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### **Preservation History of Hungarian Art Nouveau Heritage in the Carpathian Basin.**

Since the beginning of my BA studies (in History and in History of Art) my research has been focused on the question of Art Nouveau's Architectural Heritage. Nevertheless this PhD project is based on my Master thesis' results, which I completed in a two-year long interdisciplinary and research-based Erasmus Mundus program, namely European Master Course TEMA European Territories (Civilisation, Nation, Region, City): Identity and Development in 2013.

My current doctoral studies at the Atelier - Hungarian-French Department of European Historiography and Social Sciences - at the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest enable to broaden the horizon of my analysis, setting it within a specific geographical context (the Carpathian Basin). As a result of this scholarly experience, my dissertation discusses the considerably problematic segment of our urban heritage, which is approached not only from a historical, but also from a socio-cultural point of view. Art Nouveau is the commonly accepted name of the historical style, which was born as a reaction to the academic schools at the end of the nineteenth century and spread quickly in cities of Europe by advertising a new architectural program, thanks to its special aesthetical, social and political contents. In order to satisfy the needs of the "modern" age and to create a better environment for the people, the Art Nouveau masters broke with the previous historical tendencies.

In parallel with the western tendencies, in East Central Europe the new artistic initiative was based on both the international innovations and local traditions, but it had yet additional aspects – due to the political circumstances. Art Nouveau was often representing the national goals through creation of a so-called "national style", like in Hungary or the Czech Lands. Despite its ephemeral lifetime (1890—1914), it is not easy to define the style, as its complexity, local variants, different names, and contradictory nature – being international and purely national - suggest. Furthermore, these aspects led

to many misunderstandings and animosities towards Art Nouveau. As a result, for a long time, the style had remained the main example of bad taste for modern and conservative critics alike. For almost half a century, no serious attempts have been made to re-evaluate it neither in Western, nor in East Central Europe.

On the First International Forum for doctoral candidates in East European art history in Berlin, I would like to present my ongoing comparative analyses of the Preservation History of the Hungarian Art Nouveau Architectural Heritage diachronically and synchronically in Budapest (Hungary), Bratislava (Slovakia), Subotica (Serbia) and Tîrgu Mureş (Romania), through the example of four public buildings – which I consider as the primary sources of my research.

The perception of the Hungarian Art Nouveau by the Hungarian, Slovak, Serbian, and Romanian society will be discussed not just through the example of the most significant Hungarian Art Nouveau masters' oeuvre (e.g. Ödön Lechner and his students) – but also different heritage protection procedures and successful monument restorations, which took place in the above mentioned cities during the last century.

In my analysis, I would like to highlight the peculiarities of Hungarian Art Nouveau (like its national dimension) and the way in which it was perceived and treated in the territorial unit of the Habsburg Monarchy and within the new borders, which were established after the First World War. In my presentation, I would like to underline the importance of socio-historical researches on East Central European architecture and bringing closer cultural heritage protection, urban and social history.