Ildikó Pandur

THE WORKMANSHIP OF GYULA JUNGFER (1841-1908) IN THE LIGHT OF NEW RESEARCH

PhD DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

BUDAPEST, 2008

THE WORKMANSHIP OF GYULA JUNGFER (1841-1908) IN THE LIGHT OF NEW RESEARCH

CHAPTERS

Gyula Jungfer, a third generation member of an iron-wright dynasty traced back to the last third of the 18th century, the internationally acclaimed Hungarian craftsman – whose recognition is proven by his numerous prizes as well as his high positions held amongst both professionals and artists – is undeservedly little known today. He was a primary figure in the eyes of his coevals, comparable to and Vilmos Zsolnay, Endre Thék and Miksa Róth. His workmanship, which covers almost half a century has never been fully processed. The lack of this work is painfully made apparent when, for example, for the authentic reconstruction of his contemporary buildings. (Gyula Jungfer participated in most constructions determining today's cityscape of Budapest.)
In the 1950-s the associate of the Museum of Applied Arts, Angéla Héjjné Détári prepared to write a Jungfer monography but at the end it has never been completed. Károly Pereházy, the recognized researcher of European and within that Hungarian smith artisanship studied the Jungfer craftman dynasty for decades. He summarized his work in two monographical studies.[1] After his death he left behind his latest findings together with plans to write a complete Jungfer monography.
The dissertation: *The workmanship of Gyula Jungfer (1841-1908) in the light of new research* presents my new findings on the most famous member of the Jungfer dynasty and eventually could add to a future Jungfer monography. It also attempts to approach the Jungfer-legacy from a different angle. The complexity of the topic allows numerous scientific approaches like History of -Art, -Architecture, -Industry, -Technology, Urban Studies, Genealogical Research, etc. To expand the data collected by Károly Pereházy I primarily studied the Jungfer-collection of the Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest. Other important sources were the sample publications produced for tradesmen and trade schools. To research his legacy, as an new aspect, I explored Gyula Jungfer's role on exhibition in particular his success at the national Exhibition in 1885.

I.

The first chapter of this dissertation outlines the research history of the iron smith trade in Hungary. Pieces crafted with artistic care using the ancient traditional methods (hardly changed until the 20th century) in general relate to Applied Arts. Pieces of especially high standard originate from the flourishing eras of the wrought iron trade – gothic times, renaissance and baroque-rococo. From the beginning of the 19th century, the times of Napoleon's wars, the artistic cast-iron works started to spread widely. Traditional wrought iron art regained its popularity only in the middle of that century and flourished again until the first decade of the 20th century.
The rising interest in the wrought iron trade in the 1850-s was due in part to the growing number of church renovations, and also to the movements (led by J. Ruskin and W. Morris), that turned against the mass production of the industrial

[1] Pereházy, Károly: *Jungfer Gyula és iparm□vészeti fémárugyára* [Gyula Jungfer and His Factory for Artistic Metalwork] In: Építés- Építészettudomány, Budapest 1970. XI. kötet, pp 285-357 and *A Jungfer család mestersége – m□vészete* [The Art and Skill of the Jungfer Family of Smiths]. In: Mesterség – m□vészet – ipar. A „fémmunkás" Vállalat Ferencvárosi Gyárának monográfiája. [Craft – Art – Trade. First chapter of a monograph on the Metalworking Company's Ferencváros factory] Budapest, 1986, pp 9-98

revolution and tried to revive artistic craftmanship.
The increasingly appreciated wrought iron works became the subject of research starting in the middle of the 19th century. One sign of the growing interest was that more and more collectors turned to acquire wrought iron objects, especially in territories where this artistic trade had centuries of tradition (eg.France, Germany). Purchasing them from illustrious private collectors (eg. J Hefner–Alteneck, L. Gedon, H. Le Secq des Tournelle, Rouen, etc.) became an efficient method of growing the number of museums and enriching their iron collections. Collections at that time did not include cast iron, the other branch of iron work. This was the time of the Europe-wide appearance of industrial museums specialized in artistic objects and the technological museums displaying objects related to the history of technology. Their goal beside preservation was to show an example to craftsmen as well as to the general public, to form their tastes and so raise handicraft work to higher standards. In 1872 in Budapest (third in Europe) the Museum of Applied Arts, and in 1881, with the contribution of Gyula Jungfer, the Technological Industry Museum was established. It also served as Technological School, and together they were called as “Technology”. The library of the latter quickly obtained the ever multiplying publications (mostly in German) on iron craft. The growing collections provided material for research, which fed further general interest. In the mid-1880-s the first publications in Hungarian on wrought iron craft appeared.

The relatively late “discovered” wrought iron craftmanship is a little researched field of Art History. Some of its relics belong to the category of archeology and ethnology. Pieces that belong to applied art and architecture were often studied not by art historians but architects and mechanical engineers. Its diverse object groups, depending on the period they originate from, require different approaches, also, different types of sources are available for their research.
Like in other fields of applied art, the issues of technique and style interact, they have a symbiotic relationship. The specialties of both help age determination, as the applied materials and techniques often appear outside of the field of iron craft. (ex.: Gyula Jungfer also worked with copper, brass and aluminium brass as well – the latest appeared at the end of the 19th century.) The moisture-sensitive, wrought iron objects displayed outdoors were mostly painted black as we often see them today. For the authentic reproduction of a building's image it is important to know their original state.
The separation of designer and manufacturer, as in Fine Arts as well, makes the determination of the actual creator problematic. However, it is more apparent in the case of Applied Arts, because the manufacturing of its studied objects very often involves various crafts entangled. In many cases wrought iron forgers worked on someone else's design, and did not even work alone.
For certain operations it was necessary to have at least one helper. Yet it is definitely sensible to study the workmanship of individual craftsmen. In western Europe, mainly in Italy, signature signs appeared on iron pieces as early as the 14th century. In the second half of the 19th century it was the leading craftsman who made the design following the architect's plan and he was the one who, with the help of chisel and file, finished the ready object. Regardless of the era, the study of iron relics must be concerned, besides style and function, with the context: the social and economic environment. The attempts of Gesamkunst in the times of historism and secession definitely made necessary the interdisciplinary study of art relics. But the primary importance is to circumscribe the Jungfer-oeuvre, to make sure the object of study was actually manufactured by him. The exploration of the activities of the Jungfer workshop is not only wrought iron history research. Due to the use of various materials and methods it

also touches other areas and – because of the historism – different styles of metal trades.

The Jungfer workshop, compared to its concurrency, used the least possible machinery and always favored the original handcrafting method. It received lots of ambitious orders but did not only took on artistic projects.
It was general practice that masters shared projects. They didn't only separate by the type of work, sometimes they jointly worked on the same object. A good example is the gate of the Klotild-palace. Up until now it was listed as Jungfer's work but in reality the upper part was made by the firm Forreider and Schiller and the bottom part is the work of Ede Pick.
Invitations to tender for constructions of public facilities often gave surprising results. It was, to some degree, due to personal relationships. Also, personal recommendations resulted in the expansion of the aristocrat client circle. This must be considered to get a more complete picture of the history of the workshop beside the study of the social an artistic environment, the relationship with inland and foreign businesses, suppliers, architects, artist, and the aristocracy.
The distribution of data related to Gyula Jungfer's work is uneven. Information on the early years of the workshop is very scarce, while from the mid-1870-s, especially from the 1880-s plenty of written and photographic information is available. There is a lot less known about his private works than about his public projects.

II.
The second chapter lists the main sources of my research: Jungfer-related material in other public collections and very useful information from the descendants of the Jungfer family and from former employee of the workshop. Additional new data originates from coeval publications, memorials, archive photos and descriptions and also from study and comparison of available iron relics.
The primary source of the new findings presented in this thesis is the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts, which contained wrought iron objects even before the nationalization. I devoted a separate chapter to the history of that collection.

III.
“Incomprehensible amount of data has been collected”- writes Károly Pereházy, the author of the so far only Jungfer-monography.[2] My thesis contributes to that as I found new sources of information. I attempt to circumscribe the workmanship of Gyula Jungfer in a more precise way, which is one of the most important requirement for its interpretation and evaluation. I started with the examination of the many documents that the Museum of Applied Arts acquired after the 2nd World War at the time of the Hungarian nationalization.
The content of the Jungfer warehouse (mostly wrought iron show-pieces of different shapes and sizes, lattice ornaments, embossed objects and casted doorhandles and keys) was brought to the Metalwork Collection of the museum after 1949. The shipping process and the following inventory went on for years and in some cases failed to happen. As part of basic research I attempted to categorize the hundreds of objects of this Jungfer-collection and attached the resulting list to my thesis. Also, I tried -at least partially - to theoretically reconstruct the one-time numbered sample collection of the workshop as well as Gyula Jungfer's one-time ironwork collection. That list is also attached to my

[2]Pereházy, Károly: *Kovácsoltvas-m□vességünk története kutatásának és m□velésének jelenlegi helyzete*. In: Pavilon: Építészet, M□vészet, Történet 8. 1993. pp 94-101, p. 94

thesis.
Documents from the Jungfer workshop were also given to the Museum. To process this enormous amount of paperwork (designs, drawings, business records) kept in the Archive will take years of research. For the present dissertation I only sampled them to show their diversity.
Besides the Metalwork Collection and the Archive, the Museum's Minor Collections also received some of the material. And the Ceramics Collection acquired the tile stove of the workshop that was once, according to the testimony of photographs, a fixture of the Jungfer residence and so refers to the family's personal taste.

IV.
According to Gyula Jungfer his firm was founded in 1785 as stated on his sign, advertisements, letterheads. That is why I found it important to summarize our knowledge (mostly the result of the research of Karoly Perehazy) on the earlier generations (Andras and Ferenc) of the Jungfer family.

V.
The most prominent figure of the dynasty was Gyula Jungfer (1841-1908). By looking at his qualifications, family footing, residence, environment we could get closer to his decisive personality. During the several years his spent abroad he acquired a firm knowledge of styles beside excellent professional skills. He had talent, perseverance and good sense of business. The today less-known Gyula Jungfer was definitely regarded by his contemporaries as number one of his profession. His general recognition -domestic and foreign, professional and social- manifested in several prizes and -in connection with that- numerous official awards. Besides his positions at social and economic organizations his significant role in artistic circles is particularly noteworthy.

VI.
Gyula Jungfer received his personal license in 1866. He settled his workshop in the building at Berzsenyi street 6 in 1872.The earliest information about his work originates from this location. This chapter attempts to give the widest possible introduction of the Jungfer workshop starting with the construction's history. That is followed by the theoretical reconstruction of the equipments and facilities -including the sample collection- by using the inventory of the year 1943, the last one before the nationalization of the firm. The supply registry provides information on the type of work conducted, the raw materials and semi-finished goods used in the workshop. Abundant data on employees is available by studying the workers' registry. The variety of the types of products manufactured by the firm is apparent, as an example, from the list of objects prepared for the National Picture-Gallery (Museum of Fine Arts). Data on sales and marketing of finished products was obtained from the ledger records. Based on the cash book entries the number of buildings in connection with Jungfer's work expanded. Franz Joseph's visit in 1900 was a significant event in the existence of the workshop and it was recorded by a memorial tablet. Several photos were taken at that occasion which was, in a way, the crowning of Gyula Jungfer's craftmanship.

VII.
This essay examines the decades-long workmanship of Gyula Jungfer in a somewhat different way than previous periodisation and cronological studies. This chapter evokes the best of the many products manufactured in the workshop during the forty-two years (1866-1908) of Gyula Jungfer's leadership by selecting from exhibited pieces and from the sample collection. This way it is possible to

focus on products that he himself (as one of the sample card editors) and his contemporaries found outstanding and examplery.
In view to develop the sense of taste of domestic craftsmen a series of sample cards were published, first by trade organizations, later by the Hungarian Applied Arts Society. (To spread knowledge on popular shapes and ornamental elements of different periods collections of drawings and engravings were made available by designers and practicing masters (of wrought ironwork as well) since the 16th century. The 19th century sample card collections provided very useful data for this thesis (craftman's identity, time and place of manufacturing, technical issues).
The approximately four decades of Gyula Jungfer's workmanship were one of the most flourishing times of industrial development in Hungary despite the economic crisis of the era. The political settlement with Austria (1867), the abolishment of the guild system (1872), the unbelievably rapid growth and development of the city of Budapest that created more demand all presented favorable conditions for the prosperity of the Jungfer workshop.
The apparence on the Jungfer sample cards was my primary concern for choosing the buildings featured in this dissertation. I illustrated the most important technical and stylistic changes of the era concerned. An example: sample cards provided data on a short-living trend at the turn of the century: the polychromatic coloring of building embossments.
There is a sub-chapter on the very rare genre of metalcraft: the embossed copper statues. Most of those -except for the statue of the Medieval Handicraftsman on the building of his own workshop on Berzsenyi street - were considered by experts as Gyula Jungfer's work. Based on new research some of them should be excluded from his ouvre with certainty.
The popular trend changed more than once during those forty years. Besides the revival of historic styles “modern” secession appeared with its floral, Hungarian folk art touch. The workshop represented itself on sample cards and exhibitions with numerous products of various types. In the shadow of Gyula Jungfer's international successes -up until now- little attention was paid to his role in the 1885 National Exhibition held in Budapest. The reconstruction and analysis of that exhibition not only provides more information on certain pieces but also gives the opportunity to place his work in a wider intellectual-artistic context.

VIII.
This chapter presents an outline of the history of the workshop from the death of Gyula Jungfer (1908) to its nationalization (1949). The information about the fourth generation representatives of the craftsmen dynasty (Ferenc, József and Gyula Jungfer) is followed by a summary of the activities of the brass foundry formed in 1909 and the Gyula Jungfer Factory for Artistic Metalwork. The structural changes implemented by the Metalworking Company’s Ferencváros factory - the legal successor of the nationalized Jungfer workshop- are worth studying because they may provide useful information on additional sources of data. (The Statue of the Medieval Handicraftsman made in the Jungfer workshop got into the Museum of Applied Arts from a legal successor company).

The epilogue, following the summation of the characteristic features of Gyula Jungfer's workmanship, suggests further directions for the continuation of the work presented in this dissertation: the research aiming to precisely circumscribe the Jungfer-ouvre. In parallel (as a moral) it points out the necessity of research to expand the -so far regrettably scarce- knowledge of certain (domestic and foreign) coeval collaborators' work (ex: the workshops of Mátyás Zellerin, Ármin Steiner and Ferenc, Ignác Fischer, the Fleischmann-company, etc).

Data obtained from the workshop's business records (especially from the ledger) and from designs and other documents point out promising geographic locations for research. Besides research in domestic archives and libraries, public-and private collections, research abroad could also bring new results. Particular interest should be given to cities that previously hosted Jungfer-exhibitions and the ones in connection with the workshop as procurers and shoppers.
But above all a further and more detailed study of the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts would generate a great leap towards a future Jungfer monography. (This collection provided the most help for the compilation of this dissertation beside the sample description of the workshop).
This dissertation (because of the basic research-character of the topic) places emphasis on illustrations, documents, numeric data, tables, indexes. The Jungfer workshop's own museum and its sample warehouse helped the procurers to chose their orders. A (though incomplete) virtual sample collection could be assembled from the marked sample pieces kept in the Museum of Applied Arts to help the identification of further Jungfer iron relics.

IX.
My previous publications on the topic:

A szecesszió iparm□vészete – Fémm□vesség [Style 1900 and the Applied Arts - Art of metal]
In: Szecesszió – A 20. század hajnala. Kiállítás az Iparm□vészeti Múzeum gy□jteményéb□l. Az európai iparm□vészet stíluskorszakai. Iparm□vészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1996. (Style 1900. A Great Experiment of Modernism in the Applied Arts. Periods in European Decorative Arts. An exhibition from the collection of the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts. Catalogue. Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, 1996.) 28-31.p. (Joint publication with Éva Békési.)

Alexandre Charpentier m□vei és a budapesti Iparm□vészeti Múzeum. Les oeuvres d'Alexandre Charpentier et le Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Budapest. In: Ars Decorativa [Yearbook of the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts and its Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts] 16. Budapest, 1997, 111-142.p.

Gresham-palota. Tanulmány és illusztráció-gy□jtemény a századel□ lakásm□vészetér□l.
Dokumentáció a Hild-Ybl Alapítvány számára. Budapest, 1999

The Role of Gyula Jungfer in Hungary's National Exhibition of 1885. (Jungfer Gyula szereplése az 1885. évi Országos Kiállításon.)
In: Ars Decorativa [Yearbook of the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts and its Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts] 25. Budapest, 2007, 89-103.p.

Variációk egy szoborra. Kérdések és válaszok a Jungfer-gy□jtemény egykori „vasmunkás"-szobra kapcsán.
In: Ars Decorativa [Yearbook of the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts and its Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts] 26. Budapest, 2008. (In press.)