Éva Izsák – Katalin S. Nagy – Andrea Dúll

URBAN EXPERIENCE

TRANSFORMATIONS

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Introduction

Three researchers representing three different fields of science undertook the analysis of the changes in post-regime-change Budapest. Recently, it has often been said that current analyses in the history of science should be the joint work of well-prepared authors working in different fields. This is the fact that inspired us.

Éva Izsák is an ELTE University geographer, a lecturer on the development of Budapest into a city and capital, who compares the characteristics of the city chosen as the subject of this book with other European cities (e.g. Berlin) in significant publications.

Katalin S. Nagy is an art historian, a writer specialising in 20th century and contemporary arts, and a sociologist researching visual culture.

Andrea Dúll is a psychologist, the founder of environmental psychology in Hungary, and a leading lecturer at ELTE and several other universities.

She and Éva Izsák have been working together for a long time and have even coauthored a book.

This (text)book is an experiment. It is to demonstrate how three teachers and researchers with different backgrounds find a common language, a path, and interoperability between their scientific interests. The background is provided by economic and social changes, the consequences of regional development, and modern urbanization. In other words: the transformation of the city triggered by time and space.

We highlight the role of the Danube River and its importance in communication, as an urban geographical force in the development of Budapest. We present the needs of the city, the perception of the city, and how the public mood is influenced by public spaces, public sculptures, housing estates, shopping centres, and the geographical and other identifying elements that determine the city's image, as well as psychological and sociological influences.

Ever since books have been written about cities, their notion has been verbalized in countless ways: the city is the cradle of human civilization. Even now. Even in the era of postmodernity and globalization. We hope to approach the collective thinking about the urban environment that serves as a framework for our lives, with a new perspective and new questions.

Budapest, 10th April 2025

Éva Izsák, Katalin S. Nagy, Andrea Dúll

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Éva Izsák

The area studied in space and time

The transformation of geographical space is a process that changes over time. The continental territories comprise the parts of the space that are suitable for for humans to transform and take possession of. 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by water, which is not very suitable for permanent human habitation. Populating the land and making it habitable have always presented a great challenge for humanity. Living space has been determined by technological development. The transformation of the available natural environment has been an enormous task for humanity. Not only the population of space, but also the spatial transformation that goes hand in hand with technological development is a characteristic feature of the social and economic changes that have dominated the relationship between humans and their environment for millions of years. Stepping out of nature and the constraints dictated by evolution, a sense of the omnipotence of technology and economics became dominant.

The determining physical characteristics of human life are influenced by the complex system of the geographical environment. The horizontal and vertical societal structures comprise a fundamental element of the morphology of settlements. The geographical factors of different territorial characteristics have been used by humans in different ways over time. The triad of economic development, settlement structure, and society has created and transformed characteristic cities. The social history of the European continent can be traced in the internal structure of settlements.

Currently, Europe is a continent in the Northern Hemisphere, bordered by land and water. It is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Arctic Ocean to the north, the Ural Mountains to the east, and the Mediterranean

Sea to the south. In terms of area it is the second smallest continent after Australia. European social processes, the migration of peoples, colonization, and European civilization have been playing a decisive role in human cultural history. The global impact of the continent may be seen in the general adoption of the international standard for the prime meridian, running through London (Greenwich).[2]

The formation and development of cities have always meant some kind of geographical concentration of energy.[3] People settled and built cities where the natural environment allowed it, where the conditions ensured life, livelihood, and further development. The concentration of the population was also the driving force behind economic development. People want to live where the opportunities available in a settlement provide them with a secure livelihood. The economic history of Europe is illustrated by the transformations of settlement networks.

Kezdő hosszúsági kör
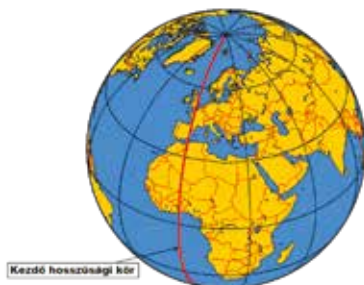
Figure 1: The prime longitude line

An important and indispensable condition for modern urbanization was the rapid adaptation of London and Paris to industrial development. Not only were these two settlements the first to apply the latest technologies of the time, but their huge population concentrations also laid the foundations for urban growth. The process is also beautifully illustrated by other genres of arts. Their existence indicates important transformations. The large-scale historical novel by Charles

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2   It was established at the International Meridian Conference in Washington in 1884.

3   Author's note: Cities are focal points of the geographical environment, which have a well-identifiable geographical location and name. The responsibility of scholars is to convey the birth of thought, to present the scientific steps that ultimately give rise to independent thoughts. This paper focuses on the geopolitical connections of the European city and environment. It flashes back to the 20th century moments of the birth of geographical space. The genre of the paper is a scientific essay.

Dickens[4] refers to the times before the French Revolution of 1789 with the novel's opening quoted below: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, that was the winter of despair..."[5]

Figure 2: Frans Masereel[6]: London (1925)[7]

Modern-age urbanization in Europe also saw the emergence of densely populated areas. Territorial patterns were transformed. The use of the opportunities provided by the geographical environment also led to the formation of urban networks. The urbanization of space began. Enormous cities were born, and the population growth also entailed the development of supply systems. Claude Monet would never have painted one of the first railway stations in Paris (see below) if there had not been for the processes that made rail connections between settlements possible.

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4   English writer (1812–1870).

5   Dickens, Ch: A Tale of Two Cities, date of first publication: 1859.

6   Masereel, Frans, a Flemish painter and graphic artist (1889–1972).

7   From his graphics published in his book The City.

Figure 3: Claude Monet: Gare Saint-Lazare (1877)

The economic success of settlements resulted in social changes as well. The differences that created different territorial patterns also grew. Neighbourhoods developed within cities that reflected the opportunities available to different population groups. The issues of proximity, neighbourhood, and quality also became important. Urbanization transformed the settlement network throughout Europe. The temporal differences in territorial changes also classified the economic, political, and social systems. Transcontinental power centres emerged where geopolitical centres were formed both by economic and political processes. The history of the 20th century is also the era of strengthening and weakening of geopolitical centres. All this also determined the characteristic changes in cities.

Picture 4: The City, by Frans Masereel (1925)

The space where cities were born

Europe, similarly to other continents, is fragmented and divisible into parts. Its geographical structure determines both its societal structure and settlement network. It is bordered by land on the eastern side only (the Ural Mountains), otherwise it is surrounded by seas and oceans. Its natural features created favourable conditions for the rapid spread of civilization. The proliferation of spatial processes over time was not always slowed down by obstacles posed by the natural environment. Their directions could gradually be influenced by economic and political forces. Accordingly, cities with larger populations were established.

The society of cities fits into the political and economic structure of their countries. These features often manifest themselves as borders. World orders, spheres of influence, and political centres shape historical processes, including the societal space in which cities have developed. The history of centuries comprises also a montage and collage drawn into the internal structure of cities. Technology and thought are the essence of the city.

Figure 5: Frans Masereel: Les promeneur

Figure 6: The physical map of Europe

Transcontinental spheres of influence in Europe – geopolitics and the city

The wars, population devastation, and political changes of the past century repeatedly redrew the borders of the countries of the continent and its map. The characteristic and defining power fields of the 20th century affected not only the roles assumed by individual countries, but also the development of their settlement networks. The capitals, as the leaders of political and economic centres all played their prominent roles.

The history of Europe has undergone four significant territorial, social, and political changes in the past century. These have always created new transcontinental force fields, influenced and transformed cities. At the same time, the spatial changes of these force fields also draw attention to the importance of time. Regimes that last for a short period of time and result in significant social changes are unable to transform man-made environments, including cities. More important than this is the connection between settlements and the construction of roads. Cities first use what is available, modifying it according to the inhabitants' own ideas. Then the transformation and construction of the inner urban space begin.

Cities show us the relationship between space and time. The "humanization" of the geographical environment, the transformation of space are matters of political power and economic strength. The internal areas of European cities have been fundamentally shaped by those economic and political processes that have also changed the territorial structures of individual countries at national level. The changing power fields resulted in different geopolitical centres. The temporal continuity of transcontinental processes can be demonstrated by the transformation and shaping of space. Examples of this can be provided by those cities that bear the imprints of different political and economic processes in a given geographical space, thus building up the inner spaces of cities.

Budapest's space in the twentieth century

Cities present their history on themselves. Time and space are intertwined in a settlement. The structure, size, and decoration of the inner spaces of a city can be rewritten in a single century. Statues, roads, and buildings can mark the passage of time. Thanks to its distinctive features, Budapest was a twin city and

a competitor, a reception centre, a place that provided work and supported life, a centre and a powerhouse, a gateway and a bridge between different parts of Europe in a single century. The continent's imperial power spheres have always influenced the city's development.

The Habsburg Empire played a major role in the modern history of Europe. Vienna was both the centre and controller of the geopolitical power structure. The imperial capital served as a model for modern urban development. Architects and other urban planning frequented the streets of Paris, Berlin and Vienna. The European capitals of that era provided a model for the capitals of other countries. The revolutionary atmosphere of the nineteenth century brought the peoples closer to wanting their lifestyles and cities resemble each other. The convergence of settlements was also facilitated by the existing human resources. Budapest, which had been formed from three minor settlements (Pest, Buda, and Óbuda)[8], found itself in a special situation. The former and contemporary Hungarian royal seat became a competitor to the imperial city of the Habsburgs.

Figure 7: The Habsburg Empire

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8 On 21st December 1872, the settlements were unified. Emperor Franz Joseph signed the law in the evening, making Budapest an existing whole. It took almost a year to establish the capital. The general assembly of the unified city met for the first time on 17th November 1873. This became the day of the capital.
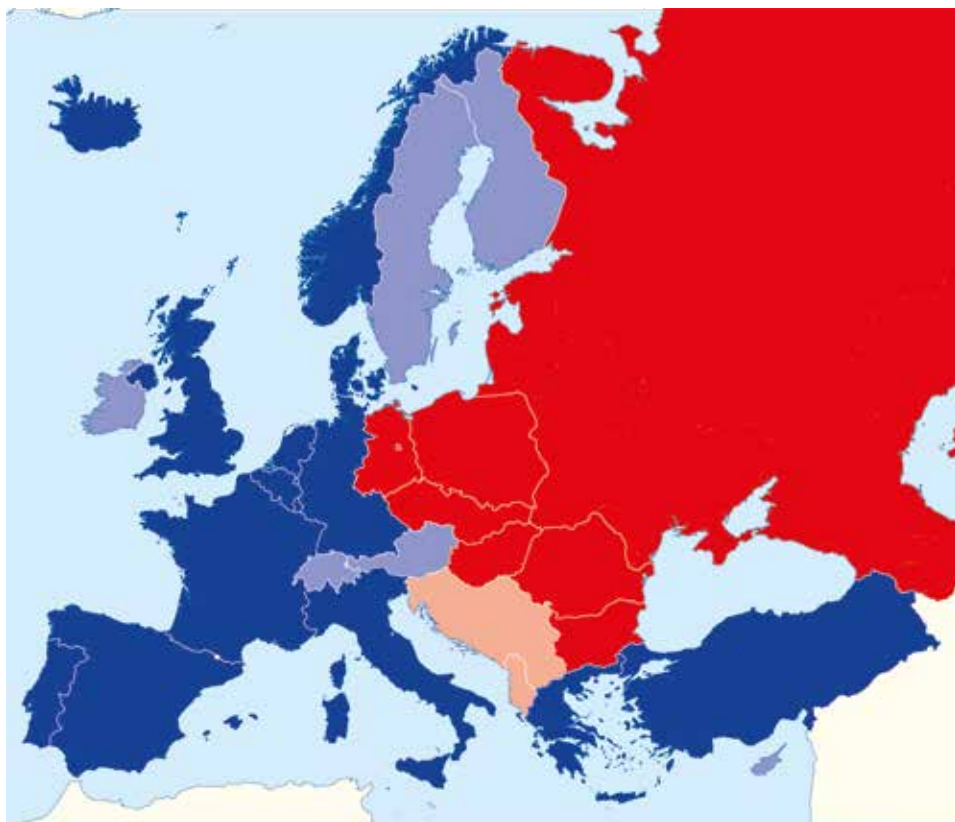
Walking around Vienna and Budapest, one can immediately see striking similarities even today. There are a lot of identical urban structural elements in the two capitals. The legacies of their shared historical past are still present today. Among the many reasons for this, the people involved in urban planning, and the social will to eliminate visible and tangible differences should be highlighted. Not only was the monarch the same[9], but perhaps for this reason the same professionals were commissioned to shape the structures of both cities. At that time, anyone who went from Budapest to Vienna could see what the differences in urban spatiality meant – right until the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1918). The end of the First World War did not only mean the disintegration of the Monarchy.

Budapest was left alone, and this burden was also exacerbated by the solution of the tasks that fell upon the city. The consequence of the Trianon Peace Dictate was not only a significant reduction in Hungary's territory, but also the migration of masses stranded outside the newly drawn national borders to Budapest. The capital became the single prominent centre of the shrinking national territory. The effects of this issue are best illustrated by the "sea of rental housing" that still exists today. Since spatial growth on the Pest side of the Danube River was hindered by fewer natural factors, the city spread eastward with tremendous momentum. Over the next two decades, Budapest became a "hydrocephalus", a "swollen bladder" relative to the country's territory. Huge masses of people that had remained outside the new state borders moved to Budapest. Not only were they able to retain their Hungarian citizenship, but they could and also did participate in building the centre of the country.

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9   Whoever was emperor in Austria also had the Hungarian crown as king...

Figure 8: Trends in population movements

The duality of Budapest was manifested not only by the complexity of its geographical environment. The capital was characterized by a complex social structure. Past and present represented the hope for the future. Feudalism and capitalism shaped Budapest into one urban space. The capital had the opportunity to develop its own unique character on this basis. However, there was neither enough time nor courage to do so. The enormous destruction of the Second World War transformed not only the urban space. Contradictions emerged in the city's social structure too that are still felt today. These were reinforced by the political and economic measures that "decapitated" the capital's society. Nation-wide social movements began. Within a short time, new urban society was formed. The territory of Budapest also changed. The administrative boundaries that are still valid today was created. New transcontinental power structures were formed. Hungary became part of the Soviet bloc within the bipolar system. The consequence was not only the central determination of the political and economic courses that lasted for decades, but also the central control of the settlement's society. The geographical location of the population also changed. New cities were built; industrial areas and new economic centres were established. Meanwhile, the urban society of Budapest also changed. For the third time during its existence, the capital found itself in a situation where it had to adapt to new power centres, losing its independence and having to hide its unique characteristics as much as possible.

Figure 9: The bipolar world divided by the Iron Curtain in Europe (1945–1990)

Figure 10: Frans Masereel: The city

Figure 11: Frans Masereel: The city

The use and utilization of urban geographic energies vary in dependence on the era. The local and situational opportunities of settlements play a decisive role in space and time. The city's dependence on these factors modifies the processes that shape the roles of settlements. In Budapest, these energies have always been decisive in urban development. Their use has been different in each historical era. Budapest's diversity and image are shaped by three very different urban geographical energies.

On the eastern side of the bipolar world order, settlements often sought to unify their individual character. They were characterized by modesty and uniformity.

In Budapest, the flat areas of the Pest side were suitable for such uniformity. Monotonous, often seemingly boring neighbourhoods were formed. The social strata that were displaced from there moved to Buda. The spatial formation of the city's social pattern began.
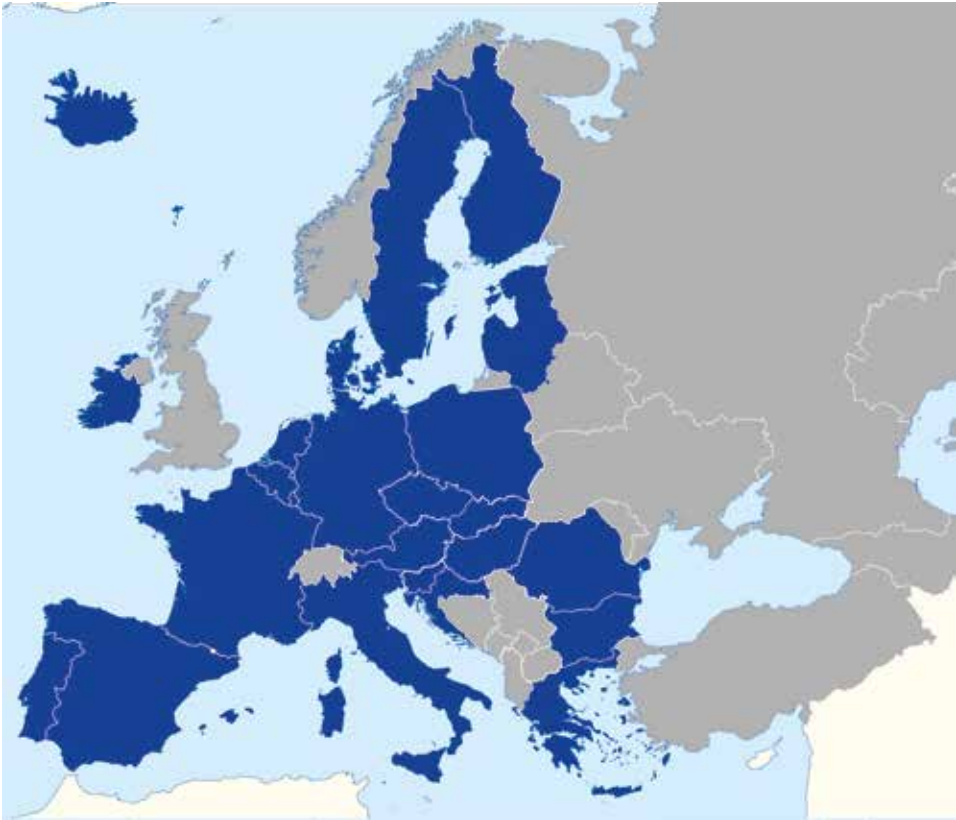
Figure 12: Member states of the European Union in 2018

Three decades ago, another transformation began. With the end of the bipolar world order, Budapest was given another opportunity. The city's various geographical energies offered dynamic transformations. The capital could have shaped its uniqueness through a change in its atmosphere, its own European essence and role. However, none of this happened. Instead, the city is slowly melting away, unable to use and exploit its potential.

The significant transformations of the past decades have resulted in many changes in capital cities. Their independence and economic power have provided opportunities for urban development. Capitals have also transformed and developed. Berlin is an excellent example of such transformation processes. It has turned not only into a federal capital and one of the centres of Europe, but also the unified centre of two social systems. Two cities integrated into a single

centre in a few decades. The rapid collapse of the bipolar world order and the impact of the economy have clearly transformed the capital of Germany.

At the same time, the Covid-19 pandemic not only closed social spaces but also resulted in significant territorial and functional changes. Urban spaces have not only been transformed; their use has also changed. A new phase of urban development might have begun. The process and outcome of this phenomenon remain a question for the future.

Urban space consumption and urbanization

Space consumption is a real geographical concept. The Earth is made up of land and water, which provide a home for living organisms. They feed on, live in, and use the space available to them, thus consuming the space at their disposal.

Human settlement and the choice of a permanent residence always means the consumption of space. Natural forces create the natural environment on the Earth. Its formation and transformation have been taking place for many millions of years. The complexity of the geographical environment thus created is also indicated by the fact that there are few places in this system suitable for life. This is the system that determines the space that can be transformed into a living space by various living creatures. The evolution of species also means adaptation to the environment. This process is characteristic not only of living organisms that have been able to live on Earth for millions of years, but even the evolution of the human species can be traced according to the effects of the geographical environment. The characteristics of the biological conditions of life have created significant differences. All this indicates not only spatial, but also racial differences. Within the single human species (Homo sapiens), several smaller groups can be distinguished based on their adaptation to different environmental conditions. For example, evolution created a black skin due to strong sunlight and a different type of facial structure because of adaptation to environmental conditions, etc. Based on smaller taxonomic units, smaller groups of the unified human species can also be territorially distinguished.

The different structure of the geographical environment and the accommodation (adaptation) to it are indicated by the appearance of different races. In biological terms, the hereditary, mostly geographically determined groups of hominids adapt phenotypically (through physical, external features) to the natural conditions.

Space consumption over time

Over millions of years, the space consumption of living beings has changed significantly. Hominids play a prominent role in this process. Their space consumption has changed and continues to change both in terms of time and territory. As analyses show, cities play a significant role in this process. The development of a nation or a given social group can be traced by examining their knowledge about the space and its use.

In the 20th century, the invention of the computer transformed the concepts of space and time. The virtual world makes distant, personally unexperienced spaces visible in a short time. Anything unknown before can be seen on a screen. The importance of the individual is called into question. The immutability of the visual space is only shown by the size of the image seen or the reality reflected in the mirror.

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Éva Izsák

The role of the network of urban spaces in the transformation of settlements

Networks are omnipresent. They interweave human bodies, lives, days, and the entire world. They guide people like visible or invisible threads. As our knowledge enlarges, we can also learn about the networks that operate the world. Since the end of the Second World War, with the proliferation of computer use, we no longer only have had access to the networks we have created or are familiar with. In the digital world there are digital networks. Researchers and scientists have been presenting numerous studies that use the term "network" as a new paradigm. This term is the new narrative of the postmodern world.

The network as a system of connections can function not only between natural but also between social factors. Knowledge of these can contribute to the functioning of society and to better and simpler relations between individual groups or factors. The network is important not only because of its capability of creating connections, but also because the unobstructed flow of different currents is essential. The Covid-19 epidemic in the past few years and the diseases of social groups in different geographical locations also showed the social impact of networks in nature. The spread of the pandemic has shown not only the network of society, but also those population hubs that provide livelihoods for many people in a geographical location, and at the same time pose a serious threat to those living there in the event of such an epidemic. World history has also proved many times how serious and strong such connections are. Below, the importance and changes in the knowledge of the geographical environment throughout history are reviewed first, followed by a brief elaboration on the geographical

relationship between time and space, and then on the most important and spectacular processes of the current transformations.

The part of the geographical environment known and inhabited by humans has constantly changed and grown. Ten thousand years ago, the ancestors of mankind lived in caves and used what their environment provided and made possible for them. They fed on the creatures that were available in a given geographical location. Cave dwellers warned their fellows about dangerous creatures, animals, and plants. From their cave paintings, it can be known what kind of animals and plants lived in the geographical location where the cave paintings were produced. The paintings even enable posterity to follow the changes in a living space, geographical environment, and climate. The cultural history of humanity is the continuous change in relation to space and time. The virtual world drawn by people has always existed, and the answers to the past are available for future generations to discover. The geographical environment and changes of prehistoric humans can be seen and examined.

Settled people began their world-conquering journey about ten thousand years ago, resulting in the urbanized space that can be experienced and seen today. The concentration and combination of resources resulted in a new type of network, a network of settlements. Living in the pull of space and time, humans created the environment for themselves.

In the pull of time...

Historians and geologists examine the traces of settlement and permanent residence in changing geographical spaces over time. Humans have always quested places where geographical energies are present simultaneously and in one location. Thus, the cities that emerged were always built on some previous traces where people had already found a location suitable for permanent life. A good example of this is Budapest, where the Roman Empire already left behind a significant settlement (*Aquincum*). The history of Budapest is an excellent example of the benefits of space consumption. The people living here have always made use of the opportunities offered by their environment. For example, the Danube River not only supplied drinking water, but served also as protection, transportation routes, and connections to other territories.
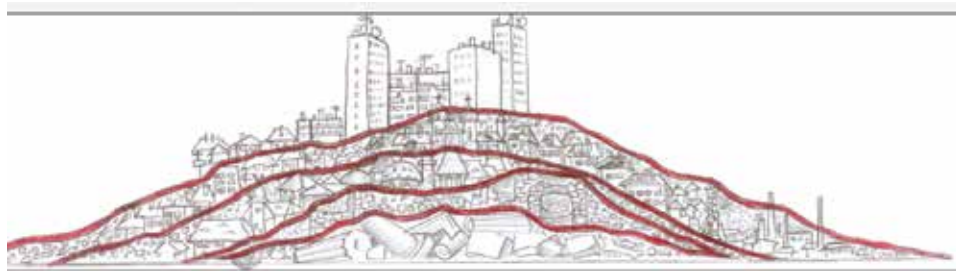
*Figure 13: Urbanized space in the geographical environment of Budapest over time
(drawing by Andrea Mindszenty).*

The temporal change of networks has always adapted to the geographical environment in which it developed. This is how the settlement networks that have continued defining the social habitats of individual continents came into being. In other words, city dwellers can sense the universal process capable of shaping the nature and permanence of space consumption.

In the pull of space...

The development of networks has always been determined by the geographical space that surrounded the people living in it. The concentration of resources has also influenced and determined the development of the various hubs whose examination is not only important in terms of time, but also in terms of scale. The geographical scale can and does determine the relationship between humans and their environment.

"The city is the world that man builds for himself," Wolf Schneider wrote in his book (SCHNEIDER 1973) in 1973, which is about a historical journey offering an imaginary adventure in the cities of bygone times. The question arises: what do the humans of today build in their cities? Where do they feel comfortable? How do they use existing spaces? And what do they do with the artificial environment used in the previous system or systems, with today's urban "scars"?

The structural characteristics of the development and transformation of cities can be observed in the micro-level changes of settlements. The transformation of a settlements' environment goes hand in hand with changes in both its natural and social environment. Peter Hall described the appearance of 21st century cities as the structure of computers. In his opinion, the physical structure of

cities is the hardware, while the social structure is the software. These two together shape and build the characteristics of urban space. This vivid analogy – among other things – also illustrates the relationship between urban society and urban space.

What is a city? The difficulty of the content and meaning of the concept, which has been defined in many ways and many times, is also demonstrated by the fact that individual academic disciplines have tried to create their own city definitions. Each of them examined human settlements from different perspectives, created its own conceptual system and statistical analysis methodologies for studying cities. The fact that all disciplines dealing with cities conducted studies based on exclusivity can be considered a shortcoming of the analyses as they often seem extremely one-sided. Holistic, systems-based thinking was lacking.

In line with the spirit of this study, a city cannot be defined from a single perspective. A city is a basic unit of the world that has a position and attributes related to this position.[2] These characteristics are inseparably interconnected; they belong to the settlement as they are its essential, defining elements. They are characterized by quantitative and qualitative data. Although their research and analysis may be the task of individual academic disciplines, overall, no single discipline is sufficient on its own. For this reason, the city is an entity that can be examined precisely in a holistic, transdisciplinary manner. If all this is accepted, it is also clear how difficult it is to compare the development, change, and transformation of two independent entities, two cities (A. GERGELY 2006–2010). According to this, the city is a basic unit that cannot be further divided into smaller basic units of similar character.

The city as an entity can be classified into categories and layers. The connections between the different layers form the hierarchy that creates the network in which the independent entities (cities) are located, thus forming a unit (city network). At the global, continental, regional, or national level, such a city network ensures the security of both the system of connections and neighbourhoods. In other words, the emphasis is on the existence of something (in this case, a city), and not on what exactly exists, i.e. what a city is.

Another methodological premise of the study is that it does not analyse the spatial organizing functions or system of the city. Instead, it deals with

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2   This is precisely what highlights the raison d'être of urban geography among those that study the city as an independent discipline.

the transformations and changes within the existing city, accepting that a city district consists mostly of the value-system of the people living there, of those living around it, or of mobile communities (A. Gergely 2006–2010), i.e. it is composed of social integration.

At the same time, it should be remembered that the communal or public spaces of cities and city districts are dynamically changing elements of society. As Henri Lefebvre stated in 1972 (Lefebvre 1972): space is a historically produced reality, and as such, the use, meaning and defining symbols of the spaces are important in every era, in every social and political system. In this way, the everyday life and transformation processes of a given city can also be presented, or the past can even be analysed as a reality that still exists in spaces and buildings today (De Certeau 1980).

"Turns" in urban research at the turn of the millennium

The second half of the 20th century saw significant socio-economic changes that affected not only the "intellectual spaces" of the globalized world, but also the value system, geographical outlook, socio-physical and socio-cultural relations of city dwellers. Edward Soja's 1989 work *Postmodern Geographies* (Soja 1989) clearly shows the significant transformations that has taken place in society and its intellectual orientation since the mid-1960s onwards. The "spatiality" of society has changed. The previously static local attachment to place and the frameworks of the living world have become "globalized". All this affected not only the economic and political processes of society, but also its thinking about the space and the study of space. The city with a growing population[3] globally, became an obvious "field" for these two (Scott, Soja 1996).

The in-depth and new-type qualitative examination of the processes taking place in cities began and proliferated throughout the scientific world after the publication of two works that fundamentally transformed urban geography. The work entitled *Thirdspace* (Soja 1996) drew attention to the importance of lived spaces, trying to interpret and examine the subjective space created by an individual, several individuals, or groups. Understanding the processes and social backgrounds drew the attention of researchers to new problems,

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3 According to UN estimates (2007), the number of city dwellers is increasing by 170,000 per week. In 2008 – for the first time in history – there were more city dwellers on Earth than rural dwellers.

such as the interpretations of urban spaces, the importance of the creation and construction of space (LEFEBVRE 1972) or the forms and practices of space appropriation (DE CERTEAU 1980). Processes that had already been analysed in history, cultural anthropology, and sociology gained new meaning in urban geography with the publication of Soja's work.

2000 saw the publication of Edward Soja's work *Postmetropolis* (SOJA 2000). In it the urban geographical processes, spatial changes, and sociophysical phenomena that characterize the cities of the globalized world are described in detail. According to Soja, the characteristics suitable and necessary for research are as follows:

- flexicity – intense functional and spatial fragmentation characteristic of a post-industrial city;
- cosmopolis (cosmopolitan places) – the primacy of globalization in cultural and economic terms;
- exopolis ("turned-out" city) – the traditional city is "turned-out", the inner city and peri-urban areas are also functionally transformed;
- metropolarities (polarization) – growing social inequalities, polarization, conflicts, and their manifestations within the urban fabric;
- "carcareal archipelagoes" – continuous surveillance, guarding and control over urban areas, hybridization (*simcity*) – the coexistence of reality and geographical imagination.

Not only the North American and Western European urbanization processes have been changed by the process of urban spatial transformations, postmodern society, and globalization. Since the early 1990s, spectacular transformations have taken place in the cities of post-socialist countries, including Budapest as well.

City – urban geography – postmodern society

Taking the city as an entity raises the question: what is the task of the geographer in this entity? The city's attachment to a specific location and the importance of attributes related to that location are clearly pointed out in the introduction. The attachment of the city refers to the geographical location where the city was founded and has been growing. The transformation and utilization of natural space is the first step. This is followed by the interaction between geographical

features as attributes and society as a space-occupying force, resulting in the city itself. The geographical face of the city is defined by the filling and utilization of space (ENYEDI 2012. 26.).

Postmodern society, the global economy, and the changes in relationship between space and time have also transformed the geographical face of cities. The forces that organise space have changed, and the interpretation of place and geographical location has also been transformed. Urban places have a history, relativity, and identity (AUGÉ 2012. 83). These factors provide – among other things – the geographical image of a city. The postmodern era strives for physical change. It transforms the inner world of cities, the so-called "non-places" without identity multiply (AUGÉ 2012. 79–80.), and typical zones and areas of postmodern cities are formed. The internal structure of the city is changing, with new elements shaping it. The former regularity is replaced by irregularity. The new, previously non-existent forms of space occupation may even be alien to some social groups of city dwellers. Today's cities are characterized by a fragmented structure, which was previously more unified, as well as a dense, function-concentrated use of space. Thus –in Budapest, for example – the previously more unified urban structure has fallen apart. Altered social, political and economic conditions fragmented functional urban areas. It is difficult to distinguish between purely residential and purely commercial area. In addition, mega-shopping centres with huge areas have emerged where several urban functions are concentrated. The relationship between space, function, and society has fundamentally changed in cities.

As independent entities, cities respond to changes in a sovereign way. The transformation of the geographical image of North American, Western European, or post-socialist cities, and the change in the spatial organising power of cities are different. In addition to the obvious differences, there are also significant differences in environment-psychology, urban sociology, and architecture. Influenced by the combined effect of all these factors, the identity of the spaces and places of the city changes. In addition, the natural face of the city can also change and transform (ENYEDI 2012. 79–80.). Since the landscape is an internal element of the city, and although nature within the city is small in scale, the transformation and restructuring of the city's natural geography is also part and an important object of urban research. This is especially true in cities like Budapest, where the natural environment and its attributes within the city have been playing such an important role to this day. The study therefore seeks to point out those spatial transformations and changes that determine the spatial turns in the urban geography of Budapest.

Characteristics of the "new" urban world

Postmodern society, the global economy, and the change in the relationship between space and time have transformed the world of cities, the meaning and significance of their internal spaces, and the use of space by city dwellers. The "new" urban world has fundamentally changed at two levels. The hierarchy of cities has transformed, and the factors determining the success of cities and competition between cities have changed.

Settlements, including cities, are organized into a hierarchy that forms both the entirety of the settlement stock and the network of settlements. Previously, territorial studies analysed the settlement hierarchy by region, country, country group, or even at continental levels, since functional subordination and superordination relations (in terms of economic or political functions) could be determined at such territorial levels. An international or global comparisons of cities were meaningless.[4] As a result of globalization, the urban hierarchy was transformed, and settlement subordination and superordination relationships were "rearranged". Global transformations resulted in the creation of "city peaks" at the top of the hierarchy, global cities that became dominant in certain areas of life. In 1991, Saskia Sassen (Sassen 1991, pp. 23–36) defined global cities as decision-making and innovative centres that shape new patterns of urban competition.[5]

The competition between cities is permanent. In a constantly changing global economic environment, new factors are always necessary to ensure that a city's success remains sustainable. Since global cities were also seriously affected by the downturns that followed economic growth, new "success factors" were needed to participate in the competition between cities. After several decades of the knowledge-based economy, a new term, the creative economy, emerged in the 1990s and then at the turn of the millennium. Creativity began to emerge as a core value of selection. Following scientific explanations[6], it received increasing attention not only in business life. The systematic approach became increasingly widespread, in which, in addition to individual performance, the cultural environment and the social field also became significant factors of creativity. That is, the prevailing tastes, traditions, and works that have become

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4   The concept of a global city was first formulated by Sir Patrick Geddes in his work *Cities in Evolution* (Geddes 1915).
5   In the early 1990s, Saskia Sassen identified three global cities: London, New York and Tokyo.
6   It is primarily approached from the perspectives of biology, medicine, and psychology.

acknowledged in society, as well as the social environment that accepts or rejects them (e.g. Csíkszentmihályi 2018). Thus, the process of creativity is the result of the interaction between the individual, the cultural environment, and the social field. Creativity is therefore a social phenomenon with no objective criteria.

Creativity, appearing as a success factor of cities, therefore creates an economy where knowledge appears as a useful activity that creates new forms, i.e. creative industries are born, and these build the creative economy. In settlements and cities where the factors of the creative economy are concentrated, the creative class that runs the entire process is increasingly solid and successful in the social field that creates and supports them. And the creative class is a fundamental success factor in the "rise" of cities. (Florida 2002. 35–64; Florida, 2005. 27–48)

This chapter is an updated version of a previously published study. The previous publication[1]: Éva Izsák: A Duna mint megélt tér Budapesten – városföldrajzi mozaikok. Településföldrajzi Tanulmányok, 2015(4) 5. 48–55. [The Danube as a lived space in Budapest – urban geography mosaics. Urban Geography Studies, 2015(4) 5. 48–55.] Downloadable: https://ojs.elte.hu/tft/article/view/3283/2977

Éva Izsák

The Danube as a lived space in Budapest

The presence of water is one of the determining, unique features of the Earth. 70% of the planet's surface is water, most of which is the mass of the oceans. Rivers connect lakes, flow in riverbeds or natural depressions. They are a significant landscape-forming factor. They either build or destroy. They are able to transform and determine the geographical space. The permanent settlement of people has always been influenced by the presence of water.

Few rivers are determined by continents. Watercourses that cross entire continents are rare. The length of a river, its drainage basin, and the geographical energies of the city shape embedded presence. The Danube is one of the defining rivers of Europe. After the Volga River[2], it is the second longest river in the continent. While the former does not leave Russia at all, the Danube[3] is a truly international river. On its course – in terms of the current state borders – it passes through ten countries, and its drainage basin affects another seven countries.

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2   The length of the Volga River is 3530 km.
3   The length of the Danube River from source to mouth is 2850 km.

Figure 14: The Danube's course in Europe, its drainage basin, and its "capitals"

The European course of the river has always been closely connected in space and time with the peoples who have utilised and exploited its potential. The Danube provided food, a trade route, and a natural barrier. The depth, water yield, and width of the river show significant differences. The peoples who settled along the river experienced and lived through this diversity. Their artistic and literary works also reflect this. Their records serve as a source for us. With their help, the relationship between people, societies, and the Danube can be traced in different times.

The Danube flows 417 km in the present-day territory of Hungary. During its journey, the river enters the Carpathian Basin through the Hungarian Gate at Dévény. The border between the Alps and the Carpathian Mountains marks not only natural, but also historical and social differences. In his poem "*I am the son of Gog and Magog...*", Endre Ady writes:

"Am I free to break through at Devény.
With new songs for new times?"

Figure 15: The Hungarian Gate

The Danube as an urban geographical energy in Budapest

According to current knowledge, the present territory of Budapest has been inhabited for thousands of years. One of the most important geographical reasons for this, if not the most important, was the presence of the Danube, which has always been a serious settlement factor, a source of geographical energy. Not only has the river provided water for the people living here, but it has also influenced, shaped urban development, and even played a decisive role in these processes. As such, the examination of its urban geographical effects is not just necessary, but also indispensable when studying the urban geography of Budapest. Accepting Tibor Mendől's assertion that the Danube represents geographical energy in Budapest, the relationship between the river and urban development must be examined. In other words, it can be stated that the Danube not only determined, but also shaped the social and economic image of the city. In addition to all this, it is also present in the lives of city dwellers as an urban space where geographical energies are important not only as urban geography factors but they also influence and shape the everyday lives of those who live here. Thus, the Danube contributed to the establishment of the settlement and was a significant settlement factor in shaping human history at all times. This statement is confirmed by the fact that a section of the Danube was not only part of the border of the Roman Empire, but Aquincum was also the capital of Provincia Pannonia. Taking a big leap forward in time, it can also be worth mentioning that after the Hungarian conquest, the conquering leader Árpád

took possession of the territory around what is now Csepel Island. Not only did they practice shifting cultivation here, but from that time until almost the present day, the country has been governed from this area.

Figure 16: A satellite image of Budapest

The process of urbanization has always been accompanied by an increase in the use and consumption of the geographical space. In the case of a river that determines the spatiality of a major city or capital, it is necessary to examine the changing relationship between the river and the city. First, it is necessary to define the aspects, groups, and factors that make it worthwhile to examine the space of the city and the river. As a starting point, it should be accepted that a populated space is primarily a "experienced space". The real spaces of human life – in this case, in Budapest – are filled with experiences and emotions, distinguished points, directions, and places. Accepting the statement that the Danube River is an urban geographical energy in Budapest, it is worth analysing the question with three relationship-systems and spatial mosaics. What does the river mean to the city? What does the Danube mean to the city's residents? And what does it mean from the perspective of non-residents, tourists visiting

the city, and foreigners? The examination of spatial mosaics was conducted with the help of theoretical works including Otto Friedrich Bollnow's 1956 study[4], Georg Simmel's 1903 paper on the Danube as a lived space in Budapest, and Jürgen Hesse's study published in 2012. These works contain ideas and phenomenological approaches that can help shed more light on the issue.

Bollnow seeks to analyse the issue of lived spaces mainly through a spatial analysis of human existence with a body. In his analysis of lived spaces, he discusses the spatiality of human life. In his book *Mensch und Raum*, his starting point is the assumption that space is part, a category, of human existence. Therefore he proposes a temporal analysis of the spaces experienced or lived by humans.[5] This obviously requires an analysis of the historical process referred to earlier. According to this, the relationship between the city and the river can be examined. The acceptance of the statement that *the Danube is an urban geographical energy* will also become obvious. Studying the history of the city (Budapest), it can be seen that the geographical location of the present capital city has always been inhabited and was an important site for the ruling powers of the time. It was not only the capital of the Province of Pannonia which was located on the Danube. The conquering leader Árpád, and later the Tatars, the Hungarian kings, and Suleiman the Magnificent also resided here. An examination of the relationship between temporal analysis and lived space confirms the assertion that the Danube can be characterized also as an urban geographical energy in the history of Budapest. In other words, the presence of the river is not only important in the historical arc of the city, but also provides a stable theoretical background for the city's spatiality as *a setting factor*.

The Danube River and the city dwellers

The elements and parts of urban space become lived-in, and experienced spaces when they are shaped and fashioned by the city's inhabitants. Urban geographer Elisabeth Lichtenberger asks her questions: what does a city need? What does society mean to the city?[6] In her paper, she also analyses the process how the

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4 Bollnow, Otto Friedrich (1956): Der erlebte Raum. In: Zeitschrift für die gesammte Innere Medizin. 11. évf. 3. füzet

5 Bollnow, O. F. (2007): Az emberi élet térbelisége. In: Moravánszky Á.: *A tér. Kritikai antológia*. Terc. pp. 202–203.

6 Lichtenberger, E (2011): *Die Stadt. Von der Polis zur Metropolis*. Primus Verlag, Wien. p. 279.

city, its various parts and spaces are used by the city dwellers. She accepts Karl Kraus's assertion that a big city is an environment for individuality.[7] In other words, it can be stated that city dwellers use the available geographical space, experience it as a factor influencing in their everyday lives. In 1903, Simmel established that urban life[8] is linked to specific places. City dwellers – in this case, the society of Budapest – use the space where they live, work, relax, etc. Ray Oldenburg distinguishes between the first, second, and third places of city dwellers.[9] The first place can be interpreted as their home. In this case, the Danube plays a role in real estate prices or real estate sales opportunities. The privatization of apartments in Budapest brought about a significant change in the housing market. The transformation of the economy and the market brought environmental features, including proximity to the Danube, to the forefront of real estate prices.[10] In other words, the emerging market economic conditions transformed and brought to the fore the urban geographic energies that play a role not only in the creation of the city but also in the everyday lives of its inhabitants.

Oldenburg mentions workplaces as the second place. In this context, the Danube is not only a comparative advantage for employees. The river can also be an opportunity or a hindrance to getting to work. In the case of entertainment and recreation, mentioned and described by the sociologist as the third place, the banks of the Danube in Budapest are given a prominent place.

The Danube and non-city dwellers

A 21st century city is an increasingly popular destination for tourists, foreigners, and other visitors. Many cities compete for their "favours". Budapest's natural beauty and geographical location are well suited to foreigners visitors. In his recently published book, Jürgen Hasse writes on the atmosphere of the city. That is, the atmosphere of the city, which is created by the multitude and "mass" of

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7   KRAUS, K: *Die Stadt.* Die Facke 333. p. 9.

8   SIMMEL, G (1903): *Die Großstädte und Geistesleben.* sosio.ch/sim/verschiedenes/1903/grosass taedte.htm

9   OLDENBURG, Ray: The great good place. Marlowe & Company, New York. https://archive.org/details/greatgoodplaceca00olde_2/page/n1/mode/2up (15.07.2024)

10 IZSÁK Éva – PROBÁLD Ferenc – UZZOLI Annamária (2008): Természeti adottságok és életminőség Budapesten. In: SZABÓ V. – OROSZ Z. – NAGY R. – FAZEKAS I. (ed.): *IV. Magyar Földrajzi Konferencia.* Debreceni Egyetem, Debrecen. pp. 265–270.

lived spaces.[11] In the case of Budapest only two examples would be mentioned below that "strengthen" the atmosphere of the Danube and the city.

The reconstruction and launch of the A38 ship were the undisguised goal of an initiative that sought to raise the cultural life and standards of Budapest's Danube waterfront. The Danube appears as one of the most important symbols of Central European history and culture. Its proximity to the University Town, the Lágymányos Campus, also indicates the age of those who come here to have fun. It is one of the best entertainment venues and cultural centers on the banks of the Danube in Budapest.

Budapest's tram line 2 runs parallel to the Danube on the left bank of the river, on the Pest side, between Jászai Mari Square and Közvágóhíd. In 2012, this tram line was ranked 7th among the ten most beautiful tram lines in the world by *National Geographic*.

The city meets its river

The Danube, as an urban geographical energy source, played an important role in the formation, and development of the city, as well as in shaping its structure. City dwellers only experience the presence of the river when they encounter it. The Danube rarely influences the daily lives of people living in the city. As a natural element, the river is sensitive to changes (e.g. climate changes) that affect its water flow and water yield. Budapest's temperate continental climate became more extreme in the second decade of the 21st century. As an indicator, the river displayed this fact to the city. This is when the city, its residents, and the river were able to come together. The two "encounters" were the result of two extreme weather changes.

The so-called Hunger Stone (Ínség-szikla) is a rock formation in the Danube at the foot of Gellért Hill, usually covered with water. It got its name from the fact that it can be seen when the water level is extremely low,[12] which occurs during a drought, a dry period, that is at "times of famine". It signals to city dwellers that the weather is dry and there is a lack of precipitation. It was last seen in July 2025.

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11   Hasse, Jürgen (2013): *Atmospharen der Stadt*. Jovis Verlag, Berlin. p. 7.
12   Visible at water levels below about 90–100 cm.

Figure 17: The Hunger Stone (Source: https://dunaisziget.blogspot.com/2011/11/duna-mederbe-sullyedt-hegy-csucsa-az.html [04.12.2024]

The climate change and the increasingly extreme weather patterns are demonstrated by the fact that, a year and a half after an unusually dry period, there were extremely severe floods in Central Europe in May and June 2013. They mainly affected the Danube and Elbe rivers, including their drainage basins. In Germany, precipitation in May was corresponding to 178% of the long-term average, which resulted in massive flooding not only there, but also in Austria and then in Hungary.[13]

The two examples above show that the geographical energy that defines a city is not only decisive in its formation, history, and structure. An analysis of the lived urban spaces can reveal the relationship between the city and its inhabitants with that urban geographical energy that is present in everyday life. "Experiencing" urban geographical energy also clarifies its spatiality. Its analysis provides an opportunity for a three-dimensional examination of the city, and for transdisciplinary research into its spatial structure.

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13   In Budapest, the Danube peaked at 891 cm for 8 hours on 9th and 10th June.

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1   The editors have given their consent for the publication of this study in this volume.

Katalin S. Nagy

Urban changes: On the Image of Budapest

A city is a visual experience as well

The author's analysis entitled *The Change in the Image of Budapest over the Past 150 Years* can be found in the collection of studies edited by Éva Izsák and Pál Szabó, published in 2023.[2] The present article is a supplement to that paper, discussing changes in visual communication, the transformation and renewal of the environment, and visual signs in urban communication and their interpretation. A number of aspects of perceptibility will not be dealt with here (for example, works of art that treat Budapest as their theme or subject matter).

Hungarian scientific literature on urban communication and visual communications is rather limited, while English-language literature on the subject is abundant terms of sociology, art history and aesthetics.

The role of the Danube in the cityscape

Early civilizations and cities were established along rivers (Nile, Euphrates, Ganges, Yangtze, etc.). The river symbolized fertility, regeneration, life, and death. The Garden of Eden was also fed by four rivers. Water is one of the four elements, the primordial material, the primordial source itself. Its magical and healing power is decisive in all mythologies and creation myths ("The spirit

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2   Izsák Éva – Szabó Pál (ed.): *Budapest 150. Tanulmányok a főváros jubileumára.* Budapest: ELTE TTK Földrajz- és Földtudományi Intézet Regionális Tudományi Tanszék és ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2023.

of God was hovering over the waters" the Bible reads). In arts, it is often the embodiment of the soul ("The soul of man resembleth water" – Goethe).

The presence of a river, of water in a city, is of extraordinary cultural and historical value, not only because of its transport, economic, touristic, and functional advantages. Its actual presence in the city is also imbued with symbols that can intellectually and emotionally influence the people living in its neighbourhood. Since the beginning of the 20th century, psychoanalysis (Freud) has also had an impact on the relationship between humans and water, the river. It is a symbol of the unconscious; it is connected to the world of instincts and the state of being in the womb (amniotic fluid).

The river that divides the capital in two defines the landscape of Budapest. The areas stretching along the Buda and Pest sides of the Danube are defining elements in terms of history, culture, function, and cityscape, influencing the city's characteristics and visual communication. They greatly contribute to the uniqueness of the cityscape. (Of course, there is a long list of cities whose structure is defined by a central river, such as London, Paris, Rome, St. Petersburg; and it is also well known that the Danube is a key player in the everyday life, architecture, and development of Vienna, Bratislava, and Belgrade. Here it is the unique role of the Danube in Budapest's cityscape that is in the focus of this paper.) At the same time, it is important to highlight the fact that the Danube is still not the main street of the city. Budapest and the Danube are inseparable, the river dominates the urban fabric and landscape of the capital, but most of its banks are not public spaces, do not have a direct connection to the water, and still there are many unused, abandoned areas. The presence of the Danube has encouraged people from a wide variety of ethnic groups to settle and develop an urban lifestyle since Roman times (around 89 BC, Aquincum was founded by the Roman garrison, the area has retained its name to this day). After the Hungarian conquest, the Danube's significance increased, and among the settlements that developed along the river, Buda and Csepel became princely and then royal residences (their traces and memories have survived to this day). Archaeological map reconstructions and medieval engravings prove that the streets ran towards the Danube, and the city walls were built taking into account the Danube's demarcating role. In the Middle Ages, the conquering Ottomans' culture took advantage of the proximity of the river and the warm water springs. The urban structure that still exists today was created in the 19th century during the Reform Era, in close connection with the flow and banks of the Danube. In the 17th – 18th centuries, the development of the city stalled, and floods threatened its existing houses. It was only after

1799 that the construction of protective embankments began in Pest, with the Váci Road embankment protecting the city to the north and the Soroksári Road embankment to the south (there were no similar flood-control structures in Buda).

From the early 19th century, institutions, facilities and symbolic spaces with a pivotal rol lined the downtown banks of the Danube, such as the Lukács Thermal Bath and Hospital, Bem Square, Batthyány Square, cultural and religious buildings (e.g. St. Anna Church), commercial monuments (Gellért Hotel), and the central building of the Budapest University of Technology on the Buda side of the city, and the new buildings of ELTE University. On the Pest side, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Gresham Palace, the Parliament Building, Vigadó, the Danube Promenade with its hotels, March 15th Square, and Corvinus University were constructed. In addition to these, nine bridges connect the two riverbanks, and the Danube-created Margaret and Csepel islands. Viewed from the Pest side, the dominant relief features in the Buda cityscape are the Castle Hill and Gellért Hill, and further away, the Buda hills stretching from Óbuda to Újbuda. The Pest side was built on flat land, and its dominant visual elements are the domes of its prominent buildings. (St. Stephen's Basilica, the Opera House, the Dohány Street Synagogue – their domes are spectacular architectural elements. Domes had been very popular in Roman and Byzantine cultures and came back into fashion in the 17th and 18th centuries, spread in the second half of the 19th century with metal structures, followed by concrete domes in the 20th century.) From the rooftops of the apartment buildings on the Pest side, we can often deduce their distance to the Danube, and from the appearance of green surfaces, we can deduce the suburban areas.

It was only in the early 19th century when the embankment and the straight line of houses parallel with the Danube were built on both sides of the Danube (1808 saw the beginning of their construction in with royal approval, and the Beautification Committee responsible for the transformation was established in the same year). The flood of 1838 washed away the houses, which had been built of non-durable materials. The first plan of the present form of the quays came from István Széchenyi (he is also credited with having the Parliament was built on the waterfront). After 1861, the transformation and development of the areas along the Danube began under the leadership of hydraulic engineer Ferenc Reitter, which also determined the current appearance of the river. In the 1870s, the Danube was regulated, quays were built, and mooring and unloading areas were established within the framework of the large-scale urban development program associated with Gyula Andrássy.

On both banks of the Danube, large-scale city construction began after the First World War. The Second World War reduced the city to rubble; the Germans blew up the Danube bridges. Life was slowly and laboriously restored, and even before the regime change and the end of socialism, in 1987, the Danube's riverside and panorama became part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The river that flows through Budapest is the most characteristic morphological landscape element of the city, which has a fundamental influence on the panorama of Budapest. Morphologically, economically, and culturally it affects the life of the city, the well-being of its inhabitants and users, and psychologically influences the quality of life and mental state of people. Budapest – regrettably and rather unjustifiably – is not a city that coexists with the Danube. (For example, in Prague the riverside is the heart of the city with the promenade along the Vltava River, in Berlin the Spree is a useful part of the city not only because you can go sightseeing by boat but also because there is a bustling life on and around it.) Since the mid-19ᵗʰ century, a constantly recurring theme and problem to be solved has been the better utilization of the two banks of the Danube, environmental planning, increasing green spaces, creating promenades, rethinking and planning transport. Belgrade Embankment was built in 1865–66, yet then the Danube embankment has typically been underutilized ever since. The Danube flows from north to south, and its two embankments are currently primarily a transportation corridor, with the one on the Buda side resembling a highway. Moreover, parking lots further restrict the space available for pedestrians (the Danube embankments – especially on the Buda side – are not pedestrian-friendly). There is a lack of pedestrian zones, lawns, tree groups, recreational areas (play and sports facilities), lookout points, stepped embankment to allow access to the river, and a variety of places to sit and meet. In other words, it is not enough to come up with plans and ideas; the scenic values of the Danube banks should be made visible and accessible, taking into account real needs and realistic possibilities.

At the turn of the millennium, cities with large and wide rivers rediscovered their waterfronts. In spite of several useful initiatives, Budapest does not have a comprehensive concept for the structural, transport, and tourism utilization of the Danube banks. The role of the quays in urban planning and cityscape has not been resolved, despite the fact that there has been a library's worth of literature on the subject since the publication of the studies by Pál Granasztói and Frigyes Pogány in the 1960s and 1970s, and countless theses and doctoral dissertations have been written on it at the Departments of Urban Planning

and other departments of the Budapest University of Technology. The urban aesthetic analyses of the two authors mentioned above were influenced by the principles of urban theory set out in the first book on urban aesthetics, written by the Austrian architect Camillo Sitte (1843–1903).[3] He considered the aesthetic experience of urban spaces to be the leading factor in urban planning and was the first to emphasize the value of irregularity. Sitte often refers to classical urban forms such as the Athenian agora and the Roman forum, which demonstrate the well-planned nature of urban spaces and their role in public life. Development projects along the Danube lack aesthetic considerations and an appreciation of the importance of place. In 2014, Építész Stúdió developed a character analysis of the Danube banks in Budapest, taking into account the characteristics of the embankments, the facades of the first rows of buildings along the Danube, the green spaces, the view of bridges and ships. There has been no research done on Budapest or on the banks of the Danube that could be based on the work and methods of Kevin Lynch to aid in visual analysis, present the local elements of the mental cityscape, and consider the development of the Danube's cityscape in relation to the current characteristics of the cityscape[4].

The Danube is wider and has a stronger current in Budapest than the rivers of most major European cities (only the Thames in London and the Neva in St. Petersburg are of a similar scale). It is narrowest at the Liberty Bridge, where it is more than 300 meters wide, the widest at the Árpád Bridge, 900 meters, while the Margaret Bridge over the two Danube branches, is around 500 meters long. Crossing the bridges, the visual perception of the embankments, the view of the rows and blocks of houses, and the three-dimensional space changes in dependence on the distance. The bridgeheads on the Danube banks are of particular importance in the perception of the spatiality of the riversides and the image of the city. The sight of the waterfront offers a special experience from the pleasure boats on the river, and the facades of the buildings facing the Danube along the quays are more perceptible than when walking or travelling by car.[5] (Edward T. Hall developed proxemics, the typical distances of communication, in the sixties. Based on this analogy[6] it would be important to assess the visual communication impact of the buildings on both sides of the Danube.)

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3   Sitte, Camillo: The Art of Building. Martin Fine Books, 2013.
4   Lynch, Kevin A.: *The Image of the City*. MA MIT Press, Cambridge, 1960.
5   Szabó Julianna: A távlatok és a térérzékelés összefüggése Budapest dunai városképében. Építés – Építészettudomány 44(1–2)87–106. DOI: 10.1556/096.2016.44.1–2.5
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In the capital, too, the view of the Danube is defined by the fact that the river does not flow in a single channel on its way to the sea, but branches off several times, enclosing the mainland. The islands belonging to Budapest are Hajógyári Island or Óbuda Island, Margaret Island, and Csepel Island.

The Danube, which flows through ten countries, is nearly 3,000 kilometres long (its maximum width is 1.5 km), has a depth of between 1 and 8 meters, originates in the Black Forest and flows into the Black Sea, and has more than a thousand islands. The name of the river comes from the Indo-European word 'danu', which means: 'primordial cosmic river'. Many tributaries flow into it, which collect precipitation from the surrounding mountains. Budapest has several islands created by the Danube, increasing the connection between the city and nature, the size of the green areas, and facilitating a more liveable everyday life amid the rapid growth of urbanization. The role of the islands in the cityscape and the view is also dominant, as their presence shapes the image of the city.

Directly accessible by foot via the Árpád Bridge and Margaret Bridge, the 96-hectare, approximately 2,800-meter-long Margaret Island is wedged almost in the centre of the city. Originally it had been a three-island "archipelago", then in the 19th century the southern, Festő, Island was incorporated into the main island while the northern, Fürdő, Island was removed. Traces of human activity from the 12th century on have been documented in Budapest's most popular public park. The island was named after Saint Margaret of the Árpád House, the daughter of King Béla IV, who had monasteries built. The ruins of a monastery, its sacred architectural fragments, musical fountain, wildlife park, and thermal bath can still be visited today. In addition to the neo-Renaissance Grand Hotel, visitors are welcomed by several other hotels, restaurants, swimming pool, running tracks, a sun terrace, a Japanese garden, a playground, and the natural proximity of the Danube bank. The water tower, built in 1913, functions as an lookout tower and an exhibition hall, offering a stunning panorama of the Danube and Budapest. The island's wildlife is rich and diverse, full of songbirds and protected species of plants. Margaret Island, an integral part of the city, is clearly visible from several bridges, from the Danube banks, and the balconies of taller buildings.

To the south, Csepel Island (Budapest's 21st district and with eleven other settlements on it, e.g. Szigetszentmiklós or Ráckeve – home to the country's only Gothic Serbian church, etc.) is one of the largest islands on the Danube. It is 48 km long and has a population of approximately 165,000. It was the first seat of the conquering Hungarians, the residence of the Árpád clan. Anonymous

describes it as "the island of the chieftain". Its name is said to have come from Árpád's master horseman, but it is more likely to have derived from the adjective bushy, scrubby (csepely, cseplye). It became one of the industrial centres of 20th-century Budapest. Between 1896 and 1914, the Weiss Manfréd Works developed into the country's largest arms factory on its territory. In the mid-1930s, the plant employed as many as 15,000 people. In 1956, its name was changed to Csepel Iron and Metal Works [Csepel Vas- és Fémművek]. From the 1960s onwards, the population in the part of the Csepel Island belonging to Budapest (approximately 10 percent of the island's territory) and that of the towns and villages on the island sharply increased.

Margaret Island, even viewed from the Danube, means recreation and relaxation for the city dwellers, while Csepel, with the leisure opportunities offered by the Danube banks there (fishing, cycle paths, weekend plots) is a symbol of industry (mostly now defunct large ironworks, machine industry, metallurgy centre) and mass housing construction (prefabricated buildings). Since 2002, the all-music Sziget Festival, featuring international participants, has been held on Hajógyári Island every August.

In cultural history, an island is a symbol of security and refuge, on the one hand, and of loneliness, on the other. It often represents unattainable happiness and paradisiacal conditions. According to Greek mythology, the son of Zeus rules the Isle of the Blessed, which is why the golden age continues there. The sunken island of Atlantis is the setting for a legendary civilization, a symbol of bygone eras. A number of European utopias are also set on islands (see the works of Thomas More, Bacon, Swift, or Defoe). In classicist painting, the mythological meaning of the island is evoked (the paintings of Watteau and Böcklin).

Having spent so much time on islands, let us mention that in the last decade, mainly in the city centre, near the quays (but also further away, for example in Józsefváros), more and more hidden urban islands have been forming – where, aptly, the city is being rediscovered. Those who pay attention to such novelties call the unique, little, intimate cafes and pastry shops with exceptionally pleasant atmosphere, which usually stand out from their surroundings, islands. (For example, in Tabán, there is a small square in front of the Saint Catherine of Alexandria Church with a confectionery called Asztalka, or another one in the charming alley named after Gül Baba on the hidden side of Rózsadomb, or an espresso bar next to the Király Bath surrounded by ivy, and so on. These places are barely visible but the fact is that they exist, they quickly become familiar and greatly influence the atmosphere of the city and the well-being of its users.)

The areas divided by the Danube in the capital are connected by bridges, enabling moving back and forth between Buda and Pest on foot, by car or public transport. This ensures continuous, multifaceted, multidirectional communication. Connecting the two riverbanks enables the development of numerous functions. It is very difficult to imagine the Danube without bridges. Few of those people are still alive today who could see the city without bridges whose strategic, functional, and cultural importance was indicated by their ruins blown up by the retreating German troops. Even today it is heartbreaking to look at the photographs of remaining stumps, fragments and wrecks. At the end of the war, three pontoon bridges were built during the restoration of the city. The remains of the destroyed Margit Bridge were clearly visible from the bridge nicknamed Manci, and the destruction of the Petőfi Bridge was visible from the bridge nicknamed Böske. Budapest without bridges is not the city it really is; the loss of the connection between the two banks and the dramatic absence of this link truly highlights what bridges mean in the life and everyday routine of the city.

Approaching one another over rivers, the idea of connecting two riverbanks have preoccupied humanity since the earliest civilizations, on the level of everyday reality as well as in mythologies, culture and spirituality. In practice, a multitude of structures indicates the natural need to connect the two banks of rivers, to make the two areas accessible to each other. Similarly, in myths and legends, it is bridges that enable the connection and interconnectivity of two worlds, the earthly and the heavenly, that of humans and that of gods. According to many folk beliefs, the soul ascends to heaven over a bridge (for example, the Milky Way is a bridge that provides souls with access to heaven). In Greek mythology, the chief deity Zeus stretched a bridge between heaven and earth, which is the rainbow. According to many traditions, the passage to the afterlife also takes place over bridges. The sacred texts of Brahmanism read that narrow bridges lead to supernatural realms, while according to Buddhism, Buddha himself is the Great Bridge for all beings. In Christian art, those who cross the bridge over the river of Hell reach Paradise while those who fall off the bridge are condemned to eternal damnation. In literature, the bridge represents communication (Apollinaire), hope (Gyula Juhász), or the connection between different cultures (Ivo Andric). In psychoanalysis, the bridge connects the subconscious with the conscious level. When someone walks or drives across the bridges over the Danube, it is unlikely that they will think of the bridge as a symbolically representable structure, or that cultural-historical, religious, or

mythological analogies will come to their mind. Yet it is important to mention this, as the collective consciousness of humans can have a very strong influence, and the bridges with their visual appearance and suggested aesthetic content, also stir the emotional realm of the psyche.

The Danube divides Budapest into two large territories (Buda and Pest) and several parts within them. The different parts of the city are connected by 15 bridges, two of which are railway bridges. There are six bridges under which the Danube flows in a single bed. Three bridges span sections of two Danube branches, while the Árpád Bridge spans four water surfaces.

In the Roman era, in the 2nd century AD, a bridge was built at the legionary camp of Aquincum, which connected Pannonia (Transdanubia) with Barbaricum (the Great Plain). Despite the fact that King Matthias had already planned building a permanent stone bridge over the Danube, due to historical vicissitudes (the lost battle of Mohács; 150 years of Ottoman rule; Habsburg oppression) only pontoon bridges were built. The first permanent bridge over the Danube between Buda and Pest was the Chain Bridge, whose construction began to occupy István Széchenyi (the "greatest Hungarian") in 1828. The foundation stone was laid in August 1842, and the bridge was finally inaugurated by Haynau, the Austrian commander who suppressed the 1848–49 revolution. The total length of the bridge is 380 meters, its width is 14.5 meters, and its total height is 55–60 meters. Miklós Barabás immortalized the laying of the foundation stone, and Adolphe Rouargue immortalized the completed Chain Bridge in a painting (around 1850).

The Margaret Bridge was opened in 1876, the Liberty (previously Ferenc József) Bridge in 1896, the Elizabeth Bridge in 1903, and the Petőfi (previously Horthy Miklós) Bridge in 1937. After the reconstruction of the destroyed Danube bridges and the removal of the ruins, the Árpád (previously Stalin) Bridge was opened in 1950 (which was the northernmost and the longest road bridge in Budapest, with a total length of 981 meters, before the opening of the Megyeri Bridge in 2008). 1964 saw the opening of the Elisabeth Bridge, named after the popular Habsburg Queen Sissi, the only bridge that could not be reconstructed after the Germans had blown it up (which is a great pity because the original bridge was a particularly outstanding achievement of domestic industry and of Hungarian bridge-building engineers, both from a technical and aesthetic points of view). In 1990, 1995, and 2008 the Deák Ferenc Bridge (M0 motorway South), the Rákóczi (Lágymányosi) Bridge, and the Megyeri Bridge (M0 motorway North) followed respectively.

We know the appearance of Buda and Pest connected with pontoon bridges as well, not only from maps, but also from engravings, copperplate engravings, and pictures (the view of Buda and Pest from different periods, the Buda Castle, the sieges of Buda Castle in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the bridgeheads of pontoon bridges from the 19th century, made by Hungarian, Austrian and international artists). The bridges of the capital differ from each other in terms of aesthetics and of their construction, their characteristics bearing the stamp of the tastes and spirit of the era in which their clients and designers lived. The lion statues of the Chain Bridge bridgeheads (created by sculptor János Marschalkó from Lőcse (present-day Levoča, Slovakia), and the Kossuth coats of arms with the Holy Crown on the pylon arches, replaced the Kádár coats of arms in 1996), the crowns on the Margaret Bridge, its carvings of the cornices, its lavish street lamps, obelisks, and the turul falcons sitting on top of the portals of the Szabadság Bridge, have become symbolic. These elements differ from each other not only because of the differences stemming from their origins in the 19th, 20th, or 21st centuries. (The author means the historicizing style and finely lined arches of the Margaret Bridge, the Megyeri Bridge's prestressed concrete pylons, which form a letter A, and its fan-like cable systems, the Rákóczi / Lágymányosi Bridge is eye-catching red colour that shines far and wide, while the pleasant green of the Liberty Bridge reminiscent nature). Still, one of the most defining symbols of Budapest is the Chain Bridge, the iconic stone suspension bridge from the 19th century.

The role of Budapest's bridges in the city's image and appearance stems from the city's natural and geographical features. The panorama of the Danube from Gellért Hill and Buda Castle offers a unique, special, and extraordinary experience. Many of the streets and residential areas of Buda built on hills and high ground (for example, Rózsadomb, Óbuda) and the Buda hills also offer good views of the river from the Danube side. The Chain Bridge is ideally located in terms of the cityscape, as it can be clearly seen from almost every high point facing the Danube. (Moreover, its evening lighting was installed in 1937, which was very early in Hungarian terms. Between the two world wars, only the Parliament, the Buda Castle Palace, Matthias Church, and a few statues were illuminated. The bridges are prominent visual elements of the Danube panorama, but their evening and nighttime decorative lighting remains unresolved.) Few people know that it is not only the Chain Bridge that is considered an architectural curiosity thanks to its main components, the chains, which are also reflected in its name, but also the other bridges in the

city centre. The Margaret Bridge is an architectural curiosity in itself because of its different structural elements, which vary in design. Although it has no portals or suspension cables, the lines and shapes of its lower arches and the statues on the pillars provide an extraordinarily special sight. The pillar statues are both monumental and graceful. The pillars closer to the riverbanks feature female figures, while those further away feature male figures, all richly detailed. Based on their attributes these are Nike (in Greek mythology, the winged goddess of victory, Zeus' charioteer) and Heracles (son of Zeus, a hero of great strength, one of the best-known and most controversial figures in Greek mythology). The Elizabeth Bridge is a cable-stayed bridge, the Liberty Bridge has a Gerber-girder structure (the Gerber-girders are spatial elements), which is quite unique, the lower and upper longitudinal arches are visible from afar, and the portals also stand out.

A special feature worth mentioning is that the Liberty Bridge is closed to traffic at weekends in the summer and can be taken over by city dwellers and tourists for picnics, sunbathing, and socializing.

The water level of the Danube is a significant factor in the appearance of the bridges. At Budapest, the fluctuation of the Danube's level can be as much as eight meters, with higher water levels after snowmelt and spring floods and lower levels during the dry summer months. In the latter case, even the sturdy concrete pillars of the bridges are visible. The surface and colour of the river also change depending on the seasons – during floods, it carries driftwood and tree trunks, there are white-grey streaks on its surface in late winter, and the direction and strength of the wind also affect the degree of rippling and waves.

The view from the bridges connecting the two sides, Buda and Pest, is also special: the buildings, facades, sculptures, and public spaces that define the image of the city on the banks offer mostly quality experiences mostly in an aesthetic sense. Both the natural and the built environment looks essentially harmonious and humane from the bridges connecting the hilly and flat sides over the Danube, and the panorama is unique (it is no coincidence that international and domestic tourists love it). The view of the Buda Castle District is distinct, while the ring-radial urban structure of the Pest side is evident. The diverse morphological natural environment (Gellért Hill and the Buda hills are partly covered with forest, the gentle slopes of the Pest side and the wide Danube flowing beneath the bridges) intensifies the effect of the built environment. From the bridges, several central public institutions can be seen whose construction, style, and exterior dominate the visual appearance of the quays, the cityscape,

and everything that makes Budapest what it is: recognizable, identifiable, different from other, similarly beautiful, cities that are true to themselves, with its own individuality. Some notable buildings on the Pest side include the Gothic Revival building of the Hungarian Parliament, the neo-Renaissance Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Art Nouveau masterpiece Gresham Palac, the romantic Pesti Vigadó, and the historicist brick structure, the Central Market Hall. On the Buda side, there is the medieval and baroque Buda Castle Palace with its historical castle walls and Matthias Church, and the Neo-Romanesque Fisherman's Bastion from the late 19th century. Four of the bridges connecting Buda and Pest – the Margaret Bridge, the Széchenyi Chain Bridge, the Elizabeth Bridge and the Liberty Bridge – are part of the World Heritage Site. Budapest was first included in the World Heritage List in 1987, with the view of the Danube riverbank (the buildings on the Pest side of the Danube up to the Petőfi Bridge) together with the Buda Castle District.

In his book published in 1966, architect and urban aesthete Pál GRANASZTÓI (1908–1985) already dealt with the urban architectural image of Budapest, including the significance of the Danube banks in Budapest and the panorama from the Buda hilltops and lookout points, which he calls the capital's greatest treasure. He authored a series of books about Budapest, with a commitment similar to that of other great Hungarian writers such as Gyula Krúdy, Dezső Kosztolányi, Antal Szerb, Sándor Márai, Géza Ottlik, or Iván Mándy. GRANASZTÓI considers the overall image of Budapest to be one of the most beautiful metropolitan images, with the Danube view and its unity resulting from natural creations as a special value. In his opinion, Budapest is an unparalleled panorama of landscape and man-made objects (streets, buildings), and thanks to its appearance, it preserves and represents extraordinary values. Similarly to Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford, GRANASZTÓI also perceives cities and towns as living organisms that constantly reinvent themselves, and in his significant works he proved the liveable nature of Budapest, its homeliness, and its special features.

Architect and art historian Frigyes Pogány (1906–1976) produced urban planning for the Danube bank, the City Centre, and certain parts of Óbuda, and wrote monographs on Paris, Rome, Florence, and Venice. He was the first to publish a book in Hungarian on the beautiful human environment, which had been a defining factor for Budapest city planners, urban development plans, and the development of the "art of squares and streets" for decades. The designers

rethinking the functions and green character of the Danube riverside are linked to the tradition-building ideas of Frigyes Pogány.

Of course, it would be worthwhile to quote from the works of other notable urbanists (for example, Tamás Meggyesi and Ferenc Vidor) but it is the writings and interpretations of the two authors mentioned above that are most closely linked to our topic.

The unique value of the Danube cityscape has fascinated artists for centuries. Over the past two hundred years, Hungarian and foreign artists have immortalized the Danube, the Danube Promenade, the Chain Bridge, the view of the river and the bridges from the Castle in numerous oil paintings and watercolours. Even today, private galleries often organize popular exhibitions of Budapest landscapes, and with its bridges and banks the Danube is the real protagonist of these exhibitions.

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Katalin S. Nagy

Changes in the visuality
of public spaces

In the seventies and eighties, our empirical sociological research on everyday life focused on examining the social phenomena, conditions, facilities, and utilization of public spaces in Budapest, Miskolc, and Mosonmagyaróvár. The approach and methodology were primarily influenced by the work of the Chicago School, which researched the structure of cities. Later, working on the preparation of a book on Budapest, I reconsidered the joint field trips I had made with my colleagues (mainly architects and economists) at that time, and utilized what I had written. This allowed me to compare the transformations of the cityscape, the appearance of public spaces, and the visual changes that occurred in the three decades after the regime change with the environments of the previous period when public conditions stemming from the so-called socialism still seemed stable and unchangeable.

Since there is an interaction among the physical conditions of social life, the natural and man-made environments, and human organizations and activities (Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess), the transformation processes of urban public spaces can also be presented in terms of these factors.

First, let us state that two strongly contrasting trends have characterized urban public spaces in the last two or three decades: on the one hand, the break with the traditions of socialism; the integration of Western European and American urban trends and the emergence of postmodernism; and on the other hand, the manifestations that counteract these tendencies, the preservation of the past; the neglect of the visual world; the reproduction of the approaches of the late 19th century and the interwar period. This is especially true of Budapest: it is not sufficiently modern, modernity plays hardly any role, while the preservation

of traditions is also inconsistent and multifaceted. As a result, the city's image is essentially eclectic, contradictory, and the opposing influences often cancel each other out.

For the analysis of the public spaces of Budapest, our starting point was the aesthetic-based approach introduced in Hungary by Frigyes Pogány, a follower of Camillo Sitte (1889) of Vienna, relying on the tradition that bases its analysis of architectural space and composition on the impact on the cityscape. The sensitive essays written about Budapest by Pál Granasztói (primarily his pictorial presentations) were also utilized. We applied the conclusions of numerous studies on visual perception and cognition to our interpretation of the visual appearance of space (primarily James G. Gibson's technical descriptions of urban perception and the reception of urban space, 1950).

The architectural characteristics of public spaces, the size, quality, and appearance of the space enclosed by buildings and the surfaces of the connecting streets comprise the starting point; among the visual objects street furniture, public statues, advertising columns and billboards, and an extremely large number and diverse range of images (posters, advertising devices, graffiti, street artworks, photographs, digital showcases, etc.) are of paramount importance. This is where the most spectacular changes took place in the cityscape and street scene after the nineties. In the image of public spaces visual objects unknown to us before, such as street art and giant posters, became dominant elements. The latter became popular not only in the capital but even in small towns. These two genres triggered an increase in the value of vertical wall and roof surfaces, similarly to many other large cities (not everywhere though!). Street art is also extremely popular and diverse in Berlin, but billboards are not nearly as widespread as they are in Hungary).

Images are dominant elements of our visual world not only in new media, mass communication, communication devices, digital means (computer, mobile phone, television, etc.), but also in the urban environment. They help us navigate and interpret our world. The positive and negative consequences of this development are debated not only in visual arts (Mitchell Flusser etc. – according to Vilém Flusser [1990], technical images "should be maps but they become wallpaper", and "instead of presenting the world, they falsify it, until finally one begins living in the function of images"), but also in social sciences and urban studies. The crowding of public spaces with images is limited by surfaces, and finite, but their quantity and variety of execution still give the impression that the possibilities for their multiplication are endless.

Walking or driving through today's public spaces, it is difficult to imagine the imagelessness and emptiness of public spaces before the regime change, the sight without colourful advertising media and billboards. I will highlight just one example: Hunyadi Square in the 6th district, between the secondary grammar school and the market hall, was completely empty except for a broken-down swing and a few rotten benches in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Then, from the mid-1970s, concrete tables started appearing, where you could play cards and chess, but there were no visual media or visual elements. Advertising media appeared late, only from the mid-1990s, in the small shops lining the streets bordering the square. Despite being just a few minutes away from the main street that determines the structure of Budapest and having been in operation since the end of the 19th century, the market hall is still disadvantaged and neglected, although some visual elements make it clear that we are in the 2000s. Many similar public squares are in a transitional situation all over the capital, and their visual appearance also conveys the visual language that has been in use since the end of the 19th century.

Public spaces have had many important functions in the urban fabric since the establishment of the ancient Greek polises (6th –5th century BC. The Greeks had city markets, while the Roman squares were surrounded by colonnades and often ornate gardens with artistic sculptures). The forum, the promenade, was the meeting place for people, goods, and ideas. Their role and visual appearance in the city have changed over time, but from the beginning they have been a public area of the city – any given city – and a system-forming element of the city as a network. The role of relaxation and leisure has increased in the modern city. Since the 2000s, the growth of green spaces has become increasingly emphasised, bringing the characteristics of public spaces closer to those of public parks. The demand for public gardens and public parks grew in the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. The number of public spaces and public parks increased in large European and American cities, which was also related to the fact that private life was pushed back from public spaces into homes, thus public and private spheres were clearly separated. The separation of workplaces and residences also caused significant changes in the functions and use of urban public spaces.

In both Buda and Pest, public spaces and public parks were created in the 18th century (for example, Városmajor was established in Buda in 1785, and the area around today's Vigadó Square on the Danube bank in Pest in 1789. The social history of urban micro-spaces is discussed in the works of Gábor Gyáni published in several journals and books.). From the mid-19th century, an

increasing number of public spaces and public parks were created in Buda and Pest, and in several other cities. Since the regime change and particularly in the 2000s, several new and multifunctional public spaces have been created in the housing estates built in the 1970s and 1980s, and the schematic playgrounds have also been transformed into little public parks for the relaxation of the residents. Their cityscape, ecological and aesthetic functions have been expanded with various green-space systems. The new urban planning approach, i.e. increasing green areas within the city, came to the fore during the renovations and redesign of public spaces in Budapest. The planting of trees, plants, and green surfaces reflects changes in our relationship with nature, changes in social and economic conditions, and even the fact that these represent visual and aesthetic values for an increasing number of private individuals, public institutions, and municipalities.
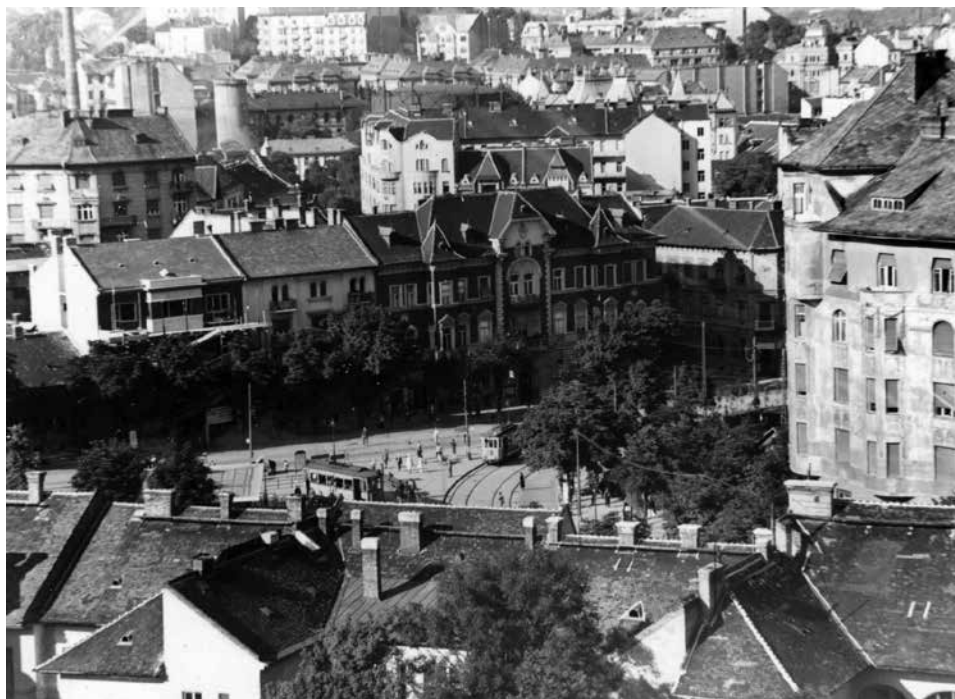
Picture 18: Városmajor (1937) View from the bell tower of the Sacred Heart Church towards Széll Kálmán Square. In the foreground, on the right, is the house on the corner of Várfok Street and Krisztina Boulevard (Source: Fortepan https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Városmajor [04.12..2024])

In the renovation of public spaces in Budapest, paving has played a particularly important role. Several types of paving are used, replacing the asphalt that had been the sole dominant for many decades. During the socialist era, almost all paving was done with rolled asphalt, laid by hand or machine. This was used for both sidewalks and road surfaces. Ceramic paving, carefully laid cobblestones or macadam were rare. In the eighties, artificial stone pavers became widespread, which are more decorative than the previous ones. Although road paving began in the 19th century, there are still many unpaved streets in Budapest (dirt roads made up as many as 27% of the public road network in 2004), and in the outer districts there are still public spaces that are not even paved with asphalt. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the colourful, striking nature of the road surface of public spaces in Budapest and in many rural towns have been a display of wealth and a demonstration of prosperity (however, their technical execution is often superficial, they deteriorate quickly, and require repair).

Street signs and house numbers are important means of information in the city, and in addition to providing information, their visual appeal is also decisive. They are regarded only as functional elements by many, although they are capable of influencing the well-being of the users of streets and squares not only because of their quantity, but also because of their role in the cityscape.

The first documents on street names in present Budapest date back to 1695 (on the Pest side they were in German until 1817 and on the Buda side until the 1840s, when changes made in this area as a result of the Hungarianisation movement).

Street signs installed one below the other were preserved in many in public spaces after 1945, then as remnants of the second wave of new street names in 1951 (when the "change of reactionary street names" took place). At the time of the regime change, there were approximately eight thousand street names that were protested against by various political forces. Nevertheless, only 410 street names were altered in Budapest between 1989 and 2003, including 202 streets that received their previous names back. As a special memento of historical memory, the previous street signs remained on the walls, only crossed out with a red line.

The once uniform type of street signs also disappeared, it changed several times, and became simpler after the war. House numbers are diverse and varied both in their design and appearance.

For about 180 years, public spaces in Budapest were home to post boxes, or mailboxes, which have been in their current form since the end of the 19th century, with a red colour that is easily visible from a distance. Until about the 1980s,

their amount increased, mainly due to the greater development of suburban areas, then since the beginning of the 2000s, their number has decreased rapidly. Despite the protests from local governments and civil organizations, the traditional post-boxes were replaced by the Hungarian Post. In addition to functional considerations this fact also contributed to their loss of popularity.

Very few public telephone booths have remained in public spaces – they seems to have been operating successfully in Budapest since 1927 (in Berlin since 1881), however, since the 2000s they have been more of past, of history, as the rapid proliferation of mobile phones has made them redundant. Between 1945 and 1990, twenty different types were visible and usable in public spaces and streets while hardly any of them can be found in the capital today.

Before the 1990s, the backs of telephone booths also served as advertising surfaces. Among the visual objects of public spaces, the most striking changes after the 1990s occurred in the field of advertising. This includes an increase in advertising surfaces as well as a change in the quantity and quality of advertisements. In the mid-eighties, even in centrally located public spaces in Pest, such as Hunyadi Square, there were hardly any advertisements, and those that did exist were unremarkable, uninteresting, and almost imperceptible. We saw the same thing in busy Buda squares, such as Batthyány Square. The economic structure of socialism and the shortage of goods made advertising unnecessary. Public spaces only became a natural medium for advertising with the advent of capitalism and the legalization of consumer society. Advertising is an integral part of the visual world of a modern metropolis, and Budapest only started following in the footsteps of the Western European cities in this regard in the second half of the nineties, while its saturation still does not come close to that of capitals such as Berlin, Amsterdam, or Stockholm. There is no doubt that the city has been flooded with advertisements, billboards, and giant posters for the past thirty years, which would have been unimaginable during four decades of socialism. Budapest residents lived in an economically backward environment, and were not a target audience for advertisements promising economic and commercial benefits. In the 2000s, mainly commercial and, to a lesser extent, cultural advertisements, posters, murals, and countless advertisements cover the walls of houses, vertical roof and wall surfaces, and the numerical superiority of visual information over advertisements based on text-based information is evident. Advertisements have become a dominant element in the visual culture of the streetscape and public spaces. However, visual communication is still essentially one-way: it is directed from the

maintainers and owners of public spaces to the users of those spaces, allowing very little opportunity for feedback, despite the fact that the appearance of private communications indicates a demand for this. Compared to the decades before the regime change, Budapest's public spaces have become (and continue to become) pluralistic media, which are still characterised by the visual dominance of advertising and political propaganda, and we cannot yet speak of a democratic public communication space.

In Budapest's public spaces, it is mainly advertisements and within these, mainly posters, which testify to the fact that these physical spaces are truly open to anyone, are not characterized by any social or lifestyle segregation, and can be used freely. Of course, there are filters created by the users (for example, in the smaller public spaces of Ferencváros and Józsefváros and in housing estates that have so far avoided renovation and urban regeneration). These are primarily ethnic in nature (neighbourhoods densely populated by Roma people), but this is not supported by official political ideologies. Advertisements, posters, and public art strengthen the creation of a democratic communication space. The presence of advertising images is explicitly supported by some public artists, urbanists, and property owners (income) in the spirit of pluralism, in the interest of diversity and colourfulness of the city's image, while others (mainly architects, aesthetes) expressly oppose it, citing the purity of the cityscape.

A memorable art event took place in the summer of 2002, organized by the Ludwig Museum in Budapest: the experiment of the visual artist Ágnes Eperjes entitled *Ad-Free Zone*. The lesson learned: there is no such thing as a city without advertisements. In the second half of the 19th century, thanks to the development of printing technology, posters reproduced using lithography were characteristic products of urban lifestyle. Among the outstanding creators of this genre are well-known artists (Toulouse-Lautrec, Klimt, and Mihály Bíró). Posters developed into an increasingly popular advertising medium, and a means of attracting attention in commerce, politics, and culture. From the 1950s, advertising posters spread everywhere and became increasingly popular among artists, as they allowed them to step out of their closed studios and into the public sphere of streets and public spaces.

Moreover, users of public spaces have the opportunity for direct reflections: they can draw, scribble, put stickers, or even small pictures on posters, and this is no longer an aesthetic issue but rather a specific form of community communication, a system of expression that elevates visuality to the sociological sphere. This is how posters are becoming an increasingly significant tool for

public-space media. In recent years, unusual creative solutions have also begun to spread (for example, three-dimensional visual displays).

Unlike its streets, Budapest's public squares are not necessarily characterized by business portals and shop windows, and the few existing ones seem even more nondescript, more jam-packed, and more clichéd than those in the streets. Let's face it: the majority of shop windows in Budapest are boring, uninteresting, and ugly. The only exceptions are those in busy places such as Andrássy Avenue (6th District) and some streets of particular importance for downtown tourism. The shops in public squares face the street even less, their shop windows are smaller and their product rather limited.

Image 19: The store of Cserei Radio Technical and Electrical Company at 47 Andrássy Road (1933) (Source: Fortepan / Cserey Zoltán_https://fortepan.hu/hu/ photos/?q=Andrássy%20Road [04.12..2024])

In Budapest, there are few historical portals left, concentrating mainly at the base of classicizing and eclectic buildings from the late 19th century (on Vámház Boulevard, Váci Street, at the corner of Régiposta Street, etc.), with a few Art Nouveau-style portals (for example, in Szent István Square). The interwar period was favourable for portal construction – it was especially the thirties that saw large-scale shop window renovations. (Photos illustrating this can be seen in the 1936 issues of *Tér és forma*.) In line with the modernist approach, glass surfaces were increased, which resulted in the transformation of interior spaces. After 1948, in the spirit of socialist ideology, a hostile attitude towards shop windows developed (which were considered a product of Americanism), and they were left to deteriorate and fall into disrepair. As a result of the renovations launched in the seventies, the classicizing and eclectic wooden portals of the 19th century, as well as the Art Nouveau and modernist shop windows, disappeared.

Until the 1980s, the cityscape of Budapest was monotonous and dull, partly due to the uninteresting and ugly shop windows. In the 1980s, several decades after the end of the war, the restoration of historic buildings finally began, and high-quality portals and sophisticated shop windows reappeared (for example, on Teréz Boulevard and in Király Street).

The regime change also resulted in structural and ownership changes in the economy and retail. After the disappearance of the narrow selection of goods and the shortages in the 1960s and 1970s ("out of stock", "just sold out", "please, inquire in a few weeks") the range of products on offer expanded rapidly after the 1990s, and the number of consumers and the volume of consumption grew. However, over the past thirty years, this has not brought about such rapid, spectacular transformations in shop premises, shopfronts, and portals as, for example, in Berlin, Prague, or Bratislava. There have been some good solutions (for example, on Andrássy Avenue, Váci Street and Zrínyi Street), few in proportion. There are also shamefully neglected, dilapidated, unpretentious, and tasteless rows of shops in the city centre (such as the busy Kossuth Lajos Street in the 5th district, Rákóczi Street in the 8th district and most of the boulevards in the 6th and 7th districts). The farther from the city centre, the higher the number of shop windows that cannot be described as aesthetic or suitable for advertising goods. The small shop windows in public spaces are almost warehouse-like and often give the impression that their owners do not know what to do with them.

Incidentally, there are few interesting, enticing shop windows even in the shopping centres and plazas that signal the regime change (even in Corvin Quarter).

Commerce keeps constantly changing, shop windows do so less.

The provision of street furniture in public spaces varies greatly. In Budapest, there are transport hubs, squares of special significance in the city structure, where there are large areas without any street furniture (for example, the area around McDonald's on Móricz Zsigmond Circus, where there are several small shops, and people waiting and loitering in front of them at all times of the day. In Széna Square, there is an insignificant amount of street furniture, there are no benches at all, a small area was created from lowered concrete elements, however, there are no designated seating areas.)

Even in central public spaces, passersby often have to use dilapidated, outdated street furniture (especially repulsive are the cold, weather-worn stone blocks, for example, the uncleaned street furniture on the 5th district side of Nyugati Square).

Street furniture suitable for various forms of communication does/can play a significant role in the use of public spaces. It determines the physical environment and atmosphere of the space, the ways of use, and the behaviour of the public (Gehl 2011).[2] Street furniture got a prominent role during the renovations of the spaces where local residents had a say in the design and shaping of their neighbourhood's image. Between the two World Wars, Teleki Square (8th District), was a vibrant and diverse place, but poverty deepened from the 1950s onwards, and the square lost its original market and community functions. In the post-regime-change period, the square became run-down and was overrun by homeless people, drug addicts, and petty criminals. The horror of ghettoization eventually generated a process of social rehabilitation and restoration. The residents participated in the creation of the park, playground, sunbathing hill, walking path, and placement of street furniture.

In recent years, several tenders have been issued in Budapest for residents to design new street furniture for the capital's public spaces and parks. From an urban architectural perspective, it is outdated, worn out, and functionally inadequate in most public spaces of the capital. The new furniture is expected to be more comfortable and modern than the present one. It is important that they have a uniform appearence, in contrast to the mixed, ad hoc objects placed in recent decades – this is why the irregularly shaped, colourful street furniture, which is still unusual in Hungary, appeared in the Main Square in Óbuda. In Mikszáth Kálmán Square in the Palace District, visitors can sit down for a while on the

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2   Gehl, Jan: Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space. Washington: Island Press, 2011.

benches or chairs of the cozy cafés and enjoy the hustle and bustle of the square. New seats were also installed in Egyetem Square during its renovation. In Tompa Street (9th District, Ferencváros), which underwent a complete transformation in the last 10–15 years, local residents enjoy relaxing on the comfortable benches and entertaining themselves as patrons of the bars, restaurants, and cafés.

The edges and stone steps of ornamental fountains in Budapest's public squares are often used as seating ("furniture") by those locals and tourists who want to relax, people-watch. These have become part of everyday culture. Since the time of the Greeks and Romans, both drinking and ornamental fountains have played a significant role in the life of cities (György Rajna), and outstanding works of arts (statues, reliefs, mythological, cultic, ecclesiastical figures, children) have made their role even more prominent. Ornamental fountains in the Gothic and Renaissance styles have also survived in Hungary. Most of the decorative fountains in Budapest were built in the 19th century in Romantic, Classicist or Eclectic style.

Image 20: Rákóczi Square, Decorative Fountain with fishing children (Károly Senyei 1900), moved here from the Buda Castle in 1957. On the right is the Market Hall (1962) (Source: Fortepan / Budapest Metropolitan Archive. Archive reference: HU_BFL_ XV_19_c_11 Photographs of the Department of Urban Planning and Architecture https:// fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=DíszkRoad%20Budapest [04.12..2024])

In his study published in 1940, Antal Kampis lists 35 public fountains in Budapest. During the decades of socialism, some of these were left to decay and were not restored, while many public-space, decorative fountains were built in socialist realist, classicist, sometimes antiquated styles, but there were some more modern, non-figurative ones too (for example, in 1965, Frigyes Matzon's abstract fountain was built for the stairs in Orvos Street in the 1st District. An abstract decorative fountain was erected in front of 114-116 Üllői Road in the 10th District, and an *Abstract Fountain* by architect Zoltán Gulyás in Kosztolányi Square near the Martyrs' Monument in the 11th District. A non-figurative composition of glass and aluminium can be seen in Zugló between 21 and 26 Kacsóh Pongrác Road). The majority of the ornamental fountains similarly to the public sculptures (for example by Pál Pátzay, Sándor Mikus, Agamemnon Makris, István Szabó) were commissioned from artists supported by the socialist realist cultural policy. There are far fewer decorative fountains that are considered significant in art history, but at least there are some (works by Miklós Borsos, Jenő Kerényi, Zsigmond Kisfaludy Stróbl, Ferenc Medgyesy, and Béni Ferenczy).

In the decades before the regime change, most of the ornamental fountains in Budapest – more than ten – were erected in the 1st District of Buda. This was followed by the 5th, 10th, and 11th districts with four decorative fountains each. No ornamental fountains were erected in the 6th, 16th, 19th districts. Courtyard decorative fountains and water features can also play an important role in shaping the visual image of a city, especially the ones with sculptures, but since they are not accessible to the general public, we will not discuss them here. However, it should be noted that these were also neglected and their restoration only began after the regime change.

The past decade has seen an increased political attention towards decorative fountains and water features. As a result, there is an increase in the number of fountains with out-of-scale, kitschy, tasteless, unusual, confusing forms. A striking example of this trend is an inappropriate structure using Herend and Zsolnay elements in József nádor Square, in the city centre. It is a porcelain tree of life towering in the middle of the square, which had an extremely controversial reception (kitschy, ugly, breathtaking, beautiful, etc.). It was not originally designed for this location. Technically, it is undoubtedly a masterpiece, but aesthetically unacceptable.

Public buildings in public spaces

In Budapest, very few new representative public buildings were built after the regime change, (for example, the National Theatre, the MÜPA, or the ELTE, and BME campuses in Lágymányos), much fewer than in East Berlin, Prague, or Bratislava. Buildings constructed with private investment and shopping malls in the city centre and suburbs have significantly changed the appearance of the capital. Yet, truly modern buildings are lacking, not even as many as were built during the wave of modernization in the 1920s (not only Vienna but also Prague is developing better in this area).

After the regime change – as mentioned above – several shopping centres and plazas built in inner district and suburban locations contributed significantly to the change in the image of Budapest, as a defining element of the cityscape (for example, Mammut on Széna Square in Buda, Corvin Plaza in the 8th District, Westend City Centre at Nyugati Square, Árkád at Örs Vezér Square and so on). As a result of the changed economic and financial relations, the number of banks in Budapest multiplied, and OTP Bank essentially lost its dominance. Bank branches had to be established to serve the needs of the population. One of the representative and modern facilities is the Bank Centre office building (1996) on the south side of Szabadság Square.

The most spectacular development in Budapest has probably been in the field of newly built and rebuilt office buildings. They have appeared in the most diverse parts of the city, from the city centre of Budapest to Soroksári Road, to the Hungária Ring Road, and the Buda office district that replaced the once world-famous factories, or to those built on the site of the former Váci Road plants. The transformation of Váci Road is the result of enormous changes. For anyone who knew this part of the 13th District before 1990, after the removal of the remains of the once six-kilometre-long industrial quarter (machinery factory, screw factory, shipyard and crane factory, etc.) the row of modern buildings constructed on Váci Road is tangible proof that irreversible changes took place 30 years ago. Imposing office buildings have been erected on the site of the demolished, redundant and ruined factories. These house approximately one quarter of the capital's modern office stock.

In the city centre of Pest (5th District), new office buildings and commercial properties were also built after 1990, but here (partly due to the scarcity of land) older palaces and historic company headquarters are being renovated and converted, with their interior layout adapted to present needs. Some of these are

located in public spaces (for example, the City Centre on the corner of Erzsébet Square, at the intersection of Bajcsy-Zsilinszky and Andrássy Avenues. The Medimpex Palace, a historic building, was built in 1928 in Vörösmarty Square and converted into an office building in 1996. And we could continue the list with the Eiffel Palace – built between 1911 and 1915 – near the Nyugati Railway Station, which was modernised in 2016 and the office spaces completed in 2019 in Szervita Square.)

The office buildings constructed in the outer districts of Pest have contributed significantly to the modernization of the capital's image, as they were built on plots of land that had been considered peripheral and dilapidated for decades, serving as clear evidence of development. Examples include the rapidly developing areas of Soroksári Road in South Pest or the Hungária Ring Road. The new National Theatre (2002), the Palace of Arts (2005), and the surrounding public square are wedged between the office buildings that have been under construction on the banks of the Danube since 1999. The K&H Bank headquarters and the Duna Medical Centre (still under construction) are also nearby. Hungária Ring Road runs from the Árpád Bridge to the former Népstadion: today, it is lined with office buildings connecting the outer districts of Pest (for example, the Hungária Office Building on Thököly Road in the 14th District).

In the central areas of Pest, in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th districts, office buildings have also been built on vacant lots or on the site of buildings slated for demolition (for example, the ING Deloitte headquarters on Dózsa György Road opposite the City Park). In these districts, significant office buildings were built on public spaces (for example, in Kálvin Square, next to Ferenciek Square). Newly constructed office buildings (Central Udvar, Greenpoint7, etc.) are also operating near the so-called party district, in Wesselényi Street, 7th District.

Pest's Broadway is another location where old buildings were renovated and converted to make them suitable for use as office buildings meeting current requirements (for example, the Pódium Office Building in Nagymező Street).

A nationwide benefit of the regime change, which is the most noticeable in Budapest, is that public spaces have taken on new functions: in smaller and larger squares, public spaces have been expanded with areas in front of cafes, restaurants, and pubs. From spring to autumn, a few tables, chairs, or benches are set up outside the buildings in the square, where residents gather with their families and neighbours and welcome their friends and acquaintances. Hungarian urban planning does not have a tradition of cafes and coffee shops with portals opening into a street or public square, as in many Mediterranean

and non-Mediterranean countries (Greece, Italy, France, etc.), as even among the turn-of-the-century coffee houses, there are few that were originally designed to open into the street.

Image 21: Óbuda, Main Square, with the sculpture group entitled Várakozók (The Waiting Ones) in the background (Imre Varga 1986) (1988) (Source: Fortepan / Chuckyeager tumblr_https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Óbuda [04.12..2024])

The area around Szentlélek and Flórián squares still preserves some of the former atmosphere of Óbuda, immortalized in the novels of the great writer Gyula Krúdy. In the Main Square [Fő Square], there are outdoor seating areas in front of the cozy restaurants, colourful street furniture, and benches in several places. All this is particularly significant also because the small-town-like, old-town-style one- and two-story houses (many more of which have been demolished) are surrounded by huge housing estates. Within the framework of housing estate reconstruction programs there were attempts made to remedy the boring monotony of the highrises with varied colour schemes, but the ten-story, unreasonably long concrete blocks of flats cannot be touched, and their proximity to nature (the Danube, Buda and Pilis mountains) and the memories of the historic small town make them particularly oppressive.

After the regime change, one of the most popular squares was Liszt Ferenc Square in the 6th District with its unique and unusual outdoor restaurants. Recently, it has lost much of its popularity (except for the Menza Restaurant). It is mostly frequented by foreigners, on its terraces English-language conversation can be heard. It is still one of the most beautiful squares in the capital, with its large trees, benches, pedestrian area, and the eclectic art nouveau building of the Academy of Music closing the square.

Since its renovation, the Egyetem Square in the city centre has been a favourite of many, with the benches in front of the ELTE Faculty of Law and the Church of the Nativity of Mary, the cozy cafes with outdoor seating areas and the terraces in front of the bars. Not quite as beautiful, but still suitable for walking and sitting outside, is the part of nearby Kálvin Square between the Szabó Ervin Library and the Reformed Church. There are benches in the shade of trees, and seats on the terraces of restaurants offering some rest in the city. Not far from Kálvin Square is Mikszáth Square in the Palace District. Its beautiful buildings have attractive inner courtyards, and benches around the statue of the great writer Kálmán Mikszáth. One of the true faces of Pest can be enjoyed on the terraces of the restaurants. A short walk leads to Lőrinc pap Square, where visitors can also find places to sit outside.

In addition to public squares, similar outdoor seating options can also be found in pedestrian zones (for example, Ráday Street and Tompa Street in the 9th District, Hajós Street in the 6th District, Lövőház Street in the 2nd District, and Fashion Street, which connects Deák Ferenc Square with Vörösmarty Square). In the past ten years, the demand for pedestrian zones has been increasing in the outer districts as well, and even in housing estates (for example, in the 19th District (Kispest), in the 10th District in Újhegyi Promenade (Kőbánya), or in the 20th District in the Vécsey housing estate).

The proliferation of pedestrian streets began in Europe after the Second World War, and their spread is increasing in the 21st century.

The public space, functioning as a social space where modern office buildings, banks, and plazas offer their services, also changes compared to the public spaces with limited functions that were available to the public during the decades of socialism. Similarly to the public spaces where terrace users spend their time, they embody various social and lifestyle changes.

To conclude this chapter, let us briefly mention Budapest's natural values. The hills and mountains surrounding the city on the Buda side are an integral part of the landscape and street scene. Forests, groves, and natural formations

emerge in the most unexpected places, streets, and public spaces. Most of them have not been utilized by city planners, and public space constructions of recent decades have also ignored them. According to a 2005 list, in the capital, there are around fifty cliffs, hills, mountains (e.g. Gellért Hill, Kis Sváb Hill, Sashegy, etc.), caves (Szemlő Hill, Pál-völgyi, etc.), gardens (University of Horticulture, Botanical Garden), parks, plant habitats, and protected trees (linden tree in Gazda Street, Lebanese cedar in Kondor Street, etc.) of special important, which can be visited, and their sight is also significant. According to a report there are nearly 300 protected natural sites in Budapest. These are areas that have been protected since the 1970s and 1980s (e.g. Buda Landscape Protection Area, Sas Hill). It follows from all this that Budapest is fortunate to have such green areas and natural values, compared to other European capitals, but the city is far from being able to exploit this advantage as well as Vienna or Stockholm (the latter even has a national park).

As a result of the regime change, many of the neglected, dilapidated public spaces were turned into parks, trees were planted, and leisure places were created. One of the authors of this book, Andrea Dúll, analysed Második János Pál Pápa Square in the 8th District and Erzsébet Square in the city centre from an environmental psychology perspective.[3] The former has been grassed over, while the grass in the latter is quite worn, but both squares are good examples of how the city and nature can be connected.

The increased attention to the design of parks, squares, and playgrounds is a result of the regime change but it is nowhere near the pace or quantity needed to make up for lost time.

Despite tree planting campaigns and propaganda promoting the increase of green spaces, approximately 15,000 trees have been cut down with municipal permission in Budapest in the past five years (Kossuth Square, Orczy-Garden, City Park, József nádor Square, etc.)

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3   Dúll, A. 2018. Pihenőpark funkciójú városi közterek: Építész és környezetpszichológus szakértői beszélgetéssorozata a közterekről 5. Építészfórum. Paper: 29.06.2018 https://epiteszforum.hu/pihenopark-funkcioju-varosi-kozterek (downloaded: 13 April 2025)

Katalin S. Nagy

Statues in Public Spaces

Statues erected in public spaces usually convey messages of societal (often political), historical, or documentary nature to the public and users of the space over a long period of time (even several generations). They cannot be separated from the specific era in which they were created, and they can connect different periods of time. Public artworks, including sculptures, reflect the visual culture and aesthetic standards of a given city, as well as the identity, historical perspective, and cultural commitment of their commissioners, creators, and installers. They address passersby according to their creators' interests and, through their works, use visual and plastic means to draw attention to everything that they and their clients (mostly the city authorities) consider important in influencing the space users. One of the main functions of public sculptures is to help strengthen the relationship between collective and individual memory. Most public sculptures in Budapest are so anachronistic that they are unable to fulfil this role. There are very few memorials that serve collective memory through aesthetic and artistic means, using space in such a way that the sculptures encourage their recipient, the viewer, reflect. According to sculptor Tamás Körösényi, "in public opinion, memorial sculpture is like football: everyone knows more about it than the professionals, the common man, the politician, the, local government representatives. And there are as many opinions as there are people who have something to say about it."[1]

Statues erected in public spaces and in front of public institutions illustrate the history of European culture. In classical Greek antiquity, the goddess Pallas Athena was the patron saint and eponymous saint of Athens therefore the

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1 Langó Péter: Turulok és Árpádok. Budapest: Typotex, 2017. https://www.typotex.hu/upload/book/9123/lango_peter_turulok_es_arpadok_reszlet.pdf 27.08.2024)

importance of her presence was demonstrated by her unusually large statues as well. Until the mid-19th century, the Christian religion's worldview and value system were conveyed to the public by statues intended for the believers (the areas in front of the churches and the parts of the royal and aristocratic palaces where the citizens publicly met were considered public spaces). They represented the self-image of the community. As a result of industrial civilization then of the 20th century social changes the uniform value system ceased to exist, and dominant homogeneity was replaced by heterogeneity, the uniform image of cities disappeared, and public sculpture underwent changes in function, language, and content.

In Europe, including Hungary as well as the German, Italian, and Belgian states, the 19th century was a period of nation-building. National communities created myths, symbols, and heroes for themselves, and filled their public spaces and public institutions with their statues (there is even talk of a "statue-building frenzy"). Contemporary urban planning in Budapest strove for monumentality and representativeness similar to that of Paris or Rome, and the traces of that trend can still be found today in the streetscape, on the buildings, and on the remaining public statues. The city's past and the national past are closely intertwined. Budapest is full of statues that, even if not directly connected to the city's past, have become an integral part of the capital's public spaces and public buildings as national symbols, representatives of national memory, and national heroes (for example, Heroes' Square, the Dózsa statue at the foot of the Castle). Until the end of the 19th century, the erection of statues followed the logic of monuments.

After the First World War, a new wave of statue erection began in most European countries. In Budapest, around 150 public statues were created in the interwar period, most of them World War memorials. Most of these can still be seen in their original locations today (generations have grown up who have no direct memories of the First World War). There is at least one in every district, and four in each of the 5th and 8th districts. (They can be found on the website of Jenő Varga, BME.) In Harminckettesek Square in the 8th District, the monument inaugurated in 1933 dedicated to the "32nd Maria Theresa Budapest Household Regiment 1741–1918" occupies a significant place in the city structure and cityscape. This inscription, engraved in large letters, is clearly visible from the Boulevard. The armed infantryman with a steel helmet standing on a high pedestal creates a monumental effect, which is also emphasized by the tree towering behind him and the scale of the three-story apartment buildings. The

neoclassical statue made by István Szentgyörgyi (1881–1938) radiates heroism, strength, and masculinity. His World War I sculpture stands in Heroes' Square in the 23rd District in memory of the soldiers of Soroksár.

The World War I statues mainly depict soldiers, with flags in several districts (for example in the 14th and 15th districts). In many cases, heroism, courage, and national glory are symbolized by legendary animals (lion, Turul falcon). From 1917 onwards, various types of First World War monuments began to appear in rural towns and other major settlements. These had to be erected by the settlements themselves on funds from public donations, from the financial resources of their particular community. They were not financed by the state, but there were ideological expectations and typological requirements – for example, in front of the church in Pesthidegkút, 2nd District, a soldier with a flag and a bugler can be seen on a stepped limestone pedestal. The pedestal featured a map of Greater Hungary before the Trianon Treaty (it was stolen, replaced in 1990, and stolen again since been). The war memorial was unveiled in 1931 by Archduke Joseph in the presence of Kunó Klebelsberg. In 1994, the names of 115 victims of the Second World War from Hidegkút were added to the names of the 67 heroes of Hidegkút who were killed in the First World War – highlighting the importance of preserving local memory and local culture. In addition to depicting a glorious past (a historical ancestor with a holy sword), the monuments mostly depicted soldiers fighting, getting wounded, or dying a heroic death, often with national symbols (double cross and three hills, Turul, Hungarian coat of arms). By now, most of the almost countless memorials have become such an integral part of their surroundings that they are no longer noticed, despite their originally heroic purpose. By the early eighties, members of the younger generation could no longer understand the allegories of the First World War statues, as the events of the war were far from their lives already. In some districts, these monuments are still in disrepair as they were often neglected during the decades of socialism. On the centenary of the First World War, it became clear that the stories and memories associated with the heroic monuments had been forgotten, retaining their local value only for the older generation living in the community. (In my opinion, a similar schematism characterizes the 1956 memorials erected after the 1990s, although the First World War monuments were erected in well-maintained public spaces, parks, and landscaped public squares, while the surroundings of the monuments commemorating the revolution were generally neglected.)

As a result of the Soviet Union's victory in the Second World War, many state- commissioned statues served to propagate the ideology of communism in Budapest. After the war, the first statue erected in the central Vigadó Square (later Molotov Square) on the Danube bank, a memorial to Soviet pilots, indicated the primacy of ideological and political considerations and the relegation of artistic and sculptural qualities to the background. Later, the large-scale *Sports Equestrian* by Pál Pátzay, who was committed to socialist realism, was erected in the southern part of Eötvös Square. After the 1989 regime change, most of the socialist-communist monuments were either demolished or were moved to a sculpture reserve. (For example, the six-meter-tall statue of the *Soviet Liberator* was moved from the *Statue of Liberty* on Gellért Hill, which still dominates the cityscape, to Memento Park. The four-meter-tall statue of Lenin from the City Park was also moved to Memento Park. The world's only cubist-style statue of Marx and Engels, which had stood in front of the headquarters of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) on Jászai Mari Square, was also moved there.) The above-mentioned Statue of Liberty was made in 1945–46, immediately after the Second World War. Zsigmond Stróbl Kisfaludi's work preserves the pathos of earlier memorial sculpture, maintains the continuity of the more conservative aspirations of the previous era, and paradoxically, it was precisely this that met the new demand for memorials at this historic turning point.

Image 22: On the left, the statue by sculptor Sándor Mikus, made for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the liberation of Hungary. On the right, the statue by sculptor István Kiss, depicting Ferenc Münnich, sawn off its pedestal,. The statues were placed in Mementó Park (1990) (Source: Fortepan / Katalin Erdei https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=memento%20 park [04.12..2024])

Most of the sculptures created by artists of the new socialist social order are now interesting mainly for their documentary value. Among those that still stand in public spaces, there are hardly any that have aesthetic value. Heroic monuments stand in public spaces, such as the Soviet heroic monument in Szabadság Square, one of the central squares of Budapest (it was blown up once during the 1956 revolution, but it still proclaims its ideological commitment with communist symbols). Hungarian memorial sculpture and the public sculpture in Budapest after 1945, have the same characteristic that Lajos Fülep stated about the previous era: "It served politics or mass snobbery and in the process, forgot or never recognized any artistic missions."[2] The most notorious monument of the era was the *Stalin statue*, a symbol of the Rákosi era, made with the use of the

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2   Lajos FÜLEP: A similar schematism characterizes the 1956 memorials erected after the 1990s. National Széchényi Library: https://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00022/00246/07381.htm (last downloaded: 15.07.2024)

bronze material of the previously demolished and melted down Andrássy, Tisza and Görgey statues. It was toppled, cut into pieces, and then dragged around Budapest on 23rd October 1956, thus becoming a symbol of the revolution.

From the 1960s onwards, a large number of public artworks were installed in Budapest, primarily monuments with decorative and representative functions and autonomous works of art. They used the expressive forms of the sculptural tools of the period, but also linked to 19th century traditions and adapted to the socialist realism expected by the official cultural policy and the state as client. The characteristic public sculptures of the Kádár era in the 1960s were liberation monuments, mostly depicting large, masculine, women releasing doves of peace (in housing estates, in rural towns and villages) or raising palm branches (for example, the works of Sándor Mikus and Zsigmond Stróbl Kisfaludi). In addition to the monuments commemorating the Hungarian Soviet Republic, Marx statues are also popular (several of them ended up in the Memento Park). Photographs are important sources for documenting the period, and the works of four well-known Soviet photographers – Viktor Akhlomov, Leonid Bergoltsev, Valentin Sobolev, Mikhail Trahman – stand out among the multitude of images presenting Budapest and Hungary (a joint exhibition of these images was organized by the Budapest Metropolitan Archives and the Moscow City Central Archives in 2016).

In the 1970s, spectacular changes took place in the function of public sculpture both in Europe and America. The genre of sculpture expanded, the formal language of 20th century -isms underwent changes, and the monumental sculpture that had dominated since the 19th century was decisively pushed into the background. Works of art that integrated into the architectural and natural environment appeared, and a new relationship with the given location evolved. Modernist urban architecture emerged in Budapest and other cities (which is generally not considered highly by the literature from an urbanistic and aesthetic point of view), which had an impact on the transformation of public spaces. The convergence of modernism and state socialism as an ideological and administrative framework, the rapid solution of the housing shortage (housing estates) and the improvement of the quality of the housing stock (level of comfort) changed the overall appearance of urban districts and brought about fundamental changes in spatial planning, in the "soc-modern" external and internal community spaces. Many squares and building complexes were demolished to make way for residential complexes and public spaces that were considered more socialist and modern. (Soc-modern urban architecture strongly

transformed Tatabánya, Salgótarján, Dunaújváros, Ózd, and had less impact on Debrecen, Szeged, or Keszthely). This was not only characteristic of Budapest, but also of other cities belonging to the Eastern Bloc (e.g. Dresden, Bratislava), and many Western European cities and public spaces were also transformed in this spirit (e.g. Brussels).

The visual arts of the seventies brought about changes in approach, functionality, and media use worldwide, therefore the works of art placed in public spaces also transformed. As a result, works with a more modern approach began to even in traditional and conservative Hungarian arts. The image of public spaces began to change, and modernization opportunities appeared (primarily in Budapest). During the Kádár era, dozens (according to Tibor Wehner, an expert in public sculpture, not infrequently hundreds[3]) of public sculptures were unveiled in Budapest and throughout the country annually However, these were not only memorials but also sculptures and statues with decorative functions. The latter reflected the characteristic confused modernism of the sixties and seventies, a mixture of socialist realism and some other -ism. Some of the modernization efforts of socialist realism were supported by communist cultural policy, especially when represented by artists loyal to the regime and committed to the ruling ideology. Realism and various isms, plastic languages balancing on the border of abstraction, emerged, seeking to conform simultaneously to the formal vocabulary and spirit of Eastern (i.e., Soviet) and Western (i.e., European, and American) modernity. This hybridity left its mark on the public spaces of Budapest, significantly determining their level of visual culture.

In the 1970s, some truly modern experiments took place in Hungary as well: Tibor Hajas's graffiti actions and Gyula Pauer's sculpture ensemble *"Demonstration-sign Forest"* (1978) created in the International Wood Sculptors' Creative Centre and Sculpture Park. The authorities immediately intervened and banned it, so the sculpture could only be the precursor of Hungarian public art.

In Budapest, the architectural shift in scale had been ongoing since the mid-1960s, starting with the construction of the hotels on the Danube bank. However, sculpture in public spaces and in front of public institutions did not follow suit. First, it broke away from architecture, its environment, and the space itself, with which it should have formed an organic unity. This resulted in public sculptures that lacked proportion and direction, as proven by art historians Tibor Wehner,

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3   Wehner Tibor: Modern szobrászat 1945–2010. Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 2010

Géza Boros, and József Mélyi in their analyses. Lajos Fülep's criticism, published in Nyugat in the early 1900s, is often quoted[4], which is characteristic of the past decades and still relevant today.

According to Rosalind E. Krauss[5] and many others, the American and Western European modernist approach has transformed the spatiality of public sculptures since the 1970s, giving rise to autonomous works created on the basis of the artists' own aesthetic ideas and formal languages. Since the 1980s, locations, the built and the natural environment have become important. New trends and new genres appear in public art. Visual arts stepped out of the walls of museums and turned to new public venues, from newspapers to shopping malls, from restaurants to mass media, seeking direct connections to social cooperation. The return to the reality of everyday life also stretched the boundaries of public sculpture, which adhered to traditional frameworks, thus making public spaces a possible venue for both high culture and popular culture.

In the eighties, albeit later than in European and American cities, non-figurative sculptures appeared in public spaces in Budapest. An unusually early example is the four non-figurative sculptures erected in the Japanese Garden on Margaret Island in 1969: Veronika Szabady's 130–150 cm high, multi-part work made of stone cubes, cylinders, and perforated pieces. In 1972 a non-figurative fountain was built on Üllői Road (it has since been demolished), and in 1979 Zoltán Bohus' five-meter-high work made of basalt cubes was erected on Mexikói Street, where it still stands today. As early as the 1960s, non-figurative, abstract works, which were banned by the Kádár-Aczél cultural policy and considered ideologically dangerous to socialism, appeared in public spaces and public buildings, provoking a series of debates. Architect József Finta was able to decorate the side of the Marriott Hotel on the Pest Danube bank, which he designed, with a large-scale non-figurative work, while György Galántai was harassed and punished for decades for a work classified as underground that he exhibited in the street in front of his studio in Buda. It is true that he was considered a banned artist who opposed the system.

Land art, public art, street art, which became increasingly prominent in Western European and American cities with works created in the decades of the 20th century, barely appeared in Budapest before the 2000s. In the eighties,

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4   Fülep Lajos: Magyar szobrászat. Nyugat,1918(10). https://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00022/nyugat. htm (04.12..2024)

5   Krauss, E. Rosalind: Sculpture the Expanded Field. JSTOR, 1979(8), 30–44. https://doi. org/10.2307/778224 (15.07.2024)

countless socialist realist, semi-modernised or characterless, not very creative non-figurative public sculptures still sought to meet the ideological expectations of the political leadership. The sculptures that meant to introduce modern forms were rather weak. György Segesdi created numerous public sculptures that met the expectations of the official cultural policy (for example, the granite Marx-Engels monument completed in 1971, which stood in a prominent place in Jászai Mari Square in the 5th District, a symbolic representation of socialist ideology in public space, which was moved to the Budatétény Memento Park in 1992, after the regime change), in the 1980s he created non-figurative steel sculptures. In 1983, his 250-cm-high chrome steel metal block was erected in the park in front of the then headquarters of the Communist Youth Organisation at 60 Pozsonyi Road in the 13th District, which, according to Budapest Gallery "is a work symbolizing the character of the factories in the 13th District".

After 1989, traditional monuments were erected again, replacing the statues that had been toppled or stored sculptures, mostly ignoring the characteristics and features of the location. New themes, relating to the events of the past decades appeared in place of those that had prevailed during socialism: Second World War and deportation monuments; Holocaust memorials; 1956. In addition to these, monuments appeared, which commemorate the history of the distant past: the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin and the millennium. They still carry political and ideological content, and they turn to 19th century models for inspiration, thus the plastic language and modernism (postmodernism) of the present era are far from them. They are mostly schematic and use clichéd plastic solutions. In the nineties, as if to counterbalance the increasing number of monuments and public sculptures, out-of-scale genre sculptures flooded public spaces. "Cute, weightless, public tastelessness"[6] – as Tibor Wehner aptly characterises them. They are easily to consumable, they attract tourists, and since they are not placed on pedestals or plinths but on walking level, they create the illusion in the viewer that they want to address them directly (a democratic gesture in a populist way). "Cult statues" and portrait monuments of poets, writers and scientists sitting on benches or in armchairs, have become popular, most of them lack any aesthetic quality though. It is unlikely that they support the desired memory policy effect, strengthen national identity, or are connected to European artistic trends. Rather, they are characterized by ideological and

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6   Gulyás Gábor: Olyan, hogy közönség: nincs – Beszélgetés Wehner Tiborral a hazai köztéri szo-brászatról (2014). Flash Art (3) 6. 7–14. http://87.229.102.27/docs/FAH15_14_06.pdf (15.07.2024)

aesthetic emptiness and not the expected change of attitude. The thousands of socialist realist statues (Lenin, Stalin and others) and Soviet monuments erected in public spaces between 1948 and 1988 to convey the ideology of communism, have not left a lasting impression either, and most of them have already faded from memory (often even of the residents of the buildings surrounding the square). The sculptures erected since the nineties – usually out of scale and proportion – do not take into account their environment, its physical characteristics, the milieu, the buildings, the habits and needs of those who use the space.

Since the 2000s, it has become typical to fill spaces with small and large sculptures, monuments, and genre pieces, with various themes, evoking different historical periods. According to experts, the public squares of Budapest and other cities are gradually turning into sculpture bazaars. Often there is not enough space for them to be separated from each other, and they interfere with each other's visibility. The tastes of the sculptors, clients, and decision-makers are uncertain, they do not seek the opinion of experts, and do not understand art. The ideologically committed socialist statues and monuments – however far removed they were from the plastic standards of the era, lagging far behind real artistic aspirations and events – mostly had one important feature: they were acceptable from a technical point of view ("they were well made" – as professionals put it), and professional control was in place. Over the past twenty to thirty years, the expectation for professionalism has disappeared, which has greatly reduced quality standards. The mini genre sculptures of Mykhailo Kolodko (1978, Uzhgorod), a Ukrainian sculptor of Hungarian descent on his mother's side, are popular among customers. Although he graduated with a degree in sculpture from the Lviv National Academy of Arts in 2002, questions about his professionalism often arise in relation to his sometimes barely noticeable statuettes placed in spacious locations. His works are popular, they quickly become familiar, and due to their humour, they are accepted by the users of streets and public spaces, despite their unusual nature. Kolodko settled in Hungary in 2017, and his first small, 15-centimeter sculpture in Budapest, *Főkukac*, can be seen in Halász Street opposite the Parliament, on Bem Quay (its original is in Uzhgorod, Ukraine). *Mekk Elek*, the statuette of the jack-of-all-trades, had to be replaced as the first one was stolen. *The bronze urinal statue* (2018) is on the retaining wall next to Vajdahunyad Castle, and his *Dead Squirrel* (2018) can be seen on the corner of the Kieselbach Gallery behind the Colombo statue in the 5th District. More and more of his statuettes are appearing

unexpectedly in the public spaces of Budapest. Journalists call them mysterious while pedestrians cover them with hats and scarves.

Animal statues are extremely popular, and not just in playgrounds. Especially horse statues (not the same as equestrian statues as these do not feature riders), for example a foal in the Szárnyas street housing estate (1959), and *Horsies* on Gellért Hill (1965). Several penguin statues can be seen in residential parks and housing estates (the penguin family by Pál Borics in the Lakatos Road housing estate).

Dogs, cats and bears are everywhere (Dezső Lányi's reading bear has been in front of the Németvölgyi school in the 12th District since 1930). Since 1978, a gigantic dragonfly has been on Vérmező at its Mikó Street side. Since 1990, many animal sculptures have been placed in the Zoo as well.

Budapest Gallery lists 1,173 public artworks under its management on its website, of which 788 depict men (688 of whom can be identified as politicians, famous people, scientists, artists, etc.), and only 150 women, most of whom are unidentifiable. Only 35 of them are historical figures. Their decorative role is essential, dancers, musicians, sunbathers. During the Kádár era, featureless nude female statues and schematic mother-child scenes were popular in housing estates.

The number of statues of significant poets, like those of Sándor Petőfi and Attila József on the Danube bank, Endre Ady in Liszt Ferenc Square, Mihály Vörösmarty in Vörösmarty Square, or the statue ensemble of János Arany in front of the Hungarian National Gallery is surprisingly small. It is rather easy to list all those writers, artists, scientists, etc. who do not have a public statue in Budapest. Their esteem does not even come close to that of politicians. Most of the statues in public spaces are busts, the majority of which are conservative and outdated in their conception.

No sophisticated public sculptures have been created in Budapest, such as David Černý's works in Prague. Progressive Hungarian artists who would be able to create modern pieces of art are not commissioned to create large-format works. Surprisingly few of the sculptors recognized by art historians were commissioned to create significant public sculptures throughout the 20th century, as a consequence the sculptures erected in public spaces in Budapest are not of sufficient quality, they are not creative or unique, but mostly mediocre, and characterless works that do not enhance the city's image in aesthetic or visual terms. However, there are some exceptions: Miklós Borsos (1906–1990) has 131 works in Budapest, including sculptures, reliefs, and tombstones. In

1975, the Zero Kilometre Stone (280x120x90 limestone) was placed at the Buda bridgehead of the Chain Bridge, in Clark Ádám Square in the 1st District, a prominent location in terms of cityscape and transportation. Béni Ferenczy's popular Petőfi statue erected in Gyula in 1960 is almost the only known of his public sculptures. Apart from that he made in *The Little Boy* decorative fountain standing at the crossing of Kígyó and Váci streets in Budapest city centre since 1977, in addition to one public work in Székesfehérvár and another two in Szentendre. One of the most significant and original creators of modern Hungarian fine art, Rudolf Berczeller (1912–1992), was not lavished with public commissions either. Next to the Déli Railway Station, at the side of Hotel Penta, in the middle of Koronaőr street, stands his approximately four-meter-high copper composition, a branchy flower. His works could have contributed to the modernization of Budapest's city image, but he was not among the favourites of the cultural leaders of socialism, which dominated for forty years. It is not worth listing the omissions any further. However, it is impossible to overlook the fact that Tibor Vilt (1905–1983), who was undoubtedly one of the defining intellectual figures of the era, has only one statue (Imre Madách), on display in Budapest, erected near the ruins of the Margaret Island monastery in 1973. Of the significant contemporary sculptors, only one statue by Gyula Pauer and six statues by György Jovánovich can be found in public spaces.
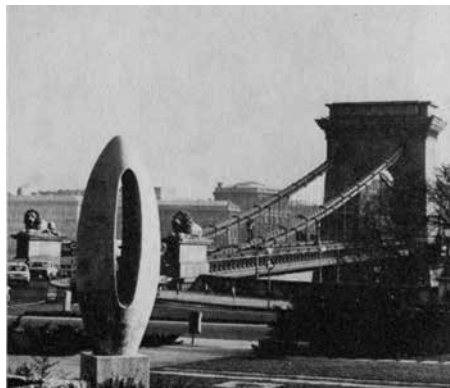
Image 23: Miklós Borsos: 0 kilometer stone (Source: Hungary travel guide, seventh edition [1981] https://www.kozterkep.hu/374/nulla-kilometerko#vetito=58584) (04.12..2024)

Every era had its favourite sculptors, most of whom are not included in Hungarian art history, but some of whom are (Zsigmond Kisfaludi Stróbl in the interwar period, Sándor Mikus, Pál Pátzay, and Imre Varga during socialism).

Clients do not demand non-figurative sculptures either. (A special exception is the white polyester sculpture entitled *Course of Life* by Zénó Kelemen, created with mixed technique and erected in 2014 for the competition of Élet Menete Foundation.) In contemporary European urban development, contemporary public art also has its place in public spaces (even as memorials, such as the *Holocaust Memorial* erected in Berlin in 2005, a work of Peter Eisenmann and Bruno Happold). In Budapest, near the Parliament, Gyula Pauer and Can Togay's *Shoes on the Danube Bank* memorial was placed in 2005, which is considered one of the most impressive Holocaust memorials in Europe by Holocaust memorial researcher Martni Winstone. It is one of the rare Budapest sculpture ensembles that also conforms to the contemporary artistic language and approach from a visual art perspective.

"During the 2000s, Budapest became a city of dense sculptures"[7] – states József Mélyi in *Artmagazin* (April 2010). In his opinion, the public sculptures in Budapest are agelessly featureless, not in the least unique, but full of pathos.

In the 2000s, Budapest's public spaces were once again dominated by erecting historical monuments and portrait memorials. These objects were mostly created for reasons unrelated to art. The clients were people in positions of power at various levels of government who lacked the necessary knowledge of aesthetics and art history. Sculptors want to create sculptures, they want to make a living, and they are happy to show their work to the public, thus quickly forming a circle whose members have been referred to as "court artists" for centuries. In addition to political monuments (monumental sculptures, full- and half-length portraits, reliefs), the last ten years have seen a proliferation of the aforementioned superficial (one might say cute or tacky) genre sculptures in public spaces, made of various materials, in surprising sizes — from the disproportionately small to gigantic columns — and with a wide variety of themes (in his writings, Tibor Wehner names the designers of Budapest's genre sculptures, their titles, and the creators of sculptures worthy of public spaces that are considered exceptions, such as Tamás Vígh and Nándor Wagner). Among the creators of today's public sculptures, there are quite a few who were also

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7   Mélyi József: A jövő alulnézete – Duna-parti szobrok 3 (2010). Artmagazin (40) 22–27. https://www.artmagazin.hu/articles/archivum/f98674f9c3076cf1f56687831e529e8b (15.07.2024)

responsible for the image of public spaces during socialism (for example, Imre Varga, Miklós Melocco).

In the 2000s, public art projects were launched in Budapest too (for example, by the landscape architects of the Újirány group) with the development of creative strategies for the role of public art today. Public-art actions are linked to urban regeneration processes in order to make the city and its districts more liveable. In Hungary, too, the involvement of viewers and space users in the process of creating public artworks is also gaining ground, with a socially engaged community approach (socially engaged art or new genre public art) replacing the autonomous, individualistic approach to art. This creates dialogue and social communication (dialogical art – as H. Kester labels it).

At the end of the chapter, some characteristic data need mentioning on the sculptures in public places in the 23 Budapest districts based on *Köztérkép* – an online community database of public artworks. According to data from March, there are 6,888 public sculptures, reliefs and recorded tombstones in Budapest. This includes works unveiled between December 2018 and February 2019 (György Markolt: *Archangel Michael*, in Színház Street, 1st District; István Lengyel: *György Bulányi Memorial Plaque*, Városmajor Street, 12th District; Mykhailo Kolodko: *Rubik's Cube*, Batthyány Square, 1st District).

Most of the sculptures, are in the city centre, in the historical core of Pest: 529 pieces. The central district of the Pest side has a population of approximately 25 thousand people.[8] Important buildings and institutions of the country and Budapest are located there, such as the Parliament, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hungarian National Bank, St. Stephen's Basilica the Széchenyi Chain Bridge, the Margaret Bridge, and the Elizabeth Bridge. Due to the structure of the city and the urban public spaces the Danube Promenade, Vörösmarty Square, Vigadó Square and Váci Street are of outstanding importance. These are defining features of the city's appearance, image, and experience. As a result of the above, the public spaces of the Belváros-Lipótváros District, founded in 1873, attract public sculptures because of their historical, social, and political roles as well. The powers that be wished to convey their own messages in a spectacular way through the sculptures, to manipulate the users of the city district, and to leave their mark. As a result of its central nature the district is also of special importance from tourism point of view, so in addition to political monuments (for example, the *monument to Count István Tisza* in

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8   Source: Wikipedia. https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Budapest_V._ker%C3%BClete (04.12.2024)

place of the Károlyi statue on Kossuth Square between 1934 and 2014), portraits of historical personalities (for example, Anna Kéthly, Ronald Reagan), the so-called public genre sculptures are also becoming increasingly popular (Mykhailo Kolodko: *Breki* [2017] on Szabadság Square). Many people refer to Kossuth Lajos Square, located opposite the Parliament Building on the Danube, as the "main square of the nation", a prominent national memorial site, and the symbolic space of Hungarian statehood. Among the monuments and statues, there is only one that has been in place since its erection in 1937: the equestrian statue of Ferenc Rákóczi II (created by János Pásztor in the Baroque, reminiscent of the Prince's era). The Horthy era attempted to contrast the greatness of historical Hungary with the reality of the post-Trianon, mutilated country in a rather anachronistic way. On the left side of the pedestal is the well-known motto: "Cum Deo pro Patria et Libertate" – of which "Cum Deo" (with God) was not restored during the renovation after the Second World War, in line with the worldview of that era, but the statue itself was not altered in any other way. The monument to a historical event that took place three hundred years ago is the only stable, fixed structure in the square.

The lack of historical and political permanence and ideological uncertainty is clearly indicated by the fact that the *Lajos Kossuth monument*, unveiled in 1927, was removed in 1952 and then re-erected in 2016. The *monument to Count István Tisza*, unveiled in 1934, was demolished in 1945, and then the reconstructed monument was re-unveiled in 2014. A reconstructed copy of the equestrian statue of *Count Gyula Andrássy* was returned to its original's place in 2015. The *Mihály Károlyi statue*, erected in the northern part of the square in 1975, was removed in 2012. (Eventually, it was erected in Siófok, because that is the native town of its creator, Imre Varga, the creator of dozens of public sculptures too.) The statues of Kossuth Square have been the subject of lively debates for decades, and in the last decade, historical taboos have been challenged from different aspects. Their aesthetic value is often questioned, and conservative and modern perspectives are at odds with each other. There is no consensus; they are divisive, problematic, and do not command public respect similarly to many other monuments in Budapest's public spaces. The erection, demolition, or removal of statues are manifestations of national historical consciousness and the assertion of political viewpoints (the reclaiming of spaces). The 5th District, Belváros, which has the most public statues, is followed by three other districts of Buda in terms of the quantity of statues. However, the second place is also in Pest, with the 8th District of Józsefváros having 789 public sculptures and

reliefs. The district was named in 1777 after either Saint Joseph or Crown Prince Joseph (according to various sources), and has a population of approximately 76,000 people, which has been decreasing since the 1940s. It is home to the Fiumei Road Cemetery (former Kerepesi Cemetery) which contains the National Pantheon with numerous national tombs and full-length statues. The number of these sculptures increases the quantity of public statues in the district. In terms of sculptures, the district is also significant for the Hungarian National Museum and the Museum Garden, Orczy Park, and the Erkel Theater. The public squares of Józsefváros are not only significant transportation hubs (Keleti Railway Station, Blaha Lujza Square, Nagyvárad Square, Rákóczi Square, Kálvin Square). It is also significant from a cultural point of view as several universities and university faculties are located in the 8th District (Semmelweis University, ELTE, etc.).

One of the most popular public sculptures is the five-figure statue of the *Pál Street Boys* (created by Péter Szanyi) in front of the Práter Street school, which was unveiled in 2007 on the 100th anniversary of the publication of Ferenc Molnár's novel. In front of the Hungarian National Museum, in the garden facing the street and clearly visible from outside, stands the three-figure Arany János memorial (1893, by Alajos Stróbl). To the right of the poet sitting in the middle, on the pedestal, is Miklós Toldi, and to his left is Piroska Rozgonyi. In 2018, the best-known and highest-quality sculptural work of the Arany János cult, according to many experts, was restored.

One of the most neglected parts of Józsefváros was the Teleki Square market, which had been operating since the 1950 urban reconstruction. It was demolished along with its dilapidated surroundings, and the rebuilt and renovated park, market hall, and playground were opened in 2014. Three genre sculptures created by Attila Mészáros fit in with the history of the square and its former residents, and cheer up those who live there today. The *Inviting Antiquarian* (2014) refers to the Jewish retailers who lived and traded here before the Second World War (there were nearly twenty synagogues in and around the square, now there is only one). There is the *Lamplighter* (2014), the figure known from *The Little Prince,* and the full-length statue of *László Teleki* (2014), the namesake of the square, sits on a bench with his arms folded, inviting those who sit next to them to take selfies. The square has borne the name of László Teleki since 1874, so it was only fair that he meets visitors at the entrance to the park.

Since the construction of Andrássy Avenue (1871–1876), there has been no urban renewal program on such a large scale in the 8th District or the inner

districts of Budapest as the (international grand prize winner) development of the Corvin Promenade at the corner of the Grand Boulevard and Üllői Road. In 2017, a 2.4-metre-high statue of the popular, legendary actor Bud Spencer (created by Szandra Tasnádi) was erected on the Corvin Promenade. 2017 also saw the placement of the first outdoor *Gömböc* statue – 4.5 meters high and weighing four tons – on the Corvin Promenade, in front of the Nokia Skypark office building. The *Gömböc* is a convex body with two points of equilibrium, one stable and one unstable. Its inventors are two architects of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. Its shape and spirit fit in well with its surroundings. Unfortunately, modern, innovative sculptures are so rare in Budapest that the importance of the presence of the *Gömböc* cannot be overemphasized. Áron Miklós's interactive non-figurative sculpture entitled *Triptychon* in the courtyard of the Corvin Technology Park office complex meets the visual expectations of public sculptures created in the 2000s: a break with the 19th century traditions, templates, and commonplace solutions. In Budapest, there are hardly any works of art in public spaces that require intellectual interpretation.

Buda districts are next in the list of districts with the most sculptures: the 12th District (642 pieces) is in third place; the 1st District (529 pieces) is in fourth place; the 11th District (528) is in fifth place. (The data are constantly changing thanks to the updating of www.kozterkep.hu.) Part of the 12th District (Hegyvidék) is covered with forests and it borders the range of the Buda Hills. János Hill, Svábhegy, Széchenyi Hill, and Budakeszi Forest are of extraordinary natural value to the district and the capital. They are also significant in terms of Budapest's appearance and are crucial elements of the city experience. Apart from the Danube, they are the city's prominent natural and geographical features. From the Széchenyi Lookout Tower (monument) on Svábhegy, the Erzsébet Lookout on János Hill, or the Svábhegy Water Tower, anyone can personally experience the importance of the relationship between the city and nature. The 12th District was established in 1938 from a part of the 1st District during the reorganization of the Budapest public administration. Due to its natural features the Korányi Frigyes Sanatorium, the Pioneer Railway on Széchenyi Hill, the Csillebérc Pioneer Camp, and the first nuclear reactor in 1959 were established here. The number of public sculptures is increased by the tomb sculptures in the Farkasrét Cemetery in the district, similar to those in the Fiumei Road Cemetery in the 8th District. The *First World War monument of the Feldjagers* (1941, two bronze soldiers by Zsigmond Stróbl Kisfaludi, with a battle

scene in the relief behind them) is located in Városmajor, while the *Monument to the Victims of Fascism* by József Somogyi (a 3.5-metre-tall bronze female figure holding a candle in front of a 20x5-meter wall built of basalt cubes) was erected in the Gesztenyés Garden next to the Congress Centre in 1985. The *Monument to the 12th District Victims of the Second World War* (creator Boldi, Boldizsár Szmrecsányi) was unveiled on Istenhegyi Road in 2005. The bronze Turul falcon clutching a sword stands on a pedestal covered with limestone slabs, with a small water basin in front of it. It sparked a lot of controversy, and there were several initiatives to tear it down. Also, in Gesztenyés Garden is György Segesdi's 15-meter-high non-figurative sculpture made of chrome steel in 1982. In 2007, a stone replica of *Hüvelyk Matyi* by Ede Telcs was returned to Városmajor (the original version was made of bronze in 1933, but was stolen in 1982). Popular genre sculptures, works by contemporary artists, have also appeared in the 12th District. Opposite the MOM shopping centre, in front of the Hill Side Office Building on Alkotás Road, stands the golden chromium steel composition *Bees* (2018) created by Miklós Gábor Szőke, which evokes the swirling movement of a swarm of bees flying out of a hive. The 12th District has public sculptures from all eras and styles, from the baroque *Ecce Homo* erected in 1725 (one of the oldest statues in Budapest, at the terminal station of the Rack Railway), to statues of saints, to full-length portraits and busts (László Papp, 2017, Csörsz Street; Józef Piłsudski, 2018), to the remnants of forty years of socialism (Sándor Mikus: *Motherhood*, 1969) and to more modern spatial sculptures (27 Meredek Street, 1989.)

The 1st District is also in Buda, on the right bank of the Danube, and is home to ten museums. A quarter of its approximately 24,000 residents belong to the senior age group. In Budapest, this district has a special place thanks to the Buda Castle Palace, the Matthias Church, and the Fisherman's Bastion, located on its territory. The construction of the Gothic royal palace began in the mid-1300s and lasted until the end of the 1400s. The siege of 1686 caused severe damage to the buildings of the Castle District. The expansions that began in 1715 were carried out in the Baroque style.

The history of Buda Castle is in close connection with the history of the country. In the interwar period, the palace was the residence of Regent Miklós Horthy. The reconstruction that began in the 1960s was partial, and the restoration of the original conditions has started in recent years. Already in the early 1900s, several public sculptures were erected in the area of the Buda Castle: József Róna's *Savoy Statue* (1900); György Vastagh Jr.'s *Horse Herder*

(1901); János Fadrusz: *Gate-Guard Lions* (1901–1902); Miklós Ligeti: *Csongor and Tünde* (1903); Alajos Stróbl: *Matthias Fountain* (1904); and Gyula Donáth's six-meter-high *Turul* (1905) on Saint George Square. In the Lions Courtyard of the former royal palace, at the entrance to the Budapest History Museum, the allegorical sculptural compositions *Peace and War* (by Károly Senyei) connect the 19th century ideologies and canons with the conservative, heroic nationalism of the 20th century, which clung to the past. The 3.5-meter-high memorial commemorating the *retaking of Buda Castle* (Béla Uhmann, 1936) welcomes those arriving at the Castle through Bécsi kapu Square.

In addition to the usual monuments, there are also monumental and unusual statues in the 1st District. István Kiss's 1961 limestone sculpture composition featuring many figures is located in Dózsa Square below the Buda Castle. In the centre, the powerful, heroic figure of Dózsa stands alone, triumphant, flanked on either side by four burly men with hammers and swords — the socialist realist equivalents of peasants and workers.
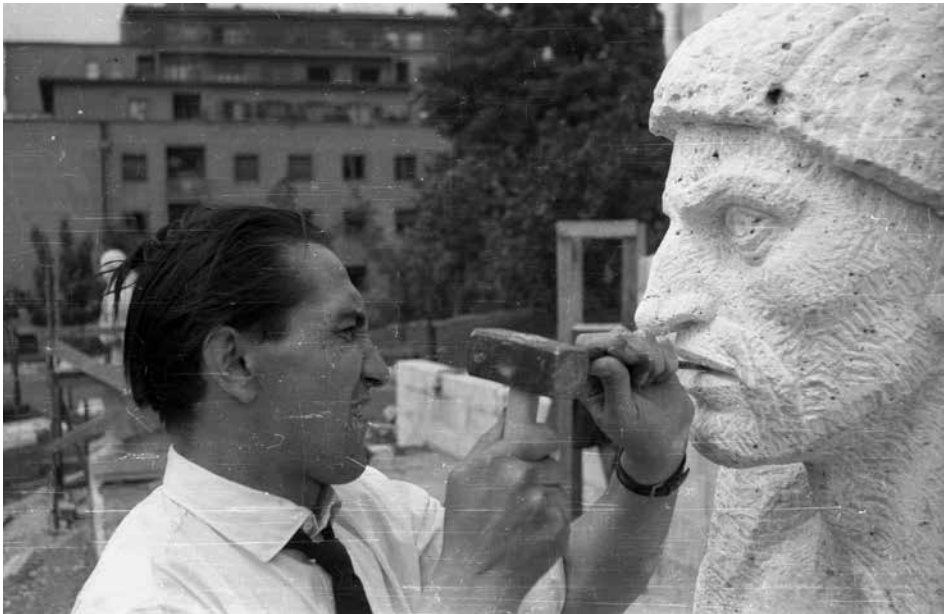
Image 24: Budapest, Dózsa György Square, sculptor István Kiss and one of the secondary figures of his Dózsa György statue (1961) (Source: Fortepan / József Hunyady https:// fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Dózsa%20Square [04.12..2024])

Also, in Dózsa Square was placed the concrete booth commemorating those who were *Persecuted between 1940 and 1990* (1996, work of Imre Makovecz and László Péterfy) with the unusual inscription: "In memory of those who did not die, but whose lives were ruined". In the park above the reservoir on Gellért Hill, a crowned man, King Buda, and a woman, Lady Pest, stand facing each other with outstretched arms, with the relief of Buda and Pest between them (Márta Lesenyei, 1982), a clear symbol of the unification of Buda and Pest. 2010 saw the completion of Nándor Wagner's eight-figure composition, the *Philosophical Garden* on top of the reservoir on Gellért Hill, which is highlighted as a positive example in the literature on public sculptures. Religious sculptures have always been popular in the 1st District. In 2018, György Markolt's *St. Michael the Archangel* was placed on the corner of the Carmelite monastery building in Színház Street in the Castle District. Also in 2018, Mykhailo Kolodko's fashionable mini genre sculpture, *The rabbit with checkered ears* (a charming fairy tale character) was placed on Szent György Square not far from Saint Michael, who defeated sin and the dragon. The bunny peering at the Chain Bridge with its telescope was preceded by the mini sculpture *Chief Worm* (2016), often wrapped in scarves and knitted caps by pedestrians, watching the other bank of the Danube from Bem Embankment in the 1st District.

Compared to other districts, there are strikingly few public sculptures in the 23rd (38), the 19th (46), the 15th (61), the 16th (61), the 17th (71) and the 20th (64) districts. All of these districts are located on the Pest side, farther away from the central districts. The 23rd District (Soroksár) separated from the 20th District of Budapest in 1994, and its territory is identical to that of the village of the same name, which was annexed to Greater Budapest in 1950. It is the least populated district, with a suburban character. Its First World War memorial has been standing on Heroes' Square, the old market square, since 1927 (the work of István Szent-Györgyi), opposite which is a Second World War statue, without figures. In 2016, the *monument to the Germans deported from Soroksár* was unveiled at the intersection of Heroes' Square and Szitás Street, behind the church. The two-figure statue by Sándor Kligl depicts a young woman leaving her home, carrying a suitcase, wearing clothes typical for that period. She holds the hand of her son; behind them there is a kitchen door and a stove with a pot left on it. A genre scene.

The 19th District was created in 1950 from Kispest, a previously independent county town, which retained its name. A total of merely 46 public works is documented, the most popular being the three-figure statue of Ferenc Puskás,

erected in Temesvári Street in 2018 (the sculptor, Lajos Kristóf, was born in Kispest), depicting the world-famous football player with members of the youth team. The memorial to the painter János Nagy Balogh, a native of Kispest, is in Templom Square (1975, István Martsa). The seated statue of the artist, who came from a poor, suburban proletarian family, emphasizes his social status with the characteristics of his clothing. One of the founders of the Kispest Social Club, who had spent long years in the Gulag, initiated the creation of *The monument to the deported into Soviet forced labour camps*, which was erected in 2017 also on Templom Square near the First and Second World War memorial (sculptor: Zsolt Hermann). Unusually, it features a pair of rails with the inscription Malenkiy robot (forced labor).

There are 61 public sculptures both in the 15th and 18th districts, which is relatively few even if compared to the other districts of Pest or to the size of the settlements. The 15th district, located on the northern side of the Danube on the Pest side, consisted of several, formerly independent settlements (the town of Rákospalota and the village of Pestújhely), which were integrated into Budapest in 1950, like many other settlements around the capital. Újpalota, one of the largest housing estates in Budapest, was built between 1968 and 1977. The oldest statues in Rákospalota, *Jesus and the Apostles* (1897, Kálmán Frank, Széchenyi Square), are the oldest statues of the neo-Romanesque Church of Our Lady of Hungary. In 1908, in what was then still independent Rákospalota, a statue of Lajos Kossuth was unveiled, funded by local donations, which is considered by many as the oldest Kossuth statue in Budapest today. (The first Kossuth memorial, an architectural sculpture on the gable of the house at 15 Szabadság Square in the 5th District, was commissioned by the private owner of the house in 1901.) The *May statue* is a full-length statue of a young woman in the style of social realism (1961, András Kocsis, Törökszegfű Square), which was renovated and cleaned. In 2015, the social realist statue *Furnaceman* (by Imre Puráni Kovács), which had been standing there since 1958 was reconstructed and restored to its pedestal, from where it had been removed in 1990. His clothing is typical workwear of the 1950s. 2010 saw the unveiling of the *Memento 1941–1945* (sculptor Tibor Rieger), a memorial to the primarily Rákospalota and Pestújhely victims of the Second World War. It depicts a figure enclosed within white contour lines, carved into a tall black block, representing a receding crowd. In 2003, a bronze bust of József Antall (made by Károly Kirchmayer) was unveiled in Pestújhely Square, but it was stolen in 2007 and found a week later in Csepel. A 1956 International Sculpture Park is being created in Rákospalota,

where since 2016 there have been portraits of philosopher *Hannah Arendt* (work by Attila Diénes), Polish poet *Zbigniew Herbert,* and since 2014 French writer *Albert Camus*– all three commemorated the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

A popular statue of the Újpalota housing estate is the bronze *Twins* with hats (1975, József Rátonyi) in Drégelyvár Street. The symbols of the housing estate are the Water Tower and the *Centenary Monument* on the Main Square since 1974. The composition by Miklós Varga of Miskolc, built from geometric shapes, is in increasingly poor condition, with only a single remaining plaque preserving the names of the Lenin Metallurgical Works and the Diósgyőr Machine Factory, who donated this work to Újpalota in the capital's centenary year.

The 18th District – part of Budapest also since 1950 – consists of two parts: Pestszentlőrinc and Pestszentimre. It has a population of approximately 95,000. It is primarily a residential suburb. Budapest's Liszt Ferenc International Airport is located here. Among its few public sculptures (61 in total), the *monument to the 1848–49 War of Independence* (1998) in Kossuth Lajos Square is particularly noteworthy, created by Gyula Pauer, one of the most original and significant creators of modern Hungarian fine art. He spent his youth in the Lőrinc housing estate and had his first studio there in a basement room in a block of flats of the housing estate. The three-meter-high black granite stele features an unusual portrait of Lajos Kossuth on one side and the other depicts Sándor Petőfi and a poem by him. The *1956 Memorial* (2012, F. Attila Kovács) is a monumental five-meter-high structure in Hargita Square, made of almost two and a half thousand 18x18-centimeter basalt cubes with the name and date of birth of the heroes of '56. On festive occasions, one-meter-high flames burn on top of the monument. In 2002, the *Armenian-Hungarian Military Memorial* was unveiled in Uzsoki Square (sculptors: Ibolya Török, Gabriella Csanádi) in memory of the Hungarian prisoners of war deported in the last months of the Second World War (a similar monument was unveiled in Yerevan in 2004). At the edge of Kossuth Lajos Square, stand *The Seven Hungarian Chieftains* (1999, Ottó Frick), wooden statues dressed in clothes of the period of the Hungarian Conquest, with swords, coats of arms indicating the clan, and with faces that have distinct oriental features. Of course, some socialist realist public statues also found their way to the Lőrinc housing estates, for example, the seated *Reading Woman* with charming, young face (1966, Mihály Németh) in front of one of the elementary schools in the Lakatos Road housing estate. At least ten similar statues of reading women are scattered in Budapest, most of them in the socialist realist style (Ferenc Kovács, 1963; Géza Fekete, 1975; Lenke Kiss,

Statues in Public Spaces

1965; while the classicizing version of the interwar period, a statue by Alajos Stróbl is in the City Park). Considering the historical and political significance of 1956, there are few public statues in Budapest, despite the fact that local governments have been trying to make up for this deficiency over the past two decades. Most of the monuments erected are unworthy of the events of 1956 in spirit and design. The 18th District monument truly preserves the memory of the revolution and the names of the victims, including those of 59 residents of the district. One of Mykhailo Kolodko's popular mini-statues also found its way to the 18th District, on the road to Liszt Ferenc International Airport on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the namesake's birth (2018). The statue of the world-famous composer sitting on a suitcase is accompanied by an airplane folded from a sheet of music. (The original statue is located in Uzhhorod.)

1994 saw the separation of Soroksár and its becoming the 23rd District while the 20th District regained its original name "Pesterzsébet", the Hungarian version of the name of Queen Elizabeth. Pesterzsébet has a population of approximately 64,000. After 2000, the image of the district changed significantly thanks to the restoration of many of its historic buildings, the creation of parks, and the erection of public sculptures. Since 1909 the statue of Lajos Kossuth (Richard Füredi) has stood in front of the Town Hall, built in 1905–1906. At that time, Pesterzsébet was an independent town, but this statue is considered to be the first public statue of Kossuth in present-day Budapest. The seated bronze statue of the district's namesake, with her skirt spread out, stands on a low pedestal in Kossuth Lajos Square (*Queen Elizabeth*, 2004, János Meszlényi Molnár), with her favourite dog at her feet. Previously, only a simple limestone memorial stone had commemorated the namesake in Szent Erzsébet Square since 1996. In addition to the usual monuments and cliched socialist realist public sculptures, the district has an unusually high number of non-figurative public sculptures in line with contemporary fine arts approach. These (nine pieces) are sculptures by János Vizsonyi, partly organic compositions, most of them built from geometric-constructive motifs. Tibor Wehner, an expert on the subject and art historian, rightly laments the absence of sculptures of similar tone and execution from other public spaces of Budapest (*Metszéspont*, 2009; 28 Közműhelytelep street). He created the non-figurative composition *Memento Vivere!* commemorating the 1956 revolution (corner of Helsinki Road – Lenke Street).

The public sculptures in the other districts are essentially similar to those presented above. The districts between those with the most (between 500 and 1000) and the fewest (between 38 and 71) sculptures have between 100 and

= 103 =

400 public sculptures. There are monuments commemorating the First and Second World Wars, 1848 and 1956, busts of public figures, religious and socialist realist sculptures, genre sculptures s (miniature sculptures), modern and non-figurative sculptures. There are few created by artists who are recognized in art history, and many by those supported by the current political power. Few are sophisticated and high-quality, and many are undemanding and low-quality.

Public spaces have always been the scene for representations of the ruling political regime, and this is what public art, especially public sculpture, serve. In the changed framework of social publicity in the 20th – 21st centuries, they should not be ideological tools of manipulation but means of community-building, taking into account local specifics. Budapest essentially remained unaffected by the changes in fine arts that took place in the 20th century, as suggested by the sculptures erected in public spaces, showing a continuity with the values of 19th century feudal society and interwar conservatism.[9] There are, of course, rare exceptions (e.g. the work titled *Warming Stones* erected by the Városi Tájkép Group on Móricz Zsigmond Circus in 2003).

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Katalin S. Nagy

The significance of shopping centres in the cityscape

In Hungary, including Budapest, the construction of large shopping centres – plazas – started late. Compared to other major European cities, department stores offering a wide range of goods only opened late, in the second half of the 19th century and at the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries. All this is related to the economic and social conditions in Hungary. In several of his studies, historian Gábor Gyáni[1] analyses the reasons for the delay in building department stores in Budapest and the difficult founding of market halls. The neo-Gothic building of the Central Market Hall was opened on the Pest side in 1897, followed by the first market hall in Buda on Batthyány Square in 1902. In 1896, the Holczer Simon Fashion House opened on the ground floor and first floor of 9 Kossuth Lajos Street, furnished in a "completely foreign style". It was considered to be of unusual size (another floor was added in 1903) and employed 150 people. In 1911, the first department store opened on Andrássy Avenue, with a name already indicating the nature of the institution: Paris Department Store (Párisi Áruház). Those built between the two world wars followed German rather than French architectural models (for example, Corvin Department Store, 1926), and did not follow the new modernist trends that were developing at that time.

1   Gyáni, Gábor: Középosztályi fogyasztási kultúra és az áruház. Budapesti Negyed 16–17 (1997/2–3): https://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00003/00014/gyani.htm (04.12..2024)

Image 25: Budapest, Fővám Square with the Central Market Hall (1904) (Source: Fortepan / Deutsche Fotothek / Brück und Sohn https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Vásárcsarnok [04.12..2024])

According to Gábor Gyáni[2], the spread of department stores in Hungary was hindered by consumer culture, suspicion, the lack of a large middle class, and the values that characterized the existing bourgeoisie. The values and lifestyle of the aristocracy and the wealthy bourgeoisie were reflected in home design and material culture. The middle class was imitative rather than innovative. It copied the aristocratic anti-department-store attitude, and the shopping habits and strategy of the middle-class women in Budapest hindered the spread of modern department stores. Michael B. Miller[3] is the first representative of the concept that connects the image of the department store and consumption with bourgeois identity. The department store plays a key role in mass consumption, the proliferation of bourgeois culture, and the importance of material goods in the petty bourgeois lifestyle.

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2 Gyáni, Gábor: Középosztályi fogyasztási kultúra és az áruház. Budapesti Negyed 16–17 (1997/2–3): https://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00003/00014/gyani.htm (04.12..2024)
3 Miller, D.: Material Culture and Mass Consumption. Oxford, UK: Berg, 1987.

The department stores that have survived since the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century are still important elements of the cityscape today (the history of the Corvin Department Store and the Fashion Hall over several decades is an instructive story in terms of their appearance, visuality, and change in prestige). Some of the many shopping centres built during forty years of socialism disappeared as a result of the social and economic changes that occurred in the nineties, some of them underwent numerous functional changes, some of them were transformed and continue operating as malls. Most of them have retained their cityscape significance, and several are still prominent central buildings and visual elements of the district where they are located and cater for the population of the district. The department stores built between the end of the 19th century and the interwar period were nationalized after 1948 (Corvin, 1926; Verseny, 1882; Csillag, Lottó, 1934; Úttörő, demolished in 1998 – 2006; Otthon, converted in 1957 and opened in 1961).

Image 26: Verseny Department Store at the corner of Rákóczi Street and Síp Street (1976)
(Source: Fortepan/FŐFOTÓ https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Verseny%20áruház
[04.12..2024])

Opposite the Nyugati railway station, the most modern building of the era in terms of Hungarian technical standards, the polygonal Skála Metro, was opened in 1984, which is still considered elegant in the literature today. Its facade is sound and light filtering glued tinted glass walls. In 1976, Flórián Shopping Centre (housing the two-story Centrum Department Store) opened to cater for the thousands of people moving into the new, concrete, high-rise blocks of flats near the Árpád Bridge (1950). In her book, Istvánné Hoffmann[4] considers Flórián Shopping Centre and Skála Department Store as the forerunners of Budapest's shopping centres. A department store with distinctive exterior design was built in Újpest in 1952, and Sugár Shopping Centre opened on Örs vezér Square in 1980, surrounded by huge housing estates. Many people consider it to be one of the first modern shopping centres in Budapest. In terms of its architectural solutions and multifunctionality, this shopping centre is most similar to later malls (although it was only two decades after its opening that services typical of malls, such as restaurants, a fitness centre, and a bowling alley were added). This is no longer of Soviet-style, its latticed skylight-domed inner passage anticipates the spatial organization of later plazas.

Shopping centres were built one after another in the outer districts as well, in Pesterzsébet, Kőbánya and Kispest (the latter was built using special, top-down construction technique in 1985).[5]

In most of the shopping centres built in the 1970s and 1980s, it is as if "time has stood still." Despite the renovations and refurbishments, the feeling and atmosphere typical of that era remained, which Czech philosopher Karel Kosik summed up as follows: "socialism is a society of mediocrities". Under socialism, urban development in Central and Eastern European countries, including Hungary, differed from that of cities in capitalist countries. Since the regime change in the nineties, the transformation of Budapest has been particularly striking – the city has joined the globalization process, primarily through the rapid construction of shopping centres, their services, their range of goods, new office buildings, office centres and the neon signs of large international companies. Our planet "became urban" in the last decade of the 20th century (according to David Clark[6]). One of the symbolic elements and locations of global urbanization

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4 Sikos T. Tamás – Hoffmann Istvánné: A fogyasztás új katedrálisai. MTA Társadalomkutató Központ, 2004. https://real.mtak.hu/92690/7/08954.pdf (27.08.2024)
5 Sikos T. Tamás – Hoffmann Istvánné: A fogyasztás új katedrálisai. MTA Társadalomkutató Központ, 2004. https://real.mtak.hu/92690/7/08954.pdf (27.08.2024)
6 Clark, David: *Urban World/Global City*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

is the shopping centre or, as it is commonly called in Hungary, the plaza. Their appearance led to significant spatial restructuring and rearrangement.

Following the model of American and Western European shopping centres, plaza construction began in Central Europe, including Hungary, mainly in Budapest, in the early nineties.

In the United States, building of shopping malls outside cities began in 1916 (most often referred to is the Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri, built in 1922). The first suburban open-air shopping mall, called Northgate Mall, opened in 1950 in Seattle, Washington State, with 80 stores. The Southdale Centre, opened in 1956 in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, is considered a milestone as it is the first completely indoor regional mall. It was designed by Victor Gruen (1903–1980), a Viennese architect, whose principles regarding shopping centres are still influential in the literature to this day. According to Victor Gruen, "shopping is a necessity for everyone, but for many it is also a pleasure." From this he derived the basic principles of mall architecture. In his opinion, and in the view of most architects who follow his footsteps today, the architectural and interior design of shopping centres should serve consumper recreation (shopping, leisure). He was convinced that dirty, untidy, often neglected, ugly city centres can be made more civilised and rationalised through shopping centres, and with appropriate architectural designs, aesthetic execution, harmonious interior spaces, and cleanliness they can become role models for their surroundings. They can become ideal city centres within modern metropolises. The first mall in Europe, the Main-Taunus-Centre in Frankfurt, opened in 1964. The use of terminology in theories[7] relating to shopping centres is not uniform, nor are the criteria for their typology. In this article, we primarily focus on the physical factors of shopping centres: the characteristics of the site and the immediate surrounding; the architectural appearance; the exterior facade; the construction, and the attractiveness. Shopping centres, the "cathedrals of consumption" (Sikos T. – Hoffmann 2004[8]) have been examined and analysed from many different perspectives[9], mostly from the perspective of the operators (tenants), the

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7   Without any claim to being complete, e.g.: Reikli Melinda: *A bevásárlóközpontok sikerének kulcsa*, PhD dissertation (consultant: Bauer Gyula). Corvinus University of Budapest, 2012.
8   Sikos T. Tamás – Hoffmann Istvánné: *A fogyasztás új katedrálisai*. MTA Társadalomkutató Központ, 2004.
9   Without any claim to being complete, e.g.: Carter, C. Review Articles: What We Know About Shopping Cen ters. *Journal of Real Estate Literature*, 2009.17(2), 163–180. https://doi.org/10.10 80/10835547.2009.12090261 (04.12.2024) Eppli, Mark – Benjamin, John D., The Evolution of Shopping Center Research: A Review and Analysis. *Finance Faculty Research and Publications*. 44., 1994. https://epublications.marquette.edu/fin_fac/44 (04.12.2024)

customers (shoppers) and the products (supply), as well as from the perspective of communication (functions, types of use, interactions). Expertise in interior space structure and interior design is also significant. At the same time, there is no adequate interpretative framework, theory or research on the buildings themselves as architectural objects and their defining role in the cityscape. Plaza buildings are carriers of physical, aesthetic, and symbolic elements and characteristics that can culturally transform the image of their environment. The synergies (interaction, cooperation) of the components can modify the mood of visitors and shoppers. Naturally, the creation and operation of plazas generate debates and criticisms among a wide range of social science experts and journalists. Sometimes there is even extreme rejection (for example, Miklós Tamás Gáspár called visitors to the shopping malls around Budapest "mall rats" [slang he borrowed from English and American dictionaries]), and Judit Bodnár, in her book about Budapest written in English at the turn of the millennium, rejects shopping malls with hostility.[10]

Before 1996, no Western-style shopping malls could be built in Budapest. Attempts were made to build department stores (such as Sugár and Flórián), as the consumer behaviour typical of capitalism had already proliferated in Hungary in the 1980s. (Research by Ferenc Hammer, Tibor Dessewffy, and Istvánné Hoffmann.) When the desire to build shopping malls skyrocketed, owners and clients in Budapest preferred suburban locations to downtown locations. The quality of the city centre and the green belt environment of Buda, the character and prestige of existing built environment influenced the work of developers, investors, and designers in shaping the exterior of shopping malls.

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10 Reikli Melinda: *A bevásárlóközpontok sikerének kulcsa*, PhD dissertation (consultant: Bauer Gyula), Corvinus University of Budapest, 2012.

Image 27: Budapest, Örs vezér Square, Sugár shopping centre (1983) Source: Fortepan / Magyar Rendőr https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Sugár%20üzletközpont [04.12..2024])

1996 saw the opening of Duna Plaza in the 13th District and Pólus Centre in the 15th District, which was developed by Trigránit. They were not yet gigantic in size; they were walkable and easy to access by public transport. This period was followed by the largest wave of mall construction in Hungary, including Budapest. In 1998 alone, 12 shopping centres opened across the country, four of them in Budapest: Mammut I., Rózsakert, Eleven Centre, and Lurdy Ház (the latter initially consisted mainly of shops, but is now more of an office building and event centre. From the outset, Mammut has been not only a shopping centre but also a place where visitors can restaurants, cinemas and pleasant, spacious interior spaces.) The most significant, largest, and most visited shopping centres in Budapest include WestEnd City Centre opened in 1999 at the Nyugati Railway Station, Campona in Budafok and Árkád at Örs vezér Square in 2002. Aréna Pláza opened on the site of the former hippodrome near Keleti Railway Station in 2007, followed by Allee in 2009 on the site of the former Skála Department Store in the 11th District. 2010 saw the opening of Corvin Plaza as part of the Corvin Promenade, which has been Budapest's largest real estate development project since 2004, and the largest inner-city renewal program in Central Europe. In

2002, there were 25 shopping centres in Budapest, while by 2007 this number had grown to 42.

In 2004, the International Association of Shopping Centres (ICSC) distinguished three main types: indoor centres a.k.a. "malls", open-air centres, and hybrid centres. The definition of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), formulated in 1947, also lacks any reference, criteria or conditions relating to the building itself. Even definitions in which the building appears as a factor are too general and the given characteristic cannot be used for shopping centre's design. For example, in a 2008 book: it is "a coordinated architectural ensemble that may consist of buildings of various shapes and types"[11]. In accordance with Hungarian literature: "a shopping centre is an architecturally uniform, commercially designed, jointly operated and managed complex that serves a given catchment area".[12] Most of the definitions do not include the building, not even in passing. Even in classifications based on their appearance (e.g. stand-alone store, commercial park, shopping mall, regional centre, etc.) the characteristics of mall buildings are not mentioned (SIKOS T., 2004[13]). LEVY and WELTZ (2008)[14] classify shopping centres into nine groups; they do mention the buildings, however, they do not discuss their architectural characteristics. When writing about the plaza as a city, as a regulated public space, its internal structure, spatial design and interior furnishings (design), the aesthetic and visual aspects are naturally discussed, but the exterior, level of visual culture, aesthetic appearance and message of the buildings are unmentioned. As if neither the designer nor the client nor the operator nor the public were interested in visuality. Yet even the pioneering Victor Green explained that the exterior and interior of shopping mall architecture should be designed to regulate the behaviour, shopping habits, and communication of visitors. This led to an increased attention paid to the interior spaces and interior design (furniture, colours, etc.), while the impact of the exterior, materials, forms, and stylistic features of the building has been almost completely overlooked.

11 KRAMER, Anita et al.: *Retail Development*. Fourth Edition. Washington D.C.: ULI Development Handbook Series, 3–97, 131–305, 2008.
12 SIKOS T. Tamás – Hoffman Istvánné: *A fogyasztás új katedrálisai*. Magyarország az ezredfordulón. Budapest: MTA Társadalomkutató Központ, 61., 2004.
13 SIKOS T. Tamás – Hoffman Istvánné: *A fogyasztás új katedrálisai*. Budapest: MTA Társadalomkutató Központ, 2004
14 LEVY, Michael – WEITZ, Barton A.: *Retailing Management*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill International Edition, 2008.

In Budapest, shopping centres were built primarily not in the neglected outer districts with few shops or in areas suitable for brownfield investment, but in the inner city, in the green belts of Buda, in green residential areas, near the western gate of the capital (while the eastern part of the city is still largely underserved). In the city centre, in the heart of the city, there is the WestEnd City Centre (Nyugati Square) on the Pest side, and Mammut I. and Mammut II. (at Széna Square) on the Buda side. Both are located in busy areas, in central locations in terms of transportation. Next to WestEnd is Nyugati Railway Station, opposite Mammut is a coach station and a car park. (Before the construction of the malls, coaches to the settlements around Budapest departed from here.) Brownfield investments: WestEnd in the 6th District was a neglected rust zone of the Hungarian State Railway Company (MÁV), with railway tracks, warehouses, and repair shops. Next to the Mammut shopping centre in the 2nd District, closer to Széll Kálmán Square, there was not only the bus station, but also the Fény Street market and other buildings, including a popular restaurant (the infamous Margit körút Military Prison used to stand here). The central office building and the Great Hall of the Ganz Electric Works used to be in the vicinity (in Fény and Kisrókus streets, etc.). Both malls fundamentally changed their neighbourhoods, and play a significant role in the cityscape. WestEnd City Centre, in cooperation with the Terézváros district municipality, emphasizes its function as a public space: it provides a venue for private events at the traditional Terézváros Festivals (Jókai Square, Liszt Ferenc Square), and the district's schools can hold their annual opening ceremonies there. Thus, the shopping centre clearly strives to become an integral part of the district both symbolically and in terms of fulfilling a cultural public function. WestEnd City is the country's largest combination of a commercial centre (with nearly 400 shops), an office building, and a hotel (the five-star Hilton, now Crowne Plaza Budapest: with a glass curtain wall stretching across the entire height above the entrance, with a skylight at the top. The hotel's exterior façade features a unique, sculptural decoration consisting of three sections of box-shaped bay windows running along the first floor). The mall houses a 14-screen multiplex cinema, and a three-hectare roof garden with trees, flowers and sculptures. At the Nyugati Square entrance there is a twenty-meter waterfall with decorative fountains. The spatial structure of the building and its indoor streets are modern, and the designers, led by József Finta, were awarded several domestic and international prizes. The facade of the acute-angled building complex on Váci Road, widening

towards the Ferdinand Bridge, is uniform and yet varied. Its red brick cladding is combined with glass. The complex is rather modern than postmodern.

Mammut I, the first downtown shopping mall, sparked unusually heated debates among developers and architects, while the marketplace built in conjunction with the mall project proved to be a resounding success despite its cheap structures and environmental alienness. The block-like plaza was eventually accepted by critics, and became extremely popular among visitors. The building is introverted, with its interior designed more carefully and structurally than its exterior.. At the end of Margit Boulevard, Mammut II was built next to Mammut I in 1998 (and then the first one was expanded in 2001). Mammut II has an articulated exterior, its entrances are prominent, the main entrance is transparent and hints at a green world inside. The building is made predominantly of monolithic reinforced concrete, with a steel support structure for the glass roof and steel curtain walls.

The two-story Rózsadomb Centre (2000) is located in a green residential area in Törökvész Road on Rózsadomb – considered by many to be one of the most beautiful parts of Budapest. In addition to a range of brand-name stores, it offers its users a wide range of services and sporting opportunities. The building itself is a reinforced concrete structure. Due to the significant terrain slope, two to four levels of the building are located below ground level. The main supports of the Centre's roof structure are curved.

Not far from it, in Gábor Áron Street, is the Rózsakert Shopping Centre, also in the prominent green belt of Buda.

Close to both, at the foot of Rózsadomb in Szilágyi Erzsébet alley, the four-story Budagyöngye Shopping Centre offers exclusive services. It opened in 1994 as the first shopping centre in Buda on the site of the former Budagyöngye Market. The atrium-like design further highlights the special product range adapted to the demanding neighbourhood. The four-storey building houses 120 stores, in line with the sophisticated neighbourhood (Pasarét). Uniquely, pets are also welcome (there is a pet pharmacy and pet food store).

Similarly, MOM Park, which fits in with the tranquillity of Hegyvidék, is located in a pleasant environment in Buda, on Alkotás Road, 12th District. It was built in 2001 on the site of the once world-famous Hungarian Optical Works. In the vernacular of Pest, it is referred to as a "posh, bourgeois plaza" due to its more expensive range of goods and the 166 elegant, sophisticated apartments it contains. The eight-story Hillside office complex was opened next to it. The two buildings have ushered in a new era in the life of the district and

are visually connected to the buildings belonging to the Hungarian University of Sports Science on the other side of Hegyalja Road. MOM Park won an award in the intensive green roof category. The primary target population of these shopping centres is the better-off, living in better circumstances, i.e. the stratum traditionally called the upper middle class (just like in the 19th century, when department stores were created to satisfy their material needs and tastes). MOM Park shopping centre in the 12th District of Buda, a.k.a. a "Bourgeois Plaza" – which is also outstanding in terms of the quality of its range of goods – has a counterexample, the Lurdy House in the 9th District, Pest, (opened in 1998 on the site of the former Horse Market Square at the corner of the Hungária Boulevard) is called "sweatpants mall". It is also referred to as a "Socialist Teddy Bear Pants Fashion Show" Plaza, or Working-class Plaza, referring to the composition and disadvantaged social situation of the population of the outer 9th District.

In Budapest, the shopping centres built in the inner districts, on valuable green areas, and residential areas do not follow the traditions and customs of Western European capitals. There are no plazas on Vienna's Ringstrasse, the Grand Boulevard in Paris, or in the centres of London, Rome, or Prague. In Berlin, there is a shopping mall on Potsdamer Platz, close to the city centre, as Berlin, divided into two for decades, is searching for its identity again. Mammut and WestEnd City Centre, built in the heart of Budapest, in the bourgeois city centre, on the Grand Boulevard, advertise themselves as city centres, built on white spots in the historic city centre, on plots that had been vacant for decades. They are alien to their environment, do not fit in the rows of 19th – 20th-century buildings, and their presence illustrates the violent existence of consumer culture and a plaza culture that does not fit into the fabric of the city.[15]

Not directly in the downtown area of Pest, but close to it, in a location easily accessible by public transport, in Futó Street next to József Boulevard in the 8th District, the four-story Corvin Plaza opened in 2011 as a continuation of the Corvin Promenade, which functions as a genuine pedestrian zone. The modern building's glass facade is a prominent sight in its surroundings. Right next to Corvin Plaza is the elegant Corner Tower with its clean facade and no frills, the third building in the promenade's office building complex, which has won several international and domestic architectural awards. On its facade,

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15   Sikos T. Tamás (ed.): *A bevásárlóközpontok jelene és jövője*. Komárom: Selye János Egyetem, 2017.

the rhythmic change of plastered and glazed surfaces shows a possible solution for modern perforated architecture. Those going to the shopping centre can view the modern building complex both together and separately. The decorative illumination of Corvin Plaza attracts attention, it is effective and convincingly manipulates colours. (The decorative illumination of Duna Pláza, Lurdy House, and MOM Park was designed and implemented by the same company.) It can be clearly stated that Corvin Plaza has significantly improved the poor image of Józsefváros, and stopped the slumification and gentrification of the area. The old tenement houses there have been renovated, and modern, designer buildings have been constructed around them. Corvin Plaza is the first in Hungary to function as a glass-roofed pedestrian street. Although there is not much green space on the Promenade, there is plenty in the huge inner courtyards and on the roof. In addition to the supermarket and the restaurants on the fourth floor, there are numerous services to attract customers.

In the 1960s and '70s, housing estates were built one after another in Budapest in order to solve the housing problem, and home-making factories churned out panels. Multifunctional shopping centres were established to serve new residents of these high-rise buildings. In the 1990s, some of them were renovated and converted into shopping malls. Others were demolished and replaced by new plazas. The provision of malls in large housing estates is uneven. A significant proportion of Budapest's housing stock, approximately a quarter, is located in prefabricated housing estates, with approximately 22-23% of the population living in these areas[16] (Csizmady 2007), therefore the services provided by shopping centres play a significant role. The literature on the typology of shopping centres in Budapest (Sikos T. – Hoffmann 2004), takes into account the characteristics of shopping centres operating in housing estates, mainly due to the nature of their catchment areas.[17]

Before 1996, Sugár, built near the Örs vezér Square metro and HÉV terminal stations, was the largest shopping centre in the country. It opened in the 14th District in 1980, and the shops and service units were organized around an indoor central square in a way that was different from the usual interior design of department stores of the time – another "first" in the country. In addition

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16 Csizmady Adrienne: *A paneles lakótelepek revitalizációja*, 2007. http://www.tarsadalomkuta-tas.hu/site/kkk.php?TPUBL-A-777/kotojelek2002/TPUBL-A-777.pdf (15.07.2024)

17 Sikos T. Tamás – Hoffmann Istvánné (2004): Typology of Budapest shopping centres. *Földrajzi Értesítő* (53) 1–2. booklet, 111–127. https://www.mtafki.hu/konyvtar/kiadv/FE2004/FE20041-2_111-127.pdf (15.07.2024)

to the residents of the Füredi Road and the Örs vezér Square housing estates, with their range of goods, the shops also catered for the residents of the eastern agglomeration of Budapest and commuters to the capital. Today's Sugár Shopping Centre also has a fitness centre and a playhouse. It is located at one of the busiest hubs in Budapest, next to the popular Ikea, which also attracts visitors.

Opposite the Örs Vezér Square metro terminal, on the Kőbánya side of the square (10th District), the popular Árkád 1 shopping mall was built in 2002, followed by Árkád 2 in 2012. These are considered the most modern retail complexes in Hungary. Örs Vezér Square had been a nondescript suburban area before the M2 metro line was opened in 1970, after which bus terminals were built on the site of today's Árkád. Approximately 82 thousand people live in the rapidly growing residential areas, so it was entirely justified to build first one (2001–2002) and then, a decade later (2012–2013), the other shopping centre. The two shopping malls are one of the largest employers in the area. Árkád 2 is not a separate building but a new wing connected to Árkád 1 in the direction of Gyakorló Street to the east (you can walk from one to the other almost without noticing the difference). The design of the new wing is different from that of the older one (this is most noticeable in the side corridors). With a similar name Arkad company opened the largest shopping centre of the southern Great Plain region in Szeged, another one with 120 stores in the heart of the centre of Pécs in 2004, and the one in Győr at a transport hub, on the site of the former Hungarian Waggon and Machine Factory Ltd. The Hamburg-based owner group operates Arkad Plazas in several European cities, including Vienna, Berlin, and Basel. The mall's sound system is of particularly high quality in the gigantic modern buildings of Budapest.

Árkád 2 is located at the junction of Kerepesi Road, Fehér Road, and Nagy Lajos király Road, surrounded by housing estates, right in the centre of one of the most significant districts of Budapest. The cityscape in this area can be identified as diffuse, and the building of Árkád Shopping Centre reflects this through not standing out from or contrasting with its surroundings. It was built on a large plot of land and due to its long, incessant façade, has a fundamentally horizontal effect. The vertical base of the building is clad in silver-colour metal panels. The character of the building is determined by its black slate cladding and protruding stone surfaces.

Campona shopping centre in the 22nd District has to adapt mostly to the consumer habits of the people living in the Budafok-Tétény housing estates, and pay attention to local interests, because the area is relatively far from the inner

districts of Budapest and is not well served by public transport. The building complex is a modern example of a closed building complex. It was opened in 1999, far from the centre, between a main road and a railway line. "The whole thing is rather ugly; it has a bit of a socialist realist atmosphere" – such opinions are not uncommon about Campona. Its special feature is the Tropicarium and Oceanarium, where sharks, alligators, and exotic amphibians are on display, which are attractions for children in the city centre, as is the Palace of Wonders. During the renovation and enlargement of the mall, the external environment of the building will also be developed, and green roofs will be constructed on the new roof terrace. In exchange for the larger-than-usual development of the site, the owners of Campona undertook to renovate the playgrounds and green areas in the 22nd District's housing estates. They are increasing the range of leisure activities available in the plaza, which will function not only as a commercial centre, but also as a family experience centre. Campona got its name from the ancient Roman fort that had been located in the vicinity, demonstrating the wish to preserve traditions. The Budatétény railway station is located next to the department store. At the end of 2018, the owners of the mall presented their plans to renovate their Polish and Czech shopping centres and transform Campona into a lifestyle centre at a large-scale trade fair (there will be a panoramic roof terrace above the new gastronomic section, and a large park with trees, a playground, and relaxation areas will also be created). Budapest's southernmost shopping centre advertised tourist programs as early as 2019 and participated in the festivals and fairs of the 22nd District.

Csepel Plaza was built in the 21st District, in a housing estate zone in the centre of Csepel in 1999. This is the shopping centre that generated most of the negative reviews, e.g. "depressing atmosphere", or "there is a greater selection at village fairs". 2016 saw the beginning of its renovation: it got a fresh design, the facade was also modernized in line with a new aesthetic concept (facade painting and colouring, replacement of steel facade cladding, stone protection film). Around one hundred thousand people live in the catchment area of the shopping centre, most of them in the housing estates of Csepel, therefore international brand stores have opened (Aldi, H&M, Rossmann, etc.). They strive to create a family atmosphere, operate a playhouse, and organize children's programs. Nevertheless, frequent criticism includes: "second-rate services," "second-rate shopping centre," and "the stores are a bit neglected." Since 2007, cultural programs have been held regularly, primarily for younger age groups (in line with what urban sociology refers to as "how a mall becomes a cultural centre").

The Pólus Centre on Szentmihályi Road in the 15th District primarily provides services and shopping opportunities for residents of the Újpalota housing estate. It was one of the first shopping centres in Hungary. In 2012 it was enlarged and renovated, and its catchment area also grew. It was built on the site of a former Soviet barracks near the M3 highway, next to the Rákospalota cemetery, and the Újpalota housing estate. According to the typology of plazas in the literature, the Pólus Centre is a third-generation shopping centre. During the renovation, a trendy, perforated metal covering was installed, which is divided in places by vertical light strips. The original cladding was retained on the less visible facades. The main entrances were covered with glass roofs, while the less important entrances were covered with simple glass roofs. The huge sign was removed from the roof; the postmodern arches are spectacular. The building as a whole has become more modern and balanced.

The shopping centre on Kispest-Határ Road in the 19th District, known as Europark for twenty years from 1997, was renovated in 2018 in terms of technical, ergonomic, and aesthetic aspects, its exterior and interior were rebuilt, only the structure of the original building was retained. The new facade is made of steel. In 2017, the mall was renamed: Shopmark. The facade of the building is white and silver, and its carpark was also connected by an escalator.

Finally, we must mention Etele Plaza, which opened in 2020 at Kelenföld Railway Station, in the South Buda City Centre, in a residential area. It is Hungary's third largest and most modern shopping centre in terms of floor space. The exterior appearance of the building is defined by box structures that protrude and recede from the facade and are connected to each other. Architectural fora refer to it as Budapest's first smart plaza. It has a good location, falling within a zone of transport hubs and an area with high purchasing power. It was built on the largest multimodal hub in Budapest, connected to Kelenföld, Őrmező, and Sasad. The construction of smart plazas is already a trend in Europe, which means addition of digital functions and web shops. There are also green areas on the roof of Etele Plaza.

In Budapest, modern and postmodern architecture is in a marginal position, very few buildings with character and implementation typical of the 20th – 21st centuries have been built in the capital despite the shopping malls, office buildings and bank headquarters. No paradigm shift has taken place in this area either. Even if contemporary cutting-edge technology is used, this is not coupled with appropriately radical aesthetic solutions, modern or postmodern characters.

Now is the time to answer the questions of how Budapest's shopping centres as buildings relate spatially to their surroundings and how they connect to urban architectural complexes (streets, squares). From our point of view – malls in the cityscape – we are not concerned with whether they adequately fulfil their primary functions (shopping, leisure), but rather with their appearance, their exterior, their design, the quality of their exterior surfaces, their decoration, and their aesthetic execution. For us, therefore, it is their appearance, and their visual perception that are essential. Shopping malls have become elements of our everyday culture, valuable parts of our environment, reflecting of our present, and embodying the Hungarian worldview and environmental culture of the past two or three decades. The important questions are: whether the Budapest plazas have their identity and if so what kind; and whether they have characteristics that create a cityscape experience in their viewers. Plazas are large-scale visual elements, dominating their neighbourhoods. This also increases the significance of how they fit into an already established cityscape. (The book by American architect Kevin Lynch: *The Image of the City*, 1960, is also useful for our topic). The capability of adapting to changes in time (weather, time of day) is a relatively new requirement, which became apparent during the renovation of shopping centres built in the 1990s over the past decade and became a factor in the cityscape (glass walls, nighttime illumination).

The harmony between a plaza and its environment depends on the relationship between the mass of the building and the surrounding space (external space), the type of built-in space, and the interrelationship of open spaces. In most of Budapest's plazas, either the space or the mass is subordinate. It is very difficult to articulate what makes a building and its external space balanced, what makes this relationship perceived as harmonious and orderly, and when is it chaotic and disorderly. Budapest's plazas are not characterized by moderation and proportionality; the buildings are usually overcomplicated by their designers. A characteristic duality is the application of a modern or postmodern approach. In this case, modern means linearity, the use of geometric shapes, and the emphasis on order. Brick and stone facades, solid block-like structures, and nostalgia for the 19th century worldview are typical for these buildings. Postmodern facades feature semi-transparent glass and curtain walls, organic, varied, and more individual elements. The appearance is not determined by orthogonal arrangements or the rationalism of straight and perpendicular lines, which is why a building is perceived as less orderly (in fact, it maintains a balance between order and chaos). In contrast to the monotony

of housing estates, the more varied and complex appearance of plazas are more effective than that of simpler, linearly organized shopping centres. The plazas built in the city centre and in green belts contrast with the surrounding urban fabric and do not take into account the architectural traditions of previous eras.

Several Hungarian architectural firms believe that the exterior of plazas is usually uninteresting and indifferent to visitors and users, and even designers do not consider exterior design to be of primary importance. They pay much more attention to the elaborate design of interior spaces, the refined, modern, and effective design. Interior spaces became of paramount importance both architecturally and visually in the 19th century, ever since cities, streets, and public spaces moved into shopping malls. It is the period spanning from classicism to eclecticism when the design of interior spaces became important, almost simultaneously with an increase in size (the first examples: the Passage des Panorames in Paris and the Burlington Arcade in London, followed by the Great Market Hall in Budapest). The origins of shopping centres go back a long way, all the way to the Rome of Emperor Trajan. According to the literature, in modern times plazas have taken over the orientation role of churches, and it is often possible to identify which city and which part of the city a shopper is in based on their appearance.

Literature

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Katalin S. Nagy

The image of housing estates

The image of Budapest – similarly to other cities belonging to the so-called socialist camp (Berlin, Leipzig, Bucharest, Warsaw, Cluj-Napoca, etc.) – changed significantly in the sixties and seventies as a result of the rapid construction of housing estates. Today, these are defining features of the visual culture of Central and Eastern Europe. They even influence the visual experience of younger generations who are no longer connected to the architecture and material culture of socialism. The concept of housing estate is not uniform, and the definitions from architectural and sociological perspectives are diverse and multi-layered. In 2005, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office proposed the following definition: "A complex of medium- and high-rise residential buildings and rows of houses, mostly built using prefabricated technology in recent decades."[1] According to sociologist András Ferkai, "a collection of residential buildings that are uniform in terms of time and style and form a unified settlement that can be distinguished from other buildings in the given settlement or part thereof."[2] According to Olaf Gibbins, a designer of several renowned Berlin housing estates, a housing estate consisting of multi-storey houses is characterized by the amount of at least five hundred apartments and high development density to reduce the large-scale housing shortage. For the urban population, it is important that they are built of concrete and can be clearly distinguished from suburban and colonial-style developments. In Eastern Europe, including Hungary, all social classes can be found there.

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1 KSH (2010). *A mikrocenzus fogalmi rendszere.* https://web.archive.org/web/20100214134431/http://konyvtar.ksh.hu/kiadvanyok/Foglalkoztatottsag_es_munkanelkuliseg/ofa6/phrase.html (15.07.2024)

2 Ferkai András (2005): *Lakótelepek – A mi Budapestünk.* Városháza Kiadó, Budapest. https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/VaroshazaKiado_0112/?pg=13&layout=s (15.07.2024)

In Budapest, the great wave of housing estate construction took place between 1961 and 1975. Its objective was to eliminate the quantitative housing shortage, while at the same time to significantly improve housing comfort, as all apartments were fully equipped. The standard of the housing stock therefore increased considerably. From the mid-eighties, the architectural and technological quality of the housing estates also improved. Around 1990, the work that had begun was completed, and then the housing factories were shut down. According to various surveys, the most popular, most desirable, and most expensive housing estates are: Gazdagréti (11th District), Pók Street (3rd District), Káposztásmegyeri (4th District), Őrmezői (11th District) and in recent years, Lajos Street in the 3rd District, Pillangó Street in the 14th District and Gyöngyösi Street in the 13th District. The largest housing estates in Budapest are: Füredi Road (58 thousand residents), Kelenföld City Centre (53 thousand residents), Újpalota housing estate (38 thousand residents) and Óbuda-Békásmegyer housing estate (38 thousand residents). The vast majority of the capital's residents believe that housing estates are necessary, that the housing stock should not be demolished but renovated and improved, the environment should be made liveable and the buildings should be beautified and varied.[3]

The 1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th and 7th districts, that is the inner-city core and city centre, are characterized by historic development. Budapest is typically surrounded by a ring of housing estates, clearly oriented outward, mainly toward the peripheral districts (10th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 22nd districts). Geographical and natural conditions also imposed limitations, with no expansion towards the Buda hills, while the Pest plain offered opportunities for unrestricted expansion.

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3 Ferkai András: *Lakótelepek – A mi Budapestünk.* Budapest: Városháza Kiadó, 2005. https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/VaroshazaKiado_0112/?pg=13&layout=s (15.07.2024)

Image 28: Budapest, Pók Street (Római Road) housing estate, panel houses in Torma Károly Street (Source: Fortepan / István Péterffy https://fortepan.hu/hu/ photos/?q=Pók%20utcai%20housing estate [04.12..2024])

In addition to the technical and energy-related problems, criticism of housing estates often focuses on their grey, dull appearance, the monotony of their architectural and urban landscape, and the loss of prestige resulting from their ugliness. It is no coincidence that renovation programs for prefabricated buildings have not only focused on modernizing sanitary blocks and replacing windows and doors but have also placed great emphasis on aesthetic considerations. Housing estates are basically green spaces; many of those who choose to live in a housing estate and do not want to move away consider this to be an essential element of the housing estate identity. They would like to have as many trees, vegetation, continuous green areas, parks, and pedestrian streets as possible in their surroundings. Over the past fifteen years, the public spaces of prefabricated housing estates have undergone a spectacular renewal in terms of their appearance and the size and quality of their green spaces. In many places, representative recreational areas (for example, the Kárpát Street housing estate, the green park of the Árpád-bridgehead housing estate, the Kassák housing estate), pedestrian walkways, and playgrounds (e.g., a playground with a ship-shaped jungle gym, 13th District) have been created with unique visual elements, decorative paving, street furniture, carefully groomed flower beds, and renovated pavilions (for example, in József Attila housing estate). It is no coincidence that many professional fora write about the renaissance of housing estate aesthetics.

Aesthetic aspirations in the design of public spaces have been much more noticeable since the early 2000s than in the 1960s and 1970s, inseparably linked to the more demanding nature of cities, including Budapest, in terms of their level of civilization, commercial supply, economic transformation, and changes in lifestyle.[4]

Everyone agrees that the renovation and modernization of prefabricated housing estates and buildings is indispensable and should proceed at a much faster pace than it has been for the past decade or two. In Sweden, which has a population of nearly similar size, there are just about twice as many housing estate apartments as in Hungary, but 820,000 out of 912,000 apartments have already been renovated, while in Hungary only 50,000 out of 551,000 have been renovated.[5]

Renovations serve not only technical and energy-saving purposes, but they also the general atmosphere and enhance the visual and aesthetic experience. Top floors are being removed from some of the identical ten-storey buildings, so their view is not uniform and boring, dominated not only by horizontal structuring. The uniform flat roofs are raised, and new attics of different shapes are created. The architectural elements of the buildings are emphasized, and the unfilled, unadorned facades are being decorated. Doors and windows are made more varied in shape. Cleaning the facades and building decorations and restoring crumbling plaster makes the prefabricated buildings, which have become dirty and darkened over the decades, more beautiful and attractive. Facade renovation is spectacular when balconies (which often present a depressing sight) are refurbished and new balconies are built to break up the otherwise monotonous surfaces.

The replacement of the exterior plaster coating of buildings is usually necessitated by their technical condition, but replacing fragmented, crumbling, dirty cladding is also very effective aesthetically, pleasant, and improves the atmosphere. Painting house walls in bright colours is becoming increasingly popular. Antal Nemcsics, professor of colour theory at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, designed the "concrete grey concrete jungle" colour scheme in the framework of several housing estate reconstruction projects, taking into account the laws of colour dynamics,[6] and creating a harmonious

4   Csizmady Adrienne: *A lakótelep*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2004.

5   Novák Ágnes: *Paneles lakótelepek és épületek felújítása – Kitekintés – 1. rész: Svédország*. https://urb.bme.hu/segedlet/panel/15-Tanulmanyok-Novak_Agnestol/sved_panel.pdf (15.07.2024)

6   Nemcsics Antal: *Színdinamika. Színes környezet tervezése*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990.

relationship between colour, people, and environment. Not all panel colouring in Budapest is exemplary; the connections between the constructional structure of buildings and colour harmonies are usually not taken into consideration, and often the new colour scheme does not match the original plastering systems. Sometimes, unreasonably garish, tasteless colours are used. There are some Hungarian star architects who oppose the colouring of panel houses, believing that it cannot change the monotony of housing estates. The visual problems of prefabricated housing estates must also be solved in order to improve the well-being of residents. Experience shows that even the price per square meter of apartments can increase as a result of sophisticated, well-executed facade colouring. A positive example is from 2016: the Újpest (4th District) Municipality had commissioned standard designs for painting the district's prefabricated housing estates. In Csepel, painting plans were made for 14 prefab areas in 2018. The second longest panel house in Budapest, a nine-story ribbon building built in 1968, is located on Etele Road in the 11th District. The whole structure was repainted in shades of warm yellows, browns, and steel blues, the coloured individual sections "jigsaw" into each other, thus creating an interesting network on the walls of the building. It was insulated too, the windows and doors were replaced, but the most striking and beautiful feature is the cheerful, harmonious, and innovative painting of the façade in its simplicity. (It would be a good idea to transform Budapest's longest prefabricated housing estate in Szőlő Street, 3rd District, Budapest, from its grey monotony into a colourful one in a similar way.) Among the international examples, Berlin stands out, where numerous innovative facade paintings have proven how much added value can be created by the combined effect of a wide variety of subtle colour shades. Obviously, the colour scheme of housing estate buildings is not the most important issue in complex prefabricated housing rehabilitation, but it is still important from the point of view of the cityscape and image, as it can significantly influence the well-being and mood of city dwellers.[7]

In the sixties, socialist realist mosaics, sgraffitto, and enamel paintings on the walls of houses, and reliefs above their entrances played an important role in the visual world of housing estates, even if few of them were constructed. These decorations had an ideological rather than aesthetic function. Significant sculptors also made reliefs in housing estates, for example Tibor Vilt, the grand master of modern art (Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Road housing estate, 10th

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7   EGEDY Tamás: Kis kedvencekből mostohagyerek? *Beszélő*, 2005. 10.

District). As the buildings grew taller, such characteristic features, works with artistic intent, were forced into the background. From the production of reinforced concrete blocks, from the first panel house built in Dunaújváros (then Sztálinváros) in 1959 until the 1980s the objective was to construct as many apartments as possible. The prefabrication wave did not require decorations, no attention was paid to the exterior facades, and the identical, boring large surfaces were not disrupted by visual elements. Function was the primary factor, in fact, the taste of the socialist realism of 1949-1953 ("Stalin Baroque") no longer affected the exterior of prefabricated buildings. In the 15-year housing construction program launched in 1961, the monotony, the boring variations in panels did not take into consideration the impact or appearance of the buildings. Now the flatness of the facades of panel blocks is solved by large-scale renovations involving the use of colours, protruding balconies, and windows cut into firewalls while the bleakness is eliminated by decorations, works of fine art, and frescoes on the firewalls. Marble and glass mosaics re-appear (numerous examples could be mentioned from Berlin). Marble and glass mosaics that cover and decorate built spaces and buildings have long roots in the history of fine arts. In the sixties, there were still experts who knew the techniques of mosaic art, so they were able to produce mosaic decorations on freshly constructed four- or five-story buildings of the housing estates.

The issue of ornamentation is controversial in urban architecture as well. Until recently, modernism considered ornamentation to be anti-aesthetic and socially unacceptable (postmodernism has since restored its status). The organic movement in Hungary also designed new types of prefabricated buildings with floor-to-ceiling patterns to combat uniformity (e.g., György Csete). In 1975, the tulip debate erupted in the weekly magazine Élet és Irodalom with an attack by architect Máté Major and then continued in 1976 in the journal Magyar Építőművészet.[8] After the experiments with decorations in Pécs, the buildings of the Paks housing estate, constructed from 1973 onwards, were decorated with a variety of motifs to make them more diverse. They were inspired by natural forms, aiming to create harmony with nature and environment, and to this end, decorative motifs of folk and peasant arts were also used. The tulip debate is named after the silhouettes of the headstones in Szatmárcseke-Kötse, which

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8   See: Simon Katalin: A tulipán-vita - Lakótelep – humánum – organikus építészet. *Iskolakultúra* 2006(6), 13–27. https://real.mtak.hu/57637/1/EPA00011_iskolakultura_2006_06_013-027.pdf (04.12.2024)

inspired Pécs painter Ferenc Lantos to use them as motifs on the panels, creating the effect of tulip names.

The wire graphics[9] on the side walls of the two houses of the Izzó housing estate are rare. They were created in 1973 by Sándor Mikus, a favoured artist of the cultural policy of the period. According to several experts, they are a typical social realism style building decoration (*Going home after work*).

The reliefs (György Ugray) and entrance decorations (Klára Herczeg) on the buildings of the Kerepesi Road housing estate, created in 1956, have survived and can also be classified as social realism works. In the same year, 1956, Ödön Metky, Gábor Boda, and Sándor Kiss created the gate decorations for the three- to six-story buildings of the Lágymányos housing estate, which are square ceramic reliefs. Various series depict animals, flowers, people, and mythical creatures, and surprisingly, there are also non-figurative compositions among them.

Image 29: Budapest, the buildings of the Kerepesi Road housing estate in Bolgárkertész (129.) Street, on the left Bolgárkerék Street. (1960) (Source: Fortepan / Samodai József Zugló Local History Workshop https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Kerepesi%20Roadi%20 lakótelep [04.12..2024])

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9   Handmade wall decoration made of wire.

Although a separate chapter is dedicated to public sculptures in this book, the sculptures of housing estates need also be mentioned here as they are special attractions among the multitude of high-rise panel houses. Very few of them are the work of significant sculptors who are registered in Hungarian art history. One of these is the five-figure *Fountain of Peace* (now the *Fountain of Youth*) in Fiastyúk (formerly Thälmann) Street housing estate in the 13ᵗʰ District, a decorative fountain, erected in 1960 and the only public work in Hungary by Márk Vedres (1870–1961), a sculptor recognized throughout Europe. (Some of his public sculptures were erected in Italy and Switzerland.)

In the 1950s and 1960s, in the case of state-owned housing investments, it was mandatory to commission public artworks, statues, murals, and other building decorations worth one thousandth of the amount invested. As a result, during the housing estate construction boom of the 1960s, a large number of sculptures were placed among prefabricated buildings and in front of buildings and at intersections (for example, the statue of the *Girl with a Jar* by Jenő Kerényi in 1967, and the statue of the *Cubs* by Gyula Kiss Kovács in the Torontál Street housing estate in the 14ᵗʰ District). These sculptures were made by famous masters, well-known in Hungarian history of art. In 2017, at the comprehensive exhibition on the period between 1958 and 1968 organised by the Hungarian National Gallery, a lifelike three-dimensional prefabricated building was erected in the reception area leading to the exhibition, as a characteristic symbol of that era. The importance of the "architect" motif was also reflected in the exhibited works (for example, László Gyémánt: *Construction*, 1965, the theme is prefabricated buildings and the technical equipment used to construct them). Jenő Kerényi's sculpture entitled *Socialist Culture* could be considered a model example of the sculptures placed in housing estates. They depict workers, reading women, some are classicizing statues of a mother with her child while cheerful animal statues, such as Sándor Boldogfalvi Farkas's one-and-a-half-meter-tall pair of penguins (1958) in the socialist realist housing estate built along Üllői Road, are rarer. The *Penguin Family* by Pál Borics was placed in the housing estate on Lakatos Road in the 18ᵗʰ District in 1966. Mihály Németh's usual *Reading Woman* was erected at the Lakatos Road school also in 1966. In 1968, the number of sculptures in Lakatos Street housing estate increased by two more (István Szabó Jr.: *Mother with her Child* and Lajos Ungvári: *Sitting Woman*). All three works are carefully executed, pleasantly unremarkable, pleasantly boring, clichéd, and in line with the state-sponsored expectations of cultural policy in the visual arts. In addition to political will and the goal of "educating the people,"

another consideration was the utilization of open spaces in Budapest's housing estates. Playgrounds, rest areas, sports fields, and public parks were built (mainly after 1965), and sculptures were erected around them.

The seventies were the era of large prefabricated buildings. These were more barren and monotonous than the housing estates of the socialist realism (1950–1953) and "long sixties" (1956–1970) eras due to the poor variety of building panels. The seventies were the decade of concrete, which could not be offset by increasing green areas, tree plantings, and public parks (for example, the Bikás Park in the Kelenföld housing estate). Open spaces became smaller, and the placement of sculptures was also curtailed, but the placement of works of art in housing estates was still supported by the state (even more so in several other Comecon countries than in Hungary, especially in Romania and Bulgaria). The 2.2-meter-high bronze statue of the *Horseman* in Nezsider Park in Kacsóh Pongrác Road housing estate in the 14th District was erected in1977.

Between 1980 and 1990, demand for housing estate apartments declined significantly. The newly built housing estates (in Gazdagrét, Pók Street, or Őrmező) are more modern and of better quality than the previous ones. The sculptures are also more sophisticated, with non-figurative, abstract compositions and more modern sculptures compared to the classicist approach no longer being rare. Sculptures returned to the streets, and some of them were positioned at intersections, indicating the changes in their role. Although open spaces decreased and fewer playgrounds were built, cast street furniture, concrete paving stones, and coloured concrete slabs appeared. The number of newly erected sculptures decreased significantly compared to previous decades. The public sculptures of the Budapest housing estates of the 1980s are extremely mixed in terms of aesthetics, style, and quality; there are still many works that represent an academic spirit, but there are also more progressive ones. Another characteristic feature is the monotonous, clichéd works that are not related to the history and characteristics of the given part of the city; there are few works that convey sovereign, individual ideas. The main problem, not only with the public sculptures of the housing estates but also with those in Budapest in general, is the disregard for space and physical criteria (material, mass, form). In the Gazdagrét housing estate, which was built between 1983 and 1989, the copper sculpture *Mother with Child and Dove of Peace* by Henrik Bolba and the *Basalt circular sculpture* by Sándor Kecskeméti were erected at the same time as the estate was established, and then two more sculptures followed in 1990 and 1991. At the same time, in Újpest, two one-meter bronze sculptures entitled

Summer by Pál Kő and *Autumn* by Bernadett Szilágyi were placed in front of a housing estate house in Leibstück Mária Street in 1983 and 1984.

The importance of locality became apparent as early as the 1970s. The district councils, and after 1991 the local self-governments, supported the artists living in the district and commissioned public works from them. This is how the sculptures of the young avant-garde artist Gyula Pauer came to be installed in the 18ᵗʰ District Lőrinc housing estate. He himself lived there with his family and set up his studio in a communal room on the ground floor. His three-meter-tall granite monument entitled *The freedom fighter of 1848–49* has stood on Kossuth Lajos Square since 1998.

Budapest is not a city of fountains, although the use of water provides a combination of relaxing, decorative and aesthetic experiences. Fountain depictions are known from times as early as 2000 BC, they also became widespread in the Islamic world, and in Europe they came back into fashion in the court of King Louis XIV of France, in aristocratic gardens and parks. Few fountains were built in Budapest between the two world wars (for example, one in 1923 on Erzsébet Square, which was renovated in 1960 and 2009). The most popular fountains in Budapest are: the *Danaids Fountain* on Szomory Dezső Square in the City Centre, the *Cubs Fountain* in the 2ⁿᵈ District on Nagy Imre Square, the *Lion Fountain* on Vörösmarty Square in the 5ᵗʰ District, and the renovated musical fountain with its evening illumination on Margaret Island. In the housing estates there are few fountains, they mainly started to be built in the early 2000s, such as in Rákospalota (15ᵗʰ District) or the one in the 16ᵗʰ District Centenárium housing estate. Some were built in the 1950s (for example, the fountain-sculpture by Sándor Szandai, a *Female nude with a child*, in front of the blocks of flats on Nagy Lajos Király Road in the 14ᵗʰ District. In 1991, Ádám Farkas's *The Power of the Earth* in the Gazdagréti housing estate, in 1985, the *Seals' fountain* on the József Attila housing estate).

Image 30: Danaids Fountain (Ferenc Sidló, 1933) on Szomory Dezső (previously Biermann István) Square. On the left is Sütő Street, on the right Bárczy István Street (1966) (Source: Fortepan / Artfókusz https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?q=Szomory%20Dezső%20 Square [04.12..2024])

The emergence of small commercial and service sector units induced significant changes in the image of housing estates, the colourfulness of their visual culture, and the complex re-evaluation of the residential environment. First, the communal ground floor rooms (baby stroller and bicycle storage, laundry, dryer, etc.) were transformed into food shops, then into business premises catering for everyday needs of the population (hairdresser's, clothing repair shops, shoemaker, real estate agent office, etc., later car mechanic, computer repair shop, bank, etc.) Architects were originally not allowed to design shops or shopwindows

on the street fronts of prefabricated houses, thus their absence contributed to the lack of stimulation and to the monotony of housing estates, the problems of the residents' well-being, and the humdrum provision of services. From the mid-eighties, and then after the regime change, changes accelerated, with retail chains and service providers offering their range of goods similar to those in the city centre, thus the construction of department stores, restaurants, and cultural centres began. Commercial and service units played a prominent role in the urban reconstruction programs of housing estates (see Adrienn Csizmady's research). The visual appeal of shopwindows, advertisements, company signs, various inscriptions, and posters became similar to the visual tools, pictorial, and verbal communications of the retail chains in traditional built-up areas. For the time being, there are fewer designer portals in housing estates, but change is moving in this direction.

In the 1960s, only one or two retail units appeared at the bottom of prefabricated buildings, but from the 1980s onwards, they formed rows of shops. After the 2000s, more and more independent shops were established in separate buildings in housing estates. These changes in themselves indicate the transformation of housing estates designed solely for residential purposes, bringing them closer to traditionally built-up urban areas. The shop windows display a wide variety of goods, and it is possible to see inside most of the shops. In recent years, the development of pedestrian streets has also begun, and spectacular shop windows play an important role in their creation.

Today, even the best-known types of retail stores – shops, department stores, discount stores, supermarkets, and shopping centres – can also be found on housing estates. This modernization process has a pivotal role in the changes in the image of housing estates as well. The enrichment and diversity of the living environment have contributed to improving the well-being and quality of life of the residents of housing estates. When the rehabilitation of housing estates began, the modernization of residential buildings, and the renewal of public spaces, urban planners and architects often stated in their strategic studies that "large housing estates are the attractive districts of tomorrow" (for example, in relation to Csepel-Városközpont and the József Attila housing estate).

As slowly, almost barely, the physical environment of Budapest's housing estates altered in the sixties and seventies, as significantly this process has accelerated in the past two decades. The shop windows and signs of small businesses, various advertising spaces and billboards, street furniture and sculptures erected in public spaces, the renovation of green spaces, and the

construction of playgrounds have improved the quality of the housing estate environment (also in aesthetic terms), reducing the general neglect and shabbiness. There are still some unsuitable prefabricated housing estates, but the trend is undoubtedly towards renovating the exterior facades of buildings and modernizing the environment, making it liveable and ensuring sustainable development.

According to the findings[10] of research assessing the architectural image of Budapest, the Castle District, the Buda Hills, and the historical districts (City Centre) are the most popular and the most beautiful, while the outer districts of Pest are considered backward, poor and neglected. The housing estates built in the sixties, seventies and often even in the eighties are uniformly labelled "social realism", they are neither liked nor considered modern. They are rejected because of their monumentality, overcrowding, and poor environment. When asked about their opinion of prefabricated housing estates, half of those surveyed voted to maintain and renovate them, while half would demolish them. Three-quarters are opposed to tower blocks higher than ten stories. The basic demand of Budapest residents is to increase green space, especially in housing estates.

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<div align="right">Andrea Dúll</div>

Urban and environmental psychology

"At any moment, the city contains more than the eye can see and the ear can hear…"

"Throughout history, the city has always been the cradle of human civilization and progress"

As early as 1948 Italian architect Bruno Zevi wrote about the "natural" relationship between psychology and architecture, or rather, the lack thereof: "the completely superficial simplification of the process was described as follows: just as the (rationalist) Greek temples of the Periclean era were followed by the Hellenistic (baroque) ones, the (rationalist) monuments of the Roman Empire were followed by the baroque of decline, the (rational) romanticism by the (romantic) gothic, Renaissance intellectualism was replaced by the Baroque of the 17th and 18th centuries, and even after that, the classicist movements of the 19th century were replaced by the Romantic movement – just as, according to the laws of history, functional rationalism is inevitably followed by organic Romanticism. In reality, this argument […] does not take into account the fact that there is nothing romantic about it, but rather, on the contrary, it is scientific: it is a requirement of modern psychology."[2]

In relation to the city as a built formation, urban science, urban planning and psychology can also be brought into an "natural" relationship. "Throughout

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2 Zevi, Bruno: *Az építészet megismerése*. Budapest: Műszaki Könyvkiadó. 1964. (166.) [Zevi, Bruno: Saper vedere l'architettura. Saggio sull'interpretazione spaziale dell'architettura. Torino: Einaudi. 1948.]

history, the city has always been the cradle of human civilization and progress"[3]: since the Neolithic period, the geographical and social formation of the city has provided a framework for coexistence and cooperation for fairly large groups of people, exceeding family scale.[4]

The ancient city "had everything we call culture: (…) where craftsmen, princes, and kings lived, where temples were built, and priests, officials, and artists worked, where writing and technology were known."[5] The mission of the city is to "transform power into form, energy into culture, inanimate matter into artistic symbols, and biological reproduction into social creativity."[6]

In antiquity, the city was essentially order itself: the cities of Rome, Byzantium, Jerusalem, Mecca, Medina – in addition to their practical role in providing orientation and organizing life – were also the earthly manifestations of the sacred order and permanence. In advanced cultures, even an entire city could become sacred, such as Meshed in Iran or Lhasa in Tibet. The city also meant permanence and stability from the very beginning: "Even if we do not know what Enoch, the city of Cain, was like, one thing can be claimed with considerable certainty: it was surrounded by walls. A hundred or one hundred and fifty years ago, a city without a protective wall was as rare as a garden without a fence today. The English word "town" is related to the German word "Zaun" (fence). A city is a fenced area. In the Roman Empire, the usual term for a city dweller was "intramuranus" – i.e. one who lives within the walls. The German word "Bürger" (city dweller, citizen) attests to the fact that the city and the castle (Burg) were once considered synonymous. (…) How natural it is for the mayor of a metropolis to welcome the participants of a congress 'within the walls of our city', even though these walls were demolished 150 years ago. For seven thousand years, the 'city' and the 'wall' were closely linked – one hundred and fifty years of industrial development have indeed destroyed this connection, but the language preserves it to this day"[7]. "Kassa wants rights because it is a city. It has stone walls and houses. It has a church, a chapel and a hospital. It has

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3 Declaration of Delos, in *Urbanisztika*, edited by VIDOR, Ferenc. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1979. (162)

4 MUMFORD, Lewis: *A gép mítosza*. Budapest: Európa Kiadó. 1986. [MUMFORD, Lewis: *The myth of the machine*. Chicago: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1967.]

5 GOMBRICH, Ernst Hans Joseph: *Az ősidőktől a közelmúltig*. Budapest: Vince Kiadó. 2001. (30.)

6 MUMFORD, Lewis: *A gép mítosza*. Budapest: Európa Kiadó. 1986 (78.) [MUMFORD, Lewis: *The myth of the machine*. Chicago: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1967.]

7 SCHNEIDER, Wolf: *Városok Urtól Utópiáig*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1973. (23.) [SCHNEIDER, Wolf: *Überall ist Babylon. Die Stadt als Schicksal des Menschen von Urbis Utopia*. Berlin: Econ Verlag. 1960.]

twenty-six guilds, a barber and an apothecary. The time when it was still a royal village is over. The city has grown like a man. It has strength and shape. That is why it wants rights."[8]

(Socio)psychological factors therefore – indirectly, of course – were already present in relation to ancient cities. "To the ancient essence of cities – although they have always changed and grown – the notions of stability and permanence also belonged, strengthening the (…) feelings of protection, security, and orientation."[9]

The city – in the form assumed today – appeared much later in human history. Until the 18th century – when the development of large cities began – urban architecture and design essentially took into account only the practicalities of housing, city defence, fire safety, transportation, and production. Obviously, these structural-functional features were directly and indirectly linked to human (i.e. psychological) aspects (e.g. need for security, sense of community, or lack thereof, health and comfort needs, etc.), which city planners – given that the science of psychology was only born in the 19th century, and environmental psychology dealing with cities only in the 20th century[10] – attempted to take into account, albeit unconsciously.

In the 18th century, as cities grew in size, a number of problems that still characterize large cities today became increasingly apparent: difficulties in the field of health, security, architecture, transportation, etc. Some of these issues could be resolved with physical planning tools: for example, roads had to be built, buildings had to be built faster and for a larger population, sewerage was needed, and so on. Although long a long time the solution to urban difficulties was seen primarily in meeting architectural and physical requirements (e.g., constructing buildings of appropriate size from suitable – e.g., non-flammable – materials, creating roads of sufficient width and surface, and so on), it became increasingly obvious and apparent both to builders and everyday people that these problems also have numerous latent and/or manifest psychological implications. One of the non-scientific, rather (moral) philosophical aspects of this is the urban utopias[11] that have accompanied the entire history of urban architecture – naturally with

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8   Márai, Sándor: *A kassai polgárok*. Budapest: Révai Könyvkiadó. 1942. (56.)
9   Granasztói, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48. (42.)
10 Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései – Helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés*. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.
11 Lippai, Edit and Dúll, Andrea: Városutópiák környezetpszichológiai elemzése. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 58. no. 4. 2003. 431–472. https://doi.org/10.1556/MPSzle.58.2003.4.1

different approaches and different emphases – i.e. the notions of the "good/ideal city – good/ideal society". From the perspective of the psychological approach to the city, it is very exciting that Renaissance or Baroque urbanists (e.g. Leone Battista Alberti) indirectly (utopianly) took into account factors that could be considered psychological (and at the same time aesthetic) in their real or imagined cities, such as "the desire to influence, the need for greatness, the representation of power"[12] in order to make people in ideal cities become better (more moral, more religious, healthier, more orderly, etc.)[13]

The city as an ambivalent entity

Since the 1960s and 1970s, (large) cities have been viewed with some ambivalence by both social science and ordinary people. The need expressed by professionals (primarily architects and urban planners) to involve psychology in urban planning and development and, in general, in the understanding of urban processes, also played a role in the emergence of environmental psychology[14] in the 1960s.

Psychological research on the city began with social psychology studies of the behaviour of city dwellers, for example, helping behaviour (or more precisely, its conspicuous absence in urban environment)[15], and with field studies. According to the findings, city dwellers are less helpful to their fellow citizens, which was explained by the overly stimulating, "overloaded" nature of the urban environment. The early 20th century sociological[16] and late 20th century

12 Granasztói, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48. (37.)
13 Lippai, Edit – Dúll, Andrea: Városutópiák környezetpszichológiai elemzése. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 58. no. 4. 2003. 431–472. https://doi.org/10.1556/MPSzle.58.2003.4.1
14 For the history of environmental psychology see Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései – Helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009. Dúll, Andrea: A környezetpszichológiától az ember-környezet tranzakció tudományig – áttekintés az elmúlt (majdnem) 30 évről. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 76. no. 3–4. 2021. 727–745. http://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2021.00050 Dúll, Andrea: Ember-környezet tranzakció viselkedéstudományi kutatások: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 78. no. 4. 2024. 471–484. https://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2023.00086
15 Milgram, Stanley: A nagyvárosi élet élménye. Pszichológiai elemzés. In. *Együttérzés, önzetlenség, felelősség,* edited by Szilágyi, Vilmos. 37–57. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó. 1980. [Milgram, Stanley: The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis. In *Psychology and the Problems of Society*, edited by Korten, Frances F., Cook, Stuart W., and Lacey, John I. 152–173. American Psychological Association. 1970. https://doi.org/10.1037/10042-011]
16 Szelényi, Iván, ed.: VÁROSSZOCIOLÓGIA. Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó. 1973.

psychological[17] (not yet environmental psychology!) theories and interpretations dealing with the city initially took this view. In rather simplified terms, cities were treated as places of excessive physical and social stimulation. According to social psychological research (environmental psychological studies have also underpinned this), the environmental load of the large city[18] is typically too intense, too complex, and too novel for the human perceptual and attentional system: it overloads people with its physical and social stimuli. Every day, city dwellers have to cope with the fact that such a very complex, large-scale sociophysical environment overstimulates their senses, exhausts their nervous system, and challenges their skills of emotional, cognitive, and social interaction. The big city can thus easily become a place alienating to people, which can be overwhelming due to its sheer scale and the crowds of people living in it, thus generating tension and fear[19]. According to social psychological research, this may be behind the "depersonalisation effect" of metropolitan life, which in turn is behind urban-social pathologies such as loneliness, i.e. the lack of meaningful and deep relationships and/or the decrease in empathy and helpful behaviour. This also manifests itself in such spectacular and simple behaviours as city dwellers hurry more, or at least try to give the impression of moving quickly and purposefully through their behaviour, look less often at others in the street and return their gazes less frequently, maintain fewer and rather formal relationships with fellow human beings, and are much less likely to help those in need. This is therefore a struggle with the stress of metropolitan environment, which happens both consciously and unconsciously: it can manifest itself in avoiding confusing streets, crowded public spaces and busy roads; in immersing oneself in reading, listening to music, or tapping away on one's phone on public transport; and even intense psychological processes can be triggered, such as withdrawing from situations or perceptual avoidance (for example, one does not notice or is already used to situations when someone is in trouble), which may be one of the

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17 Milgram, Stanley: A nagyvárosi élet élménye. Pszichológiai elemzés. In. *Együttérzés, önzetlenség, felelősség,* edited by Szilágyi, Vilmos. 37–57. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó. 1980. [Milgram, Stanley: The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis. In *Psychology and the Problems of Society,* edited by Korten, Frances F., Cook, Stuart W., and Lacey, John I. 152–173. American Psychological Association. 1970. https://doi.org/10.1037/10042-011]
18 Mehrabian, Albert: *Public Spaces and Private Places.* New York: Basic Books. 1976.
19 Milgram, Stanley: A nagyvárosi élet élménye. Pszichológiai elemzés. In. *Együttérzés, önzetlenség, felelősség,* edited by Szilágyi, Vilmos. 37–57. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó. 1980. [Milgram, Stanley: The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis. In *Psychology and the Problems of Society,* edited by Korten, Frances F., Cook, Stuart W., and Lacey, John I. 152–173. American Psychological Association. 1970. https://doi.org/10.1037/10042-011]

underlying processes of failure to provide assistance. At the same time, numerous research findings indicate that in many cases it is the intense, overloading nature of the urban environment that appeals to a significant proportion of city users and greatly contributes to the formation of urban identity. They are the urbanophile (city-lovers), as opposed to the urbanophobic[20] people who prefer primarily natural environments and do not like the city. An urbanophile, i.e. a city-loving person, has positive attitudes towards the city and prefers the typically urban characteristics (diverse, bustling, noisy) of physical places. Urban attitudes are also manifested in behaviour: for example, urbanophiles have less difficulty ignoring urban distractions and rudeness – they are able to preoccupy themselves in the urban whirlpool and do not seek societal disorders in the city. An urbanophobic, anti-city person has the exact opposite attitude: they consider cities to be polluted, crowded, burdened with traffic problems, and a violent environment, thus they prefer natural environments.

Due to the overwhelming and psychologically stressful nature of cities, ordinary people often thought (and still think) of large cities (especially in contrast to nature) as places of noise, crowds, dirt, crime, long, time-consuming journeys, and a lack of clarity. This is particularly important from a psychological point of view, as most people define themselves in terms of the rural-urban dimension[21] – the city (the settlement) is an important part of self-definition, a distinguished identity element[22] in life.

Kevin Lynch and the mental image of the city

Since the late 1950s, a positive psychological perspective has emerged in urban planning, thanks to the work of urban planner Kevin Lynch. According to him, "the city conceals more than the eye can see or the ear can hear at any given moment – various sections and perspectives that are waiting to be discovered."[23]

In his seminal work *The Image of the City*, Lynch examined the images how residents of three major American cities — Boston, Los Angeles, and Jersey

20 Urbanophile-urbanophobe typology: Félonneau, Marie-Line: Love and Loathing of the City: Urbanophilia and Urbanophobia, Topological Identity and Perceived Incivilities. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24. 2004. 43–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(03)00049-5

21 Dúll, Andrea: A helyidentitásról. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 36. no. 4–6. 1996. 363–391.

22 Proshansky, Harold M. The City and Self-Identity. *Environment and Behavior*, 10. no. 2. 1978. 147–169. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916578102002

23 Lynch, Kevin: *The Image of the City.* Cambridge: MIT Press. 1960 (1.)

City – formed their image of the city. As an urbanist, Lynch had developed a rich, psychologically-based methodological repertoire for studying the urban environment, which is very important because he was the first to emphasize that understanding the people in the built environment of a city is as important as the built environment itself. Lynch's methods cannot be considered specific environmental psychology procedures, they are rather based on general psychological perception and methodological knowledge – for example, trained observers recorded characteristic landmarks (e.g., defining buildings) during regular field observations and conducted detailed drawings and on-site interviews with city residents about their use of the environment.

According to Lynch, the physical/built structures surrounding humans are inherently neutral, therefore the basis of urban planning and design should be the "cityscape" that exists in the minds of city dwellers and users, which is shaped simultaneously both by conscious architectural and urbanistic interventions and by everyday human experience. The field of environmental psychology was taking shape at that time[24], partly simultaneously with Lynch's work. *The Mental Image of the City* is a classic urbanistic work imbued with psychological knowledge and is also an important source of environmental psychological thinking about the city.

Urban planning and environmental psychology

Independently of Lynchian ideas, the nature of the relationship between environmental psychology and architectural sciences has been a formal issue for both psychologists and architects since the emergence of environmental psychology (officially 1970 is considered the year of its foundation)[25]. In the 1960s and 1970s, when environmental psychology – and one of its branches, architectural psychology – was emerging, there was frequent talk of a "marriage" between architecture and psychology in those parts of the world where a connection between architecture and psychology had been established at all[26]. There was (and still is) an intense debate about how and to what extent

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24 Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései – Helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.

25 See Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017.

26 Lee, Terence R.: Psychology and architectural determinism. Part 1. *The Architects' Journal*, no. 154. 1971. 253–262. 1971. "In Hungary, these two fields of science have not yet 'married' although

spatial sciences (including architecture and urban planning) and social sciences (including psychology) should be connected (for the sake of simplicity, psychology, which is at the intersection of social and natural sciences, should now be considered as a social science). In the 1990s, professionals working in the spatial sciences typically took the view that, although an interdisciplinary approach was interesting and challenging, the spatial sciences had a future separate from each other and from the social sciences and psychology: the accumulated knowledge of the sciences works well within the scientific fields. "In contrast, however, opinions emphasizing that it is essential to explore the meaning [of places, buildings, and objects for people] in relation to spatial sciences have become increasingly prominent, and ethnographic and psychological methods are indispensable in this regard. It has gradually become an important task to find a place for these methods in architecture, urban planning, landscape design, geography, archaeology, object design, etc." Currently, "the mutually stimulating cooperation between urban architecture and environmental psychology" is also taking shape in Hungary."[27]

"An interaction can arise between construction and use, in this case, between the way of urban construction and its psychological effects."[28]

In December 1972, in Budapest, a conference was organized by the II. Section of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Section of Philosophy and Historical Sciences) entitled "Social science research and social needs related

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they are already in the phase of close acquaintance," quoted by Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (14).

27 Dúll, Andrea and Pálfy, Sándor: On Public Issues and Public Spaces – A Design Course Focusing on the Danube Bank in Budapest. *Periodica Polytechnica Architecture*, 45. no. 2. 2014, 47–51. (2014: 51). https://doi.org/10.3311/PPar.7594. One of the main research directions of the Environmental Psychology Research Group operating at the Institute of Human-Environment Transactions at ELTE, a joint work of architects and environmental psychologists, is the interconnected application of urban planning and environmental psychology in urban research (see e.g. Balázs, Bálint, Alföldi, György and Dúll, Andrea: A helyi társadalom átalakulása Budapest elmúlt 150 évében: A helykötődés és hely szellemének kérdése a II. János Pál pápa tér és a Királyhágó tér környékének példáján. In *Budapest 150: Tanulmányok a főváros jubileumára*, Izsák, Éva and Dúll, Pál (ed.) 163–184. Budapest: ELTE TTK Földrajz- és Földtudományi Intézet Regionális Tudományi Tanszék. 2023.)

28 Granasztói, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48. (36.)

to urbanization; their significance for urban planning". The keynote lecture of the conference was given by the Ybl Prize-winning architect and author Pál GRANASZTÓI. The lecture was also published in the form of a study in 1974 in the Hungarian Psychological Review, entitled *The psychological effects of urban environment*: "For an architect, even if he is an urbanist, to talk about psychological effects is a task that requires explanation. He cannot have the same level of relevant psychological and sociological knowledge as psychologists and sociologists. [Experience, insights, and assumptions are] increasingly emerging [...] according to which the newer and growing artificial environment also has previously unknown or insufficiently recognized psychological effects [...]. Architects and urban planners [...] cannot conduct research in psychology and other related sciences themselves; their task is primarily to apply the knowledge of these sciences and, where necessary, to encourage other sciences to conduct further research into a number of issues that have not yet been sufficiently investigated. This role arises not only from the fact that only with sufficient knowledge of these aspects can they fully perform their tasks, but also from the fact that they necessarily monitor existing buildings, cities, and city districts: what kind of life goes on in them, how they are used, how they perform, [...] what psychological effects can be observed during their use. This is all the more important because it has an impact on further planning, thus creating an interaction between construction and use, in this case between the method of urban construction and its psychological effects."[29] GRANASZTÓI listed the following topics to be studied from a psychological perspective in urban planning (the list is surprisingly contemporary and timely!): the perception of the environment (using psychological terminology: environmental perception), emotional/affective effects, the need for a sense of security and community cohesion, and "what can be considered a fundamental psychological need: orientation"[30], the positive experiences caused by the change/renewal of the urban environment (as opposed to the oppressive effects of prolonged construction projects), the issues of heritage preservation, environment protection, the relationship with nature, and the issue of high-rise buildings. He strongly criticizes functional architecture, which he believes has caused serious psychological problems: "Feeling at home and having a sense of well-being are

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29 GRANASZTÓI, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48. (36. – insertion by DA).

30 GRANASZTÓI, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48.

just as much a 'function' as eating, cooking, sleeping, and traveling."[31] In addition to psychology, he highlights the role of urban aesthetics and urban sociology in (urban) architecture.

In the 1980s, several experts of architecture and urban planning highlighted the role of (social) science, including that of sociology, literature, and psychology (if not elsewhere, then at least) in scientific architectural/urban planning research and, conversely, they also emphasized the necessity of architectural research: "Architecture [...] encourages human relationships. This fact alone underlines the need for architectural research."[32] At the beginning of the 21st century, architect and designer Dezső Ekler directly wanted to include psychiatry (and sociology) in urban architecture: "How did city dwellers live in the 20th century? How did they live 100 years ago and how do they live today? This is the borderline area where psychiatry and (non-existent) architectural science and sociology should compare what they know. Was the life of people 100 years ago normal, and does it provide a basis for comparison with the lives of people today?"[33]

These questions about the city and the psychology of its users also suggest that the living nature of the city is only accessible to both ordinary people and urban planners and designers if they understand and take into account the mental images of the city that are formed in the minds of city dwellers and users (workers there, tourists, etc.). These are not obvious, not evident, not easily recognisable therefore not easily accessible, typically latent: i.e. images of *psychological* nature. This is precisely the point: people develop and maintain a very rich image of their city in their minds, which is not merely a mental projection, but a representation that is created through the use of the actual physical (urban) environment, i.e., it develops through the interaction between people and their environment, and this is how it functions. Psychological knowledge about the city has several functions: it serves as a basis for orientation in the real environment in terms of specific orientation (how to get to the market or the local government), identity (I am urban or rural, I am from Pest or Buda, I am from Zugló or Csepel) and culture (I am from Budapest, I am Hungarian, I am

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31 Granasztói, Pál: A városi környezet lélektani hatásai. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 31. no. 1. 1974. 36–48

32 Ryd, Horriet: The Need for Architectural Research. In *Research on Environment and People*, edited by Ulrich, Roger S., and Hygge, Staffan. 129–137. Stockholm: Swedish Council for Building Research. 1985. (137.)

33 Ekler, Dezső: Térrablás és mozgósítottság. A nagyvárosok hatása a lélekre. *Régi-Új Magyar Építőművészet. Utóirat/Post Scriptum*, 5. no. 28. 2005. 40–44. (41.)

European)[34]. The intertwined spatial and psychological nature of knowledge about the city, its use, and the urban lifestyle and the attitudes towards them (urban attitudes) emphasize the possibility and necessity of environmental psychology urban research. In environmental psychology perspective, the mental image of the city (knowledge, attitudes and behaviour) is therefore not a simple reflection of the urban/settlement space but a dynamically developing psychological structure. resulting from the interaction of the characteristics of the built (and natural, and nowadays even virtual, online) environment and psychological processes (attention, perception, memory, emotions, motivations) – in environmental psychology terminology: its transactions – a dynamically evolving psychological structure which, based on the above-mentioned functions, contributes to the emotional sense of security of city users (residents, tourists, workers, transients, etc.) and also plays a role in mental hygiene: it is the basis for city residents – to live their lives in a coherent, orderly, integrated, personal, and communal whole, in accordance with their needs.

Urban needs

Cities are associated with many and varied individual and socio-psychological needs. "An avenue lined with beautiful shops, where crowds drift by, other streets that are suitable for walking and satisfy the need for social interaction as well as the desire for luxury commensurate with one's own wallet, a large number of beautiful and good restaurants that offer physical refreshment and relaxation, squares where visitors are surprised by buildings and works of art of high artistic quality, and many other things not detailed here, all contribute to the favourable image of the city. If this is accompanied by good transport, adequate cleanliness, and accommodation that provides every comfort and is suitable for every social situation, a positive impression is guaranteed".[35]

Several attempts have been made to systematize urban needs. An urban-sociology, urban planning system[36] mentions the following list of needs: (a)

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34 Cf. Dúll, Andrea: A helyidentitásról. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 36. no. 4–6. 1996. 363–391.

35 Wagner, Otto (1911), quoted by Kerékgyártó, Béla: Egy vita tanulságai. Camillo Sitte és Otto Wagner a nagyvárosról. In *Társadalmi térben*, edited by Kerékgyártó, Béla. 211–216. Buda pest: BME Szociológia és Kommunikáció Tanszék. 2005. (215.)

36 Lynch, Kevin, and Rodwin, Lloyd: A Theory of Urban Form. In *Environmental Psychology: Man and His Physical Setting*, edited by Proshansky, Harold M., Ittelson, William H., and Rivlin, Leanne G. 84–100. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. 1970.

health, balance, survival, continuity, adaptation; (b) coherence, meaning, response; (c) development, growth, stimulus, choice, freedom; (d) participation, active use of power, efficiency, skill, control; (e) convenience, comfort. A specific system of environmental psychology[37] recommends taking six basic needs into consideration when designing and maintaining a city, with the remark that it is good to pay attention to these needs in advance, since an urban environment will definitely respond to them in some way (positively in the best case, negatively in the worst case): (1) need for safety; (2) need for orientation; (3) need for privacy; (4) need for social interaction; (5) need for comfort; and (6) need for identity. (See also: human-centred urban planning.[38])

The city as a field on environmental psychology research

Environmental psychology research on the city[39] – examining, inter alia, the psychological reflections and the needs of the city – began practically at the very dawn of environmental psychology. The first comprehensive environmental psychology work[40] on the subject was published in the mid-1980s. Environmental psychologists (and Lynch in parallel with them) came to the conclusion that in order to authentically and deeply understand urban behaviour, real problems and phenomena occurring in real urban environments must be researched, and for this it is necessary to step outside the laboratory setting, which was the only scientifically accepted setting in psychology at the time: "Examining the perception and meaning of such complex, real environments/objects as a city or a natural landscape, the essence of environmental psychology research is precisely the analysis of very complex, culturally context-dependent places/things of the real world changing in time and space […]. Only data obtained in the field provide authentic information about the places/things themselves"[41]

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37   Zeisel, John: Inquiry by Design: *Tools for Environment-Behavior Research*. Monterey: Brooks Cole. 1993.

38   Gehl, Jan: *Élhető városok*. Budapest: Terc. 2020. [Gehl, Jan: *Cities for people*. Washington: Island Press. 2010.]

39   Brail, Richard K., and Chapin, F. Stuart, Jr.: Activity Patterns of Urban Residents. *Environment and Behavior*, 5. no. 2. 1973. 163–190.

40   Krupat, Edward: *People in Cities. The Urban Environment and its Effects*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1985.

41   Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései – Helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés*. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009. (113.)

and the real manifestations taking place there – in this respect, environmental psychology has a pronounced environmental anthropology orientation[42].

International and domestic urban research in (environmental) psychology in the 20th century and in the early 21st century

In 2014, a volume[43] was published (which was a pioneering work in Hungary, born from the encounter between geography and environmental psychology), and in it a chapter has this sentence: "Systematic environmental psychological urban research has not yet begun in Hungary. The undisguised aim of this study is to encourage interest in it."[44] Since then, the interest in environmental psychology urban research has not emerged,[45] but in the Environmental Psychology Research Group at the Institute of Human-Environment Transactions at ELTE University – with numerous partners, e.g. RÉV8, Megakom Zrt. – its research programs are systematically conducted.[46]

Due to the limited scope of this study, only the topics of environmental psychology research related to the city in a list format are presented, by heading, without claiming to be exhaustive.

In environmental psychology, researchers deal with the description of existing cities and their characteristics, as well as the traces and representations of cities that have existed throughout history, and they even examine ideal, utopian, and planned, and "made"[47] cities.

There is research, for example, on the following:

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42 Dúll, Andrea: Környezetpszichológia, ökológiai pszichológiák, ökológiai antropológia – lehetséges kapcsolódások. In *Antropológia – Gondolkodás – Alkotás*, edited by Bali, János, Papp, Richárd, Povedák, István, Szász, Antónia, and Tomory, Ibolya. 62–84. Budapest: Magyar Kulturális Antropológiai Társaság (MAKAT). 2022.

43 Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva (eds): *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2014.

44 Dúll, Andrea: A város a környezetpszichológiában. In *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól*, edited by Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva. 159–184. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2014.

45 The list is based on: Dúll, Andrea: A város a környezetpszichológiában. *In Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól*, edited by Dúll, Andrea és Izsák, Éva. 159–184. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2014. For reasons of length and genre, this study does not include references in this section, but the previous list of topics have been supplemented and updated here.

46 Balázs, Bálint, Komádi, Mónika, Alföldi, György and Dúll, Andrea: Városi tér és biztonság: Városlakók általános biztonságérzete és a biztonságérzet fontosság szerinti megítélése Nyíregyháza példáján. *Scientia et Securitas*, 2024, 5:2, 239–252. https://doi.org/10.1556/112.2024.00207

47 Szirmai, Viktória: *„Csinált" városok.* Budapest: Magvető Könyvkiadó. 1988.

- environment perception characteristics (e.g. acoustic stimuli: e.g. noise, visual experience characteristics: e.g. enclosure, city skyline, ambient stimuli: e.g. smells);
- orientation/disorientation/legibility in the urban environment, the actual structure of the city and its "mental mapping," mental mapping
- emotional attitude towards the urban environment, urban aesthetic preferences, attachment to the city and attitudes towards the city, urban-rural identity
- urban mobility: vehicles, modes of transport, walkability
- (public) spaces, surroundings, neighbourhoods – social organizations and units in a spatial context
- civil participation in urban life, participatory space design
- the relationship between the city and nature, urban greenery, sustainability
- the city and its metaphorical (and possibly historical) "imitations" (coffee houses, department stores, shopping malls)
- alternative urban lifestyles (e.g., homelessness), social groups, subcultures, and their spatial manifestations (graffiti, street art), urban territorial behavior
- alternative urban forms: smart/sustainable/resilient/slow/creative/virtual, etc. cities

"The city and urban culture – as a host – have carried the viruses of their own destruction since the very beginning"[48]

Numerous studies "list" and research either together or separately the issues and problems related to the city, urban deviance, the experience of safety[49] or lack thereof, the opportunities and processes of transforming seemingly unsafe environments. Many have wondered why – while the metropolitan environment, tall buildings, technology, transportation that transcends spatial and temporal boundaries, numerous cultural opportunities and other metropolitan achievements represent in many respects the pinnacle of human creative activity – so many human and environmental problems occur in these environments.

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48 Cságoly, Ferenc: Az építészet útjai és tévútjai. In *Épített jövőnk*, edited by Finta, József. 127 160. Budapest: MTA Társadalomkutató Központ. 2005.

49 Balázs, Bálint, Komádi, Mónika, Alföldi, György and Dúll, Andrea: Városi tér és biztonság: Városlakók általános biztonságérzete és a biztonságérzet fontosság szerinti megítélése Nyíregy háza példáján. *Scientia et Securitas*, 2024, 5:2, 239–252. https://doi.org/10.1556/112.2024.00207

In 1998, *American Psychologist* published a thematic issue in which experts listed the (primarily destructive, stress-inducing) effects of city life on mental and physical health. and the possibilities of psychology's intervention in urban life *(Table 1)*[50].

Table 1. Urban factors influencing mental health

Environmental	air pollution noise pollution poisons (co, etc.) visual pollution excessive stimulation (overcrowding)	population density traffic difficulties accidents saturation withdrawal
Sociological, economic	crime, violence, gangs rural-urban migration housing problems overcrowding marginalization segmentation	poverty unemployment alternative economy industrialization modernization lack of community economic development
Psychosocial	social structure homelessness life complexity family breakdown, divorce rapid (social) changes acculturation, assimilation	social mobility cultural disintegration cultural confusion / conflict secularization social stress migration
Psychological	quality of life sense of coherence power and/or lack thereof marginality, alienation	rootlessness fear, anxiety identity isolation, loneliness

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50 Marsella, Anthony J.: Urbanization, Mental Health, and Social Deviancy. *American Psychologist*, 53. no. 6. 1998. 624–634. (627.)

One explanation – closely related to the overcharge theory – is that the city is simply overcrowded. When too many people use a space, then – just as in the case of territorial animals – access to resources gets difficult, undesirable interactions cannot be avoided, which leads to a sense of failure, aggression, discomfort, and stress. Early urban studies have already confirmed that people in crowded urban areas had less contact with both their neighbours and strangers, and overall felt a greater desire to avoid other people than those living in less crowded areas.

Another explanation is that the city is an ambivalent entity: "the image of the city is dual: it symbolizes order, freedom, and glory, but it is also a symbol of worldliness, the rejection of natural values, and oppression"[51]. The ambivalence of the city also appears in the papers of other authors: "The city [...]: symbolizes order, freedom and glory, but it is also a symbol of worldliness, the denial of natural values, and oppression"[52]. This duality is often expressed in the juxtaposition of the city and nature: "The negative myth of the inhuman city is contrasted with the positive myth of friendly nature"[53]. In 21st-century environmental psychology, the contradictions seem to be dissolved in the concept of urban nature (*urban green*[54]).

The scale of the problems associated with large cities has led to the idea that, in order to correct these problems, urban life must be renewed with complex psychological intervention strategies – systematic "urban therapy"[55] – for example, unique, special, or productivity-enhancing, stimulating urban environments designed on a psychological basis should be created in order to achieve a therapeutic effect. Nowadays, this, rather utopian, idea is no longer on the agenda, since the goal is not to "heal" the city or urban life, but rather to pursue a more "traditional" psychological approach: urban people should be supported in a way that environmental design helps them to live a healthy life. This has a reciprocal effect on the environment: people who enjoy a better quality of life are more likely to protect, maintain, and preserve their environment. This

51 OUDIN, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina Kiadó. 1980 (17.) [OUDIN, Bernard: Plaidoyer pour la ville. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.]

52 FÉLONNEAU, Marie-Line: Love and Loathing of the City: Urbanophilia and Urbanophobia, Topological Identity and Perceived Incivilities. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, no. 24, 2004. 43–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(03)00049-5 2004 (45.)

53 OUDIN, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina Kiadó. 1980. (20.) [OUDIN, Bernard: Plaidoyer pour la ville. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.]

54 Van den BERG, Agnes E., HARTIG, Terry, and STAATS, Henk: Preference for Nature in Urbanized Societies: Stress, Restoration, and The Pursuit of Sustainability. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63. no. 1. 2007. 79–96. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2007.00497.x

55 POLYÁK, Levente: Városterápiák. Új identitás keresése és közvetítése. *Debreceni Disputa*, 8. no. 11. 2010. 43–47. (43–44.)

type of thinking, based on the interaction between people and their environment in terms of environmental psychology, leads to greater psychological well-being in cities. Since the late 1990s, the interpretation of research results has become more nuanced, with numerous studies showing that living in an urban environment is associated with, for example, resilience (flexible resistance), meaning that the urban environment also has many positive opportunities, such as easy access to different cultures.

Only architecture that takes into account the human scale and interaction is successful architecture[56] – and this also applies to urban architecture

There is a very rich and diverse relationship between (large) cities and their inhabitants/users, which can be explored using both the independent and joint tools of the social sciences (including environmental psychology) and architecture/urban planning. This complex understanding can be followed by interventions that take into account the interests of both people and the built environment, which can be used to make urban life more liveable actively, productively, and proactively.

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56 Gehl, Jan: *Élhető városok*. Budapest: Terc. 2020. [Gehl, Jan: *Cities for people*. Washington: Island Press. 2010.]

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Andrea Dúll

Experiencing a city

Some Environmental Psychology Thoughts on the Multisensorial[2] City

Perception of the Urban Environment: experiencing a city

When discussing a city, a square, a room or an object from an environmental psychology perspective, there is a natural wish to understand the people who inhabit or use them, and to see the environmental situation in which events take place, that is to comprehend the interrelationship[3] between people and the environment. The basic thesis of environmental psychology is that one is never without an environment – that is, even when asleep or in any other situation – one is always in an environment.[4]

In many cases, people, both city dwellers and non-city dwellers, regard the city as something that is impossible to comprehend, impossible to grasp as a whole, and therefore impossible to understand as a "big picture," if only because of its scale. From an environmental psychology perspective, this is also confirmed in relation to urban mental maps: there is no one who is able to map even a small settlement, let alone a large city, completely realistically in their mind. Incidentally, from an (environmental) psychology perspective, this has its adaptive advantages: in this case, what is important is not that the mental

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2   The word „multisensorial" is the original term by Victor Vasarely. In this study – out of respect for Vasarely's work – I use this term in many cases instead of the term multisensory used in psychology.

3   Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései: helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.

4   Dúll, Andrea: *A környezet nem hagy érintetlenül* (TED-X–presentation) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJv0_ATnMMs 2023a (03.02.2024)

cityscape is inaccurate, but that our attitudes towards the environment and our use of it shape our representations of the city in our minds in such a way that they help us adapt to a complex artificial environment: what seems dangerous may be pushed into the background or get highlighted in the mental image of the city (Avoid it!), while what is liked, what is comforting may appear with great weight and detail (I am at home, I know every nook and cranny!) and so on. At the same time, despite the fact that many (large) cities typically exceed the scale that is acceptable to an individual in all respects (in size, complexity, rate of change, diversity, and so on), the city can also be interpreted (and should be interpreted) from the perspective of the environmental psychological fit between humans and their environment[5]. One of the key processes of this is how to perceive the city with human senses – that is, the perception of the urban environment, labelled in this study as complex urban experience.

Many people (scientists, artists, architects, and of course laypeople) deal with the issue how the immediate (urban) environment is experienced and understood. This study provides some thoughts on the possible environmental-psychological relationship[6] between the city and the senses, based on the volume entitled *Colourful City* [Színes város][7], a collection of writings, lectures, and sometimes rough notes by Victor Vasarely. The objective is not to analyse these writings, and the author certainly does not undertake to analyse or evaluate Vasarely's (or anyone else's) art from any perspective. At the same time, the concept of plastic/functional (urban) art, often mentioned by him (and by other modern artists and architects), and the range of phenomena it covers regarding the city, its layout, and the experience of the city dweller as a recipient, can also be interpreted from an environmental psychological perspective, and on a very broad scale: from unique works of art to sustainable operation. Below, several thoughts from Vasarely's work *Colourful City* are quoted. Following the quotes, the reader is invited onto an interesting mental journey related to the urban experience, in which the thoughts of Victor Vasarely serve as the "stepping stones". With the help of these stepping stones, stepping from stone

5   Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései: helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.
6   Dúll, Andrea: Művészet „eleven környezetben, szerteágazó funkciókkal" – az épített környezet és a művészet viszonya környezetpszichológiai megközelítésben. Lecture, „Színes város" – társművészetek a kortárs építészetben konferencia (Pécs, 2023. november 22.) – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxkqcrvLykU2023b (03.02.2024)
7   Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben.* Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983.

to stone, reflecting on the relationship between plastic arts and the city from an environmental psychology perspective, the reader will move towards outlining a concept of urban experience from an environmental psychology perspective.

The concept of "plastic art"[8] – some inspiring thoughts to the theory of environmental psychology-based urban experience

"The environment in which we live is becoming artificial and mechanical. Machines, electronics, and cybernetics are taking over more and more areas from humans, and these areas are slowly dissolving into matter. The ego is being pushed further and further into the background by the collective, with the universal transcending quality and individuality. Homo technicus is working to create an artificial landscape that is no less vast than the Earth's vast natural landscape. In this nascent new world, human needs are already known, and the rights to satisfy them are recognized in principle."[9]

"The present level of material development (comfort, hygiene, space, light) is accompanied by a mental need, the need for the plastic beauty of the city, which is at least as indispensable to human health as oxygen, vitamins, or love."[10]

"From now on, we should no longer interpret works of art as the sole complex source of delight, created for a privileged few blessed with rare sensitivity, but as constantly renewable, ubiquitous plastic impulses that are necessary for people's mental balance on a daily basis."[11]

"The artist is the optimistic builder of a multi-coloured, multi-shaped and sun-drenched city, art is pure plasticity, health, and joy, a sensual quality."[12]

"Every human being has an innate plastic judgment: *this* field is beautiful, I really love *this* part of the mountain, the sunset is wonderful *today*, the sand is beautiful *here*, I choose *this* piece of wood, a marble slab, fruit, or vegetable."[13]

8 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (17.)
9 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (16. – highlight in original)
10 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (138.)
11 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (121.)
12 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (121.)
13 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (27. – highlight in original)

"If yesterday art had to be *sensed* and *cultivated*, today it must be *understood* and *cultivated*."[14]

"From now on, we should no longer interpret works of art as the sole complex source of delight, created for a privileged few blessed with rare sensitivity, but as a constantly renewable, ubiquitous plastic impulse that people need every day for their mental balance. [...] Thanks to their numerous functions, they can be easily integrated into both the capricious natural landscape and the artificial landscape. Even if their plasticity proves to be beneficial in one way or another in the realm of the subconscious emotions of the masses, their conscious evaluation will be extremely varied in the infinite range of subjects. One person may find the same work banal, decorative, or simply amusing, while another may find it enchanting, poetic, or unique."[15]

"Objectively speaking, we are dealing here with a two-dimensional composition of colour forms or a multidimensional structure of colour forms born out of scientific and technical intuitions, contains visual stimuli, and serves one of the many plastic functions of the modern city. Subjectively speaking, it is a poetic creation with vivid qualities that can trigger an imaginative or emotional process in another person."[16]

"Of the countless physical and psychological needs of human beings [...], the visual one is of primary importance. Our eyes watch, see, perceive the world [...]. They devour plastic beauty."[17]

"The plastic education of eye must begin at the youngest possible age, leaving a lasting impression on the emotional realm of untouched souls."[18]

"The concept of plastic art refers to all genres (architecture, fine arts, applied arts). [...] The colourful city – by which I mean the variety of exterior and interior cladding materials – represents the perfect synthesis of all plastic arts. In other words, it represents the complex aesthetic function that associates the plastic value of real space with the psychic values of universal consciousness. [...] The rapid growth of population, and in its wake a lot of relating (sociological, ethnic,

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14 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (20. – highlight in original)

15 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (17.)

16 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (86.)

17 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (16.)

18 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (118.)

ethical, psychological, aesthetic) problems make architecture the centre of gravity of all plastic activity. [...] The art of the present [...] seeks to stimulate the human biochemical complex, creating the conditions for harmony and spiritual balance that led to a pleasant state of mind and the joy of life."[19]

"The organic fabric of the city [...] consists of cells. Let us [...] endow building materials with perceptible properties the and we will achieve a perfect synthesis: the building [...] coincides with the aesthetic unity that provides it with a unique and non-supplementary plasticity."[20]

"In order to give 'something else', not just a plane, we must make use of space. The unfolding of colour forms is achieved through the initiation of space [...]. ... [If we want to achieve] the desired plastic spatial effect, we must necessarily also take into account the real space."[21]

"Architecture and urban planning today offer both their inherent beauty and their spaces to be carriers of poetic function."[22]

"The colourful city is a perfect synthesis for me. The fundamental principle that unites arts returns their "full function" to all branches of plastic art and the colourful city realizes the most unified practical application of this principle. [...] By its nature the colourful city [...] can unite the plastic value of physical space [...] with the real psychological dimension. [...] the colourful city can also be interpreted as the concrete structure of the essential extension it best reveals the psychological dimension of the material world as it relates to the current social structure."[23]

"The most vivid forms of constructive abstraction (architectural integration, expandable, informational arts, and synthetic arts) have a distinctly social orientation."[24]

"All forms of creation are moving towards a culture and civilization that can be measured by earthly standards. The city of the future, which will be the creation of thousands of engineers, architects and plastic artists, will meet all

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19 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (12.)
20 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (14-15.)
21 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (50. – insertion D.A.)
22 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (45.)
23 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (144.)
24 VASARELY, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (36.)

the material and spiritual needs of humanity. We must translate our conquests into everyday language."[25]

"The integration of [...] works of art into the community [...] is a decision of great importance".[26]

"From now on, true creation is only possible through artistic collaboration, union, and grouping. The cooperation of scientists, engineers and technicians, manufacturers, architects, and visual artists will be the basic pre-condition for the creation of any work of art."[27]

"I make an urgent appeal to the people of construction industry. The time has come for them to take on the great task of renewal... At this stage, plastic researchers, chemists, engineers, cyberneticists, manufacturers, psychologists, sociologists and, of course, urban planners and architects are working together."[28]

"To implement a program of such a magnitude, companies, manufacturers, urban planners, architects, and engineers must closely cooperate with painters, sculptors, and masters of colour and space."[29]

"Scientific and technical progress will have an impact on the development of the plastic arts, and plastic research and achievements will stimulate further studies in the relevant scientific disciplines. This interaction will give rise to modern plastic functions that can then more effectively contribute to the transformation of the city."[30]

"Popularisers of science deserve enormous credit for developing a 'common language' that makes the world and the universe understandable, if not 'precisely,' then at least 'intuitively.' If people feel things correctly, then they already know them a little. And isn't it most important that, in this world that is divided into compartments by law, osmosis takes place, hermetic isolation ceases, and a current that can be said to be the same in almost all areas of human activity can flow freely?"[31]

25 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (131.)
26 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (115.)
27 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (15.)
28 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (124.)
29 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (18.)
30 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (11.)
31 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (31.)

"I am certain that we could conjure up a splash of color on the gloomy walls of the modern city that would improve the overall picture and which the city dwellers, deprived of nature, so desperately need."[32]

"We have transformed from static observers into dynamic participants."[33]

"People keep constantly changing their living conditions, and these new conditions in turn change people."[34]

The environmental psychology of urban experience

Let's start with the last statement above: people change their environment, which in turn changes people – this idea corresponds to the principle of person-environment transaction [35] in environmental psychology.

In environmental psychology, plastic art can be interpreted as the city being a socio-physical (social and physical)[36] environment that stimulates all our senses simultaneously and, in many ways, over a prolonged period of time. This is the case even if urban design does not directly respond to humans' biological and psychological needs. If human-oriented urban planning [37] and design [38],[39] take place, then the complex urban environmental impact can be positively correlated with human behaviour at the micro (e.g., perception of environmental stimuli), meso (e.g., orientation), and macro (e.g., sustainability) levels. This also means that it is important for people to easily understand their environment in their everyday lives in such a way that they ultimately experience positive emotions.

32 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben.* Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (101.)

33 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben.* Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (31.)

34 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben.* Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (142.)

35 Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései: helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.

36 Dúll, Andrea: *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései: helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2009.

37 Sadan, Elisheva, and Churchman, Arza: Process-Focused and Product-Focused Community Planning: Two Variations of Empowering Professional Practice. *Community Development Journal*, 32. no. 1. 1997. 3–16. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/cdj/32.1.3

38 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Az MTA doktora disszertáció. 2017.

39 Dúll, Andrea: Lokalitásélmény és folyamatorientált településfejlesztés – Az alsómocsoládi lakosok lokalitásélménye szerveződésének vizsgálata. In *Budapesttől Berlinig – Interdiszciplináris kalandozások*, edited by Berki, Márton and Halász, Levente. 85–117. Budapest: ELTE Föld rajz- és Földtudományi Intézet. 2019.

Perception of the urban environment: the non-conscious, "evident" momentums of the urban experience
The theory of constructive-cognitive (urban) perception

Perception is our only direct connection with the world[40]. This statement should be understood to mean that stimuli from the outside world, i.e., physical energies, reach our senses. These stimuli are picked up by our receptors, which is the process of perception, and then the stimuli, transformed into impulses, travel along the neural pathways to the brain, where they form a kind of interpreted, "understood" image of the world. One (if not the most important) of the functions of perception is help us understand the world so that we can adapt to it. This seems very simple. To use an urban example: I see a bench in a park and sit down on it. In reality, because the sub-processes of perceiving and sensing the environment are not conscious, and behaviour often occurs very quickly, this is a very complex and, at the same time, extremely exciting process. It is worth considering that in order to sit down on a bench in a park, we need to perceive, among many other things, that the place is a park (nature in a built environment), we need to see that there is a bench there (it has a horizontal surface that we can sit on, it will presumably hold our weight, the view from there is attractive, it is sufficiently clean, etc.). Perception (in all cases, including in the urban environment) involves an "experience of evidence": here is a park, there is a bench in it – I sit down. But if we think about how many decisions the perception system has to make (we can also expand the range of psychological processes beyond direct perception processes: how dangerous the neighbourhood is, who usually sits here, what my mother always said about sitting in the park, and so on) in order to carry out a given behaviour, then we understand that, on the one hand, these perceptual performances are not simple, they can differ between different people and groups of people, and may depend on time and weather conditions, experience, knowledge, etc.

according to the theory of perception, which is considered mainstream in modern psychology and takes into account both cognitive neuroscience, brain function, and psychological processes, the stimuli of the physical world are translated (transduced) by the nervous system into spatial experiences spatial experiences, such as "this is my favourite park and in it is my favourite bench,

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40 Dúll, Andrea: Az érzékelés és az észlelés. In *Fejezetek a pszichológia alapterületeiből*, edited by Oláh, Attila and Bugán, Antal. 37–64. Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó. 2001.

which others have also been using lately—how much better it was when I could always sit here whenever I wanted; then it was quiet and I could contemplate the things of the world" (or something similar). is therefore a very, very complicated thing, but we experience it as "well, of course, that's obvious."

The plastic aspects (hereinafter referred to as multisensory – the stimulation of the senses in many different modalities) – in addition to playing an essential role in maintaining the basic, optimal background activity of the nervous system (arousal – see below) – are also important in activating associations, emotions, and impulses related to elements of the physical environment: This place is beautiful! This is where we met! Tomorrow I will plant flowers here! – and so on. Perception of the environment is therefore never just the perception of physical patterns, but also the connection of meanings, emotions, and experiences to them.

Psychology approaches the analysis of perception in two main approaches. One is the cognitive-constructive theory of perception mentioned above, the essence of which is that actual processing comprises the essence of perception. Consequently, from the colours, lights, sounds, and mechanical stimuli of the city, the brain constructs the experience: "I am walking here in Heroes' Square, and the historical atmosphere is combined with the hustle and bustle of tourist groups." According to this, the world (and thus, of course, objects, buildings, spaces, and the city itself) consists of stimuli, and how I perceive it is constructed by my brain.

The ecological-direct theory of (urban) perception

However, there is another theory as well that could be organically connected to the topic of plastic-multisensory urban environment and urban experience, if more professional efforts were made by environmental psychologists. A little attempt is made at this here, merely on the level of its conceptualization. According to the ecological-direct theory[41] of perception, it is not necessary to "calibrate" the brain so that when I see something spherical and green and a brown cylinder, I see a tree. The theory of direct perception states that we are actually able to see the tree (as an information pattern) directly because we have

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41   Cf. GIBSON, James J.: *The ecological approach to visual perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1979.

evolutionary experience of it. The concept of plastic (urban) art can be easily interpreted in this way. There is a certain exciting playfulness to the concept of plastic (urban) art, and of course to Vasarely's art as well. For example, in op art works, the question of how to interpret them is very present: how does the zebra or the cube appear from which perspective? The representations convey the message that here I see a cube (or do I?), here I see a flat shape that can also be interpreted as a cube. According to the ecological psychology theory of perception, affordance (permission or possibility) is information about an object or place that clearly defines what can be done with the object or place (one can sit on it, one can climb on it, etc.): it is logically connected with use. So, everyone starts doing what they can actually do with it or in it – a person-environment fit is easily created, people perceive what, where, on what level, and how something can/should be done. Plastic art, or urban multisensoriality, also plays with this feeling and the positioning of the whole body in space.

Spatial layman[42] vs. expert /artist – aesthetics and participation in a multisensory urban environment

The term "spatial layman" has originally been introduced to describe non-architectural users of the environment[43], thus allowing for a comparison of certain differences and similarities in the thinking of the two groups (experts and non-experts) about the built environment[44]. In the process-oriented[45] work of an environmental designer (architect, landscape architect, urban planner) that can be considered traditional, the design professional decides and "invents" how the planned environment for people should look. In human-oriented settlement planning[46], the designer is both a "communicator and facilitator in the planning

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42 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Az MTA doktora disszertáció. 2017.

43 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Az MTA doktora disszertáció. 2017.

44 Dúll, Andrea, Somogyi, Krisztina, Hülber, Attila, Brózik, Péter and Szabó, Julianna: A szociofizikai önállóság első színtere: építészhallgatók és térlaikus egyetemi hallgatók mentális tér képábrázolásainak összehasonlítása. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 73. no. 1. 2018. 83–110.

45 Sadan, Elisheva, and Churchman, Arza: Process-Focused and Product-Focused Community Planning: Two Variations of Empowering Professional Practice. *Community Development Journal*, 32. no. 1. 1997. 3–16. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/cdj/32.1.3

46 Sadan, Elisheva, and Churchman, Arza: Process-Focused and Product-Focused Community Planning: Two Variations of Empowering Professional Practice. *Community Development Journal*, 32. no. 1. 1997. 3–16. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/cdj/32.1.3

process, who can enable non-architect participants interested in environmental design to participate as partners in the environmental planning and design processes. It follows from the transactional person-environment fit that even spatial lay users of the environment have competencies: on the one hand, they are experts in other (economic, scientific, civil societal, etc.) professions/ skills/proficiency, and on the other hand, they have everyday sociophysical environmental competencies, i.e. they are able to deal with their environment effectively and purposefully in everyday life. Such *non-professional, non-designer* competencies (from an architectural perspective) are worth exploiting in the participatory planning process. Regardless of the fact whether the planning process is participatory or not, the communication between architects and the non-architects is made more effective if they are familiar with each other's thinking, if they understand how architects and environmental users without spatial expertise transactionally map the sociophysical world in their minds."[47]

The role of beauty, aesthetics is interesting in this line of thought. Without wishing to enter into the intense debates surrounding this issue in the present study, I would like to make the following statement in the current line of thought in environmental psychology: during use (perception, action, etc.), what is "beautiful" (satisfactory, comfortable) is that which is at hand and whose use creates harmony between the person and the environment. Therefore, from this point of view, everything can be multisensory urban art, everything that can create this human-environment encounter, this harmony between the environment and the human being in the experience, in terms of environmental psychology.

At this point, it is worth noting that the concept of humanity represented by Bauhaus and similarly functional modern architectural trends is not psychology in the scientific sense[48], but rather a direction in built environment design that thinks effectively about people and seeks new paths, one of whose most important goals is to shape the environment (cities, buildings, objects, works of art) to suit human needs. Vasarely writes that "I discovered the functional nature of plasticity in 1929, at the Bauhaus in Budapest. The most necessary thing at that

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47   Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizs-gálatai.* Budapest: Az MTA doktora disszertáció. 2017. (182-3)

48   Dúll, Andrea and Somogyi, Krisztina: Bauhaus és (környezet)pszichológia: Beszélgetés Dúll Andrea környezetpszichológussal és Somogyi Krisztina vizuáliskörnyezet-kutatóval. *A Bauhaus nyomában – Ménesi út 75. Budapest 100,* Budapest, 2019. május 4. 2019.

time was to create order in the technical process."[49] The concept of the Colourful (plastic) City, which in this study is considered as the inspiration for the concept of the multisensory (in Vasarely's words: multisensorial) city experience, is not psychology in the strict sense of the word at all, but the human orientation of modernism's thought process treating people along the lines of operation and functions rather than spiritually and/or holistically. At the same time, this way of thinking is a very good precursor to the environmental psychological approach, according to which even laypersons have the competence to shape their space although not on the same level as an artist or architect (i.e. the professionals). If we accept this, then in fact a number of new combinations can be created: not only between the spatial city user and the environment, but also between the spatial user and the artist, the spatial user and the architect, the architect and the artist, the architect and the contractor, etc., in the complex process of environmental design, reception, and use, i.e., the experience of the city.

The general message of the multisensorial urban environment is also important from an environmental psychology perspective. For a long time, the message was manifest in relation to both public and museum artworks and public furnishings (Do not touch the artworks! No stepping on the grass!) and often the latent message (curved surface, do not sit down, etc.). In other words, do not touch, do not get involved, just look, this is high art, or at least a work of art in a public space that you are allowed to look at. Obviously, I am not encouraging you to touch the Mona Lisa – at the same time, participation, the possibility of real involvement, and making art public property in this sense are very important elements of the Colourful City concept. The concept of the multisensory city brings something very relevant to thinking about cities in terms of environmental psychology: this way, the whole body can be present in the space, the whole body can be involved in the artwork/city in terms of the psychological processes of perception, you can perceive it, touch it, and what's more, we can even get to the point where you can create it yourself. Obviously, it is not the same as the artist's creation, but it broadens the experience of the city in terms of the everyday use of the urban environment in city planning. You can be there, actively engage in it, use it, and participate in the experience. We can introduce what direct perception theory says about movement in space: following "thinking with your feet" (i.e., active and direct perception of space

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49 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (68.)

while moving), the process of thinking through touch/body experience will be emphasized, meaning that I can get to know something (in this case, a city) not only by looking at it, taking it in, and trying to understand it with my mind, but also by walking around in it, trying it out, sitting here and there, "grasping" it from multiple perspectives, examining it, and playing with it. A completely different kind of direct involvement made possible by multisensorial public artworks (whether buildings or surface works, colours, shapes, colour forms[50]) allows for this (not necessarily conscious) play.

The stimulus side of the urban experience

At the same time, in such environmental design, great care must be taken to create the optimal level of stimulation, which highlights the importance of expertise (in addition to architectural and urban planning expertise, expertise in the human sciences and environmental psychology).

In addition to understanding the world, the other function of the perception of environment (referred to above) is to provide the appropriate arousal level[51] for the perceiving person through the sensory organs. Arousal is the basic activity of the nervous system and the brain, like the idle speed in a car, which is induced by the stimuli of the environment. If the brain's activity level is appropriate (the level of stimulation in the environment is optimal), one is neither overstimulated (as in an environment with too many, too intense, etc. stimuli), nor does one fall asleep (as in an environment with too few stimuli). Thus, one's attention, thinking, and emotions are appropriate – it can be stated that the psychological state of readiness is appropriate for both reception and response. It is very interesting that this can be achieved in the multisensorial city outlined here, based on the Colourful City, if the spatial design is appropriate and based on the harmony of humans and environment. Therefore, by seeing environmentally psychologically appropriate colours, contrasts, contours, and colour forms in urban public squares, residential areas, and streets, by encountering appropriate

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50   Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983.
51   Dúll, Andrea, Urbán, Róbert and Demetrovics, Zsolt: Aktivációs szint, stressz és a tudatállapotok. In *Pszichológia pedagógusoknak*, edited by Némethné Kollár, Katalin and Szabó, Éva. 131–168. Budapest: Osiris Könyvkiadó. 2004.

acoustic patterns, desirable bodily experiences may be gotten. While walking[52], for example, the brain constantly works on such impulses, and in addition to providing an aesthetic experience, it helps with orientation, teaches many things about the space, and even makes urban space lovable. In other words, fine-tuning the comfort zone can result in a positive urban experience and everyday happiness. This could even open an aspect to professional and spatially layman creativity, but this door will stay closed now. That is why in the author's opinion it is psychologically completely plausible to suggest that a work of art (especially in the environmental psychological sense) truly achieves its purpose when it is placed in a living environment and fulfils diverse functions there. This also implies that such urban spaces are in a state of constant renewal, not only in the sense that the works of art and colour forms there are renovated but also in a psychological sense, primarily because a little (to an optimal extent) of their current meaning must/can always be found. Taking this idea further, an environmentally and psychologically appropriate urban experience presumably has a psychological, attention-regenerating, active relaxation function, which in many ways also improves the inclusiveness and welcoming nature of the city. In addition to the relaxing functions, a properly designed colour-shape pattern with optimal spatial design (surfacing, acoustic, tactile, etc. information) can help city residents with sensory or motor disabilities or neurodiversity (e.g. autism), support the orientation of children, tourists (i.e. those who are less familiar with the space), and so on – which obviously influences the mood, psychological well-being and quality of life of city users. In Vasarely's words quoted above, "people keep constantly changing their living conditions, and these new conditions in turn change people"[53]. All this can, of course, lead to the development and strengthening, of urban identity (I am from Budapest, I am from Zugló), and flexible shifts, for example, in line with age.

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52 Berze, Iván Zsolt and Dúll, Andrea: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés ember–környezet tranzakciótudományi megközelítésben. *Tér és Társadalom*, 36. no. 4. 2022. 52–85. https://doi.org/10.17649/TET.36.4.3438

53 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (142.)

Urban needs, multisensorial urban experience and sustainability

A fundamental concept in environmental psychology is that the city – both the good city and the bad urban environment – fundamentally refers to the six basic human urban needs,[54] which are as follows: the need for safety, orientation, privacy regulation, interaction and connection, comfort, and identity. The above line of thought indicates that the multisensorial city, designed, developed, and maintained on the basis of a well-thought-out person-environment fit from an environmental psychology perspective, responds well to these needs, while at the same time, "bad" city districts, bad areas, and bad works of art also respond to them in some way. This provides the city dwellers and city users with a common system of symbols that enables the users of an environment to solve a problem in space, that is to meet in person, to find their way around this space, and to establish some kind of connection between people, and so on. All this gives people the so-called sense of clarity or legibility, whose very complex system of symbols, stories that build a sense of identity, and collective memories give people the opportunity to experience a sense of belonging to the city and everything that makes a person feel at home in space, at home in the world.

It is perhaps possible to sense the long path covered in this paper from lights and colours, that is the basic environmental stimuli. Environments that are satisfying from an environmental psychological and aesthetic point of view are also satisfying from a general psychological aspect. Restaurant studies[55] may prove to be a good example to refer to: according to them the food in a properly designed restaurant is perceived as more delicious. This is therefore a metaphor for the fact that in cities and around works of art that are more satisfying from an aesthetic and environmental psychology perspective, life is "more delicious" and of higher quality.

54   Zeisel, John: *Inquiry by Design: Tools for Environment-Behavior Research*. Monterey: Brooks/ Cole. 1981.

55   Lynch, Kevin: *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1960.

Conclusion

"The artist, locked in his ivory tower gives way to a well-informed, if not a scholarly, person who is at least sensitive to the events taking place around him. The [...] observer turns into a thinker ready for cooperation and synthesis."[56] An important idea of the 21st century science of the relationship between the environment and humans,[57],[58] is interdisciplinarity, including the cooperation of the competent spatial layperson and the spatial planner and spatial designer in addition to the collaboration of the scientific community. "Our eyes watch, see, and perceive the world"[59], and from now on the city and "works of art should no longer be interpreted as a sole complex source of delight created for a privileged few blessed with rare sensitivity, but as continuously renewable, ubiquitous plastic [multisensorial] impulses that can be found everywhere and are necessary for people's mental balance on a daily basis."[60]

This is where the idea of environmental psychological sustainability[61],[62] emerges: in cities and socio-physical environments that provide people with adequate orientation, information, and mental comfort, sustainability actions also work better.

The author is deeply convinced that one of the most important and challenging issues of the 21st century is the relationship between humans and their environment, both in terms of global sustainability (climate change, etc.) and "generally, from the perspective of the relationship between humans and environment (spatial control, spatial experience, use of real and virtual spaces,

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56 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (15.)

57 Dúll, Andrea: A környezetpszichológiától az ember-környezet tranzakció tudományig – áttekintés az elmúlt (majdnem) 30 évről. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 76. no. 3–4. 2021. 727–745. http://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2021.00050

58 Dúll, Andrea: Ember-környezet tranzakció viselkedéstudományi kutatások: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 78. no. 4. 2024. 471–484. https://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2023.00086

59 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (14.)

60 Vasarely, Victor: *Színes város. A művészet hétköznapi életünkben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó. 1960/1983. (121. – insertion by D.A.)

61 Dúll, Andrea: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság az épített és a természeti környezetben: ember-környezet tranzakció szemléletű projektjeink. In *Hazai és külföldi modellek a projekt oktatásban*, edited by Koltai, László. 23–30. Budapest: Óbudai Egyetem Rejtő Sándor Könnyűipari és Környezetmérnöki Kar. 2020.

62 Dúll, Andrea: Ember-környezet tranzakció viselkedéstudományi kutatások: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 78. no. 4. 2024. 471–484. https://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2023.00086

resilient, inclusive, and crisis-resistant space use and flexible spatial design, etc.) [...] The issues are multifaceted, therefore the approaches and intervention strategies can also be multifaceted, and the adequate choice of strategy tailored to the specific problems at hand is a prerequisite for successful adaptation, a better quality of life, or even survival, both on the level of science and actual environmental design and the decisions leading to them, as well as in everyday life."[63] In shaping the built/urban environment, environmental psychology can be a useful collaborative partner for urban planning, architecture, landscape design, arts, and everyday city users.

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63 Dúll, Andrea: Ember-környezet tranzakció viselkedéstudományi kutatások: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 78. no. 4. 2024. 471–484. https://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2023.00086)476)

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Dúll, Andrea: Ember-környezet tranzakció viselkedéstudományi kutatások: Környezetpszichológiai fenntarthatóság. *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*, 78. no. 4. 2024. 471–484. https://doi.org/10.1556/0016.2023.00086

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Andrea Dúll

The (un)conscious city

Is the "city but the land of our confusions"[2]?

Usually, the relationship between the city and humans – like the relationship between humans and their environment is generally – is not conscious in nature, but if it is, it is often ambivalent: on the one hand, people enjoy the excitement, the diversity, the pulsating rhythm, the large number of people offered by the city, and on the other hand, they can experience depressive feelings generated by the same factors. For a long time, the city – as a human living space – was viewed in a distinctly negative light by everyday opinions and the consistent statements of social sciences (e.g. psychology). Scientific data also underpinned the view that the city is an unhealthy and deviant environment, both physically and mentally, which is incomprehensible and unconceivable due to its size, complex spatial structure, rapid environmental and complex social shifts: "the city is but the land of our confusions"[3]. This idea is not new, in fact it is as old as the formation of the modern metropolis itself; for example, Thomas Jefferson wrote to Benjamin Rush[4]

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2   Flanagan, Tom, 1957 – quoted by Lynch, Kevin: *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1960. (119.)

3   Flanagan, Tom, 1957 – quoted by Lynch, Kevin: *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1960. (119.)

4   „Benjamin Rush (1745–1813) was not only the most famous physician of 18th-century America, but also a patriot, philosopher, writer, lecturer, zealous evangelist, politician, and committed social reformer. He was unwavering in his convictions, as well as self-righteous, caustic, satirical, humourless, and polemical. Undoubtedly a genius, he graduated from what would later become Princeton University at the age of 14. At the age of 17, he translated the Aphorisms of Hippocrates from Greek. He wrote the first chemistry textbook published in America. He was a devoted, although highly paternalistic physician who cared deeply about the well-being of his patients. His principles or theories, and his 'championship' in extreme blood purification and bleeding ("depletion therapy"), sparked debates that have lasted for 200 years and are still ongoing today."–

in his letter written in 1800[5]: "I consider large cities to be dangerous to the morals, health and liberty of men".

Places that are difficult to understand evoke fear

People live in complex environments composed of many objects and their relationships —buildings, streets, parks, neighbourhoods, towns. "Consider, for example, a tourist visiting a large city for the first time. At first, they may find the city confusing and difficult to navigate. As he continues to perceive the city's various aspects, a clear and well-organized mental picture of the city may develop. This clear image then enables the tourist to become better informed, which also results in the development of more positive attitudes towards the city. This clearer mental image and more favourable attitudes together can help the visitor to perceive other parts of the city more effectively and efficiently"[6]. Kevin Lynch, a pioneer in urban planning and mental mapping of urban spaces, first wrote in his classic, landmark book published in 1960 that cities are emotionally rich environments for people (residents, workers and tourists), whose emotional meaning is often negative (e.g. frightening) because people are not naturally able to perceive an environment of such a large scale in sufficient detail and therefore cannot form an adequate mental image of the entire city. Places that are not well perceived, and therefore difficult to map mentally, i.e., not well understood, evoke fear.[7]

This is why it is important to make our cities well perceivable and mentally mappable for people. If city users can read (comprehend, know) the city, this could reduce negative emotions related to the city: "fear and confusion could be replaced by joy found in the richness and power of the place".[8]

NORTH, Robert L.: Benjamin RUSH, MD: Assassin or Beloved Healer? *Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings*, 13. no. 1. 2000. 45–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/08998280.2000.11927641

5 MONTICELLO, 23 September 1800
6 HOLAHAN, Charles J.: A környezeti észlelés. In *Környezetpszichológiai szöveggyűjtemény*, edited by DÚLL, Andrea and KOVÁCS, Zoltán. 27–46. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó. 1998. (27–28). [HOLAHAN, Charles J.: *Environmental Psychology*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill College. 1982.]
7 BRÓZIK, Péter and DÚLL, Andrea: Nagyváros-üzemmód: a városi környezet szuggesztiós hatásainak környezetpszichológiai elemzése. In *Rábeszélőtér: a szuggesztív kommunikáció környezetpszichológiája*, edited by DÚLL, Andrea and VARGA, Katalin. 33–46.) Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó. 2015.
8 LYNCH, Kevin: *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1960. (120.)

"Perception of the environment is the basis of environmental behaviour. In order to understand, control, and use the physical environment effectively, we must first perceive it clearly and accurately. Although perception of the environment is fundamental to everyday life, we tend to take this process for granted"[9]. Both in childhood and adulthood, the perception and comprehension of the environment – the perception-experience – is mostly unstructured even in simpler situations. And even more so in a (big) city! The perception of the environment is, of course, based not only on vision but also on hearing, smell, touch, on whole-body perception, and the parallel inner feelings associated with all these. The process of unguided thinking/perception often develops in familiar but complex situations (e.g. in cities), where people can allow their active attention to "disconnect" from the immediate surroundings, while being exposed to inspiring, imaginative external stimuli. Negative, dangerous situations – as evolutionary remnants ensuring our survival – work in the opposite way.

Therefore, in appropriate, i.e., survival-supporting, pleasant (urban) environments, a decline of awareness of environmental situations can be experienced, and the importance of the awareness of sensory information decreases. This is how people develop unconscious attachments to familiar, comfortable, and safe places, even in cities. Strong, long-lasting emotional attachments[10] are developed to places which are also of particular importance from the perspective of the development of identity and self-concept through the experience of belonging and stability associated with places – settlements and cities are highlighted in terms of self-definition ('I am from Budapest.').

The basis of the spatiality of human experience is also anxiety and desire – psychoanalysis and the city

The non-conscious nature of the environment can also be interpreted from a psychodynamic aspect, from the perspective of psychoanalysis.

"We can use the language of psychoanalysis when we think about how people relate to others and how they shape their environment. Psychoanalysis

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9   Holahan, Charles J.: A környezeti észlelés. In *Környezetpszichológiai szöveggyűjtemény*, edited by Dúll, Andrea and Kovács, Zoltán. 27–46. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó. 1998. (27.). [Holahan, Charles J.: *Environmental Psychology*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill College. 1982.]

10   Cf. Dúll, Andrea: Ember és környezet affektív kapcsolata: a helykötődés. *Alkalmazott Pszichológia*, IV. no. 2. 2002. 49–65.

is a way of thinking about social relationships and our relationship to the material world. Psychoanalysis embeds the unconscious into social theory, connecting the unconscious to the phenomenal and experiential aspects of life. [...] psychoanalysis finds a way to articulate anxiety and desire, the foundations of the spatiality of human experience."[11] This approach has been developing since the 2000s in connection with affective spatial politics and, within that, psychoanalytically oriented urban concepts of affective urbanism, which are still based on past historical memories and feelings.

In fact, the relationship between psychoanalysis and (urban) planning (theory) goes back two decades. Freud's views, for example, proved to be an important inspiration for the development of Lewis Mumford's urban theory, among others. On the other hand, more and more psychoanalysts are working with real-world contexts: nowadays "psychoanalysis goes out into the streets to meet people".[12],[13]

The human-environment relationship and the unconscious

The unconscious nature of the human-environment relationship is discussed in many psychoanalytic theories. For example, according to Searles, people unconsciously identify with objects and places in the same way they do with other people who are important to them. These then, similarly to relationships with fellow human beings, serve as a secure base for life. Consequently, the relationship between humans and the physical world is as fundamental and deep as an infant's dependence on its mother. A primal trust in the environment is developed, which at the same time – similarly to the primal trust in the mother – means that psychologically fundamental environments (like the mother) are removed from conscious focus: they are "just there", and their existence is natural. Another very famous author-psychoanalyst, paediatrician Donald Winnicott, also uses the mother-child relationship as a starting point for explaining human connection with the environment, in the course of which

11   Sibley, David: A bináris város. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 33–50. (40.) [Sibley, David: The Binary City. *Urban Studies*, 38. no. 2. 2001. 239–50. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43100389 (downloaded: 04 August 2024)]

12   Benvenuto, Bice: „A pszichoanalízis kimegy az utcára, hogy találkozzon az emberekkel". An interview by Csabai Márta with Bice Benvenutóval. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004a. 73–79. (75.)

13   Schinaia, Cosimo: *Psychoanalysis and Architecture. The Inside and the Outside.* London: Karnac Books. 2016.

he specifically addresses humans' psychological relationship with the city. According to Winnicott, one of a mother's tasks is to provide the child with a safely encompassing, sustaining environment, which helps the child experience the separation of the self and the non-self (i.e. the environment). In his paper *Berlin Walls* Winnicott discusses the relationship to the wider environment and specifically to the city. During her relationship to her child, the mother shows the child objects, among other things, in order to (also), to introduce the world to the baby. The city, as a "mother-like" built environment, is capable of the same: it presents its residents and visitors with a variety of buildings, spaces, and landscapes. "Every glance I cast at an object that interests me gives way to a momentary reverie [...]. Freud called them psychological intensities. [...] the reveries aroused by thought-provoking objects constitute an important feature of our spiritual life. Anyone who does not like their neighbourhood is in a sad state of decay, as they cannot satisfy their essential need for personal reverie. Everyone needs to ›fill up‹ with thought-provoking objects. [...] This is how our unconscious which functions in the material realm of built things encounters our other unconscious that organizes each individual self"[14]. In Winnicott's opinion, the nature of the maternal and urban processes is similar: if an object is too new and unfamiliar to the child (the city user) (an unknown or perhaps unusual building in the city), it will not prompt a response, and if it is too familiar it will not prompt an emotional or aesthetic excitement, and the child will turn away from it. According to Winnicott, the mother is "good enough" if she adequately satisfies the child's needs without pushing herself into the foreground. An urban environment can be "good enough" in the same way: if the city "only satisfies" (rather complex) needs but does not become the focus of conscious attention itself, it remains unconscious. "Cities are quite unconscious processes. There are so many competing functions, aesthetic considerations, local interests, and economic considerations, moreover, each function influences the others, that a city is more like the apparent chaos of the unconscious mind."[15]

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14 BOLLAS, Christopher: Építészet és tudattalan. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (19-20.) [BOLLAS, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]
15 BOLLAS, Christopher: Építészet és tudattalan. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (13.) [BOLLAS, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]

Architecture/city and the unconscious

The metaphorical relationship between architecture (and the city) and the unconscious was already outlined in Freud's thinking, according to whom the physical environment (places, landscapes, buildings, one's own house) is often a symbol of the body or body parts in dreams. In his study, *Civilization and its Discontents* he discusses the timeless city as a metaphor for the timeless unconscious: "nothing that has ever been formed in the life of the soul can be destroyed"[16]. Based on this – according to one of Freud's favourite metaphors, which he explained in his work *Constructions in Analysis*[17] – psychoanalysis resembles archaeology: the analyst's "task is to discover what has been forgotten from the traces it has left behind, or more precisely, to construct it [...]. His work of construction, or if you will, of reconstruction, is very much like the archaeological excavation of a dwelling which was destroyed and buried, or the excavation of an ancient building. [...] Just as the archaeologist reconstructs the walls of a building from the foundations which remained, just as he determines the number and position of the columns from the recesses he finds in the floor, and just as he reconstructs the decoration and paintings on the walls from the remains found in the debris, so does the analyst proceed when he draws his conclusions from the fragments of memory, from associations and from the person's behaviour during the analysis. Both the archaeologist and the analyst have an indisputable right to reconstruction, the means of which is the supplementation and combination of the surviving fragments"[18]. These ideas reflect the romantic views that characterized thinking about archaeology in the 19th century: " Once objects are buried underground, they exist purely in their natural state; while above ground they have a history shaped by historical changes in the attribution of meaning. [...] The clock of buildings and objects that have been buried is stopped and gets restarted when they are discovered. What is buried is marked with a memorial, what gets under the ground will, at least temporarily, drop out of cultural memory. This is what gives archaeological discovery its deeper sense of sensation: the sudden emergence of a historical

16 Freud, Sigmund: Rossz közérzet a kultúrában. 1930. In Freud, Sigmund: *Esszék*. 327–405. Budapest: Gondolat. 1982. (333.)
17 Freud, Sigmund: Constructions in Analysis. 1937 / Konstrukciók az analízisben – in *Freud rezümék (SF21.)*, edited by Bíró, Sándor. Budapest: Animula Szakkiadó. 2021.
18 Freud, Sigmund: Constructions in Analysis. 1937 – quoted by Szummer, Csaba: A régésztől a történészig: egy új paradigma körvonalai a pszichoanalízisben. *Pszichológia*, 12. no. 2. 1992. 173–216. (196–97.)

world out of nowhere".[19] Freud's parallel between archaeology and psychoanalysis is therefore based on the that, similarly to sunken cities, events and experiences from one's life history exist, i.e., original "life event copy" that has sunk remain in the (subconscious) layers or even in the cells, to which the "solution" (re) constructed by psychoanalytic-archaeological excavation work can be compared.

According to Freud, the metaphor of the timeless unconscious is Rome, the Eternal City, because with almost each of its era and historical layer, Rome simultaneously stands (could stand) before us: "Where the Colosseum now stands, we could also admire Nero's destroyed Domus Aurea"[20]; "Forgotten things actually form part of the unconscious, to such an extent that, depending on how much we want to glimpse into the Rome of our unconscious life, we could see both the surviving and the destroyed ›city‹ at the same time"[21]. Indeed, Rome is an excellent example of the timeless city, and thus a great metaphor for the timeless unconscious, since the Eternal City – in contrast to other Italian cities, e.g. Naples – is truly stratified, "more or less built on layers of ruins of previous centuries"[22]. Freud's archaeological analogy is based on this: the psychoanalyst's job is therefore, similar to that of the archaeologist's who explores the layers of a city, to reconstruct, that is, to restore the original experience (the city) on the basis of the recollection of "found" and excavated events of the past, with the aim of understanding and processing them. This is, of course debatable and is indeed disputed by many. For example, according to Spence, psychoanalytic case analyses do not reveal absolute truth, but rather narrative truth, which is independent of whether the "unearthed" events actually happened or not; through exploration, the role of case analysis is not to "find" the remains of the original events, but rather to provide a unified interpretive framework for the explored experience, which allows the patient to understand it. Consequently, the psychoanalyst's work can be comparable not to the archaeologist's work of excavation but to the historian's work of constructing historical explanations.[23] Later on, Freud himself rejected the obvious usefulness of the city metaphor in relation to the description of the timeless unconscious, since he believed that the

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19 Radnóti, Sándor: Freud, a művelt polgár. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 52–59. (57.)

20 Freud, Sigmund: Rossz közérzet a kultúrában. 1930. In Freud, Sigmund: *Esszék*. 327–405. Budapest: Gondolat. 1982. (334–35.)

21 Bollas, Christopher: Építészet és tudattalan. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (6.) [Bollas, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]

22 Benvenuto, Bice: Nápoly, a feje tetején álló város. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004b. 60–72. (66.)

23 Cf. Szummer, Csaba: A régésztől a történészig: egy új paradigma körvonalai a pszichoanalízisben. *Pszichológia*, 12. no. 2. 1992. 173–216.

city is not actually timeless, because its buildings, streets, and squares actually disappear over time and are replaced by new ones built in their place. It should be noted that the narrative existence of urban elements remains for a long time, living on in place and street names, city stories, and thoughts about the city...

According to psychoanalytic (urban) architecture theory, the physical environment, the city, and generally "the world of architecture (in the broader sense of the deliberate reconsideration of the built human environment) and that of psychoanalysis (interpreted as the place of studying the unconscious mental life) intersect. A building ultimately originates from human imagination, through a kind of dialectic, which is influenced by countless other factors. e.g. the specific function of the building, its relationship to its environment, its functional possibilities, its artistic or design objectives, the client's desires, the expected public reaction, and many other factors that constitute the psychic structure of the building. Even if the building is constructed in the well-known style of an architect – say, Le Corbusier or Mies Van der Rohe – it undergoes countless considerations, and is influenced by a multitude of factors, all of which are organically integrated into the process as architects unconsciously direct their design.[24] The man-made environment, the city – also from the perspective of psychodynamics – is therefore largely unconscious (although awareness can be raised) in nature.

The collective (urban) unconsciousness and the spatial-cultural turn

The concept of the collective unconsciousness,[25] which goes beyond Freudian ideas and was developed by Carl Gustav Jung, plays a significant role in this matter, along which it is possible to "studying the unconscious dimensions of architecture"[26]: built environments, buildings, "on the one hand, are capable of blending into their environment [...]. Even if they differ from their

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24 Bollas, Christopher: Építészet és tudattalan. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (5.) [Bollas, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]

25 E.g. Jung, Carl Gustav: *Emlékek, álmok, gondolatok*. Budapest: Európa. 1987. [Jung, Carl Gustav: *Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken*, edited by Jaffé, Aniela. New York: Pantheon Books. 1961.]

26 Bollas, Christopher: Építészet és tudattalan. *Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (32.) [Bollas, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]

fellow buildings, they can still pretend to be logical extensions of the smooth progression of architectural time. On the other hand, they can also opt for a radical departure from the past and present, proclaiming themselves as the future of mankind. When we are dealing with the latter solution – think of Roger and Piano's Beaubourg or Frank Gehry's Bilbao – the structures seem to be more than simple buildings; they are much more material testimonies to our vision of the future. As such, we can identify with them".[27]

The "collective unconsciousness" of (urban) environments was broken by the enormously increased and accelerated development in the USA and Western European countries in the 1960s. Numerous social and ecological-environmental problems became apparent in everyday life and in science. The particularly significant internal and external issues and questions related to architecture were connected to the problems of reconstruction after the Second World War; the general (non)compliance of the built environment with user needs; the problems of housing estates and the (related) socio-economic and ecological dilemmas of metropolitan life and the related social challenges, such as population change; the use of space and the issue of power in general and vis-à-vis groups of vulnerable people of different status (women, old aged persons); the perception and use of the space by ethnic and other groups and subcultures in urban space; environmental destruction and pollution both in general and in the urban environment. These issues made the public aware, both in everyday life and in scientific research, that the physical environment of settlements has a very real, continuous and intense, often conscious relationship with behaviour. It was slowly recognized and acknowledged that such a relationship is largely psychological in naturePsychologists have also received questions from scientific fields (e.g., geography) that had not traditionally been interested in human processes, for example, in relation to attitudes toward the urban environment[28]. The socio-economic transformations and post-industrial/postmodern shifts in the past decades have fundamentally altered thinking in social science, including psychological thinking. The birth of environmental psychology and the path leading to it were an organic part of the re-materialization process[29] in social sciences both in general and in relation to the city. "The material turn can be

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27 Bollas, Christopher: *Építészet és tudattalan. Thalassa*, 15. no. 1. 2004. 5–32. (8.) [Bollas, Christopher: Architecture and the Unconscious. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 9. no. 1–2. 2000. 28–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/080370600300055850]

28 See Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva, eds.: *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól.* Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2014.

29 Woodward, Ian: *Understanding Material Culture.* London: Sage. 2007.

traced back to the realization that the objects around us are not of marginal importance – on the contrary: due to the constant interactions, interplay, and interdependence of subjects and objects, the study of objects is an indispensable part of most social science research. Ignoring this realization can easily lead to the omission of the culture-, society-, and identity-forming »capacity« of objects and the interactions with them, or to the underestimation of the significance of this capacity, with the direct consequence that our understanding of the nature of subjects and their relationship to the (external) world can only be limited and partial".[30]

The spatial-cultural shift therefore accompanied the socialization of the (urban) environment: "from the mid-sixties onwards, significant transformations took place in society and its intellectual orientation [...]. The »spatiality« of society changed. The previously static, attachment to locations ceased, and the frameworks of life became »globalized«. All this had an impact not only on the economic and political processes of society, but also on thinking about space and research into space. Understanding these processes and the social background drew researchers' attention to new problems, such as the interpretation of urban spaces, the importance of creating and constructing space (Lefebvre, 1972/1999), and the forms and practices of appropriating space (de Certeau, 1984)".[31] Simultaneously, as mentioned above, fortunately on the other side, the object and space sciences (e.g., geography, architecture) have also seen a demand for a deeper understanding of human/psychological processes related to the built/ urban and natural (and later, nowadays, virtual) environment and for linking these to spatial knowledge[32],[33].

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30 Berta, Péter: Szubjektumok alkotta tárgyak – tárgyak által konstruált szubjektumok. Interakció, kölcsönhatás, egymásra utaltság: az „új" anyagikultúra-kutatásról. *Replika*, no. 63, 2008. 29–60. (33.)
31 Izsák, Éva and Dúll, Andrea: Városi „tér-fordulatok" – a város interdiszciplináris megközelítése. In *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól*, edited by Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva. 69–76. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2014. (72.)
32 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai*. Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017.
33 See also Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva, eds.: *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól*. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2014.

Geography and environmental psychology – a new opportunity for urban cognition

In the 20th century, "geography as a discipline dealing with the space became unavoidable. [...] For a long time, it was an almost obligatory sub-discipline of history, which was the most integrative of the social sciences [...]."[34] In the geography of the interwar period, the idea already appeared in Hungary that the so-called "human" or "anthropic" factors[35] should be considered as inseparable from physical and natural processes. Then, after the Second World War, geography participated in the "vibrant interdisciplinary dialogues" [in which] "Durkheimian sociology, Vidalian geography, Maussian anthropology, and the history marked by Lefebvre and Marc Bloch" participated.[36] (Urban) geography, at least at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, "similarly to some other disciplines, e.g. psychoanalysis and certain branches of psychology, was characterized by the fact that it came under the strong influence of a kind of pre-Darwinian naturalism",[37] meaning that Darwin's theory of evolution and the principles of adaptation were applied quite mechanically, on a "sociobiological" and "psychogeographical" basis, to social processes and, within that, to human (urban) processes of environmental use and shaping. According to classic observations[38], for example, in Chicago, only a few of the people diagnosed with mental illness (schizophrenia) lived in the suburbs, with the majority concentrated in the (more disadvantaged) downtown areas – that is, mental illnesses were not scattered, but on the contrary, were located in a spatially well-identifiable fashion. The characteristic patterns of urban/geographical distribution led to the development of psychiatric geography: the original explanation of the results was that the social and mental disorganization of the residents was the consequence of the isolation of apartments in city centres, and of the people's adaptation to

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34 Sonkoly, Gábor: Miért épp a francia térmegközelítések? In *Tér és történelem*, edited by Benda, Gyula and Szekeres, András. 7–16. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Atelier. 2002. (7–8.)

35 E.g. Teleki, Pál: *A földrajzi gondolat története*. Budapest: Kossuth. 1996. [Count Teleki, Pál: *A földrajzi gondolat története*. A szerző ezen munka kivonatával 1917. február 12-én széket foglalt a Magyar Tudományos Akadémián. Hornyánszky Viktor nyomása. Budapest: Kilián Frigyes utóda m. kir. egyetemi könyvkereskedő – Szerző kiadása. 1917.]

36 Sonkoly, Gábor: Miért épp a francia térmegközelítések? In *Tér és történelem*, edited by Benda, Gyula and Szekeres, András. 7–16. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Atelier. 2002. (7–8.)

37 Lévy, Jacques: A helyek szelleme. In *Tér és történelem*, edited by Benda, Gyula and Szekeres, András. 19–37. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Atelier. 2002. [Lévy, Jacques: Le tournant géographique. Penser l'espace pour lire le monde Broché. Párizs: Belin. 1999.] (22.)

38 Faris, Robert E. L., and Dunham, H. Warren: *Mental Disorders in Urban Areas: An Ecological Study of Schizophrenia and other Psychoses*. Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press. 1939.

an overloaded, overstimulated[39],[40] urban life. In this approach, therefore, the environmental impact was decisive: it was clearly interpreted as the cause of dysfunctional adaptation. Neither subsequent research in the geography of disease nor environmental psychology studies have confirmed this one-way environmental determination. More differentiated, dynamic social ecological and spatial syntactic urban analyses and interdisciplinary urban studies have shown that, although there is indeed a correlation between spatial location and mental-social problems, poverty, crime, suicide, or mental illness can be well localized in space, but this is more plausibly explained by the phenomenon of social drift[41]: people with mental issues have problems in most areas of life (maintaining social relationships, performing work adequately, and so on) – in this context, they tend to drift to the cheaper and more "grey" parts of the city. "However, the spatial distribution of problems in cities and changes in this distribution can only be explained by synthesizing complex spatial-geographical and psychological-sociological knowledge, and due to the complexity of the phenomenon, it is very difficult to draw causal, etiological conclusions"[42]: "We believed that the behaviour of the people living in and making a living from a given area could be deduced from the natural characteristics of that area… These simple explanations […] have a weak point, which is precisely their simplicity. They have to explain human actions, and the motives behind human actions are generally not simple".[43] Humans are consciously and unconsciously motivated social beings, whose decisions and actions are also related to space: they respond to the stimuli of their environment, but at the same time they shape those stimuli with their responses.

In the spirit of interdisciplinary cooperation that characterizes the 21st century, "it is clear that geographers and psychologists can learn from each

39 Cf. MILGRAM, Stanley: A nagyvárosi élet élménye. Pszichológiai elemzés. In *Együttérzés, önzetlenség, felelősség,* edited by SZILÁGYI, Vilmos. 37–57. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó. 1980. [MILGRAM, Stanley: The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis. In *Psychology and the Problems of Society*, edited by KORTEN, Frances F., COOK, Stuart W., and LACEY, John I. 152 73. American Psychological Association. 1970. https://doi.org/10.1037/10042-011]

40 MEHRABIAN, Albert: *Public Spaces and Private Places*. New York: Basic Books. 1976.

41 HALPERN, David: *Mental Health and the Built Environment*. More than Bricks and Mortar? London: Taylor & Francis Ltd. 1995.

42 DÚLL, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai*. Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (54.)

43 MUSSET, Alain: Történeti földrajz: történeti tudomány? In *Tér és történelem*, edited by BENDA, György and SZEKERES, András. 39–64. Budapest: L'Harmattan – Atelier. 2002. (48.)

other, and the connection of geographical and psychological ideas and theories brings us closer to the creation of an integrative theoretical framework".[44]

In Hungary, in the spirit of emerging cooperation, a book was published in 2014 that jointly discusses the spatial turn in geography and environmental psychology[45], co-edited by an environmental psychologist (Andrea Dúll) and a geographer (Éva Izsák).

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44 Kitchin, Robert M., Blades, Mark, and Golledge, Reginald G.: Relations between Psychology and Geography. *Environment and Behavior*, 29. no. 4. 1997. 554–73. 10.1177/001391659702900406 (564.)

45 Dúll, Andrea and Izsák, Éva, eds.: *Tér–rétegek. Tanulmányok a XXI. század térfordulatairól.* Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2014.

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Andrea Dúll

Relationship between city and nature: antithesis or reconciliation?

"The negative myth of the inhuman city is echoed by the positive myth of friendly nature"[2]

"It is amusing to observe how frequently the adjective 'inhuman' is used in conjunction with the word 'city'. The expression itself is a contradiction: nothing is more human than a city, since it was built by humans. However, this is a contradiction, especially when considering the facts: God did not create nature so that humans could escape from the city, but humans created cities to find refuge from the vicissitudes of nature."[3]

For a long time—and often even today—cities have been considered unhealthy, even sickening and dangerous places, partly because we see them as opposed to nature, often viewed as intensely subjugating, exploiting, and violating it, not only in philosophy, but also in science and everyday life. There are numerous collective metaphors that refer to this, for example: "Nature and the city. A symbolic image of the millennial opposition between nature and culture"[4]; cancer as a metaphor for the city (which is the antithesis of nature):

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2   Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (20.)
3   Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (22.)
4   Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (28.)

"cancer is a sign of the rebellion of the living environment attacked by : Nature takes revenge on the technocratic world",[5] and so on.

An overstimulating urban environment?

Environmental psychology studies (among others) have shown that, in many respects, the urban environment does indeed pose a particularly great challenge in terms of physical stimuli and social situations, including a huge and intense amount of physical and social stimuli that is very difficult for the human information processing system to process, frequent. It is essentially a psychological characteristic: it is the experience that a given space is used by too many people in a psychological[6] sense and/or there are too many physical elements (e.g. high-rise buildings, cars, etc.) that are difficult to understand and navigate. This is indeed a source of stress in many respects, which is often a typical "urban stress"[7] due to the specific features of the urban environment: in addition to the congestion and the also characteristic difficult use of the space (time-consuming transport, transfers, etc.), this includes, for example, the very high environmental load[8] generated by the predominance of the built environment (which describes the social-physical sensory-perceptual characteristics of the environment along three dimensions: (1) intensity: the absolute strength of the information reaching the senses, e.g. measured in dB, (2) novelty: the familiarity or unfamiliarity of the stimulus(es), how interesting the information is, and (3) complexity: the amount of cognitive effort required to understand it. Every environment has some kind of environmental load (at most a small or monotonous one), but the intense urban environment really demands conscious, deliberate attention (targeted orientation, e.g., looking for an exit to the surface in an underpass or consciously choosing a mode of

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5 Sontag, Susan: 1978/1983. *A betegség mint metafora*. Budapest: Európa. [Sontag, Susan: Illness as metaphor. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 1977.] (83.)

6 Milgram, Stanley: A nagyvárosi élet élménye. Pszichológiai elemzés. In *Együttérzés, önzetlenség, felelősség*, edited by Szilágyi, Vilmos. 37–57. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó. 1980. [Milgram, Stanley: The Experience of Living in Cities: A Psychological Analysis. In *Psychology and the Problems of Society*, edited by Korten, Frances F., Cook, Stuart W., and Lacey, John I. 152–73. American Psychological Association. 1970. https://doi.org/10.1037/10042-011]

7 Brózik, Péter and Dúll, Andrea: Nagyváros-üzemmód. A városi környezet szuggesztiós hatásainak környezetpszichológiai elemzése. In *Rábeszélőtér*. A szuggesztív kommunikáció környezet pszichológiája, edited by Dúll, Andrea and Varga, Katalin. 33–46. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2015.

8 *Environmental load* – See Mehrabian, Albert, and Russell, James A.: A Measure of Arousal Seeking Tendency. *Environment and Behavior*, 5. 1973. 315–333.

transportation, etc.) and involuntary information processing (we are bombarded with countless stimuli just by being there). In cities, the arousal level i.e. the background activity of the nervous system is high[9],[10],[11]. However, it is worth mentioning here that the different quantities and qualities of sensory stimuli provided by different environments influence a person's alertness and attention capacity: if the level of background activity of the nervous system is low, boredom is experienced (and one may even doze off), and if the level of arousal is too high, one feels tense and nervous, for a reason unknown (therefore, this background activity of the nervous system does not depend on the content or meaning of the specific situation, but on the stimuli experienced in it either consciously or unconsciously). In either case, it will be difficult for a person in an over- or under-stimulating environment to concentrate and to express themselves effectively. If, on the other hand, the level of arousal is optimal (and this optimal level may be different for everyone and for every situation), then the attention capacity – and thus the capacity for action – will be adequate. This may be the reason why city people rush through the streets[12] even when they are not pressed for time, make little eye contact and (at least at a conscious level) do not pay attention to others, i.e. they mobilize a number of psychological stimulus-avoidance and defence processes to avoid overstimulation. This is because people are motivated to defend themselves: one giving in and deliberately following the flood of stimuli in the urban environment would get tired and even exhausted, to which – in addition to endangering their own survival (falling over, stepping in front of an approaching vehicle, or hitting a pedestrian crossing the street, etc.) – one could easily respond with aggression against other fellow human beings or against the physical environment (destruction), as is often the case in urban life. This is partly because people in metropolitan environments cannot generally rely on their natural adaptation mechanisms, and many learned skills are also needed for living a proper urban life.

9 DÚLL, Andrea, URBÁN, Róbert and DEMETROVICS, Zsolt: Aktivációs szint, stressz és a tudatál-lapotok. In *Pszichológia pedagógusoknak*, edited by NÉMETHNÉ KOLLÁR, Katalin and SZABÓ, Éva. 131–68. Budapest: Osiris. 2004.

10 URBÁN, Róbert and DÚLL, Andrea: Érzelem és megismerési folyamatok. In *Általános pszicholó-gia 3., Nyelv, tudat, gondolkodás*, edited by CSÉPE, Valéria, GYŐRI, Miklós and Ragó, Anett. 477–535. Budapest: Osiris. 2008.

11 VARGA, Katalin and OSVÁT, Judit: Az ingerszükséglettől a tudásszükségletig: kognitív motiváció. In *Affektív pszichológia. Az emberi késztetések és érzelmek világa*, edited by BÁNYAI, Éva and VARGA, Katalin. 237–62. Budapest: Medicina. 2013.

12 SADALLA, Edvard K., SHEETS, Virgil, and McCREATH, Heather: The Cognition of Urban Tempo. *Environment and Behavior*, 22. no. 2. 1990. 230–54. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916590222003

The generally positive human attitude towards the natural environment is often interpreted from a psychological-evolutionary perspective: during the course of evolution, even in an increasingly artificial and developed environment, the ancient knowledge and skills related to survival and survival ( ) that had been "proven" in the natural environment did not disappear, as they provided appropriate responses to the challenges and opportunities of life (e.g., finding food) that had been proven (originally in the natural environment). The basis for this is that during evolution, those human knowledge and behavioural responses that helped the most in adapting appropriately to the environment along the stimuli of (natural) places were selected. This is why even people living in cities today also prefer[13] natural environments (for example, they prefer to choose them as places to relax), which – according to research – fall within the range that triggers and maintains optimal, moderate background nervous system activity (except, of course, for extreme landscapes that provide suboptimal stimuli, e.g., the Arctic, desert), in contrast to the mostly overly complex but insufficiently diverse stimulus quality of the built, urban environment. Environmental psychology research[14] thus confirms that, overall, the nervous system background activity triggered by the urban built environment—as opposed to the activity level triggered by the natural environment—does not fall within the optimal range that is most suitable for the human nervous system.

However, the abundance of stimuli of metropolitan life is not primarily burdensome for many people, but – at least on a conscious level – rather appropriate, moreover, even desirable. There may be personality-related reasons for this. For example, people seek out stimuli and experiences on different levels.[15] Those who enjoy the rich, varied, and intense socio-physical impulses of the urban environment are less saturated by them, they and tend to be urbanophiles[16], as opposed to people with an urbanophobic orientation, who prefer natural environment to the urban one.

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13 See environmental preference theory: Kaplan, Stephen: Where Cognition and Affect meet: A Theoretical Analysis of Preference. In *Environmental Aesthetics: Theory, Research and Application*, edited by Nasar, Jack L. 56–63. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1988.

14 Kaplan, Stephen: Aesthetics, Affect and Cognition: Environmental Preference from an Evolutionary Perspective. *Environment and Behavior*, 19. no. 1. 1987. 3–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916587191001

15 Zuckerman, Marvin: *Behavioral Expressions and Biosocial Bases of Sensation Seeking*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1994.

16 Félonneau, Marie-Line: Love and Loathing of the City: Urbanophilia and Urbanophobia, Topological Identity and Perceived Incivilities. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, no. 24, 2004. 43–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(03)00049-5

Contrasting urban and rural myths – or are they just myths?

As a result of early socio-psychological research and everyday experience, it became widely accepted in public thinking that the village (and the "countryside" also known as the natural environment) and the city (as a built, artificial environment) are in sharp contrast. This is again, the myth of positive nature versus the myth of negative city: "In the mind of the Rousseauist city dweller, the myth of nature is confused with the equally mistaken idea of rural life; he imagines a village life that is healthy and relaxing; adapted to the natural cycle of days and nights and the seasons, and is a guarantee of longevity, resistance to nervous breakdowns and heart attacks. The opposite is obvious: the weekend or summer vacationer from the city usually projects his own state of mind onto the world around him and imagines that peace of body and soul lies hidden under thatched roofs."[17]

In environmental psychology, many researchers have interpreted the city and nature (countryside) as the two ends of a number line.[18] According to the well-known biophilia hypothesis[19], people have an evolutionary urge to pay attention to living things and to respond positively towards lifelike processes. This is the root of their feeling that they belong "naturally" to nature [20]. This is also supported by research findings: while watching photos depicting urban, built environments and rural, natural landscapes, people experienced more positive emotional states when exposed to natural elements and were able to pay attention to these images for longer periods of time [21],[22] This also shows that in many cases responses to the environment are not of cognitive, thinking, or problem-solving nature, but rather of a quick, automatic, unconscious, affective (emotion-, mood-, motivation-, need- and impulse-based) processes that provide

17 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (23.)

18 See e.g. Williams, Daniel R., and Knopf, Richard C.: In Search of the Primitive-Urban Continuum: The Dimensional Structure of Outdoor Recreation Settings. *Environment and Behavior*, 17. no. 3. 1985. 351–70. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1177/0013916585173005

19 Wilson, Edward O.: *Biophilia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1984.

20 Mayer, F. Stephan, and Frantz, Cynthia M.: The Connectedness to Nature Scale: A Measure of Individuals' Feeling in Community with Nature. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24. 2004. 503–15. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.10.001

21 Ulrich, Roger S.: Natural versus Urban Scenes: Some Psychophysiological Effects. *Environment and Behavior*, 13. no. 5. 1981. 523–56. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916581135001

22 Ulrich, Roger S.: Aesthetic and Affective Response to Natural Environment. In *Human Behavior and the Environment*, edited by Altman, Irwin, and Wohlwill, Joachim F. Vol. 6. 85–125. New York: Plenum Press. 1983.

an immediate assessment of the environment from the perspective of survival, at least within the favourable–unfavourable dimension. This, of course, serves survival very well, as it enables a quick and automatic response (avoidance/ escape or approach) to the opportunities and dangers of the environment. The stimuli of natural places, such as waterfronts (the sight of rippling water, the sound of water splashing, the smell of water) – in both natural and urban contexts – trigger spontaneous, unintentional attention processes in people, resulting in a kind of "relaxation experience" that can compensate for the tiring, exhausting effect of the (sometimes overly) interesting, (overly) exciting, (excessively) challenging urban built environment. "Since humans are able to process the characteristics of natural environments with negligible effort based on their evolutionary preparedness, involuntary, effortless attention prevails in nature, which promotes mental rejuvenation."[23]

The existence and utilization of nature's relaxing mechanisms is also available for modern humans, so it is not a myth. It could be really felt during the outbreak and rampage of SARS-COVID 19 pandemic: nature became more valuable even for city people, even within the city, parks were full of walkers, and city dwellers crammed their balconies with plants. At the same time, there is some truth in the following, vitriolic, words: "City dwellers love nature like gourmets love animals. Fleeing the city and dirt, they take only the negative aspects of urban culture with them. They pollute the clean air with the fumes of their cars; they dirty the sand and grass with their greasy paper; they disturb the silence with their transistors and engine noise; they rob the landscape of its natural beauty with their campsites and vacation homes".[24] "The frustrated city dweller pollutes nature in the belief that they love it and caricatures village life, while setting it as an example."[25]

A number of recent environmental psychology studies confirm that – in case of appropriate architectural characteristics – the urban, built environment (for example, a well-designed streetscape[26]) can also have an optimizing effect on the

23 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai*. Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (63.)

24 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (23.)

25 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (23–24.)

26 Dúll, Andrea: Minden utca egyszeri, megismételhetetlen jelenség. Városi utcák, urbanisztika és környezetpszichológia. In *Főutcák, üzletutcák – megújulás és fejlesztés*, edited by Kocsis, János Balázs. 7–17. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2016.

background activity of the nervous system. In the framework of an experiment[27], computer-modified urban streetscapes were systematically altered in terms of architectural features (orderliness, decoration, building silhouettes) and building height (number of floors). The findings showed that people found a small amount of disorder (entropy) relaxing, but taller buildings were associated with negative feelings. From the results of this study (and other studies), the conclusion can be made that the environmental psychology characteristics of urban and natural environments are closer to each other than previously presumed. This also raises exciting urban planning considerations[28].

Urban vs. natural environment: a balanced relationship

"Since the 1980s, environmental psychological studies on the nature vs. built environment issue have indicated that the psychological representation of the city is more harmonious than previously thought. However, many recent studies continue to demonstrate the destructive effects of urban/industrial environments on physiological and psychological health [...]. For example, among people living in purely urban built environments (e.g. high-rise housing estates), the [incidence] of psychiatric disorders was much higher than among people living in urban areas but in detached houses with gardens [...]. Another example: residents of heavily industrialized areas showed reduced levels of well-being and optimism [...]. At the same time, a growing number of studies confirm that big-city living does not necessarily go hand in hand with poorer health. Hierarchical modelling of health statistics from 29 metropolitan areas showed, for example, that although people living in more crowded urban areas reported poorer health than those living in less densely populated areas, people living in metropolitan areas did not walk less than those living in smaller towns, they did not have more chronic diseases, and their body mass index was average. The assumption is increasingly accepted, that under certain conditions the principles of biophilia [...] can also be found in built environments. The experience of belonging can also be triggered by the built environment [...] if there is access to (1) clean air, water,

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27 Lindall, Pall Jakob, and Hartig, Terry: Architectural Variation, Building Height, and the Restorative Quality of Urban Residential Streetscapes. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 33. 2013. 26–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2012.09.003

28 Dúll, Andrea, and Pálfy, Sándor: On Public Issues and Public Spaces – A Design Course Focusing on the Danube Bank in Budapest. *Periodica Polytechnica Architecture*, 45. no. 2. 2014. 47–51. https://doi.org/10.3311/PPar.7594

and a peaceful living space, (2) biophilic natural elements (plants, trees, animals) and information about them, (3) biophilic elements (texture, ornamentation, art) in the built environment, (4) other people in a visibly anxiety-free environment (public spaces, open-access residential and commercial spaces), (5) a sense of protection from anxiety-inducing objects and events (heavy traffic, threatening people, dangerous, hanging or overly protruding environmental elements)".[29]

Love of the city and fear of the city – urbanophilia and urbanophobia

The psychological formulation of the view that "city and nature are two opposite poles of a single number line" is the idea of urbanophilia - urbanophobia[30]. Although this psychological concept defines the urban and natural environments as two extremes on a continuum, it nevertheless acknowledges and even emphasizes that there are numerous intermediate positions between the two extremes. "Unlike urbanofobes, urbanofil people consider the big city to be the ideal environment. They enjoy the diverse, bustling urban lifestyle, are not bothered by the polluted air (they don't even notice it [...]), expressly enjoy mobility[31], love technology, and are enthusiastic about innovations. They tend to get bored in nature, miss the hustle and bustle of the city, and get tired of doing nothing. Urbanophobic people are characterized by anti-urban attitudes; according to them, the ideal city is small, it is more like nature, it has clean air, no garbage, no violence or poverty, few cars, you can cycle and walk in it, and there are plenty of green spaces that provide opportunities for pleasant human interaction, walks, and relaxation"[32].

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29 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (64. – inserts by DA)
30 Félonneau, Marie-Line: Love and Loathing of the City: Urbanophilia and Urbanophobia, Topological Identity and Perceived Incivilities. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24. 2004. 43–52. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(03)00049-5
31 On the environmental psychology of urban transport see Dúll, Andrea: Ember az infrastruktúrában: nagyvárosi helyváltoztatás. In *Csütörtöki Iskola – Érdekes emberekkel beszélget Krizsán András*, edited by Krizsán, András. 122–35). Budapest: Terc. 2013.
32 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (64.)

A lovable and sustainable city is walkable, of course

"I spent my time filled with beauty on long walks through the city, the route of which was determined by the city's secret layout [...]. Cities have always fascinated me as human and at the same time irrational creations; their apparent unreality, formed from a mass of individual and independent decisions, conceals an order that no one consciously wanted, but whose springs can nevertheless be recognized."[33]

One of the important problems of the "fascinating and irrational" 21st-century metropolises is that, primarily due to their scale, changing location within them can be realized almost exclusively by some means of transport. The introduction of "more human-friendly" modes of transport is important not only in terms of mobility, but also in terms of other classic urban problems (air quality, sustainability, residents' health, etc. In many respects (at least partially), it is a solution if there are sufficient green spaces (nature) in the city that allow for adequate quantity and quality of pedestrian movement (walking and hiking)[34]) for city users (residents, workers, tourists): "making the urban environment more walkable [...] environmental (increasing walkability necessarily goes hand in hand with direct and indirect traffic calming, which reduces congestion and pollution, and trees planted to create a more walkable environment reduce heat stress), personal (it helps to form social relationships and improves mental and physical health), and economic benefits."[35] A neighbourhood can be considered walkable if

(1) the destinations to be reached are within a short distance and/or cannot be reached by car;

(2) anyone – including children, the elderly, and people with limited mobility – can walk around it without obstacles;

(3) (3) it is safe in terms of both traffic and crime;

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33 Lévi-Strauss, Claude – quoted by Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (124.)

34 In this paper the concept of „walkability" is used because in built environment this term is typically associated with sustainability and the livability of cities, where walking for transportation purposes is an essential element. (Berze, Iván Zsolt and Dúll, Andrea: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés ember–környezet tranzakciótudományi megközelítésben. *Tér és Társadalom*, 36. no. 4. 2022. 52–85. https://doi.org/10.17649/TET.36.4.3438 (54.)

35 Berze, Iván Zsolt and Dúll, Andrea: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés ember–környezet tranzakciótudományi megközelítésben. *Tér és Társadalom*, 36. no. 4. 2022. 52–85. https://doi.org/10.17649/TET.36.4.3438 (52.)

(4) (4) there is adequate pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, street furniture, etc.);

(5) it is pleasant: with architecturally interesting streets, attractive shops, no litter and graffiti.[36]

This definition of walkability[37] does not explicitly mention the natural environment as a pre-condition for walkability, but the safety or pleasantness of the environment can, in the author's opinion, also include well-maintained natural environments (e.g. parks) within the city. Overall, it can be stated that walkability is in many ways consistent with better, more humane (urban) planning[38],[39].

People walk for many reasons[40]: for relaxation, well-being, me-time, transportation (to reach a destination), "just because", for the need to be active, for health and exercise, or for establishing and maintaining social relationships. Walking is therefore either for transportation or recreation, and "depending on the purpose of walking, the environmental characteristics that determine walking behaviour may vary".[41] For example, in the case of walking for transportation purposes, weather conditions or sidewalk width are more important factors of route selection, while in the case of walking for health purposes, various natural elements in the environment, for example, the presence and accessibility of water or the amount of trees along the route are very important[42].

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36 Forsythe, Ann, and Southworth, Michael: Cities Afoot – Pedestrians, Walkability and Urban Design. *Journal of Urban Design*, 13. no. 1. 2008. 1–3. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13574800701816896 (1.)

37 Forsythe, Ann, and Southworth, Michael: Cities Afoot – Pedestrians, Walkability and Urban Design. *Journal of Urban Design*, 13. no. 1. 2008. 1–3. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13574800701816896

38 Berze, Iván Zsolt and Dúll, Andrea: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés ember–környezet tranzakciótudományi megközelítésben. *Tér és Társadalom*, 36. no. 4. 2022, 52–85. https://doi.org/10.17649/TET.36.4.3438

39 Dúll, Andrea and Berze, Iván Zsolt: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés – projektlehetőségek egy tranzakcionális elméleti keretmodell alapján. In *Tudomány és fenntarthatóság*, edited by Bodáné Kendrovics, Rita. 137–45. Budapest: Óbudai Egyetem Rejtő Sándor Könnyűipari és Környezetmérnöki Kar. 2024.

40 Risser, Ralf, and Šucha, Matúš: *Psychological Perspectives on Walking*. New York: Routledge. 2020.

41 Reviewed by Berze, Iván Zsolt and Dúll, Andrea: Gyalogolhatóság és gyaloglási viselkedés ember környezet tranzakciótudományi megközelítésben. *Tér és Társadalom*, 36. no. 4. 2022. 52–85. https://doi.org/10.17649/TET.36.4.3438 (59)

42 Naderi, Jody Rrosenblatt, and Raman, Barani: Capturing Impressions of Pedestrian Landscapes Used for Healing Purposes With Decision Tree Learning. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 73. no. 2–3. 2005. 155–66. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2004.11.012

Very similar principles are recommended for urban design by the representatives of *New Urbanism*[43]. The public-space design principles of New Urbanism are sensitive to social processes, oriented to ecological and sustainability, prefer cycling and walking instead of driving, try to encourage outdoor activities and intensive social interaction:

(1) walkability: this means pedestrian-friendly street design, i.e. most services should be within a 10-minute walk from home and work, accessible via speed-limited or car-free streets lined with trees, and parking lots should be visually hidden;

(2) connectivity: the street network should be organically connected along a clear hierarchy, public spaces should be of good quality, facilitating pedestrian mobility (enjoyable walking) and dispersing traffic;

(3) mixed use and diversity: there should be mixed use in the neighbourhood, within blocks and within buildings: shops, offices, and apartments should operate, and residents and space users should be diverse in terms of age, income, culture, ethnicity, etc.;

(4) mixed housing: there should be a variety of housing types, sizes, prices, etc. in the area, located within easy reach of each other;

(5) quality architecture and urban design: beauty, aesthetic value, comfort, and human scale should be emphasized in terms of the neighbourhood, buildings, and street furniture—all of which, along with freedom of use, should be clearly suggested by the space to members of the community (sense of place);

(6) traditional neighbourhood structure: areas should have clear boundaries and a well-identifiable, high-quality public space city centre, primarily developed through participatory planning, where the highest density is concentrated, which gradually decreases towards the edges (transect planning) – this allows boundaries between natural areas and built-up areas to develop naturally and organically, which is key to well-designed urban nature, street and square structure, and human well-being;

(7) increased density: it is advisable to locate buildings, apartments, shops, and services close to each other (within a 10-minute walk!) , which facilitates pedestrian traffic, increases people's efficiency, and enhances their experience of efficiency, as accessibility gives a high degree of control, which is a very important component of the "comfortable, liveable place" experience;

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43 *Principles of New Urbanism.* http://www.newurbanism.org/newurbanism/principles.html (14.11. 2023)

(8) according to the original principles, this means supporting pedestrian-friendly transportation (bicycles, scooters, walking) within the settlement and a high-quality suburban and local train network between settlements, "but with

(9) sustainability this also means ecologically responsible behaviour (developments and interventions with minimal environmental impact, use of environmentally friendly technologies, energy efficiency, reduced use of finite energy resources, more local production, more pedestrian-friendly forms of transportation);

(10) all this results in a better quality of life"[44]: "Quality of life is an integrative concept that can be interpreted on an economic, social, and psychological level. The city and its spaces and streets are the settings for everyday life and, in this sense, the medium and shapers of quality of life, but based on the principle of reciprocity mentioned above, quality of life has an impact on the city as an environment: those with a higher quality of life – rightly – experience their environment as more livable, become more actively and effectively involved in its maintenance, and so on: the factors of the reciprocal process reinforce each other, while in negative situations they intensify each other's effects in an unfavourable direction".[45]

Based on all this, the question rightly arises: should the issue of quality of life and the connections between urban and natural environments in a broader and more complex way be not addressed? For example, it is conceivable that a person who loves cities, an urbanophile, feels better overall in an urban, built environment, so their quality of life is better there, while the quality of life of urbanophobes, people who do not like cities and prefer the natural environment, is worse in the city. The question can trigger far-reaching thoughts in both experts and laypeople, for example, whether the innate, universal, "evolutionary remnant" of human "connection with nature" can be nuanced by the close relationship with the built, urban environment. Numerous research findings indicate that people preferred images in which the natural environment and man-made elements were present in a balanced manner to the purely natural images depicting environments to those[46].

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44 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai.* Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (65.)
45 Kocsis, János Balázs and Dúll, Andrea: A megújulás környezeti és társadalmi aspektusai. In *Főutcák, üzletutcák – megújulás és fejlesztés*, edited by Kocsis, János Balázs. 199–207. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 2016. (206–7.)
46 Herzog, Thomas R., and Chernick, Kristi K.: Tranquility and Danger in Urban and Natural Settings. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 20. 2000, 29–39. http://dx.doi.org/10.1006/jevp.1999.0151

The psychological effects of the city/built environment and the natural landscape are therefore compatible[47]: urban parks[48], urban green – as multifunctional landscapes[49] – represent an independent, relatively new environmental quality, both in terms of their aesthetic quality and beyond. In perspective, this also means that environmental psychology and landscape architecture[50] may be linked in many ways in the future.

Balance between natural and artificial environments: urban parks, urban greenery

"Since the beginning of the 19th century, the proud dialogue between city and nature has been gradually replaced by a stammering devoid of all charm and individuality, a world of half city, half nature, a concept that Americans have symbolically merged from the words rural and urban in the adjective rurban. The city should not be ashamed of what it is: 'anti-nature'. Ultimately, this is the raison d'être of its existence."[51] "It would be a futile attempt to merge nature into the city. And the attempt to trap nature where it unfolds freely would be an irreparable destruction."[52] These two quotes indicate the very position that prevailed until the beginning of the 21st century, claiming that the city and nature are fundamentally and irreconcilably opposed to each other. Today, nobody agrees with the first quote and the first sentence of the second one, and it is worth reinterpreting the idea of trapping nature where it unfolds freely. Yes, "landscaping is not a cure-all [...]. If examining the issue calmly [...], it must be

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47 See e.g. Dúll, Andrea and Dósa, Zsuzsanna: A természeti környezet – környezetpszichológiai megközelítésben. *Tájökológiai Lapok*, 3. no. 1. 2005. 19–25. https://doi.org/10.56617/tl.4506

48 Cf. e.g. Szilágyi, Kinga, Zelenák, Fruzsina, Kanczkerné Veréb, Mária, Gerzson, László, Czeglédi, Csongor and Balogh, Péter István: Limits of Ecological Load in Public Parks – on the Example of Városliget. *Applied Ecology and Environmental Research*, 13. no. 2. 2015. 427–48. DOI: 10.15666/aeer/1302_427448

49 Naveh, Zev: Ten Major Premises for a Holistic Conception of Multifunctional Landscapes. *Landscape and Urban Planning, 57.* no. 3–4. 2001. 269–84. https://doi.org/10.1016/S01692046(01)00209-2

50 Zelenák, Fruzsina: Tájépítészet és környezetpszichológia. A szabadtéri minőség és a helykötődés összefüggései budapesti lakótelepeken. PhD-értekezés (témavezetők: Balogh, Péter István and Dúll, Andrea). Budapest: Magyar Agrár- és Élettudományi Egyetem. Tájépítészeti és Tájökológiai Doktori Iskola. 2018.

51 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (28 – highlight by author)

52 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (107)

admitted that trees can reduce or conceal the ugliness, monotony, and sadness of some cities or city districts, but they cannot eliminate them, just as a 'pretty' garden cannot save a wretchedly ugly family home, and flower pots cannot make a slum more beautiful. [...] Green space is desirable if it does not exist; it must be protected if it does".[53]

The topic of the city park is equally exciting in relation to contemporary urban planning and environmental psychology – both theoretically and practically – because in "environmental psychology, it means that the question whether an environment is indigenous (its components, origin, and existence are free from human influence, e.g. a natural forest or lake, wilderness, desert, or jungle) or natural (the natural components were created by human intervention and are maintained in a more or less artificial environment, e.g. a garden, park, plantation, man-made lake, sunset in the city, or an aquarium)[54] [...] is decided by the experience of nature. [According to this], when entering a particular environment (e.g. a city park), people immediately, unconsciously analyse the human-environment relationship and [...] decide on the natural or artificial character of the given location. If the separation between the landscape and humans is high, the laws of nature noticeably dominate the landscape, there is no trace of human intervention and humans typically have to struggle in this environment, then that place is – according to the experience of nature – natural[55] (even if it is actually artificial)".[56]

Urban parks function in line with the integration of the experience of nature into the urban context and/or conscious planning – beyond their health, sustainability, and aesthetic effects – and are also well understood in terms of environmental psychology, insofar as they reframe the relationship of urban residents with their environment. Urban nature, urban parks or even roadside vegetation along sidewalks, roads and motorways

– have a relaxing and re-focusing function,
– reduce public aggression (such as traffic atrocities),

53 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (110)
54 Hartig, Terry, and Evans, Gary W.: A természetélmény pszichológiai alapjai. In *Környezetpszichológiai szöveggyűjtemény*, edited by Dúll, Andrea és Kovács, Zoltán. 233–54. Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó. 1998.
55 Mausner, Claudia A.: Kaleidoscope Model: Defining Natural Environments. *Journal of Environmental Psychology,* 16. 1996. 335–48. http://dx.doi.org/10.1006/jevp.1996.0028
56 Dúll, Andrea: *Épített környezet és pszichológia: A lokalitásélmény környezetpszichológiai vizsgálatai*. Budapest: Doctoral dissertation, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. 2017. (67.)

- help the development of human relationships and their satisfactory maintenance for interaction partners (local residents), assist with easy communication,
- reduce negative emotions and as a result stress,
- support the development of positive emotions and favourable attitudes (e.g. loyalty, attachment) towards both the environment (e.g. the neighbourhood) and other people using the same environment,
- are related to the environmental awareness of people in the neighbourhood,
- and thus, play a central role in people's perceived psychological well-being.

The urban "green belt has qualities too: botanical, aesthetic, social and urban qualities. If we neglect this, we will end up satisfying chlorophyll fetishism and appeasing the gods of urban planning with a concept devoid of meaning."[57] As things stand, we can be confident that this will not be the case.

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57 Oudin, Bernard: *A város védelmében*. Budapest: Corvina. 1980. [Oudin, Bernard: *Plaidoyer pour la ville*. Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont. 1972.] (108)

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"The city is the world that human builds for himself" — wrote Wolf Schneider in 1973. The defining characteristics of human life are strongly influenced by the complex geographical-economic-social-psychological system of the environment. The triad of economic development, settlement structure, and society has created, maintained, and transformed characteristic cities. The history of the centuries is also a montage and collage drawn into the internal structure of cities. The use and exploitation of urban geographical energies vary from era to era.

What is a city?

The disciplines dealing with cities have all created their own city definitions. Each discipline has examined human settlements from different perspectives, and has created different conceptual systems and analytical methods for examining cities.

The authors of this volume (geographer, sociologist Éva Izsák; art historian, sociologist Katalin S. Nagy; and environmental psychologist Andrea Dúll) argue that holistic, system-based thinking is important, useful, and timely in the 21st century reflections on the city. The authors analyse urban development processes in general from several perspectives: the role of the network of urban spaces in the transformation of settlements, the (environmental) psychological processes related to the city, the conscious and unconscious empirical experience of the city, and the relationship between the city and nature. In addition to general urban processes, the volume contains several studies analysing the urban experience of Budapest: the image of the city and its housing estates, the change in the visuality of public spaces, the appearance of public sculptures, the urban significance of shopping centres, and the role of the Danube as a "lived space" in Budapest.

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