

LAJOS (LOUIS) MÁRK: HIS LIFE AND ART

ANTHONY GEBER

Chevy Chase
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Lajos (Louis) Márk (Plate I), was born in the small Transylvanian rural town of Retteg in 1867. He died in 1942 in New York. 1992 marks the fiftieth anniversary of his death.¹



Plate I

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The year of his birth was a momentous one in the modern history of the Hungarian nation. After the defeat of the 1848–1849 Hungarian revolution and war of independence and nearly two decades of Habsburg absolutist rule, it was in 1867 that Hungary and the Austrian Emperor concluded the *Compromise* which established the constitutional and political framework of the Austro–Hungarian dual monarchy. The nearly half-century which followed, until the outbreak of World War I in 1914, saw the most spectacular material and cultural flowering of the Hungarian people. The capital city of Budapest–Buda and Pest being united for the first time in 1873—was the greatest beneficiary of this development. In the 1867–1914 period Budapest was the fastest growing city in Europe. The Budapest bourgeoisie, their buildings, their homes, the comforts of their daily life, and their influence grew at an even more astonishing rate. Cultural life also experienced a Golden Age. Education, especially higher education, science, literature, music, the arts, reached high points of achievement.² Regained national self-consciousness and pride found an outlet for exuberant expression half way through the period in the 1896 celebration of the Hungarian millennium, the thousand year anniversary of the arrival of the Hungarians in the Carpathian basin.

Márk's formative years as a painter as well as his greatest successes were during this period. He was first and foremost a Budapest painter and the subjects of his paintings were primarily the Budapest bourgeoisie and what pleased them. The art of Lajos Márk should be seen and appreciated within the context of the social and artistic development of his time in Hungary.

THE LIFE OF THE ARTIST

The Beginnings

A few years after Márk's birth the family moved to Marosvásárhely (Tirgu Mures), a historic town and ancient capital of the Szeklers. Márk was still a youngster when the family moved again, this time to Budapest.

Before he could read and write, Márk already showed a great dexterity in drawing, as evidenced by his copying a lithograph of Hungarian historical heroes which hung on the wall of his home, and where he got only the sequence of the letters of the captions wrong. When he was fifteen years old, Hungary's much acclaimed son, Mihály Munkácsy, then living in Paris, was showing his painting *Christ before Pilate* in Budapest before taking it on a triumphal tour to America where it was bought by the Philadelphia department store magnate, John Wanamaker, for the then incredible sum of \$165,000. Márk

was greatly impressed by the painting and painted such a good copy of it that his father consented at that point to his son's ambition and desire to become a painter.³

During the last two years of his middle schooling Márk was exceptionally admitted to the State Drawing School as a visiting student. Upon finishing his school, his father urged him to get the best training available, which meant that he followed many of the young Hungarian artists of the time to the Munich Academy of painting.⁴ He spent the years 1886 to 1889 there, first in the preparatory class, then in the live models section of Johann Caspar Herterich, the successor of the Hungarian Benczúr on the faculty of the Academy, and at the end in the private school of the Hungarian Simon Hollóssy. In Munich he had his first artistic success: it was customary for the Bavarian State to buy some paintings or drawings from the annual student exhibition of the Academy; in 1888 the State bought a few of Márk's drawings but for one, a male nude, it paid for the first time five times the going rate.

After Munich Márk returned to do his military service with a Hungarian hussar regiment, and departed the following year for Paris to enroll in the Academy Julian.⁵ There he studied with William Bouguerau, Tony Robert-Fleury and Gabriel Ferrier in the years 1890–1893.

Upon his return to Budapest in 1893, Márk joined the master class of Gyula Benczúr. Next to Munkácsy, Benczúr was perhaps the most admired Hungarian painter at that time. His master class was the dominant painting school and much of an entrance gate to the artistic life of the city. By the second half of the decade Márk quit the school and lit out on an independent artistic life, painting his canvases in a series of rented studios in different parts of the city.

Márk exhibited his first painting at the Hall of Arts (Műcsarnok), the leading exhibition hall where the semi-annual salons of the Fine Arts Society were held, in 1892, a year before he returned from Paris. It was a painting he did in Munich, entitled *Art Criticism*, a curious, large scale, narrative painting full of symbolism. It was the first of a series of such large scale narrative paintings which Márk did in the 1890's and 1900's. Most of these had distinctly erotic themes with titles such as *Temptation* (1893/94) (Fig. 1), *Fever* (1895), *Spell* (1899), *Sirens' Nest* (1900), *Barricade* (1901), "*Get drunk my loves*", (1905), and *Ecstasy* (1907). These paintings received critical praise then⁶ and were considered important enough for the Hungarian State to buy *Temptation* (now in the National Gallery in Budapest), and *Fever* (on deposit at the Transylvanian Hungarian Museum in Cluj). The painting "*Get drunk my loves*" won the 4,000 crown prize of the Casino of the Leopold District of Budapest.

Another large scale narrative painting, painted in 1899–1900 is the only historical painting known from Márk's palette. Its title is "*Lehullott a rezgő*

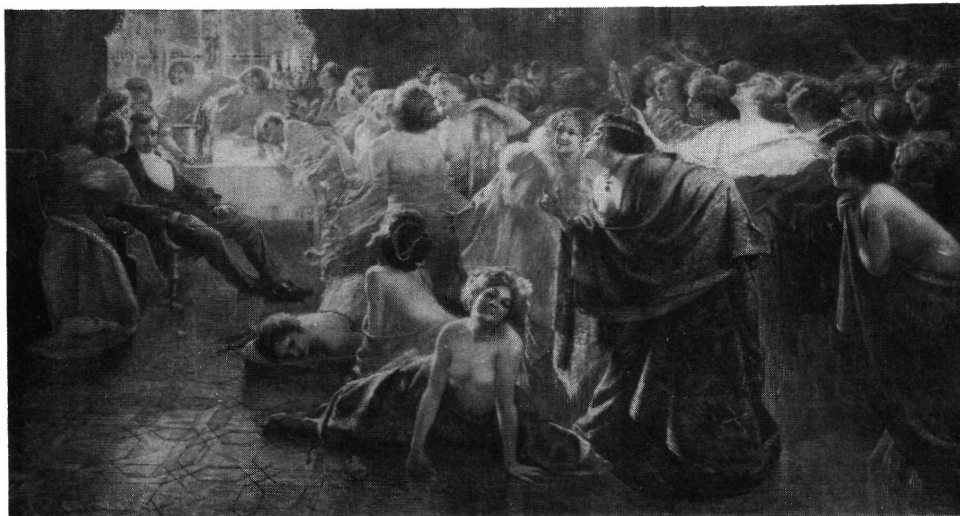


Fig. 1

nyárfa ezüstszinű levele...” (“The trembling silvery leaves of the poplars have fallen...”). It shows Queen Elizabeth accompanied by her daughter, Archduchess Gizella, and several of her ladies-in-waiting, leaving the Gerbeaud-pavilion, the Summer outdoor café of the famous confectionery in City Park, and the gypsy band playing the Queen’s above titled favorite song. The scene took place in the Fall of 1897, on her last visit to Hungary, a year before she was stabbed to death by an anarchist in Switzerland.⁷ Márk made meticulous preparations for this painting. In Vienna he was shown portraits of the late Queen, made drawings of the ladies who accompanied the Queen on that day and was also shown the costumes they wore.⁸ The secondary figures in the painting have no such claim to historical accuracy; the second fiddler in the gypsy band bears the likeness of Márk’s friend, Endre Nagy who brought the art of the Parisian political cabaret to Budapest, the three lackeys who stand at attention along the path of her Majesty are portraits of a member of Parliament, of a newspaper editor and a well-known literary figure.⁹ The painting is now in the Hungarian National Museum, and was featured prominently at the Museum’s 1974 exhibition of *Hungary around the Turn of the Century*,¹⁰ and again at the joint Austrian and Hungarian exhibition commemorating Queen Elizabeth’s special attachment to Hungary, in Eisenstadt, Austria, in 1991.¹¹

At the 1896 Millennium Exhibition Márk showed a number of paintings, among them four wall decorations done for the Casino in the Leopold District

of Budapest. About the same time he also decorated the walls of the Café Royal and the staircase of the Hotel Royal. But increasingly Márk turned to smaller genre paintings, usually featuring a young woman in different poses and in various dresses or stages of undress. The paintings bore titles such as *Toilette*, *Idyll*, *Profile*, *Rest in the Atelier*, *Coquetry*, *Jewels*. Among these are also some which show the lady in a costume of bygone days: *Anno 1840*, *Grandmother's Costume*, *Crinoline*.

While the artist's attention is clearly focused on capturing the form and movement of the female body, he is equally intent to place his models in a pleasing, often opulent milieu. They wear silks and brocades, large-brimmed hats or fashionable ribbons, they stand in large, high-ceilinged rooms in front of mirrors or airy windows, the nudes are curled up in gilded period furniture. Initially in these genre paintings the representation of single figures predominate, but gradually we find paintings which depict the pleasurable activities of the bourgeoisie. A favorite subject of the artist, for instance, is the *Five o'clock Tea*, a theme which the artist will repeat many times, showing the ladies gathered around this very pleasurable upper middle-class pastime.

Márk is probably best remembered as an excellent portraitist. At his first participation in the exhibitions of the Fine Arts Society in the Hall of Arts in 1892 he showed a portrait of Count Sámuel Teleki, the famed big game hunter, in the costume of the Sultan of Zanzibar. (Did Márk know Van Dyck's paintings of Sir Robert Shelley and his wife in Persian costumes?) His subject as well as the painting were of sufficient interest that *A Hét* (The Week), the leading literary magazine at that time, published it on its title page.¹²

Márk honed his talent as a portraitist in numerous caricatures whose subjects were mostly his friends and colleagues of the artistic community. Single drawings as well as group pictures, such as *Jury Duty* (Fig. 2), appeared in various periodicals and newspapers.¹³ Márk was a natural caricaturist. He was a very witty person and a great punster. He had excellent psychological insight into the nature of persons he drew or painted. And with a quick stroke of the pen he could capture in a humorous fashion the essential characteristics of his subjects. In 1909, at the instigation of the above-mentioned Endre Nagy, he exhibited about fifty caricatures, among them of such well-known Hungarian artists as Szinyei-Merse, Zichy, Ferenczy, Kernstok, Benczúr and Rippl-Rónai. As the reviewer in the literary magazine *Új Idők* (New Times) remarked, "Now we can see how well Márk knows his painters: whoever has a hidden weakness, Márk immediately builds his picture on it."¹⁴ Still, drawing caricatures was only a passing activity in his career; he discovered that, while some of his subjects were amused by the caricatures, others were decidedly not. With all his sharp wit, Márk was a kind person, and he did not like to offend his friends and colleagues.



Fig. 2

Another great opportunity to practice the art of portraiture came to Márk when his friend from his Munich days, Ferenc Eisenhut, set out to paint a large cyclorama of the procession in which the notables of Hungary marched on the occasion of the millennium festivities to the Royal Castle to pay homage to their king, Francis Joseph. The cyclorama was painted in 1897–98.¹⁵ It is now rolled up in storage in the Hungarian National Gallery.¹⁶ The painting was a collaborative effort of four artists; Márk was asked to paint the portraits of the notables.¹⁷ He prepared well over one-hundred sketches for these. They are marvelous gems of portraiture, each reflecting the individuality of the subject. They are now housed in the Historical Division of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest.

At most of the Salons of the late 1890's and early 1900's, next to the genre paintings, Márk also exhibited portraits. Among male portraits painted in these years one was of the painter Károly Kernstok who later became the leading personality of the group *The Eight*, an association of artists who may be best characterized as post-Impressionists (see below). A portrait of Angela de Hevesi won the prize of the Fine Arts Society.¹⁸

In addition to the paintings, Márk did drawings, lithographs, posters and book illustrations. One of these illustrations was of a folksy almanac of Bolond

Istók, the Hungarian equivalent of Till Eulenspiegel (1892/93). Márk also illustrated books by the leading literary lights of the day, those of Ferenc Herczeg, the conservative, "establishment" novelist, of Ferenc Molnár, the cosmopolitan and internationally acclaimed playwright, of Sándor Bródy, the talented novelist and playwright, and of Endre Nagy. These were Márk's friends, and by choosing him as illustrator of some of their works, they showed their esteem for Márk's stature as an artist.

While regularly exhibiting at the Hungarian Salons, Márk also began to participate in shows abroad. In 1897 his narrative canvas, *Struggle*, was shown at the Salon des Champs Elysées in Paris and received a *mention honorable*. In 1901 he participated with one of his portrait paintings in an exhibition in Venice and in Torino, where he was awarded a *diploma d'onore*.¹⁹ In 1903 he showed another portrait at the Piskó Gallery in Vienna.

During this period Márk also became increasingly prominent in the cultural activities of his country. In the late 1890's he became chairman of the jury of the Fine Arts Society; as such he escorted Emperor and King, Francis Joseph, at the latter's visit to the 1898 Spring Salon of the Society. In the same year the Fine Arts Society sent Márk, together with another respected Hungarian painter, Bertalan Karlovsky, to Paris to select paintings and sculptures for the Society's Budapest exhibitions. In 1900, Márk was charged with organizing the Hungarian painting exhibition at the Paris World's Fair. His own painting shown there won a silver medal.²⁰

The Accomplished Artist

The year 1907 was an important turning point in Márk's artistic career. At the end of that year Márk had a very large solo exhibit at the National Salon. The National Salon was founded in 1894 by artists who were dissatisfied with the official policy in the arts.²¹ Some important artists who had their shows at the National Salon were Károly Ferenczy, Pál Szinyei-Merse, Adolf Fényes, Béla Iványi-Grünwald, János Vaszary and Fülöp de László. The National Salon moved into its new exhibition hall in the center of the city on Erzsébet Square in 1907, and Márk's exhibit was the first in its new quarters. It encompassed altogether 150 items, mostly oil paintings and a handful of drawings. The oil paintings were genre paintings and portraits, and a few still-lives. Only two of the large narrative paintings were included in the show, *Ecstasy* and *Barricade*.²² In a brief introductory note to the catalogue, the director of the National Salon, Lajos Ernst,²³ tellingly describes the art of Márk.

"...[Márk] achieved an entirely particular and special place among our modern painters, since he succeeded in creating a style very much his own. While we see primarily the depiction of the Hungarian countryside and the country people among most of our modern painters, Márk's subjects are the beautiful ladies, girls and models of the nation's capital."²⁴

and,

"He discontinued his large compositions and places the emphasis rather on rendering the exquisiteness of movement with remarkable ease."

Similar observations were made by Károly Lyka, the leading art critic and chronicler of nineteenth and early twentieth century Hungarian painting, in an article in which he previewed Márk's paintings.²⁵ He finds that in his more recent paintings Márk has shown great progress over his earlier loosely conceived large compositions, such as *Sirens' Nest*.

"The models have not changed. But the two eyes which looked at them have been transformed, as has the hand which simulates the forms on the canvas, and most important of all, the head in whose brain these pictures were distilled and took shape. The painter has become an artist, whose paintings are confessions, and not merely work."

Lyka praises Márk's ability to capture the infinite variations of movement of the female body and his ability to identify with the inner soul and spirit of his sitters. He describes the subject of these paintings in the following terms:

"In the afternoons it is perhaps a lovely lady from the Inner or Leopold Districts who poses in the atelier in a dress which arrived yesterday from Paris. But in the morning it is a nude model who lounges on a sofa or arranges before a mirror a large silk which slipped down and which shows flashes of violet and green. Let us imagine the ivory-colored back and neck with its rich and warm light against the background, and we have already constructed one of Lajos Márk's paintings."

In this generally highly complimentary article of Márk's artistry, Lyka also makes a social commentary. Márk's female subjects are not the heroines of history. The ladies Márk portrays in their colorful dresses are those one meets at vernissages, at evenings at the opera or the Philharmonic concerts, at charity balls. Lyka remarks that in these paintings one senses the sultry air of the atelier, but adds that Márk's selection of his subject matter "does not affect the intrinsic value of the painting". Many years later, Lyka was of a very different opinion to which we shall return later in our appraisal of the painter's art.

The success of the Budapest exhibition brought invitations from Germany and England and from the National Arts Club in New York. Márk showed his paintings in 1908 in the Schulte Gallery, Berlin and in Düsseldorf and at Earl's Court in London.²⁶ He arrived in New York in 1910 and his arrival there opened a new chapter in his life, and in his artistic career. From then until his death in New York in 1942, Márk spent altogether about eighteen years in the United States.

The exhibition of Márk's 34 paintings at the National Arts Club took place in March 1910.²⁷ The reception committee was headed by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Washington, Baron L. Hengelmüller de Hengervár and included several members of the Embassy and the Austro-Hungarian Consul-General in New York.²⁸ The Hungarian flag flew over the building of the National Arts Club. Not since Munkácsy's brief tour of the United States, when he was received by President Cleveland in the White House, was given a dinner in his honor by the Secretary of Navy, and attended a banquet at Delmonico's in New York, did a Hungarian artist receive such a festive reception in the United States.

The prefatory note to the exhibition's catalogue, written by J. Nilsen Laurvik, admits that very little is known in America of the art of Eastern Europe. After citing some biographical information on Márk, his schooling, and the likely influences on his art, it mentions some semi-nudes included in the show "of great charm of composition but most remarkable for the sense of atmosphere of an interior".

The New York exhibition was followed by exhibitions in Buffalo,²⁹ San Francisco and Denver.

Márk established himself immediately upon arrival in America as a successful portrait painter. In the Buffalo exhibition, which opened a month after the opening at the New York National Arts Club, the number of paintings shown increased by five, all portraits he painted in New York,³⁰ including one of Admiral Peary, the North Pole explorer, shown in his arctic parka (Fig. 3); the painting belongs now to the Brooklyn Museum. While in Buffalo, he painted four portraits, one of a young lady, an art student in Buffalo, the other three of prominent Buffalo society figures, among them Mrs. Henry Ware Sprague. The California Historical Society in San Francisco is recorded owning three portraits of Márk. In the years that followed this initial tour in America, Márk painted many prominent persons in his West 57th Street studio in New York. The list is a veritable Who's Who and Social Register and includes Miss Harriet Anderson, the niece of President Taft and subsequently Mrs. Hugo de Fritsch, members of the Clews, Guggenheim, Heckscher, Rhineland families, Henry Watterson, the editor of the Louisville Courier



Fig. 3

Journal after the Civil War, Nathan S. Jones, President of Manufacturers' Trust Company, just to name a few. The Márks also spent a few summers in Newport Rhode Island, and Márk painted several portraits there, among them Mrs. Crawford Hill, the last "Grand Dame" of Denver society whose portrait still adorns the salon of Rosecliff in Newport.

In 1911 Márk returned briefly to Hungary but was back in New York the same year. In 1912 he asked his great love, Rózsi Molnár, to join him in the United States, and they were married in New York soon after her arrival. In 1919 a son was born in New York of that union. Márk stayed in the United States through the war years with the approval of the representative of the Austro-Hungarian government.

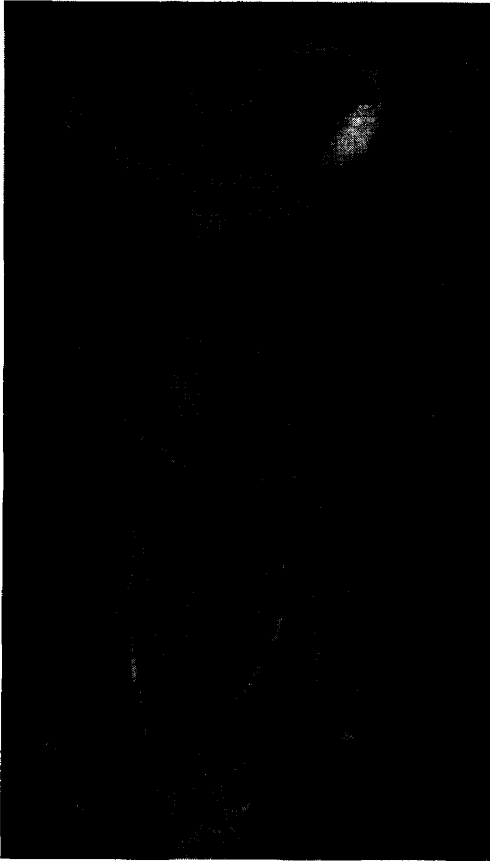


Plate II

In 1913 Márk had an exhibition of nineteen of his portraits at the Knoedler Gallery in New York,³¹ and in 1919 the same gallery was showing a portrait by Márk of President Wilson.

Márk's greatest success in America occurred in 1915 when he won the gold medal with his painting *Before the Mirror* at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. The exhibition was a landmark event in the cultural life of the city of San Francisco. It was the occasion of the first major exhibition of the work of Auguste Rodin in America, and was the genesis of the founding of San Francisco's second major museum, the California Palace of the Legion of Honor.³²

Márk's painting is undoubtedly one of his chefs-d'oeuvre. (Plate II) Elek Petrovics, the former Director-General of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts,

included it in his anthology of *Hungarian Masterpieces*, and commented on it as follows:³³

“As is the case with most of the artist’s paintings, the subject, the content and the inspiration of this one is the woman. The painter was most interested in this instance in the expressive movement of the woman arranging her hair in front of the mirror, in her whole posture, but especially in the characteristic functioning of her arms and hands. This well observed and not stereotyped, intensive movement is enough to give formal content to a painting, and even if it is not everything that makes a picture, it is certainly more and more artistic than some diluted story-telling. The clothing, the furniture, the interior decoration seems to be intended only to provide a frame for this movement.”

The Inter-War Years

In 1921 Márk returned to a Hungary devastated by the war and deprived of two-thirds of its former territory—unjustly in the view of its citizens. The country had undergone a Communist revolution, then been “liberated” from it by invading Romanian army troops who were eventually told to leave by the Allied Powers, and was suffering from very severe economic dislocations and from runaway inflation. The war and its aftermath had a profound effect on the subsequent development of Hungarian art. The avant-garde, which began to emerge in 1909 with the founding of the group of *The Eight*, showed leftist tendencies. Their more radical successors, the *Activists*, became strongly politically engaged and supported the short-lived Communist regime of Béla Kun. After that regime’s collapse, members of the avant-garde went into exile. Though many of them returned to Hungary by the middle of the 1920’s, the conservative government viewed them with suspicion, and the public with incomprehension. Except in the field of commercial art, their members worked in obscurity during the period.³⁴

Márk’s world, however, of which he was a part and which he depicted, resumed the life that had ceased with the collapse of the dual monarchy, materially impoverished, perhaps less self-confident, but intellectually with undiminished vigor. Certainly, cultural life continued where it left off before the war.

Returning from America, enriched literally and figuratively by the honors gained, Márk settled down in great comfort and with his artistic prestige greatly enhanced. He bought himself a spacious villa in one of the best districts in Budapest where bank presidents and captains of industry were his neighbors. His house in the Nagy János, later Benczúr, street served him both as home and studio. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 4

From 1921 to 1938, when he last left Hungary, he was a regular exhibitor in salons at the Hall of Arts, at the National Salons and at the Ernst Gallery, whose group exhibitions featured works of the most prominent artists of the time. The themes of Márk's paintings shown at these exhibitions remained the same as toward the end of his pre-war years, portraits and genre paintings. Many of the paintings show the interior or the garden of the artist's house as the background, and the artist's wife and other family members often serve as models.³⁵ Among the many portraits he painted in those years, those of two leading ladies of the Budapest theater, Juci Lábass (Fig. 5) and Gizi Bajor merit mention. The portrait of Mme Lábass was also shown in Paris and at the Kingore Gallery in New York. Both paintings are now in the Museum of the Hungarian Theater Institute and were shown in 1990 at an exhibition of the Institute, commemorating the two-hundredth anniversary of the Hungarian theater.³⁶ In 1936 Márk was invited to paint a few portraits in Novi Sad (Újvidék), Yugoslavia. He had a tremendous success; he ended up painting forty-six portraits altogether in Novi Sad and in Belgrade, including the President of the Yugoslav Parliament and the sister-in-law of the Prime Minister.



Fig. 5

In these inter-war years Márk made two trips to America in 1924–1925, and again in 1928/29. During his 1924–1925 stay he exhibited portraits at the Kingore Gallery, among them two portraits he painted at that time in his New York studio of the great diva of the Metropolitan and Vienna operas, Maria Jeritza.³⁷ One of these portraits now adorns the office of the director of the Vienna State Opera, and was shown in the exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Vienna opera in 1969.³⁸

During these years Márk was very active in the realm of Hungarian artists' economic concerns. In 1928 he founded, together with his friend, the art critic and gallery director, Béla Lázár, the Munkácsy Guild. Hungary at that time was rich in artists' societies. In the inter-war years sixteen such associations

were founded; together with those established earlier there were altogether twenty-six societies, a number exceeding those in other major European artistic centers.³⁹ Still, the Munkácsy Guild had a special role among these associations. First, it eschewed associating or affiliating with any single school or style. Second, its primary objective was to attend to the economic needs of artists. In this respect it was quite successful. During its eighteen years of existence (the Guild existed till 1946, Márk resigned the presidency when he left for America in 1938), it channeled over 600,000 gold pengős, about 120,000 pre-war dollars, to Hungarian artists. The principal means of marshalling funds to help artists was a major country-wide lottery, raffling off several hundred works of art by recognized Hungarian artists. The artists were paid for their works partly in cash and partly in raffle tickets, for which they thus became sales agents. Some of the best-known artists made a practice of donating one or two of their works. Márk himself painted free of charge each year the portrait of the winner of the first prize of the lottery.

During his 1928–29 stay in America Márk became concerned about the relatively limited success of Hungarian artists abroad. He made some preparatory steps to have an exhibition of Hungarian artists tour the United States under the aegis of the Munkácsy Guild.⁴⁰ Upon his return to Hungary he published an article in which he attributed the inadequacy of international recognition for Hungarian art to the near total absence of a capable art trade in Hungary. He again advocated the organization of branches of the Munkácsy Guild in major foreign artistic centers, especially in the major cities of the United States.⁴¹ Nothing came of these laudable efforts, as official Hungary withheld its approval.

The last years

When Márk left for the United States in 1938 for the last time, he was already in poor health. His friends in Hungary tried to dissuade him from the journey, but he evidently foresaw the calamities which were to engulf Hungary in the not too distant future. He also said that he had made a promise to his son, born in the United States and a United States citizen, that he would take him back to the United States.

Upon his arrival in New York, the National Arts Club, of which Márk was a life member, honored him with a medal for his painting *Five o'clock Tea*.

In 1939 Márk had an exhibition of his paintings at the Tricker Galleries in New York. The *Art News*, in a complimentary review of the exhibition, entitled "The elegant portrait of an earlier decade: Louis Mark", commented:

“In an age of Scotch and Swing, an early twentieth century atmosphere of Tokay and waltzes—very much in keeping with the current Edwardian revival—is to be found in the colorful pictures exhibited by the Hungarian artist, Louis Mark...”

The review singles out a number of genre paintings; among the portraits shown it praises that of Mme Jolly Gergely for its “particularly dashing pattern of black and white”.⁴²

Márk still received some important portrait commissions in these years, among them the portrait of the wife of the distinguished international lawyer, Lorenzo L. Mendoza. But these were the last flickerings of his former fame. He was in ill-health, his physical and artistic energy was fading, he and his family lived in increasingly penurious circumstances. His last years paralleled those of his famous countryman, Béla Bartók, who arrived already ill in the United States in 1940, two years after Márk, and died in poverty three years after him, in 1945. But while Bartók gathered his strength to write perhaps his greatest masterpiece, the *Concerto for Orchestra*, not long before he died, Márk’s creative powers were ebbing.

Márk died at the age of 75 on March 18, 1942. The New York Times in its obituary hailed him as painter of notables. A distinguished Hungarian painter found his final resting place in his second home, America.

THE SOURCES OF MÁRK’S ART

Márk left no memoirs. His comments on his art, his sources and inspirations, on his views on art in general, are few and often cryptic. To an inquiry addressed to a number of artists by a Hungarian periodical about the sources of their art, Márk wrote: “Life dictates what I should paint, but I have not the slightest idea what mental or spiritual processes prompt me to do so.”⁴³ On other occasions he clearly did not wish to be identified with any artistic movement and he disdained any categorization of artists into “ism”-s.⁴⁴ To an American society lady who asked him if he was an Impressionist, he replied: “No, I am Louis Mark”.

To some extent it is easier to describe what were *not* Márk’s artistic sources. His teachers, Herterich, Hollósy, Bouguerau, Robert-Fleury, Ferrier, Benczúr taught him the techniques of drawing and painting, improved on his native talent, and provided him with the tools of composition, draughtsmanship and coloring. But none of them impressed him with their artistic goals, and some he resented for the authoritarian imposition of their artistic concept. Perhaps Robert-Fleury was the exception, his teaching methods allowed greater artistic freedom for his students, and he had a soft spot for his numerous Hungarian

students, probably because he had a fond memory, as only a Frenchman would, for an excellent meal he was once served in Budapest. He also paved the way for Márk to enter the Salon des Champs Elysées, where Márk received a *mention honorable*.

Márk was an avid museum and gallery visitor wherever he went. But what he saw and what impressed him we only know from secondary sources or we can speculatively conjecture from his paintings.

His large, multi-figured canvases done during the early part of his career combine eroticism and symbolism.

Eroticism has played an important role in many periods of Western art and has known no geographic boundaries. In nineteenth century French painting eroticism was probably more prominent than at any other period and place. Of the two major competing movements of nineteenth century painting, the academic and Impressionist, including the pre- and post-Impressionist schools, both are replete with erotic paintings, but in terms of number of painters and number of works, probably the academic school outdid the Impressionists. From Ingres through Chassériau, Cabanel, Gérôme, and a host of lesser known painters, to Bouguerau, eroticism was wrapped in the cloak of history, mythology, allegory, religion, orientalism.⁴⁵ We know that Márk rejected Bouguerau's style of painting, with its sharply drawn contours of the female body and the enamel-like coloring, but in those early paintings of Márk we find echoes of the academic school not only in the selection of subject matter but in the construction of the compositions, and to some extent even in the painting technique. (Fig. 1)

Symbolism, as that term is applied to a certain "ism" in nineteenth century art, in poetry as well as in painting, flourished at the time of Márk's arrival in Paris. Jean Moréas published his "Symbolist Manifesto" in 1886. Gauguin was its leader among painters, and a farewell banquet for him before he moved to Tahiti in April 1891 was attended by many symbolist painters and writers.⁴⁶ The movement embraced dreams and sensations in its artistic *credo* in contrast to realism of the everyday and contemporary. Was Márk aware of the movement? His paintings under discussion have little in common with those of Gauguin, or his surrealist forerunners, such as Moreau or Redon, but they are touched by the aesthetics of surrealism and symbolism.

As we have indicated, these paintings of Márk represent a relatively brief, early phase in his oeuvre. Subsequently he concentrated on genre paintings and portraiture which depicted the life of the upper bourgeoisie in his hometown Budapest. Here again, art which could be seen in Paris at the time of his arrival could have been his inspiration. The Frenchman James Tissot, the Belgian

Alfred Stevens, and three famous expatriates, Mary Cassat, John Singer Sargent and Giovanni Boldini, were all active in somewhat different ways to paint the world of the rich and famous or—in the case of Boldini—the sometimes frivolous. Again, was Márk familiar with their work? His paintings in many respects parallel those of the artists mentioned, particularly some of the paintings of Tissot, Sargent and Boldini. These three are known for their portraiture of elegant and fashionable women, and for their verve and sophisticated coloring. Boldini, for instance, often uses white or white on white harmonies, which we also find in some of Márk's portraits. But did Márk know of Boldini's painting of a melon (c. 1905) when he painted his still-life of a watermelon (c. 1934)? The cropped and tilted table tops, the platters underneath the fruit would suggest that he did. But this is pure conjecture. We can find only one reference in Márk's pronouncements to any of these painters, to Sargent, in an interview he gave upon his return from America in 1911, namely that many of the prominent American painters—he mentions John White Alexander and William Merritt Chase in addition to Sargent—studied in the same European schools in Munich and Paris.⁴⁷

Despite Márk's disclaimer, his later paintings are related to those of the Impressionists. He shares with them the sunny outlook on the world around him, the search for color and luminosity, and the technique of fast and broad brush-strokes. By the time Márk arrived in Paris in 1890 the Impressionists were in ascendance, and from the perspective of a century later it is easy to assume that Márk was exposed to the art of the Impressionists as soon as he got to Paris. William Rothenstein, who attended the Julian Academy in 1889, mentions Manet and Monet whose studios he visited with some of his friends.⁴⁸ But as to what many young art students most likely saw at that time in Paris, it is interesting to read the memoirs of Márk's countryman, the eminent painter István Csók, who was also at the Julian Academy just before Márk arrived there (1887–1889):

“We, Ferenczy and I, went to the exhibitions. Initially Ferenczy admired the *Venus* of Baudry, but later he also became a devotee of Bastien-Lepage. The few paintings of Millet in the Louvre did not make much of an impression on us. Much more Courbet. Ferenczy also liked [Théodore] Rousseau... The *Pauvre Pêcheur* of Puvis de Chavannes strongly undermined the authority of Bastien-Lepage. If the Caillebotte room in the Luxembourg palace with its marvellous Renoir, Manet and Degas paintings had then existed, if we could have seen the landscapes of Claude Monet and of Sisley at that time, perhaps our whole approach to art would have developed in a different direction. But in those days we could not yet see Goya, who nourished Manet, on the walls of the Louvre. Greco waited in the dust to be discovered. Whistler arrived only much later in Paris. Cézanne, who angrily stormed the gates of the Salon, was totally unknown to us.”⁴⁹

Whether or not Márk experienced the Impressionist paintings on his first visit to Paris, it is certain that he was exposed to their art early in his active artistic career.

He encountered the artistry of Bastien-Lepage already in his Munich days when an exhibition of that artist was held in the *Glaspalast* in Munich in 1889. It created a sensation in German artistic circles but his art had no lasting influence on Márk.

Two lesser but much admired and honored French artists of that period have made an impression on Márk, namely Paul Albert Besnard (1849–1934), and Gaston de Latouche (1854–1913). Besnard may have been known to him from the Academy Julian. Rothenstein writes that “Besnard’s effects of light and lamp-light on nudes were a fascinating novelty, much admired at Julian’s”.⁵⁰ Besnard was also a very successful portraitist. Professor Rosenblum places him in the company of Bonnat and Benjamin-Constant as a portraitist of the Establishment in France during the period 1880–1914.⁵¹ Latouche was also experimenting with the effects of light and his colouring resembles that of Márk. A catalogue of the H. Shickman Gallery in New York entitled *The Neglected 19th Century: An Exhibition of French Painting*, comments on a painting of a *Garden Scene* by Latouche as follows:

“Gaston Latouche was a charming painter, whose academic background belies his rather refreshing and sincere canvases. He received many official honors in the last quarter of the 19th century, but his flickering surfaces and outdoor genre subjects seem more akin to the vision of the Impressionists than to those of his fellow academicians.”⁵²

This commentary could very well be applied to Márk.

Both Besnard and Latouche exhibited at the Spring Salon of 1905 in Budapest. In the exhibition catalogue the reproduction of one of Latouche’s paintings shown there, entitled *Coquetry*, was placed next to one of Márk’s portraits of a young girl; the kinship between the two paintings was unmistakable.

During his London stay in 1908, Márk was much impressed by eighteenth century English portraiture; especially Gainsborough, with his elegant ladies in lacy, shimmering dresses, caught Márk’s approving attention. One of Márk’s stunningly beautiful portraits, that of Mrs Virginia Hobart Baldwin, subsequently Princess Zourab Tchokotova, painted in 1910, and now in the California Historical Society in San Francisco, clearly reveals the Van Dyck–Gainsborough lineage.

Painters are influenced not only by the subject matter, compositional constructions and stylistic achievements of other artists, but also on occasion

by their career successes. Márk was undoubtedly aware of the successes of two of his countrymen, that of Mihály Munkácsy, whose brief but triumphal tour in the United States was already mentioned, and of Fülöp de László, a contemporary of Márk, and perhaps one of the most successful international portraitists of his time.⁵³ Márk had a great admiration for the art of Munkácsy; his opinion of László was less complimentary. But that does not mean that Márk did not wish to emulate his successes.

Lastly, artists are influenced not only by the work of other artists but by some other experiences which have a bearing on their search for the solution of some of their artistic goals. During his visits around the turn of the century to Paris, the City of Light, and especially during the visit to the Paris World's Fair, Márk was fascinated by the "Liberty" silks which the ladies of fashion were wearing and which had a multi-coloured shimmering effect with every movement of the wearer. His other fascination was a lady of the stage, the American Loie Fuller.⁵⁴ She was born in the bar of a tavern of Fullersburg, Illinois, and rising through burlesque and vaudeville, she made her fame as a dancer on the stage in Paris. One observer described her dance as follows:

"She learned to toss one hundred and twenty yards of 'draperies' to a height of ten or twelve feet, controlling their form and shape through the rhythmic repetition of precise movements. In a darkened theater, accompanied by music of classical composers, she sculpted with silk. Light, color, costume and person were fused by her dance into a single moving image."

At the time of the Paris World's Fair of 1900 Loie Fuller was the rage of *tout Paris*. Artists and poets, Toulouse-Lautrec, Whistler, Rodin, Mallarmé, and W. B. Yeats were enchanted by her skill; Anatole France wrote a preface to her memoirs. Márk, always captivated by the play of movement and light, watched her dances with fascination.⁵⁵

AN APPRECIATION OF MÁRK'S ARTISTRY

Márk received many honors and accolades during career, many of them recorded in the foregoing. As to be expected, there were also critical comments. Ironically, perhaps the strongest criticism is contained in one of the books of Károly Lyka who wrote such a laudatory review of Márk's paintings in 1907.⁵⁶ In the book Lyka devotes a chapter entitled, "In the atmosphere of the tea parties of Pest". The chapter is a biting attack on the decadent culture of *fin de siècle* Budapest and its various manifestations. Márk is singled out as the artist who succumbed to the scents and desire-laden air of this culture. His

large erotic paintings, such as *Struggle*, “*Get drunk my loves*”, *Fever*, are cited as examples. Not remembered are Lyka’s praise for his portraits of the elegant ladies of society, his languorous nudes are dismissed as another manifestation of a decadent society. Most notably, not remembered is Lyka’s earlier statement that Márk’s selection of his subject matter does not affect the intrinsic value of his paintings.

This turn-about in Lyka’s critical judgement can only be explained by the date of his writing. Lyka first published his book during the inter-war years, after the Trianon treaty dismembered historic Hungary. It became fashionable then to blame Hungary’s misfortune on the shortcomings of Hungarian society of the period between 1867 and 1914. Cosmopolitan Budapest was a favorite target, and the criticism was often tinged with anti-semitism. The historian Gyula Szekfű, in his influential book *Three Generations*⁵⁷ expounded on this interpretation of Hungarian history, and Lyka’s chapter reflects the views of Szekfű.

Lyka also complains that Márk sacrificed his talent to his chase after fame and fortune. Again, one can detect the voice of someone writing in impoverished Hungary, which imposed considerable hardship on many of the artists then working there. Not that Márk was averse to seeking fame and fortune. But long is the list of old as well as modern artists, from Rubens and Delacroix to Picasso, who have actively and successfully sought good remuneration for their art. Among Márk’s contemporaries, the same accusation was levied against John Singer Sargent.

Lyka was clearly critical not of *how* Márk painted but *what* he painted. Lyka was evidently not the only nor the first critic who objected to Márk’s selection of his subject matter. An article written in 1913 explains that Márk received a gold medal in Hungary only in 1912, and then only a small one, because many of his peers were uncomfortable with his depiction of a sensuous, enervated world.⁵⁸ Nor was Márk the only artist who suffered this kind of attack. The writer and poet, Jenő Heltai, very much a kindred spirit to Márk (Márk painted his wife’s portrait), in a good-humored but sarcastic poem written around the turn of the century, berates his “honorable provincial colleagues” for attacking him for being “not enough of a Hungarian” because instead of singing about the good earth and his grandfather and grandmother, his poems dare to glorify the “playful, stylish women who kiss and laugh and live.”⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that this cultural and political faultline between what is “true Hungarian”, to be found mostly in the countryside, and the cosmopolitan and “not truly Hungarian”, represented by the culture of Budapest, reemerged very recently in Hungarian politics after forty years of Communist repression.

Within the last quarter of this century we have seen a radical reevaluation of the art of the nineteenth century to which Márk essentially belonged. It is no longer acceptable to see it entirely as a bi-polar struggle between the academicians with their outmoded, fusty pedantism, and the liberating, exhilarating world of the Impressionists. The merits of the former are increasingly recognized, not only in the learned circles of art criticism but in the sales rooms. The "petits maîtres" are being rediscovered and are given their due.⁶⁰

Hungary is probably close to the top of the list among nations where art criticism and art appreciation underwent rapid and radical changes parallel with the radical changes in its political fortunes, and social and economic conditions which is experienced since 1918.

Márk's artistic life spanned the years 1892–1942. Now that we can look back on it from a distance of a half to a full century, and from this side of the Atlantic, without being embroiled in past and present political passions of his homeland, perhaps we can evaluate his art more dispassionately and with better perspective.

We have seen that Márk was a natural talent. He manifested early on a great aptitude in draughtsmanship that needed little improvement and which he retained throughout his artistic career.

As a painter he was most interested in observing and rendering the movement of the human body, particularly that of the woman. His sharp eye caught the essence of the curving, undulating stance of the female body in some active endeavor as well as in a casual moment of rest, as for instance, *Rest* (Plate III).⁶¹ For Márk, capturing the gracefulness of the female body was not a routine exercise for its own sake, but an aesthetic goal which filled his paintings with meaning.

Next, he was most interested in the play of color and light. He searched wherever he went, in life as well as in other painters' paintings, particularly pleasing examples of the shimmering, continuously changing effects of light and color and sought the means to project this on his canvases. He found the solution in quick brush-strokes, similar to those of the Impressionist masters and on occasion approaching the technique of the pointilists. For these brushstrokes he used long brushes (up to a meter), which he originated, and which at first had to be made especially for him.

We have indicated one of the endearing traits of his personality, namely that he was a man full of humor, a quick wit and a great punster. This quick-wittedness is also reflected in his art. Not only in his caricatures, for which he was much praised at one time, but also in his paintings. His ability to paint quickly has been noted. We have surprisingly few drawings from him, other than his caricatures and book illustrations, and none that served as prepara-



Plate III

tory drawings for his paintings. He composed his paintings directly on the canvas with few bold strokes. He generally, used no undercoating for his paintings, and the canvas, its color and texture, served on occasion as an intrinsic ingredient of the composition.

He was not particularly interested in the *plein-air* movement and landscape painting *per se*. He did not seek out spectacular natural vistas, nor the atmospheric charm of the Hungarian country-side, as did some of his Hungarian contemporaries. He did incorporate landscapes in some of his paintings, but mostly as backdrops to his genre scenes. Many of his landscape back-

grounds were the garden seen from the balcony of his home. A few of his pure landscapes depict scenes within the geographic boundary of the city of Budapest, in the hills of Buda, or in nearby villages on the Danube, where the well-to-do bourgeoisie of Budapest had their summer homes.

Márk's portraits made him justly famous and successful. They eschew the purely decorative and capture the psychological essence of his sitters. Most of his portraits are full length or three-quarter length. But the postures of the body and the attire the sitters wear are placed in the service of expressing their personality.

Márk was essentially a conservative painter. The structure of his composi-



Plate IV

tions is usually straightforward. Only in a few instances does he use bold perspectives, such as *On Top of a Hill*. (Plate IV) Techniques of cropped images such as Degas began to use and which are so frequently employed by post-Impressionists such as Bonnard and Vuillard, are practically completely absent in Márk's paintings. Generally, all the various modern movements after the Impressionists, the post-Impressionists, beginning with Cézanne, the Fauves, the Expressionists, the Cubists, the Futurists, the various abstract art movements, which flourished during Márk's active artist career, had no influence on his style. The Art Nouveau movement had a limited impact on him, mostly on some of his posters and on a few of his female portraits.⁶²

The selection of his subjects also reflect a basically conservative nature. He painted the sunny side of life. With the possible exception of one early painting, *Actors without Contract*,⁶³ in which Márk depicts a group of artists huddled around a table of a coffee-house who have fallen on hard times. He has not chosen any of the seamier aspects of life or any commitment to social struggle as his subject.

People who have a different political or artistic agenda may criticize him for his apparent lack of interest in social activism. Others may fault him for the relatively narrow range of subject matter of his art. The ease with which he attained his artistic goals deprived him of the necessity to struggle for ever higher artistic achievements both in content and style. That same ease led him on occasion to a certain carelessness in the execution of his paintings. These shortcomings, to the extent one accepts and acknowledges them, do not significantly detract from Márk's considerable achievements. These we have stated in the foregoing.

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The reputation of Márk's artistry suffered an eclipse both in his homeland⁶⁴ and in his second home, in America. In Hungary the years after Márk's death were not politically congenial to Márk's artistry. They did bring to the fore the contributions of the Hungarian avant-garde, much disdained and neglected in the previous period, but to the detriment of the older painters, especially one whose art was not engaged in social activism, and whose art was focused on the depiction of the "class enemy".

In the United States, the causes for oblivion are different. Artistic trends have changed, and with it public appreciation of it. Contemporary painters have dominated the field and the public's interest. A reevaluation of American "Old Masters", among them American Impressionists, is a relatively recent development. And here another factor needs to be noted. It is one of the tragedies of Hungarian artists, of writers as well as the practitioners of the

visual arts, that they remain largely unknown to the outside world. Hungarians, a surprisingly talented people, are known today for their musicians, mathematicians and nuclear physicists, perhaps for their economists, but barely for their literary figures or painters and sculptors. In the catalogue of the Shepherd Gallery's exhibition of artists of the Julian Academy the entry referring to a Rippl-Rónai painting rightly observes:

"A large number of Hungarian artists studied at the *Académie Julian*, including the amazing and unique Tivadar Csontváry. Undeservedly, few of them are recognized outside of Hungary."⁶⁵

In the admirable seven volume compendium of Gerald Schurr's "petits maîtres" from 1820 to 1920, already referred to, over 1,500 artists are listed. The Hungarians comprise less than one percent of those, with a list mixing some outstanding artists with some who are virtually unknown in their homeland and not particularly deserving.⁶⁶ Márk was aware of this regrettable situation of the reputation of Hungarian artists abroad and tried to do something about it late in his career.

What remains to be said in conclusion is that we owe a special thanks to Márk for having captured, more than any other painter, the reality as well as the atmospherics of a bygone world, that of the insouciant, well-to-do Budapest upper-crust before the catastrophe of the first World War, and then again between the two World Wars. The portraits of the elegant ladies, the maids in their uniforms polishing the silver, the afternoon tea being poured either in the expansive, richly decorated living rooms or in the flowering gardens, the vases, the silver platters, the nudes and semi-nudes whose pictures decorate the walls, they all evoke a time and place which merit to be retained as historic documents. They also give the present-day viewer a strong feeling of nostalgia, whether he or she remembers those days or only heard about them, particularly when it is rendered with such sincere artistry.

With the 50th anniversary of Márk's death to be commemorated in 1992, it seems proper to revive interest in Márk's artistic contribution. This modest effort is dedicated to that task.

Captions of the Illustrations to "Lajos (Louis) Márk: His Life and Art".

Plates

- I. *Self-portrait* by L. Márk, Oil on Canvas, 1933 (75 × 51 cm),
Norfolk, Connecticut, Estate collection.
- II. *Before the Mirror*, 1907 (127.5 × 73 cm).
Norfolk, Connecticut, Estate collection.
- III. *Repose*, c. 1928 (59 × 47.5 cm).
New Brunswick, New Jersey, Hungarian Heritage Museum.
- IV. *On Top of a Hill*, 1934 (104 × 96 cm).
Norfolk, Connecticut, Estate collection.

Figures

1. *Temptation*, 1893/94, (250 × 445 cm).
Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery.
2. *Jury Duty*, pen drawing, c. 1900, reproduced in
Magyar Génius (Hungarian Genius), April 14, 1901, 249.
3. *Portrait of Commander Robert Edwin Peary*, 1910 (150 × 90).
Brooklyn, New York, The Brooklyn Museum.
4. *Photograph of the artist in his studio in Budapest*,
Benczúr street, c. 1925.
5. *Portrait of Mme. Juci Lábass*, c. 1923 (98 × 107 cm).
Budapest, Hungarian Theater Institute.

Notes

1. For a good part of the factual information relating to Márk's life and artistic career I am indebted to an unedited manuscript written in Hungarian in 1946 by Béla Lázár, art critic, gallery director, and the artist's life-long friend, and to the recollections of the artist's son, Louis Mark, Jr. I also wish to thank Ms. Katalin Sinkó of the Hungarian National Gallery, for providing valuable material from the archives of the Gallery and from other Hungarian sources.
2. John Lukacs, *Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City & its Culture* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988).
3. László Siklóssy, "Márk Lajos", *Képzőművészet* 14 (1928).
4. Miklós Somogyi, "Magyarok a müncheni képzőművészeti Akadémián", *Művészet* XI., 187. Károly Lyka, *Magyar Művészet Münchenben*, Budapest, Művelt Nép Könyvkiadó. 1951. (reprinted Corvina, 1982).
5. Robert J. F. Kashey, *The Julian Academy, Paris 1868–1939, Exhibition Catalogue*, New York, Shepherd Gallery. Spring 1989.
6. Tamás Szana, *Száz év a magyar művészet történetéből, 1800–1900, Festészet, Szobrászat*, Budapest, Athenaeum. 1901. 289–290. Béla Székely, "Fine Arts–Winter Exhibition", *Pesti Napló* November 24, 1894.
7. *Vasárnapi Újság* 1900. 856.
8. *Műcsarnok* "Művészeti Hírek" 1899. 102–103.

9. Revealed by Márk in an interview to *Ujság* June 29, 1938.
10. *Magyar Nemzet* December 15, 1974.
11. Exhibition *Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary*, Eisenstadt, Austria, Museum of Austrian Culture, June 26–October 27, 1991.
12. *A Hét*, 1890, I., no. 2.
13. *Magyar Géniusz* April 14, 1901, 149–250.
14. *Új Idők* 1909, XV., no. 15, 356–357, 365.
15. *Vasárnapi Újság* 1898, vol. 45, no. 33.
16. A large cartoon of the painting is in the András Jósa Museum in Nyíregyháza; Gyöngyi Éri, Zsuzsa Jobbágyi, *A Golden Age, Art and Society in Hungary, 1896–1914* (Budapest, London, Miami: Corvina, Barbican Art Gallery, Center for Fine Arts, 1990), 51.
17. *A Hét*, 1898, vol. IX., no. 33, 526–527.
18. Ödön Gerő, Elek Londez, *Modern magyar festőművészet*, Budapest, n. d. 132.
19. Béla Déry, László Bányász, Ernő Margitay, *Almanach (Képzőművészeti Lexicon)*. Budapest, Légrády Testvérek Nyomdája. 1912. 191.
20. E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des Peintres et Graveurs*, 1976. vol. 7, 191.
21. *Művészeti Lexikon*. Budapest, 1987.
22. *Nemzeti Szalon*, “Márk Lajos Gyűjteményes Kiállítása”, Exhibition Catalogue, November, 1907.
23. Later the owner of his own exhibition gallery and private art auction house, the *Ernst Múzeum*.
24. John Lukacs in his excellent book on *Budapest 1900*, already cited, devotes a few pages to Hungarian painters of the period (pp. 170–172). The handful of painters he mentions were mostly those who, inspired by Western *plein-air* painting, returned to Hungary and formed the provincial artist colonies in Nagybánya, Szolnok, Kecskemét. He missed mentioning Márk, who was, more than any of the others, the painter of Budapest society.
25. Károly Lyka, “Márk Lajos újabb festményei”, *Művészet* 1907. 281–294, 296–299, 301–304.
26. The same year Márk received a gold medal at the Munich International Exhibition.
27. *Exhibition of Paintings of Louis Mark of Budapest*, March 2nd to 28th, 1910, The National Arts Club, New York City.
28. *International Studio*, “Louis Mark will hold an exhibition”, March, 1910.
29. *Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, Albright Art Gallery*, Exhibition of Paintings by Louis Mark of Budapest, April 7–May 2, 1910.
30. Apparently a brief press release in New York calling attention to the forthcoming exhibition of Márk’s paintings at the National Arts Club, because the identical text appeared in such widely distant papers as the *Dayton Daily News* and the *Los Angeles Express*, reports that Márk won a prize with one of his portraits which on a wager he began and finished in an hour.
31. *Catalogue of Portraits by Louis Mark*, An Exhibition at the Galleries of M. Knoedler & Co., 556–558 Fifth Avenue, March 17th to 29th, inclusive, 1913.
32. Ian McKibbin, “The Two Fairs”, *Apollo* February, 1980, 86–88.
33. Elek Petrovics, *Magyar Mesterművek*, Budapest (a gift of *Pesti Napló* to its subscribers from the Andor Miklós Fund). 1936. 113, Pl. 74.
34. S. A. Mansbach, “Confrontation and Accommodation in the Hungarian Avant-Garde”. *Art Journal*, Spring 1990 vol. 49, no. 1, 7–20.
35. The painting shows the dining room in Márk’s house; the large painting, entitled *Before the five o’clock tea*, shown hanging on the wall, is also by Márk, and his wife and seven year old son were models for the painting.
36. Adrienne Nagy, *Köszöntünk, Színház, Szép Tündérvilág! Jelenetek a magyar hivatásos színházasz 200 éves történetéből*. Guide to the exhibition, National Theatre-Historical Museum, Hungarian Theatre Institute, 1990.

37. *The Art News*, May 30, 1925, 2.
38. Cat. no. 53.
39. Károly Lyka, *Festészetünk a két világháború között*. Budapest, Képzőművészeti Alap Kiadóvállalata. 1956. 29.
40. *A Műgyűjtő* 1929. 120.
41. Lajos Márk, "A magyar művészet külföldi propagandája". *Képzőművészet* 1930. no. 34. 228–229.
42. *Art News* vol. 37, April 8, 1939. 15–16.
43. *Magyar Génius* April 14, 1901, 248.
44. E.g. in a brief auto-biographical entry in an encyclopaedia published by the Budapest daily *Az Est*, *Az Est Hármaskönyve*. 1913, 472–474.
45. Yann Le Pichon, *L'érotisme des chers maîtres*, Paris, Dencel. 1986.
46. Robert Rosenblum and H.W. Janson, *19th-Century Art*. New York, Harry N. Abrams. 1984. 425.
47. *Vasárnapi Újság* "Művészeti élet a yankeek hazájában". 1911. no. 43.
48. Sir William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories, 1872–1900*. London, Faber & Faber. 1931. 44.
49. István Csók, *Emlékezéseim*. Budapest, Officina. 193. 42.
50. Rothenstein, 44.
51. Robert Rosenblum, *Paintings in the Musée d'Orsay*. New York, Stewart, Tabori & Chang. 1989. 405.
52. *The Neglected 19th Century: An Exhibition of French Paintings*. H. Shickman Gallery. 929 Park Avenue, New York, February, 1970.
53. László's first international success was painting portraits of the Berlin Court. Subsequently he settled in London. Perhaps his most famous portrait is that of Pope Leo XIII. Among his many American portraits, that of President Theodore Roosevelt hangs in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, that of Ailsa Mellon Bruce in the Founders' Room of the National Gallery of Art, Washington.
54. The information on Loie Fuller is taken from Denys Sutton, "Dance and Image", *Apollo* March 1990. 176–177.
55. There is no record that Márk and Loie Fuller ever met. But their paths crossed again at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in 1915, where, as already stated, Márk won a gold medal with his painting *Before the Mirror*. By that time Loie Fuller was a close friend of Alma de Bretteville Spreckels, a leading lady of San Francisco society and patroness of the arts, and the two together at that time searched out the spot where the Palace of the Legion of Honor was to be built.
56. Károly Lyka, *Festészeti életünk a millenniumtól az első világháborúig: Magyar művészet, 1896–1914*. Budapest, Képzőművészeti Alap. 1953.
57. Gyula Szekfű, *Három nemzedék, egy hanyatló kor története*. Budapest, Élet. 1920.
58. Miklós Rózsa, "Az új aranyérmekről, II. Márk Lajos". *Szabad Művészet* 1913. december 3.
59. "Pro Domo", *Heltai Jenő versei*, Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó. 1967. 280–282.
60. Gerald Schurr, *Les petits maîtres de la peinture: valeur de demain, 1820–1920*. Paris, Editions de l'Amateur. 1972–1989. Seven volumes.
61. Now at the Hungarian Heritage Museum of the American–Hungarian Foundation. New Brunswick, New Jersey.
62. Judit Szabadi, *Art Nouveau in Hungary*. Budapest, Corvina. 1989. 21, 25.
63. *Új Idők* 1896. vol. II, 286.
64. Although the showing of some of his paintings in recent exhibitions kept his name in the public eye.
65. *The Julian Academy*, no. 53.
66. It is of little consolation that American artists do not fare much better.