

# The Vienna School in Hungary: Antal, Wilde and Fülep

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This article has two principal aims. The first is straightforward: to outline the approach and careers of a group of Hungarian-born art historians who trained in Vienna and who came together in Budapest during and immediately after the First World War. This was a critical moment in Hungarian history, and a critical moment in the understanding of Modernity in Central Europe. The radical intellectual climate, and the experience of war and revolution, exposed these scholars to new concepts of art and culture, challenging many of the aesthetic principles they had acquired in Vienna. For some in the group, however, it was possible to envisage an approach to art history that bridged these two camps – the Vienna School and the Lukács circle in Budapest. This is now recognized as one of the sources of the social history of art that thrived in the mid to late twentieth century. The second aim of the article is less conventional. In tracing the dispersal of this group and their subsequent careers, a contrast is made with some of the approaches to art historical scholarship that did develop in Hungary in the inter-war period. By implication, I wish to suggest that a distinctive type of art history could have developed in Hungary if the political situation had been more conducive. To understand the significance of the ‘generation of 1919’, it may help to sketch in some of the background to art history as an academic discipline in Hungary.

As several scholars have pointed out, the origins of art history in Hungary can be traced back to the so-called ‘Reform Period’ of the 1840s, although it was not until the after the *Ausgleich* [Compromise] of 1867 that this made any impact on Hungarian intellectual and cultural life.<sup>1</sup> Even at this time, the activity was linked to developments in Vienna, although not in any formal sense.

Perhaps the most important early figures were Ferenc Pulszky (1814-97) and Imre Henszlmann (1813-88) both of whom, during the 1850s, worked with the Viennese sculptor, medallist and collector Joseph Daniel Böhm (1794-1865), a key figure in the formation of Viennese collections and in the development of art history

<sup>1</sup> See Ernő Marosi (ed.) *Die Ungarische Kunstgeschichte und die Wiener Schule, 1846-1930*, (catalogue of an exhibition held at the Collegium Hungaricum, Wien, September 1983) Budapest: Statistischer Verlag, 1983, and Ernő Marosi ‘Ungarische Denkmalpflege am Scheidewege’, *Kunstchronik*, No. 43, 1990, 574-582.

in the city.<sup>2</sup> At a later date both Pulszky and Henszlmann were involved in establishing national collections of fine and decorative arts in Hungary, and in developing a range of policies regarding the interpretation and display of artefacts. As might be expected, this drew both men into areas of theory, history and practice which required engagement with some of the dominant intellectual currents of the day. In general terms, Henszlmann has been associated with Viollet-le-Duc and Gottfried Semper through his work on medieval architecture, a feature which comes to the fore in his most important text, *Théorie des Proportions appliquées dans l'architecture* (1860), a study of the structural laws of architecture through the ages.<sup>3</sup> This proved to be of direct relevance to his work on the documentation and restoration of medieval buildings in the Hungarian crown lands. As a result of this, Henszlmann was appointed to the first chair of art history in Budapest University in 1873. Henszlmann was no theorist himself, nor could he be called an art historian in the modern sense. He was interested primarily in the application of scientific models of classification (mostly botanical) to Medieval architecture. Nevertheless, he exerted a considerable influence on the study of earlier art and architecture in Hungary, if only to give priority to architecture as the dominant art form (to which, in his view, all other art forms were subservient), and to encourage greater interest in the Gothic above all other periods and styles.<sup>4</sup> In this, of course, he was not unusual in later 19th century Europe.

Pulszky, the other pioneer in this field, had a curious route to art history having been active in the liberation movement leading up to the 1848 Revolution and gone into exile with the nationalist leader Lajos Kossuth in the aftermath.<sup>5</sup> During his exile in London he took an interest in archaeology and folk art, as well as in the provision of museums and art education at South Kensington following the Great Exhibition. After his return to Hungary he was appointed director of the

<sup>2</sup> Jozsef Sisa 'The Beginnings of Art History and Museology in Hungary. Some Semper Connections', *Centropa*: Vol. 2, No. 2, May 2002, pp. 128-135. Ferenc Pulszky was the subject of an exhibition at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest with a bi-lingual catalogue: Ernő Marosi (ed.), *Pulszky Ferenc (1814-1897) emlékére / Ferenc Pulszky (1814-1897) Memorial Exhibition*, Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1997. His son, Károly Pulszky, was the subject of an exhibition at the Szépművészeti Múzeum (Museum of Fine Arts) Budapest; see, László Mravik (ed.) *Pulszky Karoly emlékének*, Budapest: 1988. A brief account of Böhm's role in development of art history in Vienna is provided in Julius Von Schlosser, 'The Vienna school of the history of art-review of a century of Austrian scholarship in German', translated by Karl Johns, *Journal of Art Historiography*, No. 1, December 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Imre Henszlmann, *Théorie des proportions appliquées dans l'architecture depuis la XIIe dynastie des rois égyptiens jusqu'au XVIe siècle*, Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1860, and subsequent translations into German and Hungarian.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Imre Henszlmann, *Magyarország csúcsíves stílú műemlékei* (The Gothic Architectural Monuments of Hungary, 2 Vols), Budapest, 1880, and L. Reissenberger & I. Henszlmann, *Monumenta Hungariae archeologica aevi medii: kiadja a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia archaeológiai bizottsága*, Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1883. For a recent selection of Henszlmann's writings, see Tímár, Á. (ed.), *Henszlmann Imre: Válogatott képzőművészeti írások* (Selected Writings on the Fine Arts), Budapest: MTA Művészettörténeti Kutatóintézet, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> See Pulszky's autobiography, *Életem és korom* (My Life and Times), 4 vols. Budapest, 1880-82.

National Museum in 1869. From this position, he was able to shape the provision of national museums and collections, giving rise ultimately to the Museum of Decorative Arts (*Iparművészeti Múzeum*) in 1874 and the Museum of Fine Arts (*Szépművészeti Múzeum*) in 1896.

What might be apparent from this is the extent to which these early initiatives towards art and architectural history, museum curatorship and the care and documentation of historic buildings in Hungary, looked to English, French and even German models, as opposed to Austrian. This is perhaps understandable for political reasons. There was a climate of distrust and rivalry towards the Habsburg authorities, even after the *Ausgleich* of 1867, which elevated Hungary to a position of ostensibly equal status in the Empire. This pattern of intellectual allegiance is further emphasized by the appointment of Gyula Pasteiner (1846-1924) as *'privatdozent'* in art history at the University of Budapest in 1885; he was elevated to a professorship in 1890, a position he held until 1919. In his research and writings (the most significant of which are concerned with Classical art), Pasteiner looked above all to Semper and the French Positivists (Comte and Taine) instead of the emerging ideas around Riegl and Wickhoff which would form the basis of the Vienna School.<sup>6</sup>

The somewhat wary and, at times, tetchy relationship between Budapest and Vienna carried on into the 20th century, and is a feature of much Hungarian scholarship on art and architecture, in so far as it tended to look to models outside Austria. Despite this, the obvious axis between the two capitals of the empire meant that a good number of students from Hungarian backgrounds chose to take up art history in Vienna. Nevertheless, the Hungarians had an ambivalent relationship with their Viennese teachers and counterparts, to the extent that Hungarian art history often deliberately positioned itself in contrast to the ideals of the Vienna School.<sup>7</sup> With this ambivalence in mind, I want to move forward one generation to highlight a group of Hungarians who studied at the Institute of Art History in Vienna and who, for a brief period, offered a distinctive development of the classic ideas of the Viennese scholars and teachers – although, as I will argue, they made little impact on the later intellectual life of Budapest.

This group was mostly made up of pupils of Max Dvořák and they studied in the Institut between 1912 and the early 1920s. They were Frigyes Antal (1887-1954), Janos Wilde (1891-1970), Karoly Tolnay (1899-1981), Edith Hoffmann (1888-1945) and Jenő Lányi (1902-40). Their circle included several other art historians; Otto Benesch (1896-1964: another pupil of Dvořák) and Arnold Hauser (1892-1978) who later studied art history in Berlin under Adolph Goldschmidt. My reading of this group's significance lies in the fact that they congregated in Budapest during and immediately following the First World War where they were exposed to a new

<sup>6</sup> In his most important writings, *A régi művészetek történetének mai tudományos állása*. (*The current view of the History of Ancient Art*), Budapest, 1875, Pasteiner reaffirmed Semper's view that architecture should play the dominant role in any history of art.

<sup>7</sup> See introduction to Marosi, *Die Ungarische Kunstgeschichte und die Wiener Schule*, 1983.

set of interests, largely deriving from the increased left-wing political slant of the Budapest intelligentsia which, in turn, prompted a radical revision of their received ideas of art history.

When they came together as a loose grouping they were still young, if precocious, students. Antal had successfully completed his doctoral dissertation on conflicting stylistic tendencies in French painting between the mid eighteenth century and the Restoration of 1815.<sup>8</sup> Wilde was still working on his dissertation under Dvořák on early Italian etching (completed in 1918), as was Benesch (on Rembrandt's drawings, completed 1921). The focus for their association and early work was the prints and drawings department of the Szépművészeti Múzeum (The Museum of Fine Arts) where all three were employed as assistants or volunteers.<sup>9</sup> Antal, as the eldest and most established (although still only 27 when the war broke out), seems to have been the key figure and he came to play a leading role in the new initiatives within the department. As young scholars in a traditionally hierarchical institution, they would normally have been expected to acquire specialist interests within the museum's collection, while applying and elaborating the principles they had acquired in Vienna.<sup>10</sup> However, the war years in Budapest witnessed a feverish intensification of philosophical and critical debate which changed the character of Hungarian intellectual life.

The central figure in this was György Lukács who in 1915 returned to Budapest from Germany where he had completed his studies and already produced two substantial texts on philosophy and literature: *The Soul and the Forms*, 1910, and *The Theory of the Novel*, 1916.<sup>11</sup> On his return, he gathered around him a heterogeneous but brilliant group of scholars, artists and musicians which formed the so-called *Sonntagskreis* (*Vasárnapi kör*) or 'Sunday Circle'.<sup>12</sup> As the name suggests, the group met on Sundays, generally at the houses of Lukács or Béla Balázs (1884-1949). Balázs is less well-known in English-speaking circles but he was a notable poet and, in the inter-war period, became one of the leading theorists of film and

<sup>8</sup> *Klassizismus, Romantik und Realismus in der französische Malerei von der Mitte des XVIII. Jahrhunderts bis zum auftreten Géricault*, Vienna University, 1914. Some of this was later published in a modified form as 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism', a series of articles in *The Burlington Magazine* between April 1935 and January 1941, and subsequently collected in a volume of essays under the title, *Classicism and Romanticism, with other Studies in Art History*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966.

<sup>9</sup> For basic, if frequently unsubstantiated information on these art historians, see *Dictionary of Art Historians*. Retrieved January 27, 2013, Web site:

<http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/benescho.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Antal's hand-written notes on drawings in the collection can still be seen in the department's index cards.

<sup>11</sup> Georg Lukacs, *Die Seele und die Formen/Essays* (The Soul and the Forms) Berlin: Egon Fleischl & Co. 1911; *Die Theorie des Romans* (The Theory of the Novel) was first published as an essay in 1916, and later as a book by Paul Cassirer, Berlin, 1920.

<sup>12</sup> On Lukács and the Sunday Circle, see Arpad Kadarkay, *Georg Lukács: Life, Thought, and Politics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991; Lee Congdon, *Exiles and Social Thought: Hungarian Intellectuals in Germany and Austria, 1919-1933*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991; Mary Gluck, *Georg Lukács and his Generation 1900-1918*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1985.

theatre. At the time of the *Sonntagskreis* he had written several works for performance and was probably best known for the libretto of Bartok's opera *Bluebeard's Castle* (written 1910, although music not completed until 1911-12, and not performed until 1918) and the short ballet *The Wooden Prince*.<sup>13</sup> Other members of the circle included the social theorist and philosopher Karl Mannheim (1893-1947), the philosophers Béla Fogarosi (1891-1959) and Karl Polanyi (1886-1964; one of an extended family of brilliant scientists and thinkers), the artist Anna Lesznai, the novelist and critic Emma Ritoók, and the composers Béla Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly.

There have been extensive memoirs and often conflicting reports of the 'Sonntagskreis', but one could characterize, in simple terms, the main issues this group of intellectuals addressed in their meetings.<sup>14</sup> Their primary focus was literary but, reflecting Lukács' studies in Germany with Simmel and Weber, there was increasing emphasis on the role of social structures in forming the cultural patterns within which artists work. In the initial stages, the group's radicalism was expressed by their rejection of the Neo-Kantian philosophy of Emil Lask, Wilhelm Windelband and Hermann Cohen, that dominated Central European universities at the time, and by their increasing turn to Nietzsche and Hegel. However, the real hallmark of this group within the larger community of progressive intellectuals oriented to the metropolitan centres of European intellectual life was its 'distinctive and sometimes competitive focus on culture'.<sup>15</sup> In Lukács's early writings, (by which I mean pre-1918, or pre-Marxist), 'culture' was not understood as an abstraction, or a blanket term for some form of high art, but the central problem of the individual in modern society. That he held a generally pessimistic view at this stage was partly due to Simmel's concept of the 'tragedy of culture' and the alienation that seemed to be a necessary by-product of Modernity. This dilemma of values and meaning under bourgeois capitalism would engage many members of the *Sonntagskreis*.<sup>16</sup>

As an outlet for their developing ideas, in 1917 the group set up the 'Free School of the Humanities' (*Geisteswissenschaften*) offering classes on a variety of subjects related to the condition of modern culture. Lukács, for example, spoke on Dostoyevsky, Mannheim spoke on 'Epistemological Systems', Hauser on Kantian aesthetics, and Antal on Cézanne.<sup>17</sup> Given the fluid nature of their ideas and the

<sup>13</sup> Balázs is being rediscovered by an Anglophone readership. Two of his early texts on film, *Visible Man* (1924) and *The Spirit of Film* (1930), have been translated and collected in *Béla Balázs: Early Film Theory*, (ed. Erica Carter) Oxford: Berghahn, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Among the most famous and contentious are the autobiographical novels by Anna Lesznai, *Kezdetben volt a kert* (In the Beginning was the Garden), 2 vols. 1966, and Emma Ritoók, *A szellem kalandorai* (Adventurers of the Spirit) 1921. There are also unpublished diaries by Ritoók, *Évek és emberek* (Years and People) Manuscript, National Széchényi Library, Manuscript Division, fond 473. Some of this has been documented in Éva Karádi & Erzsébet Vezér, *A Vasárnapi Kör; Dokumentumok* (The Sunday Circle; Documents), Budapest: Gondolat, 1980.

<sup>15</sup> David Kettler, 'Introduction to 'Soul and Culture'', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 29(7/8), 2012, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Simmel's 'Tragedy of Culture' was first outlined in *Philosophische Kultur*, Leipzig: Kröner, 1911. The influence of these ideas on Lukács is examined in Lee Congdon, *The Young Lukács*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Some of these were published as *Előadások a szellemi tudományok köréből* [Lectures from the

range of individuals involved, it would be rash to attribute any singular philosophy or outlook to the group as a whole. But one can make general observations on the overall character of their interests from Lukács' diaries and reported statements, dominated as they were by the seminal shift in his intellectual life. Between 1916 and 1918, Lukács was moving from what he described as an essentially 'Romantic' or idealist view of life and art, to one informed by the historical materialism of Marx (albeit one rooted in a reassertion of Marx's dependence on Hegel).

For several years Lukács and other members of the circle had been wrestling with the relationship between the art or culture of a given period and the society which brought them into existence and which, in turn, shaped their nature and content. Karl Mannheim, for example, worked up this set of issues into a body of theory known loosely as 'the sociology of knowledge' in which he argued for an association between forms of knowledge (or 'modes of thinking') and social structure, and proposing that membership of particular social groups or classes conditioned patterns of belief.<sup>18</sup> For Mannheim, these claims were not dependent on a Marxist model of society and historical change – for Lukács, however, and for Antal and Hauser, this was the fundamental assumption that governed their later research and writings. Lukács later recalled, 'It is typical of the diversity of views within the Sunday [Circle] that I was the only one beginning to profess a Hegelian-Marxian view – perhaps only Frigyes Antal showed some inclination to Marxism.'<sup>19</sup>

A reading of the key text by Lukács' that grew out of this, *History and Class Consciousness* (published 1923), reveals the central thrust of Lukács' project which was the development of a comprehensive philosophy of culture on Marxist principles; but one that attempted a radical revision of the classic Marxist model of 'base' and 'superstructure' to describe the relationship between economics and culture.<sup>20</sup> Instead, Lukács offered a more complex view of the relationship between ideology (which one could compare to '*weltanschauung*' or 'world-view') and the class interests of different sections of society. This is a complex set of issues that are probably familiar to many readers of this journal and have been examined in

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Humanities Circle], Budapest, 1918, although general information is drawn from the school's prospectuses.

<sup>18</sup> See Karl Mannheim, *Beiträge zur Theorie der Weltanschauungsinterpretation*, 1923; *Das konservative Denken*, 1927 (*Conservative Thought*) and *Ideologie und Utopie* 1929, (translated as *Ideology and Utopia*), parts of which have appeared in different selections of his work. Although tangential to the arguments presented here, the article by Jeremy Tanner, 'Karl Mannheim and Alois Riegl: From Art History to the Sociology of Culture' in a special issue of *Art History* (ed. Dana Arnold) *Contemporary Perspectives on Method*, 2010, 99-128, emphasizes the extent to which members of the Sunday Circle were familiar with recent art historical writings of the Vienna School.

<sup>19</sup> In *Emlekezések* (Recollections), Budapest, 1967; quoted in Anna Wessely, 'Antal and Lukács – the Marxist Approach to the History of Art', *New Hungarian Quarterly*, vol. XX, No. 73 (1979), 116.

<sup>20</sup> Georg Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein: Studien über marxistische Dialektik*, Berlin: Malik-Verlag, 1923; translated (Rodney Livingstone), *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, London: Merlin Press, 1971.

numerous publications devoted to cultural theory.<sup>21</sup> Lukács' concept of 'reification' is perhaps the most famous part of the argument although this is often treated as a catchword in what is a fairly ambitious argument about the construction of meaning and understanding of the world of experience through class relations.

Lukács' position would prove to be controversial throughout the 1920s and beyond, attracting considerable criticism from orthodox Marxists, although it became a fundamental text for Adorno and the scholars associated with the Frankfurt School.<sup>22</sup> It was this set of interests that Antal pursued for the rest of his life.<sup>23</sup> At that time (i.e. during and immediately after the First World War) Antal and his younger colleagues had written nothing substantial that might give us an indication of their future interests. I am aware, therefore, that to indicate the effect of this period upon these scholars, one has to cite examples of work published much later, sometimes many decades later.<sup>24</sup> My aim here, however, is to indicate the formation of a set of ideas that developed or crystallized within this group, but which could not be fully developed in any published form due to historical circumstances. In particular, I am suggesting that Antal attempted to link Dvořák's principles for art history (attention to style as an indicator of deep 'structural forms', belief in the importance of '*weltanschauung*', and the sense of accelerated development that arises within periods of crisis and change) with Lukács' analysis of the meaning and role of culture in terms of competing class interests.<sup>25</sup> This would be the underlying argument of his major book, *Florentine Painting and its Social Background* and the principles around which he explained the co-existence of radically different stylistic tendencies in specific periods and locations.<sup>26</sup>

These issues were already familiar to Lukács' circle, as indeed was the work of the Vienna School. As Anna Wessely has demonstrated, art and art history lay at the centre of the discourse in the *Sonntagskreis*, to the extent that they frequently used terminology and examples from the history of art as descriptive metaphors for

<sup>21</sup> A key early text is György Márkus, 'The Soul and Life: the Young Lukács and the Problem of Culture', *Telos* Vol. 32, Summer 1977, 95-116. More recent general discussions include Philip Smith, *Cultural Theory: an Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2001, chapter 3; Tim Edwards (ed.), *Cultural Theory: Classical and Contemporary Positions*, London: Sage, 2007; Michael Thompson, *Georg Lukács Reconsidered: Critical Essays in Politics, Philosophy and Aesthetics*, London: Continuum, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Lukács and Adorno disagreed on many issues subsequently but there has never been any doubt about Lukács' influence on the Frankfurt School of philosophy. See, for example, David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, University of California Press, 1980, 14.

<sup>23</sup> For a closer analysis of Antal's methods and their application, see Paul Stirton, 'Frederick Antal', in Andrew Hemingway (ed.), *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, London: Pluto Press, 2006, 45-66.

<sup>24</sup> Antal's most important publication (in his lifetime), *Florentine Painting in its Social Background*, was not published until 1948, but the text was substantially written by 1933, and based upon research undertaken in 1920-23.

<sup>25</sup> On Dvořák's methods, see Matthew Rampley, 'Max Dvořák: Art History and the Crisis of Modernity', *Art History*, Vol. 26, No. 2, (April, 2003), 214-237.

<sup>26</sup> Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting in its Social Background: the bourgeois republic before Cosimo de Medici's advent to power, XIV and early XV centuries*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1948.

intellectual positions.<sup>27</sup> This is made explicit in the essay 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat' where Lukács acknowledged the significance of the Vienna School in addressing the great questions of history as they were then perceived.

And yet, as the really important historians of the nineteenth century such as Riegl, Dilthey and Dvořák could not fail to notice, the essence of history lies precisely in the changes undergone by those *structural forms* which are the focal points of man's interaction with environment at any given moment and which determine the objective nature of both his inner and his outer life.<sup>28</sup>

Karl Mannheim was also fascinated by the scholarship of the Vienna school and continued to refer to art historical publications and concepts, not only in his work on the sociology of knowledge, but in his more speculative ideas about sociology as a discipline. Stylistic analysis, which he regarded as an everyday tool of art historical enquiry, he further envisaged as a skill-set for the new '*Kulturwissenschaft*' or 'science of culture'.

What art history has already worked out for art, with considerable clarity, is that art forms are precisely datable through style because each design element is only possible at certain historical times, and that they contain within them the features that can also be, *mutatis mutandis*, the areas of thinking that fix the 'structural aspect', which is a more accurate knowledge base ... this type of analysis can often lead on to profound issues, to the extent that one is able to answer the long-standing question of why the world has assumed the form that it has.<sup>29</sup>

It is more than mere coincidence that Mannheim published one of his earliest methodological studies in the *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, the house journal of the Vienna School, which, alongside other articles by Dagobert Frey, Erwin Panofsky and Benesch, included Dvořák's landmark article on El Greco and Mannerism.<sup>30</sup> Mannheim would continue to address art historical questions throughout his career to the extent that he might be regarded as a link between the

<sup>27</sup> Anna Wessely, 'Der Diskurs über die Kunst im Sonntagskreis', in H. Gassner (ed.) *Wechselwirkungen: Ungarische Avantgarde in der Weimarer Republik* (exh. Cat.) Kassel-Bochum-Marburg, 1986, 541-550. In an obituary of Georg Simmel, Lukács characterised him as 'a Monet of philosophy, he had not found his Cézanne'. ['er war ein Monet der Philosophie, auf den bis jetzt noch kein Cézanne gefolgt ist.'] *Pester Lloyd*, No. 2, October 1918, 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> Georg Lukács, 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat', *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, (translated R. Livingstone), London: Merlin Press, 1971, 153

<sup>29</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Handwörterbuch der Soziologie*, Stuttgart: Alfred Vierkandt, 1931, 662. [Author's translation]

<sup>30</sup> Karl Mannheim, 'Beiträge zur Theorie der Weltanschauungsinterpretation', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. 1 (XV), 1921, 236-274.

Sunday Circle and the later art historical writings of Antal and Hauser.<sup>31</sup> This was not a narrow interest conducted by Mannheim through his erstwhile colleagues in Budapest. Throughout the 1920s he conducted a correspondence with other art historians, including Panofsky who was indebted to Mannheim's work in his classic definition of iconology as based upon three levels of interpretation.<sup>32</sup>

Something of the tenor of debate at the *Sonntagskreis*, and the general drift in the political as well as intellectual outlook of the participants, can be gathered from a report written by Emma Ritook, following a period of absence from the circle for a few weeks. On her return in November 1918 she remarked:

These philosophers, with whom I used to debate in good faith about anything from Plato's Republic to Bolshevik theories of the state, about questions of revolutionary ethics, about Medieval and Dostoyevsky's mysticism, about the value and the *raison d'être* of the human sciences, about the philosophy of Bergson and Simmel, Windelband and the German Romantics ... were all of a sudden transformed into a group of active revolutionaries and politicians.<sup>33</sup>

This may explain why a group of rather bookish intellectuals threw themselves into active support for the Hungarian Soviet Republic set up under Béla Kun in March 1919 following the collapse of, first, the Empire in the closing months of the First World War, and then the liberal government of Mihály Károlyi. Lukács, Balázs and Antal took official positions in the provisional government; Lukács and Balázs in the 'People's Commissariat for Education' and Antal as chair of the committee for Museums in Budapest. In this role, Antal, Kalman Pogany<sup>34</sup> and Janos Wilde supervised the transfer of private art collections to the public museums and, with the assistance of their Viennese colleague, Otto Benesch, organised exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts. It was also at this time that the next generation of younger scholars, such as Karoly Tolnay and Edith Hoffmann, become involved in the activities of the Museum of Fine Arts. Paralleling the work of Dvořák, who was overseer of public monuments in Austria and closely involved in fostering contemporary art, Antal set up public art projects, found support for artists and led efforts to protect the public monuments in Budapest and its

<sup>31</sup> Anna Wessely, 'Der Diskurs über die Kunst im *Sonntagskreis*', 1986, 548.

<sup>32</sup> On links and parallels between Mannheim's work and that of Erwin Panofsky in the 1920s, see Joan Hart, 'Erwin Panofsky and Karl Mannheim: A Dialogue on Interpretation', *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Spring 1993, pp. 534-566. See also J. Tanner, 'Karl Mannheim and Alois Riegl: From Art History to the Sociology of Culture', *Art History*, No. 32, 2009, 755-784.

<sup>33</sup> From the memoirs of Emma Ritook, quoted by Eva Karadi in Peter Weibel, et al, *Beyond a Third Culture: A Comparative Study in Cultures, Art and Society*, Wien: Springer Verlag, 2003, 452.

<sup>34</sup> Pogany, a pupil of Pastiner in Budapest, had been employed at the Museum of Fine Arts since 1908. After military service, he returned to the museum in 1918 where he became an active member of the radical community during the Republic of Soviets. Pogany remained in Budapest after the collapse of the republic and was prosecuted by the authorities under Admiral Horthy's regency. See Ernő Marosi (ed.), *Die Ungarische Kunstgeschichte und die Wiener Schule, 1846-1930*, 1983, 78-79.

immediate hinterland. If Antal is highlighted in this short overview, it is largely because he was the senior figure among the art historians, more closely involved in events, and he is also cited in some of the memoirs and documents. It is also true that he, above all, kept the ideals and intellectual tasks that Lukács had identified as central to his subsequent research. In the Autumn of 1946, both Antal and Mannheim wrote separately to Lukács emphasizing the significance of their earlier association as a key event in their intellectual development.<sup>35</sup> This would indicate that it was during these intense and stimulating years between 1916 and 1919 that the possibility of new approaches to history emerged among this group; one that sought to make a bridge between some of the fundamental concepts of the Vienna School (and, above all, Dvorak's pre-First World War writings), and Lukacs' emerging ideas of a history of culture based around class consciousness.

The experience of political engagement was short lived since the 'Republic of Councils' was suppressed in the summer of 1919, at which point Antal, Lukács Wilde, Benesch and most of their colleagues fled to Vienna. The same was true of virtually all the associated groups of artists and writers, such as the circle around the journal *Ma* (Today), including Lajos Kassák, László Moholy Nagy, and Béla Uitz, who fled en masse to Vienna. If the preceding Republic of Councils was chaotic and dictatorial, what followed was equally disastrous for Hungarian society at large, and for the continuation of pre-war traditions of intellectual life. The invasion of Hungary by Romanian and Entente troops in the summer of 1919, and the installation of Admiral Horthy introduced a period of 'White Terror' in which leftists, Jews and trade unionists were rounded up and, in some cases, summarily executed. This was followed by the punitive terms of the Treaty of Trianon by which Hungary was required to cede some two thirds of its former territory and an equivalent proportion of Hungarian-speaking peoples to newly created states like Czechoslovakia. Almost immediately, there was massive emigration of ethnic Hungarians to Budapest from the territories allocated to the successor states. The Hungarian capital was not only under occupation, it was suffering a breakdown of political and economic organization. The stability that was gradually achieved in the 1920s gave rise to a new political and intellectual landscape which has attracted some revisionist interpretations in recent years.<sup>36</sup> If I indicate one or two of the features in this new environment, it may help to explain the curious patterns within which Hungarian art history developed in the inter-war period.

One of the dominant themes of Hungarian literature and art of the 1920s and 30s was a nostalgia for the origins and greater ages of the Hungarian kingdom, largely inspired by the 'irredentism' of the regime; Hungarian foreign and domestic

<sup>35</sup> This correspondence is noted in Wessely, 'Der Diskurs über die Kunst im Sonntagskreis', 544.

<sup>36</sup> The reputation of Admiral Horthy, for decades regarded as a right-wing dictator along the lines of General Franco in Spain, has undergone a revision since 1989. He is nowadays discussed even in academic circles as a benevolent figure who presided over a great age in Hungarian culture. For a discussion of this development, see Judith Szapor, 'Disputed Past: The Friendship and competing memories of Anna Lesznai and Emma Ritook', AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012> (accessed 8th March, 2013).

policy constantly sought to revoke the terms of Trianon and to reclaim the 'lost territories'.<sup>37</sup> In addition, the Horthy regime made much of the renewed alignment between the state and the church as a symbol of the country's historic mission at the boundary of Christendom, and as a reproach to the secularism and lawlessness that was associated with the liberal and Soviet republics.<sup>38</sup> These themes were ubiquitous in the art and literature of the period, which were by no means narrowly reactionary. In fact, some of the most radical modernist architecture in Budapest was found in ecclesiastical buildings, above all in new Roman Catholic churches.<sup>39</sup> This stability led, in 1925-26, to a general amnesty for those émigrés who had fled in 1919-1920. It is significant that many of the writers and artists, including Dadaists like Lajos Kassák, editor of *Ma* and the central figure of the Hungarian literary and artistic avant garde, returned to Budapest and picked up the pieces of their work which could continue to develop in the new regime. Hardly any of the generation of art historians I discussed earlier returned to Hungary, preferring to pursue their careers in Austria and Germany. Antal embarked on research in Italy between 1920 and 1922/3, after which he moved to Berlin where, with Bruno Fürst, he edited the journal *Kritische Berichte*. Wilde stayed in Vienna where he became an assistant curator in the Gemäldegalerie of the Kunsthistorischen Museums. At the same time he returned to the heart of Vienna School circles, collaborating with Karl Swoboda in editing the selection of essays by Dvořák which was published in 1924 as *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte: Studien zur abendländischen Kunstentwicklung*. Benesch had a similar career path, becoming an assistant in the Gemäldegalerie before moving in 1923 to the Albertina. Hauser, who was already an established scholar of linguistics and aesthetics, chose to develop his interest in art history in Berlin where he attended lectures by Wolfflin's successor, Adolph Goldschmidt, although it is often remarked that his approach owed more to Dvořák and Lukács.<sup>40</sup> Following this period of study he worked in the film business in Vienna. It was only on his move to Britain in 1938 that, under encouragement from Mannheim, he began to write on the social history of art. De Tolnay continued his studies in

<sup>37</sup> See Miklós Zeidner, *A magyar irredenta kultusz a két világháború között* (Hungarian irredentist culture between the two world wars), Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2002.

<sup>38</sup> Hungary's role as a bastion against the non-Christian east is a recurring trope that can even be traced back to the time before Matthias Corvinus. In the inter-war period, this theme was often expressed through the cult of Saint Stephen, the first Hungarian royal saint who appeared on postage stamps and became the focus of national celebration in 1938. See Zeidner, *A magyar irredenta kultusz a két világháború között*, 2002.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, the Városmajor Church (1933) designed by Bertalan Árkay, and the Church of St. Anthony of Padua at Pasaréti Ter by Gyula Rimanóczy (1933). The significance of both buildings and the broader architectural context is discussed in Andras Ferka, *Buda építésze a két világháború között* (The architecture of Buda between the World Wars), Budapest: Vince Kiadó KFT, 1995; and the companion volume on Buda, 2001.

<sup>40</sup> See John Roberts, 'Arnold Hauser, Adorno, Lukács and the Ideal Spectator', in Andrew Hemingway (ed.) *Marxism and the History of Art: from William Morris to the New Left*, London: Pluto Press, 2006, 175-195. See also Lee Sorensen, 'Hauser, Arnold.' *Dictionary of Art Historians* (website). [www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/hausera.htm](http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/hausera.htm)

Vienna under Schlosser although his subsequent work was more heavily influenced by Dvořák.<sup>41</sup> Jenő Lányi (1902-40), the youngest of this generation of art historians from Hungary, graduated from high school in 1920 but did not consider studying in Budapest in the post-war environment.<sup>42</sup> He enrolled in the University of Vienna where, alongside de Tolnay, he studied with Schlosser before moving on to Munich where he completed his doctoral dissertation on Jacopo della Quercia with Wilhelm Pinder. Of this group, Lányi is certainly the most enigmatic. His work on Italian Renaissance sculpture developed in very original and unusual ways, partly through his association with Ernst Kris, a contemporary of his in Vienna, and later with the Warburg circle in Hamburg and London. His interest in gestalt psychology and the insight this gave into concepts of artistic process led him to collaborate with Gino Malenotti in photographing Donatello's sculptures with a view to tracing certain patterns of development. Lányi was lost at sea in 1940 when his ship was torpedoed but his photographs, first exhibited at the Warburg Institute in London, survived and were subsequently published by H. W. Janson in his monograph on Donatello, although using a completely different method from that which Lányi had outlined.

This group of art historians, who congregated in Budapest in the short period between c.1916 and 1919, and which have been described elsewhere as a nascent 'Budapest School', was dispersed following the collapse of the Republic.<sup>43</sup> Not one of the key figures returned to work in Hungary thereafter, whether due to political hostility, latent anti-Semitism in the regime, or simply lack of opportunities in the universities and museums. One might ask, therefore, what kind of art history was being practiced in Budapest in the 1920s and 1930s? This was, after all, a period that could be described as a golden age in art historical scholarship, certainly in Central European universities, museums and research institutes.

Gyula Pasteiner, as mentioned above, appointed professor of art history at Budapest University in 1875, continued in this position until 1919. In the wake of the revolutions and regency, there seems to have been some retrenchment in the general approach adopted towards art history at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest, not due to lack of interest but perhaps a lack of clear academic and ideological goals and a distrust of the earlier intellectual community of art historians. At a time when *Kunstgeschichte* or *Kunstwissenschaft* was gaining a distinct identity as a discipline in its own right in German and Austrian universities, and in many of the successor states, the Institute of art history at Eötvös Loránd was conjoined with archaeology which largely shaped the direction of its development. As Marosi has written, 'The lack of differentiation between archaeology and art

<sup>41</sup> Although de Tolnay is generally regarded as a follower of both Max Dvořák and Lajos Fülep (see below), it is significant that he never lost his allegiance to the values and the people of the *sonntagskreis*. In 1965 he dedicated his article 'Newly discovered Miniatures by Pieter Bruegel the Elder', 'To György Lukács, on his eightieth birthday D.D.D.', *The Burlington Magazine*, No. 744, Vol. CVII, March 1965, 110.

<sup>42</sup> On Lányi, see Ágnes Körber, 'Lányi Jenő 1902-1940', *Ars Hungarica*; 2003, 281-298.

<sup>43</sup> Paul Stirton, 'The Budapest School of Art History', in József Jankovics and Judit Nyerges (eds.) *Kultúra, nemzet, identitás: a VI. Nemzetközi Hungarológiai Kongresszuson*, Budapest: Nemzetközi Magyarorságtudományi Társaság, 2011, 144-150.

history – which was a general characteristic of Hungarian historiography – determined the development of the art history department later on as well.<sup>44</sup> The dominant figures in this period were Antal Hekler (1882-1940), an archaeologist best known for his publications on antique portraiture, and Tibor Gerevich (1882-1955) whose reputation is largely based on the fostering of links between contemporary Hungarian artists and scholars and their Italian counterparts. This axis reflects the larger political and diplomatic environment, since Horthy's government looked to Fascist Italy as an ally in cultural as well as political affairs. In contrast to what could be regarded as a reactionary tendency in the academy, a new generation of curators emerged in the 1920s, especially those working under Simon Meller (1875-1949) in the graphics department of the Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti Múzeum). The most notable of these was Edith Hoffmann (1888-1945), a student of Dvořák, albeit briefly, who survived the purges of the counter-revolution, perhaps because she was regarded as 'less dangerous' than her colleagues.<sup>45</sup> Hoffmann continued in her position in the Museum of Fine Arts where she undertook research on aspects of early renaissance painting and medieval manuscripts, as well as contemporary Hungarian art. Alongside Meller, the art critic and historian Elek Petrovics (1873-1945), and others, she was responsible for new approaches to the collection, archives and display, as well as a significant body of specialist articles. None of these scholars, however, produced what might be regarded as theoretical or broader synoptic texts in art history.

There is one figure associated with the earlier *Sonntagskreis* who emerges in this period as an important writer on art and whose work may be taken to represent the most significant strand in art historical writing in Hungary in the inter-war period. This is Lajos Fülep (1885-1970) whom I did not mention earlier because he did not really belong to the small group around Antal and Wilde at the Museum of Fine Arts. In the years preceding the First World War, Fülep made a name for himself in Hungarian literary circles for his poetry and for some penetrating essays on Cézanne published in 1906-07. In this Fülep can be seen as symptomatic of a broader tendency among progressive artists and writers in Hungary who elevated the work of Cézanne above that of all other tendencies in modern and contemporary art. Such was the pre-eminent position that Cézanne's work enjoyed in Hungary that the art of *A Nyolcak* (The Eight), the main avant-garde group in the period c. 1909-1917, is sometimes characterized as 'Cézannism'.<sup>46</sup>

Following this initial engagement with issues of contemporary art criticism, however, Fülep embarked on a period of study in Italy where he fell under the influence of Benedetto Croce, and the circle of Italian writers and critics associated with the journal *Anima* (edited by Giovanni Amendola and Giovanni Papini). The

<sup>44</sup> Ernő Marosi, *The history of the Institute of Art History*, website of Eötvös Loránd University of Sciences, Budapest (<http://arthist.elte.hu/ANGOL/History.htm>) accessed 8th March, 2013.

<sup>45</sup> See Ernő Marosi (ed.), *Die Ungarische Kunstgeschichte und die Wiener Schule, 1846-1930*, 1983, 79.

<sup>46</sup> The term 'Cezannism' was used by Fülep himself in a famous essay discussing his portrait by Lajos Tihanyi in which he describes the artist as 'the orthodox Cézanne-ist' (see footnote 51 below).

fruits of this association appeared in a collection of essays written after his return to Hungary in 1914 known as *Magyar Művészet-európai művészet* (Hungarian Art-European Art) and published in 1918.<sup>47</sup> This is partly a discussion of certain painters whom Fülep admired but he theorized their work by correlating the national and the European, a theme that appealed to many educated Hungarians in the 1920s and 1930s, feeling somewhat marginalized from the mainstream of European intellectual currents compared to the cosmopolitan environment they had enjoyed in pre-war Budapest. By this approach, works of art inevitably show features of the national context of their genesis, but they only have true significance if they also carry a 'universal' (European) message.

Although his training during the war years had been in Calvinist theology, Fülep was active in the liberal government of Mihály Károlyi and, to a lesser extent, in the Republic of Councils, even undertaking a diplomatic mission to Fiume and Italy in 1918-19 to open up negotiations on Italian recognition of Hungarian claims in the peace conference. As the official government envoy, he was in direct contact with the Italian authorities, notably General Francesco Grazioli the Italian commander in Fiume. His politics are generally described as 'liberal' in the broad sense of the word and, although he undertook some responsibilities during the Republic of Councils, he was not regarded as one of the main protagonists of revolutionary politics. Following the dispersal of the left wing intelligentsia, Fülep was tolerated by the new right-wing regime which prompted Emma Ritook, herself a convert to the Horthy camp during the counter-revolution, to accuse him of being a collaborator and perhaps even a traitor to his earlier associates on the left.<sup>48</sup> Whatever the case, Fülep remained in Hungary but assumed a low profile. In the 1920s he retreated to the countryside, becoming a Calvinist pastor in the Tolna region, from which he developed a broader philosophy of art based on the two related fields he had earlier addressed: Cézanne and the position or status of Hungarian art in an international context. Even though he had little contact with mainstream scholarship, (or perhaps because he was not tainted by association with the compromised intelligentsia under Horthy) Fülep's reputation began to rise. He was awarded prizes and gathered followers to the extent that by the early 1930s he was one of the most highly regarded intellectuals in Hungary, a beacon whose moral rectitude alongside the broad range of his intellectual interests gave him a special status. He was a major influence on Charles de Tolnay in the early 1920s, judging from their correspondence, but there seems very little in de Tolnay's mature work as an art historian (on Bruegel or Michelangelo) that corresponds to either the

<sup>47</sup> Fülep's essays appeared in various publications during and after the First World War, and subsequently in several collections. The main title essay, 'Európai művészet és magyar művészet', was published in the journal *Nyugat* (West), 1918, No.6, followed by others in subsequent issues. This material was incorporated into the volume *Magyar művészet*, Budapest: Athenaeum, 1923.

<sup>48</sup> Emma Ritook, *Évek és emberek* [Years and People] National Széchényi Library, Manuscript Division, fond 473, Part 1: 1914-1919, március, 121-122.

tone or philosophical underpinnings of Fülep's more subjective writings.<sup>49</sup> One is drawn to the view that Fülep's reputation as an art historian is perhaps based as much on his personality and moral position, as his writings alone because it appears to fall primarily within the orbit of aesthetics and art criticism, rather than history. Nevertheless, these early critical writings did much to shape the view of Hungarian art in the twentieth century – at least among Hungarian scholars. As one author has commented, Fülep's *Magyar művészet-európai művészet* (Hungarian Art-European Art), 'established the canon [of early 20th-century Hungarian art] more or less still valid today.'<sup>50</sup>

A flavour of Fülep's early critical writings can be gained from an article entitled 'Lajos Tihanyi: The portrait on its painter', published in the journal *Nyugat* (The West) in 1918, concerning a portrait of Fülep himself by Tihanyi from 1915. The central conceit of the piece is that the author addresses the painter and his readership as if from the point of view of the picture, thus merging the authorial voice with that of the disembodied picture. Within this, Fülep expands upon his views on Cézanne and contemporary art:

Everyone knows how painting discovered a powerful antidote to Impressionism in Cézanne. With Cézanne, the substance of things reappears, not as it did among the direct predecessors of the Neo-Impressionists, but in a way never seen in any other painter. ... Tihanyi is one of those who share the inheritance of Cézanne. He struggles with the same problems as his master, and at the same stage as that at which Cézanne left it ... He is a living memorial. He is the orthodox Cézanne-ist. ... But this is simply a historical statement. It is not a value judgment. The transition from history to evaluation comes through the fact that all that Tihanyi 'takes over', let us say, from Cézanne and Kokoschka, he takes from himself at the same time. ... In brief, even without his historical place he would be what he is as the result of his historical place. What in his case is historically determined is at the same time an individual quality. His historical position has placed him exactly in the position he was born to occupy.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> De Tolnay's habilitation at Hamburg in 1929 was entitled 'Die späten architektonischen Projekte Michelangelos', and he went on to publish a monumental 5-volume account of the artist's life and work between 1943 and 1975. His earliest major publication was *Pierre Bruegel l'Ancien* (2 vols), Brussels: Nouvelle société d'éditions, 1935.

<sup>50</sup> Miklós Lackó, 'The Truths of the Soul: From the Correspondence between Lajos Fülep, Charles de Tolnay and Karl Kerényi', *Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. 40, no. 156 (Winter 1999). Much of Fülep's text was written in 1916, then published in four separate articles in *Nyugat* (West) during 1918. These were collected with additional material and published as a book in 1923. See E. Marosi, 'Európai művészet és magyar művészet: 1923 Fülep Lajos: *Magyar művészet*', in M. Szegedy-Maszák & A. Veres (eds.) *A Magyar Irodalom Története: 1920-tól napjainkig*, Budapest: Gondolat Kiado, 2007, 69-83.

<sup>51</sup> Lajos Fülep, 'Lajos Tihanyi: Az arckép a festőjéről' (The portrait on its painter), *Nyugat*, November, 1918, 1-16.

There is no doubt that Fülep exerted a powerful influence on his contemporaries. Karoly Kerényi, a noted classicist who had held fellowships in universities outside Hungary, described lectures on aesthetics that Fülep had given in Rome as 'just about the best of European philosophy today'. He goes on: 'I have never been more spiritually moved facing a living man, and can say that I have met one or two who are at the very summit of European intellectual life.'<sup>52</sup>

Fülep's position in Hungarian art scholarship is well established. He was the subject of a symposium sponsored by the Art History Department of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1985, and that same institution has also published six volumes (to date) of his extensive correspondence.<sup>53</sup> He had several pupils and followers, notably Lajos Németh, who occupied prominent positions in Hungarian cultural and academic life. What is less clear, however, is Fülep's relationship to art history in general, and to the Vienna School in particular which shaped the outlook of his colleagues in the latter stages of the First World War. The sources of his intellectual engagement with the visual arts lie in the aesthetics of Croce and Vico, rather than the Viennese tradition derived from Hegel, Dilthey and others. One can see this as symptomatic of a pattern in inter-war Hungarian culture, in which many aspects of Modernism in art and architecture, for example, could be accommodated but generally without the extended political and social agenda that was part of the theoretical package. As a result, we find a flavour of local ingredients in the modernist art and design, such as the renewed religiosity (seen in the cult of St Stephen) to sacralise the right-wing state, but little of the larger ideals towards universalism and a classless society.

Likewise in intellectual matters, the Horthy regime was unable to accommodate the totalizing history of art and culture that seems, in retrospect, to have been dominant in the German speaking countries of Central Europe – and which was, to some extent, embraced by scholars in many of the successor states of the Empire. It has been argued that these successor states freely adopted the principles of the Vienna School, but applied them to nationalist agendas to establish ethnically-centred historical traditions thereby bolstering the claims to a coherent national culture within a newly created political unit.<sup>54</sup> When observed in this light, much Hungarian art scholarship of the inter-war period emerges as significantly different from that of its neighbours, tending not to isolate national or ethnic patterns in the history of art and architecture.<sup>55</sup> This outlook, however, owes its

<sup>52</sup> Miklós Lackó 'The Truths of the Soul: From the Correspondence between Lajos Fülep, Charles de Tolnay and Karl Kerényi', *Hungarian Quarterly* Vol. 40, no. 156, Winter, 1999.

<sup>53</sup> Dóra F. Csanak, *Fülep Lajos levelezése I. - 1904-1919*, Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 1990, passim.

<sup>54</sup> See other contributions to this issue and the conference upon which it is based; especially those of Marta Filipová and Milena Bartlová.

<sup>55</sup> See Milena Bartlová, 'The Search for Deep Roots: Medieval Art in the Historiographies of Central European Nations', in *The Construction and Deconstruction of National Histories in Slavic Eurasia*, Sapporo: Hokkaido University, 2003, 163-165.

origins to the collectivist ethos that was encouraged during the Austro-Hungarian Empire when many Hungarians believed they were presiding over a tolerant, multi-ethnic community. This myth sustained the most idealistic cultural and political aspirations during the 'K und K' period but it was dealt a heavy blow in 1908 with the publication of R.W. Seton-Watson's 'Racial Problems in Hungary'.<sup>56</sup> Its continuation in the 1920s and 30s is better understood as an intellectual version of irredentism, based on the nostalgic longing for the pre-war golden age of the Empire and the privileged position that Hungary enjoyed among the diverse peoples of Central Europe.

One would like to be able to elevate Hungary as a bastion of internationalist art history in an age of increasingly competitive and anxious political nationalism. However, beyond the specialist literature on documents and attributions found in academic publications, the dominant strands of Hungarian visual art scholarship in the inter-war period would be more accurately grouped under archaeology and art criticism. Since most of the Hungarian art historians who followed the Viennese model in the 1920s did so in Vienna itself or in Berlin, and eventually, of course, in Britain or the USA, there was little chance of establishing a distinctive school in Budapest. Wilde, Antal and Hauser played a considerable role in developing art history as an academic discipline in Britain, and the latter two helped give the social history of art considerable currency in British academic circles in the period after the Second World War.<sup>57</sup> But these figures remained isolated individuals, remote from the physical and intellectual environment that shaped their core ideals. Any hopes for a school of art history in Budapest after the heroic period of the First World War, which might have taken the principles of the Vienna School and developed them into a new and vital set of intellectual tools based on the theories emerging from the *Sonntagskreis*, were ended with the dispersal of the scholars. The raw materials for a sophisticated social history of art were present in Budapest during the latter years of the First World War but this could not develop in the post-war regime and would have to wait until after the Second World War to make a substantial appearance in print.

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<sup>56</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, London: Archibald and Constable, 1908. 'K und K' refers to *kaiserlich und königlich*, (Imperial and Royal) a colloquial term for the Austro-hungarian Imperial period, 1867-1918.

<sup>57</sup> See Stirton, 'Frederick Antal' in Hemingway (ed.), *Marxism and the History of Art*, 2006, 61-66.