Dorka HÉJJA: The formation of the twin cities from the end of the 18th century to the unification in 1873. The role of the Board of Public Works in the creation of Budapest as a metropolis

Eötvös Loránd University, Faculty of Law

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Until 1784, Bratislava (Pozsony) was the centre of Hungary's political and administrative life. From 1536, the Hungarian government and the Hungarian Diet operated here,[1] and many members of the Habsburg Dynasty were crowned in the city. Therefore, Buda's function as capital was reflected only in its charter for centuries.[2] From 1784, Buda became the administrative, while Pest the economic, political and cultural centre of the Kingdom of Hungary. As Prime Minister Bertalan Szemere put it in 1849, *„(...) there can only be one capital of the Hungarian state, whose living strength is mainly provided by Pest, and whose historical memory is given by Buda."*[3] Thus, the two cities were increasingly referred to under the common name of Buda-Pest or Pest-Buda.

1. Buda and Pest before the unification

Until their unification in 1873, Buda, Pest and Óbuda were separate cities, with different stages of development.

1.1. Population

By the end of the 18th century the largest cities in the country were, in order, Debrecen, Bratislava (Pozsony), Buda, Szeged and Pest. The growth of the twin cities started exactly in this period. The population of Buda increased one and a half times during the century,[4] while Pest quadrupled its

[1] POÓR, János: Buda, Pest, and Óbuda Between 1703 and 1815. In GERŐ András, POÓR János (szerk.): *Budapest. A History from its Beginnings to 1998*. New York, 1997, Columbia University Press, pp. 54 – 58.

[2] BÁCSKAI, Vera: Budapest története 1686-1873. (The history of Budapest) In BÁCSKAI, Vera – GYÁNI, Gábor – KUBINYI, András: *Budapest története a kezdetektől 1945-ig* (*The history of Budapest from the beginnings to 1945*). Budapest, 2000, pp. 79–87.

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 281.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 80.

population by the middle of the 19th century compared to the data from the beginning of the century.[5] This growth was momentarily halted by the repercussions that followed the 1848 Revolution, as the War of Independence and the resulting homelessness forced many people to leave the capital.[6] However, the population continued to grow at a similar pace, thanks to the attractiveness of the economic conjuncture and the ongoing constructions. The newcomers included both foreigners – mainly from the Austrian and German territories – as well as Hungarians.[7] Those from the surrounding villages mainly supplied the agricultural needs of the towns. By 1870, the capital had become the 16th largest city in Europe, surpassing the growth of Paris, London and Vienna. Pest-Buda became the only large city in the country, making the Hungarian urban network unbalanced.[8] The country's „water-headedness" after Trianon was already beginning to show.

1.2. Infrastructure

Regarding the development of infrastructure, the two cities have advanced in parallel. The development of street lighting began in Pest, with the start of production at the gasworks in 1856. The gas lighting network of Buda was built in 1863, and 10 years after Pest, the Buda Gas Factory also begun its operation. The situation of the water supply was the opposite. For centuries, water had been piped to Buda from the springs of Svábhegy, while in Pest the cholera epidemic of 1866 motivated the preparation of waterworks designs. However, the final solution awaited until 1872.

Thanks to Gábor Baross, a Budapest-centric railway network was established by the end of the 1840s and public transportation started to advance. The debut of the first horse-drawn railway in 1866 and the construction of a steam-powered funicular to the Castle Quarter in 1870 are also noteworthy. Railway stations, warehouses and factories were built. Thus, the metropolitan cityscape began to emerge in the 19th century. At the beginning of the century, the architecture of the city was still characterised by neoclassicism, an excellent example being the Vigadó designed by Frigyes Feszl.

The regulation of the Danube began, quays were built. The streetscape changed, as old streets were widened and new ones were created with numerous multi-storey houses. As a result, overcrowding appeared in the city. According to data from 1873, fifteen percent of homes were overcrowded, and

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[5] CSORBA, László: Transition from Pest-Buda to Budapest, 1815 – 1873. In GERŐ, András, POÓR, János (szerk.)*: Budapest. A History from its Beginnings to 1998*. New York, 1997. Columbia University Press, pp. 69–96.

[6] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[7] CSORBA, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[8] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

seventy-seven percent of the population was considered poor at the time. Social tensions were fuelled by segregation, with rich and poor homes being separated in the city.

1.3. Economics and society

The metropolis formed at the center of the country, on the banks of the river Danube and at the junction of several land routes. Its beneficial geographical location put it in an advantageous economic position, with an extensive catchment area. Buda and Óbuda were characterised by agriculture and were most famous for their viticulture. In the first half of the 18th century, cattle trade, then craft industry was typical in Pest. The city eventually became the capital of commerce with its fairs, attracting both local and foreign customers. By the beginning of the 19th century, Pest became the second most important market town in the catchment area of the country, following Vienna. The growth was further stimulated by the emerging and developing transport system.

In the second half of the 18th century, the needs of local and surrounding areas were supplied by the guilds, while the spread of manufactories was blocked until the 19th century by the lack of capital and the customs, which favoured the interests of the Austrian provinces. Among the first factories, the Óbuda Shipyard (1835), the Pest Hengermalom Joint Stock Company (1839), the Machine Works and Iron Foundry Association of Pest and the Ganz Foundry (1845) are worth mentioning. Industrial enterprises typically operated as joint stock companies.

After 1849, an increasing amount of capital flowed into industry, with the main drivers being the milling industry, distilling and sugar production, iron foundries, machine manufacturing, besides construction and building materials industry.

These changes brought about major developments. The financial market became livelier, compared to the number of three banks operating in 1867, by 1872 there were sixteen banks and nine savings banks in the capital. The social structure also began to change. The number of officials and intellectuals with civic values was increasing. However, most of the population still worked as manual labourers, factory workers, day labourers and maids. They established their first representative body, the General Workers' Union in 1868.

Thus, the narrow and wealthy upper middle class was opposed by a multitude of people living on poor wages, with the middle class being absent from the Hungarian social structure on the eve of the unification. Similarly to the segregation of social classes, urban areas were also divided. Officials

and intellectuals lived in the city centre of Pest and in Buda's Castle Quarter. The merchants and manufacturers settled in Lipótváros, while the poorer classes were generally displaced to the suburbs. Furthermore, Buda was characterised by tranquillity compared to the metropolitan atmosphere found in Pest, a difference that long hindered the development of a common metropolitan identity of the capital.

The small number of intellectuals and officials, who represented the cultural and civic values, as well as the liberal noblemen played a significant role in urbanization and the expansion of the role as capital. They were supported by the merchants, bankers and manufacturers, who expected their economic and social rise from positive political changes. The former bourgeoisie watched all this with distaste, trying to block the activities of the new representatives of the middle class.

1.4. Ethnicities and religions

The ethnic composition of the capital in this period can be described as diverse. Most of the aristocracy, officials and intelligentsia were Hungarian, the craftsmen mainly German, and the merchants German and Jewish. Germans were also represented in agriculture, alongside Slovaks and Serbs. Industry was dominated by Germans, Hungarians and Slovaks. Slovaks made up a large proportion of the manual workers (day labourers, maids) and Germans of skilled workers. The German predominance became so strong that bilingualism became more and more typical in the capital. According to the 1851 census, fourty percent of Pest was German-speaking and thirty-eight percent Hungarian-speaking, while seventy percent of Buda was German-speaking.[9] However, by the time of unification (1873), most Germans and Slovaks had assimilated.

The capital was also diverse in terms of religions. In addition to Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy, Protestantism and Judaism was also present.

1.5. Culture

By the early 19th century, Pest had become the centre of culture. Several educational institutions were established, including two secondary schools.[10] At the time, more and more intellectuals were sending their children to secondary school, even if they were not necessarily destined for academic career. So-called "deaconic literacy" was becoming increasingly valued. Periodicals were established,

[9] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–122.
[10] CSORBA, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

such as the Aurora journal, Athenaeum and Pesti Hírlap (Newspaper of Pest), among the cultural and literary societies, like the Aurora Circle and the Kisfaludy Society. The readers of the journals were from the nobility, the so-called honoratiors, the intellectuals and the upper middle classes. A sparkling social life began, with the upper classes frequenting cafés, pastry shops, ice-cream parlours, dances and balls, and the lower classes visiting pubs and beer houses. István Széchenyi – on whose initiative important venues for social life and social discourse were opened, such as horse races and the National Casino (1827) –, played an important role in raising the standard of social life. Széchenyi's aim with these and other initiatives for urban development was to get politics out of the narrow parliamentary and county framework and to make reformers stay longer in the city, thus achieving a concentration of political forces in Pest. From 1837 there was a permanent Hungarian theatre in the town, with regular performances. The areas enabling outdoor entertainment were the promenades and public gardens.

Academic life was also advancing in the 18th and 19th century Pest-Buda. The University of Nagyszombat, which had moved to Buda in 1777, was transferred to Pest in 1784. This gave great motivation to book trade and printing in the city, and as a result, the 19th century Pest had become the centre of Hungarian publishing. In 1803, Ferenc Széchényi founded the National Széchényi Library, followed by the National Museum in 1808. *"It was thanks to the writers, journalists, students and noble families living in Pest, who supported the cause of the Hungarian language, that the mixed nationality capital of Pest, which at that time was still predominantly German-speaking, became the cradle of the Hungarian language, literature, and the national culture."*, writes Vera Bácskai.

1.6. Politics

Pest was also the centre of the Hungarian press and politics. The capital played a leading role in the Revolution and the War of Independence, and the Pilvax Café, the starting point of the March 1848 events, proved to be a particularly important venue. This was followed by the enactment of the April Laws.[11] In 1848, thanks to the revolution, the municipalities were put on a more democratic basis. In April 1849 Pest became the city of the first independent government, and the first National Assembly

[11] KÉPESSY, Imre: National Modernisation through the Constitutional Revolution of 1848 in Hungary: Pretext and Context. In: KLIMASZEWSKA, Anna – GAŁĘDEK, Michał (eds.): *Modernisation, National Identity and Legal Instrumentalism* (Vol. II: Public Law). Leiden, 2020. Brill | Nijhoff, pp. 51-68. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004417359_004; KÉPESSY, Imre: Föderalizmus, centralizmus, dualizmus - avagy a kiegyezéshez vezető út [*Federalism, centralism, dualism – or the way to the Compromise*]. In: MEGYERI-PÁLFFI, Zoltán (ed.): Szuverenitáskutatás [*Reseach on Souveregnity*]. Budapest, Gondolat, 2023. pp. 93-112.

was assembled in July. Pest-Buda was finally able to fully claim the functions of a true capital. The city supported the war of independence by providing troops and equipment. In the 1850s and early 1860s, the funeral of Mihály Vörösmarty (1855), the anniversary of Kazinczy's birth (1859), the demonstration of 15 March 1860, the funeral of László Teleki (1861) were important and powerful events.[12]

2. The position of Buda and Pest on the unification

Initially, neither the people of Buda nor Pest favoured the concept of unification. The position of Pest is best illustrated by the dissenting opinion of Móric Szentkirályi from 1871. He states that Buda has no future, that it can only be a burden for Pest and that its development would only be hindered in case of a unification. Pest feared that if it would have to help Buda financially, would only deepen its debt. Furthremore, Hungarian was not the dominant language in Buda at the time. Consequently, Szentkirályi foresees hostility between the two cities and, therefore, a loss of autonomy. Buda's point of view is reflected in the minority opinion of the Buda Committee of Five sent to discuss the bill on unification. Some members argued against the forced unification, since the citizens were against the merger, and the commercial interests of the two cities are also in conflict. The lack of interconnected transport was a further problem. In addition, the dissenting opinion points out that Buda would only lose its right to local authority if the two cities were to unite. According to the committee, the unification would only be sensible, if the inhabitants of all three cities agreed.[13]

According to András Gerő: *„Budapest had to be built against Buda, Pest and Óbuda. Everyone was fond of the idea of the capital, but all parties thought that they would have to be the ones to benefit from it, not the others. Pest said that Buda was uncapable of development (...). Buda stated that Pest was a despised civil town from which a lot of newcomers would have to be let in if the two cities were to merge. And Óbuda, with its many Jewish settlers, was a separate terrain, and the patrician stratum of Buda and Pest was, if you can say so, particularly irritated that these people might have to be allowed into the power of the city."* [14]

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[12] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–118.

[13] BÁCSKAI, Vera: *Források Budapest múltjából I. 1686-1873 [Sources from Budapest's past I. 1686-1873].* Budapest, 1971. Budapest Főváros Levéltára [Budapest City Archives], p. 294.

[14] BENKES, Réka – BOJÁR, Iván András – GERŐ, András – HANÁK, Péter – MARINOVICH, Sándor – PREISICH, Gábor – RÁDAY, Mihály – SIPOS, András – TAMÁS, Pál: A Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsa és Budapest, a nemzeti és regionális főváros (beszélgetés) [The Board of Public Works and Budapest, the national and regional capital (discussion)]. *Budapesti Negyed* [*Budapest Quarter*], 1996. No. 14.

3. An important precursor to the unification, the construction of a bridge linking the two cities

The main obstacle to the unification of the two cities, apart from the contrary public opinion, was the lack of transportation. Until the middle of the 19th century, only a temporary bridge was built to carry limited traffic. However, this solution was unusable in wintertime, so people had to cross the river by boat, or by using an ice bridge reinforced with a straw.[15] The first proposal for a permanent bridge was made by Count István Széchenyi in February 1835. In this petition, he stated that a toll would have to be paid on the bridge to be built. Furthermore, he asked for the construction of the Danube bridges to be undertaken by a joint-stock company.[16] The reason for this was that Széchenyi and his colleagues intended to finance the construction of the future Chain Bridge this way. Designer William Clark, engineer Adam Clark, and financier George Sina played an important role in the creation of the bridge.[17]

The legal basis for the construction of the bridge was provided by Act 26 of 1836.[18] Based on this, the works should be provided by a joint stock company, and a toll had to be payed on the bridge, until sufficient capital had been raised to maintain it in perpetuity. A national permanent delegation was set up to review and control the decisions of the joint-stock company. The law also established the legality of the necessary expropriations. The construction itself was carried out between 1839 and 1849.

4. The unification – 1873

The merger was also important from a political perspective. The government of Prime Minister Gyula Andrássy Jr. aimed to raise the Hungarian capital to the levels of its Western European equivalents.[19] However, the country's resources were limited, and such development could only be achieved by concentrating them. The creation of a unified metropolis was also viewed as a means to balance the power of Vienna, thus elevating the Hungarian territories to an equal status.[20]

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[15] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.,* p. 99.
[16] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.,* p. 278.
[17] CSORBA, *op. cit.,* p. 83.
[18] Act 26 of 1836 on the construction of a permanent bridge between Buda and Pest
[19] DÉRY, Attila: Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsa és a főváros I. [The Board of Public Works and the capital I.], *Magyar Építőművészet [Hungarian Architecture],* 1984. No.1, p. 6.
[20] BENKES–BOJÁR–GERŐ–HANÁK– MARINOVICH –PREISICH–RÁDAY– SIPOS–TAMÁS, *op. cit.*

The Act 36 of 1872 on the Establishment and Settlement of the Buda-Pest Metropolitan Legislative Authority formed the legal grounds regarding the unification of Buda, Pest and Óbuda. The law defined the powers of the capital and the detailed rules for the assembly, the officials, the council, the administrative and electoral districts of the capital.

More details on the establishment of the electoral and administrative districts in the capital are given in the minutes of the Subcommittee I of the 34th delegation of the capital. Six districts were created in Pest, three in Buda and three in Óbuda, and both the electoral and administrative districts were detailed.[21]

Budapest was established in 1873 as the official capital of the country. By this time, the most important institutions, including the Parliament, the ministries and the Hungarian Royal Curia were all based here.

5. The Board of Public Works

The Board of Public Works was formed on Gyula Andrássy's initiative, preceeded by the proposal of Ferenc Reitter. At the request of the Prime Minister, the engineer summarised the most important aspects of the city's development and prepared a budget.[22]

5.1. Previous events

Urban development and planning were already discussed topics, even before the unification. Pest's first plan was created in 1785,[23] followed by the establishment of the so-called Beautifying Committee (Szépítő Bizottmány) by Palatine Joseph in 1808.[24] It operated until 1857, but lacked the appropriate resources to implement its plans. The flood of 1838 marked an important turning point in the development of the metropolitan exterior. The tragedy destroyed the town's buildings, which

[21] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, pp. 303–306.
[22] KATONA, Csaba: Hogyan alakult meg a Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsa? [How was the Board of Public Works established?] *Újkor [New Age]*, https://ujkor.hu/content/hogyan-alakult-meg-fovarosi-kozmunkak-tanacsa? [Access on April 20, 2024]
[23] BENKES–BOJÁR–GERŐ–HANÁK– MARINOVICH –PREISICH–RÁDAY– SIPOS–TAMÁS, *op. cit.*
[24] FLIER, Gergely: Mit köszönhet Budapest a 150 éve létrejött Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsának? [What does Budapest owe to the Board of Public Works, which was established 150 years ago?] *PestBuda*, https://pestbuda.hu/cikk/20200414_flier_gergely_mit_koszonhet_budapest_a_150_eve_letrejott_fovarosi_kozmunkak_tanacsanak? [Access on April 20, 2024]

were in poor condition. At the same time, this made the creation of a metropolitan streetscape possible. The reconstruction was characterised by high-quality work, which was also emphasized by the strict building regulations.[25] Between 1861 and 1873, the Building Committee was responsible for the urban development of Óbuda, in 1868 the Buda-Pest Beautifying Joint Committee was set up on a temporary basis for similar purpose.[26] Early urban development plans include Ferenc Reitter's plan of 1862 and Mihály Táncsics's plan embodied in the pamphlet Our Capital from 1867.[27]

Before the preparation of the building plans, an important question had to be answered: What should serve as a model for the capital's skyline? Gyula Andrássy and Frigyes Podmaniczky proposed the construction of boulevards and avenues modelled on Paris, while the city's merchants envisioned the dominance of quays and warehouses. Furthermore, there were some who opposed both plans. In the end, the various groups reached a compromise, the result of which can be described with the words of Ferenc Molnár: *„American? Not American. Is it like Austrian? It is not. Like Berlin? Not like that."*[28] Finally, the fusion of different inspirations and opinions resulted in a unique, incomparable cityscape.

5.2. The establishment of the Board of Public Works

The fact that the capital was able to become a metropolis in visual terms is largely due to the efforts of the Board of Public Works. The Council was created by Act 10 of 1870,[29] which laid down its organisation and competences. In addition to these, the law also provided for the renovation of the Chain Bridge, the construction of two new fixed bridges and the opening of main transport routes. These ambitions were heavily supported by the cities of Pest and Buda, which had to add at least fifty percent of their regular income to their budgets.

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[25] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.* pp. 96–97. See also MEGYERI-PÁLFFI, Zoltán: Fordulatok a pesti Új Városháza létesítésében. [Turns in the construction of the New Town Hall in Pest]. In MEGYERI-PÁLFFI, Zoltán (szerk.): Épített közigazgatás. [Public Administration Constructed]. Jogtörténeti Értekezések 66. Budapest, 2024. p. 65.

[26] FLIER, *op. cit.*

[27] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

[28] BENKES–BOJÁR–GERŐ–HANÁK–MARINOVICH–PREISICH–RÁDAY–SIPOS–TAMÁS, *op. cit.*

[29] Act 10 of 1870 on the regulation of the Danube river near the capital and on the coverage of the costs of other public works to be established in Buda-Pest for the purpose of traffic and transport and on the means of implementing these public works

5.3. Criticism regarding the establishment of the Board

Both Act 10 of 1870 and the es have been the subject of harsh criticism. Some criticised the fact that the creation of the Board of Public Works was enacted before the unification of the capital itself. Furthermore, Act 10 of 1870 provided a credit, which seemed contradictory, since neither the board had not even been formed, nor the works had not begun.[30] The opposition feared that the operation of the board would restrict the city's authority. Ferenc Deák responded by saying: *„This bill is not the restriction of the city's municipal rights, instead it is the government sharing its right of supervision with the city. So it is the extension of municipal powers."*[31] A further long-standing problem was that the company's relationship with the capital was never definitively clarified from a legal point of view.[32]

The Board of Public Works was mainly modelled on the Metropolitan Board of Works in London.[33] Other examples were the Vienna Urban Expansion Commission (Stadterweiterungs-Commission) and the efforts of Baron Georges Eugène Haussmann of Paris.[34]

5.4. Members of the Board of Public Works

The board was led by the president and the vice president, with eighteen full members alongside. Six of the members were delegated by Pest, three by Buda and nine by the government.[35] The leaders of the organisation were elected by the government, and their influence was unquestionable, but the government did not interfere with the democratic functioning of the organisation. Nonetheless, Kálmán Tisza criticised the structure*: „there (in London) all members of the central authority are elected only by the relevant authority itself without exception."* Prime Minister Gyula Andrássy, who was the president of the board, replied, saying: *„Because the state gave nothing there."*[36] Both the representatives of the capital and the Hungarian state had common goals in developing the capital, so the cooperation was not hindered by conflicting interests. In the words of Eszter Benczéné Nagy: *„Throughout its operation, this mixed organisation has clearly demonstrated that the regulation of*

[30] DÉRY, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[31] KATONA, *op. cit.*
[32] DÉRY, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
[33] KATONA, *op. cit.*
[34] FLIER, *op. cit.*
[35] KATONA, *op. cit.*
[36] DÉRY, *op. cit.* p. 6.

the capital is both a national and a state task, and that government, municipality and society must work together to solve this task as fully as possible."[37]

The heads of the department were Ferenc Reitter and Sándor Országh, and the chief engineer was Henrik Wohlfart. The members of the committee were mainly sociologists, journalists, politicians, *„enthusiastic amateurs who had grown up to their tasks".*[38] Although the aristocracy was predominant, the institution was run according to civic values.[39]

5.5. Planned works

The planned works included afforestation, providing housing for the workers and the development of the city infrastructure.[40] The plans also included the paving of roads and streets, their alignment and leveling, the regulation of the Danube, the construction of embankments, water pipes and canals, public lighting, simple apartment buildings and representative public buildings, the naming of public areas, as well as the establishment of boulevards, avenues, bridges and palaces.[41]

At first, the council had to start the works without a building regulation or a layout plan.[42] A design competition for boulevards and avenues has been launched and the first three prizes were awarded to the designs of Lajos Lechner, Frigyes Feszl, Klein and Fraser.[43] The urban works were based on Parisian and Viennese models, in a historicist style.[44]

5.6. Funding

For the financing of the works, several forms have been developed. A huge support was a loan of 24 million HUF from Erlanger Bankhouse.[45] Another popular source was the proceeds of the so-called land policy. The expropriated houses were demolished so that new ones could be built on the

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[37] BENCZÉNÉ NAGY, Eszter: A Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsának rövid története. [The brief history of the Board of Public Works] *Levéltári Szemle [Archives Review]*, 1991. No. 4, pp. 35–36.
[38] DÉRY, Attila: Fővárosi Közmunkák Tanácsa és a főváros II. [The Board of Public Works and the capital II.], *Magyar Építőművészet [Hungarian Architecture]*, 1984. No. 2, pp. 7–8.
[39] KATONA, *op. cit.*
[40] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.* p. 274.
[41] FLIER, *op. cit.*
[42] DÉRY, *op. cit.* p. 7.
[43] BÁCSKAI, *op. cit.*p. 275.
[44] CSORBA, *op. cit.* p. 86.
[45] FLIER, *op. cit.*

cleared land with a higher value. The proceeds of the Margaret Island entrance tickets were given to the Municipal Treasury, which also funded the urban development works.[46] Finally, a heavily criticised lottery was set up for the purpose.

5.7. Evaluation of the works

Frigyes Podmaniczky, vice-president of the Board of Public Works of Budapest, evaluated the results of the works in his book, „Diary fragments". He describes the state of the capital immediately after the unification, highlights the successes and encourages the improvement of shortcomings. He writes the followings about the work process and its general results: *„At last, having realised even my wildest dreams, a joyful rapture must come over the bosoms of those who have (…) labored for years to bring about this new era, and who have welcomed every bit of progress with a genuine inner joy. Few of the newer cities have been able to show such rapid progress and transformation as our capital."*[47]

Among the successes described are the Danube regulation, the construction of embankments and new bridges, public buildings for scientific and cultural purposes, numerous monuments, the boulevards, the Deák and Kálvin square, the Museum Garden, Andrássy Avenue, Városliget and Gellérthegy, the arrangement of Margaret Island, the afforestation of the city, the planting of public gardens and squares and the fire brigade. Despite the many successes, Podmaniczky also emphasized of the lack of regulation of the city centre, public health and amenities, the inappropriate cleaning of pavements and carriageways, and the inadequate pace of institutional development.

Regarding tourism, Podmaniczky also expected the city to make progress. Outdated railways and overpriced rental cars listed among the problems in his diary. He points out that the service should not be focused on the needs of a few wealthy tourists, as it is the relatively low-priced, safe civic comfort that attracts foreigners to the capital. For example, cheap but comfortable hotels, which are still lacking in the city's service providers at the time. He emphasizes the importance of keeping the city clean, since *„a city that is kept dirty and ugly, even if it is beautiful, but no longer has the authenticity corresponding to the state of neglect, is unable to attract tourists".*

[46] BENKES–BOJÁR–GERŐ–HANÁK– MARINOVICH –PREISICH–RÁDAY– SIPOS–TAMÁS, *op. cit.*
[47] PODMANICZKY, Frigyes: *Naplótöredékek [Diary fragments].* Budapest, 1888. pp. 227–245.

Attila Déry's 20th century, retrospective evaluation also highlights the importance of the board: *„They did not make any irreparable mistakes, in fact, in a difficult situation, they solved their planning, architectural and technical tasks in an exemplary manner, to a high standard. They have given this city shape, face and individuality. They have made up for the neglect of centuries."*

The work of the board was therefore successful, and by 1895 Budapest had become a unique and characteristic European metropolis.[48] The Council continued to function until 1948, but the shaping of the city has not stopped since then. It is still important to make daily efforts to maintain the cityscape created in the 19th century and to enhance the name of Budapest. In the words of Frigyes Podmaniczky, *„we who live and die here, and always proclaim and say: 'here you must live and die'[49], we cannot escape these troubles so easily."*

[48] DÉRY, *op. cit.* p. 8.

[49] This quote refers to the Hungarian Appeal written by Mihály Vörösmarty.