Capital Cities in the Aftermath of Empires

Planning in Central and Southeastern Europe

Edited by Emily Gunzburger Makaš
and Tanja Damljanović Conley

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Emily Gunzburger Makaš and
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Chapter 1

Shaping Central and Southeastern European Capital Cities in the Age of Nationalism

Tanja Damljanović Conley and Emily Gunzburger Makaš

The Ottoman and Habsburg Empires were both dismantled after World War I, resulting in the formation of new nation-states. Perhaps more importantly, over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, each witnessed a gradual rise of politically and culturally motivated national movements within their borders. As nationalism became a dominant force throughout Europe, the argument that every national group should have its own nation-state slowly reshaped Central (meaning Habsburg) and Southeastern (meaning Ottoman) Europe into a collection of smaller countries within each of which an existing city became a national capital.[1]

Despite the parallels between the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, their geopolitical positions in Europe varied, as did their internal structures and especially the relationships between the centres and peripheries. As a result, the two empires witnessed different patterns of decline and their peoples harboured dissimilar attitudes towards their imperial centres. These differences determined the fate of cities in the region as much as did the similarities in the rise of national movements. The new authorities in Southeastern Europe saw the Ottoman Empire, and its political and symbolic centre of Istanbul, as a backward yoke to overcome, with physical legacies to be erased in the interest of nationalization and modernization. Vienna and Austria-Hungary similarly represented a rejected imperial authority for many Central Europeans. Yet, Vienna was viewed as a model to be emulated in attempts to modernize in both regions, especially in architectural and urban terms. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was also a structure within which change could initially be envisioned, rather than one that should be completely obliterated, as many Southeastern Europeans felt about the Ottoman Empire.

The disintegration of both the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires is often analyzed through the lens of their weaknesses and especially their inability to incorporate the forces of modernity into their political and socio-cultural structures. However, during the period of their decline in the late nineteenth century, the Habsburgs dealt more efficiently with the growing challenges and, as a result, developed some responses not only to the emergence of nationalism, but also to rapid urban growth, industrialization, and the search for increased efficiency and the beautification of the urban fabric. They were also more aware of the potential symbolic meaning of urban and architectural design both in Vienna and in peripheral cities of the empire. On the other hand, although the reforms of the era known as *tanzimat* or re-ordering, within the Ottoman realms in the mid-nineteenth century did address some of these urban issues along with political and social structures, it seemed to be too little, too late, as it paralleled the fragmentation of the empire and failed to reassure and solidify its population.

As in most of Europe, urban transformations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Central and Southeastern Europe responded to new social and economic realities: the redistribution of power during and after the rise of the middle class; extensive growth of cities through rural to urban migrations; and varying degrees of technical innovation and industrialization. However, in both regions the emergence and strengthening of national movements and changing state contexts were central factors influencing the development of key cities. The period from the Napoleonic Wars until World War II is remembered as the 'first age' of the generation of modern national identities, the formation of modern nation-states, and the construction or adaptation of capital cities to give visual support to national ideologies. During the nineteenth century, the capital cities of national movements, within the borders of the Habsburg Empire, were recognized as national seats and played a role in the formation of particular *Kulturnations*. Some would become centres of independent nation-states after World War I, while others would wait until the 'second age' of European nationalism, after the Cold War, to assume such roles. Still others would never become political capitals. On the other hand, the seats of national entities in the gradually diminishing territory of the Ottoman Empire developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century simultaneously as the leading cultural centres and political seats of independent or autonomous states.

The Political Context and Inherited Urban Topography in Central Europe

Over the course of the nineteenth century, numerous national movements were initiated by the disparate peoples of Habsburg Central Europe. For the most part, these led only to calls for cultural rights and autonomy, falling short of the demands for political independence heard in Ottoman Southeastern Europe at that time. Though characterized by legislative action and street demonstrations, the national

movements within the Habsburg Empire seldom resorted to significant violence, with the exception of the only partially successful revolutions of 1848. Without further internal revolts, and especially without external enemies attacking from all sides, the Habsburg Empire retained its integrity in the late nineteenth century and even expanded its borders slightly.

At the same time, the growing liberal middle class in many Habsburg cities gained control of their municipalities, and were actively involved in re-imagining their cities to serve as cultural centres for the national groups they sought to promote. Though imagined as national centres by these local authorities, most of the cities also remained imperial administrative centres, resulting in complex and layered urban identities. Budapest is a clear example showing the overlapping of simultaneous national and imperial agendas. After the Habsburg Empire became the Dual Monarchy through the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, Hungarians and Hungary were officially elevated to a level parallel with Austrian Germans and Austria. The empire was divided into two entities, with some shared ministries and an Austrian and a Hungarian parliament each presiding over the internal affairs of their respective halves. Soon after the Compromise, the towns of Buda, Obuda, and Pest were merged to form Budapest, which was then expanded and augmented into a city worthy of dual capital status. However, in addition to being an imperial capital, Budapest was also seen as a centre for the Hungarian people, among whom a national cultural movement had begun decades earlier. Few cities have grown so fast or been as totally reinvented as Budapest in the final decades of the nineteenth century.

Though other peoples within the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not gain the autonomy and elevated position of the Hungarians, they too witnessed growing national consciousness during the nineteenth century. Strong national movements focused on particular urban centres emerged among Czechs, Croats, and Poles, and to a lesser extent among Slovaks and Slovenes, but throughout the Dual Monarchy the ideology of nationalism had firmly taken root by World War I. In the chaos of that conflict, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dissolved into the countries of Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Parts of the empire were combined with other territories to recreate Poland and to form a South Slavic union: the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929).

Though the national movements of Central Europe did not lead to separate states until the twentieth century, the cultural development of these different national movements almost always focused on a particular city, which was regarded as the capital of the conceptualized nation. Establishing and promoting national institutions centred on a capital city was a clear expression of cultural autonomy, even when political independence did not seem an achievable or necessary goal. As some of these cities became political capitals of newly independent states in the twentieth century, in most cases the national component of their urban identities was strengthened and reinforced by the new governments. Symbolic urban projects were priority concerns for most, despite limited resources.

Prague is a paradigmatic example of the transformation and development of a Central European capital city from medieval times to the present. The city, which evolved from the seat of medieval Czech kings into the capital of the Holy Roman Emperors, later became an administrative centre of the Habsburg province of Bohemia, and even later the capital of an independent state. The site of the medieval rulers has retained its role from the middle ages to the present – the presidential residence of the modern nation-state is located within the medieval castle. Prague also reveals the characteristic silhouette and urban topography and pattern of growth of the typical Central European city's medieval origins. A citadel containing the seat of both a prince and a bishop was built on a high hill alongside a river at a secure crossing point. A number of small towns grew up and were consolidated into the single city of Prague, just as Budapest was formed by combining several towns clustered around the Danube and overlooked by Buda Castle on its hilltop promontory. Again paralleling Budapest, it was in the second half of the nineteenth century that Prague emerged as the centre of intellectual and cultural development for Czechs, and redevelopment projects were undertaken to modernize the city and reflect this symbolic position.

Within the Habsburg Empire and later within Czechoslovakia, the economic, administrative, and cultural centre for Slovaks was the city of Pressburg, whose Germanic name was Slavicized to Bratislava in 1919. Medieval Bratislava followed the typical Central European urban pattern of hilltop citadel and walled merchant town, which expanded gradually over the centuries. The Slovak national movement was less clearly defined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than some others in Central Europe, and Slovaks were never part of a political entity in which they constituted a majority during this period (except briefly during World War II). Thus the development of the multicultural city of Bratislava in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries always reflected tensions between different identities, first between Slovak and Hungarian-imperial and later between Slovak and Czechoslovak.

The Polish national movement, on the other hand, was particularly strong, in large part because of the partition and subjugation of Poles. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Cracow was designated a 'free city', responsible for its own administration. As the only Polish entity ruled by Poles, the emergent national movement chose to focus its attention on Cracow. Even after tightened Austrian control, following a failed uprising in 1846, Habsburg policies on national organization and cultural autonomy remained more lenient than in Prussia and Russia, and thus for Poles both within the Austro-Hungarian Empire and beyond its borders, the city of Cracow continued to be the focus of national imagination. Cracow's historic development reflects a similar pattern to other cities in the region as the city grew around medieval, hilltop fortification beside a river. Especially towards the end of the nineteenth century, extensive building, planning, and preservation projects in the city contributed to its role as a symbol of Polish identity. When Poland was reconstituted after World War I however,

Warsaw regained the position as capital it had held in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries before partitioning. Under Russian rule, little politically motivated or representative building or planning had occurred in Warsaw, but with independence, reinforcing the city's role as Polish capital through architecture and urbanism became the focus of much attention.

Three South Slavic cities in the Habsburg Empire – Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Sarajevo – were also conceived of as national capitals and subject to urban intervention in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but their respective national movements varied significantly in strength and organization. Intensive construction projects focused on promoting both Croatian and pan-South Slavic identities were undertaken in the city of Zagreb in response both to urban developments in Vienna and to a growing Croatian national movement spurned by the Magyarization policies of Hungary. Though Napoleon (1769-1821) made Ljubljana the capital of his South Slavic, Illyrian Provinces in the early nineteenth century, and it continued as administrative centre within the Habsburg Empire afterwards, the physical restructuring of the city did not really begin until necessitated by an earthquake in 1895. It was not until even later, in the interwar period, that Ljubljana was dramatically transformed and began to assume a particularly Slovene layer of identity through the numerous urban projects of native son, Jože Plečnik. Following the 1878 Congress of Berlin, Austria-Hungary occupied and administered Bosnia-Hercegovina on behalf of the Ottomans, who retained *de jure* suzerainty over the province until official annexation by the Habsburgs in 1908. The Austro-Hungarian imperial authorities sponsored major building programmes and urban reorganization, predominately centred on the province's capital city of Sarajevo; these were, in part, designed to foster a sense of Bosnian national identity. After World War I, the cities of Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Sarajevo continued as the centres of their respective *Kulturnations* and as administrative centres within the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

The cityscapes of Central Europe adjusted more readily than their Southeastern European counterparts to the quests for regularity, rectilinear street networks, and geometrically formed public spaces which characterized nineteenth-century urbanism. For one, the region had experienced the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, which sought to rationalize and find reason and order in everything, including cities and architecture. The process of transforming the organic medieval urban fabric into more precisely defined and regularized forms had begun at that time through the urban regulations and reforms of Maria Theresa (1717–1780) and her successors. As dramatic as the nineteenth-century urban transformations were in Central Europe, they can thus be understood as a continuation of a process begun a little earlier, though one that began to take on decidedly national connotations for the first time in the nineteenth century.

The Political Context and Inherited Urban Topography in Southeastern Europe

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, nearly all Southeastern Europe was under Ottoman control. However, between 1815 and 1914, this vast empire was gradually carved up into separate states due in part to internal uprisings (initially more often economically than nationally motivated), but mostly as a result of military and economic pressure from the great powers of Europe. In most cases the break was not clean, with self-ruling principalities or limited autonomy gained before official independence. Despite the overwhelming tasks of consolidating internal power, setting up new government apparatuses, and continued defence and expansion of their rights and borders, each of the new states that emerged from the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century also spent considerable energy on economic and cultural development and modernization. Building programmes were necessitated by the new government functions, by reforms in education and infrastructure, and by the founding of cultural institutions which accompanied these national movements. As in Central Europe, these developments focused predominantly on a central city: a new national, political, cultural, and economic capital.

Unlike Central Europe however, where nearly all of the new capitals had been established originally as medieval towns with similar settlement and development histories, the cities of Southeastern Europe which were to become capitals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries varied considerably in both their origin and growth patterns. Thus the inherited urban topography differed very significantly from Central Europe to Southeastern Europe. Some Southeastern European cities have ancient origins, typically Roman, but occasionally earlier. Others, however, were originally founded in the early medieval period, and still others were Ottoman foundations. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, regardless of their origins, most key Southeastern European cities had assumed the physical characteristics of a typical Ottoman town. In the late nineteenth century, the look, feel, and functioning of these provincial Ottoman centres was totally transformed.

Greece and Serbia were the first in Southeastern Europe to separate from Ottoman rule in the early nineteenth century. In the 1820s, with significant aid from the Russians, British, and French, Greece secured autonomy and then independence. Because of the European 'rediscovery' of the Athenian Acropolis and feverous philhellenic movement, the continuity of Thessalonica as capital and governing centre from the Roman until the late-Ottoman period was interrupted and the new Greece was centred on ancient Greece's most important city. The aggrandizing of Athens, which had declined to little more than a village, into a modern capital worthy of its ancient glory began almost immediately. The European powers installed a Bavarian king in Greece, who imported planners and architects along with his advisors and ministers. Athens clearly demonstrates

how the iconography of a modern capital relied on the dominating topography of an ancient inheritance. Alluding to the role of Athens for ancient Greeks, the Acropolis became the foremost urban element, whose symbolism extended beyond national boundaries and whose position governed many urban actions in the construction of the modern Greek capital.

After a series of rebellions, Serbia achieved autonomous rule in 1830. Because it was the most vibrant urban centre with the best developed international connections in Serbia, Belgrade was declared the capital city despite its location on the border with Austria-Hungary. Although the medieval period was central to modern Serbian national identity, insisting on the revival of one of Serbia's medieval capitals was out of the question as they were further south, still in Ottoman territory. Belgrade was gradually transformed into a modern capital by the Obrenović and Karađorđević kings, as their power grew over the course of the nineteenth century. The city was originally a Roman *castrum* which, after the turbulent middle ages, became the administrative centre of an Ottoman territorial unit. In Belgrade, where the Ottoman urban fabric has been erased, continuity with the ancient urban structure remains recognizable in the location of two main commercial streets that trace the Roman *cardo* and *decumanus*, as well as in the location of the old market (today a civic park), which coincides with the Roman forum. Belgrade would retain its status as capital even when the south Slavic kingdom was formed, as the Serbian rulers assumed the role of Yugoslav monarchs in the new state in the interwar period.

Small, mountainous Montenegro is a unique case in Southeastern Europe since it managed to maintain self-rule for centuries though surrounded by the Ottoman Empire. This theocratic principality was secularized in the 1850s, and then modernized from 1860 to 1918 under the rule of King Nikola I, who oversaw the expansion of Cetinje, the court from which Montenegro was ruled, to become not only a European style capital but also a city. First established as a Christian-Orthodox monastic community, it later assumed the role of a royal court and only gained a settlement and non-government or church related function in the late nineteenth century. Thus it can perhaps be understood as similar to the Central European pattern, but rather than growing gradually over centuries, this transformation was accelerated and concentrated within a few decades in the late nineteenth century. However, by the time Cetinje began to resemble a city, it had already lost its status as capital of an independent state, as Montenegro was absorbed into the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes after World War I.

Despite attempts by the Ottoman authorities to reform the empire, the success achieved in Serbia and Greece and continued encouragement from Russia instigated national movements and uprisings in other parts of Southeastern Europe. In 1859, Romania was formed through the merger of Moldavia and Wallachia, and at the 1878 Congress of Berlin, which followed the Russo-Turkish War, the European great powers formally recognized the independence not only

of Romania, but also of Montenegro and Serbia. At that congress, the great powers also acknowledged the autonomy of Bulgaria, whose total sovereignty was not officially recognized until after World War I.

In an effort to keep pace with its neighbours in Southeastern Europe, Bulgaria began modernizing its capital Sofia in the final decades of the nineteenth century. Sofia was founded by the Thracians as Serdica, conquered by the Romans, flourished under the Byzantines, and had been transformed into a major administrative centre under the Ottomans as it was the capital of Rumelia, which encompassed most of Southeastern Europe. As was the case in Greece, in 1878 German princes were set up by the European great powers as the new monarchical authorities in Bulgaria; initially they ruled from the medieval Bulgarian capital of Veliko Tarnovo. However, within a year the capital was transferred to Sofia because it was the autonomous province's largest urban centre and had been a key administrative seat. Despite the systematic remodelling of the Ottoman fabric, the location of prime urban functions in Sofia, as in Belgrade, had remained constant since antiquity: the majority of governmental and public buildings are within the borders of ancient Serdica.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Bucharest grew rapidly and was transformed by its imported German kings to serve as the capital of the newly united Romania. Like others in the region, its selection for this role was because it was not only an existing administrative centre, but also by far the largest city in Southeastern Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. Bucharest had been established as a trade centre shortly before the Ottoman conquest of Southeastern Europe, but its development as an urban settlement began in earnest under Ottoman rule in the sixteenth century. The pattern by which it and other Ottoman cities developed differed significantly from that of Central European cities or even the typical ancient city in Southern Europe. Rather than beginning with the seat of prince or an imposed grid layout, the Ottoman Balkan city began with an endowed mosque and a bazaar, a *çarşi*, around which neighbourhoods, *mahalle*, grew gradually. Although often located beside rivers, like medieval Central European settlements, the new Ottoman cities were often unfortified and typically located in valleys rather than on higher ground. Administrative citadels at a distance from the towns themselves were built in the early Ottoman period, but in many cases were no longer in use by the nineteenth century.

The late nineteenth century also witnessed a series of national uprisings in Albania, at first seeking only autonomy but eventually securing independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1913. Even with Italian and Austro-Hungarian support, the first few years of the Albanian state were chaotic, and a permanent government was not established until after World War I. In 1920, the city of Tirana was selected as the Albanian capital. Like Bucharest, it had developed as an Ottoman town from the seventeenth century onwards. Modernizing and urban planning projects were carried out in Tirana in the interwar period during the reign of King Zog I (1895–1961), and with significant Italian assistance and influence.

Following the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1922), 1923 saw the foundation of modern Turkey. In a conscious attempt to distinguish this new nation-state from the former empire, the capital city was moved from Istanbul to the more centrally located Ankara, which was also the centre of the Turkish resistance to the empire led by Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938). Through urban design and architecture, a new capital with a consciously constructed Turkish national identity was built to replace the Ottoman imperial one.

With the exception of Turkey, which rejected Istanbul in favour of the more neutral Ankara, and Greece, which reverted to the ancient centre of Athens, the emerging nation-states of Southeastern Europe adopted existing major Ottoman administrative centres as their national capitals. However, one of the most prevalent aspects shared by many of these cities in the construction of new civic and national identities was the destruction of most of the Ottoman urban fabric.

Thus the metamorphosis of the previous Ottoman centres into the modern national capitals of Southeastern Europe was less an evolutionary change, as in Central Europe, but a more sudden 'revenge' against the existing urban customs and forms. In both regions, the construction of national identities by means of architecture and urban planning coincided with modernization, yet in Southeastern Europe it was also synonymous with the notion of Europeanization. De-Ottomanization meant to become European and modern; that is, to become everything the Ottomans were perceived not to be (Todorova, 1997; Hartmuth, 2006). This process was all encompassing: it was cultural, political and economic as well as architectural and urban. Especially in Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest, and Athens, as had happened in Buda and Pest in the early eighteenth century, the waning of Ottoman authority was quickly followed by the removal of the mosques, baths, bazaars and other structures perceived as un-European and as symbols of the former occupying empire. Only in Sarajevo and Tirana, both of which had large local Muslim populations, were significant portions of the Ottoman urban fabric and key monumental mosques preserved.

Another key difference between Central and Southeastern Europe was the status of cities themselves and the lack of responsible municipal authorities in post-Ottoman territories. The lack of city walls in most Ottoman cities meant not only that the physical limits of urban areas were undefined, but that the concept of a city as a political entity with a municipal administrative body and citizens did not really exist within Ottoman Southeastern Europe. Those local governments that were constituted as part of the *tanzimat* or within the newly independent or autonomous states were feeble and as a result the planning and the shaping of urban space in Southeastern Europe were extraordinarily centralized under state control (Yerolympos, 1996). However, even in Western and Central European capitals where urban decisions were made by municipal bodies, such as the Metropolitan Board of Budapest, the imperial authority's support was always needed for any major urban changes. Thus central political powers were important in shaping capitals all over Europe, but in the emerging nation-states of Southeastern Europe,

nascent and weak municipal authorities, smaller middle classes and feeble civil societies, meant that state political powers were less contested in their attempts to impose their urban visions.

Adapting and Individualizing Models for Urban Transformation

When reorganized to serve as cultural and/or political capitals, the focus for European capital cities, including those in Central and Southeastern Europe, was primarily on ideas of regularity, beautification, monumentality and theatricality. The search for the symbolic meaning of urban form is particularly pronounced in capital cities, since each is considered a potential generator of collective imagination and a canvas for national representation. The conceptualization of civic scenery in the service of 'political iconography' (Sonne, 2003) played an important role in turning the capitals into 'political monuments' (Moravánszky, 1998) and distinguishing their role, form and content from that of other urban centres. The motivations for urban change as well as ideas about how to realize these goals made their way to the region from key centres in Western Europe and German-speaking territories, including Vienna. Although these concepts originated elsewhere, they were adapted, modified and individualized for the specific local physical and political conditions of each Central and Southeastern European capital.

One of the most influential of all nineteenth-century urban transformations was Baron Haussmann's Paris, with its wide straight boulevards framed by glamorous apartment buildings for the rising middle class and its multi-nodal Neo-Baroque organization where numerous boulevards converged and diverged from points marked by new and reused monuments. The other key model for reshaping cities, especially in Central and Southeastern Europe, was the Viennese Ringstrasse, with its sequential emergence of cultural and political institutions organized linearly along a circular boulevard which replaced the city's pre-modern fortifications. The transformations of Paris and Vienna in the nineteenth century have been considered the archetypal case studies of European urban planning at the time and their influence on the cities in the peripheral parts of the continent has been much written about (Blau, 1999; Moravánsky, 1998; Wiebenson, 2001).

Making direct analogies between the urban models introduced in the leading urban centres of Europe and the transformation of other cities is appealing, but can be overstated and misleading. Was it simply the idea of wide tree-lined streets framed by multi-storey buildings with a continuous street frontage as in Paris or Vienna that many cities of Central and Southeastern Europe emulated? Was it the Parisian idea that Baroque urbanism seemed exceptionally successful at creating monumentality and representing the political authority's presence within the city that these aspiring nations sought to emulate? Was it the simultaneous ability to improve the transportation, infrastructure, and the appearance of Paris that was mimicked? Did the creation, linear grouping, and thoughtful positioning of cultural and political institutions, public spaces, and monuments in Vienna inform

the layout and spatial relationships of Central and Southeastern European cities? Did the later introduction of radials to Vienna to create an expandable concentric urban structure influence the planned ring and radial structure of other cities? Was there also an attempt to inspire the social, pedestrian culture of the *flâneur* and the café and of conspicuous consumption that the Parisian boulevards and the Ringstrasse engendered in Paris and Vienna?

The construction of national iconography through the development of major boulevards or avenues was in fact achieved by means of a variety of urban programmes, layouts and forms. In both their symbolism and form, these streets were perhaps as much inspired by the ceremonial ways of Munich, Karlsruhe, and Berlin in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as they were by the new Parisian and Viennese boulevards. By the late nineteenth century, the concept of civic promenades as 'political monuments of national self-representation' as well as alleviators of congestion and facilitators of movement was evidenced in every European capital (Moravánsky, 1998).

The ambitious projects to transform prominent streets and boulevards in Central and Southeastern European capitals looked to these models but also depended on local circumstances which differed dramatically in each case. Many nineteenth and early twentieth century boulevards, which would become icons of capital cities in both regions, have been often linked to Parisian models. Andrássy Avenue in Budapest and Wenceslas Square in Prague have basically similar concepts: these key symbols of the Hungarian and Czech capitals are both axial spaces crowned by theatrical national monuments. Like Parisian boulevards, and like the Ringstrasse, they are wide multi-lane streets with tree-lined medians and broad sidewalks. While they share formal and symbolic characteristics with each other and with Paris, they differ significantly in their programmes and relationship to the existing city. While Andrássy Avenue was part of an expansion plan for a newly laid out part of the city in the 1870s and 1880s, the creation of Wenceslas Square was the result of the adaptation of the existing space of the former medieval marketplace. Neither involved the destruction of significant existing urban fabric as occurred in Paris. Andrássy Avenue accommodated prominent cultural institutions as well as upscale residences and embassies, while Wenceslas Square retained its historic commercial role including dazzling hotels and restaurants. Only the new museum built at Wenceslas Square's apex shared the national political or cultural agenda that permeated Andrássy Avenue or Vienna's Ringstrasse. The villas at the northern end of Andrassy Avenue reflected a significantly lower density of building than along the other major thoroughfares. However, like most Parisian boulevards, the length of Andrássy Avenue was broken by a series of squares at major intersections. On the other hand, though definitely a linear street, Wenceslas Square retained the unified space implied by its name and history as a marketplace.

The shopping boulevard of Vitosha, an urban landmark of Sofia, in programme is similar to Wenceslas Square. Yet, while Vitosha is conceived as a continuous north–south thoroughfare cutting through the ring that roughly delineates the

border of ancient Serdica, Wenceslas Square is strictly enclosed between the traces of two medieval civic walls. Panepistimiou Street in Athens, the showcase of higher educational and cultural institutions of national importance in the Greek capital, resembles the layout of Wenceslas Square; it is precisely defined between the borders of two, relatively close squares. With respect to its programme, Panepistimiou Street can be compared to Academy Boulevard in Bucharest, although the urban configuration of the Romanian example is closer to the Vitosha Boulevard. Both Sofia's Vitosha and Bucharest's Academy Boulevard were cut through the city as a dominant continuous east–west Haussmann-type thoroughfares.

In different ways, each of the new monumental streets in some of the regions' capitals is related to Parisian and Viennese models, and their designers and builders were certainly aware of these precedents. However, at the same time they reflect very different urban situations and can be argued to be no more or less similar than any major street in any major city. Rather than the specific characteristics of Parisian, Viennese, or any other cities' boulevards serving as direct models, it was the idea of having such monumental and regularized streets in order to be a modern, European capital which Central and Southeastern European capitals imported.

A key idea underlying the Ringstrasse is the representation of political ideology and the creation of a monumental urban landscape through the positioning and relationships of significant political and cultural edifices (such as the parliament, town hall, museum, theatre, opera, concert hall, etc.). Yet the same mechanism for producing monumental cities and national symbols occurred all over Europe. Thus it is difficult to claim a direct analogy between the Ringstrasse and urban ensembles of public buildings constructed in rising national centres within the Habsburg Empire or beyond its borders.

Comparison of the design of Zagreb's Green Horseshoe to its Viennese precedent, reveals the nuances of referencing, but also variations in urban form. The Green Horseshoe, consisting of a series of park-like squares in the shape of a 'U', was conceived as a showcase for the most important national cultural institutions. The elegant green public spaces were framed on both sides by public promenades and flanked by continuous rows of upscale apartments for the growing middle class. The Green Horseshoe is thus comparable to the Ringstrasse in content as well as in its role as the generator of public life. Also like its Viennese counterpart, it was intended to demonstrate the growing power of the bourgeoisie, the rise of national values within this emerging class, and the progressive, modern ideas of the city's citizenry. Therefore, the emergence of dynamic urban ensembles containing the institutions of national importance in both cases played a similar social role.

Though the Ringstrasse and the Green Horseshoe had much in common and the designers of the latter specifically discussed the influence of the former, the urban forms of Vienna and Zagreb are only superficially related and

contrast significantly in most details. The gentle turns and continuous flow of the Ringstrasse bear little resemblance to the sharp right turns of the precisely delimited rectilinear parks of the Green Horseshoe, which were lined with smaller streets. Similarly, the disposition of buildings predominantly as objects within the parks in Zagreb hardly proves a strong dependence on the Viennese model, where the major public buildings line the sides of, and face onto, the boulevard or are slightly set back from it on small squares. Thus the Zagreb buildings divide the Horseshoe into a series of discrete squares, unlike the uninterrupted segments of the Ringstrasse. In addition, in Vienna, the ring was superimposed on and dominates the organizational structure of a city already built up, while in Zagreb the Horseshoe fits within the organizational structure of a newly laid out part of the city and is clearly subordinate to that grid plan (Wiebenson, 2001). In addition, while the Ringstrasse quickly became the major symbolic centre of Vienna as a result of its concentration of political as well as cultural instructions, the image of Zagreb as an emergent national capital relied not only on the new Green Horseshoe, but also on the late-medieval silhouette of the Upper Town and on its reconstructed Neo-Gothic cathedral.

Cracow's Planty, a ring of parks on the site of the former medieval walls of the city that separate the historic core from the later suburbs, is something of an intermediary between the Ringstrasse and Zagreb's Green Horseshoe. The Planty, like the Horseshoe, is also frequently cited as having been modelled on Vienna, but can be said to respond to the Ringstrasse rather than to mimic it, and in fact partially predates Vienna's redevelopment. Cracow's walls were taken down decades before Vienna's, and the Planty shares the Ringstrasse's positioning within the historic urban fabric and similarly seems overlaid on the city rather than defined by it. As a ring of parks, rather than a monumental ring road, however, the Planty is closer to the character of Zagreb's Horseshoe. In the 1870s and 1880s, surely in part in imitation of Vienna in form and character, the edges of the Planty provided sites for new cultural and political institutions reflecting both local and imperial agendas.

Sofia's former moat was also turned into a ring road, and initial proposals envisioned it as something of a combination of the Ringstrasse and a Parisian boulevard, but what was eventually realized resembled neither and functioned primarily as a traffic artery. It shared a focus on movement with its models, but served little ceremonial or representational purpose and was not the site of many major cultural or political institutions. Further, Sofia's radial structure was not a critique of the Ringstrasse's initial lack of connections between the centre and the suburbs, but resulted from the transformation of historic highways leading outwards from the centre into major, European-style streets.

The urban transformation of Paris and Vienna certainly had the greatest impact on Central and Southeastern European cities, yet the importance of the radical reshaping of Budapest into a dual capital for Austria-Hungary seems under-emphasized as a potential model for other cities in the region. In

particular, Budapest's ability simultaneously to reflect Hungarian national and Habsburg imperial identities was applicable to other Central European cities. However, in addition to the enormous expansion of the city and projects for its monumentalization, Budapest's engineering accomplishments influenced similar actions in many neighbouring cities. After the tunnel of Budapest was cut through Buda Hill under the medieval castle, the same idea appeared in plans for cities with similar topographical configurations, such as Prague, Bratislava, and Belgrade, in most of which tunnels were realized in the first decades of the twentieth century. A similar analogy appeared in the construction of cable-cars: twenty years after one was built on Buda Hill in 1870, another was constructed to connect Ilica, the main commercial street of Zagreb, with the Upper Town. As in Budapest, the construction of modern infrastructure and technically advanced buildings became a mechanism throughout Central and Southeastern Europe to demonstrate national pride and progress, rather than simply a contribution to a city's practical functioning. Even when technological and engineering improvements seemed the primary goals, the symbolic agendas of those projects often overpowered the pragmatic purposes.

Despite their drive to emulate the transformation of European cities, the creators of new capitals in Central and Southeastern Europe always adapted these models to their specific physical, political, and economic contexts. When applied to the different realities of the capital cities of Central and Southeastern Europe, the same forms led to results that were at once exceptionally different yet surprisingly similar. As Dora Wiebenson (2001) has argued, these cities were each unique, yet shared so much because of their 'common objectives' and their 'common group of sources'.

Adapting and Applying Urban Theories and Planning Mechanisms

It was not only the physical developments of Western and Central European cities that served as models for the emerging capitals of Central and Southeastern Europe, but architectural and urban theories were also imported. The curricula of the architectural schools of Central Europe – especially in Vienna, Munich, Zurich, Karlsruhe, and Berlin – created a rich intellectual climate for the development of such theories. Over the course of the nineteenth century, cities increasingly became the subject of urban planning as well as of design. Building regulations and other legislation were enacted as a result of this new theorization of urban form, and the era of master planning witnessed competing strategies for managing growth based on varying attitudes towards urbanization and modernization.

These architectural and urban theories were spread throughout the Habsburg Empire and beyond by professionals trained in the schools of Vienna and elsewhere. For the most part, on independence, Southeastern European countries had few higher education institutions and therefore would-be designers went

mostly to Central Europe to study. However, before, and even after, those trained in Central Europe began returning, the import of urban and architectural theories and approaches occurred directly through the engagement of Central or Western European architects.

International competitions for urban regulation plans were a widespread practice in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Europe. In some cases, the most prominent architects and theorists of the day were invited to submit proposals. In the peripheral zones of the Habsburg Empire, commissions were usually given to those who were well-established in the leading cities, lending credibility by association. In the more distant Southeastern Europe, the first nineteenth-century regulatory plans, which focused on appropriating land and transforming the Ottoman urban layout, were created primarily by German-speaking planners, though French and Russian experts were sporadically involved as were those from Hungarian and Czech parts of the Habsburg Empire.

Athens presented an especially important example of urban design in the early nineteenth century, not only for the region, but for Europe in general. Athens was one of the pioneering endeavours of capital city planning in Europe whose primary ideological framework was representing a free nation and perceived common European heritage. The reorganization of modern Athens also epitomized the regional pattern because the most respected European architects of the time, Leo von Klenze and Karl Friedrich Schinkel, initiated planning ideas that were later further developed by Greek architects who had been trained in Berlin (Hall, 1997).

Building regulations for ordering urban settlements, widening and straightening streets, creating rectangular blocks with precisely defined lots, and positioning of public spaces and buildings had already been implemented in the Habsburg lands as a part of the modernizing reforms in the eighteenth century. Therefore, nineteenth-century transformations in Central European cities continued this process, adjusting to the needs of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Following the revolutions of 1848 and the end of the feudal system, private property became increasingly sacrosanct in Central European cities, complicating matters for would-be planners. In some cases, the state was able to redevelop large pieces of land it already owned, such as the *glacis* that became the Ringstrasse in Vienna. Otherwise, large-scale interventions or transformations within existing urban fabric required either that large parcels of land be acquired through the purchase of many small sites, or that additional regulations be enacted to control the actions of individual property owners (Banik-Schweitzer, 1999). After 1850, such ordinances restricting building heights, property lines, and other factors were passed throughout Central Europe, including the influential 1866 General Building Line for Vienna.

The background for making urban decisions in accordance with modern strategies was quite different in Southeastern Europe since few if any building regulations or planning laws had been instituted under the Ottoman authorities.

In the mid-nineteenth century, as part of the empire-wide *tanzimat* reforms, the Ottomans did begin to rethink urban structure and organization, but the only significant projects initiated at this time were in Istanbul itself. Additionally, many of the Southeastern European states had already achieved independence or autonomy and had assumed control of the development of their cities by the time the Ottomans began addressing these issues. Thus, rather than a continuation of processes begun in the eighteenth century, the regulations and the ordering of cities that they sought to create were altogether new in Southeastern Europe. Greece, along with Wallachia and Moldavia (which would later combine to form Romania), witnessed some of the region's earliest building regulations in the early 1830s.

The regulation of the inherited Ottoman urban layouts included the widening, straightening, opening up, and paving of the narrow, dead-end streets as well as the regularization of building lots with continuous street lines and the removal of forecourts and walled gardens. It also meant the creation of public spaces, including formal squares, and large institutional buildings, neither of which had been major urban elements in Ottoman cities. Thus the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century interventions in Southeastern Europe paralleled those in Central Europe in motives and character, even if the inherited urban topography varied. As Alexandra Yerolympos (1996) has argued, rather than simplifying urban contexts and strengthening identities by rejecting Ottoman urban forms and bringing order to cities, the regional attack on 'the common traditions and specific patterns of growth and development … contributed [to] making history a mystifying riddle'.

These regulations were enacted in Southeastern Europe as in Central Europe even though private property was an obstacle more easily overcome in the former Ottoman territories where the middle class developed more slowly and later. The newly formed kingdoms of Southeastern Europe were more centralized and appropriation of land for state sponsored planning projects was more easily accomplished. Residents in cities like Sofia, Bucharest, Belgrade and Athens resented the implications these changes had for individual property rights and the socio-cultural change which coincided with the urban transformations. Though some proposals were never carried out or were scaled back because of the dissent and grumbling in the local press and by preservationists, in nearly every case the centralized political authorities in Southeastern Europe were able to marginalize the public and local institutions and to carry out whatever projects their financial resources would support.

The Central European urban theorists with the greatest impact at the end of the nineteenth century were Camillo Sitte and Otto Wagner. Later twentieth-century analysis of these two influential thinkers has often associated Sitte's position with romantic, nostalgic, and overly-aesthetic ideas, and contrasted this with Wagner, who was celebrated as an advocate of rational, progressive, and technologically oriented thinking (Shorske 1980; Sarnitz, 1993; Moravánsky 1998; Wiebenson, 2001). Nevertheless, it seems that the gap between the two is not unbridgeable

and that some sharp tones in their polemics may be grounded in their personal rivalry (Blau, 1999). Although Sitte insisted on the artistic components of urban design, he was certainly aware of modern technological needs, he just did not always consider them the most important factors for the shaping of cities. At the same time, the pragmatically oriented Wagner undeniably and unapologetically conceptualized some of his most delicate urban spaces based on aesthetic and formal considerations (Collins and Collins, 1986; Moravansky 1998; Sarnitz, 1993). Sitte and Wagner both saw cities as works of art, as complex integrations of old and new, and both applied recent developments in aesthetic theory to urban design through their interest in perspective and perception of objects from varying distances and viewpoints (Blau, 1999). Both envisioned cities as three-dimensional objects, but while Sitte focused on the details of individual moments within a city, Wagner was more concerned with the big picture and master planning.

Though Sitte and Wagner have been interpreted recently as opposing forces, at the time many of their followers tended to draw on the ideas of both men. The work of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana is an example of the artificiality of creating divisions between Sitte's and Wagner's ideas. While Plečnik's micro-urban intervention in Ljubljana's old core emphasized inherited topographic sites and linked them into a meticulously shaped network of urban surprises in accordance to Sitte's principles, his plan for the enlargement of Greater Ljubljana relied much more on Wagner's concept of the *Grosstadt.* Plečnik dealt efficiently with both the seemingly opposite approaches to urban design and planning.

Otto Wagner's theories were most influential at the turn of the twentieth century, though perhaps no specific Central or Southeastern European city master plan can be identified as directly borrowed from his plans. It was the general spirit of his embracing the idea of the metropolis while seeking to reorganize it to function better that influenced the next generation of planners and their functionalist approach. At the same time, Sitte's book *City Planning According to Artistic Principles* remained a standard in the library of Central and most Southeastern European architects for decades after its publication in 1889. Though Sitte did not really speak to the issue of master planning, his ideas influenced a generation of designers of urban spaces.

The 1890s marked the dawn of a new period in European urban history: the era of the metropolis and rapidly accelerated urban growth concentrated in a few key European centres. As a result, it is also the moment when urban planning can be said to have modernized, to have become a science, and to have begun to anticipate and plan for future urban growth, rather than simply designing or redesigning specific spaces. Though a few German cities had produced master plans in the decades before 1890, it was in the 1890s that the concept spread quickly, and the first zoning plans were introduced. These looked at cities in their entirety and 'analyzed [them] rationally and functionally in terms of [their] operations' (Blau, 1999). The 1893 Zoning Plan for Vienna sought to define functional areas within the city, separating residential and industrial areas. Otto Wagner's competition

winning master plan for Vienna of the same year incorporated not only the new ideas ensconced in the zoning plan, but also included a building massing plan that stated what functions should occur where in the city as well as the relative heights and sizes of future buildings. Wagner's plan was open and flexible and relied on a familiar and infinitely expandable structure of rings and radials to accommodate and regularize Vienna's growth.

In his revised plan of 1911, Wagner criticized such critics of the metropolis as Ebenezer Howard, who wanted to decentralize cities and subvert their urban character with his Garden City model, first introduced in 1898. Like Wagner, Howard also included distinct functional zones in his urban plans, albeit separated by abundant green space rather than streets, as Wagner preferred for their potential to be more connective and to promote urban life. Howard also proved to be a highly influential theorist for planners in Central and Southeastern Europe in the early twentieth century and especially in the interwar period. Ironically, while embracing ideas of zoning from Wagner, Howard and others for newly laid out parts of their cities, some Southeastern Europeans were simultaneously seeking to mix urban functions in their historic cores as part of de-Ottomanization efforts. The strictly separated commercial *çarşi* and residential *mahalle* were essential components of the rejected urban form and the creation of mixed-use centres was important to those seeking to modernize and Europeanize Southeastern European cities.

In the interwar period, functionalist models were also frequently discussed and significantly influenced plans and projects in Central and Southeastern Europe. Planners and architects in both regions were familiar with proposals such as Le Corbusier's *Ville contemporaine* and *Plan voisin* for Paris and Tony Garnier's *Cité industrielle*, which synthesized ideas about green space, modern architecture, and strict functional zoning in cities. Bucharest's most important planner of the first half of the twentieth century, Cincinat Sfințescu, epitomizes the balance and combination of these and earlier Western and Central European urban models as well as how they were adapted within a specific physical and historic context. Sfințescu's master plans and studies for Romania's capital embraced the ideals, if not the forms, of Howard's garden city as appropriate for Bucharest's dispersed and semi-rural character. At the same time, he showed an interest in monumental planning and in creating connections through ring and radial street networks which was clearly influenced by Otto Wagner as well as by Bucharest's inherited urban topography. Sitte's ideas were also present in Sfințescu's theory of 'sentimental' planning and his proposals for individual spaces, which focused on identifying key moments within the urban fabric and drawing on that context to design the surroundings so as to highlight the space's uniqueness. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Sfințescu's proposals for Bucharest contained elements of both *Athens Charter* functionalism and the totalitarian monumental planning schemes popular during the 1930s.

Thus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Central and Southeastern European cities imported and adapted urban planning theories

and methods from Western Europe, Vienna and other German speaking centres in an attempt to aggrandize and Europeanize their capitals. Along with political agendas and the pursuit of efficiency, safety and hygiene, the embellishment and beautification of the urban fabric through the imposition of regularity and functional clarity were important objectives promoted by urban theories throughout Europe. The urge to modernize cities led to the employment of mechanisms such as appropriation, zoning, building regulations, and master plans across the continent. Most cities were actually transformed in more piecemeal fashion, however some were redeveloped and grew in accordance with approved plans, though these were seldom fully realized.

Adapting and Transforming New Building Types and Styles

What distinguished the capitals in Central and Southeastern Europe from other cities in the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the expansion of central political, religious, and cultural institutions supporting rising national ideologies. While in the nineteenth century the capitals of Central European *Kulturnations* first built cultural institutions in order to promote and consolidate specific identities, in Southeastern Europe the formation of autonomous and independent nation-states resulted in the simultaneous construction of edifices for both political and cultural institutions. Therefore, the projects for royal palaces, ministries, foreign embassies and parliaments coincided with those for national theatres, libraries, museums, and universities.

Many of these building types, such as the museum, were new nineteenth-century developments, others, such as universities, theatres and opera houses were simply new to most of the cities of Central and Southeastern Europe. Across the continent the construction of buildings to house these cultural institutions served to reinforce national identity by providing evidence of each nation's importance and uniqueness. At the same time, having such cultural institutions was evidence of the modernity and level of civilization of the nation, so was particularly important in Southeastern Europe where the post-Ottoman nation-states were eager to demonstrate their European-ness. Thus Athens was home to a university before Greece had a widespread elementary education system. Among the nations within the Habsburg Empire the emergence of buildings to house cultural institutions was a herald of national emancipation, and national theatres, museums, libraries and universities became the first architectural landmarks to shape those capitals' identities.

The construction of national identity based on new building types and architectural styles relied heavily on architectural theories and practices advanced by Central and Western Europe. As was true for models of urban transformation and for sources of urban design and planning theory, Vienna was the most important influence for new building types and styles. The projects of the leading architects of the Ringstrasse were reflected in the designs of public buildings in peripheral