

**A TALE OF TWO HUNGARIAN CITIES:  
THE MAKING AND READING OF MODERN DEBRECEN AND SZEGED,  
1850-1914**

Livia K. Szélpál

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Judit Bodnár

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I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in other institutions and no materials previously written and/or published by another person unless otherwise noted.

## Abstract

This research focuses on the urban development and mental maps of two provincial towns, Debrecen and Szeged, and examines their places in the Hungarian urban network in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Debrecen and Szeged differ also in their religious, social and economic status, as I highlight in the body of this work. By the turn of the century, Szeged was the second largest city after the capital Budapest, but was neither an Episcopal city nor a county city, but had a Catholic majority and also a strong Jewish community. Although at this time Debrecen was still economically stronger than Szeged, it had started to decline as a cultural center of the region. Debrecen was the second largest city in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, it later lost its position and became the third largest city, with a strong economic hinterland. Debrecen was traditionally a Calvinist city with a long tradition of having been a regional center. During the Reform Era, with the modernization process underway, urban centers developed and Szeged became a striking example of rapid urbanization; meanwhile, Debrecen seemed to lag behind in its development.

The main purpose of my research is to analyze the unique, and distinct, pattern of urbanization in Debrecen and Szeged respectively. The concept of the (self) representation of the city is crucial to this dissertation. The research goal is to frame the different historical layers of the metropolitan experience within this process of (self) representation. The three levels of representation are, firstly, the architectural and physical layout, i.e., the (re)construction of these towns. Secondly, this material reshaping results in an intellectual reconstruction of the towns, with the emergence of the public sphere, through the formation of civic voluntary associations and literary societies that have a great impact upon the urban images of Debrecen and Szeged. The

third level of representation is a “meta level,” constructed by the local newspapers, which reflect the different and unique mentalities of Debrecen and Szeged.

Executing these aims, the research includes investigation of the cityscapes of Debrecen and Szeged, that is, the different layers of architectural styles of these towns, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Flood of 1879 in Szeged was so devastating that it destroyed the city completely. The reconstruction of the city was planned after the Parisian model by designing boulevards and avenues. Meanwhile, Debrecen followed the old city planning model by preserving the historic core of the city.

Local literary societies and other associations in both cities, - which were run by local journalists, who were well-known writers as well, such as Kálmán Mikszáth, Ferenc Móra and István Tömörkény, - had an essential part in altering local society. Local newspapers and their identity-making role had a crucial impact upon the modernization of these cities. Architecture along with associations and the local newspapers together had a significant impact on the fact that both Debrecen and Szeged became important regional civic centers by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



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## List of Abbreviations

<b>CSK</b>	Csokonai Kör [Csokonai Circle]
<b>CSML</b>	Csongrád Megyei Levéltár [Csongrád County Archive]
<b>DT</b>	Dugonics Társaság [Dugonics Society]
<b>HBML</b>	Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár [Hajdú Bihar County Archive]
<b>OSZK</b>	Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár [National Széchenyi Library]
<b>SZH</b>	<i>Szegedi Híradó</i> [Newspaper in Szeged]
<b>SZN</b>	<i>Szegedi Napló</i> [Daily Newspaper in Szeged]

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, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way - in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.  
Charles Dickens *A Tale of Two Cities*

## Introduction

This is a tale of two cities: the urban development of two towns, Debrecen and Szeged, and their place in the Hungarian urban network, by analyzing the factors that influenced the visual and textual images of these two cities in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I will investigate the representation and urban identity of these two Hungarian towns, their consequent development in their geo-political context, and their historiographical features. My approach will be complemented by an investigation of the idiosyncratic cultural and social history of these places.

This project is not a conventional work of urban history, but rather an interdisciplinary project. Here urban history meets other disciplines, namely architecture, sociology, cultural history, literature and even ethnography. This work also aims to map the paradigm change within the methodology of urban history by offering an interdisciplinary analysis. It focuses on the (self) representation of the city, which gains increased importance by transforming itself from the narrated city to the cultural translatability of the narrating city. Another main aim of the project is to frame the different historical layers of the metropolitan experience within this process of transformation. The three levels of representation are, firstly, the architectural and physical layout, i.e., a (re)construction of these towns. Secondly, this material reshaping results in an intellectual reconstruction of the towns, and the emergence of the public sphere, through the formation of voluntary associations and literary

societies that have a great impact upon the urban images of Debrecen and Szeged. The third level of representation is a ‘meta level,’ constructed by the local newspapers, which reflected the different and unique mentalities of Debrecen and Szeged.

This topic evolved out of previous research; my master’s thesis investigated the urban history of Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879. While reading articles printed in Debrecen and Szeged newspapers in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I came across a fascinating rivalry between the two cities. This rivalry is the starting point of my present research on the comparative history of Debrecen and Szeged from the perspective of regional urban studies. The *terminus a quo* of my research is the assumption that the awakening of Szeged’s bourgeois consciousness was due to the ideological implications and the rivalry between its two daily newspapers, *Szegedi Híradó* (conservative) and *Szegedi Napló* (liberal). However, the civic consciousness of the town was also defined *vis-à-vis* competition with another provincial emerging city of the time, Debrecen. At the end of the century, Szeged became – as the *Szegedi Napló* implied – the symbol of cultural dynamism and openness in contrast to the conservative attitude of Debrecen.

There is a longstanding tradition of urban historical research in the Hungarian historiographical tradition. However, there are still a number of methodological questions which are waiting to be explored, among them, the comparative analysis of provincial cities. Lajos Timár in his work on *Vidéki városlakók* [*The People of Provincial Towns*] focuses on the challenges of regional urban studies in Hungary in the inter-war period, by outlining the terminological and methodological problems of the field. He describes the provincial cities of the Great Hungarian Plain in the time that follows the developments which took place earlier, in the *fin de siècle*.<sup>1</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> Timár Lajos, *Vidéki városlakók. Debrecen társadalma 1920-1944* [*People of the Provincial Towns. Debrecen’s Society, 1920-1944*], (Budapest: Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1993).



dissertation maps the histories of Debrecen and Szeged in a less traditional way: besides analyzing the economic and social histories of the two towns, I will focus on their cultural histories, their development and identity-making processes, especially as presented in their local newspapers.

The first level of representation in my comparative work is an analysis of the urban planning and architecture of both places. After several fires that took place in Debrecen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town's urban image remained almost the same: its houses were rebuilt, but there were no consecutive regulatory building codes in place to prevent new disasters. Additionally, the first master plan of Debrecen was executed quite late. By contrast, Szeged, after the Great Flood of 1879, was fortunate enough to be entirely rebuilt according to the latest achievements in urban planning, with the contribution of well-trained architects and engineers.

The second level of representation is the association life. It is fascinating to see the way local associations contributed to the urban planning and the image-formation of these cities. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Debrecen and Szeged were not big cities but only emerging cities; however, after the Compromise of 1867 they received a huge impetus to catch up with the developments of other, westernmost cities. The third level of representation in my dissertation will scrutinize the constructed image of the city as represented by the local press, and the way different journalists depicted their own town to create a sociological production of locality.

### ***Aims of the Dissertation***

The *terminus a quo* of the dissertation aims to place Hungarian urbanization in its Central European context. Second, the research aspires to highlight the differences between the capital and the regional centers, and to rethink the function and definition of the regional center. Third, the dissertation focuses on the theoretical question of

modernization and urban modernity in the Hungarian countryside. Fourth, the dissertation highlights the image-making function of the local newspapers in Szeged *vis-à-vis* Debrecen, and the production of locality. It strives to focus on the urban developments of the two provincial towns as relational categories for a comparative research. Finally, the dissertation compares the urban patterns of Debrecen and Szeged on the basis of sociological factors by pointing out the religious, economic and social backgrounds of the two provincial towns and their positions in the Hungarian urban network. Debrecen and Szeged reacted differently to the issue of minorities and religious otherness that determined the images of the towns; and this difference has ideological implications. The local newspapers and literary circles played a crucial part in this identity-making process. This production of locality also serves as a ground for comparison.

One of the most important features of journalism in Szeged was its local patriotism and distinguished literary life. In *fin de siècle* Hungary, the main centers for modernizing Hungarian literature *vis-à-vis* the “official” national literature were the Nagyvárad circle with Endre Ady (1877-1919) and the Szeged circle with István Tömörkény (1866-1917). In contrast to its initial cultural openness, the literary life in Szeged became more and more self-enclosed, locally patriotic and trapped in its own idea of a distinct ‘*szegedi öntudat eszméje*’ [‘*The Idea of Szeged’s Self-Awareness*’] by seeking for the idealistic role of a national capital.<sup>2</sup> Provincialism was a consequence of socioeconomic development in many parts of Hungary and of its late and distinct modernization. Hungarian literature, as Miklós Lackó argues, “developed in close

<sup>2</sup> Klukovitsné Paróczy Katalin, *A Szegedi Napló Móra Ferenc főszerkesztősége idején, 1913-1919* [The Szegedi Napló under the General Editorship of Ferenc Móra, 1913-1919], (Szeged: Dissertationes Ex Bibliotheca Universitatis De Attila József Nominatae, 1991.), 26-27. As the *Szegedi Krónika* [Szeged Chronicle] (February 1, 1902) states about the Szeged circle: “Igen örvendetes és jelentős tömörülésnek látszik ez, mert éppen ez a kör volna hivatva népszerűsíteni, valóságos szegedi jelszóvá tenni a nemzeti főváros eszméjét, amely oly tömören fejezi ki nemzeti tartalmi álmunkat.” [This seems to be a rejoicing and significant company, because this circle is bound to popularize and make the idea of the national capital a real Szeged slogan by concisely expressing our national dreams.]

symbiosis with nationalism.”<sup>3</sup> This coincided with the fact that in Central Eastern Europe literature was charged with a political mission and social meaning that reflected the problems of public life or national identity and consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

Besides general questions, the dissertation attempts to focus on specific research questions such as: What is new in the comparative research on the urban patterns of Debrecen and Szeged in recent Hungarian urban studies? What was the importance of culture as a functional character for defining the regional centers in the countryside? How did the local journalists contribute to the image production of the city? The analysis of the language use and narrative strategies of the local newspapers in Debrecen and Szeged, and the identity-making function of the local press is crucial to this analysis. How did Szeged depict Debrecen as its ‘other’? Why was this important? What were the consequences? How did Debrecen react to this description? How does the self-representation of the journalist/author influence the urban image of Debrecen and Szeged? What are the differences between the mentality of Debrecen and Szeged defined in social anthropological terms as *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen; cf. István Balogh] and *szögediség* [authentically from Szeged, cf. Sándor Bálint]?

### ***Structure of the Dissertation***

Debrecen and Szeged differ in their religious, social and economic status, as discussed in the first chapter. The underlying assumption of the first chapter is to investigate the general urban development of Debrecen and Szeged, and their connections. The second chapter will focus on the visual representations of Debrecen and Szeged, that

<sup>3</sup> Miklós Lackó, “The Role of Budapest in Hungarian Literature: 1890-1935,” in Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske, eds. 1994. *Budapest and New York. Studies in Metropolitan Transformation 1870-1930* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1994), 352.

<sup>4</sup> Lackó, “The Role of Budapest in Hungarian Literature: 1890-1935,” 352.

is, the different layers of architectural styles of these provincial towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The awakening of Szeged's bourgeois consciousness, due to the ideological implications of the two main rival newspapers, *Szegedi Híradó* (from 1859 published twice a week) and *Szegedi Napló* (from 1878, daily), determined the image of the city. This civil consciousness of the town was defined *vis-à-vis* the other main city in the countryside, Debrecen. Thus, Szeged became, as the *Szegedi Napló* implies, the symbol of cultural dynamism and openness in contrast to the self-enclosed constructed image of Debrecen, which the third chapter will highlight.

My research also includes the investigation of the local literary societies in the fourth chapter. These voluntary civic associations had a literary '*kultusz*' ['*cult*']<sup>5</sup> function and were run by local journalists who were well-known writers as well; these include Kálmán Mikszáth, Ferenc Móra and István Tömörkény, who had an essential impact upon altering local society and the urban image. The time-frame of the research is from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the outbreak of the First World War. The primary source materials for the research are the local newspapers, the documents of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged and the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in Debrecen, literary works and the documents of the municipal governments are also examined. The research concentrates on the importance of the architectural reshaping and urban planning of the cities; and the study includes also the analysis of the local newspapers and their identity-making role for the newly reconstructed city. The underlying assumption is that the self-representation of the city was an essential part of this modernization process. Moreover, architecture and the

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<sup>5</sup> The Hungarian word *kultusz* means an elevated form of adoration and respect for a famous historical, literary or public figure. In this sense I use the notion of cult role.

local newspapers together had a significant impact on the fact that Debrecen and Szeged became important regional civic centers by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### *The Method: Historiographic Heritage*

Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse's assumption presented in *Microcosm. Portrait of a Central European City*, greatly influenced my readings of the two cities. Davies and Moorhouse argue that the analysis of the historical portrait of a middle-ranking provincial center can be more fruitful than the study of individual histories of major cities of Central Europe, such as Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Krakow, and Budapest. These big cities did not portray the country's level of development as well as its provincial centers, which "have usually found themselves on the receiving, rather than at the ruling end"<sup>6</sup>. Major influences on my research, focusing on middle ranking provincial cities, were also Rosemary Wakeman's study on *Modernizing the Provincial City Toulouse, 1945-1975*, and Markian Prokopovych's work on *Habsburg Lemberg: architecture, public space, and politics in the Galician capital, 1772-1914*. Moreover, frequent professional consultations with historians Gábor Gyáni, Rosemary Wakeman and urban political scientist Paul Kantor had a great impact upon my knowledge and understanding of urban history at several levels and from different perspectives.

Writing an unbiased urban history that does not dwell on provincialism was a real challenge. "Local history is all around us,"<sup>7</sup> as John Becket argues in his methodological work on *Writing Local History*, which I also found particularly meaningful. Among my primary sources were early urban history monographs about

<sup>6</sup> Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse, *Microcosm: A Portrait of a Central European City* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), 10.

<sup>7</sup> John Beckett, *Writing Local History* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press), xi.

Szeged and Debrecen, all written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For instance, János Reizner wrote the pre-Flood history of the old Szeged [*A régi Szeged*, 1884-1908] while Zsigmond Kulinyi wrote the history of the New Szeged after the Great Flood [*Szeged új [sic!] kora: a város újabb [sic!] története és leírása*, 1901]. Their unique narrative style provided an excellent example of the period's particular historical imagination. These historical monographs reflect the mentality of their writers by showing which topics or figures they neglected or omitted from these histories.

The end of 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century was the golden age of local histories and urban biographies; all emphasized the nation-building role of the given city and their citizens. The main aim of these local histories was to ferment local patriotism among their citizens. This entailed the idea that the improvement of the country was strongly connected with the development of its cities. This idea was stated by Gyula Éhen, the mayor of Szombathely (town in Transdanubia), in his work on *The Modern City* [*A modern város*, 1897], a paradoxically neglected book, the forerunner of urban monographs in Hungary and a worthy counterpart to the Chicago-School urban sociologist Robert E. Park's *Modern City and Its Problems*.<sup>8</sup>

Local histories can be interpreted as counter-histories *vis-à-vis* the national history in a sense that these histories focused on the nation building role of towns, that is, they provided a history from below perspective.<sup>9</sup> In the inter-war period, local history in Hungary broke away from its marginal position, with the emergence of Elemér Mályusz's 'ethno-history,' which centered on the history of agricultural towns,<sup>10</sup> and István Hajnal's historical sociology about the origins of the Hungarian towns,<sup>11</sup> and it was integrated into mainstream history.

<sup>8</sup> Gyula Éhen, *A modern város* [*The Modern City*], (Szombathely, 1897), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Gábor Gyáni, *Történészdiskurzusok* [*Historians' Discourses*], (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2002), 59.

<sup>10</sup> Elemér Mályusz, "A magyarság és a városi élet a középkorban," [Hungarians and Urban Life in the Middle Ages] *Századok*, (1944): 36-62.

<sup>11</sup> István Hajnal, "Az európai város kialakulása," [The Development of the European City] in István Hajnal, *Technika, művelődés. Tanulmányok* [Technology, Civilization. Studies], (Budapest: MTA, TTI,

Before 1945, as Hajnal's work shows, Hungarian urban history focused on the cultural, intellectual and economic history of the cities and had a predominantly local character. After 1945, Marxist historiography dominated the field of urban research with its subsequent theoretical limitations. Paradoxically, however, it entailed several advantageous developments in Hungarian urban studies. A new generation of professional urban historians emerged, for instance, Jenő Szűcs with his early works, Vera Bácskai, András Kubinyi, Károly Vörös, and Sándor Gyimesi, whose oeuvres reached their high points in the 1970-1980s. They represented the professional historian investigating specific urban histories, and integrated this branch of study into mainstream national history as a part of economic and social history.<sup>12</sup> According to Gábor Gyáni, Hungarian urban studies towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were divided into the marginalized, "amateur" local histories and the professional urban history as such. In the Socialist Era, the main aim of urban studies was to define the characteristic features and origins of Hungarian cities, by going back to the Middle-Ages and pointing out what made them different from their Western counterparts.<sup>13</sup> In this context, the work of the sociologist-historian Ferenc Erdei was of great importance and had an impact on Hungarian sociology, ethnography and social history.

During the 1980s in Hungary, grand urban historiographical works were published with the financial assistance of the government. Two such multi-volume books are the *Debrecen története* [*History of Debrecen*] (in five volumes, published under the general editorship of György Ránki) and the *Szeged története* [*History of Szeged*] (six volumes, published under the general editorship of Gyula Kristó).<sup>14</sup> These

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1993), 205-243. (The study was firstly published in 1941).

<sup>12</sup> Gyáni, *Történetdiskurzusok*, 61.

<sup>13</sup> Gyáni, *Történetdiskurzusok*, 61-62.

<sup>14</sup> Gyáni, *Történetdiskurzusok*, 62.

works are outstanding in their aim to fully cover the history of a particular city, but for this very reason, they subordinate local history to national trends.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, many of these volumes remained fragmented, because of the great number of contributors (who worked with different styles and backgrounds). In addition, its Marxist style often neglected the cultural history because of the very nature of Marxist ideology, that is Marxist economy and materialism. Generally speaking, from the 1960s on, Hungarian urban history was considered to be a part of economic and social history, and the functional character of the city (e.g. market center function, regional center function) dominated the subfield. One prominent representative of this approach was György Ránki, for whom urbanization in general and urban history in particular was predominantly the history of the Hungarian working class, in contrast to Ferenc Erdei's theory, which was built on the dichotomy of the Hungarian city as agricultural city [magyar város = mezőváros]<sup>16</sup>.

Challenging the Marxist paradigm was Péter Hanák's contribution to the field of social history. He restored the cultural side of urban history, by depicting the living conditions of the modern society, and by reformulating the definition of the Hungarian modern city, in his work on *The Garden and the Workshop: essays on the cultural history of Vienna and Budapest*. According to Hanák, modern urbanization with its complete openness and dynamic expansion was a typical feature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was no longer, as Hanák argues, just an artisan settlement and a marketplace. The modern city had to gain a new functional structure with its bustling economic and social topography. With the process of embourgeoisement, the modern city became an administrative, legislative, and at the same time cultural center, "tending increasingly to fashion a way of life and cast of mind that served as a pattern for society as a

<sup>15</sup> Gyáni, *Történezzdiskurzusok*, 63. Gyáni quotes Károly Vörös. Cf. Károly Vörös. "A helytörténeti kutatásról," [On Local Historical Research] *Valóság*, (1972/2): 45.

<sup>16</sup> Gyáni, *Történezzdiskurzusok*, 64.



whole.”<sup>17</sup> Hanák challenged the juridical and regional center function of the cities and emphasized the central cultural function of a region. By the beginning of the 1990s, the notion of urbanization in historiography corresponded to the macro-dynamics of modernization, which emancipated urban history from the anachronism of local history, which focused only on the history of one particular settlement. This paradigm change was promoted by the institutionalized activities and conferences of the “Hajnal István Kör” [HIK, István Hajnal Society]<sup>18</sup> in Debrecen, which focused primarily on the questions of Hungarian urban history.

After 1989, the representation and perception of the cities went through radical changes. Urban studies moved from empirically grounded research to the level of postmodern theoretical reflections and the field of comparative urban history began to flourish. Gábor Gyáni, in his *Történészdiskurzusok* [Historical Discourses, 2002] takes into account the general linguistic turn together with the changing narrative paradigms of history. In *Identity and Urban Experience: fin-de-siècle Budapest* (2004), Gyáni points in the direction of (re)phrasing urban identity, and adapts the theories of Georg Simmel [*The Metropolis and Mental Life*, 1903] and Richard Sennett [*The Fall of Public Man*, 1978] to the Hungarian context.

<sup>17</sup> Péter Hanák, *The Garden and the Workshop: essays on the cultural history of Vienna and Budapest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Hajnal István Kör: <http://www.hajnalkor.hu/>. Publications and conferences of the Hajnal István Kör [István Hajnal Society] on urban issues: Mikó Zsuzsa, ed. *Mezőváros - kisváros. A Hajnal István Kör keszthelyi konferenciája, 1990. június 23-25. Rendi társadalom - polgári társadalom 4.* [Oppidum - Small Town. The Keszthely Conference of the István Hajnal Society, June 23-25 1990], Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó Kft., 1995.; Németh Zsófia and Sasfi Csaba, eds. *Kőfallal, sárpalánkkal... Várostörténeti tanulmányok. A Hajnal István Kör - Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület 1993. évi debreceni konferenciájának előadásai. Rendi társadalom - polgári társadalom 7.* . [With Brick Wall, and Mud Plank, Urban Historical Studies. The Lectures of the Debrecen Conference of the István Hajnal Social Historical Association in 1993; Feudal Society - Civil Society, Volume 7], Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997.; H. Németh István, Szívós Erika, Tóth Árpád, eds. *A város és társadalma: tanulmányok Bácskai Vera tiszteletére: a Hajnal István Kör Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület 2010. évi, Kőszegen megrendezett konferenciájának kötete.* [The City and its Society: Studies in Honor of Vera Bácskai: the 2010 Kőszeg Conference Volume of the István Hajnal Society], Budapest: Hajnal I. Kör Társadalomtört. Egyesület, 2011.

This dissertation is one of the new contributions to the field of the post-socialist type of Hungarian comparative urban history. The novelty of the present research to this branch of studies is threefold.

Firstly, it provides a new and additional comparative dimension to the study of the Hungarian urban network by focusing on the relations and interurban competitions of two regional centers of the Great Hungarian Plain. This is not a capital city related and centered analysis in the Post-Compromise Period but analyzed within an interdisciplinary framework. Similar works published in this field are Lajos Rúzsás's *A városi fejlődés a XVIII-XIX. századi Dél-Magyarországon* [Urbanization in Southern Hungary in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century] and Lajos Timár's *Debrecen társadalma, 1920-1944*, [Debrecen's Society, 1920-1944] and his *A gazdaság térszerkezete és a városhálózat néhány sajátossága a két világháború közötti Magyarországon* [Some Characteristics of the Economic Structure and the Urban Network in the Inter-War Period]. Timár contributed immensely to the field of Hungarian historical geography. Gábor Czoch's "*A városok szíverei.*" *Tanulmányok Kassáról és a reformkori városokról* ["Cities are veins of the heart." Studies on Kassa [Košice] and cities of the Reform Era] touches the issues of representation and social identity of cities from a different perspective and the main focus is mainly on Kassa [Košice] and Pozsony [Bratislava]. However, the focus on the issues of urban image, identity and representation of the cities in Great Hungarian Plain is still neglected in Hungarian Urban Studies.

Secondly, my work aims to critically rethink the regional center function (Cf. Beluszky Pál) by questioning what makes a provincial town a cultural regional center in the Habsburg Monarchy and to present the urban identity of the Great Hungarian Plain in a Central European context.

Thirdly, it targets for investigation the visual and textual images of the towns by ‘reading the city,’ a new paradigm in understanding urban areas. I use the ‘reading the city approach’ as an intellectual framework, since the texts that I focus on are concentrating on different layers of interpretation, representation strategies and legibility of the provincial town’s image. These urban images can be considered as texts; each text produces an image that is constructed by the local media, its social relations, civic associations, and literary societies.

### *The ‘Reading the City’ Approach*

After all, how can we ‘read’ a city? ‘Reading the city’ theory suggests that the town, as the archetype of historical imagination, has manifested itself in various constructed images and narratives. The city gathers a multitude of meanings in which people invest their interpretations, and by which they try to create their own histories. In this sense, the city resembles a text, as Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean argue, and this text can be constructed as an “inscription of man in space.”<sup>19</sup> This strategy invites different layers of interpretations ranging from the dominant historical readings to various interdisciplinary approaches.

The city is an imagined space, a mental map that we create for ourselves in the very act of existing within it.<sup>20</sup> The emergence of the modern city gives way to the metaphorization of the place. This means that we are now confronted with the problem of re-reading and re-naming the city by metaphoricizing the urban

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<sup>19</sup> Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean, *American Studies. An Introduction to American Culture* (London: Routledge, 1997), 162. Here I also would like to refer Zénó Vernyik’s unpublished Doctoral Dissertation on “*Not to Harmony or to Rationall Beauty*”: *The Representation of Urban Space in E. E. Cummings’ Complete Poems, 1904-1962 and Peter Ackroyd’s Hawksmoor*, Masaryk University, 2012, which is a comprehensive work on “reading the city” within the field of literature.

<sup>20</sup> David Harvey, *Paris, the Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 59.

experience.<sup>21</sup> In *Visions of the Modern City*, Sharpe and Wallock propose that the city is a system of signification, like language, “dependent on certain fixed relations.”<sup>22</sup> In this sense, the ‘illegible’ city as a text or a narrative can be read with as many interpretations as it has readers within the limits of representation.<sup>23</sup> The self-representation of the city gains even more importance, and, consequently, the ‘narrated’ city transforms into a so-called ‘narrating’ city. The metaphors of ‘legibility’ and ‘imageability’ of the urban landscape are thus crucial elements in the investigation of any modern city since it can provide an alternative history for the city from a multiple perspective, that of the author, that of the reader, that of the architectural form, that of the architect and so on.

This new language of images redefines the concepts of nationhood and citizenship by opening up novel channels of communication across traditional cultural and state boundaries, and by bridging the gap between fictional and factual discourses within the field of urban studies. In defining the conceptual framework of this dissertation, I found particularly useful Gyöngyi Pásztor’s work titled *Városshociológia. Elméletek és problémák* [*Urban Sociology. Theories and Problems*, 2006]<sup>24</sup> which is among the first – and a less extensive than expected – to attempt to cover the Hungarian field of studies from the Chicago School to the Postmodern urban theories, including the issue of the readable and narrated city.

Gyáni’s essay on *A reprezentatív város – a reprezentált város*<sup>25</sup> [The Representative City – The Represented City] from *Terek és szövegek: Újabb*

<sup>21</sup> William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, eds. *Visions of the Modern City. Essays in History, Art and Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 1-2.

<sup>22</sup> William Chapman Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, “Introduction,” in Sharpe and Wallock, *Visions of the Modern City. Essays in History, Art and Literature*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Sharpe and Wallock, “Introduction,” 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> Pásztor Gyöngyi, *Városshociológia: elméletek és problémák* [Urban Sociology: theory and problems], (Kolozsvár: Kolozsvári Egyetemi Kiadó, 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Gábor Gyáni, “A reprezentatív város – a reprezentált város,” [The Representational City – The Represented City], in Tímea N. Kovács, et.al., eds. *Terek és Szövegek. Újabb perspektívák a városkutatásban* [Spaces and Texts. New Perspectives in Urban Research], (Budapest: Kijárat Kiadó, 2005), 229-237.

*perspektívák a városkutatásban* [Spaces and Texts. Newer Perspectives in Urban Research], focuses on the issue of the narrated and narrating city. It illustrates the present state of urban research by presenting a useful interdisciplinary journey into the latest theories by crossing disciplinary boundaries, and presents the idea of the readable, narrated city seen as a cultural representation. This approach influenced the methodology of this dissertation.

I am following Vera Bácskai's thinking, by maintaining that a revised urban history is needed to describe and investigate many specific questions pertaining to cities. This requires a new approach, apart from the traditional urban monographs, which investigate only the social, economic and religious characteristics of cities.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, my approach is close to David Harvey's stance and uses many aspects of less conventional history. For Harvey, the study of urbanization is not the study of the legal or political entity or the physical artifact, but rather a process that "unfolds through the production of physical and social landscapes and the production of consciousness."<sup>27</sup> Since urban consciousness and identity have become increasingly important in the recent studies of the cities of the European Union, my approach and argument will focus on these concepts, too.

### *The Terminology Employed*

The urban development of 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungary is peculiar and different from the Western model. Thus, this dissertation intends to follow and, at the same time, critically rethink and redefine the 'regional center function' of the Hungarian city by

<sup>26</sup> Bácskai Vera, "Az európai várostörténet-írás főbb irányzatai és mai helyzete," [The Major Trends of European Urban Historiography and its Present State] in Czoch Gábor, et. al. eds. *Fejezetek Pozsony történetéből magyar és szlovák szemmel* [Chapters from the History of Pozsony (Bratislava) from the Hungarian and Slovak Point of View], (Pozsony: Kalligram, 2005). 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> David Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1985). xviii.

putting more emphasis on the issues of culture, education, and literature as determining factors of regional centers.

The theoretical definition of the modern city is crucial to this research, and the definition of Debrecen's and Szeged's positions within the Hungarian urban network is equally important to my analysis. The following paragraphs aim to provide a historiographical overview for the terminology and theory of Hungarian urbanization.

Ferenc Erdei defines the peculiar characteristics of the Hungarian towns in his work *Magyar város* [Hungarian City, 1939] and argues that the comparison of Hungarian urbanization with its Western counterparts is an asymmetrical process, since Western urbanization is qualitatively superior to Hungarian urbanization.<sup>28</sup> According to Erdei, the Hungarian towns were islands of European civilization within the nomadic and Asian settlement types of the surrounding countryside. Moreover, the Western city developed from the ancient *polis*, its self-identity and society have absorbed the concept of the social strata of Medieval feudalism.<sup>29</sup> What makes Hungarian urbanization distinct from the Western one, Erdei argues, is its peculiar character, manifested in the emergence of '*tanya*' ['homesteads'], strongly connected to the center of the agricultural city. The populations of these homesteads often had their residence in the town. The agricultural population, however, was not excluded from the city; moreover, these inhabitants could be defined as urban identities *vis-à-vis* the Western distinction of the city-village paradigm.<sup>30</sup> According to Erdei's general definition, the city is a kind of settlement that, either on its own or with its surrounding countryside, frames an organized and autonomous unit, is the residence

<sup>28</sup> Erdei Ferenc, *Magyar város* [The Hungarian City], (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1939), 6.

<sup>29</sup> Erdei, *Magyar város*, 49-50.

<sup>30</sup> Erdei, *Magyar város*, 7-9.

of a relatively large segment of the population, and is a center of regional function equipped with adequate technological, economic and cultural facilities.<sup>31</sup>

Gyáni's work called my attention to the Ferenc Erdei and Tibor Mendöl's debate which re-defined the provincial towns in the Great Hungarian Plain. Erdei's assumption about the division of the Western type of cities located in the Transdanubium, the Upper Hungary, Transylvania, and the Hungarian '*mezőváros*' [*'agricultural city,' oppidum*] of the Great Hungarian Plain, provoked a theoretical debate with Mendöl. Mendöl criticized Erdei's one-sided sociological definition of the Hungarian cities by approaching the topic from a geographical point of view. Mendöl mentions the exemplary urbanization of Debrecen and Szeged, and defines them as '*tanyás város*' [*'cities with family farms'*].<sup>32</sup> In general, Mendöl criticized Erdei's definition of the strong interconnection between the centers of agricultural cities and homesteads.<sup>33</sup>

The conventional classification of the Hungarian towns was based on their legal status, while urban research after 1945 started to group them on the grounds of their functional character. The hermeneutics of the '*mezőváros*' [*'agricultural city' or oppidum*] during the period between 1301 and 1848 can be framed within the Hungarian legal system *vis-à-vis* the '*szabad királyi város*' [*'free royal city' or libera regiaeque civitas*], the '*község*' [*'civil parish' or possessio*] and the '*puszta*' [*'plains' or praedium*].<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Erdei, *Magyar város*, 24.

<sup>32</sup> Mendöl Tibor, "Néhány szó az alföldi város kérdéséhez," [Some Words to the Questions of the City in the Great Hungarian Plain] *Földrajzi Közlemények* [Geographical Bulletin] (1939): 228-230.

<sup>33</sup> Gábor Gyáni, "Mai várostörténet-írásunk: teljesítmény és irányzatok," [Our Modern Urban History Writing: Achievements and Tendencies] in Gábor Gyáni, *Történészdiskurzusok* [Historians Discourses] (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2002), 75.

<sup>34</sup> Pálmány Béla, "Szempontok a magyarországi mezővárosok típusaihoz az úrbérrendezéstől a jobbágyszabadságig (1767-1870)," [Aspects to the Hungarian Agricultural City Types from the Urbanism to the End of the Abolishment of Serfdom] in Mikó Zsuzsa, ed. *Rendi társadalom-polgári társadalom 4. Mezőváros-kisváros. A Hajnal István Kör keszthelyi konferenciája, 1990. június 23-25.* [Feudal Society – Bourgeois Society 4. Agricultural City- Small Towns. The Keszthely Conference of the István Hajnal Society, June 23-25, 1990], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1995), 5.

Vera Bácskai and Lajos Nagy followed the conceptualization of the Erdei-Mendöl debate by framing the functional notion of the city on the basis of the national census of 1828. Bácskai and Nagy reconstructed and rewrote urban history on the network of functional cities by making a distinction between market towns and market centers.<sup>35</sup> Pál Beluszky, however, differentiates complete and incomplete regional centers on the cities as ‘*megyeszékhely*’ [‘*county administrative towns*’]. According to Beluszky, the regional centers taking shape around the turn of the century were modest towns and included the cities of Zágráb [Zagreb], Pozsony [Bratislava], Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca], Kassa [Košice], Debrecen and Temesvár [Timișoara]. Meanwhile six more towns – Szeged, Nagyvárad [Oradea], Pécs, Győr, Arad [Arad] and Brassó [Brașov] – functioned as incomplete regional centers.<sup>36</sup>

Gábor Gyáni in *A modern város történeti dilemmái* [The Historical Dilemmas of the Modern City], works with the most recent approaches in urban history and redefines the city in general on the basis of its functional character. Gyáni includes Penelope J. Corfield’s essay in his edited volume, that provides a terminological outline for the definition of the city *de facto* according to its functional terms, which are the following:<sup>37</sup>

1. A minimum number of inhabitants
2. Predominantly non-agricultural economy
3. Nature of institutional organization
4. Substantial social heterogeneity
5. Cultural self-identity, urban way of living
6. Recognition as a city by a given community

<sup>35</sup> Bácskai Vera and Nagy Lajos, *Piackörzetek, Piacközpontok és városok Magyarországon 1828-ban* [Market Centers and Cities in Hungary in 1828], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), 8-9.

<sup>36</sup> Beluszky Pál, *The Hungarian Urban Network at the End of the Second Millennium*, (Pécs: Centre for Regional Studies of Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1999), 23. Cf. Dr. Beluszky Pál, “Az alföldi városias jellegű települések központi szerepköre.” [The Central Role of the Urban Type Settlements in the Great Hungarian Plain], in *Földrajzi Értesítő* Vol. XV. 3. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Földrajztudományi Kutatócsoport, 1966., 329-345.

<sup>37</sup> Penelope J. Corfield, “Szociabilitás és kisvárosok a 18. századi Angliában,” [Socialibility and Small Towns in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century England] in Gyáni Gábor, ed. *A modern város történeti dilemmái* [The Historical Problems of the Modern City], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1995), 3.



András Kubinyi's "Network of Towns in the Carpathian Basin in the Late Middle Ages" (2004) focuses also on the problem of defining Hungarian towns. He follows the line of those historians who consider that the definition of the town's juridical position, originating from Werbőczy's *Tripartitum*, is anachronistic. Since the Werbőczy doctrine considers only free royal towns [*civitas*] as towns, entire regions remained in his time without such titles. Kubinyi, however, elaborated ten criteria of "centrality" with points 1 to 6 on the basis of the market-functional characters of the towns.<sup>38</sup> According to his centrality points, for instance, Szeged is among the towns of first rank with 42 points, together with Buda (55 points), Pozsony (49 points), Kolozsvár (45 points) and Pest (41 points).<sup>39</sup>

The process of urbanization which accompanied industrialization "was itself made somewhat lopsided by the dynamism of the capital whose pace of development was only eclipsed in this period by some American cities."<sup>40</sup> Many of the regional administrative and transportation centers (Győr, Kassa, Nagyvárad, Temesvár, Kolozsvár, Szeged, Fiume), as well as some of the market towns (Debrecen, Kecskemét, Kiskunfélegyháza or Szabadka) started to be intensely industrialized and thus showed increased features of urbanization.

The urbanization of the countryside included the appearance of regulated streets, urban construction and modern infrastructure, new public buildings for municipal administration, department stores, a tram line "between the center and the railway station; the development of a system of public utilities and electrification; flourishing local journalism, some of it produced by leading lights of Hungarian literature, and permanent theater companies to satisfy the bourgeois tastes of the local

<sup>38</sup> Kubinyi András, "Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében," [Urban Network in the Carpathian Basin in the Middle Ages], *Történelmi Szemle*, [Historical Review] ed. Tóth István György, (Budapest: MTA 2004/1-2): 30.

<sup>39</sup> Kubinyi, "Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében," 22-23.

<sup>40</sup> László Kontler, *A History of Hungary. Millennium in Central Europe* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 311.

middle class.”<sup>41</sup> On the basis of the above-mentioned sources, I will use the ‘functional definition’ of the city for my comparative analysis of Debrecen and Szeged and show these cities as market towns and cultural centers of the Great Hungarian Plain.

### *The Debrecen-Szeged Comparison*

The starting point of my research is based on a special cultural competition, through the local newspapers, between Debrecen and Szeged, that provides a solid ground to this comparative urban historical project. Surprisingly, as my previous research on the field indicates, the local newspapers of Szeged depict their hometown with recurring metaphors *vis-à-vis* Debrecen, thus, the ‘other’ for them is not the capital, but, alas, another provincial city.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile, the primary agent of Debrecen’s image construction was Budapest or Nagyvárad [Oradea] rather than Szeged.<sup>43</sup>

My hypothesis is that Szeged is a ‘newcomer’ melting pot, a place of religious openness, cultural, and industrial dynamism, while Debrecen is represented as economically strong but self-enclosed with its religiously homogeneous community. Moreover, the urban modernization of Debrecen was relatively stagnant in comparison to the rapid urban development of Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879. One of the recurring metaphors in the newspaper called *Debreczen* is the ‘civilizing mission’ of Debrecen, based on its prosperous economic status, long *civis* tradition, and attraction of the ‘*tősgyökeres magyarság*’ [‘*native Hungarians*’].<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless,

<sup>41</sup> Kontler, *A History of Hungary. Millennium in Central Europe*, 311.

<sup>42</sup> Initial thoughts developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city : the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2005.

<sup>43</sup> *Debreczen*, May 26, 1879.

<sup>44</sup> *Debreczen*, September 27, 1879 and September 29, 1903.

both cities prove to have the same aspirations for colonizing and civilizing the hinterland and seeking for the local patriotic idealistic role of a national capital, using the instruments of literature and journalism.

This dissertation focuses on the period after the Compromise of 1867 to the outburst of the World War I. In the urban history of Szeged, the Great Flood of 1879 is a turning point, which marks the beginning of the modern town. In Debrecen's case the city's reaction to the subsequent fires in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is turning point. The time frame of the research is consistent with Vera Bácskai's argument that the periodization of urban history monographs does not have to follow the rigid boundaries of national political history but rather has to be adjusted to local history.<sup>45</sup> The time frame of this research is framed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the World War I in 1914.

The tragic event of the Great Flood of 1879 also had some positive consequences for Szeged; it urged the state authorities to readdress the issue of the regulation of the River Tisza, and to finance this project together with the rebuilding of the city. In spite of their similarities in the mixture of urban and rural elements, Debrecen and Szeged were different in their urban growth. My claim is that the local newspapers in both cities also functioned to generate local patriotism within Debrecen's and Szeged's own civic community, strengthened the sense of local solidarity, and urged the local elite to embark on the construction of a new, prominent local modern identity. In Szeged, as opposed to Debrecen, these social, political and cultural factors were the basis of a dynamic local society, which was more open to

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<sup>45</sup> Bácskai Vera, "A magyarországi városkutatás helyzete és feladatai, " [The State and Tasks of the Hungarian Urban Research] in Zsófia Németh, ed. et al. *Kőfallal, sárpalánkkal...várostörténeti tanulmányok. A Hajnal István Kör – Társadalomtörténeti Egyesület 1993. évi debreceni konferenciájának előadásai. Rendi Társadalom – Polgári Társadalom 7.*[With Brick Wall, and Mud Plank...Urban Historical Studies. The Lectures of the Debrecen Conference of the István Hajnal Social Historical Association in 1993], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), 12-13.

modernization than many other cities of similar size at the turn of the century in Hungary.

## Sources

The primary sources for the research are the local newspapers of Debrecen and Szeged found in the National Széchenyi Library (OSZK) and the Somogyi Library, Szeged: *Szegedi Híradó* (1859-1890 [1925]), *Szegedi Napló* (Politikai, közgazdasági és irodalmi napilap), 1879-1944), together with magazines and journals such as *Hüvelyk Matyi* (1889-1919, élcz lap, a *Szegedi Napló* vasárnapi melléklete), the *Debreczen* (Politikai és közgazdasági hírlap, 1869-1919), and the issues of the *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium* [Debrecen Picture Almanach]. Besides the local newspapers, this dissertation aims to use the literary works of local journalists, authors and poets (Ferenc Móra, István Tömörkény and Gyula Juhász). Photographs about the old Debrecen and Szeged, the Great Flood, and the reconstruction are also primary sources as historical documents; I researched and found them in the *Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár* [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection] and in the *Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum* [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography]. Moreover, crucial sources I used were the minutes of the towns' general assemblies, the files of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] stored in the *Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár* [Hajdú-Bihar County Archive], Debrecen (hence abbreviated as HBML) and the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] preserved in the *Csongrád Megyei Levéltár* [Csongrád County Archive], Szeged (abbreviated as CSML), and the registers of the General Assemblies of the Municipal Committee [Törvényhatósági Bizottsági Közgyűlési Ügyek Mutatója] stored also in the HBML.

I found particularly useful the journal databases and indexes in the Fordham University Library in New York during my study abroad research period in 2010, especially the *Making of America* e-collection of Cornell University, the *American Periodicals Series Online* and the *ProQuest Historical Newspapers New York Times* (1851-2006). The articles about Hungary, Szeged (mentioned as *Szegedin* in the contemporary sources) and Debrecen (named mostly as *Debretzin*) helped me to embed their urban development in a broader international context.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Available: *American Periodicals*, Fordham University Library, New York, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>, Access: May 10, 2010.

## Chapter 1      Debrecen and Szeged in the Context of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Hungarian Urban Network

My research investigates and compares two Hungarian cities: Debrecen, situated in the northern part of the Great Hungarian Plain and Szeged, situated in the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain. I highlight the factors that determine their (self)representation. This chapter provides a general outline of 19<sup>th</sup> century urbanization and industrialization, and places Debrecen and Szeged in the Hungarian urban network during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The legal definition and the functional position of Debrecen and Szeged in the urban hierarchy, because of the lack of established English translations and equivalents of the Hungarian terminology, are rather problematic. The chapter aims to go beyond the investigation of the juridical situation and notion of these cities and focuses on their functional character.

My analysis of the two Hungarian cities starts with Elizabeth Keith Morris's (an English woman traveler to Hungary) account of her experience during the 1930s in Hungary:

[...] It seemed impossible that I was still in Europe. I felt I had reached the East with its mystic charm. I had passed through the Carpathians where 'the mists spiritualize the mountains,' and the awful silence of those grim sentinels had me realize that Hungary possesses an intangible, elusive quality, an atmosphere of her own. [...] This was a land for an artist, for only a brush and the subtlest mixture of colours could express what I felt. Later, I learnt that only through the imagination can one really see this strange land of contrasts, where antiquity rubs shoulders with odd touches of modernity, and the veil of kindly tolerance must often surround the eyes of the seeker after knowledge.<sup>47</sup>

Morris' work was not a guidebook; it was, (as noted in the Preface of this book), rather an intriguing personal description of the Hungarian countryside, including the villages and the capital city. Keith Morris visited Debrecen and was fascinated by

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Keith Morris, *Hungary: The Land of Enchantment* (Oxford: Henry Hartley, 1931). 13.

what used to be Debrecen's intense literary life. She described Hungary by attempting to enter the spirit, mentality, history and character of the Hungarians.<sup>48</sup> Keith Morris was fascinated by the country's idiosyncratic settlements, which "looked as if it had been left to grow up by itself"<sup>49</sup> in this "Land of Yesterday."<sup>50</sup> The countryside of the Great Hungarian Plain is depicted by Keith Morris in the following:

The Life on the Great Hungarian Plain was fascinating me more and more, and I could now sympathize with the Magyars' love for it. No other country in Europe had a country life with so many varied phases. This peculiarity can be traced in the physical features, which vary constantly in their aspect, not only at different seasons, but at different hours of the day. In the early summer, the profusion of flowers had been really wonderful. Nature in this gay garb has seemed as much a part of temperamental Hungary as the vivacious, light-hearted people, and both had the attraction of the touch of the East. This illusion was strengthened when I saw the *Délibáb*. This wonderful mirage made me feel that Nature and the poetry Magyar are one.<sup>51</sup>

The two cities that I am discussing in this work, Debrecen and Szeged, are both situated in the Great Hungarian Plain; Szeged lies in the South of Hungary and Debrecen is in the North-East of the country.<sup>52</sup> Both cities were founded in the Middle Ages as important market towns; during the 19<sup>th</sup> century both enjoyed the benefits (and the hindrances) of industrialization, modernization and urbanization. Hungarian scholars are still investigating the effects of urbanization in the light of the connections of the local markets and the long-distance trade-routes of the region and the continent.<sup>53</sup> At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, about 71% of the market towns in Hungary were known for their grain and livestock fairs. Debrecen and Szeged were the most prominent in this regard. Since antiquity, markets were the venues of everyday life,

<sup>48</sup> Preface by Rubido-Zichy, in Morris, *Hungary: The Land of Enchantment*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Keith Morris, *Hungary: The Land of Enchantment*, 14.

<sup>50</sup> Keith Morris, *Hungary: The Land of Enchantment*, 14.

<sup>51</sup> Keith Morris, *Hungary: The Land of Enchantment*, 97.

<sup>52</sup> The location of Szeged and Debrecen are well shown on the map of Hungary in the appendices researched in the Map Collection of the National Széchenyi Library (hence abbreviated as OSZK, Térképtár) Magyarország (általános térkép) (1870), [Hungary, general map, 1870] Gotha: J. Perthes, 1870. TM 23 774/Térképtár, ST, 66.

<sup>53</sup> Gergely András, *19. századi magyar történelem, 1790-1918* (Budapest: Korona Kiadó, 1998), 349.

the centers of bartering goods, and exchanging information, and the stages of social life. Marketplaces were the main streets or squares of a major settlement. These spaces are named with the suffix of ‘*vásárhely*’ [‘*marketplace*’] such as Hódmezővásárhely, Kézdivásárhely, Marosvásárhely, Vásárosnamény, and many more. During the Middle Ages, many cities owed their development to their central market and trade positions, and such was the case with Debrecen and Szeged. Debrecen had a weekly market and, additionally, had the royal privilege of setting up national fairs. The weekly fairs in Debrecen were held twice a week and supplied the city and its surroundings with goods and food. The Debrecen national fairs were a common commercial venue for the broader region, with larger amounts of more expensive products, and people who came from other cities to trade. The national fairs in Hungary, which were also called ‘*sokadalom*’ [‘*crowd*’] usually lasted for two weeks. In Debrecen they were held seven times a year until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and then beginning in 1717, four times a year.<sup>54</sup>

Major Hungarian cities had an inner and an outer market place. In Debrecen, the outer marketplace was beyond the dikes of the city, and from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on, it was only a summer fair. The winter fairs were held in the heart of the city, in a designated venue, part of the main street. Weekly markets were held in the inner markets with workshops and stands.<sup>55</sup> As visual documents, the photographs of Debrecen’s and Szeged’s marketplaces in the *Néprajzi Múzeum* [Museum of Ethnography] illustrate the multiple roles of the fairs. These visual documents depict – as seen in the illustrations in the Appendix – a variety of scenes which tell a lot about the unconventional histories of the place such as: the *Baromvásár télen* [Cattle Fair in

<sup>54</sup> Iván Orsolya, “Vásár és Piac,” [Fair and Market] in Besze Tibor, et. al., eds. *Források Debrecen Újkori Történetéből* (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Bölcsészeti Szakkollégiuma, 1992), 99-100.

<sup>55</sup> Iván, “Vásár és Piac,” [Fair and Market] 99-100.



*the Winter*, Debrecen, 1908], *Sertésvásár télen* [*Hog Fair in the Winter*, Debrecen, 1908], *Kenyér piac* [*Bread Market*, Debrecen, 1908], *Csapó utcai piac* [*The Market in Csapó Street*, Debrecen, 1919], *Csapó utcai piac tyúk kofákkal* [*The Market in Csapó Street with Costers*, Debrecen, 1919], *Vásári jelenet* [*A Fair Scene*, Debrecen, 1919], *Részlet a vásártérről* [*A Detail from the Market Place*, Debrecen, 1919], *Embervásár* [*People's Fair*, Debrecen, 1919], and *Kenyér piac* [*Bread Market*, Szeged, 1905].<sup>56</sup>

Besides visual documents, many foreign travelers wrote about these regional markets and their unique atmosphere. Interestingly, one of these accounts, published in the American magazine, *The Monthly Magazine, and American Review*, talks about the city in terms of its freshly baked bread from the Debrecen market: “I have never eaten lighter, whiter, and better flavored bread; nor have I ever seen such large loaves. [...] As this bread is made without yeast, about which such a hue and cry is often raised, with a substitute which is a dry mass, that may be easily transported and kept for half a year or more, I think it may be of use to my country if I describe the Debretzin art of making bread.”<sup>57</sup>

By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the interurban competition among Szeged, Debrecen, Nagyvárad [Oradea], Szabadka [Subotica, Theresienstadt], and Arad [Arad] for the regional center position in the Great Hungarian Plain became explicit. Catherine Horel draws a comparison between Szabadka [Subotica, Theresienstadt] and Arad [Arad], both of which situated in the Southern part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Neither of them were intellectual centers of their hinterland and both competed with the other major cities of the region: Újvidék [Novi Sad], Szeged and

<sup>56</sup> See photos in Chapter two; Museum of Ethnography [Néprajzi Múzeum], Budapest: F9110-9111; F9113; F9118; F20854; F20855; F20936; F20948; F20950; F15261.

<sup>57</sup> Unknown author, “A Ferment for Bread used at Debretzin,” *The Monthly Magazine, and American Review* (1799-1800); August (1799, 1,5): 387. Available: *American Periodicals*, Fordham University Library, New York, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>, Access: May 10, 2010.

Temesvár [Timișoara]. As Horel argues, this competition was not only over the quality of culture (represented by the local press) but also on the standards of urban planning and the implementation of technological progress. By 1908, Subotica had four libraries (one belonged to the city, while the others belonged to religious denominations), one museum, a theater, and ten printing houses, which published newspapers and periodicals. In comparison, Arad had nine libraries, two theaters (one of them was a summer theater on the bank of the River Maros), a museum, and twelve printing houses which published seven periodicals.<sup>58</sup> The cities of the region competed and this rivalry became apparent by the number of civic associations they held. Despite this competition, the regional cities joined, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Délmagyarországi Közművelődési Egyesület* (DMKE, South Hungarian Cultural Union), which was extended to the region of Banat and other regional counties.<sup>59</sup>

Though Debrecen and Szeged were similar in their geographical position on the Great Hungarian Plain, they differed substantially in religious, social and economic aspects. By the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Szeged was the second largest city in Hungary after Budapest. It was neither a *‘püspöki székhely’* [*‘episcopalis sedes’* or ‘Episcopal see’] nor a county administrative seat. Although, it had a Catholic majority, the city had also a considerable Jewish community. Meanwhile, Debrecen was economically more powerful than Szeged, and, because of its economic wealth, it became a self-enclosed, almost homogeneous community. Though Debrecen was the second largest Hungarian city in the 18<sup>th</sup>, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century it lost its second national position, and became the third largest city. Debrecen was traditionally a

<sup>58</sup> Catherine Horel, “Urban Change in the Southern Cities of the Habsburg Monarchy: Westernizations and National Ambitions,” in Bojana Miljković-Katić, ed. *The Spatial Planning in Southeastern Europe*. (Belgrade: Institute of History, 2011). 190-191.

<sup>59</sup> Horel, “Urban Change in the Southern Cities of the Habsburg Monarchy: Westernizations and National Ambitions,” 191.

Calvinist settlement, and the cultural center of the region with the Reformed College of Debrecen, the *Református Kollégium*, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Debrecen's prevailing Calvinism was embedded in the social, economic and cultural life of the city, a strong religious position that labeled this city as the top conservative among other Hungarian cities. During the Reform Era, thanks to its modernization process, its rival, Szeged, became a striking example of accelerated urbanization, while Debrecen was lagging behind in its development.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hungarian provincial cities were examples of the idiosyncratic admixture of the rural and the urban. The relationship between the city and the neighboring countryside and family farms was quite complex. However, as compared with Western cities, Hungarian cities had a distinctive multi-ethnic character. Sometimes many nationalities and confessional groups lived together and they also had the common heritage of the previous Turkish occupation. The regional cities of the Great Hungarian Plain were positioned on the margins of the Empire, which was also a military border.<sup>60</sup> Modernization and industrialization, as Horel argues, fostered a movement of migration from the village to the city. With the development of the railroads, distances became shorter, which resulted in increased mobility that further sharpened the competition between cities. During the turn of the century, regional cities were increasing in size; they were facing new kinds of challenges due to their expansion and growing populations. Interurban competition took as models to follow the great world capitals, especially Vienna, London, Paris, and New York specifically their great streets and boulevards served as models.<sup>61</sup> The London-style clubs, parks, suburbs; Paris-style boulevards, cafés, apartment blocks,

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<sup>60</sup> Horel, "Urban Change in the Southern Cities of the Habsburg Monarchy: Westernizations and National Ambitions," 182.

<sup>61</sup> Horel, "Urban Change in the Southern Cities of the Habsburg Monarchy: Westernizations and National Ambitions," 181.

department stores; the New York-style hotels, prisons, office blocks and gridded street plans were examples for other cities to follow.<sup>62</sup> In Szeged, during the reconstruction era after the Great Flood of 1879, Paris served as the model city for the new urban plan.

### *1.1. The Hungarian Urban Network in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*

Theorists focusing on the ‘central place theory,’ that I have already elaborated upon in the Introduction, argue for the hierarchy of urban settlements in terms of size and function. Small towns with house markets for the surrounding markets had limited service functions, as well as restricted political, social and cultural institutions. Meanwhile, larger towns offered a wider variety of services including administration. The locations of the cities in Europe’s regions had consequences for the city’s political and cultural organization. Some countries, for instance, Portugal, Great-Britain, France, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Denmark, typically had large capitals, called primary cities. Lisbon, London, Paris, Vienna and Copenhagen also were much larger than other cities in their national countryside. These capitals not only gave space to royal courts and political administration, but also hosted national cultural life, as well as performing many crucial economic functions. Migration streams and transportation networks were also centered on these capitals.<sup>63</sup>

Gary Cohen compares three of these capitals on the basis of their influence over society and culture. In Cohen’s view, Vienna and Budapest (after 1873) served all the administrative, economic and cultural functions of the European capital city, being the central place of a large, multinational political entity; while Prague for all its glorious history, industrial and cultural life, was only the central place of the

<sup>62</sup> Mark Girouard, *Cities & People. A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1985). 325.

<sup>63</sup> Gary Cohen, “Society and Culture in Prague, Vienna, and Budapest in the late Nineteenth Century,” *East European Quarterly* 20 (1986): 467-468.

Bohemian province of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Because of this, Prague's population grew significantly less than the other two capitals, and the public affairs and culture of this smaller center often tended to be less cosmopolitan than in Vienna or Budapest.<sup>64</sup> According to Bácskai, East-Central Europe was dominated by small towns because the top categories were missing from the hierarchy of towns. Furthermore, the urban function of most of the towns – even the relatively large ones – was limited and underdeveloped due to their agrarian economy, including viniculture or cattle-breeding.<sup>65</sup> The growth of Hungary's large towns was not the result of industrialization; the major factor was agricultural production and trade with agrarian products.

From the functional point of view, a regional center needed higher educational institutions, main judicial courts, post offices and many similar institutions. The capital city was at the top of the urban hierarchy in the Hungarian urban network; below this category are the regional centers followed by the developed county seats.<sup>66</sup> The developed county seats must have, according to György Kövér, chambers of commerce and industry, secondary schools, lawyers' chambers and major bank branches. Other county seats have, as the developed county seats, directorates of finance, county courthouses, hospitals and teacher's colleges. The fourth level of the urban hierarchy includes medium-sized towns, meanwhile the fifth level, by Kövér's consideration, are the so-called small towns. On the basis of the central place theory that focuses on the administrative and cultural functions of a city, the top ten cities in Hungary in 1900 besides the capital city were: Pozsony [Bratislava], Zágráb [Zagreb],

<sup>64</sup> Gary Cohen, "Society and Culture in Prague, Vienna, and Budapest in the late Nineteenth Century," *East European Quarterly* 20 (1986): 467-468.

<sup>65</sup> Vera Bácskai, "Small towns in Eastern Central Europe" [Kisvárosok Közép-Kelet Európában], in Peter Clark, ed., *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 77.

<sup>66</sup> György Kövér, "Inactive Transformation: Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to World War I," in Gábor Gyáni, et. al. eds. *Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to the End of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 73.

Kolozsvár [Cluj], Szeged, Kassa [Košice], Debrecen, Temesvár [Timișoara], Pécs, Arad [Arad], Nagyvárad [Oradea].<sup>67</sup>

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 (German “*Ausgleich*,” Hungarian “*Kiegyezés*”) established the monarchic union of Austria-Hungary. After the Compromise, the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary were governed by separate governments. Unity was maintained through the rule of a single head of state, with the Emperor-King as commander-in-chief. Key ministries were under the direct authority of the Crown, and served the whole Empire and Kingdom.<sup>68</sup> After the Compromise of 1867, Hungary received autonomy, a status which elevated the country’s position and fostered economic and social prosperity. Broadly speaking, “the Compromise was a contract, which could not be terminated unilaterally without jeopardizing the independent existence of both halves of the Empire.”<sup>69</sup> Also the Compromise gave an unprecedented boom to urbanization in the Hungarian part.<sup>70</sup> At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Hungarian province of the Austrian Empire did not have a distinct capital city in the modern sense of the word. Pozsony [Bratislava, Pressburg], where sessions of the country’s Diet were held, had a central role, but it was a relatively small. Pest and Buda were the two main regional centers. Among provincial cities, Debrecen had the largest concentration of population east of the River Tisza.<sup>71</sup> By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the map of cities within Hungary changed considerably. Budapest became the new capital of Hungary after the Compromise of 1867, when it was formally united into one big city. Buda, Óbuda

<sup>67</sup> Kövér, “Inactive Transformation: Social History of Hungary from the Reform Era to World War I,” 73.

<sup>68</sup> Kózári Mónika, *Magyarország Története. A Dualizmus Kora 1867-1914*, [A History of Hungary. The Age of Dualism 1867-1914], (Debrecen, Kossuth Kiadó, 2009), 21-26.

<sup>69</sup> Jörg Konrad Hoensch, *A History of Modern Hungary: 1867-1986*, [Geschichte Ungarns 1867-1983]. Transl. Kim Traynor. (London: New York: Longman, 1988), 17.

<sup>70</sup> Hoensch, *A History of Modern Hungary 1867-1986*, 38.

<sup>71</sup> László Kósa, “The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture,” in László Kósa ed. *A Cultural History of Hungary. In the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Corvina, Osiris, 2000), 25-26.

[*Old Buda*] and Pest united in 1873, absorbing villages around them (that were less developed than the novel constituents of the newly minted capital).<sup>72</sup> After the Compromise, Budapest soon became a real metropolis and was ranked among the ten largest cities of Europe. In 1910 it reached 880, 371 residents. Budapest had no rival in size in the country; Szeged, which was the second-largest city, was behind with its population of 118,328 residents.<sup>73</sup>

The Hungarian countryside consisted of “dispersed settlements” such as “the scattered ‘*tanya*’ [‘*homesteads*’ or ‘*Einzelhofen*’] of the central and southern parts of the Alföld [Great Hungarian Plain] region, and the hill stations of the mountainous regions in the Carpathians.”<sup>74</sup> The family farms were economically related to their neighboring market towns and nearby villages; sometimes, they constituted an extensive field system around the adjoining village that did not belong to the common field of the manor. In this regard, 35% of Szeged’s inhabitants and 42,5 % of Debrecen’s population lived around the city in these ‘*tanya*’ [‘*homestead*’ or ‘*Einzelhofen*’].<sup>75</sup>

The regulation of county and municipal self-government was enacted in 1870 by Act XLII and in 1871 by Act XVIII. After the Compromise, “the central administrative power significantly reduced the autonomy of the local municipalities as well as the basis for their independent political role, known as the “Address to the Throne.”<sup>76</sup> This meant that, at least theoretically, the county and its municipal assemblies were entitled to address national political resolutions only at their own

<sup>72</sup> Paul Ignatus, *Hungary. Nations of the Modern World*. (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1972). 103.

<sup>73</sup> Kósa, “The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture,” 29.

<sup>74</sup> Kósa, “The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture,” 30.

<sup>75</sup> Kósa, “The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture,” 30-31.

<sup>76</sup> Gábor Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience: Fin-de-siècle Budapest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 4.

meetings, and had the right to petition the government or demonstrate against their measures. In practice, the Minister of Interior had the right to supervise and discipline municipal administration and to promote the governmental incentives through the “*főispáns*” [Latin: *supremus comes*, the county governor] of the counties whose authority was based on personal loyalties to the government. Moreover, the Hungarian franchise system was based half on the elected, municipal elder men (from which peasants, domestic servants, ethnic minorities, agrarian and industrial workers were excluded), and half on the main taxpaying citizens [*virilista*] of the community.<sup>77</sup> Age, level of education, financial position and a basic requirement of several years of city residence limited municipal suffrage. During this period only 5 percent of the population had the right to vote.<sup>78</sup>

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a dramatic increase of population took place in the Hungarian part of the Monarchy. This increase was due to the industrial revolution. Thus, the population doubled from 9,5 million at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to 18,2 million in 1910.<sup>79</sup> This population boom caused an intense migration of people, either in the form of emigration to the United States or migration to the main cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The rate of Hungarian city population increased from 12% in 1851 to 20,4 % in 1910. Meanwhile, this rate was 75% in Great Britain and 39% in France.<sup>80</sup> Thus, on the basis of statistics, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the two biggest cities of Hungary (after Budapest) were Debrecen and Szeged, accordingly.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup> László Kontler, *A History of Hungary. Millennium in Central Europe*. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 285.

<sup>78</sup> Zsuzsa L. Nagy, “Transformations in the City Politics of Budapest: 1873-1941,” in Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske, eds. *Budapest and New York. Studies in Metropolitan Transformation: 1870-1930* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1994), 41.

<sup>79</sup> Gergely András, *19. századi magyar történelem 1790-1918*, [History of Hungary in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century], (Budapest: Korona Kiadó, 1998), 405-407.

<sup>80</sup> Gergely, *19. századi magyar történelem 1790-1918*, 414.

<sup>81</sup> Initial thoughts developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city : the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2005



The evolution of the Hungarian urbanization process shows essential features that differ from that of its Western European urban counterparts. These features originate not only from the “belatedness” of Hungary, as Pál Beluszky argues, but can also be attributed to the location of Hungary.<sup>82</sup> Urban development had been interrupted by the Ottoman conquest in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, which resulted in a unique development in urbanization.<sup>83</sup> Thus, Hungary “got stuck” in the Central European version of feudalism and only had an opportunity to “catch up” with the West in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with the elimination of the feudal legal system in 1848 and the Compromise in 1867.<sup>84</sup> The events of 1848 and 1867, respectively, radically changed the social structure and the historical situation of the Monarchy and its cities. Their developments, however, coexisted with underdevelopment.<sup>85</sup>

Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hungary’s social order was similar to the social order of Poland, Jörg K. Hoensch argues. It was dominated politically, socially and economically by the nobility and the urban bourgeoisie, which was underdeveloped and relatively unimportant in terms of size and role in society.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, the dissolution of the Hungarian feudal social structure proved to be a complex and slow process. Hungary’s feudal society gave way to a more complex society that included the aristocracy, noblemen, the emerging middle-class, the working class, and the peasantry. However, the prevailing aristocracy continued to wield great influence through several conservative parties in the government, because of their massive wealth and dominant position in the upper chamber of the Diet. Unlike many Western aristocrats, they fought for modernization, sought closer ties

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<sup>82</sup> Beluszky Pál, *The Hungarian Urban Network at the End of the Second Millennium*, (Pécs: Centre for Regional Studies of Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1999), 7

<sup>83</sup> Beluszky, *The Hungarian Urban Network at the End of the Second Millennium*, 6-7

<sup>84</sup> Beluszky, *The Hungarian Urban Network at the End of the Second Millennium*, 19.

<sup>85</sup> András Gerő, Katalin Jalšovszky and Emőke Tomsics, *Once upon a Time in Hungary: the world of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century* (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1996), 122.

<sup>86</sup> Hoensch, *A History of Modern Hungary 1867-1986*, 36.

with the Sovereign in Vienna and militated for a restoration of Hungary's traditional social structure and institutions, arguing that agriculture should remain the mission of the nobility.<sup>87</sup> The social transformation, including the peasant emancipation (1848), brought also the economic decline of the former middle-ranking nobility and petty nobility [*"gentry"*], which forced many of them to earn a living in the country's expanding bureaucracy in the municipal governments.<sup>88</sup>

In Hungary, large scale urbanization began in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This process entailed a high-rate of modernization in every field of society. This modernization process coincided with the transition from the feudal to the modern society, as András Gerő argues, and it was an unfinished experience in the sense that the emerging modern society lacked a compact and homogeneous middle-class as the propagator of liberal ideas.<sup>89</sup> In the transition period, urban development took place in an essentially agricultural context. The focal point was the demand for capitalist transformation, technical modernization of agricultural production and the development of the infrastructure for trade and transportation. Another important issue of urbanization in the Dualist era (1867-1918), as Beluszky argues, was the "demand for center," with the creation of an institutional network in civil public administration.<sup>90</sup> This demand for centralization manifested in the concentric structure of the national railway system, with the core in Budapest, and in the similar development of regional centers. Despite its advantages, this process caused a significant abyss between the capital and the countryside, that pushed the difference between the Western and Eastern parts of the country to the breaking point.

<sup>87</sup> Stephen R. Burant, ed. *Hungary: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1989), *U.S. Library of Congress*, Accessed: June 11, 2012. <http://countrystudies.us/hungary/>

<sup>88</sup> Hoensch, *A History of Modern Hungary 1867-1986*, 37.

<sup>89</sup> Gerő András, *Modern Hungarian Society in the Making. The Unfinished Experience* (Budapest: Central European University, 1995), 4.

<sup>90</sup> Beluszky, *The Hungarian Urban Network at the End of the Second Millennium*, 19.

## 1. 2. *Debrecen and Szeged in the Context of European Urbanization in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*

The process of European urbanization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century coincided with the industrial revolution, mass migrations to the urban centers, and the development of an intricate railroad network. Eric E. Lampard and many others observed that the modern urban transformation started from Victorian Britain, which became the world's first urbanized society during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The word 'urbanization' – now a frequently used jargon in the urban studies – was scarcely applied in the English language before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. People used to speak of the 'growth of towns,' and the life of its inhabitants was simply called the 'urban life.' However, when finally the verb 'to urbanize' was used, it had the connotation of something 'rendered urbane,' meaning 'courteous' and refined in manner, almost synonymous with 'civilized' or 'enlightened.'<sup>91</sup>

Besides modern urbanization, another crucial achievement of Great Britain during that era was the urban demographic transition involving better hygiene that lead to lower death rates.<sup>92</sup> Up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mortality in cities was higher than in the countryside because of the different physical and environmental conditions. At the turn of the century, mortality rates were the lowest in British country districts and proportionally increased with the size and density of the agglomerations, and therefore death rates were the highest in bigger cities compared to smaller settlements. This reflects the interdependence of mortality and the socio-physical environment: poor housing, impure water, lack of fresh air and sunlight, as well as the prevalence of dirt and diseases were common characteristics of working class districts in big cities, whereas people in villages had better health conditions despite their poverty and lack

<sup>91</sup> Eric E. Lampard, "The Urbanizing World," in H.J. Dyos and Michael Wolff, eds, *The Victorian City: Images and Realities* Vol. I, (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973) 4-5.

<sup>92</sup> Lampard, "The Urbanizing World," 10.

of new urban commodities. Migration was also a major component of urban development in Victorian Britain; it grew continually and, according to Lampard's study, reached its highest point between 1841 and 1851. The socio-economic environment – involving the growth of economic opportunities – had a strong impact on the natural increase of virtually every sector of city growth. Among the most important changes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were the burst of urban growth, and the increase of population density, all conditions and side-effects of industrial urbanization.<sup>93</sup> As Paul M. Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees see it, “the industrial revolution restructured social relationships, generally by eroding older, multiple social roles and systems of authority and by creating large, relatively autonomous subcultures.”<sup>94</sup> Among the indirect consequences of industrial urbanization were the increasing crime rates, poverty conditions, the development of suburbs and detached factory districts that started as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century in England.

The industrial revolution transformed previous urban patterns and infrastructures in France, as well. The distances between European cities were already covered by railway lines that fostered their prosperity. The development of a complex railroad network and expanding industrial centers, together with migration into cities, forced state authorities to issue laws on health programs and sanitary regulations, and to focus on a more elaborated urban planning. The emergence of modern public transportation gave extra impulse to spatial segregation of several distinct urban social groups, leading to the development of downtowns, the suburban ring, and factory districts. Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the prefect of Paris during the reign of Emperor Napoleon III, planned the grandiose system of boulevards and squares and, consequently issued the usage of horse omnibuses for the public transportation.

<sup>93</sup> Paul M. Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000–1950* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985). 249.

<sup>94</sup> Hohenberg and Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000–1950*, 250.

Hausmann transformed Paris in many regards and his work is one of the manifestations of the control over urban space. His projects reflected the ruler's military objectives, by providing wide avenues along which troops could maneuver freely, thus decongesting the city center. His plans linked the center to the inner ring of boulevards, to the nearby rail terminals and other intersections with the outer districts, all within the 1840s ring of city fortifications.<sup>95</sup> The improvement of Paris public transportation reflects the degree of the city's urbanization. For example, the idea of a *Compagnie Générale des Omnibus* (CGO), which was founded in 1855, spread quickly throughout Europe and North American cities in the 1860s. Later, in the 1880s, horse omnibuses were replaced by more efficient horse-trains, then by electric trams and, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by motor-cars and modern high-speed trains, constructed as elevated trains or undergrounds, so that the trains virtually disappeared from the streets, leaving more place for other public usage.<sup>96</sup>

In Hungary, the first horse-drawn omnibus route in Pest began in 1832, between what is today *Vörösmarthy tér* and *Városliget*. The horse-drawn tram was built in 1866, long after a similar line in New York. The very first electric tram was introduced in Berlin, and nine years later, in 1887, it started to operate on the *Nagykörút*, Budapest, too. Interestingly, the '*kisföldalatti*' [*'the underground electric tram line'*] in Budapest, which started to operate for the 1896 Millennial World Exhibition, was the first engine of this kind in continental Europe, after London's steam-driven underground system that began to transport passengers in 1863.<sup>97</sup>

It is important to note here that in 1828-1856, Ányos Jedlik, a Hungarian scientist, conceived the first electric engine working on the basis of electromagnetic

<sup>95</sup> Girouard, *Cities & People. A Social and Architectural History*, 285.

<sup>96</sup> Ralf Roth and Marie-Noëlle Polino, *The City and the Railway in Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).  
ixx-xx.

<sup>97</sup> Kósa, "The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture," 78-79.

fields as the principle of the dynamo. This discovery remained experimental in Hungarian circumstances.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, in 1867 William Siemens and Charles Wheatstone eventually put this important discovery into practice under the name of their factory. In 1885, as László Kósa remarks, a talented team of young engineers, working at the Ganz Works in Budapest, Ottó Titusz Bláthy, Miksa Déry and Károly Zipernowsky, solved the transfer of energy by inventing the transformer, which improved the traction of main-line trains.<sup>99</sup>

Together with other fast developing cities of the period, Debrecen and Szeged lined up behind the European cities with regard to the technological advancement of public transportation. Debrecen's first horse-train appeared in 1880 (relatively late compared to other European cities). In 1888, another horse-train line was added. This went from the Little Station to the *Baromfivásár Tér* [*Poultry Fair Square*]. Public transportation working with steam engines was available for public use in 1884, with the train lines ranging from Debrecen's Railway Station to the *Nagyerdő* [Great Forest], a line that quickly expanded all around the city by 1900.<sup>100</sup> The first tram line started in 1911 in Csapó Street.<sup>101</sup> In Szeged, horse-omnibuses started in 1857, followed by horse-trains in 1884.<sup>102</sup> The first electric tram line here started to work in 1908. György Lázár, then the mayor of Szeged, made a contract with a Belgian company to build an electric tram with six lines, with the main line connecting the two railways stations of Szeged: *Nagyállomás* [Grand Railroad Station] and Rókus Station [*Rókus Pályaudvar*].<sup>103</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Kósa, "The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture," 79.

<sup>99</sup> Kósa, "The Age of Emergent Bourgeois Society, from the Late 18th Century to 1920. I. Everyday Culture," 79.

<sup>100</sup> Siró Béla, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai. Természeti csapások, járványok, háborúk* [Debrecen's Afflictions. Natural Disasters, Epidemics and Wars] (Debrecen: Tóth Könyvkereskedés, 2007), 14.

<sup>101</sup> Frisnyák Zsuzsa, "A villamos," [The Tram], *Historia* 2001/05-06.

<sup>102</sup> Tóth Ferenc, ed. *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei* [Csongrád County's Architectural Memories] (Szeged, 2000), 343.

<sup>103</sup> Szeged Szabad Királyi Város Közönsége és a Szegedi Közúti Vaspálya Részvénytársaság között megkötött villamos vasút építésére vonatkozó szerződés (Szeged: Bartos Lipót Könyvnyomdája, 1908).

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, European norms of conduct in public life came to be strictly separated from conduct in the private domain by keeping “the rules of passive emotion which people used in *theatre*.”<sup>104</sup> This metaphorization of urban experience coincides with Lewis Mumford’s definition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century modern city. Its plan was not restricted to housing, work, recreation and circulation; it was rather a “*theatre* for active citizenship, for education and autonomous personal life.”<sup>105</sup> The separation of the public and private sphere in urban environment was, in close relation with the gender differences, influential in “the creation of a specifically middle-class way of life and self-identity in this period.”<sup>106</sup> According to Gábor Gyáni, the distinction between the private and public domain brought significant changes in the ecological structure and the visual layout of modern European cities, reflecting a kind of spatial fragmentation.<sup>107</sup> Thus, the modern European city became the venue of social differentiation and complex social networks; it was the location of various civic associations and clubs. The communal realms of the ‘public houses,’ the cafés or the beer halls, came to be the most characteristic, widespread and lavish adornment of every European city by the turn of the century. The “privatization of the urban space” resulted in the separation of the public and private places ever more clearly: every activity was connected to a specific venue (clubs, cafés, associations, etc.); factories centralized work and workers, while traffic pushed aside the previous role of the street as a meeting place or agora.<sup>108</sup>

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[Contract between the Szeged Free Royal City and the Szeged Vehicular Railway Ltd. for Constructing Tram Lines, 1908]

<sup>104</sup> Richard Sennett in Gábor Gyáni, “Uses and Misuses of Public Space in Budapest: 1873-1914,” in Thomas Bender and Carl E. Schorske, eds. *Budapest and New York: Studies in Metropolitan Transformation, 1870-1930* (New York: Russell Sage, 1994), 85.

<sup>105</sup> Lewis Mumford, *The City in History. Its Origins, Its Transformations, and its Prospects*, (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1961), 426.

<sup>106</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Cathrine Hall in Gábor Gyáni, “Uses and Misuses of Public Space in Budapest: 1873-1914,” 86.

<sup>107</sup> Gyáni, “Uses and Misuses of Public Space in Budapest: 1873-1914,” 86-87.

<sup>108</sup> Hohenberg and Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000–1950*, 300.

### 1.3. Debrecen, the “Calvinist Rome”

In this section, I will outline the most important events that contributed to the representation of Debrecen’s urban identity throughout its history. Debrecen grew out of the unification of several surrounding villages near the valley of Tóció and the Brook of Tóció, and was founded at the meeting point of several important trade routes.<sup>109</sup> The name of the town first appeared in 1235, in an ecclesiastic document. In 1271 it was called Dubrychyn, while in the last years of the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was named Debruchun and it was formed from the cohesion of adjacent villages.<sup>110</sup> One document argues in favor of the town having a Bulgarian-Turkish origin that was named after its first lord, Debrezun, but other documents argue that it has a Slavic origin emerging from the combination of two words ‘dobre’ [good] and ‘zem’ [soil] meaning Dobrezen, ‘fertile soil.’<sup>111</sup>

Since 1361, Debrecen received the privileges of agricultural market town and had important trade connections with Vienna and Poland. In 1693, Debrecen was granted the right of the free-royal town on condition that the Catholic Church could return to the town with the Franciscans. The intension behind this act was to break the hegemony of Protestantism that had been the city's major religion since 1567, when the Calvinist Church established its supremacy with the Reformation Movement.<sup>112</sup> The autonomy of Debrecen established a peculiar self-identity of its citizens as the

<sup>109</sup> Dr. Takács Sarolta, *Városépítés Magyarországon* [Urban Planning in Hungary], (Budapest: Officina ’96 Kiadó, 2004), 141.

<sup>110</sup> Papp Antal, *Debrecen* (Budapest: Panorama, 1975), 17. The origin of the settlement’s name is problematic, and there are several versions in medieval documents, such as: Deöbröczön, Döbröcön, Döbreöczön, Debreöczön, Döbröczön, Debrechen, Debreczhum, Debretzin as so on.

<sup>111</sup> Papp, *Debrecen*, 17.

<sup>112</sup> Debrecen joined to the Lutheran branch of reformation due to the achievements of Mátyás Dévai Bíró from 1530 but the religion of the city started to prefer the Calvinist branch due to the preaching activity of Márton Kálmáncsehi.



agents of the natio called Respublica Debrecen.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, Debrecen became the regional center of the hajduk (hajdú).<sup>114</sup>

The Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849 transformed Debrecen's position in the urban hierarchy. During the first half of the year 1849, the government of Hungary moved to Debrecen; thus Debrecen became the temporary capital. The provisional Parliament held its sessions in the Oratory of the Reformed College, where Lajos Kossuth, one of the leaders of the Revolution, declared the dethronement of the Habsburg rule and the independence of Hungary.<sup>115</sup> During the second half of the 19th century, Debrecen followed the path of urban development and modernization. In 1857, the railway reached the city, which became an important railway junction. The city became the county seat of the newly formed Hajdú County in 1876. In 1869, the population of the town was 46,000 (with only 13% Roman Catholics); the number of inhabitants increased to 70,000 by 1900 (with approximately 25% Roman Catholics). Debrecen – like Szeged – perpetuated a self-created myth about the city as the defender of the Hungarian nation, especially in the age of capitalist transition.<sup>116</sup>

The post-Compromise Hungarian government lead by Kálmán Tisza (the country's Prime Minister, 1875-1890) realized that the formation of public and political opinion was strongly influenced by the Calvinist Church in Debrecen, which

<sup>113</sup> Balogh István, *A civisek világa. Debrecen néprajza* [The World of the Civis. An Ethnography of Debrecen] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1973), 68.

<sup>114</sup> Steven Béla Várdy, *Historical Dictionary of Hungary*, (Lanham, Md., and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 1997), 329. The Hungarian concept 'Hajdú' comes from *hajtó* 'drover'. Drovers traveled armed, and sometimes ended up as highwaymen, mercenaries, or retainers in the service of local landowners. *Hajdú* acquired all these meanings, and is chiefly associated with the settlement of some 10,000 mercenaries in eastern Hungary by Prince István Bocskay as a reward for their support. Their towns, dating from 1605, still retain *Hajdú*- as a first element. Cf. Balogh István, *Hajdúság* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969).

<sup>115</sup> Papp, *Debrecen*, 39-40.

<sup>116</sup> Irinyi Károly, "A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás Debrecenben (1867-1918)," [The Political Thinking and Mentality in Debrecen, 1867-1918] in Orosz István, ed. *Debrecen története*, 5/3 [A History of Debrecen, Vol. 3.](Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), 267.

received significant support both financially and morally from the state.<sup>117</sup> This substantial assistance on the part of the state resulted in the cult of the Prime Minister, which also corresponded to the *cívis* interest of the town. The origin of this dedication towards the Tisza government originates from the fact that Kálmán Tisza studied and served as a soldier in Debrecen, and started his political career as the MP representing Debrecen. The Calvinist Church strongly supported Tisza's government; that, in turn, strengthened the economic position of the city after the Economic Compromise of 1878, with the advantageous opportunities arising from the Austrian market.<sup>118</sup> The city was empowered, but this also resulted in a stereotypical description of Debrecen as the orthodox fortress of Calvinism and conservative ideas, while the other emerging town, Szeged began to build its image as a modern and dynamic city.

In 1875, Tisza's Liberal Party [*Szabadelvű Párt*], which transformed Hungarian public life immensely, and was a turning point in the histories of Debrecen and Szeged, replaced Ferenc Deák's Party in the government. The first representative of Debrecen was Kálmán Tisza, who became the Prime Minister, and changed the municipal government of his own people, ironically named *mameluks*.<sup>119</sup> With the governmental change, Debrecen received a new mayor, Imre Simonffy, who belonged to Tisza's party. He was the one who changed completely the municipal administration of Debrecen. The town's development in this period stagnated and this rather slow rate of advancement had a crucial impact on the city's further urbanization. Meanwhile, the regulation of the Tisza River and the dike system around Szeged was neglected by the Tisza (sic!) government since it was considered to be a

<sup>117</sup> Irinyi, "A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás Debrecenben (1867-1918)," 268.

<sup>118</sup> Irinyi, "A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás Debrecenben (1867-1918)," 309.

<sup>119</sup> By describing the party members of Tisza's circle, as *mameluks* is an ironic reference to the powerful military caste in Egypt which seized power for themselves. Gyula Kiszely, ed. *Magyar városok fejlődése: Magyarország városai és vármegyéi. Debrecen sz. kir. város múltja, jelene és jövője rövid áttekintésben* [The Development of the Hungarian Cities: Hungary's Cities and Counties], (Budapest: Vármegyei Könyvkiadó, 1931), 159.

local, municipal issue. This proved to be a tragic decision failure, in the light of the disastrous Great Flood of 1879. The anniversary memorial book of a local newspaper, *Szegedi Napló* (hence abbreviated as *SZN*), defines Szeged *vis-à-vis* Debrecen.<sup>120</sup> According to the *Szegedi Napló*, the Tisza government (1875-1890) oppressed all towns in the countryside except Debrecen.<sup>121</sup> The synthesis of the program of the *SZN* is an allegorical word play with the Hungarian language, that Debrecen belongs to the party of Kálmán Tisza, the Prime Minister, while Szeged is at the bank of the river Tisza; in other words, Debrecen was the supporter of the government, while Szeged became the symbol of resistance.

The following chart summarizes the factors that provided grounds for comparison of Debrecen and Szeged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

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<sup>120</sup> “Szegednek jó lesz őrizkednie Tiszától, akit Debrecen már a nyakára hagyott nőni [...] ne irigyelje a Tisza parti Szeged a Tisza-párti Debrecent.” [Szeged should keep distance from Kálmán Tisza, since he already rules Debrecen (...) Szeged’s bank of River Tisza should not envy Debrecen, which belongs to Tisza’s party]. In Móra Ferenc, ed. *A Szegedi Napló 25 éve, 1878-1903. Jubiláris emlékmű. A munkatársak írásiával és arcképével* (Szeged: Engel, 1904), 9.

<sup>121</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, July 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 1878. “Debrecen Tisza-párti, Szeged pedig Tisza-parti. Debrecen diadalkaput emel Tiszának, Szeged pedig védgátakat emel ellene.” [Debrecen belongs to Tisza’s party, while Szeged is at the River Tisza. Debrecen erects triumphal arch for Kálmán Tisza, while Szeged constructs dikes against Tisza.]

	<b>SZEGED</b>	<b>DEBRECEN</b>
<b>Geography</b>	Favorable geographic position, riverside transportation, Great Hungarian Plain	Transportation center Great Hungarian Plain
<b>Economy</b>	Salt trade center, agriculture, fishing, transit trade, agricultural trade center, food processing, slaughterhouses	market town, cattle export, good connections with Austria and Poland, food processing
<b>Social Position</b>	No nobility, richest merchants in the Palánk district, mostly peasant citizens, among virilists Jews in significant number	Cívis tradition, Calvinism, mostly peasant citizens, land property, civic rights
<b>Religion</b>	Roman Catholic, 2nd largest community is the Jewish one	Calvinist, 2nd largest community is the Roman Catholic
<b>Place in the Urban Hierarchy</b>	1246 free royal town (strengthened in 1498) Incomplete regional center 2nd largest town by 1900	1361 agricultural market town 1693 free royal town (on condition that the Catholic Church could return to Debrecen with the Franciscan order) 1876: county town regional center till the mid 19th century the 2nd largest city then after the Compromise its urbanization became slower than that of Szeged, 4rd largest town after Budapest, Szeged and Szabadka
<b>Rhetorical Tropes Describing Szeged and Debrecen in the Local Newspapers</b>	Religious openness, cultural dynamism, multi-ethnic character and melting pot	Cívis town (cívis város), Respublica Debrecen

Table 1. Szeged and Debrecen Compared

The development of Debrecen and Szeged in terms of population growth is shown in the charts below, which present the numbers of their inhabitants in comparison to Budapest, and to two other major European cities, Vienna and London.

	<b>1787</b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>1857</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>1900</b>
<b>Szeged</b>	21,519	32,725	62,700	71,022	73,675	85,569	100,270
<b>Budapest</b>	52,944	101,127	186,945	270,065	360,551	491,938	716,476
<b>Debrecen</b>	29,153	48,840	36,283	46,111	51,122	56,940	72,351

Table 2.<sup>122</sup>

	<b>1801</b>	<b>1811</b>	<b>1821</b>	<b>1841</b>	<b>1851</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>1881</b>	<b>1891</b>
<b>London</b>	864,845	1,009,546	1,225,694	1,873,676	2,362,236	2,803,989	3,254,260	3,834,354	4,232,118

Table 3.<sup>123</sup>

	<b>1800</b>	<b>1821</b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>1850</b>	<b>1857</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>1890</b>
<b>Vienna</b>	232,000	260,224	317,768	431,147	476,222	607,514	705,402	1,341,897

Table 4.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Thirring, "Népesség," [Population], *A magyar városok statisztikai évkönyve*, 52.

<sup>123</sup> Adna Ferrin Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century. A Study in Statistics*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1962. Table XVIII: 46.

<sup>124</sup> Ferrin Weber, *The Growth of Cities in the Nineteenth Century. A Study in Statistics.*, 95.

As the figures above show, Szeged was the second largest city after the young capital of Budapest. The size of Debrecen and Szeged, as provincial cities, showed a striking contrast between the Hungarian capital and Hungarian provincial towns. Budapest also had fewer inhabitants than the other capitals of Europe.

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen was strong in economic terms but socially and intellectually became a self-enclosed town, partly due to its Calvinist Protestant tradition (the population of Debrecen was mostly Calvinist), and partly because it was depicted as the *civis* city. The word *civis* in its original reading meant burgher. It is a Latin name for citizens of the Roman Empire and also of the Western European cities during the Middle Ages. In Hungary this term was first used to refer to the inhabitants of Episcopal fortresses during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the period since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the notion *civis* was used as a label for wealthy burghers of the larger ‘*mezőváros*’ [‘*agricultural towns*,’ ‘*oppidum*’] of the Alföld [Great Hungarian Plain]. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century the citizens of the cities were united in *civilitas*, *ius civitatis*, *ius civile* or *Bürgerrecht*.<sup>125</sup> This was also valid for citizens of the *Duna-Tisza köze* [Region between the Danube and the river Tisza] in Nagykörös, Cegléd, Kecskemét, Szeged; in several cities of the *Dunántúl* [Transdanubia] in Pápa, Veszprém; in the Felvidék’s [Highlands] towns of Rimaszombat [Rimavská Sobota], Léva [Levice], and towns in the Alföld [Great Hungarian Plain] Miskolc, Szatmárnémeti [Satu Mare], Nagyvárad [Oradea] and Arad [Arad] also belonged to this category.<sup>126</sup> The expression *civis* became commonly used in this sense for the citizens of Debrecen. The inhabitants of Debrecen consisted of the ‘*members of the city*’ [‘*membrum oppidi*’], the ‘*bondsman of the city*’ [‘*iobagio*’], ‘*new foreigners*’

<sup>125</sup> Rácz István, “A *civis* fogalma,” [The Notion of the *Civis*], (Debrecen: Különlenyomat a Debreceni Déri Múzeum 1985. évi Évkönyvéből, 1987), 77-80.

<sup>126</sup> Balogh István, “Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere),” [Debreceniség (authentically from Debrecen). A History of a Literary Notion and its Social Background], (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem, 1969), 37.

['*novus adena*'], 'new inhabitant' ['*novus incola*'], 'new visitor' ['*novus hospes*'], 'member of the city association' ['*societatem incolarum Civitatis*'].<sup>127</sup>

Balogh István refers to Bartha Boldizsár's (1623?-1690?) 17<sup>th</sup> century historical chronicle,<sup>128</sup> which emphasizes that in spite of the subsequent fires, natural disasters and Ottoman occupation, Debrecen remained a pillar of Christianity. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after the occupation of Szeged by the Ottomans in 1543, Debrecen gave home to many refugees from Szeged, and those families from Szeged established a distinct, mostly merchant, enclave within Debrecen's society.<sup>129</sup> From the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen balanced among three powers, the Ottoman Empire, the Habsburgs and Transylvania, and was able to preserve its autonomy on the basis of its economic position. However, this also entailed an isolated position in the urban hierarchy.<sup>130</sup> Debrecen could maintain and compensate for the outer pressure by strengthening and concentrating inwardly on its traditions and defending itself outwardly on the basis of these relations. This attitude manifested in a rejection of foreign elements and ideas as a reflection of Debrecen's intellectual autarchy.<sup>131</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in Debrecen's society, a large scale of social and economic differentiation took place, which preserved the long-standing condition rather than altered it. The measures and distance coverage of commerce in Debrecen was also narrowing. This coincided with the tapering of the intellectual horizons. The facilitator and bearer of literacy were the Reformed Church and *Református kollégium* ['*Reformed College*'], which were closer to orthodox Calvinism. The *kultúrtáj* [culture region] of Debrecen was based on the

<sup>127</sup> Rácz, "A civis fogalma," 80.

<sup>128</sup> Bartha Boldizsár, *Rövid chronica avagy Oly beszélgetés, mely...Debreczenben esett...dolgokról...íratott, és szedegettetett össze Barta Boldi'sár által 1664-dik esztendőben* [Short Chronicle or a Kind of Conversation which Speaks about Things that Happened, were Written and Collected in Debrecen], (Reprint kiadás, Budapest: Barnaföldi Gábor, 1994 [1666])

<sup>129</sup> Bálint Sándor, "Szegedi világ Debreczenben," [Szeged's World in Debrecen], A Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve 1967. évi kötet [The Year-Book of the Debrecen Déri Museum, Vol. 1967], (Debrecen: Déri Múzeum, 1968), 215.

<sup>130</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 11-12.

<sup>131</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 19.

cultural community interests of the *Református kollégium* [Reformed College] strongly interwoven with Calvinism and local patriotism.<sup>132</sup>

Ferenc Kazinczy (1759-1831) the prominent literary figure of the era, even labeled Debrecen as *par excellence* provincial, by emphasizing its strong conservatism. Kazinczy wrote an epitaph for the tombstone of a Hungarian poet, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz's (1773-1805), who was born and died in Debrecen. This epitaph says: "Árkádiában éltem én is!" ["I, too, have been in Arcadia"]. This quotation was misinterpreted by the Burgess of Debrecen and resulted in the *Árkádia-pör* [Arcadia Debate] which was a famous Hungarian literary debate between Ferenc Kazinczy and Imre Kis from 1806 to 1807. After the death of Csokonai, Kazinczy published an article in the journal *Hazai Tudósítások* [Domestic Reports], in which he interpreted the underlying meaning of the quotation on Csokonai's epitaph. This quotation had a twofold meaning: one conveys an idyllic, pastoral image, while the other signifies an ironic labeling of remote provincialism. The citizens of Debrecen considered the second reading of this epitaph and believed that Kazinczy was indirectly mocking their city. Árkádia was a Greek region, enclosed by mountains; its people were shepherds. They were good musicians who treasured their unsophisticated life and rigid morals. Nevertheless, they were considered to be simple people (cf. Ovid's *Fasti* and Vergil's *Eclogues*).<sup>133</sup>

An unsigned author used the adjective *cívís* for the first time in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a pejorative term pertaining to Debrecen. This person could have been Adolf

<sup>132</sup> Dr. Molnár Pál, *Debrecen a magyar irodalom történetében* [Debrecen in the History of Hungarian Literature], (Debrecen: Dr. Bertók Lajos, 1941), 5-6.

<sup>133</sup> See more about the topic in Lakner Lajos, *Az Árkádia-Pör Fogságában. A Debreceni Csokonai Kultusz*, [In Captivity of the Arkadia Case. Csokonai's Cult in Debrecen.] Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Accessed April, 17, 2012; [http://ganymedes.lib.unideb.hu:8080/dea/bitstream/2437/108604/5/Lakner\\_Lajos\\_disszertacio-t.pdf](http://ganymedes.lib.unideb.hu:8080/dea/bitstream/2437/108604/5/Lakner_Lajos_disszertacio-t.pdf), Pál József, "Az Árkádia-pör ikonológiai vonatkozásairól," [The Iconological Connections of the Árkádia-Suit], in *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, [Literary Historical Bulletins] LXXXIX. évf. 1989. 4-5. sz.; Pecz Vilmos, ed, *Ókori lexikon I-VI*. [Lexicon of Antiquity], (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1904); Sőtér István, ed. *A magyar irodalom története*. [History of Hungarian Literature], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1964-1966).

Gyurmány, the editor of the newspaper *Közlöny*, issued during the revolutionary government of 1849. The word *cívís* referred here to a comparison between the modern Pest and the provincial Debrecen (going back also to Kazinczy's statement).<sup>134</sup> The etymology of the word *cívís* comes from the Latin word '*civitas*,' meaning '*city*' and '*citizenry*.' *Cívís*, in the Debrecen context, signifies the bourgeois privileges of the citizens, and was used with a pejorative overtone referring back to the stubborn adherence to the civic rights. *Cívís* was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century generally to describe the richest citizens of Debrecen. They were of peasant origins, with peculiar pride that created a self-enclosed society with endogenous intermarriages to keep the land property together. For instance, Antal Rickl (1857-1924) Debrecen merchant married the daughter of the famous Debrecen merchant family, Piroska Sesztina. Jenő Sesztina's wife was the daughter of another merchant family in Debrecen, Margit Csanak. József Csanak's (1820-1900) wife was Eszter Váradi Szabó, a descendant of an old Debrecen family.<sup>135</sup> This was a cohesive force in the community but also an unfortunate drawback later on. Emeric Szabad, the secretary of the Hungarian national government of 1849 described the *cívís* Debrecen people as rather "cold" among the Magyars:

Debreczin, where the government took up its seat, is situated in the midst of a vast sandy plain extending along the bank of Theiss, a river, next to the Danube, the largest in Hungary, and which taking its rise in the mountainous county of Marmoros, a district rich in salt mines, continues its course of five hundred miles down to the Theiss, where it vanishes in the waters of the Danube. This town numbering 50,000 inhabitants almost entirely Protestants, presents with its long and spacious streets a uniformity of lines of low houses, thatched and white-washed, which is relieved only by a few buildings of an imposing aspect, such as the large Protestant college, a few of the churches, and the town-house. Debreczin are mostly small landed proprietors [...]. Inaccessible to the demands of as advancing time, the

<sup>134</sup> Balogh, *A civisek világa. Debrecen néprajza* [The World of the Cívís. An Ethnography of Debrecen], 111.

<sup>135</sup> Miklóssy Ferenc and Gulyás Judit, eds. *Cívís kalmárok és iparosok* [Cívís Merchants and Craftsman], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, 2010), 29-30.



Debrecziners with very few exceptions, continue their lives as in the days of old, the burghers prudent enough to pride themselves on their ignorance, being so much engrossed with feeding of pigs, which forms the chief article of their industry, as to think such enterprises of life as the making of roads and street-paving a matters of idle luxury. Nor is the passage from one street into another, in rainy weather, a matter of slight considerations in Debreczin. From reasons hitherto unexplained, the people of Debreczin are rather of a cold temperament; neither present that easy manner of sociability of disposition which characterize so much the Magyar people.<sup>136</sup>

#### 1. 4. An Outline of Szeged's History

In this section I will highlight the most important events that contributed to the representation of Szeged's urban identity throughout its history. In 1906, a deputation of the British Eighty Club [a political London gentlemen's club aligned with the English Liberal Party] to Hungary wrote a report about the city of Szeged in which they emphasized "the splendid prosperity they had made since the disastrous flood in 1879."<sup>137</sup> This report stated that

Szeged is the second largest town in Hungary, with over one hundred thousand inhabitants. It lies on the River Tisza [*Theiss*], and in 1879 was partly destroyed by a flood, and is rebuilt in modern style with fine streets and public buildings.<sup>138</sup>

Szeged's history<sup>139</sup> can be traced back to the time of antiquity, when the settlement was a strategically important guarding post [*Partiscum*], serving as a port for the gold and salt shipments coming from Dacia. The first mention of Szeged in historical documents was in 1133. There are several alternative explanations of the

<sup>136</sup> Emeric Szabad, *Hungary. Past and Present Embracing its History from the Magyar Conquest to the Present Time with a Sketch of Hungarian Literature* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1854.) 336-337.

<sup>137</sup> *Hungary. Its People, Places and Politics. The Visit of the Eighty Club in 1906 with Sixty Illustrations*, 377.

<sup>138</sup> Author not mentioned. *Hungary. Its People, Places and Politics. The Visit of the Eighty Club in 1906 with Sixty Illustrations*. London: T. Fischer Unwin Adelphi Terrace, 1907, 377.

<sup>139</sup> Initial thoughts developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city : the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest : CEU, Budapest College, 2005.

origin of its name; the most widely accepted version is that the name of the city originates from the Hungarian word *szeg*, meaning ‘corner’, and refers to the geographic position of the city and the angle of the Tisza River. According to another theory, the name ‘Szeged’ comes from the word ‘*sziget*,’ meaning ‘*island*.’<sup>140</sup>

Due to its fortunate geographic location, the city became a commercially significant place. Transportation (mostly of salt shipped from Transylvania), raising livestock, agricultural production and fishing were the essential sources of income. In 1222, the place was appointed as an important salt-trade center. Later, with the construction of the Burg,<sup>141</sup> Szeged achieved the rank of free royal town (in 1246) and became the cultural and economic center of the region.<sup>142</sup> In 1498, Szeged’s free royal town status was strengthened since the city paid the second largest tax after Buda, which paid 2000 forints.<sup>143</sup> The emerging town played a crucial role during the 15<sup>th</sup> century in several campaigns against the advancing Turkish armies. In the Middle-Ages, the importance of Szeged as a defense center of Christianity increased and the city was seen as an important frontier place crucial in defending Western civilization against the threat of foreign elements.<sup>144</sup>

By 1522, Szeged became one of the biggest settlements in Hungary, with a population of 7500 people, almost the same as Buda’s population.<sup>145</sup> Later, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, this town became a major center of transit-trade and a regional center for its agricultural hinterland.<sup>146</sup> Meanwhile, the cultural life of the town started to prosper

<sup>140</sup> Horváth A. János and Dr. Thirring Gusztáv, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza* [The Detailed Guidebook of Szeged and its Surroundings] (Budapest: Turistaság és Alpinizmus, 1925, 7.

<sup>141</sup> The Burg was in the *Palánk*. In the Middle Ages, the Lower City (Alsóváros), the Upper City (Felsőváros) and the Palánk (Inner city) were separate autonomous entities with market functions, and they were united in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Rókus district and Új-Szeged (New Szeged).

<sup>142</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei* [Csongrád County’s Architectural Memories], 338.

<sup>143</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 338.

<sup>144</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 338.

<sup>145</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 339.

<sup>146</sup> Gergely András, “Egy frontier-telep várossá alakul,” [A Frontier Settlement Becoming a City] in *Szeged története 2, 1686-1849*, [A History of Szeged, Vol. 2.] edited by Kristó Gyula and Farkas József, (Szeged: Somogyi-Könyvtár, 1985), 486.

and the social and cultural civic position of Szeged was due to the early literary activity and public administration of Piarist fathers.<sup>147</sup> Szeged's position within the ranks of the Hungarian towns was a peculiar one and this ranking stimulated its urban development.<sup>148</sup> When the army of Ibrahim captured and plundered the Castle (*Burg*) of Szeged in 1526, Szeged and the surrounding area became part of the Ottoman Empire,<sup>149</sup> and turned into a *khász* (fiscal) town as a direct property of the Ottoman treasury.<sup>150</sup> Despite the Turkish occupation, the urban development of the town was not hindered; Szeged maintained its position as the center for trade in the Southern part of the conquered country. During the Ottoman occupation, most Hungarians left the city, but they were replaced by merchants of Turkish and Serbian origins, who settled mainly in the *Palánk* [the district around the *Burg*] district.<sup>151</sup>

Turkish occupation had its impact upon Szeged's urban development. In 1686, Austrian forces liberated the city from the Turkish occupation. Afterwards, Szeged became once again an important strategic center and military outpost.<sup>152</sup> The establishment of the Piarist Gymnasium (1721) had a determining cultural impact on the cultural life of the town<sup>153</sup> and brought further prospective inhabitants into the town. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the town was the venue of Witch litigations (1728-1729). In an atmosphere of religious paranoia, thirteen people were proclaimed witches and were sentenced to death by burning in a place called *Boszorkánysziget* [*The Island of Witches*].<sup>154</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Szörényi László, "A közerkölcsök és a társasélet," [Moral and Social Life] in *Szeged története 2, 1686-1849*, [A History of Szeged, Vol. 2.] , 486.

<sup>148</sup> Marjanucz László, "Szeged polgári csoportjai a XIX.században," [Szeged's Bourges in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century] in *Tanulmányok Csongrád megye történetéből XXVI*, (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 1998), 215.

<sup>149</sup> Dr. Borovszky Samu, ed. *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai: Torontál vármegye* [Hungary's Counties and Cities] (Budapest: Országos Monográfiai Társaság, 1896-1910), 404.

<sup>150</sup> Tóth Ferenc, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, op.cit., 340.

<sup>151</sup> Horváth and Thirring, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza* , 7.

<sup>152</sup> István Németh, ed. *Szeged. The City of Sunshine* (Szeged: Szeged City Council, 1960], 22-23.

<sup>153</sup> Tóth Ferenc, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 341.

<sup>154</sup> The witch hunt in Szeged was called by the authorities in 1728 after public complaints about issues of bad drought, the devastating famine and epidemics. The witch hunt arose with the intention of laying

Szeged played a crucial role during the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence between 1848 and 1849 as Debrecen did. Hungarian revolutionary troops were stationed close to Szeged, in Szőreg (a nearby settlement that was annexed to Szeged in 1973).<sup>155</sup> Even Lajos Kossuth visited the town to deliver his famous recruiting speech (“*Kossuth Lajos beszéde Szeged népéhez*”), uttered from a balcony on the Klauzál Square in the fall of 1848. His speech emphasized the continuation of revolution and extolled its spirit, since the revolutionary government left Debrecen for Szeged.<sup>156</sup> The town became the home of the revolutionary authorities in July 1849; this Szeged cabinet issued two crucial edicts; one dealt with the rights of the nationalities and the other proclaimed the emancipation of the Jews.<sup>157</sup>

Later on, railway construction brought an unprecedented development boom to Szeged’s region. In 1854, the railway connection between Félegyháza and Szeged was established, and this was further extended towards Temesvár [Timișoara]. By 1864, the *Alföld* [the Great Hungarian Plain] and Fiume train-line regularly took passengers and goods to Szabadka [Subotica, Theresienstadt] and Nagyvárad [Oradea].<sup>158</sup> After a new flood destroyed the town in 1879, Szeged had to be completely rebuilt. During this process, the “new” castle (which was built between 1714 and 1716) was demolished as a part of the reconstruction and, in a modernizing, symbolic turn, it was

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the responsibility for the drought on people who had allegedly fraternized with the Devil. Among the people accused was the former judge and richest citizen of the town, Dániel Rózsa (82 years old), who was said to be the leader of the witches, and Anna Nagy Kőkényné, a midwife who had accused him of witchcraft. The Burg Yard was used for the trials organized by the church elders, and the victims were tortured to make them confess. In 1756, partly as a response to the use of torture in Szeged, Empress Maria Theresa (1717-1780) ordered that all cases of witchcraft must be confirmed by the high court, which practically ended the witch trials. The last person executed for witchcraft in Hungary was in 1777. In Bengt Ankarloo and Clark Stuart, ed. *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London: The Athlone, 1999), 69-70. Cf. Reizner János, *A régi Szeged*, [The Old Szeged], (Szeged: Burger G. : Endrényi Ny., 1884-1887).

<sup>155</sup> Németh, ed. *Szeged. The City of Sunshine*, 26.

<sup>156</sup> Németh, ed. *Szeged. The City of Sunshine*, 26. “Ha – mint előre megjósolám – Debrecen lesz az a hely, hol hazánk függetlenségét kivívjuk, úgy Szegedről fog Európának a szabadság kihirdettetni...” [If – as I prophesied before – Debrecen is to become the place where the independence of our country is to be fought out, it will be Szeged where freedom will be proclaimed for Europe.]

<sup>157</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 341.342.

<sup>158</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 342.

replaced by an elegant promenade.<sup>159</sup> After the Compromise of 1867, a modern banking system was established in the town and its infrastructure started to develop. In tandem with other developments, the public social life of the town became more and more visible, especially with the foundation of the local *Casino* [Gentlemen's Club].<sup>160</sup>

In the Post-Compromise Period, the year 1870 proved to be a crucial date for the legal status of Szeged. The Article of 1870: XLII gave Szeged the municipal title [“*törvényhatósági jog*”] on the basis of the local government authority [“*önkormányzati hatáskör*”]. The articles of 1870: XLII and the 1886: XXI expanded the governmental control over the municipal boards. The Lord Lieutenant, as the representative of the government [“*főispán*”], became the head of the ‘*községgyűlés*’ [‘general assembly’]<sup>161</sup> of the new municipality. Szeged thus became a regional center without previously having been a ‘*megyeszékhely*’ [‘county administrative town’] or a ‘*püspöki székhely*’ [‘an Episcopal seat’]. The municipal title entitled Szeged to autonomy concerning its own domestic policy. This meant that Szeged could issue ordinances on its own, and the municipal administration had its own budget that covered the expenses of the local government and administration. Moreover, the city was allowed to announce its stand-points to the government and the other municipal authorities in the forms of petitions, representations and circulars.<sup>162</sup> The most important institution of the local government became the *Szeged Város Törvényhatósági Bizottmánya* [Szeged Municipal Board, 1870-1919].<sup>163</sup> Other

<sup>159</sup> Horváth and Thirring, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza*, 7.

<sup>160</sup> Tóth, *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, 341.

<sup>161</sup> Ruszoly József, “Az Állami közigazgatási és igazságszolgáltatási szervek Szegeden,” [The State Administration and Jurisdiction Agencies in Szeged] in Kristó, *Szeged története 3/2*, [A History of Szeged, Vol. 1.] op. cit., 640.

<sup>162</sup> Dunainé Bognár Júlia and Blazovich László, eds. *Szeged Színháztörténetének forrásai a Csongrád Megyei Levéltárban 1886-1919* [The Sources of Szeged's Theater History] (Budapest: Magyar Színház Intézet, 1989), 7.

<sup>163</sup> Dunainé, *Szeged Színháztörténetének forrásai a Csongrád Megyei Levéltárban 1886-1919*, 7.

administrative organizations were the ‘*tanács*’ [‘council’], the ‘*árvaszék*’ [‘board of guardians’], while the two major leaders were the mayor<sup>164</sup> and the chief commissioner of the police<sup>165</sup>

In the Post-Compromise period, the elite of the municipal government supported and hailed the infrastructural modernization. Most of the city’s civil servants worked in banks, public companies and financial corporations. Serving one community and association can be a determining factor in outlining the identity and personality of city authorities. The Lord Lieutenant Ferenc Dáni, for instance, was among the shareholders of the *Szeged-Csongrád Megyei Takarékpénztár* [Szeged-Csongrád County Savings Bank]. The Mayor, Ferenc Pálffy,<sup>166</sup> was also the member of the same company and he belonged to the Council of the *Szeged Kézműves Bank* [Szeged Craftsman Bank] and was also the Chair of the *Szegedi Kaszinó* [Szeged Casino]. Moreover, Pálffy and his sons were also well-established landowners.<sup>167</sup> The interconnection of the municipal government and the financial groups was advantageous for the city. However, this interconnection of the different public spheres was not as explicit or strong as in the case of Debrecen that my further analysis show. The elite of the bourgeoisie included high ranking civil servants who belonged to the local council, financiers and wholesale merchants (most of them of German and Jewish origin). Among the highest tax-paying citizens (*virilista*) was Andor Zsótér, a ship-owner, merchant and the head of the Savings Bank. According the register of 1889, Szeged had 142 *virilistae*, and among them were 42 merchants and only 6 factory owners.<sup>168</sup>

<sup>164</sup> The Mayors were, in chronological order: Ferenc Pálffy (1872-1904) and Lázár György (1904-1915).

<sup>165</sup> Gaál Endre, “A városi vezető tisztviselők,” [The Leaders of the City] in *Szeged története* 3/1, [A History of Szeged, Vol. 1.] (Szeged: Somogyi könyvtár, 1991), 583.

<sup>166</sup> Szeged’s majors in chronological order: Ferenc Pálffy (1872-1904) and Lázár György (1904-1915).

<sup>167</sup> Gaál, “A városi vezető tisztviselők,” [The Leaders of the City] in *Szeged története* 3/1, 583-584.

<sup>168</sup> Gaál, “A városi vezető tisztviselők,” [The Leaders of the City], 585-586.

The Great Flood of 1879 led to Szeged's unprecedented modernization. The news of the disaster spread throughout Europe via the published media, and charity concerts were organized all over Europe to help Szeged's reconstruction. The immediate reaction of the world to the city's disaster shows Szeged's elevated position after the Compromise of 1867. With the financial help of many great cities - Vienna, London, Brussels, Paris, Rome, Berlin, and many others – Szeged emerged from its ruins as a new, modern city with an exemplary layout, including concentric and radial avenues and boulevards and with an architectural facade of eclecticism and secession.<sup>169</sup>

By the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Szeged's population lived in four united parts of the city: the *Alsóváros* [Lower City], the *Felsőváros* [Upper City], *Rókus* [named after Saint Roch, with the city's first hospital built in this district] and the *Palánk* [the surroundings of the Burg]. A permanent bridge [*állandó közúti híd*] designed by the Eiffel company was built over the Tisza in 1883. This connected Szeged and *Újszeged* [New-Szeged], two distinct towns that were officially united in 1880.

In terms of population and religion, Szeged presented a multiconfessional openness. The town belonged to the Csanád Diocese (See) with a population of 88,767 Roman Catholics<sup>170</sup> by 1900. An independent Calvinist congregation was founded in 1857 and, by the turn of the century, the number of its believers grew up to 2711.<sup>171</sup> The Lutheran congregation was established also in 1857 and had 900 believers by 1900. The political influence of the Greek Orthodox Church in Szeged was significant; this had 1245 members in 1900.<sup>172</sup> At the same time, the second

<sup>169</sup> Horváth and Thirring, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza*, [Szeged and its Hinterland's Detailed Guidebook], 5.

<sup>170</sup> Magyarka Ferenc, "Az egyházak szervezete," [The Organization of Churches] in Kristó Gyula, ed. *Szeged története* 3/2 [A History of Szeged, Vol. 2.], (Szeged: Somogyi-Könyvtár, 1985), 922.

<sup>171</sup> Kristó Gyula, ed. *Szeged története* 3/2, 933.

<sup>172</sup> Kristó Gyula, ed. *Szeged története* 3/2, 931.

largest denomination was the Jewish community with 5683 people.<sup>173</sup> By 1900, the number of working inhabitants was 46,864. The agricultural sector had 19,008 people, while the industry and the trade had 9,279 and 2,117 people.<sup>174</sup> This meant that Szeged's major income came from the agricultural sector; 42% of its inhabitants were peasants, 19% were industrial workers and 5% were traders.<sup>175</sup> In the age of dualism (1867-1918) Szeged was the only Hungarian city, besides the capital, that had more than 100,000 inhabitants.<sup>176</sup>

Szeged went through a spectacular development as of 1879 with the complete reconstruction of the city after the Great Flood. Old Szeged – as other Hungarian agricultural towns of the Great Hungarian Plain – lacked the dynamism of modern life, had a cityscape of unregulated facades, and an irregular street network without proper infrastructure. The consequence of the modern urbanization process after the Great Flood was the strengthening of the town's urban identity as a modern city with the manifestation of a unique civil consciousness. The modernization of Szeged took place in the reconstruction period, which completely changed the image of the city. Szeged was rebuilt on the basis of the Parisian model with the help of national and international financial aids and special funds.

<sup>173</sup> Kristó Gyula, ed. *Szeged története* 3/2, 931-932.

<sup>174</sup> Thirring Gusztáv, "Foglalkozási csoportok," [Occupation Groups] *A magyar városok statisztikai évkönyve* (Budapest, 1912), [The Statistical Year-book of the Hungarian Cities], 126.

<sup>175</sup> Thirring Gusztáv, "Foglalkozási csoportok," [Occupation Groups], 132.

<sup>176</sup> Kontler, *Millennium in Central Europe*, 311.



## Chapter 2      The Urban Planning and Modernization of Szeged and Debrecen in the Post-Compromise Period

The Compromise of 1867 facilitated mobility, industrialization and urbanization within the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Multi-ethnicity was a paradigm that, at that time, characterized the monarchy and manifested in the diversity of languages, confessions, economical backgrounds and social strata of the state's inhabitants. There were a number of significant differences existed between the Austrian and the Hungarian part of the monarchy, although German language provided a strong link. Urban planning, and within this, the interurban competitions shaped and created a distinctly unique urban consciousness, which arose as the result of the emergence of new political and social expressions, such as the local press, association life, the new mayor figures and the municipal government. All these factors had a great and determining impact upon the character of the new, modern city that developed upon the old city pattern. The characteristic features of the *Zeitgeist* were the intensive constructions and modernizations – most often after natural catastrophes (cf. fires, floods, earthquakes). Post-romantic national and patriotic conflicts coincided with the erection of new statues and memorials alongside other crucial public buildings such as museums or libraries, which had a serious impact on the image of the town.

Ironically, the tragic event of the Great Flood of 1879 in Szeged had positive consequences for this provincial market town; it forced state authorities to readdress the issue of the regulation of the River Tisza (which had been hindered and postponed for years), and to finance this project together with the rebuilding of Szeged, which had been almost completely destroyed by the water. The city's planners had practically free hand in introducing the latest achievements of urban planning when

they designed the new master plan of the town. Consequently, the high quality and the remarkable speed of the reconstruction accelerated Szeged's urbanization and modernization in numerous spheres. The master plan created a united and modern architectural layout for the town by introducing a modern infrastructure, which would serve as a model for other provincial towns in Hungary. As a result, by 1910, Szeged, had become, after its reconstruction, the second largest city after Budapest.

Meanwhile, Debrecen followed the old city planning model by preserving the historic core of the city. In spite of "the subsequent improvements, street lining and transformation of street network, the historic core of Debrecen still include[d] the elements of small medieval villages and the main routes linking them to the old market place."<sup>177</sup> The consequence of urbanization and migration, the town expanded over the medieval walls that resulted in a rural spatial structure that included scarcely populated temporary dwellings and plough-land on the periphery of the medieval downtown. The first wave of industrialization, together with its subsequent population growth, changed the rural edge of Debrecen and lead towards the appearance of an industrial ring along the main railway lines of the town. Despite the more conscious urban planning after the Compromise Period, which changed the irregular street network of the downtown and the rural character of the city's edge,<sup>178</sup> Debrecen's urban planning was a continuous development by leaps and bounds.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a confine in urban modernization. Géza Aczél, Debrecen's Chief Architect and Kálmán Hathy, who worked for the engineering department of the city, created a new regulation master plan for the whole city in 1898-1899,<sup>179</sup> which also included avenue plans following the successful pattern of

<sup>177</sup> E. Nagy, "Transition of Urban Space in Two Systems: The Fractal Geometry of Hungarian Provincial Cities," *Cybergeo*, No. 140, (2000): 5.

<sup>178</sup> Nagy, "Transition of Urban Space in Two Systems: The Fractal Geometry of Hungarian Provincial Cities," 5.

<sup>179</sup> Sági Lajos, "Debrecen városépítése és belterületének fejlődése, 1850-1918," [Debrecen's Urban Planning and the Development of its Clear, 1850-1918], Gunst Péter, ed., *Debrecen története*

Szeged's reconstruction.<sup>180</sup> In 1907, a new street regulation and urban plan was born, which was accepted only in 1909. However, due to the lack of money, the procrastination of the municipal government and the coming of the world war, only part of it was established. Some part of the professional literature brings into the limelight only József Borsos<sup>181</sup> as the one who created Debrecen's first comprehensive master plan in 1928-1930 by ignoring his predecessor Géza Aczél's contribution to Debrecen's street modernization and urban planning. In this case, Borsos' map is just a status survey. Debrecen's building codes were in effect till the enforcement of the *Országos Építési Szabályzat* [National Building Rules] in 1961.<sup>182</sup>

1849-1919 [Debrecen's History 1849-1919], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), 71.

<sup>180</sup> Papp József, "Adalékok 1849. debreceni helyszíneihez," Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár évkönyve XXV. Debrecen, 1998; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, [The Association Register of Debrecen, 1833-2001], (Debrecen: Kinizsi Nyomda, 2002); Personal Discussion with József Papp, head of the microfilm collection [mikrofilmtár], Debrecen, 2012. September 11, 2012.

<sup>181</sup> Buildings planned by József Borsos in Debrecen and Szeged: Debrecen, Ortodox zsidó imaház és fürdő, (Kápolnási utca 1909, The Jewish Orthodox Tabernacle and Bath); Debrecen, Rákóczi utca, Novelli Ede lakóházának átalakítása (1910, The Alteration of Ede Novelli's Private House); Debrecen, Csapó utca, Horváth J. *székelykapufa* (lebontva) (1910, Szekler Gate, demolished); Debrecen, Bajcsy-Zsilinszky utcai óvoda (1911, Nursery-School in Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Street); Debrecen, Saját háza, Domonkos Lajos utca 13. (ma: Vénkerti lakótelep, 1912, Borsos' own house in Domonkos L. Street No. 13.); Debrecen, Dr. Sz. Kun Béla villája, Simonyi út 40. (1912, Béla Sz. Kun's Cottage); Debrecen, Nyilas (ma Szabadság) telepi református elemi iskola (1914, Protestant Primary-School); Debrecen, Rakovszky (ma Fürst) utcai református elemi iskola (1914 körül, Protestant Primary-School, around 1914); Debrecen, Rendőrség (ma HBM Rendőr-főkapitányság) (Kossuth utca 1914, The Building of the Police); Debrecen, temető, helyszínrajz, kerítés (1923, the Cemetery); Debrecen, Burgundia u. iparisk. (Csapó u. sarok), Zeleznik Gyulával (1925, Trade-School planned with Gyula Zeleznik); Debrecen, Hajnal-Dobozi-Szoboszlói úti 441 l. bérházak, Zeleznik Gyulával (1926, Apartment houses planned with Gyula Zeleznik); Debrecen, Ary-villa, Sestakert utca (1928-1930, Ary-Cottage in Sestakert Street); Debrecen város szabályozási terve (1928-1930, Debrecen's Urban Regulation Plan); Debrecen, Ravatalozó és krematórium, Köztemető (1923-1930, crematory and lich-house); Debrecen, Egyetemi templom, (1938, University Church); Debrecen, Ref. Főgimnázium (Tanítóképző Főiskola), tornaterem (1939, Gym of the Protestant Gymnasium); Szeged, Honvéd téri református templom (1941, Reform Church of the Honvéd Square). In Rácz Zoltán, *Borsos József és Debrecen korai modern építésze* [József Borsos and Debrecen's Early Modern Architecture], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1990), 151.

<sup>182</sup> Sági Lajos, "Debrecen városépítése és belterületének fejlődése, 1850-1918," 71.



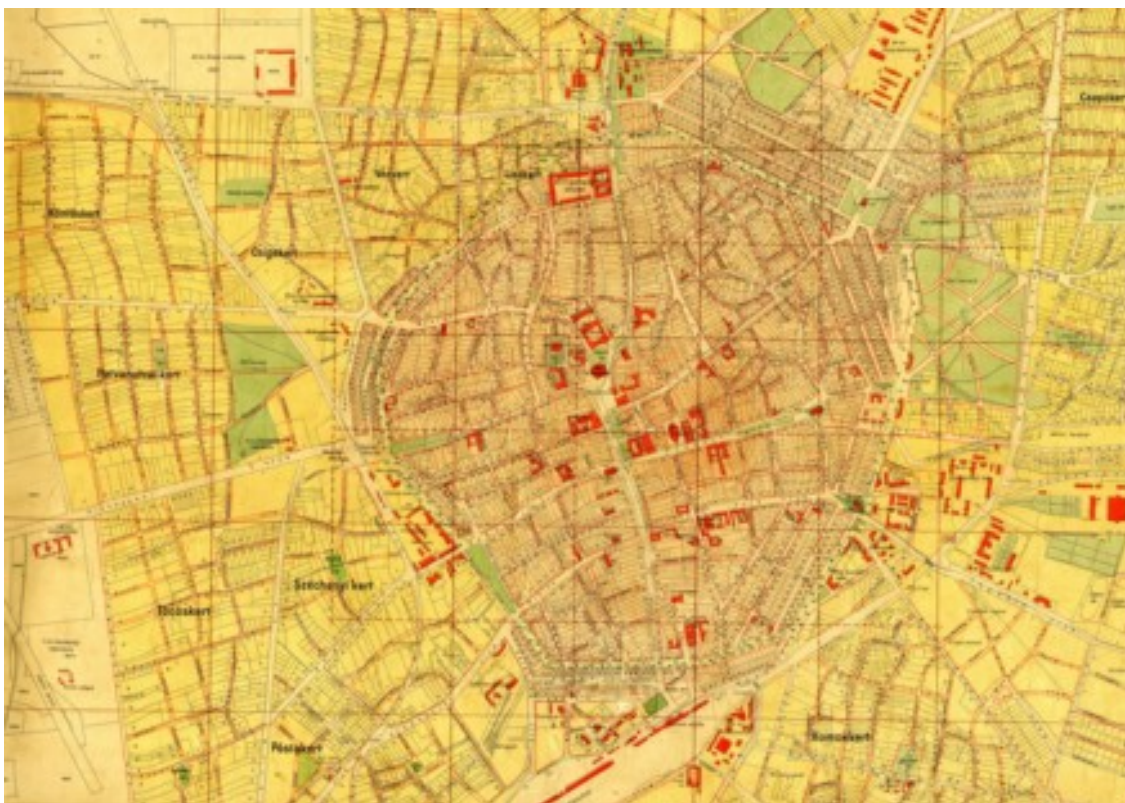
**Picture 1.**  
Debrecen's map from 1752<sup>183</sup>



**Picture 2.**  
Géza Aczél's urban plan, 1898<sup>184</sup>

<sup>183</sup> Országos Széchényi Könyvtár [National Széchényi Library], accessed September 15, 2012. <https://keptar.oszk.hu/000100/000107>.

<sup>184</sup> HBML, NY96.



**Picture 3.**  
József Borsos' map, 1930<sup>185</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the most significant public buildings of Hungarian provincial towns were designed mostly by Budapest architects. József Borsos's (a native of Hódmezővásárhely, and later a Debrecen architect) work is less known to the public, although his legacy in Debrecen and other provincial towns is fairly rich. He created a unique style, which shows elements of the Art Nouveau, Neo-Baroque, and the Bauhaus. Borsos traveled a lot in Europe and in America, and studied the modern architecture of his age. His buildings and drawings, however, show an important inspiration originated from Transylvania.<sup>186</sup> Besides Debrecen, he also designed the Szeged Calvinist Church in Honvéd tér [Honvéd Square] specifically interesting with its clinker facade.<sup>187</sup>

<sup>185</sup> By the courtesy of József Papp, head of the microfilm collection [mikrofilmtár], Debrecen

<sup>186</sup> Rácz Zoltán, *Borsos József és Debrecen korai modern építészete*, 155.

<sup>187</sup> Rácz Zoltán, *Borsos József és Debrecen korai modern építészete*, 71.

As opposed to Debrecen's urban pattern, Szeged's spatial development was determined by a master plan of 1879, inspired by Hausmann's design for Paris. This master plan, with Parisian-type of boulevards and avenues, provided a modern framework for the town in a period of economic prosperity and population growth (between 1880 and 1914). Moreover, it defined housing standards by zones and set up a reasonable plan for the infrastructure and industrial development.<sup>188</sup> The urban reconstruction changed significantly Szeged's urban pattern and contributed to the city's modern image as an important regional civic center by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Szeged changed its position in the Hungarian urban network from an incomplete regional center to a cultural center with a significant economic and social hinterland. Paradoxically, the Great Flood was needed for the government to realize that the River Tisza's regulation was the interest of the country and not the city's concern only. The river regulation infrastructures had started in the 1850's and were launched by Count István Széchenyi<sup>189</sup> on the national scale. However, the Tisza's regulation around Szeged was a failure: the so-called Percsora dike was in the hands

<sup>188</sup> Nagy, "Transition of Urban Space in Two Systems: The Fractal Geometry of Hungarian Provincial Cities," 6.

<sup>189</sup> Count István Széchenyi (1791-1860) was a Hungarian reformer, politician, writer, who contributed to the Hungarian national development and modernization. He traveled in Turkey, Eastern and Western Europe with his friend, Baron Miklós Wesselényi. The modernity of England and France made a great impression upon him, especially when he contrasted them with the backward development of Hungary. His travel to England in 1815 made the greatest influence on him. Széchenyi considered the English pattern that Hungary should follow in attitude and civic behavior. Under civilization he meant urbanization and infrastructure meaning railways and shipping on one hand, and civil union meaning culturally trained civilians without noble boundaries on the other hand. For him civilization and the need that more people have to achieve middle-class status were coincided with the program for elevating the position of the nation. The Hungarian Learned Society (later developed into the Hungarian National Academy of Sciences); the Chain Bridge Joint Stock Company, the first permanent bridge of Pest-Buda, the Chain Bridge; the first Casino, many modernization projects and initiations including the his book *Hitel* [Credit], regulation of the lower Danube, the Iron Gate, the First Hungarian Savings Bank Society, the National Transport Committee, the Railway Company between Sopron and Wiener Neustadt (Bécsújhely) and the implementation of steam shipping on Lake Balaton are connected to his name. He initiated the development of the national transport and the construction of railroads. He recommended that the lines should reach the centre of the country (Buda and Pest). accessed July 23, 2012, [http://www.omikk.bme.hu/archivum/angol/htm/szechenyi\\_i.htm](http://www.omikk.bme.hu/archivum/angol/htm/szechenyi_i.htm); "Széchenyi István [Széchenyi, Count István (Stephen)]." Révai Nagy Lexikona, Vol. 17. accessed September 22, 2012, [http://mek.oszk.hu/06700/06758/pdf/revai17\\_2.pdf](http://mek.oszk.hu/06700/06758/pdf/revai17_2.pdf), 418-425. See his picture painted by Miklós Barabás (1810-1898). "Count István Széchenyi," Oil on canvas, 1848, Historical Picture Gallery, Hungarian National Museum, Budapest, accessed July 23, 2012, <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/b/barabas/szecheny.html>.



of a private company associated with the Pallavicini estates; therefore the dike was built to protect mainly the Pallavicini estate and not the rest of the city. As a result, there was no connected dike system to protect all areas of the town, and this resulted in the tragedy of the Great Flood.<sup>190</sup>



**Picture 4.**  
The expansion of the Szeged Great Flood of 1879<sup>191</sup>

<sup>190</sup> Kákay Aranyos, (Mikszáth Kálmán), *Szeged pusztulása*, [Szeged's Destruction], (Szeged, 1879), 6.

<sup>191</sup> Accessed September 15, 2012, <http://egykor.hu/szeged/szeged-terkep/871>, Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása* [Szeged's New Era. The Newest History of the City (1879-1899) and its Description], (Szeged: Engel Lajos, 1901).



**Picture 5.**

Szeged after the reconstruction, 1912<sup>192</sup>

The Compromise of 1867 gave an unprecedented stimulus to the accelerated modernization and urbanization of Hungary. Szeged and Debrecen's place in the Hungarian urban network were defined on the basis of their functional character as crucial market towns striving for the regional center position of their hinterlands in the Great Hungarian Plain. In the following chapter, I intend to focus on the modern urban

<sup>192</sup> Blazovich László, *Szeged rövid története* [A Short History of Szeged], Somogyi Könyvtár [Somogyi Library] Accessed September 15, 2012. [http://www.sk-szeged.hu/statikus\\_html/digitalis/szrt/szrt.html](http://www.sk-szeged.hu/statikus_html/digitalis/szrt/szrt.html),



identity of Szeged and Debrecen and highlight the crucial differences in their reaction to natural disasters (floods in Szeged and sequential fires in Debrecen), and the architectural infrastructure boom fostered by the Compromise of 1867. My working hypothesis is that Szeged strove for the title of ‘progressive modern urban model,’ meanwhile Debrecen remained a ‘static modern urban environment.’ This chapter aims to present the Great Flood of Szeged and to provide a general outline for urban planning after natural disasters by placing Szeged’s Great Flood of 1879 and Debrecen’s fires of the 19<sup>th</sup> century into a broader perspective.

## 2. 1. *Urban Planning Models after Natural Disasters*

The flood broke one part of the Percsora dam system line on March 6, 1879 and it broke the dam at Petres and devastated the city on the night of March 12, 1879.<sup>193</sup> Szeged’s destruction is vividly described by an unknown foreign correspondent’s mental mapping on the night of the catastrophe on March 12, 1879:

The day never dawned upon a sadder scene that which met our eyes when the light revealed to us in its full extent the calamity that had overtaken the city. Houses were falling in every direction, - the rising waters seemed to saw the foundations from under them; and they melted away in the flood, or toppled over with a crash. When it was sufficiently light, I set off for the telegraph office to report events to London. Fortunately the telegraphic wires were in working order; indeed through the whole week there was only one day of interruption, thanks to the energy of the officials. The office is situated rather higher than most of the town, and when I entered, the flood had not yet reached this level.

The account continues to enumerate the events in the following:

I found myself awakened by the tolling of a loud bell. I started up, and then the warning sound of three successive cannon-shots gave the signal of distress. I struck a light, and just made out that it was three o’clock, when the candle was blown out by the draught, the window-frame rattled and shook again; [...] By this time the storm had increased to a perfect hurricane, adding much to the general bewilderment, for the torches were perpetually blown out. The

<sup>193</sup> *Vasárnapi Ujság (sic!)*, Vol. 26. No. 10. March 9. 1879.

townfolk seemed as unprepared and panic-stricken as if the catastrophe had not stared them in the face for days. [...] The darkness – the uncertainty as to where the danger was the greatest – the unreasoning struggles of the people – all added to the dire confusion of this awful night. I had been running in the direction of the town hall, but had not gone far when I was met by the oncoming waters. I was knee-deep in the flood at once; and not daring to go on, I turned and fled with all speed in the direction of the river dike.<sup>194</sup>

György Klösz (1844-1913), one of forerunners of Hungarian professional photography, recorded the floods in Tabán (1875) Budapest (1876), Eger, Miskolc (1878) and Szeged (1879). Moreover, his firm became the photographer of Budapest's urban planning at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>195</sup> Klösz photo-documented the catastrophes, he tries to represent not only the ruins but the lives of survivors working after the flood and clearing the ruins. Klösz wanted to get into contact with the Habsburg Sovereign and sent a series of the photos to the Sovereign in vain. In my view, Klösz's endeavor was a conscious attempt to record the flood catastrophes for educational purposes of future generations and also for commercial reasons. He photographed also the Budapest flood of 1876. In the flood devastated Budapest, Klösz began his journey in two boats from the Pest side. One of the boats carried machines; the other transported and served as a *camera obscura*. Other photographers like György Mayer and Antal Lovich also recorded the catastrophe but his photos are considered to be more professional at that time. Floods were in the center of concern as an exhibition in Budapest for the sake of the Hungarian flood victims in the palace of Count Alajos Károlyi demonstrated. Klösz photographed the exhibited objects of art for fulfilling a commission.<sup>196</sup>

<sup>194</sup> "The Destruction of Szegedin – Personal Notes," *Littell's Living Age*. Volume 142, Issue 1829 (July – September 1879), 35. Available: Making of America Cornell University Library Collection, Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010. <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>.

<sup>195</sup> Lugosi Lugo László, *Klösz György (1844-1913) élete és munkássága*, [Klösz György's (1844-1913) Life and Work], (Budapest: Polgart, 2002), 25. and 60.

<sup>196</sup> Lugosi Lugo László, *Klösz György (1844-1913) élete és munkássága*, 26.

Klősz arrived to Szeged in the beginning of April, 1879, almost one month after the flood. His photos show that the flood dwindled away one meter already. Lajos Linek a student of the ‘*mintarajziskola*’ [‘*Art School*’] and Imre Greguss (1856-1910)<sup>197</sup> painter also arrived to the city to fulfill the commission of the *Vasárnapi Újság* and to make drafts about the flood for the newspaper, which was published in the April 6<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Vasárnapi Újság*.<sup>198</sup> A newspaper in Szeged the *Szegedi Híradó* reported about Klősz’s arrival to the devastated city on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1879.<sup>199</sup> Besides Klősz, two other photographers recorded the flood: the local Letzer and Lauscher Studio and one from the nearby Hódmezővásárhely, Illés Plohn. Klősz’s photos are also for commercial purposes and every picture bears his name: “photographed and published by György Klősz.” He also made series with Hungarian, German and French photo titles. Klősz made around 55-60 photos about the Great Flood of Szeged and compiled an album, which he offered to the Sovereign. At this time his album was not rejected but kindly accepted by the Sovereign.<sup>200</sup>

<sup>197</sup> “Greguss Imre,” *Művészet*, Vol. 9, 1910: 330-338, accessed September 22, 2012. <http://www.mke.hu/lyka/09/330-338-greguss.htm>.

<sup>198</sup> *Vasárnapi Újság* 1879. Vol. 26. No. 14. April 6; Lugosi Lugo László, *Klősz György (1844-1913) élete és munkássága*, 35.

<sup>199</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, April 4th, 1879; Lugosi Lugo László, *Klősz György (1844-1913) élete és munkássága*, 35.

<sup>200</sup> Lugosi Lugo László, *Klősz György (1844-1913) élete és munkássága*, 36-37.



**Picture 6.**

The Great Flood of Szeged, 1879 (a stereo photo)<sup>201</sup>

Surprisingly, the flood of Szeged was well-reported by the international media and raised the attention of the large public at an unprecedented, global level. Newspapers and magazines such as *The Times* in London and *Le Figaro* in Paris closely followed the events of the tragedy and its aftermath, and covered the reconstruction works on a weekly and monthly basis.<sup>202</sup> Several U.S. newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, *The Troy Weekly Times*, the *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* and *The Living Age*

<sup>201</sup> "Szeged Árvíz, 1879," [Szeged Flood, 1879], photo by György Klösz, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 66/2042

<sup>202</sup> Count Karolyi, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador and Charles Whetham, Lord Mayor, "[The Disastrous Floods In Hungary](#)," In *The Times*. (London, England), Saturday, Mar 15, 1879: 10.; Edmund Monson, *The Destruction of Szegedin*. *The Times*. Monday, Mar 24, 1879: 11; "Szegedin. Quite Apart from the Late Melancholy." *Times*, Monday, Mar 24, 1879: 11; "The Floods in Hungary. The Lord Mayor," *Times*, Monday, May 12, 1879: 12; "The Floods in Hungary," *The Times*, Saturday, Jun 04, 1887: 7. Retrived from *The Times Digital Archive*. Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Könyvtár [Metropolitan Library, Budapest], accessed April 30, 2012; *Le Figaro*, (Paris, March 24, 1879) Retrived from Gallica Bibliothèque Numérique, accessed May 30, 2012. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k277044w.r=Szegedin.langEN>.

also reported about the Flood.<sup>203</sup> As compared with Debrecen, Szeged received a greater international attention due to the tragic event of 1879. Meanwhile, Debrecen is mentioned in international newspapers relatively rarely, if so, then it is because of the Hungarian Revolution and the War of Independence in 1848-1849 when the provisional government took its seat in the city.<sup>204</sup>

A prominent Hungarian author, Kálmán Mikszáth (1847-1910) – who was also the editor of the *Szegedi Napló* (a Szeged-based daily newspaper between 1878 and 1919) – worked also on the dikes and helped in rescuing people after the flood. Thus, the newspaper did not work during the Flood. However, despite the editorial board's other political orientation, the first post-flood issue published the speech of Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza (1830-1902), who never appeared up to that point in the newspaper. Since the main aim of the paper was the service of the interests of the town, it gave way to a historical compromise.<sup>205</sup> Although, the newspaper did not dare to openly criticize the government for the causes of the Flood, it advertised an opposition-type of pamphlet, written by Mikszáth entitled as *Szeged pusztulása* [*The*

<sup>203</sup> "Editor's Scientific Record," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1850-1899), Vol. 58, Issue 348 (May 1879): 948. Retrived from "Making of America Cornell University Library Collection," Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>, "The Ruin of Szegedin," *The Living Age*, Vol. 141, Issue 1819, (April 26, 1879): 253-256. Retrived from "Making of America Cornell University Library Collection," Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>; "Szegedin, from the Dyke Giving way and the Town Inundated," *The Times*, (March 13, 1879), Retrived from "Making of America Cornell University Library Collection," Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>; "The Destruction of Szegedin-Personal Notes," *Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine*, (Vol. 125, Issue 764, 1879, June; Retrived from Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, , <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>; "The Ruin of Szegedin," *Spectator*, (March 22, 1879), Retrived from Fordham University Library, Accessed May 10th 2010, , <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html> "A Hungarian City Ruined. Szegedin Visited by a Disastrous Flood," (March 13, 1879), "Szegedin and its Surroundings," (March 13, 1879), "The Calamity at Szegedin," (March 14, 1879), "Hungary's Deluged City," (March 15, 1879), "The Szegedin Calamity," (March 17, 1879), "The Submersion of Szegedin," *New York Times* (March 18, 1879), "The Disaster at Szegedin," *New York Times*, (March 21, 1879), Retrived from "America's Historical Newspapers." Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>; "The Szegedin Flood. A Graphic and Thrilling Story of a Submerged City," *The Troy Weekly Times*, (April 17, 1879), Retrived from "America's Historical Newspapers." Fordham University Library, accessed May 10th 2010, <http://www.library.fordham.edu/database/history.html>.

<sup>204</sup> *The Living Age*, Vol. 32. Issue 400

<sup>205</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, March 22 Saturday, 1879.

*Destruction of Szeged*], which was also translated into German, and which the *Szegedi Napló* advertised as a contemporary bestseller.<sup>206</sup> Mikszáth was at that time a journalist of the *Szegedi Napló* and the witness of the tragedy. He wrote about the “real” causes of the Flood and the damages in *Szeged pusztulása* [*The Destruction of Szeged*] which was written under the pen name of Kákay Aranyos. In this small work (which is no more than 62 pages altogether), Mikszáth criticized the policy of the government especially with regard to the regulation of the River Tisza and the dike system as the causes of the Flood, and adds to the subsequent agents of tragedy by inserting the “photographic” descriptions of the government commissioners, Kende Kanut and György Lukács. Mikszáth dedicated an entire chapter for the image of the government commissioner György Lukács, who reported only twenty-four dead cases to the government to lessen the consequences of the tragedy.<sup>207</sup> As he wrote, “Lukács’s face is like a pear. If history tells that humanity became devastated because of an apple then Szeged was damned by a pear.”<sup>208</sup> Mikszáth’s unique, ironic and witty style signified the beginning of a new type of modern journalism and created an alternative historiography for the flood.

Mikszáth accused the government of consciously giving incorrect information about the flood and its damages to the main Budapest press and, on the basis of this, he claimed he was the only “true” chronicler of the Great Flood without politically manipulating accurate and *de facto* historical data. *Szeged pusztulása* [*Szeged’s Destruction*] depicts the intersection of history and literature, which corresponds to the personification of the river as a lady, who faces the city. Mikszáth blamed the government that it did not pay attention to the dangers and shed light on the mistake of

<sup>206</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, April 1 Tuesday, 1879.

<sup>207</sup> Kákay Aranyos, *Szeged pusztulása*, 5.

<sup>208</sup> Kákay Aranyos, 18. „Lukács arca olyan, mint egy körte. Ha az emberiség elmondja, hogy egy alma miatt lett szerencsétlen; Szeged egy körte miatt lett az.” [Lukács’ face resembles to a pear. Should humanity say that it became unfortunate because of an apple, then Szeged’s catastrophe took place because of a pear.]

the government with the dike system at Percsora. According to Mikszáth, the regulation of the River Tisza had to be a national task and not only a municipal one.<sup>209</sup> The epilogue of his work shows faith in the future of Szeged. The author states that “I put down my pen with the strong faith that there comes a time when I will write: how small was this glorious Szeged long before the Great Flood.”<sup>210</sup> It also talks about Szeged’s geographic position and predetermination, the pre-history of Great Flood by mentioning the smaller floods in the 1870’s, the tragic night of the great flood, the damages, the long list of the dead and the city’s destroyed houses, ending with an epilogue for the future.

*Szegedi Híradó*, the conservative side of the local press, emphasized the immediate, direct reaction and the help of the government. It systematically reported the events and topics of the general assembly after the Flood. The editor in chief, Sándor Nagy, emphasized that the King Francis Joseph (1848-1916) and Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza (1830-1902), who visited the city after the tragedy, had given consolation and hope for the future, not to mention the needed financial aids. *Szegedi Híradó* thus became the official chronicle of the reconstruction by creating a rather conservative image of Szeged.<sup>211</sup> This image, however, had a so called civilizing and ‘colonizing’ function. In April 1879, the article series of “The Colonizer Szeged,” were showing this tendency for striving to the center of the region. The way, they depicted the city is an eclectic mixture of geopolitics, ethnography, legal history and urban history of the place.<sup>212</sup>

Debrecen did not escape natural disasters, either. Because of the unregulated River Tisza, subsequent floods inundated the Hortobágy<sup>213</sup> [*puszta*] near Debrecen and

<sup>209</sup> Kákay Aranyos, *Szeged pusztulása*, 6.

<sup>210</sup> Kákay Aranyos, *Szeged pusztulása*, 59.

<sup>211</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, March 21<sup>st</sup> Friday, 1879.

<sup>212</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, April 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 1879.

<sup>213</sup> The Hortobágyi Nemzeti Park [The Hortobágy National Park] is on the UNESCO’s World Heritage List. See Kulturális Örökségvédelmi Hivatal [National Office of Cultural Heritage], Retrived from

blocked every road to city (in 1730, 1746, 1750, 1816, 1844, and in 1845).<sup>214</sup> Droughts had fatal consequences for Debrecen and for its nearby settlements, which lived from agriculture; famine affected its inhabitants many times (in 1622, 1638, 1666, 1746, 1747, 1748, 1794, 1797, and 1802)<sup>215</sup> Fire took place in Debrecen several occasions especially among the thatched houses; therefore, - according to some interpretations - the phoenix bird on Debrecen's coat of arms refers to the city's capacity to emerge with renewed strength from its burnt ashes.<sup>216</sup> However, up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, municipal authorities did not issue orders for fire prevention. In 1802, another fire broke out, and a building of the Reformed College burnt down completely. The students of the College served as voluntary firemen. Even the poet Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (1773-1805) took part in the rescue works.<sup>217</sup> After the fire of 1802, there was a slight street regulation; however, tiled roof houses still remained substantially less than other, more dangerous and less fire-proof constructions. Subsequent fires helped the industry of brick-burning and brick-making.<sup>218</sup> In 1811, fire outburst three times in the city.<sup>219</sup> In 1813, this resulted in a proposal on the part of the municipal administration with which Debrecen's citizens were ordered to replace the thatched roofs with tiled roofs. In 1845, a building regulation was issued, which banned the cane roofs and propagated tile, fire-tile and board roofs. It also regulated some distance between houses and firewalls.<sup>220</sup> However, the order was executed in a rather

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[www.koh.hu](http://www.koh.hu), Accessed June 11, 2012.

<sup>214</sup> Siró Béla, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai. Természeti csapások, járványok, háborúk* [Debrecen's Afflictions. Natural Disasters, Epidemics and Wars], (Debrecen: Tóth Könyvkereskedés, 2007), 40.

<sup>215</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 43.

<sup>216</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 51-52.

<sup>217</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 57-58.

<sup>218</sup> Dr. Nábrády Mihály, ed. *Debrecen Utcanévei* [Debrecen's Street Names], (Debrecen: Debrecen Megyei Városi Tanács, 1984), 34. Fires in Debrecen were in the following years: 1564, 1580, 1640, 1656, 1669, 1680, 1681, 1688, 1693, 1699, 1701, 1704, 1711, 1714, 1719, 1727, 1746, 1755, 1759, 1764, 1791, 1797, 1798.

<sup>219</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 59.

<sup>220</sup> "Építés módja iránti rendszabályok," [Regulations of the Building Methods] HBML, IV.A. 1011/ n 5. 1845



slow pace and a fire again flared up in 1858.<sup>221</sup> Conscious urban planning took place only after the Compromise of 1867, with the emergence of the drainage system, public gas light system and real fireproof constructions.<sup>222</sup>

Paradoxically, major natural disasters and how cities coped with them helped the renewal of the given city in many ways. This happened also in the cases of Debrecen and Szeged. Tragedies strengthened the sense of community in the citizens. Moreover, it contributed to the specific identity and images of the cities that made them different from other cities and shows the main lines of urban development.

In *Out of Ground Zero. Case Studies in Urban Reinvention*, Joan Oackman provides examples for urban renewal models after natural disasters. In 1666, for example, the City of London was destroyed by fire. In spite of the six Baroque reconstruction plans, the City was rebuilt on the lines of the old streets, with a few modifications. However, some improvements took place especially in the field of the hygiene and fire safety including wider streets, open and accessible wharves along the length of the Thames, with no houses obstructing access to the river, and, most importantly, buildings constructed of brick and stone, not wood.<sup>223</sup> In the case of Lisbon, for instance, the earthquake of 1755 was a genuinely world-shaking event, as Ockman quotes Kenneth Maxwell, a scholar of Portuguese history. The earthquake was estimated to have registered 9.0 on the Richter scale and its aftershocks were felt as far east as Venice. Approximately 10,000 to 15,000 people died in the Lisbon epicenter, and about one third of the city was destroyed. As Ockman argues, a visionary, ruthless monarch had emerged on Lisbon's ruins: the Marquês de Pombal whose agency transformed and rebuilt the entire city. Consequently, "Lisbon went

<sup>221</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 60.

<sup>222</sup> "Építési szabályrendelet a város rendezési tervzet előterjesztése," [Architectural Ordinance Urban Planning Proposal] Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyv, 1891. [Minutes of the General Assembly] HBML IV 1403/a 73.

<sup>223</sup> Marc Girouard, *Cities and People* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 220.

from being an aristocratic, Jesuit outpost with a jumbled medieval plan to become a modern bourgeois and commercial city embodying Enlightenment values and boasting functional planning and a fireproof, sanitary system of construction.”<sup>224</sup>

In 1906, an earthquake destroyed the city of San Francisco and its nearby settlement in Northern California. The reconstruction was accomplished with international and national funds. The original street grid plan was restored and rebuilt, and many of Burnham’s proposals were born, such as a Neoclassical civic center complex, wider streets, a preference of arterial thoroughfares, a subway under Market Street, a more people-friendly Fisherman’s Wharf, and a monument to the city on Telegraph Hill, Coit Tower.<sup>225</sup> These examples show that natural catastrophes could foster the urbanization of cities provided the municipal authorities dare to take the efficient and proper steps in due course.

Chicago’s scenario was different. The Great Fire of 1871 was caused allegedly by Mrs. O’Leary’s cow which kicked over a lantern. The Great Chicago Fire began on the evening of October 8, 1871<sup>226</sup> on DeKoven Street situated in city’s poverty-stricken Southwest side, and went on unflagging until extinguishing itself over Lake Michigan thirty-six hours later. The destruction affected two thousand acres, 1800 city blocks, and 18,000 buildings were destroyed, 90,000 residents lost their homes; less than three hundred dead were identified but many more were not found in the poignant tragedy of Chicago.<sup>227</sup> Chicago’s case is crucial to my analysis here since Chicago’s rebuilding was among the first models for Szeged’s reconstruction but finally the royal commission opted for the Parisian model as the

<sup>224</sup> Joan Ockman, “Introduction,” In Joan Ockman, ed. *Out of Ground Zero*. New York: Prestel Verlag, 2002., 15.

<sup>225</sup> “The Great 1906 Earthquake and Fire” *The Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco*, accessed June 7, 2012, <http://www.sfmuseum.org/1906/06.html>.

<sup>226</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, “The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory,” accessed May 15, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html).

<sup>227</sup> Ockman, “Introduction,” 47.

local press reports. A couple of days after the flood, a representative of an American building company (the one which contributed to the rebuilding of Chicago after the fire) came to see what remained of Szeged.<sup>228</sup> Though the Szeged and Chicago comparison is an asymmetrical one, it shows Szeged's heightened position among other Hungarian cities in the reconstruction period.



**Picture 7.**

The Cottage of Patrick and Catherine O'Leary; J. H. Abbott, Stereograph, 1871<sup>229</sup>

Ockman quotes historian Ross Miller, who writes with many other scholars of the field about the enormous real-estate boom that followed the Great Fire, when the city was rebuilt by framing the city within “a new founding myth as a dynamic, *tabula rasa* metropolis.”<sup>230</sup> The number of land speculations increased in the reconstruction period. Meanwhile, the architects John Wellborn Root, Daniel Burnham, and Louis Sullivan designed buildings of high-rise frame, fire-proof structures that marked Chicago's further contribution to world architecture.<sup>231</sup> There was a shift in Chicago's municipal government policy after the Great Fire of 1871; this was part of the

<sup>228</sup> Horváth A. János and Thirring Gusztáv, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza* [Detailed Guidebook of Szeged and its Surroundings], (Budapest: Turistaság és Alpinizmus, 1925), 8.

<sup>229</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, “The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory,” accessed May 15, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html).

<sup>230</sup> Ockman, “Introduction,” 15.

<sup>231</sup> Ockman, “Introduction,” 15.

municipal reform that took place in the biggest cities of the U.S. at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>232</sup> This urban reform included the study of the European way of city planning as models for a good government policy. The municipal reform program became a national movement and appeared in the first Annual Conference of Good City Government (1894) and in Daniel Burnham's "White City Project" (Chicago's World Fair of 1893) or in his Chicago plan (1909) about the ideal city. The new, extended urban area demanded novel municipal home rule and restrictions for the private enterprises dealing with public transportation, while the budget deficits of the biggest cities forced planners to break with the tradition of the *laissez faire* policy.<sup>233</sup> Chicago's checkerboard pattern or the gridiron street plan was a uniform pattern especially for the inland American cities and this form has European origins. [cf. John W. Reps's *The Making of Urban America. A History of City Planning in the United States*].<sup>234</sup>

Because of the expansion of cities and the disadvantageous space usage following the utilitarian principles a strict unifying urban planning became urgent for American architects by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>235</sup> According to Lewis Mumford, almost all fields of urban life were subordinated to the realm of the industry. Also, suburbanization, as a way of life, meant the exodus of the well-to-do from the city.<sup>236</sup>

From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban infrastructure began to build huge cities (like Chicago) by breaking with the tradition of the *laissez faire*, which meant more

<sup>232</sup> Initial thoughts on Chicago's urban planning aftermath the Great Fire of 1871 were developed in my unpublished MA thesis on "Chicago helye az amerikai urbanizáció folyamatában. A város keletkezése és fejlődéstörténete a 19. század végéig." [*Chicago's Place in the American Urbanization. The Development of the City in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.*] Szeged: University of Szeged, 2003.

<sup>233</sup> Charles N. Glaab and Andrew Theodore Brown, *A History of Urban America*, (Macmillan, 1976), 182.

<sup>234</sup> The Chicago Plan was also reviewed and investigated by the municipal administration of Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879 as part of the reconstruction work. Though, it was not accepted, Szeged followed the Paris model.

<sup>235</sup> Lewis Mumford, *A város a történelemben* [The City in History], (Budapest: Gondolat, 1985), 402-403. Tenement houses characterized the era. The first tenement houses were built for immigrants on the Cherry Street in 1835.

<sup>236</sup> Mumford, *A város a történelemben*, 457.

investment into civil services and less opportunities for private entrepreneurs.<sup>237</sup> Besides, more money was spent on the infrastructure of collective civil services.<sup>238</sup> However, the lack of the water conduit, of the drainage system and essential sanitary units resulted in a stenchy atmosphere, which was a hotbed for epidemics.<sup>239</sup> There were also problems with the water supply; the unpaved and planked roads were often impassable because of the mud.<sup>240</sup>

Chicago was destroyed in 1871 because most of its buildings were made of wood. Mayor Roswell B. Mason tried to solve the crisis by asking for aid from other cities (Milwaukee, Detroit, Aurora, Quincy and Indianapolis). The *Chicago Relief and Aid Society* was founded in 1857 primarily as a charitable organization, and it helped organize the city as the mayor planned as the primary relief organization in the period after the Great Chicago Fire.<sup>241</sup> The “*Burnt District*” was around 2000 acres and the estimated damage was about 200 million dollars; only half of it was insured.<sup>242</sup> The essential services of the burnt downtown were relatively quickly replaced and set into other places. For instance, the post-office operated in the Methodist Church *pro tempore*; while stone and brick houses were the new fire-proof constructions instead of wooden houses.<sup>243</sup> The *Relief Bill* was soon established in order to assist the prompt renovation works, and to foster the use of tax-free construction materials. The complete renovation of the city was finished by October of 1872.<sup>244</sup>

<sup>237</sup> Glaab & Brown, *A History of Urban America.*, 182.

<sup>238</sup> Mumford, *A város a történelemben*, 441.

<sup>239</sup> Mumford, *A város a történelemben*, 425.& 429.

<sup>240</sup> Charles N. Glaab & A. Theodore Brown: *A History of Urban America*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967., 86.

<sup>241</sup> Bessie L. Pierce: *A History of Chicago*, Vol.III. *The Rise of a Modern City*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957. 8.

<sup>242</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, “The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory,” accessed May 15, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflog/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflog/index.html).

<sup>243</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, “The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory,” accessed May 15, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflog/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflog/index.html).

<sup>244</sup> Pierce, *A History of Chicago*, Vol.III., 16-17.



**Picture 8.**

Map Showing the Burnt District in Chicago, 3rd Edition; R. P. Studley Company, 1871 (ichi-02870)<sup>245</sup>



**Picture 9.**

Map of the Rebuilt Downtown; from *New Chicago*, 1872<sup>246</sup>

After the Great Fire, there was an aspiration to unify regionally different building codes. These codes regulated the building constructions both municipally and on the state level and ordered essential fire service, sanitary and safety arrangements. The building regulations were proposed by the insurance companies. The building codes were not obligatory, however, the insurance price of real estates built without building

<sup>245</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, "The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory," accessed May 12, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html).

<sup>246</sup> Chicago Historical Society and the Trustees of Northwestern University, "The Great Chicago Fire and the Web of Memory," accessed May 13, 2012, [www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html](http://www.chicagohs.org/fire/conflag/index.html).

codes were estimated for higher price insurance.<sup>247</sup> After the Debrecen's fires and Szeged's Great Flood of 1879, building codes were also established. Among the direct consequences of the Great Fire in Chicago were: the construction prosperity, the emergence of the Chicago Architectural School (Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan and William Le Baron Jenney), the appearance of the skyscrapers and the "fireproof building."<sup>248</sup>

Comparing the American urban planning scenarios with the Hungarian models provide a framework for an asymmetrical comparison. The different urban planning scenarios for renewals and strategies for survival show the emergence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban reform programs both in the U.S. and Europe. Moreover, the master plans and the reactions for natural disasters show similarities in the establishment of the cities' new building codes, in the mentality of citizens, and the reconstruction works. Strong leadership in the municipal government and the increased newspaper attention fostered the birth of new "founding myths" and identity formation in the cities devastated by natural disasters.

In Hungary, the regulation of the two main rivers, the Danube and the Tisza was unsolved. The embankment area of Budapest was built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On March 13-14, 1838, the icy River Danube destroyed Pest, and seriously damaged buildings. Only around a thousand houses remained untouched. In Buda, where many houses were built on hillsides, many houses collapsed and were seriously damaged; with around two thousand houses remaining. At that time, around 60,000 inhabitants became homeless, and 22,000 lost their property.<sup>249</sup> As a direct consequence of the 1838 flood, the regulation the Danube riverbed took place and protective embankments were built. Some part of the regulation of the River Tisza

<sup>247</sup> ENCARTA Encyclopedia 99.: "*Building Acts.*" Microsoft Corporation, 1.

<sup>248</sup> Glaab & Brown, *A History of Urban America*, 145.

<sup>249</sup> Némethy Károly, ed. *A Pest-Budai Árvíz 1838-ban*, (Budapest, 1938), 3.

was undertaken in 1846. The River Tisza had curved across the Great Hungarian Plain and often caused serious damage.



**Picture 10.**

The Flood of Pest and Buda in 1838<sup>250</sup>

## 2. 2. Urban Planning in Historical Perspective

The emergence of urban industrial societies with peculiar urban problems (such as the issues of sanitation and housing conditions) was a typically 19<sup>th</sup> phenomenon that a city dweller had to take into consideration. The early efforts to handle this problem reached back to Europe. According to Brian Ladd, “the academic discipline and administrative practice of city planning”<sup>251</sup> was born in the German Empire [*Deutsches Kaiserreich*] during the decades before World War I. In this sense, the German Empire became acknowledged as a leader in city planning, as Ladd argues, because of the strong governmental intervention to the plans above the municipal

<sup>250</sup> Accessed September 26, 2012.

[http://urbanista.blog.hu/2011/03/18/meddig\\_ert\\_a\\_1838\\_as\\_marciusi\\_arviz\\_pesten](http://urbanista.blog.hu/2011/03/18/meddig_ert_a_1838_as_marciusi_arviz_pesten).

<sup>251</sup> Brian Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany 1860-1914* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 1.



level. Moreover, the other aspect of city planning – besides the material reconstruction – was also an “intellectual reconstruction:” this was an “inseparable combination of economic, political, and moral motives impelled many influential members of the prosperous urban middle classes”<sup>252</sup> – for example, in the case of Szeged – to search for improving society in general. This resulted in the institutionalization of planning.<sup>253</sup>

The extension of cities at a global level followed the change of urban social and economic structures. The spatial arrangements, however, could not keep the same rate of growth. This gave way to the separation of the work spaces and dwelling spaces. Thus, developers (and also speculators) built according to the needs of the market rather than the needs of the inhabitants.<sup>254</sup> This also happened in Szeged: the government donated the old *Burg* to the city, which destroyed it for the sake of an elegant promenade with palaces. From the Middle-Ages, the center of Szeged was the so-called Castle Garden within the *Palánk* area around the castle, but with its demolition a new urban order and city center [*Belváros*] was outlined.<sup>255</sup> The center of the city shifted the New Town Hall on Széchenyi Square, instead of the old *Palánk*. The Szeged *Burg* up until its demolition lied in the middle of the present city center. The *Burg* was built in an irregular square-shaped way in the pale of the present Tisza shore, the present Vörösmarthy street, the east side of the Széchenyi square and on the line of the *Burg*. The *Palánk* was the outer fortress and a complementary part of the *Burg*. An inner city enclosure was called as *Palánk* till the Great Flood of 1879.<sup>256</sup> The

<sup>252</sup> Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany 1860-1914*, 2.

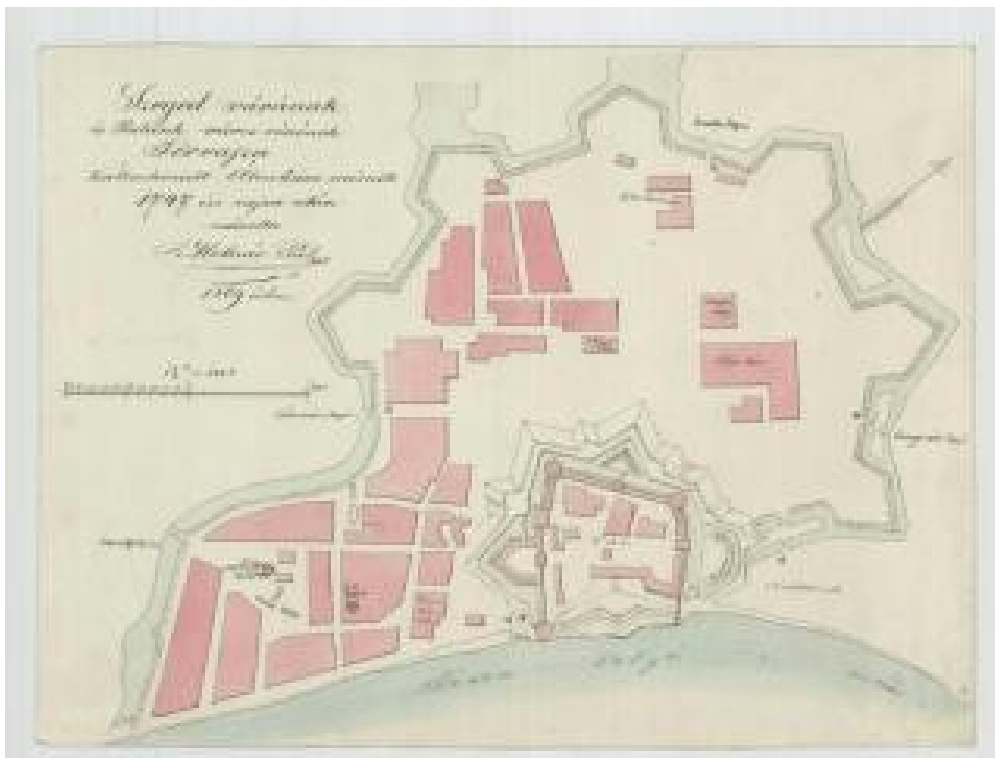
<sup>253</sup> Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany 1860-1914*, 3.

<sup>254</sup> Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany 1860-1914*, 78.

<sup>255</sup> Nagy Zoltán and Vágás István, “Lechner Lajos terve és annak végrehajtása,” [Lajos Lechner’s Plan and its Execution] in *Szeged története* 3/1 [A History of Szeged, 3/1], 169.

<sup>256</sup> Cs. Sebestyén Károly, *A szegedi Palánk* [The Szeged Palánk], (Szeged: Hírlapkiadó és Nyomdavidámlat Részvénytársaság, 1927), 4-6. The very word *Palánk* means pale, wooden or deck-plank enclosure. In the Middle Ages during the Ottoman occupation a lot of cities and city districts were surrounded by this deck-plank enclosure, which in many cases also gave the name for the given district. Szeged lied for centuries on distinct islands of the river Tisza washland, the *Palánk* area was one of these islands. The old *Palánk* was delimited by the area lining from the river Tisza shore,

*Palánk* are surrounded by a dike and a one or maximum one and half meter high fence. The outer dike, which surrounded the *Palánk* was for surface-drainage.<sup>257</sup> The *Palánk*'s street system originates from 1713, the streets were naturally developed not made by engineers and its directions were set by necessity and expedience. Károly Sebestyén Cs. regrets that after the demolition of the *Burg*, the government did not preserve the names of the old *Palánk* at least in the names of the streets. For instance, in the case of Vienna's *Am Graben*, which means "on the dike."<sup>258</sup>



**Picture 11.**  
Szeged's Burg and the Palánk area, 1869<sup>259</sup>

the south border-line of the Stefánia promenade, in front of the Kultur-palota [Culture Palace], then its borderline turns south from the Postapalota [Post Office Palace] in east and west direction, up until the Gizella square on the Kelemen and Zrinyi streets. From here the borderline lied in the southeast direction on the southern part of the Árpád street, on the area of the present Piarist Gymnasium up until the river Tisza again.

<sup>257</sup> Cs. Sebestyén Károly, *A szegedi Palánk*, 6.

<sup>258</sup> Cs. Sebestyén Károly, *A szegedi Palánk*, 10-14. The final demolition of the old *Palánk* buildings took place during the construction of the Votive-Church in the 1920s.

<sup>259</sup> Szeged várának és Palánk város részének térrajza [The Map of Szeged's Burg and the Palánk Area], 1869, Magyar Digitális Képeknyvtár [Hungarian Digital Image Library], accessed September 20, 2012, <http://www.kepkonyvtar.hu/?docId=9158>, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Térképtár [National Széchényi Library, Map Collection]

Szeged's reconstruction followed the Parisian and Vienna's Ringstrasse model. The growing role of industry and of private property in the cities, the emergence of middle-class political power and the increasing value of urban land changed the preconditions of Szeged's new urban planning. Baron Haussmann's plans to reshape Paris (under the control of Emperor Napoleon III) fulfilled both a practical and an aesthetic need<sup>260</sup> and aimed to exhibit political power through soldiers marches made possible by widening the main streets. Moreover, Hausmann's plans helped the construction of a new urban profile by straightening the facades of the houses with the separation of the public and private space and by regulating, numbering and paving of the streets. In this sense, the Paris that Haussmann creatively destroyed<sup>261</sup> can be considered as an *ur-text* within the context of modernity.<sup>262</sup> As Peter Hall writes, Paris was the European center for the network of art market and represented also the architects who transformed and transferred the concept and technology of city planning.<sup>263</sup>

According to László Gerő, the erasure of the traditional city centers and the reconstruction of the new ones in the age of Hungarian capitalism did not happen in a well-planned manner. These were rather spontaneous ideas of gifted reformers with visions for the future.<sup>264</sup> In the Reform Age, the propagator of new cityscapes was the nobility.<sup>265</sup> The town beautification movement of the Reform Age in Szeged was, for example, the forerunner of a greater boom in architectural investments after the Great Flood of 1879. This preliminary urban planning project was launched by István

<sup>260</sup> Nagy and Vágás, "Lechner Lajos terve és annak végrehajtása," 79.

<sup>261</sup> David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity. An Enquiry into the Origin of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 16-17.

<sup>262</sup> Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity. An Enquiry into the Origin of Cultural Change*, 25.

<sup>263</sup> Peter Hall, *Cities in Civilization. Culture, Innovation, and Urban Order*, London: Weidenfeld, 1998), 281-282.

<sup>264</sup> Gerő László, *Magyar városképek* [Hungarian Urban Images], (Budapest: É.M. Építőipari Könyv-és Lapkiadó, 1953), 63.

<sup>265</sup> Gerő László, *Történelmi városmagok. Építészeti hagyományok* [Historical Urban Cores. Architectural Traditions], (Budapest: Corvina, 1978), 38.

Vedres (1765-1830), a local engineer and himself a nobleman, who was the first remarkable patron of the urban modernization process of this South-Hungarian city. Vedres's urban planning activity included the construction of both public and private buildings. According to András Gergely, Vedres's urban planning activity became a tradition and created a kind of bourgeois aspiration and impetus for constructions.<sup>266</sup> His mentality changed the cityscape with the town beautification movement whose agents were the *Szépítő Küldöttség* [Beautifications Deputy] (1837) and later the better organized form of the *Város Szépítő Bizottmány* [Town Beautification Committee] (1848).<sup>267</sup> The program of this committee included the regulation of streets, the drainage of marshlands, and the defensive works against the recurring floods by considering Pest's architectural reshaping as a primary model. The Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-49, however, put an end to the first stage of urban planning.<sup>268</sup> Yet, the Compromise of 1867 gave stimulus for the town beautification movement. There was a tendency for building codes on the part of the civil society as a letter to the *Szépítő Bizottmány* [Town Beautification Committee] shows. The letter asks the engineer bureau for supervising the streets since as it is written: the streets are very narrow and fires often take place.<sup>269</sup> As the records of the meetings of the *Város Szépítő Bizottmány* [Town Beautification Committee] among the invited citizens' were Andor Zsótér, Antal Felmayer, György Neskovics, József Aigner and Károly Hoffer.<sup>270</sup> The list of these merchants coincides with the greatest tax-paying citizens [virilista] of Szeged.<sup>271</sup>

<sup>266</sup> Gergely András, "Vedres István," In Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds. *Szeged története* Vol. 2, 656-661. István Vedres came from a well-established craftsman-peasant family and graduated from the *Institutum Geometricum* as a gifted engineer and got a patent of nobility in 1826.

<sup>267</sup> Szeged Város Szépítő Bizottmányának iratai (1848-1871), [Documents of Szeged Urban Beautification Committee] CSML IV. B. 1110.

<sup>268</sup> Gergely, "Vedres István," 661.

<sup>269</sup> CSML 3408/4597, 1870. August 28.

<sup>270</sup> "Szeged Város Szépítő Bizottmánya iratai," [The Documents of the Szeged Town Beautification Committee], IV. B. 1110. 1870 March 21.

<sup>271</sup> Tamasi Mihály, *A régi, szegedi, gazdasági elit* (1870-1844), [The Old Szeged Economic Elite], (Szeged: Bába, 2001), 12-13, 19-20.

### 2. 3. *Revive Szégedin!*

The unexpected flood of 12 March 1879 destroyed almost completely the country's second largest urban site. More than 70.000 inhabitants had to be saved in a fast way. This was a vast undertaking and was carried out with the help of the army, under the leadership of Lieutenant-General Pultz. According to the existing statistics approximately 200 people were killed in this natural disaster.<sup>272</sup> The flood broke through the dikes of the Alföld railway lines with 25 meters wide long at Rókus district (in between the No. 97 and No. 98 guardhouses). The flood deluged firstly the Rókus and Felsőváros [Upper town] districts than it drowned the whole city by the morning. In the following days twenty trains were launched daily with homeless people to the surrounding cities and villages. In Szeged, 35 thousand people remained in shelter houses and the surrounding farms. The first general assembly after the Flood took place in the *Hungaria Hotel* on March 18<sup>th</sup>, which orders the building of barracks and three soup-kitchens for Szeged's inhabitants. Foodstuffs and financial-aids arrived to the city. From June 8<sup>th</sup> to August 25<sup>th</sup>, forty-four steam-engines which operated 144 pumps relieved 32,975816 m<sup>3</sup> water from the deluged city. The estimated overall damage was 11,811015 forints or 22 million 'korona' ['crowns'] and the death toll was 151.

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<sup>272</sup> Zombori István, "A szegedi nagy árvíz," [The Great Flood in Szeged] *Élet és Tudomány* 1979. III.9.: 291-294.



**Picture 12.**

Under the Ruins, Szeged<sup>273</sup>



**Picture 13.**

The Devastating Flood of 1879 in the Lower City<sup>274</sup>

<sup>273</sup> "Szeged árvíz, 1879," [Szeged Flood, 1879]. Photo by György Klösz, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1904/1953.

<sup>274</sup> "Szeged árvíz 1879," [Szeged Flood, 1879] Photo by György Klösz, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1898/1953



**Picture 14.**

The Surroundings of the Segítő-Boldogasszony Street during the Flood, 1879<sup>275</sup>



**Picture 15.**

The Palánk Area, Szeged<sup>276</sup>

<sup>275</sup> "Szeged árvíz, 1879," [Szeged, Flood, 1879], Photo by György Klösz, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1900/1953.

<sup>276</sup> "Szeged árvíz, 1879," [Szeged Flood, 1879] Photo by György Klösz, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1906/1953.

The Great Flood destroyed the city but could not wipe out the old district of the *Palánk*. After the flood there were only 265 houses and 5458 buildings, while 60,000 of Szeged's population became homeless.<sup>277</sup> Some buildings that remained usable were used as shelter houses. These were a *Szent-György iskola* [the Saint-George school], the *Minorita konvent* [the Minority Convent], the *Zsótér ház* [the Zsótér-house], the *árvaház* [the Orphanage], the *Fő Reál-Iskola* [the Main Real - school] and the *piarista gimnázium* [the Piarist Gymnasium]; later quickly built wooden temporary shelters were erected in *Új-Szeged* [New Szeged].<sup>278</sup> The city received – as Gusztáv Thirring argues – 57 million ‘*korona*’ [‘crowns’] in international financial aid.<sup>279</sup> The danger of epidemic was high because of the lack of drinking water; infections could be imminent since cemeteries were flooded and the work in the hospitals became impossible, while the city hall's work was also halted and could not run the city's *vis maior* issues. With the help of quick measures and fast operations, the city managed to avert further dangers.

Emperor Francis Joseph together with Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza quickly found a way to visit the devastated city.<sup>280</sup> The first visit was on March 17, 1879 a couple of days after the disaster followed by another visit on October 18, 1883, when the emperor inspected the reconstruction works. During his visit, the emperor promised to help making the city “more beautiful than before” [“Szeged szebb lesz,

<sup>277</sup> Kulinyi, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora*, 25.

<sup>278</sup> Új-Szeged [New Szeged] is now part of Szeged. It was a distinct *mezőváros* [oppidum; country town] and belonged to Torontal County. It was united with Szeged in 1880.

<sup>279</sup> Horváth A. János and Thirring Gusztáv, *Szeged és környéke részletes kalauza*, 8.

<sup>280</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új (Sic! Új) Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása*, 20. Sovereign Franz Joseph said upon his visit to Szeged in 1879: “Szívem fájdalommal vezetett ide. Magam is látni óhajtottam a szerencsétlen város bajait, melynek üdvét mindig szívemen hordtam. Azonban remélem, hogy Szeged újra fel fog épülni. Fájt a szívem, amikor láttam a nagy szerencsétlenséget. Nem kell búsulni uraim! *Van és lesz segítség. Lelkem legjobb reménye, hogy jobb idők is fognak jönni és hogy ezen derék város még föl fog virágozni.*” [I followed my heartgrief. I also wanted to see the miseries of this unfortunate city, which I took to my heart. However, I hope that Szeged will be rebuilt again. My heart was aching to see this great misery. Do not be sad, sirs. There is and there will be help. The best hope of my soul that better times will come and this valiant city will prosper once again.]



mint volt.”]<sup>281</sup> To reach this, King Francis Joseph appointed a royal commission led by Lajos Tisza (1832-1898), the brother of Kálmán Tisza for the reconstruction works.<sup>282</sup>



**Picture 16.**

King Francis Joseph's visit to Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879<sup>283</sup>



**Picture 17.**

Vágó Pál, *Szeged szebb lesz mint volt* (1902, oil canvas, 7×4 m, Móra Ferenc Múzeum [Ferenc Móra Museum])<sup>284</sup>

<sup>281</sup> Edmund Monson, “The Destruction of Szegedin,” *The Times*, Monday, Mar 24, 1879: 11; “The Emperor of Austria at Szegedin,” *The Times*, Thursday, Oct 18, 1883: 5; “A király Szegeden,” [The Sovereign in Szeged], *Budapest*, March 19, 1979

<sup>282</sup> Tóth Béla, *A szegedi Nagy-Árvíz képekönve. A küzdelem és újjáépítés 130 éve* [The Memorial Picture Book of the Great Flood in Szeged. The 130 years of Struggle and Reconstruction], (Szeged: Bába Kiadó, 2009), 123-125.

<sup>283</sup> Vízügyi Emlékmúzeum [Hidrographic Memorial Museum], accessed September 16, 2012. <http://www.atikovizig.hu/vizugyimuzeum/megnez.aspx?p=arviz/1879/ferencjozsef.jpg&c=Ferenc%20J%C3%B3zsef%20cs%C3%A1sz%C3%A1r%20l%C3%A1togat%C3%A1sa>.

<sup>284</sup> Margitay Ernő, “Vágó Pál,” *Művészet*, Vol. 10. No. 6. (1911), accessed September 16, 2012. <http://www.mke.hu/lyka/10/239-242-vago.htm>.



**Picture 18.**

Lajos Tisza's Statue in Szeged, 1905<sup>285</sup>

The reactions of the Hungarian, North-American and European media contributed considerably to the reconstruction by spreading the news about the disaster. The Emperor's visit to Szeged was not only an act of humanitarian relief and help; it raised the newly rebuilt city among other prominent cities of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This could have not happened in Hungary before the Compromise of 1867.

The events of the Great Flood had a strong impact on the works of Hungarian artists and intellectuals: the royal visit was recalled by a considerable number of articles and was immortalized by several drawings and paintings of Mihály Zichy (1827-1906), Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka (1853-1919) and Pál Vágó (1854-1928). Although Zichy had never been to Szeged, he sympathized with the people of the city, and through his art, he made efforts in Paris to help Szeged. Csontváry participated himself in the rescue operations, which appeared later in his intellectual and artistic

<sup>285</sup> "Szeged, Tisza Lajos szobor, Fadrusz János műve, July 12, 1905," [Szeged, Lajos Tisza's Statue by János Fadrusz, July 8, 1905] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1510/1963.

works. The flood-tragedy of Szeged was immortalized by Pál Vágó. He considered his work about the flood his main piece of art and considered it as a truly authentic picture<sup>286</sup> of the disaster. As a contribution to Szeged's reconstruction, the Esztergom Prebend Károly Somogyi (1811-1888), donated his private monograph collection to the city; a library was founded and opened in 1884.<sup>287</sup>

Artists and musicians joined to help also financially Szeged's reconstruction. The first charity concert for the benefit of Szeged's reconstruction was held on March 30, 1879. Jenő Hubay (1858-1937, Hungarian violin player and composer) and Károly Aggházy (1855-1918, composer and piano player) played at the concert. At the end of April 1879, a charity ball was organized in the Hotel Continental Paris. Afterwards, the editorial board of the journal *Le Figaro* organized a charity concert in the Paris Opera house<sup>288</sup> with invitation cards illustrated by Mihály Zichy.<sup>289</sup> The program of the charity concert at the Opera, in the aid of the inhabitants of Szeged (June 7) included *Marche Hongroise* (Berlioz); *Marche Héroïque* from "Szabady" (Massenet); *Valse* from "Sylvia" and *Czardas* from "Copelia" (Leo Delibes) with many other compositions as *The Musical Times* subjoins.<sup>290</sup>

It is less known that even Franz Liszt adopted and composed a piano play for the benefit of Szeged's reconstruction. Liszt revised Ignác Szabadi Frank's (1825-death unknown) original composition. The history of the composition is a double adaptation; originally it was a Turkish-Magyar Marche composed by Szabadi Frank and dedicated to Pasha Midhat and the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878. It was

<sup>286</sup> Szelesi Zoltán, "Festők az árvíztől," [Painters on the Great Flood of 1879] in Apró Ferenc, et. al. eds. *A szegedi Nagyárvíz és újjáépítés. Európa Szegedért.* [The Great Flood of Szeged and the Reconstruction. Europe for Szeged], 78.

<sup>287</sup> The directors of the Somogyi Library were respectively: János Reizner, István Tömörkény and Ferenc Móra.

<sup>288</sup> *Le Figaro* (Paris, April 24, 1879), Gallica Bibiliothèque Numérique, accessed May 30, 2012. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k277074x.r=Szegedin.langEN>.

<sup>289</sup> Tóth, *A szegedi Nagy-Árvíz képeskönyve. A küzdelem és újjáépítés 130 éve*, 133.

<sup>290</sup> *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 20. No. 437 (July 1, 1879): 384.

played on the occasion of the Paris World Exhibition in 1878. In Paris, Armand Gouzien picked up on the composition. Then Gouzien searched for the original composer, visited Szabadi Frank and bought the rights of the music from him. Jules Massenet (1842-1912) orchestrated it as *Marche Héroïque* and it was played in the Paris Operahouse on June 7th, 1879 for the benefit of Szeged's reconstruction.<sup>291</sup> Then the printed form of the music was published in the Hungarian newspaper *Pesti Hírlap* (June 24, 1879) dedicated to Franz Liszt, who adopted the composition to the piano entitled *Revive Szégedin! Marche Hongroise d(e) Szabady-Ochestree par J. Massenet, transcribe pour piano par Franz Liszt* [Live again Szeged!]<sup>292</sup>

The Flood Memorial on the bank of the River Tisza [made by György Segesdy in 1979] was erected for the centenary of the Great Flood of 1879. The black marble pillars leading the way to the aluminum sculpture immortalize the name of the cities that provided financial relief: Rome, Brussels, Berlin, Paris, London and Vienna. Szeged 'thanked' these towns by naming its new boulevards after these cities. Considerable donations came also from Denmark, Greece, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Russia, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Turkey, Romania, China, Japan, East-India, Algeria, Egypt, Argentina, Columbia, Haiti, Mexico, San Salvador and Uruguay, as immortalized on the marble pillars of the Flood Memorial that commemorates also the engineers and professionals who tirelessly worked for Szeged's reconstruction: builder István Kovács (1822-1902), gardener Mihály Süvegh (1859-1931), and builder Gregersen Gudbrand (1824-1910).<sup>293</sup>

<sup>291</sup> Hamburger Klára, "Bevezetés. Liszt Franz: Revive Szégedin!" [Introduction. Franz Liszt: Revive Szégedin!], (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1986)

<sup>292</sup> The original music of Franz Liszt's piano composition is treasured in the Somogyi Library (F.b. 2678). See the copy of the original manuscript by courtesy of the Somogyi Libarary, Szeged in the Appendices.

<sup>293</sup> Halmos Károly, "Gregersen Gudbrand," in Sebők Marcell, ed., *Sokszínű kapitalizmus: pályaképek a magyar tőkés fejlődés aranykorából* [Multicolour Capitalism: life stories from the golden age of Hungarian capitalist development], (Budapest: HVG, 2000), 58-71.

The construction and building plans that ultimately determined the cityscape were under the centralized control of the *Országos Építészeti Bizottság* [State Architectural Committee] which worked under this name from 1788 to 1867. After the Compromise, this committee was reorganized. Thus, cities had more freedom in reshaping their architectural cityscapes.<sup>294</sup> In Szeged, the advanced building codes were issued by Lajos Lechner (1833-1897) one of the city's most important architects and urban planners. These codes included the elimination of single storey buildings from the downtown and the construction of fireproof brick buildings that were insured by insurance companies (such as the new theater in Szeged).<sup>295</sup>

Lechner created the reconstruction plan after the Parisian Haussmann plan, and took further models after the Viennese Ring Strasse and the improvement plans of the contemporary Budapest. Lechner's plan included the construction of a big boulevard (38 meters wide) around a smaller one (30 meters wide) connecting the two with avenues.<sup>296</sup> The unique reconstruction plan was ready by the beginning of September 1879 and it included the following main points:<sup>297</sup>

1. The flood prevention and control of the city.
2. The creation of building codes, the arrangement and proper location of the city with a view to the expansion of the city in the future.
3. Reshaping the city for the sake of more organized trade, transport and traffic, e.g. paving the streets, building of new streets, a permanent bridge, and quay construction.
4. Public sanitation ordinances and infrastructures such as water conduit, street lightening and drainage system.
5. The arrangement and construction of public buildings and squares.

<sup>294</sup> Winkler Gábor, *Sopron építészete a 19. században* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988), 13.

<sup>295</sup> CSML, SZVT ir. 8080/196 [Szeged's Urban Planning documents] lt.sz. In the Archive of Szeged, there is the insurance of the Szeged National Theatre against fire (1886) which describes the mechanism of the contemporary insurance system.

<sup>296</sup> Dr. Veress Gábor, "Városrendezési terv és városfejlesztési program," [Urban Planning Draft and Urban Development Program], in Dr. Pálffy-Budinszky Endre and Hergár Viktor, *Szeged városépítési problémái* [Szeged's Urban Planning Problems] (Szeged: Prometheus nyomda, 1934), 9.

<sup>297</sup> Perényi Imre, *Városépítéstan. A városépítés története és elmélete* (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1978), 279-280.

6. Aesthetic considerations.<sup>298</sup>

Meanwhile, the Hungarian parliament issued two acts dealing with the reconstruction of Szeged: the XIX Article of 1879 and the XX Article of 1879. The first focused on the act of the dispossession, which ordered that in the interest of the reconstruction, the city could get lands for public buildings and squares. With this, the city received permission, for instance, to demolish the *Burg* in the *Palánk* district. This act entailed the reconstruction of the city on the basis of an up-to-date urban plan that met the requirements of flood prevention, transportation and trade interests. The second act ordered the appointment of the royal commissioner, Lajos Tisza. The technical manager of the constructions was Lajos Lechner.<sup>299</sup> Another act, this time issued in 1880 (Article XVII), determined the most important public constructions, including orders for building the quay, a permanent public bridge, of some more big and small boulevards and avenues, pleasure-gardens, a drainage system and the demolition of the old *Burg*. According to the local newspapers, the city celebrated the dispossession of the *Burg* by calling it as the gift of the King Francis Joseph. The local newspaper *Szegedi Napló* wrote that “in the place of the *Burg* a new splendid district would be built as the highlight of the city in a way that its stones will announce the goodness of the King.”<sup>300</sup>

However, not everybody celebrated the demolition of the *Palánk*’s houses, which came to an end by the 1920s. As Károly Cs. Sebestyén (1876-1956, Hungarian ethnographer and assistant to Ferenc Móra) recalls:

<sup>298</sup> Lajos Lechner, *Szeged Újjá Építése* [The Reconstruction of Szeged], (Budapest: 1891).

<sup>299</sup> Nagy Zoltán and Vágás István, “A királyi bizottság városrekonstrukciója,” [The Royal Commissioner’s Urban Reconstruction] in *Szeged története 3/1*, [A History of Szeged 3/1] 162-163.

<sup>300</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, April 13<sup>th</sup>, Issue 81<sup>st</sup>, Sunday, 1879.

For the sensitive human being it is painful to watch the demolition, even, when he knows that a new life will blossom instead of it. The city, the street and the houses resemble to living beings, since they are also living and dying just like human beings. Even if those streets were not beautiful, even if they were dingy and ragged; the old houses were full of the memories of the past and one part of urban history is fading away.”<sup>301</sup>



**Picture 19.**

The Palánk Area just before Demolition<sup>302</sup>

The expenses of the quay, the bridge, the embankment<sup>303</sup> and the bank of the flooded city were covered by the government while the city purchased loans from the state for other constructions. The total government loan was 15 million forints, which was determined in the Act of 1880: XX. From this money, 5 million forints was spent on public constructions and 10 million forints on private buildings. The government loan was given for 10 years at 6 % interest.<sup>304</sup>

<sup>301</sup> Cs. Sebestyén Károly, *A szegedi Palánk*, 3. “Az érző embernek fáj a pusztulás látása, még akkor is, ha tudja, hogy új élet fakad a nyomában. A város, az utca, a házak is hasonlatosak a szervezetekhez, mert ők is élnek, öregszenek s elmulnak, mint az ember. Ha nem is voltak szépek azok az utcák, ha kopottak, rongyosak is voltak a régi házak: tele voltak azért a múlt emlékeivel, s egy-egy darab várostörténet enyészik el velük.”

<sup>302</sup> Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds., *Szeged története 1849-1919*, [A History of Szeged], Vol. 3./1., 1849-1919, (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1991)

<sup>303</sup> Because of Szeged’s embankment, the ground floor of those houses which survived the flood became basements, in other words *souterrain*.

<sup>304</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, April 13<sup>th</sup>, Issue 81<sup>st</sup>, Sunday, 1879, 164.



**Picture 20.**

The Building of the Stone Embankment around the River Tisza, Szeged (1906-1908)<sup>305</sup>

Urban modernization was under the control of the royal commissioner, which was replaced by the *Középítészeti Tanács* [Public Architecture Council] from 1884 to 1903. According to Zsigmond Kuliny (a local journalist and editor, 1854-1905), the guiding principles of Lechner's reconstruction plan, including the introduction of electric street lightening in 1895, were quite up-to-date. After a relative recession in constructions at the end of the 1880s, from the middle of the 1890s the cityscape was enriched with Eclectic style palaces and buildings (during the second part of the 1890s) and Secession buildings (constructed between 1900 and 1913, e.g. Reök palota [Reök Palace]).<sup>306</sup>

<sup>305</sup> Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds., *Szeged története 1849-1919*, [A History of Szeged], Vol. 3./1., 1849-1919, (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1991)

<sup>306</sup> Novák István, "Fölről nézve..." ["Looking from Above..."] in *Lechner és Szeged: emlékülés Szeged Nagyárvíz utáni újjáépítője tiszteletére: 1997. november 21-22., Szeged* [Lechner and Szeged: Memorial Meeting in Honour of Lechner, Szeged's Rebuilder: November 21-22 1997] (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Urbanisztikai Egyesület, 1997), 21.





**Picture 21.**  
Szeged in the 1910s <sup>307</sup>

### 2. 3. 1. The Stages of Szeged's Urban Modernization and Planning

The urban modernization of Szeged underwent three main stages as the multi-volumed *Szeged története* [The History of Szeged] under the general editorship of Gyula Kristó states.<sup>308</sup> The first, between 1879 and 1883, was the major reconstruction period, followed by a relative a pause in the numbers of reconstruction. The first phase was framed and closed by the second arrival of the King to the city in 1883. The second phase of urban planning was the preparation for the Millennium celebrations (1896).<sup>309</sup> These included the construction of public buildings. The second phase of Szeged's architectural reconstruction coincided with the government of Baron Dezső Bánffy (1895-1899), a very strict government that achieved several

<sup>307</sup> "Szeged, 1910-es évek," [Szeged in the 1910s], photo by Tibor Dékány, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], M. 61/919.

<sup>308</sup> Initial thoughts developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city: the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest : CEU, Budapest College, 2005.

<sup>309</sup> The Millennium Celebration of 1896 was organized as a commemoration of the Settlements of the Hungarians in 896. The first underground railway in Continental Europe was finished in Budapest in 1896 and was the main venue of Millennium celebrations in Hungary. The Heroes Square was also a construction and one of the main places of the Millennium Celebrations.

political compromises. The Minister of Finance, László Lukács propagated the development of the urban infrastructures (the architectural and road constructions) and continued a number of initiatives inherited from the previous Wekerle government. The turn of the century – a transitory period imbued with political tensions revealing the delicate balance of the Dualist system – was dedicated to the Millennium celebrations.<sup>310</sup>

The third period of significant constructions was between 1900 and 1913. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of the reconstruction works, the Stefánia Promenade replaced the old Burg in the Palánk with apartment houses, hotels, cafés and the theater. The so-called ‘palaces’ of the city officers were built in the new city center situated in the *Széchenyi tér* [Széchenyi Square] close to the newly reconstructed Town hall. Another privileged construction space was the *Tisza Lajos körút* [Tisza Lajos Boulevard] with its public buildings and schools.<sup>311</sup>

These stages were marked by economic changes at the national and global level. The *Ipartámogatási törvények* [the Industry Support Acts] of 1881, 1890, 1899, and 1907 accelerated the rate of industrialization in the cities especially through the usage of modern construction materials for the construction enterprises.<sup>312</sup> I would argue, however, that the symbolic end of the reconstruction period was the building and finishing of the *Szegedi Dóm* [Votive Church]. In the spring of 1879 after the flood, the government decided to build a “monumental Catholic church” and the Catholic Church authorities took a ceremonial oath to build a gigantic Church as a remembrance for the tragedy of the Great Flood of 1879.<sup>313</sup> I would argue that

<sup>310</sup> Gergely, “Vedres István,” 424-425.

<sup>311</sup> Gergely, “Vedres István,” 424-425.

<sup>312</sup> Gergely, “Vedres István,” 348.

<sup>313</sup> Dusha Béla, *Az árvíz fogadalmi temploma* [The Votive Church of the Great Flood], (Szeged, 2005), 9.

Szeged's "monumental Catholic church" was built also as a worthy counterpart of Debrecen's *Református nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church].

## 2.4. Debrecen's Urban Planning in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

In Debrecen the fires of 1802 and 1811 and the responses of the municipal government were a division line in Debrecen's urban development. In the fire of 1802, the Northern part of the city (the Great Reformed Church and its surroundings) and in the fire of 1811, the Southern part of the city was destroyed. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen had to face the fact that its royal free town privileges were limited. The surface - drainage system and the sewage disposal were unsolved. A peculiar Debrecen feature was that the very word '*utca*' meant not only the present-day street but a district. Originally, there were six '*utca*' ['*districts*']: Csapó, Péterfia, Hatvan, Piac, Czegléd and Varga streets. The names of the streets were a natural naming and reflected the nature and profession of their inhabitants. Besides it Debrecen was divided into '*felsőjárás*' ['*upper town*,' inside the fence and the *palánk*] and '*alsójárás*' ['*downtown*']<sup>314</sup> Two of them had independent market holding rights: the Hatvan street and the Piac square. Every '*utca*' ['*district*'] had independent captains called '*utca kapitány*' ['*street captain*'], who supervised the streets, took part in fire service with the students of the Reformed College, took care of the cleanliness of the streets, and participated in the municipal administration.<sup>315</sup> Debrecen's inner city beyond the '*árok*' ['*dyke*'] was surrounded by the so called '*kertek*' ['*gardens*']: *Libakert*, *Csemetei kert*, *Csigekert*, *Köntöskert*, *Hatvan utcai kert*, *Villangó*, *Tócóskert*, *Miklós utcai kert*, *Vargakert*, *Német utcai kert*, *Boldogfalvi kert*. The municipal board prohibited the building of dwelling-houses in the '*kertek*' ['*gardens*']

<sup>314</sup> Dr. Nábrády Mihály, ed. *Debrecen utcanevei* [Debrecen's Street Names], (Debrecen, 1984), 23-24.

<sup>315</sup> Komoróczy György, *Városigazgatás Debrecenben 1848-ig* [City Administration in Debrecen till 1848], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei, 1969), 29.

till 1890.<sup>316</sup> The distribution of the districts also reflected the professional and religious affiliations. The railroad workers lived nearby the railway station, the gypsy musicians in the Késes street, the Catholics in the districts of the *Szent Anna templom* [Saint Anna Church], the Jews mainly in the Hatvan and Simonffy streets and the *cívís* citizens preferred the district of the Mester, Bethlen, Rákóczi and Miklós streets.<sup>317</sup>

In Debrecen's case the process of becoming a city from a village took place in a relatively slow space. In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the streets of the city are long, wide and unpaved. The old city center is surrounded with a dyke and had eight gates. The houses are simple a single storey buildings.<sup>318</sup> Debrecen was the second largest city by population after Budapest. On the basis of its juridical status and functionally it was considered to be a city. Since 59% of the population worked in the industry and commerce sphere and 40% of the population lived from agriculture. However, Debrecen lacked the features of urbanity in its appearance and was different than the German cities. In the downtown there were 2651 houses, the streets were dusty in the summer and mudded in the winter. The citizens walked on deck-planks and livestock also belonged to the cityscape because of the routine of the everyday life and the fairs.<sup>319</sup>

In Debrecen's civil service, the magistrate was abolished in 1850. János Csorba (1854-1859) became the mayor. Before that he was the mayor of Nagyvárad [Oradea] so he had no financial or any kinship relations in Debrecen. He executed the emperor's charter in the civil administration and the city public reacted sensitively for

<sup>316</sup> Dr. Nábrády Mihály, ed. *Debrecen utcanévei* [Debrecen's Street Names], (Debrecen, 1984), 29.

<sup>317</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," [Debreceniség (authentic Debrecen). A History of a Literary Notion and its Social Background], (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem, 1969), 42.

<sup>318</sup> Balogh István, "A városépítés első korszaka Debrecenben (1850-1872)," [The First Stage of Urban Planing in Debrecen, 1850-1872], 51.

<sup>319</sup> Balogh István, "A városépítés első korszaka Debrecenben (1850-1872)," 53.

the reduction of its privileges. However, in the long run, his contribution to Debrecen's modern urban image is undeniable. For the purpose of fire regulations, Csorba initiated the pavement of streets, drainage system, and expanded public street-lightening, had an interest for city beautiful movement, supported theater building and launched the establishment of the '*gazdasági tanintézet*' [*'economic teaching institution'*]. Mayor Csorba initiated a building regulation and the previously uncontrolled constructions ordered under the supervision of the municipal administration. These building codes prohibited the reed roofs and the constructions without official approval.<sup>320</sup>

In the period from the 1880s and lasting until the outbreak of First World War, in the first place the leadership of the city endeavored to develop a comprehensive fire-proof building code to satisfy the requirements of modern city planning. In 1883 the first comprehensive building regulations were created, which taking account of the existing street network and settlement structures, specified the establishment of healthy dwellings built of tough materials and provided with a fire proof roof. The building of outhouses beside the street was forbidden, the handling of waste and manure was regulated, and provision was also made for the construction of pavements for pedestrians. Starting from the 1890s some individuals (also belonging to the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]) supporting the civil demands, urged the modern development and improvement of the city. They fostered large scale street planning, the construction of an inner ring road, assisting traffic movement and reflecting the big city exterior, with well laid out streets and squares. There was no opportunity to realize the plans, partly for financial reasons, and partly because the fundamental establishments for existence of a city are (sewer, water mains, road surfacing and

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<sup>320</sup> Balogh István, "A városépítés első korszaka Debrecenben (1850-1872)," in Radics Kálmán, ed. *Hajdú-Biharmegyei Levéltár Évkönyve XXII.*, (Debrecen, 1995), 60.

street lighting also) had not yet been developed. Besides this, outside the historically developed inner city and suburbs, one section of the one-time vineyards, in spite of every prohibition, had started to be built-in with dwellings, without any form of planning. In spite of the prohibition, and later partial regulation by the leaders of the city, development of housing sites also started on the vacant ground lying between the vineyards. Taking account of this circumstance, in 1893 the city's engineering office prepared the city's first lay-out plan, with the aim of making it possible to keep to the uniform city planning and building regulations within the widely set limit. It did not have the opportunity to finalize the plan up to the first world-war.<sup>321</sup>

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the end of Imre Simonffy (1875-1902) mayorship, Debrecen was somehow elevated from its initial backwardness and set off to become a cultural center. Since 1908 only five apartment houses were built, which were private constructions. According to Károly Irinyi, a comprehensive urban development politics was lacking since the interests of the local politics blocked modern bourgeois development. Debrecen's ability for balancing among power relations originates from the Middle Ages when the city had to find balance among different powers and this also contributed to the city's capacity for constant renewal in the physical layout. The houses were simple and puritan partly because of the Calvinist tradition and they could be left behind easily in case the population had to escape from the city.

The intergrowth of leadership, religion and economy determined the decisions of the municipal government. Mihály Fazekas (1766-1828), for instance, was at the same time a botanist, a member of the municipal board, the bursar of the Reformed College and the city, and custodian of the Calvinist Church. From the urban planning,

<sup>321</sup> Balogh István, "A városrendezés első kísérlete Debrecenben (1887-1897), [The First Attempt of Urban Regulation in Debrecen, 1887-1897], in Radics Kálmán, ed. *Hajdú-Biharmegyei Levéltár Évkönyve XXIII*, (Debrecen, 1996), 166-167.

the biggest public constructions were lacking. As contemporary comparisons argue, Debrecen – in spite of its prosperous economic position and historical tradition - was lagging behind in development after Szeged, Arad [Arad], Kolozsvár [Cluj], Nagyvárad [Oradea], Kassa [Košice], Győr and Pozsony [Bratislava]. Debrecen did not take part in any urban competition. The attitude of its citizens and leaders were trapped in the somehow self-mythological political culture and mentality of ‘*debreceniség*’ [authentically from Debrecen].<sup>322</sup> This self-myth is not a distinct Debrecen feature since other nation states or even empires also apply it.<sup>323</sup> The ‘*debreceniség*’ [authentically from Debrecen] also coincided with the fact that the ‘*civis*’ rights were connected to land property in Debrecen, and were strictly regulated and also limited by the municipal board, which paid attention to the equilibrium of the ‘*civis*’ rights and the economic opportunities. As István Rácz argues, following the claim to strengthen the ‘*civis*’ rights, obviously the city had to exclude certain members of the society, more precisely, the foreigners (*contra privilegia civitatis*) that is the Greek merchants and Roman Catholics and the Jews.<sup>324</sup>

At the turn of the century, under the mayorship of József Kovács (1903-1914), state and local authorities invested into renewing the town by erecting statues and building new estates in Debrecen by changing the predominantly Classicist facade of the town.<sup>325</sup> Unlike Szeged, where the town had to be completely rebuilt, Debrecen had undergone minor but significant alterations. These visible changes were described in the first issue of the *Debrecen Képes Kalendárium* [*Debrecen Pictorial Almanach*] as follows:

<sup>322</sup> Irinyi Károly, *A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás változatai Debrecenben* (1867-1918), [The Political Public Thinking and Mentality in Debrecen, 1867-1918], (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem, Történelmi Intézet, 2002), 232-233.

<sup>323</sup> Gyáni Gábor, “Irinyi Károly: A Politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás változatai Debrecenben, 1867-1918,” *Korall* 11-12, (2010): 298-304.

<sup>324</sup> Rácz István, *A civis fogalma* [The Notion of the Cívis], (Debrecen: Különlenyomat a Debreceni Déri Múzeum 1985. évi Évkönyvéből, 1987), 82-83.

<sup>325</sup> Papp Antal, *Debrecen* (Budapest: Panorama, 1975), 72.

The spirit of modernization awakened Debrecen's citizens from their deep sleep and made them more receptive for beauty. The so-called Debrecen *cívís* – is now watching his neighbor building: a beautiful house on the location of a former thatched house. Following this example neat houses are constructed rapidly even in the side-streets. And in the main street, palaces, apartment houses and public buildings appear. Thus, Debrecen is so advanced in development that if a foreigner who had visited the city a couple of decades ago was to come again, he would simply not recognize it. The town has monumental buildings and neat, regulated, clean and paved streets; the local horse-train intensifies city life, while nicely decorated shop-windows on the main square and the locust trees lines alongside the main street gave the impression of a big city.<sup>326</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen's main street and its immediate surroundings began to be shaped as modern urban sites. In 1808, an important architectural ordinance recommended fireproof buildings but also took aesthetic principles into consideration. Thus, a conscious street regulation took place in 1811, which made street lines straight and even, controlled the distances between houses by opening new streets, which had basic sanitary and drainage system. From the 1820s on, local authorities put efforts into regulating the facade of houses; they banished the equeries and lavatories from the front side of the streets. The city dike was filled in 1862 and streets started to be paved; new public buildings (such as the '*vasút állomás*' [railway station], *Aranybika szálló* [the Golden Bull Hotel], the *Püspöki palota* [Bishop Palace] were built together with public transportation, a promenade and trees alongside the main street. Gas-light was also installed to light the streets.<sup>327</sup> The major achievements of the local authorities was the introduction of the gas light on the main city alleys between 1862 and 1863, the construction of the *Gazdasági Tanintézet* [Economic School, 1867] in the Nagyerdő [Great Forest] and the building of the permanent Theater (1861-1865).<sup>328</sup>

<sup>326</sup> "Debrecen képekben" [Debrecen in Pictures], *A Debreceni Képes Kalendárium* [Debrecen Pictorial Yearbook], Vol. 1. No. 1. (1900): 30-34.

<sup>327</sup> Siró, *Debrecen megpróbáltatásai*, 14.

<sup>328</sup> Szűcs János, *Szabad királyi Debreczen város történelme*, 3. kötet [A History of Debrecen, Free Royal City, Vol. 3] (Debrecen: 1871), 1055-1057.



The modern urban development of Debrecen – similar to Szeged - began after the Compromise of 1867. This was also the result of the work of a few enthusiastic local citizens, who established the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in 1890, helped the establishment of parks and monuments. The dissertation will focus on the impact of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] on the cityscape in Chapter Four. Katalin Sz. Kürti in *Régi Debreceni Városképek* [Debrecen's Old Cityscapes] wrongly refers to the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] founded in 1861 as a society after the Compromise of 1867 and as the main advocate of Debrecen's urban development.<sup>329</sup> Actually, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle, 1890] was the society which fostered urban modernization.

By 1910, the municipal government established an architectural board to further work on Debrecen's urban planning; the notary of the board was the young architect József Borsos (1875-1952).<sup>330</sup> Borsos worked for the modernization of Debrecen in the inter-war period: the Egyetem [university building]<sup>331</sup>, the Déri Múzeum [Déri Museum], the Nagyerdő sugárút [avenue of the *Nagyerdő* (Great Forest)], all were built on the basis of Borsos's designs, who later became the Chief Architect of the city.<sup>332</sup>

In spite of Debrecen and Szeged's similar geographical position in the Great Hungarian Plain and their historical heritage of agricultural market towns, the two cities show different urban development after the Compromise of 1867. There was a complete and unrivaled urban reconstruction in Szeged, all on the basis of the newest and latest European urban planning achievements after the Great Flood of 1879. The

<sup>329</sup> Sz. Kürti Katalin, *Régi Debreceni Városképek* [Old Urban Images of Debrecen], 16.

<sup>330</sup> HBML IV. B. 25/1909.

<sup>331</sup> Debrecen competed with Szeged for the third university place. Debrecen did not support Szeged's proposal, in which Szeged outlined a university. Szeged referred to itself as the cultural regional center of the Alföld (Great Hungarian Plain). Debrecen rejected the proposal since the city also wanted a university. HBML IV.B. 1405. 110/1880; 124/1880, 110

<sup>332</sup> Sz. Kürti, *Régi Debreceni Városképek*, 16-17.

King Francis Joseph's multiple visits to Szeged also show the city's important position in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (since after the Compromise, the city was not a province anymore). Meanwhile, Debrecen remained a product of a natural-spatial development with subsequent improvements, street lining and transformation of street network, with the historic core of Debrecen remaining almost untouched. Despite subsequent fires, Debrecen's urban planning went on slowly and only sporadically. A more conscious urban planning and infrastructure took place after the Compromise, and this changed the facade of the main street and its side-streets.

## 2.5. *Debrecen and Szeged's Cityscapes*

In Szeged, urban planning and architecture played a crucial role in the formation of the cityscape. One of the main functions of architecture here was to provide a unique, modernist identity. The stylistic pluralism reflected the heterogeneity of the Monarchy (and indirectly reflected upon issues involved in the Compromise), since there was no such thing as a homogeneous Monarchy style.<sup>333</sup> Szeged is depicted as a cityscape dominated by Eclectic architecture.<sup>334</sup>

The definition of Eclecticism is problematic. According to László Gerő, the Hungarian notion of Eclecticism corresponds to the stylistic pluralism or Historicism in the foreign scientific literature, which became a general style from the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> in Europe. Due to the interests of liberal capitalism, the number of private constructions increased, and most of the commissioners had bourgeois sources. Architects had to face the challenges of expressing the spirit of the Industrial Age mixed with new architectural forms by combining different layers of architectural styles. Often, the style of the building depended on its functional character, for

<sup>333</sup> Németh Lajos, "Art, Nationalism and the Fin-de-siècle," in Éri Gyöngyi and Zsuzsa Jobbágyi, eds. *A Golden Age. Art and Society in Hungary 1896-1914* (Budapest: Corvina, 1997), 19.

<sup>334</sup> Török László, *A szegedi eklektika* [Szeged Eclecticism], (Szeged, 1966), 5.

instance, a palace was usually built with Neo-Renaissance elements, such as the *Milkó palota* [Milkó-Palace (1893)], a museum with Neoclassical stylistic element, such as, the *Kulturpalota* [Culture Hall in Szeged (1895-96)].<sup>335</sup> Even the different congregations preferred some characteristic features to others, for instance, the Jewish one used to build their synagogues with Oriental elements just in the case of the New Synagogue in Szeged (1900-1903).

Before the city reconstruction private buildings dominated Szeged's cityscape. In other words, only the richest citizens were able to finance building mansions.<sup>336</sup> After the flood, the victims of the disaster were compensated in the form of construction materials and this led to more private house constructions. Moreover, the material had a standardized price, introduced by the so-called model-plans, which corresponded to the financial position of the house builders. There were twenty distinct model-plans and all of them were sold in a printed form for 12 fillérs. These model-plans, including the description and the estimated budget of the construction and the application forms for building permits,<sup>337</sup> contributed to the unified architectural image of the newly built Szeged.<sup>338</sup>

In the first phase of Szeged's urban reconstruction till 1883 included the following public building constructions and infrastructures on the basis of the Zsigmond Kulinyi's description:

<sup>335</sup> Gerő László, *Az építészeti stílusok*, [Architectural Styles], (Budapest: Holnap Kiadó, 2003), 116.

<sup>336</sup> Nagy Zoltán, "A tőkésgazdaság fejlődésének építészeti eredményei," [The Architectural Results of the Capitalism] in *Szeged története* 3/1, [A History of Szeged, Vol. 3/1] 113.

<sup>337</sup> Perényi Imre, *Városépítéstan*, 281.

<sup>338</sup> Here I would like to refer to Károly Vörös's work entitled as *Budapest legnagyobb adófizetői 1873-1917* [The biggest tax paying citizens of Budapest, 1873-1917] whose collection contributed to outlining the social history of Budapest from the point of view of the *virilisták*. This institution of *virilizmus* determined significantly the given hist period and was particularly strong in the countryside.

**State Constructions**

Közúti híd [Public Bridge (Eiffel-company, 1880)].....	1,825,255	ft
Rakpart [Bund].....	2,484,673	ft
Újszegedi kisajátítások [New Szeged Appropriations].....	1,086,500	ft
Szeged körtöltése [Szeged's Embankment].....	1,040,000	ft
Sövényházi védtöltés [Sövényház embankment].....	278,000	ft
All together: 6,714,428		ft

**Constructions of Certain Departments of State**

Honvéd laktanya [Honvéd Barrack(Győző Bachó)].....	567,000	ft
Honvéd tisztilak [Honvéd Officer's Barrack (Károly Meixner, 1880)]		
Pénzügyigazgatási palota [Monetary Administration Palace Győző Bachó].	297,000	ft
Posta-és távirda palota [Post and Telegraph Palace, (Károly Meixner)]....	153,000	ft
Polgári törvényszéki palota [Judiciary Palace, (Károly Meixner)].....	150,800	ft
Fenyítő törvényszéki fogház és kerületi börtön [Prison, Gyula Wagner]....	699,699	ft
Sóraktári épületek [Buildings of the Salt Store-House].....	57,000	ft
All together: 1,917, 499		ft

**Szeged's Constructions by the Royal Commissioner**

A város feltöltése, utcák nyitása[Embankment of the streets with 1,5 million stere ground and opening of new streets] .....	1.090,000	ft
Utca és terek kikövezése [Street and Square Pavements].....	1.260,000	ft
Főgyűjtőcsatornák kiépítése [Construction of Main Sewers].....	400,000	ft
Köztér és sétányok befásítása [The Afforestation of Public Parks and Promenades] .....	102,000	ft
A város rendezéssel járó kisajátítások költsége [The Expenses of Urban Planning Appropriations].....	830,000	ft
A vár lebontásának költségeit kiegyenlítette az anyagok értékesítése [The expenses of the Burg demolition were compensated by selling its parts]		
A Mars-téri laktanya-telep építése költsége [The Construction of the Barack Estate on the Mars Square].....	586,450	ft
All together: 4,268, 450		ft

**Szeged's Constructions from Financial Aids**

Polgári leányiskola (tervezte a kir. bizottság műszaki osztálya) [Civil Girl School planned by the engineering department of the royal commission].....	92,000	ft
Szegények háza (tervezte a kir. bizottság műszaki osztálya) [Alms-house planned by the engineering department of the royal commission].....	43,130	ft
Szabadkai-sugárúti óvoda [Szabadka avenue nursery school].....	13,300	ft
Kálvária kápolna [Calvary Chapel, (Andor Halmay)].....	23,000	ft
Rozália kápolna [Saint Rosalie Chapel].....	8000	ft
All together: 174,430		ft

**Szeged's Own Constructions**

Városháza [the Town-Hall (Gyula Pártos, Ödön Lechner, 1883)].....	230,000	ft
Városi színház [City Theatre (Ferdinánd Fellner and Hermann Helmer, 1883 and 1886)].....	450,000	ft

Újszegedi vigadó [Ujszeged Vigadó].....	32,500 ft
Stefánia-téri kiosk [Kiosk at the Stefania square].....	13,320 ft
Alsóvárosi népiskola [schoolhouse in the downtown].....	46,935 ft
Belvárosi fiúiskola [school for boys in the city center].....	69,128 ft
Alsóvárosi óvoda [nursery school in the downtown].....	12,000 ft
Rókusi plébánia [Rókus Parish].....	4,300 ft
Közkórház [Public Hospital].....	9,000 ft
Felső szivattyú-telep [Upper Pump Estate].....	25,177 ft
Alsó szivattyú-telep [Down Pump Estate].....	34,715 ft
A város által 24 utcában épített csatornák [Drainage of 24 streets].....	70,200 ft
A város által 15 utcában teljesített feltöltések [Embankment of 15 streets]....	58,830 ft
A város által 15 utcában épített kövezetek [Pavement of 15 streets].....	24,000 ft
All together: 1,137, 165	

### **Ecclesiastical Constructions**

Református egyházközösség temploma, parokiája és iskolája [The Temple, Parish and School of the Reformed Congregation]	
Evangelikus egyházközösség temploma, parokiája és iskolája [The Temple, Parish and School of the Lutheran Congregation]	
A zsidó hitközségi új fiúiskola [New Jewish School for Boys].....	125,000 ft
Felsővárosi óvoda [Upper Town Nursery School]	
Rókusi óvoda[Rókus Nursery School]	
Belvárosi óvoda [Inner City Nursery School]	
Katolikus tanítóképző [Catholic Training School]	
Zsidó árvaház [Jewish Charity-School]	
Zsidó leányiskola [Jewish School for Girls].....	195,000 ft

### **Other City Infrastructures**

Street pavement from 1883 to 1899 .....	299,624 ft
Public Gardens from 1883 to 1899 .....	528,000 ft
A körúti-, Mars-téri, újszegedi, valamint artézi vízvezeték, artézi fűrt kútak [artesian wells and water-conduit on the boulevard, Mars Square and New Szeged]..	94,368 ft
Műutak [roads].....	482,597 ft

### **Private constructions**

54 two-storey buildings.....	3.140, 000 ft
381 multi-storey buildings.....	8,691,000 ft
3404 single storey buildings.....	9,693,000 ft
737 single storey back-yard houses.....	269,000 ft
4558 steadings.....	802, 000 ft
1228 temporary buildings.....	61,000 ft
All together: 22,656,000 ft <sup>339</sup>	

**Table 4.**<sup>340</sup>

<sup>339</sup> Kulinyi, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása*, 148-157.

<sup>340</sup> Kulinyi, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása*, 156

With the means of architecture, which played an essential role in the urban prosperity, Szeged reached a significant modernization standard by the turn of the century. The reconstruction plan was the imprint of the time's Historicism. The stylistic pluralism of Szeged's architecture fitted into the mainstream Central European tradition of architecture. Moreover, architecture in Szeged was crucial in creating the city's unique self-identity. In Debrecen's case, 19<sup>th</sup> century was a division line in its cityscape. The two decades after the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence in 1848-1849, Romanticism in architecture ruled and altered its cityscape. The theater was built in 1865 in Romantic style and the *Kistemplom* [Small Church] was renovated in 1876. In the second phase of urban planning, architecture remounted to Classicist style with the town beautification movement of the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association, 1861]. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new construction wave included the construction of multi-storey palaces of Eclecticism: including the new *Aranybika* [Golden Bull] Hotel, the *Püspöki Palota* [Episcopal Palace] – which also functioned as water-tower- or the *Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara Székháza* [Hall of the Commercial and Industry Chamber].<sup>341</sup> However, Debrecen was lagging behind Szeged and other cities in respect of modern urban constructions and infrastructure.<sup>342</sup>

<sup>341</sup> Mazsu János, "Század/Ezredvégi Gondolatok Debrecen Fejlődéséről," [Thoughts on Debrecen's Fin de siècle Development] In Angi János and Barta János, ed. *Emlékkönyv L. Nagy Zsuzsa 70. születésnapjára* [Memorial Book for L. Nagy Zsuzsa's 70th Birthday], (Debrecen: Multiplex Media-DUP, 2000), 301-302.

<sup>342</sup> Gyáni Gábor, "Városnak lenni vidéken," [To be Urban in the Countryside], In Györi Róbert and Hajdú Zoltán, eds. *Kárpát-medence: települések, tájak, régiók, térstruktúrák* [The Carpathian Basin: settlements, landscapes, regions and space structure], (Pécs-Budapest: Dialóg Campus Kiadó, 2006), 70.



**Picture 22.**

The Public Road Bridge Connecting Szeged with Újszeged (United in 1880)<sup>343</sup>

In the following, the subsequent main points will serve as venues for comparing Debrecen and Szeged's urban images: main squares, main streets, town halls, market places, churches, theatres, cultural institutions, places of leisure time and the folk houses.

### 2.5.1. Main Squares

Both in Debrecen and Szeged the main squares were the very spirit of these cities. In Debrecen the main square is the continuation of the long Piac utca [Piac street], where the daily and weekly markets had been held. The main street, Piac utca [Market Street] dominated Debrecen's cityscape and was stretching from the railway station to the *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church], one of the main symbols of the town, the "Calvinist Rome." The side-streets were perpendicular to the main street. In the center of the city, stands the impressive Classicist building: the

<sup>343</sup> "Szeged közúti híd, 1885," [Szeged Public Road Bridge, 1885] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 4126/1958.

*Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church]. Behind the *Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church] is the building of the *Kollégium* [Reformed College]. In Szeged, the main square is a regular squarish place dominated by the imposing building of the Town Hall. Both squares gave place to markets and fairs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, after Szeged's reconstruction, the function of the main square off-centered for symbolizing the power of the city by the town hall and for recreational purposes and leisure time.

In Szeged, the preservation of the downtown buildings was limited to the Széchenyi Square (before the Flood it was named as Szabadság square). The Stefánia and the Promenade by the River Tisza were aimed to replace the 'barren' Burg with their new public spaces. On the location of the Burg, several building sites were designated for future public buildings: *the Dóm* [the Votive Church], a "*városi színház*" [the Theatre], the *Hungária Hotel*, and the *Stefánia Promenade*.

The symbolic message of the chosen architectural forms was to preserve the traditional trade center role of the city which was combined with new road constructions. From the Middle-Ages, Szeged had the monopoly of salt transportation. Therefore, after the flood the city council focused on improving this trade area by building stores for salt at the River Tisza with a view to the possible economic expansion towards the South.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, May 13rd, 1879.





**Picture 23.**

Szeged, Main Square before the Flood, 1872<sup>345</sup>



**Picture 24.**

Szeged Main Square during the Great Flood of 1879<sup>346</sup>

<sup>345</sup> "Szegedin Hauptplatz," [Szeged Main Square, 1872], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 655/1960.

<sup>346</sup> "Szeged árvíz, 1879, Városház tér," [Szeged Great Flood, 1879, Main Square, György Klösz], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1897/1953.

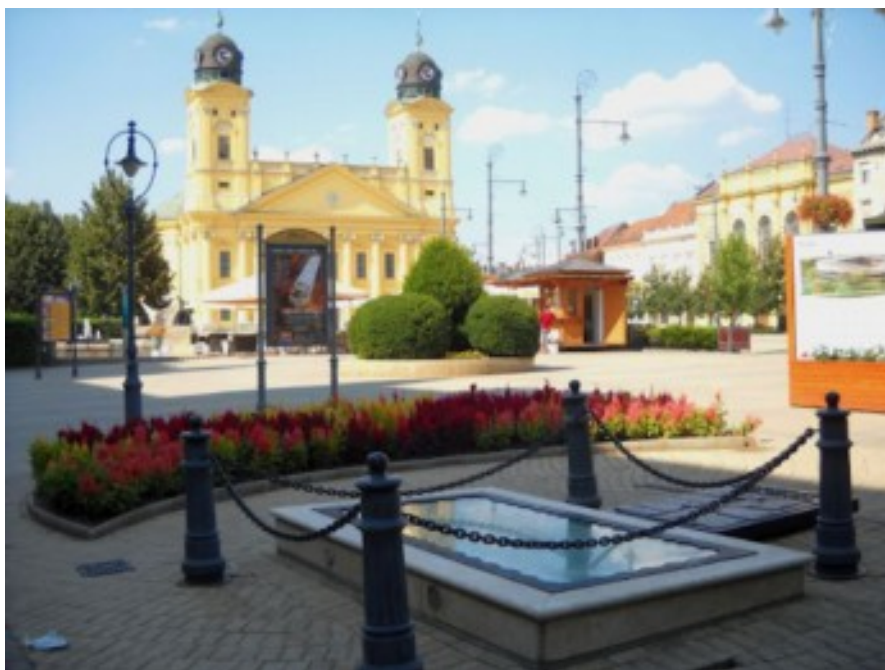


**Picture 25.**

Szeged, Main Square, 1910 after the Great Flood<sup>347</sup>

One of peculiar characteristic feature of Debrecen's main square was the plank road the *Nagyhíd* [Great Bridge] leading from the *Fehérló* [White Horse] Inn to the Reformed Church. It was eliminated after Debrecen's paving. An excavated part of the plank road is exhibited on the present-day main square of Debrecen.

<sup>347</sup> "Szeged, Főtér, 1910," [Szeged, Main Square, 1910] Photo by Kornya J. Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 83/205.



**Picture 26.**

The Excavated Part of the Plank Road Exhibited on the Present-Day Main Square of Debrecen<sup>348</sup>

The *Megyeháza* [the Hajdú County Hall] (Piac utca No. 54, planned by Zoltán Bálint and Lajos Jámor from 1911 to 1912) still stands on the main street of Debrecen. This building is especially famous for its Zsolnay granite<sup>349</sup> and its stained glass windows manufactured by Károly Kernstock (1873-1940, Hungarian Avantgarde artist. The facade has also Zsolnay pyrogranite decoration (the festoon of flowers and the statue of four armed Hajdú soldiers). The ceremonial hall is the Árpád Hall, where the general assembly of the municipality kept its sessions.<sup>350</sup>

Besides municipal buildings there were an increasing number of various commercial houses on the *Piac utca* [Piac Street]. Piac utca No. 57 is the house founded by the glass trader Endre Kaszanyitzky; the building was finished by 1852

<sup>348</sup> Accessed September 15, 2012.

<https://picasaweb.google.com/111632595102347837174/DebrecenAVasarvarosPiacai#5778504576011680690>.

<sup>349</sup> The Zsolnay Factory was established by Miklós Zsolnay (1800-1880) in Pécs, Hungary, and is a Hungarian manufacturer of porcelain, tiles and stoneware. The Zsolnay porcelain received worldwide recognition by demonstrating its products at world fairs and international exhibitions, including the 1873 World Fair in Vienna, and then the 1878 World Fair in Paris, where Zsolnay brought home a Grand Prix. See more about the factory on its homepage: [www.zsolnay.hu](http://www.zsolnay.hu).

<sup>350</sup> Sz. Kürti, *Régi Debreceni Városképek*, 16-17.

after its rebuilding several times, it still preserves its Neo-Baroque, Neoclassicist and Eclectic features. The corner house between Piac utca [Market Street] and Arany János utca [Arany János Street] was once a commercial house as the Mercury figure over its facade indicates. The other interesting corner house was built in 1874 in romanticist style for József Csanak, who was a merchant and the main patron of the town's culture. Mór Jókai (1825-1904, writer) and Miklós Izsó (1831-1875, sculptor) lived in Csanak house during their visit to Debrecen. Arany János utca [Arany János Street] No. 3 is an impressive Eclectic building. Piac utca [Piac Street] No. 26-28 was built between 1912 and 1913 by Károly Pavlovits, and is typical of the Hungarian Secession style.<sup>351</sup>



**Picture 27.**  
Debrecen Main Street, 1885<sup>352</sup>

<sup>351</sup> Papp, *Debrecen*, 75.

<sup>352</sup> "Debrecen főutca," [Debrecen, Main Street, 1885], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 81.1181.



**Picture 28.**

The Right Side of the Main Street with the Degenfeld Palace and the Reformed Church, Debrecen, 1903<sup>353</sup>



**Picture 29.**

The Main Street [Market Street = Piac utca], with a view to the Degenfeld Palace, the Town Hall and the Reformed Church, Debrecen, 1903<sup>354</sup>

<sup>353</sup> "A fő utca jobb oldala, Debrecen, 1903" [The right side of the main street, 1903, Dr. Jankó János] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F5331/b.

<sup>354</sup> "A fő utca jobb oldala, Debrecen, 1903" [The right side of the main street, 1903, Dr. Jankó János] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F5331/c.





**Picture 30.**  
The Main Street, Debrecen, 1909<sup>355</sup>

### 2.5.2. Town Halls

Town halls are the symbols of the political and municipal power. Moreover, the town halls represent the idea of the bourgeois identity and also characterize the mentality of its citizens, that is, how they imagined social power. Hungary's development followed Central European traditions but had a unique path, different from other, Western European countries. After the Compromise of 1867, Hungarian art had two functions: on the one hand to legitimize the new power, on the other hand, it was the site of the 'counter-culture' which undermines the new state.<sup>356</sup> A crucial exponent of this history through architecture was Ödön Lechner (1845-1914),<sup>357</sup> who planned the New Town

<sup>355</sup> "Főtér," [Main Square (Street), 1909, Haranghy György] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F10565

<sup>356</sup> Németh, "Art, Nationalism and the Fin de Siècle," 19.

<sup>357</sup> Ödön Lechner's created the Hungarian model for the Secessionist architecture. His pre-modern architecture is on the waiting list for the UNESCO's World Heritage List. Retrived from Natural Office of Cultural Heritage, [www.koh.hu](http://www.koh.hu).

Hall of Szeged. Lechner intended to create a peculiar Hungarian style by experimenting with “patriotic references” within the “vocabulary of Historicism.”<sup>358</sup>

Functioning as a market-place for centuries, the Széchenyi Square with the municipal center of the New Town Hall, remained the center of the city in the reconstruction period, too. This square is one of the largest squares in Hungary, surrounded by artistic statues and a row of palaces. A few of its remarkable historical buildings are the *Városháza* [Town Hall], the *Zsótér-ház* [Zsótér-house], and the *Tisza Szálló* [Hotel Tisza].<sup>359</sup> In 1883, Ödön Lechner and Gyula Pártos enlarged the building of the Old Town Hall, which was previously planned by István Vedres from 1799 to 1805. Lechner kept the old structure and outlay of the building with the tower preserving and strengthening the Baroque style of the ornaments of the gates, windows, balconies and ledges, moreover, one more floor was built upon the building.<sup>360</sup> Rebuilt in Eclectic Neo-Baroque style, the Town Hall is located on the northern side of the *Széchenyi tér* [Széchenyi Square].

<sup>358</sup> Ilona Sármany-Parsons, “Hungarian Art and Architecture 1896-1914,” in *A Golden Age. Art and Society in Hungary 1896-1914*, edited by Gyöngyi Éri and Zsuzsa Jobbágyi, (Budapest: Corvina, 1997), 34. Cf. Ilona Sármany-Parsons, “Magyarországi Városházépületek a századfordulón,” [Hungarian Town Halls at the Turn of the Century], transl. Csák Lilla. *Történeti Tanulmányok III. A KLTE Történelmi Intézetének kiadványa*, Debrecen, 1994, 53-65.

<sup>359</sup> Mészáros, *Szeged*, 9.

<sup>360</sup> Nagy Zoltán, “A rekonstrukció építkezései,” [The Constructions of the Reconstruction Period], in *Szeged története* 3/1., [A History of Szeged, Vol. 3/1], 178.



**Picture 31.**

The New Town Hall, Szeged, 1883<sup>361</sup>



**Picture 32.**

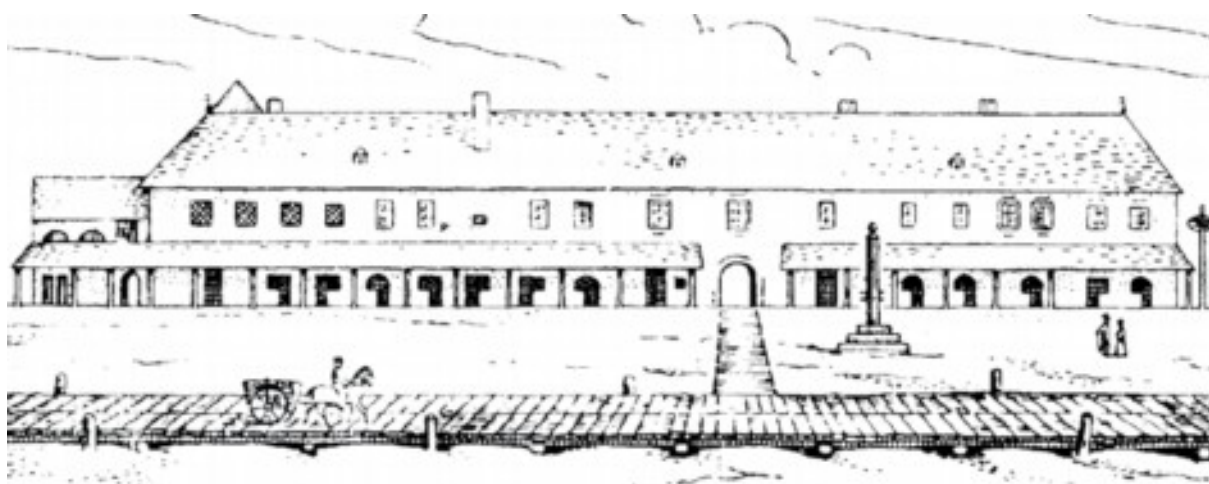
Szeged Main Square with the Town Hall, 1910<sup>362</sup>

<sup>361</sup> Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds. *Szeged története 1849-1919*, [A History of Szeged], Vol. 3./1., 1849-1919, (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1991),

<sup>362</sup> "Szeged Főtér, 1910," [Szeged Main Square, 1910], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum], Historical Photo Collection, 83.205



The Town Hall in Debrecen as compared with Szeged's town hall reflects a clear-out and simple form of Classicist facade. On the east side of the *Piac utca* [Piac Street] the corner house is giving place to town hall for more than four hundred years. The town hall was built from three "*cívis*" houses and for practical reasons nineteen shops were working downstairs. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the magistrate decided to build a new town hall and the fire of 1802 further impaired the building. The first plans were made by Mihály Péchy (1755-1819), who also designed the *Kollégium* [Reformed College] and the *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church].<sup>363</sup> The construction of the town hall was a prolonged process partly because of the indecisiveness of the municipal administration and also because of the lack of genuine interest. In 1823, Pál Beck, royal commissioner's plans were accepted. Finally the constructions began in 1825 with the building of the prison. Then the construction halted for ten years and there was also an earthquake in 1836 which demolished the building. The final form of the town hall finished in 1844 and the first town assembly was held on May 8<sup>th</sup> 1844.<sup>364</sup>



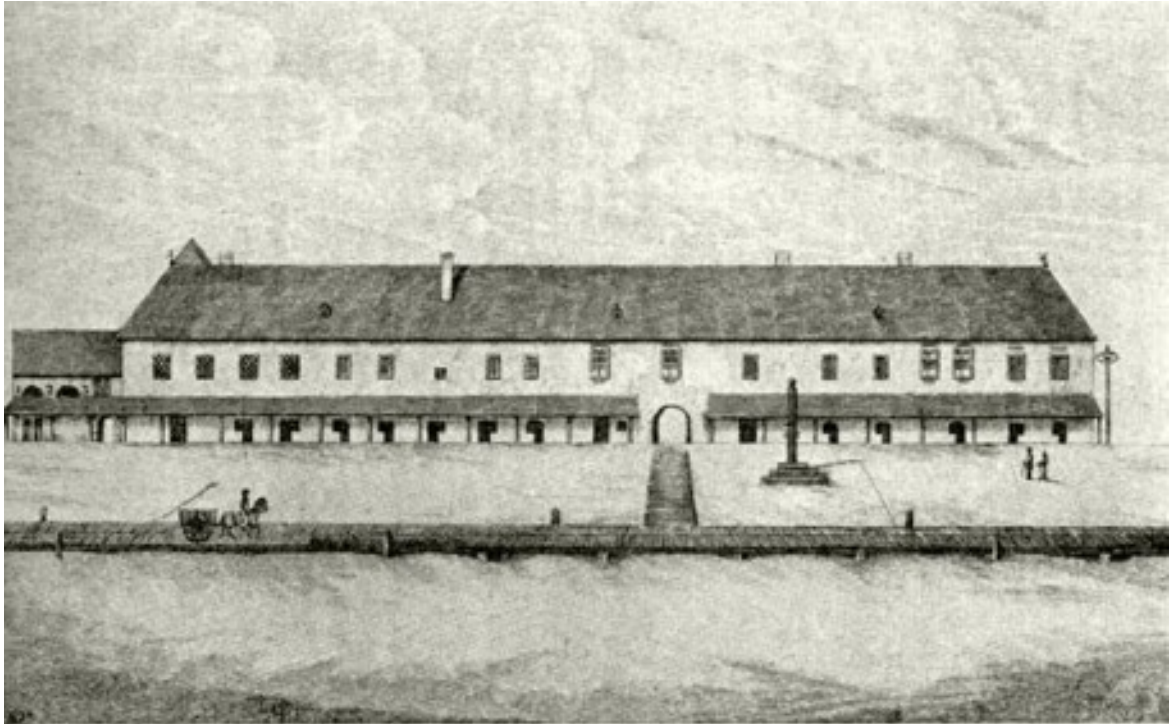
**Picture 33.**

The old Town Hall in Debrecen with the "*Nagyhíd*" [Great Bridge; plank road]<sup>365</sup>

<sup>363</sup> Papp József, "Debrecen székháza: a reformkori városháza," *Disputa*, Vol. 4. No.4., (2006): 42.

<sup>364</sup> Papp József, "Debrecen székháza: a reformkori városháza," 43-45.

<sup>365</sup> Papp József, "Debrecen székháza: a reformkori városháza," 42.



**Picture 34.**

Debreceen Town Hall in the 16-17th century, Built in 1582, Demolished in 1839-1840<sup>366</sup>



**Picture 35.**

Debreceen's New Town Hall<sup>367</sup>

### 2.5.3. *Market places*

The rhythm and center of the everyday life was the market, which was also a venue for exchanging goods and information and also a place for social life. The location of the markets was usually the main square or street of the city. Debreceen and Szeged were also important market towns from the Middle Ages and owe their development

<sup>366</sup> Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár [National Széchenyi Library], accessed September 27, 2012. <http://mek.oszk.hu/09100/09175/html/39.html>.

<sup>367</sup> Papp József, "Debreceen székháza: a reformkori városháza," 43.

to the market and commerce. This market center position had an identity forming power for these two cities on the Great Hungarian Plain.

Szeged's economic importance lied on the fact that it is at the meeting of two great rivers, the River Tisza and Maros, which connects the city with two grain productive lands the *Bácska* [Bačka] and the *Bánság* [Banat], and connected also to *Erdély* [Transylvania]. Szeged regained its economic importance from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the development of the short-sea on the River Tisza. Szeged became the center of the grain, crop and livestock trade. Also it stimulated the industry of shipwright. The appearance of steam boating and the construction of railways lines altered Szeged's position in many ways. The more perfect vehicles at the same time centralized and decentralized commerce. In 1854, the railway construction reached also Szeged, which entailed an increase in its economy. However, in 1857, the railway lines were expanded to Temesvár [Timișoara] and Szeged's terminal position ceased. Since the stations in Banat began to sell their products directly to Buda and Pest, and to the Austrian market, Szeged's holding position came to an end.<sup>368</sup> Instead of commerce, Szeged turned to agriculture. Meanwhile Temesvár's [Timișoara] answer for challenge caused by the railway was different; it turned to industry and had important food, machine- and textile factories. In 1891, only 27% of the population lived from commerce and industry in Szeged; meanwhile in Temesvár [Timișoara], also called as "Hungarian Manchester," this rate doubled.<sup>369</sup> With the emergence of railway transportation, the significance of fairs also decreased. The rural customers, with the means of good public transportation, could

<sup>368</sup> Tonelli Sándor, *A szegedi kereskedelmi és iparkamara ötven éves története, 1890-1940*, (Szeged: Széchenyi Nyomda, 1940), 8-9.

<sup>369</sup> Gyáni Gábor, "Az urbanizáció Magyarországon a 19-20. században," *Limes*, 1998/2-3. 89. Personal Discussion with Gábor Gyáni, Budapest, 2012. August 30, 2012.

move more freely and had more opportunity to visit directly the capital and other market towns, and were not limited to the smaller number of fair events.<sup>370</sup>

Debrecen was located at the encounter of trade routes, which predestined its market center position. King I. (Nagy) Lajos (1326-1382) donated the privilege and elevated position of *oppidum* in 1361 to the city. From the 15<sup>th</sup> century (1467), Debrecen got the rights to held fairs two times yearly. István Báthory (1477-1534) centralized the fairs to one location, which was the place in front of the town hall in 1582. From this time, the location of the market and fair was Debrecen's main street from the *Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church] to the *Szent-Anna utca* [Saint Anna Street].<sup>371</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the market and its usage as a social sphere underwent several transformations. The alteration of the social sphere could be reflected in the transformation of the built environment, the relations, attitudes and expectations towards the environment and the way different groups used the spaces. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the general tendency of *haussmanization* included the demolition of the old, in many cases unhealthy, inner cities for the sake of a new, regulated, fire-proof, avenue-boulevard system and modern downtowns with good sanitary conditions.<sup>372</sup> Generally speaking, both in Debrecen and Szeged, the decline of the dominant space usage and the transformation of the fair and market places could be seen.

<sup>370</sup> Tonelli Sándor: A szegedi kereskedelmi és iparkamara ötven éves története, 1890-1940.

<sup>371</sup> Miklóssy Ferenc and Gulyás Judit, eds. *Cívis kalmárok és iparosok* [Cívis Merchants and Craftsman], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, 2010), 34.

<sup>372</sup> Kosárkó László, "A piac és a korzó. Társadalmi térhasználat Miskolcon az 1850-es és az 1920-as évek között," [The Market and the Esplanade], accessed September 27, 2012, <http://www.szazadveg.hu/files/kiadoarchivum/46kosarko.pdf>.



**Picture 36.**

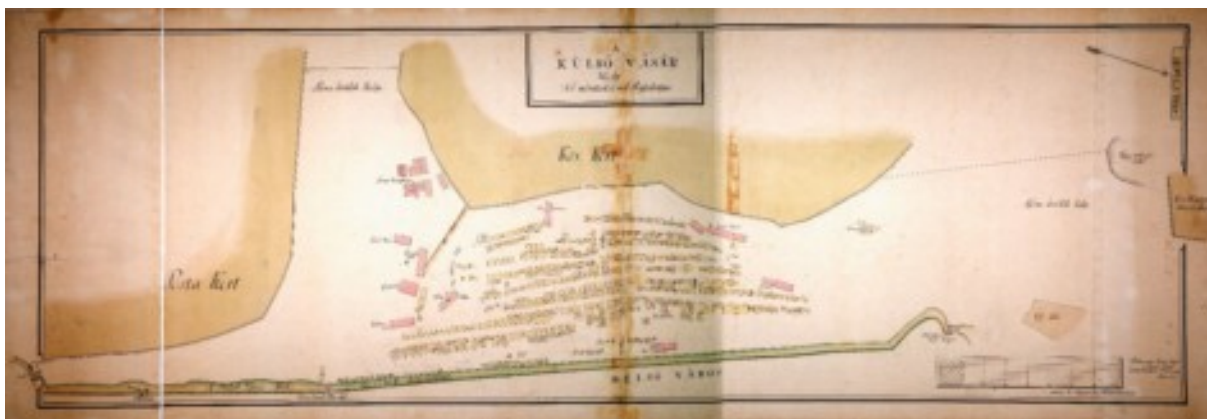
Debrecen Piac utca [Piac Street] Engraving, 1861<sup>373</sup>

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ordinances regulated the markets in the city by changing the common law. The market regulation laws became centralized and more regulated, acted upon the changing relations, needs and interests, which became also a cause of permanent conflicts, debates, applications and petitions.<sup>374</sup> For instance, Simon Gyergyovics, huckster presented a reclamation in which he explains that he had been selling vegetables on the Décsi sor [Décsi line] but he was relocated without any notification to the Simonffy utca [Simonffy Street] in 1901.<sup>375</sup> The planning, regulation and “civilizing” of the market place was raised several occasions in the municipal administration. Beyond doubt, in Debrecen the initiation of tram transportation caused a significant change in the market place.

<sup>373</sup> Országos Széchényi Könyvtár [National Szécheyni Library], accessed September 27, 2012, <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/img/4-239b.jpg>.

<sup>374</sup> Kosárhó, “A piac és a korzó. Társadalmi térhasználat Miskolcon az 1850-es és az 1920-as évek között,” 22-23.

<sup>375</sup> HBML, IV.B. 1405/b 200, IV/48/1908, 11164/1901, July 30, 1902.



**Picture 37.**

Külső vásárhely felmértetésnek rajzolatya, Kováts György, 1794, 115x40 cm [The Map of the Outer Fair Square, the present-day Segner Square]<sup>376</sup>

In Debrecen, the outer fair<sup>377</sup> place was beyond the dykes of the city and was used only in the summer till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The winter fairs were held in the city on the main street. The weekly markets and the shops were also located on the *Piac utca* [Piac Street].<sup>378</sup> Then in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the town beautification movement, the new street regulations, and the appearance of the public transportation, the *Piac utca* [Piac Street] gave up its original function in the 1920s. The municipal board renamed the *Piac utca* [Piac Street] as *Ferencz József út* [Ferencz József Ride] in 1915. From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the ‘*úri vásár*’ [‘gentleman fair’] was differentiated from the ‘*parasztvásár*’ [‘peasant fair’]. The general fair took place on

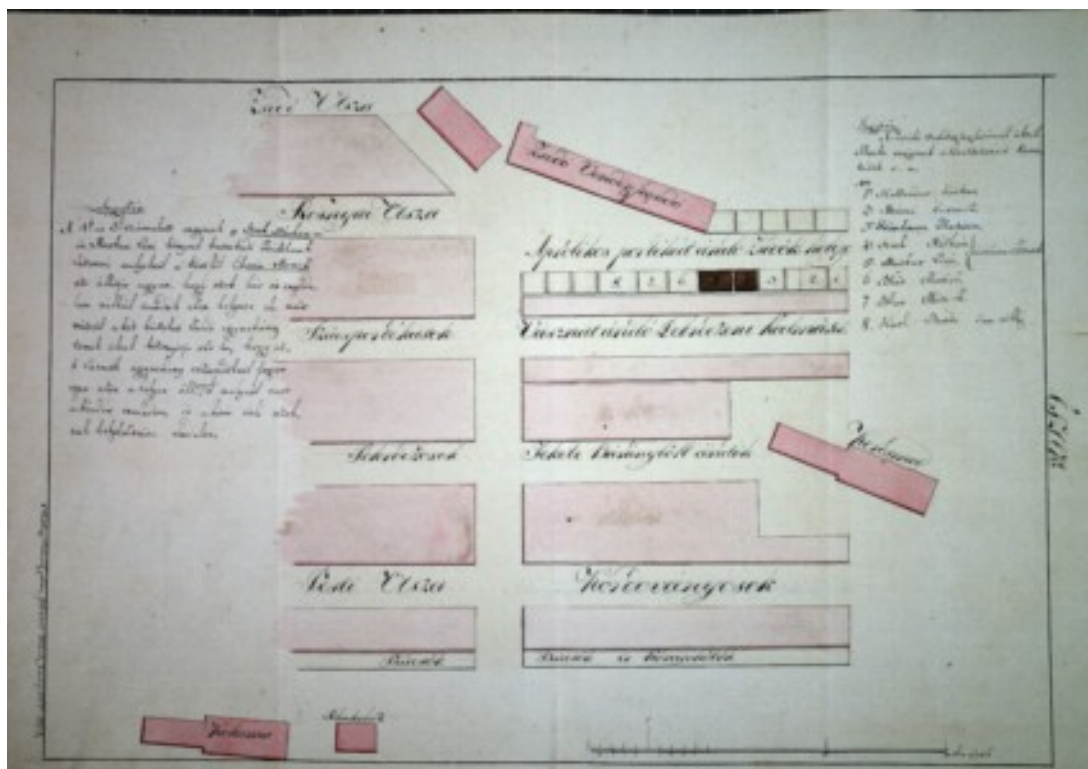
<sup>376</sup> HBML, DvT 73

<sup>377</sup> Csűrös Ferenc, “A fonatos-soron,” [On the Braided Array] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1908, 69-71. “A debreceni híres országos vásáron egyedül ödögök fel s alá. Nézem ezt a sok sürgő-forgó népet, amint ad-vesz, veszekszik, alkuszik, tülekedik. Árusok kínálkozása, kocsizörgés, állatok bögése, kolomphang, jókedvű parasztlányok vihogása kábító zsvivajban elegyedik össze. (...) A debreceni vásár századok óta mindig nagy tömegeket hozott össze. Régen is érdekes sokadalom volt... **A városi élet keveredik itt össze a paraszti élettel. Érdekes nézni az előbbi mint gyurja, formálja a maga képére az utóbbit...**” [On the famous national fair of Debrecen I was wandering around all alone. I am watching these people always on the move, the way they are selling products, arguing, bargaining, scrambling. The offering of the sellers, the rustle of cars, the bray of animals, the laugh of cheerful peasant girls all it is mixed in a mesmerizing fuss (...). The Debrecen fair attracted huge crowds for centuries. In the past it was also an interesting fair... **Urban life is mixing with the peasant life. It is interesting to watch how the previous one changes and forming the peasant life for its image.**] (emphasis mine)

<sup>378</sup> Iván Orsolya, “Vásár és Piac,” [Fair and Market] in Besze Tibor, et. al., eds. *Források Debrecen Újkori Történetéből* (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Bölcsészeti Szakkollégiuma, 1992), 99-100. Fair regulations, IV.A. 1011/n.5./ HBML.



the market squares, on the street, while the gentleman fair was a social occasions where the propertied and the wholesale dealers met in the *Aranybika* [Golden Bull] in to arrange cash-business and barter. Moreover, Debrecen was connected with the Hortobágy with a wide road for cattle driving. The '*hídi vásár*' ['the bridge market'] at the Hortobágy bridge was legalized in 1892.<sup>379</sup>



**Picture 38.**

A külsővásártéren felállított sátrak és árusítóhelyek térképe [The Map of the Outer Fair with Booths and Stands], Liszkay Sámuel, 1823, 38x26 cm<sup>380</sup>

<sup>379</sup> Miklóssy Ferenc and Gulyás Judit, eds. *Cívís kalmárok és iparosok*, 35.

<sup>380</sup> HBML, DvT 500, Rel. civ. Debr. 19/1828.



**Picture 39.**

A Nagy Csapó utcai rész vagy Ló vásár környékén levő telkek vázlata a telektulajdonosok nevének feltüntetésével, [Map of the Nagy Csapó Street Piac and the Horse Fair], Kováts György, 1815, 45x35 cm<sup>381</sup>

Among the regulations were the constructions of stalls. Géza Aczél, Chief Architect of Debrecen, made plans for the stands of the *Dégenfeld tér* [Dégenfeld square] in 1899.<sup>382</sup> Aczél also asked the municipal government for ordering the pavement and asphaltting of the *Dégenfeld tér* [Dégenfeld square] beyond the *Tisza palota* [Tisza palace]. Moreover, he asked for sanitary regulations and the construction of permanent stalls made from iron on the basis of his plans.<sup>383</sup> In 1902, the ‘építési

<sup>381</sup> HBML, DvT 990, IV.A. 1004/4.

<sup>382</sup> Piac rendészeti iratok [Market Regulation Documents], IV.B. 1405/b 196; IV. 21/1899, HBML

<sup>383</sup> HBML, IV.B. 1405/b 196; 1094/1899.



*bizottmány*' [Building Committee] ordered the regulation of the market on the *Dégenfeld tér* [Dégenfeld square] where the bread market was.<sup>384</sup>



**Picture 40.**

Dégenfeld Square Market with Wooden Stalls<sup>385</sup>

Because of the arrangement of the *Dégenfeld tér* [Dégenfeld square], the bread market was placed temporary to the *Csapó utca* [Csapó Street] in 1902. In 1902, a group of merchants, Luszting and Bán, Feldman, Fridman, Leidmann, etc. whose shops were on the *Simonffy utca* [Simonffy Street] wrote a petition to the '*építési bizottmány*' [Building Committee] in which they expressed their discontent that the market in the *Simonffy utca* [Simonffy Street] was still not ready and open to the public. In their petition, they expressed that they had bought their shops on the *Simonffy utca* [Simonffy Street] because of the forthcoming opening of the market in hope of future customers and clients. They made an application for the '*építési bizottmány*' [Building Committee] to open the market on the *Simonffy utca* [Simonffy Street], the west side

<sup>384</sup> HBML, IV.B. 1405/b 196; 109/1899

<sup>385</sup> Magyar Elektronikus Köpkönyvtár [Hungarian Digital Photo Library], Accessed September 27, 2012. <http://www.kepkonyvtar.hu/>,

for the milk and dairy products, and for selling fish, as well.<sup>386</sup> In 1902, the *Magyar Asphalt Részvénytársaság* [The Hungarian Asphalt Public Company] in a letter expressed their contract with the municipal government.<sup>387</sup> A printed form of another contract displays the general conditions in the subject of setting up iron booths on the *Simonffy utca* [Simonffy Street]. These conditions took into account the building codes and security regulations. Moreover, it offered warranty for the product and insurance against fire-loss.<sup>388</sup>



**Picture 41.**

The Simonffy utcai [Simonffy Street] Market, or Fish- Alley, where the Fish Mongers, the Milk Market and the Shambles were<sup>389</sup>

<sup>386</sup> HBML, IV. B 1405/b 200, 16732/1902.

<sup>387</sup> HBML, IV. B 1405/b 200, 339/292.

<sup>388</sup> HBML, IV. B 1405/b 200, 83/1538.

<sup>389</sup> Accessed August 27, 2012.

<https://picasaweb.google.com/111632595102347837174/DebrecenAVasarvarosPiacai#5454555363374020178>



**Picture 42.**

Zsendia Market, Debrecen, 1909<sup>390</sup>



**Picture 43.**

The Main Street [=Piac utca=Market Street], Debrecen, 1903<sup>391</sup>

<sup>390</sup> Zsendia Piac [Zsendia Market, 1909, Nagy Miklós], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F10575.

<sup>391</sup> "A fő utca jobboladal, Debrecen, 1903" [The right side of the main street, 1903, Dr. Jankó János] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F5331/d.





**Picture 44.**  
Csapó Street Market, Debrecen<sup>392</sup>



**Picture 45.**  
Csapó Street Market with Costers, Debrecen<sup>393</sup>

<sup>392</sup> Csapó utcai piac [Csapó Street Market, 1919, Haranghy György], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20854.

<sup>393</sup> Csapó utcai piac tyúk kofákkal [Csapó Street Market with Hen Costers, 1919, Haranghy György], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20855.



**Picture 46.**  
Fair Scene, Debrecen, 1919<sup>394</sup>



**Picture 47.**  
People's Fair, Debrecen<sup>395</sup>

<sup>394</sup> "Vásári jelenet," [Fair Scene, 1919, Haranghy György], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20936.

<sup>395</sup> "Embervásár," [People Fair, 1919, Haranghy György], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20950.



**Picture 48.**

A View from the Fair Square, Debrecen<sup>396</sup>

In Szeged, the *Széchenyi tér* [Széchenyi Square] as market place was decentralized because of the landscaping of the square. The *Széchenyi tér* [Széchenyi Square] gave place only to the craftsman booths and the fruit market. The selling of the milk and dairy products moved to the *Klauzál tér* [Klauzál square]. All the other markets were transported to the closest locations of the *Tisza Lajos körút* [Tisza Lajos Boulevard] and to the *Valéria tér* [Valéria Square, now Bartók Béla Square]. The general market was hold in the section from the *Dugonics tér* [Dugonics Square] to the Lutheran Church. On the *Kálvin tér* [Kálvin Square] market were the wine and the reed-mace market. In 1904, the general assembly regulated the order of the markets, which was approved by the ministry for home affairs in 1906. Shops were inside the ring of the *Tisza Lajos körút* [Tisza Lajos Boulevard], while those shops specialized for farmers

<sup>396</sup> “Részlet a vásártérről,” [Detail from the Fair Square, Debrecen, 1919], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20948.

and villagers, - where the weekly markets were also, - were located on the Tisza Lajos körút [Tisza Lajos Boulevard] and the side streets.<sup>397</sup>

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were nationwide fairs five times yearly in Szeged: February 17, May 5, July 31, October 10 and November 30. The Szeged fairs – especially concerning the manufactured goods could be matched with the Debrecen fairs. The locations of the fairs were on different parts of the city. The livestock and cart fair were in Rókus district, the wheat market was on the *Búza tér* [Búza Square, now Dugonics Square] till 1872, then it was moved to the *Szent István tér* [Saint Steven Square].<sup>398</sup> Despite the regulation instructions and orders, the plan of a roofed market hall was materialized only a couple of years ago on the *Mars tér* [Mars Square], which belonged previously to the army. The *Mars tér* [Mars square] was banked up, and was supplied with drain and plumbing only in 1932.<sup>399</sup>

<sup>397</sup> Gaál Endre, “A kereskedelem, a hitelügy, az ipar,” [Trade, Commerce and Industry], In Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds. *Szeged története 1849-1919*, [A History of Szeged], Vol. 3./1., 1849-1919, (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, 1991), 394-395.

<sup>398</sup> Gaál Endre, “A kereskedelem, a hitelügy, az ipar,” 394-395.

<sup>399</sup> Kovács József, *A szegedi piac* [The Szeged Market], (Szeged: a Szegedi Alföldkutató Bizottság Kiadványa, 1933), 25.





**Picture 49.**  
Szeged Fair on the Main Square before the Flood of 1879



**Picture 50.**  
Weekly Market in front of the Kulturpalota [Culture Palace], Szeged, 1910s, (now Ferenc Móra Museum).





**Picture 51.**

Szeged, Chicken Market (the present-day surroundings of the Anna-Fountain)<sup>400</sup>



**Picture 52.**

Costers in front of the Kultur Palota [Culture Palace, present-day Ferenc Móra Museum, Szeged], 1905<sup>401</sup>

<sup>400</sup> *Délmagyarország*, accessed September 27, 2012. [www.delmagyar.hu](http://www.delmagyar.hu).

<sup>401</sup> "Szeged, Kenyér piac" [Bread Market, Szeged, 1905, Sebestyén Károly], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F15261.

The costers selling products on the ‘*gyalogpiac*’ [‘*walking market*’] and the weekly markets were peculiar figures of the rhythm and everyday life of Szeged. Their witty and crispy speech characterized the public milieu of the city.<sup>402</sup> The situation and movement of all the ‘*gyalogpiac*’ [‘*walking markets*’] followed the daily routine and rhythm of the city.<sup>403</sup>



**Picture 53.**  
Bread Market, Szeged, 1905<sup>404</sup>

#### 2.5.4. Churches

Debrecen and Szeged’s religious repartition show crucial differences between these two cities. Debrecen was a predominantly Calvinist city. However, in the Middle Ages, Debrecen evolved from the fusion of couple of villages with Catholic temples: Szentlászlófalva, Debrecum, Szentmihályfalva and Boldogasszonyfalva. The *Szent*

<sup>402</sup> Dr. Báttaszéki Lajos, “Alföldi Képes Emlékkönyv,” [Alföld Pictorial Memorial Book], (Arad: Széchenyi Irodalmi Intézet, 1887), 174.

<sup>403</sup> The urban rhythm analysis of the city would provide another perspective on reading the cityscape, the different forms of movement and spatial arrangement that can be a further development of the project. Ben Highmore, *Cityscapes. Cultural Readings in the Material and Symbolic City*. (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2005) 8-12.

<sup>404</sup> “Kenyér piac, Szeged, 1905” [The Bread Market, Szeged, 1905, Sebestyén Károly] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F15261.

*András templom* [Saint Andrew Catholic Church] was built at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Gothic style. In 1564, the Church burnt to the ground in one of the fires which often burnt in the city. The building was rebuilt as a Calvinist Church named *Szentháromság templom* [Holy Trinity Church], which was also destroyed by a fire in 1802. The present-day *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church] was built from 1805 to 1821 on the basis of the Catholic *Szent András templom* [Saint Andrew Catholic Church].<sup>405</sup>



**Picture 54.**  
Great Reformed Church, Debrecen<sup>406</sup>

<sup>405</sup> Szöllősi Gyula, ed. *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete* [Hajdú-Bihar County's Monuments, Literary Art Relics and Folk Art], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Tanács Műemlékvédelmi Albizottsága, 1985), 47-53.

<sup>406</sup> Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár [National Széchenyi Library], accessed September 27, 2012. <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02185/html/241.html>.

Moreover, the monastery of the Dominican Fathers stood on the present-day place of the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College]. This *palimpsest* of the churches and institutions symbolizes also Debrecen's religious history that is the different layers built upon each other. In 1552, the Catholic orders were expelled to leave Debrecen and Catholicism was allowed to settle down again in 1716.

The *Szent Anna templom* [Saint Anna Church] was built by the initiation of Count Imre Csáky (1672-1732), Várad Bishop, Kalocsa Archbishop then later Cardinal.<sup>407</sup> After the Ottoman occupation, Debrecen could get back its free royal town privilege on condition of the religious freedom practice of Catholics and building a Catholic Church (in 17<sup>th</sup> century only one Catholic family lived in Debrecen, the royal tax-collector). The first plan of the Church was made by János Keresztély from the Carlone family in Eger. The building of the Church took place at a very slow pace starting from 1719 to 1746. In 1746 the church was consecrated but without the tower. The half-ready building was burnt to the ground by the fire of 1811. As part of its reconstruction, Ferenc Povolny, Debrecen master builder finished the two towers (just like the towers of the *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church]) and the final facade in Neo-Baroque style.<sup>408</sup>

<sup>407</sup> Hapák József and Keresztesiné Várhegyi Ilona, *Szentebbül megújult. A debreceni Szent Anna székesegyház* [Renewed by a More Sacral Way. The Saint Anna Cathedral] (Debrecen, 2010), 15.

<sup>408</sup> Szöllősi Gyula, ed. *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete* [Hajdú-Bihar County's Monuments, Literary Art Relics and Folk Art], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Tanács Műemlékvédelmi Albizottsága, 1985), 62-64.



**Picture 55.**

Saint Anna Church, Debrecen<sup>409</sup>

The *Református Kistemplom* [Reformed Small Church] stands alongside the *Piac utca* [Piac Street], This Church bears also the name of *Csonka templom* [the Church with the Truncated Tower]. Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century the place of the temple was a simple wooden platform for worship. Due to its simple construction it was even known as the ‘szín’ [‘setting’]; then received the name of ‘*kistemplom*’ [‘small church’] as a differentiation from the ‘*nagytemplom*’ [‘Great Church’] on the main square. During the Rákóczi War of Independence, the ‘*kistemplom*’ [small church] was deconsecrated by the occupying imperial forces and used as a stable. The fire of 1719 destroyed the wooden ‘*kistemplom*’ [‘small church’] which was rebuilt and was able to accommodate up to 1600 people. In 1727, the building was seriously damaged by yet another fire and it took four whole years to restore it. Its special *Copf* (plaited) style pulpit was made in 1790; the organ was built by István Kiszely in the middle of the

<sup>409</sup> Debreceni Városi Könyvtár [Debrecen City Library], accessed September 27, 2012. <http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/szechenyi/>.



last century. The onion-shaped helm roof on top of the church was damaged by a heavy storm in 1907. It was then repaired, but later the wind brought down the whole tower-top. To prevent such further damages, a bastion-like tower was constructed without a helm roof. Since then, it is called as *Csonka templom* [the Church with the Truncated Tower]. The church is a good example of the variation and layers of different styles. The originally Baroque building was renovated several times and bears the styles of Romanticism and Neo-Roman.<sup>410</sup> Debrecen's streets were also banked up with ground after the subsequent fires, just in the case of Szeged after the flood. Twelve steps downstairs to the interior of the "*kistemplom*" ["small church"] shows the almost two meters high embankment of the street.



**Picture 56.**

Piac Street with the Reformed Small Church, 1903<sup>411</sup>

<sup>410</sup> Szöllősi Gyula, ed. *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete* [Hajdú-Bihar County's Monuments, Literary Art Relics and Folk Art], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Tanács Műemlékvédelmi Albizottsága, 1985), 61-62.

<sup>411</sup> "Piac utca kis templommal, 1903, képeslap" [Piac Street with the Small Church, 1903, postcard], Magyar Digitális Képeknyvtár [Hungarian Digital Image Library], accessed: June 10, 2012. OSZK Plakát- és Kisnyomtatványtár, 75823/92507. [www.kepkonyvtar.hu](http://www.kepkonyvtar.hu).



**Picture 57.**  
 “Kistemplom” [“small church”], Debrecen<sup>412</sup>

The railway line and the old railway station were built by 1857; however, by 1900 the old railway station was demolished and an impressive, new station was built instead. Nearby the railway station stood Debrecen’s second synagogue on the present-day *Petőfi tér* [Petőfi Square] built in 1897. The *Debreceni Zsidó Hitközség* [Debrecen Jewish Synagog] was founded in 1854. Most of the Jewish population settled down in Debrecen from Hajdúsámson in the 1840s. The first synagogue was built in the 1800s in the *Pásti utca* [Pásti Street]. The second synagogue was decayed in the World War II.<sup>413</sup> The survivors of the Holocaust offered the building to the city for public usage and for renovation. During the renovation because of the unguarded workmen, a fire broke out and demolished the roof of the synagogue. It was demolished in the 1960s.<sup>414</sup>

<sup>412</sup> Accessed September 28, 2012, <http://www.orszagalbum.hu/kep.php?p=54213>.

<sup>413</sup> Cf. Klein, Rudolf, *Zsinagógák Magyarországon, 1782-1918: fejlődéstörténet, tipológia és építészeti jelentőség* [Synagogues in Hungary, 1782-1918 : genealogy, typology and architectural significance], (Budapest: Terc, cop. 2011).

<sup>414</sup> Personal Discussion with József Papp, head of the microfilm collection [mikrofilmtár], Debrecen, 2012. September 11, 2012.



**Picture 58.**  
Debrecen Old Synagogue, 1913<sup>415</sup>

Debrecen's religious affiliation from 1844 to the census of 1900, show the increasing number of religious groups different from Calvinism. In 1844, there were 2024 Catholics (3,7% of the whole population) in the city which increased to 13,258 (7,7% of the whole population) by 1900. The number of Jewish congregation also increased significantly. In Debrecen, the Jews were allowed to settle down in 1840 defined by Article XXIX. In 1844, there were only 34 Jewish people, while in 1900 their number increased to 6192 (8,3% of the population).<sup>416</sup> As compared with Debrecen, Szeged was a predominantly Catholic city. In 1870, 93% of the population was Roman Catholic, which decreased to 91% by 1890. The number of Calvinist population was 0,35% in 1870, which increased to 1,84 by 1890. The Calvinist and the Lutheran churches were built after the Great Fod of 1879 in the beginning of the 1880s. The number of Jewish population remained relatively stagnant as compared with

<sup>415</sup> Accessed September 27, 2012.

<http://www.regikapeslapok.eoldal.hu/fenykepek/megyeszekhelyek-lapjai/megyeszekhelyek-/debrecen--zsinagoga-1913..html>.

<sup>416</sup> "Table 7. A népesség felekezetek szerint 1844-1920," In Gunst Péter, ed. *Debrecen története 1849-1919* [A History of Debrecen, 1849-1919], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), 51.



Debrecen's increasing numbers. In 1870, 5,17% of the population were Jewish, which increased at a slow pace to 5,41%.<sup>417</sup> On the basis of the schematismus and census data, it becomes explicit that from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen's predominantly Calvinist image faded and the number of inhabitants belonging to other religions increased at a faster speed than in the case of Szeged.

	Calvinists Debrecen	Calvinists Szeged	Lutheran Debrecen	Lutheran Szeged	Roman Catholic Debrecen	Roman Catholic Szeged	Greek Catholics Debrecen	Greek Catholic s Szeged	Jewish Debrecen	Jewish Szeged
1870	<b>80,8%</b>	0,59%	1,2%	0,35%	12,7%	<b>93,13%</b>	0,9%	0,69%	4,2%	5,17%
1890		1,33%		0,55%		<b>91,04%</b>		0,66%		5,41%
1900	<b>69,7%</b>		9,7%		7,7%		2,7%		8,3%	

Table 5<sup>418</sup>

Szeged's *Templom tér* [*Templom Square*, presently the Dóm Square] was the 'spiritual heart' of the city. The *Szent Dömötör templom* [Saint Demeter Church] was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and after subsequent rebuilding it was renovated in Baroque style in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Nearby stood the *Szent Rozália kápolna* [Saint Rosalie chapel], which was built by an oath of the community. The city had recovered from the plague epidemic in 1739, and the authorities and the citizens took a resolution to build three chapels (later known as the Rozália chapel built in 1739, the Rókus chapel built in 1738 and the Kálvária [Calvary] chapel).<sup>419</sup>

The idea of resolution survived when the authorities decided to demolish the *Szent Dömötör templom* [Saint Demeter Church] on the *Templom tér* [*Templom Square*] in 1907 and decided to construct the *Fogadalmi templom* [Votive Church]<sup>420</sup> as a symbolic closing of the reconstruction era. After several applications, the

<sup>417</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása*, 271.

<sup>418</sup> On the basis of "Table 7. A népesség felekezetei szerint 1844-1920," in Gunst Péter, ed. *Debrecen története 1849-1919* [A History of Debrecen, 1849-1919] and Kulinyi's table in Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb története (1879-1899) és leírása* [Szeged's New Era. The Newest History of the City (1879-1899) and its Description], (Szeged: Engel Lajos, 1901).

<sup>419</sup> Iván Mónika, *A szegedi Rozália kápolna története és építészeti leírása* [The History of the Rosalie Chapel in Szeged and Its Architectural Description], (Szeged: Budapesti Műszaki Egyetem, Építészettörténeti és Elméleti Intézet, Tudományos Diákköri dolgozat), 3.

<sup>420</sup> "Történelmi órajáték a szegedi Dóm téren," [Historical Musical Clock on the Szeged Dóm Square], *Filmhíradók online* [Newsreels Online], accessed September 29, 2012, <http://filmhíradok.nava.hu/watch.php?id=2394>.

municipal authorities made a contract with Frigyes Schulek (1841-1919) for the construction. The gypsum model of the church exhibited for the public in the Museum in 1910 were impressive. However, Schulek's plans caused a heated debate in the municipal authorities because of its high budget. Schulek declined by leaving behind his plans and the church building assembly commissioned Ernő Foerk (1868-1934) for the construction work on the basis of Schulek's original plans. The demolition of the *Szent Dömötör templom* [Saint Demeter Church] began on July 22, 1913 in parallel with the foundation of the *Dóm* [Votive Church]. During and after the World War I, the constructions were halted and it began only in 1923. The consecration of the *Dóm* took place on October 24, 1930 by Gyula Glattfelder, Csanád bishop.<sup>421</sup>



**Picture 59.**

The *Templom tér* [Templom Square] with the *Szent Dömötör templom* [Saint Demeter Church] behind and the Saint Rosalie Chapel in the front<sup>422</sup>

<sup>421</sup> Dusha Béla, *Az árvíz fogadalmi temploma*, 10-14.

<sup>422</sup> Accessed September 29, 2012. <http://szegedma.hu/hir/szeged/2010/10/a-fogadalmi-templom-%E2%80%93-a-fogadalomtol-a-tervezesi-g.html>.



**Picture 60.**

The Demolition of the *Dömötör templom* [Saint Demeter Church] in Parallel with the Construction of the *Fogadalmi templom* [Votive Church], Szeged<sup>423</sup>



**Picture 61.**

Szeged, *Kálvária kápolna* [Calvary Chapel], 1885<sup>424</sup>

Szeged's multiethnic milieu is reflected in the arrangement of the *Templom tér* [Templom Square]. The Baroque style *Görögkeleti szerb ortodox templom* [The Greek Orthodox Serbian Church] was built by the plans of Jovan Dobits in 1773-1778 for

<sup>423</sup> Accessed September 20, 2012. <http://egykor.hu/szeged/palank/1640>.

<sup>424</sup> "Szeged, Kálvária kápolna, 1885," [Szeged, Stations of the Cross Chapel, 1885], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], F4125/1958

Szeged's strong Serbian population who lived in the Palánk area and the Felsőváros [Upper City].<sup>425</sup>



**Picture 62.**  
Greek-Catholic Serbian Church<sup>426</sup>

One of Szeged's first urban planning was the regulation of the *Templom tér* [Templom Square, presently the Dóm Square] and the building of the *Szent Rozália kápolna* [Saint Rosalie chapel] in the 1730s, which stood on a small hump. After the Great Flood of 1879, the chapel also decayed, and with embankment and regulation of the square, the small chapel was destined to demolition. However, the church authorities (Provost Antal Kréminger) asked that city to save one of Szeged's "votive churches." The Royal Commission decided its demolition but it was rebuilt nearby the *Templom tér* [Templom Square] in the middle of the way to the *Gizella tér* [Gizella Square] by following the model of a Parisian chapel. The small chapel fitted into the

<sup>425</sup> Cf. Dujmov Milán and Szálai-Nagy Márta. *Magyarországi Orthodox Templomok*. [Hungarian Orthodox Churches], Budapest: Magánkiadás, 2010.

<sup>426</sup> Accessed August 27, 2012. <http://www.delmagyar.hu/forum-kepek/202/B2019349.jpg>,

Neo-Baroque cityscape. In 1908, the little chapel was deleted from the national monument register. This entailed also that because of the construction of the new Votive church, the Dóm, even Count Kunó Klebelsberg (1875-1932) decided to demolish the small chapel in case it was necessary. In 1928, the *Szent Rozália kápolna* [*Saint Rosalie chapel*] was demolished again, its parts were numbered, marked, and it was transplanted to the *Lechner tér* [Lechner Square] and was donated as a property of the Greek Catholic Church.<sup>427</sup>

The first settled down Jewish citizen of Szeged was Mihály Pollák, who arrived to Szeged in 1771. In 1776 six more families (Izrael, Jakab, Pollák, Sachter, Spitzer and Wolf families) applied for settlement rights. The formation of the first Jewish '*hitközség*' [*'synagog'*] was around 1788. According to a census in 1808, sixty Jewish families lived in Szeged: one wholesale dealer (Wodianer), ten merchants, thirty-four peddlers, five craftsmen and one in other profession. The assigned settlement district for the Jewish citizens was the southern part of the Palánk and the Rókus districts from 1813. The first Jewish synagogue was finished by 1809 in the *Hajnóczy utca* [Hajnóczy Street] No. 12. and designed by the plans of Henrik and József Lipowszky in Neoclassicist style with a peaked roof and a little outside decoration. In 1861, Provost Antal Kreminger initiated that Jewish citizens could be also members of the municipal board. This meant that among the 280 corporators, 52 were Jewish citizen. After the Great Flood of 1879, two plaques written in Hebrew ("So far, and so farther", Book of Job, 38.11.) and Hungarian signify the height of the flood on the wall of the Old Synagogue.<sup>428</sup>

<sup>427</sup> Iván Mónika, *A szegedi Rozália kápolna története és építészeti leírása*, 5-9.

<sup>428</sup> Varga László, "Ha egyszer Szegedet megkérdeznék...Zsidók és zsidó magyarok," [If once Szeged would be asked...Jews and Jewish Hungarians], *Szeged*, Vol. 13. No. 9.( 2001): 6-10.



In 1897, the Jewish synagogue invited a competition for the plans of a new synagogue and the Budapest architect, Lipót Baumhorn won the applications.<sup>429</sup> Baumhorn worked in close collaboration with the chief rabbi, Immanuel Löw. In 1900 the constructions began and it was finished by 1903.<sup>430</sup>



**Picture 63.**  
Old Synagogue in Szeged<sup>431</sup>

<sup>429</sup> Löw Immánuel, *A szegedi új zsinagóga* [The New Synagogue in Szeged], (Szeged: Traub B. és Társa, 1903), 3.

<sup>430</sup> Löw Immánuel, *A szegedi új zsinagóga* [The New Synagogue in Szeged], (Szeged: Traub B. és Társa, 1903), 3.

<sup>431</sup>Retrieved from OSZK, Képtár [National Széchenyi Library, Photo Gallery], <http://keptar.oszk.hu/html/kepoldal/index.phtml?id=018587>, Access date: August 27, 2012.



**Picture 64.**

New Synagogue in Szeged, 1905<sup>432</sup>

The “*új zsinagóga*” [New Synagogue] (1900-1903), - which became the second largest synagogue in Hungary - has the marks of many architectural styles (particularly Moorish). The architectural styles of Hungarian synagogues, as Anikó Gazda argues, were influenced also the number and origin of the members of the community, their financial position, and last but not least, their sense of identity and their intellectual relations with other religions played a crucial role. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a consequence of the right of free migration, liberal spiritual and intellectual tendencies originated from Jewish communities in Germany, Bohemia and Moravia, later on also from Vienna, which particularly affected synagogue architecture. Buildings primarily used for religious purposes began to manifest the

<sup>432</sup> “Szeged, Izraelita templom, July 8, 1905,” [Synagogue, Szeged, 1905] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 1509/1903

social and economic position of the Jews.<sup>433</sup> This monumental 48,5 meter (158,5 feet) high Moorish-art nouveau building cost 660 thousand ‘*korona*’ [‘*crowns*’].<sup>434</sup> The ten biggest donators for the building were Szeged free royal town (40 thousand ‘*korona*’ [‘*crowns*’]), Özv. Fleisher Ignácné, József Löw (Vienna), Jakab Milkó, Nándor and Róbert Buziási Esienstädter, Mór, Bernát and József Winkler, Jakab Holtzer, Sámuel Milkó and his wife, Károly Kiss, the *Zsidó Nőegylet* [Jewish Woman Association, 1800 ‘*korona*’ [‘*crowns*’]], Ede Szécsi, Dr. Izsó Várhelyi Rósa and his wife, and Bernát Begavári Back.<sup>435</sup>

In Szeged’s “*új zsinagóga*” [New Synagogue] is a mixture of many architectural styles; bears the marks of oriental style and belongs to the category of hexagonal or octagonal ground plans on the basis of the typology defined by Anikó Gazda.<sup>436</sup> Rabbi Löw had an influence on the decoration of the building, as a respected scholar and a botanist, “had Baumhorn incorporate intricate floral and plant designs into the sumptuous decoration of the 1650-seat temple both inside and out and also had him include inscriptions and symbols representing Jewish themes.”<sup>437</sup> The synagogue inside gleams with marble, mosaics, gold fittings, chandeliers, and brilliant stained glass windows with designs symbolizing the Jewish holidays. The enormous dome painted in peculiar blue color with gold stars is to symbolize the world and is supported by twenty-four columns that represent the the twenty-four hours of a day. An ornate interior facade frames the Ark with Moorish-style arches, as Gruber depicts

<sup>433</sup> Gazda Anikó, *Zsinagógák és zsidó közösségek Magyarországon. Térképek, rajzok, adatok*. [Synagogues and Jewish Communities in Hungary: Maps, Data, Architectural Drawings], Budapest: MTA Judaisztikai Kutatócsoport, 1991, 237-238.

<sup>434</sup> Löw, *A szegedi új zsinagóga*, 15.

<sup>435</sup> Löw, *A szegedi új zsinagóga*, 16.

<sup>436</sup> Gazda, *Zsinagógák és zsidó közösségek Magyarországon. Térképek, rajzok, adatok*. 237.

<sup>437</sup> Ruth Ellen Gruber, *Jewish heritage travel: a guide to Central and Eastern Europe*, New York: Wiley, 1992, 182.



the interior of the synagogue.<sup>438</sup> The stained glass windows are the works of art by Miksa Róth, immortalizing the Jewish feasts.<sup>439</sup>

I would argue that Szeged's eclecticism can be traced back to the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional milieu of the city. Szeged's churches represent a *palimpsest* and unity of different religious affiliations on a distinct square apart from any governmental or market functions dedicated only to the spiritual dimension of the place. The Catholic churches all concentrated on the *Templom tér* [Templom Square], the Serbian Church and the Synagogue show a visual cross section of Szeged's religious multiplicity. Meanwhile, Debrecen's cityscape is dominated by the *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church], where the spiritual dimension was interwoven with market and government function. The Catholic Church was placed in a street perpendicular to the main street, and the Synagogue was close to the end of the main *Piac utca* [Piac Street]. Census data after the Compromise, shows Debrecen's openness to other religions.

### 2.5.5. Theatres

Debrecen's theater was among the first stone theaters in the countryside, which shows a public claim for entertainment and modern bourgeois identity. The leaders of Debrecen proposed the building of a stone theater to the government even in 1852 and again in 1853. Moreover, the authorities consulted with Viennese architects for plans and asked Miklós Ybl for planning the theater. In the course of time, Ybl receded and Antal Szkalnitzky's made the final plan for a Romantic style building.<sup>440</sup> The building

<sup>438</sup> Gruber, *Jewish heritage travel: a guide to Central and Eastern Europe*, 182.

<sup>439</sup> Mészáros T. László, *Szeged* (Szeged: Foto Europa Kft., 2009), 22. See the history and pictures about the "új zsinagóga" [New Synagogue] at [www.zsinagoga.szeged.hu](http://www.zsinagoga.szeged.hu), accessed May 13, 2012.

<sup>440</sup> Cf. Sisa, József, *Szkalnitzky Antal: egy építész a kiegyezés korabeli Magyarországon*. [Szkalnitzky Antal: an architect in Hungary in the Era of the Compromise], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994).

operations began already in 1861 but due to lack of money, the theater was finally finished by 1865.<sup>441</sup>

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] proposed a letter to the municipal administration to offer the poet Csokonai's name to the 'városi színház' [City Theater].<sup>442</sup> Yet again, in 1915, the municipal board submitted the proposal of local writers in the subject of naming the public theatre as Csokonai theatre for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the theater. The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] supported the idea with one voice. The board accepted it and decided to rename the theater as *Csokonai Színház* [Csokonai Theatre] from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1916 as a tribute before the Hungarian stage. In the written justification it was proclaimed that Csokonai was a noted historical figure and the greatest poet of Debrecen, and also a great writer of the Hungarian folklore comedy.<sup>443</sup>



**Picture 65.**  
Debrecen Theatre, 1868<sup>444</sup>

<sup>441</sup> Szöllősi Gyula, ed. *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete* [Hajdú-Bihar County's Monuments, Literary Art Relics and Folk Art], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Tanács Műemlékvédelmi Albizottsága, 1985), 89.

<sup>442</sup> HBML. 185/10020. 1902.

<sup>443</sup> HBML IV.B. 1403/a 36.



**Picture 66.**

The New Theater and the Promenade, 1905<sup>445</sup>

The *Szegedi Nemzeti Színház* [Szeged National Theatre] was built only after the flood as a “product” of the reconstruction work. It was planned by the well-known design team from Vienna, Fellner and Helmer. The theater burnt down a year and a half after its inauguration. In the local history of Szeged, advanced building codes were issued in the reconstruction plan of Lajos Lechner. These codes included the elimination of ground floor buildings from the downtown and the construction of fireproof buildings built from bricks with insurance, such as the ordinance dealing with the new Szeged theater, ordained.<sup>446</sup> This insurance against fire was innovative in a sense that it describes mechanism of the contemporary insurance system.

<sup>444</sup> “Debrecen városi színház,” [Debrecen Theatre, 1868], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 79.2911.

<sup>445</sup> “Szeged színház, 1905. július 8,” [Szeged Theatre, July 8<sup>th</sup> 1905] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], 2420/1962.

<sup>446</sup> CSML, SZVT ir. 8080/196 lt.sz. In the Archive of Szeged, there is the insurance of the Szeged National Theatre against fire (1886) which describes the mechanism of the contemporary insurance system.

### 2.5.6. Cultural Institutions

The *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] was the intellectual center of Hungarian Reformation Movement. In 1802, a fire destroyed the building, and the present-day College was built in Classicist style on the basis of Mihály Péchy's (1755-1819) from 1804 to 1816. For the cost of constructions, financial aids arrived from all over the country. This is immortalized on the facade of the building as the following: "A helv. vallástételt tartó magyarországi ekklesiák és jóltévők adakozásából épült MDCCCIII-tól MDCCCXVI-ig" [Built from the financial aids of Hungarian Calvinist communities and donators from 1804 to 1816].<sup>447</sup>



**Picture 67.**  
Debrecen Reformed College<sup>448</sup>

Szeged's reconstruction preserved and improved the existing trading center image, which was accompanied with the modern cultural center function with special buildings dedicated to education, entertainment and culture. One of the most significant architectural works of the 1890's was the *Kulturpalota* [Culture Hall] with

<sup>447</sup> Szöllősi Gyula, ed. *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete*, 71-72.

<sup>448</sup> Debreceni Városi Könyvtár [Debrecen City Library], accessed September 27, 2012. [http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/szechenyi/pic/2131\\_30-repro.jpg](http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/szechenyi/pic/2131_30-repro.jpg).

its Neoclassical style which housed – as the legacy of the flood-, the *Somogyi-könyvtár* [Somogyi Library], the *Városi Múzeum* [the City Museum] and the *Dugonics Kör* [Dugonics Society]. The *Kulturpalota* [Culture Hall] was built on the Southern part of the *quondam* Burg next to the bank of the River Tisza. Antal Steinhardt and Adolf Lang constructed and designed the monumental archaic form of this building with its peculiar tympanum, stairway, stone-lions and monumental symbolic sculptures.<sup>449</sup> Constructed in 1896 in Neoclassicist style, it was dedicated to “Public education” [*A közművelődésnek*] as it is written on its tympanum above the Corinthian columns.<sup>450</sup> Its reputation was founded by its directors, János Reizner, István Tömörkény és Ferenc Móra.<sup>451</sup>



**Picture 68.**

The Kulturpalota [Culture Hall] in Szeged<sup>452</sup>

<sup>449</sup> Nagy Zoltán, “Az eklektika korának építészeti és kommunális fejlődése,” [The Architectural and Community Development in the Eclecticism], in Kristó Gyula, ed. *Szeged története* 3/1., [A History of Szeged, Vol. 3/1], 189.

<sup>450</sup> Péter László, *Szegedi Tudósítások. Válogatott írások* [Szeged Reports. Selected Writings], (Szeged: Bába Kiadó, 2003), 38.

<sup>451</sup> Mészáros, *Szeged*, 50.

<sup>452</sup> “Szeged, Múzeum, 1900,” [Szeged, Museum, 1900], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection],



### 2.5.7. Places of Leisure Time

The famous hotel *Aranybika* [Golden Bull Hotel], one of the symbols of Debrecen stood on the main street. The iron signboard, which is coated with brass and depicts a goring bull, was placed on the facade in 1810. Originally Imre Steindl (1839-1902) built a single storey hotel in 1892, which was pulled down in 1913. The old wing of the present hotel was built in 1915 in its place on the basis of the plans Alfréd Hajós<sup>453</sup> (1878-1955) and Lajos Villányi.<sup>454</sup>



**Picture 69.**

*Aranybika Szálló* [The Golden Bull Hotel], Debrecen, 1903<sup>455</sup>

67/2524.

<sup>453</sup> Alfréd Hajós was not only an architect but also a sport journalist, a sportman, and a multiple Olympic gold medalist in swimming, he took part in the first modern Olympic Games in Athen, 1896. See more about his life in his autobiography, Alfréd Hajós, *Így lettem olimpiai bajnok* [I became Olympic gold medalist this way], (Budapest: Sport Kiadó, 1956)

<sup>454</sup> Dr. Takács, *Városépítés Magyarországon*, 143.

<sup>455</sup> “Debrecen, Bika Szálloda, 1903, képeslap,” [The Golden Bull Hotel, 1903, postcard], Magyar Digitális Képekonyvtár [Hungarian Digital Image Library], Accessed June 10, 2012, [www.kepkonyvtar.hu](http://www.kepkonyvtar.hu), OSZK Plakát- és Kisnyomtatványtár, 75826/92311.



**Picture 70.**

Hotel Tisza, Szeged, 1913<sup>456</sup>

The community buildings of the civil society were the centers of different associations, and they represented the cultural center-function of Szeged. Some of these buildings were the Center of the *Árpád Freemason Lodge* (Mihály Erdélyi, 1898-1899), the *Burger - House* where the editorial board of the *Szegedi Híradó* was (Henrik Szeiller, 1883), the *Krausz - House* which was the home of the *Szegedi Napló* (1884), the *Szegedi Zsidó Hitközség Központja* [Center of the Szeged Jewish Congregation], (Lipót Baumhorn, 1901-1903) and the *DMKE Palota* [DMKE-Palace of the Hungarian Cultural Society] (Pál Kótay and Flóris Korb, 1905-06). In Szeged, the places of leisure time were the *Európa-szálló* [Europe-Hotel], (Nándor Jiraszek and Lipót Krausz, 1883), the *Tisza-szálló* [Tisza-Hotel] (Lechner and Jiraszek, 1885) and the *Kass Vigadó* (Antal Steinhardt, 1897), which represented the modern agencies of catering industry. The *Új-Próféta étterem* [New Prophet restaurant and beer-garden] (1894) were the meeting points of local journalists, poets and intellectuals. Jiraszek and Krausz was one of the most important building companies

<sup>456</sup> "Tisza szálloda, 1913," [Hotel Tisza, 1913], Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Történeti Fényképtár [Hungarian National Museum, Historical Photo Collection], F98.112.

of the time. They were commissioned for many private constructions, such as the ones owned by merchants József Neubauer or Péter Tóth.<sup>457</sup>

### 2.5.8. *Debrecen's Cívis házai [Cívis Houses] and Szeged's Napsugaras oromzatú házai [Sunray Gable Houses]: Admixture of the Rural and Urban*

Most of the “*napsugaras oromzatú ház*” [Sunray Gable Houses] of the Old Szeged disappeared. The construction of single storey buildings was prohibited in the downtown area. The *napsugaras oromzatú lakóház* [Sunray Gable Houses] as a kind of peasant dwelling became also a continued tradition in the *Felsőváros* [Upper-City] and the *Rókus* district. Actually, these houses originated from the *Alsóváros* [Lower-City] but after the Great Flood the model was ‘transplanted’ to the other parts of the city in order to preserve the unique self-identity of the place. These houses were built after the Great Flood of 1879. The “*napsugaras oromzatú ház*” [Sunray Gable Houses] were on the basis of Lajos Lechner’s plans. Sándor Bálint counted and preserved the memory of 311 houses in Alsóváros [Lower-City] and Móraváros.<sup>458</sup>

<sup>457</sup> Nagy Zoltán, “Az eklektika korának építészeti és kommunális fejlődése,” [The Architectural and Community Development of the Era of Eclecticism], In *Szeged története* 3/1. [A History of Szeged, Vol. 3/1], 189.

<sup>458</sup> Juhász Antal, “A napsugaras oromdiszítés és megóvásának lehetőségei,” [The Sunray Gable House and the Opportunities of Its Preservation], in Juhász Antal, ed. *A szegedi táj vonzásában* [In the Attraction of Szeged Region], (Szeged: Bába Kiadó, 2004), 235-236.





**Picture 71.**

Napsugaras oromzatú [Sun-flooded gable] house in Lower-town [Alsóváros]<sup>459</sup>



**Picture 72.**

Napsugaras oromzatú [Sun-flooded gable] house in Lower-town [Alsóváros]

<sup>459</sup> Photo by Livia K. Szelpal

The '*cívis ház*' ['*cívis house*'] represents the idea of puritan morale built in clear-out, simple forms with Classicist facades. The oldest *cívis* house was built in 1690 and stood on the Széchenyi utca No. 6. The house is a white single storey building with concamerated aisle.<sup>460</sup>



**Picture 73.**

Cívis house, Debrecen, 1919<sup>461</sup>



**Picture 74.**

Cívis house, Debrecen, 1919<sup>462</sup>

<sup>460</sup> Szöllősi ed., *Hajdú-Bihar műemlékei, irodalmi emlékhelyei, népművészete*, 60-61.

<sup>461</sup> "Cívis ház," [Cívis House, 1919, Haranghy György] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20973.

<sup>462</sup> "Cívis ház," [Cívis House, 1919, Haranghy György] Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F20974.

Debrecen and Szeged's urbanization are unique in a sense, following István Balogh's argumentation, that in contrast to most of the towns in Central-Middle Europe, do not exist as a result of foundation but grew out of the mass of adjacent villages by primarily effecting geographical energy (trade routes, areas of different products), by the division of labor gradually developing since the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (divergence of agriculture and handicraft) and by the exchange of goods.<sup>463</sup>

Both Debrecen and Szeged had its own unique theory for designing the main squares, the parks and the styles of its buildings, which made them closer to the image of modernity. The construction of new villas and buildings alone, however, did not make these cities modern. What was needed is the mentality of the evolving bourgeoisie, who made a united effort to foster modernization by joining into associations with common interest and issuing modern newspapers. Architecture, the stylistic eclecticism was the form, which was filled with content by the citizens after the great impetus of the Compromise of 1867. Both Debrecen and Szeged were able to revive after natural disasters, which precipitated in the architecture, artistic life and the newspapers of the cities. After the Compromise of 1867, Debrecen and Szeged reflected a modern urban image with the emergence of the public sphere and the increasing urban consciousness of the citizens. However, both towns preserved its rural character - as a striking contrast to the modern city center - in the surrounding '*tanya világ*' [*homestead world*] since they were agricultural towns by origin. Debrecen's urban development took place by smaller steps due to the pertaining '*cívís*' attitude and reigning Calvinism. However, this is a contradiction in itself and proves to be a peculiar Hungarian phenomenon since Reformation did not mean stagnancy in other countries; rather it helped the progression of capitalism. Szeged's geographical

<sup>463</sup> Balogh István, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," [A History of Two Cities as Reflected in the New Monographs], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve Vol. XIII., 1986), 23.

position is more fortunate than Debrecen's. Szeged lies at the joining of two rivers the Maros and Tisza, which connects the city with *Erdély* [Transylvania] and *Vajdaság* [Vojvodina], and the rivers carried not only merchandise but also ideas and cultures. Meanwhile, Debrecen was restricted mainly to land commerce, though it was a major market town since the Middle Ages. Szeged's eclecticism is also different; it reflects the multi-voice of its religions, and the openness of the city to new ideas. Szeged had the ability to reborn totally. Meanwhile, Debrecen could preserve the traditions and values of a given past.

## Chapter 3 The Constructed Image of Debrecen and Szeged in the Post-Compromise Period

This chapter aims to analyze the textual images that constructed Debrecen's and Szeged's urban images, meanwhile the earlier rural character still prevail(ed) on the edges of these cities. This chapter is interested in the representation strategies these cities practiced; more precisely, it focuses on the agents of this image making and aims to determine what made the mentality, character or "aura" of Debrecen and Szeged. At this point of the dissertation, I encountered the difficulty that the documents of the local newspaper editorial offices could not be found in the local archives because of the changes in the maintainers and editorial offices. I could rely only on limited source materials when I outlined the history of the newspapers. However, the images depicted by the newspaper articles and literary figures about both cities were important to this analysis. I would argue that the press and its constructed image about these cities cover the *blindspots*<sup>464</sup> of the urban narratives that led to the understanding of their dominant self-myths, identities and social problems about cities (e.g. *debreceniség*, *the civis town* or *szögediség*). At this point for defining the term *blindspot* I would like to rely on Merleau-Ponty's concept that visibility itself involves non-visibility:

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<sup>464</sup> The *blindspot* of a narrative or drama is the place that is hidden and/or obscured in the text ('*blind*') but is the key topos from where the text can be visualized ('*spot*'). In this sense the blindspot gives the key to the understanding of the plot. The narrative blindspot can be explained by the anatomical blindspot. I refer to Cristian Réka Mónika's explanation of the *anatomical blindspot*. "This anatomical blindspot (*punctum caecum*) is the place where the visual impulses from the eye converge into the optic nerve. It is in the *punctum caecum* that the optical nerve leaves the retina in order to transmit the visual information to the brain." Cf. Cristian Réka Mónika. *Interface Semiotics in the Dramaturgy of Tennessee Williams and Edward Albee*. (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Szeged: SZTE, 2001), 240.

When I say that everything visible is invisible, that perception is imperception, that consciousness has a “blindspot” (punctum caecum), that to see is always to see more than one sees--this must not be understood in the sense of a contradiction-- it must be imagined that I add to the visible perfectly defined as in Itself a non-visible (which would be only objective absence)...- One has to understand that it is visibility itself that involves non-visibility.<sup>465</sup>

The constructed images of Debrecen and Szeged present an alternative history of these cities, with the displacement of the observer’s point of view from a perspective different from the dominant public history. The character and function of journalistic language often uses the tropes of irony, metonym or metaphor. The newspaper discourse reveals three levels: the material realities of the society or in our cases the local communities in general; the practices of journalism; and the character and function of journalistic language.<sup>466</sup> This chapter does not engage in a broad critical discourse analysis due to its limited capacity; it only aims to highlight the constructed images of Debrecen and Szeged via the rhetorical tropes of journalism and literature.<sup>467</sup> This analysis assumes that the city as such, like any work of art, can be analyzed as a cultural representation;<sup>468</sup> that is, its self-myths or constructed images are the products of power relations and dependent on competing and multiple narratives. The tale of these two cities, Debrecen and Szeged presents the multiple voices of how foreigners saw the cities, how citizens who lived in the given cities (e.g. Gábor Oláh in Debrecen), and how “outsiders” (e.g. Mór Jókai writing about Debrecen) depicted and presented these cities. The emergence of *fényirda* [photo

<sup>465</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “Working Notes. ‘Visible-Invisible.’ May, 1960,” in *The Visible and the Invisible. Followed by the Working Notes* (trans. Alphonso Lingis), (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 247.

<sup>466</sup> John E. Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers. An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*, (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2007), 2.

<sup>467</sup> Szélpál Livia, “Hayden White’s *Tropics of Discourse*. An Intersection of Literature and History,” In B.A.S./ British and American Studies Journal, vol. XII, Editura Universităţii de Vest, University of Timisoara, Romania, 2006 147 -158.

<sup>468</sup> Cf. the term ‘*kulturális reprezentáció*’ [‘*cultural representation*’], in Szőnyi György Endre, *Pictura & Scriptura. Hagymányalapú Kulturális Reprezentációk Huszadik Századi Elméletei* [Pictura & Scriptura. XX. Century Theories of Traditional Cultural Representations], (Szeged: JATEPress, 2004), 11.

salons] both in Debrecen and Szeged contributed to the comprehension that culture became more literate and at the same time more visual, since the *paragone* of image-text relations generated, as Vanessa R. Schwartz argues, the urban spectacle as a defining quality of modernity. The development of lithography, photography and technology that constituted illustrated books, almanachs (such as the *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium* [Debrecen Picture Almanach]) and the illustrated press led to an “unprecedented circulation of mundane visual representations.”<sup>469</sup>

I would argue that the identity of a city is constructed and structured in different levels, and that multiple dominant narratives emerge, which can diverge from the image constructed by public history or by glorified memory. According to Gábor Gyáni, public history is an influential instrument of identity politics and at the same time an integral component of mass culture, which almost always provides public memory with emotional and intellectual impulses. As Gyáni argues, written history, collective memory and public history together compose the intellectual and communicational field, where the basic *topoi* of national memory come into existence, which would then function as the durable basis of any memorializing practice.<sup>470</sup> This related image can be interpreted as a Barthesian cultural code to the given city, like a *palimpsest* of “compound of succeeding layers of building or ‘writing,’ where previous strata of cultural coding underlie the present surface, and each waits to be uncovered and “read.”<sup>471</sup> One of the duties of the mass press is, as noted in Rosemary Wakeman’s review of Vanessa Schwartz’s *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture*

<sup>469</sup> Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities. Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris*, (Berkley: University of California Press, 1998), 2-3.

<sup>470</sup> Gyáni Gábor, “Nemzet, kollektív emlékezet és public history,” [Nation, Collective Memory and Public History] *Történelmi Szemle*, 2012/3., 375.

<sup>471</sup> William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, eds. *Visions of the Modern City. Essays in History, Art and Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 9.

in *Fin-de-Siècle Paris*, “chronicling this theater of everyday life”<sup>472</sup> and analyzing “city texts as the chief informational forum within the urban milieu.”<sup>473</sup>

In the alternative history of Debrecen and Szeged, natural disasters are the *peripeteia*, that is, the turning points which led to the closure of one part of city history and the beginning of a new period. In Szeged’s case this *anagnorisis*, or realization of the need for change in urban planning, took place radically, while in Debrecen it happened at a slower pace. After the crises or *peripeteia*, the development manifested in *actions*, that is in urban plans, building codes, modernization, and also in *diction*, that is in the form of printed press, literature.

### 3.1. *The Press, Photography and the Politics of Identity*

Newspapers underwent crucial transformations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The industrialization of newspapers, and the accompanying technological, political, social and communication revolutions, changed their audiences, appearance, content, journalistic style and political role. Mass reading literacy, as Chapter Four shows, with the appearance of voluntary associations, was a further precondition for a mass-circulation press, which was largely a 19<sup>th</sup> century development. Censorship and press freedom was also a crucial point in the expansion of a journalistic culture, which differed in every country.<sup>474</sup>

The press not only has an impact on the reception of new discoveries, social problems and current events, it is also implicative in the emergence of modern identity, that is, “the process by which individuals were *typed into* the social order by

<sup>472</sup> Rosemary Wakeman, “Paris and London in the Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 27. No. 2. January (2001): 201.

<sup>473</sup> Rosemary Wakeman, “Paris and London in the Nineteenth Century,” 201.

<sup>474</sup> John Merriman and Jay Winter, eds. *Europe 1789 to 1914. Encyclopedia of the Age of Industry and Empire*. Vol. 1. (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2006), 1866-1869.



their public construction in gray print and black-and-white images.”<sup>475</sup> Both press and modern identity are embedded in urban contexts as economic business and cultural representation. The urban environment was fundamental to the development of printing from the very beginning, since it was in the cities where the technical and entrepreneurial competencies were located and where an increasing demand for printed texts was to be detected.<sup>476</sup> The first printing-offices in Hungary were founded in Buda (1473), then Gál Huszár’s printing-house in Debrecen (1561).<sup>477</sup> There is a debate among historians whether Szeged gave home to a printing-house as early as in 1567, or the first typography was established by Orbán Grün in 1801.<sup>478</sup>

In Hungary the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849 put into force the freedom of press in 1848, with Article XVIII.<sup>479</sup> In the year of the Compromise of 1867, this article, about the freedom of the press, came into effect again. After the Compromise, the press became a means for political contrivances and a business enterprise with advertisements. In 1870, the abolition of ‘*hírlapi bélyeg*’ [‘*newspaper stamp*’]<sup>480</sup> on political newspapers was a deciding change in the history of the Hungarian press. The only limitation in the newspaper enterprise was the obligatory bail before the establishment of any journal.<sup>481</sup>

<sup>475</sup> Dean de la Motte and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, “Introduction,” in Dean de la Motte and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, *Making the News. Modernity and the Mass Press in Nineteenth-Century France*, (Boston: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 3.

<sup>476</sup> Malcom Gee and Tim Kirk, “Introduction,” Malcom Gee and Tim Kirk, *Printed Matters. Printing, publishing and urban culture in Europe in the modern period*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 1.

<sup>477</sup> Dr. Csűrös Ferenc, *A debreceni városi nyomda története 1561-1911*, [The History of the Debrecen Urban Printing House, 1561-1911], (Debrecen: Szabadkirályi város könyvnyomda vállalata, 1911), 3-4.

<sup>478</sup> Cserzy Béla, *A szegedi sajtó története 1789-1849*, [The History of Szeged’s Press, 1789-1849] (Szeged: Somogyi Könyvtár, post 1970), 29. See also Gaál Endre, *A szegedi nyomdászat 1801-1918* [Szeged’s Typography], (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 2001).

<sup>479</sup> Lipták Dorottya, *Újságok és újságolvasók Ferenc József korában: Bécs-Budapest-Prága*, [Newspapers and Readers in the Era of Franz Joseph: Vienna, Budapest and Prague], (Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2002), 33.

<sup>480</sup> The same tendency can be analyzed, for instance, in the case of the Irish press, where the intent to abolish taxation on newspapers was a natural motive for the advancement of working-class education. Cf. Marie-Louise Legg, *Newspapers and Nationalism. The Irish Provincial Press, 1850-1892*, (Dublin: FOUR COURTS PRESS LTD., 1999), 32.

<sup>481</sup> Buzinkay Géza, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet, 1848-1918*, (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó Kft. 2008), 61.

In Europe's newer nation-states, the press played an important role in nation-building. On the city level, the local press could strengthen the sense of belonging to the same nation and community, the sense of solidarity among its citizens. Alexis de Tocqueville's analysis of early newspapers in America argued that the press provided a forum for debate that fostered the strengthening of bonds among community members and their unions, associations. Thus newspapers are agents in the construction and maintenance of community and "as a prime mover in enacting policy, supporting development, building neighborhoods, and generally modifying the physical and built environment."<sup>482</sup> Moreover, the constructed image created by the local press and literature offered a distinct identity to the cities, making them different from other parts of the country. My assumption coincides with Nathaniel D. Wood's argument; he claims that the appearance of a mass circulation press was a major tool in advancing and developing a "shared sense of modern, urban identity among its citizens."<sup>483</sup> Gábor Gyáni's *Identity and Urban Experience: Fin-de-Siècle Budapest* examines the relations of mass culture and urban identity by focusing on visual and linguistic aspects of modern urban existence that is also close to my analysis.<sup>484</sup>

Gábor Czoch highlights an interesting contradictory hypothesis, by arguing that in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Hungary citizens' perceptions of the urban issues did not derive from their national identity. As Czoch argues, in the value system citizens asserted to represent and strove to enforce on their 'local level,' "the nationality of the citizen was much less important than his economic situation, religion, as especially legal status, namely the possession of civil privilege."<sup>485</sup> According to this model of

<sup>482</sup> Aurora Wallace, *Newspapers and the Making of Modern America. A History* (London: Greenwood Press, 2005), 1.

<sup>483</sup> Nathaniel D. Wood, "Urban Self-Identification in East Central Europe Before the Great War: the Case of Cracow," *East Central Europe*, Vol. 33. Parts I-II, (2006): 11.

<sup>484</sup> Gábor Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience: Fin-de-siècle Budapest*, Trans. by Thomas J. DeKornfeld (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

<sup>485</sup> Gábor Czoch, "The Question of Urban Citizens' National Identity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Hungary," *East Central Europe*, Vol. 33. Part I-II, 2006. 121.

explanation, nationalism at a local level was not a consequence of an organic process from below, but exactly the opposite, it was the outcome of a process catalyzed from above and ‘outside.’ This meant, as Czoch argues, that in line with the emerging nationalist ideology and liberal political ideas, ‘national’ restrictions were imposed by the noble/intellectual elite on the citizens while at the same time fostering the extension of rights in the spheres of law, religion and economy. Meanwhile, as opposed to the noble/intellectual elite, citizens considered denominational, legal and economic markers more crucial than national identification.<sup>486</sup> In cities inhabited also by German or mixed populations, the ethnicity of citizens as a challenge and “as a marker determining social identity was imposed from outside as a result of political debates on a national level.”<sup>487</sup> I would argue this outside effect can be seen in the nationalist language use of the newspapers as recurring tropes, such as depicting Szeged as the “fortress and capital of the country against the danger of ‘panslavism,’” or presenting Debrecen as the ‘*tősgyökeres magyarság*’ [“attraction to the ‘authentic’ Hungarians”]. Moreover, by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, professional journalists changed the intellectual elite of urban societies.

Newspapers were not “photographs of the days,” like today, - as Géza Buzinkay quotes Kálmán Mikszáth’s recollections on the press from 1905, - newspapers were leaders of the public. Their function was not the transportation of news but the circulation of sensible ideas. The main aim was not the collection of materials, which is suitable for making a point of view what happened today, but it had to prepare the way for events to happen one year later.”<sup>488</sup> Newspapers also

<sup>486</sup> Gábor Czoch, “The Question of Urban Citizens’ National Identity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Hungary,” 139.

<sup>487</sup> Gábor Czoch, “The Question of Urban Citizens’ National Identity in Mid-Nineteenth Century Hungary,” 139.

<sup>488</sup> Buzinkay Géza, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet, 1848-1918*, [Hungarian Newspaper History, 1848-1918], (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó Kft. 2008), 47.

highlighted social problems like the ‘*szegény ügy*’ [*the problem of the poor*],<sup>489</sup> reflected the state of social and cultural life; and also created a constructed image of the city often acted upon by local politics.

The question arises, who were the subscribers of these newspapers? Both in Debrecen and Szeged, in line with the local newspapers, periodicals in German language and gazettes from Pest were also present. In the period from 1849 to 1879, because of the high rate of illiteracy, only the richest citizens of Szeged could afford subscribing to newspapers.<sup>490</sup> The Great Flood of 1879 was a turning point, according to Zsigmond Kulinyi, in the history of national press. As Kulinyi argues, the standards of Szeged newspapers were above the level of local patriotism. On the basis of Kulinyi’s accounts from 1884, Szeged citizens subscribed to 1096 Budapest daily newspapers; 99 “*tudományos szaklap*” [*scientific journals*]; 86 “*ifjúsági lap*” [*newspapers for youth*]; 53 “*szépirodalmi lap*” [*belles-lettres periodicals*]; 75 “*élcslap*” [*satirical journal*]; 174 other “*egyéb szaklap*” [*professional journals*]; 200 Austrian newspapers; 9 foreign journals. Thus, altogether, Szeged’s citizens subscribed to 1792 different daily newspapers in 1884.<sup>491</sup> In the period from 1879 to 1900, the social spectrum of subscriptions expanded; and by the period from 1900 to 1919, citizens from the lower layers of the social hierarchy could also afford to buy newspapers, and the number of local journals increased with the appearance of cheaper journals.<sup>492</sup> The richest merchants and leading officers subscribed to at least two local newspapers and bought the Budapest journals, as well. The retailers and craftsmen could afford to buy only one local newspaper daily. As for the workers, it

<sup>489</sup> “Szegény ügyünk,” [Our Problems with the Poor] *Debreczen*, September 29, 1893.

<sup>490</sup> Giday Kálmán, *A szegedi sajtó története 1849-1944*, [The History of the Szeged Press, 1849-1944], (Szeged : [Giday K.], 1983), 1.

<sup>491</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Ujabb [sic! Új] Kora. A város újabb [sic! újabb] története és leírása (1879-1899)*, [The New Era of Szeged. A Newer History and Description of the Town], (Szeged, 1901), 435-436.

<sup>492</sup> Giday, *A szegedi sajtó története 1849-1944*, 1.

was a common practice that two or three of them living in the same house joined to subscribe to one journal.<sup>493</sup> In the 1850s, due to the multi-ethnic milieu of Szeged, 11 % of the publications of the Grün printing house were in Serbian language, 4 % in German, 5 % in Latin and 80 % in Hungarian.<sup>494</sup> Newspapers were also sold in the 36 adverting kiosks that were built during the reconstruction period in Szeged that contributed to the urban landscape.<sup>495</sup> Generally, in Europe the growth of the provincial press from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was accelerated by increased urbanization, by state reforms and by improved transportation connections. To some extent, it was limited by legislation. The size of towns together with the increasing rate of literacy both contributed to foster the founding of new journals.<sup>496</sup>

From the 1880s and 1890s on, the character of the Hungarian press changed with the emergence of ‘*bulvársajtó*’ [‘yellow journalism’] and the growing competition for higher circulation arisen, which reflected the business mechanism of publishing as a capitalist enterprise.<sup>497</sup> The character of the professional journalist emerged as an identity forming factor. In 1914, Article XIV acknowledged the journalist profession in the ranking of intellectual occupations.<sup>498</sup> Among the professional journalists were Endre Ady (1877-1919), Kálmán Mikszáth (1847-1910)<sup>499</sup> and Zsigmond Kulinyi (1854-1905). Ady’s publicist work had a determining impact upon Hungarian journalism. Ady created a new, poetic journalism

<sup>493</sup> Giday, *A szegedi sajtó története* 1849-1944, 2.

<sup>494</sup> Giday, *A szegedi sajtó története* 1849-1944, 3.

<sup>495</sup> Dr. Fári Irén, *Szeged Anno...fényképeken őrzött történelem* [Szeged Anno...History Preserved on Photographs], (Szeged: EMK Rendezvényszervező Kft., 2011), 26.

<sup>496</sup> Marie-Louise Legg, *Newspapers and Nationalism. The Irish Provincial Press*, 29.

<sup>497</sup> Lakatos Éva, “Sikersajtó a századfordulón,” [Success Press at the Turn of the Century], (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár, 2004), 15.

<sup>498</sup> Buzinkay Géza and Kókay György, *A magyar sajtó története I. A kezdetektől a fordulat évéig* [A History of the Hungarian Press I. From the Beginning to the Year of Change], (Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2005), 163.

<sup>499</sup> Kálmán Mikszáth also used Aurél Kecskeméthy’s (1824-1905) pen name *Kákay Aranyos* out of respect towards Aurél Kecskeméthy (1824-1905), Hungarian publicist, whose essays focused on several crucial issues of the modernizing Hungary. Cf. Buzinkay Géza, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet, 1848-1918*, 36-37.

language, which was at the same time heavy with serious comments and remarks without the tropes of irony.<sup>500</sup> Ady started his journalist career in the *Debreczeni Főiskolai Lapok* (1896-1914) in 1897-1898.<sup>501</sup> He left Debrecen and moved to Nagyvárad [Oradea], which was famous for its flourishing cultural life. Ady also worked at the radical gazette *Nagyvárad Napló* (1898-1934). Kálmán Mikszáth started his journalist career at the *Szegedi Napló* in Szeged, then he moved to Budapest and worked firstly for the *Ország-Világ* ‘*családi lap*’ [‘*family newspaper*’], then he signed up with the *Pesti Hírlap*. His journalism was interwoven with his creativity; in many cases the news from newspapers served as starting points for his novels and short stories. Interestingly, as a young journalist, Mikszáth criticized Kálmán Tisza’s politics, then from 1887 till the end of his life, Mikszáth became a member of Tisza’s political party [*Szabadelvű Párt*].<sup>502</sup>

Debrecen, Nagyvárad [Oradea] and Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca] in the east of Hungary played a paramount role in history of Hungarian press, just as Arad [Arad] and Temesvár [Timișoara] did in the south of Hungary. The geographical proximity, development of railway transportation, higher rate of reading public and the oppositionist position of the local press also connected these cities. Szeged in the 1860s was lagging behind, with its only newspaper the *Szegedi Híradó*, after Arad and Temesvár [Timișoara]. The Great Flood of 1879 and the subsequent international public attention pushed the flourishing of Szeged’s journalism and printing press enterprises.<sup>503</sup> Lajos Engel was a modern forerunner of capitalist entrepreneurship. He was a publisher of the newspaper *Pécsi Napló* and he bought the *Szegedi Napló* in

<sup>500</sup> Buzinkay Géza, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet*, 1848-1918, 114.

<sup>501</sup> Bényei Miklós, *A Cívisszellem nyomtatott hírnökei. Írások a debreceni könyv- és lapkiadás történetéből*, [The Printed Messengers of the Civic Spirit. Writings on the History of the Press and Publishing], (Debrecen: Kapitális Bt, 2007), 120.

<sup>502</sup> Buzinkay Géza, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet*, 1848-1918, 109.

<sup>503</sup> Szabolcsi Miklós, ed. *A magyar sajtó története* [A History of Hungarian Press]. Országos Széchényi Könyvtár [National Széchényi Library Electronic Library], accessed September 17, 2012. <http://mek.oszk.hu/04700/04727/html/391.html>.

1896. Engel reformed the image of the *Szegedi Napló*, which ensured commercial success. Moreover, he bought a building for the newspaper, which gave home to the typography, publishing house and the editorial board.<sup>504</sup> This coincides with the tendency that the editor of a local paper was either a local man who owned the paper in whole or in part or else he had drifted into journalism (Cf. Károly Balla in the *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő*) or was risen from being a reporter (Cf. Zsigmond Kulinyi in the *Szegedi Napló*).<sup>505</sup>

The emergence of *fényírda* [photo salon] was also a crucial identity making factor in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the high rate of illiteracy, the ability to see the pictures in the illustrated press, for instance the *Debreceni Képes Kalendariom* [Debrecen Picture Almanach], helped citizens understand their social context and problems. The mentality and initial inhibition towards photography was changed by the desire for spectacle. Peasants, when they opted to make a photo about themselves, also connected this ritual with their routine visit to market and fair days. For this reason, photographers usually opened their saloons nearby the markets.<sup>506</sup> In Debrecen, in the beginning there were the migrant photographers, who arrived in the city only for the occasion of the fairs. The first photo salon was opened by Lajos Müller in 1862 in the *Piac utca* [*Piac Street*], then István Szentkuty opened his photo laboratory in 1863 in the *Széchenyi utca* [*Széchenyi Street*] No. 1780.<sup>507</sup> Szentkuty united with Ferenc Farkas, ironmonger, president of the chamber of industry, who supported cultural aspirations. Farkas was the founder of the *Zenede* [school of

<sup>504</sup> Buzinkay, *Magyar Hírlaptörténet*, 1848-1918, 96.

<sup>505</sup> Marie-Louise Legg, *Newspapers and Nationalism. The Irish Provincial Press, 1850-1892*, 79.

<sup>506</sup> Kunt Ernő, "A fénykép a parasztság életében. Vizuális-antropológiai megközelítés," [Photo in the Life of Peasants. A Visual-Anthropological Approach], in Kósa László, *Népi Kultúra-Népi Társadalom. A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Néprajzi Kutató Csoportjának Évkönyve XIV*. [Folk Culture-Folk Society. The Year-Book of the Ethnography Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, XIV], (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), 246.

<sup>507</sup> Szentkuty opened his photo salon firstly in Vienna in 1857 by changing his profession of chemist to photographer, then he moved to Debrecen. Szabó Anna Viola, *Gondy és Egey Fényképezési Műintézete Debrecenben* [Gondy and Egey's Photography Institution in Debrecen], (Debrecen: Magyar Fotográfiai Múzeum, Déri Múzeum, 2009), 11.

music], the president of the *Sziniügyegylet* [*Association for the Theatre Issue*] and the publisher of the *Hortobágy* ‘közhasznú és mulattató hetilap’ [*Hortobágy* ‘public entertaining weekly print’] and a patron of arts, one of great supporters of stone theater construction. Szentkuty convinced Farkas to construct a unique photo salon with a glass chamber on the first floor on the *Piac utca* [*Piac Street*]. This glass chamber photo workshop faced the *Református Nagytemplom* [*Great Reformed Church*]. This unparalleled building was constructed by Imre Vecsey, who was also among the few patrons of art aspirations and an agent of modernization. Vecsey was the designer and constructor of many buildings in Debrecen: the theater, the Csanak-House, the Mill, the Gas-Factory, and several buildings on the main street.<sup>508</sup>

Gondy Károly (1836-1912), who was born in Pest and educated as an engineer, opened his photo saloon in 1865, as advertised in the newspaper *Hortobágy* in the Czegléd utca No. 27. [Czegléd Street, presently Kossuth Street].<sup>509</sup> Then the Gondy-Egey company opened another photo salon in the Teleki utca No. 5. [Teleki Street], which company was innovative, adjusted to local needs and enjoyed unrivaled popularity among the citizens that no other photo salon could eclipse.<sup>510</sup> Gondy as a citizen originally from Pest, wore German attire with a character that was strikingly different from the average Debrecen citizen; he tried to integrate into the local society and assimilate the mentality of *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen].<sup>511</sup> Gondy, as Szabó Anna Viola argues, was not an intellectual in the modern sense, he considered himself a ‘képíró’ [*image writer*] but on the basis of his chosen profession, freedom of decisions and choices, his aspirations for knowledge and education far beyond his profession, made him one of the natural leaders of the local

<sup>508</sup> Szabó Anna Viola, *Gondy és Egey Fényképészeti Műintézete Debrecenben*, 11-12.

<sup>509</sup> *Hortobágy*, Debrecen, 1865. January 8.

<sup>510</sup> “A magyar fotográfia napja,” [The Day of the Hungarian Photography], virtual exhibition of the Debrecen Városi Könyvtár [Debrecen City Library], accessed September 18, 2012. [http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/fotografianapja\\_2008/keptar.html](http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/fotografianapja_2008/keptar.html).

<sup>511</sup> Szabó Anna Viola, *Gondy és Egey Fényképészeti Műintézete Debrecenben*, 31-32.



society and a representative of the modern bourgeois ethos.<sup>512</sup> His photos were published as drawings by Bertalan Székely and Mihály Munkácsy in other newspapers apart from Debrecen, like in the *Új Idők* (1916/1) and *Vasárnapi Újság* (1897 No. 19., 1866 No. 52, 1871 No. 42, 1868 No. 40, 1870 No.1., 1870 No.7, 1870 No. 16, 1882 No. 36).<sup>513</sup> Another crucial key figure of the bourgeois ethos was György Haranghy (1868-1945), a bank clerk at the *Debreceni Első Takarékpénztár* [*Debrecen's First Savings Bank*] and at the same time, an amateur photographer. He was present at national and international amateur photo exhibitions from 1902 to 1911. His photos, published in a book entitled the *Délibábok hazája* [*Homeland of Mirages*], was a great success both in Budapest and Debrecen and some of his photos were published in the *Vasárnapi újság*.<sup>514</sup> Ferenc Kiss was another determining figure of Debrecen's public life. He was a painter and a photographer, who made his shots in courtyards, houses and he is the creator of many postcards about Debrecen's inner city, which preserved the memory of many demolished buildings.<sup>515</sup>

<sup>512</sup> Szabó Anna Viola, *Gondy és Egey Fényképezési Műintézete Debrecenben*, 136-137.

<sup>513</sup> Szabó Anna Viola, *Gondy és Egey Fényképezési Műintézete Debrecenben*, 292.

<sup>514</sup> Galavics Géza, "Csontváry, a Hortobágy és a Fotográfus (Haranghy György emlékezete), [Csontváry, the Hortobágy and the Photographer, (The Memory of György Haranghy)], Országos Széchényi Könyvtár [National Széchényi Library, Virtual Library], accessed September 18, 2012. <http://epa.oszk.hu/01600/01615/00001/pdf/055-088.pdf>.

<sup>515</sup> "A magyar fotográfia napja," [The Day of the Hungarian Photography], virtual exhibition of the Debrecen Városi Könyvtár [Debrecen City Library], accessed September 18, 2012. [http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/fotografianapja\\_2008/keptar.html](http://www.dbvk.hu/egyebek/fotografianapja_2008/keptar.html).



**Picture 75.**

Cívís lakodalom [Cívís Marriage Ceremony], Debrecen, 1908.<sup>516</sup>

In Szeged the first '*képiró*' ['*image writer, photographer*'] was Ignác Debrecenyi (1823-1913), who worked in the city from 1859. Debrecenyi's workshop was among the first in Hungary; at that time when in Budapest there were five photo workshops were working. His workshop was in the *Kegyesrendűek utcája* No. 373. [Kegyesrendűek Street]. Debrecenyi lived in the U.S., but moved back to his hometown, Szeged. The first amateur photographer of Szeged was Antal Robrach (1825-1889), who was a chemist by profession and made the first cityscape photo about Szeged's main square and market. The photo was in Zsigmond Burger's shop-window. Alajos Landau (1834-1884) painter and photographer moved to Szeged in 1859. Landau built his second photo workshop in Antal Robrach's house. The newspaper *Szegedi Híradó* commented on his works of art in its articles. The Letzer Company also settled down in Szeged, they had a workshop also in Debrecen but that could not compete with Gondy and Egey. Lázár Letzer (1832-death unknown) from Kassa [Košice] united with Lipót Lauscher (1838-1881) from Dörnmaul and built a

<sup>516</sup>"Cívís Lakodalom," [Cívís Bridal], Debrecen, 1908, photo by Ferenc Kiss, Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F9114.

photography company that had studios in many cities of Hungary. Lipót Lauscher preserved for the public memory the catastrophe of the Great Flood in Szeged.<sup>517</sup>

### 3.2. Debrecen's Newspapers

Debrecen had always been an intellectual center since the Middle Ages. However, there was a great difference between Debrecen and Szeged in the field of culture; Debrecen preserved, in spite of every effort of the state power, its Calvinist character having been so formed after the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century; meanwhile Szeged, sponsored by state power, became one of the largest Catholic centers of Hungarians in the Great Plain.<sup>518</sup>

The *Református Kollégium* [The Debrecen Reformed College, founded in 1538] and the printing house settled by Péter Méliusz Juhász [1536-1572]<sup>519</sup> contributed significantly to Debrecen's vivid intellectual life and at the same time, due to Calvinist traditions, limited its scope of literary publishing themes. Péter Méliusz Juhász had an important role in the unfolding of the Hungarian press culture. Méliusz organized the Reformed Church in Debrecen, which guided Debrecen's life; the "Calvinist Rome" interwoven with the municipal board, and fostered the development of the *Református Kollégium* [The Debrecen Reformed College]. Péter Méliusz Juhász welcomed Gál Huszár (birth date unknown- 1575) the prominent reformed preacher and typographer in 1561. Gál Huszár's press and workshop became the center and symbol of Hungarian intellectual life and had a determining impact upon

<sup>517</sup> T. Knotik Márta, "A Szegedi fényképezés első fél évszázada," [The first half century of Szeged's Photography], in Tandi Lajos, ed. *Szegedi Fotográfusok* [Szeged's Photographers], (Szeged: Szeged Megyei Jogú Város Önkormányzata, 2000), 6-9.

<sup>518</sup> Balogh István, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," [The History of Two Cities as Reflected in the New Monographs], Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Archiv Portál [Hajdú-Bihar County Archive Electronic Records], accessed September 17, 2012, <http://hbml.archivportal.hu/data/files/144706094.pdf>.

<sup>519</sup> Péter Méliusz Juhász was a Calvinist preacher, writer, botanist and one of the leaders of the Hungarian Reformation.

the mentality of Debrecen's citizens. The press published mainly text-books for schools and ecclesiastical books.<sup>520</sup> Presently the press is still working under the name of *Alföldi Nyomda* [Alföldi Printing House].<sup>521</sup>

Modern bourgeois development and freedom of the press are inseparable. The appearance of mass circulation newspapers in Hungary is the means of human communication, cultural exchange and a form of the public sphere. The public sphere is a common venue in which the members of the society are to meet through a diversity of media such as the print, the press, associations, and clubs, also to discuss issues of common interest. The public sphere is a central characteristic of modern society.<sup>522</sup> Practical criticism of Habermas's view of the public sphere is founded upon suggesting that Habermas focused on a one-sided analysis or a narrow perspective through which to explore the public sphere, namely that of the bourgeoisie. More precisely, critics disclose three main practical problems with Habermas's argument on this issue. According to John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, first, Habermas implies that the bourgeois public sphere was established on free and equal access and upon willing consent between participants. By taking as his *terminus a quo*, Habermas "tends to overlook the more coercive and power-driven attributes of the bourgeois public sphere."<sup>523</sup> Second, modern communication techniques are not just a medium of thought and argument but also a potential source of power; that is, Habermas

<sup>520</sup> Dr. Molnár Pál, *Debrecen a magyar irodalom történetében*, 11.

<sup>521</sup> See the homepage of the *Alföldi Nyomda* [Alföldi Printing House], accessed July 27, 2012. <http://www.anyrt.hu/eng>. The first published book of the press in Debrecen was Péter Méliusz Juhász's work on "A Szent Pál apostol levelének melyet a kolossabelieknek írt prédikációk szerint való magyarázatja" [*The Interpretation of Apostle St. Paul's Letters*]. [Szinnyei József](http://mek.oszk.hu/03600/03630/html/m/m15837.htm), *Magyar írók élete és munkái VIII. (Löbl–Minnich)* (Budapest: Hornyánszky, 1902, accessed July 27, 2012. <http://mek.oszk.hu/03600/03630/html/m/m15837.htm>. In 1819 the press began to publish the *Debreceni Kalendárium (1901-1948)*. [*The Debrecen Picture Book*]. During the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849, the press publishes the *Függetlenségi Nyilatkozat* [The Declaration of Independence from the Habsburg Monarchy] and the first political newspaper in Debrecen, the *Alföldi Hírlap* [Alföld News]. By 1900, nine printing houses are working in Debrecen.

<sup>522</sup> Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 83.

<sup>523</sup> John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, "Introduction," in John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, eds. *After Habermas. New Perspectives on the Public Sphere* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 11.

simplifies complex media practices. Third, the bourgeois public sphere abuses the “emancipatory potential of ‘counterpublic sphere.’”<sup>524</sup>

I would argue that newspapers construct social imaginary; that is, the press highlights the way citizens “imagine” their social surroundings, which is carried in images, stories and myths, and provides a widely shared sense of legitimacy.<sup>525</sup> Moreover, the appearance of new journalism marks the degree of cultural, social and economic development.<sup>526</sup> This coincides with the fact that Debrecen’s first newspaper, the *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő* (1843-1902) was published only in 1843 as an advertising weekly journal. This later appearance of the journal compared with other European journals of similar size, and reflects the belatedness and controversy of Debrecen’s bourgeois development and modernization. During the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849, several political periodicals appeared in Debrecen – which became a temporary capital in 1849 - such as the *Alföldi Hírlap*, *Közlöny*, *Esti Lapok* and the ultra radical *Debreceni Lapok*.<sup>527</sup> The Article of 1848 XVIII declared the freedom of the press. After the revolution, in the era of absolutism, the freedom of press was limited by censorship and economic restrictions, for instance, a certain amount of capital was needed to launch a journal.<sup>528</sup> The *Csokonai Lapok* (1850 July 3 – 1850 October 5) a literary weekly journal was published in 1850 as a commemoration of the revolutionary spirit with the contribution of poets like János Arany (1817-1882). The *Csokonai Lapok* existed only for a couple of months not only because of the strictness of censorship but also due to public indifference.<sup>529</sup>

<sup>524</sup> Roberts and Crossley, “Introduction,” 11.

<sup>525</sup> Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, 23.

<sup>526</sup> Bényei Miklós, *A Cívisszellem nyomtatott hírnökei. Írások a debreceni könyv- és lapkiadás történetéből*, 75.

<sup>527</sup> Bényei, *A Cívisszellem nyomtatott hírnökei. Írások a debreceni könyv- és lapkiadás történetéből*, 75.

<sup>528</sup> Lipták, *Újságok és újságolvasók Ferenc József korában: Bécs-Budapest-Prága*, 33.

<sup>529</sup> Korompainé Szalacsi Rácz Mária, *Csokonai Lapok repertóriuma: 1850* [The Repertory of the *Csokonai Lapok*: 1850], (Debrecen: Egyetemi Könyvtár, 1975), 3.

After the Compromise of 1867, more and more newspapers and journals were published in Debrecen. Among them were the *Debreczeni Lapok* (1867-1869) and the *Alföldi Lapok* (1867-1876) which were mediocre newspapers. Meanwhile, the *Debreczen* (1869-1919) and its rival newspaper the *Debreczeni Ellenőr* (1874-1900) were more significant. The *Debreczen* was more radical than the *Debreczeni Ellenőr* and followed the ideals of revolution and connected to the oppositional party. The *Debreczeni Ellenőr* was affiliated with the *Szabadelvű Párt* [Liberal Party] and reflected the ideas of the governmental party. Among the independent newspapers were the *Debreczeni Újság* (1897-1944) and the *Debreczeni Független Újság* [Debrecen Independent Newspaper], (1903-1938).<sup>530</sup> Besides political newspapers, the appearance and differentiation of the ecclesiastical, economic, theater, cinema, sport, fashion, professional, and family journals reflect the diversification and development of bourgeois culture in Debrecen.<sup>531</sup>

The *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő* (1843-1902), the first newspaper in Debrecen, was launched by Károly Balla (1803-1881). Balla was a theater director and actor in Nagyvárad [Oradea, Bihar County], who at the age of forty moved to Debrecen and decided to establish an advertising newspaper and to earn a good living. The *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő* was a mediocre newspaper which was published once a week. However, it was a rare phenomenon in Hungarian press history, since it connected two cities, Debrecen and Nagyvárad [Oradea]. The main interests of the four page newspaper were advertisements from Debrecen and the broader countryside of Nagyvárad [Oradea] that is Bihar County. Besides advertisements, Balla strove to broaden the thematic spectrum of the newspaper by publishing economic essays and

<sup>530</sup> Korompai Gáborné, *A debreceni sajtó kutatásának története és irodalma* [The History and Literature of the Debrecen Press], (Debrecen: A Debreceni Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Könyvtárának Közleményei, 1979), 6.

<sup>531</sup> Bényei, *A Cívisszellem nyomtatott hírnökei. Írások a debreceni könyv- és lapkiadás történetéből*, 76.

poems. Moreover, Balla as a publisher and editor fostered the theater culture of both cities and supported Debrecen's theater construction in the newspaper. Balla paid special attention to the relations of the two sister cities (sic!), Debrecen and Nagyvárad [Oradea].<sup>532</sup> Right at its launch, the newspaper consisted of four pages and the main emphasis was on the advertisements; it also published economic and literary essays.

In 1873, Balla sold the newspaper to a Debrecen lawyer, Sándor Báthory, who changed the image and structure of the newspaper. Báthory gave more space to economic, political and literary writings. However, it was not a financial success and the newspaper editorship was sold to Herman Zicherman in 1877, and he made it a profitable business. Zicherman emphasized again the economic and advertising profile. The newspaper was loyal to the King in spirit and fostered the economic independence, advancement and urbanization of the country. Zicherman developed good connections with other parts of the country, the capital and even with some cities abroad.<sup>533</sup> Though in the course of time, the Nagyvárad [Oradea] office closed, the newspaper did not stop publishing news and articles from Nagyvárad [Oradea]. The *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő* was a moderate newspaper but its importance lies in the fact that it united two cities, Debrecen and Nagyvárad [Oradea] and was the forerunner of new journalism in Debrecen. The newspaper published articles about the Great Flood of Szeged in 1879 and called upon the public for donations.<sup>534</sup> Debrecen sent bread to Szeged, for which Szeged expressed its gratitude.<sup>535</sup> The newspaper also

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<sup>532</sup> Presently Debrecen and Nagyvárad [Oradea] are sister cities. Balla's definition of sister cities anticipated its age.

<sup>533</sup> Bényei, *A Cívís szellem nyomtatott hírnökei. Írások a debreceni könyv- és lapkiadás történetéből*, 84-85.

<sup>534</sup> *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő*, Vol. 37. No. 11, March 16, 1879.

<sup>535</sup> *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értesítő*, Vol. 37, No. 12, March 23, 1879.

reported about the case of the flood victims, and their transportation to Temesvár [Timisoara].<sup>536</sup>

The daily press and the activity of Debrecen's journalists were limited by the mentality of its citizens. Debrecen's self-myth covered up the poor intellectual life of the city in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Debrecen's society and its literary figures were pervaded by a kind of indifference to innovative spirit, a self-enclosed pride and lack of confidence towards anything that came other than from their city. This mentality of *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen], as Szabó Anna Viola quotes Albert Kardos, was reflected in their attitude towards newspapers, which the *cívís* [citizen] read, but neglected the journalists and the bourgeois culture associated with newspapers.<sup>537</sup>

### 3.3. *The Intersection of Fiction and Fact in the Making of Szeged*

Because of the dramatic newspaper coverage reports about the Great Flood of 1879, public attention was raised at the national and global level. The local newspapers had also another crucial function, within Szeged's society they fermented local patriotism, they strengthened the sense of solidarity within the local population, and focused the mind of the local elite to embark on constructing a new, prominent local identity of the town. These social, political and cultural factors constructed a dynamic local society, which was more open to modernization than many other towns of similar size in Hungary.<sup>538</sup> The first newspaper endeavor took place in 1858: Szeged's Chief Rabbi, Lipót Löw (1811-1875)<sup>539</sup> established a German language Jewish newspaper

<sup>536</sup> *Debreczen-Nagyvárad Értésítő*, Vol. 37. No. 13. March 30, 1879.

<sup>537</sup> Szabó, *Gondy és Egey Fényképészeti Műintézete Debrecenben*, 131-132.

<sup>538</sup> Initial thoughts of 3.3. subchapter developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city : the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest : CEU, Budapest College, 2005.

<sup>539</sup> His son, Immanuel Löw (1854-1944), later on Chief Rabbi was an excellent researcher of the Hungarian prose, rhetoric, botany, and Jewish tradition. He was a representative of the Upper House



with an international editorial board, the *Ben Chananja* that contributed to Szeged's multiethnic image.<sup>540</sup>

The major agents of this image making were the *Szegedi Híradó*<sup>541</sup> (from 1859 to 1870 published twice a week, from 1870 to 1879 three times a week and from 1879 daily) and the *Szegedi Napló*<sup>542</sup> (from 1878 daily). These local newspapers played a significant role in the accelerated modernization of Szeged by determining and constructing the image of the town. This image of Szeged as represented by the press, determined the bourgeois self-identity of the town *vis-à-vis* Debrecen. As a result, Szeged became, as the *Szegedi Napló* implies, the symbol of cultural dynamism and religious openness in contrast to the image of Debrecen.

The Dugonics Társaság [Dugonics Society] intended to follow this conscious ideology-making activity by opposing the policies of the *Szegedi Híradó* (1859), with the establishment of the newspaper of *Szegedi Lapok* (1873). The *Szegedi Lapok*, however, was rather short-lived, due to the hegemony of the conservative *Szegedi Híradó*.<sup>543</sup> Essentially, this newspaper of the *Szegedi Híradó*<sup>544</sup> started to work not as a political newspaper, but gradually it became the instrument of the government due to its high rate of popularity among Szeged's citizens. It was the only newspaper before the Compromise and could be the venue of opposition against the Habsburg Empire using the Hungarian language. Paradoxically, this newspaper presented the standpoints of the government in the reconstruction period and became highly conservative in its content. The first issue of *SZH* presents its program by speaking up

from 1927 and a honored personality of Szeged.

<sup>540</sup> Lengyel András, "Közkatonái a tollnak..." Vázlatok Szeged sajtótörténetéhez," ["Soldiers of the Pen"...Sketches to Szeged's Press History], (Szeged: Bába és Társai Kft., 1999), 17.

<sup>541</sup> The *Szegedi Híradó* hence abbreviated as *SZH* in the rest of the chapter.

<sup>542</sup> The *Szegedi Napló* hence abbreviated as *SZN* in the rest of the chapter.

<sup>543</sup> Nacsádi József, "Irodalmi élet (1849-1892)," [Literary Life], in Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds. *Szeged története* 3/2. [A History of Szeged], (Szeged, 1991), pp. 1016-1017. As it was written about the dominance of the *Szegedi Híradó* in the *Szegedi Lapok*: "egy isten az égben, egy lap, a Híradó Szegeden" which meant "One God in the Heaven and one Newspaper, the Híradó in Szeged."

<sup>544</sup> The *Szegedi Híradó* was, as it is written on the cover of the newspaper: a political and mixed-content newspaper [politikai és vegyestartalmú lap].

for strengthening the national identity against foreign influence with supporting the “enlightenment” of peasantry through technical and scientific literature. One of the main aims of its program was supporting the collective identity consciousness of Szeged, which was expanded to the whole geographical region of the Great Hungarian Plain, by providing space for an announcement for competition in the following topics: inventing pesticide against a species of insect that devastated the crop, an educational program for students in industry, and short stories on everyday life topics about the Great Hungarian Plain. The column on the status of the region aimed also at the improvement of the literary education and social position of the countryside. According to this “manifesto,” the three key words for this modernization were the following: hard work, persistence and will, with the combination of mind and money, heart and soul for the sake of the Great Hungarian Plain.<sup>545</sup> The local news, public letters and advertisements framed this modernization program. The *SZH* was initiated by Zsigmond Burger (1817-1874), who was the owner of the Grün printing house from 1857, and the first editor was Győző Kempelen (1829-1865) from Budapest.<sup>546</sup> Among the journalists and contributors of the *SZH* were Bakay Nándor, János Reizner, Géza Gárdonyi, István Tömörkény (up until 1890), Ede Sass, Ede Kisteleki, Pál Mórítz, Nándor Szmollény, or Dr. György Lázár.<sup>547</sup>

Meanwhile, its counterpart in popularity became the *Szegedi Napló*, which was associated with the ‘*Függetlenségi és 48-as párt*’ [*Independent and 1848 Party*]. The editor was Lukács Enyedi; journalists and contributors of the *SZN* were Kálmán Mikszáth, Mór Gelléri, Zsigmond Kulinyi, Lajos Pósa, István Tömörkény (from 1890), and Antal Újlaki.<sup>548</sup> Right from its launch *SZN* became the symbol of

<sup>545</sup> *Szegedi Híradó* 1<sup>st</sup> issue, May 1<sup>st</sup> (tavaszutó) Sunday, 1859.

<sup>546</sup> Lengyel András, “‘Közkatonái a tollnak...’ Vázlatok Szeged sajtótörténetéhez,” 17-18.

<sup>547</sup> “A Szegedi Híradó: 1859-1896,” Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Sajtómúzeum [National Széchényi Library Virtual Press Museum], accessed September 25, 2012, [http://sajtomuzeum.oszk.hu/forrasok/hirlapjaink/pdf/1\\_19\\_szegedi\\_hirado.pdf](http://sajtomuzeum.oszk.hu/forrasok/hirlapjaink/pdf/1_19_szegedi_hirado.pdf)

<sup>548</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, Vol. 19, No. 5. January 5, 1896.

opposition both against the government and the dominance of the *SZH* which was considered to be the newspaper of political conservatives. Its function was not only reporting the events and building infrastructures as the *SZH* did, but it was also the objective counterpoint of the advocates of the reconstruction effort and indirectly the politics of the government as a liberal and independent newspaper. The appearance of the *SZN* reflects a civic claim and the rivalry of these two newspapers contributed to the conscious constructed ‘image making of Szeged’ as a modern city, which provided a unique self-identity to the city. This ideology making activity of these newspapers can be considered as “an attempt to reconcile national history and tradition with the challenge of modern industry and capitalism.”<sup>549</sup> Thus, the role of the literary image of Szeged, presented by either the local literature or the newspapers, was not the representation of the Rankian doctrine of “*wie es eigentlich gewesen*” [what actually happened] but provided a comprehensive framework for authenticity and legitimization of local interests even if it was a biased.

Hungary had to recreate a fathomable past in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After the Compromise of 1867, Hungarian art had two functions: on the one hand to legitimize the power structure; on the other hand, it was considered to be a kind of *counter-culture* agent which could subvert the state.<sup>550</sup> Thus, it is worthwhile to mention the main aims or program of the *SZN*, as presented in the first issue of the newspaper. This gives a general conceptual framework for the conscious self-identity making tendency concerning the city as such. The program of *SZN* differed from the one of *SZH* in one main point; *SZN* aimed to serve particularly the interests of the city and not the whole region in general. This concern of the city was not the same as the

<sup>549</sup> Németh Lajos, “Art, Nationalism and the Fin de Siècle,” in Gyöngyi Éri and Zsuzsa Jobbágyi, eds. *A Golden Age. Art and Society in Hungary 1896-1914*, (Budapest: Corvina, 1997), 19.

<sup>550</sup> Németh, “Art, Nationalism and the Fin de Siècle,” 19.

ones of the nation in many cases, for example, about the dike system around the river Tisza.

The *SZN* intended to propagate the freedom of press as a politically and economically independent daily newspaper. It aimed to be a politically independent source of information for the town. The newspaper acknowledged the principles of the Compromise because of the tradition of the *pragmatica sanctio*, but lifted up its voice against the Economic Compromise of 1878. The main principle of the newspaper was to be the venue of public debates on contemporary political and economic issues. Consequently, it disapproved both the policies of the Tisza government and its anti-Turkish foreign policy, so that it claimed to be part of the political opposition ‘*közjogi ellenzék*’ [political opposition]. According to the newspaper, the contemporary economic situation relies immensely on the improvement of the cities and the urbanization, since the cities are the centers of industry, the middle class and the intellectual power. These cities, however, were oppressed, since the Tisza government supports Debrecen as the first city after the capital. Consequently, as the program of the *Szegedi Napló* emphasizes, this assumption is unbiased, since Szeged overtakes Debrecen both demographically and intellectually.<sup>551</sup>

The synthesis of this program is an allegorical word play with the Hungarian language that Debrecen belongs to the party of Tisza (prime minister), while Szeged is at the bank of the river Tisza.<sup>552</sup> In other words, Debrecen is the supporter of the government while Szeged is the symbol of resistance. As a conclusion of the program, *SZN* wants to serve the special interests of the city on the first place that matters

<sup>551</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, July 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 1878. “Szeged was the second city of the nation both demographically and intellectually and articulated the civil claim for this kind of media. Moreover, its geographic and ethnographic position predetermines the role of Szeged as the center of the Lower Region of the country [*Alvidék*] against “the danger of Panslavism.”

<sup>552</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, July 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 1878. “Debrecen Tisza-párti, Szeged pedig Tisza-parti. Debrecen diadalkaput emel Tiszának, Szeged pedig védgátakat emel ellene.” [Debrecen belongs to Tisza's Party, while Szeged is at bank of river Tisza. Debrecen erects a triumph arch to Tisza, while Szeged protects itself from the river Tisza with embankments] (Szeged, 2000), 338.

before the political ones. The same happened during the Flood when the editors of the newspapers, like Kálmán Mikszáth, worked on the dikes and served the interests of the public. The newspaper stopped publishing during the Flood and the first issue after the tragedy published the speech of Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza for the first time in the history of the newspaper. It came up with the argument that the main aim of the paper is the service of the town interests and it had to disregard its political belief.<sup>553</sup> Although, the newspaper did not criticize the government for the causes of the Flood directly, it advertised the pamphlet by Mikszáth “*Szeged pusztulása*” [On the Destruction of Szeged] that was also translated into German. The *SZN* advertised it as a bestseller since more than one hundred issues were sold.<sup>554</sup>

The *SZH*, on the other hand, emphasizes the immediate direct reaction and help of the government. It systematically reported the events and topics of the general assembly after the Flood. The editor-in-chief, Sándor Nagy, proclaimed and emphasized that the King and Kálmán Tisza, who visited the city after the tragedy, would give consolation and hope for the future, not to mention the financial aid that they would give. The *SZH* became the official chronicle of the reconstruction by creating a rather conservative image of Szeged.<sup>555</sup> This image was to be the most Hungarian *metropolis* of the nation with a kind of colonizing function. An article series was written with the title of “The Colonizer Szeged” which was an eclectic mixture of geopolitics, ethnography, legal history and urban history in April 1879.<sup>556</sup>

Consequently, the function of this image making was to construct Szeged's self-identity within specific historical and institutional sites and produce it within distinct discursive formations and practices<sup>557</sup> that corresponded to the local

<sup>553</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, March 22<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 1879.

<sup>554</sup> *Szegedi Napló*, April 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 1879.

<sup>555</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, March 21<sup>st</sup> Friday, 1879.

<sup>556</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, April 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 1879.

<sup>557</sup> Stuart Hall, ‘Who Needs Identity?’ in Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman, eds. *Identity. A Reader* (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), 17.

newspapers. As the program of the *SZN* developed, it fought against the monopoly of Debrecen over the other provincial towns.<sup>558</sup>

The editorial board of *SZN* corresponded to the condition of the new journalism by adopting the Western-type of journalism and telegraph network from the capital that transmitted the recent news worldwide. The *SZN* not only presented the story but reported and entertained which was an invention of the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to the emergence of a new occupation played off against the industrialization of the newspaper. An alternative model of the newspaper's role proposes that "the newspaper is uniquely defined as a genre of literature precisely to the extent that the facts it provides are unframed, that purveys pure 'information.'"<sup>559</sup> In this sense, newspapers which stress information on the basis of factuality tend to be seen as more reliable, as Michael Schudson argues, than 'story' papers whose aim was combining fictional elements with facts for the sake of entertaining. The truth value of *SZH* was established by the government with less attention to the public needs and interests on the municipal level, so that it was factual on the information level. This factuality was easily manipulated, however, both by the government and the interests of some in the municipal administration, as in the so-called false reports on the dike system of the River Tisza that caused the Great Flood of 1879. As Joan W. Scott emphasized, statistical reports can be used for manipulating history by choosing facts to legitimize and support the establishing authority.<sup>560</sup> Thus, representation as such, cannot avoid ideological implications. *SZN* was deeply interested in the local interests of the city, acted as a guide to living by providing facts as well as by selecting them and framing them. *SZN* provided the news to create an aesthetic experience for the readers "which

<sup>558</sup> Tóth Ferenc, ed. *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei*, [The Architectural Memorials of Csongrád County] (Szeged, 2000), 338.

<sup>559</sup> Michael Schudson, "The New Journalism," in David Crowley and Paul Heyer, eds. *Communication in History. Technology, Culture, Society* (Longman Publishers USA, 1991), 160.

<sup>560</sup> Joan W. Scott, "Statistical Representation of Work: La Statistique de l' Industrie á Paris," in Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988), 115.

help them to interpret their own lives and to relate them to nation, town, or class to which they belong.”<sup>561</sup> I would argue that the *SZN* was a better quality newspaper as compared with its rival the *SZH* both in its narrative strategies and in style. The feuilletons and daily chronicle sections indicated the claim of public interest with interesting and fetching titles and particularly enjoyable stories.

### 3.4. *Rhetorical Tropes for Describing Szeged and Debrecen*

Newspapers serve an excellent way and proved to be a means for describing the city as a geographical place and the city as a narrated form. This correspondence, as Peter Fritzsche argues, created an imaginary symbolic order that was as crucial as the city itself.<sup>562</sup> The city as a spectacle with its landscape, facades of city buildings, statues and signs was reflected also in the form of illustrated press, which served as a mediator and constructor of the cities’ self-myths and identities.

The newspaper *Debreczen* published articles from the *SZN* and reported continuously about the tragic event of the Flood. As for its “othering,” Debrecen was rather self-enclosed and not interested in comparing itself with other cities; if any comparison with other cities was made, then the primary agent of its image construction was Budapest rather than Szeged.<sup>563</sup> One of the recurring tropes in the *Debreczen* is the civilizing mission of the city based on its prosperous economic status, long *civis* tradition and attraction of the ‘*tősgyökeres magyarság*’ [‘native Hungarians’].<sup>564</sup>

The following chart summarizes the most important and recurring tropes that describe Debrecen and Szeged in the newspapers *Szegedi Napló* and *Debreczen*. This

<sup>561</sup> Schudson, “The New Journalism,” 160.

<sup>562</sup> Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 4.

<sup>563</sup> *Debreczen*, May 26, 1879.

<sup>564</sup> *Debreczen*, September 27, 1879. and September 29, 1903.

comparison is crucial to the analysis, since it highlights some of the major ideological differences between Debrecen and Szeged by the unique figurative language use. Both cities are described as predestined to be the cultural and intellectual center of the Great Hungarian Plain with “civilizing and colonizing missions.”

<i>Szegedi Napló</i> describing Szeged	<i>Debrecen</i> describing Debrecen
Metropolis	Metropolis
Fortress and capital of the country against the danger of “panslavism”, Austria	vagyonos város [well-to-do city]
Civilizing Mission	Civilizing Mission
Colonizing metropolis	Cultural and Educational center
Center of the Great Hungarian Plain	Center of the Great Hungarian Plain
‘Szegedország’ [‘Szegedland’]	Follow the example of Szeged and Székesfehérvár with the industry fairs
Freedom for Europe	Independence for Hungary
The “Other” is Debrecen	The “Other” is Budapest and Nagyvárad [Oradea]
Second city of Hungary	<i>Cívis</i> tradition
Melting pot	tősgyökeres magyarság [“attraction to the ‘authentic’ Hungarians”]
“mirror for the future Hungary”	“kurucz town”
Model city that “radiates the impact of civilization to the periphery”	Rákóczi’s town

**Table 6.**

This “civilizing mission” and the exaggerated language use is a common characteristic feature of the local newspapers that aimed to define their own positions in the Hungarian urban network. As for the criticism of their local patriotic and sometimes highly pathetic language, the ‘*élcslap*’<sup>565</sup> [*satirical journal*] named *Hüvelyk Matyi* can serve as a counter-example. This satirical journal with the forms of puns<sup>566</sup> criticized journalists, authors, politicians, and local citizens, as well. The form of this criticism was often in rhyme, as a poem on Kálmán Mikszáth shows. This poem, titled

<sup>565</sup> The origins of the “*élcslap*” [*satirical journal*] come from the 18th century England. Richard Steele and Joseph Addison established two crucial satirical journals the *Tatler* (1709-1711) and the *Spectator* (1711-1712). Cf. Géza Buzinkay, *Borsószem Jankó és társai. Magyar élclapok és karikatúrák a XIX. Század második felében*, (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1993), 6.

<sup>566</sup> Richardson, *Analysing Newspapers*, 70.



“*Mikszáth Kálmánhoz*,” plays also with the word Tisza (referring to the river Tisza and the Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza), and reveals that Mikszáth, who was an ardent opponent and critic of Kálmán Tisza, became a member of Tisza’s circle in Budapest as a member of the parliament.<sup>567</sup>

The idea of this socially ascribed status of identity constructs a uniquely and individually constituted self-awareness and self-reflection.<sup>568</sup> In this sense, the question of “What is Szeged?” became increasingly important to Szeged’s local intellectuals. The stereotypical picturing of Szeged *vis-à-vis* Debrecen and this production of locality originate from the economic and religious differences of the cities.

In these local newspapers, giving a new conceptual framework for historical imagination, the frontier myths of Szeged revived. Szeged, therefore, became the symbol of cultural dynamism and religious openness *vis-à-vis* the image of Debrecen, the *civis* city [Civis város].<sup>569</sup> Through the analysis of the local newspapers of Debrecen and Szeged, multiple levels for potential intercultural exchange can be revealed. Firstly, there was the identity making function of the local newspapers. Second, the local newspapers were venues for translations of literary works and ideas from natural sciences. Thirdly, local newspapers also transferred political ideas supporting or criticizing the government. Fourthly, with the invention of the telegraph

<sup>567</sup> *Hüvelyk Matyi*, March 24, 1889.

“Köszöntelek Kálmus, a Tisza partjáról’  
Szív dobog mindenben amit írsz a Házból.  
Mameluk szívednek felkent dobogása:  
Tiszák dicsérete, Ugronék szidása. [...]   
Látom, hogy fürdöl a magas kegyben, vajban,  
Szegény városunkat látom ezer bajban;  
Nálunk minden süllyed, csak te emelkedel-  
Hja a szegedi gróf elefántja emel.”

<sup>568</sup> Jonah Goldstein and Jeremy Rayner, “The Politics of Identity in Late Modern Society,” *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, No.3, 368.

<sup>569</sup> Móra Ferenc, “A Szegedi Napló története,” [The History of the Szegedi Napló], in Móra Ferenc, ed. *A Szegedi Napló 25 éve, 1878-1903*, [The Twenty-Five Years of the Szegedi Napló, 1878-1903], (Szeged, 1904), 7.

system, provincial towns were connected to the capital and also to world news. Finally, the content of these newspapers also reflected the multi-level story of the sponsor, the publisher and the writer, which was a result of negotiation among them. Consequently, the comparative dimension between Szeged and Debrecen is also based on a real cultural encounter through the local newspapers with the exchange of the articles.

The contributors of *SZN* were open-minded journalists who succeeded in freeing the paper from a certain provincialism, which was the characteristic feature of the newspapers published outside the capital.<sup>570</sup> This provincialism was the function of the local newspapers in Debrecen financially backed by the Tisza government, which was also connected to the industrial and *cívís* interests of Debrecen.<sup>571</sup> The Tisza government, that was reflected in the content of the newspaper as such, also financially supported the *SZH*. The question was addressed by a journalist of *SZN*, László Szabó, about the future of the newspapers in the countryside; that is, few of them were supported by the state and had the function of being an independent source of information as was a common practice in Western Europe. He mentions the example of England, where Manchester and Birmingham could emerge from provincialism and had better quality newspapers than the capital.<sup>572</sup> However, *SZN* - as Ferenc Móra emphasized - depicted thousands of times the rigid conservatism of Debrecen and its loyalty to the policy of the government.

<sup>570</sup> Klukovitsné Paróczy Katalin, *A Szegedi Napló Móra Ferenc főszerkesztősége idején (1913-1919)*, [The Szegedi Napló under the General Editorship of Ferenc Móra], (Szeged: Dissertationes Ex Bibliotheca Universitatis De Attila József Nominatae, 1991), 82-83.

<sup>571</sup> Irinyi Károly, *A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás változatai Debrecenben, 1867-1918*, [The Variations of Political Public Thinking and Mentality in Debrecen, 1867-1918], (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi Intézet, 2002), 309.

<sup>572</sup> Szabó László, "A vidéki sajtó jövője," [The Future of Provincial Journalism], in Móra Ferenc, ed. *A Szegedi Napló 25 éve, 1878-1903. Jubiláris emlékmű. A munkatársak írásiával és arcképével* [The Twenty-Five Years of the Szegedi Napló, 1878-1903], (Szeged: Engel, 1904), 120.

Consequently, there was a real and tangible connection between the local newspapers of Debrecen and Szeged. Szeged defined itself against Debrecen, while Debrecen did not seek for ‘others’ for its self-myth; if it did so at all, then it considered Budapest and Nagyvárad [Oradea] as its rival. There was an exchange of articles, however, between the newspapers *Szegedi Napló* and the *Debreczen*. The newspaper *Debreczen* published Mikszáth’s articles and during the reconstruction period of Szeged, it even welcomed news written by the *Szegedi Napló*. I would argue that these local newspapers as the agents of modernization had an essential role in the constructed self-identical image of Szeged, which was not devoid of prejudices in the national context. This kind of self-image and the image of the ‘Other,’ as Péter Hanák argues, belong to the field of prejudices and stereotypes that are recurring topics of naive ethnography and historiography that formed a peculiar kind of “we” consciousness.<sup>573</sup> This “we” consciousness does not originate only in ethnic differences. One could find it in the sphere of an urban milieu, as a sense of belonging to the same *natio* specially strengthened in a period of crisis, for instance, aftermath the Great Flood of 1879. This conceptualization of Debrecen as the ‘Other’ and the ideological function of Szeged’s constructed image have sociological, religious, but mainly psychological reasons, that is finding, a scapegoat for the failed politics of the Tisza government. Consequently, as a result of the complex interaction of social, economic and cultural development, Szeged reached a significant and rapid evolution on a national scale and even within the urban hierarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

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<sup>573</sup> Péter Hanák, “Preface,” in László Kontler, *Pride and Prejudice. National Stereotypes in 19th and 20th Century Europe East to West* (Budapest: Central European University, 1995), 7.

### 3.5. *Debrecen and Szeged as “Imagined Communities;” The Notions of Debreceniség [authentically from Debrecen] and Szegediség [authentically from Szeged]*

The notion of *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] refers to Debrecen’s independent, autonomic and different character embedded in Debrecen’s history and reveals a self-enclosed *civis* mentality. Balogh István described the *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] as a literary notion, and highlighted its historical and social backgrounds. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the notion of *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] began to overlap with the notion of the *civis*, and was not only a literary abstraction but coincided with Debrecen’s unique mentality, intellectual and social life.<sup>574</sup>

Ferenc Kazinczy (1759-1831) created the very notion of *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] and publicized it nationwide. After the Árkádia-pör [Árkádia debate] generally this notion began to be closely identified with a peculiar form of Calvinism in Hungary and was not a foundation of innovation but an obstacle to any new ideas and innovative spirit.<sup>575</sup> Kazinczy oversimplified and generalized the Debrecen mentality by setting apart the existing values and traditions of the city. His attitude was not devoid of bitterness by describing the Debrecen people as provincial, philistine and complacent with puritan stubbornness, who did not dare and did not want to change in time.<sup>576</sup>

<sup>574</sup> Rácz, “A civis fogalma,” 80.

<sup>575</sup> Balogh István, “Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere),” 25.

<sup>576</sup> Balogh István, “Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere),” 26.; Baja Mihály, “Debrecen,” *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1935. 49. Debrecen’s self-isolation, unchangingness in time and rural urbanity is well-represented by Mihály Baja’s (1879-1957, Calvinist minister, poet and writer) poem on Debrecen published in the *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium* in 1935:

As it [sic! Debrecen] was in former times,  
Debrecen is dusty and windy,  
It is without an even street.  
Its university is great for sure!  
And the old College is contemplating on the past.  
Its thousand students, decreasing diploma,  
But student-life will not be here anymore.

Balogh describes the basis of the *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a primarily agricultural and extensive production with craftsmanship and industry that got stuck in old guild forms.<sup>577</sup> By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in Debrecen's *cívís* society, franchise was connected to the land property and house in Debrecen. Peasants and ploughmen are the most popular groups of the *cívís* society. The city administration was in the hands of twenty-five or thirty families who were interwoven by multiple layers of affinity, magisterial and professional relations.<sup>578</sup> Due to these circumstances, Debrecen's bourgeois identity was humble; its cultural knowledge was not comprehensive, and it was not a flourishing intellectual center anymore.

Several authors contributed to Debrecen's textual image: one of them was Mór Jókai (1825-1904). He depicted Debrecen in a section of a grand monograph series of sixteen volumes *Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia írásban és képen* [The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Writing and Image], while Kálmán Mikszáth (1847-1910) presented Szeged's image in the same monograph.<sup>579</sup> Mór Jókai (1825-1904), a prominent Hungarian author and journalist, was not born in Debrecen;

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Its *Aranybika* [Golden Bull Hotel] is a miracle,  
 But it killed the poor *Kis Pipa* [Little Pipe] restaurant.  
 In the silver saloon there is glorious noble ball,  
 And everybody is dancing on Jazz Music.  
 Its ancient Calvinist Great Church is a sentinel,  
 But it seems as if the psalm is softer in it.  
 Rákóczi's bell is run by electricity,  
 But it is silent for years.  
 There is worship everywhere, in every bush,  
 But where is its puritan moral?  
 Lot of gaudy villas grew on the ground,  
 But where is the happiness living?  
 Here is its beach, and lake, and there is the stadium.  
 And the Nagyerdő [Great Forest] is slowly deteriorated.  
 Flowery carpet welcomes you everywhere,  
 Only our clothes and eyes are worn-out.  
 Its cinema and radio are shouting,  
 But no one is singing on the Hortobágy.

<sup>577</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 27.

<sup>578</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 33.

<sup>579</sup> Jókai Mór, "Debreczen," and Kálmán Mikszáth, "Szeged," (Budapest: Magyar Királyi Állami Nyomda, 1901).

he only lived a couple of months in the city during the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849. However, Debrecen's history and life; the character, and mentality of its *cívís* people captured his imagination and had a lifelong impact upon his literary oeuvre.<sup>580</sup> Jókai immortalized Debrecen as a typically Hungarian city and modeled his novel characters on the basis of their soberness, uncompromising poise and perseverance. Jókai also presents Debrecen's popular customs, and argues that the weddings and funerals took place in a very simple and puritan way, which is different from other parts of Hungary.<sup>581</sup> This Debrecen image, however, sketched by Jókai is not undiminished. He presents Debrecen as respectable and exemplary in its national traditions and values. However, he could not place Debrecen as an economic, cultural and social center in the modern, reformed, bourgeois image of the era.<sup>582</sup> Balogh recites from Jókai's famous novel *Fekete gyémántok* [Black Jewels, 1886] describing Hungary's intellectual situation in 1850-1860:

What is missing from this grand aspiration? A center is lacking. The country is without center. Debrecen is totally Hungarian but its religious exclusivity deprived it from universality. Szeged is at a good place but its still forming in a preliminary condition and it is a totally democratic city. *Kolozsvár* [*Cluj-Napoca*] is also Hungarian, and the aristocratic element is well mixed with the constituents of domestic culture, but geographically it lies beyond the Királyhágó... Thus, only Pest could be the center of the country.<sup>583</sup>

<sup>580</sup> Dr. Molnár Pál, *Debrecen a magyar irodalom történetében* [Debrecen in the History of Hungarian Literature] (Debrecen: Dr. Bertók Lajos Bizománya, 1941), 59.

<sup>581</sup> Jókai Mór, "Debrecen," Jókai Mór, *Debreceni idill* [Debrecen Idyll], (Balatonfüred: Balatonfüred polgármesteri hivatala, 2009), 57.

<sup>582</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 36.

<sup>583</sup> Jókai Mór, *Fekete gyémántok. (Összes művei)* [Black Jewels. Collected Works], (Budapest, 1964, I. 158-159; Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 36.

– Mije hiányzik ez óriási törekvésnek? Egy központ. Az országnak nincsen központja. Debrecen egészen magyar, de vallásfelekezeti kizárólagossága megfosztja az univerzalitástól; Szeged jó helyen van, de a kezdetlegesség stádiumában, és egészen demokrata város; Kolozsvár magyar is, elég jól is vannak benne vegyítve az arisztokrata elem és a hazai kultúra alkatrészei; de túlesik a Királyhágón, s a Bethlenek, Bocskaiak korszakának vége. Pest volna hát az egyedüli központ.

Jókai described Pest as an ‘erősség’ [*strength*], while Debrecen is the ‘*azilum*’ [*asylum*].<sup>584</sup> This symbolism lived on in Debrecen’s literary tradition. Debrecen as an asylum gave shelter to refugees during the Ottoman occupation, as in the case of Szeged,<sup>585</sup> and also welcomed the revolutionary government in 1849. Jókai also refers to Debrecen as an idyllic environment.<sup>586</sup>

In 1849, Jókai founded the newspaper *Esti lapok* in Debrecen. The Debrecen image constructed by him was tinged with ideology and nationalism. As Jókai writes in the newspaper *Pesti Lapok*: “Pest is the center of the country but Debrecen is the center of Hungarian people. In Pest the interest of all nationalities are united, while in Debrecen only the Hungarian interests are joined. Pest is the largest city of Hungary, while Debrecen is Hungary itself in a smaller scale.”<sup>587</sup>

Jókai’s metaphors for describing Debrecen are hallmarks of the idealized community (cf. Debreceni idill [Debrecen Idyll]) and also found in the narrative structure of articles and urban monographs. As Jaroslav Miller argues, the language of communities [*Gemeinschaft*] as a cultural field with a complex symbols “discloses the strong presence of a normative vision of an idealized community which was projected, however, into the life of a real city.”<sup>588</sup>

Features of nationalism are explicit in the metaphors describing Debrecen, and what is common in all metaphors is the sense of local patriotism and strong

<sup>584</sup> Jókai Mór, “Pest és Debrecen,” *Pesti Lapok*, 1849. March 31.

<sup>585</sup> Bálint Sándor, “Szegedi világ Debrecenben,” 215-227.

<sup>586</sup> Jókai Mór, “Debreceni Idill,” [Debrecen Idyll], 19-23.

<sup>587</sup> Jókai Mór, “Pest és Debrecen,” *Esti Lapok*, 1849. March 31. “Pest központja az országnak, de Debrecen központja a magyar népnek. Amott minden nemzetiség érdeke, itt azonban egyedül a magyar érdekek vannak összesítve, Pest legnagyobb városa Magyarországnak; Debrecen maga egy Magyarország kicsinyben.”

<sup>588</sup> Jaroslav Miller, “‘In each town I find a triple harmony’: idealizing the city and the language of community in early modern (East) Central European urban historiography,” *Urban History*, 39, 1, (2012): 3. A standardized description of a well-ordered city was rendered in a late seventeenth-century panegyric upon Pilsen: “In each town I find a triple harmony, or consonance: The first is a well-designed edifice [i.e. a political system]. The other is the keeping of praiseworthy customs, orders and rights. The last one is the concord and consonance of the hearts and minds of the town dwellers. One of these three, the finest is the unity of hearts and minds.”

nationalism. Debrecen is presented as a unique community [*Gemeinschaft*] within Hungarian society [*Gesellschaft*]. This Debrecen image is closer to Benedict Anderson's notion about the nation. Benedict Anderson described nations as "imagined communities," which does not mean that nations are fictional entities but that they are ideologically constructed. In an anthropological spirit, Anderson proposes his definition of the nation: "it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."<sup>589</sup> It is *imagined* in the sense that the members of one nation do not know personally most of their fellow-members, yet they share a sense of image of their communion. The nation is imagined as *limited* because it has finite boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. It is imagined as *sovereign* "because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm."<sup>590</sup> Finally, it is imagined as a *community*, because "the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."<sup>591</sup>

As opposed to Jókai's idealized community metaphors for Debrecen, Endre Ady (1877-1919) was more critical in depicting Debrecen. Besides Debrecen, Jókai also praised Nagyvárad [Oradea] as one of the brightest of the cities; the seat of royal siblings, princes, a bishopric, the sentinel of St. Ladislaus's tomb, a big fortress. According to Jókai, Nagyvárad [Oradea] attracted the wartime nobility, while Debrecen welcomed the simple, peaceful, working citizens.<sup>592</sup>

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the conservative features in the *cívís* society gained strength, and the *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] became a political and social attitude.<sup>593</sup> Ady also considers *debreceniség*

<sup>589</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 5-6.

<sup>590</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 7.

<sup>591</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 7.

<sup>592</sup> Jókai Mór, "Debrecen," in Jókai Mór *Debreceni idill*, 37.

<sup>593</sup> Balogh István, "Debreceniség (Egy irodalmi fogalom története és társadalmi háttere)," 48.



[authentically from Debrecen] as a conservative mentality and calls Debrecen as the ‘*maradandóság városa*’ [‘*the city of endurance*’].<sup>594</sup> Ady’s metonyms for Debrecen also has biased, nationalist overtones and includes the ‘*nagy magyar alföld metropolisa, a tiszamelléki magyarság szíve*’ [‘*the metropolis of the Great Hungarian Plain, the heart of the Tiszamellék (the floodbasin of the River Tisza) Hungarians*’],<sup>595</sup> the ‘*legmagyarabb város*’ [‘*the most authentic Hungarian city*’].<sup>596</sup> His image compared with Jókai’s idyllic representation strives for realism, but is at the same very subjective, full of bitterness and irony towards Debrecen, which was unable to recognize Ady as a poet. As Ady writes in one of his articles:

[Debrecen] is a calm, silent and sober *civis* city, where people enthuse only *inside*, where the police chronicle is dry, where a little love drama is a great sensation, where the shouting of a blind drunk bricklayer is a capital crime and where the foreigner is surprised by a not at all thrilling calm image of the city.<sup>597</sup>

Ady compares Debrecen to Nagyvárad [Oradea], - commonly called the ‘*Körös-parti Párizs*’ [‘*Paris at the River Körös*’], - as he called it ‘*Orfeumok városa*’ [‘*the City of Orpheums*’].<sup>598</sup> Nagyvárad was founded by King St. Ladislas around 1080, and Nagyvárad became one of medieval Hungary’s most crucial towns under the name of Várad [Fortress]. A great number of Hungarian kings were buried in the city. Várad became a bishopric soon after its foundation, while in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, under the humanist Bishop János Vitéz (c. 1408-1472), it developed into one of the important centers of Hungarian Humanism. In 1538, it was the site of

<sup>594</sup> Dr. Molnár Pál, *Debrecen a magyar irodalom történetében*, 90.

<sup>595</sup> Ady Endre, “Debrecen öröm ünnepe,” [Debrecen’s Joyful Celebration] *Debreczeni Reggeli Ujság*, 1898. November, 28.

<sup>596</sup> Ady Endre, “A legmagyarabb város,” [The Most Hungarian City] *Debreczen*, 1899. September, 12.

<sup>597</sup> Ady Endre, “A debreceni véres nap,” [The Bloody Day in Debrecen], *Nagyvárad Napló* 1901. October 19.

“Tegnap késő éjjel, mikor telefonon híreket vettünk a debreceni véres választásról, s ma sem tudjuk megérteni, mi történhetett a nyugodt, csendes, higgadt *civis* városban, hol az emberek még lelkesedni is csak úgy befelé szoktak, hol száraz a rendőrkronika, hol egy kis szerelmi dráma szenzáció, hol főbenjáró bűn egy részeg kőműves utcai kurjongatása, hol olyan imponáló lázatlan, nyugodt kép lepi meg az idegent...”

<sup>598</sup> Ady Endre, “Orfeumok városa,” [The City of Orpheums] *Szabadság*, May, 20. 1900.

the secret Treaty of Várad, which was a trial to reunite the country under the rule of the Habsburg dynasty. Located in what later became *Partium*,<sup>599</sup> after the year 1557, for over a century, it was ruled by the princes of Transylvania. Between 1660 and 1692, it fell under Ottoman occupation. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nagyvárad [Oradea] developed into a progressive industrial and cultural center. It was a center of a dynamic literary movement, with Endre Ady as one its representatives.<sup>600</sup>

Ady considers Nagyvárad [Oradea] as a cultural center of the future as compared with Debrecen. As Ady argues:

Nagyvárad [Oradea]’s population is more than 50,000 people. This fact is true and an argument that is undeniable for those of us, who expect a leading role from this modern, full of life, action and progress predestined city. Its first role is undeniable after the so much cherished capital. We are not arguing this because of local patriotism but this is a prophecy based on facts. This city, which was amused by the miserable fate of Hungarian provinces, did not have the means that other cities have. Still, it developed miraculously. We know the hardships of this improvement and its great sacrifices. We know what this city, truly predestined for being a cultural center, could have done if it had half of the financial capital which is a not used property in Debrecen.<sup>601</sup>

<sup>599</sup> “Partium,” Pallas Nagy Lexikona, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, accessed September 20, 2012, <http://www.mek.iif.hu/porta/szint/egyeb/lexikon/pallas/html/080/pc008014.html#4>. Partium [Részek] is a segment of Hungary to the east of the River Tisza, which during the 16th century was progressively attached to autonomous Transylvania but without ever becoming part of it. Constitutionally, the Partium always remained part of Royal Hungary even when under Transylvanian or indirect Ottoman rule. Its territory was first defined in the Treaty of Speyer (1571) between Emperor Maximilian and Prince John Sigismund. Most of the Partium was reannexed to Hungary in 1733, and the remaining part in 1836.

<sup>600</sup> “Várad,” Pallas Nagy Lexikona, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, accessed September 20, 2012, <http://www.mek.iif.hu/porta/szint/egyeb/lexikon/pallas/html/104/pc010485.html#7>.

<sup>601</sup> Ady Endre, “A jövő Nagyvárad,” [The Future Nagyvárad] Szabadság 1901. January, 17. “Nagyvárad lakossága meghaladta a félszáztezret. Ez a faktum nagy, beszélő igazság mimellettünk, kik ettől a Körös-parti modern, csupa élet, akció és haladásra hívott várostól vezető szerepet várunk. Elvitathatatlan, biztos, első szerepet a már talán agyon is dédelgetett főváros után. Nem a lokálpatrióták nagyzása mondatja ezt velünk, de a valóságból, a tényekből merítők próféciája. Ez a város, melyet lenyűgözött a magyar provinciák kétségbeejtő sorsa, még annyi eszközzel sem rendelkezett, mint többi társa. És mégis csodálat fejlődött. Mi tudjuk, kik ismerjük ennek a haladásnak nehéz útját, roppant áldozatait. Mi tudjuk, hogy mennyi mindent teremtett volna ez az igazán kultúrvárossá predestinált város, ha csak félig megvolnának azok az anyagi tőkék, mely holt vagy on például Debrecenben.”

In another article, Ady presents Debrecen's moral incompatibility towards Nagyvárad [Oradea] because of its cultural flourishing. In this article, Ady refers to a newspaper in Debrecen, which blames Nagyvárad [Oradea] as the '*irigy szomszéd*' ['*jealous neighbor*'] of Debrecen and the '*pakfon város*' ['*Alpaka city; nickel silver*'], which is envy for Debrecen's public institutions, voluntary schools and now for the administrative public course.<sup>602</sup>

The Debrecen-Nagyvárad [Oradea] relations can be traced back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Debrecen was the '*megyeszékhely*' ['*county administrative seat*'] of Hajdú county [*comitatus*], while Nagyvárad [Oradea] was the county seat of Bihar county. In 1538 the Treaty of Várad was a secret and unimplemented peace agreement between Ferdinand I of the Holy Roman Empire (1503-1564) and the John Zápolya (Szapolyai János, 1487-1540) signed in Várad on February 24, 1538.<sup>603</sup> Debrecen with the Treaty of Várad obtained a peculiar position among the cities; it was annexed to the Partium.

The Transylvanian prince, the Habsburg monarch and the Ottomans also demanded

<sup>602</sup> Ady Endre, "Debreceni lap Nagyvárad ellen," *Nagyvárad Napló* 1901. July 21.

"Egy debreceni lapban a következő mérges kis közleményt olvassuk: Az irigy szomszéd. Az irigy szomszéd, aki folyton sanda szemmel nézi Debrecen fejlődését, nem más, mint Nagyvárad. A pakfon város sok mindent irigyel tőlünk, egyik-másik közintézményt el is harácsolta előlünk, így a postaigazgatóságot, az önkéntes iskolát - s most a közigazgatási tanfolyam után kesereg. Legalább így olvassuk egyik nagyvárad újságban. - Az illető újság szerint a debreceni közigazgatási tanfolyamot már a közeljövőben Nagyváradra helyezik át. Így a nyáron, a kacsák virágzó szezonjában megbocsátandónak találjuk nagyvárad laptársunk kitűnő értesülését, mert se nem értesülés, se nem kitűnő. Egy elég ravaszul kieszelt hangulatcsinálás az egész arra, hogy közigazgatási tanfolyamunkat, amely már az első esztendőjében is kitűnő intézménynek bizonyult, elkaparítsák tőlünk. - Csakhogy a kedves szomszéd erőlködésébe ezúttal beletörik a bicskája, mert semmi ok nincs reá, és szó sem lehet arról, hogy a tanfolyamot Debrecenből Nagyváradra helyezték át. Ugyanolyan joggal Nyíregyháza, Szatmár és Eger is magának vindikálhatná a közigazgatási tanfolyamot, mert Szabolcs-, Szatmár- és Heves megyéből is nagy számban voltak hallgatói. Debrecenből tehát nem helyezik el a tanfolyamot, efelől nyugodtak lehetünk. Ezt a debreceni lapot Sas Ede nagyvárad hírlapíró szerkeszti. Újabb adat arra, hogy bizonyos egyéniségek sem erkölcsi, sem semmiféle inkompatibilitást nem ismernek. "

<sup>603</sup> Szendiné Orvos Erzsébet, *Debrecen és Erdély kapcsolata a XVI. század közepén (A nagyvárad béke és következményei)*, 1538-1571, [The Relations of Debrecen and Transylvania in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (The Treaty of Nagyvárad and its Consequences), 1538-1571], Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve XXVIII., (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár, 2001), 9-10.

In the treaty the medieval Kingdom of Hungary was divided by them. Zápolya was recognized as King of Hungary, while Ferdinand retained the western parts of the Hungarian Kingdom, and was recognized as heir to the Hungarian throne. John Zápolya was left with the remaining two-thirds of the Kingdom. A short while before Zápolya's death, his wife bore him a son, John II Sigismund Zápolya. Zápolya died in 1540, and John Sigismund was recognized as King of Hungary by the Hungarian nobility. The Ottoman Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent also recognized John Sigismund as King and as his vassal.

the right for the city, thus Debrecen had to balance among three powers with its politics and diplomacy. In spite of its delicate diplomatic position, during this period Debrecen is one of the greatest and richest agricultural cities of the country.<sup>604</sup> As opposed to Debrecen, Szeged was attached to the Ottoman Empire and was a “*khász birtok*” [“*khász prosperity*”].

The first issue of the newspaper *Debrecen-Nagyvárad* *Értesítő* begins with two poems metaphorizing Debrecen and Nagyvárad [Oradea], which is an example for self-representation. According to this *ekphrasis*, Debrecen is surrounded by a beautiful plain; it is the home of bourgeois virtue, the alter fire of public good and stands as a giant in the winds of Bihar, while Nagyvárad [Oradea] is the intellectually rich ancestor, ‘*iker testvér városok*’ [‘*a twin sibling town*’].<sup>605</sup>

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Szeged’s self-representation and identity was a mixture of rural and urban elements. The city was rebuilt on the basis of the latest achievements; meanwhile the surrounding ‘*tanya-világ*’ [‘*homestead world*’] remained characteristically rural. Sándor Bálint (1904-1980) formulated the notion of the ‘*szögedi nemzet*’ [‘*Szeged nation*’], based upon extensive ethnographic research in Szeged and the surrounding ‘*tanya*’ [‘*homestead*’]. Sándor Bálint also consulted with István Balogh, who coined the term *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] when defining the notion of *szögediség* [authentically from Szeged].<sup>606</sup>

István Tömörkény (1866-1917), author and museum director, also focused on the life of the farms surrounding Szeged and ethnographic research for his character

<sup>604</sup> Szendiné Orvos Erzsébet, *Debrecen és Erdély kapcsolata a XVI. század közepén (A nagyvárad béke és következményei)*, 1538-1571, 21.

<sup>605</sup> Balla Károly, “Debreczenhez,” Nagy Károly, “Nagyvárad-Olaszhoz,” *Debrecen-Nagyvárad* *Értesítő*, 1946. January 1<sup>st</sup>, Vol. 1.

<sup>606</sup> Juhász Antal, “Bálint Sándor és a Szeged-kutatás,” [Sándor Bálint and the Szeged-Research], in Juhász Antal, *A szegedi táj vonzásában* [In the Attraction of the Szeged Landscape], (Szeged, Bába Kiadó, 2004), 30.

representations, essays, reports and articles as the photo below taken by Tömörkény himself illustrates.<sup>607</sup>



**Picture 76.**

szegedi tanya rendes gólyafészekkel [Szeged Homestead with Stork Nest], 1905<sup>608</sup>

The notion of *szögediség* [authentically from Szeged] was a comprehensive feature describing vernacular culture in Szeged. The major and unique features that cover the term are the usage of “ő” dialect, and traditions closely connected to Catholicism of the given era. Citizens of the ‘*szögedi nemzet*’ [‘*Szeged nation*’] are hard-working with a joyous attitude towards working, and bear an ability for “colonization,” which meant an expansion on the Great Hungarian Plain. Also, it indicated a strong sense of union with the ‘*anyaváros*’ [‘*mother city*’] Szeged. This vernacular culture is described to be economically, religiously and intellectually unfold, and have a responsiveness to welcome external influences. As Bálint argues, the Great Flood of 1879 was a fraction in the folk culture. However, the ‘*paraszt-polgár*’ [‘*peasant-burgher*’] feature prevailed in the city.<sup>609</sup> Consequently, both the notion *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] and the term *szögediség* [authentically

<sup>607</sup> Juhász Antal, “Az etnográfus Tömörkény,” [The Ethnographer Tömörkény], 15-16.

<sup>608</sup> “Szegedi tanya rendes gólyafészekkel,” [Szeged Homestead with Stork Nest] 1905, photo by István Tömörkény (author, journalist, museum director in Szeged), Original photo by courtesy of the Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography], F7229.

<sup>609</sup> Bálint Sándor, “A szögediség, egy mezőváros példája,” [Szögediség, an Example of an Agricultural City], in Paládi-Kovács Attila, ed. *Előmunkálatok a Magyarság Néprajzához* 7, (Budapest: MTA Néprajzi Kutatócsoport), 161-165.

from Szeged] are artificially created. However, as comparing the two notions, *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] derives from a literary notion and became an equal term for conservatism. Moreover, it is connected to Debrecen's unique Calvinist tradition, which is different from that of the German model. Meanwhile, the notion of *szögediség* [authentically from Szeged] comes from the field of ethnography and presents Szeged as an open-minded city notable for integrating foreign elements and influences.

This ambivalence in modernization was the transition to civil society, which manifested itself also on the level of urbanization. In the so-called '*torlódott társadalom*' ['*society of pressured strata*'], modern civil society lived in parallel with the old feudal one in an 'osmotic' relationship. This transitory society can be best illustrated with the citizenry of Szeged, where the features of the peasant and the bourgeois lived side by side and mixed. The *civis* or *Bürger* of the city developed, not from the merchants or craftsmen as could be expected, but from the local peasants. The bourgeois development of Szeged does not develop from the onset of industrialization, but with livestock and corn trade. Since the merchants and craftsmen were essentially foreign elements of the society in this period, and the rate of nobility was significantly low in Szeged, it contributed to an image peculiar to Szeged.<sup>610</sup>

Literature and essentially the two major and rival newspapers of Szeged, the *SZH* and the *SZN* played a crucial role in the development of this flourishing. The literary image of Szeged presented by these newspapers provided a unique historiography for the city interwoven with fictional elements and the tropes of figurative language. This image, however, was both part and result of the

<sup>610</sup> Marjanucz László, "Szeged polgári csoportjai a XIX.században," [Szeged's Bourgeois Groups in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century], in *Tanulmányok Csongrád megye történetéből XXVI*, [Essays from the History of Csongrád County] (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 1998), 216. Initial thoughts developed in my unpublished MA thesis, CEU on *Making the modern city : the constructed image of Szeged after the flood a case study 1879-1904*, Budapest : CEU, Budapest College, 2005.

modernization and urbanization processes, and became the imprint of local historical imagination. Moreover, this image of Szeged contributed to the creation of both a national past and the bourgeois self-identity of the city. This constructed image reflects metahistorical elements manifested in literature and articles. Thus, the rhetoric of this verbal image of reality functions as a Barthesian cultural code to comprehend the past. In this sense, Szeged's constructed image can be depicted as a "progressive modern urban model," while Debrecen remained a "static modern urban environment."

## Chapter 4 The Impact of Voluntary Civic Associations on Debrecen's and Szeged's Urban Images in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

As a result of the dramatic newspaper reports about the Flood, public attention was attracted both at the national and the international levels. Yet local newspapers had another important function in Szeged's society: they aroused local patriotism, strengthened the sense of solidarity within the local population, and encouraged the local elite to construct a new, prominent local identity of the town. These social, political and cultural factors constructed a dynamic local society, more open to modernization than in many other towns of a similar size in Hungary.

Consequently, as the previous chapter shows, the combination of the material reconstruction of Szeged and the intellectual work of the local journalists and authors had a significant impact in making Szeged an important regional civic center by the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of this consciously re-created and at the same time newly created image of the city, Szeged was not an incomplete regional center anymore (which it actually was on the basis of its juridical status); it became an unrivaled cultural center of the region with a significant economic and social background.

This chapter presents Debrecen's and Szeged's social life via the work of local voluntary associations. Moreover, it investigates their identity-forming role and their influence upon the urban identity and image of the cities sequentially. The literary associations, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in Debrecen and the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association] in Szeged played a crucial role in the formative period of Debrecen and Szeged's urbanizations. The emergence and formation of unions and associations presuppose a conscious need on the part of the citizens for



expressing their freedom and self-identification within the society.<sup>611</sup> As members of these local associations, individuals like József Csanak (1820-1900), Gábor Oláh (1881-1942), István Tömörkény (1866-1914) and Ferenc Móra (1879-1934) emerged as engines of urbanization and in their image formation work.

#### 4.1. The Emergence of the Public Sphere

Local associations had an enormous influence on the life of the city's inhabitants. They provided space for modern social life where people could meet, identify and freely discuss common social problems; and through that discussion influence political action. Jürgen Habermas articulated the notion of the bourgeois public sphere which emerged with the development of modern civic society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, driven by the need for open commercial arenas where news and matters of common concern could be freely exchanged, accompanied by growing rates of literacy, the accessibility of literature and a new kind of critical journalism.<sup>612</sup>

This new kind of journalism adopted the telegraph network that transmitted recent news worldwide and not only presented the story but reported it and entertained the public. An alternative model of the newspaper's role proposes that "the newspaper is uniquely defined as a genre of literature precisely to the extent that the facts it provides are unframed, that it purveys pure 'information.'"<sup>613</sup> In this sense, literature as a socially symbolic act, as conceptualized by Frederick Jameson, started to function as a part of the political unconscious.<sup>614</sup>

<sup>611</sup> Széchenyi István, *Hitel* [Credit], accessed [September 27, 2012], <http://mek.niif.hu/06100/06132/html/hitel0009.html>.

<sup>612</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1989), 305.

<sup>613</sup> Michael Schudson, "The New Journalism," in David Crowley and Paul Heyer, eds. *Communication in History. Technology, Culture, Society* (Longman Publishers USA, 1991), 160.

<sup>614</sup> Frederick Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: narrative as a socially symbolic act*, (London: Methuen, 1981), 20.

Literary societies and their '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] role, as well as their function in creating cohesion, played a determining role in the development of the public sphere as focus of urbanization. But other discursive arenas, such as coffee houses or salons, also contributed to the establishment of a public sphere for social interaction in the domain of common concern and inclusivity. Coffee houses, salons, associations, and clubs became the pillars of bourgeois society and often turned into centers of art and literary criticism by providing a forum for self-expression and public discussion.<sup>615</sup>

Until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as József Kovalcsik argues, Hungarian towns can be represented as the provincial versions of the Catholic Austrian Court. Local urban identity began to emerge only in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>616</sup> From the 19<sup>th</sup> century on, the increasing number and foundation of different associations shows advancement in the process of embourgeoisement. In 1862, ninety associations were operating in Buda and Pest, which increased to more than two thousand by 1932. There was a comparable increase in the number of associations in the countryside. The Compromise of 1867 gave a stimulus for the formation of social organizations and the emergence of the public sphere. The local elite played a crucial role in the process of embourgeoisement in this formative period.<sup>617</sup> Both in Debrecen and Szeged, the local elite were interwoven with the cultural, economic, public and political spheres. Gábor Gyáni compares the 19<sup>th</sup> century Győr and Debrecen on the basis of their elite formation. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Győr is a heavy industry center, and by investigating its elite formation, it is seen to be modern in the sense that more than half of its society includes merchants, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs with a great number of intellectuals; meanwhile Debrecen's *cívís* elite with highest tax-paying

<sup>615</sup> Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 36.

<sup>616</sup> Kovalcsik József, *A kultúra csarnokai* (A közösségi művelődés színterei-utópiák, mozgalmak, társadalomszervezés: a művelődési otthonok kialakulása) II. [The Halls of Culture, (Places of Public Culture, Utopias, Movements, Social Organization: the emergence of the Cultural Homes)], (Budapest: Művelődéskutató Intézet, 1986), 38-39.

<sup>617</sup> Kovalcsik, *A kultúra csarnokai*, 71.

citizens [*virilista*] consist of mostly the ‘*nagygazda*’ [peasant] layer, which is valid for all the characters of ‘*alföldi tanyás mezőváros*’ [‘*agricultural cities of the Great Hungarian Plain with homesteads*’]. Kinship, informal social relations, marriage strategies dominated in the distribution of positions and offices.<sup>618</sup> Recently, Zsolt Szilágyi discussed profoundly the Hungarian elite formation in the market town Kecskemét and wrote about the historiographical background of Hungarian elite analysis.<sup>619</sup>

While investigating the transformation of the modern civil society, Gábor Gyáni refers to Richard Sennett’s theory, which explains that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the metropolitan sphere underwent a crucial change in terms of the way people appeared in the public arena and the way in which they participated in the life of the community. Another essential feature of the transformation of the public sphere was the increasing separation of private and public life.<sup>620</sup> From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century on, “cafés sprouted like mushrooms” particularly on the boulevards of the cities. In Western Europe, the cafés were visited mainly by middle and upper class citizens and served as semi-public spaces where people could be private in public.<sup>621</sup> As Gábor Gyáni points out, the cafés of Budapest and of other Central European cities, however, became identified with the life of the intelligentsia and the artists.<sup>622</sup> Yet, as Gyáni argues, the reduction of the concept of the café to the subculture of the artists is a generalization. Drinking coffee and reading the papers gave a strong bourgeois significance to the modern cafés. The café was significant not only as a platform for

<sup>618</sup> Gyáni Gábor, “Városinak lenni vidéken,” [To be Urban in the Countryside], In Győri Róbert and Hajdú Zoltán, eds. *Kárpát-medence: települések, tájak, régiók, térstruktúrák* [The Carpathian Basin: settlements, landscapes, regions and space structure], (Pécs-Budapest: Dialóg Campus Kiadó, 2006), 72-73.

<sup>619</sup> Szilágyi Zsolt, *Város és elit. A Horthy-kori Kecskemét történeti földrajzi és társadalomtörténeti megközelítésben*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem, 2011).

<sup>620</sup> Gábor Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience. Fin de siècle Budapest*. Columbia (New York: University Press, 2004), 26.

<sup>621</sup> Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience. Fin de siècle Budapest*, 36.

<sup>622</sup> Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience. Fin de siècle Budapest*, 98.

the exchange of information between artists and intellectuals but gained importance as a cultural medium for the bourgeois clientèle.<sup>623</sup>

Voluntary civic associations became the foundations of civil society. As Peter Clark defined these associations served as the venues of new ideas, new values, new forms of sociability and were the means of national, regional and local identities.<sup>624</sup>

#### 4.2. Associations and Social Life in Szeged as a Reflection of Urban Culture

In the Reform Era, the development of Szeged accelerated, and industrialization and a modern banking system appeared in the town. At the same time, the developing infrastructure of highway and railway constructions reached Szeged. Public social life appeared with the foundation of the local *Casino*<sup>625</sup> in 1829.<sup>626</sup> The membership registers of the *Casino*, the *Árpád Szabadkőműves Páholy* [Árpád Freemason Lodge], the *Szeged Lloyd Társaság* [Szeged Lloyd Association] and the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics-Society] almost overlap each other. Szeged's elite defined on the basis of records on the richest citizens [*virilista*], which consists of 10% of the whole population (mostly male), provided the members of these societies. By the turn of the century, the *Casino* with 226 members, the *Árpád Freemason Lodge* with 101 members and the *Lloyd Association* with 230 members comprised what could be

<sup>623</sup> Gyáni, *Identity and the Urban Experience. Fin de siècle Budapest*, 108-109.

<sup>624</sup> Clark, Peter, *British Clubs and Societies 1580–1800. The Origins of an Associational World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. ix. Cited by Kiss Zsuzsanna, "Tóth Árpád: Önszerveződő polgárok. A pesti egyesületek társadalomtörténete a reformkorban." [Review Essay on Tóth Árpád, *The Self-Organizing Citizens. The Social History of Associations in the Reform Era Pest*], *Korall* 23. (2006 March): 224.

<sup>625</sup> Éva Goda in her work on the history of the Debrecen Casino defines the notion of Casino as something to be derived from the Italian word *cassini* meaning house, small house, or indirectly an enclosed community. Casinos followed the model of English clubs which was venue exclusively for man. Goda Éva, *Társasági élet és művelődés* (A Debreceni Casino története 1833 és 1945 között), [Social Life and Culture, (A History of the Debrecen Casino from 1833 to 1945)], (Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, 2001), 12-13.

<sup>626</sup> Tóth Ferenc, ed. *Csongrád megye építészeti emlékei* [Csongrád County's Architectural Memories], (Szeged, 2000), 341.

termed the *crème de la crème* of local society and included mostly the highest tax-paying citizens of Szeged [*virilista*].<sup>627</sup> Meanwhile, according to an annual register, the number of the members of the Dugonics-Society including founders, honorary members and supporters, women and ethnic minorities, increased from 153 to 380.<sup>628</sup>

#### 4.2.1. Local Civic and Voluntary Associations in Szeged

The Compromise gave an impetus to social life in Szeged. The model for the associations came from the capital. Many societies were founded with political, humanistic, industrial, educational and economic aims. This flourishing had certain limits, however: ethnic minorities were allowed to establish only literary or educational societies, for instance the *Szegedi Görögkeleti Szerb Egyházi Dalegylet* [Orthodox Serbian Church Choral Society of Szeged, 1906]. In Szeged, the greatest and most influential society was the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics-Society] with a massive membership.<sup>629</sup> Many other associations and clubs were born and provided memberships and thus opportunities for self-representation to a broad spectrum of society.

There were societies emerging as gatherings of friends with self-educational purposes for different professions, such as the *Borbély és Fordrász Segédek Önképző Egylete* [Self-educational Society of Barber and Hair-Dresser Assistants, 1902]; societies designed according to location in the city, such as the *Szeged-Alsóvárosi Olvasótársulat* [Szeged-Lower-City Rosary Circle, 1854] or the *Szegedi Központi*

<sup>627</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Ujabb* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)*, [The New Era of Szeged. A Newer History and Description of the Town], (Szeged, 1901), 302.

<sup>628</sup> CSML, X/58. 7. Unfortunately, on the document there is no date, most probably it is from 1897. See attached document.

<sup>629</sup> The documents of the Dugonics-Society are in the Archive of Csongrád County (Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, hence abbreviated as CSML) stored in eight boxes registered as X/58.

*Társadalmi Kör* [Central Szeged Civic Society] which served the town's beautification purposes, as well; singing groups such as the *Szegedi Hangász Egyesület* [Szeged Music Club] or the *Szegedi Polgári Dalárda* [Szeged Civic Choral Society]; sport clubs such as the *Szegedi Úszó Egyesület* [Szeged Swimming Club, 1908]; charitable societies such as the *Szegedi Kisdédóvó és Jótékony Nőegylet* [Women's Szeged Association for Charity and the Protection of Children, 1903], and worker unions such as *Magyar Festőmunkások Országos Szövetsége Szegedi Csoportja* [Szeged Branch of the National Association of Hungarian Painter Workers]; societies of different denominations, such as the *Katolikus Legényegylet* [Catholic Association for Men, 1911]; the *Árpád szabadkőműves páholy* [Árpád freemason lodge (1902)]; economic associations such as the *Szeged Lloyd Society* or the *Szegedi Gazdasági Egyesület* [Szeged Economic Society]; political parties, for instance the *Szegedi Keresztény Szociális Egyesület* [Social Christian Association in Szeged, 1908]; women's societies such as the *Nőtisztviselők Egyesülete* [Association of Women Civil Servants, 1905]; scientific societies such as the *Szegedi Társadalomtudományi Társulat* [Association for Social Sciences in Szeged, 1905], and other urban societies like the *Önkéntes Tűzoltó Egylet* [Voluntary Fire-brigade, 1882].<sup>630</sup>

Zsigmond Kulinyi,<sup>631</sup> in his historical monograph on *Szeged Uj* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)* [New History of Szeged (1901)], collected and described the roles and activities of almost all of the contemporary local societies which reflected the dynamic social life of the city.

<sup>630</sup> László Blazovich, ed. "Egyesületek Szegeden és környékén," [Associations in Szeged and its Regions] *A Csongrád Megyei Levéltár Kiadványai. Segédletek XIII.* [Issues of the Csongrád County Archive. Work-Help XIII](Szeged, 2003), 143-146.

<sup>631</sup> Zsigmond Kulinyi was the general editor of the journal *Szegedi Napló*, member of the *Dugonics-Society*, president of the *Vidéki Hírlapírók Szövetsége* (Union of the Journalists in the Countryside), secretary of the Jewish Charitable Women's Society (1889-1890) and wrote a historical monograph on Szeged from the Great Flood, 1879 to 1899.

Kulinyi mentions twelve charitable associations, fifty social and professional societies and eight sports clubs.<sup>632</sup>

Szeged's population lived in different parts of the city based on occupational and economic status. In the Reform Era, citizens with full rights (*cívís, concívís, Bürger, Mitbürger*) constituted one quarter of the city inhabitants and they had to pay a certain amount of tax to the municipal government [*polgártaksa*].<sup>633</sup> Stock-breeders and peasants lived in the *Alsóváros* [Lower City], while the *civitas* [Palánk] area attracted settlers of Serbian, Greek, German and Jewish origins. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Greek merchants dominated as the richest merchants of the city (Dosics, Arady), then their prevailing position in the urban hierarchy was replaced by German and Jewish merchants. The Grün, Felmayer and Dáni families came from Germany and established in Szeged the first factories specializing in the press industry, color-washing, and niter making. The propagators of reform ideas were noble proprietary families like the Kárász, Babarczy, Vedres and Klauzál. One of Szeged's main bourgeois elements were the entrepreneurs specializing in the shipping industry and crop-trade related to the commerce on the river Tisza. These were the Ábrahám, Götz, Kompassz, Tombácz and Zsótér families.<sup>634</sup>

One of the earliest manifestations of bourgeois self-identity was the *Szegedi Polgári Dalárda* [Szeged Civic Choral Society], which was founded in 1868.<sup>635</sup> According to the printed constitution of the Choral Society, membership was restricted to men with a good singing voice and unimpeachable character. Members were obliged to pay an annual 2 forints membership fee. The fellows of the Choral

<sup>632</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)*, 299-315.

<sup>633</sup> Marjanucz László, "Szeged polgári csoportjai a XIX. században," [Szeged's Bourges in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century] in *Tanulmányok Csongrád megye történetéből XXVI*, (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Levéltár, 1998), 216-217.

<sup>634</sup> Marjanucz, "Szeged polgári csoportjai a XIX. században," 219-222.

<sup>635</sup> The CSML preserved some documents of the *Szegedi Polgári Dalárda* [Szeged Civic Singing Choir] registered as X/66 in one box.

Society committed themselves to the improvement of national male music education and to coming together for practice twice a week.<sup>636</sup> The Choral Society had good connections with other associations of the same category and took part successfully in national singing competitions. Among the documents of the society, an invitation letter shows that the *Szegedi Polgári Dalárda* [Szeged Civic Choral Society] attended a national singing competition in Debrecen in 1868.<sup>637</sup>

#### 4.2.2. The Casino

Following the model of Count István Széchenyi's Casino plan (1827), the first Casino in Szeged was founded earlier than in Debrecen: in Szeged it happened on April 24, 1829, in the old city center [*Palánk*] with 67 founder share-holders, whereas the former casino was founded only in 1833. Casinos were the venue of reformed ideas, methods within the fields of culture, economy and politics. Count István Széchenyi, during his travels in England, encountered the high levels of public culture which in his view were the outcome of the vivid association life that he found there, and wanted to implement in Hungary, with the exception of political associations.<sup>638</sup> Casinos gave place to libraries, which subscribed to international periodicals.<sup>639</sup> Belonging to the local casino, the '*úri társaság*' [*gentlemanlike society*'], also meant an echelon in the social hierarchy and was a crucial inwardly integrating factor of the local elite.<sup>640</sup>

After 1848, the *Palánki Casino* changed its name to *Belvárosi Casino* [City Center Casino], due to the transformation of the city center, which moved from the

<sup>636</sup> "A Szegedi Polgári Dalárda Alapszabályai," [The Constitutions of the Szeged Civil Singing Choir], (Szeged: Endrényi Lajos és Társa, 1877), CSML, X/66. The modified constitution of the choral society was ratified in May 15, 1877 and registered as No. 19832.

<sup>637</sup> "A Szegedi Polgári Dalárda Alapszabályai," [The Constitutions of the Szeged Civil Singing Choir], CSML, X/66.

<sup>638</sup> Tóth Ágnes, "A kaszinó szerepe a reformkori Debrecenben," [The Role of the Casino in Debrecen's Reform Era], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve XXV, 1998), 76-77.

<sup>639</sup> Tóth Ágnes, "A kaszinó szerepe a reformkori Debrecenben," 79-80.

<sup>640</sup> Gyáni, "Városnak lenni vidéken," 73-74.



Palánk region to the *Széchenyi tér* [Széchenyi Square].<sup>641</sup> The aims of the Casino were to provide a forum for the public sphere and social interaction of the local society in Szeged and its region, to support public issues and to increase the foundation of the Casino with profitable investments. Founding members of the Casino were primarily private persons, officers garrisoned in the city, and even institutions or associations, on the condition of paying the 50,000 ‘*korona*’ [‘*crowns*’] membership entry fee. István Széchenyi also visited the Casino on several occasions.<sup>642</sup> The Casino organized public theater performances and founded an association for music education. The *Szegedi Hangász Egyesület* [Music Association in Szeged] was established in 1836 in close association with the Casino. The Music Association opened a school with the financial support of the Casino share-holders. The sons and daughters of the Casino members learned music in this institution. They organized charitable balls and they spent its income on the improvement of the Music School.<sup>643</sup>

#### 4.2.3. *Árpád Szabadkőműves Páholy* [The Árpád Freemason Lodge]

The *Pusztaszer-Árpád Szabadkőműves Páholy* [Pusztaszer-Árpád Freemason Lodge] was founded in 1902, with its first president being the Mayor of Szeged, Ferenc Pálffy. Thus, the lodge got direct and unmediated support from the municipal council. Among the aims of the lodge was to foster and commemorate the ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] of Árpád, the Grand Prince of Magyars.<sup>644</sup> The lodge was an ardent advocate of building a memorial temple upon the ruins of an old St. Benedictine monastery in Pusztaszer,

<sup>641</sup> The Burg was demolished as part of the city reconstruction.

<sup>642</sup> Blazovich, ed. “Egyesületek Szegeden és környékén,” 167-169. Documents about the organization of the *Casino* (1835-36) and a year-book from 1876 can be found in the CSML X/70 box.1.

<sup>643</sup> Documents of the *Szegedi Hangász Egyesület* [Szeged Music Society] are in the CSML in one box registered as X/63.

<sup>644</sup> Blazovich, ed. “Egyesületek Szegeden és környékén,” 166. Unfortunately, the documents of this freemason lodge were placed under the registration of the Csongrád County Archive (CSML) incompletely only from 1921 to 1942. The documents are in one box registered as X/67.

dedicated to Grand Prince Árpád, as a tribute to his legacy. It was planned to organize a Catholic mass and a national celebration there by the lodge.<sup>645</sup> This sacral dimension of Pusztaszer intensified with the Reform Era. By the turn of the century, as Gábor Gyáni argues, the political '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] of Pusztaszer as a kind of social movement became an explicit trend in spite of a protest in academic historiography.<sup>646</sup> It has to be emphasized that the temple was never erected. However, its plan can be considered as the symbolic action of a national myth to connect and bridge the pagan past and the Christianized foundations of the Hungarian nation.<sup>647</sup>

#### 4.2.4. Lloyd Társaság [the Lloyd Society] and Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara [the Chamber of Trade and Industry]

Besides the Casino and the *Árpád Szabadkőműves Páholy* [Árpád Freemason Lodge], another crucial association hallmarked the social life of Szeged and determined the image of the city: the *Lloyd Társaság* [Lloyd Society], which was established in 1867 and worked like a modern business federation. This association took part seriously in

<sup>645</sup> Pusztaszer belongs to the cultural heritage of the Hungarian nation. Presently, Pusztaszer is a village in Csongrád county, very close to Szeged, in the Southern Great-Plain region of Hungary. A National Memorial Park has been erected there to remember the legendary first meeting of the leaders of the seven Hungarian tribes before 900 AD which is considered to be the foundation of the Hungarian people. In a great hall the circular panorama painting of Árpád Feszty was rebuilt. In the Memorial Park a village museum has been rebuilt (Skanzen) with old buildings, workshops that are open for visitors. The ruins of a Benedictine monastery of Romanesque style were excavated and its foundations can be visited.

<sup>646</sup> Gábor Gyáni, *Relatív történelem*, [Relative History], (Budapest: Typotex, 2007), 76-77.

<sup>647</sup> Kristó Gyula and Makk Ferenc, *Az Árpád-házi uralkodók*, [Rulers of the Arpad-Dynasty], (Budapest, 1988), 16-20. Although Árpád is not considered to be the founder of the Kingdom of Hungary – that was his descendant Stephen I –, he is generally believed to be the forefather of Hungarians. Under his rule, the Magyar tribes settled down in the Carpathian Basin [*Honfoglalás*] and he is the founder of the dynasty named after him, which ruled over the Kingdom of Hungary till 1301. Árpád's title is ambiguous; he was either *kende* or *gyula*. In that time *kende* was the spiritual leader of the Magyar tribes, while the *gyula* led their military campaigns. Gyula Kristó considers Árpád the *kende*, the spiritual leader of the Magyars who inherited his title from his father Álmos. According to Anonymus (his name is unknown), who wrote the early history of the Magyars titled as *Gesta Hungarorum* under the kingship of Béla III, considers Árpád the *gyula*, the military leader. Majority of scholars considers his work as an unreliable source. Nevertheless, Anonymus (Bele Regis Notarius) presented one of the national myths of Hungary with the description of the "White Horse Myth" which tells that a representative of Árpád sold a white stallion for a handful of soil, water and grass by symbolically buying the land from the Moravian chieftain Svatopluk I. Actually, this tradition roots in the ancient Eastern belief that stolen land would lose its fertility.

the economic and commercial reconstruction of Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879 and lobbied for the success of the city's reconstruction and urbanization. Moreover, it worked for the organization of the *Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara* [Chamber of Trade and Industry] in Szeged and officially requested the establishment of the customs-house in 1882.

The *Szegedi Kereskedelmi Testület* [Szeged Trade Corporation] provided a different dimension to the economic life of the city by serving and protecting primarily the interests of the merchants and providing them a forum for self-aid. The corporation also helped students of commercial training colleges by providing scholarships to them.<sup>648</sup>

One can argue that the most influential associations in Szeged covered all fields of life that reflect urbanization after the Compromise, and to this the reconstruction period after the Flood gave a further impetus. The *Casino* dealt indirectly with political and social issues, the *Lloyd Társaság* [Lloyd Society] and the *Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara* [Chamber of Trade and Industry] focused on economic and trade relations. Meanwhile, the *Árpád Szabadkőműves Páholy* [Árpád Freemason Lodge] provided a quasi-spiritual dimension to the social life of male citizens. At the same time, the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] that aimed to foster education, literary life and culture was one of the biggest associations that also had women supporters.

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<sup>648</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)*, 303.

#### 4.2.5. Charitable Women's Associations

The ladies of the local society in Szeged took part in the social life of the city in large numbers. Zsigmond Burger's widow, for instance, continued and successfully ran her husband's printing business after his death. She printed, amongst others, the memorial book of the *A Szegedi Jótékony Nőegylet* [Szeged Charitable Women's Association], dedicated to its thirty years of activism.<sup>649</sup> On the list of its founders with forty-nine members, there are the female relatives of Mayor Pálffy and even the city of Szeged. The list of members in the printed constitution shows that not surprisingly the richest families of the city were represented in the association. The rules of the association ensured that each woman could apply for membership on condition that she was recommended by two members and could pay the membership fee. It certainly provided an exclusive air to the association, yet it aimed to provide patronage for helping widows and orphans financially, for building nursery schools and allowed them "to heal every social injury in the domestic life of the families." József Szilágyi, under-secretary of the state, ratified the founding document of the association on behalf of the royal minister for home affairs on August 27, 1868.<sup>650</sup>

Szeged was famous in the region for its charitable associations. Many of them were founded on the basis of religious affiliation and principles. The *Szegedi Katolikus Nővédő Egyesület* [Christian Women's Patronage Association of Szeged] was founded on August 24, 1909. The association accepted and followed the model and constitution of the *Országos Katolikus Nővédő Egyesület* [National Christian Women's Patronage Association], which was established in 1907 under the auspices of Princess Mária Josepha and under the supervision of the archbishop. Among the

<sup>649</sup> This memorial booklet is in the Somogyi Library, Szeged and includes the list of the founding members of the Association with its aims and rules. *A Szegedi Jótékony Nőegylet* [Szeged Charitable Woman Association], (Szeged: Burger Zsigmond özvegye Könyv és Könyvnyomdája, 1876).

<sup>650</sup> Registration number of the constitution is 4632. *A Szegedi Jótékony Nőegylet* [Szeged Charitable Woman Association], (Szeged: Burger Zsigmond özvegye Könyv és Könyvnyomdája, 1876).

aims of the association were to improve Christian moral ethics in female bread-winners, to support them intellectually and financially, and to help them develop an independent and useful attitude in the '*életverseny*' [*competition of life*]. To cultivate these values, the association organized social meetings for educational and intellectual purposes, established patronage, homes and schools for women, created and led female Christian women workers' unions and raised its voice for the protection of children and female domestic servants.<sup>651</sup>

Another crucial charitable association was the *Szegedi Izraelita Jótékony Nőegylet* [Jewish Charitable Women's Association in Szeged] which was established on February 27, 1835 by the Pollák family. Again, the model for the association came from the capital, the Weiber-Chevne Women's Association, which was under the auspices of Archduchess Hermina and Palatine Joseph. The original idea to establish a Jewish charitable women's society came from Mrs. Katalin Pollák, but due to her old age, her grand-daughter Mrs. Johanna Kohen took the initiative.<sup>652</sup> The association aimed to educate and financially support orphaned children. The foundation of the association invested more than 8000 forints in the education of eleven female teachers, eight female nursery-school teachers, nine female hair-dressers, five female tailors, two professional singers, three female book-keepers, one female music and drawing teacher and twenty-nine women in other professions, to enable them to earn their living independently.<sup>653</sup> This association contributed immensely to the reinforcement of the bourgeois values in educating the public and the family on those merits.

<sup>651</sup> László Blazovich, ed. "Egyesületek Szegeden és környékén," 225. The CSML preserved documents of the association only for the period from 1940 to 1944 under the registration number X/267.

<sup>652</sup> Löw Immanuel and Kulinyi Zsigmond, *A szegedi zsidók 1785-1885*, [The Jews in Szeged, 1785-1885], (Szeged: a Szegedi Zsidó Hitközség, 1885), 301.

<sup>653</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)*, 299.

#### 4.2.6. Cultural Associations for Peasants and Working-Class Citizens

Almost every district of the city had a distinct association for peasants and workers with the aim of self-education, such as the *Szeged-Alsóvárosi Népkör* [Szeged Lower-City Circle of People, 1875].<sup>654</sup> These associations served as forums for lectures and many of them had libraries for their members. Unfortunately, most of the books in these library collections were destroyed by the Flood.<sup>655</sup> Nevertheless, the great number of the associations established by workers and peasants reflects the need for self-education and became a model of behavioral culture and civilization.

There were associations for cultivating the religious needs of citizens that later on also functioned as a forum for cultural exchange. Documents of the *Szeged-Alsóvárosi Olvasókör* [Szeged Lower City Rosary Circle], for instance, show that its membership consisted of citizens of the *Alsóváros* [Lower City] and farmers of the ‘*tanyák*’ [‘homesteads’] nearby. Moreover, it had connections with other rosary circles abroad. It is explicit from its membership lists that it had a general assembly which met annually under the leadership of the president, while the committee board met monthly. As is written in the membership book of the rosary circle, it was founded in March, 1854 and aimed to strengthen its members’ Christian belief. The membership list begins with a prayer to Christ and the circle is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Its members promised to say the beads daily with the permission of their priests. However simple the aims of the circle were, they still reflected their conscious and collective action to register their members monthly and leave their names behind, as they themselves claimed, for future generations as an example.<sup>656</sup> Another

<sup>654</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond, *Szeged Új* [sic! Új] *Kora. A város újabb* [sic! újabb] *története és leírása (1879-1899)*, 306.

<sup>655</sup> Ruszti J. (Reizner János), *A szegedi Somogyi könyvtár* [The Somogyi Library in Szeged], (Budapest: Hornyánszky Viktor nyomdája, 1886), 4.

<sup>656</sup> CSML X/65/a In the CSML only some documents and two membership books from 1854 and 1888 are preserved in one box and registered as X/65. See documents in the Appendices

peculiarity of the membership book from 1888 is that its members wrote in the margins of the columns the names of those who died, who became new members, who came from a homestead (e.g. from Domaszék or Mórhalom) or moved to the city center. This also meant a conscious tendency for proper registration and community cohesion.<sup>657</sup>

The colorful and active life of the societies proves that Szeged was a cultural center of the region. By the turn of the century, Szeged was a regional center without having become a '*megyeszékhely*' ['*county administrative town*'] or '*püspöki székhely*' ['*Episcopal seat*'], and had the second largest population of all cities, with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Meanwhile, Debrecen the politically loyal, economically and socially strong "fortress of Calvinism" came after Szeged with around 72,000 citizens. Szeged and Debrecen also competed for the "third university" of the country. Debrecen had one crucial advantage; it already had the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] (1538), and a literary society, which also supported the idea of the university.<sup>658</sup> One of the crucial merits of the Dugonics-Society in Szeged was that it also put on its agenda the plan to develop a university in Szeged.

### 4.3. The Dugonics Society

The *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society]<sup>659</sup> was re-established after the Flood. This society propagated the recognition of the crucial roles of the cities, and particularly Szeged's role, in the improvement of national cultural and literary life.<sup>660</sup> The predecessor of the society was the *Ifjúsági Kör* [Youth Circle] founded in 1871, led by

<sup>657</sup> CSML IV.B. X/65/b

<sup>658</sup> Dr. Molnár Pál, *Debrecen a magyar irodalom történetében* [Debrecen in the History of Hungarian Literature], (Debrecen: Bertók Béla, 1941), 72.

<sup>659</sup> The Dugonics-Society hence abbreviated as DT.

<sup>660</sup> Nacsády József, "Az irodalmi élet (1849-1892)," [Literary Life (1849-1892)] in Kristó Gyula and Gaál Endre, eds. *Szeged története* 3/2. [A History of Szeged, Vol.3/2.], (Szeged, 1991), 1024.

Mihály Szabó, the head of the local teacher training college. It was a literary society for youth and aimed to promote Hungarian language and national literature. Its manifesto was published in *Szegedi Lapok*, which was against the rigid conservatism and hegemony of *Szegedi Híradó* and can also be considered as the predecessor of *Szegedi Napló* since it proclaimed itself as a liberal and independent newspaper. In 1873, the Circle decided to name itself after András Dugonics and with this symbolic action legitimized its position in the local urban society. Before that, the '*kultusz*' [*cult*] of Dugonics was fostered by the Piarist Fathers and with this gesture the circle gained their patronage and attracted citizens from the camp of the *Szegedi Híradó*. In 1876, just after the inauguration of the Dugonics statue, the *Dugonics Kör* [Dugonics Circle] was dissolved.<sup>661</sup>

In 1883, János Reizner, historian and clerk of the municipal government, picked up again the idea of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] and began to lobby for its establishment by writing a new plan for its constitution and aims in articles printed in the *Szegedi Híradó*.<sup>662</sup> Reizner is described in the satirical journal *Hüvelyk Matyi* as a diligent historian of the city who wrote the history of Szeged in twelve volumes with extensive archival research. Moreover, he was the conscientious director of the Somogyi Library and a patron of the city museum who had previously worked for the municipal government. On the front page of the journal *Hüvelyk Matyi*, Reizner is painted with his pipe, outdoing others with his merits, which is a symbolic reference to a Hungarian pun [*"lepipál" másokat érdemeivel*].<sup>663</sup>

According to Kálmán Giday, the true founder of the *Dugonics Society* (hence abbreviated as DT) was János Reizner, but later on because of its disadvantageous position in the political lobby, Dr. György Lázár, the deputy mayor, and member of

<sup>661</sup> Nacsády József, "Az irodalmi élet (1849-1892)," 1016-1018.

<sup>662</sup> *Szegedi Híradó*, 1883. June 6-7 and June 8-9.

<sup>663</sup> *Hüvelyk Matyi*, II.évf./No.29. July 20, 1890. See picture in the Appendix.



the Hungarian Parliament, became the leader of the society and under his aegis the society began to work again in 1892.<sup>664</sup> The satirical journal *Hüvelyk Matyi* presents him, in its section entitled “Great Men,” as an overmodest man with claws of a lion who visits Budapest not only for the sake of the Parliament but also because of the maids in Hotel Hungaria.<sup>665</sup>

As Reizner’s plan of the Dugonics Society shows, it aimed to be a society for social sciences, literature and visual arts. It was to provide a forum for social sciences, cultivate national literature and support visual arts in Szeged and its region. Reizner in his own manuscript discussed the ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] role<sup>666</sup> of Dugonics and the reason the society is named after him. Reizner considered Dugonics a path-breaker of Hungarian literature and science. Dugonics’ program had nationalist dimensions and aimed to prove Szeged’s leading cultural position in the region. In Reizner’s plan, archeology would also get a crucial role in the work of the society. He drafted the organizational structure of the DT with members and supporting members; outlined the duties of the president and the secretary-general; and divided the society into three sections: social sciences, literature, and the arts. At the top of every section, he planned to have a leader. Reizner also thought of the financial organization of the DT by establishing a board of directors under the leadership of the DT president.<sup>667</sup> Zsigmond Kulinyi, in his historical monograph on Szeged, and Antal Békefi, the secretary-general of the DT and the editor of the *Szegedi Napló*, overemphasized Dr.

<sup>664</sup> Giday Kálmán, *A Dugonics-Társaság története* [The History of the Dugonics Society], (Szeged, 1986), 1. The historical monograph about the DT is fragmentarily presented by Giday. Giday’s monograph on the history of the DT remained a manuscript to be found in the Somogyi Library, Szeged. The extensive documents of the DT are in the CSML and registered as X/58.

<sup>665</sup> *Hüvelyk Matyi*, Vol. II./No.36, September 7, 1890. As the anonymous author ironically concludes his presentation, he is not as innocent as he seems to be. The front page of the journal is a caricature of Lázár in which he is painted as a “great hunter of women.”

<sup>666</sup> The Hungarian word *kultusz* means an elevated form of adoration and respect for a famous historical, literary or public figure. In this sense I use the notion of cult role.

<sup>667</sup> Reizner János’s original plan of the DT. CSML X/58. 7.

György Lázár's role in the foundation of the DT and attributed every merit to him, while neglecting Reizner's role.

In the end, the DT was reestablished on February 28, 1892 with twenty-two people present at its founding assembly. György Lázár was elected for the presidency of the DT, a position which he held from 1892 till his death in 1915, while János Reizner remained only a founding member. In the period from 1915 to 1917, the position of the president was vacant. The secretary-general became Antal Békefi (1892-1904), then Ferenc Móra (1905-1907), István Tömörkény (1907-1917), and finally Ferenc Móra (1917-1926) again.

György Lázár was considered a charismatic and conservative leader who had absolute power over the DT. Giday describes Lázár as a deputy to mayor Pálffy who governed the city from the sidelines. Lázár was a member of the Hungarian Parliament and a public prosecutor starting in 1882.<sup>668</sup> Lázár's contribution to Szeged's urbanization is unquestionable. He was an ardent worker of the reconstruction period after the Great Flood of 1879 and his vision was the plan of *Széchenyi tér* [*Széchenyi Square*] with its statues, the new city center where the reconstructed Town Hall stands.<sup>669</sup> Sculptor Miklós Köllő's letter to Lázár shows that Lázár was an enthusiastic patron, commissioning and buying statues for the city. As the letter shows, he ordered and paid for a monument from the sculptor.<sup>670</sup>

Most probably, Lázár sent around the plan of the DT and asked for scholars' opinion, as Mihály Zsilinszky's answer to him shows. Zsilinszky was a historian and the under-secretary of state for cultural affairs. In this letter, dated four days before the founding assembly of the DT, Zsilinszky hailed the formation of such a literary

<sup>668</sup> Giday, *A Dugonics-Társaság története*, 3.

<sup>669</sup> Giday, *A Dugonics-Társaság története*, 3.

<sup>670</sup> Sculptor Miklós Köllő's letter to mayor György Lázár. Budapest, February 20, 1897. CSML X/58 box 1.

society. Zsilinszky considers the foundation of the DT as a crucial issue for the self-image of Szeged and its region since a society focused on the literature and traditions of Szeged and its region and the patronage of its arts was sadly lacking. Zsilinszky emphasized the word self-knowledge through stressing the aims of the DT as he saw them. In conclusion, he applied for membership and outlined the ambition of the DT to foster the intellectual development of Szeged and its region, and in a broader context he saw the future of the DT as a society which aimed to scientifically explore the present and past relations of the Great Hungarian Plain.<sup>671</sup>

The final version of the constitution was accepted on February 28, 1892. The constitution proclaims that the name of the association is *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society]. It states the aims, the organization of the society, the rights and duties of the members. It outlines the membership rules, causes for cancellation of membership, its spheres of authority, the procedure for lectures and the income of the society. It touches upon the issue of what would be the protocol in case of any strained relations among fellow-members, describes the protocol for the modification of the rules and the disbanding of the society. Finally, it includes the supervision rights of the state. György Lukács, the under-security of state ratified the constitution on behalf of the Hungarian Minister for Home Affairs and registered it as document No. 29882.<sup>672</sup>

The final version of the constitution differs in some crucial points from Reizner's first plan. It does not go into detail about the role of András Dugonics in the field of Hungarian cultural life. Moreover, while Reizner envisioned three boards for

<sup>671</sup> Mihály Zsilinszky's letter to György Lázár, member of the municipal council, Szentes, February 24, 1892. CSML X/58. 7.

Zsilinszky wrote to Lázár the following: „A társaság célja általában a magyar alföld jelen és múlt viszonyainak tudományos tanulmányozása és ösmerete; de kívált Szeged és vidéke szellemi fejlődésének előmozdítása.” [The aims of the society were generally to scientifically study the present and past relations of the Great Hungarian Plain and its self-knowledge. Most importantly the society is to improve the intellectual development of Szeged and its Regions]

<sup>672</sup> CSML X/58 7.

the society, in the final version the visual arts section is left out. Thus, the society had two branches, one for literature and one for the social sciences, each headed by a president. The aims of the society remain what Reizner outlined, but became more specific; the most important purpose of the society is the patronage and improvement of Hungarian literacy, generally in the Great Hungarian Plain, specifically in Szeged and its regions.

For achieving its ambitions, the society decided to organize public lectures, literary celebrations and exhibitions with special emphasis on the history of Szeged, and for these reasons the society was to publish annual year-books about its activity. Moreover, the society aimed to promote the scientific work of its members by awards and literary competitions. As for membership status, the constitution distinguished between founding, supporting, average and honorary membership. A memorial assembly was decided to be held annually on every October 17, on the birthday of András Dugonics. The president was supposed to lead the society and the assembly with the help of the secretary-general. Finally, in case the society ceased to exist, the city of Szeged would inherit the properties of the DT.<sup>673</sup> The officers of the DT did not get salary for their work, except for the general secretary. One of the duties of the general secretary was to report on the activities of the DT at the beginning of every assembly. When the position of the secretary was held by István Tömörkény the work and activities of the DT became more organized and transparent and his reports were printed for the public with actual membership lists and literary competitions.<sup>674</sup>

The printed public invitation of the DT metaphorized and highly nationalized the role of Szeged as the border fortress of the *Délvidék* [Southern Hungary] and of Hungarian national culture. The DT sought the support of the public with this action

<sup>673</sup> CSML X/58. 7.

<sup>674</sup> Tömörkény István, *A Dugonics Társaság jelentései*, [The Minutes of the Dugonics Society], Szeged: Dugonics Társaság, 1909-13

and proclaimed the purposes and the name of the society and described it as a literary and scientific association. The language of the invitation is highly poetic and nationalist; it states that Hungarians have to once again occupy the homeland which they inherited from Attila. The means of this new peaceful occupation is the Hungarian national genius and its champions are the workers of literature and sciences.<sup>675</sup> The invitation served to legitimize '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] function of Dugonics by inviting the public to participate in the ambitions of the society. As Lajos Lakner argues, every literary '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] is expansive and serves the interests of its participants by relying on the natural need of the individual to strengthen his/her identity with a sense of belonging to the same group.<sup>676</sup>

The first public event of the DT was a literary celebration which took place on November 20, 1892. The program was divided into three parts. In the morning, at 10 a.m., the program started with the plenary lecture of president Lázár, continued with the speech of Reizner about Dugonics, then Kálmán Mikszáth, honorary member of the DT, read out some of his work, and the morning program ended with recitation. The gala lunch was in the hall of Hotel Tisza from 2 p.m. In the evening, the program in the theater included excerpts from Ferenc Erkel's opera entitled "*László Hunyady*," the recitation of a poem about Dugonics and the theatre company played one act from Dugonics's drama entitled "*Mária Báthory*."<sup>677</sup>

<sup>675</sup> "Ez a föld, amin állunk, kétségtelenül a miénk; de a múlt nehéz körülményei, hibái, mulasztásai azt a súlyos, de dicső feladatot hárították a jelen vállaira, hogy még egyszer és pedig jobban, teljesebben hódítsa meg Attila örökét. Az új békés honfoglalás fegyvere a magyar nemzeti génusz. Bajnokai az irodalom s a tudomány munkásai." [This land where we are standing is undeniably ours. However, the difficult conditions and failures of the past put that heavy but glorious task on the shoulders of the present to conquer in a better and more complete way Attila's heritage. The weapon of the new and peaceful weapon is the Hungarian national intellect. Its champions are the workers of literature and science]. The invitation was signed by the still temporary president György Lázár, Zsigmond Kulinyi and János Reizner on behalf of the assembly of the DT. Szeged, September 7, 1892. CSML X/58 box 7.

<sup>676</sup> Lakner Lajos, "Irodalmi kultusz, történetiség, aktualitás. A kultuszkutatás útjain," [Literary Cult, Historicism, Actuality] in Kalla Zsuzsa, eds. et.al. *Kultusz, mű, identitás. Kultusztörténeti tanulmányok* [Cult, Work, Identity. Studies on Cultural History], (Budapest: Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum, 2005), 18 and 23.

<sup>677</sup> CSML, IV.B. X/58. 7.

The first literary competition of the society focused on four topics. The first of them was a literary monograph on the life of András Dugonics due in two years and for the prize of 1000 korona. The second one was the geographic and ethnographic description of Szeged and its people to be submitted in one year and prized for 500 korona. The third was a nationalist cultural project coined as the impact of Szeged on Southern Hungary with the deadline of one year and the prize of 3-500 ‘korona’ [‘crowns’]. The final topic was the Climate of Szeged with a one year deadline for 100-200 ‘korona’ [‘crowns’].<sup>678</sup> The above mentioned topics reflect the primary intentions of the society to emphasize the function of Szeged as a regional center.

#### 4.3.1. The Legacy of András Dugonics

The society was named after András Dugonics (1740-1818), Piarist monk, mathematician and author, the first remarkable patron and researcher of neologism in the Hungarian language; he created the Hungarian mathematical professional language. Dugonics was deeply attached to Szeged and its vernacular culture. He was among the first to significantly contribute to the literary image of Szeged with his poetry, dramas and novels. One of his major works was the novel *Etelka* (1788) that openly criticized the anti-Magyar politics of Joseph II (1741-1790). This political novel provides a symbolic representation of the contemporary situation of Joseph's reign and system. Surprisingly, although a Piarist father, he wrote about secular topics like the Settlements of the Magyars in Hungary [*Honfoglalás*]. He combined fictional elements and figurative language with historical facts and his historiography became an allegory of the past. The sources of his “first original national novel,” as Dugonics claims, were the works of Anonymus [*Gesta Hungarorum*] and *Tactica* [Τακτικά] written by Emperor Leo VI “the Wise” or “the Philosopher” [Byzantine emperor,

<sup>678</sup> CSML, IV.B. X/59. 7.

866-912]. The main feature of his literary works is a kind of Szeged-centered national consciousness.<sup>679</sup> The ideological implication of this metaphorization legitimized a kind of counter-history in opposition the one propagated by Joseph II.

Szeged played a crucial role during the 15<sup>th</sup> century in several campaigns against the advancing Turkish armies. In the Middle-Ages, the importance of Szeged as a defense center increased and survived in the future ideology of the *frontier* hypothesis, which claimed that the city became the defender of civilization against the “threat” of the foreign element. Although the city was not a border town at that time, recruiting activity in the area was rather high and was aimed at fighting against the advancing Ottoman troops. Szeged became the center of transit-trade, and gradually became a true town both socially and geographically, by having been a regional center for its agricultural environment.<sup>680</sup> László Szörényi took this idea even further by arguing that Szeged’s social and cultural position was due to the Piarist Fathers’ early literary activities and the developing public administration.<sup>681</sup> Be that as it may, this frontier hypothesis survived even in the jargon of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society].

Dugonics’ literary ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] belongs to the Hungarian nation’s cultural memory. Every literary ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] reflects and highlights the social and cultural changes and transformations of a given historical period. Moreover, one of the most important characteristic features of literary ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] is their identity making function both for individuals and the community. These literary ‘*kultusz*’ [‘*cult*’] aestheticize life. The naive and average reader does not analyze the texts and

<sup>679</sup> Szörényi László, “Dugonics András 1740-1818,” in Kristó Gyula and Farkas József, eds. *Szeged története 2. 1686-1849*, [The History of Szeged, Vol. 2], (Szeged, 1985), 634 and 642.

<sup>680</sup> Gergely András, “Egy frontier-telep várossá alakul,” [A Frontier-Settlement Develops into a City] Kristó Gyula and Farkas József, eds. *Szeged története 2. 1686-1849*, [The History of Szeged, Vol.2.], (Szeged: Somogyi-Könyvtár, 1985), 486.

<sup>681</sup> Szörényi László, “A közerkölcsök és a társasélet,” [Public Moral and Social Life] in *Szeged története 2. 1686-1849*, [Public Moral and Social Life], 486.

figurative language use of literature, but uses it for helping them in their lives and sees it as a tool for identification with social ideas.<sup>682</sup>

Dugonics' major legacy was his dedicated service to culture that the DT aimed to continue. Among the ambitions of the DT was to obtain the permission of the king and the government for the establishment of a university in Szeged. For this reason, the DT collected and saved money from 1900 on.<sup>683</sup> In 1904, the DT published a plan for an album dealing with the matter of a forthcoming university in Szeged. This album intended to acquaint the public with the grounds of the university and legitimizes the city's right to it by seeking supporters on the national level, as well. The plan of the album consists of five parts. Firstly, it argues for the need for the university, secondly it deals with the location of a possible university, thirdly it describes the history of the university issue in Szeged, fourthly it outlines the preliminary conditions of a university in Szeged, and fifthly it emphasizes the connections of the university with the Agricultural College.<sup>684</sup>

This cultural center function of Szeged was strengthened by the generous book donation of Károly Somogyi (1811-1888),<sup>685</sup> which became the foundation of the library named after him. János Reizner wrote a monograph on the history of the Somogyi library under the pen name of Ruszti R. J. in which he hailed the establishment of the library since it served the purposes of Szeged by making it a true regional cultural center.<sup>686</sup> The *Szegedi Híradó* described Somogyi as the "Ferencz

<sup>682</sup> Lakner Lajos, "Irodalmi kultusz, történetiség, aktualitás. A kultusz kutatás útjain," 23-26.

<sup>683</sup> Giday, *A Dugonics-Társaság története*, 34.

<sup>684</sup> CSML X/58. 8. See document in the Appendices.

<sup>685</sup> Károly Somogyi (1811-1888) was Prebend of Esztergom, founder of the Somogyi Library in Szeged, and a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. After the Great Flood, he donated his private library of 43701 books to Szeged in 1881. See his statue in front of the Somogyi Library, Szeged and his memorial in Tiszaföldvár, his birth-place. Accessed July 23, 2012. [http://www.kosakarlo.hu/panteon/p\\_somogyi-karoly.html](http://www.kosakarlo.hu/panteon/p_somogyi-karoly.html).

<sup>686</sup> Ruszti J. (Reizner János), *A szegedi Somogyi könyvtár*, 4.



Széchenyi<sup>687</sup> of Szeged.”<sup>688</sup> Somogyi decided to donate his library collection to Szeged because of the devastation caused by the Great Flood; he saw that Szeged, because of its geographic position and cultural preconditions, was destined to be a flourishing cultural center.<sup>689</sup> The official donation took place in 1881, with the donation of 16,882 books that were transported in 215 boxes to Szeged. The library collection was unique, since it was professionally divided into eleven sections by different sciences in the six halls of the library.<sup>690</sup> The first director of the library was János Reizner (1880-1904),<sup>691</sup> then István Tömörkény (1904-1917)<sup>692</sup> and Ferenc Móra

<sup>687</sup> Count Ferencz Széchenyi (1754-1820) was the founder of the Hungarian National Library and Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum [National Museum, founded in 1802] in Buda. The library is named after him the Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár [National Széchenyi Library (OSZK), founded in 1802]. He was the father of István Széchenyi (1791-1860), Hungarian politician, philosopher, and writer. Fraknói Vilmos, *Széchenyi Ferencz, 1754-1820*, (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1902). [Hungarian Electronic Library of the National Széchenyi Library], Accessed July 23 2012, <http://mek.oszk.hu/05400/05481/html/>.

<sup>688</sup> Szegedi Híradó, 1883/ No.203.

<sup>689</sup> Ruszti J. (Reizner János), *A szegedi Somogyi könyvtár*, 7.

<sup>690</sup> Ruszti J. (Reizner János), *A szegedi Somogyi könyvtár*, 9.

<sup>691</sup> Reizner János was a lawyer, local historian, deputy head of the Dugonics Társaság [Dugonics Association], head of the Somogyi Library and the director of the Közművelődési Palota, Szeged. [Culture Hall, presently the Ferenc Móra Museum] See his statue in front of the Móra Ferenc Múzeum [Ferenc Móra Museum] by Mihály Fritz, 1997, Accessed July 23, 2012. [http://szoborlap.hu/223\\_reizner\\_janos\\_szobra\\_szeged\\_fritz\\_mihaly\\_1997.html](http://szoborlap.hu/223_reizner_janos_szobra_szeged_fritz_mihaly_1997.html).

<sup>692</sup> István Tömörkény was a Hungarian author, journalist, ethnographer, archeologist, head of the Somogyi library and the Museum. He was a member and secretary (from 1907) of the Dugonics Társaság [Dugonics Association], from 1902 the head of the *Szegedi Írók és Hírlapírók Köre* [The Circle of Writers and Journalists in Szeged], the secretary in general of the Pusztaszeri Árpád Egyesület [Pusztaszer Árpád Freemason Lodge], belonged to the municipal council in Szeged, one of the leader of the *Vidéki Hírlapírók Szövetsége* [The Association of Journalists in the Countryside] and a member of the Petőfi Társaság [Petőfi Literary Society]. His literary works focused on the 'tanyavilág,' ('homestead life') in the vicinity of Szeged. See a photo in the Appendix took by Tömörkény about a farm in the countryside of Szeged by the courtesy of the *Magyar Néprajzi Múzeum* [Hungarian Museum of Ethnography]. Some of his short stories: *Szegedi parasztok és egyéb urak* (1893, [Szeged Peasants and Other Lords]; *Az alföldi rablóvilág történetei* (1898, 1988), [Stories about the Life of Rubbers in the Great Hungarian Plain] or *Homokos világ* (1910), [Sand World]. Péter László, ed. *Új magyar irodalmi lexikon III. (P-Zs)*, [New Literary Lexicon, Vol. III], (Budapest: Akadémiai. 1994), 2130-2132. See Tömörkény's bust in front of the Tömörkény István Gimnázium [István Tömörkény High-School, Szeged] (1976, Márton Kalmár, Accessed July 23, 2012. [http://szoborlap.hu/8477\\_tomorkeny\\_istvan\\_mellszobor\\_szeged\\_kalmar\\_marton\\_1976.html](http://szoborlap.hu/8477_tomorkeny_istvan_mellszobor_szeged_kalmar_marton_1976.html).

(1917-1934).<sup>693</sup> All three directors of the library were prominent members of Dugonics-Society.

#### 4.3.2. Horizontal Ties. The Connections of the Dugonics-Society with Other Literary Societies

The literary journal of Szeged, *Idő* [Time], published an allegorical essay describing a competition of literary societies in Hungary for the prize of the laziest one among them. As the essay describes, the ruler of the poets is Mór Jókai (1825-1904)<sup>694</sup> who sits up on *Parnassus*, and becomes the judge of societies. There are many participants of the competition, for instance, the *Petőfi Társaság* [Petőfi Society] and the *Kisfaludy Társaság* [Kisfaludy Society] from Budapest, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] of Debrecen, the *Szigligeti Társaság* [Szigligeti Association] of Nagyvárad and the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] of Szeged. The prize of the laziest society was awarded to the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society], since it was too lazy to even open its mouth to speak.<sup>695</sup>

<sup>693</sup> Ferenc Móra was an author, journalist of the Szegedi Napló, archeologist, museologist, and head of the Museum in Szeged. He was a member of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association], the *Petőfi Társaság* [Petőfi Literary Society], *Kisfaludy Társaság* [Kisfaludy Literary Society], *Szegedi Múzeumbarátok Egyesülete* [Szeged Museum Patronage Association], and the Pusztaszeri Árpád Egyesület [Pusztaszer Árpád Freemason Lodge], Péter László, ed. *Új magyar irodalmi lexikon III. (P–Zs)*, [New Literary Lexicon, Vol. III], (Budapest: Akadémiai. 1994), 1409-1410. He was appointed as the director of the combined library and museum of Szeged and Csongrád county in 1917 and served in that post as director until 1934. Today the museum is named in his honor as the “Móra Ferenc Múzeum.” In his novels and short stories, he wrote about the peasant life in the Great Hungarian Plain and also contributed to children literature. Some of his major works: *Rab ember fia* [Sons of the Slave Man], (Budapest, 1909); *Csilicsali Csalavári Csalavér* (Budapest, 1912); *Kincskereső kisködmön* [The Treasure-seeking Little Jacket], (Budapest, 1918); *Dióbél királyfi* [Prince Walnutmeat], (Budapest, 1922); *Ének a búzamezőkről* [A Song about Wheat Fields], (novel, Budapest, 1927); *Aranykoporsó* [Golden Coffin], (historical novel, Budapest, 1932); *Paraszti jaim* [My Peasants], (Budapest, 1935). See his bust in the Patheon of the Dóm tér [Dóm Square], (1948) by Antal Tápai. Accessed July 23, 2012. [http://szoborlap.hu/15404\\_mora\\_ferenc\\_szeged\\_tapai\\_antal\\_1948.html](http://szoborlap.hu/15404_mora_ferenc_szeged_tapai_antal_1948.html).

<sup>694</sup> Mór Jókai was a Hungarian author, statesman, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, member of the Kisfaludy Társaság [Kisfaludy Society], head and founder of the Petőfi Társaság [Petőfi Society], honorary member of the Dugonics Társaság [Dugonics Society], honorary citizen of Budapest and Szeged free royal town.

<sup>695</sup> *Idő*, Vol.I. No. 3. March 1907, 12-13

Despite this critique, the Dugonics-Society had good connections with other literary societies, as archival sources make clear. From the year 1892, there is a list of the representatives of different literary societies who were invited to the official opening ceremony of the DT. Kálmán Mikszáth represented, for instance, the *Kisfaludy Társaság* [Kisfaludy Society] from Budapest.<sup>696</sup> The DT was invited to the Csokonai Memorial Celebration organized by the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in 1905 and Antal Békefi, the general secretary and Antal Ujlaki represented the DT on this occasion.<sup>697</sup> In a 1915 letter, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] offered its deepest condolences to the DT on the death of György Lázár's, the president of the DT, and expressed its appreciation for his merits.<sup>698</sup> The DT gave donations and supported other societies as a letter by Zsigmond Kulinyi to the assembly of the DT shows; this was written on behalf of the journalists' society.<sup>699</sup> As for the foreign relations of the society, there is an official invitation letter from the commissioner to the DT for the Paris world exhibition, which correspondence continued later on, and the DT sent representatives and took part in the Paris world exhibition.<sup>700</sup>

#### 4.3.3. The Impact of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] on the Urban Image of Szeged

As a conclusion, I offer a reflection upon the role of the Dugonics Society in shaping the urban image of Szeged. Vilmos Szecső wrote a harsh critical essay about the work of the DT in the literary journal *Idő* which at the same time proves to be a social criticism of the era. According to Szecső, there are authors in Szeged, but there is hardly any literary life. The authors whom the local press regards as Szeged's writers

<sup>696</sup> CSML X/58. 1.

<sup>697</sup> Emlékkönyv a Csokonai-Kör három irodalmi ünnepéről, [Memorial Book about the Csokonai Circle's Three Literary Celebrations], (Debrecen: Csokonai Kör, 1909), 27-28.

<sup>698</sup> CSML X/58. 2

<sup>699</sup> Kulinyi Zsigmond's letter, January 11, 1897. CSML X/58 box 1.

<sup>700</sup> Letter from the royal commissioner of the Paris world exhibition to the DT, December 23, 1897. CSML X/58. 1

did not belong to Szeged. Describing the world of the scattered farms is not the true Szeged. In reality, the precious and talented artists are modest and avoid publicity. Meanwhile, the ridiculous and conceited untalented people rule the cultural world. This is the fault of the literary society because its members are not properly chosen, since everybody wants to become a member of the society.<sup>701</sup>

One of the direct influences of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association] was the erection of András Dugonics's statue in 1876. This was the first remarkable public statue of Szeged and was inaugurated by János Reizner. The plan of the statue was made by Miklós Izsó but because of his death, his student Adolf Huszár finished it. The pedestal was made by stonemason Luigi Conti from Trieste. The square where the statue was placed is nowadays named as *Dugonics tér* [Dugonics square] and was the '*búzapiac*' [*wheat market*].<sup>702</sup>



**Picture 77.**  
András Dugonics' statue in Szeged<sup>703</sup>

<sup>701</sup> Szecső Vilmos, "Szegedi irodalmi élet," [Szeged Literary Life], *Idő*, Vol. I. No.2. 1907 February

<sup>702</sup> Tóth Attila, *Szeged szobrai és muráliái* [Szeged's Statues and Monuments], (Szeged, 1993), 28-31.

<sup>703</sup> Accessed September 15, 2012,

[http://szoborlap.hu/459\\_dugonics\\_andras\\_emlekszobor\\_szeged\\_izso\\_miklos\\_1876.html?f=photo&id=2003](http://szoborlap.hu/459_dugonics_andras_emlekszobor_szeged_izso_miklos_1876.html?f=photo&id=2003).

Gyula Juhász was an ardent critic of the DT, arguing that the society did not fulfill its duties, since the solid self-identity of the city is lacking that is expected by a literary society.<sup>704</sup> Despite his criticism, Gyula Juhász, who was an excellent poet, became a member of the society. This critical dimension belongs to the investigation of the DT; one of the greatest merits of the society was that it provided a forum for many authors, poets and scholars whose first “nest” was Szeged. For instance, Gyula Juhász’s first poem was published in the *Szegedi Napló* and he wrote beautiful poems about Szeged and its region in which he expressed his true admiration for the city.<sup>705</sup>

The fight of the DT for the third university had a crucial impact upon the social and cultural life of Szeged by raising the public consciousness. In 1880, Szeged and Kassa [Košice] wrote petitions for the establishment of the third university, which Debrecen’s municipal board also received.<sup>706</sup> However, Debrecen also declared its claim for establishing a university and naturally it did not support Szeged’s appeal.<sup>707</sup> Mayor György Lázár in his work on *Szeged az egyetemért* [*Szeged for the University*, 1906] describes the reasons for establishing a third university in Szeged after

<sup>704</sup> Juhász Gyula, “Vallomás a Dugonics Társaságról,” [Statement about the Dugonics Society], *Idő*, Vol. I. No.12. December 1907

<sup>705</sup> Juhász Gyula, “Szeged,” in Bóka László, ed. *Juhász Gyula and Tóth Árpád Válogatott művei* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1953), 65. Gyula Juhász (1883-1937) was a Hungarian poet, who was awarded the Baumgarten Prize. His first poems were published in the newspaper *Szegedi Napló* in 1899.

„A Tiszaparton halkán ballagok  
És hallgatom mit sírnak a habok?  
E partok méla fordulójánál  
Állt egyszer gőgös Attila király.  
E tájon, hol a két víz összeér,  
Áldozott egykor dús Ajtony vezér.  
Ott fölön, ahol most a vén harang dalol,  
Dugonics András búsult valahol.  
Mert búsulásra volt itt mindig ok,  
Ugy-e bajtársak, ugy-e magyarok?  
Itt Tömörkény, ott Gárdonyi lakott,  
Petőfi Zoltán erre ballagott.  
Megállok a felhős tavaszég alatt  
S míg megy a víz és az idő szalad.  
Érzem, hogy az öreg Tisza felett  
Az örök élet csillaga remeg.

<sup>706</sup> HBML, IV.B. 1405 110/1880.

<sup>707</sup> HBML, IV.B. 1405, 124/1880

Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca] and Budapest. The city, as a cultural and geographical center of the *Alföld* [Great Hungarian Plain] region, lacks a university. The Compromise, and then the Great Flood of 1879 with the subsequent reconstruction of the city, gave an impetus to the appeal for setting up a university in Szeged. The municipal board offered for the sake of university: firstly, the *Somogyi Könyvtár* [Somogyi Library]; secondly all the funds that are under the city's obligation and engage itself to establish ten more foundation places; thirdly, the city offered properties for the university; fourthly, the city obliged itself to establish a modern public hospital for the university; fifthly the city offers buildings for the faculty of arts, sciences and medicine. For accomplishing these goals, the city offers six million 'korona' ['crowns'].<sup>708</sup> Other cities were also competing to give home to the university, including Pozsony [Bratislava], (1876), Győr (1878), Kassa [Košice], (1881), and Debrecen (1892).<sup>709</sup> Finally, the *Debreceni Magyar Királyi Tudományegyetem* [Hungarian Royal University in Debrecen] was established in 1912 as proposed by a bill of 1911 written by Count János Zichy, secretary of Religion and Public Education.<sup>710</sup>

Dugonics's literary '*kultusz*' ['cult'] not only fostered local patriotism but helped its members to identify themselves with a common social ideal. Though there were many engineers among its members, the DT did not really participate in the urban planning of Szeged. Nevertheless, the achievements of the DT are explicitly manifested in their published albums, books and reports about the work of the society. Its literary prizes, celebrations, and public lectures can be considered crucial events

<sup>708</sup> Dr. Lázár György, *Szeged az egyetemért* [Szeged for the University], (Szeged: Engel Lajos Könyvnyomdája, 1907), 3-69.

<sup>709</sup> Szádeczky Lajos, "Közművelődésünk és a harmadik egyetem," [Our Public Education and the Third University], *Irodalmi Szemle*, 1894., 678-680. The Ferenc József Tudományegyetem [Ferenc József University] moved to Szeged from Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca] in 1921.

<sup>710</sup> Zichy János, "Törvényjavaslat a debreceni és a pozsonyi magyar királyi tudományegyetem felállításáról," [Bill on Establishing University in Debrecen and Pozsony (Bratislava)], (Budapest, 1911)

even in the national context. After WWI, women writers became members of the DT. Moreover, the society gave impetus to the *Tömörkény Társaság* [Tömörkény Society] to be founded, to honor the work of Tömörkény and to support the installation of Tömörkény's statue; and later the Society supported the establishment of the *Mikes Társaság* [Mikes Society] in Szeged, which came from Kolozsvár, Erdély [Cluj-Napoca, Transylvania] with the transplantation of the university to Szeged.<sup>711</sup> In sum, by the beginning of WWI, Szeged invested seriously in the intellectual power of its citizens and became a true cultural center in the region.

#### 4.4. The Csokonai Circle and its Impact on the Urban Image of Debrecen

The Csokonai Circle in Debrecen was conceived as the noetic center of the Tiszántúl region. Its aim was to provide a meeting point for a number of intellectuals whose works fostered the improvement of the city, just in the case of the Dugonics Society in Szeged. The society developed from the local literary circle on June 16, 1890, and its first president was Arnold Vértessy, a local journal editor.<sup>712</sup> Among the aims of the circle was to inspire local literary talent and to foster Hungarian literature, culture and art. Moreover, the circle aimed to encourage and take part in the town beautification movement by improving the parks, squares and streets of the city and offering statues to the cities. Finally, the ambition of the circle was to cultivate the '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] of

<sup>711</sup> Dr. Némegy Gyula, *A szegedi irodalmi társaságokról. Levél a főszerkesztőhöz*. [On the Szeged Literary Societies. Letter to the Editor in Chief], (Kiadja a *Szegedi Friss Újság*, 1936), 6. and 18-22.

<sup>712</sup> The files of the Csokonai Circle are in the Hajdú-Bihar County Archive [hence abbreviated as HBML] in the box of X.301.115.

Mihály Csokonai Vitéz<sup>713</sup> (1773-1805), a Hungarian poet who was born and died in Debrecen and studied in the Reformed College of Debrecen.

This section focuses on the presentation of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] and its place in the urban history of Debrecen. Earlier research on this topic concentrated only on the literary historical sides of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]. This research takes a different route and aims to shed new light on the history of the Csokonai circle, by highlighting not only the '*kultusz*' ['cult'] function of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] but its impact on the urban image of Debrecen, and places it in a comparative perspective by outlining the horizontal ties with other literary societies. Furthermore, I want to concentrate more broadly on the association movement in Debrecen as an indicator of modern urbanization.

Crucial sources of the research are the minutes of the general assembly, the society cadastre of Debrecen (1833-2001), the files of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] stored in the Hajdú-Bihar County Archive [HBML] in the box of X.301.115, the registers of the *General Assemblies of the Municipal Committee* [*Törvényhatósági Bizottsági Közgyűlési Ügyek Mutatója*] stored in the HBML, and the issues of the *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium* [Debrecen Picture Almanach]. Another important secondary source is the *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai Kör* [Cult and Sacrifice. The Csokonai Circle in Debrecen] volume edited by Dezső Asztalos, Lajos Lakner and Anna Viola Szabó. The first part of this volume presents Dezső Asztalos' (1913-death date unknown) manuscript on the History of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai

<sup>713</sup> Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, (Nov. 17, 1773, Debrecen—Jan. 28, 1805, Debrecen) was a poet of the Hungarian Enlightenment. Csokonai's early sympathies with the revolutionary trends of his age made life difficult for him in the wave of reaction that accompanied Napoleon's invasion of Europe. Dismissed after a brief career as an assistant master at the Calvinist college in Debrecen, he became a wandering poet. For the sake of a wealthy girl (the "Lilla" of his poems), he tried to secure a teaching post in Csurgó. He died in his native town, Debrecen and in his mother's house, when only thirty-one years of age. Encyclopedia Britannica, accessed February 10, 2012, <http://www.britannica.com>.



Circle]. Asztalos' manuscript was about to be his dissertation work, however, because of the Second World War his dissertation defense did not take place. His work is not easily readable. However, this is a crucial source, since Asztalos had the opportunity to get at documents which are not available anymore, and he knew personally the leaders of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] who could comment on his work.<sup>714</sup> The second part of the volume contains the circle's reports and the third part is a presentation of the contemporary intellectual life, writings about and by the leaders of the circle.<sup>715</sup> Moreover, the personal discussion with Lajos Lakner (the head of the Déri Múzeum [Déri Museum]) significantly enriched my knowledge on the role of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in determining Debrecen's urban image.<sup>716</sup>

#### 4.4.1. A Short History of the Csokonai Kör [Csokonai Circle]

The Csokonai Circle was named after the Hungarian poet, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (1773-1805) and was founded on June 16, 1890, on the foundation of the previous *Debreceni Olvasókör* [Debrecen Reader Society, 1885] and the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden, Society, 1861]. The Circle's main goals, as described in the articles of association, were to form an intellectual focal point for Debrecen, to foster Hungarian literature, science and art, to help local writers and artists, and to contribute to the town beautification movement. Moreover, it aimed to collect relics, unknown works, manuscripts and all data about Csokonai and to foster the poet's '*kultusz*' ['cult'].<sup>717</sup> The article of association is similar to that of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged, since it followed the model of the capital's literary

<sup>714</sup> Asztalos Dezső, Lakner Lajos and Szabó Anna Viola, eds. *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör* [Cult and Sacrifice. The Debrecen Csokonai Circle], (Debrecen: a Debreceni Egyetem Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadója, 2005), 32.

<sup>715</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 32.

<sup>716</sup> Personal Discussion with Lajos Lakner, head of the Déri Múzeum [Déri Museum], September 12, 2012.

<sup>717</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi kataszttere 1833-2001 között*, [The Association Register of Debrecen, 1833-2001], (Debrecen: Kinizsi Nyomda, 2002), 44.

societies. However, there is an element which is a peculiar characteristic of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle], namely its focus on town improvement, which is more relevant in the case of Debrecen than in Szeged, and the emphasis of the literary '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] function is more striking.

As Lajos Lakner argues, the activities of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] were dedicated totally to the idea of commemoration and sacrifice. It meant that the main aspiration of the circle was to foster the Csokonai commemoration and in this way highlighted Debrecen's national and cultural importance. For the sake of this commemorative act, they made all possible sacrifice, both morally and financially. Making sacrifice for the urban community was a crucial part of their self-identity.<sup>718</sup> As I view it, this '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] function is a peculiarly Central European phenomenon. Up to 1920, the circle had a determining role in the public life of Debrecen. The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century marked the era of urbanization, economic, and cultural modernization.<sup>719</sup> By this time almost every provincial town had a literary society which served as an intellectual filter for the local citizenry.

The literary past of the city is decisive in the field of modernization and culture. Primarily, the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] in Debrecen was founded in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was famous for its literary life.<sup>720</sup> The golden age of the classic literary life in Debrecen lasted til the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1806, after the ill-fated *Árkádia-pör* [*Árkádia Debate*],<sup>721</sup> Kazinczy accused the city of being

<sup>718</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 11.

<sup>719</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 11.

<sup>720</sup> Papp Antal, *Debrecen*. Budapest: Panoráma, 142.

<sup>721</sup> The *Árkádia-pör* [*Árkádia Debate*] was a famous Hungarian literary debate among Ferenc Kazinczy and Imre Kis in 1806-07. After the death of Csokonai, Kazinczy in an article published in the *Hazai Tudósítások* suggested the following quotation for Csokonai's epitaph: "I, too have been in Árkádia." This connotation has twofold meanings and the citizens of Debrecen considered it as the mocking of their city. The debate entailed religious, moral and aesthetic considerations. Árkádia was a Greek region, enclosed by mountains, its people were shepherds. They were good musicians who treasured their civilization, rigid morals but at the same time they were considered to be fool people. Ovid described Arkadia this way in his work entitled *Fasti*. Meanwhile, Vergil's Arcadia is different, it the

isolated, and of professional incompetence as well. At that time, Debrecen ceased to be a decisive factor in the cultural life of Hungary. One hundred years later, Endre Ady (1877-1919), a prominent poet of the Capital, repeated the accusations and wrote about the city's narrow-mindedness, the lack of openness and the desolation of its intellectual life.<sup>722</sup>

According to Lajos Lakner, others, for instance Lajos Zoltai, stood for the slow but steady improvement of the city. According to this view, only the capital was improved and supported by governmental money, while the countryside was sadly neglected. This view is contradictory with the fact that, Szeged was supported by the government after the Great Flood of 1879. The supporters of Debrecen's central place in nation-making argued that Debrecen preserved its Hungarian characteristics and made sacrifices for the national culture and interest. According to this view, Debrecen is a pillar of Hungarian culture and national identity and the Csokonai Circle supports these ambitions.<sup>723</sup>

From the Middle Ages, and especially from the era of Reformation, the interconnection of Hungarian culture and national identity was crucial for the self-image of Debrecen. From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the rearrangement of the trading routes, Debrecen ceased to be a central hub, which had been the foundation of Debrecen's economic power and an important part of its bourgeois

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ideal place of happiness and sheperd life. See more about the topic in Lakner Lajos, *Az Árkádia-Pör Fogságában. A Debreceni Csokonai Kultusz*, [Captured by the Arkadia Debate. Csokonai's Cult in Debrecen.] Doctoral Dissertation, accessed April, 17, 2012, [http://ganymedes.lib.unideb.hu:8080/dea/bitstream/2437/108604/5/Lakner\\_Lajos\\_disszertacio-t.pdf](http://ganymedes.lib.unideb.hu:8080/dea/bitstream/2437/108604/5/Lakner_Lajos_disszertacio-t.pdf); Pál József, "Az Árkádia-pör ikonológiai vonatkozásairól," [The Iconological Connections of the Árkádia-Suit], in *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, [Literary Historical Bulletins] LXXXIX. évf. 1989. 4–5. sz.; Pecz Vilmos, ed, *Ókori lexikon I–VI*. [Lexicon of Antiquity], (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1904); Sőtér István, ed. *A magyar irodalom története*. [History of Hungarian Literature], (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1964-1966).

<sup>722</sup> Szabó Sándor Géza, *Debreceni Dac. Tanulmányok Debrecen Irodalmából*. [Debrecen Defiance. Studies on Debrecen's Literature], (Debrecen: Kapitális Nyomdaipari Bt., 2006), 78-79.

<sup>723</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 12.

self-awareness. From the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the *civis*<sup>724</sup> layer was to be crowded out from the urban politics and its society became self-enclosed. The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] expected more members from the *civis* layer, however, it did not take place. Surprisingly, with the decreasing role in the economy and trading, Debrecen's national and cultural position increased in the eyes of its citizenry. The role of the journalists and local media contributed to create good public relations for Debrecen, just as in the case of other cities, and in advocating the cultural modernization of the city, by writing about the modernization of Debrecen.<sup>725</sup>

Thus, following Lakner's argument, the two main pillars of Debrecen's self-identity remained, firstly, guarding national uniqueness and secondly, preserving culture. Publicity became increasingly important for the sake of modernization of the city. Through public debates in the newspapers, Debrecen's citizens could feel that the Circle represented their interest. One of the ambitions of the Csokonai Circle was to place memorial tablets on houses and other locations which could tell stories about the past of Debrecen, for instance Csokonai's birth-place. This symbolic act could help the self-identification of its citizens.<sup>726</sup>

The predecessor of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] was the *Olvasó Kör* [Reading Circle] founded in 1885 for conveying knowledge of public utility. It was renamed and (re)formed as the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in 1890. The newly established circle had more ambitions than intellectual pursuits; it wanted to transform the cultural life of the city and for this it needed the support of the *civis* layer. According to Lajos Lakner, the circle wanted to decentralize cultural life, and make Debrecen the center which was in the beginning unaffected by ideology.<sup>727</sup>

<sup>724</sup> In the previous chapters, the word *civis* is explained. In sum, the *civis* is the citizen of Debrecen named from the 16th century. It got a pejorative connotation later on. More about the world of the *civis* people: Balogh István, *A Civilek világa*. Budapest: Gondolat, 1973.

<sup>725</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör.*, 13.

<sup>726</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör.*, 14.

<sup>727</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör.*, 14-15.

Contrary to the tendency in the capital, the moral and aesthetic principles of the folk-national literature, for instance János Arany's oeuvre, became not only a tradition but the norm.<sup>728</sup> According to the intellectuals of the Csokonai Kör, the culture of the capital was non-national and divisive.<sup>729</sup> In accordance with this tendency, a 1897 report of the Circle emphasizes the intensification of Debrecen's regional role, so that it could become the social and cultural center of the region.<sup>730</sup> However, as Lajos Lakner argues, if one examines the history of the Csokonai Kör, it becomes clear that Csokonai's commemoration is not only a means but also an end, of a cultural political program that was monopolized by a social group to establish its legitimacy. This institutionalization of Csokonai's '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] was ideology embedded in the Circle's activity, since the writings and speeches of its members lacked any individual character.<sup>731</sup>

According to Gábor Gyáni, this period was characterized as the "coffee shop culture" which meant that the coffee shop was a crucial venue of learning. This way of obtaining knowledge was not regular and not characteristic of Debrecen. In this sense, Debrecen seemed to be anachronistic from the point of the capital, since the Csokonai Circle wanted to keep the past alive and assure the priority of tradition.<sup>732</sup> As for the Circle's membership, for the Jewish population it meant a way of "integration" into Hungarian culture, and for women it helped promote a more active participation in social life, especially for ladies from the middle class, who participated in the events and celebrations of the Circle. One of the most active members of the *Csokonai Kör*

<sup>728</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 16.

<sup>729</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 16.

<sup>730</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 18.

<sup>731</sup> Lakner Lajos, *Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz*, [Captured by the Árkádia Debate. The Csokonai Cult in Debrecen], unpublished monograph by the courtesy of the author, 212.

<sup>732</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 20-21.

[Csokonai Circle] was Albert Kardos, who was its secretary from 1902, secretary-general from 1920 and honorary secretary from 1923.<sup>733</sup>

A reading society was established in Debrecen in 1885 under the guidance of the *Petőfi Irodalmi Társaság* [Petőfi Literary Society], based in the capital. They organized a Csokonai ceremony in 1889; this reading society is considered to be the direct predecessor of the Csokonai Circle, along with the *Emlékkert Társaság* [Memorial Garden Association]. Then on January 16, 1890 the reading society was renamed as the Csokonai Circle.<sup>734</sup> Its constitution can be found in the archive of the *Hajdú Bihar County* [Hajdú Bihar Megyei Levéltár mentioned later on as HBML].<sup>735</sup> The main ambitions of the Circle –as mentioned above - were to foster the intellectual prosperity of the city, make it the region’s intellectual center and to collect all the relics connected to Csokonai’s oeuvre. Besides these aims, the Csokonai Circle wanted to contribute to the town beautification movement and help the improvement of the squares, parks and streets of the city.<sup>736</sup>

To achieve these goals, the Circle wanted to hold educational and entertaining lectures, to award prizes and grants and organize parties, social functions, concerts, speeches and excursions. Doing research on Csokonai’s past and memories were among the main interests of the Circle. According to the constitution of the Circle, both men and women could be members of the Circle, unless the assembly disapproved of it. The Circle consisted of the general assembly with a president and

<sup>733</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 21.

<sup>734</sup> HBML IV B. 1405/b 95. I. 38/1890. 6976/90

<sup>735</sup> HBML IV.B 1405/b 95 I.38/1890, 6976/90 See the copy of the document in the Appendix.

<sup>736</sup> As it is written in the constitution of the Csokonai Circle about the aims of the Circle: “szellemi központot létesíteni Debrecen város művelt elemei részére; ápolnia a magyar irodalmat, tudományt és művészetet, buzdítólag hatni a kiváló irodalmi termékek közlése és terjesztése céllal [...] közreműködni a város, annak közterei, utcái és környéke szépítésében. [...] Csokonai életrajzára, irodalmi működésére és műveire vonatkozó mindennemű adatok beszerzése [...] a Csokonai kultusz művelése. [(The Csokonai Circle) is to establish an intellectual center for Debrecen’s educated individuals, to foster Hungarian literature, science and art, to inspire the excellent literary products by publishing and circulating them [...] to contribute to the beautification of public parks, streets and its surroundings, [...] to cultivate Csokonai’s cult. HBML IVB 1405/b 95 I.38/1890. 6976/90.

two vice-chairmen. Moreover, it was divided into a literature and a town beautification branch. The literature section was established to organize public readings, social functions and to publish almanachs. The town beautification section was to organize lectures for improving citizens' interest in beauty, keeping contact with city authorities and other associations so that the streets, parks and other buildings of the city both for sanitary and beautification reasons would be improved and modernized.<sup>737</sup>

#### 4.4.2. The Legacy of Csokonai

The relations of the Circle to the national culture can be characterized as based on both unconditional respect and sacrifice for it. As Lajos Lakner quotes Péter Dávidházi, this '*kultusz*' [*'cult'*] approach is marked by two main features: one is a kind of devotional adoration and, in accordance with this, the lack of any critical distance.<sup>738</sup> The members of the Circles had a naive belief towards national culture, embedded in a desire for cultural modernization, which in the end was trapped in its own ideology. The Circle unconditionally adopted the values of national culture, and believed in sacrificing everything for the sake of it. Since, as the Circle believed, Csokonai's commemoration is a heritage from the past and not a production of the present, it postulates claims for the prevailing representatives of the culture. Thus, the leaders of the circle laid down in a report from 1891 that their role is not critical analysis but rather to enshrine Csokonai's memory.<sup>739</sup> As they argue about Csokonai: "appreciation of his merits is the task of literary history; we the Csokonai Circle bearing his name, we only want to enshrine his memory."<sup>740</sup> However, as Dezső

<sup>737</sup> HBML IVB 1405/b 95 I.38/1890. 6976/90.

<sup>738</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 22.

<sup>739</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 22.

<sup>740</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 22.

Asztalos wrote in his extensive work about the Circle, in spite of their initial statement, they published many analytical articles about Csokonai's poetry as a commemoration to his work.<sup>741</sup>

Meanwhile, as Lajos Lakner pertinently comments on the activity of the Csokonai Circle, the very existence of the Circle was trapped in the vindictiveness of the ideology connected to Csokonai's '*kultusz*' ['*cult*']. In other words, in spite of the Circle's ambition to create a regional cultural center role for Debrecen, the Circle strengthened only provincialism.<sup>742</sup> The leaders of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] claimed that Debrecen's richest citizens did not support their work and ignored their visions of modernity. True, in Debrecen the level of literacy was high due to its Calvinist religion and printing tradition. However, the city lacked a social layer which could be receptive to arts and literature and become a determining social-cultural factor able to promote a publicly acknowledged author or poet.<sup>743</sup>

Gábor Oláh (1881-1942), for instance, an author and poet, a member of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle], teacher of the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College], who was born and died in Debrecen, started his career with Endre Ady and spent a shorter time in Paris. Oláh had the opportunity to break out from provinciality but he became trapped in his own narcissistic ideas of art and finally became marginalized. As Oláh recalls in his diary about Debrecen:

Debrecen, and his soul: the conservative-dead College, today it is also loyal to itself. [...] This city is a bog, here the souls are dirtier than the streets. If there is any heroism nowadays, then my own firmness in this swamp is the true heroism. I wish I could run away from here to Pest or somewhere else. My soul is in pain.<sup>744</sup>

<sup>741</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 22.

<sup>742</sup> Lakner, *Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz*, 211.

<sup>743</sup> Lakner, "Az önismeret kertjében," in Lakner Lajos, ed. *Naplók. Oláh Gábor* [Gábor Oláh's Diaries], (Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, 2002), 662.

<sup>744</sup> Lakner Lajos, ed. *Naplók. Oláh Gábor* [Gábor Oláh's Diaries], (Debrecen: Kossuth Egyetemi Kiadó, 2002), 160-161. "Debrecen, és az ő lelke: a konzervatív-halott kollégium, ma is csak hű magához. [...] Ez a város: mocsár; itt a lelkek piszkosabbak, mint az utcák. Ha van hősiség a mai napjainkban: az én szilárdan megállásom ebben a posványban igazán hősiesség. – Csak tudnék hamarosan menekülni



The activities of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] are not devoid of local patriotism. Csokonai's image depicted by the Circle is timeless, and it repeats the same pattern, meaning Csokonai's memory must be enshrined as the classic and immortal poet of the city and the nation. This immortal image, however, remains fragmented. Ironically, due to the fact that Csokonai's poetry was considered to be national, besides commemorations his name turns up in Debrecen almost always in case of national calamity or distress.<sup>745</sup> In contrast to this national image, Csokonai's portrait depicted by another poet Árpád Tóth (1886-1928) is different. He pointed out that this '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] approach to Csokonai is a canned image. As opposed to the Circle's intentions, this '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] approach makes Csokonai's image dead. Árpád Tóth claims that the main task of the Circle would have been not the collection of relics and the tradition but to deal with and focus on contemporary poets and authors.<sup>746</sup>

Nevertheless, the main function of the Csokonai adoration was to attest the self-identity of Debrecen and the social profession of the Circle. The very word *debreceniség*<sup>747</sup> [authentically from Debrecen] got a negative connotation from 1806 when the debate about Csokonai's honorary monument took place. This also entailed a denial of recognizing the genuine identity of Debrecen people, which also meant that the firmness of their identity consciousness was badly shaken by this incident. From this point, the very noun *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] meant and characterized isolation, conservatism and anachronism. Thus, celebrating Csokonai coincided with Debrecen's praising and elevating the emerging bourgeois consciousness of its citizens by strengthening their self-identity. The celebrations and

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valahová, Pestre, vagy akárhová. Mert a lelke fáj.”

<sup>745</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 23.

<sup>746</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 24.

<sup>747</sup> More about the word *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] in the previous chapters.

events organized by the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] had a great moral value for its members, which made worthwhile every sacrifice on the part of its members.<sup>748</sup>

Lajos Lakner quotes Péter Dávidházi, who called attention to the fact that the literary '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] and events genuinely own the opportunity, even temporarily, to unite the different layers of Debrecen's society in the way of life and culture. Unfortunately, as Lakner points out, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] did not have a broad foundation. The *civis* layer was indifferent to the activities of the Circle. According to Lakner, a conscious intellectual dignity is missing from the social strata of the circle. This means that the social position of its members was the determining factor and cohesive force in their self-identity. Teachers, clergy and free intellectuals were almost missing from their events.<sup>749</sup> The reason for it was that the decisive members of the Circle were at the same time both intellectuals and members of the local society. Arthur Komlóssy, for instance, was at the same time a member of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle], a town clerk, and even deputy mayor for the city. The magisterial position gave them power, but at the same time limited their choice of value. Not only the leaders but the whole society was in a dependent position, they did not have a substantive agenda which meant that the program of the circle followed the lines of the Petőfi and Kisfaludy societies. According to Lakner, renouncing an independent agenda meant putting away the modernizing aspirations of the city.<sup>750</sup> I would argue, however, that the Circle, in spite of its dependent position, truly had a great impact on the image of the city by erecting statues.

<sup>748</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 24.

<sup>749</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 25.

<sup>750</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 26.

#### 4.4.3. Horizontal Ties. Connections of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] with Other Literary Societies

At the turn of the century many literary societies were founded as a dynamic and conscious representation of self-identity. The *Dugonics Kör* [Dugonics Circle] in Szeged was the first one and was established in 1873. However, it ceased three years later but was reestablished in 1892 and named as the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society]. It became a determining factor of the intellectual life in the Southern part of the country. The *Toldy Kör* [Toldy Circle, 1871-74] in Pozsony [Bratislava] followed its example, then the *Kemény Zsigmond Társaság* [Zsigmond Kemény Society, 1876] in Marosvásárhely [Tîrgu-Mures], the *Kölcsey Társaság* [Kölcsey Association] in Arad (1881) the *Felvidéki Magyar Közművelődési Egyesület* [Upper Hungarian Intellectual Association, 1183-1912] in Nyitra, the *Kolozsvár Erdélyi Irodalmi Társaság* [Kolozsvár Transylvanian Literary Society, 1888], *Kecskemét Szigligeti Társaság* [Kecskemét Szigliget Society, 1891] or the *Arany János Társaság* [János Arany Society, 1903]. The Csokonai Circle was founded in the same year as the Bessenyei Circle in Nyíregyháza.<sup>751</sup>

According to the contemporary view from Budapest, the foundation of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] as a focalized intellectual venue of the region was not successful due to the lack of any independent agenda. As Miklós Mocsáry, under the pen-name Janus, wrote about the activities of the Circle, it was limited to and interwoven with private relations and political connections. As he pointed out: “The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] is not involved in anything and nothing can help it before long. As long as it does not realize its ambitions, and does not stop serving as a relic museum-mission, the situation will not change.”<sup>752</sup> As a criticism of the

<sup>751</sup> Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 40.

<sup>752</sup> Janus, “Íróvilág Debrecenben,” [Literary Life in Debrecen], (Budapest, 1900), 7-8. In Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 399. “A Csokonai-kör nem folyik be semmibe és ezen egyhamar nem is segíthet. Míg saját céljait föl nem ismeri és ereklýmúzeum-missziót teljesít,

*Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle], a journalist named Petur argues that the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] needs newness and reformation, it only copies the agendas and model of the Kisfaludy and Petőfi Societies.<sup>753</sup> As a response to Petur, Albert Kardos argues in his article on the profession of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] that the agenda of the Circle clearly states the ambition to make the Circle an intellectual center of Debrecen, cultivate literature, science and art, improve the collective sense of beauty, hearten talented authors and cultivate and spread the '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] of Csokonai. As Kardos argues, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] does not want to diverge from the track of the great societies in Budapest and it does not want to fight against the corrupt literary and artistic taste of the capital since it does not have adequate intellectual and financial power for that.<sup>754</sup>

One of the manifestations of the Circle's ambitions to foster literature took place in 1893 when the the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] made a proposal to celebrate the prominent Hungarian author's Mór Jókai 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a writer and asked for 2000 forints for support. Moreover, Mór Jókai became an honorary citizen of Debrecen.<sup>755</sup> This fact also shows that the Circle's activity was reduced to organize memorial festivals and erecting statues to the public; and it did not build on the opportunity to support local artists and authors by publishing their works.

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addig ilyen viszonyok fognak uralkodni." [The Csokonai Circle get involved in nothing, and this will not change soon. If it does not recognize its own aims and continue to be a relic museum, until then these relations will rule.]

<sup>753</sup> Petur, "A Csokonai Kör," [The Csokonai Circle] *Szabadság*, 1902. szeptember 7, in Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 402.

<sup>754</sup> Kardos Albert, "A Csokonai Kör hivatása", *Szabadság*. 1902. szeptember 14., In Asztalos, eds. et. al., *Kultusz és áldozat. A debreceni Csokonai kör*, 403.

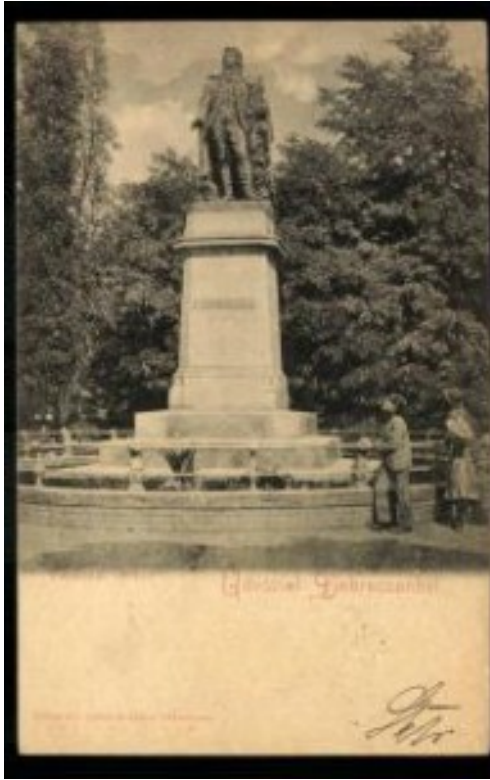
<sup>755</sup> HBML IV B 1403/a 14 80/4371

#### 4.4.4. The Impact of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] on Debrecen's Cityscape

The foundation document of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] is similar to that of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged and it followed the model of the capital's literary societies. However, there is an element which is unique to the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]: it focuses on the town's urban improvement, which is more relevant in the case of Debrecen than in Szeged, especially with regard to the cultural emphasis.<sup>756</sup> In this regard, a part of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]'s urban planning project was the improvement of the city squares, parks and streets.<sup>757</sup> In spite of its many critics, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] had a serious influence on Debrecen's urban modernization. The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] contributed more to altering the urban image of the city than the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged. One of the predecessors of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] was the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] established in 1861, with the aim to alter and beautify the square of the college that was next to the building of the Reformed Church and to unveil Csokonai's statue there.

<sup>756</sup> The Csokonai Circle's constitution is in the archive of the Hajdú Bihar County [Hajdú Bihar Megyei Levéltár hence abbreviated as HBML] HBML IV.B 1405/b 95 I.38/1890, 6976/90. See the copy of the document in the Appendix.

<sup>757</sup> As it is written in the constitution of the Csokonai Circle about the aims of the Circle: "szellemi központot létesíteni Debrecen város művelt elemei részére; ápolnia a magyar irodalmat, tudományt és művészetet, buzdítólag hatni a kiváló irodalmi termékek közlése és terjesztése céllal [...] közreműködni e város, annak köztere, utcái és környéke szépítésében. [...] Csokonai életrajzára, irodalmi működésére és műveire vonatkozó mindennemű adatok beszerzése [...] a Csokonai kultusz művelése." HBML IVB 1405/b 95 I.38/1890. 6976/90.



**Picture 78.**

Csokonai's Statue by Miklós Izsó, 1896-1905<sup>758</sup>

The *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] was strongly connected to the 'polgári Casino' ['Civil Casino'] via the mediation of József Csanak. The Association wanted to erect a monument in Debrecen, in the 'szabadság őrvárosa' ['Guardian City of Freedom'] to commemorate the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849. János Marshalkó (the planner of the stone-lions guarding the *Lánchíd* [Chain-Bridge] was the sculptor of the monument (named as '*haldokló oroslán*' meaning '*dying lion*'), which was placed on the square in front of the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] in the year of the Compromise in 1867 and stood there till 1899.<sup>759</sup> This commemorative act and ritual transformed the Memorial Garden into one of the crucial *les lieux de mémoire* of Debrecen.<sup>760</sup>

<sup>758</sup> "Üdvözlét Debrecenből képeslap," [Greetings from Debrecen, postcard], Magyar Digitális Képeknyvtár [Hungarian Digital Image Library], Accessed June 10, 2012. OSZK Plakát- és Képeknyvtár, 75811/92483, [www.kepeknyvtar.hu](http://www.kepeknyvtar.hu).

<sup>759</sup> Sz. Kürti Katalin, *Köztéri Szobrok és épületdíszítő alkotások Debrecenben és Hajdú-Biharban*, 27.

<sup>760</sup> Pierre Nora, "A megemlékezés kora," [The Age of Commemoration], trans. Tóth Réka, in Pierre Nora, *Emlékezet és történelem között* [In Between Memory and History. Selected Writings], (Budapest:

The square in front of the the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] was named as *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden], its founding association intended to build a square that would be representative of the city of Debrecen to its citizens and newcomers. The original idea was to have a national pantheon with the statues of illustrious Hungarians, including Csokonai.<sup>761</sup> The According to the document dated on July 26, 1885, the board of the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] was trying to find means to survive financially since the society did not have any income. Thus, the members proposed a fund for legitimizing their position within the city. Since the owner of the land was the municipal administration, members of the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] considered Debrecen's moral duty to take care of the Memorial Garden.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, besides the building of the *Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church], the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College], and some houses of Debrecen's citizens, there were relatively few buildings with urban character. As Lajos Lakner argues, with the evolving of the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden], the historical core and city center was outlined and emerged. I agree with Lajos Lakner's argument, when he emphasizes that delimiting the buildings with historical importance such as *Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church], the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] and the erection of Csokonai's statue made by Miklós Izsó (1839-1875) gave opportunity for Debrecen's citizens to experience that public squares need not be homogeneous. However, public squares can have symbolic points, which raise community and cultural ideas that contribute to the emergence, strengthening and cultural dimension of a community identity.<sup>762</sup> Moreover, Benedict Anderson's work *Imagined Communities* (1983) provides a foundation also to this

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Napvilág Kiadó, 2010), 298.

<sup>761</sup> Asztalos, *Kultusz és áldozat*, 44.

<sup>762</sup> Lakner, Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz, 140.

dissertation, showing that groups (e.g. the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] or the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society]) nationalize themselves as communities, while later work on collective memory is often centered on ‘memory places’ or ‘sites of memory.’ These monuments, like the Csokonai statue in Debrecen, are erected by a community to materially embody collective memories, thus transforming them into officially sanctioned histories. This way, the meanings of memorials shift over time, as new generations develop new relationships, new rituals and new narratives about the place.<sup>763</sup>

The *István Gőzmalom* [The István Mill Association] was a commercial society that financed also the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] since its foundation refused to further support the project. Besides, the younger generation of the town did not show interest in the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden].<sup>764</sup> The *István Gőzmalom Társaság* [The István Mill Association] significantly contributed to Debrecen’s urban development. The heads of the mill were József Csanak and Lajos Váradi Szabó (local merchants) from 1857 to 1862. The prosperity of the mill was obvious and its society even won two golden medals for the city in the London World Exhibition in 1862. József Csanak from his honorarium donated money for landscaping Debrecen and the *István Gőzmalom* [The István Mill Association] donated several urban planning and modernization projects, such as the building of the theater (later named as Csokonai theater), the Csokonai statue, construction of schools and public buildings.<sup>765</sup>

<sup>763</sup> Sarah Edwards, “Remembering and Forgetting. Private and Public Lives in the Imagined Nation,” in Sarah Edwards and Jonathan Charley, eds. *Writing the Modern City. Literature, Architecture, Modernity*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 23.

<sup>764</sup> HBML IV B 14056b 95 I. 38/1890. II. 38/890.

<sup>765</sup> Szűcs Ernő, “A város gyáripára 1849-1919 között,” [Debrecen’s Factory Industry from 1849 to 1919], in Gunst Péter, ed. *Debrecen története 1849-1919* [Debrecen’s History from 1849 to 1919], xvcy (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 1997), 236-237.





**Picture 79.**

The István Gőzmalom in Debrecen (built in 1847) at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on the left below is the golden medal won at the London International Exhibition on Industry and Art, Déri Museum<sup>766</sup>

József Csanak, (1820-1900) a spice merchant, a “man from below” had a truly positive impact on Debrecen’s modernization. He was open-minded, innovative and traveled in Europe; his mentality was devoid of the *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] mentality. He was the founding director of the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association], a publisher of the newspaper *Alföldi Hírlap*, member of the *polgári Kaszinó* [Civil Casino]<sup>767</sup> and was active in working for the modernization and embourgeoisement of Debrecen.<sup>768</sup> Their family supported financially the *debreceni reáliskola* [Debrecen public school], the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] and the music school. With his brother-in-law, they were co- entrepreneurs and saved the *István Gőzmalom* [The István Mill Association] from bankruptcy.<sup>769</sup> In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the flour-mill industry was a

<sup>766</sup> Picture from F. Csanak Dóra, *Egy debreceni kereskedő Nyugat-Európában. Csanak József Úti Levelei 1862-ből* [A Merchant of Debrecen in Western Europe. József Csanak’s Letters from his Journey from 1862], (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára, 1987).

<sup>767</sup> Sz. Kürti Katalin, *Köztéri Szobrok és épületdíszítő alkotások Debrecenben és Hajdú-Biharban* [Public Statues and Building Ornamental Work of Art in Debrecen and Hajdú-Bihar County], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar megyei Tanács V.B. Művelődésügyi Osztálya, 1977), 27.

<sup>768</sup> Irinyi Károly, *A politikai közgondolkodás és mentalitás változatai Debrecenben 1867-1918*, [Variants of Political Public Thinking and Mentality in Debrecen, 1867-1918], (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi Intézet, 2002), 17.

<sup>769</sup> Miklóssy Ferenc and Gulyás Judit, eds. *Cívis kalmárok és iparosok* [Cívis Merchants and Craftsman], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, 2010), 29-31.

crucial sector in Hungarian economy. Moreover, just as in the case of the *István Gőzmalom* [The István Mill Association], Hungarian mill products, owing to their outstanding quality, had an able market position in Europe and all over the world.<sup>770</sup>

During his travels to Western Europe in 1862 (on his way to the London International Exhibition on Industry and Art) Csanak had a keen eye for the idea of public gardens, which he accomplished in Debrecen. As Csanak recalls:

In Munich, we stumble upon public gardens everywhere, which were built by competing with each other with the support of private entrepreneurs, municipal authorities and the king. Here one does not have to be afraid that the idea of public garden remains under construction due to the lack of interest, there are no obstacles in front of the implementation of planning [...]; at this place everybody is pleased because of the beauty, and feels that everything around him is beautiful and good. Moreover, he contributes to its creation.<sup>771</sup>

By the time, the *Emlékkert Társulat* [Memorial Garden Association] merged into the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in 1891, the Circle took over the maintenance of the park and requested 600 forints from the municipal government for the maintenance of public parks.<sup>772</sup> In 1911, the municipal administration decided to withdraw the rights of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] for taking care of the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden], the Csokonai statue and its financial foundation, as well.<sup>773</sup> The municipal board decided to rearrange the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden] and make it a truly contemporary park, to cobble it and endow it with a complete sewerage system.<sup>774</sup>

A 1909 article enthusiastically collects the increasing manifestations of Csokonai's '*kultusz*' ['*cult*']: the Csokonai-house, the Csokonai garden, the *Csokonai*

<sup>770</sup> Klement Judit, "Apák és fiúk gazdasági stratégiái: egy magyar család a 19. és 20. században," [The Business Strategy of Fathers and Sons: A Hungarian Family in the 19th and 20th Centuries], *Aetas*, Vol. 20. No. 1-2, 2005.

<sup>771</sup> "Csanak József's letter, Munich, August 6. 1862," in Csanak F. Dóra *Egy debreceni kereskedő Nyugat-Európában. Csanak József Úti Levelei 1862-ből* [A Merchant of Debrecen in Western Europe. József Csanak's Letters from his Journey from 1862], 5.

<sup>772</sup> HBML IV B 1405/b 95 I. 38/1890 143/8387 1891

<sup>773</sup> HBML IV. B. 1403/a 32. 356/14182

<sup>774</sup> HBML IV B 1403/a 32. 357/14183 1911.

*dűlő* [Csokonai road], the *Csokonai telep* [the Csokonai estate], *Csokonai önképző- és daloskör* [Csokonai Self-Educational and Singing Choir], the Csokonai Mill, the Csokonai Station, the Csokonai restaurant, the Csokonai Pharmacy or the *Csokonai Nyomda* [Csokonai Press].<sup>775</sup>

The restoration and ownership of Csokonai's house also belonged to the Circle's cultural aims. The society was dedicated to find and place memorial plaques on houses and places which were connected to prominent Hungarians and crucial historical events. On Csokonai's birthday (November 17, 1891) the Circle placed a memorial plaque on the building where the poet was born.<sup>776</sup> Later on, in 1904, after extensive research, the Circle found out that Csokonai's birth place was actually not Bethlen utca 3. [Bethlen Street No. 3] but Hatvan utca 23. [Hatvan Street No. 23]. The Circle proposed that the new house should give place to a city museum, to an art association and to the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle], which thus could function as the main cultural venue in the city.<sup>777</sup> The municipal assembly accepted the Circle's proposal and bought the Hatvan utca 23. [Hatvan Street No. 23] property for seventy-two thousand 'korona' ['crowns'] and offered four thousand 'korona' ['crowns'] for the furniture of the house.<sup>778</sup> The municipal board also donated two thousand 'korona' ['crowns'] for the foundation and offered a fund to the Circle to build a cultural house.<sup>779</sup> According to an order from 1906, the maintenance and renovation works of the house in the Hatvan Street cost one thousand 'korona' ['crowns'].<sup>780</sup>

<sup>775</sup> Lakner quotes Arthúr Komlóssy's article on Csokonai's cult cf. Komlóssy Arthúr, "Csokonai-kultusz Debrecenben," *Debreczeni Főiskolai Lapok*, February 1. 1909, 3-4. Lakner Lajos, *Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz*, 176.

<sup>776</sup> Hamar László, "Csokonai születési és halálozási háza," [Csokonai's birth and death place] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, (Debrecen: Debreczen Szabadkirályi Város Könyvnyomdája, 1901), 34.

<sup>777</sup> HBML IV. B. 1405/6. 164. A42/1904

<sup>778</sup> HBML IV. B. 1405/6. 164. A42/ 1904 323/16514

<sup>779</sup> HBML 108/2308 1909.

<sup>780</sup> HBML IV B 1405/b 95 I. 38/1890 1629/1906

The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] had manifold activities. In 1905, it organized a memorial celebration as a remembrance for its centenary, which aimed to legitimize Csokonai's '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] in the city and the Circle's place in the literary canon.<sup>781</sup> Lakner Lajos analyzed the reaction of the public to the centenary celebration via newspaper articles. On the one hand it was a national literary festival with many invited guests, such as the Academy, the *Petőfi Társaság* [Petőfi Association] or the *Kisfaludy Társaság* [Kisfaludy Association], while on the other hand the public also showed a kind of indifference towards the centenary.<sup>782</sup> As for the other activities of the Circle, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] did archeology related works to find graves and other important material reminiscences of the city.<sup>783</sup> In 1894, the Circle undertook a quest for the grave of Péter Juhász Méliusz, Debrecen's first Reformed Bishop.<sup>784</sup> In 1907, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] adjured the municipal authorities for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary ceremony of the "Botanical Book of Debrecen"<sup>785</sup> written by Sámuel Diószegi and Mihály Fazekas, and proposed the erection of a statue for these two prominent citizens of Debrecen. The Circle wanted to organize a national literary celebration dedicated to the memory of the authors of the "Botanical Book of Debrecen." The municipal authorities donated 2500 '*korona*' ['*crowns*'] for this purposes to the Csokonai Circle.<sup>786</sup>

Besides archaeological research, the Circle helped in the erection of many statues in the city. In 1906, it donated five hundred '*korona*' ['*crowns*'] for the

<sup>781</sup> Lakner, Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz, 183.

<sup>782</sup> Lakner, Az Árkádia-pör fogságában. A debreceni Csokonai-kultusz, 185-187

<sup>783</sup> HBML IV. B. 1405/b 95. I. 38/1890 4624/1893

<sup>784</sup> HBML IV B 1405/b 95. I. 38/1890 5691/1894.

<sup>785</sup> Diószegi Sámuel and Fazekas Mihály, *Magyar fűvész-könyv, mely a két magyar hazában található növényeknek megismertetésére vezet, a Linné alkotmánya szerint* (Debrecen, 1807). Both of the authors were the citizens of Debrecen. Sámuel Diószegi was an evangelical pastor, an author of many religious songs and Mihály Fazekas was the treasurer of the city and the author of a noted epic poem, *Ludas Matyi*.

<sup>786</sup> HBML 186/9418 1907.

Bocskai statue and also undertook the organization of the István Bocskai (1557-1606)<sup>787</sup> memorial ceremony.<sup>788</sup> According to the minutes of the Csokonai Circle, the organizational committee was formed during a ceremonial meeting on November 9, 1906 in the hall of the Hotel *Bika* with the unveiling of the Bocskai statue afterwards.<sup>789</sup> The city of Hajdúböszörmény also wanted a Bocskai statue to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the settlements of *hajdú* people in 1907.<sup>790</sup> Bocskai was an important historical figure for the municipal authorities, too. He was considered to be one of greatest public figures of Hungarian history, a hero of the religious, moral, and public freedom. The municipal authorities considered Debrecen the unacknowledged center of all Hungarians and declared the city as the safe haven of religious, moral and national freedom as the *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium* [Debrecen Picture Almanach] described Debrecen.<sup>791</sup> For this reason they wanted a Bocskai statue and also as a commemoration of the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Vienna. They bought their own Bocskai statue for seven thousand ‘*korona*’ [‘*crowns*’]; this was a copy of the Budapest Bocskai monument on the Andrássy út

<sup>787</sup> Prince Stephen [István] Bocskai was a Prince of Transylvania and Hungary (1604-06). His name is associated with the “Bocskai War of Liberation” (1605-06). Bocskai initiated an anti-Habsburg uprising that resulted in his election as prince of Transylvania (February 21, 1605) and the “Ruling Prince of Hungary” (April 20, 1605). This war enforced Emperor Rudolph to mediate with Bocskai. The latter reciprocated, partially because of the growing dissent within the ranks of his supporters – rivalry between his nobles and the *hajdús* – and partially because he did not wish to turn into a vassal of the Ottoman Sultan. In the resulting Peace Treaty of Vienna (September 23, 1606) Rudolph promised to uphold the rights and privileges of the Hungarian-Transylvanian nobility, and also to respect the religious freedom of the Protestants. Moreover, he made seven eastern Hungarian counties part of Bocskai’s Transylvania, and promised that Transylvania would not be reunited with Hungary until after the death of Bocskai and all his male descendants. Bocskai had an important role in signing of the Peace Treaty of Zsitva-Torok (November 11, 1606) between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, which ended the Fifteen Years War. After the conclusion of these treaties, Bocskai settled all of his *hajdú* supporters into newly founded privileged *hajdú* towns and districts and gave them privileges comparable to those of the *Székely* nobility in Transylvania. Bocskai died December 29, 1606, leaving a testament in which he urges his followers to uphold Transylvania’s independence until more favorable conditions would permit its reunification with Hungary. “Bocskai,” Pallas Nagy Lexikona, accessed [September 22, 2012, <http://mek.oszk.hu/00000/00060/html/014/pc001419.html#8>]. Cf. Balogh István, *Hajdúság*, (Budapest: Gondolat, 1969).

<sup>788</sup> HBML 1405/6 163; A22/1904.

<sup>789</sup> HBML IV B. 1405/6. 163. A 22/1904.

<sup>790</sup> HBML IV B. 1405/6. 163. A 22/1904.

<sup>791</sup> Zoltai Lajos, “Bocskai István. A fejedelem debreczeni szobra leleplezése alkalmából,” *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium*, (Debrecen: Debrecen Szabadkirályi Város Könyvnyomdája, 19), 92-99.

[Andrássy Avenue], which was donated by the king and made by Barnabás Holló.<sup>792</sup>

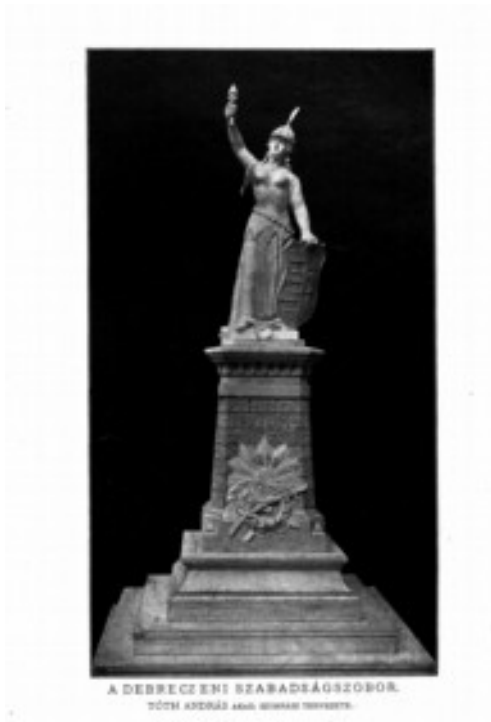
An order of the city declared that the Bocskai statue had be placed in the square situated between the *Református templom* [Reformed Church] and the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College] to replace the *Szabadság-szobor* [Liberty statue].<sup>793</sup>

Replacing the statue was a triple *palimpsest* in the mental map of Debrecen's citizens about the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden], which also shed light on the waves of changes in Debrecen's history. The first statue in the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden] was the "*Haldokló oroszlán*" ["*Dying Lion*"], a representation of the *Honvéd* monument and a commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849, erected in the year of the Compromise in 1867. Then it was replaced by the *Szabadság-szobor* [Liberty statue] made by the Debrecen sculptor András Tóth in 1902. The monument represented Hungaria with a torch; Debreceners gave the nickname "Zsuzsi" [Little Susan] to the statue. The municipal board decided to replace it by the Bocskai statue made by Barnabás Holló in 1906. Tóth's monument was carried to the court of the Town hall and it was melted.<sup>794</sup>

<sup>792</sup> HBML 15.4/8697. 1906.

<sup>793</sup> HBML 229/12648 and 12839-1906. The debreceni szabadságszobor [Liberty Statue of Debrecen] was the work of sculptor András Tóth, father of poet Árpád Tóth. András Tóth also planned the Bocskai Statue in Hajdúböszörmény in 1895 for the Millenium Celebrations but his plans were ignored due to financial reasons and finally Barnabás Holló's plan was accepted. Interestingly, Barabás Holló's was again whose Bocskai statue replaced Tóth's *Szabadság-szobor* [Liberty statue] in Debrecen.

<sup>794</sup> Sz. Kürti Katalin, *Köztéri Szobrok és épületdíszítő alkotások Debrecenben és Hajdú-Biharban*, 35.



**Picture 80.**

The Liberty Statue in Debrecen as a Memorial of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849<sup>795</sup>

In the period from 1895 to 1896, as part of the Millennium celebrations, the municipal administration offered the *Gályarabok emlékoszlopa* [The Statue of Galley Slaves] into the hands of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]; this meant that the Circle took care of the Csokonai statue and the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden].<sup>796</sup> The *Gályarabok emlékoszlopa* [The Statue of Galley Slaves] was the donation of widow Hegyi Mihályné and it was placed on the southern-east part of the *Emlékkert* [Memorial Garden], in the field between the *Református Nagytemplom* [Great Reformed Church] and the *Református Kollégium* [Reformed College]. It was inaugurated in 1895 as a remembrance to the evangelical clergymen held in captivity in Naples.<sup>797</sup>

<sup>795</sup> “Debreczeni szabadságszobor. Tóth András akad. szobrász műve. (Két képpel), [The Liberty Statue in Debrecen. András Tóth’s work], *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium*, (Debrecen: Debrecen Szabadkirályi Város Könyvnyomdája, 1902), 58-60.

<sup>796</sup> HBML IV. B. 1405/b 95. I. 38/1890 1464/1896.

<sup>797</sup> As it is written on the statue: “Monumentum ministrorum verbi divini, qui pro fide ac libertate evangelica e Hungaria ad triremes Neapolitanos deportati sunt.” [This is the memorial column of those clergymen who were deported from Hungary to Naples because of their faith and religious freedom]. Szabó József, S[erkei]: Özv. Hegyi Mihályné és a gályarabok emlékoszlopa (2 képpel) [Mrs. Hegyi Mihályné and the Memorial Column of the Galley Slaves], *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium*, (Debrecen:



**Picture 81.**

István Bocskai's Statue in Budapest, 1903 by Barnabás Holló<sup>798</sup>



**Picture 82.**

István Bocskai's Statue in Debrecen, 1906 by Barnabás Holló (a copy of the Budapest statue)<sup>799</sup>

Debrecen Szabadkirályi Város Könyvnyomdája, 1902), 29-35.

<sup>798</sup> Accessed September 17, 2012.

[http://szoborlap.hu/4465\\_bocskai\\_istvan\\_szobor\\_budapest\\_hollo\\_barnabas\\_1903.html](http://szoborlap.hu/4465_bocskai_istvan_szobor_budapest_hollo_barnabas_1903.html).

<sup>799</sup> Accessed September 17, 2012.

[http://szoborlap.hu/2331\\_bocskai\\_istvan\\_debrecen\\_hollo\\_barnabas\\_1906.html?f=photo&id=21884](http://szoborlap.hu/2331_bocskai_istvan_debrecen_hollo_barnabas_1906.html?f=photo&id=21884).





**Picture 83.**

István Bocskai's Statue in Hajdúböszörmény by Barnabás Holló, 1906<sup>800</sup>

The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] extended the '*kultusz*' ['cult'] role of the poet outside the authority of the city. For example, in 1904, the Circle proposed the municipal government to erect a Csokonai statue in Csurgó.<sup>801</sup> Another document shows that although the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] did not have proper income, it donated one hundred '*korona*' ['crowns'] to the Fröbel children's garden foundation.<sup>802</sup> This overburdened the financial limits of the Circle, and over and over again, as the archive documents show, the Circle turned to the municipal board for a financial donation. The Circle propagated the forestation of the public parks; however, this brought a bigger financial burden to the Circle, and they asked again for financial support.<sup>803</sup> In 1914, the Circle's attention was raised again towards its own town and submitted a proposal to organize a ceremony for the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Debrecen as

<sup>800</sup> Accessed September 17, 2012.

[http://szoborlap.hu/5122\\_bocskai\\_istvan\\_hajduboszormeny\\_hollo\\_barnabas\\_1906.html?photo&id=105023](http://szoborlap.hu/5122_bocskai_istvan_hajduboszormeny_hollo_barnabas_1906.html?photo&id=105023).

<sup>801</sup> HBML IV. B. 1403/a and 87/3650 – 1904 See the document in Appendices.

<sup>802</sup> HBML 278/13742 and 13743/1909.

<sup>803</sup> HBML IV. B. 1405/b 95. I. 38/1890. 60/1895

a free royal town.<sup>804</sup> Although it was a literary society in the first place, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] contributed a lot to Debrecen's cityscape by managing the memorial garden and public parks. Searching for old graves raises the question why these graves were forgotten and also means a need for a usable past. The Circle placed memorial plaques on notable historical houses and places, thus contributing immensely to the historical and urban identity of the city.

#### 4.5. Associations and Social Life, Casinos and the Freemason Lodge in Debrecen

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Debrecen's modernization and urbanization was intensified by modern technological inventions, such as gas lightening, paving of streets, the opening of the Szolnok-Debrecen railway line in 1857, and the Várad-Debrecen railway line in 1858. The *Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara* [Chamber of Commerce and Industry] was established in 1850, and in 1861 the *Emlékkert Társaság* [Memorial Garden Association] was founded. In 1871, Miklós Izsó's statue of Csokonai was unveiled.<sup>805</sup> These modernization efforts reflected a tendency towards a modern image of Debrecen. The cultural flourishing coincided with the economic and urban modernization of Debrecen.<sup>806</sup>

The beginning of a prospering cultural life of the city can be seen in the establishment of the music school in 1862 and the opening of a permanent theater in 1865.<sup>807</sup> Professional societies were venues with identity formation power.<sup>808</sup> The

<sup>804</sup> HBML IV. B. 1403/a 35 See the document in Appendices

<sup>805</sup> Gyögy Módy, "Seven Centuries of Debrecen," in József Hapák. *Debrecen. The Civis Town* (Debrecen: Blende Bt. 2007), 36.

<sup>806</sup> Uri Sándorné in the Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár [Hajdú-Bihar County Archive] helped my research profusely during my research period in Debrecen and her edited volume on *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között* [the Society Cadastre of Debrecen from 1833 to 2001] under the general editorship of Kálmán Radics was the starting point of my research in examining Debrecen's association life.

<sup>807</sup> Módy, "Seven Centuries of Debrecen," 36.

<sup>808</sup> Gyáni Gábor, "Városnak lenni vidéken," 73.

*Debreceni Orvos-Gyógyszerész Egyesület* [Physician and Pharmacist Association in Debrecen], for instance, was set up in 1887 with the chairmanship of Dr. Géza Varga and Gyula Kenézy. The *Debreceni Református Tanítók Segély Egyesülete* [The Assistance Association of the Reformed Teachers in Debrecen] was established in 1907 and the chair was István Szabó. Its main aim was the improvement of the intellectual, material and social position of the teachers. Additionally, the *Debrecen és Hajdú Vármegye Tűzoltó Szövetsége* [The Fire Service Alliance of Debrecen and Hajdú County] was set up in 1889, and chaired by István Rásó. The main aim of the alliance was to organize and improve the fire service of the city.<sup>809</sup> There were political associations such as the *Debreceni Függetlenségi Kör* [The Independence Civil Circle of Debrecen] which was set up in 1876, and the aims of the Circle were to foster patriotic feelings, cultivate social life, strengthen the civic idea and keep the traditions of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849.<sup>810</sup> The *Debreceni Csapókerti Függetlenségi és 48-as Kör* [The Debrecen Csapókerti Independence and 1848 War of Independence Circle] was set up in 1904. The ambitions of the Circle were to uplift all and especially the middle class citizens of the Csapókert district of Debrecen with the means of social interaction and readings of useful books and journals. Moreover, the circle had its own library for its members.<sup>811</sup>

The *Debreceni Polgári és Gazda Kör* [The Civil and Farmer Circle in Debrecen] was established in 1865, and the leader was Imre Kertész. The main interests of the society were to hold enjoyable and economic professional lectures without any political intentions.<sup>812</sup> In addition to the civil circles, there were reading

<sup>809</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 19. HBML X. 301. 39.; 15. HBML. IV. B. 1406/b IV. 19/1898; 16. HBML X. 301. 29.

<sup>810</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 20-21. HBML X. 301. 46.

<sup>811</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 22. HBML X. 301. ad. 32.

<sup>812</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 26. HBML. X. 301. 63.

clubs, language associations and social formations for every layer of the society. The *Debreceni Homokkerti Református Olvasó Egylet* [The Debrecen-Homokkert District Reformed Reading Circle] was set up in 1904. The aims of the society were to practice religious moral life in the spirit of Reformation with religious tolerance, promoting social interactions among its members, reading journals and books. It aimed to improve interest in beauty and uplift the general intellectual life. Within their limits the association contributed to humanitarian services. Moreover, it wanted to help its members to understand more clearly the laws of the city, country and society so that its member could practice their rights in a proper way with competent knowledge.<sup>813</sup>

The *Magyarországi Eszperantó Egyesület Debreceni Csoportja* [The Debrecen Section of the Hungarian Esperanto Association] was founded in 1911 for teaching and diffusing the Esperanto language. The *Debreceni Székely Társaság* [The Szekler Society in Debrecen] was founded in 1902. Its aim was to provide a common and united forum for the Szeklers and their friends living in Debrecen and around the region. Moreover, it was to support both morally and financially the Szeklers and all the Hungarians living in Transylvania, and to cultivate their historical traditions and to foster their cultural and economic improvement. The *Debreceni Háztulajdonosok Egyesülete* [The House Owners Association in Debrecen] was established in 1911. Its main aim was to protect socially and legally its members and their properties.<sup>814</sup>

Furthermore there were professional associations, such as the *Magyar Állatorvosi Egyesület Tiszabalparti Osztálya* [The Tiszabalparti Section of the Hungarian Veterinarian Association] which was set up in 1909, the chair was Mihály Kondor. Its aim was to cultivate veterinarian science, to improve and circulate

<sup>813</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 37. HBML X. 301. 99. and HBML X. 57.

<sup>814</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 57. HBML X. 301. 154.; 48. HBML X 301. 125., HBML X. 53.; 56. HBML X 301. 150., HBML X 13.

professional literature among its members, and to strengthen the communal unity within the association. The *Debreceni Jogász és Tisztviselő Kör* [The Jurist and Clerk Circle in Debrecen] was set up in 1889 for the protection of their interests, for improving social life and provided a venue for professional debates without political implications. The sub-branch of the International Red Cross in Debrecen was set up in 1883. The *Debreceni Reform Társaság* [The Debrecen Reform Society] was established in 1913 with the aims to revive the country by independent associations and modern democratic reforms.<sup>815</sup> The *Országos Bírói és Ügyészi Egyesület Debreceni Osztálya* [The Debrecen Section of the National Judge and Prosecutor Association] started around 1907. Its function was the protection of the intellectual, moral and financial interests of judges and prosecutors.<sup>816</sup>

The *Közhasznú Munkáskertek Egyesülete* [The Association of Worker Gardens of Public Utility] was endowed in 1907. The aims of the association were to build garden estates around Debrecen and to lease them for food production at a low price to individuals and families with low income. Moreover, it worked as a central organization for the renters and provided knowledge, free professional lectures to them, set awards, organized celebrations and crop exhibitions.<sup>817</sup>

Another interesting phenomenon was the voluntary association of teachers, which followed the tradition of the westernmost cities. The *Hajdúvármegyei Tanítók Általános Gönzty Egyesület* [The General Gönzty Association of Teachers in Hajdúvár County] was endowed in 1893. It had administrative, general and social functions, as

<sup>815</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 85. HBML X. 301. 251. ; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 62. HBML X. 301. 170.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 66. HBML X 301. 186., HBML IV B 1405/b IV. 19/1898; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 74. HBML X. 301. 218.; HBMLÉ XVII., 178.

<sup>816</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 93. HBML.X. 301. 280.

<sup>817</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 103-104. HBML X. 301. 322.; HBML X. 106. 1.

well. Its functions were to serve the general interests of teachers, to improve the educational and tutorial aims, to organize educational debates, self-training of teachers and provide practical guidance to them, to uplift the Hungarian teacher self-awareness without political connotations. Moreover, its aims were to organize general teacher corporations in cities and form pedagogic, literary, and nursery-school sections, maintain and improve the library of the association, to set awards and to provide humanitarian foundations, to provide financial support for the lower income teachers, to publish a professional journal and to make proposals to the government concerning the state of the teacher profession.<sup>818</sup> Another teacher association was the *Országos Középiskolai Tanáregyesület Debreceni Köre* [The Debrecen Circle of the National Secondary School Teacher's Association]. It was founded in 1898 with academic educational aims. *The Képzőművészek és Műpártolók Egyesülete* [The Association of Artists and Art Lovers] was set up in 1901 with the aims of circulating and fostering all branches of arts and improving the intellectual and material interests of its members. The *Szent László Dalegylet* [The Saint László Singing Choir] was set up in 1900 to foster church music; for this reason, they sang only in churches. The *Magyar Református Énekvezérek Egyesülete* [The Association of the Hungarian Reformed Choir Leaders] was founded in 1908 to protect the moral and financial rights of the chorus leaders, to foster religious music and songs and to strengthen the collegial connections among the Hungarian Reformed Choir Leaders. The workers' interests were represented by different groups, for instance, the *Könyvkötők és Rokonszakmabeli Munkások és Munkásnők Debreceni* [The Professional Association of Binders and its Cognate Professions in Debrecen] was founded in 1901.<sup>819</sup> The

<sup>818</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi kataszttere 1833-2001 között*, 108-109. HBML X. 301. 335.

<sup>819</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi kataszttere 1833-2001 között*, 133-134. HBML X. 301. 430.; 118. HBML X. 301.368.; 119. HBML X. 301. 372.; HBML X. 52.; 125. HBML X. 301. 391.; 137-138. HBML X 301. 442.; HBML IV B. 1405/b I. 8/1908.

*Magyarországi Szállodai és Éttermi Alkalmazottak Országos Egyesület Helyi Csoportja* [The Local Group of the National Association of the Hungarian Hotel and Restaurant Workers] was set up in 1906. Its main function was to protect the rights of the hotel and restaurant workers, to improve the living conditions of unemployed people, and to function as a connecting link between the members of the society and the employer bodies.<sup>820</sup>

In addition, the *Debreceni Polgári Kör* [The Civic Circle in Debrecen] was set up in 1890. The society aimed to provide a place for debates and social interactions, especially for the middle-class citizens, reading beneficial books and journals excluding politics. The *Debreceni Vőfély Társaság* [The Best Man Association in Debrecen] started in 1899. Its function was to preserve tradition as a moral ennobling task. The *Debreceni Angol Társalgó Kör* [The English Conversation Club] was set up in 1899.<sup>821</sup>

One of the interesting facts that I encountered during my research in the archival documents of Debrecen's associations was the documents of The *Nagy Tuillériai Játékkrend* [The Great Game Order of Tuilleria], which started as a game in a castle by a friendly communion. Gábor Somogyi a landholder, who lived in Debrecen, proposed a taroc game with virtual profits; he kept a diary about the gain which provides pieces of information about the personalities of the players. Moreover it is a perfect example of alternative history<sup>822</sup> in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Gábor Somogyi's style is highly enjoyable, readable and humorous. The diary begins in 1843 and lasts until

<sup>820</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 137. HBML X. 301. 441.

<sup>821</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 145-146. HBML. X. 76.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 143. HBML IV. B. 1406/b IV. 19/1898, HBML X. 301. 459.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 143-144. HBML IB. B. 1405/b IV. 19/1898.; HBML. X. 301. 461.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 145. HBML. IV. B. 14045/b IV. 19/1899; HBML X. 301. 467.

<sup>822</sup> Szélpál Livia, "A történelem jövője: bevezetés egy nem hagyományos történetírás (unconventional history) elméletébe." [The Future of History: introduction to the theory of an unconventional history] *Aetas*, 22 Vol./1., (2007): 135-146.

1885 by spanning over centuries. As it becomes explicit from the diary, familiar guests were invited for the taroc plays, for instance, bishop Mihály Révész, the mayor Imre Simonffy or Kálmán Géresi, also members of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle]. During their informal gathering, they exchanged the news of the world and the city. Somogyi was punctual in his records, he noted the names of his visitors as game players, the date, the amount of the fictive gain, and in the margins of the diary, Gábor Somogyi wrote little stories about different topics concerning the life of the city: a complete summary of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independence of 1848-1849 and surprisingly enough not even a line about the Compromise of 1867. Somogyi recorded the fairs, marriages and festivals of Debrecen and commented upon the election of members of the municipal board. Moreover, woman could also take part in their play, their names were marked with a star (\*), like for instance, Gábor Somogyi's wife.<sup>823</sup>

The incorporation of the associations into the society was enabled by consecutive regulations. A law of 1874 states that “the association life is one of the most interesting improvements of modern society, and in our country it has twofold interests due to the immaturity of the individual power and the limited power of the state.”<sup>824</sup> After the political and economic reforms in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the social reforms made way to the appearance of the public sphere. In Budapest even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, coffee shops, clubs, casinos, libraries, editorial offices and associations were set up. The countryside caught up with the capital gradually after decades. The spaces

<sup>823</sup> Somogyi Gábor's Diary, 1843-1885; HBML, X.76.1.

<sup>824</sup> Uri Sándorné, “Előszó.” Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár, 2002), 5. “Az egyleti élet a modern társadalomnak egyik legérdekesebb fejleménye, s nálunk hol az egyéni erők fejletlensége s az állam erőinek súlyos terhekkel való megkötöttsége a társadalom a vállvett működését még nagyobb jelentőségűvé teszi kétszeres érdekel, bír.” [The Association life is one of the most interesting development of the modern society. And in our midst, due to the immaturity of the individual powers, the restriction of the state powers with heavy loads, the common work of association life is more important and has twofold interests.]



of the social life of the peasantry were the pub, the forge, the mill, the market and fairs.<sup>825</sup> Besides these places the new associations of social life turned up only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the countryside. In Western Europe the association movement was more determining than in Hungary. According to John Beckett, the increase of towns from the later 18<sup>th</sup> century Great Britain coincided with a social change in which the middle-classes came to be identified in associations and clubs and were operating in associations. Gentleman's Societies were formed, and by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, clubs were being established in a whole range of areas from freemasonry through friendly societies, trade unions and co-operative societies and "all the way to societies with an intellectual agenda including literary and philosophical societies, subscription libraries, archaeological and, belatedly, antiquarian societies."<sup>826</sup>

The casinos were set up in the 1830s nationwide. In Debrecen the first local casino was founded in 1833, compared with that of Szeged, it was established later. According to the regulation of the casino, its aims were to foster nationalism, and the improvement of the nation via useful reading and good taste of communication and it helped the establishment of new associations. The main supervisor of the societies was the minister of interior affairs and the direct supervisor was the municipality as the order 1394/1873 declares. Before World War I, societies could be established freely, only their constitutions had to be sent to the minister of interior for acceptance.<sup>827</sup> Hence, the *Debreceni Kaszinó* [Casino in Debrecen] was set up on March 3 1833. The aims of the Casino were to provide a venue for the local intellectuals in the city and around the region for social and intellectual interactions, and to be a place of public utility with patriotic aims and supporting reform ideas. It was dismantled in 1945. The *Debreceni Polgári Kaszinó* [The Civil Casino in

<sup>825</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi kataszttere 1833-2001 között*, 5.

<sup>826</sup> John Beckett. *Writing Local History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, 71.

<sup>827</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi kataszttere 1833-2001 között*, 5.

Debrecen] was established on December 27<sup>th</sup> 1840. The chair of the Casino was Károly Gyarmati Tóth. The regulations of this Casino declared to foster the native language, and to improve the interests towards arts, sciences and trades. All the virtuous civil citizens of the Debrecen could be member of this Casino. The Casinos fostered triple functions: firstly, an intellectual one by reading and subscribing to journals; secondly the concentration of powers; and thirdly serving the “közjó” [“public good”].<sup>828</sup>

Another remarkable association was the *Haladás és Szabadkőműves Páholy Egyesület* [The Progress and Freemason Lodge Association], which was set up in 1875. Its main aims were to foster public morality, civilization, fraternal connections and to provide humanitarian aid. The great number of clubs, associations and circles shows the increasing interest of Debrecen’s citizens in the social and communal life.<sup>829</sup>

#### 4.5.1. Trade and Industry

The *Debreceni Kereskedelmi Csarnok* [The Debrecen Trade Hall] was set up in 1906. The aims of the Trade Hall were to foster the trade interests of Debrecen and its region, especially by improving the farm produce, and the sectors of agriculture and industry. Moreover, it wanted to give a venue for social interactions among its members and improve the social life with reading events and lectures. Additionally, the *Debreceni Kereskedelmi Alkalmazottak Egyesülete* [The Association of Trade Workers in Debrecen] was founded in 1867. The society was renamed after *Kereskedelmi Ifjak Társulata* [The Association of Youths Working in Trade]. The aims of the Association were to facilitate the economic, social and cultural interests of trade workers, to validate and protect their interests, cultivating the feeling of unity

<sup>828</sup> Goda Éva, *Társasági élet és művelődés*, 28-29.

<sup>829</sup> HBML, X.14.1.

within the trade, improving social life, cultivating the Hungarian patriotic spirit, supporting the needy and their families, debating commercial questions and improving the laws which regulate working hours, salaries and holidays. It also provided free job mediation to its members.<sup>830</sup>

The interests of people working in trade were represented by the *Debreceni Iparoskör* [The Craftsman Circle in Debrecen], which was set up in 1883 and provided a venue for the craftsmen of Debrecen for exchanging knowledge about their professions without any political agenda.<sup>831</sup> Besides professional associations there were clubs for leisure activities such as choral associations for people working in trades, for instance, the *Debreceni Város Dalegylet* [The Debrecen Civic Choral Association] was set up in 1863 and the *Debreceni Kereskedő Ifjak Dalköre* [The Choral Association of the Debrecen Trade Worker Youths] was established in 1886. Both of them wanted to propagate Hungarian music and folk songs. The *Debreceni MÁV Egyetértés Önképző Dal- és Zeneegylet* [The Railway Worker's Union Self-Training Song and Music Association] was set up in 1899.

The *Hajdú Megyei Méhészegylet* [The Hajdú County Apiarist Association] started in 1903. Its aims were to provide professional guidance to its members and improve trade relations. The *Debrecen Sz.Kir. Város Adóhivatala Tisztviselőinek, Alkalmazottainak Kebelében Létesített "Koszorú Alap" Egyesület* [The "Wreath Foundation" of Revenue Office Workers in Debrecen] started in 1908. It also provided subsidy to its poorer members in case of illness or financial needs. The

<sup>830</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 47. HBML X 301. 120.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 58. HBML X. 301. 157.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 58. HBML. X. 2. 1. kötet; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 38. HBML. X: 301. 100. and HBML X. 14.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 36. HBML IV/b 1406/b IV. 15/1904., X. 301.96.

<sup>831</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 48. HBML X. 301. 123.

*Debreceni Gazdakör* [The Farmer Circle in Debrecen] was set up in 1908. Its main functions were to improve its members' economic training, to provide a venue for debate about the national economic situation and to organize festivals, reading professional journals and books, playing bowling, cards and other games excluding gambling and the field of politics.<sup>832</sup>

#### 4.5.2. Sport Clubs

Besides trade and worker associations, singing groups, the improvement of social life were conveyed by the increasing concern in establishing and taking part in sport clubs. The *Békési Béla Vívó Club* [Béla Békési Fencing Club] was established in 1910. The *Debreceni Sakk-Kör* [The Debrecen Chess Circle] was established in 1907. The *Debreceni Úrkocsis Egylet* [The Equestrian Association in Debrecen] was set up around 1906. The main aims of the association were to foster horse breeding and selling specialized in coach-horses.<sup>833</sup> The *Debreceni Vadász Társulat* [The Rifleman Association in Debrecen] was set up in 1870 and was chaired by György Magoss. The *Debreceni Vasutas Sport Club* [The Railwayman Sport Club in Debrecen] was launched in 1912 and its main aim was to promote and improve all kind of sports with social interactions.<sup>834</sup> The *Debreceni M. Kir. Pénzügyi Tisztviselők Kuglizó Egyesülete* [The Bowling Association of Hungarian Royal Financial Officials] was launched in 1903. The main intention of the association was to strengthen the social interactions among state officials with the means of sport and to have a convenient venue for leisure time. The *Debreceni Polgári Lövészegyesület* [The Civil Marksman

<sup>832</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 143. HBML IV B. 1405/b. I-1908.; 50-51. HBML X. 301. 129. and HBML X. 301. 133.; 87. HBML X. 301. 260., HBML IV. B. 1405/b IV. 19/1898; 111. HBML X. 301. 339.; 142. HBML. IV. B. 1405/b I/8/1908.

<sup>833</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 17. HBML X. 301. 34.

<sup>834</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 21. HBML X. 301. 50.

Association in Debrecen] was set up around 1840 and their main interest was to foster rifle shooting as a sport and friendly improvement of social life. The *Debreceni Torna Egyesület* [The Athletic Association in Debrecen] was founded in 1867, Vilmos Örkény physical education teacher's initiative to form an athletic association was taken up by Sámuel Simonffy. The aim of the association was to propagate physical fitness in every field, to provide professional practice and to organize races, sport feasts and excursions. The *Debreceni Lovaregylet* [The Riding Society in Debrecen] was set up in 1861 to promote horseback riding and breeding; chaired by Vitéz Horthy István. Furthermore, there were the *Pénzügyi Tisztviselők Kuglizó és Sport Egyesülete* [The Sport and Bowling Association of the Financial Administrators] which was established in 1903. Its function was to strengthen the social relations among the state and private office-holders and to open a professional literature library further on.<sup>835</sup> The *Guthi Vadásztársaság* [The Guthi Rifleman Association] started in 1912.<sup>836</sup> The *Debreceni Polgári Kerékpáros Egyesület* [The Civic Cyclist Association in Debrecen] was founded in 1898.<sup>837</sup>

#### 4.5.3. Charitable and Women's Associations

A Charitable Women's Association [*Debreceni Jótékony Nőegylet*] was set up in Debrecen in April 30 1869 with 300 members chaired by Róza Mikó. The aims of the society were to ease the distress of the 'righteous poor' living in Debrecen regardless of race and religion, to help the prostrate, orphans and those families who were

<sup>835</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 95-96. HBML. X. 301. 287.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 26. HBML. X. 301. 62; Uri, op.cit, 27. HBML X. 301. 65.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 53. HBML. X. 301. 139.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 60. HBML. X. 301. 161.

<sup>836</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 110. HBML X. 301. 337.

<sup>837</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 143. HBML IV B 1405/b IV. 19/1898, HBML. X. 301. 460.

without any financial support but still capable to improve their lives. The Orphanage and two foundations were in the hands of the *Debreceni Jótékony Nőegylet* [Charitable Woman Association]. The 90% from the income of the foundations went to the support and maintenance of the orphanage and 10% of the income was to capitalization. The association was dismissed in 1949.<sup>838</sup> The charitable woman association contributed significantly to the woman education as the *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium* [Debrecen Picture Almanach] rejoices at its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.<sup>839</sup>

Another charitable association was the “*Bikur-Cholim*” *Debreceni Izraelita Betegsegélyző Egylet* [“Bikur-Cholim” Israelite Sick-Benefit Association in Debrecen] was founded in 1890. One of the aims of the association was to provide medical treatment and free medicine for its member and their families. The chairs were Mandel Neumann and Ármin Mező. The number of its members was 273. It ceased to work in 1946. Besides it, there was the *Debreceni Izraelita Szentegylet* [The Israelite Holy Association in Debrecen] which was set up in 1852. The aims of the society were to execute funerals, to maintain the Jewish cemetery, to keep up the foundation for the Jewish poor and to do humanitarian service to the Jewish community for instance by maintaining a pauper asylum. The *Ágostai Hitvallású Evangélikus Egyház Női Fillér Egyesülete* [The Evangelical Church Female Collecting Association] for supporting the poor teachers working in the evangelical primary school and helping poor students of this school regardless of their religion.

The *Zion Debreceni Betegsegélyező Egyesület* [The Zion Medical Aid Association in Debrecen] was founded in 1891. Its aims were to provide medical assistance to its members and their families, providing financial aid in the lack of

<sup>838</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 7. HBML. X. 204. 2. X. 301/ box 1. No. 1.

<sup>839</sup> Koncz Ákos, *Veressné Szatmáry Terézia* [A *Nőegylet* elnöke, arcképpel], [Mrs. Terézia Szatmáry Veressné, President of the Woman Association, with a portrait], *Debreceni Képes Kalendarium*, (Debrecen: Debrecen Szabadkirályi Város Könyvnyomdája, 1910), 146-148.

earning capacities, offers financial help in case of death, practice general humanitarian aid, and build and keep up alms-houses for the poor. The *Szent Erzsébet Egylet* [The Saint Elizabeth Association] was set up in 1903. It was established to organize concerts and lectures, to foster cottage industry and make workshops.<sup>840</sup> What is more, the *Magyar Állami és Közzolgálati Altisztek Országos Nyugdíjpótló és Segélyező Egyesület* [The National Pension and Subsidy Association of the Hungarian State and Civil Service Warrant Officers] was set up in 1896 to provide pension, funeral aid and orphan educational aids for its members.<sup>841</sup>

The *Siketnémákat Gyámolító Egyesület* [The Supporting Association for Deaf-Mute Citizens] was endowed in 1903. The aim of the association was generally to keep the connections between the state and the inhabitants of the Institute for the Deaf-Mute, which was set up by the association and maintained by the state. Moreover, the association helped the deaf-mute citizens when they left the special institution and supported them to be useful members of the society and taught professions to them and provided knowledge and training for these purposes.<sup>842</sup> Moreover, the *Debreceni Patronázs-Egyesület* [The Debrecen Patronage Association] was established in 1910. The aims of the association was to prevent crime and juvenile delinquency, the protection and supervision of endangered youthful offenders and their integration back into society by religious moral teaching.<sup>843</sup> The *Magyar Rokkantszegélyező és Nyugdíjegylet Debreceni Csoportja* [The Debrecen Group of the Hungarian Disability Pension and Retired Pay Association] was endowed in 1899. Its

<sup>840</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 83. HBML X. 301. 244.; 11. HBML X. 301. 17. IV. B. 1406/b IV. 19/1898.; 32. HBML X. 301. 80.; 43. HBML X. 301. 111.; 78. HBML X. 301. 228.

<sup>841</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 88. HBML X. 301. 262.

<sup>842</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 92-93. HBML X. 301. 278.

<sup>843</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 101. HBML X. 301. 310.; HBML IV. B. 1406/b IV. 15/1904.

main function was to provide pension and subsidy to its decrepit members, to give severance pay to widows and orphans, and to offer fatality aid. The *Debreceni Munkásnők Önképző Egylete* [The Self-Training Association of Female Workers in Debrecen] was set up in 1908. The aims of the association were to intellectually train its members, to improve the alternate respect and appreciation towards the members, and to help those members who were in the association more than eight months in case of illness or disablement. The *Gyermekvédő Egylet Lelencházszal Kapcsolatos Gyermekvédő Egyesület* [The Child Protector Association Related to Orphanage] was founded in 1900. Its main aim was the protection, healing and raising of orphans till the age of 7 or 14 at the oldest, and to support and adopt disabled pregnant women. The *Debreceni Önálló Munkás Betegsegélyező Pénztár* [The Independent Worker Sick-Benefit Check-Out] was set up in 1894. The *Debreceni Pincérek Betegápoló és Segélyező Egylet* [The Sick-Nurse and Subsidy Association of the Waiters in Debrecen] was set up in 1876. The aims of the society were to take care of all the disabled members due to illness, cover the costs of hospital stay and contingent funeral. Also to provide 24 hours accommodation for those foreign waiters who arrive to the city and had authentic certificates. The members of the association can be only reliable people with good behavior whom the association tries to provide jobs according to their merits and capacities.<sup>844</sup> Another pension association was the *Magyarországi Munkások Rokkant és Nyugdíj Egylet 37-dik Pénztárfiókjá* [The 37<sup>th</sup> Local Cashdesk of the Disabled and Pension Association of the Hungarian Workers].

<sup>844</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 144-145. HBML. IV. B. 1405/b 659/1876; HBML X. 301. 465.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 138. HBML X. 301. 443.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 141-142. HBML X. 301. 455.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 142. HBML. X. 301. 456.; Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 144., HBML IV 1405/b IV. 19/1898.; HBML X 301. 462.



It was set up in 1899 for supporting financially the orphans and widows of their members and to provide pension and subsidy to its ill and disabled members.<sup>845</sup>

#### 4.5.4. Cultural Associations of the Peasant and Working-Class

A singing choir was set up in 1890 by the craftsmen named *Debreceni Iparos Dalegylet* [The Debrecen Singing Choir of Tradesmen] with 40 members at the beginning. This cultural association was free from political or religious intentions and directed by religious moral and patriotic national feelings. Its ambitions were to foster Hungarian songs and music with public performances and self-training. It ceased to work in 1951 of its own free will.

The *Debreceni Földmunkások és Napszámosok Önképző Köre* [The Digger and Day-Labourer Self-Training Circle] was founded in 1905. The *Debreceni Önképző Ifjúsági Egylet* [The Self-Training Youth Association in Debrecen] was established in 1909.<sup>846</sup> The *Debreceni Nyilastelepi Népkör* [The Debrecen Nyilastelepi People's Circle] was established in 1912. The aims of the society were to foster social interactions and discourse among its members, reading journals, books and newspapers, holding amateur lectures on the topics that help understanding questions concerning the city and the country, improving the song and music culture. The ambitions of the circle was also to help its member to get to know more their rights and duties towards the country and the city so that they can exercise them in a proper way. The *Debrecen Kossuth Dalkör* [The Debrecen Kossuth Choral Society] was established in 1902. Its aim was to cultivate and propagate singing and music with special attention to national songs and their public performances and with the means

<sup>845</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 145. HBML IV. B. 1405/b IV. 19/1899.; HBML X. 301. 466.

<sup>846</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, HBML. X. 301. ad. 53.5t

of music improving social life and patriotic feelings.<sup>847</sup> The *Debreceni Fűszerkereskedők Egyesülete* [The Association of the Debrecen Spice Merchants] was set up in 1894. The aims of the association were to protect and improve the rights of spice merchants in Debrecen and to cultivate the interests of the members among one another.<sup>848</sup>

The *Petőfi Dalkör* [The Petőfi Singing Choir] started in 1897 with 58 members. Its function was to foster patriotic music and songs, the national cultivation of social life and to improve and enshrine the poet Sándor Petőfi's cult.<sup>849</sup> The *István Gőzmalom Munkásainak Önképző és Dalköre* [The Self-Training Association and Singing Choir of the István Mill] was endowed in 1889. The *Debreceni Kőművessegédek Szakegylete* [The Professional Association of the Brick-Layer Assistants] was set up in 1899.<sup>850</sup>

Despite the great number of associations, the greater number of Debrecen's citizens lived from agriculture, which determined the economic and social life, and indirectly the mentality, of the city.<sup>851</sup> The *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] did have a crucial and unique role in the urbanization of Debrecen. Though the literary work of the Circle was closer to decentralization, that is it followed a different route than that of the capital. However, the Circle's town beautification section contributed to alter Debrecen's urban landscape by unveiling statues, forestation, managing the memorial garden, public parks, historical graves and relics that supported the historical self-identity of the city. As the archive documents show the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai

<sup>847</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 42. HBML X. 301. 108.; 9. HBML. X. box 301.9.; 17. HBML. X. 301. ad. 31.; 23. HBML. X. 301. ad. 53.5t; 33. HBML X. 301. 82.

<sup>848</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 46. HBML X. 301. 117.

<sup>849</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 96-97. HBML X. 301. 291.; HBML IV. B. 1405/b IV. 19/1898; HBML XXI 505/a 10579/1949

<sup>850</sup> Radics Kálmán and Uri Sándorné, eds. *Debrecen város egyesületi katasztere 1833-2001 között*, 144. HBML IV. B. 1405/b IV.19/1898; HBML X. 301.463.

<sup>851</sup> Goda Éva, *Társasági élet és művelődés*, 116.

Circle] was in close connection with the municipal administration and enjoyed its almost unconditional support. Nevertheless, the main function of the Csokonai's adoration was to attest the self-identity of Debrecen and the social profession of the Circle. The very word *debreceniség* [authentically from Debrecen] got a negative connotation from 1806. From this point, the noun *debreceniség* also meant and characterized isolation, conservatism and anachronism. Thus, celebrating Csokonai meant the celebration of Debrecen and its citizens by strengthening their self-identity. The celebrations and events organized by the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] had a great moral value for its members, which was worth every symbolic and financial sacrifice. Compared with the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] aimed at a larger venue for changing Debrecen's urban image and it got more financial support from the municipal administration than the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] did in Szeged. I would argue that the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] in spite of its dependent position, truly had a great impact upon the modern image of the city, and thus had a unique role among the literary societies of Hungary. The common characteristic features of the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] and the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] was their elevated adoration of the poet Csokonai and author Dugonics. Both of them contributed and formed their cityscapes and competed for the third university. Miklós Izsó as sculptor was a symbolic connecting link between Debrecen and Szeged since he planned Dugonics's statue in Szeged and Csokonai's monument in Debrecen, both representing the historical imagination of the citizens.

## Conclusions

This dissertation presented the tale of two cities: Debrecen and Szeged in the second half of the 19th century. Their narratives at some points crosses each other, for instance, in their competition for the third university, in their aims to erect statues as cultural commemorations, or in the relations of their associations and local journalists. However, their stories diverge in a sense that Szeged's urban development was more spectacular and accelerated after the Great Flood of 1879; meanwhile Debrecen followed a more static urban progress model. I was interested in what made Debrecen and Szeged urban despite their pertaining rural fridges and characters, what were their self-myths (e.g. *debreceniség* [authentic Debrecen identity] and *szögediség* [authentic Szeged identity]) that contributed to the identity and mentality of their citizens. Moreover, the dissertation focused on the multiple voices of how foreigners saw these cities, how citizens who lived in the given cities (e.g. Gábor Oláh in Debrecen), how “outsiders” (e.g. Mór Jókai writing about Debrecen) depicted and presented these towns, and how the press constructed their images. I argue that the identity of a city is constructed and structured on different levels, and multiple dominant narratives emerge, which can diverge from the image constructed by public history or by glorified memory. This assumes that a city as a work of art is a cultural representation and a *palimpsest* of interpretations.

The analysis focused on the development of the cityscape (including conscious landscaping projects), the constructed image of the press about Debrecen and Szeged, the identity forming role of the voluntary civic associations that proved to be the foundations of civil societies both in Debrecen and Szeged. The research aimed to

move from the conventional classification of towns (e.g. legal and functional definitions) and to focus on the representation strategies, and legibility of these cities.

I investigated the representation and urban identity of these two Hungarian towns, their consequent development in their geo-political context, and analyzed their salient features. My approach was complemented by the idiosyncratic cultural and social history of these places. This project was not a conventional work of urban history, but rather an interdisciplinary project, where urban history meets architecture, sociology, cultural history, literature and even ethnography. It also aimed to map out the paradigm change within the methodology of urban history by giving way to interdisciplinary analysis. It focused on the (self)representation of the city that gains increasing importance by transforming itself from the narrated city to the cultural translatability of the narrating city. Another main aim of the project was to frame the different historical layers of the metropolitan experience within this process of transformation. The three levels of representation were, firstly, the architectural and physical layout, and (re)construction of these towns. This material reshaping resulted, also, in an intellectual reconstruction and an analysis of the emergence of the public sphere. This was accomplished through study of the formation of the voluntary associations and literary societies that had a great impact upon the urban images of Szeged and Debrecen. The third level of representation was a “meta level,” constructed by the local newspapers, which reflected the different and unique mentalities of Debrecen and Szeged.

The notions of *debreceniség* [authentic Debrecen identity] and *szögediség* [authentic Szeged identity] are artificially created and provide a comparative framework for analyzing the different images of these towns. However, *debreceniség* [authentic Debrecen identity] derives from a literary notion and became equal to

conservatism and is connected to Debrecen's unique Calvinist tradition, which is different from that of the German model defined by Max Weber [*Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, 1934]. Meanwhile, the notion *szögediség* [authentic Szeged identity] comes from the field of ethnography and presents Szeged as an open-minded city notable for integrating foreign elements and influences.

On the basis of the research, Szeged is depicted as a 'newcomer' melting pot, a place of religious openness, cultural, and industrial dynamism, while Debrecen is represented as economically strong but self-enclosed with its religiously homogenous community. Moreover, the urban modernization of Debrecen was relatively stagnant in comparison to the rapid urban development of Szeged after the Great Flood of 1879. One of the recurring metaphors in the newspaper *Debreczen* is the 'civilizing mission' of Debrecen, based on its prosperous economic status, and the enduring *civis* tradition. Nevertheless, both cities prove to have the same aspirations for 'colonizing' and 'civilizing' the hinterland, and seeking the local patriotic idealistic role of a national capital using the tools of literature and journalism.

The tragic event of the Great Flood of 1879 had also some quite positive consequences for Szeged; it encouraged the state authorities to readdress the issue of the regulation of the River Tisza, and to finance this project together with the rebuilding of the city. In spite of their similarities in the mixture of urban and rural elements, Szeged and Debrecen were different in their urban growth. My research concluded that the local newspapers in both cities had an important function: they engendered local patriotism within Debrecen's and Szeged's own civic communities, strengthened the sense of local solidarity, and urged the local elite to embark on the construction of a new, prominent local identity. These social, political and cultural factors were the basis of a dynamic local society, which was more open to

modernization than many other cities of similar size at the turn of the century in Hungary.

Szeged went through a spectacular development as of 1879, with the complete reconstruction of the city after the Great Flood. Old Szeged – as other Hungarian agricultural towns of the Great Hungarian Plain – lacked the dynamism of modern life, and had a cityscape of unregulated facades, and an irregular street network without proper infrastructure. The consequence of the modern urbanization process after the Great Flood was the strengthening of the town's urban identity as a modern city with the manifestation of a unique civil consciousness. The modernization of Szeged took place in the reconstruction period, which completely changed the image of the city. Szeged was rebuilt along the lines of the Parisian and Viennese *Ringstrasse* model, with the help of national and international financial aid and special funds. The city's planners had a practically free hand in introducing the latest achievements of urban planning when they designed the new master plan of the town. Consequently, the high quality and the remarkable speed of the reconstruction accelerated Szeged's urbanization and modernization in numerous spheres. The master plan created a united and modern architectural layout for the town by introducing a modern infrastructure, which would serve as a model for other provincial towns in Hungary. As a result, by 1910, Szeged had become the second largest city in Hungary, after Budapest.

Meanwhile, Debrecen followed the old city planning model by preserving the historic core of the city. In spite of the subsequent improvements, street regulations and transformation of the street network, the historic core of Debrecen remained almost untouched. Despite the more conscious urban planning after the Compromise Period, Debrecen's urban planning took place in several waves in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a

process that changed the irregular street network of the downtown and the rural character of the city's edge. One of the manifestations of the emerging bourgeois consciousness was the investment in architectural infrastructures which was the prerequisite for social and cultural transformation.

I intended to focus on the modern urban identities of Debrecen and Szeged, and highlight the crucial differences in their reaction to natural disasters (floods in Szeged and sequential fires in Debrecen), and the architectural infrastructure boom fostered by the Compromise of 1867. As my research shows, Szeged strove for the title of 'progressive modern urban model,' while Debrecen remained a 'static modern urban environment.' The stereotypical picturing of Szeged *vis-à-vis* Debrecen and this production of locality have their origins in the economic and religious differences of the cities. These local newspapers gave a new conceptual framework for historical imagination, e.g. the revival of the frontier myths of Szeged.

Through the analysis of the local newspapers of Debrecen and Szeged, multiple levels for potential intercultural exchange can be revealed. First, there is the identity-making function of the local newspapers. Second, the local newspapers were avenues for transmissions of literary works and ideas from natural sciences. Third, the local newspapers also transferred political ideas supporting or criticizing the government. Fourth, with the invention of the telegraph system, provincial towns were connected to the capital and also to the world news. Finally, the content of these newspapers also reflected the multi-level story of the sponsor, the publisher and the writer, which was a result of negotiation among them. Consequently, the comparative research between Debrecen and Szeged is based on a tangible cultural encounter through the local newspapers with the exchange of the articles. Szeged defined itself against Debrecen, while Debrecen considered Nagyvárad [Oradea] as its partner in



rivalry and interurban competition, which has deeply rooted historical traditions. There was also an exchange of articles between the newspapers *Szegedi Napló* and the *Debreczen*.

The literary image of Debrecen and Szeged presented by the local newspapers provided for the cities a unique historiography mixed with fictional elements and the tropes of figurative language. These images, however, were both part and result of the modernization and urbanization processes and became the imprint of local historical imagination. Moreover, these literary images played crucial roles in creating both a national past and the bourgeois self-identity of the towns. This constructed image reflects *metahistorical* elements. Thus, the rhetoric of this verbal image of reality functions as a cultural code to comprehend the past.

Local associations had an enormous influence on the life of the city's inhabitants. They functioned as an arena of modern social life where people can meet, identify and freely discuss mutually perceived societal problems, and through that discussion influence political action. Jürgen Habermas articulated the notion of the bourgeois public sphere which emerged with the development of the modern civic society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This was driven by the need for open commercial arenas where news and matters of common concern could be freely exchanged, accompanied by growing rates of literacy, accessibility to literature and a new kind of critical journalism. This new kind of journalism adopted the telegraph network, which transmitted the recent news worldwide and not only presented the story but also entertained the public.

Literary societies and their cohesive function played a determining factor in the development of the public sphere as a kind of catalyst for urbanization. Other discursive arenas, as the coffee houses or clubs, also provided a public sphere for

social interaction in the domain of common concern and inclusivity. Coffee houses, associations, and clubs became the pillars of the bourgeois society, and often became centers of art and literary criticism by providing a forum for self-expression and a platform for public discussion. However, the bourgeois public sphere required, as preconditions for participation, maleness, an education and the ownership of property. As a critique of Habermas's view of the bourgeois public sphere, the vast majority of society was excluded (for instance the poor, uneducated people, women, and migrants).

In the Reform Era, the development of Debrecen and Szeged accelerated and industrialization and the modern banking system appeared in these towns. At the same time, the developing infrastructure of highway and railways reached both Debrecen and Szeged. The public social life appeared with the foundation of the local *Casinos* in the 1830s. The membership registers of the *Casino*, other voluntary associations and the literary associations show a great deal of overlap. The elite of Debrecen and Szeged (mostly male) formed the membership of these societies, and comprised roughly only 10% of the whole population.

The fight of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] for a third university had a crucial impact upon the social and cultural life of Szeged and its relations with Debrecen by raising the public consciousness. Dugonics' literary '*kultusz*' ['*cult*'] not only fostered local patriotism but helped its members to identify themselves with a common social ideal. Though there were many engineers among its members, the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] did not really participate in Szeged's urban planning. Meanwhile, in Debrecen, the *Csokonai Kör* [Csokonai Circle] was conceived as the noetic center of the *Tiszántúl* [Beyond the River Tisza] region. Its aim was to provide a meeting point for a number of intellectuals whose works fostered

the improvement of the city, just as in the case of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Society] in Szeged. Among the aims of the circle were to inspire local people with literary ambitions and to foster Hungarian literature, culture and art. Moreover, the circle aimed to encourage and take part in the town beautification movement by improving the parks, landscaping projects, squares and streets of the city and offering statues to the cities.

Debrecen and Szeged's urbanization are unique in the sense, following István Balogh's argumentation, that in contrast to most of the towns in Central Europe, they did not exist as a result of foundation, but rather grew out of the mass of adjacent villages. This happened primarily by influencing geographic energy (trade routes, areas of different products); by the division of labor gradually developing since the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (divergence of agriculture and handicraft); and by the exchange of goods.<sup>852</sup> Consequently Debrecen and Szeged's place in the Hungarian urban hierarchy were especially based on their market center position.

It is interesting that there are rare documentation sources about their early histories (11-12th centuries), and a 250 years' period is reflected only by archaeological excavations, research on local names and by the analysis of the topography of the town-plans. Szeged is first mentioned in a document in 1183 as the settlement where salt - as a royal monopoly - coming from Transylvania on the river Maros, was transferred. The inhabitants of the town obtained the liberty of town burghers [*hospes*] of the Middle Ages, the privilege to elect judges, in the last third of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As a town of significant craftsmen and tradesmen, dealing with cattle breeding and commerce in large areas even outside its territory, it was occupied by the Turks in 1543 and remained as a *khász birtok* [khász property] for 143 years. After

<sup>852</sup> Balogh István, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," [A History of Two Cities as Reflected in the New Monographs], (Debrecen: Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltár Évkönyve Vol. XIII., 1986), 7-21.

being liberated from the Turkish occupation in 1686, it regained the right of free royal town in 1719.<sup>853</sup>

Debrecen shows, in contrast to Szeged, the other type of town development in Hungary. Starting as a village of the crown lands, it developed into the administrative center that formed around the turn of the 13-14<sup>th</sup> centuries. It gained the right to elect judges, meaning the liberation from vassalage, in 1361. This right was followed by several other privileges during the 15<sup>th</sup> century (holding fairs, rules of guilds, patronage right). The personal dependence of its inhabitants on the power of the landlord was assured by the definite sum of annual tax [*census*]. At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century it was the largest market-town [*oppidum*] of the country, the only market center within a 40-60 kms' radius, with textile, leather and iron industries supplying the surrounding area. It developed, with the help of its landlords, large-scale livestock breeding in the '*puszta*' [*plain*]. Its cattle merchants also participated in supplying South-German towns with meat during the 16-17<sup>th</sup> centuries. After the country was divided into three parts (1542), the town belonged to the independent principality of Transylvania until 1686. It was a tax payer to the royal court, of both Transylvania and the Ottoman Empire. In 1618 it was liberated from the rule of landlords and, due to its border position, became the center of an important international trade route (from the Balkans to Poland). After the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Calvinist direction of Reformation was accepted in the town, and through its church organization and school remained the greatest intellectual center of Calvinism in Hungary until the end of the feudal ages.<sup>854</sup>

During the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries its administrative autonomy was better developed than that of the royal towns remaining under royal power. In 1693 Debrecen became a

<sup>853</sup> Balogh, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," 7-21.

<sup>854</sup> Balogh, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," 7-21.

royal town itself by royal charter, and this right was accepted by the parliament after 1715. Liberation movements (1686-1699) and the War of Independence led by Rákóczi (1703-1711) did not have advantageous consequences for the welfare of its burgesses, but at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it still had the largest population in Hungary, though trade was declining and handicraft was stagnant. Large-scale cattle breeding and extensive agriculture were organized in the lands mortgaged during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this agricultural feature of the town became even more important during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, actually being maintained till the end of the century. On the other hand, Szeged, due to its favorable geographic position (shipping traffic on the River Tisza) could be connected to the long-distance trade, formed as a result of the grain boom. There was an even greater difference between the two towns in the field of culture. Debrecen preserved, in spite of every effort of the state power, its Calvinist character, while Szeged, sponsored by state power, became the largest Catholic center of Hungarians in the Great Plain.<sup>855</sup>

Debrecen and Szeged each had its own unique theory for designing the main squares, the parks and the styles of its buildings, which made them closer to the image of modernity. The construction of new villas and buildings alone, however, did not make these cities modern. What was needed is the mentality of bourgeoisie, who made a united effort to foster modernization by joining into associations with common interests and issuing modern newspapers. Architecture, in the form of stylistic eclecticism, was filled with content by the citizens after the great impetus of the Compromise of 1867. Both Debrecen and Szeged were able to revive after natural disasters, which developed in the architecture, artistic life and the newspapers of the cities. After the Compromise of 1867, Debrecen and Szeged reflected a modern urban image, with the emergence of the public sphere and the increasing urban

<sup>855</sup> Balogh, "Két város története az új monográfiák tükrében," 7-21.

consciousness of the citizens. However, both towns preserved their rural character - as a striking contrast to the modern city center - in the surrounding '*tanya világ*' ['homestead world'] since they were agricultural towns in origin. Debrecen's urban development took place in smaller steps, due to the reigning *cívis* attitude and Calvinism. However, this is a contradiction in itself and proves to be a peculiar Hungarian phenomenon, since Reformation did not mean stagnancy in other countries; rather, it helped the progression of capitalism. Szeged's geographic position was more fortunate than Debrecen's. Szeged lies at the joining of two rivers, the Maros and the Tisza, which location connects the city with *Erdély* [Transylvania] and *Vajdaság* [Vojvodina]. The rivers carried not only merchandise but also ideas and cultural artifacts. Meanwhile, Debrecen was restricted mainly to land commerce, though it was a major market town since the Middle Ages. Szeged's eclecticism is also different; it reflects the multi-voice of its religions, and the openness of the city to new ideas. Szeged had the ability to be reborn totally, while, Debrecen was able to preserve the traditions and values of the past.

Finally, one cannot ignore a crucial point concerning the future of urban studies; this raises interesting methodological questions in an era when visual communication has become more prominent. The study of the digital city is still nascent and a new field within Hungarian urban studies that I encountered as a challenge during my research. As Vera Bácskai argues, digital archives and representation of cities provide a more emotionally based and tangible attitude towards the research of urban identities, than simply the written urban monographs. Certainly, digitalization requires new thematic and pluralist methodological point of views and interdisciplinary framework. "The Great Chicago Fire & Web of Memory" (<http://greatchicagofire.org/>), the "Locating London's Past"

(<http://www.locatinglondon.org/>) or the “Adam Matthew Digital” (<http://www.amdigital.co.uk/>), just to mention a few examples, provide excellent models for locating and presenting urban history, and also for educational purposes. Meanwhile, the digitalization and virtual museums of newspapers and historical photographs in relation to comparative urban history is still lagging behind in Hungary. The digitalization of this unconventional tale of Debrecen and Szeged can be further developed as a continuation of this research project

## Appendices

- **Magyarország (általános térkép) (1870)**, [Hungary, general map, 1870]  
Gotha: J. Perthes, 1870. OSZK [National Széchényi Library], TM 23 774/Térképtár, ST 66.



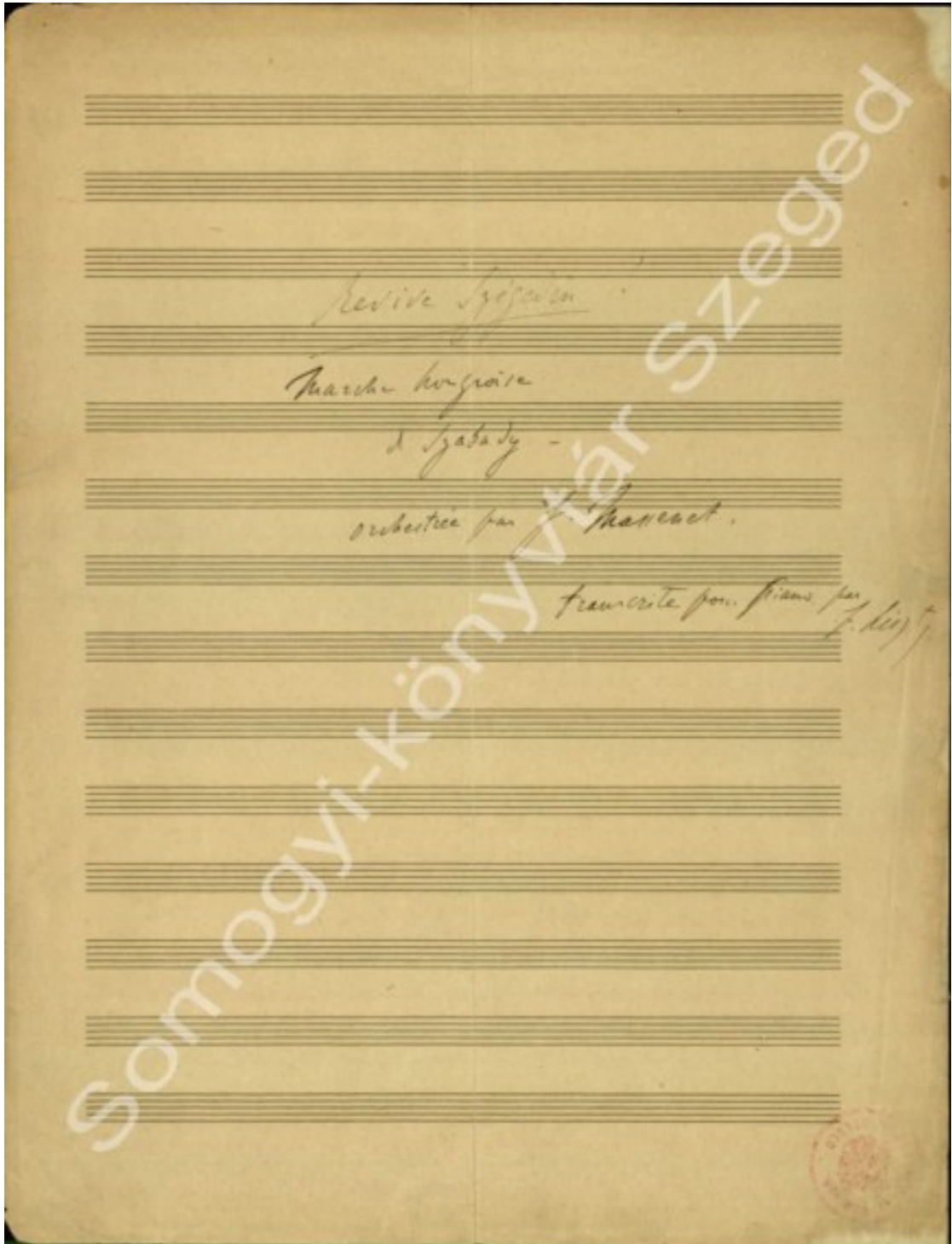


- Szeged birtok térkép, 1854, [Szeged taxation map, 1854] Bv 866-1, [Térképtár, ST, 66](#), OSZK [National Széchenyi Library]



- [illegible]

- **Franz Liszt's piano composition, *Revive Szegedin!*** treasured in the Somogyi Library (F.b. 2678). The copy of the original manuscript with Franz Liszt's handwriting by courtesy of the Somogyi Library, Szeged.



- 32  
415
- CSOKONAI-KÖR DEBRECZENBEN.

Skogedon.

Az alkonyi félfén hársfés követéje volt a XIX.  
 század azon nemre hagyományának, hogy a költő  
 vesztén állás kötelez a közművelődésnek, első sorban  
 a magyar irodalomnak lelkes szolgálatára. Boldog-  
 gult Kálmár György, mint orvos és képművész, majd pedagó-  
 gus mint a legnagyobb vidéki város polgármestere, az  
 Eötvös, Kemény, Rongyay megnevezésű párt és moz-  
 dalmak és ellenfeleik az országos irodalmi és tudományos  
 testületekben, nagy hatással a költészetére, egy nagy  
 magyar város irodalmi életében vesztén hársfés be-  
 töltései. A költészet és irodalmi hivatalnak ez az össze-  
 olvadás a javára vált a Magyar társaságban és  
 több volt a polgármesteri székben. —

Omise risovotinket ismételten nyitva tartva, valamint  
a Fehérszék, Előszék ivánti.

Debrazen ten 1918 febr. 6. <sup>hasafias tinnabel</sup> 6344.

5/11/1900

2 Coronar-Eichelnzelle

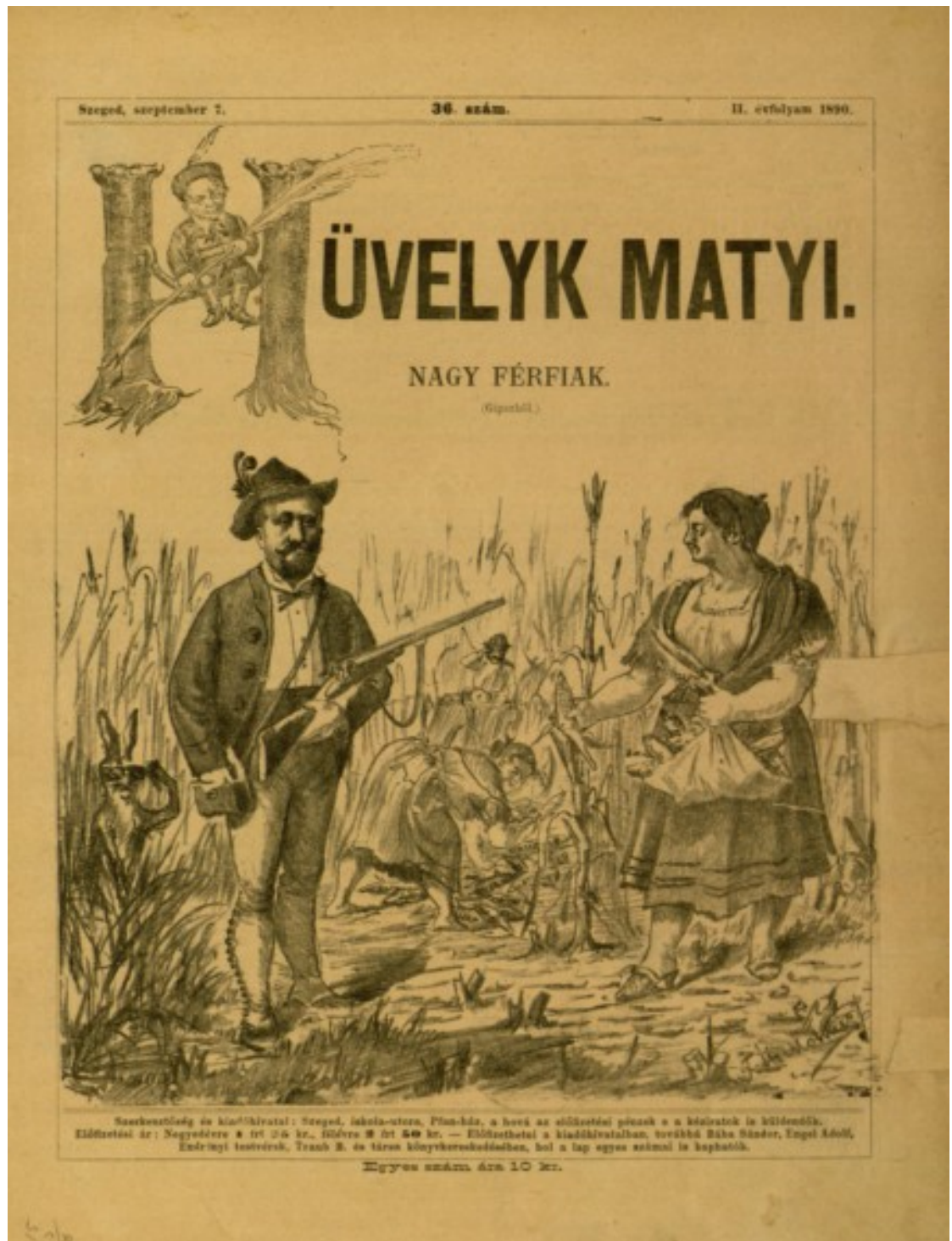


Randall

*La Cichonai-bay villa*



- György Lázár's caricature in the *élzlap* [satirical journal] *Hüvelyk Matyi* by the courtesy of the Somogyi Library, Szeged.



- 4)
- A „Dugonics társaság” alapnabái.
- A társaság neve, székhelye  
és pecsétje.
- 1) Szeged nev. kir. város  
vidéki község, alatti ludoma-  
nyos és névvelük társaság  
alakult, melynek neve Dugo-  
nics társaság. Szeged nagy  
fiáról: „Dugonics Társaság”  
2) A társaság székhelye  
Szeged. Pecsétje arany és kör.  
írattal van ellátva: „Dugo-  
nics Társaság Szegeden. 1898.”
- A társaság célja.
- 1) A társaság célja a ma-  
gyar alföldi népköltészet, és  
kivált Szegedi és vidéki  
a magyar irodalom, műve-  
lete és parlolása;  
a tudomány művelése, ter-  
jesztése és népszerűsítése;  
a művészetek parlolása  
és a közművelődési intézkedések  
támogatása.  
2) E célok elérése végett  
a társaság állapítja le a mag-  
ságot fejt ki. Felolvasásokat,  
irodalmi összejutásokat, szet-  
leg kiállításokat és kiállításokat  
a magyar alföld jelen és múlt  
viszonyaira a tudományos tá-

- Invitation of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association], CSML

## FELHÍVÁS.

Nemcsak az esztendő történeti múlt, hanem és főként a nehéz körülményekben annyira gazdag jelen bizonyítja, hogy a magyar nemzeti kultúrának itt, a sokféle nemzetiség által lakott Délvidéken legjellemzőbbebb védő bástyája, igazi végeirre *Szeged*.

Ezért, nagy nemzeti hívatással hívó végeirnek minden céljairól mód és eszköz felhasználásával gondos megőrzése kötelessége nemcsak a nemzetnek, hanem legkövetlenebbül és legelőszörban magának *Szegednek*.

Ezért kiváló kötelesség önkéntes felismerése, a beteljesítésre irányuló hasonló buzgalom képzete legkiválóbbul megijózt a „*Szegedi Dugonics-Társaság*” ismét befejezett tárgykör szerinti megvalósításának.

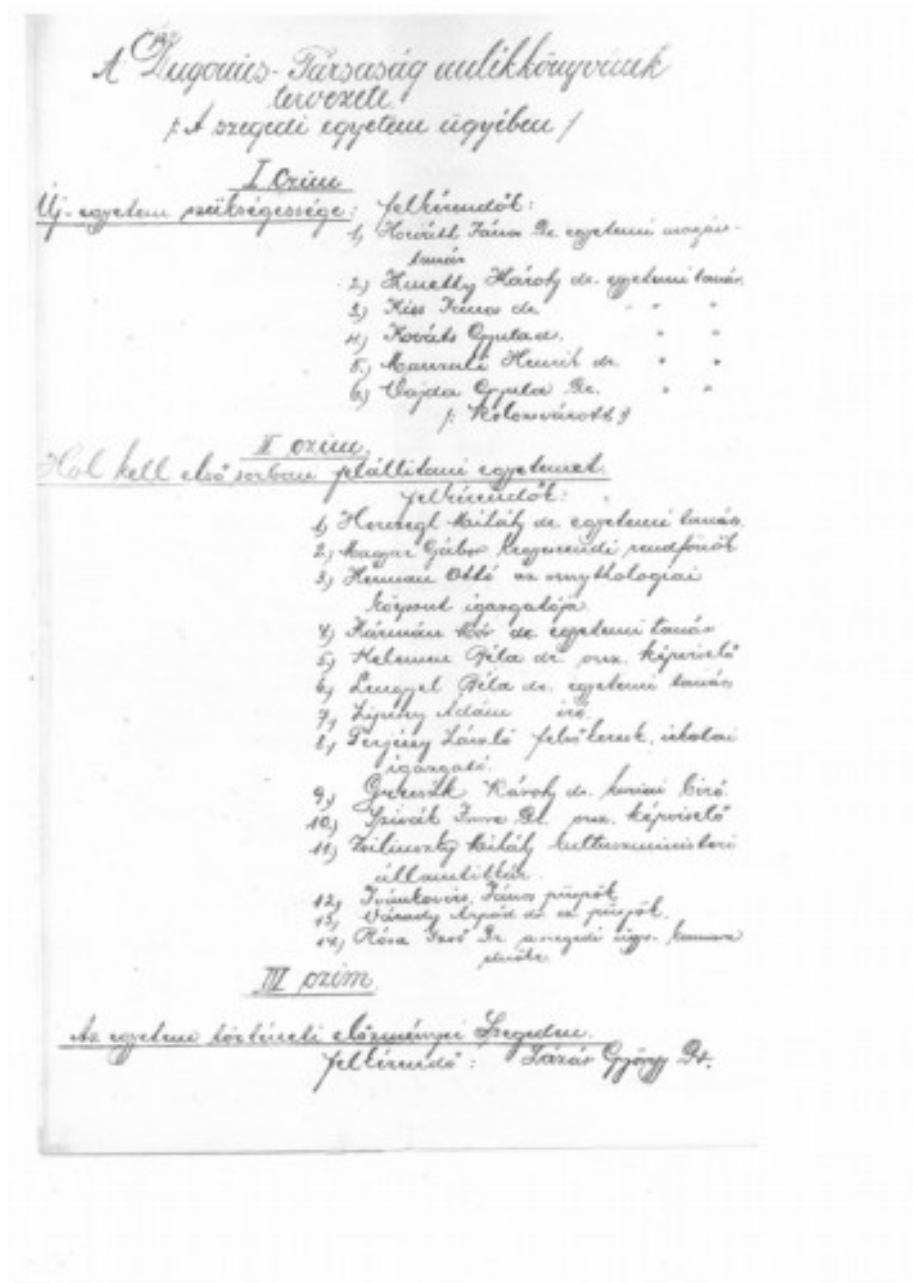
Konny, szilárd meggyőződés az alapítóknak, hogy egy magasabb mérvűen nemzeti „*Irodalmi és Tudományos Egyesület*” jelentékeny, hasznos gyakorlati tényezője a nemzeti kultúra építésének, népszerűsítésének.

Ezért kitűnő nemzeti és nagy cél eléréséhez azonban nem pusztán a működő tagok előadói és megfigyelt irodalmi s tudományos munkássága, hanem azonnali a *közönség lelkes támogatása* is nélkülözhetetlenül szükséges.

Bizalommal fordul a „*Dugonics-Társaság*” nevében állított bizottság Szeged város és a Délvidék hasonló önkéntesekre nézvekor kén, művelt közönségéhez, személyesen minden érdekes beszélgetés, akik Szeged s a magyar nemzeti kultúra előmozdítását tekintve viselik: meggyőződésük a „*Dugonics-Társaság*” céljait, törekvéseit a működő évek foglalt módjainak bármelyike szerint határozottan előmozdítani.

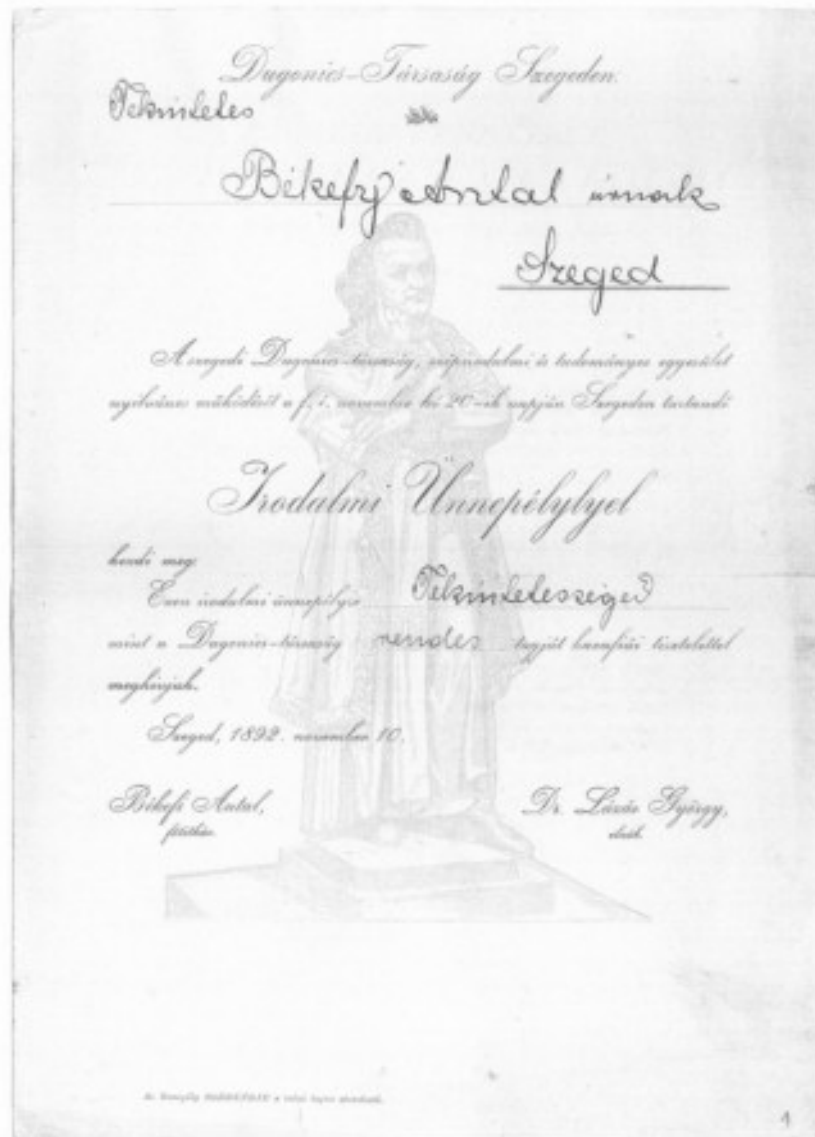
Es a föld, azon áldás, kötelességünk a miénk; de a múlt nehéz körülményei, hibái, mulasztásai azt a súlyos, de dicső feladatot hárították a jelen vállára, hogy még egyszer és pedig jobban, teljesebben kövessük meg Atilla örökét.

- Appeal of the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association] in the topic of establishing a university in Szeged, CSML



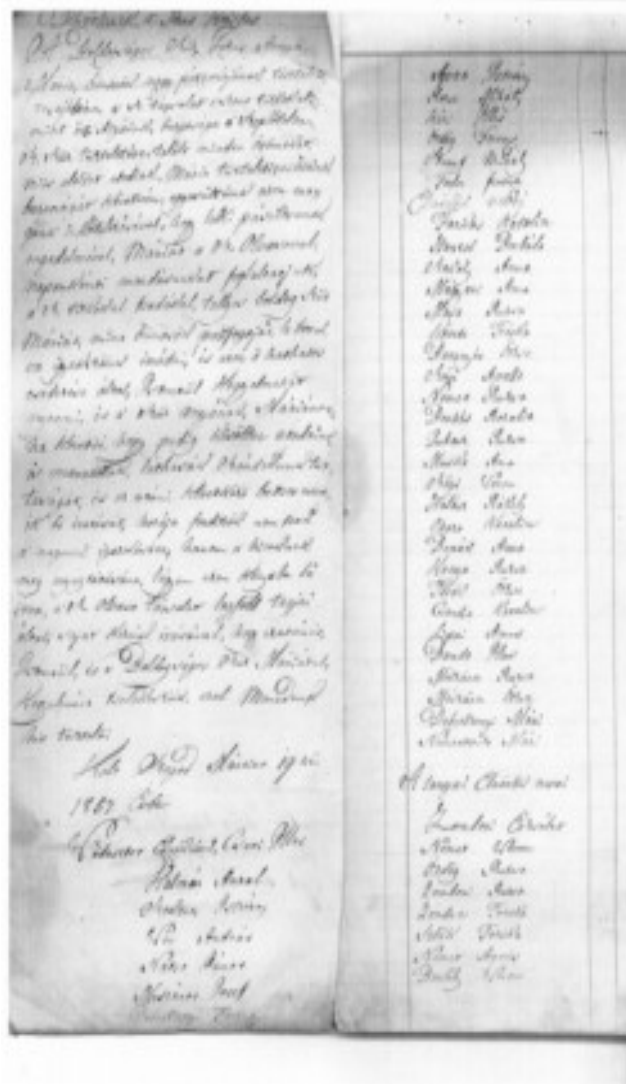


- Invitation letter to the literary memorial ceremony organized by the *Dugonics Társaság* [Dugonics Association], CSML



- [illegible]

- Register of the Szeged Alsóvárosi Olvasókör [Szeged Lower-City Rosary Circle], 1884, CSML



189782 *Utas I 237 1922* *5. szám, hiányzik: 18, 27, 37, 39, 50.*  
*1-17, 18-26, 28-30, 31-51.*

**Csütörtök** **Januar 1.**

**DEBRECZEN-NAGYVÁRADI**  
**ÉRTESÍTŐ.**

1846. első félév. **1.** 4-ik évfolyam.

Ez ÉRTESÍTŐ, melyben adás-vevő, kereskedési-gazdasági és más ilyen hirdetések közölnek. Debreczenben minden hétfőn, Nagy-Váradon csütörtökön jelenik — Fél évi előfizetés házaiban külföldre Debreczenben és Nagy-Váradon 1 — postán bár hová 2 — forintban. Előfizetni lehet mindenkor a Tudakozóintézetben.

### UJÉVI IDVEZLET.

#### Debreczenhez.

„Idvezlek a szép rósa  
 Tejé' nimbosz övedzte  
 Polgári erény' dús kora!  
 „Áltz ártatlant a' bikeri  
 Szél katarra nemzeti örül,  
 'S le nem tiprának a' hajdan világi.  
 „Levélre nemzetiséged  
 Nem bomból karcra ledérül,  
 Im minak felett ez ened téged:  
 „Közjókák által ártatlant!  
 Nem ellibagva és majd fűtben  
 Ledűlve, szőlől karcra karcra karcra.  
 Te szívet társ fel közjóra küldöl,  
 'S leledem éz és tudomány'  
 Fűzög karcra nimbosz.  
 „Áltz! és béke! örökösöd téged  
 Szeretett drága kora!  
 'S töllem ezt örök karcra vedl.

**Balla Károly**  
 tudakozó intézetnek.

#### NVárad-Olaszhoz.

„Uj év! melyre mint a' Delfi templom  
 Fülében talált csoda-lepre  
 A' végtelen örök titolat nyom.  
 „Feltűn az idő nagy szerén  
 A' mult' halom romjaira  
 Nem tudva karcra-e' vagy derék?  
 „Idő és béke! uedek szellemes és  
 Hec testvér várasok!  
 Melyeket Levélháziént él a' karcra.  
 „Hon nemtűje csokolje le arcad baraját  
 Ha volt: és ha csak örömet éldelel,  
 Nyújtva várasa nimbosz karcra.  
 „Pártolás orszá karcra mérge  
 Ne tépje szél karcra nimbosz,  
 Meri ez a' polgári élet' ferge.  
 „Hálás karcra, mint a' sima  
 Fűz karcra a' karcra,  
 Hozzad így karcra fel ez ima.

**Nagy Károly**  
 tudakozó intézetnek.  
 (C. \*)



Retrieved from Debrecen Városi Könyvtár [Debrecen City Library]. Accessed September 17, 2012. <http://fulltext.lib.unideb.hu/journals/bin/tibi.cgi?fi=dkk&ev=1901&sz=01>.





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- |             |  |                |
|-------------|--|----------------|
|             | <b>Szeged Város Közgyűlésének iratai</b>   |                |
| <b>1105</b> | <b>1867–1872</b> [Documents of Szeged's General Assembly]  | 1867–1872      |
|             | a Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvek [Minutes of the General Assembly]   | 1867–1871      |
|             | b Közgyűlési iratok [Documents of the General Assembly]  | 1867–1871      |
| <b>1110</b> | <b>Szeged Város Szépítő Bizottmányának iratai</b> [Documents of the Szeged Town Beautification Association]                        | 1848-1871      |
| <b>1402</b> | <b>Szeged Város Törvényhatósági Bizottságának iratai</b> [Documents of the Szeged Municipal Assembly]                              | 1872-1948      |
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|             | b Közgyűlési iratok [Documents of the General Assembly]  | 1872-1933      |
| <b>1409</b> | <b>Szeged Város Középítészeti Tanácsának iratai</b> [Documents of Szeged's Public Architecture Council]                            | 1884-1923      |
|             | a A Középítészeti Tanács jegyzőkönyvei [Minutes of the Public Architecture Council]  | 1884-1923      |
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- 57 A Szeged-Alsóvárosi Olvasó Társulat iratai  
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- 58 A Szegedi Dugonics Társaság iratai  
[Documents of the Szeged Dugonics Society] 1892-1949
- 63 A Szegedi Hangász Egyesület iratai  
[Documents of the Szeged Music Association] 1836-1842
- 66 A Szegedi Polgári Dalárda iratai [Documents of Szeged's Civic Singing Choir] 1868
- 67 A Pusztaszeri Árpád Egyesület iratai  
1921–1942 [Documents of Pusztaszer Árpád Freemason Lodge] 1921-1942
- 70 A Szegedi Kasinó Egyesület iratai 1835–1837  
[Documents of Szeged Casino Association] 1835-1837
- 266 A Szegedi Katolikus Legényegylet iratai  
[Documents of the Szeged Catholic Male Association] 1920-1936
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- 1105 **Debrecen Város Közgyűlésének iratai**  
[Documents of Debrecen's General Assembly] 1850-1853
- 1403 1872-1944
- a Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyvek [Minutes of the General Assembly] 1872-1944
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## X. EGYESÜLETEK [Associations]

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- 2    A Debreceni Polgári Kaszinó iratai [Documents  
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