

**Scientific Report
ESF Short Visit Grant**

**Borbála Vinczéné Gulyás
Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest**

Purpose of the visit:

I attended the international conference of the PALATIUM Research Networking Programme of the European Science Foundation and the Society for European Festivals Research *Making Space for Festival, 1400-1700. Interactions of Architecture and Performance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Festivals* in the Palazzo Pesaro Papafalva (University of Warwick) in Venice (Italy), 21–24 March 2013.

Description of the work carried out during the visit:

On the 22th March 2013 in the *Session II Ephemeral Architecture and the Meaning of Festival* of the Venice conference mentioned above I held a short paper in English illustrated by a PowerPoint presentation. The title of my paper was *The role of triumphal arches at the court festivals under the new Holy Roman Emperor, Habsburg Ferdinand I*. In my paper I focused on the triumphal arches as festive decorations of the court festivities of Emperor Habsburg Ferdinand I. The text of my presented paper was the following:

“Although, Habsburg Ferdinand I was proclaimed as Holy Roman Emperor only in 1558, it had already become certain due to the political process of the Empire in the late 1540s finished by the Treaty of Passau in 1552 that the next emperor after Charles V would be his younger brother, the member of the Austrian line of the dynasty, Ferdinand I. Hence as the only expectant of the imperial title, the first significant art work commissioned by him in Vienna was the Swiss Gate (“Schweizertor”) in 1552/53 processed in line with the building of the new North-West wing of his main residence, the Hofburg.

The Swiss Gate represented Ferdinand I’s imperial aspiration obviously: it imitated a Doric order Roman triumphal arch and its architecture all’antica was emphasized by the fact that it considerably differed from the solid new façade of the residence. Both façades of the Gate are crowned by the coat of arms of Ferdinand I and the oversized Roman capital inscriptions containing his name, titles and the date.

The appearance of the Gate was originally different. As the reconstruction of Dr. Renate Holzschuh-Hofer shows, it was built of a bluish grey sand stone with only a few

coloured and gilded applications which highlighted the coloured details and the gilded metal inscriptions imitating the bronze inlaid Roman capital inscriptions on marble.

On the basis of the written sources, Pietro Ferrabosco was the painter of the coats of arms, the inscribed plates and also the ceiling of the passageway. The Italian master served as painter and architect at the Viennese court and he was possibly involved in the architectural design of the Gate as well. It was significantly inspired by the treatise of Sebastiano Serlio, especially some details of a Doric order offered by the IV Book of his work from the “Foro Boario” in Rome. Eventually, a Roman triumphal arch on the façade of the residence symbolized Ferdinand I’s claim to the imperial crown and after his actual proclamation in March 1558 it was declared obviously the new emperor’s power and dignity.

In April 1558, after the imperial proclamation in Frankfurt, the city of Vienna organized a ceremonial entry for Emperor Ferdinand I. Although the printed account of the event does not mention ephemeral triumphal arches along the processional route of the new emperor, it describes that his final reception took place in the Hofburg and thereafter a tournament and fireworks could be directly seen by him from the windows of the residence. Since 1545 the area in front of the main façade of the Hofburg had served as a tournament field, as well as for the spectacle of 1558. In this way, the Swiss Gate altered to an imperial decoration for the event.

During the reign of Emperor Ferdinand I other tournaments took place in the same field as well, already documented by not only written but pictorial sources. In May–June 1560, during the so called “Wiener Turnier” (a series of chivalrous spectacles organized by Maximilian in honour of his father, Ferdinand I and his brother-in-law, the Duke of Bavaria, Albert V) two tournaments were held there without any significant ephemeral structures. Nevertheless, according to the illustrated account of Hans Francolin the scaffolds of the princely spectators were in both cases placed next to the Swiss Gate. In this way, the non-ephemeral triumphal arch appeared as the main festive decoration explicitly demonstrating the imperial power for ordinary viewers. In addition, three years later in April 1563 relating to the entry by the recently crowned Roman king Maximilian II into Vienna, a next tournament was held there as well.

Furthermore, the use of ephemeral triumphal arches as decorations of the court festivals of the Austrian line of the Habsburg dynasty during the reign of the new emperor emerged in line with other art phenomena “all’antica” (for instance, the development of his collection of antiquities and coins, the finishing of the sepulchral monument of his

grandfather, Emperor Maximilian I in Innsbruck or the above mentioned Swiss Gate and the rebuilding of the Hofburg).

The apparent imperial allusions of the temporary arches all'antica dominated the entry of the recently proclaimed emperor into Prague in November 1558. The procession passed no fewer than four temporary arches. The most impressive one (“uno Arco superbissimo trionfale”) was erected in the tournament field commissioned by the son of the emperor, Archduke Ferdinand II, the organizer of the event. The enormous Corinthian order structure was decorated by statues (two moving “colossi” of Samson and Gedeon and figures of the virtues), reliefs (famous battles of the former emperors as Charles V and Maximilian I) and effigies (the new emperor’s predecessors: Rudolph I and Frederick III).

Referring to the written sources, the colouring of the stucco details resembled bronze and the draped structure imitated marble. Attention should be drawn to the fact that the contemporary accounts are regularly noticing the imitation of marble concerning these ephemeral features in connection with the noble stone’s allusions to Antiquity.

Similarly, on the occasion of the coronation of Maximilian II for Hungarian king in September 1563 in Bratislava (in Hungarian: Pozsony) one of the sources emphasized that the temporary arches appeared like marble ones (“le porte [...] erano con somma magnificenza quasi di marmor fabbricate”). Along the route of the ceremonial entry into the heart of the city on a floating bridge two ephemeral triumphal arches were raised bearing the coats of arms of Emperor Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and his spouse, Maria. According to the written sources both were designed by Pietro Ferrabosco mentioned above in connection with the Swiss Gate.

As noted earlier in April 1563, after the coronation of the successor of the emperor, Maximilian for Roman king in Frankfurt in November 1562 Maximilian II had a triumphal entry into Vienna. Now I would like to refer to only a few aspects of the event (tomorrow an overview shall be given by the paper of Dr. Rasmussen). It was the first occasion in the city that ephemeral triumphal arches were erected. Wolfgang Lazius court historiographer and the advisor of the collection of antiquities of Ferdinand I compiled the program and the Latin inscriptions of the temporary arches and Melchior Lorck designed and executed them. Along the triumphal route three temporary arches, adorned with a large amount of Roman capital inscriptions, statues and reliefs, were raised. The first was dedicated to Austria, the second to Bohemia and Hungary and the third to the Holy Roman Empire and the transfer of the imperial power [called by Lazius as “Porta Austriaca”, “Porta Bohemica” and “Porta Romana”). The arches were depicted in detail by the woodcuts of the printed account of Caspar Stainhofer and it is noteworthy that, on its basis, the columns of the arches also

resembled marble (for instance “Porta Austriaca” was described as “ain herrliche Ehren portten gewaltig aufgericht, von Seulen, in gueter proportion, als ob sy mit Märbl und andern dergleichen stainen Gemaur und aussgesetzt ware”).

The Roman capital inscriptions of the largest Corinthian order arch (“Porta Romana”) declared the transfer of the power of Emperor Ferdinand I to his successor, the new Roman king Maximilian II. The imperial eagle on the top nodded three times when the arch was passed by the heir of the emperor. On the attic, above a world globe and the figures of Ferdinand I and Maximilian II the inscriptions commemorated the dialogue referring the transfer and the others praised the Habsburg predecessors of the forthcoming emperor and Maximilian himself.

To bring the paper to a close, the ephemeral triumphal arches as unprecedented features of the festivities of Emperor Ferdinand I, together with other above mentioned recently emerged phenomena “all’antica”, effectively served the “repraesentatio maiestatis” of the new imperial court of Vienna.”

Description of the main results obtained:

It was an excellent opportunity to me that after the presentation of my paper I have got questions and reflections concerning my paper from the participants of the conference and I have been able to discuss its topic with many outstanding scholars from all over the world. During the conference I could discuss my research field referring the court festivities of the Austrian line of the Habsburg dynasty as well. Furthermore I could listen to a large amount of excellent papers concerning the European court festivities of the Renaissance and Baroque. The various papers provided new approaches, aspects and different viewpoints as well as several pictorial and written sources relating to the issue of the court festivals of the Early Modern Period.

Future collaboration with host institution:

I hope in the future I could stay in contact with the PALATIUM Research Networking Programme, the co-organizer of the Venice conference.

Projected publications/articles resulting or to result from your grant:

A selected amount of the papers of the Venice conference will be published in the future in a volume relating the conference.

Other comments:

I would like to express my gratitude to the European Science Foundation for its Short Visit Grant which provided me an excellent opportunity to participate in the conference in Venice.