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**ANETT TAKÁCS**

**CHANGES IN BODY HYGENE AND GROOMING PRACTICES  
BETWEEN 1850–1920 IN HUNGARY,  
WITH SPECIAL RESPECT TO BUDAPEST**

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## **I. Introduction**

Body hygiene is as old as humanity itself. It is a social phenomenon which can be found in every age. It can be influenced by religious rules, community customs and current fashion trends. Modern hygiene developed around the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It differs from the hygienic behaviour of previous historical ages in that it is no longer tied to compulsory social rituals but it rather reflects the needs and expectation level of individuals and integrates into society accordingly. In modern hygiene, individuals clean themselves to preserve their physical integrity and health as well. Initially, this was a slow change but then the process made a sudden acceleration. People's attitude towards personal grooming started to change, body hygiene appeared in new places and involved the use of new instruments and a continuously growing palette of hygienic products. We can witness an initially quite static process going through a sudden change in the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The development of the standards of hygiene was catalysed by the events in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: the cholera epidemic in 1831 in London, which claimed around four million victims, led to the creation of the sewerage infrastructure, the reorganisation of human settlements, the establishment of water supply and sanitary networks, the spreading of toilettes and the foundation of urban public health services. Medicine, which started to develop rapidly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also took action against the poor hygienic conditions. All these processes resulted in substantial changes in the period.

This paradigm shift had an impact on the entire human society: by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century more and more buildings in the most developed countries had been furnished with bathrooms and toilettes, and the members of wealthier classes started to groom themselves on a regular basis. Naturally, these changes did not take place from one day to the other, nor did they occur everywhere at the same time. The process started off mostly from cities and towns. The new attitude and its technical consequences first appeared in urban communities. One of the basic characteristics of urban social life, both from the perspective of the individual and the community, is the development of conscious hygienic behaviour norms. Personal hygiene and conscious body culture became increasingly important for urban middle classes. In Hungary, Budapest was the role model and played a key role in the cultural history of personal grooming in the country. Another thing that makes Budapest an excellent example to study is that the process here is well-documented. For this reason, the research primarily focuses on the city, more specifically Pest-Buda and the later Budapest, but in certain cases it also touches on the situation in rural areas.

In the complex structure of contemporary society, the bourgeoisie, this very complex and differentiated social class, became the most characteristic group of urban population. Its most exciting and most typically urban subclass was the lower middle class, which had a quite complex structure even in itself. It considered personal hygiene and conscious body culture an important value. Thus, the dissertation is built upon the analysis of this social class in its unique roles and the trends unfolding in for example the architecture or housing culture. The chapters of the dissertation focus on the examination of different social classes, the comparison of possible differences between hygienic attitude and practice, with special respect to the various middle class subgroups, representing progressivity.

Therefore, the aim of the dissertation is to present the transition into "modern hygiene" in Hungary (with special respect to Budapest) from its institutionalisation to the new turn point between the two world wars, to outline the trends of lifestyle, behaviour and mentality from the perspective of hygiene in the period between 1850-1920, and to analyse life and lifestyle in the selected field (hygiene, body culture) in a complex way.

## **II. Sources, methodology**

### ***II. 1. Sources of the scientific fields involved in the research***

In my dissertation I tried to examine the topic with a complex approach which involves new scientific fields as well (linguistics; ethnography; social, cultural, economic history; history of public health and technology).

The starting point of my research was a linguistic approach. Etymological dictionaries were evidently the fundamental sources for processing the relevant vocabulary (see Zaicz 2006; Benkő 1970; Benkő 1993; Szabó 1975). Thousands of entries deal with the etymology of related Hungarian words, indicate the year when such words were first recorded, provide details about their origins and the change of their form over time, and they also note if the etymology is disputed or is only an assumption.

Studies in the field of cultural and social history were primarily useful for examining the lifestyle and mentality of the social classes concerned. We must definitely note here the works of Zsombor Bódy, Anna Fábri, Tamás Faragó, Gábor Gyáni, Péter Hanák, László Kósa, György Kövér, Vera Peterdi, Gábor Várkonyi concerning the history of society, lifestyle and mentality, which describe individual social classes comprehensively, from the aspect of housing, dressing and behaviour. Among the studies dealing with cultural and local history, I found particularly important the ones which focused on the history of public baths and spas, and bathing practices, such as the book of László Kósa presenting the life in the public baths in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the book of Gábor Várkonyi dealing with bathing in 17<sup>th</sup> century Hungary, the studies elaborating on Turkish spa architecture and bathing culture (Győző Gerő, Balázs Sudár), the book of Gabriella Csiffáry on the history of bathing in Hungary, the book of Péter Buza presenting the world of spas in Budapest, or the book of Zoltán Nagy dealing with public baths in Upper Hungary (present Slovakia). Medical history books give an account of the contemporary public health situation and legislation (see for instance the works of József Antall, György Gortvay, Géza Hahn and Károly Kapronczay). Reference material in the field of economic history (see for instance the works of Endre Csatkai, Tamás Faragó and György Kövér) proved to be essential for learning about the industry and trade organised around body hygiene and personal grooming. Ethnographic works gave an insight into the grooming practices of peasants. Hungarian folklore research pays increasingly close attention to domestic hygienic conditions and grooming practices. A pioneer in this field was Katalin Juhász who, in addition to her publications, popularised the topic by organising exhibitions (entitled “Remember to Wash Yourself”, presenting the hygienic conditions and practices in 20<sup>th</sup> century rural Hungary [2006] and the related book published under the same title) and conferences (also entitled “Remember to Wash Yourself” [2007] and its proceedings published under the title “Clean Lines”). Here we have to mention the works of Szilvia Czingel, Zita Deáky, Vilmos Keszeg, Orsolya Lipták, Zsolt Sári, Ferenc Uri and Kincső Verebélyi as well.

### ***II. 2. Primary sources***

Medical reports, recommendations, indications, official regulations and collections of ordinances (as compiled by Ottó Babarczi Schwarzer, Kornél Chyzer, Miklós Dubay, József Fodor, János Kampis, Béla Mutsenbacher and Elemér Szegedy-Maszák) are excellent illustrations of the complicated health legislation and procedures of the age.

Travelogues (such as those written by Victor Tissot) outline the character and internal life of a specific country from the outsider’s perspective. Although the individual characteristics of the authors (level of education, mentality, travel destination and

circumstances etc.) may raise doubts about the value of these books, we can still find many objective and useful observations in them.

The building and flat plans reveal the level of material usage and technology of the age, the architectural and stylistic specifications, as well as certain hygienic aspects. They also illustrate the shift of functions in flats (primarily in the middle classes) and the increasing number of functional rooms characteristic of the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

We can learn a lot about hygienic conditions from the examples provided by the so-called guidance literature, which provided lifestyle and housekeeping advices. The books, which were primarily aimed at the education and information of urban middle class women, presented a general behaviour pattern meant to be followed unconditionally, using an ideal role model built on foreign (British, French, German) examples. The most significant compilations in this field were made by Irma Beniczky, Janka Wohl and Mária Faylné Hentaller who dedicated a separate chapter to hygiene, grooming and body culture.

The various price lists and catalogues (e.g. in the topic of hardware, China fixtures, cosmetics or soap-making), probate inventories and the specialised periodicals (*Artisans' Journal*, *Hungarian Apothecary*) also provide good points of orientation for finding unique grooming articles, instruments, accessories and other products. Most periodicals (*Budapest Bazaar*, *Women's Mode in Pest*, *Women's World*, *Sunday Journal* etc.) published articles specifically to female readers about interior design, dressing, fashion and beauty treatment. These articles draw a detailed picture about the lifestyle of urban middle classes, though only as far as expectations are concerned. Their advertisements also provided additional information to my research.

To a smaller extent I could also make use of published private letters, diaries, memoirs (e.g. the works of Pál Granasztói, Emília Kánya, Antónia Kölcsey, Sándor Újfalvi) and the method of oral history. When using this type of source the research is hindered by the fact that while some authors write down everyday routine activities (in addition to peculiar, extraordinary events), others remain silent about them or consider them self-evident. Furthermore, it is important to note that in the case of memoirs and oral history alike, the narrator creates his views about past events only retrospectively and his/her memories are affected by current expectations and other factors, making it difficult to separate them from one another. It occurred several times that my interviewees "modernised" past practices on the basis of their current knowledge. The intimacy of the topic also presents serious problems as the interviewees often gave rather brief, reserved answers.

The dissertation borrowed a few examples from literary works. Such works were always examined with a specially critical eye to find out if the instances are objective records of personal experience or rather the products of the author's imagination. The characteristic motives of the topic appear, among others, in the novels of 20<sup>th</sup> century novelists, such as Géza Gárdonyi, Gyula Krúdy or Sándor Márai (in the case of this latter author, the most relevant book is the "Confessions of a Bourgeois").

Finally, we have to mention visual motives: paintings and photos as excellent means of illustration. Although they can be a rich source of information about personal, local and temporal aspects, these documents must be treated carefully as well. The world depicted by them is always influenced by the customs, stylistic and fashion marks, social traditions, the demands of the customer or the state of technology in that specific period.

In addition to two dimensional material, hygiene research must consider objects as well. Objects used on a daily basis tell us a lot about the history of the age and the society and this can be used as excellent sources for finding out more about living circumstances and the mentality of certain social classes. For grooming is a form of activity which closely linked to objects. It has its characteristic items. Originally, man could perform this activity with his two hands but technological development connected an increasing number of

items to it (such as soaps and other perfumes, tooth brush, special textile, bathroom and toilet furniture). Their material, design, decoration and function can bear loads of information about the corresponding age, social class and level of development.

Secondary sources were dominantly processed using the method of document analysis. Primary sources were collected from museums and archives and analysed with qualitative techniques. Data was mainly collected from the National Archives of the Lutheran Church, the Budapest Metropolitan Archives, the Semmelweis Museum, Library and Archives of Medical History and the Hungarian National Museum.

Qualitative research primarily took the form of single person interviews built on open-ended questions. As a result of the field work I managed to find interviewees who were children in the 1920s. I elicited their responses using a pre-edited questionnaire. This method yielded relatively unreliable data, there was a significant chance of subjectivity and only a small number of people could be reached this way (out of the 24 persons available, only 13 persons provided data that was finally included in the dissertation).

### ***II. 3. Challenges***

Interdisciplinary examination was the strength but also the most challenging factor of the research. The current, special interdisciplinary examination of everyday customs presents from the perspective of hygiene and personal grooming the changes of the attitude, behaviour and mentality of different social classes as well as their mobilisation efforts, but it also deals with the social, cultural and lifestyle history, economic aspects, as well as the relevant ethnographic and technology development data of the age.

Due to its complexity, a substantial body of literature had to be consulted with to find all relevant data. The vast and scattered information could only be collected with extensive research and some luck as well. In certain chapters of the dissertation this resulted in some shift of proportions (depending on the information found), but it also presents motivation to continue the research.

It was also difficult to compare the ideal and the actual situation that is theory and practice. Laws and other available sources (guide books and advertisements) set examples to follow, while the data of oral history and letters recorded facts and everyday reality. Apart from a few exceptions the fact that they existed together at the same time is not always suitable to draw objective consequences. This duality, however, is a recurrent topic in all chapters.

## **III. Findings**

Following a brief outline of the historical background my work was structured around five main topics: 1. Cleaning and words – hygienic attitudes and grooming practices in Hungary from the beginning until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as reflected by words and expressions; 2. Public health aspects of body hygiene – changes in public health; 3. Places of hygiene – grooming at home; 4. Industrial background of hygiene, with special respect to soap-making; 5. Personal grooming.

### ***III. 1. Cleaning and words – hygienic attitudes and grooming practices in Hungary from the beginning until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as reflected by words and expressions***

Quite unusually in the research of hygiene, the first discipline involved in my examinations was linguistics which represented the social history requirements in my interdisciplinary approach. In this context, I presented a general vocabulary of hygiene from the beginnings to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The mechanism of personal grooming is determined by places, basic activities, furniture, personal items and accessories. The range of expressions referring to these things can be further extended with the words making reference to causes, areas and results of treatment, maintenance personnel and basic material. Following this structure, I managed to collect 220 expressions related to the topic of hygiene. This terminology was used to present the hygienic situation of various periods in Hungary, with special respect to changes in the hygienic culture of the people, to the impact of western and eastern cultures on Hungarians' concept of hygiene and to vocabulary changes caused by such trends. Primarily, this linguistic aspect makes my research a novelty in this field.

### ***III. 2. Public health aspects of body hygiene – changes in public health***

The examination of the public health and hygiene conditions and reform movements characteristic of the examined period focused on the issues of personal and environmental hygiene. In the vast amount of health regulations effective between 1876 and 1920, I found 50 regulations on personal and environmental hygiene. These can be classified into seven larger groups (1. Instructions concerning babies and midwives, 2. Ordinances banning certain harmful substances, 3. Regulations on the cleaning and improvement of the hygiene of houses and flats, 4. Ordinances on public hygiene issues, 5. Rules on the provision of water suitable for drinking, 6. Instructions on health care issues in schools, 7. Other ordinances) and they dominantly focus on school hygiene, more specifically on hygienic education and public hygiene.

Similarly to the research of Zita Deáky (who discussed health education literature in 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century Hungary in her work titled “Body and Health in Health Education Literature”) and Orsolya Lipták (who examined the perception of health and cleanliness in the course books published between 1905 and 1925 for second year primary school students in her study titled “*Health and Cleanliness*”), I also dealt with school health. In this respect I examined an incomplete list of 16 publications on hygiene from the period between 1879 and 1920, and I also described additional methods of health education (with special respect to advertising culture).

To sum up changes taking place in the area of public health, it may be stated that in the examined period (1850-1920), and particularly after the Compromise of 1867, public health went through an incredible development. This period is marked, for example, by the Public Health Act of 1876, which is outstanding even by international standards and which was later on amended several times and implemented in several ordinances prescribing the most important tasks in the field of public health and general health care.

In addition to, or rather as a result of, these regulations the construction works of the medical institution and clinics of the Budapest University of Sciences was commenced, and the second medical university was founded in Kolozsvár (present Cluj in Romania). The medical faculties of these two universities gave home to the freshly organised public hygiene institutions, they launched a new structure of medical education, clinics, midwife training institutions were established, and a training programme was organised for medical officers and forensic medical experts who could this obtain qualification.

The health care infrastructure and organisation also developed. The environmental health conditions were started to be improved in the capital and larger cities. Public health checks became more regular and the fight against epidemics became more organised. The modern hygienic approach emerged during these years, an independent public health authority was established, and the official procedural order was developed. Health education received wide public attention and health propaganda activity gained strength. All these developments were evidently the sings of progressivity. At the same time, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century we can witness a duality in the public health situation. The modernisation

resulted in a great deal of progress, especially in Budapest. The street, water, gas and sewerage infrastructure was developed in a short period of 40 years. Certain elements of the regulation plan of 1872 extended to street furniture as well: the new technology of cast-iron enabled the serial production of waste baskets and public toilettes as well. Despite the progressive development in the field of public health and sanitation, in this era we can still find cottages without outdoor toilets, or barrack and cellar homes in the overcrowded and substandard urban slums.

This duality resulting from regional and social differences was, on the one hand, due to the different historical, economic and cultural background and financial situation of settlements, on the other hand it was the result of badly arranged regulations. The mass of ordinances gathered from several collections of legal regulations is an excellent example of chaotic legislation. Measures and rules are inconsistent, fragmented and difficult to look through. They often exist only in theory and several ordinances are only the repetition of previous ones. Authorities have separate health rules which are inconsistent with that of other authorities. There was no uniform procedural system in place and there was a shortage of properly qualified health professionals too.

Although scientifically well-founded and pragmatic recommendations, regulations and measures were adopted, which were recognised by the international professional life and they even yielded specific positive results, still it took a lot of time for them to be a general practice in people's everyday life.

### ***III. 3. Places of hygiene – grooming at home***

The next unit of my work was the presentation of constructions and the housing situation in relation to hygienic conditions (flat arrangement, use of space, rooms for grooming), with special respect to the spaces of living of the bourgeoisies, who were the first to adopt new hygienic practices, and placing great emphasis on apartment houses, which appeared as a new type of home.

This topic was processed primarily from the following aspects: patterns and practices, tradition and progressivity, differences between social classes, unique characteristics of social groups (e.g. the places and instruments of grooming) and possible the differences between religious denominations. The data of normative literature were compared with other sources and works. The examination was first aimed to present the "average" home model determined by the so-called normative literature and the ideas that were meant to be followed. However, since ideal situations and daily practice rarely go together, these models were compared with other sources and literature as well.

The backbone of this chapter is an examination, carried out analogously with the research of Gyáni Gábor who looked through the inventories of 12 flats located in Budapest city centre, in the wealthiest districts in respect of the period between 1870 and 1910). My examination, however, focused on the case documents of the Orphans' Court available at the Budapest Metropolitan Archives (in respect of the period between 1874 and 1920, looking through 139 probate inventories).

The findings of the results suggest that the comparison of the home of different social classes reveal the similarities and differences regarding the places and instruments of grooming.

The so-called normative literature in the examined period were primarily published for the members of the middle classes. They conveyed a general behaviour pattern, determined the parameters of an ideal home which included a bathroom from the 1880s. Practical application, however, shows large differences according to social classes and groups.

In the upgraded or newly built countryside castles of the aristocracy, due to the modern building engineering solutions, bathroom becomes a basic accessory, as well as in their urban palaces and villas which offered the comfort of modern middle class homes.

At the beginning of the examined period the instruments of grooming can be found in the designated rooms in bourgeois flats. Architectural changes (the emergence of apartment houses, the reduction of representative spaces in size to the benefit of grooming rooms) as well as the development of water mains and sewerage infrastructure made bathrooms and toilettes spread from the end of the 1880s.

By contrast, in most of the residential buildings of peasants lack grooming rooms even between the two world wars. This period marks the beginning of the spreading of grooming corners in the kitchen.

The working class lived as subtenants or night-lodgers, at cellar homes, doss-houses or as homeless. Their affection for peasant traditions determined both the furniture of their homes and their use of spaces (e.g. washing themselves in the kitchen), similarly to bourgeois patterns. Their hygienic circumstances lagged far behind the aristocratic or middle class examples mentioned above.

The difference is evident if we have a look at the place and instruments of grooming as well. While the aristocratic and bourgeois families groomed themselves in the bathroom (or in the absence thereof in the bedroom or dressing room), the majority of peasant and working class families washed themselves in the kitchen or in the yard (depending on sex and age). The objects used varied in their material (wood then metal in peasant and working class families; metal, ceramics and porcelain in aristocratic and bourgeois families) and their quantity (wooden tub, one or two cans in peasant and working class families; toilet set or tub, wash-basin, shower, bathroom water-heaters, cans and bowls in the aristocracy and bourgeoisies).

As a result of the changes which began at the end of the 1880s, the bathroom becomes a separate room with its own furniture and accessories. However, the wide palette of such accessories is only present in urban regions, particularly in Budapest, and castles in the countryside, that is in the life of the upper classes.

The hygienic culture of the bourgeoisies and the upper classes were much more differentiated and modern than that of peasants and the working class, who preferred traditional practices to novel, modern elements (as opposed to the need for innovation and sensibility for experience of the middle classes).

There are not enough data available to examine the differences between religious denominations. The examined flat inventories made some reference to religious affiliation (out of the 139 inventories examined 63 indicates the name, occupation, religion, residence, toilet set). The examined sample covers the period between 1874 and 1920, however, its small item number and the differences between occupations, wealth and income conditions, as well as the dates allow only for suggestions rather than exact conclusions. Available data shows both the differences between persons belonging to the same religious group or occupation and the similarities between persons belonging to different religious groups or occupations. Thus it may be assumed that the differences between toilet sets can be considered more the result of differences between financial conditions than the signs of belonging to a religious group. At the same time, it should be noted that statistics on flat distribution between religious denominations in 1906 and 1925 (see: *Building and Flat Conditions in Budapest between 1920 and 1925* published by the Budapest Metropolitan Statistical Office) show that the largest flats were owned by Israelites in much higher number than by the members of any other religious group.



### ***III. 4. Industrial background of hygiene, with special respect to soap-making***

The spreading of modern hygienic practices was largely facilitated by the emerging manufacturing industry and the broad industrial background.

Using available sources and literature, I summarised the industrial background of hygiene (by providing statistical data as well as a presentation of relevant institutions), with special respect to soap-making, and described the companies distributing their products.

In the Reform Era and in the 1850s, in addition to artisan manufacturers only a few industrial enterprises provided the basic instruments and accessories for cleaning, grooming and sanitation. However, a list of factories and industrial enterprises from the year 1906 (*Directory of Hungarian Factories and Industrial Enterprises, 1906-1907*) informs us about a complex industrial background established around environmental and body hygiene. The process is very well illustrated by the fact that while in the Reform Era Mihály Futó mentions only 33 soap-making industrial units in Hungary, the *Directory of Hungarian Factories and Industrial Enterprises, 1906-1907* mentions as much as 115 soap-making factories and this number increases to 663 in 49 industrial fields if we include companies operating in the field of personal grooming or clean environment (note that companies with a wider portfolio appear in the list under several branches, so the actual number is approximately 600). Some of these industrial branches relate to the examined area closely, others only marginally. The most relevant group includes companies dealing with sewerage, draining, pumps, heating, ventilation and lighting (enterprises manufacturing illuminative gas, water supply appliances, bathroom water-heaters), industrial enterprises providing the infrastructure of grooming rooms (tin and metal product factories, glazing and iron vessel factories, metal factories, steel foundries, faience factories and warehouses, porcelain factories, and “closet” factories), enterprises manufacturing the accessories of body hygiene (teeth brush factories, perfume, soap and mascara manufacturers, “cosmetics” factories, towel waivers, mirror factories) and the institutions of cleaning (steam laundries, detergent factories, broomstick manufacturers, litter transportation firms, carpet beating firms and dry cleaners). This infrastructure was contributed to by an additional 27 companies providing other services. The turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the development of a rich, diverse and complex industrial environment around activities linked to hygiene and personal grooming.

### ***III. 5. Personal grooming***

The dissertation ends with the topic of personal grooming. I presented regular activities linked to cleanliness (ventilation, perfuming, cleaning), instruments, the process and technology of keeping clothing clean and body hygiene (beauty treatment, mouth and tooth hygiene, washing and bathing).

Similarly to the examination of the housing situation, this topic was processed primarily from the following aspects: patterns and practices, tradition and progressivity, differences between social classes, unique characteristics of social groups and the differences between religious denominations. The data of normative literature were compared with other sources and works.

Data suggested that in the examined period hygienic and tidy environment, clean and well-groomed appearance and dressing (that is the so-called visible parts) were usually more importance than body hygiene.

The radical improvement of basic sanitary conditions (between 1867 and 1914) did not change traditional grooming practices from one day to the other. Personal grooming, more specifically the washing of the body, became a daily requirement in bourgeois families, though it was still substantially different from the level of needs today.

The regular use of bathrooms and bathtubs (earlier and later on parallel with the spreading of bathrooms, body hygiene was achieved by using toilet sets placed in the dressing room or bedroom and by going to public baths) became more common later, in the period between the two world wars.

There are fundamental differences between different social groups in the places and the instruments used as far as the cleaning of the living environment and the clothing is concerned. While middle and upper classes had the laundry done with washing women in laundries (primarily in apartment houses), or in the lack thereof in the kitchen or the yard, the major part of peasants and working class families washed their clothes in the kitchen or in the yard, depending on the weather. The differentiated cleaning and washing instruments, the consequent use of surfactants, the involvement of household appliances into housework were the signs of the innovative attitude of the middle class, at the same time the traditional bourgeois way of thinking which slowed down these trends (e.g. cleaning carpets with vacuum cleaning and beating at the same time), as described by Szilvia Czingel, is still significant (the modern devices were more commonly used later on, between the two world wars).

The situation is the same with personal grooming as well: the main differences resulted from the places of activity, the instruments used, and the frequency of occasions.

The homes of peasant and working class families still lack a separate grooming room not only in the examined period but also between the two world wars. This is the period when grooming corners appear in the kitchen, and they washed themselves in the kitchen, closet, or (depending on the weather) in the yard or in natural waters (depending on sex and age). Meanwhile, bourgeois families (and upper classes) groomed themselves in bathrooms or, in the absence thereof, in a dressing room or bedroom. The instruments of grooming varied in their material and quantity, the cosmetics in their quantity and quality (peasant and working class families mainly used home-made soap, potash water, common towel; middle class families mainly used home-made/coarse soap, toilette soap, separate towels, tooth powder, tooth paste, shampoo, cosmetics and perfumes) and the occasions of grooming in their frequency and thoroughness between the social classes. The difference between principles influencing grooming were also substantial.

Traditional grooming practices of peasants (which also determined the grooming practices of servants and working class for a long time) included washing the body in the morning (with cold water; for men: hands, face, neck, combing; women: face, hands, combing; the order could have varied); washing the hands during the day, mainly before lunch; washing the body in the evening (women: face, neck; men: rarely, depending on the type of work performed that day); bigger grooming occasions depending on the season, housing conditions, work, usually weekly during the summer, and more rarely during the winter. They did not brush their teeth; they occasionally rubbed them with charcoal or a piece of cloth wrapped around a rod, or cleaned them by chewing resin. They did not use any facial or body treatment products. Their grooming was determined by the connection of physical and ritual-magical functions.

The basic requirements of body hygiene according to the bourgeoisie system of values: was washing oneself in cold water with soap (order according to the memoirs of Éva Halászfy: “hands, face, ears, neck, shoulders, arms, armpits”...), combing, clean clothing; daily breakfast, washing hands before and rinsing the mouth after eating; washing the legs on a weekly basis (“Sunday grooming”), changing underwear, teeth brushing. Hygienic practices are regulated by modern concepts of hygiene and occasionally by religious rules.

The rather scarce data found about differences and similarities between religious denominations show that differences mainly came from financial inequality, not from the membership in the specific religious denomination. At the same time, we have to highlight

the hygienic practices of the Israelites, more specifically the ritual bathing – originating from religious rules which are not characteristic of other denominations. It should be also considered that a considerable part of modern bourgeoisies belonged to the Israelite community, a social group which was a pioneer in putting the new hygienic approach into practice due to its mentality, education and religious characteristics.

#### IV. Publications of the author in this topic

1. Anett Takács: Árukladó tárgyak. Fürdőszobák és használatuk a dualizmus kori Magyarországon. In: Ihász István – Pintér János (szerk.): *Történeti Muzeológiai Szemle* 8. Magyar Múzeumi Történész Társulat, Bp. 2008. 41-58.
2. Anett Takács: Mosakodás – vagy ez már több? A polgári középréteg tisztálkodási szokásai Magyarországon a dualizmus korában. In: *Napút. Irodalom, művészet, környezet.* (X. évf.) 8. sz. (Mi utcánk). 2008. október. 73-85.
3. Anett Takács: Testi higiénia a késő reneszánsz korában (16-17. sz.) Magyarországon. In: Balázs Géza (szerk.): *A magyar reneszánsz stylus.* Inter – Magyar – Szemiotikai Társaság – PRAE.HU, Bp. 2008. 103-121.
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