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**Architecture as Nation-Building. Searching for national styles in Habsburg Central Europe, 1850s–1925 (Central Europe in continental context: comparative overview of European national style strivings)**

A main aim of my “imagined” dissertation is to map the broader contexts of Hungarian architects’ national style strivings on two supranational scales. The first is the scale of Habsburg Central Europe: within the frontiers of the dual monarchy I examine the aesthetical characteristics and socio-historical background of Hungarian national architectural style efforts *vis-à-vis* their Czech, and Polish parallels. I had the opportunity to speak about this comparative analysis of Habsburg Central Europe’s architecture in the last forums. This year I would like to introduce the second context: the continental scale, by examining all national style strivings in Europe between the 1850s and the 1920s. Investigations on this scale are even more daring than the comparative analysis of Central European would-be styles, as I displace from actual edifices, architectural *œuvres* and national discourses, often defined as the standard research objects of art historians.

I consider the implementation of such a macro-scaled comparative history both possible and fruitful. The overview of the continent’s national strivings on the one hand provides another (and perhaps better) understanding of the tendencies of both architecture and nationalism, on the other hand it points out the Czech, Polish, and Hungarian nationally committed efforts’ place and peculiarity in the history of European architecture. I assume these merits according to the interdependences I identified in my research.

If one muster the national strivings of Europe, the continent will split in two. While in Northern and Eastern Europe almost all nations had their own architectural style efforts, architects from the West were not interested in inventing new styles for their nations. Western architectural discourses were engaged with revival styles or with the invention of universal, incidentally regional formal languages. (It seems that the only exceptions in Western Europe were two *stateless* nations: Catalonia and Brittany, while the estimation of the German *Heimatstil*[s] needs more investigation, since they can be positioned both in the domains of

national as well as regional architecture.)

It is also feasible to group the histories of par excellence national architectures according to different criteria. Generally, these histories were a set of searches and fully-fledged, nation-widely accepted styles emerged only after several drafts. Nevertheless, there are exceptions, since the Finnish national romanticism, the Serbian national formal language, and the Catalanian *modernisme* became promptly fully-fledged. Most strivings used vernacular art and building as a source of inspiration, nonetheless there were significant premodern (Catalonian *modernisme*, Hungarian art nouveau) as well as radically modernist style efforts (Czechoslovak rondocubism, strivings from Brittany). Furthermore, though efforts in Central Europe were truly heterogeneous in terms of forms, there were regions where architects imagined their nations' own architecture along similar patterns: Scandinavian approaches were affected by romanticism; at the same time ecclesiastical architecture was uniformly the basic source for national architecture in the Balkans, notwithstanding Romanian, Serbian, and Bulgarian nationalists were keen on pointing out the differences among their nations.