

ART CONTACTS BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND HUNGARY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

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In the 19th century, the points of orientation for Hungarian artists were the great traditional art centres of the continent. The movement, however, that began to unfold in Great Britain from the middle of the century created a perfectly new situation. The interest in the island kept growing. The Pre-Raphaelites, and later the Arts & Crafts movement, also raised the question of the interrelation of art and society in terms of progress through art. (This also roused the interest of the leaders and intellectuals of a Hungary stricken with social problems.) Eventually art, at least its branches in connection with industrial or economic structures (applied art, architecture), contributed to modern civilization taking root in Hungary.

In this process, British–Hungarian relations reached their summit around the turn of the century. These contacts were such that they exerted an influence not only on style (the union of modernism and national tradition) but also on the theory of art and society.

These contacts came to a head in 1894–1904, as Hungary's prestige rose in Anglo–Hungarian relations. It was followed by the period of strengthening a modern national style, appreciated and backed up by the British art writers, although the country was gradually losing its prestige in England due to the Hungarian political drive at independence. It may be partly attributed to the decline of Great Britain's initiatives that it acknowledged this faraway outpost of its world power. In the two decades at issue Hungarian art was faced with the Pre-Raphaelites, the Arts & Crafts movement and British Art Nouveau. The greatest gain of this influence was that it directed attention to internal resources and traditions from which starting the organic development of modernism seemed possible.

The Great War pitted the two countries against one another, which was reflected in Hungarian art writing as well. However, what actually undermined the British–Hungarian relations was not the war, but the gradual shift of the centre of modernism for architecture and applied art to Germany. The British professional press and the art community also kept track of this reorientation in the mid-teens. Yet Great Britain's modern art left an indelible mark and affected a turnabout in the art of Hungary through its Hungarian followers.

Hungarians in Great Britain – Britons in Hungary

One will find the roots of these contacts in the appeal of Great Britain's economy and state administration rather than its art at the time of the reformation/modernization of Hungarian politics and society. Artistic representation of the ideal state that attracted 19th century Hungary to England was born among Hungarian immigrants in England after the fall of the Hungarian war of independence. "The presentation of the Golden Bull", a painting by C. Brocky (Károly Brocky) (c. 1852) who lived in England after 1837 became the symbol of the common ideal of constitutionalism. Hungary's Golden Bull of 1222 is the root of democratic social organization in the same way as the Magna Carta in England. By representing the historical event with the portraits of contemporary Hungarian emigree politicians, the painter underlined the timely significance of the theme.

The first travel accounts that also stimulated architecture and urban planning were written by politicians and leaders in the Hungarian Reform Era (Ferenc Pulszky, István Széchenyi, Bertalan Szemere) who had also toured England and Scotland. Later this liberal circle also drew attention to the aesthetic design of industrial products they had seen in England.

The continuous presence of art parallels Hungarian politicians and intellectual leaders in England. In 1853, Londoners could admire the art collection of the emigrant *Ferenc Pulszky* in the Society of Antiquaries in Pall Mall. In the Royal Institute of British Architects, another emigrant, *Imre Henszlmann*, held a lecture on the theory of Gothic-derived architectonic proportions. Becoming a scholar in England, *G. G. Zerffy* lectured on the history of decorative arts from 1868 to 1892 at the National Art Training School. His moralizing art theory, "A Manual of the Historical Development of Art" (1876) enjoyed wide popularity. A Hungarian designer, *Miklós Szerelmey* invented a stone conserving material called silicat zopissa and some methods of deterring rust and corrosion; using these, the restoration of the Houses of Parliament and St Paul's Cathedral could begin in the fifties. The success of *Móricz Fischer's Herend china factory* at the 1851 world exhibition in London resulted in several orders in the 1850s and '60s by Queen Victoria and several British aristocrats. After the 1873 world exposition in Vienna and the world fair of 1878 in Paris the British Museum and South Kensington Museum enriched their collections with ceramics from the *Zsolnay factory* of Pécs, and Doulton himself bought several pieces. Later the factory delivered lamps upon commission by W. A. Benson. In the '90s Hungarian folk art and home-crafts elicited the enthusiastic appreciation of Alma-Tadema, Kipling, Rossetti, Ruskin, Whistler and Wilde, among others, through the collection of Kálmán Rozsnyay, a Hungarian correspondent in London writing under the pen name Carton Sidney. At the same time the *Hungarian Wagon and Machine Factory* delivered a set of 100 cars for the London Underground. Another successful artist in London, *Emil Fuchs*, made the death mask of Queen Victoria and the portrait of the new king, Edward VII for the coronation medal and the new coins. From the outset of our century, Hungarian artists frequently exhibited at the Studio. *Ede Vigand* came to London in 1900; reviews laud-

ed his furniture on display at the Studio in 1901. In the same year *Pál Horti* won a large silver medal for his jewelry and hammered copper pieces. Hungarian typographic art in England (J. Zaensdorf) was continued in the first years of the century by *Elek Falus*, who made book desirers in the 1850s and '60s by Queen Victoria and several British aristocrats. After the 1873 world exposition in Vienna and the world fair of 1878 in Paris the British Museum and South Kensington Museum enriched their collections with ceramics from the *Zsolnay factory* of Pécs, and Doulton himself bought several pieces. Later the factory delivered lamps upon commission by W. A. Benson. In the '90s Hungarian folk art and homecrafts elicited the enthusiasm. In small-scale sculpture, *Imre Simay's* "Family Bliss" earned appreciation at the 1908 show of the Hagenbund, while *Árpád Juhász* from Gödöllő won a gold medal at the international exhibition of drawings. However, what made this year memorable was the unique Hungarian exhibition at the Earl's Court.

The first information about the new British art arrived in Hungary 1894–96. The series of essays by Károly Lyka (in the periodical *Athenaeum*) included "The Modern Pre-Raphaelite Art". In Budapest, the first major English exhibition was staged in 1895 in the Art Hall of W. Crane's 500 illustrations and other works. The first innovative exhibition at the Museum of Applied Art was in 1898 under the title "Modern Art" also showing British exhibits in all branches of applied art. The presentation of the National Competition in Budapest in the same year was aimed at the reformation of teaching applied art. The need for a change is clearly illustrated by a single figure: 37,737 people visited the exhibition of the material of 15 crafts and the teachers' judgements in 18 days.

The first direct contacts between E & H are associated with C. R. Ashbee and Hungarian Politicians. His considerable Hungarian orders may be attributed to publications on him in Hungary. In 1899 the economist Gyula Mandello asked him to design the interior decoration of his houses in Budapest and Pozsony. These pieces were exhibited at the Eighth exhibition of the Sezession in 1900 (Vienna). Ashbee was introduced by Mandello to Zsombor Szász, a politician of the Independence Party, who in 1900 invited Ashbee to design his house. His article in *The Times* (1905) mirrors the political influence of his host. Besides the plan of the house and the reconstruction of the interior, a statue of his was exhibited under the title "The genius of modern Hungary". It must have been the artist's private idea about the central figure of the Millennium monument, György Zala's work also reproduced at the Studio. At this time, Ashbee got acquainted with Dezső Malonyay, then working on his book series "The Art of the Hungarian People". Malonyay's house was planned by Béla Lajta, a follower of Ödön Lechner, who also visited R. N. Shaw's architectural office during his London stay in 1898–99. Lajta's change in style toward British architecture, marked by his house for Malonyay, was effected by Ashbee's visit.

W. Crane and his family also paid a visit to Hungary in what proved to be the triumphal march of Pre-Raphaelitism and the Arts & Crafts movement. Crane himself recalled it in his book "An Artist's Reminiscences" (1907), but the *Art Journal* also carried a report (1901) since it was Crane's largest exhibition so far. A special issue of

the journal "Magyar Iparművészet" (Hungarian Applied Art) (hereafter MI) was published in his honour (July 1901). The title page, designed by Crane himself recalled that of the 1898 Jugend. His article (Some words about Hungarian applied art) emphasizes the role of Hungarian ornamentation in creating a national style. (In his memoirs, however, he notes that folk art will not bloom in an artificial garden.) A separate booklet titled "Walter Crane reading at the Casino of Leopoldstadt (a district of Budapest) on 16 Oct. 1900" was published with his own design for the title page. (His book "Line and Form", a more thorough treatment of the subject, came out in Hungarian translation in 1910.) During his stay he met several artists and representatives of the Hungarian spiritual scene. He designed a book-plate for Elemér Czákó, the librarian of the Museum of Applied Art and later the principal of the Royal School of Applied Art. His colour drawing "The star of Bethlehem" is still in the possession of the Czákó family. When touring Hungary, he also visited the Zsolnay factory of Pécs. His small vase adorned with Greek figures (faience with eosin glaze) and with the inscription "Long Live Applied Art" is preserved at the Museum of Pécs. When he sojourned in Kolozsvár, he was guided by János Kovács, a lecturer of the university who had graduated in England (and written a biography of *John Paget*, the author of the two-volume "Hungary and Transylvania" and a landowner in Transylvania). The exlibris he made for him features Crane paying tribute to Mr. and Mrs. Kovács clad in Transylvanian folk costume. His most memorable experience was his visit to Mrs. Zsigmond Gyarmathy in Bánffyhunяд, in the Kalotaszeg region of Transylvania, where a wedding procession was also staged in his honour. He filled a whole sketchbook with figures dressed in folk costumes, some of which appeared in the weekly *Új idők* (New Times) and later in his book "Ideals in Art" (1909). W. Crane's exhibition in Budapest marks a turning-point in the career of *Mária Undi*, too. A great part of her life-work was created with the aspiration to provide children with an artistic environment. In her autobiography she comments that she got the inspiration from Crane's books. She went to London, at first attracted by the flourishing culture of children's books.

After an average of one British participant for years, the 1901 spring show of the Hungarian Fine Art Society was a milestone. The bulk of the material on display came from 25 Britons including Burne-Jones, Hunt, Millais. This rate remained more or less constant in the forthcoming years, representing the contemporary British art from the academicians to the exponents of Art Nouveau. The third major sensational event was the Exhibition of British Applied Art in 1902. (Also, British collections dominated the exhibition of modern colour engravings in the National Gallery and the book-plate exhibition at the Museum of Applied Art.) Its material was selected by Jenő Radisics at that year's exhibition in Glasgow, and by an experts' panel at the London exhibition of the Studio. Elemér Czákó wrote the catalogue (including biographies and descriptions of works) and Georg Walton designed the cover. Several exhibits found their way to the collection of the Museum, including chairs by Walton and E. A. Taylor, stained glass compositions from Glasgow, bookbindings from the workshops of Cedric Chivers and Alfred de Santy. The expenses were jointly covered by the British and Hungarian ministries. The most prospective asset of the exhibition was the idea of planning

the entire interior as one instead of just a suite of furniture, as well as the harmonious cooperation between designers and artisans' firms. (Whyllie and Lockhead of Glasgow fitted up a pavilion of four rooms with complete interiors.) This was the first exhibition to outline the mainstreams of modern applied art in Britain. Himself a designer, *Frigyes Spiegel* differentiated three trends after the Pre-Raphaelites had laid the foundations for artistic handicrafts (structuralism, functionalism, emergence of planar ornamentation): 1. neo-Gothic, rustic furniture design with floral ornaments (Morris, Ashbee, Voysey and B. Scott); 2. the graceful furniture style built on the 18th century traditions and applying various materials in a sophisticated way (Glasgow firms and G. Walton); 3. the style of the Mackintoshes. The main merit of the furniture pieces, he claimed, was being constructed from even surfaces. The exhibition halls were packed full with designers, architects, craftsmen who sketched and studied the displayed objects.

In 1903 a book appeared with the title "Ruskin's Life and Teaching" by his translator into Hungarian, Sarolta Geőcze. In the next year *Aladár Kriesch* wrote a book, his *ars poetica* as it were, "on Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites" in which he also translated their literary works.

A new revelation was the exhibition of *A. Beardsley*. It was staged at the Museum of Applied Art in 1907, organized by Radisics. Elemér Czakó wrote an analytic essay of the show in MI. In its wake, a whole series of drawings appeared by *Lajos Kozma*, *Gyula Tichy*, *Attila Sassy (Aiglón)* (Last dreams – melodies; Tales of an inkpot; Opium dreams). They introduced in Hungary a new genre – the graphic cycle – similar to the song cycles. It is small wonder then that Britons were the majority of the participants of the 1909 international drawing exhibition staged by the Fine Art Society. A total of 425 works (and several more in the mixed categories) represented British drawing from the Pre-Raphaelites to Beardsley and further on, of which a uniquely thorough, insightful and profound analysis was published by *Viktor Olgyai* in the journal *Művészet (Art)*.

The much-awaited introduction of the Hungarians in London – the exhibition at the Earl's Court in 1908 – ended in fiasco for organizational reasons. The architectural setting was designed by József Fischer and Béla Jánszky as well as Bálint and Jámbor. Apart from displays on public education, agriculture and the capital city of Budapest, the products of artisans, the homecrafts, the Zsolnay factory and some works of art were presented. The Studio put the greatest value on handicrafts of traditional inspiration, e.g. on the carpets of the Gödöllő colony and the laces from *Árpád Dékányi's* Halas workshop. Yet it was the outcome of this exhibition that A. S. Levetus reported from Vienna, concerning the art achievements of Hungary, chiefly of the popular national trend. In 1911 she published a special issue devoted to folk art in Austria and Hungary, for which he selected material from museums and private collections. The accompanying essay "Hungarian Peasant Art" was written by *Aladár Kriesch (Körös-fői-Kriesch)*. Contributory factors to the persistent influence of Britain in Hungary were Levetus's richly illustrated article on B. Scott and Ashbee (MI, 1910), her lectures in the Museum of Applied Art (1912), the writing of Zsombor Szász about Ash-

bee and the Guild of Handicraft and the account of *Mihály Bíró*, an assistant of Ashbee, of his experiences in Campden (MI, 1910). In the 1910s the practitioner of a new area debuted in Hungary. 1913 saw the first exhibition of stage design at the Artists' Home in which G. Craig participated. From that time Craig was the paragon and model of the stage designer making architectonic sets for the purpose of creating spaces.

The Transformation of Hungarian Applied Art and Architecture

The first area to display signs of British influence was applied art, specifically its planning and teaching. As an art historian, *Károly Pulszky* contributed by his official purchases to the establishment of a Hungarian crafts museum patterned after the South Kensington Museum. Though the Hungarian state made some purchases at the London World Fair in 1867, Pulszky's acquisition of 59 items at the 1873 Vienna World Exposition was the core of the first exhibition in 1874 of the Museum of Applied Art (founded in 1873). The guide to the exhibition reveals that Pulszky expected the museum to become a universal demonstrative tool on the English model. However, only decorative arts were taught in the classes of the School of Applied Art founded in 1880. In 1883/84 classes were introduced in goldsmithing and wood and copper engraving. This accounts for Pulszky's insistence on the need for functional, modern applied arts based on design artists' and craftpeople's cooperation, which he expressed in his article "Applied Art and Style" in the journal *Művészi Ipar* (Artistic Crafts) launched in 1885. He pledged himself to the universal style of applied art. However, the programme-setting article of the journal urged the development of a national current in applied art against imported industrial goods. At that time, however, national character meant the use of folk ornamentation colours and forms. One of the most outstanding folk art collectors organized its production in the manner of homecraft and introduced teaching it at school. This was *Mrs Zsigmond Gyarmathy*, "the Hungarian George Eliot", who wrote several novels and short stories and devoted many articles to the embroidery of the Kalotaszeg region. Her embroideries scored sweeping success at the national fair of 1885, which also promoted the inclusion of folk ornamentation among the subjects taught at the School of Applied Art. For many years afterwards the problem of applied art was on the periphery. The question of modernism was raised again in 1893: Jenő Radisics, the director of the Museum of Applied Art, published his reflexions on the modern home in *Művészi Ipar*.

In 1894 the minister of commerce launched the publication of the *Mintalapok* (Pattern Books) with a view to modernizing the mentality of the artisans and the handicrafts. He financed the first exemplary exhibitions as well, trying to set an example for cabinet-makers with Chippendale and Sheraton style furniture pieces. The Park Club was also used as an example by virtue of its practical and harmonious English furniture made of finely finished materials. From that time on the journal *Művészi Ipar* regularly reviewed the Studio, resulting in the recognition of a novel connection between art and industry of the Arts & Crafts type. In 1895-96 the aim of transforming the

homecrafts into artistic industry was formulated, calling for designs making full use of materials and technologies and suitable for mechanical reproduction. In the millenary exhibition the importance of artistic design was underscored by the participation of the Applied Art Society (1896). The national trend of modern applied art, as the critic József Diener-Dénes conceded, was derived from the union of English forms (especially of furniture) and Hungarian ornamentation.

In 1896 the School of Applied Art, then a part of the Academy of Fine Art, became independent, marking a turn toward a more modern training orientated to functionalism but still preserving the national character. Courses were gradually organized, in 1899 interior decoration, in 1907 homecrafts and carpet weaving, in 1910 textile design and typography. Workshops were established: furniture making in 1905; carpet weaving with the weaving school of Gödöllő in 1907; printing in 1910; ceramics in 1912; the study of nature was also introduced. The minister of public education, Gyula Wlassics, embraced the cause of applied art by including it in an overall programme of popularizing the art: in 1899 he provided the schools with demonstrative pictures of art, initiated a series of lectures for workers at museums and lent financial support to literature on art. The preparations for a comprehensive 3-volume work, "The Book of Applied Art" (1902–12) began around this time (György Ráth).

The journal now called *Magyar Iparművészet* (Hungarian Applied Art) regularly published information on British exhibitions, art events and education throughout the studied period. Studies were devoted to the history and contemporary currents of British art. Of them, I stress only "The Guild of Handicraft" in 1897, on the Eighth exhibition of the Sezession in 1901, and Aladár Kriesch's series of articles on Ruskin, Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites in 1906. The new periodicals *Művészet* and *Modern Művészet* (Art, and Modern Art) also took their share in promoting art. Questions of architecture were also gaining ascendancy around this time.

H. Muthesius's "Das Englische Haus" and a detailed analysis of the English house published in *Művészet* (1905) were decisive in the process of adopting the attitude of designing a house in its entirety. Its main characteristics (the unity of house, interior and garden, the central role of the ground floor hall, the exterior shaped in harmony with the interior, the use of local materials, compliance with the occupants' individual needs were formulated as normative requirements. This house-centric outlook led *Dezso Malonyay* in arranging the material for his series "The Art of the Hungarian People" (from 1907); the architect *Béla Málnai*'s journal *A Ház* (The House) was launched under this banner (1908–11). (The competitions for undergraduates of architecture in 1907 highlighted a studio house. The prizes and the designs (Károly Kós, Lajos Kozma) attest that the standard measure was British architecture and, to some extent, folk architecture.) *Ede Vigand* wrote his ideas echoing British principles in an article titled "The House" (1910) and in "The garden and its flowers" (1911). He reiterated the triple unity of interior/house/garden from the aspect of the traditions of the Hungarian flower garden.

As soon as the modern approach to planning houses took root in Hungary, the demand appeared for placing detached houses with gardens in an organized manner both

for the poorer and more affluent strata of society. Both were decisively influenced by B. Howard's book "Garden Cities of Tomorrow" (1902). What underlay the social housing programme initiated by the mayor of Budapest, István Bárczy, was the sudden growth of the population of the capital (from 180 000 in 1850 to 730 000 in 1900). Under an act of 1908, 19 housing estates had been built by 1912, most of them comprising houses with gardens instead of the former multi-storey tenement buildings, in a popular modern style for the rural masses migrating to the capital. They include the housing estate for the *gas factory workers* by Lóránd Almási Balogh, and architecturally the richest residential area, the estate for civil servants in Kispest (1908–14). The so-called *Wekerle estate* with its two churches was designed by Kós, Zrumeczky and others varying 48 different types of houses, some reminiscent of the types in Hampstead Garden. The Hungarian article on Hampstead (MI, 1911) must have accelerated the emergence of the villa district on the Little Svábhegy (district of Budapest), a colony of lawyers and judges with individual demands (Aladár Árkay 1910–13). The idea of the "country of gardens" imported from England in the 19th century Reform Era began to spread at this time, becoming the basis for the ideal of the "Hungary of gardens" which never materialized.

Stylistic connections

The art of the fin de siècle was the richest in painting. Here only the trend in direct or indirect contact with the Pre-Raphaelites will be made touched on. No mention will be of the stylistic links between the artists' colonies of Cornwall and Nagybánya, both fostered by French painting but the former adhering to the naturalism of Bastien-Lepage, and the latter dissolving it in complete plein air. The exhibitions, in France and the French spiritual life simultaneously transmitted the art of the Pre-Raphaelites and Whistler to Hungarian artists in Paris. French criticism pinpointed Whistler's significance in *József Rippl-Rónai's* pictures (*Grandmother*, 1892–Whistler: *The Artist's Mother*). Following his 1888 exhibition in Paris, Whistler's influence can be traced from the first of Rippl-Rónai's longitudinal paintings depicting a standing woman. It is also due to his life-long friendship with the Scottish designer J. P. Knowles that Rippl-Rónai was attracted to l'art pour l'art and Pre-Raphaelite painting (*Woman with a Bird Cage*–W. H. Dewerell: *The Pet*). The painting of Burne-Jones, which conquered Paris in the early nineties, led Rippl-Rónai to the "Club of Burne-Jones' Followers" when he visited London in 1893, but it did not affect his art born in the circle of the Nabis and displaying signs of French synthetism and symbolism. Thus his interest in garden scenes (*Les Vierges*, 1895, published by S. Bing; its counterpart, *Les Tombeaux*, was drawn by Knowles), his activity in applied art (dining set for Count Tivadar Andrassy, 1897) only indirectly refer to their English sources (the tapestry entitled "Woman in Red Dress" above the fireplace in the dining room reminds one of the corresponding section of Whistler's Peacock Room). "Mme Mazet–Woman in Black Veil" is the only picture whose model was named by Rippl-Rónai, as Gainsborough's "Miss Siddons".

At the outset of his career *Lajos Gulácsy* apparently went to Italy to study the Italian sources of his model, the Pre-Raphaelites. His works executed in Italy from 1903 – the watercolour “Paolo and Francesca”, the canvasses “Song of a Rose Tree” and “Ecstasy” mirror the direct influence of Rossetti besides the Botticellis he saw in the Uffizi, but Gulácsy’s style is more pictorial, subjective and imbued with fin de siècle decadence. His tales, fabulous short stories and aesthetic thoughts must have been inspired by O. Wilde. His decadent vision of the renaissance, “The Tragedy of Firenze”, puts one in mind of Wilde’s play of the same title (1910). (In 1905 Gulácsy planned the stage sets for Alma-Tadema’s “Invisible Helmsman” at the Thalia Theatre.)

It must have been the Pre-Raphaelites’ efforts to resuscitate religious painting and W. H. Hunt’s journeys to the Near East that perhaps stimulated *Tivadar Csontváry Kosztká*, the creator of the most singular pictorial lifework at the beginning of our century in Hungary, to head for Jerusalem and Palestine (1904, 1905, 1908). His series of subjective paintings devoid of religiosity and expressing a life philosophy can be conceived as a reinterpretation of Pre-Raphaelite Christianity. His large composition “Mary’s Well in Nazareth” (1908) shows the symbol of life, the well, with Pre-Raphaelite reminiscences but in powerful, brightly coloured pictoriality. After his stay in London, Csontváry’s monumental landscapes also display signs of the influence of John Martin.

In applied art, the impact of Pre-Raphaelitism was the strongest in artistic tapestry design, which, however, was mediated by French synthetism. More important than this brief union of artists (Pál Horti, Aladár Kriesch, Sándor Nagy) and the crafts was the sudden revival of Hungarian furniture design around 1900: The straight form, grace and subtle mountings of Ede Vigand’s furniture pieces suggest that the plank style of Art Nouveau, the trend of democratizing art, had won over our artists. Outstanding among Vigand’s “English” interiors is the interior decoration of the exhibition hall for drawing and the reading room at the Museum of Fine Arts (1907). After her trip to England, Mária Undi also became a consistent advocate of the plank style, adopting the practice of designing all in interior’s details (children’s room 1903, woman’s study 1904).

The principle of modernism based on tradition professed by the Arts & Crafts movement also gave rise to the demand for a national variant of the plank style. The designers turned to folk crafts for tradition. The study of folk art began both individually and in an organized manner at the turn of the century. They found the roots of a modern furniture style in the construction of carpentered, peasant furniture, and not only in ornamentation. After this “exploratory movement”, the combination of the effects of British and folk art can be demonstrated in the interiors of Vigand, Kriesch, Sándor Nagy and Ödön Moiret. This marks the birth of the popular modern style in Hungarian applied art. The above-mentioned representatives were members of the *Gödöllő artists colony*.

The effect of Pre-Raphaelitism, the Arts & Crafts movement, W. Crane, British Art Nouveau and folk art can all be evidenced in the establishment and organization of this colony of artists. The Pre-Raphaelite idea of art permeating life and work seemed to

them to be reality in peasant art and life. That is also why the Gödöllő artists were not so closely attached to the Pre-Raphaelites in style. The meticulously detailed, true-to-life paintings of Sándor Nagy, Aladár Kriesch's book ornaments mediaeval in tone but composed of folk motifs, and the neo-Gothic ornamental painting and stained windows in churches by both of them attest to this stylistic influence. The way of living and method of work in the artists' colony as well as its training activity remind one of the socialistic community and teaching practice of the Guild of Handicraft, especially after the starting of the weaving workshop. Upon the influence of W. Crane, Aladár Kriesch turned away from an academic pictorial style toward an allegorical-symbolical, sharply contoured style embodying a life philosophy. (The Parable of the Blind, lithography 1902; The Good Helmsman, tapestry, 1906; The Source of Art, fresco in the Academy of Music, 1907). The sweeping lines of Crane's Greek figures left their imprint on his illustrations (the poems of Elek Koronghy Lippich (1903), took-plates, his tapestry titled "Cassandra" (1908). In his historical painting identifying moral and aesthetic values (Klára Zách 1911) the figures of Crane's Costumes frieze also exhibited in Budapest come to life. The similarity of their painting techniques is illustrated by the use of tempera on gesso which Kriesch learned in his academic studies. The emergence of a free stylization in Kriesch's carpet designs can perhaps also be traced to Crane's easier, less minutely drawn patterns.

The critics discovered Crane's influence in Kriesch's fellow artist Sándor Nagy's Koronghy illustrations in the Art Nouveau style. The allegorical parable of his painting "The Harvesters" (1903) can also be brought in analogy with Crane's socialistic works. His tapestry "The Pledge" (1906), the epitome of his programme of life and art recalling the bent female figure of Crane's Pandora, is reminiscent of the latter's spiritual atmosphere as well. But Sándor Nagy's stained windows illustrating folk ballads in Marosvásárhely, the book illustrations by him and his wife as well as by Mária Undi, and the wall carperets by Mrs. Sándor Nagy have much more in common with the British Art Nouveau, the style of K. Greenaway and the Mackintoshes.

When the book designer *Elek Falus* returned from England, he continued to cherish the British traditions and set up an artists' colony in Kecskemét starting with carpet weaving. However, his typographic art is more significant. He did the typography and cover designs of books published by the journal "Nyugat" (the West). He was the pioneer of "democratic" paperback books in a popular, decorative style in the line of Morris. The attitude of *Ede Vigand* and young *Károly Kós* to the renewal of typographic art was different. Their books were printed in archaic, mediaeval script or handwritten with a reed pen. Kós attached illustrations to his ballad "Song of King Attila" (1909) in the style of the Mackintoshes.

Our designers were hardly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites' cult of the Middle Ages. They turned for tradition and national style to peasant art. In architecture, however, the 19th century neo-Gothic trend was an alternative to the national style. A representative example is the Hungarian Parliament (1882–1902). Its designer, *Imre Steindl*, used the neo-Gothic plan of G. G. Scott submitted in 1872 for the competition

to plan the Reichstag in Berlin, but the building also has direct links with the London Parliament on account of the common ideal of constitutionalism.

Ödön Lechner tried to create a national architectural style in quite another way, using ornaments from peasant art. During his trips to Western Europe he studied the national variants of the universal architectural styles to learn the necessary method from them. After his tours of England in 1879 and 1889 he began to apply some elements of British rural castles and cottages (Leovits palace, Szabadka-Subotica, 1893) but eventually he found the clue in British colonial architecture. Adapting to local styles the British created a new style which could serve as an example for a national Hungarian architectural style to be constructed from Hungarian ornamentation then believed to have Sassanian and Persian links and the universal architectonic forms. Together with Zsolnay, Lechner studied Oriental ceramics at the South Kensington Museum. The rich ceramic ornamentation of the Museum of Applied Arts (1891-96) combines brightly coloured, floral ornaments and bizarre "Indian" formal motifs in the parvis of the building's central projection. The large exhibition hall is reminiscent of the "courtyards of Indian mogul palaces". This repertoire of forms and ornaments was further enriched with the roof shapes on the Postal Savings Bank (1899-1901), copied from oriental motifs of "Attila's treasure", the excavated Nagyszentmiklós find. Lechner, who used the historically developed functional types for his ground plans, actually created the national variant of historicism with the use of ostensibly oriental ornamentation (upon Lechner's suggestion, the wall papers of the museum were designed and delivered by W. Crane). When it was opened, Pulszky's purchases of 1895 were put on display, including the printed cloths and velvets, and knotted carpet by Morris & Co. as well as handprinted velvets made in the workshop of T. Wardle in Leek.

Nevertheless, the true source of the stylistic turnabout in Hungarian architecture can be traced to British cottages and the modern English architects who revived the art of cottage architecture. This architectural style appeared in Hungary in the 1850s in the castles and manorial buildings, but around the turn of the century it became the model of middle class housing especially for intellectuals. This change took place parallel with the shift of Anglophilia from the aristocrats to the intellectuals.

A powerful modern trend unfolded in Hungary with the breakthrough of house-centric planning, relying on peasant architecture and folk art with the influence of British modernism. This period from 1905 to World War I can be regarded as the golden age of modernism and nationalism in Hungarian architecture merging of British (modern) and Hungarian (folk) styles. The turning-point is marked by Béla Lajta's villa for Dezső Malonyay: freeing himself from Lechner, Lajta became the chief advocate of British modern functionalism combined with traditionalism in Hungary. He merged the peculiarities of buildings by Webb, N. Shaw, B. Scott, Ashbee and Voysey with peasant architectural traditions. Lajta was the works manager at the construction of a hunting-seat in the Carpathians planned by Scott. That accounts for the asymmetric masses, gables, red brick walls, high hipped roofs, attic windows, tall chimneys, exposed beamed central halls and wooden ceilings (Home of Blind Israelites, his own house).

The architects designated by the generic name "The Young Ones" adjusted better to local folk traditions. In his book "Old Kalotaszeg" *Károly Kós* (1911) described the Transylvanian/Hungarian peasant house's differences from, and similarities to, the English house. The similarities, he claimed, included the central location of the hall, the wooden ceiling, constructivity due to woodwork, and the tall roofs. He recommended that Hungarian traditionalists should use timbered ceilings instead of open ones, stoves instead of fire-places, and lofts instead of attics. As these features were compatible with the essence of modernism, its tradition-oriented variant was rightly welcomed (MI 1908). In his first representative buildings (Roman Catholic church in Zebegény, Protestant vicarage in Óbuda, 1908–9), however, Kós did not differentiate between the English and the folk traditions. More precisely he used Finnish variations of the British arch-elements such as the open ceiling of Lars Sonck's bank in Helsinki. You can see the similarity of the columns, too. But the whole idea of the church took pattern by the Kalotaszeg churches from the Middle Ages.

When the "Young Ones" appeared with their plans, Ede Vigand also published his series of ideal plans (MI 1907) under the title "My Village". His houses built in Transylvania and Hungary around this time clearly show him as the follower of British modernism (House for his brother in Budapest, 1908; Schmidt house in Marosvásárhely-Tirgu Mures, etc.). He inventively incorporated his ideal house-type in his public buildings. The plan of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Székely Country (1910) orientated in different angles, with its unceiled wooden central room are British peculiarities, but the grouping of the secondary spaces around the centre to eschew the corridor networks of office buildings is unique. Small wonder that A. S. Levetus wrote an article about Vigand in *Der Architekt* (1911), likening his role in national architecture to that of B. Scott. Indeed, his most important architectural innovation, the open plan in arranging spaces, was similar to Scott's.

Of the "Young Ones" setting out on their careers around this time, the interiors of Dénes Györgyi, the Budapest school of Dezső Zrumezky, Valér Mende's bank at Gyöngyös, the studio villas and the block of studio flats and casino by the architects Jánuszky and Szivessy in Kecskemét are pure examples of British modernism. Of course, the influence of British architecture and interior decoration is also demonstrable, though less markedly, in the work of others over the 1910s, e.g. the blocks of flats by Háász and Málnai, the elegant interior designs of József Vágó and Bálint & Jámbor. Apart from detached houses with gardens, a regrettably small number of urban terrace houses of the British model can be found in Hungary.

Thoughts on art and society

The close interrelation of art and society was the basic idea that inspired Sándor Nagy's book "On the Art of Life" and the philosopher in contact with the Gödöllő artists, Jenő Henrik Schmitt's "Art, ethical life, love" (1911). Both advocated the Pre-Raphaelite ideal of a nobler society created as a result of changes starting from inside

humanity. Both were members of the Social Science Society founded in 1901. At one time the secretary general of the Society was Oszkár Jászi; its members included Gyula Mandello, a Ruskinist. At first the Society discussed every proposal for the betterment of society, e.g. Gyula Mandello's on the transformation of society through the extension of education (University Extension, 1904) and Sándor Nagy's articles on the importance of art education (published in the journal of the Society, *Huszdik Század /20th Century/*). They also discussed the translation of Morris's book "News from Nowhere", published in their periodical a study on Carpenter by Count Ervin Batthyány, who studied in England and was a friend of Ashbee, etc. The radicalization of this circle fighting for social progress coincided with the rise of the new stylistic and social efforts of our architecture in the wake of the British examples. However, these proposals by art were no longer considered sufficient.

Károly Kós's studies on peasant/modern architecture (1909, 1910) have not lost their validity. The majority of theoretical writings on art also focussed on style. József Diener-Dénes described the process leading to the individualization of art on the example of the history of art in England from a Marxist viewpoint. He envisioned the future of style and art in the committed art of a collective mode of production. Lajos Fülep in his essay "New artistic style" (1908) attributed the 19th century cult of the homogeneous (mediaeval) cultures to individualism. For lack of an extant homogeneous culture, he expected the new style to be developed by individuals reaching out to individuals. Oszkár Jászi, who started his career as a philosopher of history, relinquished the idea of a homogeneous style in his positivistic book "Art and Ethic" (1904). Though on the basis of Spencer's evolutionism and the Marxian historical materialism he accepted the Ruskinian principle of harmony between art and ethic, he defined the essence as the freedom of art, seeing beauty as relative and the moral norms as changing in the process of the democratization of society. Only the Freudian Sándor Varjas anticipated a future style starting out from the art of his age. In his post-script to the drawings of Lajos Kozma, a follower of Beardsley (1908), he saw the decorative-symbolic drawings as the externalization of the inner world and the root of abstraction.

Although the style born of the merging of modernism and folk tradition was not considered by anyone as the true path leading to the future, the fact itself made British readers regard Hungary as the "easternmost country of the West".

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