined circulation of the city’s 291 Hungarian language and 42
German language newspapers was 65 million. Robert Nemes, The Once and Future Budapest (DeKalb,
Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 182.
reflected back to their reading and viewing publics. Indeed, it was the anxiety over being misunderstood as Hungarians, and the city of Budapest being understood as anything but forward-looking, which was continually emphasized in almost all of these publications as well as the many images accompanying them.

An important element of my analysis throughout this thesis will therefore be to demonstrate how the competing tensions over how Budapest and its public were to be seen and legitimized by an international audience were first worked out in anticipation of the Fair—that is in the years leading up to 1896. Taking into account the powerful role that modern cities played in the social imaginary of emerging nations, I contend that Hungarian national identity was constructed in large part through the phenomenological experience, emotion, and flux and flow of rapid urbanization in the growing metropolis of fin de siècle Budapest as it prepared to be visited and viewed by the world. Moreover, these discourses were worked out in highly technological ways, and as stated previously, imparted and emphasized new ways of seeing.

Critical Geography, Contested Subjectivity, and the Policy of Magyarization

Of course, all of these preliminary observations beg the question of who “the people” of Budapest were—the public for whom the new city of Budapest was being expanded and rapidly built in the late nineteenth century. A short discussion of Hungary’s complicated and often misunderstood nineteenth century social and political history is therefore useful to summarize here in the Introduction, as it forms an essential underlying context that is developed further in each subsequent chapter of this thesis.

In terms of sheer numbers, the answer to the question of the Budapest public lies with the sevenfold increase in population from 1840 to 1900, making Budapest Europe’s fastest growing and youngest city in the final decades of the nineteenth century, and the eighth largest capital city of Europe in the same period. With a population of 730,000 by 1900, many of Budapest’s inhabitants were functional

\footnote{All cited statistics on Budapest’s population distribution in the fin de siècle period can be found in Bender, Schorske, and Russell Sage Foundation, 2-4, 30-36; and Moritz Csák, “Multicultural Communities: Tensions and Qualities, The Example of Central Europe,” in Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937, ed. Eve Blau and Monika Platzer (Munich: Prestel, 1999), 45.}
immigrants with only 39% of city-dwellers having been born locally in 1890. But what is strikingly revealed in these statistics is the nearly unmatched heterogeneity of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and within the two imperial capitals in particular. For example, while the proportion of foreigners in Paris was a mere 6.3% in 1900, that of Vienna was over 60%, with a similar situation in Budapest. By 1890 and in the years immediately leading up to the Millennial Exhibition, 52% of the Budapest's inhabitants originated from ethnically and linguistically “other” places from within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, while a full quarter of the Budapest population claimed a Jewish identity.34 Indeed, when compared to the growth of fin de siècle North American cities during the same period, the parallels are significant. For example, many of New York’s immigrants were drawn from the very same regions of Central and Eastern Europe as those individuals who settled Budapest in the mid to late nineteenth century. This, as some human geographers have noted, suggests that Budapest held to an “American pattern” of urban development.35

But the market mechanisms of capitalism and the technologies that supported rapid urbanization aroused a high degree of anxiety among other sectors of the public who feared that all traditional bearings would be lost and swept away in the tide of modernization. For example, a particular series of newspaper cartoons published in Budapest during the millennial year alongside an article titled “Complaints Against Wires” helps to illustrate these concerns (fig.1.10). In these drawings (which range from the humorous depiction of a soldier saluting a telephone, and music concerts being piped into homes through machines, to a poignant image of an old man identified as the “Last of the Lamplighters”), what is revealed are the deep-seated fears of the unknown and the possibility that Budapest citizens would soon be answering to an invisible and sometimes mysterious power that could not be seen or readily resisted.36 One of the drawings caption’s sums up the sentiment: “If Edison had only known!” In other words, while modernizing processes attempted to abolish the perceived “backwardness” of the Carpathian Basin, they did so in tension with a

34 Ibid. This a generally agreed upon estimate in the literature concerning Budapest’s Jewish community that ranges between 20-25%. Still, the Jewish population of Budapest in the 1890’s is at times difficult to pinpoint exactly because of the unknown number of Jews (likely assimilated through the process of Magyarization) who would not be identified as Jewish in the official statistics of the day.

35 Bender, Schorske, and Russell Sage Foundation., 2-3.

36 Fővárosi Lapok [Budapest Capital News], 28 June 1896.
tradition of feudal hierarchy that was deeply entrenched in both the psyche and
governing body of the nation. In this sense, the conflicted Hungarian identity turned
on the problematic coin of self-exoticization and self-determination. Still, if a political
charge existed with Hungarians’ interest in aspects of their constructed Eastern
heritage and proclaimed Magyar nomadic roots, it was one that arguably escaped
many tourists or even city inhabitants caught up in the pleasure-seeking activities that
the rapidly expanding urban environment offered.

As I discuss at numerous junctures in my thesis, the experience of Budapest’s
urban development as a second imperial city was indeed marked by its tendency to be
rushed, and what one historian has deemed “spontaneous.”37 To be sure, the issue of
ethnic, national, and class tension was a consistent undercurrent at the Millennial
Exhibition, a problematic and complex dynamic that also fascinated and intrigued
North American visitors in particular.38 With such a variety of people in one place,
the experience of difference was thus understood itself to be an important aspect of
the Budapest Fair, something that was, once again, best encountered in the city and
not in the more regulated environment of the fairground. In this sense, the people of
Budapest believed they belonged to the exhibition as much as it’s most important
objects. Gypsies (known today as the Roma) were a particularly complicated group
within the Hungarian tapestry of identity and reflected the conflict in Hungary over
self-exoticization.39 Understood to be nomadic in character, but clearly delineated as
unacceptable members of polite society, the Gypsy played a convenient foil in the
Hungarian imaginary to emphasize the ethnic Magyars as civilized, as seen for


38 See for example: Margaret Fletcher, Sketches of Life and Character in Hungary (London: Swan
Sonnenschien and Co., 1892); "Are the Magyars Slavs?,” New York Times, June 8 1896; Hellen E.
Browning, A Girl’s Wanderings in Hungary (London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1896); "Austria’s

39 The Roma remain both a highly romanticized and equally disdained minority group within almost
every nation of Europe—a group that has historically been identified by many Hungarians as distinct
for virtue of their nomadic characteristics. For example, the following text accompanied the
photograph shown in fig. 1.11 of the “Gypsy camp” on display on the official fairgrounds, reprinted in
a widely distributed tourist book: “This is one of the bleak, but at the same time romantic moments of
nomadic life. But in spite of the misery that pervades this scene, the spirit of Liberty floats over these
figures.” See Gyula Laurencic, Az ezereves Magyarország és a milléniumi kiállítás (The Millennium of
Hungary and the National Exhibition) (Budapest: Kunosy Vilmos 1896), 226. For recent studies on the
Roma, see: David Crowe, A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia (New York: St.
Martin’s Press, 1994); and Carol Silverman, "Persecution and Politicization: Roma (Gypsies) of
example in a “primitive Gypsy camp” exhibit at the Fair which featured a family of Roma placed on display in what was reconstructed as an “authentic” Gypsy home (fig.I.11). In other words, the Gypsy could be counted upon to represent a more primitive nomad to contrast with a constructed Hungarian superiority founded on an ancient nomadic past. All of this was further confused, however, with the important role that Gypsies played in promoting Hungarian culture at home and abroad, particularly through music and dance recitals at other World’s Expositions, causing foreigners to rarely distinguish between the various ethnic groups in Budapest. 40

The other prominent minority within Budapest, the Jews, also became the focus for varying levels of tension within the city and Austro-Hungarian Empire. In particular, Vienna’s derisive nickname of “Jewdapest” for the second imperial city was coined by Vienna’s infamously anti-Semitic Mayor Karl Lueger and gave voice to new forms of anti Jewish rhetoric (most often propagated by aristocratic and conservative elements within the Empire) and which responded to the large number of Jewish individuals involved with the capital buildup and bourgeois transformation of Budapest. 41 Therefore, while Hungarians were seen by many Europeans and Americans as liberators of the Jewish, providing them with a high level of freedom and participation in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 42 what was often invisible was the

40 At the Chicago Fair in 1893 for example, a Hungarian attraction listed at the Midway (called the Hungarian Orpheum) featured a popular Gypsy band. Also, in period accounts about Hungary, and in particular by Americans, the reference to Gypsy bands and knowledge of Gypsy music is often evoked in error as Hungarian in origin. See for example the descriptions and juxtaposition of images (of Gypsy individuals and Budapest tourist sites) in C. Frank Dewey, "Land of the Magyars," The Washington Post, June 23 1895. This misconception is actually discussed in an American journal article of 1891 that suggests how the “rhapsodical spirit” of Gypsy music is easily confused with Magyar innovations in music of the same period. See Francis Korbay, "Nationality in Music," Harper’s New Monthly Magazine 82, no. 490 (1891): 567.

41 In 1783, Habsburg Emperor Joseph II allowed Jewish populations to settle in Pest and enacted a special tax that the Jews had to pay to the town. In turn, the city became the only place in the Habsburg Empire where the Jewish were free to carry out certain trades. Restrictions however were placed on the type of Jewish individual who was allowed to resettle, and only those living in Pest before 1790 were allowed to settle permanently. These restrictions were repealed in 1840 and Jewish commerce and trade grew as Budapest’s Jewish community began acquiring property and factories; the peak period of this activity came in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Jews also volunteered for the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 and were active in promoting liberal policies in the post-1867 Hungarian government.

42 The largest synagogue in Europe (and second largest in the world, after the Temple Emanu-El in New York City) was built in Budapest between 1854 and 1859 in a Moorish style based on Muslim models from North Africa and Spain. Called the Great Synagogue or Dohány Street Synagogue (Dohány utcai Zsinagóga/Nagy Zsinagóga), the building was designed by Viennese architect Ludwig Förster. Another smaller synagogue, the Rumbach Synagogue (Rumbach Zsinagóga) was also
view that the Jewish population was also perceived as a threat by many elements of traditional Hungarian society. This was especially so since the liberal capitalism promoted in Budapest promised, particularly for the Jewish community, a kind of upward mobility and chance for a different life that was unavailable in other parts of the Empire (on Jewish assimilation through the process of Magyarization and in relationship to anti-Semitism, see Appendix I). But this perceived freedom within Budapest also created varying degrees of tensions and deepened rifts between social classes inside and outside the city. For example, the technological innovations in farming practices that led to the consolidation of several mega-farming operations in the countryside served to keep the pace of modernization out of reach for many rural peoples. This resulted in a perception that modernity only applied to the privileged few within the city, many of whom had either been seen to abandon the countryside, or in the case of many Jewish families, been seen to favour life in the city.43

Consequently, as emerges at various points throughout the thesis, Hungarian national identity became based on highly abstract markers which did not always preclude material origins, ethnic purity or a long established claim to land. Instead, one of the circulating anxieties of the Austrians in the Budapest case is that individuals appeared to become Hungarian—particularly in the eyes of ethnic Magyar liberal government officials wishing to enlarge Hungary’s population—if they simply spoke the non-Slavic language, took a Magyar name, and agreed to participate in the Hungarian nation.44 Consequently, the relative ease with which individuals could

designed by Viennese architect Otto Wagner in 1872 and built only a short distance away in the heart of Budapest’s Jewish district. At the same time, however, the high rate of Jewish assimilation through the process of Magyarization has made the study of Hungarian Jewry a contentious topic. See for example the ideas explored in: Kati Voros, "How Jewish Is Jewish Budapest?," Jewish Social Studies 8, no. 1 (2001); and Mary Gluck, "The Budapest Flaneur: Urban Modernity, Popular Culture, and the "Jewish Question" in Fin-de-Siecle Hungary," Jewish Social Studies 10, no. 3 (2004).

43 Kontler, 289-290. Of course the perceived Jewish preference for the city was also a result of strict regulations preventing Jews from working in agriculture throughout Europe. As Kontler explains, “...the foreignness and capital success of Jews made them viable scapegoats in the eyes of an ailing gentry, in spite of the fact that they [the Jews] assimilated and supported the idea of the Hungarian nation-state with great enthusiasm—which, however, also meant that the anti-Semitic card could earn a fair number of votes among the national minorities” (290).

44 A recent contribution to the growing understanding of how Budapest was consciously modeled as a Hungarian capital, despite its heterogeneous population, is seen in Budapest historian Robert Nemes’ research. Notably, as Nemes asserts at one point in his study, “In nineteenth century Hungary and in Habsburg Central Europe more generally, individuals’ national affiliations were not written in stone. If they wanted, men and women could show their national loyalties by joining a club, adopting a new surname, buying seats at a theater, or choosing a school for their children. For some families, giving
identify themselves as a member of the Hungarian state was also bolstered by the geographical region’s complex ethnic history and the ease with which Central and Eastern European peoples took up multiple languages and simultaneous identities within the Habsburg Empire.

A particularly contested region that brought Hungary’s ethnic history to the fore was the Carpathian Basin (a territory in Central Europe bounded by the Carpathian Mountains, the Alps, the Dinarides, and the Balkan Mountains), which would play a key role within the context of the 1896 Exhibition’s celebration of history, modern progress, and Budapest’s position in the wealth of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In turn, a key link was made between the past and present economic potential of the Carpathian Basin over which Hungary historically claimed control. Importantly, the opportunities available to exploit rich resources and facilitate the growth and expansion of human populations had proven among the most attractive and valuable motivators in the fight over control of the region.\(^{45}\) Hungarian lands had however maintained the dubious distinction of being among the most occupied and contested areas in the region of Central Europe. But perhaps more significantly, the ability to foster and harness the region’s resources became wedded to the civilizing potential of the lands’ inhabitants.\(^{46}\) Beginning in the nineteenth century, when archaeologists began to actively excavate vast areas of the Basin and distinguish there what were considered to be different “Ages of human progress” along technological lines (i.e. the ability of humans to create their own tools, domesticate animals, and increase their numbers), the territory emerged with a rich and varied genealogy. This pedigree tied the land and contemporary Hungarians to a range of peoples including the earliest recorded Neolithic populations, the ancient


\(^{46}\) Kontler too makes this suggestion (22). Nineteenth century archeologists and anthropologists, influenced by Darwin’s evolution theory, often categorized civilizations according to criteria that ranked those peoples with a greater level of self-sufficiency and ability to harness and control nature superior to less technologically equipped peoples.
Celts, ancient Romans, and as well as the powerful nomadic tribes from the Near East including the Huns, Avars, and later the nomadic Magyars. In turn, this literal *deep-rootedness*, the close connection to a long and dynamic history of numerous civilizations provided a basis for multiple and often conflicting readings of the past.

My point in emphasizing the significance of this ethnic diversity is that even while Budapest as the second capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire led the pace of rapid modernization and transformation of the public sphere in late nineteenth century Austria-Hungary, there were still intense anxieties about what the final shape of the Empire would literally look like—anxieties emerging from within governing forces of Vienna and Budapest. Indeed, with the movement of large sectors of the landless peasantry to Budapest and the immigration of large numbers of foreign entrepreneurs to the Hungarian controlled regions of the empire in the final decades of the nineteenth century, fears mounted about how Hungary would sustain its distinct power position over a region historically settled by many different groups.

It is for this reason that the important process of social assimilation that historians have termed Magyarization serves as an important touchpoint throughout this study. Magyarization was the official Hungarian government policy through which non-Magyars were folded into the Hungarian nation through the adoption of the Hungarian language and a Magyar name. And while Magyarization was originally conceived as a means to consolidate political power in the Carpathian Basin, it grew out of the more radical movements waged against the Austrian crown during the revolution of 1848. At that time, the Hungarian language came to serve as potent opposition to what was construed as the process of Austria’s “Germanization” of the region. In particular, Hungarian was positioned during the 1848 revolution as both a unifying language and land symbolic discourse that could tie all the lands’ inhabitants to a distinct construction of history and society that radically differentiated Austria from Hungary. Moreover, unlike their Austrian rulers, the Hungarian

---


48 For a more detailed discussion of Magyarization in the context of Hungarian history, please see Appendix I.

49 These ideas had also originated with the failed 1794 Jacobin revolution in Buda and Pest when Hungarian literature was given new impetus, and then again in 1825 when the issue of culture and
reformers claimed that the Magyar peoples' political tradition, which espoused a collective rulership over the territory, pointed to a long and inherent tradition of liberal democracy. Even the word "Magyar" derived its literal meaning from the Ugrian and Turkish word "Meyjer," translating generically to a group or entity of men that is inclusive, not exclusive. As my thesis shows, many of the protagonists whose actions figure in the lead-up to the Millennial Exhibition had been powerfully influenced by the legacy of Magyarization. In particular, the 1848 revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth, whose funeral took place two years prior to the Budapest Fair's opening and who was internationally recognized as a crusader of an independent Hungarian state, figured prominently in the transformation of political and social debates tied to Budapest and the idea of who could count as part of the Hungarian project.

But the promise of Magyar inclusiveness was not always as simple as it appeared or was claimed. In fact, the very transition from the Hungarian government's more defensive stance towards Magyarization policy (which sought only voluntary assimilation of ethnic minorities to the Hungarian nation) towards a more offensive stance (which more aggressively pursued the forceful assimilation of ethnic minorities to the Hungarian nation) occurred in the very years leading up to and following Budapest's Millennial Exhibition. In other words, while the process of Magyarization attempted to assimilate heterogeneous groups within Hungary, the exclusionary aspects of this process are important to emphasize (see Appendix I).

Heritage became central to the founding of the Hungarian reform movement. In both cases the issue of language and heritage began to frame debates around Hungarian sovereignty.

Hungarians refer to themselves and their language as "Magyar" and the nation of Hungary as "Magyarorszag," literally "land of the Magyars." This can be confusing to outsiders since the name "Magyar" is somewhat generic and derives its meaning from a Ugrian word "Megyer," simply meaning "men." The term "Hungarian" (given to the people by foreigners) erroneously suggests a link between Hungarians and the ancient Huns who occupied the region in the fifth century. Ironically, however, it is generally considered a solecism for English speakers to refer to Hungarians as Magyars (just as it is to refer to the Germans as "Deutsch") because it insinuates a kind of chauvinism.

Kossuth's conflicted representation is discussed at length in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

I am indebted to historian Tibor Frank for a discussion I had with him on the intricacies of Magyarization at the ASN (Association for the Study of Nationalities) Conference at Columbia University in 2007. Tibor, who is Director of the School of English and American Studies at Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest and currently a visiting professor at the History Department of Columbia University, pointed me towards an essay he published describing a "transitional phase" of Magyarization policy that he argues coincided around the time of the Budapest Fair's planning in the
For instance, the rapid growth of the city was only matched by efforts to root the Magyar language and culture as official parlance of the city during this period of transition. Significantly, only 18% of Budapest citizens spoke Hungarian as a first language in 1880, yet by 1910, this figure had grown to 47% (and up to 90% for civil servants and members of the upper classes). In turn, the promotion of Hungarian identity in the second imperial capital's official spaces opened doors to new problems of inequality and increasing xenophobia among its inhabitants precisely at the moment of its international debut—problems that would contribute to fierce election riots and moments of public disruption in Budapest during the six month period of the Fair.

Re-Envisioning Frameworks of Modernity, Tradition, and Visual Culture

The analysis of the 1896 Millennial Exhibition in relation to both the city of Budapest and the larger frame of Hungary itself introduces one highly context-specific locale to explore how new media emerged and complicated existing categories of high art, political radicalism, and national history in late nineteenth century Europe. Significantly, a disjuncture and slippage between what was literally seen as myth and/or history, real and/or imagined, entertainment and/or art, punctuates the contradictions around discourses of visuality, publicity, exhibitionism, and the nation at this time. In this sense, my thesis will be of interest to scholars researching the history and theories of nineteenth century urban modernity, visual culture, and the emergence of modernism.

Drawing attention to the overview of the dissertation chapters and the study of new regimes of seeing that emerged by the time of the Budapest Exhibition, I want to underscore here that rather than attempting to locate isolated appearances of new


53 See Nemes, Hall, and Gerö.

54 This study is therefore a corollary to the kinds of ideas explored most notably by art historian Jonathan Crary, but also art historians Vanessa Schwartz, David Scobey, intellectual historian Mary Gluck, and film theorists Tom Gunning and Mary Anne Doane. Besides the cited examples already noted, see: Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002); Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," *Wide Angle: A Film Quarterly of Theory, Criticism, and Practice* 8, no. 3-4 (1986); Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2002).
media around the 1896 Fair for their own sake, I am more interested in probing how four major interrelated themes of the Fair—history, technology, geography and commerce—were reframed through these new modes of seeing, or mediascapes, and to what ends. What I mean here is that the way the local and international publics’ attention came to focus on the city was already influenced ahead of the actual event in Budapest, and sometimes even several years ahead of the official date. In turn, the individual chapters help to: 1) develop how these new modes of seeing came about in tandem with preparations for the event; 2) trace out particular contours of an interconnected “working out” process that reveal how key tensions around an urban Budapest were called up and given shape through interconnected mediascapes in the years directly preceding and accompanying the final exhibition; and 3) underscore the role of publicity and visibility that extended beyond traditional borders and configurations of power in the late nineteenth century world.

As one of the major points in my thesis, the fraught political situation of Hungary vis-à-vis Austria is marked out in the spaces of the city. In Chapter One, I explore the urban development of Budapest as second imperial capital in the years leading up to the 1896 Fair, distinguishing the facets of the city associated with Magyar power that could be associated in the 1890’s with a specifically Hungarian identity and those with Habsburg power tied to Austrian imperial authority. In particular, my focus on key tensions related to language, history, and the conflicted spaces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is drawn out through a close examination of four building projects created with the Millennial Exhibition in mind: the construction of Andrássy Avenue (Andrássy út) (1874-1884) from the city core to the site of the 1896 World’s Fair, the new site of legislative power, the Hungarian Parliament building (Magyar Országház) constructed between 1885-1904 along the Danube river; the technological showpiece, Budapest’s renowned underground electric subway (Ferencz József Földalatti Villamos Vasút) —one of the first in Europe and built between 1891-1896, and a new ‘home’ for national artefacts in a Museum and School of Applied Arts (Magyar Iparművészet Müzeum) erected from 1894 to 1896. These projects, and the urban spaces they redefined, gave visibility and form to questions concerning how Hungary’s relationship would be configured within and against the larger Austro-Hungarian Empire, and equally important, to how conflicting principles of legitimacy could be reconciled. In particular, I suggest that
stylistic languages commonly associated with “tradition” (such as the gothic or indigenous folk arts), and the marks of an emerging technological modernity (seen through the engineering of new city boulevards and underground transportation) became the perfect foil around which to explore contested subjectivity in producing and/or occupying the spaces of the new city and establishing a sense of “home” in a number of productive ways. At the same time, I examine why the abandonment of all historical markers associated with emerging modern architectural forms and new technologies was not a clear option in the Budapest case. Instead, I discuss how the turn to eclecticism and engineering innovation introduced markers of “newness” in alternative ways.

Chapter Two focuses on the creation of a popular panorama in 1894 depicting the scene of Hungary’s myth of nomadic origin—Arpad Feszty’s Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians in 896 (A magyarok bejövetele). I explore here how specific issues surrounding the direction of liberalism in Hungary in the 1890’s and the policies that sought to fold-in new citizens as ‘Hungarian’ were relevant to this Budapest project. An important aspect in my analysis is how the medium of the panorama—a 360 degree view of a depicted scene—gave shape to the political and social landscape of a contested field, mirroring the new ways of seeing introduced through the rapidly expanding bourgeois city. I argue that in Budapest the panorama introduced complications between categories of “art” and “spectacle” and the idea of private versus sponsored exhibition that were not the same in Western Europe, extending my analysis to other parts of Central and Eastern Europe through connections between Hungarian and Polish panorama painters during the fin de siècle period. The main figure in the panorama the nomadic Prince Árpád, and his contested representation in relation a number of painted images and monuments that sought to represent the Magyar leader as alternatively pagan and nomadic, or Catholic and imperial are also explored. The analysis here, in turn, opens up discussion about the nature of rulership in the Austro-Hungarian Empire by the 1890’s and the alternative circuits of power available to the masses that promoted the idea of “self-fashioning” through association with a society of nomadic survivors using their individual wills to determine outcomes.

Chapter Three looks at photography and the tensions related to the memory of revolutionary loss and proliferation of resistance to imperial rule that emerged with
the highly publicized funeral of the internationally recognized exiled leader, Lajos Kossuth in 1894. I explore how photographic images allowed the specter of 1848 revolutionary loss to re-emerge and circulate in the public and private sphere of Budapest prior to and during the World Exhibition. Importantly, the ideas of death and proliferation associated with the theory of the photographic medium are key to this understanding, and are punctuated through a close examination of how Kossuth was represented in life and in death. In part, my argument is that circulating photographs of Kossuth helped address the more abstract crises of representation in Austria-Hungary by the end of the 19th century, which effaced particular historic actors and incidents from the master narrative. But the decentralized circuits of photographic exchange and publication carved out new arenas for social interchange and legitimization in the eyes of the local and international public. This was first realized through Kossuth's legacy as an exiled leader, and the strategies taken up to circulate his ideas. The business of photography is also linked in this chapter to an emerging and dynamic capitalist economy, outside the control of the Hapsburgs, and associated with the most transformative public elements and professional associations of a burgeoning Budapest.

Finally, in Chapter Four, I explore attempts to bring the early cinema to Budapest at the time of the Millennial Exhibition, revealing tensions seen in the lampooning of Empire, the effects of global commerce, and how different media and the means of representation could be revealed as a way of unmasking power. In particular, cinema emerges as a kind of visual patois that celebrated and exposed the most pedestrian and de-institutionalized visions of a modern world—ephemeral and fleeting moments that competed with, and broke the illusion of, grand monuments dedicated to abstract concepts of nationhood and citizenship. In this chapter I discuss how cinema expanded the spaces of publicity in Budapest, but in a way that was tied to the most unruly and volatile aspects of urbanism, not only giving shape to the follies and failures of modern life under Austro-Hungarian dualism, but also highlighting the contingent nature of life in the Empire. In Budapest at the time of the Fair, the tension between the local and international film exhibitors and their movies exposed issues related to a globalizing economy at the turn of the nineteenth century, and all the conflicted issues this raised in the political and social realm. Because film exhibition in Budapest was also tied to the newest parts of the city, I examine how
film drew attention to the means of representation and the accidents associated with urban technologies that provided only the illusion of a seamless reality.

To date, the topic of the Budapest Millennial Exhibition remains largely under-explored and certainly under-theorized, while other research related to fin de siècle Budapest and cultural production is likewise scarce and, in my assessment, often over-determined, lacking in historical specificity, and/or tainted with Cold War politics. One salient and early attempt to come to terms with the differences and specific contexts of this moment emerges, however, in Peter Hanák’s widely read The Garden and the Workshop: Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna and Budapest (1998). Hanák’s study characterizes the essential differences between the two Austro-Hungarian capitals, Vienna and Budapest, in terms of their respective cultural

55 With the exception of Freifeld’s compelling discussion of the event in relationship to crowd politics in nineteenth century Hungary (266-278), virtually no study deals with the Budapest Millennial Exhibition directly beyond general description, and almost all of these are published only in Hungarian. See for example, András Gerő, Budapest 1896, a város egy évé [Budapest 1896: The City's One Year] (Budapest: Budapesti Negyed Alapítvány, 1996). One study that does discuss the political difficulties in seeing the Budapest Fair to completion can be found in Modern Hungarian Society in the Making: The Unfinished Experience (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995), 203-22. I had the pleasure of meeting with András Gerő, Hungarian historian at Budapest’s Central European University, in 2002 to discuss many details related to the Fair’s planning. At that time, I also met with his research partner Emőke Tomsics, director of the photography archives at Hungary’s National Museum, with whom Gerő published a useful book and accompanying CD-ROM (in English translation) that contains information related to Budapest’s fin de siècle context. See András Gerő, Katalin Jalsovszky, and Emőke Tomsics, Once Upon a Time in Hungary: The World of the Late 19th and Early 20th Century (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1996).

56 The earliest attempts to deal with the cultural legacy of Central and Eastern Europe art production and visual production resulted in a sort of inventory taking of artists and movements that were folded into an existing canon of modern art. Not unlike the work of feminist and postcolonial art historians in the 1980’s who attempted to admit lost artists into the canon, the process began to call into question how such canons were formed, but often did not go far enough to call into question the epistemological framework that supported their histories. This work took place both before 1989 when the histories were often found suspect for either their ideological or nationalist impulses, and soon after 1989, when the project may have been more about the legitimization of Central and Eastern European art as congruent with a model of Western modernity and therefore good and valid. Similarly, those projects that mostly emanated with Western scholars either seriously oversimplified the historical, social and political contexts (often because of lack of language or access to sources) or flatly ignored them altogether. In any case, the process, while important as a starting point to familiarize outsiders with the rich abundance of visual culture in the region was, I would argue, somewhat tainted with a complex set of political, national and ideological interests that could not easily be resolved with standard accounts of modern art movements in the rest of Europe. The other related problem lies with the absolute diversity and array of artistic output that has been produced in the region, which not only defies many of the labels or “isms” in the canon of modern art, but includes works and performances that criss-cross into popular culture and the realm of perceived propaganda. This leaves many art historians and cultural theorists curious and interested but unlikely to dislodge or seriously bring into question the importance of Western artists or art centers as the prime loci for critical attention in the realm of modern or avant-garde art.
renewals and how the intelligentsia of each city acted—retreating inwards into the realm of psychology and the "nature of existence" in the case of Vienna, and acting outward through the revision of the concept of nation through social and political activism in the case of Budapest. While taking up a somewhat dichotomized argument limited to the realm of elite art production, Hanák does bring into focus how individuals, and indeed nations, cope and react, through visual and other cultural means to the technological, psychic and internal pressures to "look forward" on the one hand, and "retreat internally" on the other.57 This contradictory phenomena and how it can be theorized also shapes an important aspect of my dissertation, in particular with respect to how negotiation of collective memory between individuals and nations has been understood in more recent poststructural accounts of the nation state.58 Hanák's study also hints at the ways in which a distinctly Viennese modernism has erroneously been equated with the emergence of modernism throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire—a conception that my research also explores and works to expand and dispel.

The final purpose of this thesis is therefore to move toward a more productive and inclusive discussion of what urban modernity and modernism entailed and looked like outside the narrow scope of Western European models. In other words, my goal is to rethink concepts of tradition and traditionalism in a more fluid way; that is, as a dynamic process in the emergence of modernity, one that is integral to both a spatial dynamics constructed around notions of "Western," "Central," and/or "Eastern" Europe and the global flows of information in the making of modern identities.59 My


58 The literature in this area is exhaustive, but three theoretically innovative examples that have informed my thinking include: Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London ; New York: Routledge, 1994); Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); E. Ann Kaplan, Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005).

methodology thus focuses on how categories of art, politics, commerce, and everyday life were interconnected and entangled at the time of the 1896 Fair which sought to reconfigure Hungary's relationship within and against the fin de siècle Austro-Hungarian Empire. Through this investigation, my objective is to contribute to rethinking and redefining how models of modernity, radicality, and resistance can emerge in the cultural sphere and within the context of histories of modern art and European modernity writ large. By returning to the neglected context of fin de siècle Budapest with its penchant for new technologies of vision, mass spectacles, nomadic ancestors, and historical consciousness, my goal is to search for points that rupture and complicate conventional accounts of this fraught period in Europe as merely decadent, decaying, escapist, or nationalistic.
Chapter One: Built Space, Style, and the Dis/ordering of Fin de Siècle Budapest

Imaginary places are invested with strong identities.
While nobody has visited the Kingdom of Oz,
Everybody knows its colors and how different it is from Kansas.

The Secession is not a style but a liberty,
the artists' revolt against art which is not created by him
but which governs him.
--Ódón Lechner, Hungarian Architect (1906)

Looking out across the Danube River to the city of Budapest in 1894, one would have been greeted with the clamour, bustle, and din of a metropolis under accelerated construction. With just two years remaining until the eyes of the world would come to momentarily focus on the featured site of Hungary’s 1896 Millennial Exhibition, there was an energy in the air that concentrated squarely on the eastern banks of the glistening river. It was here that the urban core of a modernizing Pest was undergoing profound and rapid transformation. Closest to the riverbank and in prominent view of the traditional seat of power—the ancient Buda Castle recently renovated to become the Habsburg Royal Palace and second home of Emperor Franz Joseph, situated high up in the hills on the western side of the Danube—the exoskeleton of Hungary’s new Parliament building was rapidly taking shape (fig. 1.1). With its pointed turrets, steep roofs, and massive dome, the structure stretched into the open sky, asserting its oversized and spectacular monumentality as a kind of challenge and theatrical gesture both to the inhabitants of the city and to the larger Austro-Hungarian Empire (fig. 1.2). Poised at just under 100 meters, Hungary’s Parliament Building would become the tallest free-standing building of Budapest, and among the most ambitious building projects of the city’s history. But not far from this site, another equally important project was quickly taking form. This time, however, the architecture was not bound for the sky, but dug beneath the earth’s surface into the subterranean realm of the urban core. Fashioned into mobile pathways for what would become the city’s technological showpiece, the new underground railway and its noisy construction had resulted in the temporary uprooting of Budapest’s most

---


2 Ódón Lechner, "Magyar formanyelv nem volt, hanem lesz (There Has Not Been a Hungarian Language of Form, But There Will Be)," in Művészet (Art) (1906). Translation by author.
beautiful and significant street, Andrássy Avenue (Andrassy út) (fig.1.3). This was a fact not lost on city inhabitants who mostly put up with the short-term inconvenience of dust, pollution, and ugly vistas in order to gain access to the latest mode of modern transport. It is in this sense that the planning of the new parliament building and underground railway shared in their mutual promise of reconfiguration—both for a modernizing Budapest and Hungarian state, and for those who participated patiently in its conceptual and spatial expansion.

Not unlike the phantasmagoric reflection of the Hungarian Parliament in the waters of the Danube, displacing, if only through an illusion, the size and importance of the Habsburg Royal Palace (Királyi-palota) on the western side of the river (fig.1.4), the Hungarian government’s decision to plan and execute an international World’s Fair in Budapest was seen by many within the city as an opportunity to rival Vienna as centre of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Fair, while providing an opportunity to bring the citizens of Budapest together in a display of unification, solidarity, and modern progress, also celebrated a kind of arrival for the burgeoning and fastest growing metropolis in fin de siècle Europe. The planning process for the Fair had originated modestly enough with an 1891 proposal by the Budapest General Assembly to erect a monument to celebrate the one thousand-year anniversary of the conquest of Hungary and the settlement of the Carpathian Basin by the ancient nomadic Magyars, the mythic ancestors of modern Hungary. And while some minor controversy emerged with pinpointing an exact date of this conquest, the year 896 was chosen—not insignificantly—in order to accommodate already existing construction projects slated for completion by the mid 1890’s. Notable among these was an entire range of private and public buildings, together with the new Parliament building and underground subway system, key infrastructure that would quickly become associated with emerging and more ambitious plans to stage a Millennial Exhibition commemorating Hungarian history and the celebration of new fin de siècle technologies related to modern industrialization, transportation, and communication. Interestingly, however, as Budapest historian Andras Gero suggests in his account of

---


4 Ibid., 204. The Hungarian government called upon the Academy of Sciences in 1882 to agree upon a period of time in which the conquest likely occurred. A twelve-year window between 888 and 900 A.D. was established and a government statute declared setting the Millennium for 1896.
the earliest planning stages of the Budapest World’s Fair, the attempt to fabricate a solid temporal and spatial dimension of origin for the Hungarian people paralleled attempts to consecrate and form such a dimension within the national psyche:

[T]he Millennial celebration was not just an occasion for revelry; it was an historic opportunity for the Hungarian government to construct an integrated national and historical ideology depicting the de facto imperfect state as de jure a whole, inspiring a sense of continuity, of permanent and unshakeable stability, while at the same time presenting the status quo as inevitable.5

Among the challenges facing the Fair planners was Budapest’s quick ascendancy to the status of second imperial capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1867 under the dual monarchy system. This situation, which permitted Hungary a degree of self-government with its own independent parliament and power to enact laws for the lands of the Hungarian Crown (with Franz Joseph as the newly crowned King of Hungary), had led to breakneck urban transformation in a matter of a few short decades. As a result, the pressing need to establish a sense of rightful authority for the emerging metropolis and its inhabitants resulted in an increasingly complicated political situation for Hungary, one that became bound to an odd juxtaposition of representing an ancient past while simultaneously portraying modern political relations. Of particular concern for the Hungarian government was the dilemma, on the one hand, of finding the appropriate visual and spatial vocabulary to represent national concerns while on the other, differentiating Hungarian authority from Habsburg imperialism. In other words, the problem persisted following 1867 of how to reconfigure Hungary’s relationship within and against the larger Austro-Hungarian Empire.

To explore this nexus of concerns, a constellation of building projects will be elaborated in this chapter in relation to modern urban developments as they unfolded in Budapest during the final decades and years leading to the 1896 Fair. In an effort to view architectural projects in close relationship to the urban fabric supporting them, I will begin by first examining the forged links between technology and culture in the process of Budapest’s urbanization, and then explore how publics read built forms within the context of a highly politicized and extended visual and conceptual understanding promoted within the city. In particular, I will focus on four high profile

5 Ibid.
and interconnected building projects of which the 1896 Fair would play a guiding role: the construction of Andrássy Avenue (Andrásy út) 1874-1884, the Hungarian Parliament building (Magyar Országház) 1885-1904, Budapest's underground subway (Ferencz József Földalatti Villamos Vasút) 1891-1896, and a new Museum and School of Applied Arts (Magyar Iparművészeti Múzeum) 1894-1896. These examples will allow me to probe how notions of modernity and tradition, as unstable categories in and of themselves, raise important issues around questions of identity in built space. In the special case of Budapest as a late-blooming second imperial capital, the ambiguities around Austro-Hungarian dualism will also be shown to add an extra and unique pressure to the planning enterprise. Within this context, as I will discuss at a later point in this chapter, Budapest maintained a very distinct cosmopolitan flavour, separate from fin de siècle Vienna, where the eventual move towards a distinctly ahistorical vocabulary of modern architecture proved troubling, especially to Hungarian architects. As will emerge, an appeal to individuated viewing and the desire for spatial and visual reconceptualizations of a national "home" produced strong undercurrents in the search for new building vocabularies in Budapest. The very word used to describe the Hungarian Parliament building, for example, "Országház", is quite literally translated to "House of the Nation." More specifically, these ideas provided a significant challenge to the perceived appropriation of the city as second home to the Austrian Habsburgs while simultaneously offering a more intimate and accessible category of understanding extended to a wider cross-section of the urban public sphere.

In turn, there will be a particular argument that will be threaded through my analysis of these four sites within the urban fabric of Budapest. Taking into account the powerful role that modern cities have played in the social imaginary of nation and Empire, an underpinning to this chapter (and the thesis as a whole) is that Hungary’s identity as imperial partner with Austria was increasingly tied to the multi-sensory (visual, corporeal, intellectual) experience of, and participation in, the growth of Budapest as the Empire’s second capital. Indeed, as architectural historian Eve Blau has observed about the distinctive nature of Central and Eastern European nationalism in contrast to Western models, the manifestation of new identities for

---

6 “ország” = nation, while “ház” = house or home.
nations of the region was almost completely an urban phenomenon. Budapest was thus a city that was literally inventing, and promoting, simultaneous with the ambiguities of modern urban development and expansion, what it would mean to be "Hungarian" to a new modern public. At the same time, the city would become a site through which to expand the conceptual boundaries of the Hungarian state while attempting to technologically rival and even displace the main imperial center of Vienna. As this chapter will suggest, the overall experience of Budapest's status as a second imperial city was marked by the reading of its urban planning to have emerged more spontaneously, haphazardly, and certainly, with great speed. Consequently, Hungarian identity, married to an emerging urban modernity, became based on highly abstract markers that did not preclude material origins, ethnic purity or even a long established claim to land. Instead, reflecting the sometimes illusionary and contingent nature of Austro-Hungarian dualism itself—where an Austrian King could ceremoniously and with seeming ease don the Hungarian crown and immediately assimilate to the Hungarian cause—individuals within Hungary were encouraged through Magyarization to become Hungarian through adopting a Hungarian name (either by birth or legal change), speaking the non-Slavic language, and by agreeing to participate in the growth of the Hungarian nation. It was in this context of assimilationist politics that I will suggest that the conflation of a Hungarian nationalist agenda and the dynamics of urban modernism proved most profound and indeed troubling.

I am arguing then, that as the prime locus of all things Hungarian, the city was therefore built to be inspected and legitimized in the eyes of the world. But as I will

---


8 See Appendix I for a discussion on Magyarization in Austria-Hungary through the nineteenth century. Also see Robert Nemes, *The Once and Future Budapest* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), a recent contribution to the growing understanding of how Budapest was consciously modeled as a Hungarian capital, despite its heterogeneous population. Notably, as Nemes asserts at one point in his study, "In nineteenth century Hungary and in Habsburg Central Europe more generally, individuals' national affiliations were not written in stone. If they wanted, men and women could show their national loyalties by joining a club, adopting a new surname, buying seats at a theater, or choosing a school for their children. For some families, giving preference to the Hungarian language showed at least tacit approval for the nationalist project. Alternatively, town dwellers could attempt to ignore the national question altogether, change their minds, or profess loyalty to the Emperor-King, international socialism, or the Catholic Church. In this sense, historians are correct to describe the process by which the population of Budapest became "Hungarian" as spontaneous and unplanned" (179) emphasis mine.
also explore, the discourse of a unique "otherness" attached to Budapest, and promoted from within the ethnic Magyar community’s connections to the east by means of Hungary’s non-Germanic (read non-Austrian) and non-Slavic nomadic heritage, would push for an experience of what was claimed as the “real city” outside traditional spaces of exhibition (such as a city park or fairgrounds) into the city streets by the 1896 Fair. As a result, the Hungarian state’s many contradictions were made particularly apparent through the capital city’s newly built spaces as opposed to just the Millennial Exhibition itself. These urban projects often turned to the spectacular, theatrical, and technological in order to challenge and operate below the radar of official and traditional Austro-Hungarian monuments and spaces that would be featured at the 1896 Fair. These characteristics of the city, in turn, came to play an important role in Hungary’s promotion of Budapest as much more than just another site in which the Austrian Emperor ruled. In other words, I suggest that a predominant notion emerged during the lead-up to the Millennial Exhibition, namely that one could only understand the “true” Hungary by becoming something akin to a flaneur of Budapest, privileging the more ephemeral, subterranean, eclectic, and modern urban fabric of the city as it gave shape and dimension to an emerging Hungarian consciousness. It is in this context of urban observation and visuality that my analysis in this chapter will draw and expand upon the path-breaking work of architectural historian Ákos Moravánszky, and his study Competing Visions: Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867-1918 in order to complicate and extend his initial investigations into Budapest’s architectural legacy and engagement with historicism and modernism in face of Viennese imperialism.\(^9\)

\(^9\) Moravánszky’s landmark study provides the most comprehensive framework for approaching developments in nineteenth century Central and Eastern European architecture to date. Importantly, when the research was first published in 1998, it drew from the growing body of historical material that was quickly emerging from the newly accessible archives of the post-communist Eastern bloc nations that had once constituted a large proportion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (including all or part of communist Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, Romania, and Yugoslavia). According to Moravánszky, however, what had begun as a survey of architectural developments and individual architects in the region’s capital cities turned towards a more critical reflection on the broader scope of Central and Eastern Europe architectural development in the last two centuries— one of alternative and competing visions (x-xi). As a result, this study marks the first concerted attempt to come to terms with the collective architectural developments within Central and Eastern Europe as distinct from Western models. And while I will work with and extend upon a number of Moravánszky’s critical ideas related directly and indirectly to the four Budapest building projects focused upon in this chapter, I will also bring the projects into a much closer connection and context than Moravánszky. In other words, the overriding methodology, scope, and aim of his book prevents the kind of close examination and
Budapest’s Nineteenth Century Urban Fabric: Linking Technology and Culture

Within the context of nineteenth century European urban development, the Habsburg-ruled cities of Central and Eastern Europe stand out as something of an anomaly. Aspiring to modernity, but fighting to maintain and preserve separate traditions, seeking imperial recognition and resources, yet wishing to exert local authority, the multifaceted cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire faced distinct challenges from Western European urban centers. In particular, cities such as Paris, London, and Berlin were modeled on arguably stronger and, in comparison, more homogeneous national identities. Still, it has only been in the past two decades, since the dismantling of the Soviet Eastern bloc, that the full significance of Habsburg Central Europe as a geographic and multinational entity has come to be better understood and fully appreciated. This is especially so when seen through the prism of Austria-Hungary’s troubled history and legacy from the mid-nineteenth century to the dawn of the First World War. With its dizzying heterogeneity, complex ethnic and religious make-up, and lack of external colonial holdings, the Austro-Hungarian Empire gave shape and dimension to the most pressing fin de siècle concerns, questions, and debates around modernity, nationalism, and Empire, locating the dialogue squarely within the conflicted and confined spaces of their new modern concern with embodied visuality, new technologies, and the specific concern of the political and social climate of Budapest on the eve of the 1896 Fair that I am exploring in close detail here.


11 The number of studies related to the broader historical and political developments in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire has risen dramatically in the post-communist period. Perhaps the most influential study is Larry Wolff’s Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994). Timothy Garton Ash, Director of the European Studies Centre at St. Antony's College, Oxford is another key English-speaking commentator, historian, and journalist covering events in Central Europe since the mid 1980's who has been highly influential in disseminating ideas related to the region's history. Besides his numerous essays and reviews for the NYRB and The Guardian [see for example, Timothy Garton Ash “The Puzzle of Central Europe,” New York Review of Books XLVI, no. 5 (March 18, 1999): 18], Garton Ash has published several widely disseminated books on the transformation of Europe since the collapse of communism that have drawn attention to the connections between our contemporary world and the multiethnic and multinational context of late nineteenth century Central and Eastern Europe.

12 The Austro-Hungarian Empire was of course directly implicated in sparking the First World War when on June 28, 1914, a Bosnian Serb student killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne) in Sarajevo. For a study on the Empire’s final years, see John W. Mason, The Dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1867-1918, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1997).
cities. And while Austria-Hungary as a geographic whole has only recently gained the
critical attention of contemporary architectural and urban planning historians, their
preliminary studies have helped begin the process of broadening existing discourses
surrounding urban modernity and vocabularies of modern European architecture and
city planning. As urban historian Charles Maier argues, for example, in his essay
"City, Empire, and the Imperial Aftermath: Contending Contexts for the Urban Vision," an analysis around cultural diversity, difference, and conflict—issues at
stake in our globalizing and "shrinking" world—are complicated when looking to
areas on the "periphery" of Europe:

The critical tension for aesthetic design in Habsburg Central Europe can be
located metaphorically not just along one axis (from traditionalist to modernist
visions), which in fact characterizes industrial societies everywhere, but
simultaneously along a second axis (imperial program versus ethnic
autonomy) that is peculiar to the aspirations of empire.

Moreover, as Moravanszky has deftly argued in his book-length survey of Central
European urban planning and architecture, the competing visions and identities of
Habsburg subjects has been complicated by the intangible and imaginary region of a
Mittleeuropa—a conceptual locale that Hungarian historian Peter Hanák has argued
is "a product both of wishful thinking and of anxiety" or, as contemporary Hungarian
artist and filmmaker Peter Forgacs suggests, situates "cultures in constant crisis."

That Budapest is as much an invented and collective idea as an actual physical
place is therefore a powerful conception founded upon the Hungarian state’s already
complicated political and social past. Before the nineteenth century, the lands

---

13 Besides the study by Moravánszky discussed in note 8, new studies on the Austro-Hungarian context
in relation to urban planning and architecture can be found in edited volume of collected essays, Eve
Blau and Monika Platzer, Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937
(Munich ; New York: Prestel, 1999). Also, the Hall study cited in note 9 contains a key chapter on
Budapest’s urban development (even if the only city east of Vienna included in the book) suggesting
the broadening scope of what is understood by the term “European urban planning.”

and Monika Platzer (Munich ; New York: Prestel, 1999), 29.

15 Moravánszky, 2. This idea is connected to the work of twentieth-century German politician Friedrich

16 Péter Hanák, "Közép-Európa, az imaginárius régó (Central Europe: An Imagined Place)," in
Ragaszkodás az utótpidőz (Clinging to Utopia) (Budapest: Liget, 1993), 156; Peter Forgács, "At the
Center of Mitteleuropa, A Conversation with Peter Forgács " Art Margins: Contemporary Central and
constituting Budapest had in fact been three separate towns—Buda, Pest, and Óbuda—and traced their collective histories back to the ancient Celtic settlement of Pannonia which then transformed in 89 AD into a Roman controlled area named Aquincum.\(^{17}\) Settled around 900 AD by Magyar invaders from the eastern lands of middle Asia and then invaded, first by Mongols in 1241 and then Ottoman Turks in 1541, the territory constituting Budapest finally fell under complete Austrian Habsburg rule by 1686, which had technically held the Kingdom of Hungary since 1526 but lost much on-the-ground control over lands in the region. By contrast, the relatively peaceful eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries allowed the commercial center of Pest located on the eastern side of the Danube to flourish while the town of Buda, located on the western side of the river, remained steeped in its ties to the Habsburg imperial authority.\(^{18}\) This duality was also reflected in the physical layout and population makeup of the facing towns. Pest, situated on a flat river valley, had developed a distinctly urban character during this time as a trading and commercial center with a multi-ethnic citizenry made up of mainly working class and transitioning peasant populations, while Buda, as a fashionable residential district of wooded hills overlooking Pest, remained largely unchanged as a feudal township surrounding the walled compound containing Hungary’s royal palace, the traditional home to Hungary’s nobility and a large proportion of wealthy aristocratic families. The stark social divide was only reinforced through the wide and fast running Danube River physically segregating the two towns. In this sense, the tendency within Habsburg territories by the late eighteenth century to maintain social divisions in its townships, modeled on the imperial center of Vienna, was given literal shape and dimension in the large gulf between Buda and Pest, precluding the perceived freedom and utopian aspirations many associated with town planning in other fully sovereign

\(^{17}\) The ancient city of Aquincum was situated on the North-Eastern borders of the Pannonia province within the Roman Empire. The ruins of the city and an archeological museum housing artifacts can be found today in Budapest. See Klára Sz Póczy, *Aquincum* (Budapest: Corvina Verlag, 1969) and Werner Walcker-Mayer, *The Roman Organ of Aquincum*, trans. Joscelyn Godwin (Ludwigsburg: Musikwissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1972).

Western European centers. As a result, any ambitious plans to unite and develop Pest-Buda—as the growing region was called by the beginning of the nineteenth century—remained largely theoretical and as a series of lofty plans for some unknown future.  

That was until the first signs of change arose in the 1830's. At this time, the idea for a new bridge to permanently join Pest with Buda surfaced in the public discourse. Driven by the initiatives of István Széchenyi, a liberal politician of aristocratic background in the Hungarian Diet, it was an ambitious plan that emerged within the context of Széchenyi's strong advocacy of industrial and technological development as a remedy to Hungary's perceived backwardness in relation to the rest of Europe. Under the auspices of a Bridge Society (formed in 1832), Széchenyi undertook a series of trips abroad, described as "conscious technological journeys" by one account, to study bridge engineering. Upon return, he submitted a proposal to the Hungarian Diet calling for the construction of a new suspension bridge that could stand the rigours of the Danube River. Impressed by British city planning, and the example of London's advanced bridge systems, Széchenyi's guidelines called for a structure that not only relied upon the very latest in bridge building technology to enable its construction over the rough conditions of the Danube river (more extreme than any location in Britain), but also provided Hungary with the distinction of constructing the longest bridge of its kind in the world, a structure with a total length of 1262 feet and a central span of 666 feet. At the same time, Széchenyi's plans also called for a controversial proviso recommending that public funding be relied upon to build the bridge, a condition that

---

19 One important reason for the containment of both cities also relates to the short-lived Jacobin movement that emerged within Pest and Buda in 1794 on the heels of the French Revolution. At that time, two secret societies were formed calling for revolt against the monarchy, the nobility, and the Church. An underlying agenda of the society was also to unite the city. After the execution of the leaders by the Habsburg authority in Vienna, any emerging plan to unite the twin cities was looked upon with some suspicion by the Austrians. See András Gerő and János Póor, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 58-61.

20 As a constituent land of the Austrian Empire, the Kingdom of Hungary was permitted to maintain a legislative body or "Diet." The governing council, however, were appointed by the Habsburg monarch and the Diet was directly subordinated to the Court Chamber in Vienna.


22 All relevant technical details of the bridge's construction and unique engineering can be found in Ibid.: 112-15. For a period account of the Chain Bridge in comparison with other bridges built in the period, see "Iron Bridges," The Living Journal 59, no. 750 (1858).
simultaneously encouraged the formation of a national banking scheme and system of taxation, while calling into question the feudal practice of tax exemptions for the nobility and private interests in the one temporary floating bridge between the two towns. With the Diet's approval, the final contract for the Chain Bridge (Lánchíd) as the structure would come to be simply called was awarded to English engineer William Tierny Clark in 1839 and constructed with an international workforce over the next decade under the supervision of Scottish engineer Adam Clark.

Critically, with the construction of Pest-Buda's first permanent bridge, many important issues forging the close connections between technology and culture were brought to the fore—issues that would underwrite the formation of Budapest's urban fabric as it developed throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. This included the use of cutting edge engineering, foreign intervention and influence in the reconfiguration of the territory, together with the conceptual expansion of "Hungarianness" through the search for new modern means of communication and mobility. Keeping in mind that the declarative function of the suspension bridge as an engineering feat was to unite the oldest and newest parts of two cities, one immediate outcome of the new bridge was to bring disparate social classes and their spaces into closer proximity. In this way, the levelling effects of new technology and its attendant system of capital systems worked to broach old feudal systems of sociability and commercial practice. At its simplest level, this translated into the nobility on the Buda side of the river having to pay tolls where none had been expected in the past. But at its most abstract, the entire feudal order of the areas constituting the two towns was seen to be at stake. Indeed, when the bill introducing general tolling was passed in the 1835-46 session of the Hungarian parliament, many critics of Széchenyi's bridge plan described the moment as the "funeral of the ancient constitution."

---

23 The first temporary floating bridge was constructed between Buda and Pest in the Middle Ages to join the two riversides. It would be dismantled in the autumn to allow the river to freeze over at which time people could also walk across. A ferry system had also been created to shuttle people and goods across the river, but by the early nineteenth century, the increasing volume of trade made such a system impractical. Ibid., 107.

24 Ibid.: 111.

25 In particular, the Chain Bridge would be seen as a symbol of progress away from a feudal past. For a discussion on this point, see Gerő and Poór, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998, 83.

26 Qtd. in Brody: 110.
But perhaps most significant to the period of time coinciding with the bridge’s final completion and the forging of connections between new technologies and the cultures employing them, was the moment of Hungary’s most profound battle against Habsburg rule. This occurred with the impending revolt of 1848, gaining momentum from a series of revolutions throughout Europe just as the final chains for the new bridge were being prepared for installation. The nearly completed Chain Bridge could thus be understood to serve an important material and physic manifestation of the national confidence that was brewing by the time of the 1848 Revolution. And while much of the city and the short-lived revolutionary state remained uncertain about its future, the bridge provided the Hungarian revolutionaries with a ready tool to realize their goal of creating one urban jurisdiction from which to organize the new republic. The first individuals to cross the bridge were—importantly—not regular citizens, but revolutionary troops, ordered in an almost ceremonial gesture to test the unprepared and untested structure by the newly established government. 27 A profound result was that the Chain Bridge, as a metaphor for the united city, maintained close associations with a sovereign Hungarian power formed in 1848 in revolt against Austria—a powerful conception that would persist throughout the city’s history, right up to the present day. In later representations of the 1848 revolutionaries, for example, it would not be uncommon to see the bridge imaged among the constituent elements of the picture (fig.1.5). 28 Not surprisingly, the bridge, as a focal point in the public imaginary of an emerging city-state, was, on two separate occasions before the final collapse of the revolution, ordered to be destroyed by the Austrians. The structure would survive the revolution, however, and subsequent reassertion of Austrian power. And even when the Austrians officially re-opened the Chain Bridge in 1849, on the heels of the quashed Hungarian uprising, the uniting structure would continue to fulfill, ironically enough, the powerful conceptual function of joining Buda and Pest.

27 Ibid.: 116.

28 Budapest’s Chain Bridge was completely destroyed by the Germans during the Second World War and was among the first structures to be rebuilt. This was not only understood as a practical matter, but also seen as an important marker for the city’s and country’s historical ties to its revolutionary past. The bridge was therefore rebuilt to its original 1848-9 specifications and is maintained to this day as one of the city’s treasures.
more in the spirit of the 1848 revolutionaries than the Habsburgs would surely have liked (figs.1.6-1.8).

In the aftermath of revolutionary loss and nearly two decades of Austrian-imposed order on Pest-Buda through the 1850's and 1860's, the reality of an officially sanctioned metropolis would not occur until the controversial Compromise of 1867 between Austria and Hungary when a set of laws provided for the ethnically Magyar dominated government of Hungary to gain near equal status to the Austrian Habsburg government situated in Vienna. Indeed, one of the key functions of the Compromise was to create a second imperial capital outside Vienna, and with Austria's approval, consensus was reached that the three towns of Buda, Pest and Óbuda would merge into the metropolis of Budapest through a series of edicts completed in 1873. By the time the new city was formed, however, the issue of private land ownership after the dismantling of the old feudal order within Austria-Hungary, together with the sweeping reforms brought about by Hungary's Compromise with Austria, presented its own unique set of challenges. In particular, the Compromise was seen by many Hungarians as a late victory for the losses suffered at the hands of the Austrians during the 1848 Revolution's violent end two decades earlier. As a result, Budapest city planners and architects became caught up in what Maier has aptly described as the "problematic dialectic of replication and autonomy," pushing the boundaries of independent expression for Hungary while attempting to maintain the guise of dualism with Austria. Under the new Hungarian


30 Referred to interchangeably by the German term Ausgleich, or the Hungarian term Kiegyezés, the 1867 Compromise established the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary. The Compromise followed a series of failed constitutional reforms of the Habsburg Empire and was also made in response to mounting internal pressure to adopt more measurable liberal democratic reforms. Under the new arrangement, however, the Magyar dominated government of Hungary gained near equal status to the Austrian government based in Vienna. The final arrangements were thus unpopular with large segments of other ethnic minorities of the multinational Empire, who, though forming a substantial percentage of the overall population of the new Austria-Hungary, were not even invited to be signatories to the composition. In turn, the German and Magyar groups within the Empire became de facto "peoples of state", each ruling half of a twin country united only at the top through the Emperor-King Franz Joseph and the common Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of War. For a more extended discussion of the 1867 Compromise, see Alice Freifeld, Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary: 1848-1914 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 189-223.

31 Maier, 29.
premier, Count Gyula Andrássy (appointed by Emperor Franz Joseph in 1867—and after whom Andrassy Bvd was named), the rapid urbanization and development of Budapest as the second imperial capital had conflicting aims within the context of Hungary's unique political situation. On the one hand, Andrássy, who had the distinction of being a highly controversial figure linked to the 1848 Revolution—a former "radical" who had earlier in his life been exiled from Hungary by the Austrians and backed Széchényi's Chain Bridge plans—wanted to push forward with plans to expand and develop Hungarian national interests locally and internationally. On the other hand, the new leader had to balance the desires of Hungarian politicians loyal to the dualist cause, many of whom had tremendous faith that a strong union between the former enemies could be brokered. In both cases, the fuelling of Budapest's rapid build-up and expansion became increasingly connected to the needs and tastes of the large ethnic and assimilated Magyar population, now in control of the "other" historic lands of the twin country of Austria-Hungary.

Not surprisingly, building upon the rich economic heritage of the Carpathian Basin and the understanding that new technology could be used in the context of Budapest's association with Hungarian power and prestige, much of the energy invested in Hungary's growth went straight away to extending modern infrastructure to support the burgeoning commercial trade and population growth of the second imperial capital. And while the traditional Buda side, with its imposing castle set within a walled fortress, had been variously renovated over the centuries to reflect imperial power associated with foreign outsiders (the castle was also associated with the last stronghold of Austrian forces during the 1848 Revolution), the Pest side became the focus of new urban projects, being built up in a matter of a few short decades to reflect the values of liberal capital expansion and a quickly growing Hungarian citizenry.

32 The Austrians had in fact exiled Andrássy along with revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth (discussed at length in Chapter Three) in 1849, going so far as to hang him in effigy in 1851. Upon return to Budapest in the late 1850's (following the most oppressive years of Habsburg rule over the city), Andrássy slowly worked his way into Hungary's liberal political circles, becoming vice-president of the Hungarian Diet in 1865, and then president of the subcommittee responsible for helping draft the 1867 Compromise with Austria. In this way, Andrássy's transformation from revolutionary patriot to cooperative partner with the Habsburg authority perfectly embodied the conflicted position of Hungarian liberal politicians of the period who often cast aside their more radical liberal ideals in order to accommodate the Compromise. For a critical discussion of Andrássy's role in the 1867 Compromise, see László Kontler, Millennium in Central Europe: A History of Hungary (Budapest: Atlantisz, 1999), 284-88.
Moravánszky contends that one immediate outcome of these developments was that the planning of Budapest in the last half of the nineteenth century became "the most consistent attempt to create a bourgeois city," underscoring the deliberate aims of the Hungarian government to focus on modern urban planning as a strategy for rejuvenating the national vision for the half-empire. Indeed to extend this argument further, as much as the construction of the Chain Bridge two decades earlier had begun a process of equalizing two very different cities into a united whole, the advent and introduction of new technologies into the Budapest context worked to shift the power structure of the emerging city towards the aims and goals of a growing bourgeois class. That did not mean, however, that new technologies were completely alien to the city's western banks of Buda—for example, a 350 meter long tunnel was built in 1857 (the first traffic tunnel of its size in Europe) under the Castle District connecting Pest and the Chain Bridge to areas beyond the city virtually unreachable up to that time, while a new cable funicular built in 1870 allowed easier access up to the Buda hills for the city's inhabitants. Indeed, new transportation technologies such as the funicular and tunnel facilitated a greater degree of access and mobility across the class spectrum. In the case of Buda's nobles and aristocrats, they were now being pulled, quite literally, down from the hills and across the Danube to become involved in the most modern and increasingly fashionable spaces of Pest, many abandoning Buda altogether by the mid 1880's to take up residence in newly constructed apartments along the city's complex of new boulevards. The granting of private property to serfs and the lower classes in 1848 also facilitated an increased urban density and mixed population through to the fin de siècle era.

Budapest's late timing in terms of urban development did however present a persistent obstacle to the kind of comprehensive building program that had been accomplished in Western European cities such as Paris and London earlier in the century. Because the power to tear down and reconstruct vast areas of city or state-

---

33 Moravánszky, 50. This idea has also been explored as a process of Budapest's "embourgeoisement" in Péter Hanák, The Garden and the Workshop: Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna and Budapest (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). I suggest the importance, but also the limitations, of Hanák's comparative study of Budapest and Vienna in the Introduction to this thesis.

34 This migration is discussed in a useful study related to the human geography of Budapest, Erdmann Doane Beynon, "Budapest: An Ecological Study," Geographical Review 33, no. 2 (1943): 269. Géő also provides some useful statistics to paint the picture of the migration, stating that the population of Buda declined from 25% (of the total population of Budapest) in 1869 to 18.4% in 1890 and down to 16.4% by 1900. Gerő and Poór, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998, 104-05.
owned lands had largely been accomplished under imperial order in Europe’s largest cities, the increased incidence of private land ownership in Budapest by the 1860’s onward posed many problems for city planners. In many ways, Vienna too had faced similar issues with its Ringstrasse plan of the late 1850’s when a group of private landholders centered in Vienna’s urban core prevented the kind of radial street planning seen during the Haussmannization of Paris under Napoleon III around the same time. In this sense, Franz Joseph’s orders to demolish the city’s fortifications enclosing old Vienna in 1857 were seen by many as a gesture towards liberalizing society after the revolutionary scare of 1848. And while the imperial capital’s final Ringstrasse plans in the mid-nineteenth century allowed for a mix of public and private development, providing something of a model for Budapest, the many social, administrative, and political challenges facing the Hungarian city were radically different. Crucially, whereas Vienna’s wealth came from its position as an imperial capital, putting a great deal of emphasis on a kind of conspicuousness in design and concentrating everything that was fashionable, beautiful, and related to the city’s historic elite in the centre of the city, Budapest’s wealth was largely generated from heavy industry and a new class of entrepreneurs, pushing for an urban plan that would concentrate on purposefully extending commercial networks through a more open and business-friendly city. As historian Donald Olsen suggests in The City as a Work of Art, the appearance of a progressive city model in Vienna was nothing more than a carefully constructed illusion; he argues that if the Emperor’s city plan “reflected the spirit of a newly dominant and self-confident liberalism, much of the nature and structure of the metropolis remained the same.” Consequently, as Hanák argues

35 This idea is posited by Olsen in his discussion of Vienna on pp. 64-65.

36 Hall explains that while in Vienna the development process was greatly facilitated by the fact that most of the land used to build up the Ringstrasse district was in public ownership and unbuilt (over 600 plots were sold to private individuals and companies once the old city walls were torn down in 1857, and the revenue from these sales was enough to cover the cost of the public buildings), the situation in Budapest was such that a large number of existing areas had to be demolished, and populations uprooted, not unlike the situation in Paris under Haussmannization. This caused far more tension in the planning enterprise and the need to take far more interests into account in the process of implementing a new urban plan.(335-336).


38 Olsen, 68.
(supporting the observations made by Olsen), the ruling elites of Vienna deliberately distanced themselves from modernization, and urban modernization in particular. This in turn resulted in little or no concentrated development of a modern business center or transportation connections between the city and the suburbs, with the concentration of all major industrial activity being relegated to the farthest outskirts of the city. \(^{39}\) This was the very opposite of what was desired in Budapest. Therefore, when Budapest’s Metropolitan Board of Public Works (Fővárosi közmunkatanács) was created in 1870 and charged with the task of joining the older medieval and newer bourgeois parts of the city, the organization had little interest in replicating the Ringstrasse plan of Vienna. \(^{40}\)

**Reconfiguring Urban Space and Spectatorship: Andrássy Avenue and the Sightlines of Budapest**

Indeed, from its very inception, Budapest’s Metropolitan Public Works Board was interested in balancing the needs of the growing city while attempting to accommodate Budapest’s new status as second imperial capital. The Board itself was made up of three representatives from Buda, six from Pest, nine national administrators, and a government appointed chairman and vice-chairman and was made a permanent body responsible for the whole town. \(^{41}\) In this sense, Budapest’s urban planning was implemented in a manner quite unique for the time, not unlike what would later emerge in regional planning systems in cities of the twentieth century where a number of interests worked together to derive a suitable direction for the city’s future. As Hall notes, the number of aristocrats on the Board was at first high, and then changed to reflect more of a bourgeois population in the ensuing decades, causing many debates and conflicts over the direction of Budapest’s city plan. \(^{42}\) Two imperatives emerged upon the Board’s inception however that were later addressed through the adoption of an amalgam of two proposed city plans—the

---

\(^{39}\) Hanak, 8-9.


\(^{41}\) Hall, 247.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 248.
creation of a large ring road to encompass the newest parts of Pest, and a diagonal road, or Grand avenue, to unite the city with its largest park.\textsuperscript{43}

In the absence of one overriding urban plan, the most obvious characterization of Budapest's development post-1867 therefore related to its flexibility, outward expansiveness and ambitious scope, qualities that could be likened to a kind of self-inventing nature expected of Europe's fastest growing city of the period (see Map 1).\textsuperscript{44} The radial nature of the city's boulevard system, made up of the Small Boulevard (Kiskörút) and the new Great Boulevard (Nagykörút) was built upon original roads of the inner city, but unlike Vienna where the Ringstrasse created a single enclosed circle within the city centre, Budapest's two largest boulevards served as concentric semi-circles bounding the old town of Pest and the expanding boundaries of the emerging metropolis. These boulevards, in turn, connected the fastest growing districts of Pest that housed the newest apartments, emerging businesses, cafes and restaurants of the city. Indeed, the final configuration of Budapest also asserted a radiating plan from the urban center out to the rest of the countryside and beyond. At the north end of the Great Boulevard, for example, the street connected with the Margaret Island Bridge (Margit hid) (built between 1872-76) out of the city, while the Smaller Boulevard remained in close proximity to the Franz Joseph Bridge (slated for completion by the end of the Fair), the latter creating another connection point between Buda and Pest. Budapest's two main railway stations on the Eastern (Keleti pályaudvar) and Western (Nyugati pályaudvar) ends of Pest also fed a constant flow of people and goods in and out of the city and were connected through a system of trams and omnibuses. As such, the role of communication and transportation technology signalled a cultural imperative within Hungary that held up Budapest as its treasured center piece. Underscoring this point, is that in 1896 at the time of the Millennial Exhibition, an impressive 600 page

\textsuperscript{43} A competition was announced in 1871 by the city and ten proposals were submitted. The first prize was awarded to Budapest's chief engineer of the Ministry of Works and Traffic, Lajos Lechner (no relationship to the architect of the Museum of Applied Arts, Ödön Lechner, discussed later in the chapter) and the second prize to a lesser known Frigyes Feszl for an evocatively titled plan, \textit{Metropolis}. Interestingly, the first focused more on aspects of beautifying Buda, while the latter focused on Pest. And while the original plans are now lost, what is known is that an amalgam of the two was finally worked out as a kind of guiding tool for the city's broader urban plan (Hall, 248).

\textsuperscript{44} By the turn of the nineteenth century, Budapest was the eighth largest city of Europe, following Hamburg, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and London. Gerő and Poór, \textit{Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998}, 104.
volume detailing all of Budapest's technical, engineering, and communication technologies with extensive diagrams, maps, and statistics was published to coincide with the Fair in Hungarian, English, French, and German editions. It is important to note however, architectural historian József Sisa's point, that the master plan was not brought about by the conscious efforts of city planners, but more so by a kind of "spontaneous evolution."

Despite the lack of an overall plan for Budapest, it was still important to articulate the city's new position as Austria-Hungary's second imperial city. Indeed, as stated above, one of the first major projects of Budapest's new Metropolitan Board of Public Works was to build a broad 2.5 kilometre long avenue initially called Ray Street (Sugár útca), derived from the Hungarian word for “sun-ray” (fig. 1.9). This was completed between 1871-1878 (interestingly enough, coinciding with a downturn in Vienna's urban construction after the stock market crash of 1873). Modeled in part on Paris's Champs d'Elysees, the building of the avenue was initiated in order to connect the fastest growing part of Pest's inner city boulevards' with a partially completed 600,000 square meter urban park (Városliget or "City Grove") at the northeast corner of the city (fig. 1.10) that would ultimately feature a series of national monuments and which would eventually become the location for the 1896 Millennial Exhibition. Ray Street's broad vista—enhanced by the progressive widening of the

---

45 See Edvi Illés Aladár, Budapest Műszaki Útmutatója (Technical Guide to Budapest) (Budapest: Pátria Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársaság, 1896). Significantly this publication was re-issued in 1996 in its original form to coincide with the 100 year anniversary of the Millenial Exhibition.

46 Sisa: 17.

47 Olsen, 236. This is an important event since it led to the stoppage of projects and failure of certain luxury hotels in Vienna at the same moment that the acceleration of Budapest's urban development lured new foreign investment, capital, and tourism to the Hungarian capital. This occurred along with an influx of migrant labour to Budapest, drawn from Vienna and other parts of the Austo-Hungarian Empire.

48 The influence of Paris's city plan is clearly visible in Budapest. As Hall argues, Budapest and Rome are the two cities of Europe most influenced by the radial road and inner boulevarding scheme of Paris. This approach was both a political choice in the case of Budapest since it differed dramatically from Vienna's city plan, and also likely a result of city planner's traveling to the Paris Exhibition of 1867 where the city was on display for the world to see (347-349).

49 See Chapter Two for a discussion of the monument. One of the distinctive features of the park, as sociologist Gabór Gyáni points out in his reading of the space, was how its commission and planning dovetailed with Andrássy Avenue's function to generate a more cohesive urban character for the central, suburban, and industrial sectors of the city and their publics. German architect Christian Heinrich Nebbien had planned the park after what has been described as the first competition in the history of landscape architecture in 1813. And in an effort to disassociate himself from prevailing
avenue at the north end nearest the City Grove—was deliberately designed to draw spectators’ eyes up and down the expanse of the street, emphasizing the scale and scope of the city. This was once again in stark contrast to Vienna’s circular Ringstrasse which encouraged a more isolated and inward kind of looking to a limited elite public in the city’s core.

Clearly, the final construction of the long avenue was understood by Budapest inhabitants as something much more than a road connecting the inner city to the park. Renamed Andrássy Avenue (Andrássy út) in 1885 after Hungary’s first premier, the thoroughfare gave form to all that the new metropolis desired most to project of itself.  50 Visual pleasure, the public’s experience of the street, and technological advances promoting mobility proved key among these interrelated qualities. For example, city planners keen to encourage business along parts of the avenue did not want to disrupt the traffic flow, yet were also concerned not to distract from the avenue’s appearance or vistas with the “ugly” marks of train tracks. 51 As a result city engineers would opt to place their transportation system for the street below the ground—a key technological innovation associated with the avenue and which emulated London’s city planning and new engineering techniques. My point here is

---

50 The most comprehensive and detailed account of Budapest’s post-1867 development (including Andrássy Avenue as a core focus) continues to be an early 1930 study published through Budapest’s Metropolitan Board of Public Works. See László Siklóssy, Hogyan épült Budapest? 1870-1930 (How Budapest was Built, 1870-1930) (Budapest: Fővárosi közmunkatáncs (Metropolitan Board of Public Works), 1931).

51 The establishment of Pest’s “beautifying committee” (Széptitőbizottság) in 1808 was originally charged with embellishing the city through architectural and visible upgrades to the urban environment and had a direct influence on the Andrássy Avenue’s final plan (Hall, 246). For example, applications for horse tram companies to build trams on Andrássy Avenue were denied by the Board in order to maintain the elegance of the Budapest boulevards (Siklóssy, 167). London was therefore taken as a model and the first underground railway of continental Europe was laid between 1894-1896, Blau and Platzer, Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937, 108.

52 The full account of Budapest’s Municiple Board to plan the transportation infrastructure for Andrássy Avenue (including quotations from the original minutes of meetings concerning the subway’s eventual construction below the ground) is detailed in Siklóssy, 166-70.
that such concern over visuality and how the street would be traversed by the public was a significant one. It also extended to the design of two distinct “squares” on the new avenue—spaces which represented more of an interest in aesthetics over any uniting function. Moving north from Pest, the first of these, called the Octagon (Oktogan), due to its eight sides was set at the key intersection of Andrássy and the Grand Boulevard. The second, called the Circle (Körönd), was round in shape and set closer towards the City Park (fig.1.11).53 Both “squares” served as visual anchors for Andrássy Avenue, marking transitions from the city’s inner hub to the taller commercial four story buildings further uptown, and then again to lower two story buildings and final length of luxury bourgeois villas which were constructed along the final blocks to the entrance of the City Grove. A related feature of the avenue’s conception was to fashion small-scale “urban furniture” made up of kiosks, fountains, statues and electric lampposts (the city was fully electrified by 1893), in order to give a stylistic continuity to the look and feel of the street from one end to the other. By the completion of the subway in 1896 to coincide with the opening of the Fair, transit stations on the street welcomed users with tastefully decorated waiting areas, while the actual trains were well crafted and appointed with top quality materials.54

These features, imparting an overall sense of ownership and pride to the city’s inhabitants, encouraged the use of the impressive avenue and later the new subway system as a way to participate in and experience the new city and its connections to a revitalized Hungarian identity. As Moravánszky suggests in his discussion of Andrássy Avenue and its eventual role as main thoroughfare to the 1896 Exhibition, a resident and/or visitor’s stroll along the street reiterated city planners’ consistent attempts to bind the creation of a bourgeois city with the desires of the Hungarian national cause: “...the walker left the downtown ambiance of dense urbanity and arrived at an opulent neighbourhood of upscale villas, museums, a towering national

53 Both shapes defied the typical square often utilized in such intersections. There is also the possibility that the use of the octagon shape was a deliberate feature used to distinguish Budapest’s urban planning from Vienna and associate it with more exotic and eastern design influences. Interestingly, the popularity of the octagon shape in architectural projects of this period was read as a sign of the individualist against the expected four-sided shape of traditional built forms. This was particularly the case in nineteenth century American architecture where a taste for Turkish pavilions and Chinese pagodas drove an interest in new shapes (such as the octagon) and exotic influences for architectural design. For a discussion on the octagon shape in nineteenth century architecture, see John Milnes Baker, *American House Styles: A Concise Guide* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994), 135-38.

54 Siklóssy, 189-91.
monument, and replicas of famous historical buildings at the park." \(^{55}\) This encouraged a kind of simultaneous closeness with the street and experience of a constructed “Hungarianness,” promoting an intimacy that was arguably more accessible and desirable to a broader urban middle class than an elite minority of nobles continuing to reside in the remote Buda hills, or the core of Austria’s ruling class within Vienna’s Ringstrasse district.

As alluded to earlier, the difficulty and obstacles involved with acquiring the land, permits, and government clout to clear the area necessary for the long and broad expanse of the initial Ray Street and later Andrássy Avenue was closely linked to the reality that a post-feudal economy, based on capitalism and private property, posed. It was also rooted, however, in the productive ambiguities that dual power presented for the metropolis of Budapest. As urban historian Maier fittingly asks in a rhetorical question related to the problem of city planning throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire, how was the modernist project for ordering urban space and designing its representational structures compatible with a political framework, the Habsburg realms, which, as an empire, insisted on tradition, the imposition of spatial hierarchy, and limited strivings for autonomy? \(^{56}\) The problem, in many ways, emanated from a lack of real power on the part of city administrators and planners to generate a cohesive plan for Budapest. Moravánszky notes in his discussion of Andrássy Avenue’s construction, for example, that a look at any city map reveals the failed attempt to coordinate Budapest’s Chain Bridge, its inner city boulevards, and the new street into a collective urban ensemble (refer again to Map 1). \(^{57}\) Without the necessary connective function to bring the city together, the avenue also exposed an ominous harbinger of problems to come, literally mapping out the disconnect between: 1) city planners’ goals of uniting the city; 2) foreign capital interest and market speculation in Budapest predicated on multifaceted and often competing stakes and interests; and 3) the attempts by Habsburg interests to keep a check on Magyarization in the second capital. As such, the lack of homogeneity reflected in the first substantial urban

\(^{55}\) Moravánszky, 50.

\(^{56}\) Maier, 25.

\(^{57}\) Moravánszky, 46. Hall also makes a similar observation through his discussion of the problematic traffic patterns created in Budapest as a result of Andrássy Avenue’s apparent disconnect with the smaller boulevard closest to the city core. See Hall, 252.
project of the city, together with the failure to unite the fractured parts of the burgeoning capital, revealed itself as both the result of weakened municipal policies and a lack of state power in imposing the kind of building program that one would identify with a truly "imperial" capital.\(^{58}\)

In one sense then, the inability to unite the city of Budapest in terms of traditional built space demanded the adoption of new models. At the same time, however, the perceived failure allowed the chance for new possibilities, opportunities, and the chance for ingenuity in design to arise. A direct consequence was that Budapest quickly developed an international reputation for producing technically skilled trades people, engineers, and architects.\(^{59}\) In the Budapest case, this was largely accomplished through the extensive use of emerging communication, transportation and electrical technologies to bind and unite the city in new and innovative ways. For example, while Budapest’s streets may not have been as symmetrically arranged as desired, the dense circuits of street-cars, trams, omnibuses, and the new subway—linking up to the city’s large railway stations and spreading out to the countryside and beyond—allowed for a substantial perceptual shift in how the public constructed their mental map of the city (fig. 1.12).\(^{60}\) At the same time, the creation of telephone and telegraph networks increased within Budapest and extended to the most remote parts of the country by 1896.\(^{61}\) As much as the city of Budapest was inventing itself in the context of modern developments, technology, and new regimes of capital, so too was its citizenry, many of whom had moved to Budapest to

\(^{58}\) This is a point that becomes most clear in a comparison of Budapest’s urban plan with that of Paris or Vienna and is an argument supported by Géro’s discussion of the strong influence of entrepreneurs and foreign investors in the latter phases of Budapest’s development (Géro and Poór, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998, 106). At the same time, Hall notes that the rapid urban development of Budapest that occurred in tandem with the private land speculation in the city created a demand for housing and business space that was so great, that the city’s expansion spilled out over blocks and into areas not in the official plan of the Metropolitan Board of Public Works (253).

\(^{59}\) For an account of the period referring to this reputation, see "Technical Education," Catholic World 28, no. 166 (1879) where the author refers to Budapest’s main technical college as "turning out some of the best mechanics in Europe" (521) recommending the Hungary’s model for technical education be adopted in the United States. For a history of technical education in Hungary, see Andrea Karpati and Emil Gaul, "Art and Technology in Hungarian Education: Conflicts and Compromises," Leonardo 23, no. 2/3 (1990).

\(^{60}\) For a detailed overview of the technical details of these projects, see Edvi Illés Aladár, Budapest Műszaki Utmutatója (Technical Guide to Budapest) (Budapest: Patría Irodalmi és Nyomdai Részvénytársaság, 1896).

\(^{61}\) András Géro, Budapest 1896, a város egy éve [Budapest 1896: The City’s One Year] (Budapest: Budapesti Negyed Alapítvány, 1996), 120.
start new lives (recall that a full 70% of Budapest’s population growth between 1891-1900 was fuelled by new immigration to the city). This dovetailed, not insignificantly, with the needs of both the Hungarian government and the ethnic Magyar majority, to expand Hungary’s power base by appealing to models of living and being in the world that encouraged a modern subjectivity. Based on notions of progress, mobility, and a forward-looking sensibility, the growing Budapest public could thus articulate its break with the past and claim distinction in the eyes of the world.

Stated slightly differently, the creation of a unified Budapest was deliberately modeled on a form of spectatorship that encouraged emerging conceptions of modern urban identity constructed firmly within the framework of new technology and individuated viewing. In this context, it is useful to consider art historian Jonathan Crary’s body of theory that connects vision and visuality to the changing perceptions of human subjectivity and identity in the nineteenth century, where the experience of observation increasingly belongs to the observer instead of the observed. As a valuable idea that aids in understanding the profound shifts in power relations in a post-feudal world, Crary’s argument also helps explain why the intense interest in documenting and creating discourses around the transformation of the city would become pivotal by the fin de siècle period—an important and continuing theme of later chapters of this thesis). As alluded to earlier, this complex process of a city and citizenry “becoming” also facilitated the creation of distinctly new spatial configurations within the urban fabric wrought by new technology. Crary posits, for example, how new technologies of vision performed “operations of individuation” that impelled moments of withdrawal into an interior world in order to regulate and purify relationships and connections to the manifold contents of the now ‘exterior’

---

62 From 1869-1900, Budapest’s population grew from 280,000 to 733,000 by 1900. Hall, 247. Also see the Introduction to this thesis for more statistics cited on the make-up of Budapest’s late nineteenth century population.

63 See the chapter “Modernity and the Problem of the Observer” in Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1990), 1-24. While Crary’s study focuses more so on what he terms “dominant practices of vision,” he points to the necessity of looking for points of resistance to these regimes of seeing, “What is not addressed in this study are the marginal and local forms by which dominant practices of vision were resisted, deflected, or imperfectly constituted. The history of such oppositional modes needs to be written, but it only becomes legible against the more hegemonic set of discourses and practices in which vision took shape” (7). This chapter in many ways is my attempt to answer this call.
In turn, the relations between technological inventions and a pre-given world of objective truth displaced the observer’s multi-sensory experience, leading to Crary’s radical suggestion that an internalized view could, through the mediation of technologies, be projected externally as well.\(^{65}\)

Other aspects of the emerging metropolis worked to embody this shifting visuality within Budapest. As discussed earlier, the creation of wider and more accessible boulevards and integration of mass transportation systems allowed people to move through neighbourhoods and glimpse parts of the city from new and altered perspectives. One of the most important developments during Budapest’s rapid build-up was the creation of several important promenades in the 1870’s and the development of park lands, such as Margaret Island (Margitsziget), for new spaces of leisure and interaction.\(^{66}\) Among the walkways, the Danube Corso (Duna Corso), running along both sides of the river bank, provided impressive if not picturesque views of the city and waterfront (fig. 1.13), while several public walkways were also established in the Buda hills that allowed for sweeping and indeed panoramic views of an emerging and dynamic Pest (fig. 1.14).\(^{67}\) As one prominent 1896 tourist publication description suggests (a description that was translated into four languages to accompany a large photograph of the Danube Corso), the stress on the visual was paramount to experiencing the nation:

An indescribable charm and brilliancy is cast over this view, when the sun’s rays are reflected from the glittering waves of the river and when he sets, the steeples and buildings of the town, are bathed in many coloured hues. At night the endless line of lamps, the deep shadows of the high buildings dipping so to say into the flood of the darkened river, from a most impressive and fairy sight, which fills the breast of every patriot with pride and leaves a lasting remembrance on the mind of the traveler coming to Hungary’s glorious Capital to view her fine sights and monumental Edifices.\(^{68}\)

\(^{64}\) Ibid., 14.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 15-17.

\(^{66}\) Hall, 253. Margaret Island is a 2.5 kilometer long island on the city’s northern end that features gardens, thermal spas, bathing, and a large park.

\(^{67}\) Gyáni, 89-92.

\(^{68}\) Gyula Laurencic, *Az ezeréves Magyarország és a milléniumi kiállítás (The Millennium of Hungary and the National Exhibition)* (Budapest: Kunosy Vilmos 1896), 70. This particular tourist book in the form of a large commemorative photo album was widely distributed around Europe and North America. The book (discussed in further detail in Chapter Three) also featured hundreds of
The leisure activity of walking the promenade was therefore brought into comparison with the activity of walking the city's newest spaces, combining the pleasure of viewing with the experience and freedom of movement. Moreover, the function of being seen in the cityscape set the spectator within infinite frameworks of other individuals' views. The phenomena of a cafés culture, rivalling that of Paris and Vienna despite Budapest’s smaller geographical size, also intensified and multiplied such instances of intimate seeing and being seen, as did the building up of a network of arcades in the city increasing the density of the urban core (fig. 1.15). The multiple and ever-expanding opportunities for looking and viewing generated by the new city were matched by a steady rise in the number of newspapers and periodicals available in Budapest, each attempting to capture and legitimize yet another individual voice and set of eyes in the diverse and multiethnic makeup of the Hungarian state as seen through the capital city. Budapest’s print media and its dozens of daily newspapers (boasting among the highest circulation rates in all of Europe), also contributed to a kind of panoramic literature in the nineteenth century, participating in a modern urban phenomena that historian Margaret Cohen has likened to a telling of the “collective story of the city.”

---

69 Budapest’s cafés culture was well publicized in the fin de siècle era and reoccurs in descriptions of the city at this time. For an in-depth study of Budapest’s café culture, see Béla Borsody-Bevilaqua and Béla Mázsai, Pest-budai kávéházak (Cafés of Pest-Buda), 2 vols. (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1935); and Carol A. Dittrich, Historic Coffeehouses: Vienna, Budapest, Prague (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Lemieux International, 2002).

70 Moravánszky, 33.

71 In Budapest alone by 1896 the combined circulation of the city’s 291 Hungarian language and 42 German language newspapers was 65 million. Nemes, 182.

72 Margaret Cohen, “Panoramic Literature and the Invention of Everyday Genres,” in Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life, ed. Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 238. Cohen also remarks on bodily sensation in this context: “The panoramic text’s use of discontinuity captures the discontinuities in sense perception characterizing the urban metropolis and processes of industrial production, what Benjamin has famously termed the shocks of modern life.”
Rearticulating National Identity: The “Paradigmatic Urban Ensemble” and the Constraints of Dualism

As the previous section suggests, Vienna as the seat of Habsburg power and the first imperial capital of Austria-Hungary had in many ways renovated its nineteenth century urban core to resemble a living museum for the monarchy—a city arguably more focused on past grandeur and achievements than one dedicated to forging an unknown future. Budapest, in contrast, had not totally succumbed to the Emperor’s guiding vision for the ideal Habsburg city, and therefore followed an urban development model that appeared in many ways more cosmopolitan, international, and open to foreign capital influence. Projects such as Budapest’s Western Railway Station, completed by the French Eiffel Company in 1877 and continental Europe’s first underground subway completed in 1894 by the German firm Siemens and Halske AG provide key examples of this approach. These projects, while infusing fresh perspectives in form, design, and new technology within the urban fabric, also drew compelling comparisons between Budapest and the American industrial metropolises of Chicago and New York, as “blank slates” for the kind of new building projects and urban expansion that the Hungarian government was so desperate to achieve.\(^{73}\) Vision was also privileged in the context of Budapest’s urbanization and plans for a World’s Fair because of the tremendous effort to prepare the city to be seen, inspected, and legitimized by the outside world. Moreover, there was an interest in exhibiting the very kinds of optical technologies that could continue fuelling the relation between observers and their experience of modernity.\(^{74}\) As such, the effort to modernize Budapest was closely linked to the goal of uniting a multinational and multiethnic urban population through visual cues in the cityscape, pointing to identification with a constructed Hungarian superiority and Magyar nomadic heritage. In this profound sense, the plan for Budapest was that it should be Hungarian first and foremost.\(^{75}\) The modernizing city of Budapest therefore provided not only the critical venue and space within which to foster an expanded perception of


\(^{74}\) The camera, cinematograph, and panorama are examples of these new technologies and are discussed in detail in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

\(^{75}\) This the argument at the core of Nemes’s recent book on Budapest as mentioned in note 7.
Hungarian national consciousness on the eve of the Millennial Exhibition, but also one that extended beyond situated borders and threatened to rival Vienna for global attention.

The many contradictions involved in Budapest’s urban planning culminated in a kind of multifariousness in Budapest’s architectural landscape by the late nineteenth century. This was driven by both the favourable economic conditions that pushed for the development of the city beyond its original plans, and a turn to new techniques of construction that led to departures in construction from more traditional models. As will emerge in the discussion of the Hungarian Parliament building and Museum of Applied Arts, the steady addition of new buildings modeled on styles ranging from French neo-baroque and neo-renaissance architecture, together with experimentation with eastern associated and folk art motifs, worked to displace the Viennese neoclassical style that had been in fashion earlier in the century. As a result, the rise of an eclectic architecture in Budapest—as a kind of non-style style—reflected the open-ended nature of the new metropolis as one in search of origins, yet poised for the future, and promoting a kind of architectural program willing to draw on a variety of influences. In this sense, as Moravánszky persuasively argues, Central European modernism and urban architecture “could accommodate many different proposals” and experiments in design, and it did just that.

The Habsburg Empire as a collective whole, however, could never completely forgo vernacular elements of design and architecture in its quest for modern urban development. Therefore, while a penchant for eclecticism existed within Budapest by the late nineteenth century, city planners and architects had to carefully balance the demands of an imperial vision as they collided with the specific representational

---

76 The mix of architectural styles is a key characteristic of Budapest’s urban development and is discussed variously by Hanák, The Garden and the Workshop: Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna and Budapest, 38-43; Nemes, 160-65; and Gerő and Poór, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998, 127.

77 Gerő and Poór, Budapest: A History from its Beginnings to 1998, 127. Part of the reason for such an eclecticism in the architecture related to new technological innovations in design that pushed for departures in traditional construction methods.

78 Moravánszky, 10.

79 Maier, 30. “The Habsburg project and the architecture that might legitimate it could never renounce the vernacular, or what was most often the case, the pseudo-vernacular. The city, moreover, had a particular role in Habsburg Central Europe. For it represented the site where the imperial met the local, and the architect or urban designer had to do justice simultaneously to both sources of inspiration.”
claims of the heterogeneous Austro-Hungarian Empire. For example, the underground subway built in the 1890s and running beneath Andrássy Avenue and associated with the radical progress and modernity of the city was contained somewhat by associating the new technology with the Habsburg’s rule—the subway was given the official name of the Emperor: the Franz Joseph Underground Electric Railway (Ferencz József Földalatti VillamosVasut). And Hungary’s Parliament building with its claim to shared democratic power within the Austro-Hungarian Empire still remained lower in status (both visually and in actual fact) as an institution on the Pest side of the city in the shadow of the Imperial residence, the Royal Palace across the river in Buda. Budapest in turn was compelled to express a kind of historicity in its new role as the second imperial city—both as a form of self-assertion and distinctiveness from the first imperial center—while continuing to try and make claims for its own flavour of modernity. Critically, this is the reason why such apparently contradictory goals would often collide and/or blur together in built space. As a result, Budapest maintained a form of openness and looseness in its modern character that was anything but ahistorical. Understanding too that Budapest’s function within a newly configured Austria-Hungary was largely symbolic and not rooted with the same degree of legitimate power as Vienna, many architects and planners appeared to have understood that abandoning references to a glorified Magyar past was akin to abandoning any shot at resisting what was sometimes read as the imperial agenda of a Viennese architectural language, be it traditional or modern.

Architectural Compromise and the Hungarian Parliament Building

While a diminished sense of achieving built connections in the cityscape meant that new models were needed to impart a sense of permanence and ascendancy

---

80 During the late nineteenth century, the subway was known by its official name as the Franz Joseph Underground Electric Railway (Ferencz József Földalatti VillamosVasut), but in my assessment was most often referred to in the Budapest press as the Millennial Underground Railway, and in the international press as simply the Budapest subway/metro/underground system. In other words, the attachment of the Emperor’s name to the project appeared to be something of a formality.

81 Maier raises this idea in connection to Hungarian architects on p. 29-30. In one example, Maier discusses how Viennese architect Otto Wagner told Hungarian architects in a 1915 meeting that a national style need not exist since “the artistic expression of architectural works must in every center of culture be similar.” While Wagner’s intention may have been to encourage a new modernist approach, many of the architects in attendance would have understood this statement as attempting to limit nativist inspiration and exert a kind of imperial control (29).
characteristic of an imperial capital, a turn to technology and conceptual reorganization were seen as necessary even in the most significant buildings representing Hungarian power in the dual empire. The plans for a new Hungarian parliament building therefore had immediate importance to Budapest once the 1867 Compromise with Austria had been reached. Within the context of Hungarian parliamentary politics, the shift in governance to the capital city had already arisen with the 1848 Revolution, when the feudal system was thrown out and replaced with a new set of laws, thereby enacting a modern form of representative government. Moving the traditional Diet from Poszony (present day Bratislava, Slovakia) to Pest-Buda had been one of the critical changes made by the new government, but the new laws remained essentially restricted for two decades before the union of Austria and Hungary became the basis for a modified form of governance on the 1848 model.\textsuperscript{82} Market problems and a monetary crisis in the restructured Empire (particularly in Vienna) prevented any realistic plans however to materialize through the 1870’s. Therefore, by the time that the political and economic climate was primed for a Hungarian Parliament building to be planned in the 1880’s, the expectations for the structure were incredibly high.\textsuperscript{83} Driving this enthusiasm, however, was not only the long delay in plans, but also the completion of Vienna’s new Parliament building, designed by Baron Theophil von Hansen and constructed between 1874 and 1883 in a Greek revival style (fig.1.16). These developments fuelled Hungarian politicians’ desires to give form to Hungary’s new status within the dual Empire. Moreover, in Budapest, the renovation and updates taking place on the Habsburg Royal Castle across the Danube River—a building complex incorporating neoclassical baroque styling and French Rococo influences with furnishings from Vienna’s Hofburg Palace—spurred plans to equal, if not surpass, the architectural statements being made in the Emperor’s name in clear site of the proposed home for the new Parliament.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{82} Kontler, 282.

All of these events, in turn, coincided with what architectural historians have identified as one of the most ambitious phases of parliament building design and construction in the Western world, emerging in the mid to late nineteenth century. For example, Germany’s imposing and monumental Reichstag in Berlin, Britain’s rebuilt Houses of Parliament in London, and the parliament buildings at Ottawa in the new dominion of Canada were all constructed during this time (figs. 1.17-1.19). And while these new buildings were created to serve as demonstrative statements about the kind of representative democracy practiced within, they also became part of a more overt statement about the national ambitions of the countries that built them. As Stefan Muthesius observes in his essay “Parliamentarianism, Giganticism, Style and Criticism”, these were important themes for a new category of government buildings:

The grand parliament buildings were, after all, monuments not only to democracy, but also to the centralization of decision-making and in some cases demonstrations of the emancipation from foreign rule. After the first wave of parliamentarism in America and France which stressed universal values in its pronouncements and its architecture, we enter a new phase in which the notion of the rights of the people was associated with the expressions of the particularized, with the history of a single nation, and only that nation. It was felt that political legitimacy could be gained by providing a comprehensive narrative of that nation’s history, which included the rulers as well as ‘the people.’

In this sense, Hungary was determined to produce a profound statement. For not only did potential architects have the benefit of borrowing elements from other parliamentary projects that came before (as latecomers to planning and construction), but also because Hungary possessed the desire—and newly sanctioned power—to construct a parliament building that could represent the political aspirations of the fastest growing city in Europe.

---

84 The updates to Habsburg Royal Castel included extending and giving a more “splendid appearance” to the section facing the Danube River—the part of the castle that was ironically enough the actual back of the structure originally. Hall, 253.


One of the first elements that the planning committee borrowed from other parliamentary projects initiated during the nineteenth century was the call for an international competition. In the final months of 1880, the Hungarian government passed a motion to provide the budget for a new parliament building to be constructed on a building site on the Pest side of the Danube in the fifth district between the Chain Bridge and Margaret Island, a location as described at the outset of this chapter, in direct sight of the Royal Palace in Buda under Habsburg control. Soon afterwards, the decision was made to solicit as many different ideas and visions for the planned structure as possible—an initial openness in the competition that emanated from a lack of clearly defined architectural traditions upon which Hungarians had to draw, and a commitment to a democratic process of selection. As a result, the initial criteria for the design of the Parliament building remained very open. Not restricted by financial considerations, the winning design was to accommodate for present and future needs of the country, with few specifications other than basic room capacity for layout or room groupings made in the call for proposals. But as the final deadline for the competition draft proposal grew closer and the debates over the proposed building intensified, a number of criteria did surface. Following an 1869 economic committee recommendation, the building was to impart "the proportions and shape of a memorial." And in the section on style, the committee recommended that due to the site of the new building, "...and of Hungary’s historical past and development of its constitution from the old times, the most suitable style...[was] to be chosen from among Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, or variants of Renaissance mode." While this statement conjured up the period beginning in medieval times which coincided with the early founding of Hungary and after, it is also important that conspicuously absent from this list was the Classical style in which the new Viennese parliament was modelled—a deliberate move on the part of Hungarian politicians to detach themselves from a visual vocabulary associated with the Austrian Habsburgs and therefore imperial authority.


88 Ibid., 357.

89 Ibid., 360.
Moreover, under pressure from the Association of Hungarian Engineers and Architects, who had demanded but been refused a closed competition, the final call for proposals was not widely publicized in foreign publications. As a result, the "international" competition which had been initiated in a spirit of openness, yielded only twenty entries and only from Hungarian and Austrian architects.90

Interestingly, as Eszter Gábor suggests in her detailed account of the parliamentary records related to the competition and the evaluation process, the discussion over style was at first quite muted. This related partly to the simple fact that from the earliest stages of the competition it was already apparent that a neo-Gothic mode would likely receive the best chance of winning out as the style "of choice" for Hungary's new Parliament building. Possessing the advantage of producing great height, open space, and allowing for maximum light, the neo-Gothic revival offered an architectural vocabulary already associated with parliamentary government (seen in the final designs for the British and Canadian Houses of Parliament for example, ) and in the Hungarian context one that could speak to a body of traditions—the nomadic heritage of the ethnic Magyars based on an ancient Diet—which could for many Hungarians evoke an antecedent to parliamentary models.91 Moreover, as many Hungarian politicians argued, the Gothic vocabulary allowed the most flexibility in adjusting to place, climate and function, being a style that was associated not only with European centers as a whole, but also with the British neo-Gothic revival and reformist goals best suited to Hungary's new constitution.92 As Gábor argues, however, once the evaluation process became a part of the public discourse, a number of objections related to the Gothic style surfaced. Some committee members believed that the Gothic was still too closely associated

90 Ibid. The details of each plan are discussed on pp. 360-362.

91 This idea is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two with respect to the Feszty Panorama, an image that depicts Hungary's mythic ancestor heroes in such a way as to connect them to a form of early liberal democratic government.

92 The Hungarian politicians, Széchényi (whom I discussed in relationship to building of Budapest's Chain Bridge) and Andrásy (Hungary's first Premier) have been described by numerous historians as "Anglophiles" who wanted to consciously model aspects of Budapest's character in close concert with their preferred model of a parliamentary democracy, that being Britain. As a result, the neo-Gothic signaled a particular vocabulary of liberalism that many Hungarians were keen to endorse. See for example the discussion in Jozsef Sisa, "Neo-Gothic Architecture and Restoration of Historic Buildings in Central Europe: Friedrich Schmidt and His School," The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 61, no. 2 (2002): 179, Blau and Platzer, Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937, 108.
with Germanic power, while other critics pointed out that secular buildings built in the Gothic style had no tradition in Hungary. In fact, as the more nationalist and right of center Budapesti Hirlap (Budapest News) argued, the best proposal took up the Byzantine style since it left open the possibility for historical traditions and associations emanating from eastern lands:

What justifies our support for this plan is not only because it is less hackneyed than the rest, but because it fits best the Hungarian taste and its Romanesque motifs have preserved something of the architecture of ancient Hungarians. Hence it could most safely provide the grounds for a Hungarian style.

In turn, much of these debates about what comprised a Hungarian style reflected once again the complex national identity that Hungary was being forced to define and give visual shape to in the 1890's—an identity that many were finally realizing had no solid connections to any one building vocabulary.

The debates over identity were also deeply entangled with the precarious path that liberal politics had taken in Hungary since the 1867 Compromise. Not surprisingly, the liberalism that prevailed since the 1848 revolution was badly fractured by the last quarter of the century. The first obvious split emerged from the makeup of the two parliamentary houses in Hungary. The Upper House consisted almost exclusively of the aristocracy who were entitled to their position by birth, while the Lower House consisted of elected members and functioned to represent a broader public constituency. While this did not differ from other constitutional monarchies at the time, the significance of the distinction between the Upper and Lower Houses in Hungary lay within a context of conservatizing forces that had


94 Ibid., 362.


96 Prior to 1848 and in a somewhat altered state after the 1848 revolution, the Hungarian parliamentary structure consisted of a Hungarian Diet (as a constituent land of the Austrian Empire). Importantly, members of the Diet's governing council were appointed by the Habsburg monarch and the Diet was directly subordinated to the Court Chamber in Vienna. The difference between the aristocracy and the gentry in Hungary was also given shape in the traditional composition of the Hungarian Diet. All members of the aristocracy had the right to sit in the Upper House (which was largely conservative), while the Lower House elected two delegates from each county in Hungary to form its constituency (which was mostly liberal).
brought about the guise of constitutional reform through the Compromise of 1867 with Austria. As historian AndrásGerő argues, central to the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary following 1867 was acceptance of the Emperor of Austria as the King of Hungary and by extension acceptance of absolute authority:

The Compromise not only concerned itself with political power and national issues, but was also a bargain struck about values. Certain aspects of absolutism were to remain unchallenged, with the implication that in public affairs a certain authoritarian attitude would continue to prevail with a strong attachment to an essentially feudal centre—the sovereign—and that conformity to these values would be accounted a fundamental norm. Post-Compromise political structures would therefore incorporate an irremovable and extremely powerful body, any criticism of which would be considered a criminal offence, and the prestige of which was underpinned by hundreds of years of tradition.97

One result of such hierarchical power was the insidious fracturing of Hungarian liberal politics within the elected body of the Lower House. While on the surface, a liberal democratic order was endorsed, the attempt to govern in the spirit of liberalism that had spawned the Revolution in 1848 proved difficult if not altogether impossible (as noted earlier in the case of Hungary's first Premier, Andrássy, and his career from revolutionary patriot to compliant partner of the Habsburgs). Many Members of Parliament, feeling essentially shackled to a feudal and conservative structure, simply softened their resolve to institute liberal reforms.98 This led, in part, to a climate of moral decline wherein many MP's used their positions to gain in social rank without regard for their constituents.99 Other MP's, galvanized to fight against what they believed had been a bad compromise to begin with, took to opposite sides of the political spectrum, resulting in radical parties on both the right and left of the ruling centre.100 Increasingly, the uniting feature of these opposition parties was the belief

97 Gerő, 6.

98 Adding to these difficulties was the demography of the Lower House, which continued to attract large numbers of aristocrats. See Gerő's chapter “The Two Houses of Parliament: History of a Changing Atmosphere” in Gerő, *Modern Hungarian Society in the Making: The Unfinished Experience* (145-168) for a complete description of the transformations in Hungarian liberalism in the years leading up to 1896.

99 This point is also raised by Kontler, 281.

100 These developments are summarized in Ibid., 289-90. Another issue that further exacerbated the situation was that the supporters of the exiled revolutionary leaders of 1848 (known as the old 1848-ers) were often treated with disrespect, completely ignored, or seen with suspicion by more moderate
that a recovery of Magyar power (however different the aims and investments in Magyar identity might be) was essential to break from the status quo.

It is in this entangled context of the social and political renewal of Budapest in the 1880's and 1890's that the eventual selection of Imre Steindl's design for the Hungarian parliament is usefully examined. Chosen, quite fittingly, as a kind of "compromise" in and of itself, Steindl's design titled simply, but polemically, "Constitution" (Alkotmány) was accepted with many provisos and calls for modifications. The basic plan of the Parliament building, however, remained unchanged (fig. 1.20). Modeled in a neo-Gothic vocabulary complete with steep roofs and pointed turrets, Steindl's design defied simple classification with a pronounced and almost ill-fitting central dome, an element of Romanesque and not Gothic architecture (fig. 1.21). The combination of elements was, however, what finally convinced the building's planning committee of its suitability, calling for the final winner of the four finalists to take up the style of "Gothic modified by spirit of the Romanesque." This stylistic amalgam offered a way of endorsing and linking medieval references to Hungary under the reign of Christian kings from the eleventh to the early fifteenth centuries, with the earlier ancient period of the ninth and tenth centuries when Hungary's chosen founding fathers (the ancient Magyars) were believed to have settled and ruled over the Carpathian Basin. Measuring 268 meters long and 123 meters wide, the building's interior included 10 courtyards, 13 passenger and freight elevators, 27 gates, 29 staircases and 691 rooms (out of them, more than 200 office rooms). With a height just under 100 meters, it also became the tallest building of Budapest (along with Saint Stephen's Basilica). In total, the final structure took just under two decades to complete between 1885 and 1904, using a labour force averaging 1000 workers a day, and incurring significant and controversial cost overruns. Importantly, one of the most publicized aspects of construction was the use of exclusively Hungarian materials, which included 40 million limestone bricks, half a million precious stones, and 40 kilograms of gold.


102 Ibid., 394.
The use of indigenous products was enforced through regular inspections, resulting in a boom for certain segments of the Hungarian industrial economy\(^{103}\) and becoming a well publicized, though often visibly silent, part of the final project. And while incomplete for the target opening to coincide with 1896 Millennial Exhibition, it was significant that the building appeared complete, ironically emphasizing the largely symbolic function that the new Parliament building had during the festivities in the eyes of the Habsburg authority.

By 1896, the Parliament building did however manage to echo and reinforce the stated theme of the Millennial Exhibition which was to draw attention to one thousand years of Hungarian history and technology. Most strikingly, the building’s high visibility and dramatic sprawling design along the shores of the Pest side of the Danube River made the structure an instant landmark of international interest.\(^{104}\) In clear view of anyone crossing the Chain Bridge from the Buda side into the heart of the city, it was a building that imposed itself on the urban landscape and which would therefore be impossible for any visitor to miss. The evocation of 896 as a reference to the moment claimed to mark of the ancient Magyar peoples’ arrival into the Carpathian Basin was repeated in a number of the buildings’ formal elements, including the 96 meter high dome and the 96 steps inside the front entrance. At the same time, the new structure showed off cutting edge technology taken up both in its construction and final striking appearance. For example, the implementation of a sophisticated cooling system, and the use of extensive interior and exterior electrical lighting technology were celebrated innovations, fulfilling one of the primary goals of the Fair to exhibit a progressive and technologically advanced dual partner in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.\(^{105}\) What seemed to matter most, however, was that the new building, in dialogue with the Habsburg Royal Castle across the Danube, and double in size when seen lit at night and reflected in the river, declare its significance and importance to the world in a kind of modern theatrical projection.

\(^{103}\) Ibid.

\(^{104}\) In my research, I noted that the Parliament building was mentioned (and often pictured) in almost every major foreign press report in anticipation of the 1896 Fair.

\(^{105}\) These statistics and technological advancements are partly discussed in Sisa, "From the Competition Design to the Definitive Design," and were also relayed to me by officials at the Hungarian Parliament building during two separate tours I took of the structure in Budapest in 2002 and 2005.
Steindl’s design also became a central focus of debate as political conflicts were increasingly waged on the battleground of culture. Indeed, a series of cartoons published in the local press about the building’s controversy highlighted how the question of style had merged more into a question about the Hungarian national character. One such cartoon, published in a more conservative journal loyal to the dualist cause, depicted an imagined Hungarian Parliament building along with a satiric explanation, associating a mix of stereotypical references about the role of Magyarization in the capital with stylistic markers seen in Steindl’s design (fig. 1.22).

It read in part:

“The National Committee has accepted Steindl’s Gothic style for the new Parliament. Gothic style, Romanesque style, Byzantine style, Italian and French Renaissance—these boomed from the big debate. It has occurred to nobody to propose a specifically perfected Hungarian style on this occasion. We rectify this omission. Our motto is: a purely Hungarian style of Hungarian atmosphere, with a careful exclusion of everything foreign. We give the main details of our project in the following: The special (sic) arrangement of the Parliament, in keeping with the idea of that expressed in the Hungarian trousers, is to be as tight as possible. On the facades national minorities in hats will be symbolized, because the song says: “All Wallachs (Romanians), all Germans, and all Goths (playful reference to Slovaks) should raise their hats to the Hungarians!”...Symmetry must be avoided on the building because “the Hungarian has no pair.””

While a light-hearted jab at the strange stylistic markers of Steindl’s architecture, the cartoon with its call for a specifically Hungarian mode (as opposed to Gothic, Romanesque or Renaissance) managed to expose an entire range of anxieties brought about in the Parliament building’s final plan. Notably, the references were telling with respect to the implied “Hungarianness” and national zeal that was most feared by Habsburg loyalists and some minority groups (as could be derived, for example, in the evaluation of the Parliament building by the more nationalist Budapest Daily raised earlier, as needing to find a more indigenous design vocabulary). At the same time, however, other aspects of the Parliament’s construction were effaced from such criticism, such as the cost overruns incurred by the renovation of the Habsburg Royal Palace across the river. Incensing much of the Budapest public and many within the Hungarian government, the overruns were a financial scandal that eventually led to

both the scaling back of planned expenses for the Parliament building, and the strategic delay of the building’s final completion date to well after the 1896 Fair.\textsuperscript{107}

The design of the final Parliament building was therefore marked by an attempt to restore and reshape, revealing and giving form to a tension founded in the very nature of late nineteenth century Hungarian “Compromise” politics, nation building, and Budapest’s complex urban makeup. As I have suggested, the rapid urbanization and restructuring of Budapest, together with its attempts to reconfigure notions of space and time, and the privileging of an embodied visuality, appears to have followed in this vein. Yet, as Morávanszky suggests, the Parliament building also provided early evidence of an entirely different technology of seeing, bound up in the disjunctured eclecticism of its architectural style, yet one that also sought to liberate itself from certain past traditions (and especially Viennese and Austrian associations) while constructing new ones in its place:

The Gothic of the Budapest Parliament was a clear rejection of the Ringstrassentsil [Vienna’s architectural style] and a reaffirmation of the reformist goals of Gothic revival, with all its associations of joyful labour, craftsmanship, and national virtues. But finally it was the baroque principle of a theatrical spatial arrangement of historical fragments as parts of a new spatial entity that dominated...\textsuperscript{108}

In this sense, as architectural historian József Sisa also contends, the Gothic taken up in Steindl’s plans “bordered on free composition,”\textsuperscript{109} signalling a kind of unexpected modernity in its alignment with a technological mandate to electrify and light up the Budapest sky with its presence. As such, the Parliament building’s turn towards theatricality, in tandem with the reconceptualization of the spaces of Budapest and in close association, as I will suggest, with the underground subway, was also seen through elements of the structure’s final eclectic shape and positioning within the city, supporting a whole new way of experiencing and seeing the metropolis. In particular, the imposing height and expanse of the parliament project along the fast moving artery of the Danube River cutting through the Austro-Hungarian Empire appeared well suited to the ambitious goal of transnational visibility and publicity for

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{107} See note 98.
  \item \textsuperscript{108} Moravánszky, 70.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} Sisa, “Neo-Gothic Architecture and Restoration of Historic Buildings in Central Europe: Friedrich Schmidt and His School,” 179.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the self-consciously bourgeois city. This was especially so when understood in the context of a rapidly expanding modern metropolis—one that had paradoxically created one of the largest parliamentary buildings in the world for a state that only existed as a small virtual entity.\textsuperscript{110}

**Budapest’s Underground Subway and the “Moving Street”**

The Hungarian Parliament building and Budapest’s underground subway system were under simultaneous construction in the immediate years leading up to the 1896 Fair, arguably binding the two projects and their broader uniting function in the minds of the city’s citizens. Consequently, the spatial configuration of what can be understood as two of Hungary’s most expansive public monuments are not difficult to compare and bring into association. The Parliament building, constructed along the important commercial waterway of the Danube river, brought to mind the city and wider Hungarian region’s interconnection with a dense network of transportation and communication pathways facilitating the flow of people, goods and capital in and out of Budapest; the underground subway ran within a few blocks of the Parliament building itself (refer to Map 1), and shuttled passengers efficiently and quickly underneath Andràssy Avenue to places of business and residence, but also to the city’s most important monuments to nation being planned at the site of the 1896 Millennial Exhibition. Both shared in their reference to a fast-moving mobility associating Hungarian power and control of resources—the Parliament building situated on the Empire’s quick-flowing and most important river, the subway as an underground rail system constructed under Budapest’s most dynamic and action-filled street.

In fact, one of the most critical developments within Hungary’s nineteenth century development that drove identification of technology with statehood and individual subjectivity was the railway.\textsuperscript{111} Before 1870, regions of the Carpathian Basin were effectively isolated from one another and from the capital city Budapest.

---

\textsuperscript{110} A number of debates in the Hungarian parliament centered on the question of building such a lavish and costly structure outside the parameters of real statehood. For a discussion, see Sisa, "From the Competition Design to the Definitive Design," 399.

As such, the market for exports was limited by distance and the ability to organize
disparately situated operations. Yet in the three short decades leading up to the
Millennial Exhibition, Hungary’s rapid and intensive construction of rail lines (a
network of 17,000 kilometres by 1900 ranked sixth in Europe for density, ahead of
Austria and even the United Kingdom) allowed Hungarian exports to penetrate
lucrative Western markets and spark the steady flow of Austro-German and French
capital into the country. In this way, the Hungarian industrial complex was able to
supersede its economic dependence on Austria and obtain the much needed capital
and markets to fuel its own industrial revolution. Nationalized in the early 1890’s,
the Hungarian railway was indirectly responsible for half of all mortgages taken out
on Hungarian land, allowing for economic expansion outside traditional markets and
the development of smaller urban centers beyond Budapest. And while railway
expansion saw similar industrial developments in other parts of the world in the late
nineteenth century, the railway within Hungary emerged at the same moment that
critical debates about national identity and sovereignty from the Austrian crown were
being waged in the public sphere. Indeed, the railway provided a useful and potent
conceptual tool around which to construct and connect a Hungarian national heritage.
As historian Ivan Breed suggests, the technological marvel of the railroad managed at
times to unite Hungary through the promise of opportunity and prosperous new
futures: “The railway became a symbol of improving times, praised by poets and
lauded by painters as the very embodiment of momentum, of forward surge, and the
speed that had overcome lethargy.” Consequently, the railway began to define a
particular sense of ownership and control over the land, a radically different spatial
relationship that challenged traditional modes of feudal organization. As media
historian Tom Gunning has argued, it was within the context of the railroad that new
perceptions and experiences of the body in modern culture could be imagined and
created:

112 Ibid, 9-11.
113 This was a goal of the 1848 revolutionaries and is discussed in Chapter Three with respect to
revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth.
114 Berend, 9-11.
115 Ibid., 9.
This new landscape, which was organized according to circulatory needs, exemplifies the perceptual and environmental changes which define the experience of modernity: a new mastery of the incremental instants of time; a collapsing of distances; and a new experience of the human body and perception shaped by traveling at new rate of speed and inviting new potentials of danger.\textsuperscript{116}

Within Budapest, the heart and main circulatory hub around which railway transport in Hungary operated, the symbolic veracity and conceptual function of rapid rail transport as marker of modern Hungarian nationalism was given monumental shape and dimension through the construction of the new electric underground subway.\textsuperscript{117} In fact, a subway plan had been accepted by the Hungarian National Assembly as early as 1875, around the same time that plans for a new Parliament building were first being discussed, and was finally commissioned in 1894 in anticipation of the World’s Fair.\textsuperscript{118} Built under the new Andrássy Avenue in a staggeringly short period of time, the creation of the millennial underground subway took 2000 workers using state of the art machinery and technology just under two years to complete, in time for the 1896 Fair (figs.1.23-1.24). Stretching 3.7 kilometres, with trains leaving every two minutes, the new metro boasted eleven stations from one end of town to the other with a total carrying capacity of 35,000 people a day (figs. 1.25-1.26). When completed and opened to the public by Emperor Franz Joseph in an elaborate inauguration ceremony on the first day of the Millennial Exhibition on May 2, 1896, the new underground system served two critical functions. First, in practical terms, the subway was built to shuttle the expected crowds of fairgoers attending the World’s Fair quickly and efficiently from the dense inner city of Pest to the planned fairgrounds in the City Grove on the eastern edge of the metropolis. Second, the new underground electrified rail system acted as the


\textsuperscript{117} Many primary and secondary sources exist discussing the technical details of the underground subway. In addition to material that I was able to gather at exhibits in Budapest’s Millennial Underground Museum (strategically located at one of the underground stations of the original 1896 subway line), I also took statistics from the section devoted to the building of the subway in Aladár, Budapest Műszaki Útmutatója (Technical Guide to Budapest), 404-16 and from a period account (with reprinted photographs) detailed in Vasárnap Ujság (Sunday Illustrated News) 43, no. 17 (1896).

\textsuperscript{118} Siklóssy, 166-67. Also see notes 51 and 52 for further discussion on how the eventual plan for the underground subway was decided.
technological centerpiece of the Budapest Fair, becoming among the exhibition’s most popular and significant attractions.

Indeed, Budapest would be identified in the following decades as a technologically advanced capital city because of its new metro system, garnering interest in the cutting edge mode of city transportation from city planners as far away as New York. 119 Importantly, the cut-and-cover technique of building the underground subway tramline called for a full excavation of the street and not just a process of boring into the ground, necessitating the removal of large amounts of underground soil to achieve the permanent tunnel. And while the metro technically bore the name of the Emperor, in dedication to his role as Hungary’s official monarch, the technology, planning, and construction of the line was closely associated with Hungary and a carefully constructed heritage of Hungarian ingenuity—this a result of the international publicity generated around the underground subway during the lead up to the 1896 Fair (not unlike the wider interest in the Chain Bridge’s construction earlier in the city’s history). The metro’s financing, as well, helped drive this perception, since funding was provided in large part by the well known Hungarian entrepreneur Robert Wunsch.120 I would argue then that the more significant function of the underground metro was to capitalize on the galvanizing affinity Hungarians already associated with their new nation, train travel, and technological innovation. As a result, the metro could be fashioned as a new kind of urban monument to the Hungarian nation, one that signalled the first of many expected achievements in the emerging second capital of Austria-Hungary.

With the simultaneous construction of the underground railway and the Hungarian Parliament building, the city was articulated by built spaces at once devoted to the founding myths of Magyarization and ideals associated with bourgeois urban modernity. The final realization for the underground subway asserted this important relationship. The last section of the electrified transit system would emerge

119 Engineers from New York and Boston, for example, visited Budapest around the time of the 1896 Fair and made plans to implement a similar subway system in their own city. See George C. Crocker, "The Passenger Traffic of Boston and the Subway," The New England Magazine 14, no. 5 (1899); and American Institute of Electrical Engineers, The New York electrical handbook; being a guide for visitors from abroad attending the International electrical congress, St. Louis, Mo., September, 1904. (New York: Pub. under the auspices of the American institute of electrical engineers, 1904).

120 Budapest’s Millennial Underground Museum provided this name, and I have since been unable to garner any more information beyond his status as a Budapest businessman of the 1890’s.
from underground, within plain sight of a planned Millennial Monument designed for the entrance to the City Grove (fig. 1.27). In other words, rather than distancing a constructed Hungarian heritage away from the modern present and locating the two building projects on the Buda side of the city—the traditional site of power and control over the territory of Budapest—notions of modernity and heritage converged in Pest where new cafes, shops, and businesses co-mingled with the new statues, museums, and government buildings celebrating the Hungarian nation. And in a kind of bold assertion of Hungary’s new path, both the new electrified subway system and the sensational Parliament structure literally “moved” people both above and below the ground in an implied mobility and technological mastery that overturned traditional conceptions of spatial ordering in the city (fig. 1.28). Indeed, the distinguishing trait of Budapest from other nineteenth century urban capitals was that the center of the city was not oriented towards the interior of Pest as would be expected. Instead, the emerging metropolis was focused around one of the fastest “moving” features of the city where the two parts of the city faced one another—the Danube River. It is in this light that both projects as monuments also functioned within the context of what Moravánszky has characterized as elements of Budapest’s “paradigmatic urban ensemble.” What I believe is useful in this characterization is that attributes of both projects collapse into an almost utopic, though ultimately failed, urban statement about the accessibility of Hungarian heritage to all of the city’s inhabitants.

Stylistic Vocabularies Between East and West: The Language of Nation and Hungary’s Museum of Applied Arts

Importantly, Hungary’s Parliament building would, in retrospect, be understood as conceived at a time of transition and debate over cultural identity in the country, when the role of ethnicity and the process of Magyarization would become

121 The large scale Millennial Monument, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 2, was planned for the end of Andrásy Avenue where the entrance to the exhibition fairgrounds was situated during the lead-up to the 1896 Fair and would not be fully realized until the 1920’s. As seen in fig. 1.26, the subway emerged within view of the finished colonnade and statue groupings of the Monument.

122 Hall, 253.

123 Moravánszky, 46. This useful phrase is raised in direct reference to Andrásy Avenue by the author, but I think that it provides a good characterization of Budapest’s broader urban plan.
increasingly politicized and polarizing on the eve of Hungary’s Millennial Exhibition.\textsuperscript{124} Key to these debates was the realization that Hungary’s lack of a legible architectural language presented more than just a creative crisis for architects, and that any attempt to adopt from among the acceptable historical styles was akin to accepting and speaking a foreign language.\textsuperscript{125} Adding to this anxiety was the popular knowledge that the Hungarian language was uniquely distinct from Slavic and German languages spoken in the Empire,\textsuperscript{126} and thus construed as under constant threat—a construction that persisted even while Hungarian was protected with legal status as the dual empire’s second official language and the number of people speaking Hungarian rose exponentially throughout the fin de siècle period.\textsuperscript{127} In many ways then, the Parliament building as an amalgam of largely recognizable neo-Gothic and Romanesque shapes associated primarily with western European languages was already “out of style” and stood rejected as the “Országház” or “House of the Nation” by a new generation of Hungarian architects by the time of its completion at the turn of the century. As a result, an orientation towards more eastern and “exotic” languages (more closely associated with the Hungarian language’s Finno-Ugric roots tracing to the Far East) was called for.\textsuperscript{128}

Within the nexus of urban transformations that characterized a decidedly Hungarian Budapest, the idea of compression or the squeezing together and reshaping

\textsuperscript{124}On Magyarization see Appendix 1.

\textsuperscript{125}This idea is discussed in relationship to architectural training within the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Christopher Long, "East Central Europe: National Identity and International Perspective," The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 61, no. 4 (2002): 519-21.

\textsuperscript{126}The Hungarian language is one of only a small number of European languages part of the Finno-Ugric family (along with Finnish and Estonian), which is not related in any way to other languages spoken in Europe as part of the Indo-European language family (such as French, German, English, and all the Slavic languages spoken in Central and Eastern Europe). As such, it has remained one of the most valued and protected aspects of the Hungarian identity, playing a key role in all matters related to visual vocabulary. Knowledge about Hungary’s distinct language was also popularized in connection to the growing interest in anthropology and its connection to nationalism through the nineteenth century. See for example, "On the Language of the Magyars," Anthropological Review 4, no. 13 (1866); and Daniel G. Brinton, "The Nation as an Element of Anthropology," in The Smithsonian Report for 1893 (Washington: Smithsonian, 1894).

\textsuperscript{127}Nemes cites that in 1870, the number of Budapest’s residents that claimed their mother tongue German, Slovak, or some other language besides Hungarian peaked at 150,000. From then on, the numbers steadily declined as Hungarian was adopted by many residents as their language for daily business, replacing most notably the German associated so strongly with Austria (178).

\textsuperscript{128}See Long, 519-21; and János Gerle and László Lugosi Lugo, A szecesszió Budapesten (The Budapest Secession) (Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2003), 7-9.
of data and temporal order as witnessed in the building of the Parliament building itself, or the process of excavation and reconfiguration of the urban fabric through the construction of the city’s new subway, became important aesthetic strategies in the rapidly evolving capital. Oscillating (and often precariously) between a kind of new historicism on the one hand and a hodge-podge eclecticism on the other, the visual language employed in Budapest’s architecture and city planning signaled tensions that were indeed playing out throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But in Budapest, where the stakes were far higher as the second imperial capital, the attempt to compress one thousand years of history and visually re-present and re-collect a distinct building language from Vienna, produced an environment that at times attempted to gather and display fragments from diverse Western and Eastern canons of architecture in one space and time. Consequently, the impulse to recollect, and of recollection, as Moravánszky usefully points out, was not born of a modernist proposal to create a utopia modeled on the rational reordering of space in a homogenous way. Instead, it was born of the desire to navigate many diverse possibilities:

...the utopian projects of Central European architects were built of fragments of the past that were carefully selected, interpreted, and densely assembled according to a universalist vision. Compression as an aesthetic strategy did not necessarily result in a collage of history. “When we came across a mound in the wood, six feet long and three feet wide, raised to a pyramidal form by means of a spade, we become serious and something in us says: somebody lies buried here. This is architecture,” wrote Adolph Loos in his essay “Architecture” (1910). What could more clearly reveal the paradoxical character of Central European modernism than this statement? The most radical innovator of architectural language at the beginning of the century pointed to the grave as the final metaphor for architecture.

But what does the subterranean reveal? It is in the context of this question that the design and construction of Hungary’s Museum and School of Applied Arts between 1894-1896 (Magyar Iparművészeti Múzeum és Iskóla) provides another example of a building project that followed a very different path towards the goal of giving form to a Hungarian architectural vocabulary in time for the 1896 Fair. This time, however, instead of the Gothic style as locus of debate, the adoption of art

129 See the chapters related to other cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Blau and Platzer, Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890-1937

130 Moravánszky, 22.
nouveau and more overtly modernist forms became the cause for concern. In one way, the Parliament building as symbolic "home" of the nation shared a discourse with the new museum as a national "home" of another kind. But whereas the former structure would be seen as too foreign by those unconvinced of the "Hungarianess" associated with the building by the time of the 1896 Fair, the latter would point to a radical shift in architectural language taken up by Hungarian architects on behalf of the nation.

The need for a new museum to house national treasures of applied art traced back to an act of parliament in 1872 that provided funds to allow the city of Budapest the purchase of Magyar art objects exhibited at the Vienna World's Fair of 1873 for display in Hungary.\footnote{For a history of the Museum of Applied arts planning and construction, see Jenő Kismarty-Lechner, \textit{Lechner Ödön} (Budapest: Képzőművészeti Kiadóvállalata, 1961); László Pusztai, András Hadik, eds., \textit{Lechner Ödön, 1856-1914} (Budapest: Magyar Építészetii Múzeum, 1985); István Berta et al., \textit{Panorama: Architecture and Applied Arts in Hungary 1896-1916} (1996); János Gerle, \textit{Lechner Ödön} (Budapest: Holnap Kiadó, 2003); Gerle and Lugosi Lugo, \textit{A szecesszió Budapesten (The Budapest Secession)} . A short history and useful index of images can also be found on the museum's website, "The Museum's History," Iparművészeti Múzeum (Budapest Museum of Applied Arts), http://www.imm.hu/angol/muz.html.} These items, which would later form the basic collection for the museum, were exhibited for a while in Hungary's Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti Múzeum) until the decision was made in 1890 (anticipating the impending Millennial Exhibition) to create an independent institution to house the objects and provide for both a museum and a new space for the recently inaugurated School for Applied Arts.\footnote{Gerle and Lugosi Lugo, \textit{A szecesszió Budapesten (The Budapest Secession)}, 11.} This act of separating the collections was an important cultural event on the part of Hungarians, signalling not only the move towards celebrating a national cultural tradition founded on ethnically Magyar objects (largely made up of folk art items and material dating to the earliest recorded periods of Hungary's ancient past), but also foregrounding how deeply embedded the question of art and culture had become in the political arena surrounding the broader aims of the Hungarian government's nation-building project. Through a series of land purchases, the site was acquired on the southern end of Pest's Grand Boulevard along one of the city's newest major thoroughfares.\footnote{Ibid.} The Hungarian government, in turn, called for a competition to build a new structure that could meet all of the necessary requirements of a national museum. This was significant since the building would be
situated within one of the oldest districts of Pest's urban core, maintaining some distance from the official site of the Millennial Exhibition fairgrounds where a neoclassical Palace of Art (Műcsarnók) and a newly planned Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti Múzeum) were being built—institutions housing more traditional forms of art closely modelled on Western European collections (fig.1.29). Therefore, the decision to locate the Applied Arts Museum "off-site" of the Fair had a way of reinforcing the close and intimate association between ideas of individual "home" and the museum housing the nation's indigenous objects, together with a specific Hungarian culture that was emerging in the political debates of the day. These were associations in turn that the new building would also need to express.

Critically, the idea of "home" taken up by many late nineteenth-century Hungarian architects was not necessarily formed upon the idea of privacy and escape from the public as it was sometimes conceived by architects of the period in other Western nations. Instead, notions of home were joined to a very strategic and politicized sense of ownership extending to the nation as a whole "homeland." In other words, through Hungary's search for a visual and architectural language distinct from Austria, and with which to buttress their own emerging identity, constructions of the east and the orient held out a vast reservoir of possibility. As a result, the new models rivaling the classical Greco-roman ideals associated with imperial control did not necessarily form upon the idea of privacy and escape from the public as it was sometimes conceived by architects of the period in other Western nations. Instead, notions of home were joined to a very strategic and politicized sense of ownership extending to the nation as a whole "homeland." In other words, through Hungary's search for a visual and architectural language distinct from Austria, and with which to buttress their own emerging identity, constructions of the east and the orient held out a vast reservoir of possibility. As a result, the new models rivaling the classical Greco-roman ideals associated with imperial control did not necessarily form upon the idea of privacy and escape from the public as it was sometimes conceived by architects of the period in other Western nations. Instead, notions of home were joined to a very strategic and politicized sense of ownership extending to the nation as a whole "homeland." In other words, through Hungary's search for a visual and architectural language distinct from Austria, and with which to buttress their own emerging identity, constructions of the east and the orient held out a vast reservoir of possibility. As a result, the new models rivaling the classical Greco-roman ideals associated with imperial control did
not necessarily manifest the same oriental despotism that was conventionally associated with the “East” in other parts of Europe.\textsuperscript{136}

Of course, such a reading of modernity and modern styles of architecture as they emerged in Austria-Hungary challenges the common paradigm around Viennese modernism—often extended to a description of Austrian modernism despite the existence of Austria’s entanglements with Hungary—popularized most prominently by intellectual historian Carl Schorske.\textsuperscript{137} For Schorske, a reading of fin de siècle Vienna, its politics and culture, presents a city obsessed with the concurrent decline of liberalism and the Habsburg imperial complex, caught up in a concept of modernity that rejoiced in the death of history and a kind of self-absorption. While a valuable contribution to the study of one particular city’s experience and context, Schorske neglects to mention any of the specific and very different developments that went on in other urban centers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, specifically Budapest, nor does he draw enough attention to the fraught ethnic conflicts that boiled just beneath the surface during the late Hapsburg Empire. I would therefore argue that any idea of “home” or “self-fashioning” as a category of knowledge introduced by Schorske was not as depoliticized in the Budapest context as it has been suggested for the Viennese public. In turn, the taking up of what has often been erroneously understood as a Viennese inspired architectural language in Budapest (such as art nouveau or what is broadly termed the Secession style) did not translate into the same kind of urban expression around decadence, privacy and/or interiority as it may have in the main Habsburg enclave. Moreover, I would contend that the complex discourses built up around “Austrian modernism,” and how they have subsequently been worked into the broader history of modernism and modernity, remain incomplete.

The selection committee for the Museum of Applied Arts, which notably included the new Parliament building’s lead architect, Imre Steindl, and a number of

\textsuperscript{136} These are ideas that work in opposition to a number of philosopher Edward Said’s main assertions about the nature of “orientalism” in his work on the subject [Edward W. Said, \textit{Orientalism} (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978)]. Recent work on what is termed Austrian or Austro-Hungarian orientalism, however, suggests a different approach to understanding the broader scope of this loaded concept with respect to multi-ethnic and multicultural communities. See for example the intriguing and creative analysis in Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, “Will the Real Almássy Please Stand Up! Transporting Central European Orientalism via The English Patient” \textit{Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East} 24, no. 2 (2004).

other prominent individuals who had consulted on the Parliament project,\textsuperscript{138} awarded
the first prize to a series of plans submitted by two Hungarian architects, Odon
Lechner and Gyula Partos (figs.1.30-1.31). From the beginning, however, Lechner
was understood to be the design and aesthetic brains behind the unusual project that
would become closely associated with his earliest concerted attempts to work out a
specifically Hungarian architectural language. Within this context, the title of
Lechner's winning design for the museum—"To the East Hungarians"—revealed his
simultaneous desire to seek out new motifs and design elements for his architectural
projects, and to reconnect Hungary with its ancient origins associated with the orient
and east.\textsuperscript{139} Inspired by Indian and Syrian architecture, and later by traditional
Hungarian decorative design elements, Lechner wanted from the outset to produce a
plan for the new Museum of Applied Arts that could project an original synthesis of
architectural styles. Drawing on Hungarian ethnographer and art teacher József
Huszka’s call for the renewal of Hungarian architecture on the basis of ethnographic
discoveries, Lechner endorsed Huszka’s findings that found constitutive elements for

\textsuperscript{138} Kismarty-Lechner, 51. This is an intriguing fact that leads one to question how much Steindl’s own
architectural directions had shifted by this moment, especially as he fully endorsed the eventual (and
controversial) plan for the museum.

\textsuperscript{139} An independent architect who was schooled in Budapest and Berlin, Lechner traveled widely
throughout Europe and worked in a number of cities, including Paris, during the mid to late 1870’s.
During his early career, Lechner had produced designs in the popular neo-Renaissance style—a style
that had reportedly impressed Lechner for its primitiveness of origins. But as his designs developed
and his political views became more refined, especially in connection to Budapest’s architectural
projects, Lechner appeared to struggle when coming to terms with Hungary’s precarious relationship
and power struggle with Austria. In turn, Lechner increasingly came to reject historicism in
architecture as insufficient to the aims of his designs and began to favour new directions and sources of
inspiration. This dovetailed with the educational shifts in architectural training within Austria-Hungary
by the 1890’s, which also began to emphasize a turn to the practices and design of the folk arts. This
followed in the vein of the British Arts and Crafts movement, popular at the time, but also as an
attempt to reconcile the multi-ethnic sources of design within the heterogeneous Austro-Hungarian
Empire. At the same time, Lechner became intrigued with aspects of the prevailing Secession
movement that were fostering a new modern language of architectural forms across Europe. This
would in the following years take the form of the German Jugendstil, Art Nouveau in Belgium and
France, and the influence of English and Finnish architecture, all elements that would be reflected in
many of Budapest’s turn-of-the-century buildings. In this sense, Lechner has often been compared to
Austrian architects Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos as core participants in the Central European
Secession, but for his part Lechner appeared most captivated with the underlying impetus of
Secessionist artists and architects to create an act of formal separation from academic art, producing in
its place a rejuvenating language of new forms that could best give shape to modern life. It was a
notion of separation that Lechner viewed both formally and politically. See László Barla Szabó,
"Nemzeti Gyökerek, Historizmus: 1900-as Stílus Antonio Gaudi és Lechner Ödön Építészetében
(National Style and Historicism in the Turn-of-the-Century Architecture of Antonio Guadi and Ödön
Lechner)," \textit{Ars Hungarica} 1 (1975); Puszta; Janos Gerle, "Ödön Lechner, Architect (1845-1914)," in
\textit{Architecture 1900}, ed. Peter Burman (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Donhead, 1998).
a new direction in Hungarian architecture within the framework of an ancient and eastern past. Writing later, Lechner revealed that the links between the “East” in terms of Persia and India, and indigenous Hungarian folk art were significant:

Studying our folk art led me to the art of Asian peoples, for some striking similarities are immediately apparent. This Eastern relationship, which shows up primarily in Persian and even more in Indian art, was of particular interest because these peoples invested their art with monumentality and I wished to find some guidance on using folk motifs in monumental architecture.

Turning to the museum itself, it was a structure that indeed gave monumental shape to the goal of introducing multiple possibilities for the oriental origins ascribed to Hungarian folk art (figs.1.32). Beginning with the building plan (fig.1.33) and, as Moravánszky usefully identifies, a Persian inspired “covered, but open, loggia-like octagonal entrance hall,” the unusual shape of the building and its various elements mirrored attempts to incorporate non-traditional and more exotic and eastern-associated planning influences into the building at its very inception (not unlike the distinctive octagonally shaped intersection incorporated in Budapest’s Andrássy Avenue plan mentioned at an earlier point in this chapter). Perhaps most striking was the intensely coloured exterior ornamentation of the structure, and in particular the highly visible roof, which could be read as either a brightly decorated folk object and/or an intricate tapestry depending upon the vantage point of the viewer (figs.1.34-1.36). In this sense, the use of bright primary colours (such as green, yellow, and orange) contrasted dramatically against the more muted and conservatively coloured and designed city buildings in the structure’s immediate vicinity. Reinforcing the

---

140 Few studies have been published on Huszka outside Hungary. A recent exhibition, however, was held at Hungary’s Museum of Ethnography marking the 150th anniversary of the drawing teacher’s life and the following useful summary of Huszka was produced on the English version of the museum’s website: “During the 1880s and 1890s, Huszka published a number of works that sought to draw a parallel between Hungarian medieval and early Renaissance art and the ornamentation displayed by Hungarian folk art, claiming that both were of “Eastern origin” and specifically related to the decorative styles of Persia and India. His work exerted a profound effect on contemporary movements in the applied arts and architecture that sought to adopt a distinctly Hungarian approach. Although his Romantic worldview has consistently inspired the public at large, professional ethnographers have rejected his views and questioned his theories regarding the origins of folk art.”
http://www.neprajz.hu/english/kiallitasok/huszka.html

141 Lechner qtd. in Moravánszky, 225.

142 Ibid., 227.

143 See note 53 for a discussion of the octagon shape in nineteenth century architectural history.
buildings exterior theme associated with folk art and eastern influences, the glazed decorative bricks featured at the buildings entrance, together with the Persian inspired entrance hall (fig.1.37), were rivalled only by a sumptuous interior and exhibition space that could bring to mind an Indian Mughal palace (fig.1.38) in its references to “durbar courts.” Other interior elements such as the “tent” of coloured stained glass (fig.1.39) above the exhibition hall, and the use of variously treated stone surfaces, intricate moldings, and iron works, successfully reinforced the structure’s central function of showcasing and raising the profile of the applied arts throughout the building plan. These features, together with the final building’s eclectic and hard to distinguish architectural mode, called to mind the folk art motifs and experimental designs that the Museum and its newly housed School would play an important role in promoting in the city and half-Empire by the time of the 1896 Fair.

Conclusion: The Problem of Reception—A Troubling Modernity

In terms of reception, Budapest’s new Museum of Applied Arts garnered a great deal of critical review, positing Lechner and his new architectural vision in the crossfire of extreme praise and abuse. Distinguished as the first museum of Europe not designed in a wholly historicist style, the building was conspicuous with its break from tradition. In this sense, the selection committee, although publicly stating that their final choice of Lechner’s plan best fit the practical criteria for the building competition, understood that awarding the commission to Lechner would prove controversial. Combining what was understood by the committee as a fusion of English Gothic, early Renaissance, Moorish, and Hungarian folk art, Lechner’s proposal reflected, ironically enough, similar kinds of stylistic compromises made in the selection of the final Parliament building plans. But in the public realm, the reaction by those who viewed the building as flatly unreadable reflected the general popular consensus that the building had somehow gone too far. This was perhaps best summed up in the reaction of the Emperor himself, when, on the occasion of the

144 Moravánszky, 227.

145 Much of the criticism I am citing is drawn directly from the detailed summary in Kismarty-Lechner, 52-66.

146 Gerle, "Ödön Lechner, Architect (1845-1914)," 163.

147 Kismarty-Lechner, 13-14.
building’s opening in October 1896, his highness Franz Joseph registered his disgust for the new edifice by remarking on the “bizarre” use of bright yellow on the front entrance handrail. But unlike the criticism leveled by the Emperor or other conservative critics towards Secessionist artists within Vienna—a critique that was based more on a rejection of the overt modernity of the buildings—the most strident opposition to the final shape of the Museum had to do with the clear orientalism associating Hungary with the east.

Dubbed the “Gypsy Castle” by some, the building raised anxieties about negative stereotypes associating Hungarian identity with an undifferentiated and altogether primitive eastern heritage. Moreover conceptions around Eastern art was arguably still seen by the majority of the lay public as “exotic,” that is, understood to be inferior to Western European classical ideals despite Hungarian artists and architects attempts to disassociate from the historical classicism favoured in Vienna. Other critics made light of the building, claiming that a potter must have made it since it resembled a large ceramic object (immediately referencing pottery’s associations with ‘the ‘folk’) while some complained about the building’s modernity because of Lechner’s own fantastical projection that lacked respect for real Hungarian traditions. All of these reactions highlighted again how implicated the building had become within political debates about Hungary’s cultural direction. In turn, the defenders of Lechner’s architecture emphasized the ambitiousness of his vision, arguing that his risk-taking was the first sign of a new native language of Hungarian architecture. In particular, the Museum’s director described Lechner’s vision as the ability to take the folk motifs of Hungary and raise them to the level of a new art, bypassing and even challenging the traditional hierarchies of art which placed folk art well below the status of more academic and western associated art traditions slated for display within public venues, including the official Fair grounds. In a series of rhetorical questions, he asked whether Hungarians were prepared to continue living off the

---

148 Ibid., 54.

149 Moravánszky examines these critiques about the appearance of art nouveau in Vienna on p. 155.

150 Ibid., 64-65.

151 Ibid., 65.
crumbs of other nation's styles, urging the public to appreciate the architect's daring efforts as a kind of political act.\textsuperscript{152}

But was Lechner's building, in the end, a modern one? Did it signal a sufficient break with historicism, and how if at all does this matter? Convinced that fin de siècle society was characterized by stagnation while technological progress was steadily gaining momentum, most Secessionist architects believed that the growing gap between the two could be bridged only by art and culture. It is clear, however, that Lechner appeared to stray from what he saw as the alienating foreign current of Art Nouveau and replaced international stylistic marks with elements from oriental styles and Hungarian folklore, working in what was arguably a more historically derived architectural vocabulary. In this sense, Lechner indeed appeared to work against the theory of Art Nouveau, which rejected the study of history outright. Instead, Lechner created what he understood as a Hungarian version of the art nouveau style. To be sure, the Museum of Applied Art's function as both an exhibition space and a training ground for future students in the design and techniques of objects based in historical precedent was a guiding principle for Lechner.\textsuperscript{153} I would argue too that it is within this spirit that Lechner would later remark that a modern building had to "introduce itself right away to the viewer", implying an identity or subjectivity for the built space not unlike the modern subjectivity favoured as I have indicated earlier in this chapter, by a self-inventing Budapest public preparing for a World's Fair.\textsuperscript{154}

In the case of the final form given Hungary's Museum of Applied Arts, the building spoke about the so termed 'primitive' origins of the nation in the way that Huszka had also espoused them, that is, as a new way to approach what had been denied before—the possibility of a Hungarian art and architecture unhampered and

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{152}{Ibid.}
\footnote{153}{The Hungarian Royal National School of Arts and Crafts (Magyar Iparművészeti Iskola) was founded in 1880 in the spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain, offering a range of classes in architectural drawing, goldsmithery, decorative and copperplate engraving, woodcarving and furniture design. The School, having been scattered in different parts of Budapest, was finally moved to the central location of the new Museum of Applied Arts in 1896. The School today is known as the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (Moholy-Nagy Művészeti Egyetem) in homage to one of Hungary's best known twentieth century designers and artists, László Maholy-Nagy, Bauhaus luminary and strong advocate of the integration of technology and industry into arts. For a brief history, see the School's official website and description at http://w2.mome.hu/content/view/20/97/.

\footnote{154}{Lechner qtd. in Moravánszky, 224-25.}}
\end{footnotes}
untainted by imperialism and foreign tradition and influence. This of course extended to Lechner’s use of indigenous materials, not unlike what was witnessed in the Parliament building project. The ceramic tiles utilized on the outside of the building, for example, were from the Hungarian porcelain house of Zsolnay, a producer that was also influenced by both art nouveau movements throughout Europe and Hungarian folk shape and patterns (fig. 1.40). Zsolnay ceramics had entered the spotlight in 1893 when Vilmos Zsolnay first experimented with lustrous metallic glazes and developed the famed cozin ceramics that ended up on a number of Lechner’s buildings. In turn, Lechner’s rationale for using the cutting-edge and durable material was as a solution to combating the problem of soot and dirt on dull and dreary buildings in the modern metropolis. The modernity of the building was therefore partially located, as it was in the Parliament building, with both the use of new building and lighting technologies, and the taking up of a self-consciously theatrical architectural vocabulary with high visibility in the modern cityscape. In this way, the fusing of elements associated with an ancient past and a technological future—the paradoxical knot at the heart of Hungarian nation-building and the theme of the Millennial Exhibition—took shape in the curiously designed museum as much as it did in the nation’s multifarious Parliament building.

As this chapter has highlighted, the demand for Hungarian visibility, manifested in the conflicted spaces of the emerging metropolis, gave rise to an appeal to fantasy, gigantisms, altered perception, and embodied visuality. In turn, the search for alternatives was rooted in the desire to achieve some kind of direction for Budapest in time for its impending Millennial Exhibition. Indeed, as historian Peter Hanák persuasively suggests in his analysis of Budapest’s fin de siècle social and political environment, the lack of tradition in the metropolis was strongly associated with the sense that the city and nation had been deprived of its continuity. Budapest’s physical locale on the border between Eastern and Western Europe therefore operated as a kind of perceptual gateway by the time of the 1896 Fair,

---

155 For a study on the ceramic factory and its history, see Éva Csenkey et al., Hungarian Ceramics from the Zsolnay Manufactory, 1853–2001 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

156 These technical features are discussed in many of the noted studies on the museum and, notably, also in Aladár, Budapest Műszaki Útmutatója (Technical Guide to Budapest), 160–64.

balancing the demands of tradition and modernity through the stereotypes associated with an exotic and primitive past and an alienated and unknown future. Underscoring my analysis as a whole has been the further contention that the accelerated city planning and building program of Budapest, however disjointed, declared its character as specifically bourgeois and anti-imperialist. That does not mean however that the modernity experienced in Budapest mirrored that of Vienna. In fact, what I want to suggest by way of conclusion is that the literature and theories associated with an emerging Austrian modernism in the fin de siècle period have worked to efface the contradictions posed by Budapest’s urban history as I have described them. Therefore, the taking up of a bourgeois city model was partly informed by a strategy to challenge Habsburg authority through the shaking up of established hierarchies, systems, and modes of experience. In other words, the modern city, as a key location for transformation and change in the late nineteenth century, provided the most viable space to achieve the goal of gaining visibility, status, and legitimacy for Hungarian interests in the eyes of the world.
Chapter Two: Topographies of Contested Power, Technologies of Embodied Perception—The Painted Panorama Made Modern

...there is always a nomad on the horizon of a given technological lineage.”
--Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987)¹

To write about our present age, will only bring trouble.
We know this by heart.
There are more problems today than in the past.
That much is certain.
Still, we are progressing forward at an extraordinary rate.
But now, it is as if we are all sorry for it,
as if we are beginning to see with distorted eyes.
--Sándor Bródy, Hungarian Journalist (1896)²

If Budapest was to compete as an international modern metropolis on the scale
of a London, Paris, or New York, it would require its own prominent monuments.
This was the mantra emanating from particular elements of the Budapest legislature
in the years leading up Millennial Exhibition. Indeed, between the mid 1880’s and
early 1890’s, several proposals for new works were introduced and debated, while
many more were flatly ruled out.³

The problem persisted not only of where to locate
the monuments—in traditional locations of power in Buda or in new spaces of a
modernizing Pest— but also how to successfully manage the Millennial Exhibition
theme concerning the origin myth of Hungary’s founding father Prince Árpád, and
the Magyars conquest of the Carpathian Basin. In particular, concerns culminated
around how to position the ancient leader within the broader spatial and temporal
pantheon of joint Austrian and Hungarian rulership that the dual monarchy now
represented.

The original and most controversial plan involving the figure of Árpád was
the Millennial Monument itself—the project that had first initiated the idea of the
1896 Exhibition. Commissioned by the Hungarian government as a sculptural
grouping, the final project attempted to represent the complicated narrative of a

³ The various proposals for monuments prior to the 1896 Fair is discussed in András Gerő, *Modern Hungarian Society in the Making: The Unfinished Experience* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995), 204-06.
Hungarian past situated firmly within the context of Austro-Hungarian dualism.\textsuperscript{4} By 1894, following fierce debate over the configuration of the sculptures and culminating fears over how the monument would impact the cityscape due to its size and cost, a final plan was provisionally unveiled. Consisting of a central group of seven equestrian statues representing the seven chieftains led by Prince Árpád beneath a 36 meter tall column, the plans also called for an encircling pantheon of historical leaders from other sovereign dynasties of Western Europe (fig.2.1). Placed on top of the column was the Archangel Gabriel, signaling victory and serving as an important marker in Hungarian origin myths both as the traditional symbol of the conversion of the Hungarian peoples to Christianity, but also as a sign of the continuity of Prince Árpád’s bloodline to that of the imperial rulership of St. Stephen, who a century following the entry into the Carpathian Basin, would be crowned Hungary’s first Christian king.\textsuperscript{5} This implied connection to the Catholic monarch Franz Joseph was reinforced through the imposing pantheon group, which included ancestors of the Habsburg king. Key to the monument’s planning was therefore the Hungarian government’s attempt to negotiate the glorification and pride in the Hungarian lineage of leaders with the recognition of the Austrian monarchy in a way that linked the past to the modern present. And even though plans were well in place and made public during the time of the Millennial Celebration, they remained largely outside the common Budapest public and foreign audience’s frame of reference since the final monument would not be completed until several years following the 1896 Exhibition.

As the controversy over the Millennial Monument brewed, another related project attempted to accommodate the ancient Magyars’ legacy within the broader scope of Hungarian governance. This time, however, the monument celebrating Prince Árpád was proposed in the form of a grand history painting to be ceremoniously hung in the chambers of the new Parliament building. From the beginning, there was little question that the task could not be entrusted to anyone


\textsuperscript{5} Legends claimed that Gabriel had appeared in a dream to St. Stephen, inspiring the leader to convert the Magyars to Christianity. A well known myth to most Hungarians is discussed in detail in Stephen Sisa, The Spirit of Hungary: A Panorama of Hungarian History and Culture (Toronto: Rákoczi Foundation, 1983), 15-18.
other than Hungary’s most important living artist, Mihály Munkácsy. A celebrated painter who had lived and worked in Western Europe for most of his career, Munkácsy had become internationally famous by the late nineteenth century through his affiliation with the French Realists and Barbizon School. Importantly, however, Munkácsy was Hungary’s most famous artist, but living outside of Hungary. Owing in large measure to frequent exhibitions in Paris and a number of high profile sales to American buyers, the artist enjoyed a fair amount of foreign attention. As such, Munkácsy’s loyalty was already in question by critics when he received the commission. Many believed that the artist’s interests lay more with his government patrons and public image; this despite his reputation in the earlier phases of his career as a “Hungarian Courbet.”

By the early 1890’s, I would argue both of these projects—the Millennial Monument and the Munkácsy painting, eventually titled Conquest (fig.2.2)—were distant abstractions that had barely left a dent in the Budapest public imaginary as it awaited the Millennial Exhibition. Another project dealing with Árpád and the ancient Magyars, however, did garner great attention—a temporary, yet intensely public monument in the form of a panorama painting. It was a work which met with city inhabitants’ desires to simultaneously participate in, and bring higher visibility to, the story of Prince Árpád. The project originated in 1891 when Hungarian artist Árpád Feszty formed the “Hungarian Panorama Company” (Magyar körkép-társaság) with a number of private investors to plan and execute a large scale panorama

---


7 Székely, 5-6. John Wanamaker, a Chicago millionaire and department store owner, famously bought two of Munkácsy’s paintings in the 1880’s. Both pictures were borrowed for the World Exhibition in Paris in 1889 and Wanamaker took them himself to the Chicago Exhibition in 1893.

8 I was unable to find any critical discussion outside of Hungary regarding Munkácsy’s large mural beyond the fact that he was at the end of his career when it was completed. Those interested in Munkácsy’s early work would probably find little continuity between this historical painting and many of his earlier realist works produced in Paris. Even so, the commission was presumably viewed by some members of the Fair’s planning committee as an opportunity to bring the famed Hungarian painter home. The debates over his allegiances and motivations to paint the scene as he did I have surmised from the tone of the Feszty panorama reviews within Hungary. These suggest to me that Munkácsy’s patriotism was questioned since he chose to live the majority of his life away from Hungary.
painting to be housed in a rotunda at the end of Andrassy Avenue directly adjacent to the planned Millennial Exhibition's entrance (See Map 2). It was at this open location that Feszty and a team of twenty painters worked for two years to complete the work (fig.2.3). Measuring 1760 square feet with over 2000 painted figures, it was a project frequently reported upon in the press, drawing great anticipation among the Budapest public who watched and waited for the final canvas's unveiling. The moment finally arrived in the spring of 1894, two years in advance of the official Fair's opening, when Feszty debuted his large scale cylindrical painting, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians 896 (A magyarok bejövetele)*. Illuminated with dozens of twinkling electric lights and situated at the end of Budapest’s self-proclaimed Champs-Élysées, beside one of the final stops of the new underground railway, the spectacular painting was housed in a spacious rotunda rivaling that of any found in Paris or London—a space that could accommodate over one hundred viewers at one time (fig.2.4).

Better known by its Hungarian title *Honfoglalás*, which translates to “original conquest,” the image re-presented the key moment that the Millennial Fair was designed to commemorate. Set in 896, one thousand years in the past, the painting claimed to give shape to the moment of the ancient nomadic Magyar peoples’ arrival in the Carpathian Basin, a people who were believed in Hungarian origin myths to have conquered the local Slavic and sedentary populations. As viewers climbed up inside the rotunda’s darkened staircase and assembled onto the round platform, they would find themselves fully immersed inside the painting. There stretched out before them lay a three hundred and sixty degree composite view of the rich expanse of fertile land stretching from modern day Slovakia, through Hungary and into

---

9 Map 2 shows the positioning of both the Feszty panorama and planned monument (in addition to other features discussed later in the chapter) outside the official entrance to the grounds. This is important to stress since it may not be immediately apparent in the close proximity of these features to the official fairgrounds.

10 The etymology and usage of this Hungarian word *Honfoglalás* (loosely translated to “conquest”) is thought to be directly connected to the 9th century episode in Hungarian history when the Magyar peoples led by Prince Arpad were believed to take over the Carpathian Basin lands as their own. A break down of the word also yields the more provocative idea of “homeland-seizing” since the Hungarian prefix *hon* translates to “homeland” and the root word *foglal* translates to “seize.” See *English/Hungarian and Hungarian/English Standard Dictionary*, ed. T. Magay and L. Kiss (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1995).

Romania—an area marked by human movement where the first human settlements dated back a half million years.\textsuperscript{12} Adding to the veracity and immediacy of the scene, viewers would also face a three-dimensional diorama of real rocks, turf and soil built up in the foreground, forcing the eye to seek where the three-dimensional space stopped and the flat canvas began.\textsuperscript{13} Importantly, representation of the space was immediately highlighted by the presence of Prince Árpád, astride a brilliant white horse, along with his seven chieftains overlooking the gateway to the Carpathian Basin that stretched out in the distance (fig.2.5). These figures, immediately recognizable to the Hungarian public, were represented as the Magyars’ mythic ancestors and evoked in Hungarian folktales and popular historical novels of the day as the heroic founding fathers of the Hungarian people.

As viewers’ eyes scanned the panorama, a number of episodes related to this moment were simultaneously enacted. Reading from the Hungarian Panorama Company guidebook’s description of 1894,\textsuperscript{14} the strength of the Magyar invaders is emphasized:

It is advisable to begin the inspection with the prominent group of the chiefs. Among these you will at once distinguish the noble figure of Árpád who, on his snow-white steed and in rich oriental attire, has taken up position on a hill [fig.2.6]. It seems he arrived this moment with his fellow-chiefs and the steep precipice caused them to stop their horses....On the place before the chiefs you will remark Latorcz [Slavic ruler] and other captives who, with dazzled eyes, look at the radiant leaders of the unknown invading nation [fig.2.7]. Who are these? Whence do they come? The fertile level attracts his [Árpád’s eyes] [fig. 2.8]. He enjoys the sight of these plains stretching into unbounded distance, where the rising waters of the Latorcza are flowing like a silver serpent.... To the right there roars the battle of the Magyars; the fierce troop rushes down the hill like a blustering storm [fig.2.9]. They seem to be innumerable, just as if the earth would bring them forth, as if their horses had wings....

The descriptive text also stresses the inherent superiority of the Magyars over the soon to be conquered Slavs in terms of both constitutional and political development, and agricultural wealth. The conquering Magyars religious practices are also delineated:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{12} The importance of the Carpathian Basin to Hungarian history is discussed in Chapter One.
\textsuperscript{13} Árpád Szűcs and Malgorzata Wójtowicz, \textit{A Feszty Korkép (The Feszty Panorama)} (Budapest: Helokon, 1996), 13.
\textsuperscript{14} “The Explanation of the Picture: Cyclorama by Árpád Feszty.”
\end{flushright}
The enemy, have already diminished: the rest of the Slavonians oppose with valorous resistance. They die on the spot where they lived; it was their home though it was not fortified by constitution and political bulwarks...The women's carriages pass by the destroyed Slavonian altar [fig.2.10]...On the other side of the road there you see the smoking ruins of a wooden watch-tower, where fair Slavonian women have tried to hide themselves. But the new lords of the country carry them away from their hiding-place [fig.2.11]... More pleasing is the view of the settlers on the edge of the forest. It describes their first peaceful rest. Numerous herds and flocks of horses, cattle, sheep, coming-forth from the clouds of dust, pass before our eyes and hasten towards the plain [fig.2.12]...There can be no doubt about the end of the fight. The picture shows us the last moments of the resistance. The chiefs just ordered to give signal for the finishing of the battle. On a cleared place, the large pile already smokes. The "Táltos", that is the Hungarian heathen priest, stands before it with stretched-out arms and invokes the Spirit of Fire [fig.2.13]; behind him the "Bonczes" brings a fine white horse and the "Kádár" with a drawn sword waits to offer it to the God. Dancing girls strew flowers round the pile [fig. 2.14].

In the end, Feszty’s panorama represents the entry of the Magyars, the destruction of the land’s inhabitants, emphasizing the rape of Slavic women, and the rush of conquering invaders in detailed academic illusionism. Striking for its attempts at verisimilitude, Feszty’s panorama worked to evoke the moment of Hungary’s birth as a nation.

Popularized in the late eighteenth through mid nineteenth centuries, the panorama, in the years following 1850, often appeared in the context of World’s Fairs, depicting historic events and reasserting national myths. Yet by the 1890’s, when Feszty’s panorama was created, the medium was seen by some as altogether outmoded and even retrograde. Indeed, as a popular tourist site and featured attraction of the Fair, the Feszty panorama did not appear to look at the present or the future, but rather conjured up familiar tropes around invasion, conquest and domination, and a primitive past with its ancient technologies. But while it is indeed tempting to dismiss Feszty’s work as pure spectacle and declare the image as nothing

15 Ibid.


more than a trite manifestation of national propaganda on one hand, or escapist spectacle on the other, my purpose in this chapter is to explore how the vexed themes and conflicting histories around Magyar settlement and domination of Slavic inhabitants, at issue over the course of the nineteenth century and evoked in this panoramic image, worked to destabilize and reveal fractures in the Hungarian social body associated with a legacy of Habsburg absolutism.

What I will argue is that through a complex visual vocabulary and specific allusions to the theme of conquest, technological control, and conflicted subjectivities, the Feszty panorama gave shape to the political and social landscape of a deeply divided and contested Budapest public sphere. Indeed, despite its traditional illusionism, the panorama was a mass medium that offered a new technology of seeing that could in turn evoke and mobilize aspirations in revived and highly charged ways. In contrast to the program of static monuments initiated by official Fair organizers, the experience of being immersed within panoramic space allowed viewers to literally position themselves within the narrative of Hungary’s origin myth. In this way, the representation of technological invention, mobility, and exoticism played an integral role in Feszty’s panorama, satisfying the overall agenda of the Budapest Millennial Exhibition to celebrate Hungary’s long history and anticipated modern and progressive future. The medium also tapped into foreign visitors’ desires to be entertained and transported elsewhere. Indeed, it would thus appear that a further underlying mechanism of the panorama was to strategically construct and normalize a lineage for modern day technological marvels—like the underground railway—that dated back to a pre-feudal time and place. Importantly, notions of mobility were not just about spatial movement, but also meant to spark the imagination and new fields of possibility. Echoing and reinforcing the technological statement made by the new modern innovation of rapid travel, the panorama too offered a new kind of transport to another space, and to another time.

In the course of my exploration of the Feszty panorama, upon its debut in 1894, and as a popular tourist attraction at the 1896 Fair, I will also argue that the image intervened in narratives concerning Hungarian nationalism post-1848 that linked modern Hungarian subjects to a glorified nomadic past. This past, born at a time of mid-nineteenth century revolutionary politics, emphasized, for liberals, freedom of movement, leadership through coalition, cultural miscegenation as a
means to domination, and technological innovation. In particular, the nomads pictured in the panorama were connected to the present through an implied capacity to self-fashion a society of survivors and innovators, distilling all the best traits of a new modern public. This kind of nomadism was strategically linked to aspirations for Hungarian political consolidation and international visibility, core liberal values advocated and sought out in 1848, 1867, and still in 1896. However, nomadism also appeared to disrupt several tenets of modern nation building—namely stable borders, and a clearly marked citizenry. To be sure, the dynamic movement and energy of Feszty’s Magyar nomads, the disruption of the static and the sedentary as they surged to an expanding horizon, argued for the potency of the fluid and the mobile, not only in the past but as a way of challenging and reconfiguring the present.

Visually then, the representation of Prince Árpád and his chieftains entering the Carpathian Basin could at one level appear well suited to the representation of liberal aspirations, because, for one, as panorama historian Bernard Comment suggests, the panorama format offered up possibilities of shaking off the past: “Abolishing the frame was the only way of transcending the limits of traditional representation.” Moreover, as media historian Angela Miller suggests, the panorama medium invited a newness and modernity in seeing which complimented liberal aims:

\[\text{...vision was something engineered and shaped by the medium, not the reproduction of some objective reality onto the retina in a precise isomorphic relationship. Far from being a transparent vehicle for reproducing the real (the camera obscura model), the panorama—like the cinema—manufactured a new reality, condensing time, editing the visual field, amplifying certain aspects of perceived reality while diminishing others.}\]

In addition, the Feszty panorama formulated a particular representation of the Hungarian past that depended upon the illusionism, theatricality, and corporeal experience provided through the panorama medium; features that were lacking in traditional history painting and static stone monuments. This produced a kind of spectatorship that was not passive, but deliberately active, inviting audience participation. Moreover, the panorama did not produce a seamless reality, but corresponded to what was relevant in the contemporary world through a dialogue

\[\text{Comment, 100.}\]

with the past. Against those who claimed the panoramic medium as a tool of the state, the new media as it was taken up by Hungarians was not necessarily a tool of nationalism, and especially not on the model of a Western European form. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how the panorama’s appearance in Austria-Hungary necessarily had very different stakes for a heterogeneous community that was often starved for representation.

However, while the rhetoric of Magyar nomadism and the enfolding principles of Magyarization could serve to challenge the imperial and feudal power structures of the Austrian Habsburgs that were legitimized during the Compromise of 1867, I want to keep in play other and more problematic aspects of modern liberalism that were also given form. The prominent image of Prince Árpád and the seven chieftains presiding over the scene of the defeated and humiliated Slavs could only have registered the conflicted status of ethnic groups within ongoing liberal programs. Importantly, the facile and disturbing illusionism of Feszty’s image of the arrival of the conquering Hungarians gave form all too clearly to a moment of crisis in fin de siècle Central and Eastern Europe—one wherein the rhetoric of multinationalism and emerging modernity was situated in uneasy juxtaposition with rapid technological change, displacement of populations, and rising political factionalism.

Indeed, who “the people” constituted was at the heart of the debate in Austria-Hungary by the end of the nineteenth century and claims to being a “true Magyar” had multiple and conflicting connotations and political motivations. With the movement of large sectors of the landless peasantry to Budapest and the immigration of large numbers of foreign entrepreneurs to the Hungarian controlled regions of the empire in the final decades of the nineteenth century, fears mounted about how Hungary and the ethnic Magyar majority could sustain its distinct power position over the region. In this context, I will explore the mechanisms through which the visual destabilized and produced conflicted readings of Hungary’s past, as seen through the lens of the present. The rhetoric of nomadism is key to these mechanisms since the movement of bodies marked the period leading up to and during the Millennial Celebrations. For some members of the Hungarian public, the panorama’s violent imagery of pillage, rape, and destruction, could have augured that the embracive claims of Magyarization—evoked in the image by the dynamic charge of nomads that urged viewers to move with and not against the conquerors—were in fact tenets of
exclusion, even eradication. In dialogue with the incomplete Millennial Monument and the distant Munkácsy painting, the privately sponsored Feszty Panorama effectively offered a counterpoint to official representations of the founding of Hungary. Yet in doing so, it also raised, all too uncomfortably, the contradictions facing modern liberals within the dual Austro-Hungarian Empire.

**The Panorama’s Appeal: Tracing a History to Budapest**

Painted panoramas as a mass medium were invented and patented in late eighteenth century Britain by artist and entrepreneur Robert Barker, emerging as a popular and regular attraction in larger urban centers throughout Western Europe by the early to mid nineteenth century. Deriving its etymology from two Greek roots, *pan* (all) and *horama* (view), the panorama introduced nineteenth century audiences to a powerful technology of seeing that placed upwards of 150 viewers in the centre of a 360-degree view of the scene depicted (fig.2.15). Therein, individuals were instructed in how to view the painted circular painting set before them through a variety of visual techniques, cues, and written souvenir guides, working together to elicit the greatest level of verisimilitude and understanding possible. As panorama historian Stephen Oettermann argues, early panoramas shared close resemblances with traditions of Baroque theatre painting—such as the use of curved stage backdrops and illusionistic receding landscape vistas—but, importantly, emerged in direct and critical reaction to the limited viewing possibilities of the Baroque stage, which catered first and foremost to the perspective of the imperial ruler:

> Baroque theatres on the Continent were court theatres; among their most prominent characteristics was a deep stage with receding rows of flat scene cloths on both sides, oriented toward a single vanishing point. At the eye point of this construction in strict central perspective—to which the entire architectural design of such theatres also had to conform—was situated the royal box; that is, the only person able to see the stage set in correct perspective was the sovereign. Of necessity, all the other spectators saw it with some degree of distortion. One might even say that the sovereign was the

---

20 In addition to existing literature on the history of the panoramic medium in n.15, see a more concentrated discussion of the first exhibited panoramas in Denise Oleksijczuk, “The Dynamics of Spectatorship in the First Panoramas: Vision, The Body and British Imperialism, 1787-1829” (Ph.D., University of British Columbia, 2001), 1-27.

21 Oettermann, 6. “It is an artificial, technical term, in other words created for a specific form of landscape painting which reproduced a 360-degree view and was invented independently around 1787 by several different European painters.”
only true spectator; the rest of the audience viewed the stage “through his eyes,” in a manner of speaking, with the sovereign as a kind of mediator.\footnote{Ibid., 23-24.}

Breaking with the convention of catering to one privileged viewpoint, the panorama offered a greater level of perceived realism through the adoption of techniques, such as a rounded horizon, which drew many more viewers into the role of active spectatorship. Moreover, as the ranks of the middle class audiences to the theatre grew and pressures to adapt the stage design to new and more modern themes in playwriting emerged, a gradual democratization of vision ensued. Audiences insisted on broadening the possibility of perspectives within the spaces of depicted scenes, driving transformations in theatre design and subsidization that over time culminated in the production of privately financed panoramas—an enterprise that not only placed the tastes and needs of middle class viewers above the aristocracy, but provided a lucrative means through which to turn a profit. As Oettermann usefully sums up, the panorama became “the middle-class response to forms of feudal art that had grown obsolete.”\footnote{Ibid. 23.}

Yet despite the panorama’s long tradition of exhibition and its emergence as a profitable mass medium in Western Europe, paintings of this type had rarely been seen and experienced in Central and Eastern Europe outside the Habsburg enclave of Vienna where a history of panorama making and exhibition dated back to\footnote{This is an observation, however, that requires some qualification. For example, while Oettermann devotes a full chapter of his book to “The Panorama in Austria” (287-312), there are no references made to panorama exhibition outside Vienna. This would leave one to conclude that panorama exhibition was very limited in the country. This is particularly problematic when considering the post-1867 period following the “Compromise” with Hungary when Budapest, Prague, and other cities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire reportedly exhibited panoramas. This was something that I discovered in the course of my research when I found reoccurring references to sporadic panorama exhibition outside the imperial center, something that is effaced from Oettermann’s chapter even while he discusses Austrian panorama exhibition into the fin de siècle period. His only acknowledgement comes with a listing of a Hungarian and a Polish panorama (the Feszty and Styka panoramas) in the appendix to his book on “Existing Panoramas,” something that fails to link these works to Austrian national concerns of their period, or reflect the movement of visiting panoramas to places outside Vienna. I would further argue that the subdivision of Oettermann’s book into individual national exhibition histories reveals a glaring shortcoming, mainly that the site of panorama exhibition was almost always within an urban core—a space that possessed its own unique character and set of stakes that did not necessarily reflect overarching national concerns. This was especially the case in Austria-Hungary, as this study suggests, where the multi-national makeup of the country complicated how panoramas would be read and understood.}1801.\footnote{Ibid. 23.} It was here in the imperial capital, as in nearly every other major Western European
production arose. The first phase, lasting from the inception of the medium in the 1780’s until the 1830’s marked the initial heyday of panorama exhibition when audiences first experienced the novelty of panoramic space and became familiar with its range of themes, subject matter, and techniques of illusion. Sparking debate over whether the medium’s appeal to a mass audience constituted panorama painting as art, the first panoramas also posed questions and raised anxieties around the reception of works, cultivation of class taste and the accessibility of high art to the masses.\textsuperscript{25} And by mid-century, as Oettermann explains, what had emerged in France and England was an increasing repudiation of panoramas as anything other than mere entertainment.\textsuperscript{26} The medium also fell out of fashion as newer technologies of vision (such as photography) emerged and increased access to travel threatened the medium’s promise to deliver the highest degree of realism possible. In this sense, the panorama faced challenges to its primary promise to transport audiences to another space and time. But the second phase of panorama production, beginning in the 1880’s and lasting into the early 1900’s, was sparked by a revival of interest in the panoramic medium through the larger scale format of the newer canvases and their subsequent mobility through an international network of standardized rotundas.\textsuperscript{27} This coincided with new techniques of visual reproduction taken up in panorama technology, coming far closer to the illusionistic mastery that many Academic painters had aspired to earlier in the century. As cultural historian Vanessa Schwartz emphasizes, fin de siècle panoramas were technologically superior to their predecessors; that is, they achieved a level of verisimilitude through the use of projected photographs and diorama assemblages that would have been impossible before the late nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{28} I raise these points to suggest that, counter to arguments that describe the panorama as retrograde, baroque, or outmoded by the

\textsuperscript{25} Oettermann raises the 1820 exhibition of Theodore Gericault’s \textit{Raft of the Medusa} in London’s Egyptian Hall on pp. 131-132 to discuss this point. A more extended argument is outlined in Jonathan Crary, “Gericault, the Panorama, and Sites of Reality in the Early Nineteenth Century,” \textit{Grey Room}, no. 9 (2002).

\textsuperscript{26} Oettermann summarizes the two phases of panorama production and reasons for decline in the inter-period on p. 235.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid, 58-39. See especially Figure 1.11 “Comparative size of several panorama rotundas” where a useful sketch of the German “Hittdorf rotunda” is provided in order to show how it would serve as a model for later rotunda buildings throughout Europe and North America.

\textsuperscript{28} Schwartz, 156.
close of the nineteenth century, it was precisely within the context of the panorama’s technological *newness* and modern themes in the second phase of production that panoramas first debuted outside Vienna in other urban centers throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire, most notably in the second imperial capital of Budapest by the mid 1880’s.

How then is this latter phase of panorama production significant? And how would it eventually contribute to the medium becoming a central and decisive attraction at the Budapest Millennial Exhibition? As I have suggested, the second phase of panorama production and its accompanying popularity gained in strength through a kind of technological upgrading and enhanced mobility for the medium. Throughout Europe and North America at this time, panorama companies also became lucrative businesses that could rely on massive paying audiences through the touring of canvases to increasing numbers of individuals at International Fairs. These interrelated phenomena drove production demand for more ambitious panorama projects that employed larger number of painters, thereby increasing the interest, investment, and profits in the companies. But aside from the technical transformations in panorama production, the renewed interest in the medium also drove audience demand for newer, more innovative, and perhaps more sensational and contested subject matter for the massive canvases. By far, the most popular panoramas of this latter period took up themes from contemporary history or referenced them indirectly. This was sparked, perhaps most fervently, by the

---

29 Even if a popular perception, Schwartz argues that the fin de siècle panoramas were technologically superior to their predecessors; that is, they achieved a level of verisimilitude through the use of photographs and diorama assemblages that would have been impossible before the late nineteenth century.

30 I found several references to a panorama being exhibited at the Hungarian National Exhibition of 1885. It is mentioned by Ákos Kovács in "A Feszty-kép [The Feszty Painting]" 1997, and in Magyarok bejövetele: Száz szép kép / Feszty Árpád [The Entrance of the Hungarians/ Arpad Feszty Files], The Hungarian Electronic Library Resource, National Széchenyi Library <http://mek.oszk.hu/01500/01591/index.phtml#>


32 Since the panorama painting still required six to twelve months on average to produce, and an additional three months to replace one panorama with another in any given rotunda, the profit motive had to remain high in order to take on ever-increasing complexity with the composition.
Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1. In particular, Edouard Detaille and Alphonse de Neuville’s military image, *Battle of Champigny*, painted and exhibited to huge audiences throughout Europe in the early to mid 1880’s, recreated a view of the bloody confrontation between two nations with such a level of horrific detail and realism that the work quickly garnered international interest (fig.2.16).\(^\text{34}\) Importantly, however, the large panorama gave reference to *defeat* and not victory, that of self styled Emperor Louis Napoleon —in power since 1851— and of France as a whole. But, in 1882 when the panorama was first exhibited in Paris, the defeat was one which already had ushered in a more liberal Republican regime and a period of vital rebuilding. In other words, the panorama worked to galvanize the new aims of a transformed French government in the wake of imperial rule run amuck.

Perhaps it is not surprising then that a Hungarian painter would recognize the potential power of the panorama for a country and city going through its own vital transformation after a period of absolute imperial rule. This is likely what struck Árpád Feszty, who reportedly showed immediate interest in introducing the medium to Hungary once he viewed the evocative and controversial *Battle of Champigny* on a field trip to Paris in the mid-1880’s.\(^\text{35}\) Feszty, an artist who had been schooled in the Munich Art Academy, had gained some acclaim in Budapest as a painter of landscapes and portraits, but also as a talented set painter for Budapest’s theatre community.\(^\text{36}\) But perhaps more significant to Feszty’s interests as a painter was his close relationship to his famous father-in-law, Mór Jókai, a former revolutionary of 1848, famed literary figure, and distinguished MP in the Lower House of the Hungarian Parliament.\(^\text{37}\) As a close friend and mentor of Feszty, Jókai exerted a great

\(^{33}\) Most of these were concerned with famous battles of the recent past.

\(^{34}\) Oettermann discusses the French panorama on pp.170-171. Also see Comment, 66-67.

\(^{35}\) Árpád Szűcs and Malgorzata Wójtowicz, *A Feszty Körkép [The Feszty Panorama]* (Budapest: Helokon, 1996), 9. While Feszty is believed to have visited the French panorama in Paris, Oettermann provides evidence that the *Battle of Champigny* was also exhibited in Vienna in 1887 (306). Moreover, it is entirely possible that Jókai and Feszty had occasion to see the other controversial panorama painted of the Franco-Prussian War, Henri Philippoteaux’s *The Siege of Paris* (1878) that traveled to Vienna in the 1880’s and was much written about and debated in its day.

deal of influence over the young painter both in the realm of art and politics. In particular, at the time of Feszty’s visit to Paris, he had been asked to paint the setting for one of Jókai’s theatre productions dealing with thinly veiled political themes from Hungarian history. Consequently, observing the great interest and debate around the Detaille and Neuville panorama, Feszty also likely recognized the paintings significance to both a broadly defined French nationalism and the specific interests of France’s liberal Republican government. Critically, however, the example of Detaille and Neuville’s painted panorama underscored how the medium could represent past war and conflict in a way that literally and figuratively moved people through a collective perception-altering experience, while simultaneously articulating contemporary concerns and interests. Consequently, the large scale image also provided a more direct means through which to reach a broad cross-section of the lay public through an appeal to emotion and fantastic projection. But underwriting all of these loftier themes was the striking fact that the Detaille and Neuville panorama had become among the most profitable and popular panoramas ever debuted in Europe, attracting some 1600 people a day in its first four months of opening in 1882 and taking in a total of 400,000 francs in the same period.

Therefore, it was arguably within the context of reinvigorated liberal politics, combined with national awareness, promise of large audiences and a clear profit motive, that the panorama medium was understood, exploited, and ultimately politicized by the Hungarian painter. Upon returning to Budapest in 1891, Feszty moved quickly to form the Hungarian Panorama Company and finance a large format panorama painting with private investors drawn from among the most prominent

---

37 Jókai returned to Budapest in 1850 following the failed revolution and became a newspaper editor and journalist, in addition to his work as a novelist. He served in the Hungarian parliament as an MP from 1865-1896.

38 The fact that Feszty had been so drawn to the Detaille and Neuville panorama in Paris is not without significance to his family ties or their strong liberal leanings. As historian László Deme argues, the culture and spirit of change that emanated from France was a continuing influence upon the Hungarian imaginary, especially to those committed to the liberal spirit of the 1848 revolution. Jókai also wrote passionately about the French in his memoirs where he stated: “We were all Frenchmen. We read only Lamartine, Michelet. Louis Blanc, Sue, Victor Hugo, and Bernage. If we deigned to read an English or German poet, it was Shelly or Heine, disowned by their own countrymen and English and German with respect only to their language: in spirit, they were French.” László Deme, The Radical Left in the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 10.

39 The Detaille and Neuville panorama is discussed within this context in Schwartz, 158-62.

40 Ibid., 170.
members of Jókai’s circle. Counted in this group were liberal cabinet ministers from the Lower House of Parliament, prominent Budapest financiers, and other city elites who not only saw the venture as a good investment for the city, but also believed in the potential for the painting and rotunda to draw attention to Budapest’s cultural offerings as on par with other Western European urban centers.\footnote{A full list of investors, including reproductions of the archival letters of incorporation can be found in Ákos Kovács, "Feszty Árpád és a körkép [Arpad Feszty and the Panorama]," \textit{Ars Hungarica} 24, no. 1 (1996).} Also among the subscribers to the Hungarian Panorama Company was the elder Jókai who provided the inspiration for the final subject of the panorama. Drawing on the theatrical piece he had been writing at the time about the Hungarian Conquest, and taking up the very theme around which the Millennial Exhibition was being planned, the arrival of the Magyar peoples was chosen as a subject-matter for the panorama, marking the founding moment of the Hungarian nation through Árpád’s arrival in the Carpathian Basin.\footnote{Ibid.: 102.} As I introduced at the outset of this chapter, it was this very theme that Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy, working in Paris, had been commissioned to paint for the new Parliament building’s interior, and around which the colossal Millennial monument was being planned. In Feszty’s case, however, the privately funded painting was to be realized without any direct government involvement. This is one of a number of interrelated issues that, as I will discuss in the next section, would have direct implications for how the painted panorama would be viewed, experienced, and understood by the its many diverse audiences.\footnote{Szücs and Wójtowicz, \textit{A Feszty Körkép [The Feszty Panorama]}, 13.}

\section*{The Reception of the Feszty Panorama: Locating a “Magyar” Discourse}

When the Feszty panorama debuted to the Budapest public in the Spring of 1894, two years in advance of the Millennial Exhibition, the reception of critics, both professional and general, was overwhelmingly enthusiastic.\footnote{I assessed the general tone of the reviews by looking at writings in several of the major Budapest newspapers in the months preceding and following the panorama’s debut. Among these were the widely distributed \textit{Budapest Hirlap (Budapest News)}, \textit{Magyar Hirlap (Hungarian News)}, \textit{Magyarország (Hungary)}, \textit{Budapest (Illustrated News)} and \textit{Pesti Hirlap (Pest News)}. I also drew quotes from a number of reviews and articles from 1894-1896 accumulated in András Varga, ed. \textit{Árpád Feszty: The Entry of the Magyars} (Opusztaeser: Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park, 2000) CD-ROM.} In the months and days
leading up to and following the opening, the Budapest press was filled with descriptions and opinions of the merits of the work. Of these, many played up Feszty’s artistic talent and credentials, despite what could be perceived as Feszty’s diminished status on the project, painting panoramas as opposed to rendering history paintings within the accepted definition of the Hungarian Art Academy.45 For example, the *Magyar Hirlap (Hungarian News)*, a popular Budapest daily declared Feszty “the most serious Hungarian history painter today” and the panorama, a work of art that “impregnated the imagination.”46 Much of the press also emphasized the artist’s ability to render the scene with a high level of emotion and technical accuracy—an accuracy that was understood to strengthen and lend authenticity to the historical scene constructed. In many eyes, Feszty had achieved this level of unsurpassed realism through years of intensive historical research and painstaking attention to detail. One critic noted, for example, that it is was not Feszty’s task to only create a most spectacular work of art, but also to render first and foremost a faithful historical depiction of the Magyar’s entrance into the Basin.47 Critics outlined and detailed the time and effort Feszty spent scrupulously investigating the ancient events, visiting the site of the supposed initial entrance of Magyar nomads into the Carpathian Basin, and researching the people known as the first Magyars in the libraries of Vienna, Paris, and Rome in order to best reconstruct the scene of the Entrance.48 As one critic exclaimed, “Feszty is a scholar and scientist first and then a painter.”49 Review after review also pointed out Feszty’s success in rendering the scene “correctly,” an observation that suggested Feszty’s superiority in representing an event that was the very impetus for the millennial celebrations.50

---

45 This was a body to which Feszty belonged, and he had in fact been a founding member of the recently established Hungarian Salon (in 1893) but was not a part of the officially planned salon exhibition at the 1896 Millennial Exhibition despite the fact that he was listed among the membership of the salon’s yearbook in 1895. See Feszty’s name listed in *A nemzeti szalon évkönyve, 1895* [*The National Salon Yearbook, 1895*], (Budapest: Magyar Nyomda, 1896), 35.


47 "A körkép születése [The Panorama's Birth]," *Vasárnapi Ujság [Sunday Times]* 9 (1893)


Indeed, the common consensus of Budapest reviews and writings was that Feszty had created something beyond a mere painting. Emile Kazár, a critic for the *Pesti Napló* (Pest Daily) prepared audiences for the enormous canvas by suggesting that one could never know where the line between artistry and reality existed, since the panorama “appeared to have no beginning or end.”\(^{51}\) Others noted that while panoramas had been exhibited in Budapest before, none could compare with the one Feszty had created.\(^{52}\) These reviews in particular did away with any conception of the panorama medium as somehow retrograde. As one critic argued:

This cyclorama hasn't got anything to do with its now-antiquated predecessors. This is a circular picture as conceived by Detaille and Neuville, a form of artistry that transcends even illusion. Imagine a giant canvas 115 meters long and 13 meters tall sewed together at its two ends and, suspended from a giant iron ring of a diameter of twenty meters... One stands in the center of this cylinder and looks from there at the canvas painting which surrounds one as surely as a horizon. The twenty-meter-wide space that separates one from the painting is in effect its three-dimensional extension, and the painting is arranged so that objects and figures in the foreground appear to be of natural size when viewed from the proper distance but grow smaller, seemingly out of proportion, the closer one gets, and only once one arrives right beside the canvas is it evident that they are in fact of a size approximating those in the other painted scenes. This artistic device creates the surprising illusion whereby the viewer, not knowing where the painting begins and where the three-dimensional world ends, views the painting with a sense of verisimilitude.\(^{53}\)

One of the cities souvenir guides, published during the World’s Fair, even argued that Feszty had fully “surpassed” the French panorama painters Detaille and Neuville,

---

50 See for example "Solemn Scene in Buda-Pesth," *New York Times* March 31 1894 where the reviewer describes the “correctness” of the painting on the occasion of a special panorama viewing for Budapest’s newspaper editors.


52 See for example "A honfoglalás panorámája [The Panorama of the Conquest]," where the reviewer opens his piece with a discussion of the recent panorama exhibitions in Vienna which are described as more popular among everyday people than the theatre since audiences continue to be amazed at how they feel “transported” to another place and time. The reviewer goes on to state that “In short time, Budapest will have its own panorama,” suggesting how the newer second generation canvases held a special charge for viewers.

claiming his technical ability and artistic talent to render the natural elements of the earth and sky more realistically than the French painting duo. As a result, the descriptions and focus on the work’s technical excellence and progressiveness together with suggestions of its historical authenticity and ability to move individuals, both physically and emotionally, overrode any suggestion of the panorama as a mere entertainment or kind of novel spectacle.

I want to stop and point out here, that however favourable these critical appraisals of Feszty’s panorama were, they ran contrary to the texture of debates around the mass medium in places where a long tradition of panorama exhibition already existed. As art historian Angela Miller argues in her assessment of the advancing frontier of illusionistic representation in the nineteenth century and the threats that it posed to the artistic establishment (particularly in France and England), “the panorama offered a liberating access to an apparently encyclopedic reality; [and] unlike older forms of art, it did not require any particular or specialized knowledge or aesthetic expertise.” This proved not only threatening, but disconcerting since “the power of high art was to select, idealize, and refine experience” while the power of the panorama was to simulate it. For this reason, the panorama became devalued in many circles by mid-century, fed in part by increasingly sophisticated audiences that tended to mimic and assimilate upper-class attitudes and tastes around “acceptable” art. In this sense, Miller explains how the debate over the artistic value of panoramas took place on the terrain of class and around issues of who would control the means of cultural production. As Miller observes, “the issue became more pronounced once panoramists moved into a subject area that, up to that time, had been granted to history painters—that of epic battle scenes.” And while of technical interest to some (most often) academic artists, the panorama remained mostly within the realm of curious spectacle and industrialized reproduction in Western Europe. But in Budapest, a city that did not possess a long tradition of academic painting exhibition,

54 Henrik Lenkei, A Múlátó Budapest (The "Good Time" Budapest) (Budapest: Singer-Wolfner, 1896), 93.

55 Miller, 42.

56 Here, Miller identifies and rehearses debates around art, spectatorship, and imitation sparked by the technological aspects of the panorama that would play out later in the nineteenth through to the twentieth century around other “new media” such as photography, film, video, and computer graphics.

57 Miller, 45.
nor sustained exposure to debates around the artistic values of panoramas, I would contend that the panorama proved far more acceptable to critics and was conceived by the public as a kind of colossal history painting. At the same time, the Budapest public demanded alternative representations of their official history and carried fewer assimilated tastes about what constituted "acceptable" art. This was further buttressed by the fact that most local spectators of the Feszty panorama learned about, and were first introduced to, panorama painting through the city's many newspapers—an expanding bourgeois enterprise in Budapest that favoured and even celebrated the mass medium in these very terms. On the heels of highly successful and publicized French and German panoramas that dealt with more recent history and political debates, the panorama was also understood within Hungary in the second, more international, phase of production, as discussed earlier, when the medium was celebrated precisely for its modern technological advancements.

As a tool that could educate and spark interest and discussion around present day national realities, the panorama as history painting therefore held out the promise of an important alternative mode to re-present and re-figure the affairs of the nation outside imperial control. This is an especially charged configuration when considering that within the context of Hungarian visual production, traditional history painting as a tool of liberal resistance and shaping of national historical consciousness had arguably lost much of its authority and appeal by the late nineteenth century. Prior to 1867 and especially during the period between the 1848 uprisings and the establishment of Austro-Hungarian dualism, history paintings had served as an important outlet for nationalist yearnings and resistance to foreign rule. Drawing from

---

58 Official academic painting in Hungary was initiated in 1871 when the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts was founded. Up until this point, artists had to travel abroad to receive high-level professional training (mostly in Vienna, Rome, Paris, and Munich). This was the reason why Mihaly Munkácsy, for example, moved and would eventually take up permanent residence in Paris. For a history of Salon painting in Hungary, see Árpád Timár, "A nemzeti szalon alapítása, cikkek, híradások a korabeli sajtóban [The Establishment of the National Salon: Articles from the Era's Newspapers]," *Ars Hungarica* 28, no. 1 (2002).

59 A similar argument is also made by Oettermann when discussing the role of press reporters in promoting panoramas in Western Europe because of their status as bourgeois. He writes, "...it tended to be members of the bourgeoisie who wrote for and edited newspapers and magazines, the same class that had previously been excluded from the world of 'serious' art. Yet from the often apologetic tone of their articles on the panorama one can infer that it had met with opposition from 'real' artists and connoisseurs" Oettermann, 235. In Budapest, that opposition was far less apparent. In fact, the main publication of the Hungarian Salon wrote a rather favourable appraisal of the panorama. See "The Students at Buda-Pesth," *The Washington Post* March 25 1894.
diverse time periods and popular narratives in the history of occupation, artists from the Carpathian basin tended to portray episodes of confrontation and battle with both Turkish despots and those moments of struggle between Hungarian national heroes and blood thirsty Kings of the past as a way to talk about the struggles and resistance to imperial Habsburg domination.\textsuperscript{60} But by the end of the nineteenth century, the artworks commissioned by the Hungarian government to be shown at the Millennial Exhibition had to represent and contend with the challenging new configuration of power wrought by the Hapsburg dual monarchy, a point that I will explore later in the chapter. In turn, the Feszty panorama also drew its strength as a painting that was situated well apart from traditional institutions of power, a privately funded painting that was exhibited (quite literally) outside the official exhibition, and external to the official Salon.

Therefore, in opposition to the reception of panoramas in most Western European urban centers as spectacular entertainments by the fin de siècle period, where many panorama ventures also worked to reinforce or support the political status quo, the Budapest press coverage and critical reception of the panorama worked not only to prepare audiences for the complete \textit{legitimacy} of the scene depicted in Feszty’s panorama as a kind of history painting, but also as a radical representation that operated independent of those constraints which were perceived by many to falsify or alter the reality of Hungary’s origin myth around the Árpád and the entrance of the Hungarians. As one reviewer extolled, “...this panorama, \textit{like a history painting}, will be a lasting and valuable work of art in the canon of Magyar artistry.”\textsuperscript{61} To be sure, the painting succeeded in butting up against Habsburg-rooted

\textsuperscript{60} Among these paintings are Bertalan Székely’s \textit{Discovery of the Body of King Louis the Second} (1860) and \textit{The Battle at Mohács} (1866), both depicting key episodes in the critical battle that sealed the fate of the Carpathian Basin against the Ottoman Turks. More provocative is Viktor Madarász’s \textit{The Bewailing of László Hunyadi} (1859), an image depicting the tragic fate of the son of the great 15\textsuperscript{th} century national hero János Hunyadi, who was beheaded at the orders of the jealous young Habsburg king. This painting, garnering a gold medal in the 1861 Paris Salon, was a powerful signifier of Hungary’s failed revolution and Kossuth’s forced exile. After 1867, however, the representation and discourses around Turkish battles and foreign imperial rule had to change in order to justify Habsburg dualism. An early suggestion of these themes are found in Peter Krafft’s 1825 work \textit{The Attack of Zrinyi}, a painting commissioned by the Vienna court during the time of full Habsburg authority over the Carpathian territory. The image recalls the Turkish defeat of a Hungarian count and his men in 1566—a savage battle that the Habsburgs felt would stress the duty of Hungarians to defend the House of Habsburg at any cost. By 1896, the apparent corollary to this earlier work emerged in time for the exhibition with Gyula Benczúr’s large and prominently featured history painting \textit{The Recapture of Buda Castle in 1686}. Depicting the end of 150 years of Turkish occupation, the painting was created to emphasize the role of Austrian imperial forces in the freeing of the Carpathian Basin.
origin myths, but also emphasized the careful construction around, and celebration of, exclusively Magyar origins, something that reviewers clearly picked up on. This evoked what I will preliminarily term here a rhetoric of the nomadic—a parlance that emphasized freedom of expression and individual initiative unhampered by imperial influence.

The identity and construction of Feszty’s persona was critical to this perception. As an ethnic Magyar producing a work that was not a commission of the state, Feszty, and by extension his panorama, was viewed by many critics as an indigenous and thus “more authentic” work of art than many of the commissioned works paid for by the government. This was in large part a reflection of the perceived propagandistic representations of history that were believed by many reviewers to be at the root of the dual government’s political program, and by extension the art produced in their name. Consequently, Feszty’s painting was celebrated for a kind of modernity in its status as a privately exhibited work of art. One of Budapest’s most influential cultural journals A Hét (The Week) (a publication that would later champion the burgeoning modern art movement in literature and art in Hungary), underscored the positive associations of the panorama’s independence from traditional art institutions by wryly suggesting how the painting would raise Budapest’s cultural profile in the eyes of the world by exhibiting an art work “that did not cost the government a penny.” The reviewer also pointed out how the “monumental” painting would mark the first of the completed projects for the millennial year, a comment that intentionally criticized the slow-progressing plans for the official Millennial Monument. It was no surprise then that several comparisons would surface among reviewers between Feszty and the Hungarian painter Mihály Munkácsy, the famed Hungarian academic painter working in Paris who had been commissioned by the Hungarian government in 1890 to paint the large scale history

61 "A honfoglalalás képe panorámában [The Image of Conquest in Panorama-form]," Vasárnapi Újság [Sunday Times], no. 17 (1893). Emphasis and translation mine. It is important to emphasize that the term “Magyar artistry” is somewhat ambiguous in this context and could refer interchangeably to ethnic and national interests. Also see "A Feszty-féle körkép [The Feszty Panorama]," Pesti Hirlap [Pest News], April 20 1893 where the panorama is explicitly called a “history painting.”

62 "A magyarok bejövetele [Entrance of the Hungarians].” A Hét [The Week], 20 May 1894. See also Review. Magyarország, 13 May 1894 for a similar argument.

63 “Funeral of Kossuth,” The Washington Post April 2 1894 Discussion of the official Millennial Monument and the controversy surrounding its planning was known about at the time of the Feszty panorama’s debut. For a discussion, see Eszter.
painting *Conquest* (1896) on the same theme of Prince Árpád’s arrival in the Carpathian Basin (refer to fig.2.2). The commission, as I introduced at the outset of the chapter, was for a large-scale history painting to be hung in the new Parliament building following the millennial festivities (fig.2.17). But in sharp contrast to Feszty, who was described by one reviewer as possessing an “inborn intuition,” an artist of the Hungarian people, painting for the Hungarian people,” Munkácsy became famous as an exhibitor at the Paris Salon, and was in turn viewed as Westernized and by extension Habsburg influenced. Reviewers, for instance, remarked disparagingly on how Munkácsy first exhibited *Conquest* in Paris and not in Budapest, also bringing attention to how Munkácsy painted his work on foreign soil while Feszty had created his masterpiece in Budapest. The comparisons also extended, however, to the actual visual features and emotional resonance called up by the two works. More than one critic commented on how Munkácsy’s depiction of his static Magyar horsemen and their weaponry suggested a more “Western” type of warfare style, while Feszty’s charging nomadic horsemen with their ancient more exotic implements successfully gave shape to the more “real” and “bloody” combat strategies employed by the earliest Magyar peoples. Moreover, it was claimed that Feszty’s painting was much harder to create since he had chosen the arduous task of producing a historically accurate and heart rendering scene, while Munkácsy depended more on his internal artistic vision to create his largely “symbolic” picture. As one reviewer summed up the comparison of the images, it is like standing between “a witty young gentleman and a yawning old man...it will be easy to determine which one is the old man.”

It was this final most damning comparison that brought to light how many audiences would come to perceive the Feszty panorama in the context of its newness and forward-looking character. To be sure, the implied debate over high and low art,  

---

64 Review. *Pesti Hirlap*, 13 May 1894. This is an interesting characterization since Feszty’s primary art education was acquired in Germany. Still, his choice to come back to Hungary once his training ended, together with his close association to Mór Jókai, elevated him in the eyes of critics as a true patriot.

65 “A honfoglalás képekben [The Conquest Pictured],” *Pesti Hirlap [Pest News]*, May 4 1893. Munkácsy exhibited the painting twice in Paris before bringing the canvas to Budapest. See Boros.

66 See for example Kazar, np, and an 1894 review article of the Munkácsy painting titled “The Conquest” from *A Hét [The Week]* cited in Boros: 147.


as elucidated in comparisons between Feszty and Munkáscy’s works, strongly underscore my argument that panorama painting did not register in the same way within the Budapest public sphere as it did in places further west of Austria-Hungary. This was also and perhaps most especially the case when considering how important the actual technology associated with the panorama was in the descriptions and assessments of the final work. For example, the electric lights used to illuminate the painting at night were cited by reviewers as both innovative and practical, allowing people to view the image at any time of the day without any qualitative changes in how one saw the canvas. Even more conservative art journals that tended to extol Munkácsy’s actual artistic talent above Feszty’s concurred that the panorama had the advantage of its technologically engineered effects, equaling that of Detaille and Neuville in Paris, thereby raising the profile of all Hungarian painting together with the city of Budapest. Newspaper accounts also described how the power used to generate the rotunda lights originated from the electric energy fed to the trolley system connecting the city to the park where the panorama was housed, bringing into proximity the implied modernity and progressiveness of Budapest’s famed transportation systems and the infrastructure supporting the panorama. Finally, the panorama rotunda as among the final stops of the new underground railway further cemented the painting’s ties to the emerging metropolis, along with the establishment of a popular coffee house with overlooking terrace on the first floor of the rotunda—intersecting spaces that provided a growing bourgeois public with new ways to see and feel part of the urban scene.

In the end, the apprehension of the panorama’s visual vocabulary in tandem with the discourses generated by the textual critiques echoed and drew similarities to the vocabulary and discourses activated within the press to debate and “picture” the political problems and social anxieties around nationalism within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a result, the various attempts to describe and legitimize Feszty’s work were immediately linked to, but also problematized by, the ongoing crises of political and social representation under Austro-Hungarian dualism. Thus,

69 Kazár, np.
70 “Millenáris képek [Millennium-themed Pictures],” np.
71 Reference to the rotunda’s coffee house are made in the review by Csorba Ákos Palotai, “A magyarok bejövetele [Entrance of the Hungarians],” Tércza August 12 1894.
while panorama historians have often discussed the panoramic medium in terms of its disciplining effects—discipline of the body and of vision⁷²—what I am more interested in here is how the Feszty panorama worked to reveal and promulgate the disjuncture and slippages in an emergent Hungarian national body within the context of a privately funded space. In turn, Feszty’s panorama, first exhibited in 1894 and again when it was featured as a major site just outside the Budapest Millennial Exhibition of 1896, provided a potent medium to re-present and consciously give shape to these conflicts.

**Contested Space and Embodied Visuality: Activating a New Kind of “Seeing”**

Together with the charged social politics of the day elicited by Feszty’s panorama—anxieties that will play out repeatedly before and during the Fair and form a constant undercurrent of this dissertation—the panorama also allowed for debates to emerge in relation to the conflicted position of individual viewers; in other words, in relation to a far more modern configuration of embodied visuality and subjectivity. In the first three months of the panorama’s debut alone 142,515 individuals visited the panorama, a staggering figure when considering that the population of Budapest in 1894 was around 600,000.⁷³ Each of these visitors, in turn, grappled with how to situate themselves within and against a scene that gave shape to a contested landscape. It was a representation in which the pitted earth, smoldering ruins, and bloodied fields were set in sharp contrast to the open sky and endless pink horizon; where the duality of light and dark played out as competing elements in the upper and lower halves of the divided canvas. In this sense, Feszty’s scene manifested the final stages of a conquest, one that was, importantly, incomplete.⁷⁴ Moreover, the panorama’s viewing platform positioned individual bodies in the very center of the unfolding drama. The conflicted subjectivity that was experienced by many of the

---

⁷² I believe that this particular understanding of the panorama stems from the influence of philosopher Michel Foucault’s work on the closely related, yet still distinct, conceptual dynamics of panopticism in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). In turn, the few comprehensive works on the panorama that exist (see Oettermann, Comment, and even aspects of Schwartz) tend towards this discipline-inducing understanding of the panoramic medium.


⁷⁴ This was also noted by reviewers. See for example "A honfoglalás panorámája [The Panorama of the Conquest]," np.
first audiences to visit the panorama closely paralleled the conflicted landscape and set of stakes associated with a city and country undergoing profound and rapid transformation. As one critic described it, underscoring the range of emotions at play in the aftermath of spatial violence, “The viewer is standing in the middle of a burnt down village.”

This was something that I realized myself when I had the opportunity to visit the restored panorama and stand inside the space of the reconstructed painting. While on its surface, the Feszty panorama depicts conquering Hungarian nomads, the viewing body actually becomes suspended, existing between two contradictory points of action. Turned one way, the viewer is placed precariously and dangerously, as if a victim, in the path of the conquering invaders and moving cart carrying the Magyar princess. When turned around, the viewer is no longer a victim but rather is made part of the conquering procession, looking out at the shaman priest figure in direct line with the horizon, positioned, in other words, with the conquering Hungarians in the direction of flow and future generation of the nation. Therefore, one direction threatens and freezes the body while the other direction opens up into a historical narrative tied to ongoing nation building and political liberation. This, a technique of folding in new followers, not unlike the panoramic space itself, positions bodies at the very center of a multi-sensory and multi-perspectival process. Following Jonathan Crary’s formulation of modern regimes of seeing, vision increasingly corresponded in the late nineteenth century not to an external referent but rather to an action situated firmly within the physical body of the individual spectator. In other words, subjective and objective were relatively confused, blurred together, and body-bound, rather than kept separate. I would add, however, that Crary’s formulation also successfully extends the original break that the panorama medium made from Baroque theatre painting that I raised earlier, overturning a way of seeing that worked

75 Kazár, np.

76 The Feszty panorama was restored over a period of 42 months in the early 1990’s and put on permanent display in 1995 in a new rotunda at Hungary’s National Historical Memorial Park. This park, located approximately 200 kilometers south of Budapest and built at the same time as the panorama’s restoration, was developed on the very spot depicted in the panorama where the Magyar peoples were first believed to settle the Carpathian Basin. I visited the panorama during the summers of 2000 and 2002 and was given special privileges by the museum’s director to videotape and view the panorama alone.

through the mediating body of the sovereign with a new more dynamic means of spectatorship that allowed many individuals to arrive at their own mindset in relationship to the scene set before them. This "self-determining" visuality allowed spectators to metaphorically transfer power to themselves and potentially see through the eyes of the Emperor, enabling the same audience to independently determine and make evaluations about aspects of what they were looking at. But perhaps more critically, this new way of seeing also worked to displace and reduce the Emperor's privileged viewpoint to one among many—a democratization of vision that was also fast becoming part of a bourgeois Budapest built upon individual enterprise and the promise of social mobility.

Vanessa Schwartz examines the phenomena of embodied seeing at the end of the nineteenth century (more specifically within the context of French panorama exhibition in Paris), which she argues provided for a convergence of corporeal and intellectual responses that further blurred the private and public realm of experience:

The new panoramas delivered their "realism" by enveloping spectators. By manipulating the spectators' bodies, the scene intended to move the spirit as well. The collective body of the nation was to be built through the literal sensations of individual bodies. For at least some visitors to the attractions, the sensations mixed with memories they already had from childhood or even from firsthand experience with the moment represented.78

The spectacle thus embellished a narrative visitors already knew through visual representation and sensation.79 Indeed, as one critic of the Feszty panorama remarked, "Every Hungarian, when seeing the painting, will exclaim above all else: 'In reality, this is how it had to happen, this is how I thought it, this is even how I dreamt it.'"80 In this sense, the democratization of vision provided through elements of the panorama continued to work in tension with the various themes and constraints of "seeing the whole picture" enacted within its spaces. Within the Feszty panorama, the contrasting emotions derived from themes of evasion, capture, and salvation were thus described by reviewers precisely within the language of private experience coupled with public emotion and the realization that what one was seeing was only part of a larger nexus of historical events. The Budapest Hirlap (Budapest News), for example, described

78 Schwartz, 156.

79 Schwartz, 162.

80 Adorján, np.
the panorama’s “outstanding illusionism,” as one that evoked “the deepest variety of impressions through a full range of emotions,” emphasizing that:

Since it is a panorama of which I speak, it is not the duty of this work to appear as a picture. Instead, in the simulated light of a simulated landscape that exists, we feel the reality: the artist had to recreate the entire composition to appear in this reality, and he had to create it to a scale that elicited that reality. He could only choose one moment, but he had to take that moment and actualize it.⁸¹

To be sure, not unlike the panoramic medium’s break with traditional and increasingly outmoded regimes of vision and spectatorship, the decision to re-present a panorama of the mythic moment of the Magyar peoples’ arrival in the Carpathian Basin strategically intervened and presented challenges over how the past was to be represented and understood. The scene of entry into the Carpathian Basin was created at a moment when the first comprehensive histories of Hungary after the Compromise of 1867 with Austria were being written and debated. Significantly, the development of the “Hungarian Positivist School” of history emerged around 1860-70 and would by 1895 become a regular part of the education of prospective historians. As historian Steven Béla Vardy writes: “This method attempted to collect, select, evaluate and utilize historical sources with the precision of natural and physical sciences.”⁸² These empirical histories, influenced in part by the archeological discoveries being made in the Carpathian Basin, attempted to locate the material evidence for a people who had, up until the nineteenth century, only been known through myth and legend.⁸³ In this way, Feszty’s task of meticulously recreating Hungary’s “founding moment,” around which the entire Millennial Celebration of 1896 was also conceived, allowed him to position his representation in relation to yet another site of contestation—that of the Carpathian region’s complicated history.⁸⁴ At the same time, Feszty successfully extended the aims of positivist historians by focusing the same kind of attention to

---

⁸¹ Review, Budapest Hirlap, 13 May 1894.


⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ One reviewer reported that Feszty had not bothered to consult the Hungarian Academy of Sciences during his research into the arrival of the earliest Magyar peoples into the Carpathian Basin because their conservativism and ties to the imperial authority prevented what he affirmed would be truthful accounts of the past. The reviewer characterized Feszty’s cynical belief that “All the Academy knew about the Conquest, was that they knew nothing.” Kézdi-Kovács, np.
empirical detail and notions of evidence and proof in his “historically” derived scene, producing, for example, photographic studies of terrain and minutely detailed sketches of costumes and architecture to scale in order to render the scene as close to scientifically accurate as possible. Feszty also worked the element of a *faux terrain* into his compositions; a three-dimensional foreground that extended the canvas into the viewer’s space. In Feszty’s panorama, however, the well publicized use of real soil and rocks from the Carpathian Basin were utilized to deliver an extra charge to the act of viewing.

At the time of the panorama’s debut in 1894, and during preparations for Budapest’s World’s Fair leading to 1896, narratives concerning the significance of the nomadic Magyar settlers of the Carpathian Basin were indeed varied. Importantly, many of these narratives, as discussed in the previous chapter with respect to architectural style and the construction of the Parliament Building and Museum of Applied Arts, worked to complicate and overturn didactic stereotypes of the East as “backward” and the West as “progressive.” Foreign reporters and authors, especially in the United States, began to pick up on elements of these shifting narratives well in advance of the Exhibition, focusing on the exotic Magyars as an inherently democratic and liberty-loving people. As mentioned earlier, Feszty’s famous father-in-law, Mór Jókai, a former revolutionary of 1848, became famous in Hungary and well-known internationally as a novelist working in the realist genre—an author whose prolific works were also frequently set in exotic locations of the ancient and

---

85 The *faux terrain* was a common element among many late nineteenth century panoramas, often utilizing manufactured props (such as weapons and tools in the case of the Feszty panorama) that imitated particular elements of the setting. For a critically informed discussion of the *faux terrain* as a problematic element in the imagined reality of painting, see Elizabeth Clegg, "Faux terrain: Discontinuous Space in the Early Work of Jacek Malczewski," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53, no. 2 (1990). Interestingly, a shared concern with Feszty’s panorama emerges in Clegg’s article where she writes about the Polish painter and the use of *faux terrain* elements in his paintings of the late 1880’s to talk about “the ambiguous status of the land on which Poles lived during the period of Partition (1772-1918).” (199).

medieval past. In particular, Jókai helped popularize the convention of the historical novel after 1848 as a way to help rehabilitate the Magyar language in the wake of revolutionary loss (he did not write original works in any other language even while other Hungarian writers produced texts in German), combining his skills in journalism, social commentary, liberal politics, and the prevailing tastes for romantic novelists to produce highly moralistic commentary on social and political issues of the day. Critically, Jókai's liberal values permeated his works together with the landscape of the Carpathian Basin as a prime setting for a number of his most popular novels. The exhaustive descriptions of the soil and Jókai's almost obsessive interest in the terrain and geography of the region may have indeed provided something of an inspiration for Feszty. But it is also conceivable that Jókai already recognized the power of the panoramic medium's broad spectatorship to generate international publicity, not unlike the broad readership and worldwide attention his works enjoyed through the power of print media. In fact, a full reissuing of all of Jókai's works in a special jubilee celebration dedicated to his career coincided with the year of Feszty's panorama opening. It is therefore conceivable that readers who were actively reacquainting themselves with Jókai's deep library could make connections with the stories and characters in his works with those of his son-in-law's large scale painting.

But why exactly were the Magyar nomadic ancestors so appealing to 1848 revolutionaries like Jókai? Perhaps most significantly, they provided a model of community with social, political, religious, and even economic practices that directly

87 In English speaking countries, 21 “Maurus” Jókai works circulated in 119 editions. This is according to a 1926 statistic cited in Alexander Hevesi, "Maurus Jokai, the Greatest Novelist of Hungary," Slavonic Review 8 (1929): 357. Every indication is that the majority of these publications emerged prior to Jókai's death in 1904 and that he was most popular abroad in the 1890's. See Francis Magyar, "Jokai's Reception in England and America," The American Slavic and East European Review 17 (1958): 333. I indeed found repeated references to Jókai's novels in American and British journals, reviews, and book advertisements in the decades prior to the 1896 Fair.

88 Jókai produced over 100 novels, 30 plays, and dozens of poems in his career. Historian Anna Fábri notes that: “[Jókai’s novels] proclaimed that life was worth living, that people could shape their individual fate themselves; nothing that happened was accidental; people were not forcefully subjected to developments; individual lives were always determined by individual decisions; and there was always a chance to find out what was right and what was wrong.” “Mór Jókai” in Hungarian Liberals, ed. András Gerő (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 1999),114-127. In particular, his most internationally successful novels (such as Modern Midas, Hungarian Sketches in Peace and War, Midst of the Wild Carpathians, A Hungarian Nabob, and Black Diamonds) introduced readers to these themes.

89 This was an event that was noted in the American press. See for example, "Maurice Jokai's Jubilee,” The Washington Post, January 7 1894.
challenged the Austrian and Viennese “strong civilizing mission.”

And while these earliest liberal reformers were often at odds with how much of a problem the ethnic diversity in the Carpathian Basin posed, there was a consensus on the necessity of breaking down the feudal order which served Austrian rule. The first step in this direction had come about in the Revolution of 1848 with the emancipation of the serfs (and in part the Jews) and the abolition of tax privileges for the rich. This was followed by a push to extend the constitution to non-nobles and propagate economic modernization as a means to more equitable distribution of capital both geographically and across social classes. An important aspect of these reforms came with the philosophy of \textit{laissez faire}, or noninterference by the State in the aspirations of individuals. These rights also extended to the public sphere with the separation of church and state and the creation of a justice system. For liberal reformers of 1848, the middling classes were believed to be the vehicle of the process. Historian László Kontler explains that the organizing principle behind the concept of the “unitary Hungarian political nation” of Hungarian liberals was that the extension of individual rights would render collective rights \textit{superfluous} even in the eyes of the ethnic minorities who, just as emancipated serfs would be reconciled with their former lords, would voluntarily assimilate into the Hungarian nation. In turn, the process of “Magyarization” was linked to the characteristic mobility and folding-in qualities of

---

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{90} This is a term that historian László Kontler uses to describe the mandate of the Austrians. László Kontler, Interview by author, 17 June 2002, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. For accounts of the construction of democratic roots and constitutional laws of the Magyar peoples in Hungarian history, see László Kontler, \textit{Millennium in Central Europe: A History of Hungary} (Budapest: Atlantisz, 1999); Vardy; and Gerő.
  
  \item \textsuperscript{91} Kontler, 259.
  
  \item \textsuperscript{92} The term \textit{laissez faire} derives from a French phrase “let do, let go, let pass” and was first used by eighteenth century physiocrats as an injunction against government interference with trade. It is generally understood to be a doctrine that maintains that private initiative and production are best to \textit{roam free}, opposing economic interventionism and taxation by the state beyond that which is perceived to be necessary to maintain peace, security, and property rights. A useful discussion about the origins and philosophies surrounding the term can be found in Oscar Handlin, "Laissez-Faire thought in Massachusetts, 1790-1880." \textit{Journal of Economic History} 3 (1943).
  
  \item \textsuperscript{93} Ibid, 242. To get an idea of the true ethnic mix of the revolutionary period, Kontler appends the following statistics: “Hungary’s population was nearly 13 million in 1842. Merely 38 percent of this figure, 4.8 million, were Magyars; Romanians numbered 2.2 million (17 percent); Slovaks 1.7 million (13 percent); Germans 1.3 million (10 percent); Serbs 1.2 million (9 percent); Croats 900,000 (7 percent); Ruthenes 450,000 (3.5 percent); Jews 250,000 (2 percent), and there was no less than ten further small groups as well” (242).
\end{itemize}
the ancient nomadic cultures. It was also the cornerstone to a modern liberal society. Predicated on a heritage that could boast of its liberal antecedents, the revolutionaries claimed that the ancient Magyars provided a ruling order of proclaimed representative government where chieftains ruled collectively. These ancient people, in turn, were free to move across the land incorporating other populations along the way.

Negotiating Árpád: Imperial Catholic Ruler or Indigenous Liberal Nomad?

As I have worked to unpack in the previous section, the panorama’s implicit challenge to a unilateral perspective was couched in an alterity that transformed the act of viewing. Inviting audiences into active and body-bound spectatorship, the panorama held out the possibility for a kind of democratization of vision while simultaneously enacting greater degrees of visual manipulation through increasingly sophisticated and technologically aided illusions. Having raised this tension, I want to now pay more careful consideration to the image of Árpád, the figure set prominently in Feszty’s panoramic narrative (recall fig. 2.5). In the previous chapter’s reference to Budapest parliamentary politics around the time of the Millennial Exhibition, I discussed how the ruling house majority remained loyal to the aims of dualism, thus the tendency was to accommodate the wishes of Vienna to the largest extent possible. Consequently, the genre, styles, and art forms taken up by officially commissioned artists associated with the 1896 Fair more often reflected the tastes and preferences of the Viennese. The planning committee therefore focused on commissioning works that drew more upon Budapest’s associations to an imperial Roman past (and all the accompanying styles this would call up) versus an indigenous or folk art tradition that drew on pagan and pre-Roman associations. In this sense, the “feudal flavour” of the ceremonies surrounding the Fair and the ways in which certain colours and costumes were worn by Franz Joseph and his procession, strongly signaled Austrian imperial power over Hungary. Reconciling a festival of Hungarian statehood with loyalty to the House of Habsburg thus remained a key challenge for Exhibition organizers. In particular, the Exhibition’s central theme of Prince Árpád and the Magyar’s entrance

---

94 Magyarization is discussed at length in Appendix I.


into the Carpathian Basin proved particularly daunting as Hungarian claims to full legitimacy over the Carpathian Basin rested with this particular event. Árpád, in particular, was a powerful symbol of pre-Christian, pre-monarchical Magyar authority and had to be carefully represented.

One outcome of the challenge to represent Árpád through the 1890’s was that the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph was increasingly represented, or strongly alluded to, as the “New Árpád,” or “Prince Árpád,” taking the position of the mythic Magyar chieftain who in Hungarian national myths was claimed to first settle the Carpathian Basin. As early as 1892, for example, Hungary’s national archivist and leading historian, Gyula Pauler, wrote a two-volume text titled *The History of Hungary under the Árpád House of Kings* which skillfully wove a narrative that responded to contemporary interest in Magyar history while acknowledging the modern fact of Austrian rule. Pauler, however, used anthropological evidence to scientifically “prove” the Magyar peoples superiority over their Slavic neighbors. And while describing the events of conquest in all of their violence, he suggests that the Slavs’ downfall was more than just a result of physical force, it was constructed as inevitable and even justified because of their Slavic “backwardness”:

They [the Slavs] weren’t yet as brave as Magyars, nor were they as proud and self-respecting, nor as combative in nature, nor as dominant, but were rather disposed toward heedless obeisance and servility...The fact that the sundry Slav tribes did not accept the newcomers with leisure and tried to resist is not at all surprising. The degree of resistance was varied, however; while Hungarian tradition has retained many such episodes, it would be wrong to conceive of such resistance as heavy or as a menace to the Magyars. The weak and widely dispersed Slav tribes could not resist the concentrated attack led by Árpád, a brilliant military man and equally talented head of state. Throughout Pauler’s narrative, it is the Magyars, described as “noble” and “valiant,” that are pictured to be civilized beyond their neighbours. Paradoxically, however, the narrative drew on a history projected in hindsight — a history that linked the nomadic

---

97 See for example Katalin Sinkó, "Árpád and Saint István: Competing Heroes and Competing Interests in the Figurative Representation of Hungarian History," in *Hungarians between "East" and "West": three essays on national myths and symbols*, ed. Tamás Hofer (Budapest: Museum of Ethnography, 1994) where Sinko argues that, “By assuming the persona of a second Árpád, Franz Joseph made a dramatic departure from traditional Habsburg courtly ideology, giving a hint as to his readiness for a compromise” (21).

98 Notably, I discovered this translated excerpt from Gyula Pauler’s *The History of Hungary under the Árpád House of Kings* cited in the first pamphlet accompanying the Feszty panorama (Kőkép-Társaság, np). Pauler was one of the leading members of the positivist school of Hungarian history as outlined by Vardy.
Magyars with the same imperial powers and foreign incursions that were constructed in other histories as oppressing the Magyars' modern day descendants. In fact, Prince Árpád was directly linked to Franz Joseph in at least two ways through this configuration since first, the Austrian King wore the crown of Hungary, and second, that the mutual strategic interest that bound Germanic and Magyar interests together was found in a collective goal to keep Slavic peoples under control. This was likely why the Emperor felt comfortable and secure enough to visit the Feszty panorama on two highly publicized occasions in the months following its opening. By all accounts, however, the Emperor apparently understood the problematic stakes implied by the violent image of Magyar superiority and tried to focus more on the panorama's visual features than on the actual subject matter shown, stating only that he found the Magyars' presence and "air" most striking in the picture, and that it was "not a picture of cosmopolitanism."

By the time of the actual 1896 Fair, this balancing act would take shape in official posters advertising the Millennial Exhibition, where the mix of Christian and pre-Christian elements produced complicated political messages. For example, in a widely distributed and popular poster titled *A Thousand Years of Statehood* (fig.2.18), a statue group depicting Árpád's chieftains holds the nomadic leader aloft on a shield, signaling his power as the first "state" leader. The Hungarian Crown—symbolic of St. Stephen and an imperial Catholic tradition—is seen in the lower right register of the poster, signaling a somewhat diminished status in the image. Interestingly, however, the text directly beside the figure of Árpád reads instead the name of Austrian emperor "Franz Joseph I" in bold red script, and, upon closer inspection, the name of

---

99 Franz Joseph was crowned the King of Hungary during a coronation ceremony August 6, 1867.


101 "József főherceg a Feszty-körképnél [Emperor Joseph Visits Feszty Panorama]," np. I assessed the careful tone of the two accounts where each reporter made sure to especially highlight any comments made by the Emperor that alluded to the implied politics of the image. Recall that the Emperor's visit was made only months after Lajos Kossuth's controversial funeral (discussed in Chapter Three). Interestingly, in both cases, the Emperor was reported to have "endorsed" the image. Still, in the account of the second visit, I did discern more tension since Feszty and Jókai were both reportedly present to answer any of the Emperor's questions. The final impression from the article was that the Emperor tried to keep the conversation focused more on Feszty's artistic talent and research, together with the great publicity the image had already generated for Budapest, than on any discussion of how the actual event was being depicted.
Árpád is nowhere to be found on the poster. In this way, a kind of literal “compromise” emerges in the poster as the balance of potent state and imperial symbols attempts to accommodate both state and imperial power positions. In another less textually intensive poster simply titled *Hungaria* (fig.2.19), a kind of pagan princess evokes associations with Hungaria as the Latin term that designated the land of the Carpathian Basin associated with ancient Hungary. Bearing an uncanny resemblance to the nomadic “princess” being carried in on an oxen cart in Feszty’s panorama, the Hungaria in this poster further entangles the mythical character’s revolutionary associations as a “seat of liberty” with a glorified pre-Christian past. But in another uncanny twist, this figure can also be read to resemble the female personification of Pannonia, being the name of the Hungarian territory that became an imperial province of Rome in 10 A.D. The legacy of Pannonia was significant to the establishment of Hungary as “civilized,” and functions here to help fuse (temporally and spatially) Hungaria with Pannonia, and the imperial crown with the Hungarian coat of arms in the lower left hand corner of the poster. Feszty’s panorama, as I will demonstrate, was likewise conflicted and contradictory in its references to competing traditions of rulership in Hungary, a dynamic that often converged around the already complex and loaded figure of Árpád.

As I introduced earlier in the chapter, an important commission that was already helping shape the transfer of Magyar power to the Austrian crown was given form in Mihály Munkácsy’s large history painting *Conquest* of 1896 (recall fig.2.2) This too was a painting visited by the Emperor in the lead-up to the 1896 Fair, but a representation that was far more to his liking and approval. As I have already suggested, Munkácsy’s final work produced a far different narrative than that of Feszty’s panorama. Positioning an imposing, gigantic, and static Árpád as the dominant focus of the canvas, Munkácsy pictured the scene of conquest in ceremonial terms, importantly without signs of struggle or resistance. As one critic remarked on the shortcomings of the painting for Hungarian viewers, “We [Magyars] like to imagine the bloody conflict over our divided land, our fallen ancestors, and glorious battles for which one needs to conjure up an enormous defeated opposition.” In

---

102 The word and idea behind “Hungaria” references all inhabitants of the Kingdom of Hungary, irrespective of ethnicity. This is especially the case in the word’s Latin form and origins.

other words, here was a Prince that looked more like a ruler in a royal procession than a nomadic warrior. The finished work was commissioned to hang—not insignificantly—in the Upper House of the Hungarian parliament, the most conservative and pro-Habsburg space of the Parliament building. It was also the image most closely associated with the official Austro-Hungarian understanding of Hungary’s origin myth, one that attempted to assimilate only symbolic aspects of the Árpád legend. This particular function of the Munkácsy painting would increasingly be featured, for example, in front page newspaper illustrations concerning parliamentary affairs in the year of the Millennial festivities (see fig.2.20). In turn, the Munkácsy painting also worked to closely link Hungarian narratives of the past to dynastic rule and the authority of the Catholic Church.

In sharp contrast, Feszty’s panorama emerged as an alternative national history, one that I argue as associated with liberal investments in Magyarization. Within the panorama interior, Árpád and his chieftains call up the collaborative and collective rule that liberal reformers associated with the earliest Magyar nomads. In this respect, the site of Pusztaszer in the Carpathian Basin is of particular importance. For Hungarians in 1896, it was not only known as the site of entrance of the first Magyars into the Carpathian Basin, it was also celebrated as the site of the first “Diet”—where leaders of the Magyar tribes came together to establish what was termed the first “assembly” or government of the region. Special festivities in 1896 asserted the importance of the event, which for liberals signaled the longstanding constitutional traditions in Magyar social and political organization. The connection of Feszty’s painting to liberal narratives of democratic governance was further punctuated by a number of high profile political guests and foreign visitors to

---

104 A drawing of Munkácsy’s painting in the background of one such meeting is prominently featured on the cover of “A nemzetközi parlamenti értekezlet [The International Parliament Meeting],” Budapest: Illustrated Political News, September 25 1896.

105 This particular understanding of the Magyars arrival at Pusztaszer is a well entrenched narrative in many Hungarian histories. It is underscored in an 1896 Budapest newspaper article (Fővárosi Lapok, 27 June 1896) during the time of special ceremonies related to the site of the Hungary’s first Diet.

106 I discuss these celebrations and the connections of the Magyars’ “Diet” to England’s Magna Carta in Chapter Three. Also see Kontler, for a discussion of Hungarian liberals’ interest in the Magna Carta as an important conceptual tool in claiming the early roots of Hungarian liberalism in the ancient past. He writes, “Another element of Hungary’s past cherished among liberals was the supposed parallel between the constitutional development of Hungary and that of England” (280).
the Feszty panorama during its opening months. But reference to the Diet also served a special significance to liberal connections and investments in the 1848 Revolution. It was during this period for instance that revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth (discussed in depth in Chapter Three) became an active member of the ‘dietal youth,’ a radical student group that began a campaign of creating multiple hand-written copies of the official minutes of the Poszony Diet of 1832-36—reports that became important shapers of public opinion and debate over the conflicted direction of liberalism in the Empire. A well known tale in Hungary’s revolutionary history, and echoed through visual cues in the panorama that called up the sense of proliferation and outward expansion, the episode pointed squarely to the corrupt nature of Austrian administrative power.

But the viewer’s position on the centre of the platform was also significant to the conjuring up of another particularly current tenet of liberal concern and conflict within Austria-Hungary in the 1890’s—the separation of church and state. Whether turning to face the oncoming invaders, or, turning to join and move with the conquering procession, the viewer is inevitably struck with the distance between Prince Árpád and his entourage, and the officiating shaman priest. Here it is worth noting that one reviewer of Feszty’s panorama, in stressing the movement and animation of the painted scene, had noted that only these two static figures countered the dynamic flow in the image—effectively drawing the viewer’s eyes to their presence and location. Given these features, I would contend that the positive response to Feszty’s panorama grew out of a particular segment of the Hungarian public, in both 1894 and 1896, who sought signs of a liberal Magyarization in the

107 Visits by politicians and distinguished guests were regularly detailed in the press in the form of long lists. See for example "Feszty Árpád körképe [Feszty's Panorama]," Fővárosi Lapok [Capital News], May 7 1894. A special guest book was also referenced in a number of the reports, the contents of which were partially published in future guide books to the Feszty Panorama. The lists appeared to demonstrate the success and popularity of the “unofficial” painting, even among the political elite of the country.

108 Poszony is the Hungarian name for the present-day capital city of Bratislava in Slovakia. Bratislava served as Hungary's capital and the residence of Hungarian kings and archbishops, and Bratislava was the meeting place of the Hungarian diet until 1848. Kontler, 236.

109 The early 1890’s were marked by political debates in Hungary about the separation of church and state. The Austrian crown, reluctant to diminish the power of the Catholic Church as a pillar of his strength, finally gave in to pressure from opposition parties that ran platforms on the issue. The reforms were introduced into law in 1894 and 1895. See Kontler, 291.

110 Review. Budapest Hírlap, 13 May 1894.
aftermath of the 1867 Compromise with imperial Austria. It also signaled a very public re-examination of the gains and losses since 1867, not the least of which included continuing debates over papal authority in Hungary and the introduction of reform bills (for civil marriages, state registration of births and deaths, the freedom of religious choice, and the acceptance of Judaism as a received faith) to limit the Catholic church’s influence in the everyday life of an increasingly secular society.

But I want to raise another, slightly different, reading in order to introduce the question of charisma and the presence of a kind of early psychology that put imperial rule into question during the fin de siècle period. Max Weber has described charisma as a defining personality trait of talented leaders, which renders the individual “...extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers...[that] are regarded as of divine origin.”\(^{111}\) By the late nineteenth century, the discourses surrounding the 1848 revolutionary leaders had reached epic proportions, culminating in the controversial funeral of exiled revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth only a few months before the Feszty panorama’s Budapest debut. Moreover, the strong relationship between Kossuth and his great admirer and friend, Mór Jókai, made inferences arising in Feszty’s panorama (related to the 1848 revolution’s impact on Hungarian history) undeniable. Therefore, I would contend that the figure of the transformative shaman, evoked so strongly in Feszty’s panorama, also operated as a not so veiled reference to a tradition of the cult of personality and martyrdom which pervaded accounts of Hungarian history and posed a latent, yet constant, threat to Habsburg rule, especially since the 1848 Revolution. Indeed, psychology of religion scholar Len Oakes argues that “The most primitive form of charisma occurs in shamanism.”\(^{112}\) As such, the shaman is understood as special and “touched” in such a way as to deviate from the pack, and emerge as a kind of radical element in society. This also figured strongly in liberal political strategies of the late nineteenth century which appealed to the public’s emotions, their “hearts and minds,” as a way to garner support for their causes. Consequently, unlike the Munkácsy painting that gave shape to a duly reserved and distant imperial resonance,

---


\(^{112}\) Ibid., 26.
the Feszty panorama capitalized in its overwrought display of emotion and immediacy.\textsuperscript{113}

But the question of leadership was not just contained to the juxtaposition of Prince Árpád representations by the time of the 1896 Exhibition. Indeed, two further visual examples that help underscore an argument for the potency and psychology of charismatic leadership in fin de siècle Hungary surface in connection to the great publicity generated over the rejection and subsequent private exhibition of two history paintings (at the Orczy House\textsuperscript{114} in the heart of the Pest) originally intended to be shown at the Hungarian Salon during the Fair—János Thorma’s \textit{Martyrs at Arad} (fig.2.21) and Béla Grünwald’s \textit{Comeback After the Tatar Invasion} (fig.2.22).\textsuperscript{115} While at first glance both works adopt a comparatively conservative and facile visual vocabulary of academic painting (not unlike aspects of the Feszty panorama), the subject matter presented reference two radical and charged moments in Hungarian history likewise related to questions of imperial authority and martyrdom. The first painting by Thorma, set in the aftermath of revolutionary loss, depicts the execution of thirteen rebel generals of the 1848 Revolution on October 6, 1849 on the orders of Austrian Habsburg military authorities.\textsuperscript{116} The second work by Grünwald (a painter who would later form part of Hungary’s first modern artistic movement) gave shape to a legend around thirteenth century King Béla IV, a ruler who restored authority in Hungary after Tatar invasions got land back from the Austrians. King Béla became a

\textsuperscript{113} The many descriptions in the press of the emotional reactions to the Feszty panorama are indeed striking. One critic reported, for example, how visitors openly wept upon seeing the image or bowed their head in reverence at the scene before them.

\textsuperscript{114} Orczy House was one of the largest original apartment houses in Pest (also in close proximity to Budapest’s Jewish community) and housed a café in its lobby where the paintings were displayed according to numerous Budapest newspaper advertisements I traced to the months of the 1896 Fair.

\textsuperscript{115} The episodes related to this controversy are discussed in István Réti in István Réti and Géza Csorba, \textit{A nagybányai művésztelep (The Nagybanya Artistic Landscape)}, 3. kiad. ed. (Budapest: Vince Kiadó, 2001), 8-13. See also Jenő Murádín, \textit{Thorma János 1848-as képei (Janos Thorma’s 1848 Paintings)} (Kiskunhalas: Thorma János Múzeum, 1998).

\textsuperscript{116} Several newspaper articles in Budapest make reference to the controversy generated by Thorma’s painting in 1896, especially in connection to the loaded subject matter as a source of tension between Austria and Hungary. See for example the front page discussion of the painting in the liberal \textit{Pesti Hírlap [Pest Daily]}. István Réti, an artist and friend of Thorma also recalled in his memoirs about the disappointment felt by Thorma and his friends on the decision of the government not to show the painting as planned. From Réti’s account, it is clear that Thorma was only made aware of the decision at the last possible minute, and therefore had to make quick plans to find an alternative site to exhibit his painting (Réti, 13). Less is known about the specific circumstances surrounding Grünwald’s painting since it was not discussed as much as Thorma, but I discovered the references to its banning in Réti’s accounts as well.
famous historical figure for Hungarian liberals because his transformation of imperial rulership—which included repopulating the country with a wave of immigrants (Germans, Italians, and Jews), beginning new mining ventures, improving farming methods, and supporting commerce development in the towns—echoed a kind of early liberal reform program. King Béla, descended from the Árpád line of rulers, was thus viewed historically as a kind of innovative and respected monarch, whose charismatic leadership instituted what was perceived by some as a form of proto-liberalism. Contrasted, these two paintings gave shape to opposing spectrums of charismatic leadership; the first image referencing imperial power run amuck, while the second illustrating innovation in imperial rule. Importantly, however, both paintings spoke to contemporary debates surrounding the declining influence and lackluster leadership of the aging Habsburg emperor, a ruler that many believed was out of touch with the modern realities of Austria-Hungary. Moreover, it was the specter of feudal anarchy suggested in Grünwald’s painting, and themes of martyrdom, suggested in Thorma’s painting, that concerned Habsburg loyalists and Austrian officials the most. In the end, there was something about these excluded and privately exhibited paintings, reinforced through their implied connection to the unofficial canvas of Feszty’s more liberal and radical Prince Árpád, that also challenged the very “history” of Hungarian history painting.

The Question of Space, Perspective, and Virtuality: Nomadology as Politics

As I move on to consider more theoretically derived understandings of nomadism, I want to reiterate here that the notion of harnessing resources, and its ties to progress and civilization, is often constructed around, and gains power through, the idea of perpetual movement. In the influential study Medieval Technology and Social Change (1964), historian Lynn White traces the roots of perpetual movement, as idea, in a chapter section titled “The Concept of a Power Technology.”117 Therein, White reveals how the invention of a water wheel in twelfth-century India originated the enthusiastic adoption of natural energy and its application to human purposes throughout Europe. Importantly, and especially within the context of nomadic group origins, White identifies that these forces arose from the East. Earlier in her narrative,

however, White identifies another related invention with eastern origins—the stirrup—that connected the ancient Magyar nomads to its evolution and use.\textsuperscript{118}

Featured prominently in Feszty’s panorama on the thousands of mounted horses, the stirrup served in the panorama as one of the earliest and most ancient symbols of readable technological mastery and control, a point to which I will return. But what the notion of perpetual movement and harnessed energy in Feszty’s composition also brought to the fore, related to the specter and legacy of the revolutionary crowd and its radical liberal leadership within Hungary. Indeed, a long history of crowd politics, particularly within Budapest, pointed to a volatile propensity among the public to stage uprisings and political protests at very short notice and on a very large scale.\textsuperscript{119}

And by the fin de siècle period, such episodes were a regular feature of international news coverage, prompting continuing questions about the fate of Austria-Hungary’s multinational experiment.\textsuperscript{120}

A reading of contemporary theorists Deleuze and Guattari’s “Treatise on Nomadology—the War Machine” in \textit{A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia} (1987) provides insights into the significance of the kind of rhetoric of nomadism and liberal emancipation conjured up through Feszty’s panorama in the late nineteenth century. In particular, recent critiques shed light on how the crises of identity outlined by the post-structural theorists may have materialized. These studies discuss how Deleuze and Guattari read and used highly problematic and selective anthropological data in tandem with politically charged notions of the “free” and “landless” nomad to arrive at their theory of “nomad thought.” That is to say, Deleuze and Guattari oscillate between what cultural historian Christopher Miller characterizes as “purely intellectual nomadism” and an “anthropological nomadism.”\textsuperscript{121}

What interests me in these discussions is the conceived flux—the

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 14-28.


paradox between referential and non-referential identities. Importantly, the narrative of nomadic conquest in the Carpathian Basin drew increasing strength in the late nineteenth century as anthropological evidence was being extracted from the very area depicted in the panorama. For the first time, this material “evidence” was being used to concretize and create empirical histories for a people who had, up to that point, only been imagined through folklore and myth. With these emerging histories came the task of distinguishing the ancient Magyars from Eastern invaders like the Turks who were largely viewed as heathen, savage and despotic.

In the opening passage of the “Treatise” Deleuze and Guattari introduce two pivotal ideas that frame their discussion of what they term “nomad thought:” “Axiom I. The war machine is exterior to the state apparatus” and “Proposition I. This exteriority is first attested to in mythology, epic, drama, and games.” These axioms and propositions posit an important concept that works to undermine traditional conceptions of war, namely that the forces of change and rupture that occur in its wake cannot be contained. Furthermore, drawing directly on aspects of White’s findings, they go on to attribute these “truisms” to the realm of Eastern Indo-European mythology, outside the familiar domain of a Western Judeo-Christian heritage. Likening the war machine to a kind of nomadic warrior god from the East, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that it is the potential to act and the threat of rapid mutation and change which challenges sedentary culture and the State apparatus that controls it: He (the warrior God Indra) is “like a pure and immeasurable multiplicity, the pack, an irruption of the ephemeral and the power of metamorphosis…. In every respect, the war machine is of another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus.” Critical theorist Paul Patton, in his discussions of the “Treatise on Nomadology”, notes that Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of nomadism rests upon nineteenth century anthropological distinctions that viewed sedentary agriculturists as more civilized than nomadic groups. Patton explains that, in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, every time an insurgency against the State erupts (in the form of revolution, guerilla warfare, or civil disobedience) it can be said that a “nomadic potential has


122 Deleuze and Guattari, 351.

123 Ibid, 352.
Patton states further that “the fundamental antipathy between “the war-machine” and “the State” derives from their relations to two incompatible kinds of space.” The smooth or “nomad space” of the war-machine that seeks to displace and expand, versus the homogenous and measurable striated spaces of the State or sedentary space that seeks to root and mark out. As Patton argues, Deleuze and Guattari’s theories are historically situated. More specifically, the post-1968 French Left model of nomadology was strategic as a reconceptualization of the politics of resistance:

Might not the choice of nomads to specify the characteristics of war-machines and smooth space betray a Eurocentric primitivism and a fascination for the Other, the limits of which were already present to the authors... For, as in Deleuze’s revalorization of simulacra or processes of becoming, the association of nomadism with qualitative multiplicity, smooth space, and the conditions of transformation is intended to controvert a deep stratum of the European imaginary. In particular, it is a concept designed to overturn the priority attached to sedentary forms of agriculture and social life at the expense of more fluid and mobile relations to the earth... If, as Deleuze and Guattari suggest, ‘history is always written from a sedentary point of view,’ their nomadology is an attempt to provide another perspective.

While I would avoid a simple conflation of Magyar nomadism mobilized in the nineteenth century with those of Deleuze and Guattari in the twentieth century, what is significant in both cases is that the nomadic suggests a radical conceptual shift in perspective (historic and social), accompanied by unstoppable movement and uncontrollable and irreversible transformation. Viewed in these terms, the power of a rhetoric of nomadism for nineteenth century Hungarian liberals becomes clear. When wedded to narratives of freedom, Magyar nomadism was viewed by many reformers as pivotal to gain support and motivation for the kind of political change that could break open and recast the social order. In turn, the framework of nomadology openly challenged the status quo of the State, supporting the more radical aims of certain liberals to work outside the established framework of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.


\[125\] Ibid.

\[126\] Ibid, 119.
Within Hungary’s, and by extension, an urban Budapest’s drive for a unique identity within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and in light of the crisis of political, social, and cultural representation leading up to the Millennial Celebrations, Feszty’s panorama of the Magyar’s entrance into the Carpathian Basin was a particularly potent site since it was aimed squarely at a growing bourgeois public. It was this group, more apt to embrace new technologies of vision over “high art,” who were actively and rapidly constructing the new social and political fabric of the modern Hungarian nation, and in the process, actively reconfiguring the traditional social and political hierarchy. But it was also this public that was being ignored in much of the official visual representation commissioned for the Fair. This would help explain, for example, why audiences might look for some kind of hidden “truth” in the rejected Thorma and Grünwald paintings of 1896 mentioned earlier. What I am arguing is that the privately exhibited *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians in 896*, involved a kind of “seeing” that was fast becoming an important part of a growing Budapest. The panorama, as Oettermann describes it, was “a pictorial expression or ‘symbolic form’ of a specifically modern, bourgeois view of nature...an apparatus for teaching and glorifying the bourgeois view of the world.” But the urban phenomenon of “being seen” held other inferences. Descriptions of the Feszty panorama in 1894 underscore a full range of conflicting bodily sensations, including dizziness, nausea, joy, and fear. These derive in part from accounts of viewing the medium, but also from simultaneous scenes of rape, murder, ceremony and salvation (recall again the shaman’s presence in the scene, understood as a master in “techniques of ecstasy”). As such, the Feszty panorama’s depiction of a single moment is one represented in *medias res*—a moment positioning viewers *between* the projected past and future, firmly in the indeterminate present. Take for example this opening passage from an 1894 review of the panorama in the *Hungarian News (Magyar Hirlap)*. Not only does

---

127 Anarchist thought and the history of anarchism in Hungary has often intersected with the aims of liberal reformers. And the growing liberal factionalism of the 1890’s, related to the frustration of the dual monarchy system, gave rise to the formation of increasingly more radical political parties by the turn of the century. See András Bozóki and Miklós Süksösd, *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

128 Oettermann, 7.

129 See for example Iván Murányi, “Feszty Árpád remekművét [Feszty’s Masterpiece],” *Képes Családi Lapok [Illustrated Family Newspaper]*, May 20 1894.

130 Oakes, 26.
it compellingly describe the city of Budapest caught anxiously between the past and future, it links that urban body (here in the form of an upper class woman) to the fashionable world of consumer culture and leisure, where how one is seen, how one passes, and how one accumulates status in the eyes of the world becomes paramount:

Budapest is today like a beautiful genteel lady who is preparing for her first ball. She is already nervous with two full seasons left until the Millennial Celebrations. She can barely think of it, she is filled with plans, daydreaming, hoping. She feels her fate depends on it, wondering if “monsieur de Monde” will take her hand. Will she, will she not be Mrs. de Monde?131

The ideas around virtual reality are an important corollary to the understanding of immersion within panoramic space.132 In turn, the Feszty panorama engaged the modern viewer in dynamic ways, tied to notions of shifting perceptions and the sense of reconfiguration. Media theorist Pierre Levy in his meditations on the virtual aptly describes the process of virtualization not as a specific mode of being but as “the process of transformation from one mode of being to another,” a procedure of humanity’s “becoming other.”133 In this way, virtuality, instead of some type of false reality, can be conceived as a kind of perpetual movement that mediates between possibilities. Moreover, Levy draws a distinction between the possible and the virtual on the basis of existence. Levy writes:

The possible is already fully constituted, but exists in a state of limbo. It can be realized without any change occurring either in its determination or nature. It is a phantom reality, something latent. The possible is exactly like the real, the only thing missing being existence... The virtual should, properly speaking, be compared not to the real but the actual.134

Levy stresses that the virtual as a “knot of tendencies or forces that accompanies a situation, event, object, or entity” invokes a process of actualization that belongs and even constitutes an element of what is virtual.135 In this way, the virtual tends towards

131 Magyar Hirlap (Hungarian News), 13 May 1894. Note the use of gender and class to shape this particular sense of anxiety. Translation by author.


134 Ibid., 24.
actualization without undergoing any form of effective or concrete shift. The fact of not being associated with any "there," of occurring between things that are clearly situated, does not prevent us from existing. Within the Feszty panorama, there is an inexorable parallel between Levy's characterization of the virtual and the viewer's situation within the panoramic space. Oscillating between forces of capture, invasion, and salvation, the viewing body is literally activated with an intense urgency to "fit itself" within the narrative of Hungarian conquest, sparking a kind of actualization. This sense of virtuality gains in strength through a viewing body outside the detached and stationary position of mainly observing (as experienced when viewing a traditional painting). As Levy argues, this power to invoke an actualizing response is potent; the actual tree is already present in the potential seed. This, however, does not suggest that the seed can predetermine what the shape of the tree will be, instead, "the seed will have to invent the tree [and] co produce it together with the circumstances it encounters." Therefore, the dynamic of virtualization is interdependent with reality. Levy writes:

If virtualization were nothing more than a transition from a reality to a collection of possibilities, it would be derealizing. But it [the virtual] implies a great sense of irreversibility in its effects, indeterminacy in its processes, and creativity in its striving, as actualization. Virtualization is one of the principle vectors in the creation of reality.\(^{137}\)

Within this context, Denise Oleksijczuk's groundbreaking work on the first panoramas links well with Levy and highlights the importance of multiple perspective positions within panoramic space as a way to problematize attempts by early panorama artists to determine the way viewers experienced the image. Moreover,\(^{138}\)

---

\(^{135}\) Ibid. Levy introduces the problematic dynamic constructed around the duality of the real and the virtual a page earlier. He writes: "Consider the simple and misleading opposition between the real and the virtual. As it is currently used, the word "virtual" is often meant to signify the absence of existence, whereas "reality" implies a material embodiment, a tangible presence. Reality is implied when someone says "I've got it," virtually when they say "You'll get it." The illusion involved generally allows us to introduce a sense of trivial irony to evoke the various forms of virtualization" (23).

\(^{136}\) Ibid.

\(^{137}\) Ibid., 27.

\(^{138}\) Denise Oleksijczuk, Introduction to "The Dynamics of Spectatorship in the First Panoramas: Vision, The Body and British Imperialism, 1787-1829" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of British Columbia, 2001). Oleksijczuk writes, "At its broadest level, my argument in this thesis is that by transporting its spectators to other places in the city, country or world, the panorama created a spatial and temporal disjunction between a 'here' and a 'there' that became a crucial locus for the formation of
Oleksijczuk distinguishes the importance of an internalized view and experience of visuality as a “radically new relationship between spectator and image.” Oleksijczuk argues:

Thus, at the same time that the panorama offered spectators a sense of embodiment, a sense that the space their bodies occupied was contiguous with the space of the image, it also gave them multiple ways of interacting with, or being subjected to, its representational power. By completely immersing the spectator in the middle of a phenomenalistic, multiperspectival and cylindrical painting which could not be grasped all at once, the viewing situation in the panorama could also lend spectators a greater awareness of the limits of human vision (because the panorama could not be entirely seen from one point without turning around) and of the spaces occupied by their bodies (because it forced them to move). ¹³⁹

And while I contend that the Feszty panorama was successful in limiting these viewing positions by the sheer momentum of the scene, what remains critical is Oleksijczuk’s suggestion that panoramas invited a transfiguration in the experience of viewing that complicated and even challenged what viewers were encouraged to believe—and especially by those in official positions of power. In late nineteenth century Austria-Hungary, this alterity facilitated a level of agency and invited a kind of identity formation and conception of reality that was particularly threatening to existing power structures—an abstract and nomadic identity with no clear spatial or bodily configuration. Indeed, I wish to underscore that the critical aspect of Levy’s work that I am interested in resides in its direct references to nomadism and notions of virtual transport and mobility. As Levy repeatedly argues, the elements of the virtual are specifically nomadic and dispersed with “the pertinence of their geographic position significantly diminished.” ¹⁴⁰ It is through the idea of nomadic movement that Levy conceives of the virtual and it is through nomadic practices that Levy introduces an intriguing metaphor for the process of establishing virtual communities. Yet the experience of embodied vision together with the kinds of

¹³⁹ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁴⁰ Levy, 27. Geography is therefore not discounted as an important element of the virtual; rather, it is the problematizing of settlement that is being introduced by Levy. As Deleuze and Guattari write, “A path is always between two points, but the in-between has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and direction of its own. The life of the nomad is the intermezzo (380).
Recalling Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of space, Feszty's panorama of conquering nomads with a proliferation of moving figures moving outwards to a distant horizon, at first appears to take up a smooth (or nomadic) space which displaces and expands. As one reviewer argued, "In reality, the Feszty picture is not a painting, but an action." In contrast, an image like Munkácsy's Conquest with its static central figure and little or no motion appears to take up striated (or sedentary) space that roots and marks out. Munkácsy's imposing Árpád filled a square canvas and found prominent display to a limited aristocratic audience in the Upper House of Parliament while Feszty's Árpád became one body among an infinitely expanding number of bodies filling a panoramic scene that was displayed to a broad and diverse public. As a mass medium with the ability to accommodate up to 150 viewers of mixed classes and ethnicities in one viewing, panoramas effected among the most serious attack on traditional artistic sensibilities, that of commodification and proliferation of art to an ever widening audience. Moreover, the appeal of the panorama existed in its attempts to literally capture life through a level of verisimilitude lacking in traditional history paintings. The spatial war that Deleuze and Guattari outline in the Treatise on Nomadology opens up new ways to elucidate the differences between the two works and by extension underscore the conflicted spatial politics of the city and the nation.

But the space of the Feszty Panorama was also conflicted for liberals of 1848 like Feszty's father-in-law Mór Jókai who continued to call for the voluntary assimilation of ethnic minorities to the Hungarian nation. For them, nomadism had originally been conceived in its inclusive and abstract form as a way of folding new members into a more promising future. This would help account for the Budapest publics' acceptance of celebrating the Millennium in the first place and popularity,


142 Brian Massumi, in the Foreword to Deleuze and Guattari's Treatise provides a useful summary to help expand this idea: "The space of nomad thought is qualitatively different from State space. Air against Earth. State space is "striated," or gridded. Movement in it is confined as by gravity to a horizontal plane, and limited by the order of the plane to preset paths between fixed and identifiable points. Nomad space is "smooth," or open-ended. One can rise up at any given point and move to any other. Its mode of distribution is the nomos: arraying oneself in an open space (hold the street), as opposed to the logos of entrenching oneself in a closed space (hold the fort)" (xiii).
for example, among Budapest partygoers to dress up as ancient Magyars during the Fair, or celebrate the Empress of Austria-Hungary’s donning of a Hungarian costume to show solidarity with her Budapest constituents. But for a new generation of liberals within the shifting political environment of late nineteenth century Hungary, nomadism was also conceived in its more virulent form. Importantly, it was an identity that would increasingly normalize as ethnically Magyar to the exclusion of any other group. For these individuals, a radical politics of either exclusion or a forced identification with the Hungarian nation was seen as the only option to save any vestige of legitimacy for what was construed as Hungary’s heritage and modus operandi. Conceptually speaking then, within the nexus of spatial tensions being played out in Budapest in the years leading up to 1896, Feszty’s panorama seemingly suspended bodies at its very centre and was a major expression of a space that worked to either entirely mobilize or exclude the spectator. These anxieties are characterized in a revealing satirical cartoon that used the backdrop of the Feszty panorama to raise questions about the Hungarian social body (fig.2.23). In the opening frame, a Hungarian peasant-farmer from the countryside is shown reading a sign at the entrance of the Feszty panorama rotunda promising “The Arrival of the Hungarians.” Not understanding that the sign is the title of the painting inside, he proceeds to sit down and wait for what he assumes will be arriving Hungarians. Outside the rotunda, however, he is surprised and confused when he sees that those who are arriving (residents of Budapest there to see the Feszty panorama) are unreadable to him as Hungarians. “Who are these people?” he asks. The people, caricatured as greedy, bloated businessmen, reveal anxieties over who is presumably understood to be

---

143 The wife of the Emperor, Queen Elizabeth, was often called “Hungary’s Queen” because of her reported love of the Hungarian country, its language, and peoples. This was also read politically since an urban legend persisted in Hungary that the Emperor disliked the Queen’s independent nature and frequent visits to Hungary. Therefore, when the Queen dressed in Hungarian costume during the Millennial festivities, it made front page news. See for example “A királyné magyar öltözbben [The Queen in Hungarian Costume],” Budapest: Illustrated Political News, May 11 1896.

144 Kontler outlines the rise of several political movements beginning in the mid 1870’s (288-302), that were opposed to the Liberal government and the Compromise of 1867 that brought about dualism. Significantly, a number of disparately organized labour movements merged over a period of two decades, adopted a Marxist line, and formed the Hungarian Social Democratic Workers’ Party. As Kontler notes, “a major role was played by Léó Frankel, a prominent figure of the Paris Commune of 1871.” Another development was the National Anti-Semitic Party, established in 1883, which Kontler writes was “outspoken, indeed aggressive in its attempts to mobilize the instincts of national ‘self-defense.’ By 1896, the agrarian populations outside Budapest were also organizing their own political parties (some of which adopted anarchist ideas) and staging strikes.
Hungarian. "How could these cheaters claim to be Magyars?" the man asks. Overhearing his question, the guide to the panorama (drawn to resemble the man and thus be understood as a "real" Hungarian) takes the peasant-farmer inside and shows him the scene of the ancient nomads. "Now this I understand!" he exclaims.

Keeping in mind the Feszty panorama's well publicized connection to Jókai, in tandem with fairgoers' desire to be transported elsewhere, I believe that audiences may very well have approached the scene of Hungarian nomadic conquest as the manifestation of one of Jókai's many popular, yet highly romanticized, historical novels. Indeed, these were narratives often criticized by literary critics for fantastic projections. Even so, the liberal Jókai's popularity came about through the moral dilemmas and psychological problems he posed, questions focused on "how-shall-we-live?" and "by who's determination?" His captivating themes were also rooted in the power of individuals to rise above their lot in life—a kind of liberal prowess that recalls the expanding and displacing spaces of nomadism. In stark contrast, however, Feszty's panorama may also have been read by some spectators as a message of passive resistance, evoking the power and strength to be gained from a kind of collective victimization—recalling the kind of themes evoked, for example, in Thorma's rejected painting of the executed martyrs in the aftermath of the 1848 Revolution. If so, these themes had become muddied and even obscured by the immense transitions in the political and social landscape of late nineteenth century Austria-Hungary as increasing numbers of minorities also questioned the agenda of Hungarian authority. By 1896, Jókai too may have—quite literally—seen the writing on the wall. As Fábri argues in her biography of Jókai, the sense of frustration permeated his later novels: "instead of producing direct answers (bourgeois civilization, public commitment, etc.), he increasingly tended to provide his readers with dilemmas only." It is possible then that the Feszty panorama was viewed in a similar way. Standing inside the space, the viewer was confronted with an onslaught

---

145 They could also have been read as Jewish. In fact, a number of anti-Semitic cartoons lampooning the Feszty panorama directly emerged between 1894-1896. See for example: "Uj honfoglalás a második eszredév küszöben [A New Conquest on the Threshold of the Second Millennium]", Herkő Páter, January 5 1896; and "Magyarok bejövetele [The Arriving Hungarians]", Herkő Páter, July 26 1896. Also see also my discussion regarding Budapest's Jewish community and the Millennial Exhibition in Chapter Four.

146 Fabri, 120.

147 Ibid, 123.
and a choice—was one to be trampled, or, was one to turn and be moved along with the flow of the conquered?

Technological Mastery, the Modern Moment, and Future Faith

As this chapter has already suggested, the representation of technological invention and mobility played an integral role in Feszty's panorama, satisfying the overall agenda of the Budapest Millennial Exhibition to celebrate Hungary's long history and anticipated modern and progressive future. Indeed, it would thus appear that a further underlying mechanism of the panorama was to construct a lineage for modern day technological innovations—like the railway—that dated back to a pre-feudal time and place. The use of the stirrup by the early Magyar invaders forged connections between modern day Hungarians and the construction of their ancient ancestors. Enabling the rapid movement of mounted peoples into present day Europe, the stirrup was celebrated as a technology to increase speed. The forerunner of these advancements, of mythic proportion for the Magyars, was the horse. Evoked in terms of both freedom and mastery in Magyar folklore, the horse could conjure up the kind of primal cultural identification around themes of mobility and speed so critical to the rapid modernization of Hungary over a few short decades. Recalling the rhetoric of Magyar nomadism, the nomadic body constructed in relation to this mobility was active, attentive, moving, and unpredictable. In this way, we are reminded once again of Deleuze’s nomadic bodies—masses resisting the “technological management” of their sedentary counterparts. But in light of the problematic raised around the rhetoric of nomadism in the previous section, the theme of regeneration and proliferation that took shape in Feszty’s panorama was also one that raised many contradictions and anxieties. First and foremost, it was carried out violently, ironically enough through references to agriculture where plows and oxen

148 Anthony Tihamér Komjáthy, *A Thousand Years of the Hungarian Art of War* (Toronto: Rákóczi Foundation, 1982), “The use of stirrups—unknown in the western cavalries—made it easy for them [the Magyars] to make sudden stops, turns, and starts, individually or in formation. Thus, their horsemanship secured their superiority over the knight armies” (13).

149 See András Györffy-Villám et al., *Lovas nemzet : a magyarság és a ló (Horse Nation: Hungarianness and the Horse)* (Budapest: Helikon, 2004). The image of the horse often appeared on military objects such as armour that were being excavated in ambitious archeological digs funded by the Hungarian government in the late 19th century. I viewed a number of these objects in the archeological collections of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography and the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest.
seeded the soil, and through physical force that damaged and inflicted harm upon
bodies. Reproduction was also suggested through the rape and insemination of the
Slavic women and through the references to animal husbandry elucidated through the
livestock herds and hundreds of horses filling the canvas.

In an ironic twist, relating to nineteenth century anthropological dictums that
posited sedentary agriculturalists on a higher rung of civilization than nomadic
peoples, the ancient and nomadic Magyars were pictured as a “civilizing force” in the
Carpathian Basin. With such apparent claims of manifest destiny, it is no surprise that
one critic characterized the scene of Feszty’s panorama as the “Magyar Eldorado,”
drawing on the Spanish myth that helped to drive ambitions of European colonizers
penetrating Amerindian territories in the vain search for gold. “This is the promised
land,” writes the review.150 In the official explanation of the panorama, cited at the
outset of this chapter, these overtones are made clear:

They [the Magyars] feel perhaps that the God of the Magyars has appointed
for them this land to be, after many years of restless wandering, their
inheritance, which was to be consecrated for their lasting home by the blood
of many heroes. ..The enemy, have already diminished: the rest of the
Slavonians oppose with valorous resistance. They die on the spot where they
lived; it was their home though it was not fortified by constitution and
political bulwarks: just as the wild forest is the home for the bear and the plain
is the home of the hamster. In this land they were born and here they are
crushed by the suddenly appearing great strange nation.151

The elements of spectacle and theatricality that the panoramic medium held over
more traditional forms of art may have played an important part in promoting a
passive acceptance of these themes. At one level, audiences expected to be
entertained and the advertisements for Feszty’s work capitalized on visitors’ desires
to be transported to another place and time.

Much of the discourse around the 1896 Fair centered on how to plan for the
next millennium of implied Magyar rule. At each level of Hungary’s origin myth,
regeneration was powerfully controlled by the ancestors of modern Hungarians (over
land, animal, and people), suggesting a level of mastery that had sustained the

150 Review. Pesti Hirlap, 13 May 1894. Indeed, the influence of American frontierism and expansion
upon the Hungarian imaginary is worthy of further consideration, especially in light of the mixed
ethnic composition of both nations. Notably, the modern day “puszta” or men who train and race
horses on the plains of Hungary are commonly referred to as “Hungarian cowboys.”

151 Kőrkép-Társaság, np.
nomadic movement for thousands of years. This power also stemmed from selective breeding through an understanding of the survival of the fittest. As I noted at an earlier point in the thesis, Magyar, derived from the word Megyer, translates to “the strongest tribe in the alliance,” a generic term given to whomever is in control of the tribe at any given time, suggesting that those non-Magyars folded into the Magyar nation (i.e. Slavs, Jews, Germans, and other “foreigners”) were not considered equal to their “masters.” Overtones of asserting “technological” control and evoking a sense of danger thus remained in tension with being part of a collective without pedigree, marks of purity, or geographic certainty (recall Levy’s virtualized body—a body that is recreating, encouraged to travel and exchange, crossing boundaries). By the time of the 1896 Fair, this discourse was already well entrenched in the local psyche through years of preparation and anticipation of the event. It was then reinforced through foreign interest and discussion of all the “exotic” and unique qualities of the non-Slavic Magyars—an ethnic group whose difference from all other groups in the Austro-Hungarian Empire was celebrated and legitimized in connection to Budapest’s rapid modernization.

To be sure, the desire and expectation for altered experiences was what had been drawing crowds to World’s Fairs by the end of the nineteenth century. No longer providing just a venue to be educated in the history and affairs of the nation, International Exhibitions had evolved in the fin de siècle period into elaborate realms of fantastical amusement, exotic transportation, and interiorized contemplation. In fact, another popular panorama featured at the 1896 Fair led spectators into a dreamscape of Dante’s Hell. Billed as the “Giant Cyclorama of Molnar and Trill”

---

152 Zoltán Halász, Hungary, 4th ed. trans. Zsuzsa Béres (Budapest: Corvina, 1998), 1-2. As discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the word “Magyar” derives from the Ugric “Mansi– or ”Magy–” with the addition of the Turkic “-eri,” forming “Megyéri” – “Magyén.” – “Magyar”, which became a generic label meaning “the largest tribe in the group” or “masters.” Both particles mean “men”. The name given to them by the western historians, “Hungarian” (Latin: ”Hungarus”), is a variation of the name “Hun-Ogar” – “Onogur” – “Hungur” used since the fifth century by foreign chroniclers, a reminder of their association with TurkicOnogur-Hun peoples.


(referencing the painters of the panorama), the scene enticed viewers with the promise of seeing the rise of Dante’s immortal spirit right before their eyes (fig.2.24). A chaotic and disturbing composition filled with writhing and horrific figures, the panorama was applauded by critics for the scenes ambitious attempts to provide a sense of the boundlessness and endlessness described in Dante’s textual narrative through techniques of paint and light.\textsuperscript{155} Exhibited privately near the Millennial Fair grounds, the panorama of Dante’s Hell was in close proximity to Feszty’s panorama and also near another stop along the underground railway.\textsuperscript{156} As a result, the suggestive juxtaposition of the two works (spatially and technologically), together with their similar themes of transformation and epic myth, may have worked to bind and complicate simultaneous elements of fact and fiction, interiority and exteriority, history and fantasy, operating in both scenes.

But what then are we to make of the appearance of a much visited Polish-produced panorama at the Budapest World’s Fair—a massive painting that gave shape to a critical moment in a story that ultimately signaled Slavic defeat? Indeed, if the panorama was a productive medium through which to represent the idea around contested space, it is perhaps not surprising that the panorama would be taken up as a representational tool in other parts of Eastern Europe. This was the case with the other best known panorama painting of the same period exhibited in Austria-Hungary. The large canvas, created by Lemberg painter Jan Styka, and known as Kosciuszko’s Victory Over the Russians or simply the Raclawice Panorama, was completed in 1894 to honour the one hundred year anniversary of the first victorious battle in the Polish insurrection against Russian imperial forces in the Spring of 1794.\textsuperscript{157} Depicted in the panorama was the decisive moment when legendary

\textsuperscript{155} A number of reviewers comments are usefully summarized in Lenkei, 95-97. Also see Vezető a Molnár és Trill-féle pokol-körképhez [Guide to the Molnár and Trill "Hell" Panorama], (Budapest: Singer and Wolfner, 1896).

\textsuperscript{156} A brief reference to the panorama rotunda’s location near the underground subway (discussed in Chapter One) and its use of electrical lighting derived from the trolley system (not unlike Feszty’s) is made in Lenkei, 94.

\textsuperscript{157} Lemberg was the capital city of the Austrian ruled territory of present-day Poland (in Galicia) and a hotbed of Polish independence movements in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century. The First Polish Republic (also known as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) had existed in Eastern Europe since the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and had signed a Constitution in 1791 before succumbing to a series of partitions over the course of sixty years that divided portions of the former Commonwealth between Russia and Austria. During the Napoleonic Wars, however, Napoleon temporarily united the Commonwealth as the Duchy of Warsaw before Austrians and Russians dismantled it during the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815. In
commander Tadeusz Kosciuszko (who had fought in the American War of Independence for George Washington) helped, with the aid of a peasant army from the Raclawice countryside, to fend off Russian troops sent to quell the revolt (fig.2.25). These themes, in turn, played on a number of key ideas that would have appealed to the Budapest public and found some resonance with discourses already at play in the Feszty panorama. First, the struggle for Polish national independence was represented as connected to a tradition of liberalism and the charismatic leadership of Kosciuszko. Featuring a multitude of horses, soldiers, battle scenes, and a faithful rendering of the local terrain, these elements were also among the most obvious visual parallel between the two paintings. Moreover, the battle against imperial forces brought to mind the close alliance between Hungarians and Poles during the 1848 Revolution against Austria, and the role that the Russian imperial army had in helping the Habsburgs put down the uprisings. Second, the uniting of common people, particularly as a peoples' army, may have appealed to more radical sectors of the Budapest public who were participating in socialist and labour movements in greater numbers by the time of the 1896 Fair. To be sure, the idea of the army joining and dressing as peasants to quell the Russians brought to mind ideas around cross-class solidarity to unite people in a common cause. Finally, the theme of martyrdom in the face of revolutionary defeat—in that the Poles would ultimately succumb to Russian imperial control—was a well worn theme of Hungarian history and would be immediately understood as a vehicle through which to find common ground between Poles and Hungarians to continue fighting for social and political emancipation from foreign imperial forces.

turn, many Poles cherished the memory of parliamentary rule during what was called the Commonwealth's “Golden Era” and shared ideological links with Hungarians in the pursuit of liberal freedoms.

158 For a discussion on Kosciuszko's ties to liberal reform politics in Poland, see Andrzej Walicki, *The Enlightenment and the birth of modern nationhood: Polish political thought from Noble Republicanism to Tadeusz Kosciuszko* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).


160 The rise of these movements is discussed in Chapter Three. See also note 141.
But the Styka panorama, especially in comparison to Feszty’s panorama, also raised many subtle cues about its alleged inferiority in the minds of some critics and spectators—cues which in turn related to discourses already in play surrounding technology, ethnicity and historical fate at the time of the Millennial Exhibition. After all, it is important to remember that the battle pictured by Styka was one which ultimately resulted in a failed attempt to rid Poland of Russian influence. But in the most literal and material criticisms, critics pointed to how the techniques employed in Styka’s panorama were themselves outmoded and not as advanced as Feszty’s composition. But this criticism of one artist’s work seemed, in some sense, directly connected to the inevitability of what was viewed as an overall Slavic failure. For example, one critic was quick to point out that no matter how much the Poles fought, they would remain a “slave nation” which had no future, and another critic even drew direct parallels between the Styka and Feszty panoramas, claiming the Polish painting’s technological and artistic inferiority in comparison to the Magyar canvas.¹⁶¹ And despite the fact that the Poles had fought off a technologically superior army, their ultimate failure was seen to reside with the simple fact that the Magyars, and not the Poles (or any other Slavic minority group ruled by an imperial force in Eastern Europe) could gain concessions and compromise with their occupiers. This implied that the Poles could not succeed, and were fated to lose, with their agricultural origins and outmoded sedentary traditions tied to a feudal order. Further evidence to this might have been gathered when even the liberal-minded Polish leader, Kosciuszko, would famously support the idea of a Kingdom of Poland.¹⁶² It was in this sense that the Styka panorama seemed to be regarded, as if the valiant effort that was to be commended in the scene was doomed. It appeared that the Poles lacked something that the Magyars allegedly did not, specifically a pre-imperial, pre-Christian tradition, which could boast of the technological management of Slavs. A Feszty panorama reviewer even made inferences in this direction by suggesting that the Slav peoples were not yet trusting of their opponents, implying that they would be in the future.¹⁶³ In dialogue with the Feszty panorama, I would therefore argue that the scene of Polish defeat transformed in some ironic ways into a cautionary tale

¹⁶¹ Both criticisms are summarized in Lenkei, 96-97.

¹⁶² See Walicki.

¹⁶³ “A körkép születése [The Panorama’s Birth],” np.
metaphorically asking spectators to think about which cart they would rather hook their horse to. With whom was the future most tenable? And which space held up the most promise? In turn, I would further contend that a kind of underlying promotion of Magyarization by default is what remained at stake in the juxtaposition of these two panoramas.

Consequently then, if the future was to be marked out by speed, motion, and change, outstripping the old paradigms associated with agricultural (i.e striated and sedentary modes) of production and imperial control, many Hungarians supported the idea that it would likely emerge most fruitfully in their city and within the context of emerging global capitalism and commerce. The idea of unbridled economic growth and proliferation thus remained attractive to many sectors of the Budapest public specifically because it allowed a measure of prosperity and social mobility unseen in other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and broader region of Eastern Europe. This was something that many Poles, like Styka himself, understood, lured to Budapest for what was billed in the region as the most progressive and forward-looking city to make a new start and find a new life in a cosmopolitan center. In particular, those bourgeois and “self-made men”— bankers, industrial barons, and inventors, together with a growing intelligentsia that took full advantage of liberal capitalism— also appeared to threaten traditional hierarchies most directly. The ephemeral nature of laissez faire economics with its invisible hand and shift towards individualism and private ownership were indeed hallmarks of the liberal age. As such, the identification of the ancient Magyars with speed, invasion, and superior technological ability only allowed for the strengthening of these convictions in the urban context.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Turning back to the Feszty panorama, one can locate the expression of capital expansion tied to circulation and free enterprise in a number of literal ways. First and foremost, the panorama itself was born of a private business initiative that sought investors for its production and hired workers for its creation. In turn, the Hungarian Panorama Company had a fiduciary duty to its investors (largely members of Budapest’s bourgeois elite), as a business venture, the main function of which was to create a commodity that could generate profits. Feszty, as an investor, worked within the confines of a business plan and deadline for completion that strategically divided the labour needed to create the final painting across a number of hired painters, craftspeople, and technicians. In this way, the panorama’s production could be likened to a modern factory or assembly-like atmosphere where individual labourers were responsible for the completion of isolated tasks. These labourers, seldom associated or recognized as contributors of the final product, thereby distanced their mark on the canvas. My suggestion here is that the panorama was discussed almost exclusively in terms of individual enterprise in its day despite today’s acknowledgment of the dozens of high profile Hungarian landscape artists who assisted in the panorama’s execution. László Nagy, interview by
But while the multiple references to modernizing processes represented in the Feszty panorama attempted to abolish the perceived “backwardness” of the Carpathian Basin, they did so in tension with a tradition of feudal hierarchy and counter-liberal politics that were deeply entrenched in both the psyche and governing body of the nation. Moreover, an agrarian majority (not unlike their Polish counterparts in the Styka panorama, continuing to reside under largely feudal conditions) constituted a full 60% of the Hungarian population. Ironically, it was this sector of society, sedentary agriculturists, who were working the same land and embodying the same position pictured in the Feszty panorama as under attack. But when the panorama is read with liberal anxieties of the period in mind, the attack is not so surprising considering that emerging Hungarian socialist parties of this period drew on the agrarian populations of Hungary for support. Still, the importance of the land continued to be evoked through the discourses circulating around the millennial celebrations, including Feszty’s work. This despite agriculturists and many industrial workers growing concerns and fears that Hungarian agricultural and industrial production was slipping into increasingly distant and indifferent hands.\(^{165}\)

In the end, the power of faith and the forward thrust of historical positivism underwrote the scene of the Magyars’ triumphant arrival pictured in the Feszty panorama and would have fostered a sense of pride, if only temporarily, for many Hungarians together with those ethnic minorities who increasingly chose to identify as Hungarian. These forces, carefully connected to the narrative of destiny and fate, remained a powerful draw to audiences of the Feszty panorama and were echoed through daily ceremonies around Hungary that sought to connect the past, present, and future.\(^{166}\) Of these scheduled events, one of the highest profile rituals occurred

---


\(^{166}\) The Budapest press in 1896 is filled with pictures and commentary on these ceremonies and discussion of all things related to the time of Árpád and its connection to the future. See for example these front page stories (and accompanying illustrations that have visual parallels to the Feszty panorama) in a popular daily: “Árpád és táltos jósíta [Árpád and the Shaman’s Prophecy]," *Budapest: Illustrated Political News*, April 28 1896; “Az ezredéves kiállításból, Árpád korai emlékek [Selections from the Exhibition: Árpád Era Objects],” *Budapest: Illustrated Political News* 1896; “A második ezredév kezdetén [At the Beginning of the Second Millennium],” *Budapest: Illustrated Political News*, May 2 1896.
over a weekend in late June 1896 when Pusztaser, the location of the supposed first Diet of Árpád and the setting for the Feszty panorama, took center stage in a dedication ceremony. A large monument dedicated to the nomadic leader Árpád in the shape (ironically enough) of an imperial neo-classical triumphal arch was erected in the quiet agricultural community with the simple though significant engraving 896-1896 (fig.2.26). Newspaper accounts of the event extolled the importance of the monument, stressing with suggestive Christian overtones that the Magyar soil and people were “blessed.” Importantly, however, editorials continued to underscore the democratic roots and constitutional laws of the Magyar peoples, linking the collaborative order to those acknowledged by England’s Magna Carta. Accounts detailed “rich and poor standing side by side” during the ceremony, emphasizing how participants traveled—importantly in these accounts, by train—from all parts of Hungary to take part in the event.

**Conclusion: Whose Medium, What Function?**

As I have explored in this chapter, the disjuncture and slippages between what was literally seen as real and/or imagined, myth and/or history, entertainment and/or art, punctuates the contradictions around the rhetoric associated with nomadism and the techniques of panorama perception taken up in the Feszty panorama. These dynamics punctuate how competing narratives of origin and conflicts over the desire to adopt a Western model of liberal democracy shaped the political landscape in the years leading up to the Millennial Celebrations of 1896. Within this matrix, shifting notions of visuality and individual subjectivity brought about through the process of modernization and bourgeois regimes of seeing reveal still further dimensions in the overall crises of identity seen in the social sphere of fin de siècle Central Europe. If nomadism through the process of Magyarization held out some possibility for a common community in 1896, it did so problematically and at the expense of other claims.


168 See note 107. The description in Fővárosi Lapok, 27 June 1896 actually cites the “Magna Carta” in its textual descriptions of the ceremony.

169 Ibid.
Within this context, the panorama remained a potent means of representation in the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the fin de siècle period—one that I continue to believe held out radically different stakes and production of meanings for its ethnically, nationally, and spiritually heterogeneous publics. In fact, within a few short years of the Feszty panorama’s debut at the Budapest World’s Fair, another high profile pair of panoramas would enter into dialogue with one another and pick up on key themes first introduced by Feszty. The first, highlighting a much publicized collaboration between Polish and Hungarian painters, attempted to stage the first direct visual representation related to the 1848 Revolution.\footnote{Relatively little is known or has been written about this panorama, except that is related to the Battle of Nagyszeben fought on March 11, 1849. I did however find brief mention of the painting in the Budapest press of 1898 and located the original guidebook in the Budapest City Archives (see Bem-Petőfi körkép (The Bem-Petőfi Panorama), (Budapest: Werbőczy Könyvnyomda Részv-Társ, 1898). One key article that discusses aspects of the panorama emerges in the 1950’s ("Bem és Petőfi, Egz elvesyett körkép emléki [Bem and Petofi: A Lost Panorama Remembered] ", Vasarnapi Újság [Sunday News] 1954) and a revival of interest in the painting recently emerged in Transylvania (located in present day Romania where many ethnic Hungarians reside) where fragments of the original were displayed in a local exhibition in 2000. An accompanying catalogue, published on the Internet, provides useful information about the history of the panorama after 1898, Alicja Majcher-Węgrzyn, "Transylvanian Panorama," http://www.djm.hu/archiv/erdely.html} Titled The Battle of Sibiu or Bem and Petofi in Transylvania (Bem Erdélyiben or Bem és Petőfi in Hungarian) and painted by Styka and Hungarian landscape artist Pál Vágó, the panorama debuted first in Styka’s hometown of Lemberg, the Austrian ruled city of the former Polish Commonwealth in Galicia, and then in Budapest in 1898 as a reminder of the fiftieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution (fig.2.27). Picturing a scene of bloody battle, mounted cavalry, and pitted earth, not unlike what had been depicted in both the Feszty and Styka panoramas, the scene recalled was of a brilliantly executed and staged maneuver where Hungarian troops won victory over the united forces of the Austrian and Russian army (figs.2.28-2.29). Importantly, the strategic depiction of the participation of Poles in the Hungarian struggle for emancipation came with a not so subtle underlying message; that the increasing unity among Hungarians and Poles was centered on calling into question the two traditional imperial rulers of the region—the Austrians and the Russians.\footnote{In fact, the 50th anniversary celebration of the 1848 Revolution, for which the panorama was brought to Budapest from Galicia’s capital city Lemberg, was called “The Spring of the Nations.”} In the same year, and as if in response, the second panorama to emerge was The Franz Joseph Jubilee Panorama. Financed by a group of Viennese citizens characterized as “patriotic and
public-spirited,” the final canvas celebrated and strongly reiterated the function of the monarchy in Austria-Hungary on the occasion of the emperor’s fifty years in power (fig. 2.30). Painted by Austrian artist Philipp Fleischer, and exhibited in Vienna in the same year that the Polish-Hungarian panorama traveled to Galicia and Hungary, the Jubilee painting was startling in its static and frozen qualities. Functioning as a kind of colossal portrait of the King and his court, hundreds of figures stood dwarfed under imposing Corinthian columns which brought to mind the architectural program and imperial function of the city of Vienna.

By way of conclusion, I raise these two, very visually and strategically different panoramas to make a final point. That is, that the observable links that many commentators have attributed to the panoramic medium, with the purpose and aims of strictly demonstrating imperial nation-state objectives, must be brought into question and troubled. There exists a serious challenge in the example of the Feszty panorama and Austro-Hungarian panorama exhibition history to the idea that the ideological function of panoramas was only to manipulate crowds or assert state authority. I believe instead that the Austro-Hungarian context for panorama exhibition stands testament to the very dynamic and complex modes of representation elicited by the medium. And if the panorama was only seen as retrograde in some circles of Western Europe by 1896, I would still argue that the panorama was made modern in Budapest.

172 Qtd. in Oettermann, 306. He discusses the panorama in one short paragraph. Once again, as with the previous panorama, little is known or has been written about this work, and Oettermann only publishes two black and white photographic reproductions of the main grouping canvas published in the local paper.

173 Ibid.
Chapter Three: Trafficking in Photographs—Representational Power and the Latent Hydra of Revolution

A photograph is always invisible, it is not it that we see.  
-- Roland Barthes (1981)

This is not an entombment here,  
Not a funeral procession, not a burial,  
But a triumphal celebration of an innovator-thinker  
Whose grave will not bury two nation’s hearts  
That beat together over him.  
So throw a laurel crown for the hero’s triumphal journey  
For this triumphal road, it will never end.  
--From the poem “Kossuth Lives!” (1895)

Consider this carefully composed image of a dead body—a fin de siècle postmortem photograph taken of a ninety year old man one week after his death (fig.3.1). Dressed in a fine black suit, his beard and clothing carefully groomed, the man, presumably an urban dweller and of middle or even upper class, has been gently placed upon a bed of flowers in what appears to our eyes as a succinctly private home setting. And while elements of ceremony and the sanctity of the space point to the solemnity of the occasion, viewers could be forgiven for believing the man to be in a deep slumber. It is not unlike other corpse photographs that circulated privately as part of a broader social practice in the late nineteenth century bourgeois family, a process of mourning the dead through the private and sometimes secret circulation of such images.  

Their significance, however, were more as serial acts of failed preservation and an attempt to show bodies in their most idealized form, appearing most often as asleep if not in fact agreeably alive, ready to arise back into life at any moment. But above the man’s head, and to the left of the image, we see a painting, likely of the gentleman as a young man. That and the funerary wreaths surrounding the picture frame signal the function of this image as something more—a kind of memento mori—a moment seized from the current of time to remind us of our own mortality and the inevitability of bodily failure. Susan Sontag, writing on the

---


2 Bálint Illyés, Kossuth Lajos sírjára, hat Kossuth költémeny (For Kossuth’s Grave: Six Poems) (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1895), final poem, no pages listed.

phenomena of pathos elicited by such an image has boldly asserted that “all photographs are *momento mori*.”\(^4\) If this is true, it leads one to wonder—what additional charge does the postmortem photograph carry, and, what does the illusion of life, simultaneous to the reality of death in such an image, tell us about the culture that produced it?

It was this picture, published in the Budapest newspapers and plastered around city streets during the final week of March 1894, which would come to play a key part of a high profile controversy. At this time, just two years prior to the opening of the Millennial Exhibition, the death of Lajos Kossuth took place. As Hungary’s oldest and longest surviving exiled leader of the 1848 Hungarian revolution, Kossuth, the dead man pictured in the photograph, had 46 years earlier led a failed uprising against the Austrian King Franz Joseph. But unlike the passing of other geriatric figures associated with long forgotten historical events, the Hungarians’ plans for Kossuth’s funeral and the quick action taken to transport his body back to Budapest from Turin, Italy (where Kossuth had lived in exile for decades) was met with immediate Habsburg resistance. As such, the Austrians focused a great deal of attention on thwarting attempts at visual and theatrical representations of Kossuth. Through a series of carefully calculated moves in the days and weeks following Kossuth’s death on March 20, 1894, the Habsburg authority prohibited official paintings, statues or plaques from being commissioned in his honour, and forbid any theatre or opera production that referred to Kossuth’s life to be performed.\(^5\) This effectively silenced any publicly or state funded cultural venues or contexts where such activities could take place. Moreover, at the personal prompting of the aging Emperor (the same monarch who had defeated the 1848 revolutionary at the age of 18), the Hungarian government and parliament were strictly forbidden from taking any official notice of the arrival of Kossuth’s remains from Italy. The city of Budapest was also prevented from funding a state funeral or funeral procession at public expense; this despite


\(^5\) A useful summary of the controversy complete with detailed newspaper citations can be found in Erzsébet Andics, “A halot Kossuth és ellenei (Resistance to Kossuth’s Funeral),” in *Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth’s 150th Anniversary)* ed. Magyar Történelmi Társulat. (Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952) and Judit Borus, “Kossuth a főváros halottja (Kossuth, the Capital City’s Deceased),” *Budapest Negyed* 1, no. 3 (1994), http://www.bparchiv.hu/magyar/kiadvany/bpn/03/borus.html.
Hungary’s status as a functionally sovereign partner in the dual monarchy. Indeed, even the shipment of Kossuth’s body back to Budapest would come into dispute, resulting in a compliant plan laid out by Italian officials to return the body without touching, and in essence contaminating, traditionally Austrian soil. The revolutionary was thus returned to Hungary as a private citizen and not a public figure.

But even while the Austrians’ attempted to deflect attention away from the situation, the enduring and highly publicized nature of Kossuth’s legacy, as this chapter will examine, would cast a long shadow over Budapest as it attempted to present a unified image of its new dual arrangement with Austria in the lead-up to the 1896 Fair. Indeed, within days following news of the Habsburg’s attempts to silence the Kossuth funeral, the desire to mourn the deceased revolutionary not only intensified, but quickly captured international headlines and catapulted Budapest to the center of the world’s attention. Unwilling to fully enforce the restrictions, the Hungarian government allowed the capital city of which Kossuth had been an honourary citizen to raise funds for a funeral through private subscription. In turn, the lavish funeral was staged in defiance of the Austrian’s dictums and acted out on the streets of Budapest with a high degree of drama and self conscious theatricality. The procession, led by men dressed in the regalia and carrying the standard and flags of the 1848 revolutionary army, was followed closely by one thousand mourning women dressed in black, twenty canopied cars, the clergy, Kossuth’s family, deputies, delegates, a contingent of invited peasants, and finally hundreds of small children, all making use of the widest and most visible city streets of the emerging metropolis, as the five mile long cavalcade snaked its way along the fashionable Grand Boulevard and the impressive new Andrassy Avenue. Here, apartment houses strategically

---

6 This fact was reported in many of the local newspapers. See for example Budapest Hirlap [Budapest News], March 25, 1894.

7 It is not entirely clear in the historical record how much of the funeral’s expense was paid for through private funding and how much was finally contributed by the city. London’s Daily Telegraph reported on March 22, 1894 for example that the “expense of the funeral was raised by subscription” but that the tomb would be provided by the city, while more recent Kossuth biographers suggest that the city paid for the entire event. See Gábor Pajkossy, “Lajos Kossuth,” in Hungarian Liberals, ed. András Gerő (Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, 1999), 140.

8 The description of the procession can be found in "Funeral of Kossuth," The Washington Post April 2 1894.
draped in black cloth acted as ready backdrop for the thousands of mourners watching
the scene, also clad in black mourning garb, many of whom carried or displayed in
shop and home windows the cut-out newspaper image of a postmortem Kossuth. And while the Budapest press focused attention on the funeral as a long overdue
homecoming and as a final chance to commemorate Kossuth in the city he had fought
so hard to create, the international press also recognized the looming specter of the
enormous crowd that had quickly amassed for the event. As The London Times
reported, the “vast and unmanageable dimensions” of the ceremony caused “no little
anxiety as to the possibility of maintaining order amongst the ever-increasing
multitudes that thronged the Hungarian capital to overflowing.”

The occasion of Kossuth’s death would therefore become an important
benchmark in Austro-Hungarian relations, not only remembered as an opportunity for
mourning a failed revolutionary, but also mourning the very memory of revolution
itself. In turn, what the Kossuth funeral managed to expose to the world was the
reality of the brewing and increasingly multi-ethnic and collective questioning of
Austrian imperial power and dualism policies within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
This was most probably at the root of why, despite nearly five decades of physical
absence from the national political scene in the region, the Habsburgs made the bold
move to disallow Kossuth’s body to be remembered in any official way. Entering into
this charged context was the role of the photograph. Indeed, in the absence of other
officially sanctioned modes of representation, photography became instrumental as a
means to commemorate and represent Kossuth’s death to a wider viewing public. As
a result, the Kossuth funeral was photographed from every conceivable angle by
nearly every one of the several hundred working photographers in Budapest at the
time, remaining to this day one of the most photographed events in Hungarian
history. These hundreds of images of the funeral procession in the newest parts of a

---

9 In the March 30th edition of Budapest Hirlap [Budapest News], there is a discussion of citizens’ plans
to post and carry images of Kossuth around the city during the funeral (both cut out of the newspaper
and privately owned). Detailed descriptions of the Kossuth funeral in English can also be found in:
April 2 1894; "Funeral of Kossuth,”; and "Funeral of M. Kossuth,” London Times, April 2, 1894.

10 "Funeral Of M. Kossuth,” The London Times, April 1894.
modernizing Budapest, together with pictures of the massive mourning crowds, and
the postmortem photograph of Kossuth, were widely distributed through dozens of
Budapest newspapers and private agents throughout the Empire, and then around the
world. And while the representation of death as a means to communicate loss was not
uncommon prior to the growing popularity of nineteenth century postmortem
photography, what remains intriguing in the case of Kossuth’s funeral, and will form
a broad underpinning to this chapter, is how the already innate relationship between
death and the new technology of photography could effectively participate in a highly
publicized expansion and transformation of the spaces of Budapest’s public sphere in
the years leading up to the Millennial Exhibition.

Consequently, another important aspect of my analysis relates to the
suggestive power of unchecked proliferation, and how the broadening identification
of a Hungarian public sphere within the spaces of urban modernity and the urban
crowd was achieved, in part, through modern advancements in the machinery of
representation, reproduction and circulation. These new technologies helped to
displace and override traditional networks of power while gaining the attention of a
new global and modern consciousness by the end of the nineteenth century. This was
something that imperial forces had erroneously believed to suppress with the defeat of
the 1848 revolutions that swept Europe. Take for example the deeply ironic image of
the Austrian Emperor and Russian Tsar declaring to overwhelm the “Hydra of
Revolution,” in a Viennese print dating to 1851 (fig.3.2) 12—an image that reveals
the extent to which new configurations of power would remain vastly under-
estimated by traditional elites. The hydra, as a mythical monster with multiple heads
that generates another as soon as one is cut off, is depicted here as under the control
of the Kings. But what is also being referenced refers ironically enough to the very
same power of mechanized and modern proliferation that would come to threaten

11 This event is only surpassed by the 1956 Hungarian revolution in terms of the photographic record.
For a discussion, see Martha Lampland, “Death of a Hero: Hungarian National Identity and the Funeral

12 The German text underneath the print refers to the “thousand-headed attack that the hydra can
devise” and how through justice and the rule of law it can be killed. The hydra is therefore understood
in its direct reference to revolutionary action. In Friedrich Engels’ letters to Karl Marx about the
Hungarian revolution, for example, he describes the “hydra of revolution” as not yet stilled. Friedrich
http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1849/02/27.htm.
older forms of knowledge and traditional representation in Austria-Hungary within a few short decades. Sprouting heads that appear eerily similar to photographic portraits of defeated revolutionaries—such as Kossuth himself—the hydra effectively conjures up and pictures the means of photographic reproduction as automatic, relentless and mobile. And even though imperial forces seem to be in control of this scene for the moment, I would argue that the latent hydra would likely appear to modern fin de siècle viewers as a far worthier adversary than shown here. In other words, the futility and folly of the Emperors would be revealed in the context of their shortsightedness and inability to deal with the flux and unpredictability of the hydra in a transformed modern world. Moreover, the question of what remained latent would become the very real focus and cause for concern.

Therefore, in order to further understand how the medium of photography was taken up in the particular context of post-1848 Hungarian revolutionary loss, the historical development of Kossuth’s representation while in exile, and the circulation of images related to his persona, need to be closely examined. In turn, Kossuth’s varied representations (both public and private) will be shown through my analysis to play a key role in carving out new arenas of social exchange, interaction and representation, entering into modes of private and commercial circulation that extended beyond the reach of Austrian control. Not surprisingly, the media forms commonly associated with the bourgeois middle class were also products of an emerging and dynamic capitalist economy. But the promise of mobility, freedom, and uncensored documentation that seemed an attractive aspect of these new media is not as straightforward as it might appear. Indeed, an important aim of my dissertation research has been to bring into comparison the economy of the circulating image and the economy of capital expansion in order to explore how the attendant ambiguities, threats, and conflicting motives infused within these interrelated systems held out certain hopes and fears with respect to gaining freedom from Habsburg imperial power. In this sense, the centrality of the Austro-Hungarian context is paramount and allows us to think about how we can connect the dynamic and politicized means of representation wrought by the new technology of photography to specific social, political, and economic milieus out of which they emerge. What were the new spaces produced by photography at this moment, and what kind of shadow would the death
and postmortem representation of an exiled revolutionary cast on the 1896 Fair in Budapest—and to what ends?

In other words, a further consideration will be to uncover how photography emerged as a ready, duly subversive, highly mobile, and technologically superior medium, acting as a kind of alternative mode of conflated artistic and documentary representation that could not only be broadly and freely disseminated to a wide public audience, but also be put in service of very real social and political action. Within this context, it is possible to ask how photography was conveniently able to address the more abstract crisis of representation in Austria-Hungary by the late nineteenth century— one that visually effaced key historical actors and events from the fractured Empire’s consciousness. But the more literal crisis of representation that sought to silence the political rights of a large contingent of the heterogeneous Austro-Hungarian public is also to be considered here. To be sure, there would emerge by the time of the 1896 Millennial Exhibition a growing recognition on the part of the largely unregulated Hungarian Photographer’s Association that one of their civic responsibilities as a photographic body was to document the affairs of the nation. This lesson had been reinforced in 1894 with the international publicity and controversy generated around Kossuth’s funeral, and would become one of the touchstones of the Society’s mandate as they sought to document and extend publicity around the 1896 Fair.

Lajos Kossuth and the Legacy of Radical Liberalism

Lajos Kossuth (also known as Louis or Ludwig Kossuth in Western European histories), was among Europe’s most mobile proponents of radical liberal thought throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, continuing to be viewed by the Austrian Habsburgs as a dangerous and potent political figure even decades after being exiled from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Becoming internationally famous as an outspoken advocate for the liberal independence and self-determination of nations following the collapse of the 1848 Hungarian revolution, Kossuth’s powerful legacy resided with his championing of targeted democratic policies that called for the emancipation of non-nobles and extension of constitutional rights for a more equitable distribution of economic resources and opportunities across the social hierarchy. Importantly for Kossuth, the final goal towards the political independence
of Hungary rested with its economic independence from Austria. Citing examples from Western Europe and America, where modern capitalism and political liberalism appeared to work hand in hand, Kossuth believed in the intrinsic link between political and economic emancipation as a means to overcoming imperial dependence and interference. In his estimation, one could simply not proceed without the other. And although born of noble class, Kossuth's more radical underlying agenda linked democratic political emancipation to the plight of peasants whose situation he regarded as akin to slavery, seeking the speedy manumission of serfs and the abolition of tax privileges that locked the majority of the peasant population of Empires into dependence with landowners. This position, echoing aspects of Karl Marx's ideas about the reconfiguration of the relations of production and redistribution of wealth, would separate Kossuth from more moderate liberals by the time of the 1848 revolutions that swept Europe. Therefore, while Kossuth targeted much of his focus on appealing to the relatively small middling classes of Austro-Hungarian society, his was a deliberate tactic aimed at attracting initial awareness and interest of the non-nobles to the functioning of government policies. It was through the bourgeoisie and urban classes that Kossuth believed the initial sparks of liberalism could fuel broader sweeping changes at all levels of society, leading finally to revolution.

At the outset of his political career, however, Kossuth attempted to work within the framework of the Habsburg monarchy by attempting to "loosen" Hungary's ties to Austria. His earliest actions sought to transform political debate through access to, and dissemination of, information that had largely been censored.

13 Kossuth has remained a complicated figure within Hungarian political historiography, particularly during Hungary's communist era (1945-1989), precisely because his radical liberal beliefs are not easily accommodated within historical frameworks that have cast the 1848 Hungarian revolution as simply a class war or a bid for Magyar ethnic nationalism. Consequently, many aspects of Kossuth's political ideas (especially related to his ongoing interest in the United States as a model democracy) have been effaced from the historical record or not put into their proper international context. For critical post-communist reassessments of Kossuth, see Pajkossy, and L. Peter et al., Lajos Kossuth Sent Word: Papers delivered on the occasion of the bicentenary of Kossuth's birth (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, 2003).

from public discourse. With this action, Kossuth followed the guiding principle uniting Hungarian liberals of the pre-1848 era to disallow anyone or anything from having absolute power over society.\textsuperscript{15} This was an enduring characteristic of Kossuth’s persona that not only worked to extend and transform the public sphere, but importantly, as will be developed in this chapter, initiated a tradition of political counter re-presentation that attempted to work \textit{both within and outside} officially established and sanctioned channels and spheres of influence. Kossuth began this approach in his early years as a law student when he became an active member of the ‘dietal youth,’ a radical student group that began a campaign of creating multiple hand-written copies of the official minutes of the Poszony Diet from 1832-36.\textsuperscript{16} These documents, distributed as private letters through the mail via subscription to thousands of readers, circumvented official censorship and helped to expose the unreliability of the press as a source of parliamentary affairs. One direct result was that the reports became important shapers of public opinion and debate over the conflicted direction of governance in the Empire.\textsuperscript{17} And while Kossuth’s refusal to retract his reports resulted in his jailing in 1837, the Austrians’ punitive action only fueled the young lawyer’s popularity as an outspoken and trusted journalist of the common people. Once released from prison, and with public pressure, Kossuth was allowed through a series of negotiations that sought to keep a government check on his activities, to take over the editor-in-chief post at Budapest’s liberal daily newspaper, the \textit{Pest Daily (Pesti Hirlap)}. Therein, Kossuth introduced the innovative convention of the front page editorial, using his keen sense of journalistic prose and rhetoric to lay out his treatise for the political and economic transformation of Hungary.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} Denes: 829.

\textsuperscript{16} Poszony is the Hungarian name for the present-day capital city of Bratislava in Slovakia. Poszony served as residence for Hungarian kings and archbishops, and was the Kingdom of Hungary’s official meeting place for its Diet (as a constituent land of the Austrian Empire) until 1848. Importantly, members of the Diet’s governing council were appointed by the Habsburg monarch and the Diet was directly subordinated to the Court Chamber in Vienna.

\textsuperscript{17}László Kontler, \textit{A History of Hungary: Millennium in Central Europe} (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 236.
Importantly, Kossuth addressed issues of ethnic nationalism within the positivist liberal aims of Magyarization, as a process of encouraging an inclusive and new modern nationalism that could be freed from imperial, and ultimately Germanic, influence. As a descendant of partly Slovak ancestry, Kossuth’s political position was therefore not without controversy. This was especially so as a small number of Slavic groups continued to mistrust the broader agenda of Magyarization, even as it helped unite against the imperial Habsburgs. Indeed, ethnic nationalists would take up Kossuth’s ideas decades later to forge ahead and justify discriminatory policies towards Slavic minorities. But Kossuth’s “Buy Hungarian” campaigns of the early 1840’s, for example, were rooted more in a growing awareness of unrestrained laissez-faire economic policies that threatened to incorporate or subsume smaller industries than a bid to protect only one ethnic group’s interests. As a result of the popularity and mass appeal to a broad liberal base, the circulation of Pest Daily increased to over five thousand subscribers from a few hundred (translating to as many as fifty thousand readers or one quarter of the public for newspapers at that time in the country), making the Hungarian language newspaper the most widely read paper in the Habsburg Empire, completely transforming the aims and objectives of Hungarian journalism within the Empire as a kind of “check” on the nation’s political elite.

By autumn 1847, on the eve of sweeping revolutionary activity throughout Europe, Kossuth consolidated his power by waging a hard fought campaign to become the principle figure of Opposition in the Lower House of the Diet.

---

18 Ibid., 238-41. Also see Kosáry, Domokos, "A Pesti Hirlap (The Pest Daily)," in Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth’s 150th Anniversary) ed. Magyar Történelmi Társulat. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952).

19 See Appendix I concerning the politics of Magyarization in nineteenth century Hungary.

20 Kontler, 282-283.


22 Kontler, 238.

23 The difference between the aristocracy and the gentry in Hungary was given shape in the Hungarian Diet. All members of the aristocracy had the right to sit in the Upper House (which was largely conservative), while the Lower House elected two delegates from each county in Hungary to form its constituency (which was mostly liberal).
Representing the industrial district of Pest, Kossuth worked to cement his position as the new leader of an emerging middle class urban constituency. And by March 3, 1848, only two days after reports of revolution in the streets of Paris and the abdication of Louis Phillipe, Kossuth seized an opportunity to put his liberal reforms into practice by delivering a parliamentary speech to the Lower House, which, in the spirit of America’s Declaration of Independence, demanded parliamentary government for Hungary and a constitutional government for the rest of Austria.\(^\text{24}\)

Ten days later, translated copies of Kossuth’s speech helped fuel the outbreak of revolt first in Vienna and then in Budapest. In response, the monarchy promised that the nations of the Austrian monarchy would be granted a constitution. For his part, Kossuth took an active and leading role in developing the April Laws, a series of thirty-one acts that would transition Hungary from a feudal to a civil society.\(^\text{25}\)

Working at first within the framework of the Austrian’s concessions to Hungary, Kossuth’s focus as Hungary’s new Minister of Finance was to begin an aggressive program of economic emancipation from Austria through the introduction of the country’s own banknotes and the distribution of interest-bearing treasury notes.\(^\text{26}\)

Critically, Kossuth also focused on the importance of developing dense railroad systems and the promotion of local industries as further steps towards independence.

\(^{24}\) Kossuth had to carefully balance his political aims within the context of a large noble majority in the feudal social conditions as they existed in Austria-Hungary at mid-century. Many of his contemporaries were also preoccupied with the outcomes and lessons learned from the French revolution of 1789. Therefore, Kossuth avoided direct reference to a revolution on the radical scale of the French in the earliest days of the impending revolt against Austrian rule in order to mitigate an immediate fracture in the social body as Hungary attempted to achieve its independence. Behind closed doors, however, Kossuth was directly connected to Budapest’s radical left and found inspiration in the revolutionary and cultural tradition of the French. For further discussion, see: Deme; György Spira, *Kossuth and posterity* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980), 6; István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

\(^{25}\) The April Laws (also known as the Constitution of 1848) amounted to a thinning of the constitutional links between Austria and Hungary. The Laws, however, provided for the extension of the franchise, independent law courts, full emancipation of the Jews, equality of received Christian denominations, abolition of tax privileges to the wealthy, and importantly, the liberation of all serfs from personal bondage and manorial obligations. See Kontler, 249-251.

\(^{26}\) For a discussion on the development of the first banknotes under Kossuth, see István Sinkovics, "Önéllő Magyar Bankjegy (The Independent Hungarian Banknote)," in *Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésénél 150. évfordulójára* (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth’s 150th Anniversary), ed. Magyar Történelmi Társulat. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952).
from Austria. These political aims in turn would have great significance for later phases of his activity and post-exile representation as I will return to later.

The fragile detente with Austria, however, was already showing signs of deterioration in the months following the establishment of the new constitution. In particular, the Habsburgs grew increasingly uneasy with the liberal directions of Hungary’s newly formed government and the radical Left’s push for further democratic change. With the threat of imminent conflict on the horizon, Kossuth’s focus quickly turned from political revolution to the establishment of an army to defend Hungary’s interests. Following one of his most famous addresses to the newly constituted Hungarian parliament in July 1848, Kossuth persuaded members to offer 200,000 soldiers forty million forints for the defense of the nation. Embarking on a recruiting tour to attract new conscripts, Kossuth traveled to the Hungarian countryside’s peasant farming communities and cemented his popularity with the people whom he met there. It is through this direct contact with the unrepresented rural populations of Hungary that historians often associate with the birth of what is termed as the “Kossuth Cult,” marked by the creation of special songs, stories, and legends about the revolutionary figure, made Regent of Hungary in April, 1849. In turn, Kossuth’s plans to declare Hungary’s complete independence from Austria was met with wide popular support, even as moderate liberals attempted to persuade Kossuth to capitulate to the newly crowned Emperor Francis Joseph who had declared Hungary in a state of rebellion. By the summer of 1849, Austrian forces

---

27 See discussion in Chapter One on the 1848 revolutionaries’ interest in uniting Buda and Pest into an industrial center through the construction of railways and bridges.

28 See Deme.


30 Kossuth chose the designation of Regent in order to avoid taking over as sole leader of the revolutionary state, fearing any associations with a dictatorial and non-democratically gained position. For a discussion on the “Kossuth Cult” phenomena, see Alice Freifeld, Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary: 1848-1914 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 70-87.

31 Franz Joseph I assumed the Habsburg throne December 2, 1847 following the controversial abdication of Ferdinand V who was deemed mentally unfit to rule. The Austrians believed that a new ruler would not be bound by any oath to respect the constitutional concessions made by the outgoing Emperor. Not surprisingly, Hungarians refused to acknowledge the newly crowned eighteen year old Emperor, crying foul over the deliberate attempts to revoke the constitution. Moreover, the order of
with the help of substantial Russian tsarist troop would completely quell the Hungarian insurgency. And while the events would distinguish Hungary as engaging in the longest full revolution among the mid-nineteenth century uprisings in Europe, it would also prove among the most devastating. Kossuth, having been forced to resign and accept defeat, was forced into exile by the Austrians never to step foot onto Hungarian soil for the rest of his life.

The next phase of Kossuth’s political career, however, was arguably as prolific as his early achievements at home. Not only would he emerge on the international stage as a tireless advocate of democratic state independence, Kossuth would champion the cause in an unprecedented manner to any surviving revolutionary of the nineteenth century.\(^{32}\) One reason for this was that Kossuth and his cause had come into global consciousness just as the technology of print media and telecommunication through the telegraph were making it possible to disseminate information at a more rapid and affordable rate to the common person. Kossuth, as a result, had already familiarized himself in the minds of distant publics, who followed the captivating story of Hungary’s bid for state independence and its terrible defeat through daily accounts in the international press. These reports only intensified following Kossuth’s year of imprisonment in Turkey, when the exiled revolutionary successfully negotiated his release to the hands of the Americans. In turn, a growing international public became enthralled with Hungary’s struggle for independence and Kossuth’s role as a modern day George Washington.\(^{33}\) In Britain too, Kossuth and the Magyars were seen to be fighting for rights and a constitution not unlike the Anglo-Saxons cherished Magna Carta. In this sense, Kossuth’s perceived patriotism also dovetailed with chartist political ideology that legitimated market mechanisms

\(^{32}\) This is a claim made in one way or another by a number of historians. See for example Donald S. Spencer, *Louis Kossuth and Young America: A Study of Sectionalism and Foreign Policy, 1848-1852* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977); Freifeld; Margot Finn, ""A Vent Which Has Conveyed Our Principles": English Radical Patriotism in the Aftermath of 1848,"*The Journal of Modern History* 64, no. 4 (1992).

\(^{33}\) Freifeld, 112. The passionate outpouring of support for Kossuth was also precipitated by an international incident involving the Habsburgs’ attempted seizure of a former revolutionary soldier from an American ship in Turkish waters. This prompted the United States to issue the first international ultimatum in its history and demand that the Habsburgs back down from their plan.
supporting classical liberal demands for non-state interference in the economy. In turn, few revolutionaries of the nineteenth century would garner such an international impact or draw such an outpouring of support as Kossuth would in the early 1850’s, attracting massive political crowds the likes of which had seldom been witnessed in the Western world. His arrival in London enroute to America, for example, was characterized in the press as a kind of “coronation day,” where Trafalgar Square was described as “black with people” and Nelson’s monument peopled “up to the fluted shaft!” And at a stop in the southern French port of Marseilles, Kossuth, who had been denied permission to travel to Paris in the aftermath of France’s own aborted revolution, caused a sensation when he threatened to go over the head of Louis Napoleon and appeal directly to the French public. He did so in short order by publishing his correspondence with the French authorities in the radical Paris newspaper Le Peuple, a letter that questioned how a country that stood for liberty, equality and fraternity could allow such a response from its leader. A political cartoon even appeared within the week in The London Charivari asking as much (fig.3.3) In response, the French demanded that the Americans leave with Kossuth before public rioting ensued.


35 Freifeld, 113.

“Kossuth Fever” in America, Kossuth in the International Eye

By the time Kossuth reached New York in early December, 1851, a crowd of one hundred thousand awaited him, the largest crowd that had ever gathered for a public procession in the United States (fig.3.4). Presenting his orations before over five hundred groups in a tour of America’s largest eastern cities, the celebrated revolutionary possessed the aura of a modern day rock star (compared to George Washington, Moses, and even Jesus Christ) reportedly making women swoon and men cheer his name wherever he traveled. The telegraph and daily press coverage, together with hundreds of articles and drawings in the pages of monthly magazines and journals, made it possible for Americans to follow the “Kossuth Fever” through the exiled revolutionary’s daily movements from the moment of his arrival in December 1851 to his departure in July 1852, escalating the popular excitement and near hysteria caused wherever Kossuth went. For example, *The New York Daily Times* (later *The New York Times*) printed in excess of 800 articles directly related to Kossuth during his eight month tour of the United States. As a result, Kossuth emerged as arguably the first bonafide international press sensation of the modern era, acting as the ready poster child of 1848 revolutionary defeat and secularized martyrdom. Skillfully playing on parallels with the sufferings of the Israelites and the New England Puritans to garner support, Kossuth’s story brought to mind the plight

---

37 Freifeld, 113.


of America’s founding fathers and the ideals of the American revolution. A town in Mississippi and a county in Iowa were even named after Kossuth.\footnote{There are cities and towns named after Kossuth in, Iowa, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.}

But what contributed most to Kossuth’s impact on the American stage related to his timing. Arriving at the height of fierce debates within the U.S. about slavery, sectionalism, and foreign policy—issues that could be directly related to the precarious situation within Austria on the eve of revolution—Kossuth capitalized upon his moment in the American public eye by contributing his opinions on a whole host of issues, championing above all else the policy of ‘Intervention for Non-Intervention.’ This policy, drawing on the case of the Russian Tsarist army’s role in quelling the Hungarian uprising, called upon the American government to prevent foreign nations from interfering with the internal affairs of neighbouring states.\footnote{Spencer, 49-64.} And while the democratic aims of the policy were championed by a wider public looking to help Hungary gain its independence, the governing powers of the United States were less than willing to sign off on such a controversial act. Even so, attesting to Kossuth’s broad appeal and influence, a banquet was held in his honour in Washington D.C. where he was invited to address a joint session of Congress in the National Statuary Hall, only the second foreigner after France’s Marquis de La Fayette to be bestowed with such an honour.

On recalling these series of events, it is useful to underscore that several scholars who have focused on the complex Kossuth phenomenon and his overwhelming international popularity, argue that it was Kossuth’s uncanny ability to tap into the popular political debates around democracy and freedom in the places that he toured that made him such a captivating figure.\footnote{See for example Zoltán Fejős, “Three Faces of the National Hero: Statues of Kossuth in the United States” Hungarian Quarterly 40, no. 156 (1999), http://www.hungarianquarterly.com/no156/107.html.} In particular, the exiled revolutionary’s keen oratory skills in English and persuasive rhetoric, together with his charismatic presence, seemed to assure him ready audiences.\footnote{Kossuth was famously reported to have learned English by reading Shakespeare in jail. Spencer, 55.} Be it through Kossuth’s ability to incorporate a local anecdote relevant to his particular audience in public speeches on Hungarian independence, or reportedly inspire future president
Abraham Lincoln to use Kossuth's interpretation of democracy ("All for the people and all by the people. Nothing about the people without the people...") in his famous Gettysburg Address of 1863, Kossuth appeared to be a true master of publicity and innovator of the modern-day political campaign and "sound-bite."

At the same time, however, the appeal of Kossuth to a politically diverse cross-section of the public aroused suspicion in some observers about where his real loyalties lay. Was he a liberal or a socialist? A radical or a moderate? Did he want an independent Hungary for all, or just for the Magyars? In this sense, what is more indicative of the international interest in Kossuth, and the aspect of his later fraught re-presentation that will become the focus for the remainder of the chapter, is how successfully his presence upon the post-1848 global stage galvanized around and revealed all that was most contested within a range of liberal and democratic ideals that had essentially been damaged and brought into question in the wake of revolutionary loss post-1848. Kossuth's plea for American foreign interventionism, for example, was feared by anti-abolitionists who thought similar applications could be made to abolish slavery in the southern United States.45 In this sense, Kossuth remained until his death a constant irritant and reminder of the most idealized and radical aspects of democratic and liberal values. But these very values—ones that appeared on the surface to remain essential to Western nation-building through the fin de siècle era—were, ironically enough, most often attached to him in relationship to loss and failure. This was seen most provocatively with Kossuth's self-fashioning as a defeated Hannibal in exile, never to gain victory. Kossuth's shortcomings were also increasingly tied to the many controversies and debates that called his character and motivations into question once exiled from Hungary.46 But one of the seldom

44 Abraham Lincoln famously supported Kossuth's cause. Spencer, 24. Several of Kossuth's lengthy speeches were reprinted word for word in the U.S. press and circulated well after his departure from the American scene. See note 29.


discussed aspects about Kossuth’s popularity and controversial persona relates in fact to just how quickly it died down after its tremendous peak. With the exception of American historian Donald Spencer’s comprehensive study on the connections between Kossuth and the climax and decline of the ‘Young America’ movement in the early 1850’s—research that traces the rapid decline of public interest in Kossuth by the time he left America— few scholars have examined how closely Kossuth’s abbreviated “fifteen minutes of fame” were tied to American politicians’ speedy abandonment of any residual interest in the spirit with which the 1848 revolutions arose. In other words, it is arguable that there existed a concerted effort to contain the more radical social and political agenda represented by the exiled Hungarian revolutionary.

What then are we to make of Kossuth’s legacy and his residual impact on the international public eye? For his part, Kossuth remained a resolute figure of nineteenth century power politics, one that would arise again and again in public and global discourse throughout a number of tumultuous European nation-building episodes from the 1850’s to the 1870’s. Likened by some to a kind of relentless wanderer, who spoke many languages and kept himself informed and often entangled in global affairs, Kossuth was closely tied at several junctures in his lifetime to other exiled revolutionary figures such as Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini and continued to publicly agitate the likes of France’s Louis Napoleon and Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph through the far-reaching medium of the international press.

---

47 This idea is explored briefly in a dated essay by Heinrich Herman Maurer, "A Letter of Louis Kossuth," *Journal of Modern History* 2, no. 1 (1930). Importantly, the perpetuation of a particular myth of Kossuth as an enduring hero in American eyes, especially in the American-Hungarian community, has often led to an outright refusal to come to terms with any American abandonment of the Hungarian cause— even though a similar abandonment occurred again in 1917 with the Trianon Agreement that carved up Hungarian territories and famously in 1956 following the Hungarian revolution. In both cases, the promised American support for the Hungarian cause was withdrawn.

Finally settling in Turin, Italy, where he would remain until his death in 1894, Kossuth continued his campaign for Hungarian independence through an endless stream of ultimately unsuccessful proposals, speeches, manifestos and programs. Still, Kossuth's broad appeal to a wide cross-section of groups—be it the community of sympathetic and more moderate liberal politicians within Hungary, émigré groups and 1848 exiles from the United States and England, or radical liberal thinkers from a diversity of nations—maintained his voice and presence on the international stage. This, despite his arguably disempowered position. Critically, in 1867 when Austria made concessions to Hungary through the Compromise that created the dual Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kossuth refused to acknowledge or accept invitations to help counsel the new government, vehemently criticizing Hungarian politicians who he thought blind to the limitations and illusions of the deal. Instead, Kossuth's published letters and calls for opposition to dualism only escalated in the immediate years and decades following the Compromise, followed closely by his memoirs which were published in several languages during the 1880's. As a kind of postmortem account of the failed 1848 revolutions, Kossuth's memoirs and his continued writings sparked renewed debate over Austro-Hungarian dualism and the direction of European liberalism to Kossuth's dying day. In turn, Kossuth's writings were followed

---

49 Many of these writings are discussed in great detail in Gyula Syékő, "Az öreg Kossuth, 1867-1894 (The Elder Kossuth)," in Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth's 150th Anniversary) ed. Magyar Történelmi Társulat. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952), 341-433.

50 Kossuth's memoir Memories of My Exile was published in 1880 in English, French, German, Hungarian, and Italian editions. Within Hungary, the loosening of publication restrictions post-1867 resulted in the circulation of a number of Kossuth books, including: Mihály Horváth, Kossuth Lajos újabb leveleire (Lajos Kossuth's Newest Letters) (Pest: Ráth Mór, 1868); Lajos Kossuth, Mészáros Károly, and Sándor Szodoray, Kossuth Lajos és fiainak az 1867-dik évben megjelent összes leveleik (Lajos Kossuth and His Son's Complete Letters Published to 1867) (Pest: Nyomatott Leitner Kunosy és Réthy-nél, 1868); Mihály Zsilinszky, Kossuth a magyar nép szívében és költészetében; költémenyfűszer (Kossuth in the Hungarian Nation's Heart and Poetry) (Pest: Kilián György, 1868); Áldor Imre, Kossuth Lajos, mint a magyar nép vezére és tanítója (Lajos Kossuth as the Hungarian Nation's Leader and Teacher) (Pest: Heckenast G., 1870); Imre Áldor, Kossuth Lajos, élete és pályája (Lajos Kossuth's Life and Career) (Budapest: Franklin, 1892).

51 Kossuth was still being reported on in the international press within years of his death for his continuing commentary on the ills of the 1867 Compromise with Austria, the issue of pragmatic sanction (see note 30), and for the controversy surrounding the Hungarian government's attempts to bribe Kossuth into directing his supporters (at home and abroad) to endorse the liberal cabinet operating in Budapest at the time. See: "Kossuth's Bitter Feeling," The Washington Post, September 22 1892; "Kossuth And The Pragmatic Sanction," The London Times, September 29 1892; "Offers to Bribe Kossuth," The Washington Post, May 16 1893.
quickly by reprints of the history of the 1848 Hungarian revolution and multiple renditions of Kossuth’s biography. All of these materials continued to circulate widely in Hungary and the Western world throughout the fin de siècle period, coinciding with the rapid rise of socialist movements throughout Europe and within Hungary by the 1880’s and 1890’s.\(^{52}\)

Consequently, by the time of Kossuth’s well-publicized death in the spring of 1894—the opening episode of this chapter—I would contend that the public reaction in Budapest to the brewing controversy over Kossuth’s funeral and remembrance formed around three interrelated markers. These were first, the martyrology of revolutionary defeat; second, the aims and discrepancies of nineteenth century revolutions; and third, the role of the crowd and international press in demanding attention and access to the means of representing Kossuth in the private and public sphere. In terms of martyrology and suffering for the sake of principle, Kossuth had built his political career on proving his dedication to an unwavering belief in the complete independence of the Hungarian state. His role as a catalyst for heated debates surrounding the nature of “compromise” and the neo-absolutism he associated with the dualist regime inspired irritation and refusal among the Hungarian public to completely accept the extent of transformations in political policies that emerged in Europe post-1848. At the very least, he acted as a reminder of the brewing state of crisis European liberalism and ethnic nationalism were in by the 1890’s. And while other Western nations had largely explained away their 1848 revolutionary legacy to their publics as either an embarrassment and/or a part of a transitional phase to modern nationalism, historian Alice Freifeld in her fascinating study *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary* argues that there existed within Hungary a “chastened” public born in revolution and revived in compromise politics.\(^{53}\)

\(^{52}\) In the period of the late 1890’s and into the early 1900’s, I noted a perceptible rise in the number of publications and re-issues of books dealing with Kossuth and the 1848 revolution internationally. This is also likely a result of the Budapest World’s Fair and the interest in Hungarian history, but the more radical aspects of Kossuth’s democratic ideals are often emphasized. See for example E.O.S, *Hungary and its revolutions: from the earliest period to the nineteenth century; with a memoir of Louis Kossuth*, Bohn’s libraries. (London: George Bell, 1896) and *Kossuth: Architect of Hungarian Freedom (1802-1894)*, (London: Hungarian Friendship Society, 1900). For a discussion on the rise of radical socialism in fin de siècle Hungary, see András Bozóki and Miklós Síkköd, *Anarchism in Hungary: Theory, History, Legacies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 62-99.

\(^{53}\) Freifeld, 1-43.
Importantly, Freifeld explores how Hungarian revolutionary defeat was persistently cast from within Hungarian ranks in heroic terms, emphasizing dignity in failure. As I have described, for example, in the previous chapter on the potency of the Polish panorama for Hungarian audiences at the Millennial Exhibition, it was a representation that allowed Polish defeat at the hands of the Russian tsarist army to be read as a sign of national self-determination and perseverance—a history of collective failure to throw off imperial forces that awakened and united disparate publics in Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the initial success of the 1848 revolutions relied heavily upon the spirit of internationalism and emerging brotherhood to gain momentum for the decentralized transformation of traditional networks of power. As a result, the memory of revolution was a constant and silent link among a broad cross-section of the Austro-Hungarian public, and, as Freifeld compellingly argues, resulted in the specter of the revolutionary crowd never fully being dispelled. And by 1894, the danger that threatened to ignite the crowd coalesced once again around the right to represent and honour historical memories and figures that did not correspond to the Habsburg master narrative.

Conflicted Representation of a Revolutionary

Not surprisingly, the Austrian monarch’s refusal to commemorate Kossuth’s death in any official capacity stirred up bitter memories of the immediate and most oppressive years following the 1848 revolution when the city of Budapest was placed under constant surveillance. At this time, individuals had been punished, even by public execution, for daring to sing the Kossuth song, bear his likeness, or reference Kossuth in any public or political venue whatsoever. The funeral, as a quickly developing public event, thus became a very fluid and uncontainable venue through which members of the public began to openly and passionately question the aftermath of broader multinational outcomes with the Austro-Hungarian experiment. In the days immediately following the news of Kossuth’s death, for example, student and worker groups gathered to protest the Hungarian parliament’s decision to comply with the Habsburgs and not lower flags of public buildings in honour of Kossuth, while others

---

54 Ibid., 119-59.
sang the Kossuth song openly for the first time in decades. Many individuals also protested the jailing of two well-known city journalists writing on the rioting, ironically echoing the fate of Kossuth in his earlier years who had been imprisoned by the Austrians as a Budapest reporter in the 1840's. The questions on the lips of many puzzled Budapesters in the days, weeks, and months following Kossuth's death therefore galvanized around what had been gained, what had been lost, and what would be buried forever with the last remaining figure of the 1848 Hungarian revolution. The world in turn watched, and international press accounts that at first focused on the seemingly banal and quiet death of a geriatric political figure, began to fixate more squarely on the political skeletons that were being stirred up in the heart of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the wake of the contentious funeral preparations.

To be sure, the manifestations and conflicts over Kossuth's representation as they emerged in the public realm at the time of his death had longstanding connections to the kind of mass consumption and modern means of circulation and distribution conjured up through the medium of the international press. This was particularly evident in Kossuth's earliest days as a traveling exile and the tremendous publicity that he generated wherever he went. Refused representation in any official capacity in his home country, Kossuth relied upon the press, the Hungarian émigré community, and those who looked to capitalize upon his persona and story as a means to keep his image in a broader public consciousness. Within the United States and Britain, these representations mostly took the form of newspaper and magazine illustrations that sought to capture the seeming spontaneous support for Kossuth's cause, fueled by the phenomenon of 'Kossuth Fever' that came in the wake of his multi-city tour. These pictures, commonly showing the exiled revolutionary in transit and arriving or departing from certain stops were punctuated by large and enthusiastic crowds and the machinery of motion—be it via a horse drawn carriage or a steamship—simultaneously signaling Kossuth's power to draw large audiences and


56 See Borus.


58 See notes 34 and 39.
a sense of his continual movement through vast distances (figs.3.5-3.6). These interrelated themes were echoed quite literally in a special postage stamp depicting Kossuth’s image that apparently circulated in the United States from 1851-56.59

Kossuth, in fact, was confronted with just how generative and profitable his ‘face-value’ was, particularly in New York, where the sale of ‘Kossuth hats,’ buttons, flags, and the appearance of Kossuth marches and dances in theatres throughout the city were headline-grabbing news.60 Even his style of beard, the Newgate fringe (so called because it occupies the position of the rope when men are about to be hanged), and his choice of hat became fashion statements and signs of protest against revolutionary loss, being adopted by none other than Abraham Lincoln, the young republic’s future president.61 Several photographers also advertised the sale of exclusive poses of the Hungarian patriot, and a market developed for special daguerreotypes.62 Kossuth, however, had been keen enough to commission and grant exclusive commercial rights to his likeness to a private artist, maintaining some small measure of control over his representation. Furthermore, in the years and decades following Kossuth’s exile from Hungary, several lithographic prints and copies of his photographic portraits managed to circulate outside the West and make their way back to Hungary (figs.3.7-3.10). Boosted in circulation through newer and more affordable printing technologies and expanding global postal systems, the appearance of a Kossuth photograph, print, or item of memorabilia in the private confines of a Budapest family home became increasingly commonplace through the end of the nineteenth century, even while the possession of such an object was considered a punishable crime.63

59 A postcard dating from the early nineteenth century (see fig.3.43) shows a stamp in the lower right-hand side of the image with the insignia 1851-56. This leads me to believe that such a stamp circulated with Kossuth’s image at some point during this period.

60 Spencer, 49-64.

61 Newgate was a famous prison in London where public hangings regularly took place. William Penn, for example, the Quaker who founded Pennsylvania had also been a famous prisoner. Abraham Lincoln, a supporter of Kossuth, would famously sport a Newgate fringe during his political career.

62 Walter Gould, a young artist from Maryland is believed to have obtained exclusive commercial rights from Kossuth for his likeness, however a trade in unauthorized copies quickly developed. The exploitation of Kossuth’s fame extended into unforeseen venues as well. For example, Kossuth’s face was used to sell rat poison as a deterrent to the pesky rodents. Spencer, 61-2.
To be sure, most of the commonly circulated representations of Kossuth carried with them the charge and memory of 1848 and their distribution was largely through private hands once Kossuth’s brief public moment in America began to fade. Within the public sphere, however, a simultaneous category of more traditional representation with overt political overtones slowly emerged once the revolutionary left America. These, while attempting to recuperate and find space for Kossuth’s persona, operated on the outer edges of official and traditional modes of exhibition. Among the earliest documented examples arises with Gustave Courbet’s 1855 large scale and controversial painting *The Painter’s Studio: A Real Allegory Summarizing My Seven Years of Life as an Artist* (fig. 3.11). Coinciding with the phase of neo-absolute rulership in post-1848 France, it was an image that Courbet self-consciously chose to commemorate and picture key figures associated with the broader 1848 European uprisings.\(^\text{64}\) As art historian Helene Touissant has convincingly argued, Kossuth was included among the individuals chosen by the respected French artist to make an appearance in the painting (fig. 3.12).\(^\text{65}\) Painted during a period of great

---

\(^{62}\) Vayer Lajos, "Kossuth alakja az egykorú művészetben (Kossuth's Image in the Art of the Day)," in *Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth's 150th Anniversary)*, ed. Magyar Történelmi Társulat. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952), 450-51. I have also found evidence of these circulating images in both Budapest’s City Archives and numerous sources (both primary and secondary) that discuss and/or directly provide examples of the earliest recorded photographic and print representations of Kossuth circulating in Hungary after Kossuth’s exile. Besides the detailed account by Vayer, see Herman; Miklós Nagy, *Kossuth Lajos emlékezetete. Negyvenegy képpel és két képmelléklettel* (Lajos Kossuth Remembered. With Forty-four Pictures) (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1894); Beatrix Basics, *Kossuth Lajos (1802-1894)* (Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 2002). Herman,


\(^{65}\) Touissant, Rubin, and Mewburn all mention the presence of Kossuth in the Courbet painting. Interestingly, however, this finding has not been cited in any of the works detailed in note 61 dealing with the representation of Kossuth. This may be because the presence of Kossuth in Courbet’s image has not yet been absolutely verified, but also because Touissant’s findings emerge well after the most comprehensive account by Vayer. Even so, I have been able to place Kossuth in France in the years Courbet would have been preparing his canvas through newspaper accounts. Kossuth’s fame was also at an all time high between 1851-1856 because of his work with Mazzini.
social transition in France (coinciding with the most oppressive pre-Austro-Hungarian Compromise years of Kossuth’s exile) Courbet’s work made ironic commentary on the fading memory of radical liberalism and the momentary unity of the French working and middle classes.\textsuperscript{66} Importantly, when the painting was ceremoniously rejected by the jury of the 1855 Paris World Exhibition set to occur in France’s capital, Courbet withdrew his eleven accepted submissions and set up an independent pavilion (Pavillon du Réalisme) not far from the official exhibition. The painting’s erasure from officially sanctioned spaces of exhibition marked a critical reference point not only in the history of modern art, but also for a new generation of European artists situated outside France looking to challenge institutional power and seek alternative spaces of public exhibition. It was a phenomenon that would play itself out at future World’s Fairs, including not surprisingly, Budapest’s four decades later.\textsuperscript{67}

The first renderings of Kossuth by respected Hungarian painters would slowly emerge shortly after the 1867 Compromise. These artists, many with state funding, began to include Kossuth in public paintings as a worthy figure among the pantheon of great Hungarian statesmen, challenging how far they could push Austrian tolerance with a newly gained Hungarian presence in the Empire.\textsuperscript{68} A seldom discussed episode relating to the limits of this patience emerged with the rejection of a Kossuth portrait painted for Hungary’s National Exhibition of 1885. Submitted by female artist Vilma Parlaghy, the large scale painting of an elder Kossuth in his private Italian chambers (fig.3.13) proved too controversial to include in the official Exhibition.\textsuperscript{69} Citing Parlaghy’s lack of talent, despite her experience and acclaim as a portrait painter, and being the recipient of the distinguished Gold Medal of the Berlin Art Academy several years later, the Budapest art committee refused to show the work in any

\textsuperscript{66} See Mewburn.

\textsuperscript{67} See Chapter Two for a discussion around the exhibition of two high profile paintings rejected from the official Salon of Hungarian art during the 1896 Fair.

\textsuperscript{68} See Vayer, especially pages 454-469, and a list on page 470 with a complete list of all known painted portraits of Kossuth finished in his lifetime. Importantly, Vayer also includes here the name of the publisher and printing presses (in Italy, Scotland, Austria, and Britain) responsible for circulating copies of these portraits throughout Europe.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., 460-465.
official venue. As a result, Parlaghy exhibited the painting privately. Not only did this cause a great deal of controversy and discussion in the Budapest press at the time, the rejection of the painting drew a new generation of Austro-Hungarians’ attention to Kossuth’s history. In fact, Parlaghy’s painting can be distinctly made out in numerous photographs and lithographic prints of Kossuth in his final years as a kind of visual marker of this crisis point in his contested representation (fig. 3.14).  

The Photographer as Patriot—The Photograph as Revolutionary

These observations related to the diverse, charged, and technologically mediated history of the exiled revolutionary’s representation suggest how powerfully, and across a broad spectrum of international publics, Kossuth’s image would resonate by the time of his death. For over four decades the underground circulation of Kossuth’s image, and particularly within Hungary, was marked with a profound fixation and refusal to relinquish his memory. Treated as powerful and sacred objects, these photographs, prints and items of memorabilia were handed over from one generation to the next as a mark of endurance and testimony, forging a kindred relationship between Kossuth and his supporters as mutual martyrs of a failed revolution.  

And while understood in more muted and historicized terms in some quarters, this sense of perseverance endured through a shared and unspoken understanding that Kossuth possessed and maintained residual power as an outspoken exile that could not be readily contained or controlled by the Austrians. Within the political realm, Kossuth’s memory was upheld by the radical Left’s ‘48-er Independence Party,’ who repudiated the Compromise in toto.  

But with the geriatric revolutionary’s death, it is arguable that all that had remained, in one sense, shared, unspoken, and increasingly decontextualized about this power gained a renewed immediacy and radical voice.

Crucially, the realization of the finality of Kossuth’s life intersected with growing concerns by the 1890’s in Hungary over the effect of Austro-Hungarian

---

70 In a letter to a friend in Budapest, Kossuth remarked directly upon the Parlaghy controversy and how it had helped his cause. Ibid., 464.

71 See Freifeld and Vayer.

72 Kontler, 284.
dualism and what it was signaling politically for Hungary. This was duly exacerbated by the Austrian Habsburg’s refusal to acknowledge, or allow any official Hungarian body to commemorate, his passing. The public’s angry and shocked reaction was therefore a response to the perceived broach of trust that their place in the Empire was not as an equal partner. At the same time, the passionate outrage and revolt reinforced public fears of forever being subordinate to imperial power. As a result, “Kossuth Cult,” which had undergone transformation and become gradually depoliticized and even somewhat dormant in the post-Compromise years, emerged with a new vigour and charge. Did Kossuth’s death, many wondered, indeed signal an end to the dream of Hungarian Independence, to future revolution, or to the Compromise itself? And if so, what stood in the wake of death?

The role of the photograph in this nexus of questions and concerns was thus set to become a central force as efforts to preserve Kossuth in his passing gained a new urgency. Death’s deep associations with photography hinge, as Susan Sontag has argued, on the photograph’s alleged participation in another person, place, or thing’s “mortality, vulnerability or mutability.” Also, according to Roland Barthes, photography imbues its images with the paradoxical power of producing death while trying to preserve life. As raised at the outset of this chapter, the photograph’s object value as a memento mori is to attest and reveal a sublime sense of loss and, in Sontag’s words, “time’s relentless melt.” It is these same qualities that had already rendered many of the privately circulating Kossuth photographs as fetish objects—objects that ironically through their iteration of immobility and silence already pre-associated them with a clear mortality. These associations, in turn, were further punctuated with Kossuth’s physical exile from Hungary, emphasizing the sense of the unattainable evoked by photographs, and as Sontag explains, the corresponding erotic and romanticized feelings of those for whom desirability was enhanced with distance.

---

73 This very point was debated in the Hungarian parliament and became a much discussed topic in the weeks and months following Kossuth’s death. See Borus.

74 Sontag, 15.


76 Sontag, 15.
In other words, the talismanic uses of photographs could, as Sontag explains, "express a feeling both sentimental and implicitly magical... attempt[ing] to contact or lay claim to another reality." With Kossuth's physical death and threat of erasure from public memory, the desire to immortalize Kossuth merged with the productive function of the photograph to capture and preserve the dead body in a kind of immortal state. In this profound sense, photography provided a quick and ready technology to address the representational crisis posed by the Habsburg's censure of Kossuth. Moreover, the drive to commemorate and remember the exiled revolutionary's legacy—a phenomena first fostered in the private sphere—intersected with the power of photography to quite literally contact, claim, and widely broadcast a reality of Budapest's public sphere that had been effaced from official Habsburg representation. Indeed, in the days and weeks following Kossuth's death, the sentiment worked something like an incantation in the press. Through the exhaustive attempts to report and capture every detail of Kossuth's death and funeral and then circulate the information around the world, the message followed: if enough photographs could be taken and distributed, the revolutionary and his legacy would not be forgotten and could not really be dead.

In terms of sheer output, the number of photographs taken of the events surrounding Kossuth's funeral conservatively number in the hundreds, if not thousands. At the same time, most of these images circulated in local and international newspapers and through private hands. Concentrating in large part on the arrival of Kossuth's body from Turin, together with the funeral ceremony and procession, the vast archive of images attest to the enormous number of mourners and spectators on the streets, ranging in estimates from one hundred to five hundred thousand. The procession, as the photos help reveal, was planned as a two to three

---

77 Sontag, 16.

78 This representational crisis was also seen in the immediate desire of some Hungarians to have casts taken of Kossuth's dead body. Moreover, the traces of a "living Kossuth" filled Budapest newspapers in the days after his death, with reproduced images of his handwritten notes, and detailed drawings of his living quarters in Turin. See for example Budapest Hirlap [Budapest Daily] March 25 1894.

79 I have summized this figure through discussions with archivists in Budapest and also through my own estimates after researching local and international newspaper and photographic archives that contain many of these pictures.
hour event on April 2, 1894 (see Map 3). Following a loop through the newest parts of a rapidly growing Pest, the procession’s path strategically avoided the traditional seat of imperial power associated with Buda altogether, and bypassed any monuments or buildings associated with the new dualist government. The images, in turn, speak to the collective goal of the Budapest newspapers to publish every aspect of the event as a kind of virtual procession in print and image, detailing minute by minute accounts of the funeral procession that snaked its way through predominantly working and middle class enclaves of Pest on the cities widest and most impressive new boulevards. Importantly, this area of the city was precisely that of Kossuth’s former constituency, an area that he had represented on the eve of the 1848 revolution and helped thrust into the centre of its activities.  

Therefore, when studying individual photographs in the context of a much broader and collective body of representation, what quickly emerges topographically are the traces of a massive effort to simultaneously document the funeral and, significantly, to associate very particular spaces of the city with Kossuth’s legacy. In terms of subject matter, the photographs, while following closely the documentation of the regal procession, also imaged the buildings, technologies, and streets associated with the modern building program and economic aims of the burgeoning second capital city of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These include perhaps most symbolically the Hungarian National Museum (Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum) (fig.3.15) where the procession began and made homage to the site of revolutionary speeches, protests, and call for independence in 1848; the recently renovated Andrássy Avenue (Budapest’s ‘Champs d’Ellyses’ discussed in Chapter One), site of the ongoing construction of the underground metro that led to the site of the Millennial Exhibition grounds; along the Large Boulevard housing the newest apartment buildings in the cities burgeoning hotel and café district, (and where the majority of photographs were taken) (figs.3.16-3.17); in front of the Eastern Railway platform, referencing the modern means through which Kossuth arrived from great distance in Budapest, and

80 There appears to be little consensus on this figure in any of the documents I have studied. Any glance at the photographs or descriptions of the funeral does suggest however that the crowds were massive and blanketed Budapest’s city streets.

81 See Chapter One for a discussion on the population statistics and development of the Pest side of Budapest.
finally the Kerepesi Cemetery (fig.3.18), Hungary’s first large public cemetery opened during the revolutionary war and housing many of Hungary’s most distinguished and honoured 1848 patriots. Not only do the photographs indexical power as historic documents connect the memory of Kossuth to recognizable and distinctly modern and technologically advanced spaces of a rapidly expanding Budapest, the photographs bind this section of the city and the specter of massive urban crowds to a radical revolutionary legacy and the place where it will be best preserved and not buried. At the same time, these spaces of the city were connected to the impending World’s Fair and a majority of working and middle class inhabitants who appeared to mourn Kossuth the most.

Turning more closely to the individual photographs, the self-referential qualities of the images and their powers of insistent preservation and documentation are reiterated. For the purposes of analysis, they can be usefully divided into three separate categories. In the first category, the characteristic of reflexivity is revealed to an almost frenetic effect through serial snapshot-like photographs that document the funeral from all conceivable angles and distances. Seen for example in the photographic sequence of figs.3.19-3.22, the viewer is made to experience how the photographer, presumably positioned in a window or balcony one to two stories above the street, captures the scene below at sharp and unbalanced angles, intently focused on the broad expanse of Budapest’s Grand Boulevard with its distinguishable trolley tack lines and new modern buildings. Later, as waves of black crowds spill across the street’s surface, with many individual figures blurring directly into one another, the photographs draw attention to the collective act of mourning and defiance as shifting and uncontainable. Shot in short succession in a reportage style, these images appear almost like film stills, that when placed together impart the sense of movement and mass mobilization seen on that day (and further reinforced by the visible train tracks on the street). In the second category of photographs, the presence of many individual tripods and observing cameras are foregrounded in the images (fig.3.23), drawing attention to the new technology’s central function as witness for the nation and included in the reportable action of the day. These pictures also suggest the unofficial position of the fin de siècle Budapest photographer as labouring

82 One can in fact make out advertisements for the newspapers themselves in a number of photographs.
contributor to the urban society, part of and not divided from the crowd that is being documented. Finally, in the third category of photographs, the large format images (frequently framed as if paintings in some archival collections) functioned to elevate their subject matter to monumental effect, drawing on fine art traditions that carefully planned and posed historic scenes while infusing them with a sense of permanence and grandeur (figs.3.24-3.25). Not surprisingly, these were the photographs that most often made their way onto the pages of the international press in the form of lithographic copies, often taking up one or two full pages in illustrated newspapers, seen for example in France’s *L’Illustration, Le Monde Illustré, and L’Univers Illustre de Paris*, Italy’s *Le Tribuna de Roma*, and Britain’s *Illustrated London News* (figs.3.26-3.27). Whether picturing individuals involved in the funeral, Kossuth’s decorated casket, or distinguished guests examining the thousands of flower arrangements on the steps of the National Museum, viewers are confronted with photographers’ attempts to record the pomp, ceremony and self-conscious theatricality of the funeral as a kind of performance.

Hungarian photography and its connections to the public sphere had in fact traced its roots back to the 1848 revolution and the daguerreotypes that documented many of its key events. And while most of the revolutionary era’s photographers fled to the West after 1849, the memory of their work endured within Budapest’s photography community. As early as 1862, for example, before the official Compromise with Austria, Hungarian photographers began to openly discuss their connections to their 1848 counterparts and the links between the patriotic actions of these individuals and their emerging mandate to assist in Hungary’s nation-building project. In this sense, the cultivation of the nation’s image abroad was seen first and foremost as modern, liberal in spirit, and progressive. As such, both historical

---

83 A fascinating collection of photos, drawings, newspaper clippings, and colour plates taken from books in connection to the funeral exists in a Kossuth scrapbook available for viewing at the Budapest Collection of the Budapest City Library. Dénes Kovács, “Kossuth Emlékalbum (Kossuth Memory Book),” (Budapest: Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár (Budapest City Library), 1910).

84 A history of the Budapest photographic community (amateur and professional) as it developed during this period is discussed in Matthew Robert Lungerhausen, "Visual Culture, Modernity, and National Building: The Case of Photography in Fin de Siècle Hungary" (Ph.D Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2004), 57-93. Also see Michael Simon, Magdolna Kolta, and Magyar Fotográfiai Múzeum, *Összehasonlító magyar fotótörténet* (Comparative History of Hungarian Photography) (Budapest: Magyar Fotográfiai Múzeum (Museum of Hungarian Photography), 2000).
moments, 1848 and 1894, were understood to operate within the context of professional openness and the spirit of cosmopolitanism that maintained photographers’ independence from any regulatory body or guild. Budapest photographers recognized their increasing power and influence within the public sphere, drawing together plans in the months following the Kossuth funeral to form a national Photographer’s Association. It was through these efforts and the founding of a professional journal that Budapest photographers first outlined their civic responsibility as a collective body and to continue documenting the affairs of the nation. Importantly, their active participation in the 1896 Fair was facilitated through an independent pavilion and photography display. Benefiting from improved printing technologies which allowed photographs to be reproduced more readily and cost-effectively in the press, most Budapest photographers upheld the stated aims of their emerging association to maintain a degree of civic responsibility and to turn a profit.

Indeed, I want to stress here that the professionalization of photography within Budapest and the emergence of the photographer’s role as both witness for, and promoter of, the independent Hungarian nation came of age with the Kossuth funeral. Between 1890 and 1900, for example, the number of working photographers in

85 Since the Hungarian government had been unwilling to recognize photographers as a profession (perhaps due in some measure to the action of many photographers to document the events of the 1848 revolution), there was a sense that the new technology could be practiced democratically, by anyone able to open a studio and purchase the necessary equipment. The power to organize a profession was indeed under the constant scrutiny of the state. See Mária M. Kovács, Liberal Professions and Illiberal Politics: Hungary from the Habsburgs to the Holocaust (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

86 The Hungarian Photographer’s Association founded their association newspaper, the Fényképesyeti ertesíti (Photographic Informer) in November 1893, just five months before Kossuth’s death. Therein, the guiding principles of the association were laid out in a series of essays and open letters by its members. Importantly, an article titled "The Millennium and Hungarian Photography" in the very first issue (volume 1) urged association members to become active in the visual representation of the nation and the city of Budapest in particular.

87 The plans for the display are discussed in Katalin Varga, "Egyszer és azóta sem (Once and Never Again)," Budapest Negyed 15 (1997), http://www.bparchiv.hu/magyar/kiadvany/bpn/15/varga.html, while the actual display is described over three issues of the Fényképesyeti ertesíti (Photographic Informer) (volumes 16-18) during the duration of the 1896 Fair.

88 The history of photography’s first appearance in Hungarian newspapers from the nineteenth to twentieth century is outlined in Péter Baki, A Vasárnapi Ujság és a Fotográfia, 1854-1921 (The Sunday Newspaper and Photography, 1854-1921) (Budapest: Magyar Fotográfiai Múzeum, 2005).
Budapest almost doubled from 263 to 508.\textsuperscript{89} Having worked largely in anonymity, they were a group that had gained some measure of currency at home, but became more respected and trusted as foreign photo-journalists with the international circulation of their Kossuth funeral photography. As a result, a new generation of Budapest photographers’ careers was, in part, defined through connection to the Kossuth funeral. Traced through photographic credits on steel plate engravings in the local and international press, the names of photographers who managed to sell their images abroad became synonymous by the late 1890’s as the founding and leading figures of Budapest’s fin de siècle photography boom, including Antal Weinwurm, Diváld Károly, György Klösz, Mihaly Schemboche and Erdélyi (figs.3.28-3.29).\textsuperscript{90}

As alluded to earlier, the simultaneous documentation of the funeral as a kind of theatrical performance was closely related to the goal of Budapest photographers to showcase and ‘show-off’ the most forward-looking parts of the city. Fully aware of the interest and global publicity that the photographs would likely generate, not to mention their collective posterity in the history of the nation, the photographers and newspaper editors working on Kossuth’s funeral provided an early preview and glimpse of Budapest to potential fairgoers and international tourists who would soon arrive in the burgeoning metropolis. Consequently, the thousands of circulating photographs of the newest parts of Pest, images that were reprinted regularly in the local and international press for up to a month after the funeral, and then more sporadically in the lead up to the 1896 Fair, revealed and helped overturn any previously held assumptions about the “backward” or “feudal” nature of the peripheral European nation. Picturing a fashionable and up-to-date urban public on new city streets with the latest in urban technology, the photographs trafficked in images of Budapest’s modernity first and foremost.

At the same time, however, some of the pictures that featured large gathering bodies of mourners also renewed focus on the legacy of revolution and raised ambiguities about what latent danger or promise the crowd possessed. This sentiment was noted, for example, in the French coverage of the crowds preparing for Kossuth’s

\textsuperscript{89} Lungershausen provides statistics on the “Budapest Labour force in Photography” on page 66.

\textsuperscript{90} Each of these individuals is listed in one or more histories of Hungarian photography as key figures, and all were active members of the Hungarian Photographer’s Association, with advertisements and multiple mentions in the \textit{Fényképesyeti ertesítő (Photographic Informer).}
funeral in the March 31, 1894 issue of *L'Illustration*, which also included a photograph of the annual gathering in Budapest on March 15th for the commemoration of the 1848 revolution. This occurred only one month before Kossuth’s death, yet was placed in the pages alongside the Kossuth funeral (fig.3.30-3.31). Largely indistinguishable from one another, both images featured massive crowds and work to effectively collapse the act of political protest with the funeral gathering through their close proximity. Other similar reports that pointed to cracks in the dualist system revealed what had been known in Budapest and indeed the Empire for well over a decade—that not only was the second capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire more progressive than previously known, but that it was expanding at a rate that surpassed the Austrian capital of Vienna, and often in defiance of official Habsburg dictums. Moreover, there existed within the second capital a diverse and modern public that was anxious and perhaps even desperate to come into representation on its own terms. It was a power that Kossuth’s funeral rehearsed for Budapest on the eve of World Exhibition and would provide its inhabitants only temporary reprieve.

**Private Mourning, Public Ritual, and the Cult of Kossuth**

As elaborated in the previous section, photographic images of Kossuth’s funeral as event and performance served to legitimize and extend the discourses surrounding Kossuth and the legacy of revolution where it had previously been censored from the public sphere. In turn, the photographic evidence of massive urban crowds engaged in ritualized mourning on broad boulevards, and marching alongside the newest urban building and technological projects of Budapest, attest to how these discourses surrounding Kossuth and his funeral were shaped in part by the spaces and

---

91 March 15th marks the anniversary of the beginning of the Hungarian revolution and is celebrated as a national holiday in Hungary. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, right around the time that the 1896 Fair would take place, the holiday had become increasingly ant-liberal in flavour and, according to Freifeld, “mostly an occasion for nationalist or radical crowds to vent their frustrations” (286). I would argue that the controversy surrounding the Kossuth funeral (and his very death in general) likely played some role in pushing the March 15th holidays towards this more anti-liberal feel.

92 Interestingly, the way in which the crowds were characterized in the April 2, 1894 reports of the funeral differed markedly in conservative and more liberal newspapers. In the more conservative *London Times*, for example, the crowds were described as “unruly” whereas the *Washington Post* emphasized the “solemnity” of the crowd that lacked any rioting or disorder.
sensibilities of the new modern city. Similarly, the circulating photographs of Kossuth’s body at rest functioned as highly charged ritual objects that articulated the most literal expression of sacred martyrdom associated with political revolutionary loss. In both instances, the language and the means of representation wrought by these photographs served a double function; they combined the vocabulary of religious ritual with the vocabulary of modern and mobilized mass resistance, at once evoking the specter of the spiritual and the secular.

This phenomenon had first emerged in the 1850’s during the most oppressive years of the counter-revolution in Hungary. It was at this time that a turn towards an increasingly ritualistic memorialization of Kossuth took hold. Paralleling and reacting to the religious component of neo-absolutism enacted through the “Bach Era” (a name given in reference to Austria’s Interior minister Alexander von Bach and the system of centralized power in Hungary from 1849-1859), the attempts to reinvigorate the role of the Catholic Church within the context of Emperor Franz Joseph’s monarchical rule was met with widespread resistance in Budapest. Among Bach’s collective goals, as Freifeld’s explains, was “to master the pageantry of urban life by invoking a spiritual mission predicated on remorse and redemption.”93 Within this program, Bach turned his attention to the reinvigoration of public Catholic rituals and ceremonies that attempted to underscore the absolute rule of Franz Joseph while restricting overt outlets for political debate. The response, however, only helped to unite a religiously heterogeneous populace against Bach’s policies, which were understood in terms of direct imperial persecution more than Catholic in origin. Enacted through the fetishization of the few references to revolutionary memory that could be re-presented, the print and the photograph emerged as ready objects of focus and devotion. Indeed, the circulation and characterization of such objects had precedence within the United States where Kossuth’s connection to a kind of revolutionary sainthood were often made overt during his visits, as in the case a privately circulating 1852 Calendar of Liberty that featured Kossuth as one of the “people’s saints” (fig.3.32).

As raised earlier, a small number of prints and photographs had already began to circulate within Hungary in the immediate years following Kossuth’s exile,

93 Freifeld, 121.
increasing in circulating numbers each year as cheaper and more available technology fueled expanded distribution. Photographs, in particular, emerged within nineteenth century religious culture as highly charged objects, promising a materialist realization of eternity in face of increasing questions posed by religious skeptics around metaphysical immortality. Kossuth’s pictures, hung on the walls of peasant homes alongside those of saints, emphasized both his charismatic force and implied divinity. But in the years following the 1867 Compromise, once laws became more relaxed around religion, and an increasing secularization of society gradually took hold, the political reality of Kossuth’s return also faded. As a result, the memorialization of Kossuth took on more abstract markers as the understanding of revolutionary martyrdom merged with increasingly private and interiorized conceptions of religiosity and loss. These were ideas more difficult to express and represent as the crises and ambiguities surrounding modern life, religion, and politics increasingly took shape in the public sphere.

Postmortem photography provided at its most productive level a means through which to participate in a loved one’s passing from the material to the immaterial world. The photograph, as conduit, acted as both a substitute and a reminder of loss for the individual mourner. The pressing desire, in turn, to document and evoke a representation for those left behind had a particularly profound and historically galvanizing effect for a broad cross-section of the Budapest public. This was especially so since the ambiguity of Compromise politics in a dualist Austria-Hungary, and especially by the time of Kossuth’s death, was increasingly revealed to the public as providing only the illusion of Hungarian sovereignty, and only for a very select minority of the public. As religious historian René Rémond suggests, religion has often acted as the repository for the soul of nations suffering revolutionary loss, writing that “Identification with religion, whether catholic, protestant or orthodox, was not and is still not as developed anywhere else as in nations deprived of political existence, those which have never had a state to defend

94 See Ruby.

95 Len Oakes, Prophetic Charisma : The Psychology of Revolutionary Religious Personalities, 1st ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 27-29. Also see my discussion in Chapter Two on charisma and leadership with respect to the ancient figures pictured in the Feszty Panorama.
and represent them, or have lost it." As such, it is possible that all of Kossuth's photos potentially operated in a kind of ritualized and religiously charged dynamic since his absence from Hungary was understood both in terms of a physical exile—one that Kossuth himself framed in biblical language—and in the context of a future resurrection or return that required the faith and prayers of Kossuth believers. The mechanisms of actual photographs of Kossuth lying dead aroused a terrific crisis around his representation and legacy while simultaneously raising Kossuth to the level of a nationalized saint. What I mean here is that the postmortem image, as a private reminder of that which cannot be changed, was the final proof for all that the previous photographs of Kossuth, at some level, fell short (and functioned to fall short) of achieving—the state of being dead while alive.

The visual manifestation and fantasy of this category of immortal state, the state of being dead, yet alive, was the very feature that had in fact helped promote and popularize postmortem photography from the 1840's-1880's. This timeframe also coincided with the underground circulation of Kossuth images and memorabilia, conferring a similar status of immortality to his representations even while the exiled patriot remained alive. But from the 1880's to 1910, as photographic historian Jay Ruby distinguishes in his study of changing postmortem photography styles, the photographer's emphasis shifted from depictions that sought to immortalize, to narrative scenes of grief and mourning. This transition in photographic style coincided precisely within the timeframe of Kossuth's passing in 1894, helping to explain the phenomenon of mass mourning and funeral procession photographs already touched upon. Therefore, what is worth underscoring here is that the composition of postmortem photographs also had to change with this new emphasis on representing grief, making it impossible to pretend that the deceased was merely asleep or destined to make a heroic return. And critically, in order to acknowledge and give markers to what photographers were actually capturing, the pictures began

---

96 René Rémond, Religion and Society in Modern Europe (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 115

97 Kossuth's references to Christian martyrology during his exile is discussed by Freifeld, 114-117.

98 Jalland, 288-91.

99 Ruby, 123.
to include nuanced, yet readable cues to distinguish the funerary context. This occurred while still maintaining some residual sense of the body ‘at rest.’

In the case of Kossuth’s postmortem photograph (recall fig. 3.1), for example, we can pick out these cues quite readily with the copious flower arrangements covering his lifeless body. This subtle, yet distinct, shift to showing the deceased ‘alive, yet dead’ was a repudiating and strategic inversion of the fantasy of the deceased’s immortality, the state of being ‘dead, yet alive.’ The difference exists with where the stress is placed. I would therefore suggest that this realization not only spoke to the heated political stakes of Kossuth’s legacy in the Budapest public realm as often ambiguous and problematic, but that his postmortem photograph gave literal form to this crisis of representation felt by those who had to accept, even if only symbolically, that the mourning of the revolutionary exile was also at some level the mourning of threatened democratic and liberal ideals. These sentiments emanating from Hungary were in fact directly conveyed through international press accounts that signaled Kossuth’s passing as the end of an era.¹⁰⁰

What appears to be additionally profound and distinctive in the case of Kossuth’s death is how quickly the private act of bourgeois family mourning associated with the postmortem photograph transformed into a public act of political protest. Whereas the circulation of postmortem images (normally associated with a kind of discrete and underground exchange by the 1890’s) was mainly understood within the context of private mourning, the publication of a deceased Kossuth on the front pages of Budapest newspapers operated as an overt public declaration that challenged any attempts at censorship or erasure (fig. 3.33). Moreover, the Budapest press’s role in calling for the peaceful protest of the Emperor’s erasure of Kossuth’s memory and the raising of private funds for a new Kossuth statue to be raised in the city (with the names of contributors published in the local newspapers) was further evidence that the freedom of the press would be utilized to the fullest extent possible.¹⁰¹ As philosopher Karl Marx famously argued with respect to the reflexive

¹⁰⁰ For example, the Daily Telegraph of London quoted from the French newspaper Le Temps on March 22, 1894 that, “The last survivor of the heroic age of revolutionary struggles for national independence and political liberty is dead...the last of a generation, a type, and an ideal.”

¹⁰¹ Both initiatives are discussed following the first news of Kossuth’s death. Budapest Hirlap [Budapest Daily] March 21 1894.
system of the nineteenth century free press—couched in language that ironically enough blurs sacred and secular references—it produced the effect of holding up a “spiritual mirror” in which the public could see its own image:

The free press is the ubiquitous vigilant eye of the people’s soul, the embodiment of a people’s faith in itself, the eloquent link that connects the individual with the state and the world, the embodied culture that transforms material struggles into intellectual struggles and idealizes their crude material form. It is a people’s frank confession to itself, and the redeeming power of confession is well known.¹⁰²

Not only then did this one photograph force what had been determined by government officials as private squarely into the eyes of the public, the image also took up the vocabulary of a modern and increasingly interiorized and secularized act of mourning and turned it radically outwards. As such, Kossuth’s dead body had as much to reveal about Budapest’s frank confession about its own political realities as it did about the finality of one revolutionary’s life.

Within the city streets, the literal manifestation of demonstrative and collective mourning was further expressed through the hundreds of Kossuth pictures that were displayed in shop windows, either as cut-outs from the newspapers or as personal possessions taken from the confines of private interiors and exhibited for the world to see. Coinciding with the crisis state of liberal politics and on-going public debates over the policy of religious tolerance in Hungary, the secularized funeral managed to conflate aspects of religious ritual with the power of public demonstration, bringing together people regardless of religious denomination.¹⁰³ The reasons for this related to Kossuth, as symbolic father of Hungary’s revolution, also being a Protestant with strong ties to a liberal understanding of the separation of church and state. As Rémond argues, 1848 revolutionaries’ beliefs in the incompatibility between Catholicism and modern society were largely predicated on overriding the concept of absolute rule. This did not, however, preclude shows of religiosity, especially when set within the context of Protestantism: “...compromises seemed conceivable between reason and Protestantism, some of whose expressions


¹⁰³ As Freifeld discusses on page 265, the debate over civil marriage in the Hungarian parliament and liberal protests on the streets of Budapest (with an estimated crowd of 60,000 on March 5, 1894) occurred within weeks of Kossuth’s death.
diverged from the traditional formulations of dogma and came to terms with liberalism.\textsuperscript{104} Indeed, the revolution, and Kossuth’s aims specifically, had been blamed by the Catholic Church and imperial Habsburgs as being Protestant inspired. This is why, for example, churches were prohibited from ringing their bells upon news of Kossuth’s death.\textsuperscript{105} Kossuth’s funeral was consequently understood by many within Hungary as a unique opportunity to protest intolerant government religious policies. Kossuth had famously fought throughout his career for civil marriages, state registration of births and deaths, the freedom of religious choice (or of being atheist), and the acceptance of Judaism as a received faith.\textsuperscript{106} In fact, one of Kossuth’s final letters in the weeks before his death called upon the leaders of the Hungarian opposition to vote for the reform bills on the segregation of church and state.\textsuperscript{107} In this profound sense, the funeral managed to reinvigorate a religiosity around what was referred to as the “Kossuth Cult” and especially the important characteristic of charisma that he possessed his entire life. At a time when Budapest’s leadership appeared weak and bankrupt, Kossuth’s persona temporarily filled a gaping vacuum.

Kossuth’s funeral, when viewed within the context of a “cult,” helps explains the reasons for the language of religious pilgrimage and official mourning permeating both accounts and representations of the event. This was also simultaneous with more secular aims to direct a public protest against Emperor Franz Joseph. In the press, the collective decision to border all of the many Budapest newspapers’ front pages with thick columns of black ink paralleled the draping of city buildings and windows with black cloth, spatializing and mirroring ritualized grief by the city’s inhabitants.\textsuperscript{108} The massive and spontaneous influx of thousands of mourning peasants from the countryside, often arriving by train, was also a phenomena noted by many newspaper accounts in the days following Kossuth’s return to Hungary’s capital.\textsuperscript{109} Described as

\textsuperscript{104} Remond, 143.

\textsuperscript{105} "Austria Slurs Kossuth," \textit{New York Times} April 1 1894.

\textsuperscript{106} Kontler, 291.

\textsuperscript{107} Herman, 12. These laws were eventually passed in 1894-95.

\textsuperscript{108} In a show of unity among the city’s press core and chief editors in the week following news of Kossuth’s death, all of Budapest’s major newspapers published their daily editions with thick black borders from March 21 to April 4, 1894 to mark a period of collective mourning.
"pilgrims" and "Kossuth worshippers," their appearance at the funeral suggested how shifting notions of pilgrimage by the end of the nineteenth century (brought about in large measure by the lucrative travel industry set up around Lourdes) intersected with more modern and secular notions of tourism that connected travel to the consumption of novel and communal spectacles.\textsuperscript{110} Both were essentially tied to movement and were transformed through new technologies such as photography and train travel that helped to internationalize, secularize, and broaden the public sphere for pilgrimage as a kind of mass tourism.\textsuperscript{111} In fact, the return of Kossuth’s body to Hungary had also been discussed in terms of a pilgrimage tour, since the train that his body was placed in stopped in a number of predetermined villages on the way to Budapest. To be sure, many mourners had arrived at the stations to pay their respects, but it is conceivable that many more had come to witness the train’s arrival as an historic event, thus blurring once again the role of religious pilgrimage and secular tourism. And while the endless stream of funeral photographs that captured the imagination of the city could be read as an attempt to mimic the overtly religious memorials and posthumous representations of the aristocratic elite who had denied the revolutionary’s official memorialization, there was a way in which the Kossuth funeral emerged as a wholly modern event.

One reason for this sense of modernity was that photography failed to do what more official and traditional representations \textit{appeared} more successful at—namely to produce an aura. As Walter Benjamin has famously described, the function of the photographic medium, with its unique phenomenon of distance,\textsuperscript{112} was precisely among the leading characteristics of photography that would later help call into question all works of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. By substituting what

\textsuperscript{109} One British reporter claimed that, “to the Hungarian peasant Kossuth is still and will always remain the deliverer of the soil, the aboler of serfdom and the hero for whom his grandfather and father were ready to lay down their lives, and no memoirs or newspaper articles can take away from the spell of that great name.” \textit{Daily Telegraph of London}, March 22 1894.


\textsuperscript{112} This aspect of Walter Benjamin’s theories regarding aura are discussed in Wells, 318.
Benjamin describes as "a plurality of copies for a unique existence," images which had previously existed in only one place and at one time could be seen simultaneously by a variety of audiences in new situations. Photographs therefore satisfied the desire of the masses "to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly," and "to get hold of an object at very close range." This closing of distance, however, also served the process of radical demystification that prevented photographs from being adequate substitutes for what was being pictured. Consequently, what was witnessed as anxious repetition and reiteration of images related to Kossuth's memory in the public sphere, was actually shaped in large part by photography's ever-present lack which denied any authentic representation or aura of the original (this was also punctuated through a closed casket procession, and the limited viewing of Kossuth's actual body). It is also arguable, however, that the urgency with which the funeral images and postmortem photographs of Kossuth circulated was not so much tied to attempts to measure up to official representation, but more decidedly a coming to terms with the growing realization that, like photography itself, the dream of Hungary's independence from Austria remained trapped by its own realist limitations. What emerged in turn was a recognition of how rapid urban and bourgeois modernity, and the kind of political and capital systems supporting the enterprise, had transformed and complicated the call for revolution set out in 1848. This remained, if even subconsciously, an important part of what was being mourned. And by the 1890's, Kossuth's postmortem photograph gave shape to the sense of diminished aura surrounding it all.

The Power of Proliferation: Reordered Power and the 1896 Millennial Exhibition

What is important to emphasize from the previous discussion concerning the residual impact of Kossuth's funeral on Budapest's Millennial Exhibition, is how over a series of several decades a politically charged connection developed between the uses of new media, communication, and transportation technology together with

113 Ibid., 318-319.

the expansion and assertion of Hungary upon the global stage. To be sure, what Kossuth’s funeral ultimately accomplished was a highly publicized and performative rupturing of several illusions tied to literal and figurative Austro-Hungarian representation: the illusion of the 1867 Compromise that implied Hungary’s sovereignty; the illusion of liberal parliamentary democracy; the illusion of multiethnic harmony; and the illusion of access to state-recognized power. This rude awakening and period of collective reflection during Kossuth’s funeral was followed by the realization on the part of an expanding and heterogeneous Budapest public that if representational power could be harnessed, it would have to supersede and extend beyond the boundaries of traditional and officially sanctioned networks. And critically, this would most likely and successfully occur within the context of new contemporary and modern realities. Moreover, as receptive audiences in the West showed interest and support for Budapest’s rapid and continued modernization, there was a sense that Hungary could capitalize on its ties to the future as much as to its thousand year past. In other words, the perceived potential for real social and political change within Austria-Hungary, and the preservation of effaced cultural memory, was shown to exist more and more in Budapest’s urban sphere of capital enterprise, communication, and representation. These notions were of course closely informed by the model of Kossuth’s own exile experience, and particularly within the context of his brief but stratospheric popularity among the bourgeois class of the young republic of the United States. Liberated from the controlled environments of old aristocratic cultures in which unique and exclusively created objects had been predominantly produced, used, and exhibited to make representational claims, the proliferating power of new communication media, with its boundary-breaking channels of distribution and transnational ‘readability,’ held out the promise of manifesting entirely new spaces of reality and experience for its multiple publics.

This was something that the Hungarian Photographer’s Association understood and actively exploited in their emerging mandate in the aftermath of the Kossuth funeral. Predicated on one part patriotism and one part healthy entrepreneurial professionalism, the association and its newspaper made photography exhibition at the 1896 Millennial Exhibition its central focus. Importantly, Hungarian

115 This idea is explored at several junctures in the previous two chapters.
photography was declared “terra incognita,” or undiscovered territory by the
association founders, and the membership continued to underscore the potential for
working Budapest photographers to make a significant impact on the world stage for
themselves and their city through their newly created pictures. The thousands of
photographs traced to this period attest to these claims and have survived to become
among the most important and readily available documents of any period in
Hungarian history. Moreover, with the emergence of the first photographic division
of the Budapest city archives coinciding at roughly the same moment as these images
greatest production and proliferation, the added power of the circulating photographs
related to their role as among the first modern records and indices of a rapidly
expanding modern city.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the favoured task of Budapest’s Photography
Society appeared to be documenting the new building programs, technologies, and
bourgeois public of a burgeoning Budapest. These initiatives had roots in the 1880’s
when Budapest’s best known photographer of the period, György Klösz, began
producing and distributing a series of photographic prints called the “Pictures of the
New Budapest” following up on an earlier series of photographic prints created in the
1870’s called “Pictures of the Old Budapest,” many of which featured images of old
demolished buildings. Taking advantage of the new dry plate technology that
allowed for greater sensitivity, shorter exposure times, and greater reproducibility,
Klösz was able to capture photographs that produced a radically different image of
the city. An important element of his series consisted of documenting the creation of

116 The term “terra incognita” is used in relationship to Hungarian photography in the opening essay in
the first volume of the Fényképesyeti ertesítő (Photographic Informer), November 1893.

117 The Budapest City Archives began including photographs in their collection from roughly the
1880’s onwards. This coincided with the “scientific phase” of the Archive’s mandate that called for a
more measurable approach to the documentation of the city. For a brief description of the Archive’s
history, see “A Short History of the Budapest City Archives,” Budapest City Archives,
http://www.bparchiv.hu/demo/angol/history/torten_e.html. For a study of city archive development in
Europe during the late nineteenth century, see Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, Archives,
Documentation, and Institutions of Social memory: Essays from the Sawyer Seminar (Ann Arbor:
University of Michigan Press, 2006).

118 László Lugosi Lugo, Klösz György, 1844-1913: Fényképek = Photographs (Budapest: Polgart,
2002), 261-65. This is the first book published exclusively on the photographer, largely made up of
Klösz’s photographs and biography. Lugosi writes that the most “exciting discovery” of preparing the
book and finding the images was that Klösz “recorded nearly all the significant phenomena of the last
third of the 19th century” (25). Indeed, when I visited the Hungarian National Museum’s photography
archives, I was struck with the disproportionate number of Klösz photographs in the collection.
Budapest’s tram system and the new underground railway, together with the general demolition of old structures and construction of new buildings taking place throughout the city in preparation for the Fair (figs.3.34-3.35). Consequently, as Klösz biographer László Lugo Lugosi explains, rather than the static nature of his earlier Budapest series that seldom featured human interaction, the new Budapest photographs and “snapshots” revealed streets that were “full of life and people (figs.3.36-3.37).” The photographs, in turn, explored the full range of human impact and transformation of the cityscape. These and other photographs in his series appeared in several Hungarian newspapers and magazines in the 1890’s, including the Budapest Visitors’ Paper, a publication that helped orient tourists and potential investors to the city. As a result, Klösz’s work helped to establish a way of looking at the spaces of Budapest that not only connected its metamorphosis, new technologies, and attendant culture to a particular segment of society— as did his well-known Kossuth funeral photographs— but also to the circulation of new capital that drove these changes.

Because of his commercial success, Klösz also became one of the key contributors and collaborators on an important commemorative souvenir picture book project, The Millennium of Hungary, which featured over two hundred large format photographs of Budapest, the Exhibition grounds, and the surrounding countryside of Hungary in 1896 (figs.3.38-3.39). Translated into German, French and English, and distributed internationally, the handsome volume was published under the patronage of Hungary’s Minister of Commerce and the Board of Directors of the Hungarian State Railway (the very same railway that Kossuth had helped establish in his brief post as Hungary’s leader during the 1848 revolution). The book was widely advertised in Budapest newspapers through subscription and distributed throughout Europe and America.

190

119 Ibid., 265.

120 Gyula Laurencic, Az ezeréves Magyarország és a milleniumi kiállítás (The Millennium of Hungary and the National Exhibition) (Budapest: Kunosy Vilmos 1896).

121 Multiple advertisements for the volume can be found in nearly every major Budapest newspaper during the entire run of the Fair. In terms of distribution, I have been able to trace copies of the original picture book in antiquarian book stores throughout Europe and even North America, an indication of its wide circulation. Reprints of the original book were also made in 1996 in order to coincide with Hungary’s 1100th anniversary.
Importantly, however, what the book managed in part to achieve was a careful and sometimes not so subtle levelling of existing hierarchies and categories of knowledge related to Budapest and to Hungary. This was accomplished partly through text and image placement, and through implied innuendo. For example, while a photographic portrait of Emperor Franz Joseph was featured on the opening page of the book, the text alongside suggested that his was only a very brief appearance in a very long thousand year history of Hungarian civilization. And when one turned the page, they were presented with what was described as “the most momentous occasion of Hungarian history,” which was conspicuously not related to what one might expect, such as the coronation of the Emperor or the establishment of the 1867 Compromise, but a photo-reproduction of the central group of Arpad and his Chieftains from the Feszty panorama (discussed in Chapter Two).\footnote{Laurencie, 5-7.} Such hierarchical levelling was also achieved through the disproportionate number of photographs of the “new” Pest as opposed to the few images of the “old” Buda appearing in the text, and through a general mixing of photographic themes and subjects throughout the book in a sometimes haphazard way.

As art historian Rosalind Krauss has suggested in reference to the indexical nature of photography, the medium “raises the spectre of nondifferentiation at the level of qualitative difference and introduces instead the condition of a merely qualitative array of difference, as in series.”\footnote{Rosalind Krauss qtd. in Wells, 21-22.} How I understand Krauss here is that through the arrangement of multiple and many similarly sized photographs in succession (as in the souvenir picture book), there is an inherent refusal of a genre system that would assign one photograph at a higher level of importance and another with lesser meaning. In other words, the traditional distinctions that might provide readable value judgements between a portrait of a living Emperor and the contrived image of mythic nomads are troubled as hierarchies of importance give way under photography’s levelling effects.
Mobility, Capital Expansion, and the Economy of the Fin de Siècle Photograph

Mass availability of new categories of photographic equipment arguably drove the democratization of vision evidenced in the previous examples related to the growing commercial popularity and advanced technology seen during the fin de siècle period. These were also precisely the developments in the field of photography that the Hungarian Photographer’s Association and its membership wanted to display and talk about at the 1896 Fair. So too were new techniques for private use. For example, a pavilion of optics displaying the latest in camera technology for professional and business use also exhibited consumer products for private home use such as the new Eastman Kodak camera. These products, which advertised their ease of use and affordability, promised individuals the power to make their own images and document their own reality—the international slogan “Everyone in the world can be a photographer with a Kodak” speaks for itself. The availability of personal cameras also related to the freedom of movement, with cameras that could easily fit into bags and even affix to bicycles. In this sense, the spatial and temporal dimensions of mobile photographic power were emphasized through higher speed machines that could capture increasing degrees of motion in smaller segments of time. Manufacturers, of course, encouraged the promotional activities of such exhibitions, and the boom of amateur photography hit Budapest in the years immediately following the Fair. Therefore, not unlike Kossuth’s early attempts to broaden the public sphere through privately distributed copies of the Diet’s records and newspapers, photography became an instrumental tool through which the Budapest public came to expand their view of the city and the nation, and then eventually of themselves, in the decades before and after the Millennial Fair. As a result, the exponential and unchecked increase and distribution of individual photographs by the end of the nineteenth century was quite literally transforming the

---

124 These venues ad innovations are variously described in volumes 16-18 of the Fényképesyeti ertesítő (Photographic Informer) in 1896. Also see Varga.

125 I found this slogan in a Kodak campaign multiple times in the pages of the Illustrated London News throughout the 1896 editions. While I was unable to find this exact phrasing in the Budapest press, the rise of amateur photography and availability of equipment, (including Kodak’s, as discussed in the pages of the Fényképesyeti ertesítő (Photographic Informer) was the same in Hungary as in almost every other European and North American city by the end of the nineteenth century.

126 Lungerhausen, 82-85.
means through which knowledge was being conceived and ‘processed’ in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

As argued in the previous chapter, the concept of nomadism emerged as a concept connected to the notion of ‘technology as culture’ during the Budapest Exhibition. It was also an idea that became naturalized in late nineteenth century accounts of Hungarian history and in visions for its future. During the Fair itself (as discussed in Chapter Two), nomadism was constructed as the very essence of Magyar identity through the mobility and alleged supremacy of the mounted horsemen, together with the rhetoric of miscegenation that allowed access to any ethnicity that wanted to resist Germanization and take part of the broader Magyar project. One expects, therefore, that if new techniques were going to emerge in Hungary as identifiable forms of culture, they would likely be connected to a legacy of unregulated and underground activity. Moreover, they would provide a vocabulary of cultural representation that could be quickly and easily distributed, and through creative and often undetectable and unanticipated means.¹²⁷ Not surprisingly, this emphasis on the creative expansion of communication fields—the kind typified through the global use of photography by the end of the nineteenth century—was precisely what would become the focus of the most technologically progressive displays at the Budapest World’s Fair. To be sure, 1896 signaled the dawn of the electric age, and the ephemeral and mysterious workings of electricity and electrical transmission became the paramount technology to discuss and exhibit.¹²⁸ Hungarian

¹²⁷ It is useful to consider as a corollary to the discussion of photography here that within the actual scene of the Feszty panorama, the act of distancing and extension of the circulation of technological power is witnessed through Feszty’s use of photographs to render the illusion of reality more seamless. These photographs were taken at the actual locale of nineteenth century Pustaszer, the constructed site in Feszty’s panorama of Prince Arpád’s entrance into the Carpathian Basin. Developed into slides and projected onto the large panorama canvases, the photographs of Pustaszer were traced by Feszty’s crew before being painted over. The well publicized use of camera technology thus allowed the final panorama to effectively transport the actual landscape of a Hungarian agricultural community to an imagined nomadic past. With this act, the original photographs’ ties to a referent were essentially severed and positioned within (quite literally) a new landscape of power. Movement and outward expansion marked this new landscape, importantly, on the ruins of existing structures. Recalling and perhaps referencing Klösz’s photographs of Old Budapest’s demolished buildings, the scene of smoldering ruins suggests a transition of power to a new force. Significantly, this new force takes shape through Feszty’s image in his panorama of mounted nomadic tribesmen, bodies that could be quickly and efficiently transported via the mediation of technological invention seen through the stirrup. It is a body, not unlike the modern liberal body, cloaked in the rhetoric of individual freedom with the propensity to expand and spread over existing territory.
participation in a number of key electrical inventions and innovations during the nineteenth century—including the invention of the first prototype electric dynamo by Ányos Jedlik in 1861, the AC (alternating current) generator distribution system by Miksa Déri in 1882, the closed-core and shell core electric transformer and watt meter by Ottó Titusz Bláthy in 1885, and the first electrified system for a main railway line by Kálmán Kandó around the time of the Fair’s opening in 1896—was the topic of much foreign interest, as was the general sense that Hungarians were helping lead the way in the electrification of Europe. 

Interestingly, however, in a number of the new innovations displayed at the Budapest Exhibition, there was an implied and sometimes overt political connection between the technology shown and the ways in which it could be, or already had been, used by the Hungarian public. For example, Tivadar Puskás’s highly publicized invention of the telephonograph or “speaking newspaper” was the forerunner to the modern radio and telecommunications networks. Puskás had already gained great fame as the builder of Europe’s first telephone exchange in Paris in 1879 (Budapest would have Europe’s fourth exchange only two years later). And by 1893, he would gain recognition again for creating a device exclusively for use in Budapest that connected subscribers through a telephonic device to a regular information service. Providing news, music, up-to-the-minute stock reports, children’s shows and even a system to interrupt programming and relay late-breaking news, the telephonograph was an invention that had already garnered significant publicity during Kossuth’s funeral. At that time, the invention had helped circulate uncensored

---

128 The centerpiece for this technology was of course Budapest’s much acclaimed electric underground subway, discussed at length in Chapter One.

129 A list of nineteenth century Hungarian inventors are listed with extensive bibliographies in English, including the ones I have noted, through Hungary’s official Patent Office website. See "Hungarian Inventors," Hungarian Patent Office, http://www.hpo.hu/English/feltalalok/index.html. Hungarians also made headlines by the turn of the century for their advances in the process of electronic transmissions. See for example this article that credits Hungarians for the “promise revolution in telegraphy”: "For Quicker Telegraphy," New York Time, November 16 1899.


131 See the biography on Puskás at Hungary’s Patent Office website where a full description of the inventors contributions are detailed. http://www.hpo.hu/English/feltalalok/puskas.html

132 See Denison.
and frequent news updates about the exiled revolutionary’s death and subsequent global reaction.\textsuperscript{133} Delivered straight into subscribers’ homes without intermediary or regulatory bodies policing its content, the telephonograph was a ready medium through which news could be quickly disseminated, but also a means through which Hungarian cultural programming and political commentary could circulate.\textsuperscript{134}

Another invention with recognized political association related to the exhibition of the phonograph and its accompanying wax cylinders. Invented by Thomas Edison in the late 1870’s and perfected by the early 1890’s, the popular innovation allowed people to listen to recorded music, voices and sound in the privacy of their homes. Interestingly, however, the invention had also famously been implemented by a delegation of Hungarians to Turin, who were known to have recorded a short patriotic speech delivered by the elderly Kossuth on September 20, 1890.\textsuperscript{135} And while difficult to determine just how widely the Kossuth recording circulated, the spirit in which the recording was made pointed to a faith and belief in the power of new communication technologies to carry political and cultural messages across international boundaries and directly to the masses. The original recording on two wax cylinders for the Edison phonograph reportedly survives to this day, and Kossuth is believed by many accounts to be the earliest born person in the world to have had their voice preserved.\textsuperscript{136}

Indeed, the mobility and perceived freedom that was tied to concepts of capital expansion by the end of the nineteenth century has often been compared to the economy of the photograph itself, with its dynamic properties of invisible and far-

\textsuperscript{133} This was reported in the \textit{Daily Telegraph of London}, March 22 1894.

\textsuperscript{134} The programming content of Hungary’s telephonograph is described in Denison: “It is most interesting to follow the actual “issue of the paper.” A complete programme is tacked to the wall above each subscriber’s receiver, and a glance at this tells just what may be expected at any hour, every day except Sundays and holidays having the same programme. The issue begins at 10.30 A. M. and ends about 10.30 P. M. unless a concert or some other night event is being reported, when it keeps on till later.”

\textsuperscript{135} The American Hungarian Federation website has a page devoted to Kossuth where the Hungarian pilgrimage to Turin is described. The page includes the full transcription of the speech in Hungarian and English. The recording is also available for audio download. See The American Hungarian Federation, "The 1848 Revolution and Louis (Lajos) Kossuth: Father of Hungarian Democracy," http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_kossuth_1848.htm.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid. The speech is about the martyrs of 1848 who were executed by Austrian troops. Incidentally, this is the topic of one of the banned paintings from the 1896 Budapest Salon discussed in Chapter Two.
reaching electric circuits. This was something Kossuth had understood and had tried to harness at various times of his life. As a young newspaper man in the 1840’s, for example, Kossuth had worked on promoting a series of industrial fairs in Pest between 1842 and 1846. In a discussion of Kossuth’s undertaking, Freifeld observes that his purpose however had not, as would be expected, to show Budapest’s progress, but in stark contrast pointed squarely at the obstacles of economic advancement in the city. Acting as a “critique of Austrian benevolence,” the fairs eventually did help promote Hungarian goods and resources to the rest of Europe, while exposing economic inequities within the larger Empire. In this sense, Kossuth had used his understanding of capitalism to gain visibility for Budapest as a desirable market and exporter of goods. This practice continued within traditions of Hungarian liberalism well after Kossuth’s exile, and ironically intensified once the Compromise with Austria had been reached. This happened, as historian László Kontler has astutely argued, because whatever emancipationist momentum Hungarian liberalism still had after the revolution of 1848 became fully checked within the context of conservative Austrian politics post the Compromise of 1867. Liberal and democratic ideas and policies as a result became almost exclusively confined to the espousal of free enterprise and the introduction of modern infrastructure. And while potentially liberating, these developments increasingly carried the risk of the double-edged nature of transnational capitalism to bring some measure of freedom on the one hand, and exploitation for profit on the other.

The issues surrounding the imbalances of capitalism had been something that worried Kossuth throughout his life. In particular, the ambiguity around laissez-faire markets and the silent reach of global capital was an issue that Kossuth had direct experience of during and following the 1848 revolution. First, as Minister of Finance in the short-lived Hungarian government of 1848-49, Kossuth had come up with a plan to issue interest-bearing treasury notes to stabilize the new Hungarian economy. He then generated the country’s own currency, the forint, (also known as “Kossuth’s notes” because of his signature on each printed banknote) in order to gain economic

---

137 Freifeld, 38.

138 Ibid.

139 Kontler, 281.
independence from imperial Austria. And even upon his defeat and exile in the 1850’s, Kossuth’s goal of Hungarian independence through economic means continued with his controversial attempts to circulate and promote a new Hungarian currency to destabilize the Austrian korona.\textsuperscript{140} The notes, which were printed in both Hungarian and English versions, pictured not only his own likeness and signature, but also featured a provocative image of a slain King. This made the more overt goal of Kossuth’s endeavors to form an independent Hungarian government instantly readable (figs.3.40-3.41).

It was in this radical sense that the Kossuth banknotes appeared to “generate faith” by depicting authority in different ways. As economic historian Marieke de Goede has argued in \textit{A Genealogy of Finance}, the piece of paper, as representation, was only a symbol to stand in the place for some loftier goal.\textsuperscript{141} But the paper money, like many circulating photographs, also contained the most ambiguous emblems of modern experience, revealing a tension between two forces: one that sought to undo older forms of stability in order to produce new more mobile ones; versus another that sought only to control and make such mobility predictable and therefore profitable. Foreign investment in Kossuth’s dollar would therefore be dictated by market forces and predictably, in the case of Kossuth’s final outcome, collapse through a lack of profitability and legal pressure by the Austrians to halt the circulation of the bills.\textsuperscript{142} It is with this kind of implied democratization of vision blurred into capitalist expansion and global positioning that the problematic and contradictory nature of photography itself can be traced—mediating, as unpredictably as any free market economy, between the public and private realm of experience. Ironically enough, it was exactly this kind of ambiguity and unregulated economy of representation that arose in the days following Kossuth’s death when savvy vendors had already begun to profit from

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{140} See note 26.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Marieke de Goede, \textit{Virtue, Fortune, and Faith: A Genealogy of Finance} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xviii-xix.
\item \textsuperscript{142} The issue over the notes legality would be tested as an early test case in international law in the British courts when the Habsburg authority attempted to sue Kossuth in 1861 on the grounds of conspiring to disrupt the Austrian economy. The final verdict after appeal upheld Franz Joseph’s claims and Kossuth was prohibited from manufacturing any more of the notes. See "Court Of Chancery: The Emperor Of Austria V. Day And Kossuth (Judgment)." \textit{London Times}, June 13 1861.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the commemorative prints and coins of the dead hero. Printed alongside newspaper editorials that urged the public to raise funds for Kossuth's funeral and maintain his memory, the ads for Kossuth memorabilia were more than a little strategic. It would not be surprising to anyone, and least of all Kossuth, if a number of these entrepreneurs had little loyalty to his cause.

In fin de siècle Budapest, and especially on the eve of the Millennial Exhibition, such complex dynamics were driven by the increasing presence of non-state or private sector actors in the planning and management of the Fair's entertainments and promotion. These agents, many of whom were shut out of the official Fair and/or simply looking to turn a profit, were responsible for introducing the Budapest viewing public to many of the Fair's most popular and technologically advanced spectacles. These, including a number of panoramas (discussed in Chapter Two), an entire range of new film technologies (raised in Chapter Four), and other temporary and off-site venues around the city are discussed throughout this dissertation. But I raise them here, in a very broad sense, to make the point that these developments mirrored and intersected with the very function or raison d'être of photography as a counterpart to traditional, exclusive, and officially sanctioned representation, such as the many planned monuments and paintings around the Austro-Hungarian Empire that celebrated the Habsburg rulers. That is not to say, however, that all of the new viewing contexts made available through new technologies always worked to subvert or critique more traditional venues of cultural consumption, such as museums, or the visual representations that were most often presented there. Instead, what is to be emphasized here is that the unruly and flexible aspect of photography, in tandem with other new technologies of vision at the Fair with which the medium intersected, lay precisely in its open-ended, fluctuating, and proliferating nature. Therefore, photography was not simply the final stage of realistic or subversive representation, but part of new systems of modern exchange and circulation that challenged existing spatial barriers and transformed traditional understandings of solidity, truth, and identity.

I have traced several advertisements for commemorative prints, coins, drawings and the like in Budapest newspapers during the week of March 20, 1894, the first appearing within two days of Kossuth's death.
In terms of Kossuth's popular representation during the year of the Fair and up until the dissolution of the Empire, there were clear attempts to keep his memory ever-present in the face of Austrian prohibition. Kossuth day calendars, for example, prominently featured the revolutionary's image on their cover and were circulated during the year of the 1896 Exhibition (fig.3.42).\textsuperscript{144} Containing several pages of material related to his life, death, and funeral, the book-form calendar also provided information about the Fair and attractions of interest, especially the Feszty panorama, to which several pages were devoted. In this way, the calendar perpetuated an important association between Kossuth's legacy and the goal of gaining international publicity for Hungary's cultural and political history. Indeed the calendar, following in the tradition of circulating underground humour, also poked fun at the existing monarchy and the power structure of dual rule in Austria-Hungary through cartoons and jokes.\textsuperscript{145} Images of Kossuth also continued to circulate internationally via souvenir postcards, a medium that collapsed travel, circulation, and mass representation. One card of note dating from 1909 (fig.3.43) provides perhaps the most conceptual imagining of Kossuth's enduring legacy. Picturing a young contemplative Kossuth on a boat, the revolutionary is shown in motion and in the heterotopic spaces of sea travel. Such an image is further animated with reference to both the Kossuth postage stamp that circulated in the U.S. during the 1850's and the commemorative coin that Americans issued to commemorate Kossuth's cause.\textsuperscript{146}

\textsuperscript{144} Képes Kossuth Naptár (Illustrated Kossuth Day Calendar) (Méhner Vilmos Kiadása, 1896). The picture on the front of the calendar shows Kossuth as a young man and printed underneath is the text “Freedom! Equality! Brotherhood!” (Szabadság, Egyenlőség, Testvírség) and a note that the calendar is available everywhere books are sold. Inside, the calendar states that it is in its eleventh year of publishing and includes in its table of contents items such as: a calendar with the moon’s movements; an article about the Chicago World’s Fair; notes about the Millennial architecture of the city; an account of the Kossuth funeral (including transcripts of speeches), and the story of Kossuth’s life. I viewed several of these day calendars in their original form (from the years 1895-1900) in the Budapest Collection at the Budapest City Library, filed along with other general Kossuth memorabilia. In addition to this calendar, the publishing company also advertised other day calendars on notable Hungarian figures, which also included one of Sándor Petőfi, a famous revolutionary poet from 1848.

\textsuperscript{145} On one of the pages of the calendar I looked at from 1895, for example, a drawing of Habsburg Archduke Wilhelm Franz Karl von Habsburg-Teschen is shown falling off of his horse, alluding to a hunting accident that took his life in 1894. The accompanying text lampoons the Duke’s inability to manage the “reigns of power” in a veiled reference to his Habsburg family connections.

\textsuperscript{146} The coin, minted in the United States around 1851 is inscribed on one side with his portrait and the words, “Louis Kossuth: The Washington of Hungary,” and on the other with the passage “Now in the name of eternal truth and by all that is sacred and dear to man: Since the history of mankind is recorded, there has been no cause more just than that of Hungary.” I found the coins and alleged
Both examples, while functioning to collapse time and space, also animated the connections between circulation and capital that helped define Kossuth’s long life.

**Conclusion: Reconfiguring Understandings of Truth, Solidarity and Identity**

In the preface to Kossuth’s memoirs, *Memories of My Exile*, published in London, Paris and New York in 1880, the revolutionary wrote with a surprising sense of exhaustion, coupled with pessimism and uncertainty about his legacy:

To me, the old wanderer who has arrived at the verge of his grave, who has no hope in the future, and in whose past there is no consolation, the conviction of my heart says, that as I was right once in the controversy with the enemies in my country, so am I now in the diversity of opinion with my own nation; I am right. The ‘Judge of the World’ will decide.\(^{147}\)

Kossuth’s sentiments reflected what had become perhaps the most emblematic aspect of revolutionary loss, the constant question of what could have been and the ever-present reality of what had gone wrong. Placing blame became, as Kossuth biographer Istvan Deak observes, a constant theme around how Kossuth would ultimately be remembered: “Those who emotionally identify with Hungary’s historic nobility often feel that Kossuth betrayed his estate, while those who see the nobility as the bane of the country often feel that he betrayed the people. Radicals believe that he was not sufficiently forceful, and moderates that he was reckless”\(^{148}\). Indeed, the permutations of Kossuth’s representation and debates around his politics and persona (particularly throughout Hungary’s tumultuous twentieth century history), have strangely come to rival much of the controversy that he drummed up while alive. Still, in order to understand Hungarian nation building, liberalism, and capital expansion in the late nineteenth century, one has to come to terms with its very specific experience of the 1848 revolution and the towering figure of Lajos Kossuth.

Thus, while Kossuth imagery served to circulate blame over why the 1848 revolution failed, it is clear that something had changed in the Budapest public sphere.

---

147 Kossuth, xxiv.

148 Deak, x.
after his death in 1894. The public reaction to Franz Joseph’s arrival in Budapest
during the opening ceremonies for the 1896 Millennial Exhibition is a case in point.
Remembered by many as an event that was nothing short of underwhelming, the
photograph of the Emperor dwarfed under an enormous Magyar style tent is telling
(fig.3.44), if only made worse by reports of the inaudibility of his voice, making him
almost incoherent to the modest crowd pictured (of no more than a few hundred) who
had gathered to see him.149 This revealing juxtaposition gave shape to the kind of
substantial changes that were afoot in Budapest’s public sphere by the close of the
nineteenth century. To be sure, it had arguably become impossible to see the
Habsburg Emperor as he once was, and not to question his power. Could one truly
view published photographs of the Emperor’s procession in the streets of Budapest
during the 1896 Fair and not think of the high profile funeral procession of his arch
nemesis—Kossuth—in the same streets splashed around the world only two years
before? Which one of two carried more authority? Had Kossuth or Emperor Franz
Joseph garnered more publicity? Significantly, in this sense, photography had helped
flatten the effect of affording the Emperor more status in the eyes of the world. For
many, he had simply become a tired old leader, out of touch with the shifting modern
world around him, unable to deal with a multinational and multiethnic empire, and
unwilling to face the realities of Budapest’s progress and new spaces of
representation. It is in this profound sense that Franz Joseph’s declaration of defeating
the hydra of revolution forty-seven years earlier (as I raised at the outset of this
chapter) had emerged as both shortsighted and strangely premature.

Returning to the postmortem image of Kossuth that sparked this inquiry
(fig.3.1), it is a picture imbued with the kind of productive ambivalence that speaks to
all of the photographic medium’s allure. In one way, the framed painting of Kossuth
as a young man hanging to the left of his dead body can be read as a suggestive
juxtaposition, pitting a traditional form of representation against the frameless and
modern existence of the photograph. Suggestive of a potent means to exist beyond
death and failure, the image is a working comment on the extension of power
wrought by photography and its detachable and proliferating nature, allowing the
photograph in its many exchanges to refer to an absent object separated from it in

149 Freifeld, 274.
space and time, resulting in a kind of mobility and reconfiguration of seeing that its referent never possessed. It was a kind of power that Kossuth had attempted to embody in his own status as an exiled liberal leader of a failed democratic revolution, arguably more powerful and dangerous in his circulating absence from the Hungarian political scene, and more powerful again in death than in life—his most significant legacy to haunt Emperor Franz Joseph and the World’s Fair that he had not lived to see. In turn, the spectator’s ability to view Kossuth’s body in its most idealized form constructs a picture that appears to maintain the false promise of the revolutionary’s awakening at any moment. It is a peculiarly modern sensibility and cruel irony that any dead radical would likely appreciate.
Chapter Four: "Life: Caught in the Act!"—Mobilizing Budapest's Cinematic Gaze

Origins are slippery things, figuratively and literally, and the cinema is possibly the most slippery medium that has ever existed.

—Tom Gunning, Film Historian (2000)

For us, we had to construct everything ourselves: the machine to project films, the machine to make films, the films themselves, print developers and print washers, so you see, everything.

Because, believe me, only in Paris from Lumière could we have gotten all these things, and from them we could not get any of it.

—Arnold Sziklai, Hungarian Filmmaker (1915)

In the middle passages of Charles Baudelaire's nineteenth century prose poem, "The Eyes of the Poor," the speaking subject situated within a new modern café along one of the centralized boulevards in a newly Haussmannized Paris describes his experience of three figures that look through the window into the café's interior:

...the six eyes contemplated fixedly the new café with equal admiration, but shaded differently according to their age. The father's eyes said: 'How beautiful it is! How beautiful it is! You'd think all the gold in this poor world was on its walls'—the eyes of the little boy: 'How beautiful it is! How beautiful it is! But it's a house only people who aren't like us can enter'—As for the eyes of the smaller child, they were too fascinated to express anything other than a stupid and profound joy.

When first encountering these passages, what immediately comes to mind is how deftly Baudelaire captures the almost indescribable and conflicted sensations of awe, fear, skepticism, and fascination that new urban spaces most likely engendered in nineteenth century publics. As philosopher Marshall Berman has famously argued in his assessment of the poem's distinct modernity, the difference lies precisely within the context of the urban space where the scene unfolds.

---


2 Arnold Sziklai, "Az első budapesti-mozi (The First Budapest Movie)," Mozgófénykép híradó (Moving Pictures News) 44-46 (1915). Translation by author.


displaced, marginalized, and poor outsiders, to those who do not have the same access to the places and experiences of the people they are observing, and likely never will. Indeed, as one gradually comes to realize, the poor as the "others" of the poem, are assimilated into a narrative voice precisely because of their silence, reduced to a nameless set of faces and six disembodied eyes. Literary historian Kara Rabbitt, in her discussion of these figures explains that:

they are quantifiable and containable: safely outside the dialogue...these third-person others are "penetrable" and "vacant" in their silence. The speaking subject reads his thoughts in their eyes and projects his voice upon them...The subject uses the eyes of these third-person "non-persons,"...as windows into a world of his own creation.5

I want to draw attention to Baudelaire’s disembodied eyes as a kind of entry point into a discussion of representational modes and contested voices and visions in the new modern city, and as a way of coming to terms with the largely institutionalized histories of the early cinema in the fin de siècle period. But unlike critics who, as literary historian Geraldine Friedman suggest, largely sidestep the self-effacing quality of dominant discourse dramatized so well in Baudelaire’s poetry, I am more interested in the opportunity to engage directly with the prevailing theme of this particular poem; that is, to penetrate the nexus of gazes set up by the poet and attempt, as Friedman argues one can, to read the “difference” in the urban scene presented.6 In other words, I want to work from the premise that much of early cinema’s histories, in an uncanny twist on Baudelaire’s modern narrative form, have often been one-sided stories told from the perspective of those who believed they were able to understand how the ‘primitive’ and ‘poor cousin’ of classical cinema operated and affected its earliest spectators. And much as in the poem, these reactions have often been read to efface what was perhaps just beneath the radar of perception—namely the radical possibility that certain silenced publics would find their own voice and vision.7


7 An important aspect of Friedman’s argument is to think about Baudelaire’s poetry in relationship to the interrogation of liberal and egalitarian politics in a post-1848 French public sphere. This aligns in
The first films in Budapest were shown to diverse aspects of the Budapest public beginning in May 1896, coinciding with the opening of the Millennial Exhibition. Of these, the most publicized screenings were held in the café of the newly constructed Royal Hotel in Budapest, located on the city’s own Haussmannized Grand Boulevard and far from the official spaces of the city’s Exhibition (see Map 4). Here, the French Lumière Company set up shop with the assistance of a locally placed distributor and began the process of introducing the city’s inhabitants to the cutting-edge technology of projected motion pictures. Marking the simultaneous impression of uncertainty and anticipation that the medium elicited in its inventors and early publics, film historian Deac Rossell has observed that "The technological frame of moving pictures was a *tabla rasa*, not yet defined as to its contents, institutions, and markets." At the end of the 1890’s, I would argue that the sparkling new metropolis of Budapest had itself become something of a *tabla rasa* in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a blank slate that existed in the unknowingness of its modern present, not yet defined, despite a looming World’s Fair that tried to argue otherwise. Against the monumentality with which the Millennial Exhibition officially represented Budapest to the world—be it through the massive architectural and transportation projects, history paintings, and grandiose displays already discussed in previous chapters—there was a way in which early cinema gave form to the almost intangible, ephemeral, and often silenced aspects of the city and its burgeoning modern life.

Indeed, as I will explore in this chapter, the subjects and themes of the early cinema showcased a broad spectrum of human activity that provided a glimpse into the more banal and everyday activities of everyday people. As the same time, however, viewers’ attention was being drawn to the *techniques* of projected images—images that could be made to appear or disappear, or function as deliberate illusions that brought focus to the means of representation and notions of what could remain hidden from perception. Through various camera techniques for example, early cinema audiences were sometimes shown the same films in reverse, in slower speeds,

---

or edited to create visual illusions. In turn, the predominant themes of the films were wrapped up not so much in seeing something real, but more in technological display, the machinery of viewing itself, and the novelty of seeing images come to life as 'living photographs.' In turn, these early films revealed an entire sensorium of emotions and human actions, and appeared at once to animate and re-contextualize the static images of modern life increasingly on display in the popular illustrated newspapers and journals of the day.

To be sure, Budapest, as Europe's fastest growing city during the year of early cinema's worldwide debut captured the spirit of modernity, newness and experimentation that also embodied the filmic form. But one of the prime attractions of the early cinema, and a feature which provides a focus for this chapter, lies not only in the novelty of the new media, but in the unpredictability of what one was going to see. Not unlike the rhetoric of the nomadic foregrounded in the shifting spaces of the Feszty panorama discussed in Chapter Two—a configuration that was linked to a kind of naturalized technology through the roaming mounted horsemen who surged to the horizon—there was something about the experimental and conceptual nature of the filmic medium and the subject matter it took up that was far less directed and exposed a reality that was not always as it seemed. Therefore, against common descriptions of incredulous spectators who taken in by the cinema's illusions reportedly ran from the screens in fright, I will argue that the sophisticated fin de siècle audiences of early cinema were more than aware of the new film technology's illusionistic qualities and did not necessarily mistake what they saw on the screen as 'real.' In fact, early accounts of film spectators at the end of the nineteenth century are filled with descriptions of the technical shortcomings of the machines, exposing audiences to the manipulated nature of technology as something that acted upon subjects as much as it was used as a tool of progress. As such, early films did not necessarily display the grandeur of modern progress at all; rather they often exposed the follies and failures of modern life and its technologies. This leads me to a series of questions. If this was indeed the case, what exactly was being exposed, destabilized and unhinged in these early films? What was being mocked and

---

made fun of? What silent realities were being given form, and what certainties were giving way?

The act of seeing the familiar in unfamiliar ways will therefore be emphasized in this chapter, something that was not necessarily perceived by viewing audiences as an escape from reality. Instead, what the cinematograph presented through early films was a more personalized or pedestrian vision of the world, one that appeared largely unedited and de-institutionalized, and offering something of a reprieve from the monumentality that accompanied large exhibitions. In light of this observation, what remains equally fascinating and notable about the Budapest context surrounding the earliest traces of cinema is how the appearance and exhibition of a new technology of vision so concerned with anxieties around representability and notions of recorded space and time could call up and give shape to the conflicted Austro-Hungarian capital. As I have worked to outline in previous chapters, the Budapest fin de siècle public was a divided one; it was a social body existing within a city literally obsessed with two inter-related issues by 1896—that is legitimacy, in terms of being an active and valid player within the dual monarchy; and history, in terms of overcoming the legacy of a failed revolution against Austria in 1848. Crucially, the much anticipated filmic medium became something of an unofficial attraction of the Budapest Millennial Exhibition celebrating the history of the Hungarian people and the entry of Hungary into the larger European world economy.

In this context, Miriam Hansen’s observations that early cinema appealed and “catered to people with specific needs, anxieties, and fantasies—people whose experience was shaped by more or less traumatic forms of territorial and cultural displacement,”10 is particularly compelling and forms a broad undercurrent of my analysis. The question of early cinema’s potential to expand the spaces of publicity—literally the condition of being public—remained tied to the emergence and experience of an evolving fin de siècle urban modernity, one that was charged, unruly and volatile. One aspect of this volatility was already reflected in the more experimental atmosphere of the early cinema, engendering a sense of not knowing what one was going to necessarily see or experience. This was coupled with a model of viewing that tended to excite audiences with its themes of modernity and an

emphasis on the present moment rather than the past. But what I will also suggest in this chapter was even more apparent both in Budapest’s case and during the lead-up to the Millennial Exhibition, was that the volatility associated with the urban scene upon which the early cinema drew its strength and appeal, centered increasingly on issues of neo-absolute authority, nationalism, and the right to showcase multiple and conflicting points of public and private view. Consequently, what I will explore in this chapter is how the early cinema gave shape to a kind of new altered space of inquiry, one that could provide a visual forum for the conflicted sense of futility, folly, and secret knowledge of modernity’s shortcomings—the dark side, the failing side of fin de siècle ‘progress,’ and, of Austro-Hungarian dualism. In other words, cinema as a representational tool was one that could give form to an entirely new space of expression, one that was well poised as a site of contestation.

The Cinematograph as Emerging National Eye: Expanding New Spaces of Publicity

By the time the brothers Auguste and Louis Lumière debuted their much anticipated invention, le cinémagraphe Lumière, to a paying audience at the Salon Indien du Grand Café in Paris on December 28, 1895, the brothers were quickly gaining international fame as among the first inventors to commercialize the projection of moving images. Indeed, it would only be within five short months that the Lumière brothers would make their presence felt at the scene of Budapest’s much anticipated Millennial Exhibition. Underscoring Hungarians’ desire to showcase the latest technological innovations from Western European cultural centers (ones that conspicuously did not originate with Vienna), it was within the context of an emerging café culture and the middle and working class publics to which the new media was first marketed that the earliest films would make their mark in Budapest. It was a phenomenon that would be repeated in many other urban centers around the world in the following year.

---

With a nominal entrance fee and several shows daily, spectators were presented with a diverse collection of short films that each ran under one minute in length. Featured as one continuous program that lasted approximately thirty minutes, the films were projected in random sequences that ranged from scenes of labour, play, leisure, and nature while mixing themes of the everyday with those offering a glimpse into more distant locales. As a result, the earliest projections, within the context of their haphazard display, maintained a sense of spontaneity and did not adhere to the same rigidity of order expected from other venues of public performance. And while difficult to pinpoint with absolute certainty which of the early Lumière films were first screened to the Budapest public at the Hotel Royal, it is certain that among them would have been one or more of the classic “Lumière ten,” composing the first ten films screened in sequence to the French public. This included the films Leaving the Lumière’ Factory in Lyon, The Vaulting, Fishing for Goldfish, The Landing of the Participants at the Photography Conference in Lyon, The Smiths, The Gardener, The Baby’s Dinner, The Jump in the Coverage, The Place of the Cordeliers at Lyon, and The Sea (fig. 4.1). Of these, perhaps the best known and most compelling for motion pictures’ earliest audiences, was the very first film in the cycle, Leaving the Lumière’ Factory in Lyon. Depicting a crowd of workers as they left their factory, presumably at the end of the day, there was already a sensibility inscribed within this first film that the medium could capture moments that were not so much a part of the official working day but tied more to the private leisure time of the city and its inhabitants.

Early films and the non-traditional venues within which they were experienced by spectators provided distinctly new contexts for viewing unlike the

---


13 From most accounts, it is clear that the first Lumière film screenings of 1896 would include several, if not all, of the original ten films made by the Lumières. This is especially so since the earliest film exhibitors would not have had the necessary training or time to make a completely autonomous program of films (instead, a mix of local and bought films was the norm by the end of the nineteenth century). The print advertisements that I have found related to this venue do not offer specific details of the programming at the Royal Hotel, but I am operating on the assumption that most of them would have been original Lumière productions.

14 I am indebted to artist Marina Roy from the University of British Columbia for drawing my attention to this observation that she first made in a research essay touching on the nuanced class distinctions given shape in the first Lumière films. This unpublished study is available on Roy’s personal website, Marina Roy, “The Recreation of Reality: From the Prison of Everyday Life to the Cinematographic Adventure through Time and Space ” (2003), http://www.marinaroy.ca/Lumiere.htm#_cdn1.
established and often institutionalized venue of the local theatre or the city opera house. Instead, housed in darkened café lobbies, makeshift vaudeville theatres, temporary exhibition grounds, renovated brothels, or other fleeting locations, the early cinema venues allowed for a level of perceived freedom and social interaction that typified the new urban energy of a burgeoning metropolis. Without the same traditional weight or expected codes of behaviour, the more decontextualized spaces of cinema exhibition recalled the very earliest engagement with World’s Fairs several decades earlier, where norms of social interaction were disturbed and called into question, while class mixing and new configurations of seeing were introduced. Consequently, there was a definitive air of the risqué and the underground surrounding early film exhibition that attracted audiences and word-of-mouth attention. Novelist Maxim Gorky’s now infamous account of a visit to a 1896 cinematograph screening in Russia speaks to this sense of spectacle. But, as film historians Lee Grieveson and Peter Kramer characterize in their reading of Gorky, the Russian author also captured the prevailing public attitude about the new technology—namely, that it was one without a future. Writing on Gorky’s encounter with the films, they highlight the ambivalence engendered around the media’s fit within the urban scene:

He [Gorky] was viewing them in a morally dubious café that seemingly doubled as a brothel run by entrepreneur Charles Aumont as part of the All Russian Nizhi-Novorod Fair. Gorky acknowledged that the Cinématographe could be ‘applied to the general ends of science’ but was also conscious that this was not ‘to be found at Aumont’s where vice alone is being encouraged and popularized.’ Vice was the future of this invention, Gorky anxiously predicted—assuming it had a future at all...

As this passage suggests, the potential lure of the early cinema lay in its democratic nature and open accessibility to anyone who could pay the relatively inexpensive entrance fee. At its outset, the cinema was indeed conceived as a medium for the

---


working classes, on whom cinema exhibitors could depend to turn a profit. But from the very earliest pre-commercial screenings in Paris, the audiences were also made up of individuals emanating from professions interested in the future of the media, such as photographers, scientists, and industrialists. The new technology of moving pictures, unabashed in its modernity, therefore appeared to comfortably blur the lines between artistry, science, commerce, and spectacle that more traditional representational modes worked to keep separate (or at least worked to offer the illusion of separation).

Within Budapest, a city that had only two years before the Millennial Exhibition been transformed through the experience of the 1848 revolutionary Lajos Kossuth’s death, I would argue that it too was a city that felt strangely futureless; and if not entirely futureless, then indefinite and without a clear direction. What I mean here is that despite the planning and preparation for a World’s Fair that celebrated Hungarian heritage and technological achievement, the crisis of representation in the lead-up to the 1896 Exhibition left large segments of the Budapest public with a high degree of mistrust in their government and more traditional institutions of cultural exhibition. This had been exposed most dramatically with the events surrounding the Kossuth public funeral, including the barring of any Kossuth-related plays and operas in the city, the unprecedented circulation of private and unsanctioned photographs related to his funeral, and the global attention brought to bear on the event. At the core of this sentiment of mistrust was a pervading impression that the interests of the Habsburgs and compliant Hungarian politicians upholding the aims of dualism stood paramount in the eyes of

---


19 Rossel, 133-134.

20 See Chapter Three for a detailed analysis of this episode.

21 The legacy of this mistrust also extends to the 1848 revolutionary period when leader Lajos Kossuth established the first Magyar language theatre in the old National theatre (where German had been the language of performance). This precipitated the rise of Hungarian language theatres across the region. The theatre thus became the first venue where the Hungarian language could be mobilized as a mass political language. But in the aftermath of revolutionary loss, the reestablishment of German language theatres in the country led to the censorship and closing down of many Hungarian theatres. It was only in the post-Compromise period that the Hungarian theatre could again become established. See Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary: 1848-1914* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 34, 148-57.
the city's political and cultural elite, and that any remaining liberal aspirations that did not conform with their dictums were futile at best. Therefore, within the context of continued and deepening conflicts in the Hungarian social body over its political connections with Austria—a theme explored at various points throughout this dissertation—there was a revival of passionate rhetoric tied to the 1848 revolution which polarized both sides of the political spectrum. On the far left, the political aim was to unite the marginalized classes of the social body in an outright revolt against the ruling elites of the dualist regime, while on the far right, the exclusionist agenda of the ethnic Magyar contingency was to claim the rights of ownership to the lands of Hungary at the exclusion of all others. Both sides were united, however, in seeking a political position well outside the prevailing norms represented by the dualist government of Austria-Hungary.22

Within this context, it could be argued that Budapest's urban environment and public sphere were ripe for the kind of radical change and perceptual shifts given shape by the debut of early cinema in the urban scene. It was a medium that appeared to break down and transform even further the boundaries of more traditional modes of circulating knowledge and power, and the spaces required to disseminate that information. As Jonathan Auerbach suggests in his work on fin de siècle media, early cinema shared with photography key features that had already been witnessed through the circulating images surrounding the Kossuth funeral, namely that film offered the "power and immediacy of a photographic realism that could not be matched by print."23 In other words, the cinema, through its very means of representation, could successfully reveal and deliver in an instant many of the unspoken tensions of urban modernity related to the social and political realities of the times as they played out in a rapidly evolving fin de siècle world.

The expanding spaces of publicity provided through the Budapest public's engagement with early cinema also mirrored the opposing aims and interests of exhibition organizers and participants over how best to represent Hungary and the


city of Budapest at the 1896 Fair. Emerging mainly among those individuals who wanted to move beyond the shackles of Habsburg-centered control and interests in the Fair and potentially exhibit outside state-sanctioned sites, there manifested a kind of conflicted position. On the one hand, there was tremendous excitement over the chance to gain a worldwide audience for Hungary’s arrival on the international scene. But on the other hand, this recognition came with a high price—namely, perceived identification with the official dictums of the Habsburg crown. In turn, the question increasingly circulated around notions of reliable truth and what the public would understand as the official and unofficial versions of Hungary’s history and claims to nationhood. This is of course the conflict that underwrote the creation, exhibition, and spatial configuration of the Feszty panorama where the founding of a private panorama company was partly conceived as a way to gain some measure of artistic freedom in rendering the scene of Hungary’s mythic founding moment. The final scene, however, could simultaneously be read as an assertion of Habsburg power (if one associated Prince Árpád with the Austrian Emperor), a show of Hungarian national self-determination (if one identified with the theme of Arpad as liberal ruler), or the representation of ethnic Magyar superiority (if one upheld the notion of Arpad and his people as the first Hungarians). These issues also arose through the conflict surrounding the private exhibition of paintings rejected from the official Budapest Salon set to open during the 1896 Fair. Here, the publicity generated over the private exhibitions of two rejected works, János Thorma’s *Martyrs at Arad*, which showed a controversial episode related to Austrian violence against Hungarians during the 1848 revolution, and Béla Grünwald’s *Comeback After the Tatar Invasion*, which pictured a thirteenth century Hungarian king celebrated for his proto-liberal reforms, was enough to make the paintings’ exhibition among the most popular at the Fair. Calling to mind the famous moment of French painter Gustave Courbet’s exhibition of works in an independent pavilion at the 1855 World’s Fair in Paris as I raised in Chapter Three of this thesis, the act of showing the paintings privately gained in strength as a kind of avant-garde gesture. But more importantly, the rejected paintings shown in these new spaces of unofficial exhibition that alluded directly and indirectly to historical events in Austria-Hungary’s short history were far more likely to be trusted

24 See Chapter Two for a detailed analysis of the Feszty Panorama and other paintings exhibited during the Fair.
and accepted by certain elements of the Hungarian public as "true" depictions for the 
*very fact* of the crown's refusal to show them. In this way, these paintings' exhibition 
also shared in the sense of the risqué and underground associated with early cinema 
projections.

I raise these episodes, in part, as a way of demonstrating how the Budapest 
publics' experience of late nineteenth century visual culture occurred at an 
unprecedented scale, one that was closely tied to the high visibility and variety of 
venues offered up by the metropolis during its six month term as host city of a 
World's Fair. Exposed to an entire range and variety of viewing experiences outside 
the control of ruling elites, Budapest citizens gained access to early forms of modern 
globalizing media and culture at the Exhibition that were radically redefining urban 
publics through a kind of "transporting" of people and places beyond situated borders 
and officially sanctioned narratives. For a rapidly expanding and self-inventing city 
such as Budapest, new media and the communication technologies held out a 
particularly desirable potential to revive and extend the goals set out by the earliest 
liberal reformers of the pre-Compromise era; that is, to promulgate the discourses of 
Hungarian emancipation from any outside rule. This of course lent force to the aims 
of Fair organizers (however it was to be politically and socially perceived) to 
construct the ancient Magyars as the most progressive people of the region, able to 
boast of their nomadic and technologically advanced roots. These aspects also fed 
desires at the individual, urban, and national levels to feel a sense of belonging to 
world events as a worthy participant. Being a public was therefore no longer 
something experienced as a citizen of *one* nation or even *one* Empire. For example, 
the arrival of more foreign goods to the city during the time of the Fair, together with 
their advertisement, and the flurry of new journal and newspaper publications in the 
wake of the Millennial Exhibition were often produced through trans-national 
collaborations.²⁵ The daily practice of internationalism was thus increasingly realized

²⁵ Budapest boasted among the largest circulation of news media in a European city (based on per 
capita statistics), comparable to Paris and London with a large number of international advertisers keen 
to purchase advertisement space in the pages of the local newspapers. At the time of the 1896 
Exhibition, there were 291 Hungarian language newspapers operating in the Austro-Hungarian Empire 
with a total circulation of 52 million. This is in addition to the numerous papers produced in a number 
of different languages (such as German, Polish, Czech, and Serbian) often drew on information 
provided from foreign correspondants. Robert Nemes, The Once and Future Budapest (DeKalb, Ill.: 
Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 182. The new invention of the news wire through telephone
within the realm of private experience and related to matters of personal taste and choice, where people could feel part of new markets of consumption that extended outside traditional boundaries. As a result, the notion of publicity as a social category was increasingly understood in its multiplicity, tied to the kind of places one frequented, the kinds of newspapers one read, and how one navigated and perceived the information coming at them from so many new sources. In terms of the early cinema, this meant the ability to watch films that audiences knew were being simultaneously screened around the world to groups of multi-lingual spectators without need of translation.\(^{26}\) This lent further power to a medium that could communicate a kind of international voice.

It is not surprising that early cinema exhibitors found in Budapest an obvious place to popularize and extend the cinematograph's 1896 worldwide debut. As a World's Fair crafted around technological innovation in the fastest growing metropolis of Europe, the Budapest Millennial Exhibition provided a charged and loaded site through which to exercise ever increasing modes of spatial reconfiguration demanded by late nineteenth century Fair audiences. Following closely on the heels of Chicago's successful World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, where the display of new technologies and spectacles helped catapult the mid-Western city to international stature and attention as a modern metropolis,\(^{27}\) there was likely a keen recognition on the part of local and international entrepreneurs of the Budapest Fair's rich potential as a site to promote new inventions such as the cinematograph. There existed not only the sense of wanting to outdo the what had been shown in Chicago, but also the keeping up with expectations of the Budapest public and fair visitors, many of whom anticipated the entertainments of the Fair as much, if not more, as the traditional displays.\(^{28}\) With its mixed citizenry, diverse ethnic make-up, and distinction as the

---

\(^{26}\) Rossell, 136.


most Americanized city of Europe, Budapest and its multiple venues indeed emerged to showcase early film among the most exotic and unusual settings around the city. This included film screenings at the Old Buda Castle Cabaret (Ős Budavára), a place of amusement located on the periphery of the official Fair meant to reconstruct the ancient Buda fortress as it was imagined under Turkish occupation between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a site boasting access to authentic Turkish smoking rooms, a mosque, and the display of authentic “oriental” bodies from distant locales, the featured kinematoscope projections were advertised as a bonus amusement (figs. 4.2-4.4). Early films were also featured at the reconstructed town of Constantinople on the edge of the city where the projections were one of many featured entertainments for visitors (recall discussion in Introduction and fig. 1.7). These locations gained additional strength and appeal because of Budapest’s own position as an “exotic” outpost in the broader international imaginary, caught spatially in many tourist’s minds between Western Europe and the Far East. The locations also, while allowing attendees to mark out their separation from Middle Eastern and Islamic traditions, called up a kind of history of occupation abstracted and distanced from the modern present.

As cultural historian Vanessa Schwartz argues within the context of evolving forms of spectatorship that emerged and were popularized with the ever-increasing crowds facilitated by such exhibitions, the new forms of viewing were caught up specifically with negotiating reality. As Schwartz suggests, “the blurring of art and life with the reality effect” on display in places of amusement and recreated realities, resides as much with the spectators’ abilities to make connections between the spectacles that they see and the familiar press narratives that they already know. It is therefore necessarily within the modern exhibition crowd that one finds the cinematic

29 The kinematoscope was a close relative to the cinematograph and was also used to project moving images. A daily newspaper, circulated by the exhibitors at the venue (called the Ős-Budavára Napilap (Old Buda Castle Daily)), provided a detailed schedule of performances and amusements open to visitors, and includes evidence of the changing program of individual films on exhibition that were similar to the Lumière movies in theme and subject matter.

30 The reconstructed Constantinople is described in the Introduction. The film screenings at this venue were advertised in almost every major Budapest newspaper at the time. See “Konstantinápolis Budapesten (Constantinople in Budapest),” Vasárnapi Ujság (Sunday Illustrated News) 36, no. 43 (1896): 598-601.

When seen as a kind of micro-history, the story of the first film projections in Budapest attest to this fascinating milieu of the modern crowd as it gathered and processed what it saw in the burgeoning urban metropolis. At the same time, however, it is important to consider how the crowd was perceived by distant observers. At its best, the crowd promised profits and a degree of acclaim and notoriety for the city. But at its worst, the crowds were seen as a short-term disruption and nothing short of anxiety-inducing for many of the city’s inhabitants and leaders. This of course is a theme that runs through World Exhibition history, tracing back to London’s Great Exhibition of 1851 when exhibition planners were charged with the difficult task of managing large influxes of people to the city. But, by 1896, as alluded to above, anxieties related increasingly to the overwhelming popularity of off-site venues around the host city, attracting as much traffic as the official Exhibition site. These locales, including the Old Buda Castle and the reconstructed fantasy city of Constantinople as noted above, were independently run ventures where working class people and exhibition visitors looking to let off a little steam could go and enjoy themselves away from the comparatively austere settings of the official Exhibition.

One American reporter’s acerbic description of his visit to the Old Buda Castle Cabaret offers a glimpse into this atmosphere:

Of course there was still another department (to visit)—there always is at every well-regulated exhibition, whether centennial or millennial. This was the department of the *non-descript*, the *unclassified*, and the *heterogeneous*...It was here a department of astounding wooden houses, cardboard mosques, and unlimited cafes—the kind where the pine tables are constantly wet with beer, and the same mugs do all day with but a single dip of water...Once inside and hurdy-gurdy instantly began. There were imitation Turks with fez and baggy trousers; there were imitation Venetian gondoliers, male and female this time, with Neapolitan caps and Tyrolean skirts; there were Turkish smoking rooms, with rugs and nargiles on sale at moderate prices, attended by houris speaking pure Hungarian...There were side-shows concealed by a carpet curtain, outside of which stood a Nubian or New Zealander or a Hindoo, one and the same swarthy Magyar doing service for all

32 Ibid.


34 Freifeld, 270.

35 Ibid., 274.
during the season; he brandished a scimitar one day and neat a tom-tom the
next, while every and all day he cried the virtues and attractions of the
performance inside. 36

Indeed, through this one impression one is left with a potent example of how
potentially threatening these unregulated spaces, tied to film exhibition and the
crowds that frequented them may have appeared to many observers.

Turning to the Budapest and Vienna press archives and what was imaged on
local newspaper pages of 1896, the sense of disorder and the unknown underscores
the anxieties and tensions associated with the fear of crowds seen around the city
during the Fair. Playing up concerns related to the rapid and uneven build up of
Budapest, with its unusual social and political configuration as the second capital
after Vienna in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, many of these accounts take the form
of scapegoating in an attempt to isolate and justify blame for the carnival-like
atmosphere that permeated some quarters of the city during the Millennial Exhibition.
For example, in a Viennese newspaper drawing dating from July 1896 and simply
titled “Understandable” (fig.4.5), a Viennese figure pleads with hands out held to the
displeased sun about the uncontrollable state of affairs at the Hungarian Exhibition.37

In the image, bodies of Exhibition spectators—many drawn to reflect a caricatured
working-class public— are crowded around an exotic and tawdry performance of a
dancing “odalisque”-like woman. In the foreground, other Exhibition visitors are
engaged in acts of violence, gambling, drinking, and lude conduct. Seated amidst this
apparent chaos, on the left hand side of the picture, is a bloated figure smoking a pipe,
enjoying his front row seat to the spectacle of it all. In another example (fig.4.6), this
time set on the streets of Budapest and manipulating current anti-Semitism in blatant
ways, a French visitor asks an Exhibition ambassador if all of the people they see on
the crowded street before them—many of whom are ruthlessly caricatured as Jewish
businessmen—are Hungarian.38 The ambassador’s response is, “Of course! We are in
Budapest, in the nation’s capital.” To this, the Frenchman remarks, “Well, then there

36 F. Hopkinson Smith, "The Hungarian Millennium," Harper's New Monthly Magazine 95, no. 567
(1897): 410.


38 “Szép esmények a millennium küszöbén (Nice Episodes on the Threshold of the Millennium),”
Herkő Páter, April 19 1896.
must be many Hungarians all over the world, indeed in France too. But just so you
know, we usually call them dirty Jews (sic).”

In both examples, what I want to draw attention to are the ways in which the
cartoons turn on the themes and tensions of who constitutes the unruly and alien
crowd. In the first example, the crowd of predominantly Hungarian working class
individuals is framed as if through Viennese eyes as an embarrassment to the Austro-
Hungarian Empire, while in the second cartoon, the sense of embarrassment falls
instead on the shoulder of Hungarians who want to distance themselves from those
seeming to be profiteering off of the event—here embodied through the bigoted
caricature of the Jewish businessman.39 The issue over perceived co-mingling of
social classes and ethnic groups within the city that take form in these drawings was
closely connected to debates over what role the city of Budapest played in the
progress and political state of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and broader European
community. And as stated at an earlier point in this chapter, these social and political
debates were often fought in the arena of art and culture. Urban Jews, in particular,
were cast in ferocious representations as killers of national culture. In a political
cartoon, for example, titled, “Today is not like it was” (fig.4.7), the first thousand
years of Hungarian history is embodied by the female figure of Hungaria, offering to
Hungarians the symbolic virtues of knowledge, work, music and debate from her horn
of plenty.40 In contrast, the second thousand years is embodied by an unknown Jewish
figure, who spills from his horn of plenty—drawn more as a bag of tricks— the
‘virtues’ of money, industry, and bought labour. Importanty, the virtue of art is the
most prominent of his possessions and given a special place among the booty. But I
would argue further that lying latent in these charged stereotypes was another fear.
Indeed, the scapegoating of Jews was part of a broader means through which more
conservative and Catholic voices within Budapest (and most often Habsburg

39 Recent studies related to the role of Jewish community in late nineteenth century Budapest include:
Kati Voros, "How Jewish Is Jewish Budapest?,” Jewish Social Studies 8, no. 1 (2001); Mary Gluck,
"The Budapest Flaneur: Urban Modernity, Popular Culture, and the "Jewish Question" in Fin-de-Siècle
Hungary,” Jewish Social Studies 10, no. 3 (2004); Yuri Slezkine, The Jewish century (Princeton:
Princeton University Press, 2004); Kinga Frojimovics and Géza Konotoróczy, Jewish Budapest:
Monuments, Rites, History (New York: Central European University Press, 1999). Also see the
following book from the period, Hermán ed. Zichy, Magyar Zsidók a Millenniumon (Hungarian Jews
at the Millennium) (Budapest: Miljkovic Dragutin, 1896).

40 "Nem ugy van ma, mint volt régen, más csillagzat jár az égen [Today is not like it was long ago,
another prophecy lies in the stars]," Herkő Páter, February 23 1896.
sympathizers) could react to the rapid urban growth of the city—a growth that was characterized as subverting traditional power and economic authority.\textsuperscript{41} Therefore, what these cartoons also foreground is how the Exhibition became a catalyst through which all that was cast as problematic and anxiety-inducing about capital expansion, urban modernity, and political representation in the fin de siècle capital could be expressed.

Importantly, the themes raised in a number of these caricatures related to the alien crowd gets to the core of film historian Hansen’s compelling argument raised at the outset of this chapter about how cinema could appeal to those with specific anxieties and fears about being culturally and territorially displaced. Related to and expanding Hansen’s astute observations are her more recent formulations of cinema as a kind of global vernacular or visual language of the everyday.\textsuperscript{42} These ideas emerge out of observations she first made with respect to classical American cinema and its attempts to negotiate the complexities of American nationalism in the aftermath of mass immigration to the U.S. at the turn on the twentieth century. What Hansen also raises here, however, are intriguing questions that connect the American cinema industry with the Budapest context. Importantly, it was at this moment that a disproportionate number of Hungarian immigrants, many of whom had lived and worked in fin de siècle Budapest, contributed to the growth and popularity of America’s emerging film industry.\textsuperscript{43} Critically, what Hansen has worked on as an evolving concept in her observations about early American cinema are the intersections she identifies between mass consumption, global media, and the hybrid

\textsuperscript{41} Many of the most discriminatory caricatures of urban Jews were found in journals and newspapers linked to the Catholic right throughout Austria-Hungary. Vienna in particular was known at this time for its openly anti-Semitic mayor, Dr. Karl Lueger, whose Christian Social Party dominated Vienna’s city council and lent support to similar political parties operating in Budapest. See “Anti-Semitism in Austria-Hungary,” \textit{New York Times}, May 30 1895. Also see Appendix I for a discussion about the process of Magyarization in relationship to anti-Semitism in this period.


\textsuperscript{43} Importantly, many of the individuals making up this group of filmmakers have now been identified as Jewish, or coming from families that changed their Jewish names during the process of Magyarization. Among these are counted a number of Hollywood’s most famous studio founders, Alexander Korda, Adolf Zukor and William Fox. Still, relatively little has been written specifically on the topic of Hungarians in the American film industry even while they are recognized as a founding group of the American cinema. One rare exception is the short essay by Catherine Portuges, “Hungarians in Hollywood,” \textit{Film Criticism} 21, no. 2 (1996).
identities associated within American immigrant cultures. It is a culture that drew on many of the anxieties experienced within the originating home context, and in the case of American cinema's early founders, a context that was often drawn from Austria-Hungary and Budapest more specifically. Hansen writes of the American cinema:

If this vernacular had a translatable and transnational resonance it was not just because of its optimal mobilization of biologically hardwired structures and universal narrative templates but, more important, because it played a key role in mediating competing cultural discourses on modernity and modernization, because it articulated, multiplied, and globalised a particular historical experience.44

And while it is important to note that Hansen makes these initial arguments about cinema after 1908, there have been more recent attempts to widen her critical frame and open up the possibility of using the theory of vernacular modernism to enrich an account of modernism through the entire history of film and other technological media.45 Critically, a vernacular modernism based around film exhibition can link the concerns of a Budapest public and their particular historical experience, shut out of access to modes of representation controlled by Viennese and complicit Budapest elites, to wider currents of international media formation throughout the twentieth century.

Drawing from Hansen's insights, I want therefore to liken early cinema to a kind of visual patois,46 capturing the sense of volatility, class and ethnic associations, and the perceived secret knowledge embedded within the new medium that could be conjured up and represented for certain publics. In turn, the cinematograph stands as a

---


45 This provocative argument was recently made at a University of London symposium exploring new frameworks for urban modernity and published in Mike Hammond, "Vernacular Modernism: 'Film: The First Global Vernacular?' University of London," History Workshop Journal 58 (2005). Therein, Hammond reflects on film historian Laura Mulvey's reaction to Hansen's keynote address at the event: "Her [Laura Mulvey's] reference to the term modernity seemed to encompass the functional impact and the affect of an everyday aesthetic produced by modernization and its products: design, consumer culture generally, and mass entertainment, on the material experience and texture of living. Her hope was that the symposium would look critically at the possibility that this everyday aesthetic produced 'a language to dream the dream of a better life'. This was not then the critical perspectives and prescriptions of high modernism, but instead was a means of exploring the 'vernaculars' emerging from the production of and engagement with globalizing mass communication and aesthetic practices."

potent metaphor for a kind of modern and emerging "national eye"—one that saw refracted through its lens the disjunctured modernity of a conflicted and fragmented Hungarian social body in fin de siècle Austria-Hungary, where the arc of liberalism was receding, faith in science and progress were decreasing, and the future thrown into perpetual question. Importantly, this introduces a way of seeing the world that produces a dialectic between participating and spectating, being active and passive, radical and conservative, and giving shape to the dualities of modernism as they played out on the margins of Europe. Indeed, if the technology of seeing engendered by the cinematograph created a conflicting sense of action and inaction, it was also one that brought people's awareness to the calculated nature of representation and the ability to glimpse the means of its production. Seen slightly differently, it gave form to the duality of experience within the duality of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, offering some measure of freedom, but not enough to be truly believed. In this sense, I see the cinematograph as an emerging national eye extending the understanding of the ephemeral position of Hungary itself as a quasi-nation that was being forced to look beyond the optical illusion of legitimacy for its half-empire; a place with no assurances of its future, but with a utopian hope for its eventual success.

Reappraising Early Cinema Historiography and Spectatorship

All of the observations regarding early cinema thus far have worked to play up its dynamic potential. But the history and subsequent historiography of the early cinema has worked to largely efface much of the radical promise that the medium possessed in its earliest phases. Reflecting, ironically enough, the same kind of competing interests and stakes that drove the innovation and mass distribution of moving pictures across Europe and then the globe in a staggeringly short period of time, the history of the early cinema remains problematic. While virtually all accounts of early films' first appearance in the 1890's generally agree that it was only within a few short years that cinema quickly established itself as the leading form of visual culture among an array of rapidly expanding global media, there is decidedly less consensus on the early history and development of the medium. At the core of these disagreements are two interrelated problems. First, is the long shadow cast by

47 I would like to thank Dr. Sherry McKay for suggesting the terminology of a “national eye” in connection to the configuration of seeing I have outlined through this section of the chapter.
cinema's key foundational figures, the Lumière Brothers and Thomas A. Edison, in the canonical account of film's origins as a technological race between France and the United States. Second, is the residual perception that film prior to 1908 was "primitive," "prehistoric" or simply proto-cinematic. Complicating these matters further is the question of how far back to trace the development of moving pictures, together with a simple lack of archival evidence of early cinema's first marks. Be it through limited access to actual films and early instruments created to make moving pictures, or the fragmented nature of first-hand accounts of the medium's debut in the public sphere, there is an inherent difficulty in writing about this period.

All of these problems associated with the early cinema are further marred by attempts to institutionalize and isolate a history that defies easy categorization. As film historian Laurent Mannoni usefully argues in his assessment of the literature on early cinema, historians have a hesitancy in approaching the period of the nineteenth century precisely because of the fragmented nature of filmic events. As such, the few historical accounts that have traditionally been recalled are not only flat and one dimensional, but also lack the documented range of experimentation characteristic of the time. As Massoni notes:

Most historians accord the realisation of this dream no more than a small note in the margin, and mention no more than a handful of daring technicians...In truth, the invention of the cinema was a 'long march' which lasted for several centuries. It was a story filled with crowds of highly ingenious pieces of equipment, infinitely varied images ranging from the popular to the poetic, and researchers who, although occasionally charlatans, were often scientists with a rigorous and very modern approach.

What then are the consequences of the historical downplay of the early period of cinema's growth? Indeed, Mannoni's observations are striking for underscoring what


49 Laurent Mannoni and Richard Crangle, The Great Art of Light and Shadow: Archaeology of the Cinema (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000)469. In Appendix A, Mannoni lists the countries that have known "pre-cinema" items of interest among their film archives. Among these are five Western European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Britain) plus the U.S. and Canada. Notably, most of these countries also have major film industries operating within their borders and an institutionalized cinema history that dominates much of the traditional historiography and discourse related to early cinema history.

50 Ibid., xvi.
has remained a key challenge in rendering early cinema’s history—that is, a forceful and sustained engagement with the speed, disjunction, and volatility of the urban scene that spawned the mass medium. As such, what has often been overlooked through the marginalization of early cinema history is precisely the messy, experimental, and highly entrepreneurial nature of early film production and distribution. Also lost is the extraordinarily international character of early film production and distribution. This is a phenomenon that Rossell describes as “Perhaps the most striking characteristic of moving picture work before 1900” when the “remarkably rapid dissemination of rumour and information, technical developments, wandering exhibitors and circulation of films” became entangled.51 Related to this internationalism is the extraordinary speed with which the machinery of motion pictures was adapted and mobilized for public exhibition. For example, the concession system that sent Lumière distributors and trained film technicians across the globe to thirty-one countries between 1895 and 1897 produced eight hundred and fifteen films in the same period, films that were produced and exhibited by a wide and diverse number of individuals within a myriad of social and political contexts.52 This is in addition to the hundreds of Edison films that would have circulated internationally as part of an elaborate licensing system worked out in the period.53 Few historians have attempted to unpack and document these systems, and when they have, the results have most often resulted in micro-histories, contributing to something of a giant jigsaw puzzle that reveal small pieces in a much broader picture of early cinema history.

Traditional film histories, while working to efface this messy and confounding period of filmmaking, have therefore constructed more in terms of an evolutionary model when approaching the earliest phase of cinema exhibition. This model, taking its cues from the institutionalized, competitive, and nationalized motion picture

51 Rossell, 143.

52 These statistics are from the Lumière Institute published on their website: http://www.institut-Lumière.org/english/frames.html. They correspond to most of the cited statistics in other accounts of the period.

industry with—which many are more familiar (for example, the Hollywood, French, or even Indian cinema), positions the earliest years of cinema in terms of an infancy, a time of fits and starts, lacking sophistication or attention to qualities that would come to be associated with what is argued to be the true art of cinema. The features often cited here relate to a high degree of narrative coherence, the technically involved processes of editing, or the theoretical speculation of cinema’s relationship to the novel and theatre.\(^\text{54}\) As a result, the technological determinism with which many film historians have looked to the past fail to take into account that more than technology was involved in the invention of the cinema and that the cinema as understood today was not necessarily what audiences of early film exhibitions experienced. Indeed, following this flawed logic, there is a notion perpetuated in much of cinema’s historiography that filmmaking has from its inception been progressing to some known end point, one that by definition rejects early cinema’s unique qualities and dismisses individuals associated with early filmmaking as nothing more than adventurous dabblers. Failing to critically focus on this “pre-classical” moment in film history has also resulted in the failure to move beyond categories of “popular” and “avant-garde” filmmaking as determinants of value when studying the cinema. Such a model brings back to mind the passage quoted earlier from Mannioni’s descriptions of the “crowds” of equipment and “charlatans” that pepper the early accounts of moving pictures. These are particularly charged characterizations since they capture the inherent difficulty that many filmmakers and film historians have had to confront with respect to film’s precarious position as a category between art and spectacle.\(^\text{55}\) Therefore, a recasting of early cinema not only suggests the possibility for a radical reconceptualization of the medium—precisely the process that threatens to dislodge the founding myths and canons of traditional film historiography—it also threatens to “soil” all film histories with the taint of the pedestrian and everyday.


Mannoni’s insights concerning the limited understanding of early filmmaking do however point us to the more recent critical reappraisals of the early cinema. The various technological changes within the contemporary media universe have led to many of these studies, together with interdisciplinary efforts to chronicle and make sense of early filmmaking and its attendant technologies. My focus, however, is centered more on theoretical debates that bring into question notions of spectatorship and the often monolithic account and focus on the gaze that, until more recently, have tended towards an account of seeing in terms of a static individual fixed spectator, thereby effacing the diversity of viewing positions, audiences and social groupings possible in terms of gender, race, class and nation. The analysis in Chapter One regarding visuality and the shifting spaces of the urban fabric, and in Chapter Two and Three in respect to embodied seeing foregrounds much of this theory and rehearses aspects of the radical new relationship between spectator and viewer I want to raise here with respect to cinema. Of particular importance is Jonathan Crary’s body of work concerning the disruption of the human sensorium and the emergence of models of subjective vision in the decades during early cinema’s formative phase. Key to Crary’s formulations is that, concurrent with the invention of cinema, the truth and materiality of vision was put into scientific dispute in the nineteenth century. As Crary argues, “Vision, in a wide range of locations, was reconfigured as dynamic, temporal, and synthetic,” becoming compatible with other processes of modernization that were characteristically automated, fragmented, contingent, and unstable.

Deriving cues from Crary, the new directions taken in early cinema studies by figures such as Charles Musser, Tom Gunning, and Mary Ann Doane have been key

---


to my thinking around early cinema’s debut in Budapest and are worth touching on here briefly. Beginning with Musser and his research into the early American cinema, one finds the first significant attempts to contextualize early cinema’s narrative conventions as not strictly related to formal techniques, but derived more from the specific cultural contexts within which the first films were exhibited. Crucially, Musser has worked to acknowledge the powerful role of the exhibitor in the history of early cinema as an active agent who exerted a tremendous amount of control over how, in what order, and to what preconceived effect, early films would be shown to particular publics. In his most recent essay, “Historiographic Method and the Study of Early Cinema” Musser expands on the significant reassessment of the exhibitor’s role to the understanding of film history, stating that:

On a basic level, then, film editing was not invented but shifted from exhibitor to production company, resulting in the centralization of this crucial element of creative control and acceptance of the filmmaker as an artistic and cultural force. Intimately related to this insight into production practices was an interrogation of the "pre-Griffith" system of representation, which prior scholars had dismissed as primitive, uniformed, and incoherent. Musser goes on to expand from this argument, claiming that engagement with early cinema foregrounds at least five fundamental challenges for historical inquiry. The first is the need to interrogate the status of the film text as an object that exists as it was shown to specific audiences; the second involves the exploration of the relationship between films and other cultural works; the third relates to the nature of historical change, causality, and the transformation of film practice in the fin de siècle period; the fourth includes situating cinema within a larger framework of the history of cultural practices in a way that reveals the transformative powers of motion pictures; and the fifth involves the exploration of films and other cultural works in relation to their social base—that is, their varied ideologies.

---


63 Ibid.
Tom Gunning, working closely with Musser's ideas, has also sought to valorize early filmmaking and exhibition as a "cinema of attractions."\(^{64}\) This is a cinema that Gunning argues "dispels its visibility," and its willingness "to rupture a self-enclosed fictional world for a chance to solicit the attention of the spectator,"\(^{65}\) thereby rejecting the narrative absorption model of classical cinema that engages with spectators in a more directed and less interactive way. In turn, Gunning not only foregrounds the active role of the spectator as a new figure through which to approach early cinema; he also shows how the cinema of attractions relates more to the attractions of the fairground than to the traditions of legitimate theatre."\(^{66}\) He deftly extends this argument to the more material realm of commercial transportation and the railway lines that were celebrated at modern Fairs (and incidentally used to distribute films around Europe). In this context, early cinema, with all of its non-narrative and sometimes comic, phantom, or ephemeral conventions, merges into an already existing network of technology and industry.\(^{67}\) Gunning’s project has also involved the ambitious task of directly challenging narrative primacy (or storytelling) as a sustained focus of film histories. Commenting on cinema’s place within a broad visual culture that exists at the intersection of modern science and media, Gunning claims that this intersection, while continuing to define information and entertainment media today, allows us "to rethink what the nature of modernity and its roots really are."\(^{68}\)


\(^{65}\) Ibid., 57.

\(^{66}\) Ibid., 58.

\(^{67}\) Tom Gunning, "Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema," in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, ed. Leo Charney (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995), 16. Gunning writes: "While actuality films depended directly on the new technology of both cinema and transportation to image the collapse of space and time formerly required for an experience of global tourism, the phantasmagoria of the trick film with its magical metamorphoses echoes the transformation of raw material into products achieved nearly instantaneously through the rapid succession of tasks in the new factory system."

Finally, turning to Mary Ann Doane, what is arguably most compelling in her recent work, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time* has been a concerted attempt to link notions of contingency and temporality directly to the mechanisms of early cinema.\(^69\) Doane argues that the significance of the cinema, within the context of an epistemological shift toward legible contingency as I’ve outlined vis-à-vis Crary, lies in its apparent capacity “to perfectly represent the contingent.”\(^70\) In other words, the diverse actuality films popularized in the fin de siècle period—of trains leaving stations, baby’s eating, people playing etc...—were celebrations not only of “life itself in all its multiplicity, diversity and contingency,”\(^71\) but also of the ability to represent movement and imprint time. As Doane explains:

> While the earliest screenings of film clearly functioned as demonstrations of the capabilities of the machine itself... one of the most prominent capabilities exhibited was that of indexicality, the ability to represent motion and temporal duration. Contingency was itself a display.\(^72\)

This archival impulse fixed its assurances in a late nineteenth century world to the capability of a machine that could produce an aesthetic representation not linked purely to human control (such as painting and sculpting for example). Consequently, Doane has sought to extend and complicate what she terms the “performative dimensions” of Gunning’s arguments and emphasize instead how films as records and films as display need not be contradictory or incompatible.\(^73\) Moreover, among her other intriguing suggestions related to Crary’s linking of temporality and the body, and the pressure of time’s rationalization in the modern world, has been to

---

\(^69\) Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2002).


\(^71\) Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive*, 22.

\(^72\) Ibid., 24.

\(^73\) Ibid.
reconceptualize time as a source of anxiety—an idea that haunts and indeed permeates the history of early moving images.

**The Radical Potential of Budapest's Early Cinema**

What then shaped the more specific radical potential and modern dimension of the early cinema in Hungary? Arguably, a kind of inherent sensibility had already existed with a generation or more of Budapest’s urban spectators being exposed to viewing the familiar in an unfamiliar way. Martin Loiperdinger, in his account of the first Lumière films, explains this phenomena as emanating in relationship to the plethora of other viewing devices that had a history of exhibition within Austria-Hungary. This includes the magic lantern, stereoscope, diorama, and panorama, all of which had been for half a century or more focused on presenting the fantastic display of everyday reality in an altered manner. As Loiperdinger argues, however, the appeal of the cinematograph was still rooted in a kind of reality effect and sense of movement that was difficult to fully replicate in other media:

The curiosity of seeing familiar and well-known scenes through a new technological invention in an unfamiliar way and to experience them differently appears to be the central motive for visiting the Cinématographe Lumière in the spring and summer of 1896... Spectators did not want to see reality on the screen, but rather images of reality, which were different from reality.

Therefore, against persistent and historiographically cemented accounts of the cinematographic projections’ panic-inducing qualities and appeal as a fantasy machine—a point to which I will return towards the end of this chapter—audiences appeared most interested in the technology of the machine itself and how it could render reality otherwise. This is also what likely drove interest to the off-site venues of the Budapest Exhibition where the reconstruction of distant locales allowed for a kind of altered experience of reality. It is doubtful, however, that all spectators

---

74 Ibid., 225.
75 For a useful history of the exhibition and availability of new technologies of vision to the Budapest public, see Magdolna Kolta, "Képmutogatók Pest-Budán (Picture-makers in Pest-Buda)," *Budapest Negyed* 15, no. 1 (1997), http://www.bparchiv.hu/magyar/kiadvany/bpn/15/kolta.html
77 Ibid.
necessarily believed that these places, holding out the promise to present something novel and different, were representing what was a real or authentic display of distant places or cultures. Instead, publics seemed fascinated with the techniques of illusion that could render reality in a novel way. Recalling the American reporter and his account of Old Buda Castle, it is notable that he did not fall for the performance of the Magyar who dressed alternatively as a ‘Nubian, or New Zealander, or a Hindoo.' Instead, the reporter’s description characterized the venue in terms of an unspoken understanding that everything on display was less about what was real, and more about a kind of relaxed and unrestricted socializing that encouraged a temporary release from the pressures of everyday working life.

Displaying a kind of experimental instability then, not unlike the urban context of Budapest at this time, the technologically mediated forms of publicity enabled through early cinema exhibition in Budapest coexisted with forms of public life predicated on face-to-face relations and pre-existing encounters with other forms of amusement. Relying on what film theorist Miriam Hansen terms “cultural intertexts,” the films shown had to be recognizable to larger groups, and so the variety format was most often utilized where the presentation of individual films or film groupings were sometimes interspersed with different entertainments. As Hansen argues, “early cinema’s dispersal of meaning across filmic and non-filmic sources (such as the alternation of films and musical numbers) lent the exhibition the character of a live event,” one that varied from place to place and time to time depending on the venue, location, and audience composition. This situation in turn emphasized the potential for both expanded and differentiated spaces of publicity. This is physically traceable through the method in which cinematograph screenings were advertised in Budapest’s newspapers and on the city streets, side by side with other traditional and non-traditional public entertainments (fig.4.8).

At its core, early seeing machines therefore played a kind of epistemological role in challenging commonly held assumptions about the reliability of seeing as truth. Other categories of lesser known, but equally important film technologies were in fact exhibited around Budapest during the Fair and bear mentioning here within this context. These include the Animatotgraph projections at the Somossy Social Club

---

78 Hansen, "Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film."

79 Ibid.
and Café, the Kinematoskop projections at Old Buda Town and Constantinople, and Edison’s Vitascope machines which were featured at the Fair as part of a pavilion of optics. Importantly, while each viewing context tended to position viewers differently, there was no public sense about which media form would later manifest as the more dominant one. This is critical to keep in mind since it disrupts perceptions of the standardized features of cinema-going as we know it today (including the use of a single large screen, a silent projector, surround sound etc...). In other words, these venues reflected not only the diversity of viewing opportunities available to the Budapest public, they drew attention to the heterogeneous nature of viewing in and of itself. This growing awareness of seeing things not always as they were, coupled with the awareness of active competition in the marketplace to cater to a diverse crowd of fair-goers, therefore exposed publics in a very readable way to the idea and materiality of multiple and competing perspectives.

In contrast to the elaborate architectural projects, overbearing national statues, official paintings, and constant state rhetoric, the early cinema thus appeared to break down eternal certainties and bring to the screen more ephemeral, fleeting, and chance moments of urban modernity. In large part, these qualities were often experienced in connection to the humour seen in the earliest films. Whether it be a scene in a film of someone tripping, near misses in traffic, the act of a child being scolded, or the simple gesture of a figure looking knowingly at the audience, it is arguable that there is a way in which the earliest films embodied elements of humour that would later be explored in classical cinema through the conventions of slapstick and camp. Literary theorist Simon Critchley, writing on humour, suggests that it is precisely the provocative quality of the comedic or joke that remains a productive site of examination, “tear[ing] holes in our usual predictions of the empirical world.” In other words, there is a way in which humour creatively exposes the tensions between expectation and actuality that often remain unspoken. As Critchley writes:

---

80 See Kolta.

81 In contemporary terms, I would liken this setup to an imagined exhibition showcasing and engaging fairgoers with multiple and alternative computer operating systems well before the global omnipresence of Microsoft Windows—an event that would likely rupture many people’s perceptions about other viable ways to engage with computers and the digital management of knowledge.

We might say that humour is produced by a disjunction between the way things are and the way they are represented in the joke, between expectation and reality. Humour defeats our expectations by producing a novel *actuality*, by changing the situation in which we find ourselves... The comic world is not simply 'die verkehrte Welt,' the inverted or upside-down world of philosophy, but rather the world with its casual chains broken, its social practices turned inside out, and common sense rationality left in tatters.  

Critchley therefore helps extend an understanding of what is meant by the term “actuality” films; another name given, perhaps not so insignificantly, to the early film vignettes presented in the first screenings of the late 1890’s. These films produce the effect Critchley describes about a joke, and more specifically the situation where films in and of themselves produce a novel experience that alters the perception of a given situation in which the spectator finds him or herself. Activities such as walking through new city streets, riding a city omnibus, or the simple act of viewing nature are therefore perceived differently once they are experienced through the filmic medium.

The suggestive dynamic Critchley associates with humour—the disjunction between the actual and the expected—brings into question many of the social configurations exposed through the seemingly playful banter and subject matter of the earliest films. As such, the early cinema became a site through which modern regimes of power could take shape, be mocked, and even come into question. A potent example emerges in the short film “The Gardener,” one of the original “Lumière ten” composing the first films screened in sequence to the viewers at 1896 screenings (and likely seen by Budapest audiences).  

Therein, the viewer is presented with the figure of a working man, a gardener, watering a flowerbed to the left-hand side of the screen (fig.4.9). The expanse of rubber hose behind him lies horizontally on the ground and snakes off the right-hand side of the screen and out of the spectator’s line of view. After a few moments, a second figure appears on the right of the screen, suggested through his dress to be a younger bourgeois figure, perhaps the son of the foreman or owner of the property on which the gardener is working (fig.4.10). In a comic attempt to keep the gardener from doing his job, this second figure sneaks up behind the gardener and places his foot on the hose, causing the flow of water to begin flowing...
erratically and then stopping altogether (fig.4.11). The gardener, at first unaware of this figure, is puzzled by the changing flow of water and attempts to fix the hose by shaking it (fig.4.12). He then turns his face towards the hose opening to examine it, and, in a moment of total surprise, is sprayed violently in the face with water, causing his hat to go flying up in the air as the young man takes his foot from the hose (fig.4.13). The gardener immediately turns around to see the culprit and angrily chases him into the left background, catching and dragging the man by the ear back to the hose (fig.4.14). The gardener then pushes the man's face toward the hose laying on the ground with a gesture that says "Look! This is what you did!" (fig.4.15) and proceeds to spank him with his bare hands (fig.4.16). The figure is then pushed away from the hose and leaves the screen, while the gardener returns to his work (fig.4.17).

Through this particular vignette, a number of key themes are raised. First and perhaps most significantly is that notions of power, represented by the gardener's technological control over the flow of water through the hose, are exposed to the audience as illusions. These illusions are most potently suggested by the viewer's inability to see where the hose ends, and consequently where the source of water is emanating from. Not only are the mechanisms of power therefore transferred away from the gardener, they are metaphorically linked to the second bourgeois figure that secretly controls the means of power at his whim, and often for his own amusement. Second, the film draws attention to the ludic nature of technology and its propensity to accident and breakdown. This is seen occurring when the technology enabling the water to flow through the rubber hose is halted, preventing the gardener from carrying out his task of watering the plants. Consequently, the most violent aspects of both technologically gone awry and of who controls technology are expressed when the gardener is sprayed with great force in his face. I would suggest further that some interesting comedic parallels and self-referential qualities associated with these instances of technological breakdown represented in the film are connected back to earliest film screenings themselves, where various problems with the projection machine led to all manner of problems, including total failure. Third, simultaneous to the notions of failure and seeing progress in ironic terms elicited through "The Gardener," is a suggestive punch line, as it were, with respect to the discipline imposed by new regimes of power in modern culture. This takes shape in the comical retribution that the gardener unleashes on the second figure through the act of
spanking and humiliating him for taking advantage of the gardener's trust. And finally, in a way that introduces the dimension of reflexivity to the filmic medium, there is the split-second moment, where the second figure humiliated after his spanking by the gardener looks straight at the camera in a way that brings recognition to the existence of an audience (fig.4.18)—an audience presumably aligned with the gardener and laughing at the whole scene.

In this short and seemingly innocent film of under one minute in length, a whole host of tensions and pressures of modernity are played out. This includes the themes of class and social configurations under capital expansion, the question of who holds technological control and to what ends, and the more radical notion of worker revolt in face of misguided power. As Hansen has suggested, there is a way in which film and the spaces of cinema hold out the possibility of a "self representation of the masses subject to the process of mechanization." Hansen explains that the cinema suggested such a possibility because it made visible to itself and society a public ignored by the dominant culture. As she goes on to argue:

[The new medium] offered an alternative because it engaged the contradictions of modernity at the level of the senses, the level at which the impact of modern technology on human experience was most palpable and irreversible. In other words, the cinema not only traded in the mass production of the senses but also provided an aesthetic horizon for the experience of industrial mass society.

While I agree with Hansen on this point, it is useful to contextualize the argument more specifically to the fin de siècle moment when the awareness of mechanization in the public sphere was in its earliest, and therefore more anxiety-inducing stages of realization. At this time, the recognition of technology's impact on the shaping of modern experience would eventually become normalized within the framework of a classical cinema (especially American cinema) shaped by the comic tradition. It is therefore arguable that the fear and awe of new technologies elicited at the moment of the very first film screenings created a far more charged environment. The commercial slogan used to advertise the cinematograph is a case in point. 'La vie prise sur le vif,' or 'Life, caught in the act!' is a multi-faceted expression that imparts


not only the sense of being able to see something that is otherwise hidden—a kind of
voyeuristic quality that a hidden camera could elicit—but also the impression that
what one is witnessing are ephemeral and quickly dissolving moments of modern life
that can sometimes be overlooked, forgotten or even ignored. All said, it is a slogan
that perhaps gets to the heart of what is most dynamic and conflicted about the
medium.\footnote{This slogan is discussed in Loiperdinger and Elzer: 97.}

As a slogan, “La vie prise sur le vif” The slogan also usefully underscores the
word-of-mouth publicity through which the early screenings gained popularity. This
lent to the early cinema an air of secrecy and a kind of “wink and nod” knowing
about the ludic aspects of modernity and modern progress as they operated below the
radar of more official representation. Such a sensibility, as noted at the outset of this
chapter, was already worked into early cinema at its historically constructed
inception, when the very first Lumière film presented workers leaving the factory and
away from the eyes of power at their job site, presumably off to enjoy their private
leisure time. As artist Marina Roy has astutely observed in her analysis of *Worker’s
Leaving the Lumière Factory:*

The fact that the workers are leaving the factory, and not entering it for
instance, seems significant; leaving the factory reflects a time when the
worker is happy to be off work, ready to go about occupying their time with
more leisurely activities perhaps. The worker is also no doubt relieved to be
released from the surveillance-type situation that characterized so many
factories at that time, the new Taylorist-style methods of scientific work
management that would assure that they worked efficiently.\footnote{See Roy.}

What is worth stressing here is that the early cinema and the ways in which different
publics reacted to what they viewed was necessarily drawn into connection with the
daily experience of being part of a certain class, gender, nationality, and world view.
In this sense, the humour and various understandings brought about through the
experience of seeing these films was deeply context specific; that is, the laughter
aroused by the scenes had its basis in recognitions that related back to the world of
the viewer. Some were shared jokes while others were certainly not. As Critchley
explains, pointing to this kind of exclusivity of humour and relating to ideas of
vernacular modernism already raised in earlier discussion:
Humour is a form of insider-knowledge, and might indeed be said to function like a linguistic defence mechanism. Its ostensive untranslatability endows native speakers with a palpable sense of their cultural distinctiveness or even superiority. In this sense, having a common sense of humour is like sharing a secret code.  

In the case of the Budapest public, I would contend that the shared jokes were related to all that has been raised thus far in this dissertation with respect to a broad urban modernity, and especially so since the Millennial Exhibition took as its focus the celebration of technology and modern progress. But perhaps more palpably, the shared jokes during 1896 also gained in their specific context through the insidious gaps people increasingly recognized between what was expected of their political leaders and what was actually transpiring in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Indeed, during the same month that cinema made its debut in Budapest, large and vocal worker protests and parades were being staged to coincide with the opening of the World’s Fair, an episode often effaced from historical accounts of the Exhibition. In turn, the dualities and causal chains that were exposed and explored through the mechanisms of the early cinema strangely paralleled a similar process of unveiling with respect to the dualities of Austro-Hungarian rule.

**Tracing the Story of Hungarian Film Exhibitor Arnold Sziklai**

Having staked a great deal of my observations on the importance of a context-specific evaluation of early cinema’s many fragmented histories, I want to turn attention to a key episode at the Budapest World’s Fair that brings much of what has been discussed thus far into play. It is a story on the topic of Hungary’s early cinema pieced together from the Budapest archives and few sources related to the period.

---

89 Critchley, 67.

90 Hungarian socialist worker parties staged a series of demonstrations in Budapest both as part of May Day celebrations on May 1, 1896, and then subsequently on numerous occasions throughout the time of the Fair. The official Exhibition did not open until May 2, the day following these protests, but many of the events were still headline news around the country. The calls for protest can be readily found in Budapest’s daily socialist newspaper Népszava (Nation’s Voice) during the week prior to the opening celebrations (Also see my discussion and further analysis in the Conclusion of this thesis).

91 Most histories of the Hungarian cinema make only a passing reference to the cinematographe’s debut at the 1896 Millennial Exhibition as a starting point in a more linear story of the medium in the country. They are useful, however, for piecing together various facts about the episodes related directly to the film exhibitors. See for example: Bálint Magyar, *A Magyar Némafilm Története, 1896-1931* (Hungarian Silent Film History, 1896-1931) (Budapest: Palatinus, 1966); István Nemeskúrti, *Word*
amounting to something of an under examined chapter blurred into the “official” record of early cinema exhibition in Budapest. This retrieved history, which interestingly enough mimics the unpredictability of the filmic medium and its erratic pathways that many historians have tried to stabilize through founding myth narratives and the simple downplay of the ‘primitive early days,’ reveals concerted attempts by certain individuals to not only introduce and exhibit films to the Budapest public one month before the officially recognized Lumière screenings at the Hotel Royal, but crucially, to produce and create projection machines and films outside the control and interest of foreign film company owners.

In order to recall these events, it is useful to reiterate again the coinciding moment with the heady frontier days of the early cinema, when producing and exhibiting films was increasingly standardized and then wholly monopolized. Specifically, within a little over one decade of the cinematograph’s worldwide debut, the film industry would consolidate into a comparatively small group of film production companies located largely within Western Europe and North America. That is not to say however that the pre-1908 period was entirely open. As early as 1896, for example, when the first films were being commercially distributed and the earliest projection devices made their way into the market, there were policies set in place by the Lumière Brothers and Edison to maintain some measure of control over how their projection devices and films would circulate. The critical difference between the early and later cinemas, however, lay with which aspect of cinema technology invested parties were most interested. In the earliest stages of film exhibition, there was an increased focus on controlling the circulation of the competing machinery of film-making (i.e. Lumière’s cinematograph or Edison’s Vitascope). There are many reasons for this, including the uncertainty that many


92 See Chanan, Rossell.

93 Ibid.
inventors had about the future of filmmaking as a viable industry (thereby decreasing the motivation to sell their machines) and the tradition of scientific investigation in the Western world that was tied to the practice of patenting. In later stages, however, when the business of film-making was realized, the machinery would become standardized in the form of one universal film projection device. The focus thus fell increasingly on controlling the actual films themselves. In other words, a kind of reversal of interests emerged in the latter phases of the cinema’s development so that an exhibitor’s success in the formative years of filmmaking was more or less determined by getting their hands on a machine; the films could then be obtained or produced far more readily. This is in stark contrast to the classical cinema period of the early twentieth century when profits became increasingly linked to film distribution. Therefore, despite the entrepreneurial efforts that underpin early cinema’s success, the activity of film exhibition outside of France, England and the United States was still largely perceived to be in the hands of “outsiders,” with links to local entrepreneurs and new classes of mobile businessmen who purchased rights to film projection machines.

These distinctions are pivotal since they help illustrate how difficult it would have been for an interested party to screen the earliest films without entering into established business networks. This is, however, exactly what one Hungarian entrepreneur, Arnold Sziklai, attempted to do beginning in late 1895, when on a business trip to Paris, he viewed one of the first Lumière film projections and immediately put a plan in place to exhibit the new medium at the Budapest World’s Fair. Sziklai’s first hand account of his plans was unceremoniously published more than a decade after the Millennial Exhibition in a series of interviews for a Budapest movie journal. Therein, Sziklai detailed the difficult process he encountered when attempting to stage film screenings in Budapest. And from what can be gleaned of his plans to purchase the equivalent of franchise rights from the Lumière Brothers to show just their films, Sziklai became frustrated through the process of attempting to negotiate a contract:

94 Channan, 177-180.

95 See note 1. Sziklai’s interviews were published over three volumes of the Mozgófénykép hiradó (Moving Pictures News) in 1915.
It was in Paris that I heard that a motion picture show was going to take place at the Boulevard des Italiens. It was out of curiosity that I also went to the movie theatre. Inside this theatre they were showing around 150 metre strips and the biggest attraction was the film of an arriving train at the station. Of course the pictures themselves had technical mistakes, but it was a new technology and the idea occurred to me that I should bring it to Hungary for the Millennial Exhibition. The Paris theatre operated under the Lumière name, and it was with them that I made contact. The Lumière’s immediately asked for an unbelievable amount of money for the patent, that is, to secure rights to exhibit in Hungary. They asked 60,000 francs for the machine and 60% of the gross receipts during the entire duration of the screenings. Of course, this was not seriously negotiable and I wanted to abandon the plan when I heard that the inventor of the machine was not Lumière, but a fellow from Lyon who worked in the Lumière factory and was still there, living under fairly humble conditions (this, the inventor’s fate!).

Sziklai goes on to describe his trip to Lyon where he in fact hires the unnamed man for twenty franks a day. With this Lumière worker in tow, he returns to Paris and decides to find more technical assistance at Paris’s Polytechnic Institute. He speaks there with an instructor (a man he simply calls Combret) and hires him for fifty franks a day to come to Budapest to perfect a projection machine in time for the Fair’s opening in May, 1896. Sziklai then describes how he and the two hired helpers return to Hungary in 1896 to begin making the machine and equipment necessary to screen Budapest’s first films.

In describing the months of experimentation to make a functioning projection machine, Sziklai explains in terrific detail the various problems he encounters and the many prototypes that are thrown away in the process of fabricating a projection device. Once the machine is ready, however, Sziklai manages to secure film stock from the Eastman company (makers of the Kodak camera) in New York but discovers a new problem—the film projector he created does not project the whole image. This takes Sziklai an additional two weeks to fix, from which point he goes on to recall his travels to Paris and London to find a photographer with the expertise to develop the films he wants to make. Here too Sziklai outlines the problems he encounters with making the Eastman film stock fit into his fabricated camera,

96 Ibid.

97 The Eastman Company had originally been a dry plate supplier and appears to have sold clear film stock to a number of independent agents, understanding that the material was being used to make projected images on patented machines. See Rossell, 124-125.
outlining the system he works out to perforate the film strips to move through his projector. Still, one of the biggest problems that remains for his team is that the films are dislocated, causing the pictures to appear with a moderate degree of distortion. But with April nearing, Sziklai panics to prepare for the first screenings set to coincide with the Millennial Exhibition's opening. Importantly, there is the matter of a theatre, and Sziklai recounts how he negotiates with an owner of a porcelain store to convert an available space in his building (on Andrassy Avenue leading to the Fair) and rent it to him for one year, characterizing the space that is created as a makeshift theatre:

The lobby was pretty much like the ones we are familiar with today. The viewing space was around ten meters long with simple chairs and a capacity to seat one hundred. By today's standards then, the first Budapest cinema was quite low, but back then, it was quite remarkable especially when the space was filled. The first screening took place on May 5, 1896 and was advertised and written about in the local papers. The screenings took place each day at five and each screening lasted about half an hour, in which we showed six films, each about 80 metres long, so about 480 meters total...The pictures projected were either my own or from the Edison Kinetoskop films I acquired. Our pictures were taken from the street, among them films of her majesty, the exhibition's opening ceremony, and the official visit to Munkácsy's Ecce Homo painting.

The screenings, according to Sziklai, lasted only a month and were interrupted when a Lumière agent arrives on the Budapest scene one month after his first shows. Having set up at the Hotel Royal on the Grand Boulevard in the city center, the Lumière films that Sziklai could not afford to show are debuted. It is only within a matter of days however that Sziklai is approached by the agent whose stated goal is to buy the Hungarian filmmaker out his operation. Fearing that the venture is already costing him too much money and energy, together with the continued technical

---

98 There is conflict in the written histories about this date, but I have been able to find the advertisements in Budapest newspapers the week of the screening to corroborate Sziklai's claims.

99 Sziklai.

100 This agent was Eugene Du Pont, whose signature can be made out in the original Budapest contract to show Lumière films at the Royal Hotel reprinted in Srdjan Knezevic, "Filmvetítések Budapesten 1896 és 1900 között (Film Screenings in Budapest Between 1896 and 1900)," Filmkultúra (Film Culture) 31 (1995): 21. Dupont is described elsewhere as a Lyon born businessman who was responsible for exhibiting Lumière films throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Interestingly, he arranged a private screening of films for an invited audience in Vienna in March 1896, two months before arriving in Budapest, and again in April, apparently for Emperor Franz Joseph himself. Rossell, 135-138.
difficulties he is facing with the film projections, Sziklai agrees to sell his business, noting that it was only a matter of a few months before the agent abandons Budapest altogether for a new series of film exhibitions in Vienna.101

Through Sziklai’s detailed descriptions of the tremendous efforts to fulfill his goal of screening films to the Budapest public, what I want to emphasize is how the story that emerges is less about entrepreneurial adventure and more about a kind of artisanal labour and sense of escalating frustration. Therefore, against the few dismissive characterizations by film historians about Sziklai’s attempts to dabble in film, or his inability to understand film technology, what I argue is important in these accounts is the sense of struggle and innovative experimentation that Sziklai demonstrates in his attempts to take control of film technology on his own terms. Through Sziklai’s interview, one is also provided with important clues of early cinema qualities that largely go unmentioned, such as the obvious technical problems in film projection that precludes any real sense that what viewers saw was perceived as true-to-life. But what is further revealed is a glimpse into a key episode that complicates accounts of the ‘primitive’ period of film exhibition while simultaneously exposing the underbelly of globalizing fin de siècle business practices. Sziklai’s narrative is of course reinforced through his play on popular themes of the artisan fighting the growing power of the foreign conglomerate by positioning himself in the role of David against the Goliath of the Lumière system and their agents. Still, Sziklai’s refusal to work within the Lumière system is strengthened through his allegiance and support of the lowly and discredited Lumière employee—the man he understands to be cheated out of his invention by more powerful forces—and thus feeds a charged construction of Hungarian nationalism that had been perfected by the time of the interview. It was a conception that saw failure and defeat as a source of resolve to keep fighting in the face of opposition and power. Drawing parallels to the rhetoric around the cult of Kossuth and the spirit with which the revolutionaries of 1848 were remembered, Sziklai’s telling of his experience can indeed be unpacked in any number of productive ways to illustrate this point.102 But ultimately for him, it was about wanting to set the record straight

about his achievement as suggested at the end of his interview, “This is the first Hungarian film history, one that cost me around sixty thousand crowns and immense fatigue...As for myself, I placed all the materials in a bin and placed them in the basement of a house on Zsigmond Street.”

What is also compelling in Sziklai’s account is his brief reference to the local films that he produces, films including scenes of the Budapest streets and the opening celebrations of the Millennial Exhibition. These films, interspliced with the foreign motion pictures that he purchases outside Hungary, belong to a category often ignored in film history. As Ali Jung argues, in relationship to similar episodes in early German cinema:

Local views are a blind spot in film historiography. They were not advertised in the trade journals and, although they were probably shot in large quantities, they were available only in very small numbers of prints. The producers of local films were either local theatre owners...or professional production companies that were commissioned by local people or organisations (including theatre owners). Probably the bulk of these films were printed only once (which at the same time may explain why most of the local films must be considered lost), since they were playing only at one cinema and probably not for a long period of time.

These films, seen as exclusive attractions, were important to exhibitors as a way to attract viewers interested in seeing themselves on the screen. Importantly, it was the phenomena of “participatory fervour” that film historians Vanessa Toulmin and Martin Loiperdinger contend made local films among the most popular and talked about of the period. The urge for self-recognition among early cinema audiences was consequently fed by the prevailing sense that spectators were unable to see themselves reflected in more traditional representational media. And while Toulmin and Loiperdinger point out that earlier precedents for self-recognition had been set with portraits vivants and the theatrical gimmick of such amusements as the ‘Looking

102 For example, the tone of Sziklai’s recalling of events is surprisingly similar in tone and rhetoric to parts of 1848 revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth’s memoirs [Lajos Kossuth, Memories of My Exile (London: New York, 1880)] where he too is interested in setting the historical record straight for deeds he feels will be overlooked by later historians.

103 Sziklai.


Glass Curtain,' there is a way in which early films captured moving bodies in specific and recognizable contexts that leant the media a kind of instant charge.

A specific film—locally produced by Sziklai—brings both the specificity of Budapest in the time of the Millennial Exhibition and early film technology to the fore. The film in question is one that Sziklai made of Emperor Franz Joseph's visit to the newly constructed Art Gallery (discussed briefly in Chapter One) on the Exhibition grounds on May 6, 1896 (fig.4.19). It was here that the Emperor was scheduled to view a recently completed painting by the most internationally acclaimed Hungarian artist, Mihaly Munkácsy that has been discussed in Chapter Two. What was intended to be filmed was apparently the visit itself. Sziklai had in fact been a part of a group that had worked to bring Munkácsy's paintings to the Millennial Exhibition, a fact that Sziklai himself reveals in his 1912 interviews. It was here that Sziklai's strategy of filming the event worked in two complementary directions—first, by capturing the Emperor in the act of bestowing cultural legitimacy on Hungarians by visiting their new art gallery, and second, by attributing further value and attention to a painting that Sziklai himself was partly responsible for bringing to an international audience. But apart from these already loaded set of interests, what ended up on film and was screened to the Budapest public proved provocative indeed. In his failed attempts to work the projector and center the film on the screen, Sziklai accidentally projected the scene in such a way as to cut off the top third of the picture in the spectator's view, thereby causing the inadvertent but metaphorically loaded beheading of the Austro-Hungarian monarch.

The technical error of cutting off Franz Joseph's head, even if unintended, has much to reveal even while it continues to be cited by a small number of historians as an ironic and humorous episode in the failed venture of early Hungarian filmmaking. In my estimation, the decapitation of the Habsburg Emperor in what is arguably the first ever domestically produced Hungarian film provides an apt metaphor for the stakes implied by such new technologies of vision—stakes related to satiric humour.

106 An illustration of this event was featured on the front page of a popular Budapest daily, "A király az új műcsarnokban [The King Visits the New Art Museum]," Budapest: Illustrated Political News, May 6 1896.

107 Sziklai.

108 The direct reference to the visual decapitation is usually omitted from English versions of Hungarian history and is mainly mentioned by Hungarian film historians.
self-reflexivity, self-recognition, and the perceived gaps between the actual and the expected. More specifically, the film successfully brings into form aspects of the experimental instability and disquiet over urban modernity and the social and political upheaval that characterized the late nineteenth century Austro-Hungarian Empire in its most literal sense. The deep chasm left over since the failed 1848 revolution against the Habsburgs and the extreme dichotomies that emerged on the periphery of Europe as a kind of multinational experiment were revisited again and again in the lead-up and final staging of the Budapest Fair. Therefore, at its most radical, this strangely prophetic film could be read as exposing the framework of Austrian imperialism as both headless and disabled.

By all accounts, the film was screened to the Budapest public and remained on display during the first month of the Exhibition. Indeed, there are also suggestions through various allusions to the film’s subject matter that the film may have travelled beyond Hungary. There is little doubt that the film would have caused any number of reactions, ranging from shock, surprise, bewilderment. But more than likely, I would argue the first response would have been laughter. I make this suggestion since the audiences most likely attending Sziklai’s screenings in the heart of the newest part of Pest would not have been drawn from Budapest’s aristocratic classes (segments of the public most loyal to the Habsburgs and less likely to attend the common cinema). And even though Sziklai makes no direct mention of the episode in his interviews, we are left to ask the question of why he would have screened the film in the first place. Was he unaware of the implications of what he was showing? Did the technical context within which the image was shown override these concerns? These of course remain unanswerable questions, but it is worth considering that it would only be within the calendar year that an attempt to assassinate Franz Joseph would occur, an event that was deliberately downplayed in the Austrian press and shrouded in some secrecy. It is perhaps also worth suggesting here that a strange parallel exists

109 This can be ascertained through Sziklai’s interview and newspapers advertising the screenings.

110 I have concluded this from references made in more general histories of the early cinema that mention films made in Budapest of Emperor Franz Joseph during the 1896 World Fair.

111 I found reference to this event in a very short article in The New York Times that reported on a bomb explosion near a train carrying Franz Joseph as he departed Budapest after a planned visit. Interestingly, the reporter notes that a Vienna newspaper (Neues Wiener Journal) was later pulled from
between the beheading of Franz Joseph on the screen and its strange prelude to the more infamous assassination of his nephew, Archduke Ferdinand, on the eve of World War I. Both acts engendered a sense of not knowing what was going to come next, a profound declaration of the different processes through which wars were going to be initiated and waged.

What happened to this film’s distribution of course remains a mystery to this day, but through Sziklai’s accounts one learns that all of his materials were eventually lost and/or destroyed. This underscores yet again the problematic situation of early film historiography and the loss of filmic evidence, raising perpetual questions around what remains unknown about the early cinema. In terms of Sziklai’s story and the implications of his Franz Joseph film, three subsequent facts related to the event can be determined. First, the police begin to pay serious attention to film screenings around the time of this event and make every film exhibitor register with them in advance of screenings. This is a situation that Sziklai describes himself in his mention of the permits that he has to have in order to open his cinema.\textsuperscript{112} Second, Sziklai is run out of the film business one month after his screenings by the more powerful and established Lumière, who presumably want to shut down what they perceive as illegal competition. And third, the entire episode is somehow expunged from the official historical record so that the first recorded film screening in Budapest is most often cited as the more recognized Lumière showing one month after this debacle.\textsuperscript{113}

As Sziklai metaphorically alludes to in a description of the bin of his discarded film materials that is eventually destroyed, it is an episode in early cinema history that remains largely forgotten, misrepresented, and lost from view.

\textsuperscript{112} Many of the regulations around filmmaking and exhibition are detailed in an impressive collection of primary documents published in János Orth, "A mozgófénnyék budapesti törvénzhatósági forrásai 1896-1906 (Primary Documents on the Regulation of Film Screening in Budapest, 1896-1906)" Filmspirál (Filmspiral) 11/12 (1998).

\textsuperscript{113} Sziklai is sometimes erroneously identified as a Lumière agent in the historical record, a falsity that led me at first to conclude that he was the agent running the screenings at the Royal Hotel. It was only after researching Sziklai’s past and locating his 1915 interview that I was able to piece together a more reliable account of his contribution to early film exhibition in Budapest.
Conclusion: Contingency and the Deterritorialized Structures of Modern Life

To conclude this chapter, and as a way to return to the questions I raised at its outset related to representational modes and contested visions and voices, I want to briefly consider what role notions of contingency and time played in connection to the early cinema and the Budapest urban context. Contingency, the condition of being dependant on chance or as an event that may occur but that is not likely or intended, has clear parallels to the self-reflexive and paradoxical nature of early motion pictures. Critically, they point to the places where the filmic medium can be seen as most productive and potentially radical. As Doane observes in her study of cinematic time, contingency arises as a form of rationalization, but one that is suffuse with ambivalence: “Its lure is that of resistance itself—resistance to system, to structure, to meaning. In turn, time becomes heterogeneous and unpredictable... Accident and chance become productive. Nevertheless, these attributes are also potentially threatening...” 114 As I have found through my research, this phenomena of contingency as a kind of symptom of modernity manifests time and again in the discourses surrounding the Budapest Millennial Exhibition. It can be located at a more local level with the fear of technology and new urban spaces as witnessed through the extensive reporting of tram accidents, accidental train explosions, bicycle accidents, and speculation over what the “secrets” of the city were hiding at the time of the Fair (figs.4.20-4.23).115 But at a more international level, where fears persisted over the reach of global capital and how business networks impacted upon distant subjects, large crowds and acts of revolt were also regularly imaged and discussed in the local papers. These events, often taking the form of civil wars and strife abroad, included the Russian and Cuban uprisings of 1896 and the Turkish execution of Armenians in the same year (figs.4.24-4.25). Simultaneously suggesting the potential for revolution, but also the futility and the fear of certain death, these world events found resonance with a Budapest public that was conflicted over its own state of

114 Doane, The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive, 11.

115 Many of the daily news items related to accidents and violence were actually pictured on the cover of the city’s popular daily illustrated newspaper and became largely indistinguishable at a glance. See for example "A főváros titkaiból [From the City's secrets]," Budapest: Illustrated Political News, August 8 1896; "Rémes vasút főakadály [Horrible Railway Accident]", Budapest: Illustrated Political News, July 25 1896; "A leglátott sikló [The Collapsed Furnicular]," Budapest: Illustrated Political News, June 20 1896; "Léggömbs a háziéjén [Balloon Crashes on Roof]," Budapest: Illustrated Political News, June 27 1896; "A kerékpár halotti [The Bicycle's Victim]," Budapest: Illustrated Political News, October 31 1896.
contingency in an increasingly divided Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the end, the turbulent world events of 1896 would come to mirror similar tensions brewing at home that during the final month of the Fair culminated in the bloody Election riots that took place on Budapest city streets (figs. 4.26-4.27).

Not unlike the accidental execution of the Emperor on film, or the underpinnings of violent social uprising, there is knowledge, or in the words of Tom Gunning, an undisguised awareness of early cinema’s illusionistic capabilities that exposes a reality that is not always as it seems. In this way, the filmic medium replicated like no other media before it an encounter with modernity that was able to re-present and even celebrate the contingent modern condition. Without the same regard for a kind of seamlessness that accompanies much cinema-going today where audiences are invited into a kind of total absorption, early cinema worked to showcase the means of representation. Be it through the skipping of films on its reels, the intersplicing of real entertainments with imagined ones, or the fascination with the multiplicity of machines that made the films, the mark of the machine was apparent in the earliest accounts of the cinema. Still, as Loiperdinger and Elzer’s careful reassessments of audience reception suggest, the stakes remain high to uphold a founding myth for the early cinema that renders audiences easily duped and mesmerized by what is projected on the screen:

...no one has yet proven the existence of a panic among the audience for the cinematographic locomotive pulling into the station of La Ciotat. Persistently reiterating this panic legend, film history has ascribed a founding myth to the medium that categorically assigns the power to manipulate spectators to the film on screen.

In contrast, as this chapter has worked to demonstrate, it was precisely early cinema audiences’ interest and attention to discontinuity and continuity that drove

---


118 See Gunning, "'Primitive' Cinema: A Frame-Up? Or, The Trick's on Us."

119 Loiperdinger and Elzer. For an example of a film history upholding the myth of the panicked crowd, see Emmanuelle Toulet, Birth of the Motion Picture (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1995), 14.
fascination with film during the fin de siècle period. Time, as Doane suggests, became a valuable measure at this precise moment, not unlike the logic of a monetary system within capitalist orders, subject to standardization and articulation into discrete units. The modern subject in turn began to experience the pressures of this new phenomenon of time as "uncanny, alienated and strange... no longer experienced, but read and calculated."\textsuperscript{120} This indexicality, which first took representational form in the work of early photographers such as Eadward Muybridge (but also related to the many photographers representing Kossuth's funeral discussed in Chapter Three), captured time in units of measure. But as Doane ultimately argues, it was the pressure of time's rationalization in the public sphere that produced discursive tensions that strike many observers today as being embodied or materialized in the earliest film form itself; divided into isolated and static frames that when projected produce the \textit{recognizable} illusion of continuous time and movement. As a result, one can conclude that representability and the rupturing of a sense of time are very different between still images and motion pictures. In particular, the latter seems able to represent what had been up to that point beyond representation; that is, the ephemeral and embodied perception of the modern condition. This suggestion compliments Jonathan Crary's notions of the corporeality of vision, where the classical model of spectatorship that presumes a distanced and monocular kind of observation is replaced with a model of viewing in which the boundaries between body and machine, body and image, and the real and imagined are blurred; a kind of bodily assault that is not necessarily dependant on any avant-garde rupture.

I close this chapter with an assertion—that the study of more specific contexts and milieus of fin-de-siècle urban modernity remains a productive place to rethink and retheorize its many hidden histories. And I use the world milieu here in the true Deleuzian sense of the word, as "a material and heterogeneous field" out of which productive assemblages are formed, a "vibratory block of space-time," teeming with possibility.\textsuperscript{121} It is indeed arguable that Budapest was just such a place, and especially so since within a few short decades following the crumbling of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Hungary would become the first country (in 1919 under a short-lived

\textsuperscript{120} Doane, \textit{The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive}, 7-8.

communist revolutionary government led by Béla Kun) to nationalize both its film production and distribution. This occurred in part, under the direction of Marxist philosopher and theorist György Lukács, an early admirer of the cinema, who saw how motion pictures could illuminate the vexed state of modern culture while recognizing the potential to utilize film in the service of social action. In turn, the unpredictable forms of deterritorialization and reterritorialization in the manifestation of new spaces of publicity at the moment of cinema’s debut in Budapest, however abstractly experienced by its audiences, threatened notions of totality and pointed towards very material political action and revolt.

122 Lukács’s work with the Kun government is discussed in Mary Gluck, *Georg Lukacs and His Generation, 1900-1918* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 175-222.

123 Lukács’s interest in the filmic medium is discussed in Tom Levin, “From Dialectical to Normative Specificity: Reading Lukacs on Film,” *New German Critique* (1987).
Conclusion: Urban Modernity's Janus Face—Rethinking Visuality and Spatial Contexts

...no culture is full unto itself, no culture is plainly plenitudinous, not only because there are other cultures which contradict its authority, but also because its own symbol-forming activity, its own interpellation in the process of representation, language, signification and meaning-making, always underscores the claim to an originary, holistic, organic identity.
--Homi Bhabha, Critical Theorist (1990)

Not only capital but cultural symbols and new trends in the built environment are interwoven with global and local urban textures. Thus, it is hard to distinguish the local influences from the global; as elsewhere, these are reciprocal in Budapest [today].
--Zsuzsa Foldi and Jan van Weesep, Urban Geographers (2006)

In the week of April 1896, before official ceremonies were set to commence in Budapest for the opening of the Milennial Exhibition, the city's largest socialist newspaper and official organ of Hungary's Social Democratic Party, the Voice of the People (Népszava), called for Budapest citizens to take part in citywide demonstrations. Ignoring the Hungarian government's request for a political truce on the eve of what was arguably the most significant event of the city's modern history, organizers of the traditional May 1st celebrations (that commemorated International Worker's Day) went ahead with their plans to stage the event—a citywide day of protest calling upon the government for more equitable labour policies and the implementation of universal suffrage. Critically, the planned demonstrations and marches were also set to occur only one day before the Budapest Exhibition debuted to an international audience on May 2, 1896. And while May Day celebrations had proven largely peaceful occurrences within the city, with the first one held only six


3 As I found in archived copies of the newspaper, the call for protest was advertised and/or discussed as front page news in almost every edition of the paper in the week prior to the Fair. See for example the call to protest on the front page of Voice of the People (Népszava) on April 30, 1896. Additionally, the paper advertised general worker's protests throughout the six month run of the Milennial Exhibition, culminating in the bloody election riots that took place in the last week of October, coinciding ironically enough with the closing ceremonies of Budapest's Fair.

4 These events are mentioned briefly by Alice Freifeld, Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary: 1848-1914 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 263. Freifeld also notes that the Hungarian government had deliberately not set the opening for May 1st to avoid any direct confrontation between protesters and fairgoers.
years earlier,\(^5\) the events of 1896 were punctuated by larger than expected crowds, escalating tension, and moments of outright violence. In the end, one worker died and thirty more were injured, while in a related incident, a bloody confrontation occurred between Magyar and Slovak workers.\(^6\) In response, the Hungarian government scrambled to maintain the guise of political unity by attempting to largely ignore the incident and focus instead upon a more pressing imperative among politicians for the time of the Fair.\(^7\) This imperative, as historian László Kontler points out, was directly connected to the political climate in Hungary’s millennial year and sought to “disseminate the image of a stable and ‘great’ nation fulfilling a civilising mission in its historical habitat.”\(^8\)

As a result of the Hungarian government’s effective attempts at managing the country’s image during the time of the Millennial Exhibition, the city of Budapest would emerge as the true star of the Fair with all of its associations with technological progress and, significantly, difference from Vienna and Austrian authority, on display for the entire world to see. As the French newspaper Le Figaro remarked, underscoring the success of the Budapest media campaign, “Budapest will become the new “It” location for tourists.”\(^9\) And while issues around ethnic and class tension, the Fair’s budget overruns, and the city’s failure to meet all of its planning goals may have been apparent to some, what the reporters tended to write about downplayed and even effaced such concerns. For example, Richard Harding Davis, famed New York reporter, foreign correspondent and managing editor of Harper’s Weekly described to

---

\(^5\) The first May Day was celebrated in Budapest in 1890 and coincided with similar celebrations in capital cities across Europe. The worker holiday originated with a call made by international socialists and labour groups of the Second International in 1889. Unlike the Austrians, the Hungarian government appeared more tolerant of the event and even allowed municipal factory workers to participate in the May 1\(^{st}\) marches. And while the Budapest police braced for the expected crowds and possible violence, the May Day celebrations of the early 1890’s remained relatively peaceful. For a discussion of the first May Day holidays in Hungary, see Ibid., 260-66.

\(^6\) Ibid., 273.

\(^7\) Interestingly, in my research I found that the event was largely underreported in most Hungarian newspapers, but prominently discussed in Budapest’s more conservative German language newspaper Pester Lloyd. In fact, my first knowledge of these events came through the brief mention in Freifeld (as noted above) and has been an episode that I have not seen mentioned in any other secondary account related to the Budapest Fair.

\(^8\) László Kontler, Millennium in Central Europe: A History of Hungary (Budapest: Atlantisz, 1999), 292.

\(^9\) I discovered this quote from the French newspaper reported and transcribed in Budapest’s journal, Millenniumi Kiálítási Értesítő [Millennium Exhibition Informer] 3 June 1896.
his readers in the United States his surprise and delight in finding the “Americans of Europe” residing in Budapest—the place he declared as the old world’s “Yankee City” (fig.C.1).  

Budapest, according to Davis was “the most modern city in Europe; more modern than Paris, better paved and better lighted; with better facilities for rapid transit than New York; and with houses of Parliament as massive and impressive as those on the banks of the Thames...” Davis’s comments concerning his trip to the Budapest World’s Fair were echoed in media accounts around the world in the lead up to the Millennial Exhibition, where the unlikely country of Hungary was deemed again and again as Europe’s most progressive place with not only the fastest growing city on the continent but also possessing the technological and intellectual capability—and modern vision—to lead the way in Europe’s modernization and harmonization of its Eastern and Western boundaries. In this sense, Budapest had indeed succeeded, if only for a brief moment, to draw international attention away from the Habsburg’s traditional seat of power in Vienna. As one British journalist explained, underscoring the spirit of the sentiments: “To the world at large, Budapest is the least known of all important cities in Europe ... [and] several reasons may be assigned for this...But the most important reason is the simplest of all: the Budapest of today is so new that the world has not had time to make its acquaintance.”

My point in emphasizing these celebratory accounts is twofold: First, the process of Hungary’s nation-building project as a kind of overt resistance to Viennese imperialism which has been traced in this thesis was largely effaced in the media celebration of Budapest’s urban modernity. And second, what this promotion of Hungarian achievements at the time of the exhibition also downplayed were both the ethnic and class tensions exacerbated by the Hungarian government’s mismanagement of its national minority question—and which erupted so violently in the days prior to the Fair as I have pointed out above—together with the dissatisfaction of an increasingly radicalized segment of the population with the

---

10 Richard Harding Davis, "Yankee City of the Old World," *The Washington Post* February 28 1897. Davis writes, “Pest is the city of the Yankee city of the old world, just as the Hungarians are called the Americans of Europe.”

11 Ibid.

12 See the Introduction to this thesis where I cite a number of these articles in more detail.

failure of liberal reforms in the social, political, and economic spheres. In other words, progress and modernity were read by foreign observers in relationship to Budapest’s rapid urban transformation as forward-looking and positive initiatives. These were themes that also had apparently little to do with the actual conflicts embedded in the ancient past, social strife, or notions of traditionalism that related to Hungary’s numerous transitions of leadership and cultural transformation in its tumultuous thousand year history.

Perhaps not surprisingly, it is within the context of the perceived success of the 1896 Fair and Budapest’s moment of glory on the international stage that the Millennial Exhibition—with all of its attendant conflicts and discourses linked to the fin de siècle period—has become one of the most celebrated of past events in modern Hungary today. In fact, most of the individual architectural projects and the visual representations with their new technologies of vision that have been discussed in the previous chapters have become the focus of recent and intensive restoration efforts in a newly transforming post-communist Hungary. For example, in terms of architectural projects and urban planning, among the first moves of the Third Hungarian Republic declared on October 23, 1989, was to re-establish the original names of the majority of Budapest’s city streets to their nineteenth century designations.\(^\text{14}\) At the same time, massive efforts to clean, beautify, and revive the city’s many fin de siècle buildings (including most of Budapest’s best known historical cafes, luxury hotels, and theatres, together with intensified maintenance of the nation’s Parliament Building), was topped off by the restoration of the city’s original underground subway line running underneath Andrássy Avenue\(^\text{15}\) to recall the appearance of benches, wooden floors and ceramic tiling at the time of the Millennial Exhibition in 1896.\(^\text{16}\) In terms of visual representations, a less publicized


\(^{15}\) The street’s name was also restored, eradicating the former communist designation (Avenue of the People’s Republic (Népköztársaság útja)).

\(^{16}\) The restoration of Budapest’s original subway line (one of a series in an extensive Metro system in Budapest today) occurred in the 1980’s and 1990’s when each of the original stations was restored to recall Budapest’s millennial year. This included the restoration of the benches, floors, wooden windows, lighting, and ceramic tiling on the walls. Each station is also installed with photographs and
project initiated in the 1980’s to retrieve pieces of the lost Feszty panorama resulted in its full scale restoration by 1995 and the establishment of a Hungarian National Historical Park (Öpuztaszter Nemzeti Történeti Emlékkert) in the heart of the country with the restored panorama as a key centerpiece. In the area of photography, I was struck during my trips to Budapest to see large scale photographs by late nineteenth century Budapest photographers (and most notably those of György Klösz discussed in Chapter Three) blown up to poster size and installed directly into Budapest’s urban fabric. These photographs pop up almost randomly around the city, in public parks and museums, city walkways and underpasses, and even in the windows of private businesses, collectively acting as a kind of visual reference point for Hungary’s nation-building epoch (fig.C.2). Finally, the Hungarian film industry, linked to the country’s pre-Soviet communist status as the first cinema to become nationalized (in 1919), has undergone a complete revival in the past two decades, producing movies that have garnered international acclaim, awards, and increasing attention.

brief historical descriptions in attempts to create a mini-museum at each metro stop. As discussed in Chapter One, the Budapest Metro Museum is located underground in one of the stops (Deák Ferenc tér) along the subway’s original route. These are all observations I made when traveling the subway line on my research trips to Budapest.

17 After 1989, the overriding motivation to complete the Feszty panorama restoration became the planned staging of another World Fair in Budapest set to coincide with the now 1100th anniversary of the Hungarians’ arrival in the Carpathian Basin. Originally planned in conjunction with Vienna, the 1996 World’s Fair was eventually cancelled when the Viennese withdrew and Hungarian government that came into power in 1994 cancelled the project for financial reasons. This has recently been followed up by attempts to restore the 1898 Bem-Petőfi Panorama (also discussed briefly in Chapter Two) through combined efforts in Hungary, Poland, and Transylvania. Importantly, this initiative is closely connected to the political aims of Hungary’s ethnic minority in Romania’s Transylvania region to gain recognition for the continuing importance of the regions Hungarian history. The area of Transylvania in present-day Romania is also populated by the country’s largest Hungarian minority. Recall from my discussion in Chapter Two that the panorama depicted the martyrs of the thirteen Hungarian revolutionary generals who were executed on October 6, 1849 in the city of Arad, in Transylvania. Incidentally, the Styka panorama discussed in Chapter Two as well has been restored to its original form and is now housed in a rotunda set up by the National Museum of Poland in Wroclaw.

18 I recognized many of these photographs immediately as among the same images I compiled for this thesis. As noted in Chapter Three, the disproportionate number of photographs in city archives by the photographer Klösz are striking in this regard.

19 The Hungarian cinema, even under communism, continues to be one of the most important and treasured cultural industries in Hungary. Because of the Hungarian languages unique nature, the government continues to provide large subsidies for the continued production of Hungarian films. Also, the recent success and international recognition of Hungarian filmmakers at high profile film festivals (including most notably István Szabó whose credits include the English language Sunshine (1999) and Being Julia (2004)) has pushed Hungarian film production into international ventures with Canadian,
I would argue that in each of these cases that references and makes direct links between a present day post-communist Hungary and a fin de siècle Budapest on the eve of its world exhibition, there is a similar goal: an image of Hungary's renewed nation-building project through the context of its largely depoliticized rapid urban renewal. It is a conscious strategy on the part of the country's government and cultural institutions that is also caught up with seeking, yet again, legitimization in the eyes of the western world. The results, as can be assessed from foreign press accounts and characterizations of Hungary by tourists new to the city, bear a close similarity in tone to those of over a century earlier—reports that continue to focus on romanticizing and often overlooking many of Hungary’s social tensions through an intense focus on the aesthetic and technical features of the city of Budapest. An article from Britain’s Guardian in 2004, is telling in this respect:

few cities in Europe have retained so much of their past while simultaneously embracing the new. Everywhere you go the centuries collide. Much of the city's architecture is testament to its once imperial grandeur, such as the gothic parliament building or the Byzantine central synagogue. But turn a corner and you'll find yourself in the cobbled alleys or the wide boulevards of 20th century eastern Europe. The capital of Hungary is two cities at once. Spanning the elegant river Danube is Buda, on the west bank, and Pest on the east. The former is classical and ornate, serene and majestic, peppered with the vaulted domes and bulb towers of the city's many churches and public buildings...Pest is the livelier part of town - Buda's energetic younger sister - and the place to go for great nightlife and some of the best cafe culture east of Paris. Andrassy Avenue is Pest's main boulevard and it leads out east to the City Park, a huge green space, perfect for strolling and passing the time of day with the friendly locals.

Such readings of both Hungary as a whole and Budapest as a city render a strange sense of déjà vu. What then remains downplayed? In a significant twist on the resistance that Budapest once articulated in its relationship to Vienna and the imperial Habsburgs, much of Hungary’s current focus resides with shedding the remnants of French, American, and British collaborators. The Hungarian government also provides attractive subsidies to foreign film companies to film their movies against the backdrop of Budapest.


21 "East is the New West: Budapest," Guardian Unlimited, August 11 2004. For a similar tone, see Pandi George, "Just like Paris?: Budapest, ranked among the world's most beautiful cities, has the rolling river, the shimmering lights and the romance," National Post, March 4 2000.
its communist past tied to a kind of imperial order under the Soviet regime, while also attempting to restore Magyar power to the Hungarian Parliament. One direct outcome in terms of Budapest’s social and economic spheres is that renewed tensions among minority groups and a rekindled anti-Semitism mark the modern present. Most recently, Hungary’s present government faced public charges of corruption and the selling out of the country’s resources and assets to foreign interests, a scandal that led to a series of intense and highly publicized riots in Budapest during the Fall of 2006.23 Interestingly, the most commonly circulated photographs of the protests prominently featured the backdrop of the beautifully kept up Hungarian Parliament building, calling to mind the juxtaposition of conflicts played out in the city from over a century earlier (fig.C.3-C.4).

Indeed, conflicts and concerns around representing local ethnic and minority identities within the context of modern national ideology and globalization have come to the fore in recent years, and the ensuing anxieties and new paradigms of seeing that they impart inform many aspects of how this dissertation was originally conceived. Importantly, what I imply through my analysis in this thesis is that problems that seem more a part of a contemporary and globalizing world were current and actively being negotiated in the nineteenth century in Central and Eastern Europe. Recalling the foreign press’s optimism (in the past and present) and revelry in the face of urban growth, rapid technological change, and the “newness” of Budapest in contrast to the political and cultural realities on the ground, I am reminded of the heated debates elicited by two recently published and opposing views of globalization and technology, John Friedman’s The World is Flat (2005) and John Ralston Saul’s The Collapse of Globalism (2005). While Friedman, in his optimistic view of the global

22 The issue of a perceived shift towards more anti-Semitic activity in the past several years has been noted as a phenomenon not just exclusive to Central and Eastern Europe, but it is there that the issue arouses more intense scrutiny because of the fraught history of Jewish persecution in the region. On the recent rise of anti-Semitism in Europe, see Roger Boyes, "New Europe, Old Dangers," New Statesman 135, no. 4812 (2006); and for a discussion related more specifically to Hungary, see Dinah A. Spritzer, "Hungarian Jews Worry After Protests," Canadian Jewish News 2006.

economy preaches a kind of extreme technological determinism, arguing that new technologies and developments in communication follow a path largely beyond cultural or political influence, having "effects" on societies that are inherent rather than socially conditioned, Saul argues for the social construction of technology in opposition to the flattening effect that Friedman believes levels the global playing field. In turn, Saul draws attention to how key “hot button” issues such as job outsourcing, abuse of human rights, media monopolies and multinational trade disputes are revitalizing nationalist, ethnic and even religious conflicts that many have wanted to either ignore or declare dead. The texture of these debates which strike us today as uniquely “postmodern” are, I would like to suggest, firmly rooted in modernist paradigms that grow out of an increasing awareness of how modernity has been forged through a process of violent differentiation and the fixing and unsettling of tradition—spatial and visual processes that I argue were actively being played out on the periphery of Europe over one hundred years ago.

Turning to the final map of this study (Map 5—a conglomerate of each of the four maps raised in individual chapters of the thesis), what is strikingly revealed is the extent to which the visual and spatial processes of Budapest’s urban transformation pushed for the experience of what was read as the “real” Hungary outside traditional realms of culture and influence. My thesis has moved architecture and the spaces of the new modern nation, to embodied conceptions of the struggle to fit into the emerging dual empire, to photographic representations of the city and proof of a counter-discourse and memory of prior revolution, to filmic scenes of modern day power struggle and the folly of “progress.” Each episode discussed in this thesis examines how new technologies of seeing expanded publicity for the city and its inhabitants. Most obviously, the map foregrounds how the newest parts of the city housed the sites of the half-Empire’s most technologically intensive innovations and displays, but simultaneously acted as ready backdrop to episodes of the city’s most contentious political and cultural debates. As I have argued, the visuality promulgated within the urban fabric of Budapest offered up a way of seeing and being that moved people across boundaries and promoted a more individuated experience of seeing—one tied to choice, self-direction, and the exploration of alternative viewpoints. At the

---

same time, however, the reconceptualization of Budapest entangled and conflated notions of its newness with conflicting Hungarian government strategies to establish an emergent national homeland. Indeed, through the interconnected chapters of this thesis, I have attempted to outline the contours of a context specific visual culture and accompanying visuality—one that became increasingly abstracted and uncontainable as the desire to push conceptual boundaries of Hungarianness in anticipation of the 1896 Fair accelerated politically and socially. Stated slightly differently, the city of Budapest, as a dynamic and fast changing environment, became a prime locale that held the most potential for experimentation and new configurations of power.

But what is also key to reading this final map is an understanding of how the methodology I have employed in this thesis privileges the means of representation and spatial frameworks brought about by new regimes of seeing. As my thesis has argued, Budapest was a place of extreme volatility, but also a place that within a decade would spawn an entire generation of thinkers and artists fully immersed in the dynamic interplay between urban modernity, tradition, and political change. Located within a nexus of competing interests, global flows and processes, the new paradigms of representation and seeing produced in Budapest would inform an entire generation of well-known and often controversial cultural thinkers and artists—including philosopher György Lukács, sociologist Karl Mannheim, film theorist and filmmaker Béla Balázs, Bauhaus luminary László Maholy-Nagy, art historian Arnold Hauser, and photographers Brassai and André Kertész to name but a few—individuals who grappled with the role of art, politics, history, culture and new technologies of vision in modernizing societies, and importantly, individuals whose work still intrigues scholars today.25

Had this study only looked at the “art,” of the period, my research would not have lead very far—and especially not towards a composite understanding of the dynamic interplay between urban modernity and the eventual role of modernist forms as they emerged in one of Central and Eastern Europe’s most influential capitals. Crucially, I have come to believe that the absence of a visible and readable avant-garde in fin de siècle Budapest (and especially along the lines of Western art history models) does not preclude the fact that radical activity took place in the city’s social

and cultural spheres. At the same time, the history of experimentation and failure as I described in connection to the nineteenth century Budapest context is valuable, but often effaced in models of history that seek more measurable marks of progression. Indeed, the history of modern art and avant-garde movements in Central and Eastern Europe is particularly complex and is arguably best understood within the context of the specific social and political climate generated by the region's troubled past as I have attempted to analyze throughout the dissertation.\(^\text{26}\) As noted at an earlier point in the thesis, the revisionist nature of art historian Jonathan Crary's arguments that explore the role of embodied visuality and become a key theoretical underpinning to my arguments rests upon the radial deprivileging and re-envisioning of modernism as a category of knowledge.\(^\text{27}\) In turn, the interconnected processes and alternative configurations of power brought about by new technology and media's "messy" nature—while often difficult to track—also provide valuable markers towards an entirely new understanding of the interconnected matrix of European visual representation in the past and in the present. It is my suggestion that we can begin by looking to developments on the periphery of Europe as a point of departure.

\(^{26}\) As cultural historian Tyrus Miller suggested in response to the recent attention paid to the modern art of this much neglected and misunderstood region of Europe, "Central Europe" may prove to be, analogously, the disquieting hole in the Western avant-garde's aesthetic ideology, most revealing in the contradictory forces it allows to rise into consciousness and representation." Tyrus Miller, "Rethinking Central Europe: The Symbolic Geography of the Avant-Garde," *Modernism/modernity* 10, no. 3 (2003), http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/modernism-modernity/v010/10.3miller.html.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Pre-1917 Newspapers and Journals (Hungary)

Budapest: Illustrated Political News
Budapesti Hírlap [Budapest News]
Fővárosi Lapok [Capital News]
Fényképészeti Értesítő [Photographic Informer]
Hazánk [Our Home]
Herkó Páter
A Hét [The Week]
Képes Családi Lapok [Illustrated Family Newspaper]
Képzőművészet [Fine Arts]
Kiállítási Ujság [Exhibition News]
Magyar Figaro
Magyar Hírlap [Hungarian News]
Magyar Szalon [Hungarian Salon]
Magyarország [Hungary]
Millenniumi Kiállítási Értesítő [Millennium Exhibition Informer]
Millenniumi Lapok [Millennium News]
Mozgofénykép Hiradó [Motion Pictures News]
Mozgokép Ujság [Film News]
Művészet [Art]
Művészeti Lapok [Art News]
Nemzet [The Nation]
Népszava [Nation's Voice]
Országos Hírlap [National News]
Ős-Budavára [Old Buda Castle Cabaret Daily]
Pester Lloyd [Lloyd of Pest]
Pesti Hírlap [Pest News]
Pesti Napló [Pest Daily]
Uj-Budapest [New Budapest]
Uj Idők [New Times]
Pre-1917 Newspapers and Journals (International)

The American Whig Review
Anthropological Review
Berlin Post
The Atlantic Monthly
Catholic World
The Century
Daily Telegraph of London
Der Floh
Figaro
Frankfurter Zeitung
Harper's New Monthly Magazine
L'Illustration
The International Magazine of Literature, Art
Kikeriki
The Living Age
The Living Journal
London Standard
The London Times
Manufacturer and Builder
Le Monde
The New England magazine
New Englander and Yale Review
New York Daily Times
New York Times
The North American Review
Political Science Quarterly
The Queen, The Lady's Newspaper
Scribner's Monthly
Le Tribuna de Roma
L'Univers Illustre de Paris
Books:

*Authentic Life of His Excellency Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary. His progress from his childhood to his overthrow by the combined armies of Austria and Russia, with a full report of the speeches delivered in England, at Southampton, Winchester, London, Manchester, and Birmingham. To which is added his address to the people of the United States of America.* London: Bradbury and Evans, 1851.


*Bem-Petőfi körkép (The Bem-Petőfi Panorama).* Budapest: Werbőczy Könyvnyomda Részy-Társ, 1898.


*Budapest és az ezredéves kiállítás (Budapest and the Millennial Exhibition).* Budapest: Phoebus Sokszorosító Vállalat Kiadása, 1896.


*Ezredéves Kiállítási Emlék Budapest 1896 (The Millennium Exhibition Memory Book 1896).* Fényképeszeti szövetkezés kiadása (Federation of Photographers Publication), 1896.


*Képek az 1896 ezredéves országos kiállításból (Pictures from the 1896 Millennial Exhibition).* Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1896.

*Képes Kossuth Naptár (Illustrated Kossuth Day Calendar).* Mérnér Vilmos Kiadása, 1896.


*Kossuth and the Hungarian War: comprising a complete history of the late struggle of the Hungarians for liberty: with notices of the leading chiefs and statesmen who distinguish themselves in council and in the field.* New Haven, Conn.: H. Mansfield, 1852.

*Kossuth in New England: a full account of the Hungarian governor's visit to Massachusetts.*


Adams, William T. Sunny shores; or, Young America in Italy and Austria. A story of Travel and Adventure. New York: Lee, Shepard and Dillingham, 1875.


De Puy, Henry W. Kossuth and his Generals: with a brief history of Hungary; select speeches of Kossuth; etc. Buffalo: Phinney, 1852.


Engineers, American Institute of Electrical. The New York electrical handbook; being a guide for visitors from abroad attending the International electrical congress, St. Louis, Mo., September, 1904. New York: Pub. under the auspices of the American institute of electrical engineers, 1904.


———. *A magyar nemzet története regényes rajzokban (Hungarian National History in Pictures)*. Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1902.


Kovács, Dénes. *"Kossuth Emlékalbum (Kossuth Memory Book)."* Budapest: Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár (Budapest City Library), 1910.


Szana, Tamás. *Száz év a magyar művészettörténetéből, 1800-1900 (One Hundred Years of Hungarian Artistry, 1800-1900).* Budapest: Athenaeum Irodalmi és Nyomdai R-Társulat, 1901.


Webster, Daniel. *Sketch of the Life of Louis Kossuth, Governor of Hungary. Together with the declaration of Hungarian independence; Kossuth's address to the people of the United States; all his great speeches in England; and the letter of Daniel Webster to Chevalier Hulsemann.* New York: Stringer & Townsend, 1851.


Zsilinszky, Mihály. *Kossuth a magyar nép szivében és költészetében; költeményfüzér (Kossuth in the Hungarian Nation's Heart and Poetry).* Pest: Kilián György, 1868.
SECONDARY SOURCES


Baldacchino John *Post Marxist Marxism Questioning the Answer Difference and Realism after Lukacs and Adorno* Brookfield VT Avebury, 1996

Barany George *The Hungarian Diet of 1839 40 and the Fate of Szechenyi’s Middle Course* ‘ *Slavic Review* 22 no 2 (1963) 285 303

Barla Szabo Laszlo ‘Nemzeti Gyokerek Historizmus 1900 as Stilus Antonio Gaudi es Lechner Odon Epiteszeteben (National Style and Historicism in the Turn of the Century Architecture of Antonio Guadi and Odon Lechner) " *Ars Hungarica* 1 (1975) 57 64


Basics, Beatrix *Kossuth Lajos (1802 1894)* Budapest Kossuth Kiado 2002


Becker Carol *The Romance of Nomadism A Series of Reflections* *Art Journal* 58 no 2 (1999) 22 29

Bell Andrew *The Role of Migration in the History of the Eurasian Steppe Sedentary Civilization vs 'Barbarian' and Nomad* 1st ed New York St Martin’s Press 2000


________ Paris Capital of the Nineteenth Century " *Perspecta* 12 (1969) 163 72


Berend Nora *At the Gate of Christendom Jews Muslims and "Pagans" in Medieval Hungary c 1000 c 1300* Cambridge, UK Cambridge University Press 2001

Berend T Ivan *Decades of Crisis Central and Eastern Europe before World War II* Berkeley University of California Press 1998


Bergson Henri *Matter and Memory* New York Zone Books 1988

Berman, Marshall "Baudelaire Modernism in the Streets *Partisan Review* 67 no 2 (1979) 205 33


Braun, Brigitte, and Uli Jung. "Local Films from Trier, Luxembourg and Metz: A Successful
Business Venture of the Marzen Family Cinema Owners "Film History An International Journal 17 no 1 (2005) 19 XX28

Brody Judit "The Széchenyi Chain Bridge at Budapest " Technology and Culture 29 no 1 (1988) 104 17


Buck Carl Darling 'Language and the Sentiment of Nationality " The American Political Science Review 10 no 1 (1916) 44 69

Buck Morss Susan 'The Flaneur the Sandwichman and the Whore The Politics of Loitering ' New German Critique no 39 Second Special Issue on Walter Benjamin (1986) 99 140

Bucur Maria and Nancy M Wingfield Staging the Past The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe 1848 to the Present West Lafayette IN Purdue University Press 2001


Chabert Philippe Gerard Alphonse de Neuville l'epopee de la defaite Peintres temoins de l'histoire Paris Copernic 1979


Charney, Leo and Vanessa R eds Schwartz Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life Berkeley University of California Press, 1995

Chu Petra ten Doesschate The Most Arrogant Man in France Gustave Courbet and the Nineteenth Century Media Culture Princeton Princeton University Press 2007


Clark T J Image of the People Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution London Thames and Hudson 1973


Cohen Margaret Panoramic Literature and the Invention of Everyday Genres " In Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life edited by Leo Charney and Vanessa R Schwartz Berkeley
Coleman Simon and John Eade *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion* London Routledge 2004

Comment Bernard *The Painted Panorama* New York H N Abrams 2000

Congdon Lee *The Young Lukacs* Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press 1983


Crary Jonathan "Gericault, the Panorama and Sites of Reality in the Early Nineteenth Century" *Grey Room* no 9 (2002) 7 5 6 8 25

——— *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* Cambridge MA MIT Press 1999


Critchley Simon *On Humour* London Routledge 2002

Crowe David *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* New York St Martin's Press 1994

Csaky Moritz "Multicultural Communities: Tensions and Qualities: The Example of Central Europe" In *Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe 1890-1937* edited by Eve Blau and Monika Platzer 43 55 Munich Prestel 1999

Csenkey Eva Agota Steinert Piroska Acs and Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts Design and Culture *Hungarian Ceramics from the Zsolnay Manufactory 1853-2001* New Haven Yale University Press, 2002

Cunningham John *Hungarian Cinema From Coffee House to Multiplex* London Wallflower Press 2004

Curti Merle "The Impact of the Revolutions of 1848 on American Thought" *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 93 no 3 (1949) 209 15

Czigany Lorant "Janco's Country: Miklos Jancso and the Hungarian New Cinema" *Film Quarterly* 26 no 1 (1972) 44 50
Deak Istvan Kossuth The Vain Hopes of a Much Celebrated Exile Hungarian Quarterly 43 no 166 (2002) 45 55


Deleuze Gilles and Felix Guattari A Thousand Plateaus Capitalism and Schizophrenia Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press 1987


Deme Laszlo 'The Society for Equality in the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 " Slavic Review 31 no 1 (1972) 71 88


Dittrich Carol A Historic Coffeehouses Vienna Budapest Prague Milwaukee Wisconsin Lemieux International 2002

Doane Mary Ann The Emergence of Cinematic Time Modernity Contingency the Archive Cambridge MA Harvard UP 2002

The Object of Theory ' In Rites of Realism Essays on Corporeal Cinema edited by Ivone Margulies 80 89 Durham Duke University Press 2003


The Voice in the Cinema The Articulation of Body and Space In Film Theory and Criticism Introductory Readings edited by Leo Braudy 363 75 New York NY Oxford UP 1999

Domokos Kosary 'A Pesti Hirlap (The Pest Daily) " In Emlekkonyv Kossuth Lajos születesének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth's 150th Anniversary) edited by Magyar Történelmi Tarsulat 18 68 Budapest Akademiai Kiado 1952

Edit, Andras and Maria Bernath Valogatas a nagybanya muvezek leveleibol 1893 1944 (Selections from the Nagybanya Artists' Letters 1893 1944) Miskolc MissionArt Galeria 1997

Elsaesser Thomas Cinema The Irresponsible Signifier or The Gamble with History Film Theory or Cinema Theory " New German Critique (1987) 65
Engel Pal The Realm of St Stephen A History of Medieval Hungary 895 1526 London I B Tauris 2001

Ernő Gyongyi Zsuzsa O Jobbagyi and Magyar Nemzeti Galéria Lelek és forma Magyar művészet 1896 1914 (Soul and Form Hungarian Art 1896 1914) Budapest Idegenforgalmi Propaganda és Kiadó Vallalat 1986

Ersoz Meryem New Beginnings in Early American Film American Quarterly 49 no 4 (1997) 888 94


Fabri Anna "Mor Jokai " In Hungarian Liberals edited by Andras Gero Budapest Uj Mandatum 1999

Federation The American Hungarian The 1848 Revolution and Louis (Lajos) Kossuth Father of Hungarian Democracy "
http://www.americanhungarianfederation.org/news_kossuth_1848.htm

Feher Ferenc Lukacs and Benjamin Parallels and Contrasts New German Critique no 34 (1985) 125 38

Fejos Zoltan "Three Faces of the National Hero Statues of Kossuth in the United States " Hungarian Quarterly no 156 (1999)
http://www.hungarianquarterly.com/no156/107.html

Fenyö Mario D The Future of the Nineteenth Century ' In Hungary's Historical Legacies edited by Dennis P. Hupchik and R. William Weisberger New York Columbia University Press 2000


———. "Decentric Perspectives: Kracauer’s Early Writings on Film and Mass Culture." New German Critique, no. 54 (1991): 47-76.


Harvey Penelope *Hybrids of Modernity Anthropology the Nation State and the Universal Exhibition* London Routledge 1996

Herbert Christopher *Victorian Relativity Radical Thought and Scientific Discovery* Chicago University of Chicago Press 2001


Herman Robert "Lajos Kossuth" In *Fact Sheets on Hungary* Budapest Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary 2002

Hevesi Alexander Maurus Jokai the Greatest Novelist of Hungary " *Slavonic Review* 8 (1929) 356 67


Hogg Garry *Orient Express The Birth Life and Death of a Great Train* London Hutchinson 1968


Hoy Milton S Van "Two Allusions to Hungary in Uncle Tom's Cabin " *Phylon* 34 no 4 (1973) 433 35

Humbert, Jean *Edouard Detaille l'heroisme d'un siecle* Paris Copernic, 1979

Hyde Ralph *Panoramania! The Art and Entertainment of the 'All Embracing' View* London Trefoil Publications 1988

Jacobs Lewis *Introduction to the Art of the Movies An Anthology of Ideas on the Nature of Movie Art* New York Noonday Press 1960


Jalland Patricia *Death in the Victorian Family* New York Oxford University Press 1996


Kuus, Merje. "Europe’s Eastern Expansion and the Reinscription of Otherness in East-Central


Lyka, Károly. Közönség és művészet a századvégen (Art and the Public at the End of the


---. *Modern magyar művészet (Modern Hungarian Art).* Budapest, 1980.


Oliver, John W. "Louis Lossuth's Appeal to the Middle West, 1852." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 14, no. 4 (1928): 481-95.


Roman, Eric. *Austria-Hungary & the Successor States: A Reference Guide from the Renaissance*


Schwartz, Vanessa R. *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-siècle Paris*. 


Sisa, József. "From the Competition Design to the Definitive Design." In *Az Ország Háza. House*


APPENDIX I: Hungarian History and the Policy of Magyarization

The Kingdom of Hungary, which emerged in the eleventh century, witnessed numerous transitions of leadership and cultural transformations that have been a continuing source of tension in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. The first recorded attempts to rule over the Carpathian Basin’s inhabitants began in 1000 A.D. with the region’s first documented King, St. Stephen. After two centuries of relatively stable leadership, the Mongolian Tartars began an invasion in 1241 that would lead to nearly two hundred years of fighting and instability in the country. During this period, the Kingdom of Hungary fell under the control of foreign rulers, emerging for a few short decades between 1458 and 1490 under King Matthias, Hungary’s so-called “Renaissance King,” who managed to centralize power and ensure a degree of security in the region. But with Hungary’s defeat at the hands of the Turks in 1525, a one hundred and fifty year period of Ottoman rule would see the tripartite division of the Hungarian Kingdom. The Habsburgs came to rule the Western region, the Turks the central areas, with the south-east principality falling under the jurisdiction of Transylvanian princes. After 1686, when Buda was recaptured from the Turks, the peoples of the Carpathian Basin began to seek support from the Habsburgs for protection from further Turkish incursion. When this support did not come (largely because the remaining lands of Hungary made up a tactical buffer zone from further Ottoman advancements into Europe), an uprising against the Habsburgs as a joint French-Hungarian offensive was plotted under the Transylvanian King. And even though the region finally gained independence from Turkish rule in 1699, the sentiment against Habsburg rulers only grew when they violated the interests of area landowners by not returning estates in the areas under former Turkish control. The final attempts at a war of independence from Habsburg forces (between 1703-1711) failed, however, and the people of the Carpathian Basin (a multi-ethnic community of Magyars, Croats, Germans, Slovaks, Romanians, Serbs, Slovenians, Rusyns, Jews, and Roma), and formerly the area constituting the Kingdom of Hungary, came back under Habsburg rule.

It would not be until the 1848 revolution that ethnic Magyars, together with other ethnic groups of the region, would once again attempt to free the Carpathian Basin from the Habsburgs. One of the driving forces of this resistance to Austrian absolutism has been ascribed to the awakening of a modern Magyar national self-consciousness—one that had already been fostered in earlier attempts to oppose Austrian rule in the eighteenth century. The Hungarian language, in particular, was positioned by reformers (also of non-Magyar ethnic background) as a new language of the people and a form of resistance to replace the traditional Latin and German used in the official life of the Empire. At the same time, many of the individuals who would eventually lead the 1848 revolution looked to the Magyar nomadic people as a model of community with social, political, religious, and even economic practices that directly challenged the Austrian and Viennese “strong civilizing mission.” And while the earliest liberal reformers of the region were often at odds with how much of a problem the ethnic diversity in the Carpathian Basin posed, there was a consensus on the necessity of breaking down the feudal order which served Austrian rule. The first step in this direction came after the initial revolution in 1848 with the emancipation of the serfs (and in part the Jews) and the abolition of tax privileges for the rich, setting the course for more liberal reforms. This was followed by a push to extend the constitution to non-nobles and propagate economic modernization as a means to more equitable distribution of capital both geographically and across social classes. An important aspect of these reforms came with the philosophy of laissez faire, or non-interference by the State in the aspirations of individuals.

---


2 Sugar, Hanák, and Frank, 180.


4 This is a term that Kontler uses to describe the mandate of the Austrians. László Kontler, Interview by author, 17 June 2002, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. For accounts of the construction of democratic roots and constitutional laws of the Magyar peoples in Hungarian history, see Tardy, Kontler, and Gerő.

5 Kontler, 259.
also extended to the public sphere with the separation of church and state and the creation of a justice system. For liberal reformers of 1848, the middling classes were believed to be the vehicle of the process. Historian László Kontler explains that:

the organizing principle behind the concept of the ‘unitary Hungarian political nation’ of Hungarian liberals was that the extension of individual rights would render collective rights superfluous even in the eyes of the ethnic minorities who, just as emancipated serfs would be reconciled with their former lords, would voluntarily assimilate into the Hungarian nation.7

As a result, the unofficial policy of Magyarization as it was set out during the 1848 revolutionary period was relatively inclusive in its aims, and was conceived as the cornerstone of the transition to a modern liberal society.8 Predicated on a heritage that could boast of its liberal antecedents, the revolutionaries claimed that the ancient Magyars provided a ruling order of proclaimed representative government where chieftains ruled collectively.9 And while many Hungarians respected the cultural values of different peoples living in the region, the language and heritage of the Magyars was positioned as a radical alternative to the Germans and Slavic groups of the region. Indeed, the success of the Magyarization rhetoric of the period resulted in many non-Magyars changing their names (and thus their ethnic associations) voluntarily to join the Magyars’ ranks. At the same time, the establishment of Magyar language newspapers, theatres, and a range of Hungarian cultural and educational institutions, solidified the connections many liberal-minded individuals and the emergent bourgeoisie made between the Magyar language and the progress of a modern state in opposition to traditional imperial orders.


7 Kontler, 242. To get an idea of the true ethnic mix of the period, Konlter appends the following statistics: "Hungary’s population was nearly 13 million in 1842. Merely 38 percent of this figure, 4.8 million, were Magyars; Romanians numbered 2.2 million (17 percent); Slovaks 1.7 million (13 percent); Germans 1.3 million (10 percent); Serbs 1.2 million (9 percent); Croats 900,000 (7 percent); Ruthenes 450,000 (3.5 percent); Jews 250,000 (2 percent), and there was no less than ten further small groups as well" (242).

8 Magyarization or Magyarisation (or "Hungarization", "Hungarianization" or "Hungarianisation", etc.) is a common term applied to a number of ethnic assimilation policies implemented by various Hungarian authorities at various times.

9 For a discussion of this constructed past, see: András Róna-Tas, Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999).
After the defeat of the short-lived 1848 revolution, however, the process of Magyarization would come under the influence of new contexts and, as a result, would also come to hold a different set of stakes. The Austrians, who with the assistance of Russian Tsarist forces, successfully quelled aspirations for Hungarian (or any other ethnic groups') independence, re-imposed absolute rule over the region through the 1850's and early 1860's. But in the face of increasing pressure from ethnic groups within the region to adopt more liberal reforms (based in large measure on the ones enacted temporarily by the Hungarian led revolution of 1848), the so-called Compromise of 1867 was brokered. The agreement marked a pivotal shift in power relations when a two-nation state under an unprecedented dual constitutional monarchy was created whereby Austria and Hungary came to share joint foreign policy, finances, and military affairs, while retaining separate constitutions, administrations, legislatures, and national militia. The first state (comprising Austria proper, Bohemia, Moravia, Austrian Silesia, Slovenia, and Austrian Poland) was to be ruled by the Habsburg monarchs in their capacity as emperors of Austria. The second state (including Hungary, Transylvania, Croatia, and part of the Dalmatian Coast) was to be ruled by the Habsburg monarchs in their capacity as kings of Hungary. The legitimacy of power was based, however, in two competing principles: the more liberal principles of a newly configured nation state (Hungary); and the feudal concept of investing power by God's grace to one ruler (Austria). Even so, the Austrian Habsburg ruler, Francis Joseph I, was crowned King of Hungary in 1867. And while Hungarians were able to gain some measure of legitimacy for themselves, the consequences of dualism were far more than a compromise for other ethnic groups, particularly those of Slavic origin, who saw their own nationalist aspirations ignored.

In recognition of this power imbalance and under pressure from Vienna to deal with growing minority demands for rights, the Hungarian government passed the Nationalities Act in 1868 guaranteeing the rights of all Hungary's citizens through a series of laws. This Act, however, was increasingly interpreted by less tolerant

---

10 For a full discussion of the 1867 Compromise and neo-Absolutism in Hungary, see Kontler, 264-279.

11 Some historians argue that Austria-Hungary provides the greatest recent example of a multinational state in Europe. However, of the four chief ethnic groups (Germans, Hungarians, Slavs, and Italians) only the first two received full partnership. The Habsburg-held crown of Bohemia was conspicuously
members of the newly formed Hungarian government to suggest that only those non-Magyars who had assimilated to becoming fully Hungarian would be considered equal. As a result, the process of a revived Magyarization took hold, making it difficult to attain high-ranking positions in government or in the social sphere without claim to a Magyar heritage through language and family name. It is at this point in Hungary’s history that the claims of “Magyarization” as either an aggressive assimilationist project or continued process of voluntary participation in Hungary’s nation-building project come into debate. On the one hand, there is evidence that minority groups within Hungary continued to choose Magyarization as a strategy to gain in social, political, and economic rank in the public sphere without much concern for their private lives, while on the other hand, the reality is that the process of Magyarization resulted in a profound transformation in how family histories were impacted and new modern identities formed. For example, an estimated 340,000-350,000 names were Magyarized between 1815-1944—an occurrence that happened mainly inside the Hungarian-speaking area of the Empire.

In one sense then, Hungarian government efforts to Magyarize heterogeneous groups of migrant inhabitants through rhetoric of choice was comparable to similar goals to assimilate new immigrants through Americanization in the young Republic of the United States. Both were rooted in liberal attempts to achieve national unity and foster a sense of collective pride in an adopted and presumably democratic homeland. The comparison is indeed compelling at a number of levels, especially

omitted in the reorganization. Both halves of the newly constituted Austro-Hungarian Empire elected independent parliaments to deliberate on internal affairs and had independent ministries. A common cabinet, composed of three ministers, dealt with foreign relations, common defense, and common finances. It was responsible to the Emperor-King (Franz Joseph) and to the delegations of 60 members each (chosen by the two parliaments), which met to discuss common affairs.

Among Central and Eastern European nations today that were once under Austro-Hungarian rule in the nineteenth century, the claims about Magyarization’s negative impacts are particularly pronounced.

In 1881 the “Society for Name Magyarization” (Központr Névmagyarosító Társaság) was founded in Budapest. The aim of this private society was to provide advice and guidelines for those who wanted to Magyarize their surnames. Simon Telkes became the chairman of the society, who professed that “one can achieve being accepted as a true son of the nation by adopting a national name”. The society began an advertising campaign in the newspapers and sent out letters, and also made a proposal to lower the fees of the name changing. The proposal was accepted by the Hungarian Parliament and the fee was lowered.

with respect to liberal discourses encouraging such a melting pot mentality.\footnote{Thomas Bender, Carl E. Schorske, and Russell Sage Foundation., \textit{Budapest and New York: Studies in Metropolitan Transformation, 1870-1930} (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), 8-9.} The Jewish population, in particular, may have been among the few of the minority groups to actively embrace Magyarization because in the process, many saw an opportunity for assimilation (in this case to the Hungarian half of the dual Empire) without conceding their religion. The statistics are also compelling in this case: one Jewish name out of 17 was Magyarized, in comparison with one out of 139 (Catholic) and 427 (Evangelical) for Germans, and one out of 170 (Catholic) and 330 (Evangelical) for Slovaks.\footnote{István Kozma, "A névmagyarosítások története. A családnév-változtatások (The History of Magyarized Names)" \textit{História} 05/06 (2000), http://www.historia.hu/archivum/2000/000506kozma.htm} As historian Stephen Roth writes, underscoring the Jewish community’s rationale for accepting some level of Magyarization in the earlier phases of the dual Empire’s history:

\begin{quote}
Hungarian Jews were opposed to Zionism because they hoped that somehow they could achieve equality with other Hungarian citizens, not just in law but in fact, and that they could be integrated into the country as Hungarian Israelites. The word 'Israelite' (\textit{Izraelita}) denoted only religious affiliation and was free from the ethnic or national connotations usually attached to the term 'Jew', which could therefore be regarded as a derogatory. Hungarian Jews attained remarkable achievements in business, culture and less frequently even in politics.\footnote{Stephen Roth, "Memories of Hungary," in \textit{The Face of Survival: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe Past and Present.}, ed. Michael Riff (London: Valentine Mitchell, 1992), 132.} \end{quote}

In other words, despite undercurrents of social and ethnic unrest, the period of Magyarization in nineteenth century Hungary was also marked by a time of great industrial and economic prosperity, when a spirit of adventure and entrepreneurship indeed marked the decades following the establishment of Austro-Hungarian dualism. The birth of Budapest became central to the establishment of a growing bourgeois and urban working class in the Empire, fuelling the economic and technological transformations of the period.

But while the process of Magyarization had been, up until just around the time of the Millennial Exhibition, more of an inclusive operation, a profound shift would occur by the turn of the century. As historian Tibor Frank argues, the idea of Magyarization as conceived in the spirit of liberal democratic thinking and fraternal
brotherhood became increasingly exclusive and outright discriminatory. This also dovetailed with increasing anti-Semitism throughout Europe in the final decades of the nineteenth century, as witnessed by the response to the Dreyfus Affair—a situation that also led very quickly to the establishment of an active Zionist movement within Budapest by the late 1890’s. Also at this time, politicians under pressure from an increasingly nationalistic and right-wing constituency of Hungarian voters responding to national minority movements and the presence of Zionism in Budapest, implemented policies grounded in Magyarization efforts that had been up until that time unofficial. As a result, the effort to Magyarize became enforced by a series of laws and extended into the domain of geographic place names, of which many were Magyarized between 1895-1899. Importantly, the nuances of Magyarization as an assimilationist policy have often been obscured in more recent histories. As historian Jorg Hoensch suggests in his account of the misconceptions surrounding the legacy of failed Magyarization and its “evils,” the criticisms work hand in hand with pinpointing blame over why the Austro-Hungarian Empire would eventually collapse in 1918, “Only after attempts to transform the multi-national Empire into a federation of free and equal nations had failed, was the Compromise criticized on the grounds that other nationalities—above all the Slavs—had been simply handed over to the rule of the Hungarian nobility and subjected to its policy of

18 From note 51 of the Introduction to this thesis: I am indebted to historian Tibor Frank for a discussion I had with him on the intricacies of Magyarization at the ASN (Association for the Study of Nationalities) Conference at Columbia University in 2007. Tibor, who is Director of the School of English and American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and currently a visiting professor at the History Department of Columbia University, pointed me towards an argument he made about a “transitional phase” of Magyarization policy that he argues coincided around the time of the Budapest Fair’s planning in the 1890’s.

19 A key event said to trigger the modern Zionist movement was the Dreyfus Affair, which erupted in France in 1894 when a young artillery officer of the French army (and of Jewish background) was wrongfully convicted of passing military secrets to the Germans. In turn, the case brought attention to the brewing anti-Semitism in France. Jewish communities throughout Europe were shocked to see this outbreak of anti-Semitism in a country which they thought of as the home of enlightenment and liberty. Among those who witnessed the Affair was an Austro-Hungarian (born in Budapest, living in Vienna) Jewish journalist, Theodor Herzl, who published his pamphlet Der Judenstaat (“The Jewish State”) in 1896 and described the Affair as a turning point. Prior to the Affair, Herzl had been anti-Zionist, whereas afterwards he became ardently pro-Zionist. In Austria, Theodor Herzl brought the World Zionist Organization into being; its First Congress met in 1897. See George R. Whyte, The Dreyfus Affair: A Chronological History (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

20 The Magyarization policy under the Hungarian government between 1895 and 1899 included forced Magyarization of personal and geographical names. For example, the Bánffy law of the villages was ratified whereby all officially used village names in the Hungarian lands had to be in the Hungarian language.
forced Magyarization.” To be sure, the debates surrounding the policy remain contentious and unresolved.

---

1. Ancient Buda Castle (1247-1265)
2. Habsburg Royal Palace (1850-1856) remodeled (1890-1896)
3. Margaret Bridge (1872-1876)
4. Chain Bridge (1839-1849)
5. Franz Joseph Bridge (1894-1896)
6. Parliament Building (1885-1904)
7. Grand Boulevard (1872-1896)
8. Small Boulevard (1872-1885)
10. Western Railway Station (1874-1877)
11. Andrássy Avenue (1872-1885)
12. Metro Line (in dotted line) (1894-1896)
13. City Grove Park (1870-1890)
15. Eastern Railway Station (1881-1884)
Map 2: Panorama and Painting Exhibition in Budapest (1894-1896)

16. Orczy House
17. School of Fine Arts (Old Art Gallery)
18. Feszty Panorama
19. Planned Millennial Monument
20. New Art Gallery
21. Styka Panorama
22. Molnar and Trill Panorama
Map 3: Procession of Lajos Kossuth's Funeral and Areas Photographed (1894)

23. Hungarian National Museum
24. Small Boulevard
25. Andrássy Avenue
26. Grand Boulevard
27. Kereşepi Avenue
28. Eastern Railway Station
29. Kereşepi Cemetery
Map 4: Cinema Screenings and Theatres in Budapest During 1896 Fair

30. Constantinople in Budapest
31. Opera House
32. National Theatre
33. Sziklai Film Screenings
34. Plastikon Café
35. Royal Hotel
36. New York Hotel
37. People's Theatre
38. Old Buda Castle Pleasure Dome
Map 5: Overlay of Maps 1-4

1. Ancient Buda Castle
2. Habsburg Royal Palace
3. Margit Bridge
4. Chain Bridge
5. Franz Joseph Bridge
6. Parliament Building
7. Grand Boulevard
8. Small Boulevard
9. Museum of Applied Art
10. Western Railway Station
11. Andrássy Avenue
12. Metro Line (in dotted line)
13. City Park
14. New Art Gallery
15. Eastern Railway Station
16. Orczy House
17. School of Fine Arts
(Old Art Gallery)
18. Feszty Panorama
19. Millennial Monument
20. New Art Gallery
21. Styka Panorama
22. Molnar and Trill Panorama
23. National Museum
24. Small Boulevard
25. Andrássy Avenue
26. Grand Boulevard
27. Keresepi Avenue
28. Eastern Railway Station
29. Keresepi Cemetery
30. Constantinople in Budapest
31. Opera House
32. National Theatre
33. Sziklai Film Screenings
34. Plastikon Café
35. Royal Hotel
36. New York Hotel
37. People’s Theatre
38. Old Buda Castle Pleasure Dome
Fig. 1.4 Unknown Illustrator, Section from map of Budapest (1896). Illustrated Antiquarian Map, c.1896. Owned by author. Photograph of original by author.
Fig. 1.5-6 Unknown Illustrator, Book Cover, Lenkei, Henrik. A Múlató Budapest (Budapest's Amusements). In Hungarian and French Editions. Budapest: Singer-Wolfner, 1896. Photograph of originals by author.
Fig. I.7 Lipót Kellner, Constantinople in Budapest (1896). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

Fig. I.8 “Constantinople in Budapest” (1896). Newspaper Advertisement. Reprinted in Vasárnap Ujság (Illustrated Sunday News) 43.29 1896. Scan of original by author.
Fig. I.9 Unknown Illustrator, Orient Express Advertisement (c. 1890’s). Poster. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Aff_ciwl_orient_express4_jw.jpg.
Fig. 1.10 Unknown Illustrator, “Complaints Against Wires” (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Fővárosi Lapok, 28 June 1896. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 1.1 David Károly, Roof-Raising Ceremony of Parliament on May 5, 1894 (1894). Photograph. Kiscell Collection, Budapest History Museum.
Fig. 1.2 György Klösz, *Parliament Building* (c.1900’s). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.3 György Klösz, Construction for New Metro Station (1896). Photograph. Reprinted in Vasárnapi Ujság (Illustrated Sunday News) 43.17 1896.
Fig. 1.4 Unknown Photographer, Parliament Building with Buda Hills and Royal Castle in Background (1930). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.5 Unknown Producer, Lajos Kossuth (c.1850-60’s). Photograph of lithograph by Prinzhofe. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.
Fig. 1.6 Unknown Artist, Jellasics Crosses the Chain Bridge (1849). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

1.7 Unknown Artist, View of Buda and Pest (c. 1859-70). Lithographic Print. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.8 Weinwurm Brothers, Chain Bridge (c. 1870). Daguerreotype. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.9 György Klösz, Andrásy Avenue, View from Opera House towards City Grove (c.1890). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.10 György Klösz, View of City Grove (c.1890). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.11 Budapest Municipal Planners, Plan for Sugár (later Andrássy) Avenue (1870). Drawing. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.13 Mór Erdelyi. The Danube Promenade (c.1900). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.14 Károly Divald. View from Buda (c.1900). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.15 György Klösz, Cafe Reitter on Andrássy Avenue Opposite the Opera House (1896). Photograph. Kiscell Collection, Budapest History Museum.
Fig. 1.16 Unknown Producer, Vienna Parliament (c.1890-1900). Photochrome Print. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Wien_Parlament_um_1900.jpg
Fig. 1.17 Unknown Photographer, Berlin Reichstag (c.1900). Photograph. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Berlin_Reichstag_mit_Bismarck_Denkmal_um_1900.jpg
Fig. 1.18 Unknown Photographer, Palace of Westminster in London (c. 1880-1900). Photograph. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Westminster.jpg
Fig. 1.19 Unknown Photographer Original Canadian Parliament (before 1916 fire) (c. 1870). Photograph. Accessed from Wikimedia Commons Free Domain Images http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Original_Canadian_parliament.jpg
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig 1.21 Steindl Imre Plan for Hungarian Parliament (1884) Drawing Reprinted in Jozsef Sisa Steindl Imre (Budapest Holnap Kiado 2005) 128
Fig. 1.22 Tisza Lajos, “What Should the New Parliament Be Like?” (1884). Newspaper Illustration. Bolond Istók (Crazed Stephen) 11 May 1884. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 1.23 György Klösz, Construction of Underground Subway on Andrássy Avenue (1894). Photograph. Hungarian National Museum Photography Archives.
Fig. 1.25 “Map of Budapest Subway Line” (1896). Drawing. Budapest Metro Museum.
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 1.28 Siemens and Halske, *Franz Joseph Underground Subway* (c.1894). Illustration. Budapest Metro Museum.
Fig. 1.29 György Klösz, New Art Gallery/Exhibition Hall (c.1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 1.30-1.31 Ödön Lechner. Plans for Museum of Applied Arts (c.1894). Drawings. Reprinted in János Gerle. Lechner Ödön. (Budapest: Holnap Kiadó, 2003), 136-137.
Fig. 1.32 György Klösz, Street View of Budapest’s Museum of Applied Arts (c.1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig 1.33 Odon Lechner, Plans for Museum of Applied Arts (c. 1894) Drawings. Reprinted in Janos Gerle, Lechner Odon (Budapest: Holnap Kiado 2003), 137.
Fig. 1.34-1.36 Exterior Views of Budapest’s Museum of Applied Arts (2005). Photographs by author.
Fig. 1.37-1.39 Interior Views of Budapest’s Museum of Applied Arts (2005). Photographs by author.
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 2.2 Mihály Munkácsy, *Conquest* (1896). Oil painting on canvas (459 x 1855 cm). Hungarian Parliament Building.
Fig. 2.3 Anonymous, Árpád Feszty posing in front of the panorama (c.1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 2.4 György Klösz, Feszty Panorama Rotunda in City Grove (1895). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 2.5 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas (15 x 120 meters). Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 1.
Fig. 2.6 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 2.
Fig 2.7 Arpad Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894) Panorama, oil painting on canvas Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltan Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001) postcard 3
Fig. 2.8 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 4.
Fig. 2.9 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 5.
Fig. 2.10 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 6.
Fig. 2.11 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 7.
Fig. 2.12 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 8.
Fig. 2.13 Árpád Feszty, *Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians* (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 9.
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 2.14 Árpád Feszty, Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians (1894). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park. Panorama reproduced as a colour postcard series photographed by Enyedi Zoltán, Hungarian National Historical Memorial Park (2001), postcard 10.
Fig. 2.15 Generic Diagram of Panorama Platform. Árpád Szúcs and Malgorzata Wójtowicz. A Feszty Körkép (The Feszty Panorama). (Budapest: Helokon, 1996), 3.

This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions
Fig. 2.16 Edouard Détaille and Alphonse de Neuville, *Battle of Champigny* (1879). Detail of Panorama, oil painting on canvas (121 x 215 cm). New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Fig. 2.17 Photographer Unknown, Mihály Munkácsy’s Conquest in the Upper House of Parliament (c.1900). Photograph. Budapest Museum of History.
Fig. 2.18 Unknown Producer, *A Thousand Years of Statehood* (1896). Colour Poster. National Széchényi Library, Budapest. Photograph of original by author.

This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions.
Fig. 2.20 Unknown Illustrator, A nemzetközi parlamenti értkezlet (The International Parliament Meeting) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 25 September 1896, Front Cover. Photograph of original by author.
Fig. 2.21 János Thorma, Martyrs of Arad (1893-96). Oil painting on canvas (350 x 633 cm). Hungarian National Gallery.
Fig. 2.22 Béla Grunwald, *Comeback After the Tatar Invasion* (1896). Oil painting on canvas (dimensions unknown). Hungarian National Gallery.
Fig. 2.23 Unknown Illustrator, The Arrival of the Hungarians (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Herkő Páter 26 July 1896. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 2.24 Unknown Illustrator, Molnár and Trill’s Panorama of Dante’s Hell (1896). Illustration. Reprinted in Gyula Laurencic. Az ezeréves Magyarország és a milléniumikiállítás (The Millennium of Hungary and the National Exhibition). Budapest: Kunosy Vilmos 1896.
Fig. 2.26 Unknown Photographer. Pusztaszer Memorial Monument (1896).

Fig. 2.27 Jan Styka and Pál Vágó, *The Battle of Sibiu or Bem and Petofi in Transylvania* (1897). Panorama, oil painting on canvas. Sections in private collections throughout Europe. Image reproduced on Museum of Tarnow, Poland website: [http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/panorama/panorama.html](http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/panorama/panorama.html).
Fig. 2.28-2.29 Jan Styka and Pál Vágó, The Battle of Sibiu or Bem and Petofi in Transylvania (1897). Panorama, oil painting on canvas (original dimensions unknown). Sections in museum and private collections throughout Europe. Images reproduced on Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Museum, Hungary website: http://www.djm.hu/archiv/erdely.html
Fig. 3.1 Unknown Photographer, Kossuth Lying in State in Torino Italy (1894). Photograph. Reprinted in Vasárnapi Ujság (Illustrated Sunday News) 41.14 1894. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 3.2 Unknown Artist, Defeating the Hydra of Revolution (1851). Lithographic Print. Unknown Vienna Archive. Reprinted in Róbert Herman. "Lajos Kossuth." In Fact Sheets on Hungary. Budapest: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, 2002.
Fig. 3.3 Unknown Illustrator, “You Can’t Pass Here!” (1851). Newspaper Illustration. Punch, or The London Charivari vol. 21, 1851. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 3.4 Unknown Artist, Grand Reception of Kossuth in New York, "The Champion of Hungarian Independence" at the City Hall, New York, December 6th 1851 (1851). Lithographic Print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.
Fig. 3.5 Unknown Artist, *Arrival of Kossuth at the Southampton Docks, England* (1851). Lithographic Print after wood engraving. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

Fig. 3.6 Unknown Artist, *Kossuth Enters the Park in New York in 1851* (1851). Lithographic Print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.
Fig. 3.7 Unknown Producer, Lajos Kossuth (c.1850-60's). Photograph of lithograph by Prinzhofe. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.
Fig. 3.8 Unknown Photographer, Lajos Kossuth (c.1860's). Photograph. Reprinted in Merényi Hajnalka. "The Pulszky Salon" Budapest Negyed 46.4 (2004).
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions


This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 3.11-3.12 Gustave Courbet, The Painter's Studio, A Real Allegory Summarizing My Seven Years of Life as an Artist. (1854-1855). Oil painting on canvas (361 x 598 cm). Musée d'Orsay, Paris.
This image has been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 3.14 Schemboche, Kossuth’s Office in Turin (1894). Photograph. Reprinted as a steel print engraving in “Louis Kossuth” L’Illustration 31 March 1894.
Fig. 3.15 Mor Erdélyi, Kossuth Lying in State at Hungarian National Museum (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.16 György Klósz, Kossuth’s Funeral on April 1st (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

Fig. 3.17 György Klósz, Kossuth Funeral Procession on Grand Boulevard (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.18 Mor Erdélyi, Kossuth’s Grave (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.19-22 Mor Erdélyi, Kossuth Funeral Procession (Series) (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.23 Mor Erdélyi, *Waiting for Kossuth's Body's Return to Budapest at Western Railway Station* (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.24 Mor Erdélyi, Paying Respects to Kossuth at Hungarian National Museum (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

Fig. 3.25 Mor Erdélyi, Watching Over Kossuth’s Casket (1894). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.26-3.27 Mor Erdélyi, Paying Respects to Kossuth at Hungarian National Museum and Watching Over Kossuth’s Casket (1894). Photographs. Reprinted as steel plate engravings in Le Monde Illustre 14 April 1894. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 3.28 Károly Divald, *Gathering Crowd on March 15th for Anniversary of 1848 Revolution* (1894). Photograph. Reprinted as a steel plate engraving in “Louis Kossuth” *L'Illustration* 31 March 1894.

These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 3.30-3.31 "Louis Kossuth" L'Illustration 31 March 1894.
Fig. 3.32 A.W., One of the People's Saints for the Calendar of Liberty 1852 (1852). Lithographic Print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.
Fig. 3.33 Front Page, Vasárnapi Ujság (Illustrated Sunday News) 41.14 1894. Scan of original by author.
Fig. 3.34 György Klösz, *The Old Stock Exchange Building* (c.1873). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.35 György Klósz, *Budapest Street Scene* (1894-95). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 3.36 György Klösz, Electric Tram Yard (c.1890) Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

Fig. 3.37 György Klösz, Blasting for the First Shaft of the Iron Gate (1890). Photograph. Hungarian National Museum.
Fig. 3.38-3.39 Cover and Sample Inside Pages. Gyula Laurencic. *Az ezeréves Magyarország és a milléniumikiállítás (The Millennium of Hungary and the National Exhibition)*. Budapest: Kunosy Vilmos 1896. Photographed from original by author.
Fig. 3.40-3.41 Examples of the Kossuth Dollar in English and Hungarian Printings. Reprinted in István Sinkovics, "Önálló Magyar Bankjegy (The Independant Hungarian Banknote)." In Emlékkönyv Kossuth Lajos születésének 150. évfordulójára (Essays in Memory of Lajos Kossuth's 150th Anniversary), edited by Magyar Történelmi Társulat., 114-73. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1952.
Fig. 3.42 Cover, Képes Kossuth naptár (Illustrated Kossuth Calendar) (1896). Day Calendar. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library. Photographed from original by author.
Fig. 3.44 György Klösz, Millennium Exhibition Opening (1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions.

Fig. 4.1 Film Stills from the First Ten Lumière Films Debuted at the Salon Indien du Grand Café in Paris on December 28, 1895 with Accompanying Program. Reproduced on the Institut Lumière website http://www.institut-lumiere.org/english/frames.html.
Fig. 4.2 Unknown Photographer, *Old Buda Castle Cabaret* (1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.

Fig. 4.3 Detailed Map of the Budapest Millennial Exhibition of 1896 (Close up of Old Buda Castle Cabaret Location) (1896). Illustrated Fold-out Map. József Vásárhelyi. *Az Ezredévi Kiállítás (The Millennial Exhibition)*. Debrecen: Gönczyegyelet, 1896. Photograph from original by author.
Fig. 4.4 György Klösz, *Old Buda Castle Cabaret* (1896). Photograph. Budapest Collection, Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library.
Fig. 4.5 Unknown Illustrator, *Begreiflich* (Understandable) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. *Kikeriki* 48, 14 June 1896. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 4.6 Unknown Illustrator, Szép események a millennium küszöbén (Nice Episodes on the Threshold of the Millennium) (1896). Illustrated Cartoon, Herkó Páter, 19 April 1896. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 4.7 Unknown Illustrator, Nem ugy van ma, mint volt régen, más csillagzat jár az égen [Today is not like it was long ago, another prophecy lies in the stars] (1896). Illustrated Cartoon, Herkő Páter, February 23 1896. Scanned from original by author.
Megnyitás.

Konstantinápoly Budapesten

Megnyitás pünkösdi vasárnapi

Nagy ünnepség.

Öriási tűzijáték a vizen.

Este 8 órakor

látványosságok nagy sorozata.

Dankó Pista

hirneves mágarráfi hatú és zeneszerző

énekesszenekar

naponta

hangversenyez.

Közlekedés szárazon és vizen.

Szárazon:

A láncúhíd és összekötő-híd;

Vizen:

A Duna gózhajózási társaság

valamennyi kikötőjétől

hajó indul

Konstantinápolyba dóránként.

---

Fig. 4.8 Advertisement Page from Pesti Napló (Pest Daily) 24 May 1896. Scanned from original by author.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 4.9 Lumière Brothers, "Gardener Waters Garden" in The Gardener (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.

Fig. 4.10 Lumière Brothers, "Young Man Sneaks Up" in The Gardener (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 4.11 Lumière Brothers, “Young Man Stops Flow of Water” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.

Fig. 4.12 Lumière Brothers, “Gardener Examines Hose” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 4.13 Lumière Brothers, "Gardener Blasted in Face with Water" in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.

Fig. 4.14 Lumière Brothers, "Gardener Grabs Young Man" in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 4.15 Lumière Brothers, “Gardener Makes Young Man Look at Hose” in The Gardener (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.

Fig. 4.16 Lumière Brothers, “Gardener Spanks Young Man” in The Gardener (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions

Fig. 4.17 Lumière Brothers, “Gardener Returns to Work” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.

Fig. 4.18 Lumière Brothers, “Young Man Looks Directly at Audience” in *The Gardener* (1895). Film Still. Institut Lumière.
Fig. 4.19 Unknown Illustrator, A király az új műcsarnokban (The King Visits the New Art Museum) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 6 May 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 4.20 Unknown Illustrator, *A főváros titkaiból (From the City's secrets)* (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 8 August 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.

Fig. 4.21 Unknown Illustrator, *Rémes vasúti akadály (Horrible Railway Accident)* (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 25 July 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 4.22 Unknown Illustrator, A lezuhant siklo (The Collapsed Furnicular) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 20 June 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.

Fig. 4.23 Unknown Illustrator, A kerékpár halottja (The Bicycle's Victim) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 31 October 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.

Fig. 4.25 Unknown Illustrator, *Kubai fölkelők harca* (Cuban Uprising) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 23 May 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. 4.26 Unknown Illustrator, Véres választás (Bloody Elections) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 24 October 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.

Fig. 4.27 Unknown Illustrator, Harc választók és huszárok között (Among the Election Rioters and Police) (1896). Newspaper Illustration. Budapest: Illustrated Political News 30 October 1896, Front Cover. Scanned from original by author.
YANKEE CITY OF THE OLD WORLD.

Pesth Has Grown Up in Forty Years Without Sacrifice of Beauty.

Richard Harding Davis in Scribner's.

Budapest, as everybody knows, is formed of two cities, separated by the Danube, and joined together like New York and Brooklyn, by great bridges. Buda is a city hundreds of years old, and rises on a great hill covered with yellow houses with red-tiled roofs, and surmounted by fortresses and ancient German-looking castles, and the palace of the King, with terraces of marble and green gardens running down to meet the river. It still is a picturesque, fortified city of the middle ages.

Pesth, just across the way, is the most modern city in Europe; more modern than Paris, better paved, and better lighted; with better facilities for rapid transit than New York, and with houses of Parliament as massive and impressive as those on the banks of the Thames, and not unlike them in appearance. Pesth is the Yankee city of the old world, just as the Hungarians are called the Americans of Europe. It has grown in forty years, and it has sacrificed neither beauty of space nor line in growing. It has magnificent public gardens, as well as a complete fire department; it has the best club in the world—the Park Club—and it has found time to put electric tramways under ground, and to rear monuments to poets, orators, and patriots above ground. People in Berlin and Vienna tell you that some day all of these things will disappear and go to pieces; that Pesth is enjoying a "boom," and that the boom will pass and leave only the buildings and electric plants and the car tracks, with no money in the treasury to make the wheels go round. I do not know whether this is, or is not, to be, but let us hope it is only the envy and uncharitableness of the Austrian and German mind that sees nothing in progress but disaster, and makes advancement spell ruin. People who live in a city where one is asked to show a passport, a certificate of good health, a police permit, and a residence card, in order to be allowed to mount a bicycle, as I was asked to do in Berlin, can hardly be expected to look with favor on their restless, ambitious young neighbors of the Balkans.

Fig.C.1 Richard Harding Davis, “Yankee City of the Old World” (1897). Newspaper Article. The Washington Post 28 February 1897. Scanned from original by author.
Fig. C.2 Nineteenth Century Photographs Blown Up As Posters in Budapest Street Walkways (2005). Photograph by author.
These images have been removed because of copyright restrictions
