

# The Living Environment of the Nobility and upper Middle-class in Pest-Buda during the Second Half of the 19th Century

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**Abstract:** *The 19th century was a very important century in the history of Hungary. A series of significant historical events that happened in the latter half of the 19th century, all had a profound impact on the Hungarian nation, especially on the daily lives of people living in Pest-Buda. In this paper,, I have chosen to focus on the nobility and upper middle-class living in Budapest (Pest-Buda before 1873), hoping to analyze their daily lives through an examination of their living environment in the second half of the 19th century.*

**Keywords:** Château, Apartment, Aristocracy, Nobility, Intellectuals, Living space of women and children, Daily life.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the 19th century, the proportion of nobility in Hungary was very high, with nearly one in every twenty people being a member of the nobility [1]. Among the nobility, apart from the extremely distinguished individuals with huge property and lived at the top of society, known as the aristocracy, there were also many normal nobles or small nobles. Most of the small nobles lived in the frontier area of the former Turkish conquest during the 19th century, with few assets. Lots of normal nobles lost their serfs and much of their property during the emancipation of the peasantry in 1848. They also became so poor that it was difficult for them to maintain the luxurious life patterns, which were typical of nobility. Therefore, these lesser nobles and some of the impoverished common nobility found themselves unable to rise to the upper class of society in terms of life patterns. Their social status was determined by the professions they engaged in and the economic income derived from those professions. Some lived a middle-class lifestyle, and they became known as the "úri középosztály"[2] during this period. Most of the "úri középosztály" who live in urban areas choose to enter the state institutions and become civil servants. The middle class needed to engage in jobs that were consistent with their status. An important point is that the middle class could not engage in manual labor or production work. (A shop owner, for example, could not personally serve customers if he wanted to maintain his middle-class status.) And those professions that they despised but could bring income to maintain a middle-class lifestyle were gradually occupied by Jews who had difficulty entering state public institutions due to legal restrictions. The most typical one was the profession of doctor.

There were also those of noble origin who chose to become doctors, such as Dr. Vörös Richárd (1845-1913) [3], whose father was a nobleman. Similar to him, young people with similar family circumstances typically had the option of either staying and working on the family farm or pursuing careers such as clerical work, managing large estates on behalf of the owners as stewards, or becoming lawyers. Consequently, this young man's career choice faced strong opposition from his father [4].

In the upper-middle class of 19th-century Hungary, intellectuals were a much discussed group. From the perspective of their wealth and lifestyle, most of them belonged to the middle class. And, apparently, they could meet the educational requirements of the middle class - a certificate of secondary education.

Usually, the type and size of residence were also important criteria to determine whether a person belongs to a certain social class. Because the research and analysis of residential properties can not only reflect the decoration styles of the period, but also reveal the occupational characteristics and life patterns of family members. For example, a middle class person had to own an apartment of at least three rooms and have servants [5]. On the other hand, the châteaux or the rural manor (kúria) inhabited by the aristocracy, clearly distinguished them from other social classes.

In this article, I focus on the city of Budapest because in the second half of the 19th century, especially after the establishment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, this city developed at an unimaginable pace. Residential areas, infrastructure (such as railway stations, hospitals, schools, etc.), municipal institutions (city hall, courts, prisons, etc.), and railway networks were constructed rapidly before the outbreak of the First World War. Additionally, public entertainment facilities to meet the daily recreational needs of urban residents were continuously improved. More gardens, green spaces, and promenades were also emphasized. After the unification of Pest, Buda and Óbuda, in 1873, it grew into a true metropolis, which gave the people who lived there a distinct sense of superiority. This sentiment was particularly prevalent among the so-called "úri középosztály" (which of course includes the bourgeois middle class), who believed that they were much more educated and modern than the nobility living in the countryside adhering to traditional life patterns [6].

In the following chapters, I will introduce and analyze the residences of both the aristocracy and the upper middle-class living in the capital city.

In the chapter on the aristocracy, I mainly introduce the area divisions and the room functions of the aristocratic residences by analyzing Sándor Palace (where Count Gyula Andrássy once lived) and other estates of the Andrássy family. In researching the daily life of the Gyula Andrássy family, I mainly used Mary Stevens' letters, which were written to her mother and sister during her stay in Hungary [7]. This young lady from England arrived in Hungary in May 1864. Initially, she served as the lady companion of Countess Etelka Szapári (Gyula Andrássy's mother) for three to four months. Later, upon the invitation of Countess Katinka Kendeffy (Gyula Andrássy's wife), she worked as a governess in Count Gyula Andrássy's household until 1869. In her letters, Mary Stevens not only recorded her daily work, but also detailed the daily life of this famous Hungarian aristocratic family. In addition, this young lady from Victorian England expressed her opinions on the development of Hungarian cities, transportation, and social class in a very haughty and critical manner. Here, I need to provide an explanation for the primary sources. Mary's letters were originally compiled and published in the United Kingdom in 1999 under the title "Letters from Hungary 1864 to 1869. Written by Mary Elizabeth Stevens to her mother and sister." Due to limited access, I was unable to get the original English version. Instead, I have read the collection of letters in Hungarian. This version was edited by Alexandra Schmal and translated by Vera Bánki, and it was published in Budapest in 2007. In this article, the excerpts from Mary's letter which I have quoted, are all from this Hungarian version. Additionally, to illustrate the residential culture of nobles during that period, I also used memoirs from other nobles as sources, including those written by Princess Odescalchi Eugénie (1898-1985) and Count Lajos Károlyi (1833-1896). To avoid the issues of forgotten or distorted facts due to the authors' subjective thoughts in diaries, letters, and memoirs, I also used period photographs of interiors and articles published in print media as sources.

In studying the middle class, I mainly focused on the residences of the renowned Hungarian writer Júlia Szendrey and her second husband during their cohabitation, as well as the family's holiday villa on the Rose Hill (Rószadomba, a member of the Buda Hills). I used the hand drawn floor plans of the family's residence at 1 Hársfa street, as well as their family letters as primary sources for my research. Through the analysis of these primary materials, I hope to introduce the residential culture of the Szendrey-Horváth family and analyze the life patterns of the middle class during this period.

## **2. THE RESIDENCES OF THE HUNGARIAN ARISTOCRACY IN THE 19TH CENTURY.**

Every prominent Hungarian noble family owned properties in multiple locations. Their residences in the countryside are mostly châteaux or rural manors (kúria). It should be noted here why I use the term "château" rather than "castle". In Hungarian, the grand and luxurious residences where aristocracy reside outside of cities or settlements are referred to as "kastély". When translating this term into English, I chose the French word "château" to distinguish it from the English term "castle" which emphasizes its defensive function. These palatial residences of the prominent nobility serve not only as their homes but also as symbols of their social status, wealth, and power.

### **2.1 The Palace Construction and the Daily Lives of the Aristocracy in Pest-Buda in the Latter Half of the 19th Century**

Most of Hungary's aristocratic estates were located outside of settlements, but in the second half of the 19th century, many nobles chose to build their palaces around or within large cities. This was due to the urbanization process in Hungary.

During the reform period, Pest had become the economic and cultural center of the country. After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, modernization took place at a rapid pace. In 1873, after Pest, Buda and Óbuda unified, Budapest became the capital city. The function of this city was constantly improved, and the social life was gradually enriched, seasonal social activities such as balls and horse races also emerged. These encouraged the aristocracy to move to live around the big cities or in the cities' center in order to participate in rich social and political activities. But that doesn't mean aristocrats have always lived in cities. Typically, they traveled to their estates in the suburbs during the summer and autumn hunting seasons and returned to Budapest in the winter. However, the city was densely built, and it was difficult for the rich nobles to have large private gardens in the city connected to the estates. Although an extensive garden or park is a necessary part of the estate located in the countryside.

In the second half of the 19th century, aristocracy began to build their own palaces in Pest-Buda. On the Pest side, the palaces built by the Hungarian historical main nobility in the 18th and 19th centuries were mainly concentrated in a fan-shaped area enclosed by present-day Rákóczi road, Szentkirály road, Üllői road, Kecskeméti road, and Károlyi út. In addition, there were several palaces in the area between the present-day St. Stephen's Basilica and Széchenyi István tér. For example, between 1826 and 1830, Antal Festetics (1764-1853) constructed a palace rental house at present-day 8-10. Zrínyi Street. Nearby, at present-day 13. Zrínyi Street, Count Márton Marczibányi (1785-1835) also had a large palace built between 1830 and 1833 [8]. The aristocratic castles built in Pest-Buda in the second half of the 19th century are mainly concentrated around the National Museum. Even today, in this area, we can still see the palaces constructed during this period by Hungary's most prominent nobility such as the Esterházy, Festetics, and Károlyi families. During this period, the area around the museum also became known as the district of magnates [9].

On the Buda side, along the riverbank, a row of new noble palaces also emerged during this period. The palace of István Széchenyi (1791-1860) located at present-day 10. Lánchíd street was built in this period. This castle was still unfinished at the time of his death. It was inherited by his son, Count Béla Széchenyi (1837-1918), and expanded into a three-story palace between 1871 and 1873. Count Gyula Andrássy (1823-1890) also commissioned a palace nearby, located at present-day 6-7. Bem rakpart. After Gyula Andrássy died of uremia on February 18, 1890, Vasárnapi Ujság published a series of articles about this great Hungarian nobleman in its February 23, 1890 issue. One of the articles mentioned this palace in Buda. "The Buda palace was built above the Chain Bridge, with a beautiful view of the Dunabe, Margaret Island, and the Academy (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia) directly opposite." [10]. The Andrássy family lived on the first floor of this building, while the other floors were elegant rental apartments. The family's living area in the palace was decorated elegantly and comfortably, with many precious paintings, sculptures, memorabilia, and beautiful furniture, reflecting the Count's artistic taste [11]. North of this castle is the palatial rental house built by Dr. Kornél Emmer (1845-1910) between 1885 and 1886 [12].

Due to its proximity to the Royal Palace (the Buda Castle) and the The venues where the parliament sessions were held at that time (In 1783, the Viennese government decided to use part of the Buda Castle district for parliament), Castle Hill became a favored residential area for nobles as early as the 18th century [13].

The Sándor Palace, where the Gyula Andrássy family once resided, is also one of the most renowned castles of the 19th century. This palace was built between 1803 and 1806 by Count Vince Sándor (1766-1823), who served as the Imperial and Royal Chamberlain. In 1867, upon the recommendation of Prime Minister Gyula Andrássy, the Hungarian state leased it as the official residence of the government. In 1881, through a property exchange, the Hungarian state acquired this palace permanently. Count Gyula Andrássy, who was the Prime Minister of Hungary (1867-1871), moved into this palace in 1867.

The palace is located in the Buda Castle District, at Szent György Square, right next to the Buda Castle. According to Mary Stevens' letters, the palace even featured a secret passage leading directly to the theater within the castle: "...it's very easy to get to the German theater, we don't even have to step out onto the street, there's a corridor that leads straight from the palace to the box seats, we can cross over in a minute." [14].

Mary Stevens repeatedly mentioned in her letters the advantageous geographical location of the Sándor Palace - she could see the Emperor, prominent nobility, and renowned figures of the Empire without even stepping out. In Mary Stevens' letter dated March 24, 1867, she recounts that when Gyula Andrásy passed by the Sándor Palace in the Emperor's carriage, he waved to his wife and children standing by the window. Upon seeing this, the Emperor bowed multiple times to Countess Kendeffy in his wife's name [15]. And in her letter dated November 30, 1867, she mentioned an amusing anecdote involving the Emperor. One day the Emperor walked from the Buda Castle to the Sándor Palace to greet the Countess. At that moment, neither the Count nor the Countess was home, so the servants were loudly gossiping. Then, to their astonishment, the Emperor walked in by himself. The servants, taken aback, stutteringly informed the Emperor that the Duchess was not at home. The Emperor asked the servants to convey his regards to the Duchess and then left. Afterwards, the gatekeeper tried to explain himself, saying he didn't ring the bell promptly because he only knew that if it was the Count or the Countess returning home, the bell should ring three times. However, he was unaware of how many times the bell should ring if the Emperor himself arrived [16].

Empress Elisabeth (also known as Sisi) and ladies from the court also frequently visited to see the countess, including Ida Ferenczy, who read Hungarian to the Empress. Empress Elisabeth was very fond of Countess Kendeffy and often invited her to ride horses together. In Mary's letter dated May 1, 1867, she mentioned that Empress Elisabeth had a great passion for horse riding and was an excellent rider herself [17]. The Empress extended an invitation to Countess Kendeffy to join her for a ride, but unfortunately, the countess was unwell at the time. In another letter dated November 27, 1868, Mary Stevens mentioned that during that time, the countess often went riding with the Empress, and the Empress held her in high regard [18].

## **2.2 Interior environment of the palaces and châteaux**

Mary Stevens did not provide extensive descriptions of the interior environment of the Sándor Palace in her letters. However, it is noteworthy that during the latter half of the 19th century, Hungarian aristocracy began to renovate and modernize the interiors of their châteaux and palaces. They began to incorporate room combinations based on functionality, resulting in more comprehensive private domains. A complete noble living area might include a foyer, a bedroom, a salon or a parlor, as well as a boudoir. Boudoir is a room for dressing and personal grooming. Maidservants attending to female members or valets serving male members would sleep in this room to be available for nighttime service to the noble household. In the latter half of the 19th century, it evolved into a bathroom or lavatory [19]. Before the late 19th century, noble husbands and wives often lived separately in their own suites. This situation began to change only from the end of the 19th century. Mary Stevens mentioned in her letters that Gyula Andrásy rarely shared a bed with his wife. In such cases, he was unaware that his wife spent all her nights in her boudoir and read until three or four in the morning [20].

### **2.2.1 The Living Quarters for Children**

The upper-class children generally slept separately from their parents in distinct suites or living areas. In some châteaux, children even reside in wings far removed from their parents' suites. The children's rooms are typically closer to those of the private tutors, governesses, maids or nannies, making it easier for these individuals to take care of and educate the children. This area would also include spaces for children to play, and there might even be a separate dining area, aimed to keep children from disrupting the social lives of adults. In the letter dated May 1, 1867, Mary mentioned her move to Sándor Palace with the Gyula Andrásy family. As Ilona Andrásy's governess, her room was adjacent to the little girl's and was approximately the same size [21]. Similarly, Count Károly Lajos (1799-1863) also noted the distinct separation between the living quarters of children and those of their parents in his memoirs. "The so-called children's section, consisting of children's bedrooms, playrooms, study rooms, and dining areas, was also arranged on this wing on the first floor, which was separated from the rest of the eastern wing, forming a kind of separate world. Adjacent to it, also on the first floor, lived the current staff of tutors and educators, in comfortable and spacious rooms." [22].

However, Mary wrote about a particular situation in her letter dated July 11, 1868: Ilona slept in her mother's room during this period because her own room had many bugs.

The separation of living spaces can even result in emotional and relational estrangement between parents and children, as it greatly reduces opportunities for companionship and mutual understanding.

In Count Lajos Károly's (1825-1889) memoirs, he wrote that neither he nor his siblings had many opportunities to visit the wing where the adults lived on the west side. "For me, and later for my two siblings, my younger sister and little brother, the western wing represented a kind of mysterious world of adults, whom we could rarely visit during our childhood." [23]. In Princess Odescalchi Eugénia's memoir, she also mentioned that her mother received a traditional noble education. Her mother could only see her parents at specific times of the day, and her room was always far from her parents' rooms [24].

Mary also believed that the relationship between children and parents in Gyula Andrássy's family was very distant, lacking the love and trust she experienced in her own family.

She mentioned this phenomenon multiple times in her letters. For example, in a letter dated March 16, 1868, she noted that noble men were busy with their work while women focused on their attire. They entrusted their children to governesses. The children, in turn, feared their parents. They felt happy when they were not required to be in their parents' presence. Likewise, parents expressed gratitude when they were relieved of the duty to care for their children [25].

Furthermore, according to Mary's correspondence, despite Countess Katinka Kendeffy's belief that she educated her children well, she had no real understanding of them. Ilona, for instance, dared not confide her little troubles or secrets to her mother and refrained from asking her anything. These children found more comfort in the company of their governesses than in that of their own parents [26]. Princess Odescalchi Eugénia also noted in her memoir that governesses played an important role in the growth of noble children and had a very close relationship with the kids. "[Fräulein von Wendeler] meant more to us than a governess: she not only taught us but was also our friend. We could discuss any problem with her, and she understood everything." [27]. She also mentioned that when her mother was young, she had very kind governesses around her, which somewhat eased the cold and strict parent-child relationships common in noble circles.

Nonetheless, aristocratic mothers usually took care of and accompanied their children, and also played a guiding role in their children's education. Mary also mentions several occasions when Countess Katinka Kendeffy accompanies her children.

For example, the Countess personally crafted gifts for Ilona's birthday. She also spent Christmas and playtime with the children. She selected suitable governesses for them and stipulated that household servants refrain from conversing with the children. Because she believed such interactions would hinder her children's development [28]. Gyula Andrássy was indeed busy, but in reality, he did not neglect his children's upbringing outside of his political activities. He loved his children dearly, but like most noble gentlemen, he consistently played the role of a strict patriarch until the end of his life [29].

#### 2.2.2 The Representative, Shared Part of the palaces and châteaux

For aristocracy, socializing and entertaining guests were among their important duties. In Mary's letter dated May 1, 1867, she mentioned that shortly after moving into Sándor Palace, the Countess did not feel happy. On one hand, it was because the Count was very busy, and she rarely got to see her beloved husband. "On the other hand, she was busy with many tasks in the palace, including organizing numerous large lunches and other social events meant for enjoyment [30].

The noble children also needed to participate in social activities specifically organized for minors, such as children's balls. During the Austro-Hungarian Empire period in Pest and Buda, these events were quite common. As Ilona's governess, Mary documented several instances of accompanying Ilona to socialize or attend children's balls in other noble households. For instance, in her letter dated April 25, 1868, she mentioned accompanying Ilona to a dinner at Countess Festetics' residence. An amateur theater performance was scheduled to take place there, and all the children, along with the young ones who have not yet been introduced to society, were invited to the dress rehearsal. It was a very enjoyable and esteemed gathering. Furthermore, Mary mentioned that during this period, they were either hosting guests or visiting others themselves [31].

Therefore, in addition to the private spaces allocated for family members, the communal areas within noble palaces and châteaux held significant importance. The most striking rooms were undoubtedly the luxuriously decorated salons of various sizes. If a stranger came to visit, they would be led to the salon by the servants. From there, the servants would take the visitor's calling card (*névjegy*) to the master of the estate [32]. So the salon was



an important impression of the entire château for most visitors. The decorations in the salon were symbols of the owner's status, taste, and wealth. Therefore, decorative furniture and items were commonly found in the salon. The most common items were console tables, display cabinets, porcelain, vases, flowers, candlesticks, clocks, paintings, curtains, and mirrors. Usually, there would be a fireplace in the salon, and the wall above it was usually decorated with a large painting or a huge mirror. The mantelpiece was adorned with various small decorative items, such as porcelain vases, plates, jars from China and Japan, clocks, or candlesticks. These small items were arranged symmetrically on the mantelpiece. This style of decoration could be seen in almost every salon. Here, I list a few salons located in Budapest: the Vörös szalon in Csekonics-Palota at 10 Kecskeméti Street (Accession Nr.: FLT 6053), the ladies' salon in Batthyány-palota at 13 Teréz Boulevard (Accession Nr.: FLT 6064) and the salon in Andrássy Aladár palotája at 59 Andrássy Avenue (Accession Nr.: FLT 6060). Seating furniture was essential furniture in the salon. Most chairs or sofas were arranged around tables, forming many seating groups around small tables in the salon. When there were a large number of guests, they could sit in small groups.

In some noble castles, there were also ladies' salons. For example, we could find ladies' salons in the Batthyány-palota at 13 Teréz Boulevard in Budapest, the Koháry-Coburg Castle of Szentantál (Accession Nr.: FLT 25870), and the Almásy family's estate in Gyula. In these salons, the seating furniture was usually a bit smaller than normal. This was not only to better fit the smaller size of women but also to create a cozy atmosphere for socializing - the women could easily chat, gossip, do crafts, relax, read, or enjoy coffee and hot chocolate here. Some special furniture for women was also found in these salons, like small sewing tables (varróasztal). These tables typically have a drawer with smaller compartments for different sewing tools and yarns. The Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts has many pieces of such furniture in its collection, like Accession Nr.: 62.339.1, 88.7.1, 56.404.1, 65.204.1.3.5. Display cabinets were also common in such salons, where beloved collections like folding fans and porcelain are showcased. From photos of the time, we can see that the display cabinet in the ladies' salon at Batthyány Palace was filled with various folding fans and children's toy cups. (Accession Nr.: NLT 1086) [33].

The gentleman's room, also referred to as the billiards room, was where the male host talked politics, smoked, read, or entertained male guests. Along with chairs and sofas around tables, there were also furniture pieces like billiard tables for male entertainment. However, cabinets and writing desks in such salons show that men could also spend time reading here [34].

Additionally, the dining room played a pivotal role in entertaining guests. The dining hall can accommodate multiple people for communal dining. Apart from housing the family's book collection, the château's library often functioned as the master's study. In rural settings, libraries within noble estates, palaces or châteaux sometimes offered book lending services to the local community. Furthermore, large châteaux in rural areas frequently included independent chapels and dedicated areas reserved for guest accommodation.

### **3. THE RESIDENTIAL CULTURE OF THE UPPER MIDDLE CLASS**

In the latter half of the 19th century, Pest-Buda experienced rapid urbanization and a surge in population. However, this growth was accompanied by a pressing shortage of housing, causing property prices and rents to skyrocket. Given these circumstances, it's no wonder that during the latter half of the 19th century, the predominant construction focus in Pest-Buda was on rental apartment buildings known as "Bérház."

Builders typically relied on rental income to repay bank loans, so they had to maximize profitability. Consequently, Budapest's civic apartment buildings were not constructed entirely following the template of British apartment blocks (though by the late 19th century, Hungarian newspapers had introduced and recognized the interior planning of English-style apartments). Therefore, Budapest's civic apartment buildings could not be constructed entirely following the template of the British (although by the late 19th century, Hungarian newspapers had already introduced and acknowledged the emphasis on room functionality and comfort in English apartment interior space planning). Builders and architects in Budapest had to make full use of space, streamline designs [35], and to some extent sacrifice room privacy, functional partitioning, and overall residential comfort. A prime example is the courtyard apartments (udvari lakások) in Pest during this period, many of which featured open circular corridors. It's evident that such apartments lacked privacy and intimacy, as virtually every apartment's front rooms and kitchen windows faced the circular corridors. This also meant that even strangers could easily see what occupants were doing inside through the windows. The apartment at 74 Dohány Street, where the doctor Richárd Vörös's affair partner, Emma Braitzner, resided, was situated in a typical 19th-century rental apartment building. Consequently, the doctor's lawful wife, Mária Popovics, could clearly see her husband dining with his mistress from the open corridor outside the apartment. She expressed it this way:

"I saw him with my own eyes, two hours before his return, through the window of Emma Braitzner's Dohány Street apartment, eagerly enjoying his dinner. He behaved at the dinner table like a true host, as husbands usually do with their wives. And as he sat laughing and rejoicing among his mistress and illegitimate offspring, he had no inkling that his wife was a witness to the entire scene." [36]

In addition to the circular staircases, the allocation of room functions in civic apartments also reflects a disregard for comfort. Areas intended for entertaining guests and showcasing family status and wealth, such as dining rooms and salons, were disproportionately emphasized and occupy large areas. On the other hand, areas where family members lived, such as bedrooms and living rooms, were relatively narrow and received less attention. In many apartments, small windowless rooms (alcoves) were used as bedrooms, often serving as sleeping areas for children. These rooms were poorly ventilated, posing significant health risks. Consequently, during this period, Hungarian bourgeois apartments prioritize representativeness over functionality and comfort.

The representative nature was also quite evident in the apartments of doctors and lawyers. Due to the nature of their professions, their apartments failed to meet the ideal of bourgeois residences, which emphasized the separation of private and public domains. This is because, in most cases, the apartments of doctors and lawyers also served as their places of meeting with patients or clients. This phenomenon of living and working spaces overlapping might also occur in bourgeois families engaged in other industries. For example, in the former Saxlehner-residence at 3 Andrásy út, there were five offices. Administrative work for the Saxlehner's Company was conducted in these offices. András Saxlehner also had his own office located here.

Based on the research of Dr. Annamária Vigh [37] and Dr. Hilda Horváth [38] on the four-room apartment where Ifj. dr. Janny Gyula (Székesfehérvár, March 30, 1842 - Budapest, May 19, 1916) lived just after getting married, we can see that in this apartment, only the dining room and bedroom could be considered private spaces. The lack of children's rooms in the apartment resulted in their first child having to sleep on the sofa in the parents' bedroom. The living room and study were used to receive patients and served as the doctor's workspace.

With the changing lifestyles of the bourgeoisie, the middle class, and intellectuals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the so-called family apartments emerged. Unlike the apartments within the rental apartment buildings, which consisted of multiple interconnected large rooms where each room's function was determined by the owner, family apartments featured interior spaces designed and laid out according to different functionalities. These apartments, which better suited modern living needs, began to appear on a large scale only in the early 20th century, although the first similar apartment building was completed as early as 1887 [39].

Additionally, in the 19th-century Pest, multi-story rental buildings offered apartments of varying sizes to different segments of the bourgeoisie. Even the relatively poorer lower middle-class could rent smaller units in these buildings (often not facing the street). Consequently, wealthier bourgeoisie living here couldn't distinctly separate themselves from the less affluent. And this desire to separate from the lower strata of society drove the formation of independent housing and villas for the bourgeoisie. In the 1870s and 1880s, intellectual families seemed to prefer independent single-story houses with gardens [40]. Júlia Szendrey's residence at 1 Hársfa Street is an excellent example for this. These types of residence can also be seen as precursors to bourgeois villas, which were gradually replaced by two-story bourgeois villas at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

### **3.1 Júlia Szendrey's Residence at 1 Hársfa Street**

Júlia Szendrey was a renowned Hungarian female writer, poet, and translator. Beginning in 1857, she independently published numerous literary works in contemporary newspapers and other print media, and also translated Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales into Hungarian. Unfortunately, she faced criticism from the Hungarian public throughout the latter half of the 19th century and into the early 20th century. Much of this criticism stemmed from her second marriage. After the death of her first husband, Sándor Petőfi, she quickly remarried Árpád Horváth. This was seen as a betrayal by those who admired Petőfi, and more significantly, her remarriage in the second year after the failed revolution was viewed by Hungarians as a betrayal of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. The dissolution of her relationship with her second husband also contributed to prejudice against her. However, for most readers, the daily life during her second marriage remains relatively unknown. The majority of correspondence and paper materials from this period, including letters from her children, were only published in 2019 by Dr. Gyimesi Emese. She compiled and published a selection of family letters from Szendrey Júlia's childhood and her second marriage period, as well as the family magazines created by her children, providing insights into the everyday life of an upper middle-class family [41].

The family formed by Júlia Szendrey and historian Árpád Horváth (1820-1894) was one of the most educated families of their time. As a university professor, Árpád Horváth had more leisure time than the average middle-class individual, and he actively participated in the education and companionship of his children. According to letters exchanged between the children, it was he who took them for walks on holidays. Under the influence of their parents and other relatives, the children received a good education. They also developed the habit of writing, producing numerous poems and letters. Attila Horváth (1851-1873) and his brother Árpád Horváth (1855-1887) also engaged in games that included editing a magazine together-their handwritten magazine, *Tarka Művek*, has been preserved, containing many poems and diaries written by the two brothers.

However, as the relationship between Szendrey Júlia and Horváth Árpád deteriorated, the family eventually fell apart. Júlia Szendrey moved away with her daughter, Ilona Horváth, while Attila Horváth and his brother Árpád Horváth lived with their father. Starting in the early 1860s, Zoltán Petőfi (Sándor Petőfi's only child, 1848-1870) lived for a long period with his uncle, István Petőfi (Sándor Petőfi's elder brother, who was Zoltán's guardian before 1869), in Csák, and attended school in Szarvas after 1865. During this time, he maintained correspondence and good relationships with his half-brothers and sister. After the relationship between his mother and stepfather broke down, his relationship with his stepfather also gradually deteriorated. Subsequently, Júlia Szendrey passed away in 1868 after suffering from cancer. In the year following his mother's death (1869), Attila Horváth drew two sets of floor plans of their former residence at 1 Hársfa Street (the present-day 54 Hársfa Street, Budapest) [42]. One of them detailed the interior structure and furnishings of the house, while the other depicted the structure of the house and the garden. He clearly marked each family member's room and the furniture in the house, even noting every plant in the garden. These two floor plans also reflected the strong emotions of the then 18-year-old Attila Horváth towards his family. Perhaps he wanted to preserve the memory of his once-complete family forever in this way.

According to the floor plan drawn by Attila Horváth, all the rooms in the residence were quadrilateral (appearing nearly rectangular on the plan), with a hallway and a foyer connecting the various rooms. Upon entering the residence, the hallway extended southwest, turned northwest at the so-called small room, and then extended southwest again at the foyer. This long hallway connected the small room, foyer, kitchen, storage room, toilet (árnyékszék), and the soldier's room (a room provided for soldiers). This room had windows on its northwest-southeast walls facing Hársfa Street (The section of Hársfa Street located between Dob Street and Király Street was known as Linden Gasse from 1804). The room of Árpád Horváth (the so-called father's room on the floor plan) was situated to the southeast of Szendrey Júlia's room, while the children's room was positioned to the southwest. Southwest of the children's room were, in order, the kitchen, storage room, toilet, and the soldier's room. These four rooms were smaller, with doors opening onto the hallway. The family members' rooms were accessible from the foyer. The foyer was located southwest of the father's room and connected to the southeast corner of the mother's room and the northeast corner of the children's room. The aforementioned small room was situated southeast of the foyer.

In this apartment, there was a separate children's room. However, in the 19th century, having an independent children's room was not a necessity in bourgeois households. According to Gyáni Gábor's research on the apartments of 12 middle- and upper middle-class families, in households with multiple children, the children might sleep in different places: younger children might sleep in the parents' bedroom, while older children might sleep in other rooms, such as the dining room or the living room [43]. In these 12 apartments, only 4 or 5 had rooms that could potentially be used as children's rooms, and only one explicitly mentioned a children's room in the records. Furthermore, most of these rooms that could potentially be used as children's rooms were facing the courtyard. This characteristic was also evident in the Szendrey-Horváth family's residence. At that time, it was quite common to use rooms facing the courtyard, which were usually smaller, as children's rooms. An article titled "Gyermekszoba" (Children's Room) published in January 1900 in the *Új Idők*, a magazine primarily read by rural intellectuals, addressed this issue: "If we need to choose a children's room, we should deviate from the old bad habit of designating the smallest, most hidden corner of the apartment as the children's room. Instead, we should choose a large, well-ventilated, bright room, preferably one facing the street. We should especially avoid those small rooms facing the courtyard, which, despite the best ventilation efforts, cannot have good air quality due to the polluted air rising from below." [44] Earlier, Dr. Johann Steiner also criticized the phenomenon of children's living spaces being cramped in bourgeois apartments. He pointed out that it was detrimental for the bourgeoisie to designate the best rooms as salons [45].

Of course, the significance of a children's room is not merely to provide a dedicated sleeping place for the children. According to the recommendations of *Az Új Idők Illemtörvénye*, children should not be overly involved in adult



social interactions. The school or the children's room at home is where they belong [46]. In other words, besides school, the children's room also provides children with a separate space from adults, even offering them an independent space where they can temporarily escape from adults—a space exclusively for children. In a letter dated February 3, 1865, Attila Horváth wrote to his half-brother Zoltán Petőfi about an amusing incident that illustrates this function of the children's room. On January 21st, when Júlia Szendrey returned from the theater and rang the doorbell, the children were in their room and didn't hear it. Given that the main entrance of the residence was on Hársfa Street and the children's room faced the courtyard instead of the street, it's quite plausible that they didn't hear the bell. Júlia Szendrey knocked on the door for quite some time, and eventually, she resorted to knocking on the window before the maid came to open the door. This incident left her very angry. Meanwhile, Attila and his brother stayed hidden in the children's room, too afraid to open the door of the room. However, Attila eventually mustered up the courage to go out and confront their angry mother [47].

In addition to the separate and reasonably sized children's room, this apartment also exhibits other interesting phenomena. We can observe that there is no separate salon in the entire apartment. This is a rare occurrence in urban apartments. During the same period, bourgeois residences typically emphasized the representative role of the salon, which was usually the finest and most luxurious room in the apartment. However, in most cases, the so-called salon was only used for cultivating social relationships. This room was usually not heated during winter because, aside from the housewife coming in regularly to clean, hardly anyone entered it on a regular basis [48].

In the Szendrey-Horváth residence, near the window in Júlia Szendrey's room, we can see common salon furniture like a piano, divan, and sofa. This room, therefore, has a space that could serve as a salon. Additionally, as the lady's room, it features Szendrey's bed, fireplace, and nightstand. The room also has unique furniture for a lady's room, such as the bookshelf, the wall-mounted bookshelf, and the writing desk. Typically, such furniture was quite common in gentlemen's rooms, which also served as the family libraries. According to the floor plan, bookshelves and a huge writing desk are also found in Árpád Horváth's room. It's worth noting that rooms designed specifically for ladies, or boudoirs, typically appeared in upscale bourgeois apartments [49]. Therefore, the interior design of the Szendrey-Horváth family's apartment does not fully conform to the design standards of bourgeois apartments of the same period. In terms of space and furniture, this apartment focuses more on meeting the residents' needs than on creating public spaces to show off the owner's status.

### **3.2 The Bourgeois Villas in Pest and Holiday Villas on the Buda Side**

In 1870, during Budapest's first urban planning initiative, the areas along Sugár út (the present-day Andrássy Avenue) and its surrounding streets were designated as villa districts, where villas for long-term residence were built. The villas in this area were not large, with most plots ranging between 300 and 400 square meters, and were primarily sold to the upper middle-class. The villas typically featured a small garden, which primarily served as a separation from neighboring properties. One particularly interesting garden was Ferenc Hopp's orientalist garden, which included a moon gate made with materials ordered from China.

In the 1870s and 1880s, newly constructed bourgeois villas showed a similar pattern in spatial functional planning. Typically, service rooms such as the kitchen and quarters for household staff were situated in the basement. The ground floor typically housed the public area, comprising the salon, dining room, and the master's study or gentlemen's room. Private spaces, such as the bedrooms of family members, were usually located on the upper floor. According to Eszter Gábor's research, villas like the Weninger Villa (the present-day 126 Andrássy Avenue) and Kálmán Szily's villa (the present-day 106 Andrássy Avenue, designed by Alajos Hauszmann in 1876) all adhered to this division of interior spaces [50].

Starting from the early 19th century, with the rise of Romanticism and sentimentalism, the worship of nature became increasingly evident. The middle class could not afford to build large-scale English gardens like the nobility, but they still wanted to escape the dusty, noisy city life when possible. During the Austro-Hungarian Empire, vacations became an essential part of middle-class life. From the first half of the 19th century, more and more bourgeois families began constructing vacation villas on the outskirts of Pest-Buda. During the Austro-Hungarian period, the hilly areas on the Buda side (such as Rose Hill, Városmajor, Svábhegy, Hűvösvölgy, Zugliget, etc.) and Városliget on the Pest side became well-known districts for bourgeois vacation villas. However, villas in these locations were usually quite expensive and affordable only to the wealthier upper middle-class [51].

Júlia Szendrey's father, Ignác Szendrey, was a very diligent man. Serving as an estate manager for the Festetics and Károlyi families, he provided well for himself and his family. As the head of an upper middle-class household,

Ignác Szendrey purchased a vacation villa on the Rose Hill on the Buda side for his two daughters. Júlia Szendrey and her sister, Mari Szendrey, who was ten years younger, along with their respective families, frequently spent summers at this vacation villa.

In a letter dated September 25, 1865, Attila Horváth wrote to his half-brother, Zoltán Petőfi:

"[...] We never lack guests; there is hardly a day when we don't have 3-4 guests with us. [...] We celebrated Máríka's name day with a big party, with about 10 guests. The lunch consisted of creamy dishes and pâtés, with 2 bottles of champagne, 2 bottles of Tokaji wine, and table wine." [52]

Therefore, this vacation villa not only served as a family retreat but also played a role in hosting guests and organizing family celebrations, providing a venue for social interactions. This also made up for the limitations of their Pest-side residence, which, lacking separate salons, were unable to host large social gatherings [53].

#### 4. SUMMARY

In the latter half of the 19th century, Budapest emerged as the nation's economic and political nucleus. Its dynamic economic and political milieu, along with vibrant social life, attracted a lot of upper-class individuals who either constructed, purchased, or leased residences in the area. Aristocracy had been erecting their palatial abodes near Buda Castle since the 18th century. During the latter part of the 19th century, many aristocratic palaces were built around the National Museum in Pest and along the riverbanks of Buda. During this period, the upper class also undertook internal restructuring of their palaces, refining the functionality of private and public areas to suit their needs. It was customary for noble couples to have separate living quarters, and cohabitation only became common towards the end of the century. Aristocratic children had separate living quarters within the castle and typically did not share rooms with their parents. According to Mary Stevens' letters, there was a lack of intimate relationships between Hungarian aristocratic children and their parents in the 19th century. The social life of nobles residing in Pest-Buda was very active, with big dinners and balls being a regular part of noblewomen's lives. Children's balls were social gatherings for kids and teenagers who had not yet been introduced to formal social life, and the invited minors usually attended with their family tutors.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the emerging Hungarian bourgeoisie developed its own residential culture. The rental apartment building, or *bérház* in Hungarian, a predominant building type in Pest during this period, provided residences of varying sizes to accommodate the bourgeoisie across different economic strata. However, these buildings often lacked comfort, intimacy and privacy. And it was hard for the upper middle-class to differentiate their apartments from those of the lower middle-class.

To distinguish themselves from other social groups, some members of the bourgeoisie, particularly intellectuals, preferred independent single-storey residences with gardens, which could be seen as the precursors to bourgeois villas. In the 1870s, the Sugár Road (the Andrássy Avenue) and its surrounding neighborhoods were planned as bourgeois villa districts. However, the villa plots here were not very large and were expensive. In addition to these permanent residence villas, several bourgeois vacation villa areas appeared on the hillsides of Buda. However, these vacation villas were also costly, affordable only to the wealthiest bourgeoisie.

In bourgeois residences of the late 19th century, the representative rooms were often overly emphasized. The salon, used for entertaining guests and showcasing social status, was typically the best room of the entire bourgeois apartment. Meanwhile, children in these families sometimes did not have their own dedicated spaces.

The residence of the Szendrey-Horváth family at 1 Hársfa Street is a unique bourgeois residence of this period. It is notable for prioritizing the practicality and comfort of private spaces while minimizing formal reception areas. Unlike typical bourgeois residences, there was no separate salon designated for entertaining guests. Instead, the lady of the house's room served multiple functions—it acted as the reception area for guests, as well as her bedroom and workspace. Additionally, in Horváth Attila's accurately scaled floor plan, it is evident that the three largest rooms in the house were utilized by the family members.

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- [20] Ibid., Schmal 2007, p.184.
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