

PETER HANAK

The Garden and the Workshop

*Essays on the Cultural History of Vienna
and Budapest*



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ESSAYS ON THE
CULTURAL HISTORY OF
VIENNA AND
BUDAPEST

Péter Hanák

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FOREWORD

PÉTER HANÁK

1921–1997

WITH CHARACTERISTIC eagerness and almost boyish pride, Péter Hanák had awaited the appearance of this book, his first to be published in the America he had come to love so well. Just as the volume is going to press, death has intervened to rob him of his joy—and to deprive the historical profession of one of its most energetic and enthusiastic practitioners. Through fifty years of drastic historical change, Péter Hanák was among the most active Hungarian scholars: first in placing Hungary's history in transnational perspective; then in bringing newer Western methods to bear on Hungarian historical experience. In a world divided by the politics of the Cold War, Péter Hanák built bridges through historical scholarship, both in his writing and in his vigorous participation in the international conferences that have so strongly shaped contemporary academic culture.

For Péter Hanák history studied and history lived were inevitably allied. The cruelties of mid-century European politics were repeatedly visited upon him. Denied a university education under Hungarian anti-Jewish laws in 1939, he embarked on a career as a metal worker and trade unionist in Pécs. In 1942, he was “conscripted” into Jewish labor service in the Hungarian army. That fate, harsh though it was, enabled him to survive. His parents died in Auschwitz and his brother disappeared without a trace.

Like other young Jews who survived the Hungarian holocaust—one thinks of two outstanding modern European historians who became his valued colleagues, György Ránki and Ivan Berend—Hanák as a young man eagerly embraced Communism after the liberation of Hungary by the Red Army. His university education, possible at last, led him to history; his new-found politics, to the study of Hungarian radical movements in 1905. As a young assistant professor at Eötvös Loránd University (1953–1956), Hanák began to work on the nationality movements in 1848 and the restructuring of Hungary after the defeated revolution.

In 1956, contemporary history brusquely intervened once more in historian Hanák's life and work. As a sympathetic participant in the Hungarian movement for autonomy and reform in that year, Hanák was dismissed from his university teaching post. Yet for him as for some other outstanding scholars, the Academy of Science served as a refuge when the university was barred. In the painfully slow thaw in still-Stalinist Hungary, the Academy

cautiously opened an intellectual window to the West. In the early sixties, Hanák and a few of his peers were allowed to travel to Western Europe and America, where a new world of scholarship entered their field of vision. They bought books and periodicals closed to them since the war's beginning, learned English, and began to consort with their Western colleagues—none more easily than the open, friendly Péter Hanák. By 1971, he was teaching as a visiting professor in Columbia and Yale, though he could not teach at home.

Hanák's major work in the sixties and early seventies recast our historical understanding of Hungary's political and social development in the mid-nineteenth century. In a multipronged attack on the Hungarian nationalist and traditional Austrian views of Hungary's place in the empire of the Habsburgs, Hanák brought the lights of international, social-structural, economic, and political analysis to bear, revealing in a new way the dynamics of the Austro-Hungarian political system in its wider European context. His undoctinaire Marxism unquestionably enlarged the capaciousness of his grasp and enriched the density of his analysis.

By the 1970s, Péter Hanák's exposure to Western historical ideas became evident in his turn to a new kind of social history. The problem of *embourgeoisement* that preoccupied the younger generation of German historians, such as Jürgen Kocka, made its appearance in Hanák's *Ungarn in der Donaumonarchie* (Hungary in the Danubian [Habsburg] Monarchy). This German edition of 1984 explored the questions of Jewish and other minority assimilation as well as the demographic and social-structural transformation of Hungary before World War I.

Beyond these new concerns with social history, Péter Hanák became engaged with intellectual and cultural problems. Here, I suspect, his leadership in organizing colloquia between Hungarian and American historians for the exploration of comparative historical problems played its part. Several colloquia were devoted to Progressivism in both countries. This reflected current ideological interests in both the United States and Hungary. While young American historians were preoccupied with the reanimation of the legacy of pre-World War Progressivism and the New Deal in the conservative atmosphere of the Cold War, their Hungarian counterparts were reviving their own cosmopolitan and democratic intellectual tradition of the turn of the century. The latter, which included such national cultural heroes as Béla Bartók, the poet Endre Ady, and the later Communist philosopher-laureate, György Lukács, could be safely utilized in the development of a heightened liberal and democratic consciousness under the slowly softening Communist raj. In pursuit of this interest, Péter Hanák published a book on Oscar Jászi, an outstanding political and social analyst of the Austro-Hungarian empire who, fleeing his native Hungary in 1919, brought his great gifts to Oberlin College and the American political science profession.

Jászi's transnational ideal of a democratic comity of Hungary with its neighbors undoubtedly affected Hanák's historical as well as political outlook. In particular, he identified himself in the last years of Communism with the strengthening of Hungary's ties with Austria and the development of a multinational Central European community. His assumption in 1991 of a leading role in the Central European University founded by George Soros expressed in terms of professional commitment Hanák's cosmopolitan outlook, which was both Western-oriented and devoted to overcoming the ignorance and indifference of every Central European country to the culture and history of its neighbors.

As he had moved in his Marxist phase from the history of national movements to a densely textured political and institutional history of Hungary as a component of the larger empire, so Hanák moved from his Western-inspired social history of the 1970s to a fourth historical terrain in the 1980s; namely, that of cultural history. *The Garden and the Workshop* presents some of the fruits of that concern. Even more than his earlier work, these essays reflect Hanák's openness to the new perspectives and methods emerging in Western Europe and America. He brings to bear on problems of Hungarian cultural history the approaches of French explorers of *l'image de l'autre*, German students of *Wohnkultur*, American multidisciplinary historians of urban high culture, Austrian analysts of middle-brow theatrical and musical culture—to name but a few. If these individual efforts, so demanding in their scholarly variety, are not uniformly successful, they accomplish the major objective that informed the life's work of their author. A true citizen of the Republic of Letters throughout his long and often painful experience of history, Péter Hanák remained a teaching scholar, bringing to Hungary the lights of understanding generated in the world beyond its borders and, in exchange, projecting to those outside the profoundly enlightening experience of Hungary's rich history, culture and scholarship.

Péter Hanák's life and work bears eloquent witness to the intense relationship between history studied and history lived. He knew how to draw from the very terrors of history, of which he knew too many, its potential for enhancing our understanding of the human condition in its historical vicissitudes.

Carl E. Schorske
December 2, 1997

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MOST CHAPTERS of this volume were written in the 1980s and early 1990s, after I had finished writing and editing one of the volumes in the recent series of “The History of Hungary.” This meant, first, that I was able—even induced—to explain problems, particularly those of cultural history that I could not do within the limited framework of a manual. Second, this occurred during the last stage of Communism in Hungary, the period of the “soft dictatorship,” when the leadership of cultural administration tolerated discussions on such problems as decadence of the arts, existentialism as a humane philosophy, the eroticism of death, social marginality, and so on. At the same time I became acquainted with new questions and methods of French, German, and American cultural history.

I was very lucky that I could be a fellow of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for forty-five years, an institute that was a refuge of liberalism, creating and preserving the atmosphere of free scholarly thinking. I feel deep gratitude for the stimulating milieu, and particularly for the inestimable help of my late dear friend, György Ránki. Next to him, it was Professor Carl Schorske who offered the greatest support in my advancement. As a visiting professor in the United States in 1971, I had the privilege to take part in his faculty seminar at Princeton University. These meetings and discussions rendered me lasting experiences of how to approach problems of the history of ideas and artistic creation. I thank him for his beneficial influence, received through many common conferences and personal conversations during the last quarter century. He was helpful also in obtaining a fellowship for me at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 1986–1987. In the untroubled peace of the Institute I was able to complete this volume of my essays. The publication of my book is the suitable occasion to express my highest appreciation to the Institute and its professors for their advice and remarks.

As to the single articles, I am indebted to Dr. Gábor Gyáni for his valuable information relating to the materials of the Budapest City Archive, and to Dr. Ilona Sármany-Parsons for her contribution to my considerations on art history, and to the chapters on urbanization, and especially of Viennese and Budapest art nouveau. I recall with gratitude and sorrow the relevant remarks of the outstanding deceased poet, the late Ágnes Nemes Nagy, who corrected my views relating to *fin-de-siècle* decadence. I have to thank very much the informative advice given by the experts of the Archive of War History (Kriegsarchiv) in Vienna and in Budapest, where I collected the unknown people's letters for my article, “Vox Populi.” I wish to express my sincere admiration for the devoted collaboration of my translators, particu-

larly Professor Susan Gal, Professor Solomon Wank, Dr. Gloria Deak, Éva Pálmai, Brian Mclean, Nicholas Parsons, Christina Rozsnyai, and Peter Doherty.

Last but not least I have many thanks to give the editors of Princeton University Press for their laborious, careful, and accurate work.

I finished the introduction of this volume with the following words: "The workshop of Pest in a way was also a garden, sprouting flowers and fruits which, though frequently uprooted, could not be torn out by the blows and storms of history." I wrote these lines in Princeton, on October 23, 1986, the thirtieth anniversary of the 1956 Revolution in Hungary.

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Chapter Eight, "Vox Populi: Intercepted Letters in the First World War," was published under the title "Népi levelek az első világháborúból" (People's Letters from the First World War) in *Valóság* (Reality) no. 3 (Budapest, 1973). Translated by Nicholas Parsons.

INTRODUCTORY REFLECTIONS ON CULTURAL HISTORY

THIS BOOK is about two famous, neighboring Central European cities: Vienna and Budapest. They are bound by a common destiny, tradition, and culture, yet divided by their history, character, tradition, and culture as well. Nothing can demonstrate the truth of this paradox more plainly than the way they were spliced together in the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, almost as complements of each other. For although they shared the same framework of state and enjoyed the same prosperity and cultural florescence under the Monarchy, their rivalry, mutual suspicion, social structure, and mentality drove a wedge between them.

The antagonism manifested itself more plainly in the last half century. The 1950s turned Vienna, the resurrected capital of *felix Austria*, into a border fortress of the West, the free world's shop window to the East, and a restored monument to the contented, peacetime years of old. Budapest, meanwhile, was featured on Western front pages, and in the minds of newspaper readers, in connection with the 1956 Revolution, and then with a loosening of the bonds of the Soviet system and hopes of liberal reforms. In the last few decades, Vienna has almost been made a star by art connoisseurs, the educated public, and tourists. Fin-de-siècle Vienna has been admired, researched, and explained in a succession of guidebooks, albums and specialist books, and several dozen monographs on cultural history.¹ Budapest, on the other hand, has been confined to one or two worthwhile books in Western languages.²

What lies behind Vienna's extraordinary present-day popularity, which greatly exceeds the recognition it received at the turn of the century? First, perhaps, comes the linguistic advantage. A knowledge of German is many times more common than a knowledge of Hungarian, and that also applies to translators, of course. Another factor may be emigration. Far more writers, artists, and men of letters, before and after the Second World War, migrated to America from Austria than from Hungary. Understandably, they glorified Vienna, with strong nostalgia and no little exaggeration. Laying aside partiality, it must be acknowledged that Vienna's time-honored culture, and the French and Italian-style culture grafted onto German in general, surpassed the culture of eastern Central Europe, notably in music, fine art, and drama, although Hungarian culture vied strongly with Vienna, mainly in poetry, romantic fiction, and twentieth-century music. This probably explains Vienna's popularity among the wider public, as a spectacle

and a civilization. It does not explain satisfactorily what aroused the scholarly interest of the American intellectual elite of outstanding thinkers, writers, and historians. Why have they seen in fin-de-siècle Vienna a paradigm of the change of cultural epoch, comparable to Paris? Let me anticipate certain ideas in this book by mentioning briefly some characteristics of Viennese culture.

One obvious feature is that the national question plays a secondary role, or is absent altogether. Austrians were almost wholly lacking in national romanticism. The occasional manifestations filtered in from outside. The prime example here is the playwright Grillparzer. He did not regard himself as a German, and only by citizenship as an Austrian; he was a veritable Viennese: "The best thing a man can be is a man," he remarked, "whether he wears an *Attila* [hussar tunic] and speaks Hungarian, or, despite his German native language, dons an English frock coat and a French hat." I think the best evidence here is that there was no expressly Austrian opera between Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Richard Strauss's *Salome*. This great genre of national romanticism simply passed Vienna by.

What exercised the Austrian mind were not local dissensions or problems of national destiny, but vital questions of universal human importance: the nature of the world, life and death, illusion and reality, the soul, and sexuality. These are all attractive subjects, which have become more immediate still in our day than they were at the end of the last century. Austrian high culture was dominated by the problems of existence and nonexistence, the finality of death, existential solitude, the place of the individual, and the secrets of love, in other words by Eros and Psyche, and the related embrace of Eros and Thanatos. Imbuing all this was fin-de-siècle malaise, an uneasy sense of nameless anxieties, a sinister inkling of imminent dangers. These were motifs that only two cataclysmic wars, with fascist and communist dictatorships, gas chambers and gulags, would endow with a horrifyingly real significance, as a full historical and artistic vindication of Viennese culture.

Vienna's brilliance long obscured the virtues and merits of its neighbors, though these should not be underestimated. Budapest's last "peacetime" quarter century brought a cultural flowering of European significance. The liberalism of the nobility and the related national romanticism were in decline by that time. The cultural regeneration at the beginning of this century embraced the subject matter and forms of the European Sezession, modernism, and the avant-garde. The Viennese themes—life, death, solitude, psyche, guilt, eroticism—appeared, along with a crisis of identity in poetry and pictures and on stage. However, there are two essential differences dividing the cultural renewals of Budapest and Vienna. The Hungarian reform generation solved its identity problems not by withdrawing from the national community but by revising the concept and idea of a nation. It evolved an anti-feudal national

awareness based on the people and on critical self-knowledge, which chimed in with the program of transforming the whole society in a radical, democratic way. The other essential difference was that the national and universally human aspects were not severed or opposed to each other. Ady the poet, Lechner and Lajta the Sezession architects, and Bartók the musician discovered a submerged, forgotten realm of folk versification and folk forms and melodies, and built it into the new forms of twentieth-century modernism. Ady and his associates loved their people and worried about their fate for the same reasons and to the same extent as they worried about the catastrophes befalling mankind. They were neither chauvinistic nor cosmopolitan, but intellectuals who saw people and nation, nation and mankind, as one.

Although the studies in this book deal with cultural history at the turn of the century, it is worth recalling briefly, in a few introductory lines, some features of the region's history over the last 2,000 years. During its stormy history, this region (it has become acceptable again to call it Central Europe) was always an integral part of the Occident, as its eastern marches. Mediterranean culture and the Greco-Roman state, law, science, and art took permanent root. Pannonia was a northeastern border province of the Roman Empire for almost four centuries. The *limes* followed the Danube. Vindobona ("radiant city"), with its fine-sounding Celtic name, and Aquincum ("warm spring"), an Illyrian-Celtic foundation, became the two centers of the province, military strongholds and thriving civilian towns. Vienna and Buda-Pest rose again on the same sites at the beginning of the second millennium. The same region was crossed by the border of the Carolingian Empire, and later the Holy Roman Empire, which expanded in the direction of Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland after 1000. In the high Middle Ages, this was the limit of Western Christendom, with its culture-friendly, renewing Church. In early modern times, this marked the extent of Protestantism, and with it of Christian pluralism—the germ of hard-won religious toleration and slowly maturing political pluralism. The River Vistula and the Carpathian Mountains formed the eastern edge of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and early Humanist enlightenment and scholarship. An outstanding part was played in all this by Vienna, by its rival Buda, and by Prague, Krakow, and Warsaw, in conflict or alliance with them.

The Illyrians and Celts made an inspired choice when they picked the future sites of Vienna and Buda-Pest. They lie between the Alps and the plains, at the border between climatic zones, on the banks of the Danube, and at the junction of important trading routes running north-south and east-west. Both cities developed rapidly in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, gaining the rank of royal free cities and then of princely seats. The growth and rivalry lasted until the end of the fifteenth century, culminating in a battle for Central European supremacy, between Frederic III of Habsburg and the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus. The struggle, lasting a century, was won by the Habsburgs,

who politicized more successfully and married more judiciously. Behind Vienna lay German support; behind Buda lurked the threat from the heathen Turks. For two long centuries, Habsburg rule brought the region misfortune rather than peace and prosperity. Their empire was scourged by religious wars and dynastic power struggles until the end of the seventeenth century. Then came a change, marked by three milestones: the relief of Vienna and reconquest of Buda from the Turks (1683–1686), the treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt ending the War of the Spanish Succession (1713–1714), and the Pragmatic Sanction that settled Hungary's status within the empire (1723). These three historical events shifted the Habsburg Empire's center of gravity from Western to Central Europe, and regained liberated Hungary its limited constitutionalism. This change of position continued under enlightened absolutism, with establishment of the "Danubian Monarchy," and culminated, under Emperor Francis Joseph, in the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867. The resulting Dual Monarchy established an equilibrium between West and East, and within the Central European region, based on a manifold compromise between Vienna and Budapest. Fragile and vulnerable though the Dualist system may have been, Vienna and Budapest became for a long time an integral part of European culture and of the European equation.

The studies in this book do not form an editorially or thematically coherent whole. Readers may wonder what can link into some kind of coherence such distant subjects as the fin-de-siècle perception of death and popular letters of complaint, or artistic ferment and the worldwide success of operetta. The intrinsic connections between the studies derive not from uniformity of subject or narrative continuity but from a practical and theoretical concept of cultural history. This imposes on me, as author, a duty in the introduction to clarify how I define and employ the notion of "comparative cultural history." Beyond the conventional meaning, my definition involves three important theses. One looks beyond the peaks of high culture and its achievements, to embrace urban mass culture and the cultural products of peasants, traditionally relegated to folklore. I see as relevant to cultural history, instead of aesthetic worth or artistic excellence, the representative values and forces that shape the lifestyle and ideas of a community—in short, its normative behavior.

This leads to my second thesis: culture does not appear in itself, as the manifestation of an "absolute" spirit, but in constant interaction with society. In this sense, cultural history is akin to social and intellectual history, but goes beyond it, by embracing also a society's principal conventions (*Gewohnheitskultur*). This in turn brings cultural history close to the field of research dealing with everyday life, and at the same time expands its horizons to encompass the mentality and traditions that govern everyday life. My third thesis poses a link between cultural history and politics. This conclusion does not simply de-

rive from the empirical observation that political events, especially a government's cultural policies, influence the free manifestation of culture. It reflects my realization that politics and culture are interpenetrating realms of human creativity and destructiveness. When investigated analytically they may appear to be separate, but in the synthetic analysis of cultural history they are intimately united.

Such were my tenets when writing and selecting the essays in this book. They explain why the chapters encompass different fields of cultural history. The book starts with a comprehensive theme: urbanization. The modern metropolis is a center of civilization and cultural elevation, the seat of education and high culture, spontaneous mass culture, and both organized and spontaneous counterculture. Modern urban studies deal with almost all major areas of cultural history: urban policy and planning, economy and ecology, sociology, housing and living (*Wohnkultur*), and the history of style. Historians may touch on everything from architecture and art history to social science, ethnography, and even medicine, to provide bonds for broad, interdisciplinary research. The opening essay revolves around three subjects: the relations between embourgeoisement and urbanization; the Central European model of middle-class living; and the causes behind the development of a new taste and style, affected by the cultural upheaval and generation revolt of the outgoing nineteenth century.

The second essay examines the development of prejudices against "other" groups. Social psychology is especially useful in dealing with this subject, and steers historiography into pioneering areas such as the study of national character and the psychology of noncognitive beliefs and stereotypes. The essay traces anti-German and anti-Semitic images, and how perception of them changed over time. The three extensive essays that follow were inspired by social and intellectual history, especially Carl E. Schorske's exquisite book entitled *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*. The leitmotiv in all three essays is the interaction between politics and culture, specifically, how culture reflects and reacts to social and political challenges. The cultural upheaval at the end of the nineteenth century, the social milieu that favored stimulating intellectual battles, and the flight into creativity from ever more threatening, destructive trends and ideas are reflected in the comparison between Vienna and Budapest. The title of the third essay—and of the book—is not a metaphor formulated later, but two contemporary keywords. Fin-de-siècle artists in Vienna withdrew into their private *gardens*, to tend the gardens of their souls. Those in Budapest termed newspaper offices *workshops*—a phrase coined by the poet Endre Ady—where they found both a refuge and companions in arms. Fin-de-siècle modernism led to an awareness of existential dangers, in the case of the Viennese, and of the common fate of Hungarians and humanity, in Budapest.

The chapter on operetta in Vienna and Budapest investigates the causes of the success of this favorite theatrical genre, and its social and political role. In a state that contained more than a dozen nations, there was no other common language than music, either in politics or in culture. The famous operettas contributed to awakening some feeling of community, and at the same time, to finding the path to higher cultural levels. The subject of death and burial, inspired by French historical anthropology, draws on the adoration of death and its rituals, so central to everyday life, to throw light on the deep-rooted changes occurring in these societies' conventions and their perception of death. The importance of the seventh chapter lies in asking whether there was a significant correlation between social marginality and cultural creativity. The essay, based on a wide sample, finds evidence of such a correlation: the majority of the outstanding thinkers, scholars, scientists, and artists of the age were intellectuals who had dropped out or withdrawn from the middle-class Establishment, but never joined a political or social movement.

The final essay enters virgin territory, by trying to outline basic categories in the social perception of the lower classes, based on some letters written during the First World War. This unexplored medium offers new insights into the radical shifts toward an increasingly revolutionary mood among people in Hungary (and all Central Europe), and into the causes behind this. The letters present graphically the "sub-historical" masses, with their nonintellectual, noncognitive awareness of past and present. Their rationality about daily tasks blends with their common beliefs; the pursuit of magic rituals, intrinsic in people living close to nature, transgresses their down-to-earth realism.

Another term I used to designate the genre of this book was "comparative." Again, rather than contemplating a general definition of this as used in historical methodology, I would like to deal with its local significance, in the comparison between Vienna and Budapest already touched upon in connection with the divergent metaphors of "garden" and "workshop." The essay on the urbanization of the two cities refers at one point to a specific and tangible difference. While the Ring in Vienna is surrounded by greenery, all the way from Döbling to the City Park, central Pest has scarcely any parks, gardens, or green squares at all. From its earliest years, Pest has been surrounded by factories. The dichotomy of the garden and the workshop, a metaphor in the volume's title essay, runs through the whole book as well.

What, then, explains the differences in character between the two capitals? One springs to mind all too readily. History has been kind to Vienna, but not to Budapest. Buda was still under the baneful crescent moon when Vienna already boasted strong bastions around its ancient core and a girdle of outer defenses, circled by flourishing townships. At that time, the area that was to become the great boulevard of Budapest was still sprinkled with manors, open fields, and sheep pastures.

Such an answer is simplistic, however. Vienna in modern times was the seat of rulers and capital of an empire, housing powerful government offices. It was the home of aristocrats and magnates from Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, and of affluent Greek and Jewish merchants, who furnished their palaces with the insignia of power and wealth. Meanwhile Pest and Buda were small provincial towns. It was a good century after the end of Turkish rule before Buda regained its status as the country's capital. Vienna had a Baroque period, crucial to city development, whereas Pest did not. *That is the key difference.* The Baroque style defined Vienna's development, as the Burg, the string of mansions on Herrengasse, Am Hof and Wipplingerstrasse, and the Karlskirche, Belvedere Palace, and Schönbrunn—masterpieces of Fischer von Erlach and Hildebrand—all testify. But the Baroque was more than just an influence on the cityscape or a style of art. It was an expression of a way of life. The Baroque coincided with the Counterreformation, full of piety, religious sensitivity and zeal, and of bigotry—when heresy and paganism were intolerable, but the human failings of the faithful might be forgiven. Religious intolerance was perfectly complemented by tolerance of splendor, religious ritual, and adoration of secular beauty and sensuality. The closed circles of the Viennese court, and the courts of the aristocrats in its wake, imitated the civilization of Versailles and Paris. Display, representation of rank, was their canon. The court was the stage of public life on which everyone played an assigned or self-assigned role. From this derives the love of illusionism, the fusion of appearance and reality in Baroque art and mentality, the fascination with theater, with the illusion of reality on stage, and the attraction to nature in the garden. The gardens of aristocrats in the Baroque period were settings for recreation, beauty, and the magic of nature. Rather than sweeping all this away, the Enlightenment and Classicism simply tamed it to suit bourgeois tastes, rendering it acceptable to a rising new social stratum of Vienna: the educated middle class (*Bildungsbürgertum*).

Pest reached maturity in a spirit of Classicism and liberalism that could readily coexist with a romantic zeal for patriotism. Initially, Pest was marked by a classically puritan simplicity and bourgeois intimacy. Later came the neo-Renaissance line of Eclecticism. The city's nobility was declining into the middle class, while the middle class mimicked the nobility. Art to this public was not an expression of piety and sensuality, nor the stage an evocation of the illusion of reality. They were media for awakening national consciousness—effective tools for educating the nation. Pest was driven by a desire to rise to be a capital of European rank. It sought to turn its meadows into crammed apartment houses, not gardens or parks. Whole streets were lined with buildings and factories. It sought to be industrious, and to industrialize.

There was a vast difference between the one city—growing up in the age of Baroque and the Counterreformation, marked by illusionism and an adoration of beauty and ornamentation—and the other—maturing under Classi-



1. Statue of Eugen, Prince of Savoy, Square of Heroes, Vienna



2. Statue of Eugen, Prince of Savoy, Budapest Castle

cism, in an atmosphere of tolerant enlightenment and love of the renaissance of liberal humanism. The garden represents display, the workshop industry and profit. The social structure and whole historical situation of the Monarchy and its two capitals were changed radically in the nineteenth century, especially by the events of 1848 and 1867. Vienna's new elite—its upper middle class and artists and intellectuals—adopted and guarded much of their city's Baroque culture as they climbed the social ladder and assimilated. They retained their love of the theater, of the play between illusion and reality, music and art, secret and suppressed eroticism, and of course of the splendid villas, with their secluded gardens, havens for withdrawal and contemplation, on which the soul could draw in times of crisis. With the fin-de-siècle, the soul actually became the garden for those who wanted to flee this world and, at the same time, the source of their neuroticism.

The younger and more restless city of Pest had no Baroque tradition. In fact it lacked any tradition, since it had been divested of its continuity. In the late nineteenth century, at a time when the romantic spirit of noble tradition was waning, intellectuals and artists in Pest looked to the questions of the hour, to the future, society, and reform. They did not withdraw (and would have had nowhere to withdraw to), because in spite of their gut feelings of impending catastrophe, they harbored a positive vision of the future. They wanted to set about building a new Hungary, through art, literature, and culture.

So much for the origin and historical validity of the metaphor in the title of this book. History has the peculiar ability to absorb the future of the events that it relates, and the distance that this creates lodges in the consciousness of historians. Time, in a historical perspective, is able to undergo magic transformations. Looking back after almost a century, a historian feels that the Viennese garden was also a workshop in a way. No matter how much the great minds retreated into the solitude of their mansions or their souls, they met together, nonetheless, at the Café Griensteidel or the Central. No matter how often their works were consigned to the flames, they created, nonetheless, something enduring. They created a culture whose products are admired today, in exhibitions in cities ranging from Budapest to Paris and New York. When I as a historian look back on the Hungarian capital almost a century later, it seems to me that the workshop of Pest was also a garden in a way, sprouting flowers and fruits that were frequently uprooted but never eradicated by the storms of history.³

Budapest, August 1997

The Garden and the Workshop



Chapter One

URBANIZATION AND CIVILIZATION: VIENNA AND BUDAPEST IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

URBANIZATION AND THE SHAPING OF CITY CENTERS

The existence of a link between modern urbanization and the processes of *em-bourgeoisement*, the rise of the middle class, can be taken as self-evident. It hardly needs proving that the expansion of the production of goods and development of capitalist production were the underlying requirement and main stimulus for modern urbanization, and that the resulting urban development differed in kind from medieval development. Modern urbanization, with its complete openness, dynamic expansion, and fast acceleration, differed indeed from the slow growth or frequent stagnation of medieval and early modern times, when towns were still surrounded by walls, privileges, and other constraints. So one requirement before urbanization could begin, in the mid- to late eighteenth century, was for the walls, privileges, and restrictions to come down and for the common lands of the town to be parceled out as building land. Another was for citizens to acquire civil rights. A third was for the functions of a capitalist economy and bourgeois administration and culture to begin a steady process of development. A nineteenth-century metropolis was no longer just an artisan settlement and a marketplace. It was an administrative, legislative, and cultural center, tending increasingly to fashion a way of life and cast of mind that served as the pattern for society as a whole.¹

With the process of *em-bourgeoisement*, modern cities gained a new functional structure and economic and social topography. Corresponding with the pace and depth of *em-bourgeoisement*, there was a steady division of job from home, public from private life. The business center and office area became separate from the shopping, trade, and industrial areas. These in turn became increasingly divorced from the residential areas,² which for their part took on a variety of social complexions, and provided socially and visually an accurate topographical guide to the character, consistency, and culture of the city or quarter. This separation of the manufacturing, commercial, administrative, and cultural zones from the residential areas presupposes a developed infrastructure and a high degree of mobility.

There were no walls or dikes, however, to make a sharp dividing line between a preindustrial town and a modern city. There was normally a continuity, in fortunate cases an integral one, between the two types and periods—