Revolution in the city:

Public space and political discourse

in Pest-Buda and Prague 1848

By

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Submitted to

Central European University

Department of History

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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Budapest, Hungary

2011

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Abstract

The present thesis investigates the revolution of 1848 in the cities of Pest-Buda and Prague from a comparative perspective by conceptualising the first phase of '1848' between March and June as a decidedly urban event. Through applying Jürgen Habermas' conception of the 'public sphere' to the actual settings of these cities, it analyzes the setup and maintenance of the public discourse on the basis of a thorough examination of the local German press. Three major issues are tackled: the first section contains a discussion of the socio-structural characteristics of both cities and delineates the ways and means through which the urban discourse was generated and upheld in the immediate years before '1848'. Under the notions of first 'fraternization' and then 'conflict' the second section follows the discursive development mirrored in press from a chronological perspective and outlines and evaluates similarities and differences of both cases by comparison. The third chapter adds the spatial aspect to the narrative. It delineates an urban topography of the revolution, analyzes mechanisms of manipulation of the urban space in the course of events, e.g. it addresses the manifold processes of inscribing meanings into the cityscape through renaming and rededicating public places, and finally drafts a symbolic topography of the revolution in the urban realms of Pest-Buda and Prague.

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Introduction

Revolutions in the Habsburg monarchy in general and in its major cities in particular were something entirely new when they impetuously erupted in the early springtime of 1848. As against France and the city of Paris where at least three revolutions occurred within a lifetime (1789, 1830, 1848), not including the frequent constitution changes between 1789 and 1799, the 'anti-revolutionary revolution' of the Bourbon restoration in 1814, nor the reestablishment of the monarchy in 1852, the largest urban agglomerations of the Habsburg realms apart from Vienna, i.e. Pest-Buda and Prague, had been remaining untroubled by revolutionary movements and overthrows until the memorable days of March 1848. Once the first mass demonstrations were held, political demands vehemently articulated and even barricades erected in the streets, the anti-liberal *Vormärz*-regime quickly crumbled. The subsequent demission and escape of Chancellor Metternich, who was depicted as the central skid of any socio-political change the liberals in the Habsburg monarchy had been longing for, symbolically marked the deep impact of the tempest of the revolution haunting the lands of the Austrian Empire.[1]

Shortly after the Parisian populace had rebelled against the ruling class once more and, after some days of fervid street fights in February 1848, had obtained the resignation of the abhorred Prime Minister François Guizot and later even the Citizen King's abdication and flight to England, the zippy revolutionary wave starting from its virtually 'traditional' urban centre, Paris, literally overran the entire post-Napoleonic Europe in an astonishingly short period of time. Although the central European revolutionary movements in the Austrian Empire, directly affected by the news from Paris spreading like a wildfire, did finally not adduce lasting success and resulted in a temporal triumph of the restorative powers, these

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[1] Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 114.

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occasions can be considered formative for the shaping of national identities and political self-awareness of the various nations conjoint under the rule of the House of Habsburg.

Comparing these revolutions in the Bohemian and Hungarian realms of the Austrian Empire, the role of major cities is paramount. Both Prague and Pest-Buda were epicentres and junctions of the course of events, the 'stage' of the 'revolutionary play' that shook the *Vormärz*-regime to the core. These cities were characterised by several comparable aspects: They ranked second and third respectively largest urban centres within the monarchy. They experienced a huge population growth between 1800 and 1850, had the function of central places for their vast hinterland and served, at least officially, as royal residence cities within the Bohemian and Hungarian Kingdoms.[2] In addition, they featured a considerable German-speaking population which represented the majority of inhabitants until the mid 1850s.[3]

The revolutionary movements *per se* starting in mid March 1848 took place in these specific urban environments. Streets, squares and theatres, coffeehouses, restaurants and ballrooms crowded with people of diverse social, ethnic and political backgrounds formed the 'scenery' where various kinds of activities, such as demonstrations and gatherings, talks and fights, political debates and dissentions, finally led to the dramatic outburst of the revolution and the articulation of urgent political demands. This public sphere of the cities is the spatial framework, so to speak the setting of the present thesis. All these urban features, however, were more than just a coulisse or stage for the course of events. The respective city itself was a vivid sphere of communication where news and rumours were circulating which people received and reacted to—an entire urban discourse was consequently generated based on in-

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[2] Gerhard Melinz & Susan Zimmermann, „Großstadtgeschichte und Modernisierung in der Habsburgermonarchie," in Gerhard Melinz & Susan Zimmermann, eds., *Wien – Prag – Budapest. Blütezeit der Habsburgermetropolen. Urbanisierung, Kommunalpolitik, gesellschaftliche Konflikte (1867-1918)* (Vienna: Promedia, 1996), 15-16; Robert Nemes, *The Once and Future Budapest* (DeKalb: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 42.

[3] Nemes, *Budapest*, 152; Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 22-23.

formation exchanged by word of mouth, read in papers and pamphlets and lively discussed in public places.[4]

Against this spatial background with all its implications for communication and transport of information, both orally and via newspapers and pamphlets, this thesis will comparatively investigate the setup of the particular urban public discourse in the first period of the revolutions in Pest-Buda and Prague with special regard to the German-speaking inhabitants in order to fathom their involvement, reaction and contribution in the unfolding revolutions. The methodology proposed relies on a thorough analysis of local German newspapers which are presumed to serve as a mirror of the urban discourse in the period in question. Through approaching the topic on the basis of an examination of a share of the press, the perspective on the central issue has necessarily to be a restricted one: holistic explanations cannot be expected right from the outset; however, with regard to the emergence and maintenance of the political discourse in the respective cities the thesis provides a innovative view on the subject matter of the revolution as an decidedly urban phenomenon.

The chronological frame is limited to the first phase of both revolutions, i.e. mainly the springtime from March to early June 1848. Since historiography has chiefly investigated the 'national' *impetus* of the respective indigenous peoples during the revolutions, i.e. Czechs and Hungarians, it is worth scrutinizing the, at first view, somewhat paradoxical situation in this regard, namely the role of the majority of city inhabitants in the urban discourse—the German-speaking population and their means of reflecting and contributing to '1848', the press; an issue which has rather been neglected in historical analysis so far.

A good portion of this thesis centres about the notion of the 'public', the 'public space' and the 'public sphere' [*Öffentlichkeit*] in the urban context, a heavily debated and criticised concept theoretically conceptualized by the German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen

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[4] Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press 2000), 25-87; Nemes, *Budapest*, 114-129; Stanley Z. Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 7-46.

Habermas in his 1962 Habilitationsschrift *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* [The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society].[5] Despite the scholarly debate about his theory of the public sphere would easily fill several bookshelves and therefore cannot be revised *in extenso*, one can hardly avoid reflecting on its significance and employment in the given context, at least very briefly.[6]

According to Habermas, the 'public', or what he more precisely calls the 'bourgeois public sphere', arising since the 18th century is to be understood as "a realm of communication marked by new arenas of debate, more open and accessible forms of urban public space and sociability, and an explosion of print culture in the form of newspapers, political journalism, novels and criticism."[7] The gradually unfolding occurrence of a notably 'civil' public beyond the traditional representational culture of the early-modern state made a critical dialogue among citizens [*Bürgern*]—now understood as private individuals, not as mere subjects—possible who, while sojourning in public places, were reading newspapers and exchanging opinions, standpoints and information. While Habermas localised the nucleus of the bourgeois public sphere in the initially apolitical and private, later increasingly (semi-) public, literary public sphere and the associated emergence of salons, coffeehouses and *Tischgesellschaften*, these forms of sociability gradually led to the setup of a critical discourse that piecemeal turned towards political issues and eventually involved the full-fledged bourgeois public

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[5] Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1962). The English translation was only published in 1989 under the title *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

[6] A summary of the reception of Habermas' work with special regard to its application in historiography is provided by Harold Mah, "Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians," *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (2008), 153-182.

[7] James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4.

sphere which was, according to Habermas, characterised by the dictate of reason, ubiquitous criticism and its literal publicity.[8]

Not only can we rest assured that this public sphere with its specific urban topography was already existing in the mid 19th century cities of Pest-Buda and Prague, nor was it a mere socio-structural prerequisite for a mass movement like a revolution. In fact, the public sphere was moulding the path to and the outbreak of the revolution of 1848—keeping in mind that it was not by chance that in the morning of March 15th 1848 Sándor Petőfi and his comrades had gathered in the coffeehouse 'Pilvax' in Pest, where they had been spending the night discussing, before they headed for the National Museum not far from there.[9]

Since the notion of the 'public sphere', according to its definition by Habermas, had a inherent spatial dimension which, however, is not explicitly rendered, neither in the original German term *Öffentlichkeit* nor in its English translation, it will be complemented by the notion of 'public space' in the following remarks in order to accentuate the spatial dimension of the described phenomenon in the urban environment. Entangling both notions provides the conceptual matrix in which the processes of the revolution in the city can be exemplified.

In this thesis three major questions are to be raised. The first one aims at the urban milieus and actual settings of Pest-Buda and Prague in the immediate run-up to the respective revolutions. The issues to be covered in this chapter firstly contain an outline of the characteristics of both urban centres by comparison, investigating facts and figures such as the demographic and socio-economic conditions as well as the changes of the population structure in order to set up the particular urban contexts in which the revolutions would later take place. Secondly, it shall be asked how and where the public discourse in both cities emerged and by what means it was generated and maintained on the eve of '1848'. This section mostly relies on the already published literature which processed manifold data

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[8] Ibidem, 8.
[9] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 46-48.

illuminating the contemporary circumstances, notwithstanding the reservation that reliable statistical sources are rare and often scattered in the written record.

The second section centres on the initial phase of the revolution from March to early June 1848. Under the notions of first 'fraternization' and then 'conflict' it follows the development of the urban discourses from a chronological perspective. By entangling both case studies, the changes of the public discourse with regard to the advancing nationalisation of the revolutions are traced and analysed. Whereas during the first days of the revolutions the German-speaking inhabitants of both cities joint the revolutionary cause with authentic affection and merged into the captivating mood of elation and exuberance, this enchanted atmosphere dramatically shifted, little by little, to a strong emphasis of exclusive, or rather exclusivist, national sentiments. Through analysing the representation of the urban events and the public opinion in the local press, this part investigates the involvement of the German-speaking inhabitants in the course of the revolution, their contribution to and perception of this urban event, their engagement in revolutionary policies and their self-organisation in clubs and associations. The identification of areas of event and debate where the revolution took shape is the main aim of this section: diverse inputs, opinions and comments in the local press, the public display of concord and mistrust, the cheerful feasts and the bloody violence in the urban realms, in sum, the vibrant and continuously changing public sphere in the cities is sketched in this chapter. Eventually, differences and similarities of the public discourses in both urban settings, Pest-Buda and Prague, are discussed and evaluated.

The third section approaches the revolutions in Pest-Buda and Prague from a spatial perspective. Since the traditional master-narratives of '1848' are mainly concentrated on the course of events in a more or less chronological order or on its 'glorious' protagonists, their 'heroic' deeds and struggles, the approach proposed here seeks to give the phenomenon of the revolution in both cities less a chronological or biographical but a decidedly spatial dimen-

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sion. This contains three layers: Firstly, it delineates an urban topography of the revolution by localising the actual sites of events in the urban space of both cities. Secondly, it analyzes the social mechanism of manipulation of the urban space by the contemporaries. Hereby, their various strategies to inscribe a certain meaning into the urban space, for example by renaming and rededicating public places according to the ideals of the revolution, is a central point. For the last part of the chapter the surmise is that certain places in the urban realm were assuming an emblematic imprint in the course of the revolution. They became ciphers and codes intimately connected to particular events: squares and streets, parks and assembly rooms were not only the material constituents of the public sphere in the respective city but gained a symbolic meaning which most contemporaries were fully aware of. This third segment of the chapter drafts a symbolic topography of the revolution and thus makes the revolution visible in the urban realm.

The prefixed chapter "City and Revolution" contains a discussion of the sources examined and analyzed for the outlined agenda and a literature review of those scholarly contributions to the topic of the revolutions in Pest-Buda and Prague which provide interpretations for the subject matter of this thesis, namely the linkage between the urban public and the revolution. The other central points in this chapter are a concise discussion of Habermas' theory of the 'public sphere' and its critique as well as its application in the given context. Finally and especially important when speaking of the revolution as an urban event, a short reflection on the debate about the concepts of 'space' and 'spatiality' which has had a eminent impact on scholarship at least in the past decade is appropriate before engaging in the abovementioned scope of research.

All these outlined chapters are to be conceptualized in a comparative way. By doing this, similarities and differences between the cases of Pest-Buda and the Prague can be exposed and analysed. Since both revolutions took very different paths, the former (Pest-Buda)

leading to the acrimoniously fought war of independence until August 1849, the latter (Prague) ending with the Pentecost Uprising in mid June 1848, only the first three months of the revolution are taken into consideration. The thesis seeks to close an existent gap in the historiography of the 1848 revolution in the Habsburg monarchy and its second and third largest cities respectively. It provides a methodologically inventive and theoretically grounded account in a highly relevant spatial context which has been studied with different priorities thitherto. The comparative perspective opens up a trans-national panorama of the revolution as a European phenomenon, sheds new light on the existing scholarship and contributes to the urban history of the region.

Chapter 1

City and Revolution

The great events which have been shaking Europe recently had a weighty backlash on our country and our capital city. Since yesterday an unusual excitement has been prevailing in Pest which has entirely changed the physiognomy of our industrious city.[10]
– *Anonymous, Pester Zeitung, 16 March 1848*

Lively activity cheers up our hearts. The Bohemian colours adorn the intellectually unleashed nation. Indeed, in the first days a few faces haltingly looked at the happy crush of the cheerful populace, because the surprise was just too big.[11]
– *Anonymous, Bohemia, 2 April 1848*

With the lines of the first quote above, published in the March 16th issue of the *Pester Zeitung*, the leading daily of the German-speaking community in Pest-Buda, an anonymous author, most likely the editor-in-chief Eduard Glatz himself, opened his commentary on the memorable events which had occurred in Pest the previous day. Right from the onset, the journalist put these *"great events"* which had been taking place in the city on the Danube into the broader European context of recent uprisings and subsequently informed his readership about a somehow modified appearance of the local scene, not clearly defined though apparently well-noticeable. The term *"physiognomy"* used by the journalist did obviously not relate to actual physical changes which the city could impossibly have faced within one day, although the report later points to the countless placards with the famous '12 Points' and Sándor Petőfi's 'Nemzeti Dal' [National song] hanging at every street corner, but rather accentuated the changed atmosphere in the city after the street gatherings and demonstrations of

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[10] Pester Zeitung, No. 615, 16 March 1848 *[Die großen Ereignisse, welche jetzt Europa durchschüttern, sind auch auf unser Land und unsre Hauptstadt nicht ohne mächtige Rückwirkung geblieben. Eine ungewöhnliche Aufregung herrscht seit gestern in Pest und hat die Physiognomie unserer werkthätigen Stadt völlig verändert]* (all translations by the author).
[11] Bohemia, No. 53, 2 April 1848 *[(…), eine lebensfrische Regsamkeit erfreut unsere Herzen. Die böhmischen Farben zieren das geistig entfesselte Volk,… Zwar schaute manches Gesicht in den ersten Tagen noch etwas unsicher auf das frohe Gewühl der heiteren Bevölkerung(…), denn die Uiberraschung* (sic!) *war zu groß].*

the revolutionary crowd on March 15th—a dramatic event unseen in Pest to date. Its far-reaching consequences could hardly be assessed on the presumably late evening when the author compiled this newspaper article.[12]

Interestingly enough, also one of the German newspapers in Prague, the *Bohemia*, used this very term in an introductory commentary *"Prags Physiognomie seit dem 15. März"* [Prague's physiognomy since March 15th] published in its April 2nd issue to describe the city's altered character after the revolutionary events in March. The granting of freedom of the press, announced in bold newspaper headlines and countless leaflets and placards, had caused a very similar 'atmospheric change' in the capital city of the Bohemian Kingdom.

Both articles did not only inform their respective readers about the factual events and incidences of the unfolding revolution in Pest-Buda and Prague, but also presented a journalistic interpretation of the unprecedented impact of these occurrences on the urban public whose hitherto inherent character had undergone a so far only vaguely defined and barely explicable alteration. A changed atmosphere in the city—what does that mean after all? What exactly did change here, by what means and on which grounds? Moreover, what circumstances led to and accompanied these changing events?

Before exploring these questions in depth and detail to be raised for both cases, Pest-Buda and Prague, one needs to pay attention to the terminological and methodological set to be applied to the outlined research agenda. This first contains a thorough reflection on Habermas' theory of the public sphere and its various currents of criticism and, in the necessary briefness, the ongoing and prolific debate on the relevance of conceptions of 'space' in historical scholarship in order to sound the theoretical grounding for the particular approach proposed. The following chapter attempts to integrate these considerations into the historical context of '1848' and to set a theoretical frame within which the above discussed assumptions

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[12] Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 45-46.

can be exemplified. In a second step, the subject of the thesis is to be embedded into the existing scholarship by the agency of a concise literature review which encompasses less the innumerable accounts dealing with '1848' in general, but rather those which centre on topics and approaches relevant to the main scope. Finally, and particularly important for pursuing this very line of argumentation, a crucial point is a critical survey, inventory, and assessment of the analysed sources.

As suggested in the introduction, a central notion which can prove valuable for this context is Jürgen Habermas' concept of the 'public', the 'public sphere' or, with the enhancement of spatial aspects, the 'public space'.[13] Undoubtedly, Habermas and his theory have gathered countless critics which might be considered a sign for a rather fruitful and straightforward approach than for a helplessly misleading and perfectly mistaken one—keeping in mind that his quite schematic and generalising interpretation of historical evidences makes it easy to find weak and utterly false points.[14] On the other side, critics indeed have rightly identified numerous gaps, misinterpretations and omissions of important aspects. Before addressing the critique, we will now turn to the central argument.

Reducing his main idea to its basic proposition, Habermas argues that in the dusk of absolutism in Western Europe a new form of the 'public' emerged beyond the representational culture of the princely courts, such as their prime example and ideal Versailles, where the only hitherto existing locus of the 'public' was situated and confined to.[15] Habermas identified two historically evolved prerequisites for this "new realm of communication"[16] which laid the foundations of the public sphere to unfold: firstly, the rise of modern nation-states meaning the state represented by the (absolute) monarch as the (sole) holder of sovereignty

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[13] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

[14] A summary of critical views from mainly Anglo-Saxon scholarship is collected by Harold Mah, „Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians," *The Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 153-182.

[15] James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4-5.

[16] Ibidem, 4.

and public authority which, in turn, unintentionally promoted a creation of a "private body of subjects under royal rule, (…) society as a private realm distinct from it [i.e. the monarch's realm]."[17] Here was the nucleus of the private civil domain located which would later evolved into what Habermas calls the 'bourgeois public sphere'.

Secondly, the rise of capitalism reinforced a further split between state and (civil) society: since the state possessed the monopoly in political terms, society gained a certain autonomy or even independence by pursuing economic activities on a (global) market level which entailed growing needs for networks of communication and exchange. Both developments backed the emergence of the bourgeois family as a shelter of privacy and intimacy alongside with sincere affection and sensitivity beyond the spheres of state and labour. These norms and values formed the moral grounding for 'the other public' which started its triumphal procession in this very interiority of the family.[18]

With the appearance and widespread distribution of newspapers, journals and books, read by an interested and increasingly educated 'bourgeois' public in various places of sociality, such as salons, clubs and coffeehouses, an initially competing public sphere grew which gradually superseded the courtly representational culture and public. Although most historians reflecting on and applying Habermas' theory stop at this point, the alleged structural transformation of the public sphere has not reached its last phase. As Harold Mah emphasises, the public sphere which had been taken its shape in the long period described above undergoes the final and decisive step by becoming *the* public, a unitary entity, a collective subject, not spatially dispersed in the shape of single social groups in political dissent and conflict, but a mass subject—or simply the mass *katexochen*.[19]

Habermas dates the classic period of a 'mature' public sphere to the late era of enlightenment and the erupting revolutionary age from 1775/1789 ('Atlantic revolution'). The

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[17] Ibidem, 5.
[18] Ibidem, 6-7.
[19] Mah, *Rethinking the public sphere*, 155.

beginning industrialisation, alongside with the emergence of a growing impoverished class lacking education and available leisure time, marked the quick end of open access to the public arena. The strict separation between the state and the 'private' realm, typical of the heyday of the bourgeois public sphere, diminished in the course of the 19th century when the interventionist welfare state, capitalist corporations and mass media increasingly inferred the privacy of the family which, according to Habermas, gradually became a sphere of passive consumption and conformity while it consequently lost its relevance for the critical discourse.[20]

From the side of the critics, numerous parts of the Habermasian theory have been challenged. A rather classic point of contention by Geoff Eley and others was that the notion of the public sphere in Habermas' approach is far too confined to one sole class, the bourgeoisie. Instead, they argued, that among other social classes, in the elite as well as in the lower strata of society, a critical discourse did too evolve which in the end led to competing and diverse public spheres.[21] As we will see later, this point can be exemplified when tracing the development of the public discourse in Pest-Buda and Prague in the springtime of 1848. Another point of critique was on Habermas' grasping of the public sphere in spatial terms. Since the notion of the public sphere, according to its definition by Habermas, had an inherent spatial dimension, which is, however, not rendered *expressis verbis*, historians have usually understood and applied it in a spatialized way. It has been called a "structural setting", a "site", a "domain" and a "space" by various historians. Consequently, it had to be a 'locus' one could enter, occupy and leave.[22]

But was there a universal access to the public arena as Habermas claims? Especially from the side of gender studies serious doubts have been raised. Apart from the prerequisites for entering the discursive arena, such as owing property and a certain degree of education,

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[20] Horn van Melton, *The Rise of the Public*, 9-10.
[21] Mah, *Rethinking the public sphere*, 158-159.
[22] Ibidem, 160.

the public sphere was decidedly male. Joan Landes has argued that "the norms of the public sphere were intrinsically masculinist, resting on gendered distinctions between a (male) public realm and a (female) private one."[23] Insofar, she concludes, the structural properties of the public sphere meant a perpetuation of women's political subordination to the male-dominated discourse.[24] When taking this argument into consideration, Habermas' claim regarding the universal access to the public sphere seems to be severely questioned, since apart from women also other social groups were not allowed or able to enter it. In his reply to this argument, James Horn van Melton has stressed that, despite the fact that women had indeed not gained political rights since the enlightenment, their active participation in the public sphere (understood as a private social realm and not as a sphere of political power), for example as theatre audiences, in salons and societies, and as readers and writers, was an important structural element of the evolving public sphere.[25]

As it becomes clear in the course of this thesis, both the initial claim about the universal accessibility and its critique are too rigid and static, since particularly the 1848 revolution did break up hitherto prevailing conventions and restrictions. In the next chapter, the concept of the 'public sphere' will be applied to the very concrete urban settings of Pest-Buda and Prague on the eve of '1848'. The aim shall be to identify the arenas of debate, socialisation and eventually of the critical discourse which, according to the argumentation of this thesis, are regarded as the main constituents and preconditions for the emergence of the public sphere in the period of the revolution.

Based on these briefly sketched keystones of the central notion in Habermas' approach, the outlined spatial scope investigated in this thesis is a decidedly urban environment. Unlike older historiographical accounts which treated cities of this period as anonymous grand units in the course of far-reaching developments such as urbanisation and industria-

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[23] Horn van Melton, *The Rise of the Public*, 13-14.
[24] Ibidem, 13.
[25] Ibidem, 14.

lisation, modern urban historical research increasingly attempts to apply a qualitative micro-historical perspective to the city scope which incorporates interdisciplinary approaches derived from sociology, human geography or anthropology.[26] Lately, the city has been perceived as a highly dynamic, 'polyphone' and diverse organism with a sophisticated social and cultural topography. The city, seen as a focused place where social groups with heterogeneous backgrounds lived and met, formed a subjective *Lebenswelt* [life world] and *Erfahrungsraum* [realm of experience] with specific social and cultural mechanisms in closest proximity.[27] Constant influx of people from the countryside encountering already established inhabitants, in combination with a diversification and refinement of urban space and society, made the city a laboratory for the shaping of modern urban behaviour, identities and ways of living. Patterns of inclusion and marginalisation, assimilation and integration, conflict and mediation, cultural practises and formation of groups can be identified within the dense social web of the city realm.

Particular attention from the side of modern urban research has been paid to the dimensions of 'space' in the city context.[28] The premise is that 'space' is not, as commonly described, a 'container' or a closed entity *a priori* existing, but a social product created through acts of communication and human action. Based on the assumption that there is no such thing as a uniform and linear space within the complex social system of a city but overlapping and disparate, competing and controversial spaces as a result of hierarchies, inequalities and conventions communicated and challenged, fixed and changed, the urban space becomes a much more differentiated and multilayered scope for the historian. These various spatial levels of acting and behaving bear witness to the everyday life of the urban population.

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[26] Julia Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest: kulturelle Topographien einer Stadtgemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), 30-33.
[27] Ibidem, 46-48.
[28] Ibidem, 36-38. A concise overview over the debate on the spatial turn is provided in an anthology by Jörg Döring & Tristan Thielmann, eds., *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2009).

This approach comes close to Edward Soja's theory of the 'Third space' in which he suggests that, apart from the perceived space ('First space') and the conceived space ('Second space'), there is the dimension of the 'lived space' constituted by social processes and actual human (inter)action.[29] In other words, Soja argues that social processes shape spatial forms the same way as 'space' causes and moulds social processes.[30] Based on these considerations, the assumption is that the spatial, the social and the historical axes coincide while forming a topical junction. For the line of argument in this thesis, this junction is the city, more precisely the cities of Pest-Buda and Prague in their spatial and social dimension and in the concrete historical situation of '1848'.

Unsurprisingly, the revolutions in Pest-Buda and Prague in their function as profound breaks in the history of Hungary and Bohemia have attracted countless historians and scholars contributing particular interpretations of the 'concussive' events which caused unrest and fragility within the hitherto ostensibly calm and orderly Empire of the Metternich era. István Deák's book *The Lawful Revolution* can still be considered the standard work of the overall topic of the 1848 revolution in the Hungarian lands.[31] It mainly follows the course of events from the Reform Era in the 1830s and 1840s to the defeat of the Hungarian revolutionary army in 1849, and is modelled around the political biography of the revolution's main protagonist, Louis (Lajos) Kossuth. It provides a useful survey of both the political and social conditions in the pre-revolutionary period and the most important incidents in the Hungarian lands during the years 1848/1849.

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[29] Edward Soja, „Vom ‚Zeitgeist' zum ‚Raumgeist'. New Twists on the Spatial Turn" in Jörg Döring, Tristan Thielmann, eds., *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2009), 241-262, especially 250-255.
[30] Ibidem, 256.
[31] István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution. Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-49* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

The equivalent of Deák's account for the Bohemian lands during the 1848 revolution is Stanley Z. Pech's book *The Czech Revolution of 1848*.[32] Like Deák, Pech mainly follows the course of events starting with an analysis of the conditions in the pre-1848 period and later leading over to the revolutionary movement from March 1848 to the Pentecost Uprising in June 1848. But unlike Deák, Pech particularly emphasizes the socio-structural aspects of the movement and pays special attention to the ethnic and social groups involved (Czechs, Germans, Slovaks, peasants, workers, students, and women).

Apart from these older accounts aiming at the general history of the revolution, the scholarly literature which incorporates approaches relevant to the subject matter of the present thesis, the spatiality of the revolution in the urban context with particular respect to the German-speaking inhabitants and their contribution to the events, is relatively rare. Some very illuminating contributions come from Robert Nemes who published a highly relevant study of the urban history of Buda and Pest in the 19th century with special regard to topics such as population growth, industrialisation, edificial and infrastructural development and composition of the urban population.[33] An important part useful for our causes concerns the emergence of an urban public sphere. With particular sensitivity for the spatial dimensions, the chapter on the years of the revolution points to the importance of the public discourse for the outbreak of the revolution and the acting of the inhabitants during its progress. The organized forms of the urban society, clubs and associations, also play an important role in his 2001 article "Politics of the Dance Floor" in which Nemes traces the emerging Hungarian civil society and their appearance in the public sphere in Pest-Buda during the 1840s.[34] He exemplifies his general observance with the help of what he calls "the politics of the dance floor," i.e. semi-public celebrations conducted by newly founded voluntary associations and patriotic circles, in

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[32] Stanley Z. Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969)
[33] Robert Nemes, *The Once an Future Budapest*, (DeKalb: University of Illinois Press, 2005).
[34] Robert Nemes, "The Politics of the Dance Floor: Culture and Civil Society in Nineteenth-Century Hungary," *Slavic Review* 60 (2001), 802-823.

which the awakening Hungarian national consciousness could be displayed (balls, concerts, etc.) A congruent publication for the German-speaking community is still a desideratum, although we know of a well-established German cultural scene with balls, theatres, concerts and social events to which we shall return when defining the public sphere in Pest-Buda. Moreover, Nemes draws our attention to social groups involved in the revolution, for example by identifying women as important contributors to the urban political discourse.[35]

Another important study is Alice Freifeld's book *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary* in which a particular interest is devoted to the relevance of mass gatherings and demonstrations in Pest-Buda in the course of the revolution, not only on March 15th but continuously during the following months.[36] The relevance of *the* mass for shaping the political discourse and forming what might be called a 'public opinion' is keenly analysed and helps to define urban social life around 1848. György Spira's account *The Nationality Issue in the Hungary of 1848-49* provides additional perspectives to the problems emerging with regard to growing national tensions in the course of the revolution which, for the Bohemia case, are tackled by Gary B. Cohen in his book *The Politics of Ethnic Survival*.[37] However, the latter two are lacking a specific urban history frame.

Two classic contributions to the social history of the revolution in Bohemia are written by Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft, 1848-1918*, who in this extensive account provides many helpful insights into the urban history of the revolution in the Bohemian capital, and by Josef Polišenský who approaches the revolution from a Marxist perspective.[38] An expedient anthology of the urban histories of Prague and Budapest in the 19th century with con-

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[35] Robert Nemes, "Women in the 1848-1849 Hungarian Revolution," *Journal of Women's History* 13 (2001), 193-207.

[36] Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000).

[37] György Spira, *The Nationality Issue in the Hungary of 1848-49* (Budapest: Akadámiai Kiadó, 1992). Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

[38] Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft, 1848-1918* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994); Josef Polišenský, *Aristocrats and the Crowd in the revolutionary year 1848. A contribution to the history of revolution and counter-revolution in Austria* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1980).

tributions to the topics of urbanisation, demographics and social groups is edited by Gerhard Melinz and Susan Zimmermann.[39] Lastly, in her recently published dissertation Julia Richers draws attention to the Jewish community in Pest-Buda and provides a sound approach and argumentation for tackling a decidedly urban phenomenon like this.[40]

Based on the instructive scholarly literature the present thesis aims at an investigation of the functionality and the mechanisms of the public discourse on the eve and during the revolution of 1848. As stated above, the approach proposed is to trace the development, the changes and representations of the public discourse mirrored in the German press. Apart from one single edition of newspaper articles for the Pest-Buda case by Mária Rózsa which more-over comprises a selection of leaflets and other printed material illustrating the revolution in Pest-Buda and all Hungary, this examination had to rely on original issues of newspapers from Prague and Pest-Buda.[41]

The sources in which the argumentation is grounded consist of a selection of the most influential and widespread local newspapers published in Pest-Buda and Prague, notably the *Pester Zeitung*,[42] *Der Ungar*[43] and *Die Morgenröthe*[44] (Pest-Buda), and the *Prager Zeitung*,[45] *Ost und West*[46] and *Bohemia*[47] (Prague). It needs to be stated that these newspapers necessarily represent only a small sample of the German papers of this time. In order to

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[39] Gerhard Melinz & Susan Zimmermann, eds., *Wien – Prag – Budapest. Blütezeit der Habsburgermetropolen. Urbanisierung, Kommunalpolitik, gesellschaftliche Konflikte (1867-1918)* (Wien: Promedia, 1996).

[40] Julia Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest: kulturelle Topographien einer Stadtgemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009).

[41] Mária Rózsa, *„Ihr Männer aus, jetzt ruft die Zeit". Deutsche Texte aus Ungarn zur Revolution und zum Freiheitskampf 1848/1849* (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 2006). A general introduction into the issue of the press during '1848' is provided by Domokos G. Kosáry, *The press during the Hungarian Revolution of 1848-1849* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1986).

[42] Széchényi National Library Budapest/ call number: H 4249, Pester Zeitung / Red. Eduard Glatz, Pest: Landerer & Heckenast Ny., 1845-1852.

[43] Széchényi National Library Budapest/ call number: FM3/988, Der Ungar: zeitschriftliches Organ für magyarische Interessen, für Kunst, Literatur, Theater und Mode / Red. Hermann Klein, Pesth: 1842-1848.

[44] Széchényi National Library Budapest/ call number: FM3/5153, Morgenröthe: Tageblatt für Kunst, Literatur und sociales Leben / Red. L. P. Horváth, Pest 1848.

[45] National Library of the Czech Republic Prague/ call number: 52 A 42, 1848/1., Prager Zeitung (Prager Constitutionelle Zeitung, Amtsblatt) / Red. Eduard Breier, Prag: Medau und Comp., 1848.

[46] National Library of the Czech Republic Prague/ call numbers: Mf C 004633, Mf C 004634, Ost und West: Blätter für Kunst, Literatur und geselliges Leben / Red. Rudolf Glaser, Prag: K. Gerzabek 1847-1848.

[47] Austrian Nation Library Vienna/ call numbers: 394190-C.20.1847, 394190-C.21 1848,1, Bohemia / Red. Franz Klutschak & Bernhard Gutt, Prag: Verlag Gottlieb Haase, 1847-1848.

confine their number, only those which had already existed before the March events and the granting of the freedom of the press were chosen for examination. Certainly, one has to keep in mind that after March 1848 the sheer number of periodicals heavily increased; a process which went hand in hand with the diversification of political positions and opinions.

The paramount principle of the examination of this corpus of newspapers is to understand how and in which ways the public discourse in both urban centres was being constituted. In other words, the assumption is that the reporting on the local events, their journalistic evaluation and reception by the respective readership had a formative impact on the public discourse among the German-speaking communities in both places. Apart from exhaustive articles on cultural issues, such as stage and literature reviews, all these periodicals had a section in common in which selected events and happenings having occurred in the city the previous days was assembled. These very briefly sketched news usually informed the reader what was going on in his or her neighbourhood, which club gatherings took place and where, which coffeehouses have been opened or renovated, whose public lecture could be recommended and various other things the readership had to know, e.g. the progress of urban construction sites, the installation of street lighting, and, of course, the new railways.

One has to be aware of the fact that before the March events all newspapers were subject to censorship. This might be one reason why some newspapers did not engage in political debates or even commenting whatsoever. *Ost und West* and *Bohemia* in Prague for example exclusively reported on aesthetic and artistic topics. Only after being granted freedom of the press they would undergo a fundamental transformation. All of a sudden, all of the discussed newspapers became a forum for passionate political debate and opinion. Fervent letters to the editor, commentaries and comprehensive reporting on the latest events alongside with the publication of protocols of the local political bodies, proclamations and announcements provided manifold information for opinion making. Some editorial offices even decided to issue

periodic supplemental papers in order to give the interested readership the opportunity of publishing further letters to the editor and short essays to carry out dedicated discussion on the currently debated issues.

Taking this into account, we can presume that the newspapers serve as a mirror of the ongoing and constantly changing public discourse in the cities in question. Through an investigation of their reporting and commenting on the revolutions and their immediate aftermath gives one a firsthand insight into the mechanisms of how the political developments were perceived and what kind of reactions they evoked among the people in the urban environment. Alongside with other printed material, such as leaflets and placards, these papers and journals can be considered the key means for the popularization of news and rumours, as well as opinion and critique in the urban context. Openly accessible in numerous coffeehouses, bookshops and hotels, or delivered to an increasing number of subscribers, they became the paramount medium for the spread of information. Their proximity in time to the occurring events and their relevance for the vibrating public discourse in the respective city make them a central source for the revolution as a decidedly urban event.

Based on the analysis of these sources one can investigate the attitudes and reactions of the German-speaking communities in Pest-Buda and Prague, their perception, involvement and contribution to the revolutions. This material enables us to follow the revolutionary enthusiasm and fraternization which bridged the subtly smouldering differences between the 'German' and the Hungarian and Czech respectively city population after the March events and identify the turning points when the 'enchanted' atmosphere, which we encountered in the quotations at the outset of this chapter, was increasingly supplanted by nationalisation and a shift towards exclusivist attitudes. Additionally, following the spatial approach depicted above, the information *about* and the interpretation of events *in* the urban space by journalists and contributors to the newspapers make it possible to draft an urban topography of the revo-

lution by identifying places with symbolic connotations and emblematic imprints generated through the public discourse. Adding this 'spatial' dimension to the 'historical plot' adds a fresh perspective to the hitherto existing emphasis on chronology and biography in the historiography of the revolution.

Before engaging in these issues, the next chapter concentrates on the urban space of Pest-Buda and Prague in the run-up to and during the revolutions, reflects on the socio-economic conditions and the changes of the population structure, and eventually focuses on the public discourse itself, on how it emerged and by what means it was maintained in the period in question.

Chapter 2

Urban Space and Public Sphere

in Prague and Pest-Buda on the eve of '1848'

As we drove along the Quay, which is here paved and walled in, we arrived at the Redouten Saal, *a ball-room of very large dimension and elegant proportions, gay in winter with happy crowds of nobles and citizens mingled together in the levelling waltz and gallopade.*[48]
– John Paget, 1835.

The excruciating has happened, the day of horror, dies irae, dies illa—*coffee has become more expensive.*[49] *– Pester Zeitung, 19 August 1845.*

When John Paget, a trained physician and passionate traveller from Leicestershire, arrived at Pest-Buda on board of a steamer from Pressburg in 1835, the first person he met was a "rather dark-complexioned man, with a singularly bright eye, and dressed in a style so completely English"[50] that Paget initially supposed him to be a countryman—Count István Szechényi. This, at least, is the version Paget presents in his voluminous travelogue *Hungary and Transylvania*, first published in London in 1839, in which the Englishman accurately reports on his journey he had begun in Vienna and which would later lead him to the Balaton, Upper Hungary and finally Transylvania.[51] Apart from his meeting with the famous Hungarian aristocrat whose person, public activities and achievements Paget devotes an entire chapter of his account, he gives us a firsthand description of the cities of Pest and Buda in the year of his visit. This eclectic description is based on his tour through both cities after his arrival and was not meant to be a comprehensive or exhaustive account.

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[48] John Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania: with remarks on their condition, social, political and economical* (New York: Arno Press, 1971) [reprint], 233.
[49] Anonymous author, Pester Zeitung, No. 82, 19 August 1845 *[Das Entsetzliche ist geschehen, der Tag des Grauens 'dies irae, dies illa' – der Kaffee ist theurer geworden]*.
[50] Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania*, 202-203.
[51] Ibidem.

Among many features, Paget praised the Palatine Hotel as one of the best accommodations in the Austrian dominions, the clean fiacres, the splendid houses at the Quay, the Casino with its pleasant interior and fragrant tobacco smell, the giant *Redoutensaal* (Pesti Vigadó) and the paved streets.[52] He acknowledges Pest's enormous growth of the last years by exemplifying that

> *(...) one of the large squares now in the middle of Pest was, only a few years ago, so far out of the town, that the first occupants could not sleep for the croaking of frogs in the neighbouring marshes (...) which are now handsome streets.*[53]

The Museum, the building of the Hungarian Academy and the Rákos plain, which used to be the gathering place for the Hungarian diets in the Middle Ages and served as a race-course in Paget's time, impressed the visitor just like the city of Buda on the other bank of the Danube he visited afterwards with its fine vineyards and the edificial complexes of the fortress which sheltered the *Königliche Statthalterei* and the *Ungarische Hofkammer*.[54] Overall, Pest and Buda appeared as full-fledged cities with amenities and characteristics of modern urbanity which appealed to the senses of the Englishman.

From his account we get the impression that the city agglomeration of Buda, Óbuda and particularly Pest were in the process of undergoing a far-reaching urban transformation. After the backlashes of the lethal cholera epidemic in 1831 and the 1838 floodwater which caused severe destruction to the building stock on both banks of the river, this urbanisation process accelerated and intensified in the following decades and entailed several aspects: number and structure of the urban population were under continuing change, the city areas enlarged dramatically, the edificial structure underwent a redevelopment and urban social life in general experienced a manifold diversification and inner refinement.

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[52] Ibidem, 229-233.
[53] Ibidem, 235.
[54] Ibidem, 235-236, 238-243, 245-246.

Against the background of this process of advancing urbanization which affected not only the outward appearance of the city but also its inner structures, this chapter focuses on the actual settings of Pest-Buda and Prague. It addresses their characteristics in social and spatial terms in the immediate years before the revolution as well as the emergence and maintenance of the citywide public discourse by tracing how and by what means it was generated. The remarks first concentrate on Pest-Buda; then the focus shifts to Prague. A short comparison of both cases at the end prepares the ground for the following events, the outbreak of the revolution in March 1848 which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The area of the urban agglomeration of Pest-Buda-Óbuda, from here on simply called Pest-Buda, formed a vibrant sphere of communication and interaction. Since the prospected stone bridge connecting both banks of the Danube was still under construction in the 1840s, traffic and exchange between the cities was maintained by regular ferries and by a temporal pontoon bridge, which was normally installed in early spring and removed in late autumn because of the expected ice drift in the wintertime. This provisional bridge was generally being regarded as an impediment for the cities' economic upturn and had eventually led to the project of the *Lánchíd* [chain bridge] which, however, was only completed by 1849.[55] In the period of the revolution between March and June 1848, this thesis focuses on, the pontoon bridge served its purpose when it was re-installed on March 4th 1848, right before the revolution started, thus making a fast circulation of news and rumours in the entire urban agglomeration possible.[56]

Influx of people from the countryside caused an increase of the urban population in Pest. An elaborate demographic statistic based on the military conscription and published in the *Pester Zeitung* gives an idea of the quickly developing changes: whereas in the *Militärjahr* [military conscription year] 1836/37 the total population had amounted to roughly 70,000

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[55] Robert Nemes, *The Once an Future Budapest* (DeKalb: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 116-117.
[56] Pester Zeitung, No. 699, 5 March 1848.

inhabitants, it had already more than 100,000 only eight years later, which meant a rate of increase of ca. 43 %.[57] Hence, Pest was by far the largest city in the Hungarian Kingdom, almost double the size of the next smaller city, Debrecen. The highest density of inhabitants in Pest was featured by the inner district of Belváros (Innenstadt) where 20,762 people were registered.[58] The other districts of the city, Lipótváros (Leopoldstadt), Terézváros (Theresienstadt), Józsefváros (Josephstadt) and Ferencváros (Franzstadt) grouped clockwise around the inner district. All of them had been undergoing fundamental changes within a short period of time: Terézváros advanced the biggest district in the city with a total population of ca. 38,000 in 1847.[59] The edificial structure of the suburbs changed dramatically. Due to the catastrophe caused by the flood in 1838 the housing areas, mainly in Terézváros, Józsefváros and Ferencváros, had to be rebuild, since more than 50 % of the houses in Pest had collapsed because of water damage.[60] Under the aegis of Palatine Joseph, the omnipresent Count Széchenyi and the *Pester Verschönerungscommission* (Szépitő Bizottság) [Pest beautyfication commission] the incipient building boom gave the city a different phenotype in an astoundingly short time period.

The significantly smaller city of Buda on the other bank of the river developed slower, from about 31,000 inhabitants in 1838 to 40,500 in 1847.[61] Around 30 % (11,414) of the populace lived in the district of Víziváros (Wasserstadt) beneath the castle; the district of Tabán, between Gellert Hill and Castle, had the second largest number of inhabitants (7,700).[62] The population of the a bit upstream located city of Óbuda did not increase at all

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[57] Statistics of the Pest population, Pester Zeitung, No. 411, 19 March 1847.
[58] For the detailed statistics see Domokos Kosáry, ed., *Budapest története a török kiűzesetől a márciusi forradalomig* (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó 1975), 373-375.
[59] Idem.
[60] Julia Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest: kulturelle Topographien einer Stadtgemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), 119-122.
[61] Kosáry, *Budapest története*, 373-375.
[62] Ibidem, 373-375.

and retained a level of about 7,600, making a total population of all three administratively se-

parated cities of roughly 150,000.[63]

While the vast majority of the inhabitants was Catholic (in Pest 80 %, in Buda 75 %,

in Óbuda 60 %), the urban agglomeration had a considerable Jewish population.[64] In Pest a

good portion of it which had doubled its number in six years and reached a new peak with

about 13,000 individuals concentrated in the district of Terézváros.[65] Also Óbuda where a

third of the population was affiliated to the 'mosaic faith' was a centre of the local Jewish

community.[66] In sum, ca. 15,000 Jews lived in the agglomeration of the three cities by 1851,

which meant a percentage of approximately 10 %.[67]

A more difficult issue is the composition of the cities' population in terms of ethnicity

or nationality. Before addressing this highly sophisticated question, it must be stated that, due

to the limited frame of this thesis, it is not the aim to engage in the scholarly debate about the

explanatory power and validity of these terms for the present context. The diverse con-

tributions to the question of the emergence and construction of group and national identity by

Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson, Miroslav Hroch, Clifford Geertz, Rogers Brubaker and

many others have fuelled a dedicated and prolific controversy with many different approaches

how to deal with the issue of 'identity' which, however, cannot be discussed here.[68] Instead,

for the goals of this thesis we tackle this issue in a rather pragmatic way, since the actual ways

of constituting a 'national identity' as such are not in the centre of the subject matter. Yet, it is

important to emphasise that in the time period this thesis is dealing with the awakening

national consciousness was still fluid and amorphous and did not have clear-cut dividing

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[63] Idem.
[64] Ibidem, 397-398.
[65] Idem.
[66] Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest*, 59-63.
[67] Kosáry, *Budapest története*, 398-399.
[68] An overview of the most relevant approaches is presented by Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest*, 41-46.

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lines. Many other reservations concerning this issue can be made, for example the lack of reliable statistics.

As Robert Nemes has put it, being 'German' in the cities of Pest-Buda was chiefly defined by education, social status and, most importantly, by language.[69] German was the primary language of commerce, culture and everyday life in the respective cities in the first half of the 19th century. Against this background, only slowly but steadily, the Hungarian national movement was gaining ground through fostering a Magyar nationhood by emphasising and popularising the Hungarian language and customs. We will see later how this development proceeded in the urban context. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that bilingualism played an important role in everyday life, although this ability was rather demanded by those urban inhabitants whose primary language was Hungarian.[70] Finally, it can be assumed that a good portion of the populace had a rather indifferent attitude towards a 'national' consciousness which only began to change in the course of the 1840s and particularly during and after the revolution.[71] In short, when speaking of 'Germans' in the present context, we mean German-speakers whose primary language was German. This also includes the vast majority of the Jewish population. This terminological clarification is to be applied to the Pest-Buda as well as to the Prague case of this study.

Thus, with all due reservations, we act under the assumption that the majority of inhabitants in 1848 Pest-Buda can be considered German-speakers. Even on the basis of the post-revolution census of 1851 in which the nationality was surveyed, the Germans in Pest-Buda still constituted a relative majority, although the Magyarization process had increasingly been changing the linguistic and 'national' composition of the urban society which is also evident in the public discourse.[72] In the newspapers of the years before 1848 we find many

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[69] Nemes, *Budapest*, 15-16.
[70] Ibidem, 17, 101-102.
[71] Ibidem, 105.
[72] Kosáry, *Budapest története*, 399.

instances which exemplify this subtle process, sometimes in the form of very minor comments. In 1846 for example, the *Pester Zeitung* reported on an occurrence in the local baths that a son of a notable burgher had yelled at his apparently German-speaking swimming instructor that he wanted to be addressed in Hungarian, otherwise he would not obey.[73] A year later, the readership learnt that the names of hills and locations in the Buda Mountains were to be magyarized, according to the new decrees of the administration. On the side of the German-speaking inhabitants this very measure obviously caused some irritations, so that the editor-in-chief of the *Pester Zeitung*, Eduard Glatz, suggested an upkeep of German labels for the renamed places, especially because the pronunciation of the Hungarian names was difficult for the non-Hungarian-speakers.[74] A bit earlier, a very similar debate had occurred about the issue of street and shop signs in Pest-Buda which usually were in German and therefore caused unrest among nationally incited Magyar circles.[75] Via the newspapers all these examples, negligible and individual as they might appear, entered the public discourse and influenced the political opinion of the inhabitants.

In the 1840s, the Hungarian national awakening had already made substantial progress in Pest-Buda.[76] Burghers from various social backgrounds formed or joint voluntary associations and clubs which mushroomed in the two decades before the revolution. Robert Nemes even characterized this development as a "mania for associations."[77] Considering the strict censorship of the print media, these more intimate social gatherings constituted a semi-public sphere in which people articulated and exchanged opinions and standpoints, just like Habermas has suggested in his theory. They were engaged in philanthropic, infrastructural and economic as well as in cultural activities. Especially the latter often went hand in hand

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[73] Pester Zeitung, No. 264, 3 July 1846.

[74] Pester Zeitung, No. 470, 4 July 1847.

[75] Nemes, *Budapest*, 123-128

[76] For a concise overview on the topic of Magyar nationalism and its intellectual underpinnings before 1848 see László Deme, „Writers and Essayists and the Rise of Magyar Nationalism in the 1820s and 1830s," *Slavic Review* 43 (1984), 624-640.

[77] Nemes, *Budapest*, 61.

with a progressing creation of a national awareness. During the first weeks of the revolution these clubs and associations quickly attracted hundreds upon hundreds of inhabitants.[78] Their role for the politicization and mobilization of urban society can hardly be overestimated, since they tied forces of social and political, linguistic and cultural cohesion and appeared as influential 'players' in the public sphere of the pre-revolutionary and later the revolutionary city.

An essential part of the setup of a citywide public discourse was the emergence and proliferation of local newspapers through which the inhabitants of the respective city could take note of developments both in their immediate environment and in other parts (mostly also cities) of the monarchy and beyond. In the course of the 1840s, we can observe an increasing number of newspapers with a broad spectrum of topics and attitudes: rather feuilletonistic, culturally-oriented ones with an emphasis on book and stage reviews, others with a more events-oriented coverage of incidents happening in the city, and some of them had a more noticeable political reporting and opinion, at least as far as censorship would tolerate it. At the latest during the months after the revolution, most publications merged these three branches and became periodicals covering the entire topical array.

Apart from many Hungarian periodicals, which are not taken into account in this thesis, a considerable number of German newspapers were published in Pest-Buda, among them the *Pester Zeitung*. Its editor-in-chief, Eduard Glatz, came from a German family in Upper Hungary, had studied at the University of Leipzig and was therefore acquainted with the idea of German nationalism.[79] As the main contributor of the *Pester Zeitung* he, as seen above, commented critically on the tendencies of Magyarization by affirming a rather conservative agenda when it came to linguistic issues. Other widespread papers were *Die Morgenröthe* edited by Lázár Petrichevich Horváth, *Der Ungar* by the Jewish journalist Herrmann Klein and

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[78] Ibidem, 142-143. An overview is presented in a 2001 article by Robert Nemes, "Associations and Civil Society in Reform-Era Hungary," *Austrian History Yearbook* 32 (2001), 3-28.
[79] Nemes, *Budapest*, 74-75.

Samuel Rosenthal's *Der Spiegel* whose editorial office was situated, just like Glatz's, in the district of Belváros.[80] Unlike in earlier decades, the German press market in the mid 1840s was diversified and competitive which even led to arguments between the editorial staffs. For example, *Der Ungar* und *Pester Zeitung* were constantly bickering. Most of the newspapers were issued three to four times a week. This practise fundamentally changed only in the course of the revolution when countless special editions, *Extra-Nummern* [special issues], were published in order to catch up with the unfolding events which made the respective papers downright dailies.

Newspapers were read either at home or in public places, such as coffeehouses and restaurants where on could discuss and argue with other people being present at the spot. Of course, one has to keep in mind that places like these were not completely open access areas for all social strata; yet there were major places of socialisation. Not only did many of the newly formed clubs and associations regularly have their meetings there; they were highly appreciated spots for spending time, either individually or in company. One could read the provided newspapers, mainly the local ones, in some hotels even a selection of papers from other parts of the monarchy, and engage in debates about issues of public interest. The local press had a close eye on the developments of the 'coffeehouse scene' in Pest-Buda and informed their readership about new-established or renovated places, gave recommendations and popularised the latest news about the increasing prices for coffee, as we can see in the introductory quote.

Additional to the coffeehouses with their relevance for public debate and critical exchange, there were countless urban places of socialisation and get-togethers in all seasons of the year. Usually, the first months of the year were under the impression of glamorous car-

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[80] The newspaper entitled *Der Spiegel für Kunst, Eleganz und Mode* had been published since 1827 and ceased to exist in June 1847.

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nival balls—not less than 84 balls were held in 1846.[81] A great array of associations, patriotic circles and guilds invited to these kinds of activities. Their decidedly political character during Hungary's reform is of eminent interest. Robert Nemes in his article "Politics on the dance floor" argues that venues like balls and feasts were highly important for shaping and cultivating the national consciousness particularly on the Hungarian side.[82] By using solely the Hungarian language and by celebrating 'Hungarian style' with its special folklore, dresses and songs, these balls had an exclusivist character. In this sense, this actually pre-political (semi-)public sphere of festivities became increasingly politicised, a trend which can also be observed at other events, the annual horse race in spring, concerts in the summertime, and the large Pest industry fair in August 1846 which impressively attracted around 22,000 people, according to a report of the *Pester Zeitung*.[83] Other occasions, such as the opening ceremonies for new railway lines (to Vác and to Szolnok) also assumed a virtually patriotic character and were always accompanied by glamorous feasts and fairs.

Another place for nourishing the urban public discourse was the theatre.[84] In Pest there were a German and a Hungarian stage coexisting. German newspapers often reviewed both theatres, chiefly according to aesthetic and artistic principles not to national prejudices. In the night from the 1st to 2nd February 1847, the German theatre in Pest experienced a fatal catastrophe when it completely burned down after a stroke of lightening. The very emotional reports in the German press of the following days (even weeks) make clear what importance the theatre had had for the local German-speaking community.[85]

Aside from these structural prerequisites, such as the great quantity of coffeehouses, the theatres, a flourishing urban association life and an impressively multifaceted press mar-

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[81] Pester Zeitung, No. 170, 20 January 1846.
[82] Robert Nemes, "The Politics of the Dance Floor: Culture and Civil Society in Nineteenth-Century Hungary" *Slavic Review* 60 (2001), 802-823.
[83] Pester Zeitung, No. 303, 10 September 1846. For the industry fair and other gatherings see Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 38-43.
[84] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 29-34.
[85] Pester Zeitung, No. 386, 4 February 1848; Pester Zeitung, No. 394, 18 Feburary 1848.

ket, there were also mass events before '1848' which attracted huge crowds in the urban space. When Palatine Joseph died on January 13th 1847, his mortal remains were publicly displayed in Buda. According to a report of the *Pester Zeitung*, more than 50,000 inhabitants from Pest crossed the Danube in the following days (in January!) in order to express their appreciation for Joseph and the achievements during his long reign by paying their last respects to him.[86] An even larger crowd gathered on the occasion of the arrival of the new Palatine Stephan at his residence city on August 31st 1847, a festive event which was accompanied by fireworks and an illumination of the cities: reports say that more than 100,000 onlookers gathered in the streets and at the quayside celebrating an outdoor feast unseen in Pest and Buda so far.[87]

Together with many other instances, such as the election campaigns for the 1847/48 diet and the industry fairs which due to the popularity of Lajos Kossuth allured thousands of people, this short overview shows that mass gatherings with a gradually increasing political content in the public space of the city were not unknown to the inhabitants of Pest-Buda before March 1848. A complex urban public nourished with information and rumours had been emerging over the past years: the innumerable engaged people were well-organised, active, had manifold interests and shaped a dynamic urban discourse which piecemeal included more and more inhabitants from all social strata.

Concerning the evolution of the public sphere in the urban context, the situation in Prague in the years before the revolution bore resemblance to the flourishing Hungarian metropolis on the Danube, at least to a certain degree. Very schematically speaking, the city layout of Prague featured structural characteristics similar to those of Pest-Buda. Located too on a broad stream (Vltava/Moldau), the Bohemian capital had a smaller western part (Malá Strana/Kleinseite) with the ancient royal castle (Hradčany/Hradschin) and a larger and

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[86] Pester Zeitung, No. 377, 19 January 1847.
[87] Pester Zeitung, No. 503, 5 September 1847.

continuously expanding part on the opposite bank (Staré Město/Altstadt and Nové Město/Neustadt). The city, whose shores were linked by the stony Old bridge (Charles Bridge) from the Middle Ages and by the younger Chain bridge (Kettenbrücke) via the Schützeninsel (Střelecký Ostrov), underwent an expansion the in course of the first half of the 19th century, although not with the same rate of increase as Pest: the city population grew significantly less in the first half of the 19th century.[88] According to the census of 1850, Prague with its five districts had 118,405 inhabitants and thus was smaller as Pest-Buda; yet, it was by far the largest urban agglomeration in the Bohemian Kingdom.[89]

An important point of public dispute was the statistics concerning the composition of the urban population with regard to their 'nationality'. Georg Schnabel, professor of law at Prague University, who had researched this issue on the basis of an investigation of parish registers, published his calculations in the *Prager Zeitung* on January 16th 1848.[90] He suggested that about 66,000 inhabitants of Prague were German, ca. 36,600 Czechs. In the course of the following months, these figures were fiercely challenged by several other scholars. This displays the delicate significance of this issue for the public discourse, especially with regard to the prominent Czech national movement.[91] Again, we should not take these figures as too monolithic or carved in stone. Just like in Pest-Buda, the question of an emerging national consciousness among the urban populace is not easy to deal with, since apart from the reservations stated above specific Bohemian peculiarities such as the tradition of *böhmischer Landespatriotismus* [Bohemian (regional) patriotism] and the issues of bilingualism and national indifference are to be taken into account. As Gary Cohen suggested, it was "social

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[88] As for the urbanisation process in Prague see Jaroslav Láník, „Urbanisierung in Böhmen und die Entwicklung der Prager Agglomeration," in Gerhard Melinz & Susan Zimmermann, eds., *Wien – Prag – Budapest. Blütezeit der Habsburgermetropolen. Urbanisierung, Kommunalpolitik, gesellschaftliche Konflikte (1867-1918)* (Wien: Promedia, 1996), 46-57, esp. 47-48.

[89] Gary B. Cohen, "Society and Culture in Prague, Vienna, and Budapest in the late Nineteenth Century," *East European Quarterly* 20 (1986), 468.

[90] Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 20.

[91] Ost und West, No. 17, 8 February 1848.

status and occupation which separated German-speakers from their Czech neighbours in Prague", whereby one has to keep in mind that "[b]eyond the sometimes great differences in status and means, the great majority of German-speakers had frequent and close contacts with the Czech-speaking population."[92] Cohen concluded that all these aspects do not suggest a conscious ethnic identity of the 'Germans' in *Vormärz* Prague. Instead, the decisive factors for identification remained the monarchy and the territory.[93]

Just like Pest-Buda, Prague featured a numerous Jewish population which was, in linguistic and cultural terms, closely connected to the German inhabitants who occupied the most influential positions as state officials in the local administration, officers in the military, higher clergy, merchants and industrials.[94] In these branches of urban life, the overwhelmingly used language was German. The Jews in Prague mainly concentrated in the district of Židovské Město (today Josefov) and the neighbouring part of the Old Town and numerically amounted to 6,400 in 1848, which meant a share of about 5 % of the total population.[95]

Prague as the ancient capital of Bohemia had an eminent position concerning administration and economy in the kingdom. The early industrial development made Prague, very centrally located the Bohemian basin, a hotspot of textile-producing and machine-building companies, which were almost exclusively in the hand of the German-speaking elite.[96] Against this predominance of German language and culture, the Czech intellectuals and students, just like their Hungarian equivalents, fostered the national movement by founding clubs and associations, most notably the 'Repeal Club', literary salons and patriotic circles and thus

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[92] Cohen, *Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 24.
[93] Ibidem, 26.
[94] Friedrich Prinz, „Von der Revolution bis zum Neoabsolutismus: Sozialer Aufbruch und wachsende nationale Konfrontation," in Friedrich Prinz, ed., *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas. Böhmen und Mähren* (Berlin: Siedler, 2002), 311-312.
[95] Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival,* 20.
[96] Ibidem, 23.

contributed to a diversifying social life in the urban realm.[97] The (semi-)public sphere of the city became increasingly politicised and an area of critical debate. An important factor within this process was the press.

In the immediate dawn of the revolutionary year 1848 a very diverse press culture existed in Prague. Apart from several Czech papers, most notable the *Pražské Nowiny*, the three major periodical in German were the *Prager Zeitung* edited by Eduard Breier, *Ost und West* by Rudolf Glaser and *Bohemia* by Franz Klutschak and Bernhard Gutt. Compared to their Pest-Buda equivalents the Prague papers appeared more modern in layout and had a broader topical array. The news reporting of the *Prager Zeitung* covered the European countries, the Americas and Asia. Other prominent topics were economy and trade, art and science, social life and cultural reports. In sum, the *Prager Zeitung* as the leading German periodical in Prague was conceptually one step ahead of the journals in Pest, although the *Pester Zeitung* gradually caught up, particularly in the course of the revolution. *Ost und West* as well as *Bohemia* mainly engaged in covering cultural events in Prague and underwent a strong politicization of their reporting only after the stirring days in March 1848.

When it comes to the documenting of local circumstances in the city, the newspapers fulfilled the same key task as their counterparts in Pest-Buda. The selection of news and topics aimed at informing the readership about the latest developments and events in the urban realm, oftentimes combined with a journalistic evaluation. Technological achievements, such as the installation of the electro-magnetic telegraph between Vienna and Prague (which would later become important for the revolution) or street lighting, moreover the announcement of festivities and balls, the review of literature and theatre plays were typical themes in the mostly a-political papers of the *Vormärz*.

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[97] Ibidem, 29.

A particular emphasis was put on the importance of the Czech national movement, not in a pejorative or prejudiced way, but with certain sympathy. Exhaustive reports on the death of Josef Jungmann, a leading figure of the movement, Palacký's *Matice česká* or successful theatre premieres displayed a sincere interest of the German press in this regard. The very positive commentaries on Ferdinand Břetislav Mikovec's play 'Das Ende der Přemysliden' [The end of the Premyslid dynasty], a very patriotic and solemn work of art, which had grandiose success in the Czech theatre in January and February 1848, can serve as an example for this inclination.[98]

On the basis of what is outlined above, we can assume that in the cities areas of Pest-Buda and Prague a very active and dynamic public life had emerged in the years before 1848. Organized forms of socialisation, such as clubs and associations, devoted to particular cultural and political causes, a great quantity of newspapers as catalysers of information and opinion, and (semi-)public *fora* of consumption and debate, continuously attracted and involved more and more people from the urban cosmos and made the city a 'polyphone' and multifaceted social organism. An urban sphere of communication, exchange and discourse was being generated; the urban space was constantly refined by the interaction of the inhabitants. This is the specific context in which the revolution erupted in the days of March 1848 and which in turn gave way for an even more engaged political discourse in the urban public after the bondage of censorship had been torn.

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[98] Bohemia, No. 7/8, 13/14 January 1848.

Chapter 3

Revolutionary (dis)enchantment:

From fraternization to conflict

Cheers to the freedom of the press! Cheers to publicity! A sincere and persistent pereat *to all secretiveness!*[99] *– Count Moritz Deym, Bohemia, 25 March 1848*

Brothers! As citizens of a common state, as citizens of the world, we speak to each other (…). It is time that nations just as families take each other's hands. Cheers to the king, cheers to liberty, cheers to fraternity.[100] *– Karl Kendelenyi, Pester Zeitung, 6 April 1848*

(…) they also forced the mournful conviction on us that the German element appears to be pushed aside, which, not only by its intelligence but by quantity and indigeneity, is entitled to have a decisive say in all matters concerning the common fatherland.[101]
– German Constitutional Club, Prager Zeitung, 27 April 1848

When the telegram sent from the imperial court in Vienna which announced the end of censorship, the issuing of a press law and the summoning of the estates in all parts of the Habsburg monarchy in a foreseeable period of time was made public in Prague, it was understandable that Franz Klutschak, editor-in-chief of the *Bohemia*, expressed his thoughts in an almost poetic way:

Finally, after a long and hopeless languor, the writer is given back the innate right of free speech. The killing of thoughts has an end (…). Our country enters a new era. Who knows what future will bring, what throes there will be![102]

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[99] Stadthauptmann Moritz Graf Deym, Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 25 March 1848 *[(…), es lebe die Preßfreiheit! Es lebe die Oeffentlichkeit! Ein aufrichtiges und treu gehaltenes Pereat jeder Geheimnißkrämerei!].*

[100] Karl Kendelenyi, Pester Zeitung, No. 636, 6 April 1848 *[Brüder, als Bürger eines gemeinsamen Staates, als Weltbürger, sprechen wir zueinander. (…) Die Zeit ist da daß sich die Nationen wie Familien die Hände reichen. (…) Es lebe der König, es lebe die Freiheit, es lebe die Brüderlichkeit].*

[101] Constitutioneller Verein, Prager Zeitung, No. 66, 27 April 1848 *[(…) sie haben uns auch die traurige Ueberzeugung aufgedrungen, dass das deutsche Element wirklich hintangesetzt erscheint, das deutsche Element, (…) welches nicht blos durch seine Intelligenz, sondern schon durch seine Zahl und Eingeburt berechtigt ist, ein entscheidendes Wort in den Angelegenheiten des gemeinsamen Vaterlandes mitzusprechen].*

[102] Franz Klutschak, Bohemia, No. 43, 16 March 1848 *[Das angeborne Recht des freien Wortes wird endlich nach langem, hoffnungslosem Schmachten dem Schriftsteller zurückgegeben. Die Tödtung des Gedankens hat ein Ende…. Unser Land tritt in eine neue Aera, wer kann noch wissen, was die neue Zeit bringt, welche Geburtswehen seyn werden!].*

By pointing to possible challenges of the future, Klutschak displayed a fine sensorium for the difficulties in the days to come. As it would turn out later, he proved to be more farsighted than many of his colleagues who dived into the sheer endless joy of the moment, although he could certainly not foresee where the tide of events would eventually lead. Of course, the granting of the freedom of the press meant a tremendous achievement which had been unimaginable only a few days earlier. Without censorship, an unrestricted public discourse seemed to be within reach for the first time.

Impacted by the news from Vienna, the urban public experienced common relief and an outburst of happiness. An atmosphere of romantic fraternization emerged and dominated the next weeks of political development in Prague and Pest-Buda. In the course of April 1848, however, this enchanted temper underwent a slow but advancing metamorphosis. Conflicts on the legal status of the respective languages, assaults on the Jewish population and further eruptions of violence, eventually a murky spirit of mistrust gained ground. This chapter addresses under the headlines of first 'fraternization' and then 'conflict' the changing public discourses in the urban realms of Prague and Pest-Buda reflected in the German press. By retracing the representations of this fundamental alteration in the local key media, it is also possible to get an idea of the involvement of German-speaking burghers in the revolution, about the perception of and reactions to this urban event. Finally, the focus shifts to an evaluation of the similarities and differences of both cases in question.

3.1 Fraternization

The 'revolutionary play' in Prague had begun when on March 8th (Ash Wednesday) a bilingual leaflet appeared in the streets announcing a public assembly in the Václav Baths the following Saturday evening.[103] The invoking came from the radical 'Repeal Club' which had

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[103] Otto Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft, 1848-1918* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1994), 44.

clandestinely scattered the invitations all over the city.[104] Despite the cold and rainy weather and the comprehensive security measures from the side of the urban authorities, represented by Count Stadion, governor of Bohemia, Josef Heyde, police director, and Josef Müller, burgomaster of Prague, who had warned against any disturbances of the public peace, the gathering of a few thousand people took place as planned.[105] The audience consisted of young people, mainly students, burghers and officials, and was mostly Czech, although also a lowly number of Germans was present.[106] In the course of the fevered meeting, a petition to the emperor, edited by the lawyer František Brauner, was introduced which comprised twelve points of political demands. The central point was the equality of the Czech and the German language in the Bohemian Kingdom.

> *Two different national elements live in the blessed Kingdom, the pearl of His Majesty's exalted crown; the one, which is the primal one, which had the nearest claim for country and king, has hitherto been hindered in its cultural development by* [different] *institutions (...). Free development of both nationalities, the Bohemian* [i.e. Czech] *and the German, which are united by destiny and which are living together in closest proximity in Bohemia, and equal striving for higher culture will cause the welfare of both in a invigorating, reconciling and fraternizing manner.*[107]

The demands concerned the reform of the estate system, the establishment of central authorities for the entire Kingdom to be installed in Prague, the reform of the municipal administration, the resolution of the manorial system, freedom of faith, freedom of the press and, most importantly, the equality of both nationalities, which mainly meant the equalization of the Czech and the German language in all public institutions, such as schools and admi-

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[104] Stanley Z. Pech, *The Czech Revolution of 1848* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 47.
[105] Pech, *The Czech Revolution,* 56-57.
[106] Ibidem, 57.
[107] Publication of the petition, Bohemia, No. 43, 16 March 1848 *[Zwei verschiedene nationale Elemente bewohnen das gesegnete Königreich, die Perle Majestät erhabener Kaiserkrone; das eine, das ursprüngliche, welche das nächste Anrecht hat an das Land und seinen König, war bisher in seiner Entwicklung zur Kultur und Gleichberechtigung durch Institutionen gehindert… Freie Entwicklung beider Nationalitäten, der böhmischen wie der deutschen, die durch Schicksals Schluß vereint und verschlungen Böhmen bewohnen, gleiches Streben nach dem Ziele höherer Kultur wird kräftigend, versöhnend, verbrüdernd Beider Wohl begründen].*

nistrative authorities. After passionate debates on this very evening, a smaller committee, later simply called the Václav Committee, was authorised to formulate a final version of the petition in the next days. The eventual model was copied several thousand times and laid public for subscription at several places in Prague, such as in coffeehouses, bookshops and the town hall, on March 14th.[108]

Up to this day the German newspapers in Prague kept silence about the memorable assembly at St Václav Baths, since censorship was still intact. The rather culturally-oriented papers *Ost und West* and *Bohemia* engaged in political reporting only after the proclamation of the constitution, whereas the *Prager Zeitung* had already closely commented on the revolutionary developments in Paris including a thorough discussion of the new French government before it eventually turned to the events in Prague and elsewhere in the Habsburg monarchy. By March 14th, the revolution in Vienna had led to the demission of state chancellor Metternich. Subsequently, an imperial patent had been published granting the freedom of the press, the formation of a national guard and the quickest possible summoning of the estates.[109]

The news about this imperial patent which was cabled to Prague and announced by the governor of Bohemia, Count Rudolf Stadion, through bold headlines in all local papers in Czech as well as in German, excited incredible joy and exuberance among the inhabitants.[110] The *Bohemia* reported on the thrilled reactions of the audience after Count Stadion had finished his speech in the theatre in which he explicated the content of the patent.[111] The term 'constitution' was on the tip of everyone's tongue in the following days. Virtually everything became 'constitutional': people wore 'constitutional' hats, bought 'constitutional' umbrellas and ate 'constitutional' pastry. Crowds celebrated in the streets, 'Vivat' and 'Sláva' cries were

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[108] Pech, *The Czech Revolution,* 65.
[109] Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft,* 48-49.
[110] Unlike today, bold headlines were rather unusual in the contemporary newspapers in Prague and Pest-Buda. Even highly important news such as the death of the Hungarian Palatine in 1847 was presented without graphical specifics. Insofar, the announcement of the patent by using bold headlines and enlarged type size signalled the readership the literal 'revolutionary' meaning of the information.
[111] Bohemia, No. 44, 17 March 1848.

heard everywhere, champagne flowed in torrents.[112] Even in the late evening the festivities went on. Torchlight processions were organised, the city shone in solemn lights, speeches in Czech and German were given in public places, people were singing and dancing ('constitutional' polka), wore cockades and ribbons in the Bohemian colours, red and white. Editor Klutschak commented in his poetic style:

> *Sun has arisen over Austria's states. Against the teachings of the astronomers, our sun did not arise in the east: the day had begun in the west and aurora has been coming closer and closer.*[113]

The following days saw a citywide bustle. The students assembled in the time-honoured university, where professors, the burgomaster and eventually the well-known dissident Uffo Horn, who had just arrived from Dresden, gave eloquent speeches, and passed their own petition to the emperor demanding reforms also in academia.[114] Burgher militia were formed, corps of professionals, artisans, students and writers set up, people from all social strata and backgrounds surged to those sites where they could enlist into organised associations or corps.

We can assume that the city of those days resembled a beehive, probably with a lesser degree of organisation, since the complex social organism of the city needed to adjust to the new circumstances in a rather short period of time and without any sort of top-down 'master plan'. The public demand for associating was immense and exceeded the pre-revolutionary one many times over. The clubs and corps mushrooming everywhere in the city would later function as means and catalysers of politicization and mobilization of the local population and thus assumed a key role in the public discourse in the city.

A widely perceived foundation of a new association concerned the local intelligentsia. Karl Egon Ebert, a popular German-speaking poet, published an appeal to all writers in

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[112] Pech, *The Czech Revolution,* 66.
[113] Franz Klutschak, Bohemia, No. 44, 17 March 1848 *[Die Sonne ist über Oesterreichs Staaten aufgegangen: (...) Allen Lehren der Astronomen zuwider, brach unsere Sonne nicht im Osten auf: (...) im Westen begann's zuerst zu tagen, (...) immer näher drang die neue Morgenröthe].*
[114] Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 18 March 1848.

Prague, irrespective of their mother tongue, to gather in the 'Hotel zum Erzherzog Stephan' at the Rossmarkt (Koňský trh/today Václavské náměsti) in order to found an association dedicated to the spread of political education among the masses.[115] Even František Palacký who first had fancied with a solely Czech-speaking club of scholars agreed on this suggestion. A public appeal released a few days later and subscribed by sixty writers, among them the newspaper editors Klutschak (*Bohemia*), Glaser (*Ost und West*), Kuranda (*Grenzboten*), called for cooperation and harmony between Czechs and Germans on the basis of equality.[116] This new-established writers' club was thought to serve the function of a role model for the ability and volition to bridge differences and distrust. Obviously, the intellectuals had realized the volatility of the historic moment and arranged this well-received joint venture.

Understandably, the leading articles in the German press first expressed limitless enthusiasm for the concerns of the burghers' petition. In an essay by a Prague resident, A. v. Edlenbach, the author acknowledged the just cause of the longing for an equal status of both languages in Bohemia and thus again attracted notice to the language issue which had recently been gilded by the common elation.

> *The German deeply feels the high justness of the demand, that the language spoken by three thirds of the country's inhabitants* [i.e. Czechs]*, is to be equal with his own language; those who only know German regret the lost time and spryly start to learn the second mother tongue* [i.e. Czech].[117]

Allegedly, the author himself knew numerous German-speakers who, after the festive events a few days earlier, had just started to learn Czech with incited verve. Edlenbach concluded that in the end the general thrust would not lead to an abolishment or removal of the German language from Prague and the Bohemian lands. Instead, he wrote, the "materiellen Landes-

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[115] Appeal by Karl Egon Ebert, Ost und West, No. 34, 18 March 1848.
[116] Appeal by the writers' club, Bohemia, No. 47, 23 March 1848.
[117] Essay by A. v. Edlenbach, Ost und West, No. 35, 21 March 1848 *[Tief fühlt der Deutsche die hohe Gerechtigkeit der Forderung, dass die Sprache welche drei Viertheile der Bewohner des Landes reden, gleichberechtigt mit der seinen werde; mit Schmerz blickt, wer nur des deutschen Wortes mächtig ist, auf die verlorene Zeit und schreitet rüstig zur Erlernung der zweiten Muttersprache].*

interessen" [material interests of the country], defined by fast progress and glorification of the common fatherland, made speaking skills in both languages indispensable for the future. His reasoning can be considered the optimistic reading of the recent developments and was affected by the ideas of a rather romantic and idealistic nationalism which did not comprise sharply exclusivist tendencies but first and foremost acknowledged the innate right of a nation to fully cultivate its own idiosyncrasies.

The sympathy for the Czech cause was widespread. The atmosphere in the city public, displayed in the press, as abovementioned, or in the ongoing festivities was rife with ideas of fraternization and reconciliation between the "two different national elements." Yet, very soon, several commentators and contributors became thoughtful and managed to evaluate the present situation in Prague with the necessary distance. Eduard Breier, editor-in-chief of the *Prager Zeitung*, by alluding to the countless anonymous leaflets and placards circulating in the city, insisted that a press law which would prevent the press from being misused and which would force a publisher to put his name on the printed material was urgently needed, otherwise morality and ethical principals were severely endangered.[118] Apart from these issues, some leaflets affected the immediate disposition of the public. One of these print products had announced an impending attack of imperial troops on the Bohemian capital which understandably caused major fright among the population. In order to prevent the uncontrolled circulation of this kind of misinformation a special committee was founded ("Comité zur Verhinderung des Umsichgreifens der Pamphlete und Flugblätter"[119]). Some days later, the *Bohemia* in an article urged this committee to intensify its activities, since the flood of pamphlets had not been stemmed—that was a tightrope walk after the abolition of censorship.[120]

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[118] Prager Zeitung, No. 45, 19 March 1848.
[119] „The committee for the prevention from the proliferation of pamphlets and leaflets".
[120] Bohemia, No. 50, 28 March 1848.

Meanwhile, the most senior representative of the Catholic Church in Bohemia, the Archbishop of Prague, Alois Josef Schrenk von Nötzig, had sent a circular letter to all priests of his diocese reminding them not to mistake their pulpits as a political platform.[121] Apparently, some clergymen had uttered their stances on recent developments in too a blunt way which made the church in general assailable. This precautious act must certainly be seen in the context of the traditionally politicised status of the Catholic Church in Bohemia since the counterrevolution, which qualified it for fierce objections from the Czech national camp.

At the end of March, new rumours put the German-speaking population into a feeling of unease. Allegedly, the purely Czech 'Václav Corps' had started agitating against them and had introduced a red cross as the corps insignia, which was apparently associated with blood and combat, and thus was understood by the German populace as a sign for imminent use of force. Havliček, the leader of the corps, found himself constrained to publish a declaration in the *Bohemia* stating that these rumours and misgivings about anti-German agitation did not comply with reality but anyhow announced the introduction of a different club emblem.[122] Still, this delicate incident shows that in spite of the sheer omnipresent public joy of the last weeks certain mistrust and doubts were palpable and could not be fully dispelled.

The petition which meanwhile had been signed by thousands of burghers was handed to the emperor by an official deputation of the Prague citizenship. The imperial reply, which actually was the reply of the Kolowrat/Pillersdorf Cabinet in the name of the emperor, was disappointingly vague and received with serious frustration by the city inhabitants.[123] The celebrations on the occasion of the delegation's return to Prague were immediately cancelled. For the first time, a common mood of disillusionment wafted through the city.[124] A series of public meetings were held in order to protest against the lacking full approval of the demands.

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[121] Bohemia, No. 47, 23 March 1848.
[122] Declaration by Havlicek, Bohemia, No. 47, March 1848.
[123] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 71.
[124] Bohemia, No. 50, 28 March 1848.

Subsequently, another petition with more pointed postulations was drafted in great rush which, following the Hungarian example, involved the concession of an own responsible ministry for the Bohemian lands, and brought to the imperial court in Vienna.

In the following weeks, citywide elections were held, the setup of various burgher committees and boards took place in order to maintain public safety and peace. The discourse in the public arena became increasingly politicised. Unleashed from any kind of censorship, newspapers commented on recent developments with intense criticism. Advertisements regularly announced new papers being founded, among them the '*Constitutionelles Blatt aus Böhmen*' [Constitutional paper from Bohemia]. Countless leaflets and placards deluged the streets, covered pavements or were adhered to house walls. Rumours were circulating about a coming abatement of the movement, about resignations, abdications and appointments of central political figures and about purported decisions regarding the cancellation of the robot and other issues, which stirred up the already vehemently incited population during the first week of April.[125]

The return of the second deputation who had handed the second petition to the emperor in Vienna, which was better received this time, as well as the election of the new Prague burgomaster Anton Strobach markedly calmed down these increasing tensions. A grand "feast of the constitution" was celebrated in the vernal Baumgarten (Stromovka) in the northern part of the city.[126] Finally on April 12th, on the occasion of the approval of the second petition, a further large torchlight procession attended by thousands went from the city hall in the Old Town via the Charles Bridge to the Hradčany. During the thanksgiving service in St Vitus Cathedral thundering gun salute was fired.[127] Klutschak noted:

> *The ancient royal city of Prague shone in youthfully prosperous joy. The happy news, that the*
> *Bohemian King, the true father of liberty of his peoples, Emperor Ferdinand, has conceded*

[125] Pech, *The Czech Revolution,* 67-68.
[126] Bohemia, No. 58, 11 April 1848.
[127] Prager Zeitung, No. 59, 13 April 1848.

everything for his faithful Bohemians, disseminated in the form of millions of torches in all districts of Prague.[128]

The first act of the 'drama' ended with ostensible pleasure. The coming weeks, however, would show how quick the rifts within the urban society augmented and the overall temper of enthusiasm shrank.

On the very same day in Pest-Buda, the new-installed Hungarian government headed by Count Batthyány and accompanied by detachments of the National Guard were expecting Palatine Stephan to arrive at his residence city. In the past month, the cities on the Danube had undergone an exciting revolutionary change. As Robert Nemes put it, the events in Pest closely followed the same revolutionary script, just like in many other European capitals affected by the revolutionary tide.[129]

In the case of Pest-Buda, everything started in a coffeehouse. Having intensively studied the history of the French Revolution, the poet Sándor Petőfi and a group of friends were adamantly convinced that they knew how a proper revolution is to unfold. Already before March 1848, the meanwhile twenty-five year old Petőfi had been engaging in radical circles and had formed the 'Society of Ten' in 1846 which propagated democratic ideas and a coming revolution.[130] The group of self-reliant revolutionaries met in the coffeehouse 'Pilvax' in the Inner City where they spent the night from March 14th to 15th 1848 debating, stirred up by the news about the revolution in Vienna the day before which had been brought by a steamship in the late evening.[131]

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[128] Bohemia, No. 59, 13 April 1848 *[Die alte Königstadt Prag strahlte gestern Abend in jugendlich blühender Freude. Die frohe Nachricht, daß Böhmens König, der ächte Vater der Freiheit seiner Völker, Kaiser Ferdinand, seinen treuen Böhmen alles gewährt habe, durchlachte in millionenfach zitternden Flämmchen alle Stadttheile Prags].*

[129] Robert Nemes, *The Once an Future Budapest* (DeKalb: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 131. Strictly speaking, Pest was not the ‚capital' of the Hungarian Kingdom, since the diet met in Pressburg and the Palatine as the highest official resided in Buda. Nonetheless, Pest, as outlined above, was the epicentre of culture, education and economy and by far the most important city in the Kingdom.

[130] István Deák, *The Lawful Revolution. Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-49* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 70.

[131] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution,* 71.

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In the early morning, the group of about sixty people left the place and started their march through the empty streets towards the medical school, while declaiming inciting slogans like "We swear that we won't be slaves any longer."[132] Students from the school quickly joint the enlarging procession which passed the law school and halted in front of the Horvath house where the largest print shop of Pest, 'Landerer & Heckenast', had its office. Arrived there, the crowd of meanwhile several thousands vehemently demanded the immediate printing of the '12 points' and Petőfi's 'Nemzeti Dal' (National song), irrespective of censorship.

The freshly-printed leaflets were being distributed, while the protagonists of the movement delivered political speeches creating an atmosphere of exaltation and enchantment. The '12 points' which had been formulated by the revolutionists earlier contained the classic liberal demands, just like those in Prague, including, highly important, the appointment of a responsible Hungarian ministry in 'Budapest'. The revolutionary tensions spread later this rainy afternoon, when an even larger crowd gathered in front of the National Museum listening to speeches delivered by Petőfi and others in Hungarian and German. The director of the museum, Kubinyi, was assailed with the demand to deposit the original paper sheet of the '12 points' in the archive "for eternity."[133]

The mass, meanwhile raised to more than ten thousand people, moved further to the Pest town hall and confronted the present municipal representatives with their demands. Leopold Rottenbiller, vice-burgomaster, addressing the revolutionists that "under your aegis our city will avoid disruptions of public order"[134] allowed the '12 points' to be officially sealed. The Committee for Public Safety was subsequently set up which provisionally took over the municipal government.[135] The last coup of this eventful day was the procession from the town hall over the pontoon bridge to Buda's Vice-Regal Council in the castle. Under the im-

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[132] Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 47-48.
[133] Pester Zeitung, No. 616, 17 March 1848.
[134] Cit. in Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd,* 49.
[135] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, 72.

pression of this enormous mass gathering, the council quickly complied with the political de-

mands and agreed on the abolition of censorship, the release of Mihály Táncsics, a political

prisoner (the only one), and the creation of a national guard.[136] With Táncsics as its living

symbol the incited crowd returned to Pest. The celebrations went on in the National Theatre

where patriotic songs and plays were performed.

The news about these achievements disseminated in the city. Already on the next day,

leaflets and placards fresh off the press adhered to house walls announced the newly gained

freedom.[137] The local newspapers provided first hand reports the following day. In the *Pester

Zeitung*, the editor Eduard Glatz compiled a reporting on the events on the very same day.[138]

All German newspapers opened with the bold headline "Die Presse ist frei!" [The press is

free!].[139] The journalist Márton Diósy, who would later become the personal secretary of

Lajos Kossuth, authored as recurrent commentator in *Der Ungar.* On March 17th, he wrote

completely overwhelmed and virtually intoxicated by the events:

> *You see me on my knees, exalted leader of worlds, fraught with an inmost infantine feeling of*
> *gratitude, that You let me live to see this great day, that You provided me with the capacity to*
> *grasp its meaning, the ability to convey this joyful news to hundreds of thousands of my*
> *brothers and to animate them to the same jubilance and praise.*[140]

The new urban government enacted new instructions how to maintain public security after the

commotions and commissioned the enlarged militia, constituted as the new National Guard, to

enforce law and order instead of the military. On the top of the Pest town hall and other public

buildings the Hungarian Tricolour signalled the new era, after the imperial insignia had been

removed. Later the very same evening, Pest and Buda were illuminated, lights put in every

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[136] Idem.

[137] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 50-51.

[138] Pester Zeitung, No. 615, 16 March 1848.

[139] Pester Zeitung, No. 616, 17 March 1848.

[140] Der Ungar, No. 64, 17 March 1848 *[Auf den Knien siehst du mich, erhabener Weltenlenker, voll des innigsten kindlichen Dankgefühles, daß Du mich diesen großen Tag erleben ließest, daß Du mit die Fähigkeit verliehen, dessen Bedeutung zu fassen, die Fähigkeit, hunderttausenden meiner Brüder die frohe Kunde zu bringen, und sie zu gleichem Jubel und Lobgesang aufzumuntern (...)].*

window, flags waved from the gables and bays, the streets were crowed with thousands of people wearing cockades and ribbons celebrating and singing, 'Éljen' cries were heard everywhere.

In the provisional German theatre (the actual one had burned down in 1847), local poets, among them Ludwig Foglar and Gustav Grimm, recited political poems under thunderous applause of the audience. Touched by the events the day before, the latter had written a piece entitled "Stimme eines in Ungarn wohnenden Deutschen" [Voice of a German living in Hungary] in which he emotionally called for fraternity between Germans and Hungarians:

> 7th stanza: *Darum reich' ich Ungarn Euch zum festen Bunde*
> *Verschmäht sie nicht, die deutsche Bruderhand,*
> *Doch nein, Ihr fühlt, gekommen ist die Stunde*
> *Die zwischen Völkern stürzt die Scheidewand.*
>
> 14th stanza: *Und späte Enkel sollen einst erfahren:*
> *Durch alle Herzen bebte Ein Gefühl,*
> *Ein Geist beseelte Deutsche und Magyaren,*
> *Sie gingen Hand in Hand zu Einem Ziel!*[141]

The poem was a grandiose success and immediately brought to the printing presses from where it, together with a German translation of Petőfi's 'National Song', was being distributed in the streets and published in the newspapers the next day; in the urban churches an extraordinary *Te Deum* was sung.

Just like in Prague, the following days after the achievement of the freedom of the press caused a citywide mood of excitement. As Alice Freifeld subsumes, "[t]hese honeymoon days had a rhythm of their own, documented every evening at the National Theater in Pest, and propelled forward with the arrival of the evening steamship carrying the news from

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[141] Mária Rózsa, *„Ihr Männer aus, jetzt ruft die Zeit". Deutsche Texte aus Ungarn zur Revolution und zum Freiheitskampf 1848/1849* (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 2006), 56-58; *[the approximate English translation is: I reach you, Hungarians, to firm band, / Do not contemn it, my German brother hand, / But nay, you feel, the hour has come / The partition between peoples is gone; Once grandchildren shall be told / A feeling affecting all hearts / A spirit animating Germans and Magyars / Hand in hand they strive for one goal //]*.

Vienna, Pozsony [i.e. Pressburg], and abroad. The steps of the museum—the launching pad of revolution—became the forum of innumerable official and unofficial gatherings."[142] The public urban discourse was continuously fed with information and rumours circulating. "[F]rom the steps [of the museum, G.M.W.] information was transmitted, solidarity established, and actions were organized. People were emboldened by the new flow of information. Although rumours still abounded, the newly freed press imbued news with an exhilarating authenticity and immediacy".[143]

The political decisions made in these days contributed to the zippy atmosphere in the cities. By decree, made public by Palatine Stephan, King Ferdinand agreed to install a Hungarian Ministry with Count Batthyány as new Prime Minister.[144] Shortly after this far-reaching measure was taken, keen speculations about the personal allocation of the governmental resorts began. The rumour mill was set going. Of course, Lajos Kossuth and Ferenc Deák were tipped as future ministers with an eminent portfolio, whereas István Szechényi was rather underrated, as one of the countless leaflets suggested.[145] The float of these print material reached so far unknown dimensions. As the *Pester Zeitung* reports, at literally every street corner in the city manifests, pamphlets, poems, papers and protocols of the diet were being sold. To prevent misuses of the freedom of the press, the city government issued regulations, introduced committees to evaluate these print materials and thus performed a similar tightrope walk as the city administration in Prague.[146]

Unintentionally abetting an atmosphere of unrest in the Pest-Buda, the diet in Pozsony, afraid of the impact of an unleashed press on the already incited crowds, passed a new press law which levied the deposit for every new journal to be founded to twenty thousand

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[142] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 52.
[143] Idem.
[144] Pester Zeitung, No. 618, 19 March 1848.
[145] Printed leaflet „Wen wünscht sich die Nation zu verantwortlichen Ministern?" *[Whom does the nation want to be ministers in charge?]*, Pester Zeitung, No.617, 18 March 1848.
[146] Pester Zeitung, No. 618, 19 March 1848.

florins—an astronomic amount of money which could hardly been afforded without massive financial backup.[147] Although the abolition of censorship had not been put into question, it was not surprising that a law designed like this bore resemblance to the repressive mechanisms of an epoch thought to be overcome, and was perceived as running contrary to the '12 points'. Consequently, the March Youth, young people and students, after getting the provisional edict into their hands, publicly burned it on the City Hall Square in Pest.[148] Even though the press law in its original form underwent certain changes later on, among others the bisection of the deposit, public opinion proved to be very neuralgic in this regard, particularly because the political decisions were still made in Pozsony where the diet gathered, whereas the revolutionary hotspot was situated in Pest-Buda. The latent antagonism between the nominal political centre of the Kingdom and the 'capital' of the recent movement reached a new peak, especially since the '12 points' ultimately demanded the relocation of the political main body, the diet, as well as the installation of the new ministry in 'Budapest'.

Since far away in Vienna, the negotiations about the exact legal basis of the Hungarian ministry were still running without visible outcome, first shadows darkened the joyful atmosphere in the city public of Pest-Buda. In the course of the 'mania for associations' which had intensified among all social strata of urban society after March 15th a newly founded corps attracted particular attention in the media. *Der Ungar* which extensively reported on the mushrooming club life in the city devoted critical notice to a recently constituted corps called 'Fekete Sereg' [black regiment].[149] It was named after a famous military unit which served under King Matthias Corvinus in the 15th century, commonly perceived as Hungary's Golden Age. The members of this corps dressed partly in black and had introduced a black flag with a skull as their corps insignia. The editor of *Der Ungar*, Hermann Klein, repeatedly uttered his disapproval of these kinds of martial appearances in the public

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[147] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 54.
[148] Idem.
[149] Der Ungar, No. 66, 19 March 1848.

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sphere of the revolutionarily enchanted city.[150] Apart from that particular case, he observed a decreasing number of the Hungarian Tricolour in the streets, whereas the amount of solely red flags and emblems rapidly grew.[151] Klein interpreted this alteration as a bad augury and sign for an impending radicalisation of the movement due to the yet undecided issues concerning the political path of the coming weeks.

Not even the arrival of the first minister of the new cabinet in Pest-Buda, Bertalan Szemere, minister of the interior, could prevent the atmosphere from an entire change. He had arrived on board of a steamer from Pozsony on the late evening of March 25th, impatiently awaited by thousands of burghers with crackling torches at the quayside of Pest. Szemere immediately addressed the crowd in order dispel the common impatience and unrest:

> *I greet you, honoured fellow citizens! I greet the city of Pest as the heart of the fatherland. I greet it together with Buda as the two 'darlings' of my fatherland, those which forwent by example, those mighty agitators for the attainment of order and liberty (...) I greet the three holy principles: liberty, equality and fraternity!*[152]

But since the relieving news about the completion of the negotiations was not received, the urban public became more radicalised. As first István Deák and later Alice Freifeld describe it unanimously, the daunting demonstrations on March 29th and 30th assumed such a charged and thunderous temper that a second revolutionary outburst seemed inevitable.[153] Unlike in the course of the 'umbrella revolution', as with regard to the foul weather Szechényi had called the events of March 15th, barricades were erected, thirty thousand people gathered in front of the museum wearing red patches and waving red flags. Petőfi recited his anti-monarchic poem "To the Kings" (A Királyokhoz) and spoke about the coming world revolution.

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[150] Der Ungar, No. 76, 30 March 1848.
[151] Der Ungar, No. 78, 1 April 1848.
[152] Speech by Szemere in German translation, Morgenröthe, No. 10, 31 March 1848 *[Ich grüße Euch, geehrte Mitbürger. Ich begrüße die Stadt Pest, als das Herz des Vaterlandes, ich begrüße sie samt Buda, als die beiden Augensterne meines Vaterlandes, und als solche die vorangingen mit dem Beispiele, und mächtige Agitatoren waren zur Erlangung der Ordnung und der Freiheit. (...) Ich begrüße diese drei heiligen Grundsätze: Freiheit, Gleichheit und Brüderlichkeit!]*.
[153] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, 95; Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 55-56. Nemes, *Budapest*, 132-133.

The proclamation of the republic was within reach. Robert Nemes describes the mood as "darker and more violent" than on March 15th.[154] Eventually, one has to keep in mind that the appearance of large crowds, bound and determined, in the city space could be handled as a means to give the proceedings in Vienna the 'right' direction. It is beyond question that particularly Kossuth followed this calculation, although he would not have let 'the street' take over the primate of politics.[155]

It was evident that the news about the commotions in Pest would have an impact on the ongoing negotiations in Vienna. And even if they went on for a further while (Batthyány even offered his resignation once), the final approval of the ministry was soon decreed. One by one the new Hungarian ministers arrived at the new capital, the last one was Batthyány, and were accommodated in different houses scattered across the inner district of Pest. After the completed arrival, the ministers immediately took up their employment, even though urban life was still far away from ease and tranquillity. Almost daily, public meetings were held, mainly in front of the museum or the city hall, where people gathered by the thousands and listened to speeches by political or otherwise publicly known figures like Miklós Wesselényi and József Eötvös.[156] Demonstrations and processions, parades of the National Guard and public speeches by high-ranked officials remained a daily occurrence.

A remarkable and widely perceived event was the reception of an official deputation of the Viennese student body in early April. The city government as well as their fellow students had organised a multi-day program.[157] They were shown the memorial site in front of the museum, where enthusiastic speeches in Hungarian and German were delivered and a highly symbolic exchange of flags (the Hungarian and the German Tricolour) took place. When reading the reportages on these events, one gets the impression that, to a certain extent,

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[154] Nemes, *Budapest*, 133.
[155] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, 94-95; Nemes, *Budapest*, 133.
[156] Pester Zeitung, No. 634, 4 April 1848.
[157] Pester Zeitung, No. 636, 6 April 1848; No. 637, 7 April 1848.

the series of festive diners and receptions given by municipal and ministerial officials partly revived the meanwhile badly damaged atmosphere of fraternization and enchantment which had wafted through the city almost a month ago. Thus, the appearance of the Viennese deputation can be considered a stimulant and likewise a reminder of the initial ideas of the movement which had led to the outbreak of the revolution.

Insofar, if one tries to describe the situation in mid April 1848, one can say that the urban public attained an unstable state of balance. The ministry was constituted and about to pass a package of liberal laws (later called the 'April laws'), the Palatine as new vice-king of Hungary took residence in Buda and the fierce and almost violent tensions during the public meetings calmed down. However, shortly after this ostensible balance had been achieved, the urban discourse underwent a fundamental change, among other things, due to a series of assaults on the local Jewish population. Interestingly, a similar process can be observed in the Bohemian capital.

3.2 Conflict

In Prague, this process of growing conflict mainly entailed two issues: the violent assaults on the Jewish inhabitants and the 'Frankfurt question' which was not only about the issue of sending representatives to the National Assembly in Frankfurt or not, but a cipher for the increasing tensions between the "two national elements" in Bohemia in general and in Prague in particular. Generally speaking, the erupting violence against the Jews did not come out of the blue. Much can be said about the manifold motivations of the anti-Semitic attacks, the least part had to do with the achievements of the revolution as such, although for example the question about the admission of Jews to the National Guard were dedicatedly debated in the public. Rising prices for daily supplies, religious motives around the Holy Week and Easter and the questions of emancipation and identity of the Jewish population also contributed to the outbreak of violence. Invidious rumours functioned as triggers. The news about the

assaults met with grand refusal, also in the press. Among the German newspapers, the *Bohemia* objected them in the most decisive way.

In contrast to Stanley Pech's description, the first news about the intimidation of Jews already circulated in mid April.[158] The *Bohemia* reported on an assault on the Jewish merchant Wehli at whose shop-door several skulls and the inscription "Tod des Juden" [death of the Jew] were affixed. Reportedly, numerous pamphlets with anti-Jewish content deluged the city in those days. In the district of Židovské město (Jewish quarter), where the majority of Jews lived, was now under special supervision of the National Guard. Editor Klutschak made his standpoint very clear: Attacks on Jews did not comply with Christian principles and meant a betrayal of the newly gained freedom.[159] Also the Archbishop of Prague issued a circular letter which opposed any violence against the Jews. However, minor assaults continued during the Holy Week.

Stanley Pech suggested that particularly workers facing unemployment and affected by anti-Jewish propaganda were behind these incidents. This diagnosis coincides with the aforementioned leaflets which had accused Jewish shopkeepers of overpricing groceries, especially bread.[160] Combined with the daily news about the famine in northern Bohemia which attracted great attention in the papers and sympathy of the people, alongside with the growing number of unemployed workers in Prague, this yielded an explosive potpourri. During the Holy Week the attacks increased in number and amplitude and reached their culmination in the first days of May. For the first time, the newspapers reported about several persons injured. It was rumoured that even one person had died in one of the brawls.

The National Guard, the military and the student legion had serious problems to maintain public safety, although they intensified their patrols in the districts at risk.[161] The Bohe-

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[158] Pech only mentions the assaults on May 1st and later, see Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 139-140.
[159] Bohemia, No. 62, 19 April 1848.
[160] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 293-294.
[161] Bohemia, No. 70, 2 May 1848.

mian government forbade routs out in the open and gatherings of more than five people after eight p.m. under the threat of hard penalty in case of violation.[162] But all these measures did not prevent further attacks. As the reporting goes, the Jews were defending themselves, the National Guard had to make use of their rifles to stop the murderous mob, and many people got arrested.

The *Bohemia* gives an example of a particularly malicious rumour circulating. A few Jews were accused of pouring vitriol (sulphur acid) out of their windows on people passing by. Two ostensible victims of this 'vicious' ambush, a women and a boy, with blackened fore-arms and hands were brought to the town hall. They had been running through the streets stirring up further people by showing what could be interpreted as chemical burns. A close in-spection in the town hall brought to light that they had smeared their hands with black dirt. According to their confession, they had been instructed by an unnamed person to do so.[163] This provocation had quickly precipitated a vast array of prejudices ('Jews are attacking Christians'), mingled with the already widespread anti-Jewish tension of the last weeks and led to fierce street battles which resulted in demolished shops and houses. As it will turn out later, a very similar assault happened in Pest-Buda, too. The reporting in the newspapers on these events was dense and exhausting, the comments of the editors were overwhelmingly characterised by disapproval or even abhorrence. Klutschak called on "the better" (citizens) to stand up against any form of violence.[164] But a clear identification of the persons or groups in charge for this outburst of brute force was not provided.

Prague in May 1848 did not find its peace. An affair about one of the most aggressive leaflets drafted by a print shop assistant, František Groll, made burgomaster Strobach, who had desperately sought to retain law and order, resign from his office.[165] Groll, after printing

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[162] Official declaration of the Bohemian government, Bohemia, No. 70, 2 May 1848.
[163] Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 3 May 1848.
[164] Bohemia, No. 71, 4 May 1848.
[165] Affair 'Groll', Bohemia, No. 75, 11 May 1848.

and distributing the pamphlet, had been arrested due to open agitation against Jews, Germans and the Church, in short, because of disturbance of the public order. Stanley Pech's interpretation of this incident, that the arrest was mainly perceived by the public as an infringement of the hard-won freedom of the press and therefore led to mass demonstrations which forced the authorities to finally release Groll does certainly come up to reality.[166] It displays the delicate situation of the political discourse in Prague and the difficulties of the responsible authorities to deal with it respectively. From their point of view, either way, 'laissez-faire' or restriction, seemed to inevitably lead to public discontent or even violence.

The second development contributing to urban conflict started with the 'Frankfurt question' and the famous letter by Palacký dated on April 11th in which he declined the invitation by the Frankfurt pre-parliament and avowed himself to a reshaped Austria.[167] Thus, the political path from March 11th was split into two. Whereas the Germans tensely looked at Frankfurt, the Czechs kept their eyes on the developments in Vienna. The public debate on the historical affiliation of the Bohemian lands began. In the German newspapers several articles by national-minded people, oftentimes students, were published, mostly with a similar line of argumentation: Bohemia used to be an electorate of the Holy Roman Empire and was now part of the German Confederation. Therefore 'Frankfurt' was the place where its future would be decided.

Interestingly, the fight was catalysed by a very concrete issue, namely if it was appropriate to publicly wear symbols of the German revolutions, the black-red-gold colours. All German newspapers were reporting on incidents when people wearing black-red-gold cockades were insulted or even attacked in public.[168] The reactions of several Prague-based German intellectuals aimed at appeasement: They published essays in order to dispel any traces of anxiety which apparently gained ground among the German populace and repeated

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[166] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 140.
[167] Ibidem, 79-82.
[168] Bohemia, No. 61, 16 April 1848.

their calls for unity.[169] First informal gatherings of the German inhabitants after the trespasses also emphasized the common aims shared by Germans and Czechs but simultaneously stressed the principle of equality—which, from their standpoint, seemed to be endangered.[170] Gary Cohen argues that, notwithstanding this apparently ill-received anti-German sentiment, the vast majority of German-speakers in Prague abstained from any decisive action.[171] He explains this indication with their political and social conservatism which made them, afraid of subverting the Habsburg Empire and provoking Czech nationalists, not take sides in the ongoing conflicts. Only few of them managed to set up an association devoted to the defence of what they identified as decidedly German interests, the Constitutional Club—in Gary Cohen's interpretation primarily formed by youngish radicals.[172] One can add here, that the membership was indeed more diverse and the importance of the club, in terms of public perception, much greater than Cohen suggests. A look into the newspapers which dedicated many articles to the Club makes this very clear. Moreover, Stanley Pech's assessment that the Club became "a major center of an implacable anti-Czech sentiment"[173] appears exaggerated to a certain extent. Surely, it was perceived by the leaders of the Czech national movement, represented in the National Committee, as their major political antagonist but, and here Cohen is most likely right, the actual impact of the Constitutional Club on the further course of events can be considered relatively small.[174]

In sum, the Constitutional Club acted as the only existing lobby of the Germans in Prague in the sense of a 'national' representation.[175] It propagated the ideas of an inclusion of

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[169] Kliebert „Offener Brief an die deutschen Bewohner Böhmens" [Open letter to the German inhabitants of Bohemia], Bohemia, No. 60, 14 April 1848.

[170] Idem.

[171] Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 31.

[172] Ibidem, 32.

[173] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 88.

[174] Cohen, *Politics of Ethnic Survival*, 32.

[175] Another important association dedicated to the nationality issue in Bohemia was the "Verein der Deutschen aus Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien zur Aufrechterhaltung ihrer Nationalität" [League of Germans of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia for the preservation of their nationality] founded in Vienna, see Ernst Karl Sieber, *Ludwig*

the Bohemian lands into a future German national state and an upkeep of the German 'nationality' in Bohemia which, according to the convictions of its members, was threatened. Insofar, the Constitutional Club was a means to shape a nationally defined group identity among the Germans in Prague and was popularised by the German newspapers which exhaustively reported on its sessions and development. By the Czech national camp, these newspapers were accused of becoming downright party organs of the Club cultivating discord. These accusations were repudiated for example by the editors of the *Prager Zeitung* in an indignant statement.[176]

The dedicated debate about 'Frankfurt' and the relations between the "two national elements" in Prague necessitated new forums of debate. In late April the *Bohemia* and the *Prager Zeitung* introduced supplemental papers to their usual issues in which letters to the editor could be published without internal censorship.[177] These papers comprised several pages and became an appreciated place to make personal opinions and standpoints public. It is important to advert to the fact that not only Germans but also Czechs, who published in German, contributed to the debates. On the occasion of the discussions on nationality issues and the Constitutional Club, many letters sought to make clear that harmony between Czechs and Germans must be retained, otherwise the "Nationalitätenfanatismus" [national fanaticism] would inevitably lead to civil war.[178] The overwhelming majority of these letters to the editor followed this very argumentation trying to point out that the sympathy of the Germans for 'Frankfurt' did not mean a coercive 'Anschluss' of Bohemia as a whole but was rather an expression of 'natural' bonds. However, also insistent critiques of these attitudes were expressed which subsequently involved new reactions.

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von Löhner. Ein Vorkämpfer des Deutschtums in Böhmen, Mären und Schlesien im Jahre 1848/1849 (München: Verlag Robert Lerche, 1965), and Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries. Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press 1996), 29-68.

[176] Prager Zeitung, No. 68, 30 April 1848.

[177] The supplement paper of the Prager Zeitung was entitled „Offene Sprechhalle" [open tribune]; Prager Zeitung, No. 68, 30 April 1848; Bohemia, No. 65, 22 April 1848.

[178] Anonymous, „Noch eins, ehe es zu spät ist", Bohemia, No. 70, 2 May 1848.

Apart from the usual places of public debate such as coffeehouses, opinions like these could be discussed in the new-established "Zeitungshalle" [newspaper reading room] at the university where fifty-two different regional and supra-regional papers were provided.[179] In spite of the local tensions in May, additionally intensified by the news about a series of riots in Vienna, a public discourse with a highly diversified spectrum of stances and opinions (at any rate more than just 'German' versus 'Czech') unfolded, vivid and critical, and encompassing inputs from many different perspectives.

Beyond this journalistic public and the reactions of the respective readership, a very popular element of expressing criticism, especially when it involved certain disliked office holders, was "Katzenmusik" [rough music; literally "cats' music"]. Particularly students, who had formed a great number of fraternities in the course of the past two months, made use of this noisy demonstration of disapproval. Frequently at night, groups of them, 'armed' with all kinds of music instruments or simply metal devices, appeared in front of the respective domicile of the disliked and started to make 'music'—actually an ear-deafening and disharmonic bluster. These rows caused many high-ranked officials sleepless nights. Almost pleasurably, the newspapers reported about the 'victims' of the latest "Katzenmusik" the following day: they provided information or indulged in speculations about the possible reasons for this exposure of disfavour and thus popularised oppositional attitudes of parts of the inhabitants. Unlike in Prague, "Katzenmusiken" in Pest-Buda did not always take place without violence.

An impressive attempt to improve the lately deteriorated relations between Czechs and Germans came just from the National Committee which had become a stronghold of the Czech national movement. A giant feast, „ein Tag allgemeiner Versöhnung, ein Tag des Friedens"[180] [a day of common reconciliation, a day of peace], was announced to take place in

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[179] Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 20 May 1848.
[180] Prager Zeitung, No. 79, 19 May 1848.

the Baumgarten (Stromovka) in the northern part of Prague on May 25th. Against the background of the experienced political altercations, the violence, the forthcoming Slavic Congress and the elections for the Bohemian diet to be held soon, the organisation of a public celebration was first considered a highly sensitive issue. Surprising for the historian as well as for the contemporaries, it was an unimaginable success. In the late evening of that day, Eduard Breier, editor-in-chief of the *Prager Zeitung*, could not help but articulate his impressions of the feast in an exuberant way:

> *It is already late. I am sitting at my desk and shall describe what I lived to see. (...) Still it whirs before my eyes, it dins in my ears, still I hear the cheering, singing, the music, oh, what a surge, what a manifold, joyously moved setting.*[181]

Beier's enthusiastic report conveys a lively picture of the event. By the thousands, people gathered under the trees in the Baumgarten. In both languages speeches were given, folksongs sung, toasts were proposed and responded, poems recited, flags waved. The National Guard, the military, students and officials left their detachments and mingled. For a moment, it seemed, the initial atmosphere of revolutionary enchantment and elation covered the wide range of controversial issues and unsolved questions which had lurked almost everywhere.

Yet, even though the lavish celebration was perceived with great sympathy in the local media and can be regarded as an outstanding event of reconciliation in a period of mistrust and conflict—and as such utterly underrated in previous historiography—, it did not have the long lasting effect for the improvement of the relations. Rudolf Glaser, editor-in-chief of *Ost und West*, noted later that, besides his sympathy for the feast's intention, already the following day students in the ancient *Clementinum* had sung "die ärgsten Spottlieder auf die Deutschen" [the worst satirical songs about the Germans].[182]

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[181] Report on the feast „Der 25. Mai", Prager Zeitung, No. 83, 26 May 1848 *[Es ist schon spät. Ich sitze am Schreibtische und soll schildern was ich erlebt. (…) Noch schwirrt es mir vor den Augen, noch dröhnt es mir in den Ohren, ich höre noch Jubeln, Singen, Musiciren, ach welch ein Wogen, Strömen, welch eine reichgestaltige, freudig bewegt Scenerie (…)].*
[182] Ost und West, No. 64, 27 May 1848.

A further big event kept the political discourse in the city in motion. The Slavic Congress announced several weeks ago and, remarkably, first acclaimed in all German papers gathered in the splendid ballroom (Palac Žofín) on the Sophieninsel (Slovanský Ostrov) and began its negotiations.[183] The German press closely followed the debates and kept its readership informed about speakers and issues discussed. The accompanying festivities, Holy Masses and processions through the city made clear, even for the non-reading public, that a historic occurrence was taking place in the city. One might assume that the reporting was characterised by distanced and suspicious stances on the side of the journalists but it is quite striking that the daily articles abstained from pejorative commenting. This might also be due to other developments which had a more immediate relevance for the inhabitants.

The legally questionable appointment, to put it neutrally, of the provisional government of Bohemia by the Bohemian governor, Count Leo von Thun, which was later declared null and void by the Viennese government, alongside with strikes and the destruction of textile machines by groups of malcontent workers, and the beginning elections for the Bohemian diet attracted special interest and attention. Especially the arrival of General Windischgrätz at Prague on May 20th, after which he had significantly raised the number of soldiers present in the urban space, caused severe anger on the side of the National Guard and the students. Against the background of the abatement of the revolution in northern Italy and the surrender of Milan, which was prominently reported in the newspapers, the increasing militarization in Prague had a rather threatening character.[184]

The eventual way to the bloody Pentecost Uprising started with the ultimate demand by the student body to remove the military units and artillery batteries which had been placed in various parts of the city. On June 12th (Whit Monday), the Holy Mass on the Rossmarkt

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[183] For example Rudolf Glaser welcomed the idea of the Slavic Congress in an article. He stressed the logics that all Slavic peoples 'naturally' club together. Accordingly, the German Confederation was the logical frame for all Germans. At the end of this process any kind of organisation would merge into the final "Menschheitsbund" [bond of humankind], Ost und West, No. 56, 8 May 1848.

[184] Urban, *Die tschechische Gesellschaft*, 75-76, 79.

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with heavy attendance ended with the many-voiced call "Let's march past Windischgrätz."[185] The target of the demonstration was the general's residence where the crowd most likely wanted to stage a "Katzenmusik". Not far from it, the triggering brawl between the protestors, who were joined by the National Guard, on the one side and the military on the other side took place.

Instead of Tuesday after Pentecost, the next issues of the local newspapers were published ten days later, on June 23rd. In the meantime, most of the barricades had been removed, the killed buried, but the cleanup after the deadly fights was not finished yet. The revolution in the city of Prague had ended with a mighty hit of the military. Under the state of siege, the dissolution of the National Guard and of the political bodies formed in the course of the revolution was decreed; hundreds of people, especially unemployed workers, were expelled from the city, thousands left voluntarily. The press was again subject to censorship.[186] The open political discourse in the city, earlier impetuous, diverse and committed, was now restrained and narrowly canalised.

Two month earlier in Pest-Buda, the inhabitants were preparing themselves for the Easter days. Yet, the cities on the Danube were far away from ease. Just like in Prague, public wrath first turned towards the Jewish population. The revolution had brought them opportunities of political and public participation. Two Jews were even coopted into the Public Safety Committee right after the March events and thus held political offices for the first time. A while later Jews were even allowed to join the National Guard, although this measure met with refusal, especially from the side of the German inhabitants.[187] The conflict between parts of the German and the (German-speaking) Jewish populations began growing.[188]

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[185] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 145.
[186] Ibidem, 159.
[187] Julia Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest: kulturelle Topographien einer Stadtgemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2009), 176-177.
[188] Petöfi's speech on March 20th: A német polgárok és a zsidók [The German burghers and the Jews], cit. in Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest*, 177.

The violent assaults on the Jews started in mid April. Alice Freifeld identifies "an urbanized German minority that was openly ambivalent about the revolution with its Magyar nationalist direction"[189] as the main propagators of the anti-Jewish riots. Despite the aforementioned opposition of several German burghers, which certainly has to be taken into account, this seems fairly short-sighted. Indeed, a group of German inhabitants in Buda had demanded the expulsion of all Jews from Pest-Buda, yet the magistrate of Buda (!) rejected this request immediately.[190] On April 18th, the *Pester Zeitung* reported about a public gathering of mainly workers in front of the museum where too the expulsion of all tolerated Jews without *incolat* was demanded. All these events can be considered a sign for a growing anti-Jewish sentiment.[191]

The violence erupted on April 19th. As Robert Nemes describes, the riot was nourished by the circulating rumour that Jews had thrown stones out of their windows and had poured hot oil on pedestrians in the Terézváros district of Pest.[192] Julia Richers mentions a public meeting immediately before the violence broke out in which the disarming of the Jewish National Guardsmen was demanded.[193] The actual course of events can not be reconstructed on the basis of the German newspapers examined. Days later, the *Pester Zeitung* confirmed that rumours saying that a few Jews had poured vitriol out of their houses and had attacked a Pest burgher had stirred up the crowd.[194] Marauding mobs had subsequently been heading for the district of Terézváros where they demolished shops and houses. The National Guard had severe problems to restore order; numerous patrols ought to prevent further assaults in the

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[189] Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd*, 61.
[190] Der Ungar, No. 91, 16 April 1848.
[191] Pester Zeitung, No. 648, 18 April 1848.
[192] Nemes, *Budapest*, 134.
[193] Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest*, 187.
[194] Pester Zeitung, No. 651, 21 April 1848.

coming days. The consequences of these events were an increasing number of baptisms among the Jews and, in the medium term, emigration to North America.[195]

The public perception of and reaction to this outburst of violence in the centre of the city were ambivalent. Whereas Petőfi and the radicals around him quickly blamed the German bourgeoisie for having led the mobs, the Hungarian ministry acted reluctant in enforcing safety measures in favour of the Jewish inhabitants.[196] Batthyány only issued a decree, which made public gatherings notifiable three days in advance, ordered the disarming of Jewish Guardsmen, and announced a strict enforcement of the immigration laws, certainly calculating with an appeasement of the tensions. Whereas István Deák assesses this proceeding as "tactically not unwise,"[197] Julia Richers sees in these decisions a humiliation of the Jewish community now being shorn of any means of self-defence—having in mind, that similar anti-Jewish assaults took place in many places in Hungary in those days.[198]

Similar to Prague, the reasons for the riots were manifold. György Spira highlighted growing unemployment and heavy competition with Jewish craftsmen on the local market as triggering factors.[199] Moreover, with regard to the approaching Easter days, also religious prejudices as well as opposition to the debated emancipation laws come into play, as Robert Nemes adds.[200] The solely 'national' interpretation of the events, as put forward by Petőfi and parts of the contemporary Hungarian papers, does certainly not suffice, because alongside with the Germans also "Magyars had been involved in protests against Jews since the beginning of the revolution."[201] The German press widely condemned the riots. *Pester Zeitung* und *Morgenröthe* reported exhaustively. *Der Ungar* itself was confronted with anti-Jewish agitation since its editor-in-chief, Hermann Klein, was a scion of a wealthy Jewish family in

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[195] An association devoted to the promotion of emigration to North America was founded in Pest in late April 1848, Pester Zeitung, No. 658, 30 April 1848.
[196] Nemes, *Budapest*, 134.
[197] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, 114.
[198] Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest*, 190.
[199] Nemes, *Budapest*, 134-135.
[200] Ibidem, 135.
[201] Idem.

Miskolc. The incited crowd, particularly German participants who did not appreciated Klein's positive attitudes towards the Magyar national cause and his determined reporting on anti-Jewish tendencies of the public, had demanded his ejection from the editorial board of *Der Ungar* by accusing him of biased coverage from a decidedly religious (i.e. Jewish) perspective.[202] According to the personal report by Klein, the menace had assumed such a threatening shape that he had feared a downright "Judenmetzelei"[203] [slaughter of Jews] on April 19th:

> *Friends, acquaintances and strangers hurried off from the site of tumult, rushed into my office, and conjured me to take care for my safety, since I was running the risk of becoming a victim of the incited and vengeful mass. I remained calm at my desk, trustfully looking at my pistol and waiting for the things to come.* [204]

The conflict over his newspaper became even sharper in early May when the clockmaker Johann Nepomuk Swoboda published an appeal in the *Morgenröthe* not to support Klein and his paper any longer:

> *Let us not subscribe to this commonly outlawed gossip rag. Let us declare that we avoid visiting those public coffeehouses, guesthouses and clubs as long as the named scandal sheet is provided there.*[205]

Convinced that attack is the best form of defence, Klein picked up the gauntlet and decided to tackle this issue head on. He published a response article, a fierce philippic, in which he debunked Swoboda's outrageous motives and demands, and thus made the affair not only known to his readership but an issue of public interest. By pointing to the high acceptance of *Der Ungar* among the intelligentsia and the relatively high numbers of subscribers (2,400),

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[202] Der Ungar, No. 103, 30 April 1848.

[203] „Wird das einem gewissen Johann Nepomuk Swoboda recht sein?", in Rózsa, *Ihr Männer aus, jetzt ruft die Zeit*, 113-116 [*Freunde, Bekannte und Unbekannte eilten vom Platze des Tumultes weg, stürzten händeringend in mein Bureau, und beschworen mich für die Sicherheit meiner Person Sorge zu tragen, indem ich jeden Augenblick Gefahr laufe, ein Opfer der aufgehetzten, rachschnaubenden Masse zu werden. Ich blieb ruhig an meinem Arbeitstische, einen vertrauensvollen Blick auf mein vierläufig Pistol werfend und der Dinge harrend, die da kommen sollten*].

[204] Idem.

[205] Morgenröthe, No. 36, 2 May 1848 [*Pränumeriren wir nicht mehr auf dieses allgemein geächtete Klatschblatt, erklären wir, alle jene öffentliche Kaffeehäuser, Gasthöfe und Klubbs, die wir besuchen, nicht mehr betreten zu wollen, so lange das genannte Schmähblatt dort aufliegt*].

Klein managed to make Swoboda's appeal look like a plea for censorship, anti-Jewish sentiment, and brutish and insulting agitation.[206] Apparently, aside from the direct attack by Swoboda, also others had uttered bold brickbats against Klein but did not wage a forthright confrontation. Making the continuous threatening a political issue, to which people in the city public had to somehow react, proved to be the best strategy for Klein. During the entire month of May, the tensions did not fully dissolve—Swoboda even started a signature initiative against Klein—, but were increasingly supplanted by other conflicts.

In the first week of April, a newspaper article called for a foundation of a German Club which should promote and spread the ideas of the revolution and bring together interested people of all social strata of urban society.[207] The main concern seemed obvious and understandable: There were already countless associations and clubs in Pest-Buda devoted to the Magyar national cause but nothing alike for the German part of the city inhabitants. The idea was to provide a forum for exchange of thoughts about the "vaterländischen, d.i. ungarischen Interessen"[208] [patriotic, i.e. Hungarian interests]—the language to be used was German.

Unsurprisingly, this proposal met with harsh criticism from the side on the radicals. A public debate broke out about how to deal with the Club. Subsequently, it was being accused of undermining the national cause of the Magyars, some even proposed to expel the Germans from the country, and denounced them of being traitors, separatists and worse things.[209] Others reminded their readers of the freedom of assembly, an important achievement of the revolution, which applied to the German Club as well as to all other associations founded so far.[210] The meetings of the Club became a political issue and present in the medial discourse in the city. The deprecative attitude of the majority of the Hungarian press did not change in

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[206] „An einen gewissen Johann Nepomuk Swoboda", in Rózsa, *Ihr Männer aus, jetzt ruft die Zeit*, 108-112.
[207] Pester Zeitung, No. 637, 7 April 1848.
[208] Idem.
[209] Nemes, *Budapest*, 144.
[210] Idem.

the following months, although the Club even started courting Magyars to join the Club in order to minimize tensions through transparency:

> *(...) in such a way the nasty accusations and vilifications will stop which have unfortunately found their way into the press and, by befouling the German, have only caused mischief.*[211]

The Pest German Club initiated a lively society life, had formal statutes, and met regularly, yet remained under close supervision and mistrust from the Magyar national camp.

In the meantime, the question of language had again become a central issue, albeit it had already been an eminent point for controversies before the revolution. Since the elections on the municipal level as well as for the Hungarian diet were quickly approaching, radical demands to ban any other language than Hungarian from all hearings, debates and sessions of political and administrative bodies met with criticism from the German side. The *Pester Zeitung* had lately introduced a supplemental paper "Volks-Tribüne" [people's tribune] in which a passionate discussion on this issue commenced. In the particular question of language the burgher Ignaz August argued for a very cautious approach. Under the ambiguous title „Verständigen wir uns!" [Let's agree!/Let's make ourselves understood!], he wrote:

> *Hungary consists of many elements. (...) security, even the existence of Hungary makes it indispensable not to affront these elements, not to tantalize, not to subdue them. Someone who does that might be an enthusiast but most certainly he is an indirect disturber of the Hungarian weal.*[212]

The public discussion on the language issue as well as on the organisational proceedings with respect to the coming elections continued. Apart from the debates in the newspapers and the deliberations in public sessions of the municipal bodies and in the associations, also "Katzenmusik" as a means of open expression of critique played an imminent role in Pest-Buda.

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[211] Pester Zeitung, No. 666, 10 May 1848 *[...so werden auch die gehässigen Beschuldigungen und Verunglimpfungen, die leider auch ihren Weg in die Presse gefunden, und die indem sie den Deutschen besudeln, nur böses Blut hervorrufen, von selbst aufhören].*
[212] Ignaz August „Verständigen wir uns!", Pester Zeitung/Volkstribüne, No. 670, 14 May 1848 *[Ungarn ist aus vielen Elementen, ... die Sicherheit, ja die Existenz Ungarns erfordert, diese Elemente bei Leibe nicht anzugreifen, sie zu reizen –sie zu unterdrücken. Wer solches unternimmt, kann wohl ein Enthusiast sein, aber sicherlich ist er indirect ein Störer des ungarischen Wohles].*

When on May 11th the commander of the military garrison in Buda, Baron von Lederer, had to endure a "Katzenmusik", the scene abruptly turned into a bloody tumult. Lederer, apparently expecting a 'visit' in the evening, had his house guarded by infantry units who, immediately after the 'music' began, interfered. Several people were injured, some of them very seriously. The news about the attack quickly disseminated from Buda to Pest. As newspaper reports on the events tell, the entire urban scene was in a bustle, people were outraged since they interpreted the intervention of the regular military as a harbinger for further use of force, maybe even the repression of the recent political movement.[213] Only after the news got about that Batthyány had immediately met with Palatine Stephen in order to initiate an investigation committee did the unrest calm down. Lederer was subsequently released from his command, yet escaped to Vienna, so that the committee proceeded to hear several witnesses in the following days. The affair attracted immense attention of the public. The protocols of the hearings were constantly published in the local papers which by the contemporaries was considered a downright breakthrough for the achieved degree of *Öffentlichkeit* [publicity].[214] The final report of the committee recommended bringing a charge against Lederer and two officers, since it had turned out that the infantrymen, apparently drunk and incited by their officers, had used force against the 'musicians' without prior warnings.

From these days on, the military, commonly perceived as foreign body in midst of the inhabitants (since most of the detachments were Italian), was kept under close observation. Further conflicts did not hold off. On June 2nd, the military garrison and the National Guard were to be sworn in. This initially festive event was undermined when the Italian regiment "Ceccopieri" refused the oath on the constitution. Despite the minister of war, Lázár Mészáros, who had served in Italy and was fluent in the language, eventually convinced the soldiers to swear the oath, the trouble went on. On the Jun 13th, the newspapers titled "Blutige Pfing-

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[213] Pester Zeitung, No. 668, 12 May 1848.
[214] Pester Zeitung, No. 677, 23 May 1848.

sten in Pest!" [Bloody Pentecost in Pest]:[215] the latent tensions between military and National Guard had led to an outburst of violence in the Charles barracks (Károly laktanya) in the Belváros district where heavy shoot-outs took place. Rumours saying that the Italian soldiers were killing Guardsmen spread immediately and fuelled public anger. Mészarós and even Palatine Stephan appeared at the scene in order to negotiate a ceasefire. Three days passed by until the calm was restored; five people had perished in this so far deadliest incident since the March events.

Despite the great consternation among the city inhabitants about the deadly violence the elections were held as planned. Leopold Rottenbiller was elected new mayor Pest, Karl Jakobsohn in Buda; the restoration of the municipal bodies was soon completed. Unlike the Pentecost Uprising in Prague, which clearly had the character of an abatement of the entire revolution, the Pentecost fights in Pest-Buda lacked this political background, even though they were more than mere background sounds. The Hungarian ministry was consolidated, laws were regularly passed, the new diet met in early July. The tensions in the municipal bodies were soon supplanted by the next act of the 'drama' which commenced with the advancing military campaign of the Croatian Ban, Josip Jelačić.

3.3 Similarities and differences

When assessing the character and development of the public discourses in the cities during the three months of the revolution, from March to June 1848, similarities and differences between the two case studies come to light. The most striking similarity concerns the general thrust: the revolutionary enchantment accompanied by an atmosphere of fraternization and expressed through various festivities in public places, symbolic acts and outright commitment to commonly shared goals was omnipresent in the first days after the March events. The abolition of censorship can be considered the decisive achievement and precondition for the full

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[215] Pester Zeitung, Extra-Nummer, 13 June 1848.

evolvement of the open and critical public discourse which in both cases assumed a multi-layered and highly diversified form over the months. The virtually exponential rise of the print media ranging from leaflets to newspapers is the significant indicator in this regard.

The mobilization of effectively all social groups of urban society made the city a place where political participation beyond the regular bodies and authorities took place: in the narrow period between March and June the public sphere of the cities was not only the place for a 'bourgeois', predominately male and well-off public any longer, but was gradually penetrated and transformed by students, workers and women organized in various groups and articulating political demands. Whereas students became the most active supporters of the national agenda of the revolution and workers made their appearance in the urban realm with demands mainly concerning the issue of unemployment, it is of particular interest that women increasingly took part in the public life of the city—not as passive 'consumers' of public activities such as concerts, balls and feasts, but with specific political concerns, for example in the form of the circle of the 'Radical Hungarian Women' which issued an own petition of '24 demands'.[216] Similar engagement can be observed in the case of Prague when, for example, women contributed to debates in local newspapers and later even actively supported the Pentecost Uprising.[217]

The political discourse mirrored in the German press developed a similar way. Having achieved central goals of the liberal agenda, national attitudes gained ground which later became more and more exclusivist. From the side of the newspaper editors and contributors pleas for unanimity were repeatedly uttered which, as an unintentional side effect, made the growing split between the "two national elements" even more palpable. In Pest-Buda as well as in Prague the foundations of German Clubs, around the same time in April, can certainly be regarded as a reaction of the German populace of the cities to the national 'drive' the re-

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[216] Robert Nemes, "Women in the 1848-1849 Hungarian Revolution," *Journal of Women's History* 13 (2001), 193-207.
[217] Pech, *The Czech Revolution*, 319-329.

spective movement had been assuming in the weeks before. The questions concerning the language to be used in official proceedings became an outstanding point of conflict.

Before in May the public exchange of arguments, standpoints and opinions in the new public arenas of debate, e.g. the supplemental papers of the press, reached the probably most elaborated and eloquent stage, both cities had seen the brutish violence against the Jewish inhabitants starting in roughly the same week, though with longer lasting effects in Pest-Buda. The issue of including the Jews into the 'revolutionary play', by admitting them to the National Guard, and in the Pest-Buda case by even coopting them into political bodies, fuelled already existing anti-Jewish attitudes among the urban populations. The reception and handling of the violent riots mainly followed the same pattern: by referring to Christian principles and to the values of the revolution journalists and contributors publicly distanced themselves from the assaults.

Moreover, the coming elections in June caused a citywide excitement which was catalysed and intensified by individual events like "Katzenmusiken", the Slavic Congress in Prague or the 'Lederer affair' and the 'Pentecost shoot-out' in Pest-Buda, closely reported and commented in all local newspapers. Altogether it is quite striking to identify the parallelisms, even in chronological terms, of the public discourse in the structurally comparable urban settings of Prague and Pest-Buda when it comes to the central social and political issues in the course of events.

Irrespective of the very different progress of the revolutions in both contexts after June 1848, in Prague the military abatement and the political restoration, in Pest-Buda the way into the war of independence, there were also differences with regard to the public discourse. For the period in question, it seems that in Prague the emphasis on the 'national question' was more articulated than in Pest-Buda. Even though the debate on language appeared in both urban discourses, it had a more prominent significance in Prague, since the Czech language

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did not have an official status whatsoever, whereas Hungarian had been the official language of Hungary since the diet of 1844.[218] Additionally, the debate on 'Frankfurt' contributed to a sharp polarisation which fuelled the national sentiments on the side of the Czechs whose experiences with the earlier periods of counterreformation and Josephinism were deeply inscribed into the collective memory of the people. In Pest-Buda on the other hand, a certain polarisation was palpable, too, but not as determined as in Prague. For example there were no fights about a public display of the German Tricolour—on the contrary: when the Viennese student deputation was visiting Pest, many burghers waved black-red-gold flags out of their windows.

As for the German Clubs it is evident that the Constitutional Club in Prague was more national-minded and dedicated to a defence of decidedly German interest than its equivalent in Pest-Buda whose self-conception was rather "ungarisch-vaterländisch"[219] [Hungarian patriotic], irrespective of the language used. On the other hand, despite all tensions, the Prague burghers made the feast of reconciliation in the Baumgarten in late May possible which shows that an overcoming of ostensibly insurmountable antagonisms was at least tackled, though not achieved in the end.

However, a strong polarisation in Pest-Buda concerned the means of public debate, the press. As for the German press, the public affair concerning the editor of *Der Ungar*, Hermann Klein, shows that certain types and styles of commenting could meet with refusal from parts of the readership. To what extent the affront by the burgher Swoboda had an anti-Jewish motive is unascertainable on the basis of the examination of the press. Despite this particular issue, we can state that the entirety of the German press in Pest-Buda, not only those newspapers which were included into the analysis, covered a broader spectrum of political attitudes than the papers in Prague. Nonetheless, the respective three newspapers of each city which

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[218] Deák, *The Lawful Revolution*, 47.
[219] Pester Zeitung, No. 637, 6 April 1848.

have been analysed and which belonged to the most widespread and accepted papers represented a rather moderate position and had no alignments to clubs and associations whatsoever.

Finally, it is important to mention that the urban discourses were not a closed entity. The newspapers reported on the ongoing political developments in almost many cities in Europe, especially in Vienna, of course. Apart from the look at the emperor's residence from the perspective of the Bohemian and the Hungarian metropolises, the public discourses in Pest-Buda and Prague had a direct mutual impact via their local newspapers. We know that the editor of the *Prager Zeitung* had subscription for the *Pester Zeitung* and *vice versa*. Both repeatedly commented on the most notable developments in the respective other city which fed the local discourses with further arguments and kept the readership informed about the other revolutionary movement and the issues people were facing there.

Chapter 4

Revolutions spatialized:

Symbolic topographies in the urban realm

You certainly know the romantic Baumgarten (Stromovka); *but today!, today you should have seen it, with long, crowded tables, with fulgent pavilions, today when the trees were wearing flags, today when the inhabitants of Prague celebrated a feast, indeed, today you should have seen it (…), doubly nice, doubly delightful, today it witnessed how thousands of hearts happily beat, today it heard Czechs and Germans calling each other brothers, how heartfelt words of reconciliation were uttered, how blissfully Bohemians shook hands, how hitherto separated emotionally hugged, today it was not a Baumgarten but a Volksgarten* [people's garden] *which God in Heaven must have rejoiced.*[220]

– Eduard Breier, Prager Zeitung, 26 May 1848

Under the assumption that the revolutions of 1848 featured a consecutive chain of events, which maybe even followed a certain logical and traceable causality constituting a definitive chronological frame, historiography has overwhelmingly focused on a temporal stream of narration, just like in the previous chapter of this thesis. This predominant paradigm has usually been accompanied by a strong emphasis on the history of the 'great men' of 1848 whose individual contribution to politics and public life was considered meaningful and explicatory. This category of great men like Kossuth and Batthyány in Pest-Buda or Havliček and Palacký in Prague still shapes the collective memory and the respective national narrative. Thus, one can certainly conclude without judgement or regret whatsoever, 'chronology' and

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[220] Eduard Breier, Prager Zeitung, No. 83, 26 May 1848 *[O gewiß, ihr kennt den romantischen Baumgarten; aber heut, heute hättet Ihr ihn sehen sollen, mit den langen, reichbesetzten Tafeln, mit den herrlichen Gezelten, heute, wo die Bäume Fahnen trugen, heute wo die Bewohner Prags ein Fest begingen, ja heute hättet ihr ihn sehen sollen (…) doppelt schön, doppelt reizend, heute war er Zeuge, wie sich Tausende von Herzen freudig entgegenschlugen, heute hörte er wie sich Tschechen und Deutsche Brüder nannten, wie glühend heiß die Worte der Versöhnung von den Lippen strömten, wie selig Böhmen sich die Hände drückten, wie lang Entzweite sich gerührt umarmten, (…) heute war er kein Baum-, er war ein Volks-Garten, an dem Gott im Himmel seine Freude haben musste].*

'biography' have usually been regarded as the most adequate perspectives when dealing with '1848'—even structuralist approaches did not manage to fully elude these patterns.[221]

In contrast to that, 'space', if mentioned at all, pops up as the 'container space' with more or less clear limits, as a stage on which a certain (once more: mainly chronological and progressional) 'play' takes place. Normally political or administrative units, such as states, regions or cities, serve this purpose. But was the revolution in the city only a series of events progressing in time, spurred by outstanding individuals who were following a wide variety of political attitudes and convictions, *somewhere*? What about the role of space in the urban realm within the stream of incidents which is commonly subsumed under the notion of *the* revolution of 1848?

4.1 Topographies of events

Based on the explanations in the chapter before which has drawn attention not only to the political and discursive developments in general but also to spatial localisation of the events in the urban realm, one can claim that the revolutions of 1848 in Pest-Buda and Prague had a specific urban topography. There were hotspots in the urban space where incidents directly and indirectly related to the revolutions took place and, at the same time, there were quiet areas, unaffected by this kind of occurrences, where things were going on the usual way, even when General Windischgrätz put down the Pentecost Uprising in Prague with heavy artillery. What made places a hub of 'revolutionary' activity was their open accessibility, at least in the overwhelming majority of cases. Despite the eminent relevance of clubs and associations, balls and feasts, political debates in town halls and other venues, it was the publicly accessible urban space in which the revolution took shape.

This chapter seeks not only to draft an urban topography of the revolution in terms of 'what happened where' but tries to give an idea how the revolution as a social and com-

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[221] Josef Polišenský, *Aristocrats and the Crowd in the revolutionary year 1848. A contribution to the history of revolution and counter-revolution in Austria* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1980).

municative process shaped urban space and *vice versa*. This takes up the theoretical assumptions by Edward Soja and others which are sketched in the chapter "City and Revolution."[222] Again, the considerations mainly rely on the analysed German press which serve as a mirror of the public discourse through which this 'minting' and 'labelling' of certain places in the city took place. In the discursive process, some of those sites, formerly just places *somewhere* in the city space, were vested with a highly symbolical, maybe even a *quasi*-sacral meaning which was propagated by all means of the citywide discourse, print products, rumours, debates in public places and word of mouth.
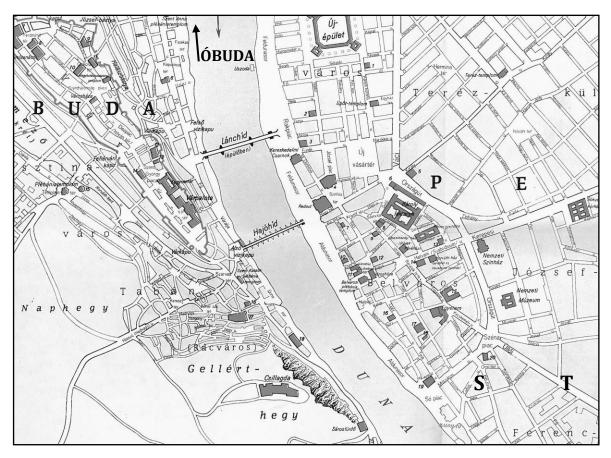
To begin with, one can simply ask: Where were the places of the revolution located in the urban space of Pest-Buda and Prague? And did they have anything in common apart from the structural prerequisite of open accessibility; were there differences? Obviously, these places mainly concentrated in the inner districts of the cities. As for Pest-Buda, the National Museum and its forecourt where the first mass gathering on March 15th as well as the following public assemblies including the large and incited demonstrations on March 29th and 30th took place were located at Ország út (Landstraße) right next to the Inner District (Bélváros). The university from where the students were allured to join the demonstrations was just around the corner.

The coffeehouse 'Pilvax', where Sándor Petőfi and his fellow revolutionists had gathered as well as the print office 'Landerer & Heckenast', where the '12 points' had been printed, were at Urak utca (Herrengasse) and Hatvani utca (Hatvanergasse) respectively, roughly a hundred meters apart; the Pest City Hall and the City Hall Square were also in closest proximity. The pontoon-bridge (Hajóhíd) connected the Pest bank with the Buda district of Tabán on the Buda bank from where the street led uphill to the castle with the vice-regal institutions of the Palatine. Altogether the Inner District proved to be core of revolu-

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[222] Edward Soja, „Vom ‚Zeitgeist' zum ‚Raumgeist'. New Twists on the Spatial Turn" in Jörg Döring, Tristan Thielmann, eds., *Spatial Turn. Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2009), 241-262.

tionary activity in Pest. In this list we cannot only recognise the events of March 15th which mainly happened out in the open but also the spatial concentration of the relevant sites in a district not larger than 0.5 km². All these places could be reached within a few minutes.
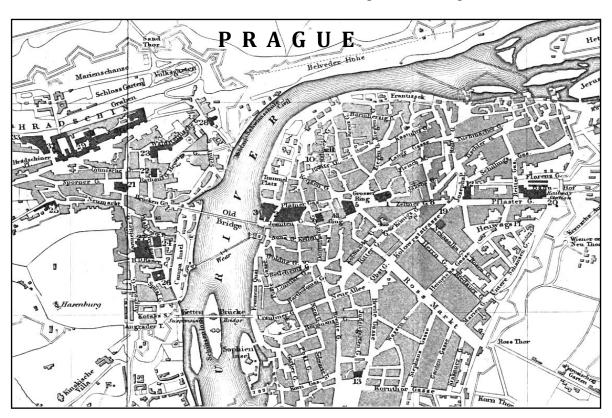

Map 1: Buda and Pest in 1848

Additionally, the Inner District of Pest between the riverside walk and Ország út featured the necessary infrastructure of the discursive arena: many coffeehouses, the university, the city hall, several print shops and so forth. The editorial offices of the German newspapers were located close to the centre of the city. The *Pester Zeitung* even had its editor's office in the house of 'Landerer & Heckenast' and thus was directly involved in everything going on at this hotspot of debate.[223] The *Morgenröthe* had its office at the *Redoutensaal* (redout) at the upstream end of the Inner District; *Der Ungar* in Magas utca in Buda beneath the castle and

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[223] Pester Zeitung, No. 1, 30 March 1845.

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thus was closely exposed to the developments on the other side of the Danube.[224] The areas of conflict, where for example the assaults on the Jewish population took place, were not located in the centre of Bélváros but in the adjacent district of Térezváros, especially in Váci and Király utca. Similarly, the 'Lederer incident' happened outside the centre, in Buda. This short overview makes clear that the more remote from the centre of Pest the more rapid revolutionary activity decreased.

As for Prague, the topography of the revolution was slightly different. Of course, much of the public activity took place in the inner district, Old Town (Staré Město/ Altstadt), as well. The city hall at the Altstädter Ring (Staroměstské náměstí) was one of the main gathering places where for example an incited crowd demanded the release of the printer František Groll, the incident which later caused the resignation of burgomaster Strobach.

Map 2: Prague in 1858

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[224] Die Morgenröthe, No. 1, 1 January 1848; Pester Zeitung, No. 394, 18 February 1847.

An outstandingly important place was the Rossmarkt (Koňský trh) at which, right at the Václav statue, Holy Masses with the Archbishop and public celebrations were held, for example on the occasion of the return of the second deputation to the emperor. The square was the only one in the centre of the city large enough for a gathering of thousands of people. The way from the Rossmarkt via Am Graben (in the 1858 map called Kolowratstrasse) and Hibernerstrasse (1858: Pflaster Gasse) to the railway station (today Masarykovo nádraží) and back was usually the route of processions when deputations were seen off or welcomed. By the thousands people lined these streets; flags waved from the festooned houses. The platforms of the railways station were densely crowded when the deputations of students arrived from Vienna, welcome speeches were given and the emperor was celebrated. But unlike in Pest-Buda, also more distant places were settings with an essential connection to the revolution: the Sophieninsel (Slovanský ostrov) with its large ballroom, where numerous meetings of burgher committees took place and eventually the Slavic Congress held its sessions, and the Baumgarten (Stromovka) in the northern part of the city beyond the River Vltava (Moldau) where several feasts were celebrated, among them the great feast of reconciliation in late May. In sum, unlike in Pest, the scenes of the revolution in Prague were more spread in the urban space and even included quite remote places such as the Baumgarten. Yet, the Kleinseite (Malá Strana) on the opposite bank of the Vltava basically remained untouched from any revolutionary activity, apart from individual torchlight processions and Holy Masses in the Cathedral, whereas Buda experienced several big events, among them the demonstration on March 15th at the castle.

An important aspect when tackling the revolution from a spatial perspective is the social handling and manipulation of the urban space by the contemporaries in the course of events until June 1848. As outlined above, the March events were regarded as a deep break commonly perceived as the overcoming of a period of constraints. From the point of view of

the revolutionists, this break would have a similar impact on the future of society as the French Revolution had had more than two generations earlier.[225] And just like the Parisian protagonists of the Revolution in 1789, the '1848ers' in Pest-Buda and Prague sought to inscribe the revolution and its achievements into the collective memory of the people. It was not by chance that the director of the National Museum in Pest, which served as a repository of the Hungarian historical memory, was assailed to store the original sheet with the '12 points' in the archive of the collection in order to keep it there as the core document of the political and national emancipation for the generations to come.[226]

4.2 Inscribing meaning into the urban space

Another way to eternalize '1848' was indeed the manipulation of urban space or, more precisely, its representations in the form of street names or any other kind of toponyms. The relabelling of public places in the urban space was the attempt to inscribe the revolution into the cityscape and consequently into communicative behaviour of the inhabitants. Of course, a similar process can be observed after almost all revolutions in the past two hundred years. Interestingly in the case of '1848' in Pest-Buda and Prague, the process of renaming was not decreed from the municipal or administrative authorities but initially came from the leaders of the revolutionary crowd, from various clubs or associations or even loose groups of inhabitants dedicated to a certain renaming project. The latter had a tradition which went back before the revolution itself, for example when after the death of the highly appreciated Hungarian Palatine Joseph in 1847 a burgher committee was founded in order to collect money and to commission drafts for a prospective memorial to be erected at a central place in the city.[227] However, whereas in the case of the dead Palatine it was the idea of honouring a distinguished person and commemorating his dedication to the city, its people and the 'Hun-

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[225] Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2000), 10, 46.
[226] Pester Zeitung, No. 616, 17 March 1848.
[227] Pester Zeitung, No. 380, 24 Januar 1847.

garian cause' in general, it was an expression of political achievements, attitudes and convictions in the case of the revolution.

For the cause of renaming public places, the discourse in the city was essential. People in associations or other localities of socialisation debated proper names certain places could be given, newspapers and leaflets contributed to the spread of name proposals and evaluated the pros and contras for a place to be named after this event or that person. It turns out that the process of renaming was progressing very quickly during the weeks after the March events which can be considered a signal that the revolutionary movement consciously sought to imprint its 'mark' into the urban space as soon as possible.

In Pest-Buda, it was Sándor Petőfi who first suggested a site to be renamed: his proposal was to change the name of the Pest City Hall Square in 'Freedom Square'.[228] Further suggestions followed: In the Inner District, Urak utca with the meanwhile famous coffeehouse 'Pilvax' was renamed as 'Victory Street', the Horváth house with the print shop 'Landerer & Heckenast' was called from now on 'Free Press Court', and the adjacent street not Hatvani utca any longer but 'Free Press Lane'.[229] All of these new names directly referred to March 15th and reflected its decisive events and achievements at the original site.

Whereas Pest embraced the memorable day of March 15th, the renaming process in Buda was guided and influenced by the coming political agenda of the Hungarian polity represented by the ministry and its most distinguished members: In the castle (vár), Bécsi kapu utca (Wienerthorstraße) was renamed as 'Kossuth utca' and Uri utca (Herrengasse) as 'Batthyány utca'.[230] The preliminary end of these proceedings of rededication was reached when the proposal came up to erect a monument of liberty on the recently renamed Freedom Square in Pest.[231]

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[228] Pester Zeitung, No. 618, 19 March 1848.
[229] Pester Zeitung, No. 623, 24 March 1848.
[230] Pester Zeitung, No. 626, 27 March 1848.
[231] Pester Zeitung, No. 629, 30 March 1848.

Unsurprisingly, a similar process can be observed in Prague. One day after the proclamation of the constitution, a proposition was published in the *Bohemia* to rename the Franzensquai (Francis Quay) as Constitutionsplatz (Constitution Square).[232] Since the name Franzensquai commemorated the reign of Emperor Franz I and therewith the anti-liberal era of centralisation and censorship, it was a conceivable 'victim' of a quick rededication. Its prominent location between the Old bridge (Charles bridge) and the Chain bridge next to the Sophieninsel (Slovanský ostrov) connecting two important intersections in the urban space (crossings of the River Vltava), made it a crowded place where thousands of inhabitants usually passed by every day. Thus, the Franzensquai was a landmark with a name familiar to virtually everyone in Prague. With the decision to change its name not only the notion of the 'constitution' itself, which was on everyone's lips these days anyway, did become popularised but the essential shift from the anti-liberal era of repression to a legal status which affirmed liberties found its symbolic expression. This 'historic' shift could hardly be made more evident to the broader public than by re-coining such a popular site in the city.

At this point, it is evident that the renaming process was more than a mere commemoration of the achievements of the revolution but a means to convey a political message. In the case of the Franzensquai, this message even had a further dimension. A monument of the ruling Emperor Ferdinand (1835-1848) was to be erected in the middle of the new Constitutionsplatz—an approval of the monarchy as such and of Ferdinand in particular but simultaneously a sharp break with the non-constitutional character of the monarchy of the past, represented by Franz I. The entire ensemble displayed the core idea of the revolution in the most concise way and made it visible and manifest in the urban space.

The renaming of the Rossmarkt (Koňský trh) which was proposed some days later had a different connotation.[233] Whereas the former name referred to the actual use of the largest

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[232] Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 18 March 1848.
[233] Bohemia, Extra-Nummer, 22 March 1848.

square in the city, i.e. horse selling, the suggested name Wenzelsplatz (Václavské náměstí) clearly had a national character. It commemorated the patron saint of the Bohemian lands, King Wenceslaus. The king had served as a symbol less for Bohemia as a whole but for the Czech national cause, especially after the Battle of White Mountain, the following period of coerced counterreformation and the reign of Emperor Joseph II who sought to make German the compulsory language of administration in his realms. Since the square named after the ancient king played an important role in the political liturgy of the revolution, where Holy Masses, feasts, demonstrations and procession were held, the mutual impact and mesh between political activity in the course of the revolution and the Czech national movement was constituted at this very site. Interestingly, from the side of the German press, this nexus was not considered a problem, since against the background of the enchanted atmosphere of fraternization neither the name of the square nor its deeper meaning necessarily suggested conflict or exclusivist attitudes.[234] Only during the Slavic Congress when the present deputations celebrated Mass at the Wenceslaus statue did the site gain a certain exclusive character from the viewpoint of the German press.[235]

When reflecting on the renaming processes in Pest-Buda and Prague, a different handling comes to light. In Pest-Buda the main thrust aimed at a representation of the major achievements of the revolution in the urban space by rededicating eminent places which bore symbolic significance in the revolution. In Prague, as the 'Franzensquai example' shows, the aim was to erase pre-revolutionary street names, which commemorated the earlier era, from the city map and therewith from the communicative behaviour of the inhabitants through renaming them corresponding to the goals of the revolution. The 'Wenceslaus square example' even displays a stricter national interpretation of this re-labelling process, whereas the example of the streets in Buda named after two Hungarian ministers rather shows an orientation

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[234] Idem.
[235] Bohemia, No. 90, 6 June 1848.

according to contemporary political developments. This, of course, was due to the more successful outcome of the revolution for the Hungarian polity after the completed negotiation in Vienna concerning the degree of political self-administration. In sum, renaming proved to be an important means to inscribe the revolution into the urban space and eventually into the public discourse. One can certainly assume that the revolutionists hoped to eternalise the achievements of '1848' this way.

4.3 Symbolic spaces in the city

However, apart from the localisation of the actual events of the revolution in the urban realm and the subsequent social processes negotiating the use and definition of urban space, a spatial perspective on '1848' comprises a further aspect: the symbolisation of space. As for the revolution at least four different categories of urban space with a symbolic meaning can be classified:

a. Spaces of revolutionary activity,

b. Spaces of fraternization,

c. Spaces of conflict and violence,

d. Spaces of dialogue and (re-)conciliation.

As outlined above, the spaces of revolutionary activity were scattered across the city. Places out in the open, the stairs of the National Museum or the City Hall Square in Pest and the Rossmarkt in Prague, and places indoors, such as the Václav Baths and the ballrooms of the Sophieninsel in Prague, the 'Pilvax', the redout and the theatre in Pest, belong to this category. Print shops and reading rooms where the discursive process took shape may also be included. The stairs of the National Museum in Pest became a cipher for the political emancipation of the crowd, the Horváth house with 'Landerer & Heckenast' for the freedom of the press, and Václav Baths for the freedom of assembly.

The spaces of fraternization are more difficult to decode. The meeting places of associations devoted to the spread of amity and unanimity among the inhabitants, such as the Prague writers' club or the various mass gatherings indoors and outdoors which entailed fervent appeals to the commitment to the common goals of the revolution, irrespective of language or nationality, can be listed here. Spaces of fraternization could overlap with the spaces of the former category. The Rossmarkt for example served as the site where the burghers' petition was solemnly read out before it was brought to Vienna. Later on, it staged the mass gatherings after the return of the second deputation where the newly gained freedom was commonly celebrated. The square in front of the National Museum in Pest saw the *quasi-*sacral ceremony of fraternization of the Viennese students' deputation with the city officials in Pest which made the most symbolic site of March 15th a scene of universal concord and harmony.

The spaces of violence and conflict were first and foremost the districts in which the assaults on the Jewish population took place in April 1848, in Pest the district of Terézváros, in Prague the district of Židovské město. Another place of conflict was the Konviktsaal (convict hall) in Prague where the sessions of the German Constitutional Club were held in whose course fierce disputes between spokesmen of the Club and of the National Committee concerning the 'Frankfurt' issue broke out.[236] Moreover, the Lederer residence in Buda, the Charles Barracks in Pest and the entire Old Town in Prague after the beginning of the Pentecost Uprising constituted symbolic spaces of an urban topography of conflict.

The spaces of dialogue and (re-)conciliation were again overlapping with some of the aforementioned. The meeting place of the writers' club, but especially the Baumgarten in Prague were places where the prevailing tensions and arguments of the weeks before were unexpectedly pushed aside for a very short moment. The eyewitness report by Eduard Beier

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[236] Bohemia, No. 70, 2 May 1848.

which is quoted in the beginning of this chapter is the most telling testimony of its highly symbolic content. Those sites opened up the opportunity for compromise and consensus, or at least dialogue and reconciliation, and thereby added an important puzzle piece to the urban topography of the revolution which historiography has usually not discerned.

Finally, an important point when addressing the spatiality of the revolution is the issue its commemoration in the urban space in the following decades. Undoubtedly both revolutions had a formative impact on the shaping of the national consciousness in the long run. Both are commemorated completely different in the respective cities. Whereas the *lieux de mémoire* of '1848' do practically not appear in Prague's urban space today, they are very present and visible in Budapest's.

That, however, is another story.

Conclusion

Revolution in the city—it has turned out that conceptualising the first phase of '1848' in Pest-Buda and Prague as a comparative urban history and thus confine the scope to a smaller spatial frame provides a different view on the epochal break which shook the Habsburg monarchy to the core. The two largest cities in the monarchy aside from Vienna were hotspots of revolutionary activity and discourse, indeed hubs of what has romantically been called the 'springtime of the peoples'. These cities were more than just the stage for the events which in their entirety constituted the revolution with all its ramifications for the following path of history. To put it boldly: it did matter that Sándor Petőfi recited his poems on the stairs of the National Museum in Pest and *not somewhere*, and that František Palacký wrote his famous letter to the Frankfurt pre-parliament *not from somewhere* but from Prague. The heterogeneity of their inhabitants and the unique social and cultural topography made the cities of Pest-Buda and Prague a diverse and 'polyphone' organism in which the spatial and social dimension of the concrete historical situation of '1848' became explicit and materialized. Hereby, the urban space had specific relevance for the process of the revolution, an aspect which hitherto existing historiography has underrated.

The public space—on the eve of '1848', the cities featured a variety of public *fora* of debate which contributed to the politicization and mobilization of effectively all social groups of urban society. The "mania for associations"[237] has yielded countless places of socialisation and assembly in the realms of the cities. The public sphere in the Habermasian sense developed a high degree of diversification ranging from numerous intimate circles and clubs to bigger societies dedicated to causes of public interest and even to giant mass events in the urban space. After the March events, these places of critical discourse mobilized and included

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[237] Robert Nemes, *The Once and Future Budapest* (DeKalb: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 61.

even those who had been marginalised in earlier periods like workers and women who from this point on contributed to the social and political processes. The urban public space increasingly became the place for political articulation, criticism and assertion of demands. Incited crowds gathering at public sites in the urban realm were even able to enforce specific demands against the official bodies of the municipal administration—partly 'the street' took over. The local newspapers unleashed from censorship and sold at many places all over the city proved to be the decisive means for the spread of information, rumours and opinion. Read either at home or in public places, such as coffeehouses where also various clubs held their meetings, they were an essential part of the setup and subsequent intensification of a citywide public discourse.

The political discourse—the explosion of print products, simple flyers and leaflets, inciting pamphlets, placards and many new weeklies and dailies, quickly distributed all over the city catalyzed opinion making, political processes and perceptions and reactions of the inhabitants in an unprecedented manner. They displayed and simultaneously fuelled the changes from the initial mood of elation after the achievement of freedom of the press to the period of growing tensions and conflicts. It became evident to many of the 'opinion leaders' that *Öffentlichkeit* [publicity] was an ambivalent issue. Without certain regulations, i.e. a legal framework, it could be misused (and indeed was misused) for fierce agitation and the incitement of violence; did one propose a comprehensive press law or a municipal arbitration committee, people could (and indeed did) simply override it by claiming this to be an outrageous cutback of the hard-won freedom of the press. The unleashed press on the other hand made an open exchange of arguments and standpoints possible: the fervent debates in the supplemental papers give an idea of the contributors' engagement in presenting coherent lines of argumentation for their specific opinions. The German newspapers in Pest-Buda and Prague played an important role in the totality of the urban discourse, were at the cutting edge of the

latest developments and served as a forum for dedicated debates on issues such as the status of the respective languages, on the condemnation of the violence against the Jewish population, on 'Frankfurt' and eventually on the ways how the unanimity of the urban inhabitants in an atmosphere of increasing mistrust could be retain.

Pest-Buda and Prague compared—a striking aspect which was elaborated in the course of this thesis is the parallelism in the developing public discourse in both cities between March and June 1848. This parallelism, however, did not only concern the chronology in terms of the fundamental alteration from the common enchantment in mid March to the increasing tensions in late April and May until the riotous and violent Pentecost days in June. It was particularly displayed in a wide array of discursive mechanisms: the attempts to inscribe the revolution into the urban space through processes of renaming in March; in the case of the violence against the Jews the reporting and commenting in the German newspapers which showed similar patterns of decided disapproval; the founding of German Clubs in both cities in April due to a perceived lack of representation of the German-speaking urban population in the public discourse which, in turn, evoked reactions of mistrust and fear; finally the disharmonic "Katzenmusiken" as a means to express political dissent which were the order of the day in May. All these elements can be regarded as similarities in both examined cases. As for the differences, a closer look is necessary in order to identify 'Frankfurt' and the lacking official status of the Czech language as problems peculiar to the Prague case, or the rather moderate "ungarisch-vaterländisch" [Hungarian-patriotic] self-conception of the German Club in Pest-Buda which explicitly differed from the strong national-liberal positions of its Prague counterpart.

Certainly, the fateful war of independence in the Hungarian case and the subject of the lasting tensions between Czechs and Germans in Bohemia have attracted special interest from the side of professional historiography. To some extent, topics like these have outdone the

relevance of an urban history of the revolution, not to mention an urban history from a comparative perspective. This conjuncture opens up opportunities for further research. The theoretical input of the scholarly debate subsumed under the notion of 'spatial turn' and of Habermas' theory of the 'public sphere' helps to understand the city not as a monolithic and anonymous grand unit but as a diversified, multiform and disparate space. As for '1848' as an urban phenomenon, especially the inclusion of the case of Vienna into the comparative analysis is a desirable goal for coming research in order to complete the unique setting and network of the three largest urban centres in the Habsburg monarchy which Péter Hanák has called "das zentraleuropäische Dreieck" [the central European triangle].[238]

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[238] Péter Hanák, „Das zentraleuropäische Dreieck," in Gerhard Melinz & Susan Zimmermann, eds., *Wien – Prag – Budapest. Blütezeit der Habsburgermetropolen. Urbanisierung, Kommunalpolitik, gesellschaftliche Konflikte (1867-1918)* (Wien: Promedia, 1996), 7-10.

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