

The influence of Moorish Art in Hungarian Architecture at the End of the 19th century

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“Something novel and out of the ordinary is desired in our boulevards. [...] Our colourful national ornamental design and the picturesque alternating pattern of voussoirs on horseshoe arches ought to be employed on public buildings or the houses of the aristocracy.”¹ In 1892 when József Huszka, a Hungarian ethnographer and teacher² wrote these words in an essay about Hungarian national architecture, the few people who would have subscribed to his opinion did not think that within a couple of years their wish would, to a certain extent, be realised in Budapest.

The “transplantation” of exotic realms into the private sphere was not uncommon in the palaces of contemporary noblemen across Europe. These sumptuous interiors, like the Arab room in Cardiff Castle by William Burgess (1880–1881), would not only comprise apartments evoking historic European eras but also a room designed in Oriental fashion whether Moorish, Arabic or Egyptian. With Villa Wilhelma at Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt by Karl Ludwig Zanth, *Uránia* would emulate the Arab room in Cardiff Castle by William Burgess.

The Austrian – Hungarian Compromise of 1867 paved the way towards the consolidation of the country, as well as for an economic boom initially led by the milling industry, ranked first in Europe and second in the world, that was centred in Budapest. The prosperous economy boosted building activity: the remarkably rapid expansion of Pest’s residential area dates from the final decades of the 19th century. As a result, the capital’s population almost tripled: reaching almost one million within forty years. The fact that architects, predominantly of German origin (such as Henrik Schmahl), whose works are discussed in this study, settled in Budapest permanently is a telltale sign of the increased building activity. The principal buildings discussed in this study were designed for one of the major axis: Kerepesi út (the present day Rákóczi út) which terminates at the capital’s Eastern Railway Station built in 1884.³ Residential and public buildings like The National Theatre (1875) were also designed in historic styles along Kerepesi út, with Neo-Renaissance being the prevailing style in the last quarter of the century. The first triumph of this style, the *National Academy of Science* erected in 1860 followed a fierce battle of ideas. That architectural competition is remembered in modern Hungarian history as the first to stir up public opinion (primarily that of theoreticians) over the issue of a genuine *national style*.⁴ Imre Henszlmann, an art critic⁵ favoring the Gothic style above all others advocated⁶ that the formulation of a *national*

style was a step towards the unity of the nation, and each style to be regarded as a part of “high culture” has been derived from a *national style*. Although the Oriental influence had affected a few buildings which departed from Romanticism, as attested by the parish church of Fót and the *Vigadó* and the Synagogue of Dohány Street in Budapest, it was only at the turn of the century that the Oriental style played a key role in the creation of the *national style*.

Ödön Lechner (1845–1914) ushered in a new era in the 1890s; he gave a new perspective to the debate over the Hungarian national style by breaking away from planning in the “classical styles.” Contemporary assertions that Hungarians were more strongly bonded to the East than to the West had turned Lechner’s attention to India. His growing awareness that Hungarian and Indian art had originated from a common source was also fostered by his experiences during his visit to the South Kensington Museum in London.⁷ His conclusion that Indian art had enriched British art prompted him to design the Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest (1892–1896) in Indo-Islamic fashion with multi-lobed arches and rich Indian ornamental decoration, to mention just two of its distinctive features. From its foundation, an Arab Room has existed in the *Museum of Applied Arts*.⁸ One can infer from the modeling and furnishing of the Arab Room in its entirety that the various cultures of the Near and Far East were easily blended, and the borderlines between the cultures of the “East” at times appear to have been completely blurred in the contemporary theorists’ mind.

The fact that Indian art, and Indo-Islamic style also prompted British architects and intellectuals to develop the British national style cannot escape our attention.⁹ Humphrey Repton, who designed following the Indo-Islamic style, even went so far as to propose¹⁰ the adoption of “the Indian style” as the *national style* for the British.

The motives generating a shift towards the culture of India were markedly different in Hungary and Britain. Whereas in Britain the reliance upon the Indo-Islamic style met with political interests concerning British domination in India, such pragmatic considerations did not play a role in Hungary. There, the long-lasting inspiration from the Orient was fostered by the belief that Hungarians and the people in the East have a common heritage. An entire generation of architects in the first decades of the 20th century followed in Lechner’s steps, and studied Hungarian folk art to formulate the genuine Hungarian style.¹¹

While architects, like Lechner, believed that Indian and Persian art was ingrained in traditional Hungarian art, Moorish art was not considered to be inherent to Hungarian art (and in fact the two had no ties either). While the quest for a national style had close ties with the Oriental (and more precisely Indo-Islamic) style, the *Uránia Film Theatre* (1896),¹² in spite of its Oriental style, did not follow this tendency. There is no evidence to suggest that Henrik Schmahl (1846–1912) had developed an interest in contemporary debates revolving around the adoption of Oriental style as the national style). Born in Hamburg and immigrating to Hungary in his early twenties, he remained an outsider to Hungarian society and the circle of architects. Despite his lack of academic studies, Schmahl, like his contemporaries, started his career as an architect in the Neo-Renaissance style. Ödön Lechner followed a similar track, and Schmahl’s and Lechner’s true style evolved almost the same time in the middle of the 1890s. Schmahl’s principal building, the *Uránia Film Theatre* in 1896, was the first and

most important manifestation of this architect's distinctive style influenced by Moorish art. Not only does it rank as an exception within his oeuvre, but it is also an exception in contemporary theatre architecture. The fact that the Opera House was erected in Neo-Renaissance style cannot be disregarded, if only because Henrik Schmahl was commissioned to supervise the building operation by its designer, Miklós Ybl in 1876–1884. During this period Schmahl had mastered the Neo-Renaissance style. His first artistic period in the 1880s is characterized by this style to be followed by the Neo-Gothic for a brief period.

Schmahl's stylistic change in the middle of the 1890s is even more striking if we take into consideration that not only were theatre buildings dedicated to high cultural entertainment invariably designed in the Neo-Renaissance or in the Neo-Baroque style, but the orpheums of Budapest catering for light entertainment were also built in historic styles, most preferably Neo-Baroque. Ferdinand Fellner and Hermann Helmer dominated not only traditional theatre design but also that of variety theatres, since the *Somossy Orpheum* in Budapest was designed in Neo-Baroque style by the two architects in 1894.¹³ Together they produced 48 theatres in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and many others beyond its borders.

Despite the scarce resources about the career of Henrik Schmahl, contemporary architects attribute his choice for the Moorish style to his travels to Andalusia. Sámuel Révész¹⁴, an architect working at Schmahl's studio, claims that in Andalusia Schmahl drew inspiration from Moorish art. Schmahl must have been driven by motives similar to those of Frederic Leighton who produced the Arab Hall in his own house and studio in London.¹⁵

It was not by accident that Schmahl tried his hand at the Moorish design which requires careful attention to details and good drawing skills. Even before *Uránia* his works already exhibited his precision. Once captivated by the Moorish style, he made a radical departure from the Neo-Renaissance and the Neo-Gothic, only to return to the latter in his last artistic period.

In comparison with other European theatres and cinemas in Moorish style, Gothic plays a considerable role in this *variety theatre*. Schmahl's Venetian-Gothic buildings designed before *Uránia* justify his choice for the Gothic style. The first two levels in the interior of *Uránia*, reserved for purposes of representation, were decorated in Moorish style, which was not extended to the residential units in the four-storeyed building. The façade displays no alternating colours on vous-



Fig. 1. The façade of *Uránia* Film Theatre, Budapest designed by Henrik Schmahl. 1896.
Photo: Ágnes Torma

soirs, but minor details were emphasized since the intrados of the arches are decorated with arabesques. (Fig. 1)

The mezzanine shows that Schmahl transgressed the boundaries of the classical canon of architecture. The delicate rhythm of the large arches hiding the three inner arcades framing the entrances to the balcony lends a picturesque effect to the mezzanine, raising it to the level of the *piano nobile*. The arches are close to the segmental arch, but the rigidity of this regular formation is resolved by the wavelike shallow lobes of the upper part displaying the experimental character of the architect. It is no exaggeration to draw the parallel between Schmahl and Lechner in exploring new forms of expression in architecture. The interior arcades defying these regular forms, primarily in Lechner's *Földtani Intézet* (the Institute of Geology, 1896–1899), represent this tendency. The *piano nobile* in the *Uránia* is in harmony with its upper levels in Venetian style. In this intricate system, the inner windows are framed by and hidden behind the arcades dominating the façade. Multiple blind arches bracketing each other became a characteristic feature in Schmahl's art as exemplified by his *Deutsch House* (1896)¹⁶ and the *Párisi-udvar* (1909–1912). (Fig. 2) The apertures of the window arches can be traced back to the multi-lobed arches of the Umayyad period of Moorish architecture found in the Capilla de la Villaviciosa of the Great Mosque in Cordova.¹⁷

The picturesque effect is enhanced by the Venetian stylistic features: the windows and the façade topped by crenellation (a characteristic element of Islamic architecture borrowed by the Venetian style). Schmahl did not go so far as to have the *Uránia* surmounted by an Islamic dome or to include a bold horseshoe arch to his plan as Thomas Hayter Lewis did in the *Royal Panopticon of Science and Art*, London, or as Huszka dreamt about it.

Schmahl encountered difficulties with respect to the feasibility of Islamic style in Hungary similar to the concern expressed by K.L.Zanth¹⁸ in the 1830s and by James Fergusson in *The History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* in 1876.¹⁹ The Western spatial articulation differs from that of the Islamic due to climatic reasons, which might pose a barrier to the use of arcade systems to blur the firm barrier between interiors and exteriors found in the East and in the Maghreb. In the architect's vocabulary, the arches were adapted to the interior of *Uránia* so that they were given the role of coordinating the spaces.

As for further traits of Gothic architecture, the interior of *Uránia* shows the architect's predilection for engaged compound columns. The frequent use of



Fig. 2. The façade of Párisi-udvar designed by Henrik Schmahl. 1909–1912.
Photo: Ágnes Torma

arcades by the Nasrid rulers of Andalusia in the 14th century was adapted to the requirements of enclosed interiors: one finds columns in the theatre hall used solely for decorative purpose which have no structural role. (Fig. 3) The bonds of columns and the decorative delicate ribs of the vault in the banquet hall lend an elevated atmosphere to the theatre hall, juxtaposing and “taming” the overflowing Moorish ornamentation. Such Gothic architectural elements connect *Uránia* to the architect’s earlier Neo-Gothic period and anticipate the culmination of his career with his multifunctional, predominantly Neo-Gothic building, the *Párisi-udvar*, Budapest.

Schmahl might have been welcomed in England a century earlier, since his Neo-Gothic design was immediately followed by the Moorish style and the intermingling of the two styles. Fascinated by Arabic art, Owen Jones (1809–1874) traced the pointed arch from the Ibn Tulun mosque, Cairo.²⁰ Sir Cristopher Wren²¹ and William Hodges developed a theory about the common origins of the Mughal and Gothic style.²²

To enumerate yet another connection between the Moorish and the Gothic styles, the history of the Moorish residence of Villa Wilhelma can be examined.²³ Here the association between the two styles is not based on scientific and analytic observations but lies in the realm of individual stylistic taste. Wilhelm I, King of Württemberg, seems to have merged his longing for the distant glorious past and the inaccessible *exotic*; leaving him the single choice between the Gothic and the Moorish styles. Dissatisfied with the plan by Giovanni Salucci based on Greek prototypes, King Wilhelm I fancied a Gothic, or more preferably, a Moorish resort centred around a bathhouse on the bank of the River Neckar. (Fig. 4)

The arches in the foyer of the *Uránia* featuring broader multifoils are further articulated with smaller lobes. Other architectural details betray his faithfulness to the prototype: the capitals on slender columns and the decorative elements (mainly in the

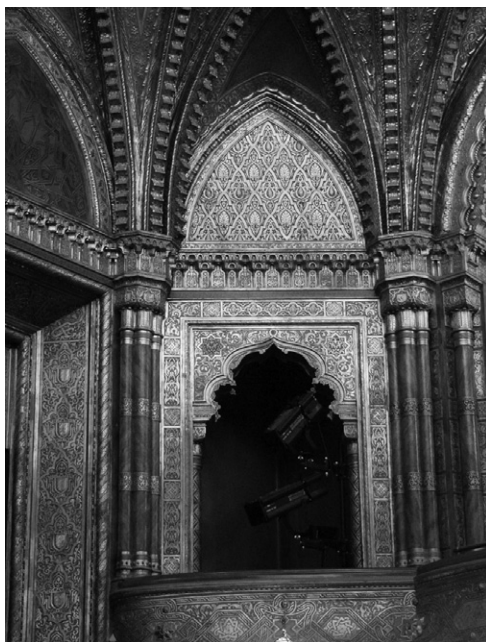


Fig. 3. The theatre hall of *Uránia* Film Theatre. 1896, renovated in 2003. Photo: Zoltán Torma



Fig. 4. Villa Wilhelma, Stuttgart, designed by K.L.Zanth. 1842–64. Photo: Stuttgart: Schwäbische Metropole mit Charme. Brachenkatalog

theatre hall). These exact replicas of the capitals of the Lion Court in the Alhambra²⁴ attest to Schmahl's close observation of the architecture of the Nasrids palace as rediscovered by his contemporaries. In this respect, one can draw a parallel between *Uránia* and the *Synagogue of Rumbach Street*, Budapest (designed by Otto Wagner), the entrance of which also features the faithful rendition of columns from the Lion Court.

Solutions, like the entrance arch between the interconnecting stairway and the café on the first floor of *Uránia*, point towards the architect's artistic inventiveness. This entrance arch owes much to the Mexuar, the "conference room" of Arab rulers in the Alhambra, whereas the formation of this arch of concave and convex lines shows the experimental character of Schmahl's art. The intrados of the arches adjacent to the capitals mentioned above are not modelled on the stalactite arches of the Lion Court; they are overflowed with arabesque decoration attesting to his great attention to detail instead of decoration in plasticity. Where the space was insufficient for arches, Schmahl used blind arches serving merely a decorative function. This scheme was also inspired by Moorish art featuring a series of blind arches bracketing one another. The architect even employed this plasticity in the façade of a house commissioned by the Deutsch family at the same time (1896).

To borrow Stefan Koppelkamm's taxonomy, this unprecedented combination of the characteristic features mentioned above can be classified as "architectural fantasy."²⁵ Koppelkamm's term comprises "only" the blending together of different Islamic features, like the Turkish or Persian onion dome, the decoration of façades by alternating colours, and elements of the Alhambra²⁶ to produce an "Oriental fantasy," exemplified, for instance, by the residence and glass houses of Villa Wilhelma. The "fantasy" in Schmahl's art, however, goes beyond the "Oriental" styles which as far as the Islamic styles are concerned, is composed only of the Moorish style. The combination of architectural elements and stylistic features is not confined to the Islamic style but embraces Schmahl's free application of Moorish ornamentation on characteristic architectural elements: the arches in the interior and the mezzanine on the façade as well as Gothic architectural elements. A kind of architectural fantasy is created primarily by the integration of the architect's inventions with some Moorish features into the Venetian-Gothic composition of the façade which is then reversed in the interior where the Moorish style sets the tune.

According to Koppelkamm, illusion was associated with the spirit of Moorish art.²⁷ Optical illusion and tricks play a considerable role in the *Uránia* in which their traces can also be discerned. His ingenious idea of placing mirrors within the blind arches amplified this effect, by creating an illusion of unending interiors, a technique that had been employed by Karl Ludwig Zanth in the *Kuppelsaal* of the full-fledged Moorish building complex, *Villa Wilhelma* (1842–1864; Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt).²⁸ In the theatre hall of *Uránia*, this illusion was exploited to the utmost: the three full-length mirrors on the back wall behind the balcony create the sense of vast space. In placing them, Schmahl was able to create an effect similar to that of a series of arches which is a typical feature of Islamic buildings.

The magic of the Moorish atmosphere is also evoked by the intense colouring in the interior. As one advances through the theatre hall on the ground floor, an image emerges as if the foyer was modelled on Owen Jones' colour theory: red, blue and gold are applied on a white surface and separated from each other.²⁹ The stucco surfacing in

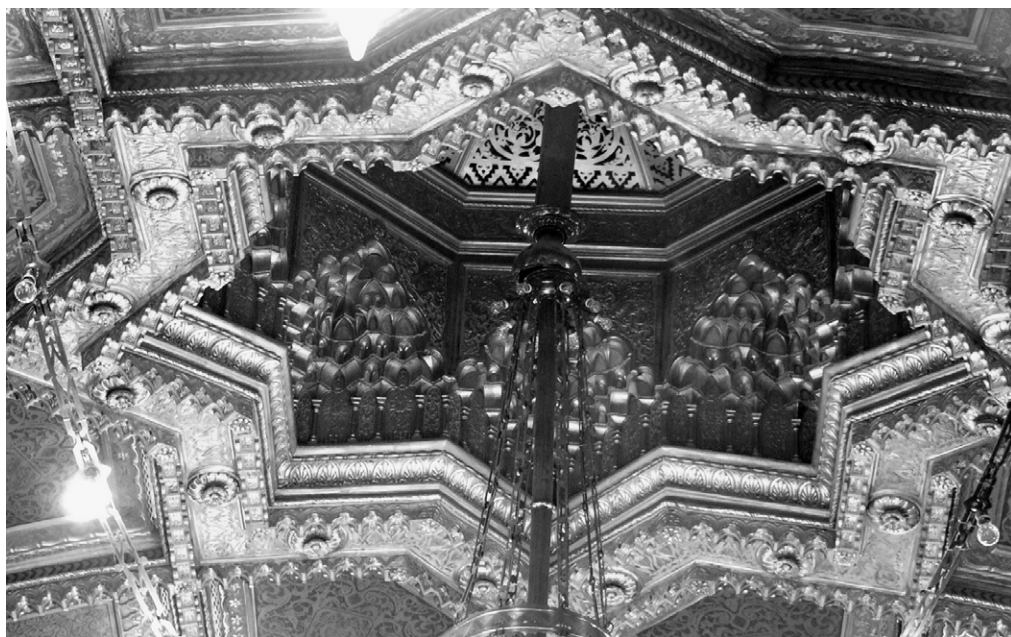


Fig. 5. The lantern of the theatre hall adorned with *muqarnas* decoration. 1896, renovated in 2003. Photo: Zoltán Torma

the entrance hall may remind us of this widespread medium of decoration, elaborately carved particularly, during the Nasrid Age. This effect is accentuated as one enters the theatre hall: the colours, markedly differing from the restrained colouring of the foyer, produce a dazzling effect. The shimmering is not attained by the ceramics and azulejos as in the *Arab room* by Lord Leighton or *Villa Wilhelma*, but by paints applied on a metallic, primarily bronze basis.³⁰ The spandrels also display rich and metallic decoration.

The groundplan of the theatre hall in a central location also offered the possibility of designing a lantern. Planned by Béla Jánoszy (1884–1945) and Tibor Szivessy (1884–1963), the lantern is, however, an element of a later modification, which took place between 1929–1930.³¹ This lantern is particularly interesting owing to its *muqarnas* decoration. (Fig. 5) This kind of honeycomb decoration has no parallel either in contemporary Hungarian architecture or art, with the exception of an early Romantic building of Miklós Ybl, the parish church of Fót (1845–1955). (Fig. 6)

Schmahl's buildings are telltale monuments of his ingenuity that does not need to be corroborated by having earned an architecture degree: he never



Fig. 6. The honeycomb structure in the parish church of Fót, designed by Miklós Ybl. 1845–1955. Photo: Ágnes Torma

even entered university. The house at 72 Rákóczi út serves as evidence that the Moorish style was not confined to the realm of entertainment (variety *theatre*) in Schmahl's oeuvre, but constituted a period of its own.³² This house, which accommodated the temporary exhibition of the Museum of Agriculture at the turn of the century has unfortunately not survived.

In comparison to the *Uránia* that building embodies an advanced stage in the architect's oeuvre. The composition of the façade: the deep alcoves with conspicuous *muqarnas* decoration reduced to miniature scale, which can be traced to the mihrab alcoves of Islamic buildings, are hallmarks of the Moorish style. The inner architectural elements of the *Uránia* entailing a larger structure have literally come to the foreground, that is, to the façade of the interior of the building as seen at the *Uránia*. The arcades of the Lion Court seemed to have been created for the shop-fronts of the House at 72 Rákóczi út.

The number of theatres and cinemas influenced by the Moorish style rose even more rapidly in the 20th century, yet a relatively early example of the phenomenon, *The Alhambra Theatre* in London, can be used as comparison to the *Uránia*. *The Royal Panopticon of Science and Art* at Leicester Square, London built in Saracenic style³³ (later converted into *The Alhambra Theatre*) can not only be compared to *Uránia* on stylistic grounds but also on functional ones although the change in use of the two buildings has an inverse pattern of development. Founded in 1852, the *Royal Panopticon* was devoted to demonstrating scientific experiments and equipment with the aim of disseminating scientific knowledge to the public. Within a short period, the enterprise went bankrupt and the Oriental building was turned into a music hall in 1858, giving the stage to circus and ballet performances of a more popular value.³⁴ (Fig. 7)

This second type of entertainment assumed the main role in the *Uránia*: entertaining the public with comedies within three years after its erection. The *Oroszi Caprice*³⁵ as an orpheum offering "light entertainment" must have catered for the needs of the same lower middle class of society as the Alhambra Theatre in London in the 1860s did.³⁶ The venture proved to be a failure, and in 1898, Schmahl's building in Budapest was taken over by The *Uránia* Scientific Society organised shortly after its in-

ception. As its name implies, the *Uránia* modelled itself after the German *Uránia Scientific Society* in Berlin and that in Vienna, adopting their programme. The founders of the *Society* set out to offer a wide range of programmes, centred around the introduction of contemporary advanced technology. The banquet hall of *Uránia* was able to promote the introduction of scientific and geographic discoveries to the public since diorama presentations on its stage rendered the unknown distant places to be shown more life-like.³⁷ In this way, citizens visiting the *Uránia* could follow the steps of pioneer travellers who gave lectures on

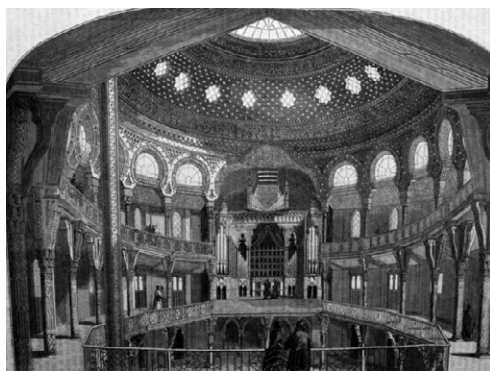


Fig. 7. The Royal Panopticon at Leicester Square, London designed by Thomas Hayter Lewis. 1852. *The Builder* XII. (1854.03.18.) 580. sz. 143.

disenchanted territories, like the North Pole (*A battle for the North Pole* by Jenő Cholnoky, a Hungarian geographer³⁸) or the ice cave of Dobsina.³⁹ This novel technique of diorama projection was also employed in *The Alhambra Theatre*, London. Such virtual travels went hand in hand with familiarising the public with the modern technical innovations: the telegraph attracted the attention of the managers of the *Uránia* and the *Royal Panopticon* alike. While John Watkins Brett's telegraph could be seen by the visitors at the *Panopticon*,⁴⁰ the audience of the *Uránia* faced the puzzling question whether Guglielmo Marconi would be able to establish wireless communication across the ocean.⁴¹ The founders of the *Panopticon* aimed at the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the public in a more spectacular way than the *Uránia Society*: they also showed Michael Faraday's experiments.

The didactical purposes of the *Society* were not only to popularise science but also to edify citizens through art. In their view, the theatre must have exerted an ameliorating effect on the audience, which could not have been achieved in an ordinary building.⁴² While popular ballet performances were in the core repertoire of *The Alhambra*, the audience was enchanted by the elevated ballet performance of Isadora Duncan in the *Uránia Theatre*.⁴³ Even more important is the scheme using moving pictures which the *Uránia* regularly used to introduce the characteristic dances of the people of the world. The non-newsreel Hungarian film, entitled *A tánc* (*The Dance* by Gyula Pekár) is considered to be the first film production of Hungarian cinematography.⁴⁴ This film was shot on the terrace of the *Uránia* and was shown in the theatre. Supporting and employing Béla Zitkovszky, a photographer, the *Uránia Society* embarked on promoting photography and presenting films on its stage. The Society was

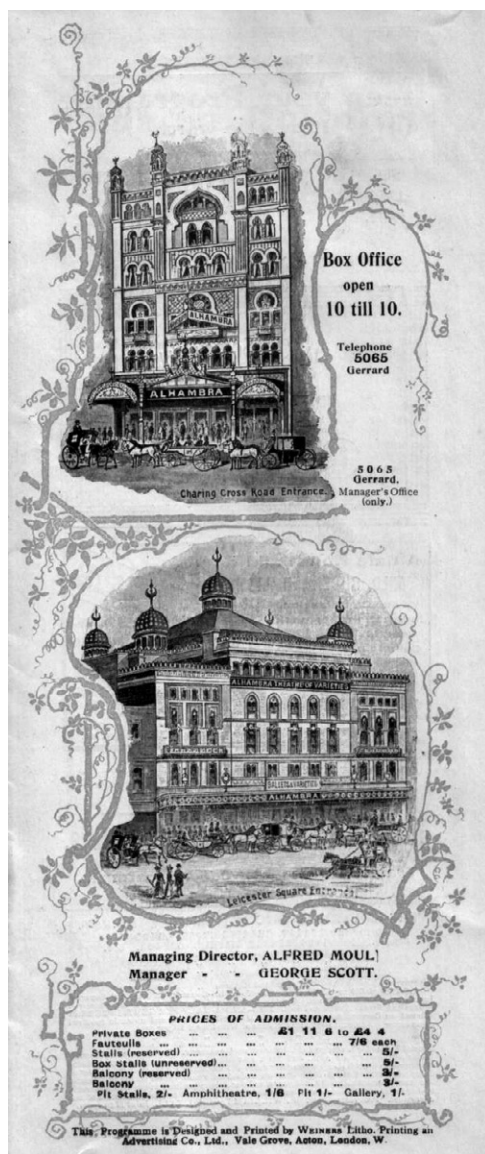


Fig. 8. The back (up) and front view of The Alhambra Theatre, London on the first page from a Programme for Paquita at The Alhambra. 1908. Royal Panopticon of Science and Art – Later Alhambra Theatre – Later Odeon Leicester Square: The Music Hall and Theatre History Site – Dedicated to Arthur Lloyd

up-to-date with the latest achievements, and the programme of the *Uránia Society in Berlin*.

In comparison with other theatres conceived under the spell of Islamic styles, the Islamic style of the *Uránia* can be considered to be homogeneous,⁴⁵ solely stimulated by the Moorish style. This masterpiece at the turn of the century, however, also bears the characteristic features of historic styles: namely the Venetian Gothic. The fact that new demands were present invariably in Britain and in Hungary is demonstrated by the similarities shared between the renewed façade of *The Alhambra Theatre* with that of the *Uránia*. (Fig. 8)

The ground floor of *The Alhambra Theatre* is articulated by full-length shop windows on the rear façade⁴⁶ facing Charing Cross Road, which was designed by W.M.Brutton in 1897.⁴⁷ In addition to the similar Islamic stylistic characteristics *The Alhambra Theatre* is also linked to the *Uránia* on structural basis when one takes into account the shop windows.⁴⁸ Despite the enumerated similarities, we have no reason to assume that Henrik Schmahl was familiar with *The Alhambra Theatre* in London.

Notes

- 1 József Huszka, *Nemzeti építészeti múltja és jelene (The past and present of our national architecture, 1892)* cited by Ákos Moravánszky, *Versengő látomások: esztétikai újítás és társadalmi program az Osztrák–Magyar Monarchia építészetében, 1867–1918. (Competing Visions: Aesthetic Invention and Social Imagination in Central European Architecture, 1867–1918)* (Budapest: Vince, 1998), 187. The quotation was translated by the author.
- 2 His collecting activity and taxonomy of decoration patterns is comparable with that of Owen Jones, who published a systematic work entitled *The Grammar of the Ornament* in 1854. The of Huszka's system, however, encompasses a less wide scale of motifs. Emese Révész, *A magyar historizmus (Historicism in Hungary)* (Budapest: Corvina, 2005), 34.
- 3 Attila Déry, *Erzsébetváros – Terézváros és Józsefváros* (Budapest: Terc, 2006).
- 4 József Sisa, "A historizmus építészete," in *Magyarország építészetének története* ("The architecture of historicism," in *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*), ed. József Sisa and Dora Wiebenson (Budapest: Vince, 1998), 199–234.
- 5 Imre Henszlmann earned a degree in architecture, although he never practised in this field.
- 6 Henszlmann expressed his views in *Párhuzamok (Parallels)* (Budapest, 1841) cited by: Révész, 2005, 22–23.
- 7 Ödön Lechner, "Önéletrajzi Vázlat" (Curriculum Vitae: an Outline), *A Ház* (The House) 4. (1911), 343–56.
- 8 Ödön Boncz, "Az Iparművészeti Múzeum arab szobája" (The Arab Room in the Museum of Applied Arts), *Művészi Ipar* 1 (1885–1886).
- 9 This view in Britain dates from the age of the Gothic Revival.
- 10 John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester – New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), 74.
- 11 Examining the patterns of folk art, József Huszka, an architect, assumed that Hungarian ornamental motifs have similar features as Sassanidan decorative design.

This assumption exerted great influence on Ödön Lechner. Closely related to the history of buildings that were to herald the national style, the design of Zsolnay ceramics was also inspired by Oriental motifs. Vilmos Zsolnay travelled extensively in Asia Minor to trace the origins of the genuine Hungarian style. Later Ödön Lechner and Henrik Schmahl cooperated with the Zsolnay Manufacture of Ceramics. Moravánszky, 1998, 186–7.

- 12 For convenience this building featuring Moorish characteristics is referred to as *Uránia* in this paper. At the time of its erection in 1896, the building was known as *Oroszi Caprice* after its owner, Antal Oroszi.
- 13 Aladár Edvi Illés, *Budapest műszaki útmutatója (A Guide to the Architecture of Budapest from a Technological Perspective)* (Budapest, 1896).
- 14 Sámuel Révész, "Schmahl Henrik," *Építő Ipar* (The Periodical of the Industry of Building) (1912) Nr. 33: 319–20. and also in Gáspár Fábrián, *Nagy magyar építőművészek (Great Hungarian Architects)* Vol. 1. (Budapest, 1936).
- 15 Patricia Baker, "London's Arab Hall," in *Saudi Aramco World: London's Arab Hall*. 1978.
- 16 The elevation of the facade is preserved in the *Budapest City Archives*. The number of the record: BFL III. XV.17.d.329/24544.
- 17 Marianne Barrucand and Achim Bednorz, *Moorish Architecture in Andalusia* (Köln: Taschen, 1992), 70–77.
- 18 Stefan Koppelkamm, *Der imaginäre Orient: Exotische Bauten in achtzehnten und neunzehnten Jahrhundert in Europa* (Berlin: Ernst, 1987), 66.
- 19 Michael Danby, *Moorish Style* (London: Phaidon, 1994), 170–172.
- 20 Note to Plate XXXI in Owen Jones, *The Grammar of the Ornament* (London, 1854), 158.
- 21 Koppelkamm, 1987, 62
- 22 Danby, 1994, 83
- 23 Koppelkamm, 1987, 57–76.
- 24 Barrucand and Bednorz, 1992, 194–197.
- 25 Koppelkamm, 1987, 66, 70.
- 26 I completed the list of Islamic elements enumerated by Koppelkamm with the striped building façade exhibited by the building accommodating the *Festsaal* in *Villa Wilhelma* shown in an archive photograph on page 67. Koppelkamm, 1987, 67.
- 27 Koppelkamm, 1987, 63–64.
- 28 Koppelkamm, 1987, 69–70.
- 29 Jones, 1854.
- 30 This statement is based on the study conducted by Architekton Rt. which was responsible for the reconstruction of the interior decoration of the building in 2001–2003. Architekton Rt. produced a detailed analysis of the original materials used at the *Uránia*. *Az Uránia Belsőépítészeti Rekonstrukciója (The Reconstruction of the Interior Design of Uránia)* (Gödöllő: Architekton Építő és Műemlékfelújító Rt., 2001.)
- 31 Ferenc Bor, *Tudományos dokumentáció az Uránia Mozi épületéről (Documentary on the Architectural History of Uránia Film Theatre carried out for the Reconstruction of the Building)* (Budapest: Hild – Ybl Alapítvány, 2000), 1–16.

- 32 The elevation of the main facade of the building is preserved in the *Museum of Architecture*, Budapest. The number of the building permit given by the Municipality of Budapest: 43240/1898–III.
- 33 The prominent horseshoe arch associated with the *Uránia* in London derives primarily from the Golden Age of the Caliphate in the 10th century. Barrucand and Bednorz, 1992, 48.
- 34 With regard to the history of the Alhambra Theatre: it underwent several renovations before its dismantling in 1936. That from 1883 and the expansion in 1897 being the most prominent. Koppelkamm 1987, 160.
- 35 *Uránia* was known as *Oroszi Caprice* between 1896 and 1899.
- 36 Simon Trussler, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of British Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- 37 With slight alterations in the interior.
- 38 Jenő Cholnoky (1870–1950) studied and made an hydrographical analysis of the Huang He and the Yangtze in Chinese territory.
- 39 *Uránia: Népszerű Tudományos Folyóirat* (The *Uránia* Popular Periodical on Science) *Az Uránia Magyar Tudományos Egyesület Közlönye* (Budapest: *Uránia Scientific Society*) 1. (1900) Nr. 3: 23.
- 40 K.G. Beauchamp, *Exhibiting Electricity* (London: The Institution of Electrical Engineers, 1997), 22.
- 41 *Uránia: Népszerű Tudományos Folyóirat*: 1. (1900) Nr. 2: 22.
- 42 Victor Molnár, “Törekvésünk,” (Our Aims) in *Uránia Magyar Tudományos Színházegylet és Részvénytársaság prospectusa és aláírási felhívása* (Budapest, 1900), 1–2.
- 43 “Isadora Duncan Budapesten” (Isadora Duncan in Budapest), *Vasárnapi Ujság* 49. (1902) Nr. 17: 274–276.
- 44 Domonkos Dániel Kis, “Az *Uránia* száz éve,” (One Hundred Years of *Uránia*), *Valóság* 46 (2003) Nr. 1: 66–77.
- 45 Koppelkamm 1987, 53, 70.
- 46 The formation of the facade at Leicester Square geared to the commercial demands was realised during the remodelling of the Alhambra Theatre in 1883 after its destruction in fire. The proportions of the facade by W.M. Brutton, however, renders the comparison of the two structures more justified.
- 47 Koppelkamm 1987, 160.
- 48 As for this structural innovation by Schmahl, he is ranked among the first architects in Hungary who responded to the call of the new era, as the introduction of shop windows of large scale in his own house of 1890 testifies. This feature attests to his practical way of thinking that had been thoroughly recognized by his contemporaries. Vilmos Magyar in *Építő Ipar* 01.09.1912. and Sámuel Révész in *Építő Ipar* 18.08.1912; Ferenc Vadas, *Neoreneszánsz építészet Budapesten (Neo-Renaissance Architecture in Budapest)*, ed. Tamás Csáki, Violetta Hidvégi and Pál Ritoók (Budapest: Budapest Főváros Levéltára, 2008).