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Medievalism in Nineteenth-Century Hungarian Architecture*

It would be perfectly reasonable to ask how a paper on nineteenth-century architecture ended up in a volume of essays dealing with the various periods and styles of medieval art in Hungary, the different groups of monuments, and the connections that can be discerned from the monuments themselves.

The aim of this present study, insofar as the occasion and the available space permit, is to shine a light on the way medieval art was reflected in architecture in the nineteenth century, and to investigate the traces left by the architecture of the Middle Ages on architectural theory and practice in Hungary several centuries later. Before examining this phenomenon in greater detail, however, it is important to note that in nineteenth-century historical analyses, architectural critiques and writings on architecture theory, instead of using the Middle Ages as a collective term, the main tendency in Hungary was to refer to concepts of style, and to classify individual monuments accordingly. The detailed content of what was to be understood by specific style concepts was canonised in the first half of the nineteenth century, influenced primarily by works on architectural history produced in Germanophone lands. The most important medieval styles referred to in nineteenth-century writings on the history of architecture were: Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic – although the term only came into use at the end of the nineteenth century, replacing the phrase "pointed-arch style" (in Hungarian: *csúcsíves*; in German: *Spitzbogenstil*) –, and the so-called "transitional style", an early variant of the Gothic that grew out of the Romanesque. The style terms themselves are often narrowed down even further using the names of particular places (e.g. Venetian, north German, French, Île-de-France, etc.). These styles, closely linked to different periods in history, were used as points of reference in architectural projects of the nineteenth century. In this paper I would like to show how the Middle Ages became a reference point for nineteenth-century Hungarian architecture, and how its different periods were reflected in Hungary's buildings at the time. I will also touch upon the symbolic meanings that were attached to different periods of the Middle Ages, and the way in which the

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concepts of inspiration, reflection and imitation were affected by the changing ways of interpreting the Middle Ages. During my analysis, I will also endeavour to highlight developments in the general attitude towards the past.

Classical versus Medieval

References to monuments from history, as they appeared in nineteenth-century Hungarian architecture, took different forms over time, and served evolving objectives. Around the year 1800 two basic movements coexisted, each with its own independent character, and these would determine the architectural orientation of later decades: these were the classical and the medieval. In terms of formation and theoretical encapsulation, both dated back to eighteenth-century precedents, or – in part – even older ones. The classical forms of Antiquity originally embodied a kind of "eternal" beauty and traditional artistic knowledge, irrespective of place and time. The ethos of this knowledge was conveyed by the art academies, where the study of ancient art had remained a standard part of training since the Renaissance. The fact that classical art (in particular architecture) began to be regarded in the eighteenth century as an exalted ideal, an example to be emulated, was not unconnected to changes taking place in society, the new sense of liberty and the forward march of the Enlightenment. In parallel with this, a second tradition emerged, whose novel and conscious relationship with the past was shaped not by the art (architecture) of the classical world, but by the Middle Ages and that period's artistic achievements. This approach was affected by a different concept of historicality, which was bound temporally and spatially, and was based on a desire to uncover and elaborate local historical traditions. Exponents of the two movements placed themselves into two different historical narratives. For the former, timeless harmony and aesthetics represented art of the very highest order, which they attempted to contend with through their own works. For the latter, the aim was to arrive at their own local style and to mark out their own place in the bigger picture by digging into their past.

The Neo-Gothic

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, both traditions were present in Hungarian architecture. Solutions that copied Antiquity could be found in ecclesiastical architecture, state buildings, and works commissioned by the aristocracy, in the form of façade handling, and masses and proportions that recalled classical architecture. Medieval architectural conventions were first employed during this period in the composition of buildings closely associated with gardens and parks (pavilions, gloriettes, ruin follies, chapels, mausoleums).

While Hungarian architecture in the first third of the nineteenth century was dominated by neo-Classicism, to a modest extent these were joined by a number

of reflections on the Middle Ages, and a smattering of architectural creations generated an idealised medieval atmosphere through their use of castle-like features, and doors and windows with pointed arches. In addition to the relatively isolated group of garden buildings, the first glimpses of the Gothic in Hungary could be seen in church architecture (Pétervására parish church; reconstruction of Pécs Cathedral). Medieval (or medieval-inspired) forms also began to creep into urban, civic material culture at this time, as a part of citizens' self-identity. At the start of the middle third of the nineteenth century, Gothic forms in Hungarian architecture took on a historic meaning. Typically Gothic proportions and shapes that evoked the Middle Ages were used both in chateau architecture – Keglevich Mansion, Nagyugróc (Veľké Uherce, today Slovakia), 1845-1850 – and in urban residences (Pichler House, Budapest, 1855-57; Fig. 244). In many aspects, this movement shared affinities with the so-called Gothic Revival and with a variety of European variants. Evocations of the past were manifest not only in architectural forms, but also in the sculpted and painted decorations of buildings. The emerging bourgeoisie funnelled local historical traditions into their own sense of identity. As nation-builders, they viewed themselves as custodians of the historic past, with its intrinsic power to add legitimacy and to enhance a nation's self-image. This was part of the reason why they decorated their homes – as representations of who they were – with features that recalled the glorious past of the nation (Pekáry House, Budapest, 1847-1848).

The Rundbogenstil *and Related Developments*

Alongside the neo-Gothic, the other response to the aesthetics of neo-Classicism also sought inspiration from the forms of Europe's architectural past. This was a movement that derived its vernacular from a variety of styles, yet was perfectly suited to the period's architectural tasks, and was called the *Rundbogenstil* ("round-arch style"). Finding expression in churches arranged with basilica-type groundplans and in the use of round-arched windows, this was a contemporary reinterpretation of Romanesque and Byzantine architecture. The theoretical groundwork was laid in the 1820s by Heinrich Hübsch, professor of architecture at the Polytechnische Schule (today's Institute of Technology) in Karlsruhe (in 1828 he published his first summary of his theory in a pamphlet entitled *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?*). From the 1840s, this new style became extremely popular in central Europe. In Hungary, the style was employed particularly creatively in the works of Miklós Ybl and Frigyes Feszl. Both these Hungarian architects studied architecture in Munich, a city of exceptional importance in promoting and disseminating the *Rundbogenstil*. At the initiative of King Ludwig I of Bavaria, a whole series of royal and public buildings were constructed from the 1830s on, all following this new fashion in architecture. The most prominent exponents of this style – whose work certainly exerted an influence on Ybl and Feszl – were Friedrich Gärtner and Leo von Klenze.

The first masterpiece in Ybl's career to demonstrate the approach of the *Rundbogenstil* in all its complexity was the Roman Catholic church in Fót (1844-1855), which clearly reveals the influence of Munich (Fig. 243).

The church in Fót came about as a result of intense cooperation between the architect and the man who commissioned the building, Count István Károlyi (1797-1881), a devotee of the Catholic Revival movement. The count's idea was for an early Christian basilica in the Romanesque style, while Ybl approached the forms of the Romanesque from the angle of south German Romantic architecture. The school and parsonage either side of the church were built in 1845. Part of the architect's remit was to construct a traditional noble burial chamber attached to the church, which eventually became the crypt. Adopting a basilica-type groundplan, the building was a modern revival of the tradition of Romanesque churches erected by noble families. Among its precedents, in both form and composition, were three churches in Munich: Basilika Sankt Bonifaz (Georg Friedrich Ziebland, 1828-1850), Ludwigskirche (Friedrich von Gärtner, 1829-1842) and Allerheiligen-Hofkirche (Leo von Klenze, 1826-1837). Whereas the composition and structure of the building in Fót took their cue from German territories, the decoration was inspired rather by the most exquisite works of Nazarene art (the altarpieces and murals of Karl Blaas) and Roman neo-Classical sculpture (statues by Pietro Tenerani). The iconography of the church decorations was based on the cult of the Virgin Mary. István Károlyi, an unconditional believer in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception (promulgated in a papal bull of 1854 by Pope Pius IX, in response to movements within the Catholic Church), so he dedicated his new church accordingly. Together with the works of fine art and the rich decoration all around the building, the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Fót is an outstanding example of a Gesamtkunstwerk.

The *chef d'œuvre* of Frigyes Feszl is the Vigadó concert hall in Pest (1860-1865), which was built by combining the historic approach of the *Rundbogenstil* with the use of structures and materials that complied with the needs of the day. The emphasis on the national Hungarian nature of this building can be detected not only in the architectural execution, but also – and even more so – in the building's decoration, which took many decades to complete (and which became caught up in Hungary's efforts in the second half of the nineteenth century to create the national self-image; Fig. 245).

The predecessor to the Vigadó in Pest, which had stood on the same site, had been designed in a neo-Classical style by Mihály Pollack, the outstandingly talented architect of his age. During Hungary's struggle for independence from imperial Austria in 1848-1849, Pollack's building was severely damaged. The city council first asked another noted neo-Classical architect, József Hild, to draw up plans for its reconstruction, before turning to Feszl, the master of Hungarian Romantic architecture. Feszl's plans called for a building that was radically different from its predecessor, both in appearance and in dimensions. The artistic complexity of his building was embodied in the unity of content that the architect intended to express through the sculpted and painted decorations. The sculptures,

both inside and outside, highlighted the function of the building as a venue for city balls, concerts and theatre plays, so different types of dance and drama were symbolised in the figures. The overarching aim – which presumably sprang from Feszl's creativity, but was only partly realised – was for the different works of art to convey the idea that Hungary's past and culture were deeply embedded in Europe. This spirit inspired the themes for the frescos, which portrayed episodes taken from Hungarian history and legends (*The Story of Prince Argirus* by Károly Lotz and Mór Than, *The Feast of Attila* by Mór Than, and *King Matthias Defeats Holubar* by Sándor Wagner). The sculpted decorations in the grand chamber, which were not completed until several decades after the building was constructed, depicted a variety of forms of theatre and dance as part of the European tradition – while variants of certain performing artists concealed the figures of Hungarian actors.

The middle third of the nineteenth century was the age of Romantic Historicism in Hungarian architecture. This was not just a central European phenomenon, for this movement also took hold in France and especially in the United States of America.

Church Architecture in the Context of Monument Restorations

Whereas the *Rundbogenstil*, which formed the theoretical background to Romantic Historicism, was free from any emphasis on national characteristics, architectural monuments from the past played a central role in formulating the self-image of newly emerging nation states (and also, partly, in constructing a national style of art). Surviving architectural relics from the Middle Ages were therefore not only reminders of the history of each given country in Europe, but also stood as evidence to turn to for the nation's architecture. Surveys of Hungary's architectural monuments first took place in the 1850s, under the auspices of the Vienna-based body set up to register and conserve the treasures of the past in Austria-Hungary; following organisational restructuring, the work was continued by an expert committee attached to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This period resulted in the first scientific plan for the restoration of Vajdahunyad (Hunedoara, today Romania) Castle (Ferenc Schulcz, 1868), and the first analysis of the Romanesque bas-reliefs, showing narrative cycles, preserved on the walls of the stairways down to the crypt in Pécs Cathedral (Imre Henszlmann, 1863). The cathedral is particularly important when it comes to the question of how the Middle Ages were received in Hungarian architecture, because its redesign (Mihály Pollack, 1805-1827) at the beginning of the nineteenth century (inspired by still-existing Romanesque forms) was carried out using a diverse variety of styles, most of which had medieval origins. The façade was divided using Gothic windows, topped with their own unique tracery, inserted into the gaps between columns with composite(-style) capitals; at the same time, the framing around the south portal was executed following the Romanesque tradition.

Excavation work performed by archaeologists laid the theoretical foundations for monument restorations (increasing numbers of which were carried out from the 1870s on); moreover, thanks to the growing publicity given to such restorations, contemporary architecture was also influenced to a certain extent, with particular regard to buildings with important symbolic roles to play in shaping the new national consciousness (such as the palace of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Parliament building in Budapest, and the buildings erected to commemorate the "Millennium" of Hungarians settling in the Carpathian Basin).

In parallel with these developments, Hungary, like most other countries in Europe, witnessed the construction of large, modern cities, dotted with buildings designed in "neo", revivalist styles, serving all the latest social requirements. These requirements were mostly met with the features and floorplans of the neo-Renaissance, which were founded on classical traditions. It was also noteworthy that buildings designed in this style were cheaper to construct than neo-Romanesque or neo-Gothic works, which involved the use of vaulting and expensive masonry decorations. It was not by chance, then, that the metropolises of the nineteenth century were largely characterised by rows of buildings incorporating the classical forms of the Renaissance. The cityscape that came about in Budapest in the wake of earlier practices was matched with several striking analogues in other large cities in central Europe (more particularly, in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy): alongside Vienna and Prague, it is worth highlighting Ljubljana, Rijeka, Zagreb and Königsberg/Kaliningrad. The role of medieval architecture was confined to prestigious architectural tasks, in particular ecclesiastical architecture. All the important church buildings erected in nineteenth-century Hungary were executed in one or other of the medieval revivalist styles. Miklós Ybl's parish church for the Budapest district of Ferencváros (1866-1879) was designed in the Romantic Historicist style (Fig. 246), and bears affinities with the work of the contemporary Viennese architect, Ludwig Schöne. At the same time, the external features of the church – built with a basilica arrangement, a transept, a polygonal chancel and side-chancels – borrow their forms from the Romanesque monuments of northern Italy, especially Lombardy (such as Pavia). The parish church in another district, Erzsébetváros (1891-1901), was designed by Imre Steindl in his preferred neo-Gothic style, and was the largest church built in this style during this period in Budapest (Fig. 249). Its place in architectural history was marked out in part by the Church of Maria vom Siege in Fünfhaus, Vienna, designed by Friedrich Schmidt, while its groundplan was structured along the lines of two Gothic forebears: the Elisabethkirche in Marburg, and Saint Elizabeth's Church in Kassa (Košice, today Slovakia). An alternative design for the parish church in Erzsébetváros, produced by Samu Pecz, was for a central arrangement, focused around a hexagon. In the 1880s, the architect Pecz had begun to deal with means of expressing the sacrality of churches through an application of the central plan. In 1888 he published a study on how to structure space in Protestant churches. In his writing, he asserted that the ideal arrangement for a Calvinist church was a central plan, because the liturgical focus (the pulpit) and the geometric focus

would be the same. The idealised pentagonal plan in his dissertation (which was also partly based on the church in Fünfhaus, Vienna) served as the starting point for the Calvinist church he designed for Szilágyi Dezső Square in Budapest (1891-1895). For this building, consisting of a pentagonal groundplan with an additional vestibule on one side and extended lobes on the four remaining sides, the architect chose a neo-Gothic style, in order to impart the "monumentality" merited by a sacral building (Fig. 250).

Here we should not omit to mention the work that took place at this time on two Gothic monuments of iconic importance; from today's perspective, instead of "restoration", these interventions should rather be described as reconstruction. We have already fleetingly mentioned the parish church of Saint Elizabeth in Kassa (1877-1904); the other monument is the Church of Our Lady (Matthias Church) in Buda Castle (1872-1896). The alterations and conversions carried out in the late nineteenth century bear witness to the general efforts being made to create, albeit retrospectively, an idealised Hungarian variant of the Gothic, inspired in particular by the precedents of thirteenth-century France.

The Middle Ages as a Symbol, in the Context of Public Buildings

In addition to church architecture, a variety of medieval styles can also be discerned in the designs produced for a certain group of public buildings. These were buildings with highly symbolic roles in the process of moulding the national image. In such cases, incorporating the Gothic – or one of its derivatives – into contemporary architecture was intended as a means of representing the continuity of history and of emphasising the centuries-old past of the Hungarian nation.

In 1862, Imre Henszlmann and two colleagues jointly submitted a Gothic plan for the competition to design the headquarters of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In Henszlmann's view (adopted from Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc), the constructs of the Gothic gave architects greater freedom and flexibility than those of classical architecture when it came to adapting structure and spatial formation to suit new functions. His other reason for choosing the Gothic was ideological. He was of the firm belief that a building that served to house a national institution should represent the character of that nation. Since Hungary did not have its own typical architectural style, Henszlmann regarded the Gothic as a suitable choice, for "the golden ages of our national history arrived arm in arm with the Gothic style". Henszlmann's efforts to convince his contemporaries were all in vain, however, and even the written promises he obtained from his competition rivals – that they would also submit designs in a medieval style – went awry. The secret pact was revealed, the judging committee felt betrayed, and the man behind the competition was rebuffed. A new round of the competition was launched, and this time the first prize was awarded to an architect from Berlin, Friedrich August Stüler, whose design for the Academy palace resulted in a neo-Renaissance building (1862-1865).

The other building of the age with enormous symbolic meaning was the Parliament (1882-1904); prior to its construction, there had already been a number of failed attempts to erect an independent Hungarian national assembly building; parliamentarians had hitherto been forced to meet at temporary venues and in a series of rented premises (Fig. 248).

In 1844-1845 an international competition was announced, but nothing came to fruition at this time. In 1861, the competition to build a temporary Parliament was won by Miklós Ybl, who erected the House of Representatives on Sándor Street (the building still stands, and is now the home of the Italian Institute of Culture in Budapest). The question of building the Houses of Parliament in Pest reached its next stage at the beginning of the 1880s, when the national assembly voted into law a bill approving the construction of a permanent home for the Parliament. The planning programme was ready by 1882, and a competition was launched, with a deadline for submitting bids of 1883. Plans were received in a variety of styles, dominated by classical tastes, but remarkably only three of the plans bore elements from medieval architecture. Style was not among the selection criteria; far more important was the extent to which the design met the required specifications. The question of style was to be decided by the prime minister of the time, Gyula Andrássy. In his opinion, the Gothic-style building recalled one of the most iconic exemplars of the genre, the Houses of Parliament in London, and denoted the positive connotations of English parliamentary tradition. On the subject of his winning design, the architect, Imre Steindl, said the following about the national nature of the Gothic: "If there is a style which has somewhat of a connection with our history, then this style is definitely the one most closely associated with the eventful past of our nation". In the end, the national character of the Parliament was expressed not so much in architectural forms as in the ensemble of artworks and internal decorations. When writing about the completed work, the architect himself emphasised the role played by the decoration of the chambers in creating the national character: "I strove, modestly, carefully, as is demanded absolutely and invariably by art, to introduce a national and individual spirit into the magnificent style of the Middle Ages. To this purpose, I employed all the motifs from our existing two-dimensional ornamentations to decorate the surfaces of the walls, the vaulting, etc. in the spirit of the Gothic style, and I utilised the shapes of the flora of our homeland, the plants of our fields, forests and plains, in a more or less stylised manner". Similarly, the sculptures and paintings used on the building were all designed to underline its national nature.

The symmetrical edifice is dominated by the segmented dome that crowns its centre. Despite the details, which are dressed in a Gothic mantle, the composition of mass and the structure of space are derived from Baroque architectural traditions. Among the precedents Steindl modelled his building on are the dome of the church in Fünfhaus and the façade of Vienna City Hall, both designed by Friedrich Schmidt (Steindl's teacher); the plan Steindl submitted to the 1872 competition to design the Reichstag in Berlin can be regarded as a forerunner. The chambers, the broad staircase and the corridors also follow a symmetrical

arrangement. The internal treatment and decoration bear hallmarks of both the Gothic and the Renaissance. At the same time, the use of modern architectural technologies, such as the iron framework, facilitated the formation of new types of space. This was approximately the extent of the opportunities offered by the neo-Gothic at the time, based on solutions made possible by iron structures.

Incorporating modern engineering know-how into Historicist architecture was not without precedent. In Hungary, it was probably Samu Pecz who did the most to expand the horizons of the neo-Gothic – as demonstrated by the library building of Budapest Technical University (1909).

In private architecture, the neo-Gothic undoubtedly played a much lesser role, and it appeared mostly as a result of some personal interest or attraction. This is shown in the construction of a number of neo-Gothic mansions and a few urban villas. For an example of personal interest we need look no further than the buildings commissioned by Gyula Andrássy. The politician who had given the final seal of approval to the neo-Gothic design of the Parliament in Budapest had his own country house in Tiszadob (Arthur Meinig, 1880-1885) built as a self-contained block, rather like a castle keep, with medieval-style mouldings and high-peaked roofs. Unsurprisingly, one of the finest neo-Gothic mausoleums of the era was built in his memory: Tőketerebes (Trebišov, today Slovakia), by Arthur Meinig, 1893. A perfect example of a neo-Gothic urban villa is the one built for the painter Árpád Feszty in Budapest (1890), probably mostly designed by the artist himself, which provides solid proof of how much he loved medieval Venetian architecture. Analogies worth mentioning include the Palazzo Erizzo Nani Mocenigo and Palazzo Barbarigo Minotto, both in Venice; the Palazzo da Mula in Murano; and the Gothic house in Piran, Slovenia.

The Dead-End of Symbol Creation

This final section is devoted to the complex of buildings which, to the present day, remain the most important point of reference for reflections on the relationship between the Middle Ages and nineteenth-century architecture.

The Millennium Exhibition opened in May 1896 in Budapest's City Park, after lengthy preparations (planning began in 1882, while the official call for proposals to design the exhibition was prepared in 1893). Besides showcasing the latest achievements in home-produced industry, trade and culture, the aim of the exhibition was to display the country's thousand-year history in objects and artefacts from the past and the present. In line with these twin aims, the exhibition was divided broadly into the Contemporary and Historical Building Complexes. Construction of the latter complex was preceded by two rounds of competition, during which the ultimate concept was elaborated. The exhibits in the Historical Complex were presented in the display rooms of a pavilion designed in a historical style, consisting of a suite of buildings. The buildings themselves could be interpreted as architectural representations of the nation's past. The

sources of inspiration were all iconic monuments: copies of famous buildings were constructed to house the exhibition. These copies were therefore designed as references to the past. The historical appearance was merely a façade, however, and there was no actual relationship between the environment outside and the spaces inside. Such "stage-dressing" on exhibition architecture was not unknown in those days, but the exhibition in Budapest in 1896 differed from most similar constructions in two major ways. Firstly, the buildings in the City Park were far more ambitious and extensive than others attempted previously; and secondly, the copies were built as a contribution to the formation of the national self-image. As such, their role as reflections on how prominent historical buildings of the past were becoming part of an emerging canon was at least as important as the way in which the selected buildings themselves were shaping this very same canon. At the end of the nineteenth century, the act of making copies of historic buildings was part of the same historical approach that could also recreate and animate history in the form of models and festive processions (*Festzug*). The Historical Building Complex (designed by Ignác Alpár) contained partial or total replicas of monuments from different regions of the country, which were well-known as a result of organised state monument conservation, and grouped according to separate style periods. Among the monuments celebrated in this way were the portal of the abbey church in Ják, Zápolya Chapel in Csütörtökhely (Spišský Štvrtok, today Slovakia), the tower of Catherine's Gate in Brassó (Braşov, today Romania), the main wing of Vajdahunyad Castle, and a montage of Renaissance buildings in Upper Hungary (Fig. 247). It is also worth noting that the Baroque era was represented not by a complete copy, but by a composition made up of different buildings by the illustrious Austrian architects Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach and Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt. The internal rooms of the pavilion complex were designed in idealised forms of their respective styles. The copies of the buildings themselves functioned as "exhibits" that formed an integral part of the section on the country's history and historic treasures. Having achieved popularity as exhibition buildings, the original historic monuments soon became part of the canon of Hungary's national history. This process continued at the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1900, where – encouraged by the success at the Millennium Exhibition in Budapest – a few of the buildings from the complex were erected once more, as part of the Hungarian pavilion. In this new context, however, their repeat showing generated false notions: lifted from their original setting, they became representatives of the architecture from different periods in history, and this allowed illusions to formulate. These fantasies took root even more deeply after the First World War. Following the signing of the peace treaty, the copies – still visible in Budapest's City Park – of historic monuments located in territories that Hungary was now forced to cede not only stood as reminders of the nation's former greatness, but also beckoned, by their mere presence, for this greatness one day to return.

By the end of the nineteenth century, when the national variant of medieval architecture had reached a kind of consensus, the use of revivalist styles that

made reference to them took on a mostly symbolic significance. For the new schools and movements in architecture – the Secession (art nouveau), and the so-called "Youth (*Fiatalok*) movement" –, which took ornamentation, the local architectural heritage, and the traditions of folk architecture as their starting points, the forms of building used in the Middle Ages had lost all relevance.

In summary, it can be seen that attitudes towards medieval architecture changed throughout the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century, different forms of Gothic adaptations appeared as a response to classical orientation. From the 1830s onwards, the *Rundbogenstil* offered a new approach to architectural formation, which was more in line with materials and construction. The ability to make free choices of style resulted in a diminished role for the Gothic, which was replaced with a pluralistic view of Historicism. By virtue of Hungary's close relationship with southern German lands, the *Rundbogenstil* had a powerful impact on Hungarian architecture. The Gothic made a renewed appearance in ecclesiastic architecture, and can be attributed to the programme of monument conservation that began midway through the century. Medieval forms achieved a significant role in the second half of the century in buildings that enjoyed symbolic importance in shaping the national self-image. From the end of the nineteenth century, symbolic works of architecture no longer looked to the historic past and its associated styles for inspiration and interpretation. In line with this process, within a few years of the Millennium Exhibition, the architecture created for the century's last great outing for historical monuments resembled nothing more than a set of anachronistic accessories from a bygone age.

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