

DANUBE TOUR FROM BUDAPEST TO ÓBUDA

Introduction:

The conceptual goal of the tour is to show how the foundations of modern societies and the capitalist market economy emerged in Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th century; how a capitalist society emerged from a feudal country.

This process is related to the Hungarian elite of the time, especially Istvan Széchenyi, whose memories can be found in Budapest in countless ways.

The tour is partly based on the presentation of his personality, through which we can more understand of the former and contemporary relations of Hungary and Central Europe. In the first part of the tour we will walk from the university to Petőfi square and from there we will go to Margitsziget, Árpád bridge (50 minutes) with BKV. It is the official end of the tour. From there, begins an optional part of the tour. You can go to Óbuda by tram.

During the tour we are going to see these sights:

- 1) Ferenciek square
 - 2) Petőfi Square
 - 3) BKV Ship
 - 4) Towards Batthyány square:
 - 5) The Ybl Waterhouse
 - 6) The National Casino - Széchenyi Square
 - 7) Chain Bridge and its economic aspects
 - 8) Hungarian Academy of Sciences - Széchenyi square
 - 9) Margaret Bridge
 - 10) Industrial development
- From there a half hour is coming on the boat:
- 11) The society of Pest
 - 12) Regulation of Danube
 - 13) Steamship
 - 14) Margaret Island
 - 15) We are approaching the end of the tour- optional tour in Óbuda

1) From the University to the Ferenciek Square

Let's go from the university to the Ferenciek square, on Váci Street or on the side streets.

Please take a look around. What do you see? Are these streets different than other streets of Budapest? Is the length of the streets and the size of the houses different?

2) Remains of a medieval city

The streets that we are now running, are different in all their size and build than the nearby buildings. Here are the houses smaller, have fewer floors and the streets are less planned. This is because it is an architectural monument inherited from the Middle Ages and early New Age. During the Middle Ages the citizenship strengthened. Most of the citizenship a craftsmen with a house and an office. The masters were engaged in guilds by profession. Guilds were an interest protection organization, provided the market regulation (quality, quantity) so that everyone can live. The streets became narrow alleys. As a result of congestion, the urban population was exposed to epidemics. The guild masters built a shop, workshop or warehouse at the ground floor of their houses. In spite of the many changes that have taken place in the society and urbanization, the development was underdeveloped in Budapest compared to the Western European cities. Because the Western European cities created a network and here were only inclusions

3) The Great Flood of Pest (1838), the destruction of a city

On the 15th of March 1838 was the Great Danube flood, the largest flood of all time. The flood of 1838 was caused by the persistently high cold and the high flood waves suddenly occurring in the spring. There were huge damages, not only in Pest, but also in neighborhood settlements. The flood destroyed a medieval city, where a modern metropolis emerged, as a result of the industrial revolution in Central Europe. Probably you see a Franciscan church on the corner. This church commemorates Miklós Wesselényi, who saved many people during this flood. If we go closer to the church, we can see an embossment on the wall. This memorial reminds us of the heroism of Wesselényi.

Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem

4) 15 of March 1848: the revolution of a city

Continuing our walk, we are walking towards the Danube bank.

If we get to Petőfi Square, we will see a statue. This is a statue of Sandor Petofi. He is one of the greatest figures of the Revolution and war for freedom which was 170 years ago.

This statue is commemorating him. In 1848, a civil revolution broke out in Hungary, as in many other countries in Europe. The characteristic feature of the Hungarian Revolution was that the local, national elites stood in the lead, and they fought to abolish their own medieval privileges because they saw that these medieval, feudal rules made Hungary lag behind from the West. The Hungarian elite was Western educated. They tried to catch up with the West and they saw that civil liberties and free economic circumstances are necessary.

We will continue our tour from here by ship. Please go to the BKV ship.

5) The Ybl Waterhouse

We continue our tour on board. To the left, on the Buda side of the Danube, we see a beautifully renovated building with tower, it is the Ybl Waterhouse. The building includes the history of the transforming society of Budapest: after the construction of 1875, it actually operated as a machine house: it provided water to the Buda palace quarter. The admiration of this kind of industry success is expressed by the fact that the designer of the building was Miklós Ybl, the star architect of the era. This is like designing a modern power plant today with a star builder. From 1905 the building had a different function: it became a popular meeting place for urban citizenship. Café culture was more than just a pastime: it was the place for publicity. "Casino" was therefore an important civic achievement: it became a symbol of public opinion, debate and power of publicity. This power of publicity was something new achievement of modern societies: in feudal times the "public" opinion does not exist.

6) The National Casino - Széchenyi Square

As we move forward, the Chain Bridge will be visible. Széchenyi Square was named after Istvan Széchenyi, which is located on the Pest side of the Chain Bridge. Széchenyi is one of the most important figures of Hungary, one of the founders of modern Hungary, with his ideas, influence and practical activity. He founded the first casino. England was the example, because there was the Casino known as one of the centers of social-political life. The establishment of the Hungarian casino was also suitable for the dissemination of the

Hungarian language, because here the "official language" was not German or Latin but Hungarian. In the second half of the nineteenth century, citizenship, which grew stronger in the Kingdom, has created the casino in most places, which has become a modest but later important center of local social life.

7) Chain Bridge and its economic aspects

The next sight is the Chain Bridge, this bridge is also connected with Széchenyi. His idea was that a bridge connecting Buda and Pest would be useful for the economic and cultural development of Pest. For personal reasons, he also wanted a bridge connecting Buda and Pest, because in the winter of 1820, due to the strong ice hail on the Danube, he could not cross Pest, his beloved father's funeral.

That was the takeover of the patterns of Westernism, this phenomenon is reinforced by the fact that the British have designed the bridge and there is a bridge in Marlow (this is an English town not far from London) and this bridge looks like the Chain Bridge. The explanation for this fact is that both bridges were designed by William Tierney Clark. We can see this whole project is kind of a struggle of importing English development into Hungary.

8) Hungarian Academy of Sciences - Széchenyi square

As we continue our tour, we can see the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the Pest side. It is also connected with Széchenyi.

Now you can understand why we mentioned earlier that Széchenyi is one of the most determining figures of these decades in our country. On November 3, 1825, on the occasion of the Speech at the Parliament in Pozsony, today Bratislava, Széchenyi offered a significant amount of donations to the creation of a scholarly society whose main task was to develop / cultivate the Hungarian language. His example was followed by several Hungarian nobles. These donations served as the basis for the establishment of the existing Hungarian Academy of Sciences. These academies had already functioned thorough in Europe.

9) Margaret Bridge

Again, we can see a bridge, that was built in 1876. It was trying to serve the growing traffic between the increasingly busy neighborhoods. Because the neighborhoods were earlier separate towns and were united only in 1873 under the name of Budapest. Before 1873 there was no Budapest just Buda, Pest and Óbuda. There is a memorial to the reunion on Margit Island. Three cities were united at that time, Pest, Buda and Óbuda.

10) Industrial development

At the Pest side of Margaret Bridge there were mills at that time, there was the center of the modern mill industry.

The difficulties of Hungarian cereal exports (uneven quality, expensive transport, customs system, increasing competition) encouraged holders to sell their produce in the form of flour. However, rough ground flour in aquatic and dry mills did not correspond to this purpose. Following his experiences in England, István Széchenyi first initiated the foundation of a steam engine-driven mill in Sopron (1835). Then he founded a joint-stock company in Pest with a steam engine operated mill.

Reform members also supported industrialization, realizing that improvements to the country's economic development are needed. 1839-40, the laws on free founding and the bill of exchange were adopted, which improved the possibility of borrowing. Railway construction started in the reform era continued later, and - based on Széchenyi's suggestion - a Budapest-centered, centralized European-level rail network was established. The railroad also helped boost the economy, where railways were, and the economy recovered.

11) The society of Pest

The modern part of the city, which is visible to the right, became a residential area only in the second half of the 1800s and it was a favorite dwelling place of modern citizenship and a new middle class. Among them there was a large proportion of Germans and Jews. Due primarily to the 1840 Law, which greatly facilitated the establishment of the Jews, their number doubled and it was over 15,000 in 1848.

12) Regulation of Danube

If we have a look around we will see a bed with a stone wall, but it was not always like this. It is the result of the river regulation, which is also related to Széchenyi Istvan. The purpose of the river regulation was to conquer the tidal plains of rivers for agriculture. The works started in 1834 with measuring. Although the regulations had positive effects, there were negative impacts as well. The size of the living space of the wildlife has diminished. Many animals died and many occupations (for example fishing) lost their importance. The regulation made the rivers achievable transport channels for economy, and helped to connect to the Western European capitalist economy.

13) Steamship

Széchenyi also had a great merit in the boom of shipping. He dealt a lot with the idea of extending steamer on the Danube to the Black Sea. In order to achieve its purpose, the Desdemona runner-up boat traveled from Pest to Galac in 1830 to study the Danube conditions and sent a letter to DSC (Danube Steamship Company) to increase its number of ships because it was profitable. István Széchenyi was so concerned about the fate of the steamship in Lake Balaton, and at his own expense he had commissioned a committee of experts - mainly foreign shipbuilding engineers. The first steamer was eventually made at the Óbuda Shipyard and the machine was built in Rotterdam. This ship floated on the lake Balaton. The steamship with 300 seats, which also had a dining room and a library, was first released on September 21, 1846, on the 55th birthday of Széchenyi. Hungarian steamships relied on a powerful and modern shipbuilding industry. In addition to the Óbuda Shipyard, Angyalföld and Újpest also developed a number of smaller and larger shipbuilding plants and factories. With developing steams, Széchenyi and his fellows tried to establish these industrial branches in Hungary.

14) Margaret Island

On our left side we can see an island. The name of the island is Margaret Island. The island is mostly covered by landscape parks, and is a popular recreational area. Its medieval ruins are reminders of its importance in the Middle Ages as a religious centre. The island spans the area between the Margaret Bridge (south, you have already heard about the Margaret Bridge in the 10th topic) and the Árpád Bridge (north). Today's appearance was developed through the connection of three separate islands, during the end of the 19th century, to control the flow of the Danube as we mentioned earlier in the 12th topic.

15) We are approaching the end of the tour.

If you want, you can continue the tour to Óbuda because this town shows the old-town image of an industrialized society with noble attributes. Furthermore, you can see on the bridge the shipyard in Óbuda, where Széchenyi built his ships.